Update: Standards, Assessment, and Accountability (SAA)

Fall 2015-2016

Volume 16

STANDARDS

ASSESSMENT

ACCOUNTABILITY

Purpose of the Standards, Assessment, and Accountability SAA Update 16

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

I.   Standards, Assessment, and Accountability – What's Ahead – 2015-2016?

II.   The Statewide Writing Assessment – NeSA-Writing

III.   ELA Transition

IV.   Inclusion All Students in Assessment and Accountability

V.   State and Federal Accountability

VI.   The Continuous Improvement Process

VII.   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 2016.

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

Assessment Administrations for
2015-2016

Year	Subject	Grade level
2015-2016	NeSA-Reading NeSA-AA Reading NeSA-Mathematics NeSA-AA Mathematics NeSA-Science NeSA-AA Science NeSA Online Writing NeSA Paper/Pencil Writing English Language Development Assessment (ELPA21)	3-8, HS * 3-8, HS 3-8, HS 3-8, HS 5, 8, HS 5, 8, HS 8, HS 4 K-12

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

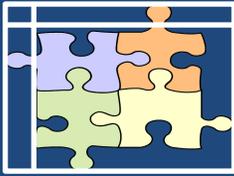## Table of Contents

STANDARDS

ASSESSMENT

ACCOUNTABILITY

I. **Standards, Assessment, and Accountability: What's Ahead: 2015-2016?**

I. Standards, Assessment, and Accountability: What's Ahead: 2015-2016?

A. Curriculum Update

   a. **The Nebraska Teacher and Principal Performance Framework and Evaluation Models**

The Nebraska Teacher and Principal Performance Framework and Evaluation Models

The Nebraska [Teacher and Principal Performance Framework](http://www.education.ne.gov/documents/TeacherPrincipalPerformanceFramework11-11.pdf) (http://www.education.ne.gov/documents/TeacherPrincipalPerformanceFramework11-11.pdf) identifies a set of effective practices that characterize Nebraska's best teachers and principals.

For the past two years 17 pilot schools, representing all sizes of schools and all regions of the state, have been piloting evaluation models for both teachers and principals based directly on these frameworks. This fall and winter a series of trainings will be offered for superintendents on principal evaluation at various ESUs across the state. Teacher evaluation trainings will follow next spring and summer.

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For questions about the material covered in this section please contact:
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   b. **College and Career Ready Standards**

Nebraska Revised Statute, Section 79.760.01 requires academic content standards to be reviewed and updated every seven years. Since 2010, the State Board of Education has approved the Nebraska Science Standards (2010), the Nebraska Career Readiness Standards (2011), the Nebraska Social Studies Standards (2012), the Nebraska Fine Arts Standards (2014), and the Nebraska English Language Arts Standards (2014). Additionally, Career Education Course Standards and Programs of Study continue to be reviewed and revised as needed.

Most recently, the Nebraska Mathematics Standards have undergone a process for review and revision. Under the leadership of Nebraska Department of Education staff, representatives from the University of Nebraska, Nebraska state colleges, Nebraska community colleges, and independent colleges and universities began the Nebraska Mathematics Standards revision process in November 2013. This group provided recommendations that guided the standards writing process, with the

goal of developing standards that, when mastered, would qualify a student for success in entry-level, credit-bearing postsecondary coursework without remediation. Following this meeting, a writing team was identified. The writing team included K-16 educators, administrators, and math curriculum specialists. The team was geographically diverse and represented all sizes of school districts.

From that point, the writing team used nationally recognized resources and documents to identify research-based concepts and content that should be included in our revised standards. The McREL Alignment Study, authorized by the State Board in March 2013, was one of many resources used to identify the concept and content that should be included in the revised Nebraska Mathematics Standards. Other resources included postsecondary entrance requirements/placement exams, ACT expectations, the NAEP Framework, NCTM Standards, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, SREB Expectations, etc. The writing team also sought input from individuals in business and industry. This important step helped the writing team identify the math knowledge and skills required for employment in Nebraska's workforce. As a result, the revised standards reflect the broad application of math knowledge and skills needed for employment in Nebraska's key industries.

An important part of the process was hearing from the public. At several points, the public was able to provide input and comments on the proposed revisions. An electronic survey was available April – May 2015, which generated comments from over 300 individuals and groups. Additionally, public input meetings were held on August 4, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. The meetings were conducted virtually at seven sites throughout Nebraska, in partnership with our Educational Service Units. The writing and editing team reviewed each individual comment and made edits based on the input collected from the electronic survey and the public input meeting.

As stated initially, the goal was to develop mathematics standards that, when mastered, would qualify a student for success in entry-level, credit-bearing postsecondary coursework without remediation. With that in mind, representatives from the Nebraska Community College System, Nebraska State College System, Independent Colleges and Universities of Nebraska, and the Nebraska University System have reviewed the proposed revisions and offer their designation of the Nebraska K-12 Mathematics Standards as "Nebraska's College and Career Ready Standards for Mathematics." The anticipated approval date for the Nebraska Mathematics Standards is September 4, 2015. Local school districts have one year from the State Board adoption to adopt the Nebraska Mathematics Standards.

For more information about content standards, contact Dr. Cory Epler, Director of Curriculum & Instruction cory.epler@nebraska.gov or visit the C&I Staff Directory (http://www.education.ne.gov/ci/StaffDirectory.html).

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)

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.

Security policies and ethics codes also apply to the English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century (ELPA21) and are under the purview of the Statewide Assessment Office.

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. The DAC will 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 DAC 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 DAC. The DAC has the responsibility for maintaining assessment communication within the district. The superintendent is responsible for communicating to the DAC the way assessment information is to be shared within the district.

The contacts for the 2015-2016 school year will be the same as those used in 2014-2015 unless the superintendent changed the assignment. Superintendents are responsible for updating DAC information. 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 and request an update of information or a change in DAC designation.

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 is responsible for notifying the assessment office.

Three documents have been developed to clarify and enhance information needed by DACs.

- The New DAC Checklist provides a month-by-month over view of the responsibilities of District Assessment Contacts.
- The NeSA Document Information and Responsibilities provides summary information about NeSA testing documents, security of the documents, and appropriate return or disposal.
- The Summary Chart – NeSA Testing Materials and Procedures provides detailed information such as requirements of testing, availability of tests in Spanish, and availability of accommodations.

b. The eDIRECT System and Enrollment Verification

The [DRC eDIRECT System](#) will be used for implementation in 2015-2016 to obtain enrollment information from districts and information about testing decisions. The first of those submissions is scheduled for October 5-16. 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 and 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 through a recorded training available in September. See [NeSA Timeline](#).

c. NeSA-Reading, Math, Science Testing Window

> The NeSA Testing Window for operational reading, mathematics, and science is March 21 – May 6, 2016. This window includes the alternate tests as well.

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 and ELPA21.

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. Anyone 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 DAC. The DAC has responsibility for the comprehensive oversight of the testing process in the district. Principals and

DACs will submit their security agreements directly to the NDE assessment office through Echosign email by October 30, 2015. 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 2014-2015, 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 information 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 2015

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 2015.

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:

- Providing answers, suggestions, or edits in any way to students or to their test answers/responses.
- Compromising the security of any testing materials.
- 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

District personnel have access to NeSA results before the information has been released publicly. Districts are asked to embargo their data until the Nebraska Department of Education releases data publicly.

- Do not share scores publicly through newsletters, school board meetings, award ceremonies, media releases, and other formal publications.
- Individual scores for each student can be shared with the student and with the student's parents. However, classroom, school, district, or any other form of aggregate scores cannot be shared with students or outside the school.
- Aggregate scores can be shared with school/district staff, but do remind recipients that scores are embargoed.
- NeSA-Writing essays can be returned to individual students (and parents if district wishes) with the students' scores on them, including domain scores.
- No public recognition of individuals can be given if doing so reveals NeSA scores, such as awarding students who earn perfect scores (8) on the NeSA-Writing, for example.
- Raw scores are embargoed; students can be told their raw scores, but staff should be careful about sharing information with students and/or parents about performance level until the Conversion Charts are released.

