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Achievement Testing Changes

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Why do we do achievement testing?

Testing has become a significant part of the education process, and many schools spend several weeks during the year preparing and testing their students. Scholarly research has proven that standardized testing fatigue can lead to significant stress and adverse performance for both students and teachers. We have no desire to increase the frequency of our standardized testing, which is conducted annually. The primary goal of achievement testing at Prince Avenue is to better evaluate certain aspects of our curriculum and instruction to identify where adjustments need to be made. It also serves to verify that our students are meeting or exceeding the performance level of students at other schools within their peer group.



For the past seven years, Prince has given the Terra Nova Version 3 achievement test. Prior to that, the Stanford Achievement Test was given. As with all our programs, we periodically evaluate them to determine if change is needed. As we reviewed the Terra Nova 3, we determined that a change was needed due to the age of the assessment and the fact that there were no plans to upgrade it. After a lengthy review of other options and several conversations, the review committee determined that a change would be made beginning this year.

Changes in Lower School

Students in lower school will be given the [Iowa Test of Basic Skills](#). This instrument is created by the University of Iowa and is used throughout the country by public, private secular, and Christian schools. The test was redesigned in 2017 and is aligned with the standards that we teach at each grade level. Similar to previous years, the scoring reports will show how the student compares to other students throughout the nation with national percentiles, and it will also show specific areas of strength and weakness within those areas. The reports also will have information in narrative form to explain the scores in a manner that is easier for parents to understand. Additionally, students will take the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), which will

measure each student's ability instead of what he or she has been exposed to in the classroom. The CogAT is similar to an IQ score.

Changes in Grades 6-9

Students in grades 6-9 will be given the [ACT Aspire test](#). This test is produced each year by the same company that develops the ACT – an achievement test that many colleges and universities review when determining acceptance. The ACT Aspire is aligned with the [ACT College Readiness Benchmarks](#) and the standards we teach in our classes. The report that students receive each year will have historical scores and predicted future scores. The score report will also have an indication of college readiness for the student. Finally, the reports will give some guidelines for how to improve scores for the future. Additionally, students will also take the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT).

Changes in Dates

Our change in testing instruments will now allow us to consolidate our testing into the week of April 15th. The length of the assessments vary, so students will complete the test either Thursday of that week or early the next week.

These changes will be beneficial to our students by helping faculty and staff receive more comprehensive data relative to the learning of our students at each grade level. Our desire is to accurately evaluate each subject area so we may better prepare our students for the challenges ahead.