


PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., *State Superintendent*

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July 13, 2015

TO Select LEA Superintendents
Select Charter School Directors

FROM Tammy L. Howard, Director 
Accountability Services Division

2015–16 PARTICIPATION IN FIELD TESTS AND SPECIAL STUDIES

Earlier this month, the State Board of Education (SBE) was informed of the field tests and special studies that will be administered during the 2015–16 school year. The field tests and special studies for this school year include the North Carolina Proof of Concept Study in English Language Arts/Reading at grade 6 and the North Carolina Proof of Concept Study in Mathematics at grade 5. Additionally, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) will oversee computer-based pilot tests in reading, mathematics, and writing in grades 4, 8, and 12.

All field tests/special studies will be administered at a subset of schools that have been sampled for participation. All students within the sampled grade and subject area of a school will participate in the field tests/special studies. A list of the individual schools selected to participate is attached to this memo. *The LEA/Charter School Test Coordinator will be responsible for sharing locally.*

Please remember that field testing and special studies are key components of the process for developing tests and making programmatic decisions. The purpose of field tests and special studies is to collect the data necessary to generate high-quality and technically-sound state tests and to inform our assessment practices. Specifically, the objectives are:

- To try out the questions and the tests in part or in their entirety in an environment that simulates an operational test.
- To generate data that will assist the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) in making decisions about each test question and each test as a whole.
- To generate data that will assist the test publisher in determining the level of difficulty of each question.
- To generate data that will assist the test publisher in determining if questions are biased in favor of one group over another.
- To determine the appropriateness of the content measured and the appropriateness of the test questions.
- To determine the level of accessibility to the questions and the test by students with special needs.
- To determine the time test administrators need to administer the tests and the time students need for a fair administration of the tests.
- To collect data used to establish and/or equate forms of the tests, the scales for the tests, and to set or link performance standards (achievement levels) for the tests.
- To collect data to provide documentation about the overall technical quality of the tests for the U.S. Department of Education and other stakeholders.
- To collect data that establish and maintain the credibility of the testing program and answer questions about the program asked by the North Carolina General Assembly, the U.S. Department of Education, and the public.

DIVISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY SERVICES

6314 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-6314 | (919) 807-3769 | Fax (919) 807-3772

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

The attached *2015–16 Field Tests and Special Studies Calendar* contains information regarding the following field tests and special studies:

- Proof of Concept Study—English Language Arts/Reading Grade 6
- Proof of Concept Study—Mathematics Grade 5
- NAEP— Reading, Mathematics, and Writing Pilot Tests

Additionally, the following documents are included:

- 2015–16 List of Schools Selected to Participate in Field Tests/Special Studies
- *Request to Appeal Field Test/Special Study Participation* form
- *Notification of School Closings or Changes in Grade Configuration* form
- SAMPLE Parent/Guardian Field Test Notification Letter—sample letter for schools to send to parents informing them about field testing and special studies. An electronic copy of this letter will be posted on the Testing News Network (TNN).

Review the information carefully. Use the enclosed *Notification of School Closings or Changes in Grade Configuration* form to make us aware of any changes in school closings and grade configurations so that we can update our records.

Appeals will be reviewed carefully and only those that demonstrate true hardship will be considered. To appeal a school's participation in field testing for the 2015–16 academic year, please (1) complete and submit the enclosed *Request to Appeal Field Test Participation* form with the appropriate signatures and (2) send a written letter of request from the LEA Superintendent/Charter School Director to Dr. Tammy Howard, Director of Accountability Services. Appeals must be received (using receipted mail method) by 5:00 PM, July 22, 2015. Appeals that cannot be handled administratively will be submitted to the Compliance Commission for Accountability during the last week in July. The Compliance Commission will review each appeal and make recommendations to the State Board of Education (SBE) at its August meeting. LEAs will receive notification of the acceptance or denial of the appeal by August 14, 2015.

Professional development will be provided, including CEU credit for participation, in preparation for the Proof of Concept Studies in English Language Arts/Reading and in Mathematics. A webinar will be held July 20, 2015 from 12:00–1:00 PM for district and school staff. Additional information regarding the registration for the webinar and the professional development topics, dates, locations, and times will be sent to participating schools once finalized.

TLH:slj

c: June St. Clair Atkinson
Rebecca Garland
Lynne Johnson
Adam Levinson
Karen Hoeve
Nancy Carolan
Hope Lung
Test Coordinators
Regional Accountability Coordinators

Attachments

2015–16 Field Tests and Special Studies Calendar—North Carolina Testing Program

The following field tests/special studies will be administered at select schools in North Carolina during the 2015–16 school year.

