

Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 106/2017

From: Secretary for Education

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

Date: 21 June 2017

Territory-wide System Assessment of Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics at P6 and S3 in 2017/18

(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 P6 and S3 levels for the 2017/18 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, the 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 the TSA. It was introduced to P3 in 2004, P6 in 2005 and S3 in 2006. The 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.

TSA in 2017/18

Primary 6 Level

3. As announced by the Education Bureau (EDB) in April 2014 (vide Circular Memorandum No. 54/2014), the current alternate-year arrangement for P6 TSA and Pre-Secondary One Hong Kong Attainment Test (Pre-S1 HKAT) will be continued from 2015 onwards, i.e. the P6 TSA will be conducted in odd-numbered years whereas the Pre-S1 HKAT in even-numbered years. Hence, the P6 TSA will be suspended in 2018. In the year of suspension of the P6 TSA, individual schools can take part in the P6 assessment on a voluntary basis, and make use of the marking and reporting services provided by the HKEAA. As this is not an assessment participated by all P6 students in Hong Kong, no system level data (including the territory-wide performance on sub-papers and individual items) will be provided. Schools interested in participating please note that the Chinese audio-visual (CAV) assessment and speaking assessments for Chinese Language and English language for P6 will be conducted on a sampling basis on **9 or 10 May 2018** (with 15 May as the fallback date); while the written assessments for Mathematics, Chinese Language and English Language for P6 will be conducted on **12 and 13 June 2018** (with 15 June as the fallback date). The HKEAA will issue letters to inform primary schools of the related arrangements of P6 assessment by June 2017.

Secondary Schools

4. The speaking assessments for Chinese Language and English Language at S3 level will be conducted on a sampling basis on **24 or 25 April 2018** (with 27 April 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.

5. The written assessments for Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics at S3 level will take two days. Schools are requested to reserve **19 and 20 June 2018** (with 22 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 the TSA.

Participation of all students (including Non-Chinese Speaking students)

6. We wish to re-iterate that the TSA is a low-stake assessment, which serves to provide not only objective territory-wide data on students' basic competency for the Government but also 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 to participate, especially Non-Chinese Speaking (NCS) students to take part in the TSA Chinese Language assessments, 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 feedback schools for learning and teaching, starting from 2015 TSA, in addition to the existing supplementary reports provided for secondary schools having NCS students taking part in the assessment, HKEAA provides secondary and primary schools with five or more NCSs taking part in the assessment with an assessment report on NCS students' performance to enhance teaching and learning. The HKEAA can provide support measures for NCS students to take part in the assessments as needed and will later inform schools of the details concerned.

2017 Basic Competency Assessment Research Study

7. In view of the effectiveness of the 2016 Tryout Study (Primary 3) (Tryout Study), the EDB accepted the recommendations of the Coordinating Committee on Basic Competency Assessment and Assessment Literacy and introduced the Basic Competency Assessment Research Study (Research Study) by extending the new initiatives for enhancement under the Tryout Study to all primary schools in the territory in 2017. The objectives of implementing the Research Study are to expand the scope of the research in order to allow more schools to participate and understand the new initiatives under the Tryout Study so as to collect more comprehensive feedback and to continue to review the assessment arrangements. The 2017 Research Study is still in progress. Related arrangements will be announced after the review. Should the assessment at P3 level continue, the dates for the written assessments will be the same as those for P6 level.

Enquiries

8. For enquiries, please contact the following persons:

Enquiry on administration of the TSA:

Dr Tenny LAM of the HKEAA at 3628 8100

Enquiry on general policy of the TSA:

Ms Eunice CHAN of the Education Bureau at 2921 8943

Reminder

9. 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 the 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