

1. INTRODUCTION

Assessment is an integral part of learning and cannot be separated from teaching. Survey on the usefulness of TSA Reports conducted in 2008 illustrated that 96% of the primary and secondary school teachers would adjust their planning with reference to the TSA data. The encouraging results informed us that TSA, to a certain extent, is addressing the objective of assessment for learning.

The idea of assessment for learning is not new. Assessments similar to TSA are conducted in other countries like the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) in Australia, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in the U.S., Core Competency Assessment in England.

In Hong Kong, the Education Commission (EC) in 2000 recommended a system of Basic Competency Assessments in Chinese, English and Mathematics at various stages of compulsory education in the Education Commission Report (2000) entitled *Learning for Life, Learning through Life*. It was anticipated that the data provided by these assessments would be used in planning curriculum, designing teaching methods and providing assistance to schools and students so as to enhance the effectiveness of learning and teaching.

The Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) was commissioned in 2001 by the Education Bureau (EDB) to develop and implement Basic Competency Assessments in three subject areas: Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics. As recommended by the EC, the Basic Competency Assessments programme has two components: Student Assessment and Territory-wide System Assessment. Student Assessment is an online system to provide instant feedback to students and teachers and is fully operational for Primary 3 (P.3), Primary 6 (P.6) and Secondary 3 (S.3). The web-based Student Assessment system allows teachers to review and improve student progress towards learning objectives and set targets for students.

Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA) is a low-stakes survey of the performance of students at P.3, P.6 and S.3 levels in three subject areas. The main purpose of TSA is to provide the Government and school management with information on school standards in key learning areas for the purposes of school improvement and to provide more targeted support to those schools in need of assistance. The TSA began at the P.3 level in 2004,

P.6 level in 2005 and S.3 level in 2006. From 2006 onwards, all students at P.3, P.6 and S.3 take part in the TSA.

This year, due to the H1N1 Swine Influenza, only the Secondary 3 students completed the assessments. The suspension of primary schools due to the flu led to the cancellation of the TSA except for Oral in both languages and CAV assessment for Chinese Language. However, the TSA question papers, together with model answers for all three subjects, were delivered to primary schools for internal assessment in late August 2009.

Chapter 2 of this report outlines the design of TSA and the development of the assessments; Chapter 3 reports on the conduct of the TSA, including the role of the Research Test, on-screen marking of TSA scripts, etc.; Chapter 4 sets out the method used to maintain standards from year to year and reports the proportions meeting these standards; Chapter 5 describes the different types of TSA reports made available to schools; Chapter 6 to Chapter 8 report in detail on the performance of students to the questions on the Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics tests. The basic competency level and more capable performances in each subject and each level are discussed in these chapters. Chapter 9 concludes with lessons to be learnt from the TSA data and suggests some future development of TSA.