Dear Parent(s) and/or Guardian(s),

We have made it to Spring and with Spring comes testing for our 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th Grade Scholars. Beginning on April 15, we will be administering the M-STEP test at Cooke.

The M-STEP is a 21st Century online test designed to gauge how well students are mastering state standards. These standards, have been developed for educators by educators and broadly outline what students should know and be able to do, in order to be prepared to enter the workplace, career education training, and/or college. M-STEP results, when combined with classroom work, report cards, and other tools, offer a comprehensive view of student progress and achievement.

At Cooke, we have been working all year for successful outcomes on this test and, on test day(s) we will provide your Scholar(s) with the tools needed to do their best on the M-STEP, including technology, instruction and a safe and quiet environment to test. To achieve the best possible outcome for our Scholars, we also need help from home. The following practices will help us all achieve the best possible outcome(s) for our Scholars:

- Ensure that your child gets a decent night's sleep before taking the test. If your Scholar has breakfast at home, please make sure it is nutritious and filling. We will do the same for the Scholars that eat breakfast at school. These items are essential to how your child performs. You want them to be at their best. Failing to get a good night’s rest or good breakfast can cause them to lose focus quickly.
- Make the morning of the test a pleasant one. Do not add to your child’s stress. Do not argue with your child or bring up a touchy subject. Instead, try to do extra things that make them laugh, smile, and relax.
- Get your child to school on time the day of the test. Give yourself extra time to get to school that morning. Getting there late will not only throw off their routine, but it could also disrupt testing for other students.

Thank you and we look forward to a successful remainder of the year!

-Dr. McEwen
Congratulations Bulldogs On A Great Basketball Season!

Congratulations to Coach Braxton, Mr. Ganter, Mr. Walker and our Cooke STEM Academy Bulldogs for a successful basketball season! Our team won critical tournament games leading to the opportunity to play for the district championship!

We are very proud of the effort put forth on the basketball court and the professionalism that they demonstrated both on and off the court during the season!

Warm Weather Dress Code

As the weather heats up, please make sure that Scholars are dressed appropriately for school. All shorts and skirts must be khaki in color and at least knee length. Flip flops or shoes lacking closed toes or closed heels are prohibited as they may become a safety hazard.

Spring Weather Preparedness

Now that we are entering the Spring severe weather season, there are a few things you can do to make sure you are prepared and can manage if you find yourself in the path of a severe storm.

Take action now. Develop an emergency plan that takes into account your local weather hazards and then rehearse your plan often, stay updated on emergency alerts, secure everything before the storm hits and check and re-check communication devices and backup communication devices.

At Cooke we follow these emergency preparedness techniques and implement school wide safety protocols. This spring you will hear about an increased level of Tornado and Fire Drills that your Scholar participates in, in an effort to safe and prepared!

M-STEP Pep Rally

We would like to thank all of our Scholars who have been working hard to prepare for the M-STEP and who took part of our Pep Rally with Smiley The Clown! We appreciate your hard work and your attention during this spring testing time!

Poem in Your Pocket Day

Poem in Your Pocket Day 2019 is on April 18 and is part of National Poetry Month. Poem in Your Pocket Day was initiated in April 2002 by the Office of the Mayor in New York City, in partnership with the city’s Departments of Cultural Affairs and Education. In 2008, the Academy of American Poets took the initiative to all fifty United States, encouraging individuals around the country to participate.

On this day, select a poem, carry it with you, and share it with others at school. If Ms. Murray or Dr. McEwen ask you to read your favorite poem and you are prepared, we will share your poem on social media using the hashtag #pocketpoem.

If your teacher asks you to read your poem in front of your class and you are prepared, you will receive Bulldog Bucks!

Demonstration Day

Demonstration Day would not be a success without you!
Parents, Are Your Scholars Ready To M-STEP?

April brings the testing window for the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP). The M-STEP is given online and the subject matters tested include Math, Reading/English Language, Social Studies and Science. Michigan Scholars from 3rd grade through 6th grade.

Lori Higgins from the Detroit Free Press has consulted with area educators to compile a handy guide to help you understand the test and make sure your kids are prepared.

Understanding the test: The M-STEP is based on the Common Core State Standards, a set of expectations of what your kids should know to be ready for college and careers. These standards have been adopted in Michigan and more than 40 other states.

What does that mean for the exam? It’s going to be more difficult for most kids. Think fewer multiple choice questions (and fewer opportunities to score a lucky guess) and a lot more open-ended questions for kids to demonstrate their learning.

Become familiar with the format: It’s an online test, so that means it’ll be interactive. Students will be required to do things like type in answers to some questions, plot data on a graph, click and drag information, highlight text in a passage, draw shapes and listen to a presentation, then answer questions. There is also a performance task for math and English language arts tests, which require students to complete an in-depth project during the course of the exam that demonstrates their analytical and problem-solving skills.

Dial back the fear: Talk to your kids about the test. Make sure they understand it’s just one test and thus just a snapshot in time. Educators look at multiple pieces of evidence, including classroom work and classroom assessments, to get a fuller picture of a student’s academic progress. Schools should not be using scores from the state exam to determine whether a child is promoted, held back or able to graduate. Urge your child to simply do his or her best on the test.

Take a test drive: OK, so it’s not the real thing. But the Michigan Department of Education has an online test that you can review at https://wbte.drcedirect.com/MI/portals/mi.

Read directions carefully: Make sure your child understands how important it is to thoroughly read the instructions for each question, and follow them. One question, for instance, might require the student to do multiple things and missing one of those steps could be the difference between getting it right or wrong.

Some things are just basic: Make sure your child gets a good night's sleep the day before the exam and has a nutritious breakfast the day of the test.

Know when your child will be tested: Schools will be testing kids at various points over the next eight weeks. Cooke STEM Academy will be issuing Robocalls to alert you of your Scholar’s testing window.
**REMINDER:** School is dismissed at 2:40 PM! Please be on time to pick up your Scholar(s)!

**EARTH WEEK 2019**

**HOW CAN WE PROMOTE A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT IN DETROIT?**

April 22 is officially Earth Day, and Earth Week is all week. The Office of Science has partnered with The Office of Sustainability, the Office of Nutrition, Green Living, Eco Works, and Keep Growing Detroit to create a plan of action for Earth Week! We are advocating for sustainability in Detroit and encouraging teachers, students, and all District employees to do the same. Scholars are encouraged to wear the color green April 22nd through April 26th.

**Lost and Found**

FOUND: two sets of car/house keys. One set is for a Chevrolet vehicle and the other set is for a Lexus.

Please visit the office if you believe these keys may be yours!