

**TO:** Roger Breed, Ed.D.  
Commissioner of Education

**FROM:** John Moon, NeSA Project Director

**SUBJECT:** Online testing requirements

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### **PROPOSED BOARD ACTION**

Request board approval of the requirement that students be tested in the online mode beginning in the 2012-2013 school year. This requirement would apply to NeSA reading, NeSA-mathematics, and NeSA-science tests. This requirement would 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.

### **Background Information**

The Nebraska State Accountability (NeSA) tests have been administered in both paper/pencil and online testing modes for two years in reading, one year in mathematics, and science in 2012. The NDE has offered school districts the opportunity to select -by building -the testing mode for their students: paper/pencil or online.

The vast majority of students have been tested online (80+% in reading and in the science field test in 2011), but the 2011 mathematics online participation dropped to under 60%. The additional costs for paper/pencil testing in the last two years has exceeded \$100,000.

The NDE initiated a mode comparability study with the mathematics test results in 2011 to determine whether or not there were score differences in the results of paper/pencil test takers and the performance scores of students who were tested online. On average 25% of the paper/pencil test takers were students with disabilities or students learning the English language, ranging from a high of 32% in grades 3-4 to a low of 20% and 16% in grades 8 and 11, respectively.

The results of the study shown in the table below indicates a significant positive difference in the scores for online test takers. The positive "effect" favors the online mode. The study results were shown to the Governor-appointed Technical Advisory Committee who recommended the policy shift.

<b>Fixed Effect of Student's Test Administration Mode Grade</b>	<b>Mode Effect Online = 1; Paper = 0</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>t-value</b>
3'd	2.88947	0.87731	**3.3
4th	-0.16067	0.92843	-0.2
5th	0.29912	0.99014	0.3
6th	0.05490	1.16110	0.0
7th	2.99596	1.19220	*2.5
8th	4.77773	1.15051	***4.2
11th	5.11788	1.25762	***4.1

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