



# **Update: Standards, Assessment, and Accountability (SAA)**

## **Beginning the School Year 2014-2015**

Volume 14





### **Purpose of the Standards, Assessment, and Accountability SAA Update 14**

This Standards, Assessment, and Accountability Update provides information about:

- I. Standards, Assessment, and Accountability – What’s Ahead – 2014-2015?
- II. The Statewide Writing Assessment – NeSA-Writing
- III. Inclusion All Students in Assessment and Accountability
- IV. State and Federal Accountability
- V. The Continuous Improvement Process
- VI. Links

SAA Updates are provided twice a year by the NDE Assessment and Accountability office in cooperation with other departments. The next update will be available in March 2015.

These materials may be downloaded from the [Nebraska Department of Education website](#)





[Timeline: Standards, Assessment, Accountability 2014-2015](#)

**Assessment and Reporting Schedule  
2014-2015**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Grade level</b>
2014-2015	NeSA-Reading	3-8, HS *
	NeSA-AA Reading	3-8, HS
	NeSA-Mathematics	3-8, HS
	NeSA-AA Mathematics	3-8, HS
	NeSA-Science	5, 8, HS
	NeSA-AA Science	5, 8, HS
	NeSA Online Writing	8, HS
	NeSA Paper/Pencil Writing	4
	English Language Development Assessment (ELDA)	K-12

\* Grade HS – students in third year of high school. Students are to be tested one year before their expected graduation year.



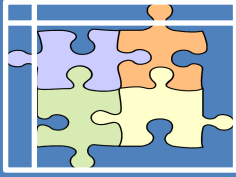
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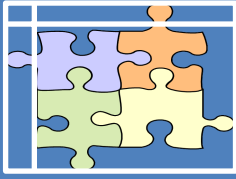


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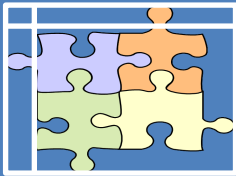




**STANDARDS**



**ASSESSMENT**



**ACCOUNTABILITY**

**I. Standards, Assessment, and Accountability: What's Ahead: 2014-2015?**







# **I. Standards, Assessment, and Accountability: What's Ahead: 2014-2015?**

## **A. Curriculum Update**

### **a. College and Career Ready Standards**

The Nebraska State Board of Education's number one goal is to "improve achievement outcomes for all students." One way to do this is to ensure that all Nebraska students graduate from high school being fully prepared for college and career. To accomplish this it is imperative that Nebraska has rigorous K-12 academic standards in place that prepare Nebraska students to graduate from high school able to complete credit-bearing first year courses without need for remediation.

In addition, State Statute Section 79.760.01 requires that academic content standards be reviewed every five years; Nebraska's English Language Arts and Mathematics standards were both adopted in 2009. Since the adoption of the Nebraska Standards, the National Governor's Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers released a set of Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics. These standards were adopted by a majority of the states around the country.

The State Board made the decision not to adopt the Common Core Standards; rather, they directed the Department to begin with the 2009 standards and ensure that they be written for college and career readiness. Revision work began in the fall of 2013 for English Language Arts. The review process began by asking Nebraska institutions of higher education to weigh in on the 2009 standards and identify areas for improvement. Once that information was gathered, as with all Nebraska standards development, a writing group comprised of Nebraska K-16 educators, administrators and specialists went to work. The authors represented all regions of Nebraska, all levels of education, all sizes of school districts as well as the diverse populations of our state. The existing standards were reviewed against exemplary standards from other states, along with information from ACT, SAT, the NAEP Framework, and information from nationally known researchers. The results of the alignment study between the Common Core State Standards and the Nebraska Standards commissioned in March of 2013 were also used. The results of the alignment study are on the [NDE homepage](#).

The 2014 standards look very similar to the 2009 set but have been made more rigorous as a result of the review process. The format of the standards has remained essentially the same with two small changes. The standards in the high school grade band have



been split into smaller 9-10 and 11-12 grade bands, replacing the 9-12 grade band in the 2009 standards. Also, the curricular indicators will be considered a required part of each standard and will no longer be considered to only be examples. They are still organized with three “levels of specificity”:

- K-12 Comprehensive Standards – These broad, general statements cover key areas in each content area.
- Grade Level Standards – These statements are organized by key concepts and identify what students should know and be able to do by the end of a specified grade level. They are not course specific.
- Curricular Indicators – These statements provide more specific information to distinguish expectations between grade levels or grade bands.

Several opportunities for educators and the general public to offer comments and suggestions were made available at various points throughout the development process. A web-based survey was available for several weeks and a public input session was held at seven locations via distance technology. Representatives from business and industry were also invited to a day-long meeting to review the standards specifically for career readiness. Designated higher education representatives were asked to certify that the standards met the college and career ready litmus test as a final step before the final draft was forwarded to the State Board for approval. The final approval is scheduled for the September State Board of Education meeting. Once the standards are adopted, a process will be initiated to look at how and when the NeSA assessments may be revised to incorporate any changes. Work on the Nebraska Mathematics Standards is scheduled to begin late in 2014 and go well into 2015.

#### **b. Fine Arts Standards Adopted by the State Board of Education**

The Nebraska State Board of Education adopted the first ever set of K-12 Nebraska Fine Art Standards on March 4, 2014. In part, this was made possible by a Nebraska Arts Council grant awarded to the Department of Education in the fall of 2012. The goal was to develop a new set of standards reflective of Fine Arts Education in the 21st century. NDE brought together groups of educators and other experts to develop the new standards in the areas of Visual Arts, Media Arts, Music, Theatre, and Dance. NDE followed the same process used to develop the academic content standards in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. The standards were written in grade bands of K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12 using same format as all Nebraska standards; K-12 broad comprehensive standards, grade level standards and curricular indicators. They were written with the idea that cross curricular or integrated lessons could be used to teach the standards outside of a designated dance class, media arts class, etc. The new fine arts standards may be viewed on the [NDE-fine arts webpage](#).



For the first time in ten years the Department also has a fine arts director. Her name is Debbie DeFrain and comes to NDE with vast experience at all levels of education. She is available to assist schools with alignment and implementation ideas for the new standards. Debbie's goal is to provide professional development on these standards across the state through the ESU system. Please contact Debbie or your local ESU representative to learn about opportunities in your area. She may be reached at [Debbie.DeFrain@nebraska.gov](mailto:Debbie.DeFrain@nebraska.gov) or 402-471-3142.

### **c. The Nebraska Teacher and Principal Performance Framework and Evaluation Models**

In November of 2011, the State Board of Education adopted the Nebraska [Teacher and Principal Performance Framework](#). The Framework identifies a set of effective practices that characterize Nebraska's best teachers and principals.

In February 2012, the State Board of Education approved the development of models for teacher and principal evaluations based on *The Teacher and Principal Performance Framework*. The Board reaffirmed the models would be voluntary and that districts would have the option to adopt or adapt them. A leadership committee, representing all facets of Nebraska education, met for several months and made recommendations on specific components and processes to be included in such models. In the spring of 2013, seventeen pilot schools, representing all sizes of schools and all regions of the state, began a two year process of designing and testing the models. Project completion and statewide implementation is currently slated for the fall of 2015.

For questions about the material covered in this section please contact:

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### **B. Nebraska State Accountability - NeSA**

Nebraska State Accountability - NeSA - includes all state tests; therefore, the scoring rules, accommodations, security policies, and ethics codes apply to the following:

NeSA-W (Writing)

NeSA-R (Reading)

NeSA-M (Mathematics)

NeSA-S (Science)

NeSA-AA (Alternate Assessments in Reading, Mathematics, and Science)

ELDA (English Language Development Assessment)



All protocols, practices, and procedures for state testing will apply to each test inside the Nebraska State Accountability System, NeSA.

As required in the amended Quality Education Accountability Act, 79-760, the Nebraska Department of Education has built state tests for the purposes of comparative accountability with the help of its partner, Data Recognition Corporation (DRC), Maple Grove, Minnesota.

#### **a. District Assessment Contacts**

District superintendents and ESU administrators have been asked to designate ONE District Assessment Contact [DAC]. In some districts the official assessment contact is the superintendent, and in other districts the superintendent has designated a different person. This contact will, however, be the contact for **all subject areas** and all assessment-related communication. All official assessment notification, passwords, and required assessment decisions will be sent to that one district contact. The official district contact will receive materials for reading, writing, mathematics, science, and all other assessment-related materials.

Once the official district assessment contact is assigned the district password in such programs as eDIRECT, he or she may designate as many users inside the district as needed. The Statewide Assessment office will maintain the list with one official contact. It is important that all users inside the district know who has been assigned the responsibility of being the official district assessment contact. District Assessment Contacts bear the responsibility for maintaining assessment communication within the district.

The contacts for the 2014-2015 school year will be the same as those used in 2013-2014 unless the superintendent changed the assignment. If a change in the DAC is needed, Superintendents need to make that change. The [contact form](#) for making this change is available on the NDE-Assessment website. Or the superintendent may send an email directly to [nde.stateassessment@nebraska.gov](mailto:nde.stateassessment@nebraska.gov) and request a change in the DAC.

Superintendents have also been asked to designate a NeSA Technology Assessment Contact, who will serve as the contact for information concerning technology used for the Nebraska State Accountability tests. DACs will also receive official information N-TACs receive.

The administrators of Educational Service Units were also asked to designate an



official assessment contact. The designated ESU contact receives pertinent mailings except test booklets or materials that can only be sent to districts. If the ESU contact is to change, the administrator needs to notify the assessment office.

### **b. The eDirect System and Enrollment Verification**

The [DRC eDirect System](#) will be used for implementation in 2014-2015 to obtain enrollment information from districts and information about testing decisions. The first of those submissions is scheduled for October 6-17. Data that will be collected in the eDirect system include decisions about the number of paper/pencil booklets needed for students with IEP, 504, or ELL accommodations, the number of Braille, large print, or Spanish-translated booklets needed. Access to the eDirect system will be provided to the DAC who will submit the district's decisions to DRC.

Districts will have the opportunity to learn about the eDirect system and Enrollment Verification at WebEx trainings to take place in October. The dates for the training are included on the [NeSA Timeline](#).

### **c. NeSA-Reading, Math, Science Testing Window**

The NeSA Testing Window for operational reading, mathematics, and science is March 23 – May 1, 2015. This window includes the alternate tests as well.

### **Scheduling**

The reading, mathematics and science tests are to be administered in two independent sessions. Even though NeSA-R, M and S are not timed tests and students are to be allowed as much time as necessary to complete, the recommended time scheduled for each session doesn't generally exceed 90 minutes.

However, the two-session administration may be scheduled during the testing window in any of several ways:

1. Two consecutive days.
2. Two days within the same week, preferably not Monday.
3. Two sessions within the same day with a break in between.
4. Other schedules as specified in a student's IEP or used for English Language Learners.



Districts are asked to review the following scheduling considerations and to read [Suggestions for a Smooth Testing Process](#).

### **Scheduling Considerations:**

1. Younger students will be more likely to need the two-day schedule than older students.
2. Districts should not wait until the end of the testing window. Mondays are not the best testing days.
3. The 90-minute scheduling guidance is not required for everyone. Districts should review the time taken to complete NeSA tests by students in their districts in the eDIRECT system and base scheduling needs on the information. Students who finish early should have other work or reading to do just as they would in any standardized test settings.
4. Regardless of the schedule used, the test administration must be consistent, standardized, and the scripted directions must be followed. This is true for both online and paper/pencil testing.
5. Student benefit should be considered first with regard to scheduling, not adult convenience or logistical issues.
6. Make-up sessions for operational testing must be scheduled within the testing window as students will be scored on the items completed and will receive no credit for blank, incomplete, or missing items.
7. Planning ahead and coordinating within the district and building are critical for successful testing.

### **d. NeSA Security, Ethics and Training**

In a centralized testing process, it is critical that equity of opportunity, standardization of procedures and fairness to students are maintained. Therefore, the Nebraska Department of Education asks all school districts to review the NeSA [Security Procedures](#). It is critical that all administrators and teachers read the procedures, especially those who are administering the assessment. These procedures apply to all NeSA testing: reading, writing, mathematics, ELDA, science, and alternate tests.

Breaches in security are taken very seriously. They must be quickly identified and reported to the Nebraska Department of Education's Statewide Assessment Office. From there the determination is made as to whether or not a professional practices complaint will be filed. A district reporting a security breach should complete the form entitled [Report of Security Breach](#).



The [Principal Security Agreement](#) requires each principal to sign for each testing session in his or her building(s). Principals need to understand that signing this security agreement means they will oversee the appropriate testing procedures and training for all teachers administering the tests in the building. A [DAC Confidentiality Agreement](#) is required from each District Assessment Contact. The DAC is responsible for overall oversight of the testing process in the district. Principals and DACs will submit their security agreements directly to the NDE assessment office through Echo sign email by October 31, 2014. Each principal and DAC will receive an email and instructions for return of the security/confidentiality agreement.

Districts should maintain a set of district policies that includes a reference to Nebraska's [NeSA Security Procedures](#). The [Sample District Security Policy](#) was drafted by a local legal firm and is available to districts. Whether districts use this sample, the procedures offered by the State School Boards Association, or policies drafted by other law firms, local district policy should address the NeSA Security document. The Department would encourage all districts with questions to contact their own local school attorneys for customization of such a policy.

### **Testing Ethics and Appropriate Practice**

It is important to note that all principals and teachers need to be familiar with appropriate testing ethics and security practices related to testing. Professionalism, common sense, and practical procedures will provide the right framework for testing ethics. It is also important to note that school districts are bound to hold all certificated staff members in school districts accountable for following the *Regulations and Standards for Professional Practice Criteria* as outlined in Rule 27. The NeSA Testing Security Procedures are intended to outline clear practice for appropriate security.

All school personnel who administer NeSA tests must receive complete training in test administration and are responsible for appropriate test ethics and security practices.

Since 2013-2014, a Nebraska State Accountability Security Manual has been distributed to provide an overview of the facets of test security in place in Nebraska, test security practices required in districts, and links to all forms needed for NeSA test security (also included in this Update).





