Top News This Week

1. Clarification Regarding Parent Information Booklets (PIBs) and Parent Letters for Different Statewide Student Assessments

Combined Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy and Mathematics Assessments (Grades 3-8 and 11) and HSA Science Assessments (Grades 4 and 8) PIB and Parent Letters

The Smarter Balanced and HSA Science Parent Information Booklets (PIBs) were shipped to each public and public charter school during September 2015 by American Institutes for Research (AIR) via UPS. Each student's home language in the Department's electronic Student Information System (eSIS) during August 2015 was used to determine whether a student would receive an English PIB or a translated PIB in the home language indicated by the family when they enrolled their child at your school. If you cannot locate the shipment of PIBs, or if you need to request additional booklets, please contact the Help Desk staff at 1-866-648-3712 from 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. HST. They will be able to confirm the date, time, and the person at the school who signed for the shipment of PIBs.

Each school may decide when the PIBs will be distributed to the parents of students in the tested grades during the 2015-16 school year. Schools that provide services for students in grades 4 and 8 may choose to distribute the PIBs to their parents several weeks before they take the HSA Science Assessment for the first time. Students may be given up to three opportunities to take this assessment during a seven month testing window, i.e., October 13, 2015 - May 26, 2016. The parents of these grades 4 and 8 students should not be sent a copy of the same PIB again before the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments are administered during spring 2016.

Customizable Parent Letters for 12 student populations in 14 languages are also available to be sent home to parents of each student along with the PIB. Each school may select the parent letter(s) to be sent home to parents. Some schools send the "General Education" parent letter to the families of all students in the tested grade(s). Individual schools may choose to send one parent letter that includes the HSA Science Assessment and Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment testing dates for the entire school year or separate parent letters for the specific grade levels that will take each assessment.
See the links below to the PIB and Parent Letters that are posted on the Smarter Balanced and HSA Science Resources page at alohahasap.org.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2015–2016 Smarter Balanced Parent Information Booklet</th>
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<tr>
<td>The Parent Information Booklet (PIB) includes information for the grades 3–8 and 11 Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy and Mathematics Assessments and the grades 4 and 8 Hawaii State Science Assessments. Printed copies of one English PIB per student will be delivered to each school in September.</td>
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This Parent Information Booklet (PIB) in English is also available in 14 languages. One translated PIB for identified ELL students whose parents have indicated their home language is a language other than English in the eSIS home language file will also be shipped to each school in September.

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<tr>
<th>2015–2016 Smarter Balanced and HSA Science Parent Letters</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation and non-participation letters that schools may send to parents along with the Parent Information Booklet about the grades 3-8 and 11 Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy and Mathematics Assessments and the grades 4 and 8 Hawaii State Science Assessments are available in English and 14 translated languages.</td>
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These parent letters are Word documents that can be edited by school level staff members. Edits may include a school’s testing schedule, principal’s signature, and school phone number. If a student is included in two populations, e.g., IDEA-eligible and Home/Hospital Instruction, a customized parent letter can be created by inserting the appropriate text from the parent letter for each of these two populations.

**Separate End-of-Course (EOC) Exams PIB and Parent Letters for Secondary School Students Enrolled in Algebra I, Algebra II, Biology I, or U.S. History Courses**

Schools will not receive shipments of the EOC Exams PIB and may choose to inform the parents of the students enrolled in one or more of the courses where to access this document on the EOC Exam Resources page and the time frame when the exam(s) will be administered during the last few weeks of the corresponding course(s) using one of the customizable parent letters for 12 student populations in 14 languages. The administration of the Algebra I, Algebra II, and U.S. History EOC Exams is optional and a teacher(s) at a school may choose to have students take an exam(s). Students who are enrolled in a Biology I course are required to take the corresponding EOC Exam because the results are used in the calculation of a school's Strive HI accountability results.

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<tr>
<th>2015-2016 EOC Parent Information Booklet</th>
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<tr>
<td>This document provides parents with general information about the End-of-Course Exams and sample online test items and student responses for each exam subject. The EOC Exams Parent Information Booklet is provided in English and 14 additional languages.</td>
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<td>Participation and non-participation letters schools may send to parents about the Algebra I, Algebra II, Biology I, and U.S. History End-of-Course Exams. Parent letters are provided in English and in 14 additional languages for nine student populations.</td>
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Separate Hawaii State Alternate Assessment (HSA-Alt) Informational Brochure for Parents for Grades 3-8 and 11 Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

Copies of the HSA-Alt Informational Brochure for Parents are not shipped to the schools who provide services for the IDEA-eligible students who meet the participation guidelines for the HSA-Alt Reading (grades 3-8 and 11), Mathematics (grades 3-8 and 11), and Science (grades 4, 8, and 11) Assessments. Special Education teachers may print copies of the brochure that is posted on the HSA-Alt Resources page for distribution to the parents of these students before the testing window begins on February 19, 2016 for the HSA-Alt Reading and Mathematics Assessments and March 6, 2016 for the HSA-Alt Science Assessment. A parent letter is also provided in a pdf and Word format that can be printed and distributed to parents along with the brochure.

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<tr>
<th>2015-2016 HSA-Alt Informational Brochure for Parents [pdf]</th>
<th>This document provides information for parents about the HSA-Alt Assessment.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015 Parent IDEA Letter [pdf]</td>
<td>This document provides information for parents regarding the IDEA Requirements for statewide student assessments.</td>
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### 2. ACT Assessments

**ACT Aspire (Grades 8, 9, and 10)**

**ACT Aspire Assessments for Grades 9 and 10**

For School Year 2015-2016, secondary public and public charter schools have the option of administering the ACT Aspire Assessments to their grades 9 and/or 10 students. If your school has not yet notified the Assessment Section of the administration decision, please call or email Kuaanaai Lewis at 808-733-4100 or via Lotus Notes.

