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Dr. R. Stephen Green

October 22, 2015

Dear DeKalb County Schools Community,

Toward the end of this semester, the Georgia Department of Education will release student scores for the first year of the new Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade and End-of Course assessments that took place last school year. Parents will receive a summary report of their child's performance on all components of the assessment and all schools will receive reports on the individual school's performance on these new assessments.

When designing the new assessment system, the Georgia Department of Education made special note to increase the rigor and challenge of the test items, including introducing norm-referenced items that compare Georgia student achievement to that of similar students across the nation. These state-wide enhancements were designed to better identify the learning needs of our students because the retired Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT) and End-of-Course Tests (EOCT) provided less detail on how proficient students were in mastering Georgia content standards. The CRCT and the Georgia Milestones do not provide similar information and cannot be compared to one another.

As we anticipate the release of Georgia Milestones results this semester, it is important to reflect on how our school district continues to improve upon how we provide our students with the most rewarding education possible. The changes with this new assessment system recognizes the need for our students to continue to be challenged academically and should help us better understand that in order for our students to compete in an ever-changing global economy, we must continue to raise expectations of their abilities while ensuring that we provide them all of the support they need to be successful. It is likely that the raised expectations of the Georgia Milestones may result in fewer students scoring at proficient or higher as of last school year, but all this means is that our students are being asked to reach to higher academic goals, and our school district plans to do everything possible to help our tremendous students achieve those goals.

The DeKalb County School District is completely devoted to providing our students with the most academically rewarding educational experience possible. The increasing percentage of DeKalb students who continue to make outstanding learning gains each year, the ongoing support from our fantastic parents and community, and the tireless dedication of our teachers and school leaders toward ensuring a rich educational environment for all of our students demonstrates the unwavering commitment of our school district community in helping our outstanding students succeed both in school and on the Georgia Milestones Assessments for years to come.

Warm regards,

Dr. R. Stephen Green
Superintendent