

October 19, 2011

Dear Parents,

The first half of any school year brings many new experiences for our students. The new classroom setting and new grade level teacher are just two of the experiences that welcome each of our students. Academically our students are asked to do more than they have done in prior years. With goals in mind they are achieving and learning more than ever before.

St. Bernard's staff works very hard evaluating the students through weekly assessments, as well as standardized testing (ITBS). This testing, that is conducted in September, enables our teachers to identify our students' strengths and growth areas. The ITBS test results are an invaluable tool that each teacher uses to better plan lessons and address the needs of your child.

At Parent Conferences you will be given your child's individual test results. In this letter I would like to report how the school is doing from grades 2nd to 8th. The ITBS test is an achievement test that uses national comparisons. Some have asked, "How is St. Bernard's doing in comparison to the public schools' testing?" There is no accurate way of comparing the two tests. The tests given to the public schools are very different than the ITBS test that the Dioceses of California administer to their students. The ITBS test has a complete battery of testing in reading, language, math, social studies and science. As a measure of proficiency there are four categories that are used to rate the results of the test: Advanced, Proficient, Basic and Below Basic. In lay terms the following can be used: Advanced is far above grade level, Proficient is above grade level, Basic is at grade level to minimal grade level and Below Basic is below grade level.

Another method of determining the status of a class is to compare the Grade Equivalent (GE). The GE is defined to be "A score derived from a raw score on a given test that indicates the grade level at which a typical pupil makes this raw score". Example for GE could be 3.7. This score indicates the students' classroom average is at the 3rd grade 7th month in performance on the ITBS tests. Please remember the ITBS tests were given in the 2nd month of the year or 3.2 would be a typical score for a 3rd grader.

As you will see, the following test results will give you a better idea of how each grade did on their ITBS test as a class. We are very proud of our students' work and wish to congratulate them on their wonderful accomplishments.

The following is a representation of our ITBS classroom testing:

PERCENT OF STUDENTS IN EACH GRADE THAT ARE AT BASIC, PROFICIENT OR ADVANCED LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY.

	READING	LANGUAGE	MATH	SOCIAL STUDIES	SCIENCE
Grade 2	100	100	97	100	97
Grade 3	97	97	90	100	97
Grade 4	97	93	90	97	93
Grade 5	100	96	96	96	96
Grade 6	100	96	93	100	100
Grade 7	100	92	100	100	96
Grade 8	100	100	100	96	96

THE FOLLOWING REPRESENTS THE AVERAGE PERCENT OF STUDENTS THAT ARE AT THE PROFICIENT OR ADVANCED LEVEL FOR ALL SUBJECTS TESTED

Grade 2	Avg. 82% for all 5 subjects
Grade 3	Avg. 67% for all 5 subjects
Grade 4	Avg. 69% for all 5 subjects
Grade 5	Avg. 74% for all 5 subjects
Grade 6	Avg. 63% for all 5 subjects
Grade 7	Avg. 85% for all 5 subjects
Grade 8	Avg. 72% for all 5 subjects

GRADE EQUIVALENT FOR EACH GRADE AND SUBJECT TESTED

	Reading	Language	Math	Social Studies	Science
Grade 2	2.6	2.9	2.5	2.5	2.3
Grade 3	3.8	3.5	3.2	3.9	3.8
Grade 4	4.8	5.4	4.4	5.2	5.3
Grade 5	6.6	7.7	6.3	6.7	6.6
Grade 6	6.4	8.2	7.0	6.8	7.2
Grade 7	9.5	11.8	9.4	9.2	10.5
Grade 8	10.5	13.0+	10.9	10.3	11.3

One noticeable score that has improved over the previous year is the math score in every grade. We believe the work that our students did this last summer in their respective online work coursework was a contributing factor. When reviewing the individual student results those who made the greatest effort over the summer scored the highest when returning to school-keep up the great work.

I'd like to thank all the parents that encouraged their children to participate in the summer math and read.

Sincerely,

Gary A. Abate, Principal