

## **NCLB and ABCs Changes for North Carolina**

There are many changes regarding the ABCs of Public Education and implementation of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) federal law that affect all public schools in North Carolina.

Changes have been made in order to meet NCLB requirements and to take advantage of new flexibility offered by the U.S. Department of Education (USED). Changes affecting 2005-06 accountability are: the addition of an AYP growth standard, new AYP considerations for students with disabilities, new alternate assessments, new language proficiency tests for Limited English Proficiency students, and a cohort graduation rate. New science assessments will be piloted for grades 5 and 8 in Spring 2007.

New growth formulas and performance composites will be used for ABCs calculations beginning for 2005-06 assessment results.

### **AYP Incorporates a Growth Measurement for the First Time**

Beginning for 2005-06, AYP calculations will include a way that schools and districts can be credited for academic growth shown by a student group not initially meeting its proficiency target goal. An AYP growth measurement will be applied to student groups that don't initially meet target goals. Nonproficient students who are on track toward proficiency within four years of entering a tested grade in North Carolina, or by the end of 10th grade, can be counted as proficient. The AYP growth standard outlines predetermined incremental progress that students must demonstrate in order to be counted as "on track" and, therefore, proficient.

If the percentage of nonproficient students on the set proficiency growth pathway and percentage of proficient students combine to meet the proficiency target goal, the group is considered to have met its target goal. The AYP growth measurement will not be applied to the scores of alternate assessments. The AYP growth measurement differs from the new ABCs growth formulas. The ABCs growth component will be used to calculate the percentage of proficient students meeting the growth standard.

AYP measures the yearly progress of different groups of students at the school, district and state levels against proficiency and participation target goals in reading and mathematics and progress made in the Other Academic Indicator (attendance and graduation rates). Proficiency target goals are set increasingly higher with the expectation that all students will be proficient by the end of the 2013-14 school year.

Student groups are: 1) the School as a Whole; 2) White; 3) Black; 4) Hispanic; 5) Native American; 6) Asian; 7) Multiracial; 8) Economically Disadvantaged Students; 9) Limited English Proficient Students; and 10) Students With Disabilities.

Preliminary AYP results released in July 2006 will not include mathematics assessment results, due to the administration of new mathematics assessments in spring 2006.

Schools and districts entering into or escalating in Title I Improvement status based on reading assessment results, will need to implement sanctions for the beginning of the 2006-07 school year. Schools and districts entering into or escalating in Title I Improvement status based on mathematics assessment results, should become aware of the new designation in September/October 2006 and implement sanctions as soon as possible.

For more information on the new AYP growth measurement, see <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/newsroom/topics/> to download a 7-minute movie.

## **Students With Disabilities Caps**

Beginning with 2005-06 calculations, up to 2 percent of students with persistent academic disabilities can take assessments based on alternate achievement standards and be considered proficient. These students are served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), but are not students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Beginning in 2003-04, a 1 percent cap was set on the percentage of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities within a school district who could be held to alternate achievement standards and deemed proficient through alternate assessments.

This flexibility ends last year's (2004-05) transitional flexibility of adding 14.4 percentage points to the actual percentage of students within the Students With Disabilities group scoring proficient when schools and districts didn't make AYP solely due to that student group. That transitional flexibility was used only until the new alternate assessments were approved by the US Department of Education (USED). (See the **New Alternate Assessments** section.)

The percentage caps don't limit the number of students whose scores may be measured against alternate standards. It simply limits the number of Level III and IV scores that may be used to determine AYP. Scores measured against alternative standards that exceed set percentages are considered as nonproficient, unless an exception has been approved.

## **Limited English Proficient Students**

In 2005-06, the state began using a new proficiency test, which consists of four sections that assess the student's reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. Previously, the state-identified language proficiency test consisted of three sections that assess the student's oral, reading and writing skills.

The state-identified language proficiency tests are administered to all language minority students (Grades K-12) at initial enrollment and annually to all students identified as limited English proficient.

## **New Alternate Assessments**

North Carolina has developed new alternate assessments to meet the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and NCLB.

- The North Carolina Checklist of Academic Standards (NCCLAS) is an alternate assessment based on grade-level achievement standards.
- The North Carolina EXTEND2 (NCEXTEND2) is an alternate assessment based on modified achievement standards.
- The North Carolina Alternate Assessment Portfolio (NCAAP) was used in 2005-06 to meet the requirements of the alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards. The NCAAP will be replaced by the North Carolina EXTEND1 (NCEXTEND1) beginning in 2006-07 for students with significant cognitive disabilities accessing the Standard Course of Study (SCOS) through extended content standards or essences.

### **NCCLAS**

The North Carolina Checklist of Academic Standards (NCCLAS) is an alternate assessment provided to some students with disabilities who are not able to access the standard end-of-grade or end-of-course assessments even with approved accommodations and to some students with limited English proficiency within their first two years in United States' schools.

