

Teacher Panel- Upcoming State Tests - 3/23/17

Ms. Misthal- 6th Grade Humanities and Mr. Wilson- 6th and 8th Grade Math

- There are three days of ELA (English Language Arts) state exams (3/28-3/30) and three days of Math state exams (5/2-5/4).
- 8th Graders in Regents classes do not take the Math state exams, they take Science and Math Regents at a different time. These students take practice Regents during the time when 6th and 7th Graders are taking the state tests.
- This year's State Tests have unlimited time, as they did last year. Most students finish the exams within a certain amount of time and resume regular school day activities. Those who do not, are moved to another room to complete the exams. Students who are designated in advance as requiring additional test taking time, take the exams in a separate location.
- Certain components of the Math exams require a calculator, some do not.
- The breakdown of the ELA exams is: Day One- multiple choice; Day Two- multiple choice, short answer and extended response; Day Three- all writing- passages, author's purpose, central idea, comparing texts.
- Teachers do a lot of prep for both of the state exams and the Regents exams. Parents can look through their child's schoolwork and have their child practice areas where her/she may have had some difficulty.

Question and Answer Session:

Q: Do state tests count for school grades?

A: The Regents exams count for high school transcript grades, but the state tests do not count as report card grades.

Q: Should we tell our children to take all the time they want on the exams?

A: Most kids do not take the entire time because they finish the exam and do not want to have to sit around doing nothing. Parents should tell their kids that they will not be rushed and that should check their work, but that they do not need to stay if they have finished exam. Parents should also tell their kids not to second guess their work. Students should plan what they are going to write before they begin their essays.

Q: Should students bring calculators?

A: If your child has a scientific calculator, he/she should bring it. If not, the school will provide one for the test.

Q: Will my child be at a disadvantage if he did not receive outside test prep?

A: Most parents prep for the SHSAT (specialized high school admissions test), but it is not necessary to do so for the state tests because preparation is done at school.

Q: Is there any area students should work on particularly to prepare for the state tests?

A: For ELA: Students should know that “extended response” means writing an essay. Students should write separate, organized paragraphs and use transition words. There should be an introduction and conclusion (one or two sentences each). Students should use specificity of language (no “stuff”, “things”, “etc.”)

For math: Students should be concise and accurate in their answers.

Q: Have teachers been sharing this information with the students?

A: Yes. All of the classes have been working on these skills throughout the year.

Q: Any suggestions of what to do if students read a passage that they do not understand?

A: There are times when passages are difficult to understand. Students should preview the questions to determine what is being asked. For the short answer responses, students should use two details to support their answer. Students can receive partial credit for short responses and essays.

On the math exams, students can lose points for computation errors or conceptual errors. Students should show all of their work to receive partial credit even if they should make a conceptual error.

Q: Can parents view their child’s tests before they leave the school to be graded?

A: No. The tests get sent out right away to be scanned and graded. Parents may see their child’s tests in the fall, but even then, they can only see some of the questions. The multiple choice questions are not included, only the answers.