



# NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Catherine Truitt, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*

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July 17, 2024

**TO** LEA Superintendents  
Charter School Directors

**FROM** Michael Maher, Deputy State Superintendent *MM*  
Division of Standards, Accountability, and Research

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## 2024–25 ANNUAL TESTING PROGRAM AND ACCOUNTABILITY REQUIREMENTS

In preparation for the 2024–25 school year, this memo provides affirmation and clarification of processes, procedures, and requirements for the Annual Testing Program and the accountability system. This memo has two sections: (1) Updates and (2) Standard Operating Procedures and Information.

### Updates

#### ***Delayed Science End-of-Grade (EOG) and Biology End-of-Course (EOC) Scores***

The new North Carolina Science Standard Course of Study and Extended Content Standards adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE) in July 2023 will be implemented in the 2024–25 school year. With the implementation of new science content standards, a new edition of EOG and EOC general and alternate assessments in grades 5, 8, and biology will be developed and administered during the 2024–25 school year. In the summer of 2025, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) will conduct standard setting workshops to recommend new academic achievement levels for all new science assessments. Final recommended academic achievement levels will be presented to the SBE for approval in August 2025.

All scores for EOG and EOC science grades 5, 8, and biology for general and alternate assessments will be delayed until the SBE approves new achievement levels in August 2025. NC Admin Rule 16 06D .0309 states, “(c) PSUs shall adopt policies and use results from all EOCs as a minimum of 20 percent of the student's final grade for each respective course with the exception of... (3) students enrolled in a course during the initial implementation year of the new EOC for that course where proficiency scores are not available due to standard setting.” For the 2024–25 school year, students’ final grades for biology will not include the EOC test score.

The test specifications and the released forms for the new science assessments will be available in mid-August.

### OFFICE OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND TESTING

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

The February 2025 administration of biology for Credit by Demonstrated Mastery will not be available, and the results of the July 2025 administration of biology for Credit by Demonstrated Mastery will be delayed until early September 2025.

### ***New Designated Feature***

Beginning with the 2024–25 school year, students may receive test read-aloud (in English) on mathematics and science tests as a designated feature. Designated features are part of North Carolina’s *Accessibility Framework* and are available to certain students when the need has been indicated by an educator (or a team of educators) who are familiar with the student. It is best practice to only recommend the read aloud designated feature for students who consistently use similar features during classroom instruction. The read aloud designated feature is not allowed on the grades 3–8 reading tests or the English II test.

Also, for the 2024–25 school year, NCTest will undergo a change in architecture impacting the read aloud functionality. Content that is read aloud will be rendered locally, as opposed to being composed of audio files downloaded to the student's device during the test. This is based on the Web Speech API, currently supported on Chrome, Edge, Firefox and Safari. Public school units (PSUs) are encouraged to test this new functionality within NCTest prior to administering assessments.

### ***North Carolina Personalized Assessment Tool (NCPAT) Status***

During the 2023–24 school year, the NCPAT redesigned EOG tests in reading and mathematics were administered statewide in grades 4, 5, 7, and 8. During the 2024–25 school year, the NCPAT redesigned EOG tests will include the reading and mathematics EOGs in grades 3 and 6 and science EOGs in grades 5 and 8. This is the final phase of the statewide implementation of NCPAT.

### ***Two-Factor Authentication***

Effective July 19, 2024, NC Education will require two-factor authentication for access. On that date, <https://center.ncsu.edu/ncauth> will allow you to set up an authenticator and will provide instructions to complete the process.

### ***WIDA Alternate ACCESS Test Scores Delay***

The 2023–24 school year was the first operational administration for WIDA Alternate ACCESS tests. As with the first implementation year for an assessment, WIDA will convene educators and conduct standard setting in summer 2024 and finalize the scale in fall 2024. Student level scores, including individual score reports (ISRs), will not be available until fall 2024. However, for accountability reports, the 2023–24 WIDA Alternate ACCESS results will be generated using a crosswalk to the current scale. This data will be used for the school performance grade analysis and to determine if a student met the progress target or exit criteria. This information will be shared with PSUs.

For 2024–25 accountability and reporting, the NCDPI will recommend new exit criteria based on the new WIDA Alternate ACCESS scale. Once approved by the SBE, the new progress targets and exit criteria will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education as part of the ESSA state plan for approval. The new progress targets and exit criteria will be applied to the 2024–25 WIDA Alternate ACCESS test results.

***Extended ACCESS for ELLs and Testing Window***

The ACCESS for ELLs and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs test window has been extended by two weeks. The 2024–25 testing window is January 13 through March 14, 2025.

***WIDA ACCESS Kindergarten Field Test***

The WIDA ACCESS Kindergarten Field Test will be administered January 21 through March 28, 2025. Participation in the Kindergarten ACCESS Field Test administrations is voluntary and will be organized by WIDA through upcoming recruitment efforts. Schools that would like to take part in the field test administration should indicate their willingness during the WIDA recruitment period. WIDA will offer incentives to schools participating in this field test administration.

***NCEXTEND1 Item Tryout***

To support the development of the science NCEXTEND1 alternate assessment for grades 5, 8, and biology, an item tryout for all NCEXTEND1 students will be held in January 2025. Each student will respond to approximately five to ten items.

