

Assessment Brief



Public Schools of North Carolina • State Board of Education • North Carolina Department of Public Instruction • June St. Claire Atkinson, Ed.D., State Superintendent

Released Test Forms

August 2009 • Vol. 10, No. 2

This brief is available on the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Testing Web site, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/policies/briefs/>.

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The State Board of Education's *Framework for Change: The Next Generation of Assessments and Accountability* provides for the modification and improvement of state assessment and accountability policies and practices. As part of this new direction, in August 2009, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) Accountability Services Division/North Carolina Testing Program will release one form of the test for each grade level and subject tested in the 2008–09 school year. Released test forms and supplemental information may be found on the NCDPI Web site at the following address: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/releasedforms>.

This brief has been produced to inform and guide school systems and the public in the general use of released test forms.

Precautions and Use of Released Tests

While the release of a test form will increase transparency of testing, the state strongly cautions local school systems against using the forms to “teach to the test.” State tests are aligned to content standards. While the end-of-grade and end-of-course tests summarize student achievement and serve as an important indicator of aggregate student performance for state and federal reporting, they are not the sole measure of student performance. Scores on these tests are only one of the many indicators of how well a student is achieving.

The use of released test forms should be part of an overall plan in school systems for implementing the new comprehensive balanced assessment system that

includes formative, benchmark, and summative assessment. Released test forms may be used by school systems to help acquaint students with valuable test taking strategies in summative assessment situations. These strategies may include teaching time management, following directions, understanding reading selections, and thinking through how to select the correct answer.

Released test forms may be used by parents and the general public in gaining a greater understanding of how the state's academic content standards are measured. The state's standardized achievement tests (developed to measure skills and knowledge learned through instruction), have not been designed for diagnostic purposes.

Released Tests and Regulatory Measures

The cover of a released form will include the name of the test, the form letter, the date of the release (e.g., Spring 2009 Released Test), and be clearly marked RELEASED. A faint watermark containing the word RELEASED will be printed on each page of a released test form.

Although released, the test forms remain the intellectual property of the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program. These materials and the information contained within must not be used for personal or financial gain.

The North Carolina End-of-Course Test of English I and the North Carolina End-of-Grade Tests of Reading Comprehension contain copyrighted reading

selections. Due to budget constraints and the reluctance of copyright holders to grant printing rights via a Web site, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) has obtained permissions **only** for Web viewing of these selections. The download or use of these copyrighted materials is restricted by applicable license agreements obtained by the NCDPI and copyright law (Title 17, United States Code). Permission to use any copyrighted material must be obtained directly from the respective copyright holders. To contact the copyright holder, please see the Acknowledgments for each test form.

To honor our commitment to the copyright holders, there are two versions of these tests: (1) a PDF version of the entire form (selections and items) that **is not** printable and (2) a PDF only of the items that **is** printable.

The North Carolina Testing Program includes experimental items in its operational forms to reduce the number of field test administrations in the school systems. Prior to the release of a form, experimental items will be removed and the test items will be renumbered. Test developers need to examine the performance of these new items and may make necessary adjustments.

An answer key, a table equating the raw-to-scale scores and goal level information will be made available for each released test form.

Released Tests: Subjects and Grade Levels

Beginning in the 2009–10 school year the following subject and grade level tests will be released.

- *Pretest—Grade 3*
- *End-of-Grade Reading and Mathematics Grades 3–8*
- *End-of-Grade Science Grade 5 and 8*
- *Online Test of Computer Skills Grade 8*

End-of-Course Test for the following subjects:

- *English I*
- *Algebra I*
- *Geometry*
- *Algebra II*
- *Physical Science*
- *Biology*
- *Chemistry*
- *Physics*
- *Civics and Economics*
- *U.S. History*

Non released Tests for 2009–10

The alternate assessments, including the ***NCEXTEND 1*** and ***NCEXTEND2*** tests will not be released during the 2009–10 school year. There are a limited number of test forms available for the alternate assessments. New forms of these assessments will not be produced until the state's Essential Standards are developed and adopted by the State Board of Education.

The tests used for initial and annual testing of English language proficiency are published by the WIDA Consortium. The test used for initial identification, the *W-APT*, is password protected by the test publisher and not released. However, sample test items for the *ACCESS for ELLs* are available on the WIDA Consortium Web site at http://www.wida.us/assessment/ACCESS/ACCESS_Sample_Items.pdf.

Sample items are also available for the *National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)* after each assessment is conducted. Test items can be found at the following address: <http://nationsreportcard.gov/testyourself.asp>.

Viewing Non released Secure Test Materials

The North Carolina Testing Program will continue to implement a process to allow individuals to view operational non released secure test forms. Permission to view non released test forms must be directed to the NCDPI Accountability Services Division. Additional information for viewing non released tests can be found in the document *Process for Stakeholders to View Non released Secure Test Materials* (dated June 24, 2009), posted on the NCDPI Testing Web site.

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