



# Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA) Update Bulletin

January 3, 2014

## 2014 Calendar

Jan. 13 – 16

Retest Option #1  
Reports Arrive

Sep. 3 – Mar. 28

Retest Option #2  
Administration  
Window

Jan. 06 – Mar. 28

Retest Option #3  
Administration  
Window

Feb. 03 – 04

Pre-ID labels,  
Demographic  
Forms, and  
Return Kits arrive  
in systems

Feb. 04 – 06

Mid-  
Administration  
Webinars

This bulletin addresses the administration of the GAA from mid-year through the close of the assessment window on March 28, 2014.

**Note: For those districts that retested high school students during *GAA High School Retest Window #1*, system level data are posted to the MyGaDOE portal. These data files can be found in the 'GAA' folder under “District Assessments”.**

Shipment 2 will arrive in systems February 3 – 4, 2014 and will contain Student Demographic Information Forms (*SDIF*), pre-ID labels, and return shipment kits. This shipment is packaged by school and delivered to the system. System Test Coordinators are responsible for distributing the materials to each school and to the Georgia Network for Therapeutic Support (GNETS), where applicable.

The return window for GAA portfolios for the main administration and for retest options #2 and #3 is March 14 – 28, 2014. The early return of portfolios is encouraged!

Shipments of portfolios from systems must be postmarked no later than March 28, 2014. ***It is critical that all materials leave Georgia systems no later March 28.***

### TEST SECURITY

Maintaining security of student materials is crucial to obtaining valid and reliable assessment results. The GAA is designed as a working assessment that occurs in the classroom. Teachers who are assessing students on the GAA need access to the forms and collected evidence to complete the assessment. While evidence is being collected and compiled, it is permissible for the materials to remain in the classroom, provided they are secured (i.e., secured in locked storage within the classroom) when not in use.

At both the collection and submission phases, it is appropriate to involve colleagues (i.e., other certified educators) in the review of the portfolio to ensure that all components have been included and the documentation and annotations are concise and accurate based on the instructions and guidelines outlined in the *GAA Examiner's Manual, 2013-2014*. A Checklist for Teachers and Portfolio Reviewers, found on page 57 of the manual, is provided to ensure all procedures have been followed and requirements met at the system level prior to submission of the portfolio for scoring. Once satisfied that the portfolio is complete, teachers should then submit the binder(s), with **original** forms and evidence inserted, to the School Test Coordinator by the date established by the system.

Mar. 14 – 28

Systems return  
portfolios to  
Questar for  
scoring

Jun. 04 – 11

Main  
Administration  
and Retest  
Options #2 and #3  
reports arrive in  
systems

Post Assessment  
Webinars

Jun. 11 – 13

## PORTFOLIO BINDERS

Each student being assessed on the GAA should have one binder. Additional binders may be requested and shipped to your system prior to March 14. Situations for which additional binders may be needed include the enrollment of new students in the system and/or for transfer students whose evidence arrived without a binder. Additional materials requests must be consolidated. It is recommended that counts from each of your schools are obtained before placing an additional order. Questar Assessment Inc., Customer Service Toll-Free Number is: 1-866-997-0698. You may also email your additional materials order to [GA@QuestarAI.com](mailto:GA@QuestarAI.com).

## PRE-ID LABELS

Each school will need to carefully review pre-ID labels for accuracy of student data before attaching to a SDIF. Specifically, check that each student's grade level and system/school codes are correct. Also, correct placement of the pre-ID label is important. Place the label within the dotted lines on page 1 of the form. All sections of the *SDIF* must be completed if a pre-ID label is not provided for a student.

## STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORMS (SDIF)

An SDIF must be completed and submitted for each student participating in the GAA. Three SDIFs are utilized for the GAA. There is an SDIF specifically designated for students who are assessed during the main administration in grades K and 3-8 (purple) and high school (orange). High school retesters' data are coded on a different (blue) SDIF. Instructions for completing each SDIF are attached to the respective form. Examiners should be careful that the correct SDIF is being used for a student. Once completed, the SDIF should be inserted into the clear, vinyl overlay on the front of the student's binder. *As a reminder, the SDIF must not be three-hole punched, photocopied, nor placed inside the binder.*

Several sections of the SDIF must be completed for students who are assessed during the main administration even if a pre-ID label is used. Pre-ID labels are not provided for retesters.

**The following sections should be completed for students in grades K and 3-8 (purple), including those with pre-ID labels:** Box A, Box K (State Required Codes), Box L (Strands Assessed), Box M (Teacher's first name initial and last name), Box N (two-digit GNETS or GAVS code for students served in these programs) and Box O (State Directed Coding), if applicable.

