Non-Public Schools Testing Service Catalog
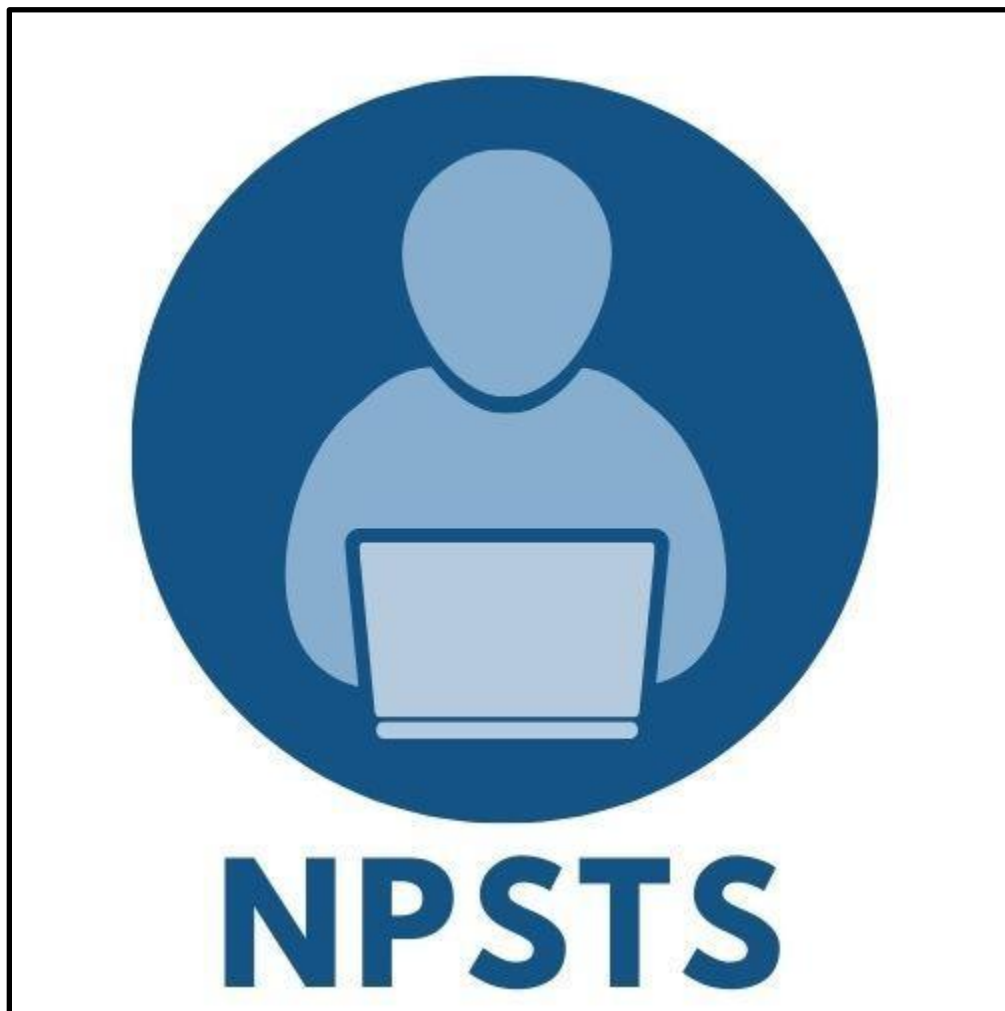
North Carolina State University
NPSTS Raleigh, NC 27695
https://center.ncsu.edu/ncaccount/course/view.php?id=27
V 21.0

Contents

About the Non-Public Schools Testing Service (NPSTS)

Introduction
The Non-Public Schools Testing Service (NPSTS) is the authorized agent of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) for making the North Carolina Annual Testing Program test materials available for temporary and conditional use to conventional non-public schools registered with the North Carolina Department of Administration in accordance with General Statute Article 39, Chapter 115C-551. The statutes states, "Any such school may, on a voluntary basis, participate in any State operated or sponsored program which would otherwise be available to such school, including but not limited to the high school competency testing and statewide testing programs."

Overview of the NPSTS
The NPSTS provides non-public schools an opportunity for obtaining training and technical support; test materials, scoring, and reporting services for all tests currently required of public schools and made available by the North Carolina State Board of Education (SBE).

Tests administered by the NPSTS may be used in addition to, but not instead of, the nationally standardized test(s) as required in General Statute Article 39, § 115C-550**.**

Participating in the NPSTS
Private church schools, schools of religious charter, and qualified non-public schools (as defined by the North Carolina Public School Laws, Article 39, General Statute §115C-555), hereafter referred to as non-public schools, and agree to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in this document, may elect to participate in this program on a voluntary basis. Participation is based on a current registration with the North Carolina Department of Administration, is subject to the terms and conditions set forth in this document and is at the discretion of the NCDPI and the SBE.

Student Accommodations during Test Administrations
Test accommodations may be provided to students for all state tests under certain conditions. Test accommodations:
- must be documented in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), Section 504 plan, English Learner plan, or transitory impairment plan.
- must be used routinely in the classroom.
- must not be used for the purpose of test score enhancement.
- must not violate the intent of the test.

Schools should contact NPSTS to arrange training for accommodated tests as needed.

Selecting Products and Services
Potential consumers of the test materials and services provided by the NPSTS need to carefully review the descriptions to ensure all required materials are ordered. It is the users' responsibility to attend training and use this document and additional administrative information to inform themselves about the North Carolina Annual Testing Program and test administration requirements.

Assessment Briefs
Assessment Briefs are publications that contain information related to testing and may be helpful when explaining certain aspects of the North Carolina Annual Testing Program to staff, students, parents, and guardians. Assessment Briefs can be found on the NCDPI's website at Assessment Briefs | NC DPI

Test Specification Information
Test specification documents are available for each state-mandated test administered by the Annual Testing Program. These documents provide technical information about the tests, such as types of questions, number of questions, delivery mode, assessed standards, and the weight distribution (percentage) of each assessed domain. Test specification information is located at Technical Information for State Tests | NC DPI

Registration and Fees
Non-public schools that request to participate in the North Carolina Annual Testing Program must register with the NPSTS each testing cycle (fall and spring) by completing a registration form, the training sign-up form, and paying the registration fee. The registration fee is $100.00 for each test cycle. Approval of participation in the program is dictated by the NCDPI and the SBE. The registration fee covers training, technical support, scoring, and shipping of materials for all tests administered during the testing cycle.

Test material orders must be placed by the order deadline to allow sufficient time to produce and ship materials. All orders received after the ordering deadline may be charged an additional $35.00 late-order fee. At the discretion of NPSTS, a $15.00 surcharge may be added for additional processing for any order form that is incomplete.

The use of test materials listed in this catalog is based upon acceptance of the prices, terms, and conditions described in this document. An individual or organization securing the use of these test materials accepts these prices, terms, and conditions by signing the registration form. The NPSTS shall not be bound to any modification(s) or addition(s) to the prices, terms, or conditions listed in this catalog unless jointly agreed to in writing by the NPSTS and the purchaser.

Where to Send Payment
An invoice for the registration fee, test materials, and services will be mailed at the end of the testing cycle (i.e., fall and spring). Payment must be attached to the invoice and made payable to N.C. State University.

Mail payment to:
N.C. State University
Campus Box 7203
Raleigh, NC 27695-7203

Payment terms are net thirty days. A late payment fee of 1.5% per month may be added to payments not received according to the payment terms listed above. Consistent with state

government policy, delinquent payments will be referred to the Office of the Attorney General for the State of North Carolina for processing and collection.

