

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Title:** **K-2 Literacy Assessment Task Force Recommendations**

**Type of Executive Summary:**

- Action
- Action on First Reading
- Discussion
- Information

**Policy Implications:**

- Constitution \_\_\_\_\_
- General Statute #115C-174.11
- SBE Policy #HSP-C-016
- SBE Policy Amendment
- SBE Policy (New)
- APA # \_\_\_\_\_
- APA Amendment
- APA (New)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Presenter(s):** Mr. J. B. Buxton (Deputy Superintendent, Department of Public Instruction) and Ms. Jackie Colbert (Director, Division of Elementary Education)

**Description:**

At the request of local school districts, the Elementary Division facilitated a series of task force meetings regarding changes in the K-2 Literacy Assessment. The Task Force reviewed the current NC K-2 Literacy Assessment and similar tools frequently used in schools across the state, affirmed a vision for literacy and young children, and discussed best practices in literacy assessment. These discussions formed the backdrop for the recommendations to the State Board of Education.

**Resources:**

DPI, LEA and IHE staff time. Action beyond requesting permission to proceed with the revision will require additional resources of dollars and also funding for schools to purchase technology tools.

**Input Process:**

The Task Force met for three two-day sessions (Nov. 8-9, 2006; Jan. 26-27, 2007; and April 12-13, 2007). Participants on the Task Force represented teachers, central office supervisors, literacy coaches, college/university professors of reading and parents.

**Stakeholders:**

Teachers, students, principals, central office supervisors, literacy coaches, college/university professors of reading and parents.

**Timeline For Action:**

This item was presented for discussion in June and is returned for action in August.

**Recommendations:**

The State Board of Education is requested to accept the report from the K-2 Literacy Assessment Task Force.

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**Audiovisual equipment requested for the presentation:**

- Data Projector/Video (Videotape/DVD and/or Computer Data, Internet, Presentations-PowerPoint preferred)  
Specify: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Audio Requirements (computer or other, except for PA system which is provided)  
Specify: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Document Camera (for transparencies or paper documents – white paper preferred)  
\_\_\_\_\_
-

Motion By: \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Vote: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Abstain \_\_\_\_\_  
Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Disapproved \_\_\_\_\_ Postponed \_\_\_\_\_ Revised \_\_\_\_\_

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\*Person responsible for SBE agenda materials and SBE policy updates: Janice Ham, 919-807-3915

# North Carolina Legislation Regarding K-2 Assessment

## **§ 115C-174.11. Components of the testing program.**

(a) Assessment Instruments for First and Second Grades. – The State Board of Education shall adopt and provide to the local school administrative units developmentally appropriate individualized assessment instruments consistent with the Basic Education Program for the first and second grades, rather than standardized tests. Local school administrative units may use these assessment instruments provided to them by the State Board for first and second grade students, and shall not use standardized tests except as required as a condition of receiving a federal grant under the Reading First Program.

# NORTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

## Policy Manual

**Policy Identification** Priority: High Student Performance

**Category:** ABCs Accountability Model

**Policy ID Number:** HSP-C-016

**Policy Title:** Policy regarding required K-2 assessments

**Current Policy Date:** 02/04/1999

**Other Historical Information:**

**Statutory Reference:**

**Administrative Procedures Act (APA) Reference Number and Category:**

The State Board of Education requires that schools and school districts implement assessments at grades K, 1, and 2 that include documented, on-going individualized assessments throughout the year and a summative evaluation at the end of the year. These assessments monitor achievement of benchmarks in the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study*. They may take the form of the state-developed materials, adaptations of them, or unique assessments adopted by the local school board. Grades K, 1, and 2 assessments should be implemented by all schools by the 2000-2001 school year. The intended purposes of these assessments are (1) to provide information about the progress of each student for instructional adaptations and early interventions, (2) to provide next-year teachers with information about the status of each of their incoming students, (3) to inform parents about the status of their children relative to grade-level standards at the end of the year, and (4) to provide the school and school district information about the achievement status and progress of groups of students (e.g., by school and grade level) in grades K, 1, and 2.

# **Executive Summary**

## **K-2 Literacy Assessment Task Force Recommendations to the State Board of Education**

### **Task Force Purpose**

The Elementary Division in the Department of Public Instruction convened a series of meetings (November 8-9, 2006; January, 25-26, 2007; and April, 12-13 2007) with approximately forty representatives of LEAs, colleges/universities and parents to develop a set of recommendations to the State Board of Education regarding an assessment of reading and writing for students in kindergarten through second grades.

