

Reed City High School Juniors to Receive Free ACT Test

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Reed City High School will administer this spring the new Michigan Merit Exam (MME), which will include a free ACT test for high school juniors. The State of Michigan will pick up the cost of the test, which, for the basic registration fee for the ACT Plus Writing, is \$43 per student.

Implementing the MME means all 11th graders will take the new state assessment this March. It will provide students with a regular ACT score report that they can use to apply to a college or a university. Students also will be able to use the MME to qualify for a Michigan Merit Award scholarship to help pay for their costs, to the sum of \$4000, to attend a state university, community college or a technical or trade school.

The MME is made up of the national ACT and WorkKeys tests in mathematics and reading plus additional tests created here in Michigan in the areas of mathematics, science, and social studies. MME testing is divided into three parts. The ACT will be administered on March 13, 2007, while the WorkKeys and Michigan mathematics tests will be administered on March 14, 2007. The Michigan science and social studies tests will be given in one session on March 15. Make-ups for these tests are scheduled for exactly two weeks later.

First administered in 1959, the ACT is a curriculum-based college readiness exam and is America's most widely accepted college entrance exam. The ACT is not an aptitude or an IQ test. Instead, the questions on the ACT are directly related to what students have learned in high school courses in English, mathematics, and science. Because the ACT tests are based on what is taught in the high school curriculum, students are generally more comfortable with the ACT than they are with traditional aptitude tests or tests with narrower content. The ACT is more than a test. The ACT also provides test takers with a unique interest inventory that provides valuable information for career and educational planning and a student profile section that provides a comprehensive profile of a student's work in high school and his or her future plans.

The Reed City High School administration team has been busy finalizing the implementation of the MME and because of MME stringent testing requirements, an alternative testing site was chosen. The Hersey Kindergarten building will serve as the new MME Testing Center. High School Juniors will be bused to and from the center for each of the three days of testing. Reed City High School teachers will serve as proctors of the examination. Students will receive snacks and lunch at the testing center.

Students may utilize free ACT prep tools online prior to testing from the following web sources: www.act.org and www.mivhs.org/content.cfm?ID=667. The ACT prep course through the second web site offers customized and interactive test preparation, including practicals (test-taking strategies), practice tests and two full-length ACTs with real-time scoring. The review is designed to provide up to four weeks of test preparation material.

Though the State of Michigan's implementation of MME is not a perfect process, as it puts and added burden onto the local school districts with the nuances of its administration, it does offer the right carrot for students to sit up and take notice of its impact on their futures.