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program. Training is conducted before the fall and spring test administrations. All schools choosing to administer a test in either semester must register with the NPSTS for that semester and complete training during that semester. Under no circumstances may a school administer a test before the school's test coordinator receives the appropriate training and subsequently the test administrators are appropriately trained.

To obtain information regarding training, please visit the NPSTS web page at https://center.ncsu.edu/ncaccount/course/view.php?id=27; you may also email the NPSTS at group-topsdocs@ncsu.edu or phone 919-515-4624.

Test Format
All EOG and EOC tests must be administered online. The only exceptions to the online testing requirement are for individual students with disabilities who have documented accommodations that dictate a paper test format is necessary for accessibility purposes. Separate training from the NCDPI and the NPSTS is required for paper test administrations. If you need an exception, email Brian_Swiger@ncsu.edu or call 919-515-4624 for further instructions.

Available Tests
Schools may participate in the following tests:
- Spring grades 3 through 8 end-of-grade (EOG) reading and mathematics;
- Spring grades 5 and 8 EOG science; and
- Fall and/or spring end-of-course (EOC) English II, NC Math 1, NC Math 3, and Biology

Annual Testing Plans
The school must ensure an annual, written testing plan is developed and shared with testing personnel at the school. The plan must include, but is not limited to, rules for test administrator training, test security, proper testing environment, secure test administrations, test administration audits, and preparation and return of secure test materials. See Appendix J of this handbook for guidance in developing a testing plan.

Observing State Testing Windows
Per General Statute § 115C-174.12(a)(4), "all annual assessments of student achievement adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant to General Statute § 115C-174.11(c)(1) and (3). . . shall be administered within the final ten instructional days of the school year for yearlong courses and within the final five instructional days of the semester for semester courses. Exceptions shall be permitted to accommodate a student's individualized education program and section 504 (29 U.S.C § 794) plans and for the administration of final exams for courses with national or international curricula required to be held at designated times." All testing must be conducted within designated state testing windows. Test materials will not be delivered earlier than ten business days before a non-public school's reported test date(s) within a state testing window. Test materials will not be distributed to non-public schools after the testing window has closed.

Test Security

The North Carolina Annual Testing Program is a key component of the state's accountability program and significant resources are required to create and maintain the testing program. Therefore, the highest level of test security is required at all times before, during, and after each test administration.

According to 16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0307 the definition of "secure test" is "any test developed, adopted, or provided by the State Board of Education that has not been released under General Statute § 115C-174.13." SBE policy TEST-011 specifies that "secure tests, including all test materials and test questions, are not to be reproduced in any manner or for any reason without the express written consent of the test publisher. School personnel must not disclose the contents of secure tests. They must not discuss with each other, or with students, specific test questions or information contained within the tests or write about them on the internet or on social media sites. In addition, excerpts from the tests must not be used at any time during classroom instruction or in resource materials such as study guides. Access to the tests shall be limited to school personnel who have a legitimate need. Persons who have access to secure test materials shall not use their access to those materials for personal gain."

Secure state tests shall not be copied, reproduced, paraphrased, filed, or used directly in instructional activities or for professional development. Copying, reproducing, or paraphrasing test materials represents a breach of test security and is a violation of federal copyright laws, 16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0311.

Copies of any documents suspected of containing secure test questions or information from secure tests must be submitted to the NPSTS and the NCDPI for clearance before use in the school. Appropriate items for review would be any material of which the origin is not known, including test questions discovered on the internet. Individuals are not permitted to create or save electronic files of secure test questions, including answers, or save or post them through a vendor, Google drive, email, social media, web posting, or any other method. The NCDPI will review any materials a school submits. Schools and the North Carolina Annual Testing Program must work together to maintain the security of the testing program.

It is imperative that test security is maintained at all times. Test materials made available through the NPSTS are the property of the NCDPI and schools must ensure that test materials are kept secure at all times so as not to jeopardize the integrity of the administration of the North Carolina Annual Testing Program. Use of state tests is restricted to specific conditions and will be strictly monitored. To maintain test security at all times, upon determination of a breach in test security by any person (administrator, staff, student) at the non-public school, the right to further participation in the North Carolina Annual Testing Program may be forfeited.

Basic test security requirements include, but are not limited to:
● inventorying all materials immediately upon receipt. The school test coordinator must count and record the number of secure test materials (e.g., test books, Scratch paper, and graph paper, if applicable) and supplemental materials on the packing list.

- ensuring all test materials are inventoried immediately after the administration. All materials must be returned to the NPSTS within two days of administration. The school will be accountable for any missing materials.
- storing all test materials in its possession in a secure, locked facility except when in use.

Teachers must not jeopardize the security of the test forms. Teachers are not permitted to discuss specific questions from the tests with students or colleagues before, during, or after the test administration or to ask students which test questions were difficult. For example, if students approach a teacher to ask about test questions, teachers should remind them that they are not permitted to share any of the test questions or information contained within the test or to write about them on the internet or on social media. Teachers must not use test questions or information from students as the basis for additional instruction or review. Excerpts from the tests must not be used at any time during classroom instruction or in resource materials such as study guides.

Irregularities
Test administrators must report to the school principal or the school test coordinator any irregularities or violations of test procedures (e.g., cheating, random marking, disruptions, illness during testing) using the NPTST Report of Testing Irregularities form. Test coordinators must report testing irregularities, breaches of test security, and their findings from subsequent investigations in writing to the NPSTS via secure fax to (919) 515-4622.

In the event an irregularity occurs during a test administration(s), the school test coordinator and principal are to conduct an investigation to determine if the testing irregularity should be declared a misadministration. If a misadministration has occurred and the validity of the test results are affected, the student must be administered a different form of the test.

In the event that a testing irregularity is declared a misadministration:
- test results must be declared non-valid.
- student scores must be deleted from the data file.
- test administrator, principal, parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and student(s) must be notified.
- Report of Testing Irregularity must be filed with NPSTS. (a confidential description of the personnel action taken, if appropriate, must be attached to the Report of Testing Irregularity forwarded to the NPSTS.)
- student must be administered a different secure form of the test.

Failure to report testing irregularities or breaches of test security to NPSTS may result in the forfeiture of a non-public school's right to further participation in the North Carolina Annual Testing Program.

Copyrights
All of the tests and test materials ordered or used as part of the NPSTS are produced or contracted by the NCDPI, are copyrighted by the NCDPI, and are restricted in use through copyrights of the original authors and/or specific copyright agreements by and between the NCDPI and the original authors.

The individual or organization securing the use of these tests or test materials acknowledges and agrees upon signage of the Test Security agreements, that the contents of the tests, scannable documents (if applicable), computer programs, test administrator's guides, and all other related test materials are copyrighted. The non-public schools shall prohibit their employees from disclosing information about the tests or engaging in any activity which has the potential to disclose or to compromise the contents of the test. Failure to comply with this requirement may cause the non-public school's right to further participation in the North Carolina Annual Testing Program to be forfeited.

Prohibition Against Sale, Distribution, and Reproduction of Test Materials
No products and/or related services listed in this catalog and/or made available through the NPSTS may be sold, leased, distributed, or reproduced in whole or in part.

Who May Coordinate and Administer Tests and under What Conditions
The following staff members may administer tests under specific conditions:
1. Test Coordinator(s) may not be a test administrator nor the parent, relative, or legal guardian of a student taking a test in the school.
2. Test administrators:
   ● Test administrators shall be employed by the school and have completed all required training for state test administration.
   ● Test administrators must be trained by the school test coordinator who attended NCDPI and NPSTS training during the current semester.
   ● Test administrators may not be the parent(s), relatives or legal guardian(s) of the student(s) taking the test(s).
3. Proctors:
   ● Proctors are not required but may serve as additional monitors to help the test administrator ensure that testing occurs fairly.
   ● Proctors must be trained by the school test coordinator and must include the review of the *Proctor's Guide* video.
   ● Proctors must not be a parent, relative, or legal guardian of a student taking a test in the assigned testing room.
   ● Proctors are required to follow all testing procedures and maintain the security of the tests.