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 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:

- The NeSA-Mathematics and NeSA-Science tests are to be administered in <u>two</u> independent sessions. Even though NeSA-Math and Science are not timed tests and students are to be allowed as much time as necessary to complete, the recommended time scheduled for each session does not generally exceed 90 minutes.
- **However, the transition test for NeSA-Reading/ NeSA-English Language Arts at grades 5–8 and 11 requires three 60-minute sessions.**

- The NeSA-Reading operational test will be completed by students in the first two sessions. The items will all be multiple choice and matched to the legacy standards and the revised College and Career Ready Nebraska Standards of English Language Arts.
- The NeSA-ELA field test will be completed in session three.
- The recommended time <u>for each session is 60 minutes</u>. Note that the recommended time has not been increased, but has been changed from two 90-minute sessions to three 60-minute sessions.
- Students must participate in all three sessions.
- Students must take all three sessions in the same mode, either online or, if allowed the accommodation, paper/pencil.
- Only students who are allowed paper/pencil accommodations due to their IEPs or 504 plans are allowed to participate in the NeSA-ELA field testing with the paper/pencil accommodation.
- English Language Learners who may not be familiar with or have experience with technology may participate in the NeSA-ELA field test with the paper/pencil accommodation.

- **Grades 3 and 4 will participate in the NeSA-Reading/ NeSA-English Language Arts in two 90-minute sessions. However, NDE offers a reminder of the optional TDA Pilot for grades 3 and 4, available April 25 – May 6.**

- **<u>Please note the importance of field testing</u>**
  - It is very important that teachers, test administrators and other staff encourage students to give their best efforts on the NeSA-English Language Arts field testing as the education of Nebraska students very much depends on having accurate field test results.
  - Students' performance on the field test determines the items for the following year's operational test. States that are unable to gather accurate field test information from their own states' students usually have to buy items that are field tested on students in other states.
  - Nebraska has never had to buy items field-tested in other states for the operational NeSA tests.
  - NDE feels strongly that using only items field-tested in Nebraska on any operational NeSA tests assures all districts that the tests are accurately designed to fairly assess Nebraska students.

- The two-session (or three-session) administration may be scheduled during the testing window in any of several ways:
    1. Two-Three consecutive days.
    2. Two-Three days within the same week, preferably not Monday.

3. Two sessions within the same day with a break in between. It is not recommended to give session 3 of NeSA-Reading/NESA-English Language Arts as a third consecutive session.
4. Other schedules as specified in a student's IEP or used for English Language Learners.

- Younger students will be more likely to need the two-day (or three-day) schedule than older students.
- Districts should not wait until the end of the testing window. The final week of each test window is a make-up week. No regular sessions should be scheduled in the make-up week.
- Mondays are not the best testing days.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- In each testing window, the final week of the window is included for make-up tests. Students who are not tested due to sickness during a regularly scheduled test that takes place in the final week of a test window will not be eligible for an Emergency Medical Waiver.
- 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.
- 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.
- Student benefit should be considered first with regard to scheduling, not adult convenience or logistical issues.

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

Online Testing:

- Students need to have access to the tutorials, online tools training and practice tests prior to the testing in order to familiarize with the online environment.
- 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.
- Test administrators are not to log in for students.
- Parents should be reminded of the school's testing schedule so that personal appointments are not scheduled during the testing time.
- Teachers should provide only ONE ticket at a time to students testing online.
- It is acceptable for students to take sessions in any order. For example, a student may take session # 2 before session # 1.

Administration:

- Standardized testing environments and protocols must always be followed.
- INSIGHT operates in a secure browser, which does not allow students to access the Internet or other software during testing. Requirements are available at [Web-Based Testing Engine System Requirements](#).
- 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. i.e. Having students read NeSA-Reading passages to adults is not appropriate.
- 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.

Secure Materials:

- 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.
- 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 secure test materials to DRC. Districts are not to keep secure materials. Lost secure NeSA testing materials that cannot be located will call for a district to complete a District Response to Missing Materials.
- A list of all testing materials and protocol for their security are available in **NeSA Document Information and Responsibilities**

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 Waiver (EMW) is 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. Students with EMWs are exempt from testing. The complete [Emergency Medical Waiver form](#) is available on the Statewide Assessment website in NeSA Forms during the testing window. Refer to the Emergency Medical Waiver for additional guidance.

Invalidations (INV) are applied in situations where the construct of the NeSA test was violated. An example of invalidation occurs when a student receives an accommodation that is not in their IEP. Students receiving score invalidations receive zero scores. Participation in AYP and NeSA reporting may or may not have been affected, depending upon the circumstances of the invalidation.

Exception (EXP) is used for any student who was tested, but due to testing circumstances the assessment scores are not valid. An example of exception occurs when the reading test passages are read to a student but the student completes the assessment. The student is reported with a scale score of zero and performance level of 1, but is counted as a participant.

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 may be exempt from reading testing for 12 months and at the most one test period. Refer to [Guidance for Recently Arrived Limited English Proficient Students](#) for additional information on RAL code.

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. 11th 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 2017 will take his/her assessment tests in 2016.

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 2015 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.

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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 Proficiency Assessment fir the 21ˢᵗ Century [ELPA21], 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 federal and state accountability 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 federal and state accountability.
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

The Tables of Specifications (TOS) provide guidance for classroom instruction on tested Nebraska standards. Tables of Specification are posted on the NDE Assessment website.

k. **NeSA Practice Tests**

- Online practice and tools training are available in the INSIGHT software, provided by DRC
  - o Online Tools Training
  - o Practice Tests-NeSA-R, M, S (New NeSA-R)
  - o Guided Practice Tests-NeSA-R,M,S
  - o NeSA-W Practice Tests-Grades 8 and 11
  - o 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.drcedirect.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.

Additional Practice Tools Available for NeSA-English Language Arts

November 2015	NeSA-ELA Grade-Level Item Samplers Available to Districts
December 2015	Revised online tools training and guided practice tests available
December 2015	Revised tutorials available
December 14, 2015- June 30, 2016	NeSA-ELA Text Dependent Analysis Practice Test— Administration Available in eDIRECT and INSIGHT, including Test Setup
April 18-May 6, 2016	NeSA-ELA Text Dependent Analysis Pilot for Grades 3 and 4 Testing Window

l. 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.

m. 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 interrupted (power outage, unplanned fire drill) or discontinued (pause, inactivity), the student may log back in using the same student test ticket (same day only).
- If a test session was not submitted 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. If NDE has questions about the circumstances of the unlocking, the district will be contacted. Districts may be asked to

provide additional information about the circumstances. NDE uses online telemetry to help verify the circumstances that may merit an unlock.

- 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 number, 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 number, 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

n. 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).

o. Spanish Translations

All paper/pencil Spanish-translated testing materials are requested through eDIRECT enrollment system in October and online Spanish is designated 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.

p. NeSA Software Update

For the 2015-2016 school year, the INSIGHT software became available for download on July 22 except for iPad and Android device. Software for iPad and Android became available on August 11. The download of this software will provide the applications for all subjects: reading, mathematics, science, writing (grades 8 and 11) and Check4Learning.

Information about installation, including System Requirements, can be found on NDE's webpage and in DRC eDirect documents. Questions about system requirements and installation of INSIGHT software should be directed to DRC customer service.

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Nebraska Customer Service

Toll Free (866) 342-6280

Email: necustomerservice@datarecognitioncorp.com

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. M-F CST

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

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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 (fall 2015) are 2015-2016 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.

b. C4L- Future Plans

The transition of NeSA tests, including new standards and item types, will bring about the need for the C4L system to be updated. NDE continues to work on plans to update C4L and to align content to new standards. NDE's goal is to keep NeSA and C4L parallel in content and item types.

