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Dear Parent or Guardian:

In the spring of 2015, your child took the new Kansas State Mathematics and English/Language Arts (ELA) Assessments. Students in grades 3-8 and 10 participated in the initial administration of these new assessments.

The new assessments are based on the Kansas College and Career Ready Standards which increased rigor and elevated standards to better prepare today's students for success after high school. Auburn-Washburn embraced this change and adopted new curriculum that combines new academic expectations and opportunities to build critical problem solving skills. You may have seen this reflected in your child's work.

Our students continue to learn and perform, but with the standards being raised, their baseline results this first year may not look as accomplished as their performance on previous state assessments. As Dr. Randy Watson, Kansas Commissioner of Education put it, *"Your student may have commented that last year's assessment was more difficult than in previous years and they would be right. Kansas adopted more rigorous academic standards and last year's assessment was the first time students were asked to demonstrate their mastery of skills such as critical thinking. When you receive your student's scores...it is important to remember they cannot be compared to your student's performance in previous years. Doing so would be like comparing apples to oranges-there is simply no comparison."*

There are four performance levels for this assessment rather than five that we have seen in the past. Students in Levels 2, 3, and 4 are all described as meeting or exceeding grade level expectations while Levels 3 and 4 are considered being on track for college and career readiness. For more details on how to read your child's report, a link to an Interpretation Guide provided by the Kansas State Department of Education is available on the district web site: usd437.net.

As teachers and students spend more time with our new curriculum, we are confident our students will attain levels of performance that signify college and career readiness. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher or principal if you have any questions.

Thank you for your continued support of your child's education!

Dr. Scott McWilliams
Superintendent of Schools

