



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Honorable June Atkinson
State Superintendent
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
6301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-6301

December 2, 2016

Dear Superintendent Atkinson:

Thank you for your participation in the U.S. Department of Education's (Department) assessment peer review process under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) maintains the essential requirements from NCLB that each State annually administer high-quality assessments in at least reading/language arts, mathematics, and science that meet nationally recognized professional and technical standards. Therefore, as you know, the Department reinstated peer review of state assessment systems so that each State receives feedback from external experts on the assessments it is currently administering. We appreciate the efforts required to prepare for the peer review, which occurred in April and June 2016. State assessment systems provide essential information that States, districts, principals, and teachers can use to identify the academic needs of students, target resources and supports toward students who need them most, evaluate school and program effectiveness, and close achievement gaps among students. A high-quality assessment system also provides useful information to parents about their child's advancement against and achievement of grade-level standards. The Department's peer review of State assessment systems is designed to provide feedback to States to support the development and administration of high-quality assessments.

On October 6, 2016, the Department sent a letter to chief State school officers outlining the outcomes for States related to the assessment peer review. I am writing to provide you feedback on the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's (NCDPI) recent submission of evidence. External peer reviewers and Department staff evaluated NCDPI's submission and found, based on the evidence received, that the components of your assessment system meet some, but not all of the statutory and regulatory requirements of section 1111(b)(1) and (3) of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB. Based on the recommendations from this peer review and our own analysis of the State's submission, I have determined the following:

- Reading/language arts and mathematics general assessments in grades 3-8: **Partially meets requirements**
- Reading/language arts and mathematics general assessments in high school: **Partially meets requirements**

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The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

- Reading/language arts and mathematics alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS) for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in grades 3-8 and high school: **Partially meets requirements**
- Science general assessments in grade bands 3-5 and 6-8: **Substantially meets requirements**
- Science general assessments in high school: **Substantially meets requirements**
- Science AA-AAAS in grades 3-8 and high school: **Partially meets requirements**

The components that **substantially meet** requirements meet most of the requirements of the statute and regulations but some additional information is required. The Department expects that North Carolina should be able to provide this additional information within one year.

The components that **partially meet** requirements do not meet a number of the requirements of the statute and regulations and the State will need to provide substantial additional information to demonstrate it meets the requirements. The Department expects that North Carolina may not be able to submit all of the required information within one year.

The specific list of items required for NCDPI to submit is enclosed with this letter. Because several of the State's components have partially met the requirements, the Department is placing a condition on the State's Title I grant award related to those components of the assessment system. To satisfy this condition, NCDPI must submit satisfactory evidence to address the items identified in the enclosed list. NCDPI must submit a plan and timeline within 30 days for when it will submit all required additional documentation for peer review. The Department will also host regular (e.g., quarterly) progress calls with the State to discuss the State's progress on its timeline. If, following the peer review of the additional evidence, adequate progress is not made, the Department may take additional action.

The Department notes that NCDPI submitted a waiver request for assessing speaking and listening that was approved on August 5, 2016, for the 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19 school years.

In addition, the full peer review notes from the review are enclosed. These recommendations to the Department formed the basis of the Department's determination. Please note that the peers' recommendations may differ from the Department's feedback; we encourage you to read the full peer notes for additional suggestions and recommendations for improving your assessment system beyond what is noted in the Department's feedback. Department staff will reach out to your assessment director in the next few days to discuss the peer notes and the Department's determination and to answer any questions you have.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to improving educational outcomes for all students. I look forward to our continued partnership as we move ahead with this critical work. I appreciate the work you are doing to improve your schools and provide a high-quality education for your students. If you have any questions, please contact Andre Richardson and Cynthia Wright at: OSS.NorthCarolina@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Ary Amerikaner
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Delegated the Duties of Assistant Secretary
for Elementary and Secondary Education

Enclosures

cc: Tammy Howard

Critical Elements Where Additional Evidence is Needed to Meet the Requirements for North Carolina’s Assessment System

Critical Element	Additional Evidence Needed
2.1 – Test Design and Development	<p><u>For all subjects and components of system:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the alignment evidence, a content-by-cognitive complexity table of specifications for the general assessments (3-8 and high school) and the alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS). • Evidence that the Reading/language arts (R/LA) assessments measure the full range of the content standards at all grades, including writing, speaking, and listening. <p>[NOTE: North Carolina has received a speaking and listening waiver; therefore, the Department does not expect North Carolina to submit additional evidence regarding speaking and listening during the period of the waiver.]</p> <p><u>For general assessments in reading/language arts (R/LA), math and science, grades (Gr.) 3-8 and high school (HS):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that describes how cognitive complexity is used for test construction. • Evidence of counts of items on test form summaries to verify that blueprint percentages are being met. <p><u>For AA-AAAS in R/LA, math and science, Gr. 3-8 and HS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation that the test design for the AA-AAAS is sufficient to establish the reliability, domain representation, and validity.
2.2 – Item Development	<p><u>For general assessments in R/LA, math and science, Gr. 3-8 and HS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of how the pilot survey results of students taking technology-based items were used in item and form development for the general assessment, particularly with respect to aspects of the technology-based test forms that might constitute construct irrelevant variance for the students’ scores.
3.1 – Overall Validity, including Validity Based on Content	<p><u>For general assessments in R/LA, math and science, Gr. 3-8 and HS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that further elaborates the alignment procedures and formulas as well as evidence to support established alignment thresholds for the general assessments. • Evidence of alignment of reading/language arts tests for writing standards at every grade is needed. • Evidence that describes the inferences expected from the assessment scores and evidence to support those inferences for general tests. <p><u>For the AA-AAAS in R/LA, math and science, Gr. 3-8 and HS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that describes the inferences that are expected from the AA-AAAS scores and evidence to support those inferences. • Evidence of alignment of reading/language arts tests for writing standards at every grade is needed.
3.3 – Validity Based on Internal Structure.	<p><u>For general assessments in R/LA, math and science, Gr. 3-8 and HS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of common and typical output for principal components analyses on general assessments, and also of the unrotated and rotated factor solutions.

Critical Element	Additional Evidence Needed
	<p>These additional data analyses are needed to support the sub-domain score structure.</p> <p><u>For AA-AAAS in R/LA, math and science, Gr. 3-8 and HS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of a factor analysis to support the single score obtained.
4.1 – Reliability	<p><u>For general assessments in R/LA, math and science, Gr. 3-8 and HS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that supports the reliability of reported sub-scores (i.e., sub-scores require the same kind of evidence for reporting as overall test scores). <p><u>For AA-AAAS in R/LA, math and science, Gr. 3-8 and HS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and timeline to address the low reliability estimates coefficients for the AA-AAAS and documentation that confirms reliability estimates that meet acceptable professional standards.
4.2 – Fairness and Accessibility	<p><u>For general assessments in R/LA, math and science, Gr. 3-8 and HS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of differential item functioning (DIF) statistics presented for economically disadvantaged students and documentation of the process and evaluative criteria used by the State when DIF items are identified. <p><u>For AA-AAAS in R/LA, math and science, Gr. 3-8 and HS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of DIF statistics for male/female, white/black, white/Hispanic, economically disadvantaged//non-economically disadvantaged, and any other sub-group comparisons for which there are sufficient numbers of students, and documentation of the process and evaluative criteria used by the State when DIF items are identified.
4.6 – Multiple Versions of an Assessment	<p><u>For general assessments in R/LA, math and science, Gr. 3-8 and HS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A plan and timeline for continued research in this area that specifically examines differences across test delivery modalities.
6.1 – State Adoption of Academic Achievement Standards for All Students	<p><u>For general assessments in R/LA, math and science, Gr. 3-8 and HS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional information regarding the achievement standards for Level 3 (proficient) that supports its alignment to the content standards for the general assessments.
6.2 – Achievement Standards-Setting	<p><u>For general assessments in R/LA, math and science, Gr. 3-8 and HS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence requested for element 6.1 will address this element.
6.3 – Challenging and Aligned Academic Achievement Standards	<p><u>For general assessments in R/LA, math and science, Gr. 3-8 and HS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence requested for element 6.1 will address this element.

