

Executive Numbered Memo 010-2008-09 - Suspension of Double Scoring for Writing Assessment

February 20, 2009

TO: IT Managers, Superintendents, District Test Coordinators

RE: ODE Adjusts Scoring Process for State Writing Assessments at Grades 4 and 7

Summary:

ODE is temporarily suspending the double scoring system for the State Writing Assessments at Grades 4 and 7 for papers that clearly meet or clearly do not meet the writing standard.

In response to the recent economic crisis and budgetary shortfalls, the Oregon Department of Education will retain the essential elements of the statewide writing assessment while reducing the number of ratings used to score these essays at grades 4 and 7. This temporary suspension of double scoring will be implemented using the following guiding principles:

- Papers that **clearly meet** or **clearly do not meet** the writing standard based on an initial reading by a qualified rater will only be scored once.
- Papers that would typically fall into the **nearly meets** category will be scored using the traditional double-scoring process, including a possible third reading to resolve any discrepancies.
- High school papers will receive double scoring, as has been done in the past, and local districts will still have the option to appeal scores at this grade level if there are local ratings of the essay that determine the student work meets the state standards.
- For grades 4 and 7, ODE is providing more than 1 rating as a substitute for the option to appeal the state score based on a local evaluation.

Based on prior experience with the rating system where individual trait scores from two raters agree 95% of the time, we feel that the single ratings will provide an accurate portrayal of student writing and will help inform instruction. However, because this change will affect the comparability of the scores to previous year's assessments, Grade 4 and 7 writing scores will continue to be excluded from accountability reports (e.g. School Report Card and AYP determinations). [Districts will still be able to access their scores and use the data to inform instructional decisions.]

ODE is working with ESDs and its contractors regarding the implementation of these changes so that the reporting and storage of scores occurs as smoothly as possible.