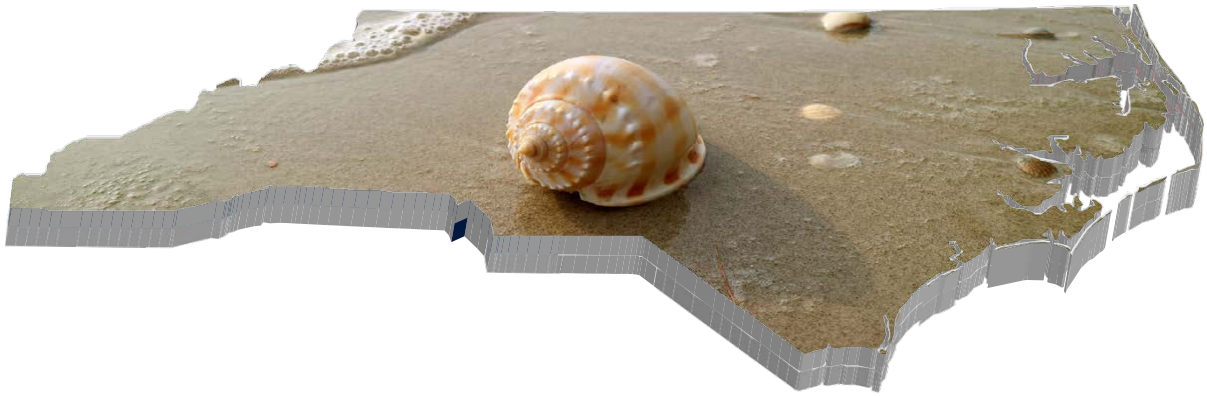
# – North Carolina –
# TEST COORDINATORS' POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK



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# A. Introduction

## Purpose of the North Carolina Test Coordinators' Policies and Procedures Handbook

The purpose of the North Carolina *Test Coordinators' Policies and Procedures Handbook* is to provide public school unit test coordinators with a reference for implementing proper test administrations for the Annual Testing Program.

This handbook provides information to ensure the integrity of the testing program is maintained, results generated from the program are valid, and any subsequent reporting is accurate and appropriate. To experience the complete functionality of this online resource, Testing News Network (TNN) users should log in to TNN. (If a user is not logged in to TNN, some links will only take the user to the TNN log-in screen.) For more information about how to gain access to TNN, contact your Regional Accountability Coordinator (RAC).

## Fundamental Testing Premises

It is essential for school personnel to develop proper testing procedures in order to provide accurate test data for decision-making. The Annual Testing Program must be conducted in a manner that is fair, consistent, and equitable for all students. Security must be maintained at all times.

- **Fairness**. Be fair and consistent in following policies and procedures.
- **Equality**. Students must have equal opportunity when taking tests. Any special arrangements or accommodations must be in accordance with the rules, procedures, and validity of the test. Special arrangements or accommodations must never be used for score enhancement.
- **Flexibility**. North Carolina-developed tests are curriculum-based tests designed to measure the objectives found in the state-adopted content standards. The tests are available in an online and a paper mode, and all students are allowed ample opportunity to complete the tests. Students with disabilities and students identified as English Learners (ELs) may also receive approved accommodations to complete certain tests.
- **Security**. Test security must be maintained at all times. Test materials must be stored in a secure, locked storage facility when not in use. A properly trained test administrator must always be present during the test administration. The test administrator must conduct an unbiased administration of the test according to the policies, procedures, and

directions in the test administration guide and any subsequent updates shared by the Division of Accountability Services.

Awareness of proper testing procedures helps ensure the integrity of the testing program, provides accurate test data, and gives public school units the ability to use test data confidently as decisions are made for the improvement of student learning and achievement.

**The Test Development Process**

North Carolina teachers are very involved in the development of the end-of-grade (EOG) and end-of-course (EOC) tests and the NCEXTEND1 alternate assessments.

The item writing process is as follows:

- North Carolina professional educators from across the state who have classroom experience are recruited and trained as item writers and developers for state tests.
- The use of classroom teachers from across the state ensures that instructional validity is maintained.
- Diversity among the item writers and their knowledge of the current state-adopted content standards are addressed during recruitment.

North Carolina teachers are also recruited for reviewing the written test items.

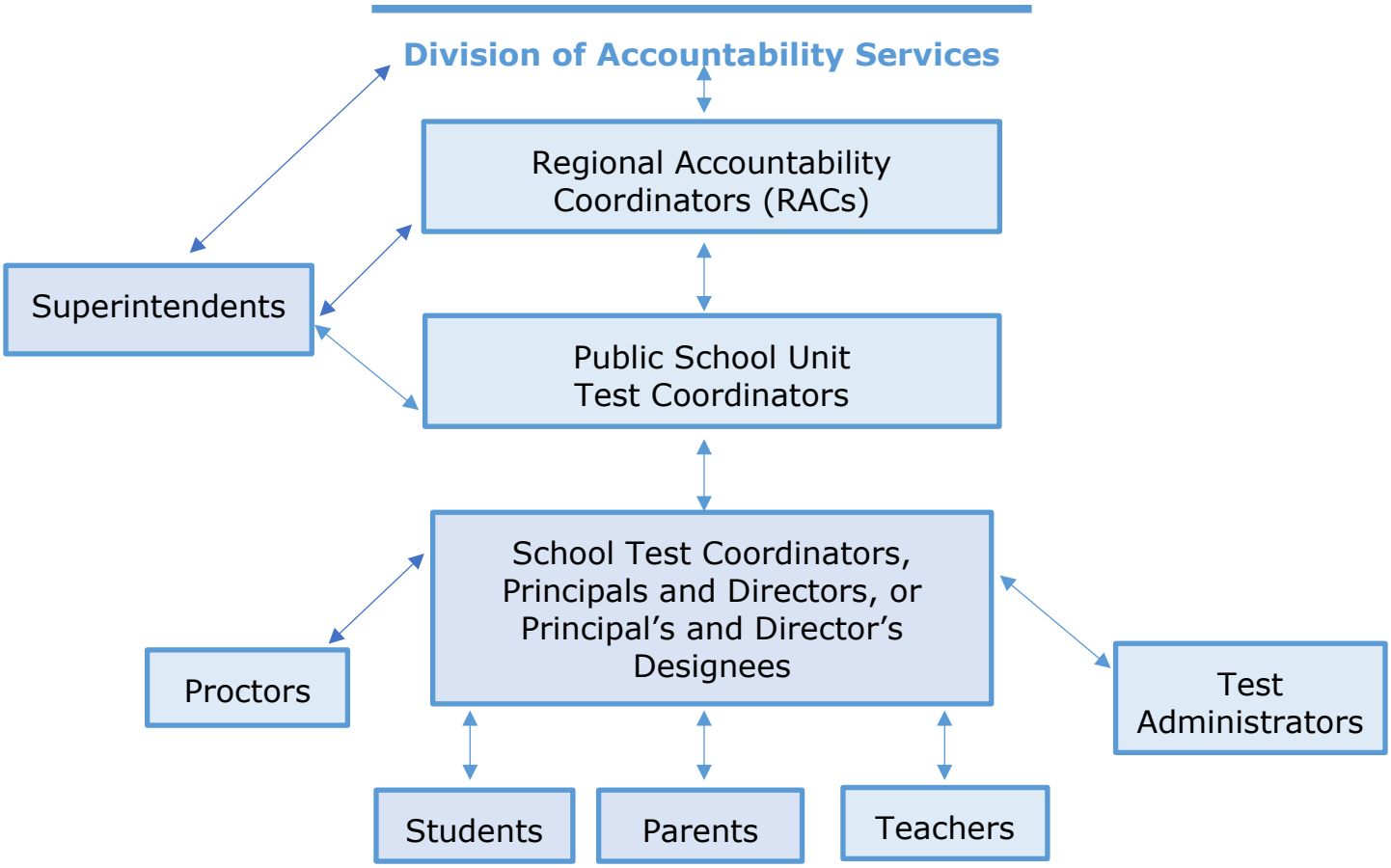
- Each item reviewer receives training in item writing and reviewing test items.
- Based on the comments from the reviewers, items are revised or rewritten, item-objective or standard alignment is reexamined and changed where necessary, and introductions and diagrams for passages are refined.
- Analyses occur to verify alignment of the items to the objective or standards.
- Additional items are developed as necessary to ensure sufficiency of the item pool.
- North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) test development staff members as well as NCDPI academic standards specialists review each item.
- Content specialists for students with disabilities and ELs are also included in the review.
- This process continues until a specified number of test items are written to each standard, edited, reviewed, edited again, and finalized.

Teachers interested in training to become an item writer or reviewer for the Annual Testing Program, should visit https://center.ncsu.edu/ncpd/course/view.php?id=128 for more information.

For an in-depth explanation of the test development process, see https://www.dpi.nc.gov/test-development-process-eog-eoc-and-ncextend1.

**Protocol for Communication**

To keep individuals well informed regarding topics related to test development and policy, the Annual Testing Program supports two-way exchanges between communication levels that include ongoing dialogues at each level. Program questions and information should be channeled through the appropriate testing staff at each successive level. Staff members at the school level are encouraged to share questions related to testing and accountability (e.g., questions pertaining to the EOG and EOC tests, testing students identified as ELs and students with disabilities, and testing accommodations) with the public school unit test coordinator. If necessary, the test coordinator will share these questions with the RAC, who in turn will contact the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services.



## Important Websites for Communicating Information

### Testing News Network (TNN)

The Testing News Network (TNN) is a closed information and collaboration service sponsored by the Division of Accountability Services. The primary users of this service are district, charter, lab, regional, residential, and Innovative School District (ISD), school testing and accountability staff. Test coordinators should check the *News* link on this site daily for testing information and updates.

The TNN is the information source of the Annual Testing Program for North Carolina Public Schools. Its development began in August 1995 and is supported by the Technical Outreach for Public Schools (TOPS) at North Carolina State University. Its dual missions are to

- provide secure dissemination of information to local school system test coordinators, and
- index critical events, policies, reports, communications, process details, and software upgrades for the testing programs of North Carolina Public Schools.

Information is placed on the TNN for electronic access by public school unit test coordinators, NCDPI Accountability staff, and TOPS staff at North Carolina State University. Persons other than these must obtain written permission from the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services to access and use this information.

### NCDPI Testing and School Accountability

The Testing and School Accountability website is a public resource that provides information about state tests, policies and procedures for testing and accountability results.

### Technical Requirements for NCTest

The technical requirements for NCTest, which is used to deliver the online tests, are found at http://center.ncsu.edu/nct/. Schools must review these technical requirements several days before online administrations occur and must make any necessary adjustments before administering an online test.

### Nonpublic Schools Testing Service

The Center for Urban Affairs and Community Services (CUACS) provides access to secure state test materials to nonpublic schools through the Nonpublic Schools Testing Service (NPSTS) program. This program is sanctioned by the NCDPI and is operated on a cost recovery basis.

For more information on the NPSTS, see https://center.ncsu.edu/ncaccount/course/view.php?id=27.

## Released Test Questions

The NCDPI Division of Accountability Services has released test forms available for all state-mandated tests. Released test forms reflect the currently adopted content standards. Released tests that are aligned to previously adopted standards are retired and no longer publicly available.

Released test forms aligned to current standards are publicly available and can be found by searching for the type of state test and resource (Released Tests) at https://www.dpi.nc.gov/testing-documents.

Released online test forms can be found through the NCTest app, secure browser, and via links at North Carolina Testing System (ncsu.edu).

To navigate this site

- click the "Type of State Test" dropdown box to select a test,
- click the "Resource" dropdown box and select "Released Tests," and
- click "Apply."

## Assessment Briefs

Assessment Briefs are publications that contain information related to testing and accountability. Assessment Briefs can be found on the NCDPI's website at the following address:
https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/testing-and-school-accountability/testing-policy-and-operations/assessment-briefs

## Test Specification Information

Test specification documents are available for each state-mandated test administered by the Annual Testing Program. These documents provide technical information about the tests such as types of questions, number of questions, delivery mode, assessed standards, and the weight distribution (percentage) of each assessed standard. Test specification information for state-mandated tests is located at https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/testing-and-school-accountability/technical-information-state-tests.

## B. Test Security

According to 16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0307 the definition of "secure test" is "any test developed, adopted, or provided by the State Board of Education that has not been released under § 115C-174.13." SBE policy TEST-004 specifies that secure tests, including all test materials and test questions, are not to be reproduced in any manner or for any reason without the express written consent of the test publisher. School personnel must not disclose the contents of secure tests. They must not discuss with each other or with students specific test questions or information contained within the tests or write about them on the internet or on social media sites. In addition, excerpts from the tests must not be used at any time during classroom instruction or in resource materials such as study guides. Access to the tests shall be limited to school personnel who have a legitimate need. Persons who have access to secure test materials shall not use their access to those materials for personal gain.

Secure state tests shall not be copied, reproduced, paraphrased, filed, or used directly in instructional activities or for professional development. Copying, reproducing, or paraphrasing test materials represents a breach of test security and is a violation of federal copyright laws, 16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0311, SBE policy, and the *Testing Code of Ethics*.

Copies of any documents suspected of containing secure test questions or information from secure tests must be submitted to the NCDPI through the RAC for clearance before use in the public school unit. Appropriate items for review would be any material of which the origin is not known, including test questions discovered on the internet. Individuals are not permitted to create electronic files of secure test questions or save or post them through Google drive, email, social media, web posting, or any other method. The NCDPI will review any materials a public school unit submits. Public school units and the Division of Accountability Services must work together to maintain the security of the testing program.

### Third-Party Service Providers and Personally Identifiable Information

Several public school units contract with third-party data-sharing vendors. In doing so, the third party can be designated a "school official" as defined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Whether a third-party provider, such as Google Apps for Education or Dropbox Business, is designated a school official as defined by the FERPA, is at the discretion of the public school unit. The legal relationship with third-party service providers is by and between the public school unit and the third-party

service providers. The NCDPI does not endorse or prohibit the use of any third-party vendors. However, public school units are encouraged to consult with their legal counsel and leadership when determining what third party meets their specific requirements. Such requirements must include certification that the third-party vendor is FERPA compliant. The public school unit is responsible for the security of students' personally identifiable information (PII).

Only public school unit-contracted sharing services that provide the FERPA compliance certification should be used when sharing PII via shared files. Personal email or personal sharing services accounts must never be used to transfer student data or PII.

**Handling and Transmitting Personally Identifiable Information**
Public school units and the NCDPI staff frequently need to share information from individual student records to resolve data issues and answer program area questions. Employees of public school units, the NCDPI, or other education institutions are legally and ethically obliged to safeguard the confidentiality of any private information they access while performing official duties. Private information regarding students and staff should always be transmitted securely.

The FERPA (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a federal law that applies to all educational agencies and institutions (e.g., schools) that receive funding under any program administered by the U.S. Department of Education. Among several purposes, FERPA was enacted to protect the privacy of students' educational records.

For those public school units with full encryption capabilities, transported data and other electronic transporting devices containing NCDPI data should be encrypted. This requires the recipient of the data to have corresponding decryption capabilities.

To protect the confidentiality of individuals from those who are not authorized to have access to individual-level data, Personally Identifiable Information (PII) should be encrypted during transmission using one of the following methods, in order of preference:

- **Secure FTP** server based on SFTP or FTPS protocols.
    - Preferred method and most widely acceptable standard for transmitting encrypted data.

- **Encrypted Email**
  - If secure FTP capabilities do not exist, encrypted email can be used.
- **Password Protected Email**
  - If compatible encryption is not available to both parties, data should be password protected. The password should be given to the recipient through a different medium, such as a phone call, never in notes or documents accompanying the actual data file, or another email. In addition, the password should not be transferred via voicemail.

When sending email, encrypted or password protected, please ensure that it contains the least amount of FERPA-protected information as possible. The subject line of an email should not include FERPA-protected information; the body of an email should not contain highly sensitive FERPA-protected information, such as a student's Social Security Number or full name. FERPA-protected data should always be in an attached encrypted or password protected file, never in the body of an email.

Fax machines and printers used to send and receive secure data must be located in secure areas.

Secure test questions, answer choices, or portions of secure test questions or answer choices must not be sent via email (use email only if encrypted or password protected).

Public school units should not use private or personal accounts to store students' PII. Public school units who wish to use the G suite for Education (previously called Google Apps for Education) should consult with their legal team to ensure compliance with FERPA and state security guidelines.

Furthermore, it is recommended that public school units use the Data Leak Protection (DLP) feature of G Suite to protect data, even though FERPA compliance does not require DLP.

For additional information, see the publication *Best Practices Guide: PII and Email* at Data Management Resources | NC DPI.

### ***Testing Code of Ethics***

16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0311 Testing Code of Ethics, addresses appropriate professional practices for central office staff, school administrators, test coordinators, test administrators, and proctors. Ethical practices for administering North Carolina tests include (1) informing

students about the tests and why the tests are important, (2) informing students and parents how the tests and test results will be used, (3) ensuring all eligible students take the tests, (4) encouraging students to attempt to respond to all test questions and do their best, (5) preparing students to take the tests, and (6) sharing the results of the tests along with any available interpretation of the scores with students and parents within the allotted timelines. In addition, the importance of maintaining test security at all times must be stressed. Ethical practices ensure validity of the test results.

A copy of the *Testing Code of Ethics* is included in all test administration guides for review and must be discussed during training sessions for test administrations. The sanctions for violations are also included in the *Testing Code of Ethics* and are applicable to the administration of all secure state-mandated tests.

**Accounting for and Storing Test Materials**

According to 16 N.C. Admin Code 06D .0307, public school units shall

- "account to the department for all tests received,
- provide a secure, locked storage facility for all tests received,
- prohibit the reproduction of any or all parts of the test, and
- prohibit their employees from disclosing the content of the tests or specific items contained in the tests to persons other than authorized employees of the LEA."

Every public school unit must have a clearly defined system of checkout and check-in of test materials to ensure at each level of distribution and collection (district, school, and classroom) all secure materials are tracked and accounted for. Public school unit test coordinators must inventory test materials upon arrival from Technical Outreach for Public Schools (TOPS) and must immediately inform TOPS of any discrepancies in the shipment.

Public school unit test coordinators must house all secure test materials in a secure, locked facility and must ensure each school test coordinator receives, stores, and distributes test materials in a secure manner. Secure test materials may be stored at a school for only a short period before and after the test administration. Every effort must be made to minimize school personnel's access to secure state tests.

As established in 16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0311, the *Testing Code of Ethics*, the principal must ensure test security in the school building and store the test materials in a secure, locked facility except when in use. The

principal must establish a procedure to have test materials distributed immediately before each test administration. Before each test administration, the school test coordinator must accurately count and distribute test materials to each test administrator.

Each test administrator must count and record in writing the number of secure test materials and supplemental materials (i.e., those specified in the test administration guide or published supplements or updates)

- when the materials are first received,
- before the distribution of materials to students,
- after the test administration, and
- when the materials are returned to the school test coordinator.

Any discrepancies in the counts must be reported to the school test coordinator or principal immediately.

All testing materials must be returned to the school test coordinator according to directions specified in the test administration guide. Immediately after each test administration, the school test coordinator shall collect, count, and return all test materials to the secure, locked facility. Any discrepancies in the count must be reported immediately to the public school unit test coordinator. Upon notification, the public school unit test coordinator must report the discrepancies to the RAC and ensure all procedures in the Online Testing Irregularity Submission System (OTISS) are followed and the OTISS report is submitted within five days of the occurrence. Procedures established by the school for tracking and accounting for test materials must be provided upon request to the district test coordinator or the Annual Testing Program.

**Testing Room, Testing Violations, and Irregularities**

The use of the following items in the testing room will constitute a misadministration or violation of the *Testing Code of Ethics*. On days before testing, teachers are expected to announce to students which items cannot be accessed in the testing room.

- **Electronic devices.** Students are not allowed to use or have in their possession cell phones or any other electronic recording, listening, scanning, communication, or photographic devices at any time during testing, including breaks. Any student found or observed with a cell phone or electronic device during testing time must be dismissed from testing and a misadministration declared for that student.
    - If a student must be removed from testing because he or she has a cell phone or electronic device during testing, the test administrator

must not leave the testing room unattended, but rather must notify the school test coordinator to see that the student is removed.
  - Before testing begins, test administrators and proctors must turn off their personal cell phones or electronic devices and ensure these devices are neither used nor visible during testing, including breaks.
- **Personal belongings**. Personal belongings are allowed in the testing room. However, students must not be permitted to access them at any time during testing, including breaks.
  - Students who complete the test before the scheduled time is over must be provided with the opportunity to read novels or other nontextbooks (e.g., magazines) while waiting for other students to finish the test. For paper administrations, test administrators must collect student answer sheets, test books, and all ancillary materials (e.g., used papers) before students can take out their reading materials. For online administrations, test administrators must ensure students have clicked the End Test button to close the test and must collect all ancillary materials (e.g., used papers) before students can take out their reading materials.
- **Testing aids.** Textbooks, reference books, thesauruses, wearable activity trackers, smartwatches, smartpens, music, notes, bookmarks, personal learning devices, or any unapproved testing aids are prohibited for use during testing.

Test administrators must remain attentive to their testing responsibilities throughout the entire administration. Reading (except for the test administration guide or supplemental testing policy information); grading papers; using a computer, cell phone, or other electronic device; talking casually with a proctor or other staff; or engaging in any activity in the testing room not directly related to the test administration is not allowed.

Prior written permission from the NCDPI is required to use any device that is not authorized by these guidelines. Letters of request must be sent to the Director of Accountability Services at the following address:

Tammy Howard, Director
Division of Accountability Services
NC Department of Public Instruction
6307 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-6307

Please note the following exception to this policy: Students participating in online test administrations may use computers or electronic devices to respond to the test questions if the computers or devices meet all technical requirements listed at http://center.ncsu.edu/nct/.

**Testing Security Protocol and Procedures for School Personnel**
Information regarding test security may be found in the publication *Testing Security Protocol and Procedures for School Personnel*. This publication is provided to principals, teachers, and other school personnel as a reference for implementing secure, uniform test administrations in North Carolina schools.

**Viewing Secure State Tests and Obtaining Data for Research**
General Statute §115C-174.13 (a) states that "until the SBE designates that a test is released, any test developed, adopted, or provided by the SBE, as provided in this Article, is not a public record within the meaning of G.S. §132-1. The SBE may develop rules to allow inspection of a test before release but shall require that individuals inspecting the test meet the same standards for confidentiality required for employees of local boards of education in test administration. As used in this section, the term 'test' includes both the test and related test materials."

Effective with the 2008–09 school year, the SBE directed the NCDPI to release to public school units and the public one test form for each grade level and subject tested. Visit https://www.dpi.nc.gov/testing-documents for all released test forms and additional testing information.

Otherwise, the *Testing Code of Ethics* (16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0311) states that questions and associated materials on a secure test shall not be in the public domain. Access to the tests shall be limited to school personnel who have a legitimate need. Access to test materials by school personnel refers to handling the materials, but it does not include reviewing tests or analyzing test questions. Persons who have access to secure test materials shall not use their access to those materials for personal gain.

Secure test materials include test blueprints; test layout forms; question pools; operational test books, test questions, or reading passages; and answer documents. Secure test materials may be in electronic or paper format. Test questions in North Carolina are often reused and are costly to generate; every precaution must be taken to ensure all test materials remain secure at all times.

The normal course of the test development process includes educator and stakeholder involvement in test specifications, test development, and

question-writing reviews; experimental form and section, bias, and operational form reviews; and standard setting. During these processes, educators and stakeholders are asked to view secure test materials but are bound by a signed test security agreement.

In special circumstances, exceptions can be made for parents or guardians. Parents or guardians who request the opportunity to view secure test materials must send a letter of request to the director of the Division of Accountability Services at the following address:

Tammy Howard, Director
Division of Accountability Services
NC Department of Public Instruction
6307 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-6307

Letters of request should include

- the specific test requested,
- why the request is being made, and
- what will be done with the information after it is reviewed.

For parents and guardians granted permission to view secure test materials, the review must occur at the NCDPI in Raleigh under secure conditions with NCDPI staff present throughout the viewing period. Parents and guardians may not view secure test materials at the district or school sites nor duplicate, scan, copy, photograph, or otherwise create a record of information contained within them. The *Testing Code of Ethics* may be referenced for information relative to test security requirements.

Parents and guardians granted permission to view secure test materials will not be able to view the same test form that was administered to their child, but it will be a parallel and equivalent form of the test. Parents and guardians will not be able to view their child's completed answer document or test.

Before viewing secure test materials, information will be provided to describe how tests are developed. Several public documents about the process may be shared. The NCDPI staff member(s) may also have on hand a copy of additional documentation, such as standard-setting reports, technical manuals, or a report of test results that the parents and guardians may view during the meeting.

While parents and guardians may take notes about the information shared before viewing the secure test materials, notetaking is not permitted during

the actual viewing. Also, before viewing secure test materials, each parent and guardian is required to read and sign a test security agreement form. One copy of the form will be retained by the NCDPI; each parent and guardian will receive a copy. Parents and guardians who refuse to sign the test security agreement form may not view secure test materials.

**Research Data Requests**

Private companies, higher education staff, and students may request school data for research purposes. Test coordinators and other school officials must never release test data beyond what is publicly available on the NCDPI website. Researchers, should be referred to the reports and data posted at the following links:

- Data Sources & Information Guide
- School Report Cards
- Statistical Profile
- Discipline, ALP, and Dropout Annual Reports
- Accountability Data Sets and Reports
- Disaggregated Assessment Data

Information regarding the NCDPI research data request process is available at https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/testing-and-school-accountability/school-accountability-and-reporting/research-data-requests.

If more data is requested than is publicly available, the individual should contact the NC Education Research Data Center (NCERDC) at http://childandfamilypolicy.duke.edu/research/nc-education-data-center/ or K.C. Elander, NCDPI Education and Policy Consultant, at kc.elander@dpi.nc.gov.

**Maintaining the Confidentiality and Security of Testing and Accountability Data**

Public school unit test coordinators are responsible for handling confidential North Carolina testing and accountability data. Extreme caution and care must be taken to maintain the confidentiality and security of these data. Access and use of these data must comply with the FERPA (http://studentprivacy.ed.gov/) as well as all portions of North Carolina G.S. §115C that pertain to the use of educational data. Violations may result in the withdrawal of U.S. Department of Education funds and constitute misdemeanors under North Carolina law.

Confidential data must be transferred using secure methods (e.g., Secure File Transfer Protocol or receipted parcel delivery services, such as the US Postal Service, UPS, or Federal Express). When placing confidential data on

portable devices (e.g., laptops, thumb drives), the portable device must be protected by encryption or password protection.

In certain limited situations, confidential student, school, or district data may be used in presentations related to school or district improvement. However, this is permissible only when such presentations are made to the leadership or instructional personnel in the school or district who would normally have access to the confidential data of the students for purposes of improving instruction. Even in such situations, caution must be taken to ensure the data remain secure at all times.

Some specific examples of confidential data that must not be released to anyone include the following:

- **WinScan files.** WinScan files contain data that are for test development and accountability purposes only, and their release would violate test security. See the *Security of WinScan Data Records* subsection in this handbook for additional information on the release of WinScan files.
- **Free and reduced meal data and direct certified data for the identification of economically disadvantaged students (EDS).** The EDS data are property of the NCDPI and School Nutrition Services. The Division of Accountability Services has access to the data through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Test coordinators are bound by the requirements of the MOU and FERPA to preserve the confidentiality of this data. Releasing this data to anyone in any manner that would allow the identification of the EDS status of an individual student would be a violation of federal law.
- **Answer keys.** Public school unit test coordinators must not release answer keys or any information linking these keys to particular test forms. To do so would violate test security. Answer keys and related information are used for test development, scoring, and maintenance of the Annual Testing Program.

Public school units must not release secure data to the public. If persistent requests are made, the test coordinator may instruct the requestor to send a letter of request to the Director of the Division of Accountability Services at the following address:

Tammy Howard, Director
Division of Accountability Services
NC Department of Public Instruction
6307 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-6307

Letters of request must include
- the specific data requested,
- why the request is being made, and
- what will be done with the data.

Additional information may be required to facilitate a reply to such a request.

**Security of WinScan Data Records**
WinScan data records are student education records that contain sensitive information. Access to these records must be restricted to individuals with legitimate need to access these data. These data are not for personal use and should not be distributed in such a way that can possibly identify individual student scores. When producing summaries of student performance, any group with less than ten individuals must not be reported because it might be possible to identify the individual students that make up that group. Instead, the report should show a "*" or "N/A" (or other symbol) with an appropriate explanation (DMG-2009-004-SE).

In any group where the percentage of individuals is greater than ninety-five percent or less than five percent, the actual values may not be displayed because of FERPA privacy regulations. In these cases, the results will be shown as >95% or <5%. This ensures that student information remains anonymous. The policy further ensures compliance with the interpretation of FERPA that small cell sizes must be removed from statistics made public or offered to outside organizations or persons to avoid the disclosure of personally identifiable data.

Individual student records must not be sent via email because this is not considered a secure means of transferring information.

The FERPA (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) protects the privacy of student education records. Under this law, parents have certain rights to inspect their children's education records. Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
- school officials with legitimate educational interest
- other schools to which a student is transferring
- specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes
- appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student
- organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school
- accrediting organizations

- to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena
- appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies
- state and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific state law

## C. Roles and Responsibilities

All individuals in the testing community play a vital role in maintaining a secure testing environment at every level—from test development to scoring and reporting. The following section outlines the roles and responsibilities of key individuals who are responsible for maintaining testing security. The following responsibilities reflect in detail the duties established in the *Testing Code of Ethics*.

**Responsibilities of the NC Department of Public Instruction**
The NCDPI shall develop, revise, publish, and provide timely updates to public school units on the policies and procedures required for proper test administrations. These guidelines shall be provided through the district or school test coordinator.

The NCDPI shall supply required tests and supporting materials to the public school units. The NCDPI shall develop, procure, distribute, and bear the cost of such testing materials, including software and technical support for local scoring necessary for the administration of tests mandated by the SBE. The NCDPI shall score or have scored all tests in the Annual Testing Program and shall provide scoring and interpretative services to the public school units.

**Training Mode Options**
Test administration training may occur either in-person or virtually. Test administrators must be provided a printed version of the appropriate test administration guide before administering the test.

**Selection and Training of District Test Coordinators**
"The local superintendent in a local education agency (LEA) shall act as or appoint an LEA test coordinator to assist in the local administration, reporting, and interpretation of results of any 'secure test,'. . . administered in the Annual Testing Program" (16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0308 [a]).

As outlined in 16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0308 (b) , "LEA test coordinators shall attend required monthly test administration training sessions provided by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction on subjects including proper test administration, test security, appropriate use of accommodations, scanning and scoring answer sheets, and preparation of test materials for scoring at a central site."

**Duties of the District Test Coordinator**

After receiving test administration training from the NCDPI, "LEA test coordinators shall in turn conduct training in the Annual Testing Program for any school test coordinators" (16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0308 [c]). The district test coordinator will train local personnel who are responsible for test administration procedures. This training shall include procedures for test administrations that require accommodations and shall emphasize the need to follow the directions outlined by the test publisher. In addition, "the LEA test coordinator shall arrange for the scanning, scoring, and reporting of results for any secure test administered in the Annual Testing Program from tests adopted by the State Board of Education" (16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0308 [e]). A primary responsibility of the district test coordinator is to maintain test security.

District test coordinators shall perform or oversee the following procedures:

- Annually sign a confidentiality and test security agreement that must be kept on file with the RAC. The required *District Test Coordinator Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement* is included in the Appendixes of this handbook.
- Ensure an annual written testing plan for the district is developed and distributed to each school before the beginning of the school year. The overall testing plan must include, but is not limited to, rules for test administrator training, test security, proper testing environment, administering secure tests, auditing test administrations, and preparing and returning secure test materials. A copy of the testing plan must be submitted annually to the RAC. A sample *Public School Unit Annual Testing Plan* is included in the Appendixes of this handbook.
- At the beginning of each school year, work with district staff to provide information to principals, teachers, students, and parents or guardians advising them of the local and state-mandated tests that students will be required to take during the school year, the dates the tests will be administered, and how the results from the tests will be used. Also, the information provided to parents or guardians must include whether the SBE or local board of education requires the test(s) per G.S.§115C-12(9)(c).
- Develop local policies and procedures to ensure maximum test security in accordance with the policies and procedures developed by the test publisher.
- Provide information about test security and inform staff of sanctions, penalties, or other possible consequences for test security violations.
- Designate the personnel who are authorized to have access to test materials. "Access" to test materials by school personnel means

handling the materials but does not include reviewing tests or analyzing test items (16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0311).

- Assist the principal or director at each school in understanding the duties and responsibilities relative to the Annual Testing Program and the implementation of state tests.
- Ensure that all school principals and directors read and sign annually the *Testing Code of Ethics* and a *Principal/Director Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement*. The original signed copies must be kept on file with the district test coordinator. The required *Principal/Director Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement* can be found in Appendix I of this handbook.
- Ensure that all school test coordinators read and sign annually the *Testing Code of Ethics* and a *School Test Coordinator Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement*. The original signed copies must be kept on file with the district test coordinator. The required *School Test Coordinator's Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement* is included in Appendix I of this handbook.
- Ensure school test coordinators have a copy of the *Test Administrator Test Accountability and Security Form* for test administrators participating in training for the administration of North Carolina state-mandated tests and that they are aware all test administrators at their school must sign the form before administering a test. The required *Test Administrator Test Accountability and Security Form* is included in Appendix I of this handbook.
- Ensure all test administrators sign the *Test Administrator Test Accountability and Security Form* at every test administration training session, and the signed forms are kept on file at the school.
- Ensure that student placement decisions are not solely based on test scores (SBE policy SCOS-016).
- Ensure the school test coordinator and the test administrators at each school are school district or school personnel who have professional training in education and the Annual Testing Program (16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0311).
    - To avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest and to protect test administrators from allegations of impropriety, a test administrator should not be assigned to administer a test in a room where his or her relative or ward is tested.
        - Relatives and wards include children, stepchildren, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, siblings, in-laws, and persons under the test administrator's guardianship.
- Oversee the planning and implementation of training for school test coordinators, test administrators, and proctors.
    - It is a local decision to have proctors serve as additional monitors who help the test administrator assure testing occurs fairly.

- Maintain accurate attendance records for all training sessions and keep these records on file in the district testing office.
- Ensure each school establishes procedures to ensure all test administrators comply with the test publisher's guidelines.
- Ensure all appropriate staff receive training in procedures for providing approved accommodations for state-mandated tests to students with disabilities and students identified as ELs.
- Ensure each school has a secure, locked facility in which test materials will be stored and staff clearly understand test material handling and storage procedures. Access to the storage area must be limited to one or two authorized school personnel when secure materials are being stored. Unauthorized personnel (e.g., cleaning staff) must not have access to the storage area where secure materials are stored.
- Monitor to ensure the district and school plans for administering tests under secure conditions are implemented appropriately.
- Prohibit public school unit employees from disclosing the general content of the tests or specific questions contained in the tests to persons other than authorized employees of the district.
- Ensure all eligible students are tested.
- Maintain accurate records of student membership and assist in identifying students who are eligible to take the test in order to secure the appropriate quantity of materials.
- Order enough copies of test materials.
- Account to the NCDPI for all test materials received.
  - Count and record the number of secure test materials, including supplemental materials, when the materials are first received. Report immediately to TOPS any discrepancies in the count.
- Develop a system of checkout and check-in of test materials to ensure that at each level of distribution and collection all secure materials are tracked, returned, and accounted for.
- Ensure each school test coordinator
  - develops and documents in writing a schoolwide testing plan for administering tests under secure conditions;
  - receives and stores test books, and other testing materials in a secure manner; and
  - has a system of checkout and check-in of test materials to ensure all materials are returned and accounted for.
- Prohibit the reproduction of any or all parts of the tests. No person may copy, reproduce, or paraphrase the test materials in any manner or for any reason.
- Train all school personnel on the appropriate use of test materials, test security, the *Testing Code of Ethics*, the *Testing Students with Disabilities* handbook and published supplements, and the *Guidelines*

*for Testing Students Identified as English Learners* document and published supplements.

- In conjunction with program administrators, ensure the need for test accommodations is documented and the accommodations are limited to specific needs.
- In conjunction with program administrators, monitor to ensure all documented accommodations are provided to students and to what extent the accommodations are used by the students during the test administrations.
- Ensure the security of test materials and the integrity of the Annual Testing Program are maintained at all times.
- Investigate all reports of testing irregularities and violations of ethical testing practices and immediately report them to the superintendent, principal or director, and RAC.
    - Determine the seriousness of reports of test security breaches, loss of test materials, failure to account for test materials, unauthorized reproduction or retention of test materials, or any other deviation from required security procedures.
- Declare a test misadministration when appropriate, using the appropriate procedures and documentation, and ensure students are administered a different, secure form of the test, if available. All misadministrations must be reported to the superintendent, principal or director, and the RAC using the appropriate documentation and notification procedures.
- Use and follow all procedures in the OTISS to document and report all testing irregularities within five days of the occurrence.

**Duties of the Charter, Lab, Regional, Residential, and ISD School Test Coordinator**

The principal or director shall either act as or designate a school test coordinator. The school test coordinator shall assist in test administrations, reporting and interpretation of test results, and other accountability measures in the Annual Testing Program. The school test coordinator will train school personnel who are responsible for test administration procedures. This instruction shall include procedures for test administrations that require accommodations and shall emphasize the need to follow the directions outlined by the test publisher. Maintaining test security is a major responsibility of the school test coordinator. The school test coordinator is responsible for monitoring test administrations within the building and responding to situations that may arise during test administrations.

The school test coordinator—and all site coordinators—are expected to be accessible to test administrators during the administration of secure state tests. Because of this accessibility requirement, the school test coordinator

(and site coordinators) must not be given the responsibility of administering or proctoring a test.

School test coordinators shall perform or oversee the following procedures and responsibilities:

- Annually sign the *Testing Code of Ethics* and a *School Test Coordinator's Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement* that must be kept on file with the RAC. The *School Test Coordinator's Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement* is required for school test coordinators who report directly to their RAC and is included in Appendix I of this handbook.
- Ensure that the school principal or director reads and signs annually the *Testing Code of Ethics* and the test security agreement. The original signed copies must be kept on file with the school test coordinator. The required *Principal or Director Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement* is included in Appendix I of this handbook.
- Ensure all test administrators attend training for the state-mandated tests and sign the required test security agreement at the end of every training session. The test security agreements must be kept on file with the school test coordinator and should be available during the assessment monitoring process. The required *Test Administrator Test Accountability and Security Form* is included in Appendix I of this handbook.
- Ensure an annual written testing plan for the school is developed and disseminated to the school principal or director and appropriate staff before the beginning of the school year. The annual testing plan must include, but is not limited to, rules for test administrator training, test security, proper testing environment, administering the secure tests, auditing test administrations, and preparing and returning secure test materials. A sample *Public School Unit Annual Testing Plan* is included in Appendix J of this handbook and can be edited to fit the needs of the school. A copy of the school testing plan must be submitted annually to the RAC.
- At the beginning of each school year, collaborate with other school officials to provide information to teachers, students, and parents or guardians advising them of the state-mandated tests that students will be required to take during that school year, the dates the tests will be administered, and how the results from the tests will be used. Also, information provided to parents or guardians must include whether the state or the local school board requires the test(s).
- Establish any needed school policies and procedures to assure maximum test security in accordance with the policies and procedures developed by the test publisher.
- Provide information about test security and inform staff of sanctions, penalties, or other possible consequences for test security violations.

- Designate the personnel who are authorized to have access to test materials. "Access" to test materials by school personnel means handling the materials but does not include reviewing tests or analyzing test items.
- Assist the school principal or director in understanding their duties and responsibilities relative to the Annual Testing Program and the implementation of state tests.
- Ensure all test administrators attend training for the state-mandated tests and sign the required test security agreement at the end of every training session. The test security agreement must be kept on file with the public school unit test coordinator and should be available during the assessment monitoring process. The required *Test Administrator Test Accountability and Security Form* is included in Appendix I of this handbook.
- Establish procedures to ensure all test administrators comply with the test publisher's guidelines.
- Oversee the planning and implementation of training for test administrators and proctors.
  - It is a local decision to have proctors serve as additional monitors that help the test administrator assure testing occurs fairly.
- Ensure all appropriate staff receive training in procedures for providing approved accommodations for state-mandated tests to students with disabilities and students identified as ELs.
- Maintain accurate attendance records for all training sessions and keep these records on file at the school.
- If the school's testing occurs at the same time at one or more nonadjacent sites, ensure a trained test coordinator is assigned to each nonadjacent site.
- Ensure all eligible students are tested.
- Maintain accurate records of student membership and assist in identifying students who are eligible to take the test in order to secure the appropriate quantity of materials.
- Ensure the school has a secure, locked facility in which test materials will be stored and staff clearly understand test material handling and storage procedures. Access to the storage area must be limited to one or two authorized school personnel when secure materials are being stored. Unauthorized personnel (e.g., cleaning staff) must not have access to the storage area where secure materials are stored.
- Order enough copies of test materials.
- Account to the NCDPI for all test materials received.
  - Count and record the number of secure test materials, including supplemental materials, when the materials are first received.
  - Report immediately to TOPS any discrepancies in the count.

- Develop a system of checkout and check-in of test materials to ensure all secure materials are tracked, returned, and accounted for at each level of distribution and collection.
  - Distribute test materials immediately before the test administration (16 N.C. Admin Code 06D .0311) unless otherwise authorized by the NCDPI.
  - Accurately count and verify with each test administrator before the test administration the number of secure test materials, including supplemental materials, received.
  - Immediately after each test administration accurately count and verify with each test administrator the number of secure test materials, including supplemental materials, that are returned to the secure, locked storage facility.
  - Verify with TOPS that the number of secure materials returned by the school matches the count taken when the materials were first received by the school.
- Prohibit the reproduction of any or all parts of the tests. No person may copy, reproduce, or paraphrase in any manner or for any reason the test materials without the express written consent of the test publisher.
- Monitor to ensure plans for administering tests under secure conditions are implemented appropriately.
- Ensure the security of test materials and the integrity of the Annual Testing Program are maintained at all times.
- Prohibit school employees from disclosing the general content of the tests or specific questions contained in the tests to persons other than authorized employees of the school.
- In conjunction with program administrators, ensure the need for test accommodations is documented and the accommodations are limited to specific needs.
- In conjunction with program administrators, monitor to ensure all documented accommodations are provided to students and to what extent the accommodations are used by the students during the test administrations.
- Select test administrators who meet the following criteria:
  - Per 16 NCAC 06D .0307 (a), "Only current or retired professional educators as defined in G.S. § 115C-270.1(2) (an administrator, teacher, or student services personnel) or teachers who
    (1) are employed by local education agencies (LEAs); and
    (2) have training in the Annual Testing Program as required in Rule .0308 of this Section shall administer secure tests."
  - To avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest and to protect test administrators from allegations of impropriety, a test administrator

should not be assigned to administer a test in a room where his or her relative or ward is tested.
  - Relatives and wards include children, stepchildren, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, siblings, in-laws, and persons under the test administrator's guardianship.
- Train all school personnel on the appropriate use of test materials, test security, the *Testing Code of Ethics*, the *Testing Students with Disabilities* handbook and published supplements (as appropriate), and the *Guidelines for Testing Students Identified as English Learners* document and published supplements (as appropriate).
- Emphasize to all school personnel that no person may copy, reproduce, or paraphrase the test materials in any manner or for any reason without the written permission of the NCDPI.
- Inform personnel that any person who learns of any breach of security, loss of test materials, failure to account for test materials, or any other deviation from required security procedures must immediately report that information to the school principal or director and the school test coordinator, who in turn will inform the RAC.
- Implement the state's testing policies and procedures and initiate any additional school policies and procedures to ensure all eligible students are tested.
- If administering tests online, complete the Online Assessment Tutorial for the associated test(s), and ensure every student participating in the online test(s) has completed the appropriate tutorial at least one time before the test administration.
- Prepare the physical conditions for the testing room, including rooms to which students may be relocated.
  - Cover or remove bulletin boards and instructional displays that contain content being measured or test-taking strategies.
  - Cover or remove all reference materials on testing rooms' walls, students' desks, or workstations that might be a source of direct answers.
- Encourage a positive atmosphere for the test administrations.
- Maintain the confidentiality of individual student scores when reporting test results to the public and the media.
- Prohibit the reclassification of students or the assignment of a grade of "F" or "I" for the sole purpose of not having students participate in any state test.
- Ensure that student placement decisions are not solely based on test scores.
- Use and follow all procedures in the OTISS to document and report all testing irregularities within five days of the occurrence.
- Immediately report irregularities to the school director or principal and RAC. Submit completed and signed *Irregularity Investigation*

*Checklists*, investigation summaries, and all pertinent investigation documentation to the NCDPI within five business days of the occurrence (or the date the incident was identified).
- Notify the school director and the RAC for consensus before deciding whether to declare a misadministration.

**Public School Unit Test Coordinator's Responsibilities for Ordering Test Materials**

The Annual Testing Program works closely with TOPS to manage the ordering and delivery of secure test materials. Test materials are ordered via the Online Order System maintained by TOPS on the TNN website. Alternative methods for ordering and delivering of test materials include the following:

- Ordering via NC Education (TNN Online Order System)
- Ordering via an ordering system managed by a test vendor
- Auto shipping to districts based on student membership data

Test coordinators receive notification and training for tests that use ordering methods other than the TNN Online Order System. For some tests, RAC approval is necessary before TOPS will ship orders.

Regarding the ordering of test materials, public school unit test coordinators shall perform the following:

- Provide accurate contact information within TNN so testing shipments are delivered to the correct address, and TOPS and NCDPI staff can contact the appropriate testing personnel, as necessary.
- Provide accurate test participation dates in the ordering system based on the testing calendar. These participation dates help with statewide planning and ensure receipt of materials in a timely manner. Ordering pages will not appear until the participation dates are entered and training has been completed.
- Prepare estimates of the quantities of materials necessary for each test that is part of the Annual Testing Program. Estimates should be based on student membership and previous materials usage.
- Carefully read the instructions, including any special instructions, on the ordering pages before placing orders.
- Order enough test materials in a timely manner.
- Attend RAC trainings each month to obtain critical information about upcoming tests, such as testing windows, and student eligibility.
- Check TNN daily for notices regarding test materials.
- Ensure copies of any errata sheets posted on TNN are provided to test administrators, as appropriate.

- Maintain a testing operations calendar to ensure necessary materials arrive in enough time to prepare for testing in an organized and secure manner.
- Ensure accommodation forms (*Braille*, *Large Print*, *One Test Item Per Page,* and *Large Print One Test Item Per Page*) are ordered at least thirty school days (forty school days for Braille) before the actual test administration date (or as soon as the ordering system becomes available, if fewer than thirty days before testing).
- Establish a contingency plan so that materials can be received without incident or breach of security on days when the test coordinator may be out of the office and unavailable to receive shipments. *Test security must be maintained at all times*.
- Ensure each school has a secure, locked facility in which test materials will be stored and the school clearly understands test material handling and storage procedures. Access to the storage area must be limited to one or two authorized school personnel when secure materials are being stored. Unauthorized personnel (e.g., cleaning staff) must not have access to the storage area where secure materials are stored.
- Inventory test materials upon arrival and inform TOPS immediately via fax (919-515-4622) of any discrepancies in the shipment.
- Report nonreceipt of any materials to the respective RAC at the earliest possible time. The test coordinator must make every effort to ensure that materials that have not arrived will not disrupt the testing schedule.
    - The Annual Testing Program and TOPS deliver most test materials to public school units two weeks before the beginning of testing, except for the test administration guides and answer sheets for the EOC and EOG tests, which are generally delivered three weeks before the beginning of testing.
- Account to the NCDPI for all test materials received.
- Refer to the appropriate copy of the *Requirements for Destroying, Storing, and Returning Test Materials* (districts – refer to Section H) (charter, lab, regional, residential and ISD schools – refer to Section I) of this handbook and follow the instructions regarding the return of materials, the secure destruction of test materials, and the secure storage of materials.

**Duties of the School Test Coordinator (Within a District)**

According to 16 NCAC 06D .0308 (d), "School test coordinators shall conduct training in the Annual Testing Program for any test administrators or proctors." Additionally, the school test coordinator is responsible for monitoring test administrations within the building and responding to situations that may arise during test administrations. The school test

coordinator must be accessible to test administrators during the administration of secure state tests. Because of this accessibility requirement, the school test coordinator should not be given the responsibility of administering or proctoring a test. The school test coordinator shall perform the following:

- Adhere to the district testing plan and test administration schedules established by the NCDPI and the district test coordinator.
- Develop and document in writing a schoolwide plan for administering tests under secure conditions. For each testing session, the plan must include documentation of the accommodations and the nature of the accommodations each eligible student will receive.
- Cooperate with district and state officials in the event of an audit or monitoring visit so as to ensure the testing plans are implemented appropriately.
- Attend training sessions sponsored by the district test coordinator on the policies and procedures for conducting a proper test administration and for reviewing and processing test materials.
- Read and sign annually the *Testing Code of Ethics* and a school test coordinator test security agreement. The original signed copies must be kept on file with the district test coordinator. The *School Test Coordinator Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement* is included in Appendix I of this handbook.
- Count and record the number of secure test materials, including supplemental materials, when the materials are first received from the district test coordinator. Report immediately to the district test coordinator any discrepancies in the count.
- Store test materials in a secure, locked facility. Access to the storage area must be limited to one or two authorized school personnel while secure materials are being stored. Unauthorized personnel (e.g., cleaning staff) must not have access to the facility where secure materials are stored.
- Ensure test materials are distributed immediately before the test administration unless otherwise authorized by the Annual Testing Program.
- Accurately count and verify with each test administrator before the test administration the number of secure test materials, including supplemental materials, received. Immediately report any discrepancies in the count to the district test coordinator.
- Immediately after each test administration accurately count and verify with each test administrator the number of secure test materials, including supplemental materials that are returned to the secure, locked storage facility. Immediately report any discrepancies in the count to the district test coordinator.

- Return all test materials to the district test coordinator, as directed, immediately following the completion of the test administration.
  - Count and verify with the district test coordinator that the number of secure test materials, including supplemental materials returned by the school, matches the count taken when the materials were first received.
- Select test administrators who meet the following criteria:
  - Per 16 NCAC 06D .0307, "Only current or retired professional educators as defined in G.S. §115C-270.1(2) (an administrator, teacher, or student services personnel) or teachers who
    (1) are employed by local education agencies (LEAs); and
    (2) have training in the Annual Testing Program as required in Rule .0308 of this Section shall administer secure tests."
  - To avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest and to protect test administrators from allegations of impropriety, a test administrator should not be assigned to administer a test in a room where his or her relative or ward is tested.
    - Relatives and wards include children, stepchildren, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, siblings, in-laws, and persons under the test administrator's guardianship.
- Train all school personnel on the appropriate use of test materials, test security, the *Testing Code of Ethics*, the *Testing Students with Disabilities* handbook and published supplements (as appropriate), and the *Guidelines for Testing Students Identified as English Learners* document and published supplements (as appropriate).
- Ensure all test administrators attend training for the state-mandated tests and sign a test security agreement at the end of every training session. The test security agreements must be kept on file with the school test coordinator and should be available during the test monitoring process. The required *Test Administrator Test Accountability and Security Form* is included in Appendix I of this handbook and may be edited to suit the needs of the school.
- Emphasize to all school personnel that no person may copy, reproduce, or paraphrase the test materials in any manner or for any reason without the written permission of the NCDPI.
- Inform personnel that any person who learns of any breach of security, loss of test materials, failure to account for test materials, or any other deviation from required security procedures must immediately report that information to the principal and school test coordinator, who in turn will inform the district test coordinator.
- Implement the district's testing policies and procedures and initiate any additional school policies and procedures to ensure all eligible students are tested.

- If administering tests online, complete the Online Assessment Tutorial for the associated test(s), and ensure every student participating in the online test(s) has completed the appropriate tutorial at least one time before the test administration.
- Prepare the physical conditions for the testing room, including rooms to which students may be relocated.
  - Cover or remove bulletin boards and instructional displays that contain content being measured or test-taking strategies.
  - Cover or remove all reference materials on testing rooms' walls, students' desks, or workstations that might be a source of direct answers.
- Encourage a positive atmosphere for the test administrations.
- Maintain the confidentiality of individual student scores when reporting test results to the public and the media.
- Prohibit the reclassification of students or the assignment of a grade of "F" or "I" for the sole purpose of not having the students participate in a state test.
- Ensure that student placement decisions are not solely based on test scores.
- Use and follow all procedures in the OTISS to document and report all testing irregularities.

**Duties of the School Counselor**

Per G.S. §115C-316.1(a), counselors shall spend at least eighty percent of their work time providing direct services to students. Direct services do not include the coordination of standardized testing. During the remainder of their work time, counselors shall spend adequate time on school counseling program support activities that consist of professional development; consultation, collaboration, and training; and program management and operations. School counseling program support activities do not include the coordination of standardized testing. However, school counselors may assist other staff with the coordination of standardized testing. The district determines how school counselors will assist with testing (e.g., being trained as a test administrator or proctor). This policy does not apply to charter, lab, regional, or the Innovative School District.

**Duties of the Test Administrator**

Per 16 NCAC 06D .0307, "Only current or retired professional educators as defined in G.S.§115C-270.1.2 (an administrator, teacher, or student services personnel) or teachers who

(1) are employed by local education agencies (LEAs); and

(2) have training in the Annual Testing Program as required in Rule .0308 of this Section shall administer secure tests."

While the North Carolina test administration guides outline the full test administrator responsibilities for each test, those responsibilities specifically related to test security are provided below. The test administrator is responsible for the following:

- Prepare for and attend a test administrator training session(s) conducted by the district or school test coordinator before each test administration.
- Attend training on the *Testing Students with Disabilities* handbook and the *Guidelines for Testing Students Identified as English Learners* documents and published supplemental documents when accommodations will be provided to students and follow the appropriate procedures for the use of accommodations during test administrations for students with disabilities and students identified as ELs.
- Read and sign a test security agreement (provided by the school test coordinator) at the end of every test administration training session. All signed test security agreements must be kept on file with the school test coordinator and should be available during the assessment monitoring process. The required *Test Administrator Test Accountability and Security Form* is included in Appendix I of this handbook.
- Read and study thoroughly the test administration guide before the actual test administration. Review the student directions (script) and be prepared for the variations required by the testing conditions.
- Read and study thoroughly the *Testing Code of Ethics* before the test administration.
- Maintain test security at all times during the handling of test materials.
- If administering tests online, complete the Online Assessment Tutorial for the associated test(s), and ensure every student participating in the online test(s) has completed the appropriate tutorial at least one time per year before the test administration.
- Prepare the physical conditions for the testing room, including rooms to which students may be relocated.
    - Cover or remove bulletin boards and instructional displays that contain content being measured or test-taking strategies.
    - Cover or remove all reference materials on testing rooms' walls, students' desks, or workstations that might be a source of direct answers.
- Ensure each student tested has access to the appropriate test materials as specified in the test administration guide.
- Follow procedures for the distribution and collection of any supplemental materials as specified in the test administration guide.

- Count and record the number of secure test materials, including supplemental materials, before and after the test administration. Notify the school test coordinator or principal immediately of any discrepancies in the count.
- Ensure students' personal belongings are not accessed during testing.
- Ensure all cell phones (i.e., cell phones belonging to students, test administrators, and proctors) are turned off, and they, or any other electronic devices, are not accessed at any time during the test administration, including during the break(s). Personal cell phones and electronic devices must not be used during the test administration, including breaks.
- For online administrations, never share usernames or passwords. User accounts are confidential.
- Before beginning an online administration, confirm the student's name and the appropriate test's name are correctly identified on the student's device screen.
- Administer the test to all eligible students.
- Conduct an unbiased administration of the test according to the policies, procedures, and directions in the test administration guide and any subsequent updates developed by the Division of Accountability Services.
- Read directions to the students as they are written in the test administration guide. It is a violation of the *Testing Code of Ethics* to omit, rewrite, or paraphrase orally or in writing the instructions presented in the test administration guides.
- Monitor the test administration by moving quietly throughout the room and scanning the students' work areas to ensure students follow the test directions, perform the required tasks, do not share responses, and those eligible have access to required accommodations.
- Do not, at any time, modify, change, alter, or tamper with student responses on answer sheets or on computer monitors during or after the test administration.
- Do not, at any time, read test questions from student tests (with the exception of students who have a permitted *Test Read Aloud [in English]* accommodation) or take notes or photographs of secure items or post them on the internet or social media sites.
- Assist students with emergencies (including restroom breaks) during the test administration.
- Remain in the room throughout the entire test administration unless there is an emergency. A trained test administrator must be present for the duration of testing.
- Prohibit visitors from entering the classroom during the test administration, except when required for state or local monitoring of

test administrations or under extreme circumstances (i.e., emergency situations).
- Provide a positive test-taking environment. Avoid distracting behaviors (e.g., reading newspapers or novels, carrying out other personal or professional duties, talking or texting on cell phones, or working on a computer or any other electronic device).
- Follow the procedures established by the public school unit test coordinator for returning all used and unused testing materials and supplemental materials to the school test coordinator.
- Under the direction of the school test coordinator, the test administrator must review under secure conditions in a group setting (i.e., three or more designated school personnel) each student's answer sheet to ensure it is ready to be machine scored. Students' responses are not to be modified during the review process.
- On the day of the occurrence, immediately document and report testing irregularities to the school test coordinator or principal, who will ensure the irregularities are submitted in the OTISS.

**Duties of the Proctor**

It is a local decision whether to require proctors to "serve as additional monitors that help test administrators assure that testing occurs fairly" (16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0311). For vendor-made assessments, test coordinators must ensure the proctor guidelines from the test publisher are followed.

For public school units that opt to assign proctors for state tests, the following best practices should be considered:
- The principal should be responsible for selecting proctors who are school staff or responsible adult community volunteers (i.e., age eighteen or older and not enrolled as a student in the K–12 public school system).
- The proctor assigned can be either (1) a one-on-one, full-time proctor (i.e., one proctor assisting one test administrator in a single testing room) or (2) a roving proctor (e.g., one proctor assisting up to three test administrators in three testing rooms).
- A proctor should not be assigned to proctor in a room where his or her relative or ward is to be tested. Relatives and wards include children, stepchildren, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, siblings, in-laws, and persons under the proctor's guardianship.
- Additionally, a proctor should not be assigned to proctor with a test administrator who is a personal family member or a close acquaintance.

- Students should be informed before the day of the test administration that a proctor will be assisting the test administrator in monitoring their test administration.
- Proctors are required to attend a proctor training session before the test administration and understand and agree to carry out the duties described.
  - During the training session, the school test coordinator is encouraged to show the NCDPI Proctor's Training video which covers the proctors' responsibilities as outlined in *The Proctor's Guide* (published by the Annual Testing Program). If the NCDPI Proctor training video is not used, the school test coordinator is expected to review the Proctor's Guide during the training session.
  - Proctors should read or review thoroughly the *Testing Code of Ethics* and its sanctions.
  - Proctors should sign and date a copy of the *Testing Code of Ethics* to be kept on file at the school.

## D. Preparation for the Test Administration

**Annual Testing Plans**
The public school unit must ensure an annual, written testing plan is developed and distributed to the school(s) before the beginning of the school year. The plan must include, but is not limited to, rules for test administrator training, test security, proper testing environment, secure test administrations, test administration audits, and preparation and return of secure test materials. Plans should also be available in electronic format and include "sample" documents that are used as supports for the testing plan. An electronic copy of the testing plan must be submitted annually to the RAC. A *Sample Public School Unit Annual Testing Plan* can be found in Appendix J of this handbook.

**Limitations to Providing Instruction to Students on the Day of Testing**
During the school year, teachers shall provide instruction that meets or exceeds the state-adopted content standards to give students an opportunity to learn the objectives measured by the tests.

Teachers must not jeopardize the security of the test forms. Teachers are not permitted to discuss specific questions from the tests with students or colleagues before, during, or after the test administration or to ask students which test questions were difficult. For example, if students approach a teacher to ask about test questions, teachers should remind them that they are not permitted to share any of the test questions or information contained within the test or to write about them on the internet or on social media sites. Teachers must not use test questions or information from students as the basis for additional instruction or review. Instead, teachers should provide instruction and review on the state-adopted content standards. Excerpts from the tests must not be used at any time during classroom instruction or in resource materials such as study guides.

Before the designated test administration date and according to the *Testing Code of Ethics*, teachers may help students improve test-taking skills by

- "helping students become familiar with test formats using curricular content;
- teaching students test-taking strategies and providing practice sessions;
- helping students learn ways of preparing to take tests; and
- using resource materials such as test questions from test item banks and linking documents in instruction and test preparation."

Before the day of the test, teachers should explain to students that the test administrator (and proctor, if utilized) will move quietly and frequently throughout the room to scan the students' work areas to ensure students are following the test directions. While monitoring, test administrators (and proctors, if utilized) are not to read test questions from students' test books or device monitors used for online tests nor are they to take photographs of, or notes about the test questions, or otherwise create a record of information contained within them. Test administrators (and proctors, if utilized) must be made aware of what they can and cannot do to assist students (see *Monitoring Students during Test Administrations*).

Before the day of the test, students participating in paper administrations should be taught to check for misalignment during instructional test-preparation sessions. Students should be taught to check every tenth number to see if the question to which they are responding in the test book corresponds with the number of the bubble on the answer sheet.

All test administrations must be conducted in an unbiased and uniform manner. It is essential the scores for all tests represent the best estimate of the students' knowledge and mastery of the concepts. Before and during the test administration, the test administrator must promote an informative, positive, and supportive atmosphere to minimize student anxiety regarding the test.

According to G.S. §115C-12(9)c, "LEAs shall, at the beginning of each school year, provide information to students and parents or guardians advising them of the districtwide and state-mandated tests that students will be required to take during that school year. In addition, LEAs shall advise students and parents or guardians of the dates the tests will be administered and how the results from the tests will be used. Also, information provided to parents shall include whether the State Board of Education or the local board of education requires the test(s)."

On days before testing, the school should inform the students and parents (preferably in writing) about the purpose of the test and that students

- are scheduled to take a test(s) surveying their knowledge and mastery of skills as specified in the state-adopted content standards;
- should attempt each question or prompt on the test;
- should bring two sharpened No. 2 pencils with erasers;
- should not bring extra scratch paper, dictionaries, reference books, textbooks, cameras, thumb drives, smartpens, smartwatches, music, thesauruses, cell phones, or other electronic devices (see *Testing Room, Testing Violations and Irregularities*);

- should bring a novel or other nontextbook, such as a magazine, to read after they complete the test administration; and
- will be informed of any local and state policies regarding the use of test results.

**Required Gridded Response Practice Activity**

The paper EOG mathematics tests at grades 4 through 8 and the EOC NC Math 1 and NC Math 3 tests include gridded response questions. These questions require students to write and fill in a numerical answer on their answer sheet rather than to select an answer from several choices.

Schools must ensure every student participating in the paper EOG mathematics test at grades 4 through 8 and the EOC NC Math 1 and NC Math 3 tests completes the grade-appropriate Gridded Response Practice Activity at least one time before taking the test.

The practice activities may be accessed through the following links:

- EOG *Gridded Response Practice Activity*
- EOC *Gridded Response Practice Activity*

Note: There are two *Gridded Response Practice Activities* for the EOG mathematics test. One activity is for grades 4 and 5, and one activity is for grades 6, 7, and 8.

Guidelines for answering gridded response questions include the following:

1. Students should write their answer in the empty boxes on the top row of the grid and then write only one digit or symbol in each box underneath the row. Spaces are permitted before or after the answer, but spaces are not permitted within the answer. The student must darken the corresponding circle below each box. The answer will be scored based on the darkened circles.
2. Students must not use symbols such as commas or dollar signs. For example, 5,600 should be answered as 5600; $25.99 should be answered as 25.99. Students must use only the symbols that are provided in the circles.
3. If an answer is a mixed number, it must be changed and entered as an improper fraction or a decimal. For example, the mixed number four and one-half could be entered as 9/2 (an improper fraction) or as 4.5 (a decimal). An improper fraction, such as 3/2, may be entered as 3, then /, then 2; or it may be entered as 1, then a decimal point, then 5.
4. Entries equal to the correct answer are acceptable. For example, if the answer to a question is 2/4, it can be entered as 2/4, 1/2, 0.5, 00.5, or .5000 as well other equivalent numbers.

**Online Assessment Tutorials**
Online Assessment Tutorials are available for all North Carolina-developed online tests through the NCTest Chrome App for Chromebooks, NCTest Secure Browser, NCTest iPad App or by accessing https://data.ncsu.edu/nctest/Destination.html. Schools must ensure every student participating in an online state test has completed the appropriate Online Assessment Tutorial at least one time per year before the test administration. For additional information on the Online Assessment Tutorials, see the subsection *Online Assessment Tutorials* in Section J of this handbook.

**Suspended Students**
**Short-term suspension.** According to G.S. §115C-390.5, "the principal shall have authority to impose short-term suspension on a student who willfully engages in conduct that violates a provision of the Code of Student Conduct authorizing short-term suspension. A student subject to short-term suspension shall be provided the following:

- the opportunity to take textbooks home for the duration of the suspension;
- upon request, the right to receive all missed assignments and, to the extent practicable, the materials distributed to students in connection with the assignment; and
- the opportunity to take any quarterly, semester, or grading period examinations missed during the suspension period."

Students with short-term suspensions are required to take the appropriate state-mandated test(s). The school must arrange to test these students in a location (e.g., central office) that is mutually agreeable to parents or guardians. The school test coordinator must ensure test security is maintained and all procedures contained in the test administration guide are followed throughout the test administration(s).

**Long-term suspension.** According to G.S. §115C-390.7, "the principal may recommend to the superintendent the long-term suspension of any student who willfully engages in conduct that violates a provision of the Code of Student Conduct that authorizes long-term suspension. Only the superintendent has the authority to long-term suspend a student."

The public school unit decides if it will provide students with long-term suspensions the opportunity to take the appropriate state-mandated test(s). If the opportunity is provided, the school must arrange to test these suspended students in a location (e.g., central office) that is mutually agreeable to parents or guardians, and the school test coordinator must ensure test security is maintained and all procedures contained in the test administration guide are followed throughout the test administration(s). If a

long-term suspended student is still enrolled in the school and is tested, the test results will be official and will be included in the student's record and in accountability results. A long-term suspended student who is still enrolled in the school and is not tested will count against school participation rates.

**Hospital and Homebound Testing**
Public school units must establish policies and procedures for providing hospital and homebound services to public school students who are temporarily confined at home or in a health care facility. Public school units must ensure that students who receive hospital and homebound services participate in the EOGs, EOCs, and all other state-required test administrations. Medical exceptions may be submitted, if appropriate. (All medical exceptions must be approved by the Annual Testing Program.) For accountability purposes, the test results of a hospital or homebound student must be included in the accountability results at the base school.

Hospital or home testing is subject to the same policy and procedures as regular test administrations.

**Scheduling.** Hospital and homebound testing must occur during the state-designated testing windows.

**Training.** Staff members administering a test to a hospitalized or homebound student must be included in the school's test administrator training and must review the test administration guide before the test administration. The public school unit test coordinator is to be contacted if there are any questions regarding the test administration.

**Before test day.** The test administrator or the school test coordinator must ensure the parent or guardian is aware of the following testing policies and procedures as they relate to test security and the testing environment:

- For the protection of both the student and the teacher, the presence of a responsible adult is required on-site. If a parent, guardian, or responsible adult is not present on-site, then the test administrator must terminate the testing session. The parent, guardian, or responsible adult must stay on-site for the entirety of the test session.
    - During the test, only the test administrator, the proctor (if utilized), and the student being assessed are permitted in the testing room.
    - Under extreme circumstances (i.e., emergency situations, medical treatment breaks) the parent, guardian, or responsible adult may enter the testing room.
    - If a test administration must be paused because of a bathroom break or emergency, the test administrator must follow the

procedures in the test administration guide for taking a break. Test materials must remain secure at all times.
- Home security system cameras must not record the test session.
- Electronic devices, cell phones, recording, listening, scanning, or photographic devices are prohibited in the testing room.
- The testing room should be quiet, without outside interruptions, and have appropriate supplies (e.g., table, chair).
- All pets, with the exception of service animals, should be confined before the arrival of the test administrator.
- An effort should be made to eliminate any possible distractions during the test administration (e.g., doorbells, televisions, music, telephones, outside noises, siblings).

Note: There may be unique circumstances that dictate the need for testing to occur outside the hospital or home setting. Decisions must be made on an individual basis. The location, such as a library conference room or a school office, should be mutually agreed upon. An adult must always be on-site (not in the testing room), and the hospital or homebound teacher or the test administrator is not required to transport the student.

**Materials.** The test administrator must check out test materials from the school test coordinator, administer the test on the designated test date, and return the materials to the test coordinator at the end of testing each day. Test materials must not be checked out overnight. All materials must be accounted for each day.

Note: On the day of a test administration, the test administrator must notify the school test coordinator immediately of any change in the student's status or in the home or hospital conditions that may necessitate rescheduling or cancelling the test administration.

**Testing Environment**

The *Testing Code of Ethics* states "the principal must ensure the school test coordinator encourages a positive atmosphere for testing." Test administrators must prepare appropriate physical conditions for all testing rooms, including those to which students may be relocated. All rooms designated for test administrations must be quiet, orderly, and comfortable with adequate seating, lighting, and heating and cooling. Each student must have enough space in which to work. Seating must be arranged to discourage students from sharing responses.

Many teachers are transforming their classrooms in an effort to make their learning spaces more student-centered by implementing adaptive seating. Adaptive seating may include, but is not limited to, round tables, standing

desks, stability and yoga balls, working on the floor with a clipboard, sitting on a couch, or sitting on a floor mat at a table. Students must be positioned in a suitable manner for testing so that no other student is able to see another student's test documents. For the administration of all tests in the Annual Testing Program, all rooms with adaptive seating that have been designated for testing (including those to which students may be relocated), *must* be approved by the RAC before they can be used on test day.

To ensure that test administrators have an unobstructed view of students testing, current policy does not permit the use of study carrels or privacy shields for a whole-class general administration. Only under the following circumstances are study carrels or privacy shields permitted:

- A study carrel or privacy shield may be appropriate for a student with the *Testing in a Separate Room* accommodation in a one-on-one or small group setting. Use must be documented in the current Individualized Education Program (IEP), Section 504 Plan, or English Learner Plan.
- A classroom may use study carrels or privacy shields if students' assigned seats are multi-student desks (i.e., desks that seat two or more students).

The Annual Testing Program strongly discourages large-scale administrations (e.g., those that occur in a library or cafeteria) that include large groups (multiple classes) of students. Test administrations that occur under these conditions may result in misadministrations. If testing is to take place in a facility other than a classroom, special effort may be required to establish and maintain a proper testing atmosphere.

Visitors to the classroom are prohibited during the test administration except when required for state or local monitoring of test administrations or under extreme circumstances (i.e., emergency situations).

During all administrations of North Carolina tests, displaying information regarding content being measured or test-taking strategies in any manner or form in the room, whether printed or attached to student desks, may result in a misadministration. These displays must be covered or removed. Examples include, "Tips for Taking Tests" displays, word lists, thinking maps, word walls, definitions, writing formulas, multiplication tables, number lines, and mathematical formulas and theorems. Failure to cover or remove these displays during a test administration is considered a violation of the *Testing Code of Ethics*. Test administrators must contact the school test coordinator before the test administration if they have questions related to the testing environment.

**Monitoring Students during Test Administrations**

A primary responsibility of the test administrator is monitoring the test administration. This responsibility requires the test administrator to frequently and quietly walk throughout the room and scan the students' work areas to ensure they are following the test directions, performing the required tasks, are not sharing responses, and those eligible have access to required accommodations. When the test administrator needs to sit during the test administration, he or she should maintain an unobstructed view of and easy access to students.

Test administrators must remain attentive to their testing responsibilities throughout the entire test administration. Personal cell phones and electronic devices must not be used during the test administration, including breaks. Before testing begins, test administrators must turn off their personal cell phones and electronic devices and ensure these devices are neither used nor visible during testing, including breaks.

Reading (except for the test administration guide or supplemental testing policy information); grading papers; using a computer, cell phone, or other electronic device; talking casually with a proctor or other staff; or engaging in any activity in the testing room not directly related to the test administration is not allowed.

Test administrators must not read test questions from students' test books or from students' devices used for online tests (except for students with documented special needs requiring accommodations, such as the *Test Read Aloud [in English]*).

Test administrators must avoid creating distractions and causing testing irregularities while monitoring students during a test.

Each student must complete the test without assistance for the scores to reflect the student's ability. During training, test administrators must be made aware of the types of student assistance they are permitted to provide during the test. To ensure an equitable and standardized testing experience for all students, test administrators must adhere to the following guidelines.

- Test administrators cannot indicate answers to students. Some examples include
  - telling students to "look at the question again" or offering similar advice;
  - making a facial expression, hand gesture, voice inflection, or utterance (e.g., coughing, clearing throat) to indicate approval or disapproval of the student's response; and

  - standing beside the desk, reading a question, looking at the student's response, and then pointing to the correct answer or pointing to the question as if to indicate, "read the question again because you have marked the wrong answer."
- Test administrators cannot help students by
  - explaining the directions in their own words;
  - explaining the meaning of any word in the directions, test questions, or answer choices;
  - rephrasing test questions;
  - translating a word or phrase into another language; or
  - providing synonyms for unknown words.

**Test Forms**

**Paper test forms.** Different versions of a test are distributed at each testing site (i.e., classroom). The different versions are equated statistically and are parallel in content, so comparisons of performance within and across test administrations can be made. The versions differ in form letter, number (e.g., Form A1, Form A2, Form B1, Form B2, etc.), and color. Each student must use a test book and answer sheet having the same form letter and color. This is essential for correct scoring of student responses.

**Online test forms.** Different versions of a test are assigned to students testing online. The different versions are equated statistically and are parallel in content, so comparisons of performance within and across test administrations can be made.

**Test Materials**

School test coordinators may conduct training virtually or in-person, using either an electronic or hard copy of the test administration guide. The test administrator must thoroughly read and study the guide (electronic or hard copy) before attending the training session, so the school test coordinator can answer any questions the test administrator may have. All test administrators must receive a hard copy of the guide before administering the test. All other test materials must be distributed to test administrators immediately before each test administration and returned to the principal or school test coordinator at the end of each test administration. Test administrators are responsible for all materials in their care. Every effort must be made to minimize public access to secure state tests before and after each test administration.

With the exception of scratch paper, graph paper, and pencils, the test administrator should not give students additional materials during the test administration without the prior written consent of the Division of Accountability Services. Reference books, textbooks, thesauruses,

bookmarks, multiplication tables, number lines, music, MP3 players, cameras, cell phones, personal learning devices, personal computers, smartpens, smartwatches, or any other electronic devices are prohibited during the administration of any test in the Annual Testing Program (see *Testing Room, Testing Violations and Irregularities*).

**Designated Features**

NCDPI-approved designated features are available for all students taking North Carolina-developed tests. The use of designated features can be considered a part of a standard test administration. To be used during a test, students must have experience using the designated features regularly in classroom instruction and with similar classroom test. Designated features must not be introduced for the first time during state tests. If designated features, such as highlighters, color acetate overlays, colored pencils, etc. will be provided during test administrations, the test administrator is to distribute them immediately before beginning the testing session (i.e., before starting to read aloud the test directions). Refer to the *Testing Students with Disabilities* handbook for additional information on designated features approved by the Annual Testing Program for use by all students.

**Calculator Use**

Students should use calculators that are routinely used during classroom instruction and on classroom assessments during the school year when taking state tests. Students who routinely use more than one calculator during classroom activities may be permitted to use more than one calculator during the test administration. Students may use calculators with more than the minimum requirements (e.g., fraction keys, graphing capabilities), if those additional features are not prohibited. (School systems should be cautioned that the use of these features without prior training may confuse students and adversely affect their performance during the test administration.)

An online calculator is available for students testing online. The online calculator meets the minimum calculator requirements for the specific test. Both a scientific calculator and a graphing calculator are available online for grade 8 mathematics. A handheld calculator is not required for online test administrations; however, students who routinely use a handheld calculator during classroom instruction and on similar classroom assessments or have not had enough practice using the online calculator, should be provided a handheld calculator during the test administration. A student may also require a handheld calculator for accessibility purposes, when appropriate.

To access the North Carolina testing version of the online calculators visit

- Four Function Calculator www.desmos.com/testing/northcarolina/fourfunction
- Scientific Calculator www.desmos.com/testing/northcarolina/scientific
- Graphing Calculator www.desmos.com/testing/northcarolina/graphing

All online calculators are free to use and are accessible for students who are visually impaired and blind. For more information, visit www.desmos.com/accessibility.