***Phase I Implementation of the new North Carolina Student Information System (NCSIS Phase I PSUs)***

The new NCSIS will not support digital ISRs in the 2024–25 school year. If a PSU is participating in Phase 1 of the NCSIS, it will not be possible to release ISRs to a parent, legal guardian, or student portal until that feature is available in the new NCSIS.

Phase 1 PSUs must distribute paper ISRs to parents and legal guardians until the digital process is developed and implemented unless the PSU has established a different means of electronic distribution.

***ACT Testing Formats***

The NCDPI requires administrations of the PreACT, The ACT, and ACT WorkKeys to all eligible students. Beginning with the fall 2024 test administration, the PreACT will be available via online and paper format. Test format is a local decision for both the PreACT and the ACT; however, online administrations are encouraged. ACT WorkKeys test administrations are required online unless a paper format is necessary for students with a documented need for accessibility purposes.

***Accountability End-of-Year Date***

Annually, the end of year date for the accountability data collection is July 6. When July 6 falls on a weekend the end of year data collection is due the following Monday. Therefore, the accountability data collection end-of-year date for the 2024–25 school year is July 7, 2025.

***NC Education: Help Desk and Availability***

NC Education is not available December 23, 2024, through January 1, 2025.

In order to reset the NC Education testing management platform for the 2025–26 school year, the NCTest and NCAdmin systems will not be available July 9–15, 2025. During this time, it will not be possible to administer any state-designated tests or review reports. Paper testing will not be available during this time, and schools should plan accordingly.

## **Standard Operating Procedures and Information**

### ***Requests for Testing Exceptions Based on Significant Medical Emergencies and/or Conditions***

There may be rare instances in which a student is unable to participate in a state assessment during the testing window, including makeup dates, because of a significant medical emergency and/or

condition. Examples include, but are not limited to, circumstances involving students who are (1) in the final stages of a terminal or degenerative illness, (2) comatose, or (3) receiving extensive short-term medical treatment due to a medical emergency. Under these circumstances, a school may request a testing exception for the student from the Office of Accountability and Testing. If a medical exception is granted, the student remains enrolled in the school during the test window; however, the student does not take the assessment(s), and the student is not included when calculating participation rates.

When submitting medical exception requests, it is important to remember that the medical exception committee provides a decision about the removal of the student's data from the school's denominator (given the supporting documentation and the details of the request). The school should make the decision to test a student based on the medical condition or emergency, not on approval of a medical exception request. Districts and schools should not wait for a medical exception decision before determining to test a student; however, if the student is not tested and the medical exception is denied, the student will be included in the participation calculation.

Attached to this memo is the process for requesting testing exceptions based on significant medical emergencies and/or conditions for the 2024–25 school year. Failure to adhere to this process or include all requested information may result in the need to resubmit the request or cause a delay in the response. All requests must be submitted for consideration through the *Online Medical Exception Request System* in NC Education's NCTest Admin. The requests must be submitted by the PSU test coordinator and be approved by the superintendent or school director.

### ***Adherence to the 10/20 Day Rule***

Per [16 N.C. Admin Code 06D. 0309](#), "Public school students may drop a course with a required EOC test within the first 10 days of enrollment in a semester block schedule or within the first 20 days of enrollment in a yearlong traditional schedule. Students who are enrolled for credit after the 10/20 days, regardless of course delivery (e.g., traditional classroom, NC Virtual Public School, vendor-based online) shall not drop a course with a required EOC test and shall participate in the appropriate EOC test at the completion of the course."

Exceptions to the 10/20 day rule are allowed when it is in the best interest of the student to be removed from a course requiring an EOC test. These cases should be evaluated individually, and consideration should be given to ensure the accountability of the school is not compromised. Some examples of acceptable individual student withdrawals after the first 10/20 days of enrollment include the following:

- *Transfer student inappropriately placed in an EOC course.* If a student transfers into a school and his or her records do not arrive until after the first 10/20 days to inform a proper placement decision, the school has the latitude to withdraw the student from the EOC course and place the student in the appropriate course.

- *Student is withdrawn from a course to enroll in a higher-level course.* Occasionally, a student may be better served to withdraw from an EOC course and enroll in a higher-level course. In such cases, the student takes the appropriate test for the higher-level course; the school remains accountable through the higher-level course. Students must not be withdrawn from an EOC course and enrolled in a higher-level course within the last six weeks of the course.
- *There is a valid medical reason for removing a student from an EOC course.* In rare cases, an individual student may be deemed medically fragile because of a significant medical emergency or condition, such as an accident, that incapacitates the student for an extended period of time. In such instances, it may be in the student's best interest to be withdrawn from a course.

The principal of the school should review each case individually and decide in consultation with the PSU test coordinator, teacher, and parent or legal guardian whether withdrawal from the course is necessary. If it is determined the student should be withdrawn from the course (after the first 10/20 days), the school must submit documentation and request approval from the Senior Director of the Office of Accountability and Testing using the *Process for Notification of Withdrawals after the 10/20 Days* in NC Education. Schools should consult with the regional accountability office if there are questions about student eligibility or a specific situation not listed.