Online Testing

Online Test Format
All test questions are formatted specifically for online testing and presented on the screen one test question at a time. Online tests provide several tools for students to use while testing, which include: reset, flag, strike, highlight, change highlight color, unhighlight, clear highlight, notepad, electronic pen, and help. Also, navigation buttons (i.e., first, back, pause, next, and review) are located at the bottom of the screen. Scroll bars appear on test questions as needed, based on the length of the test question or font size. Students can also increase the display by clicking "Ctrl," shift, and "+" keys at the same time. Students have an opportunity to practice using these tools when completing the online tutorial.

Online tests are available in regular or large font and in alternate background colors (i.e., white, yellow, green, gray, cream, and black) to all students. The black background color is used for high contrast. The NCDPI recommends these options be considered only for students who routinely use similar tools (e.g., color acetate overlays, colored paper, alternate background color, and large print text) in the classroom. It is recommended that students are given the opportunity to view the large font and alternate background color versions of the Online Assessment Tutorial and released forms of the test (with the device to be used on test day) to determine which mode of administration is appropriate.

Testing Schedule for Online Tests
Online tests should be administered as early in the school day as the schedule permits; however, afternoon administrations are also permissible.

As best practice, the North Carolina Annual Testing Program strongly recommends schools schedule each online test within the school day for the maximum time allowed without interfering with lunch or bus schedules.

Acceptable Devices for Online Administrations
When accessing an online test, the Annual Testing Program recommends that students use devices that are school-issued with NCTest already loaded by the school.

Student-owned devices. When necessary, schools may permit students to use personally owned devices. Parents, guardians, and students should collaborate with the school test coordinator for instructions on how to download NCTest to their personal devices. Directions for downloading NCTest to student-owned devices can be located via https://center.ncsu.edu/ncinstruct/. This link may be shared with parents, guardians, and students. Technical support will not be available at the NCDPI level and must be provided locally. It is not permissible to share the Technical Outreach for Public Schools (TOPS) Help Desk phone number or email address with students, parents, or guardians.

All devices used for online testing, whether school-issued or student-owned, must have a pointing device included. This may be a touch screen, touchpad, external mouse, or other pointing device with which the student is familiar. It is a local decision to permit the use of a student-owned pointing device such as a hardwired or Bluetooth mouse. Schools must ensure

that external pointing devices are compatible with the device utilized for testing. Pointing devices with recording capability are prohibited. In addition, schools must ensure that reference material attached to student devices containing content being measured or test-taking strategies are covered or removed prior to testing.

Technical Specifications for NCTest

The NPSTS will provide NCTest training to schools as part of the required training session. To ensure students receive a valid and reliable test administration, schools must meet specific technical requirements. The technical specifications for NCTest, which is used to deliver the online tests, are found at https://center.ncsu.edu/nct. On days before an online test administration, schools must review these technical requirements and make any necessary adjustments before administering the online test. Schools that administer an online test but do not meet the technical requirements are at risk of providing students with questions that cannot be manipulated (e.g., technology-enhanced questions), are without associated artwork (e.g., tables, graphs, symbols), and do not fit properly on the screen.

Online Assessment Tutorials

An online assessment tutorial is available for all North Carolina-developed online tests through the NCTest Chrome App for Chromebooks, NCTest Secure Browser, NCTest iPad App or by accessing https://data.ncsu.edu/nctest/Destination.html. Students can complete the tutorial either in-school or as part of remote instruction.

Paper Testing (*By Request Only*)

Only students identified with a disability that has been documented in their IEP, 504, or transitory impairment plan may take a paper test for accessibility purposes. Paper testing training will be provided by the NPSTS and the NCDPI upon request. If you need an exception, email Brian_Swiger@ncsu.edu or call 919-515-4624 for further instructions.

When paper is used for accessibility purposes, a test administration guide and a test book for each student (along with any necessary accompanying material) will be sent for each administration. Unless otherwise noted, the price of the test book includes additional administrative materials including graph paper, and a score report. The test coordinator is required to order items listed on the order form. All the necessary supplemental materials for the test will be included and shipped with the order.

Shipping Policy
Standard shipping and handling fees are included in the registration fee. Test materials are shipped by the most cost-efficient trackable method.

It is the responsibility of the individual or organization securing the test materials to ascertain if all ordered test materials have been included in each shipment and to report any discrepancies. Misplaced test materials are not considered discrepancies in the original shipment and are the responsibility of the individual or organization which secured the test materials. Damaged test materials must be stored in a secure, locked, limited access location and included in the return shipment. The individual or organization securing the use of the test materials will be held accountable for all test materials. If test materials are misplaced or damaged an irregularity form must be completed and submitted to the NPSTS.

Refund Policy
The NPSTS will not refund a school for any unused test material. It is the responsibility of the individual or organization securing the test materials to order correct quantities. This policy also applies to test materials ordered for a test administration that is canceled by the individual or organization securing the use of these test materials. This refund policy should not be confused with the return of testing materials policy.

Return of Testing Materials Policy
Test materials are made available through the NPSTS for use during specific testing windows and all test materials must be returned within two business days after completion of the test administration. If all materials are not returned promptly, the non-public school's right to further participation in the North Carolina Annual Testing Program may be forfeited.

Returning Materials
When returning materials for scoring, pull the tracking number strip from the UPS return label and affix it to your packing list. This is the only record of your tracking number. Immediately fax your packing list (with tracking label) to TOPS to expedite the processing of the test materials.

How to Order Test Materials
To place the order, fax or email the completed ordering form(s), found in <u>Appendix G</u> and/or <u>Appendix H</u>, to:

Non-Public Schools Testing Service
Fax: (919) 515-4622
E-mail: <u>group-topsdocs@ncsu.edu</u>

Questions about Ordering, Shipment, Invoices, and Payments
If you have any questions concerning your order, invoice, or payments, send an email, fax, or call the NPSTS at:

E-mail: <u>group-topsdocs@ncsu.edu</u>
Fax: 515-4622
Phone: (919) 515-4624

Scoring

Online Tests

Online tests without constructed response questions are scored during an overnight process and sent to the secure shell by 9:00 a.m. the day after the test is completed. School test coordinators can generate school rosters and class rosters after 9:00 a.m. the morning after the test was administered.

For online tests with constructed response questions, vendors will begin scoring the first business day after the test record is received and will return the scored online test electronically to the NCDPI within approximately six business days. An additional day is required for processing the files from the scoring vendor to the NCDPI. Therefore, school test coordinators should allow approximately seven business days to receive scored online test records that include constructed response questions.

As a reminder, a school may receive scored test records across multiple days for a group of students that tested on the same day. Student responses are scored in the order they are received by the vendor.

Paper Tests

Scoring paper multiple-choice tests and multiple-choice tests with gridded response questions. On days before a paper administration the school test coordinator must mark the "Transcribe Online" SIQ in NCTest and mark all other documented accommodations required by the student (i.e., *Multiple Testing* Sessions and Other required accommodations besides *Multiple Testing* Sessions). By checking the Transcribe Online SIQ, the student is assigned the same test form number online as he or she is administered via paper. If the Transcribe Online SIQ is not selected, the student will not be assigned the same online and paper form number; therefore, the transcriber will not be able to transcribe the student's answers from the test book to the online test.

The school is required to follow the procedures outlined in the test administration guide for transcribing the student's responses from multiple-choice tests and multiple-choice tests with gridded response questions to the online testing system.

Invalid Test Scores

In the event that procedures specified in the test administration guides are not followed during the test administration, the NCDPI may declare the test score(s) invalid. If test scores are invalid, the results must not be included in a student's permanent record.

General Statute § 115C-174.13(b): Public Records Exemption

"Any written material containing identifiable scores of individual students on any test . . . shall not be made public by any person, except as permitted under the provisions of the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. §1232g.*"

Confidentiality of Student Scores When Publicizing Test Results
It is advised that the confidentiality of test scores is always protected when publicizing or reporting test results to the public. Districts and schools should not violate confidentiality rights under the provisions of the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. §1232g*.

As stated in the *Testing Code of Ethics*, "Educators shall maintain the confidentiality of individual students. PSU personnel shall not publicize test scores or any written material containing personally identifiable information from the student's educational records except as permitted under the provisions of the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C.§ 1232g* and regulations adopted pursuant thereto. . . . In the event of a violation of this Rule, the State Board of Education may impose any one or more of the following sanctions:
● withhold any monetary incentive awards;
● file a civil action against the person or persons responsible for the violation for copyright infringement or for any other available cause of action;
● seek criminal prosecution of the person or persons responsible for the violation; and
● in accordance with the provisions of 16 N.C. Admin. Code 6C .0312, suspend or revoke the professional license of the person or persons responsible for the violation."

It is best practice that school staff be mindful of student confidentiality and adhere to appropriate policies and procedures when publicizing or reporting test results.

Data Security

Third-Party Service Providers and Personally Identifiable Information (PII)
Schools can contract with third-party data-sharing vendors. In doing so, the third party can be designated a "school official" as defined by the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)](#). According to the FERPA, "a 'school official' includes a teacher, school principal, president, chancellor, board member, trustee, registrar, counselor, admissions officer, attorney, accountant, human resources professional, information systems specialist, and support or clerical personnel." Whether a third-party provider, such as Google Apps for Education or Dropbox Business, is designated a school official as defined by the FERPA, is at the discretion of the school. The legal relationship with third-party service providers is by and between the school and the third-party service providers. The NPSTS nor the NCDPI does not endorse or prohibit the use of any third-party vendors. However, schools are encouraged to consult with their legal counsel and leadership when determining what third party meets their specific requirements. Such requirements must include certification that the third-party vendor is FERPA compliant. The school is responsible for the security of students' PII.

Only school-contracted sharing services that provide the FERPA compliance certification should be used when sharing PII via shared files. Personal email or personal sharing services accounts must never be used to transfer student data or PII.

Handling and Transmitting PII
Schools and the NPSTS staff frequently need to share information from individual student records to resolve data issues and answer program area questions. Employees of schools, the NPSTS, the NCDPI, or other education institutions are legally and ethically obliged to safeguard the confidentiality of any private information they access while performing official duties. Confidential information regarding students and staff should always be transmitted securely.

For those schools with full encryption capabilities, transported data and other electronic transporting devices containing NCDPI data should be encrypted. This requires the recipient of the data to have corresponding decryption capabilities.

To protect the confidentiality of individuals from those who are not authorized to have access to individual-level data, PII should be encrypted during transmission using the following method:
● Secure FTP server on SFTP or FTPS protocols.
   o Preferred method and most widely acceptable standard for transmitting encrypted data.

Fax machines and printers used to send and receive secure data must be located in secure areas.

Secure test questions, answer choices, or portions of secure test questions and answer choices must not be sent via email.

Schools should not use private or personal accounts to store students' PII. Schools that wish to use the Google Workspace for Education should consult with their legal team to ensure compliance with FERPA and state security guidelines.

Furthermore, it is recommended that schools use the Data Leak Protection feature of Google Workspace to protect data, even though FERPA compliance does not require Data Leak Protection.

For additional information, see the publication *Best Practices Guide: PII and Email* at Data Management Resources |.

Viewing Secure State Tests and Obtaining Data for Research
General Statute § 115C-174.13 (a) states that "until the State Board of Education designates that a test is released, any test developed, adopted, or provided by the State Board of Education, as provided in this Article, is not a public record within the meaning of G.S. §132-1. The State Board of Education may develop rules to allow inspection of a test prior to release, but shall require that individuals inspecting the test meet the same standards for confidentiality required for employees of local boards of education in test administration. As used in this section, the term 'test' includes both the test and related test materials."

Otherwise, the *Testing Code of Ethics* (16 N.C. Admin. Code 06D .0311) states that "The PSU (school) shall designate the personnel who are authorized to have access to secure test materials. "Access" to test materials by school personnel means handling the materials but does not include reviewing tests or analyzing test items. (1) Persons who have access to secure test materials shall not use those materials for any purpose other than test administration. (2) No person shall copy, reproduce, or paraphrase the test materials without the express written consent of the test publisher."

Secure test materials include, but are not limited to, blueprints; test layout forms; item pools; operational and field test books, and test questions, or test book sections. Secure test materials may be in either electronic or paper format. North Carolina test materials are costly to generate; every precaution must be taken to ensure all test materials remain secure at all times.

The normal course of the test development process includes educator and stakeholder involvement in the following processes: test specifications, test development, question-writing and reviews; experimental form and section, bias, and operational form reviews; standard setting; and alignment studies. During these processes, educators and stakeholders are asked to view secure test materials but are bound by a signed test security agreement.

Maintaining the Confidentiality and Security of Testing
School test coordinators are responsible for handling confidential North Carolina testing data. Extreme caution and care must be taken to maintain the confidentiality and security of this data. Access and use of these data must comply with the FERPA https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/ferpa as well as all portions of North Carolina General Statute § 115C that pertain to the use of educational data. Violations will result in cancellation of further use of the Annual Testing Programs tests.

Confidential data must be transferred using secure methods (e.g., Secure File Transfer Protocol or receipted parcel delivery services, such as the US Postal Service, UPS, or Federal Express).

When placing confidential data on portable devices (e.g., laptops, thumb drives), the portable device must be protected by encryption or password protection.

In certain limited situations, confidential student or school data may be used in presentations related to school improvement. However, this is permissible only when such presentations are made to the leadership or instructional personnel in the school who would normally have access to the confidential data of the students for purposes of improving instruction. Even in such situations, caution must be taken to ensure the data remains secure at all times.

Schools must not release secure data to the public.

Appendices

Appendix A: 2023 – 2024 Non-Public School Testing Service Registration Form

School Name_____

2024 NPSTS REGISTRATION FORM

$100 per school per testing cycle.

Registration with NPSTS includes training, technical support, scoring, and shipping costs. This registration form must be completed and submitted with your test order each testing cycle. Your order will not be processed without submitting both. **DO NOT** send payment with this form. The registration fee will be included on the invoice you will receive at the end of the school year.

School Principal _____ Registration   FALL_____   SPRING_____

*Test Coordinator _____Position at School_____

Street Address (not a PO Box) _____

City _____ State: <u>NC</u> Zip _____

Email Address (required) _____School Website:_____

Telephone # _____ **Fax # (required)** _____

Registered with Dept. Non-Public Education   Yes_____ No_____

List the grades at your School _____ Number of students enrolled_____

School Calendar (Must Submit with Registration)

Registration, Conditions of Use, and Security Agreement

I accept responsibility for maintaining test security at all times and for following the procedures listed in this catalog and in the *North Carolina Testing Code of Ethics*. I understand the tests must be administered in accordance with the rules, guidelines, and procedures established by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. I further understand that failure to observe all conditions, rules, guidelines and procedures may, at the discretion of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education, result in the forfeiture of my school's right to further participate in the statewide testing program. I agree to report any and all possible breaches in test security to the Non-Public Schools Testing Service and, upon determination of a breach in test security by any person (administrator, staff, student) at my school, I understand my school's right to further participation in the statewide testing program may be forfeited. I understand all test materials are the property of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, and that I must return **all** test materials using the means provided by the Non-Public Schools Testing Service. I realize failure to account for and return all test materials may result in the forfeiture of my school's right to participate in the statewide testing program.

*Test Coordinator may not be a parent of any student being tested, nor a teacher of any subject being tested.

Principal Signature: _____ _____   Date: _____

Test Coordinator (principal's designee)_____Date: _____

FAX to: 919-515-4622
NPSTS Test Coordinator
Phone: (919) 515-4624

Appendix B: Non-Public School Testing Service 2023 – 2024 Training Sign-up Form

School Name:_____

Non-Public School Testing Service (NPSTS)
2024
Training Sign-up Form

Test Coordinator Attending Training: (print)_____

(sign)_____

This form must be submitted with your Fall and/or Spring registration(s). Before receiving test materials, non-public schools must participate in a test administration training session for the specific test that is being ordered. Participating schools must receive their training by the NPSTS. The Test Coordinator of the school must attend this training and **NOT** be the teacher or department head of any subject being tested. Participation in this required training verifies that you are fully informed of the terms and conditions of the participation requirements of in the North Carolina Testing Program. Only one person may attend from each school unless online EOC testing- an IT person may attend that test session.

Training

Spring 2024

_____ 1)   Online EOC   – **April 23, 2024**   **Raleigh, N.C.**

_____ 2)   Online EOG   – **April 23, 2024**   **Raleigh, N.C.**

School Test Coordinator—Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement

This form must be completed annually by the school test coordinator and kept on file with the Non-Public School Testing Services. If a new person is employed in this position, then the new person must complete this form as soon as possible.

School Name: _____

Test Name: _____

In performing my assigned duties and responsibilities as the school test coordinator, I understand that:

1. maintaining test security and student confidentiality is critical to the mission of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI).

2. my compliance with federal and state laws is crucial to maintaining the public's trust in North Carolina public schools.

3. my assigned duties and responsibilities may involve the use of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's data, local data, or other information that is confidential.

4. federal and state laws prohibit me from including or disclosing personally identifiable information (PII) in any form of communication with any unauthorized individual or entity, except as required in the performance of my assigned duties. Such communication includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messaging, or social media account posts (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tik Tok, SnapChat).

5. I acknowledge that all North Carolina test materials are the property of the NCDPI and that these test materials must remain secure at all times.

6. in order to ensure test security, I will not discuss or share information relating to the contents of any test, testing process, or test scoring. This restriction applies to discussion with mass media, including, but not limited to, print, radio and television media, and social media.

7. I will not publish any secure testing or scoring material or share this material outside of the secure work site.

8. I am obligated to read the *Testing Code of Ethics* in its entirety annually and always understand and act in accordance with the test coordinator's obligations described therein.

My signature below indicates my agreement to abide by and fulfill the obligations and duties described above. Further, I understand that violation of this agreement could lead to additional legal liability to me.

Print Name: _____   **Sign:** _____

Date: _____

January 2024

Appendix D: Principal or Director—Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement

This form must be completed annually by the principal or director and kept on file with the school test coordinator. If a new person is employed in this position, then the new person must complete this form as soon as possible.

School Name: _____

Test Name: _____

In performing my assigned duties and responsibilities as the principal or director, I understand that:

1. maintaining test security and student confidentiality is critical to the mission of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI).
2. my compliance with federal and state laws is crucial to maintaining the public's trust in North Carolina public schools.
3. my assigned duties and responsibilities may involve the use of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's data, local data, or other information that is confidential.
4. federal and state laws prohibit me from including or disclosing personally identifiable information (PII) in any form of communication with any unauthorized individual or entity, except as required in the performance of my assigned duties. Such communication includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messaging, or social media account posts (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat).
5. I have read and will follow school policies and procedures to ensure all eligible students are tested fairly.
6. I am responsible for ensuring all necessary school personnel are identified and trained prior to any test administration.
7. I acknowledge that all North Carolina test materials are the property of the NCDPI and that these test materials must remain secure at all times.
8. I am responsible for ensuring a procedure is in place at my school to assure that all test materials are accounted for and secure at all times while they are in the school's possession.
9. in order to ensure test security, I will not discuss or share information relating to the contents of any test, testing process, or test scoring. This restriction applies to discussion with mass media, including, but not limited to, print, radio and television media, and social media.
10. I will not publish any secure testing or scoring material or share this material outside of the secure work site.
11. I am obligated to read the *Testing Code of Ethics* in its entirety annually and always understand and act in accordance with the principal's obligations described therein.

My signature below indicates my agreement to abide by and fulfill the obligations and duties described above. Further, I understand that violation of this agreement could lead to additional legal liability to me.

Print Name: _____ **Sign:** _____

Date: _____

Appendix E: Test Administrator—Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement

This form must be completed and signed by the test administrator at each test administrator training session and kept on file with the school test coordinator.

School Name:_____

Test Name:_____

In performing my assigned duties and responsibilities as the test administrator, I understand that

1. I must administer the test listed above according to all state and local regulations and policies as printed in the test administration guide, the *Testing Code of Ethics*, and other information provided in the training session(s) conducted by the school test coordinator.
2. my compliance with federal and state laws is crucial to maintaining the public's trust in North Carolina public schools.
3. I must review, study, and understand the test administration guide and the *Testing Code of Ethics* that was given to me by the school test coordinator.
4. I must count and record the number of secure test materials, including supplemental materials, before and after the test administration and notify the school test coordinator of any discrepancies in the counts.
5. I must maintain test security at all times while test materials are in my possession.
6. I will not copy, post, or reproduce test items in any manner or in any medium for any reason.
7. I will not modify, change, alter, or tamper with student responses during or after the test administration.
8. I will conduct an unbiased administration of the test according to the policies, procedures, and directions (as written) in the test administration guide.
9. I must remain in the room throughout the entire test administration.
10. I will report any testing irregularities to the school test coordinator on the day of the occurrence.

My signature below indicates my agreement to abide by and fulfill the obligations and duties described above. Further, I understand that violation of this agreement could lead to additional legal liability to me.

Print Name: _____

Sign: _____

Date: _____

Appendix F: Proctor—Confidentiality and Test Security Agreement

If proctors are utilized, this form must be completed each testing cycle and signed at the conclusion of proctor training. A copy of this signed form must be kept on file at the school with the school test coordinator.

