



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
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OFFICE OF CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND STUDENT SUPPORT

June 30, 2009

To: Complex Area Superintendents, Principals, Charter School Administrative Office Director and Charter School Directors

From: Daniel S. Hamada, Assistant Superintendent

Subject: **Annual Assessment for English Language Learners (ELLs): Adoption of the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) to Replace the Language Assessment Scales Links (LAS Links)**

The World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) will replace the LAS Links as the annual assessment for English language learners (ELLs). The first administration of the new assessment will be in February 2010.

LAS Links was replaced with WIDA after considerable discussions because No Child Left Behind Title III requires that the state English language proficiency (ELP) standards be aligned to the state ELP assessment. The alignment study between the Hawaii English Language Proficiency Standards (HELPS), approved by the BOE on October 13, 2008 and LAS Links, reflected poor to limited alignment. The Department explored how other states met the alignment requirement and found that nineteen states adopted the WIDA ELP standards and assessment. The System Accountability Office, Student Assessment Section, the Instructional Services Branch's core content Educational Specialists and Resource Teachers, and the ELL Program Advisory Committee were involved in reviewing the alignment study findings and recommend adopting the WIDA standards and assessment. On May 21, 2009, the Board of Education (BOE) approved the adoption of the WIDA ELP standards. Adoption of the WIDA ELP standards allows for the use of the WIDA ELP assessment. The HELPS will be used as a tool to bridge instruction between WIDA's ELP standards and HCPS.

In order to ensure the relationship between HCPS and WIDA's ELP standards, an alignment study between the two will be conducted on July 7 – 9, 2009. Please refer to the previously approved May 20, 2009 memo in DOE Memos and Notices.

If there are any questions, please contact Ms. Lynette Ackerman, Educational Specialist for NCLB Title III, at 733-9141, ext. 243, or via Lotus Notes.

DSH:LA:dm

c: Superintendent  
Assistant Superintendent  
Superintendent's Office Directors  
Charter School Administrative Office