



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | Catherine Truitt, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*

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March 8, 2022

TO LEA Superintendents
Charter School Directors

FROM Catherine Edmonds, Deputy Superintendent
Office of Educational Equity

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Tammy L. Howard, Director
Division of Accountability Services

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TESTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY UPDATES

On December 17, 2021, the U.S. Department of Education (USED) communicated there are no federal waivers from testing or accountability (School Performance Grades) for the 2021–22 school year. However, due to the extraordinary circumstances created by the Coronavirus Disease 2019 pandemic, the USED recognizes with restarting accountability in the 2021–22 school year, there may be impacts where data is not available to fulfill the accountability requirements in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) state plan. To address these impacts, the USED is providing states an opportunity to submit an addendum to their ESSA state plans for the 2021–22 school year. The submitted addendum, approved by the State Board of Education on March 3, 2022, includes modifications to the ESSA state plan for the 2021–22 school year only in the following areas:

- 1) Long-term goals and measurement of interim progress: shifting the timeline forward by two years.
- 2) Participation for high schools only: using current year membership of students in NC Math 1, NC Math 3 and English II to mitigate the negative impact of students who did not participate in testing during the 2020–21 school year.
- 3) Identifying Targeted Support and Improvement Schools Consistently Underperforming Subgroups: using the most recent (2021–22) and the two previous (2017–18 and 2018–19) school years to provide valid data for the identifications.
- 4) Exit criteria for Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools: editing current criteria to (1) remove requirement to meet the interim progress targets and (2) Use the most recent (2021–22) and the previous (2018–19) school years' data.
- 5) Exit schools from Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools: using one-time criteria to exit currently identified schools that (1) are not identified for such status in fall 2022 and (2) have a 2021–22 growth designation of meets or exceeds.

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

- 6) Exit criteria for Schools Receiving Additional Targeted Support: (1) updating the current criteria for a three-year growth designation to meets or exceeds using 2017–18, 2018–19, and 2021–22 school year or (2) using an additional exit criterion of a two-year growth designation of meets or exceeds using 2018–19 and 2021–22 school year.

The addendum was submitted to the USED on March 7, 2022, for approval. The anticipated approval will be communicated to all public school units (PSUs) as soon as it is received.

Cohort Graduation Rate Reminder

Beginning with the 2020–21 school year, the timeline for students to graduate and still be counted as a current year graduate changed from July 15 to August 6. Therefore, going forward, students who graduate on or before August 6 each year can be included as a current year graduate.

Students who graduate on or before August 6 should be included in the Final Graduation Data Verification (GDV) report in PowerSchool. The due date of the 2021–22 Final GDV submission is August 11, 2022, to provide time for these graduates to be included. All public school units must submit the Final GDV by August 11, 2022, even if there are no changes.

Changes that could be made to the Final GDV include:

- 1) Adding students who graduated on or before August 6 not already included in the Preliminary GDV.
- 2) Removing students who did not graduate but were entered as graduates in the Preliminary GDV process

Students who graduate August 7 or later must be added to the next school year's Preliminary GDV.

Innovative Assessment

The development of the innovative assessment continues in the 2022–23 school year with the addition of grades 5 and 8 reading and mathematics through-grade assessments. Students participating in the pilot will take the through-grade assessments during the school year and the end-of-the year flexible summative assessment at the end of the year. The foundation of the innovative assessment model is the NC Check-Ins, which have been given to students across the state since the 2015–16 school year. To align this work and for transparency next school year, the through-grade NC Interims will be called NC Check-Ins 2.0 beginning in the 2022–23 school year. For grades 4, 5, 7, and 8, only NC Check-Ins 2.0 will be available for the 2022–23 school year; NC Check-Ins will not be available for these grades. The specifications for the NC Check-Ins 2.0 are posted at <https://bit.ly/NCPAT>.

The current NC Check-Ins will continue for grades 3 and 6; however, beginning with the 2023–24 school year, all grades 3–8 reading and mathematics NC Check-Ins will be NC Check-Ins 2.0. NC Check-Ins will continue to be available for science grades 5 and 8, biology, and NC Math 1.

NC Check-Ins for NC Math 3 and English II will be available for the first time in the 2022–23 school year.

Year	NC Check-Ins 2.0	NC Check-Ins
2022–23	Grades 4, 5, 7, 8 Reading and Mathematics	Grades 3 and 6 Reading and Mathematics
		Grades 5 and 8 Science
		Biology
		NC Math 1, NC Math 3 (new)
		English II (new)
2023–24	Grades 3-8 Reading and Mathematics	Grades 5 and 8 Science
		Biology
		NC Math 1, NC Math 3
		English II

The NC Check-Ins 2.0 and the flexible summative assessment is designed for online administration. Paper forms are not available for standard administrations. Accommodated versions (braille, large print, and paper) are only available for students with a documented need for accessibility that cannot be accommodated by the online delivery system.

There are no changes to the specifications for NC Check-Ins (available at https://bit.ly/NCCIs_NCDPI).

For the 2022–23 school year, additional innovative assessment pilot volunteers are being accepted. Please contact your regional accountability coordinator for more information.

Testing and Accountability Updates

- 1) In March 2020, the University of North Carolina Board of Governors updated the minimum composite required on the ACT for admission to constituent schools to a composite score of 19. Beginning with the 2021–22 school year, when calculating the ACT/WorkKeys measure in School Performance Grades, as required by state law, and reporting performance on the ACT test, the updated minimum composite will be used. This change is also applied to the ESSA State Plan for the ACT/WorkKeys school quality or student success indicator through the addendum submitted.
- 2) Beginning with the 2021–22 school year, percentiles and the state average scale score for all end-of-grade and end-of-course assessments in reading, mathematics, and science are set on the data from the 2020–21 school year.
- 3) At its February meeting, the State Board of Education approved an exit criterion for the Alternate ACCESS English language proficiency test: A student who scores an overall composite of P1 or higher for two consecutive years, with the first year being the 2021–22 school year, may exit the English Learner status.

LEA Superintendents/Charter School Directors

March 8, 2022

Page 4

- 4) As the transition to online testing continues, scanning and scoring paper tests will be centralized at the North Carolina State University warehouse. Ten school districts are piloting this process in the 2021–22 school year. Additional districts will be added to the pilot in the 2022–23 school year. If you are interested in participating in this pilot, please contact your regional accountability office.
- 5) As a reminder, all required statewide assessments are administered face-to-face; a virtual option is not available.

As always, thank you for your commitment to North Carolina students. If additional information or a discussion is needed, please contact your regional accountability office.

TLH:lm

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