- *Process for Notification of Withdrawals after 10/20 Days.* 10/20 Day Withdrawal Requests are submitted through NC Education's NCTest Admin. PSU test coordinators select "10/20 Day Withdrawal Request" from the right main menu and dropdown link. Complete the "Submit Request" tab. Please ensure supporting documentation (outlined below) is attached to the request before selecting the "submit" button at the bottom of the request form.
- *Supporting Documentation.* For all withdrawal requests, enrollment documentation is required (PowerSchool enrollment report and historical transcript). Some requests may need additional documentation for review (e.g., evidence of prior credit for a course [transcript, student score report], medical documentation, letter or notes from the homebound teacher).

Once a decision has been made, a response email will be generated through the online system for each request. This email will be addressed to the PSU test coordinator and copied to the regional accountability coordinator.

- If the request is approved, the school must notify the parent or legal guardian and the student in writing of any change to EOC testing requirements. Immediately following this notification, the school must remove the student from the course and change the student's schedule to reflect the new course code in PowerSchool. The school must ensure the student no longer attends the previously scheduled class and attends the new class. All documents pertaining to course withdrawals after the first 10/20 days must be kept on file by the PSU.
- If a request is denied, the student's original course code will be included in the school's accountability. Students who are removed from a course with a corresponding EOC requirement after the 10th day of the semester, or the 20th day of a year-long course, without the Office of Accountability and Testing's approval, will count against participation rates as not tested.

Requests should be submitted as soon as the school is aware of the need, rather than waiting until the end of the year to submit requests when reviewing school data.

### ***English II End-of-Course Delayed Scoring***

English II EOC tests include multiple-choice, technology-enhanced, and student-written constructed response questions. The constructed response questions are hand scored, and the time required to

send the answers to the vendor and to complete the scoring process has an impact on the timeline for score return. Schools are advised to administer the English II EOC test as early in the test window as possible to facilitate optimal return of the scores.

For English II EOC testing, the vendor begins scoring the first business day after test records are received and returns the scored test records electronically to the NCDPI within approximately six business days of starting the scoring process. An additional day is required for processing the files from the scoring vendor to the NCDPI. Therefore, test coordinators should allow approximately seven business days to receive test records.

The attached table, *English II EOC Constructed Response Return Dates for 2024–25* summarizes the scoring windows and score return times for the 2024–25 assessment year.

### ***2024–25 Summer Programs***

For the 2024–25 school year, PSUs may administer the EOG and EOC tests during summer programs to students who do not have a proficient test score from the current school year. All summer programs must have local board approval.

As in previous years, the re-administration scores will **not** be included in growth analyses for school accountability or for educator effectiveness. However, the higher score will be included in proficiency calculations for school accountability. The 2024–25 accountability year ends on July 7, 2025. Summer program EOG and EOC re-administration scores uploaded to the Annual Testing Program by July 7, 2025, will be included in the 2024–25 school year accountability calculations. Summer program sessions with test scores uploaded to the Annual Testing Program after July 7, 2025, will be included in the 2025–26 school year accountability analyses.

As a reminder, no SBE policy exists that allows retesting. The inclusion of re-administration scores in the 2024–25 school year accountability reports recognize summer programs are an additional learning opportunity that occurs outside of the regular academic calendar.

There are three ways students may participate in summer programs, take the associated EOG or EOC test, and have those results included in the accountability analyses for proficiency:

1. Repeating elements of a course or subject for the purpose of improving functional skills or to access an enrichment opportunity (EOG and EOC): There is not an SBE policy for this option; however, this opportunity is available to students who pass the course or subject but scored Not Proficient on the associated EOG or EOC test. These students do not earn credit, and the initial grade is not replaced.

2. Credit recovery (EOC only): As specified in SBE policy CCRE-001, *Course for Credit* (attached), enrollment in credit recovery is limited to students who have completed and failed a course. Credit recovery courses only provide a subset of the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* (NCSCOS) for the original course. The length of the course must be based on the skills and knowledge the student needs to recover rather than a certain amount of seat time. When credit recovery is exercised, the original record of the course completion and failure remains on the transcript. No later than thirty days after completing a credit recovery course, students may be administered the associated EOC test for those courses with an EOC test.
3. Repeating a course for credit (EOC only): As specified in SBE policy CCRE-001, repeating a course for credit is limited to students who have completed and failed a course unless the local board of education has developed policies that define specific circumstances when students other than those who have failed a course may repeat a course for credit. When students repeat a course for credit, the entire NCSCOS for that course is taught to the student for a second time. Students who have already scored at Level 3, 4, or 5 on the associated EOC test may elect either to retake the EOC or to use the previous passing EOC score as at least twenty percent of their final grade. If a student retakes the EOC test, the higher of the two scores is used in the calculation of the final grade. For students who initially fail a high school course and repeat the course for credit, upon completion of the repeated course, the new course grade replaces the previous grade for the course. When a student repeats a course for credit and passes the course, the student only earns credit towards graduation once.

