



NORTH CAROLINA
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

Report to the North Carolina General Assembly

North Carolina Personalized Assessment
Tool (NCPAT) Pilot

SL 2019-212 (SB 621), Section 2.(b)

Date Due: November 15, 2024
DPI Chronological Schedule, 2023–2025

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Introduction

This report addresses the requirements stated in Session Law 2019-212 (SB 621), Part II. Report on North Carolina Personalized Assessment Pilot:

SSECTION 2.(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly that the State move toward a through-grade assessment model, in which all State-mandated assessments are administered in multiple short testing events throughout the school year rather than in a single long testing event at the end of the year.

SSECTION 2.(b) The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall report by November 15, 2020, and annually thereafter until November 15, 2024, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee regarding the progress of the North Carolina Personalized Assessment Tool (NCPAT) pilot. At a minimum, the report shall include the following, when available:

- (1) Demographic information for each school participating in the pilot.*
- (2) NCPAT performance, including proficiency and growth data, at the State, public school unit, and school level for students enrolled in participating schools. Such data shall be aggregated for all students and disaggregated for each subgroup of students identified in G.S. 115C-83.15(d1) without revealing personally identifiable information.*
- (3) End-of-grade assessment performance, including proficiency and growth data, at the State and public school unit level for students not enrolled in participating schools. Such data shall be aggregated for all students and disaggregated for each subgroup of students identified in G.S. 115C-83.15(d1) without revealing personally identifiable information.*
- (4) Feedback received from teachers, principals, unit-level staff, students, parents, and other stakeholders regarding the NCPAT pilot and a description of how such feedback was incorporated into the NCPAT pilot.*
- (5) Progress in scaling up the assessment system to additional public school units or schools measured against the Department of Public Instruction's latest time line submitted to the United States Department of Education. Page 2 Session Law 2019-212 Senate Bill 621*
- (6) Description of how the participation of any additional schools or public school units in that year contributed to progress toward achieving high-quality and consistent implementation across demographically diverse public school units.*
- (7) The most recent Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority Annual Performance Report submitted to the United States Department of Education.*
- (8) Any communications received from the United States Department of Education related to the NCPAT pilot.*
- (9) Progress in developing a plan to replace the science end-of-grade assessments in fifth and eighth grade with through-grade assessments after the completion of the NCPAT pilot.*
- (10) Progress in developing a plan to replace all end-of-course assessments with through-grade assessments for State-mandated high school assessments after the completion of the NCPAT pilot.*
- (11) Recommendations on any changes needed in State law to continue implementation of through-grade assessments statewide after the completion of the NCPAT pilot.*

SECTION 2.(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the State Board of Education and the Superintendent of Public Instruction may supervise and administer the NCPAT pilot in

fulfillment of the State's Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority granted by the United States Department of Education.

In June 2019, the U.S. Department of Education (USED) approved North Carolina for an Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority (IADA). Limited to only seven states at the time, North Carolina was the third state to receive the authority to develop an innovative assessment to pilot in lieu of the current statewide assessment for a subset of students.

The IADA assessment, NCPAT, is a balanced assessment system that provides granular data for immediate feedback about students' performance throughout the year and summative data at the end of the year for general accountability purposes. A primary goal is to design an assessment system that provides formative feedback data to educators throughout the school year and reduces the impact of test time and test anxiety for students and schools. This is consistent with North Carolina General Statute 2019-212, Part II, Section 2.(a):

“It is the intent of the General Assembly that the State move toward a through-grade assessment model, in which all State-mandated assessments are administered in multiple short testing events throughout the school year rather than in a single long testing event at the end of the year.”

With the IADA flexibility and the requirement in North Carolina state law that the State move toward a through-grade assessment model, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) developed the NCPAT assessment system; however, there was impact from COVID-19. Though the timeline for development and implementation had to be modified due to a federal testing waiver in the 2019–20 school year, ultimately the project reset milestones and met the timeline specified in the initial plan.

In the 2023–24 school year, the multistage summative assessment component of the innovative assessment was administered to students statewide in grades 4, 5, 7, and 8. In the 2024–25 school year, the multistage adaptive summative assessment will expand to include grades 3 and 6 thus fulfilling the goal of statewide administrations in grades 3–8 reading and mathematics.

This report, the last required by Session Law 2019-212 (SB 621), addresses the 2023–24 school year activities, tasks, and outcomes.

Background and Overview

In December 2018, at the direction of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the NCDPI applied to the U.S. Department of Education for an Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority. In June 2019, North Carolina became one of only seven states awarded this authority, and in August 2019 the North Carolina General Assembly passed legislation (S.L. 2019-212) endorsing the pilot, setting goals for expansion of the innovative assessments, and requiring annual reports on progress.

When the NCDPI initiated the application, three school districts committed to participating in the pilot for innovative assessments for fourth-grade math, seventh-grade reading, or both. Despite the challenges posed by the ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic, there were 187 schools across 14 districts and 8 charter schools committed to participating in the pilot for the 2020–21 school year. Some districts and charter schools withdrew from pilot participation for the 2021–22 school year resulting in participation of 77 schools across 10 districts, 6 charter schools, and the Cherokee Central Schools. Participants for pilot volunteers in the 2022–23 school year included 189 schools from all North Carolina State Board of Education regions across 27 districts, 14 charter and lab schools, and the Cherokee Central Schools. In the 2023–24 school year, the NCDPI transitioned the NCPAT system from pilot status to statewide implementation: the NC Check-Ins 2.0 component of the innovative assessment was available statewide in mathematics and reading at grades 3–8 and the multistage adaptive summative component of the innovative assessment was administered as the statewide summative (end-of-grade) assessment at grades 4, 5, 7, and 8.