U. S. Department of Education Peer Review of State Assessment Systems

April and June 2016 State Assessment Peer Review Notes



U. S. Department of Education
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
Washington, D.C. 20202

Note: Peer review notes provide the combined recommendations of the individual peers to the U.S. Department of Education (Department), based on the statute and regulations and the Department's peer review guidance and the peer's professional judgement of the evidence submitted by the State. These assessment peer review notes, however, do not necessarily identify the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for assessment peer review. Although the peer notes inform the Secretary's consideration of each State's assessment system, the Department makes the final decision regarding whether the assessment system meets the requirements in the statute and regulations. As a result, these peer notes may not completely align with the final determination made by the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

SECTION 1: STATEWIDE SYSTEM OF STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>1.1 – State Adoption of Academic Content Standards for All Students</p> <p>The State formally adopted challenging academic content standards for all students in reading/language arts, mathematics and science and applies its academic content standards to all public elementary and secondary schools and students in the State.</p>	<p>Evaluate for all subjects</p>	<p>The State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards in 2010 in Reading/Language Arts and Mathematics. The State Board of Education adopted State-Developed Essential Standards for Science Standards in 2010.</p> <p>The North Carolina’s alternate assessments ,the <i>NCEXTEND1</i> assessments, are administered in grades 3-8 and once in high school in English Language Arts and Mathematics, and in grades 5 and 8 and once in high school in Science to students with significant cognitive disabilities, and are aligned to the state’s Extended common Core and Essential Content Standards. Participation for eligible students in <i>NCEXTEND1</i> is determined by a student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) team.</p> <p>It is unclear that the NCExtendI ELA tests include a writing component or whether they assess speaking and listening.</p>
<p>Section 1.1 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><u> </u>x_ No additional evidence is required</p>		
<p>Note: Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics were adopted ‘in its entirety with no adjustments’ Exhibit 4 p.29 New College and Career Ready Standards. The Peers are noting this because we found that North Carolina’s general and alternate assessments do not assess writing, although writing performance is included in the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts.</p>		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>1.2 – Coherent and Rigorous Academic Content Standards</p> <p>The State’s academic content standards in reading/language arts, mathematics and science specify what students are expected to know and be able to do by the time they graduate from high school to succeed in college and the workforce; contain content that is coherent (e.g., within and across grades) and rigorous; encourage the teaching of advanced skills; and were developed with broad stakeholder involvement.</p>		<p>The State refers back to the Common Core adoption process and evidence of its rigor as rated by educators. The NC Science standards were written in accordance with Bloom’s Taxonomy evidencing accessibility for all ability levels. Although exhibit 23 references very generally what the end goals are for science students, there is a lack of specificity in relation to the content and skill set expected of all NC students. For example, Common Core State Standard’s description of College and Career Readiness in Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, and Language contains a list of skills and knowledge in ELA.</p> <p>The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction’s division of Curriculum/Instruction and Exceptional Children also developed the extended content standards, an extension of the general content standards. The state provided detailed documents describing the strategies used to ensure that the extended content standards are appropriately rigorous, and adequately specify what students with significant cognitive disabilities should know and be able to do.</p>
<p>Section 1.2 Summary Statement</p>		
<p>x___ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specify what general education students are expected to know and be able to do by the time they graduate from high school to succeed in college and the workforce in relation to Science. 		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element—REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY	Evidence —REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence — REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY
<p>1.3 – Required Assessments</p> <p>The State’s assessment system includes annual general and alternate assessments (based on grade-level academic achievement standards or alternate academic achievement standards-AAAS) in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading/language arts and mathematics in each of grades 3-8 and at least once in high school (grades 10-12); • Science at least once in each of three grade spans (3-5, 6-9 and 10-12). 	<p><i>Documented end of grade assessments cited in: Exhibit 26 references:</i></p> <p>English Language Arts Grades 3–8 Mathematics Grades 3–8 Science Grades 5 and 8 Beginning of Grade 3 (counted in accountability for students who do not pass EOG gr 3)</p> <p><i>Documented end of grade assessments cited in: Exhibit 28 references:</i></p> <p>BOG ACT Explore Grade 8 End-of Course Assessments cited in Exhibit 26 references: Algebra I/Integrated I (Math I CCSS) English II Biology ACT grade 11 WorkKeys grade 12</p> <p><i>Alternate EOG Assessments cited in Exhibit 26 references:</i></p> <p>NCEExtend I English Language Arts Grades 3–8 NCEExtend I Mathematics Grades 3–8 NCEExtend I Science Grades 5 and 8</p> <p><i>Alternate EOC Assessments cited in Exhibit 26 references:</i></p> <p>NCEExtend I English Language Arts Grade 10 NCEExtend I Mathematics Grade 10 NCEExtend I Biology Grade 10 NCEExtend Grade 11 CCR Alternate Assessment Grade 11</p> <p>■</p>	<p>The State Board of Education adopted the <i>Common Core State Standards</i> in English Language Arts and Mathematics June 2010. These standards include Writing in English Language Arts. However NC ELA tests do not assess writing. The Peer review submission refers to the tests as English Language Arts/Reading.</p> <p>The list of the annual assessments the State administers in reading/language arts, mathematics and science includes alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities including the grades in which each type of assessment is administered. These alternate assessments are provided at each of the grades and and for each subject tested by general assessments (however there is no alternate assessment for the BOG grade 3 ELA test).</p> <p>The NCEExtendI ELA tests do not include a writing component nor do they assess speaking and listening.</p>

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element—REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY	Evidence —REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence — REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY
Section 1.3 Summary Statement—REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY		
X No additional evidence required.		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element—REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY	Evidence —REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence — REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY
<p>1.4 – Policies for Including All Students in Assessments</p> <p>The State requires the inclusion of all public elementary and secondary school students in its assessment system and clearly and consistently communicates this requirement to districts and schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For students with disabilities(SWD), policies state that all students with disabilities in the State, including students with disabilities publicly placed in private schools as a means of providing special education and related services, must be included in the assessment system; • For English learners (EL): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Policies state that all English learners must be included in the assessment system, unless the State exempts a student who has attended schools in the U.S. for less than 12 months from one administration of its reading/ language arts assessment; ○ If the State administers native language assessments, the State requires English learners to be assessed in reading/language arts in English if they have been enrolled in U.S. schools for three or more consecutive years, except if a district determines, on a case-by-case basis, that native language assessments would yield more accurate and reliable information, the district may assess a student with native language assessments for a period not to exceed two additional consecutive years. 		<p>Exhibit 31 adequately indicates that all eligible students in membership (i.e., enrolled in a school) at grades 3 through 8 and 10 and in high school courses in which an end-of-course assessment is administered shall participate in the state assessment program adopted by the SBE.</p> <p>Exhibit 32: Code of Ethics 3(B) establishes any needed school policies and procedures to assure all eligible students are tested fairly;</p> <p>Exhibit 33 pages 86 and 91 and Exhibit 34 page 18 adequately outline the policy for inclusion of students with disabilities and provision of needed accommodations. The read-aloud accommodation however is not allowed on Reading tests in 3-12 which begs the question of how a student with dyslexia, particularly one whose reading test primarily assesses comprehension, being fairly assessed in reading?</p> <p>Exhibit 33 p. 82-83 and Exhibit 39 p. 4 adequately outline policies for inclusion of ELs in ELA and Mathematics. Students in first year of U.S. schools may be exempted if found to be LEP.</p> <p>North Carolina does not administer native language versions of its State Assessments.</p> <p>Exhibit 33 p. 130 adequately describes policies for inclusion of students with disabilities publicly placed in private school settings. In a situation in which North Carolina publicly places a student in a private facility during the school year, the LEA and base school are responsible for ensuring all required state</p>

