



Caldwell County Schools

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Dr. Steve Stone, Superintendent

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Dear Parents:

Starting this week, most sophomores in the Caldwell County Schools and across the state of North Carolina will take the PLAN assessment between Dec. 5 and Dec. 16, one part of the new national assessment program administered by ACT.

The PLAN assessment is a comprehensive guidance resource that helps students measure their current academic development, explore career/training options, and make preparations for the remaining years of high school and post-graduation years. Typically this assessment is taken before the ACT (college readiness test similar to SAT), which is slated for all North Carolina juniors in the spring of 2012. This is the first time that PLAN or ACT has been scheduled for statewide administration in North Carolina.

The PLAN assessment is divided into four sections of multiple choice questions in English (usage/mechanics and rhetorical skills), mathematics (Pre-Algebra/Algebra, Geometry), reading and science. The exam takes about two hours to complete and final composite scores range from 1 to 32.

PLAN is the first of three national assessments that will be required in school districts across the state. The ACT and Workkeys are the two other components in the triage of national assessments. The ACT will be given to all high school juniors on March 6, 2012. WorkKeys is a career- readiness tests that will be administered this school year only to high school seniors who are Career and Technical Education Concentrators (taking four credits in CTE courses with at least one Level II course).

As the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction continues its transition to a new state accountability model, more than half of the end-of-course tests were eliminated this school year. Effective 2011-12 school year the only courses requiring end of course tests are Algebra I, English I and Biology, compared to the English I, Algebra I, Algebra II, Biology, Physical Science, Civics & Economics, and US History tests administered in previous years. Just recently the state also announced the elimination of the grade 10 writing assessment that was used in conjunction with the English I end of course test to measure Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for high school English language arts. The State Board of Education voted last week to include *results* from the ACT and WorkKeys in the new school accountability model that will be implemented beginning in 2012-2013.

For more information, visit <http://www.act.org/> or www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/.