

Dear Parents,

Enclosed you will find a report of your child’s performance on a list of skills that were tested earlier this Fall using the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) and the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT - 5th graders only). As with all exercises that generate data, its best use will be in providing questions, not answers. Receiving information like this is the beginning of our work, not the conclusion. Our data committee will be poring over the numbers to explore questions about our curriculum, teaching methods, resources, and schedule. Teachers will use this information during professional development time and their weekly grade level meetings to learn what they can from the scores about specific children, resources, curricula and teaching strategies.

As a parent you will see areas of relative strength or potential growth of your student by looking at the breakdown of larger areas of study into specific skill sets. The narrative provided by the score publishing company has prescribed guidance depending on where your child had correct or incorrect responses. This also provides excellent discussion points for you and your child’s teacher. However, it is vital that this information is used in conjunction with everything else we know about each learner, since standardized test scores only provide a measure from one point in time; the testing dates in October. There is so much more to watch and monitor that informs our instruction.

So how did we do as a school? The charts below summarize the percentile rankings from each grade and component. These percentiles can help discern whether we are aligned to national standards of core curricula since it is compared to so many other schools. It also provides a general measure for our church and Diocese of whether we are fulfilling our canonical charge, to maintain a school that is “...as academically distinguished as that in the other schools.” (Code Book III, Title III, Chapter I.) You will see that our achievement on the whole compares very well to the national student and school percentile measures. Take special note of the commentary on the opposite side of this letter because our testing company has changed score categories and norming data, which has a significant effect on the 2014 scoring, making the comparison from year to year extremely difficult.

If you have any questions or concerns about what you are seeing, please contact your child’s teacher. Thank you for all of the academic support you give our children.

GRADE 3	ELA	EXT. ELA	Math
	Nat'l Student %ile	89	89
Nat'l School %ile	99	99	97

GRADE 4	ELA	Math	SS	Sci
	Nat'l Student %ile	88	83	82
Nat'l School %ile	99	95	98	99

GRADE 5	ELA	Math	SS	Sci
	Nat'l Student %ile	86	71	81
Nat'l School %ile	99	79	96	92

GRADE 5 CogAT	ELA	Math	SS	Sci
	Nat'l Student %ile	85	70	82

GRADE 6	ELA	Math	SS	Sci
	Nat'l Student %ile	83	80	78
Nat'l School %ile	98	94	93	95

GRADE 7	ELA	Math	SS	Sci
	Nat'l Student %ile	87	81	82
Nat'l School %ile	99	94	97	94

GRADE 8	ELA	Math	SS	Sci
	Nat'l Student %ile	88	78	78
Nat'l School %ile	99	94	94	90

In Christ,

Michael W. Ashton, Ed.D.

The enclosed reports about your child as well as building level scores use an abundance of statistical terms and acronyms, which can be very confusing. The following helpful information was compiled with the help of Mrs. Donna Moss, principal of Cathedral School in Raleigh. For more information and help with terms and acronyms associated with these reports, please refer to <http://www.riversidepublishing.com/scoring/glossary/default.jsp>

HELP WITH STUDENT REPORTS

Grade Equivalent (GE): A decimal number that describes a student's location on an achievement continuum in terms of grade and months at which a typical (average) student received this score. For example, a student scoring 4.7 is performing at the level that an average student in the seventh month of fourth grade would achieve. Parents are cautioned not to read more into a grade equivalent than is intended. It should not be misread as "my child is reading at the 4th grade 7th month". Grade equivalents help schools measure how many months of growth has taken place between testing sessions.

National Stanine (NS): A stanine indicates the status or relative rank of a student's score compared with a nationally representative sample of examinees. There are 9 stanines with 1 being lowest and 9 being highest. Scores of 1, 2, 3 are considered below average. Scores of 4, 5, 6 are considered average. Scores of 7, 8, 9 are considered above average.

National Percentile Rank (NPR): A percentile rank indicates the relative rank of a student's score when compared to a nationally representative sample of examinees. For example, a student scoring at the 56th percentile has scored higher than 56% of the students in the norm sample. It should not be misread as a simple percentage as in a 56 out of 100 like we are familiar with on grades for day to day school work.

If you were to compare this score report to last year's score report, you will find that there are two major differences.

1. The subtests are not exactly the same.

For example, there is no longer a Broad Reading Total and Broad Language Total. Those have been replaced by an ELA (English Language Arts) Total. Punctuation, spelling, capitalization and usage have been grouped together into one category called Conventions of Writing. In Mathematics, there are now two subtests instead of three subtests. The subtests of Maps and Diagrams and Reference Materials have been eliminated.

2. This test has been re-normed.

About every five years, we receive new tests with new norms. That is what we are experiencing right now. After a number of years, students and teachers become used to or "practiced" with certain formats and items and scores can sometimes inflate. Also, curriculum and standards change and achievement tests must try to account for that. For those reasons, it is essential to rework these tests and start anew.

Because of the two items mentioned above, these scores will be considered a baseline for future years. Comparison data for your child will be available next fall at this time when we will compare these scores to next fall's scores.

HELP WITH BUILDING REPORTS

What is the difference between the "National Student Percentile (%ile)" and the "National School %ile?" The "student" percentile is created by averaging our students' scores in each category to create the "STM average student." That score is compared to all student scores nationally in that category. In other words, our average student score is better than 83% of all student scores in the country for grade 4 Math. The "school" percentile compares the average of our students against the average score from other school systems. For example, the average STM score for grade 3 math is better than the averages of 97% of the other schools.