

Dear Parent or Guardian:

During the window of April 2nd to May 3rd students in grades 3-8, and 11 will take the Smarter Balanced Assessment in English Language Arts & Literacy and Mathematics. The purpose of this letter is to help in your understanding of the assessment, as well as providing a few ideas for improving your child's preparedness.

The Smarter Balanced assessments measure student achievement in relation to our state standards in the areas of English Language Arts & Literacy and in Mathematics. In addition, score reports will provide information on student performance in the following areas:

- English: Reading, writing, listening, & research
- Math: Concepts and procedures; problem solving and modeling/data analysis; & communicating reasoning

The assessments are given through an online computer application and are unique in the way they adapt to a student's question responses. This is important as it provides questions that are appropriate for your child's level of learning. As a result, each student has the same opportunity to succeed and maintain a positive attitude towards testing. These assessments are not timed; however, we provide the following times as estimates of assessment duration: English – 4 hours and Math – 3.5 hours.

Student grades will not be impacted by their performance on this assessment, however the assessment does serve as a way for the school to analyze how well we are helping students meet the standards.

There is no need for students to study in preparation for the assessments. We do, however, ask that students try their best and get plenty of rest the night before testing. It is important for students to come to school on test days. Assessments are required, therefore making up a missed assessment leads to less instructional time and a loss of important learning opportunities.

Online Resources

- Students and parents can use complete Practice Tests in English and Math for grades 3 through 8 and 11 at the [student and family assessment portal](#).
- Students and parents can use sample assessment items for all assessment content at the [Smarter Balanced sample item webpage](#).

This testing is very important for your child and the Gayville-Volin School District. Thank you for supporting your child and our school during this assessment period. Please contact us if you have any questions. We know that Gayville Volin's students will help us to understand the great strides our students have taken in meeting our school and state standards in learning!

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns at amy.westrum@k12.sd.us or 605-267-4476 ext. 121.

Sincerely,

Amy Westrum

Testing Coordinator