## Training for Test Administration

DACs and principals share the responsibility for assuring that all teachers and school personnel administering NeSA are trained in appropriate procedures, security and ethics. NDE provides a set of tools on the assessment website for test [administration training](#).

## C. NeSA Implementation Details

### a. NeSA-Reading Math & Science Cut Scores

The cut scores for the NeSA-Reading, Math, and Science and NeSA-Alternate Assessment-Reading, Math, and Science were set consecutively in 2010, 2011, and 2012.

Nebraska State Board of Education considered a range of “cut scores” for each grade level in each content area and made final decisions about the exact scores that determined the percentages of students who score in one of three performance levels on the tests:

- Below the Standards
- Meets the Standards
- Exceeds the Standards

The scale score ranges for NeSA-Reading, Math, and Science were set as follows:

Scale Score Ranges	Performance Level
135-200	Exceeds the Standards
85-134	Meets the Standards
0-84	Below the Standards

It should be noted that the scale scores for performance levels will not change unless the tests themselves change. Details of the processes used to set scale score ranges are included in the Technical Reports, available on the NDE-Assessment website for each subject area

### b. Release of NeSA Results in 2014

Through DRC’s eDirect system, districts received NeSA-Reading, NeSA-Mathematics, NeSA-Science, NeSA-Alternate Assessment Reading, NeSA-Alternate Assessment Math and NeSA-Alternate Assessment Science results in July 2014.



The Nebraska [State of the Schools Report](#) is released each year in the fall and is available on the Nebraska Department of Education website. State of the Schools Reports have been provided since 2001.

### **c. The State Testing Environment and the Instructional Environment**

Differences exist between an equitable, secure, standardized testing environment and the environment where daily instruction takes place. Students in all districts have a right to both environments. All districts have a responsibility to provide both. It is the responsibility of the state to assure appropriate testing and learning.

On a day-to-day basis Nebraska school districts provide their students with multiple opportunities to learn their districts' curriculum in a variety of ways, including access to the skills and content required in the state standards. On testing day, however, the environment must be standardized according to the directions provided, is prescribed for all, and must assure that all students have equitable opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills on the NeSA tests.

The scripted directions, the security policies and procedures, and the "rules" of testing are designed to provide such equity. If districts apply their own adaptations of these procedures, the testing experience across the state is NOT equitable. Such things as the following undermine the equity and standardization of the testing process:

- Playing music during the testing.
- Providing food, candy, or drinks during the tests.
- Requiring pauses and stretch breaks for all students during the tests.
- Placing check lists of testing protocol on students' desks during testing.
- Requiring students to raise their hands at completion of the tests to assure the test is finished. The online test has a summary sheet built in for students to use for that very purpose, and students must be provided the opportunity to practice in the online test engine.
- Not reading the scripted directions verbatim.

Although some may be appropriate in an instructional environment, they are not included as part of the standardized testing process. They are not appropriate. If districts take it upon themselves to "add" such features, they are not applying the scripted, prescribed nature of the standardized test, and they are disrupting the needed equity of administration across the state.

Each district should consider the necessary steps to differentiating between the state testing environment and the day-to-day instructional environment. Although both have expectations, those expectations are different.

#### **d. Embargoed Data**

Another aspect of the culture of NeSA testing is the understanding of embargoed data. Embargoes may seem strict, but they are necessary because centralized state test data are new each year, formal, and never before released.

Data are considered “embargoed” when they are not to be shared. Established processes determine the extent to which state data can be shared and with whom. Only internal school/district staff should have access to raw scores. After the Conversion Tables are posted on the NDE-Assessment website each year, the raw scores can be converted to scale scores. When the state public releases of the state averages occur, then the data can be fully shared.

- NeSA-Reading, Mathematics, Science – Since the cut score process has been finalized, when districts receive preliminary online results, they may share the results internally with school personnel. Individual scores may be released to students and parents, but the results should not be released to the public through award ceremonies, newsletters, media releases, or formal publications until after a formal public release of state averages by NDE. NDE will announce the public release dates.

The NDE is very appreciative of your efforts to provide data in an appropriate and timely manner to all stakeholders, respecting and honoring the procedures that we must all follow.

#### **e. NeSA administration details**

In 2014 Nebraska school districts and their students experienced issues with the INSIGHT technology, provided by Data Recognition Corporation. The NDE Assessment and Accountability department has worked closely with Nebraska school district representatives, policy partners, and Data Recognition Corporation to assure NeSA testing in 2015 will proceed smoothly and effectively.

In 2014 most students tested online: 94% on NeSA-RMS and 98% on NeSA-W at grades 8 and 11. Online testing is required for all districts and students in the 2014-2015 school year, except NeSA-W at grade 4 and NeSA-RMS Alternate Assessments. Students who may be exempted include those on 504 or IEP Plans, English Language Learners, and those who are contracted to institutions that do not allow internet access.

In an attempt to continually improve our processes, the assessment team trains NDE staff to visit school districts and observe the testing, in order to learn ways to make the



process go more smoothly for our students and our teachers. The following observations are being identified in an attempt to improve the NeSA process.

## NeSA Procedures

### Scheduling:

- Scheduling of NeSA testing should NOT wait until the last few days of the window. If that is the case, districts run the risk of not getting everyone scheduled because of illness, weather, breaks, or other disruptions.
- The testing window runs through all days of the published timeline. That means the NSSRS system will expect a score for all students enrolled during the testing window. There is NOT a cutoff date prior to the end of the window where students are “exempt.” When receiving students in the last few days of the window, schools may want to consult NDE.
- When students arrive at a new school, the receiving school should contact the previous school to determine what NeSA tests have already been completed. Students are to be enrolled at the time of their arrival. There is no “waiting” for the testing process to be over. It is not ethical or fair to delay or adjust an enrollment based upon the arrival of the student and testing schedule. That is absolutely not fair to the student and family.

### Online Testing:

- Students need to have access to the tutorials, online tools training and practice tests prior to the testing, so they do not have trouble with their own logins. Test administrators are not to log in for students.
- Districts that plan to use iPads or Chromebooks for NeSA-RMS in spring 2015 should participate in the Technology Trial to pilot the devices, scheduled October 27-November 7, 2014.
- Parents should be reminded of the school’s testing schedule so that doctor’s appointments are not scheduled during the testing time.
- Teachers should provide only ONE ticket at a time to students testing online. When both tickets are provided to the students, students may log into a different session of the tests. This practice requires unnecessary unlocking. It is acceptable for students to take session #2 before session #1.



- For younger students, districts need to allow more time for log in to the test and need to be sure that students have had an opportunity to practice logging in prior to testing. Students are to log in themselves.

### **Administration:**

- Standardized testing environments and protocols must always be followed.
- Only operating systems supported for the Web-Based Testing Engine should be used for NeSA online testing. These system requirements are specified in the [“Web-Based Testing Engine System Requirements”](#) document, posted on the NDE-Assessment website.
- INSIGHT operates in a secure browser, which does not allow students to access the Internet or other software during testing.
- Items on the wall or within classrooms that provide hints or direction to test content need to be removed or covered.
- Cell phones or other electronic devices are to be removed from the testing setting.
- Districts are to follow the approved accommodations and practices on the [Nebraska State Accountability \(NeSA\) Approved Accommodations document](#). Deviations from that document are not appropriate, i.e. Whisper Phones are not listed as an appropriate testing practice administration for all students.
- Districts must keep the NSSRS updated appropriately so that when the data files are shipped to the vendors, they are correct. Due dates for NSSRS downloads are listed on the [NeSA timeline](#).
- It is important that your request for materials in eDirect in October is as accurate as possible. If more materials are needed, districts may order them from DRC, but the DAC should attempt to coordinate the additional requests.
- For districts experiencing technical difficulties that cannot be locally resolved, the district N-TAC should contact DRC.
- Districts who wish to determine their computer capacity will have access to a Capacity/Load Testing Tool through INSIGHT, available August 29, 2014.



## Security:

- Duplicating any secure test material in any content area is a security violation. Taking pictures of said material constitutes duplication. This expectation is clear in the administrative manuals and in all NDE testing materials. Districts are not to make copies of the tests, the prompts, or the items. All booklets, all student tickets and accompanying materials are to be kept secure.
- Examining the items, discussing the test content, or “taking” the test is a security violation.

## Secure Materials:

Every test booklet and every answer sheet, each Spanish translation document or CD must be accounted for. A district is held responsible for the return of all test materials. Districts are not to keep materials. Materials must be returned per the explicit directions or the situation is considered a breach of security. Lost NeSA testing materials that cannot be located will call for a district to complete a [District Response To Missing NeSA Materials](#).

- All secure testing materials are to be returned to DRC.

NDE along with DRC take the security of testing materials very seriously. DRC uses a sophisticated tracking system for all secure materials.

- DACs return materials to DRC through UPS. Each UPS label has a unique tracking number that provides the status of each shipment from the time it is picked up until it arrives at DRC’s receiving facility.
- Upon receipt, DRC hand-scans the DRC box return label on each box. The box is then opened and security codes are hand-scanned to link each document to the original box.
- The materials are sorted based on processing and sorting rules specific to the Nebraska project.
- The materials are then rescanned to ensure materials match against previously scanned information.
- Any material exceptions are tracked and resolved through a system based Exception Resolution process.
- Scorable materials are sent for further scanning and processing. Non-scorable materials are sent to secure storage.
- All DRC client boxes are processed through a final scan and inspection prior to box recycling to ensure no paper materials were missed in processing.



- Any secure material that is unable to go through the scanning process (no PreID label or District/School label affixed, label affixed incorrectly, scratch paper left inside test booklet or answer sheet, etc.) is sent to a secure area where Nebraska’s Education Program Management team resolves and records the issue, and the document is returned for check-in and processing. DRC provides the NDE a Problem Document Summary at the close of check-in.
- Using its Operations Materials Management System (OpsMMS), DRC can track documents internally, and determine the date they arrived at DRC, the box they arrived in, what other documents were included in the same box, and the box in which the materials are stored. In instances where a district indicates, for example, a used answer sheet was returned with the rest of their materials, DRC can locate the test booklets returned from the district, and determine if the answer sheet was left inside a test booklet, and therefore unable to be checked-in and processed. (This is the most common scenario for missing answer sheets.)
- A specialized group meets prior to the release of the Preliminary Missing Material Report to analyze data for anomalies and prescribe further search parameters up to and including scanning secure stored materials a third time.
- Districts are notified of any secure materials not received by DRC, and those materials are included on the preliminary Missing Materials Report provided to the NDE. In many cases materials are located and returned to DRC. A final Missing Materials Report with district comments regarding missing materials is provided to the NDE.

## **f. Score Invalidation and Waivers**

Throughout the NeSA process, the NDE has written and applies business rules for zero scores, invalidations and waivers. Each situation is weighed individually. The following rules are applied:

Emergency Medical Waivers (EMW) are granted if the situation is a medical emergency and the emergency situation prevents testing. The EMW needs to be approved by the Statewide Assessment office during the testing window. If special circumstances impede the timely submission of an EMW, please contact the Statewide Assessment office. EMWs are not granted for pregnancy or for situations where the school could have tested the student. Districts applying for EMWs are required to provide a physician’s statement. The complete [Emergency Medical Waiver form](#) is available on the Statewide Assessment website in NeSA Forms during the testing window. Students with EMWs are exempt from testing.

Invalidations (INV) are applied in situations where the construct of the NeSA test was violated. An example of invalidation occurs when the reading test passages are read to a student or where cheating is documented. Students receiving score invalidations



receive zero scores. Participation in AYP may or may not have been affected, depending upon the circumstances of the invalidation.

No Longer Enrolled (NLE) is flagged for any student pre-registered for testing who withdraws from a district or school prior to being tested. NLE can be indicated in eDIRECT Test Setup (for students pre-registered to test online) or on the student's answer sheet (for student's pre-registered to test paper/pencil). Please note that this does not update the student's NSSRS information. NLE codes are applied in circumstances where a student only took the first half of the test and then left the district. All NLE codes result in waived scores.

Other (OTH) designation is used for situations where emergencies or drastic unforeseen circumstances occur and adequate documentation is provided. Districts with students in drastic unforeseen circumstances should contact the Statewide Assessment office. A waived score is applied.

Parent Refusal (PAR) is used for any student removed from testing due to a formal request from the parent or guardian. These students receive zero scores.

Recently Arrived LEP (RAL) is used for any student who meets the requirement for recently arrived classification. These students are not exempt from testing. [Guidance for Recently Arrived Limited English Proficient Students](#).

Student Absent for Entire Testing Window (SAE) is for any student who was not assessed, because the student was absent from the beginning of testing until the end of testing. All SAE codes result in zero scores.

Expelled Students provided with education in Rule 17 schools (alternative programs with certified teachers) must be tested. Therefore, if students in Rule 17 schools are not tested, but are enrolled during the testing window, they receive zero scores.

#### **g. 11<sup>th</sup> Graders must be tested with their cohort**

The requirement for students taking high school NeSA tests is the following:

High school students are expected to be tested in their third year of high school. Testing occurs in the year prior to their expected graduation year rather than their assigned grade level. A student's "expected graduation year" or "cohort" is determined by adding four years to the school year in which the student enters grade nine for the first time. For example, a student with a Cohort Year of 2016 will take his/her assessment tests in 2015.





## **h. Testing Modes: Paper/Pencil or Online and placing orders**

Beginning in 2012-13 all NeSA assessments were delivered in the online mode with the exception of grade 4 NeSA-Writing, which will remain paper/pencil only. This requirement will apply to NeSA-Writing at grades 8 and 11 and NeSA-Reading, Mathematics, and Science at grades 3-8 and 11.

This requirement will not apply to the following groups of students:

- Students taking the alternate tests (NeSA-AAR, NeSA-AAM or NeSA-AAS).
- Students with disabilities whose Individual Education Plans (IEPs) require paper/pencil testing.
- Students with 504 plans that require paper/pencil testing.
- English Language Learners whose accommodations require paper/pencil testing.
- Student responding in a language other than English or Spanish on NeSA-Writing.
- Students contracted to institutions where online access is not allowed.