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element—REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY	Evidence —REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence — REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY
		<p>tests are administered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The LEA/base school is 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 LEA and base school must ensure all security policies and procedures are maintained. o For accountability purposes, the test results of such a student must be included in the accountability results at the base school. <p>Pages 5-6 of ALT Exhibit 35 adequately describe the criteria for participation in the North Carolina alternate assessments (NCExtend1).</p>
<p>Section 1.4 Summary Statement-REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY</p>		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required or</p>		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element—REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY	Evidence —REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence — REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY
<p>1.5 – Participation Data</p> <p>The State’s participation data show that all students, disaggregated by student group and assessment type, are included in the State’s assessment system. In addition, if the State administers end-of-course assessments for high school students, the State has procedures in place for ensuring that each student is tested and counted in the calculation of participation rates on each required assessment and provides the corresponding data.</p>	<p>Prompts for Reviewers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --data disaggregated by student group: ELA/Math/Science --Shows students tested and students enrolled for each breakout --for end-of-course HS, procedures to ensure each student is tested and counted in participation rate along with data --includes grade level tests and AA-AAAS 	<p>Exhibit 40 charts adequately provide participation data for the most recent year, indicating that all students, disaggregated by group and assessment type, are included in EOG and EOC tests, and alternate assessments and are counted in the participation rate. Per Exhibit 41 a substantial number of schools did not meet 95% participation in subgroups.</p> <p>Exhibit 31 pages 2-3 adequately provides participation policies for ELs and policies for intervention in schools not meeting 95% participation rates for 3 consecutive years. Page 3 additionally provides for district waivers on exceeding 1% cap for participation on alternate assessments.</p>
<p>Section 1.5 Summary Statement-REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY</p>		
<p><u> X </u> No additional evidence is required</p>		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

SECTION 2: ASSESSMENT SYSTEM OPERATIONS

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>2.1 – Test Design and Development</p> <p>The State’s test design and test development process is well-suited for the content, is technically sound, aligns the assessments to the full range of the State’s academic content standards, and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement(s) of the purposes of the assessments and the intended interpretations and uses of results; • Test blueprints that describe the structure of each assessment in sufficient detail to support the development of assessments that are technically sound, measure the full range of the State’s grade-level academic content standards, and support the intended interpretations and uses of the results; • Processes to ensure that each assessment is tailored to the knowledge and skills included in the State’s academic content standards, reflects appropriate inclusion of challenging content, and requires complex demonstrations or applications of knowledge and skills (i.e., higher-order thinking skills); • If the State administers computer-adaptive assessments, the item pool and item selection procedures adequately support the test design. 	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column—all tests and grades documented on cover sheet</p> <p>General assessments across all content areas:</p> <p><u>Exhibit 56:</u> <i>Technical Report 2012–15 Assessments—English Language Arts/Reading End-of-Grade 3–8 and End-of-Course English II</i></p> <p><u>Exhibit 57:</u> <i>Technical Report 2012–2015 Assessments—Mathematics End-of-Grade 3–8 and End-of-Course Math I</i></p> <p><u>Exhibit 58:</u> <i>Technical Report 2012–15 Assessments—Science End-of-Grade 5, 8 and End-of-Course Biology</i></p> <p><u>Exhibit 59:</u> <i>A Report to the NCDPI on the Alignment Characteristics of State Assessment Instruments Covering Grades 3–8 and High School in Mathematics, Reading, and Science</i> (September 2015)</p> <p><u>Exhibit 61:</u> <i>Online Test Development System—Blinded Depth of Knowledge and Aligned Standard—For Internal Use</i></p> <p><u>Exhibit 48:</u> <i>NCNEXTEND1 Alternate Assessment Technical Report 2012–2015</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Table 1.2: NCNEXTEND1—Number of Operational Items and Maximum Possible Score Points(PDF p. 16) ▪ Section 3.2: Step 1. Content Domain Specification and Blueprints (PDF pp.31–37) <p><u>Exhibit 49:</u> <i>A Report to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction on the Alignment Characteristics of the NCNEXTEND1 Alternate Assessment Instruments</i></p> <p><u>Exhibit 51:</u> <i>Test Development Process—Item, Selection, and Form Development</i></p> <p>This test development process is used for English language arts, math, and science alternate assessments (PDF pp. 18–31).</p>	<p>The absence of writing in the assessment represents a misalignment between CCSS and the assessments.</p> <p>Grade 5 and 8 assessments do not meet blueprints. Narrow ranges make meeting constraints difficult.</p> <p>Reading Foundational Skills are indicated “NA” in blueprints but no explanation is given for why these standards are “NA.”</p> <p>Speaking and Listening are in the CCSS, adopted by the State, but are not assessed. NCDPI indicated a waiver to be submitted to ED to be exempt from this requirement, but the waiver is not part of the evidence submitted for review. (Granting of the waiver is a condition for meeting this requirement.)</p> <p>Item counts by grades 3-8 reading/language arts English II blueprint categories are not among the evidence documents; these are needed to gauge whether blueprint constraints being met.</p> <p>Item counts by Math I conceptual category are not among evidence documents; these are needed to gauge whether blueprint constraints being met.</p> <p>No forms meet the Grade 5 Science or Grade 8 Science blueprint, although the margins by which the balance is off are low (<i>Technical Report 2012–15 Assessments Science End-of-Grade 5, 8 and End-of-Course Biology</i>, PDF pp. 32-36).</p> <p>Additional note: There are only three ways to assign 60 items into the seven domains, which will meet the Grade 5 Science blueprint parameters. There is only</p>

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
		<p>one way to meet the Grade 8 Science blueprint parameters, with 60 items. NC could either allow more flexibility within the blueprints or increase the items pool to meet the blueprints as written.</p> <p>The OAI alignment targets of (0.50) for grade 3 (0.40) and grade 7 (0.46) mathematics, and grade 4 (0.47) English language arts/reading tests were not met. These do not meet NC alignment requirements.</p> <p>Will NC address the tests that do not meet alignment targets? Some further explanation is necessary. There was no indication of margin of error for alignment evidence.</p>
<p>Section 2.1 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><u> </u>X_ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While a table is provided for text type and we have Webb’s alignment statistics, we’d like to see a content by cognitive complexity table of specifications for regular education and AA. We view this as important documentation for claiming alignment for all subjects and an important area of content-related validity evidence. The technical manual discusses cognitive complexity at length, but the test items are populated by a content sub-topics-only blueprint. We would like to see how cognitive complexity is used for test construction. • Would like to see counts of items to verify that blueprint percentages are being met, where not included for the regular assessment. • We will need to see evidence that the writing standards have been fully addressed as part of the alignment of assessment system to the CCSS. • The AA is currently 15 items in a fixed-format selected-response test. The limitations imposed by having only 15 items causes substantial challenges for reliability, domain representation, and validity. NC may want to revisit the NCEXTEND1 test design with a goal of supporting specific inferences made from the AA. The diversity and range of students in the AA population makes short fixed tests very difficult to support. 		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>2.2 – Item Development</p> <p>The State uses reasonable and technically sound procedures to develop and select items to assess student achievement based on the State’s academic content standards in terms of content and cognitive process, including higher-order thinking skills.</p>		<p>The pilot survey had some very high percentages of students indicating problems with things like scrolling and selecting answer choices. For example 17% of students in Grade 5 science had trouble selecting answer choices. Has anything been done to correct students’ difficulties, or has the survey been given after the operational tests?</p> <p>The AA assessment design does not include complex item types. The limited time precludes the use of more complex items—without extending overall testing time. NC should consider multiple testing sessions to allow for inclusion of these item types and to extend domain representation. The test description includes high-complexity content that may be difficult to assess using only selected-response items.</p>
<p>Section 2.2 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><u>X</u> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need a fuller description of how the survey results were used for the regular assessment. This is especially pertinent for aspects of the test that might constitute construct irrelevant variance for the students’ scores. 		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>2.3 – Test Administration</p> <p>The State implements policies and procedures for standardized test administration, specifically the State:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has established and communicates to educators clear, thorough and consistent standardized procedures for the administration of its assessments, including administration with accommodations; • Has established procedures to ensure that all individuals responsible for administering the State’s general and alternate assessments receive training on the State’s established procedures for the administration of its assessments; • If the State administers technology-based assessments, the State has defined technology and other related requirements, included technology-based test administration in its standardized procedures for test administration, and established contingency plans to address possible technology challenges during test administration. 		<p>Documents indicate that administration procedures are thorough and standardized for both general ed and alternate assessments.</p>
<p>Section 2.3 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required</p>		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element—REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY	Evidence —REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY(Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence — REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY
<p>2.4 – Monitoring Test Administration</p> <p>The State adequately monitors the administration of its State assessments to ensure that standardized test administration procedures are implemented with fidelity across districts and schools.</p>		<p>For the general assessments, exhibit 33 pp.5-11 describe test security procedures for all test coordinators (Elementary, Middle, High School) and describes roles and responsibilities for maintaining test security in both online and paper/pencil administrations of all involved staff, by job assignment, on pp 20-25. Pp 43-57 also describe test administration procedures across school districts, inclusive of charter schools. Pp 103-109 addresses the same procedures for alternate assessment administrations. Exhibit 104 indicates that Regional Accountability Coordinators are responsible for training school test coordinators. Exhibit 87 describes the content typically covered by these Regional Accountability Coordinators in training test coordinators. Exhibits 105-107 provide guidance and checklists for conducting on site monitoring with fidelity.</p> <p>Although existing written documentation of the State’s procedures for monitoring alternate assessment administration across the State were developed for 2015-16 (Exhibits 70, 71 and 72), ED Staff could not locate any evidence that NC had monitored its alternate assessment administration in the 2014-15 year of test administration in the State. The most recent audit report for monitoring alternate assessments included in the submission was dated 2012 (Exhibit 74).</p> <p>Site visit procedures would be strengthened by conducting unannounced visits. These should supplement scheduled visits or replace them.</p>

