

April 12, 2021

Dear HMS Families,

Our Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Liz Guercin, recently provided you with an update on this year's New York State testing. If you missed this email, it is [available here](#).

At the end of last week, we learned that the US Department of Education has denied the New York State Education Department's waiver requesting the cancellation of NYS Standardized Tests, so we are moving forward with planning for the administration of the NYS English Language Arts (ELA) Test, the NYS Math Test and the 8th Grade Science Test. This year the NYS Tests will be different in several ways:

- Students will only participate in 1 day of testing for each of the assessments--formerly each assessment required 2 days
- Students will complete only the "Part 1" multiple choice questions for each of the assessments
- The tests will have fewer questions and take less time, as all embedded field test questions have been removed from the Part 1 questions

For our fully remote students, there is *no requirement to participate in the testing, nor any penalty for not taking the NYS exams*. Please be reassured that there are many data points that we already use to determine student progress including coursework throughout the semester, teacher tests and the NWEA. However, for those remote families that choose to participate in the NYS Tests this year, we will set a date for remote students to come to school and complete the tests **in-person**. NYS does not permit the remote administration of these state tests.

If you are a parent of a fully remote student and are planning to have your child participate in NYS Testing, please click on the link below and submit the participation form by Monday, April 19:

[HMS Remote Participation in Assessments](#)

The schedule for our upcoming ELA and Math assessments is listed below:

ELA

Wednesday, April 21	Thursday, April 22	Friday, April 23
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grades 6, 7 & 8• Blended A Cohort• Modified Schedule• Report to Assigned Classrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grades 6, 7 & 8• Blended B Cohort• Modified Schedule• Report to Assigned Classrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grades 6, 7 & 8• Fully Remote Students• 8:00 AM -10:00 AM• Report to Cafeteria

Math

Wednesday, May 5	Thursday, May 6	Friday, May 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grades 6, 7 & 8• Blended A Cohort• Modified Schedule• Report to Assigned Classrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grades 6, 7 & 8• Blended B Cohort• Modified Schedule• Report to Assigned Classrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grades 6, 7 & 8• Fully Remote Students• 8:00 AM -10:00 AM• Report to Cafeteria

We will use a modified bell schedule for the days when Blended A and Blended B Cohorts test. We will not use a modified schedule on the Remote Testing days.

Modified Schedule:

Period	Time
Testing	7:45-9:27
2	9:31-10:03
3	10:07-10:39
4	10:43-11:15
5	11:19-11:51
6	11:55-12:27
7	12:31-1:03
8	1:07-1:39
9	1:43-2:15
1	2:19-2:51

Our HMS staff has prepared your children well for these assessments. Here are a few things that you can do at home to support your children:

- Make sure that your child eats a healthy breakfast. Studies suggest that good nutrition supports energy levels and enhances attention and concentration.
- Ensure that your child gets a good night's rest before the test. Children who are tired may have difficulties with endurance and focusing.
- Get up early and be on time for school. Rushing around to get ready in the morning or arriving late to school tends to heighten worries. Ensure that your child makes it to school on time so they can settle in and relax before the test begins.
- Stay positive. Encourage your child to do his/her best on the tests. It is important to avoid putting any undue pressure on them, which may lead to anxiety or worry. Please keep these assessments in proper perspective. They are simply one measure of performance and will not individually impact any child's academic program.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Have a wonderful day,

Brian McConaghy
Principal
Herricks Middle School