The distinction between credit recovery and repeating a course for credit is that the latter is for a student wishing to modify his or her grade point average (GPA). Repeating a course for credit allows students who initially fail a high school course and repeat the course for credit to have the initial grade replaced with the subsequent grade. Repeating a course for credit is also intended for students who need to repeat an entire course versus a select portion of a course. In credit recovery, students receive a grade of pass (P) or fail (F), and the P or F does not affect the student's GPA. The student retains the original record of the course being completed and failed on his/her transcript for credit recovery.

When providing a summer program, PSUs must also adhere to the following NCDPI requirements:

- Summer program remediation and re-administrations of the EOG and EOC tests must occur after the conclusion of the student academic year (i.e., after students have been dismissed for the regular school year) but can occur on teacher workdays.
- Schools offering a summer program must have a written plan for the 2024–25 school year that has been signed and approved by their local board. A copy of the 2024–25 board-approved plan must be sent to the regional accountability office by April 4, 2025.
  - Plans should include, but are not limited to:
    - the purpose of the program,
    - who is eligible to attend,
    - the dates the program will occur, to include days for remediation and re-administrations,
    - the length (hours and minutes) provided daily for remediation and re-administrations,
    - security of test materials, and
    - a testing plan.

- Online administrations are required for all summer program re-administrations of the EOG and EOC tests. (Students who require a paper test format due to accessibility purposes will be provided paper versions of the test during summer program.)
- Tests that are available for summer program re-administrations include only the following:
  - EOG grades 4–8 reading (grade 3 reading is not part of summer program due to Read to Achieve requirements),
  - EOG grades 3–8 mathematics,
  - EOC English II, NC Math 1, and NC Math 3,
  - NCEXTEND1 grades 3–8 reading and mathematics, and
  - NCEXTEND1 grade 10 English II, and NC Math 1.
- Schools must notify parents and legal guardians about the summer program including the dates it will occur, its purpose, and who is eligible to attend.
- **Student participation is voluntary. Parents or legal guardians must make the final decision regarding a student’s summer program attendance. Students must be held harmless if they do not participate in summer programs.**
- Students who do not attend any summer program remediation must not be permitted to participate in the re-administration opportunity. This should be addressed in the PSU summer program plan approved by the local board.

Note: The EOG Reading test at grade 3 is not available for re-administration during summer programs. The Read to Achieve (RtA) General Statute §115C-83.8(a) states that “Parents or guardians of students not demonstrating reading proficiency shall be encouraged to enroll their student in a reading camp provided by the local school administrative unit. Parents or guardians of a student not demonstrating reading proficiency shall make the final decision regarding a student's reading camp attendance.” The reading camp program has specific parameters and funding provided to PSUs. The RtA reading camps must be separate from summer programs; RtA camps are not impacted by the allowances in this memo.

Please share the annual testing updates information found in this memo and the attachments locally. If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact your regional accountability office.

MM:TLH

c: Catherine Truitt, State Superintendent  
Derrick Jordan, Deputy State Superintendent, Educator and Student Advancement  
Jeremy Gibbs, Deputy State Superintendent, District and School Support Services  
Carol Ann Hudgens, Senior Director, Office of Exceptional Children  
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Regional Accountability Coordinators  
Test Coordinators

Attachments: Process for Medical Exceptions  
English II EOC Constructed Response Return Dates for 2024–25  
Policy CCRE-001 (Course for Credit)



## Process for Requesting Testing Exceptions Based on Significant Medical Emergencies and/or Conditions

The following steps outline the process for requesting testing exceptions based on significant medical emergencies and/or conditions for the 2024–25 school year. Failure to adhere to this process or include all requested information may result in the need to resubmit the request or cause a delay in response.

1. Public school unit (PSU) superintendents or directors must support the appeal.
2. The parent or legal guardian must give the PSU consent for submission of the request.
3. The PSU test coordinator will submit an online request to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) through the *Online Medical Exception Request System* in NC Education's NCTest Admin.
4. The online request must include the following information:
  - **Semester**
  - **School Name**
  - **Student Name**
  - **Administration Type** (e.g., Standard or NCEXTEND1)
  - **Test(s) Requested** (multiple tests may be requested)
  - **Student Type** (indicate if the student has a current Individualized Education Program (IEP), current Section 504 Plan, transitory impairment documentation, and/or Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP).
  - **Test Window** (school test window)
  - **Date of Onset of the emergency and/or condition**
  - **Expected Duration/Recovery Period**
  - **Days of Instruction Missed** (include the student's current attendance record)
  - **Homebound** (indicate if the student is homebound and include the student's homebound documentation)  
Students receiving homebound services are expected to take all state mandated tests. Homebound testing processes and procedures can be found in the *North Carolina Test Coordinator's Policies and Procedures Handbook*.
  - **Medical Issue**  
Briefly describe the student's current medical condition(s).
  - **Description of how the medical issue/condition prevents participation in the respective test(s)**  
Briefly describe how the medical issue/condition impacts daily instruction/classroom participation and prevents participation in the respective test administration(s). This explanation should include sufficient details and documented data (scanned attachments) that provides the review committee a thorough understanding of the implications of the emergency and/or condition on the student's ability to test.
  - **Parent Notification** (indicate yes or no if parent has been notified)
  - **Affirmation** (approval by the PSU superintendent or director to submit the request)

- **Supporting Documents**

All requests must be accompanied by supporting documentation dated within the current school year. Supporting documentation is necessary in the event the Annual Testing Program is audited. If information is expired or missing from the request, a resubmission may be required. Only the following types of documentation are accepted.

