



Holly Area Schools

Excellence in Action!

Dear 3rd Grade Families,

It has been a great start to the 2019 - 2020 school year!

Third grade is such an exciting year for students, staff and parents. Students have moved into the upper elementary and are experiencing some big shifts in the levels of independence and expectations. This year will bring new learning opportunities and it will be exciting to see your students grow.

One of the firsts that each of our 3rd graders participate in is our state assessment, M-STEP, which will take place in May of this school year. The M-STEP is a standardized assessment which is designed to measure student progress in relation to the state academic standards. New this year, M-STEP performance will be used by the state to determine advancement to 4th grade. The Michigan Read By Grade 3 Law indicates that students must meet a minimum performance level in reading, which will be determined by the Michigan Department of Education after the conclusion of all testing.

We realize that this new law may create some anxiety for parents. As you know from communications over the past couple of years, Holly Area Schools is committed to increasing literacy at all levels. In fact, based on our own initial analysis using last year's M-STEP test scores, the impact of this new law on Holly 3rd grade students was less than 1%. While we expect the impact to very minimal, we do want to take this opportunity to communicate this update to you.

We care deeply about the success of our students and strive to provide high quality learning experiences in reading and all academic subjects, as well as art music, PE, and STEM. To further support each child, we have included resources to provide additional reading support at home. Continuing the learning process at home can be done in many ways. One of the most important things you can do as a parent is to model an excitement for reading and learning and provide them opportunities to read. Read everything from street signs, to the cereal box in the morning, to text on games, to a good old fashioned bedtime story. The stories are great, the engagement is key and the time together between parent and child is priceless!

As we progress throughout this year, you are sure to see great growth in your third grader. If at any time you have any questions or concerns, we encourage you to have an active and open line of communication with your child's teacher. Together, as a team, we can provide powerful learning opportunities for each child.

Here's to a great year for all of our Broncho families!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Herbstreit
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