



Phoenix Central School District

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Services

Robert J. Edwards
Director of Instruction
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Christopher J. Byrne
Superintendent of Schools

March 22, 2017

Dear Parents/Guardians,

This spring, the New York State Grades 3-8 English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Tests will be administered to students. ELA testing will take place March 28 – 30 and mathematics testing is scheduled for May 2 – 4. By having your child participate in these assessments, you are:

Allowing our students to demonstrate what they know and are able to do as compared with the expectations set by the state standards. The results help us analyze the effectiveness of our curriculum, which is being developed locally by our teachers and administrators to meet the state standards. Further, these assessments allow us to objectively compare the progress of our students with students in other schools and districts.

Supporting the hard work of our teachers and administrators as they utilize the entire instructional cycle – standards, curriculum, instruction, assessments, analysis of results, and professional learning – to continuously improve the opportunities provided to our students.

Preparing our kids for future standards-based instruction and assessments such as Regents Exams and the SAT. When students take the 3-8 assessments, they are “practicing” in a sense for future assessments, when the stakes are higher.

Supporting the work of local and other NYS educators who are involved at each step of assessment development, setting of proficiency scores, and generating new instructional approaches that are being shared statewide.

Ensuring that the District remains in good standing with the state and federal government with our student participation rate – 95% is required over a two-year period – and our student progress.

It is worth noting that the assessments were shortened last year and will remain the same length for this testing period. It is also worth noting that the tests are no longer timed. As long as students are working productively, they may continue working on their exams past the estimated testing times provided by NYSED for the 2017 Grades 3-8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests. When a student is finished with their test, the test will be collected and the student will be permitted to read silently until the end of the test session.

Student performance on the 2017 Grades 3-8 ELA and Mathematics Tests will have no employment-related consequences for teacher and principal evaluations. This means no teachers or principals in New York State public schools will be affected by the results of the 2017 Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Tests.

In the event that students “opt-out” or refuse to take these exams, students will not be given an exam. These students will remain in the classroom for the exam and will be allowed to read silently. If refusal numbers are high, these students may be moved to another classroom and will be allowed to read silently.

If you would like more information on the 2017 grades 3-8 NYS assessments, please visit the “Parents Tab”, general information and essential resources on our website at www.phoenixcsd.org. You can also find more information about the assessments at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/ei/eigen.html>.

We greatly appreciate your child’s participation in the 3-8 NYS ELA and Mathematics Tests. As always, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christopher J. Byrne". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C".

Christopher J. Byrne
Superintendent of Schools