



## Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)

### **WHY ARE STUDENTS TESTED?**

Parents often ask, "Why were my children tested?" Standardized testing programs usually serve several purposes. They help teachers, principals, and others:

- Evaluate and improve a school district (Archdiocese of Milwaukee)
- Evaluate and improve the individual school (Christ King School)
- Identify a child's academic strengths
- Identify areas where a child may need to improve

It is important to note that a standardized test is **only one** of several tools used to evaluate students' academic performance. Students are never measured on the basis of one test alone.

### **WHAT ARE GRADE-LEVEL EQUIVALENT SCORES?**

Grade-level equivalent scores are determined by giving a test that is developed for a particular grade to students in other grades. For instance, test designers establish grade-equivalents for a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade test by giving that same test to students who are in different grade levels (above and below). Grade-level equivalent scores are often misunderstood. For example, if a 3<sup>rd</sup> grader received a 5<sup>th</sup> grade equivalent score on a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading achievement test, you may be inclined to believe their child is ready for 5<sup>th</sup> grade material. Actually, the score means that the child reads 3<sup>rd</sup> grade material as well as the average 5<sup>th</sup> grader. This would still be an incredibly positive piece of achievement data, but it is important to note the difference.

### **WHAT ARE PERCENTILE SCORES?**

Percentiles give parents/teachers a more detailed description of how a student compares with other students who took the test by showing scores that range from 1 to 99. For example, if a student scored in the 66th percentile on a test, that student achieved a score that is higher than 66% of the other students who took the test. So, if 1,000 students took the test, the student in the 66th percentile scored higher than 660 students. Do not confuse percentile scores with percentage correct scores. Percentile scores allow you to compare one student's scores with a group of students who took the test. Percentage correct scores simply reveal the number of items that a student answered correctly out of the total number of items.

# ITBS Test Results

