

THE NORTH CAROLINA TESTING PROGRAM

2006–2007

For additional information about the North Carolina Testing Program, visit the Accountability Services Division Web site <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/>.

Elementary and Middle School Grades 3 – 8

Quick Facts about Testing at Grades 3–8

- Students at grade 3 take a pretest in the first three weeks of school.
- Students at grades 3–8 take end-of-grade tests in reading comprehension and mathematics in the final three weeks of school.
- Students at grades 5 and 8 take an end-of-grade test in science in the final three weeks of school.
- Students at grades 4 and 7 take a one-prompt writing test in March.
- Some students at grades 4 and 8 participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).
- Students at grade 8 must pass the computer skills proficiency test to receive a North Carolina high school diploma. Students who do not meet the computer skills proficiency standard at grade 8 will be given remedial instruction and additional opportunities to take the test up to and including the last month of the twelfth grade.
- Alternate assessments are available for many of the state tests for students with disabilities who have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and students with limited English proficiency who meet specific eligibility requirements.

Grade 3 Pretest

Basic Facts:

- The pretest is a multiple-choice test administered within the first three weeks of school to all students at grade 3.
- The pretest measures knowledge and skills specified for grade 2 in reading and mathematics as outlined in the North Carolina *Standard Course of Study*.
- A comparison of the results from the pretest and the results from the grade 3 end-of-grade test that is administered the last three weeks of the school year allows schools to measure growth in achievement in reading comprehension and mathematics at the third grade level.
- The time allotted for both the reading comprehension and mathematics tests is approximately three hours over multiple days. This includes time for test administration duties and, where appropriate, scheduled breaks.

End-of-Grade Tests (EOG)

Basic Facts:

- End-of grade tests in reading comprehension, mathematics, and science are multiple-choice tests given in the final three weeks of school.
- **Reading Comprehension.** Students read both literary and informational selections and then answer questions related to the selections.

- Knowledge of vocabulary is assessed indirectly through application and understanding of terms within the context of the selections and questions.
- The selections chosen for the reading tests reflect reading for various purposes such as: literary experience, gaining information, and performing a task.
- Four types of items (organized into categories) are on the reading test. The categories include cognition, interpretation, critical stance, and connections. Cognition requires the reader to apply strategies, such as using context clues to determine meaning, summarizing to include main points, and identifying the purpose of text features. Interpretation requires the reader to make inferences and generalizations. It may ask students to clarify, to explain the significance of, to extend, and/or to adapt ideas/concepts. Critical stance requires the reader to apply processes such as comparing/contrasting and understanding the impact of literary elements. Connections require the reader to connect knowledge from the selection with other information and experiences beyond/outside the selection.
- **Mathematics.** Students are assessed in the five strands of the mathematics curriculum: 1) number and operations, 2) measurement, 3) geometry, 4) data analysis and probability, and 5) algebra.
- For grades 3–7, the mathematics EOG test is administered in two parts: calculator active and calculator inactive. Students are allowed to use calculators during the calculator active part of the test; students are not allowed to use calculators during the calculator inactive part of the test. For grade 8, the mathematics EOG test is all calculator active. Students are allowed to use calculators during the entire test.
- The time allotted for both the reading comprehension and the mathematics tests is approximately six hours over multiple days for grades 3–7 and five and one-half hours over multiple days for grade 8. This includes time for test administration duties and, where appropriate, scheduled breaks.
- **Science.** The end-of-grade science tests at grades 5 and 8 measure the 2004 goals and objectives as defined in the North Carolina *Standard Course of Study*.
- Students at grades 5 and 8 will be able to use calculators for the tests.
- The time allotted for the science test is approximately two hours. This includes time for test administration duties and, where appropriate, scheduled breaks.

Writing Tests

Basic Facts:

- Students at grade 4 and grade 7 take a writing assessment in March.
- Scoring of the assessment is comprised of a content component and a conventions component.
- The North Carolina Writing Assessment measures the following in content: focus, organization, support and elaboration, and style. In conventions the writing assessment measures sentence formation, usage, and mechanics, which includes spelling.
- Students at grade 4 write an extended narrative response (personal or imaginative). Students at grade 7 write an extended argumentative response (problem/solution or evaluative).
- Approximately one and one-half hours are allotted for the tests at grades 4 and 7. This includes time for test administration duties and, where appropriate, scheduled breaks.