Districts will be required to submit paper/pencil needs in October of 2014 via the eDirect System. It is expected that the District Assessment Contact will gather the building decisions and communicate them to DRC through the eDirect System; it should not be individual building principals or contacts who communicate these decisions to DRC.

Districts will be required to designate online accommodations through the eDirect system once the test management system opens. Audio and Spanish-translations are available online accommodations.

Districts need to research the needs of individual students to determine their needs.

- School personnel should review the Accommodations Document.
- Classroom teachers should provide input concerning students' mode of testing.
- As appropriate, school personnel may consult with individual students concerning mode of testing decisions.
- Paper/pencil tests should be ordered for accommodated students according to their individual needs. Do not assume a student who needs accommodations will perform best on a paper/pencil test. Students should be informed whether they will be tested online or paper/pencil before they are administered the tests.



- The individual needs of English Language Learners should inform the district decisions, and students should know whether they will be tested in English or Spanish before they are administered the tests.
- Accommodated students may need paper/pencil in one subject area but not all.
- See [Guide for Including and Accommodating English Language Learners in the NeSA Tests 2014-15](#) to inform decisions for ELL students.
- See [NeSA Accommodations Guidelines: How to Select, Administer, and Evaluate Accommodations for Instruction of Students with Disabilities](#) to inform decisions for students with disabilities.

Any student who needs NeSA-AAR, NeSA-AAM or NeSA-AAS must be flagged in the NSSRS system, from which DRC will compile alternate test orders. Districts may use the [Alternate Assessment Participation Criteria](#) to inform decisions on identification of students who require alternate assessment.

#### **i. Nebraska State Accountability [NeSA] Scoring Rules**

These rules apply to NeSA-Reading, NeSA-Writing, NeSA-AA (Alternate), English Language Development Assessment [ELDA], NeSA-Mathematics and NeSA-Science.

NeSA is a system of state tests, which are scored by vendors. The scores are inserted by NDE into the NSSRS for statewide calculations.

It is a requirement of NDE that any student in the Nebraska Student and Staff Record System (NSSRS) in tested grades is required to participate in NeSA tests. Test scores will be reported to parents in Individual Student Reports [ISR].

The following scoring rules apply to all students, including those with disabilities or those learning the English language.

1. All enrolled students in required grade levels are to be included in Nebraska State Accountability in one of three ways:
  - NeSA – General education tests
  - NeSA – General education tests with approved accommodations
  - NeSA – Alternate Assessment



2. If enrolled students are not tested, the district must account for the reason why each student is not tested.
3. All students will be tested at grade level. If a student is given an out-of-level test, the student will receive a zero. He/she will not be counted as a participant for AYP or in AMAOs.
4. Students will receive scores only on the items that are completed. Incomplete items will count as incorrect items.
5. Students will be considered a participant for AYP or in AMAOs if they respond to at least one question or prompt.
6. If teachers modify any NeSA tests, all resulting scores are zeroes.
7. If a parent refuses (in writing) to allow a student to participate in a test, the student will receive a zero score and non-participant status in AYP/AMAOs.
8. Students will be able to receive accommodations as outlined in their IEPs and as allowed by the [Nebraska State Accountability Approved Accommodations Document](#).

#### **j. Tables of Specification and NeSA Practice Tests**

The Tables of Specifications [TOS] and NeSA practice tests provide guidance for classroom instruction on tested Nebraska standards.

On August 29<sup>th</sup>, districts can access the release of all software for all NeSA testing, including 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades online writing field testing. The online practice tests are accessed through the DRC software, INSIGHT. If the software has not yet been loaded on school computers, it may be accessed by personnel with appropriate permissions in [eDIRECT](#).

- The reading, mathematics, and science practice tests and Tables of Specification are posted on the [NDE- assessment website](#).
- Online practice and tools training are available in the INSIGHT software, provided by DRC
  - Online Tools Training
  - Practice Tests-NeSA-R, M, S (New NeSA-R)



- Guided Practice Tests-NeSA-R,M,S
  - NeSA-W Practice Tests-Grades 8 and 11
  - NeSA-W Field Test-Grades 8 and 11
- [Video Tutorials](#) are available on [NDE- assessment website](#).
  - Publicly accessible versions of the DRC INSIGHT test engine and the NeSA Onlines Tools Training are available. Please copy the following link into Google Chrome to access these practice opportunities  
<https://wbte.drctdirect.com/NE/portals/ne>
  - Districts who administer the NeSA-W online practice test will have access to the student results via eDIRECT. Student online practice test results are replaced each time a student takes a NeSA-W practice test.
  - Districts that choose to administer paper/pencil practice tests for NeSA-RMS will have access to the answer keys posted on the web.

#### **k. Testing contracted students and students in programs outside of the school district**

Districts maintain the responsibility for assessing and reporting student results for students who are in Rule 18 schools or in contracted programs. See [Who Reports What](#) Districts must have a plan for the assessment of and the reporting of those students' results. Students who are enrolled in the Iowa School for the Deaf are included in NeSA testing through coordination with the student's home district.

#### **Options include:**

- Paper/pencil tests - districts are responsible for ordering test booklets for students outside their buildings, for the monitoring of the security of the test administration, and for the return of the test booklets to DRC.
- Online test administration - access to online test administration is controlled by the school district. Therefore, if students outside their buildings take the tests online, districts will be responsible for monitoring the downloading of software, for obtaining and distributing the student tickets, and for the security and monitoring of the test taking process.



With either option, a district needs to communicate its plan to the contracting school or agency and work with it and the academic liaison (required in Rule 18 schools) to facilitate a smooth testing process.

## I. NeSA Online Unlocking

### Guidelines for unlocking:

- Once the test session has begun, the session must be completed in the same day.
- If the session is discontinued within 15 minutes of login (pause/inactivity), the student will have to log back in using the student test ticket (same day only).
- If a test session was not completed on the day of the initial login, the student's test session will lock overnight. If a student has ended the test through the End Test screen, it will become locked. If a DAC believes circumstances merit a test session being unlocked, the DAC must obtain approval from NDE.

If for some reason a student needs second day unlocking, it should be requested from NDE by phone at 402.471.2495 or by e-mail at [nde.stateassessment@nebraska.gov](mailto:nde.stateassessment@nebraska.gov). If NDE has questions about the circumstances of the unlocking, the district will be contacted.

- Request by phone: Please provide the student name, student state ID number, name of the school district and building name, grade level, subject area, session 1 or 2, and the reason for unlocking the ticket.
- Request by email: Please include student state ID number, name of district, name of building, grade level, subject area, session 1 or 2, and the reason for unlocking the ticket. However, for security purposes, please do not include the student's name in the email. Emailed requests will receive a return e-mail indicating when the unlocking is complete.

If the student is not finished with the items in a session, the following are appropriate reasons to unlock tickets:

- Technical difficulties
- Power failure / loss of connectivity
- Student logged out incorrectly
- Illness
- Emergencies



- Log in using incorrect student ticket type (Spanish, visually impaired, etc.)

Unlocking student tickets would not be appropriate for the following reasons:

- Students rushing through the tests
- Students not answering all of the questions
- Students misbehaving
- Schools not scheduling adequate test time

### **m. NeSA Accommodations**

All students including those tested with the alternate test (the 1% most significantly cognitively challenged) are included in the Nebraska State Accountability System.

Test scores for all students in grades 3-8 and 11 are expected in the Nebraska Student and Staff Record System, the NSSRS. Because of the inclusionary testing requirements in a state system, any student not tested will receive a zero state score unless granted an allowable exception.

After thorough research with internal and external groups, the NDE team developed and has annually reviewed the [Nebraska State Accountability Approved Accommodations Document](#). It is expected that a student's IEP and/or 504 plan will include the appropriate accommodations for inclusion in NeSA and for regular instruction. Districts need to have all teachers review the allowable accommodations in this document. For future consideration of an accommodation currently not on the list, districts are encouraged to contact Valorie Foy within the Statewide Assessment office at 402.471.2495, or Sharon Heater within the Special Education Office at 402.471.4322.

If the student is unable to respond directly in the standard answer sheet or online, a Test Administrator must transcribe the student responses into the answer sheet, answer booklet or the online system.

Among the features included in the online testing system is a magnifying feature to enlarge the graphics, a feature to enlarge text, and a feature to change background color. Students who need the magnifier or screen color change do not have to have an Individual Education Plan (IEP).



## **n. Spanish Translations**

All Spanish-translated testing materials are requested through eDirect enrollment system, paper/pencil in October and designated for the online mode in the eDirect system in March. All tests, including Spanish, are returned to DRC.

**NeSA-Writing:** Paper/pencil Spanish translations will be available in all three grades 4, 8, and 11. Districts will identify the numbers of Spanish writing tests needed in DRC's eDirect enrollment system in October. Online NeSA-W tests are not available in Spanish.

**NeSA-Reading, Mathematics and Science:** The NeSA-Reading test is available in Spanish; however, translation of reading passages is not allowed. NeSA-R is available both paper/pencil and online. NeSA-Mathematics and NeSA-Science tests in their entirety will be available in Spanish – both paper/pencil versions and online.

DRC provides Spanish-translated audio directions and items that may be copied or transferred to I-Pods or audiotapes but not to any networked device. The original DRC-provided Spanish translations must be returned to the DRC after testing. All electronic and paper copies made in districts are to be destroyed.

Note: Translations in languages other than Spanish for the NeSA-Math, Science, and Writing and for NeSA-Reading directions and items will need to be provided by local districts. All electronic and paper translations made in districts are to be destroyed.

## **o. NeSA Software Update**

For the 2014-2015 school year, the INSIGHT software will be available for download on August 29th. The download of this software will provide the applications for all subjects: reading, mathematics, science, writing (grades 8 and 11).

The dates of technology training for the WebEx INSIGHT software include two different opportunities:

- INSIGHT and TSM Installation training for N-TACs
- INSIGHT and TSM Management and Capacity Load Testing training for N-TACs

Presentation dates are included on the [NeSA Timeline](#) located on the NDE-Assessment website. Video recordings of the sessions will be available after the WebExes occur.

Questions about any of the information in this section may be directed to:



Dr. Valorie Foy, Director Statewide Assessment

Phone: 402.471.2495

E-mail: [valorie.foy@nebraska.gov](mailto:valorie.foy@nebraska.gov)

#### **D. Check4Learning (C4L)**

The NeSA summative tests provide important student performance information for schools, for communities, and for policy makers, but it is important that Nebraska educators gather student performance information throughout the school year in order to determine whether or not daily instruction is preparing students to perform well on the NeSA tests. Educators need to see the curriculum, assessment, and instructional processes linked together – as ongoing, continuous and grounded inside each classroom.

For that reason the Nebraska Department of Education has joined with DRC, with school districts, and with service units to build a state system of assessment to “wrap around” the summative NeSA tests given in the spring. The system, Check4Learning (C4L), is based upon a state-level item bank of locally-developed multiple choice questions in reading, mathematics and science. Participation is strictly voluntary and left to the district to decide. Districts choosing to participate will be able to select items that match the tested indicators and build interim assessments that may be given at point of instruction at any time in the year. The purpose of the interim assessments will be to determine whether or not students are “on track” with the important skills measured in the summative NeSA tests.

C4L will provide instantaneous results to students and reports to teachers about item analysis, individual classroom, building, or district reports. The intent will be for teachers to have at their fingertips the data to adjust or change instruction. The system is a powerful tool to inform and link the curriculum and instructional process to assessment.

School leaders have many responsibilities, but few among them are more important than the academic performance of their students. One of the measures of student performance in Nebraska is a set of Nebraska State Accountability (NeSA) tests. The Nebraska Department of Education believes that the integration of curriculum, instruction, and assessment must occur if all children are to have the opportunity to succeed on the standards. C4L is a tool intended to provide immediate feedback to students and teachers so that learning throughout the year becomes the focal point, and the summative NeSA tests are used as the verification of that learning.





C4L resources, including instructional videos, can be found on the [NDE-Assessment website](#).

#### **a. C4L – Memorandum of Understanding**

Districts that signed a Memorandum of Understanding (spring 2014) are 2014-2015 participants. Districts will have the opportunity to be members of C4L on a year-by-year basis as determined by completion of the Memorandum of Understanding and required test items and/or peer review of items.

Questions about any of the information in this section may be directed to:

Jeremy Heneger, Assistant Director Statewide Assessment  
Phone: 402.471.2818      E-mail: [jeremy.heneger@nebraska.gov](mailto:jeremy.heneger@nebraska.gov)

#### **E. The Technical Advisory Committee**

The NDE has contracted with numerous assessment experts including many from outside the state. These assessment experts have assisted the NDE in advisory roles, in assessment development, in No Child Left Behind (NCLB) documentation, and many other tasks.

A Technical Advisory Committee was appointed by the Governor in 2008 and approved by the Legislature. The role of this committee is to:

“Review the statewide assessment instruments and advise the Governor, the state board, and the State Department of Education on the development of statewide assessment instruments and the statewide assessment plans.”

The committee has met for the last five years. The committee members include the following:

Dr. Brian Gong, Chair	Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment – Dover, New Hampshire
Dr. Richard Sawyer	ACT – Iowa City, Iowa
Chad Buchendahl	Alpine Testing Solutions – Orem, Utah



Linda Poole

Teacher, Papillion-LaVista Public Schools

Dr. Frank Harwood

Superintendent, Bellevue Public Schools

## **F. National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)**

During the 2014-2015 school year, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) will sample student performance in schools identified by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES). Superintendents of selected schools were notified in June 2014 if their schools had been selected. Letters were sent to principals and District Assessment Contacts in selected schools as well as superintendents. The letters identified the date chosen for the assessment, administration information, and specific information about the school's responsibilities.

For 2014-2015, 334 buildings were selected to administer NAEP assessments in reading, mathematics, and science at the 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. The NAEP testing window runs from January 26<sup>th</sup> to March 6<sup>th</sup>. Three Nebraska schools will also participate in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS).

Thank you to all of the schools and students who take part in NAEP. Without your support, the NAEP process in Nebraska would be unachievable. The national 2015 NAEP reading and math results will be available in the fall of 2015, and the science results in 2016. These results will all be posted on the NDE website.

Please visit the [NAEP-website](#) for complete information about NAEP, including previous NAEP results, and other NAEP publications. If you have specific questions about NAEP, please contact the Statewide Assessment Office:

Kim Snyder, Nebraska NAEP Coordinator

Phone: 402.471.2959

E-mail: [kim.snyder@nebraska.gov](mailto:kim.snyder@nebraska.gov)





**II. The Statewide Writing Assessment – NeSA-Writing**





## II. The Statewide Writing Assessment – NeSA-Writing

### A. NeSA-W Implementation 2015

As the Nebraska State Accountability System continues to evolve, the next steps for the transition of the NeSA-Writing test take place in 2014-2015. Districts may anticipate the following:

#### Grade 4:

- Will continue to be in the narrative mode.
- Will continue to be tested in two timed 40-minute sessions.
- Will be scored analytically.
- Will include a self-assessment Rubric Tool in the student test.
- Will continue to be tested in paper/pencil formats. (No online administration planned)
- Will have test results released to the schools in the spring of 2015.
- Will have access to commercial published dictionary and thesaurus.

#### Grades 8 and 11:

- Will participate in online test administration and analytic scoring.
- Will allow paper/pencil tests only to those students with IEPs, and 504 plans, that specify a student need for paper/pencil testing. (Paper/pencil tests requested through eDirect in October).
- Will need paper/pencil mode if responding in a language other than English.
- Will participate in an untimed (but recommended) 90-minute online testing session.
- Will be tested in the same mode as in previous years: 8<sup>th</sup> grade – descriptive, 11<sup>th</sup> grade – persuasive.
- Will have test results released to schools in the spring of 2015.
- Will have access to an online dictionary and thesaurus.
- Will have access to commercial published dictionary and thesaurus.
- Will have a new spell check accommodation available in the INSIGHT software if specified in IEP or 504 plans.

#### a. Rubric/Rangefinding Review

The NeSA-W rubrics were revised in the fall of 2010 and released on the web at that time. They are found on the [NeSA Writing page](#).



Rubric/Rangefinding Review for 4<sup>th</sup> grade teachers will be provided in October of 2014. The specifics of the training dates, times, and locations are provided on the [NeSA-Timeline](#).

**b. 2014-2015 NeSA-Writing Schedule**

August 29-June 2015	Online Writing Practice Test available
October 6-17, 2014	Order Paper/Pencil Test Quantities in eDirect Enrollment
November 10, 2014	Tickets Available for Writing Field Test Grades 8 and 11 On-line
November 10 – December 19	Writing Field Test Window
January 5, 2015	Districts Receive Paper/Pencil 4th Grade Writing Materials.
January 5-7, 2015	WebEx – Writing Administration
January 7, 2015	Grades 8 and 11 Writing Session Tickets Available to Districts
January 19 – February 6, 2015	NeSA-Writing Testing Window
February 11, 2015	Writing Paper/Pencil Materials Returned to DRC
April 16, 2015	Release of preliminary NeSA-Writing Scores to districts – All grades
May 1, 2015	Verifications due to NDE

**c. Pertinent information for NeSA-W 2014:**

- In paper/pencil testing, students must write in #2 PENCIL. Papers written in ink will not be scored and will result in zero scores.
- If students are provided with a transcription accommodation, the student response to the writing prompt must be written in the actual test booklet at Grade 4 or entered into the online system at Grades 8 and 11 by the test administrator. If a student with an IEP is word processing a paper or using a scribe, the student response must be transcribed into the test booklet at Grade 4 and entered into the online INSIGHT system at Grades 8 and 11.

- Originals of transcribed papers will be sent to DRC in an envelope provided with the shipping materials. Each student essay included in the envelope must be accompanied by a [Transcription Submission form](#).
- Students using Spanish translated prompts will respond in a paper/pencil test booklet or in the online INSIGHT system. Students writing their responses in Spanish must use paper/pencil booklets. Spanish translations for writing are ordered through eDirect in October.
- Students are not to be provided “story starters.”
- Students are not to be provided graphic organizers unless the accommodation is allowed by an IEP or 504 plan. If graphic organizers are provided for special education students, the organizers are not to include more than a skeletal guide. Graphic organizers with suggested wording, specific instructions, and suggested inclusion of specific details are not allowed. Word lists are not allowed.
- Teachers are not to provide editing assistance.
- In paper/pencil testing, students may only use the paper provided. If additional sheets of paper are added to the booklets, they will not be scored.
- Districts may make copies of the student essays (do not take the booklets apart) for local scoring and for possible Score Verification. No student essays may be shared or discussed prior to the close of the NeSA-W testing window. All student essays will be available in eDIRECT. At Grades 8 and 11, the online test essays are available upon their completion. Grades 8 and 11, paper/pencil essays will be available in eDirect upon completion of DRC scoring. At Grade 4, the student essays will be scanned and placed in eDIRECT upon completion of the DRC scoring. All electronic copies will be available on March 18, 2015.
- All writing materials (including Spanish papers) must be returned to DRC, not NDE.
- In online testing students will be notified when they have reached the 2/3 mark and again when they have reached the character limit. (6,000 characters = approximately three pages). Students will be able to continue revising.
- Online thesaurus and dictionary are provided.



- Students may select their font size, spacing between paragraphs, etc. Their selections do NOT impact the scoring. The NDE does not prescribe requirements for these choices.
- Students in grades 8 and 11 may continue to pre-write on paper or compose at the computer. Students should be provided with blank paper for pre-writing.
- Spell check will not be available in the online mode unless allowed as an accommodation by the student’s IEP or 504 Plan.
- Students in grades 8 and 11 may use hard copies of commercially published dictionaries and thesauruses.
- The 90-minutes testing time is a recommendation, not a requirement as the NeSA-W in grades 8 and 11 is not a timed test. The majority of students in grades 8 and 11 used a time span between 60 and 90 minutes in 2014.
- The NeSA-W in grade 4 is a timed test – two 40-minute sessions on two days.
- The modes of writing will remain the same for all three grades:
  - Grade 4 – Narrative
  - Grade 8 – Descriptive
  - Grade 11 – Persuasive
- Information about the modes of writing and student writing samples are found on the assessment website on the [NeSA-Writing page](#).

**B. NeSA Writing – Statewide Field Testing –2014-2015– Grades 4, 8, 11**

Grade 4 – Field Testing will remain the same as the past. Testing will be in the spring from the end of February to the middle of May, using paper/pencil tests.

Grades 8 and 11 – Field Testing will be online through INSIGHT. Prompts are assigned randomly to students.

The field test is an opportunity for students to practice taking the test under the same conditions as the regular NeSA-W test.





As a field test of future prompts for NeSA-W, the student essays will not be available to districts.

NDE appreciates schools supporting this project as NDE wants to keep prompt writing in the hands of Nebraska educators and to continue to set rangefinders using Nebraska student writing samples.

### C. NeSA Writing – Statewide Analytic Scoring

Analytic scoring provides five scores for each student: a score for content, a score for organization, a score for word choice and voice, a score for sentence fluency and conventions (punctuation, grammar, spelling), and a total overall composite score.

Cut scores for the three levels of performance were established through a process that involved Nebraska educators with the final decision based on informed decisions by the Nebraska State Board of Education.

The cut scores for NeSA-Writing were set as follows:

Proficiency Levels	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 11
Exceeds the Standards	57-70	55-70	53-70
Meets the Standards	40-56	40-54	40-52
Below the Standards	0-39	0-39	0-39

The analytic scoring rubrics are posted on the [NeSA-Writing webpage](#).

The weighting of the four domains has been reviewed internally and with the Technical Advisory group that provides direction to the assessment system. The four domains of writing to be used in analytic scoring are weighted as follows:

- Content and ideas 35%
- Organization 25%
- Word choice and Voice 20%
- Sentence Fluency/Conventions (grammar, punctuation, spelling) 20%

Each student’s paper will be read by two independent scorers. Each domain score from both raters will be summed and multiplied by its weighting (0.35, 0.25, 0.20, and 0.20) to create a composite score total. The composite scores will be converted to a scale score between 0-70.

In cases where the two readers disagree by more than one score point on the domain score, the paper will be reread and the domain that is not in agreement will be scored a third time. The rules of the third score reads will be applied as follows:

- If the third score is an exact match to one of the originals, the two matching scores will be used.
- If the third score is adjacent to one of the originals, but not the other, the third score and the adjacent score will be used.
- If the third score is adjacent to both scores (e.g. A=2, B=4, and C=3), the third score will be used twice.

The rules for third reads are NOT influenced by the weighting of the domains. The final scaled score will accurately reflect the performance of the student on the writing assessment.

[The Analytic Scoring Model](#) explains how the composite score is obtained and how the scale score is determined.

**a. Suggestions for Scheduling NeSA Writing:**

**Grade 4:**

- Administer the assessment on two consecutive days. Avoid scheduling Day 1 on Fridays or Mondays.
- Avoid scheduling toward the end of the testing window. Allow time for make-up tests within the three-week window.
- Make sure all of the assessments reach DRC by February 11, 2015.

**Grades 8 and 11:**

- Schedule ahead for the computer lab and/or the accessibility of computers.
- Avoid scheduling toward the end of the testing window. Allow time for make-up tests within the three-week window.
- Allow for the recommended 90-minute block of testing time. In 2014, the majority of students in grades 8 and 11 used a time span between 60 and



90 minutes with 10 to 15 percent of the students going beyond the 90-minute period.

### **b. Printing the online tests**

Both the online practice tests and the operational tests may be printed. Directions for printing NeSA-W online responses will be available through the NeSA-W administration training. Essays may be printed for local scoring and are required for the verification process.

## **D. Including All Students in the Statewide Writing Assessment**

All students in grades 4, 8, and 11 are expected to participate in the statewide writing process. Districts should note the following:

- All students (except those who qualify for the NeSA-AA alternate assessment) are expected to participate in the statewide writing assessment.
- Districts may provide accommodations per the [Nebraska State Accountability Approved Accommodations Document](#).
- The Spanish version of the writing will be scored by DRC. Spanish translations of the writing test are ordered through eDirect, and students respond in a paper/pencil booklet with essay written in Spanish or English. At Grades 8 and 11, the student may respond online in English only.
- Booklets for students responding in a language other than English or Spanish will be sent to DRC and be counted as participants.
- Students in Rule 18 or Interim Program Schools will participate. The contracting district that is responsible for arranging appropriate administration and security of the test.
- Students with disabilities, including those performing below grade level will be provided test booklets on grade level.
- All NeSA Scoring Rules apply to the NeSA-W.

### **a. Test Security and Ethics**

The NeSA Security Procedures outlined in this Update apply to the administration of the NeSA-W. This includes the building principal's signature on the NeSA Security Agreement and the DAC Confidentiality Agreement. Each building principal and DAC will be expected to sign the agreements with Echosign when they receive the agreements in their email.



## **b. Statewide Writing Verification Process**

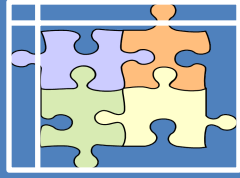
Although the Statewide Assessment Office reviews each writing assessment question related to students' scores brought to our attention during the review of the preliminary results, a formalized score verifications process is available.

This score verification process is appropriate only for very specific, not general, scoring issues in all grades. Only the total score can be appealed. The score verification process is designed for student scores that fall below the state cut score. Districts will need to complete the [score verification form](#). In addition, districts must provide a written explanation indicating specific reasons for the score verification request and a copy of each paper in question. Sample score verification requests are available on the [NDE-Assessment website](#). Papers submitted for score verification will be examined by a panel of trained reviewers who are Nebraska educators. The verification process will be completed in June 2015. Districts may fax the score verification materials to the Statewide Assessment office at 402.742.2319. Score verifications may be shipped to NDE but must arrive by the deadline, May 1, 2015.

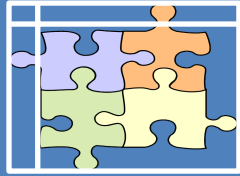
For questions about the information in this section please contact:

Valorie Foy, Director Statewide Assessment  
402.471.2947 Email: [valorie.foy@nebraska.gov](mailto:valorie.foy@nebraska.gov)

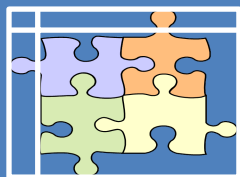




**STANDARDS**



**ASSESSMENT**



**ACCOUNTABILITY**

**III. Including All Students in Assessment and Accountability**



### III. Including All Students in Assessment and Accountability

#### A. Students with Disabilities and Scoring Rules

All students with disabilities are expected to participate in the Nebraska State Accountability System, NeSA. No student, including students with disabilities, may be excluded from the state assessment and accountability system. All students are required to have access to grade-level content, instruction, and assessment.

Students who are ELL and also have an IEP are allowed accommodations as appropriate for both designations. These students may benefit from linguistic support accommodations in addition to Special Education accommodations. The IEP team should include members familiar with both the student's cognitive and linguistic needs in order to determine appropriate accommodations.

Students with disabilities may be included in state assessment and accountability in the following ways:

- Students may be tested on the NeSA tests without accommodations. This testing will be online except for 4<sup>th</sup> grade writing.
- Students may be tested on the NeSA tests with accommodations specified in the student's IEP. Accommodations appropriate for the NeSA are found in the [Nebraska State Accountability Approved Accommodations Document](#). Accommodations provided to students must be specified in the student's IEP and used during instruction throughout the year. Accommodations may require paper/pencil testing.
- Use of accommodations that are not approved may invalidate the student's score. Non-approved accommodations used in state testing result in both a zero score and no participation credit.

**For example, if a student's IEP indicates that reading passages may be read to the students on NeSA-R, the state reading test, and that accommodation is administered, the district is obligated to report to the Assessment Office the student's name and ID number before the testing window is over. The student's score will be a "zero" and the student will not be considered a participant. Violations of this procedure are considered a breach in ethics.**



**Please note:**

Districts must be aware of the differences between accommodations and modifications.

Accommodations provide adjustments and adaptations to the testing process that do not change the expectation, the grade level, the construct, or content being measured. Accommodations should only be used if appropriate for the student, indicated in the student's current IEP, and used during instruction throughout the year.

