MESSAGE FROM THE EDUCATION MINISTER

The Punjab Government under the dynamic leadership of Chief Minister Punjab Ch. Pervaiz Elahi is trying its best under the Education Sector Reforms Program to enhance literacy rate and provide the students quality education. The quality education can only be ensured in the presence of standard curriculum, well trained and motivated teachers and a proper assessment system to assess students learning.

The establishment of Punjab Education Assessment System (PEAS) is a healthy sign for quality education. It is associated with National Education Assessment System (NEAS) Ministry of Education Government of Pakistan. It is conducting sample based survey to determine students learning achievement level in government schools for the preparation of database which would be helpful for the curriculum, modules development and teacher training. It is pleasant that this institution has made linkage with national and international institutions including University of the Punjab, Australian Council for Education Research (ACER), University of Melbourne, Australia and the Educational Testing Service (ETS) in the United States. The mutual cooperation with these institutions will enable PEAS to benefit their experiences and research in assessment system and teaching method. I feel immense pleasure to mention that in a short span of time PEAS has shown an excellent performance and has prepared a comprehensive report about students learning level in Punjab. The recommendations of this report will be useful for improving the standard of education in public schools. I assured the PEAS, my full support and pray for its success.

MESSAGE FROM SPECIAL SECRETARY SCHOOLS

The Government of Pakistan and the Govt. of the Punjab are committed to improving the quality of Education. The establishment of National Education Assessment System (NEAS) at national level and Punjab Education Assessment System (PEAS) at the provincial level reflects the commitment at governmental level to Institutionalize students assessment as a permanent feature of education system. Punjab Education Assessment System (PEAS) is making utmost efforts to provide the government and all the stakeholders, valid and reliable Information regarding the learning achievement level of students in Punjab. I am pleased to know that PEAS Punjab is publishing its first newsletter. It reflects the dedication of PEAS team and fulfill one of the responsibility of PEAS i.e. Information Dissemination. Teachers play the key role in improving the quality Education so they should use the available information to improve quality Education.
**BACKGROUND**

The Government of Pakistan as well as the Government of the Punjab is committed to improve the quality of education along with its efforts to increase enrolment and access. This commitment is reflected in the government’s policy documents (National Education Policy 1998-2010, Education Sector Reforms 2001-05) and in its reaffirmation at international forums to include quality outcomes such as student achievement scores as performance monitoring indicators in the education sector. A specific priority within the overall plan is to:

A dialogue about the need to establish a mechanism for National Assessment of learning achievement at school level initiated in a national workshop at Lahore in December 1997. It was followed by National/Provincial workshops and Technical Group Meetings (TGMs). Provincial Education Assessment Centers (PEACES) in each province were declared as partners and implementing agencies of National Education Assessment System (NEAS), Ministry of Education Islamabad. The Provincial Education Assessment Center (PEACE) Punjab started functioning in May 2002. In July 2005, PEACE Project was revised with new name as “Punjab Education Assessment System” (PEAS). Education Department, Government of the Punjab.

Keeping in view the importance of students learning assessment, Education Department, notified an institution named Punjab Education Assessment System (PEAS) vide letter NO. SO(TRG)2-6/04(P-1) dated 27th September 2006. Now PEAS is responsible for NEAS and PEAS Project activities in Punjab.

**MISSION**

Our mission is to provide valid and reliable information about student’s achievement level to support quality education and professional development.

**VISION**

PEAS will be known in providing fair and valid assessment to help:

- Policy makers base on ground realities in making realistic decisions.
- Teacher educators improve the professional development of teachers.
- Teacher improve their classroom practices through assessment and professional development.
- Educational institutions facilitate teaching and learning environment and provide useful information to public about students’ performance.
- Assessment specialists develop fair, valid and innovative assessments.
- Researchers advance the area of educational assessment and contribute in policy discussions about educational issues.
- Text Book and Material Developers develop effective textbooks and teaching learning material for learning improvements.
- Parents understand and use assessments findings to help their children reach their potentials.

**VALUES**

PEAS is guided by some values and commitments which are:

- Commitment to integrity in all efforts we do.
- Professional standards in research and assessment.
- Fairness and validity in all tests.
- Commitment to quality education through valid assessment findings.
- Recognition and respect for all who participate in conducting assessment.
- Accountability and openness in all we do.
OBJECTIVES

1. To Organize and conduct activities of National Education Assessment System (NEAS) Ministry of Education in Punjab.
2. To participate in the capacity building workshops/programs organized by NEAS.
3. To organize and conduct capacity building workshops/programs in the area of assessment.
4. To prepare, translate, pilot and compile test items to assess students learning achievement level.
5. To identify institution to be included in assessment samples.
6. To conduct quality control monitoring of NEAS/PEAS assessment activities at provincial level.
7. To disseminate findings at district level.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Competencies and Test Item Development Workshop

A ten days workshop on Competencies and Test item development was organized by PEAS Punjab from 27th February 2006 to 08th March 2006. Forty five participants were invited to this workshop from all over the Punjab. They were divided into five subject groups i.e., Urdu, English, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science. During this workshop they were trained to develop competencies and test items for each subject.

