

A way of life

High Stakes testing has become a way of life in all schools. Parents and students have felt the added pressure to meet standards. Likewise, teachers and principals feel the stress to improve scores. Learning to place it all in perspective is a daunting task, but at SES we have been active to reduce student stress and to help each child realize his/her potential.

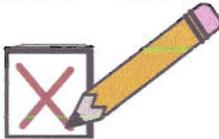
Its true that our DoDDS kids are taking more tests than many of their state side counterparts. Why do DoDDS students seem to be taking more tests? The Community Strategic Plan for DoDEA developed by stakeholder groups focuses specifically on achievement and assessments to measure student progress toward system goals.

Testing this year will not be quite as extensive as last year. It will consist of the following:

March 10-14 – Terranova reading, Language-Arts, math, Social Studies and Science – 3rd grade through 5th grade

April – On-line testing Science – 5th Grade

April – On-line testing Social Science – 3rd Grade



HOW CAN PARENTS HELP CHILDREN IMPROVE TEST SCORES?

Many parents are concerned about helping their children become “test wise,” that is, to understand and apply test-taking skills. As a parent you can support your children by telling them:

- *To listen carefully to all directions. Pay attention during the sample questions. Ask for clarification if you still don't understand.*
- *That much of the TerraNova is multiple-choice. Read all answer choices before choosing your answer.*
- *If you are unsure of an answer, eliminate any choices you know are wrong, and then choose from those that are remaining.*
- *To not spend too much time on any one question. Skip the difficult questions, and remember to come back to them and mark an answer later.*

- *That when you are asked to write your answers, write in complete sentences and tell all you know about the question.*
- *If there is a story to read, check the questions first and then read the story.*
- *To not rush through the test. Use your “middle” speed.*
- *To try to answer every question before the time limit.*

Parents can also encourage their children to:

- * *Get plenty of rest the nights before testing*
- * *Set their alarm so they won't be rushed in the morning*
- * *Eat a healthy breakfast*
- * *Get to school on time*
- * *Do their best*

AFTER TESTING EACH DAY:

Communicate with your children after school each day. Listen to their frustrations, worries and concerns. Remind them that no one is perfect and they should feel satisfied if they gave their best. Let them know that you will never give up on them regardless of the results! Consider relaxing activities for evening hours during test week. Plan for fun activities that are light and relaxing. Be sure to guarantee laughter and an early bed hour.

Raise **interest** ↑ and reduce **anxiety** ↓! This is exactly what many of our teachers attempt to do before testing begins. There are some students however who may need to have their motivation raised.

Some ways to reduce test tension:

1. Imagery – quiet thoughts of a safe place that is worry-free
2. Deep Breathing
3. Muscle Relaxation
4. Verbalizing fears to a parent
5. Art activities, exercise, hobbies, etc.



Unless emergencies arise, never schedule appointments (medical, dental, etc.) during the morning hours of test week. Routine and “rhythm” are important to test takers.

Try these faculty "approved" Web Sites for more ideas to help children:

<http://jc-schools.net/terranova-res.htm>

<http://jc-schools.net/tutorials/test-strategies.ppt>

<http://www.dodea.edu/instruction/support/accountability/assessment2.htm>

<http://electron-net.eztest.eppg.com/ISBE>

http://www.charliefrench.com/test_tips.htm

<http://web.mit.edu/arc/learning/modules/test/>

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/instructor/testyourattitude.htm>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/>

For math practice try these:

www.aplusmath.com

www.primarygames.com

www.apples4theteacher.com

www.mathfactcafe.com

www.allmath.com

www.funbrain.com

www.mathplayground.com

www.songsforlearning.com

www.multiplication.com