FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 4, 2014

MEDIA ADVISORY

ACT ASSESSMENTS INFORMATION SESSION
Alabama First State in the Nation to Offer Full Suite of Assessments

WHAT: Press briefing to offer information on ACT Aspire (System level testing begins April 28) and the entire ACT suite of assessments, which offers educators and parents an opportunity for customized instruction and detailed reports on student growth from Grades 3 through 12.

Answers provided to questions such as:
• Why did Alabama discontinue the Alabama High School Graduation Exam?
• How are the ACT assessments different from ARMT?
• How are these different from what was required by No Child Left Behind?

Information will be offered on ACT Aspire, ACT Explore, ACT Plan, ACT Quality Core (End of Course tests), the ACT plus Writing - now offered to all 11th grade students free of charge, and ACT WorkKeys.

WHEN: Wednesday, April 9, immediately following the K-12 Board Meeting

WHERE: Room P104
Gordon Persons Building
50 N. Ripley Street, Montgomery, AL 36104

WHO: State Superintendent Dr. Tommy Bice
Deputy State Superintendent of Instruction Sherrill Parris
State Board of Education members
National representatives from ACT

To view the event online, please visit http://www.alsde.edu/sites/boe/Pages/home.aspx.
Archived videos can be viewed at http://www.alsde.edu/sites/boe/Pages/PreviousMeetings.aspx. For questions, please contact Communications at 334-242-9950 or send an e-mail to comm@alsde.edu.
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ALABAMA COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READINESS ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

**ACT WorkKeys**
ACT WorkKeys is a job skills assessment system that helps employers select, hire, train, develop, and retain a high-performance workforce. This series of tests measures foundational and soft skills and offers specialized assessments to target institutional needs. As part of ACT’s Work Readiness System, ACT WorkKeys has helped millions of people in high schools, colleges, professional associations, businesses, and government agencies build their skills to increase global competitiveness and develop successful career pathways.

**ACT Plus Writing**
The ACT® college readiness assessment contains five curriculum- and standards-based assessments: English, Mathematics, Reading, Science, and an optional Writing Test. The assessment is used as a college admissions and placement test and measures the skills and knowledge needed for first-year college success. Additionally, the ACT includes a career exploration component that stimulates students’ thinking about future plans and relates personal characteristics to career options.

**ACT QualityCore**
ACT QualityCore is a research-based system of educator’s resources, formative items and end of course assessments designed to help schools better prepare all students for college and workforce training. It ensures that high school core courses are focused on the most essential postsecondary skills and enables educators to monitor progress toward, and attainment of, those skills.

**ACT Plan**
ACT Plan is a curriculum-based educational and career planning program for 10th graders that measures achievement in English, math, reading, and science. ACT Plan helps students build a solid foundation for future academic and career success and provides information needed to address school districts’ high-priority issues. It is a comprehensive guidance resource that helps students measure their current academic development and make plans for the remaining years of high school and post-graduation years.

**ACT Explore**
ACT Explore is a curriculum-based educational and career planning program for 8th and 9th graders that measures achievement in English, math, reading, and science. The assessment is based on the major areas of high school and postsecondary instructional programs and measures the skills and knowledge needed for college success.

**ACT Aspire**
ACT Aspire is an assessment system that measures academic achievement in English, math, reading, science, and writing in grades 3 through 10. ACT Aspire is linked to the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards, research-based information that makes test results meaningful by connecting a student’s ACT Aspire score to specific skills and knowledge important for college and work success.

*With the transition into ACT Aspire, the last administration of ACT Explore and ACT Plan for Grades 5 and 10 will be October 2014*
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Immediately preceding the ACT Information Session at the board meeting, ALSDE will honor the ACT College and Career Readiness State Nominees. For the second year, ACT has launched a College and Career Readiness Campaign to celebrate achievement and create awareness around the goal of college and career readiness for all.

This year, ALSDE has submitted nominees for all four categories:

- Student Readiness Award – Jared Crawford, Section High School, Jackson County Schools
- College and Career Transition Award – Spain Park High School, Hoover City Schools
- Career Preparedness Award – Shelton State Community College
- Workplace Success Award – Rheem Manufacturing, Inc.

Nominations have been submitted to ACT. A national winner will be chosen from all states’ submissions for each category in May.

Last year, Alabama’s student nominee Sheree Gremillion of Florence, won the National Award for Student Readiness. Read more about her here.

For more information on the awards, please visit http://www.act.org/readinesscampaign/.

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