

*Aspire Parent Presentation Notes  
October 13th and 14th, 2014  
Berry Middle School*

- ❖ ARMT vs. ASPIRE
  - Alabama Reading and Math Test (ARMT)
    - Last administered in spring of 2013, a basic skills test (minimum proficiency),
    - Four score levels: 1, 2, 3, or 4
  - ACT ASPIRE
    - First administered in spring of 2014, grades 3-8, A college / career readiness test (aligned with ACT)
    - Three score levels: Needs Support, Close, or Ready
  
- ❖ A Cautionary Note....
  - These test scores are important indicators of student performance, but they are not the ONLY indicators. A test is a snapshot of one day’s performance.
  - Students take other assessments, some formal and some informal, which can paint a more complete picture of how a child is performing.
  - Work with your child’s teacher to understand the larger picture of your child’s progress.
  
- ❖ How does Berry Use Data?
  - We put together “snapshots” to paint the most accurate picture possible.
    - Student daily performance (classroom)
    - Globalscholar scores (formative math and reading)
    - ASPIRE scores
    - Report card / summative grades
  - Teachers use these pieces of student data to make decisions regarding classroom instruction.
  
- ❖ Understanding the Student Report (See “Glossary of Terms”)
  - There are three primary sections: English, Math, and Reading.
  - Each area is broken down into skill specific areas.
  - Page 3 features area titled “Progress with Text Complexity”
  
- ❖ What are the benchmarks (goals) for each subject area proficiency?

<i>Grade Level</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>Math</i>	<i>Reading</i>
<b>5</b>	419	418	420
<b>6</b>	420	420	421
<b>7</b>	421	422	423
<b>8</b>	422	425	424

- ❖ What strengths and weaknesses may these scores indicate?
  - Scaled scores are “critierion-referenced” – meaning they are based upon a student’s performance compared against a predetermined set of standards (ACT Aspire).
  - These ACT standards are correlated to the Alabama Course of Study Standards.
  - Our teachers utilize these standards when planning, instructing, and assessing our students.

- ❖ How do these scores correlate to report card grades?
  - ASPIRE measures a student’s mastery of content standards (scaled score).
  - There exists a ***correlation*** between a student’s scaled score and their performance in class.
  - It is important to note that while our formative (quizzes) and summative (tests) assessments are aligned to standards, there are ***other skills and activities*** specific to middle school which may impact their report card grades.
  - What are the ***other middle school specific skills or activities*** which may impact their grades on report cards?
    - Organizational skills, Study habits, Homework, Class participation, Cooperative learning, Remediation / Reassessments, Creation of project or evidence-based assessments
  - These skills are not necessarily measured within ACT ASPIRE.
  
- ❖ What can I do to help my child improve in their weak areas?
  - English
    - Encourage your child to read, read, read.
    - Give your child opportunities to “practice” the ACT format (passage, higher order thinking questions).
    - Guide the child to not only find the best answer, but ***support their answer with evidence*** from the text.
    - Help them maintain a problem-solving mindset – the answers won’t necessarily be “right there” answers.
  - Math
    - Practice math fluency. Speed matters.
    - Practice ***problem-solving***, not just finding the “right answer”.
    - Model for them how to use common sense to know if an answer is not even in the ballpark.
    - Provide practice using math literacy skills.
    - Encourage them to stick with it.
    - Practice, practice, practice.
  - Reading
    - Encourage your child to read, read, read.
    - Work to increase your child’s reading “stamina.”
    - Encourage your child to TALK about what they are reading.
    - Guide and model for your child how to think critically about what they are reading.
    - Help them maintain a problem-solving mindset – the answers won’t necessarily be “right there” answers.
  - Science (COMING SOON, 2015!!)
    - Take advantage of opportunities for your child to practice reading and ***interpreting*** charts, graphs, and tables.
    - Focus on “What does this data tell us? What conclusions can we draw from this chart?”
    - Practice reading science experiments – focus on experimental design.
    - Help them maintain a problem-solving mindset – the answers won’t necessarily be “right there” answers.
  
- ❖ What is next?
  - The ACT Aspire will be administered again in the spring of 2015 to grades 3 – 8. In the spring of 2016, grades 3 – 10 will be tested.
  - Science will be added in 2015 for grades 3-8.
  - Student scores will track from year to year on each student’s report so that parents can see how the scores are growing over time.
  - If you have concerns, please talk with your child’s teacher, counselor, or principal.

***ASPIRE Glossary of Terms***

1. **Student Score**: The level or category of the student’s current achievement with the accompanying numerical scale s

2. Student Score Point: Where the student's scale score places them on this visual range compared to the national average score point
3. Predicted Pathway: This cone predicts where this student could be over the next two years with a high and low estimated range
4. 'Ready' Region: The student is on trajectory to be college / career ready in this area if they scored at or above readiness benchmark
5. 'Close' Region: Scores in this range below but near the readiness benchmark. With a little more effort, students should be able to reach the Ready region next time.
6. 'Support' Region: The student will need extra support in this area to reach the readiness benchmark. Some may already be receiving such support.
7. Reporting Categories: These are the sub-parts of the tested area (in this case, Reading). The sub-parts represent clusters of college and career ready standards.
8. Sub-part Score: For each reporting category, this shows the actual number of points earned out of the points possible along with a percentage of correct responses.
9. Visual Bar Graph: This is a visual representation of the percent correct scored in each reporting category
10. ACT Readiness Range: These smaller bars represent the percentage necessary for a student to be considered on trajectory for college / career readiness in each reporting category.
11. Student Tip: For the lowest scoring reporting category, a tip is offered to help the student improve in this area.
12. National Percentile Rank: This bar graph represents where this student's score in each major area ranked in terms of total number of students in the nation who took the ACT Aspire in the spring of 2014.
13. Progress With Text Complexity: Text complexity is a detailed topic, but basically a 'Yes' in this area means that a student is most likely ready to tackle the more difficult stories and texts they will encounter the next school year. A 'No' in this area usually means that a student is struggling to justify conclusions with evidence cited from the story that was read. Students are required to write about the stories they read, and a good example of a student who is citing evidence would be the following: "Goldilocks was a sleepy girl. I know this because she fell asleep in the story on Baby Bear's bed."
14. Suggested Books: Based on each student's individual level, some book titles are suggested that could be helpful for this student. These are just suggestions, and your child's teacher can offer other appropriate titles.