Subject(s)	Participation	Item Type(s)	Mode	Testing Window
Proof of Concept Study	All students enrolled in grade 5 at sampled schools who participate in End-of-Grade Mathematics assessments	Multiple-choice Gridded Response	Paper-Pencil	Interim 1—October 1–30, 2015
				Interim 2—December 8, 2015–January 22, 2016
				Interim 3—March 3–31, 2016 End-of-Year—Final 10 instructional days of the school year
Proof of Concept Study	All students enrolled in grade 6 at sampled schools who participate in End-of-Grade English Language Arts/Reading assessments	Multiple-choice Short response Extended response	Paper-Pencil	Interim 1—October 1–30, 2015
				Interim 2—December 8, 2015–January 22, 2016
				Interim 3—March 3–31, 2016 End-of-Year—Final 10 instructional days of the school year
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) – Reading and Math Pilot Assessments	All students enrolled in grade 4 at sampled schools	Multiple-choice Constructed response Performance tasks Technology enhanced	Online	January 26 – March 6, 2016
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) – Reading, Math, and Writing Pilot Assessment	All students enrolled in grade 8 at sampled schools	Multiple-choice Constructed response Performance tasks Technology enhanced	Online	January 26 – March 6, 2016
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) – Writing	All students enrolled in grade 12 at sampled schools	Multiple-choice Constructed response Performance tasks Technology enhanced	Online	January 26 – March 6, 2016

**2015-16 List of Schools Selected
to Participate in Field Tests/Special Studies
Grade 5 Math**

	LEA Name	School Code	School Name	RAC
1	Alamance-Burlington Schools	010346	B Everett Jordan Elem	6
2	Brunswick County Schools	100302	Belville Elementary	5
3	Cabarrus Charter Academy	13B000	Cabarrus Charter Academy	3
4	Catawba County Schools	180336	Clyde Campbell Elementary	2
5	Chapel Hill-Carrboro Schools	681330	Scroggs Elementary	6
6	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	600338	Clear Creek Elementary	3
7	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	600485	Oakdale Elementary	3
8	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	600522	Selwyn Elementary	3
9	Chatham County Schools	190332	J S Waters School	6
10	Community School of Davidson	60I000	Community School of Davidson	3
11	Cumberland County Schools	260403	New Century International Elementary	5
12	Cumberland County Schools	260448	Vanstory Hills Elementary	5
13	Duplin County Schools	310336	Warsaw Elementary	5
14	Durham Public Schools	320374	C C Spaulding Elementary	6
15	Durham Public Schools	320376	Spring Valley Elementary	6
16	Edgecombe County Public School	330354	Stocks Elementary	4
17	Gaston County Schools	360348	Catawba Heights Elementary	3
18	Gaston County Schools	360400	Gardner Park Elementary	3
19	Guilford County Schools	410424	Jesse Wharton Elem	6
20	Guilford County Schools	410461	McLeansville Elementary	6
21	Harnett County Schools	430336	Erwin Elementary	6
22	Henderson County Schools	450324	Etowah Elementary	1
23	Henderson County Schools	450340	Mills River Elementary	1
24	Hoke County Schools	470310	Don D Steed Elementary	3
25	Johnston County Schools	510356	Glendale-Kenly Elementary	6
26	Kannapolis City Schools	132329	Kannapolis Intermediate	3
27	Martin County Schools	580324	Jamesville Elementary	4
28	Millennium Charter Academy	86T000	Millennium Charter Academy	2
29	Mooreville City Schools	491306	Mooreville Intermediate	2
30	Mount Airy City Schools	862310	Jones Elementary	2
31	Nash-Rocky Mount Schools	640324	Coopers Elementary	6
32	New Hanover County Schools	650323	Edwin A Anderson Elementary	5
33	New Hanover County Schools	650362	Pine Valley Elementary	5
34	Northampton County Schools	660308	Conway Middle	4
35	Onslow County Schools	670347	Stateside Elementary	5
36	Orange County Schools	680336	Pathways Elementary	6
37	Piedmont Community Charter School	36B000	Piedmont Community Charter School	3
38	Randolph County Schools	760340	Ramseur Elementary	6
39	Robeson County Schools	780324	Fairgrove Middle	5
40	Vance County Schools	910356	Pinkston Street Elementary	6
41	Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools	340462	North Hills Elementary	2
42	Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools	340490	Petree Elementary	2
43	Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools	340540	Walkertown Elementary	2
44	Yadkin County Schools	990316	Fall Creek Elementary	2
45	Yancey County Schools	995336	South Toe Elementary	1