- **Attendance Record:** Upload a detailed attendance record for each student.
- **IEP, BIP, Section 504 Plan, Homebound Documentation:** If a student has a current IEP, Section 504 Plan, transitory impairment documentation, and/or BIP, the most recent version of the full documentation must be scanned and accompany the request.
  - **IEP:** Upload a complete copy of the current IEP (including present levels of performance, IEP goals, special education services, etc.) to this request.
  - **BIP:** Upload a complete copy of the current BIP as well as the Functional Behavioral Assessment.
  - **Section 504 Plan:** Upload a copy of the current Section 504 documentation.
  - **Homebound Documentation:** Upload the student's homebound documentation including the dates of homebound services, the provider's signature and PSU leadership signature(s). Medical exception requests for students in a homebound setting require justification and supporting documentation that clearly details the reason(s) the student is unable to access or participate in testing in the homebound setting.
- **Medical Documentation:** Significant medical emergencies and/or conditions should be supported by uploading current school year medical documentation that may include, but is not limited to:
  - a referral for medical treatment or statement of hospital confinement,
  - concussion form,
  - statements of treatment from medical providers/facilities,
  - seizure logs, or
  - doctor's notes with a provider's signature.

These documents must be legible, include the current school year date, and clearly address the student's medical condition and limitations that prevent the student from testing. These documents should not violate the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Notes from doctors and medical professionals must include a signature and must address and/or explain the impact of the condition on the student but should not provide a testing recommendation.

If information is missing in the request, a resubmission may be required.

The Office of Accountability and Testing and the Annual Testing Program do not process the following medical exception submissions:

- Requests for field test administrations. It is a local decision as to how requests for medical exceptions are to be processed for field tests.
- Requests for Career and Technical Education (CTE) Proofs of Learning (POL). These include: CTE state assessments, third party assessments, local assessments, CTE indicator POL assessments, credentials, and performance-based measures. The CTE Office, Reporting and Assessment section determines special exceptions for these courses. Contact

Misty Wolfe, [misty.wolfe@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:misty.wolfe@dpi.nc.gov) for questions or concerns about CTE POL medical exceptions.

#### **Medical Exceptions Submission Timeline for 2024–25**

<b>Testing Window</b>	<b>Deadline for Submission</b>
Fall testing window	February 28, 2025
Spring testing window	June 27, 2025

5. Submit requests for consideration through the *Online Medical Exception Request System* in NC Education’s NCTest Admin. Do not email, mail, or fax requests.
6. The NCDPI will provide an email response with a statement of the decision to the PSU test coordinator. This email will only identify the student by the assigned “Request ID #” in the *Online Medical Exception Request System*.
7. Students who are approved for a testing exception are coded for data analysis purposes by the NCDPI.
8. Any exception granted by the NCDPI is limited to the testing period for the specific test(s) for which it was requested and does not carry forward to future test administrations, unless noted in the NCDPI decision.

PSUs are encouraged to submit requests as early in the school year as possible. Due to the increase of requests submitted during end-of-year testing, processing will occur as soon as possible, but PSUs should expect a delay in response. With that in mind, it is important for PSUs to make decisions about testing students based on what is appropriate for the student during the testing window, not on approval or denial of a medical exception request.

It is the expectation of the NCDPI that only those students who the PSU believes are unable to participate in a state assessment due to a medical emergency or condition are submitted for consideration. Students who are granted a medical exception shall not be reported or counted in the school, district, or state test scores and will not be included in the calculation of the 95 percent tested rule. In addition, students who are granted an exception are required to meet all state and local graduation requirements before receiving a high school diploma.

Please be reminded that any written material containing personally identifiable student information shall not be disseminated or otherwise made available to the public by any member of the State Board of Education, any employee of the State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, any employee of the NCDPI, any member of a local board of education, any employee of a local board of education, or any other person, except as permitted under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. §1232g.

Contact your regional accountability office with questions regarding requests for testing exceptions based on significant medical emergencies and/or conditions.

## EOC English II Constructed Response Return Dates for 2024–25

Test Cycle Window	Testing Window Opens	Scoring Begins <sup>1</sup>	Return Time for Scores <sup>2</sup>	Testing Window Closes (NCTest Closes) <sup>3</sup>
<b>Summer School 2024 (Late)<sup>4</sup></b>	June 20, 2024	June 21, 2024	Approximately 7 business days	August 26, 2024
<b>Summer 2024 CDM (July)<sup>4</sup></b>	July 19, 2024	July 22, 2024		August 1, 2024
<b>Fall Flexible</b>	September 10, 2024	September 11, 2024 <b>Vendor scoring will pause December 20, 2024–Jan 1, 2025</b>		February 3, 2025
<b>Fall 2024 CDM (September)</b>	September 17, 2024	September 18, 2024		September 30, 2024
<b>Fall 2024</b>	November 19, 2024	November 20, 2024 <b>Vendor scoring will pause December 20, 2024–Jan 1, 2025</b>		February 3, 2025
<b>Spring 2025 CDM (February)</b>	February 18, 2025	February 19, 2025		March 3, 2025
<b>Spring Flexible</b>	February 25, 2025	February 26, 2025		June 26, 2025
<b>Spring 2025</b>	April 24, 2025	April 25, 2025		June 26, 2025

<sup>1</sup> Tests are scored in order of receipt. Test records are scored independent of each other and will not be organized by public school unit, school, or classroom.

