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Analyzing and Calculating Winter Performance Series Gains

Upon completion of the winter test window, academies can determine if students are on track to meet or exceed average growth and/or demonstrate progress toward The Center for Charter Schools’ (“Center”) achievement targets and ACT’s College Readiness Benchmarks. A thorough and careful data analysis can provide the Academy with the information needed to effectively evaluate each student’s progress toward his or her own achievement target and plan instruction accordingly.

Below is a method to calculate minimal expected gains for students from fall to winter, which can be utilized by any staff member with access to the students’ scores. This method employs Scantron’s Observed Average (Mean) Gains from the most current national norm study. Average gains can be used in conjunction with ACT’s College Readiness Benchmarks to measure progress.

- Use the Standard Error of Measure (SEM) to establish confidence intervals around the scaled scores.
- Keep in mind that scaled scores are a reliable *estimate* of student achievement.
- Additionally, it is important to note that these gains are *average* and, if students are well below grade level, average gains may not be enough to ensure that your students are on track to achieve the College Readiness Benchmarks.

The Observed Average (Mean) Gains document is attached and can also be found under the documents tab on the Performance Series website.

To obtain average gain from fall to winter based on the Observed Average (Mean) Gains charts:

1. Obtain a class or grade average *or* individual student’s **fall** scaled score along with the correlating National Percentile Ranking.
2. Using the Observed Average (Mean) Gains charts, locate the correct grade level and subject for the student, class or grade and determine which quartile the scaled score falls within.
 - a. The first quartile represents students whose score falls between 1-25 on the National Percentile Ranking system. Accordingly:
 - ii. Quartile 1 = 1 - 25 NPR Quartile
 - iii. Quartile 2 = 26 - 50 NPR Quartile
 - iv. Quartile 3 = 51 - 75 NPR Quartile
 - v. Quartile 4 = 76 - 99 NPR Quartile
3. Locate the column titled “Obs. Overall Gain in Spring” which provides the average gain for students whose scores fall within that quartile.
4. To obtain the average expected gain for the winter test window, divide the average gain from fall to spring by 2.
5. Compare this figure with the actual gains students achieved from fall to winter from the data provided on the District Reports tab under the Gains column.
6. Finally, use the attached ‘Education Goal’ document to determine a student’s or a group of students’ distance from the achievement targets, which are based on ACT’s College Readiness Benchmarks.

The simplicity of this process allows you to focus on what is most important - using the data to inform instruction and make informed decisions about your students, school, educational program, curriculum, and school improvement plan.

Performance Series Data Maintenance

Occasionally, the New Year brings enrollment changes within the Academy. To maintain the accuracy of your data and ensure Archived Data is correct, please remember the following guidelines:

- Students who have completed a test in the fall but are no longer enrolled at the Academy, must stay on your Performance Series site until after the summer rollover. Following this practice will ensure the Academy's Archived Data accurately reflects fall test results.
- Students who have not completed a test and are no longer enrolled at the Academy can be deleted. Prior to deleting students, ensure they have no test history in their profiles. Once a student's record is deleted, it can never be recovered.

EXPLORE AND PLAN Assessments

The EXPLORE and PLAN test administration window will open on March 5th and end on March 14, 2012.

Testing Materials

The Center will order the Academy's testing materials and arrange for them to be delivered to the Academy mid-February. Once materials are received, please open them immediately and take inventory to ensure the required materials are present. If not, please email or call the Center immediately to rectify any discrepancies with the Academy's materials order. Remember to keep the boxes the materials were shipped in, as these are a convenient place to store the test booklets which the Academy will distribute in late April or early May to students with the results.

Pre-Identification labels will arrive separately from your testing materials. Please ensure these labels are affixed properly to each student's test booklet.

[Test Supervisor's Manuals](#) will arrive with the Academy's testing materials, or can be viewed online following the above hyperlink. Ensure these important manuals are read by each staff member assisting with the test administration and that they thoroughly understand the policies, procedures, and instructions. As a reminder, the Charter Contract states, "The Academy shall ensure that those involved with the administration of these assessments are properly trained and adhere to the ethical standards and testing procedures associated with these assessments." (Schedule 7e)

Test Schedule

You may administer the assessment on any day from March 5th through March 14, 2012. Please email the Academy's test schedule as soon as it is prepared, but no later than February 20, 2011 to sbetcher@thecenterforcharters.org. **The schedule must contain four dates and times:**

1. One initial date and one make-up date for the Non-Test/Student Information Section. This section of the EXPLORE and PLAN test must be completed at least one day prior to the administration of the assessment itself to shorten the test day administration time. Students can complete this portion prior to March 5th, or as soon as the materials arrive. Please schedule 40 minutes to 50 minutes for this important section of the test.
2. One initial date with times and one make-up date with times for the assessment itself. Remember that the tests (English, mathematics, reading, and science) must be administered in one session, consistent with the administration model used in the national norming study. There cannot be any extended breaks (e.g., no lunch breaks) between testing sections. Please schedule 2 ½ to 3 hours to administer the assessment.

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As with all standardized assessments required by the Charter Contract, the Center will be conducting drop-in visits during the testing window. The visits are designed to identify best practices that can be shared with other schools and to ensure consistent administration of the EXPLORE and PLAN assessments. Please email your test schedule to sbetcher@thecenterforcharters.org on or before **February 20, 2012**.

Student Preparation

Students taking the EXPLORE or PLAN for the first time may not be familiar with taking assessments under timed conditions. The Academy might find it helpful to administer timed tests during regular classroom activities. Students can hone their time management skills with practice.

Distribute and discuss [Why Take PLAN®?](#) and/or [Why Take EXPLORE®?](#), which are included with your testing materials or can be accessed via the hyperlinks.

