Your Student's Computer-Based PEAKS Experience

In spring 2017 students in Alaska will take the Performance Evaluation for Alaska's Schools (PEAKS) for the first time. This assessment measures the skills and concepts in the Alaska Math and English Language Arts Standards.

Many students will take PEAKS using a computer. Students will use the device that they use in their classrooms: a laptop, tablet, or desktop computer. Computer-based tests also have built-in tools for students to use while they work. These tools are like the ones teachers use in the classroom. Students can use a highlighter, calculator, or a sticky note. Another kind of tool that students have is called "masking." It allows students to cover up parts of the information on the screen so that it is easier to focus. Students can also have scratch paper and a pencil to use outside of the computer. On a computer-based test, students might highlight a part of a story, put ideas in order, drag and drop items in a math problem, or draw a graph.

Some students might have more tools. Students who have a learning disability or are English learners can have a tool called "text-to-speech." Text-to-speech reads the test questions and answer choices to the student.

Most tools are available for all students. They will be there when they log into the test. Other tools require a teacher to turn them on. If you have questions about what tools your student has on the test, talk to your student's teacher or the principal.

Students will have access to two different resources to prepare for the spring computer-based test.

Student Tutorials are web-based videos that introduce the computer-based test using sample items, animation, and closed captioning to describe the test tools and navigation through the test.

Online Tools Training (OTT) offer a hands-on opportunity for students to become familiar with the INSIGHT test engine (the program that the test runs on) and practice using the tools.

You can access the tutorials or OTT to view what kinds of questions your student will be answering. Directions for accessing these resources can be found on the PEAKS webpage at https://education.alaska.gov/tls/Assessments/PEAKS.html.

	Tools available on ELA, Math, and Science assessments
	Pointer – Used to select answers and tools within the test.
	Cross-Off—Cross out/eliminates multiple-choice answers
	Highlighter—Highlights text
	Magnifier—Magnify/enlarge the entire screen, including all text, images, and objects, for better viewing. The tool magnifies the screen by 150% or 200%.
Line Guide	**Line Guide**—Movable, straightedge line used to follow along with each line of text.
?	**Help**—The Help Library provides information on tool usage, test directions, and helpful hints on using the student test engine.
	Sticky Notes (Scratch Paper)—Creates and places a note on the screen in which a student can type a short message for later reference.
X+Y	**Reference Materials**—Includes a Formula Sheet or Periodic Table to aid students in answering a question.

	Tools specific to the PEAKS Math Assessment
	Calculators—Basic four-function and scientific calculators are available at specific grade levels
	Graphing Tool—Used to graph one or several functions. Includes zoom and trace features.

	Additional tool available to some students
■ ● ❚❚	**Text-to-Speech** —Starts, stops, or provides starting points for the student to select where the speech should start.