

December 13, 2006

TO THE TESTING COORDINATOR ADDRESSED:

Subject: TAKS–Alternate (TAKS–Alt) Field Test

This letter provides important information regarding the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills–Alternate (TAKS–Alt) Field Test.

TAKS–Alt Field-Test Overview

The window for the TAKS–Alt Field Test is from January 8 – April 13, 2007 and the submission window is April 2 – April 13. Teachers can begin using the online system in January to develop activities, document observation notes on the data collection forms, and score the assessment. Teachers will have access to finalize and submit their scores during the submission window only. Therefore it is highly recommended that teachers administering the test and campus testing coordinators take full advantage of the window for the online system. Prior to beginning the TAKS–Alt online system, teachers **must** complete the four training modules available at <http://pearson.learn.com/taksalt/>. Module 4 will be available beginning January 2, 2007.

District personnel involved in the TAKS–Alt Field Test are expected to

- ensure that students have access to the general education curriculum and that direct instruction is occurring for the selected essence statements; and
- support teachers involved in the TAKS–Alt process by providing opportunities for training and by providing needed equipment to access the online tool effectively.

The teacher(s) are expected to

- use all available resources provided by TEA to ensure that students are receiving access to the general education curriculum;
- complete the four training modules;
- create activities, select and complete 2 teacher-selected essence statements for each subject tested, and complete 2 state-required essence statements;
- use the online instrument to submit TAKS–Alt rubric scores with corresponding documentation; and
- complete a survey evaluating the TAKS–Alt online process.

Eligibility

Students who are determined by the ARD committee to meet the participation requirements will participate in the TAKS–Alt Field Test.

Inter-Rater Reliability Study

To provide evidence that the TAKS–Alt allows for reliable observation and rating of student performance in the TEKS, a sample of teachers will be asked to have a second observer provide a rating of student performance on a specified essence statement and its accompanying instructional activity. Teachers who have been selected to participate in the inter-rater reliability study will be notified in advance. More specific information regarding the inter-rater reliability study will be sent in January 2007.

Results

Scores from the TAKS–Alt field test will not be reported, however they will be used to set standards for the 2008 operational test. Information gathered from the field test will be used to evaluate the TAKS–Alt assessment system. If teachers would like to report TAKS–Alt information to ARD committees, the teacher will need to keep copies of the completed documentation forms.

TAKS–Alt Resources

Resources for administering TAKS–Alt are also available on the TEA website at www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/resources/taksalt/ and on the training website at <http://pearson.learn.com/taksalt/>.

For questions regarding the TAKS–Alt field test, please contact the Student Assessment Division at 512-463-9536; Monday–Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. CT or e-mail: Alternate.Assessments@tea.state.tx.us. For questions regarding technical support, please contact Technical Support for School Success at 800-874-0914; Monday–Friday, 7:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M. CT or e-mail: support@schoolsuccess.net.

Please share this information with the District Special Education Administrator, as well as any other staff who would benefit from this information.

Sincerely,

Susan Barnes
Associate Commissioner for Standards and Programs