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

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:

Brian Gong, PhD, Chair   Center for the Improvement of
                                 Educational Assessment – Dover, New Hampshire

Richard Sawyer, PhD	ACT – Iowa City, Iowa
Chad Buckendahl, PhD	Alpine Testing Solutions – Orem, Utah
Linda Poole	Teacher, Papillion-LaVista Public Schools
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) sampled student performance in schools identified by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES).

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

For the 2015-2016 school year, 16 buildings have been selected to administer NAEP assessments in reading and mathematics (grades 4 and 8) and writing (grades 8 and 12). The testing window runs from January 25th to March 11th. Superintendents of selected schools were notified in June 2015 if their schools had been selected. Emails were sent to principals and District Assessment Contacts in selected schools as well as superintendents. The emails identified the date chosen for the assessment, administration information, and specific information about the school's responsibilities.

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 2015 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

STANDARDS

ASSESSMENT

ACCOUNTABILITY

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 2015-2016. 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 2016.
- 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: 8th grade – descriptive, 11th grade – persuasive.
- Will have test results released to schools in the spring of 2016.
- 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.

b. 2015-2016 NeSA-Writing Schedule

July 22, 2015-June 2016	Online Writing Practice Test available
October 5-16, 2015	Order Paper/Pencil Test Quantities in eDIRECT Enrollment
November 9, 2015	Tickets Available for Writing Field Test Grades 8 and 11 Online
November 9-December 18, 2015	Writing Field Test Window for grades 8 and 11
January 4, 2016	Districts Receive Paper/Pencil Writing Materials
January 4-5, 2016	WebEx – Writing Administration
January 6, 2016	Grades 8 and 11 Writing Session Tickets Available to Districts
January 18- February 5, 2016	NeSA-Writing Testing Window
February 10, 2016	Writing Paper/Pencil Materials Returned to DRC
March 16, 2016	Images of 4, 8, 11 Paper/Pencil Responses available in eDIRECT
April 14, 2016	Release of preliminary NeSA-Writing Scores to districts – All grades
April 28, 2016	Verifications due to NDE

c. Pertinent information for NeSA-W 2016:

- 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.
- Students are not to be provided 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 16, 2016.
- All writing materials (including Spanish papers) must be returned to DRC, not NDE.
- In online testing students will see a continuous count of the character limit of 6,000 characters (approximately three pages) in the lower left corner of the response box.
- 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. To activate the spellchecker, the test administrator must flag the accommodation in eDIRECT before printing the student ticket.
- Students may use hard copies of commercially published dictionaries and thesauruses.
- The NeSA-W in grades 8 and 11 is <u>not</u> a timed test. The 90-minutes testing time is a recommendation, not a requirement. The majority of students in grades 8 and 11 used a time span between 60 and 90 minutes in 2015.
- The NeSA-W in grade 4 <u>is</u> 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 –2015-2016– 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. Field testing will take place from November 9-December 18.

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:**

- o Administer the assessment on two consecutive days. Avoid scheduling Day 1 on Fridays or Mondays.
- o Avoid scheduling toward the end of the testing window. Allow time for make-up tests within the three-week window.
- o Make sure all of the assessments are mailed to DRC by February 10, 2016.

> **Grades 8 and 11:**

- o Schedule ahead for the computer lab and/or the accessibility of computers.
- o Avoid scheduling toward the end of the testing window. Allow time for make-up tests within the three-week window.
- o Allow for the recommended 90-minute block of testing time. In 2015, 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 2016. 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, April 28, 2016.
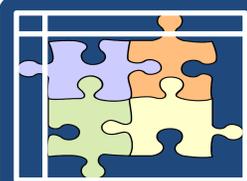
For questions about the information in this section please contact:
Erin Kunkle, Statewide Writing Assessment Director
402.471.2947 Email: erin.kunkle@nebraska.gov
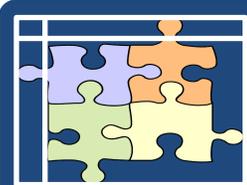
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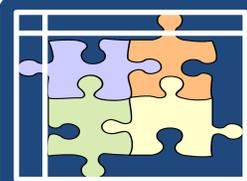
ASSESSMENT

ACCOUNTABILITY

III. NeSA-ELA Transition

A. Revised Nebraska College and Career Ready English Language Arts Standards
   1. Passage and Endorsements
      a. The revised Nebraska College and Career Ready English Language Arts (ELA) Standards were adopted unanimously by the State Board of Education on September 5, 2014
      b. Representatives from the four systems of higher education in Nebraska verified the standards College and Career Ready
         i. The University System
         ii. The State College System
         iii. The Private Post-Secondary System
         iv. The Community College System
   2. With the adoption of these standards the current NeSA-Reading (NeSA-R) assessment will transition into the NeSA-ELA

B. NeSA-R Background

   A. NeSA-R Assessment
      a. Administered to public school students to measure school and district accountability
      b. Has been in place in Nebraska since 2010
      c. Provides a grade-level appropriate test for grades 3 – 8 and 11
      d. Administered the last week in March through the first week in May
      e. Comprised of all multiple choice items
      f. Contains 25 – 55 operational items per grade-level
      g. Items based on reading passages
      h. Includes small number of field-tested items
         i. Field tests do not count toward scores but are items being field-tested for use on future tests
      i. Administered online to approximately 94% of students; 6% participate with a paper/pencil test due to an accommodation
      j. Average time used
         i. 8th grader – 70 minutes for NeSA-Reading (in two parts)
         ii. 3rd grader – 80 minutes for NeSA-Reading (in two parts)
      k. Based on design as indicated in the Table of Specifications (http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/NeSA_Reading.htm) that indicates:
         i. The standards covered in the text for each grade
         ii. The highest depth of knowledge reached

B. NeSA-Reading Alternative Assessment
   a. Administered to public school special education students with a severe cognitive disability (1% of student population)
   b. Has been in place in Nebraska since 2011
   c. Provides a grade-level appropriate test for grades 3 – 8 and 11
   d. Administered the last week in March through the first week in May
   e. Comprised of all multiple choice items
   f. Contains approximately 25 operational items per grade
   g. Administered in paper/pencil
   h. Includes a small number of field tested items
        i. Field tests do not count toward scores but are items being field-tested for use on future tests
   i. Needed time to test varies widely, depending on student
   Based on design as indicated in the Table of Specifications (http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/NeSA_Reading.htm) that includes:
        i. The standards covered in the test for each grade
        ii. The highest depth of knowledge reached

C. New Item Types for NeSA-ELA

1. Selected-Response Items
   a. Efficient method to measure a broad range of content across a variety of skill levels, including analytical thinking
   b. The students determine the correct answer from a provided list – they do not generate content of the answer
   c. Two types
      i. Multiple Choice (MC)
         1. Will generally have four answer choices, including three distractors and one correct answer (Fig. 1)
         2. Distractors represent common misconceptions, incorrect logic, common misinterpretations, unsound reasoning, casual reading, etc…
         3. A correct response to a MC item is worth one point

Figure 1: Screenshot of an example NeSA-ELA Multiple Choice (MC) item.

ii. Multiple Select
  1. "Multi-Select" versions may include more than three distractors and more than one correct answer (Fig. 2) These are worth two points
  2. Distractors represent common misconceptions, incorrect logic, common misinterpretations, unsound reasoning, casual reading, etc…
  3. A correct response to a MC item is worth two points

Figure 2: Screenshot of a typical NeSA-ELA Multi-Select, Multiple Choice item.

iii. Evidence-Based Selected Response (EBSR)
   1. Will contain two parts, designed to elicit a response based on readings from an Informational or a Literature passage
      a. Part One – Student analyzes a passage and chooses the single, correct answer from four choices (Fig.3)
      b. Part Two – Student elicits evidence from a passage and selects one answer based on the response chosen to answer Part One (Fig. 4)
   2. Each EBSR (Part One and Part Two, combined) is worth two points

Figure 3: Screenshot of an example NeSA-ELA two-part Evidence-Based Selected Response item (Part One).

