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NORTH CAROLINA

Application for New Authorities under the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority

December 14, 2018

Part 1: Preliminary Documents

- ❑ Application for Federal Assistance
- ❑ Assurances

Legal Name of Applicant: **North Carolina Department of Public Instruction**	Applicant's Mailing Address: **6307 Mail Service Center** **Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-6307**
Employer Identification Number: **561492826**	Organizational DUNS: **809581762**
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Required Applicant Signatures *(Must include signatures from an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency. Insert additional signature blocks as needed below.)*

To the best of my knowledge and belief, all of the information and data in this application are true and correct.

I further certify that I have read the application, am fully committed to it, and will support its implementation:

Lead Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): **Mark Johnson, State Superintendent**	Agency Name: **North Carolina Department of Public Instruction**
Signature of Lead Agency Authorized Representative: Mark R. Johnson	Date: 12/4/18

Assurances

This form assures that the lead SEA and each SEA applying as a consortium will:

(1) Continue use of the statewide academic assessments in reading/language arts, mathematics, and science required under 34 CFR 200.2(a)(1) and section 1111(b)(2) of the Act--

(i) In all non-participating schools; and

(ii) In all participating schools for which such assessments will be used in addition to innovative assessments for accountability purposes under section 1111(c) of the Act consistent with paragraph (b)(1)(ii) of this section or for evaluation purposes consistent with 34 CFR 200.106(e) during the demonstration authority period;

(2) Ensure that all students and each subgroup of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the Act in participating schools are held to the same challenging State academic standards under section 1111(b)(1) of the Act as all other students, except that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities may be assessed with alternate assessments aligned with alternate academic achievement standards consistent with 34 CFR 200.6 and section 1111(b)(1)(E) and (b)(2)(D) of the Act, and receive the instructional support needed to meet such standards;

(3) Report the following annually to the Secretary, at such time and in such manner as the Secretary may reasonably require:

(i) An update on implementation of the innovative assessment demonstration authority, including--

(A) The SEA's progress against its timeline under 34 CFR 200.106(c) and any outcomes or results from its evaluation and continuous improvement process under 34 CFR 200.106(e); and

(B) If the innovative assessment system is not yet implemented statewide consistent with 34 CFR 200.104(a)(2), a description of the SEA's progress in scaling up the system to additional LEAs or schools consistent with its strategies under 34 CFR 200.106(a)(3)(i), including updated assurances from participating LEAs consistent with paragraph (e)(2) of this section.

(ii) The performance of students in participating schools at the State, LEA, and school level, for all students and disaggregated for each subgroup of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the Act, on the innovative assessment, including academic achievement and participation data required to be reported consistent with section 1111(h) of the Act, except that such data may not reveal any personally identifiable information.

(iii) If the innovative assessment system is not yet implemented statewide, school demographic information, including enrollment and student achievement information, for the subgroups of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the Act, among participating schools and LEAs and for any schools or LEAs that will participate for the first time in the following year, and a description of how the participation of any additional schools or LEAs in that year contributed to progress toward achieving high-quality and consistent implementation across demographically diverse LEAs in the State consistent with the SEA's benchmarks described in 34 CFR 200.106(a)(3)(iii).

(iv) Feedback from teachers, principals and other school leaders, and other stakeholders consulted under paragraph (a)(2) of this section, including parents and students, from participating schools and LEAs about their satisfaction with the innovative assessment system;

(4) Ensure that each participating LEA informs parents of all students in participating schools about the innovative assessment, including the grades and subjects in which the innovative assessment will be administered, and, consistent with section 1112(e)(2)(B) of the Act, at the beginning of each school year during which an innovative assessment will be implemented. Such information must be--

(i) In an understandable and uniform format;

(ii) To the extent practicable, written in a language that parents can understand or, if it is not practicable to provide written translations to a parent with limited English proficiency, be orally translated for such parent; and

(iii) Upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent; and

(5) Coordinate with and provide information to, as applicable, the Institute of Education Sciences for purposes of the progress report described in section 1204(c) of the Act and ongoing dissemination of information under section 1204(m) of the Act.

Lead Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name):	
Mark Johnson, State Superintendent	
Signature:	Date: 12/4/18

Part 2: Project Abstract

☑ Project Abstract

Transitioning to Classroom-centered Assessments: North Carolina Personalized Assessment Tool

In the efforts to increase student achievement, aggregated and disaggregated test data provide critical information for states, districts, and schools to engage in planning and executing actions that create optimal learning environments for all students. Recognizing the importance of this data, North Carolina led the way as it implemented statewide assessments aligned to grade-level content standards in the early 1990s. In the intervening twenty-five years, the assessments have been revised multiple times to align with newly adopted content standards, continuously increasing expectations for students and ensuring students graduate ready for success in college and career.

Though the importance of test data in this process is acknowledged, there is much concern regarding the amount of time students spend on standardized assessments and the usability of the data at the classroom level. In October 2014, to address these concerns the State Board of Education convened the Task Force on Summative Assessment. Comprised of State Board of Education members, North Carolina General Assembly members, local school superintendents, principals, teachers, parents, and business leaders, the Task Force recommended the implementation of a through-grade assessment model to replace the end-of-grade summative assessments. The proposed model consisted of three or four assessments administered throughout the school year, designed to provide teachers and parents with immediate feedback for guiding subsequent instruction.

In response to this recommendation, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) developed a proof of concept for administration in the 2015–16 school year. The proof of concept addressed research questions regarding the feasibility of implementing a through-grade assessment as the statewide summative assessment. The targeted subjects and grades, grade 5 mathematics and grade 6 English language arts/reading, were administered to a representative sample of 4,500 students per grade level.

In the second year of the through-grade study, other schools could participate on a voluntary basis. Program evaluation of the through-grade model during the second year focused on the selected required sample participants, but the participation of additional schools provided broader input. By the third year, the study had a formal name, NC Check-Ins, and the number of volunteers continued to increase. The feedback from educators overwhelmingly supported a through-grade model that supported formative assessment. In addition to the items being aligned to North Carolina Content Standards, these items were selected from the same item bank as the state's end-of-grade assessments. A much-appreciated feature of the NC Check-Ins continues to be the immediate feedback to teachers and access to the test items and student responses for five weeks after the test administration. Key to this access are the detailed classroom reports. The interest and support of NC Check-Ins has continued to grow as has its availability for additional grade levels. For the 2018-19 school year, the NC Check-Ins are being administered to over 50

percent of the students in the state in grades 3-8 for mathematics and grades 4-8 in English language arts/reading.

With the concept fully established as a formative model focusing on giving immediate feedback on student performance to teachers, the next step is to expand this concept to develop a comprehensive assessment system that would support the use of a through-grade model as the summative assessment, as the Task Force recommended. North Carolina's deliberate development and implementation of the NC Check-Ins give a strong foundation for this work, with critical lessons learned:

a. Teachers value immediate feedback, especially the detailed classroom reports with each student's item level information.
b. Results on classroom rosters must be accessible, usable, and understandable.
c. For ELA/reading, the difference across the through-grade assessments is text complexity; however, mathematics has distinct content standards assessed on each test. This makes the issue of locally developed pacing guides not an issue for ELA/reading but an issue for mathematics.

During the sixty months of the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority, a representative sample of students will participate in the pilot the through-grade assessments for mathematics and English language arts/reading. In Year 2, two districts have committed to participating, and for Year 3 and Year 4, districts and charter schools will be recruited or required to participate so there will a representative sample of at least 15 % of the statewide population.

The end goal is to combine the results of the through-grade assessments for an achievement level designation for all students' inclusion in the statewide accountability model. Individual student reports will identify the content standards for which a student needs additional instruction. Coupled with this information will be non-secure assessment items for classroom instructional use and for a personalized approach to learning. This model fulfills not only the implementation of a through-grade assessment system, more importantly, it converges the best of formative, interim, and summative. With this approach, the three assessment types are not providing mis-aligned data. Rather the data is connected throughout the assessment experience for the students and their teachers yielding consistency and focus on the content standards. Continuing its commitment to excellence in test development, North Carolina will develop the North Carolina Personalized Assessment Tool (NCPAT) for statewide implementation in the 2023-24 school year.

Part 3: Project Narrative Attachment

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☑ Project Narrative

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I. Application Requirements

a. Consultation

Evidence that the SEA or consortium has developed an innovative assessment system in collaboration with--

1. **Experts in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of innovative assessment systems, which may include external partners; and**
2. **Affected stakeholders in the State, or in each State in the consortium, including--**
   - **i. Those representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, and other subgroups of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the Act;**
   - **ii. Teachers, principals, and other school leaders;**
   - **iii. Local educational agencies (LEAs);**
   - **iv. Representatives of Indian tribes located in the State;**
   - **v. Students and parents, including parents of children described in paragraph (a)(2)(i) of this section; and**
   - **vi. Civil rights organizations.**

Task Force of Summative Assessment Recommendation

The proposed through-grade assessment for the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority (IADA) is based on a recommendation from the North Carolina State Board of Education's Task Force on Summative Assessment. In January 2014, the North Carolina State Board of Education authorized Chairman William Cobey to establish and appoint a task force for reviewing current summative assessments and to recommend an assessment that embeds feedback to instruction in shorter summative tests that are valid and reliable and can be used for federal accountability and growth requirements.

The Task Force was chaired by Mr. A.L. "Buddy" Collins, the Vice-Chair of the State Board of Education, and co-chaired by Dr. Olivia Oxendine, a State Board of Education member. The task force included educational leaders from K–12, community colleges and higher education institutions, policymakers, district superintendents, a charter school administrator, teachers, business leaders, and parents:

- Mr. A.L. "Buddy" Collins, Chair and State Board of Education Member
- Dr. Olivia Holmes Oxendine, Vice Chair and State Board of Education Member
- Dr. June St. Clair Atkinson, North Carolina State Superintendent
- Ms. Erin Beale, Mathematics Teacher, Davis Drive Middle School, Wake County Schools
- Ms. Pam Biggs, Exceptional Children Consultant, Johnston County Schools
- Dr. Lisa Chapman, Senior Vice President/Chief Academic Officer, North Carolina

Community College System

- Mr. Todd Davis, North Carolina Business Committee on Education Board Member/Century Link Incorporated
- Ms. Ilina Ewen, Marketing Consultant/Parent Representative
- Dr. Wayne Foster, Director, STAR 3 Project, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools
- Ms. Krystal Harris, Third-Grade Teacher, Fairview Heights Elementary School, Richmond County Schools
- Mr. Butch Hudson, Northeast Regional Accountability Coordinator
- Ms. Anna Jarrett, Middle and High School District Lead Mathematics Teacher, Duplin County Schools
- Mr. Michael Landers, English Teacher, Mount Pleasant High School, Cabarrus County Schools
- Mr. Joe Maimone, Headmaster, Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy
- Mr. Larry Obeda, Principal, Lumberton High School, Public Schools of Robeson County
- Ms. Jennifer Robinson, Principal, Westwood Elementary School, Ashe County Schools
- Ms. Roberta Scott, President-Elect, North Carolina School Boards Association/Warren County Schools
- Dr. Robert Taylor, Superintendent, Bladen County Schools
- Dr. Frank Till, Superintendent, Cumberland County Schools
- Dr. Miriam Wagner, Dean, School of Education, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University
- Ms. Hannah Youngblood, Testing/Accountability Director, Johnston County Schools

Throughout the work of the Task Force, a concerted effort was made to engage stakeholders, both as members and as discussants at the meetings. Various experts shared information and opinions on the use, the development, and the technical requirements for a balanced assessment system.

- At the November 2014 meeting, representatives from the North Carolina School Superintendents' Association, the North Carolina School Boards Association, the North Carolina Association of Educators, and the North Carolina Parent Teacher Association shared their perspectives on testing in North Carolina.
- At the February 2015 meeting, the North Chamber, the state's largest, broad-based business advocacy organization, and BEST NC, a non-profit, non-partisan coalition of business leaders committed to improving North Carolina's education system through policy and advocacy, shared their perspectives.
- The April 2015 meeting included presentations by the North Carolina Science, Mathematics, and Technology Education Center and the New Hampshire Department of Education, a leader in innovative assessments which was piloting its performance-based assessment (PACE). Also, at the April meeting, the North Carolina Department of Public

Instruction staff shared the feedback from the North Carolina Technical Advisors, a standing group of experts on testing and accountability who meet bi-annually with the Accountability Services team.

At the end of gathering information from experts and stakeholders, the Task Force endorsed a proof of concept to study the feasibility of replacing the end-of-grade assessments with a through-grade model (Appendix D). The success of the proof of concept and the resulting full development of the NC Check-Ins, an interim assessment administered three times a year with data that supports classroom formative instruction, has been well received by teachers and other educators. Though the NC Check-Ins has not replaced the summative assessment, it has become a most valued tool voluntarily used by over 50% of students in the fall of 2018.

The enthusiasm for the NC Check-Ins is evident in the two most asked questions by teachers and local staff: (1) When will the NC Check-Ins be expanded to other grade levels and subjects? and (2) Can the NC Check-Ins replace the end-of-grade assessment?

When will the NC Check-Ins be expanded to other grade levels?

The expansion to other grade levels has been fulfilled. Effective with the 2018–19 school year, NC Check-Ins are available, on a voluntary basis, for schools and districts in grades 3–8 for mathematics and grades 4–8 for English language arts/reading. North Carolina has a comprehensive reading program, Read to Achieve, at grade 3 and has chosen not to expand the NC Check-Ins to grade 3 at this time. However, there are requests for NC Check-Ins to be available in grade 3, as well as requests to expand to the high school end-of-course content areas.

Can the NC Check-Ins replace the end-of-grade assessment?

The response to inquiries of whether NC Check-Ins can replace the end-of-grade assessments has been measured, with emphasis on the obvious shifts in design, particularly with respect to administration protocol, reporting, and usability. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction has repeatedly engaged the North Carolina Technical Advisors in these discussions in anticipation of a decision to pursue a through-grade model based on NC Check-Ins to function as the statewide summative assessment for the accountability model.

At the September 2017 meeting, the Department's psychometric team presented an update on the NC Check-Ins to the technical advisors. The feedback on whether to develop a summative assessment based on the NC Check-Ins model included the following:

- In the design, have the approach of doing no harm, and consider the unintended consequences of having early data on student performance. Is it possible lower performing students would not be prioritized as the accumulative data indicated they would not be proficient by year end?

- Consider a design of having a through-grade model that culminates in a summative assessment at the end of the year. This may be one way to accommodate transitory students who are not present for all three of the administrations throughout the year.
- Address the impact on the growth analysis (EVAAS) that is used in the North Carolina accountability model.

The consistent recommendation throughout the discussion was to have a detailed development plan, being mindful of the possible challenges. The technical advisors noted the challenge in developing a through-grade model for a summative rating. Having contributed to the design and development of the NC Check-Ins and the statewide assessments, the technical advisors have a thorough understanding of the purpose and the uses of both.

External Input on Through-Grade Model

As the NCDPI considered applying for the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority, input from external stakeholders was obtained, beginning with a stakeholders' meeting on December 3, 2018. The following groups were invited to participate:

- NC Association of School Administrators
- Professional Educators of NC
- New Teacher Center
- NC Congress of Parents and Teachers
- NC School Boards Association
- Personnel Administrators of NC
- SERVE Center at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro
- Classroom Teachers Association of NC
- The University of NC General Administration
- NC Business Committee for Education
- Teach for America
- NC Community College System
- NC Association of Educators
- Regional Education Service Alliances
- The Centers for Quality Teaching and Learning
- Classroom Teachers Association of NC
- Southeast Comprehensive Center
- Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
- BEST NC
- NC Music Educators Association
- NC National Network of State Teachers of the Year (NSTOY)
- NC Justice Center
- The Public School Forum of NC
- The John Locke Foundation

The meeting included a presentation on the recommendation of the Task Force on Summative Assessment, the resulting proof of concept study, and the intention to apply for the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority. As the design, development timeline, requirements, and targeted outcomes of the proposed innovative assessment were discussed, the stakeholders provided suggestions and identified areas that needed additional clarification.

It was suggested the overall process and requirements throughout the demonstration period be clearly communicated, particularly the requirement that in Year 2 and Year 3 the participating schools will take both the end-of-grade assessment and the innovative pilot. Stakeholders stressed it is critical to define the expectations of comparability and the analyses that will be conducted to show the innovative assessment is comparable to the end-of-grade assessments.

Noting the importance of the professional development and training that was provided for NC Check-Ins, the stakeholders emphasized the importance of continuing to engage with teachers on how to use the data formatively, so classroom instruction is optimized. This discussion led to the need for a clearly stated purpose, particularly as teachers and others in the education community understand formative, interim, and summative assessments. It was noted that the purpose of a through-grade would have to be defined. The required communication to teachers and parents was stressed repeatedly, particularly as this would be the first major change to the North Carolina Testing Program in twenty-five years.

With respect to the design of the mathematics assessments, the stakeholders inquired whether there would be a required state pacing guide or if districts would continue to determine the pacing of the delivery of the content standards throughout the school year. This was not perceived as an insurmountable challenge, but the stakeholders noted this was an area that would require systems and a structure to support the delivery of the instruction. Related to this was a discussion on personalized learning and the need to think carefully on how the assessment would support a personalized learning environment. Clarity of whether personalized learning allows administrations to occur when students determine they are ready or when the teacher determines they are ready was noted.

Much discussion was centered on whether the model should be three through-grade assessments only or three through-grade assessments with a summative at the end of the year for students who did not meet proficiency on the three through-grade assessments. The stakeholders cited the importance of protecting the instructional days and cautioned against having the third assessment not close to the end of the school year. Currently, statewide end-of-grade tests are administered in the last 10 days for a school with a traditional calendar and the last five days for a school with a block or semester calendar.

Overall the stakeholders did not express strong concern about proceeding with the development of the IADA application; however, their comments and discussions were noteworthy and contributed to this application.

On December 4, 2018, a webinar was held to gather feedback from the members of the Testing and Growth Advisory Council, a group of superintendents and district-level testing and accountability directors who meet twice a year to provide input to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction on testing, accountability, and growth analyses. For this webinar, participation was open to any superintendent or district-level educators to increase the opportunity for input and feedback. Though a webinar is not as engaging as a face-to-face meeting, the approximately sixty-six participants did have the opportunity to pose questions and make comments. As expected, much of the feedback was like that of the stakeholders that met the previous day, with emphasis on pacing guides for mathematics and the logistical considerations of having three assessments throughout the year as opposed to one summative assessment at the end of the year. Also noted was the logistics involved to include students who may have not been in membership for one or more of the three through-grade assessments. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction was able to capture these questions and comments for further consideration as this application was finalized (Appendix E).

In addition to input from the technical advisors, the stakeholders, and the Testing and Growth Advisory webinar, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction presented to the State Board of Education on December 5, 2018. Very familiar with the recommendations of the Task Force and the development and implementation of the NC Check-Ins, the State Board of Education stressed the opportunity eventually to include innovative items, such as performance tasks, in the through-grade assessments. The request for performance tasks was also noted in both the stakeholders meeting and the Testing and Growth webinar.

Using the collective input from external partners and stakeholders, the NCDPI is proceeding with an application for the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority. Continuing to provide opportunities for feedback will be critical to developing a through-grade model.

b. Innovative assessment system.

A demonstration that the innovative assessment system does or will—

1. **Meet the requirements of section 1111(b)(2)(B) of the Act, except that an innovative assessment--**
    i. **Need not be the same assessment administered to all public elementary and secondary school students in the State during the demonstration authority period described in 34 CFR 200.104(b)(2) or extension period described in 34 CFR 200.108 and prior to statewide use consistent with 34 CFR 200.107, if the innovative assessment system will be administered initially to all students in participating schools within a participating LEA, provided that the statewide academic assessments under 34 CFR 200.2(a)(1) and section 1111(b)(2) of the Act are administered to all students in any non-**

participating LEA or any non-participating school within a participating LEA; and

ii. Need not be administered annually in each of grades 3-8 and at least once in grades 9-12 in the case of reading/language arts and mathematics assessments, and at least once in grades 3-5, 6-9, and 10-12 in the case of science assessments, so long as the statewide academic assessments under 34 CFR 200.2(a)(1) and section 1111(b)(2) of the Act are administered in any required grade and subject under 34 CFR 200.5(a)(1) in which the SEA does not choose to implement an innovative assessment;

North Carolina will continue to meet all the requirements of section 1111(b)(2)(B) of Every Student Succeeds Act. As such, all students in non-participating schools will continue to take the North Carolina end-of-grade tests in mathematics (grades 3–8) and English language arts/reading (grades 3–8). The end-of-grade assessments for science at grades 5 and 8 will continue as currently administered and are not considered part of this application for the IADA. Schools that administer the end-of-course assessments in NC Math 1, NC Math 3, English II, and biology will continue to administer these assessments and will not participate in the IADA. Expansion of the innovative assessment to the end-of-course assessments or science assessments at grades 5 and 8 will not be considered until the fulfillment of the IADA for grades 3–8 in mathematics and English language arts/reading in 2023–24.

With respect to the requirements of section 1111(b)(2)(B) of Every Student Succeeds Act, North Carolina will ensure the innovative assessment system:

- is aligned to the same challenging state-adopted academic standards and will provide coherent and timely information about student attainment of such standards and whether the student is performing at the student's grade level;
- is used for purposes for which such assessments are valid and reliable, consistent with relevant, nationally recognized professional and technical testing standards, objectively measure academic achievement, knowledge, and skills, and be tests that do not evaluate or assess personal or family beliefs and attitudes, or publicly disclose personally identifiable information;
- is of adequate technical quality for each purpose required under the Act and consistent with the requirements of this section, the evidence of which shall be made public, including on the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's website;
- involves multiple up-to-date measures of student academic achievement, including measures that assess higher order thinking skills and understanding, which may include measures of student academic growth;
- measures the breadth and depth of the state-adopted content standards and has such claim validated by an external alignment study;
- provides appropriate accommodations, such as interoperability with and ability to use, assistive technology for students with disabilities (as defined in section 602[3] of the

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [20 U.S.C. 1401[3]), and students with disabilities who are provided accommodations under an Act other than the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, necessary to measure academic achievement;

- is inclusive of English learners, who shall be assessed in a valid and reliable manner and provided appropriate accommodations on the assessments, and is administered to English learners who are in their first year in a U.S. school, and include the results of such administrations as stated in North Carolina's Every Student Succeeds Act state plan;
- is administered through multiple statewide interim assessments during the school year that result in a single summative score that provides valid, reliable, and transparent information on student achievement and growth;
- provides student-level information on achievement on the state-adopted content standards with an academic achievement level designation and an accompanying academic level descriptor that allows parents, teachers, principals, and other school leaders to understand and address the specific academic needs of students;
- provides score reports to parents, teachers, principals, and other school leaders as soon as practicable after the assessment is given, and the score reports are understandable;
- disaggregates data at each level (state, district, and school) by each major racial and ethnic group, economically disadvantaged students as compared to students who are not economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities compared to students without disabilities, English proficiency status, gender, and migrant status;
- reports data in compliance with North Carolina's requirements to protect student privacy and to be statistically valid; and
- is developed, to the extent practicable, using the principles of universal design.

With an approved exception for the selected grades in IADA's participating schools, the students in the sampled schools/districts will only participate in the innovative assessment for designated grades beginning in Year 4 of the demonstration authority period. All students not participating in the IADA in Year 4, both for schools/districts with some participating schools and schools/districts with no participating schools, will continue to participate in the statewide end-of-grade assessments for mathematics and English language arts/reading.

2.

i. Align with the challenging State academic content standards under section 1111(b)(1) of the Act, including the depth and breadth of such standards, for the grade in which a student is enrolled; and

ii. May measure a student's academic proficiency and growth using items above or below the student's grade level so long as, for purposes of meeting the requirements for reporting and school accountability under sections 1111(c) and 1111(h) of the Act and paragraphs (b)(3) and (b)(7)-(9) of this section, the State measures each student's academic proficiency based on the challenging State academic standards for the grade in which the student is enrolled;

3. **Express student results or competencies consistent with the challenging State academic achievement standards under section 1111(b)(1) of the Act and identify which students are not making sufficient progress toward, and attaining, grade-level proficiency on such standards;**

North Carolina's purpose in developing an innovative through-grade assessment model that is administered in trimester throughout the school year rather than at the end of the school year is to improve the usefulness and timeliness of test results, so teachers may better personalize learning for students. This approach is not intended to restrict or narrow the instructional content. The purpose, as with the current end-of-grade assessments, is to measure student learning on the full breadth and depth of the grade-level content standards. The plan is to use only grade-level aligned items in the development of the North Carolina Personalized Assessment Tool (NCPAT).

A benefit of the proposed through-grade model is the opportunity to include more items per content standard, and as a result, report student-level strengths and weaknesses for each assessed content standard for mathematics and for each type of reading text, informational or literature for English language arts/reading. As a leader in content standard-aligned assessments for the past twenty-five years, North Carolina's test development team has the knowledge and capacity to do this and to provide usable data for improving student achievement.

For each student, the innovative assessment will continue to report challenging academic achievement standards that address whether sufficient progress toward attaining grade-level content standards is being made. The current assessments have five academic achievement standards:

- Achievement Level 1: Students performing at this level have limited command of the knowledge and skills contained in the state-adopted content standards.
- Achievement Level 2: Students performing at this level have partial command of the knowledge and skills contained in the state-adopted content standards.
- Achievement Level 3: Students performing at this level have sufficient command of the knowledge and skills contained in the state-adopted content standards.
- Achievement Level 4: Students performing at this level have solid command of the knowledge and skills contained in the state-adopted content standards.
- Achievement Level 5: Students performing at this level have superior command of the knowledge and skills contained in the state-adopted content standards.

At the end of Year 4 for Grades 3, 4, and 6 mathematics and for Grades 5, 6, and 7 English language arts/reading, the through-grade assessments will be linked to the current end-of-grade assessments. This will support the reporting of the above academic achievement levels for students participating only in the NCPAT. At the end of Year 5, an external vendor will facilitate a standard setting panel to recommend academic achievement standards and achievement level

descriptors for the NCPAT. The recommended achievement standards will be presented to the State Board of Education for approval in August 2024 for inclusion in the 2023-24 school year accountability reports.

4.

i. Generate results, including annual summative determinations as defined in paragraph (b)(7) of this section, that are valid, reliable, and comparable for all students and for each subgroup of students described in 34 CFR 200.2(b)(11)(i)(A)-(I) and sections 1111(b)(2)(B)(xi) and 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii) of the Act, to the results generated by the State academic assessments described in 34 CFR 200.2(a)(1) and section 1111(b)(2) of the Act for such students. Consistent with the SEA's or consortium's evaluation plan under 34 CFR 200.106(e), the SEA must plan to annually determine comparability during each year of its demonstration authority period in one of the following ways:

A. Administering full assessments from both the innovative and statewide assessment systems to all students enrolled in participating schools, such that at least once in any grade span (i.e., 3-5, 6-8, or 9-12) and subject for which there is an innovative assessment, a statewide assessment in the same subject would also be administered to all such students. As part of this determination, the innovative assessment and statewide assessment need not be administered to an individual student in the same school year.

B. Administering full assessments from both the innovative and statewide assessment systems to a demographically representative sample of all students and subgroups of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the Act, from among those students enrolled in participating schools, such that at least once in any grade span (i.e., 3-5, 6-8, or 9-12) and subject for which there is an innovative assessment, a statewide assessment in the same subject would also be administered in the same school year to all students included in the sample.

C. Including, as a significant portion of the innovative assessment system in each required grade and subject in which both an innovative and statewide assessment are administered, items or performance tasks from the statewide assessment system that, at a minimum, have been previously pilot tested or field tested for use in the statewide assessment system.

D. Including, as a significant portion of the statewide assessment system in each required grade and subject in which both an innovative and statewide assessment are administered, items or performance tasks from the innovative assessment system that, at a minimum, have been previously pilot tested or field tested for use in the innovative assessment system.

E. An alternative method for demonstrating comparability that an SEA can demonstrate will provide for an equally rigorous and statistically valid comparison between student performance on the innovative assessment and the statewide assessment, including for each subgroup of students described in 34 CFR 200.2(b)(11)(i)(A)-(I) and sections 1111(b)(2)(B)(xi) and 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii) of the Act; and

ii. Generate results, including annual summative determinations as defined in paragraph (b)(7) of this section, that are valid, reliable, and comparable, for all students and for each subgroup of students described in 34 CFR 200.2(b)(11)(i)(A)-(I) and sections 1111(b)(2)(B)(xi) and 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii) of the Act, among participating schools and LEAs in the innovative assessment demonstration authority. Consistent with the SEA's or consortium's evaluation plan under 34 CFR 200.106(e), the SEA must plan to annually determine comparability during each year of its demonstration authority period;

North Carolina's approach to the design and development of the NCPAT is to continue with the processes and procedures that have ensured valid and reliable end-of-grade assessments in mathematics and English language arts/reading. This includes a focus on item development that is aligned to the state-adopted content standards and an adherence to technically sound statistical processes. Meeting these expectations is critical, as during the demonstration authority period (Year 4 only) the students participating in the NCPAT are not required to take the current end-of-grade assessments.

The results of the NCPAT in Year 4 will be used in the statewide accountability system for meaningful differentiation across schools. With this requirement, the NCPDI will ensure results, including annual summative determinations as defined in paragraph (b)(7) of this section, that are valid, reliable, and comparable for all students and for each subgroup of students described in 34 CFR 200.2(b)(11)(i)(A)-(I) and sections 1111(b)(2)(B)(xi) and 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii) of the Act, to the results generated by the State academic assessments described in 34 CFR 200.2(a)(1) and section 1111(b)(2) of the Act for such students.

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction will verify comparability between the two assessments: the current end-of-grade and the NCPAT. English language arts/reading test specifications for the NCPAT (Year 1) will be reviewed for alignment to the test specifications for the current end-of-grade assessments in grades 3–8. Mathematics test specifications for the NCPAT (Year 1) will be reviewed to ensure breadth and depth of coverage of the state-adopted content standards. Unlike the end-of-grade assessments that include items for all assessed content standards, the content standards will be distributed across the three NCPAT assessments. The delivery is the difference, not the overall content of the assessments. The NCPAT will assess the breadth and the depth of the challenging state-adopted content standards.

As detailed in the Project Narrative, the participating schools will administer the NCPAT for specific grade levels in Year 2 and Year 3. For example, in Year 2 the mathematics NCPAT is administered at grade 4 only in a participating school with grades 3–5. However, students in all grade levels will participate in the statewide end-of-grade assessments. This will provide comparability data for the grade 4 students who take both assessments. This continues for Year 3 when the innovative assessment is expanded to additional grade levels. As with Year 2, not all grade levels in the grade span at participating schools will participate in the NCPAT, but all students will participate in the statewide end-of-grade assessments. Thus, in Year 4 when the NCPAT data is used for participating schools' accountability data, there will be two years of comparability data for the NCPAT and the statewide end-of-grade assessments to affirm high expectations for all students are maintained and the resulting academic achievement levels are consistent with those for the statewide end-of-grade summative assessments.

North Carolina uses an embedded field test model. All items for the NCPAT will be field tested in available embedded slots on the current end-of-grade assessments. This methodology will allow the NCPAT items to be placed on the same scale as the end-of-grade items, supporting comparability and rigor. The development for the NCPAT items will follow the same established protocol as the current end-of-grade item development. The process begins with contracting teachers to write items to specific content standards, with the subsequent process including multiple reviews by teachers and experts in content, students with disabilities, and English learners. The reviewers attend to the alignment to content and the accessibility by all students.

After the initial field test, linking items will be embedded in the NCPAT and statewide end-of-grade assessments. These linking items will be used to statistically link the NCPAT and the current end-of-grade assessments and to establish one scale for both the NCPAT and the statewide end-of-grade assessments. Beyond Year 4, a field test plan will be developed under the through-grade model to replenish the item bank for future form development.

5.

- **i. Provide for the participation of all students, including children with disabilities and English learners;**
- **ii. Be accessible to all students by incorporating the principles of universal design for learning, to the extent practicable, consistent with 34 CFR 200.2(b)(2)(ii); and**
- **iii. Provide appropriate accommodations consistent with 34 CFR 200.6(b) and (f)(1)(i) and section 1111(b)(2)(B)(vii) of the Act;**

The innovative assessment will be developed and implemented with the same documented processes and procedures as those North Carolina adheres to for its statewide summative assessments. This includes processes that ensure universal design and accessibility by all students, including students with disabilities and English learners.

North Carolina General Statute §115C-174.12 states, "(a) . . . The State Board of Education's policies regarding the testing of children with disabilities shall: (i) provide broad accommodations and alternate methods of assessment that are consistent with a student's Individualized Education Program and Section 504 (29 U.S.C. § 794) plans…." State Board of Education (SBE) policy TEST-011 states that "students identified as English learners shall participate in the statewide testing program using either the standard test administration or the standard test administration with accommodations."

The local education agency (LEA)/charter school must ensure all students, including those identified as students with disabilities or English learners who have the appropriate documentation, (1) participate in the standard administration of a North Carolina test and, if eligible, (2) receive appropriate accommodation(s) during the administration of the test. To ensure test results are valid, all school personnel must follow the appropriate procedures for the use of accommodations by students with disabilities and English learners. To ensure communication of the appropriate procedures, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction publishes the *Testing Students with Disabilities* and *Guidelines for Testing Students Identified as English Learners* documents annually.

Individualized Education Program teams and English learner teams/committees must review these publications before making decisions about testing accommodations for students identified as students with disabilities and English learners. Districts and charter school test coordinators must train local staff on the material in these documents and disseminate any subsequent published supplements or updates to these publications that provide additional information for decision making in testing students identified as a student with disabilities or an English learner.

Standardized test procedures for students with disabilities and English learners require testing accommodations and corresponding administrative procedures be developed and implemented to ensure individual student needs are met, and at the same time, maintain sufficient uniformity of the test administration to retain test validity and to fulfill the requirements of testing for accountability. One of the functions of state tests is to generate information for accountability.

Among the accommodations students with disabilities may need are (a) special print versions, (b) assistive technology devices/special test arrangements, and/or (c) a special test environment. A student may require the combined use of any number of these accommodations to obtain access to a given test. Accommodations designated for the tests should be consistent with accommodations used routinely during classroom instruction and similar classroom assessments. It is vital for students with disabilities to receive accommodations on state-mandated tests that allow them to demonstrate their true abilities; however, students must not receive unnecessary, inappropriate, or unfamiliar accommodations.

The accommodations available for English learners are (1) *Word-to-Word Bilingual (English/Native Language) Dictionary/Electronic Translator*, (2) *Multiple Testing Sessions*, (3)

Scheduled Extended Time, (4) *Testing in a Separate Room*, (5) *Student Reads Test Aloud to Self*, and (7) *Test Read Aloud (in English)*. Use of the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation during the administration of a state test that measures reading comprehension invalidates the results from the test.

For any state-mandated test, accommodations must (1) be documented in the student's current Individualized Education Program or Section 504 Plan, and (2) the documentation must reflect their routine use during instruction and similar classroom assessments that measure the same construct. If a student has not been provided the accommodations documented on the Individualized Education Program or Section 504 Plan during instruction, the student is still to receive the accommodations specified in the current Individualized Education Program or Section 504 Plan for the state-mandated tests. However, the use of testing accommodations that were not routinely used during instruction or similar classroom assessments may constitute a misadministration and result in an invalid test score. Moreover, student performance could be adversely affected because the student did not become familiar with the accommodations before testing. In such cases, a local investigation must be conducted to determine if the student was adversely affected by the provision of the testing accommodations and if a misadministration should be declared.

Testing accommodations and corresponding administrative procedures ensure individual student needs are met and maintain sufficient uniformity of the test administration to maintain test validity and to fulfill the requirements of testing for accountability. A student may require the combined use of any accommodations to obtain access to a given test.

6. **For purposes of the State accountability system consistent with section 1111(c)(4)(E) of the Act, annually measure in each participating school progress on the Academic Achievement indicator under section 1111(c)(4)(B) of the Act of at least 95 percent of all students, and 95 percent of students in each subgroup of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the Act, who are required to take such assessments consistent with paragraph (b)(1)(ii) of this section;**

North Carolina State Board of Education policy ACCT-021 states "all eligible students in membership (i.e., enrolled in a school) at grades 3 through 8 and in high school courses in which an end-of-course assessment is administered shall participate in the state assessment program adopted by the State Board of Education." The policy specifies the end-of-grade assessments for grades 3–8 in mathematics, grades 3–8 in English language arts/reading, grades 5 and 8 in science, and the end-of-course assessments in NC Math 1, NC Math 3, English II, and biology. For accountability calculations, the denominator for the percent proficient is either the number of students who participate in the assessment or 95% of the student population, whichever is greater. During the demonstration period, all eligible students will participate in the assessments aligned to the North Carolina adopted content standards, and the results of the assessments will

be included in the state accountability model in the reporting of School Performance Grades, as included and approved in the Every Student Succeeds Act state plan.

7. **Generate an annual summative determination of achievement, using the annual data from the innovative assessment, for each student in a participating school in the demonstration authority that describes--**
    i. **The student's mastery of the challenging State academic standards under section 1111(b)(1) of the Act for the grade in which the student is enrolled; or**
    ii. **In the case of a student with the most significant cognitive disabilities assessed with an alternate assessment aligned with alternate academic achievement standards under section 1111(b)(1)(E) of the Act, the student's mastery of those standards;**

All students in the participating schools will take the innovative assessment that is aligned to grade-level content standards and will receive a summative score by combining results from all three NCPAT through-grade assessments administered during the school year. As adopted by the State Board of Education, the summative score is reported as follows:

- Achievement Level 1: Students performing at this level have limited command of the knowledge and skills contained in the state-adopted content standards.
- Achievement Level 2: Students performing at this level have partial command of the knowledge and skills contained in the state-adopted content standards.
- Achievement Level 3: Students performing at this level have sufficient command of the knowledge and skills contained in the state-adopted content standards.
- Achievement Level 4: Students performing at this level have solid command of the knowledge and skills contained in the state-adopted content standards.
- Achievement Level 5: Students performing at this level have superior command of the knowledge and skills contained in the state-adopted content standards.

Each achievement level has an accompanying descriptor that specifies what students know and can do. At the end of Year 5, standard setting will be facilitated by an external vendor. Panels of teachers and content experts will participate in the standard setting process, and the resulting recommended academic achievement standards and descriptors will be presented to the State Board of Education in August 2024.

To maintain the technical quality of the standard setting process and to affirm the validity and reliability of the recommended achievement standards and descriptors, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction will require the vendor to facilitate a valid standard setting process that includes panelists from a demographically representative group of content experts. The process will be researched-based with an external evaluator to affirm objectivity and adherence to technical standards of quality and measurement.

The academic achievement standards will provide each student's mastery of the challenging State academic standards under section 1111(b)(1) of the Act for the grade in which the student is enrolled.

8. **Provide disaggregated results by each subgroup of students described in 34 CFR 200.2(b)(11)(i)(A)-(I) and sections 1111(b)(2)(B)(xi) and 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii) of the Act, including timely data for teachers, principals and other school leaders, students, and parents consistent with 34 CFR 200.8 and section 1111(b)(2)(B)(x) and (xii) and section 1111(h) of the Act, and provide results to parents in a manner consistent with paragraph (b)(4)(i) of this section and part 200.2(e);**

As with the statewide end-of-grade assessments, the innovative assessment results will be disaggregated by each subgroup of students as described in 34 CFR 200.2(b)(11)(i)(A)-(I) and sections 1111(b)(2)(B)(xi) and 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii) of the Act. The disaggregated results for ethnicities, students with disabilities, English learners, economically disadvantaged, migrant status, status as a homeless student, status as a student in foster care, and status as a military-connected student are posted on the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's website and included in the NC Report Card.

Classroom rosters, school reports, district reports, and individual student reports will be provided for each through-grade innovative assessment and for the summative assessment at the end of the school year. Having reports throughout the school year will inform teachers of students' current performance on the selected subset of content standards. Likewise, the Individual Student Reports for each through-grade assessment and for the year-end summative assessment will provide understandable information that supports parents as they collaborate with their students' teachers on how to best address weaknesses.

As the state of North Carolina moves towards competency-based learning, the North Carolina Personalized Assessment Tool could also serve as evidence of standard level mastery throughout the year.

9. **Provide an unbiased, rational, and consistent determination of progress toward the State's long-term goals for academic achievement under section 1111(c)(4)(A) of the Act for all students and each subgroup of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the Act and a comparable measure of student performance on the Academic Achievement indicator under section 1111(c)(4)(B) of the Act for participating schools relative to non-participating schools so that the SEA may validly and reliably aggregate data from the system for purposes of meeting requirements for--**
    i. **Accountability under sections 1003 and 1111(c) and (d) of the Act, including how the SEA will identify participating and non-participating schools in a**

consistent manner for comprehensive and targeted support and improvement under section 1111(c)(4)(D) of the Act; and

ii. Reporting on State and LEA report cards under section 1111(h) of the Act.

The foundation for this application is the Task Force on Summative Assessment's recommendation to develop a through-grade assessment that fulfills the requirements specified in Every Student Succeed Act. The intention is not to minimize or dilute the requirements for school accountability. The data from the NCPAT in Year 4 and Year 5 will be included in the statewide accountability model and included in the data to determine unbiased, rational, and consistent determination of progress toward the State's long-term goals for academic achievement under section 1111(c)(4)(A) of the Act for all students and each subgroup of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the Act and a comparable measure of student performance on the Academic Achievement indicator under section 1111(c)(4)(B) of the Act. All students' data will be included in the annual accountability reports and on the NC Report Card throughout the Demonstration Authority period.

The data for participating and non-participating schools will be validly and reliably included in the accountability system so all schools will have a meaningful designation as stated in North Carolina's Every Student Succeeds Act state plan with a reported interim progress target for each year of the Demonstrated Authority period. Eligibility for identification as a comprehensive school of support and improvement or a targeted school of support and improvement will apply for participating schools and non-participating schools as required by section 1111(c)(4)(D) of the Act.

The reporting on the NC Report Card and local report cards will comply with section 1111(h) of the Act. The information on the NC Report Card is presented in an understandable and concise manner and is available on the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's website so all parents and other stakeholders have access.

c. Assurances.

The required assurances are signed by the State Superintendent of North Carolina, Mark Johnson, (see pages 3–4). Also included in Appendix B are signed agreements from the school districts agreeing to participating in the NCPAT during the Demonstrated Authority period.

d. Initial implementation in a subset of LEAs or schools.

If the innovative assessment system will initially be administered in a subset of LEAs or schools in a State--

1. A description of each LEA, and each of its participating schools, that will initially participate, including demographic information and its most recent LEA report card under section 1111(h)(2) of the Act; and

2. **An assurance from each participating LEA, for each year that the LEA is participating, that the LEA will comply with all requirements of this section.**

The innovative assessment will be piloted in Year 1 to a small sample of schools from districts that have volunteered to participate. The three districts are (1) Rowan-Salisbury Schools, (2) Stanly County Schools, and (3) the Innovative School District. The participating schools for Rowan-Salisbury Schools and Stanly County Schools have not been selected. For the Innovative School District, Southside Ashpole Elementary in Robeson County will participate.

Rowan-Salisbury has 19,155 students enrolled in its 34 schools. There are 19 elementary schools and eight middle schools that may participate in the innovative assessment pilot. The district has been identified as a renewal school district, currently the only one in the state. This identification allows for charter-like flexibility in identifying ways to improve student achievement.

Stanly County Schools has 21 schools serving 8,230 students. Located in western North Carolina, Stanly County has eleven elementary schools and four middle schools that may participate in the innovative assessment pilot.

Southside Ashpole Elementary is part of the Innovative School District (ISD), created in 2016 through legislation enacted to improve student outcomes in low-performing schools across North Carolina. The ISD works in partnership with local communities to design and implement strategies for school improvement, creating innovative conditions for accelerating student growth and achievement.

The assurances of participation from each district is provided in Appendix B, and the NC Report Card for each district is provided in Appendix C. Information on the district's demographics is provided in Section 3 of the Project Narrative.

II. Selection Criteria

a. Project narrative.

The quality of the SEA's or consortium's plan for implementing the innovative assessment demonstration authority. In determining the quality of the plan, the Secretary considers--

1. **The rationale for developing or selecting the particular innovative assessment system to be implemented under the demonstration authority, including--**
   i. **The distinct purpose of each assessment that is part of the innovative assessment system and how the system will advance the design and delivery of large-scale, statewide academic assessments in innovative ways; and**

ii. The extent to which the innovative assessment system as a whole will promote high-quality instruction, mastery of challenging State academic standards, and improved student outcomes, including for each subgroup of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the Act; (5 points if factor (3) is applicable; 10 points if factor (3) is inapplicable)

Building on the foundation of NC Check-Ins, an assessment administered as an interim that provides formative student-level information, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction is piloting an innovative assessment that will optimize the purposes of formative, interim, and summative into one assessment. The North Carolina Personalized Assessment Tool (NCPAT), has the best features of NC Check-Ins with the required design changes to meet the requirements as stated in 34 CFR 200.105. The purpose of the innovative assessment is to provide actionable data to teachers and parents throughout the school year so teaching and learning may be adjusted to increase student achievement.

Like many states, North Carolina has pursued a balanced and comprehensive system with the State providing the summative assessment and local districts providing interim assessments. Added to this has been an emphasis on the integration of formative assessment as a process that is grounded in the instructional practices in the classroom. After more than ten years of this approach, the result is not necessarily a balanced or unified system, but rather an on-going concern about the time spend on administering interim and summative assessments.

More recently, North Carolina Statute §115C-174.12(d) required the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction to post the statewide testing calendar and the local districts to provide information on the interim assessments administered in their districts (Appendix F). This information is provided in a report to the North Carolina General Assembly's Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and in publicly accessible calendars on the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's website.

This, along with consistent feedback from educators and parents that students take too many assessments and instructional time is consumed by test administrations, the State Board of Education convened the Task Force on Summative Assessment in 2014. Based on multiple presentations by testing experts and external stakeholders, the task force noted the data provided from the summative assessment is not available in time to affect instruction. Overwhelmingly, the input was the need for data throughout the school year rather than at the end of the year. In 2015, the Task Force on Summative Assessment's final report included a recommendation for North Carolina to develop a through-grade assessment. This recommendation led to the development of the NC Check-Ins which were first implemented as a proof of concept study in the 2015–16 school year.

The NC Check-Ins were administered as interim assessments with data for classroom teachers to use for formative purposes. Though the NC Check-Ins were not ultimately developed to replace

the summative assessments, their design proved to be most successful and appreciated by teachers.

First, the alignment to the North Carolina content standards assessed on the statewide summative was evident to the teachers administering the assessment. Feedback from teachers provided via surveys and face-to-face sessions acknowledged the alignment to the content standards and thus the usability in instruction.

Second, the classroom-level reports grouped by content standards taught during the period with items aligned to the North Carolina content standard and depth of knowledge designation were valued for their usability and functionality. To support teachers' review of this data and to plan for intervention, the test booklets were available for classroom use for four weeks after the completion of the NC Check-Ins administrations.

Third, the NC Check-Ins were designed to support the formative approach to instruction so often cited in presentations of the balanced assessment system. To ensure this use of the data, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction partnered with the Standards, Curriculum, and Instruction Division to host webinars focused on sharing information on how to use the NC Check-Ins data formatively in classrooms. The webinars were targeted for teachers' classroom implementation to improve instruction.

Fourth, NC Check-Ins' were perceived as better preparing students for the end-of-year testing experience. The two assessments are developed by the same entity, a partnership with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and North Carolina State University. Maintaining consistency in the design of the test booklets, item formats, and directions was noted by teachers and students. In the initial proof of concept study's survey responses, teachers reported students shared they were more comfortable with the end-of-grade assessment administrations because of familiarity with the test format via NC Check-Ins.

Fifth, the innovative part of the NC Check-Ins is the flexibility of the instructional pacing where order of instruction of the content standards may vary between classes or schools within an interim assessment period. This allows for a local decision as to when to deliver the instruction, often cited as the most important aspect for the teachers.

Though not the intention at the outset, the NC Check-Ins evolved to a much-appreciated assessment without it becoming a through-grade assessment that replaced the summative end-of-grade assessment. However, with the lessons learned from NC Check-Ins and with the success of NC Check-Ins, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction is now developing a through-grade assessment to be administered only online, the NCPAT.

Like NC Check-Ins, the innovative through-grade assessment will be administered three times during the school year. Unlike NC Check-Ins, the items will be secure and not available for

teacher use after the administration. However, the specifications will require sufficient items for student-level content standard reporting, so teachers will know which content standards require additional instruction for each student. This information will enable teachers to adjust and modify instruction throughout the school year, and of significant benefit, this data will help low-performing students, students with disabilities, and English learners.

The NCPAT will culminate with a summative score based on the three through-grade administrations; however, each through-grade assessment will provide a score for each student that includes performance on the assessed content standards. The NCPAT will be piloted for mathematics and English language arts/reading, but as was learned from building the NC Check-Ins test forms, the two content areas function differently in a through-grade multiple assessment model.

The English language arts/reading NCPAT repeats the assessed content standards on each assessment with the major difference across the through-grade forms being text complexity. Initially, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction was going to only develop the NCPAT for English language arts/reading because of this factor; however, the value of through-grade data and the potential for increasing student achievement in mathematics was too important not to pursue. The NCPAT will be developed for mathematics and English language arts/reading.

The initial design of the NCPAT is to have three through-grade assessments and then a summative assessment at the end of the year. This would provide an opportunity for students who did not demonstrate grade-level proficiency on the through-grade an additional opportunity to do so. Feedback from stakeholders, including district-level educators, have noted logistical challenges to administering the last of the three through-grade assessments prior to the end of the school year. North Carolina state law requires test administrations to occur the last ten or five days of the school year, depending on the school calendar, traditional or semester. However, the availability of an end-of-year summative assessment would fulfill the need to assess students who may not have been in membership during one or more of the three NCPAT administrations. With that consideration, the NCPAT will include a summative assessment at the end of the year, but analyses and feedback from educators, parents, and students will determine whether the summative is available as an additional test opportunity for students who are not proficient on the through-grade assessments.

To further support the NCPAT's reports of student performance on the content standards, an online non-secure item bank will be available as a classroom resource for teachers to check student progress in the content standards not mastered. The item bank is currently housed in SchoolNet, and the items are provided by the same test developers that maintain the summative assessment item bank, also be the source of items for NCPAT. Additionally, this system provides instructional resources tagged to each content standard, so the resources are not limited to items

only. With this feature, the design of the NCPAT provides not only information on student learning but also provides instructional support.

The North Carolina Personalized Assessment Tool's design directly addresses the recommendation of the Task Force on Summative Assessment for an assessment that supports instruction, provides immediate feedback to teachers and parents, and has an administration time that is shorter in duration than the current tests. With the generation of a summative score for accountability purposes, the NCPAT meets the purposes of formative, interim, and summative assessments:

- Immediate feedback to students and teachers for formative classroom use,
- Shorter, interim-like assessments focused on a specified set of content standards and administered immediately after instruction, and
- Assessment of the breadth and depth of the content standards that supports a valid and reliable academic achievement standard for each student's inclusion in the statewide accountability model.

Participation in the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority will support the transition to a through-grade assessment that will replace the end-of-grade summative assessment for mathematics and English language arts/reading and will provide interim administrations with formative data for each student. Having actionable feedback from assessments is often what teachers and parents note is not available for the end-of-grade summative assessments. As the task force concluded, summative end-of-year data is autopsy data, or little use to teachers, students, or parents. This is not the case with a through-grade model.

2. **The plan the SEA or consortium, in consultation with any external partners, if applicable, has to--**
   i. **Develop and use standardized and calibrated tools, rubrics, methods, or other strategies for scoring innovative assessments throughout the demonstration authority period, consistent with relevant nationally recognized professional and technical standards, to ensure inter-rater reliability and comparability of innovative assessment results consistent with 34 CFR part 200.105(b)(4)(ii), which may include evidence of inter-rater reliability; and**
   ii. **Train evaluators to use such strategies, if applicable; (25 points if factor (3) is applicable; 30 points if factor (3) is inapplicable)**

North Carolina assessments are scored according to established processes and procedures that ensure adherence to nationally recognized professional and technical standards. This methodology will be used to score the innovative assessment during the demonstration authority period.

