

# What You Need to Know:



## **AN OVERVIEW OF ACADEMIC TESTING**

**SUE CLINE  
EXTENDED LEARNING PROGRAM  
JOHNSTON HIGH SCHOOL**

# What can “tests” tell us?



- What the student knows/can do today under these conditions.
- How this student’s single performance compares to other children his/her age.
- How this student’s single performance compares to previous performances.

# What can “tests” NOT tell us?



- **Is the child...**
  - motivated to learn? motivated to take tests?
- **What other areas of talent...**
  - does s/he possess? want to pursue?
- **Is s/he well-rounded academically, emotionally and socially?**
- **Is the student happy at school?**

## How does JCSD use “tests”?



- To analyze effectiveness of instruction and materials over the whole district.
- To report JCSD performance to Department of Education.
- To analyze/evaluate appropriate programming for individual students, as part of a comprehensive profile of data.

# Elementary Tests



- **Required**

- Iowa Assessments (gr. 2+)
- Measures and Academic Progress (MAP)  
(gr. 3+)

Selected students: CogAT (gr. 2,4 or 7)

# Secondary Tests



- **Required exams: IA and MAP**
- **Additional exams available**
- **PLAN/ACT**
- **PSAT/SAT**
- **AP Exams**

# Iowa Assessments



- Standard scores /percentiles reported
- Used to report to State about school's yearly progress and to measure individual student growth
- Often are not good measures of ELP potential/achievement due to “hitting the ceiling”

# MAP



- Administered spring and fall
- Computer administration, so a leveled test
- Theoretically more accurate for students, less “hitting the ceiling”



## MAPs, cont' d



- Reported as raw scores (RIT) and percentile
- Also labeled Non Proficient/Proficient/Advanced.
- Used to report to State about student performance
- Students often have preference for MAP or IA. Many do not perform at exactly the same level on both.

# Cognitive Abilities Test



- **Used for recommended students gr 2, 4 or 7**
- **Includes verbal, math and nonverbal reasoning**
- **Reported as standard score**
- **Can help identify relative need for services amongst those who have “hit the ceiling” on IA/MAP**

# PLAN (pre-ACT)



- Available Sophomore year
- Includes shortened, adapted ACT plus a career interest component
- Designed to assist in planning for college
- Subject areas: reading comprehension, math, science, English skills
- Reported as raw score out of 32

# PSAT (pre-SAT)



- Available Junior year
- Contains shortened, adapted SAT exam
- Subject areas: math, reading comprehension, English skills
- Gateway to the National Merit Scholarship Program

# ACT



- Achievement test designed to predict college success
- Usually taken as a junior, but may be recommended for 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> as a baseline.
- Reported as raw score out of 36
- Subject areas: math, science, reading comprehension, English skills
- Optional writing component

# SAT



- Usually taken junior or senior year, but could be taken earlier.
- Subject areas: math, reading comprehension, English
- Required writing section
- Reported as raw score out of 1600, divided between math (800) and verbal (800).
- Writing score is separate

# AP Exams



- Possible credit awarded by colleges.
- Measures mastery of designated curriculum for each course
- College level classes
- 12 AP courses at HS, gr. 10 – 12.
- Students may take exam without taking course
- Several JHS courses offer dual credit with DMACC, so may not need exam

# Optional exams administered at JHS



- **PLAN/PSAT yearly in October**
- **ACT five times a year (Oct, Dec, Feb, April, June)**
- **SAT yearly in October**
- **AP exams yearly in May**



## Other Options



- **Belin/Blank Center in Iowa City offers Explore (gr. 4-6), ACT and SAT for grades 7+ through the BESTS program.**
- **SAT may be available at other sites in the metro. Check the website [collegeboard.com](http://collegeboard.com)**

# BESTS



- Belin/Blank program offering above-level testing to students grades 3-9
- Designed to better estimate potential and achievement for students who have “hit the ceiling”
- Enables access to Belin/Blank summer programs and mailing list
- Includes Explore, ACT and SAT

# Test Publishers



- **Iowa Assessments and CogAT: created University of Iowa College of Education, Iowa City, IA.**
- **MAP : Northwest Evaluation Association, Portland, OR.**
- **PSAT, SAT and AP Exams: Education Testing Services /College Board. Regional office Chicago, IL.**
- **PLAN and ACT: ACT.org, Iowa City, IA.**

