

THE WEST BEND SCHOOL DISTRICT



DESTINATION

ACADEMICS • ARTS • ATHLETICS

January 8, 2016

Dear High School Families,

The West Bend School District (WBSD) is committed to ensure that every student meets their maximum learning potential each school year. The WBSD is accountable to the State of Wisconsin Department of Instruction (DPI) to demonstrate yearly growth in literacy and math K-8 (science and social studies in grades 4 and 8) as measured by the state assessment (Wisconsin Forward/Badger Exam). The high schools are accountable for demonstrating yearly growth in the subject areas of English, reading, writing, math, and science as measured by the state assessments (Aspire and ACT), social studies in grade 10. This accountability is represented each year through the DPI-issued “District Report Card” which is available on the WBSD website and through the Department of Public Instruction.

Feedback from parents, students, and teachers during the 2014-15 school year demonstrated concerns with the number of student assessments administered and the amount of time spent on assessments. A solution that reduces the number of assessments while providing instructional guidance and data was identified. The WBSD purchased Galileo, an instructional improvement system, in the spring of 2015. This instructional improvement system costs \$8 per student per year and reduces the overall budget for district assessments by \$62,000 annually. At the high school level, the average student will experience a 12-hour reduction in district assessments. The highlighted features of the instructional improvement system are listed below:

- Allows for measuring student growth from beginning of school year to end of school year
- Allows for forecasting the achievement levels on state assessments
- Provides analysis of students who may need an intervention based on growth levels in a standard
- Mirrors the online testing environment students will experience for state assessments
- Provides a student/family portal for students and families to view how they are growing in the standards of a grade level and/or content areas
- Provides technology-enhanced assessment questions which parallel the state’s technology-enhanced assessment items
- Offers instructional materials for certain subject areas
- Offers an efficient process for creating a quiz or short formative assessment on standards, knowledge and skills

- Provides assessment questions that are statistically valid and reliable
- Provides assessments that are created from national blue-print assessments
- Allows the district to create their own assessments which are scored and “stored” in the system
- Provides updated classroom, school and district dashboards for progress monitoring

This new instructional improvement system is a more robust platform and will capture system efficiencies at the student, classroom, and district levels. The previous vendor also used an electronic assessment platform with banks of assessment questions for creating the assessments, however; the platform did not have the capacity for students to take the assessments online with technology enhanced items, nor perform many of the functions listed above.

Previously, the WBSD partnered with NWEA (located in Portland, Oregon) to measure student growth of K-8 students utilizing MAPS (measures of academic performance), however; the district did not use a universal growth assessment at the high schools. Since the district is accountable to the State of Wisconsin to demonstrate student growth at the high schools, the WBSD has selected to use a new instructional improvement system and its suite of comprehensive assessments to progress monitor student growth and proficiency on the state standards. Teachers collaboratively selected and/or created questions that reflect the standards, knowledge and skills covered during first semester for Semester 1 Exams; the student exam grade is determined by the percentage of questions answered correctly. The Semester 1 Exam grade is not determined by the amount of student growth from the pre-test administered in September.

As always, the West Bend School District is committed to Preparing ALL Students for College Readiness AND Career Success. If you have further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the Curriculum and Instruction Division.

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