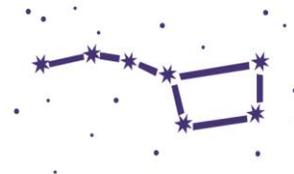


# BRATTLEBORO AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL

*Learning for Life ~ Caring for Others ~ Doing the Right Thing ~ Together*



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Tuesday, April 10, 2018

Dear Parent or Guardian,

This spring our school will join thousands of schools across the United States in the second administration of the new Smarter Balanced Assessments (commonly called the SBAC). SBAC is replacing the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) for math and English/language arts. The new tests are designed for students in grades 3-8 and 11, and will measure achievement in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Students in 8<sup>th</sup> grade will continue to take the Science NECAP in addition to the SBAC. Our tentative schedule for testing is as follows:

- May 8th- 9th (ELA), May 14th, 15th (MATH)
- Science - 8th grade only May 22 and 23
- NEW- Physical Education - 7th grade only on May 22 and 23

The Smarter Balanced tests are not timed. However, the total time students will be involved in the testing is estimated to be about 8 hours, which will be spread out across several days. The tests employ a variety of innovations, including the following:

- All testing is administered using a secure online assessment system that includes a variety of tools and technology enhanced test questions that will improve the assessment experience for our students
- Foremost among the technologies is Computer Adaptive Testing or CAT. CAT selects a unique set of test questions for each student that will produce very precise results in less time than the last generation of pencil and paper tests.
- In addition to the CAT portion of the test, students will also participate in a performance task that permits students to use their skills on an authentic and engaging challenge.
- The assessment also includes an array of embedded accessibility tools for special populations – features such as read aloud, color and contrast choices, expandable reading passages, key word translation glossaries, American Sign Language translation, Braille, and many others
- Because the test is administered on computer, results will be returned to schools very quickly. We can expect school scores by early July, and individual student scores before that.
- Science and PE testing are now also utilizing the same testing software as the ELA and math testing. This is new for us and both tests are considered pilot tests for this spring.

To learn more about Smarter Balanced, log on to the VT Smarter Balanced Assessment Portal where you will find additional information for parents, as well as practice tests that will allow you to try out the test your student will be taking this spring. Here is the link:

<http://vt.portal.airast.org/>

Please note that Vermont's test delivery system uses state of the art security features that will protect our students' privacy, and will adhere to all federal and state confidentiality regulations, including but not limited to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

BAMS values the results of these tests and we use the results to inform our instruction in the future and to assess how well our students have learned what we have taught them. Please encourage your child to work hard on the tests and to take them seriously. We will be sending you the results when they are available.

If you have any questions, please feel free to give me a call at 451-3500.

Sincerely,

Keith Lyman- Principal