

**By Jan Rahn**

*Managing Editor*

Fans of Perkins County Schools have an opportunity to cheer their students toward excellence in the upcoming weeks this spring.

This is a little different type of competitiveness—students in grades three through eight and grade 11 will be participating in statewide testing for reading, math and science.

Although the competitions aren't spectator events, the Nebraska Statewide Assessments are just as important on an academic level.

Letters mailed to all district patrons have been asked to support students in the Perkins County Schools just as they would any sports team challenge.

School districts across the state will be compared on their academic performance during several testing dates beginning the last week of March and continuing throughout April.

These state and federal measurements among school districts comprise the assessment system Nebraska has adopted and the one the Perkins County District will participate in each year, said Superintendent Tobin Buchanan.

Historically, the district's students have performed well on local, state and standardized testing, said the letter to patrons. The district scores on last year's assessments were lower than anticipated and steps are being taken to improve student performance, Buchanan said.

Families, educators and patrons can help boost the assessment scores by supporting the students and cheering them on during the dates the tests are scheduled.

"Here in Perkins County we have embraced competition and comparison between our performance with those near and far to us throughout the state," said Buchanan in his letter. "I would like us to instill this same kind of 'competitive fire' and 'we are the best' attitude when it comes to academic performance on the state assessments."

Buchanan asks that everyone do their part in encouraging Perkins County students to value this opportunity in the "academic state tournament" and let them know a high level of performance is expected of them. Support them in their efforts to work hard and do well.

"Let's cheer on our students as they take on the challenge of being the very best they can be on this year's assessments!" he said.

## Testing Schedule

- High School:  
11th Grade: March 27-28 Reading; April 18-19 Science;  
April 25-26 Math
- Middle School:  
Sixth Grade: April 10-11 Reading; April 23-27 Math  
Seventh Grade: April 10-11 Reading April 24-25 Math  
Eighth Grade: April 10-11 Reading; April 16-20 Science;  
April 24-25 Math

- Elementary:

Third Grade: April 16-19 Reading; April 16-19 Math

Fourth Grade: April 11-12 Reading; April 30-May 1 Math

Fifth Grade: April 16-17 Science; April 18-19 Reading;

April 23-27 Math