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element—REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY	Evidence —REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY(Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence — REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY
		Consider clarifying the procedures for assigning students to participate in test prep activities, such as practice tests, item tryouts, etc.
Section 2.4 Summary Statement—REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY		
__X_ No additional evidence is required		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>2.5 – Test Security</p> <p>The State has implemented and documented an appropriate set of policies and procedures to prevent test irregularities and ensure the integrity of test results through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of any assessment irregularities, including maintaining the security of test materials, proper test preparation guidelines and administration procedures, incident-reporting procedures, consequences for confirmed violations of test security, and requirements for annual training at the district and school levels for all individuals involved in test administration; • Detection of test irregularities; • Remediation following any test security incidents involving any of the State’s assessments; • Investigation of alleged or factual test irregularities. 	<p>Exhibit 109: <i>Caveon Test Security Audit Report</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Caveon, LLC has been in operation since 2003 and is solely focused on test security. In April 2015, Caveon completed an audit of security policies, procedures, and practices of the Accountability Services Division at the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI). <p>Exhibit 110 contains an overview of the Caveon Security Audit for the NCDPI.</p> <p>Exhibit 113: <i>2014–15 WinScan32 Users’ Manual</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WinScan software can detect too many erasure marks on the answer documents and produce an error message. The Regional Accountability Coordinators use the <i>WinScan 32 Users’ Manual</i> to train test coordinators on how to detect excessive erasures on answer sheets using WinScan. 	<p>While there was erasure monitoring for paper forms, Peers would recommend some level of data forensics for the computer administered version.</p> <p>NC should consider updating its procedures for securing online materials as part of the Testing Code of Ethics.</p> <p>The Caveon report, provides guidance to bolster test security—especially with regard to test exposure.</p>
<p>Section 2.5 Summary Statement</p> <p><u> X </u> No additional evidence is required</p>		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>2.6 – Systems for Protecting Data Integrity and Privacy</p> <p>The State has policies and procedures in place to protect the integrity and confidentiality of its test materials, test-related data, and personally identifiable information, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To protect the integrity of its test materials and related data in test development, administration, and storage and use of results; • To secure student-level assessment data and protect student privacy and confidentiality, including guidelines for districts and schools; • To protect personally identifiable information about any individual student in reporting, including defining the minimum number of students necessary to allow reporting of scores for all students and student groups. 		<p>Documentation adequately supported the requirements of this section.</p>
<p>Section 2.6 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required</p>		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

SECTION 3: TECHNICAL QUALITY – VALIDITY

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>3.1 – Overall Validity, including Validity Based on Content</p> <p>The State has documented adequate overall validity evidence for its assessments, and the State’s validity evidence includes evidence that the State’s assessments measure the knowledge and skills specified in the State’s academic content standards, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of adequate alignment between the State’s assessments and the academic content standards the assessments are designed to measure in terms of content (i.e., knowledge and process), the full range of the State’s academic content standards, balance of content, and cognitive complexity; • If the State administers alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards, the assessments show adequate linkage to the State’s academic content standards in terms of content match (i.e., no unrelated content) and the breadth of content and cognitive complexity determined in test design to be appropriate for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. 		<p>The Peers would like to see a more comprehensive validity argument articulated, with related claims and evidence, all linked to purposes and interpretations of test scores for regular ed and alternate assessments.</p> <p>Alignment, while important, is insufficient to establish validity. The essence of the validity argument is to support the adequacy and appropriateness of inferences made from test scores. This section does not describe those inferences in sufficient detail. Clarify the purposes of the assessments and the inferences NC would like to make for regular ed and AA.</p> <p>The alignment report does not include sufficient detail to interpret the indices used for determining “adequate” alignment. We would like to be able to verify the statistics presented and have more information about how the adequacy of alignment specifically relates to the indices provided. The report should provide relevant formulas to allow for critical review. We would also like to see evidence supporting the established thresholds, particularly the 0.5 overall indicator. How was 0.5 settled on as adequate?</p> <p>The alignment study does not address writing for regular ed and AA.</p> <p>The alignment method was not specifically designed for the AA and omits aspects of alignment typically captured for AA (content centrality, performance centrality, content differentiation by grade level, etc.). This would provide an opportunity to explain why decisions were made to limit the test’s length and help us understand the ways the AA supports specific</p>

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
		<p>inferences.</p> <p>See also Peer comments in the Test Development section regarding alignment.</p>
Section 3.1 Summary Statement		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We would like further elaboration of the alignment procedures and formulas as well as evidence to support established alignment thresholds for the regular ed assessments. • We would like clear statements describing the inferences that are expected from the assessment scores and evidence to support those inferences for both regular ed and alternate assessments. 		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>3.2 – Validity Based on Cognitive Processes</p> <p>The State has documented adequate validity evidence that its assessments tap the intended cognitive processes appropriate for each grade level as represented in the State’s academic content standards.</p>	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column—all tests and grades documented on cover sheet</p> <p>Exhibit 56: <i>Technical Report 2012–2015 Assessments—English Language Arts/Reading End-of-Grade 3–8 and End-of-Course English II</i> Appendix 10–A Lexile Linking Technical Report 2013 (PDF pp. 360–434)</p> <p>Exhibit 57: <i>Technical Report 2012–2015 Assessments—Mathematics End-of-Grade 3–8 and End-of-Course Math I</i> Appendix 10–A Quantile Linking Technical Report 2013 (PDF pp. 344–440)</p> <p>Exhibit 58: <i>Technical Report 2012–2015 Assessments—Science End-of-Grade 5, 8 and End-of-Course Biology</i> Appendix 3-D Test Development Process— How Our Teachers Write and Review Test Items (PDF p. 268)</p> <p>Exhibit 48: <i>NCEXTEND1 Alternate Assessment Technical Report 2012–2015</i></p> <p>Exhibit 26: <i>Instructional Shift: Cognitive Complexity</i></p>	<p>Lexile/Quantile analyses are clever, and gives a national perspective. Confirms information from NAEP insofar as NC students tend to perform better than the national average. Peers would like to see parallel analyses for math, ELA, and science (external comparisons and teachers expectations for all subjects).</p> <p>Please assure readers that the sampling of students who took the Lexile was representative of the full state sample.</p> <p>The Lexile and Quintile reports should be updated to reflect the most current cut scores. They are from the prior 4 score level system. This won’t change the correlational evidence, but it may impact the conclusions.</p> <p>We would like to see additional correlational evidence within the NC tests themselves (e.g. convergent/discriminant validity coefficients for reading, math, and science).</p> <p>The scatterplots in the Lexile/Quantile studies seem to have more co-variance than would be expected given the very high correlations. Were there corrections or adjustments made for non-linearity, heteroscedacity, range restriction, or other factors that may be inflating these correlations?</p> <p>It looks as though there may be a ceiling effect for quantile graphs and some scores extend to -300 on the quantile scale. We’d like some explanation of how these were addressed in the final description. For example, were these removed from the correlation computation?</p>