**Calculator restrictions**. Students are not allowed to share calculators during test administrations, nor are they allowed to use calculators with the following functionalities:

- Calculators with wireless communication technologies (e.g., Bluetooth, Infrared, or Wi-Fi)
- Calculators with built-in computer algebraic systems (CAS) capable of doing symbolic algebra (e.g., factoring, expanding, or simplifying given variable output) or symbolic calculus
- Pocket organizers
- Handheld, tablet, laptop, or notebook computers, unless specifically approved
- Calculators built into cell phones or other electronic communication devices (Cell phones and electronic devices are not permitted during state test administrations.)
- Calculators in pen input or stylus-driven devices (e.g., palm-based devices, tablets, laptops, notebooks, and computers)
- Calculators requiring access to an electrical outlet (except for students needing special accommodations)
- Calculators that make noises of any kind that cannot be disabled (except for students needing special accommodations)
- Calculators that use a QWERTY (typewriter-style) keyboard
- Calculators that use paper tape

The following list includes calculators not permitted for use on North Carolina tests. The list is not all-inclusive. If the public school unit test coordinator believes calculator brands other than those listed below may need to be restricted, then the RAC must be contacted for confirmation before excluding them.

- Texas Instruments: All model numbers that begin with TI-89 or TI-92, Voyage 200, Nspire CAS (TI-Nspire CX CAS and TI-Nspire CAS with touchpad)
- Hewlett-Packard: HP 48GII and all models that begin with HP 40G, HP 49G, or HP 50G
- Casio: Algebra fx 2.0, ClassPad 300, and all models that begin with CFX-9970G

- Virtual calculators, downloaded calculators, calculator apps
- Calculators accessible by desktop, laptop, or other devices (e.g., iPad and Chromebook)

Texas Instruments TI-Nspire calculators without CAS are allowed only in the following two cases:

1. with the TI-84 Plus keypad or
2. with the Nspire keypad using operating system 1.7 or higher with both "limit geometry functions" and "disable function grab and move" invoked in Press-to-Test mode.

Before beginning and immediately following a test administration that requires calculator use, the test administrator or principal's designee must clear the calculator memory and all applications (including preloaded) from all calculators that will be used during each administration of the test. Only the test administrator or principal's designee is permitted to carry out this procedure. Procedures for clearing the calculator memory (including standard memory, ROM, and Flash ROM) that are appropriate for the specific calculator model(s) must be used. The test administrator or principal's designee should use caution when clearing calculators because different calculators require different procedures. In some cases, the calculator's memory and applications are cleared or disabled and in others, they are permanently deleted.

Because the memory and all applications must be cleared and all data stored in the calculator erased, students who wish to use their own calculators must be told before the test day to back up all data and programs that they wish to save. After the test administration, the test administrator or principal's designee should enable the memory and applications of the students' calculators.

Comprehensive clearing procedures for calculators most frequently used in the state are available in the Appendixes of this handbook. In addition, major calculator vendors have support teams who assist test administrators in clearing calculators. Vendor contact information can be obtained through the public school unit test coordinator.

Note: As curricula and technology change, the policy concerning calculator requirements on North Carolina tests will be reevaluated.

**Minimum Calculator Requirements**
The minimum calculator requirements for each state test that requires calculator use are listed in the following chart. Additional features (e.g., fraction keys, graphing capabilities) are permitted, but are not required. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction does not endorse any brand of calculator.

| Test | Minimum (At Least) Calculator Requirements |
|---|---|
| End-of-Grade (EOG) Mathematics Grades 3–5 | Four-function calculator with memory key |
| EOG Mathematics Grade 6–7 | Scientific calculator[1] |
| EOG Mathematics Grade 8 | Graphing calculator and/or scientific calculator[1] |
| End-of-Course (EOC) NC Math 1 and NC Math 3 | Graphing calculator |
| NCEXTEND1 Mathematics Grades 6–8, NC Math 1 Grade 10, and Grade 11 | Four-function calculator with memory key |
| College and Career Readiness Alternate Assessment (CCRAA) Grades 10 and 11 | Four-function calculator with memory key |

[1]Any four-function calculator with a square root function, $y^x$, π (pi), and algebraic logic.

For additional information on the Annual Testing Program's calculator requirements, refer to the *North Carolina Calculator Assessment Brief,* available at https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/testing-and-school-accountability/testing-policy-and-operations/assessment-briefs.

**Precoded Answer Sheets**
The student information (i.e., school name, teacher's name, student's last name and first name, and PowerSchool Student Number) on SIDE 1 of the answer sheets must be precoded before testing by the RAC, TOPS, or the public school unit test coordinator, the school test coordinator, or the principal's designee. Students must not code the student information on SIDE 1 of their answer sheets.

Precoded information comes from the PowerSchool database. Students and test administrators must not change, alter, or erase precoding on students' answer sheets. All corrections for precoded information must be provided to the person designated by the RAC, RCC, or public school unit test

coordinator so that the information may be corrected or updated in the PowerSchool database.

**Student Identification Numbers**
To identify student records for testing and accountability, a unique student identification number is required on student answer sheets. The PowerSchool Student Number must be used on the student answer sheet.

**TOPS Precoding and Scanning Program**
The TOPS Precoding and Scanning Program serves all charter, lab, regional, residential and ISD schools, as well as some school districts that utilize paper testing.

**Precoding accommodation forms.** For tests administered on paper, test coordinators should complete an *Accommodation Student Precode Information* spreadsheet and upload it to the root of the current year folder on the secure shell (SSH) for students requiring a Read Aloud form, or a *Braille* (full UEB), *Large Print, One Test Item Per Page (OTIPP)*, or *Large Print OTIPP* edition. The *Accommodation Student Precoding Information* spreadsheet should contain the following column headers: student name, student ID, grade, subject, accommodation type (*Braille, Large Print, OTIPP, Large Print OTIPP, Read Aloud*), misadministration (Y or N).

This spreadsheet should be completed before the school's material order submission to ensure adequate time for TOPS to precode. Failing to submit the spreadsheet in a timely fashion can result in delays with the delivery of precoding answer sheets. Extra blank answer sheets will be included in all orders in case they are needed. If the spreadsheet is not placed on the SSH, then blank answer sheets will be sent to be hand bubbled.

**Answer sheets and precoding.** Answer sheets are precoded by TOPS based on the test materials ordered in TNN. Precode files are pulled from the enrollment feed generated from PowerSchool and used to precode answer sheets by grade level for Beginning-of-Grade 3 (BOG3), EOG tests, and by subject for EOC tests. TOPS precoded answer sheets are delivered with ordered test materials.

It is important that schools verify rosters and ensure that all students expected to test are correctly enrolled in PowerSchool at least two weeks before the test window. Test coordinators should also verify that the correct course codes are used for EOCs (i.e., NC Math 1, NC Math 3, Biology, and English II). Inaccurate rosters will result in incorrect or missing precoded answer sheets.

**Precoding Read to Achieve and EOG Grade 3 Reading Retest.** Test coordinators should follow these steps when precoding the Read to Achieve (RtA) and EOG Grade 3 Reading Retest answer sheets:

1. For online testing, review the grade 3 reading scores, inform TOPS if precoding is necessary for retesting and indicate which test, RtA or EOG Grade 3 Reading Retest will be administered.
2. For tests administered on paper, test coordinators should complete a *Grade 3 Retest Student Precode Information* spreadsheet and upload it to the root of the current year folder on the SSH.
   - The *Grade 3 Retest Student Precode Information* spreadsheet should contain the following column headers: student name, student ID, RtA (Y or N), Grade 3 Retest (Y or N), Retest Form.
   - If the student is participating in the Grade 3 Retest, the public school unit test coordinator should enter the retest form in the Retest Form column. The retest form should be different from the original form taken.
   - Send an email to TOPS and copy the RAC and RCC to let them know the spreadsheet is uploaded for precoding.
   - Order additional paper materials, if needed.

Before the administration of the grade 3 EOG Reading Test, ensure special codes for Good Cause Exemption (GCE) and the option met for third-grade promotion standard for reading are completed via the data collection process.

**Packing and returning answer sheets for grade 3 EOG.** It is advisable when administering the paper version of the grade 3 EOG reading test to test on the first day of the window. Completing this first will allow adequate time to return the answer sheets to TOPS for scoring so that students who may need to take either the Grade 3 Reading Retest or the RtA test will be identified in the testing window.

Boxes returned to TOPS for scoring that include grade 3 reading answer sheets for scoring should have "G3 READING" written on them to ensure scanning priority. Do not include any other testing materials in these boxes.

**Packing and returning answer sheets for all tests (except BOG3).** Answer sheets should be returned to TOPS for scanning as soon as testing is completed. It is important for test coordinators to allow adequate time to ensure all student answer sheets are ready for machine scoring. This includes the special codes section of each student's answer sheet. (Note, secure test books must not be available during the reviewing process.) This process must occur under secure conditions in a group setting that includes the test coordinator and a minimum of three test administrators. Failure to

effectively complete the answer sheet review process will create scanning and reporting delays for schools.

Answer sheets to be scored are grouped with header sheets by grade level and subject. For packing and returning answer sheets,

- complete a scanning cover sheet;
- include a roster containing form letters and numbers by each student's name;
  - absences may be noted on the roster.
- verify the form number has been bubbled on all answer sheets;
  - pack all answer sheets together in vinyl bags;
- place answer sheets in boxes using the provided ARS labels;
- do not include any other testing materials in these boxes, including any unused answer sheets;
- each box should be clearly marked on the outside with the provided sticker "SCORABLE ANSWER SHEETS";
- if more than one box is used for shipping answer sheets, then each box should also be clearly marked with "BOX <#> OF <total # of boxes>";
- ship the completed answer sheets to TOPS, and inform the RAC or RCC of the shipment via email; and
- fax the FAX Return Verification Form to TOPS and email a copy to the RAC or RCC.

**Scanning Process.** TOPS will scan scorable answer sheets as they are received. Check Data Sheets will be reviewed on all scanfiles. TOPS will contact the public school unit test coordinator to correct any issues that are discovered during the scoring process. Answer sheets with missing information or coding errors will be set aside until scoring is complete, and then these issues will be resolved. These answer sheets are placed back in the scanning queue once all issues have been corrected. Providing the form letters and numbers on the roster for each student allows TOPS to correct those errors without calling the school test coordinator.

**Unexpected School Closings, Inclement Weather, or Student Dismissals and Testing Requirements**

Unexpected school closures and student dismissals are determined locally. The NCDPI recognizes the health and safety of the school community comes first. In the event a public school unit is unable to administer state tests according to designated testing windows because of unexpected school closings, inclement weather, or student dismissals, the public school unit should adhere to the following procedures:

1. The public school unit test coordinator must notify the RAC of the school closing, impending weather condition, or student dismissal.
2. State tests should be rescheduled as soon as possible after the school returns to a normal schedule.
3. The public school unit must submit all scores to the NCDPI by the data submission deadline unless an exception is requested and granted (see number 4).
4. The public school unit may request an extension for submitting scores if it has evidence that shows the unexpected school closing, inclement weather, or dismissal affected its ability to meet the NCDPI data submission deadline. The public school unit superintendent, principal, or director must submit the request via receipted mail to:

   Tammy Howard, Director
   Division of Accountability Services
   NC Department of Public Instruction
   6307 Mail Service Center
   Raleigh, NC 27699-6307

The request must include the following information:

- the name of the public school unit;
- the public school unit code;
- an explanation why the unexpected school closing, inclement weather, or student dismissal affected the ability to submit scores by the NCDPI data submission deadline; and
- the earliest date when all scores can be submitted to the NCDPI.

The superintendent, district test coordinator, principal or director is to contact the RAC with any questions regarding these procedures.

Note: In the event a public school unit is unable to administer ACT tests (i.e., PreACT, ACT, ACT WorkKeys) according to the designated testing window(s) because of unexpected school closings, inclement weather, or student dismissals, the public school unit must contact the RAC for ACT-specific makeup testing policy and procedures.

**Testing Window**

Per G.S. §115C-174.12(a)(4), "all annual assessments of student achievement adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant to G.S. §115C-174.11(c)(1) and (3) and all final exams for courses shall be administered within the final ten (10) instructional days of the school year for yearlong courses and within the final five (5) instructional days of the semester for semester courses."

**Request to Test a Student Outside the Testing Window**

Schools are expected to test within the designated test windows; however, there are certain circumstances that may require a student to test outside of the window. The Division of Accountability Services provides procedural documents to districts and schools that must be submitted to the RAC when requesting to test students outside the window. The procedure and documents are shared with RACs during training.

## E. State Monitoring

**Monitoring of Prior School Year's Cohort Graduation Rate**
The NCDPI Accountability Services Division has implemented a formalized state monitoring plan for on-site monitoring of public school units to verify withdrawal of students reported in the prior school year's cohort graduation rates. The monitoring is conducted by teams of state-level and regional staff members tasked with conducting electronic desk monitoring and with requesting written evidence or documentation to verify the withdrawals of students from the cohort. For more information regarding the monitoring process and additional details, access the Cohort Graduation Rate Manual located on the Accountability Services Section of the NCDPI website.

**Annual Process for Assessment Monitoring Visits**
The NCDPI Division of Accountability Services conducts all assessment monitoring. The purpose of monitoring test administrations is to ensure the Annual Testing Program is conducted in a manner that is fair, consistent, and equitable for all students, including students with disabilities and students identified as English Learners. The annual process for assessment monitoring consists of three components: (1) desk monitoring, (2) on-site monitoring, and (3) feedback and assistance.

To ensure schools are administering statewide required tests appropriately, select schools will be monitored by both an on-site visit and desk monitoring by NCDPI staff. Starting with the 2021–22 school year, the selected schools will be identified by random stratified electronic sampling. This method ensures sites are observed in a fair and equitable manner.

The following steps outline the process for coordinating and conducting an assessment monitoring visit.

**Desk Monitoring.** Assessment monitoring observations begin with desk monitoring. To facilitate this process, the observer will request the following documents from the district or school test coordinator:

- annual testing plan
- test-material distribution list or documents related to secure material distribution procedures
- test administration training rosters
- signed test security agreements
- test meeting agendas and notes
- testing calendar

The observer may also access the following reports internally for review:

- the Expect Test File,
- the ACCOM file, and
- Online Testing Irregularity Submission System reports

If concerns are noted during the desk monitoring review, they will be noted in the follow-up letter to the superintendent or director.

**On-site Monitoring.** The initial observation notification will inform the public school unit of the visit and request specific monitoring documentation. (If the observer will be visiting a school within a district, he or she may request the district test coordinator accompany them on the visit.) Within one week of the monitoring visit, the observer will contact the public school unit test coordinator regarding specific details for the monitoring visit (e.g., arrival time, special circumstances).

During the assessment monitoring visit, the observer will use the appropriate *Assessment Monitoring Visit Checklist* to record observations. This checklist will be used to generate feedback to the public school unit following the visit.

The assessment monitoring visit may include observing either a full or partial public school unit assessment day. The visit may include monitoring the following activities:

- visiting the secure location for test materials
- observing test materials distribution (check-in or checkout, or both) procedures
- observing test-day policy and procedures of the school test coordinator, test administrators, or proctors (if utilized)
- monitoring the school's testing environment
- monitoring accommodated settings (i.e., Individualized Education Programs [IEP], Section 504 Plans, EL Plans, transitory impairment documentation, *Review of Accommodations Used During Testing* forms)
- monitoring the reporting of testing irregularities (if applicable)

Interviews may be conducted to gain additional information if time and schedules permit. Interviewees may include:

- district test coordinator;
- principal or assistant principal, or both;
- school test coordinator;
- test administrators;
- proctors (if utilized); and

- other public school unit staff members participating in the test administration.

**Feedback and Assistance.** During the observation, assessment monitoring checklists are completed by the observer. The checklists are designed to provide specific feedback to the superintendent or director, administrators, and school test coordinators. A copy of these checklists is emailed to the superintendent or director within forty-five calendar days of the visit.

As part of the feedback the observer will indicate if concerns were noted either during the desk monitoring or during the in-person visit. In some situations, when concerns are noted, the feedback will include plans to observe the site again (at a later date). If this circumstance should arise, the observer will include specific remedies or actions that should be completed before the next observation. The observer will ensure that the concerns are corrected as part of the next observation and noted in the follow-up feedback to the superintendent or director.

## Assessment Monitoring Visit Checklist: District Observation

**Test Date:** _____ **District Test Coordinator:** _____

| Administration Process (District Test Coordinator) | Compliance | Non-compliance | Not Observed |
|---|---|---|---|
| District testing plan developed and disseminated before school starts | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Current testing plans for all schools on file in the testing office | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Evidence of school test coordinator training, meeting minutes, notes Date(s): | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Test materials counted and verified upon receipt from vendor | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| System in place to maintain accurate records of student membership | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Test materials stored in a secure, locked facility | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Students' test book and answer documents stored according to testing policy | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Testing materials distributed in a secure manner (check-in and checkout system) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Secure shredded materials disposed of in accordance with testing policy | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Administration Process | Compliance | Non-compliance | Not Observed |
|---|---|---|---|
| District test coordinator encourages a positive atmosphere for test administrations | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Sufficient copies of test materials; materials ordered in a timely fashion | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| System in place to monitor all documented accommodations (i.e., IEPs, Section 504 Plans, EL Plans, transitory impairment documentation, *Review of Accommodations Used During Testing* forms) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Investigate and report all testing irregularities, including misadministrations and situations that may compromise test security (OTISS) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Other | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

**Policy and operational concerns:** ☐ YES ☐ NO _____

**Observer Signature:** _____

## Assessment Monitoring Visit Checklist: School Observation

| **Test Date:** | **School Name:** |
|---|---|
| **Principal:** | **School Test Coordinator:** |

| Administration Process (School Test Coordinator) | Compliance | Non-compliance | Not Observed |
|---|---|---|---|
| Testing plan for the school located in the main office | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| All test administrators and proctors trained Date(s): | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Test materials stored in a secure, locked room | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Test materials distributed in accordance with the testing plan | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| School test coordinator walks around and monitors testing sites | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| School personnel encourages a positive atmosphere for test administrations | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Test materials reviewed under secure conditions (group setting) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Testing irregularities reported in the OTISS on the day of occurrence | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| "Testing—Do Not Disturb" sign posted on the door of each testing site | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Administration Process | Compliance | Non-compliance | Not Observed |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bulletin boards, instructional displays, and reference materials covered or removed | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Windows in doors exposed for monitoring purposes | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Visitors are prohibited in the classroom during the test administration | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Test administrators are aware of students provided accommodations for testing (i.e., IEPs, Section 504 Plans, EL Plans, transitory impairment documentation, *Review of Accommodations Used During Testing* forms) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Personal cell phones and electronic devices are turned off and not visible | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Test materials provided appropriately for all students during the test administration | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Test administrators and proctors move quietly and frequently about monitoring the room during the test administration | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Test administrators and proctors do not leave students unattended at any time during the testing session | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

**Policy and operational concerns:** ☐ YES ☐ NO _____

**Observer Signature:** _____

## Assessment Monitoring Visit Checklist: Test Administration (Page 1 of 2)

**School Name:** _____
**Test Name:** _____
**Date:** _____
**Test Format:** _____
**Test Administrator:** _____
**Proctor:** _____
**Number of Students in the Room:** _____

**Devices Used in the Test Room (Select all that apply.)**

Desktops ☐ Laptops ☐ iPads ☐

MacBooks ☐ Chromebooks ☐

Unknown ☐ Other _____

| Administration Process | Compliance | Non-compliance | Not Observed |
|---|---|---|---|
| A "Testing—Do Not Disturb" sign is posted outside the room. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Positive atmosphere–room is quiet, well-lighted, comfortable, etc. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Bulletin boards, instructional displays, and reference materials are covered or removed. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Desks or workstations are cleared of books and other materials not required for the test. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Students are provided the appropriate test materials. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Procedures are followed for distribution and collection of test materials. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Administration Process | Compliance | Non-compliance | Not Observed |
|---|---|---|---|
| Personal cell phones and electronic devices are turned off and appropriately stored. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| The test administrator and proctor monitor the test administration. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Policies and procedures are followed for the provision of accommodations. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Students receiving testing accommodations are monitored. (*Review of Accommodations Used During Testing* forms are utilized) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Procedures are followed for assisting students who misalign answers. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Visitors are prohibited in the classroom during the test administration. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

## Assessment Monitoring Visit Checklist: Test Administration (Page 2 of 2)

| Administration Process | Compliance | Non-compliance | Not Observed |
|---|---|---|---|
| Directions are read to the students as they are written in the test administration Guide. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| There are no distracting behaviors in the room. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Correct log-in procedures are followed. (online only) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Additional devices are ready and available in each test room. (online only) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| If technical issues arose, the issue(s) were resolved with limited delay. (online only) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Administration Process | Compliance | Non-compliance | Not Observed |
|---|---|---|---|
| Students who complete the test early are provided the opportunity to read. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Maximum time procedures are followed, if applicable. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Device power supplies are available. (online only) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| The test administrator's NC Education username and password remained secure. (online only) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Documentation exists confirming students took the online tutorial before test administration. (online only) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

**This testing session contained some policy and operational concerns:** ☐YES ☐NO

_____

**Add any additional comments as necessary:**

_____

**Observer Signature:** _____

## F. Scoring and Reporting

**Requirement to Report Student Scores**
According to 16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0307 "(g) LEAs shall, at the beginning of each school year, provide information to students and parents or guardians advising them of the districtwide and State-mandated tests that students will be required to take during that school year. In addition, LEAs shall advise students and parents or guardians of the dates the tests will be administered and how the results from the tests will be used. Also, information provided to parents shall include whether the State Board of Education or the local board of education requires the test(s). (h) LEAs shall report scores resulting from the administration State-mandated tests from the Annual Testing Program to students and parents or guardians no later than 30 days after the test is administered and along with available score interpretation information within 30 days from receipt of the scores and interpretive documentation from the NCDPI."

**General Statute §14-118.2: Assisting, etc., in Obtaining Academic Credit by Fraudulent Means**
"It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, corporation, or association to assist any student, or advertise, offer or attempt to assist any student, in obtaining or in attempting to obtain, by fraudulent means, any academic credit, grade or test score, or any diploma, certificate or other instrument purporting to confer any literary, scientific, professional, technical, or other degree in any course of study in any university, college, academy or other educational institution. The activity prohibited by this subsection includes, but is not limited to, preparing or advertising; offering, or attempting to prepare a term paper, thesis, or dissertation for another; impersonating or advertising, offering or attempting to impersonate another in taking or attempting to take an examination; and the giving or changing of a grade or test score or offering to give or change a grade or test score in exchange for an article of value or money."

**General Statute §115C-174.13(b): Public Records Exemption**
Any written material containing identifiable scores of individual students on tests shall not be disseminated or otherwise made available to the public by any person, except as permitted under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. §1232g.

**Confidentiality of Student Scores When Publicizing Test Results**
The confidentiality of students must be protected at all times when publicizing or reporting test results to the public. Practices that violate confidentiality rights are not permissible under the provisions of the FERPA.

Unethical practices include

- publicly posting student names and test results, and
- publicly announcing student names and test results (including recognizing students achieving a specific academic achievement level or score).

As stated in the *Testing Code of Ethics*, "Educators shall maintain the confidentiality of individual students. Publicizing test scores or any written material containing personally identifiable information from the student's educational records shall not be disseminated or otherwise made available to the public by any member of the State Board of Education, any employee of the State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, any employee of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, any member of a local board of education, any employee of a local board of education, or any other person, except as permitted under the provisions of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C.§ 1232g . . . In the event of a violation of this Rule, the State Board of Education may, in accordance with the contested case provisions of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes, impose any one or more of the following sanctions:

1. withhold any applicable monetary incentive awards;
2. file a civil action against the person or persons responsible for the violation for copyright infringement or for any other available cause of action;
3. seek criminal prosecution of the person or persons responsible for the violation; and
4. in accordance with the provisions of 16 N.C. Admin. Code 6C .0312, suspend or revoke the professional license of the person or persons responsible for the violation."

Educators must be mindful of student confidentiality and adhere to appropriate policies and procedures when publicizing or reporting test results.

**Students Receiving Services at a Visited School**

It is important that districts and schools understand the policies and procedures for including all students attending a school (whether in membership, cross-enrolled, or visiting) in the Annual Testing Program. For policy and procedures regarding students receiving services at a visited school, refer to the *Policies and Procedures for Students Receiving Services at a Visited School* subsection found in Section S of this handbook.

## Scanning, Scoring, and Reporting

*Online Tests*

**Scoring online tests without CR questions.** Online tests without CR questions are scored during an overnight process and sent to the secure shell (SSH) by 9:00 a.m. the day after the test is completed. RAC and district test coordinators are then able to generate school rosters and class rosters.

**Scoring online tests with CR questions.** For online tests with CR questions, vendors will begin scoring the first business day after the test record is received and will return the scored online test electronically to the NCDPI within five business days. Therefore, RACs and district test coordinators should allow approximately six business days to receive scored online test records.

As a reminder, a school may receive scored test records across multiple days for a group of students that tested on the same day. Student responses are scored in the order they are received by the vendor.

*Paper Tests*

**Multiple-choice tests and multiple-choice tests with gridded response questions.** At the district level, the district test coordinator establishes the schedule for scanning and scoring North Carolina multiple-choice tests and multiple-choice tests with gridded response questions. The district test coordinator (1) scans the answer documents, (2) provides the results (reports) from the test administrations soon after scanning and scoring is completed, and (3) stores all used answer sheets in a secure, locked facility for six months following the return of test scores. After six months, the used answer sheets are recycled or destroyed in a secure manner in accordance with Annual Testing Program's procedures.
Note: TOPs has the responsibility of precoding, scanning, and scoring multiple-choice and multiple-choice gridded response answer sheets for charter, lab, regional, residential, and ISD schools.

**Scoring paper tests with constructed response (CR) questions.** For districts and schools administering paper tests with constructed response (CR) questions, the completed answer sheets must be shipped by the district test coordinator to the vendor each test day. The vendor will score all questions (i.e., multiple-choice and CR). The scoring process will begin the first business day after the test record is received by the vendor. Scored paper test records will be returned electronically to the NCDPI within eight business days of starting the scoring process. Therefore, test coordinators should allow approximately nine business days to receive scored paper test records.

**Situations that will delay scoring.** The following situations will delay the scoring of individual student English II EOC answer sheets:

- Precoding marks are not aligned to the bubbles.
- The form number is not coded on the answer sheet.
- Photocopied answer sheets are used by students instead of the original answer sheets shipped from TOPS.
- Correction fluid or tape is used on the answer sheets.
- Boxes are not packed according to the return instructions.
- Boxes are not packed appropriately, resulting in damaged materials. Add filler to boxes that are not full to resist crushing.
- Incorrect shipping labels are used.
- Transmittal forms are not completed accurately.
- NC General Purpose Header Sheets are not included in each box. Header sheets must be included for general and makeup administrations.
- Misaligned precoding marks or incomplete coding on header sheets will also delay scoring.

Student answer sheets received for scoring with any of these issues will be placed in the back of the scoring queue for investigation and will not be scored until the issues are resolved.

**Invalid Test Scores**

In the event that procedures specified in the test administration guides or in state accommodations publications (or in subsequent updates to these documents) are not followed during the actual test administration, the Division of Accountability Services may declare the test scores invalid. If test scores are invalid, the results must not be included in a student's permanent record or be used for accountability purposes. Invalid test scores will not be used in the accountability model.

## G. Test Administration Information

**North Carolina Standardized Testing and Opting Out**
All students in North Carolina (including students with disabilities and students identified as ELs) are required to participate in the testing program per state and federal requirements. To date, North Carolina does not allow any student to opt out of required testing unless there are extenuating circumstances, primarily related to serious health conditions. N.C. Admin. Code 06G .0315 requires all students in membership (i.e., enrolled in a school) participate in the Annual Testing Program.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires each state educational agency to implement in each district and school, a set of high-quality academic tests that includes, at a minimum, annual tests in mathematics and reading or language arts, and science. Mathematics and reading or language arts tests are to be administered in each of grades 3 through 8 and at least once in grades 9 through 12. Science tests are to be administered at least once during grades 3 through 5, grades 6 through 9, and grades 10 through 12. Furthermore, as amended by 1005 of Public Law 114–95, ESSA requires state tests to "be the same academic assessments used to measure the achievement of all public elementary school and secondary school students in the State." ESSA requires all states to "provide for the participation in such assessments of all students." These federal requirements do not allow students to be excluded from statewide tests. Rather, they define the legal requirement that all students in the tested grades must be tested.

Parents and guardians who request that their students not be tested or refuse to allow their students to test must be informed of the state's testing requirements and any possible academic outcomes for not permitting their students to test.

As in prior years, if eligible students are present in the classroom on test day, employees of the public school unit must administer tests to *all* eligible students in membership. If students attend a test session but choose not to answer any test questions, they will be assigned the lowest possible score. The scanner will not recognize that the students intentionally opted out and will scan for right answers*. Schools do not have the option to remove a student's test from scoring*. The student's grade for the course and overall grade point average calculation may be negatively affected by receiving the lowest possible score.

A sample letter that public school units may use to address parents' or guardians' concerns regarding testing mandates is found in Appendix H of this handbook.

**Uniformity of Test Administration**

All tests that are part of the Annual Testing Program require a standardized process of administration for test results to be considered valid. It is important that test coordinators, test administrators, and proctors (if utilized) follow all procedures included in the test administration guides. Test administrators must follow and present the directions as written in the test administration guides. It is a violation of the *Testing Code of Ethics* to omit, rewrite, or paraphrase orally or in writing the instructions presented in the test administration guides without the prior written consent of the Division of Accountability Services.

Unethical testing practices, also documented in the *Testing Code of Ethics*, include omitting, revising, interpreting, explaining, or paraphrasing the test directions, reading selections, or test items. Test administrators may repeat test directions as they are written in the test administration guides as many times as necessary for the student(s) to understand, but they are not permitted to provide any specific assistance with answering test questions. For example, test administrators (and proctors, if utilized) are not permitted to clarify test directions, provide synonyms for unknown words, or rephrase questions. Students must complete their own work without assistance for the scores to reflect the student's ability. All students must complete the test under the same conditions, unless a student has a current IEP, Section 504 Plan, EL Plan, or transitory impairment documentation (in accordance with state policies) that allows testing accommodations.

Documentation on the current IEP, Section 504 Plan, EL Plan, or transitory impairment documentation must exist in order for students with disabilities, students identified as ELs, or students with a transitory impairment to receive accommodations approved for use by the Annual Testing Program. The test administrator must ensure the appropriate students receive the accommodations and must follow all appropriate procedures in the *Testing Students with Disabilities* handbook and the *Guidelines for Testing Students Identified as English Learners* publication and any published supplements or updates for providing accommodations to these students.

Directions located in the test administration guides for distributing test materials must be followed. Per the test administration guides, only NCDPI-approved designated features and supplemental materials may be used during the test administration. If NCDPI-approved supplemental materials or designated features such as highlighters, color acetate overlays, or example

response spaces for CR items or mathematics grids for mathematics tests (for students with *Student Marks Answers in Test Book* accommodation only) will be used, the test administrator must give students these items before beginning the testing session.

Placing the required test materials, such as the answer sheets, test books, or calculators, on students' desks before beginning the test administration is a violation of the procedures outlined in the test administration guides and the *Testing Code of Ethics*. To administer statewide tests to North Carolina students in a fair and equitable manner, only the testing materials specified in the test administration guide or part of an approved procedural accommodation are allowed during the test administration. Other materials (e.g., reference books, textbooks, thesauruses, bookmarks, multiplication tables, number lines, music, MP3 players, cameras, cell phones, personal learning devices, personal computers, smartpens, wearable activity trackers, removeable storage devices, smartwatches, or other electronic devices) or procedures (e.g., taping reference tables, word lists, "Tips for Taking Tests," or mathematical formulas on students' desks) are not permitted during the administration of secure tests (for additional information see *Testing Room, Testing Violations and Irregularities*).

While most test administrators and proctors (if utilized) may have conducted or proctored similar testing sessions previously, they must receive training each testing cycle before administering or proctoring any secure state test. In addition, the test administrator must study the designated test administration guide before the test administration, ensuring uniform test administration procedures are followed throughout North Carolina.

**Virtual Schools and Remote Instruction**

Any school providing virtual or remote instruction to students (whether the school operates virtually full-time or operates a hybrid model of in-person and remote instruction) must adhere to all testing policies, procedures, and requirements as documented in public school laws of North Carolina in General Statute, N.C. Admin. Code, State Board of Education policies, all Division of Accountability Services test administration guides and handbooks.

**Paper Clipping Test Books**

Test administrators are responsible for paper clipping students' test books in the following instances:

**Paper clip before students begin calculator active (paper testing).**

When students complete the calculator inactive part of the mathematics tests (i.e., EOG Mathematics grades 3–8 and EOC NC Math 1), the test

administrator must paper clip the students' test books so they cannot return to previously attempted items. Students must be informed of this policy on days before the test administration.

**Procedures for students who take a lunch break.** If students stop for a lunch break during testing, the following steps must be completed before dismissing students from the testing room.

- Alert the students when they have five minutes remaining.
- Secure all test materials during the lunch break.
- For online test administrations:
  - Instruct the students to click the PAUSE button to prevent test questions from being visible on devices.
- For paper test administrations:
  - Instruct the students to place their answer sheet and scratch paper(s) inside the test book and close the test book.

If students <u>will</u> have the opportunity to communicate with others or access electronic devices during lunch, the test administrator must also complete the following steps.

- Inform students that during lunch, they are not allowed to discuss specific test questions or information contained within the test.
- Inform students they must complete the current reading selection and the associated test questions before the lunch break.
- Inform students they are not allowed to return to any questions attempted before the lunch break.
- For online test administrations:
  - The test administrator must monitor students to ensure students do not return to any questions attempted before the lunch break.
- For paper test administrations:
  - Paperclip students' test books to ensure they do not return to any questions attempted before the lunch break.

If students <u>will not</u> have the opportunity to communicate with others or access electronic devices during lunch, then they may return to any previously attempted questions after the lunch break (with the exception of the mathematics calculator inactive section of the test. Students cannot return to mathematics calculator inactive items if they received a calculator and were working on the calculator active section before the lunch break.)

**Paper clip for students with accommodations.** The students' test books must be paper clipped in cases in which the students have accommodations (i.e., *Multiple Testing Sessions*, *Scheduled Extended Time*) documented on their current IEPs, Section 504 Plans, EL Plans, or transitory impairment documentation that require an extended break or require taking the test on

a subsequent day. Test administrators should refer to the most recent *Testing Students with Disabilities* handbook for specific procedures for providing these accommodations with extended breaks to students.

**Transcribing Gridded Response and Short Answer Test Questions**
Where appropriate documentation exists, the provision of the accommodations *Student Marks Answers in Test Book*, *One Test Item Per Page Edition*, *Large Print Edition*, *One Test Item Per Page Large Print Edition, Braille Edition*, *Braille Writer/Braille Paper or Slate and Stylus/Braille Paper*, *Dictation to a Scribe*, and *Assistive Technology Devices* is available to students with disabilities, including students only receiving services under Section 504. The need for the accommodation(s) must be documented in the students' current IEPs or Section 504 Plans and used routinely during the students' instructional programs and similar classroom tests. Test administrators must refer to the most recent *Testing Students with Disabilities* publication for specific procedures for providing these accommodations.

**Maximum Testing Time Allowed**
The Annual Testing Program requires all students be allowed ample opportunity to complete required tests. However, no BOG3, EOG, or EOC standard test administration may exceed the maximum testing time (except for those involving students with documented special needs requiring accommodations, such as *Scheduled Extended Time*). The maximum testing time allowed does not include time for general instructions or breaks.

At the school level, provisions must be made for students who need time beyond that scheduled to complete the test (i.e., up to maximum time). Students who complete the test during the scheduled time must not be allowed to remain in the testing room with any students who require additional time. The school may either move students who have completed the test to another room or facility, or the school may move students who need additional time to another room or facility to complete the test. Students who are in different grade levels or in a different subject or course may be combined into one group for up to the maximum time. However, schools must ensure that students do not feel so uncomfortable with mixed-grade, subject, or course grouping that it affects their test performance. Test administrators must consult with the school test coordinator for the procedure to follow in providing additional time to students to complete the tests.

For best practices, the Annual Testing Program strongly recommends schools schedule tests within the school day so that they do not interfere with lunch or bus schedules. All students, including students with the *Scheduled Extended*

*Time* accommodation, must be allowed to eat lunch during the school day and to travel home at their regularly scheduled time.

**Procedures for Students Who Complete the Test before the Scheduled Testing Time Is Over**

In some test settings, there may be students who complete the test before the scheduled time is over. The following local options are available to these students:

- Students may remain in the testing room and read novels or other non-textbooks (e.g., magazines) while the other students continue to work during the scheduled time.
- Students may be dismissed from the testing room when they complete the test if authorized by the appropriate local official (e.g., principal).

Before a student who has completed the test early may be dismissed or remain in the room to read, the test administrator must complete the following:

*Online Test Administrations*

- Verify that the student has clicked the END TEST button to close the test. Once students have clicked the END Test button, they will not be able to return to the test questions. A STOP sign will appear on students' screens after the second END TEST button has been clicked and the test has been closed.
- Collect all ancillary materials (e.g., used and unused papers, borrowed pencils).

*Paper Test Administrations*

- Verify with the student that he or she has completed the test, checked over his or her answer sheet, and is sure all answers are clearly marked and entered on the answer sheet for scoring.
- Collect the student's answer sheet, test book, and all ancillary materials (e.g., used and unused papers). The test administrator stacks the student's test materials on the teacher's or test administrator's desk and is not allowed to open or review the student's answer sheet or test book. Test books are to remain closed and secure.

**Misalignment during Paper Testing**

Misalignment occurs during a paper test administration when students are responding to a multiple-choice question and the question number the student has coded on the answer sheet does not match the question number the student is responding to in the test book.

Test administrators are not permitted to tamper with (e.g., alter, change, modify, erase) student responses to the test questions on the answer sheet. The following procedures are to be discussed during training and followed in the event a misalignment occurs during the test administration.

- If a student is observed marking a number on the answer sheet that does not match the number of the test question, and the error can be corrected during the testing session, the test administrator should notify the student that the responses are misaligned.
  - The test administrator may guide the student in immediately realigning responses and then direct the student to continue answering the remaining test questions.
  - Alternately, the test administrator may need to assist the student in identifying where the misalignment occurred and then direct the student to continue answering the remaining test questions. Once the student completes the remaining questions, the test administrator can guide the student in reordering the earlier misaligned responses.
- If a student is observed marking a number on the answer sheet that does not match the number of the test question, and the error cannot be corrected during the testing session, the test administrator should notify the student that the responses are misaligned.
  - The test administrator may tell the student to circle the remaining responses in the test book. After the test administration ends, the test administrator or other designated school personnel must guide the student, under secure conditions in a group setting (i.e., three or more designated school personnel), to correct the misalignment and transfer the circled responses from the test book to the answer sheet. Students must complete this process within the maximum time allowed for the test administration.