The next passage and poem are about making soup. Read the passage and answer questions 1 and 2.

Nail Soup

a folktale from Sweden

There was once a man who went plodding his way through a forest. The distance between the houses was so great that he had little hope of finding a shelter before the night set in. But all of a sudden he saw some lights between the trees. He then discovered a cottage, where there was a fire burning on the hearth. How nice it would be to roast one's self before that fire, and to get a bite of something, he thought, and so he dragged himself towards the cottage.

Just then a woman came toward him.

"Good evening, and well met!" said the man.

"Good evening," said the woman. "Where do you come from?"

"South of the sun and east of the moon," said the man, "and now I am on the way home again, for I have been all over the world with the exception of this parish," he said.

"You must be a great traveler, then," said the woman. "What may be your business here?"

"Oh, I want a shelter for the night," he said.

"I thought as much," said the woman, "but you may as well get away from here at once, for my husband is not at home and my place is not an inn," she said.

"My good woman," said the man, "you must not be so cross and hard-hearted, for we are both human beings and should help one another, it is written."

More Text Below

This question has two parts. Answer Part One and then answer Part Two.

Part Two

Which sentence from "Nail Soup" **best** supports the answer in Part One? Choose **one** answer.

(a) "But the man did not consider himself beaten at the first rebuff."

(b) "He did not need much pressing."

(c) "The woman stared with all her might."

(d) "She was quite awestruck at the man and his grand connections."

Review/End Test   Pause   Flag

Back Next

Figure 4: Screenshot of an example NeSA-ELA two-part Evidence-Based Selected Response item (Part Two).

2. Constructed-Response Items
    a. Students generate content of the response to a problem or objective provided
    b. Two types
        i. Auto-Scored Constructed Response (ASCR, Figs. 5 – 10)
            1. A Technology-Enhanced Test Question type
            2. Students manipulate information within dynamic tasks such as drag and drop elements (Figs. 7 – 10), highlighting text (Figs. 5 & 6), and selecting multiple answers (Figs. 7 – 10)
            3. Addresses higher-level thinking skills without needing to be hand-scored
            4. Incorporates technical enhancements to test questions, response areas, and/or stimuli
            5. Includes drag-and-drop, hot-spot, and in-line selection of multiple answers from drop-down menus
            6. Each ASCR is worth two points

Figure 5: Screenshot of an example NeSA-ELA Auto-Scored Constructed Response item with highlighted text.

Figure 6: Screenshot of an example NeSA-ELA Auto-Scored Constructed Response item with highlighted text.

Figure 7: Screenshot of an example NeSA-ELA Auto-Scored Constructed Response item with drag and drop elements to select multiple answers.

↖ 🔍 Line Guide

Of Arthur's Birth; and How He Became King

by Beatrice Clay

Long years ago, there ruled over Britain a king called Uther Pendragon. A mighty prince was he, and feared by all men; yet, when he sought the love of the fair Igraine of Cornwall, she would have naught to do with him, so that, from grief and disappointment, Uther fell sick, and at last seemed like to die.

Now in those days, there lived a famous magician named Merlin, so powerful that he could change his form at will, or even make himself invisible; nor was there any place so remote but that he could reach it at once, merely by wishing himself there. One day, suddenly he stood at Uther's bedside, and said: "Sir King, I know thy grief, and am ready to help thee. Only promise to give me, at his birth, the son that shall be born to thee, and thou shalt have thy heart's desire." To this the king agreed joyfully, and Merlin kept his word: for he gave Uther the form of one whom Igraine had loved dearly, and so she took him willingly for her husband.

When the time had come that a child should be born to the King and Queen, Merlin appeared before Uther to remind him of his promise; and Uther swore it should be as he had said. Three days later, a prince was born, and, with pomp and ceremony, was christened by the name of Arthur; but immediately

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Arthur's qualities are listed in the chart below. Based on information in **both** passages, drag each detail into the chart next to the quality it supports.

Arthur is helpful.	Once he is made king, Arthur provides justice to all.
Arthur is humble.	Arthur is surprised by the reaction of Sir Ector and Sir Kay after he pulls the sword from the stone.
Arthur is kind now.	Arthur returns to the house to retrieve Sir Kay's sword.

Click To Respond

Review/End Test   Pause   Flag 🏴   Back Next

Figure 8: Screenshot of an example NeSA-ELA Auto-Scored Constructed Response item with drag and drop elements to select multiple answers.

Line Guide

The First Day of Swim Class

It was the first day of summer, and I was having a terrific day until my mom told me that it was time to go to swim class. I had never learned how to swim so I was fearful of water, although swimming was something that I always wanted to do.

Sometimes, when I would see signs posted in school and around town for swim competitions, I wished I could participate.

The public pool wasn't far, so we walked there. When the pool was in sight, I felt hesitant. Once inside the gates, my mom went to talk to the instructor while I waited.

"Hi, Trevor," I heard a familiar voice exclaim. I turned around to see my friend Shay. "Are you taking a swimming class this summer?" he asked.

I slowly nodded.

"You're going to love swimming! The instructor, Ms. Dennison, is a fantastic teacher," he said.

"I hope so," I replied uncertainly. Shay patted my shoulder as if he understood, and then he strode off, drying his hair with a towel.

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Drag into the chart **three** terms that **best** describe the setting.

?

Setting for *The First Day of Swim Class*
outdoor pool
summer
sunny day

beach

school

spring
chilly day

windy day

Review/End Test   Pause   Flag

Back   Next

Figure 9: Screenshot of an example NeSA-ELA Auto-Scored Constructed Response item with drag and drop elements to select multiple answers.

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

A Few New Neighbors
by Kerry McGee

One afternoon, Jessie spotted a tiny bird fluttering around Mrs. Baxter's front door. Mrs. Baxter had just moved into an apartment.

It's probably looking for somebody to fill the bird feeders, Jessie thought.

The bird perched on the edge of the wreath. Then it disappeared.

Disappeared? Jessie ran over to Mrs. Baxter's door. Where had it gone?

A jumble of sticks and grass stuck out from the middle of the wreath. Suddenly, Jessie understood. A nest! A bird's nest sat right in the middle of Mrs. Baxter's wreath. The bird poked its head out and looked at Jessie. Then it fluttered away.

Jessie crept up to the front door. Tucked inside the nest were four speckled blue eggs.

Jessie ran home to call Mrs. Baxter. "Guess who moved into your old wreath!" Jessie said. "A family of birds!"

Mrs. Baxter sounded just as excited as Jessie was. "Tell me what they look like. What color are the eggs?"

Jessie and Mrs. Baxter talked about the birds for a while. "They sound like house finches," Mrs. Baxter said. "Keep an eye on them for me, will you?"

"I will," Jessie said.

More Text Below

Arrange the events from the passage in the order in which they happen. Click on the sentences to drag them into the correct locations.

?

- Jessie saw four speckled blue eggs in the nest.
- The movers arrive to remove Mrs. Baxter's belongings.
- Jessie calls Mrs. Baxter to tell her about the nest.
- Jessie unlocked the side door to Mrs. Baxter's house.
- Mrs. Baxter moved from her house into an apartment.

Review/End Test   Pause   Flag   Back

Figure 10: Screenshot of an example NeSA-ELA Auto-Scored Constructed response item with drag and drop elements.

ii. Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA)
1. Students read informational or literature passage(s) and generate an evidence-based response (Fig. 11)
    a. In alignment across grades 3 –8 and 11 with Nebraska College and Career Ready English Language Arts Standards
    b. On-demand, reading-based writing piece requires students to provide evidence from text to support analysis, reflection, or ideas and opinions
    c. Students draw on basic writing skills while inferring and synthesizing information from a passage (making use of and referencing content from passage to support analysis) in order to develop a comprehensive response
2. Students will be given a TDA Writer's Checklist to assist in composing a response (Fig. 12)
3. Scored using a rubric designed to provide measurement of reading, providing evidence, and writing skills
4. The score value of TDAs is being determined

Figure 11: Screenshot of an example NeSA-ELA Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) item.