The Task Force reviewed the current North Carolina K-2 Literacy Assessment and similar tools frequently used in schools across the state, affirmed a vision for literacy and young children and discussed best practices in literacy assessment. These factors formed the backdrop for recommendations to the State Board of Education.

### **Major Recommendations**

The Task Force offers two major recommendations to the State Board of Education. Suggested action steps under each recommendation are outlined in the full report.

1. Revise the North Carolina K-2 Literacy Assessment for enhanced curriculum alignment based on current research, greater applicability and adaptability to all children. Use technology tools to improve the efficiency of data collection and analysis.
2. Assure 21<sup>st</sup> century educators receive professional development in using the North Carolina K-2 Literacy Assessment for maximum benefit. Require LEAs to implement the tool across the state, participate in aggregation of data at the state level and share best practices.

# **Report to the State Board of Education K-2 Literacy Assessment Task Force**

## **Task Force Purpose**

The Elementary Division of the State Department of Public Instruction convened a series of meetings (November 8-9, 2006; January, 25-26, 2007; and April, 12-13, 2007) with approximately forty representatives of LEA's, colleges/universities and parents to develop a set of recommendations to the State Board of Education regarding an assessment of reading and writing for students in kindergarten through second grades.

The Task Force reviewed the current North Carolina K-2 Literacy Assessment and similar tools frequently used in schools across the state, affirmed a vision for literacy and young children and discussed best practices in literacy assessment. These factors formed the backdrop for recommendations to the State Board of Education.

## **Overview of the K-2 Literacy Assessment**

The purpose of the instrument is and should continue to be a formative and summative assessment for kindergarten, first and second grades based on the grade level English Language Arts competencies, research and best practices. It is designed as an ongoing tool and embedded in the instruction of students to determine students' level of performance and to guide instructional methodologies. Assessments are required two times per year, but it is strongly recommended that students be assessed three times per year. These targeted assessments are used to gather additional information on the specific instructional needs of at-risk students. The assessment addresses the five components identified by the National Reading Panel:

1. Phonemic awareness: the ability to recognize sounds in spoken words.
2. Phonics: the association between letters and sounds.
3. Fluency: the ability to read quickly, accurately and with expression.
4. Vocabulary: words we need to know in order to understand what has been read.
5. Comprehension: the ability to understand what has been read.

Phonics and vocabulary are not explicitly assessed in the current assessment, but embedded into other assessments.

The K-2 Literacy Assessment is useful to teachers, parents and students to provide a positive one-on-one experience with each child to increase the potential for success in reading. It is research-based, used to inform instruction methodologies, provides for responsive interventions and creates learning rigor for young school children. The Assessment focuses on progress over time and affirms what students know. It is not a test but a diagnostic, on-going observational process. It provides the teacher and student valuable time together to determine both progress and student frustration points. This open-ended gathering of specific information gives an opportunity for more effective feedback in the teaching and learning situation. Gathering data in this less formal manner

allows the teacher to qualitatively diagnose literacy problems and guides instruction to better meet the individual student's needs.

The K-2 Literacy Assessment has proven to be an important tool to ensure literacy for all children in the early grades and is used by about eighty percent of the LEA's. While it has undergone minor revisions in the past two decades, the Task Force agreed that it is currently cumbersome, is not used to its fullest potential in the classroom and is lacking some important elements that have evolved in the literacy field. Aggregation data across the state is difficult to obtain and prevents analysis of the performance of K-2 students.

### **Task Force Process**

The K-2 Literacy Assessment Task Force conducted the following activities to inform their recommendations:

- reviewed the history of K-2 Literacy Assessment in NC and the current State Board Policy on the K-2 Literacy Assessment;
- heard presentations on the assessment tools most commonly used in NC including the North Carolina K-2 Literacy Assessment; the Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI); the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS); the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA); the Response to Intervention: CBM Progress Monitoring System; the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS); and, the Rigby E\* Assessment;
- discussed feedback on the K-2 Literacy Assessment from the statewide survey and participant perspectives;
- reviewed the brochure "Vision for Literacy" produced by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, its guiding principles and the K-2 Literacy Scaffold to align beliefs with the K-2 Literacy Assessment; and
- debated issues of research and best practice in specific curriculum areas.