Both components (NC Check-Ins 2.0 and multistage adaptive summative end-of-grade) of the innovative assessment will be statewide at grades 3–8 for reading, mathematics, and science in the 2024–25 school year.

Session Law 2019-212 Report Requirements

Session Law 2019-212, Part II, Section 2.(b) requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to report by November 15, 2020, and annually thereafter until November 15, 2024, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee regarding the progress of the NCPAT pilot. The required specifics of progress in the development of the innovative assessment system, NCPAT, are provided in this section. The annual report submitted to the United States Department of Education on September 27, 2024, is included as Appendix A, and the supporting appendices for the 2023–24 annual report as Appendix B.

- 1) Demographic information for each school participating in the pilot.

For the 2023–24 school year there were no pilot schools as the multistage adaptive component of the NCPAT system was administered as the statewide summative assessment. All districts and schools participated in the statewide administration at grades 4, 5, 7, and 8 in reading and mathematics.

- 2) NCPAT performance, including proficiency and growth data, at the State, public school unit, and school level for students enrolled in participating schools. Such data shall be aggregated for all students and disaggregated for each subgroup identified in G.S. 115C-83.15(d1) without revealing personally identifiable information.

- 3) End-of-grade assessment performance, including proficiency and growth data, at the State and public school unit level for students not enrolled in participating schools. Such data shall be aggregated for all students and disaggregated for each subgroup of students identified in G.S. 115C-83.15(d1) without revealing personally identifiable information.

For the 2023–24 school year, there were no pilot schools; all districts and schools participated in the statewide administration of the multistage adaptive summative assessments for reading and mathematics at grades 4, 5, 7, and 8. End-of-grade performance data, including school growth results, for all schools is [available online](#).

- 4) Feedback received from teachers, principals, unit-level staff, students, parents, and other stakeholders regarding the NCPAT pilot and a description of how such feedback was incorporated into the NCPAT pilot.

The NCDPI gathered feedback from stakeholders throughout the 2023–24 school year. A summary of stakeholder feedback is included in [Appendix A: USED 2023–24 Annual Performance Report](#) Section IV: Consultation and Feedback.

- 5) Progress in scaling up the assessment system to additional public school units or schools measured against the Department of Public Instruction’s latest timeline submitted to the United States Department of Education.

In the 2023–24 school year, the NCDPI transitioned the NCPAT system from pilot status to statewide implementation: the NC Check-Ins 2.0 component of the innovative assessment was available statewide in mathematics and reading at grades 3–8 and the multistage adaptive summative component of the innovative assessment was administered as the statewide summative (end-of-grade) assessment at grades 4, 5, 7, and 8.

North Carolina will administer the multistage adaptive summative assessments at grades 3–8 statewide in the 2024–25 school year.

- 6) Description of how the participation of any additional schools or public school units in that year contributed to progress toward achieving high-quality and consistent implementation across demographically diverse public school units.

The NCPAT was implemented statewide at grades 4, 5, 7, and 8 in the 2023–24 school year.

- 7) The most recent Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority Annual Performance Report submitted to the United States Department of Education.

On September 27, 2024, the NCDPI submitted the 2023–24 report to the USED (see [Appendix A: USED 2023–24 Annual Performance Report](#)).

- 8) Any communications received from the United States Department of Education related to the NCPAT pilot.

The USED provided an updated template for submitting the 2023–24 report that is provided in Appendix A.

- 9) Progress in developing a plan to replace the science end-of-grade assessments in fifth and eighth grade with through-grade assessments after the completion of the NCPAT pilot.

The NCDPI will implement the NCPAT system for grades 5 and 8 science in the 2023–24 school year with the NC Check-Ins 2.0 component available to all schools and administering multistage adaptive summative assessments to all students statewide.

- 10) Progress in developing a plan to replace all end-of-course assessments with through-grade assessments for State-mandated high school assessments after the completion of the NCPAT pilot.

The current NCPAT model design is appropriate for year-long courses that allows for reasonable time between interims for teachers to incorporate feedback into instruction. Public school units in North Carolina utilize a semester-based block schedule which would not align with the formative purpose of a through-course design.

- 11) Recommendations on any changes needed in State law to continue implementation of through-grade assessments statewide after the completion of the NCPAT pilot.

No specific changes are currently identified as needed

Conclusion

Successful implementation of the NCPAT, as allowed by IADA, was dependent on the following factors: (1) the NCDPI’s capacity to develop items and pilot the through-grade NCPAT system with a demographically representative sample of students, (2) the inclusion of public school units, both as participating in the pilot administrations and as providing feedback, and (3) the on-going psychometric analysis to support a reliable and valid assessment system that meets technical requirements.

In the fifth year of the innovative assessment demonstration authority, the NCDPI has administered interims for grades 3–8 mathematics and reading, administered multistage adaptive summative assessments for grades 4, 5, 7 and 8 mathematics and reading, delivered online reporting for NC Check-Ins 2.0 and the multistage summative assessment, and delivered online professional development courses to support data literacy and the use of NC Check-Ins 2.0.

On September 27, 2024, the NCDPI submitted the 2023–24 report to the USED (see [Appendix A: USED 2023–24 Annual Performance Report](#)). This report provided detailed information on the design, development, and implementation of the NCPAT for the 2023–24 school year.

Appendices

[Appendix A: *USED 2023–24 Annual Performance Report*](#)

- <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/documents/accountability/testing/technotes/innovative-assessment-demonstration-authority-annual-performance-report>

[Appendix B: *USED 2023–24 Annual Report Appendices*](#)

- <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/documents/accountability/testing/technotes/innovative-assessment-demonstration-authority-annual-performance-report-appendices>