All the items for the innovative English language arts/reading assessments will be multiple-choice which is consistent with the format of the current assessments. The items for mathematics will be multiple-choice and numeric entry. The administration will be online, and as such, the scoring methodology will not require any local scanning of paper-and-pencil answer documents. To assure accessibility for students with disabilities, there will be a paper-and-pencil mode available as an accommodation on a very limited basis.

To ensure quality control and accuracy in the scoring of the assessments, the delivery platform, NCTest, is verified to have the items and the associated key correctly loaded. Though the platform is the proprietary property of NC State University, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's Test Development section reviews each assessment and approves the release of each assessment to the online system.

Once the tests are administered, the scoring process is verified by the review of a sample of student responses. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's test measurement specialists in the Test Development section review items to affirm the keys are correct and to affirm an item is valid, both with respect to the content measured and the accuracy and correctness of each answer choice.

3. **If the system will initially be administered in a subset of schools or LEAs in a State--**
    i. **The strategies the SEA, including each SEA in a consortium, will use to scale the innovative assessment to all schools statewide, with a rationale for selecting those strategies;**
    ii. **The strength of the SEA's or consortium's criteria that will be used to determine LEAs and schools that will initially participate and when to approve additional LEAs and schools, if applicable, to participate during the requested demonstration authority period; and**
    iii. **The SEA's plan, including each SEA in a consortium, for how it will ensure that, during the demonstration authority period, the inclusion of additional LEAs and schools continues to reflect high-quality and consistent implementation across demographically diverse LEAs and schools, or contributes to progress toward achieving such implementation across demographically diverse LEAs and schools, including diversity based on enrollment of subgroups of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the Act and student achievement. The plan must also include annual benchmarks toward achieving high-quality and consistent implementation across participating schools that are, as a group, demographically similar to the State as a whole during the demonstration authority period, using the demographics of initially participating schools as a baseline. (10 points, if applicable)**

As with the implementation of the NC Check-Ins, the innovative pilot will be administered initially to a limited sample of students at one elementary grade level for mathematics and one middle school grade level for English language arts/reading. In subsequent years, participation will expand so both mathematics and ELA/reading are piloted at each grade span: grades 3–5 and grades 6–8. In Year 5 of the demonstration period, statewide implementation in grades 3–8 for mathematics and English language arts/reading will be fulfilled. This timeline will ensure appropriate analyses and technical review to support the combining of the three through-grade assessments into one summative score for each student prior to the statewide administration. It will also allow the development and design to be revised as needed to meet the technical requirements

The timeline supports the on-going input and feedback from internal and external stakeholders, which was most valuable with the development of NC Check-Ins. Specifically, the feedback may affirm whether the content standard level reporting provided for each assessment throughout the school year is useful and contributes to instructional decisions in the classroom. Noting the diverse needs of students, it will be necessary to conduct qualitative and quantitative analyses to determine whether these decisions benefit all students including low-performing students, students with disabilities and English learners. The design and analyses of these students will be included in the scope of work of the external evaluator, the Office of Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Services (OAERS) of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

As detailed in the charts below, Year 1 of the IADA will be a planning year to allow for (1) development of test specifications for each of the three tests that comprise the North Carolina Personalized Assessment Tool, (2) additional item development, (3) review of the online testing platform, (4) final selection of participating schools for each of the project phases, and (5) preparation for professional development and training that will be implemented for each year of the project.

In Year 2, the Mathematics NCPAT will be administered at grade 4 to a selected sample of students, and the English Language Arts/Reading NCPAT will be administered to a selected sample of students at grade 7. These administrations will provide feedback from the participating teachers and students on (1) the usability of the online delivery system, (2) the appropriateness of the content standards assessed for each test, (3) the use of the data reports, particularly with respect to providing additional instruction and informing parents, and (4) the usability of the accompanying non-secure item system available to support the formative assessment process. This feedback will be gathered through surveys of teachers and cognitive labs with students. Having this feedback will support modifications to the assessments, the online delivery system, the data reports, and the professional development and support for the Year 3 administrations. Students in Year 2 will also take the statewide end-of-grade assessments, providing valuable comparability data and meeting the requirements for these students' inclusion in the statewide accountability model.

For Year 2, three districts have committed to participating in the innovative pilot at grade 4 and grade 7. The target population is 4,500 students for each grade level and content area, with the students representing the demographics of the state population including students with disabilities and English learners. At this time, the demographics of the volunteered districts are not representative of the state population as presented in the tables below. During the planning year, the NCDPI will continue to recruit districts and charter schools for voluntary participation. If necessary, policies and state laws are in place to require participation. With NC Check-Ins, the initial work with the proof of concept was a required sample, but as the assessments' usability became widely known, they evolved to be voluntary. The NCDPI will make every effort to maintain a voluntary sample as participant buy-in is critical to the development of an innovative assessment that ultimately will be administered statewide.

Demographics: State and Volunteer Districts

	State		Rowan-Salisbury Schools		Stanly County Schools		ISD: Southside Ashpole Elementary	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
All Students	1,539,187	100%	19,155	100%	8,230	100%	273	100%
American Indian	18,368	1.2%	43	0.2%	22	0.3%	94	34.4%
Asian	52,124	3.4%	207	1.1%	275	3.3%	0	0%
Black	389,804	25.3%	3,561	18.6%	1,115	13.5%	130	47.6%
Hispanic	271,390	17.6%	3,389	17.7%	726	8.8%	9	3.3%
Two or More Races	66,701	4.3%	865	4.5%	406	4.9%	28	10.3%
White	738,708	48.0%	11,074	57.8%	5,681	69.0%	12	4.4%
Students with Disabilities	189,977	12.3%	2,148	11.2%	1,441	17.5%	54	19.8%
English Learners	109,477	7.1%	1,309	6.8%	258	3.1%	3	1.1%
Economically Disadvantages	681,495	44.3%	10,169	53.1%	4,040	49.1%	206	75.5%

Comparison Overall Demographics: State and Volunteer Districts

	State		All	
	N	%	N	%
All Students	1,539,187	100%	27,658	100%
American Indian	18,368	1.2%	159	0%
Asian	52,124	3.4%	482	1.7%
Black	389,804	25.3%	4,806	17.4%
Hispanic	271,390	17.6%	4,124	14.9%
Two or More Races	66,701	4.3%	1,299	4.7%

	State		All	
White	738,708	48.0%	16,767	60.6%
Students with Disabilities	189,977	12.3%	3,643	13.2%
English Learners	109,477	7.1%	1,570	5.7%
Economically Disadvantages	681,495	44.3%	14,415	52.1

The sample in Year 2 is intentionally limited to a small number of students, as the primary purpose of Year 2 is to expose the online system, the assessments, and the administration processes and procedures to a representative sample of students, so an evaluation of the project may be conducted prior to Year 3. The evaluation will include data from statistical analyses, cognitive labs, observations, monitoring visits, surveys, and focus groups. The following questions will be addressed during this evaluation:

- What is the perceived purpose of the through-grade assessment model as understood by teachers, parents, and students?
- Is the feedback from teachers, parents, and students positive and supportive of the through-grade assessment model?
- Were the data from each through-grade assessment used formatively in the classroom to improve teaching and learning?
- Were the administrations consistent with requirements for standardization and consistency?
- Are there enough statistical and validity evidences to support combining scores from the three through-grade assessments into one reliable scale score for use in statewide reports and in the statewide accountability model?
- Is there a stable statistical relationship between the NCPAT scale and the summative end-of-grade assessments?
- Does NCPAT scale accurately predict relationship between the NCPAT scale and the summative end-of-grade assessment?
- Does NCPAT scale accurately predict students overall achievement levels?
- What validity evidence supports the use of the NCAPR scale to report students' overall achievement levels?

If the conclusion of this evaluation supports the continuation of the innovative pilot, additional schools will be selected for participation, and additional grade levels/content areas will be included in Year 3. In anticipation of proceeding to Year 3, the planning year activities for the additional grade levels/content areas will be addressed in Year 2.

In Year 3, the Mathematics NCPAT will be administered in grades 3, 4, and 6 and the English Language Arts/Reading NCPAT will be administered in grades 5, 7, and 8. By adding grades 3 and 6 for mathematics and grades 5 and 8 for ELA/reading, the development will have participants in both the elementary and middle school grade spans for each content area,

providing more data confirm the reliability of linking the NCAPT scale onto the current end-of-grade assessments scale. This is necessary to have confidence in Year 4 that the results of the NCPAT can be used in the statewide accountability model for the participating schools, and to affirm the participating students in Year 4 would not participate in the end-of-grade assessments.

For Year 3 and Year 4, the sample of participating students will increase in number and will maintain the requirements for representativeness of the state population. To accomplish this, the NCDPI will recruit districts to voluntarily participate; however, the NCDPI has policies and procedures in place to ensure a representative sample can be secured and established.

The sample identified in Year 3 will continue to participate in the NCPAT in Year 4; however, in Year 4, the participating students will only participate in the NCPAT, not the summative end-of-grade assessments.

In Year 5, the NCPAT will be scaled to statewide implementation for grades 3–8 in mathematics and English language arts/reading. Following the 2023–24 administration, a standard setting process to recommend academic achievement standards for grades 3-8 in mathematics and English language arts/reading will be conducted. The recommended achievement standards and descriptors will be presented to the State Board of Education for approval at its August 2024 meeting, enabling the inclusion of the data from the NCPAT in the statewide accountability model that provides meaningful differentiation of school performance and the identification of schools for comprehensive and targeted support and improvement.

Elementary Grades 3-5 Plan

Year	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Year 1: 2019–20		Planning Year: Test specifications finalized, field testing, participants finalized	
Year 2: 2020–21	Planning Year: Test specifications finalized, field testing, participants finalized	NCPAT Mathematics administered to selected schools (target 4,500 students) These students also take the statewide EOG Mathematics assessment	Planning Year: Test specifications finalized, field testing, participants finalized
Year 3: 2021–22	NCPAT Mathematics administered to	NCPAT Mathematics administered to	NCPAT ELA/Reading

Year	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
	selected schools (target 15% of total student population) These students also take the statewide EOG Mathematics assessment	selected schools (target 15% of total student population) These students also take the statewide EOG Mathematics assessment	administered to selected schools (target 15% of total student population) These students also take the statewide EOG ELA/Reading assessment
Year 4: 2022–23	NCPAT Mathematics administered to selected schools (target 15% of total student population) These students do not take the EOG Mathematics assessment	NCPAT Mathematics administered to selected schools (target 15% of total student population) These students do not take the EOG Mathematics assessment	NCPAT ELA/Reading administered to selected schools (target 15% of total student population) These students do not take the statewide EOG ELA/Reading assessment
Year 5: 2023–24	NCPAT Mathematics and ELA/Reading Statewide Implementation	NCPAT Mathematics and ELA/Reading Statewide Implementation	NCPAT Mathematics and ELA/Reading Statewide Implementation

Middle School Grades 6-8 Plan

Year	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Year 1: 2019–20		Planning Year: Test specifications finalized, field testing, participants finalized	
Year 2: 2020–21	Planning Year: Test specifications finalized, field testing, participants finalized	NCPAT ELA/Reading administered to selected schools (target 4,500 students)	Planning Year: Test specifications finalized, field testing, participants finalized

Year	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
		These students also take the statewide EOG Mathematics assessment	
Year 3: 2021–22	NCPAT Mathematics administered to selected schools (target 15% of total student population) These students also take the statewide EOG Mathematics assessment	NCPAT ELA/Reading administered to selected schools (target 15% of total student population) These students also take the statewide EOG Mathematics assessment	NCPAT ELA/Reading administered to selected schools (target 15% of total student population) These students also take the statewide EOG ELA/Reading assessment
Year 4: 2022–23	NCPAT Mathematics administered to selected schools (target 15% of total student population) These students do not take the EOG Mathematics assessment	NCPAT ELA/Reading administered to selected schools (target 15% of total student population) These students do not take the EOG Mathematics assessment	NCPAT ELA/Reading administered to selected schools (target 15% of total student population) These students do not take the statewide EOG ELA/Reading assessment
Year 5: 2023–24	NCPAT Mathematics and ELA/Reading Statewide Implementation	NCPAT Mathematics and ELA/Reading Statewide Implementation	NCPAT Mathematics and ELA/Reading Statewide Implementation

The participating schools will reflect the statewide demographics with respect to student subgroups, region, and the mean scale score on the currently administered end-of-grade assessments. Included in this application is the commitment from school districts and charter schools that have committed to participation in the administrations and in the formative activities (Appendix B). This is critical to the development of a system that truly integrates formative, interim, and benchmark into one.

The exclusion of grade 3 and grade 8 from the Years 2 administrations is deliberate. Grade 3 has an intensive reading program, Read to Achieve, that has multiple assessment opportunities for students to demonstrate reading proficiency. For grade 8, North Carolina is exercising the option not to double-test in mathematics. Though each of these grades could participate in the other content area, meaning mathematics at grade 3 and English language arts/reading at grade 8, the other grade levels will provide sufficient data to proceed without their inclusion in Year 3 and Year 4. Full implementation for all grade levels in mathematics and English language arts/reading in Year 5 requires all teachers and local educators to have a clear understanding of the purpose and the development process for the North Carolina Personalized Assessment/ Tool. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction will ensure the teachers for these grade levels are included in professional development and are provided an opportunity for input on the NCPAT.

b. Prior experience, capacity, and stakeholder support. (Up to 20 points)

1. **The extent and depth of prior experience that the SEA, including each SEA in a consortium, and its LEAs have in developing and implementing the components of the innovative assessment system. An SEA may also describe the prior experience of any external partners that will be participating in or supporting its demonstration authority in implementing those components. In evaluating the extent and depth of prior experience, the Secretary considers—**
   - i. **The success and track record of efforts to implement innovative assessments or innovative assessment items aligned to the challenging State academic standards under section 1111(b)(1) of the Act in LEAs planning to participate; and**
   - ii. **The SEA's or LEA's development or use of--**
     - A. **Effective supports and appropriate accommodations consistent with 34 CFR part 200.6(b) and (f)(1)(i) and section 1111(b)(2)(B)(vii) of the Act for administering innovative assessments to all students, including English learners and children with disabilities, which must include professional development for school staff on providing such accommodations;**
     - B. **Effective and high-quality supports for school staff to implement innovative assessments and innovative assessment items, including professional development; and**

C. Standardized and calibrated tools, rubrics, methods, or other strategies for scoring innovative assessments, with documented evidence of the validity, reliability, and comparability of annual summative determinations of achievement, consistent with 34 CFR part 200.105(b)(4) and (7). (5 points)

In an era of much discussion about statewide testing programs, particularly the impact of the time required to administer assessments, North Carolina has developed an interim assessment focused on formative use that has received positive feedback from district and school-level educators including teachers with experience in teaching exceptional children and English learners. This was accomplished by taking a deliberate but measured approach in implementing NC Check-Ins. The focus on input from teachers and local-level content experts was consistent, and as suggestions and feedback were offered to improve the assessments, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction responded by changing the assessment administration requirements, availability of the test forms for review, and the design of the reports. All of these changes increased the usability, a key factor in the NC Check-Ins being an assessment that has expanded to voluntarily be used in over 50 % of the state's schools during the current school year.

The NC-Check-Ins are reliable, and the reliability index has improved over administrations. The tests are constructed representing width and breadth of the summative blueprints, and test items are developed by embedding into the field test slot of the summative assessments indicating construct validity of the NC Check-Ins. Initial analysis indicated that there is a positive correlation between the scores in NC Check-Ins and summative end-of-grade assessments indicating possible predictive validity of the NC Check-Ins.

North Carolina has been developing its assessments in collaboration with North Carolina State University since the early 1990s. In this collaboration, assessments have consistently met the requirements of peer review.

2. The extent and depth of SEA, including each SEA in a consortium, and LEA capacity to implement the innovative assessment system considering the availability of technological infrastructure; State and local laws; dedicated and sufficient staff, expertise, and resources; and other relevant factors. An SEA or consortium may also describe how it plans to enhance its capacity by collaborating with external partners that will be participating in or supporting its demonstration authority. In evaluating the extent and depth of capacity, the Secretary considers--

i. The SEA's analysis of how capacity influenced the success of prior efforts to develop and implement innovative assessments or innovative assessment items; and

ii. The strategies the SEA is using, or will use, to mitigate risks, including those identified in its analysis, and support successful implementation of the innovative assessment. (5 points)

North Carolina's experience in the development of its statewide assessments serves as a strong foundation for the transition of the NC Check-Ins to through-grade assessments for grades 3–8 in mathematics and English language arts/reading. Since the 1990s, through a partnership with the Technical Outreach for Public Schools (TOPS) at North Carolina State University, North Carolina has developed its assessments rather than outsource to a vendor. The State's capacity is demonstrated by the development of four editions of statewide assessments, which have consistently met the U.S. Department of Education's peer review requirements.

North Carolina has developed innovative assessments such as the online computer skills test in the early 2000s, a modified assessment in the mid-2000s, and assessments that align to extended content standards, currently being revised for an online administration. Recent test development has included technology-enhanced items for the online assessments. This work is supported by internal and external teams that have extensive knowledge of test development and the requirements for valid and reliable assessments. The internal capacity of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction test development section and the psychometricians, led by Dr. Kinge Mbella, has been strengthened by partnerships with North Carolina State University, the Regional Accountability Coordinators, the North Carolina Technical Advisors, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill L.L. Thurstone Psychometric Lab, and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro Office of Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Services.

Test Development Section and Technical Outreach for Public Schools at North Carolina State University

The Test Development Section Chief in the Division of Accountability Services leads the content development ensuring the process includes teachers of students with disabilities and English learners. The section's test measurement specialists for each content area (mathematics, English language arts, and science) collaborate with content experts at the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, section chiefs and consultants in the Standards, Curriculum, and Instruction Division, and at North Carolina State University. This work structure has successfully developed and implemented four editions of statewide assessments by following the test development process adopted by the State Board of Education. This process adheres to the technical standards for the development of test items and test forms. Additionally, there are detailed processes documented for item development and form development, centered on utilizing teachers as panelists for test specifications, item writers, and reviewers. Internal and external experts for content, students with disabilities, and English learners ensure the assessments are developed with universal design. With this integrated team, North Carolina has the capacity not only to develop its assessments but also to optimize new possibilities in test development, such as with the NC Check-Ins and the innovative assessment pilot.

North Carolina State University develops and maintains the online testing platform, supporting its use with a Help Desk for teachers and district/school staff. Feedback from users contributes to on-going improvement of the online delivery system. To proactively engage the field in discussions on how to ensure the online system is optimal, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction gathers direct feedback from the Control Configuration Board, a group of testing and accountability coordinators representing the six accountability regions of the state. This group makes suggestions to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction staff who then works with the NC State University team to identify solutions, and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction shares its priority list of improvements to the online system for input from the group. As North Carolina has increased its delivery of online assessments, the joint efforts of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, North Carolina State University, and the external stakeholders, such as the Control Configuration Board, has yielded a successful system.

Regional Accountability Coordinators

Providing support to districts and charter schools, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction has a team of Regional Accountability Coordinators who provide training and technical assistance for all aspects of testing and accountability. The Regional Accountability Coordinators meet monthly with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction team and the North Carolina State University team to ensure information on all aspects of testing are reviewed and shared with districts and charter schools. The information includes test administration protocol and processes such as availability of accommodations, online delivery requirements, paper format ordering system, security assurances and practices, and required policies, state statute, and federal law. This regional support system has been the foundation for ensuring consistent and accurate implementation of assessments and the collection of valid accountability data since the inception of the North Carolina Testing Program in the 1990s. As such, the Regional Accountability Coordinators will be key conveyers of information on the IADA to not only the participating schools but to all schools across the state. With this established structure between the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and districts/charter schools, the communication loop, including professional development and training for the innovative assessment, will be effective.

Testing News Network

The Regional Accountability Coordinators provide the face-to-face and "one phone call away" support to districts and charter schools. This is supported by the Testing News Network which ensures timely communication to district and charter school test coordinators. The Testing News Network system is for designated local staff only and broadcasts updates and information on North Carolina testing and accountability. This system is an immediate, daily resource for schools, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the Regional Accountability Coordinators. Automatic emails alert those who have access to the Testing News Network whenever a message is posted. With this system, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction can quickly share information that is accurate, and the Regional Accountability

Coordinators are able to be a resource for clarification and assistance. Most messages posted on the Testing News Network end with the statement, "For more information, please contact your Regional Accountability Coordinator."

North Carolina Technical Advisors

For both test development and the online platform, NCTest, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction benefits from the broad range of expertise of the North Carolina Technical Advisors. This groups includes the following members:

- Dr. Gregory Cizek, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- Dr. Claudia P. Flowers, University of North Carolina at Charlotte
- Dr. Brian Gong, Center for Assessment
- Dr. Gerunda B. Hughes, Howard University School of Education
- Dr. Kris Kaase, Consultant
- Dr. Richard Luecht, University of North Carolina at Greensboro
- Dr. Brad McMillen, Wake County Public Schools
- Dr. David Thissen, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, L.L. Thurstone Psychometric Laboratory

At its bi-annual meetings, this group reviews the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's test development design, psychometric analyses and plans, and shares feedback on actions that may improve the outcomes. These discussions were integral in the design and development of NC Check-Ins, particularly on providing teachers with usable data reports. Likewise, the technical advisors have reviewed the online delivery system, noting ways to improve accessibility for all students, including students with disabilities and English learners. As the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction implements the innovative assessment, the technical advisors' input and guidance will continue to ensure the instrument meets technical standards for valid and reliable assessments and is delivered in an accessible, usable format that provides valid and reliable data. Its next meeting is March 2019, and the innovative assessment pilot will be included on the agenda, allowing for input prior to the initial year of the Demonstration Authority period.

The combined efforts of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction team, the Technical Outreach for Public Schools team at North Carolina State University and the other external partners ensure the capacity of North Carolina to develop and implement the North Carolina Personalized Assessment Tool. As with the previous four editions of the statewide assessments, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction proactively engages with experts in testing and accountability to identify the soundest technical approach that will yield valid and reliable results. This approach has minimized risk with a clear focus on excellence.

3. **The extent and depth of State and local support for the application for demonstration authority in each SEA, including each SEA in a consortium, as demonstrated by signatures from the following:**
    i. **Superintendents (or equivalent) of LEAs, including participating LEAs in the first year of the demonstration authority period.**
    ii. **Presidents of local school boards (or equivalent, where applicable), including within participating LEAs in the first year of the demonstration authority.**
    iii. **Local teacher organizations (including labor organizations, where applicable), including within participating LEAs in the first year of the demonstration authority.**
    iv. **Other affected stakeholders, such as parent organizations, civil rights organizations, and business organizations. (10 points)**

Signatures of participating districts and charter schools are in Appendix B.

c. Timeline and budget.

The quality of the SEA's or consortium's timeline and budget for implementing the innovative assessment demonstration authority. In determining the quality of the timeline and budget, the Secretary considers--

1. **The extent to which the timeline reasonably demonstrates that each SEA will implement the system statewide by the end of the requested demonstration authority period, including a description of--**
    i. **The activities to occur in each year of the requested demonstration authority period;**
    ii. **The parties responsible for each activity; and**
    iii. **If applicable, how a consortium's member SEAs will implement activities at different paces and how the consortium will implement interdependent activities, so long as each non-affiliate member SEA begins using the innovative assessment in the same school year consistent with 34 CFR part 200.104(b)(2); (5 points)**

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction will develop a through-grade assessment, modeled on the NC Check-Ins assessments, for grades 3–8 in mathematics and English language arts/reading. Statewide implementation will be achieved by the final year of the demonstration authority period. To accomplish this work, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction will include this scope of work in the existing contract with North Carolina State University. This contract has been in place for twenty-five years and allows for adjustments to the scope at the discretion of the State.

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, with its partnership with the Technical Outreach for Public Schools at North State University will ensure the test development process

as specified in North Carolina State Board of Education policy will be followed (Appendix G). This process is operationalized in flow charts developed by Technical Outreach for Public Schools and approved by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (Appendix H). The test development procedures include the following:

- Based on the state-adopted content standards, panels of English language arts/reading teachers convene to provide feedback on the test specifications and the assessment design, including the length, text complexity, and content of the reading selections.
- For mathematics, teacher panels will recommend the content standards assessed on each of the three through-grade assessments and provide input on availability of calculators and item types.
- North Carolina teachers with the appropriate content expertise write assessment items to align to specified content standards.
- North Carolina teachers who are representative of the demographics of the state population and who have expertise with all students and with subgroups of students, particularly students with disabilities and English learners, review all test items for alignment and fairness/sensitivity.
- North Carolina Department of Public Instruction content experts, in the Division of Accountability Services and in the Division of Standards, Curriculum, and Instruction, review all items for content alignment.
- External experts with experience related to students with disabilities and English learners review all test items.
- At the conclusion of the item reviews, the items are field tested in an embedded format on the current statewide assessments.
- Post field-testing, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's psychometricians assemble test forms aligned to test blueprints. These forms are then reviewed internally and externally by experts with experience related to students with disabilities and English learners and by non-educator content experts.

At the conclusion of the operational administrations, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's psychometricians review the data and conduct post administration analysis to ensure forms are technically sound, reliable and score interpretation and use are valid. During the demonstration authority period, the following additional analyses will consider:

- The reliability and the validity of the content standard level reporting for each of the three through-grade assessments.
- Validity evidence and reliability of the combined three through-grade assessments' scores into one scale score that is statistically linked to the summative scale to report academic achievement standard levels for each student. The methodology for this will be confirmed during the planning year with input from the North Carolina Technical Advisors.
- Classification consistency analyses for those students who will participate in the innovative pilot to determine if both scales are comparable. These students will be

required to take both the NCPAT and the end-of-grade assessments in Year 2 and Year 3 of the demonstration period.

- Evaluation of SAS's EVAAS growth index to determine if the through-grade model will support the current growth methodology of it revisions would be required.

Throughout the demonstration period, analyses will be considered that would provide technical strength to the assessments, particularly as related to their use in the statewide accountability system for achievement and growth. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction partnerships with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. The input from the universities, as well as the input from the North Carolina Technical Advisors, will provide a structure for on-going attention to quality analyses to affirm the progression innovative assessment pilot across the sixty months allowed.

The following charts provide the tasks and deliverables for each year of the demonstration period. As North Carolina State University is the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's development partner, many of the tasks are the shared responsibility of both; however, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction is ultimately responsible for the fulfillment of this work. Many of the tasks are repeated each year as the development approach is to continuously improve the design, learning from teachers and students, as well as other stakeholders and external partners, on ways to improve the design, delivery, reporting, monitoring of accommodations and administrations. Though not indicated in the chart below, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro Office of Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Services will also gather information and feedback via surveys, observations, and focus groups throughout the demonstration period as part of their role as external evaluator. This is like the process with NC Check-Ins. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction conducted surveys and gathered feedback, and the external evaluator, Dr. James Bartlett, Associate Professor, North Carolina State University, conducted an external evaluation (Appendix I).

Year One: 2019–20 School Year

	Task/Deliverable	Responsible
1	Convene teacher panels for test specifications	NCDPI/NC State
2	Finalize test specifications	NCDPI
3	Finalize Analyses Plan for Demonstration Period, including standard setting	NCDPI w/Technical Advisors
4	Contract with teachers to write items (on-going)	NCDPI/NC State
5	Complete item review process (on-going)	NCDPI/NC State
6	Embed items in operational end-of-grade assessments (on-going)	NCDPI/NC State
7	Review online delivery system for innovative assessment (on-going)	NCDPI/NC State
8	Develop professional development materials (on-going)	NCDPI

	Task/Deliverable	Responsible
9	Develop training materials for state regional support teams (on-going)	NCDPI
10	Administer survey to teachers, district/charter school staff (on-going)	NCDPI
11	Conduct focus groups (on-going)	NCDPI

Year Two: 2020–21 School Year

Grade 4 Mathematics
Grade 7 ELA/Reading

	Task/Deliverable	Responsible
1	Build test forms	NCDPI/NC State
2	Cross-embed items in operational end-of-grade and innovative for comparability data	NCDPI/NC State
3	Administer test forms	NCDPI
4	Conduct administration observations, accommodations monitoring, and cognitive labs	
5	Analyze data from each administration, including growth analysis and correlational analysis between the pilots and the end-of-grade assessments	NCDPI and SAS
6	Develop professional development materials (on-going)	NCDPI
7	Develop training materials for state regional support teams (on-going)	NCDPI
8	Administer survey to teachers, district/charter school staff (on-going)	NCDPI
9	Conduct focus groups (on-going)	NCDPI

Grade 5 ELA/Reading
Grade 6 Mathematics

	Task/Deliverable	Responsible
1	Convene teacher panels for test specifications	NCDPI/NC State
2	Finalize test specifications	NCDPI
3	Contract with teachers to write items (on-going)	NCDPI/NC State
4	Complete item review process (on-going)	NCDPI/NC State
5	Embed items in operational existing end-of-grade assessments (on-going)	NCDPI/NC State
6	Review online delivery system for innovative assessment (on-going)	NCDPI/NC State
7	Develop professional development materials (on-going)	NCDPI
8	Develop training materials for state regional support teams (on-going)	NCDPI
9	Administer survey to teachers, district/charter school staff (on-going)	NCDPI
10	Conduct focus groups (on-going)	NCDPI

Year Three: 2021-22 School Year

Grades 3, 4 and 6 Mathematics
Grades 5, 6 and 7 ELA/Reading

	Task/Deliverable	Responsible
1	Build test forms	NCDPI/NC State
2	Cross-embed items in operational end-of-grade and innovative for comparability data	NCDPI/NC State
3	Administer test forms	NCDPI
4	Conduct administration observations, accommodations monitoring, and cognitive labs	NCDPI
5	Analyze data from each administration, including growth and correlational analyses between the pilots and the end-of-grade assessments	NCDPI
6	Develop professional development materials (on-going)	NCDPI
7	Develop training materials for state regional support teams (on-going)	NCDPI
8	Administer survey to teachers, district/charter school staff (on-going)	NCDPI
9	Conduct focus groups (on-going)	NCDPI

Year Four: 2022–23 School Year

Grades 3, 4 and 6 Mathematics
Grades 5, 6 and 7 ELA/Reading

	Task/Deliverable	Responsible
1	Build test forms	NCDPI/NC State
2	Cross-embed items in operational end-of-grade and innovative for comparability data	NCDPI/NC State
3	Administer test forms	NCDPI
4	Conduct administration observations, accommodations monitoring, and cognitive labs	
5	Analyze data from each administration, including growth and correlational analyses between the pilots and the end-of-grade assessments	NCDPI
6	Confirm linking scale	NCDPI/External Vendor
6	Develop professional development materials (on-going)	NCDPI
7	Develop training materials for state regional support teams (on-going)	NCDPI
8	Administer survey to teachers, district/charter school staff (on-going)	NCDPI
9	Conduct focus groups (on-going)	

Year Five: 2023–24 School Year

Grade 3-8 Mathematics
Grades 3-8 ELA/Reading

	Task/Deliverable	Responsible
1	Build test forms	NCDPI/NC State
2	Cross-embed items in operational end-of-grade and innovative for comparability data	NCDPI/NC State
3	Administer test forms	NCDPI
4	Conduct administration observations, accommodations monitoring, and cognitive labs	
5	Analyze data from each administration, including growth and correlational analyses between the pilots and the end-of-grade assessments	NCDPI
6	Conduct standard setting for academic achievement standards (selected grades/content areas)	NCDPI/External Vendor
7	Develop professional development materials (on-going)	NCDPI
8	Develop training materials for state regional support teams (on-going)	NCDPI
9	Administer survey to teachers, district/charter school staff (on-going)	NCDPI
10	Conduct focus groups (on-going)	

2. **The adequacy of the project budget for the duration of the requested demonstration authority period, including Federal, State, local, and non-public sources of funds to support and sustain, as applicable, the activities in the timeline under paragraph (c)(1) of this section, including--**
   i. **How the budget will be sufficient to meet the expected costs at each phase of the SEA's planned expansion of its innovative assessment system; and**
   ii. **The degree to which funding in the project budget is contingent upon future appropriations at the State or local level or additional commitments from non-public sources of funds. (10 points)**

The primary work of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's contract with North Carolina State University is the development of statewide assessments, of which funding is consistently provided from the North Carolina General Assembly and the federally-funded State Assessment Grant. The annual state budget of $12 million plus the annual federal State Assessment Grant of approximately $9 million will meet most of the cost demands for the transition to a through-grade assessment system.

The major work tasks cited in the North Carolina State University contract include item development and online assessment delivery, so a contract amendment is not needed. However, throughout the demonstration period, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction will

monitor cost projections, and possibly include in the 2021–22 and 2022–23 biennial budget a request for additional funding.

All collaborative partners cited in this application are on-going relationships and do not require an increase in funding. The one exception is the additional cost required for an external evaluator. This will increase the contract cost for the Office of Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Services project through the University of North Carolina at Greensboro; however, current resources in the State Assessment Grant will fund this work, so it is not necessary to request additional funds.

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's capacity to transition to a through-grade assessment design that will meet the expectations of its data users to have immediate feedback on student performance rather than only a summative score at the end of the school year without significant increase in funding further affirms its capacity. This capacity, which is based on leveraging internal skill and knowledge, has been the hallmark of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's state program since the early 1990s. As then, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction is committing itself to state-developed assessments aligned to State Board of Education content standards, and the development of those assessments is executed in a manner to optimize efficiency, both in operations and cost.

d. Supports for educators, students, and parents. (Up to 25 points)

The quality of the SEA or consortium's plan to provide supports that can be delivered consistently at scale to educators, students, and parents to enable successful implementation of the innovative assessment system and improve instruction and student outcomes. In determining the quality of supports, the Secretary considers--

1. **The extent to which the SEA or consortium has developed, provided, and will continue to provide training to LEA and school staff, including teachers, principals, and other school leaders, that will familiarize them with the innovative assessment system and develop teacher capacity to implement instruction that is informed by the innovative assessment system and its results; (5 points if factor (4) is applicable; 9 points if factor (4) is inapplicable)**

As the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction implements the innovative assessment, the supports for educators, students, and parents will be based on the system already in place for the NC Check-Ins. The associated webinars, trainings, and surveys have ensured teachers, parents, and students have the necessary information to not only administer the assessments but also to appropriately use the data, particularly the score reports. North Carolina has always depended on its Regional Accountability Coordinators to share information on testing and accountability per a train-the-trainer model. With NC Check-Ins, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction went beyond this training structure to directly deliver trainings. The

reception has been positive with a recent NC Check-Ins webinar far exceeding other webinars with respect to the number of clicks to listen to the recording.

2. **The strategies the SEA or consortium has developed and will use to familiarize students and parents with the innovative assessment system; (5 points if factor (4) is applicable; 8 points if factor (4) is inapplicable)**

Though the innovative pilot is a direct response to requests for shorter assessments that provide actionable data during the school year, it is recognized that the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction must initiate a comprehensive effort to share information with students and parents on the transition to the through-grade assessments. The current testing program has been in place for twenty-five years, as evidenced by the widespread understanding of the acronym EOG (end-of-grade).

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction will collaborate with the Division of Communications to ensure information is shared with parents throughout the demonstration period. The priority is two-fold: (1) sharing the assessment purpose and what it means for students, and (2) gathering feedback from parents and students. Through the parent portal in PowerSchool, informational messages and surveys to gather feedback can be sent to parents. A recent delivery of a survey on testing yielded over 40,000 responses from parents.

To gather feedback from students, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction will conduct cognitive labs during each year of the demonstration period beginning with Year 2. These sessions will focus on the usability of the system, the accessibility of the items, and the value of having the through-grade model as opposed to a summative assessment at the end of the year.

3. **The strategies the SEA will use to ensure that all students and each subgroup of students under section 1111(c)(2) of the Act in participating schools receive the support, including appropriate accommodations consistent with 34 CFR part 200.6(b) and (f)(1)(i) and section 1111(b)(2)(B)(vii) of the Act, needed to meet the challenging State academic standards under section 1111(b)(1) of the Act; (5 points if factor (4) is applicable; 8 points if factor (4) is inapplicable)**

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction requires students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and/or an English learner (EL) plan to receive appropriate accommodations as specified in the IEP or the EL plan and as used routinely in the classroom. This is communicated extensively in all assessment administration guides, the district test coordinators' handbook, assessment briefs, the *Testing Students with Disabilities* document, and the *Guidelines for Testing Students Identified as English Learners* document. For each test administration, training on the delivery of accommodations is provided and required prior to the administration.

During the demonstration period, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction will conduct monitoring visits at the participating schools, following the same procedures and protocols used for the statewide assessments. Administrations are monitored by the Regional Accountability Coordinators, with the outcomes shared with the Director of Accountability. The Director then sends the schools a memo with details on the observations noted during the monitoring. For accommodations monitoring, the Regional Accountability Coordinators, along with the Division of Accountability Services staff, the Division of Exceptional Children staff, and the English Learner staff conduct on-site visits to affirm consistency between the accommodations cited in the Individualized Education Programs, Section 504 Plans, and English Learner Plans and the accommodations provided and used by the student during the administration. As with the administration monitoring, a summation of the accommodations observations is provided to the district or charter school. The processes for assessment and administration monitoring are available in Appendix J.

4. **If the system includes assessment items that are locally developed or locally scored, the strategies and safeguards (e.g., test blueprints, item and task specifications, rubrics, scoring tools, documentation of quality control procedures, inter-rater reliability checks, audit plans) the SEA or consortium has developed, or plans to develop, to validly and reliably score such items, including how the strategies engage and support teachers and other staff in designing, developing, implementing, and validly and reliably scoring high-quality assessments; how the safeguards are sufficient to ensure unbiased, objective scoring of assessment items; and how the SEA will use effective professional development to aid in these efforts (10 points if applicable)**

The innovative assessment does not include any items locally developed or scored locally.

e. Evaluation and continuous improvement.

The quality of the SEA's or consortium's plan to annually evaluate its implementation of innovative assessment demonstration authority. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers—

1. **The strength of the proposed evaluation of the innovative assessment system included in the application, including whether the evaluation will be conducted by an independent, experienced third party, and the likelihood that the evaluation will sufficiently determine the system's validity, reliability, and comparability to the statewide assessment system consistent with the requirements of 34 CFR part 200.105(b)(4) and (9); (12 points)**

For the NC Check-Ins, Dr. James Bartlett with North Carolina State University conducted an evaluation of the delivery of the assessment to teachers and the formative utility of the

assessment (Appendix I). For the innovative assessment, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction will amend its current contract with the Office of Assessment, Evaluation and Research Services at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro to conduct an evaluation. This evaluation will include:

- Review of all training materials and professional development activities, including but not limited to webinars, informational documents, administration guides
- Review of the administrations, particularly the standardization and the fidelity at the classroom level, and the delivery of accommodations for qualifying students
- Review of the online delivery system and its accessibility, for all students and all subgroups of students
- Review of the usability of SchoolNet for access to content aligned items and resources to support instruction
- Review of the appropriateness and usability of the Individual Student Reports for parents
- Review of the usability of all score reports and the extent to which they are used at the classroom level to make decisions on instructional delivery
- Review of the standard setting process, the validity evidence for the assessment, and the reliability statistics

2. **The SEA's or consortium's plan for continuous improvement of the innovative assessment system, including its process for--**
   i. **Using data, feedback, evaluation results, and other information from participating LEAs and schools to make changes to improve the quality of the innovative assessment; and**
   ii. **Evaluating and monitoring implementation of the innovative assessment system in participating LEAs and schools annually. (8 points)**

Throughout the demonstration period, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction will review data, feedback, evaluation results, and other information to improve the innovative assessment. At the school-level, this is done formally through on-site observations and monitoring by the NCDPI and regional staff (Appendix J). Following each year of the demonstration period, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction will convene the Test Development Section, the Testing Policy and Operations Section, and the psychometricians for a debrief of the development and the implementation. The purpose of the debrief session is to improve the internal processes and to make needed changes to the test design, administration, reports, and communication to educators, students, and parents.

As with NC Check-Ins, the development and outcomes of the NCPAT will be shared with the North Carolina Technical Advisors for their input on the psychometric plan, the administration requirements, the inclusion of all students and subgroups, including students with disabilities and English learners in the design, and the development of usable and understandable reports for parents, teachers and other educators.

Likewise, input will be sought from periodic updates to the State Board of Education and the Testing and Growth Advisory. Both groups were most valuable in the development of NC Check-Ins, stressing the need for professional development and training for teachers. This requirement led to direct interaction with teachers and other educators who had feedback, providing much of the reasoning for some of the changes to NC Check-Ins throughout the development and administration period. It is anticipated this would be the same model for the NCPAT. Consistently gathering feedback from users will ensure an assessment that meets the technical requirements and is of the highest quality for use by teachers and all students and all subgroups of students.

Part 4: Appendices

☑ **Appendix A.** Individual Resumes for Project Directors and Key Personnel

ERIC S. HALL, Ed.D.

EDUCATION

Doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies (2014)
The University of South Florida, Tampa, FL

Master of Education in Educational Leadership (2006)
The University of South Florida, Tampa, FL

Bachelor of Science in Secondary Science Education (1997)
The University of South Florida, Tampa, FL

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION 2017 - PRESENT

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) serves as the State Education Agency (SEA) for North Carolina, with a dedicated focus on supporting 116 school districts, serving more than 2,500 public schools (traditional, charter, innovative) and educating over 1.5 million students across the state each year. The agency, under the governance of the State Board of Education, is responsible for administering over $10 billion in state and federal education funds, while also managing the implementation and compliance of state and federal policies.

Deputy State Superintendent of Innovation - (July 2018 – Present)
Promoted in July 2018 by the North Carolina State Superintendent to serve as the Deputy State Superintendent of Innovation at the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (DPI). Responsible for the State Department's Divisions of: Accountability and Testing, Federal Programs and Monitoring, Career and Technical Education (CTE), State Standards, Curriculum and Instruction, Charter Schools, Advanced Learning, Computer Science and Technology Education, as well as the North Carolina Innovative School District (ISD). Lead eight divisions in the agency, in support of key initiatives and goals established by the State Superintendent and the State Board of Education. As a member of the State Department's Executive Leadership team, work closely with local school districts, school boards, the North Carolina General Assembly, and the Governor's Office.

Superintendent of the North Carolina Innovative School District (ISD) - (May 2017 – July 2018)
Hired by the North Carolina State Board of Education to serve as the founding Superintendent for a new statewide school district, established in 2016 by the North Carolina General Assembly, designed to support and improve student outcomes in persistently low-performing schools. The ISD operates under the administration of the State Board of Education and the State Superintendent. In the inaugural year of operation, efforts were focused on district office start-up, program design, policy development, and the identification and implementation of innovative strategies for improving student achievement in qualifying low-performing schools. The ISD will establish a portfolio of elementary schools from across the state, with the opportunity to also partner with local districts to design and launch locally operated innovation zones (I-Zones) to support the turnaround of other low-performing schools. I-Zones will allow locally operated, low-performing schools to benefit from the same flexibilities afforded charter schools in the state, with the development of a dedicated turnaround team focused on improving student outcomes for schools operating in the zone.

Performance Highlights:
- Serve and support the State Board of Education in the development and launch of a new statewide school district, under their administration and governance.

- Led the development of all district office operations and related policies for the State Board of Education (including payroll systems, accounting/budget processes, employee benefits/state retirement, hiring, contracting, district website, school operations, etc.).
- Managed the implementation of all elements of the newly established district in alignment with state statutes on behalf of the State Board of Education and the State Superintendent.
- Established and publicly released qualifying school data and list of eligible schools for state intervention.
- Conferred and engaged with 21 local school district superintendents, representing 48 persistently low-performing schools as part of the State Board of Education's school selection process for the ISD.
- Developed and launched an annual application and selection process for qualified operators for contracting and managing selected schools under the ISD.
- Established a strong community engagement and partnership strategy for the ISD, which was deployed at the first school, Southside Ashpole Elementary School, in Rowland, North Carolina (continues to be replicated as part of the annual school selection process).

COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA, Raleigh, NC 2013 – 2017

Non-profit organization dedicated to the development and implementation of evidence-based integrated student supports and wrap-around services based on assessed needs. The organization works in partnership with local non-profits, schools, districts, communities, the State Department of Public Instruction, and business leaders to ensure the provision of high quality, multi-tiered supports to promote student academic achievement and long-term success.

President and CEO

Manage, support and lead a state-wide network of 26 independent organizations that together serve 40 school districts, 300 schools and nearly 170,000 students annually across the state of North Carolina. Responsible for the daily operations of the state office, the expansion of services, strategic planning, legislative/government affairs, evaluation of impact, the development of new partners, and the financial management of the company and its portfolio of programs.

Performance Highlights:

- Deployed evidence-based, targeted intervention services with achieved student outcomes reflecting (as validated by external evaluators at RTI International):
    - 98% of high school seniors served graduating
    - 96% of students in grades K-11, being promoted to the next grade
    - 84% of students served improved academic achievement
    - 90% of students served improved school behavior
    - 85% of students served improved daily school attendance
- Established a comprehensive school improvement framework in partnership with the NC Department of Public Instruction, focused on the integration of evidence-based, wrap-around student services in low-performing schools across the state.
- Established a comprehensive legislative strategy that led to $2.4 million in recurring funding from the state to expand the delivery of evidence-based, wrap-around services in low-performing schools.
- Led a team and network through national accreditation standards resulting in 26 accredited organizations delivering wrap-around services in low-performing schools across North Carolina.
- Increased unrestricted fund balance for the organization by more than 65% in three years.
- Secured more than $6 million in new investments from state, foundation and corporate partners to expand services focused on improving student achievement in low-performing schools.
- Established partnerships with research and evaluation organizations aimed at data validation, annual outcome reports, implementation science and effective, evidence-based practices for improving student and school outcomes.

AMIKIDS, INC., Tampa, FL 1997 – 2013

Non-profit organization providing education, mental health, and behavior intervention services to students in non-traditional programs, alternative schools, and/or the juvenile justice system. This organization includes a portfolio of more than 56 schools across 9 states, which operate under contract with the local school districts and/or state agencies as a public-private partnership.

National Director of Educational Services/Regional Director (2005-2013)

Promoted to direct and supervise the accountability processes and academic programming for 56 school sites across 9 states (Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico and Illinois). Recruit, hire, train, and evaluate Regional Directors of Education, Executive Directors/Principals, and teachers. Review and negotiate contracts annually and ensure academic compliance with local, state, and federal mandates. Secure and manage revenues to support the delivery of services and program enhancements. Serve and collaborate with over 800 board members across the nation to support and ensure the mission of the organization. Partner with state and district educational agencies in the coordination, design and delivery of educational programs for at-promise students working to avoid dropout, grade-level retention, suspension/expulsion and/or contact with the juvenile justice/court system.

Performance Highlights:

- Led portfolio of 56 schools to achieve accelerated student growth in reading and math, resulting in an average of two months of academic growth for every one month enrolled in school (doubled the expected student growth rates).
- Based on the external validation of student growth in reading and math, co-led the process for attaining "evidence-based/promising practice" designation by SAMSHA for accelerating academic gains for students (National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices).
- Increased school performance across portfolio of 26 schools in Florida by 31%, with 10 of the schools deemed "Exemplary" by the Florida Department of Education (highest rate in organization's history).
- Achieved 90% or higher average daily student attendance for all schools under my supervision.
- Facilitated legislation to increase per student state education funding for juvenile justice youth by 20% or approximately $12 million annually for programs across Florida (funds to focus on teacher recruitment and retention in hard-to-staff schools).
- Developed and implemented standardized educational policies and practices for schools operating in 9 states
- Led statewide education initiatives in partnership with the Florida Department of Education, the Louisiana Department of Education and legislative officials in both states to enhance services and funding for students and education programs.
- Direct and facilitate annual National Education Conferences focused on proven instructional strategies, accelerated learning principles, and effective school leadership practices.
- Testify before legislative bodies to improve laws governing education programs and collaborate with Education Committees in multiple states to improve student services.
- Led the growth and expansion of the organization with the launch of 5 new school operations in a 2-year period.
- Conceptualized and directed the implementation of a multi-grade level, comprehensive experiential, standards-based curriculum in collaboration with Florida Atlantic University on topics related to STEM education to support the acceleration of student achievement in reading, math and science.
- Designed and implemented extended learning programs, focused on the delivery of evidence-based interventions for improving student achievement and pro-social behaviors to support on-time high school graduation.
- Established and implemented processes to ensure compliance with education finance audits by the State of Florida Auditor General.
- Led the development and implementation of a multi-state, value-added teacher and school leader evaluation process, focused on school performance and student growth measures in reading and math.

- Facilitated the collaboration with Louisiana legislative officials and organizational board members in developing state policy and funding mechanisms for student alternative education programs equating to approximately $4.5 million annually for student services.

Executive Director/Principal (2000-2005)
Promoted to manage and enhance operations for Day Treatment Programs/Alternative Schools in Miami, Panama City, and Bradenton Florida. Accountable for instructional services, behavior interventions, fiscal management, contract compliance, leadership development for new managers, and the delivery of quality and compliant services for students and families. Participated in legislative delegation events and developed partnerships with local community organizations (Leadership Miami, United Way, Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, Price Waterhouse Coopers, St. Joe Community Foundations, and school districts) to secure mission-driven support for improving student achievement and graduation.

Performance Highlights:
- Accelerated student academic growth in reading and math with an average two-month gain for each month enrolled
- Increased overall annual revenue 13% through securing grants and development activities.
- Managed a capital investment budget and the construction for a new school project.
- Recruited to improve operational performance and overall academic achievement, with specific attention on the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act. Ensured contract compliance and secured highly-qualified instructional personnel leading to expansion of contract with school district.
- Transformed educational services resulting in "Exemplary Status" designation by the Florida Department of Education.

Director of Operations/Assistant Principal (1997-2000)
Promoted from classroom teacher/team leader to manage the daily operations at 2 school facilities (Tampa and Tallahassee). Managed school operations for students in non-traditional/alternative/day treatment education programs; monitored compliance for Statewide Quality Assurance Standards; conducted all personnel performance reviews; developed and implemented standards-based academic curriculum; and led the provision of all instructional activities at the schools with a focus on improving on-time graduation and student achievement.

Performance Highlights:
- Improved program statistics and outcomes in student achievement, attendance, graduation, and program enrollment (1997-2000).
- Improved staff retention by approximately 25%.
- Established collaborative partnership with community stakeholders and served as the lead educator for this integrated education program for at-promise students in the juvenile justice system.
- Developed program policies and practices resulting in "Exemplary Status" designation by the state.
- Co-managed the construction and capital improvement of a new school facility in Tallahassee (1998)

CONTINUING EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- Harvard Graduate School of Education – *School Turnaround Leaders Institute* (June 2018)
- The Next Generation Superintendent Development Program – Cohort V (March 2018)
- *BB&T Leadership Institute* (October 2015)
- *Bluewater Leadership Academy*; Leadership and Interpersonal Competencies Development, Del Polling (2008). (Interpersonal/Leadership Competency Evaluation scoring "highly effective")
- *Leadership, Achievement and Accountability – Learning Focused,* Max Thompson (July 2006).

AWARDS

- President's Award for Excellence in Leadership (October 2012)
- Outstanding Corporate Leadership Award (December 2011)
- Corporate Dedication Award (December 2011)
- Outstanding Executive Director/Principal Leadership Award (June 2005)
- Outstanding Leadership for Legislative Initiatives (June 2001)

PUBLICATIONS

Hall, E.S. (2015). *Making the Every Student Succeeds Act an Opportunity for All Students in NC*. EdNC.org online publication. Retrieved at https://www.ednc.org/2015/12/14/making-the-every-student-succeeds-act-an-opportunity-for-all-students-in-north-carolina/

Hall, E.S. (2015). *You Can't be Successful if You're Not at School*. EdNC.org online publication. Retrieved at https://www.ednc.org/2015/09/15/you-cant-be-successful-if-youre-not-at-school/

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Hall, E.S. (2015). *Now is the Time: Wrap-Around Services for Students*. EdNC.org online publication. Retrieved at https://www.ednc.org/2015/03/25/cis-on-esea/

Hall, E.S. (2015). *With NC School Grades Out, Let the Dialogue Begin*. News & Observer publication. Retrieved at http://www.newsobserver.com/opinion/op-ed/article10262261.html

Hall, E.S. (2014). *A Portraiture of Leadership As Enacted by School Administrators Working in Alternative/Non-Traditional Education Programs*. (In print) Pro-Copy.