### **NCEXTEND2 EOG**

NCEXTEND2 EOG is an on grade level assessment that serves as an alternate for end-of-grade reading and mathematics tests for grades 3-8, writing tests for grades 4 and 7, and, beginning with the 2006-07 school year, science tests for grades 5 and 8. As an alternate assessment based on modified achievement standards, NCEXTEND2 EOG is aligned to the SCOS grade-level academic content standards for the grade in which the student is enrolled.

To determine student participation in the NCEXTEND2 EOG, the following eligibility requirements must be considered:

- The student must have a current IEP;
- The student does not have a current 504 plan;
- The student is not identified as having a significant cognitive disability;
- The student is not receiving instruction in the SCOS through the essences/extensions;
- The student's 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;
- The student's disability has precluded the student from achieving grade level proficiency, as demonstrated by objective evidence; and
- The nature of the student's disability may require assessments that are different in design.

Modified academic achievement standards are standards that are aligned with grade-level content and are expectations of student performance that have been adjusted to reflect reduced breadth or depth of grade level content.

Like the standard end-of-grade tests, NCEXTEND2 EOG is a multiple-choice assessment. However, it has shorter reading passages with simplified vocabulary. There are fewer test questions and fewer answer choices (three instead of four). The pages have only one to two items per page written across the page instead of in columns. Students participating in the NCEXTEND2 EOG for reading and mathematics should be allowed ample opportunity to complete the tests.

The NCEXTEND2 writing tests for grades 4 and 7 use the same prompts, but are scored using modified achievement standards.

### **NCEXTEND2 OCS**

In addition, NCEXTEND2 for the Occupational Course of Study (OCS) is new assessment for the OCS courses of Occupational Mathematics I, Occupational English I (Reading), and Life Skills Science I and II, each assessed at the end of the course. Also, there is NCEXTEND2 OCS writing assessment for grade 10 that is an extended response.

Students participating in the NCEXTEND2 OCS assessments must have an IEP and be enrolled in the Occupational Course of Study. NCEXTEND2 OCS assessments are being field tested in Spring 2006 and will be operational in the 2006-07 school year.

For more information and presentation materials on testing students with disabilities, access the Web at: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/policies/tswd/>. Below is a list of the new NCCLAS, NCEXTEND2, NCEXTEND1 and computer skills alternate assessments.

Assessment description	Number of new assessments
NCCLAS for EOG (reading and math at grades 3-8 and 10)	14
NCCLAS for science at grades 5 and 8	2
NCCLAS for writing at grades 4, 7 and 10	3
NCCLAS for 10 EOC	10
NCEXTEND2 for EOG (reading and math at grades 3-8)	12
NCEXTEND2 for EOG (science at grades 5 and 8)	2
NCEXTEND2 for writing at grades 4 and 7	2
NCEXTEND2 Occupational Course of Study subjects	3
NCEXTEND2 Occupational Course of Study writing	1
NCEXTEND1 for EOG (reading and math at grades 3-8 and 10)	14
NCEXTEND1 for science at grades 5, 8 and 10	3
NCEXTEND1 for writing at grades 4, 7 and 10	3

Computer skills alternate assessment	1
Total	70

## Cohort Graduation Rate

The 2005-06 school year is a transition year in North Carolina's measurement of the graduation rate. A cohort graduation rate is reported on the NC School Report Cards for this year (2006) for the first time, as required by NCLB. The cohort rate reflects the percentage of ninth graders who graduated from high school four years later. Because 2006 is the first year for the cohort rate, North Carolina also is reporting the on-time graduation rate, the percentage of regular diploma graduates who graduated in four years or less. This enables a trendline to be shown as required by NCLB. In 2007 and beyond, only the cohort rate will be reported.

A school's AYP status is determined by a school, district or state meeting its proficiency and participation target goals and making progress on the Other Academic Indicator, which is the graduation rate for schools that have a 12th grade and graduate seniors and attendance rate for all others.

The graduation rate is an important factor for high schools when invoking the safe harbor provision, a provision that allows schools to get credit for making significant year-to-year improvement, even if they miss the proficiency target goal. If a school's student group(s) doesn't (don't) meet the proficiency target goal in a given year, the school can still make AYP if it reduces the percent of students in the particular student group below proficient by at least 10 percent from the previous year and the group shows progress on its graduation rate.

The dropout rate will continue to be calculated for ABCs growth purposes. The rate is calculated by considering the current year versus a two-year baseline weighted by one fourth of the average daily membership.

Below is a chart outlining end-of-grade results, end-of-course results, graduation rates, dropout rates, attendance rates and other factors contributing to ABCs and AYP calculations for the 2005-06 that will be reported in October 2006.

