

Dear Parent,

In the 2014-15 school year, Idaho will roll out new assessments in mathematics and English Language Arts that are aligned to the new Idaho Core Standards. These new assessments will be used to gauge how well students are mastering these new, higher academic standards. In high school grades, these assessments will ultimately be used to determine how ready students are for education after high school and the workforce.

These new assessments are the next-generation of assessments and will differ from the previous Idaho Standards Achievement Tests (ISAT) in several ways. Whereas the ISAT only measured student knowledge based on multiple-choice questions, the new test will include different question types – such open-ended response, technology-enhanced items, and performance tasks – to better measure what a student truly knows and is able to do at the end of each grade level. In addition, the new test will adapt to your child’s ability so your local school can better measure how much academic growth your child has demonstrated in a given school year.

While this new test will not be officially administered to all students until spring 2015, all of Idaho’s public schools will be participating in a field test this spring to ensure that the testing process runs smoothly when new tests are administered next year. This means that **your child will take the field tests in math and English language arts this spring 2014**, instead of taking the ISAT in math, reading, and language usage.

The purpose of the field test is to “test the test” and help prepare schools, teachers, and students for the full implementation of the new assessments in spring 2015. Because this is a field test, similar to a pilot, no scores will be sent home for your child from the field test. However, taking this field test will still greatly benefit your child because he or she will experience the new test a year in advance and become more familiar with the different types of questions.

To see the different types of test questions that will be on the new assessments, go to <https://sbacpt.tds.airast.org/student/> and click the “sign-in” button or go to <http://sampleitems.smarterbalanced.org/itempreview/sbac/ELA.htm>

Please note, if your child is in 5th, 7th, or 10th grade, he or she will still be required to take the statewide ISAT in science this spring. In addition, your child will also be required to take [*insert any district or school-specific assessments students will be asked to take this year*].

If you have any questions about the field test of the new assessments aligned to the Idaho Core Standards or the other information provided in this letter, please contact your school principal or district superintendent at [*insert school or district contact information*].