

Memorandum to State and School Network Coordinators

From: Gene Bottoms

Subject: 2008 *High Schools That Work* Assessment

Date: Fall, 2007

It is time to make important preparations for the 2008 *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, including new dates for 2008
- Sampling Instructions
- Student Roster Form
- Checklist for Test Coordinators
- Course Description Guide and instructions for classifying courses (Revised for 2008)
- Course Matching Chart (Revised for 2008)
- Information for Sites Bulletin (New in 2008)
- Test Description with Sample Questions Booklet (Revised for 2008)
- 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 Timberlake, SREB (404) 879-5575 or allison.timberlake@sreb.org
Lisa Rion, ETS (609) 734-5646 or lrion@ets.org
Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time). Questions will be answered within 24 hours.

Please note that the assessment is to be administered between **January 7 and February 1, 2008**. 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 1, 2008. 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 2007. Do not use previous versions of these documents.

2) We strongly recommend that schools complete the Course Experience section of the survey (Section 1) for students before the test begins. This may yield more accurate data and reduce the amount of time required to complete the survey.

3) Remember the compliance policy for testing students with disabilities. This has been revised for 2008. See 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. It is recommended that the assessment not be administered on one day only. **Make sure to reserve sufficient time and space to administer make-up sessions.** Assessment data are usable in school reports **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 school report for your school.

5) Assessment booklets will be sent to sites via UPS in early December to arrive at your school no later than December 15, 2007. If you do not receive your materials by December 18, please call Lisa Rion at (609) 734-5646.

6) We urge you to share the Test Description Guide with Sample Questions Booklet 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. Students will also receive an individual student report detailing their performance on the assessment for the first time in June 2008.. 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>

7) As you know, the *HSTW* Assessment has been revised based on the 2009 NAEP frameworks. In addition to serving as a measure of school improvement, it also serves as a measure of student college- and career-readiness. Please refer to the above website for more information on this revised assessment.

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.