**2015-16 List of Schools Selected
to Participate in Field Tests/Special Studies
ELA Grade 6**

	LEA Name	School Code	School Name	RAC
1	Beaufort County Schools	070329	Northeast Elementary	4
2	Brevard Academy	88A000	Brevard Academy	1
3	Brunswick County Schools	100309	Cedar Grove Middle	5
4	Caldwell County Schools	140308	Collettsville School	2
5	Camden County Schools	150310	Camden Intermediate	4
6	Carteret County Public Schools	160332	Smyrna Elementary	5
7	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	600333	Carmel Middle	3
8	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	600479	Northeast Middle	3
9	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	600488	Oaklawn Language Academy	3
10	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	600514	Ranson Middle	3
11	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	600577	Westerly Hills Academy	3
12	Chatham County Schools	190308	Bonlee School	6
13	Davidson County Schools	290334	Ledford Middle	2
14	Davidson County Schools	290376	Tyro Middle	2
15	Duplin County Schools	310330	Chinquapin Elementary	5
16	Granville County Schools	390334	Northern Granville Middle	6
17	Guilford County Schools	410397	Guilford Middle	6
18	Harnett County Schools	430347	Harnett Central Middle	6
19	Henderson Collegiate	91B000	Henderson Collegiate	6
20	Iredell-Statesville Schools	490338	Lakeshore Middle	2
21	Johnston County Schools	510344	North Johnston Middle	6
22	Madison County Schools	570319	Madison Middle	1
23	Paul R Brown Leadership Academy	09A000	Paul R Brown Leadership Academy	5
24	Pitt County Schools	740396	Stokes	4
25	Polk County Schools	750319	Polk County Middle School	1
26	Robeson County Schools	780360	Parkton Elementary	5
27	Robeson County Schools	780384	Prospect Elementary	5
28	Robeson County Schools	780403	Saint Pauls Middle	5
29	Scotland County Schools	830304	Carver Middle	3
30	Scotland County Schools	830349	Spring Hill Middle	3
31	Southern Wake Academy	92P000	Southern Wake Academy	6
32	Summerfield Charter Academy	41J000	Summerfield Charter Academy	6
33	Wake County Schools	920492	Martin Middle	6
34	Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools	340568	Winston-Salem Preparatory Acad	2
35	Yadkin County Schools	990320	Forbush Elementary	2

**North Carolina Testing Program
Request to Appeal Field Test/Special Study Participation**

Accountability Year: 2015–16

LEA Name: _____

School Name: _____

LEA/School Code:

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Check here if this appeal is being submitted because of more than two field tests/special studies at one grade level in a school.

Please list the name of the field test/special study that is being appealed.

Note: If a sampled school closes or a sampled grade level moves to another school, the school with the intended population participates in the field test or special study.

To appeal a school’s selection to participate in field testing or special studies for the 2015–16 academic year, (a) please complete and submit this form with the appropriate signatures using a receipted mail method, and (b) include a written letter of request from the LEA Superintendent/Charter School Director to:

Dr. Tammy Howard, Director
Division of Accountability Services
Department of Public Instruction
6314 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-6314

This form and letter of request for removal from the field test/special study sample must be received (using receipted mail method) by 5:00 PM, July 22, 2015. Appeals that cannot be handled administratively will be submitted to the Compliance Commission for Accountability during the last week in July. The Compliance Commission will review each appeal and make recommendations to the State Board of Education (SBE) at its August meeting. The response to the appeal will be based solely on the written justification. School or district personnel will **not** have the opportunity to address the Compliance Commission or the SBE. LEAs/charter schools will receive notification of the acceptance or denial of the appeal by August 14, 2015.

Principal: _____ **Date:** _____

LEA Test Coordinator: _____ **Date:** _____

LEA Superintendent: _____ **Date:** _____

North Carolina Testing Program

Notification of School Closing or Change in Grade Configuration

Complete the following information only for a school that has closed or has changed in grade configuration.

Accountability Year: 2015–16

LEA Name: _____

School Name: _____

LEA/School Code:

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List the name of the field test or special study for which this school was selected to participate:

If a sampled school closed or changed in grade configuration, list the name(s) of the receiving school(s). The school(s) that received the student population must participate in the field test or special study.

List the name of the receiving school(s):

All requested information must be completed. Please fax this form with the appropriate signatures to Dr. Tammy Howard, Director of Accountability Services, by 5:00 PM, July 22, 2015.

**LEA Superintendent/
Charter School Director**

Date

Please fax this form to:
Dr. Tammy Howard, Director
Division of Accountability Services
Fax Number: 919-807-3772

SAMPLE PARENT LETTER

Dear Parent or Guardian:

(Insert school name) has been selected by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) to participate in the following field test/special study administration: (Insert name of field test/special study).

This means your child will assist educators in collecting data needed to develop high-quality, technically-sound state tests. For example, field testing/special studies determine: how effective a test is under conditions that closely simulate the “real” test environment; the level of difficulty of a test question; and how appropriate a test is for students with special needs. The NCDPI has made every effort to limit the number of field tests/special studies at each school.

There is no need for your child to study in preparation for the field test/special study; however, we do ask that students do their best and receive plenty of rest the night before the test. Your child’s grades or progress in school will not be affected in any way by participating. Results about individual students or schools will not be reported. The data collected will be used for the purpose of test development only.

The field test/special study will take a minimal amount of time, and is scheduled to take place on (Insert test date). The test will take approximately (Insert time) minutes to complete.

For more information about the North Carolina Testing Program, please visit <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing>. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact _____ at _____.
(Insert name of contact and email/phone)

Sincerely,

(Insert name and title of local official)