An Rannóg Pholasaí, Curaclaim agus Measúnachta, An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna, Sráid Mhaoilbhríde Baile Atha Cliath 1		Curriculum and Assessment Policy Unit, Department of Education and Skills Marlborough Street Dublin 1

To: Boards of Management, Principal Teachers and Teaching Staff of Primary Schools and Special Schools
CEOs of ETBs

Information in relation to Actions under the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy Standardised Testing, Reporting and Other Matters

Academic Year 2013/14 and Subsequent Years

Circular Letter 0045/2014

1. Revised School Report/Transfer Card Templates

The principal of each primary school is required to send a copy of the end-of-year report card to the post-primary school to which a child transfers (Circular 56/2011). This information is only provided after enrolment in the post-primary school has been accepted.

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) has developed a suite of materials to support the reporting and transfer of pupil information from primary to post-primary schools. The materials are presented under the umbrella title of Education Passport and are available at www.ncca.ie/transfer.

From **2013/2014** schools can use their current NCCA report card templates or some/all of the new Education Passport materials to support the reporting and transfer of student information. The report card should be sent to the relevant post-primary school following confirmation of enrolment by the post-primary school and, ideally, by the end of June.

The standard report/transfer card has been developed by the NCCA, following an extensive period of engagement with stakeholders, to support the dual purpose of reporting to parents and transferring student information to post-primary schools post-enrolment.

From **2014/15** schools will be required to use the Education Passport materials. These include
- The standard *6th Class Report Card Template* for completion by schools.
- The *My Profile* sheet for completion by pupils in primary schools before being shared with their parents/guardians.
- The *My Child's Profile* sheet for completion by parents/guardians. This should be sent with the *My Profile* sheet to parents/guardians by the end of the second week of June at the latest. Parents may complete the *My Child's Profile* should they wish to do so.

Further details on reporting arrangements are available at www.ncca.ie/transfer.

Further information will issue on the requirements for 2014/15 in due course.

2. **Standardised Testing in Primary Schools – Returns for 2013/14**

Thank you for your continued co-operation in providing the results of your standardised testing via the Esinet online system. All schools responded last year and we acknowledge the work of school staff in this regard.

You will have recently received funding for 2013/2014 standardised testing. These funds may be used to purchase test instruments and materials such as teachers' manuals, test scoring services or test-related software offered by test providers. Any funds remaining after the standardised testing costs have been met may be spent on diagnostic tests in accordance with a school's needs.

During May/June 2014, you should carry out the tests in accordance with circulars 0056/2011 and 0018/2012 available at www.education.ie. The results of these tests must be uploaded onto the Esinet portal on or before **16th June 2014.**

Note that the online system has been updated this year to include separate reporting of all STens. In the new system, STens 1-3 and 8-10 are no longer grouped together. The system now provides for reporting STens at each level from 1 – 10.

A step by step guide to uploading the returns is attached in the Appendix.

Schools are reminded of their reporting obligations in Part 7 of Circular 0056/2011: Reporting and Using the Results of Assessments to Improve Pupil Learning. These include:
  - Reporting to parents: Schools are reminded that they should issue written reports to parents in sufficient time before the closure of the school for the summer vacation to allow parents a reasonable opportunity to seek meetings with the principal and/or teacher(s) to discuss the written report, if necessary.
  - Using report card templates: Note that all primary schools must use one of the report card templates (available at www.ncca.ie) for reporting to parents on students' progress and achievement at school (as reiterated at section 1 above)
  - Reporting, analysing and using assessment information at school level
  - Reporting information from standardised tests to their board of management
  - Reporting assessment results to other schools
  - Reporting standardised test results to the Department of Education and Skills

Note that the administration of standardised tests to whole classes is inappropriate in infant classes. Standardised tests, if used before the end of first class, should be administered in small groups only. See www.ncca.ie for more information.

3. **Support for Parents**

The National Adult Literacy Agency has developed small Z-cards for parents to help support their children's literacy and numeracy. These are credit sized cards that fold out like a map with 24 ways to keep children entertained and learning all through the summer. The cards are available for collection in your local education centre, if you wish to make them available to the parents of pupils in your schools.

4. **Primary Online Database (POD)**

The Department of Education and Skills is currently in the process of developing an individualised database of primary school pupils, known as the Primary Online Database (POD). This will give schools the ability to make online returns to the Department. POD will collect individual information on each pupil, including their PPSN. POD will, when introduced, negate the need for schools to complete the National School Annual Census. The introduction of POD will also facilitate the identification of pupils who do not make the transfer from primary to post-primary. Further details are outlined in circular 0017/2014. Note that initial discussions have taken place on the possible future inclusion of the collection of some of the data items outlined in section 2 in POD.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely,

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Breda Naughton
Principal Officer
Curriculum & Assessment Policy Unit

Appendix

STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO UPLOADING RETURNS

In order to upload the returns, please **fully complete** the following steps:

DATA ENTRY

1. The designated **data entry** person in your school should log onto the Esinet portal, click on 'Literacy and Numeracy Returns', and then 'CAP Application', before entering the results of the tests on the form on screen, and clicking '**Submit'**.
2. Once the scores are submitted, the data entry person should log out.

APPROVER

3. The designated **approver** in your school should then log onto the Esinet portal, click on 'Literacy and Numeracy Returns', and then 'CAP Application'.
4. If the approver is satisfied that the correct scores have been entered, he/she should click '**Approve'**.
5. A message will appear to say 'Thank you. Your records have been successfully approved'.
6. The approver should then click '**Finish'**.

Please note the following points in relation to the uploading of returns on the Esinet portal:
- All returns must be submitted **online**. Postal returns will **not** be processed
- Returns should be submitted by the <u>designated</u> data entry person in your school **and** then approved by the <u>designated</u> approver
- Submitted returns will **not** show up in the OLCS approval list. The approver must log into the application and approve the data

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR SPECIAL SCHOOLS: NIL RETURN OPTION

In the case of special schools if, in the view of the school principal, all relevant students have a learning or physical disability which would prevent them from attempting the tests, the system now allows you to make a nil return. In this case, please do not enter data into the STen levels.

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR INFANT SCHOOLS

As infant schools have no pupils in second, fourth or sixth class, no return is required. If an infant school logs on to the system, the school will not be recognised by the system.