Computer Skills Tests

Basic Facts:

- Eighth grade students take the North Carolina Online Test of Computer Skills.
- The online test measures the following strands set forth and specifically defined in the 2004 North Carolina Computer/Technology Skills *Standard Course of Study*: Societal/Ethical Issues, Database, Spreadsheet, Keyboard Utilization/Word Processing/Desk Top Publishing, Multimedia/ Presentation, and Telecommunications/Internet.
- Students must demonstrate computer proficiency as a requirement to receive a North Carolina high school diploma.
- Students not meeting the standard by the end of grade 8 are to be provided focused remedial instruction and are to have additional opportunities to retake the test throughout their high school career.
- The total time allotted for the online test of computer skills is approximately two hours. The total time allotted for the computer skills assessment includes time for test administration duties and, where appropriate, scheduled breaks.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Basic Facts:

- North Carolina has participated voluntarily in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as the *Nation's Report Card*, for more than a decade. NAEP is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subject areas.
- *No Child Left Behind* now requires all 50 states to participate in NAEP.
- Selected fourth, eighth, and twelfth grade students participate in NAEP. State-level results are reported for grades 4 and 8 in mathematics, reading, science, and writing. This allows comparisons between states and the nation. Results for grade 12 are only reported at the national level.

State-Identified English Language Proficiency Test (IPT)

Basic Facts:

- The IDEA® (Individualized Developmental English Activities) Language Proficiency Tests (IPT) is North Carolina's state-identified English language proficiency test that complies with Title III of the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) legislation.
- The IPT consists of four subtests that assess the student's English speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills.
- A home language survey (HLS) is used to determine if a language minority student.
- The IPT is administered to all language minority students (grades K–12) during initial enrollment.
- Language minority students who do not score Superior on all four subtests of the IPT are identified as limited English proficient.
- According to State Board of Education policy HSP-C-021 students identified as limited English proficient shall be included in the statewide testing program.
- All students identified as limited English proficient (based solely upon the IPT scores) must be administered the IPT during the annual testing window.
- The results from the annual administration of the IPT are used to measure progress and proficiency.

High School Grades 9–12

Quick Facts about Testing at Grades 9–12

- Students who are enrolled for credit in courses where end-of-course tests are required shall take the appropriate end-of-course test.
- Algebra I and the combination of English I and the grade 10 writing assessment are used for meeting the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) high school testing requirements. Students that have not taken English I and/or Algebra I by the end of the tenth grade will participate in the high school comprehensive (or its replacement) test administration.
- Students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2006-07 and beyond are required to meet new exit standards. The exit standards only apply to students following the Career Preparation, College Technical Preparation, or College University Preparation courses of study. These students are required to pass five end-of-course (EOC) assessments and a graduation project. The five required EOC assessments are Algebra I, Biology, English I, Civics & Economics, and U.S. History. The graduation project is a performance-based component that can include service-based learning or work-based learning experiences. The graduation project is developed, monitored, and scored locally using state endorsed rubrics.
- Students at grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 following the Career Preparation, College Technical Preparation, or College/University Preparation Course of Study who have not met the competency requirement of Achievement Level III (without the standard error of measurement) or Achievement Level IV on the end-of-grade (EOG) reading and/or mathematics tests/retests or who have not met the competency standards on other approved measures must take the competency test(s). Students following the Occupational Course of Study (OCS) do not have to pass the competency tests in order to receive a high school diploma.

Note: The North Carolina State Board of Education is working to remove the requirement of the competency standards for students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2006–07 and beyond. Until then, the new high school exit standards are in addition to the existing graduation requirements. Students who enter the ninth grade for the first time in 2006–07 will be informed in October 2006 whether or not the requirement to meet the competency standards has been removed. If it is not removed, starting in spring 2007, those students who have not met one or both of the competency standards will be provided at least one opportunity per year at grades 9 through 12 to meet the standards.

