



Dr. Richard Evans
Assistant Superintendent for
Curriculum & Instruction

50 Cypress Drive
Glenville, NY 12302
www.bhbl.org

revans@bhbl.org
Voice: (518) 399-9141 ext.85015
Fax: (518) 399-1882

Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Central Schools

Ensuring
opportunities
for learning,
personal growth
and social
responsibility.

April 10, 2013

Dear parents,

Beginning next week, students in grades 3-8 will be taking state exams in English Language Arts (ELA) and math. Later this spring, fourth and eighth graders will also take exams in science.

This is the first year that the ELA and math exams will be based on the new Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), which were designed to build the knowledge and skills students need at each grade level to achieve college and career readiness. These tests will be challenging because the learning standards are more rigorous and emphasize stronger critical thinking and communication skills.

Our teachers, with the help of administrators and support staff, have been working hard all year to align the way they teach with the higher expectations inherent in these new standards, and in turn, to help prepare students for these exams.

State Education Commissioner John B. King, Jr., has said that we should expect assessment scores to drop this year, based on the experience of other states implementing the Common Core. While this may be the case, I am confident that at BH-BL we have done our best to prepare students for these exams. Students respond to the emotions of the adults around them, so all of us — both teachers and parents — will have an impact on how the testing experience feels for students. We want the experience to be as stress-free as possible for our students and are making efforts to convey the message, “Just do your best and we’ll be proud of you!”

Please encourage your child to have a positive attitude and simply to do her or his best on exam day. You can also help by ensuring that your child has a good night’s sleep and eats a healthy breakfast on the morning of the exams. Attached you’ll find additional test-taking tips and resources for helping you prepare your child.

Please mark your calendars for the following testing dates:

- **Tuesday, April 16-Thursday, April 18:** Grades 3-8 ELA Exam
(Make-up dates: April 19-23)
- **Wednesday, April 24-Friday, April 26:** Grades 3-8 Mathematics Exam
(Make-up dates: April 29-May 1)
- **May 22-23 and June 3:** Grades 4 & 8 Science Performance & Written Exams

If you would like to learn more about the CCLS, visit the BH-BL website’s Understanding the Common Core page at <http://www.bhbl.org/District/Academics/commoncore.htm> This page provides videos and links to many valuable materials for parents and families.

Thank you for your continued support as we navigate through these changes together and make the testing experience as positive as possible for our students.

Sincerely,

Rick Evans
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction