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
		<p>We'd like some explanation for why the Algebra I quantile score reflecting the cut scores on the NC assessments were lower than the Grade 8 quantile scores.</p> <p>Science validity evidence is primarily based on alignment and teacher judgements compared to student scores. We'd like to see an external measure included here as well. We'd also like to see a parallel section related to teacher judgements for math and ELA.</p> <p>The technical manual describes cognitive processes and provides a crosswalk between Webb's and Hess' definitions of cognitive complexity, but there is little evidence presented to link this description with the test content and there is no description of inferences that might be made based on how cognitive processes are addressed.</p>
Section 3.2 Summary Statement		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>3.3 – Validity Based on Internal Structure</p> <p>The State has documented adequate validity evidence that the scoring and reporting structures of its assessments are consistent with the sub-domain structures of the State’s academic content standards on which the intended interpretations and uses of results are based.</p>	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column —all tests and grades documented on cover sheet Exhibit 56: <i>Technical Report 2012–2015 Assessments—English Language Arts/Reading End-of-Grade 3–8 and End-of-Course English II</i> Exhibit 57: <i>Technical Report 2012–2015 Assessments—Mathematics End-of-Grade 3–8 and End-of-Course Math I</i> Exhibit 58: <i>Technical Report 2012–2015 Assessments—Science End-of-Grade 5, 8 and End-of-Course Biology</i></p> <p>There was no evidence of validity provided based on sub-domain structure for the alternate assessment. NC explains, ‘ The NCEXTEND1 assessment does not yield sub-domain reporting due to constraints that are a factor of the assessment design and the assessment population. The assessment has a limited number of items (15 per content area per grade level). Also, the number of students participating at each grade level averages about 1,200 which is an insufficient number of student responses to validly draw conclusions at the sub-domain level. Though the student population is small, it is very diverse with respect to the types and severity of disabilities, again making it difficult to provide sub-domain information with confidence’.</p>	<p>There is sufficient evidence that the test meets unidimensional requirements for reporting a single score.</p> <p>A thorough dimensionality analysis would have included extraction of factors with rotation and discussion of dimensionality.</p> <p>We’d like to have seen more data on the dimensionality analysis—particularly some confirmatory analysis associated with component scores. The component scores (% correct and number correct by sub-domain) are sub-scores. We’d like to see more about the justifiability of these sub-scores (e.g. validity, reliability).</p> <p>The general statement that 30% of variance is accounted for in math by a single factor would have been much better if we had been able to see a table with variance by grade/test.</p> <p>We would also like to see factor analysis to demonstrate that the NCEXTEND1 assessment truly represents a single factor. NC could provide reliability evidence to support the validity of the test based on internal structure.</p>
<p>Section 3.3 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><u>X</u> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We would like to see common and typical output for principal components analyses. We’d like unrotated and rotated factor solutions. We need justification that the sub-domain scores are reasonable. • For the AA we would like to see factor analysis to support the single score obtained. 		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>3.4 – Validity Based on Relationships with Other Variables</p> <p>The State has documented adequate validity evidence that the State’s assessment scores are related as expected with other variables.</p>		<p>The choices of evidence for this element is at times dated, creating inconsistent conclusions. The NAEP comparison from 2011-2013 indicates an increase in the rigor of NC standards, while the revisions to the score categories indicates an overall reduction in rigor. The new “meets criteria, or score 3” is 1 CSEM lower than the prior standard.</p> <p>The only external comparisons made were with Lexile/Quantile and, for science, teacher expectations. Peers would like to see additional evidence related to other external measures. Correlational analyses should include both convergent and discriminant validity coefficients. Tables of correlations should be presented in their entirety.</p> <p>In the AA technical manual pdf pp 180-182, we question how to interpret the results. We would expect a modest correlation between teacher predictions and student achievement level (Table 10.10).</p> <p>We also would expect cross-content correlations (discriminant validity coefficients) to be positive (Table 10.11).</p> <p>We would like to see within content correlations (convergent validity coefficients) in order to interpret (e.g. ELA grade 3 to grade 4).</p> <p>The evidence presented does not allow for adequate interpretation of how the AA scores relate to other measures. In future reports more defensible external measures should be included. Even when comparing NCEXTEND1 scores with other NCEXTEND1 scores, include sufficient context to allow more meaningful interpretations of your data.</p>

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
Section 3.4 Summary Statement		
<p><u>X</u> No additional evidence is required or</p> <p>We would like to see more complete reporting for the evidence that has been submitted, but the evidence presented in the tech manual minimally meets the requirement as stated. See Section 3.2 for further discussion.</p>		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

SECTION 4: TECHNICAL QUALITY - OTHER

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>4.1 – Reliability</p> <p>The State has documented adequate reliability evidence for its assessments for the following measures of reliability for the State’s student population overall and each student group and, if the State’s assessments are implemented in multiple States, for the assessment overall and each student group, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test reliability of the State’s assessments estimated for its student population; • Overall and conditional standard error of measurement of the State’s assessments; • Consistency and accuracy of estimates in categorical classification decisions for the cut scores and achievement levels based on the assessment results; • For computer-adaptive tests, evidence that the assessments produce test forms with adequately precise estimates of a student’s achievement. 	<p>Exhibit 56: <i>Technical Report 2012–2015 Assessments—English Language Arts/Reading End-of-Grade 3–8 and End-of-Course English II</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter 7 Analyses of Operational Data (PDF pp. 104–129) ▪ Section 10.1 Reliability Evidence of ELA EOG and EOC English II (PDF pp. 169–171) ▪ Section 7.3.4 Measurement Precision—Test Information Function and Conditional Standard Error (PDF pp. 113–118) ▪ Section 10.2 Conditional Standard Error at Scale Score Cuts (PDF pp. 171–173) ▪ Section 10.3 Evidence of Classification Consistency (PDF pp. 173–174) <p>Exhibit 57: <i>Technical Report 2012–2015 Assessments—Mathematics End-of-Grade 3–8 and End-of-Course Math I</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter 7 Analyses of Operational Data (PDF pp. 92–120) ▪ Section 10.1 Reliability Evidence of Math EOG and EOC Math I (PDF pp. 164–167) ▪ Section 7.3.4 Measurement Precision—Test Information Function and Conditional Standard Error (PDF pp. 101–106) ▪ Section 10.2 Conditional Standard Error at Scale Score Cuts (PDF pp. 167–169) ▪ Section 10.3 Evidence of Classification Consistency (PDF pp. 169–170) <p>Exhibit 58: <i>Technical Report 2012–2015 Assessments—Science End-of-Grade 5, 8 and End-of-Course Biology</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter 7 Analyses of Operational Data (PDF pp. 94–112) ▪ Section 10.1 Reliability Evidence of Science EOG and EOC Biology (PDF pp. 148–149) ▪ Section 7.3.3 Measurement Precision—Test 	<p>It is helpful to use classification accuracy and consistency methods that account for the number of categories. The multiple binary classifications reported do not address overall accuracy/consistency, nor do they address passing/not passing. The accuracy/consistency rating gets smaller with multiple categories.</p> <p>Test reliability estimates are reasonable but do not include subscore information at all.</p> <p>CSEMs at the cut scores are reasonable.</p> <p>Reliabilities for the AA are unacceptable for most assessments (especially grade 8) to support reporting students’ scores, based on NC’s reliability acceptability criteria (only 1 of 17 tests meets the threshold of 0.85 for 2014-15). This is likely, in part, a function of the length of the test.</p> <p>This finding is especially troubling given the high discriminant validity coefficients. It is also incongruous with the high polyserial correlations of the test items. Reasons for this should be investigated and explained.</p> <p>Consider reporting coefficients of stability.</p> <p>If possible, consider estimating reliability by student sub-groups (disability categories).</p>