Modifications are adjustments or changes in the test that change test expectations, the grade level, or the construct of content being measured.

**Modifications are not acceptable in the state testing process.** Examples: Students cannot be tested out of grade level, nor can certain sections of the test be eliminated or shortened.

Students who qualify may be tested using an alternate assessment, the NeSA-AA. The NeSA-AA has been designed for students with severe cognitive disabilities or multi-handicapping conditions (generally less than 1% of the overall student population.) This is a separate, paper/pencil test that appropriately measures skills tied to the academic content standards as required by NCLB. Further discussion of the NeSA-AA is found later in this section.

If the IEP team determines that a student is to take an alternate assessment, the NeSA-AA, a statement of why the student cannot participate in the regular NeSA and the rationale for selecting the NeSA alternate shall be included in the IEP (Rule 51 007.07A6).

**a. Guidelines for Participation in the Nebraska State Accountability [NeSA] Alternate Assessments**

The [Alternate Assessment Participation Criteria](#) for determining which students are to take the alternate assessment must be followed by the IEP team.

The U.S. Department of Education and the State of Nebraska do not currently define "significantly cognitively disabled students." This determination will continue to be made at the local level. It is expected that the local IEP team will carefully consider each of the following guidelines before determining participation in an alternate assessment: The student...



- Accesses curriculum and instruction closely aligned to Nebraska standards with extended indicators.
- Possesses significant limitations, both in intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior, expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills.
- Requires extensive, pervasive, and frequent supports in order to acquire, maintain, and demonstrate performance of knowledge and skills.
- Demonstrates cognitive ability and adaptive behavior that prevents completion of general academic curriculum, even with extensive modifications and accommodations.
- May have an accompanying communication, motor, sensory, or other disability.

**b. Nebraska Rule 51: Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 51**

Nebraska Rule 51 regulations state: 007.07A – “The IEP shall include:”

007.07A3 – For children with disabilities who take alternate assessments aligned to alternate achievement standards, a description of benchmarks or short-term objectives;

007.07A7 – A statement of any individual appropriate accommodations that are necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the child on state and district-wide assessments; and if the IEP team determines that the child must take an alternate assessment instead of a particular regular state of district-wide assessment of student achievement, a statement of why:

007.07A7a – the child cannot participate in the regular assessment; and

007.07A7b – the particular alternate assessment selected is appropriate for the child...”

**c. 1% Rule on the NeSA-AAR**

If a district’s percentage of students who are proficient on the NeSA-AA tests exceeds 1% of the total number of students enrolled in the tested grades 3-8 and HS of the district population, the district will be contacted by letter and given instructions for applying for an “exception.” The “exception” application provides the opportunity for districts to explain their circumstances. The USDE’s intent of the 1% cap is to assure that students are appropriately assessed with the alternate assessment and that students who should be taking the general education test have that opportunity.

Further information on the 1% rule for alternate assessments may be found at [School Age NeSA Tests for Students with Disabilities](#) or by contacting Sharon Heater at 402.595.1140 or by email at [sharon.heater@nebraska.gov](mailto:sharon.heater@nebraska.gov)





#### **d. Instructional Guides for Alternate Assessments**

Instructional examples and clarifications for reading, math, and science extended standards are available for teachers working with students taking the NeSA alternate assessments. The “Reading Standards with Extended Indicators and Instructional Clarifications,” the “Math Standards with Extended Indicators and Instructional Clarifications,” and the “Science Standards with Extended Indicators and Instructional Clarifications” are available on the [NDE-Sped website](#).

#### **B. The Alternate Assessments: Nebraska State Accountability Alternate for Reading, Mathematics and Science (NeSA-AAR, NeSA-AAM, and NeSA-AAS)**

In order to be consistent with the NeSA-R, NeSA-M, and NeSA-S tests for general education students and to meet federal requirements, alternate assessments for reading, mathematics, and science (NeSA-AAR, NeSA-AAM, and NeSA-AAS) were developed in conjunction with the tests for general education. These tests have been designed for students with severe cognitive disabilities or multi-handicapping conditions, generally less than 1% of the overall student population.

The NeSA-AAR, NeSA-AAM and NeSA-AAS are tests of appropriate tasks, summative in nature, that provide a single snapshot of a student’s performance. The tests have gone through the same processes as the NeSA tests for general education. Students with severe cognitive disabilities or multi-handicapping conditions are required to participate in statewide testing. The alternate assessment can be administered as specified in a student’s IEP.

Districts may access the NeSA-AA practice tests, Tables of Specification, Performance Level Descriptors, and Extended Indicators on the [NDE-Assessment website](#). Like the NeSA tests, the alternate assessment will be administered between **March 23 - May 1, 2015**. This is a six-week administration window. Various trainings on the alternate assessment will be provided in the 2014-2015 school year.

#### **2015 NeSA-AA Testing**

- The NeSA-AAR (reading), the NeSA-AAM (mathematics), and the NeSA-AAS (science) are required in 2015 for all students whose IEPs specify the need for an alternate assessment.
- All three tests (reading, mathematics, and science) are in one booklet.



- Students in grades 4, 8, and 11 who qualify for alternate assessment for NeSA-Writing will be locally assessed.
- Students may be administered the alternate assessment in one subject but not in another. If that is the case, districts will need to contact the Statewide Assessment Office. This is a rare situation, but is appropriate occasionally.
- In 2015, the alternate assessment results will be entered by the teacher on the DRC answer sheet following the specific directions.
- All secure test materials, including answer sheets, student test booklets, and administration manuals for the NeSA-AA, will be returned according to the directions in the administration manual **to DRC.**
- All security procedures outlined in this Update also apply to the NeSA-AA testing process.
- All students who have been flagged in the NSSRS as students eligible for the alternate testing will receive NeSA-AAR, NeSA-AAM, and NeSA-AAS test booklets and administration manuals.

For questions about these processes, you may contact the DRC Help Desk at 866.342.6280 or email them at [necustomerservice@datarecognitioncorp.com](mailto:necustomerservice@datarecognitioncorp.com)

## C. Students Learning the English Language

### a. Who are English Language Learners?

According to NCLB, English Language Learners (ELL) are those students who have a native language other than English, **OR** who come from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on their level of English proficiency, **AND** whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual (i) the ability to meet the state's proficient level of achievement on state assessments, (ii) the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English, or, (iii) the opportunity to participate fully in society.

Each district with ELL students should have a plan for identifying and serving these students that meets the requirements of the Office for Civil Rights, Title III, and Rule 15.



The requirements can be found in the [The Nebraska ELL Program Guide, Guide for Administrators](#).

*Note: Foreign exchange students are NOT considered as ELL students and should be included in the state assessment process.*

### **b. Including ELL Students in the Nebraska State Accountability [NeSA] Process**

Both state and federal laws require the inclusion of all students in the state testing process. ELL students must be tested in NeSA. Districts should review the following guidelines:

- NCLB requirements allow appropriate testing accommodations for all ELL Students.
- In determining appropriate accommodations for students in the NeSA system, districts should use the newly revised Nebraska State Accountability [Approved Accommodations Document](#).

**Districts must be aware of the difference between accommodations and modifications.**



For students learning the English language, accommodations are changes to testing procedures, testing materials, or the testing situation that allow the student meaningful participation in the assessment. Effective accommodations for ELLs address the unique linguistic and socio-cultural needs of the student. Accommodations for ELL students may be determined appropriate without prior use during instruction throughout the year. For a detailed discussion of accommodations for ELL students on state content assessments, please refer to [“Guide for Including and Accommodating English Language Learners \(ELLs\) in the Nebraska State Accountability \(NeSA\) Tests.”](#)

Modifications are adjustments or changes in the test or testing process that change the test expectation, the grade level, or the construct or content being measured. Modifications are not allowable in NeSA.

### **c. ELL Students Exiting Program and AYP**

Students who are coded as “redesignated as English fluent two years or less” on NSSRS will have their assessment scores included for AYP calculations. There will not be an option to exclude the scores for the two years following program exit.



#### **d. Spanish Translations:**

**NeSA-Writing** – Spanish translations are available in grades 4, 8, and 11. Students who write NeSA-W in Spanish or any other language other than English need to use a paper/pencil booklet that is ordered in October through eDirect.

**NeSA-Reading** – is available online and paper/pencil. Districts are asked to specify their request for Spanish paper/pencil translations through eDirect. To accompany paper/pencil tests, the translations of directions and items are available in written and audio format and are sent from DRC. Reading passages remain in English, and should not be translated. Translating reading passages will invalidate the student score.

Students have the option of using the audio and/or written translation of the directions and items in place of or alongside the NeSA-R paper/pencil test. Student responses are entered on a regular student answer document.

The translated audio CD directions and items may be copied to iPods or audio tapes but not to any networked device. The original Spanish CD will need to be returned to DRC after testing and all other copies destroyed. Only one copy of the written and audio modes will be provided to each district per grade level.

**NeSA-Mathematics and NeSA Science** – The NeSA-Mathematics and NeSA-Science tests in their entirety will be available in Spanish – both paper/pencil versions and online. If a student requires side-by-side tests, the NeSA paper/pencil tests may be used. Student responses are entered on a student answer document.

Translations for NeSA in languages other than Spanish will need to be provided by local districts. Reading passages cannot be translated.

#### **e. Guidance for Recently Arrived Limited English Proficient Students**

Recently Arrived Limited English Proficient Students are defined by the U.S. Department of Education as a student with limited English proficiency who has attended schools in the United States for less than twelve months. The phrase “schools in the United States” includes only schools in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The term “schools in the United States” does NOT include Puerto Rico.



The district may exempt a recently arrived limited English proficient student from the **NeSA- Reading test (only) for 12 months or one reporting period**. A district **must** assess the writing, mathematics, and science achievement (NeSA-W, NeSA-M, and NeSA-S) of a recently arrived limited English proficient student using appropriate accommodations.

For AYP purposes, recently arrived limited English proficient students are counted as having participated in the state's assessments for purposes of meeting the participation requirement if they take either the English Language Development Assessment (ELDA) OR the reading test (NeSA-R) **AND** both the mathematics and science assessment (NeSA-M and NeSA-S).

#### **f. ELLs with Disabilities**

Students who are ELL and also have an IEP are allowed accommodations as appropriate for both designations. These students may benefit from linguistic support accommodations in addition to Special Education accommodations. The IEP team should include members familiar with both the student's cognitive and linguistic needs in order to determine appropriate accommodations.

#### **g. Language Acquisition Testing**

As required by NCLB and Rule 15, districts must annually assess the English language proficiency of all limited-English proficient students.

The test provided by the Nebraska Department of Education to test English language proficiency is the ELDA. Developed by a consortium of states, the test, given in the spring, and is administered through the services of Measurement, Inc. All students designated as Limited English Proficient (LEP) on NSSRS, must participate in ELDA testing. The ELDA 2015 testing window is **February 9-March 20, 2015**.

It is important to note that the purpose of this test is to determine English language proficiency, not proficiency on reading standards.

Students eligible for alternate assessments for NeSA (NeSA-AAR, AAM, AAS, and local Writing) should attempt to take the sections of ELDA that are deemed appropriate.

#### **h. AMAOs (Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives)**



NCLB requires that an additional accountability decision be applied to the performance and progress of those students learning the English language. This required Title III decision known as meeting the Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) is applied to all Title III districts and consortia. This accountability decision is based upon:

- a) The progress ELL students are making in learning English, as measured by ELDA.
- b) The number of students becoming proficient in English, as measured by ELDA.
- c) Whether or not the ELL students meet AYP.

Questions about any of the information in this section may be directed to:

Terri Schuster  
402.471.4694 E-mail: [terri.schuster@nebraska.gov](mailto:terri.schuster@nebraska.gov)

#### **D. Early Childhood Assessment: Results Matter B-5**

*Results Matter in Nebraska* is a child and family outcomes and program improvement system designed and implemented to improve programs and supports for all young children birth to age five, served through school districts, Educational Service Units (ESUs), the Early Development Network, and community partners. The system grew out of earlier efforts to monitor and evaluate grant funded early childhood education programs. Its broader application came as a result of federal Office of Special Education Program (OSEP) requirements for reporting outcomes for children with disabilities and requirements for monitoring programs funded through a range of state funds. The system employs both child outcomes assessment and program quality assessment to accomplish these purposes:

- improve experiences, learning, development, and lives of young children (birth to age five) and their families
- inform program practices
- demonstrate program effectiveness
- guide the development of local and state policies and procedures
- provide data to demonstrate results

The system is administered by the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) Offices of Early Childhood and Special Education. Partners include the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Munroe-Meyer Institute-University of Nebraska Medical



Center. A state Results Matter Child and Program Measurement Task Force comprised of state and local stakeholder representatives serves in an advisory role to the system.

The child and program assessment tools implemented for *Results Matter* are congruent with:

The child and program assessment tools implemented for *Results Matter* are congruent with:

- Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines (Birth to Three and Three to Five) [www.education.ne.gov/OEC/elg.html](http://www.education.ne.gov/OEC/elg.html);
- NDE Rule 11, Regulations for Early Childhood Education Programs [www.education.ne.gov/legal/webrulespdf/CLEANrule112007.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/legal/webrulespdf/CLEANrule112007.pdf); Rule 11 applies to all pre-kindergarten programs operated through public schools or ESUs
- NDE Rule 51, Regulations and Standards for Special Education Programs [www.education.ne.gov/legal/webrulespdf/CLEAN51\\_2010.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/legal/webrulespdf/CLEAN51_2010.pdf); Rule 51 applies to all children with disabilities birth - 21.
- NDE Rule 52, Regulations and Standards for the Provision of Early Intervention Services [http://www.education.ne.gov/Legal/webrulespdf/CLEAN52\\_2014.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/Legal/webrulespdf/CLEAN52_2014.pdf) Rule 52 applies to all infants and toddlers with disabilities (birth to age 3)
- The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B and Part C.