Two Days Test Administration Training Workshop

PEAS Punjab organized two days Test Administration Workshops on March 21-22, 2006. Forty seven participants were invited from six districts of Punjab i.e., Sahiwal, Bahawal Nagar, Mandi bahauddin, Jhelum, Khushab and Lahore. The objective of this workshop was to train the participants for the administration of Tests in the subject of Urdu, English, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science at Grade-VIII level.

Pilot Test in 6 Districts of Punjab

In March 2006 a pilot test was administered in 6 districts of Punjab (Sahiwal, Bahawal Nagar, Mandi bahauddin, Jhelum, Khushab and Lahore) in 5 subjects. The objective of the Pilot testing was to check the item characteristics and the reliability of the test.

Test Administration Training Workshop

Five hundred test administrators were trained in eleven centers of Punjab in April 2006. The purpose of this workshop was to train the Test Administrators (TAs) to collect data about students learning level in Punjab under National Assessment Activity i.e., NEAS activity, National Achievement Test 2006 in Punjab.
National Achievement Test (NAT) 2006

NAT 2006 was conducted in April 2006 by PEAS Punjab.

National Pilot Achievement Testing (NPAT) 2006

In April 2006 PEAS conducted and supervised National Pilot Achievement Testing (NPAT) 2006 in Punjab under NEAS project.

Scoring of National Achievement Testing (NAT) 2006 Instruments

A ten days activity was organized by NEAS for the Scoring/Coding of Grade-IV NAT 2006 instruments in the subjects of Urdu, Math, Science and Social Studies. The subject specialists, school teachers and university students participated in this activity. Monitors cross checked 25% of the scored booklets to ensure quality in marking and scoring.

Scoring of Pilot Tested Instruments of PEAS

In June 2006 Scoring/Coding activity was organized by PEAS Punjab for the scoring of pilot tested instruments regarding Grade-VIII in the subjects of English, Math, Science, Social Studies and Urdu. The instruments were administered in selected schools from six districts of Punjab.

Subject Committee's Meetings on August 1-2, 2006

A two day meeting/workshop of Subject Committees was organized at PEAS on August 1-2, to discuss Test Frameworks and Test Items. All the members of the notified committees were invited to this meeting/workshop. The representative from Institute of Education and Research (IER) University of the Punjab, Punjab Text Book Board, Provincial Institute of Teachers Education (PITE) and GCETs participated in the meeting.

Mrs. Lucy Jones the consultant from NEAS and Miss Shafqat, the Subject Specialist of NEAS were especially invited to PEAS Punjab to facilitate the participants. The main objectives of this meeting were to:

1. Review the Framework of the respective subjects.
2. Develop the items in respective subject.
Stakeholders Conference

Punjab Education Assessment System (PEAS) organized a stakeholders conference on 20th September 2006, in which major stakeholders i.e., Executive District Officers (Education), Heads of Teacher Training Institutions, Text Book writers, Teachers, Parents, Students, Elected Representatives, Representatives from Donors, NGOs, Educationists and Senior level Government Officers were invited. The purpose to hold this event was to disseminate the results of Punjab Assessment 2005. The Joint Executive Advisor, Mr. Saqib Ali Khan gave a briefing to the participants about NEAS/PEAS. The Director PEAS presented the Punjab Assessment Results 2005, regarding Grade-IV students' achievement level in the subjects of Mathematics and Urdu. Some educationists shared their views how the classroom and teachers training play a vital role to achieve the target of quality education. The participants also expressed their ideas and concerns towards achieving the task of quality education. All such activities exhibit the sincerity of Education Department to establish proper assessment mechanism for improving quality education.

Subject Committee Meeting March 2007

Subject committee meetings were held in PEAS office to review the instruments in the light of analysis of pilot test data. Subject committees also matched the items with frameworks and tables of specification.

Background Data Working Group Meeting March 2007

Background data working meeting was held in PEAS office to review and finalize background instruments. These background instruments include head teacher background questionnaire, teacher background questionnaire and students and parents background questionnaires, developed to solicit information from head teachers, teachers, students and parents.

National Achievement Testing (NAT) 2007
Grade-VIII in the Subjects of Urdu and Math.

National Education Assessment System (NEAS), Ministry of Education, Islamabad conducted its 3rd National Achievement Testing (NAT) 2007 at Grade-VIII level in the subjects of Urdu and Mathematics. PEAS organized this activity in Punjab. Two hundred and twenty six (226) schools from thirty five districts of Punjab were included in the sample of NEAS for this activity. PEAS got the schools confirmed from EDO offices
Of the relevant districts. Nominations for Test Administrators were also sought from EDO offices. PEAS staff and selected master trainers from Punjab imparted training of Test Administration to 500 Test Administrators on April 18-19, 2007 at 13 Training Centers established in GCETs. Tests were administered on April 23-24, 2007 in all the sample schools successfully.