The Task Force affirmed that the North Carolina K-2 Literacy Assessment is a valuable tool that needs revision in curriculum alignment, its applicability and adaptability, implementation and implications for practice, and the level of professional development and support for stakeholders to achieve these goals:

1. to provide information about the progress of each student for instructional adaptations and early interventions,
2. to provide next-year teachers with information about the status of each of their incoming students,
3. to inform parents about the progress of their child's literacy development throughout the school year and
4. to provide the school and school district information about the achievement status and progress of groups of students (e.g. by school and grade level) in grades K, 1 and 2.

## **Major Recommendations**

Based on research, best practice and dialogue among task force members, two major recommendations are made to the State Board of Education. Suggested action steps under each recommendation are outlined in this report.

1. Revise the North Carolina K-2 Literacy Assessment for enhanced curriculum alignment based on current research, greater applicability and adaptability to all children. Use technology tools to improve efficiency of data collection and analysis.
2. Assure 21<sup>st</sup> century educators receive professional development in using the North Carolina K-2 Literacy Assessment for maximum benefit. Require LEAs to implement the tool across the state, participate in aggregation of data at the state level and share best practices.

# Background of the K-2 Literacy Assessment Tool

## State Board Policy on the K-2 Literacy Assessment

The K-2 Literacy Assessment was created to support early school literacy for all children. It grew out of recommendations made to the State Board of Education in 1984 based on the English Language Arts study of curriculum that was launched in 1982. Building on the development of Basic Education Plan, the Division of Communication Skills (now identified by the English Language Arts) began research in 1986 on assessing literacy development of first and the second-grade children. One issue driving the assessment process was a question regarding the appropriateness of standardized tests for young children. Legislation prohibiting standardized testing in grades one and two was passed (GS 115C-174.11 included), launching the development of appropriate assessment tools for literacy in young school children.

By 1988, the Division of Communication Skills began designing a research-based assessment program for grades one and two. Following a 1989 pilot program in eight schools, staff development institutes and approval by the State Board of Education, the instrument was implemented in 1990. The components in the first assessment included oral language; orientation to print; reading strategies through oral reading, listening comprehension; silent reading comprehension; and unassisted writing. A major revision of the English Language Arts curriculum in 1991 helped prepare for the advent of the era of high stakes testing in 1993. Since then, additional legislation has been passed, including the ABCs of Public Education (GS 115C-150/27) and No Child Left Behind.

Since the 1990 implementation, revisions of the Assessment expanded to include kindergarten children. Further, educators developed a continuum, extended the book level lists, added a phonics component, focused on a running record/retell, added fluency measures, added writing rubrics and replaced orientation of print with book and print awareness. The K-2 Literacy Assessment has proven to be an important tool to ensure literacy development for all children in the early grades.

The current legislation includes both reading and math, regarding all children in kindergarten through second grades [Section 28.30(c), GS 115C-150.27, and Section 28.30(d)].

## Feedback on the K-2 Literacy Assessment

A Zoomerang survey sponsored by the Elementary Division was launched June 5, 2006, to determine the effectiveness of the current NC K-2 Literacy Assessment in assessing the reading skills of young children. One hundred fifteen LEA's were surveyed, and 100 responded (86%). Teachers comprised 67% of respondents. Other respondents included reading coaches, supervisors and others.

Seventy-nine percent (79%) of those responding are currently using the K-2 Literacy Assessment or parts of it. The majority responded that they use the K-2 Literacy Assessment to drive instruction or to group children, and 78% believe it is a valuable tool,

is comprehensive, and provides sufficient data for uniformity and accountability across the state. Others reported using a variety of assessment tools, including the TPRI, DRA, DIBELS and others.

In addition to the survey results, the Task Force discussed the pros and cons of the current NC K-2 Literacy Assessment. Positive aspects were identified.

1. The Assessment gives teachers the data they need to guide instruction. It provides insights into students' strengths and offers a visual representation of individual progress for a child as s/he progresses from kindergarten through second grade. The tool gives a strong source of data for talking with parents about individual student progress. The Assessment guides instruction and supports the accountability of students and teacher to accepted literacy norms.
2. The Assessment is developmentally appropriate and provides targeted assessment components for at-risk students. The data gathered allows teachers to lead the learning process and enhance their knowledge base. It offers major support for teachers and literacy coaches by providing specific information and skills in order to plan instruction. It supports classroom teachers by having the data readily at hand. Analysis of the instrument allows administrators and teachers to identify professional development needs in areas where students are not progressing.
3. The Assessment tool addresses most of effective reading instruction components identified by the National Reading Panel. Although not all components are assessed explicitly, the assessment does provide meaningful data on all significant elements of reading. It also reflects components in the *Standard Course of Study*. The connections between the assessment information and the *Standard Course of Study* are strong. Data gathering is locally-controlled, and there could be reliability of the information if aggregated by county and state-wide.

