

August 29, 2008

TO: Chief School Administrators
Charter School Lead Persons

FROM: Jay Doolan, Ed.D., Assistant Commissioner
Division of Educational Standards and Programs

SUBJECT: Professional Development Opportunity: *Assessment Literacy Workshops*

Last year the department sponsored a series of highly successful regional workshops on the theme of Assessment Literacy. These professional development workshops were intended to complement the implementation of the *Learnia* formative assessment component of our new elementary and middle grade assessments. We believe that substantive professional development in understanding and applying assessment concepts is essential to the success of our formative assessment program and to the improvement of student achievement overall.

I am pleased to announce a new series of Assessment Literacy workshops for 2008, and I urge you to release appropriate school staff to participate in them.

Assessment Literacy Workshops

Pearson (formally Harcourt Assessment) will present a one-day, six hour class in Assessment Literacy designed to provide district staff with a substantive grounding in essential educational measurement concepts, as well as practical techniques for analyzing student achievement data. To get a preview of the Assessment Decision Model that will be used in this session, please feel free to go to www.assessmentacademy.net and click on the Practical Application tab to view a short 20 minute video.

These classes will be limited to groups of about 40 - 50 participants each, in order to maximize the opportunities for interactive, hands-on training. Participants will study four key assessment “decision points” and apply them to sample student data performance sets. The training will increase the capacity of district staff to make effective use of their own assessment data and related student achievement information. There is no charge for these workshops.

Any district administrator, school administrator or teacher is eligible to sign up for this training. Lunch and refreshments will be provided. We encourage districts to send teams of staff members; however, a maximum of five participants from any one district will be accepted. Please note that all sessions will start promptly at 9 a.m. and end at 3 p.m. The dates and locations for these sessions are as follows:

Date	Location	Address
October 6, 2008	Somerset County Education Office 4 th Floor Conference Room	27 Warren Street Somerville, NJ 08876
October 6, 2008	Essex County Education Office 2 nd floor (LRC conference room)	7 Glenwood Avenue East Orange, NJ 08302
October 7, 2008	Passaic County Public Safety Academy Rooms 122A/B	300 Oldham Road Wayne, NJ 07470
October 14, 2008	New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association	12 Centre Drive Monroe Township, NJ 08831
October 15, 2008	Clark Township School District - Union County 2nd Floor	365 Westfield Avenue Clark, NJ 07066
October 20, 2008	Camden County Educational Office Educational Services Commission	225 White Horse Avenue Clementon, NJ 08021
October 21, 2008	New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) Building	180 West State Street Trenton, NJ 08607
October 22, 2008	Hackettstown School District- Warren County Hackettstown Middle School	500 Washington Avenue Hackettstown, NJ 07840-
October 23, 2008	Ridgewood Village School District- Bergen County	49 Cottage Place Ridgewood, NJ 07451
October 23, 2008	Upper Township School District - Cape May County Upper Township Elementary School	50 Old Tuckahoe Road Marmora, NJ 08223

To sign up for the training or to clarify any locations, please e-mail Ramiro Delgado at ramiro.delgado@pearson.com. Please put Assessment Literacy in the title line and include in the body the session you would like to attend, your contact information, the names and titles of all those coming from your district, and your district name.

As a reminder, you may wish to review Commissioner Lucille Davy's May 9, 2008 memorandum regarding *Learnia*: <http://www.nj.gov/education/assessment/formative/memo050908.pdf>. The *Learnia* system provides schools with a rich set of grade 3-8 formative assessment resources that will enable teachers to adjust their instruction to meet student needs throughout the school year. These resources include pre-existing benchmark assessments, aligned to New Jersey standards, item pools for diagnostic analysis of CPIs and common student errors, as well as test authoring and score reporting capabilities. *Learnia* is a web-based, comprehensive tool that will provide a wide range of timely, actionable reports to meet the specific needs of each education professional in New Jersey. In addition, *Learnia's* answer analysis function provides information about the types of mistakes students are making, allowing teachers to develop more focused strategies to help students. There is no charge to districts for using *Learnia*. If your district is not already using *Learnia*, contact the Pearson representative directly: Scott Herr, Director of Implementation Services, at 800-228-0752, ext. 5680. For any matters pertaining to the statewide assessments, please feel free to contact Timothy Peters, director, Office of State Assessments, at (609) 984-7761.

JD/TP/csamemo: Professional Development Opportunity: *Assessment Literacy Workshops*

c: Members, State Board of Education

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