



PARENT TIPS TO HELP PREPARE THEIR STUDENT FOR STANDARDIZED TESTING

Two important standardized achievement tests will again be given to students in grades 3-11 this fall. The first test opportunity will come in September. During the week of September 24, students will take the NWEA Level Test. The Level Tests are used to measure a student's academic growth over time. A second test, Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) and Iowa Test of Education Development (ITED), will be given in November. These tests measure a student's level of achievement when compared to state and national norm groups. The results of ITBS/ITED are also used for accountability purposes under No Child Left Behind.

All parents want to see their student(s) perform well in school. Parents play an important part in helping their children give their best performance on a test. The ideas presented below may serve as a guideline for parents when helping their student(s) prepare for testing.

The following list of activities represent things parents can be doing throughout the year.

1. Read to your preschool children and/or have older children read to you.
2. Discuss with your student(s) what they have read.
3. Make sure your student reads at least 20 minutes a day.
4. Know what kind of homework teachers expect and make sure students complete it.
5. Provide your student(s) with a regular, quiet place where they can do homework.
6. Expect every child to take tough courses.
7. Take an active interest in what your student is doing in school. What is he or she learning? Communicate with them daily.

What your student is learning on a daily basis builds the foundation for being able to demonstrate high achievement on tests.

During the weeks leading up to the Level Tests or ITBS/ITED tests, begin to talk with your student about the importance of giving their best effort during testing. The following thoughts will help you in preparing your child for being ready to give the test his or her all.

The night before:

- ✓ Help your child get to bed on time. Research shows that being well-rested helps students do better.
- ✓ Help children resolve immediate arguments before going to bed.
- ✓ Keep your routine as normal as possible. Upsetting natural routines may make children feel insecure.
- ✓ Mention the test to show you're interested, but don't dwell on it.
- ✓ Plan ahead to avoid conflicts on the morning of the test.



The morning of the test:

- ✓ Get up early to avoid rushing. Be sure to have your child at school on time.
- ✓ Have your child eat a good breakfast but not a heavy one. Research shows that students do better if they have breakfast before they take tests.
- ✓ Have your child dress in something comfortable.
- ✓ Be positive about the test. Acknowledge that tests can be hard and that they're designed so that no one will know all of the answers. Explain that doing your best is what counts. The important thing is to make your child comfortable and confident about the test.

After the test:

- ✓ Talk to your child about his or her feelings about the test, making sure you acknowledge the effort such a task requires.
- ✓ Discuss what was easy and what was hard; discuss what your child learned from the test.
- ✓ Discuss what changes your child would make if he or she were to retake the test.
- ✓ Explain that performance on a test is not a condition for you to love your child. You love your child just for the person he or she is.