School Name: _____

Test Name: _____

In performing my assigned duties and responsibilities as the proctor, I understand that

1. I cannot be assigned to test sessions where my relatives or wards are testing and where the test administrator is a personal family member or close acquaintance.
2. I cannot distribute or collect test materials, read directions, assist students on the test, or review student information or responses.
3. I cannot use a cell phone or electronic device during testing, including breaks. Test administrators and students are not allowed to use cell phones or electronic devices during testing, including breaks. (Students testing online may use approved electronic devices.)
4. I will assist school personnel in maintaining test security at all times by ensuring secure test materials are not discussed or disclosed in any manner (copying, posting, or reproducing).
5. I will assist in monitoring the testing environment and minimize distractions and interruptions in the testing environment.
6. I will assist school personnel in ensuring appropriate test administration procedures are followed.
7. I will assist students with emergencies and restroom breaks.
8. I will assist school personnel in ensuring accommodations are provided appropriately. School staff will discuss the type of accommodation(s) student(s) will receive, how the test administration will differ from what is considered standard administration, and the specific procedures necessary to provide the accommodations(s) prior to the test administration.
9. I will monitor the distribution of materials as specified by the script in the test administration guide. (Exceptions include approved supplemental materials or designated features such as highlighters, colored pencils, color acetate overlays, and students who receive a sample copy of the English II constructed response space or mathematics grid.)
10. I will monitor students during the test session.
11. I will maintain student confidentiality and must not disclose any personally identifiable information (PII) about individual students. (Student information is protected by federal privacy laws.)
12. I will report all testing irregularities or testing violations to the school test coordinator or principal on the day of occurrence.
13. I have reviewed and understand the *Testing Code of Ethics* (found in the back of *The Proctor's Guide)* before proctoring a test administration.

My signature below indicates my agreement to abide by and fulfill the obligations and duties described above.

Print Name: _____ **Sign:** _____

 Date: _____

Appendix G: Non-Public Testing Program Spring 2024 End-of-Grade Tests Order Form

School Name _____

EOG

Non-Public Testing Program
Spring 2024 Order Form
End of Grade Tests

Testing Coordinator_____
School Address _____
_____
School Phone _____Fax_____
School e-mail Address _____

END-OF-GRADE Test **$20.00**   PER TEST ORDERED

Date to be administered: _____
(within the last 10 days of school year)
Last Day of School: _____

Order will not be processed without these dates

Fax order by: **April 9, 2024**...............Training: **April 23, 2024**

Subject	NUMBER OF TESTS	TEACHERS
Gr. 3 ELA		
Gr. 3 Math		
Gr. 4 ELA		
Gr. 4 Math		
Gr. 5 ELA		
Gr. 5 Math		
Gr. 6 ELA		
Gr. 6 Math		
Gr. 7 ELA		
Gr. 7 Math		
Gr. 8 ELA		
Gr. 8 Math		
Gr. 5 Science		
Gr. 8 Science		

FAX: 919-515-4622
Phone: 919-515-4624

Fax this form by April 9, 2024

Appendix H: Non-Public Testing Program Spring 2024 End-of-Course Tests Order Form

School Name_____

**2024 Non-Public Testing Program Order
Form
End-of-Course**

Testing Coordinator_____

School Address _____

_____

School Phone_____**Fax**_____

School e-mail Address_____

$20.00   PER TEST ORDERED

SPRING_____(✓)

Block / 4x4 / Semester – *(last 5 days of semester) that ends* _____

Traditional – *(last 10 days of semester) that ends* _____ (last day of semester)

(last day of school)

Date to be administered: _____

Fax order by: **April 9, 2024**....................Training: **April 23, 2024**

Order will not be processed without these dates

Course/Subject	Number Of Tests	Number of Teachers
Math I		
Math 3		
Biology		
English II		

* Orders include all materials needed for the test administration.
* Large Print and Braille accommodations are available upon request (price to be determined). * Retain a copy for school records.
* Sales tax will be added to total order.

FAX: 919-515-4622

Phone: 919-515-4624

Fax this form to NPSTS by order date

Appendix I: Non-Public School Testing Service Report of Testing Irregularity

Due to the nature of certain testing irregularities, the State Board of Education has directed that a test administrator or other person reporting an irregularity must choose to file a report (i.e., this form) directly with the Non-Public School Testing Service (NPSTS). The person reporting the irregularity must (a) complete and sign this report, (b) include a telephone number where the person may be contacted, and (c) fax the report to the NPSTS. It is important to ensure secure transmission of the information if it includes student(s) personally identifiable information.

Parts 1 and 2 of the *Report of Testing Irregularity* must be filed via secure fax to the NPSTS. Different incidents must be documented on separate reports of testing irregularities even when the incidents occur during the same test administration in the same room. When appropriate, a confidential description of the personnel action taken must be provided. All documentation must be retained by the school system for six months following the return of test scores.

One copy of this form must be retained by the person filing the report, the principal, and the school test coordinator. The school test coordinator and principal are to conduct an investigation to determine if the testing irregularity should be declared a misadministration. In accordance with State Board of Education policy, if a misadministration has occurred and the validity of the test results are affected, the student must be administered a different secure form of the test (unless the student should not have been tested in accordance with state guidelines for students with disabilities or limited English proficiency). In the event that a testing irregularity is declared a misadministration:
1. the test results must be declared non-valid;
2. student scores must be deleted from the data file;
3. the test administrator, principal, parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and student(s) must be notified;
4. the Report of Testing Irregularity must be filed with NPSTS;
5. the student must be administered a different secure form of the test The non-public school test coordinator is to make all arrangements with the NPSTS for ordering replacement test materials; and
6. a confidential description of the personnel action taken, if appropriate, must be attached to the Report of Testing Irregularity forwarded to the NPSTS.

Part 1: This part of the *Report of Testing Irregularity* must be filed within five days of the incident.

School Name:
Test Coordinator:
School Address:
School Phone:
School Fax:
School Email Address:

Today's Date:

Date of Incident:

Person Reporting the Irregularity:

Test Name:
  ☐ End-of-Grade Test
  ☐ End-of-Course Test

Grade Level:

Subject:
  ☐ Reading ☐ Mathematics ☐ Science
  ☐ Biology ☐ English II ☐ NC Math 1 ☐ NC Math 3

Number of Students Involved:

Specify Student Name(s) (a list may be attached):

Describe in detail the testing irregularity that occurred (attach any pertinent documentation, if necessary):

Principal Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Test Coordinator Signature: _____**Date:** _____

Part 2: This part of the *Report of Testing Irregularity* must be filed within fifteen days of the incident.

As the principal and school test coordinator, we have reviewed the attached *Report of Testing Irregularity (Part 1)* with the appropriate school personnel, conducted an investigation, and determined the following:

Select one of the following and complete all requested information.

Decision 1:

☐ The reported testing irregularity *is not* a misadministration, and no further action is needed.
   Explain:

Decision 2:

☐ The reported testing irregularity *is not* a misadministration, but further action is needed.
   Explain:

Decision 3:

☐ The reported testing irregularity *is* a misadministration. Check one of the following:

   ☐ Our school system plans to administer a different secure form of the test to the student(s) or has completed the administration of the different secure form of the test on this date: _____
   ☐ Our school system will *not* administer a different secure form of the test to the student(s).
   Explain:

In addition, the school system must do the following when a misadministration is declared.

● The test results must be declared non-valid.
   Date:
● Score(s) of the student(s) involved in the misadministration must be deleted from the accountability data file.
   Date:
   The test administrator, principal, local school board, parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and student(s) must be notified (i.e., circumstances; no test scores).
   Date:
● The Report of Testing Irregularity must document the date the student was administered the different secure form of the test
   Date:
● When appropriate, a confidential description of the personnel action taken must be attached to the copy of the Report of Testing Irregularity filed with the NPSTS
   Date:
● The Report of Testing Irregularity must be filed with the Non-Public School Testing Service.
   Date:

Principal Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Test Coordinator Signature: _____**Date:** _____

Appendix J: 2023–24 School Annual Testing Plan Guide (School Use)

School Name:
Test Coordinator:
School Address:
School Phone:
School Fax:
School Email Address:

School test coordinators shall ensure a written annual testing plan for the school is developed and shared with all testing personnel at the school before testing begins. Plans should also be available in an electronic format and include "Sample" documents that will be used for testing throughout the year.

