

# Intradistrict Communication

DATE: Thursday, January 31, 2019

TO: Middle School Principals  
High School Principals

FROM: Dr. Anthony Godfrey, Associate Superintendent  
Ben Jameson, Director of Evaluation, Research and Accountability

SUBJECT: Utah Aspire Plus Updates and Reminders

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In an effort to provide timely updates and reminders as we transition to a new state-mandated 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade summative assessment, we want to provide the following information to school administrators. Principals are asked to please pass this information on to test coordinators, ELA, math, and science teachers, resource teachers, and any other pertinent personnel who will be involved with the 2019 administration of the Utah Aspire Plus Summative test.

## Updates and Reminders:

- School administrator, test coordinator and teacher accounts on PearsonAccessNext, the admin site for Utah Aspire Plus, went live on Monday, January 28<sup>th</sup>. If you did not get an account notification email, please call or email the Evaluation, Research & Accountability Department.
- Question samplers for each of the four subtests (English, reading, math and science) are now available on the Utah Aspire Plus resource website: <http://utah.pearsonaccessnext.com/question-samplers/>. It is strongly encouraged that every 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade student has had the opportunity to go through the question samplers.
- USBE's new parental opt in policy where a parent, with signed permission, may opt to have their child's Utah Aspire Plus score be used in place of a course requirement will not be available this year. We do not expect to see any scores for the Utah Aspire Plus test until the fall of 2019, rendering the opt in impossible.
- It is recommended that school administrators help parents, students and community members understand that the Utah Aspire Plus is essentially free practice for the ACT. Individual student reports will provide a predictive score for the ACT and their student's college readiness. Like the ACT, parents will also have access to a parent portal where they can drill deeper into their student's performance on the Utah Aspire Plus and access resources to help their student prepare for the ACT. ACT's own research has shown that students perform better on the ACT if they take it more than once. Therefore, taking the Utah Aspire

Plus, which is an ACT product, will have a positive impact on students' future ACT performance.

- USBE has set the dates of February 4-8, 2019, as the week schools should test the new system and ensure the installed testing software is working. Details on how to do this system check will be available to testing coordinators and school administrators during the Utah Aspire Plus trainings (Jan. 28<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>). Please work with your school techs and test coordinators to accomplish this task.
- Please remember that once a subtest has been started, it must be finished in one sitting. School testing schedules should allow for this. If a student has to stop a test for any reason (they get sick, a parent checks them out, etc.), it is unlikely that he/she will be able to finish the subtest.
- The Utah Aspire Plus is a grade specific, end-of-level test, which means that all 9<sup>th</sup> grade students must take the 9<sup>th</sup> grade test and all 10<sup>th</sup> grade students must take the 10<sup>th</sup> grade test. For instance, an 8<sup>th</sup> grader in a 9<sup>th</sup> grade math class will not be eligible to take the Utah Aspire Plus test. In addition, the RISE and Utah Aspire tests cannot be taken in the same room.
- Blueprints for the Utah Aspire Plus test have recently been released. They can be found on the Evaluation, Research & Accountability Department's website. They are also attached with this JAM memo.
- Middle School Principals: Because you will be implementing two brand new summative assessments with completely different admin sites, we are recommending that middle schools, where possible, have a RISE test coordinator and a separate Utah Aspire Plus test coordinator to help ease the learning curve and workload.

For more information and additional resources for the Utah Aspire Plus Summative test, please visit the Evaluation, Research & Accountability Department's website:

<http://assessments.jordandistrict.org/assessments/utah-aspire-plus/>