Hall, E.S. & Karanxha, Z. (2012). *School today, jail tomorrow: The impact of Zero Tolerance on the over-representation of minority youth in the juvenile system*. Power Play, A Journal of Education Justice, Vol. 4, Issue 1.

Karanxha, Z. & Hall, E. S. (2012). *Are charter schools a viable educational model as an alternative to public education?* (Counterpoint/Point) In C. Russo (Ed.) Alternative Schooling and School Choice. SAGE series on *Debating Issues in American Education*. (In print) Sage Publications.

PRESENTATIONS

- Annual North Carolina School Boards Association Conference – Creating Innovative Conditions for Improving Student and School Outcomes (November 2017)
- Presentation to the North Carolina State Board of Education on the Role and Impact of Integrated Student Supports in Schools (2015 & 2016)
- Presentation to the North Carolina Joint Education Oversight Committee on Integrated Student Supports (2014)
- Presentation to the North Carolina State Board of Education on Integrated Student Supports and Effective School Intervention Practices (2014)
- National Youth At-Risk Conference: Engaging Students using Experiential Education (2012)
- Critical Race Studies in Education Conference: Presentation of Publication at Columbia University (2012)
- Testify to the Florida Senate Education Sub-Committee on reform efforts for students at-risk (2011 and 2012)

- National Conference for the Coalition of Juvenile Justice in Washington, D.C.; Experiential Education Curriculum and Strategies to Enhance Student Engagement in the Classroom (2010)
- Juvenile Justice Education Institute (JJEI) Conference; Research Supported Strategies for Accelerating Academic Achievement (2009).
- *No Child Left Behind Act* and its impact on Non-Traditional Programs; National Board Conference (2006)

APPOINTMENTS/NOMINATIONS

- North Carolina State Board of Education's Interagency Advisory Committee – Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Model Statewide Initiative (January 2016)
- NCWorks Commissioner (Executive Committee Member/Committee Chair for Improving Post-Secondary Education and Training for Future Workforce Demands) – Appointed by Governor Pat McCrory (December 2015)
- Vice-Chair of the North Carolina State Superintendent's Graduation Task Force (March 2013)
- Chair of the Juvenile Justice Education Accountability Committee for the Florida Department of Education and Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (January 2010)
- Chair of the Juvenile Justice Board for Florida Circuit 12 (2005)

Tammy L. Howard

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e-mail: tammy.howard@dpi.nc.gov

Education:
Ph.D., North Carolina State University (Educational Research and Policy Analysis) 1998
M.A., East Carolina University, (Education Administration) 1991
B.A., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Journalism) 1982

Professional Experience:
June 2011–Current: Director of Accountability Services
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

Directs the statewide assessment and accountability program, including the development of all general and alternate assessments and the analysis and reporting of the state and federal accountability systems. Ensures compliance with state and federal law as well as State Board of Education policy and provides communication to multiple internal and external stakeholders.

January 2011–June 2011: Director of Accountability Operations
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

Directed the operational aspects of the statewide assessment and the accountability program. Focused on the day-to-day functions of the division and fulfillment of deliverables to ensure a technically sound testing program.

September 2008–January 2011: Section Chief, Test Development
Accountability Services
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

Developed and implemented the statewide assessments for grades 3–8 and high school, ensuring compliance with technical standards and state and federal requirements. Directed the peer review submission for the 3rd Edition of the statewide assessments.

November 2006–September 2008: English Language Arts Test Measurement Specialist
Test Development Section
Accountability Services
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

Developed the English language arts assessments for grades 3–8 and high school.

April 2004–January 2006: Senior Research Scientist
Director of Assessment Operations
American Institutes for Research
Washington, DC

Directed the delivery and operations for general statewide assessments and for alternate assessments.

February 2003–April 2004: Section Chief, Testing Policy and Operations
Accountability Services
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

Directed the policies and procedures related to the delivery of the statewide assessments in grades 3–8 and high school, including policy manuals and administration manuals.

February 2002–April 2003: State NAEP Coordinator
Accountability Services
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

Managed the state's participation in NAEP and TIMSS, including data fulfillment and administration oversight.

October 1998–February 2002: Operations Consultant and NAEP State Coordinator
Accountability Services
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

Managed the delivery of the statewide assessments in grades 3–8 and high school and managed the state's participation in NAEP and TIMSS.

August 1988–June 1991: Teacher (Grades 7–8)

Taught English language arts and social studies in a rural K–8 school in North Carolina.

Professional Engagement:

AdvancEd North Carolina State Council Member (September 2016–present)

North Carolina Association for Research in Education Board (January 2016–present)

NORC of The University of Chicago Technical Advisor for "Implementing a Model for Reporting and Research on State Assessment Policies for K–12 Science and Mathematics Education," (2014–2018)

Triangle Assessment Working Group (March 2016–present)

Education Policy Fellowship Program. North Carolina Public School Forum (2001–2002).

KRISTEN D. MAXEY-MOORE

WORK EXPERIENCE:

Section Chief: Test Development, Accountability Services, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Raleigh, NC – April 2018- present

- Provide leadership, supervision, and management of the test development staff in order to bring forth well designed, high quialtiy, rigorous, content aligned, defensible, accessible, cost efficient, and technically-sound state assessments.
- Establish project plans and monitor adherence to timelines for all deliverables.
- Liasion with vendors to coordinate test development tasks, online design, and scoring.
- Responsible for the technical quality of the assessments.
- Provides leadership, supervision, and final editing for all technical documents published to document the development process.
- Ensure all processes employed meet the standards set forth by state policies and regulations and the U. S. Department of Education under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

Director of Assessment, *Department of Accountability, Research and Evaluation,* Denver Public Schools, Denver, CO – October 2014-March 2018

- Set the vision for all aspects of assessments in DPS.
- Developed and implemented the local assessment strategy for the district, within the context of school-based autonomy, which is in alignment with Denver 2020 Goals as well as the Academic Strategic Plan. Consists of identifying and delivering strong district-supported options while passing funds on to schools that elect to "opt-out" of district-supported options.
- Oversaw the development of high quality interim assessments in ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies as well as unit assessments, semester finals, and course finals for all core high school courses.
- Ensured all schools are knowledgeable and prepared to administer all state-mandated assessments given the continued shift to online assessments.
- Direcedt the development and implementation of Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) to inform both instruction and teacher evaluations, including the development of assessments to determine end of year growth.
- Ensured measurable improvement in and availability of best practices and assessment that contribute to schools' instructional achievement.
- Lead analysis, interpretation, professional development and communication of annual and short cycles of student performance data.
- Collaborated on the creation and implementation of the DPS Academic Strategic Plan and the Early Literacy 2020 Plan.
- Built and mentored leaders within ARE through the Leadership Investment Framework for Talent (LIFT).

Director of Assessment, *Department of Research and Accountability*, Guilford County Schools, Guilford County, NC – January 2013-October 2014

- Planned, organized, created, and managed high quality district-wide assessments aligned to the CCSS and NC Essential Standards.
- Developed protocols, trained, directed, and supported schools with local assessment administrations.
- Evaluated the district's assessment program through item analysis and correlations.
- Collected and assembled data; analyzed, interpreted and disseminated local assessment results.
- Based on Assessment for Learning theory and practice, current educational research, and changes to the curriculum, worked with personnel throughout district on using assessment data to identify needs and to improve teaching and learning for all students.
- Supervised and collaborated with Curriculum and Instruction personnel on various projects including standard maps, curriculum design, and unit revisions.
- Provided consultative and instructional support for educators.
- Developed and facilitated Item Writing and Close Reading professional development for all teachers.

Adjunct Professor, *Educational Research and Methodology Department*, University of North Carolina Greensboro, Greensboro, NC – May 2010-October 2014

- Developed and facilitated online assessment courses for undergraduates pursuing teaching certification.
    - ERM 401- Accountability in Our Nation's Schools
    - ERM 402- Standardized Tests
    - ERM 403- Classroom Assessment
- Developed and taught graduate level ERM 605 Educational Measurement and Evaluation for teachers, counselors, school administrators. Course included principles of measurement and evaluation; methods of scoring and interpreting tests. Construction and use of teacher-made tests. Statistical concepts basic to understanding and interpreting test data.

Director of Formative Assessment, *Department of Research and Accountability*, Guilford County Schools, Guilford County, NC – May 2010- December 2012

- Maintained and improved the operation of a system-wide benchmarking program for 122 schools with a 60% decrease in departmental budget and personnel over the course of three years.
- Developed and implemented district-wide online assessing.
- Decreased customer response time, increased level of support to schools, and streamlined training by integrating the use of technology.
- Evaluated the district's formative assessment program.
- Analyzed and interpreted benchmark data for teachers, principals and central office administrators.
- Participated on district and state committees that contributed to the development and implementation of strategic goals.
- Supervised and evaluated the performance of assigned staff members.

Formative Assessment Specialist, *Department of Research and Accountability*, Guilford County Schools, Guilford County, NC – August 2006- April 2010

- Wrote and edited high quality system-wide standards based benchmarks.
- Provided consultative and instructional support for all schools in the district.
- Developed, implemented, and trained schools on a Balanced Assessment program.
- Analyzed and interpreted assessment data at the district level
- Trained teachers and administrators to analyze benchmark data.
- Used data to help schools develop school improvement plans.
- Participated on district and state committees that contributed to the development and implementation of goals.

Academic Coach, *Department of Academic Improvement,* Guilford County Schools, Guilford County, NC – December 2005-August 2006

- Promoted the use of consistent instructional framework and research-based strategies.
- Designed and implemented school and district level staff development.
- Trained mentors and assisted in developing and coaching new teachers.
- Developed standards based assessments to diagnose student strengths and weaknesses.
- Developed data profiles and supported schools in using data at the school level.
- Used data to help schools develop their school improvement plans.
- Modeled instructional strategies and offer instructional support to schools.
- Participated on a cross departmental team to assist struggling schools.

Curriculum Facilitator K-5, *Lindley Elementary School,* Guilford County, NC – August 2004-December 2005
Curriculum Lead Teacher 3-5, *Oak Hill Year-Round Elementary,* Guilford County, NC – July 1999- July 2005 (Leadership Committee Chair 1999-2005)
NASA Educational Teacher, Kennedy Space Center, FL – Summer 2001
Teacher, *Oak Hill Year-Round Elementary,* Guilford County, NC –1994-1999 (Grade Level Chair 1996-1999)
Interim Fourth Grade Teacher, *Hazelwood Elementary*, Haywood County, NC - January 1994-May 1994

EDUCATION:

High Point University, High Point, NC

Academic Learner Certification, August 2003

University of North Carolina Greensboro, Greensboro, NC

M Ed., August 2001, magna cum laude

Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC

BS, Elementary Education, December 1993, cum laude

North Carolina Teacher Certification, December 1993/renewed, June 2014

Capital University, Columbus, OH, June 1988-July 1991

Kinge K Mbella, Ph.D.

EDUCATION

- **Ph.D. Educational Research Measurement, University** of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina, August 2012
- **Master of Science (M.S.) in Educational Research Measurement**, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina, 2008
- **Masters of Arts (M.A.) in Education Research**, Vrjie University of Brussels, Brussels, Belgium, 2003

RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

Lead Psychometrician
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), Raleigh, NC, 2014 – Current

- Provide leadership, direction and management of the day-to-day operation of the psychometric team at NCDPI. Serves as psychometric lead for North Carolina End-of-Course (EOC) and End-of-Grade (EOG) assessments in Mathematics and English Language Arts/Reading (ELA). Primary responsibilities include:
  - Development: Assessment blueprint designs, item development, field test embedding plans
  - Analyses: Item analyses using Item response modeling and classical statistics, calibration and scaling.
  - Ongoing Form assembly: Build new equivalent forms that are of same statistical and content specifications.

Education Research Analyst | Research and Performance Management
North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) Office, Raleigh, NC, 2013 – July 2014

- Statistician and Researcher: Conducted research on a variety of performance indicators and other institutional research topics to support and inform policy decisions for the office of the president for all 58 North Carolina Community Colleges System.
- SAS Programmer: Manages and query large relational databases using customized SQL and SAS macro routines Used ODS to synthesize large relational data and generated customized reports and outputs
- Psychometrician: Served as primary Psychometrician for NCCCS and worked with outside test vendors on a new Diagnostic Placement assessments (NC-DAP).
  - Applied equipercentile scaling to link new placement scale scores onto the existing placement scale.
  - Facilitator on the NC Standard setting committee that recommended state wide cut scores for new placement test.
  - Designed and conducted ongoing validation studies to evaluate impact of newly established cut scores.

Business and Technology Applications Analyst
North Carolina Community College System Office, Raleigh, NC, 2012

- Collaborated with office staff to understand research needs from both internal and external agencies
- Designed relational database for student and outcome variables for all 58 colleges
- Performed data quality and validation checks through SAS
- Extracted data sets from data warehouse to fulfill various external and internal data needs
- Collaborated with other staff on internal and external evaluation needs
- Created Customized PDF and HTML reports using ODS and SAS templates.

Academic Researcher I
Guilford Technical Community College, Greensboro, NC, 2010 to 2012

- Served on the Evaluation Team for a nationally funded Developmental Education Initiative (DEI) grant.
- Designed and implemented data collection tools for the DEI grant evaluation
- Created and managed large-scale student relational databases using SAS
- Designed and conducted statistical analyses to evaluate grant objectives.
- Provided quantitative research support on a variety of issues related to improving completion rates of DEI students through college.

Psychometric Consultant
Horizon Research, Inc., Raleigh based, 2008 to 2010

- Advised on psychometric quality of various field and operational assessments
- Calibrated item parameters using Item Response Theory (IRT) on teacher professional development assessments
- Advised on selection of operational assessment items using information from IRT analysis
- Evaluated reliability of assessment through test information function and standard errors
- Wrote and presented Item Analyses report to technical advisory committee.

North Carolina State Bar, Raleigh, North Carolina, 2007 to 2010

- Created and managed database of test item and item response patterns
- Reviewed psychometric qualities of items for specialty exams using classical test theory and IRT
- Wrote technical reports and presented results to committee chairs
- Collaborated and conducted workshops on item quality and standardized testing.

THAKUR B. KARKEE, PH. D.

Thakur Karkee is currently a Psychometrician at the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) working on full scope of large scale assessment, that is, test development, item bank management, calibration, equating, and writing technical reports. Previously, he worked as an Assistant Professor/ Psychometrician/Research Scientist over the years at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, Measurement Incorporated (MI), ETS, and CTB/McGraw-Hill respectively with experience in designing research projects, managing and analyzing large data sets using complex statistical procedures, conducting psychometric and statistical analyses, developing sampling plans and surveys, creating research specifications to interpret research designs, preparing reliability and validity evidences for project evaluations, writing technical reports, monitoring budgets, evaluating proposals, and meeting project deadlines. He has working knowledge of statistical and psychometric software like SAS, SPSS, WINSTEPS, IRTPRO, and PARSCALE.

Education

Ph.D. Educational Measurement, Research, and Evaluation; University of North Carolina, Greensboro, NC, 1999
M.Sc. Statistics; Tribhuvan University; Nepal, 1986
B.Sc. Statistics, Mathematics, and Science; Tribhuvan University; Nepal, 1982
Skills SAS, SPSS, R, LISREL, PRELIS, PARSCALE, WINSTEPS, IRTPRO

Summary of Professional Experience

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Raleigh, NC - Psychometrician, 2015-
-Analyze large scale assessment data and document reliability and validity evidences
-Participate in meetings and provide Psychometric support to inter departments
-Develop tests based on test blueprints and approve embedding plans
-Write technical reports and briefs
-Participate in evaluating RFPs

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill - Assistant Professor of Bio-Statistics at Psychiatric Department, 2014-2015
-Analyzed Psychiatric data to support Psychiatric research

Measurement Incorporated, **Durham, NC; Psychometrician**, 2010–2014

- Conducted psychometric and statistical analyses, equating, and scaling for educational assessment development and scoring projects.
- Prepared item review, scoring, standard setting, norming, reporting, and evaluations of custom-designed tests.
- Implemented data analysis design, data management statistics, inferential statistics, univariate, and multivariate statistics.
- Conducted classical and IRT item calibration, model building, and tests of

association.

- Projects involved included:
  - New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge: 2010–2014
  - Charlotte-Mecklenburg (North Carolina) Schools Formative Assessment: 2010–2014
  - Gwinnett County (Georgia) Public Schools Gateway Assessment Program: 2010

California Commission on Teaching Credentialing, Sacramento, CA - Consultant, Fall 2009–Winter 2010

- Evaluated certification test results.
- Prepared RFPs for certification tests.

Education Testing Service, **Princeton, NJ - K–12 Consultant**, 2009

- Evaluated large-scale assessment results.
- Provided consulting on assessment issues.

CTB/McGraw-Hill, **Monterey, CA - Research Scientist**, 1999–2009

- Planned and managed assessment programs, provided psychometric support to clients, conducted classical and IRT analyses, wrote proposals for research studies, and wrote technical reports for large-scale assessment programs.
- Supported test development activities of large scale state assessment programs including evaluation of anchor items, test characteristic curves, and standard error curves.
- Presented research studies and issues at state departments' TAC meetings. Translated research proposals to research specifications with test design, analysis procedures, and documentation for state assessment programs.
- Provided training to research associates and statistical analysts on analysis procedures and requirements.
- Met deadlines and program requirements under budget and on schedule.
- Implemented complex mathematical models that are the foundations of assessment design and analyzed data.
- Supervised interns (Ph.D. candidates) on vertical scaling and growth modeling.
- Planned and carried out relevant technical studies (please see selected publications and presentations below) including an online versus paper and pencil comparability study using quasi-experimental design, design and analysis of a survey study, missing data analysis, producing reliability and validity evidence for evaluating testing programs, and use of latent factors and multi-dimensional models for deriving composite scores of an English Language proficiency test.
- Served as a lead Psychometrician for state assessment projects in Colorado, Oklahoma, Arizona, and Mississippi and was a team member on TerraNova and LASLinks.

University of North Carolina, **Greensboro, NC: Department of Educational Research Methodology - Teaching/Research Assistant**, 1996–1999

- Mentor graduate students on statistics and survey methods while completing course work and dissertation research.
- Performed statistical data analysis and item response theory data analysis for the National Paideia Research Study.
- Performed adverse impact analyses and assisted with performance standard-setting workshops.

UNICEF Regional Office, **South Asia, Nepal - Research Internship**, Summer 1997

- Designed studies, collected and analyzed data, and disseminated results through written technical reports for Teacher Training Program, Solokhumbu, Nepal.

Professional Affiliations

- American Educational Research Association (AERA) and
- National Council of Measurement in Education (NCME).

Professional Development Activities

Training courses:

- An introduction to Student Growth Percentiles: Concepts, Calculation, Visualization and Use (April 2012, Vancouver, Canada).
- ICL and ETIRM: Open Source IRT Estimation Software for Researchers (March 2008, New York, NY).
- Generalizability Theory (April 2007, Chicago, IL).
- Applying Hierarchical Models to Causal Inference (April 2006, San Francisco, CA).
- Test Equating Methods and Practices (April 2001)
- Assessing and Detecting Item Bias using Multidimensional Differential Item Functioning (W. Stout, March, 1999)
- Hierarchical Linear Modeling (S. Raudenbush, April 1997)
- Computer-based Test Construction (W. van der Linden, December, 1997).
- National Advancement of Educational Progress summer workshop, Washington, DC (August, 1996).

Presentations and Publications

Presentations

Bowen, D, Karkee, T, & Bowen, J. (2019). *Evaluation of NGSS-Aligned Task Model Performance: Technology-Enhanced Items Compared to Multiple-Choice Counterparts*. Paper to be presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Toronto, Canada, April 5-9, 2019.

Karkee, T., Reid, W., & Aragon, S. (2014). *Investigating College and Career Readiness Indicators for CCSS Aligned Tests.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Council of Measurement in Education, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Karkee, T. & Reid, W. (2014). *Evaluating the Impact of Multiple Rater-Score Designs on Mixed-Format Test Characteristics.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, April 3-7, 2014.

Karkee, T., Martin-Santonato, F. E., & Morgan, G. (2013). *Assessing Validity Evidence of Benchmark Assessments.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco; April 27-May 1, 2013

Reid, W. & Karkee, T. (2013). *Writing Prompts: Does the Number of Raters Impact Sub-Populations?* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, California April 27 - May 1, 2013.

Karkee, T., & Reid, W. (2012). *Sensitivity of Sampling Designs and Sample Sizes in the Recovery of Rasch Model Item Parameter Estimates and Resulting Proficiency Classifications.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of National Council of Measurement in Education, Vancouver, BC, Canada.

Karkee, T., & Reid, W. (2012). *Sensitivity of Anchor Designs on Scaling and Proficiency Classifications in the Rasch Model.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of American Educational Research Association, Vancouver, BC, Canada.

Karkee, T., Reid, W., & Bowen, D. (2011). *Does Removing Anchor Items Based on Statistical Criterion Impact Scale Stability and Student Achievement: A Rasch Model Perspective.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

Karkee, T., Kim. D., & Fatika K. (2010). *Comparability Study of Online and Paper-and-Pencil Test: Using Modified Internally and Externally Matched Criteria*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Denver, CO.

Karkee, T., Murphy, Steven T., & Fatika K. (2010). *Comparisons of Test Characteristic Curves Alignment Criteria of the Anchor Sets and the Total Test for Maintaining Test Scale and Impact on Students' Performance.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Council of Measurement in Education, Denver, CO, April–May 2010.

Karkee, T., Davidson, A. H., & Abedi, J. (2009*). Factor Structure of an English Language Proficiency (ELP) Test: A Comparison of Three Approaches to Overall Score Estimation with Varying Dimensionality and Latent Factor Assumptions.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego.

Davidson, A. H., Karkee, T. & Wan, P. (2008). *Factor Structure of an English Language Learner (ELL) Test that Includes Sub-tests by Language Modality: Part II. Dimensionality in the Estimation of Overall English Language Proficiency—Lessons from LAS Links.* Paper presented at the 2008 National Conference on Student Assessment, Orlando, FL.

Karkee, T., Davidson, A. H., & Wan, P. (2008). *Factor Structure of an English Language Learner (ELL) Test that Includes Sub-tests by Language Modality: Part I. Conceptualizing English Language Proficiency: A Comparison of Latent Factor Structures.* Paper presented at the 2008 National Conference on Student Assessment, Orlando, FL.

Weeks, J. P. & Karkee, T. (2008). *From Status to Growth: The Impact on School Accountability Ratings.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Council on Measurement in Education, New York, NY.

Lefly, D. & Karkee, T. (2007). *Plain Language and Universal Design: Disentangling the Characteristics of Revised items Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP).* Paper presented at the CCSSO Large-Scale Assessment Conference, Tennessee.

Karkee, T. & Finkelman, M. (2007). *Missing Data Treatment Methods in Parameter Recovery*

for a Mixed-Format Test. Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL.

Wang, Z., Karkee, T., & Green, D. R. (2006). *Exploring the effects of dimensionality on three vertical scaling procedures.* Paper presented at the National Council on Measurement in Education, San Francisco, CA.

Karkee, T., Wang, Z., Green, D. R., & Patz, R. J. (2006) *Vertical Scaling of English Language Proficiency Assessments Using Common Examinees Design: a Comparison of Three Methods.* Paper presented at the National Council on Measurement in Education, San Francisco, CA.

Karkee, T., Ito, K., & Shook, A. (2005). *Evaluation of missing data treatment methods on the estimation of IRT based test scores*. Paper presented at the National Council on Measurement in Education, Montreal, QC, Canada.

Karkee, T. & Choi, S. (2005). *Impact of eliminating anchor items flagged from statistical criteria on test score classifications in common item equating*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, QC, Canada.

Karkee, T. & Wright, K. (2004). *Evaluation of linking methods for placing three-parameter logistic item parameter estimates onto a one-parameter scale*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA.

Karkee, T., Lewis, D. M., Hoskens, M., Yao, L. & Haug, C. (2003). *Separate versus concurrent calibration methods in vertical scaling*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Council on Measurement in Education, Chicago, IL.

Karkee, T., Lewis, D. M., Barton, K., & Haug, C. (2002). *The effect of including or excluding students with testing accommodations on IRT calibrations*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Council on Measurement in Education, New Orleans, LA.

Publications

Karkee, T., Davidson, A. H., & Housten, L. S. (2009*). MHAR Research and Development Technical Report: Evaluation of the Test Construct of LAS Links Overall Language Proficiency Using Various Weighting Designs.* Submitted to MHAR, December 2008.

Karkee, T. & Dhakal, D. N. (1997). *Himalayan Trust Solukhumbu Teacher Training Program: A baseline survey of the primary level schools*. UNICEF, Regional Office for South Asia, Nepal, Internal Report No. 10.

Karkee, T. (1997). *Recurrent teacher training through the whole school approach-some issues*. UNICEF, Regional Office for South Asia, Nepal, Internal Report No. 11.

Huff, K.L., Price, M.A., Fiandaca, G.M, Karkee, T., Jaeger, R.M. (1996*). An analysis of the degree of adverse impact in the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards' 1995–96 Middle Childhood Generalist assessment.* Greensboro, N.C.: National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, Technical Analysis Group, Center for Educational Research and Evaluation, University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Hattie, J. A., Fletcher, R. B., & Karkee, T. (1996, August). *An analysis of school suspensions in Guilford County Schools*. Confidential report presented to the school board, Guilford County, NC.

Christopher R. Gregory

EDUCATION

Virginia Tech, Doctor of Philosophy, December, 2015 Educational Research and Evaluation
West Virginia University, Master of Arts, December, 2009, Political Science- Education Policy
West Virginia University, Master of Arts, May, 2003, Secondary Education- Social Studies
West Virginia University, Bachelor of Arts, May, 2001, Major in Political Science, Minor in History

WORK EXPERIENCE

6/17-Present: Psychometrician, Accountability Division, North Carolina State University/North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

- Develop sound, reliable and valid assessments for state acountability purposes using Classical Test Theory and Item Response Theory
- Create and update SAS programs relevant to statewide testing program
- Manage psychometric deliverables
- Collect and anlayze item and form data

3/17-6/17: Educational Research and Evaluation Consultant, Accountability Division, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

- Collected and analyzed data related to statewide accountability programs
- Created annual and ad hoc reports
- Provided documentation and quality control of statewide accountability data
- Provided analytic support for various divisions within NCDPI

8/14-3/17 (Grant Funded/Time Limited Position): Program Evaluator, PACE Project, Guilford County Schools, NC

- Collected data related to the Race to the Top grant focused on personalized learning
- Created logic model and Scope of Work
- Analyzed quantitative and qualitative data
- Conducted meetings with various departments within school system and with U.S. Department of Education
- Coordinated and led grant status within the PACE team

8/07-08/09: West Virginia University, Benedum Collaborative, Graduate Assistant/Research Assistant

- Liaison between School of Education and other Schools and Departments throughout the University
- Taught seminars to 5-Year Teacher Education Program participants
- Led professional development experiences

1/02-12/02: West Virginia University, Extended Learning, Graduate Assistant/Program Assistant

- Managed WVU Attaining College Credit and Experience while in Secondary School (ACCESS) Program
- Created and maintained ACCESS web page
- Served as contact liaison contacts between area high schools, Board of Education, and WVU

3/98-5/01: West Virginia University, WWVU-FM, DJ, Assistant Program Director

- Managed staff of 40, including hiring, training, and providing on-going enrichment programs
- On-air alternative and jazz personality
- Provided administrative assistance to station office

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

8/09-8/14- Teacher/Adjunct Faculty, Montgomery County Schools/New River CC

5/11-1/12- Adjunct Faculty, School of Education, Virginia Tech

8/03- 6/07- Teacher, Social Studies Department Chair, Social Studies Lead Teacher, Galileo Magnet High School,

6/05-7/06- Teacher, Upward Bound

DISSERTATION AND PUBLICATIONS

- Dissertation Title: *A Cross-National Study of Civics Knowledge Scores*
- Gregory, C., & Miyazaki, Y. (2016). Multilevel analysis of student civics knowledge scores. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 1-15. DOI-10.1080/00220671.2016.1255869

PRESENTATIONS AND CONFERENCES

- April, 2016- Presented at American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting- *A Cross National Study of Civics Knowledge Scores*
- April 16-20, 2015- Presented at American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting- *Association of Home Literacy, School Climate, and Teacher Classroom Method with Student Civics Knowledge Scores*
- February 20-22, 2014- Presented at Eastern Educational Research Association- *Association of Two Elements of Socioeconomic Status, School Climate, and Teacher Classroom Method with Civics Knowledge Scores*

MEMBERSHIPS

- American Educational Research Association
- National Council on Measurement in Education

John T. Willse

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Greensboro, NC 27412
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Education

Doctor of Psychology, Assessment and Measurement, James Madison University (2002)

Master of Arts, General Psychology, James Madison University (1999)

Bachelor of Arts, Psychology, University of Virginia (1997)

Professional Experience

Chair, Department of Educational Research Methodology, University of North Carolina at Greensboro (2016 - Present)

Associate Chair, Department of Educational Research Methodology, University of North Carolina at Greensboro (2015 - 2016)

Co-Director, Office of Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Services, University of North Carolina at Greensboro (2018 - Present)

Director, Office of Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Services, University of North Carolina at Greensboro (2015 - 2018)

Interim Director, Center for Educational Research and Evaluation, University of North Carolina at Greensboro (2010 - 2011)

Associate Professor, Department of Educational Research Methodology, University of North Carolina at Greensboro (2010 - Present).

Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Research Methodology, University of North Carolina at Greensboro (2004 - 2010).

Director of Academic Assessment, Office of the Provost, University of North Carolina at Greensboro (2003 - 2004).

Adjunct, Department of Educational Research Methodology, University of North Carolina at Greensboro (2002 - 2004).

Research Associate, Office of Institutional Research, University of North Carolina at Greensboro (2001 - 2004).

Academic Assessment Specialist, Office of the Provost. University of North Carolina at Greensboro (2002 - 2003).
*Some positions listed above were held concurrently.

Graduate Level Courses Taught

- Educational Measurement and Evaluation
- Foundations of Educational Measurement
- Intermediate Statistical Methods
- Statistical Methods in Education
- Methods of Educational Research
- Design and Analysis of Educational Experiments
- Multivariate Statistical Analyses
- Structural Equation Modeling
- Statistical Programming in R

Publications (bolded name indicates student co-author)

Refereed Articles

Willse, J. T. (2017). Polytomous Rasch Models in Counseling Assessment. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, *50*, 248–255. https://doi.org/10.1080/07481756.2017.1362656

Madrigal, L., Gill, D. L., Willse, J. T. (2017). Gender and the Relationships Among Mental Toughness, Hardiness, Optimism and Coping in Collegiate Athletics: A Structural Equation Modeling Approach. *Journal of Sport Behavior*, 40, 68-86.

Luo, X. & Willse, J. T. (2015). A Dual-purpose Rasch Model with Joint Maximum Likelihood Estimation. *Journal of Applied Measurement*, 15.

Daniel, L. W., Borders, L. D., & Willse, J. T. (2015). The Role of Supervisors' and Supervisees' Mindfulness in Clinical Supervision. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 54, 221-232.

Reese F. R., Myers, J. E., Lewis, T. F., & Willse, J. T. (2015). Construction and Initial Validation of the Reese EcoWellness Inventory, *International; Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, doi:10.1007/s10447-014-9232-1

Weinfurt, K. P., Lin, L., Bruner, D. W., Cyranowski, J. M., Dombeck, C. B., Hahn, E. A., …, Willse, J.T., & Flynn, K. E. (2015). Development and Initial Validation of the PROMIS ® Sexual Function and Satisfaction Measures Version 2.0: PROMIS SexFS v2.0. *The Journal of Sexual Medicine*, *12*, 1961–1974. http://doi.org/10.1111/jsm.12966

Dallas, A & Willse J. T. (2014). Survey Analysis with Mixture Rasch Models. *Journal of Applied Measurement*, 15, 394-404.

Kemer, G., Borders, L. D., Willse, J. T. (2014). Cognitions of Expert Supervisors in Academe: A Concept Mapping Approach. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 53, 2-18.

Edmunds, J. A., Willse, J. T., Arshavsky, N., & **Dallas, A.** (2013). Mandated engagement: The impact of Early College High Schools. *Teacher's College Record*, 115, p. - http://www.tcrecord.org ID Number: 17044.

Shu, Z., Henson, R. A., & Willse, J. T. (2013). Using Neural Network Analysis to define an efficient method of DINA model estimation for small sample sizes. *Journal of Classification*, 30, 173-194.

Edmunds, J.A., Bernstein, L., Unlu, F., Glennie, E., Willse, J., Smith, A. & Arshavsky, N. (2012). Expanding the start of the college pipeline: Ninth grade findings from an experimental study of the impact of the early college high school model. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness, 5:*2, 136-159.

Smith, R. M. & Willse, J. T. (2012). Influences on Municipal Annexation Methodology: An Intra-State Analysis of Annexation Activity in North Carolina, 2000 - 2010. *State and Local Government Review*, 44, 185-195.

Goodman, J. T., Willse, J. T., Allen, N., & **Klaric, J.** (2011). Identification of differential item functioning in assessment booklet designs with structural missing data. *Educational and Psychological Measurement,* 71, 80-94.

Marty, M. C., Henning, J. M., & Willse, J. T. (2011). Students Provide Accurate, But Not Always Detailed, Feedback to a Peer Performing an Orthopedic Assessment Skill. *The Internet Journal of Allied Health Sciences and Practice*, 9(1), 1-7.

Myers, J. E., Willse, J. T., & Villalba, J. A. (2011). Promoting self-esteem in adolescents: The influence of wellness factors. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 89, 28-36.

Willse, J. T. (2011). Mixture Rasch Models with Joint Maximum Likelihood Estimation. *Educational and Psychological Measurement,* 71, 5-19.

Edmunds, J.; Bernstein, L.; Glennie, E.; Willse, J.; Arshavsky, N.; Unlu, F.; Bartz, D.; Silberman, **T.; Scales, W.D.** & **Dallas, A.** (2010). Preparing students for college: the implementation and impact of the Early College High School model. *Peabody Journal of Education, 85*:3, 348.

Kalcounis-Rueppell M. C., Petric R, Briggs J. R., Carney C, Marshall M. M., Willse, J. T., Rueppell, O., Ribble, D. O., & Crossland, J. P. (2010). Differences in Ultrasonic Vocalizations between Wild and Laboratory California Mice (Peromyscus californicus). *PLoS ONE*, 5(4): e9705. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0009705

Marty, M. C., Henning, J. M., & Willse J. T. (2010). Accuracy and reliability of peer assessment of athletic training psychomotor laboratory skills. *Journal of Athletic Training*, 45, 609-614.

Wester, K. L., Willse, J. T., & Davis, M. S. (2010). Psychological climate, stress, and research integrity among research counselor educator: A preliminary study. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 50, 39-55.

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Sivo, S. A., Fan, X. , Witta, E. L., & Willse, J. T. (2006). The search for optimal cutoff properties: Fit index criteria in structural equation modeling. *Journal of Experimental Education*, 74 (3), 267-288.

Invited/Edited Publications

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URL http://CRAN.R-project.org/package=CTT. Version 2.3.3. (2800+ downloads).

Willse, J. T. (2018). *CTT: Classical Test Theory Functions*.
URL http://CRAN.R-project.org/package=CTT. Version 2.3.3. (48k+ downloads).

Willse, J. T. (2014). *mixRasch: Mixture Rasch Models with JMLE*. URL http://CRAN.R-project.org/package=mixRasch. Version 1.1. (20k+ downloads).

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Ackerman, T. A., Ip, E., Chen, S. H., **Strachan, T.**, **Fu, Y.**, Willse, J. T. (2018). Applying the Projected IRT Model to Correct for Inconsistent Score Scale Interpretation. Presented at the National Council on Measurement in Education annual meeting, New York.

Goodman, J., Willse, J. T., Chau, R., Dallas, A., & Fan, F. (2018). Using Shiny to Create Custom Psychometric Solutions. Presented at the National Council on Measurement in Education annual meeting, New York.

Rollins, J. & Willse, J. T. (2017). Comparison of Lasso Constrain Multiple Group Approaches for Detecting Differential Item Functioning. Presented at the National Council on Measurement in Education annual meeting, New York.

Samonte, K. M. & Willse, J. T. (2016). Examining the Impact of Longitudinal Measurement Invariance Violations on Growth Models. Presented at the National Council on Measurement in Education annual meeting, Washington, D.C.

McCoy, T. P., Willse, J. T. (2015). The Effects of Mixture-induced Local Dependence on Diagnostic Classification. Presented at the National Council on Measurement in Education annual meeting, Chicago, ILL.

Willse, J. T., **Rollins, J.** & **Qunbar, S.** (2015). Rasch Model Parameter Recovery with a Conditional Pseudo-Likelihood. Presented at the National Council on Measurement in Education annual meeting, Chicago, ILL.

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Willse, J. T., Ackerman, T. A., & Luecht, R. M. (2012). An Overview of ca-MST: From Panel Configurations to Test Assembly. Presented at the National Council on Measurement in Education annual meeting. Vancouver, BC, Canada.

Willse, J. T. & Dallas, A. (2012). Survey Analysis with Mixture Rasch Models. Presented at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting. Vancouver, BC, Canada.

Willse, J. T., Fulcher, K. H., & DeMars, C. E. (2012). Confirmatory Mixture Rasch Analysis for Understanding and Improvement of an Information Seeking Skills Test. Presented at the National Council on Measurement in Education annual meeting. Vancouver, BC, Canada.

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Shu, Z., Henson, R. A., & Willse, J. T. (2010). Using Neural Network Analysis to Define an Efficient Method of DINA Model Estimation for Small Sample Sizes. Presented at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting. Denver, Colorado.

Shu, Z., Willse, J. T., & Henson, R. A. (2010). Implication of Grain-Size Misspecification of Q Matrix in DCMs. Presented at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting. Denver, Colorado.

Willse, J. T. & **Dallas, A.** (2010). Impact of the Early-College High School Model on Students' Attitudes, Behavior, and Engagement. Presented at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting. Denver, Colorado.

Edmunds, J., Arshavsky, N., Bernstein, L., Unlu, F., Glennie, E., Willse, J. T., & **Dallas, A**. (2009). Sudy of the Efficacy of the Learn and Earn Early College High School Model. Presented at the Annual IES Research Conference. Washington, DC.

Marty, M. C., Henning, J. M., & Willse J. T. (2009). Students are Reliable Assessing a Peer Performing an Athletic Training Psychomotor Skill. Presented at the National Athletic Trainers' Association Educators' Conference, National Harbor, MD.

Willse, J. T. (2009). Retrofitting Cognitive Diagnostic Models to Large Scale Tests: Problems with Dimensionality. Presented at the National Council on Measurement in Education annual meeting. San Diego, California.

Willse, J. T. (2009). Mixture Rasch Models with Joint Maximum Likelihood Estimation. Presented at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting. San Diego, California.

Henson, R. A., Templin, J., **Burke, M.,** & Willse, J. T. (2008). Estimation of the log-linear model with latent classes for the purpose of cognitive diagnosis. Presented at the National Council on Measurement in Education annual meeting. New York, New York.

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Marty, M. C., Henning, J. M., & Willse, J. T. (2008). Peer assessment: students helping students learn. Paper presented at the Teaching and Learning Conference; March 19, 2008; San Juan, Puerto Rico.

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Scales, W. D. & Willse, J. T. (2008). Creation of a student survey for evaluation of early college high schools. Presented at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting, New York, New York.

Willse, J. T. (2008). Consistency of content expert Q-matrix development. Presented at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting, New York, New York.

Willse, J. T., Henson, R. A., & Templin, J. (2008). K-Means with Latent Class Refinement: Cognitive Diagnosis with Few Assumptions. Presented at the National Council on Measurement in Education annual meeting, New York, New York.

Willse, J. T. & Luecht, R. M. (2008). Empirical Validity and Efficiency Studies with PROMIS Scale Items. Presented at The Second PROMIS Conference: Bethesda, Maryland.

Willse, J. T., Henson, R. A., & Templin, J. L. (2007). Using sumscores or IRT in place of cognitive diagnostic models: Can more familiar models do the job? Presented at (joint mtg) American Educational Research Association / National Council on Measurement in Education , Chicago, Illinois.

Willse, J. T. (2007). Using MIMIC Models to Describe the Performance of Fit Indices. Presented at (joint mtg) American Educational Research Association / National Council on Measurement in Education , Chicago, Illinois.

Willse, J. T., Henson, R. A., & Templin, J. L. (2007). Nonparametric skills assessment: Cognitive diagnosis with few assumptions. Presented at the 23rd Workshop on Item Response Theory, Enschede, The Netherlands.

Willse, J. T., Henson, R. A., & Templin, J. L. (2007). A nonparametric alternative for analyzing test data and developing profiles of skill mastery. Presented at the International Conference on Advances in Interdisciplinary Statisitics and Combinatorics, Greensboro, NC.

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Goodman, J.T., Willse, J., Allen, N., & **Klaric, J.**, (2006). Identification of Differential Item Functioning for Different Survey Assessment Booklet Designs, Presented at (joint mtg) American Educational Research Association / National Council on Measurement in Education , San Francisco, California.

Klaric, J., **Goodman, J.**, Willse, J., & Allen, N., (2006). Recovery of Item Parameter Estimates From Item Data Generated According to Different Survey Assessment Booklet Designs, Presented at (joint mtg) American Educational Research Association / National Council on Measurement in Education , San Francisco, California

Willse, J.T., **Goodman, J.**, Allen, N., & **Klaric, J.**, (2006). Comparison of the Structure Found for Different Survey Assessment Booklet Designs Using Structural Equation Modeling. Presented at (joint mtg) American Educational Research Association / National Council on Measurement in Education , San Francisco, California.

Willse, J. T. & Sivo, S. A. (2001). Cutoff Criteria for Fit Indexes in Structural Equation Modeling: The Need for Cross-Fitting Structural Models when Performing Monte Carlo Studies, American Educational Research Association, Seattle, Washington

Haley, K. A. & Willse, J. T. (2001). Rater Effects in Writing Assessment. American Educational Research Association, Seattle, Washington.

Regional

Marty, M. C., Henning J. M., & Willse J. T. Athletic Training Students Provide Accurate, But Not Always Corrective, Feedback to a Peer Performing a Laboratory Skill. Presented at the Fairfax County Teacher Researcher Conference, Fairfax, VA.

Moore, D., Willse, J., & Fulcher, K. H. (2000). Planning Your Assessment Program. Student Success Conference, Markers and Milestones: Measuring Student Success in Virginia, Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Willse, J. T. & Anderson, R. (1999). Oral Communications Assessment, Annual Fall Meeting of the Virginia Assessment Group, Williamsburg, Virginia.

Research Grants and Contracts

Special projects in Development and Maintenance of Statewide Assessments. ($200,000, Principal Investigator). North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. 2016-2019.

Using projective unidimensionsal models for measuring multidimensional educational data. ($232,445, Principal Investigator). Subcontract with Wake Forest University. Primary funding IES. 2015-2019

OAERS contract with American Board of Pediatrics. ($55,816, Principal Investigator). American Board of Pediatrics. 2016-2019.

Experiential Measurement Training with Castle Worldwide, Inc. ($49,500, Principal Investigator). Castle Worldwide, Inc. 2016-2019.

OAERS contract with Guilford County Schools. ($31,500, Principal Investigator). Guilford County Schools. 2016-2017.

US Lacrosse Evaluation (2015-2017). ($42,355, Principal Investigator). Guilford County Schools. 2016-2017.

OAERS contract with Winston Salem/Forsyth County Schools 2015-2016. ($69,519, Principal Investigator). Winston Salem Forsyth County Schools. 2015-2017.

Reading Connections Data Analysis. ($1800, Principal Investigator). Reading Connections. 2015.

Dimensionality and Population Invariance Studies for New Patient-Reported Outcome Measures Used in the PROMIS Project. ($83,279, Principal Investigator with Co-Investigator Ric Luecht). Subcontract with the Duke Clinical Research Institute for *Validating and Extending the PROMIS Sexual Function Measure for Clinical Research*. Primary funding from National Institutes of Health (NIH). 2009-2013.

Analysis and Verification of Test Equatings for Nevada's K-12 Assessment Program. ($78,000, Principal Investigator). Measured Progress, Inc. 2011-2013.

Analysis and Verification of Test Equatings for Nevada's K-12 Assessment Program. ($24,000, Principal Investigator). Measured Progress, Inc. 2010.

Analysis and Verification of Test Equatings for Nevada's K-12 Assessment Program. ($24,000, Principal Investigator). Measured Progress, Inc. 2009.

Analysis and Verification of Test Equatings for Nevada's K-12 Assessment Program. ($21,000, Principal Investigator). Measured Progress, Inc. 2008.

Award for travel to present at the 23rd Annual Item Response Theory Workshop at the University of Twente, Enschede, The Netherlands. ($500). UNCG International Travel Fund. 2007.

Analysis and Verification of Test Equatings for Nevada K-12 Assessment Program. ($20,000, Principal Investigator). Measured Progress. 2007.

ABCTE Item Bank Calibration Project. ($9487.50, Co-Investigator with Robert Henson). American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence. 2006.

Study of the Efficacy of North Carolina's Learn and Earn Early College High School (ECHS) Model. ($2.8 million, .125 FTE Member of research team; Julie Edmunds, Project Director). Institute of Education Sciences. 2006.

Analysis and Verification of Test Equatings for Nevada K-12 Assessment Program. ($18,000, Principal Investigator). Measured Progress. 2006.

Verification of Measured Progress Equating of Nevada Test Data. ($18,000, Principal Investigator). Measured Progress. 2005.

Professional Service

University Service

- Search Committee Founding Director of Informatics (2018)
- University Fellowship Selection Committee (2014)
- Strategic Intelligence Subcommittee for Enrollment Management (2013)
- Student Learning Enhancement Committee (2010-2012)
- 1.3 (Retention) Implementation Team (2010)
- Research Policies Committee (2009-2012)
- UNCG SACS-COC 5-Year Review, Ad hoc Committee (2009-2010)
- Assessment Task Force (2005-2006)
- General Education Review Taskforce (2005-2006)
- SACS: Assisted with the preparation of the Spring 2005 SACS Second Monitoring report (2004-2005)
- Measuring Student Achievement Assessment Project: Contributed to design of assessment, performed all analyses, and co-authored final report; Presented findings at the UNCG Assessment Summit and to the Faculty Senate (2004-2005)

ERM and School of Education Service

- Chair, SOE Promotion and Tenure Committee (2015-2016)
- SOE Promotion and Tenure Committee (2009-2016)
- SOE Faculty Council (2014-2016)
- ERM Faculty Search Committee, Chair (2014-2015)
- ERM Faculty Search Committee (2012-2013)
- ERM Assessment Coordinator (2012-ongoing)
- ERM Website Coordinator (2012-2015)

- SOE Academic Program Review Committee (2011-2012)
- Access and Equity Committee (2009-2011)
- CUI (Higher Education) Faculty Search Committee (2006-2007)
- ELC Faculty Search Committee, two positions (2006-2007)
- CED Faculty Search Committee (2005-2006)
- School of Education Executive Council: Elected as a junior member (2005-2006)
- School of Education RARE Committee (2004-2005)
- School of Education Research Assignments Committee (2004-2005)
- School of Education Scholarship Committee (2004-ongoing)

Professional Service and Organizational Leadership

- Mission Fund Committee Member, National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME, 2015-2019)
- Editorial Board Member, *Journal of Educational Measurement* (2017-2019)
- Website Content Editor, National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME, 2011-2013)
- Co-chair, Program Committee for the National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME) 2010 Annual Meeting
- Member of Editorial Board (2012-2019)
    - *Research and Practice in Assessment*, http://www.virginiaassessment.org/RPAJournal.php
- Membership
    - National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME)
    - American Educational Research Association (AERA)
        - Division D – Measurement and Research Methodology (member)
        - Educational Statisticians Special Interest Group (member)
        - Structural Equation Modeling Special Interest Group (member)

☑ **Appendix B.** Letters of Support and LEA Assurances

Rowan-Salisbury
SCHOOL SYSTEM
Extraordinary Education Every Day

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
Lynn P. Moody, Ed.D.
Wallace Educational Forum
500 North Main Street
Salisbury, NC 28145

December 4, 2018

The Honorable Betsy DeVos
Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary DeVos,

I am writing to you as the Superintendent of the Rowan-Salisbury School System in Salisbury, North Carolina. Rowan-Salisbury is a school system of 35 schools serving approximately 19,000 students and their families. Some portions of our district face the challenges of an urban area while other portions are extremely rural. One common challenge facing all of our schools is an increasing rate of economically disadvantaged students and families. Rowan-Salisbury a district that prides itself in being innovative and is committed to bringing personalized and engaging learning experiences to our students every day.

With a commitment to an assessment system that provides actionable data for improving student achievement, the Rowan-Salisbury School System will collaborate with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) on the implementation of the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority.

The NCDPI is developing an innovative through-grade assessment that will provide content standard-level data for teachers to personalize students' learning experiences. North Carolina's assessments have a strong foundation of being constructed with teacher input, both in the development of the test specifications and the writing of assessment items. With this approach and with the inclusion of administrators and external stakeholders in the process, we are confident the NCDPI's design has great potential to deliver an assessment that will support improved outcomes for students.

The Rowan-Salisbury School System is excited to be part of the innovative through-grade assessments under development in North Carolina and is looking forward to participating. We will certainly grow as a district by both participation in the through-grade assessment pilot and our collaboration with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction in this endeavor.

Lynn P. Moody

Lynn P. Moody, Ed.D.
Superintendent

In compliance with federal law, the Rowan-Salisbury School System administers all educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability, or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law.

Stanly County Schools
Dr. Jeffery R. James
Superintendent

December 6, 2018

The Honorable Betsy DeVos
Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary DeVos,

As superintendent of Stanly County Schools in rural North Carolina, I am writing to support flexibility to work with NCDPI in a pilot to provide a more inclusive model of testing and use of test data to improve instruction and instructional outcomes.

With a commitment to an assessment system that provides actionable data for improving student achievement, Stanly County Schools will collaborate with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) on the implementation of the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority.

The NCDPI is developing an innovative through-grade assessment that will provide content standard-level data for teachers to personalize students' learning experiences. North Carolina's assessments have a strong foundation of being constructed with teacher input, both in the development of the test specifications and the writing of assessment items. With this approach and with the inclusion of administrators and external stakeholders in the process, we are confident the NCDPI's design has great potential to deliver an assessment that will support improved outcomes for students.

Again, we are happy to be part of this innovative approach to learning in Stanly County Schools, Albemarle, North Carolina.

Sincerely,

Jeffery Ray James

Dr. Jeff James
Superintendent of Stanly County Schools

1000-4 N. First Street, Albemarle, NC 28001 • (704) 961-3000 FAX (704) 961-3099 •
http://www.stanlycountyschools.org
An Equal Opportunity Employer

NC INNOVATIVE
SCHOOL DISTRICT

December 10, 2018

The Honorable Betsy DeVos
Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary DeVos,

As the Superintendent of the Innovative School District, a statewide school district established to partner with local communities and school districts to improve student outcomes in low-performing schools across the state of North Carolina, I support the implementation of the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority at our school, Southside Ashpole Elementary School.

With a commitment to an assessment system that provides actionable data for improving student achievement, Southside Ashpole Elementary School will collaborate with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) on the implementation of the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority.

The NCDPI is developing an innovative through-grade assessment that will provide content standard-level data for teachers to personalize students' learning experiences. North Carolina's assessments have a strong foundation of being constructed with teacher input, both in the development of the test specifications and the writing of assessment items. With this approach and with the inclusion of administrators and external stakeholders in the process, we are confident the NCDPI's design has great potential to deliver an assessment that will support improved outcomes for students.

The Innovative School District anticipates the opportunity to partner with NCDPI to implement the Innovative Assessment. Our school, Southside Ashpole Elementary School, will participate in this endeavor that will lead to improved student outcomes.

