

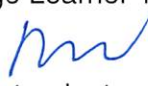


STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

OFFICE OF STRATEGY, INNOVATION AND PERFORMANCE

November 30, 2018

TO: Principals (All)  
Public Charter School Directors (All)  
Curriculum Coordinators  
Math and ELA Department Chairs  
Special Education Department Chairs  
Special Education Teachers  
English Language Learner Teachers

FROM: Rodney Luke   
Assistant Superintendent

SUBJECT: **Hawaii State Alternate Assessment (HSA-Alt) Policy and Range Performance Level Descriptors for English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics**

The Department of Education's Assessment Section, in collaboration with the Office of Student Support Services and the Office of Curriculum Instruction and Design, and in partnership with the American Institutes for Research, has developed HSA-Alt Policy Performance Level Descriptors (Attachment A) and Range Performance Level Descriptors for ELA (Attachment B) and mathematics (Attachment C). These Performance Level Descriptors are available to teachers of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to provide information about content that will be assessed.

**Background**

Under Elementary Secondary Education Act (ESEA) regulations, a state's assessment system provides an alternate assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Alternate assessments must be aligned to the State's grade-level academic content standards, but may assess the grade-level academic content standards with reduced breadth and cognitive complexity than general assessments. Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams for these students determine participation in the alternate assessments.

The Policy Performance Level Descriptors and Range Performance Level Descriptors were developed to guide the shift from grade band to grade-level assessments in SY 2018-2019. To ensure the descriptors would reflect a reduced breadth and complexity for students taking the HSA-Alt, multiple stakeholders were involved in the preparation process. Stakeholders included parents, community members, special education advocates, special education teachers, and content area specialists.

### **Performance Level Descriptors**

Policy Performance Level Descriptors are general statements about the knowledge and skills of students at each proficiency level across all grades. Content Specific Policy Performance Level Descriptors are general statements about the knowledge and skills of students at each proficiency level across all grades for each content area (ELA and mathematics).

Range Performance Level Descriptors for ELA and mathematics describe assessment performance expectations for students in Grades 3-8 and 11 who take the HSA-Alt in these content areas. There are four proficiency levels with performance level descriptors linked to the Common Core State Standards for each grade. The Range Performance Level Descriptors for ELA and mathematics serve as benchmarks that guide the development of all new HSA-Alt test items in these content areas.

### **Additional Information**

The Assessment Section will present information about the Policy and Range Performance Level Descriptors at the spring 2019 HSA-Alt test administrator training sessions as well as in an online webinar. Information on training dates, times and location will be provided in future announcements.

The documents are also available on the AlohaHSAP portal: [alohahsap.org](http://alohahsap.org) >> HSA-Alt >> Test Administration >> Online Test Administration.

If you have any questions, please contact Susan Forbes, Test Development Specialist; Dianne Morada, Test Development Specialist (math); or Kelsie Pualoa, Test Development Specialist (ELA), Assessment Section, at (808) 733-4100 or via Lotus Notes.

RL:kp

Attachments: 1) Attachment A  
2) Attachment B  
3) Attachment C

c: Assistant Superintendents  
State Public Charter School Commission  
Assessment and Accountability Branch