



Every Child. Every Day. For a Better Tomorrow.

How To Talk To Your Child About Test Results

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools has been transitioning to new learning standards which mean more challenging work and a different kind of learning for our students. Last spring, for the first time, CMS students took new End-of-Year and End-of-Course assessments that reflect these standards. The tests were more challenging than the previous ones. They asked students to show what they know in richer and more complex ways that required higher-level thinking and reasoning skills. These skills will better prepare students for college and to compete for jobs in tomorrow's global workplace.

We encourage you to speak to your child about the new tests and his or her performance on them. These tips are provided to help guide your conversations.

How do I talk to my child about the test results?

The standards for learning and tests have changed

- Tell your child that the questions were harder and that adjusting to the new standards and this new way of learning may be difficult at first.
- Ask your child to share what was difficult about the tests, what was easy and what he/she may need help with.

Lower test scores do not mean your child didn't learn or didn't work hard last year

- Reassure your child that a score that is lower than in past years doesn't mean he/she isn't learning or working hard enough. These are different tests that measure important knowledge and skills that weren't a part of past tests.
- Remind your child that the tests are meant to help teachers support his/her learning.
- Explain that tests are not the only way teachers find out what students have learned and what areas they may need more help with.
- Reassure your child that you, teachers and school staff all believe in and will support him/her to ensure college and career success after graduation.
- Discuss with your child all the ways that he/she is preparing for the future.

The test scores are not the full picture of who your child is as a student

- Tell your child that the tests are only one piece of what he/she knows as a student and that the tests give teachers information about where support is needed.
- Explain that teachers also look at class work, effort and other factors to get a full picture of a student.
- Tell your child that when tests or schoolwork seems really hard, it is important to keep trying and not give up. Reassure your child that it is okay to struggle and you believe he/she can meet the challenge. Remind your child never to be afraid to ask teachers and other adults questions regarding his/her schoolwork, the tests and the new standards.
- Remind your child that by continuing to work hard and persist through difficulties, he/she will be prepared to be successful in school and life.

How can I learn more information in order to help my child?

The CMS website has resources to help you learn more about the new standards, including videos, parent guides to the Common Core State Standards and other resources. Go to www.cms.k12.nc.us and click on the Common Core link in the Spotlight section.