

Dear School Parents,

On March 20-22 (6-10 grades) and 20-24 (1-5 grades), your student will take the Iowa Assessments and the Cognitive Abilities Test. The purpose of this letter is to inform you about the tests so that—with your support and encouragement—your student will do his or her best on the tests.

About the Iowa Assessments

Our school will administer the Iowa Assessment and the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) in our achievement testing program. These are nationally normed, standardized tests that will be used by all schools participating in the American Association of Christian Schools (AACCS) testing program. The Iowa Assessments help determine how students are performing on nationwide standards. These assessments measure achievement in several important content areas including Reading, English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. The exact tests that your student takes will depend on his or her grade level. The Iowa Assessments help teachers identify a student's strengths and areas that may need additional emphasis. The Iowa Assessments also measure student growth and progress in the content areas assessed from year to year and may provide information about college readiness for older students. The assessments produce information that enables sound decision making and provides a focus for teachers to evaluate instruction. Each test includes sample questions to help students become familiar with the content and format of the tests. Samples help students understand what to do—how to mark answers and move from question to question. For most tests, students read the questions and mark their answers by filling in a circle for each question. All test questions are multiple choice, and the tests last about 10 to 40 minutes.

The Iowa Assessments have an online support for schools called DataManager that allows us to generate a multitude of customizable reports for groups of students and individuals to help us evaluate and improve our instruction. Beginning in sixth grade, the Iowa Assessments also provide statistically accurate predictor scores for the college entrance tests ACT and SAT.

The CogAT is not an IQ test, even though the scores are on a similar scale. An IQ test is administered individually and covers a much broader spectrum of abilities. However, the profile reports from the CogAT make it easy to link assessment to instruction by giving insights into how a child learns and techniques to help him for both teachers and parents.

How your student can prepare for test taking—and what you can do to help

A student who is well rested and well fed and has a positive attitude about testing is best prepared for testing. You can help your student do his or her best by considering these tips:

- Make sure that your student is in school and on time on test days. Reschedule dentist appointments and other out-of-school time on non-testing days.
- Make sure your student gets a good night's sleep and eats a healthy breakfast before each day of testing.
- Remind your student that these tests are only one measure of what he or she has learned. Emphasize that you have confidence in his or her ability to do the best job possible.

- Remind your student to listen to the directions and read each question carefully during testing. Encourage your student to ask the teacher for help if he or she does not understand the directions.
- Each child should have at least two #2 pencils unless your child's homeroom teacher has indicated otherwise.
- Please provide your child with some food in snack sized portions for them to eat in-between tests as allowed by your child's homeroom teacher. Your child may get a snack from the vending machines before school, but they will not be allowed to go to the vending machines during the tests to avoid distractions for classes who will be testing. It might also be wise to have a water bottle available for your child.

Score reporting and how we use test results

The school will receive test scores soon after tests have been sent to the scoring center. These scores will indicate how your student performed on the tests compared with students across the nation in the same grade. When scoring is complete, we will be sending copies of your child's scores to you for your review.

Thank you for partnering with us in providing your child with a quality Christian education.