

Dear Catholic Elementary School Families,

From September 17, to September 21, many of our Diocesan Elementary students will be taking the *Iowa Assessments*™. Students in grades 3, 5, and 7 are required to participate in the *Iowa Assessments*™. Each school may choose to test students in other grades. Make-up tests will be given the week of September 24, to those students who may have missed any tests during the initial testing week. The purpose of this letter is to inform you about the tests so that—with your support and encouragement—your student will do his or her best on the tests.

### **About the *Iowa Assessments***

The *Iowa Assessments* help determine how students are performing on nationwide standards. These assessments measure achievement in several important content areas including Vocabulary, Word Analysis, Reading, Listening, English Language Arts, Mathematics, Computation, Science, and Social Studies. The exact tests that your student takes will depend on his or her grade level.

The *Iowa Assessments* help teachers identify a student's strengths and areas that may need additional emphasis. The *Iowa Assessments* also measure student growth and progress in the content areas assessed from year to year and may provide information about college readiness for older students. The assessments produce information that enables sound decision making and provides a focus for teachers to evaluate instruction. Each test includes sample questions to help students become familiar with the content and format of the tests. Samples help students understand what to do—how to mark answers and move from question to question. All test questions are multiple choice, and the tests sessions vary depending on the grade level.

### **How your student can prepare for test taking—and what you can do to help**

A student who is well rested and well fed and has a positive attitude about testing is best prepared for testing. You can help your student do his or her best by considering these tips:

- Make sure that your student is in school and on time on test days. Reschedule dentist appointments and other out-of-school time on non-testing days.
- Make sure your student gets a good night's sleep and eats a healthy breakfast before each day of testing.
- Remind your student that these tests are only **one** measure of what he or she has learned. For the younger students, you might want to remind them that this is only on part of their day. In either case, emphasize that you have confidence in his or her ability to do the best job possible.
- Remind your student to listen to the directions and read each question carefully during testing. Encourage your student to ask the teacher for help if he or she does not understand the directions.

### **Score reporting and how we use test results**

The school will receive test scores in about eight weeks. These scores will indicate how your student performed on the tests compared with students across the nation in the same grade. Discuss the test results with your student, and if you have any questions, contact your child's teacher or principal. Parents will be notified when the school has received the test scores. The test results will also provide some direction in identifying, planning, and implementing professional development for the faculty.

Thank you very much for encouraging and supporting your student(s) during testing. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your child(ren's) teacher or school principal.

Sincerely,  
Vito C. DeFrisco  
Assistant Superintendent of Schools  
Rockford Diocese