**Provincial Achievement Test (PAT)**
**Grade-VIII, English, May 2007**

Provincial Planning and Coordination Committee (PPCC) for PEAS advised to administer Provincial Achievement Test (PAT) at Grade-VIII level in the subject of English only. A sample of 210 schools was selected at the pattern of NEAS sample selection. Ten schools where English medium of Instruction is used partly for selected students were also included due to the concern of PPCC regarding achievement level of students with English medium. About 450 Test Administrators were trained on May 2-3, 2007 at ten training centers to administer the test. Tests were administered on May 5, 2007 in all the sample schools successfully.

**Marking/Scoring of Grade-VIII Urdu NAT 2007**

PEAS organized marking and scoring of Grade-VIII National Achievement Test in the subject of Urdu. Six Subject Specialists got training of monitoring the scoring process at NEAS on April 30 to May 01, 2007. Marking Scoring activity at PEAS office started on May 8, 2007 and continued till May 19, 2007. Fifteen Subject Specialists, working teachers and Ph.D. Students from University of the Punjab worked as Markers/Scorers. Monitors checked 25% of the work done by Markers/Scorers to ensure accuracy and quality of marking process.

**Marking/Scoring of Grade-VIII English PAT 2007.**

PEAS organized marking and scoring of Grade-VIII Provincial Achievement Test in the subject of English. Ten teachers trained by PEAS staff for marking and scoring worked for thirteen days i.e. from May 21 to June 2, 2007 to complete the task of marking and scoring. PEAS staff monitored the marking process to ensure accuracy and quality.

**Data Entry of Grade-VIII English and Background Questionnaires of PAT 2007**

Eight experts for data entry were hired to enter the data of Grade-VIII English test and background questionnaires. The process of data entry was completed by June 10, 2007.

**Courses/Workshops held for the Capacity Building of PEAS Staff**

During the year, PEAS staff has attended various workshops in the pursuit of capacity building. In July-August 2006, Dr. Khalid Mahmood attended the “Two months in-
country certificate course on Testing and Assessment” at Institute of Education and Research, University of the Punjab. It was the workshop designed by NEAS in collaboration with ACER, Australia.

2. The second three month in-country Certificate Course on “Testing and Assessment was attended by Ms. Sabina Aziz (Senior Subject Specialist) and Mr. Muhammad Hussain (Senior Subject Specialist) from November 2006 to February 2007. It was also organized by NEAS in collaboration with ACER, Australia.

3. Two of the staff members of PEAS Mr. Naveed Khurshid Mustafa (Deputy Director) and Ejaz Dastgir (Senior Subject Specialist) are participating in one year sandwich program for Master of Assessment and Evaluation at IER, University of the Punjab. This program comprises three semesters. Two semesters will be conducted at I.E.R and one will be conducted at Melbourne University Australia.

4. One of the staff member of PEAS Shazia Altaf (SSS) is attending one year master degree course in Assessment & Evaluation at Melbourne University, Australia.

Study Visits

1. Structured Study Visit of ETS by Coordinator PEAS.
SOME IMPORTANT FINDINGS ABOUT ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL OF 4th GRADE STUDENTS IN THE SUBJECTS OF MATH & URDU BASED ON DATA COLLECTED IN 2005 ARE AS UNDER.

1. The achieved scaled mean scores in mathematics in Punjab is 421 and in Urdu is 369, which is below the scaled mean set at 500.
2. The hard area for the students in mathematics are fraction, problem solving and measuring of segment. In Urdu the students are very weak in writing their own observations in daily life. The students are also weak in grammar and vocabulary.
3. If we compare the learning level of Pakistani/Punjabi students with other countries then we are relatively close to the countries which scored low in Trends in Mathematics and Science Studies (TIMSS) 2003 study.
4. The urban students have an edge over the rural once in both the subjects.
5. The girls are performing well in both the subjects as compared to boys. It is contrary to the findings of some other studies in which the performance of boys is better in mathematics.
6. The 4th Grade students attached with higher and high schools perform better. However the performance of primary schools in Punjab seems better as compared to the primary schools of rest of the provinces.

FORTH COMING EVENTS

2. Competencies and Item development.
4. Stakeholder conference to disseminate findings of PEAS.
5. Visits of various institutions for linkage development.
6. Dissemination of Assessment findings and Assessment Training at district level (Selected Districts).
7. Establishment of PEAS computer lab.
8. Seminar on Assessment and Quality of Education.
9. Sample selection for Large Scale assessment of students. Sample will be based on stratified random sample technique.

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