

MINUTES for TSNAP Teleconference – March 28, 2006

HOUSEKEEPING – Roll call by Steve Peterson, ESC Region 20
PLEASE turn off cell phone and pagers

TSNAP SECTION – Vicki Thomas, 2006 TSNAP President
Welcome, Introductions, and Membership Call: Applications at www.tsnap.com

Texas Assessment Conference Dates

December 2-5, 2007

December 6-9, 2009

December 7-10, 2008

December 5-8, 2010

Call for presenters---Need more small/medium districts and more 'hands-on'!!

Fall Training Academy Schedule for 2006 (Site: Pearson Plant in Austin)

➤ New Test Coordinators Academy - Sept. 12th or 13th, 2006

➤ Not-So-New Test Coordinators Academy – Sept. date to be determined later

The dates are still flexible; email Kathi Aaron or Vicki Thomas at the TSNAP website

TETN Moderator – Sandra Poth – 2003 TSNAP President

TEA SECTION

UPDATE ON TEA STAFFING – Lisa Chandler

Lisa stated that there are 10 vacancies, but that several positions have been filled such as:

- **Julie Guthrie** has been promoted to Coordinator for Mathematics and Science
- **Glen Kresner** is the new Online Test Manager
- **Cathy Kline** is the new State NAEP Coordinator
- **Muffet Livaudais** is the Communication Director and will be creating newsletters and brochures. The newsletters can be found under “What’s New” on the TEA student assessment website and will be sent to people who are on student assessment listserve.

STATE TESTING CALENDARS/SCHEDULING---2005-2006 and 2006-2007 concerns
Religious holidays in conflict with April 19 and 20, 2006

The student assessment has a task force that works with the test calendar. Lisa Chandler stated that relatively no comments on the calendar for this school year even though there was a problem with a conflict with Passover and UIL in April 2006.

Lisa did state that there has been some concern expressed about next year’s calendar due to a makeup test scheduled for Valentine’s Day as well as the Stock Show in San Antonio in February. TEA is considering revisions for the 2007 calendar as well as alternate test dates

Lisa went on to say that there has been concern about the amount of Field Testing and TEA is considering moving the January grade 9 reading, grade 4 & 7 writing field testing to the week of testing in April. In January, grade 10 and Exit would field test ELA. EOC is scheduled to field test the first week of May.

Extended Testing Day Schedules

Extending the testing day is a local decision. Lisa stated that professional judgment should be used at the campus and district level in determining how long a student should be allowed to test beyond the school day. When asked if TEA would give districts a recommendation for the average length of time a student should take a specific test the response was that it would depend on the individual student and TEA did not want to provide that kind of information in fear that a campus and/or district would abuse it.

Timing of Receipt of official Score Reports

- Official scores were received March 10th just as districts entered Spring Break. Results had to 'go out' by March 17th which was inside the closed period.
- Realizing that there is an Administrative Code rule for this, could there be a 'working day' definition of the number of days?

Gloria Zyskowski clarified that it is working days and not calendar days we need to be concerned with when dealing with notifying parents of results. She stated that the online rosters are considered "Official Reports" and can be used to notify parents of results. She went on to say that "verbal notification" of results over the phone with a parent or guardian is acceptable. It is most critical to notify parents of students who failed to meet the standard as soon as possible; send out the paper copies of the CSR's when they come in.

LAST MINUTE TESTING MANUAL REPLACEMENT/CHANGES

Revised manuals were sent for April testing for grades 5, 10 & Exit. An email was sent to district test coordinators informing them of the revision after the first shipment of test materials had already been shipped to districts. Gloria Zyskowski stated that there were typographical errors with the TAKS-I portions of the manuals that only affected April testing. She stated that a side by side document was not necessary since the revised manuals were considered replacements. Lisa Chandler state that TEA knew of the need for revisions in February, but wanted to "get through February testing" before dealing with the issue. Districts asked for more advanced notice of manual revisions so they could plan training etc.

LATE-DAY/AFTER HOURS NOTICES FROM TEA & PEARSON

Districts are concerned about the “after hours’ notices sent to district test coordinators, especially on Friday after the work week has ended. Lisa Chandler stated that it was TEA’s goal not to have any late notices sent to districts, but that notices were sent out as soon as possible.

