

**Regional School District No. 14**  
**Towns of Bethlehem and Woodbury**  
**News from Our Schools**



**What is the Purpose of CMT and CAPT?**

February 19, 2010

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Beginning on Monday, March 1, 2010, school districts throughout Connecticut, including Region 14, will begin to administer the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) to all students. Testing will continue through the middle of the month with no more than two tests being administered on any given day. Since the fall of 1985, schools throughout Connecticut have administered the CMT to measure the achievement and progress of Connecticut students in grades 4, 6, and 8. Students are measured on what are considered to be essential mathematics, reading, and writing skills. The test has been revised and updated a number of times since it was originally introduced over twenty years ago. The fourth generation of the CMT is the most recent version. Beginning in the spring of 2006, the CMT is now administered annually to all students in grades 3-8 inclusive.

In 1995, the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) was introduced for all of Connecticut's tenth grade students. CAPT is the high school version of the CMT and, like the CMT allows us to closely monitor the academic performance of our students. Currently there are four areas assessed on the CAPT test. They are: Mathematics, Reading across the Disciplines (Reading for Information and Response to Literature), Writing across the Disciplines (Interdisciplinary Writing and Editing and Revising), and Science. Both the Connecticut Mastery Test and the Connecticut Academic Performance Test are criterion referenced tests, suggesting that for each test, at each grade level, there is a targeted level of performance that all students are expected to reach. Students are not compared to one another as a result of their performance on the CMT or CAPT; rather, they are compared to an established standard. This standard has been set by the Connecticut State Department of Education.

Typically, we receive the test results during the summer. The information we receive is extremely beneficial as it spells out the strengths and weaknesses for each student, for each class of students, and for each grade level of students in the district. Because similar concepts are measured every year, it allows us to chart student progress over time. We can assess how effectively the corrective measures we put in place are addressing a particular weakness. As we review the test results by class or grade level, patterns tend to surface and we can get an idea of just how effectively our curriculum is preparing students for this high stakes test. For example, last year's third grade showed a decline in reading. Using this information, we then went back to determine where our curriculum and instruction needed to be improved and those changes were put in place this year. At the same time, we saw improvements in reading and math in grades 4, 5, 6, and 8 last year. Grades 6 and 8 also showed gains in writing.

As we prepare to begin the CMT and the CAPT it would be most helpful if you would emphasize with your child the importance of doing his/her best throughout the testing. That way, they will be giving us a way of seeing just how well we are preparing them daily in our classrooms throughout the district.

Sincerely,  
*Robert D. Cronin, Ph.D.*  
Robert D. Cronin, Ph.D.