**ACT Aspire Training (for schools administering the required 8th grade ACT Aspire and/or the optional 9th and 10th grades ACT Aspire)**

The ACT Aspire Training will be held at the McKinley Community School for Adults in Honolulu during the week of **November 30 - December 3, 2015 from 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.** The Test Coordinator at each school administering the ACT Aspire paper/pencil and online tests is required to attend the training on one of the four days. The Technology Coordinator at each school that is planning to conduct online testing of the ACT Aspire for grades 8, 9, or 10, is also required to attend the training on one of the four days. Other school level staff members, such as the ACT Aspire Test Accommodations Coordinator, e.g., Student Services Coordinator, Special Education Department Chairperson, and Principal or Vice-Principal, may attend a training session based on space availability.

Training details and the registration form can be accessed by clicking [http://bit.ly/1hr0LP9](http://bit.ly/1hr0LP9). When a school level staff member registers, he or she will receive an automated email confirming that the registration information has been received. This automated email is not a confirmation to participate in...
the training on one of the two preferred dates. The registered school level staff member will receive an email message from Kuaanaai Lewis confirming his or her specific date for the training or confirming that he or she has been waitlisted. A registered school level staff member should not attend the training unless he or she has received an email message confirming the date for his or her training. Registration closed on Friday, November 13, 2015.

If you have questions regarding the online registration process or the agenda for the meeting, please call the ACT Aspire Customer Service at 888-802-7502 or email at ACTAspire_Implementation@ACTAspire.org.

The ACT (Grade 11)

**URGENT! ACT-Approved Accommodations Requests Are Due No Later Than Friday, November 20, 2015**

All ACT-Approved Accommodations requests must be submitted through ACT’s new Test Accessibility and Accommodation (TAA) website. To access TAA:

- Sign-up and complete steps for TAA access (only the test coordinator may complete this task).
- ACT will then approve the test coordinator as the Trusted Agent in TAA. This approval process may take up to 5 days.
- Next, the test coordinator may give TAA website access to additional school staff who are responsible for completing and submitting the ACT-Approved Accommodations for students.

For additional information, test coordinators and test accommodations coordinators are asked to view the accommodations training videos that are available on the ACT Testing: Hawaii website. If test coordinators and test accommodations coordinators have questions about ACT Accommodations or need assistance accessing the TAA website, please contact the ACT Accommodations Customer Service at 800-553-6244, ext. 1788 or ACTStateAccoms@act.org.

The ACT Administration Manual

**October 29, 2015**

Each school's ACT test coordinator received an email message from the ACT State and District Testing Team titled "ACT State and District Testing: Manuals Arriving." The email message contains information about the administration manuals, e.g., items in the shipment, action needed when manuals arrive, important information about who a school will call if manuals do not arrive, resources, upcoming events and important dates, and contact information for The ACT Customer Service. The administration manuals were scheduled to arrive at schools during the week of November 2 - 6, 2015. Please contact The ACT General Inquiries Customer Service at 800-553-6244, ext. 2800 or Contact Us for more information.
3. Notice

The Assessment Section staff will be at Office of Strategy, Innovation and Planning meetings on November 24, 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM, and December 17, 12:00 - 4:00 PM and will not be available to respond to telephone inquiries at these times.

4. In the News

- Exams play role in preparing kids (Bismarck Tribune)
- Opt out of Smarter Balanced test? That's not the question to ask: Editorial Agenda 2015 (Oregon Live)
- New Tools Help Track Common-Core Learning (EdWeek)
- New Hampshire Smarter Balanced test results are in, and they're better than national scores (Concord Monitor)
- PARCC switches to a Chinese menu of standardized testing options (Washington Post)
- State Keeps a Tight Grip on New Standardized Testing Data (New Hampshire Public Radio)
- 4 Myths About California’s New Common Core Academic Standards (KQED News)
- Test: Students 58 percent OK in language, 46 percent in math (Greenwich Times)
- Bensten: Why the Common Core tests are collapsing (The Detroit News)
- Vermont to Parents: Don't worry about your child's Common Core test scores. They don't mean much. (MSN News)
- Some of the Nation's Best Teachers Say Smarter Balanced is Dramatically Better than Old State Tests
- The Scores Are In: Tracking Common-Core Test Results Across States (State EdWatch)

5. Resources

Knowing the Score: The Who, What, and Why of Testing

The Center on Education Policy (CEP) at the George Washington University released a report to help explain and clarify the most important aspects of K-12 testing and assessment. Knowing the Score: The Who, What, and Why of Testing was developed to help educators, parents, policymakers and others focused on education sort out the facts, myths and opinions on testing.

Recently released report: ACT Condition of STEM 2015

Read the post and find out more about the ACT at www.act.org/actnext.

Digital Library Spotlight Webinar

The Digital Library Spotlight Webinar and Forum series—featuring the Illustrative Mathematics series and the Supporting Students with Disabilities series—continued this past week. In case you've missed any (or want to share them), you can stream or download the following:

- Maximizing Access to Instruction and Testing for Students with Disabilities to Improve Achievement: stream or download
- Investigating Grades 6 & 7 Ratio and Proportional Relationship Standards with a New Desmos Activity, Tile Pile: stream or download
Spotlight Webinars are facilitated by national experts and innovative practitioners, and they highlight Digital Library resources related to timely and relevant topics. For more information about the series, including dates for the upcoming webinars, download the flyers below, or contact Chrys Mursky.

- [Illustrative Mathematics Series flyer](#)
- [Supporting Students with Disabilities Series flyer](#)