- Students at grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 who have not met the computer competency standard by the end of grade 8 are to be provided focused remedial instruction and are to have additional opportunities to retake the test throughout their high school career. The year a student enters grade 8 determines which form(s) of the computer skills test(s) students must take in order to meet the graduation requirement. Students who entered grade 8 from the 1996-97 school year through the 1999-00 school year must meet the graduation requirement based on the 1992 computer skills curriculum (Test Edition 1). Students who entered grade 8 in the 2000-01 school year through 2004-05 must meet the graduation requirement based on the 1998 computer skills curriculum (Test Edition 2). Students who enter grade 8 for the first time in the 2005-06 school year and beyond are required to meet the graduation requirement based on the 2004 computer/technology skills North Carolina *Standard Course of Study* (Test Edition 3).

- Some students at grade 12 participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

End-of-Course Tests (EOC)

Basic Facts:

- All end-of-course tests are multiple-choice tests.
- The end-of-course tests measure the student's grasp of the North Carolina *Standard Course of Study* goals and objectives for a particular subject.
- End-of-course tests are scheduled for the following subjects: English I, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Civics & Economics, U.S. History, Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics.
- Per State Board of Education Policy HSP-C-003 (16NCAC 6D.0305), students who are enrolled in the Integrated Math sequence take the Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II end-of-course assessments. The Algebra I end-of-course assessment is administered during the final five days of the Integrated Math II course if taken on a block schedule or the final ten days if taken on a traditional schedule. The Geometry end-of-course assessment is administered during the Integrated Math III course on a locally established test date. The Algebra II end-of-course assessment is administered during the final five days of the Integrated Math III course if taken on a block schedule or the final ten days if taken on a traditional schedule.
- EOC tests are given during the last week (block schedule or summer school) or the last two weeks (traditional schedule) of the instructional period.
- Per State Board of Education policy HSP-C-003 (16NCAC 6D.0305), schools are to use results from all end-of-course tests, including alternate assessments, as at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the student's final grade for each respective course.
- Students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2006–07 and beyond are required to perform at Achievement Level III (with one standard error of measurement) or above on the five EOC assessments of Algebra I, Biology, English I, Civics & Economics, and U.S. History. The exit standards only apply to students following the Career Preparation, College Technical Preparation, or College University Preparation courses of study. Students following the Occupational Course of Study are required to meet rigorous exit standards as outlined in State Board of Education policy HSP-N-004 (16 NCAC 6D. 0503).
- Algebra I and the combination of English I and the grade 10 writing assessment are used for meeting the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) high school testing requirements.
- Approximately two hours are allotted for each end-of-course test. This includes time for test administration duties and, where appropriate, scheduled breaks.

Writing Test

Basic Facts:

- Students at grade 10 take a writing assessment in March.
- Students write an extended informational response (definition or cause/effect).
- Scoring of the assessment is comprised of a content component and a conventions component (sentence formation, usage and mechanics).
- The North Carolina Writing Assessment measures the following in content: focus, organization, support and elaboration, and style. In conventions the writing assessment measures sentence formation, usage, and mechanics, which includes spelling.

- Algebra I and the combination of English I and the grade 10 writing assessment are used for meeting the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) high school testing requirements.
- Approximately two hours is allotted for this test. This includes time for test administration duties and, where appropriate, scheduled breaks.

Competency Tests of Reading or Verbal and Mathematics

Basic Facts:

- Students in grade nine and beyond who are following the Career Preparation, College Technical Preparation or College/University Preparation courses of study and who have not met the competency requirements of Achievement Level III (without a standard error of measurement) on the grade 8 end-of-grade (EOG) reading and/or mathematics tests/retests or who have not met the competency standard on other approved measures must take the North Carolina Competency Tests of Reading or Verbal and/or Mathematics Tests.
- Students must meet the competency standards to receive a high school diploma.
- Students not meeting the standard by the end of grade 8 are to be provided focused remedial instruction and must have at least one opportunity per year to take the tests until the competency standard has been met.
- The competency tests consist of multiple-choice reading and mathematics tests.
- Approximately four hours is allotted for this test (reading and mathematics). This includes time for test administration duties and, where appropriate, scheduled breaks.

