



Kankakee Valley School Corporation

12021 N 550 W

PO Box 278

Wheatfield, Indiana 46392-0278

Telephone: 219-987-4711

Fax: 219-987-4710

Mission statement:

*Our mission is to guide students
to become informed, engaged
citizens, and curious, lifelong
learners.*

September 9, 2019

Dear Parents/Guardians and Stakeholders of the Kankakee Valley Community,

Last week, the Indiana Department of Education released the results of the ILEARN assessments. This new assessment is another version of standardized testing, like the former ISTEP+. What we know now is that the results of this new assessment indicate lower achievement levels throughout the state of Indiana and at Kankakee Valley School Corporation. As schools move from one assessment to another, a drop in scores is to be expected. However, we know that this is not reflective of the efforts and dedication of our students and staff. Leaders at the state level, including Gov. Eric Holcomb, are calling on legislators to hold school districts harmless and pause intervention efforts based on the results of the 2019 ILEARN assessment. This would ensure that scores will not impact teacher evaluations and letter grades under the state's accountability system.

Kankakee Valley School Corporation looks beyond the single snapshot of learning that ILEARN provides and gathers data on student learning and growth from multiple sources throughout the school year. As a corporation, we utilize the NWEA assessment to measure how much students grow academically from fall to winter and finally to spring. This allows our teachers the opportunity to make instructional adjustments and provide focused interventions in a timely manner. Teacher teams work in professional learning communities where they review the results of common assessments given during and after units of instruction. Again, this allows for adjustment of instruction and quick intervention. While we will continue to disaggregate ILEARN data and look to improve, Kankakee Valley Schools will continue to focus on overall student growth.

Kankakee Valley School Corporation is in support of the proposed pause in utilization of the ILEARN results on teacher evaluations and school letter grades. We believe that these test scores do not reflect the high levels of learning happening at our schools. Our corporation joins many others around the state calling on our governor and legislators to take a hard look at the practice of using standardized tests to evaluate our students, teachers and schools. There are far better ways to evaluate the learning and growth of the whole student. As a state, we have the opportunity to step back and look for more appropriate and effective approaches to determining the effectiveness of our teachers and schools, as well as the growth of our students. Let us start by asking our teachers. Including the teachers in the conversations is key!

Thank you to the members of our community for supporting our students, teachers and schools. Through all of the politics behind statewide standardized testing, please rest assured that Kankakee Valley School Corporation will continue to focus on our students and preparing them for the future that lies ahead.

With Kougars pride,

Don Street
Superintendent

Allisa Schnick
Assistant Superintendent