NeSA Writing

Reports Interpretive Guide

NeSA-Writing
Grades 4, 8, and 11
Spring 2016

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Dr. Matthew L. Blomstedt
Commissioner of Education

Nebraska State Accountability assessments are administered by the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE)
301 Centennial Mall South ● P.O. Box 94987 ● Lincoln, Nebraska 68509 ● (402) 471-2495

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For further information, contact Dr. Valorie Foy

Director of Statewide Assessment

Office of Statewide Assessment

(402) 471-2495

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INTRODUCTION

THE NeSA-WRITING TEST

The Nebraska State Accountability (NeSA) tests are developed specifically for Nebraska. Since 2004, the Nebraska statewide writing assessment has been annually administered in grades 4, 8, and 11 to provide school districts with instructional information and to include writing results from grades 4 and 8 as the "other academic indicator" in the federal accountability requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

The Nebraska statewide writing assessment is intended to:

1. gather information to assist teachers in determining the progress of students in meeting state or local standards for writing;
2. provide each local school district with a report of student progress in meeting state or local standards for writing; and
3. lead to improved writing by Nebraska students.

The NeSA-Writing tests, by law, are directly aligned with the state content standards. These tests, by law, must be as rigorous as those of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

OVERVIEW OF THE GRADES 4, 8, AND 11 NeSA-WRITING TESTS

Each student in grades 4, 8, and 11 responded to a writing prompt in a specific mode (Grade 4 – Narrative, Grade 8 – Descriptive, Grade 11 – Persuasive). The writing prompts were developed by the Nebraska Department of Education to measure composition of writing as specified in the Writing Content Standards.

All grade 4 students received a paper/pencil writing assessment. The test was administered in two independent sessions on two consecutive days. Each session was 40 minutes, unless a student's IEP or 504 Plan required additional time. The majority of students in grades 8 and 11 were administered the writing test online in one session. Students were allowed to use paper to pre-write and then continue by creating a draft and providing their final response online. It was recommended by the NDE that districts schedule 90 minutes for students to complete the online assessment; however, the test was not timed, and students were allowed as much time as necessary to complete and submit their final essays. Grades 8 and 11 students with IEPs or 504 Plans were allowed to use a paper/pencil test. Students in grades 4, 8, and 11 receive one of the following three performance level descriptors:

Exceeds the Standards: Overall the student's writing reflects an *advanced* performance of the standards and a *thorough* understanding of the traits of writing. The student's writing demonstrates numerous strengths. Only minor revision and/or editing is necessary.

Meets the Standards: Overall the student's writing reflects a *satisfactory* performance of the standards and a *sufficient* understanding of the traits of writing. The student's writing demonstrates more strengths than weaknesses. Some revision and/or editing is necessary.

Below the Standards: Overall the student's writing reflects an *unsatisfactory* performance of the standards and an *insufficient* understanding of the traits of writing. The student's writing is still under development. Extensive revision and/or editing is necessary.

Nebraska content standards reflect the essential concepts and skills students are expected to know and perform. The foundation skills, identified as essential competencies needed to meet the demands of the classroom and the world beyond, are the basis of all content standards. These foundation skills are the following:

- communication,
- problem solving,
- resource access and utilization, and
- linking and generating knowledge.

SETTING THE PERFORMANCE LEVEL STANDARDS FOR GRADES 4, 8, AND 11

Results for Grades 4, 8, and 11 NeSA-Writing are reported as analytic scores based on four domains. The rater-assigned domain scores are converted into a scale score metric, which ranges from 0 to 70, to maintain comparability from year to year.

In isolation, scale scores are difficult to interpret. Performance Levels can help make the scale scores meaningful. Three performance levels, labeled *Below the Standards, Meets the Standards*, and *Exceeds the Standards*, have been defined with the performance level descriptors by the Nebraska State Board of Education for grades 4, 8, and 11.