Note: The North Carolina State Board of Education is working to remove the requirement of the competency standards for students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2006–07 and beyond. Until then, the new high school exit standards are in addition to the existing graduation requirements. Students who enter the ninth grade for the first time in 2006–07 will be informed in October 2006 whether or not the requirement to meet the competency standards has been removed. If it is not removed, starting in spring 2007, those students who have not met one or both of the competency standards will be provided at least one opportunity per year at grades 9 through 12 to meet the standards.

High School Comprehensive Test (or its replacement)

Basic Facts:

- Although the test was eliminated due to budget constraints in 2001, the high school comprehensive test was reinstated during the 2002-03 school year to meet NCLB requirements.
- Students that have not taken English I and/or Algebra I by the end of the tenth grade will participate in the high school comprehensive (or its replacement) test administration.
- A small number of students at grade 10 will continue being assessed on the North Carolina High School Comprehensive Tests of Reading and Mathematics (or its replacement) to report AYP per federal NCLB requirements.
- Students who have not taken Algebra I by the end of tenth grade are required to take the high school comprehensive test of mathematics or its replacement.
- Students who have not taken English I by the end of tenth grade are required to take the high school comprehensive test of reading or its replacement.
- Currently the North Carolina High School Comprehensive Test measures a student's ability to read, understand, and critically analyze printed material and assesses a student's ability to apply mathematical knowledge to solve real-world problems.

- Approximately four hours is allotted for the North Carolina High School Comprehensive Test (reading and mathematics). This includes time for test administration duties and, where appropriate, scheduled breaks.

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- A home language survey (HLS) is used to determine if a language minority student.
- The IPT is administered to all language minority students (grades K–12) during initial enrollment.
- Language minority students who do not score Superior on all four subtests of the IPT are identified as limited English proficient.
- According to State Board of Education policy HSP-C-021 students identified as limited English proficient shall be included in the statewide testing program.
- All students identified as limited English proficient (based solely upon the IPT scores) must be administered the IPT during the annual testing window.
- The results from the annual administration of the IPT are used to measure progress and proficiency.

Alternate Assessments

North Carolina Checklist of Academic Standards (NCCLAS)

Basic Facts:

- The North Carolina Checklist of Academic Standards (NCCLAS) is an on grade-level subject-specific or course specific alternate assessment in which teachers utilize a checklist to evaluate student performance on subject-specific or course-specific standards.
- NCCLAS may be administered to students identified as limited English proficient (LEP) who have been assessed on the state-identified English language proficiency tests as below Intermediate High in reading and are in their first 2 years (24 months) in U.S. schools.

- NCCLAS may be administered for writing for grades 4, 7, and 10 to students identified as limited English proficient that have been assessed on the state-identified English language proficiency tests as below Superior in writing and are in their first 2 years (24 months) in U.S. schools.
- Some students with disabilities with a current Individualized Education Program (IEP) who are unable to access the standard tests even with the use of approved accommodations and assistive technology may also be eligible for NCCLAS.
- NCCLAS measures student performance in the following:
 - Reading at grades 3–8 and 10 (High School Comprehensive Test),
 - Mathematics at grades 3–8 and 10 (High School Comprehensive Test),
 - Science at grades 5 and 8,
 - Writing at grades 4, 7, and 10, and
 - High school courses requiring an end-of-course (EOC) exam (Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, English I, Civics and Economics, and U.S. History).

NCEXTEND2–Multiple-Choice

Basic Facts:

- *NCEXTEND2* is a modified multiple-choice end-of-grade (EOG) test based on modified (grade-level) achievement standards.
- *NCEXTEND2* is designed for students who have a current Individualized Education Program (IEP) whose progress in response to high-quality instruction is such that the student is not likely to achieve grade level proficiency within the school year covered by the IEP. In addition, the student’s disability has precluded the student from achieving grade level proficiency, as demonstrated by objective evidence.
- *NCEXTEND2* uses simplified language, shorter passages, fewer items and fewer answer choices compared to the standard tests to assess students on grade-level concepts.
- *NCEXTEND2* measures student performance against modified (grade-level) achievement standards in the following:
 - Reading at grades 3–8,
 - Mathematics at grades 3–8, and
 - Science at grades 5 and 8.

