

April 16, 2012

Good Afternoon,

Effective, high quality and consistent. These are the values about evaluation that are important to Ohio's educators. ODE is dedicated to providing the foundation and framework for principals and evaluators to ensure these values are present when the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) is implemented in the 2013-2014 school year. Our goal is to provide teachers with a richer and more detailed view of their performance, focusing primarily on their specific strengths and opportunities for improvement.

To prepare for this new generation of teacher evaluations, ODE has several information and training sessions planned for this spring and summer.

On May 25, the Statewide Educator Evaluation Symposium at the Greater Columbus Convention Center will discuss key aspects of OTES including, evaluation models, findings from pilot programs in Ohio, and promising ideas from around the nation. Registration is free, but you will need to go through STARS via SAFE [sign-in](#). Once there, use "evaluation" in the keyword search and enter May 25 as the event date.

Beginning in June, ODE will offer the OTES evaluator training required of all evaluators using the new system. Participants will gain a better understanding of OTES and will practice valuable skills such as scripting, evidence analysis/categorizing and coaching. The training will also share resources and best practices in educator evaluation. Upon successful completion of the three-day training and an online assessment, the evaluator will become a credentialed OTES evaluator.

There is no cost for this training, but registration is required through STARS. This training will continue over the next two years so that approximately 15,000 people can be credentialed as evaluators by the start of the 2013-2014 school year. A schedule of training dates and other updates can be found on our [Ohio Educator Standards](#) web page.

I encourage principals and other evaluators to start preparing for this change early in the process to ensure they acquire the proper credentials before OTES is implemented in your district.

Thank you for your continuing efforts on behalf of Ohio's children. Make it a great week.

Sincerely,



Stan W. Heffner

**Note:** Below are news items of interest to all superintendents and principals. Please share these items as appropriate with other suggested educators who will benefit from the information.

**For School superintendents and treasurers** – Please remember alternate assessment cap policy, Auditor of State announces reporting requirements for all public employers

**For curriculum directors, teachers and school counselors** – Help guide the development of next generation assessments with online pilot, April 23 Webinar - Moving Forward Safe and Supportive

Learning, Child abuse prevention video contest opens May 1

### ***For School superintendents and treasurers***

#### ***Please remember alternate assessment cap policy***

Traditional local education agencies (LEA) are restricted to a cap of 1 percent for accountability purposes. As in the past, the cap does *not* limit the number of students who should or may be alternately assessed; assessment type is a decision of the individualized education program (IEP) team. Assessment type should continue to be based on the needs of the child.

Although requests for exceptions to the cap on alternate assessments have been granted in the past, the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) indicated that these exceptions were permissible only temporarily. Please remember that ODE no longer accepts requests for these exceptions from traditional LEAs. Instead, LEAs that serve more than 1,000 tested students will be restricted to the cap of 1 percent of their total tested population. LEAs that serve 1,000 or fewer tested students will be restricted to a cap not to exceed 10 students.

USDOE believes that alternate assessments should be restricted for use with students who have the most significant cognitive disabilities and that this number should represent only 1 percent of a state's total student population. Furthermore, the USDOE rationale for the cap is that regular statewide assessments, with or without accommodations, are appropriate for the remainder of the student population.

Special LEAs that may request to exceed the cap are those with charters for primarily serving high percentages of students with significant cognitive disabilities (e.g., community schools dedicated to students with autism). To request an exception, a special LEA will be required to submit a copy of its charter and a letter detailing the intent to exceed the cap, along with the state student identifying numbers for students whose IEPs indicate they should use alternate assessments. (Only those students who meet the Full Academic Year criterion and count towards accountability calculations for the LEA should be reported.) These special LEAs may obtain the form with instructions for completing the waiver by clicking [here](#) or by visiting the ODE [home page](#) and searching keywords: *Alternate Assessments*. For questions, please contact Jackie Seward at [jackie.seward@education.ohio.gov](mailto:jackie.seward@education.ohio.gov) or (614) 387-7570.

#### ***Auditor of State announces reporting requirements for all public employers***

As a result of new House Bill 66 requirements, all public offices, including public (traditional and community) schools, must make their employees aware of the Ohio Auditor of State's fraud-reporting system by the bill's May 4 effective date. In addition, public employers must make newly hired employees aware of the system and have them confirm in writing that they have received this information within 30 days of initial employment.

Per the legislation, the Auditor of State has expanded its existing fraud hotline (telephone) program to allow all Ohio citizens the opportunity to also make anonymous complaints about fraud online or through the U.S. mail. These reports are those regarding misuse of public money by any official or office. The Ohio Auditor of State's [Fraud Center](#) provides more information, including sample confirmation forms for new employees. Also see House Bill 66 language [here](#).

### ***For curriculum directors, teachers and school counselors***

#### ***Help guide the development of next generation assessments with online pilot***

Starting today, students and educators will have an opportunity to experience how an online assessment might work as ODE transitions to the next generation of assessments for the 2014-2015 school year. Participation is voluntary to schools that participate in the Spring 2012 OAAs and 8<sup>th</sup>-grade students who have a Statewide Student Identifier (SSID) number.

The online pilot contains both multiple choice and interactive questions. Information gathered from the pilot will help inform the development of the next generation assessments. The content for the pilot test is

8<sup>th</sup>-grade Social Studies.

Additional details related to the online assessment pilot, including an overview of procedures, technology requirements, schedules, documents, links and software, will be made available on the [Online Pilot Portal](#) on April 16. Questions concerning the online pilot may be directed to Denny Wagoner at (614) 466-0223 or [dennis.wagoner@education.ohio.gov](mailto:dennis.wagoner@education.ohio.gov).

***April 23 Webinar - Moving Forward Safe and Supportive Learning***

Join ODE in a webinar conversation on April 23 at 4 p.m. to take an intense look at both academic and non-academic learning supports for student success. National guest speakers, Dr. Howard Adelman and Dr. Linda Taylor, will continue a discussion started in a fall 2011 webinar regional series and update national progress on learning supports.

This is an opportunity to join the Safe and Supportive Learning Collaborative, an educational learning community that provides resources and technical assistance, promotes sharing of best practices and encourages school, family and community partnerships. For more information, register [here](#).

***Child abuse prevention video contest opens May 1***

The Ohio Children's Trust Fund is sponsoring a high school video contest to help educate the public about child abuse and neglect prevention and inspire the public to action. High school students from Ohio's public, private, career-tech, community and charter schools are invited to create a bold, creative and exciting 30-60 second video that focuses on the problem.

Four schools will be chosen to receive a \$5,000 award. The contest runs from May 1-15. For more information and guidelines, visit the Ohio Children's Trust Fund [Web page](#) or call (614) 387-54788.

*ODE is interested in your thoughts about how EdConnection fulfills your information needs. Please send any comments or suggestions to [Superintendent@education.ohio.gov](mailto:Superintendent@education.ohio.gov).*

*Follow our new Facebook page for Ohio families by clicking [here](#).*

*Follow ODE's Twitter feed by clicking [here](#).*