

# The Beacon: Family Edition

:To give light to, as a beacon; to light up; to illumine.



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## Testing: Preparing for Next Generation Testing

Testing has been in the news many times over the past few years. This coverage has centered on the changes not only in testing but also in curriculum expectations and standards.

As a parent you can keep up with these changes by visiting The Indiana Department of Education Website: [www.doe.in.gov](http://www.doe.in.gov)

In particular, parents can access the standards students are expected address by grade and content. Parents can view released assessment questions and see blueprints for the tests their children will take by visiting [www.doe.in.gov/assessment](http://www.doe.in.gov/assessment).

All of these requirements have also brought about changes in instruction in our classrooms. In fact some parents may be wondering what on earth is going on

when they hear their child talk about solving a math problem in two ways or watching students read and manipulate multiple texts at one time. In addition to learning the concepts, these activities are designed to prepare students for the types of questions and tasks students will face on standardized tests. For example, would you be surprised to learn that in math, students should be not introduced to the standard algorithm for division until Grade 6? Check out these standard statements:

*6.C.1: Divide multi-digit whole numbers fluently using a standard algorithmic approach*

*5.C.2: Find whole-number quotients and remainders with up to four-digit dividends and two-digit divisors, using strategies based on place value, the properties of operations, and/or the relation-*

*ship between multiplication and division. Describe the strategy and explain the reasoning used.*

This shift in math, in particular, is meant to stress better foundational understandings of number sense, number relationships and the concepts of math behind many of the “tricks” we, as parents, may have learned to solve math problems.

I encourage you, as a parent, to visit the listed sites to view the types of tasks expected to be presented to students and to think about how you can help your child grow to reach their potential. Google the following sites to access sample questions/tasks:

- PARCC
- Smarter Balanced
- SAT/ACT

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## Seymour Schools Reunification Protocol

Circumstances may occur that require parents to pick up students in a formalized, controlled release. Severe weather, HAZMAT, or some other crisis may not allow our normal release plan to be executed. In this case Seymour Schools will activate the *Reunification Plan*.

Things you need to know as an SCSC staff member:

- 1) Your school has put together a reunification team in recent weeks. As a teacher, you will need to stay with your class and make sure everyone is accounted for.
- 2) Second semester we will practice getting the students to the reunification point. More information will come from your principal on organization of this process.
- 3) SCSC has many “places” organized for reunification, depending on the crisis. Only move to the reunification point when directed by district administration, building administration, or police.
- 4) For safety purposes, it is important that you keep our reunification plans confidential.
- 5) The reunification process can be tedious, time-consuming, and frustrating, but after keeping our students and staff safe, it is the most important part of a crisis.

Parents will be receiving the information linked at this site: <http://tinyurl.com/zgje35g>

## FEDERAL and STATE PROGRAMS

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Seymour Community School Corporation participates in Federal and State programs to provide additional educational opportunities for our students. Federal and State funds for these programs are used to provide materials, additional teachers or instructional assistants as well as professional development for teachers.

Title I is a Federal program that helps ensure all children meet challenging state academic standards.  
 Title III is a Federal program and Non English Speaking is a State program that ensure English learners achieve English proficiency.  
 High Ability is a state funded program that helps identify and serve High Ability students.

### Check out the latest updates in each program!

#### Title I

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Jackson, Redding and Brown Elementary Schools are Title I schools. We are proud to be in our 2<sup>nd</sup> year of a schoolwide program. A schoolwide program is designed to improve the instructional practice of the entire school. All students in a school with a schoolwide program benefit from Title I. Every family is invited to attend Title I parent events. Check your school's calendar for the next event.

**"A JOURNEY  
 OF A  
 THOUSAND  
 MILES BEGINS  
 WITH A SINGLE  
 STEP."  
 -LAO TZU**

#### High Ability

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Every student in grades K, 2, 5 & 8 participate in the Cognitive Abilities Testing (CogAT). The CogAT is the initial screening tool used in our High Ability screening process. We also use ability tests and rating scales to provide additional information about a student's academic needs.

You can view the entire identification process for High Ability students at:

<http://tinyurl.com/SCSCHighAbilityProgram>

The identification process concludes in the Spring and parents are notified by mail if their child shows potential for High Ability.

#### English Learners

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New this year! Seymour Community Schools is proud to provide English Language services at all Elementary schools. Starting with this year's Kindergarten class, all English Learners will attend their home school. We have language teachers at every building and are excited to expand our services.

