



PAWNEE COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #11

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

All 8th grade students and high school students taking biology will be taking the Illinois Science Assessment (ISA) **the week of March 5th**. The ISA aligns with our new Illinois Learning Standards in science. This assessment helps families understand how well students are performing academically and see whether they are on track to succeed in college. The ISA represents Illinois' commitment to preparing all students for college and careers, including in the high-demand science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. The assessment also satisfies federal accountability requirements.

The ISA is designed to reflect classroom experiences. Many students who took the assessment last year said the ISA seemed more like instruction than a test. Students do not simply select an answer and fill in the bubble of a multiple-choice test. Rather, the ISA pushes students to apply their knowledge when they give answers, thus better preparing them for higher education and a career. All students deserve the opportunity to demonstrate what they know; they get to see how knowledge is applied to real-life situations.

The ISA is an hour-long summative assessment consisting of 23 questions for the 8th grade students and 21 questions for the high school students. **Please plan to bring a set of headphones if your student plans to have his or her test read.** The results provide administrators with important data to help them make broad curriculum decisions at the school and district levels. But classroom educators will not use the results to make teaching adjustments year-to-year for individual students.

We encourage you to talk with your children about the importance of doing their best on the ISA, while communicating that the assessment yields only one piece of information about them and their school's progress. Students' attendance, classroom work, homework, projects, performance on local tests, participation in sports and extracurricular activities, and contributions to the school's climate and culture all help them grow and learn.

We all work together to ensure Pawnee students build a cohesive understanding of science over time. Thank you for your role in developing lifelong learners.

Educationally,

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