



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION

DIVISION OF
LEARNING SERVICES

WWW.ARKANSASED.ORG

Subject: Message #21: Changes to Science Testing

Date: August 18, 2015

To: adecurriculum@lists.state.ar.us

From: Arkansas Department of Education Curriculum and Instruction Unit

Dear Curriculum Leaders:

You have probably heard that the Benchmark assessments for Grades 5 and 7 and the Biology EOC have been replaced by The ACT Aspire assessment. The ACT Aspire assesses science for grades 3-10. In addition The ACT for Grade 11 also has a science test. Many of you have questions regarding the content of the tests and how best to prepare your students. You may also have questions about the new Arkansas K-12 Science Standards. Not to worry...

Here are a few tips:

1. Engage students in doing science. Teach the current 2005 Arkansas Science Curriculum Frameworks. The Science Curriculum Frameworks in effect for the 2015-16 school year can be found on the ADE Website at this link:
<http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/learning-services/curriculum-and-instruction/curriculum-framework-documents/science>
2. Have your students reading, writing and problem solving through science. Collaborate with your math and literacy teachers to make sure your teaching/learning expectations match. For example ask the math teacher exactly what needs to be on a graph that you might have students produce with data you collected during a science investigation. Ask the literacy coach/teacher for recommendations on informational text that match your content.
3. Visit the exemplar items on the ACT Aspire website. There you can become familiar with the types of questions asked at various levels. <http://www.discoveractaspire.org/assessments/test-items/>
4. Plan on attending professional development on the new standards this year. Contact your local science specialist or your STEM center for training times in your area. Professional development will be of great benefit to you prior to using the new standards.
5. The new standards will be implemented in grades K-4 during the 2016-17 school year, in grades 5-8 during the 2017-18 school year, and in high school during the 2018-19 school year. For more information on the Arkansas K-12 Science Standards go to

Please share this information with others that might be interested. Thank you for serving the students of Arkansas.

Arkansas Department of Education
Learning Services Division
Curriculum and Instruction Section
Director: [Stacy Smith](#)
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<http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/learning-services/curriculum-and-instruction/arkansas-k-12-science-standards>.

If you are still concerned about the ACT Aspire and the ACT, a descriptor and time table of the test can be found on Page 29 of the Summative Assessment Technical Bulletin

#1: http://www.discoveractaspire.org/pdf/2014_ACT-AspireTechnicalBulletin1.pdf. The test items will include data representation and interpretation, research summaries, conflicting viewpoints, science investigation, and student viewpoints.

Our assessment specialists are here to help you. If you have further questions, do not hesitate to call. You can reach me at the office number below, or call the assessment office number, 501-682-5300.

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