



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

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DATE: August 3, 2005
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TO: LEA Superintendents
Charter School Directors

FROM: Mary Watson, Director
Exceptional Children Division

Louis M. Fabrizio, Director
Division of Accountability Services

Jackie Colbert, Director
Division of Elementary Education

SUBJECT: Alternate Assessment Changes in the North Carolina Testing Program 2005-06

Effective with the 2005-06 school year, several changes will be implemented statewide in the North Carolina Testing Program. Specifically, the changes will affect students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency who participate in the alternate assessment system. These changes are the result of recent changes in regulations or impending decisions by the United States Department of Education (USED). One of the major decisions is that "out-of-level" assessment of students will *not* be permitted for reporting adequate yearly progress (AYP) results in participation or performance effective with the 2005-06 school year.

The USED is also in the process of creating new regulations to address modified (grade-level) achievement standards for students *without* significant cognitive disabilities, but who have persistent academic disabilities. Supposedly it will allow states to create alternate assessments based on modified (grade-level) achievement standards. The ruling is expected to allow states to include proficient scores of up to two (2) percent of the total tested student population in determining AYP decisions based on modified (grade level) achievement standards. According to the USED, "This provision is for those students who are not likely to reach grade level achievement because of their disability in the same timeframe as students without disabilities, but who will make significant progress. Individualized education program (IEP) teams will make the decision about which individual students should take such an assessment."

In response to the requirements from the USED the following changes will be implemented in the North Carolina Testing Program for the 2005-06 school year:

1. The North Carolina Alternate Assessment Academic Inventory (NCAAAI) has been discontinued.
2. The North Carolina Checklist of Academic Standards (NCCLAS) has been created as an alternate assessment to be used at the student's assigned grade level. The assessment is designed for students who need alternate means to demonstrate their academic progress on grade-level concepts. (This assessment is based on grade-level achievement standards and not alternate achievement standards or modified (grade-level) achievement standards.)

DIVISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY SERVICES

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

The North Carolina Checklist of Academic Standards (NCCLAS) has been created as an on-grade-level alternate assessment for the following students only:

- A. For 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 in their first 2 years (24 months) in U.S. schools, NCCLAS may be administered in the areas of reading and mathematics at grades 3–8 and 10 and in high school courses in which an end-of-course test is administered.
- B. The NCCLAS may be administered for writing for grades 4, 7 and 10 to students identified as limited English proficient who have been assessed on the state-identified English language proficiency tests as below Superior in writing in their first 2 years (24 months) in U.S. schools.
- C. 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.
 - i) Some examples of students with disabilities who might require the use of this assessment are students who are newly blinded, students with recent traumatic brain injury, students with physical disabilities that prohibit the student being able to manipulate materials and information within the standard tests, even with the use of assistive technology and approved accommodations.
 - ii) ***The NCDPI anticipates that the number of students with disabilities who will require the use of this assessment will be very small.***
- D. NCCLAS will measure student performance in:
 - i) reading grades 3-8 and 10 (High School Comprehensive Test);
 - ii) mathematics grades 3-8 and 10 (High School Comprehensive Test);
 - iii) writing grades 4, 7, and 10;
 - iv) and high school courses requiring an end-of-course exam: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, English I, Civics and Economics, and U. S. History.
 - v) In addition, NCCLAS science at grades 5 and 8 will be field tested in the spring of 2006.

The USED will allow states to include proficient scores of up to two (2) percent of the total tested student population in determining AYP decisions based on modified (grade-level) achievement standards. The students who will participate in the alternate assessments with the modified (grade-level) achievement standards are students with disabilities who do not have a significant cognitive disability but do have a persistent academic disability.