Alternately, if the student is unable to continue testing because of the severity of the misalignment, the test administrator may need to end the testing session and complete a testing irregularity report. The student will be provided an opportunity to take the test again at a later date.

**Student Emergencies and Restroom Breaks during Testing**

The Division of Accountability Services strongly recommends all students have an opportunity to use the restroom before beginning a test administration. If a student needs to leave the room during a test administration because of an emergency (e.g., becoming ill or requiring a visit to the restroom), the student must be allowed to leave, but all test materials must remain in the room.

If a student needs a restroom break during a test administration, these procedures must be followed:

- To the extent possible, only one student at a time is to be excused to the restroom.
- The student's test materials must be secured.
  - For paper tests, the answer sheet, scratch paper, graph paper, etc. must be placed inside the test book as a place holder and the test book closed.
  - For online tests, the PAUSE button must be clicked to prevent the online test items from being visible on the device monitor.
- The test administrator must note the time the student left the room to ensure the student has the allotted amount of time to complete the test upon return.
- If necessary, an appropriate member of the school staff may accompany the student to the restroom. Students must be accompanied if more than one leaves the room at the same time.
- For online tests, upon return from the restroom, the student must click the CONTINUE button to resume work on the test.

## H. District Requirements for Destroying, Storing, and Returning Test Materials for the 2021–22 School Year

The following information provides districts with requirements for the destruction, storage, and return, of the Annual Testing Program's test materials.

**Securely Destroying Test Materials**
When designated by the Annual Testing Program, district test coordinators must securely destroy test materials using one of the following methods: shredding, secure recycling, observed landfill burial (i.e., by two or more designated school personnel), or incineration.

**Test Materials to Be Securely Destroyed Immediately after the Testing Window Closes**
Test materials designated in Table 1 must be securely destroyed immediately after the testing window closes. This includes used test books, unused test books, and unused answer sheets, but does not include test books containing original student responses (see Table 2). Guides (i.e., administration, assessment, teacher, etc.) are not secure but should be destroyed after the testing window closes unless otherwise indicated in Table 1.

| **Table 1: Test Materials Designated for Secure Destruction at the Completion of the Respective Testing Window** |
|---|
| Beginning-of-Grade 3 (BOG3) |
| College and Career Readiness Alternate Assessments (CCRAAs) Grades 10 and 11 |
| End-of-Grade (EOG) Reading and Mathematics Grades 3–8 |
| EOG Science Grades 5 and 8 |
| NCEXTEND1 Manipulative Card Kits and Selection Booklets (Grades 3–8 and 10) |
| WIDA™ Screener Online used test tickets, scratch paper, and student test rosters |
| *Large Print Edition* test books |
| *One Test Item Per Page Edition* test books |
| *Large Print/One Test Item Per Page Edition* test books |
| *Braille Edition* test books |
| Guides (i.e., administration, assessment, teacher, etc.)—destroy all guides after the testing window closes unless otherwise stated below:<br>• Store 2021–22 EOC guides for use in fall 2021, spring 2022, and summer 2022.<br>• Store Read to Achieve guides for use in summer and fall 2022. Store 2021–22 EOG guides for use in spring 2022 and summer 2022 programs.<br>• Store NCEXTEND1 guides for Grade 11 and Grades 3–8 and 10 administrations. Store CCRAA guides for use in spring 2022. |

**Test Materials to Be Stored Locally**

Test materials designated in Table 2 are secure test materials to be stored by the district in a secure, locked facility with controlled access limited to one or two authorized school personnel only. After the required storage time has elapsed, the district must securely destroy these materials using one of the approved methods.

| **Table 2: Test Materials Designated to Be Stored by the District in a Secure, Locked Facility** | |
|---|---|
| **Test Material** | **Required Storage Time** |
| 2020–21 boxed Grade 3 Student Reading Portfolios | Store and use the 2020–21 version in 2021–22 until the new 2022–23 boxed portfolio is received from TOPS. |
| EOC NC Math 1, NC Math 3, Biology, and English II | Store unused test materials from fall for use in spring. |
| Read to Achieve Test | Store unused test materials from spring for use in summer and fall. |
| EOG Science Grade 8 Periodic Tables | Store and use during next test administration (Stock No. 12427). |
| NCEXTEND1 Grade 11 Used Assessor Books | Store six months after the return of students' test scores. |
| All used answer sheets for operational tests (including scoring sheets for W-APT) | Store six months after the return of students' test scores. |
| Answer sheets with misaligned answers (keep testing irregularities in a separate file) | Store for six months after the return of students' test scores. |
| NC General Purpose Header Sheets | Store and use during next test administration (Stock No. 14049). |
| Unused EOC, EOG, and CCRAA graph paper | Store and use during next test administration. |
| Original responses recorded in a test book (i.e., *Student Marks Answers in Test Book*), including special print version test books (i.e., *Large Print Edition, One Test Item Per Page Edition, Large Print/One Test Item Per Page Edition, Braille Edition*) | Store for six months after the return of students' test scores. |
| Original Braille writer/slate and stylus responses | Store for six months after the return of students' test scores. |

| **Table 2 (continued): Test Materials Designated to Be Stored by the District in a Secure, Locked Facility** | |
|---|---|
| **Test Material** | **Required Storage Time** |
| Original responses to a scribe | Store for six months after the return of students' test scores. |
| Original responses using a typewriter or word processor | Store for six months after the return of students' test scores. |
| WIDA Screener Online written responses for writing test grades 1–3 | Store for six months after the return of students' test scores. |
| WIDA Screener Paper student response booklet | Store for six months after the return of students' test scores. |
| W-APT kindergarten test materials (reusable except for scoring sheets) | Store all forms and use during next test administration. |

**Test Materials to Be Returned to Vendors**
Test materials designated in Table 3 must be packaged and returned according to the instructions provided by the vendor.

| **Table 3: Test Materials to Be Packaged and Returned to Vendors** |
|---|
| All ACCESS for ELLs® and Alternate ACCESS materials must be returned to the vendor. |
| All ACT and WorkKeys test materials must be returned to ACT. (PreACT test books are not returned to ACT. Schools must return the test book to students when score reports are returned.) |
| All English II EOC answer sheets for scoring must be sent to the scoring vendor. |

**Test Materials to Be Returned to the TOPS Warehouse**
Test materials designated in Table 4 are to be returned to the TOPS warehouse at the conclusion of the testing window. The materials in Table 4 must not be stored locally.

| **Table 4: Test Materials Designated to Be Returned to the TOPS Warehouse at the Conclusion of the Testing Window** |
|---|
| All WIDA Screener paper test materials, except used Student Response Booklets |

## I. Charter, Lab, Regional, Residential, and Innovative School District Schools–Requirements for Storing and Returning Test Materials for the 2021–22 School Year

The following information provides charter, lab, regional, residential, and ISD schools with requirements for the storage and return of Annual Testing Program secure test materials. Charter, lab, regional, residential, and ISD schools are not allowed to securely destroy any test materials.

**Before Ordering**

Check to be sure the school contact information is correct on the NC Education ordering page. The United Parcel Service (UPS) will send an email notification to the email address listed for the main test coordinator upon the shipping of an order. If the test coordinator does not receive the package on the day indicated in the notification, the test coordinator must contact the TOPS warehouse at (919) 515-4623. In North Carolina, all UPS shipments are next-day delivery. The test coordinator must be aware of the delivery date for the school to ensure there is not a security risk and that the delivery occurs in a secured area.

**Shipping and Receiving**

Orders will be shipped no more than ten days before the first test date. On the day the materials arrive at the school, the test coordinator must:

- Conduct an inventory immediately upon receipt of all test materials to ensure that the packing list(s) match exactly what is included in the box(es) of materials.
- Note quantities received in the appropriate column on the packing list.
- Fax the packing list verifying the accuracy of or any discrepancy in the quantity received to TOPS at (919) 515-4622 on the same day that the materials arrive in the building. See the example label which will be on the bottom of the packing list.

Example Label:

Date_____ Checked in Correctly _____
Discrepancies Noted in Qty. Received Column _____
Do Not Send_____
Please Do Send_____
Signature of Test Coordinator _____

If a discrepancy is noted on the packing list label, indicate on the label whether additional materials are not needed (Do Not Send) or are needed (Please Do Send).

- Sign all packing lists and fax them to TOPS.
- Save all boxes for the return of all materials.
- Save the original packing list(s) to use for the return of test materials to TOPS.

**Storing Materials**
Upon receipt, schools must house all secure test materials in a secure, locked facility with controlled access limited to one or two authorized school personnel only (e.g., test coordinator, principal). Secure test materials should only be stored at the school for a short period before and after the test administration.

**Returning Materials**
The test coordinator must adhere to the following procedures for the return of test materials:

- All test materials are to be returned to TOPS within two business days after the regular administration, including materials for schools testing online. This includes all used and unused test books, unused answer sheets, used and unused test administration guides, used scratch paper, used graph paper, used periodic tables and reference tables, and any used, approved supplemental materials. Passport for Learning Reading books must be returned to TOPS, and all PDF and electronic versions must be deleted or destroyed.
  - Exception: The Math Sets and Math Passport for Learning books do not have to be returned to TOPS.
- Boxes must be packed according to the quantities on the packing lists (i.e., materials packed in a box should match the packing list exactly).
- All students with the *Student Marks Answers in Test Book* accommodation must have the transcription label completed on the front of their test book.
  - Separate these accommodation forms and then place them on top of the other materials with a cover sheet identifying them as *Student Marks Answers in Test Book* test books.
- If applicable, separate test materials with print errors and then place them on top of the *Student Marks Answers in Test Book* with a copy of the completed print error report form as the cover sheet.
- The *Fax Return Verification Form* must be faxed to TOPS, and the school's RAC must be contacted immediately after the test materials are shipped. This provides a tracking number(s) for the school and TOPS and will also help ensure test security and prompt follow-up should materials not arrive the next day at TOPS.

**Recording Tracking Information**

The test coordinator must adhere to the following procedures for recording tracking information:

- Record information clearly on the UPS authorized return service (ARS) label.
- Complete the *Fax Return Verification Form*.
- Maintain a record of
  - UPS tracking numbers,
  - number of boxes in the shipment,
  - packing lists involved, and
  - date shipped.

## J. Online Testing

**Online Testing for 2021–2022**
Required online administrations for state-mandated tests for the 2021–22 school year and beyond include:

- ACCESS for ELLs
- All EOCs (English II, NC Math 1, NC Math 3, and Biology)
- EOG Reading (Grades 6–8)
- EOG Science (Grades 5 and 8)
- EOG Mathematics (Grades 4–8)
- NCEXTEND1 Reading and Mathematics (Grades 3–8)
- NCEXTEND1 Science (Grades 5 and 8)
- NCEXTEND1 Biology, English II, and NC Math 1 (Grade 10)
- ACT WorkKeys

For the 2022–23 school year, all assessments will be available for online administrations. Tests added for required online administrations next year include:

- EOG Reading (Grades 3–5)
- EOG Mathematics (Grade 3)

**Technology Hardship Requests**
If public schools do not have the technology capability to support administering the required online tests to students, a hardship request can be submitted through the Technology Hardship Request notification system in NC TestAdmin. Requests should not be emailed, mailed, or faxed.

In the request, districts and schools should indicate if the Technology Hardship Request applies to the fall or spring semester or both. Approval from the Division of Accountability Services must be documented in the Technology Hardship Request notification system before paper tests can be ordered through the NC Education materials ordering page or in some cases, through an assessment vendor.

**Online Assessment Tutorials**
Online Assessment Tutorials are available for all North Carolina-developed online tests through the NCTest Secure Browser, the NCTest Chrome App for Chromebooks, the NCTest iPad App, and https://data.ncsu.edu/nctest/Destination.html.

Schools are expected to ensure every student participating in an online state assessment completes the appropriate online tutorial at least one time per school year prior to the test administration. Effective beginning the 2021–22 school year, the online assessment tutorial may be completed before test

day or on the same day as the test administration. The online assessment tutorial may also be completed in-school or as part of remote instruction.

**Beginning-of-Grade 3 (BOG3) Reading Test.** Students participating in the BOG3 Reading Test must be provided with a practice opportunity before the test administration:

- For paper test administrations, students must complete the BOG3 Reading Test Practice Activity.
- For online test administrations, students must complete the BOG3 Reading Online Assessment Tutorial.

If providing the practice opportunity (i.e., paper practice activity or online assessment tutorial) to students learning remotely, the school must have the students complete the practice activity again in-school prior to testing on the day of the test administration. During the practice activity, teachers are encouraged to help students understand testing procedures that will occur during the BOG3 Reading Test administration to minimize student anxiety and errors.

**NCEXTEND1 Online Practice Activities**

Before the administration of the NCEXTEND1 Alternate Assessments at grades 3–8 and 10, teachers should complete one of the NCEXTEND1 online practice activities with the student. The practice activities assist teachers in determining which administration option is most appropriate for their students. The practice activities not only help students become familiar with the testing platform but also provide them with practice responding to sample test questions. Reading, mathematics, and science practice activities are available for student use.

It is not necessary for students to complete the practice activity if they will be administered the alternate assessment using the test cards, while the assessor records the responses on the device.

**Online Test Format**

All test questions are formatted specifically for online presentation and presented on the screen one test question at a time. Online tests provide several tools for students to use while testing, and they include:
Reset, Flag, Strike, Highlight, Unhighlight, Clear Highlight, and Help. Also, navigation buttons (i.e., First, Back, Pause, Next, and Review) are located at the bottom of the screen. Scroll bars appear on test questions as needed, based on the length of the test question or font size. Students have an opportunity to practice using these tools when completing the online tutorial.

Online tests are available to all students in regular or large font and in alternate background colors (including high contrast) for all students; however, the NCDPI recommends these options be considered only for students who routinely use similar tools (e.g., color acetate overlays, colored background paper, and large print text) in the classroom. It is recommended that students be given the opportunity to view the large font and alternate background color versions of the Online Assessment Tutorial and released forms of the test (with the device to be used on test day) to determine which mode of administration is appropriate.

**Sample—Checklist for Online Testing Readiness**

1. Test Coordinator Preparation
   - All devices used for testing meet the minimum technical requirements for 2021–22.
     - Secure browser is updated and used on all desktops and laptops. iPad app is updated with iOS version 9.3.2 and above. The app will open in Automatic Assessment Configuration.
     - Chromebooks are managed using technology requirements. It is strongly recommended that they be placed in kiosk mode.
     - Verify accommodations and accessibility features in NCTest administration are accurate before the day of testing.
     - Create a plan for
       - distributing devices and ensuring the school will administer all tests within the five or ten-day window;
       - tracking students who have not completed testing;
       - providing each room with enough charged devices;
       - ensuring devices stay charged throughout the administration; and
       - distributing materials required for online testing (e.g., calculators, headphones).

2. Test Administrator Preparation
   - Receive training in administering the accommodations online.
   - Verify NCAdmin account log-in is successful (username and password.)
   - Power on and connect all devices used for testing to the network before test day. (This will ensure any updates or software deployment needed for testing are complete before test day.)

3. Student Preparation
   - Complete the required online assessment tutorial.
   - Use digital tools in the classroom on a regular basis.
   - Practice using the released forms embedded within NCTest.
   - Practice using the online calculator.

**Internet Security, Security of Test Materials, and Online Content**
Online tests include secure test data, copyrighted content, and confidential student records. Therefore, test administrators, proctors (if utilized), technology staff, and students must follow the Annual Testing Program's rules and procedures to ensure online content is not made available to anyone for any other purpose than to conduct the tests. Test administrators and students must not access the test and then leave the device unsupervised. Locally stored off-line content (e.g., cookies, cache) must be cleared or secured after accessing the test so malicious applications or users cannot gain access to secure test materials.

Best practices for password protection include but are not limited to the following:

- Never share passwords with anyone. User accounts are confidential.
- If passwords must be written down on a piece of paper, store the paper in a secure place and destroy it when it is no longer needed.
- Change passwords immediately if they have been compromised.
- Do not save or allow devices to autofill passwords. Selecting this option poses a security threat.

**Testing Schedule for Online Tests**
Online tests should be administered as early in the school day as the school schedule permits; however, afternoon administrations are also permissible. As a best practice, the Annual Testing Program strongly recommends schools schedule each online test within the school day for the maximum time allowed without interfering with lunch or bus schedules. All students, including students with the *Scheduled Extended Time* accommodation, must be allowed to eat lunch during the school day and to travel home at their regularly scheduled time. Schools may elect to administer two tests in one day; however, caution must be taken when scheduling such testing to ensure that students can eat lunch during the school day and travel home at their regularly scheduled time.

**Acceptable Devices for Online Administrations**
The Annual Testing Program recommends that students use devices that are school issued with NCTest already loaded by the school. When necessary, schools may permit students to use personal devices. Parents, guardians, and students should work with the school test coordinator for instructions on how to download NCTest to their personal computers. Directions for downloading NCTest to student-owned devices can be located via: https://center.ncsu.edu/ncinstruct/. This link may be shared with parents, guardians, and students. Technical support will not be available at the NCDPI level and must be provided locally. It is not permissible to share the Help Desk phone number for TOPS with students, parents or guardians.

**Technical Specifications for NCTest**

To ensure students receive a valid and reliable test administration, schools must meet specific technical requirements. The technical specifications for NCTest, which is used to deliver the online tests, are found at http://center.ncsu.edu/nct/. On days before an online test administration, schools must review these technical requirements and make any necessary adjustments before administering the online test. Schools that administer an online test but do not meet the technical requirements are at risk of providing students with items that cannot be manipulated (e.g., technology-enhanced items), are without associated artwork (e.g., tables, graphs, symbols), and do not fit properly on the screen.

Online tests are presented through a secure platform (i.e., NCTest Secure Browser, NCTest Chrome App for Chromebooks, and NCTest iPad App). If Chromebooks are used, they must be managed, and tests should be administered in kiosk mode. If using iPads, the app for iPads (supported iOS of 9.3.2 and above) provides the security measures within the app.

Many technical issues can be resolved locally by ensuring that acceptable hardware is being used by the students, making adjustments to the local network, ensuring all required applications are loaded and meet necessary version requirements, and setting a minimum screen resolution. Schools should periodically review the technical requirements at http://center.ncsu.edu/nct/ for updates.

**Technical Difficulties**

In the event of technical difficulties during the actual test administration, the test administrator is to contact the school test coordinator. The school test coordinator, with the assistance of school technical personnel, should determine if the technical difficulty is at the school level. Many technical issues can be resolved locally by ensuring students are using acceptable hardware, adjusting the local network, ensuring all required applications are loaded and meet necessary version requirements, and setting a minimum screen resolution. If the technical difficulty continues after investigating at the school level, the school test coordinator should contact the school system test coordinator. The school system test coordinator, along with central office technical personnel, will investigate whether the technical difficulty is at the central office level. If a problem cannot be resolved locally, the incident should be reported to the Help Desk.

Test coordinators can contact the Help Desk by using one method of communication.

- Email: ncdesk@ncsu.edu
- Phone: (919) 515-1320

- Hours: 7:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday (excluding holidays)

The following information should be provided when contacting the Help Desk:

- First and last name and title or position of the contact person
- Phone number or email address for a response from the Help Desk
- School district name
- School name
- Public school unit code
- Test name (course or subject and grade level)
- Form number (available at the top of the screen)
- Description of the problem
- Error message(s) (document the words verbatim)
- Specific item number(s), if applicable
- Operating system name and version number
- Secure platform being used (e.g., NCTest Chrome App for Chromebooks, NCTest Secure Browser, or NCTest iPad App)
- Steps taken locally to resolve the issue

The Help Desk should provide the caller with a ticket number for reference. If the Help Desk does not provide a ticket number, the caller should request one.

**Interruptions during Online Testing**

If there is an interruption during the test (e.g., loss of internet connection, illness), and the students are not permitted to talk or access electronic devices during the interruption, the school test coordinator will need to be contacted to restart the students' test. After the school test coordinator has restarted the test, the test administrator must log in, choose the test, select the student, and click START to resume the test. The test will resume at the last question accessed before the interruption. *An OTISS report does not need to be submitted if the students are able to complete the test after the interruption.*

If students are permitted to talk or access electronic devices during the interruption, the test should be exited, and the students will need to retake the entire test on another day. A report must be submitted in the OTISS and a misadministration declared.

**Questions Not Displaying or Not Displaying Correctly**

If a question does not appear, only a portion of the question appears, or the information for the question does not match the answer choices, the student should click either the NEXT or BACK button to refresh the question. The

student can also click the REVIEW button and then click the question number to return to the question.

If the test does not resume correctly, the test administrator should:

- make a written note of the question number on the screen,
- exit the test and restart the device,
- log in the student again, and
- click START to resume.

If the test administration time is close to the end, the test administrator must contact the school test coordinator to determine the most appropriate course of action.

**Tests Appearing Slowly on the Screen**

If testing information (i.e., test questions, passages, graphs or charts) are appearing very slowly, this could mean that the server, the network, or the student's device is running slowly. If this occurs at any time during the administration, and it is determined that network utilization is peaking, it is strongly recommended that steps be taken to reduce network traffic. This may involve reducing the number of students testing, prioritizing internet traffic, or other similar actions.

**Procedures to Complete Before Test Day**

School test coordinators must work with appropriate testing staff to develop a plan to ensure the following procedures are completed before test day:

- Ensure test administration windows (via the Test Window Scheduler) are scheduled for the school in NC Education. Test administration windows must be scheduled no later than the day before the test administration date.
- Ensure all devices meet specified technical requirements listed at http://center.ncsu.edu/nct/.
- Ensure the appropriate NCDPI-approved secure platform (browser or app) is installed and meets technical requirements, specifically:
  - Chromebooks must be managed and follow the security requirements at http://center.ncsu.edu/nct/.
  - iPad iOS must use the current app in Automatic Assessment Configuration.
  - Computers and laptops must use the secure browser.
- Ensure test administrators have an NC Education user account and confirm (1) their username and password credentials are working correctly, and (2) they can access the appropriate tests and student information pages. Two to three days before the test administration date, test administrators should affirm their account credentials are operable.

  - All test administrator NC Education accounts must be given the role of "teacher" for the appropriate school to start an online test.
- Check to ensure all students who are eligible to participate in online tests are listed in the Admin Entry Tab list for the specific test in NC Education. For students listed that are absent or testing via paper format, disregard these students and do not start a test for them.
- Ensure that every student participating in an online state test has completed the appropriate Online Assessment Tutorial at least one time per year before test day. Ensure screen savers are disabled for all devices.
- Ensure volume controls are set for students with the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation and headphones are available if testing in a group setting.
- Review and edit the Student Interface Questions for students. See the following subsection for more details.

**Student Interface Questions (SIQ)**

On days before the test administration, the school test coordinator or the test administrator is expected to review and edit (if applicable) the SIQ for students who need the following interface options or documented accommodations:

*Student Interface Accessibility Feature Options:*

- Alternate Background Color
- Large Font

*Accommodations Required by the Student:*

- *Multiple Testing Sessions*
- *Test Read Aloud (in English)*
- Other Required Accommodations (i.e., other accommodations besides *Multiple Testing Sessions* and *Test Read Aloud [in English]*)

Online tests are available in regular or large font, in high contrast, and in different background colors (i.e., white, yellow, green, grey, cream, and black). The NCDPI recommends these options be considered for students who routinely use similar tools (e.g., color acetate overlays, colored paper, alternate background color, large print text) in the classroom. For students to access large font, an alternate background color, the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation, or the *Multiple Testing Sessions* accommodation, the options must be entered in the student's SIQ before the day of testing. After the test has been started, the SIQ cannot be changed.

**Setting Up Devices**

It is a local decision to either (1) allow students to remain in the testing room while devices are being set up or (2) have the students enter the testing room after the test administrator has logged in to the secure browser. School test coordinators are expected to develop, distribute, and train on a written plan that outlines secure procedures for schools to follow when students either remain or do not remain in the room while devices are being set up. The plan must address procedures that will ensure

- students cannot see secure usernames and passwords while the test administrator is logging in to the devices;
- each device is set to the START page with the correct student's name and PowerSchool number, test name, and school name correctly identified on the device; and
- students will not begin using their devices until instructed to do so.

This plan must become part of the overall annual testing plan for the school system submitted annually to the RAC. (See the subsection *Annual Testing Plans* for more information.)

**Procedures the Test Administrator Must Complete on Test Day**

**Steps to complete before beginning online testing.** The NCDPI recommends test administrators begin setting up devices used to deliver the online test approximately thirty to forty minutes before the students are to begin testing. Test administrators or other designated school personnel must perform the following:

1. Launch the NCTest Secure Browser, NCTest Chrome App on Chromebooks, or NCTest iPad App and click on the NCTest LOGIN button.
   - Ensure Chromebooks are managed with settings and login processes that restrict a student's ability to access additional resources. Directions for Chromebooks can be found in the Technical Requirements for NCTest at https://center.ncsu.edu/nct.
   - Ensure iPads are in Automatic Assessment Configuration.
2. The teacher logs into the test,
   - Enter a valid NC Education username and password and click LOGIN;
   - Choose *(the test type)* from the drop-down menu;
     - Choose the appropriate *(test name)* from the drop-down menu and click continue; and
     - Select the student from the list presented on the screen.
3. After the students are logged in, the test administrator should ensure the screen is set to the START page with the correct student's name, test name, and school name near the top of the screen.

4. After confirming that all the students are logged in to the correct test, the test administrator should refer to the test administrators guide for next steps.

**Steps to complete when a student finishes the test administration.** When a student completes the test, the test administrator should refer to the following instructions to exit the student from the test:

- After the student has clicked the second END TEST button to close the test, a STOP sign will appear on the student's screen. The test administrator will need to click on two END TEST buttons to close the test.
- The test administrator must click the EXIT button on the STOP sign screen to close NCTest.

Note: For additional information about procedures to follow for students who complete the test before the scheduled time is over, see the subsection Maximum Testing Time Allowed in Section G of this handbook.

**Steps to complete after the test administration.** Upon completion of testing, the test administrator must ensure all test information that was saved or cached on any network appliance or device is purged or deleted immediately following the completion of the test administration. Test security must be maintained at all times.

Ensure all special codes in NC Education have been completed before 7:00 p.m. on the day of the test. The Absent from Makeup special code is completed after testing, if applicable. Before 7:00 p.m. on the day of testing, enter the accommodations provided in the "Accommodations" tab in NC Education for all appropriate students (i.e., *Multiple Testing Sessions*, *Test Read Aloud [in English], Other Required Accommodations*).

## K. Testing Irregularities and Misadministrations

**Testing Violations and Testing Irregularities**
Test administrators (and proctors, if utilized) must report any alleged testing violation or testing irregularity to the school test coordinator on the day of the occurrence. The school test coordinator must contact the district test coordinator (charter, lab, regional, and ISD schools contact the RAC) immediately with any allegation of a testing violation. The school test coordinator must then conduct a thorough investigation and complete the Report of Testing Irregularity provided through the Online Testing Irregularity Submission System (OTISS). Note: It is recommended that persons reporting irregularities in OTISS view the online OTISS training video below before submitting irregularity reports.

**OTISS Training Video**
To access the OTISS training video, log in to NC Education and navigate via the following pathway:

- NC Education > Main Menu > OTISS Irregularity > Overview
- Access the video directly by clicking here.

The OTISS irregularity report should be submitted within five days of the occurrence. Schools cannot submit one report for several different testing violations or irregularities. Different incidents are expected to be documented on separate reports of testing irregularity even when the incidents occur during the same test administration in the same room. For example, if one student is disruptive during testing and another student becomes ill during the administration of the same test, two separate reports of testing irregularity must be filed in OTISS. If a misadministration is declared, it must be documented and reported using appropriate procedures outlined in OTISS.

Note: The RAC must be contacted by the public school unit test coordinator immediately upon learning of any alleged serious testing violations or irregularities that may require a misadministration and the completion of an OTISS Investigation Checklist.

**Irregularity Classifications**

Irregularity classifications include, but are not limited to, the following:

| # | Irregularity Classification | Level | Examples (include but not are limited to) |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Test Administration Irregularities*** | | | |
| 1. | Staff Failed to Follow Directions | 1 | • Tutorial or Practice Activity not administered<br>• Staff started online test for student<br>• Staff administered incorrect test<br>• Provided incorrect materials or did not provide materials<br>• Failed to follow test schedule procedures<br>• Provided additional time beyond the designated time specified in the test administration guide<br>• Failed to follow administration instructions<br>• Test scheduling prevented student test completion |
| 2. | Eligibility Issues | 1 | • Eligible student not tested<br>• Ineligible student tested |
| 3. | Defective Paper Test Materials | 1 | • Wrong cover<br>• Pages out of order<br>• Duplicate pages<br>• Blank or missing pages<br>• Missing questions<br>• Questions without answers<br>• Printing error – letters or words unreadable |
| 4. | Online Administration Issues | 1 | • Test connectivity or technical problems<br>• Items not displaying properly<br>• Unexpected EXIT in NCTest |
| 5. | Disruptions to the Testing Environment | 1 | • Fire alarm or bomb threat<br>• Emergency evacuations<br>• Power outage<br>• External noise<br>• Student disruption<br>• Unauthorized visitor |

| ***Test Administration Irregularities continued*** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6. | Accommodation Issues | 1 | • Not provided or not provided appropriately<br>• Provided but not approved or documented<br>• *Test Read Aloud* or signed/cued on reading<br>• Student refused accommodation |
| ***Student Related Irregularities*** | | | |
| 7. | Student Cheated | 1 | • Student copied answers<br>• Student accessed prohibited device or resource (e.g., cell phone, cheat sheet) to access test information<br>• Student used calculator during inactive portion of the math test |
| 8. | Student Personal Issues | 1 | • Student was ill or injured<br>• Student was anxious<br>• Student had a problem with medication or glasses<br>• Student had family or personal circumstance<br>• Student fell asleep<br>• Student left early for an appointment<br>• Student did not finish the test<br>• Student pacing prevented completion of the test |
| 9. | Student Refusal to Test | 1 | • Student did not mark answers<br>• Student marked test randomly |
| 10. | Student Did Not Follow Directions | 1 | • Student misaligned answer sheet<br>• Student worked on wrong section of test<br>• Student possessed cell phone |

| ***Security Irregularities*** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 11. | Secure Test Material Divulged | 2 | • Test items used for instruction or in resource materials such as study guides<br>• Reproduced test item(s)<br>• Copies of test made available to others<br>• Improper use of test materials<br>• Staff or student copied or transmitted or discussed test items or information (e.g., social media, text message, video, picture)<br>• Allowed those without a legitimate need to have access to the test<br>• Allowed students to review secure test materials |
| 12. | Monitoring Issues | 2 | • Staff inadequately supervised test session<br>• Proctor or students left alone with test materials<br>• Students removed secure materials from test site<br>• Test items not transcribed in secure, group setting |
| 13. | Missing Test Materials | 2 | • Materials lost and not found<br>• Materials unaccounted for and then found |
| 14. | Test Material Distribution/Collection/Storage | 2 | • Test materials not stored in secure, locked facility<br>• Failed to delete secure electronic files saved or cached on network appliances or computers<br>• Failed to maintain security of NC Education username and/or password<br>• Materials not counted at all levels of distribution<br>• Failed to return initial test materials distributed |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Staff Procedural Irregularities*** | | | |
| 15. | Encouraging Students to be Absent | 2 | |
| 16. | Modifying Test Directions | 2 | • Staff read test directions from wrong test administration guide<br>• Did not read script or all "SAY" statements in script<br>• Paraphrased, omitted, revised, interpreted, explained, or rewrote the script, directions, or test items |
| 17. | Staff Read or Altered Responses | 2 | • Tampered with student responses<br>• Read test items (not including *Read Aloud* accommodation) |
| 18. | Improper Assistance or Instruction | 2 | • Failed to remove or cover inappropriate displays<br>• Provided improper assistance related to concepts measured on test |
| 19. | Test Not Administered during Testing Window | 2 | • Failed to administer test on test day or during the testing window |
| 20. | Unauthorized Readministration | 2 | • ACT, PreACT, WorkKeys (ACT denied retest)<br>• Grade 3 Reading EOG during summer program |
| ***Other*** | | | |
| 21. | Other | 1 or 2 | • RAC approval required |

Note: If the same technical problem is being reported for multiple students for the same test administration on the same day, only one OTISS report needs to be submitted. A list of all students affected should be attached to the OTISS report.

**OTISS Investigation Checklist and Sample Action Plan**
When public school units submit irregularity reports in OTISS, Level 2 irregularities require an investigation checklist, along with investigation summary report(s) and other pertinent documentation to be submitted to the NCDPI.

The *OTISS Testing Irregularity Investigation Checklist* must be used by the public school unit test coordinator when collecting information and investigating an alleged testing violation. The checklist provides the necessary steps and guidance for filing irregularities and completing investigative measures. The *Sample–Test Security Action Plan* may be used to address areas of concern in testing and to outline procedures for establishing corrective actions.

**Online Testing Irregularity Submission System (OTISS) Investigation Checklist**

This form and all accompanying documentation must be submitted electronically.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **OTISS ID#:** | | **Name of Regional Accountability Coordinator (RAC):** | |
| **School System Name:** | | **Date RAC Contacted:** | |
| **School Name:** | | **Date of Occurrence:** | |

**The following steps must be completed within five days of when the irregularity occurs or is identified.**

| **Step** | **Completion Date** | **Additional Information** |
|---|---|---|
| **1. Identify Level 2 Irregularity Classification:** | | Irregularity Classification: |
| **2. OTISS**<br>Test Coordinator (TC) submits testing irregularity in OTISS. This must occur within five days of when the irregularity occurs or is identified. | | |
| **3. Collection of Evidence**<br>(e.g., test books, answer sheets, computers, cheat sheets, classroom displays) | | List Evidence Collected: |
| **4. Statements and Interviews**<br>• Obtain written and signed statements from all parties involved.<br>• Conduct interviews with everyone (including students, if necessary) involved in the incident. The interviews should include questions of a non-objective nature, and each interview should be conducted by two staff members. | | Name(s) and Role(s) of Person(s) Involved: |

**Online Testing Irregularity Submission System (OTISS) Investigation Checklist (continued)**

| Step | Completion Date | Additional Information |
|---|---|---|
| **5. Summary of any disciplinary action taken**<br>TC should collaborate with leadership to prepare a written statement of any disciplinary action taken in association with the incident. | | |
| **6. Action Plan**<br>TC should submit a written action plan that identifies strategies that will prevent a reoccurrence of the incident. | | |
| **7. Upload all evidence in OTISS**<br>The following items must be included as electronic attachments:<br>• Summary of the incident<br>• Questions and answers collected during interviews<br>• Summary of any disciplinary action taken at the school or district level<br>• Action plan identifying strategies that will prevent a reoccurrence of the incident<br>Completed and signed *School Testing Irregularity Investigation Checklist* | | |
| ***I affirm that I received my Superintendent's or Director's approval to submit this OTISS Investigation.*** | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Principal's/Director's Name** | **Signature** | **Date** |
| **Public School Unit Test Coordinator's Name** | **Signature** | **Date** |
| **Superintendent's Name** | **Signature** | **Date** |

**Sample–Test Security Action Plan**
School Site:
Plan Written By:

**I. Identification of problem areas and corrective actions**

A. Purpose:
B. Summary of Actions Steps and Target Dates:
C. Goal(s):

**II. Definition of roles and responsibilities**

A. Principal or Principal's Designee_____
Description of responsibilities:
B. Assignments of responsibilities:

| |
|---|
| Name_____<br>Responsibilities: |

| |
|---|
| Name_____<br>Responsibilities: |

| |
|---|
| Name_____<br>Responsibilities: |

**III. Evaluation criteria**

A. Measurable outcomes (e.g., reduction in number of testing irregularities, shorter resolution time, more comprehensive test administration training sessions according to workshop evaluation summaries, etc.)
B. Follow-up methodology (e.g., distribution of fact sheets, resources, activity logs, training sessions, quarterly needs assessments, etc.)

**Misadministrations**

Public school units must monitor test administration procedures. According to 16 NCAC 06d .0307 (e,f), "LEAs shall monitor test administration procedures. If a school employee discovers any violation of the rules in this Subchapter, he or she shall notify the principal, charter school director, or school test coordinator who shall notify the superintendent or the LEA test coordinator. If the superintendent or the LEA test coordinator determines that the violation affected the validity of the test for its intended purpose, he or she shall have the authority to order the affected students to be retested. (f) If NCDPI determines that the failure to administer a test in accordance with the rules in this Subchapter produced a result which is invalid for measuring student achievement, then NCDPI may remedy the error or order the LEA to remedy the error, including requiring retesting students."

When a misadministration is declared, the affected student(s) must be administered another secure form of the test (i.e., a different letter or form number if available). The public school unit test coordinator will specify how misadministrations are to be handled at the school and will schedule dates and times for readministering the tests in each school so that all misadministration retests are completed within the state-designated testing windows. For online tests, after a misadministration is declared and indicated in NC Education, a different form of the test will be loaded for the student if available.

Only scores resulting from a valid test administration should be included in students' permanent records or used for accountability purposes. All misadministrations must be documented and reported using the appropriate procedures outlined on the OTISS.

## L. Participation in the Annual Testing Program

As stated in 16 N.C. Admin. Code 06G .0315 (a), "All students enrolled in a public school unit (PSU) in grades 3 through 8 or in high school courses in which an end-of-course (EOC) assessment is administered shall participate in the State Annual Testing Program. PSUs shall report to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) test results for:

(1) beginning of grade 3 reading proficiency
(2) grades 3 through 8 end-of-grade (EOG) English language arts/reading and mathematics;
(3) grades 5 and 8 EOG science;
(4) grade 10 EOC English II;
(5) grade 11 EOC assessments in NC Math 1, NC Math 3, and EOC Biology;
(6) grade 11 ACT; and
(7) grade 12 Career and Technical Education Concentrators and WorkKeys."

"For the accountability model, a school that does not assess at least ninety-five percent of its expected test population for the all students group and each subgroup of students will be deemed not to have met participation rate requirements" (SBE Policy ACCT-021 [1B]).

There are three ways students may participate in the Annual Testing Program:

- participation in the general state test under standard conditions (i.e., without testing accommodations);
- participation in the general state test with testing accommodations; or
- participation in a North Carolina alternate assessment, with or without accommodations.

