

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

INFORMATIVE

DATE: April 9, 2008

TO: Members, Board of Education
David L. Brewer III, Superintendent

FROM: Donnalyn Jaque-Antón, Executive Officer, Educational Services
Alma Peña-Sanchez, Interim Assistant Superintendent Elementary
Instructional Support Services
Shelley Weston, Interim Assistant Superintendent Secondary
Instructional Support Services

SUBJECT: RESULTS FROM THE “SURVEY OF CURRENT *PERIODIC ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES*”, Fall 2007

This informative summarizes the results of the “Survey of Fall 2007 *Periodic Assessment Procedures*” which was provided to all 23,237 teachers who administer the District’s *Periodic Assessments (PAs)*. Additionally, a summary of proposed actions to address the concerns and suggestions offered by the respondents has been collaboratively developed by representatives from Central office staff and Local District Administrators of Instruction and Directors of School Services.

1. Background

The purpose of the biannual “Survey” is to provide an opportunity for those responsible for administering the District’s diagnostic *Periodic Assessments* to contribute to the continuous improvement of both the effectiveness and efficiency of the *Periodic Assessment Program*. Based upon an analysis of the data from the “Surveys”, Central and Local District staffs determined appropriate follow-up actions, timelines and accountabilities. Communication about those agreed upon practices to the educators involved in administering and scoring the *PAs* is a shared effort through the Local District Superintendents, Administrators of Instruction, Directors of School Services, LAUSDnet, the *Periodic Assessment* website as well as in upcoming articles in the United Teacher newspaper. Progress on the newly implemented procedures is continuously assessed during regularly scheduled monthly meetings with Central and Local District staff.

2. Summary of Quantitative and Qualitative “Survey” Results

Of the **23,237** teachers who administer *Periodic Assessments*, **7, 687 (33%)** responded to “Survey of Current *Periodic Assessment Procedures*”. The quantitative data was compiled based upon responses to questions measured on a five-point scale as displayed on **Attachment A** indicating “Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Strongly Disagree and No Response”. Additionally, qualitative data was obtained from responses to the open-ended survey items which were provided by **2, 073 (27%) of the respondents who wrote comments** suggesting program enhancements as displayed on **Attachment B**. Of the 2,073 respondents who wrote comments, **60% (1,239)** addressed elementary school practices and **40% (834)** targeted subject specific concerns on the secondary assessments which included requested revisions related to the following subjects: 46% (384) from English/Language Arts, 18% from Mathematics, 13% from Science, 7% from History, 6% from teachers who taught both math and science, and 10% who did not indicate specific subject areas.

Based upon both quantitative and qualitative responses, **90%** of the 7,687 educators indicated that the program logistics seemed to be much improved with teachers receiving their answer sheets on time and **over 70%** using *PA* data to “adjust” instruction. Although almost **60%** said they had “adequate time during the school day to discuss student results with my colleagues”, over **75%** indicated on their written comments that they needed “more training on how to use the data as instructional tools for informing instruction”. In response to this identified need, the Local District Administrators of Instruction were allocated additional resources and identified expertise to not only support professional development sessions at school sites, but to also ensure that there is wide-scale promotion for teachers to participate in the salary-point classes entitled “Building Quality Learning Using *Periodic Assessments*”. To date, ten classes have been provided through the Local Districts to support teachers using systematic procedures for accessing their data on the website and using it to inform instruction during collaborative learning community meetings.

Some of the other critical issues identified in the written comments are summarized below and the specific actions proposed to resolve the concerns are referenced on Attachment B:

Issue 1: Informing and involving students and parents with *Periodic Assessments*.