<sup>2</sup> The score return timeline begins with the first business day following the receipt of the test records to be scored.

<sup>3</sup> Online test administrations and coding must be completed before 7:00 p.m. Online test records received after this date will not be scored until the next online test record scoring window.

<sup>4</sup> NCTest and NC Education will be unavailable from July 11–18, 2024, for maintenance.

**Policy CCRE-001: Course for Credit**

**Status:** ADOPTED

**Original Adopted Date:** 09/07/2017 | **Last Revised Date:** 06/06/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 06/06/2024

**NORTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Policy Manual**

Item	Description
Policy Title	Course for Credit
Policy Category	Course for Credit (CCRE)
Policy ID	CCRE-001
Policy Date	06/06/2024
Previous Policy Dates	05/05/1988, 08/02/2001, 02/07/2002, 12/05/2002, 07/01/2004, 11/04/2004, 05/03/2007, 06/05/2008, 06/04/2009, 10/01/2009, 12/02/2010, 12/06/2012, 12/06/2012, 12/06/2012, 12/05/2013, 05/01/2014, 08/06/2015, 11/05/2015, 02/02/2017, 06/01/2017, 09/07/2017, 06/07/2018, 02/07/2019, 06/06/2019, 05/13/2021, 07/06/2023
Statutory Reference	GS 115C-8

- Each local board of education shall ensure that all required and elective courses have sufficient rigor, breadth, and depth to be awarded high school credit, in accordance with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.
- A high school principal shall award course credit toward high school graduation based upon a student's demonstration of sufficient mastery of the standards for a course as defined in the NC Standard Course of Study. Current graduation requirements are found in SBE policy GRAD-004.

2.1 Credit toward high school graduation may be awarded for: high school courses included in the NC Standard Course of Study, including those provided by the NC Virtual Public School; Advancement Placement courses; International Baccalaureate courses; Cambridge International Examination courses; locally developed high school courses; and public university, community college, and private college-courses.

2.2 Course instructors shall provide instruction on the complete standards for the course as outlined in the NC Standard Course of Study, the Advanced Placement syllabus, the International Baccalaureate syllabus, or the locally-developed course syllabus, as appropriate.

2.3 Credit for the following courses must be earned through the high school (Grade 9 and beyond) except where indicated otherwise:

**English**

- English I: This credit may be earned prior to Grade 9 as part of an accelerated plan;
- English II: This credit shall be earned in the high school, Grade 9 or beyond;
- English III and English IV: These credits may be earned with appropriate college-level course(s).

**Math**

- NC Math 1, NC Math 2, and NC Math 3: These credits may be prior to Grade 9 as part of an accelerated plan;
- The fourth math credit may be earned in middle school or with an appropriate college-level course(s);
- Students seeking to complete minimum course requirements for UNC institutions must successfully complete four mathematics courses that include a mathematics course with NC Math 3 as a pre-requisite.

**Science**

- Earth/environmental science: This credit may be earned prior to Grade 9 as part of an accelerated plan or with an appropriate college-level course(s);
- Physical science: This credit may be earned prior to Grade 9 as part of an accelerated plan or with an appropriate college-level course(s);
- Biology: This credit may be earned prior to Grade 9 as part of an accelerated plan or with an appropriate college-level course(s).

**Social studies**

For students who entered Grade 9 for the first time between 2014-2015 and 2019-2020:

- American History: Founding Principles, Civics and Economics: This credit may be earned in middle school. This course must follow the NCSCOS in its entirety and may not be satisfied by an Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), or Cambridge International Examination (CIE) course, dual enrollment or any other course that does not fully address the NCSCOS.
- World History: This credit may be earned in middle school or with an appropriate college-level course(s);
- American History I and American History II: These credits may be earned in middle school or with an appropriate college-level course(s).
- Economics and Personal Finance: This credit shall be earned in high school, grade 9 and beyond.

For students who enter Grade 9 for the first time in 2020-21 and beyond:

- American History: This credit may be earned prior to grade 9 as part of an accelerated plan or with an appropriate college-level course(s);
- The Founding Principles of the United States of America and North Carolina: Civic Literacy: This credit may be earned prior to grade 9 as part of an accelerated plan or with an appropriate college-level course(s);
- World History: This credit may be earned prior to grade 9 as part of an accelerated plan or with an appropriate college-level course(s);
- Economics and Personal Finance: This credit shall only be earned in high school, grade 9 and beyond.