For information regarding appropriate testing procedures, test administrators who provide accommodations for students with disabilities must refer to the most recent *Testing Students with Disabilities* handbook and any published supplements or updates.

There may be rare instances in which a student is unable to participate in a state assessment during the testing window, including makeup dates, because of a significant medical emergency and/or condition. Examples include, but are not limited to, circumstances involving students who are (1) in the final stages of a terminal or degenerative illness, (2) comatose, or (3) receiving extensive short-term medical treatment due to a medical emergency. Under these circumstances, a school may request from the Division of Accountability Services a testing exception for the student. If a

medical exception is granted, the student remains enrolled in the school during this period; however, the student does not take the assessment(s), and the student is not included when calculating participation rates.

**English Learners' First Year in U.S. Schools**

State Board policy ACCT-021 (1)(D)(1), states that "students identified as English Learners (ELs) shall participate in the statewide testing program using either the standard test administration or the standard test administration with accommodations. Effective 2017–18 and beyond, ELs must participate in state assessments beginning with their first year in a U.S. school; however,

- For the first year, the requirement is for participation and for reporting (e.g., NC School Report Card), not the accountability model.
- For year two, ELs' test scores will be included in the growth analysis for the accountability model.
- For year three and beyond, ELs' test scores will be included in growth and the achievement indicator of the accountability model."

**Grade 8 Students Enrolled for Credit in NC Math 1**

State Board policy ACCT-021 (1)(A) states, "effective 2017–18 and beyond, all eligible students in membership at grade 8 enrolled for credit in NC Math 1 shall take the EOC assessment at the completion of the course. Schools shall not assess these students on the grade 8 mathematics EOG assessment. These students will take the NC Math 3 EOC assessment for federal accountability in high school."

Students in membership at grade 8 who have an NC Math 1 EOC score (e.g., granted credit from an earlier grade level) should only be assessed on the test matching the current course enrolled (e.g., NC Math 3). These students do not take the grade 8 mathematics EOG.

See the *Use of NC Math 1 and NC Math 3 End of Course Tests for School Accountability* document for more information.

## M. Annual Testing Calendars and Required Testing Charts

The following Annual Testing Program calendar and required testing charts are available on the NCDPI website:

- **2021–22 North Carolina Operational Testing Calendar** —a comprehensive chart that includes all state mandated tests by grade level.
- **The North Carolina Annual Testing Program 2021–22**—a document that includes bulleted talking points for all state mandated tests.
- **North Carolina Testing Program Required Testing for the 2021–22 School Year**—A color coded chart that denotes how state mandated tests are used by the state's accountability model and by schools.
- **North Carolina Testing Program Required Testing (with alternates) 2021–22**—a chart that includes all state mandated tests and their corresponding alternate assessments.
- **2021–22 Testing for Read to Achieve at Grade 3**—a list of tests associated with the Read to Achieve legislation.

# N. North Carolina Statewide Tests

This section consists of two parts, Parts 1 and 2.

*Part 1*, Policies and Procedures for North Carolina Statewide Tests, includes policy guidelines and procedures that apply to the administration of all tests in the Annual Testing Program. RACs and test coordinators must ensure all appropriate staff are trained on this information before administering a test. School personnel must ensure the policy guidelines and procedures outlined in Part 1 are implemented appropriately.

*Part 2*, *Required North Carolina State Tests*, provides policy and procedures about tests that are required as part of the Annual Testing Program and are not provided to schools by vendors. The following tests are outlined in Part 2:

- Beginning-of-Grade 3 Reading Test
- End-of-Grade Tests—Reading at Grades 3–8
- End-of-Grade Tests—Mathematics at Grades 3–8
- End-of-Grade Tests—Science at Grades 5 and 8
- End-of-Course Test—NC Math 1
- End-of-Course Test—NC Math 3
- End-of-Course Test—English II
- End-of-Course Test—Biology

# Part 1: Policies and Procedures for North Carolina Statewide Tests

**Information about Test Questions**
North Carolina state tests contain a small portion of experimental (field test) questions, which do not count toward or against a student's score. These questions are indistinguishable from operational questions and should not interfere with students' test-taking experiences.

**Before Testing**
Selection of test administrators. Only current or retired professional educators as defined in G.S. §115C-270.1.2 (an administrator, teacher, or student services personnel) or teachers who

(1) are employed by local education agencies (LEAs); and
(2) have training in the Annual Testing Program
may serve as test administrators as part of the Annual Testing Program.

Test administrators shall:

- prepare for and attend test administrator training session(s) each testing cycle before administering any secure state test, including training sessions on accommodations, if applicable;
- read and sign a test security agreement (provided by the school test coordinator) at the conclusion of every test administration training;
- read the test administration guide thoroughly; and
- review the student directions (script) and be prepared for the variations required by the testing conditions.

Before each test administration, all test administrators must be trained on test security and testing procedures. The public school unit test coordinator will schedule and conduct the training session(s). Test administrators should read the test administration guide thoroughly before attending the training session(s) and take it to the training session(s) so that it can be referred to as needed. Test administrators should make note of any questions regarding their responsibilities. A test administrator who will be conducting test administrations with accommodations must also be trained by the public school unit test coordinator or designee in the appropriate provision of the specific accommodations before the test administration.

**Read and study the *Testing Code of Ethics*.** Before test day, the test administrator must

- read and study the *Testing Code of Ethics*, and
- discuss the *Testing Code of Ethics* and its sanctions during the test administration training.

The *Testing Code of Ethics* addresses appropriate professional practices for central office and school administrators, test coordinators, teachers (test administrators), and proctors in the areas of securing tests; administering tests; and scoring, reporting, and interpreting test results. The sanctions for violations are also included in the *Testing Code of Ethics* and are applicable to the administration of all secure state mandated tests. A copy of the *Testing Code of Ethics* is provided in the Appendixes of this handbook.

**Read and follow test security procedures.** The principal shall account for all test materials and shall ensure test security within the school building (16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0311). The following test security procedures must be studied and discussed during test administrator training:

Copying Secure Test Materials

- Secure tests, including all test materials and test questions, must not be reproduced in any manner.
- Secure tests must not be copied, filed, or used directly in instructional activities.
- No person may copy, reproduce, or paraphrase the test materials in any manner for any reason without the prior written consent of the Annual Testing Program.

Classroom Instruction and Study Guides

- Excerpts from secure tests must not be used at any time during classroom instruction or in resource materials such as study guides.
- Instructional materials that contain sample test questions (whether generated locally or obtained from another school system) must be shared with the principal and school system test coordinator before use.
- Teachers are not permitted to discuss any information in the tests with students or colleagues before, during, or after the test administration or to ask students which test questions were difficult.

Displays

- Displaying information (e.g., bulletin boards, instructional displays, and reference materials printed or attached to student desks) that contains content being measured or test-taking strategies (e.g., "Tips for Taking Tests," displays, thinking maps, word lists, word walls, definitions, writing formulas, multiplication tables, number lines, mathematical formulas or theorems) in any manner or form in the room during a test administration may result in a misadministration. These displays must be covered or removed.

  - Failure to cover or remove such displays during a test administration is considered a violation of the *Testing Code of Ethics*.

Testing Environment

- All rooms designated for testing must be quiet, orderly, comfortable, with adequate seating, lighting, and heating or cooling.
- A "Testing—Do Not Disturb" sign should be ready to post outside the testing room.
- Each student must have enough space in which to work.
- Seating must be arranged to discourage students from sharing responses.
- For online testing, ensure spare devices and power sources are available, if needed.
- Only under the following circumstances are study carrels or privacy shields permitted:
  - A classroom may use study carrels or privacy shields if the students' assigned seats are multi-student desks (i.e., desks that seat two or more students).
  - A study carrel may be appropriate for a student with the *Testing in a Separate Room* accommodation in a one-on-one or small-group setting. Use must be documented in the current IEP, Section 504 Plan, or EL Plan.
- Test administrators must contact the school test coordinator before the test administration if they have questions related to the testing environment.

Accounting for and Storing Test Materials

- The test administrator must count and record the number of secure test materials and supplemental materials
  - when the materials are first received,
  - before the distribution of materials to students,
  - after the test administration, and
  - when the materials are returned to the school test coordinator.
- The test administrator must immediately report any discrepancies in the count to the school test coordinator or principal.
- For online testing, devices that are open and display the students' START screens, test material, or are paused, must not be left unattended by the test administrator at any time.
- For online testing, any information from the online test saved or cached on any network appliance or device must be purged or deleted immediately following the completion of the test administration.

- Immediately following the test administration, the test administrator must return all testing materials to the school test coordinator according to the directions specified in the test administration guide.
- The school test coordinator shall collect, count, and return all test materials to the secure, locked facility.

Access to Secure Tests

- Access to secure tests must be limited to school personnel who have a legitimate need.
- For online testing, NC Education usernames and passwords must remain secure and must not be shared or compromised.
- School personnel must not disclose the contents of secure tests, discuss with each other or with students any of the test questions or information contained within the tests, or write about them or post them on the internet or on social media sites.
- Visitors to the classroom are prohibited during the test administration except when required for state or local monitoring of test administrations or under extreme circumstances (i.e., emergency situations).

Read Aloud or Signing/Cueing Administrations

- Test administrators who provide read aloud or signing/cueing administrations have the added responsibility of maintaining confidentiality because of the access they are granted for these types of accommodations. It is strictly prohibited for test administrators who give these administrations to divulge the contents of the test, generally or specifically, to anyone or to copy or record test questions.

**Know local testing procedures.** During test administrator training, test administrators must be informed of local testing policies and procedures such as the following:

- local procedures for providing additional time to students needing more than the estimated time to complete the test;
- local procedures for contacting the school test coordinator during the test administration, if needed;
- local procedures to follow at the conclusion of testing for returning students to the regular school schedule; and
- local procedures for reporting a testing irregularity.

**Online readiness checklist.** Before administering any secure online test, public school unit test coordinators must:

- ensure the appropriate NCDPI-approved secure platform is installed.
- ensure test administrators have an NC Education user account. All test administrator NC Education accounts must be given the role of teacher

for the appropriate school to start an online test. For questions, contact the district test coordinator or the Help Desk at ncdesk@ncsu.edu or (919) 515-1320.

- ensure test administrators' NC Education usernames and passwords are working correctly and can access the appropriate test's student information pages. Usernames and passwords should be checked two to three days before the test administration date.
- complete the Online Assessment Tutorial and ensure every student participating in the online test has completed the appropriate Online Assessment Tutorial at least one time per year before test day.
- ensure all devices meet all the specified technical requirements listed at http://center.su.edu/nct.
- ensure screen savers are disabled for all devices and that volume controls are set for students with the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation.
- check to ensure all students who are to participate in online tests are listed in the Enrollment tab list for the specific test in NC Education. Students who are no longer in membership MAY appear in this list. Disregard these students and do not start a test for them.
- ensure test administration windows are scheduled in NC Education. Test administration windows must be scheduled no later than the day before the test administration date.
- review and edit the SIQ for students who need the following interface options or documented accommodations: alternate background color, large font, *Multiple Testing Sessions* accommodation, *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation, or other required accommodations. SIQ's must be completed before test day.
- ensure all Special Codes in NC Education have been completed before 7:00 p.m. on the day of the test. Refer to the *Complete the Special Codes* section of the test administration guide for additional information.

**During Testing**

**Testing room, testing violations, and irregularities.** On days before testing, teachers are expected to announce to students which items cannot be accessed in the testing room. See the subsection in this handbook, *Testing Room, Testing Violations, and Irregularities*, for full discussion of prohibited items in the testing room. The use of items in the subsection above will constitute a misadministration or violation of the *Testing Code of Ethics*.

**Monitor students during the test.** Test administrators and proctors must remain attentive to their testing responsibilities throughout the entire test administration. A primary responsibility is monitoring the test administration,

which requires the test administrator and proctor to frequently and quietly walk throughout the room and scan the students' work areas to ensure students are following the test directions, performing the required tasks, are not sharing responses, and those eligible have access to required accommodations. See the subsection in this handbook, *Monitoring Students during Test Administrations*, for full discussion of test administrators and proctors monitoring policies and procedures.

**Maximum testing time allowed.** The Annual Testing Program requires that all students be allowed ample opportunity to complete required tests. However, no administration of state tests may exceed the maximum testing time (except for those involving students with documented special needs requiring accommodations, such as *Scheduled Extended Time*). See the subsection in this handbook, *Maximum Testing Time Allowed,* for full discussion of policies and procedures for providing maximum time to students during testing.

**Internet security, security of test materials, and online content.** Test administrators, proctors, technology staff, and students must follow rules and procedures that ensure online content is not made available to anyone for any other purpose than to conduct the test. For a full discussion of policies and procedures to maintain internet security and security of online test materials and content, see the subsection in this handbook *Internet Security, Security of Test Materials, and Online Content*.

**After Testing**

**Report online test connectivity and technical problems in OTISS.** Schools must report online test connectivity and technical problems that occur during the administration of online tests when a student(s) is not able to successfully complete the test. *Reports do not need to be entered for students who successfully complete the test despite a technical issue.*

If the same technical problem is being reported for multiple students for the same test administration on the same day, only one OTISS report needs to be submitted. A list of all students affected should be attached to the OTISS report.

On the day of the technical occurrence, schools must enter the following information about each incident into the OTISS:

- test name (subject and grade level)
- test form number (available at the top of the screen)
- description of the incident
- number of students involved
- error message(s) (document the words verbatim)

- specific item number(s), if applicable
- secure platform being used (e.g., NCTest Chrome App on Chromebooks, NCTest Secure Browser, or NCTest iPad App)
- steps taken locally to resolve the issue
- Help Desk ticket number (If the Help Desk does not provide a ticket number, the caller should request one.)
- advice offered by the Help Desk
- solution (document whether the issue was resolved or not resolved)

**Pack and return paper test materials.** After reviewing each answer sheet and header sheet under secure conditions in a group setting (i.e., three or more designated school personnel), the test administrator or other designated school personnel are required to package and return all the secure test materials. All secure test materials must be accounted for and returned to the school test coordinator.

Note: All secure test materials must be stored in a secure, locked facility before being returned for scoring.

1. Package and return the coded header sheets (if applicable) and answer sheets as follows:
   - Place the coded header sheet on top of each class or test group set of coded answer sheets (including those coded for students absent from makeup).
   - Place the coded header sheet and answer sheets in the provided vinyl bag(s). Only the coded header sheet and answer sheets to be scanned for scoring and reporting purposes are to be in the vinyl bag(s). "Sticky" notes, self-adhesive notes, or other paper must not be enclosed.
   - Place any bent, folded, stapled, torn, or damaged answer sheets that are not to be scored in a separate, labeled vinyl bag.
   - Place any misadministration answer sheets that are not to be scored in a separate, labeled vinyl bag.
2. Place any test books that have been marked in (e.g., student marked in the test book) in a separate, labeled vinyl bag.
3. Follow the school system test coordinator's instructions for handling used and unused scratch and graph papers. All used scratch and graph papers must be securely destroyed immediately following the completion of the test administration.
4. Return all materials (i.e., test books, answer sheets, test administration guides, and other test materials) to the school test coordinator. The school test coordinator will provide information regarding the return of calculators.
5. The school test coordinator will collaborate with the school system test coordinator (or RAC) to ensure the guidelines outlined by the Annual

Testing Program for destroying, returning, and storing test materials are followed.

**Return and storage of test materials for accommodations.** Upon completion of test administrations with approved accommodations, test administrators must

- return all completed *Review of Accommodations Used During Testing* forms to the school test coordinator to keep in the students' IEP folders, Section 504 Plans, EL Plans, or transitory impairment documentation; and
- return all test materials for accommodations (e.g., original student responses recorded in a manner other than the regular answer sheet, special print versions, and original scribe recordings of student responses if not recorded directly in a test book) to the school test coordinator.

The school system test coordinator must follow the appropriate guidelines outlined by the Annual Testing Program for destroying, returning, and storing materials used with testing accommodations.

The school system test coordinator must store the following in a secure, locked facility for six months following the return of the test scores. Note: Charter, lab, residential, and ISD school test coordinators must return all materials to TOPS, including the following, within two days of the initial test administration:

- original student responses recorded in a manner other than the regular answer sheet (e.g., use of accommodations *Student Marks Answers in Test Book, Braille Edition, Braille Writer/Braille Paper, Slate and Stylus/Braille Paper*, *Dictation to a Scribe*, or *Assistive Technology Devices*);
- special print versions (i.e., braille editions, large print editions, one test item per page editions, large print/one test item per page editions) in which eligible students marked their answers in the test book (i.e., received and used *Student Marks Answers in Test Book* accommodation);
- Braille writer/braille paper or slate and stylus/braille paper student responses and photocopies of the responses; and
- original scribe recordings of student responses if not recorded directly in a test book (e.g., scribe records responses on a separate sheet of paper and transcribes after the testing session).

# Part 2: Required North Carolina State Tests

## Beginning-of-Grade 3 Reading Test

### Purposes of the Test

Article 8 Chapter §115C of the General Statutes includes Part 1A, the *North Carolina Read to Achieve Program*. The goal of this program "is to ensure that every student read at or above grade level by the end of third grade and continue to progress in reading proficiency so that he or she can read, comprehend, integrate, and apply complex texts needed for secondary education and career success." The North Carolina Beginning-of-Grade 3 (BOG3) Reading Test is linked to the Read to Achieve Program. This test serves several purposes:

- It establishes a baseline measure of beginning third-grade students' reading skills.
- Students who score achievement level 3 or higher on the test demonstrate reading proficiency appropriate for third-grade students, which satisfies the requirements of the Read to Achieve legislation.
- Based on demonstrated student outcomes in reading proficiency, the test serves as a teacher-growth tool for determining those teachers who are well-suited to teach at reading camps (G.S. §115C-83.3[4a]).
- Data from the administration of the BOG3 Reading Test and the administration of the EOG grade 3 reading tests are used for school accountability growth and student growth for teachers and administrators.
- Students in grade 3 who are not proficient on the EOG grade 3 reading tests but are proficient on the BOG3 Reading Test (i.e., score achievement level 3 or higher) count as proficient in the performance composite and school performance grades.

### Eligible Students

All students in membership at grade 3 (according to PowerSchool) are expected to participate with or without accommodations in the administration of the BOG 3 Reading Test. The only exceptions are as follows:

- Students with disabilities who, according to their IEP documentation, participate in the NCEXTEND1 alternate assessment in accordance with state policies
- Transfer students who were administered the BOG3 Reading Test at the former school before moving must not be readministered the test. For school accountability purposes, students must not be tested two or more times with secure statewide tests unless the school system discovers a misadministration.

**Testing Formats**
The BOG3 is available in both online and paper formats.

**Testing Window**
The BOG3 Reading Test window begins on the eleventh day of the school year and continues through the fifteenth day.

**Testing Schedule**
The testing schedule for the BOG3 Reading Test is as follows:

- The BOG3 Reading Test must be administered in one day (except for administrations involving students with documented special needs requiring accommodations, such as *Multiple Testing Sessions*).
- A school does not need to administer the test to all students at grade 3 at the same time on the same day.
- The test should be administered as early in the school day as the school schedule permits; however, afternoon administrations are also permissible.
- For best practices, the Annual Testing Program strongly recommends schools schedule the BOG3 Reading Test within the school day for the maximum time allowed without interfering with lunch or bus schedules. All students, including students with the *Scheduled Extended Time* accommodation, must be allowed to eat lunch during the school day and to travel home at their regularly scheduled time.
- No BOG3 Reading Test administration (except those involving students with documented special needs requiring accommodations, such as *Scheduled Extended Time*) may exceed the maximum time allowed.

**Test Administration Time and Number of Questions**
Refer to the following chart for the estimated test administration time, the maximum time allowed for testing, and the number of test questions.

| **Beginning-of-Grade 3 Reading Test** | **Estimated Time (minutes)** | **Maximum Time Allowed (minutes)** | **Number of Questions** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Reading | 90 | | |
| 2 Three-Minute Breaks | 6 | | |
| General Instructions | 12 | | |
| **Totals** | 108 | 180 | 40 |

The BOG3 Reading Test's content is "chunked" similarly to the Read to Achieve Test. The BOG3 Reading Test passages are divided into two parts with questions following each part. Questions pertaining to the entire passage are located at the end of the passage.

**Preparing Students for Testing**

Before the designated test administration date, teachers may help students improve test-taking skills by

- completing the Online Assessment Tutorial for the Online BOG3 Reading Test with students.
  - See Section J, subsection *Beginning-of-Grade 3 (BOG3) Reading Test* in this handbook for more information.
- completing the BOG3 Reading Practice Activity with students.
  - The BOG3 Reading Practice Activity is not a test. The Practice Activity helps students understand testing procedures that will occur during the actual BOG3 Reading Test administration so as to minimize student anxiety and errors on test day.

## End-of-Grade Tests: Reading and Mathematics Grades 3–8 and Science Grades 5 and 8

### Eligible Students

**Reading and mathematics.** All students in membership at grades 3–8 (according to PowerSchool), including students who have been retained in grades 3–8, are expected to participate with or without accommodations in the administration of the EOG tests in reading and mathematics.

**Science.** All students in membership at grades 5 and 8 (according to PowerSchool), including students who have been retained at grades 5 and 8, are expected to participate with or without accommodations in the administration of the EOG science tests.

The only exceptions are as follows:

- students with disabilities who, according to their IEP documentation, participate in the NCEXTEND1 alternate assessment in accordance with state policies

### Off-Level Testing

Off-level testing (e.g., administering the grade 4 EOG test to students not in membership as fourth-graders according to PowerSchool) is not permitted.

### Testing Formats and Availability

All EOG tests are available in both online and paper formats. However, online EOG test administrations are required for the following:

- EOG Reading (Grades 6—8)
- EOG Science (Grades 5 and 8)
- EOG Mathematics (Grade 4—8)

The only exceptions to this online testing requirement are for (1) public school units granted an approved technology hardship request and (2) individual students with disabilities who have documented accommodations that dictate a paper test format is necessary for accessibility purposes.

If public school units do not have the technology capability to support administering the required online tests, or a paper format is necessary for accessibility for students with disabilities, see Section J, subsections *Technology Hardship Requests* in this handbook.

### Required Online Assessment Tutorial

Schools must ensure every student participating in online tests has completed the appropriate online assessment tutorial for the associated test(s) at least one time per year prior to the test administration. The Online

Assessment Tutorial may be accessed through https://data.ncsu.edu/nctest/Destination.html. See the subsection *Online Assessment Tutorials* in Section J of this handbook for more information on the tutorials.

**Testing Window**

The EOG tests must be administered during the state approved testing window. For school systems that were required to adjust their school schedules because of adverse weather conditions or other emergencies, the testing schedule should be adjusted to fall within the state approved testing window of the adjusted school year.

**Testing Schedule for End-of-Grade Tests**

| **Online and Paper Administrations** |
|---|
| **Testing combinations**. All online and paper EOG testing combinations must be approved by the RAC before they can be used on test day. |
| **Mixed mode.** Students can be administered the EOGs in mixed mode formats. For example, if a student is administered the mathematics test in the pencil format, the reading test can be administered in the online format. |
| **Morning and afternoon administrations.** The EOG tests should be administered as early in the school day as the school schedule permits; however, afternoon administrations are also permissible. |
| **Non-school day administrations.** Testing is only permitted on regular school days. Testing is not permitted on Saturdays or Sundays. |
| **Consecutive school days.** Administrations of the EOG tests do not have to occur on consecutive school days. |
| **Administering more than one EOG in one school day.** Schools may elect to administer either one or two EOGs in one school day (i.e., reading and science, or mathematics and science, or reading and mathematics); however, caution must be taken when scheduling testing to ensure that the maximum time allowed for these tests does not interfere with lunch or bus schedules. All students must be allowed to eat lunch during the school day and to travel home at their regularly scheduled time. |
| **Testing window.** Schools do not have to test all students in the same grade starting on the same day or the same time, but all students must be tested within the state approved testing window. |
| **Exceeding maximum time.** No EOG test administration (except for those involving students with documented special needs requiring accommodations, such as *Scheduled Extended Time*) may exceed the maximum time allowed. |

**Estimated Test Administration Time and Number of Questions**
The estimated test administration time is the time that the Annual Testing Program estimates it will take nearly all students to complete the tests. The Annual Testing Program requires all students participating in the EOG tests be allowed ample opportunity to complete the tests. As long as students are engaged and working, and the maximum time allowed (i.e., three hours) has not been reached, they must be given time to complete the tests. The test administrator must consult with the school test coordinator for the procedures to follow in providing additional time to students who need time beyond that scheduled to complete the tests. Refer to the following charts for the estimated test administration times and number of questions.

| **Test Information** | | **Number of Questions** | **Time (minutes)** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Reading** | Grades 3–5 | 48 | 120<br>(180 minutes maximum) |
| | Grades 6–8 | 52 | |
| | 2 Three-Minute Breaks | | 6 |
| | General Instructions | | 12 |
| | **Total** | | 138 |
| | | | |
| **Mathematics** | Grades 3 and 4 | 46 | 120<br>(180 minutes maximum) |
| | Grade 5 | 48 | |
| | Grades 6–8 | 53 | |
| | 2 Three-Minute Breaks | | 6 |
| | General Instructions | | 12 |
| | **Total** | | 138 |
| | | | |
| **Science** | Grades 5 and 8 | 65 | 120<br>(180 minutes maximum) |
| | 2 Three-Minute Breaks | | 6 |
| | General Instructions | | 12 |
| | **Total** | | 138 |

## End-of-Course Tests: Biology, English II, NC Math 1, and NC Math 3

### Eligible Students

According to 16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0309:

- public school students who are enrolled for credit in courses in which EOC assessments are required shall take the appropriate EOC assessment at the completion of the course
- public school students who are exempt from final exams by local board of education policy shall not be exempt from EOC assessments
- public school students shall take the appropriate EOC assessment the first time the student takes the course requiring the assessment
- public school students shall take the appropriate EOC assessment at the end of the course regardless of the grade level in which the course is offered
- public school students who are identified as failing a course for which an EOC assessment is required shall take the appropriate EOC assessment; and
- all eligible students shall participate in the administration of EOC assessments (standard administrations with or without accommodations or an alternate assessment).

**Students enrolled for credit in courses in which EOC tests are required and do not have a proficient EOC test score.** Students enrolled in courses that require the administration of the EOC test but have not obtained a proficient score on the EOC test prior to enrolling in the course must take the appropriate EOC test at the completion of the course. The score must be used as at least twenty percent of the student's final grade.

**Students enrolled for credit in courses in which EOC tests are required and have a proficient EOC test score.** Students enrolled in courses that require the administration of the EOC test and who have obtained a proficient score previously on the EOC test may use the proficient EOC score as at least twenty percent of their final grade, or they may elect to retake the appropriate EOC test at the completion of the course and use the most recent score for the final grade calculation.

**Advanced Placement (AP) Biology, International Baccalaureate (IB) Biology, Cambridge Biology II, Biology II, and General Biology II courses.** Students enrolled in AP Biology, IB Biology, Cambridge Biology II, Biology II, and General Biology II courses must be administered the EOC Biology test at the completion of the course with the exception of students who have (1) previously obtained a test score from the EOC test or (2) transferred from out-of-state or from a nonpublic school in which the

principal authorized course credit for having participated in the test by recording the appropriate reason code in PowerSchool. Students meeting these exceptions are not eligible to take the EOC test.

**Repeating a course for credit.** Repeating a course for credit refers to a high school course repeated via any delivery method when the entire *Standard Course of Study* for that course is being taught to the student for a second time (SBE policy CCRE-001). Students are permitted to repeat a course for credit when they have failed a course. However, local boards of education may develop policies that define specific circumstances when students other than those who fail a course may repeat a course for credit. Students repeating a course for credit who have already scored at Level 3, 4, or 5 on the associated EOC test may elect to either retake the EOC or use the previous passing EOC score as at least twenty percent of their final grade. If the student retakes the EOC, the higher of the two scores will be used in the calculation of the final grade. Students who initially fail a high school course and repeat the course for credit, upon completion of the repeated course, must take the associated EOC, and the new course grade shall replace the previous grade for the course. When a student repeats a course for credit and passes the course, the student only earns credit towards graduation once.

**Credit recovery.** Credit recovery refers to a block of instruction that is less than the entirety of the *Standard Course of Study* for that course. Credit recovery delivers a subset of the *Standard Course of Study* or blueprint of the original course in order to specifically address deficiencies in a student's mastery of the course and target specific components of a course necessary for completion (SBE policy CCRE-001). When credit recovery is exercised, the original record of the course being completed and failed will remain on the transcript. The public school unit shall allow a grade of pass or fail for each credit recovery course. The mark will not affect the student's grade point average (GPA). The EOC exam associated with the credit recovery course may be administered no later than thirty days upon the completion of the credit recovery course.

### EOC Results Used as Twenty Percent of the Final Grade

16 N.C. Admin Code 06D .0309 states that "public schools shall use results from all operational EOC tests as a minimum of twenty percent (20%) of the student's final grade for each respective course with the exception of

- students following the Occupational Course of Study Pathway;
- EL students in their first year in a U.S. school; and
- all students enrolled in a course during the initial implementation year of the new test for that course where scores are not immediately available due to standard setting.

For these exceptions, schools shall adopt policies regarding the use of EOC assessment results in assigning final grades."

**Withdrawal from an EOC Course**
Per 16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0309 "students may drop a course with a required EOC assessment within the first ten days of enrollment in a semester or 4x4 course or within the first twenty days of enrollment in a traditional yearlong course. Students who are enrolled for credit after the ten or twenty days, regardless of course delivery (e.g., traditional classroom, NC Virtual Public School, vendor-based online), shall not drop a course with a required EOC assessment and shall participate in the appropriate EOC assessment (with or without accommodations) at the completion of the course."

Any changes in EOC enrollment after the tenth or twentieth day must follow the *Process for Notification of Withdrawals* outlined in the memo *Adherence to the 10/20 Day Rule* (see the Appendixes in this handbook). All notifications of withdrawals are to be submitted in accordance with the memo. Any necessary schedule changes for EOC enrollment should take place following notification of the decision from the Division of Accountability Services.

**Testing Window**
Test administrators must administer the EOC test during the last five days (4x4, semester courses, and summer school) or the last ten days (traditional yearlong schedule) of the instructional period. For school systems that were required to adjust their school schedules because of adverse weather conditions or other emergencies, the testing schedule should be adjusted to fall within the final five days (4x4 or semester) or last ten days (yearlong) of the adjusted school year. Any student absent (i.e., not present) from the test administration must make up the test. The public school unit test coordinator will specify how makeup tests are to be handled at the school and will schedule dates and times for completing makeup tests in each school so that all makeups are completed within the five- (semester) or ten-day (yearlong) testing window.

**Testing Formats and Availability**
All EOCs (i.e., English II, Biology, NC Math 1, and NC Math 3) are required online administrations. The only exceptions to this online testing requirement are for (1) public school units granted an approved technology hardship request and (2) individual students with disabilities who have documented accommodations that dictate a paper test format is necessary for accessibility.

If public school units do not have the technology capability to support administering the required online test(s), or a paper format is necessary for accessibility for students with disabilities, see Section J, subsections *Technology Hardship Requests* in this handbook.

Public school units should prioritize scheduling the online administrations of the EOC tests in the following order: English II, NC Math 1, Biology, NC Math 3.

**Required Online Assessment Tutorial**
Schools must ensure every student participating in online tests has completed the appropriate online assessment tutorial for the associated test(s) at least one time per year prior to the test administration. The Online Assessment Tutorial may be accessed through https://data.ncsu.edu/nctest/Destination.html. See the subsection *Online Assessment Tutorials* in Section J of this handbook for more information on the tutorials.

**Required Gridded Response Practice Activity for Paper NC Math 1 and NC Math 3**
Some of the questions on the paper NC Math 1 and NC Math 3 EOCs are gridded response questions. These questions require students to write and fill in a numerical answer on their answer sheet rather than to select an answer from several choices.

Schools must ensure every student participating in the paper NC Math 1 and NC Math 3 tests completes the Gridded Response Practice Activity at least one time before test day. Copies of the Gridded Response Practice Activity can be found at https://www.dpi.nc.gov/documents/nc-math-1-and-3-gridded-response-practice-sheet-12.

**Testing Schedule for End-of-Course Tests**

| **Online and Paper Administrations** |
|---|
| **Morning and afternoon administrations.** The EOC tests should be administered as early in the school day as the school schedule permits; however, afternoon administrations are permissible. |
| **Two tests administered in one school day.** When scheduling two tests in one day, caution must be taken to ensure that the maximum time allowed for these tests does not interfere with lunch or bus schedules. All students must be allowed to eat lunch during the school day and to travel home at their regularly scheduled time. |

**Testing Schedule for End-of-Course Tests (continued)**

| **Online and Paper Administrations** |
|---|
| **Non-school day administrations.** Testing is only permitted on regular school days. Testing is not permitted on Saturdays or Sundays. |
| **Combining courses.** Different EOC courses cannot be combined for online or paper administrations. Courses must test separately. |
| **Exceeding maximum time.** No EOC test administration (except for those involving students with documented special needs requiring accommodations, such as *Scheduled Extended Time*) may exceed the maximum time allowed. |

**Estimated Test Administration Time and Number of Questions**
The estimated test administration time is the amount of time that the Annual Testing Program estimates it will take nearly all students to complete the test. The Annual Testing Program requires all students participating in the Biology, English II, NC Math 1, and NC Math 3 tests be allowed ample opportunity to complete the tests. As long as students are engaged and working, and the maximum time allowed has not been reached, they must be given time to complete the tests. The test administrator must consult with the school test coordinator for the procedure to follow in providing additional time to students who need time beyond that scheduled to complete the tests. Refer to the following charts for the estimated test administration times and number of respective questions.

| **Biology Administration** | **Estimated Time (Minutes)** | **Maximum Time Allowed (Minutes)** | **Number of Questions** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Biology Test | 120 | 180 | |
| 2 Two-Minute Breaks | 4 | | |
| General Instructions | 12 | | |
| **Totals** | 136 | | 65 |

| **English II Administration** | **Estimated Time (Minutes)** | **Maximum Time Allowed (Minutes)** | **Number of Questions** |
|---|---|---|---|
| English II Test | 150 | 240 | |
| 2 Two-Minute Breaks | 4 | | |
| General Instructions | 12 | | |
| **Totals** | 166 | | 60 |

| **NC Math 1 Administration** | **Estimated Time (Minutes)** | **Maximum Time Allowed (Minutes)** | **Number of Questions** |
|---|---|---|---|
| NC Math 1 Test | 180 | 240 | |
| 2 Two-Minute Breaks | 4 | | |
| General Instructions | 12 | | |
| **Totals** | 196 | | 60 |

| **NC Math 3 Administration** | **Estimated Time (Minutes)** | **Maximum Time Allowed (Minutes)** | **Number of Questions** |
|---|---|---|---|
| NC Math 3 Test | 180 | 240 | |
| 2 Two-Minute Breaks | 4 | | |
| General Instructions | 12 | | |
| **Totals** | 196 | | 60 |

## O. WIDA™ Assessments

**Identification of English Learners**
Per SBE policy TEST-011, "to be identified as English Learners (ELs), students indicating a language other than English on the Home Language Survey (HLS) must be assessed using the state EL identification test at initial enrollment. Thereafter, all students identified as ELs must be annually assessed using the state EL proficiency test."

- **W-APT.**™ The W-APT is the state-identified EL proficiency identification test given to students in kindergarten and in the first semester of grade 1.
- **WIDA™ Screener Online.** The WIDA Screener Online is the state-designated EL proficiency identification test given to students in second semester grade 1 through grade 12.
  - *Assessment window*. Initial assessment of both the W-APT and the WIDA Screener is required within thirty calendar days of enrollment. Note: Public school units also have the option to initially assess language-minority students on the WIDA Screener Online up to thirty calendar days before the start of school.
  - *Paper-based assessment.* The WIDA Screener Online is also available in paper format; however, the paper format is permissible only to individual students with disabilities who have documented accommodations in their IEPs or Section 504 Plans that dictate a paper format is necessary for accessibility.
- **ACCESS for ELLs.**© The ACCESS for ELLs is the state-designated EL proficiency test administered annually to kindergarten through twelfth-grade students who have been identified as ELs.
  - *Four subtests.* All students identified as ELs must be administered all four ACCESS for ELLs subtests annually during the state-designated testing window. If one or more subtests cannot be administered, schools must follow the directions specified by the Division of Accountability Services.
  - *Testing window*. Annual ACCESS testing must occur during the state-designated testing window. The 2021–22 testing window is January 24, 2022, through March 11, 2022.
  - *Paper tests.* Online administration is required for the ACCESS for ELLs; however, the paper format is permissible for individual students with disabilities who have documented accommodations in their IEPs or Section 504 Plans that dictate a paper format is necessary for accessibility. Note: Kindergarten ACCESS for ELLs is only in paper format.
- **Alternate ACCESS for ELLs.** The Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is an option to the administration of the ACCESS for ELLs assessment for

students in grades 1–12 who are classified as ELs and have significant cognitive disabilities that prevent their meaningful participation in the ACCESS for ELLs assessment. Additional information on the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs can be found at https://wida.wisc.edu/assess/alt-access.

- *Testing Window*. Administration of the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs must occur during the state-designated testing window. The 2021–22 testing window is January 24, 2022, through March 11, 2022.

**Participation in the Annual Testing Program**

Per General Statute §115C-174.11(c)(1) states, "The State Board of Education (SBE) shall adopt the tests for grades three through 12 that are required by federal law or as a condition of a federal grant. These tests shall be designed to measure progress toward reading, communication skills, and mathematics for grades three through eight, and toward competencies for grades nine through 12. Students who do not pass the tests adopted for eighth grade shall be provided remedial instruction in the ninth grade." Further information about testing students identified as ELs can be found in SBE policy TEST-011.

**Eligibility for Testing Accommodations**

"Students who score below Level 5.0 Bridging on the reading domain of the WIDA Screener/ACCESS for ELLs, are eligible to receive state-approved EL testing accommodations on all state tests. Students who score Level 5.0 Bridging or above on the reading domain of the WIDA Screener/ACCESS for ELLs or exit EL status must participate in all state tests without accommodations" (SBE policy TEST-011).

| Domain | 1 Entering | 2 Emerging | 3 Developing | 4 Expanding | 5 Bridging | 6 Reaching |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Reading** | **Eligible to Receive State-Approved EL Testing Accommodations for All State Tests** | | | | Must participate in the general state test administration without EL testing accommodations | |

Refer to the *Guidelines for Testing Students Identified as English Learners* publication for information on the accommodations available to eligible EL students for state-mandated test administrations. Refer to the *North Carolina State Specific Guidance for WIDA Assessments* publication for state-specific policies and procedures related to the WIDA Screener and the ACCESS for ELLs assessments.