Best,

LaTeesa A. Allen
Superintendent
North Carolina's Innovative School District

December 6, 2018

The Honorable Betsy DeVos
Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary DeVos,

For over three decades, SAS has delivered the latest technology to our education and government customers, uncovering insights from their data to help improve outcomes for the students and citizens they serve. Headquartered in Cary, North Carolina, SAS has its roots in academia, founded at North Carolina State University in 1976. SAS has since grown to become the leader in business analytics software and services and the largest independent vendor in the business intelligence market.

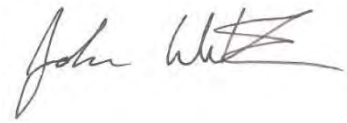
SAS began its relationship in student growth analytics with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) in 2005 with the pilot implementation of the Educational Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS), a web-based educational reporting tool for educators, administrators and policymakers. EVAAS provides a measure of growth to districts, schools and teachers as well as other metrics and, now as a statewide initiative, EVAAS includes a variety of reports designed to assist educators in identifying accelerants and impediments to student learning. The foundation of EVAAS is based on analyses of the state's standardized assessments, which span those for early grades, end-of-grade, end-of-course, career and technical education, North Carolina Final Exams, and college readiness (Advanced Placement, ACT and SAT). The collaboration between SAS and the NCDPI over the past ten years also includes innovative research and web development regarding the use of these assessments.

As a strong partner with the NCDPI in education, SAS fully supports the NCDPI's application to develop through-grade assessment that will provide content standard-level data for teachers to personalize students' learning experiences. A critical goal of this initiative is that the innovative assessment will provide an EVAAS growth measure that can be used in the statewide accountability model and for educator effectiveness ratings, and SAS is committed to partnering with the NCDPI throughout the demonstration period, ensuring the growth aspect of the assessments is fulfilled and meets validity and reliability requirements.

In our thirteen-year relationship with the NCDPI, SAS has valued our collaboration with the testing and accountability team at the department, always knowing its commitment to quality work is the priority. SAS is pleased to be part of this next phase of assessments in North Carolina, and the EVAAS team looks forward to being part of improved assessment outcomes for students.

SAS INSTITUTE INC. WORLD HEADQUARTERS SAS CAMPUS DRIVE CARY, NC 27513
TEL: 919 677 8000 FAX: 919 677 4444 U.S. SALES: 800 727 0025 WWW.SAS.COM

Sincerely,



John White, Ph.D.
Senior Director of SAS EVAAS for K-12

UNCG | OAERS OFFICE OF ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION, AND RESEARCH SERVICES

University of North Carolina Greensboro
School of Education
Department of Educational Research Methodology

254 School of Education Building
1300 Spring Garden St., Greensboro, NC 27402-6170
336.334.3471 *Phone* 336.334.4120 *Fax*
https://oaers.uncg.edu
https://erm.uncg.edu

To Whom It May Concern:

I am happy to write this letter in support of the project, Innovative Assessment Demonstrated Authority Application for a Through-Grade North Carolina Personalized Assessment Tool (NCPAT). I have reviewed the proposal being submitted by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. I believe that the Office of Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Services (OAERS) is in an excellent position to act as an external evaluator on this grant.

OAERS is a division of the Department of Educational Research Methodology (ERM) at UNCG. The purpose of OAERS rests at the intersection of two goals. The first goal is to offer exceptional consulting services and technical resources in the areas of assessment, program evaluation, and data analysis to individuals and organizations in the Piedmont Triad, North Carolina, and beyond. The second goal is to provide graduate students in ERM extensive hands-on applied experiences to support their training and professional growth. Through meeting these two goals, OAERS delivers valuable research and evaluation support to organizations while providing a rich training ground for the next generation of leaders in the fields of assessment, program evaluation, and data analysis.
Located in ERM, OAERS has access to broad methodological expertise represented by the Department. OAERS can therefore conduct and oversee research in both psychometrics and program evaluation. Having both measurement and program evaluation professionals seems especially relevant to the grant in question. Professional staff will be well positioned to understand both the theory underlying the novel model being investigated by NC DPI and the broader evaluative context relevant to the implementation of that model.

Different faculty or professional staff could be included in the external evaluation once the full scope is defined. For now, I have included a C.V. for myself and the other co-Director of OAERS.

Sincerely,

John T. Willse
Chair and Associate Professor of Educational Research Methodology
co-Chair of the Office of Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Services
jtwillse@uncg.edu
336-446-9428

☑ **Appendix C.** 2016–17 Report Cards for LEA and Charter School Participants

NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL REPORT CARDS

Rowan-Salisbury Schools

Dr. Lynn Moody, Superintendent

500 North Main Street

Salisbury, NC 28144

(704)636-7500

DISTRICT PROFILE

School Size: The average number of students in an elementary (K-5), middle (6-8), and high (9-12) school in this district in the state.

	Elementary	Middle	High
District	443	621	833
State	490	629	853

Average Class Size: The average number of students enrolled in the "typical" K-8 classroom.

	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Our District	19	19	19	18	22	22	23	24	21
State	19	19	19	19	21	21	22	21	22

* Legislation mandates that class sizes for grades 4-12 are not restricted.

Average Course Size: The average number of students enrolled in the courses listed at the time of testing.

	English II	Math I	Biology
District	20	22	19
State	18	20	18

School Attendance: The average percentage of students who attend school daily at the elementary (K-5), middle (6-8), and high (9-12) school for this district and the state.

	Elementary	Middle	High
District	93%	93%	93%
State	95%	95%	95%

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

School Safety: The number of criminal acts reported per 100 students. Criminal acts include all acts occurring in school, on a school bus, on school grounds, or during off-campus, school-sponsored activities.

	Elementary	Middle	High
District	0.18	1.24	1.05
State	0.22	0.79	1.21

Student Out-of-School Suspensions and Expulsions: The average number of short-term (10 days or fewer) and long-term (more than 10 days) out of school suspensions and expulsions per 100 students.

	Elementary	Middle	High
Short-Term Suspensions	11.18	32.09	17.51
Long-Term Suspensions	0	0	0.02
Expulsions	0	0	0

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

Performance of Students on the North Carolina End-of-Grade Tests:
Percentage of Students at **Level 1** (**Limited Command** of knowledge and skills)

LEVEL 1	Reading	Math	Science
District	28.8%	36.8%	24.1%
State	21.6%	23.1%	14.7%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Performance of Students on the North Carolina End-of-Grade Tests:
Percentage of Students at **Level 2** (**Partial Command** of knowledge and skills)

LEVEL 2	Reading	Math	Science
District	24.3%	25.2%	16.9%
State	20.9%	21.5%	12.5%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Performance of Students on the North Carolina End-of-Grade Tests:
Percentage of Students at **Level 3** (**Sufficient Command** of knowledge and skills)
Students performing at Level 3 are performing at grade level.

LEVEL 3	Reading	Math	Science
District	11.8%	7.8%	11.6%
State	12.0%	7.8%	10.2%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Performance of Students on the North Carolina End-of-Grade Tests:
Percentage of Students at **Level 4** (**Solid Command** of knowledge and skills)
Students scoring at Level 4 meet NC Standard for College-and Career-Readiness and are performing at or above grade level.

LEVEL 4	Reading	Math	Science
District	28.9%	22.3%	36.0%
State	34.6%	30.0%	41.2%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Performance of Students on the North Carolina End-of-Grade Tests:
Percentage of Students at **Level 5** (**Superior Command** of knowledge and skills)
Students scoring at Level 5 meet NC Standard for College-and Career-Readiness and are performing at or above grade level.

LEVEL 5	Reading	Math	Science
District	6.3%	8.0%	11.3%
State	10.9%	17.6%	21.4%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

FIVE ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

LEVEL 1: Limited Command of knowledge and skills
• Performing At or Above Grade Level: NO
• Meets N.C. Standard for College-and Career-Readiness: NO

LEVEL 2: Partial Command of knowledge and skills
• Performing At or Above Grade Level: NO
• Meets N.C. Standard for College-and Career-Readiness: NO

LEVEL 3: Sufficient Command of knowledge and skills
• Performing At or Above Grade Level: YES
• Meets N.C. Standard for College-and Career-Readiness: NO

LEVEL 4: Solid Command of knowledge and skills
• Performing At or Above Grade Level: YES
• Meets N.C. Standard for College-and Career-Readiness: YES

LEVEL 5: Superior Command of knowledge and skills
• Performing At or Above Grade Level: YES
• Meets N.C. Standard for College-and Career-Readiness: YES

What does the achievement level number mean?
Students scoring at Levels 1 and 2 will likely need additional help next year to succeed in that subject area. Students scoring at Level 3 are considered proficient for that grade level or course, but may still need some targeted help in the next grade or course. Students scoring at Levels 4 and 5 are ready for the next grade or course, and are also on a path to be prepared for college or a career by the time they graduate.

The reading and math End-of-Grade tests are administered in grades 3-8. The science End-of-Grade tests are administered in grades 5 and 8 only.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE, continued

Performance of Students on the North Carolina End-of-Course Tests:
Percentage of Students at **Level 1** (**Limited Command** of knowledge and skills)

LEVEL 1	English II	Math I	Biology
District	25.2%	39.0%	36.1%
State	19.3%	22.4%	23.4%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Performance of Students on the North Carolina End-of-Course Tests:
Percentage of Students at **Level 2** (**Partial Command** of knowledge and skills)

LEVEL 2	English II	Math I	Biology
District	21.3%	17.0%	24.4%
State	20.0%	13.3%	20.5%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Performance of Students on the North Carolina End-of-Course Tests:
Percentage of Students at **Level 3** (**Sufficient Command** of knowledge and skills)
Students performing at Level 3 are performing at grade level.

LEVEL 3	English II	Math I	Biology
District	10.9%	10.9%	8.4%
State	10.6%	10.2%	8.7%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Performance of Students on the North Carolina End-of-Course Tests:
Percentage of Students at **Level 4** (**Solid Command** of knowledge and skills)
Students scoring at Level 4 meet NC Standard for College-and Career-Readiness and are performing at or above grade level.

LEVEL 4	English II	Math I	Biology
District	39.2%	26.9%	23.9%
State	44.8%	38.1%	30.7%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Performance of Students on the North Carolina End-of-Course Tests:
Percentage of Students at **Level 5** (**Superior Command** of knowledge and skills)
Students scoring at Level 5 meet NC Standard for College-and Career-Readiness and are performing at or above grade level.

LEVEL 5	English II	Math I	Biology
District	N/A	6.2%	7.2%
State	5.3%	16.0%	16.8%

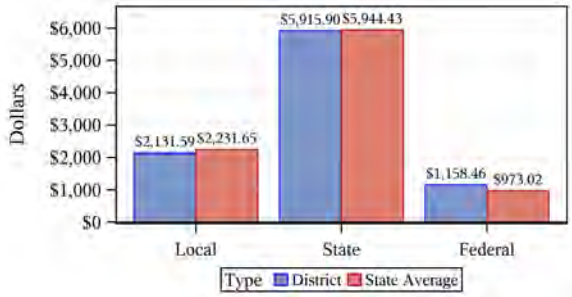
N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Annual Participation Requirements: Districts are required to assess at least 95 percent of their students on assessments administered for accountability. This requirement is for the all students group and for each student group. The minimum number of students needed in a group is 30.

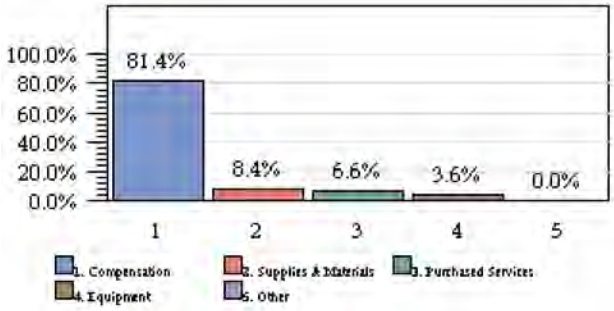
Our district met 81 out of 81 targets.

For more information on participation requirements please go to www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/reporting.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT



Source of Funds (Amount per Student, Child Nutrition Included): Public schools in North Carolina operate with funding from local, state and federal sources. The financial support reflected in these numbers includes all expenses concerned with operating schools, including teacher and administrator salaries, textbooks, transportation, Career and Technical education courses and other educational supplies and materials.



Use of Funds: Education is a labor-intensive enterprise, as reflected in the accompanying chart. Salaries for teachers and other staff are usually the largest expense in a district.

QUALITY TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

TEACHERS AND QUALIFICATIONS

Classroom Teachers: The average number of classroom teachers in an elementary (K-5), middle (6-8), and high (9-12) school for this district and state.

	Elementary	Middle	High
District	31	41	53
State	34	41	53

Fully Licensed Teachers: The percentage of classroom teachers with clear initial or clear continuing licenses (not lateral entry, alternative, or emergency licensed teachers).

	Elementary	Middle	High
District	94%	90%	87%
State	96%	92%	90%

Teacher Turnover Rate: The percentage of teachers who left their school district from the start of the prior year to the start of the current year.

	Elementary	Middle	High
District	15%	19%	16%
State	13%	15%	15%

Teachers with Advanced Degrees: The percentage of teachers who have completed an advanced college degree, including a master's or doctoral degree.

	Elementary	Middle	High
District	25%	23%	22%
State	30%	28%	26%

National Board Certified Teachers: The average number of school staff, including teachers, administrators and guidance counselors, who have received National Board Certification at the elementary (K-5), middle (6-8), and high (9-12) school levels in this district and the state.

	Elementary	Middle	High
District	3	5	6
State	4	5	7

Years of Teaching Experience: The percentage of teachers who have taught for 0-3 years, 4-10 years or over 10 years in this district and the state.

	Elementary			Middle			High		
	0-3 Years	4-10 Years	10+ Years	0-3 Years	4-10 Years	10+ Years	0-3 Years	4-10 Years	10+ Years
District	21%	30%	50%	20%	22%	58%	23%	20%	57%
State	22%	27%	51%	23%	26%	51%	21%	24%	55%

QUALIFICATIONS OF PRINCIPALS

Years of Experience as a Principal: The percentage of principals with experience of 0-3 years, 4-10 years, or over 10 years as a principal.

	0-3 Years	4-10 Years	10+ Years
District	74%	14%	11%
State	43%	41%	16%

Principals with Advanced Degrees: The percentage of principals who have completed an advanced college degree beyond a master's degree.

District	23%
State	21%

Principal Turnover Rate: The percentage of principals employed last year who are no longer employed in the same school this year.

District	20%
State	9%

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NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL REPORT CARDS

Stanly County Schools

Mrs. Georgia O. Harvey, Superintendent

1000-4 N First Street

Albemarle, NC 28001

(704)961-3000

DISTRICT PROFILE

School Size: The average number of students in an elementary (K-5), middle (6-8), and high (9-12) school in this district in the state.

	Elementary	Middle	High
District	395	478	419
State	490	629	853

Average Class Size: The average number of students enrolled in the "typical" K-8 classroom.

	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Our District	18	15	16	18	19	21	20	20	20
State	19	19	19	19	21	21	22	21	22

* Legislation mandates that class sizes for grades 4-12 are not restricted.

Average Course Size: The average number of students enrolled in the courses listed at the time of testing.

	English II	Math I	Biology
District	17	17	14
State	18	20	18

School Attendance: The average percentage of students who attend school daily at the elementary (K-5), middle (6-8), and high (9-12) school for this district and the state.

	Elementary	Middle	High
District	95%	95%	95%
State	95%	95%	95%

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

School Safety: The number of criminal acts reported per 100 students. Criminal acts include all acts occurring in school, on a school bus, on school grounds, or during off-campus, school-sponsored activities.

	Elementary	Middle	High
District	0.43	1.41	0.99
State	0.22	0.79	1.21

Student Out-of-School Suspensions and Expulsions: The average number of short-term (10 days or fewer) and long-term (more than 10 days) out of school suspensions and expulsions per 100 students.

	Elementary	Middle	High
Short-Term Suspensions	14.48	24.5	21.32
Long-Term Suspensions	0.08	0.05	0.16
Expulsions	0	0	0

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

Performance of Students on the North Carolina End-of-Grade Tests:
Percentage of Students at **Level 1** (**Limited Command** of knowledge and skills)

LEVEL 1	Reading	Math	Science
District	19.1%	21.8%	15.4%
State	21.6%	23.1%	14.7%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Performance of Students on the North Carolina End-of-Grade Tests:
Percentage of Students at **Level 2** (**Partial Command** of knowledge and skills)

LEVEL 2	Reading	Math	Science
District	21.9%	25.5%	14.5%
State	20.9%	21.5%	12.5%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Performance of Students on the North Carolina End-of-Grade Tests:
Percentage of Students at **Level 3** (**Sufficient Command** of knowledge and skills)
Students performing at Level 3 are performing at grade level.

LEVEL 3	Reading	Math	Science
District	13.9%	8.1%	9.8%
State	12.0%	7.8%	10.2%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Performance of Students on the North Carolina End-of-Grade Tests:
Percentage of Students at **Level 4** (**Solid Command** of knowledge and skills)
Students scoring at Level 4 meet NC Standard for College-and Career-Readiness and are performing at or above grade level.

LEVEL 4	Reading	Math	Science
District	36.4%	31.3%	43.8%
State	34.6%	30.0%	41.2%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Performance of Students on the North Carolina End-of-Grade Tests:
Percentage of Students at **Level 5** (**Superior Command** of knowledge and skills)
Students scoring at Level 5 meet NC Standard for College-and Career-Readiness and are performing at or above grade level.

LEVEL 5	Reading	Math	Science
District	8.7%	13.3%	16.5%
State	10.9%	17.6%	21.4%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

FIVE ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

LEVEL 1: Limited Command of knowledge and skills
• Performing At or Above Grade Level: NO
• Meets N.C. Standard for College-and Career-Readiness: NO

LEVEL 2: Partial Command of knowledge and skills
• Performing At or Above Grade Level: NO
• Meets N.C. Standard for College-and Career-Readiness: NO

LEVEL 3: Sufficient Command of knowledge and skills
• Performing At or Above Grade Level: YES
• Meets N.C. Standard for College-and Career-Readiness: NO

LEVEL 4: Solid Command of knowledge and skills
• Performing At or Above Grade Level: YES
• Meets N.C. Standard for College-and Career-Readiness: YES

LEVEL 5: Superior Command of knowledge and skills
• Performing At or Above Grade Level: YES
• Meets N.C. Standard for College-and Career-Readiness: YES

What does the achievement level number mean?
Students scoring at Levels 1 and 2 will likely need additional help next year to succeed in that subject area. Students scoring at Level 3 are considered proficient for that grade level or course, but may still need some targeted help in the next grade or course. Students scoring at Levels 4 and 5 are ready for the next grade or course, and are also on a path to be prepared for college or a career by the time they graduate.

The reading and math End-of-Grade tests are administered in grades 3-8. The science End-of-Grade tests are administered in grades 5 and 8 only.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE, continued

Performance of Students on the North Carolina End-of-Course Tests:
Percentage of Students at **Level 1** (**Limited Command** of knowledge and skills)

LEVEL 1	English II	Math I	Biology
District	23.0%	21.4%	26.4%
State	19.3%	22.4%	23.4%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Performance of Students on the North Carolina End-of-Course Tests:
Percentage of Students at **Level 2** (**Partial Command** of knowledge and skills)

LEVEL 2	English II	Math I	Biology
District	22.9%	15.4%	24.4%
State	20.0%	13.3%	20.5%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Performance of Students on the North Carolina End-of-Course Tests:
Percentage of Students at **Level 3** (**Sufficient Command** of knowledge and skills)
Students performing at Level 3 are performing at grade level.

LEVEL 3	English II	Math I	Biology
District	12.6%	10.0%	10.7%
State	10.6%	10.2%	8.7%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Performance of Students on the North Carolina End-of-Course Tests:
Percentage of Students at **Level 4** (**Solid Command** of knowledge and skills)
Students scoring at Level 4 meet NC Standard for College-and Career-Readiness and are performing at or above grade level.

LEVEL 4	English II	Math I	Biology
District	39.2%	39.8%	29.5%
State	44.8%	38.1%	30.7%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Performance of Students on the North Carolina End-of-Course Tests:
Percentage of Students at **Level 5** (**Superior Command** of knowledge and skills)
Students scoring at Level 5 meet NC Standard for College-and Career-Readiness and are performing at or above grade level.

LEVEL 5	English II	Math I	Biology
District	N/A	13.4%	9.0%
State	5.3%	16.0%	16.8%

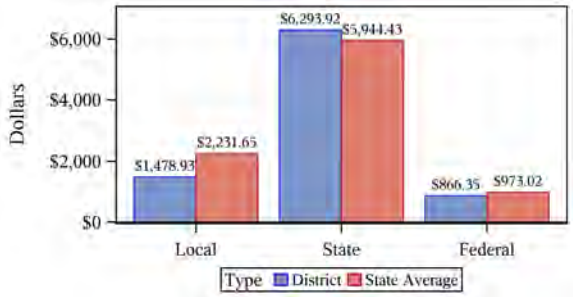
N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Annual Participation Requirements: Districts are required to assess at least 95 percent of their students on assessments administered for accountability. This requirement is for the all students group and for each student group. The minimum number of students needed in a group is 30.

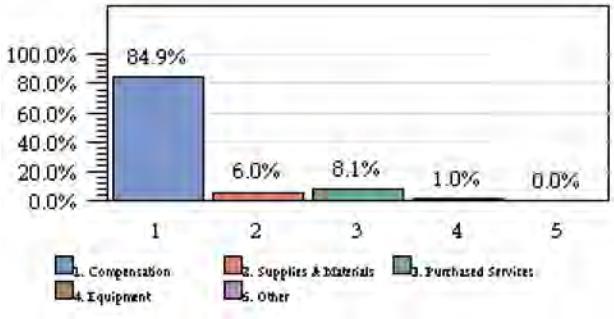
Our district met 69 out of 72 targets.

For more information on participation requirements please go to www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/reporting.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT



Source of Funds (Amount per Student, Child Nutrition Included): Public schools in North Carolina operate with funding from local, state and federal sources. The financial support reflected in these numbers includes all expenses concerned with operating schools, including teacher and administrator salaries, textbooks, transportation, Career and Technical education courses and other educational supplies and materials.



Use of Funds: Education is a labor-intensive enterprise, as reflected in the accompanying chart. Salaries for teachers and other staff are usually the largest expense in a district.

QUALITY TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

TEACHERS AND QUALIFICATIONS

Classroom Teachers: The average number of classroom teachers in an elementary (K-5), middle (6-8), and high (9-12) school for this district and state.

	Elementary	Middle	High
District	26	35	30
State	34	41	53

Fully Licensed Teachers: The percentage of classroom teachers with clear initial or clear continuing licenses (not lateral entry, alternative, or emergency licensed teachers).

	Elementary	Middle	High
District	98%	95%	84%
State	96%	92%	90%

Teacher Turnover Rate: The percentage of teachers who left their school district from the start of the prior year to the start of the current year.

	Elementary	Middle	High
District	9%	12%	10%
State	13%	15%	15%

Teachers with Advanced Degrees: The percentage of teachers who have completed an advanced college degree, including a master's or doctoral degree.

	Elementary	Middle	High
District	30%	32%	19%
State	30%	28%	26%

National Board Certified Teachers: The average number of school staff, including teachers, administrators and guidance counselors, who have received National Board Certification at the elementary (K-5), middle (6-8), and high (9-12) school levels in this district and the state.

	Elementary	Middle	High
District	4	6	4
State	4	5	7

Years of Teaching Experience: The percentage of teachers who have taught for 0-3 years, 4-10 years or over 10 years in this district and the state.

	Elementary			Middle			High		
	0-3 Years	4-10 Years	10+ Years	0-3 Years	4-10 Years	10+ Years	0-3 Years	4-10 Years	10+ Years
District	11%	24%	65%	9%	29%	61%	21%	27%	53%
State	22%	27%	51%	23%	26%	51%	21%	24%	55%

QUALIFICATIONS OF PRINCIPALS

Years of Experience as a Principal: The percentage of principals with experience of 0-3 years, 4-10 years, or over 10 years as a principal.

	0-3 Years	4-10 Years	10+ Years
District	45%	35%	20%
State	43%	41%	16%

Principals with Advanced Degrees: The percentage of principals who have completed an advanced college degree beyond a master's degree.

District	N/A
State	21%

Principal Turnover Rate: The percentage of principals employed last year who are no longer employed in the same school this year.

District	10%
State	9%

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NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL REPORT CARDS

Southside/Ashpole Elem

607 S Martin L King Jr St
Rowland, NC 28383

(910)422-3791

Grade Range: PK-5

Regular School

Traditional Calendar

Robeson County Schools

http://www.robeson.k12.nc.us/schools.cfm?id=saes&schoolid=408

Title I

2016-2017 SCHOOL PERFORMANCE GRADE

Achievement Indicators	Score
Reading EOG Proficiency	19
Math EOG Proficiency	15
Science EOG Proficiency	27
Math I Proficiency	.
Biology Proficiency	.

"." = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Growth Status	School Performance Grade
Not Met	F

	Score	Grade
Achievement	18	
Growth	59.3	
School Performance	27	
EOG Reading	30	F
EOG Math	23	F

Formula for determining the School Performance Grade:

- 80 percent of the School Performance Grade is based on the school achievement score. The school achievement score is calculated using a composite method based on the points earned by a school on all of the tests measured for that school
- 20 percent of the School Performance Grade is based on academic growth
- If a school has met expected growth and inclusion of the school's growth score reduces the school's performance score and grade, a school may choose to use the school achievement score solely to calculate the performance score and grade

A+NG Schools: A+NG schools earned a score of 85-100 and do not have significant achievement or graduation gaps.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE GRADING SCALE	
Grade Range	Letter Grade
85-100	A
70-84	B
55-69	C
40-54	D
Below 40	F

SCHOOL PROFILE

School Size: The total number of students in this school and the average number of students in schools with similar grade ranges at the district and state levels.

Our School	**246**
District	**459**
State	**490**

School Attendance: The average percentage of students who attend school daily.

Our School	**93.5%**
District	**92.9%**
State	**94.6%**

Average Class Size: The average number of students enrolled in the "typical" K-8 classroom.

	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Our School	**21**	**18**	**20**	**12**	**20**	**15**			
Our District	**18**	**19**	**19**	**17**	**21**	**21**			
State	**19**	**19**	**19**	**19**	**21**	**21**			

** Legislation mandates that class sizes for grades 4-12 are not restricted.*

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

Performance of Students on the NC End-of-Grade Tests: Percentage of Students at **Level 1** (**Limited Command** of knowledge and skills)

LEVEL 1	Reading	Math	Science
Our School	54.7%	57.7%	50.0%
District	39.6%	39.2%	23.5%
State	21.6%	23.1%	14.7%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Performance of Students on the NC End-of-Grade Tests: Percentage of Students at **Level 2** (**Partial Command** of knowledge and skills)

LEVEL 2	Reading	Math	Science
Our School	26.3%	27.7%	23.1%
District	24.0%	26.2%	15.6%
State	20.9%	21.5%	12.5%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Performance of Students on the NC End-of-Grade Tests: Percentage of Students at **Level 3** (**Sufficient Command** of knowledge and skills)
Students performing at Level 3 are performing at grade level.

LEVEL 3	Reading	Math	Science
Our School	8.8%	5.8%	15.4%
District	12.0%	8.8%	12.7%
State	12.0%	7.8%	10.2%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Performance of Students on the NC End-of-Grade Tests: Percentage of Students at **Level 4** (**Solid Command** of knowledge and skills)
Students scoring at Level 4 meet NC Standard for College-and Career-Readiness and are performing at or above grade level.

LEVEL 4	Reading	Math	Science
Our School	10.2%	8.0%	11.5%
District	20.8%	20.6%	37.3%
State	34.6%	30.0%	41.2%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

Performance of Students on the NC End-of-Grade Tests: Percentage of Students at **Level 5** (**Superior Command** of knowledge and skills)
Students scoring at Level 5 meet NC Standard for College-and Career-Readiness and are performing at or above grade level.

LEVEL 5	Reading	Math	Science
Our School	N/A	N/A	N/A
District	N/A	5.2%	11.0%
State	10.9%	17.6%	21.4%

N/A = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

FIVE ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

LEVEL 1: Limited Command of knowledge and skills
- Performing At or Above Grade Level: NO
- Meets N.C. Standard for College-and Career-Readiness: NO

LEVEL 2: Partial Command of knowledge and skills
- Performing At or Above Grade Level: NO
- Meets N.C. Standard for College-and Career-Readiness: NO

LEVEL 3: Sufficient Command of knowledge and skills
- Performing At or Above Grade Level: YES
- Meets N.C. Standard for College-and Career-Readiness: NO

LEVEL 4: Solid Command of knowledge and skills
- Performing At or Above Grade Level: YES
- Meets N.C. Standard for College-and Career-Readiness: YES

LEVEL 5: Superior Command of knowledge and skills
- Performing At or Above Grade Level: YES
- Meets N.C. Standard for College-and Career-Readiness: YES

What does this achievement level number mean?
Students scoring at Levels 1 and 2 will likely need additional help next year to succeed in that subject area. Students scoring at Level 3 are considered proficient for that grade level or course, but may still need some targeted help in the next grade or course. Students scoring at Levels 4 and 5 are ready for the next grade or course, and are also on a path to be prepared for college or a career by the time they graduate.

The reading and math End-of-Grade tests are administered in grades 3-8. The science End-of-Grade tests are administered in grades 5 and 8 only.

Summer Program for School Report Cards
This school's report card (School Performance Grades and EOG/EOC results) include test scores from a summer program administered after the conclusion of the school year.

Annual Participation Requirements: Schools are required to test at least 95 percent of their students on assessments administered for accountability. This requirement is for the all students group and for each student group. The minimum number of students needed in a group is 30.

Our school met 10 out of 10 targets.

For more information on participation requirements please go to www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/reporting.

TEACHERS AND QUALIFICATIONS

	Total Number of Classroom Teachers*	Fully Licensed Teachers	Teachers with Advanced Degrees	National Board Certified Teachers*	Years of Teaching Experience			Teacher Turnover Rate
					0-3 years	4-10 years	10+ years	
Our School	17	71.0%	23.5%	2	35.3%	17.6%	47.1%	11.6%
District	29	88.9%	23.9%	2	22.4%	28.0%	49.6%	10.5%
State	34	96.3%	29.8%	4	21.5%	27.4%	51.1%	12.9%

** The total number of teachers in this school and the average number of teachers in schools with similar grade ranges at the district and state level.*

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

School Safety: The number of criminal acts reported per 100
students. Criminal acts include all acts occurring in school, on a school bus, on school grounds, or during off-campus, school-sponsored activities.

Our School	0
District	0.06
State	0.22

Student Out-of-School Suspensions and Expulsions: The average number of short-term (10 days or fewer) and long-term (more than 10 days) out of school suspensions and expulsions per 100 students.

	Short-Term Suspensions	Long-Term Suspensions	Expulsions
Our School	36.18	0	0
District	14.99	0	0
State	7.61	0.01	0

READ TO ACHIEVE

The Read to Achieve program is a part of the Excellent Public Schools Act which became law in July of 2012 and applies to all schools at the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year. The goal of the State is to ensure that every student reads at or above grade level by the end of third grade. Students who are proficient on the 3rd-grade EOG or qualify for a "good cause exemption" are promoted to Grade 4. Students who are not proficient may be retained in 3rd grade or placed in 4th grade with extra reading instruction and a Retained Reading label.

	PROMOTED TO GRADE 4		RETAINED	
	# of students	Percentage	# of Students	Percentage
Our School	25	59.5%	17	40.5%
District	1355	70.6%	565	29.4%
State	105098	85.6%	17727	14.4%

"." = < 5% of students; 95% = ≥ 95%

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA
State Board of Education | Department of Public Instruction

KEEPING YOU INFORMED
More information about your school is available on the NC School Report Cards website at: http://www.ncpublicschools.org/src/

☑ **Appendix D.** Task Force on Summative Assessment Final Report

Task Force on Summative Assessment

Report to the North Carolina State Board of Education

Assessment Recommendations

June 2015

Task Force Membership

- The goal for membership on the Task Force on Summative Assessment Committee was to include individuals with diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences with public education and the community. Mr. A.L. "Buddy" Collins, Vice Chair of the State Board of Education and Dr. Olivia Holmes Oxendine, Board Member, State Board of Education were named Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, of the Task Force. State Superintendent Dr. June St. Clair Atkinson also served on the Task Force. Other Task Force members included local school district K–12 superintendents, principals, and teachers. Additionally, testing and accountability, higher education, local school board, parent, and business professional vantage points were represented on the Task Force: Ms. Erin Beale, Mathematics Teacher, Davis Drive Middle School, Wake County Schools
- Ms. Pam Biggs, Exceptional Children Consultant, Johnston County Schools
- Dr. Lisa Chapman, Senior Vice President/Chief Academic Officer, North Carolina Community College System
- Mr. Todd Davis, North Carolina Business Committee on Education Board Member/Century Link Incorporated
- Ms. Ilina Ewen, Marketing Consultant/Parent Representative
- Dr. Wayne Foster, Director, STAR 3 Project, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools

- Ms. Krystal Harris, Third Grade Teacher, Fairview Heights Elementary School, Richmond County Schools
- Mr. Butch Hudson, Northeast Regional Accountability Coordinator
- Ms. Anna Jarrett, Middle and High School District Lead Mathematics Teacher, Duplin County Schools
- Mr. Michael Landers, English Teacher, Mount Pleasant High School, Cabarrus County Schools
- Mr. Joe Maimone, Headmaster, Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy
- Mr. Larry Obeda, Principal, Lumberton High School, Public Schools of Robeson County
- Ms. Jennifer Robinson, Principal, Westwood Elementary School, Ashe County Schools
- Ms. Roberta Scott, President-Elect, North Carolina School Boards Association/Warren County Schools
- Dr. Robert Taylor, Superintendent, Bladen County Schools
- Dr. Frank Till, Superintendent, Cumberland County Schools
- Dr. Miriam Wagner, Dean, School of Education, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University
- Ms. Hannah Youngblood, Testing/Accountability Director, Johnston County Schools

Mr. Martez Hill, Executive Director, Office of the State Board of Education, Dr. Audrey Martin-McCoy, Policy Analyst, Office of the State Board of Education, and Dr. Lou Fabrizio, Director, Data, Research, and Policy, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), served as staff to the Task Force on Summative Assessment.

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PART I: INTRODUCTION AND TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

In January 2014, the North Carolina State Board of Education (SBE) authorized Chairman William Cobey to establish and appoint the Task Force on Summative Assessment for the purpose of examining the administration of state summative assessments for student accountability in school year 2016–17 and beyond. Representing several interested stakeholder groups, the Task Force began meeting in small and large groups in the fall of 2014. These meetings provided opportunities to exchange professional perspectives, to examine and discuss reports and presentations, and to formulate recommendations. Part I of this report presents the recommendations of the Task Force and the details of two assessment approaches: (1) a through-course assessment (periodic testing on the academic content standards in three or four intervals during the school year in grades 3–8) and (2) a nationally normed assessment suite for grades 9–11. The underpinning research of the recommendations and further details about the two assessment approaches (grades 3–8 and grades 9–11) comprise Part II of the report. The activities of the Task Force, including external presentations and concluding comments, appear in Part III of the report. The Appendices provides background information for the recommendations found in the report.

Task Force Recommendations

According to S.L. 2014-78§ 5 (SB 812), the SBE shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by July 15, 2015, on the acquisition and implementation of a new assessment instrument or instruments to assess student achievement on the academic standards adopted pursuant to G.S. §115C-12(9c). The State Board shall not acquire or implement the assessment instrument or instruments without the enactment of legislation by the General Assembly authorizing the purchase. The assessment instrument(s) shall be nationally normed, field tested, and aligned with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.

Grades 3–8 Recommendation

The Task Force recommends implementing a proof of concept study in 2015–16 in selected school districts to determine the feasibility of administering a through-course assessment model consisting of three or four tests that will occur over the school year. If approved by the SBE, these assessments would replace local interim or benchmarks assessments that districts currently administer as tools for monitoring student, grade, school, and district progress toward standards-driven goals. The timely data obtained from through-course assessments will inform instruction, improve the allocation of time and resources, and redirect professional development initiatives.

If the findings support the through-course model as a technically sound approach for measuring annual student proficiency and student growth while meeting state and federal accountability purposes, including accommodations for students with disabilities and students who are English language learners (ELLs), the SBE

may consider eliminating End-of-Grade assessments and adopting nationally normed tests in English Language Arts (ELA)/Reading and mathematics in grades 3- 8.

The Task Force recommends a three-year plan for studying student assessment in grades 3–8. In short, the study will examine the extent to which a series of segmented assessments capture a valid and reliable picture of student achievement throughout and at the end of the school year. Determining the operational and technical feasibility of this model will be a critical part of the study. The NCDPI will select a randomized sample for participation, solicit feedback on the design of the study from the North Carolina Technical Advisors, and present the findings to the SBE in summer 2016. In order to obtain valid and reliable information about the through course model, the Task Force recommends that schools participating in the study not administer local benchmark/interim assessments. The findings from the study will inform the decisions of the State Board of Education regarding future test development.

Also, in 2015–16, the NCDPI will examine commercial instruments and determine the extent to which these assessments satisfy North Carolina's content standards and specific psychometric requirements. With several school districts currently administering commercially developed assessments, it is possible to conduct a review of the assessment data from previous End-of-Grade (EOG) administrations. This will allow the NCDPI to determine whether commercial assessments align with state summative assessments in coverage of content standards, reliability, and validity. In order to accomplish this review, the NCDPI will request school systems to submit historical data from commercial assessments and determine the extent to which the technical integrity compares with state-developed EOG tests.

Grades 3–8 Implementation Plan

2015–16

(1) Implement a proof of concept (POC) study to determine whether the through-course assessment model is technically sound and operationally feasible. The data resulting from these assessments will inform teachers as they reflect critically on their instructional practices and adjust their strategies accordingly. In addition, the NCDPI will study these data giving special attention to reporting requirements set forth in state and federal laws. Participating school districts will administer both the through-course assessments and a modified (shorter) EOG test during 2015–16. The study will include fifth grade mathematics and sixth grade ELA/Reading.

(2) Examine commercial assessments systems and the extent to which these assessments satisfy North Carolina content standards and specific psychometric features. The NCDPI will collect historical assessment data from school districts that routinely administer commercially-developed assessments in prior years and analyze the results for standards alignment, validity, and reliability.

3) At the conclusion of 2015–16, the SBE will review findings from the study and the locally administered commercial products. Depending on the SBE's decision following their review, a field test may be administered in 2016-17 or a Request for Proposals may be released.

2016–17

Conduct a field test in grades 3–8 (ELA/Reading and mathematics) based on the results from the through-course study, or release a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a grades 3–8 national assessment suite that aligns with the rigorous college and career-ready standards adopted by the State Board of Education.

2017–18

Depending on State Board approval, administer a new student assessment program.

Grades 3–8 Implementation Overview

Year	Administration	Grade Levels	Purpose
2015–16	Implement Proof of Concept study	Grade 5: Math Grade 6: ELA/Reading	Determine feasibility of Proof of Concept
2015–16	Examine commercially-developed assessment instruments	Grades 3–8	Determine the extent to which these assessments satisfy North Carolina content standards and specific psychometric features
2016–17	Either proceed with a field test of the through-course model, or release a request for proposals for a national-normed assessment	Grades 3–8: Math Grades 3–8: ELA/Reading	Ensure national-normed assessments meet technical requirements and state and federal accountability standards
2017-18	Administer new assessment	Grades 3–8	Ensure assessments provide information on student performance in a manner that will impact instructional decisions

Grades 9-11 Recommendation

The Task Force recommends a national assessment suite for ELA/Reading, mathematics, and science. Administered as pre-tests in grades 9 and 10, these assessments will target content skills that students must master before post-testing occurs in grade 11. This approach will accommodate comparative analyses of student achievement data, provide indicators of college-and-career readiness, and satisfy state and federal accountability

requirements, including appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities and students who are ELLs. Given that the ACT assessment suite (ACT Explore and ACT Plan) will not be available after 2015-16, the State Board of Education may consider authorizing the NCDPI to explore the market for other nationally normed assessment tools. Additionally, the Task Force recommends administering a national career-readiness assessment to students who complete a concentration in the Career and Technical Education curriculum.

Grades 9-11 Implementation Plan

2015–16

Release an RFP for a grades 9–11 assessment suite that aligns with academic content standards and measures career-and-college readiness. The grades 9 and 10 assessment must provide diagnostic information for teachers to improve instruction. Determining career-and-college readiness will reflect performance on grade 11 assessments.

2016–17

Conduct a statewide pilot of the proposed assessments to ensure the capacity of the tools to satisfy all state and federal requirements. Concurrently, the NCDPI will conduct information meetings and provide training opportunities to help teachers, parents, and school administrators understand the possible transition from EOG tests to the new assessment protocol. During 2016-17, a method for determining a grade 11 proficiency score will be identified and presented to the State Board of Education for approval.

2017-18

Implement the new assessment suite in grades 9–11 and use the grade 11 assessment as the accountability measure.

Grades 9-11 Implementation Overview

Year	Administration	Purpose
2015-16	Release a request for proposals	Ensure national assessments meet technical requirements and state and federal accountability standards
2016-17	Conduct statewide pilot test and establish method to determine student proficiency using grade 11 test data	Ensure national assessments meet technical requirements and state and federal accountability standards
2017–18	Implement new assessments in grades 9–11	Full Implementation

PART II: REPORT FROM THE TASK FORCE ON SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Background

In July 2014, the General Assembly adopted and the Governor signed Senate Bill 812 (S.L. 2014-78§ 5) directing the SBE to report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by July 15, 2015, on the acquisition and implementation of a new assessment instrument(s) to assess student achievement on the academic standards adopted pursuant to G.S. §115C-12(9c). The SBE is granted the authority to review the standards of other states and national assessments aligned with those standards and shall implement the assessments it deems most aligned to assess state academic achievement content standards in accordance to the law. The State Board shall not acquire or implement the assessment instrument(s) without the enactment of legislation by the General Assembly authorizing the purchase. The assessment instrument or instruments shall be nationally normed, field tested, and aligned with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.

Task Force Charge

In 2014, the State Board Education charged the Task Force to examine the purpose of federal, state, and local assessment requirements and offer recommendations on a best course of action for measuring student achievement while protecting teachers' instructional time, realizing that achieving the right balance is paramount. A balanced and coherent assessment system should align with content standards, instructional practices, and assessment activities and provide timely, reliable student achievement and growth information to classroom teachers and school leaders in their efforts to improve instructional programs for all students.

As the Task Force discussed recommendations, the following options emerged:

- Continue the current system of state-developed End-of-Grade (EOG) and End-of-Course (EOC) tests in ELA/Reading and mathematics;
- Utilize a consortium-developed summative assessment system such as Smarter Balanced Assessments or Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC); and
- Purchase a commercially designed assessment system such as ACT, SAT, or the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS).

Conceptual Framework

The Task Force on Summative Assessment recognizes that content standards form the basis of the instructional program, with student assessment comprising one important component of the teaching/learning process. The Task Force also acknowledges that an assessment protocol must achieve several goals with student performance serving as the unifying purpose. The strength of any assessment program depends on balance and interdependence, meaning that all steps must form a cohesive system from which teachers, school leaders, parents, students, and education policy makers receive systematic information about the performance of students. Three distinct levels comprise a balanced system: (1) formative, (2) interim, and (3) summative.

A formative assessment (the first level) provides actionable feedback regarding student, small group, and/or whole-class performance. These assessments occur in the natural context of teaching and have no bearing on school accountability (Perie, Marion, and Gong, 2009). Extensive research on assessment and learning shows that skilled use of formative assessment by teachers has a significant positive impact on student learning (Black & William, 1998; Heritage, 2007; Stiggins & DuFour, 2009). An interim assessment is designed to evaluate the progress of students with respect to a given set of content standards. Determined in advance, teachers know where in their curricula and for what length of time to focus their instruction. Since assessing common standards is the focus of the interim protocol, school districts often aggregate and report school-level results. Given a specific end point (e.g., grade-reporting cycle, semester, or year), a summative assessment captures the outcomes of continuous teaching and learning. When administered as standardized tests, summative tools inform educators, the public, and policy makers about the extent to which large numbers of students have reached proficiency on state-adopted content standards. Unlike formative and interim assessments, the summative protocol has state-level accountability implications, as well as large-scale comparative value.

<u>Guiding Beliefs and Principles</u>

During ongoing discussions about the purpose and desired attributes in a state-level assessment, the Task Force emphasized the following beliefs and principles:

- Academic standards drive instructional content and serve as the basis of assessment.

- The alignment of content standards, daily instruction, and all levels of assessment benefits teachers and students.
- An assessment system should provide feedback that improves instruction.
- Teachers and school leaders deserve timely student achievement information to make decisions about student learning.
- Interim assessments have the potential to influence instructional practices as compared to summative assessments, which are designed for accountability purposes.
- An assessment system must address the diversity of learners in classrooms. This range includes students with disabilities, English Language Learners (ELLs), and the academically gifted students.
- Student assessment systems must reflect well-established principles of child growth and development.
- Technology will enhance teachers' efforts to embed interim assessments as part of routine instructional delivery.

Additionally, the Task Force agrees that multiple measures should be used to determine a school's effectiveness. The members, however, debated strategies for using assessments to measure teacher effectiveness, with some members stressing the importance of empowering school leaders to use school-level growth data as a proven strategy to strengthen teams of teachers and professional learning communities, while some members emphasized the value of school leaders having individual teacher growth data to identify effective and ineffective teachers. The Task Force did not reach a consensus recommendation on using assessment data to measure teacher effectiveness.

Defining a Comprehensive Balanced Assessment System

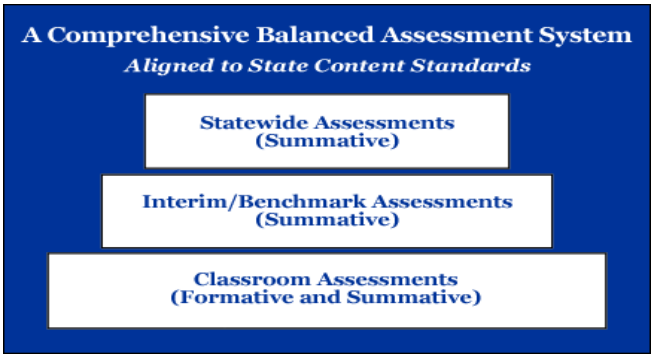
A comprehensive balanced assessment system is a multi-tiered approach for gathering proficiency data in areas of state and/or national standards. Heretofore, North Carolina has relied on summative (e.g., EOG/EOC) assessments to meet state and federal requirements. Coupled with summative tests developed by the NCDPI, school districts also examine formative and interim assessment data to determine student performance at the skill/competency level. In preparing students for these assessments, teachers generally follow a common pacing guide.

Based on the work of Gong (2010), an assessment system is considered balanced and coherent when content standards, instructional practices, and assessment activities result in reliable information about the academic achievement of students. Additionally, a balanced system appropriately weights the distribution of learning to support accountability needs. A comprehensive, balanced assessment system also provides customized information required by different levels of the educational system. For example, formative information is crucial for revising/modifying daily instruction, yet these data satisfy no state and national reporting requirements.

Formative, Interim, and Summative Assessments

Conceptually, a balanced assessment system resembles building blocks, with classroom/formative assessments forming the lowest level. Interim assessments, or the second level provide systematic information to educators regarding student performance at the school and district levels. The top level consists of statewide assessments, which offer a final opportunity for students to demonstrate academic proficiency across the content standards. Figure 1 depicts a comprehensive assessment system.

Figure 1. A Comprehensive Balanced Assessment System



One purpose of assessment is to capture student learning at the closest point of instruction and to utilize the results to guide instructional adjustments. This process is defined as formative assessment and is described "as encompassing all activities undertaken by teachers, and/or by their students, which serve as feedback to modify teaching and learning activities…" Black and Wiliam (1998, p.7). Formative assessment often occurs within and between lessons and can be considered a "pulse check," alerting teachers and students of learning gaps. Formative assessment and daily instruction must operate seamlessly, or the result of fragmented feedback will undermine strategies to assist students. Moreover, timely data empower students to evaluate their own learning. In short, formative assessment allows teachers and students to recognize, respond, and improve learning as it is occurring (Cowie & Bell, 1999; Looney, 2005).

An assessment also captures student learning at specific intervals or "along the way." This type of assessment is defined as a benchmark, or an interim assessment. Critical to progress monitoring, interim assessment tools may be developed by individual teachers, school and district teams, state-level committees, or private vendors. Multiple assessment administration occurs at strategic points during the school year (e.g., beginning, middle, and end). Oftentimes, interim assessments are used to predict "end-of-year" results (Gong, 2010). Darling-Hammond and Pecheone (2010) propose that interim assessments propel instruction and track student performance over time.

Depending on the test developer, assessments will vary with respect to targeting and evaluating content standards. This variability creates challenges for school districts when they unknowingly purchase poorly aligned vendor-developed assessments. While school districts may receive information on student growth for specific skills, school leaders may not see significant gains in year-end scores on state summative assessments. Like North Carolina, many states offer school systems item banks to customize standards-based assessments; however, the benefits of using these instruments independently are minimal. A possible solution would involve the NCDPI assuming the responsibility for sequencing standards-based interim assessment items. When test items are sequenced well, teachers gain a deep understanding of standards organization, which results in effective planning, pacing, and progress monitoring

The Through-Course Assessment Model

Under consideration by the Task Force, the through-course model is comprised of multiple standards-based tests (three or four) that schools administer over several months. The quick turnaround of results from each assessment is intended to help teachers identify degrees of student mastery given specific sets of content standards. Depending on carefully controlled psychometric standards, through-course data could satisfy state and federal reporting requirements. In the literature, the through-course design is promoted as the "next generation" trend in bridging interim assessment with summative assessment. Darling-Hammond and Pecheone (2010) offer the following perspective on "medium stakes" versus high stakes.

> We would argue, as economist Richard Murnane suggested in his study of Vermont's assessment system (Mumane & Levy, 1996), that medium stakes can be preferable to high stakes of the kind that often lead to unintended negative consequences for student participation in school and teachers' instructional practices. That is, the use of rich assessments to inform stakeholders about educational performance (both because what students know and can do is made visible and because it produces useful, interpretable scores) can produce significant attention to educational improvement and support, as well as needed information for teachers, parents, policymakers, colleges, and employers" (p. 27).

For several years, state-led assessment consortia (e.g., Partnership for Assessment Readiness for College and Careers/PARCC) have shown an interest in the through-course assessment design. At the same time, these consortia have acknowledged that students require maximum instructional time to study and apply rigorous standards before assessment occurs (Wise, 2011). In a through-course model, the continuous cycle of administering assessments is likely to interfere "time to task" learning opportunities for students. In a similar vein, consortia have expressed concerns that through-course assessment data could possibly underestimate the impact of a full year of standard-based instruction. Although these concerns are acknowledged in the literature, the Task Force believes that

through-course model will minimize pressure on students, teachers, schools, and districts, since multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate proficiency will occur throughout the year.

As the SBE has been tasked by the General Assembly to implement assessments that allow for national comparisons aligned to content standards, focus placed on redefining the testing program to include room for innovative interim through-course assessment design in easing pressures placed on summative assessments is a logical next step in moving toward a balanced assessment approach. It also serves in alleviating the need for school systems to incur the costs and time associated with administering multiple interim assessments in preparation for annual state summative assessments

A Close Look at Grades 3–8

In order to assist schools in responding to the instructional needs of all students, the Task Force proposes the administration of a through-course assessment model. Ideally, this approach could eliminate local assessments; however, the Task Force is not taking a definitive stand on local interim assessments, except to advise school leaders to give careful consideration to the technical integrity and alignment strength of assessment tools, both locally and commercially designed systems.

Data derived from through-course assessments will guide teachers' pedagogical practices, inform instructional adjustments, and improve the allocation of resources and time. If the through-course model proves to be technically sound, operationally feasible, and responsive to state and federal reporting requirements, the SBE may consider eliminating the North Carolina EOG tests. A decision of this importance could possibly require the General Assembly to enact new legislation on the means and purposes of measuring student achievement in the public schools. The following diagram summarizes the grades 3-8 proposal.

