

## **Modifications to the Wicomico County Public Schools**

### **2013-2014 Benchmark Assessment Program**

As you may have already heard, Wicomico County Public Schools have begun the transition to a new curriculum. The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) initiative is a state-led process to develop common standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics for grades K-12 which are internationally benchmarked and aligned to standards related to college and career readiness. As a result, we have been working over the last three years to revise our curriculum documents and benchmark assessments to align with the CCSS.

With the change in curriculum, we have also modified our district-created benchmarks which are designed to support instruction and to monitor students' progress on the CCSS. These benchmark assessments will help teachers, administrators, parents and students understand how students are progressing toward meeting year-end standards.

The following changes are being implemented for the 2013-2014 school year:

- Pre-K and Kindergarten will still administer benchmarks four times per year for reading and mathematics.

#### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS:**

- Students in grades 1-5 will take one Interim Benchmark Assessment in January 2014.
- Students in grades 6 – 8 will take two Benchmark Assessments. These benchmarks will be administered in September 2013 and February 2014.
- Students enrolled in English 9 and English 10 will continue to take benchmarks aligned to English HSA. They will be administered during scheduled exam times (January & June).
- Students in grades 9-12 will take a Literary Analysis Diagnostic Writing Task in September and a Literary Analysis Summative Writing Task in March.

#### **MATHEMATICS:**

- Students in grade 1 will take three benchmarks during the year. These benchmarks will be administered in November 2013, January 2014 and May 2014.
- Students in grade 2 will take four benchmarks during the year. These benchmarks will be administered in September 2013, November 2013, January 2014 and May 2014.
- Students in grades 3-8 will take one Benchmark Assessment in January 2014.
- Students enrolled in high school Geometry will take one Interim Benchmark Assessment in January 2014.
- Students enrolled in an Algebra course will also continue to take HSA aligned benchmarks four times per year.

If you have any questions about the administration of these benchmarks please contact your child's teacher.