Region 17 stated that UPS was covering campus labels with their own UPS labels and it was difficult to peel the UPS label off of the campus label and slowed down getting materials to campuses. Walter Sherwood from Pearson stated that they are in regular contact with all carriers and would take the matter up with UPS.

TELPAS—with focus on the TOP Writer Rater qualifying process

Assignment of the Roles within the TOP system

Testing receives the information but it also requires a necessary involvement of bilingual/ESL, curriculum and staff development. Laura Ayala was asked who should assign roles in districts. Laura stated that it was a local decision and that the District & Campus Coordinator Manual (DCCM) explains why collaboration is important. TOP Rater Training is not negotiable and the district test coordinator may delegate responsibility to other departments, but it is in charge of TELPAS.

TOP Technical/infrastructure issues

Walter Sherwood stated that phone calls into Pearson were 100% more than they anticipated. He admitted that the number of calls “caught them off guard”. He acknowledged that there was a lot of frustration around the state and that Pearson got over 12, 000 calls in an 8 week period. Pearson expanded their helpline staff as soon as they realized the volume of calls they were receiving. They also got 4,000 emails and 55,000 Raters attempted to test online. The week of February 26th over 22,000 Raters attempted to qualify online. Districts asked if next year TOP Raters could have a separate 1-800 number so district test coordinators could get through to Pearson during the TOP window.

TOP access codes were a problem across the state. TEA anticipated 25,000 raters and codes were generated for that number. They wanted codes to match the CDC numbers and to keep unauthorized users out of the system. Pearson is now looking for a better system for next year.

Pearson has detailed reports regarding the problems with TOP System and online testing. Walter stated that there was confusion in the state about email addresses which was resolved on a case by case basis. It seems that Raters provided Pearson with incorrect or wrong email addresses. There were also issues with SPAM filters that blocked email from Pearson. There were also issues with limitations on the length of email characters, case sensitive issues, wrong grade level cluster chosen by rater, hitting the save button and instead having it submitted for a score as well as hardware and software issues. Pearson is working to correct all problems.

Districts asked if a Technical Survey should be completed prior to the window opening for TOP. Walter thought it was a good idea so that districts would be clearer about what technology was necessary prior to opening the window. Knowing what platform is required is also very important.

Districts also asked if they could bring technical staff with them to training and were told yes. Technical staff understand technology many times much better than district test coordinators.

Training requirements for next year

Laura Ayala discussed options for next year. She stated that 55,000 Raters attempted to qualify online and that 90% of the 55,000 passed. TEA has been accepting input from the field regarding training options for next year. Laura contacted T-SNAP members, ESC's and others to get input regarding the training for TOP for next year.

Training options include:

- TOT in July so new Raters could be trained in August. New Raters would have a training window from August until November and could immediately qualify online as soon as training is completed.
- Raters who trained this year but who failed to qualify online would have an Online Refresher Training in December-January timeframe and qualify online in February.
- New Raters and Raters who completed refresher training online would under go an recalibration activity in February.

She intends to have everything finalized and a letter sent to districts regarding TOP Training for next year soon.

When asked what would happen to Raters who fail to recalibrate using the rubrics she said, "We don't have an answer, yet."

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Cari Weyland stated that the Steering Committee met yesterday and representatives from 20 regions and parent advocate groups discussed TAKS-Alt test. She told us that she does not yet know who the federal government means by "1% of the most significantly cognitively disabled".

Cari believes it is a 2 prong issue:

1. Criteria for participation required for TAKS-Alt
2. Characteristics of who students are that would take TAKS-Alt

There are training issues. All assessment issues for students with disabilities are instructional issues. Students need access to general curriculum that has always been required but also there must be

- Alignment to TEKS curriculum
- Tool itself is needed

Cari stated that the January 12, 2006 letter is the best guidance in writing. Next year we will field test TAKS-Alt and all students eligible for TAKS-Alt must field test. Cari said that TAKS-Alt figures into AYP participation only for 2006-2007.

Shannon Houson stated that 3% cap for 2006-2007 on LDAA's must count for participation and performance for AYP. There will be no 1% in 2007. The USDE saves us from the automatic participation problem, but we must deal with the performance part. We can't have it both ways!

Shannon also stated that the Katrina-Rita Indicator (KRI coding) that was done in February will apply to April testing. However, grades 6 & 8 did not test in February. Some districts stated that we should all go back and check the KRI coding.