The limiting aspects were also identified.

1. The Assessment is very time consuming, cumbersome and disjointed. There is no easy way to report data nor a united way to display data on each child. It is difficult to manipulate the data to inform instruction, especially for new teachers, and does not support the instructional program in the classroom. The terminology needs to be more parent-friendly.
2. The Assessment needs to be updated in a number of areas. It relies too much on running record/retells. It lacks balance of decoding and word knowledge. The word list reading is based on orthographic representation for developmental levels. There is no blending of phonemes, no letter/sound association, no letter naming and no vocabulary. The running record does not assess phonics in context. A significant gap exists between the second and third grade curricula. In addition, there are concerns that book levels do not realistically reflect a child's reading level, that there is not enough nonfiction, that the tool is not appropriate for some Exceptional Children and English Language Learners, and that there is a lack of intervention ideas for at-risk students.

3. The LEAs currently have choices about assessments to use, which can make it difficult for the State to gather data. The lack of consistency in its administration makes it hard to standardize the data for aggregation analysis.

## Key Elements of a Useful Tool

The Task Force deliberated a number of important issues regarding assessments. Four themes were dominant.

1. **Research** clearly demonstrates the importance of aligning standards, curriculum and assessment to ensure optimal learning outcomes. It is also established that significant achievement can occur when teachers are intentional in their analyses of data to guide instruction. Currently the NC K-2 Literacy Assessment includes tools that assess many of the important literacy skills, and when used as intended, the Assessment provides quality information. However, recent studies have refined how and what we assess in literacy. Information from these studies is not currently reflected in the tool used today. A revised K-2 Literacy Assessment, when implemented as designed, will provide more precise and usable information for teachers to guide their instruction, give better information to parents and help produce desired outcomes for every child.
2. **Assessment** suggests to “sit beside.” Considering children’s developmental needs, quality assessment must continue to be individualized. As our population continues to diversify, educators struggle with accurately assessing diverse learners. A revised K-2 Literacy Assessment can address how literacy development of English Language Learners and Exceptional Children may differ. Authentic assessment supports rigorous instruction, allowing teachers to provide high quality literacy experiences based on individual strengths and weaknesses. These experiences optimize individual progress while developing globally competitive students with 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills.
3. **Professional development** is a cooperative effort involving professional educators, pre-service teachers, parents, central office staff and local boards of education. It stimulates and encourages the professional growth of both new and experienced educators, provides them with the skills and knowledge to effectively interpret literacy development and deliver effective instruction for all children.
4. **Technology resources and support** for gathering and analyzing student data, tracking progress over time, facilitating instruction and informing stakeholders are essential. The K-2 Literacy Assessment has the potential to provide schools and the State relevant data which can be aggregated and used to show success and the positive economic impact of our 21<sup>st</sup> century learners.

The remaining pages restate the major recommendations and suggest specific action steps by the State Board of Education. There are working papers and additional background information that can be provided as needed.

## Recommendations

1. Revise the North Carolina K-2 Literacy Assessment for enhanced curriculum alignment based on current research, greater applicability and adaptability to all children. Use technology tools to improve efficiency of data collection and analysis.

### Suggested Actions:

- a. The State Board of Education should establish a Revision Committee of stakeholders to **revise the current North Carolina K-2 Literacy Assessment** to be reflective of current research and the recommendations of the Task Force. The following tasks should be completed.
    - i. Align the assessment tool with the NC Standard Course of Study goals and objectives for reading and writing including 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills.
    - ii. Streamline instruments to integrate and measure processes, strategies and multiple skills, such as combining running record, fluency and comprehension.
    - iii. Update components of fluency, phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary and text comprehension.
    - iv. Improve applicability to all children through the identification of individual strengths and weaknesses during an age-appropriate one-to-one assessment; engaging students in high quality literature to evaluate achievement; uniform implementation of assessment components, adaptations for Exceptional Children and English Language Learners by including these specialists in the revision of the assessment.
    - v. Add a Pre K-5 developmental literacy continuum, including assessment benchmarks and instructional strategies for continuous progress, to all elementary teachers to meet the needs of all children and provide a bridge between K-2 and 3-5 grades.
  - b. The State Board of Education should establish and charge the Revision Committee with exploring the **purchase of technology hardware and development of software** for teachers that will assist in the administration of paperless assessment components and in data collection and management processes.
2. Assure 21<sup>st</sup> century educators receive professional development in using the North Carolina K-2 Literacy Assessment for maximum benefit. Require LEAs to implement the tool across the state, participate in aggregation of data at the state level and share best practices.