- 3. To address this provision and this population of students the NCDPI is developing a new assessment called NCEXTEND2.
 - A. NCEXTEND2 will be designed as a modified multiple-choice end-of-grade (EOG) test based on modified (grade-level) achievement standards.
 - B. NCEXTEND2 will be designed for students who have a current IEP and who have a persistent academic disability but who do ***not*** have a significant cognitive disability.
 - C. NCEXTEND2 will use simplified language, shorter passages, fewer items and fewer answer choices compared to the standard tests to assess students on grade-level concepts.
 - D. NCEXTEND2 will measure student performance against modified (grade-level) achievement standards in:
 - i) reading grades 3-8;
 - ii) mathematics grades 3-8;
 - iii) writing grades 4 and 7;
 - iv) science at grades 5 and 8 will be field tested in the spring of 2006;

- v) in addition, for students following the Occupational Course of Study (OCS), field tests will be administered in the spring of 2006 in Life Skills Science (Biology), Occupational Math (Algebra I), and Occupational English (English I/Writing 10).
4. The North Carolina Alternate Assessment Portfolio (NCAAP) is available for all students with disabilities who have a significant cognitive disability. Individualized education program (IEP) teams should refer to the guidelines provided for determining which students have the most significant cognitive disabilities.
- A. Students must have a current IEP.
 - B. Students access the *Standard Course of Study* (SCS) through the essences.
 - C. The NCAAP will measure student performance against alternate achievement standards in:
 - i) reading grades 3-8 and 10;
 - ii) mathematics grades 3-8 and 10;
 - iii) writing grades 4, 7, and 10;
 - D. To identify students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, all of the following must be true:
 - i) The student requires extensive and explicit instruction to acquire, maintain, and generalize new reading and mathematics skills for independent living.
 - ii) The student exhibits severe and pervasive delays in multiple areas of development and in adaptive behavior (e.g. mobility, communication, daily living skills, and self-care).
 - iii) The student's IEP annual goals focus on the functional application of academics (reading, mathematics, and writing).
 - iv) The student's performance is evaluated against alternate achievement standards.
 - E. The NC Alternate Assessment Portfolio will be redesigned to be less cumbersome and renamed NCEXTEND1 effective with the 2006-07 school year. NCEXTEND1 will be field tested in the spring of 2006 in:
 - i) reading grades 3-8 and 10;
 - ii) mathematics grades 3-8 and 10;
 - iii) writing grades 4, 7, and 10, and
 - iv) science grades 5, 8 and 10.

Guidelines for Modifying IEPs

For students who have a current IEP, only those whose IEP notes the use of the NC Alternate Assessment Academic Inventory will require an IEP team meeting to determine the most appropriate assessment option from the North Carolina Testing Program Testing Options for 2005-06 (listed below). The decision of the team must be documented on the student's IEP (DEC 4, page 3 – strike through NC Alternate Assessment Academic Inventory and specify the appropriate assessment for the student if an alternate assessment is chosen). The team may determine that the student can be assessed with the standard test administration with accommodations. If the IEP team determines that the NCAAP is the most appropriate alternate assessment, training and implementation should begin immediately. Updated North Carolina Testing Program (NCTP) tables that reflect the new assessment choices are attached.

For students in the third grade, choosing any one of the alternate assessments for grade 3 EOG testing will also count as their participation in the Fall 2005 grade 3 pretest in reading and for the Fall 2005 field test of the grade 3 pretest in mathematics.

**North Carolina Testing Program
Testing Options for 2005-2006**

Standard Test Administration
Standard Test Administration with Accommodations
North Carolina Checklist of Academic Standards (NCCLAS)
North Carolina EXTEND2 (NCEXTEND2)
North Carolina Alternate Assessment Portfolio (NCAAP)

Further guidance and pending decisions from the USED may have an additional impact on the information contained within this document; however, we anticipate that the impact will be minimized because of the changes implemented in the North Carolina Testing Program effective with the 2005-06 school year and the plans in place for the 2006-07 school year.

In addition, all new alternate assessments used in the North Carolina Testing Program this year will be field tested in the fall 2005 prior to use as operational tests in the spring of 2006.

For additional information regarding the changes in the North Carolina Testing Program for the 2005-06 school year, please contact your Regional Accountability Coordinator (RAC). We appreciate your services to the children of North Carolina.