Use the passage and the poem to answer questions 4 and 5.

Na

a folktal

There was once a man who went
distance between the houses was so
shelter before the night set in. But all
trees. He then discovered a cottage, v
How nice it would be to roast one's s
something, he thought, and so he dra

Just then a woman came toward h

"Good evening, and well met!" said

"Good evening," said the woman. "

"South of the sun and east of the m
way home again, for I have been all o
parish," he said.

"You must be a great traveler, then
business here?"

"Oh, I want a shelter for the night,"

"I thought as much," said the woma
at once, for my husband is not at hom

"My good woman," said the man, "
for we are both human beings and sh

"Help one another?" said the w More Text Below id you ever hear such a thing?

Writer's Checklist

🔍 Enlarge

he poem address a similar theme.
alyzing how the passage and the
theme. Use evidence from **both** the
oem to support your response.

udent composes an essay after
ated passage and poem.

**Writer's Checklist for the
Text-Dependent Analysis Question**

PLAN before you write
• Make sure you read the question carefully.
• Make sure you have read the entire passage carefully.
• Think about how the question relates to the passage.
• Organize your ideas on scratch paper. Use a thought
  map, outline, or other graphic organizer to plan your essay.

FOCUS while you write
• Analyze the information from the passage as
  you write your essay.
• Make sure you use evidence from the passage
  to support your response.
• Use precise language, a variety of sentence types,
  and transitions in your essay.
• Organize your paper with an introduction, body,
  and conclusion.

PROOFREAD after you write
☐ I wrote my final essay in the response box.
☐ I stayed focused on answering the question.
☐ I used evidence from the passage to support my
  response.
☐ I corrected errors in capitalization, spelling,
  sentence formation, punctuation, and
  word choice.

Review/End Test   Pause   Flag 🏴   Back Next

**Figure 12: Screenshot of an example NeSA-ELA Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) item,
showing drop-down** *Writer's Checklist for the Text-Dependent Analysis Question.*

D. Transition Timeline

English Language Arts Transition Spring 2016				
Grades	**Operational Items Types**	**Standards Tested**	**Field Tested Item Types**	**Standards Tested**
Grades 5-8 and 11- **Test Dates** **March 21-May 6, 2016**	• All Multiple Choice	• Legacy Standards and College and • Career Ready English Language Arts	• Multiple Choice • Evidence-Based Selected Response • Auto-scored constructed response • Text-Dependent Analysis	• College and Career Ready English Language Arts
Grades 3 and 4 **Test Dates** **March 21-May 6, 2016**	• All Multiple Choice	• Legacy Standards and College and • College and Career Ready English Language Arts	• Multiple Choice • Evidence-Based Selected Response • Auto-scored constructed response • **NOT** Text-Dependent Analysis	• College and Career Ready English Language Arts

Pilot test for Grades 3 and 4—Text Dependent Analysis Spring 2016				
Grades 3 and 4 **Pilot Dates** **April 25-May 6, 2016**	• Pilot Test for Text-Dependent Analysis	• College and Career Ready English Language Arts		

English Language Arts Transition Spring 2017				
Grades	**Operational Items Types**	**Standards Tested**	**Field Tested Item Types**	**Standards Tested**
Grades 5-8 and 11- **Fully Transitioned Test**	• Multiple Choice • Evidence-Based Selected Response • Auto-scored constructed response • Text-Dependent Analysis	• Career Ready English Language Arts	• Multiple Choice • Evidence-Based Selected Response • Auto-scored Constructed Response • Text-Dependent Analysis	• College and Career Ready English Language Arts
Grades 3 and 4-Partially Transitioned Test	• Multiple Choice • Evidence-Based Selected Response • Auto-scored Constructed Response	• College and Career Ready English Language Arts	• Multiple Choice • Evidence-Based Selected Response • Auto-scored constructed response • Text-Dependent Analysis (Tentative-Based on findings of spring 2015 Pilot test)	• College and Career Ready English Language Arts

NeSA-English Language Arts Spring 2018				
Grades	**Operational Items Types**	**Standards Tested**	**Field Tested Item Types**	**Standards Tested**
Grades 5-8 and 11- **Second Year of Fully Transitioned Test**	• Multiple Choice • Evidence-Based Selected Response • Auto-scored constructed response • Text-Dependent Analysis	• Career Ready English Language Arts	• Multiple Choice • Evidence-Based Selected Response • Auto-scored Constructed Response • Text-Dependent Analysis	• College and Career Ready English Language Arts
Grades 3 and 4- **Fully Transitioned Test**	• Multiple Choice • Evidence-Based Selected Response • Auto-scored Constructed Response • Text-Dependent Analysis (Tentative)	• College and Career Ready English Language Arts	• Multiple Choice • Evidence-Based Selected Response • Auto-scored constructed response • Text-Dependent Analysis (Tentative)	• College and Career Ready English Language Arts

E. The NeSA-ELA Alternate Assessment

NeSA-English Language Arts Alternate Assessment			
Year	Grades	Operational Item Types	Standards Tested
Spring 2016	3-8 and 11	All Multiple Choice	Legacy Reading and Revised NeSA-English Language Arts Reading and Writing standards
Spring 2017	3-8 and 11	All Multiple Choice	Revised NeSA-English Language Arts Reading and Writing standards

F. Advantages of the New ELA Assessment for Nebraskan Students
   a. Students will participate in assessments that include questions more closely tied to instruction in the classroom
   b. Students will be asked questions that test not only what they know, but also how they know
G. The Role of Nebraska Educators in the Development of the New ELA Assessment
   a. Nebraska will continue to be a leader in engaging our educators to write test questions for the NeSA-ELA
   b. NDE will continue to gather diverse groups of educators from across Nebraska to write test items during NDE-hosted item-writing workshops in Lincoln
   c. Educators will receive item-writer training, develop test items, and conduct peer-review of test items
   d. NDE will continue to encourage Nebraska educator involvement in other related events associated with the transition, including Standard Setting
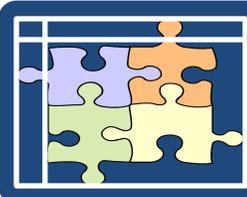
STANDARDS
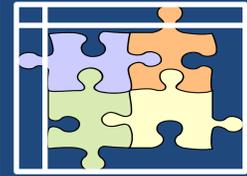
ASSESSMENT
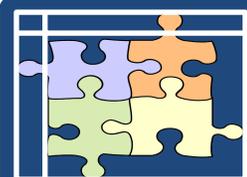
ACCOUNTABILITY

IV. Including All Students in Assessment and Accountability

IV. 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 4th 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

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 21 - May 6, 2016**. This is a six-week administration window. Various trainings on the alternate assessment will be provided in the 2015-2016 school year.

2016 NeSA-AA Testing

- The NeSA-AAR (reading), the NeSA-AAM (mathematics), and the NeSA-AAS (science) are required in 2016 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 11who 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. <u>If that is the case, districts will need to contact the Statewide Assessment Office.</u> This is a rare situation, but is appropriate occasionally.
- In 2016, 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

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. While recently arrived students are required to take the NeSA-M, the results are not included in the AYP calculation.

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 Proficiency Assessment for the 21ˢᵗ Century (ELPA21) 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. Beginning in SY 2015-2016, the test provided by the Nebraska Department of Education to test English language proficiency will be the English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21ˢᵗ Century (ELPA21.) This test replaces the ELDA.