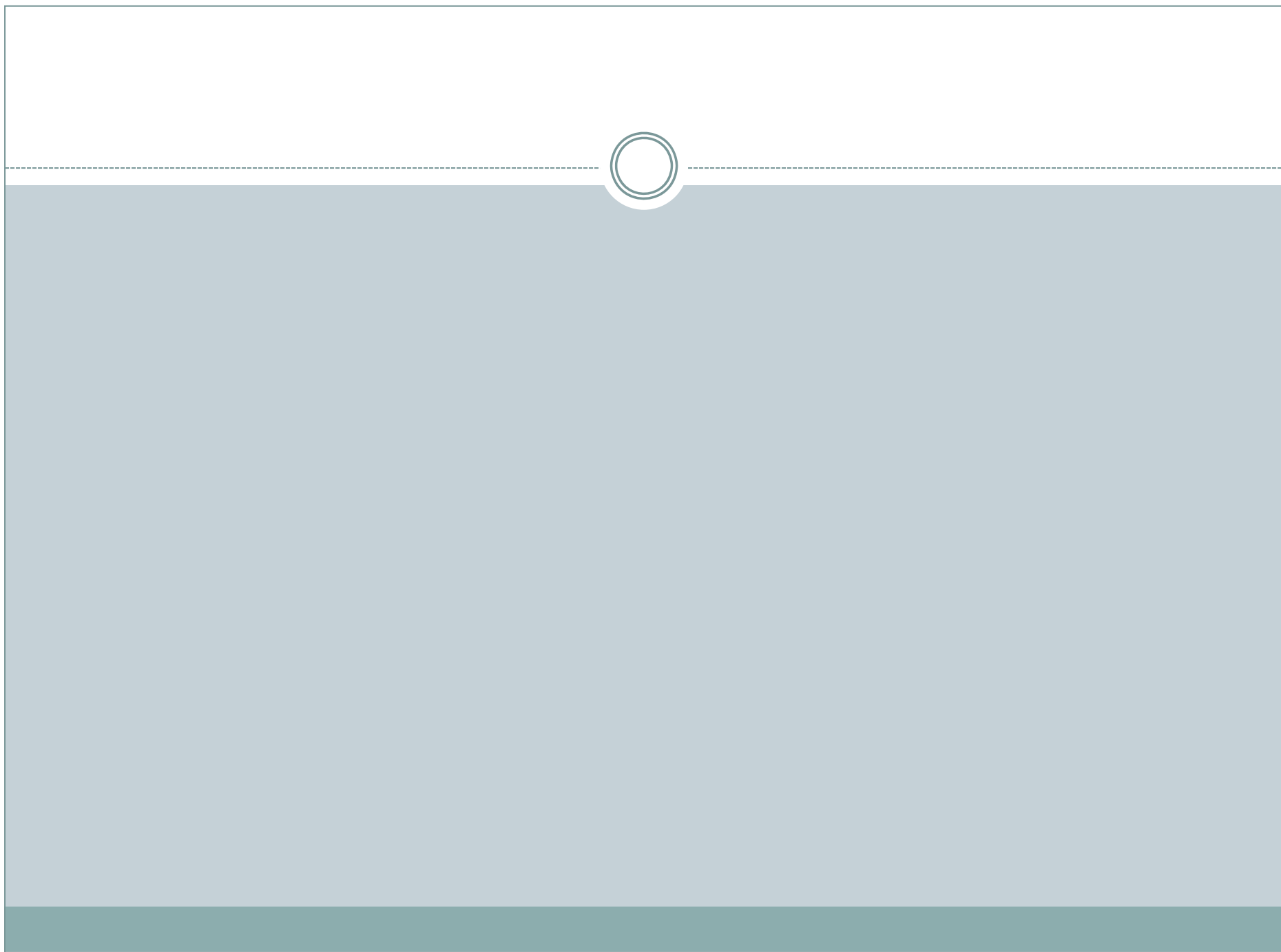
# Questions?



# Registration



- PLAN, PSAT and AP exams register through the HS guidance office.
- ACT registers through mail or online
- SAT registers online
- BESTS/EXPLORE: consult website  
[www.education/uiowa.edu/belinblank](http://www.education/uiowa.edu/belinblank)



# When In Doubt



- Call or email an ELP teacher
- Call the high school guidance office
- Check websites
  - SAT [collegeboard.com](http://collegeboard.com)
  - ACT [act.org](http://act.org)