

METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT of NEW DURHAM TOWNSHIP

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February 1, 2018

Dear Families,

January and February are prime instructional months (weather permitting!) We are busy preparing students for upcoming assessments. As you know, students in grades 3-8 will be taking the application portion of ISTEP at the end of February. Application means that they will be asked to write, both short answer and essay, and also show their work in math. The test is online so we also must practice keyboarding skills, particularly for our elementary students. We never advocate teaching to the test. However, we want to assure that the content tested is taught. There are also test taking strategies that we share with students so they can perform their best. We do ask that you make sure that they come to school each day of the testing window, well rested, and with a good breakfast.

As I walk school buildings and visit classrooms, I am so impressed with the quality of teaching and the focus of students. Instructional time is maximized and students are on task. We try to keep interruptions to a minimum so teachers can focus on teaching and kids on learning.

Congratulations to Science Olympiad, DECA, and all students who participated in winter academic extracurriculars. February begins the sectional tournament for our Girls' basketball team. Being a first time spectator to the PCC tournament was such a great experience for me! I have never seen such positive school spirit from students and fans. It was so nice to see the Blackhawk Pride for both our teams.

Families have asked about the 2018-2019 calendar. We do have a committee and met on Monday to discuss dates. Since we share students with LaPorte, Michigan City, and South Central, we do coordinate our calendars. It is my hope that we will be able to present the calendar for School Board approval at the February 14, 2018 meeting and will post it immediately following.

I do realize that weather delays and/or cancellations can be problematic for families. I appreciate your flexibility as we navigate this challenging winter. On that note, **February 16, 2018 will be a snow make up day** for the cancellation on Friday, January 12th. It will be a regular school day. Hopefully the weather will cooperate this month!

Lynn Johnson, Ed. S.
Interim Superintendent