There are three important reasons for establishing the Performance Levels:

1. satisfy the requirements of the U.S. Department of Education,
2. connect the scale scores to the writing content standards to assist Nebraska educators in helping students, and
3. give meaning to the scale scores to help Nebraska students and parents use the results effectively.

The information provided to the State Board of Education for writing included the recommendations from panels of Nebraska teachers and other stakeholders, convened in April 2012 for grades 8 and 11, and in March 2013 for grade 4.

The teacher panels used the *Body of Work Method* to determine recommended cut scores for each of the levels in each grade. Following a training session and practice exercise, the panels discussed descriptions of the Performance Levels and the knowledge, skills, and behaviors implied by each. The task was then for the panelists to individually review and sort each essay into either *Meets the Standards* or *Below the Standards* categories. The panelists then proceeded to split the essays in the top group between *Meets the Standards* and *Exceeds the Standards*.

The ratings of the essays were statistically linked to the rater-assigned domain scores to establish the score needed to reach each Performance Level. After two rounds of group discussion, the results were summarized and presented to the State Board as the panels' recommendations.

NeSA-WRITING SCALE-SCORE RANGES FOR GRADES 4, 8, AND 11

NeSA-WRITING GRADES 4, 8, and 11			
Performance Level	**Grade 4 Writing Scale-Score Range**	**Grade 8 Writing Scale-Score Range**	**Grade 11 Writing Scale-Score Range**
Exceeds the Standards	57–70	55–70	53–70
Meets the Standards	40–56	40–54	40–52
Below the Standards	39 and below	39 and below	39 and below

READING AND INTERPRETING NeSA-WRITING RESULTS

Sample NeSA-Writing reports and explanations appear on the following pages to aid administrators and teachers in understanding test results. The data in these reports are simulated and do not reflect the current year results.

The following reports are described in this *Reports Interpretive Guide*:

Reports for the School

School Writing Summary

Writing School Student Roster

Reports for the District

District Writing Summary

Writing District Report of School Performance

Each sample report includes circled numbers that are referenced in the interpretive information provided with the sample. Online reports will be available to districts and schools via the eDIRECT system, https://ne.drcedirect.com/.

Individual Student Report

Student writing results will be included in the Individual Student Reports with results for NeSA-Reading, Mathematics, and Science. Information for interpreting these reports will be included in the 2016 Reports Interpretive Guide for NeSA-Reading, Mathematics, and Science.

SAMPLE SCHOOL WRITING SUMMARY

NeSA Writing

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NEBRASKA STATE ACCOUNTABILITY (NeSA-W)
SCHOOL WRITING SUMMARY
SPRING 2016

GRADE 8

DISTRICT: **SAMPLE DISTRICT (99-9999-999)**
SCHOOL: **SAMPLE SCHOOL (99-9999-999)**

Student Groups Included in State Results	Average Scale Score[1]	Average Domain Score[2]				% Below the Standards	% Meets the Standards	% Exceeds the Standards	Number Tested	Number Not Tested[3]
		Ideas/Content	Organization	Word Choice/Voice	Sentence Fluency/ Conventions					
All Students (1)	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Male (2)	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Female (2)	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
American Indian/Alaska Native	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Asian (3)	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Black (3)	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
White	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Hispanic	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Two or More Races	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Free and Reduced	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Not Free and Reduced	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
LEP/ELL Eligible	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Not LEP/ELL Eligible (4)	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Special Education	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Not Special Education	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Spanish Assessments	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999

(5)

Other Student Groups	Number of Students
Emergency Medical Waiver	999
Alternate Assessment	999
Language Other than English or Spanish	999

[1]Includes: zero scores for **INV** = Invalid, **PAR** = Parent Refusal, **SAE** = Student Absent for the Entire Testing Window
[2]Each domain score is the sum of the two readers for the domain. For a scoreable paper, scores can range from 2 to 8. Please refer to the rubric.
[3]Includes: **INV** = Invalid, **PAR** = Parent Refusal, **SAE** = Student Absent for the Entire Testing Window

99-9999-999 99/99/9999

SAMPLE SCHOOL WRITING SUMMARY: EXPLANATION OF RESULTS AND TERMS

The School Writing Summary is posted in PDF format and may be downloaded and printed from the eDIRECT system by districts and schools. The summary report lists all students by different demographic information and presents a summary of their performance. This report is for internal district and school use only and is required for state and federal reporting purposes. Information to protect small numbers of students has not been suppressed. Release of summary data to the public may violate individual student confidentiality (FERPA).