- a. Informational brochures were developed last year entitled “What Students and Their Families Need to Know”. These are available in the dominant languages of the District (Armenian, Chinese, English, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese). These brochures can be accessed via lausd.net; click “Resources” and then select “Parent Resources”.
- b. The value of using *Periodic Assessments* to communicate student learning progress to students and parents needs to be promoted. Suggested practices included student leadership representatives, coaches, counselors and administrators visiting each classroom being assessed to stress the importance of the assessments so students will be motivated. Promotional events were suggested for schools to provide special awards/ recognition/ privileges to all classes with 95% Participation Rate, most improved, etc.
- c. Teachers can generate Individual Student Level Reports to share with students and during parent/ teacher conferences to “personalize” learning progress.

Issue 2: Accessing data reports within 24-48 hours after answer sheets are shipped from the school.

Teachers, coaches, lead teachers and administrators can view data from any computer connected to the Internet at <https://lausd.princetonreview.com> within 24-48 hours after answer sheets are picked up by the Mail Unit. The “Item Response Report” shows all students’ responses to each item and by clicking on a specific student’s name; “Individual Student Level Reports” will show the student’s achievement by standard in comparison to the total class performance.

Issue 3: Providing professional development opportunities for teachers

Over 75% of the teachers expressed a need to have both time and adequate expertise to provide training during regularly scheduled faculty, grade level/ departmental meetings, banked-time days, minimum/ shortened days or common planning time. These sessions should be provided so that teachers can collaboratively analyze data from the assessments and determine appropriate follow-up learning experiences for students.

- a. Salary-point in-service classes are offered through each Local District titled “Building Quality Learning Using *Periodic Assessments*”. A schedule of classes is provided through each Local District as referenced on page 2 of Attachment B and through the District’s “Learning Zone”.

- b. An electronic mailing list (*Periodic Assessment ListServ*) has been opened to provide an opportunity for all teachers to share information and facilitate discussion around using *Periodic Assessments* effectively. To join the ListServ teachers and others should send an e-mail from their LAUSDnet e-mail account (only) to listserv@list.lausd.net and type SUBSCRIBE PALS in the body of the e-mail message.

Issue 4: Communicating alignment between standards assessed on the formative *Periodic Assessments* and those assessed on the summative *CSTs* (*California Standards Tests*).

The District created *CST and Periodic Assessment “Comparability Charts”* to show the connections between the *Periodic Assessments* (formative assessments) and the *CSTs* (summative assessments). There is a chart for each grade level/ course and subject area where there are both *Periodic Assessments* and *CSTs*. The charts are available for display in each teacher’s classroom so that this alignment can easily be communicated to students and parents. Charts can be obtained from Local District Administrators of Instruction and are available online on the *Periodic Assessment* web page on Inside LAUSD.

Issue 5: Including teachers in the “Assessment Review Committees”

Because the greatest percentage of teacher comments targeted revisions related to subject specific concerns related to the assessments, teachers are encouraged to contact the following appropriate Central District Director or designee to contribute suggestions to inform/ enhance the work of the Review Committees which meet regularly:

- El Math: Andrew Jenkins (213) 241-6444; El Science: William Chang (213) 241-6444
- Sec. E/LA: (213) 241-8291; Sec. Hist/Soc Science (213) 241-4216; Sec. Math (213) 241-2465
- Sec. Science: (213) 241-6420.

Issue 6: Scheduling *Periodic Assessments* so they can serve as informative instructional support.

The District has developed a revised draft of the assessment schedule for 2008-2009. Care was taken to eliminate conflicts with *CST* schedules and to minimize overlaps with other District-wide testing. Assessment windows common to English/Language Arts and Mathematics were created at the secondary level to support teachers having access to data during common professional development time. The shared assessment windows for Science and History/Social Science have been revised and are currently being reviewed by the Local District Superintendents for approval.

A more extensive compilation of quantitative and qualitative survey results is posted on the *Periodic Assessment* web page on Inside LAUSD. For additional information, please call either Joan Evans at (213) 241-7001 or William Tarr at (213) 241-6873.

- c: Don Davis
Jim Morris
Julie Slayton
Jefferson Crain
Maribel Medina
Randy Ross
Jerry Thornton