**The following sections should be completed for students in high school (main administration; orange), including those with pre-ID labels:** Box A, Box K (State Required Codes), Box L (Strands Assessed), Box M (Teacher's first name initial and last name) and Box N (two-digit GNETS or GAVS code for students served in these programs), Box O (State Directed Coding), if applicable.

**As reminder, if a student is accommodated under Section 504 or is Migrant Certified, SRC 14 or 18, respectively, must be marked on the SDIF.**

## FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Guidance on the assessment of high school students for the main administration and for those requiring retesting is available in the *GAA Examiner's Manual, 2013-2014*, pages 3-4.

The blueprint for the main administration is available in the *GAA Examiner's Manual, 2013-2014*, Appendix D.

For more information on the Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA) visit the Assessment Web site at <http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Pages/GAA.aspx>

The blueprints for retesters are located on the GAA Resources webpage. The link to the website is: <http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Pages/GAA.aspx>.

### **ASSEMBLING PORTFOLIOS AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL**

School teams should be encouraged to review all directions in the *GAA Examiner's Manual, 2013-2014* regarding compiling and documenting student evidence and assembling evidence in the portfolio binder. Samples of annotated evidence, as well as several helpful checklists, are included in the *Examiner's Manual*.

To help schools avoid nonscorable entries, common errors resulting in scoring problems are outlined in the *GAA Examiner's Manual, 2013-2014* (see pages 66-67). ***Each portfolio should be carefully reviewed to ensure its completeness.***

Each portfolio should contain the following fully completed forms:

- The *Student Demographic Information Form* (see directions above);
- An Entry Sheet and four pieces of student evidence for each content area entry (refer to the *GAA Examiner's Manual, 2013-2014*, pages 35-37 to confirm the number of standards to be assessed by grade and content area); and
- The *Validation Form* signed by the teacher and the building administrator (note that this form was sent in the fall shipment and is also posted on the GAA webpage). The *Validation Form* must have both signatures of personnel in each school the assessed student has attended during the school year. **No exceptions!**

In-state transfer students should have two signed *Validation Forms* in their binder—one form signed by the teacher and the building administrator of the sending school/system and the other form signed by the teacher and the building administrator of the receiving school/system.

The *Release to Use Student Portfolio for Training Form* must be signed by the parent/guardian for the portfolio to be used to train scorers or Georgia educators. The use of photographs and/ or videotapes showing the student being assessed and others with whom the student interacts does not require a release. The identity of the student will be protected.

For the main administration, systems should return portfolios for grades K, 3– 8, and 11 only. The state will not score portfolios submitted in the main administration for grades 1, 2, 9, 10, or 12. Portfolios for students in grade 12, who are retesting, will be scored and must be submitted in a black binder. Complete the Transmittal Form, included in the Return Kit, following the directions provided. ***Use the boxes the binders were originally shipped in to return the portfolios to Questar.*** Binders should be organized by grade and school; more than one school can be placed in the same box. Unused binders and *SDIF* should be included in the last box for the system. The Transmittal Form serves as the header sheet for the system. There are no school header sheets for this assessment.

### **STUDENTS WHO CHANGE SCHOOLS OR SYSTEMS WITHIN THE STATE OF GEORGIA**

Students who transfer schools and/or systems within the state of Georgia during the assessment window should have their portfolio, including all evidence and related documentation, sent to the receiving system. Each system is responsible for developing an appropriate protocol that ensures the portfolio is sent to the receiving system in a timely and secure manner. It is recommended that a method of shipping that provides a

tracking number be employed. *Students who have transferred from within the state are not eligible to have Box J, Portfolio Not Complete, marked on the SDIF.* A receiving system should contact the GaDOE Assessment Administration Division if the system experiences difficulty in receiving a student's portfolio after multiple attempts.

#### **STUDENTS WHO TRANSFER FROM OUT-OF-STATE, PRIVATE SCHOOLS, OR HOME STUDY**

Students who enroll in a Georgia system from another state, a private school, or home school must also be assessed. Out-of-state students who enroll after January 1, 2014 may have Box J, Portfolio Not Complete, marked on the *SDIF*, for each content area submitted, if there is not sufficient time to complete all required entries for both collection periods. *It is critical; however, that a student enrolling after January 1 has evidence for Collection Period 1 completed and submitted in their portfolio for each required content area.* Inclusion of evidence for one collection period will allow the student to be counted as a participant for the purpose of accountability. Students who have no evidence submitted cannot be counted as participants.

#### **TRAINING WEBINARS**

The mid-year administration webinar, presented annually to System Test Coordinators in preparation for shipping portfolios to the vendor for scoring, is scheduled for February 4-7, 2014.

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE VENDOR**

Questar Assessment Customer Service

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