

Parent Communications  
March 3, 2016

A Parent Communications meeting was held on March 3, 2016 with approximately 24 parent representatives and ambassadors attending.

Dr. Worthington welcomed the group and briefly discussed the agenda for today's meeting.

TNReady

Dr. Kimmie Sucharski, District Data Analyst, who also works with our grants, is closely involved with our testing coordinators and gave an update regarding TNReady and how the program is aligning to date.

Dr. Sucharski stated that Tennessee has an over-arching testing system called TCAP (TN Comprehensive Assessment Program). You will hear reference to TCAP TNReady, TCAP science, TCAP social studies, and then TCAP EOC (high school and a course assessment).

TCAP science is administered as it has always been and will be conducted this year May 2-6. This is a one-time one part test for grades 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> science and looks very much like the traditional tests (multiple choice / fill-in). We are looking at grades 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> for biology and chemistry could be grades 10<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> depending upon where it falls within their pathway. High school is not assessed by grade level but rather by course. All other 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> is by grade level. If a student is in middle school when taking a high school course, the student will take the high school test.

Dr. Sucharski continued by saying Social studies is also like the traditional test and consists of two components (Part I and II). Part I social studies (testing Mar 14 – 18) will include grades 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> and high school US History. In Part I social studies, the students are provided a “prompt to” to respond and a writing piece is required. Part I is what was supposed to have been online but was recently halted by the state. Currently, we are waiting for our tests to be shipped. Testing will be administered by paper and pencil and is the same test as what would have been online. Part II will be administered May 2 – 6, and again, looks more like the traditional test with multiple choice / multiple correct.

Why is science in one part and social studies is in two parts? The reason is because science is the only one that was going to be a paper test all along so no change as the standards continue to be reviewed.

The whole goal of the TCAP system is that we are moving toward more rigorous curriculum so our students are college and career ready. Tennessee's desire is that our students would only have to take one assessment that would be used for things like going to college rather than taking the ACT or SAT. TNReady was the first big piece of that and they did those standards first which is why it is in two parts. TNReady is two subjects: RLA (reading-language arts) / ELA (English-language arts) and then the math test. For example, grades 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> – math and reading. In high school, students will have English 1, 2 and 3 and for the math, algebra I, geometry and algebra II. If a student is in 8<sup>th</sup> grade taking algebra I, the student will take the algebra I assessment. In other words with TNReady, there will be two subjects in two parts but only one test. Part 2 is the traditional test and Part 1 is more essays. This program is designed so that students will spend no more time on testing than they have in the traditional environment. For additional information, go to : [tn.gov/education](http://tn.gov/education).

Dr. Worthington touched briefly on budget amendments and what that might entail. The goal is to work toward saturating our schools with more technology and fewer textbooks (digital blending). Textbooks are not aligning with the curriculum and we want our teachers to have access to resources and technology which will provide student access to gain the skills needed to test online. Textbooks were not purchased last year because the math standards were not received until June from the state. Dr. Worthington continued by sharing the next step is for teachers to adopt a book that match the standards. Our hope, he said, is that we are going to see more dedication to math and reading language arts. Other areas of focus include replacing student locker in various schools, safety entrances in some elementary schools, and GPS on buses.

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Parent representative responses to the Question of the Month: "Do schools, and the district, share academic goals and achievements with the school community?"

1. I feel not all schools keep parents informed. All schools should adopt standards for doing so.
2. Texts and emails to convey achievements are great and help create pride.
3. Some goals, but would like to see more goal-oriented communication.
4. I feel that some schools are better at keeping parents informed than others. Middle and high schools need a more direct way to engage parents. When notes are sent home, they don't always make it to the parents.
5. In general, yes they do. As parents, we do feel that accomplishments are expressed more often concerning CHS and Rossvie school districts versus the north side of Clarksville.
6. We think you all are doing a great job...always improving.
7. Not all schools share this information. Posting more info on the website could help.
8. Our school does an excellent job of communicating goals (weekly parent newsletter, teacher goals/targets for the week, website tools and updates, internal bulletin boards, parent meetings).
9. No. No one knows the advantages of the academies. Do they contribute to receiving scholarships? How do the kids rank overall?
10. Yes. As long as you are a "connected" parent, you are aware of the goals and achievements. You are able to find info on the CMCSS website, individual school websites and school Facebook pages (if the school posts info regularly). I recall a "robo-call" regarding achievement in the past too.
11. Minglewood has the reward school banner in the lobby. "What was your daily target today?" (Note: Targets feed into the standards and that's what teachers are teaching toward.)
12. In the hallway, our school has bulletin boards that list achievements and goals such as....A & AB honor roll, Character Kids for the month. AR reading goals, etc.
13. Short answer "yes" because we, as representatives and ambassadors, go into our communities and pass on what we learn. The school always calls, sends notes and reports home, and so much information is on the web.

Notes from each parent meeting are posted on the website which describes topics of interests and concerns (<http://www.cmcoss.net/students/parentgroup.aspx>). This is a very informative tool to reference when engaging with others parents. For questions regarding meetings and postings, please contact [deborah.cummings@cmcoss.net](mailto:deborah.cummings@cmcoss.net) (931-920-7808).