Test Administrators Training
All school staff (i.e., principal, school test coordinator, test administrators) who handle secure test materials must be trained by the school test coordinator and sign a confidentiality and test security agreement.
- School staff was trained on (*insert date*)
- Signed confidentiality and test security agreements are kept *(location)*.

Proctors
Proctors (*will* or *will not*) be utilized.
If utilized, include a description of local proctor requirements, including the bullets below:
☐ Proctors assigned: (1) a one-on-one, full-time proctors and/or (2) roving proctors.
☐ The school will use the following procedures for roving proctors, who can assist up to three test administrators in three testing rooms:
- Roving proctors will not be responsible for more than three, centrally located classrooms.
- Roving proctors will spend _____ minutes in each room before rotating to the next room to proctor.
- The STC trains all proctors, if utilized, before testing. Proctors sign a confidentiality and test security agreement. Signed proctor agreements are kept on file at the school with the STC.
  o Proctors were trained on this date: _____

Test Materials Security
- The STC stores materials in a locked, secure, limited-access facility until needed for testing. Include a brief description of where secure materials will be stored. Include a list of all personnel granted access to this location.
- Describe the procedures and timeline for the secure checking out and checking in of test materials to ensure that at each level of distribution and collection all secure materials are tracked, returned, and accounted for.
- Describe the procedures and timeline for returning test materials to the TOPS.

School Testing Plans and Self-Monitoring Procedures
(Persons designated) completes monitoring during testing with the goals of preventing any avoidable irregularities and ensuring that there are no errors in the coding. These staff members need to have access to the testing plan and should use the following self-monitoring procedures:

Before and during testing the school will:
- Make sure the TC is accessible.
- Check to see if the bells are turned off.
- Check that each testing site has a 'Do Not Disturb' sign on the door.
- Check to see if there is a test administrator in each room.
- If utilized, check to see if there is a proctor (one-on-one or roving) serving where designated.
- Observe whether each test administrator is providing a positive test-taking environment.

Testing Irregularities Reporting Procedures
(Name and Role) will ensure state procedures for submission of testing irregularity reports to the NPSTS.

Online Testing
The school test coordinator will ensure all test administrators clears any information from the test saved or cached on any network appliance or computer is purged or deleted immediately following the completion of the test administration. To ensure this step, all devices are shut down after each test administration.

Online Testing Log-In Flexibility
The Annual Testing Program's policy for online test administrations recommends test administrators begin setting up devices thirty to forty minutes before students begin testing. School test coordinators are expected to develop, distribute, and train on a written plan that outlines secure procedures for schools to follow when students either remain or do not remain in the room while devices are being set up.
- In the space provided:
  - Include a description of how the test administrator will log in students. (Include if the test administrators will log in each student at a device or if students will log in to the test themselves using an access code. The plan must outline procedures that ensure:
    - students cannot see secure test administrator usernames and passwords while the test administrator logs into the devices;
    - students cannot see the secure student ID numbers and student access codes of others while logging themselves in to their device;
    - upon login, each device is set to the start page with the correct student's name and PowerSchool number, test name, and school name correctly identified on each device; and
    - students do not begin using their device until they are instructed to do so.

Test Plan Template (Internal Use)

School Name:
Test Coordinator's Name:
Backup Test Coordinator's Name:
Director's Name:

Test Name	Date		Location	Administrator	Proctor (note if roving)	# of Students

- Attach a map of the school facility.
- What locked, secure storage area in the school will be used for storing test materials?
- Where will test administrators pick up and return test materials?
- What are the procedures (who, when, where and how) for transcribing students' test responses? (Ensure three or more school personnel are present for the transcription process).

Training Sign-In Sheet (Internal Use)

School Name: _____   **Date:** _____

Facilitator(s) Name: _____

Test Name: _____

Name (print)	Signature	Test Administrator (TA) or Proctor (P)	Received Test Administration Guide (initial)

Materials Checkout and Check-In Sheet (Internal Use at School)

Complete before the Testing Session

I acknowledge that I have attended training for the _____ test and have received and read a copy of the test administration guide. I further acknowledge that I am responsible for information provided during training and for understanding and adhering to the contents of the test administration guide, including the *Testing Code of Ethics*.

Teacher Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please note the number of materials received for each item:

Materials	Number at Sign-out (Completed by test administrator *before test administration*)	Number at Sign In (Completed by checker *after test administration*)
Test books		

Check off any of the following items received.

blank paper		writing utensils	
graph paper		periodic tables	

Signature of test administrator (teacher) at checkout: _____

Signature of person checking in materials after the test (Checker): _____

Complete after the Testing Session:

I, _____, affirm that I adhered to the following rules and procedures during the students' test administration.
1. I read and complied with all the procedures in the *Testing Code of Ethics*.
2. I maintained test security at all times.
3. I administered the tests according to the directions in the test administration guide and any subsequent updates developed by the test publisher.
4. I administered the test to all eligible students.
5. I reported all testing irregularities to the school system test coordinator.
6. I provided a positive test-taking climate.

Teacher Signature: _____ Date: _____
Proctor Signature: _____ Date: _____
Proctor Name (Please Print Clearly): _____

Self-Monitoring Report Form (Internal Use)

As part of the test plan, schools are expected to conduct at least one self-monitoring session during testing. **This form should be completed during the process and kept on file at the school.**

Date:_____ School: _____ Test: _____

CHECK ALL BOXES THAT ARE OBSERVED; INCLUDE EXPLANATIONS FOR ANY AREAS NOT OBSERVED.

	Devices are set up appropriately before testing and correct login procedures are followed.		Personal cell phones and electronic devices are turned off and appropriately stored during testing.		Windows in doors are exposed and a "Testing-Do Not Disturb" sign is posted outside each testing room.		Directions are read to the students as they are written in the test administration guide.
	Test materials stored in a secure, locked room and distributed in accordance with the testing plan		Students are provided with the appropriate test materials.		Test administrators and proctor (if utilized) do not leave the students unattended at any time during the testing session and move throughout the room during testing.		Bulletin boards, instructional displays, and reference materials related to testing content are covered or removed.

Explanation for areas not observed:

_____

_____

_____

_____

This test was conducted in accordance with the accepted practices of standardized testing.
This test had some irregularities and/or findings as listed below.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Monitor's Name:_____   Monitor's Signature:_____

Appendix K: Testing Code of Ethics

Introduction to the Testing Code of Ethics
In North Carolina, standardized testing is an integral part of the educational experience of all students. When properly administered and interpreted, test results provide an independent, uniform source of reliable and valid information, which enables:

- *students* to know the extent to which they have mastered expected knowledge and skills and how they compare to others;
- *parents* to know if their children are acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in a highly competitive job market;
- *teachers* to know if their students have mastered grade or course-level knowledge and skills in the curriculum and, if not, what weaknesses need to be addressed;
- *community leaders and lawmakers* to know if students in North Carolina schools are improving their performance over time and how the students compare with students from other states or the nation; and
- *citizens* to assess the performance of the public schools.

In order to achieve those objectives, teachers and administrators must conduct testing in a fair and ethical manner, which includes:

Security
- assuring adequate security of the testing materials before, during, and after testing and during scoring
- assuring student confidentiality

Preparation
- teaching the tested curriculum and test-preparation skills
- training staff in appropriate testing practices and procedures
- providing an appropriate atmosphere

Administration
- developing a local policy for the implementation of fair and ethical testing practices and for resolving questions concerning those practices
- assuring all students who should be tested are tested
- utilizing tests which are developmentally appropriate
- utilizing tests only for the purposes for which they were designed

Scoring, Analysis, and Reporting
- interpreting test results to the appropriate audience
- providing adequate data analyses to guide curriculum implementation and improvement

Standardized test scores are only one of the many indicators of how well the student is learning. Test scores should be used in conjunction with all other available information about a student to understand student progress and improve student learning. When administering tests, school administrators and teachers must comply with applicable statutes, rules and policies. In particular, administrators and teachers must comply with the *Testing Code of Ethics* (16 North Carolina Administrative Code 6D .0311), which is printed on the following page.