Assessment Recommendation for Grades 3–8	Rationale
❧ Three or four interim assessments are administered throughout the year for ELA/Reading, and Mathematics. ❧ Content standards are sequenced across three or four assessments. ❧ Grade-level proficiency is demonstrated by meeting standards across several assessments. ❧ A growth status is based on student data gathered across several assessments.	❧ Reduces local assessments required by school districts ❧ Provides immediate feedback to determine learning gaps ❧ Could eliminate the need for the current summative/EOG tests

Educators depend on immediate test results to adjust and improve instruction. With results provided throughout the school year, an assessment system with a through-course design can guide instructional practices and diagnose student learning along the way.

A Close Look at Grades 9-11

The Task Force recommends a national assessment suite for ELA/Reading, mathematics, and science. Administered as diagnostic pre-tests in grades 9 and 10, these assessments will target content skills and knowledge that students must master before post-testing occurs in grade 11. The goal is to implement an approach that will allow for comparative analyses of student achievement data; provide indicators of college-and career-readiness; and satisfy state and federal accountability requirements, including provisions for students with disabilities and students identified as English Language Learners (ELLs). Additionally, the Task Force recommends administering a national college-and-career readiness assessment to students completing coursework in the Career Technical Education curriculum. Currently, the state administers two diagnostic assessments: 1) the ACT Explore in grade 8 and 2) the ACT Plan in grade 10. School year 2015-16, however, is the last release of the ACT Explore and ACT Plan, thus requiring the State Board of Education to consider other high school assessment systems. The following diagram summarizes the high school proposal.

Assessment Recommendation at High School	Rationale
❧ National assessment suite aligned to academic content standards to determine college readiness. The pre-test results in grades 9 and 10 will determine student growth after completing the post test in grade 11.	❧ Provides diagnostic information to empower instructional and learning practices ❧ Gives comparisons of North Carolina students to students in other states ❧ Meets state law requirements for a national assessment ❧ Used as a factor to determine admission to colleges and universities
❧ National career-readiness assessment administered to CTE concentrators.	❧ Recognized in the business/industry as an indicator of being career ready

Components of the Three-year Study

The Task Force on Summative Assessment recommends a study of a through-grades assessment model for grades 3-8 (ELA/Reading and mathematics). The Task Force also recommends a trial period for new assessments at grades 9–11 and adequate time for determining a grade 11 proficiency score.

The assessment findings will help to answer questions regarding the through-course model as a way to improve student proficiency in the ELA/Reading and mathematics standards. For grades 3–8, the study will help to determine whether the data satisfy critical mandates required by the North Carolina General Assembly, as well as federal policies administered by the US Department of Education. In order to extrapolate broadly from the findings, the NCDPI will establish sampling parameters and gather feedback from the North Carolina Technical Advisors regarding the demographic features.

As part of the proof of concept, the NCDPI will determine whether the through-course model is technically sound, operationally feasible, cost effective, and responsive to state and federal reporting requirements. Schools participating in the study will also administer modified EOG assessments. During 2015-16, the NCDPI will conduct a comparability study to determine whether commercial assessments are technically designed with the alignment, reliability, and validity to prepare students for rigorous EOG tests. The study will require the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction to request school systems to submit historical interim assessment data generated from the commercially developed assessments to determine alignment integrity.

Based on the outcomes of the through-course study and the local assessment comparability review, the NCDPI will conduct a field test in grades 3-8 of state-developed ELA/Reading and mathematics items, or consider a commercially developed assessment system. In 2017-18, the NCDPI will administer a new assessment. This three-year plan (2015-2018) must have the approval of the State Board of Education.

Operating concurrently with the grades 3-8 plan, the high school proposal for grades 9-11 will build on a pre and post tests to determine the extent to which students are demonstrating proficiency and growth in rigorous state-adopted content standards. These assessments must satisfy a number of state and federal policies around accountability and student accommodations.

PART III. THE ORGANIZATION AND WORK OF THE TASK FORCE

Summary of Task Force Activities

Working in both large and small groups, the Task Force convened monthly from October 2014 through May 2015. General meetings were held in the Education Building; however, webinar sessions and telephone conferencing made it possible to collaborate and plan in small groups, or to participate remotely. The NCDPI Communications Division disseminated information to the public about the activities of the Task Force, and the Office of the State Board routinely posted meeting material on the eBoard website at http://stateboard.ncpublicschools.org under SBE meetings. Audio streaming made it possible for the public to listen to live proceedings of Task Force meetings.

To gain a better understanding of how assessment best enhances the process of teaching and learning, the Task Force members formed three groups representing elementary, middle, and high school grades. Chairman Collins directed the groups to study assessments currently administered in each grade and to identify ways to improve the feedback loop from which teachers determine the ways to modify their instructional practices. .Each group proposed a model that 1) complements the developmental needs of students, 2) provides timely feedback to teachers, and 3) yields a student growth measure.

In addition committee reports, NCDPI staff and several external stakeholders offered helpful guidance and perspectives. Below is a summary of presentations to the Task Force..

<u>The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction</u>

- provided a historical perspective on the Standards and Accountability Commission and the Blue Ribbon Commission on Testing and Accountability
- reviewed revisions to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the proposed Every Child Achieves Act of 2015
- explained the purpose of state assessments currently administered to meet state and federal mandates
- discussed local interim/benchmark assessments
- differentiated between various assessments and the information/data resulting from each one (e.g., formative, interim, and summative)

<u>Educational Associations</u>

The following associations presented perspectives on short-term and long-term changes in the state assessment system.

- North Carolina School Superintendents' Association
- North Carolina School Boards Association

- North Carolina Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
- North Carolina Association of Educators
- North Carolina Parent Teacher Association
- BEST NC
- North Carolina Chamber Foundation

The associations expressed agreement on the following principles:

- Educators must ensure that assessments are developmentally appropriate.
- Assessments must reflect state-adopted content standards; improve student learning; and produce data consistent with state and federal reporting requirements.
- Assessments must provide timely, valid, and useful information.

Other Presentations

The Task Force received information from regional and school district-level testing coordinators who emphasized the importance of thoroughly covering the content standards before conducting interim assessments, accommodating students with special learning needs, and managing and coordinating the administration of interim/through-course assessments.

Dr. Paul Leather, Deputy Commissioner, New Hampshire Department of Education discussed the PACE, an innovative accountability strategy that offers a reduced level of standardized testing used together with locally-developed common performance assessments. These assessments are designed to support "deeper" learning through competency education and to be integrated into students' day-to-day learning activities. Meaningful assessment is an essential step in ensuring that all students are getting the most out of their education. New Hampshire implemented the PACE model in 2012.

Perspectives and Findings

Based on several written reports and expert presentations, the Task Force offers the following findings:

1. While North Carolina has customarily relied on summative assessments to meet state and federal requirements, the Task Force encourages the NCDPI to design and implement a balanced assessment system—one that builds on tiers of data generated by formative and interim assessments. A through-course design will serve the purpose of guiding teachers' instructional practice and diagnosing student learning needs "along the way." Summative (e.g., EOG/EOC) tests appropriately fulfill state and federal reporting mandates.
2. During the school year, classroom teachers are responsible for administering a variety of assessments that have different mandate provisions (e.g., state and/or federal). Below is a sample.

- Test results are used for school performance grades, which include proficiency and growth (state)
- Test results are used to report Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO). (federal)
- Tests must be aligned to state-adopted content standards. (federal and state).
- Content standards must satisfy college- and- career ready rigor. (federal and state)
- Students must be assessed on their grade levels. (federal and state)
- Tests must result in an end-of-year achievement level (1-5 in North Carolina). (federal and state)
- As required in policies governing Educator Effectiveness, tests must provide teacher-level growth information. (federal and state)
- Test data must result in national comparisons. (state)
- The North Carolina student assessment system adopted by the State Board of Education applies to all students. School systems are not permitted to administer other summative/end-of-year assessment programs. (federal and state)
- Students with the most significant disabilities must have appropriate assessments aligned to extended content standards. (federal)
- All students must be included in the annual testing program. The testing program must accommodate the needs of students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), 504 plans, and English as a Second Language (ESL) documentation.

3. Surveys administered and analyzed by the NCDPI (2014) reveal that school district (on average) dedicate about 2.3 percent of the school year assessing students, regardless of the grade level. The majority of locally mandated assessments are administered in grades 3-8, with at least three assessments given per year in grades 5 through 8. Fifty-five percent of the respondents stated that they use local assessments to inform instruction, while nearly forty percent stated that their school districts administer these tests to monitor student progress in standards-driven curricula and to prepare students for EOG/EOC testing

4. An assessment must fit its purpose. Since the 1990s, standardized assessments have been foundational to school, district, and state accountability policies. In the intervening years, state and federal laws have expanded the use of test data for a variety of reasons (e.g., school performance grades, educator effectiveness, and annual measurable objectives (AMO). It must be noted that summative tests are not intended to provide student-level, diagnostic data. Instead, they satisfy state and federal reporting requirements calling for cumulative "snapshots" of student achievement. Furthermore, the release time

of official results makes it impossible to provide feedback to teachers. For all intents and purposes, the year of instruction has ended before the Department of Public Instruction is authorized to release official outcomes to school districts.

During March 2015, the NCDPI staff assigned to the Task Force attended a meeting of the North Carolina Technical Advisors to discuss through-course assessments, the proposed high school assessment model, and the proof of concept framework. Although the advisors did not oppose the through-course concept, they raised concerns about its technical soundness and the importance of careful planning, communication, and implementation.

Given the body of information provided in written reports and by knowledgeable stakeholders, the Task Force continued . . .

- deliberating on ways to implement through-course assessment tools with the capacity to provide proficiency and growth data in grades 3-8 and using a high school pre/post-test model in grades 9 and 10 and a national assessment to measure college-and-career readiness in grades 11 and 12;
- collaborating in small groups on ways to enhance student achievement using assessment tools;
- gathering information from other states about interim assessment design;
- exploring a second phase of the study to include kindergarten through grade 3;
- briefing local school superintendents on the assessment proposal and the NCDPI's draft Request for Information (RFI) during the Superintendents' Quarterly Meeting on March 18, 2015. The purpose of a RFI is to determine the availability and costs of through-course assessments. The North Carolina School Superintendents' Association held a meeting on March 27, 2015, for local superintendents and staff to share information on the proposed pilot concept tentatively scheduled to begin during 2015–16.
- collecting information from school districts regarding pilot design preferences (see below).

  Option A: The school system will administer commercially developed assessments to generate three or four assessments during 2015–16, or the initial year of the pilot.

  Option B: The school system will administer up to four state-developed interim assessments during 2015-16.

  Option C: The school system will administer a single assessment suite identified by the state's RFI process that would be administered throughout the 2015–16 piloting school year.

In a review of LEA proposals submitted by 23 systems, 14 districts indicated a preference for state-developed assessments. In the other proposals, school systems mentioned various ways of utilizing state-developed assessments.

Conclusion

The Task Force believes that an interim assessment model designed as a through-course approach is worthy of further exploration and proposes a study of this concept in grades 5 and 6 during 2015-16. Regarding the high school proposal for grades 9-11, the Task Force supports adopting a nationally normed suite of pre-tests and post-tests for determining baseline performance during the freshman and sophomore years and evaluating proficiency and growth during students' junior year. Equally important, this assessment suite must assess the rigor expected in college-and- career ready standards. In summary, the Task Force encourages the SBE to consider the recommendations contained n this report.

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☑ **Appendix E.** December 4, 2018 Webinar Questions

Stakeholder Input Meeting Questions
December 4, 2018

Q: Will the NCDPI also be looking at the age-appropriateness of online assessments for younger students (grades 3–5)?

Q: How many more items?

Q: So if we go to through-grade assessments, am I hearing correctly that we would no longer release the items with results? If so, that is the most appealing part of NC Check-Ins.

Q: How could we avoid 4 high stakes test throughout the year. If these are designed to give levels, then unless it covers objectives from the entre curriculum, then would it not be three or 4 summative assessments?

Q: How would the first assessment be included in the student's overall proficiency? I'm concerned that a student does poorly on the first assessment that then impacts how they are categorized (proficiency level) by the end of the year--could a student "dig a hole" they can't get out of after test one? Raises high stakes pressure to three times per year, rather than one.

Q: Are the unbelievably high cut scores that have caused a five-year flat line on state testing scores going to remain the same?

Q: Would there be three separate scores or do the scores combine to make one overall score?

Q: Will all assessments be online only?

Q: Is there a way to combine universal screening with MTSS to create multiple measures of proficiency (ie. a student could be deemed proficient during any of these multiple opportunities).

Q: Growth?

Q: How do we handle students who are transient and are not able to take all three administrations?

Q: Are you planning to replace the EOCs which typically measure outcomes on semester long courses with 3 tests?

Q: Will all of the data be available through Schoolnet?

Q: Will the three math assessments be cumulative?

Q: How would you handle transient students that would not have all assessment scores?

Q: Is there discussion about computer adaptive testing? Since we are building these from the ground up, could CAT be used for these?

Q: What do you mean not pulling back NC CHECKINS?

Q: How would PEY be calculated? Would statewide pacing guides be provided?

Q: If memory serves correctly at one time there were discussions that check ins would include a "shortened" summative - this completely eliminates the summative? Would the third assessment move closer to the end and thus become a shortened summative of 20–25 items?

Q: Will this not result in a significant increase in the amount of instructional time lost to standardized assessments, because we would essentially be giving the EOG three times throughout the year rather than just once?

Q: Will this structure allow for remediation and re-testing for the first few?

Q: Is this being considered at all for high school EOCs, or just elementary/middle school grades?

Q: How will we handle students who move into the state or are absent for one or more of these assessments during the year?

Q: Will technology hardships be honored?

Q: Would this continue to be delivered through NCTest?

Q: Will this assessment be developed for only 3–8 or will High School EOC assessments be included also? If so, how do we address the issue of multiple assessments within the semester long courses?

Q: Has the state considered that schools using laptops and other devices for testing more often throughout the year means they will not be being used for instruction?

Q: Not a question but a suggestion brainstorm--if there is a summative, could the interims be used only as a value add to help a student's potential proficiency. A student gets the "best of" results across any of the assessments.

Q: If a student manages to learn content tested earlier in the year through remediation and intervention, but those concepts are not included on subsequent tests at later time points in the year, how will we have an accurate picture of what the student has actually learned at the end of the year?

Q: Please provide NC CHECKINS for EOCS!!! It is needed :)

Q: Would a student receive an achievement level if they miss one of the three tests?

Q: What is the anticipated impact on the workload of local testing staff, if they are now going to have three times more testing events every year?

Q: Is it possible in some circumstances where it is not educationally feasible to have students administer three different assessments - and only administer the summative? just asking because I know I will be asked.

Q: Would statewide pacing guides be provided?

Q: It seems a little unsound to test a standard relatively early in the year (say November) and then not test it again at the end of the year. In both Reading and Math, students' skills sharpen, and their understanding of concepts deepens throughout the year. Is the NCDPI concerned that the process of through-grade assessments might actually restrict a student's ability to demonstrate proficiency gained after a year's worth of instruction?

Q: What if a student is proficient on two of three assessments? Would student be able to take the summative??

Q: This structure would only be for ELA and Math? So would we continue with NCFEs for growth calculations for other subjects?

Q: Will you do a Q and A based on today's feedback so districts can use this as a tool on whether or not to participate?

Q: Will these assessments be both paper pencil and online

Q: So, we are going to continue with summative for grades 5 & 8?? Let's move to NC CHECKINS with them as well.

Q: The important take away must be that we need to keep a growth measure.

☑ **Appendix F.** Local Testing Report

Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

Report to the North Carolina General Assembly

Testing Transparency - Statewide Administration of the Testing Program, pursuant to S.L. 2017-57, (SB 257) Section 7.28A. (b)

Date Due: December 15, 2018
Report #15
DPI Chronological Schedule, 2018–2019

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M1018

Introduction

General Statute §115C-174.12 (d) requires "by October 1 of each year, each local board of education shall notify the State Board of Education (SBE) of any local standardized testing to be administered to students by the local school administrative unit at the direction of the local board of education in its schools and the calendar for administering those tests. The local board of education shall include the following information:

(1) the source of funds supporting the local testing program;

(2) the time allotted to administer each test;

(3) whether the test is a computer-based test or a paper-based test;

(4) the grade level or subject area associated with the test;

(5) the date the test results are expected to be available to teachers and parents;

(6) the type of test, the purpose of the test, and the use of the test results; and

(7) estimates of average time for administering tests required by the local board of education by grade level."

Section (e) of the same legislation requires the SBE to "submit a report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee containing information regarding the statewide administration of the testing program, including the number and type of tests and the testing schedule, and a summary of any local testing programs reported by local boards of education to the SBE in accordance with subsection (d)."

Section (e1) of this legislation requires "by September 1 of each year, the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall publish on the Web site of the Department of Public Instruction a uniform calendar that includes schedules for state-required testing and reporting results of tests for at least the next two school years, including estimates of the average time for administering state-required standardized tests. The uniform calendar shall be provided to local boards of education in an electronic format that allows each local board of education to populate the calendar with, at a minimum, the information required by subsection (d) of this legislation. The uniform calendar must be searchable by local school administrative unit and denote whether a test on the calendar is required by the state or required by a local board of education."

This report addresses the above legislative directives with respect to the current (2018–19) school year. The report has two sections: the first section provides the information regarding the statewide testing program, and the second section provides information gathered from local boards of education regarding local testing programs.

Statewide Testing Program

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's (NCDPI) Accountability Services Division (www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/) ensures that North Carolina's statewide testing program meets the requirements of all applicable state and federal laws. These laws are designed to promote student academic achievement and to assist stakeholders in understanding and gauging this achievement against standards. To these ends, the NCDPI Accountability Services Division endeavors to accomplish the following three main objectives:

(1) Design and development of reliable and valid assessment instruments,
(2) Uniform implementation of and access to suitable assessment instruments for all students, and
(3) Provision of accurate and statistically appropriate reports.

To meet these objectives, the NCDPI supports and/or administers an array of statewide standardized assessments ranging in purpose from placement to summative measurement of academic achievement and ranging in grade from kindergarten to grade twelve. The NCDPI ensures that all assessments are accessible to every North Carolina student, including students with disabilities. Per G.S. §115C-174.12(a)(4), "all annual summative assessments of student achievement adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE) and all final exams for courses are administered within the final ten (10) instructional days of the school year for year-long courses and within the final five (5) instructional days of the semester for semester courses." Placement testing occurs at the beginning of both fall and spring semesters, and college-and-career readiness testing, which includes Pre-ACT, ACT, and ACT WorkKeys, occurs during set windows during the fall and spring semesters.

Funding sources for the North Carolina Testing Program are the North Carolina Public School Fund (approximately seventy-five percent [75%]) and a State Assessment Grant from the federal government (approximately twenty-five percent [25%]). A separate allocation from the General Assembly funds the ACT suite.

In response to Section (e1) of this legislation, on September 1, 2018, the Superintendent of Public Instruction published on the website of the Department of Public Instruction a uniform calendar that includes the administration dates and times for all state-required testing and reporting results of tests for the next two school years. On August 6, 2018, a uniform calendar (survey) was provided to local boards of education in an electronic format which allowed each local board of education to populate the calendar with, at minimum, the information required by subsection (d) of the legislation. The uniform state and local calendars are published on the NCDPI's website at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/ and are searchable by LEA and denote whether a test on the calendar is required by the state or required by a local board of education.

In addition, the NCDPI publishes annually the North Carolina Statewide Testing Program Operational Calendar. The operational calendar for 2018–19 is located at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/ and is as follows:

North Carolina Testing Program Operational Calendar
2018−19 School Year–Summer

Assessment	Grades Tested	Frequency of Administration	Administration Time in Minutes	Testing Window
W–APT[1]	Kindergarten and First Semester Grade 1	Once upon initial enrollment	Up to 30 minutes	Initial assessment required within 30 calendar days of enrollment at the beginning of the school year or 14 calendar days if the student enrolls after the beginning of the school year.
WIDA Screener[1]	Second Semester Grade 1 through Grade 12	Once upon initial enrollment	Up to 70 minutes	Initial assessment required within 30 calendar days of enrollment at the beginning of the school year or 14 calendar days if the student enrolls after the beginning of the school year.
End-of-Course Tests	The grade in which the course is taken	Once at the completion of the course	120–Biology 150–English II 180–NC Math 1	Final 5 instructional days of the summer school course
Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) Phase 1 Assessments[2]	For EOC tests only	One Day	Varies by CDM assessment	July 18–31, 2018
Read to Achieve Test[3]	Grade 3	One Day	160	Locally determined date at the conclusion of reading camp

[1] To be identified as English Learners (ELs), students indicating a language other than English on the Home Language Survey (HLS) must be assessed using the state EL identification test at initial enrollment. The W-APT™ is the state-identified EL proficiency identification assessment given to students in kindergarten and in first semester of grade 1. The WIDA™ Screener is the state-identified EL proficiency identification assessment given to students in second semester grade 1 through grade 12. All students identified as ELs must be annually assessed using the state EL proficiency test.
[2] Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) is the process by which local education agencies (LEAs)/charter schools shall, based upon a body-of-evidence, award a student credit in a particular course without requiring the student to complete classroom instruction for a certain amount of seat time.
[3] Students who have not demonstrated reading proficiency at or above the third-grade level by the end of the third-grade year are provided an opportunity to take the Read to Achieve Test at the end of reading camp on a day designated by the LEA.

Summer School Administrations of End-of-Grade and End-of-Course Tests for Accountability
Districts/charter schools may administer end-of-grade (EOG) and end-of-course (EOC) tests during summer programs that have been approved by their local board and occur after the regular academic year is completed. Summer program scores uploaded to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) by 5:00 p.m. July 6, 2018 will be included in 2017–18 accountability calculations. Summer program scores uploaded to the NCDPI after July 6, 2018, will be included in the 2018–19 accountability analysis. Summer school administration scores will be counted only for proficiency, not growth.

2018–19 School Year–Fall

Assessment	Grades Tested	Frequency of Administration	Administration Time in Minutes	Testing Window
W–APT	Kindergarten and First Semester Grade 1	Once upon initial enrollment	Up to 30 minutes	Initial assessment required within 30 calendar days of enrollment at the beginning of the school year or 14 calendar days if the student enrolls after the beginning of the school year.
WIDA Screener	Second Semester Grade 1 through Grade 12	Once upon initial enrollment	Up to 70 minutes	Initial assessment required within 30 calendar days of enrollment at the beginning of the school year or 14 calendar days if the student enrolls after the beginning of the school year.
Beginning-of-Grade 3 English Language Arts/Reading Test	Grade 3	One Day	90	The testing window begins on the 11th day of the school year and continues through the 15th day.
Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) Phase 1 Assessments	For EOC and NCFE assessments only	One Day	Varies by CDM assessment	September 10–21, 2018
PreACT®	Grade 10	One Day	130	October 15–November 30, 2018
College and Career Readiness Alternate Assessment (CCRAA) [1]	Grade 10	One Day	150	October 15–November 30, 2018
ACT® WorkKeys	Concentrators (High School)	One Day	165	December 3–14, 2018
End-of-Course Tests	The grade in which the course is taken	Once at the completion of the course	120–Biology 150–English II 180–NC Math 1 180–NC Math 3	Final 5 instructional days of the semester (4x4/semester courses)
NC Final Exams[2]	The grade in which the course is taken	Once at the completion of the course	120	Final 5 instructional days of the semester (4x4/semester courses)
Read to Achieve Test[3]	Grade 4	One Day	160	Locally determined date by November 1, 2018

[1] The grade 10 College and Career Readiness Alternate Assessment (CCRAA) is an alternate assessment to the PreACT.
[2] The grade 4 science and the grades 4 and 5 social studies NC Final Exams are only available for spring administrations.
[3] Students with a retained reading label in either a 3/4 transitional class or a grade 4 accelerated class are provided an additional opportunity to satisfy the Read to Achieve legislation by passing the Read to Achieve Test by November 1.

2018–19 School Year–Spring

Assessment	Grades Tested	Frequency of Administration	Administration Time in Minutes	Testing Window
W–APT	Kindergarten and First Semester Grade 1	Once upon initial enrollment	Up to 30 minutes	Initial assessment required within 14 calendar days if the student enrolls after the beginning of the school year.
WIDA Screener	Second Semester Grade 1 through Grade 12	Once upon initial enrollment	Up to 70 minutes	Initial assessment required within 14 calendar days if the student enrolls after the beginning of the school year.
ACCESS for ELLs 2.0®[1]	Kindergarten through Grade 12	Once annually	30–65	January 28–March 8, 2019
Alternate ACCESS for ELLs®[2]	Grades 1–12	Once annually	80	January 28–March 8, 2019
Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) Phase 1 Assessments	For EOC and NCFE assessments only	One Day	Varies by CDM assessment	February 15–28, 2019
ACT® (Paper/Pencil)	Grade 11	One Day	215	February 20, 2019 (initial) March 12, 2019 (makeup)
ACT® Accommodations Testing Window (Paper/Pencil)	Grade 11	One Day	215 (varies by timing code)	February 20–22, 25–28, March 1, 4–6, 2019 (initial) March 12–15, 18, 2019 (makeup)
ACT®–Online	Grade 11	One Day	215	February 20–22, 26–28, 2019 (initial and makeup)
College and Career Readiness Alternate Assessment[3]	Grade 11	One Day	150	February 20–22, 25–28, March 1, 4–6, 2019 Makeup Window: March 12–15, 18, 2019
NCEXTEND1 Alternate Assessment[4]	Grade 11	One Day	Untimed (unique to each individual student)	February 20–22, 25–28, March 1, 4–6, 2019 Makeup Window: March 12–15, 18, 2019
ACT® WorkKeys	Concentrators (High School)	One Day	165	April 1–12, 2019
NCEXTEND1 Alternate Assessments[5]	Grades 3–8, 10	One Day	Untimed (unique to each individual student)	Final 10 instructional days of the school year
End-of-Course Tests	The grade in which the course is taken	Once at the completion of the course	120–Biology 150–English II 180–NC Math 1 180–NC Math 3	Final 5 instructional days of the semester (4x4/semester courses); Final 10 instructional days of the school year (yearlong courses)
End-of-Grade Tests	Grades 3–8 Reading & Math; Grades 5 & 8 Science	Once at the completion of the school year	180–Reading 120–Math 120–Science	Final 10 instructional days of the school year
Read to Achieve Test[6]	Grade 3	One Day	160	Final 10 instructional days of the school year
End-of-Grade Retest[6]	Grade 3	One Day	180	Final 10 instructional days of the school year

NC Final Exams	The grade in which the course is taken	Once at the completion of the course	120	Final 5 instructional days of the semester (4x4/semester courses); Final 10 instructional days of the school year (yearlong courses

[1] The ACCESS for ELLs® 2.0 is the state-designated EL proficiency assessment administered annually to kindergarten through twelfth-grade students who have been identified as ELs.
[2] The Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is for students in grades 1–12 who are classified as ELs and have significant cognitive disabilities that prevent their meaningful participation in the general ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment.
[3] The grade 11 College and Career Readiness Alternate Assessment is an alternate assessment to the ACT.
[4] The grade 11 NCEXTEND1 Alternate Assessment is the alternate assessment to the ACT.
[5] The NCEXTEND1 Alternate Assessments at grades 3–8 and 10 are the alternate assessments for the end-of-grade and end-of-course tests of reading, mathematics, and science.
[6] Students at grade 3 who failed to demonstrate reading proficiency appropriate for a third-grade student on the regular (first) administration of the EOG English Language Arts/Reading assessment may take the Read to Achieve Test and/or the EOG English Language Arts/Reading Retest as an option to satisfy the requirements of the Read to Achieve legislation.

2018–19 School Year–National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and International Assessments[1]

Assessment	Grades Tested	Frequency of Administration	Number of Schools Participating	Administration Time in Minutes	Testing Window
International Emergent Literacy, Emergent Numeracy, Self-Regulation, and Empathy/Trust (IELS)	Kindergarten	Two Days	2	60 (30 minutes each day)	October 1–December 15, 2018
Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018 Math, Reading, Science, and Financial Literacy	Students age 15	One Day	4	60	October 1–December 15, 2018
Middle Grades Longitudinal Study (MGLS) National Data Collection: First Follow-Up	Grades 6–8	One Day	18	90	January 15, 2019–April 30, 2019
NAEP 2019 Reading, Mathematics, and Science	Grades 4, 8, 12	One Day	515	120	January 28, 2019–March 8, 2019
Trends in International Math and Science Study (TIMSS) 2019	Grades 4 & 8	One Day	18	120	March 1, 2019–April 30, 2019

[1] The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) selects a nationwide sample of schools and students for participation in NAEP 2018–19. Local education agencies (LEAs) and schools selected to participate will be notified by June 2018.

The NCDPI Accountability Services Division also provides accurate and statistically appropriate reports for public consumption through the following websites:

- Accountability and Testing Results (www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/reporting/)
- NC School Report Cards (www.ncpublicschools.org/src/)

Local Testing Programs

Background

"General Statute §115C-174.12 (d) requires each local board of education to "notify the SBE of any local standardized testing to be administered to students by the local school administrative unit at the direction of the local board of education in its schools and the calendar for administering those tests."

To standardize and make comparable the information submitted by local education agencies (LEAs) in response to the legislation, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) created a standard format and specific requirements for LEAs to use for their submissions. The NCDPI collected the LEA submissions from August 6, 2018 through October 1, 2018. In the instructions and supporting materials the NCDPI provided to LEAs, "local testing" was defined, for the purposes of this report, as follows:

- "Testing that is administered in schools within local school administrative units as initiated by the LEA and administered either LEA- or school-wide (including for all students of one grade in a district or school)."
- Testing that is initiated by classroom teachers was to be considered part of the teachers' instructional practice and thus, not considered local testing for the purposes of this report.
- Testing that is required or recommended by the state (including testing that offers local discretion related to the particular "brand" or form used) was not considered local testing for the purposes of this report.

As directed by G.S.§115C-174.12(e), "a summary of any local testing programs reported by local boards of education to the State Board of Education in accordance with [the legislation]" is provided in this report.

Student Teams Achieving Results (STAR) Research Study

In 2017, a team of University of North Carolina (UNC) Master of Business Administration (MBA) and undergraduate students participating in the Student Teams Achieving Results (STAR) program, conducted a study at the request of the State Superintendent on testing burden and district-reported assessments. The team evaluated the survey used by the NCDPI to collect local assessment information and analyzed the resulting data. Team members made recommendations for ways to improve the survey, used interactive tools to provide visualizations of the data to inform stakeholders and the public, and noted areas of potential inefficiencies or duplication. Their work led to more accurate data collection this year and a new online interactive report available on the NCDPI website at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/. The interactive report is intended to allow viewers to create customized views based on their areas of interest, whether they are interested in state-level or district-level information, for all grades or for specific grade levels. Both an instructional guide and a video that explains how to use the tool is provided.

Summary of Information Submitted by Local Boards of Education

All 115 LEAs (and one charter school) reported the "local testing" that is initiated by the LEA and administered either LEA- or school-wide. The extent of local testing appears to vary widely across the LEAs, ranging from zero to 46 assessments. Only two LEAs[1] do not administer district-mandated assessments. Unless otherwise noted in this report, a total of 828 local tests

[1] Edenton-Chowan and Clay

were reported statewide.

The NCDPI used the data to describe the following aspects of local testing (as required by the legislation):

- "local testing to be administered to students by the local school administrative unit at the direction of the local board of education in its schools,
- the calendar for administering those tests,
- the source of funds supporting the local testing program,
- the time allotted to administer each test,
- whether the test is a computer-based test or a paper-based test,
- the grade level or subject area associated with the test,
- the date the test results are expected to be available to teachers and parents,
- the type of test, the purpose of the test, and the use of the test results, and
- estimates of average time for administering tests required by the local board of education by grade level."

Local Testing: Type of Test, Test Subject, and Grade Level

Across the 115 LEAs, the focus of local testing programs appears to be benchmark/interim assessments. Of the 828 local tests reported, over 500 fall into this category. "Benchmark" and "interim" are two terms used typically, and often interchangeably, by district and school personnel to describe tests that are administered throughout the school year but not at the end of the school year. These tests, which are designed to measure at a point in time a student's progress toward mastery of content, may or may not be directly aligned with the state end-of-grade (EOG) or end-of-course (EOC) summative assessments. Since some local districts use the term "interim" for this type of test, while others use the term "benchmark," the local testing data collection offered LEAs either term as an option for describing local testing. As seen in Figure 1, the terms are combined for purposes of understanding the type of local testing being conducted in North Carolina.

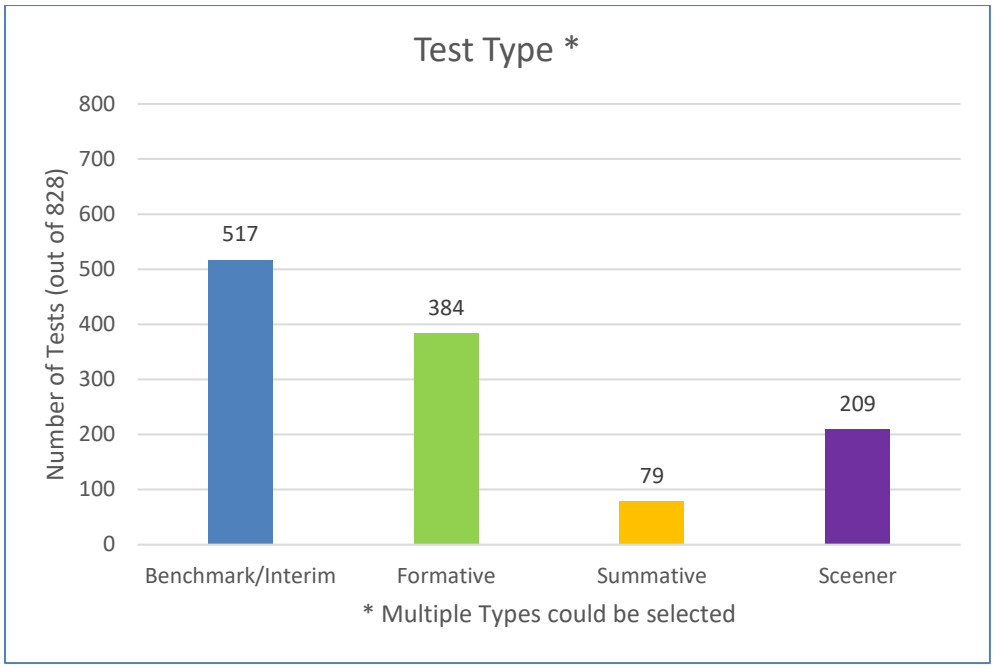

Figure 1. Type of tests administered locally.

The focus of local testing appears to be on the core subject areas of reading and mathematics (see Figure 2). These subjects are the focus of the statewide EOG and EOC assessments used for state and federal school accountability purposes.

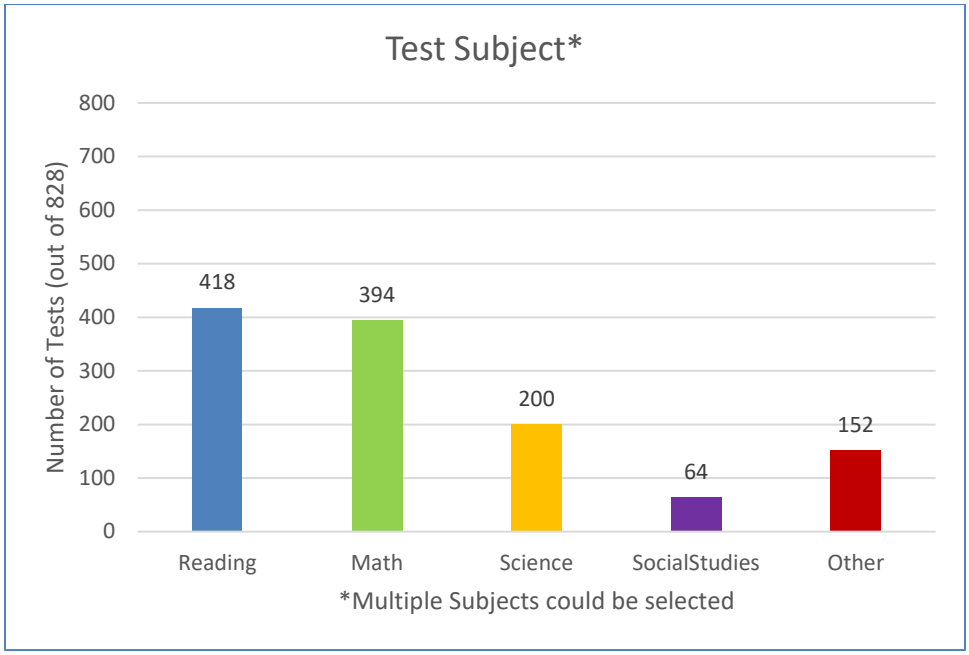

Figure 2. Subject areas tested locally.

As seen in Table 1 and Figure 3, more local testing occurs in grades 3, 5, and 8. Overall, students in grades 3 through 8 are tested more than students in elementary grades K–2 and high school grades 9–13.

Table 1. *Grades Tested**

Grade Level	Frequency	Percent of 828 Tests Given
Kindergarten (K)	97	11.7
Grade 1	112	13.5
Grade 2	139	16.8
Grade 3	419	50.6
Grade 4	376	45.4
Grade 5	430	51.9
Grade 6	364	44.0
Grade 7	358	43.2
Grade 8	426	51.5
Grade 9	226	27.3
Grade 10	242	29.2
Grade 11	218	26.3
Grade 12	154	18.6
Grade 13	39	4.7

*Districts could select more than one option for the grades tested. Percentages in this case will sum to over 100, and the N will sum to over 828.

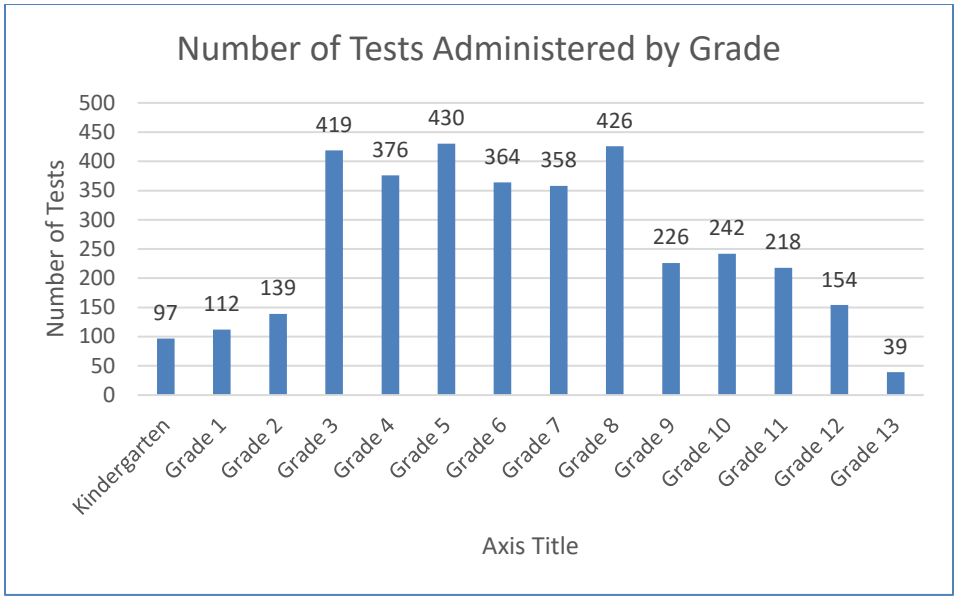

Figure 3. Number of tests administered by grade.

Delivery Mode

Over fifty percent of the 115 LEAs reported that local testing was administered online rather than paper/pencil (see Figure 4). Effective with the 2017–18 school year, the North Carolina Testing Program provides all state assessments in both online and paper/pencil modes. Many of the state-administered assessments are required online administrations (i.e., all EOC assessments [English II, NC Math 1, NC Math 3, Biology]; EOG Science assessments; North Carolina Final Exams for NC Math 2, Physics, Discrete Math, and Social Studies Grades 4 and 5; WIDA Screener; ACCESS for ELLs; and NCEXTEND1 Mathematics Grades 3–8 and 10). The NCDPI encourages districts and schools to continue to move toward online assessments as much as their local technical infrastructure will allow.

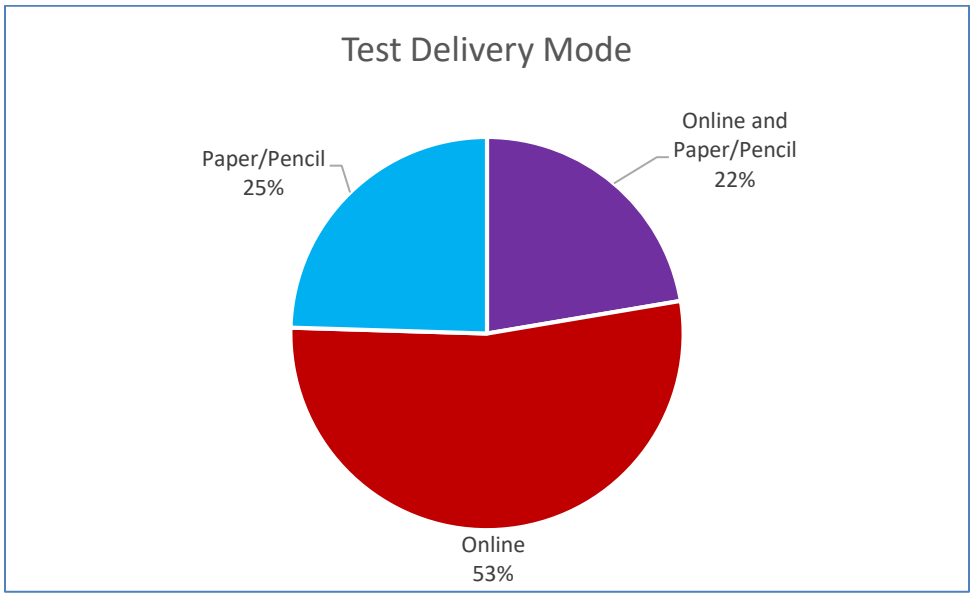

Figure 4. Test delivery mode.

Calendar for Administering Local Testing

To administer local tests, LEAs establish testing windows during which each test is to be given either LEA-wide, sometimes staggered to occur at different times at particular schools, or for particular grades. These testing windows typically have a start date—the initial date on which students may be tested somewhere, if not everywhere, in the LEA—and then schools have discretion regarding when they schedule school- or grade-wide testing. Some of the testing may even be scheduled on a given day for students in small groups or for individuals, depending upon a school's resources and/or the accommodations required by individual students. A testing window may therefore be many days long, so that all students in the target population can be tested, but that does not imply that each individual student undergoes testing more than once in the window or for an extended period of time. For example, during a scheduled LEA testing window of 15 days for a particular benchmark/interim, each student may undergo less than one full school day of testing. That said, a summary of testing windows does provide insight into how much time LEAs are building into their academic calendars to administer local testing programs.

Statewide, in every month of the school year, at least one local testing window is scheduled to begin. The most common months during which local testing windows begin are October and January (see Figure 5).

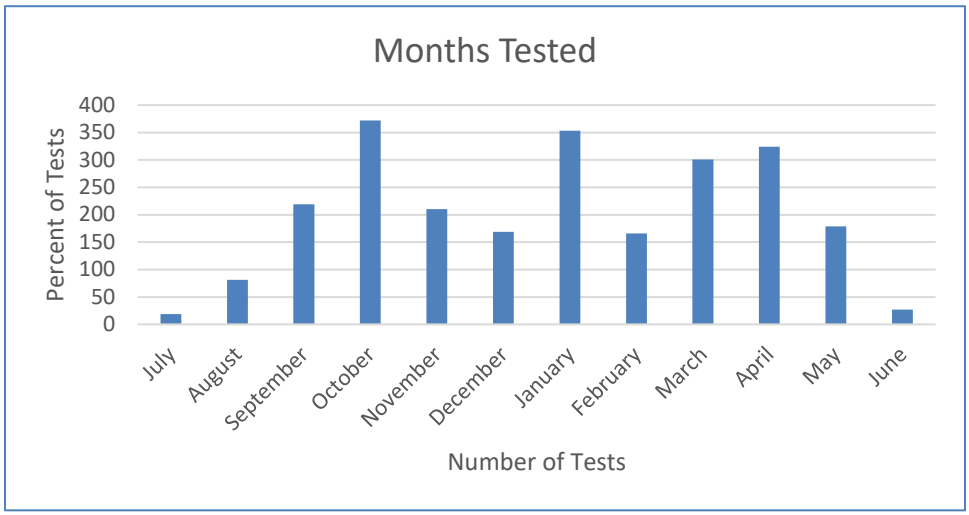

Figure 5. The months local testing windows begin.

Figure 6 is a picture of one of the interactive calendar maps that are available under the *Calendar Views* tab of the interactive report. This picture shows the total number of minutes allotted for all tests by grade and month. The purpose of this view is to show the months where students take tests for the longest time. Two additional interactive calendar maps show (1) the average number of minutes allotted for local tests by grade and month and (2) the total number of local tests given in the state each month by grade.

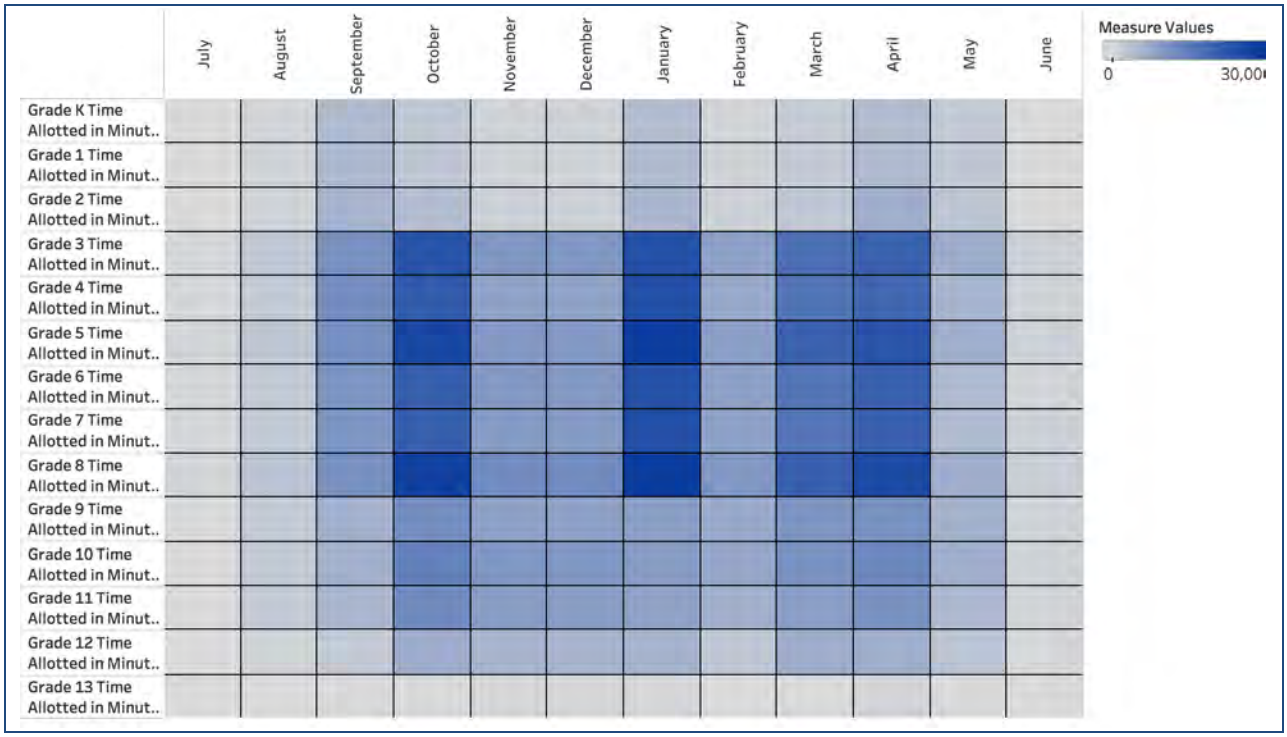

Figure 6. Total Tests by Grade and Month

As shown in Figure 7, the length of scheduled testing windows appears to vary between one (1) day and more than fifteen (15) days, with five (5) days being the most common number reported. The actual number of days required to administer the local assessment within the testing window was one (1) day (see Figure 8).

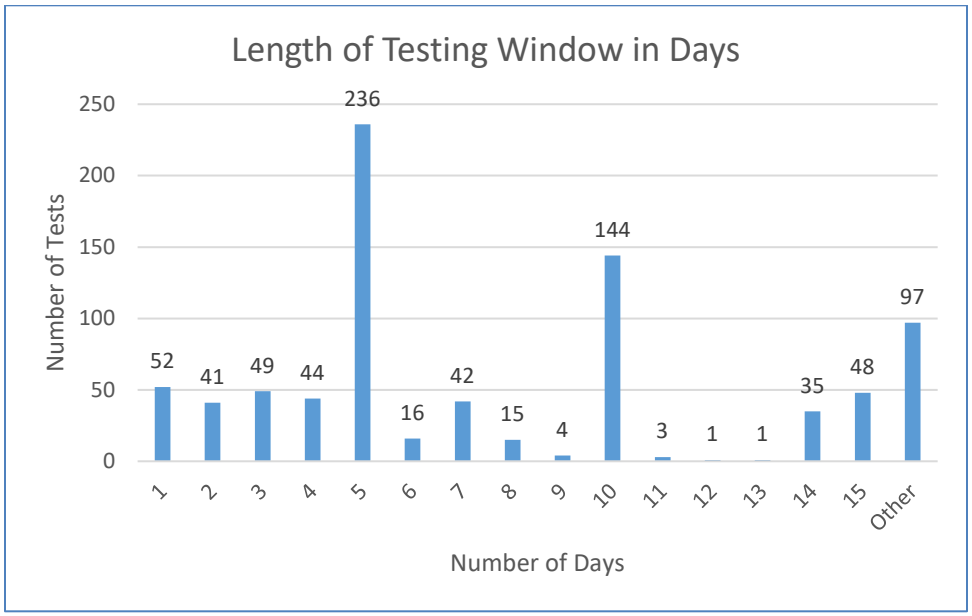

Figure 7. The length of testing windows in days.

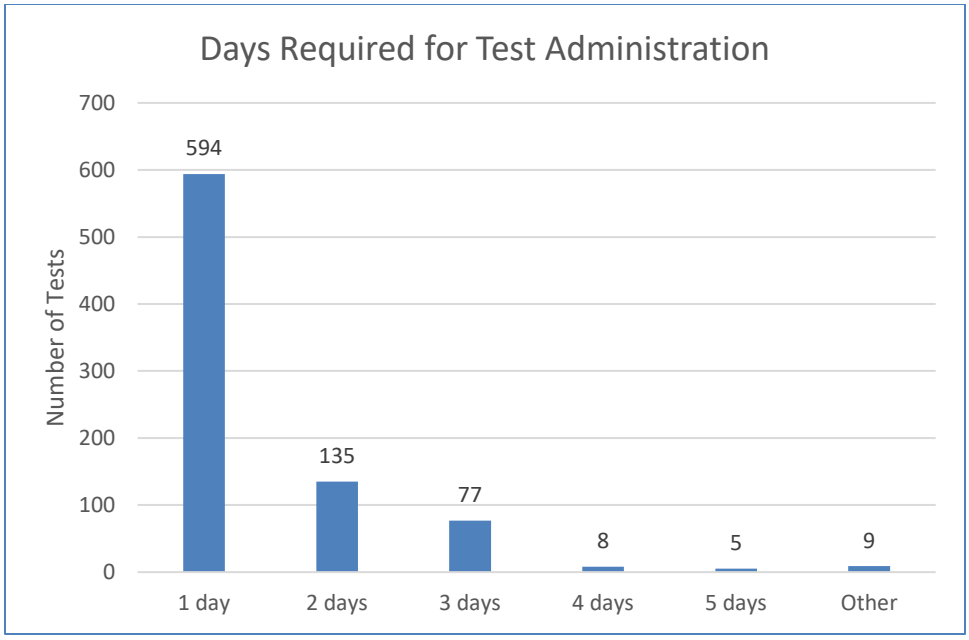

Figure 8. The days required for test administration.