### **a. Measuring Child Outcomes**

*Results Matter* in Nebraska calls for measuring child outcomes through an assessment system that:

- is based on ongoing observation of children engaged in real activities, with people they know, in natural settings.
- reflects evidence-based practices.
- engages families and primary care providers as active participants.
- integrates information gathered across settings.
- is individualized to address each child's unique ways of learning.
- informs decisions about day-to-day learning opportunities for children.
- reflects the belief that development and learning are rooted in culture supported by the family.

NDE requires that all school districts use a single, statewide child assessment system, Teaching Strategies GOLD. This comprehensive system measures individual child progress across six domains of development and learning for all children birth to age 5 who are served by school districts and ESUs. Districts enter ongoing observational data in the GOLD online system to document progress towards narrowing the gap in



meeting research-based widely-held expectations for young children birth to age five. District outcomes are compared to state targets related to three outcomes most highly associated with success in school and in life:

1. Positive social-emotional skills, including social relationships
2. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, including early language, communication and early literacy; and
3. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

Annual reporting of *Results Matter* child progress data is required by OSEP, the State Board of Education and the Nebraska Legislature. The use of a single online assessment system provides the state with unprecedented opportunities to compile needed data, not only for the required state and local reporting functions, but most importantly for ongoing curriculum planning, differentiated instruction, program improvement, and improved child outcomes.

## **b. Program Quality Assessment**

*Results Matter* also includes evaluation of program quality to assure that early childhood classrooms achieve and maintain overall high quality, employ qualified staff, and operate in compliance with federal and state guidelines. Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, NDE will contract with observers and pay all costs associated with program quality observations. Observations will be completed in a percentage of classrooms across the state. Districts should continue to assure that classroom teachers and other appropriate staff attend training to be familiar with, and implement classroom practices consistent with, the ECERS-R. Sixpence classrooms will continue to follow the requirements of Sixpence grants.

Information about completing ECERS assessments and a schedule of [Environment Rating Scale Training](#) are provided by the Office of Early Childhood.

All school districts and Educational Service Units are required to submit the NDE annual Early Childhood Program Report to be in compliance with Rule 11 approval processes. In addition, programs are highly encouraged to participate in the NAEYC Accreditation process, and NDE provides technical and financial assistance for that process.

## **c. Professional Development**

School districts and programs receive continuous support to assure that their participation in *Results Matter* provides the highest quality data and knowledge about how





to use data to improve program quality and child and family outcomes. The state's [Early Childhood Training Center](#), and statewide network of early childhood professional development (Early Learning Connection), in collaboration with the organizations which provide the program and child assessment tools, regularly offer training in their use. NDE maintains a cadre of professionals who have achieved reliability in the use of the Environment Rating Scales.

#### **d. Results Matter Fidelity Process**

The Results Matter Fidelity Process is designed to assure the reliability and validity of GOLD assessment data. The process consists of two parts:

1. District Fidelity Plan. Each district, ESU and special education cooperative is responsible for completing a Fidelity Plan for child outcomes annually. The one-page Fidelity Plan describes and documents how the district, ESU, or agency will support and supervise teachers/practitioners in maintaining the reliability and validity of child observation data collected. The Fidelity Plan must be kept on file for review by NDE staff.

Gold Inter-Rater Reliability (IRR) Certification. This certification is required to be completed online by each teacher/practitioner responsible for scoring child observations and documentation for children birth to age five. Individual Inter-Rater Reliability (IRR) must be completed online by December 31, 2014 for teachers who completed their first year in GOLD in 2013-14. Teachers must have one year of GOLD experience prior to being eligible for IRR certification. IRR certification must be renewed every three years. In Nebraska, most teachers/practitioners work with children birth to kindergarten entrance age. For certification, these individuals must achieve and maintain inter-rater reliability must be maintained for the following two groups of children:

- a. Birth through age 2, including children with disabilities
- b. Preschool (3-5), including children with disabilities.

For information, resources, and updates related to *Results Matter*, see the [Results Matter Technical Assistance Document](#) (July 2014).

Questions about any of the information in this section may be directed to:

Melody Hobson, Administrator, Early Childhood

Phone: 402.471.0263

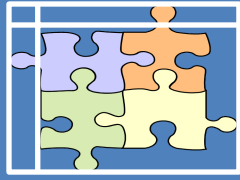
E-mail: [melody.hobson@nebraska.gov](mailto:melody.hobson@nebraska.gov)

Jan Thelen, Coordinator, Early Childhood Special Education

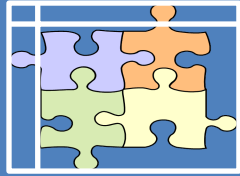
Phone: 402.471.4319

Email: [jan.thelen@nebraska.gov](mailto:jan.thelen@nebraska.gov)

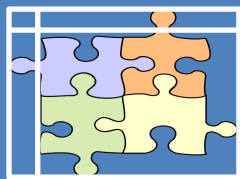




**STANDARDS**



**ASSESSMENT**



**ACCOUNTABILITY**

**IV. State and Federal Accountability**





## IV. State and Federal Accountability

### A. NeSA Data – Release and Use

#### a. NeSA Reports and Use of NeSA Data

NeSA reports are available to districts through the DRC eDirect System. Reports include building, district, and state level information about the NeSA-Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Writing. Districts have opportunity to review the data before reports are made public. Sample reports and full explanations of all reports are available in the current [NeSA Reports Interpretive Guide](#). The guides include explanations of testing terms that may be unfamiliar to educators and parents. The Interpretive Guide will be available in Spanish.

DRC provides copies of the Individual Student Reports (ISR) to the districts. NDE provides a letter directing districts to send each ISR home to parents and to retain a copy of the ISR in the student’s file. It is the district’s responsibility to send the score reports to parents in a timely manner. The individual student reports are also available electronically through eDirect.

#### b. NeSA proficiency levels

**Important Note:** The NeSA scale score proficiency levels will not change.

#### Reading – Math – Science

135 and above	Exceeds the Standards
85-134	Meets the Standards
84 and below	Below the Standards

#### Writing

Proficiency Levels	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 11
Exceeds the Standards	57-70	55-70	53-70
Meets the Standards	40-56	40-54	40-52
Below the Standards	0-39	0-39	0-39

The Raw Score/Scale Conversion tables will be different for reading, mathematics, and science in 2014 than they were in 2013 because although the test items are comparable,



they are different. The 2014 conversion tables for reading, mathematics, and science that convert raw scores to scale scores will be posted on the NDE website as soon as they are finalized. DACs will be notified.

### **c. Differences and Similarities Between Norm-Referenced Tests and NeSA**

There are several important differences and similarities between a norm-referenced test e.g., Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), Terra Nova, NWEA, and a criterion-referenced test (NeSA):

#### **Differences**

- Norm-Referenced tests are built to compare student performance across the country. NeSA tests compare student performance within Nebraska.
- Criterion-Referenced tests like NeSA are built to measure state standards; norm-referenced tests do not measure the state's standards.
- Norm-Referenced tests usually result in bell curve distribution. NeSA is built to measure student proficiency on standards and results in skewed distribution.

#### **Similarities**

- Technical processes used are the same: standard setting, alignment, reliability analyses.
- Both tests are administered under standardized conditions.
- Terminology in both score reports is similar.

## **B. The Nebraska Student and Staff Record System (NSSRS)**

The Nebraska Student and Staff Record System, the NSSRS, is the record keeping system of NDE. Districts have done well in accomplishing successful data submission.

As the new year unfolds, districts should remember several important reporting considerations.

- The Consolidated Data Collection (CDC) will continue to collect non-student level data as it did last year.
- In 2015 NeSA test results will be used for reporting reading, mathematics, science, and writing.
- National assessment data may be submitted throughout the year beginning in January, but data can NOT be accepted after June 30, 2015. Districts needing to submit data after June 30, 2015 will need to complete a "Request to Submit Data



Late or Make Data Changes” form located in the Consolidated Data Collection (CDC) on the portal.

- National assessment (NRT) data are not collected for non-public students.
- [SOSR Guidance for Assessment Calculations](#) provides guidance on how the student assessment data collected through the Nebraska State Accountability Reading, Math, Science, and Writing assessments (NeSA-RMSW) are compiled for the SOSR.
- Districts need to access the verification and validation reports from the NSSRS website to determine the accuracy of the data.

#### a. Checking assessment labels

- Districts must check assessment labels before December 2, 2014 for NeSA-W and ELDA and January 30, 2015 for NeSA-R, NeSA-M and NeSA-S. This report reflects the student demographic data submitted to DRC for the test administrations.
- Additional help with NSSRS data submission may be obtained from the NDE Help Desk at 1.888.285.0556.

Checking the NeSA Assessment Labels:

- ✓ Go to the [NDE Website](#)
- ✓ Click on “NDE Portal” on the left side
- ✓ Enter your User Name and Password
- ✓ Click on “Student and Staff” (NSSRS) tab at the top
- ✓ Click on “NSSRS Validation”
- ✓ Click on “Verification Reports”
- ✓ Click on “Student” to display the verification reports
- ✓ Click on “Assessment”
- ✓ Select appropriate **Labels** report to view student information uploaded to the assessment vendor

#### b. Validating NeSA data in the NSSRS

- Districts need to ensure data quality by accessing the Accountability Count Verification reports from the NSSRS website to determine the accuracy of the assessment data for reporting on the State of the Schools Report (SOSR). Use the steps below to audit school and student results in NSSRS for NeSA groups:

- ✓ Go to the [NDE Website](#)
- ✓ Click on “NDE Portal” on the left side



- ✓ Enter your User Name and Password
- ✓ Click on “Student and Staff” (NSSRS) tab at the top
- ✓ Click on “NSSRS Validation”
- ✓ Click on “System Lookups”
- ✓ Click on “Accountability Count Verification” to display the assessment reports
- ✓ Select reading, math, science, or writing as the subject
- ✓ Select Assessment Details – NeSA
- ✓ Select school and grade, then click on “Submit”
- ✓ Select the audit link on the right side to review individual student results by performance level and scale score. There are audit links for all students and various subgroups: gender, racial/ethnicity, SPED, ELL, and FRL.

### c. Verifying demographic indicators for tested students

- Districts must check NeSA Roster Review Reports for students with NeSA results to verify student demographic indicators. To check the NeSA Assessment Rosters:
  - ✓ Go to the [NDE Website](#)
  - ✓ Click on “NDE Portal” on the left side
  - ✓ Enter your User Name and Password
  - ✓ Click on “Student and Staff” (NSSRS) tab at the top
  - ✓ Click on “NSSRS Validation”
  - ✓ Click on “Verification Reports”
  - ✓ Click on “Student” to display the verification reports
  - ✓ Click on “Assessment”
  - ✓ Select appropriate **Labels** reports to view student information uploaded to the assessment vendor

Questions about assessment data in NSSRS may be directed to:

Dr. John Moon, NeSA Project Manager

Phone: 402.471.2495

E-mail: [john.moon@nebraska.gov](mailto:john.moon@nebraska.gov)



#### **d. Validating AYP data in the NSSRS**

AYP Verification reports are available on the NSSRS Validation Home page as well. To review these reports click on the “System Lookups” and then the “Accountability Count Verification” link. This link provides 2014-15 district aggregated information for AYP details for all grades by subject and building. Note that data for AYP are consolidated into grade levels-elementary, middle and high.

To review individual student data, use the audit link on the right side of the NSSRS Data report. Here results for grade level, performance level, full academic year, participant, and enrolled are displayed for each student number.

#### **e. Reporting Contracted Students and Students Who Move**

The Nebraska Student and Staff Record System requires districts to clarify who owns the assessment results of contracted public school students. Most students will be assessed in the district and reported in the district where they are enrolled. This is true whether students move between or within districts.

There are three categories for the ownership of assessment results for contracted public school students.

**Category One:** Any student contracted from one public district to another public district becomes the assessment responsibility of the receiving district.

In these situations, the receiving district needs to do the following:

- Enroll the student, obtaining or verifying the NDE Student ID number and adding it to the district.
- Report attendance, demographics, and all NSSRS requirements.
- Assume assessment responsibilities.

**Category Two:** Any student contracted from a public district to any education agency that is not a public district remains the responsibility of the public district. Some examples of education agencies that are not considered to be public districts include, but are not limited to, the following: interim programs-schools (Rule 18), approved special education service providers, court-appointed placements, ESU programs, and temporary out-of-school placements.





In these situations, the public district needs to do the following:

- Keep the student enrolled.
- Continue to report attendance, demographics, and all NSSRS requirements.
- Make arrangements with the other education agency to administer the assessment.
- Understand that the assessment results obtained from the education agency will be assigned to the district.

**Category Three:** Assessment results for students attending non-public schools are not required to be reported to NDE unless a non-public school student is enrolled in the public school for at least .51 FTE. If a non-public school is also an approved service provider for special education, Category Two (above) applies.

#### **f. Home-Schooled Students**

Districts report home schooled students only if they are enrolled in the district at least .51 FTE.

#### **g. Ward of the Court**

If a student is a ward of the court, or a ward of the state, the student remains a resident of the district where he or she became a ward, and that district is responsible for assessment and reporting (Section 79-215) (9).

However, based on a change in state legislation in 2010, if the ward is placed in a foster home, the ward will be deemed a resident of the district in which the ward resided at the time that the ward became a foster child.

There may be circumstances where an official or the court responsible for the ward may make a different decision to assign the ward to a district. If the official or court makes a decision about where the ward will attend school, it would then be the assigned district who would assume the responsibility for the assessment and reporting.

#### **h. Reporting Individual Scores on National Assessment Instruments**

As required by the Quality Education Act, districts will need to submit individual student scores and subscores on national tests. National assessment data may be submitted throughout the year beginning in January, but data can NOT be accepted after June 30, 2015. If data is not available by June 30, the district needs to submit a "Request to Submit Data Late or Make Data Changes" form located in the Consolidated



Data Collection (CDC) on the portal. National assessment (NRT) data are not required for non-public students.

