

To: Principals, teachers, and school patrons

About a year ago Governor Huntsman organized a Blue Ribbon Panel on Assessment which has been chaired by State Superintendent Patti Harrington. The panel has met monthly and arrived at tentative recommendations for a reconstruction of the UPASS testing system while focusing on creating a system that would do the following:

- Provide useful information to teachers, parents and students
- Place a premium on quality ongoing assessment rather than summative testing
- Provide for immediate results and feedback
- Ensure calculations using growth-based measures
- Tie to instruction and rigorous standards
- Decrease time in summative testing and focus time on classroom-based assessment
- Ensure a seamless transition in assessment between secondary schools and Utah's colleges and universities

In brief, the recommendations are summarized below. If implemented, these comprehensive changes to the UPASS system could have considerable ramifications for classroom instruction as well as school scheduling; it is possible, too, that they would not be approved by the U.S. Department of Education and thus necessitate our maintaining dual assessment systems to comply with the AYP requirements of NCLB.

Panel proposes elimination of three types of tests:

1. Core testing (end of level CRTs) in all grades
2. Utah Basic Skills Competency Test (UBSCT)
3. Iowa Test of Basic Skills (nationally normed)

Panel proposes the following assessments:

1. Computer-adaptive testing K-12 in reading, language arts, math and science three times each year including a pretest and posttest in each subject
2. Directed Online Writing Assessment grades 4-12 three times each year including a pretest and posttest
3. Ongoing reading assessment K-12 using locally selected but state approved interim assessment types. After 3rd grade, once a student has shown proficiency at or above grade level over three years, the student no longer needs ongoing reading assessments but will participate in the pre-/posttest reading assessment on the Computer-Adaptive Test.
4. Kindergarten assessment using locally developed assessment
5. EXPLORE in the 8th grade for all students to measure preparedness for high school and prescribe high school coursework
6. PLAN in 10th grade for all students to measure high school performance and prescribe further coursework for preparedness for postsecondary education and training

7. Accuplacer (college placement test) in spring of 11th grade for all students to determine their academic needs prior to graduation, to prequalify students for admission to Concurrent Enrollment courses, and to prequalify for credit-bearing courses in Utah’s colleges and universities
8. ACT in 11th grade for all students to measure high school performance, to prescribe further coursework for preparedness for postsecondary education and training, and to begin the postsecondary admissions process.

Panel proposes to increase expectations for a high school diploma:

1. Basic diploma to be awarded to students who demonstrate proficiency on at least one of the following assessments –
 - Accuplacer (college placement test)
 - ACT score in 11th grade
 - PLAN score in 10th grade
 - Performance on the Computer-Adaptive Assessment, beginning with 10th grade performance
2. No diploma to be awarded to any student who does not demonstrate proficiency in one of the above, with possible exception of students with disabilities
3. Annual IEP to be the guiding document for all learning, assessment, graduation/diploma decisions for students with disabilities
4. Value-added diplomas awarded to students who demonstrate unusually high performance in graduation assessments

Panel proposes continuation of federally-mandated testing:

1. NAEP will be given in grades four and eight in randomly selected schools

Blue Ribbon Panel on Assessment Outreach meetings are being held during the month of August throughout the state. Educators and patrons are invited to attend, and the meetings will be structured to provide attendees the opportunity to ask questions, express opinions, and voice concerns and/or support for the recommendations.

While principals are asked to attend one of the meetings, teachers and school patrons are also invited to participate and voice their opinions if they wish to do so.

Following is the schedule of outreach meetings to discuss the panel recommendations:

<i>Day</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>City</i>
Thursday	August 7 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Granite School District Office Board Room Auditorium	2500 South State	SLC
Wednesday	August 13 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Provo City School District Office	280 West 940 North	Provo

		Professional Development Center		
Thursday	August 14 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Jordan High School Tech Atrium	95 East Beetdigger Boulevard (9880 South)	Sandy
Monday	August 18 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Weber County School District Office	5320 Adams Avenue Parkway	Ogden
Tuesday	August 19 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Carbon School District Office	251 West 400 North	Price
Thursday	August 21 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Iron County School District Office	2077 West Royal Hunte Drive	Cedar City