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<p>Information Function and Conditional Standard Error (PDF pp. 101–103)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Section 10.2 Conditional Standard Error at Scale Score Cuts (PDF pp. 150–151) <p><i>Exhibit 48: NCEXTEND1 Alternate Assessment Technical Report 2012–2015</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Section 7.3 Test Reliability (PDF pp. 99–101) ▪ Section 10.1 Reliability Evidence of NCEXTEND1 (PDF pp. 146–147) ▪ Section 10.2 Standard Error of Measurement (PDF pp. 147–148) ▪ Section 10.3 Evidence of Classification Consistency (PDF pp. 148–150) 	
Section 4.1 Summary Statement		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subscores are not addressed at all in this section or in previous sections. The NC DPI produces reports with subscores. Subscores require the same kind of evidence for reporting as overall test scores—even if they are only reported as percentages or numbers correct. • Review reliability coefficients for AA and revise the assessments to generate more acceptable reliabilities (or plan for such) prior to the next assessment cycle. 		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>4.2 – Fairness and Accessibility</p> <p>The State has taken reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure that its assessments are accessible to all students and fair across student groups in the design, development and analysis of its assessments.</p>	<p>Exhibit 56: <i>Technical Report 2012–2015 Assessments—English Language Arts/Reading End-of-Grade 3–8 and End-of-Course English II</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appendix 4–A Bias and DIF Review Process (PDF pp. 314–320) <p>Exhibit 57: <i>Technical Report 2012–2015 Assessments—Mathematics End-of-Grade 3–8 and End-of-Course Math I</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appendix 4–A Bias and DIF Review Process (PDF pp. 314–320) <p>Exhibit 58: <i>Technical Report 2012–2015 Assessments—Science End-of-Grade 5, 8 and End-of-Course Biology</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appendix 4–A Bias and DIF Review Process (PDF pp. 277–283) <p>Exhibit 48: NCEXTEND1 <i>Alternate Assessment Technical Report 2012–2015</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Section 10.6 Fairness and Accessibility (PDF pp. 182–186) ▪ Appendix 4–A NCEXTEND1 Form Building & Test Development Process (PDF pp. 377–391) 	<p>The tech manual is inconsistent on the treatment of DIF. Items rated C are indicated in one section as omitted from the operational pool. On the next few pages, the manual indicates only C- items are to be removed. Treatment of DIF should be consistent and documented. We would also like to see the economically disadvantaged DIF included in the tables and we'd like to know if that DIF was used to eliminate items. We'd also like to see an indication of the total numbers of items dropped and the distribution of DIF for items on the operational forms.</p> <p>Consider that heterogeneous groups may not be as effective for conducting item review as homogenous groups of impacted classes.</p> <p>There are multiple accommodations that seem reasonable. We are concerned that home/hospital bound students are exempted rather than accommodated and administered the assessment.</p> <p>The computer-read accommodation is not allowed for any online ELA assessments. We don't understand the logic of withholding this accommodation for students who are no longer being tested for decoding—e.g. the English II EOC. The argument NC provides--that the read aloud accommodation invalidates these tests is not supported with evidence in the provided documents.</p> <p>Allowing typical accommodations that students receive during instruction for assessments may improve the validity of test scores.</p> <p>AA technical items do not have DIF tables provided.</p>
<p>Section 4.2 Summary Statement</p>		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to see DIF statistics presented for economically disadvantaged students and we want clarification on how DIF items are treated once identified (e.g. dropped, kept, revised, etc.). • For AA we want to see item DIF statistics, minimally for male/female, white/black, white/Hispanic, EDS/non-EDS, plus any other group comparisons for which you have 200 persons per group (allowing item data to be accumulated over time). 		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>4.3 – Full Performance Continuum</p> <p>The State has ensured that each assessment provides an adequately precise estimate of student performance across the full performance continuum, including for high- and low-achieving students.</p>		<p>CSEM for cuts scores is sufficient for this requirement. No significant ceiling or floor effects.</p> <p>AA has standard errors of measurement rather than CSEMs, which would indicate the variance across the full scale of the assessment.</p> <p>Classification accuracy is strong for all achievement levels.</p>
<p>Section 4.3 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><u> X </u> No additional evidence is required</p>		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>4.4 – Scoring</p> <p>The State has established and documented standardized scoring procedures and protocols for its assessments that are designed to produce reliable results, facilitate valid score interpretations, and report assessment results in terms of the State’s academic achievement standards.</p>		<p>Hand score reports indicate scorer agreement rather than reliability—you can report reliability.</p> <p>All selected response items for math and science allow for efficient local scoring and rapid reporting.</p> <p>AA score distributions do not look normal. Lower reliability tests seemed more normal than higher reliability tests. Most distributions were flat in the areas of the tests above the chance range. This may indicate a bimodal distribution.</p> <p>Consider loosening the AA administration requirements to add utility of the testing event for instructional purposes.</p> <p>The peers recommend that NC should consider alternate scoring models for the AA. This might improve several of the indicators or provide guidance for how to improve the overall AA.</p>
<p>Section 4.4 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required</p>		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>4.5 – Multiple Assessment Forms</p> <p>If the State administers multiple forms within a content area and grade level, within or across school years, the State ensures that all forms adequately represent the State’s academic content standards and yield consistent score interpretations such that the forms are comparable within and across school years.</p>		<p>Forms mostly follow blueprints (see earlier alignment comment) and are equated within grade/subject. Would be nice to see a reference for the methodology for establishing forms comparability.</p>
<p>Section 4.5 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required</p>		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>4.6 – Multiple Versions of an Assessment</p> <p>If the State administers assessments in multiple versions within a content area, grade level, or school year, the State:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Followed a design and development process to support comparable interpretations of results for students tested across the versions of the assessments; • Documented adequate evidence of comparability of the meaning and interpretations of the assessment results. 		<p>We would like to have seen some empirical comparability analysis among the modes of testing. We do not anticipate that every conceivable device be included, but attending to tablets versus PCs, paper versus computer, would be reasonable. Verify that Macs and PCs render the test in the same way.</p> <p>Braille form is well documented.</p>
<p>Section 4.6 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><u> X </u> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We would like data analysis to ensure comparability across devices. Minimally, this would include paper versus computer and tablet versus PC. We do not expect comparability studies on all brands/screen sizes, etc). A report based on the DPI plan for conducting mode comparability studies would meet this requirement. 		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>4.7 – Technical Analysis and Ongoing Maintenance</p> <p>The State has a system for monitoring and maintaining, and improving as needed, the quality of its assessment system, including clear and technically sound criteria for the analyses of all of the assessments in its assessment system (i.e., general assessments and alternate assessments).</p>	<p>Exhibit 56: <i>Technical Report 2012–2015 Assessments—English Language Arts/Reading End-of-Grade 3–8 and End-of-Course English II</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Section 7.5 Ongoing Form Maintenance and Item Development (PDF p. 129) <p>Exhibit 57: <i>Technical Report 2012–2015 Assessments—Mathematics End-of-Grade 3–8 and End-of-Course Math I</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Section 7.5 Ongoing Form Maintenance and Item Development (PDF p. 115) ▪ Section 7.6 Development of Forms C and O for EOC Math I (PDF p. 116) <p>Exhibit 58: <i>Technical Report 2012–2015 Assessments—Science End-of-Grade 5, 8 and End-of-Course Biology</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Section 7.5 Ongoing Form Maintenance and Item Development (PDF pp. 108–109) ▪ Section 7.6 Development of Forms C and O for EOC Math I (PDF pp. 109–112) 	<p>We would like to see some attention given to how parents, teachers, schools, and districts use the assessment data. Verify that the scores are being used appropriately and that the impact of the testing and accountability system is as intended.</p> <p>Investigate the consequences of implementing NC’s assessment and accountability system on student- and school-level outcomes.</p> <p>Does the system consider stakeholder feedback routinely regarding what the system provides (e.g. every 3 years)?</p> <p>Ongoing analyses and planned studies are not well explicated. A clear validity argument, with claims and evidence, and plans for adding and refreshing evidence would be ideal here.</p>
<p>Section 4.7 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required</p>		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