After the district has entered its NAI/NRT results into the NSSRS system, districts can review the results using the NSSRS Validation in the portal. On the NSSRS Validation page, the default School Year is to 2015-06-30. To view other school years, use the “change years” function. To review NAI/NRT results in NSSRS:

- ✓ Go to the NDE Website: <http://www.education.ne.gov>
- ✓ Click on “NDE Portal” on the left side
- ✓ Enter your User Name and Password
- ✓ Click on “Student and Staff” (NSSRS) tab at the top
- ✓ Click on “NSSRS Validation”
- ✓ Click on “Verification Reports”
- ✓ Click on “Student” to display the verification reports
- ✓ Click on “Assessment “
- ✓ Select National Assessment Instrument Reports to display NAI/NRT results.

The State Board of Education, as required by state statute 79-760, **recommended** the national tests that should be used and in which grades they should be reported.

The results of that **recommendation** are as follows:

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| Grades 4, 8: | Terra Nova                             |
|              | ITBS (Iowa Test of Basic Skills)       |
|              | Stanford Achievement Test              |
|              | NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Assessment) |
| Grade 10:    | PLAN (no longer available)             |

Districts should note that these are **recommendations** only and are **not** requirements. If a district chooses to administer different tests or administer tests in grades other than those recommended, they may do so. Additional information on the national test reporting will be shared as soon as it is available.

Districts must collect and report total individual scores and subscores for math and reading. Each test provides results differently, and therefore, each test state average will be calculated and displayed separately on the State of the Schools Report. The following pages outline the reporting requirements on the recommended tests.

Questions about any of the NRT/NAI information in this section may be directed to:


Dr. John Moon, NeSA Project Manager

Phone: 402.471.2495

E-mail: [john.moon@nebraska.gov](mailto:john.moon@nebraska.gov)



Example of Terra Nova

 CTB/McGraw-Hill		Student Subtest & Objective Report		Degree of Mastery Key	
Student Name Student ID Special Codes				<input type="radio"/> Low Mastery <input checked="" type="radio"/> Moderate Mastery <input type="radio"/> High Mastery <input type="radio"/> Not all items attempted	
Grade Birth Date					
District School Teacher					
Test Name Level/Form Test Date Template Report Date		TN3-CB 15 G 11-03-2008 Student Subtest & Objective 02-04-2009			

Scores By Subtest

Subtest	Scale Score	Grade Equiv	National Percentile	Normal Curve Eq	National Stanjpr
Reading	650	5.5	53	51	5
Vocabulary	650	5.9	58	54	5
Reading Composite	650	5.8	58	54	5
Language	665	7.9	73	63	6
Language Mechanics	642	5.6	54	52	5
Language Composite	654	6.7	65	58	6
Mathematics	647	5.6	57	54	5
Math Computation	607	4.4	30	30	4
Math Composite	627	4.9	43	46	5
Total Score	654	6.0	62	56	5
Spelling	638	5.3	53	51	5

Reading Composite

Math Composite

Total Score NCE

Scores By Subtest / Objective

Subtest / Objective	Degree of Mastery
<b>Reading</b>	
Basic Understanding	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Analyze Text	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Evaluate/Extend Meaning	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Rda/Wrtg Strategies	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Subtest Average	0
<b>Vocabulary</b>	
Word Meaning	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Multimeaning Words	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Words in Context	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Subtest Average	0
<b>Language</b>	
Sentence Structure	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Writing Strategies	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Editing Skills	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Subtest Average	0
<b>Language Mechanics</b>	
Sent. Phrases, Clauses	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Writing Conventions	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Subtest Average	0
<b>Mathematics</b>	
Number & Num Relations	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Computation & Estimation	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Operation Concepts	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Measurement	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Geometry & Spatial Sense	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Data, Stats, & Prob	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Patterns, Funcs, Algebra	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Subtest Average	0
<b>Math Computation</b>	
Multiply Whole Numbers	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Divide Whole Numbers	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Decimals	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Fractions	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Subtest Average	0
<b>Spelling</b>	
Vowels	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Consonants	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Structural Units	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Subtest Average	0
<b>Total Average</b>	0





**PERFORMANCE PROFILE FOR**  
Iowa Tests of Basic Skills® (ITBS®)

**Reading Total in NCE**

Student:  
Class:  
Building:  
System:

Student ID:  
Form/Level:  
Test Date:  
Norms:  
Order No.:  
Page: 1      Grade: 5

Tests	Scores					PERCENTILE RANK				
	SS	GE	NS	NCE	NPR	Low	25	50	75	High
Vocabulary	161	2.4	2	15	8					
Reading Comprehension	155	2.1	1	10	3					
<b>Reading Total</b>	158	2.2	1	<b>17</b>	2					
Spelling	174	3.1	2	23	10					
Capitalization	150	1.8	2	16	5					
Punctuation	176	3.2	3	31	18					
Usage and Expression	153	2.0	2	17	6					
<b>Language Total</b>	163	2.5	2	16	6					
Concepts & Estimation	164	2.6	1	13	4					
Prob. Solv. & Data Interp.	163	2.5	2	18	6					
Math Computation	184	3.8	3	30	18					
<b>Math Total</b>	170	2.9	3	<b>18</b>	6					
<b>CORE TOTAL</b>	164	2.5	1	<b>7</b>	2					
Social Studies	165	2.6	2	18	6					
Science	172	3.0	3	26	12					
Maps and Diagrams	167	2.7	2	23	10					
Reference Materials	174	3.1	2	22	9					
Sources of Information Total	170	2.9	2	19	7					
<b>COMPOSITE</b>	166	2.7	1	10	3					

In the upper left part of this report, scores are printed for the tests, totals, and, if available, the composite. Several types of scores are reported, including the national percentile rank (NPR), which is the percent of students in this grade in the nation with a lower score on that test, total, or composite.

The graph to the right of the scores provides a visual display of the student's performance on each test relative to the other test areas. The NPR for the various scores are displayed as horizontal bars. The varying lengths of these bars permit identification of the student's stronger and weaker areas of achievement.

The lower part of the report provides detailed information about skills in each test. The number of items for each skill, the number attempted, the percent correct for the student, and the percent correct for students in this grade in the nation are reported. The difference between the student's percent correct and the percent correct for students in the nation is displayed as a horizontal bar. These bars permit identification of skills that stand out as high or low when compared with students in the nation.

**Math Total in NCE**

**Core Total in NCE**

SS = Standard Score, GE = Grade Equivalent, NS = Natl Stanine, NCE = Normal Curve Equiv., NPR = Natl Percentile Rank

Tests and Skills	Total Items	No. Att.	%C Stu.	%C Nat.	Diff.	Differences* -20 0 +20
<b>Vocabulary</b>	37	37	22	55	-33	
Vocabulary						
<b>Reading Comprehension</b>	16	16	13	55	-42	
Factual Understanding						
Inference and Interpretation						
Analysis and Generalization						
<b>Spelling</b>	23	23	30	60	-30	
Root Words						
Words with Affixes						
Correct Spelling						
<b>Capitalization</b>	5	5	0	62	-62	
Names/Titles / Dates/Holidays						
Place Names						
Names: Organizations & Groups						
Writing Conventions						
Overcapitalization/Correct Cap						
<b>Punctuation</b>	12	12	42	55	-13	
End Punctuation						
Comma						
Apostrophe/Quotes/Colon/Semi						
Correct Punctuation						
<b>Usage and Expression</b>	10	10	20	58	-38	
Nouns, Pronouns, and Modifiers						
Verbs						
Conciseness and Clarity						
Organization of Ideas						
Appropriate Use						

Tests and Skills	Total Items	No. Att.	%C Stu.	%C Nat.	Diff.	Differences* -20 0 +20
<b>Concepts &amp; Estimation</b>	13	13	23	60	-37	
Number Properties & Operations						
Algebra						
Geometry						
Measurement						
Probability and Statistics						
Estimation						
<b>Prob. Solv. &amp; Data Interp.</b>	15	15	27	58	-31	
Problem Solving						
Single-step						
Multiple-step						
Approaches and Procedures						
Data Interpretation						
Read Amounts						
Compare Quant./Relationships						
<b>Math Computation</b>	3	3	67	72	-5	
Add with Whole Numbers						
Subtract with Whole Numbers						
Multiply with Whole Numbers						
Divide with Whole Numbers						
Add or Subtract with Fractions						
Add or Subtract with Decimals						
<b>Social Studies</b>	11	11	9	51	-42	
History						
Geography						
Economics						
Government and Society						

Tests and Skills	Total Items	No. Att.	%C Stu.	%C Nat.	Diff.	Differences* -20 0 +20
<b>Science</b>	14	14	29	54	-25	
Scientific Inquiry						
Life Science						
Earth and Space Science						
Physical Science						
<b>Maps and Diagrams</b>	8	8	25	54	-29	
Locate/Process Information						
Interpret Information						
Analyze Information						
<b>Reference Materials</b>	12	12	17	61	-44	
Using Reference Materials						
Searching for Information						
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	27	27	30	60	-30	
Reading						
Language						
Mathematics						
Social Studies						
Science						
Sources of Information						

\* A plus (+) or minus (-) sign in the difference graph indicates that the bar extends beyond +/- 20. No. Att. = Number Attempted %C = Percent Correct





with Otis-Lennon School Ability Test®, Eighth Edition

**About This Student's Performance:**

Firstname recently took the *Stanford Achievement Test, Tenth Edition* (Stanford 10). This test is one measure of this student's achievement. This report compares this student's performance to students in the same grade across the nation. Percentile Bands show ranges within which this student's true scores likely fall. For example, a student whose Percentile Band spans the 70th percentile performed as well as or better than 70% of students nationally in that subject-but not as well as 30% of students.

The chart below shows this student's performance in each subject area tested.

**Lexile measure = 730L**

Information on the use of Lexiles can be found at [www.PearsonLexile.com](http://www.PearsonLexile.com). Lexiles used with permission.

**Student Report | HFIRSTNAME M LASTNAME**

National Comparison

TEACHER: SAMPLE TEACHER  
 SCHOOL: SAMPLE SCHOOL - 0000000000  
 DISTRICT: SAMPLE DISTRICT

GRADE: 04  
 TEST DATE: 04/08  
 Total Reading in NCE 9 Yrs 08 Mos  
 STUDENT NO.: 0000000000

Subjects and Totals	Number Possible	Number Correct	Scaled Score	National PR-S	National NCE	AAC Range	National Grade Percentile Bands							
							1	10	30	50	70	90	99	
Total Reading	114	82	639	59-5	54.8	MIDDLE								
Word Study Skills	30	25	664	76-6	64.8	HIGH								
Reading Vocabulary	30	22	627	46-5	47.9	MIDDLE								
Reading Comprehension	54	35	634	53-5	51.6	MIDDLE								
Total Mathematics	80	56	633	64-6	57.5	MIDDLE								
Mathematics Problem Solving	48	30	623	54-5	52.1	MIDDLE								
Mathematics Procedures	32	26	650	74-6	63.5	HIGH								
Language	48	28	610	39-4	44.1	MIDDLE								
Language Mechanics	24	15	617	46-5	47.9	MIDDLE								
Language Expression	24	13	603	36-4	42.5	MIDDLE								
Spelling	40	30	647	73-6	62.9	HIGH								
Science	40	30	643	69-6	60.4	MIDDLE								
Social Science	40	22	607	40-5	44.7	MIDDLE								
Listening	40	22	608	35-4	41.9	MIDDLE								
Thinking Skills	190	122	623	56-5	53.2	MIDDLE								
Basic Battery	322	218	NA	57-5	53.6	MIDDLE								
Complete Battery	402	270	NA	56-5	55.4	MIDDLE								

Total Mathematics in NCE

Basic Battery in NCE

Otis-Lennon School Ability Test®	Number Possible	Number Correct	SAI	Age PR-S	Age NCE	Scaled Score	National Grade Percentile Bands							
							1	10	30	50	70	90	99	
Total	72	38	106	65-6	XX.X	XXX								
Verbal	36	21	112	77-7	XX.X	XXX								
Nonverbal	36	17	102	55-5	XX.X	XXX								

Clusters	NP	NA	NC	Below Avg	Avg	Above Avg	Clusters	NP	NA	NC	Below Avg	Avg	Above Avg	Clusters	NP	NA	NC	Below Avg	Avg	Above Avg
Word Study Skills	30	30	25		✓		Mathematics Procedures	32	32	26		✓		Science (cont.)						
Structural Analysis	12	12	10		✓		Computation w/Whole Numbers	18	18	14		✓		Form & Function	13	13	9		✓	
Phonetic Analysis-Consonants	9	9	8		✓		Computation with Decimals	8	8	6		✓		Thinking Skills	20	20	16		✓	
Phonetic Analysis-Vowels	9	9	7		✓		Computation with Fractions	6	6	6		✓		Social Science	40	40	22		✓	
Reading Vocabulary	30	30	22		✓		Computation in Context	16	16	13		✓		History	10	10	6		✓	
Synonyms	12	12	9		✓		Computation/Symbolic Notation	16	16	13		✓		Geography	10	10	8		✓	
Multiple Meaning Words	9	9	5	✓			Thinking Skills	16	16	13		✓		Political Science	10	10	6		✓	
Context Clues	9	9	8		✓		Language Mechanics	24	24	15		✓		Economics	10	10	2		✓	
Thinking Skills	18	18	13		✓		Capitalization	8	8	7		✓		App. of Knowledge/Comp.	14	14	7		✓	
Reading Comprehension	54	54	35		✓		Usage	8	8	3		✓		Org., Summ. & Interp. of Info.	15	15	7		✓	
Literary	18	18	12		✓		Punctuation	8	8	5		✓		Determination of Cause/Effect	11	11	8		✓	
Informational	18	18	10		✓		Language Expression	24	24	13		✓		Thinking Skills	20	20	11		✓	
Functional	18	18	13		✓		Sentence Structure	8	8	4		✓		Listening	40	40	22		✓	
Initial Understanding	12	12	11		✓		Prewriting	5	5	3		✓		Vocabulary	10	10	3		✓	
Interpretation	20	20	12		✓		Content and Organization	11	11	6		✓		Comprehension	30	30	19		✓	
Critical Analysis	12	12	8		✓		Thinking Skills	12	12	6		✓		Initial Understanding	8	8	6		✓	
Strategies	10	10	4		✓		Spelling	40	40	30		✓		Interpretation	12	12	7		✓	
Thinking Skills	42	42	24		✓		Phonetic Principles	18	18	14		✓		Analysis	7	7	4		✓	
Mathematics Problem Solving	48	48	30		✓		Structural Principles	10	10	7		✓		Strategies	3	3	2		✓	
Number Sense & Operations	24	24	16		✓		No Mistake	7	7	7		✓		Literary	10	10	7		✓	
Patterns/Relationships/Algebra	6	6	6		✓		Homophones	5	5	2		✓		Informational	10	10	7		✓	
Data, Statistics & Probability	8	8	4		✓		Science	40	40	30		✓		Functional	10	10	5		✓	
Geometry & Measurement	10	10	4		✓		Life	11	11	9		✓		Thinking Skills	22	22	13		✓	
Communication & Representation	6	6	2		✓		Physical	11	11	6		✓		Thinking Skills	190	190	122		✓	
Estimation	8	8	5		✓		Earth	11	11	10		✓		Thinking Skills	190	190	122		✓	
Mathematical Connections	21	21	13		✓		Nature of Science	7	7	5		✓		Thinking Skills	190	190	122		✓	
Reasoning & Problem Solving	13	13	10		✓		Models	14	14	11		✓		Thinking Skills	190	190	122		✓	
Thinking Skills	40	40	26		✓		Constancy	13	13	10		✓		Thinking Skills	190	190	122		✓	

STANFORD LEVEL/FORM: INTERMEDIATE 1/A  
 2007 NORMS: Spring National

OLSAT LEVEL/FORM: E/5  
 2002 NORMS: Spring National

C = Content Cluster P = Process Cluster  
 Scores based on normative data copyright © 2003, 2008 by NCS Pearson, Inc. All rights reserved.

