




# PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA


DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | Mark Johnson, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*

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**TO** LEA Superintendents  
Charter School Directors

**FROM** Eric Hall, Ed.D.   
Deputy Superintendent of Innovation

Tammy L. Howard, Ph.D.   
Director of Accountability Services

## READ TO ACHIEVE ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS

The Read to Achieve (RTA) legislation allows third-grade students an option to demonstrate reading proficiency through the administration of an alternative assessment of reading comprehension that has been approved by the State Board of Education (SBE). At its September 2018 meeting, the SBE approved alternative assessments that local education agencies (LEAs) may elect to use (at the LEAs' expense) for this purpose during the 2018–19 school year. Results from an alternative assessment cannot be used by an LEA to determine proficiency for current third graders unless the alternative assessment is on the SBE-approved list. Charter schools may elect to use an SBE-approved alternative assessment or an alternative assessment of reading comprehension that is not on the SBE-approved list (at the charter schools' expense).

A chart of the 2018–19 SBE-approved alternative assessments and their achievement levels is attached to this memo. The chart is also posted on the K–3 Literacy Read to Achieve page at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/k-3literacy/achieve/> and on the Division of Accountability Services page at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/readtoachieve>. Proficiency for all of the SBE-approved alternative assessments is a Lexile® level of 725 or higher. By using the common Lexile level scale, the alternative assessments meet the standard reading proficiency at the end of third grade. On the End-of-Grade 3 English Language Arts/Reading Assessment, the minimum sufficient achievement level for proficiency is 439. The 439 achievement level has a Lexile level of 725, which was determined by a Lexile linking study conducted by Metametrics®. The linking study provides a Lexile student/reader measure that aligns to a student's scale score. The Lexile level represents a student's ability not only to make inferential interpretations of the text, but also to answer critical analysis questions about the text.

Alternative assessments used to determine proficiency must be approved by the Superintendent or Charter School Director. LEA/charter school test coordinators must complete and submit the *Read to Achieve Alternative Assessment Notification Form* in NC Education's NCTest Admin by December 1, 2018. The form indicates the alternative assessment(s) that will be used with their current third-grade students. The notification form must be completed even if an LEA or charter school elects **not** to use an alternative assessment of reading comprehension.

### DIVISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY SERVICES

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

The SBE will annually review all alternative assessments to ensure their ongoing relevance, validity, and reliability. In order for the SBE to review an alternative assessment for approval in 2019–20, a linking study must be completed (at the LEAs' expense) through MetaMetrics to determine an achievement level that aligns with the Lexile level of 725. LEAs that would like to request alternative assessments for inclusion must submit their request to Jaime Kelley at [Jaime.Kelley@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:Jaime.Kelley@dpi.nc.gov) by June 28, 2019. The request should include (1) the name of the alternative assessment, (2) the vendor's name and contact information for the requested alternative assessment, (3) the results of the linking study through MetaMetrics, and (4) the name of the LEA/school contact person who can be reached to answer questions and provide additional details concerning the request.

Please share this information locally. If you have questions or need further clarification regarding information contained within this memo, please contact your Regional Accountability Coordinator.

**EH/TLH/jlk**

**c: Mark Johnson, State Superintendent  
Pamela Shue, Deputy Superintendent, Early Education  
William Hussey, Director, Exceptional Children  
Dave Machado, Director, Office of Charter Schools  
Nancy Carolan, Section Chief, Testing Policy and Operations  
Curtis Sonneman, Section Chief, Analysis and Reporting  
Maxey Moore, Section Chief, Test Development  
Jaime Kelley, Consultant, Testing Policy and Operations  
Regional Accountability Coordinators  
LEA Test Coordinators**

**Attachment**

**State Board of Education**  
**Read to Achieve Local Alternative Assessments**  
**2018–19**

The following alternative assessments have been approved by the State Board of Education (SBE) for use by local education agencies (LEAs) at the LEAs' expense. Current third graders must use only the alternative assessments and achievement levels that were established by the SBE on September 6, 2018. Charter schools may elect to use an SBE-approved alternative assessment or to use an alternative assessment that is not on the SBE-approved list at the charters' expense. LEAs/charters must submit documentation to Accountability Services by December 1 of each school year indicating which alternative assessments will be used with students. Please note that LEAs must administer Reading 3D (mClass), adopted by the SBE to meet the requirements of the Read to Achieve (RTA) program, to all students. Level Q is the achievement level for Reading 3D that satisfies the RTA promotion requirement.

Test Name	Lexile Level Provided	SBE-Approved for 2018–19	End-of-Grade 3 Achievement Level 2018–19
Northwest Evaluation System (NWEA) — Measures of Academic Progress	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher (207 scale score)
Scholastic Reading Inventory	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher
STAR Reading	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher (537 scale score)
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher (Level 9 Test at 71 <sup>st</sup> Percentile)
i-Station Benchmarks	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher <sup>1</sup> (258 scale score)
i-Ready	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher (537 scale score)
Discovery Education Grade 3 Summative Assessment	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher (1505 scale score)
Imagine Learning	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher
Achieve3000	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher
Case 21	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher <sup>2</sup>
Edmentum— <i>Exact Path Individualize Learning Solution</i>	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher

<sup>1</sup> Scale score 258 is equal to 720L, which is the closest scale score to 725L. The five-point difference between 720L and 725L is not considered significantly different in reading comprehension.

<sup>2</sup> Case 21 Assessments consist of two parts. Both parts of the assessment must be administered in order to receive a Lexile level. Fifteen items correct is equal to 710L, which is the closest scale score to 725L. The fifteen-point difference between 710L and 725L is not considered significantly different in reading comprehension.