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Dear Parents and Guardians,

Our students take federally required assessments every spring. These assessments help us understand how our students are growing academically, compared to their peers across the state. The state uses this information to provide more support and resources to the schools in the greatest need. This year, the English language arts and math assessment for grades 3-8 is called the **Illinois Assessment of Readiness**.

The Illinois Assessment of Readiness is almost exactly the same this year as the assessment that students took last year, only slightly shorter. The Illinois Assessment of Readiness measures the same Illinois Learning Standards and includes the same high-quality test questions that teachers and students have become familiar with over the past four years.

Our students should feel confident showing what they know and can do on the Illinois Assessment of Readiness, even with the new test name and new look.

The Illinois Assessment of Readiness will change over the next few years, as the state works to make it more useful to schools and families. Next year, we will have the results back from the test much more quickly. The year after that, the test will adapt to each student, so we gain a better understanding of where each individual student is in their learning. We will continue to be able to measure students' growth from year to year throughout these improvements.

In preparation for these improvements, all students must take the Illinois Assessment of Readiness online. The state has granted us a one-year extension to fully test online. Our 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students will continue to take the assessment on paper this year. We will transition to fully online testing next year, and we thank you for your support. National studies have shown no significant difference in students' performance between paper and online assessments. We will ensure all of our teachers and students have the support and resources they need to make this transition smoothly.

Our students who are testing online will take the Illinois Assessment of Readiness between March 11<sup>th</sup> and April 12<sup>th</sup>. Students testing paper-pencil will take the test between March 25<sup>th</sup> and April 12<sup>th</sup>.

While students can't study for a standardized assessment like they would for a regular classroom assessment, there are ways you can help your child prepare to do their best:

- Ensure your student attends school regularly so that they don't miss out on important instruction
- Talk to your child about testing so that they understand why they are being tested
- Make sure your child gets a good night's sleep the night before the exam
- Ensure your child arrives to school on time
- Remind your student to take their time, listen to and read all directions, and tackle one question at a time
- Help your child maintain a positive mindset by reminding them of their strengths and accomplishments

If you have questions about the Illinois Assessment of Readiness, please reach out to your principal. As always, we encourage our students to do their best every day. Thank you for your partnership in your student's academic success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anna Alvarado". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Anna Alvarado  
Chief Officer of Teaching and Learning