

Measures of Student Learning (MSL) Frequently Asked Questions, August 2012

What are Measures of Student Learning (MSL)?

Measures of Student Learning (MSLs) are assessments that measure what students know and are able to do after completing a course or grade. The MSLs are designed for those grades and subjects that are currently non-tested (i.e., non-end-of-grade and non-end-of-course subjects).

Who is requiring MSLs?

In summer 2011, the **State Board of Education** voted to require an annual evaluation for every teacher in North Carolina. A sixth standard, "Teachers contribute to the academic success of students" is being added to the evaluation instrument.

To populate Standard 6, **MSLs** for non-end-of-grade and non-end-of-course subjects are **required (by the State Board of Education)** and will be used to measure student growth and evaluate teacher effectiveness.

What are goals of the MSLs?

Goals of MSLs :

- To develop and increase the effectiveness of teachers.
- To have an effective teacher in every classroom and in every school.
- To see evidence of achievement and growth for all students.

Who is required to participate?

ALL students at grades 3-8 and high school must participate with or without accommodations.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities must participate in MSLs, utilizing the same accommodations and modifications that are used in the classroom on a daily basis.

Limited English Proficient

Students identified as limited English proficient (LEP) by the state-identified English language proficiency reading placement test should participate in MSLs, utilizing the same modifications that are used in the classroom on a daily basis.

Who is NOT required to participate?

Students with disabilities

Students currently being instructed on the Extended Content Standards who, according to their Individualized Education Programs, participate in NCEXTEND1 alternate assessment are not required to participate. Alternate assessments are not available from NCDPI at this time.

Limited English Proficient

Students identified as limited English proficient (LEP) who score below 4.0 (Expanding) on the state-identified English language proficiency reading placement tests and are in their first year in NC schools

are not required to participate in MSL assessments. These students are not required to be assessed on the high school MSLs for English Language Arts I, English Language Arts III, English Language Arts IV, OCS English Language Arts I, OCS English Language Arts III, and OCS English Language Arts IV.

Medical Exemption

In rare cases, students deemed medically fragile because of a significant medical emergency and/or condition and are unable to participate in a specific test administration, may be granted a medical exemption. It is a local decision as to how requests for medical exemptions are processed.

Do students who transfer into an ELA/school near the end of the course or school year participate in the MSLs?

This is a local decision. The NCDPI suggests these instances be appropriately documented by the LEA/school and a report filed with the appropriate LEA/school instructional leader.

When will MSLs be implemented?

Because of the magnitude of subjects/courses that will require an MSL, the state is directing three separate phases of implementation. The following tables list each phase and the MSLs that will be administered during the phase:

First Semester, 2012 - 2013 School Year		Second Semester, 2012 – 2013 School Year	
Earth Environmental Science	Physics	Grade Four Science	Grade Four Social Studies
Chemistry	Physical Science		Grade Five Social Studies
English Language Arts I	English Language Arts III	Grade Six Science	Grade Six Social Studies
English Language Arts IV	Pre-Calculus	Grade Seven Science	Grade Seven Social Studies
Advanced Functions and Modeling	*Geometry		Grade Eight Social Studies
Algebra II/Integrated Math III	World History		
Civics and Economics	US History (2003 standards)		
American History I	American History II		
OCS English Language Arts I	OCS English Language Arts III		
OCS English Language Arts IV	OCS Financial Management		
OCS Applied Science	OCS Introductory Math		

*Students enrolled in Integrated Math II in the 2012-13 school year will take the Algebra I/Math I assessment.

First Semester, 2013 – 2014 School Year		Second Semester, 2013 – 2014 School Year	
21 st Century Global Geography	Psychology	Grades Three – Grades Eight Health Education	
21 st Century Civil Liberties & Rights	Sociology		
American Humanities	World Humanities	Grades Three – Grades Eight Physical Education	
Turning Points in American History	The Cold War		
Grade Nine Health Education	Grade Nine Physical Education		

More Information Coming Soon from DPI

K-3 Measures of Student Learning – focus on literacy instruction

World Languages

The Arts

Extended Content Standards

How will MSL scores be used in the teacher evaluation process?

The teacher evaluation process will include a student growth component. Standard 6 focuses on the amount of growth students make as the result of a teacher’s instruction.

Ratings on the standards will be used to create professional development plans each year as well as to determine educator status. A teacher receives educator status when there are three years of growth data (current year and two prior years) to populate Standard 6 on the NC Teacher Evaluation instrument.

The categories for status are:

- *Highly effective*
- *Effective*
- *In need of improvement*

In summary, growth shown on the MSL assessments is used as part of the overall annual teacher evaluation process to determine the sixth standard rating, as well as part of how a teacher’s overall status is determined. To populate Standard 6, the following assessments will be used to measure growth:

- *End-of-Grade Tests*
English Language Arts (grades 3-8)
Mathematics (grades 3-8)
Science (grades 3-8)
- *End-of-Course Tests*
Algebra I/Integrated I (Common Core Math I)
English II
Biology
- *Measures of Student Learning*
- *Career and Technical Education Post-Assessments*

Whenever possible, growth will be calculated through the use of the Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS).

What can I do to prepare students for the MSLS?

*These new assessments are closely aligned to the new NC Standard Course of Study and will replace final exams at the high school level. It is critical that classroom assessments, activities, and lessons are **aligned to the new standards and are rigorous** for **ALL** students. Students should regularly and consistently engage in learning activities that require critical thinking and problem solving. The new standards are clear about what students are expected to know, understand, and do.*

Working together in professional learning communities, teachers will benefit from developing lessons, creating/ implementing common formative assessments, analyzing data and work collaboratively to ensure that all students are learning at high levels. Teachers must also assess formatively throughout lessons by stopping periodically to assess learning and inform instruction.

All of the professional development for the past two years was in preparation for transition to the new standards. There are many resources on the Person County Schools' website under teacher tab. Look for the "PCS New Standards" link. Online modules created by NCDPI, face-to-face professional development by the PCS Professional Development trainers, and Learning-Focused professional development were all strategically designed to prepare teachers for successful implementation of the new standards.

Where can I find more information about the MSLS?

Visit the NCDPI website at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/educatoreffect/measures>.