1 ALL STUDENTS

All student performance on the NeSA-Writing test is reported. Reading across the row, the school's average scale score, average domain score for each domain, percent of students in each performance level, and the number of students tested and not tested are presented.

2 GENDER

All student performance on the NeSA-Writing test is reported. This information is broken out by gender of all students. Reading across the row, the school's average scale score, average domain score for each domain, percent of students in each performance level, and the number of students tested and not tested are presented at the school level.

3 RACE/ETHNICITY

All student performance on the NeSA-Writing test is reported. Reading across the row, the school's average scale score, average domain score for each domain, percent of students in each performance level, and the number of students tested and not tested are presented. This information is listed based on the race/ethnicity of each student: American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, White, Hispanic, and Two or More Races.

4 SPECIAL PROGRAMS

All student performance on the NeSA-Writing test is reported. Reading across the row, the school's average scale score, average domain score for each domain, percent of students in each performance level, and the number of students tested and not tested are presented. This information is listed based on the students involved in special programs: Free and Reduced, Not Free and Reduced, LEP/ELL Eligible, Not LEP/ELL Eligible, Special Education, Not Special Education, and Spanish Assessments.

5 OTHER STUDENT GROUPS

All student performance on the NeSA-Writing test is reported. The school's number of students under Emergency Medical Waiver, Alternate Assessment, and Language Other than English or Spanish are presented.

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NEBRASKA STATE ACCOUNTABILITY (NeSA-W)
SCHOOL WRITING STUDENT ROSTER
SPRING 2016

GRADE 11

DISTRICT: **SAMPLE DISTRICT (99-9999-999)**
SCHOOL: **SAMPLE SCHOOL (99-9999-999)**

4

1 Performance Level Ranges		Performance		Domain Score[3]				
Exceeds the Standards	99-99	Level[1]	Note[2]	Ideas/Content	Organization	Word Choice/Voice	Sentence Fluency/ Conventions	Scale Score
Meets the Standards	99-99							
Below the Standards	99 and below							
State Average				**9.9**	**9.9**	**9.9**	**9.9**	**99**
District Average 2				**9.9**	**9.9**	**9.9**	**9.9**	**99**
School Average				**9.9**	**9.9**	**9.9**	**9.9**	**99**
STUDENT'S LAST, FIRST MIDDLE INITIAL 123456789		X	XXX	9	9	9	9	**99**
STUDENT'S LAST, FIRST MIDDLE INITIAL 123456789		X		9	9	9	9	**99**
STUDENT'S LAST, FIRST MIDDLE INITIAL 123456789		X		9	9	9	9	**99**
STUDENT'S LAST, FIRST MIDDLE INITIAL 123456789		X		9	9	9	9	**99**
STUDENT'S LAST, FIRST MIDDLE INITIAL 123456789		X	X	9	9	9	9	**99**
STUDENT'S LAST, FIRST MIDDLE INITIAL 123456789 3		X		9	9	9	9	**99**
STUDENT'S LAST, FIRST MIDDLE INITIAL 123456789		X		9	9	9	9	**99**
STUDENT'S LAST, FIRST MIDDLE INITIAL 123456789		X		9	9	9	9	**99**
STUDENT'S LAST, FIRST MIDDLE INITIAL 123456789		X		9	9	9	9	**99**
STUDENT'S LAST, FIRST MIDDLE INITIAL 123456789		X		9	9	9	9	**99**
STUDENT'S LAST, FIRST MIDDLE INITIAL 123456789		X		9	9	9	9	**99**
STUDENT'S LAST, FIRST MIDDLE INITIAL 123456789		X		9	9	9	9	**99**