SECTION 5: INCLUSION OF ALL STUDENTS

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>5.1 – Procedures for Including Students with Disabilities</p> <p>The State has in place procedures to ensure the inclusion of all public elementary and secondary school students with disabilities in the State’s assessment system, including, at a minimum, guidance for individual educational plan (IEP) Teams to inform decisions about student assessments that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides clear explanations of the differences between assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards and assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards, including any effects of State and local policies on a student’s education resulting from taking an alternate assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards; • States that decisions about how to assess students with disabilities must be made by a student’s IEP Team based on each student’s individual needs; • Provides guidelines for determining whether to assess a student on the general assessment without accommodation(s), the general assessment with accommodation(s), or an alternate assessment; • Provides information on accessibility tools and features available to students in general and assessment accommodations available for students with disabilities; • Provides guidance regarding selection of appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities; 		<p>The peers reserved this section for alternate assessments. The prior sections on accessibility and fairness, assessing all students, etc. provided sufficient evidence for this section for the regular assessment.</p> <p>Evidence submitted for the NCEXTEND1 provided sufficient evidence to meet the requirements of this section.</p>

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes instructions that students eligible to be assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards may be from any of the disability categories listed in the IDEA; • Ensures that parents of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are informed that their student’s achievement will be based on alternate academic achievement standards and of any possible consequences of taking the alternate assessments resulting from district or State policy (e.g., ineligibility for a regular high school diploma if the student does not demonstrate proficiency in the content area on the State’s general assessments); • The State has procedures in place to ensure that its implementation of alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities promotes student access to the general curriculum. 		
<p>Section 5.1 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required</p>		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>5.2 – Procedures for including ELs</p> <p>The State has in place procedures to ensure the inclusion of all English learners in public elementary and secondary schools in the State’s assessment system and clearly communicates this information to districts, schools, teachers, and parents, including, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures for determining whether an English learner should be assessed with accommodation(s); • Information on accessibility tools and features available to all students and assessment accommodations available for English learners; • Guidance regarding selection of appropriate accommodations for English learners. 		<p>The evidence presented was thorough. Peers especially like the inclusion of students in the decision to use an accommodation.</p> <p>We also like the use of the 30 day requirement to declare “routine use” of an accommodation.</p> <p>It is important to certify that ELs have sufficient English language skills to be validly assessed on their specific grade level test. Provision of a dictionary may not be sufficient. The rule of 1 year may not allow students to acquire sufficient English language skills to generate a valid test score.</p>
<p>Section 5.2 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required</p>		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>5.3 – Accommodations</p> <p>The State makes available appropriate accommodations and ensures that its assessments are accessible to students with disabilities and English learners. Specifically, the State:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that appropriate accommodations are available for students with disabilities (SWD) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and students covered by Section 504; • Ensures that appropriate accommodations are available for English learners (EL); • Has determined that the accommodations it provides (i) are appropriate and effective for meeting the individual student’s need(s) to participate in the assessments, (ii) do not alter the construct being assessed, and (iii) allow meaningful interpretations of results and comparison of scores for students who need and receive accommodations and students who do not need and do not receive accommodations; • Has a process to individually review and allow exceptional requests for a small number of students who require accommodations beyond those routinely allowed. 		<p>The regular assessment evidence is detailed earlier in the Fairness and Accountability. We’ve provided feedback earlier on the regular assessment. Evidence submitted for the alternate assessment was sufficient to meet the requirements of this section.</p>
<p>Section 5.3 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required</p>		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>5.4 – Monitoring Test Administration for Special Populations</p> <p>The State monitors test administration in its districts and schools to ensure that appropriate assessments, with or without appropriate accommodations, are selected for students with disabilities under IDEA, students covered by Section 504, and English learners so that they are appropriately included in assessments and receive accommodations that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with the State’s policies for accommodations; • Appropriate for addressing a student’s disability or language needs for each assessment administered; • Consistent with accommodations provided to the students during instruction and/or practice; • Consistent with the assessment accommodations identified by a student’s IEP Team or 504 team for students with disabilities, or another process for an English learner; • Administered with fidelity to test administration procedures. 	<p><u>Exhibit 170</u>: <i>Plan for Monitoring the Use of State Testing Accommodations—North Carolina Testing Program</i></p> <p><u>Exhibit 130</u>: <i>Bertie County Accommodations Monitoring On-Site Visit Report—Cover Letter</i></p> <p><u>Exhibit 131</u>: <i>Accommodations Monitoring On-Site Visit Report—Bertie County</i></p> <p><u>Exhibit 132</u>: <i>Sampson County Accommodations Monitoring On-Site Visit Report—Cover Letter</i></p> <p><u>Exhibit 133</u>: <i>Accommodations Monitoring On-Site Visit Report—Sampson County</i></p>	<p>The regular assessment evidence is detailed earlier in the Fairness and Accountability. We’ve provided feedback earlier on the regular assessment.</p> <p>Exhibit 170 makes reference to modified test formats. Please clarify the meaning of this type of accommodation. Is this a reference to alternate forms (e.g. 1 item per page), or is it a modification of test content?</p> <p>Site visit report samples (Exhibits 130-133) did not include references or comment on the alternate assessment administration.</p>
<p>Section 5.4 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required</p>		

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR NORTH CAROLINA

SECTION 6: ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS AND REPORTING

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>6.1 – State Adoption of Academic Achievement Standards for All Students</p> <p>The State formally adopted challenging academic achievement standards in reading/language arts, mathematics and in science for all students, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The State formally adopted academic achievement standards in the required tested grades and, at its option, also alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities; • The State applies its grade-level academic achievement standards to all public elementary and secondary school students enrolled in the grade to which they apply, with the exception of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to whom alternate academic achievement standards may apply; • The State’s academic achievement standards and, as applicable, alternate academic achievement standards, include: (a) At least three levels of achievement, with two for high achievement and a third of lower achievement; (b) descriptions of the competencies associated with each achievement level; and (c) achievement scores that differentiate among the achievement levels. 	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column—all tests and grades documented on cover sheet</p> <p>Exhibit 176: Academic Achievement Standards (cut scores) Options Presented to the NC State Board of Education in September 2013 for discussion and recommended action in October 2013</p> <p>Exhibit 177: Minutes of the North Carolina State Board of Education October 3, 2013</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The State Board of Education voted unanimously to adopt implementation of Option 1 to set the academic achievement standards for Edition 4 of the end-of-grade, end-of-course, and the associated alternate assessments (PDF pp. 13–18, <i>GCS 1—Academic Achievement Standards [Cut Scores] and Achievement Level Descriptors</i>). <p>Exhibit 178: Minutes of the NC State Board of Education March 5–6, 2014 page 45.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The revision of the Academic Achievement Levels to consist of five levels: Superior, Solid, Sufficient, Partial, and Limited, with Level 3 and above meeting proficiency, and Level 4 and above meeting College and Career Readiness; The Level 3 Achievement Descriptors were approved by the State Board on March 6, 2014 (PDF pp. 44–46, <i>GCS 1—Academic Achievement Levels and Descriptors</i>). <p>Exhibit 179: State Board Policy GCS-C-033—Academic Achievement Standards and Achievement Level Descriptors for End-of-Grade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State Board policy that includes the cut scores and the achievement level descriptors for the competencies associated with each achievement level for the end-of-grade assessments in English 	<p>We don’t know how NC operationalized “challenging” achievement standards.</p> <p>The current Level 3 indicates that students are not on track to be college and career ready. They may need academic support to engage in the next grade level. The Level 4 descriptor seems more in line with what we would expect for “challenging” achievement standards. Level 3 seems to be more a minimum competence definition.</p> <p>The Level 3 standards do not include content specific descriptors. Because the Level 3 cut score was selected mathematically after the standards-setting procedures were completed, and operationally used, it does not have the same level of specificity. The descriptors for Levels 1, 2, 4, and 5 all have content specific knowledge, skills, and abilities (the same as the prior Levels 1, 2, 3, 4) described. This means that the old Level 2 description really describes the new Level 3.</p> <p>The scoring model for the NCEXTEND1 complicates standard setting. For the NCEXTEND1, the standards setting method required panelists not to consider guessing; and guessing was adjusted for in the next phase. We would like understand how the panelists could ignore guessing for items where making an incorrect selection is part of the scoring algorithm.</p>

