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March 1, 2016

Dear Parents and Guardians:

During the spring of 2015, the State of New Hampshire transitioned to a new statewide assessment, Smarter Balanced, for students in grades 3-8 and 11. Throughout the months of March-May, 2016, the Smarter Balanced Assessment will again be administered to students in grades 3-8 in the subject areas of English language arts/Literacy and mathematics. The specific assessment date will depend upon your child's grade level. The Smarter Balanced Assessment replaced the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP), formerly administered in the same content areas during the fall. The Science NECAP will continue to be administered to students in grades 4 and 8 during the month of May.

Smarter Balanced, created by a consortium of states, is designed to measure a student's progress towards meeting the New Hampshire College and Career Ready Standards which define the knowledge, skills, and abilities required of students to be successful both during their K-12 education and post-secondary and career opportunities. The Smarter Balanced system uses computer adaptive technology. Based on student responses, the computer program will adjust the difficulty of the questions throughout the assessment.

There are three components to Smarter Balanced, including the computer adaptive assessment, a classroom activity and a performance task. The classroom activity is intended to provide context and familiarize students with the upcoming performance task. Performance tasks are tasks that challenge students to apply their knowledge and skills to respond to real world problems.

The parent and curriculum links on the Derry School District website contain resources specific to the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. The New Hampshire Department of Education's Smarter Balanced Portal includes the Students and Families' tab which may provide a helpful resource. Your child's school will email a school specific assessment schedule following this letter. Please feel free to call either your child's building principal or me with any questions.

Sincerely,

MaryAnn Connors-Krikorian, Ed. D.
Assistant Superintendent of Schools