**Test Administrator Training**

The ACCESS for ELLs training courses (online and paper) have a general administration quiz, which educators must pass with a score of eighty percent or higher to be certified to administer the tests. Certification is required in each mode if administering online and paper tests. WIDA recommends taking the quiz immediately after completing the training. ACCESS for ELLs test administrator certification is valid for two years and test coordinators are responsible for ensuring test administrators are certified to administer tests annually. Refer to the *North Carolina State Specific Guidance for WIDA Assessments* for training specifics for each assessment.

## P. ACT Assessments

The NCDPI has a partnership with ACT, a not-for-profit organization that provides educational assessment, research, information, and program management services. All North Carolina tenth-graders take the PreACT, and eleventh-graders take the ACT. Grade twelve students who are identified as Career and Technical Education (CTE) concentrators also take the ACT WorkKeys assessment. These assessments measure what students have learned in their courses and help educators identify the information that students still need to learn to succeed in college or a career.

**PreACT**

- The PreACT is administered annually to all eligible tenth-graders.
- The PreACT is a state required test per G.S. §115C-174.22.
- The PreACT simulates the ACT testing experience within a shorter test on all four ACT test subjects: English, reading, mathematics and science.
- The multiple-choice test predicts future success aligned to the ACT test and provides both current achievement and projected future ACT test scores on the 1–36 ACT score scale.
- Detailed Results and Item Response help to identify specific areas of strength and weakness. Additional reporting insights on STEM, Career Readiness and Understanding Complex Texts are provided.
- The PreACT assessment is designed to help parents and educators identify areas where students may need additional academic support or remediation. The PreACT can also help to initiate strategic conversations between parents and schools regarding dual enrollment decisions, identifying curriculum gaps, implementing interventions on behalf of students, and choosing Advanced Placement classes.
- The test administration window is October 11, 2021–May 13, 2022.

**ACT**

- Students at grade 11 take the ACT in the spring.
- The ACT is a curriculum and standards-based assessment that evaluates eligible eleventh-graders' college and career readiness in English, mathematics, reading, and science.
- Each section of the ACT test is multiple-choice and scored on a 1–36 point scale. The composite score is the average of the four subject test sections.
- The ACT is a required state assessment for all eligible eleventh graders per G.S. §115C-174.11(4).
- The ACT is used for college admissions, placement, and scholarships. It is accepted by most colleges and universities in the United States.
- The ACT provides a path to increase student access to postsecondary

and workforce opportunities.
- Additional reporting and insights on STEM, Career Readiness, and Understanding Complex Texts are provided.
- For standard, paper administrations, test dates are as follows:
  - Initial Test Date: March 1, 2022
  - Makeup Test Date: March 15, 2022
  - Emergency[1] Test Date: March 29, 2022
- The ACT paper accommodations testing windows are as follows:
  - Initial Test Window: March 1–4, and March 7–11, 2022
  - Makeup Test Window: March 15–18, and March 21–25, 2022
  - Emergency[1] Test Window: March 29–31, April 1, and April 4–8, 2022
- The ACT online accommodations testing windows are as follows:
  - Initial Test Window: March 1–3, and March 8–10, 2022
  - Makeup Test Window: March 15–17, and March 22–24, 2022
  - Emergency[1] Test Window: March 29–31, and April 5–7, 2022
- Results from the statewide administrations of the ACT are available at https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/testing-and-school-accountability/school-accountability-and-reporting/act-reports

**ACT WorkKeys**

- The WorkKeys assessments are required for all eligible CTE concentrators per G.S. §115C-174.25.
- The three WorkKeys assessments—Applied Math, Graphic Literacy, and Workplace Documents—are the basis of the WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate (WorkKeys NCRC) program.
- The Applied Math test measures critical thinking, mathematical reasoning, and problem-solving techniques for situations that occur in today's workplace.
- The Graphic Literacy test measures the skills needed to locate, synthesize, and use information from workplace graphics. Workplace graphics come in a variety of formats, but all communicate a level of information. From charts to graphs, diagrams to floor plans, identifying what information is being presented and understanding how to use it are critical to success.
- The Workplace Documents test measures the skills people use when they read and use written text such as memos, letters, directions, signs, notices, bulletins, policies, and regulations on the job. The assessment is defined through a combination of the test complexity level of a reading passage and the skill elicited by the item.
- Students who achieve qualifying scores on the Applied Mathematics,

[1] Schools must obtain permission from the NCDPI to utilize the emergency test date.

Graphic Literacy, and Workplace Documents assessments can earn a WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate (WorkKeys NCRC) as well as a North Carolina Career Readiness Certificate at the Bronze, Silver, Gold, or Platinum levels of readiness. Certificates provide employers with proof that students have the skills needed to do the jobs available.

- The WorkKeys standard and accommodated testing windows are as follows:
  - Fall 2021: November 15–December 10, 2021
  - Spring 2022: February 22–May 6, 2022
- All WorkKeys testing must be administered online unless a paper format is necessary for students with a documented need for accessibility purposes or the school has an approved Technology Hardship approval on file with the Division of Accountability Services. Paper test materials must be ordered through ACT during the appropriate test material ordering window.
- Results from the statewide administrations of WorkKeys are available at https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/testing-and-school-accountability/school-accountability-and-reporting/act-reports.

## Q. North Carolina Alternate Assessments

This section contains information on the following North Carolina Alternate Assessments.

- NCEXTEND1
- College and Career Readiness Alternate Assessments (CCRAA)
- Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

**Students with *Only* Section 504 Plans**

Students with only Section 504 Plans are not eligible for participation in any of North Carolina's alternate assessments. Students who have only a Section 504 Plan may participate in the standard test administration with or without accommodations as documented in their individual Section 504 Plan. Students with Section 504 Plans who do not have a current IEP and who participate in one or more alternate assessments will have their test scores invalidated and removed from the end-of-year accountability database. There are no exceptions to this policy except for those conditions listed under specific alternate assessments, as applicable.

# NCEXTEND1 Grades 3–8, 10, and 11

## NCEXTEND1 Alternate Assessments

The NCEXTEND1 alternate assessments of reading and mathematics at grades 3–8; science at grades 5 and 8; Biology, English II, and NC Math 1, at grade 10; and NCEXTEND1 Grade 11 are designed for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The NCEXTEND1 alternate assessments measure the content standards specified in the North Carolina *Standard Course of Study* Extended Content Standards for reading and mathematics and the North Carolina Extended *Essential Standards* for science. The assessments are administered individually to each student by an assessor.

## Eligible Students

16 N.C. Admin. Code 06G .0315 states that "all eligible students in membership (i.e., enrolled in a school) at grades 3 through 8 and in high school courses in which an EOC assessment is administered shall participate in the state assessment program adopted by the SBE…All students with disabilities who are included in membership, including those with IEPs and those identified under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, shall participate in the state assessment program using one of the following assessments as appropriate and as determined by the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan:

- the standard test administration with or without accommodations, or
- an alternate assessment with or without accommodations, if eligible."

To determine participation in the NCEXTEND1 alternate assessments, the following eligibility requirements must be met:

- The student has a current IEP.
- The student must have a significant cognitive disability.
  - The student's disability significantly impacts cognitive functioning and adaptive behaviors, defined as those skills that are essential for someone to live and function independently.
  - The student requires extensive and repeated individualized instruction and support to make meaningful gains.
  - The student uses substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways.
- The student must be instructed using the North Carolina Extended Content Standards (i.e., reading and mathematics) and the North Carolina Extended *Essential Standards* (i.e., science).
- The student must be enrolled in grades 3–8, 10, or 11 according to PowerSchool. Only those students enrolled in eleventh grade for the first time are required to take the NCEXTEND1 alternate assessment at Grade 11.

The vast majority of students with disabilities do not have a significant cognitive disability. The NCEXTEND1 is not appropriate for students who:

- are being instructed in any or all of the assessed general grade or course-level content standards of the North Carolina *Standard Course of Study* (i.e., reading, mathematics, and the Essential Standards (i.e., science);
- demonstrate delays only in academic achievement;
- demonstrate delays only in selected areas of academic achievement;
- demonstrate delays owing primarily to behavioral issues; or
- if in high school, are pursuing a North Carolina high school diploma (including students enrolled in the Occupational Course of Study Pathway).

Evidence for the decision to participate in NCEXTEND1 is not based on

- a disability category or label;
- poor attendance or extended absences;
- native language, social, cultural, or economic differences;
- expected poor performance on the general education assessment;
- academic or other services the student receives;
- educational environment or instructional setting;
- percent of time receiving special education services;
- English Learner status;
- low reading level or achievement level;
- anticipated disruptive behavior;
- impact of student scores on the accountability program;
- administrative decisions;
- anticipated emotional distress; or
- need for accommodations to participate in the assessment process.

**Testing Windows**

**NCEXTEND1 Grade 11.** The testing windows for the NCEXTEND1 Alternate Assessment at grade 11 are as follows:

- Initial Test Window: March 1–4, and March 7–11, 2022
- Makeup Test Window: March 15–18, and March 21–25, 2022
- Emergency[2] Test Window: March 29–31, April 1, and April 4–8, 2022

**NCEXTEND1 at Grades 3–8 and 10.** The testing window for the NCEXTEND1 Alternate Assessments at grades 3–8 and 10 is the last ten days of the school year. For public school units that were required to adjust their school schedules because of adverse weather conditions or other emergencies, the testing schedule should be adjusted to fall within the last

[2] Schools must obtain permission from the NCDPI to utilize the emergency test date.

ten days of the adjusted school year. Any student absent (i.e., not present) for the test administration must make up the test. The public school unit test coordinator will specify how makeup tests are to be handled at the school and will schedule dates and times for completing makeup tests in each school so that all makeups are completed within the ten-day testing window.

Testing window exception. Per G.S. §115C-174.12(a)(4), an exception to test outside the ten-day testing window, including makeup days, "shall be permitted to accommodate a student's IEP and Section 504 Plan." (See subsection *Request to Test a Student outside the Testing Window* for additional information.)

**Test Format**

**NCEXTEND1 online reading, mathematics, and science alternate assessments at grades 3–8 and 10.** The NCEXTEND1 alternate assessments at grades 3–8 and 10 are teacher-facilitated online assessments that are administered individually to each student. The questions are presented online in two sets. There is no formalized break between the sets. Students have two trials for the first and second set of test questions.

If the student misses the answer in the first trial, the incorrect answer is removed from the choices for the second trial. Students who answer enough questions correctly in set one will continue to set two. The assessment ends after the last question in set two.

The test materials include a packet of test cards that coincide with each online question. Every assessor will receive a packet of test cards for each student. The test cards determine the test form the student will be administered online. Use of the test cards is optional for assessors during the actual test administration. The decision to use the cards should be based on the individual needs of the student.

**NCEXTEND1 Grade 11 paper alternate assessment.** The NCEXTEND1 grade 11 alternate assessment is administered individually to each student by an assessor. The assessor receives an assessment guide and an assessor booklet for each student to be assessed. The assessor also receives a test card kit (and a selection book for the NCEXTEND1 test of ELA/reading only). The assessor booklet provides the script the assessor is to read when administering the assessment.

Students are provided up to two opportunities to respond to each question. All questions are administered to all students. The assessor reads the script for each question, uses any corresponding manipulatives as directed in the

assessor booklet, and records the student's responses to each question by filling in the appropriate bubble in the assessor booklet for Trial 1 and Trial 2 as indicated by the instructions in the assessor booklet. Following the test administration, the assessor transcribes each student's responses that are recorded in the student's assessor booklet to the appropriate answer sheet.

**NCEXTEND1 Assessors**

NCEXTEND1 assessors at grades 3-8, 10, and 11 must

- have training in the specific content area being assessed and the contents of the assessment guide,
- be familiar with the North Carolina Extended Content Standards,
- be the student's primary teacher for the assessed content area(s), and
- have routine contact with the student during classroom instruction.

**Number of Test Questions**

| Alternate Assessment | Number of Questions |
|---|---|
| NCEXTEND1 Reading Grades 3–8 | 30 |
| NCEXTEND1 Mathematics Grades 3–8 | 32 |
| NCEXTEND1 Science Grades 5 and 8 | 30 |
| | |
| NCEXTEND1 Biology Grade 10 | 30 |
| NCEXTEND1 English II Grade 10 | 30 |
| NCEXTEND1 NC Math 1 Grade 10 | 34 |
| | |
| NCEXTEND1 Grade 11 | 15 |

**Estimated Time for Test Administration**

The NCEXTEND1 alternate assessments are administered individually to each student. The time required by a student to complete the assessment will be unique to each student, depending on the student's ability to maintain focus, medical condition, or fatigue factor(s).

The NCEXTEND1 alternate assessments may be administered over several days or may be completed in one session. If a student routinely uses multiple testing sessions during classroom instruction and similar classroom assessments, the *Multiple Testing Sessions* accommodation should be documented in the student's IEP so appropriate planning and scheduling can take place before testing. The *Multiple Testing Sessions* accommodation is most appropriately used when a student is purposefully scheduled to take the assessment in specifically timed increments (e.g., three questions a day over five days, fifteen-minute testing sessions, etc.). However, the test design for the NCEXTEND1 alternate assessments allows breaks to be taken at any time during testing if the need arises, regardless of documentation in

the student's IEP. The assessor must use professional judgment to determine when a break is needed and what is the appropriate length of time for a student's test administration. All test materials must remain secure during all breaks.

# College and Career Readiness Alternate Assessments Grades 10 and 11

### Purpose of the North Carolina College and Career Readiness Alternate Assessments at Grades 10 and 11

Per 16 N.C. Admin. Code 06G .0315, all students with disabilities are required to participate in the statewide testing program by taking either the general state-mandated tests with or without available accommodations or by participating in North Carolina alternate assessments with or without accommodations. To participate in alternate assessments, students must meet specific eligibility criteria established by the Annual Testing Program, and the decision to participate in the alternate assessments must be documented in the students' current IEPs.

The College and Career Readiness Alternate Assessments (CCRAAs) at grades 10 and 11 are available for students with disabilities who are following a course of study that, upon their completing high school, may not lead to admission into a college-level course of study resulting in a college degree. The CCRAA at grade 10 is the alternate assessment for the PreACT; the CCRAA at grade 11 is the alternate assessment for the ACT. Students at grades 10 and 11 receive a single score based on how many test questions they answer correctly on the CCRAA. Students' scores from the CCRAA at grade 11 are included in participation of the ACT administration for accountability reporting but are not included for performance.

### Eligible Students

To determine student participation in the CCRAA at grade 10 and grade 11, the following eligibility requirements must be considered:

**CCRAA at grade 10.** The student must be enrolled in grade 10 according to PowerSchool. Only eligible students enrolled in tenth grade for the first time are required to take the CCRAA at grade 10. Students repeating the tenth grade and have no prior state sponsored CCRAA at grade 10 score documented in PowerSchool, should plan to take the test their repeating year.

**CCRAA at grade 11.** The student must be enrolled in grade 11 according to PowerSchool. Eligible students who take the CCRAA at grade 11 will be included in participation of the ACT administration for accountability reporting but not for performance. Therefore, eligible students who are repeating the eleventh grade and have no record of a previous CCRAA at grade 11 score must take the CCRAA. If they do not, it will count against participation.

**CCRAA at grades 10 and 11.** The following eligibility requirements must be met for CCRAA at grades 10 and 11:

- The student must have a current IEP. (Students with a Section 504 Plan are not eligible to take the CCRAA.)
- The student exhibits severe and pervasive delays in all areas of conceptual, linguistic, and academic development as well as in adaptive behaviors, including communication, daily living skills, and self-care.
- The student is following a course of study that, upon completion of high school, may not lead to admission into a college-level course of study resulting in a college degree (i.e., the Occupational Course of Study).
- The student is not receiving instruction in the North Carolina Extended Content Standards. Students receiving instruction in the North Carolina Extended Content Standards may be eligible for the NCEXTEND1 Alternate Assessments at grades 10 and 11.
- The student meets the criteria above and has a written parental request for the administration of an alternate assessment (i.e., CCRAA). Decisions regarding which assessments a student with disabilities will participate in must be made annually by the IEP team. Therefore, if students' current IEPs designate participation in an alternate assessment, they can serve as documentation in lieu of the written parental request.

In rare cases, students deemed medically fragile because of a significant medical emergency, condition, or both and are unable to participate in a specific test administration may be granted a medical exception. The principal or school test coordinator must contact the public school unit test coordinator for procedures on how to request a medical exception. All medical exceptions must be approved by Annual Testing Program.

**Testing Windows**

**Grade 10 testing window.** The testing window (including makeups) for the CCRAA at grade 10 is October 11, 2021, through May 13, 2022.

**Grade 11 testing window.** The testing windows for the CCRAA at grade 11 are as follows:

- Initial Test Window: March 1–4, and March 7–11, 2022
- Makeup Test Window: March 15–18, and March 21–25, 2022
- Emergency[3] Test Window: March 29–31, April 1, and April 4–8, 2022

[3] Schools must obtain permission from the NCDPI to utilize the emergency test date.

**Testing Formats and Availability**
The CCRAA at grades 10 and 11 are available in both online and paper formats.

**Makeup Testing**
Any student absent (i.e., not present) from the CCRAA at grade 10 or the CCRAA at grade 11 test administration must make up the test. All makeups must be completed during the designated testing window(s). The public school unit test coordinator will specify how makeup tests will be handled at the school and will schedule the dates and times for completing makeup tests in each school.

**Administration Time and Number of Test Questions**
The administration time for the CCRAA at grade 10 and grade 11 is 150 minutes. No administration may exceed 150 minutes (except for students with documented special needs requiring accommodations, such as *Scheduled Extended Time*). The administration time does not include time for general instructions and breaks. The tests must be administered in one school day (except for students with documented special needs requiring accommodations, such as *Multiple Testing Sessions*).

The students will see the subject tests in a specific order (i.e., English first, followed by math, reading, and science.) Students should not stop when they complete the questions for a subject-area section; they should continue working on the test questions until the test is completed or until time is called.

Refer to the following chart for the test administration times and numbers of questions for the CCRAAs:

| **Activity** | **Time (Minutes)** | **Subject Areas** | **Grade 10 Number of Questions** | **Grade 11 Number of Questions** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Administration Time | 150 | English | 14 Multiple-choice | 13 Multiple-choice |
| | | Math | 12 Multiple-choice | 12 Multiple-choice |
| | | Reading | 6 Multiple-choice | 9 Multiple-choice |
| | | Science | 11 Multiple-choice | 10 Multiple-choice |
| 2 Three-Minute Breaks | 6 | | | |
| General Instructions | 12 | | | |
| **Totals** | 168 | | 43 | 44 |

As a best practice, the Annual Testing Program strongly recommends schools schedule the CCRAAs so they do not interfere with lunch or bus schedules. All students, including students with special needs requiring accommodations, such as *Scheduled Extended Time*, must be allowed to eat lunch during the school day and to travel home at their regularly scheduled time.

**CCRAA Scoring and Reporting**

Students' scores from the CCRAA at grade 11 are included in participation of the ACT administration for accountability reporting but are not included for performance. Students receive a single score based on how many test items they answer correctly on the CCRAA.

**Scoring of online assessments.** The CCRAA online assessments are scored during an overnight process, and scores are sent to the secure shell (SSH) by 9:00 a.m. the day after the assessment is completed. District test coordinators will be able to generate school rosters and class rosters after scoring is complete.

**Scoring of paper assessments.** CCRAA answer sheets from district schools must be scanned and scored locally. Charter, lab, residential, and ISD schools must return answer sheets to TOPS for scanning and scoring.

## Alternate ACCESS for ELLs®

The Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is an option to the administration of the ACCESS for ELLs test for students in grades 1–12 who are classified as ELs and have significant cognitive disabilities that prevent their meaningful participation in the ACCESS for ELLs assessment. The Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is designed for only a small population of ELs who meet specific eligibility criteria.

Additional information on the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs can be found at https://wida.wisc.edu/assess/alt-access.

**Features of the Assessment**

- The Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is similar to the general ACCESS for ELLs in that it has four assessment domains (i.e., Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking).
- The Listening and Reading sections consist of multiple-choice questions.
- The Writing and Speaking sections prompt the student for a constructed response.
- Separate test forms are available for each grade-level cluster.
- All sections are adaptive, meaning that test questions are presented until the student reaches their performance "ceiling."
- All test sections are hand scored by the test administrator; each item must be scored before moving on to the next item.
- Students are provided with additional opportunities to demonstrate their English language proficiency through scripted cues in the Listening and Reading sections and auxiliary questions in the Speaking section.
- Modeled tasks are included in the Writing section Shat allow students to observe the test administrator perform the task before trying it.
- Other unique features of the test include simplified language, repetition of questions, increased graphic support, and larger testing materials.

**Eligibility Criteria**

The Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is designed only for a small population of ELs with significant cognitive disabilities. To determine student participation in the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs, the following criteria must be met:

- The student has a current IEP that reflects the student meets the eligibility criteria for the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs.
- The student must be instructed using the North Carolina Extended Content Standards (i.e., reading and mathematics) and the North Carolina Extended Essential Standards (i.e., science).

- The student must have a significant cognitive disability.
  - The student's disability significantly impacts cognitive functioning and adaptive behaviors, defined as those skills that are essential for someone to live and function independently.
  - The student requires extensive and repeated individualized instruction and support to make meaningful gains.
  - The student uses substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways.
- The student's ACCESS for ELLs scores from the prior year yielded not applicable (NA) across any or all domains or yielded a composite score of less than 2.0. (If the composite score is 2.0 or above, the student does not qualify for the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs and must continue to take the regular ACCESS for ELLs.)
- If the student does not have ACCESS for ELLs scores from the prior school year, the student's WIDA Screener or WIDA ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT™) results must have a proficiency level of 1 in all applicable domains.

**Test Administrator Training**

The Alternate ACCESS for ELLs training course has a general administration quiz, which educators must pass with a score of eighty percent or higher to become certified to administer the assessment. WIDA recommends taking the quiz immediately after completing the training. Alternate ACCESS for ELLs test administrator certification is valid for two years and test coordinators are responsible for ensuring test administrators are certified to administer tests annually. Refer to the *North Carolina State Specific Guidance for WIDA Assessments* for additional details on test administrator certification.

The Division of Accountability Services collaborates with WIDA to provide training to all prospective administrators of the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs. Information on training options will be sent to public school units and English as a Second Language (ESL) coordinators. Qualifications for test administrators are the same as those listed in *the North Carolina State Specific Guidance for WIDA Assessments*.

**Test Materials**

The Division of Accountability Services will provide public school units with instructions on ordering Alternate ACCESS for ELLs test materials.

**Scoring (2021—2022)**

The current design of the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs provides both a scale score and proficiency level for each Language Domain (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing). Proficiency levels are interpretative scores that

describe the student's performance in terms of the six WIDA Alternate English Language Proficiency Levels, which ascend in the following order: A1-Initiating, A2-Exploring, A3-Engaging, P1-Entering, P2-Emerging, and P3-Developing. Each proficiency level is explained in terms of what the student can do using English.

Students also earn a scale score for each Language Domain. Scale scores precisely track student growth over time and allow comparison of student performance across grades within a domain. Scale scores do not correlate across domains.

## R. National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subject areas. The NAEP has two types of assessments, main and long-term trend. Main assessments are conducted in a range of subjects with fourth-, eighth-, and twelfth-graders across the country. Assessments are given most frequently in mathematics, reading, science, and writing. Other subjects, such as the arts, civics, economics, geography, and U.S. history, are assessed periodically.

Long-term trend (LTT) assessments measure student performance in reading and mathematics, using some questions repeatedly to ensure comparability across the years. The LTT assessments allow the performance of today's students to be compared with those from more than forty years ago and inform the development of new assessment instruments that reflect current educational content and assessment methodology. The LTT assessments are administered every four years.

Since NAEP assessments are administered uniformly using the same sets of test questions across the nation, NAEP results serve as a common metric for all states and select urban districts. The assessments stay essentially the same from year to year, with only carefully documented changes. This uniformity permits the NAEP to provide a clear picture of student academic progress over time.

**Participation and Sampling**

In accordance with the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA),* NAEP administrations in reading and mathematics (which began in 2003) are required at grades 4 and 8 every other year in all states. In North Carolina, 16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0307 requires all selected schools to participate in the NAEP; however, at the student level, participation in the NAEP is voluntary. *ESSA* allows either students or parents to refuse to participate.

For each main NAEP administration, a sample of students is drawn from both public and nonpublic schools at grades 4, 8, and 12. (*ESSA* requires reading and mathematics assessments at grade 12 on a nationally representative basis at a minimum of every four years.) For each LTT assessment, a sample of students at ages 9, 13, and 17 is drawn from both public and nonpublic schools. All sampling for the NAEP assessments is conducted at the national level. The sample of schools and students is chosen in a two-stage sampling process. First, the sample of schools is selected by probability sampling methods. Then, within the participating schools, random samples of students are chosen.

To ensure the integrity of NAEP, every effort must be made to include each selected student in the testing sessions. The NCDPI recommends IEP teams and Section 504 committees utilize the accommodation(s) in the *District Assessment* section of the respective plans during the administration of NAEP. Participation is required for students who can access the assessment; there are no consequences for students or schools based on student performance. Using the documented accommodations or revisiting those in the *District and State Assessment* section of the IEPs and Section 504 Plans will provide increased access for students with disabilities.

**Procedures for the IEP team or Section 504 committee.** The IEP team or Section 504 committee refers to the accommodations listed in the *District Assessment* portion of the plan and determines if those accommodations are appropriate and allowable according to the NAEP guidelines. To determine the allowable accommodations according to the test publisher, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), contact the school test coordinator for the most recent list of approved accommodations designated by the NAEP.

If the team or committee determines after consulting with the school test coordinator that a student cannot access the NAEP, a student may be excluded from participating in the administration of the NAEP. Before excluding a student based on an accommodation need, the school test coordinator is to send an email to the North Carolina NAEP State Coordinator, Dr. Andrea Faulkner, at Andrea.Faulkner@dpi.nc.gov. The email should include the school's name and contact information along with a summary of the student's accommodation needs. Confidential student-identifying information should not be included in the email. The NAEP State Coordinator will review the email and respond with a follow-up email or phone call to include comprehensive guidance.

The NCDPI is committed to including as many students as possible in the NAEP. The NAEP results for North Carolina should represent the entire student population. The IEP team and the Section 504 committee should consider ways to offer accommodations for students to enable participation in NAEP, and every effort should be made to identify an accommodation that will facilitate students' participation in NAEP. The NAEP reports only highlight results at the state level; there are no high-stake consequences for individual students or schools.

**NAEP Test Results**

The NAEP test results include data on subject-matter achievement, instructional experiences, and school environment for populations of students (e.g., all fourth-graders) and groups within those populations (e.g.,

female students, Hispanic students). The NAEP does not provide scores for individual students or schools, although states can report NAEP results for selected, large urban districts. NAEP results are based on representative samples of students at grades 4, 8, and 12 for the main assessments or samples of students at ages 9, 13, or 17 years for the LLT assessments. These grades and ages were selected because they represent critical junctures in academic achievement.

**NAEP Assessment Schedule**

All Trial Urban District Assessments (TUDA), main, and state assessments take place from mid-January through March. All LLT assessments take place from October through May. Results for NAEP assessments are reported in The Nation's Report Card. Results are published for math, reading, science, and writing assessments six months to a year after the assessment is complete.

**Additional Information on NAEP**

For more information on NAEP, visit the following websites:

- http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/,
- http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/about/schools.aspx, and
- https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/testing-and-school-accountability/state-tests/national-assessment-educational-progress-naep.

## S. Resource Documents

### North Carolina's Implementation Guide for Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM)

North Carolina's *Implementation Guide for Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM)* is provided by the SBE and the Annual Testing Program to help public school units implement CDM policy CCRE-001. The *Implementation Guide for Credit by Demonstrated Mastery* offers specific implementation guidelines addressing how students can earn course credit in a manner that does not require specific seat-time requirements. The *Implementation Guide for Credit by Demonstrated Mastery*, Frequently Asked Questions, and the CDM Toolkit may be found on the NCDPI's Credit by Demonstrated Mastery website at https://www.dpi.nc.gov/students-families/enhanced-opportunities/advanced-learning-and-gifted-education/credit-demonstrated-mastery%C2%A0.

### Process for Requesting Testing Exceptions Based on Significant Medical Emergencies, Conditions, or Both

There may be rare instances in which a student is unable to participate in a state assessment during the testing window, including makeup dates, because of a significant medical emergency and/or condition. Examples include, but are not limited to, circumstances involving students who are (1) in the final stages of a terminal or degenerative illness, (2) comatose, or (3) receiving extensive short-term medical treatment due to a medical emergency. Under these circumstances, a school may request from the Division of Accountability Services a testing exception for the student. If a medical exception is granted, the student remains enrolled in the school during this period; however, the student does not take the assessment(s), and the student is not included when calculating participation rates.

Failure to adhere to this process or include all requested information may result in the need to resubmit the request or cause a delay in the response. All requests must be submitted for consideration through the Online Medical Exception Request System in NC Education's NCTest Admin. The requests must be submitted by the public school unit test coordinator and be approved by the superintendent or school director.

**Policies and Procedures for Students Receiving Services at a Visited School**

Accountability policies and procedures regarding students receiving services at a visited school apply to all public school students in grades K–12.

Per G.S. §115C-366, "All students under the age of twenty-one (21) years who are domiciled in a school administrative unit and who have not been removed from school for cause, or who have not obtained a high school diploma, are entitled to all the privileges and advantages of the public schools to which they are assigned by the local boards of education." Per G.S. §115C-107.1(a)(2), "any child with a disability who is receiving special education and related services and has not graduated from high school with a regular diploma is eligible to continue to receive a free, appropriate public education until the end of the school year in which that child reaches the age of twenty-two (22)." IDEA participation regulation 34 CFR 300.116(e) specifies that in determining the educational placement of a student with a disability, "each public agency must ensure that a child with a disability is not removed from education in age-appropriate regular classrooms solely because of needed modifications in the general curriculum." To exercise this responsibility for determining the least restrictive environment, the teams' decision-making process would need to begin within the context of an age-appropriate classroom.

It is the responsibility of the district to assign a base school for each child of school age residing within the district who qualifies under the laws of North Carolina for admission to a public school. A school administrative unit may decide that it is in the student's best interest to receive services at another school or from a service provider that is not part of the school system. These courses or services may be educational or special needs, such as those for children with disabilities or for ELs. In these instances, the base school still assumes responsibility for the student's education.

With the permission of the local school administrative unit, a school has the right to allow a non-NC public school student to attend. In doing so, the school accepts responsibility for the student's education.

It is important that districts and schools understand the policies and procedures for including all students attending a school (whether in membership, cross-enrolled, or visiting) in the Annual Testing Program.

- Students who are cross-enrolled or are visiting a school are required to participate in the state's testing program, if eligible.
- Eligibility is determined by the Annual Testing Program and includes grade-level and course enrollment. Specific eligibility requirements are

published each year and can be found in the test administration guides.

The policies and procedures for reporting test results apply.

- If there is a base school, test results go back to the base school and are included in the accountability results of the base school.
- If there is no base school, test results remain at the visited school and are included in the accountability results of the visited school.

**Definition of Terms**

1. **Average daily membership.** Average daily membership (ADM) is a count of students *in membership* who receive an elementary, middle, or secondary education at public expense. To be included in ADM, a student must have a class schedule that is at least one-half of the school's instructional day. Students who have a schedule less than one-half of an instructional day must be assigned as visiting students and are not included in ADM.
2. **Base school.** The base school is the school in which the student is reported for ADM (i.e., in membership). A district cannot serve as a base school. Each local board of education is authorized and directed to provide for the assignment to a public school (i.e., base school) of each child residing within the district who is qualified under the laws of North Carolina for admission to a public school (G.S. §115C-366).
3. **Cross-enrolled school.** A cross-enrolled school is a school other than the student's base school that provides a course(s) or educational services to the student that are not available at the student's base school.
4. **Cross-enrolled student.** A cross-enrolled student is in membership at the base school but is taking a course(s) or receiving educational services at another school.
5. **Visited school.** The visited school is the school in which the student takes a course(s) or receives educational services. The student is not reported in ADM (i.e., membership) at the visited school. A district cannot serve as a visited school.
6. **Visiting student.** A visiting student is not in ADM at a base school but is taking a course(s) or receiving educational services at a visited school.
7. **Community residential centers, developmental day centers, or contracted service providers.** Districts and schools furnishing special education and related services to children with disabilities may contract with private special education facilities or service providers to furnish any of these services that the public providers are unable to furnish (pursuant to G.S. §115C-111.2).

8. **Clustered EC students** (term for accountability purposes). Clustered EC students are students with disabilities (with current IEPs) who may be grouped in a school other than their school attendance area. EC students must be administered all required state tests. The test results of these students may be electronically moved to an attendance area school determined by the district whereby test results will be included in the accountability results of that school.

**Cross-enrolled students within the same districts**—A cross-enrolled student's test results are included in the accountability results at the base school. There are several contexts in which students may be cross-enrolled (i.e., attending two different schools). For accountability purposes, the base school and visited school should adhere to the following procedures regarding cross-enrolled students:

- The base school should have a master schedule for the cross-enrolled student. The master schedule for the cross-enrolled student should
  - include all classes and courses taken at the base school and include each class and course taken at the visited school, and
  - use appropriate state course codes.
- The base school is responsible for ensuring the cross-enrolled student is administered all required state tests.

**Visiting students**—A visiting student's test results are included in the accountability results at the visited school. There are several contexts in which a student may be a visiting student (i.e., attending a school without a base school). For accountability purposes, the visited school should adhere to the following procedures for students who are visiting but do not have a base school:

- PowerSchool should record the student as visiting and not in ADM.
- The visited school should have a master schedule for the student. The master schedule for the student should
  - include all courses taken at the visited school, and
  - use appropriate state course codes.
- The visited school is responsible for ensuring the student is administered all required state tests.
- If the visited school administers a state test to the student, the student's test results (i.e., EOC and EOG) remain at the visited school and are included in the visited school's accountability results.
  - For paper administrations, the answer sheet, which contains the student's responses, must be scored under the visited school's header sheet, and included in its accountability results.

**Examples for Clarification**

The following are examples and guidelines regarding requirements to test cross-enrolled and visiting students:

1. **Foreign exchange students.** The district and school are responsible for ensuring all required state tests are administered to foreign exchange students. The student is enrolled in a visited school as a visitor and not counted in ADM. Test results remain at the visited school and are included in the visited school's accountability results.
2. **Private school or home-schooled students.** The district agrees to allow a private school or home-schooled student to take a class(es) or course(s) at the visited school. The district and school are responsible for ensuring all required state tests for the class or course the student is enrolled in are administered to the visiting student. Because there is no base school, test results remain at the visited school and are included in the visited school's accountability results.
3. **Nondomiciliary students attending a NC school pursuant to an agreement with a district or school.** In some instances, pursuant to an agreement with the district or school, students may be admitted to a North Carolina school in which they are not domiciliary. For example, a student's family may live in Virginia and one of the parents teaches in North Carolina. The student (pursuant to an agreement with the district or school) attends the school in which the parent teaches. The student is not reported in ADM but is eligible to take state tests in the class(es) or course(s) the student is taking through the school. The district and school are responsible for ensuring all required state tests are administered to the student. Test results are used for accountability results at the visited school. Note: The student is eligible for a North Carolina high school diploma.

   Nondomiciliary students meeting specific requirements. A student who is not domiciliary of a local school administrative unit may attend, without payment of tuition, the public schools of that school administrative unit if the student resides with an adult domiciliary of that unit as a result of the death, serious illness, or incarceration of a parent or legal guardian; the abandonment by a parent or legal guardian; the inability of the parent or legal guardian to provide adequate care and supervision because of a physical or mental condition; or the loss or uninhabitability of the student's home as a result of a natural disaster. The student must not be under a term of suspension or expulsion, and affidavits must be completed by the adult with whom the student resides and the student's parent, guardian, or legal custodian (G.S. §115C-366). If a student meets the requirements of G.S. §115C-366, the student is in ADM. Therefore, this is the student's base school. The district and school are responsible for

ensuring all required state tests are administered to the student. Test results are used for accountability results at the base school.

4. **Nondomiciliary students attending a NC school as a result of the parents' or legal guardians' active military deployment.** Pursuant to G.S. §115C-366 (1) (g), a student who is a nondomiciliary of North Carolina as a result of the parents' or legal guardians' active military deployment may attend, without payment of tuition, the public schools within a district or a specific school if the student meets the following requirements: (1) the student resides with an adult who is a domiciliary of that district or school, (2) the period of deployment is thirty days or longer, and (3) the school is provided evidence of the deployment along with the affidavits required under subdivision (3) of subsection (a3) of this Statute. If a student meets the requirements of G.S. §115C-366, the student is in ADM at a base school within the district or school. Therefore, the district or school is responsible for ensuring all required state tests are administered to the student. Test results are included in the accountability results at the base school.
5. **Special education services.** Districts and schools furnishing special education and related services to children with disabilities may contract with community residential centers, developmental day centers, or contracted service providers to furnish services that the public providers are unable to furnish (pursuant to G.S. §115C-111.2). Title VIII, General Provisions, Part A, Sec.8101(1)(D) of the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* states:

   "(D) CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES. If a local educational agency makes a tuition payment to a private school or to a public school of another local educational agency for a child with a disability, as defined in section 602 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Secretary shall, for the purpose of this Act, consider the child to be in attendance at a school of the agency making the payment." The child is not considered to be in attendance at a school of the agency receiving the payment. All agencies not associated with local school administrative units, the Department of Health and Human Services, or the Division of Juvenile Justice must meet standards that apply to state and local educational agencies and secure the rights the students would have if served by the state or local educational agency.

   a. Community residential centers. Pursuant to G.S. §115C-366 (a1), children living in and cared for and supported by an institution established, operated, or incorporated for the purpose of rearing and caring for children who do not live with their parents are considered legal residents of the district in which the institution is located. These children are eligible for admission to the public schools of the local school administrative unit as provided in this

section. For additional information that outlines in more detail the steps community residential centers are to follow, see section S, subsection Community Residential Centers—Testing Policy.

Example: A student residing in County A goes to live at a residential center in County B. As soon as the student becomes the ward of the residential center in County B, the student is no longer in membership in County A. County B must select a school within County B and enroll the student as a visitor. County B is responsible for the educational services of the student. All required state tests must be administered to the student. Test results are used for accountability results at the base school.

b. Developmental day centers. Special education and related services are provided to eligible children with disabilities who are placed in accredited developmental day centers by local school administrative units.