[1]**E** = Exceeds the Standards, **M** = Meets the Standards, **B** = Below the Standards
[2]**ALT** = Alternate Assessment, **EMW** = Emergency Medical Waiver, **INV** = Invalid, **NLE** = No Longer Enrolled, **OTH** = Other, **PAR** = Parent Refusal, **SAE** = Student Absent for the Entire Testing Window, **B** = Blank, **C** = Copy of Prompt, **F** = Foreign Language, **I** = Insufficient, **R** = Refusal, **T** = Off Topic, **U** = Illegible/Incoherent
[3]Each domain score is the sum of the two readers for the domain. For a scoreable paper, scores can range from 2 to 8. Please refer to the rubric.

99-9999-999 99/99/9999

SAMPLE SCHOOL WRITING STUDENT ROSTER: EXPLANATION OF RESULTS AND TERMS

The School Writing Student Roster is posted in PDF format and may be downloaded and printed from the eDIRECT system by districts and schools. The roster report lists students who were required to take the regular NeSA-Writing test and presents a summary of their performance. For most schools, the report has multiple pages.

1 PERFORMANCE LEVEL RANGES

In the upper left corner of this chart, the score ranges associated with each performance level are reported for Writing. Students will receive scores that fall within one of the three ranges.

2 STATE, DISTRICT, AND SCHOOL AVERAGE

The state, district, and school averages are presented for scores in Writing.

3 ROSTER OF STUDENTS TESTED

In the far left column, a list of students who are enrolled in the school is printed alphabetically by last name and first name.

4 WRITING PERFORMANCE DATA

Each student's performance on the NeSA-Writing test is reported. Reading across the row, the student's performance level, domain score for each domain, and scale score are presented. If a student did not attempt the test, the note column will be populated with a not tested code.

NeSA Writing

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NEBRASKA STATE ACCOUNTABILITY (NeSA-W)
DISTRICT WRITING SUMMARY
SPRING 2016

GRADE 8

DISTRICT: **SAMPLE DISTRICT (99-9999-999)**

Student Groups Included in State Results	Average Scale Score[1]	Average Domain Score[2]				% Below the Standards	% Meets the Standards	% Exceeds the Standards	Number Tested	Number Not Tested[3]
		Ideas/Content	Organization	Word Choice/Voice	Sentence Fluency/ Conventions					
All Students 1	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Male 2	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Female	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
American Indian/Alaska Native	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Asian 3	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Black	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
White	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Hispanic	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Two or More Races	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Free and Reduced	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Not Free and Reduced	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
LEP/ELL Eligible	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Not LEP/ELL Eligible 4	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Special Education	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Not Special Education	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
Spanish Assessments	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999

Other Student Groups	Number of Students
Emergency Medical Waiver	999
Alternate Assessment	999
Language Other than English or Spanish	999

[1]Includes: zero scores for **INV** = Invalid, **PAR** = Parent Refusal, **SAE** = Student Absent for the Entire Testing Window
[2]Each domain score is the sum of the two readers for the domain. For a scoreable paper, scores can range from 2 to 8. Please refer to the rubric.
[3]Includes: **INV** = Invalid, **PAR** = Parent Refusal, **SAE** = Student Absent for the Entire Testing Window

99-9999-999 99/99/9999

SAMPLE DISTRICT WRITING SUMMARY: EXPLANATION OF RESULTS AND TERMS

The District Writing Summary is posted in PDF format and may be downloaded and printed from the eDIRECT system by districts. The summary report lists all students by different demographic information and presents a summary of their performance. This report is for internal district use only and is required for state and federal reporting purposes. Information to protect small numbers of students has not been suppressed. Release of summary data to the public may violate individual student confidentiality (FERPA).