## ABCs/AYP Program 2005-06

### Third Grade Pretest

Components	ABCs Growth	Performance Composite	AYP
Reading	✓		
Mathematics			

### End-of-Grade Tests and NCCLAS (Alternative assessments don't count in growth.)

Components	ABCs Growth	Performance Composite	AYP
Reading	✓	✓	✓
Mathematics Grade 3		✓	✓
Mathematics Grades 4, 5, 6	✓	✓	✓

Mathematics Grades 7, 8	✓	✓	✓
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**End-of-Course Tests and NCCLAS (Alternative assessments don't count in growth.)**

Components	ABCs Growth	Performance Composite	AYP
Algebra I	✓	✓	✓*
Algebra II	✓	✓	
Biology	✓	✓	
Chemistry	✓	✓	
Civics and Economics		✓	
English I	✓	✓	✓*
Geometry	✓	✓	
Physical Science	✓	✓	
Physics	✓	✓	
U.S. History		✓	

\* In rare cases, the North Carolina High School Comprehensive Tests of Reading and Mathematics (or their alternate assessments) are used for students who do not take Algebra I or English I by the end of the tenth grade.

**Writing Tests**

Components	ABCs Growth	Performance Composite	AYP
Grades 4, 7		✓	
Grade 10		✓	✓*

\* In rare cases, the North Carolina High School Comprehensive Tests of Reading and Mathematics (or their alternate assessments) are used for students who do not take Algebra I or English I by the end of the tenth grade.

**High School Comprehensive Tests**

Components	ABCs Growth	Performance Composite	AYP
Reading			✓*
Mathematics			✓*

\* In rare cases, the North Carolina High School Comprehensive Tests of Reading and Mathematics (or their alternate assessments) are used for students who do not take Algebra I or English I by the end of the tenth grade.

**North Carolina Alternate Assessment Portfolio**

Components	ABCs Growth	Performance Composite	AYP
Reading		✓	✓
Mathematics		✓	✓

**NCEXTEND2**

Components	ABCs Growth	Performance Composite	AYP
Reading		✓	✓
Mathematics		✓	✓

**Dropout Rate**

Grade levels	ABCs Growth	Performance Composite	AYP
9-12	✓		

**Graduation Rate**

Grade level	ABCs Growth	Performance Composite	AYP
12			✓

**Attendance Rate**

Grade levels	ABCs Growth	Performance Composite	AYP

3-8			✓
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#### Computer Skills

Grade level	ABCs Growth	Performance Composite	AYP
8		✓	

#### Competency Passing Rate

Grade level	ABCs Growth	Performance Composite	AYP
10	✓		

#### College University Prep/College Tech Prep

Grade level	ABCs Growth	Performance Composite	AYP
12	✓		

## Science Assessments for Grades 5 and 8

Science assessments for grades 5 and 8 were field tested statewide in spring 2006, and will be pilot tested in spring 2007 and fully operational in spring 2008. The assessments will test the 2004 NC Standard Course of Study (SCOS) for science in grades 5 and 8 only. For more information about the science SCOS can be accessed on the Web at: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/science/scos/2004/>. End-of-grade science assessments for grades 5 and 8 must be implemented to meet NCLB requirements. Current USED guidelines indicate these scores will not be a part of AYP calculations, but that could change. A table outlining the revision of the NC Science SCOS timeline as approved by the State Board of Education in May 2005, is available on the Web at: [http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/testing/eog/science/sciencetimelinechart%206\\_13.pdf](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/testing/eog/science/sciencetimelinechart%206_13.pdf).

## New ABCs Growth Formulas

At the 10-year mark of the ABCs program, new growth formulas are being used to better do what the program has done from the beginning – measure student growth each year. These new formulas:

- Use two years of prior student performance data in reading and mathematics to predict performance in the current year;
- Will re-establish the baseline for the academic change scale when new tests are introduced;
- Separate change scores for reading and mathematics used to determine a school's growth; and
- Provide student, classroom and school-level data to schools.

The new ABCs growth formulas are different enough that comparisons shouldn't be made between the 2006 performance of schools and previous years. For more information on the new ABCs growth formulas, see <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/reporting/abc/2005-06/backgroundpacket.pdf> and

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/newsroom/topics/> to download a 6-minute movie.

## **New Performance Composites**

Performance composites, in addition to growth formulas, are key in calculating school success in the ABCs. The performance composite is the percentage of designated test scores in the school that are at or above Achievement Level III, which is considered proficient. The performance composite of a school shows how well the students in a school did against the set standard of proficiency.

Civics and Economics and U.S. History end-of-course assessments at the high school level and the writing tests for grades 4, 7 and 10 are key new additions to performance composites of the ABCs for 2005-06. See the *ABCs/AYP Program 2005-06* chart elsewhere in this document for more information on performance composites. Beginning last year (2004-05), Algebra I and a combination of the end-of-course English I and the Grade 10 Writing assessment were used in place of the North Carolina High School Comprehensive Tests of Reading and Mathematics for AYP purposes.