Example: If the district cannot provide services for a student, the district may place the student in a developmental day center. In this case, the student is enrolled at a base school in the district; the developmental day center becomes an extension of the school. The district is responsible for testing the student on all required state tests. The test results are included in the accountability results at the base school.

Example: If a district has made a free and appropriate public education available in the district and the parents of a child elect to place the child in a developmental day center for educational services, the district is not responsible for the cost of education, nor is the student required to be tested.

c. Contracted service providers. Local school administrative units may contract with service providers to furnish services that public providers are unable to furnish.

Example: A student in County A needs an educational service that is only available in County B. County A contracts with County B for the service. ADM for the student remains in County A. County A is responsible for ensuring all required state tests are administered to the student. Test results are used for accountability results at the base school in County A.

d. Parentally placed private or home school students. Parentally placed private or home school students who receive services through a service plan are not required to be tested.

Example: Districts and schools are required to ensure equitable participation to students with disabilities. In cases where a parentally placed student in a home school attends a public school through a service plan, such as speech therapy, the student may be enrolled as a visitor. The student is not eligible for participation in the Annual Testing Program unless the student also enrolls in a content area course. In this case, refer to letter *e* below.

e. Parent or legal guardian contracts with the public school unit for a course. If the parent or legal guardian contracts with the local school administrative unit for a course, then the student needs to be tested. The school administrative unit is responsible for ensuring all required state tests are administered to the visiting student. Because there is no base school, test results remain at the visited school and are included in the visited school's accountability results.

f. North Carolina publicly places a student in a private facility. In a situation in which North Carolina publicly places a student in a private facility during the school year, the district and base school are responsible for ensuring all required state tests are administered.
   - The district and base school are responsible for notifying the private facility of the required tests, policies, and procedures, and for arranging the test date and location. If the private facility will administer the state test(s), the district and base school must ensure all security policies and procedures are maintained.
   - For accountability purposes, the test results of such a student must be included in the accountability results at the base school.

6. **Summer program students taking EOC and EOG tests**. The summer program is an additional learning opportunity that occurs outside of the regular academic calendar. Tests taken at the end of a summer program must be completed before the end of the current accountability year and uploaded to the Division of Accountability Services by the defined end of accountability year date. Accountability results will be attributed to the base school for the student in the spring of the accountability year.
7. **Summer school students taking EOC tests.** Summer school takes place during the summer and provides students the opportunity to participate in a high school course in one of two ways:

a. Course for Credit. Students receiving instruction in courses that require the administration of the EOC test and having obtained a proficient score previously on the EOC test may use the proficient score as at least twenty percent of their final grade, or they may elect to take the appropriate EOC test at the completion of the course. Students who have not obtained a proficient score on the EOC test before 2021-22 must take the appropriate EOC test at the completion of the course.
b. Credit recovery. Students receiving instruction in credit recovery courses may be administered the appropriate EOC test no later than thirty days after completion of the course.
c. Summer school test scores. Summer school test scores are returned to the base school the student attended in the spring for inclusion in the accountability results for the new accountability year.

   Example: Student A attended school at School X in the spring of 2021–22. This student then attended summer school at School Y in July of 2022. The student's resulting EOC score will be attributed to School X in the 2022–23 school year.

8. **Clustered EC students.** Clustered EC students—a term used for accountability purposes—are students with disabilities (with current IEPs) who may be grouped in a school other than their school attendance area. Clustered EC students must be administered all required state tests. It is a district's decision as to where test results from EC students' scores will count for accountability purposes. If students are appropriately cross-enrolled in PowerSchool to a school within a district for instructional purposes, the students will have their scores sent to the base school as defined in PowerSchool. If a student is not scheduled in this manner, districts may complete the ACCHOME process to have the student's accountability measures attributed to the appropriate school.
9. **Hospital or homebound students.** Educational services for hospital or homebound students are typically provided at a home or hospital by school or district personnel. If a student is confined at home or in a hospital, is unable to attend the base school, and is receiving homebound instruction from the base school or district, the student is considered hospital or homebound. Once public school unit personnel have made contact (i.e., a face-to-face meeting) with the student to provide instruction, the student should be counted present for the span of time during which regularly scheduled hospital or homebound instructional services are delivered. (Supporting documentation should be maintained at the school.) The base school is responsible for ensuring that all required state tests are administered. Medical

exceptions can be submitted, if appropriate. For accountability purposes, the test results of a hospital or homebound student must be included in the accountability results at the base school.

10. **North Carolina virtual public school (NCVPS).** The NCVPS is not responsible for administering state tests. The base school is responsible for administering all required state tests. Test results shall be included in the accountability results at the base school.
11. **Learn and earn early college high schools.** Learn and earn early college high schools provide students with the opportunity to complete high school with a high school diploma and an associate degree or two years of transferable credit at no cost to the student. To participate in learn and earn, students must meet the course prerequisites set by the participating college or university. The base school is responsible for administering all required state tests. Test results shall be included in the accountability results at the base school. The graduation data is reported for the school where the student is included in ADM.
12. **Community college courses.** A public school student taking a community college course must be enrolled with the appropriate state course code designated for community college courses. Community college officials have the responsibility for verifying eligibility and acceptance of the articulated course or courses on a student's high school transcript. For credit to be awarded in any individual course, all criteria of the Commission on College, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) must be met. The base school is responsible for administering all required state tests. Test results shall be included in the accountability results at the base school.
13. **Teacher-in-treatment programs.** Teacher-in-treatment programs are located at centers across the state, but the centers are not affiliated with a district or school. Students who are participating in a teacher-in-treatment program should remain in membership in their base school. Days of participation at the center should be posted as absences. The base school is responsible for administering all required state tests. Test results shall be included in the accountability results at the base school.
14. **North Carolina Department of Public Safety Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ).** The DJJ facilities are responsible for administering all required state tests. Scores are not included in accountability results.
15. **Extended day program.** For students who attend an extended school day program and are in membership at a base school, the base school is responsible for administering all required state tests. Test results shall be included in the accountability results at the base school.
16. **Vocational and career centers.** Students can take special vocational courses as well as academic courses at vocational and career centers. The student must be enrolled in the course at the base school. The

base school is responsible for administering all required state tests. Test results shall be included in the accountability results at the base school.

17. **Schools housed in the same building.** There are several instances where two schools, each having different school codes, are housed in the same building (e.g., a S.T.E.M. school and a traditional school). For example, School A has school code XXX and School B has school code YYY. If a student is enrolled in School A and walks down the hall to take a class in School B, the student should be cross-enrolled at School B. School A assumes responsibility for the education of the student and must ensure the student is administered all required state tests. Test results shall be included in the accountability results at School A, which is the base school.

**Community Residential Centers—Testing Policy**

Per G.S. §115C-366 (a1), "Children living in and cared for and supported by an institution established, operated, or incorporated for the purpose of rearing and caring for children who do not live with their parents are considered legal residents of the local school administrative unit in which the institution is located. These children are eligible for admission to the public schools of the local school administrative unit as provided in this section." All required state tests must be administered to these students. Test results are used for accountability results at the base school.

The steps local school administrative units should follow for testing students at community residential centers are as follows:

1. Assign students at community residential centers to a base school.
    a. Assign the students at grades 3–12 who are served by a community residential center to a base school that includes their grade configuration. Grades 3–12 cannot use school code 292 or any other school code under 300. Students must be assigned to an actual school in the district. The district can determine which base school the scores will go to.
    b. Only students at grades PP, PK, K, 1, 2, and 12 or 13 (for students with disabilities who have completed the twelfth grade but have not graduated from high school and continue to receive a free appropriate public education until the end of the school year in which they reach the age of twenty-two) can use school code 292 as their base school number.
2. The district is responsible for ensuring all required state tests are administered to the students. Test results are included in the accountability results at the assigned base school.

3. The district test coordinator is responsible for ensuring all testing policies and procedures are implemented at the community residential centers and material security is maintained at all times.
4. Districts have two options available for assigning test administrators at community residential centers:
   a. Designated staff who are employed by the district and have received training in the appropriate test administration(s) can administer the required tests to the students residing at the community residential centers.
   b. Community residential staff members who provide instruction to the student(s) residing in the center may attend test administrator training provided by the district accountability staff and administer the required test(s) to their students. The following procedures apply for this option:
      i. Community residential staff must attend face-to-face test administration training (including training on the guidelines for the use of accommodations) conducted by the district before the administration of any state-required test(s).
      ii. A test security agreement by and between the district and community residential center and its employee(s) must be signed at the time of training and kept on file at the district. The agreement is to ensure compliance with all state policies and procedures pertaining to the administration of secure state tests, test administrator training, irregularities reporting, materials handling, and test security. (The district assumes responsibility for test security.)
      iii. For online tests and NCEXTEND1, the district will need to work with each community residential center test administrator to create an NC Education account. District test coordinators must ensure that these accounts have proper roles and permissions. On days before testing, the district test coordinators must go under the district tab on the enrollment screen and add students to the appropriate course. District test coordinators must ensure all pre- and post-test activities are completed for online tests as described in the appropriate online test administration guides (e.g., scheduling test windows, ensuring proper entry of student interface questions (SIQ), and meeting all technology requirements).
      iv. For paper administrations, all students' answer sheets must be placed under a header sheet by grade and by test with the "teacher name" area used to identify the actual community residential teacher's name. The "school name" area must be completed on the header sheet so that the district code is the three-digit number of the local school administrative unit in

which the community residential center is located, and the school three-digit code is that of the students' assigned base school.

v. In some instances in which the district has a current, signed security agreement between the community residential center and the district ensuring the security of all student data, the community residential center employees who are trained as test administrators may be provided access to the Every Child Accountability and Tracking System (ECATS). The district assumes responsibility for test security. For community residential center employees who are trained as test administrators but have not been given access to ECATS, the district test coordinators must plan to provide community center teachers with the necessary student accommodation information for testing purposes.

## NC School Report Cards

The North Carolina School Report Cards provide information about K–12 public schools for local school systems and for the state.

Each report card includes a school or district profile and information about student performance, safe schools, access to technology, and teacher quality. By reviewing report card data, parents and others can learn more about school progress and resources.

## Reports of Student Performance

Reports of Student Performance for the EOG and EOC tests are published annually in one publication, the Green Book.

Disaggregated state, district, and school performance data are available at https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/testing-and-school-accountability/school-accountability-and-reporting/accountability-data-sets-and-reports#reports-of-supplemental-disaggregated-state,-school-system-and-school-performance-data.

Accountability model information and results are available at https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/testing-and-school-accountability/school-accountability-and-reporting/accountability-data-sets-and-reports.

The North Carolina SAT report and Advanced Placement (AP) results are available at https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/testing-and-school-accountability/school-accountability-and-reporting/north-carolina-sat-and-ap-reports.

Results from the ACT and ACT WorkKeys administrations are available at https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/testing-and-school-accountability/school-accountability-and-reporting/act-reports.

The annual academic achievement of American Indian students is available at https://www.dpi.nc.gov/students-families/student-support/american-indian-education.

### Test Administration Guides

For Testing News Network (TNN) users only, test administration guides are available online and in print for each state-mandated test. These separate publications provide information and directions for administering tests and preparing documents for return to the test coordinator. Administration guides are not considered secure test materials.

# T. Contact Information

**Regional Accountability Coordinators (RACs) and Regional Computing Consultants (RCCs) Directory**

Contact Information

**NCDPI Accountability Services Directory**

Mailing Address, Physical Address, General Phone Numbers
Director's Office Staff Directory
Analysis and Reporting Staff Directory
Technology Services
Test Development Staff Directory
Testing Policy and Operations Staff Directory

## *The North Carolina Education Directory*

The *North Carolina Education Directory* is made available by the Department of Public Instruction's Communication and Information Services division as a service to educators and others interested in public education.

The directory provides information on the SBE; the NCDPI; educational associations and commissions; and local school districts, charter schools, special and federal schools, and postsecondary schools.

## Educational Directory and Demographical Exchange (EDDIE)

The Educational Directory and Demographical Information Exchange is an online application containing school district and school information such as district numbers, school numbers, select administrative contacts, addresses, grade levels, calendar types, and more. EDDIE does not contain individual teacher or student information. EDDIE is the authoritative source for NC public school numbers and demographic information, and it is used by multiple systems including Accountability, PowerSchool, and NC School Report Cards. EDDIE is also used to meet federal reporting requirements.

Districts and schools are responsible for ensuring data are complete, accurate, and current in EDDIE.

# Appendixes

# Appendix A: Adherence to the 10/20 Day Rule Memo

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | Catherine Truitt, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*
WWW.DPI.NC.GOV

August 23, 2021

**TO** LEA Superintendents
Charter School Directors

**FROM** Catherine Edmonds
Deputy Superintendent, Office of Educational Equity

Tammy L. Howard
Director, Division of Accountability Services

**ADHERENCE TO THE 10/20 DAY RULE**

Per 16 N.C. Admin Code 06D. 0309, "Public school students may drop a course with a required EOC assessment within the first 10 days of enrollment in a semester block schedule or within the first 20 days of enrollment in a yearlong traditional schedule. Students who are enrolled for credit after the 10/20 days, regardless of course delivery (e.g., traditional classroom, NC Virtual Public School, vendor-based online) shall not drop a course with a required EOC assessment and shall participate in the appropriate EOC assessment at the completion of the course."

Exceptions to the 10/20 day rule are allowed in individual cases where circumstances are in the best interest of the student to be removed from a course requiring an EOC assessment. These cases should be evaluated individually, and consideration should be given to make certain the accountability of the school is not being compromised. Some examples of acceptable individual student withdrawals after the 10/20 days of enrollment include the following:

1. **Transfer student inappropriately placed in an EOC course.** If a student transfers into a school and his or her records do not arrive until after the 10/20 days respectively to inform a proper placement decision, the school has the latitude to withdraw the student if the student was inappropriately placed in an EOC course.
2. **Student is withdrawn from a course to enroll in a higher-level course.** Occasionally, a student may be better served to withdraw from an EOC course and enroll in a higher-level course. In such cases, the student takes the appropriate test for the higher-level course; the school remains accountable through the higher-level course. Students must not be withdrawn from an EOC course and enrolled in a higher-level course within the last six weeks of the course.
3. **There is a valid medical reason for removing a student from an EOC course.** In rare cases, an individual student may be deemed medically fragile because of a significant medical emergency or condition, such as an accident, that incapacitates the student for an extended period of time. In such instances, it may be in the student's best interest to be withdrawn from a course.

For all situations, the principal of the school should review each case individually and decide in consultation with the public school unit test coordinator, teacher, and parent or guardian whether withdrawal from the course is necessary. If it is determined the student should be withdrawn from the course (after the 10/20 days), the school must request approval from the Director of Accountability Services using the *Process for Notification of Withdrawals after the 10/20 Days*. Schools should work with the Regional Accountability Coordinator (RAC) if there are questions about student eligibility or a specific situation not listed.

**DIVISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY SERVICES**
6307 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-6307 | (984) 236-2710
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

LEA Superintendents/Charter School Directors
August 23, 2021
Page 2

**Process for Notification of Withdrawals after 10/20 Days**
10/20 Day Withdrawal Requests are submitted through NC Education's NCTest Admin. Public school unit test coordinators select "10/20 Day Withdrawal Request" from the right main menu and dropdown link. Complete the "Submit Request" tab. Please ensure supporting documentation (outlined below) is attached to the request before selecting the "submit" button at the bottom of the request form.

**Supporting Documentation**
For all withdrawal requests, enrollment documentation is required (PowerSchool enrollment report and historical transcript). Some requests may need additional documentation for review (e.g., evidence of prior credit for a course [transcript, student score report], medical documentation, letter or notes from the homebound teacher, etc.).

Once a decision has been made, a response email will be generated through the online system for each request. This email will be addressed to the public school unit test coordinator and copied to the RAC.

- If the request is approved, the school must notify the parent or guardian and the student in writing of any change to EOC testing requirements.
- Immediately following this notification, the school must remove the student from the course and change the student's schedule to reflect the new course code in PowerSchool. The school must ensure the student no longer attends the previously scheduled class and attends the new class.
- All documents pertaining to course withdrawals after the 10/20 days must be kept on file by the public school unit.
- If a request is denied, the student will remain in the original course code and will be included in school accountability.

**10/20 Day Student Unapproved Removal from a Course with an EOC**
Effective with the 2021–22 school year, students who are removed from a course with a corresponding EOC requirement after the 10th day of the semester, or the 20th day of a year-long course, without the Division of Accountability Services approval will count against participation rates as not tested. Requests for approval are submitted through the 10/20 Day Withdrawal Request process in NC Education. Adding students to participation rates as a violation of the 10/20 day rule was intended to be implemented in the 2019–20 school year but was delayed until the 2021–22 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please share this information locally. If you have any questions regarding this memo, contact your RAC.

CE:TLH:whw

c: Catherine Truitt, State Superintendent
Derrick Jordan, Assistant State Superintendent for Agency Schools
Mary Hemphill-Joseph, Director, Academic Standards
Trey Michael, Director, Career and Technical Education
Sherry Thomas, Director, Exceptional Children
Dave Machado, Director, Office of Charter Schools
Eliz Colbert, Executive Director, North Carolina Virtual Public School
Shannon Jordan, Section Chief, Testing Policy and Operations
Curtis Sonneman, Section Chief, Analysis and Reporting
Regional Accountability Coordinators
Public School Unit Test Coordinators

# Appendix B: Methods for Clearing Calculators Method for Clearing Memory: Memory Management to Reset Calculator Models: All TI-83 Plus and All TI-84 Plus Models (See note for TI–73, TI–80, TI–82, TI–83, TI–85, and TI–86 models)

*Overview*: All students must have access to calculators that meet the minimum requirements during the administration of North Carolina tests, when applicable. Before beginning and immediately following a test administration that requires calculator use, the test administrator or principal's designee must clear the calculator memory and all applications (including preloaded) of all calculators to be used during the administration of the test. The memory management function on Texas Instruments graphing calculators will permanently delete all data, programs, and lists from RAM. Archive memories, including Apps, are cleared from TI-83 Plus and TI-84 Plus models.

**Before Testing**:

1. Select the memory management function by pressing the 2nd key and then the MEM key (the + key).
2. Choose RESET from the menu options.
3. Using the right arrow/cursor key, press the key twice to highlight ALL.
4. Press the ENTER key.
5. The calculator will confirm the intention to delete all data and programs from RAM and/or archive memory. Choose 2: Reset and then press ENTER. (This may take a few seconds to process.)
6. The calculator will verify that the appropriate files and memory have been cleared.

**After Each Test Administration:**

Repeat the process outlined in steps 1–6, or below for older models.

**Note**: Calculator Reset varies on older model calculators from Texas Instruments.

**TI-73, TI-80, TI-82, TI-83, TI-85, and TI-86**

Press 2nd and then MEM. Select Reset. Select All, or Reset (if All is not an option). Select options to confirm, if prompted.

Location of the MEM and Reset functions vary.

**TI-81**

Press 2nd and then Reset. Select Reset.

# Appendix C: Method for Clearing Applications & Memory TI TestGuard ™ App: Calculator Models: TI-83 Plus Family and TI–84 Plus Family (page 1)

*Overview*: All students must have access to calculators that meet the minimum requirements during the administration of North Carolina tests, when applicable. Before beginning and immediately following a test administration that requires calculator use, the test administrator or principal's designee must clear the calculator memory and all applications (including preloaded) of all calculators to be used during the administration of the test. TI TestGuard™ is an application that can be implemented with TI-83 Plus and TI-84 Plus graphing calculators as a means of "clearing the memory and applications" of student calculators. TI TestGuard permanently deletes selected applications from TI-83 Plus and TI-84 Plus student calculators and can be obtained directly from Texas Instruments. It is a software program *designated for educators only* and should be run from the teacher's graphing calculator only.

Note: Steps 1–4 are preliminary functions done on a teacher's calculator that has been preloaded with the TestGuard App.

1. Start with the calculator cleared screen. Press the "APPS" key.

**APPLICATIONS**
1:Finance…
2:ALG1CH5
3:ALG1PRT1
4:AreaForm
5:CabriJr

2. Select the App with "TestGrd" in the title.

**APPLICATIONS**
:TestGrd
:Transfrm

3. Choose 1:Setup Calcs from the TestGuard home screen.

**TESTGUARD HOME**
1:Setup Calcs
2:Start Transfer
3:Setup Summary

4. Confirm that "DELETE" and "ALL" are selected and then press OK (the soft key associated with the "ZOOM" key).

**SETUP CALCS**
DELETE DISABLE
ALL RAM/ARC APPS
ANGLE: RADIAN DEGREE

Note: The teacher is now ready to use TI TestGuard with a student's calculator. Make sure that the student's calculator is on the home screen.

5. Connect the teacher's graphing calculator to the first student's calculator using a unit-to-unit link cable. (TestGuard is not compatible with the USB cable.)

6. Complete on the teacher's calculator: Select 2: Start Transfer from the TESTGUARD screen and press ENTER.

**TESTGUARD HOME**
1:Setup Calcs
2:Setup Transfer
3:Setup Summary

Note: When the deletion process is complete on the first student's calculator, a TestGuard confirmation screen will be displayed on the teacher's calculator.

**TESTGUARD**
TRANSFERRING…COMPLETE
CONFIRMATION CODE: RBBW
1:Again
2:Quit

Note: The note on the student's calculator displays for a brief time.

TRANSFER COMPLETE
CONFIRMATION CODE
RBBW

# Method for Clearing Applications & Memory TI TestGuard ™ App: Calculator Models: TI-83 Plus Family and TI–84 Plus Family (page 2)

7. Disconnect the link cable from the first student's calculator and connect to the next student's calculator. Then select 1:Again.

**TESTGUARD**
TRANSFERRING…COMPLETE

CONFIRMATION CODE: RBBW
1:Again
2:Quit

↓

Note: Repeat Steps 5–7 with all student calculators to be used in the test administration.

↓

Note: By pressing the APPS key on a student's calculator, it can be confirmed again that this process has been successfully completed.

**APPLICATIONS**

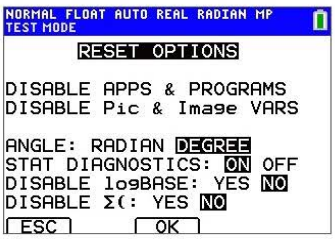
1:Finance

# Appendix D: Method for Clearing Applications & Memory: Press-to-Test: Calculator Models: All TI-84 Plus Models

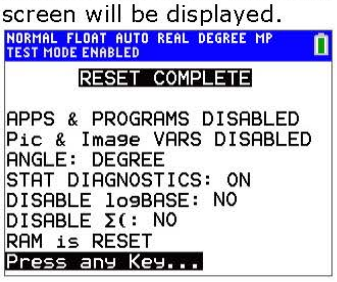
Overview: All students must have access to calculators that meet the minimum requirements during the administration of North Carolina tests, when applicable. Before beginning and immediately following a test administration that requires calculator use, the test administrator or principal's designee must clear the calculator memory and all applications (including preloaded) of all calculators to be used during the administration of the test. All TI-84 Plus models have a special key sequence that students and teachers can initiate to prepare a calculator for use in a testing environment where applications, programs, and other calculator files are not permitted. This feature is called **"Press-to-Test."** This feature **temporarily disables** all applications, programs and calculator files. "Press-to-Test" **does not permanently delete** these files from the calculator, thereby facilitating restoration of these files after test administration. Note: **TI-84 Plus** and **TI-84 Plus Silver Edition** graphing calculators must be upgraded to **Operating System 2.53 or higher** to use Press-to-Test.

**Before Testing:**

1. Turn the calculator off. Press and hold down both the LEFT and RIGHT arrow/cursor keys while pressing the ON key. (All three keys must be depressed simultaneously.) The Reset Options screen will be displayed. Select NO for DISABLED logBASE and DISABLE Σ(.




2. Press OK (the soft key for this command is the ZOOM key) and the Reset Complete screen will be displayed.




3. Press the ENTER key to return to the home screen of the calculator.

4. Press the APPS key to confirm again that this process has been successfully completed.

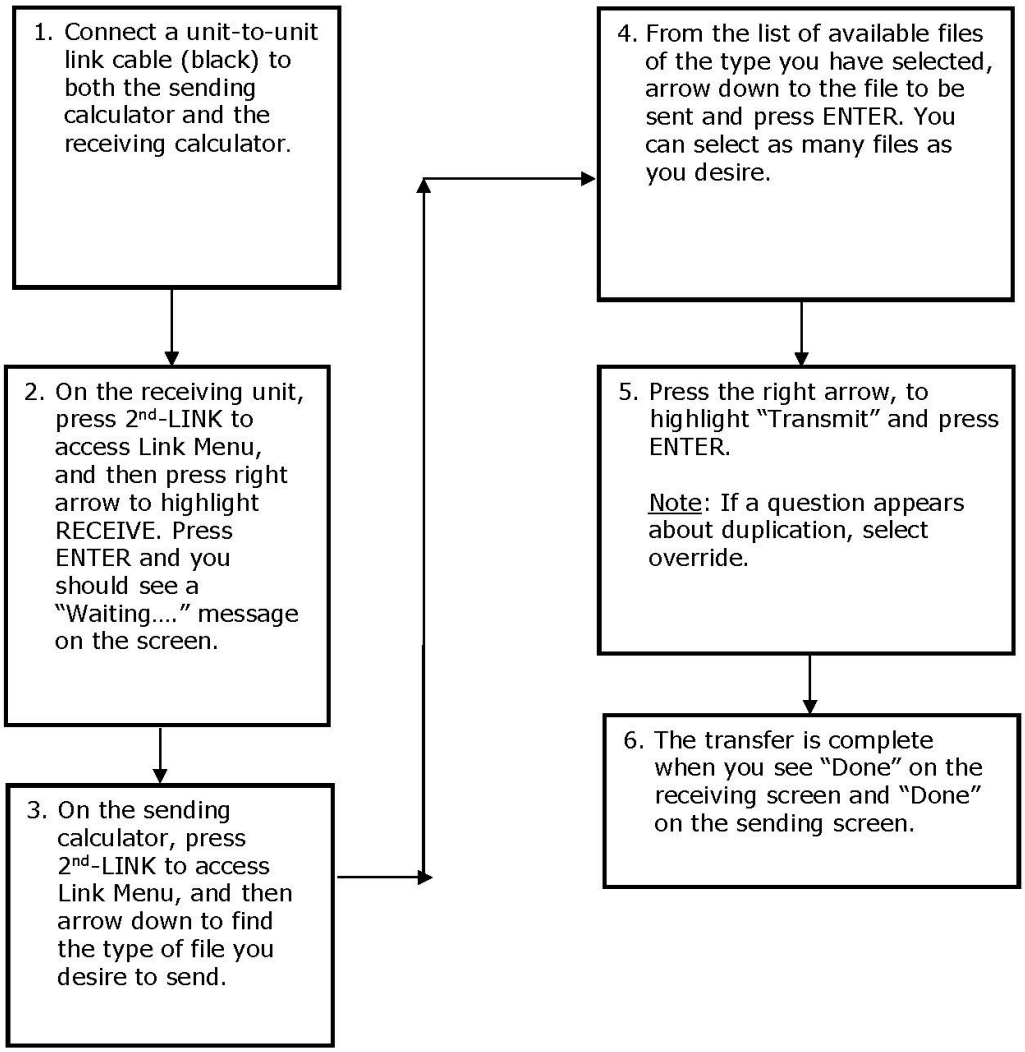
**After Each Test Administration:**

Note: Repeat Steps 1–4 after every test administration.

# Appendix E: How to Restore Files That Were on Calculators before the Reset

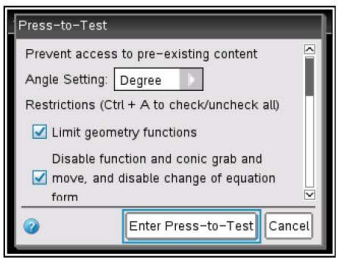
### To Be Completed at the Conclusion of Testing:

Note: To restore files that were on the calculator before the reset, transfer files from one calculator to another via the "Unit-to-Unit Transfer" function, if applicable. For instructions to reset a specific model calculator, please contact 1-800-TI-CARES (800-842-2737). On TI-84 Plus models, following these steps to send any file type will also exit Press-to-Test mode, restoring Apps and programs that were previously disabled.

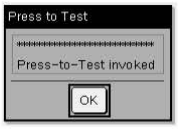
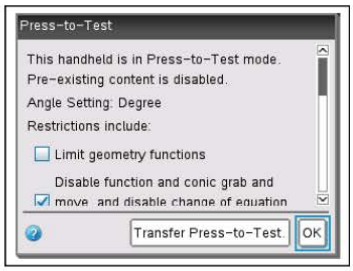
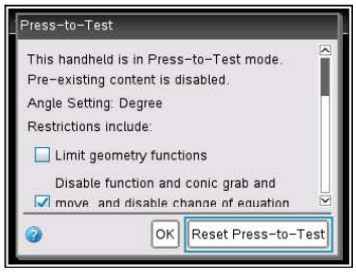
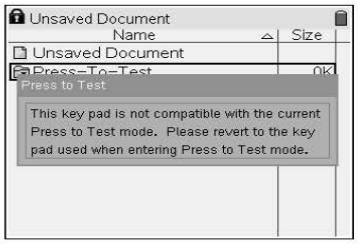
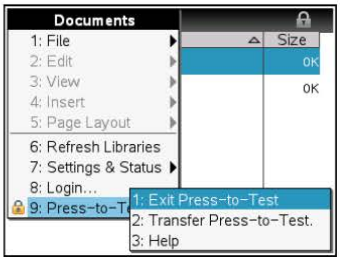


# Appendix F: TI-Nspire and TI-Nspire CX Press-to-Test Mode Keystrokes (page 1)

*Overview*: All students must have access to calculators that meet the minimum requirements during the administration of North Carolina tests, when applicable. Before beginning and immediately following a test administration that requires calculator use, the test administrator or principal's designee must clear the calculator memory and applications (including preloaded) of all calculators to be used during the administration of the test. This version of the operating system has Press-to-Test. This feature **temporarily disables** all calculator files. **Press-to-Test does not permanently delete** these files from the calculator, facilitating a quick and easy restoration of these files to the affected calculator.

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Turn the calculator OFF with the [ctrl] and then [on] keys. | |
| 2. With the calculator turned OFF, press and hold down [esc] and [home icon] keys at the same time. Older models additionally require pressing the [on] key at the same time. Release the keys after you see the dialog box (pictured below in Step 3). | |
| 3. Make your selections for the default angle setting and select functions to enable (uncheck) versus keep disabled (checked). Use the [tab] key to move to the different options in the dialog box and click to uncheck. The following functions must remain disabled (checked)<br>• "**Limiting geometry functions**" and<br>• "**Disable function and conic grab and move, and disable change of equation form**".<br>You may enable (uncheck) the "**Disable $log_b x$ template and summation functions**". When complete, highlight [Enter Press-to-Test] or [OK] (on older models) and press [enter]. The TI-Nspire will reboot with a status bar. |  |
| 4. Notice the flashing LED at the top of the device. It will flash green if all functions remain checked. It will flash amber/yellow if you unchecked "**Disable $log_b x$ template and summation functions**". During the rebooting process, there is also a red light combined with the green or amber light. Once reboot is complete, the red light goes away and the green/yellow light continues to flash. | |

# TI-Nspire and TI-Nspire CX Press-to-Test Mode Keystrokes (page 2)

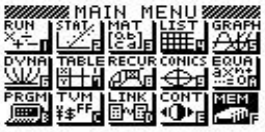
| | |
|---|---|
| 5. After the reboot, you will see a dialogue box that confirms you have entered Press-to-Test. Click [OK] to proceed.<br><br>(Dialogue box on older models)   |   |
| 6. During or after the exam, you can tell if a calculator is still in Press-to-Test mode by the flashing LED and also by turning the calculator OFF and back ON. You will again see a confirmation screen.<br><br>Restoring the calculator from Press-to-Test mode will delete the documents created during testing mode and restore all previous working documents.<br><br>Reinvoking Press-to-Test (step 1) when it is still in test mode will show a dialog box telling you that you are in Press-to-Test mode, and you can clear out the Press-to-Test documents if you want to start over with a reset calculator (image shown). |   |
| 7. SECURITY:<br>• The flashing LED is hardware-secure and cannot be affected by coded software.<br>• The students cannot get out of this mode by removing the batteries or by resetting the device.<br>• On models with replaceable keypads, students cannot change the keypad while in the Press-to-Test mode. If they attempt to, they will get a dialog box to change the keypad back to the one in which Press-to-Test was invoked. |   |
| Exiting Press-to-Test mode:<br>• Connect two TI-Nspire or TI-Nspire CX using a unit-to-unit USB cable.<br>• Press the [home icon] key and select My Documents.<br>• Press the [doc] key. Or, on older models, press the [ctrl] and then the [Tools icon].<br>• Select the Press-to-Test options to Exit Press-to-Test.<br>• Contact TI to learn about other methods to exit Press-to-Test. |   |

# Appendix G: Resetting Casio Calculators

*Overview*: All students must have access to calculators that meet the minimum requirements during the administration of North Carolina tests, when applicable. Before beginning and immediately following a test administration that requires calculator use, the test administrator or principal's designee must clear the calculator memory and all applications (including preloaded) of all calculators to be used during the administration of the test.

## Resetting the Calculator

1. Highlight the MEM icon on the main menu and press EXE.




2. Using the down arrow of the replay key, move the highlighting to "Reset."

```
Memory
Memory Usage
Reset


To Select:[↑][↓]
To Set   :[EXE]
```

3. Press F1 (Yes) to reset the calculator or F6 (No) to abort the operation.

```
********************
*       RESET      *
********************
RESET ALL MEMORIES?
[F1]            [F6]
YES  RESET ALL  NO
```

4. Once the window resets, a "Memory Cleared!" message is displayed. Press the Menu Key to return to Main Menu.

```
********************
MEMORY CLEARED!

********************
  Press [Menu] Key
```

## Quick Reset

You can reset the calculator by using an object like the thin, pointed end of a paper clip. Simply locate the small P-button on the back of the calculator and press the button with the end of the paper clip. This will put the screen in Step 3. "Reset All Memories" mode; then press F1 (Yes) to Reset or F6 (No) to abort the operation. Once reset, press Menu to return to the Main Menu screen.

# Appendix H: Sample Parent or Guardian Letter—Opting Out of Required Testing

(Current Date)

Mr./Mrs. (Parent or Guardian)
(Street Address)
(City, State, ZIP)

Dear Mr./Mrs. (Parent or Guardian) _____,

Thank you for taking the opportunity to express your concerns regarding the testing mandates of the Annual Testing Program. Having read your request for a waiver, _____County Schools is truly sympathetic to your concerns.

The Annual Testing Program has been operational since the 1970s, and to date the State Board of Education (SBE) has not allowed any student to opt out of required state testing. The only exceptions granted have been for limited numbers of students who met certain eligibility requirements or who had extenuating circumstances primarily related to a significant medical emergency or condition and were unable to participate in a specific test administration.

Because of state and federal laws, all students in North Carolina (including students with disabilities) are required to participate in the testing program. Not only are public schools required to test, but also nonpublic schools have testing requirements. Testing is required of nonpublic school enrollees in grades 3, 6, 9, and 11. Nonpublic school law does not exempt special needs (or any other) students from this requirement. Concerning the nonpublic school standardized testing requirement, G.S. §115C-549, 550, 557, and 558 state that the test is to be administered in those grade levels each year "to all students enrolled or regularly attending." Also, homeschooled students are required to be assessed annually on a nationally normed standardized test.

State policy requires schools to use end-of-course (EOC) tests as "at least twenty percent (20%) of the student's final grade." As such, a student's grade for a subject or for a course and overall grade-point-average calculation may be negatively impacted by not taking the state tests. How end-of-grade (EOG) scores are used in grades 3–8 is a local decision.

Please know that _____ County Schools is trying to be responsive to parents' concerns, yet we must adhere to state and federal guidelines that address the educational needs of all children.

Sincerely,

# Appendix I: Confidentiality and Test Security Agreements

Test coordinators will find the following documents on the subsequent pages:

- District Test Coordinator Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement
- Principal or Director Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement
- School Test Coordinator's Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement
- Test Administrator Test Accountability and Security Form

*This form must be completed annually by the District Test Coordinator and kept on file with the Regional Accountability Coordinator. If a new person is employed in this position, then the new person must complete this form as soon as possible.*

## District Test Coordinator Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement

In performing my assigned duties and responsibilities as the District Test Coordinator, I understand that:

1. Maintaining test security and student confidentiality is critical to the mission of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI).
2. My compliance with federal and state laws is crucial to maintaining the public's trust in North Carolina public schools.
   .
3. My assigned duties and responsibilities may involve the use of the NCDPI's data, local data, or other information that is confidential.
4. Federal and state laws prohibit me from including or disclosing Personally Identifiable Information (PII) in any form of communication with any unauthorized individual or entity, except as required in the performance of my assigned duties. Such communication includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messaging, or social media account posts (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snap Chat).
5. I acknowledge that all North Carolina test materials are the property of the NCDPI and that these test materials must remain secure at all times.
6. In order to ensure test security, I will not discuss or share information relating to the contents of any test, testing process, or test scoring. This restriction applies to discussion with mass media, including, but not limited to, print, radio and television media, and social media.
7. I will not publish any secure testing or scoring material or share this material outside of the secure work site.
8. I am obligated to read the *Testing Code of Ethics* in its entirety annually and always understand and act in accordance with test coordinator obligations described therein.

My signature below indicates my agreement to abide by and fulfill the obligations and duties described above. I understand that violation of this agreement constitutes personal misconduct and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including, dismissal, without prior warning. Further, I understand that violation of this agreement could lead to additional legal liability to me.

Print Name Here:_____

Signature:_____

Date:_____

*This form must be completed annually by the principal or director and kept on file with the Regional Accountability Coordinator. If a new person is employed in this position, then the new person must complete this form as soon as possible.*

## Principal or Director Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement

In performing my assigned duties and responsibilities as the principal or director, I understand that:

1. Maintaining test security and student confidentiality is critical to the mission of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI).
2. My compliance with federal and state laws is crucial to maintaining the public's trust in North Carolina public schools.
3. My assigned duties and responsibilities may involve the use of the NCDPI's data, local data, or other information that is confidential.
4. Federal and state laws prohibit me from including or disclosing Personally Identifiable Information (PII) in any form of communication with any unauthorized individual or entity, except as required in the performance of my assigned duties. Such communication includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messaging, or social media account posts (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snap Chat).
5. I have read and will follow school policies and procedures to ensure all eligible students are tested fairly.
6. I am responsible for ensuring all necessary school personnel are identified and trained prior to any test administration.
7. I acknowledge that all North Carolina test materials are the property of the NCDPI and that these test materials must remain secure at all times.
8. I am responsible for ensuring a procedure is in place at my school to assure that all test materials are accounted for and secure while they are in the school's possession.
9. In order to ensure test security, I will not discuss or share information relating to the contents of any test, testing process, or test scoring. This restriction applies to discussion with mass media, including, but not limited to, print, radio and television media, and social media.
10. I will not publish any secure testing or scoring material or share this material outside of the secure work site.
11. I am obligated to read the *Testing Code of Ethics* in its entirety annually and always understand and act in accordance with test coordinator obligations described therein.