Testing Code of Ethics

(a)   This Rule sets out the administrative testing procedures and testing code of ethics and shall apply to all public school employees, including charter school and regional school employees, who are involved in the state testing program.

(b)   The superintendent/charter school director or superintendent's/charter school director's designee shall develop local policies and procedures to ensure maximum test security in coordination with the policies and procedures developed by the test publisher.

(c)   The superintendent/charter school director or superintendent's/charter school director's designee shall instruct personnel who are responsible for the testing program in testing administration procedures. This instruction shall include test administrations that require testing accommodations and shall emphasize the need to follow the directions outlined by the test publisher.

(d)   The superintendent/charter school director or superintendent's/charter school director's designee shall designate the personnel who are authorized to have access to secure test materials. "Access" to test materials by school personnel means handling the materials but does not include reviewing tests or analyzing test items.
   (1)   Persons who have access to secure test materials shall not use those materials for personal gain.
   (2)   No person may copy, reproduce, or paraphrase in any manner or for any reason the test materials without the express written consent of the test publisher.

(e)   The principal shall ensure test security within the school building.
   (1)   The principal shall store test materials in a secure, locked facility. The principal shall allow test materials to be distributed immediately before the test administration.

(f)   Any breach of security, loss of materials, failure to account for materials, or any other deviation from required security procedures shall be reported immediately to the principal, school test coordinator, school system (LEA) test coordinator, superintendent/charter school director, and regional accountability coordinator.

(g)   Preparation for testing.
   (1)   The superintendent/charter school director shall ensure that school system (LEA) test coordinators:
      (A)   secure necessary materials;
      (B)   plan and implement training for school test coordinators, test administrators, and proctors;
      (C)   ensure each school test coordinator and test administrator is trained before each test administration on the policies and procedures for conducting a proper test administration and for processing and returning test materials; and
      (D)   in conjunction with program administrators, ensure the need for test accommodations is documented and that accommodations are limited to the specific need.
   (2)   The principal or the principal's designee shall serve as school test coordinator.
   (3)   The principal shall ensure the school test coordinator:
      (A)   maintains test security and accountability of test materials;
         (1)   Before each test administration, the school test coordinator shall accurately count and distribute test materials.
         (2)   Immediately after each test administration, the school test coordinator shall collect, count, and return all test materials to the secure, locked storage facility.

(B) establishes any needed school policies and procedures to assure all eligible students are tested fairly;

(C) identifies and trains personnel, proctors, and backup personnel for test administrations; and

(D) encourages a positive atmosphere for testing.

(4) Test administrators shall be school personnel who have professional training in education and the state testing program.

(5) Teachers shall provide instruction that meets or exceeds the state-adopted curriculum standards to meet the needs of the specific students in the class. Teachers may help students improve test-taking skills by:

(A) helping students become familiar with test formats using curricular content;

(B) teaching students test-taking strategies and providing practice sessions;

(C) helping students learn ways of preparing to take tests; and

(D) using resource materials such as test questions from test item banks and linking documents in instruction and test preparation.

(h) With respect to test administration.

(1) The superintendent/charter school director or superintendent's/charter school director's designee shall:

(A) assure each school establishes procedures to ensure all test administrators comply with test publisher guidelines;

(B) inform the local board of education of any breach of this code of ethics; and

(C) inform school system (LEA) test coordinators and principals of their responsibilities.

(2) The school test coordinator shall:

(A) assure school personnel know the content of state and local testing policies;

(B) implement the school system and local testing policies and procedures to assure all eligible students are tested fairly;

(C) ensure trained proctors are assigned to test administrations by the principal; and

(D) ensure all testing irregularities are reported to the school system (LEA) test coordinator.

(3) Test administrators shall:

(A) administer tests according to the directions in the assessment guide and any subsequent updates developed by the test publisher;

(B) administer tests to all eligible students;

(C) report all testing irregularities to the school test coordinator; and

(D) provide a positive test-taking environment.

(4) Proctors shall serve as additional monitors to help the test administrator assure that testing occurs fairly.

(i) Scoring. The school system test coordinator shall:

(1) ensure each test is scored according to the procedures and guidelines defined for the test by the test publisher;

(2) maintain quality control during the entire scoring process, which consists of handling and editing documents, scanning answer documents, and producing electronic files and reports. Quality control shall address at a minimum accuracy and scoring consistency.

(3) maintain security of tests and data files at all times, including:

(A) protecting the confidentiality of students at all times when publicizing test results; and

(B) maintaining test security of answer keys and item-specific scoring rubrics.

(j)   Analysis and reporting. Educators shall use test scores appropriately. This means that the educator recognizes that a test score is only one piece of information and must be interpreted together with
other scores and indicators. Test data help educators understand educational patterns and practices. The superintendent shall ensure that school personnel analyze and report test data ethically and within the limitations described in this paragraph.

    (1)   Educators shall maintain the confidentiality of individual students. Publicizing test scores or any written material containing personally identifiable information from the student's educational records shall not be disseminated or otherwise made available to the public by any member of the State Board of Education, any employee of the State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, any employee of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, any member of a local board of education, any employee of a local board of education, or any other person, except as permitted under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C.§1232g.

    (2)   Educators shall release test scores to students, parents, legal guardians, teachers, and the media with interpretive materials as needed.

    (3)   Staff development relating to testing must enable school personnel to respond knowledgeably to questions related to testing, including the tests, scores, scoring procedures, and other interpretive materials.

    (4)   Items and associated materials on a secure test shall not be in the public domain. Only items that are within the public domain may be used for item analysis.

    (5)   Data analysis of test scores for decision-making purposes shall be based upon:

        (A)   disaggregation of data based upon student demographics and other collected variables;

        (B)   examination of grading practices in relation to test scores; and

        (C)   examination of growth trends and goal summary reports for state-mandated tests.

(k)   Unethical testing practices include, but are not limited to, the following practices:

    (1)   encouraging students to be absent the day of testing;

    (2)   encouraging students not to do their best;

    (3)   using secure test items or modified secure test items for instruction;

    (4)   changing student responses at any time;

    (5)   interpreting, explaining, or paraphrasing the test directions or the test items;

    (6)   reclassifying students solely for the purpose of avoiding state testing;

    (7)   not testing all eligible students;

    (8)   failing to provide required accommodations during testing;

    (9)   modifying scoring programs including answer keys, equating files, and lookup tables;

    (10) modifying student records solely for the purpose of raising test scores;

    (11) using a single test score to make individual decisions; and

    (12) misleading the public concerning the results and interpretations of test data.

(l)   In the event of a violation of this Rule, the State Board of Education may, in accordance with the contested case provisions of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes, impose any one or more of the following sanctions:

    (1)   withhold any applicable monetary incentive awards;

    (2)   file a civil action against the person or persons responsible for the violation for copyright infringement or for any other available cause of action;

    (3)   seek criminal prosecution of the person or persons responsible for the violation; and

(4)   in accordance with the provisions of 16 NCAC 6C .0312, suspend or revoke the professional license of the person or persons responsible for the violation.

History Note: Authority G.S. 115C-12(9)c.; 115C-81(b)(4);
                        Eff. November 1, 1997;
                        Amended Eff. August 1, 2000.