### Suggested Actions

- a. The State Board of Education should charge the Revision Committee to design a direct **link between assessment data and instructional decisions** to both differentiate and impact instruction for all students. Such expectations would include

- i. assessing students at least three times a year to monitor progress according to state benchmarks,
  - ii. sharing assessment data with parents on a regular basis inform parents of their child's progress and
  - iii. analyzing data to enable teachers to design focused and targeted instruction for flexible groups.
  
- b. The State Board of Education should charge the Revision Committee with suggesting a plan for **professional development for all stakeholders** as necessary to the successful implementation of the revised, statewide North Carolina K-2 Literacy Assessment. The professional development should be
  - i. required, continuous and consistent with professional experiences, content and standards (including follow-up support) for LEA implementation teams and representatives from institutions of higher education. The professional development should be provided by recognized experts in the field of literacy education;
  - ii. planned for sustainability through the State model training and local LEA implementation;
  - iii. supported by literacy coaches at each elementary school by providing ongoing training and assisting with implementation of the assessment, guiding teachers in the daily use of the assessment and the resulting instruction and continually emphasizing the importance and facilitating data collection;
  - iv. supported by DPI-developed K-2 Literacy training materials for LEAs and all other professional groups (to insure consistent delivery of professional experiences). Materials might include training manuals, information on best practices, podcasts, videos, DVDs and distance learning experiences; and
  - v. differentiated for varied audiences.
  
- c. The State Board of Education should charge the Revision Committee with developing **strategies for state-wide implementation** of the essential elements of the revised assessment within the LEAs current autonomy to choose the curricula/instructional materials they will use in their schools.
  
- d. The State Board of Education should charge the Revision Committee with establishing a **statewide data collection system** to provide reliable indicators of student achievement. This system must address
  - i. the mobility of our student population and the need for consistent measurements of progress across the state,
  - ii. ways to establish benchmarks and to identify at-risk beginning readers as early as prekindergarten and
  - iii. further revisions to the K-2 Literacy Assessment to allow for possible comparisons of performance with other states.
  
- e. The State Board of Education should charge the Revision Committee with recommending **level of funding that are essential** to ensure the full implementation of a rigorous, high quality, developmentally appropriate literacy

assessment tool that will better enable teachers to prepare future-ready students. Full implementation of the K-2 Literacy Assessment requires funding for

- i. materials and supplies for the development of the revised assessment tool and for the implementation of the professional development,
- ii. developing and delivering focused, sustained professional development for preK-3 teachers, administrators and teacher educators,
- iii. employing full-time literacy coaches for all elementary schools and
- iv. electronic tools for collecting data to document the effectiveness of the revised assessment at the local and state level.

# Appendix

## DPI Task Force Planning Team

- Jackie Colbert, Director, Elementary Division
- Marilyn Palmer, Section Chief, ELA/Social Studies/Student Services Section
- Lucy Roberts, Section Chief, Primary Education
- Tara Almeida, ELA Consultant , Elementary Division
- Carolyn Southerland, ELA Consultant, Elementary Division
- Michelle Weaver, ELA Consultant, Elementary Division
- Susan Styons, Reading First Consultant, Elementary Division
- Connie Steigerwald, EC Literacy Consultant, Exceptional Children
- Maggie McGlynn, McGlynn Associates, Inc., Facilitator

## Task Force Members

Jean Blackman Brauer	Director of Elementary Education	Chatham County Schools
Patricia Calfee	K-5 Curriculum Coordinator	Beaufort County Schools
Susan Choplin	Kindergarten Teacher	Winston-Salem/Forsyth Schools
Ann Bennett Crutchfield	School of Education	Pfeiffer University
Lynn Dunn	Kindergarten Teacher	Moore County Schools
Sobia Estrela	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher	Johnston County Schools
Rob Felker	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher	Charlotte/Mecklenburg Schools
Janet Finke	Literacy Curriculum Coordinator	Union County Schools
Cheryl Hardy	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher	Wake County Schools
Frankie Harris	Literacy Specialist	Onslow County Schools
Barbara Honchell	School of Education	UNC Wilmington
Sharon Hopper	Curriculum Specialist K-2	Vance County Schools
Linda Johnson	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher	Guilford County Schools
Francine Johnston	School of Education	UNC Greensboro
Yvonne King	Parent	Wake County
Rebecca McAtee	Elementary Reading Specialist	Guilford County Schools
Sara McCall	Curriculum Director K-8	Yadkin County Schools
Sue Mercier	Curriculum Facilitator	Guilford County Schools
Sherri Miller	Exceptional Children Teacher	Wake County Schools
Betty Peel	School of Education	East Carolina University
Cynthia Shields	Elementary Language Arts Specialist	New Hanover County Schools
Tim Sims	Director of Student Services	Hickory City Schools
Sara Simmons	School of Education	UNC Pembroke
Beverly Spears	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher	Cumberland County Schools
Marideth Stiller	Parent	Wake County
Daniel Tetreault	More at Four Consultant	Office of School Readiness
Pam Tew	Reading First Coach	Sampson County Schools