NCEXTEND2 – Writing at Grades 4 and 7

Basic Facts:

- *NCEXTEND2* Writing is a modified extended response test based on modified (grade-level) achievement standards.
- *NCEXTEND2* Writing is designed for students who have a current Individualized Education Program (IEP) whose progress in response to high-quality instruction is such that the student is not likely to achieve grade level proficiency within the school year covered by the IEP. In addition, the student’s disability has precluded the student from achieving grade level proficiency, as demonstrated by objective evidence.
- *NCEXTEND2* Writing uses a modified test format and measures student performance against modified (grade-level) achievement standards in writing at grades 4 and 7.
- Approximately one and one half hours is allotted for this test. This includes time for test administration duties and, where appropriate, scheduled breaks.

NCEXTEND2 Occupational Course of Study (OCS) Writing

Basic Facts:

- Students at grade 10 who are participating in the Occupational Course of Study (OCS) take a writing assessment in March.
- Students write an expressive mode response (letters, notes, journal entries).
- Approximately one and one half hours is allotted for this test. This includes time for test administration duties and, where appropriate, scheduled breaks.

NCEXTEND2 OCS

Basic Facts:

- *NCEXTEND2* OCS is a modified multiple-choice test based on modified academic achievement standards.
- All students enrolled for credit in the Occupational Course of Study (OCS) in Occupational Mathematics I, Occupational English I, and Life Skills Science I and II are expected to participate in the *NCEXTEND2* OCS Assessment. Students who participate in the Life Skills Science assessment must have completed both Life Skills Science I and Life Skills Science II prior to taking the assessment.
- *NCEXTEND2* uses simplified language, shorter passages, fewer items and fewer answer choices compared to the standard tests to assess students on **course** concepts.
- *NCEXTEND2* OCS measures student performance in the following:
 - Occupational English I,
 - Occupational Math I, and
 - Life Skills Science I and II.

NCEXTEND1

Basic Facts:

- *NCEXTEND1* is a performance task-based alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards for students with significant cognitive disabilities.
- To be eligible to participate in the *NCEXTEND1*, students must:
 - Require extensive and explicit instruction to acquire, maintain, and generalize new reading, mathematics, science, and writing skills for independent living;
 - Exhibit severe and pervasive delays in multiple areas of development and in adaptive behavior (e.g. mobility, communication, daily living skills, and self-care);
 - Have IEP annual goals which focus on the integration of functional and academic skills; and
 - Receive instruction in the grade level Standard Course of Study (SCS) Extensions for the subjects in which they are assessed.
- Assessors must complete the decision tree process on participating students in NCRegistration between October 23, 2006 and November 3, 2006.
- Assessor receives tasks for each content area being assessed at that grade level.
- Students will be assessed on a subset of these tasks during the last six weeks of school.
- *NCEXTEND1* measures student performance against alternate achievement standards in the following:
 - Reading at grades 3–8 and 10,
 - Mathematics at grades 3–8 and 10,
 - Science at grades 5, 8, and 10, and

- Writing at grades 4, 7, and 10.

Computer Skills Alternate Assessment

Basic Facts

- Only students who cannot access the North Carolina Online Test of Computer Skills as a result of technical/technology limitations at the building level, and students with disabilities who, due to the nature of their disabilities, are not able to access the North Carolina Online Test of Computer Skills even with the available approved accommodations are eligible to take the North Carolina Computer Skills Alternate Assessment.
- The Computer Skills Alternate Assessment measures the following strands set forth and specifically defined in the North Carolina Computer/Technology Skills *Standard Course of Study*: Societal/Ethical Issues, Database, Spreadsheet, Keyboard Utilization/ Word Processing/Desk Top Publishing, Multimedia/Presentation, and Telecommunications/Internet.
- The Computer Skills Alternate Assessment consists of two sections: multiple-choice and performance. Students taking this assessment are to be administered both sections of the test.
- The multiple-choice section of the test must be administered before the administration of the performance section.
- The multiple-choice section consists of 35 items, and the performance section consists of 25 computer-related tasks.
- Students record their responses on their answer sheets for the multiple-choice items. Test administrators mark students' answer sheets for the performance section.
- Approximately one hour is allotted for the multiple-choice section and one and one half hours is allotted for the administration of the performance section. This includes time for test administration duties and, where appropriate, scheduled breaks.