Update on dyslexia bundled accommodations---

Victoria Young stated that the DBA for TAKS reading went well. She stated that she got emails telling her that students performed much better using the DBA.

Grade 3 TAKS Reading – 6, 469 students used DBA and 84% met the standard; 20% were commended

Grade 5 TAKS Reading- 4,719 students used DBA and 68% met the standard; 5% were commended

Grade 3 Spanish TAKS Reading- 168 students used DBA and 61% met the standard; 7% were commended

Grade 5 Spanish TAKS Reading- 33 students used DBA and 52% met the standard; 18% were commended

There will be conflicts with grade 5 TAKS Reading in April and SDAA II math. Victoria recommends moving SDAA II Math testing to April 17th.

Victoria informed us that TEA is looking at DBA for middle school and high school for next year, but may look different from elementary DBA.

ONLINE TESTING TOPICS

➤ Long Range Plans

Lisa Chandler state student assessment is in the process of evaluating plans for next year. Communication will be drafted about infrastructure requirements for TAKS-Alt Field Test. She stated that there is nothing more concrete to report at this time.

GEE Online testing program-

Lisa Chandler stated that Louisiana controls GEE testing. All TEA does is provide communication from the state of Louisiana to Texas school districts. 14,000 students took the GEE in Texas. Districts reported frustration at the lack of support and testing dates that overlap Texas state testing. Lisa could not comment on the future of GEE testing in Texas.

OTHER TOPICS / CONCERNS SUBMITTED FOR DISCUSSION / INFORMATION

Legislative Update

Lisa Chandler stated that the special session on school finance is occurring in Texas. The Governor has not issued a call yet, so no one knows if the special session is limited to school finance. Educational Reform may be included, but we don't know yet.

End of Course (EOC) Field Testing in spring of 2007- Lisa stated that recently there was a governor's directive concerning college readiness that called for TEA to develop voluntary EOC Science and Math assessments. Plans for development start with Geometry and Biology tests that will be field tested next year in April or May. We do not know at this time if the field tests will be random or if all students will be required to participate.

Clarification of 'who can test' in April related to EXIT tests/re-tests

Gloria Zyskowski stated that a student who took the primary exit administration of ELA in February could not take the retest in April if districts scored the February test with an absence or another code. She said the student must wait to retest in July.

Security Update

The kinds of testing irregularities reported in February have not changed from the kinds of reports from the past.

- Most reports concerned the wrong test administered.
- There were also issues with not using Form 1 when needed for oral administration.
- Test administrators are still not clear about viewing tests or reading the tests or even scoring tests!
- Cell phones are still an issue across the state.

NAEP in 2007

Cathy Kline, the state coordinator, stated that there will be a significant increase in NAEP testing. Results for science in grades 4 & 8 will be released in April 2006. In 2007, the state reports will be added to the national reports, so more schools will be sampled to get the data needed for the reports.

Procedures for NAEP in 2007- The list of schools and districts will be released in May 2006 for the next year's NAEP in order for districts to create calendars. Districts with Title Funding must take NAEP in grade 4 & 8 math and reading. "Exceptional circumstances are needed for substitution of a campus," said Cathy. The student assessment website at TEA includes a NAEP Overview under "What's New."

Introduction of the Lexile measure on the CSRs

Victoria Young told us that the Lexile measure is included on students' CSR's for the first time this year. The Lexile Measure provides additional information for parents as to what type of reading material is available that is right for their child. The one page brochure on Lexile Measure (English and Spanish) should be given to parents. The brochure includes a Lexile website where parents can view a list of reading material that may be used by the student.

Streamlining of Test Training

Lisa Chandler stated that TEA went through the ESC/large district training PowerPoint presentation prior to training in order to make it easier for districts, campuses and students. She said that because of all of the different testing programs it is not always possible to make procedures and the training the same.

PEARSON SECTION

Email notification for testing material shipments

Terri Fish restated what Walter Sherwood had previously stated about being proactive in an attempt to do better in the future. Terri stated that Austin Operations releases emails to districts at 9 am the day the material is shipped UPS ground. Freight shipments have had no emails sent to districts, but are looking to address the issue. Terri asked that district coordinators call her if they have a problem with shipments and she will take care of it.

Braille testing materials

Late arrival of Braille tests is still an issue in Texas. For 2 years in a row Braille tests have arrived the day of testing in some districts. Terri announced a task force that was created to look into how to deliver Braille tests in a more timely manner.