COPY 01  
 PROCESS NO. 00000000-00000000-0000-00



# Public Schools

## Student Progress Report for \_\_\_\_\_

### School \_\_\_\_\_

Growth is measured from Fall to Spring

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

### Mathematics

Season/Year	Grade	Student Score Range	Dist. Avg RIT	Norm Group Avg.	Student Growth	Typical Growth	Student %ile Range
W09	6	232-235-238	221	221			75-82-87
F08	6	216-219-222	219	218			41-51-59
S08	5	227-230-233	223	219	19	8	72-79-85
W08	5	218-221-224	218	216			59-67-75
F07	5	208-211-214	212	212			48-50-59
S07	4	211-214-217	214	211	7	9	52-61-69
W07	4	210-213-216	209	208			64-69-77
F06	4	204-207-210	204	203			53-64-74

Most recent

No Composite Score

Mathematics Score - Percentile Rank

### Reading

Season/Year	Grade	Student Score Range	Dist. Avg RIT	Norm Group Avg.	Student Growth	Typical Growth	Student %ile Range
W09	6	225-228-231	214	214			80-86-92
F08	6	230-233-236	214	212			75-96-98
S08	5	227-230-233	215	211	10	4	90-95-97
W08	5	223-226-229	212	210			88-93-96
F07	5	217-220-223	208	207			80-87-93
S07	4	225-228-231	208	206	22	6	94-97-98
W07	4	210-213-216	206	204			66-78-85
F06	4	203-206-209	202	200			57-66-78

Reading Score - Percentile Rank

#### Mathematics Goals Performance - Winter 2009

Numeration & Number Sense	High
Computation & Estimation	Avg
Measurement	HiAvg
Geometry & Spatial Concept	Avg
Data Analysis & Probability	High
Algebraic Concepts	High

#### Reading Goals Performance - Winter 2009

Strat to Read Words / Vocab	High
Identify Main Ideas / Details	HiAvg
Characteristics of Text	High
Elements / Tech. Fict / Nonfict	High

Lexile Range: 1011-1161

#### Explanatory Notes:

##### Season/Year

The season (F=fall, S=spring, W=winter, U=summer) and the year the test was administered.

##### Student Score Range

The middle number is the RIT score your child received. The numbers on either side of the RIT score define the score range. If retested, your child would score within this range most of the time.

##### District Average RIT

The average score for all students in the school district in the grade who were tested at the same time as your child.

##### Norm Group Avg.

The average score observed for students in the most recent NWEA RIT Scale Norms study, who were in the same grade and tested in the same portion of the instructional year (e.g., fall or spring).

##### Student Growth

Presents the growth in RITs your child made from the previous fall to the spring of

### Language Usage

Season/Year	Grade	Student Score Range	Dist. Avg RIT	Norm Group Avg.	Student Growth	Typical Growth	Student %ile Range
S08	5	220-223-226	216	212	11	4	72-82-89
W08	5	222-225-228	213	210			83-90-95
F07	5	209-212-215	210	207			49-59-72
S07	4	219-222-225	210	207	16	6	83-90-95
W07	4	208-211-214	207	205			57-67-76
F06	4	203-206-209	202	201			50-60-70

#### Language Usage Goals Performance - Winter 2009

There were no test events found for the selected term, Winter 2009

##### Student %ile Range

The number in the middle is your child's percentile rank - the percentage of students in the most recent NWEA RIT Scale Norms study that had a RIT score less than or equal to your child's score. The numbers on either side of the percentile rank define the percentile range. If retested, your child's percentile rank would be within this range most of the time.



## C. AYP Goals

Federal accountability will continue with AYP and PLAS until reauthorization of the Elementary Secondary Education Act. (ESEA)

AYP Mathematics Goals			
	Elementary	Middle School	High School
2013-2014 and Beyond	100%	100%	100%

AYP Reading Goals			
	Elementary	Middle School	High School
2013-2014 and Beyond	100%	100%	100%

### a. SMALL Schools AYP Goals – Reading and Mathematics

If a grade span (elementary, middle, or high school) has no group of 30, the data will be aggregated for the previous and current school years to determine if two years of data will enable the grade span to meet the minimum group size of 30. If using two years of data still results in a grade span with no groups of 30, the data are aggregated for the districts and the AYP district level decision for that grade span is applied to all buildings.

The calculations for Small Schools AYP are explained, beginning on page 11 of the [Title I AYP Guidance](#).

If you have questions about the goals or calculations, please call the Director of Federal Programs:

Diane Stuehmer

Phone: 402.471.1740

Email: [diane.stuehmer@nebraska.gov](mailto:diane.stuehmer@nebraska.gov)

Randy McIntyre

Phone: 402.471.1749

Email: [randy.mcintyre@nebraska.gov](mailto:randy.mcintyre@nebraska.gov)

### b. Display of Adequate Yearly Progress on the State of the Schools Report

The State of the Schools Report will display the AYP decisions for each school and district.

The AYP status is available for auditing during August and September on a State of the School's Preview window. During this time districts are to review their data to ensure





accuracy. The formula and process for determining AYP decisions are provided in the [AYP Guidance](#).

The AYP status should be reviewed and Nebraska Department of Education should be notified if there are questions or concerns.

### **c. Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools (PLAS)**

All schools identified as being in need of improvement under AYP are considered PLAS. High schools with graduation rates below 75 percent over a period of three years are considered PLAS. Secondary schools that are eligible for Title 1 funds, but not served, that are the lowest ranked among all the schools in the state are also considered PLAS. The identification in 2014 is determined by the combination of several data sources: combined reading and mathematics proficiency levels from 2011-12 through 2013-14, graduation rates, and a growth calculation based on three years of data.

## **D. 2013-14 State of the Schools Report – Fall 2014**

The State of the Schools Report [SOSR] will be released in October 2014 and includes a summary of statewide information, individual district and building profiles, disaggregated data, and accountability decisions. The [State of the Schools Report](#) is available on the Nebraska Department of Education website.

### **a. School District and Building Information on SOSR**

District information will include the data about each public school district by both district and by building. The data will include the following:

- Narrative description of districts and buildings
- District and building improvement goals
- Student characteristics including students who move frequently (mobility), students who receive special education services, students who are learning the English language, and students who receive free and reduced lunch
- Reports of student performance on NeSA-Reading, NeSA-Mathematics, NeSA-Science, and NeSA-Writing at 4<sup>th</sup> Grade (state, district, and building)
- NeSA results will be reported both in average scale scores and proficiency levels.
- Percentage of students included in NeSA tests

- Student scores and subscores on national assessment instruments
- Reports of student results on the statewide writing assessment at the district and individual building levels
- 2014 State Accountability Charts – building and district level
- Adequate Yearly Progress determinations
- Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools (PLAS)
- Language Arts and Mathematics graduation requirements
- Graduation rate
- Six-Year Graduation Rate
- ACT information (available October 2014)
- School finance
- Teacher qualifications
- Teacher salaries
- Student attendance
- Special Education Improving Learning for Children with Disabilities (ILCD) data

## **E. Nebraska Accountability System**

In 2010 the State Board agreed upon the Beliefs, Purposes, and Values of a new state accountability system and established the Standards, Assessment, and Accountability (SAA) Belief Statements. The policy was affirmed by the State Board November 9, 2012.

### Accountability 2014

The current state accountability system that will appear on the 2014 State of the Schools Report is the Nebraska Performance Accountability System [NePAS].

**Section I** includes NeSA Reading, Math, Science, and Writing Scale Scores for status, improvement, and growth -- and state rankings. Graduation rate and rankings are also included. Participation is indicated as Met or Not Met (the goal being 95%).



**Section II** includes NeSA scale scores, graduation, and participation for grade levels by school and by district with no rankings.

### Accountability, Starting in August 2015

With LB #438 passing into state statute on April 10, 2014, the following changes in the Quality School Act will occur:

- Combining performance indicators into a school performance and district performance score in order to classify schools and district into levels of performance, using data from 2014-2015.
- Designating priority schools, with no more than three priority schools identified at one time.
- Requiring progress plans to be submitted by priority schools to the State Board of Education no later than August 2016.

For each school designated as a priority school:

- The Commissioner of Education shall appoint an intervention team of five people.
- The intervention team shall collaborate with school district entities to develop a progress plan.
- Compliance with the progress plan shall be a requirement of accreditation.

For full information see [State Statute 79-760 .06 and 79-760.07](#)

Much collaboration has taken place with the development of a complete quality accountability system:

- A Task Force comprised of superintendents, districts assessment contacts, school principals, teachers, program directors, ESU representation, policy partners, and NDE personnel has been working on a model to determine the method by which schools and districts will be placed into the performance levels as required by Statute 79-760.06 and .07 (formerly LB # 438). The Task Force Committee has made recommendations and technical work is being completed at this time. Opportunity will be available for districts to provide input into the accountability model.
- An *Assessment and Accountability Advisory* committee was formed to give input into assessment and accountability. It includes superintendents, administrators, district assessment contacts, program directors, technology representatives from ESUs and school districts, policy partners, and NDE personnel. This committee is ongoing and will meet approximately two times a year to discuss and give recommendations for NeSA testing and reporting, technology for testing, and accountability.
- In August 2014, Commissioner Blomstedt released a draft document that shares the vision for Nebraska's quality and accountability system:



*Accountability for a Quality Education System, Today and Tomorrow*  
*A QuESTT for Nebraska!*

This document provides:

- A well-articulated vision for quality and accountability for Nebraska's schools, including the basic tenets,
- The acknowledgement that accountability is a living, growing initiative and the vision will take time to implement fully, and
- A guiding philosophy of the system-that the work will be accomplished in a partnership of collaboration with Nebraska schools and stakeholders.







**V. The Continuous Improvement Process**





## V. The Continuous Improvement Process

The Continuous Improvement Process, focused on student learning, is an important framework for every Nebraska school district. “School Improvement” is not limited to a data collection and an external visitation every five years. Continuous Improvement is ongoing, systematic and systemic, and should involve everyone in the district.

Standards and assessment are essential to continuous improvement. Student performance data generated from assessment that is aligned with content standards informs the continuous improvement process. As data is analyzed, it should inform the school improvement committees where priorities and target goals must be established. The resulting CIP plan establishes both building and district goals that are focused on student learning.

Continuous improvement means that adults need to be learners, data consumers and have opportunities to collaborate on Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment. Many of the professional development opportunities offered by NDE are focused on these topics.





## A. School Improvement Workshops

In 2014 the School Improvement Workshops have been collaboratively developed and sponsored by NCSA, AdvancED, the Nebraska Educational Service Units, and NDE accreditation and data research and evaluation teams.

Date	Event	Location
September 25 - 26, 2014	School Improvement Workshop <b>North Platte</b>	Holiday Inn Express 300 Holiday Frontage Road North Platte, NE 69101
October 6-7, 2014	School Improvement Workshop <b>Kearney</b>	ESU 10 76 Plaza Blvd Kearney, NE 68845
October 23-24, 2014	School Improvement Workshop <b>Norfolk</b>	Lifelong Learning Center Northeast Community college 801 East Benjamin Norfolk, NE 68702
October 27-28, 2014	School Improvement Workshop <b>Omaha</b>	<b>(Monday)</b> Westside Conference Center 3534 South 108 <sup>th</sup> Street <b>(Tuesday)</b> ESU #3 6949 South 110 <sup>th</sup> Street Omaha, NE 68848

### External Review Training is available for:

- AdvancED schools who have reviews in 2014-15
- People interested in becoming External Review Team Chairs
- Those interested in AdvancED/North Central Accreditation

For additional information regarding External Review Training or School Improvement, contact:

Freida Lange, Administrator  
Nebraska Department of Education, Accreditation and School Improvement  
Phone: 402.471.2444      E-mail: freida.lange@nebraska.gov





#### IV. Links to Statewide Assessment Documents

- A. [Nebraska State Accountability Official Contact Form](#)
- B. [Suggestions for a Smooth Testing Process](#)
- C. [NeSA Security Procedures](#)
- D. [Report of Security Breach](#)
- E. [2014 NeSA Building Principals Security Agreement](#)
- F. [2014 NeSA Confidentiality Agreement - DAC](#)
- G. [Sample District Security Policy](#)
- H. [District Response to Missing NeSA Materials](#)
- I. [Nebraska State Accountability Approved Testing Accommodations](#)
- J. [Transcription Submission](#)
- K. [Analytic Scoring Model – NeSA-Writing](#)
- L. [NeSA Writing Score Verification Form](#)
- M. [Sources of NeSA Assessment Data](#)