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Title:** Recommended Interim Academic Achievement Standards (Cut Scores) for the NCEXTEND2 OCS Assessments in the Areas of English and Mathematics

**Type of Executive Summary:**

- Action       Action on First Reading       Discussion       Information

**Policy Implications:**

- Constitution \_\_\_\_\_  
 General Statute #G.S. 115C.174.11  
 SBE Policy  
 SBE Policy Amendment  
 SBE Policy (New)  
 APA # \_\_\_\_\_  
 APA Amendment  
 APA (New)  
 Other Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

**Presenter(s):** Dr. Louis M. Fabrizio (Director, Accountability Services Division)

**Description:**

The recommended interim academic achievement standards (cut scores) for the NCEXTEND2 OCS assessments in the areas of OCS English and OCS Mathematics are being provided for adoption on first reading at the August 2007 meeting of the State Board of Education.

The NCEXTEND2 OCS assessments in OCS English and OCS Mathematics are newly designed and implemented assessments for students with disabilities who are enrolled in the OCS English and OCS Mathematics Courses. The tests were designed to generate scores for use in the AYP calculations and the ABCs at the high school level.

The recommended standards for each of these tests were set using teacher judgment information under the Contrasting Groups' method along with the use of the Reasoned Judgment Method which involves agency assessment staff analyzing consequential data to determine the impact of the recommended cut scores for each of the tests.

The department recommends that the recommended standards be adopted as interim standards effective and applicable for assessments administered during the 2006-07 school year. The interim standards recommended at this time are to be re-evaluated at the end of the 2007-08 school year once a test-based method is used to generate the achievement level descriptors and engages a teacher panel in re-evaluating the interim cut scores.

**Resources:**

The staff from test development at NCDPI, staff at NCSU-TOPS, some representatives from other sections and divisions within the agency such as the Exceptional Children's Division, teachers who provided judgments about the students who took the assessments at the time they were administered during the 2006-07 school year.

**Input Process:**

Input from a group of practitioners or teachers who administered the tests, staff from the Test Development Section, Testing Policy and Operations section, Exceptional Children's Division, staff from Curriculum and School Reform, and staff from NCSU-TOPS, and staff from other sections and divisions in the department have provided input into the design of the tests and the recommendation for the standards.

**Stakeholders:**

Public school educators, students, parents, the exceptional children's community, state and federal policy makers, and the general public

**Timeline For Action:**

Action on first reading at the August 2007 meeting of the SBE for implementation effective with the 2006-07 school year.

**Recommendations:**

The department recommends that the interim academic achievement standards (cut scores) for NCEXTEND2 OCS English and OCS Mathematics be adopted for implementation effective with the 2006-07 school year.

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Audiovisual equipment requested for the presentation:

Data Projector/Video (Videotape/DVD and/or Computer Data, Internet, Presentations-PowerPoint preferred)  
Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Audio Requirements (computer or other, except for PA system which is provided)  
Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Document Camera (for transparencies or paper documents – white paper preferred)  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Motion By: \_\_\_\_\_

Seconded By: \_\_\_\_\_

Vote: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Abstain \_\_\_\_\_

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Disapproved \_\_\_\_\_

Postponed \_\_\_\_\_ Revised \_\_\_\_\_

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\*Person responsible for SBE agenda materials and SBE policy updates: Lucy Medlin, 919-807-3771



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\*Person responsible for SBE agenda materials and SBE policy updates: Rick Klein, 919-807-3761

## North Carolina's Proposal

The state requests renewal of the SES pilot in six of the seven LEAs approved in 2006-07. Those are

- Burke           Region 7
- Cumberland   Region 4
- Durham        Region 3
- Guilford       Region 5
- Northampton  Region 3
- Pitt            Region 1

The state asked the seven LEAs approved for implementation in 2006-07 to submit letters of interest stating a strong rationale for renewal of the pilot with supporting data. Six of the seven LEAs expressed keen interest in continuing participation. Selected comments and data submitted follow.