#### Health and Physical Education

- The health and physical education credit may be earned with an appropriate college-level course(s). Refer to 2.4 below;
- The CPR requirement may be met through instruction in the middle school, or by providing documentation of successful completion of an instructional program and/or test approved by the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross. [see GS §115C-81 (e1)]

#### Computer Science

For students who enter Grade 9 for the first time in 2026-27:

- The computer science credit may be earned prior to grade 9 as part of an accelerated plan or with an appropriate college-level course(s).

#### Electives and other credits

- Elective credits may be earned with an appropriate college/university college-level course(s); World Language credits may be earned in middle school or with an appropriate college/university college-level course(s).
- Credit requirements added in the future may be earned in middle school for disciplines where such credit is currently allowed (English, math, science, social studies, and world languages), or with an appropriate college/university college-level course(s), unless explicitly prohibited in this or other State Board of Education policies.

Note: Graduation requirements are determined when a student enters Grade 9 for the first time. High school courses may be taken prior to Grade 9 with an accelerated plan as outlined above for high school course credits. These credits may satisfy specific graduation course requirements if those courses are part of the graduation requirements as outlined in GRAD-004 when a student enters Grade 9.

2.4 Students may earn dual credit for any high school course and meet graduation requirements using an appropriate college course or combination of college courses. Principals shall award dual credit according to the Career and College Promise program guidelines established by the Department of Public Instruction (DPI). For courses not addressed by DPI guidance, a principal may award dual credit for a college course if an evaluation of the course content against NC Standard Course of Study requirements demonstrates that the college course offers substantial coverage of the high school course standards.

2.5 Prior to 2018-19 academic school year, college and university courses shall earn high school dual credit as specified below:

Semester Hours Credit***	High School Credits
1-4*	1
5-8**	2
9 or more**	3

\*For college courses having an associated lab component (such as math or foreign language lab), the combination of the course and the lab count as a single course and earn one credit only.

\*\* These occur only in certain Career and Technical Education courses.

\*\*\* High school credit applies to college courses in college curriculum programs.

2.6 Beginning with the 2018-19 academic school year, college and university courses shall earn high school dual credit as specified below:

College Semester Hours Credit	High School Credits
1-2	0
3-4	1
5-8	2
9 or more	3

College credit is determined by the course credit value indicated officially by the college system, such as, the Combined Course Library for the NC Community College System. College class hours and lab hours shall not be combined to equal high school course credit. However, college course credit may be combined when two or more courses of one or two semester hour credits are taken in the same academic year.

High school credit applies to college courses in college curriculum programs.

Effective 2019-20, high school credit may be awarded for articulated Career and College Promise (CCP) Workforce Continuing Education pathways that have been approved by the CCP Leadership Team (CCPLT) and do not duplicate efforts by the high school. The CCPLT consists of representatives from NCDPI Career and Technical Education Advanced Learning and Gifted Education Divisions and Community College System Office representatives from Workforce Continuing Education, Career and Technical Education, and Academic Programs.

3. Students in grades 6-8 who pass English I and/or mathematics, science, social studies, or world language courses that are described in and aligned to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study for grades 9-12 may use the course(s) to meet high school graduation requirements. Such course(s) shall count toward meeting graduation requirements and the number of credits required to graduate, and shall appear on the high school transcript. These courses shall not be included in the calculation of students' high school Grade Point Average (GPA). Student GPA shall be computed only with courses taken during high school.

4. An e-learning course qualifies for course credit if it meets the following requirements:

4.1 Local Education Agencies (LEAs) may partner with eligible providers of e-learning opportunities other than the North Carolina Virtual Public School. Eligible providers shall meet all of the following:

- Be accredited by a regional accrediting agency such as, but not limited to, AdvancEd or the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).
- Employ teachers who hold teaching licenses from states that participate in the NASDTEC Educator Identification Clearinghouse.
- Ensure that courses offered to North Carolina students are aligned to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.

4.2 Where available, EOG tests, EOC tests, and post-assessments must be used as an indicator of student mastery. The student's base school schedules and administers EOC and EOG tests. These scores shall be included in the determination of the base school's state and federal accountability reports.

4.3 Enrollment in an e-learning "for credit course" shall count towards satisfying local board requirements related to minimum instructional days, seat time policies, student attendance, athletic and/or extracurricular obligations. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are instructed to be purposeful in establishing processes and procedures to enroll and manage such e-learning students in an environment where they can be successful.

5. Credit may not be awarded for school bus driving, office assistance, teacher assistance, or laboratory assistance.

6. Credit recovery shall be governed by the following definitions and parameters:

#### Credit Recovery

6.1 The term "credit recovery" will be used to refer to a block of instruction that is less than the entirety of the Standard Course of Study for that course. Credit recovery delivers a subset of the Standard Course of Study or blueprint of the original course in order to specifically address deficiencies in a student's mastery of the course and target specific components of a course necessary for completion.

6.2 The length of credit recovery courses shall be dictated by the skills and knowledge the student needs to recover and not be a fixed length of seat time. When credit recovery is exercised, the original record of the course being completed and failed will remain on the transcript.

6.3 The LEA shall allow a grade pass or a fail for each credit recovery course. The mark will not affect the student's GPA.

