



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

September, 2017

Dear Parent, Guardian or Caregiver:

During each year, the Hawaii Department of Education (Department) administers the Hawaii State Alternate Assessments (HSA-Alt) to measure the academic achievement of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Alternate Achievement Standards are used to provide students with the most significant cognitive disability access to the assessment. These assessments are developed in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) for those students who cannot be assessed accurately using the general assessment, even with appropriate accommodations.

Your child will take the standards-based HSA-Alt in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics if he or she is in grade 3 through 8 or 11. Your child will also take the HSA-Alt in Science if he or she is in grade 4, 8 or 11. The 2017-2018 HSA-Alt testing window for ELA, Mathematics and Science begins on February 20, 2018 and closes on May 31, 2018.

Your child's teacher will administer the assessments to him or her, individually or in a small group setting. Your child will be able to respond in his or her most appropriate modality (oral, signed language, picture system, or augmentative communication device). The time required to administer the assessments will be approximately one hour per content area. However, each assessment does not need to be completed in a single session. Your child may be given breaks when they are needed. Additionally, your child will use appropriate accommodations that have been recommended by the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team members so that he or she can successfully demonstrate what has been learned.

The *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*, as reauthorized by the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* in 2015, requires states to establish challenging standards, develop aligned assessments, and build accountability systems based upon educational results. All students are included in a state's system of standards, assessments, and accountability.

Participation in the HSA-Alt does not prevent a student from obtaining a Hawaii high school diploma. All students who obtain this diploma will need to meet the minimum course and credit requirements. Go to: <http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/TeachingAndLearning/StudentLearning/GraduationRequirements/Pages/Requirements.aspx> for more information.

The Department strongly encourages all parents to have their child participate in the Hawaii State Alternate Assessment so that we can better identify your child's academic strengths and needs.

If you have any questions, please contact the school at (808) \_\_\_\_\_.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Principal