- Experience working with providers this past school year has enabled us to develop a positive relationship. (Cumberland)
- Participation in the pilot program significantly increased the number of economically disadvantaged students enrolling in SES. (Guilford)
- SES was well received by students, parents, and staff. Preliminary results show the students made significant gains. (Burke)
- Seventy-two percent of the students who participated in SES attended the pilot schools. (Guilford)
- Durham Public Schools provided parents with a list of providers in English and Spanish through two vendor fairs. There was great interest from families. (Durham)
- The SES [pilot] program was very well received in our community and continues to make sense. (Pitt)
- Approximately 82.4 percent of the students choosing the SES option demonstrated an average of 6.93 points of growth in mathematics. (Cumberland)
- Four new providers agreed to serve our students, in large part due to the sizeable number of eligible students; this resulted in parents having more choices. (Guilford)
- The pilot program has allowed more students to receive direct, one-on-one, or small group services in reading and math. (Pitt)

The state proposes to make the flexibility option available to those students in the six LEAs whose schools enter Year 1 of Title I School Improvement in 2007-08 in reading/language arts and/or mathematics. In requesting that the pilot be renewed in these districts, the NCDPI staff reasoned that these LEAs have worked through the challenges of the initial year of implementation, and can therefore proceed with greater ease to reach optimum benefits from participation in 2007-08. These designated schools identified for Year 1 of School Improvement will have ample time to notify parents and select service providers prior to the opening of school. There are 62 schools identified on NCDPI's Title I Watch List that may be entering Year 1 of School Improvement in 2007-08 in the six districts selected for renewal.

Criteria for the initial inclusion (in addition to their interest) of these LEAs took into account characteristics and demographics, as well as the projected numbers of Title I schools in the LEA that entered Year 1 of School Improvement in 2006-07. Guilford County Schools and Durham Public Schools were selected from the Piedmont Triad, a historically industrial and highly populated section of the state. Cumberland County Schools represented a unique population with Ft. Bragg, one of the nation's largest military installations and the point of embarkment for military personnel heading to the war front. Three additional LEAs, Northampton, Burke, and Pitt, were selected from other geographic regions with their own demographic and economic challenges. Northampton, in the Northeast corner of the state, has a large minority and economically disadvantaged population. Although Northampton did not fully participate in 2006-07 due to not having any schools entering Year 1 of School Improvement, they expressed a strong interest in renewing their participation for the 2007-08 school year. Burke is in the North Carolina Appalachia mountain region. Pitt, in eastern North Carolina, implemented a massive reassignment plan in 2006-07, and has successfully worked through many challenges associated with that reassignment.

A review of data in the LEAs selected for this pilot and in the state as a whole indicates that students and their parents in North Carolina are more likely to take advantage of SES than Public School Choice. Statewide, in 2006-07, there were 86,345 students in North Carolina who were offered the option of School Choice under NCLB. Of those students, nearly five percent (4,053) transferred to other schools. This was one percent greater than the rate of transfer in 2005-06. In 2006-07, there were 33,153 students eligible for SES, and more than 20 percent (eight percent greater than in 2005-06) of those students received services.

The state will continue to maintain a comprehensive list of SES providers and will ensure that parents in each of the six pilot LEAs have at least two providers from whom to choose. Furthermore, the state will guarantee access to school facilities at reasonable cost, and will promise a fair division of space in those facilities for the non-LEA providers. North Carolina will ensure that SES providers in the pilot LEAs market their services to parents, and that the pilot LEAs collaborate with business and community leaders to disseminate pertinent information to parents so that they fully understand the choices of services for their students.

In closing, North Carolina offers the USED the assurance that, if selected to renew this flexibility, more of our state's students will participate in SES in 2007-08. As promised, the state will collect performance data for those students receiving SES at the schools that participated in the pilot program in 2006-07. Although final testing data are not ready for dissemination, preliminary results look promising.