1 ALL STUDENTS

All student performance on the NeSA-Writing test is reported. Reading across the row, the district's average scale score, average domain score for each domain, percent of students in each performance level, and the number of students tested and not tested are presented.

2 GENDER

All student performance on the NeSA-Writing test is reported. This information is broken out by gender of all students. Reading across the row, the district's average scale score, average domain score for each domain, percent of students in each performance level, and the number of students tested and not tested are presented.

3 RACE/ETHNICITY

All student performance on the NeSA-Writing test is reported. Reading across the row, the district's average scale score, average domain score for each domain, percent of students in each performance level, and the number of students tested and not tested are presented. This information is listed based on the race/ethnicity of each student: American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, White, Hispanic, and Two or More Races.

4 SPECIAL PROGRAMS

All student performance on the NeSA-Writing test is reported. Reading across the row, the district's average scale score, average domain score for each domain, percent of students in each performance level, and the number of students tested and not tested are presented. This information is listed based on the students involved in special programs: Free and Reduced, Not Free and Reduced, LEP/ELL Eligible, Not LEP/ELL Eligible, Special Education, Not Special Education, and Spanish Assessments.

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NEBRASKA STATE ACCOUNTABILITY (NeSA-W)
DISTRICT WRITING REPORT OF SCHOOL PERFORMANCE
SPRING 2016

GRADE 8

DISTRICT: **SAMPLE DISTRICT (99-9999-999)**

1 Performance Level Ranges	
Exceeds the Standards	99-99
Meets the Standards	99-99
Below the Standards	99 and below

	Writing									
		Average Domain Score[2]								
	Average Scale Score[1]	Ideas/Content	Organization	Word Choice/Voice	Sentence Fluency/ Conventions	% Below the Standards	% Meets the Standards	% Exceeds the Standards	Number Tested	Number Not Tested[3]
STATE SUMMARY 2	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	99,999	9,999
DISTRICT SUMMARY 3	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
SAMPLE SCHOOL (99-9999-999)	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
SAMPLE SCHOOL (99-9999-999)	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
SAMPLE SCHOOL (99-9999-999)	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
SAMPLE SCHOOL (99-9999-999)	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
SAMPLE SCHOOL (99-9999-999)	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
SAMPLE SCHOOL (99-9999-999)	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
SAMPLE SCHOOL (99-9999-999)	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
SAMPLE SCHOOL (99-9999-999)	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
SAMPLE SCHOOL (99-9999-999)	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999
SAMPLE SCHOOL (99-9999-999)	99	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	99	99	99	9,999	999

[1]Includes: zero scores for **INV** = Invalid, **PAR** = Parent Refusal, **SAE** = Student Absent for the Entire Testing Window
[2]Each domain score is the sum of the two readers for the domain. For a scoreable paper, scores can range from 2 to 8. Please refer to the rubric.
[3]Includes: **INV** = Invalid, **PAR** = Parent Refusal, **SAE** = Student Absent for the Entire Testing Window

SAMPLE DISTRICT WRITING REPORT OF SCHOOL PERFORMANCE: EXPLANATION OF RESULTS AND TERMS

The District Writing Report of School Performance is posted in PDF format and may be downloaded and printed from the eDIRECT system by all districts. The district report includes all schools within the district that tested students.

1 PERFORMANCE LEVEL RANGES

In the upper left corner of this chart, the score ranges associated with each performance level are reported for Writing. Students will receive scores that fall within one of the three ranges.

2 STATE SUMMARY

All student performance on the NeSA-Writing test is reported. Reading across the row, the average scale score, the average domain score for each domain, the percent of students in each performance level, and the number of students tested and not tested are presented at the state level.

3 DISTRICT SUMMARY

All student performance on the NeSA-Writing test is reported. Reading across the row, the average scale score, the average domain score for each domain, the percent of students in each performance level, and the number of students tested and not tested are presented at the district level. In addition, each school within the district is listed and summarized.

Nebraska Department of Education ● Office of Standards and Assessment

2016 Reports Interpretive Guide

NeSA Writing