

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Assessment is an integral part of learning and cannot be separated from teaching. 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 and the Pan-Canadian Assessment Program in Canada.

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 curricula, designing teaching methods and providing assistance to schools and students so as to enhance the effectiveness of learning and teaching.

In 2001, the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) was commissioned 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.

The 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 the 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. Since 2006, all students at P.3, P.6 and S.3 take part in the TSA.

This report provides a summary of the TSA results for 2012. 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 and on-screen marking of TSA scripts, etc, while Chapter 4 sets out the method used to maintain standards from year to year and reports on the proportion of students meeting these standards. Chapter 5 describes the different types of TSA reports made available to schools. Chapters 6 to 8 report in detail on the performance of students based on the questions in the Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics tests. The basic competency level and examples of capable performances in each subject and at each level are discussed in these chapters. Chapter 9 concludes with lessons to be learnt from the TSA data and suggests some future development for TSA.

The report for this year will only cover P3 and S3 students' overall performance. In 2011 the government announced the suspension of the P6 TSA in 2012 and 2014. Schools may participate in the P6 TSA on a voluntary basis. In 2012, 51 schools participated in the P6 TSA on a voluntary basis and their results do not constitute system level data.