All students designated as Limited English Proficient (LEP) on NSSRS, must participate in ELPA21 testing. Developed by a consortium of states, the test is given in the spring, and is administered through the services of Questar Assessment, Inc. All students designated as Limited English Proficient (LEP) on NSSRS, must participate in ELPA21 testing. The ELPA21 2016 testing window is **February 8- March 18, 2016.**

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 ELPA21 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:

1. The progress ELL students are making in learning English, as measured by ELPA21.
2. The number of students becoming proficient in English, as measured by ELPA21.
3. 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
Brooke David
402.471.2451 E-mail: brooke.david@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:

- Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines (Birth to Three and Three to Five) www.education.ne.gov/OEC/elg.html;
- NDE Rule 11, Regulations for Early Childhood Education Programs

Rule 11 applies to all pre-kindergarten programs operated through public schools or ESUs. Note - **Rule 11 is under the final stages of revision. Please check the NDE main website to access the current rule.** http://www.education.ne.gov/

- NDE Rule 51, Regulations and Standards for Special Education Programs. http://www.education.ne.gov/LEGAL/webrulespdf/CLEAN51_2014.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 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. 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-R 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 the Rule 11 approval processes. In addition, programs are highly encouraged to participate in the NAEYC Accreditation process or Step Up to Quality. NDE provides technical assistance for each process and financial assistance for NAEYC accreditation.

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

Results Matter Fidelity is designed to assure the reliability and validity of GOLD assessment data.

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 teachers who have complete one year in GOLD. 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 for the following two groups of children:

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

If one age group of children is served by a teacher, only that certification is required.

For information, resources, and updates related to *Results Matter*, see the Results Matter Technical Assistance Document (July 2015).

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

Teresa Berube, Coordinator, Early Childhood Special Education Phone: 402.471.4319
Email: Teresa.berube@nebraska.gov
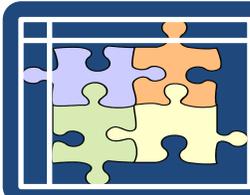
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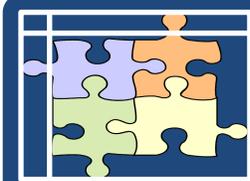
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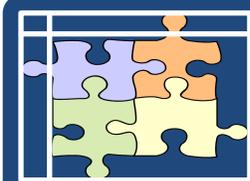
ACCOUNTABILITY

V. 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. For the first time the 2015 reports from DRC will include any changes made to student data during the summer months.

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 2014 because although the test items are comparable, they are different. The 2015 conversion tables for reading, mathematics, and science that convert raw scores to scale sores 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 2016 NeSA test results will be used for reporting reading, mathematics, science, and writing.
- 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 NeSA data.
- National assessment data may be submitted throughout the year beginning in January, but data can NOT be accepted after June 30, 2016. Districts needing to submit data after June 30, 2016 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.

a. Checking assessment labels

Districts must check <u>assessment labels</u> before December 1, 2015 for NeSA-W and ELDA and January 20, 2016 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.

To Check 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. Alternate flags are displayed on these reports.
    - o Report – NeSA Reading and Math Labels
    - o Report – NeSA Science Labels
    - o Report – NeSA Writing Labels

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). As NDE makes changes to

assessment results based on district submissions, these changes can be validated in the Accountability Count Verification reports.

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 NeSA Assessment Details
- ✓ 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 are available.

c. Verifying demographic indicators for tested students

Districts must check NeSA Roster Review Reports to verify student demographic indicators for students with NeSA results. This report also indicates whether the student is Full Academic Year (FAY).

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 **Roster** reports to view student information uploaded to the assessment vendor
  - ○ Report – NeSA Reading Roster Review

- Report – NeSA Math Roster Review
- Report – NeSA Science Review
- Report – NeSA Writing Review

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

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. Assessing Contracted Students and Students Who Move

The Nebraska Student and Staff Record System require districts to clarify who owns the assessments of contracted public school student. 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 a district.

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, verify the NDE Student ID number and add 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.
> • Include the assessment results obtained from the education agency with the district assessment results.

Category Three: Any student attending a non-public school is not required to take the NeSA assessments unless the non-public school student is enrolled in the public school for .51 FTE or more. If a non-public school is also an approved service provider for special education, Category Two (above) applies.

f. Home-Schooled Students

Home schooled students enrolled in the district are not required to take the NeSA assessments unless the home schooled student is enrolled .51 FTE or more.

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 assumes 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 for one grade at elementary, middle and high school levels. If available a composite/total score along with subscores for reading and math are submitted for each student tested.

The State Board of Education, as required by state statute 79-760, **recommended** national tests to be used. Districts should note that these are **recommendations** only and are **not** requirements. If a district chooses to administer different tests, they may do so. The following are State Board **recommendation**s of national assessment tests for districts to consider (April 3, 2015):

ACT Aspire
ACT
California Achievement Test (CAT)
Compass
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)
Iowa Test of Educational Development (ITED)
Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) (Northwest Evaluation Assessment)
Terra Nova

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 for some of the recommended tests.

See the Assessment Fact pages in the Student Templates Instruction Manual for specific information about submitting national test results (http://www.education.ne.gov/nssrs/docs/STUDENT_MANUAL_10_1.pdf) .

National assessment data may be submitted throughout the year beginning in January 2016, but data can NOT be accepted after June 30, 2016. 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 (NAI/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 by using the NSSRS Validation in the portal. On the NSSRS Validation page, the default School Year is to 2016-06-30. 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.

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

READING Composite

MATH Composite

Total Score

TerraNova, Third Edition

TERRA**NOVA** ³

COMPLETE BATTERY

Home Report

KEN JONES

Grade: 4.7

Purpose
This report presents information about your student's performance on the TerraNova achievement test. Together with classroom assessments and classwork, this information can be used to identify your student's potential strengths and needs in the content areas shown.

Simulated Data

Birthdate: 02/08/97
Special Codes:
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
3   59   732   1   1   1
Form/Level: G-14
Test Date: 04/24/07   Scoring: PATTERN (IRT)
QM: 31   Norms Date: 2007
Class: JONES
School: WINFIELD
District: GREEN VALLEY

City/State: ANYTOWN, USA

CTBID: 01075M0161550002-02-00001

Performance by Content Area
National Percentile Scale

Reading 44, Vocabulary 37, Reading Composite 42, Language 28, Language Mechanics 42, Language Composite 36, Math 39, Math Compu 58, Math Composite 52, Total Score** 38, Science 44, Social Studies 47, Spelling 58

Above Average / Average / Below Average

**Total Score consists of Reading, Language, Mathematics.

Observations

The height of each bar shows your student's National Percentile score on each test. The percentile scale is shown on the left. The graph shows that your student achieved a National Percentile of 44 in Reading. This means your child scored higher than approximately 44 percent of the students in the nation.

The scale on the right side of the graph shows the score ranges that represent average, above average, and below average in terms of National Percentiles. Average is defined as the middle

50 percent of students nationally, consisting of the 25th through the 75th National Percentiles. Your student has thirteen out of thirteen scores in the average range, shown as a gray horizontal band in the middle of the graph. No scores are in the above-average range and no scores are in the below-average range.

See the back of this page for content area descriptions of the kinds of knowledge, skills, and abilities assessed on the TerraNova, Third Edition achievement test.

THE IOWA TESTS

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

Reading Total in NCE

Math Total in NCE

Core Total in NCE

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.