My signature below indicates my agreement to abide by and fulfill the obligations and duties described above. I understand that violation of this agreement constitutes personal misconduct and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including, dismissal, without prior warning. Further, I understand that violation of this agreement could lead to additional legal liability to me.

Print Name Here:_____

Signature:_____

Date:_____

*This form must be completed annually by the School Test Coordinator* and kept on file with the Regional Accountability Coordinator. If a new person is employed in this position, then the new person must complete this form as soon as possible.*

## School Test Coordinator's* Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement

In performing my assigned duties and responsibilities as the School Test Coordinator, I understand that:

1. Maintaining test security and student confidentiality is critical to the mission of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI).
2. My compliance with federal and state laws is crucial to maintaining the public's trust in North Carolina public schools.
3. My assigned duties and responsibilities may involve the use of the NCDPI's data, local data, or other information that is confidential.
4. Federal and state laws prohibit me from including or disclosing Personally Identifiable Information (PII) in any form of communication with any unauthorized individual or entity, except as required in the performance of my assigned duties. Such communication includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messaging, or social media account posts (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snap Chat).
5. I have read and will follow school policies and procedures to ensure all eligible students are tested fairly.
6. I am responsible for ensuring all necessary school personnel are identified and trained prior to any test administration.
7. I acknowledge that all North Carolina test materials are the property of the NCDPI and that these test materials must remain secure at all times.
8. I am responsible for ensuring a procedure is in place at my school to assure that all test materials are accounted for and secure while they are in the school's possession.
9. In order to ensure test security, I will not discuss or share information relating to the contents of any test, testing process, or test scoring. This restriction applies to discussion with mass media, including, but not limited to, print, radio and television media, and social media.
10. I will not publish any secure testing or scoring material or share this material outside of the secure work site.
11. I am obligated to read the *Testing Code of Ethics* in its entirety annually and always understand and act in accordance with test coordinator obligations described therein.

My signature below indicates my agreement to abide by and fulfill the obligations and duties described above. I understand that violation of this agreement constitutes personal misconduct and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including, dismissal, without prior warning. Further, I understand that violation of this agreement could lead to additional legal liability to me.

Print Name Here:_____
Signature:_____
Date:_____

*To include: Charter, Lab, Regional, Residential, and the Innovative School District Test Coordinators

*This form must be completed and signed by the test administrator at each test administrator training session and kept on file at the school.*

## Test Administrator Test Accountability and Security Form

School Name:_____ Test Name:_____

In performing my assigned duties and responsibilities as the test administrator,
I understand that:

1. I must administer the test listed above according to all state and local regulations and policies as printed in the test administration guide, the *Testing Code of Ethics*, and other information provided in the training session(s) conducted by the school test coordinator.
2. My compliance with federal and state laws is crucial to maintaining the public's trust in North Carolina public schools.
3. I must review, study and understand the test administration guide and the *Testing Code of Ethics* that was given to me by the school test coordinator.
4. I must count and record the number of secure test materials, including supplemental materials, before and after the test administration and notify the school test coordinator of any discrepancies in the count.
5. I must maintain test security at all times while test materials are in my possession.
6. I will not copy, post, or reproduce test items in any manner or in any medium for any reason.
7. I will not modify, change, alter, or tamper with student responses during or after the test administration.
8. I will conduct an unbiased administration of the test according to the policies, procedures, and directions (as written) in the test administration guide.
9. I must remain in the room throughout the entire test administration.
10. I will report any testing irregularities to the school test coordinator on the day of the occurrence.

My signature below indicates my agreement to abide by and fulfill the obligations and duties described above. I understand that violation of this agreement is constitutes personal misconduct and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including, dismissal, without prior warning. Further, I understand that violation of this agreement could lead to additional legal liability to me.

Print Name Here:_____

Signature:_____

Date:_____

# Appendix J: Sample 2021–22 Public School Unit (PSU) Testing Plan

**PSU Name:** _____ **PSU Code:** _____

**PSU Test Coordinator:** _____

Test Coordinators shall ensure a written Annual Testing Plan for the school is developed and disseminated before the beginning of the school year. Plans should also be available in an electronic format and include "Sample" documents that will be used for testing throughout the year. The Annual Testing Plan clarifies local procedures; testing staff are still required to read and follow all NCDPI testing publications related to state assessments. The Superintendent/School Director ensures that the PSU accountability contact and school test coordinators are accurately coded in EDDIE throughout the school year.

**Test Administrators and Proctors**

- Proctors (will/will not) be utilized as follows: **Include a description of local proctor requirements, including the bullets below, if applicable.**
    - (1) a one-on-one, full-time proctor or (2) a roving proctor.
    - The school will use the following procedures for roving proctors, who assist up to three test administrators in three testing rooms:
        - Roving proctors will not be responsible for more than three, centrally located classrooms.
        - Roving proctors will spend _____ minutes in each room before rotating to the next room to proctor.
        - The door to test rooms using roving proctors <u>must stay open</u> throughout the testing session.
        - Test settings served by a roving proctor cannot have more than 30 students testing in the group.

**Training**

- All school staff who handle secure test materials must sign a Test Security Agreement that must be kept on file at the PSU.
- The School Test Coordinator (STC) will provide annual accommodations and security training to all instructional staff on (date before September 30).
- Training materials and sign-in sheets will be kept **<u>(location).</u>**
- The STC trains all proctors at least one week before the first day of testing. Proctors sign a checkout sheet and a *Testing Code of Ethics* sign-off sheet.
- The STC trains all potential test administrators at least one week before the first day of testing. Administrators will sign a sign-in sheet and a Test Security Agreement. The school principal/director is encouraged to attend test training.
- At least one week before testing, the STC trains all test administrators on the use of any specific accommodation offered in their assigned test setting.

The following chart provides the name of each required test security document, the person(s) required to sign each document, and when each document must be signed.

| **Test Security Documents** | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Person Responsible** | **District Test Coordinator Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement** | **Principal or Director Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement** | **School Test Coordinator's Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement** | **Public School Unit Annual Testing Plan** | ***Testing Code of Ethics*** | **Test Administrator Test Accountability and Security Form** |
| District TC | Annually | | | | | |
| School TC | | | Annually | Annually | Annually | |
| Charter, Lab Regional, Residential, or ISD School TC | | | Annually* | Annually* | Annually* | |
| Principal or Director | | Annually | | | Annually | |
| Test Administrator | | | | | | Before the administration of each state-mandated test |
| Proctors (if utilized) | | | | | Before the administration of each state-mandated test | |

*Charter school test coordinators must submit all documents to their RAC.

**Test Materials Security**

- The PSU TC stores materials in a locked, secure, limited-access facility until needed for testing. **Include a brief description of where secure materials will be stored. Include a list of all personnel granted access to this location.**
- **Describe the procedures and timeline for returning test materials to the PSU TC.** Once test materials are designated by the state for destruction, districts must securely destroy them by using one of the following methods: shredding, secure recycling, observed landfill burial (i.e., by two or more designated school personnel), or incineration. Charter, lab, ISD, and regional schools return materials to TOPS.
- This PSU will use the **(name of method)** method for destroying test materials.

**Testing Environment**

- Food and drink **(is/is not)** permitted in test sites.

**Accommodations Documentation**

Accommodation Entry in PowerSchool- Accommodation information in PowerSchool derives from two sources:

1. IEP: **(Name of person or position)** is responsible for entering and updating the plan details and accommodations information into ECATS for each EC student.

- Section 504 Plan and EL: **(Name of person or position)** is responsible for entering the special program participation and the accommodation(s) in the appropriate pages in PowerSchool for students with a Section 504 Plan or EL documentation. For each school year, the initial entry of special program assignment and accommodations must be completed by October 1 for returning students. PowerSchool entries for special program participation and accommodations must be made by the first of each month following initial assignment to a special program, annual review of the plan, and/or the addition of accommodations.

**School Testing Plans and Self-Monitoring Procedures**

- The STC securely submits a school test plan to the PSU TC (for districts) or Regional Accountability Coordinator (for charter, lab, ISD, and regional schools) at least 2 weeks before the first day of testing for each test, such as RTA, BOG3, ACCESS, and no later than May 1 for end-of-year testing.
- **(Persons designated)** complete monitoring during testing with the goal of preventing any avoidable irregularities and ensuring that there are no errors in the coding. These staff members need to have access to the test plan and use the following self-monitoring procedures:
  - ✓ Make sure test coordinator is accessible.
  - ✓ Before testing starts, ask a couple of students in online test settings if they watched the online tutorial video and had a chance to do the sample test items on the device they will be using.
  - ✓ Check to see if the bells are turned off.
  - ✓ Each testing site should have a DO NOT DISTURB sign on each door.
  - ✓ Check to see if there is a test administrator in each room.

- ✓ Check to see if there is a proctor serving each room. Roving proctors are permitted with these conditions:
  - The roving proctor may serve no more than three centrally located classrooms.
  - Classroom doors remain open at all times.
  - The proctor rotates every **(local decision)** minutes.
- ✓ Observe whether each test administrator is providing a positive test-taking climate.
- ✓ Check to see if there are enough testing materials (e.g., scratch paper, calculators, etc.)
- ✓ Be sure the test administrator and proctor remain in the room and are moving quietly around the testing site monitoring students.
- ✓ Students should not receive instruction related to the concepts measured by the tests in the morning before or during the test administration session.
- ✓ Classroom displays that provide information regarding the content being measured by the test or test taking strategies should be covered or removed.
- ✓ Do not allow visitors in the testing site while testing. (Monitoring staff are not visitors.)
- ✓ Windows on doors should be uncovered and doors should be unlocked.
- ✓ Report any noise or disruptions.
- ✓ Randomly select **(the number or percent is a local decision)** students receiving accommodations during each testing period. Pull the IEP, EL, Section 504, or transitory impairment plans. Make sure that the accommodation(s) each student is receiving matches those listed on the plan and those listed on the *Review of Accommodations* form. Record the information from the IEP, EL, or Section 504 plan; the accommodations listed on the *Review of Accommodations* form; and the accommodations observed in the testing site on the *Self-Monitoring Report Form*.
- ✓ Complete the *Self-Monitoring Report Form* for each testing period and keep on file at the school.

**Test Irregularities Reporting Procedures**

- **(name of role)** follows all state procedures for submission of irregularity reports through the Online Testing Irregularity Submission System (OTISS).
- If a student refuses to use a documented accommodation or if the student is not offered a documented accommodation, the school must obtain a written statement from the parent/guardian before receiving score results. The statement indicates whether the parent waives the right to have the student retested or will accept the score results from the initial administration. (See the sample Test Irregularity Parent Notification Form.)

**Include if the PSU has any paper EOG or EOC testing:**
**Precoded student answer documents and student information corrections in PowerSchool**

- Before testing, the STC will identify any students who enrolled after the date of the MEMBER file used for precoding and ensure that a staff member hand-bubbles the precoded information on the student's answer document.
- The school will utilize the attached Materials Checkout Form to document any reports of inaccuracies in precoded information that needs to be reviewed in PowerSchool. The STC will share this information with the data manager.

**Online Testing**

- Schools ensure every student participating in an online assessment has completed the Online Assessment Tutorial for the associated grade level at least one time before test day. The process for verifying completion of the tutorial is **(describe procedures).**
- The test administrator ensures any information from the test saved or cached on any network appliance or computer is purged or deleted immediately following the completion of the test administration. To ensure this step, all devices are shut down after each test administration.

**Online Testing Log-In Flexibility**

- The NCDPI policy for online test administrations requires test administrators to begin setting up computers and tablets approximately 30–40 minutes before students enter the testing room. With written procedures, schools can have flexibility for students to remain in the testing room while test administrators log into the secure browser.
- The school **(will/will not)** use online test login flexibility.
- **(List the secure procedures for the schools to follow when students remain in the testing room while computers/tablets are being set up on test days. The plan must outline procedures that ensure (1) students cannot see secure usernames and passwords while the test administrator is logging into the computers/tablets; (2) the computers/tablets are set to the START page with the correct student's name and PowerSchool number, assessment name, and school name correctly identified on the computer/tablet; and (3) students do not begin using their computers/tablets until they are instructed to do so.)**

**Arrangements for Completing Makeups**

- Each test administrator takes attendance and reports absences by **(Describe Procedures)** before starting the test session.
- The STC designates someone to contact all students absent from the test session. (**Person Responsible)** will contact all students who are absent from the test session on the day of testing.

**FERPA Protocol**

- To protect the confidentiality of individuals from those who do not have access to individual-level data, Personally Identifiable Information (PII) should be transmitted using one of the following methods, in order of preference:
  - Secure FTP server based on SFTP or RTPS protocols
  - Encrypted Email
  - Password Protected Email
  - **Include a brief description of which method(s) above the PSU uses to share PII.**

**PSU Testing Templates.** The PSU TC may choose to use the following Annual Testing Program sample templates or develop others for local use. The PSU testing form templates should be included below.

# Appendix K: Sample Test Plan Template

School Name:
Test Coordinator's Name:
Backup Test Coordinator:
Test:
Date of Test Administrations:
Make-Up Day(s):
Test Training Date and Time:

Test Coordinator's Signature:
Director's Signature:
Date of Signatures:
Requested Test Scanning Date, Time, Location:

| Test Name | Date | Format (Online or Paper) | Location | Administrator | Proctor (note if roving) | # of Students | Accommodations |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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Attach a map of the school facility.

What locked, secure storage area will be used for test materials?

Where will test administrators pick up and return test materials?

What are the procedures (when, where, how) for the editing of test materials to ensure three or more school personnel are present?

**NCDPI Example Test Plan**

- School Name: ABC Elementary
- Building Level Test Coordinator's Name: Susie Coordinator
- Backup Test Coordinator: Jimmy Back-Up
- Test: EOGs
- Date of Test Administrations: May 25–26, 28
- Make-Up Day: May 28
- Test Training Date and Time: May 10, 3:00-4:00

Test Coordinator's Signature: *Susie Coordinator*
Director's Signature: *Alexandra Boss*
Date of Signatures: April 15, 20XX
Requested Scanning Date, Time, Location:
May 26, 3:00 p.m., Raleigh Office
May 29, 9:00 a.m., Raleigh Office

| Test Name | Date | Format | Location | Administrator | Proctor | # of Students | Accommodations |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gr. 3 Math EOG | May 25 | Paper | 14 | M. West | C. East | 24 | None |
| Gr. 4 Math EOG | May 25 | Paper | 15 | D. North | T. South | 25 | None |
| Gr. 4 Math EOG | May 25 | Paper | 16 | N. January | R. Smith | 5 | A.H., B.F., S.V.- TSG, RAE, MTS |
| Gr. 3 ELA EOG | May 26 | Paper | 14 | M. West | C. East | 24 | No |
| Gr. 4 ELA EOG | May 26 | Paper | 15 | D. North | T. South | 25 | No |
| Gr. 4 ELA EOG | May 26 | Paper | 16 | N. January | R. Smith | 1 | S.B.- TSO, RAS |
| Make-Up Testing | May 27 | Paper | 20 | J. Haley | B. Burke | ? | No |
| Make-Up Testing | May 27 | Paper | 21 | C. Southeast | F. Southwest | ? | Yes |
| Gr. 3 ELA Retest | May 28 | Paper | 20 | J. Haley | B. Burke | ? | No |
| Gr. 3 ELA Retest | May 28 | Paper | 21 | C. Southeast | F. Southwest | ? | Yes |

- What locked, secure storage area will be used for test materials? *Materials will be stored in the vault room in the main office. During testing, all keys will be collected, so that only the school test coordinator and the director can access this space.*
- Where will test administrators pick up and return test materials? *Test administrators will pick up and return materials in the media center.*
- What are the procedures (when, where, how) for the editing of test materials to ensure three or more school personnel are present? *Test administrators will edit test materials in the media center with the test coordinator and back-up test coordinator present when they return materials for check-in.*

# Appendix L: Sample Training Sign-In Sheet

**School Name:** _____ **Date:** _____

**Facilitator(s) Name:** _____

**Test Name:** _____

| Name (print) | Signature | Test Administrator (TA) or Proctor (P) | Received Manual (initial) | Received Accommodations Training (initial) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
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# Appendix M: Sample Materials Checkout Sheet

**Complete before Testing Session**

I acknowledge that I have attended training for the _____ assessment and have received and read a copy of the test *Administrators Guide (AG)*. I further acknowledge that I am responsible for information provided during training and for understanding and adhering to the contents of the *AG(s)*, including the *Testing Code of Ethics*.

Teacher Signature: _____ Date: _____

*Please note the number of materials received for each item:*

| **Materials** | **Number at Sign-out (Completed by Test Administrator *before test administration*)** | **Number at Sign In (Completed by Checker *after test administration*)** |
|---|---|---|
| Header Sheet | | |
| Answer Documents | | |
| Test Books | | |

*Check off any of the following items received.*

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Blank Paper | | Pencils | | Testing Sign | |
| Graph Paper | | Reference Tables | | Review of Accom. Sheets | |

*** Be sure answer sheet colors match booklet colors before leaving checkout.**

Signature of Test Administrator (Teacher) at Checkout: _____

Signature of Person Checking In Materials after the Test (Checker): _____

Students Absent from this Session

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Mistakes on Precoded Answer Sheets:

Who: Mistake: What it should say:

**Complete after Testing Session**

I, _____, affirm that I adhered to the following rules and procedures during the administration of student assessments.

1. I read and complied with all the procedures in the *Testing Code of Ethics*.
2. I maintained test security at all times.
3. I administered the tests according to the directions in the administration guide and any subsequent updates developed by the test publisher.
4. I administered tests to all eligible students.
5. I reported all testing irregularities to the school system test coordinator.
6. I provided a positive test-taking climate.

Teacher Signature: _____ Date: _____

Proctor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Proctor Name (Please Print Clearly): _____

# Appendix N: Sample Test Irregularity Parent or Guardian Notification Form

Student: _____ Grade: _____

Test and Subject: _____ PowerSchool ID: _____

Teacher: _____ Test Date: _____

School Test Coordinator (STC): _____ STC Phone: _____

**The following test irregularity occurred during testing today, which invalidates your child's test results.**

**Your child's test will not be scanned or scored, and your child is scheduled to retake the test on**

_____.

Description of Test Irregularity:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

## Waiver of Right to Retake the Test

In some cases, you may choose to waive the right for your child to retake the test and accept the scores from the test already taken. Please sign and return this form to the school test coordinator before the date listed above. If this form is not returned by the above date, the test will be readministered to your child as indicated. *Note: The test already taken is deemed invalid and will not be scanned or scored unless you choose to waive the right for your child to retake the test.*

☐ I would like my child to retake the test. I understand we will not receive results from the original test.

☐ I do not want my child to retake the test. I understand that the results from the test already taken will be used. Furthermore, I understand I am waiving the rights for my child to retake the test.

_____ _____

Parent or Guardian Signature Date

*Note to staff: This document should be scanned and attached to the OTISS report.*

# Appendix O: Sample Self-Monitoring Report Form

Date:_____ School: _____ Test:_____

**CHECK ALL BOXES THAT ARE OBSERVED; INCLUDE EXPLANATIONS FOR ANY AREAS NOT OBSERVED**

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Test Notebook in Office | | Notebook Includes Copy of Test Plan | | DO NOT DISTURB Signs on Each Door | | Proctor/Roving Proctor Assigned to All Test Sites |
| | Notebook includes *Review of Accommodations During Testing* forms | | Notebook Includes Copies of ECATS (or other IEP program) Testing Participation Report | | Test Administrator and Proctor Monitoring Students | | Classroom Displays Covered or Removed |
| | Notebook includes copies of 504 and EL Plans | | Bells Turned Off | | Positive Test-Taking Environment | | All Materials Provided (Calculators, Paper, Pencils, etc.) |

Test Session

____ This test was conducted in accordance with the accepted practices of standardized testing.

____ This test had some irregularities and/or findings as listed below.

_____

_____

Accommodations

Choose three students at random who are receiving accommodations on the test and complete the chart below.

| Student Name | Type of Plan (504, EL, IEP) | Accommodations Viewed on the "Review of Accommodations" Form | Accommodations Observed in Test Site |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Monitor Name:_____ Monitor Signature:_____

## Appendix P: Sample Students Absent from Makeups for State-Required Tests

*The STC lists all students ABSENT from Makeups on this form. If 100% tested for EOGs and EOCs, write NO ABSENCES.*

| Last Name | First Name | Student Number | Grade | Subject | Classroom Teacher | Reason Student Did Not Test |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | |
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*My signature below indicates that I understand it is the responsibility of the principal and school test coordinator to ensure that ALL eligible students are tested.*

_____
School Test Coordinator Signature / Date

_____
Principal Signature / Date

# Appendix Q: TOPS Scanning Cover Sheet

**School Name:**

_____

**School Code:** _____

**Test Coordinator Name:**

_____

**Contact Number**: _____

**Shipment Date:** _____

Answer Sheet Content

- ☐ Regular Fall or Spring Testing
- ☐ Make-up Testing
- ☐ Summer Program
- ☐ Other

Test Name

- ☐ BOG3
- ☐ NC Check-In
- ☐ EOG
- ☐ G3 Reading Retest
- ☐ EOC
- ☐ RtA
- ☐ NC Interim

Notes for TOPS

_____

_____

## Appendix R: FAX Return Verification Form

**EOG__ EOC__**
**Other_____**

**FAX**
**919-515-4622**
**NCSU/TOPS**

**Circle YOUR RAC and send CC FAX to RAC:**
**RAC FAX #'s:**

**(1) Brent Caldwell 828-689-5565**

**(2) John Worley 336-667-6377**

**(3) Scott Frye 910-997-9832**

**(4) Patricia Benbow 252-534-6591**

**(5) Amanda Hobbs email (amanda.hobbs@dpi.nc.gov)**

**(6) Brent Cooper 336-229-2019**

**(7) Paul Davis email (paul.davis@dpi.nc.gov)**

**Public School Unit Name**

_____

**Public School Unit #**
**(6 digit)**

_____

**Phone #_____**

**FAX #_____**

**Date Shipped:_____**

**(MUST be DROPPED OFF AND SCANNED at UPS Store; remember to get a receipt)**

**Affix UPS Tracking label(s) below:**

**To Be Completed by the Public School Unit Test Coordinator**
Return verification must be FAXED to TOPS immediately after/when materials have been shipped. This provides a tracking number(s) for you and TOPS and will also help ensure test security and prompt follow-up should your materials not arrive the next day at TOPS.

# Appendix S: List of Abbreviations and Acronyms Resource Document

| Abbreviation or Acronym | Meaning |
|---|---|
| ACCESS for ELLS | Accessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners |
| ACDE | Accountability Collection Date Entry |
| ADM | Average Daily Membership |
| AP | Advanced Placement |
| ASL | American Sign Language |
| BANA | Braille Authority of North America |
| BOG3 | Beginning-of-Grade 3 Reading Test |
| BOY | Beginning-of-Year |
| CCB | Configuration Control Board |
| CCRAA | College and Career Readiness Alternate Assessment |
| CCSSO | Council of Chief State School Officers |
| CDM | Credit by Demonstrated Mastery |
| CECAS | Comprehensive Exceptional Children Accountability System |
| CEDARS | Common Education Data Analysis & Reporting System |
| CEP | Community Eligible Program |
| CGR | Cohort Graduation Rate |
| CR | Constructed Response |
| CSI | Comprehensive Support and Improvement |
| CTE | Career and Technical Education |
| DMG | Data Management Group |
| DTC | District Test Coordinator |
| EBAE | English Braille American Edition |
| ECATS | Every Child Accountability and Tracking System |
| EC | Exceptional Children |
| EDDIE | Educational Directory and Demographical Information Exchange |
| EDS | Economically Disadvantaged Students |
| EL | English Learner |
| ELA | English Language Arts |
| ELAC | English Learners Advisory Council |
| ELP | English Learner's Progress |
| EOC | End-of-Course |
| EOG | End-of-Grade |

| | |
|---|---|
| EOY | End-of-Year |
| ESEA | Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 |
| ESL | English as a Second Language |
| ESSA | Every Student Succeeds Act (an amendment to ESEA) |
| EVASS | Education Value Added Assessment System |
| FDF | First Day of Fall |
| FDS | First Day of Spring |
| FRL | Free and Reduced Priced Lunch |
| GLP | Grade Level Proficiency |
| IADA | Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority |
| IB | International Baccalaureate |
| IDEA | Individuals with Disabilities Education *Improvement* Act |
| IEP | Individualized Education Program |
| IHE | Institute of Higher Education |
| IIS | Instructional Improvement System |
| IPA | International Phonetic Alphabet |
| ISD | Innovative School District |
| ISR | Individual Student Report |
| LEA | Local Education Agency |
| LEA TC | LEA Test Coordinator |
| LEA TA | LEA Test Assistant |
| LEP | Limited English Proficient |
| LMS | Learning Management System |
| LOR | Learner Object Repository |
| LTG | Long Term Goals |
| MCR | Math Course Rigor |
| MFELs | Monitored former English Learners |
| MOY | Middle-of-Year |
| MTSS | Multi-Tiered System of Support |
| NAEP | National Assessment of Educational Progress |
| NAGB | National Assessment Governing Board |
| NCDPI | North Carolina Department of Public Instruction |
| NCES | National Center for Education Statistics |
| NCEES | North Carolina Educator Evaluation System |
| NCEXTEND1 | Alternate assessment for EOG and EOC tests |
| NC*SCS* | North Carolina *Standard Course of Study* |
| NSLP | National School Lunch Program |
| OER | Open Educational Resources |
| OLE | Online Learning Exchange |

| | |
|---|---|
| OTISS | Online Testing Irregularity Submission System |
| PD | Professional Development |
| PE | Partial Enrollment |
| PEP | Personalized Education Plan |
| PISA | Program for International Student Assessment |
| PLC | Professional Learning Communities |
| PS | Power School |
| PSU | Public School Unit |
| PBIS | Positive Behavior Intervention and Support |
| RAC | Regional Accountability Coordinator |
| RCC | Regional Computing Consultant |
| RESA | Regional Education Service Alliance |
| ROA | Review of Accommodations form |
| RtA | Read to Achieve |
| SAG | School Accountability Growth |
| SBE | State Board of Education |
| SCASS | State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards |
| SEA | State Education Agency |
| Section 504 | Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 |
| SIP | School Improvement Plan |
| SIS | School Information System |
| SLC | [North Carolina] Student Learning Conditions [Survey] |
| SPG | School Performance Grades |
| STC | School Test Coordinator |
| STEM | Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics |
| SWD | Students with Disability |
| TALIS | Teaching and Learning International Survey |
| TIMSS | Trends in Math and Science Study |
| TOPS | Technical Outreach for Public Schools |
| TMS | Test Measurement Specialist |
| TSI | Targeted Support and Improvement |
| TSIEL | Guidelines for Testing Students Identified as English Learners |
| TNN | Testing News Network |
| TWC | [North Carolina] Teacher Working Conditions [Survey] |
| UEB | Unified English Braille |
| USED | U.S. Department of Education |
| WIDA | World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (English proficiency test) |

# Appendix T: State Board of Education Policies, N.C. Admin. Codes, and Legislative Requirements

This section contains SBE policies, N.C. Admin. Codes, and other legislative requirements related to the Annual Testing Program.

**Appropriate Use of State Tests and Testing Program Documents**

- 16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0310 – Policy delineating the appropriate use of state tests
- TEST-009 – Policy regarding rules, guidelines, and procedures governing the NC Testing Program
- TEST-013 – Policy delineating the test development process for multiple-choice tests
- TEST-015 – Policy outlining time devoted to standardized testing

**Test Security**

- 16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0311 – Policy of administrative testing procedures and Testing Code of Ethics

**End-of-Course Tests**

- 16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0309 – Policy delineating use of end-of-course tests for accountability
- CCRE-001 – Policy defining "Course for Credit"

**Testing Students Who Are English Learners**

- TEST-011 – Policy outlining the use of EL testing accommodations and eligibility for participation in the state-designated test

**Graduation Requirements**

- GRAD-004 – Policy delineating state graduation requirements
- GRAD-001 – Policy giving the local school boards of education the authority to exceed minimum graduation requirements
- ACCT-039 – Policy delineating the cohort graduation rate

**Academic Achievement Standards and Achievement Level Descriptors**

- TEST-037 – Academic achievement standards and achievement level descriptors for NCEXTEND1 alternate assessments
- TEST-036 – Academic achievement standards and achievement level descriptors for end-of-course tests

- TEST-033 – Academic achievement standards and achievement level descriptors for the Beginning-of-Grade 3 Reading Test, the Read to Achieve Test, and the end-of-grade tests

**Accountability Model**

- ACCT-020 – Policy delineating the components of the accountability model
- 16 N.C. Admin. Code 06G .0315 – policy delineating the accountability annual performance standards
- 16 N.C. Admin. Code 06G .0314 – Policy delineating the alternative schools' accountability model
- CHTR-001 – Policy delineating charter school accountability requirements

**Use of Test Results**

- GS §115C-288 (a) – Law granting principals the authority to grade and classify students; instructs principals not to make the decision solely based on standardized test scores
- 16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0309 – Policy requiring schools to use results from all operational EOC tests as at least twenty percent of the student's final grade for each respective course (with exceptions)

**Other Policies Related to the Annual Testing Program**

- 16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D. 0307 – Policy governing test administrations in public schools
- 16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0308 – Policy governing the role of the testing coordinator

# Appendix U: *Testing Code of Ethics*

### Introduction to the Testing Code of Ethics

In North Carolina, standardized testing is an integral part of the educational experience of all students. When properly administered and interpreted, test results provide an independent, uniform source of reliable and valid information, which enables:

- *students* to know the extent to which they have mastered expected knowledge and skills and how they compare to others;
- *parents* to know if their children are acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in a highly competitive job market;
- *teachers* to know if their students have mastered grade or course-level knowledge and skills in the curriculum and, if not, what weaknesses need to be addressed;
- *community leaders and lawmakers* to know if students in North Carolina schools are improving their performance over time and how the students compare with students from other states or the nation; and
- *citizens* to assess the performance of the public schools.

In order to achieve those objectives, teachers and administrators must conduct testing in a fair and ethical manner, which includes:

*Security*
- assuring adequate security of the testing materials before, during, and after testing and during scoring
- assuring student confidentiality

*Preparation*
- teaching the tested curriculum and test-preparation skills
- training staff in appropriate testing practices and procedures
- providing an appropriate atmosphere

*Administration*
- developing a local policy for the implementation of fair and ethical testing practices and for resolving questions concerning those practices
- assuring all students who should be tested are tested
- utilizing tests which are developmentally appropriate
- utilizing tests only for the purposes for which they were designed

*Scoring, Analysis, and Reporting*
- interpreting test results to the appropriate audience
- providing adequate data analyses to guide curriculum implementation and improvement

Standardized test scores are only one of the many indicators of how well the student is learning. Test scores should be used in conjunction with all other available information about a student to understand student progress and improve student learning. When administering tests, school administrators and teachers must comply with applicable statutes, rules and policies. In particular, administrators and teachers must comply with the *Testing Code of Ethics* (16 N.C. Admin. Code 6D .0311), which is printed on the following page.

## Testing Code of Ethics

(a) This Rule sets out the administrative testing procedures and testing code of ethics and shall apply to all public school employees, including charter school and regional school employees, who are involved in the state testing program.
(b) The superintendent/charter school director or superintendent's/charter school director's designee shall develop local policies and procedures to ensure maximum test security in coordination with the policies and procedures developed by the test publisher.
(c) The superintendent/charter school director or superintendent's/charter school director's designee shall instruct personnel who are responsible for the testing program in testing administration procedures. This instruction shall include test administrations that require testing accommodations and shall emphasize the need to follow the directions outlined by the test publisher.
(d) The superintendent/charter school director or superintendent's/charter school director's designee shall designate the personnel who are authorized to have access to secure test materials. "Access" to test materials by school personnel means handling the materials but does not include reviewing tests or analyzing test items.
    (1) Persons who have access to secure test materials shall not use those materials for personal gain.
    (2) No person may copy, reproduce, or paraphrase in any manner or for any reason the test materials without the express written consent of the test publisher.
(e) The principal shall ensure test security within the school building.
    (1) The principal shall store test materials in a secure, locked facility. The principal shall allow test materials to be distributed immediately before the test administration.
(f) Any breach of security, loss of materials, failure to account for materials, or any other deviation from required security procedures shall be reported immediately to the principal, school test coordinator, school system (LEA) test coordinator, superintendent/charter school director, and regional accountability coordinator.
(g) Preparation for testing.
    (1) The superintendent/charter school director shall ensure that school system (LEA) test coordinators:
        (A) secure necessary materials;
        (B) plan and implement training for school test coordinators, test administrators, and proctors;
        (C) ensure each school test coordinator and test administrator is trained before each test administration on the policies and procedures for conducting a proper test administration and for processing and returning test materials; and
        (D) in conjunction with program administrators, ensure the need for test accommodations is documented and that accommodations are limited to the specific need.
    (2) The principal or the principal's designee shall serve as school test coordinator.
    (3) The principal shall ensure the school test coordinator:
        (A) maintains test security and accountability of test materials;
            (1) Before each test administration, the school test coordinator shall accurately count and distribute test materials.
            (2) Immediately after each test administration, the school test coordinator

shall collect, count, and return all test materials to the secure, locked storage facility.

(B) establishes any needed school policies and procedures to assure all eligible students are tested fairly;

(C) identifies and trains personnel, proctors, and backup personnel for test administrations; and

(D) encourages a positive atmosphere for testing.

(4) Test administrators shall be school personnel who have professional training in education and the state testing program.

(5) Teachers shall provide instruction that meets or exceeds the state-adopted curriculum standards to meet the needs of the specific students in the class. Teachers may help students improve test-taking skills by:

(A) helping students become familiar with test formats using curricular content;

(B) teaching students test-taking strategies and providing practice sessions;

(C) helping students learn ways of preparing to take tests; and

(D) using resource materials such as test questions from test item banks and linking documents in instruction and test preparation.

(h) With respect to test administration.

(1) The superintendent/charter school director or superintendent's/charter school director's designee shall:

(A) assure each school establishes procedures to ensure all test administrators comply with test publisher guidelines;

(B) inform the local board of education of any breach of this code of ethics; and

(C) inform school system (LEA) test coordinators and principals of their responsibilities.

(2) The school test coordinator shall:

(A) assure school personnel know the content of state and local testing policies;

(B) implement the school system and local testing policies and procedures to assure all eligible students are tested fairly;

(C) ensure trained proctors are assigned to test administrations by the principal; and

(D) ensure all testing irregularities are reported to the school system (LEA) test coordinator.

(3) Test administrators shall:

(A) administer tests according to the directions in the assessment guide and any subsequent updates developed by the test publisher;

(B) administer tests to all eligible students;

(C) report all testing irregularities to the school test coordinator; and

(D) provide a positive test-taking environment.

(4) Proctors shall serve as additional monitors to help the test administrator assure that testing occurs fairly.

(i) Scoring. The school system test coordinator shall:

(1) ensure each test is scored according to the procedures and guidelines defined for the test by the test publisher;

(2) maintain quality control during the entire scoring process, which consists of handling and editing documents, scanning answer documents, and producing electronic files

and reports. Quality control shall address at a minimum accuracy and scoring consistency.

(3) maintain security of tests and data files at all times, including:

(A) protecting the confidentiality of students at all times when publicizing test results; and

(B) maintaining test security of answer keys and item-specific scoring rubrics.

(j) Analysis and reporting. Educators shall use test scores appropriately. This means that the educator recognizes that a test score is only one piece of information and must be interpreted together with other scores and indicators. Test data help educators understand educational patterns and practices. The superintendent shall ensure that school personnel analyze and report test data ethically and within the limitations described in this paragraph.

(1) Educators shall maintain the confidentiality of individual students. Publicizing test scores or any written material containing personally identifiable information from the student's educational records shall not be disseminated or otherwise made available to the public by any member of the State Board of Education, any employee of the State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, any employee of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, any member of a local board of education, any employee of a local board of education, or any other person, except as permitted under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C.§1232g.

(2) Educators shall release test scores to students, parents, legal guardians, teachers, and the media with interpretive materials as needed.

(3) Staff development relating to testing must enable school personnel to respond knowledgeably to questions related to testing, including the tests, scores, scoring procedures, and other interpretive materials.

(4) Items and associated materials on a secure test shall not be in the public domain. Only items that are within the public domain may be used for item analysis.

(5) Data analysis of test scores for decision-making purposes shall be based upon:

(A) disaggregation of data based upon student demographics and other collected variables;

(B) examination of grading practices in relation to test scores; and

(C) examination of growth trends and goal summary reports for state-mandated tests.

(k) Unethical testing practices include, but are not limited to, the following practices:

(1) encouraging students to be absent the day of testing;

(2) encouraging students not to do their best;

(3) using secure test items or modified secure test items for instruction;

(4) changing student responses at any time;

(5) interpreting, explaining, or paraphrasing the test directions or the test items;

(6) reclassifying students solely for the purpose of avoiding state testing;

(7) not testing all eligible students;

(8) failing to provide required accommodations during testing;

(9) modifying scoring programs including answer keys, equating files, and lookup tables;

(10) modifying student records solely for the purpose of raising test scores;

(11) using a single test score to make individual decisions; and

(12) misleading the public concerning the results and interpretations of test data.

(l) In the event of a violation of this Rule, the State Board of Education may, in accordance with the contested case provisions of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes, impose any one or more of the following sanctions:
   (1) withhold any applicable monetary incentive awards;
   (2) file a civil action against the person or persons responsible for the violation for copyright infringement or for any other available cause of action;
   (3) seek criminal prosecution of the person or persons responsible for the violation; and
   (4) in accordance with the provisions of 16 NCAC 6C .0312, suspend or revoke the professional license of the person or persons responsible for the violation.

History Note: Authority G.S. 115C-12(9)c.; 115C-81(b)(4);
Eff. November 1, 1997;
Amended Eff. August 1, 2000.

Signature _____

Date_____

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