

**District Writing Assessment**

**General Information Bulletin**

**Nipisihkopahk Education Authority**

2014-2015

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# Introduction

This document is designed to be an instruction manual for the administration of the pilot district writing assessment. The hope is that you find all of the information you need to successfully administer it in your schools and classrooms this year. If you do not find what you’re looking for, or have additional feedback about the assessment itself and ways that it could be improved, please contact Ryan Anderson at [randerson@scnea.com](mailto:randerson@scnea.com).

# Schedules and Significant Dates

## Administration Window

Like the new SLAs that will be administered by the province, the district writing assessment will be administered within an administration window instead of a single date. That means teachers can administer the assessment over the span of a few days, or on a day that works best for their students.

The administration window is as follows:

***Administration Window - Tuesday May 19th – Thursday May 29th***

Because teachers have the flexibility to administer the assessment at any time during this window, they also have the ability to administer the assessment in segments. This decision can be made by teachers if they feel that their students would benefit from segmenting the test versus completing it in one single sitting. That decision is left to the professional judgment of the classroom teacher. However, ***all students in their classes have to have completed the assessment by the end of the administration window.***

## Marking Date

Unlike last year, we have scheduled our marking sessions on the district PD that will be held on ***Friday May 30, 2015***. The marking session will be held for all teachers teaching grades 1-9. The session will run from ***9:00am until 12:00pm***. ***Location will be determined at a future date*** and will be relayed to staff through email.

All materials that will be needed for the marking session (such as scoring guides and exemplar booklets) will be provided to teachers on that day. ***Teachers are only required to bring a pen/pencil*** with witch they will mark student samples.

# Test Accommodations

Because this is a locally developed and administered assessment, we can make whatever accommodations necessary for our students. When it comes to accommodations for this particular assessment, individual ***teachers will have the autonomy to make accommodations for students based on their IPPs.*** If students require certain accommodations, such as a reader or scribe, outlined specifically in their IPP, then such an accommodation can be made for this assessment as well.

If students will be given accommodations for the assessment, ***teachers are required to fill out the accommodations section included in each of the individual tests***. It identifies what the accommodation is, and who the adult was that provided the accommodation.

***If a student is exempted from the PAT, which is a similar type of an assessment, because of the recommendation made by the superintendent or a psychologist, then the student would be exempted from this assessment as well.*** All other students, however, will write this assessment so that we can determine where our students are at in terms of their writing and what we could do to best help them in their future learning.

With regards to making accommodations for students, teachers are encouraged to make arrangements with other teachers at the school and/or EAs if adults are needed for student accommodations. This should be manageable due to the fact that there is a two week administration window instead of a single test administration.

# Test Rules

The following are the general rules for test administration. Please note that there have been a few changes from last year’s administration.

## Type of Assessment

Remember, ***the District Writing Assessment is a first draft writing exercise***. This means that students produce one copy of their work for assessment. First draft writing does not allow for the completion of rough and good drafts.

## Printing of Materials

Given the photocopying limitations experienced by teachers, ***all testing booklets will be printed and delivered to the schools*** for distribution. Teachers do not have to download and print the test booklets for their students like they did last year. Booklets will be generated according to class lists in Power School.

## Use of Visuals/Smart Board

Teachers are permitted to put the image/illustration on the Smart Board so that their students can better see the image/illustration in order to write their narrative story.

## Discussion and Planning

Teachers are encouraged to engage their students in discussion and planning as outlined in the instructions for the assessment; however, ***teachers are not to do the planning for the students***. Inasmuch as teachers are to facilitate the discussion and planning, the ideas and the work of planning should come from the students.

Please note that there has been a change to the amount of time that teachers can take with their students with respect to discussion and planning. According to the grade level meetings held earlier in the school year, ***we have decided to allow for up to, but not more than, 20 minutes for both discussion and planning***.

## Segmenting of Time within the Administration Window

As previously mentioned, if teachers feel that their students would benefit by segmenting discussion, planning, and writing times, it is permitted under the test rules for the administration of the district writing assessment; however, this decision should be made only for the benefit of the student(s). This also allows for the individualization of a test administration for the benefit of students who would not be able to complete the assessment within the same parameters as the rest of their classmates. Caution and planning, however, should be taken into account when considering how such time adjustments will be made.

# Technology and Other Resources

Teachers can choose to have their students write by hand or by computer. They can even have some of their students write by hand and some by computer. It is at the discretion of the teacher; however, should the teacher choose to have students complete the assessment using a word processor ***all autocorrect functions need to be deactivated for the writing of the assessment.***

***Students are permitted to have access to a dictionary and thesaurus*** during the administration of the assessment. This includes any personal dictionaries that students may have created under the direction of their teachers over the course of the year, such as word wall dictionaries, etc.

# Securing and Delivering of the District Writing Assessment

***It is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that these assessments are kept in a secure place*** until all students have completed the assessment during the administration window.

Once all students in the class have completed the assessment, ***teachers are to submit them to their principals for safekeeping.***

***All assessments need to be completed and delivered to principals no later than the end of the school day on Thursday May 29, 2015.*** Optional Assessment

Teachers can choose to use the scoring guides and make this an assignment or assessment worth marks; however, this is not mandatory. The scoring guides will eventually be used for teachers to engage in a grade level marking sessions where they can determine how students did in relation to the scoring guides and what students should be able to do based on the program of studies for each of the respective grades.

Please note that these are not secured documents, and can be copied to be put in students writing portfolios if that is something that is being done in the classroom or school. Copies can also be kept if a teacher would like to use the district writing assessment for further discussion, instruction, and learning with students.

# Test Results

Intellimedia is currently making customizations to our Dossier program. This will allow for the importing and display of student results for this assessment. More information will be provided as the customization is finalized. It is anticipated that a workshop will be offered in the fall of the 2015-2016 school year to show teachers how to access test results for this assessment and how to use it to inform their practice.

# Adding Assessment to the Cum Files

Mr. Anderson keeps all student samples of the assessment on file. Should principals want copies of student samples for cum file purposes, arrangements can be made by principals contacting Mr. Anderson and making those arrangements.