

Supts.: Brace for lower ISTEP scores

Les Huddle, Scott Hanback and Rocky Killion 7:54 p.m. EST November 10, 2015



(Photo: File)

A great deal of conversation and consternation has surrounded the 2015 ISTEP test and its anticipated results. With good reason.

This test, required by Indiana as an accountability measure for our schools and teachers, appears to have no end of issues. Much has already been said about the delivery, the politics and the delays. The issue that may be generating the greatest concern, however, is the anticipated inevitable drop in student scores from the previous year.

Inevitable, because data proves that anytime there is a change in the content and/or construction of such high stakes tests, scores will drop the first year. They drop because it takes time for both the curriculum and the instruction to catch up and align to the new standards, and it takes a great deal of time, preparation and collaboration for schools to prepare their students and staff for a new test.

First, we want to thank our respective teachers, parents and community members for all they do to help our students. Second, regardless of what the ISTEP scores turn out to be, we know as educators that locally driven curriculum, instruction and assessments tell us much more about how our students are doing. Third, we continue to celebrate the many successes of our students, teachers and staff.

So when the ISTEP scores are announced across the state, and when everyone sees a drop in scores and school corporation accountability grades, just remember that we have the same great students, the same caring staff and the same supportive community that were here last year. The only thing that has changed is the state requiring a new test with no time for our students, staff and schools to prepare.

Of course, you can expect careful analysis of each of our district's ISTEP results as those are delivered, but also anticipate the results of multiple other measures of accountability and success that each district uses to tell the larger story of our students and our schools.

We have every reason to be proud of our schools, and you should be, too.

"Pride and success" is our message to you.

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