Time Allotted for Standard Administration

The time LEAs allot for standard administrations of local assessments varies from 30 minutes or less to more than five (5) hours (see Figure 9). Across the 115 LEAs, nearly fifty percent (50%) of the tests administered require 61 to 90 minutes for the standard administration.

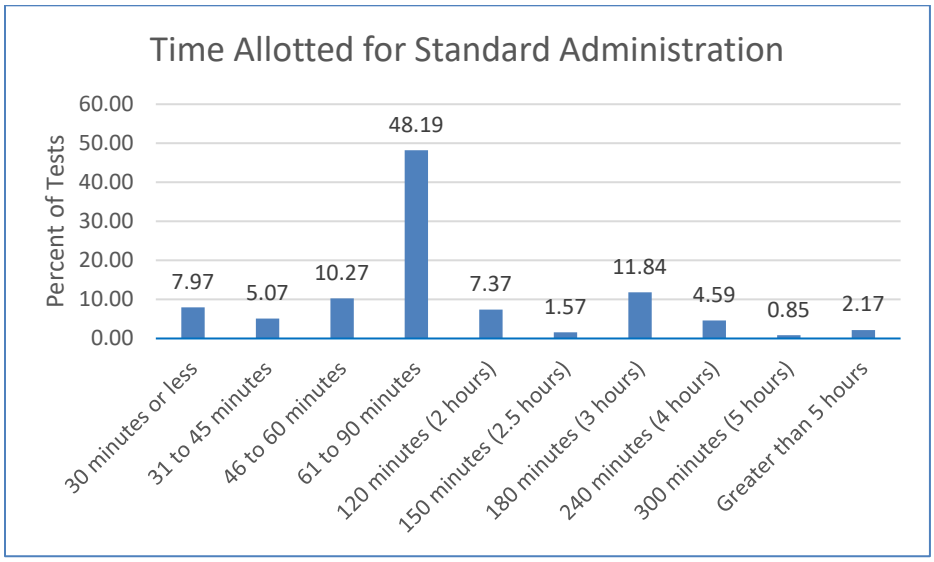

Figure 9. LEAs' estimated time for standard administration of local assessments.

The map in Figure 10 shows the time allotted per year for local tests administered by district at grade 3. Interactive maps for grades kindergarten (K) through grade 13 are located in the interactive report under the *Grades K–13: Time Allotted for Testing* tabs. The interactive, grade level maps include the average frequency (the number of times the test is administered per year), the average time allotted per test, the average time allotted in minutes, and the average time allotted in hours by district.

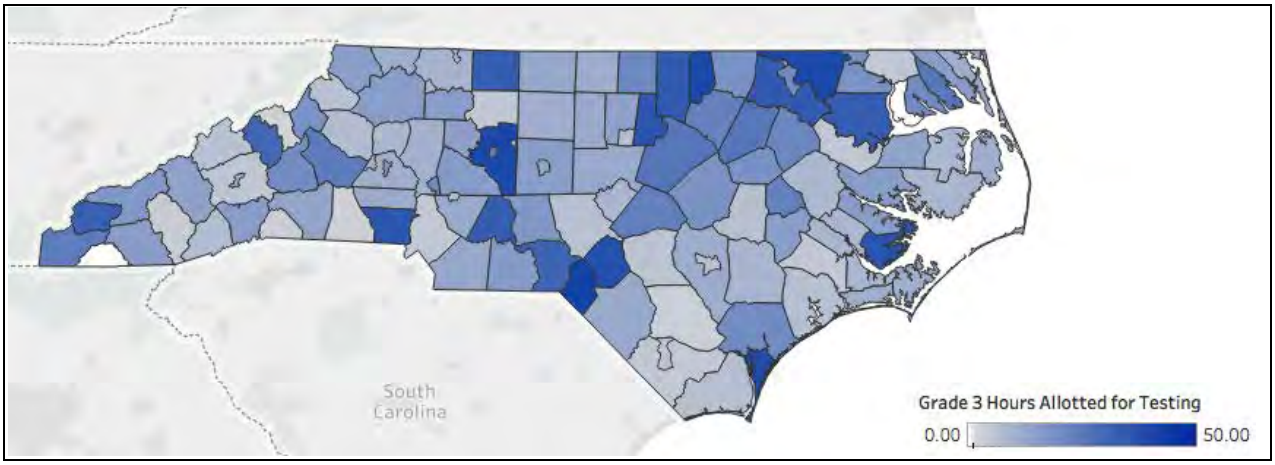

Figure 10. Hours Allotted for Testing in Grade 3 by District

Test Format and Availability of Results

Regardless of the mode of delivery (i.e., online or paper/pencil), assessments that contain multiple-choice test items only allow LEAs to get test results within the same day of the test administration. Assessments that contain performance items, such as constructed response or short answer items, take longer to score. The scoring process for performance items usually begins the morning after the test record is received by the vendor/scorer. The results are returned to the LEA within approximately five (5) to seven (7) business days. A summary of the data in Figures 11 and 12, shows that most of the local assessments contain multiple-choice items only (76%), and that most of the teachers (44%) can get results back from these assessments within the same day of the administration.

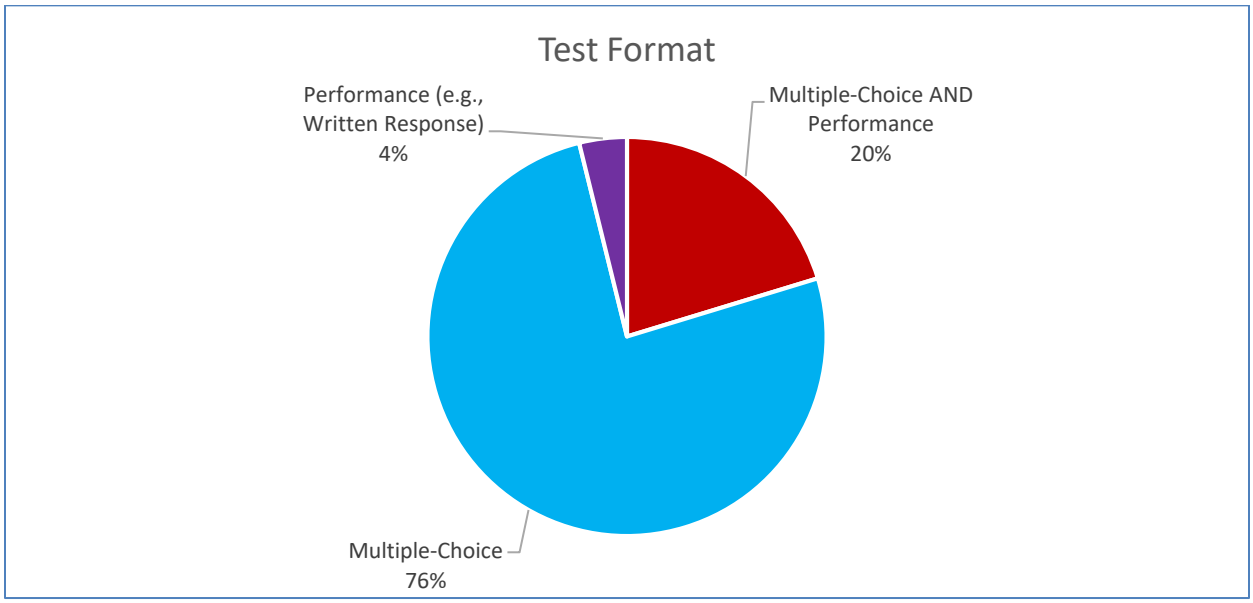

Figure 11. Test format.

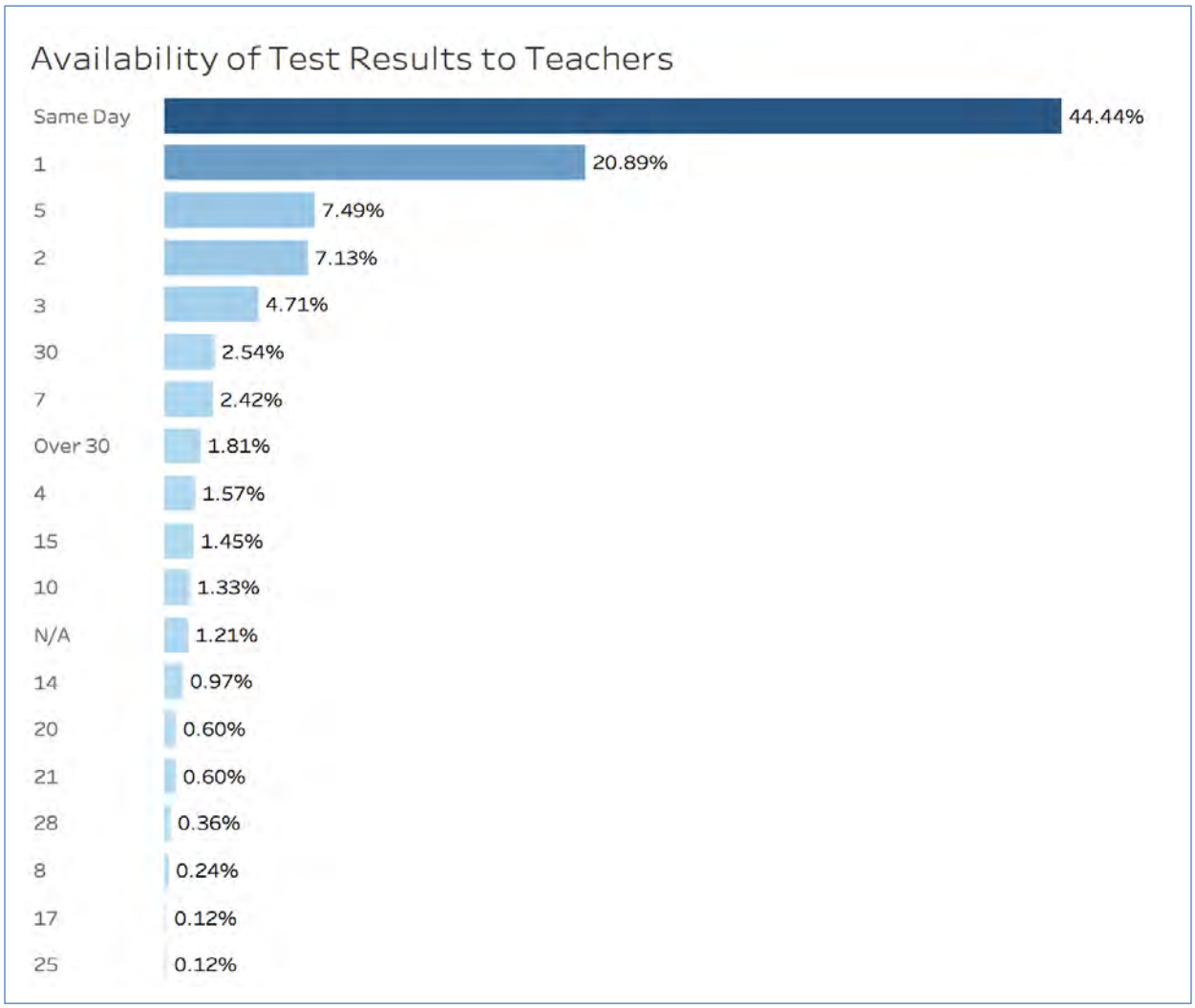

Figure 12. Availability of Assessment Results in Days for Teachers.

State Board policy TEST-001 states the following:

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

(h) LEAs shall report scores resulting from the administration of districtwide and state-mandated tests to students and parents or guardians along with available score interpretation information within thirty (30) days from generation of the score at the LEA level or receipt of the score and interpretive documentation from the NCDPI."

Figure 13 shows the number of days by test that it takes for parents to receive their student's score and/or interpretive documentation for local assessments. Most parents (20%) receive results within five (5) days of the generation of the score. However, the data also indicates that some parents (11%) do not receive test results until thirty (30) or more days after the generation of the score.

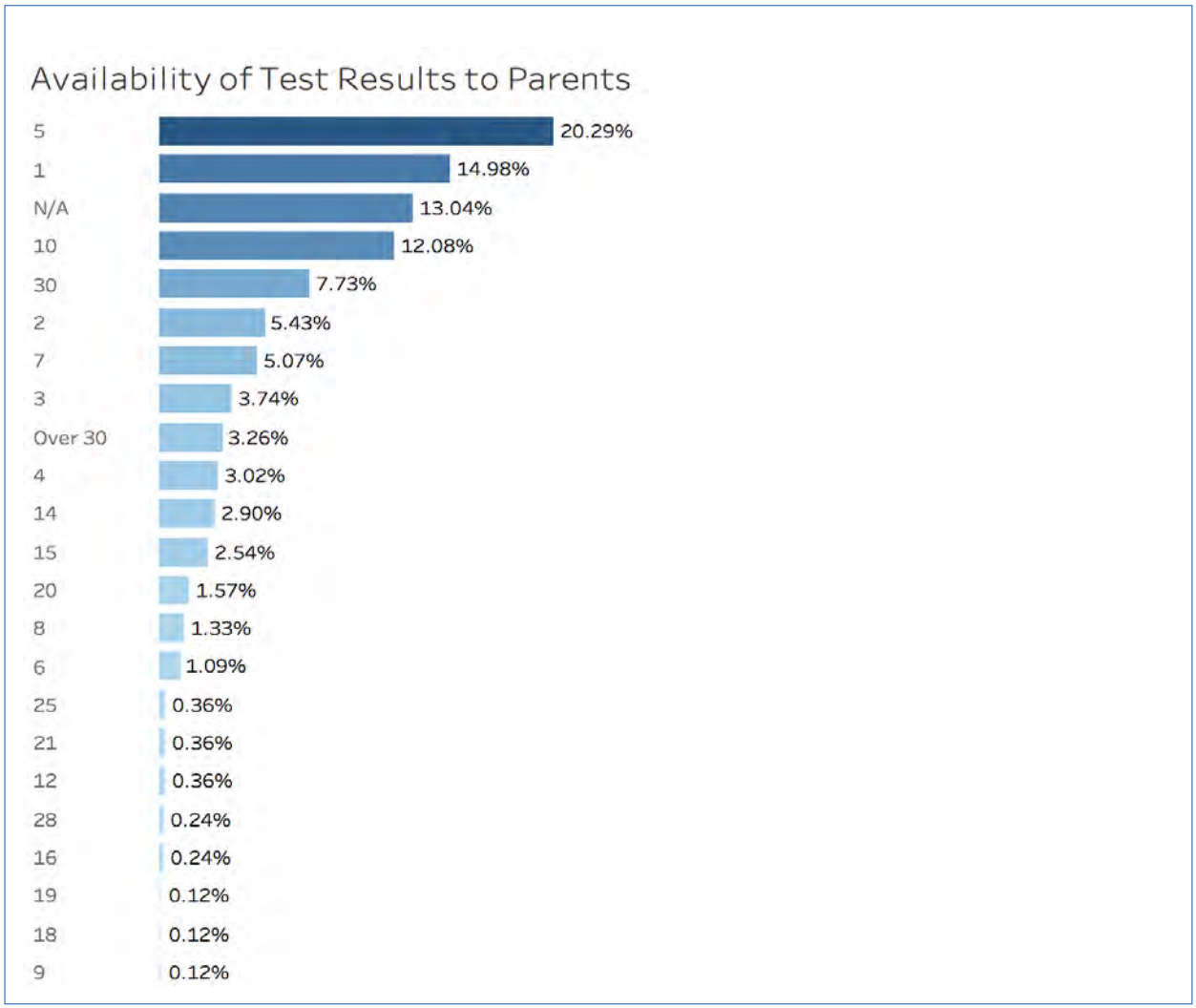

Figure 13. Availability of Assessment Results in Days for Parents

Purpose of the Test and Use of the Results

A summary of the data in Figure 14 shows that educators from the 115 LEAs use the results from local assessments most often to try to determine if students have mastered the concepts and skills covered by instruction (i.e., mastery). The type of tests teachers typically administered to determine mastery and guide future instruction are interim/benchmark and formative assessments (see Figure 1). Interim/benchmark assessments are like formative assessment in the sense that they help teachers see what students know and understand as well as topics students are having difficulty grasping.

Diagnostic assessment is a form of pre-assessment that allows teachers to determine students' individual strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills prior to instruction. Teachers typically administer diagnostics for reading and math skills, using the results to provide remedial instruction or place students within appropriately leveled classes or small groups. Some schools also diagnose concepts as a whole, aiming to reveal commonly held misconceptions in specific subjects. Results of these diagnostics inform teachers about the direction they need to take in their instruction, meaning how early or advanced in the topic they can begin.

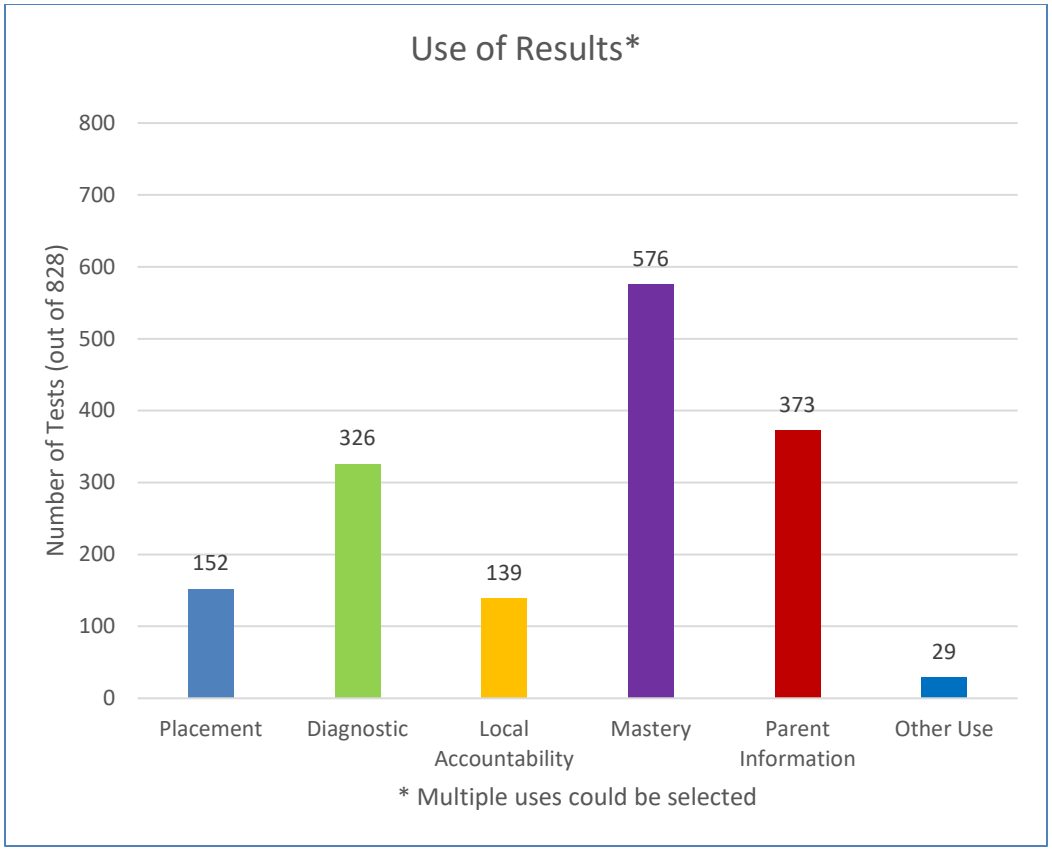

Figure 14. Use of test results.

Test Developers for Local Assessments

Local assessments are either purchased from a vendor, created by the LEA, or acquired from the State (e.g., NC Check-Ins). As shown in Figure 15, most LEAs purchase local assessments from vendors and/or create their own.

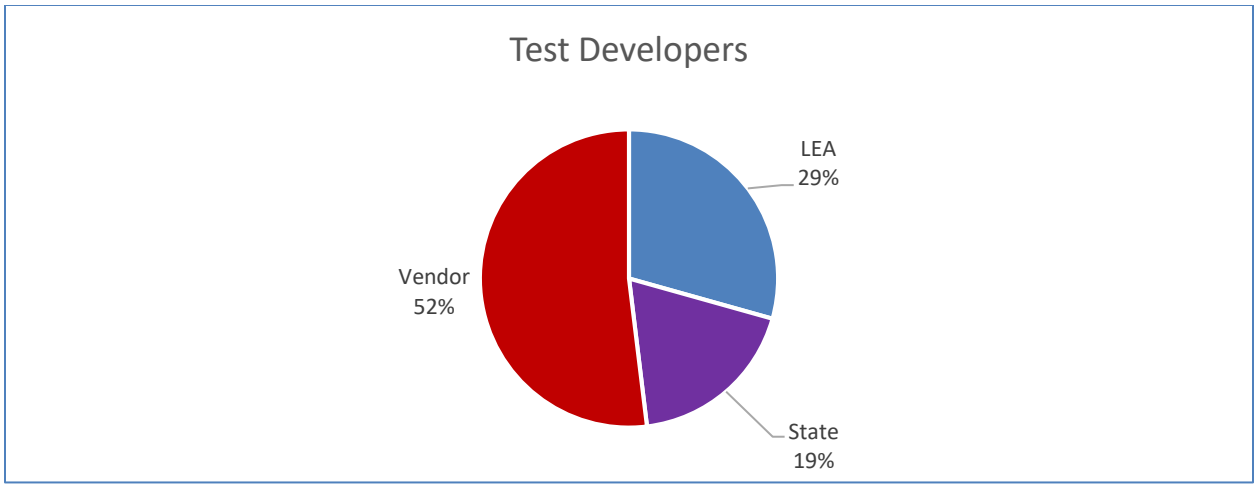

Figure 15. Test developers of local assessments.

Additional reports on the test developers for local assessments can be found under the *Test Developers* tab of the interactive report. These reports include (1) the number and percentage of LEAs that use each vendor and (2) the count of LEAs using each vendor by test purpose (e.g., screener, benchmark, etc.).

Source of Funds Supporting Local Testing Programs

District funds appear to be the primary source of funds supporting local testing, followed by state funds. Figure 16 illustrates the breakdown of funds supporting local testing programs.

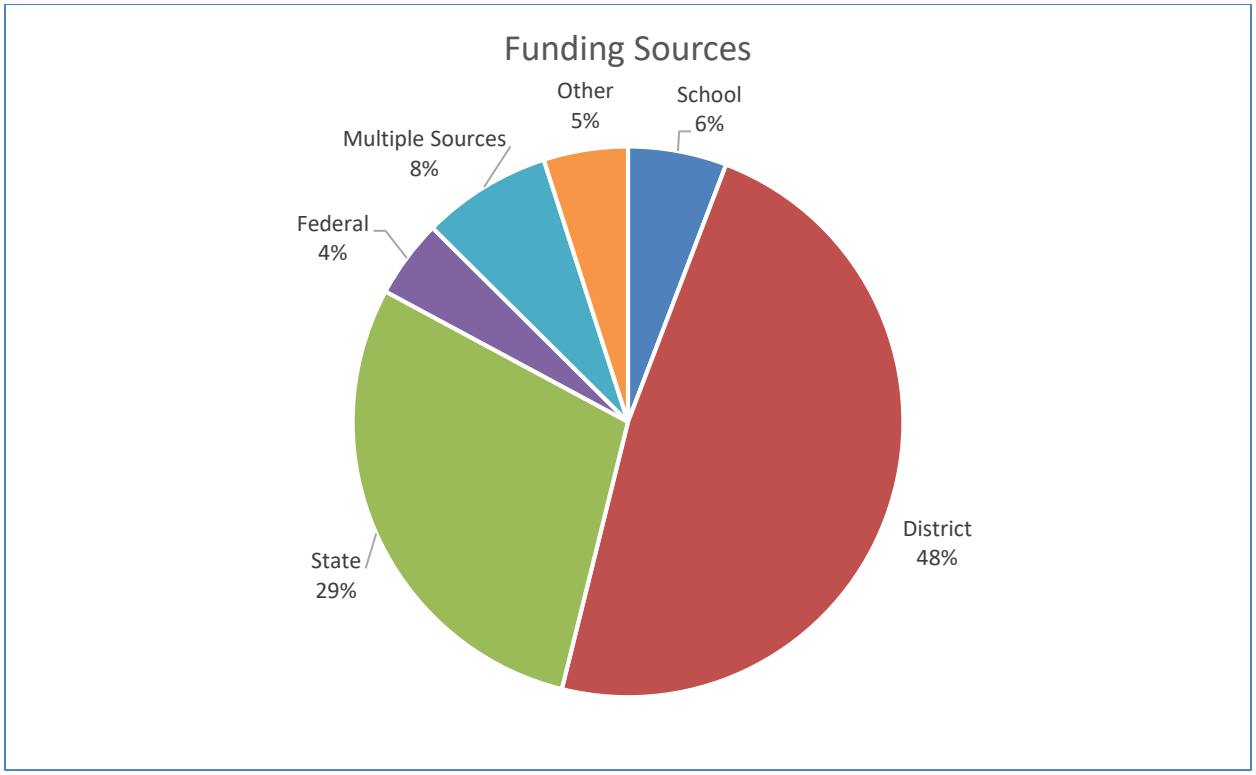

Figure 16. Source of funds supporting local testing.

☑ **Appendix G.** State Board of Education Test Development Policy

NORTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Policy Manual

Policy Identification
Priority: Globally Competitive Students
Category: Testing
Policy ID Number: GCS-A-013

Policy Title: Development process for tests

Current Policy Date: 1/01/2012

Other Historical Information: 06/05/2003

Statutory Reference: GS 115C-174.11(c); NC Constitution Article IX

Administrative Procedures Act (APA) Reference Number and Category:

***** Begin Policy *** (Do not tamper with this line)**

The official process for the development of state tests included in the North Carolina State Testing Program is as follows. The flowchart depicts the steps in the test development process for the state tests. A written description of each step in the test development process is included.

Questions regarding the **Test Development Process** should be directed to:

NC Department of Public Instruction
Accountability Services Division
Test Development Section
6314 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-6314

(919) 807-3774

North Carolina Testing Program
Test Development Process Flow Chart

Adopt Content Standards	Step 7 Review Item Tryout Statistics	Step14[b] Conduct Bias Reviews
Step 1[a] Develop Test Specifications (Blueprint)	Step 8[b] Develop New Items	Step15 Assemble Equivalent and Parallel Forms
Step 2[b] Develop Test Items	Step 9[b] Review Items for Field Test	Step16 Review Assembled Test
Step 3[b] Review Items for Tryouts	Step 10 Assemble Field Test Forms	Step17 Final Review of Test
Step 4 Assemble Item Tryout Forms	Step 11 Review Field Test Forms	Step 18[ab] Administer Test as Pilot
Step 5 Review Item Tryout Forms	Step 12[b] Administer Field Test	Step19 Score Test
Step 6[b] Administer Item Tryouts	Step 13 Review Field Test Statistics	Step 20[ab] Establish Standards
		Step 21[b] Administer Test as Fully Operational
		Step 22 Report Test Results

[a]Activities done only at implementation of new curriculum
[b]Activities involving NC teachers

Phase 1 (step 1) requires 4 months
Phase 2 (steps 2-7) requires 12 months
Phase 3 (steps 8-14) requires 20 months
Phase 4 (steps 15-20) requires 4 months for EOC and 9 months for EOG
Phase 5 (step 21) requires 4 months
Phase 6 (step 22) requires 1 month
TOTAL 44-49 months

NOTES:
1. For novel items or new curriculum, item tryouts should precede field-testing items.
2. Professional development opportunities are integral and ongoing to the curriculum and test development process.

North Carolina Testing Program

TEST DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Introduction

North Carolina tests are curriculum-based tests designed to measure the objectives found in the state-adopted content standards. The responsibility of updating the state-adopted content standards falls to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) K-12 Curriculum and Instructional Division. Curriculum specialists, teachers, administrators, university professors, and others assist in the process of updating curricula. Once curricula are adopted or tested objectives are approved by the North Carolina State Board of Education, in areas where statewide tests are required, the test development process begins.

The state-adopted content standards are periodically reviewed for possible revisions; however, test development is continuous. The NCDPI Accountability Services/Test Development Section test development staff members begin developing **operational** test forms for the North Carolina Testing Program when the State Board of Education (SBE) determines that such tests are needed. The need for new tests may result from mandates from the federal government or the North Carolina General Assembly. New tests can also be developed if the SBE determines the development of a new test will enhance the education of North Carolina students. The test development process consists of six phases and takes approximately four years. The phases begin with the development of test specifications and end with the reporting of operational test results.

PHASE 1: DEVELOP THE TESTING PLAN

Step 1: Develop the Test Specifications (Blueprint)

Prior to developing test specifications, it is important to outline the purpose of a test and what types of inferences (e.g. diagnostic, curriculum mastery) are to be made from test scores. Millman and Greene (1993, *in* Robert Linn, ed)[1] offer a rationale for delineating the purpose of the test. "A clear statement of the purpose provides the overall framework for test specification, item development, tryout, and review. A clear statement of test purpose also contributes significantly to appropriate test use in practical contexts." Using a test's purpose as the guiding framework, NCDPI curriculum specialists, teachers, NCDPI test development staff, and other content, curriculum, and testing experts establish the test specifications for each of the grade levels and content areas assessed. In general, test specifications include the following:

(1) Percentage of questions from higher or lower thinking skills and classification of each test question in the two dimensions of difficulty[2] and thinking skill level[3].

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[1]Millman, J., and Greene, J. (1993). "The Specification and Development of Tests of Achievement and Ability". In Robert Linn (ed.), *Educational Measurement* (pp. 335-366). Phoenix: American Council on Education and Oryx Press.

[2]*Difficulty Level.* Difficulty level describes how hard the test questions are. Easy questions are ones that about 70 percent of the students would answer correctly. Medium test questions are ones that about 50 percent to 60 percent of the students would

(2) Percentage of item types such as multiple choice, constructed response, technology-enhanced, or stimulus-based and other specialized constraints.
(3) Percentage of test questions that measure a specific goal, objective, domain, or category.
(4) For tests that contain reading selections, the percentage of types of selections (e.g., literary vs. informational texts, etc.).
(5) For tests of mathematics, the percentage of questions where a student is allowed to use a calculator.

PHASE 2: ITEM DEVELOPMENT (ITEM TRYOUTS[4] AND REVIEW)

Step 2: Develop Test Items

While objectives for the new curriculum might not yet be implemented in the field, there are larger ideas that carry over from the previous curriculum cycle. These objectives are known as **common curriculum** objectives. Items can be developed from old test items that are categorized as common curriculum items or they can be developed as new items.

Old test items include those items from the previous curriculum cycle that were developed but not field tested. They can also be items that were field tested but not used in the statewide operational administration. If a curricular match is found for certain items, these items will be retained for further development with the new curriculum and tests. Items may be switched from grade to grade or from course to course to achieve a curriculum match. For example, a mathematics item may be moved from grade 5 to grade 4. If they are moved from grade to grade or course to course, they are considered to be new curriculum objective items. If they remain in the same grade or course, they are considered to be common curriculum items. Any item that has been used in a statewide operational test that matches the new curriculum may be released for training or for teachers to use in the classroom.

In many cases, the purpose of the item tryout is to examine item types that the students have not previously been exposed to. In those cases, the items must be newly developed and will follow the process outlined in Step 8. While additional training may be required for writing new item types, the teachers can begin item development of common curriculum items due to their existing familiarity with the content.

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answer correctly. Hard test questions are ones that only about 20 percent or 30 percent of the students would answer correctly. Difficulty level may be estimated based on judgment prior to statistics having been collected on the items or statistically determined through field testing.

[3]*Thinking Skill Level.* Thinking skill level describes the cognitive skills that a student must use to solve the problem or respond to the question. One test question may ask a student to classify several passages based on their genre; another question may ask the student to select the best procedure to use for solving a problem. Passages are selected on other criteria, including readability. They must be interesting to read, be complete (with a beginning, middle, and end), and be from sources students might actually read. Advisory Groups, curriculum specialists, the NCDPI Division of Instructional Services, and the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/Testing Section select passages for state tests.

[4]NCDPI Test Development Section reserves the right to waive the "item tryout" component if time and other resources do not support the practice or if requirements for field testing are limited.

Step 3: Review Items for Tryouts

The review process for items developed for the item tryout is the same as it would be for the review of newly written items developed for any statewide test. The review process is described in detail in the "Phase 3 Field Test Development" section. In some cases where there are new item types developed that are different from what had previously been seen by students, additional reviews may be incorporated.

Step 4: Assemble Item Tryout Forms

As time and other resources permit, item tryouts are conducted as the first step in producing new tests. Item tryouts are a collection of a limited number of items of a new type, a new format, or a new curriculum. Only a few forms are assembled to determine the performance of new items and not all objectives may be tested. Conducting item tryouts has several advantages. One important advantage is that an opportunity exists, during this process, to provide items for field-testing that are known to be psychometrically sound. In addition, it provides an opportunity to refine a new or novel type of item, such as technology-enhanced items, for presentation to students. Having this data prior to field-testing and operational testing informs the item development and the test development process.

Step 5: Review Item Tryout Forms

Content specialists at the NCDPI Test Development Section and the Technical Outreach for Public Schools (TOPS) review the item tryout forms for clarity, correctness, potential bias, and curricular appropriateness. The NCDPI staff members, who specialize in the education of children with special needs, also review the forms.

Step 6: Administer Item Tryouts

When item tryouts are administered as a stand-alone test, a limited number of forms are produced, thus minimizing the number of children and schools impacted. Once these items are embedded in operational forms, the types of novel items that can be evaluated are severely constrained.

Item tryouts may include additional research, such as think-alouds or the evaluation of item modifications. Such research allows for the refinement of items for field testing.

Step 7: Review Item Tryout Statistics

Item statistics are examined to determine items that have a poor curricular match, poor response choices (foils), and confusing language. In addition, differential item functioning analyses can be run and a bias committee can review flagged items for revision. During a first-year item tryout, timing data can be collected to determine how long the new tests should be or to determine the amount of time needed for a given number of items. All of this information provides an opportunity to correct any flaws in the items that are to be included in the field tests.

PHASE 3: FIELD TEST DEVELOPMENT

Step 8: Develop New Items

North Carolina educators are recruited and trained as item writers for state tests. The diversity among the item writers and their knowledge of the current state-adopted content standards are addressed during recruitment. The use of classroom teachers from across the state as item writers and developers ensures that instructional validity is maintained through the input of professional educators with current classroom experience. In cases where item development is contracted to an external vendor, the vendor is encouraged to use North Carolina educators in addition to professional item writers to generate items for a given project.

Step 9: Review Items for Field Test

Another group of teachers is recruited for reviewing the written test items. Each item reviewer receives training in item writing and reviewing test items. Based on the comments from the reviewers, items are revised and/or rewritten, item-objective matches are re-examined and changed where necessary, and introductions and diagrams for passages are refined. Analyses occur to verify there is alignment of the items to the curriculum. Additional items are developed as necessary to ensure sufficiency of the item pool. Test development staff members, as well as curriculum specialists, review each item. Representation for students with special needs is included in the review. This process continues until a specified number of test items are written to each objective, edited, reviewed, edited, and finalized. Test development staff members, with input from the curriculum staff and other content, curriculum, and testing experts, approve each item to be field-tested.

Step 10: Assemble Field Test Forms

Items for each subject/course area are assembled into forms for field-testing. Although these are not the final versions of the tests, the forms are organized according to the specifications for the operational tests (test blueprints). New items or those that have been substantially changed since the item tryouts are analyzed after field testing. The item performance should be markedly better and the item rejection rates much lower for those items that were included in item tryouts as the items are mainly newly written and do not have item statistics. **Parallel** forms can be assembled which match test specifications and are parallel in terms of content coverage; however, difficulty of the forms cannot be addressed statistically.

Step 11: Review Field Test Forms

Content specialists at the NCDPI Test Development Section and the Technical Outreach for Public Schools (TOPS) review the field test forms to ensure that clarity, correctness, content coverage, and curricular appropriateness are addressed. Additionally, assembled tests forms are sent to an outside content expert who is not employed directly by the testing program. Such experts are typically professors or other staff of the university, college, or community college system.

Step 12: Administer Field Tests

For a stand-alone or explicit field test, a representative sample of students is selected to take the field test forms. Schools are selected from across the state's regions and LEAs to represent the state based on gender, ethnic/racial, geographic, and performance characteristics of the student population, including scores on previous versions of the tests and other appropriate characteristics for developing assessments.

The administration of the field test forms must follow the routine that will mimic the statewide operational administration of a test. The test administrator's guide for the field test administration includes instructions about the types of data to be collected in addition to student responses to the test items during the test administration. Examples of the types of data collected during field testing are item information, student demographic information, students' anticipated course grades as recorded by teachers, teachers' judgments of students' achievement level, field test administration time, and/or accommodations used for students with disabilities or identified as Limited English Proficient.

After the development of initial forms, field test items are embedded into the operational tests. At that point, all students take a small subset of field test items with their operational forms, and will no longer be aware of which items are experimental. Embedded field test items reduce the need for full forms of field test items and ensures students respond to field test items with the same motivation as they would an operational item.

Step 13: Review Field Test Statistics

The field test data for all items are analyzed by the NCDPI in conjunction with services contracted at Technical Outreach for Public Schools (TOPS). The classical measurement model and the three-parameter logistic **item response theory** (IRT) model (including **p-value, biserial correlation, foil counts, slope, threshold, asymptote, and Mantel-Haenszel differential item functioning statistics**) are used in the analyses. Teacher comments on field test items are also reviewed. Only the items approved by the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/Test Development Section staff members, with input from staff members from the K-12 Curriculum and Instructional Services Division are sent to the next step.

Step 14: Conduct Sensitivity/Fairness Reviews

A separate committee conducts sensitivity/fairness reviews to address potential bias in test items. The NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/Test Development Section "casts a wide net" when statistically identifying potentially biased test items in order to identify more items for review instead of fewer items. Bias Review Committee members are selected for their diversity, their experience with special needs students, or their knowledge of a specific curriculum area. The NCDPI K-12 Curriculum and Instructional Services Division and additional content specialists review items identified by the field test data as functioning differentially for subgroups. Items are retained for test development only if there is agreement among the content specialists and testing specialists that the item appropriately measures knowledge/skills that every student should know based on thestate-adopted content standards.

PHASE 4: PILOT/OPERATIONAL TEST DEVELOPMENT

Step 15: Assemble Equivalent and Parallel Forms

The final item pool is based on approval by the (1) NCDPI K-12 Curriculum and Instructional Services Division for curriculum purposes and (2) NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/Test Development Section for psychometrically sound item performance. To develop **equivalent** forms, the test forms are built to an IRT test characteristic curve. Each test form matches the test specifications. The test development staff members, in collaboration with the NCDPI K-12 Curriculum and Instructional Services Division, reviews the reliability and timing data to determine the appropriate number of test items. Curriculum content specialists also review the forms to determine if the test specifications have been implemented and to ensure that test forms by grade are parallel in terms of curricular coverage.

Step 16: Review Assembled Tests

The assembled tests are carefully reviewed by content experts at the Technical Outreach for Public Schools (TOPS) and the NCDPI Test Development Section. Representation for students with special needs is included. The content team reviews the assembled tests for content validity and addresses the parallel nature of the test forms. Additionally, assembled tests forms are sent to an outside content expert for review.

At the operational stage, the types of edits allowed are quite limited to avoid invalidating the final item calibration. Should the item be determined to be unusable without the changes, it can be returned to the field test stage for revision andre-field testing. The field test items continue to be reviewed separately, since for those items, major revisions are still allowed.

Step 17: Final Review of Tests

Test development staff members, with input from curriculum staff, other content, curriculum, and testing experts and editors, conduct the final content and grammar check for each test form. If at this point a test item needs to be replaced, the test development staff must rebalance the entire form. If a large number of items are replaced after the series of reviews, the form is no longer considered to be the same form that originally went to review. Therefore the "new" form must go back through review.

Step 18: Administer Test as Pilot[5]

A pilot test of the final forms allows any remaining glitches or "bugs" to be caught without negative ramifications for students or schools. This also allows for calibration of item parameters under instructed, motivated conditions. The pilot test mimics an administration of the operational test in every way except that the standards are not yet in place. Test scores are delayed until after the standard setting and final test administration data analyses.

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[5] Pilot tests are conducted only for new tests not for tests considered revised from a previous test.

Step 19: Score Tests

The NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/Testing Section must complete the following in order to provide local education agencies (LEAs) with the ability to scan multiple-choice answer sheets and report student performance at the local level:

(1) Answer key text files must be keyed with the goal/objective information and then converted to the format used by the WINSCAN/SCANXX program.
(2) A program converts the IRT files containing the item statistics to scale scores and standard errors of measurement. State percentiles must be added to create equating files.
(3) The equating files are created so the appropriate conversions occur: (a) raw score to scale score with standard error of measurement and, (b) scale score to percentile.
(4) Files that convert scale scores to achievement levels are added.
(5) The test configuration file must be completed next. This file describes the layout of the header/answer sheets, Special Code instructions, answer keys, and the linkage test scores for WINSCAN/SCANXX.
(6) Using the WINSCAN or the SCANXX program, header and answer sheets are scanned. This consists of selecting the appropriate test configuration file and scanning answer sheets. The program reads the answer key, equating the file and achievement level files. The individual items are compared to the answer keys and the raw score is calculated by summing the number correct. Each test item receives equal weight. Raw scores are then converted to other scores.

The student's final score is based solely on performance on the operational sections of the test. Any embedded field test item is not included in the calculation of the student's score.

Step 20: Establish Standards

Industry guidelines require that performance standards, or cut scores be set using data from a pilot test or first year of fully operational. A variety of established and accepted methods for setting standards are available. Test characteristics, such as inclusion of constructed response items, may dictate which methodology is chosen. In the past, North Carolina has used methods such as Contrasting Groups and Bookmark or Item Mapping to determine standards for state tests. Once the performance standards for a test are determined, typically they are not changed unless a new curriculum, revised test, or a new scale is implemented.

PHASE 5: OPERATIONAL TESTING

Step 21: Administer Tests as Fully Operational

The tests are administered statewide following all policies of the State Board of Education, including the North Carolina *Testing Code of Ethics.* Standardized test administration procedures must be followed to ensure the validity and reliability of test results. Students with disabilities and students identified as Limited English Proficient may use accommodations as identified by

their Individualized Education Programs, Section 504 Plans, and/or Limited English Proficiency (LEP) documentation when taking the tests.

PHASE 6: REPORTING

Step 22: Reporting Test Results

For tests containing only multiple-choice or other immediately scoreable items, reports are generated at the local level to depict performance for individual students, classrooms, schools, and LEAs. Results are available shortly after the tests are administered. For tests which contain items relying on human scoring, such as constructed response items, results may take longer. These data can be disaggregated by subgroups of gender and race/ethnicity as well as other demographic variables collected during the test administration. Demographic data are reported on variables such as free/reduced lunch status, LEP status, migrant status, Title I status, and disability status. The results are reported in aggregate at the state level usually at the end of June of each year. The NCDPI uses these data for school accountability and to satisfy other federal requirements (e.g., No Child Left Behind Act of 2001).

TIMELINE FOR TEST DEVELOPMENT

Phase	Timeline
Phase 1: Develop Test Specifications (Blueprint)	4 months
Phase 2: Item Development for Item Tryout	12 months
Phase 3: Field Test Development and Administration	20 months
Phase 4: Pilot/Operational Test Development and Administration	4 months for EOC tests (9 months for EOG tests)
Phase 5: Fully Operational Test Development and Administration	4 months
Phase 6: Reporting Operational Test Results	Phase 6 completed as data become available.
Total Time	**44-49 months**

Note: Some phases require action by some other authority than the NCDPI Testing Section (e.g. contractors, field staff). These phases can extend or shorten the total timeline for test development.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The terms below are defined by their application in this document and their common uses among North Carolina Test Development staff. Some of the terms refer to complex statistical procedures used in the process of test development. In an effort to avoid the use of excessive technical jargon, definitions have been simplified; however, they should not be considered exhaustive.

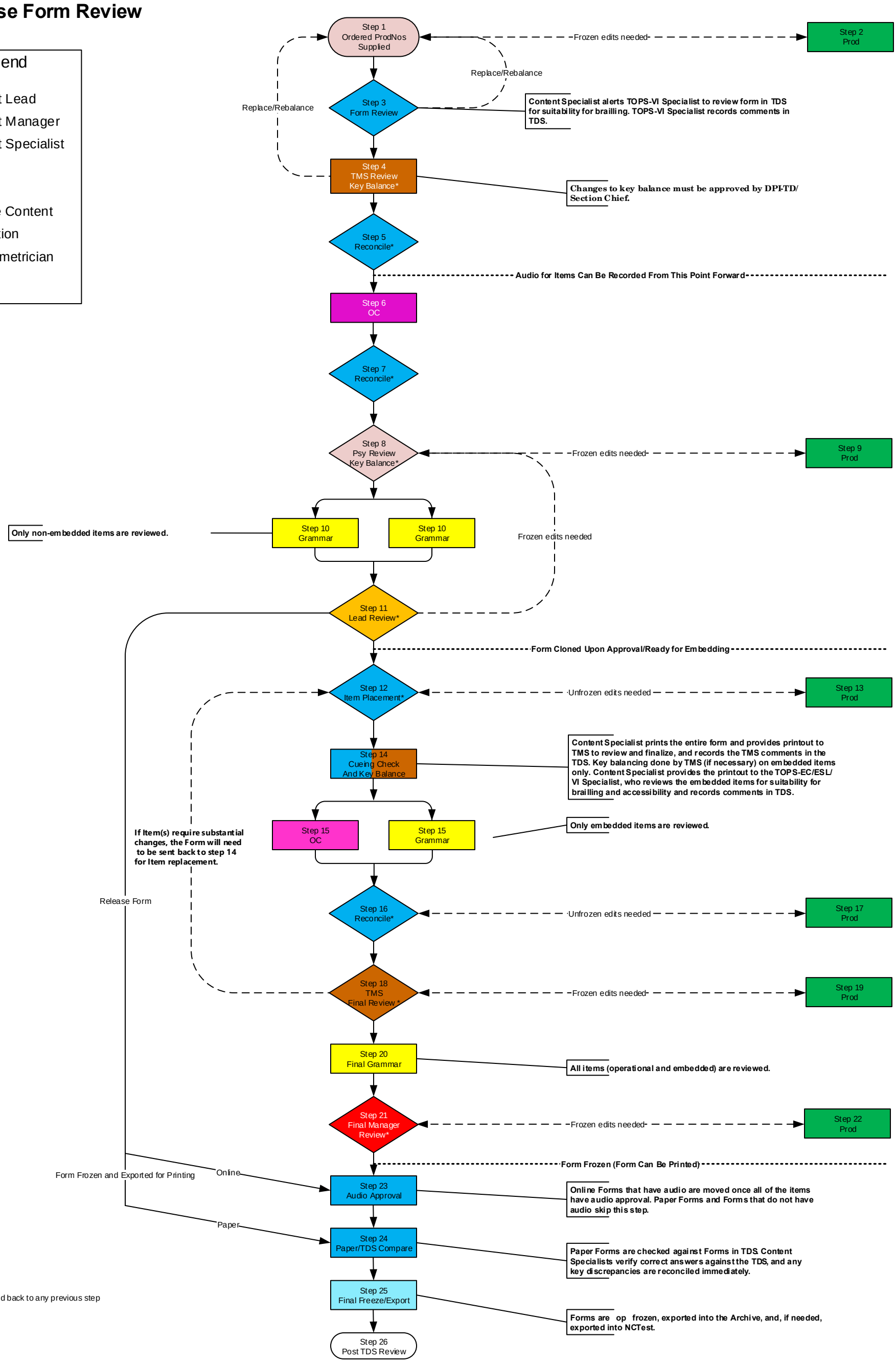
Accommodations		Changes made in the format or administration of the test to provide options to test takers who are unable to access the test under standard test conditions. Accommodations do not alter the construct or content of the test.
Achievement Levels		Descriptions of a test taker's competency in a particular area of knowledge or skill, usually defined as ordered categories on a continuum classified by broad ranges of performance.
Asymptote		An item statistic that describes the proportion of examinees that endorsed a question correctly but did poorly on the overall test. Asymptote for a typical four choice item is 0.20 but can vary somewhat by test. (For math it is generally 0.15 and for social studies it is generally 0.22).
Biserial correlation		The relationship between an item score (right or wrong) and a total test score.
Common Curriculum		Objectives that are unchanged between the old and new curricula
Cut Scores		A specific point on a score scale, such that scores at or above that point are interpreted or acted upon differently from scores below that point.
Dimensionality		The extent to which a test item measures more than one ability.
Embedded test model		Using an operational test to field test new items or sections. The new items or sections are "embedded" into the new test and appear to examinees as being indistinguishable from the operational test.
Equivalent Forms		Statistically insignificant differences between forms (i.e., the red form is not harder).

Field Test		A collection of items to approximate how a test form will work. Statistics produced will be used in interpreting item behavior/performance and allow for the calibration of item parameters used in equating tests.
Foil counts		Number of examinees that endorse each foil (e.g. number who answer "A," number who answer "B," etc.)
Item response theory		A method of test item analysis that takes into account the ability of the examinee, and determines characteristics of the item relative to other items in the test. The NCDPI uses the 3-parameter model, which provides slope, threshold, and asymptote.
Item Tryout		A collection of a limited number of items of a new type, a new format, or a new curriculum. Only a few forms are assembled to determine the performance of new items and not all objectives may be tested.
Mantel-Haenszel		A statistical procedure that examines the differential item functioning (DIF) or the relationship between a score on an item and the different groups answering the item (e.g. gender, race). This procedure is used to examine individual items for bias.
Operational Test		Test is administered statewide with uniform procedures and full reporting of scores, and stakes for examinees and schools.
p-value		Difficulty of an item defined by using the proportion of examinees who answered an item correctly.
Parallel Forms		Covers the same curricular material as other forms
Percentile		The score on a test below which a given percentage of scores fall.
Pilot Test		Test is administered as if it were "the real thing" but has limited associated reporting or stakes for examinees or schools.
Raw score		The unadjusted score on a test determined by counting the number of correct answers.
Scale score		A score to which raw scores are converted by numerical transformation. Scale scores allow for comparison of different forms of the test using the same scale.

Slope		The ability of a test item to distinguish between examinees of high and low ability.
Standard error of measurement		The standard deviation of an individual's observed scores usually estimated from group data.
Test Blueprint		The testing plan, which includes numbers of items from each objective to appear on test and arrangement of objectives.
Threshold		The point on the ability scale where the probability of a correct response is fifty percent. Threshold for an item of average difficulty is 0.00.
WINSCAN Program		Proprietary computer program that contains the test answer keys and files necessary to scan and score state multiple-choice tests. Student scores and local reports can be generated immediately using the program.

