



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

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December 19, 2007

TO: LEA Superintendents
Charter School Directors

FROM: J.B. Buxton *JBB*
Deputy State Superintendent

LMF
Louis M. Fabrizio
Director, Accountability Services Division

SUBJECT: Distributed Scoring for the NC General Writing Assessment at Grades 4, 7, and 10

In 2000-01, the Writing Assessment Task Force made recommendations to improve the North Carolina Writing Assessments at Grades 4, 7, and 10. One of the top priorities was to make the scoring of the Writing Assessments accessible to educators in this state. Traditionally, the NCDPI has contracted with vendors who scored large-scale writing assessments in regional scoring centers. The vendors operated these regional scoring centers and supervised the scorers under strict quality control measures. All training sessions for scorers, however, were conducted by NCDPI Test Development and NCSU-TOPS staff who were present at these scoring centers.

Since 2001, the NCDPI has continued to work toward the goal of having North Carolina educators score the Writing Assessments. With the availability of new technologies, this is now possible. Modern technological advances have allowed NCDPI to transition to Distributed Scoring for the North Carolina General Writing Assessments at Grades 4, 7, and 10. Certified North Carolina educators now have the opportunity to score the North Carolina Writing Assessments right from their own homes.

Distributed Scoring consists of the process of scanning the handwritten student essays into the vendor's computer system which distributes them securely online to scorers. Computer technology has made it possible for scorers to securely download the necessary computer programs and software, and then score student responses from home using a secure web site.

All potential scoring candidates must meet the rigorous requirements set forth by the NCDPI as in previous years. Potential scorers must first meet the eligibility criteria and then pass the necessary requirements in order to qualify for a scoring position. After getting approval to score the assessments, scorers must maintain the high reliability standard required by North Carolina. Those who do not will be removed from the project and all of the student responses they scored will be rescored. Scorers will also be required to sign Test Security and Confidentiality Agreements.

Pearson, the vendor for this project, will continue to provide a central headquarters to supervise the scoring operation. In addition, NCDPI personnel will be able to monitor scorers and the scoring process through remote access. The NCDPI will also have the capability to generate real-time scoring reports and data statistics on the scorers.

DIVISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY SERVICES

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Educators who are interested in this opportunity must follow the procedures listed below in order to be considered in the applicant pool.

NC Scoring Application Process

1. Please visit the Pearson web site for North Carolina at: <http://www.flexiblescoring-nc.pearson.com>. There you can read more about the distributed scoring process, find out about the technology requirements for your computer, and read the qualifications for prospective applicants.
2. Apply for scoring positions online at: <http://www.flexiblescoring-nc.pearson.com> or <https://websurveyor.net/wsb.dll/80911/Scoreessaysfromhomeapp1.htm>. Please submit online applications from December 19, 2007 to February 8, 2008.
3. Approximately one week after the online application is submitted, applicants will receive a generic email stating that Pearson has received the information.
4. Notification letters will be sent during the week of February 11, 2008 to applicants who are selected for a scoring position. The offer will request that the applicant either accept or decline the position.
5. If the applicant is not selected for this position or decides to decline the position, their application will remain on file for consideration for other programs.
6. If the position is accepted, then the applicant will be required to complete pre-employment paperwork (including an I-9 signed and verified by a Notary) and a Computer Inventory (a brief system check to make sure their PC is compatible with the ePEN software). The applicant will have approximately three weeks to complete these steps.
7. Approximately 2 weeks after all paperwork is due to Pearson Human Resources Division, applicants will receive a "Welcome" e-mail with project dates and passwords to access the secure site. If any paperwork and computer checks have not been completed by April 1, 2008, the applicant will be removed from the pool of potential scorers.

Thank you for your interest in the North Carolina Writing Assessments at Grades 4, 7, and 10. We appreciate your continued support for the North Carolina Testing and Accountability Programs.

c: Test Coordinators/Directors
Regional Accountability Coordinators
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