Scores

Tests	SS	GE	NS	NCE	NPR	PERCENTILE RANK
Vocabulary	161	2.4	2	15	8	
Reading Comprehension	155	2.1	1	10	3	
Reading Total	158	2.2	1	7	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	
Language Total	163	2.5	2	16	5	
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	
Math Total	170	2.9	2	16	5	
CORE TOTAL	164	2.5	1	7	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	
COMPOSITE	166	2.7	1	10	3	

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

Column 1

Tests and Skills	Total Items	No. Att.	%C Stu.	%C Nat.	Diff.	Differences* -20 0 +20
Vocabulary						
Vocabulary	37	37	22	55	-33	
Reading Comprehension						
Factual Understanding	16	16	13	55	-42	
Inference and Interpretation	15	15	20	61	-41	
Analysis and Generalization	12	12	42	58	-16	
Spelling						
Root Words	23	23	30	60	-30	
Words with Affixes	9	9	22	39	-17	
Correct Spelling	4	4	0	67	-67	
Capitalization						
Names/Titles / Dates/Holidays	5	5	0	62	-62	
Place Names	6	6	33	54	-21	
Names: Organizations & Groups	5	5	40	46	-6	
Writing Conventions	7	7	14	51	-37	
Overcapitalization/Correct Cap	5	5	0	60	-60	
Punctuation						
End Punctuation	12	12	42	55	-13	
Comma	8	8	25	47	-22	
Apostrophe/Quotes/Colon/Semi	5	5	20	40	-20	
Correct Punctuation	3	3	0	62	-62	
Usage and Expression						
Nouns, Pronouns, and Modifiers	10	10	20	58	-38	
Verbs	6	6	17	59	-42	
Conciseness and Clarity	6	6	50	53	-3	
Organization of Ideas	6	6	17	57	-40	
Appropriate Use	7	7	14	60	-46	

Column 2

Tests and Skills	Total Items	No. Att.	%C Stu.	%C Nat.	Diff.	Differences* -20 0 +20
Concepts & Estimation						
Number Properties & Operations	13	13	23	60	-37	
Algebra	6	6	33	63	-30	
Geometry	6	6	0	55	-55	
Measurement	3	3	0	59	-59	
Probability and Statistics	3	3	67	48	19	
Estimation	9	9	33	50	-17	
Prob. Solv. & Data Interp.						
Problem Solving	15	15	27	58	-31	
Single-step	3	3	33	68	-35	
Multiple-step	8	8	25	54	-29	
Approaches and Procedures	4	4	25	58	-33	
Data Interpretation	11	11	18	54	-36	
Read Amounts	3	3	33	60	-27	
Compare Quant./Relationships	8	8	13	52	-39	
Math Computation						
Add with Whole Numbers	3	3	67	72	-5	
Subtract with Whole Numbers	4	4	0	66	-66	
Multiply with Whole Numbers	6	6	83	55	28	+
Divide with Whole Numbers	7	7	0	45	-45	
Add or Subtract with Fractions	5	5	20	44	-24	
Add or Subtract with Decimals	4	4	25	48	-23	
Social Studies						
History	11	11	9	51	-42	
Geography	10	10	30	57	-27	
Economics	12	12	33	49	-16	
Government and Society	4	4	25	57	-32	

Column 3

Tests and Skills	Total Items	No. Att.	%C Stu.	%C Nat.	Diff.	Differences* -20 0 +20
Science						
Scientific Inquiry	14	14	29	54	-25	
Life Science	9	9	11	53	-42	
Earth and Space Science	8	8	38	55	-17	
Physical Science	6	6	33	55	-22	
Maps and Diagrams						
Locate/Process Information	8	8	25	54	-29	
Interpret Information	12	12	33	55	-22	
Analyze Information	6	6	17	47	-30	
Reference Materials						
Using Reference Materials	12	12	17	61	-44	
Searching for Information	20	20	30	56	-26	
Critical Thinking						
Reading	27	27	30	60	-30	
Language	29	29	21	52	-31	
Mathematics	34	34	26	53	-27	
Social Studies	21	21	33	52	-19	
Science	20	20	25	52	-27	
Sources of Information	28	28	29	55	-26	

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

Student Report | HFIRSTNAME M LASTNAME

STANFORD ACHIEVEMENT TEST SERIES TENTH EDITION

KNOWLEDGE · EXCELLENCE · POWER

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. Lexiles used with permission.

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

GRADE: 04
TEST DATE: 04/08

9 Yrs 08 Mos
STUDENT NO.: 0000000000

Total Reading in NCE
Total Mathematics in NCE
Basic Battery in NCE

Subtests and Totals	Number Possible	Number Correct	Scaled Score	National PR-S	National NCE	AAC Range	National Grade Percentile Bands
Total Reading	114	82	639	59-5	54.8	MIDDLE	
Word Study Skills	30	25	664	76-6	64.9	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	53.4	MIDDLE	

Otis-Lennon School Ability Test®	Number Possible	Number Correct	SAI	Age PR-S	Age NCE	Scaled Score	National Grade Percentile Bands
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
Word Study Skills	30	30	25		✔	
C Structural Analysis	12	12	10		✔	
C Phonetic Analysis-Consonants	9	9	8			✔
C Phonetic Analysis-Vowels	9	9	7		✔	
Reading Vocabulary	30	30	22		✔	
C Synonyms	12	12	9		✔	
C Multiple Meaning Words	9	9	5	✔		
C Context Clues	9	9	8		✔	
P Thinking Skills	18	18	13		✔	
Reading Comprehension	54	54	35		✔	
C Literary	18	18	12		✔	
C Informational	18	18	10		✔	
C Functional	18	18	13		✔	
P Initial Understanding	12	12	11			✔
P Interpretation	20	20	12		✔	
P Critical Analysis	12	12	8		✔	
P Strategies	10	10	4		✔	
P Thinking Skills	42	42	24		✔	
Mathematics Problem Solving	48	48	30		✔	
C Number Sense & Operations	24	24	16		✔	
C Patterns/Relationships/Algebra	6	6	6			✔
C Data, Statistics & Probability	8	8	4		✔	
C Geometry & Measurement	10	10	4		✔	
P Communication & Representation	6	6	2	✔		
P Estimation	8	8	5		✔	
P Mathematical Connections	21	21	13		✔	
P Reasoning & Problem Solving	13	13	10			✔
P Thinking Skills	40	40	26		✔	

Clusters	NP	NA	NC	Below Avg	Avg	Above Avg
Mathematics Procedures	32	32	26		✔	
C Computation w/Whole Numbers	18	18	14		✔	
C Computation with Decimals	8	8	6		✔	
C Computation with Fractions	6	6	6			✔
P Computation in Context	16	16	13		✔	
P Computation/Symbolic Notation	16	16	13		✔	
P Thinking Skills	16	16	13		✔	
Language Mechanics	24	24	15		✔	
C Capitalization	8	8	7		✔	
C Usage	8	8	3	✔		
C Punctuation	8	8	5		✔	
Language Expression	24	24	13		✔	
C Sentence Structure	8	8	4		✔	
C Prewriting	5	5	3		✔	
C Content and Organization	11	11	6		✔	
P Thinking Skills	12	12	6		✔	
Spelling	40	40	30		✔	
C Phonetic Principles	18	18	14			✔
C Structural Principles	10	10	7		✔	
C No Mistake	7	7	7			✔
C Homophones	5	5	2		✔	
Science	40	40	30		✔	
C Life	11	11	9		✔	
C Physical	11	11	6		✔	
C Earth	11	11	10			✔
P Nature of Science	7	7	5		✔	
P Models	14	14	11		✔	
P Constancy	13	13	10		✔	

Clusters	NP	NA	NC	Below Avg	Avg	Above Avg
Science (cont.)						
P Form & Function	13	13	9		✔	
P Thinking Skills	20	20	16			✔
Social Science	40	40	22		✔	
C History	10	10	6		✔	
C Geography	10	10	8			✔
C Political Science	10	10	6		✔	
C Economics	10	10	2	✔		
P App. of Knowledge/Comp.	14	14	7		✔	
P Org., Summ. & Interp. of Info.	15	15	7		✔	
P Determination of Cause/Effect	11	11	8		✔	
P Thinking Skills	20	20	11		✔	
Listening	40	40	22		✔	
C Vocabulary	10	10	3	✔		
C Comprehension	30	30	19		✔	
P Initial Understanding	8	8	6		✔	
P Interpretation	12	12	7		✔	
P Analysis	7	7	4		✔	
P Strategies	3	3	2		✔	
C Literary	10	10	7		✔	
C Informational	10	10	7		✔	
C Functional	10	10	5		✔	
P Thinking Skills	22	22	13		✔	
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

COPY 01
PROCESS NO. 00000000-0000000-0000-00000-0

_____Public Schools
Student Progress Report for _____
_____School

Growth is measured from Fall to Spring **Student ID:** _____

NWEA Northwest Evaluation Association
Partnering to help all kids learn

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			75- **82** -87
F08	6	216- **219** -222	219	218			44- **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			42- **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

Mathematics Score -Percentile Rank

No Composite Score

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			80- **86** -92
F08	6	230- **233** -236	214	212			93- **96** -98
S08	5	227- **230** -233	215	211	10	4	90- **95** -97
W08	5	223- **226** -229	211	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 Idea / Details	HiAvg
Characteristics of Text	High
Elements / Tech Fict / Nonfict	High

Lexile Range: 1011-1161

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

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 the year in which growth is reported.