School Year 2006-07 (Pilot)				2005-06	Difference
LEA	# Eligible	# Participated	Rate	Rate	
Pitt	2,940	685	23%	34%	-11%
Cumberland	4,212	129	3%	1%	2%
Guilford	4,171	1,399	34%	26%	8%
Burke	302	42	14%	18%	-4%
Durham	4,315	1,172	27%	31%	-4%
Robeson <sup>1</sup>	8,630	663	8%	5%	3%
Northampton <sup>2</sup>	NA	NA	NA	10%	NA

<sup>1</sup>Does not wish to participate in 2007-08

<sup>2</sup>Schools projected to move into Year 1 of School Improvement did not do so in 2006-07

**Schools That May Be Included in SES Pilot If Approved in 2007-08**

<b>On Watchlist for 07-08?</b>				
<b>LeaSch</b>	<b>School Name</b>	<b>Grade Span</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Math</b>
120304	Chesterfield Elementary	PK05	Yes	Yes
120312	Drexel Primary	PK02	0	Yes
120324	Glen Alpine Elementary	PK05	Yes	Yes
120330	Hallyburton Elementary	305	0	Yes
120344	Icard Elementary	PK05	0	Yes
120368	Ray Childers Elementary	PK05	0	Yes
120374	Salem Elementary	PK05	Yes	0
260321	Douglas Byrd Middle	708	Yes	1
260338	Cliffdale Elementary	PK05	Yes	Yes
260340	College Lakes Elementary	0K05	Yes	Yes
260342	C Wayne Collier Elementary	PK05	Yes	Yes
260344	J W Coon Elementary	PK05	0	Yes
260360	Hillsboro Street Elementary	0K05	Yes	Yes
260361	Ferguson-Easley Elementary	PK05	0	Yes
260365	R Max Abbott Middle	608	Yes	1
260368	Hope Mills Middle	608	Yes	Yes
260370	Ed V Baldwin Elementary	PK05	0	Yes
260371	Ireland Drive Middle	606	Yes	Yes
260372	Lewis Chapel Middle	608	Yes	Yes
260382	Lucile Souders Elementary	PK05	0	Yes
260383	Mac Williams Middle	608	Yes	Yes
260397	E Melvin Honeycutt Elem	0K05	0	Yes
260398	E E Miller Elementary	PK05	Yes	Yes
260401	Morganton Road Elementary	0K05	0	Yes
260405	Pauline Jones Elementary	PK05	Yes	Yes
260407	Lake Rim Elementary	0K05	Yes	Yes
260410	Ponderosa Elementary	PK05	0	Yes
260414	Benjamin J Martin Elem	PK05	Yes	0
260425	South View Middle	608	Yes	1
260426	Sherwood Park Elementary	PK05	Yes	Yes
260430	Stedman Elementary	205	0	Yes
260432	Stedman Primary	PK01	0	Yes
260449	Walker-Spivey	SPED	Yes	Yes
260456	Alger B Wilkins Elementary	PK05	0	Yes
320315	Eno Valley Elementary	0K05	Yes	Yes
320318	Club Boulevard Elementary	0K05	Yes	0
320319	Creekside Elementary	0K05	1	Yes
320324	Hillandale Elementary	0K05	Yes	Yes
320327	Hope Valley Elementary	0K05	Yes	Yes
320344	Fayetteville Street Elementary	0K05	0	Yes
320362	Parkwood Elementary	0K05	Yes	Yes
320388	W G Pearson Elementary	PK05	Yes	Yes
410307	Edwin A Alderman Elementary	0K05	Yes	Yes
410322	Archer Elementary	0K05	Yes	0

410325	Aycock Middle	608	Yes	1
410334	Brightwood Elementary	PK05	Yes	Yes
410364	Fairview Elementary	PK05	Yes	0
410409	Hunter Elementary	PK05	Yes	0
410478	Murphey Traditional Academy	PK05	0	Yes
410505	Oak View Elementary	0K05	0	Yes
410532	Rankin Elementary	PK05	1	Yes
410538	Sedgefield Elementary	0K05	Yes	Yes
660320	Gaston Middle	608	0	Yes
660356	Squire Elementary	PK05	Yes	0
740330	Creekside Elementary School	0K05	0	Yes
740334	Falkland Elementary	PK05	0	Yes
740380	W H Robinson Elementary	0K05	Yes	Yes
740390	South Greenville Elementary	PK05	1	Yes
740396	Stokes Elementary	PK08	0	Yes
740402	Wellcome Middle	608	Yes	1
740404	Wintergreen Intermediate	306	Yes	Yes
740406	Wintergreen Primary	PK02	Yes	Yes

Table Legend

- Yes School is on the Watch List for entering School Improvement status in this content area in 07-08.
- 0 School is not in School Improvement in this content area and is not on Watch List to enter School Improvement status in 07-08.
- 1 School is already in Year 1 of School Improvement in this content area in 06-07.