



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | Catherine Truitt, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*

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September 7, 2021

TO LEA Superintendents
Charter School Directors

FROM Catherine Edmonds *CE*
Deputy Superintendent, Office of Educational Equity

Tammy L. Howard *TH*
Director of Accountability Services

2021–22 READ TO ACHIEVE ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS

The Read to Achieve (RtA) legislation allows third-grade students an option to demonstrate reading proficiency through the administration of an alternative assessment of reading comprehension that has been approved by the State Board of Education (SBE). At its September 2021 meeting, the SBE approved alternative assessments local education agencies (LEAs) may elect to use for this purpose during the 2021–22 school year. The LEA is responsible for the costs of administering these assessments. Results from an alternative assessment cannot be used by an LEA to determine proficiency for current third graders unless the alternative assessment is on the SBE-approved list. Charter schools may elect to use an SBE-approved alternative assessment **or** an alternative assessment of reading comprehension that is not on the SBE-approved list. Charter schools are responsible for the costs of administering these assessments.

A chart of the 2021–22 SBE-approved alternative assessments and their achievement levels is attached to this memo. The chart will also be posted on the Office of Early Learning and on the Division of Accountability Services websites. Proficiency for all of the SBE-approved alternative assessments is a Lexile® level of 725 or higher. By using the common Lexile level scale, the alternative assessments meet the standard reading proficiency at the end of third grade. On the End-of-Grade 3 Reading Test, the minimum sufficient achievement level for proficiency is 439. The 439 achievement level has a Lexile level of 725, which was determined by a Lexile linking study conducted by Metametrics®. The linking study provides a Lexile student/reader measure that aligns to a student's scale score. The Lexile level represents a student's ability to not only make inferential interpretations of the text but to also answer critical analysis questions about the text.

Alternative assessments used to determine proficiency must be approved by the Superintendent or Charter School Director. LEA and charter school test coordinators must complete and submit the *Read to Achieve Alternative Assessment Notification Form* in NC Education's NCTest Admin by December 1, 2021. The form indicates the alternative assessment(s) that will be used with current third-grade students. The notification form must be completed even if a LEA or charter school elects not to use an alternative assessment of reading comprehension.

DIVISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY SERVICES

6307 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-6307 | (984) 236-2710

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

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In rare situations, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team may determine that a student with a significant disability is unable to access mClass DIBELS 8 or any of the assessments on the SBE approved list. In such situations, the student's literacy skills shall be assessed with a validated measure of early reading that is accessible to the student. Selection of these assessments should be determined by the Public School Unit in consultation with local Exceptional Children staff.

Please share this information locally. If you have questions or need further clarification regarding information contained within this memo, please contact your Regional Accountability Coordinator.

CE/TLH/jlk

c: Catherine Truitt, State Superintendent
Beverly Emory, Deputy Superintendent, Office of District Support
Amy Rhyne, Director, Office of Early Learning
Sherry Thomas, Director, Exceptional Children
Dave Machado, Director, Office of Charter Schools
Tonia Parish, Section Chief, Read to Achieve and Early Literacy
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Curtis Sonneman, Section Chief, Analysis and Reporting
Maxey Moore, Section Chief, Test Development
Jaime Kelley, Education Consultant, Testing Policy and Operations
Regional Accountability Coordinators
Public School Unit Test Coordinators

Attachment

State Board of Education

2021–22 Read to Achieve Local Alternative Assessments

The following alternative assessments have been approved by the State Board of Education (SBE) for use by local education agencies (LEAs). LEAs are responsible for the costs of administering these assessments. Current third graders must use only the alternative assessments and achievement levels that were established by the SBE on September 2, 2021. Charter schools may elect to use an SBE-approved alternative assessment or an alternative assessment of reading comprehension that is not on the SBE-approved list. Charter schools are responsible for the costs of administering these assessments. LEAs and charter schools must submit documentation to Accountability Services by December 1 of each school year indicating which alternative assessments will be used with students.

Test Name	Lexile Level Provided	Recommended for 2021–22	2021–22 End-of-Grade 3 Achievement Level
Northwest Evaluation System— <i>Measures of Academic Progress Growth</i>	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher (207 Scale Score)
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt— <i>Reading Inventory</i>	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher
STAR Reading	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher (537 Scale Score)
Iowa Test of Basic Skills	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher (Level 9 Test at 71 st Percentile)
i-Ready	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher (537 Scale Score)
Imagine Learning— <i>Reading Level Assessment</i>	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher
Achieve3000	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher
Instructure— <i>CASE Benchmark Assessment</i> (previously known as Case 21 Assessment)	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher ¹
Edmentum— <i>Exact Path Individualize Learning Solution</i>	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher
Lexia Learning— <i>RAPID Assessment</i>	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher
Imagine Learning— <i>Galileo English Language Arts/Reading Assessment</i>	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher (Developmental Level Score of 856)
Acadience Reading	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher (398 Composite Score) ²
FastBridge— <i>FastBridge aReading</i>	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher (510 Scale Score)
Imagination Station— <i>Istation's Indicators of Progress (ISIP™) Reading</i> ³	Yes	Yes	Lexile Level 725 or higher (258 Scale Score)

¹ CASE Benchmark Assessments consist of two sections. The second section consists of a set of items from MetaMetrics to assess student Lexile levels. Through correspondence tables provided by MetaMetrics, Lexile levels are provided for each student based upon performance on those specific MetaMetrics items.

² The composite score is comprised of scores from four subtests (i.e., Oral Reading Fluency [ORF] Words Correct, ORF Accuracy, ORF Retell, Maze).

³ Metametrics linking study was conducted with ISIP ER/AR assessment and found either ISIP ER or ISIP AR can be used to measure reading comprehension.