LMF:MW:JC:sb:mgb

Attachments

- C: Members of the State Board of Education
 Jane Worsham
 Janice Davis
 Elsie Leak
 Regional Accountability Coordinators
 Regional Exceptional Children Coordinators
 LEA Test Coordinators
 LEA Directors of Instruction
 LEA Exceptional Children Program Directors
 LEA LEP/ESL Coordinators
 LEA Title I Directors
 Marvin Pittman
 Wandra Polk
 Mildred Bazemore
 Sarah McManus
 Chris Cobitz
 Fran Hoch
 Ira Wolfe
 David Mills

Table 3

North Carolina Testing Program End-of-Course Tests and Field Tests

Student: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

School System: _____ School: _____

Specifics Regarding Accommodation Use:

Standard Administration	Administration with Accommodations													NC Checklist of Academic Standards (NCCLAS)					
	Test Format	Assistive Technologies/Devices and Special Test Arrangements								Test Environment					Other Accommodations**				
		Braille Edition	Large Print Edition	One Test Item Per Page	Assistive Technologies/Devices	Magnification Devices	Crammer Abacus	Student Reads Test Aloud to Self	Test Administrator Reads Test Aloud (not for tests of reading skills)	Interpreter Signs Tests (not for tests of reading skills)	Dictation to a Scribe	Student Marks Answers in Test Book	Braille Writer			Typewriter/Word Processor	Testing in a Separate Room	Scheduled Extended Time	Multiple Testing Sessions

End-of-Course Test*

Algebra I																			
Algebra II																			
Biology																			
Chemistry																			
Civics & Economics																			
English I																			
Geometry																			
Physical Science																			
Physics																			
U.S. History																			
Other:																			

*Students enrolled in the course for credit must be administered the end-of-course test, with or without accommodations, or, if eligible, the North Carolina Checklist of Academic Standards (NCCLAS).

**Specify the accommodation to be used on the lines above under "Specifics Regarding Accommodation Use". Use of an accommodation not located in the state accommodations publications requires completion of the appropriate Accommodation Notification Form, available through the school test coordinator. Use of certain unauthorized accommodations may invalidate test results.

Revised 7/05

North Carolina Testing Program

2005-06 Tests and Field Tests at Grades 3 Through 8 and Grade 10

NCTP
Table 2

Student: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____
 School System: _____ School: _____

Specifics Regarding Accommodation Use:

Standard Administration	Administration with Accommodations											NC Alternate Assessments								
	Test Format	Assistive Technologies/Devices and Special Test Arrangements							Test Environment											
	Braille Edition	Large Print Edition	One Test Item Per Page Edition	Assistive Technologies/Devices	Magnification Devices	Crammer Abacus	Student Reads Test Aloud to Self	Test Administrator Reads Test Aloud (not for test of reading skills)	Interpreter Signs Test (not for test of reading skills)	Dictation to a Scribe (will not receive convention score for writing assessment)	Student Marks Answers in Test Book	Braille Writer	Typewriter/Word Processor	Testing in a Separate Room	Scheduled Extended Time	Multiple Testing Sessions	Hospital/Home Testing	Other Accommodations**	NCCLAS	NCEXTEND2

Grade 3 Pretest																				
Reading																				
Mathematics																				
Writing Test: 4, 7, and 10																				
Writing/Grade ____																				
End-of-Grade Tests: 3-8																				
Reading/Grade ____																				
Mathematics/Grade ____																				
Science Field Test: 5 and 8																				
Science/Grade ____																				
HSCT: 10																				
Reading																				
Mathematics																				
NAEP*: 4 and 8																				
Reading/Grade																				
Writing/Grade																				
Mathematics/Grade																				
Science/Grade																				
Other:																				

*Note: NAEP (grades 4 and 8) is a national test administered to a representative sample of students for national comparisons. School personnel must refer to the test publisher's manual for accommodation information. Every effort must be made to ensure that selected students have an opportunity to participate in NAEP using the available accommodations from the test publisher. IEP Teams are reminded that NAEP is not a high stakes test for students.

**Specify the accommodation to be used on the lines above under "Specifics Regarding Accommodation Use". Use of an accommodation not located in the state accommodations publications requires completion of the appropriate Accommodation Notification Form, available through the school test coordinator. Use of certain unauthorized accommodations may invalidate test results.

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