All level 1-4 English learners participate in the WIDA Access assessment. The WIDA Access is a required language proficiency assessment. English learners will be participating in the WIDA Access January 16-27, 2017



“How do we make their LAST day of High School look like their FIRST day after?” -Teresa Grossi

**December 1, 2016 Special Education Count Day**

Annually, the district is required to capture the number of special education students who are serviced in the district. December 1st, is considered the snapshot date for determining which children are being serviced through special education and the eligibility classification. The number of students counted December 1, 2016 was 907. The process continues throughout the year with all referrals addressed and students evaluated as determined appropriate, but the state must have a snapshot date to identify this population of students. We continue to grow in servicing our students with special needs.

Totals	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total Growth
Total Dec. 1 Count	612	685	765	858	907	+ 295

**FY 2017 Special Education Part B Grant Highlights**

- Contracted service with Hands In Autism for a Collaboration/Professional Development held at 3 Sites this year: Jackson Elementary Preschool & SMS Life Skills Classroom, Redding BEST Program, each month for the 2016-2017 School Year. These 3 sites will become Demonstration sites for our district and guests. Hands will also provide 2 days per month District Consultation to assist with our most challenging behavioral needs.
- DSI Post-Secondary Transition Services Contract with DSI for our High School Academy students for the 2016-2017 School year.
- Special Education Classroom Supplies
- Appropriate Share for Non-Public Schools in our District.
- Professional Development to support Autism, Behavior, updated Legal information, PATINS technology training, and Early Childhood Development.



Seymour Schools is in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of partnership with Project Success. Life Skills staff are continuing Curriculum training with Meredith Keedy-Merk of Project Success. Professional Development has also been held with Preschool & Seymour High School Academy Teachers.

Project SUCCESS is a resource center that supports higher academic achievement for students with disabilities. We are building local capacity to ensure that stu-

dents with significant cognitive disabilities achieve increasingly higher academic outcomes and leave high school ready for post-secondary options.

Project SUCCESS is part of the Indiana Resource Network and strives to support teams of teachers and administrators in Indiana as they work to implement academic standards into instruction for students with disabilities. Project SUCCESS provides current, research-based resources related to content standards, instructional design, and student outcomes and is specifically designed to meet the

needs of students with disabilities.

**Did you know that there are now standards for our students taking the Alternate Assessment (Non-Diploma Track students) that tie in with the Indiana Academic Standards?** These are called **Content Connectors**.

For more information on Content Connectors & Project Success please visit:

<http://www.projectsucceedindiana.com/>

Phone: 812-522-3340

**Seymour Schools Special Education Contact Information**

For more information about special education programming, please visit our website at:

**WE'RE ON THE WEB:**

**WWW.SCSC.K12.IN.US**

<http://tinyurl.com/jq9kly7>

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## 1:1 Computing Environments and Textbooks Fees

Seymour Community School Corporation has embraced a 1:1 computing environment in Grades 5-12. This means that a Chromebook has been designated to each student. This Chromebook goes back and forth between home and school. Teachers use digital platforms and resources to present curriculum. Students use Chromebooks to access assignments and facilitate learning.

Chromebooks are replacing traditional textbook adoption and parents will

soon see fees for devices replace textbook fees. This does not mean that Seymour Schools is abandoning all printed materials. We will still have books in our library. We still have sets of textbooks available for student use. In the High School, for some courses texts will be required as part of Advanced Placement or Dual Credit Courses.

This transition will mean many things for not only school life but home life as well. A couple of things to consider:

Seymour Community School Corporation provides filtering for the devices provided to students. This filtering is in place both during and after school hours. Filters are in place to help shield students from improper use and access. But no filter is fool-proof. As we tell our teachers, the best filter is the adult in the room.

When devices are at home, be sure you monitor use. It is everyone's job to keep our students safe.

Another thing to consider in the 1:1 transition is the tool itself. Parents will not see a device taken away from a student as a disciplinary action. Just as in the past, when a student misused a textbook, we did not ban them from the book. The same applies for the device. The Chromebook provides access to the curriculum and all students have a right to that access. That does not mean the school does not have options should a student use their Chromebook inappropriately. Schools can restrict use to only those sites/tools students need at a minimum to access curriculum and complete assignments.

Seymour Schools' goal is to keep costs down for fees and to provide our students with viable curriculum, appropriate access, and state of the art equipment.



Looking to the Future