6.4 A student wishing to modify his or her GPA shall repeat a course for credit and not seek a credit recovery solution.

6.5 A local school board may not limit the number of credit recovery courses taken by a student prior to graduation.

6.6 The End-of-Course (EOC) exam associated with the credit recovery course may be administered no later than 30 days upon the completion of the credit recovery course.

6.7 By the beginning of 2019-20 school year, the LEA shall develop local policy and procedures addressing the implementation of credit recovery opportunities across the school district to support student achievement. At a minimum, credit recovery policies and procedures shall address factors for student participation, content alignment to original course, instructional delivery methods and a process to ensure consistency in implementation across the district.

7. Repeating a course for credit shall be governed by the following definitions and parameters

Repeating a Course for Credit

7.1 The term "repeating a course for credit" will be used to refer to a high school course repeated via any delivery method when the entire Standard Course of Study for that course is being taught to the student for a second time.

7.2 Students are permitted to repeat a course for credit when they have failed a course. Local boards of education may develop policies that define specific circumstances when students other than those who fail a course may repeat a course for credit.

7.3 Students repeating a course for credit shall receive a grade and take the associated End-of-Course (EOC) assessment. Those students who have already scored at Level 3, 4, or 5 on the associated EOC assessment may elect either to retake the EOC or use the previous passing EOC score as at least 20% of their final grade. If the student retakes the EOC, the higher of the two scores will be used in the calculation of the final grade.

7.4 Beginning in 2015–16, for students who initially fail a high school course and repeat the course for credit, upon completion of the repeated course, the new course grade shall replace the previous grade for the course.

7.5 When a student repeats a course for credit and passes the course, the student only earns credit towards graduation once.

8. Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM)

8.1 Credit by Demonstrated Mastery is the process by which LEAs shall, based upon a body-of-evidence, award a student credit in a particular course without requiring the student to complete classroom instruction for a certain amount of seat time.

8.2 "Mastery" is defined as a student's command of course material at a level that demonstrates a deep understanding of the content standards and application of knowledge.

8.3 Credit by Demonstrated Mastery shall be available for all NC students in grades 9-12 for high school courses and in grades 6-8 for high school courses offered in middle school. LEAs may choose to make CDM available for students in grades 6-8 for middle grades content.

8.4 Students shall demonstrate mastery through a multi-phase assessment, consisting of (1) a standard examination, which shall be the EOC/EOG where applicable, or a final exam developed locally and (2) an artifact which requires the student to apply knowledge and skills relevant to the content standards. LEAs may require additional requirements, such as performance tasks. This multi-phase assessment process builds a body-of-evidence that allows a committee to determine if the student has a deep understanding of the standards for the course or subject area, as defined by the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, thereby earning credit for the course without experiencing it in the school setting.

8.5 DPI shall develop implementation guidelines for this policy. These guidelines shall provide guidance for LEAs regarding scoring of assessments as well as local implementation. The guidelines shall establish minimum scores for the standard examination and artifact creation. Students must attain minimum scores to earn Credit by Demonstrated Mastery.

8.6 The following courses are excluded from Credit by Demonstrated Mastery:

- Career and Technical Education (CTE) work-based learning courses (refer to CTED-003 for work-based learning policy);
- CTE courses that have a clinical setting as a requirement of the course, such as ProStart, Early Childhood Education I/II and Nursing Fundamentals;
- CTE Advanced Studies courses;
- CTE courses in pilot and/or field test status;
- English Language Learner (ELL) courses;
- Healthful Living required courses;
- AP, IB, and CIE courses; and
- Occupational Course of Study (OCS) Occupational Preparation I, II, III, and IV courses

9.0 Honors Level Courses

9.1 Definition of Honors Level Courses

Honors level courses are distinguishable from standard level courses in depth and scope. These courses must be designed and implemented to:

- Meet the needs of students with advanced learning needs by providing a differentiated course of study and opportunities based on their aptitudes, achievement, and interests.
- Provide depth in rigor, complexity, challenge, and creativity beyond the standard level course.
- Adjust pacing to increase depth and scope.
- Foster growth and achievement for students with advanced learning needs.

9.2 Inherently Honors Courses

Courses designated as *inherently advanced* or *inherently honors* are designed initially at the honors level and do not have standard level courses. These courses are designed at the state level with rigor and complexity. Inherently honors courses vary in expectations according to content area. These courses are outlined in GRAD-009.

9.3 PSUs that offer honors level courses shall:

- Develop Honors Level Courses using the NCDPI Honors Level Course Guide.
- Implement and attest by the end of 2024-25 academic year.



- Thereafter, evaluate Honors Level Courses every three (3) years or earlier as needed based on changes with the Standard Course of Study (SCOS) and local needs.

#### 9.4 Honors Level Course Guide

NCDPI shall develop an Honors Level Course Guide. This guide shall provide guidance for PSUs regarding implementation and evaluation of honors level courses, and be reviewed and updated periodically.

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#### Supporting Documents



[Guidelines Credit by Demonstrated Mastery \(CDM\) June 2016.pdf](#)

#### Supporting Links

CDM Guide - <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/students-families/enhanced-opportunities/advanced-learning-and-gifted-education/credit-demonstrated-mastery%C2%A0>