☑ **Appendix H.** Test Development Process

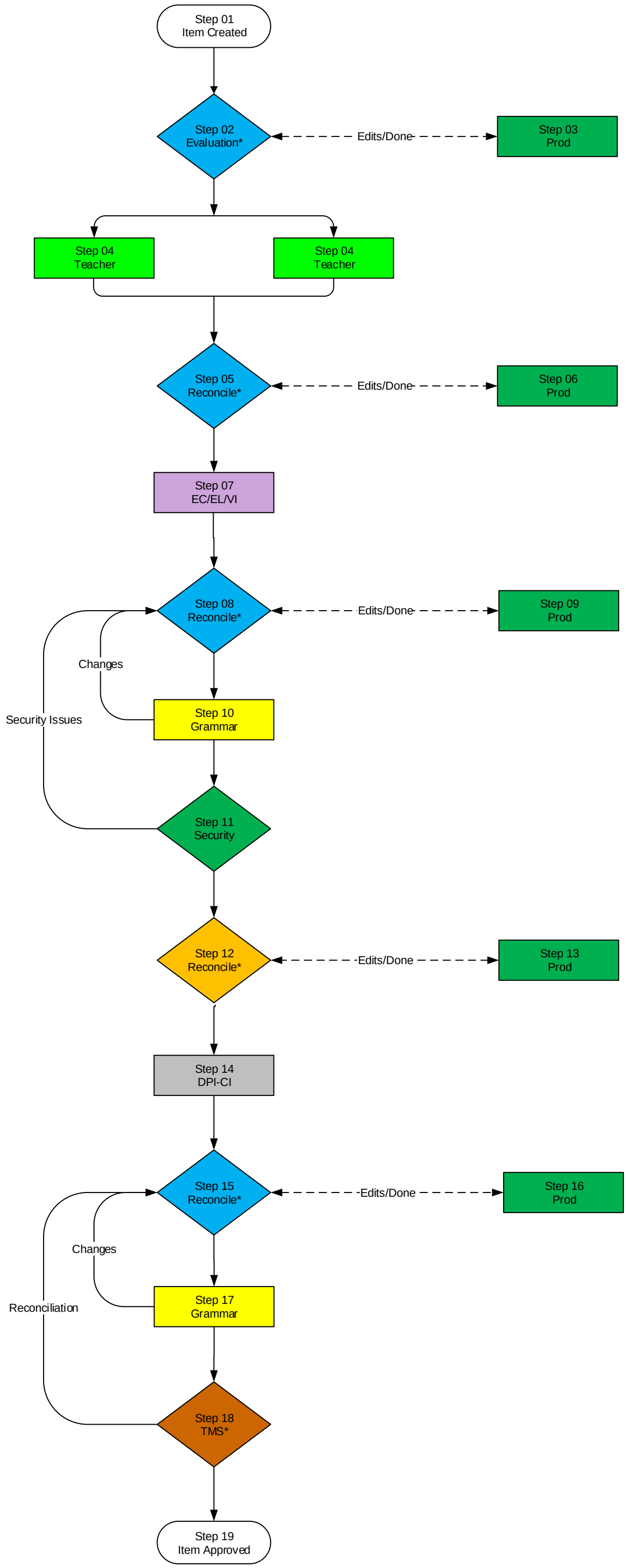
Embedded Base Form Review



* At these Steps, Forms can be moved back to any previous step or removed from the Form Pool.

Revised Tuesday, July 18, 2017 2:47:09 PM

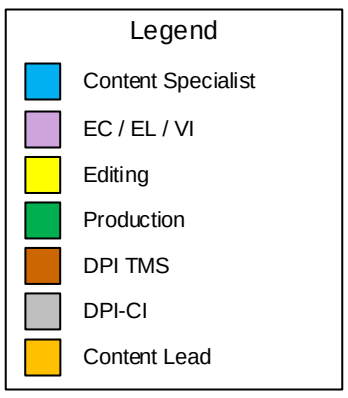
Item Review

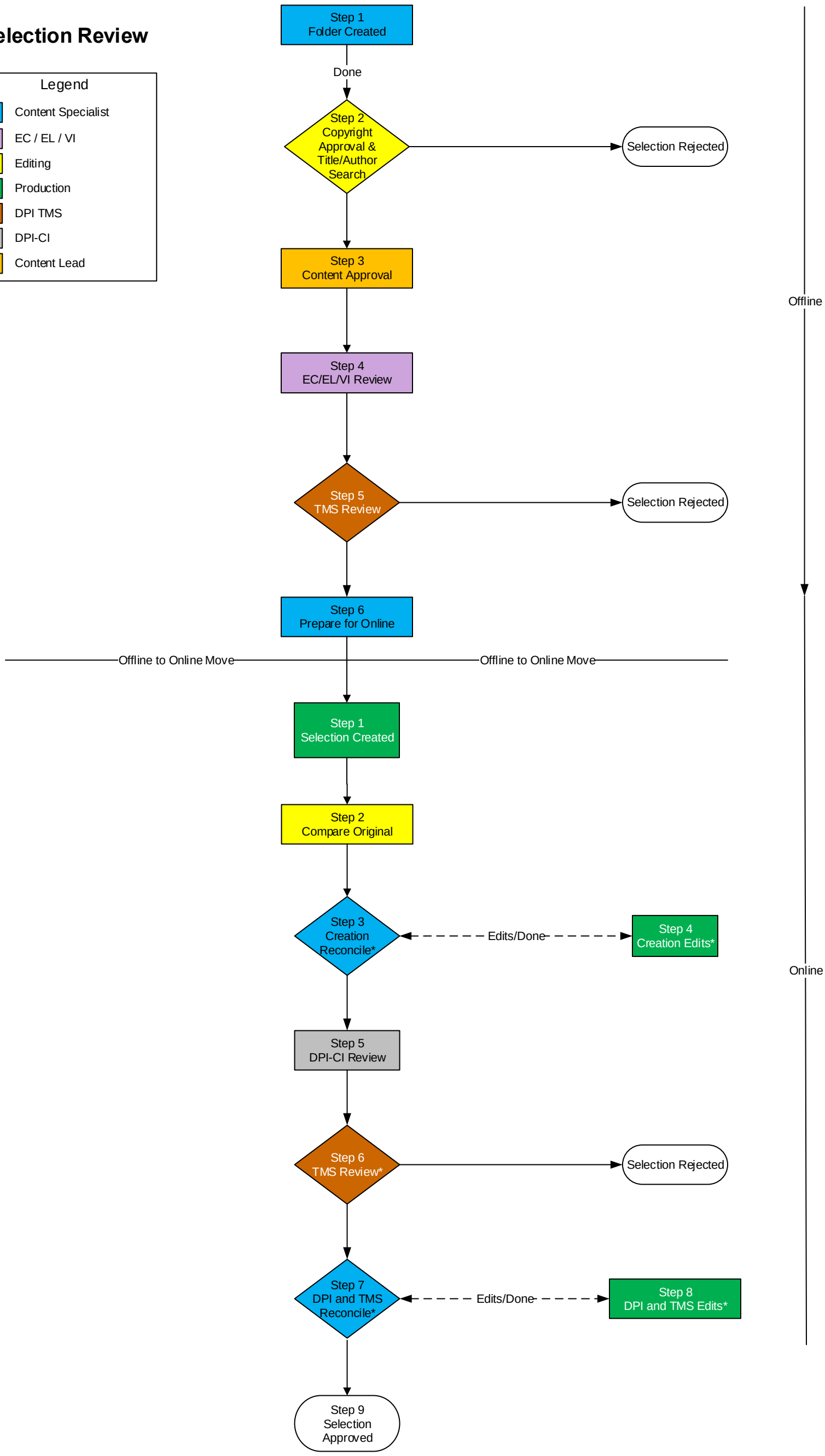


* At these Steps, Items can be moved back to any previous step or removed from the Item Pool.

Revised Tuesday, July 18, 2017

Selection Review





* At these Steps, Selections can be moved back to any previous step or removed from the Selection Pool.

Revised Tuesday, July 18, 2017 2:49:05 PM

☑ **Appendix I.** NC Check-Ins External Evaluation Report, Dr. James Bartlett

WORKING DOCUMENT

Evaluation of North Carolina Proof of Concept Implementation

James E. Bartlett, II, Ph.D.

Darren J. Masier, Ed.D.

Michelle E. Bartlett, Ph.D.

Report Submitted to the North Carolina State Board of Education

June 30th, 2016

Working Document

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Executive Summary

This project was complex with multi-layered components to evaluate. Additionally, at the time this evaluation was conducted the North Carolina Proof of Concept project was not completed. From meeting with North Carolina Department of Public Instruction staff, a number of goals for this project emerged while seeking to overall evaluate the implementation of the North Carolina Proof of Concept project to integrate through-grade testing in 5th grade Math and 6th grade English Language Arts/Reading. The project sought to document the processes that were used to implement the North Carolina Proof of Concept project for through-grade testing. Second, the project sought to examine the implementation processes and gain insight into areas that could be improved in both the short and long-term. The project sought to examine in more depth the professional development for the teachers regarding the North Carolina Proof of Concept project and specifically, provides an evaluation of training teachers received to implement the North Carolina Proof of Concept project for through-grade testing effectively. Furthermore, it was a goal to determine if other training would add value in future implementations of through-grade testing. Lastly, the project provides suggestions based on data gathered to inform short and long-term continuous improvement on the implementation of the North Carolina Proof of Concept project and through-grade testing.

Origins of Project

As a result of legislation, the Task Force on Summative Assessment provided the North Carolina State Board of Education a report in June of 2105. During the June 2015 State Board of Education meeting, a presentation of the North Carolina Proof of Concept project was conducted by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. The State Board of Education discussed the implementation of through-grade testing. Then, at the July 2015 North Carolina State Board of Education meeting, it was approved to implement the North Carolina Proof of Concept project for the 2015-16 school year. During the discussions, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction communication signaled they felt this was a highly aggressive timeline but, feasible. It was evident that pre-planning was completed for the project. All communications indicate the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction is placing this as a priority project and responded quickly after approvals to start were affirmed.

Development of Materials

Regarding the development of materials, pacing guides were at the local level, however; teachers would like more detailed pacing guides. Highly structured pacing may be a direction to examine in the future that aligns instruction with using through-grade testing. Additionally, further information could be provided to teachers on how to specifically use results to redesign their instruction. It is possible to explore pacing guides with low performing schools first. The use of highly structured pacing guides to examine the impacts on the student achievement in a through-grade testing model is a next step. Implementing this type of project could use techniques that integrate improvement

science, a continuous improvement model, to explore what type of pacing has the best results on student success.

Test Specifications

One part of the process, that is commendable, is the test specifications were developed collaboratively with North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and teachers. This type of collaborative creation with an aggressive timeline is very difficult. It is important to communicate these collaborations to teachers participating in the study, to make them aware that other teachers helped create the assessments. Finally, the interim exams were continuously developed. While this continuous development of assessments comes with challenges, it is important that continuous development occurs and focuses on the improvement of the critical outcome, raising student achievement while obtaining valid and reliable data.

Professional Development and Training

The training for the teachers had lower reaction scores and less than half rated the training as excellent. While the reaction to the training was not high, the teachers did report they learned how to implement through-grade testing and use of interim assessments to improve instruction. In addition to the learning, the teachers reported changes in behaviors. The teachers reported they explained through-grade testing to the students and used the interims to make an improvement to instruction. Additionally, they reported that they used the interim assessments to talk with parents. Finally, teachers reported they changed their instructional practices based on data from the through-grade testing.

A suggestion for the training would be to move to a hybrid/blended method that includes online and face-to-face instruction. Additionally, it is suggested that for shared concepts, items that are similar no matter what subject area the teacher specializes in, professional development of the teachers together should be provided together. Due to the differences in the specific subjects, it is important to keep separate training sessions to address concepts such as differences in pacing and instructional practices. The Math and English training materials demonstrated this in the NC Proof of Concept project. One repository would be valuable to archive and share all documents for this project. This type of repository could provide detailed labeling and makes access for the teacher quick, seamless, and easy. Information that is needed must be quick to find and easy to access if it is expected to be used.

It is suggested to train teachers with best practices on the use of interim results. This type of training can help the teacher learn to communicate better with parents. The most important part is to explore if this project can increase student achievement. It is critical to provide teachers with best practices to change instruction based on the interim results to increase student performance. Measurements, being recorded from interim results, provide areas to be examined for making improvements. Teachers report using interim assessment results for improvement and for communicating with parents, but it is not

evident currently how the teachers are using them. Determining how successful teachers are using the data from interim reports would aid in the development of best practices.

Short-Term Improvements

Short-term improvements need to 1.) Ensure teachers get training promptly to implement the North Carolina Proof of Concept in the manner suggested by North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and provide the teachers a solid understanding why through-grade testing is important in improving student achievement. 2.) Communications need to go to teachers directly and timely to ensure they get all communications. 3.) Continuously assess the quality of items and refine items. 4.) Use feedback from teachers improve the processes being used such as changes to pacing. 5.) Explore how teachers are specifically using interim results and incorporate these instructional practices as content for training. All teachers should receive training on how to use interim assessment to improve student achievement.

Long-Term Improvements

Long-term improvements must address and certify implementation in a consistent format across schools. Additionally, it is critical, at the state or local level, to provide guides to confirm teachers know how the pace matches the interim assessments. Long-term it is important to continue to gather data from teachers to improve the assessments and the process. In this gathering of data, it is also important to continue to have teachers involved in the creation of assessments and the pacing. It is also critical in the long-term to keep a positive climate toward using this for improving performance. It is possible to explore in the future methods to connect this type of assessment to performance measures of instructors. However, it is not suggested to use it as high stakes or for performance measure if it reduces the relevance for improving student success.

Suggestions for Future Directions

The following suggestions can be explored to incorporate in the next round of implementing the through-grade testing with the North Carolina Proof of Concept study. First, it is critical to make sure that all individuals in the process are provided the information needed to make the change process successful. The leaders need to work diligently to create an urgency to implement, form a coalition that supports through-grade testing, create a vision for through grade testing, communicate vision, remove obstacles, create wins, build on change, and create a culture of through-grade testing for improvement. Part of this suggestion has been initiated and will continue by implementing improved communication strategies and specific training with those goals in mind.

It is important to expand to more teachers to determine the feasibility to scale the project and develop a coalition of teachers that understand through-grade testing. It is suggested to expand into additional grades, subjects, and add additional teachers. The more

individuals with training on through-grade testing on the process and the system, the easier it will be to scale in the future.

It is important to explore the gatekeepers of information at the local level. With the use of the Internet to distribute emails and create one place to distribute data concerning the through-grade testing project it should reduce barriers. This type of communication might make it easier to ensure that all teachers have the same information. Additionally, providing everyone the information (training and communications) and asking for a variety of individuals to report in a survey how key processes are conducted would provide strength to the study. For example, if one local education agency decided to offer other benchmarks on the same subject, it would be useful to find that out and then remove their data from the study.

The reports, created for the state, local, teacher, and parent levels are detailed and provide appropriate information. The largest concern was the timing of receiving the report data. An online electronic deliver format could help with some of these issues and reduce costs. Additionally, one aspect that is lacking in the reports appears to be the visualization of data. Data visualization could be one way to strengthen the reporting. Finally, it would be useful if the data could be disaggregated to understand how students are doing by ethnicity, income level, and teachers. The disaggregation of data could provide useful feedback in the development of instruction.

It is suggested to continue collecting data in the form of feedback from the district, teachers, and parents. Additionally, it might prove useful to also get feedback from students. It is important to use the feedback gained from these people to improve the processes of through-grade testing. It is thought that while surveys are inexpensive, they might not be the best way to collect data because of the response rates. Focus groups could be a way to collect data and develop deeper understanding of the feedback. Using a process like design thinking could help to create a new model of how to conduct through-grade testing. Lastly, once changes are made based on suggestions implemented, it is critical to track the outcomes of the change to see if there is an improvement. Just because a change occurred, does not mean that there was a movement in student achievement.

It is important to explore the instructional practices and methods used by teachers with the results of the interims. Specifically, it would be valuable to understand which practices teachers are using to be successful that demonstrate an increase student learning. Collecting this information will not only create content for training to provide professional development for more teachers, but it also could be the start of creating networked improvement groups that can be used in problem-based research for improving outcomes. It is critical to examine the book *Learning to Improve: How America's Schools Can Get Better at Learning* (Bryk Gomez, Grunow, & LeMahieu, 2015).

It is also important to assess the process local schools are using to implement the Proof of Concept Study. Schools should not be doing other assessments that have potential to

impact the results. While North Carolina Department of Public Instruction provided clarity in their documents and distributed them through the appropriate traditional communication channels, it is not clear the processes are being conducted similarly. It is suggested that understanding these settings (local education agencies) could also provide a further understanding how to make an improvement. It is suggested that examining the process might create items to remove the process to make it more efficient such as possibly reducing other testing measures.

A study to explore the impact of through-grade testing on student achievement is important to understand the effectiveness of the process. Implementing a technique such as a propensity score matching (PSM) study would attempt to estimate the effect of treatment, policy, or other intervention by accounting for the covariates that predict receiving the treatment. This type of study would allow for the researcher to create statistically equivalent groups (those in the North Carolina Proof of Concept Study and those that are not) and examine the impacts on student achievement as a result of participating in through-grade testing.

Limitations

One of the limitations of this project includes the timing of the project. The project did not start gathering data until April 2016 and the completed project was needed by June 30th, 2016 to inform the State School Board on their decisions regarding through-grade testing. Part of this limitation includes that the final interim assessment and modified end-of-grade exams were not completed when the majority of this project was conducted. Another limitation of this study was that there were a tremendous amount of communications and documents to review in a short period. The project required the review of over 70 documents. Documents include initial legislation, task force reports, meeting minutes, letters, web pages, training, PowerPoints, webinars, reports, technical documents, previous surveys, and feedback after assessments. A list of representative documents is included in Appendix B. Additionally; primary data collection was conducted with interviews and an online survey

The Introduction of North Carolina Proof of Concept and Evaluation

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction is developing a through-grade assessment model. The North Carolina State Board of Education has authorized a Proof of Concept study during the 2015-16 school year to gather data to inform decisions to provide the best course of action for assessments in North Carolina. The North Carolina Proof of Concept study in English Language Arts/Reading is in grade 6 and in Math is in grade 5. There is a representative sample of schools participating in the North Carolina Proof of Concept Study with a reported target population of 3,500-4,500 students for each the English Language Arts/Reading and Math.

The through-grade testing model includes three interim assessments and one end-of-grade summative assessment. The interim assessments will be delivered three times during the academic year: October, December/January, and March. The modified end-of-grade assessment will be delivered during the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction designated testing window for end-of-grade assessments. The interim and end-of-grade assessment will be in paper-pencil format. The purpose of the interim assessments throughout the year is to inform and improve instruction. Also, a long-term goal is to use the interim assessments to help predict performance on future assessments during the same academic year. At the end of the 2015-2016 school year, students in the sample will take a shortened end-of-grade assessment.

The teachers sampled to participate in the study received professional development to prepare for participation in the North Carolina Proof of Concept project. The professional development was delivered face-to-face and online. The first year of the North Carolina Proof of Concept ended in June of 2016.

Methods to Conduct Evaluation

During the first step in conducting an evaluation, it was important to identify the purpose. Next, it was important to identify who will use the evaluation and how they will use it. It was identified that the primary user of the evaluation would be the North Carolina State Board of Education to make decisions on how to proceed with through-grade testing. A second group that will use the results of this evaluation will be the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction will use the results from the evaluation to make short and long-term improvements. Others that may use the results of this evaluation will be teachers, school boards, administrators, and local education agencies. These individuals will use the results from this evaluation to inform practice, make decisions, and improve student success.

Sources of data for the project were identified and included primary data collected from interviews with North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and primary data collected from online surveys with teachers that participated in the North Carolina Proof of Concepts. Secondary data was gathered from the North Carolina Department of Public

Instruction that included websites, documents (memos, test development, Assessment Brief, Talking Points, test administration resources, reporting documents/samples of interim reports, parent letters, Proof of Concept FA, PowerPoints about the Proof of Concept, survey results from participating teachers, district coordinators, curriculum leaders, instructional leaders, and parents, observation from interim test administrations, key North Carolina Department of Public Instruction personnel, professional development materials, Proof of Concept interim assessment training guide, access to online training materials, names and emails of teachers, and participation communication list. Additionally, data was gathered from other online sources that discussed the North Carolina Proof of Concept project.

All of the documents were reviewed, and data was processed. Appropriate data was analyzed and interpreted to determine what was learned from the process. A wide variety of quantitative and qualitative methods were used to analyze the data. Limitations of the project were identified.

Initial Goals of Evaluation

This specific evaluation initially sought to:

1. Document the processes used to implement a through-grade testing model for math and English Language Arts/Reading.
2. Provide an evaluation of the training process that was developed for teachers to implement a through-grade testing model successfully. Issues include:
    a. Comprehensively examine and evaluate the training that has occurred including objectives and content;
    b. Examine the delivery methods of the training that have occurred;
    c. Assess the teachers' perceptions of the goals of training and though-grade testing.
    d. Assess if and how the training has impacted teachers behaviors in the classroom
    e. Assess teachers' perceived needed training to implement though-grade testing successfully.
    f. Provide suggested areas to offer training to support the successful implementation of through-grade testing.
    g. Provide methods and suggestions to improve training for through-grade testing continuously.
3. Provide an evaluation of the processes that were used by North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and teachers to implement a through-grade testing model. Issues include:
    a. Determine processes teachers used to implement the through-grade testing
    b. Via interviews, assess processes North Carolina Department of Public Instruction used to implement the through-grade testing
    c. Solicit, from teachers, ideas to improve processes used in the implementation
    d. Solicit, from North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, ideas to

improve processes used in the implementation

   e. Provide methods to assess processes and suggestions to improve the processes used by teachers and North Carolina Department of Public Instruction to implement a through-grade testing model.

4. Provide an evaluation of the processes used in scoring, reporting, and accountability for implementing a through-grade testing model. Issues include:
   a. Describe the process of scoring the through-grade testing.
   b. Describe the process of reporting results of the through-grade testing.
   c. Describe the process of using results for accountability of the through-grade testing.
   d. Provide methods to assess processes and suggestions to improve the processes for scoring, reporting, and accountability for the implementation of a through-grade testing model.

5. How can we use the information learned on the short-term to inform the continuous improvement process for implementing through-grade testing?
   a. What are short-term areas that could be improved upon in through-grade testing?
   b. Provide methods and suggestions to continuous improvement methods that could be used to institutionalize continuous improvement to make long-term improvements.

6. How can a long-term continuous improvement process approach be used to improve though-grade testing for areas such as the assessments, communication, and training be built? These issues include:
   a. Provide a visual of the process to implement through-grade testing
   b. Develop a continuous improvement plan for implementing and sustaining through-grade testing.
   c. Develop measurements and assessment methods to gather data for future continuous improvement efforts for through-grade testing.
   d. Suggest areas to measure for continuous improvement for through-grade testing.

7. Plan to meet with appropriate members of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction North Carolina Proof of Concept team to debrief on the report to implement the continuous improvement processes. It is anticipated that quarterly meetings will continue, with additional communications via email, telephone/conference call, and/or face-to-face meetings if needed during the project.

8. Serve as a North Carolina Technical Advisor with anticipated meetings required at least two times a year and scheduled telephone conference calls that involve the advisors or the SBE.

Processes in Implementation North Carolina Proof of Concept/Through-grade Testing Model

As a result of 2014-78 (Senate Bill 812), Section 5, "The State Board of Education shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by July 15, 2015, on the acquisition and implementation of a new assessment instrument or instruments to assess student achievement on the academic standards adopted pursuant to G.S. §115C-12(9c). The State Board shall not acquire or implement the assessment instrument or instruments without the enactment of legislation by the General Assembly authorizing the purchase. The assessment instrument or instruments shall be nationally normed, aligned with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, and field tested. Examples of appropriate assessment models would include, but not be limited to, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), ACT Aspire, and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)" a Report on Assessments conducted.

Task Force on Summative Assessment

In June of 2015, The Task Force on Summative Assessment submitted a Report to the North Carolina State Board of Education entitled Assessment Recommendations. This Task Force included "individuals with diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences with public education and the community." The Task Force recommended, "Implement a proof of concept (POC) study to determine whether the through-course assessment model is technically sound and operationally feasible. The data resulting from these assessments will inform teachers as they reflect critically on their instructional practices and adjust their strategies accordingly. Also, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction will study these data giving special attention to reporting requirements outlined in state and federal laws. Participating school districts will administer both the through-course assessments and a modified (shorter) EOG test during 2015–16. The study will include fifth grade mathematics and sixth grade ELA/Reading." Then it suggested in the 2016-17 school year to expand the North Carolina Proof of Concept to grades 3-8. The Task Force then stated that in the 2017-18 school year, "depending on State Board approval, administer a new student assessment program." Specifically, during the 2017-18 school year, it was suggested to administer the new through-grade testing to grades 3rd to 8th and "Ensure assessments provide information on student performance in a manner that will impact instructional decisions."

Presentation and Discussion of North Carolina Proof of Concept/Through Grade Testing Model at June Board Meetings 2015

At the June 2015 State Board of Education Meeting, the State Board of Education was presented the North Carolina Proof of Concept information that was submitted for discussion by Dr. Rebecca Garland (Deputy State Superintendent, Office of the Deputy State Superintendent) and Dr. Tammy Howard (Director, Accountability Services). At the June State Board of Education Meeting, the Department of Public Instruction presented a proposed Proof of Concept study for the 2015-16 school year to implement a through-grade testing model. It was stated that the study would provide data on the

feasibility of administering interim assessments rather than one end-of-grade summative assessment. The through-grade testing model provides a design that optimizes student-level data throughout the school year for teachers. This model will attempt to provide teachers valid information to adjust instruction for the purpose of increasing student achievement.

GCS Committee Chair Eric Davis recognized Dr. Tammy Howard for additional staff comments such as the importance of the communication plan and recognized the ambitious timeline. The discussion by a board member stated that hopefully, the outcome would be one that will be conducive to providing accurate results and making parents and schools less stressed as it relates to the process. One board member agreed that talking points are important to ensure that everyone is relaying the same message, and appreciated the suggestion by Dr. Atkinson about monthly status updates during the study year. Chair Davis made the commitment to have a monthly discussion.

According to Dr. Atkinson, local education agencies will be sampled for the Proof of Concept in a way from which to draw conclusions for the rest of the state and the Department has already done the work to determine the random sample of local education agencies that will participate in the Proof of Concept study. Also, she noted that there are State Board of Education policies in place requiring school districts to participate in any Proof of Concept study or field test. It was noted some local education agencies that have volunteered to be a part of the process, and the Department can accommodate those requests; however, the Department will need to be careful not to mix their data with the data from the statistically drawn sample.

Dr. Howard noted that this is a school-level sample, not a district sample. She also noted that sampling draws upon Grade 5 for Math, and a separate sample will be conducted for Grade 6 for English Language Arts/Reading. Dr. Atkinson reported that the Department is planning a webinar for those involved in the study, and all Board members are welcome to participate in that webinar. The discussion further included details on the design of the study, which includes three independent assessments to measure content. Dr. Atkinson suggested the Proof of Concept using the already developed test item banks and North Carolina Department of Public Instructions own assessments for the Proof of Concept. Dr. Howard added that one of the key elements is to be able to draw conclusions between the through-grade assessments and the end-of-grade assessments; therefore, in the study year, it is helpful to have the same source for those assessment items. According to Dr. Howard, it is cost effective to use the very robust item bank we already have because the items are aligned to the same content standards, have the same level of difficulty, and enable us to build assessments that have the potential ultimately to provide relevant data for those teachers as they plan their instruction for the year. Dr. Oxendine shared that one of the byproducts from the Proof of Concept study year is the ability to dissect and break apart those standards for a content area and grade, and to assess them over the entire year. She added that whether we maintain or revise the Common Core State Standards, we would gain knowledge that will apply to any set of standards. At this time it was discussed that the stand-alone summative assessment at the end of the year that may be connected to the interim assessments. Dr. Howard briefly

elaborated on the reason that the word "may" is being used because that is the purpose of the study, and we are not sure that we will accomplish that goal. At the conclusion of the study year, perhaps that verb can be changed, according to Dr. Howard.

Presentation and Discussion of North Carolina Proof of Concept/Through Grade Testing Model at June and July Board Meetings 2015

At the July 2015 meeting the North Carolina Proof of Concept was it was discussed as "III. D. 1. b. GCS 6 - North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Proof of Concept Study" in more detail. Upon motion by Mr. Eric Davis, and seconded by Dr. Olivia Oxendine, the State Board of Education voted unanimously to approve the Proof of Concept Study as presented (See Attachment GCS 6) (in Appendix A). The State School Board at the July 2015 meeting gave the approval to implement the Proof of Concept study during the 2015-16 academic year for Grade 5 Math and Grade 6 ELA/Reading. The implementation of the Proof of Concept study was to "Determine feasibility of Proof of Concept" during the 2015-16 academic year for Grade 5 Math and Grade 6 ELA/Reading.

Implementation of North Carolina Proof of Concept Steps and Processes

Some processes were identified as critical to implementing the North Carolina Proof of Concept. The timeline to administer the North Carolina Proof of Concept was viewed as highly aggressive and started even before the final board approval at the July 2015 meeting. Since processes were not conducted in a totally linear manner, they will be presented by type.

Communications

The communications for this project included documents that were distributed to teachers, local education agencies, administrators, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, State Education Board, and school boards. The communications included descriptions about the participation in the Proof of Concept project, descriptions of the project, and professional development. In additional to make certain common messages were communicated Proof of Concept Talking Points were created for the State Board of Education, Regional Accountability Coordinators, Principals, and Teachers. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction also created Assessment Briefs. One brief provides an overview of the Grade 5 Mathematics project; one brief provides an overview of the Grade 6 English Language Arts/Reading project, and a third brief provides an overview of Interim Assessment Reporting. In addition to these communications, monthly, there were communications with the State Board of Education that included a number of PowerPoint presentations. The monthly reports appeared to update the State Board of Education on the project and provide information to inform future decisions.

Development of Assessments

The first release of test specifications occurred on July 21st, 2015, but the documents remained "DRAFT" until the blueprint for interim assessment three was finalized on December 18th, 2015. The specification documents (specifically the assessed standards and Lexile range for selections) were updated and communicated as decisions were made throughout the summer and fall. On August 5th, 2015, test specifications were shared with the State Board of Education. The documents were posted on the State Board of Education e-board for the public. The test specifications for the other interims were developed throughout the academic year. It is important to stress that the development occurred early and continued throughout the project.

Training of Teachers

On August 4th, 7th, and 11th, 2015, math professional development meetings were conducted by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction/Curriculum and Instruction math team with participating teachers. The standards being assessed were discussed in these professional development sessions. The sessions were conducted face-to-face. It was stated that due to the nature of the math subject and content a face-to-face training was desired and due to the spiraling nature of the English Language Arts/Reading online training sessions were desired. August 19th and 20th, 2015 and October 22nd, 2015, ELA/reading professional development meetings, conducted by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction/Curriculum and Instruction ELA team. The English Language Arts/Readings session were done online with participating teachers. The standards being assessed were discussed. Conceptualizing the Data webinar. Note: The webinar was repeated on October 29th, 2015.

Distribution of Information

August 2015, November 2015, December 2015, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction/Curriculum and Instruction teams for ELA and math posted the assessed standards at http://maccss.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/Proof+of+Concept+Study.

October 16th, 2015, a message was posted on the Testing News Network that the Proof of Concept Interim Assessments-Specification Information were updated. The assessment specification documents typically outline the purpose of the assessment, the structure of the assessment (e.g., item types, the number of items, test sections, test administration time), and percent of items or score points measuring a specific goal or domain category.

Information was added to the specification information document based on feedback from the October 15th, 2015, Proof of Concept.

Grade 5 Math Specification Information:

- Point value for each item was added. Each item is worth 1 point.
- An error in the number of numbered items chart was corrected.

- Information was added to the scoring and reporting section.
- The teacher access to test books section was added.

Grade 6 ELA/Reading Specification Information:

- Point value for each item type and the total number points.
- Approximate Lexile ranges for the informational and literature selections.
- Assessed standard for the short-answer constructed response item was added.
- Information was added to the scoring and reporting section.
- The teacher access to test books section was added.

This description of changes made shows that continuous improvement and development was occurring in the current process. Additionally, the numerous posts to pages show an effort to continuously communicate with those participating in the project.

With the aggressive timeline for developing all part of this project, the distribution of information was done as promptly, as possible. It was noted by some that the promptness of communication was not at the level desired, but there was awareness of the issue. It was noted that it was not always easy to find all the information because of the numerous places it was stored and the number of people sharing information on the project.

Development of Interim Reports

The development of reports was done to communicate with schools, teachers, and parents. There were state level reports, teacher item level reports, subscore reports, and parent reports. The reports included detail information that was appropriate for the audience that was being communicated with and provided details that could be used to provide data to inform instruction. The Math and English Language Arts/Reading were only slightly different based on the types of items being reported and the structure of the Math and English Language Arts/Reading content and standards. Different Mathematic standards are assessed on each Interim and the same standards with increasing difficulty are assessed on each of the English Language Arts/Reading Interims.

Proof of Concept Study Teachers Guide

Two teacher guides (English Language Arts/Reading and Math) were created for the Proof of Concept Study. Teachers were provided thoroughly developed Proof of Study Teacher's Guide. The Math and English Language Arts/Reading guides included an overview of the project, accommodations, interim assessment security, interim assessment irregularities, student instructions, procedures after the assessment, sample interim answer sheet, transcribing gridded responses, sample review of accommodations form, resources, information and feedback, and a code of ethics for testing. Specific resources are described in the guide (e.g., assessment specification documents, frequently asked questions, presentations, and memos) and the teachers were provided details how to access them through North Carolina Education at https://center.ncsu.edu/ncaccount/. If you do not have a North Carolina Education account, click "Create new account" on the

login page. Additional materials from the Mathematics Proof of Concept Study professional development meetings were also provided, and this was another way to communicate to the teachers of the availability of materials. This document stated resources "are available on the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Mathematics Wiki at http://maccss.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/Home." The English Language Arts/Reading document stated "Materials from the English Language Arts/Reading Proof of Concept Study professional development webinars are available at www.edmodo.com. Participants will need to create a free account (if they do not already have one) and enter the code, 2d93zp, to join the group. The "Join a Group" button is on the left side of the home screen." To help make sure this information was communicated to the teachers, a Proof of Concept Interim Assessment Guide Training was created.

Proof of Concept Interim Assessment Guide Training

The Proof of Concept Interim Assessment Guide Training provided details on the format of the tests. It provided specific information for the Grade 5 Mathematics and Grade 6 English Language Arts/Reading. The document provided details about the format of the test. The training also explained which students were eligible. The guide provides a specific window of dates for the interims that included October 1st – 30th, 2015 for Interim 1, December 8th to January 22nd, 2016 for Interim 2, and March 3rd – 31st, 2016 for Interim 3. The guide provided highly detailed information to make sure the tests were administered in a similar manner. The guide provided specifics about the assessment schedule. Guidance on make-up assessments was provided. The specific amount of time and number of items was described. The processes at the time of collecting and processing interim tests were then described. The interims assessment materials were described. Accommodations and the review of the accommodations used during the testing form were discussed. The interim assessment security was covered. A copy of the testing code of ethics was included. The interim assessment administrators were described, and it was stated proctors were not to be used. The Interim assessment environment was described. Student emergencies and restroom breaks were discussed. The process for interim assessment irregularities was covered. Student instructions were presented. The method to record students' provided and used accommodations were presented. Coding of the answer sheets was discussed. The absent from make-up situation was discussed. Special codes for answer sheets were presented. The reviewing of the interim materials was highlighted. The action needed to obtain scoring of assessments was described. The document was detailed and aligned with the Proof of Concept Study Teachers guides.

Interim Assessments Executed and Modified End-of-Grade Assessment

The interim assessments were conducted at the three times as planned throughout the year. Interim 1 was conducted October 1st – 30th, 2015, Interim 2 was conducted, December 8th to January 22nd, 2016, and Interim 2 was conducted March 3rd – 31st, 2016. Data was collected from teachers after each of the 3 Interims. Data was collected from the district testing coordinators after Interim 1 and 3. Administration observation was collected during Interim Assessment 1, 2, and 3. The Modified EOG was conducted at

the same time as the traditional EOG. After Interim assessments, data was collected to get feedback.

Reporting of Interim Results

The Interim results were reported after the assessments. It was stated that the local education agency test coordinator should return reports to the teachers within five school days. It was requested that the individual reports be communicated to parents within 30 days. The teachers' feedback did not support that this timeline was followed at the local level all the time.

Perceptions Toward Implement North Carolina Proof of Concept/Through-grade Testing Model

Teachers Survey Results on Training and Proof of Concept Project

A total of 214 e-mail addresses for the teachers that participated in the North Carolina Proof of Concept Project is the frame for this survey. Of the 214 emails, it was reported that 141 (65.9%) of the e-mails were opened by the teachers. Of the 214 emails, 113 (53.2%) of the teachers responded. Miller and Smith (1983) suggest that comparing early and late respondents as a method to examine non-response bias. This technique helps to provide evidence that those that responded are similar to those that did not respond. To assess for non-response bias the early respondents (those that responded during first round, 5/18/2016) and the late respondents (those that responded during the third round, 5/24/2016) were compared on the overall perceptions to North Carolina Proof of Concept, reactions to training, learning as a result of training, behaviors as a result of North Carolina Proof of Concept, and teachers perceptions of improved students outcomes. In all areas, there were no statistically significant differences in early and late respondents. For the rest of the analysis, all of the respondents were included, and non-response bias should not be a concern.

Of the 113 respondents, 112 reported if they were 5th Grade Math or 6th Grade English Language Arts/Reading. Of the 112 respondents, 61.6% (n=69) were Math 38.4% (n=43) were English Language Arts/Reading. There were no statistically significant differences on any items when comparing the two groups. With no differences existing all respondents were combined for the data analysis.

An exploratory factor analysis (Appendix A) was conducted to examine the validity of the constructs that were being assessed about the North Carolina Proof of Concept Project and Training. A total of 36 items were used to collect data from the teachers. The items were part of five constructs. The constructs that were measured were teachers' perceptions toward the proof of concept / though-grade testing, teachers' reaction to training, teachers perception of learning as a result of training, teachers perceived behavior changes as a result of training, and teachers perceptions of improved student learning. The factor analysis revealed the 5 factors based on the 36 items. Factor

loadings were all statically significant, and all reliabilities were about .70 which is considered a standard to assess reliability. Factor 1, teachers' perceptions toward the proof of concept / though-grade testing, had factor loading ranging from .871 to .547. The reliability of factor 1 was .913. Factor 2, teachers learning from on training for proof of concept / though-grade testing, factor loading ranging from .871 to .547. The reliability of factor 2 is .913. Factor 3, reaction to training for the proof of concept / though-grade testing, teachers' reaction to training had loading ranging from .799 to .650. The reliability of Factor 3 was .955. Factor 4, teachers' perceptions toward changes in behavior based on the proof of concept training and though-grade testing, had factor loading ranging from .770 to .368. The reliability for factor 4 was .900. Factor 5, teachers' perceptions toward improved student learning, had factor loading from .663 to .526. The reliability of factor 5 was .904. These results provide evidence of the validity and reliability of the instrument used in the assessment.

Perceptions toward Proof of Concept

When examining how the teachers viewed the North Carolina Proof of Concept and training, a 5-point scale was used to rate all scaled items that included strongly agree (5), agree (4), neural (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1).

In examining the teachers' perceptions to the North Carolina Proof of Concept / through-grade testing, the highest rated item was "that through-grade testing provides more useful data than one summative test" (M=4.18, SD=.99). Of the teachers, 82.4% either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement. Additionally, 82.4% of the teachers strongly agreed or agreed with the statement "The project provides data to make evidence-based instructional decisions" (M=4.07, SD=.87). Both of these statements address the use of data by the teachers.

The next 6 statements range from (M=3.92 to M=3.75) that can be interpreted as the teachers on average agree with the statements. The statements that were agreed with on average were "If implement correctly, through-grade testing can improve learning" (M=3.92, SD=.95), "others would be willing to implement through-grade testing if they understand the benefits" (M=3.89, SD=.96), "I feel I can be more successful with data provided from the through-grade testing" (M=3.87, SD=1.11), "I would implement through-grade testing even if it was not required" (M=3.79, SD=1.04), and "Through-grade testing is an improvement model that can be easily implemented" (M=3.75, SD=1.11).

The teachers, are on average, neutral to the statements "all stakeholders will see the value of through-grade testing" (M=3.5, SD=1.07), "the quality of the educational process has increased" (M=3.5, SD=1.09), and "through-grade testing makes my job teaching easier" (M=3.44, SD=1.22).

Evaluation of Training to Implement North Carolina Proof of Concept/Through-grade Testing Model

The evaluation of the training included a description of the training, examination of the delivery methods, teachers' reaction to the training, impacts on behaviors, and perceived need for additional training.

Description of Trainings

The training was offered in multiple delivery methods based on the subject area. The Math training occurred face-to-face in three separate locations across the state of North Carolina. Teachers attended one of the three days of training. The English Language Arts/Reading training was done in three separate days with online sessions and teachers attended all of the sessions.

A session was provided on July 27th, 2015 that provided an overview of the Proof of Concept project that described the project. Additionally, this July training provided details for when the English Language Arts/Reading and Math would be conducted and some of the content that would be discussed. A similar training session was held on August 18th, 2015. This session provided an overview the project and a description of the training that would be provided. However, this was not done during the academic year because of the aggressive timeline and might have been missed by some of the teachers.

The English Language Arts/Reading training was provided in three online sessions and third follow-up in October. The first online session, Part One: Standards Study − included resources for understanding, expectations for students, progression, integrating the strands was on August 19th, 2015, from 3:00–4:00 p.m. The second online session, Part Two: Text Complexity − included how it should be considered within the instruction, scaffolding, and determining the complexity of a text that was held on August 20th, 2015, from 3:00–4:00 p.m. The third instructional support series was held on October 22nd, 2015 from 3:00-4:00 p.m.

The Math training was provided face-to-face in three locations including an east, central, and west location. The east training sessions was on August 4th, 2015 at the Hilton Hotel, Greenville from 10:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m. The central training session was on August 7th, 2015, at the Embassy Suites, Greensboro from 10:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m. The west session was on August 11th, 2015, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Hickory from 10:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m. An additional math online session was held in October of 2015.

In addition to the training that was online or face-to-face, there were web resources set up in different environments. The Math resources from the training were available on the DPI Mathematics Wiki: http://maccss.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/Home. The English Language Arts/Reading participants had an Edmodo site set up for distributing materials and support the North Carolina Proof of Concept project.

The Accountability webinar held on October 15th, 2015, and again on October 29th, 2015, was for the role of conceptualizing data. The desired outcomes for the session were: What role do interim/through-grade assessments play in a Balanced Assessment System?, How are interim/through-grade assessments different from formative assessment?, What

data will teachers have following each interim/through-grade assessment?, and How can this data be used to inform instruction and supports for students?

Examination of Delivery Methods

The participants in the Math and the English Language Arts/Reading groups did not view the training differently. The teachers were asked, "The delivery method (online or face-to-face) I received training in was appropriate." Of the respondents, 67.7% either strongly agreed or agreed with this statement. About 6.9% disagreed with the statement, and 25.5% were neutral. This data from these statements is interpreted as the majority of the Math participants felt the face-to-face training was appropriate, and the majority of the English Language Arts/Reading participants felt the online method of delivering training was appropriate. During this implementation deliver methods were enhanced by supplemental resources available online. The online repository for the Math group was a Wiki. The repository for the English Language Arts/Reading materials was Edmodo.

Objectives of Training

The purpose of the English Language Arts/Reading described their training as an instructional support series. The first online training described as "Our purpose today and ELA Section's role in the Proof of Concept Study is to provide the participating teachers with instructional support." The purpose of Part Two of the instructional support series for the Proof of Concept Study training was for exploring text complexity and review access to the Edmodo web page.

Assess the Teachers' Reactions to Training and Though-Grade Testing

The teachers agreed that the training sessions accommodated their personal learning style (M=3.63, SD=.83). However, 34.3% were either neutral, and 7.84% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. The teachers agree (M=3.60, SD=.94) "The training was provided promptly to help me understand the North Carolina Proof of Concept project." However, of the teachers, 13.7% either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement and 24.5% were neutral.

The teachers on average agreed on average that "The training was valuable" (M=3.59, SD=94), "The training was worth my time" (M=3.58, SD=94), and I would suggest others to take this training" (M=3.55, SD=96). Overall the teachers had a neutral reaction to "Overall, I would rate the training as excellent" (M=3.44, SD=.97). Only 48.0% of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed "Overall, I would rate the training as excellent."

The teachers' reaction to the training was grouped more around individuals agreeing to statements rather than strongly agreeing. When rating the training overall only 48.0% of the participants strongly agreed or agreed that they "would rate the training as excellent." Of those that responded, 52.0% were either neutral, disagreed, or strongly disagree with the statement. It can be concluded that the majority of the participants did not perceive the training as excellent.

Training and North Carolina Proof Of Concept Impacted Teachers Behaviors in the Classroom

Of the teachers, over 70% either strongly agreed or agreed with the statements "I have explained the process of though-grade testing to students" (M=3.99, SD=.87), "I look to the interim assessments to improve instruction" (M=3.95, SD=.89), "I communicate with parents on interim assessment results" (M=3.88, SD=.86), and "I pace instruction based on test specifications" (M=3.80, SD=3.80). Over 60% of the teachers either strongly agreed or agreed that "I changed my instructional practices" (M=3.80, SD=.91), "I discussed with other teachers the importance of through-grade testing" (M=3.65, SD=.95), and "I explained to parents through-grade testing" (M=3.53, SD=.98). Of the teachers, 15.5% either disagreed or strongly disagreed "I changed instructional practices." It can be concluded the teachers perceived the project has impacted their behaviors and there has been transfer to the workplace setting.

Teachers' Perceived Needed Training to Successfully Implement Though-Grade Testing

There was a total of 61 teachers that responded to an open-ended question that asked teachers to "Please list any specific training you feel would assist you in implementing the North Carolina Proof of Concept projected." Of the teachers, 15 (24.6 %) responded that either it was appropriate, or there was not other training that was needed. Additionally, a few of the teachers responded that they did not get to receive the training, for example, one stated "I was not trained at all because I was the writing teacher and not the reading teacher – who administered the test" and another one stated "I did not receive any training. I think some training would have been great because I felt lost through this whole process and there was miscommunication about how it would be administered." Another teacher stated that "My testing coordinator informed us she went to training" and then shared what the teachers were going to be doing. Another teacher said "We just met with our principal and went over the guidelines and instructions" and "if this becomes implemented as our new testing practice then there needs to be more involved in training all teachers."

The teachers comments to provide an insight into what training is still needed can be viewed from the perspective of the knowledge about the process and testing, how to use results, the content of the tests, communications, teaching and learning, and continuous training.

Knowledge about the Process and Testing

The teachers reported it would be important to learn more about the through-grade testing model and why it is being done. It would be helpful to have training to "Provide students with a better understanding of the North Carolina Proof of Concept project." Other teachers stated that it would be helpful to have training in different formats that best meet multiple learning styles. Specifically, one person stated that "Additional face-to-face contact with the other teachers after the first Proof of Concept test would have been

helpful" to share information about how the testing process went from their experience.

How to use Data

Some teachers, made up of both Math and English backgrounds, reported that it would be helpful to understand better how to use the data they are being provided. One possible type of training could provide a clear understanding of the "Best practices on how to use the data and review a post-assessment" and "how to use student data from the test." It is important once this is implemented that the through-grade testing is not just being conducted, but the results are being used in an effective manner to improve student success.

Content of Test

The content of the test was an area some individuals provided input on, and it was suggested that pacing guides be shared or that local pacing guides be created. Additionally, teachers want to have a "Clearer understanding of concepts being assessed…they don't align with our maps." It is critical that there is open communication about these concepts being assessed, and everyone is on a similar page. It is not useful to do through-grade testing if one does not know the order of the standards being assessed. Professional development that helps teachers to "Know the order of the tested standards would be beneficial to plan instruction" and is a key part of having through-grade testing be effective.

Communications

While the training for teachers might help communications, it is important that those communicating to the teachers understand the best methods to provide "Clear communication in a timely manner." The use of new communication tools could help with these issues. Additionally, it was stated that some "Face-to-face training" is desired. Another area that was important was how the teacher communicates results with the parents. One teacher noted a specific concern for wanting to learn more about "How to communicate the importance to the parents" and this was also noted, as an issue when teachers were asked what would help make implementation better. This communication would also require the teachers to understand the importance of the through-grade testing.

Continuous Training

Training for a major initiative such as through-grade testing is not a one-time session. It is critical that teachers are provided "Continued updates on any changes made to the process or the assessment." This type of change is going to require continuous training. The teachers were concerned about the process being conducted as required and even stated "Each of those teachings and implementing the Proof of Concept project should be continuously trained."

Teaching and Learning Techniques

The area that was most highly sought after for training was teaching and learning techniques that relate to the through-grade testing. The teachers were interested in learning how to help a student with testing, for example, provide training to help teachers on "Specific problem solving interventions for students struggling with problem solving in general due to reading level and comprehension." In the specific area, it was requested that professional development address topics such as "Common core instructional modules for math" and instructional resources be developed on concepts being assessed on Proof of Concept such as "specifically, combined volume. Another suggested that "I would like more examples of word problems, sample test questions" to understand better how the process works. In other areas, it was requested to learn more about "Scaffold educational objectives that will be the focus of testing so instruction can match." Further, it was desired to learn what strategies can be used effectively with the data. Lastly, others continued to look to get professional development on "training on strategies that will help students in assessments such as test-taking, reading, or vocabulary."

Evaluation of the Processes Used to Implement North Carolina Proof of Concept/Through-grade Testing Model

There were many steps in the process used to implement the North Carolina Proof of Concept and through-grade testing module. The process implementation was conducted on an aggressive time frame. The process started from the work of a Task Force on Assessments that included a diverse group of individuals with a variety of backgrounds. The specific North Carolina Proof of Concept project included the involvement of leadership at North Carolina DPI, specific content experts from DPI, DPI assessment experts. At the local education agencies, testing coordinators, principals, superintendents, and teachers were part of the process. Additionally, students and parents were part of the implementation process.

When examining the steps in the processes, specific steps in the processes were identified as areas that raised concerns. Those areas will be discussed regarding the pre-implementation, communications, design of North Carolina Proof of Concept study, development of the North Carolina Proof of Concept assessment materials, the training for teachers, the assessment and reporting of interims, post-interim uses, and communication with stakeholders.

Pre-implementation

Before implementation of the project, communications were conducted in some formats that display the urgency and commitment to this project. Dr. Atkinson communicated to her staff before final approval of the project to make sure an aggressive timeline could be adhered to for this project to be a success. At this point, samples of teachers were drawn, and staff started planning. As soon as approval was provided, appropriate presentations were made that described the North Carolina Proof of Concept project. Dr. Atkinson created a sense of urgency for the project and described why it was important. Additionally, other top leadership at DPI communicated the same message. A number of other stakeholders, one such example was the North Carolina School Boards Association

July 31st , 2015, posting, provided details concerning the project on websites. This area demonstrated strong commitment to pre-planning.

Communications

Webinars were conducted in addition to other forms of communication with the local education agencies. Appropriate letters were provided that demonstrated that DPI did communicate with the local education agencies promptly and provided information about the project to share with their stakeholders. These communications described the project, provided timelines for the project, and timeline for the training.

Talking Points for principals and teachers were created in September 2015 by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. The talking points provided both the principals and teachers with common information to communicate about the project. Additionally, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program created an Assessment Brief North Carolina Proof of Concept Study grade 5 Mathematics and grade 6 English Language Arts/Reading. This brief was available on the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction) Accountability web site, www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing. The department of public instruction continued to update stakeholders by posting information about the project in a number of outlets. One example was the November 2015 - North Carolina Public Schools Partners Newsletter that describes the project and the full information can be found at https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/NCSBE/bulletins/126ced1.

Initial and brief searches on the Internet demonstrated that the information on the North Carolina Proof of Concept was presented at school board meetings and discussed in public forms. In a majority of the documents, that were located, a consistent message about the project was communicated.

Two teacher guides (English Language Arts/Reading and Math) were created for the Proof of Concept Study. Teachers were provided thoroughly developed Proof of Study Teacher's Guides. These guides provided highly detailed instructions. It does appear in some instances the guides were not adhered to closely at the local level.

The Math and English Language Arts/Reading guides included an overview of the project, accommodations, interim assessment security, interim assessment irregularities, student instructions, procedures after the assessment, sample interim answer sheet, transcribing gridded responses, sample review of accommodations form, resources, information and feedback, and a code of ethics for testing. Specific resources were described (e.g., assessment specification documents, frequently asked questions, presentations, and memos) and teachers were provided details how to access them through North Carolina Education at https://center.ncsu.edu/ncaccount/. If you do not have a North Carolina Education account, click "Create new account" on the login page. Additional materials from the Mathematics Proof of Concept Study professional development meetings were also provided, and this was another way to communicate to

the teachers of their availability. This document stated resources "are available on the NCDPI Mathematics Wiki at http://maccss.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/Home." The English Language Arts/Reading document stated "Materials from the English Language Arts/Reading Proof of Concept Study professional development webinars are available at www.edmodo.com. Participants will need to create a free account (if they do not already have one) and enter the code, 2d93zp, to join the group. The "Join a Group" button is on the left side of the home screen."

