

Memorandum to State and School Network Coordinators

From: Gene Bottoms

Subject: The 2006 *High Schools That Work* Assessment

Date: Fall, 2005

It is time to make important preparations for the 2006 *High Schools That Work* Assessment. Please review the contents of this packet upon receipt. There are several items that need your immediate attention. Enclosed you will find:

- A list of tasks and timelines to outline the assessment schedule
- Sampling Instructions
- Student Roster Form and instructions for selecting a sample of student
- Checklist for Test Coordinators
- A Course Description Guide and instructions for classifying courses
- A Course Matching Chart
- A Test Description and Sample Question Booklet
- The Test Administration Guide (***NOTE: For assessment preparation only. Do not use this guide for the actual assessment. The final version will be sent with your test materials.***)

You may attend a state-level workshop about preparing for the assessment for additional training about these materials and the initial tasks that need to be completed by mid-December. If questions remain, do not hesitate to contact:

Allison Yasitis, SREB	(404) 879-5575 or allison.yasitis@sreb.org
Lisa Rion, ETS	(609) 734-5646 or lrion@ets.org
Seth Weiner, ETS	(609) 683-2331 or sweiner@ets.org

Please note that the assessment is to be administered between **January 9 and February 10, 2006**. It is critical to begin planning as early as possible. Do not wait until after the holidays to start your preparations. Testing materials must be postmarked for return no later than February 10, 2006. Materials returned after this date will not be processed.

Important Matters to Note:

1) The Course Description Guide and Course Matching Chart were updated in 2006. Do not use previous versions of these documents.

2) Many schools have decided to complete the Course Experience section of the survey (Section) for students before the test begins. This may yield more accurate data and reduce the amount of testing time required to complete the survey.

3) Remember the compliance policy for testing students with disabilities. See page six of the Test Administration Guide for details.

4) The assessment is comprised of a Student Survey and three subject tests in mathematics, science, and reading. Total testing time is approximately five and a half hours. The assessment may be administered in two, three, or four sessions. **Make sure to reserve sufficient time and space to administer make-up sessions.** Assessment data are usable **ONLY** if students complete the Student Survey. If a student completes the subject tests, but does not complete the survey, that student's data will not be part of the test results for your school.

5) Assessment booklets will be sent to sites via UPS between December 27, 2005 and December 30, 2005 to arrive at your school January 2-6, 2006. If you do not receive your materials by January 6th, please call ETS at (609) 734-5646.

6) Finally, we urge you to share with your students how their participation in this assessment is critical to improving their school. The assessment gives them a voice in the improvement process and also gives them an opportunity to earn the Award of Educational Achievement. Please go to SREB's website for ideas about how to motivate students to do their best on this assessment. Use the following web address:

<http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/Assessment/assessindex.asp>

As we begin this assessment cycle, our enthusiasm for this program continues to grow. We thank you for all you do to make the assessment a success. Many education professionals in this country (and throughout the world) know about your work. They recognize your efforts to reclaim the majority of our youth by challenging them with higher expectations and forging pathways to a better future that did not exist for them just a few years ago.