On test day, students will need:

- Two No. 2 pencils with erasers (**no ink or mechanical pencils**)
- A calculator with the four basic functions plus square root function for the math assessment only
- A watch to pace themselves (optional)

Test Administration Guidelines

The EXPLORE and PLAN tests should be administered under the same high standards as ACT®. The following are abbreviated guidelines from the EXPLORE and PLAN Test Supervisor manual.

1. Facilities:
 - a. Uncrowded seating, all students facing one direction, and 3 feet apart shoulder-to-shoulder.
 - b. Suitable lighting, comfortable temperature, quiet atmosphere.
 - c. Adequate writing surfaces.
 - d. Freedom from distractions.
 - e. Individuals not involved in testing should not be in the room.
 - f. Uninterrupted testing sessions (no restroom breaks unless it is an absolute emergency; student must be accompanied by a proctor).
 - g. No unnecessary noises (no radios or music).
2. All assessments should be timed according to directions.
 - a. More than one timepiece must be used in each room to ensure accurate timing.
 - b. Time remaining may not be posted.
 - c. Announcement of five minutes remaining must be read verbatim from the supervisor's manual.
3. All assessments (English, mathematics, reading, and science) must be administered in one session, consistent with the administration model used in the national norming study.
4. **All materials must be kept secure.**
5. Over-prepare your staff and students on what is expected on the day of the test.
6. Do not tell your students "this is a practice ACT" or similar language as students will not take the assessment as seriously.
7. It is not necessary to start all rooms together.

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Testing Personnel

1. Required number of qualified personnel per room:
 - a. One room supervisor is required in each room for groups of 25 and under.
 - b. After the first 25 students, 1 proctor is also required (i.e., 26-50=1; 51-75=2; 76-100=3).
2. Testing staff may not be:
 - a. Involved in test preparation outside of normal teaching responsibilities.
 - b. Enrolled in high school.
3. Room supervisors and proctors should make testing their only focus.
 - a. Periodically roam through the room.
 - b. Do not read books, grade papers or use a computer.
 - c. Watch for students working behind or ahead.
 - d. Watch for students bubbling in wrong section.
 - e. Watch for wandering eyes.
4. No food or drink for students or testing personnel.
5. **Read testing directions verbatim** – do not ad lib, deviate or abbreviate.
6. Do not leave room for any reason unless you have another testing staff member in room.
7. Have extra #2 pencils ready.

Assessment Results

Please ship only the answer documents to ACT® and keep the test booklets secure at the Academy for distribution to students with their results. Ship all answer folders (standard, make-up, and accommodated testing) to ACT immediately after your last testing session, but no later than March 16, 2012. To ensure accurate scoring, ship each grade level separately. **Do not use the pre-addressed, prepaid mailing envelope that is provided with your testing materials by ACT.** Instead, the Center will send the Academy a prepaid Federal Express shipping label(s) for the purpose of returning the answer documents to ACT.

Please ensure the test booklets are secured in your school for later distribution to students once the results are received.

ACT will ship all test results to the Academy. The Center will conduct a meeting at the end of April to review the data provided by ACT. This meeting will provide the Academy with the information needed to share the results with your parents, students, and stakeholders. If the Academy is administering the EXPLORE or PLAN assessment for the first time, do not distribute the results to students until after attending this informational meeting.

Essential ACT Links

[EXPLORE Administrator Resources](#)

[EXPLORE Room Supervisor's Manual](#)

[PLAN Administrator Resources](#)

[PLAN Room Supervisor's Manual](#)

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Students Not Tested Window Opening January 9th Until January 23rd – Fall 2011 MEAP, MEAP-Access, and MI-Access Testing

The following excerpt is taken from email communication sent to the educational community from the Bureau of Assessment and Accountability (“BAA”) on January 5, 2012:

It is very important for schools to provide a reason why any student was not assessed in fall 2011. The Students Not Tested screen on the BAA Secure Site (www.michigan.gov/baa-secure) will display a list of students that the BAA has identified as enrolled in the school during the Fall 2011 assessment window (using the Michigan Student Data System). A red “N” will display for a content area in which a student should have been assessed and was not (based on the student’s grade level). Where a red “N” is displayed, a reason why the student did not test needs to be submitted. The Students Not Tested page will remain open until **Monday, January 23, 2012 at 11:59 p.m.**

Not all reasons listed in the drop down menu are valid exemption reasons for accountability purposes. When a Not Tested reason is selected that is not a valid accountability exemption, a message will display informing the user. Selections from the drop down menu, which may be a valid exemption reason, are automatically submitted electronically to the BAA for review. You can check the status of submitted issues on the “Not Tested Issues” screen. After Not Tested issues are submitted, please check back periodically, as the BAA may have requested additional information. If additional information is requested, this information is required before the submitted issue can be processed. Student demographics (including unique identification codes), entry/exit dates, and Primary Education Providing Entity (PEPE) issues are no longer appealable (after 12/5/11) and cannot be corrected during the Students Not Tested window.

Instructions for the “Students Not Tested” page can be found in the BAA Secure Site User Manual (<https://oeaa.state.mi.us/meap/Help/BAA%20secure%20website%20Manual.pdf>).

Questions? Please email us at BAA@michigan.gov or call 877-560-8378 and select the appropriate option.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you,
Sherry

Sherry Betcher
Assessment Coordinator
The Center for Charter Schools
Central Michigan University
www.TheCenterForCharters.org
Telephone (586) 215-1402

If you wish to unsubscribe to this newsletter please email Sherry Betcher at sbetcher@thecenterforcharters.org.

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