Typical Growth
The average growth of students in the most recent NWEA RIT Scale Norms study who were in the same grade and began the growth comparison period at a similar achievement level.

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.

Goal Performance
Each goal area included in the test is listed along with a descriptive adjective of your child's score. The possible descriptors are Low (<21 percentile), LoAvg (21-40 percentile), Avg (41-60 percentile), HiAvg (61-80 percentile), and High (>80 percentile).

Lexile Range
The difficulty range of text that can be understood by the student 75% of the time.

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION 93

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.

Important Note

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   Randy McIntyre
Phone: 402.471.1740   Phone: 402.471.1749
Email: diane.stuehmer@nebraska.gov   Email: 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. 2014-15 State of the Schools Report – Fall 2015

The State of the Schools Report [SOSR] will be released in October 2015 and includes a summary of statewide information, individual district and building profiles, disaggregated data, and accountability decisions. The [State of the Schools Report](#) 2013-2014 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 4th 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- AQuESTT

AQuESTT is Accountability for a Quality Education System Today and Tomorrow, a next generation accountability system for Nebraska public schools and districts. AQuESTT is designed to integrate statutory requirements for accountability (79-760.06-.07 R.S.S), accreditation (Rule 10), the effective use of data, and support for professional learning for educators into a system focused on continuous school improvement

Statutory requirements of AQuESTT include:
- Performance classification of public schools and districts
- Designation of three priority schools
- Intervention teams for priority schools
- Progress plans for priority schools

Performance Classification of Public Schools and Districts
Raw Classification
The classification of public schools and districts into four performance levels (i.e., Excellent, Great, Good, Needs Improvement) will be based on multiple indicators, including:
- NeSA (Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Writing)
  o Status
  o Improvement
  o Growth
  o Participation
  o Non-Proficient Students

- Graduation Rate

These indicators provide the Raw Classification ratings for schools and districts. Results of the Raw Classification will be provided to schools and districts on or about October 15, 2015.

The Raw Classification was developed by the AQuESTT Performance Classification Task Force.

The full AQuESTT Performance Classification Task Force Report provides the details of the work completed by the group.

Final Classification
In addition to the Raw Classification indicators, responses provided by schools and districts to the AQuESTT Evidence-based Analysis (EBA) will be included in the Final Classification rating. Results of the Final Classification will be released to schools, districts, and the public in December 2015.

Evidence-based Analysis (EBA)
The AQuESTT EBA is an electronic survey designed to collect information from all public schools and districts regarding policies, procedures, and practices related to the six tenets of AQuESTT: College and Career Ready, Assessment, Educator Effectiveness, Positive Partnerships, Relationships & Student Success, Transitions, Student Success & Access.

The EBA responses can only improve the school/district raw classification ratings.

Purposes of the EBA are to obtain information to:
- Inform the classification of schools and districts
- Acknowledge school and district activities linked to positive student outcomes
- Support Priority School designation process
- Support the development and prioritization of AQuESTT systems of support

The superintendent and the principal are responsible for the submitting the EBA for the district and the school. The window for completing the EBA is August 17- November 1, 2015.

The School Profile
Data from the Final Classification (i.e., NeSA status, improvement, growth, participation, non-proficient students, graduation rate, and the EBA results) and demographic characteristics will be used to create a Profile for each public school and district. The Profile is designed to be diagnostic and support continuous improvement.

Designation of Three Priority Schools

Three schools from the Needs Improvement classification level will be designated as Priority Schools, those most in need of assistance to improve. The process for designating the Priority Schools will include a comprehensive analysis of the following:

- Raw Classification Data
- Evidence-based Analysis Responses
- Demographic Characteristics
- School Improvement Plans
- Existing Systems of Support

The designation process may also include interviews and on-site visits to obtain additional information. Announcement of Priority Schools will occur in December 2015.

Intervention Teams for Priority Schools

For each Priority School a Support and Intervention Team will identify and guide improvement efforts focused on the following key areas of school effectiveness:

- School Leadership
- Educator Effectiveness
- Improvement of Instruction
- School Culture
- Family and Community Engagement
- Use of Data for Continuous Improvement

The roles and responsibilities of the Support and Intervention Teams will be to:

- Diagnose Key Areas of School Effectiveness
- Develop a Progress Plan for Improvement
- Monitor and Support the Progress Plan Implementation

The make-up of the Support and Intervention Teams will include the school principal as the team leader and school and district staff. Each team will consist of up to five members, and each team will receive support and guidance from the Nebraska Department of Education.

Progress Plans for Priority Schools

Each Priority School will develop and annually submit a Progress Plan for Improvement to the State Board of Education for approval.

The content of the Progress Plan for Improvement will include:

- Required actions for improvement

- Measureable indicators of progress
- Strategies for improvement
- Timelines for improvement

The State Board of Education will review the Progress Plans and determine when a Priority School may exit priority status.

Key Dates for AQuESTT Implementation

Evidence-Based Analysis (EBA) **– August 17-November 1, 2015**

Raw Classification **– October 2015**
 NeSA Status, Growth, Improvement, Participation
 Non Proficient Students
 Graduation Rate

Final Classification **– December 2015**
 Raw Classification Data
 EBA Classification Adjustment

Designation of Priority Schools **– December 2015**

Intervention and Support Teams **– January 2016**

Progress Plans for Priority Schools Submitted to State Board **– August 2016**

AQuESTT Information and Resources

Additional AQuESTT information and resources may be found at **www.AQuESTT.com**

<div align="center">

If you have questions about AQuESTT, please contact:
Sue Anderson AQuESTT/Accountability Coordinator
402-471-2444
sue.anderson@nebraska.gov

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STANDARDS

ASSESSMENT

ACCOUNTABILITY

VI. 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, systemic and sustainable, 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 2015 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 22 - 23, 2015	School Improvement Workshop **Norfolk**	Lifelong Learning Center Northeast Community college 801 East Benjamin Norfolk, NE 68702
September 28-29, 2015	School Improvement Workshop **Gering**	1050 M Street Gering, NE 69341
October 15-16, 2015	School Improvement Workshop **Lincoln**	Holiday Inn- Downtown 141 N. 9th Street Lincoln, NE 68508
October 19-20, 2015	School Improvement Workshop **Omaha**	ESU #3 6949 South 110th Street Omaha, NE 68848
October 26-27, 2015	School Improvement Workshop **Kearney**	ESU #10 76 Plaza Blvd Kearney, NE 68845

External Review Training
is available for:

- AdvancED schools who have reviews in 2015-16
- 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

STANDARDS

ASSESSMENT

ACCOUNTABILITY

VII. Links to Statewide Assessment Documents

    A. Nebraska State Accountability Official District Assessment Contact Form
    B. Suggestions for a Smooth Testing Process
    C. NeSA Security Procedures
    D. Report of Security Breach
    E. 2015 NeSA Building Principals Security Agreement
    F. 2015 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
    N. NeSA Document Information and Responsibilities