

Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 96/2018

From: Secretary for Education

To: Heads of all Primary and
Secondary Schools (excluding
ESF and International Schools)

Date: 20 June 2018

Territory-wide System Assessment of Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics at P3, P6 and S3 in 2018/19

(Note: This circular memorandum should be read by Heads of all primary and secondary schools, excluding ESF and International Schools, for necessary action.)

Purpose

The purpose of this circular memorandum is to inform schools of the arrangements of the Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA) of Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics at P3, P6 and S3 levels for the 2018/19 school year.

Background

2. In accordance with the document “Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong” released by the Education Commission in 2000, TSA aims to help schools and the Government gauge students’ attainment of Basic Competencies in Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics at the end of key learning stages. The information obtained will provide feedback on the planning of school-based learning and teaching and improvements of education policies. We have commissioned the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) to administer TSA. It was introduced to P3 in 2004, P6 in 2005 and S3 in 2006. TSA is a low-stake assessment that does not provide assessment results of individual students. It is by no means a tool for grading students, determining their advancement in studies or allocating school places for admission to Secondary 1. Schools may make reference to the Basic Competencies students are expected to acquire at key learning stages at the website http://cd1.edb.hkedcity.net/cd/eap_web/bca/index3.htm.

3. Since the introduction of TSA in 2004, the Education Bureau (EDB) has maintained close communication with various stakeholders to learn about the

implementation progress and stakeholders' views for improvements. To continue to respond to the public's concerns about TSA, the Secretary for Education, among others, announced in late October 2015 that the Coordinating Committee on Basic Competency Assessment and Assessment Literacy (the Committee) would conduct a comprehensive review of Basic Competency Assessment. Throughout the entire review that took more than two years, the EDB introduced step by step the 2016 Tryout Study (Primary 3) and 2017 Basic Competency Assessment Research Study to verify the effectiveness of the enhancement measures. The Committee has collected and concluded the views of different stakeholders and schools' experiences, and submitted the Report on Review of the Primary 3 Territory-wide System Assessment 2015-2017¹ (review report) in March 2018.

TSA in 2018/19

Primary 3 Level

4. The EDB accepted the review report submitted by the Committee and announced in March this year the new arrangements for P3 TSA in 2018 and beyond. Starting from 2018, the feedback at the territory-wide and school levels for P3 TSA will be handled separately. At the territory-wide level, TSA will be conducted every year on a sampling basis, with about 10% of P3 students sampled from each public sector and Direct Subsidy Scheme school. At the school level, schools which would like all P3 students to participate in TSA and obtain detailed school reports may approach the HKEAA direct. The HKEAA will issue school reports to schools directly. The EDB will not obtain school reports of individual schools from the HKEAA. Details are set out in EDB Circular Memorandum No. 37/2018.

5. The Chinese audio-visual (CAV) assessment and speaking assessments for Chinese Language and English Language at P3 level will be conducted on a sampling basis on **7 or 8 May 2019** (with 10 May as the fallback date). The HKEAA will inform schools nearer the time on which of these two days the speaking assessments will be conducted. The written assessments for Chinese Language and English Language, and assessment for Mathematics for P3 will be conducted on a sampling basis on **11 and 12 June 2019** (with 14 June as the fallback date). The HKEAA will issue letters to advise schools that would like all their P3 students to participate in TSA and obtain detailed school reports to approach the HKEAA directly.

¹ Report on Review of the Primary 3 Territory-wide System Assessment 2015-2017 (March 2018)
<http://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/assessment/about-assessment/2015-17-tsa-report-en.pdf>

Primary 6 Level

6. The CAV assessment and speaking assessments for Chinese Language and English Language at P6 level will be conducted on a sampling basis on **14 or 15 May 2019** (with 17 May as the fallback date). The HKEAA will inform schools nearer the time on which of these two days the speaking assessments will be conducted. The written assessments for Chinese Language and English Language, and assessment for Mathematics for P6 will be conducted on **11 and 12 June 2019** (with 14 June as the fallback date).

Secondary 3 Level

7. The speaking assessments for Chinese Language and English Language at S3 level will be conducted on a sampling basis on **29 or 30 April 2019** (with 3 May as the fallback date). The HKEAA will advise nearer the time on which one of the two days mentioned will the speaking assessments be conducted.

8. The written assessments for Chinese Language and English Language, and assessment for Mathematics at S3 level will take two days. Schools are requested to reserve **18 and 19 June 2019** (with 21 June as the fallback date in case the assessment has to be deferred due to inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances) in their school calendar for administering TSA.

Participation of students

9. We wish to re-iterate that TSA is a low-stake assessment. Not only can it provide objective territory-wide data on students' Basic Competency for the Government, but it can also provide school level data and information on overall student performance in different learning dimensions for schools to feedback learning and teaching. Hence, we request schools to arrange all students, including Non-Chinese Speaking (NCS) students and students with special educational needs (SEN), to participate in P6 and S3 assessments; while all P3 students, including NCS and SEN students, to participate in the sampling arrangement at the territory-wide level, with details set out in paragraph 4 above, with a view to assisting the Government in collecting data for related research, policy review and provision of relevant support. In order to make good use of the assessment data to provide feedback to schools, at the school level, the HKEAA can provide secondary and primary schools with five or more NCS and SEN students taking part in the S3 and P6 assessments with respective reports on the overall performance of relevant students to enhance teaching and learning. This measure is also applicable to schools which

arrange all their P3 students to participate in TSA and obtain detailed school reports. The HKEAA provides support measures for NCS and SEN students to take part in the assessments as needed and will later inform schools of the details concerned.

Enquiries

10. For enquiries, please contact the following persons:

Enquiry on administration of TSA:

Dr Tenny LAM of the HKEAA at 3628 8100

Enquiry on general policy of TSA:

Ms Eunice CHAN of the EDB at 2921 8943

Reminder

11. Schools are reminded to communicate the schedule for the assessment and the contingency arrangements during adverse weather (including the reserve dates) to parents early to ensure students' participation in TSA in order to generate comprehensive and useful information for schools to enhance learning and teaching.

Ms Jenny CHAN
for Secretary for Education

cc: Heads of Sections – for information