Additionally, the document communicated "The NCDPI is committed to providing information and support directly to participating teachers. Additional information about the Proof of Concept interim assessments (e.g., assessment specification documents, frequently asked questions, presentations, and memos) may be accessed through North Carolina Education at https://center.ncsu.edu/ncaccount/. If you do not have a North Carolina Education account, click "Create new account" on the login page."

Finally, this document communicated clearly that "Participating teachers will be asked to provide feedback following each interim assessment administration. Topics will include item and selection reviews, test time (e.g., approximately how many minutes did 50 percent of your class take to complete the assessment), assessed standards, test window, administration, professional development needs, supplemental materials, review of the reports, etc. This feedback will be incorporated into decision making, planning, and test development of any future interim assessments." This demonstrates a collaborative culture that helps support implementation.

There appeared to be a break down in some of the communications between the local education agency and the teachers. North Carolina Department of Public Instruction developed a number of materials to enable the project to communicate with critical and appropriate stakeholders. It was evident that many of these materials were used effectively and were distributed widely.

Design of North Carolina Proof of Concept Study

The North Carolina Proof of Concept study was described in the documents provided. The sample appeared to be drawn in a random manner. The sample size appears to be appropriate to determine the feasibility of the process. It was described that North Carolina Department of Public Instruction was aware that if schools volunteered it would be important to keep that data separated to ensure the quality of the project. There was evidence that the design place value on creating a project that provided valid and reliability data.

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction did communicate to local education agencies the importanance of not administering other benchmark exams during this project. Additionally, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction communicated very specific instructions about the administration of the interim exams and the modified EOG exams. Finally, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction offered all teachers participating in the study the opportunity to take part in the training sessions.

What has been demonstrated was that not all Local Education Agencies followed the requests of not administering other benchmark exams. Having students complete multiple assessments could create a testing effect and not provide accurate results. Furthermore, it was communicated that not all teachers received the information on testing in a timely manner. There could be a break down between the local education agencies and teachers in some instances. Finally, all teachers did not receive the same training, and some reported receiving no training. This lack of information could also have a negative impact on the outcomes of the effectiveness of the project. This information/communication break down could explain why only 48.0% of the teachers either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "Overall, I would rate this training as excellent" and these issues will be addressed in the short and long-term improvement ideas.

The project needs to move beyond the feedback of those that participated in the North Carolina Proof of Concept to examine the true impact of the North Carolina Proof of Concept to see the magnitude of improvement in student success from this innovative assessment method. At this time, it has not yet been possible to look at the results of the North Carolina Proof of Concept study and compare students that participated in the study with those that did not participate in the study to see the impact on student achievement. It is suggested that a propensity score study is conducted to create two equivalent groups and examine the impacts on student success.

Development of Materials

The development of the assessment materials was done on a highly aggressive timeline. However, the evaluation revealed that the process included an appropriate group of individuals. Specifically, it was a highlight that teachers were involved in this process. Having teachers help create the assessment materials is important to develop a stronger commitment to the process. The commitment could explain why the teachers did see this as useful. It was reported that while the test specifications were developed collaboratively with DPI and teachers, at some points revisions did not include as many people because of the short time frames required to have projects finished. There were comments that stated that there was a lack of communications in some parts of the process with the teachers in the North Carolina Proof of Concept project.

Teachers and others at DPI raised a few concern about pacing guides. In regards to the pacing guide development, it was all done at the local level. In some instances, it was discussed that teachers would like more details about the pacing guides. In some instances teachers discussed, during the first interim assessment cycle in October, there were more details provided and then as the project evolved details were not updated as promptly. The interims were continuously developed and should continue to be developed and improved.

During the project, feedback was solicited after each interim. The feedback was solicited from an appropriate group of individuals. The feedback was used to make adjustments to the process along the way. However, it is important to communicate all changes to those

that are delivering the instruction and administering the assessments. It would be useful to provide a more formal method to gather information from the teachers participating in the study. The teachers even suggested that it would be helpful to bring them back together to discuss the assessment. At this point, focus groups could be used to gather information to make changes and seek ways for improvement.

Assessment and Reporting of Interims

The Interim reports provided information that was useful to intended audiences. The reports provide the teachers with data on which students missed items and provide summaries by content standard and subscores. The reports provided data allowing for comparisons and a variety of insights into the data. One slight issue reported is that reports were not received as promptly as desired for teachers to make use of the data. The reports are described in more detail in the report. Teachers reported using interims for improvement and for communicating with parents, but at this point, it is not described how they use the data at this point

Post Interim Uses of Data

The instructors reported that the project did provide data to make evidence based instructional decisions and that they could be more successful with the data provided by through-grade testing. This positive climate to the project leads to the through-grade testing being an improvement model that has the potential to be successfully implemented. While the teachers did report that the data was being used to change instructional practices, it was not clear how teachers were using the data. Additionally, from the open ended questions there was evidence that some teachers were not clear how to use the data, and this is one area in which the teachers were seeking additional professional development.

Communication with Stakeholders.

From reviewing the documents provided, it was evident that the communication concerning this specific project the North Carolina Proof of Concept was well planned and done in a strategic manner. Items that were provided were consistent and provided a similar message. All communications from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction has been professional. Additionally, information about the project has appeared in a number of other places in addition to the communication materials that were provided to me by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Information concerning the project appeared in the meetings minutes from other local education agencies board meetings. Additionally, information concerning the project has appeared on organizations websites of instructional and administrative leaders.

Evaluation of Processes of Scoring, Reporting, and Accountability for Implementing North Carolina Proof of Concept / Through-grade Testing Model

The results of this evaluation did not specifically focus on the quality of the assessments that were developed, and that was not part of the scope of this project. The evaluation did obtain feedback on the display and communication of the results. The materials were provided in adequate formats for the reports. The reports were provided that included state level results, class level results, subscore results, and individual reports for parents. From reviewing the reports, the following description is provided.

State Level Reports

The state level report, using a sample of results from interim one, described the concept being assessed and the specific content standard. For example, the first concept was measurement and data. The first content standard was "MD.5.b Apply the formulas $V = l \times w \times h$ and $V = b \times h$ for rectangular prisms to find volumes of right rectangular prisms with whole-number edge lengths in the context of solving real world and mathematical problems." Then items that assessed that standard are listed, and next to the item number the depth of knowledge was described such as recall or skill/concept. The percentage of students that correctly answered the item was the last item in the row. The report clearly identified the gridded response items and the items students had access to a calculator to complete. The report also provided the overall number of students assessed and the overall percentage correct. Additionally, the report notes the "Results from interim assessments should not be compared across interims, districts or to the state." It also notes "Each math grade 5 interim assesses different content standards." The English Language Arts/Reading reports were constructed in an identical manner. However, the notes on the bottom of the reports differed. On the English Language Arts/Reading report rather than stating the interim assessment assessed different content standards it was noted: "Text complexity is increased across the ELA/reading grade 6 interim assessments."

Class Level Reports

The class item reports for both Math and English Language Arts/Reading provides the title of the interim, academic year, teachers name, grade, subject, and school name. The report provides an overall description of the results of the interim by providing the class mean, class percentage correct, school mean, and school percentage correct. Details are then provided by each item that includes the content area, content standards, depth of knowledge, class percent correct, school percent correct, and correct answer. Each student is listed on the class item report, and there recorded answers are provided in terms of the letters A, B, C, and D. The only difference between the two reports is the English Language Arts/Reading report assessed writing on a 0 to 3 scale. In the correct answer position, a 3 was provided as the top score and then each student received a 0 to 3. If the

student is absent or had an accommodation, the scores were not reported. By each name, it was listed absent or invalid accommodation used.

An additional report was provided that detailed the subscore by areas. For example, the math subscore report included calculator inactive items, calculator inactive gridded response items, calculator active items, numbers and operations in Base 10, number and operations in fractions. The English Language Arts/Readings subscore were reported in the areas of language, reading literature, reading informational, and writing. Each of the areas had the total number correct. Additionally, the total points correct and percent correct were reported by the student.

Individual Level Reports

The individual student reports were presented at the end of each interim to the parents. In the reports column 1 is content area, column 2 is the total number of questions, column 3 is number correct (for the student), column 4 is percent correct (for the student), column 5 is average number correct for school, and column 6 is average percent correct. Additionally, the parent report solicited feedback from the parents with an online survey. These reports could add additional details to interpret scores for parents. Additionally, all of the reports could be strengthened by the visualization of data.

Short-term Continuous Improvement Process for Implementing North Carolina Proof of Concept/Through-grade Testing Model

Short-term Improvement Idea 1: Timely Data Reporting

One short-term improvement could be to ensure that teachers receive reports promptly so they can be used to improve instruction. If the goal of through-grade testing is for teachers to be able to make sure students can meet specific standards, it is critical this information is provided on schedule. It might be helpful to look at the process and have the information go directly to the teachers rather than have an intermediate stop at the local education agency.

Short-term Improvement Idea 2: Excellent Supporting Documents

It was clear that the documents that were created were done in a manner that supported the project. The quality of the documents reviewed were all excellent and communicated similar messages. However, it was indicated from some; not everyone received all of the materials and communication in a timely manner. Documentation was often provided that demonstrated the information was provided to the local education agencies or placed on the Internet in a number of locations. It is suggested that one repository be created to share all information about this project. Additionally, since there is no additional cost, it is suggested that information is communicated to individuals directly. For example, if there is information that needs to go to the teachers, do not use an intermediate

gatekeeper. It is best to have open communications and gives everyone access to the information that would help support the project.

Short-term Improvement Idea 3: Provide Training to All Teachers

It is important that all teachers participating in the North Carolina Proof of Concept have training. It is fine to have staff members, in addition to teachers, participate in the professional development, but it is not good practice to have teachers not be provided professional development for implementing the project when they are the frontline of implementation. A major part of the professional development needs to focus on why through-grade testing is being conducted and how it can be used to improve student achievement. The professional development for through-grade testing needs to be continuous and not just a one-time experience. Additionally, it is possible now to take most of the documents, relating to the project, which have been reviewed, and place them in a repository that is easy for teachers to access.

Short-term Improvement Idea 4: How Teachers are Using Data

It would be highly useful to explore how the current teachers are using the data they have received from the Interim assessments. It would be very helpful to see how the data is being used to shape instruction. Additionally, it would be useful to see how teachers are using this data to communicate with parents, administrators, and other colleagues. Then it would add value to share how other teachers are using this data with other teachers. Also, this process might also seek to explore which of the methods have the greatest impacts on student achievement.

Short-term Improvement Idea 5: Continuously Assess Quality of Interims

The quality of the assessment needs to be continuously assessed. It is important to conduct analysis to determine the item difficulty, item discrimination index, distractor review, and item review. Additionally, this continuous improvement can incorporate questions in the Interim assessment for the development of future items. It is critical to involve teachers in this process.

Long-term Continuous Improvement Process for Implementing North Carolina Proof of Concept/Through-grade Testing Model

Long-term Improvement Idea 1: Consistent Implementation

One area that is thought of as important in education is often the craft and art of teaching. The individual nature that allows the high performing teacher to be innovative is valued by the teacher and seen as necessary. However, to examine the best way to improve instruction and provide a consistently high level of education it is important that there is consistency in processes and the implementation of processes. For example, giving up

freedom for having structured pacing guides that align with formative assessment might be trade-off that is needed to develop consistent quality. If the recommendations of implementation are not followed by the local education agencies, data should not be included in the study. The results of any study are not likely accurate if a project is not consistent in implementation. Furthermore, to implement concepts like improvement science, it is important to have structured processes. Data needs to be collected from multiple sources to understand if there is consistent implementation.

Long-term Improvement Idea 2: Pacing Guides

This consistent implementation could go even further than what the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction has provided, and it is suggested that the use of highly structured pacing guides be strongly encouraged. Pacing may be a direction to examine in the future that aligns with using through-grade testing. It makes sense to ensure that the instruction that is being assessed by the through-grade testing is being delivered in alignment with the Interim. Additionally, it is critical to provide time in pacing for the teachers to make adjustments and cover items that need remediation. If there is not alignment and there is not the time for remediation it defeats the purpose of the through-grade testing model. A highly structured pacing guide could be explored with low performing schools first, and data can be collected to explore results on student success. Additionally, this process could be used to record performance of teachers if a modified end-of-grade assessment is used to assess gains.

Long-term Improvement Idea 3: Gather Data to Continuously Improve Student Success

It would be important to create improvement cycles once through-grade testing is implemented. The use of improvement science requires the modification of instructional practices to examine the impacts on student achievement. The improvement science concept requires developing practices that are thought to create improvements and then making and testing the changes on a small scale. The concept integrates multiple cycles of plan, do, act, and study. This integrates concepts from Deming and quality management. Additionally, it is recommended that lessons learned in the healthcare sector for process improvement be examined for use in this project. An example of this might be providing instruction for a specific math technique in a contextual manner. Then see how the change impacts the results of the Interim assessment. It is important to empower teachers to conduct these local improvements and then share them across the networks. Teachers need to be rewarded for participating in this type of work even if there are not highly successful outcomes from each cycle. The concept has multiple cycles that are not always positive regarding the outcomes but provide information that can be used to make improvements rather than just large changes. Using improvement cycles is one way that will allow for taking advantage of the added value of the through-grade testing for improvement.

Long-term Improvement Idea 4: Teachers Highly Involved in Process

Long term, it is critical to have the teachers as an integral component in the process of creating through-grade testing in terms of the assessment, reports, and training. Teachers need to be part of the creation of test specifications, test questions, reporting protocol, instructional practices and pacing guides to take ownership in the process. In all subject areas, teacher involvement will increase the likeliness to have implementation be successful. Additionally, having the teachers integrate the Interim assessment process in the instruction and remediation will make them view this as a formative process and less as additional short summative assessments. The more this is integrated in the instructional process it can be used to make improvements throughout instruction to increase student success.

Long-term Improvement Idea 5: Reporting of Data

Long term it is important to create electronic reporting formats that allow for teachers to get data almost instantly. Furthermore, these electronic reporting formats need to move beyond only providing numbers and provide a visualization of data for the teachers. Moreover, for teachers to be able to view specific groups of students, the visual reporting must provide teachers data in methods that can be disaggregated. Examples of disaggregating data might be comparing how specific socioeconomic groups do in comparing the outcomes of the assessment. A teacher might want to compare the students results by gender to gain deeper insight into instructional practices. The teachers need access to data that is dynamic and allows them to drill down to make meaningful instructional changes.

Conclusions

This report provides the State Board of Education data to make a decision on proceeding with the North Carolina Proof of Concept. To implement my suggestions, it is critical to make sure that all individuals in the process are provided the information needed to make the change process successful such as creating an urgency to implement, form a coalition that supports through-grade testing, create a vision for through grade testing, communicate vision, remove obstacles, create wins, build on change, and create a culture of through-grade testing for improvement. Many of these suggestions can be implemented with improved communication and specific training with those goals in mind. Additionally, expanding the project to more teachers will make full implementation easier if there is an individual in each school already familiar with through-grade testing.

In relation to this report, I plan to meet with appropriate members of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction North Carolina Proof of Concept team to debrief to discuss the implementation of methods to continuously improve processes. It is anticipated that quarterly meetings will continue, with additional communications via email, telephone/conference call, and/or face-to-face meetings if needed during the project.

I am willing to serve as a North Carolina technical advisor for through-grade testing regarding suggestions in the report. Additionally, I would be willing to work with individual on parts of future projects that seek to overall develop further continuous improvement processes in regard to through-grade testing.

References

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Appendix A: Proof of Concept from State Board of Education

Proof of Concept Study

GRADES 3 THROUGH 8

A through-course assessment model consists of three or four assessments administered throughout the school year, which is designed to provide teachers and parents with immediate feedback for guiding subsequent instruction.

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) is designing a *through-grade* model which includes testing in grades 3 through 8 in English language arts/reading and mathematics. A proof of concept study of the model may be conducted during the 2015–16 school year to address research questions intended to determine the feasibility of proceeding to a field test year in 2016–17 and a pilot operational statewide administration in 2017–18.

The following chart provides the activity and the impacted grade levels for each year of the development of a through-grade model; however, the outcomes of the 2015–16 proof of concept study will be evaluated in summer 2016 to determine whether to proceed to a field test in 2016–17.

Year	Administration	Grade Levels	Purpose
2015–16	Proof of Concept (sample population)	Grade 5: Math Grade 6: Reading	Determine feasibility of concept
2016–17	Field Test (sample population)	Grades 3–8: Math Grades 4–8: Reading	Test items for inclusion in operational test forms
2017–18	Pilot Operational Year (statewide)	Grades 3–8: Math Grades 4–8: Reading	Full Implementation

Following are the goals, research questions, and design of the proof of concept for the through-grade assessment model.

Purposes and Uses of a Through-Grade Assessment Model

The purposes and uses of a through-grade model include providing

- ✓ Valid and reliable measures for evaluating students' based on North Carolina Standard Course of Study.
- ✓ Growth data for educator effectiveness reports.
- ✓ Assessments throughout the year that inform and guide instruction and that predict performance on future assessments within the year.
- ✓ A stand-alone summative assessment at the end of the year that may be connected to the interim assessments.

Research Questions for the Proof of Concept Study (2015–16 Administration)

The first step in designing a through-grade assessment model is to conduct a proof of concept administration in 2015–16 that will address the following research questions:

1. Do interim results provide teachers and students with useful information to inform and improve the delivery of instruction?

2. Will interim assessment results provide early indicator of students' performance on the end-of-year test?

3. How best should the structure of the content standards for English language arts/reading and mathematics be adjusted to fit the design of through-grade model?

4. Is it feasible to incorporate constructed-response items or writing prompts on the English language arts/reading interim assessments?

5. Are there significant motivational effects in terms of performance between scores on the interim and scores on the end-of-year for comparable groups of students?

6. What information will be available for student-level and teacher-level reports and how is such information best delivered and presented?

7. Does the professional development provided to teachers in the proof of concept study adequately prepare them to deliver instruction aligned to the interim assessments?

8. Is it feasible to deliver the assessments both online and paper/pencil?

9. Is it valid and reliable to combine results on the interim assessments for proficiency and growth reporting; thereby, eliminating an end-of-year summative assessment?

10. In a through-grade model, are the interim assessments required of all students or can some of the interim assessments be optional?

11. Does the through-grade model provide parents with useful information and do they view the model as an effective way to assess students?

Proof of Concept Design (2015–16 Administration)

To facilitate the answers to the research questions, the proof of concept administration will be designed as specified below:

1. Throughout the proof of concept year, districts will provide input on the processes and the procedures as the study is designed and implemented.

2. In July and early August 2015, teachers and other content experts will convene to recommend which content standards should be assessed on each of the interim assessments and which item types (multiple-choice, gridded, constructed-response and/or

writing prompts) would best assess each standard. The NCDPI curriculum staff and the NCDPI testing staff will coordinate and facilitate these meetings.

3. By late July, the NCDPI testing staff will identify a representative sample of schools that reflect statewide student demographics related to ethnicity, gender, previous mean scale score on state tests, and geographic location with a target participation of 3,500–4,500 students each for mathematics (grade 5) and English language arts/reading (grade 6). As much as possible the districts that previously volunteered for the study will be included. Districts will have the opportunity to appeal participation to the State Board of Education (SBE).

4. Professional development on the impact of the instructional timeline will be provided to schools participating in the proof of concept administration in 2015–16.

5. In 2015–16, there will be at least three test administrations during the school year, each representing a subset of the content standards as recommended by the content experts in Number 2 above.

6. Throughout the school year, the participating schools' teachers will be provided with student-level data to inform instruction, and these teachers will have the opportunity to give feedback to the NCDPI on the usefulness of the data and the reports.

7. A fourth assessment that is a shorter version of the end-of-grade (EOG) will fulfill the requirement for reporting end-of-year proficiency levels for participating students, and it will provide growth data for participating teachers and principals for educator effectiveness. However, the reporting of the proficiency information may be delayed due to required analysis.

8. At the conclusion of 2015–16 and the appropriate data analysis, a review of the proof of concept year will provide direction on whether to proceed with a field test in the 2016–17 school year.

Comparability Studies of Existing Interim Assessments

With several school districts currently administering vendor-developed interim assessments, and with at least one of these districts agreeing to provide data, it is possible to conduct a review of the assessments and the related data available from previous end-of-grade administrations. This will allow the state to determine whether commercially-developed assessments are aligned with state summative assessments with respect to coverage of content standards, reliabilities, and validity of reports. School systems will need to submit interim assessment data generated from commercially-developed assessments to determine which of these tests are most closely aligned.

HIGH SCHOOL

Currently, results from three end-of-course tests (Math I, English II, and Biology), The ACT, ACT WorkKeys, Math Course Rigor, and Cohort Graduation Rate are used to report school

accountability. As to whether to use a college admissions test such as the ACT for state and federal accountability requirements and to eliminate the EOCs which currently meet this need, it is noted implementation of this model is dependent on the SBE adopting grade level proficiency standards for English language arts/reading, mathematics, and science for The ACT or a similar assessment.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) could be released to gather information on the available instruments that meet the criteria of providing a national comparison as well as alignment to North Carolina content standards and state and federal reporting requirements. A requirement in the RFP would be for the test publisher to provide proficiency standards.

Also, with the unavailability of ACT Explore and ACT Plan in 2015–16 (both currently required by state statute), the RFP would include a requirement for predictive assessments for grade 9 and grade 10.

Given the current specifications for this type of assessment in state statues, the outcome of the RFP may yield a recommendation to the SBE that would be dependent on legislative action.

Appendix B: Sample Data Items

Proof of Concept
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program

Website	Test specification information, webinars, resource documents, memos, sample participants, and professional development information is all housed for stakeholder access in NC Education. To access this information: 1. Use the following link to the course https://center.ncsu.edu/ncaccount/ 2. Click "create new account" 3. Questions - contact the Help Desk
Documents distributed to: - Teachers - LEAs - Administrators - North Carolina Department of Public Instruction - State school board - School boards	**Memos** ✓ Participation in End-of-Grade Proof of Concept Testing ✓ 2015–16 Participation in Field Tests and Special Studies (July 13, 2015) ✓ Professional Development for Proof of Concept Studies **Test Development** ✓ Interim Assessment Test Specification Information Math Grade 5 Concept Study 2015–16 ✓ Interim Assessment Test Specification Information English Language Arts/Reading Grade 6 Concept Study 2015–16 ✓ Constructed Response Item Scoring Rubric for Interim Assessment 2 Grade 6 ELA/Reading (January 2016) ✓ Constructed Response Item Scoring Rubric for Interim Assessment 3 Grade 6 ELA/Reading (March 2016) ✓ ELA Example Response Space ✓ Example Grid for POC Grade 5 Mathematics ✓ Grade 5 Interim Template **Assessment Briefs** ✓ POC Grade 5 Mathematics, Grade 6 English Language Arts/Reading Assessment Brief ✓ POC Interim Assessment Reporting Assessment Brief **Talking Points** ✓ POC Talking Points (for State Board of Education) ✓ POC Talking Points (for Regional Accountability Coordinators) ✓ POC Talking Points (for Principals and Teachers) **Test Administrative Resources** ✓ Interim Assessment Guide Grade 5 Mathematics ✓ Gridded Response Practice Activity End-of-Grade Mathematics 5 ✓ Interim Assessment Guide Grade 6 English Language Arts/Reading

	Reporting ✓ SAMPLE Reports for Interim Assessment 1 (math and ELA/reading) and 2 (ELA) o Individual Student Report o Class Item Report o Class Goal Subscore Roster ✓ State Item Statistics o 2015–16 Proof of Concept Study Interim Assessment 1, Grade 5 Mathematics o 2015–16 Proof of Concept Study Interim Assessment 1, Grade 6 English Language Arts/Reading o 2015–16 Proof of Concept Study Interim Assessment 2, Grade 5 Mathematics o 2015–16 Proof of Concept Study Interim Assessment 2, Grade 6 English Language Arts/Reading o 2015–16 Proof of Concept Study Interim Assessment 3, Grade 5 Mathematics (Coming Soon) o 2015–16 Proof of Concept Study Interim Assessment 3, Grade 6 English Language Arts/Reading (Coming Soon) **Miscellaneous** ✓ Proof of Concept Study (NC State Board of Education 6/19/15) ✓ Report to the North Carolina General Assembly—Report on Assessments ✓ POC FAQ September 2015 ✓ 2015-16 Sample Parent Letter
PowerPoints about proof of concept presented and training materials	✓ Proof of Concept Study (7/13/15) ✓ Proof of Concept Study (7/20/15) ✓ Proof of Concept Study (7/27/15) ✓ Proof of Concept Study: Grade 5 Mathematics, Grade 6 ELA/Reading (8/18/15) ✓ Proof of Concept Study: Contextualizing the Data Webinar (10/15/15, 10/29/15) ✓ Through-Grade Assessment Model: Proof of Concept Study (3/23/16) ✓ Monthly SBE PowerPoints
Survey Results	✓ Participating Teachers-Interim 1 ✓ Participating Teachers-Interim 2 ✓ Participating Teachers-Interim 3 (coming soon) ✓ District Test Coordinators-Interim 1 ✓ District Test Coordinators-Interim 3 (coming soon) ✓ Parents ✓ District Curriculum and Instructional Leaders (03/21/16)
Administration Observations	✓ Interim Assessment 1 Observations ✓ Interim Assessment 2 Observations ✓ Interim Assessment 3 Observations
	Tammy Howard | Accountability Director

List of key individuals from North Carolina Department of Public Instruction on project	Nancy Carolan	Section Chief ~ Testing Policy & Operations
	Hope Lung	Section Chief ~ Test Development
	Karen Hoeve	Section Chief ~ Analysis & Reporting
	Jaime Kelley	Educational Consultant ~ Testing Policy & Operations
	Brian Swiger	Educational Consultant ~ Testing Policy & Operations
	Dan Auman	Test Measurement Specialist (ELA) ~ Test Development
	Joshua Griffin	Test Measurement Specialist (Math) ~ Test Development
	Thakur Karkee	Psychometrician – Test Development
	Kinge Mbella	Psychometrician – Test Development
	Faye Brown	Educational Consultant ~ Analysis & Reporting
	George Stubblefield	IT Specialist
	Butch Hudson	Regional Accountability Coordinator
	Amanda Hobbs	Regional Accountability Coordinator
	Barbara Collins	Regional Accountability Coordinator
	Paul Davis	Regional Accountability Coordinator (Charter Schools)
	Jeff Payne	Regional Accountability Coordinator
	David Craig	Regional Accountability Coordinator
	John Worley	Regional Accountability Coordinator(Charter Schools)
	Scott Frye	Regional Accountability Coordinator
Curriculum and Instruction Professional Development Materials	✓ Links for the C&I trainings located in NC Education (see above)	
Access to training materials	✓ POC Interim Assessment Guide Training (September 2015)	
Access to online training	✓ Located in NC Education (see above)	
Names and email contact for Teachers, Superintendent, Principals, first timers, math coaches, classroom teachers, administrators, central office	✓ Participation & Communication List Serve ✓ Teacher Participation List	

Appendix C: Factor Analysis

Table 1. Factor Analysis with Item Loadings Demonstrating Constructs of Perception of Proof of Concept, Learning as Result of Training, Reaction to Training, Behavior Changes Based on Training, and Changes Resulting in Improved Student Learning

	FACTOR 1 Perception toward proof of concept	FACTOR 2 Learning as result of training	FACTOR 3 Reaction to training	FACTOR 4 Behavior changes based on training	FACTOR 5 Changes resulting in improved student learning
Item 4	**.871**	.207	.258	.129	-.020
Item 1	**.850**	.167	.180	.065	.010
Item 3	**.817**	.170	.196	.165	.089
Item 5	**.797**	.165	.239	.194	.226
Item 6	**.775**	.322	.163	.146	.082
Item 8	**.755**	.250	.091	.097	.354
Item 11	**.710**	.440	.067	.130	.162
Item 9	**.686**	.140	.289	.280	.370
Item 12[a]	**-.660**	-.043	-.163	.070	-.458
Item 7	**.638**	.382	.185	.303	.256
Item 10	**.562**	.229	.315	.266	.551
Item 2	**.547**	.231	.411	.152	.243
Item 22	.239	**.807**	.285	.140	.200
Item 19	.196	**.794**	.334	.094	.293
Item 26	.352	**.755**	.218	.220	.142
Item 21	.341	**.754**	.225	.070	.217
Item 20	.333	**.734**	.250	.197	.119
Item 24	.299	**.673**	.262	.360	.042
Item 25	.222	**.632**	.321	.349	-.021
Item 23	.279	**.614**	.496	.193	.089
Item 12	.338	.174	**.799**	.160	.009
Item 14	.177	.176	**.780**	.187	.081
Item 13	.276	.269	**.766**	.175	.015
Item 18	.232	.391	**.727**	.192	.238
Item 17	.273	.358	**.720**	.163	.175
Item 16	.084	.589	**.656**	.140	.239
Item 15	.072	.570	**.650**	.158	.245

Table Continued

Table 1 (continued)

	Perception toward proof of concept	Learning as result of training	Reaction to training	Behavior changes based on training	Changes resulting in improved student learning
Item 29	.168	.034	.348	**.770**	.212
Item 33	.101	.427	.268	**.656**	.095
Item 30	.299	.489	.153	**.573**	.090
Item 31	.074	.524	.173	**.542**	.271
Item 27	.342	.403	.156	**.524**	.219
Item 32	.484	.480	.227	**.371**	.094
Item 28	.420	.344	.273	**.368**	.293
Item 35	.318	.291	.094	.442	**.663**
Item 36	.385	.376	.183	.193	**.645**
Item 34	.417	.350	.239	.389	**.526**

Note.
[a] Item reverse scored

Appendix D: Tables

Table 2. Means, Standard Deviations, Frequencies, Percent, and Factor Reliability of Teachers Perceptions Toward North Carolina Proof of Concept and Through Grade Testing

Perceptions Toward Proof of Concept	M	SD	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	SA-A	N	D-SD
Through-grade testing provides more useful data than one summative test.	4.18	0.99	46	38	12	2	4	82.35%	11.76%	5.88%
The project provides data to make evidence-based instructional decisions.	4.07	0.87	32	52	14	1	3	82.35%	13.73%	3.92%
If implemented correctly, through-grade testing improves student learning.	3.92	0.95	29	44	22	3	3	72.28%	21.78%	5.94%
Others would be willing to implement if they understand the benefits.	3.89	0.96	29	42	26	1	4	69.61%	25.49%	4.90%
I feel I can be more successful with the data provided from this project.	3.87	1.11	33	41	15	8	5	72.55%	14.71%	12.75%
Administrators see the value in through-grade testing.	3.85	0.89	27	38	34	1	2	63.73%	33.33%	2.94%
I would implement through-grade testing, even if it was not required.	3.79	1.04	25	47	20	6	5	69.90%	19.42%	10.68%
Through-grade testing is an improvement model that can easily implemented.	3.75	1.11	27	42	18	10	5	67.65%	17.65%	14.71%
All stakeholders will see the value of through-grade testing.	3.49	1.07	18	37	28	15	4	53.92%	27.45%	18.63%
The quality of the educational process has increased.	3.46	1.09	16	42	23	17	5	56.31%	22.33%	21.36%
Through-grade testing makes my job teaching easier.	3.44	1.22	23	30	27	13	9	51.96%	26.47%	21.57%
This project takes more time than it is worth. (Reverse scored on Mean)	3.50	1.09	8	7	29	42	16	14.71%	28.43%	56.86%
Total Scale Average	3.77	0.86								

Note. Cronbach's Alpha is .913, SA-A= Strongly and Agree, N= Neutral, D-SD= Disagree and Strongly Disagree

Table 3. Means, Standard Deviations, Frequencies, Percent, and Factor Reliability of Teachers Reactions Toward North Carolina Proof of Concept Training

Teachers Reaction to Toward North Carolina Proof of Concept	M	SD	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	SA-A	N	D-SD
The delivery method (online or face-to-face) I received training in was appropriate.	3.77	0.84	18	51	26	6	1	67.65%	25.49%	6.86%
The training session accommodated my personal learning style.	3.63	0.88	15	44	35	6	2	57.84%	34.31%	7.84%
The training was provided in a timely manner to help me understand the North Carolina Proof of Concept project.	3.60	0.94	14	49	25	12	2	61.76%	24.51%	13.73%
The training was valuable.	3.59	0.94	14	47	29	9	3	59.80%	28.43%	11.76%
The training was worth my time.	3.58	0.94	14	46	30	9	3	58.82%	29.41%	11.76%
I would suggest others to take this training.	3.55	0.96	17	37	35	11	2	52.94%	34.31%	12.75%
Overall I would rate this training as excellent.	3.44	0.97	14	35	38	12	3	48.04%	37.25%	14.71%
Reaction to Training Total Avg	3.59	0.81								

Note. Cronbach's Alpha is .950, SA-A= Strongly and Agree, N= Neutral, D-SD= Disagree and Strongly Disagree

Table 4. Means, Standard Deviations, Frequencies, Percent, and Factor Reliability of Teachers Learning as a Result of North Carolina Proof of Concept Training

Learning as a Result	M	SD	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	SA-A	N	D-SD
I learned how to implement through-grade testing.	3.84	0.96	25	48	21	6	3	70.87%	20.39%	8.74%
I learned how to use the interim assessments to improve instruction.	3.84	0.99	27	45	21	7	3	69.90%	20.39%	9.71%
I understand the importance of through-grade testing.	3.78	1.01	25	45	21	9	3	67.96%	20.39%	11.65%
I have the knowledge needed to change my instructional practices to implement through-grade testing.	3.78	0.96	22	49	22	7	3	68.93%	21.36%	9.71%
I have a better understanding of the North Carolina Proof of Concept project.	3.76	1.00	21	52	17	8	4	71.57%	16.67%	11.76%
I was provided the test specifications to pace my instruction.	3.76	1.02	22	52	15	10	4	71.84%	14.56%	13.59%
I learned how to use the interim assessment to communicate with parents.	3.73	0.99	23	43	26	8	3	64.08%	25.24%	10.68%
I had full understanding of the logistics to implement the through-grade testing.	3.68	0.99	19	47	23	10	3	64.71%	22.55%	12.75%
Learning as a Result Total Avg	3.77	0.87								

Note. Cronbach's Alpha is .955, SA-A= Strongly and Agree, N= Neutral, D-SD= Disagree and Strongly Disagree

Table 5. Means, Standard Deviations, Frequencies, Percent, and Factor Reliability of Teachers Behaviors as a Result of Training for the North Carolina Proof of Concept

Behaviors as a Result of Training	M	SD	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	SA-A	N	D-SD
I have explained the process of through-grade testing to students.	3.99	0.87	29	53	12	9	0	79.61%	11.65%	8.74%
I look to the interim assessments to improve instruction.	3.95	0.89	28	51	16	7	1	76.70%	15.53%	7.77%
I communicate with parents on interim assessment results.	3.88	0.86	21	59	14	8	1	77.67%	13.59%	8.74%
I pace instruction based on test specifications.	3.80	0.91	21	52	18	10	1	71.57%	17.65%	10.78%
I changed my instructional practices.	3.70	1.02	24	41	22	15	1	63.11%	21.36%	15.53%
I discussed with other teachers the importance of though-grade testing.	3.65	0.95	17	49	22	14	1	64.08%	21.36%	14.56%
I explained to parents though-grade testing.	3.53	0.98	13	50	21	17	2	61.17%	20.39%	18.45%
Behaviors as a Result of Training Total Avg	3.79	0.72								

Note. Cronbach's Alpha is .900, SA-A= Strongly and Agree, N= Neutral, D-SD= Disagree and Strongly Disagree

Table 6. Means, Standard Deviations, Frequencies, Percent, and Factor Reliability of Teachers Perceptions of Changes for Improved Student Learning Outcomes as a Result of the North Carolina Proof of Concept

Changes for Improved Student Learning Outcomes as a Result of the North Carolina Proof of Concept	M	SD	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	SA-A	N	D-SD
I can better make improvements to instruction.	3.89	1.01	29	49	13	9	3	75.73%	12.62%	11.65%
I changed my instructional practices resulting in improved learning.	3.67	1.10	24	40	21	13	4	62.75%	20.59%	16.67%
My students learning has increased.	3.47	1.04	17	36	31	16	3	51.46%	30.10%	18.45%
Changes for Improved Student Outcomes Total Avg	3.62	0.96								

Note. Cronbach's Alpha is .904, SA-A= Strongly and Agree, N= Neutral, D-SD= Disagree and Strongly Disagree

Acknowledgements

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☑ **Appendix J.** NCDPI Assessment and Accommodations Monitoring

E. State Monitoring

Annual Process for Assessment Monitoring Visits

All tests that are part of the North Carolina Testing Program require a standardized process of administration. It is essential for school personnel to develop awareness of proper testing procedures in order to provide accurate test data for decision-making.

The purpose of monitoring assessment administrations is to ensure the North Carolina Testing Program is conducted in a manner that is fair, consistent, and equitable for all students. The annual process for assessment monitoring consists of three components: (1) desk monitoring; (2) on-site monitoring; and (3) feedback/assistance. The NCDPI Division of Accountability Services is responsible for conducting all annual assessment monitoring, with assistance from the RACs.

The following steps outline the process for coordinating and conducting the annual assessment monitoring required by the NCDPI:

1. During each accountability year, the RACs will conduct a minimum of three visits to local education agencies (LEAs)/schools within their region. These visits may focus on the district testing office or a district school or charter school.

2. The RAC will establish an annual calendar for assessment monitoring that details locations and times for visits.
   - Efforts should be made to vary the visit locations from year to year.
   - The selected locations must be administering state assessments during the monitoring dates established on the RAC's monitoring calendar.
   - After the LEAs/schools have been selected, the RAC must notify the locations at least thirty (30) calendar days before the monitoring visit to
     - inform the LEA/school of the visit,
     - ask that the LEA/school test coordinator accompany the RAC during the monitoring visit, and
     - request specific desktop monitoring documentation.

3. Annual assessment monitoring should begin with desk monitoring. To facilitate this process, the RAC should request from the test coordinator specific desk-monitoring documents. Examples of these documents include, but are not limited to:
   - district/school annual testing plan
   - district/school test-material distribution list and/or documents related to secure-material distribution procedures
   - district/school test-administration training rosters
   - district/school signed Test Security Agreements
   - district/school test-meeting agendas/notes
   - district/school testing calendar
   - Desk-monitoring may also include:
     - Checking Expect Test File

- Reviewing the ACCOM file
- Reviewing current/past OTISS reports

4. Within one week of the monitoring visit, the RAC must contact the LEA/school test coordinator regarding specific details for the monitoring visit (i.e., arrival time, special circumstances, etc.).

5. During the assessment monitoring visit, the RAC will use the appropriate *Assessment Monitoring Visit Checklist* (found on the following pages of this *Handbook*) to record observations. This checklist will be used to generate feedback to the LEA/school following the visit.

6. The assessment monitoring visit may include seeing either a full or partial LEA/school assessment day. The visit may include monitoring the following activities:
   - visiting the central office's or school's secure location for test materials
   - observing test material distribution (check-in/checkout) procedures at the central office or school
   - observing test-day policy and procedures of the school test coordinator, test administrators, and other school staff
   - monitoring school testing environment
   - observing test material review under secure conditions at the end of testing
   - monitoring the reporting of testing irregularities

Note: For school-monitoring visits, the RAC should plan to either arrive at the school at least forty-five (45) minutes before testing starts to observe checkout procedures or stay until testing has concluded to observe check-in procedures.

7. Interviews may be conducted to gain additional information if time and schedules permit. Interviewees may include:
   - LEA test coordinator
   - Principal/assistant principal
   - School test coordinator
   - Test administrators
   - Proctors (if utilized)
   - Other LEA/school staff members participating in the test administration

8. The RAC will share with the district/school the appropriate *Assessment Monitoring Visit Checklist(s)* within thirty (30) days of the visit. The *Assessment Monitoring Visit Checklists* can be found on the following pages of this *Handbook*.

9. The RAC should ensure the LEA/charter school test coordinator submits any required actions in a timely manner following the visit.

10. If concerns are noted during the visit and not addressed fully or have raised additional concerns, the district/school may be monitored.

ASSESSMENT MONITORING VISIT CHECKLIST
District Observation

Date: _____ **School Name:** _____

Principal: _____ **School Test Coordinator:** _____

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

Administration Process	Compliance	Noncompliance	Not Observed
LEA test coordinator encourages a positive atmosphere for the test administrations			
Enough copies of test materials ordered in timely fashion			
System in place to monitor all documented accommodations			
Investigated and reported all testing irregularities, including misadministrations and situations that may compromise test security (OTISS)			

Policy and operational concerns: ____ YES ____ NO

_____

_____

_____

Observer Signature: _____

ASSESSMENT MONITORING VISIT CHECKLIST
School Observation

Date: _____ **School Name:** _____
Principal: _____ **School Test Coordinator:** _____

Administration Process (LEA Test Coordinator)	Compliance	Noncompliance	Not Observed
Testing plan for the school located in the main office			
All test administrators and proctors (if utilized) trained Date(s):			
Test materials stored in a secure, locked facility			
Test materials distributed in accordance with the testing plan			
School test coordinator walked around and monitored the testing sites			
School test coordinator encourages a positive atmosphere for the test administrations			
Test materials reviewed under secure conditions (group setting)			
All testing irregularities reported in the OTISS			
"Testing—Do Not Disturb" signs posted on the door of each testing site			

Administration Process	Compliance	Noncompliance	Not Observed
Bulletin boards, instructional displays, and reference materials covered or removed			
Windows in doors exposed for monitoring purposes			
Doors unlocked and/or opened for monitoring purposes			
Test administrators aware of accommodations that are documented in IEPs/EL or transitory impairment plans			
Personal cell phones/electronic devices turned off/not visible			
Test materials provided appropriately for all students during the test administration			
Test administrators and proctors (if utilized) moved quietly and frequently about the room			
Test administrators did not leave students unattended at any time during the testing period			

Policy and operational concerns: ____ YES ____ NO

_____
_____
_____
_____

Observer Signature: _____

ASSESSMENT MONITORING VISIT CHECKLIST
Paper/Pencil Test Administration

Date: _____ **School Name:** _____

Principal: _____ **Test Coordinator:** _____

Test Name: _____ **Administration Type:** _____

Test Administrator: _____ **Proctor (if utilized):** _____

Administration Process	Compliance	Noncompliance	Not Observed
"Testing—Do Not Disturb" sign posted outside room			
Room is quiet, well-lighted, comfortable, etc.			
Bulletin boards, instructional displays, and reference materials covered or removed			
Desks or workstations cleared of books and other materials not required for the assessment			
Students provided the appropriate test materials			
Procedures followed for the distribution and collection of test materials			
Directions read to the students as they are written in the *Assessment Guide*			
Distracting behaviors avoided			

Administration Process	Compliance	Noncompliance	Not Observed
Personal cell phones/electronic devices turned off (not visible)			
Test administrator and proctor (if used) monitored the test administration			
Policies and procedures followed for the provision of accommodations			
Students receiving testing accommodations were monitored			
Procedures followed for assisting students who misalign answers			
Visitors prohibited in the classroom during the test administration			
Students who completed the test early provided with the opportunity to read			
Maximum time procedures followed; if applicable			

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

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Observer Signature: _____

ASSESSMENT MONITORING VISIT CHECKLIST
Online Test Administration

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

Devices Used in the Test Room (circle all that apply) Desktops, Laptops, iPads, MacBooks, Chromebooks, Other, Unknown

Administration Process	**Compliance**	**Noncompliance**	**Not Observed**
Personal cell phones and electronic devices are turned off and not visible.			
All computers were logged-in and on the START page prior to students entering the room.			
Additional devices were ready and available in each test room.			
Device power supplies were available.			
All students with *Test Read Aloud* accommodation and not in a one-to-one environment had headphones.			
Test Administrator NC Education usernames/passwords remained secure and were not shared among staff or students.			
In case of an unanticipated exit, test administrator resolved issue with limited delay.			
Documentation exists that confirms students took the online tutorial before test day.			

Additional Comments:
Please provide any additional comments about log-in processes observed:
Please provide any additional comments about devices used or room configuration:
Please provide any additional comments about observed test administration and technology functionality:

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

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Observer Signature: _____

North Carolina Testing Program Accommodations Monitoring Plan

Brief Overview of Targeted Accommodations Monitoring

Effective with the 2009–2010 school year, the North Carolina Testing Program implemented a formalized state monitoring plan that joins specific activities from each area of the NCDPI (i.e., Accountability Services, Exceptional Children, English Learners, Section 504) to effectively and efficiently monitor the use of testing accommodations. The state plan consists of four phases: (1) desk monitoring, (2) pre-site review, (3) on-site monitoring, and (4) state response and targeted assistance. The following list is a brief overview of each phase of the targeted accommodations monitoring process.

Desk Monitoring

- The NCDPI's ongoing process for monitoring testing accommodations using data collected via student answer sheets, Online Testing Irregularity Submission System (OTISS), PowerSchool, and the Every Child Accountability and Tracking System (ECATS)
- May require submission of local testing plans from randomly selected school systems
- Assists in selection of on-site visit locations

Pre-site Review

- Review of existing data to determine those school systems and school(s) that are to receive an on-site visit
- Determination of additional documentation that will be requested before the visit and on the day of the on-site visit
- Determination of monitoring team members and their roles for each on-site visit
- Review of documentation submitted by LEA/school before the on-site visit

On-Site Monitoring

- NCDPI monitoring team consisting of at least two Testing/Accountability staff members and a member of the Exceptional Children, English Learners, and/or Section 504 staff
- Observation of the entire testing day's activities at the school-building level
- Observation of testing sessions with accommodations and, if time permits, testing sessions without accommodations
- Review of corresponding IEP/Section 504/ELs/transitory impairment documentation for those students observed during testing
- Review of documentation submitted by the LEA/school on the day of the on-site visit
- Results and observations from the on-site monitoring visit will <u>not</u> be shared with the school system or school-building staff before leaving the site. Written results from the on-site monitoring visit will be sent to the LEA superintendent within ninety (90) calendar days of the visit.

State Response and Targeted Assistance

- The NCDPI monitoring team will reconvene to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the processes and procedures observed during the on-site visit.

- A letter summarizing the monitoring activities, findings, recommendations, targeted assistance, and possible sanctions will be e-mailed and mailed to the LEA superintendent within ninety (90) calendar days of the on-site visit.
- The letter will also provide any additional information regarding follow-up visits, requirements for the submission of additional documentation for review (if necessary), and timelines.

Required Documentation and Procedures for On-Site Monitoring Visits
The following information may serve as a guide for school systems preparing for on-site visits that are performed by the NCDPI. While much of the information presented in this document is specific to monitoring testing accommodations, school systems are reminded that in order for a student with disabilities to be eligible to receive a testing accommodation, the disability must be documented in his/her IEP or Section 504 Plan, and the accommodation must be used routinely during classroom instruction and similar classroom assessments.

Documentation Required before On-Site Monitoring Visit
School systems must submit the following information to the NCDPI within seven (7) days of the formal request made to the LEA test coordinator:

- Electronic copy of the LEA testing plan that includes, but is not limited to, the following:
    - Plan for training test administrators (and proctors, if utilized) to include testing accommodations training (i.e., training sessions on accommodations that have been approved for students with disabilities or students identified as ELs to use with specific tests)
    - Guidelines for test security
    - Guidelines for test material handling and storage procedures
    - Guidelines for proper testing environment
    - Procedures for documenting the accommodation(s) each eligible student will receive for each test
    - Procedures for the self-monitoring of test administrations to ensure the system and school-by-school plans for administering tests under secure conditions are implemented appropriately
    - Procedures for self-monitoring to ensure all documented, required accommodations were provided to students and to what extent the accommodations were used by the students during the test administrations
    - Policies and procedures for reviewing and processing test materials
    - Policies and procedures for repackaging, returning, storing, or recycling test materials
    - Policies and procedures for reporting testing irregularities
    - LEA testing calendar. Please include "Sample" documents completed by the LEA/school and used as documentation for the testing plan. Documents may be scanned if necessary.
- Electronic copy of the school annual testing plan that includes, but is not limited to, the following:
    - Alignment to the district testing plan and test administration schedules established by the NCDPI and the school system test coordinator

  - Plan for training test administrators (and proctors, if utilized) for administering tests under secure conditions that includes accommodations training
  - Procedures for documenting the accommodation(s) each eligible student will receive for each test
  - Guidelines for test security
  - Guidelines for proper testing environment
  - Guidelines for handling test material and storage procedures
  - Procedures for self-monitoring test administrations to ensure the school system and school-by-school plans for administering tests under secure conditions are implemented appropriately
  - Procedures for self-monitoring to ensure all documented required accommodations were provided to students and to what extent the accommodations were used by the students during the test administrations
  - Policies and procedures for reviewing and processing test materials
  - Policies and procedures for returning all test materials to the school system test coordinator
  - Policies and procedures for reporting testing irregularities

  Please include "Sample" documents completed by the LEA/school and used as documentation for any testing plans. Documents may be scanned if necessary.
- Daily schedule(s) of test administrations with and without accommodations. Must identify the test name and grade level or course, the test administrator's name, the scheduled proctor's name (if applicable), the testing room assignment, each student's name with any required testing accommodations, and the type of plan under which each eligible student is required to receive testing accommodations.
- School-day schedule for days of testing (e.g., time teachers arrive, time students arrive, time to begin testing, bell schedule)
- Directions to school and parking instructions
- Staff names and contact information for those who will serve as points of contact (e.g., principal, school test coordinator)

Documentation Required on the Day of On-Site Monitoring Previsit

School systems are required to provide the following information to the NCDPI monitoring team on the day of the on-site monitoring previsit, which will take place the afternoon before the monitoring visit.

- Paper copy of the LEA testing plan (see above)
- Paper copy of the school annual testing plan (see above)
  - Documentation for the secure handling and storage of test materials (e.g., materials check-in from LEA, school storage, secure materials checkout and check-in procedures for test administrators)
  - Test administration training attendance records
  - Self-monitoring records that ensure all documented accommodations will be provided to students (e.g., accommodation information to be coded on student answer sheets, optional forms from the *Testing Students with Disabilities*

publication, *Review of Accommodations Used During Testing* forms, student participation rosters for specific accommodations, etc.)

- IEP/Section 504/EL/transitory impairment documentation for students in test administrations selected for observation (The LEA test coordinator will be informed of the test administrations selected for observation before the on-site monitoring previsit.)
- Copies of *Review of Accommodations Used During Testing* forms for students in testing sessions that will be observed during the monitoring visit with student information and required accommodations information filled in (The rest of the information is to be completed by the test administrator during/following testing.)

Procedures for Day of On-Site Monitoring Previsit

School systems should expect the following procedures to be followed by the NCDPI monitoring team on the day of the on-site monitoring previsit, which will take place the afternoon before the monitoring visit:

- Two NCDPI monitoring team members will arrive at the school at a specified time on the afternoon before the monitoring visit.
- Monitors will review corresponding student IEP, Section 504, EL, and/or transitory impairment documentation and *Review of Accommodations Used During Testing* forms for those students to be observed during testing.
- Monitors will conduct interviews with the school test coordinator and/or school principal if time and scheduling permit.

Procedures for Day of On-Site Monitoring Visit

School systems should expect the following procedures to be followed by the NCDPI monitoring team on the day of the on-site monitoring visit:

- The NCDPI monitoring team will arrive at the school forty-five (45) minutes before the scheduled start time for testing.
- Monitors will observe the secure, locked storage facility, document who has access to the facility, and record the process of how test materials are checked out and returned to the facility.
- Each team member will observe a different testing session that requires accommodations.
- When the test administrations are completed, the monitoring team will review corresponding student IEP, Section 504, EL, and/or transitory impairment documentation for those students who were observed during testing.
- Monitors will conduct interviews with the school principal, school test coordinator, test administrator(s), proctor(s) (if utilized), and teacher(s) to gather information about processes and procedures employed before, during, and following test administrations.

Results and observations from the on-site monitoring visit will not be shared with school system or school building staff before leaving the site. Written results from the on-site monitoring visits will be sent to the LEA superintendent within ninety (90) calendar days of the visit.