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Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<p>language arts/reading and mathematics at grades 3–8 and science at grades 5 and 8</p> <p>Exhibit 180: <i>State Board Policy GCS-C-036—Academic Achievement Standards and Achievement Level Descriptors for End-of-Course</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State Board policy that includes the cut scores and achievement level descriptors for the competencies associated with each achievement level for the end-of-course assessments in biology, English II, and Math I <p>Exhibit 50: <i>Technical Brief—October 16, 2014</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Details information regarding the five achievement levels, specifically the creation of Level 3—the newest achievement level (PDF p. 16) ▪ <p>Exhibit 182: <i>Assessment Brief—Understanding the Five Achievement Levels</i></p> <p>Exhibit 134: <i>Academic Achievement Standards (cut scores) Options</i></p> <p>Exhibit 135: <i>Minutes of the North Carolina State Board of</i></p> <p>Exhibit 136: <i>Minutes of the NC State Board of Education March 5–6, 2014</i></p> <p>Exhibit 137: <i>Five Achievement Levels—Memo March 7, 2014</i></p> <p>Exhibit 47: <i>Technical Brief—October 16, 2014</i></p>	

Section 6.1 Summary Statement

The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:

- We recommend conducting a new standards setting for both general and AA (or undo the decision to add a scoring level without conducting a standard setting) to generate more accurate, coherent, and defensible achievement level descriptors and to support the declaration of “challenging standards.”

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Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>6.2 – Achievement Standards-Setting</p> <p>The State used a technically sound method and process that involved panelists with appropriate experience and expertise for setting its academic achievement standards and alternate academic achievement standards to ensure they are valid and reliable.</p>	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column —all tests and grades documented on cover sheet</p> <p>Exhibit 183: <i>North Carolina Testing Program-Standard Setting for the End-of-Course and End-of-Grade</i></p> <p>Exhibit 184: <i>North Carolina Testing Program-Standard Setting for the End-of-Course and End-of-Grade Assessments—Technical Report</i></p> <p>Exhibit 140: <i>Standard Setting Report for NCEXTEND1 Assessments, August 27, 2013—Alpine Testing Solutions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This report summarizes the procedure for and the results of standard-setting workshops conducted July 30–August 1, 2013. The standard-setting report is available online (PDF pp. 1-81). 	<p>The original standards setting used an acceptable method for setting cut scores. However, these are not the current operational standards. See 6.1 and our recommendations to conduct a new standards-setting.</p>
<p>Section 6.2 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><u> </u>X The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We recommend conducting a new standards setting for both general and AA (or undo the decision to add a scoring level without doing a standard setting) to generate more accurate, coherent, and defensible achievement level descriptors and to support the declaration of “challenging standards.” 		

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<p>6.3 – Challenging and Aligned Academic Achievement Standards</p> <p>The State’s academic achievement standards are challenging and aligned with the State’s academic content standards such that a high school student who scores at the proficient or above level has mastered what students are expected to know and be able to do by the time they graduate from high school in order to succeed in college and the workforce.</p> <p>If the State has defined alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, the alternate academic achievement standards are linked to the State’s grade-level academic content standards or extended academic content standards, show linkage to different content across grades, and reflect professional judgment of the highest achievement standards possible for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.</p>	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column—all tests and grades documented on cover sheet</p>	<p>See notes under 6.1 and 6.2.</p>
<p>Section 6.3 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We recommend conducting a new standards setting to generate more accurate, coherent, and defensible achievement level descriptors and to support the declaration of “challenging standards.” 		

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Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>6.4 – Reporting</p> <p>The State reports its assessment results, and the reporting facilitates timely, appropriate, credible, and defensible interpretations and uses of results for students tested by parents, educators, State officials, policymakers and other stakeholders, and the public, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The State reports to the public its assessment results on student achievement at each proficiency level and the percentage of students not tested for all students and each student group after each test administration; • The State reports assessment results, including itemized score analyses, to districts and schools so that parents, teachers, principals, and administrators can interpret the results and address the specific academic needs of students, and the State also provides interpretive guides to support appropriate uses of the assessment results; • The State provides for the production and delivery of individual student interpretive, descriptive, and diagnostic reports after each administration of its assessments that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide valid and reliable information regarding a student’s achievement; ○ Report the student’s achievement in terms of the State’s grade-level academic achievement standards (including performance-level descriptors); ○ Provide information to help parents, teachers, and principals interpret the test results and address the specific academic needs of students; ○ Are available in alternate formats (e.g., Braille or large print) upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a native language 		<p>The Peers considered this section with the assumption that prior sections are addressed. The Peers did not comment on the aspects of the assessment that may impact the reporting (e.g. alignment, etc.).</p> <p>Setting two proficiency standards creates issues with interpretation. The idea that NC students can be proficient at grade level, but not on track to be college and career ready is difficult to reconcile. If there are multiple proficiency standards—how many could there be—you could label each category as “proficient” with some description of proficient for what.</p> <p>We do like presenting the data as dichotomous in exhibit 186—it allows for easy interpretation of change scores. Better than simply presenting the percentage of students by performance category.</p> <p>Exhibit 197 could be simplified—lots of ink for the information provided. Many of the stripes in the charts are not necessary and distract from the score interpretation. Drop those that don’t represent cut scores. The error band could be clearer and needs to be better specified (1 CSEM), and we don’t need the bar—just a point is sufficient. Level 3 does not have the same kind of description of content mastery as the other levels—just an adjectival difference.</p> <p>Exhibit 199—Room for improvement could be more consistently labeled “weighted mean incorrect”. These scores should be validated in the same way as the overall scores. The computation of room for improvement is clever for guiding educators’ efforts. It would be more interpretable as a graphic (see example below). In addition, consider a simple cut score for the sub-scores to indicate proficient</p>

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<p>that parents can understand;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The State follows a process and timeline for delivering individual student reports to parents, teachers, and principals as soon as practicable after each test administration. 		<p>performance within a domain. The goal report should be consistent with the information presented on Exhibit 199.</p> <p>Be consistent on reports regarding whether to report both college and career ready (Level 4 cut) and grade proficiency (Level 3). The Level 4 information is on some reports and not others.</p> <p>The Spanish reports are only translated for the back of the report. All of the information related to a parents' particular student on the front is in English. The explanation on the back is important, but less so than the description of what a particular students scores mean. Exhibit 155.</p>
<p>Section 6.4 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required or</p> <p>We still expect validation of subscores and submission of accompanying evidence.</p> <p>Using multiple proficiency level standards (one at Level 3 and another at Level 4) creates issues for interpretation and sends a message that proficiency may mean being less than on track for college and career in NC.</p>		