



# PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., *State Superintendent*

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September 26, 2008

TO LEA Superintendents/Directors of Charter Schools

FROM Ms. Angela H. Quick, Deputy Chief Academic Officer *AHQ*  
Curriculum, Instruction, Technology and Accountability Services

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Accountability Services Division

## **IPT Score Validation for Spring 2008 Annual Test**

North Carolina was officially notified by Ballard & Tighe Publishers in September 2007 that there were scaling and equating issues involving the IPT Form B, the test form that had been used as the state's annual assessment for measuring progress and proficiency for students who are identified as limited English proficient. This test form was not performing as anticipated and its use was discontinued. IPT Form A was used for annual testing during the 2007–08 school year.

LEAs were notified in May to hold all spring 2008 annual IPT results until they could be validated. Since that time, Accountability Services has been working with Ballard & Tighe to address the technical issues associated with the use of IPT Form A for annual testing. The analysis of the scores was recently completed. The resulting re-score adjustments allowed for better alignment of scores with the standards set by the North Carolina teachers and those approved by the State Board of Education. As anticipated, the outcome of the adjustment did not result in drastic changes.

Accountability Services is now ready to release the validated IPT scores and a score report based on the new conversions. To assist in this process, Accountability Services has provided the enclosed sample letter that may be issued to parents to explain the delay in scores.

The NCDPI understands that some English as a Second Language program placement decisions have been made based on the best information available at the start of the school year. As a reminder, language minority students and LEP student participation in the North Carolina Testing Program must be based on the most recently validated IPT or WIDA ACCESS Placement Test (or W-APT, the new screener test used for LEP identification). As of September 24, 2008, the adjusted IPT scores made available to the LEAs are the most recent validated test scores. The most recent validated IPT or W-APT score is the one that must be used for determining LEP status and eligibility for testing accommodations. The validated annual 2008 IPT Form A scores will be used for calculating the 2007-08 AMAOs for proficiency and progress.

### **DIVISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY SERVICES**

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Memorandum

LEA Superintendents/Directors of Charter Schools

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With this release of the adjusted spring 2008 annual IPT scores, LEAs/charter schools should keep the following in mind.

- Some students who would have exited with the original unvalidated IPT scores no longer exited based on the adjusted scores. Approximately the same percentage of students who exited each of the last two years exited this year.
- If a student exited LEP identification based on the IPT score adjustment results, the LEA has the option to reclassify the student as limited English proficient based on the results of administering the W-APT to confirm the student's LEP status. As in previous years, all testing for the purpose of reclassification must be completed by December 31, 2008.
- Eligibility for 2008–09 testing accommodations is based on the adjusted IPT scores or W-APT scores. Based on the adjusted IPT scores, approximately the same percentage of students who remained eligible for accommodations following annual testing in each of the past two years remain eligible this year. If a student is identified as LEP based on the adjusted IPT scores, but scored Superior on the reading subtest (and is no longer allowed to have LEP testing accommodations on state tests), the LEA does not have the option of retesting the student on the W-APT.

We appreciate your cooperation and support as we worked to finalize the validation process for the IPT. We look forward to your continued support in the administration of the new test for annual administration, the *Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners* (ACCESS for ELLs), which will be administered beginning spring 2009.

Enclosure

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Date

Dear Parents,

Recently the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's Accountability Services Division completed a process that helps the agency verify the scores for the spring 2008 administration of the state's English language proficiency test, the *IDEA® English Language Proficiency Test* (also known as the IPT). This checking of the scores helps to more accurately account for your child's progress and proficiency in attaining the English language. There was a delay in this process with the test publisher, Ballard & Tighe, which resulted in a delay in reporting these scores to parents.

The NCDPI Accountability Services Division has now provided IPT score reports to each school system. You will find enclosed with this letter a copy of your child's score report and an interpretative document titled *Understanding the Individual Student Report for the North Carolina IDEA® English Language Proficiency Test (IPT)* for the grade level test that your child was given during the spring 2007–08 annual testing window.

Placement decisions for English as a Second Language program services and eligibility for the state's alternate assessment, the North Carolina Checklist of Academic Standards (NCCLAS), and testing accommodations will be based upon the scores that have been recently verified.

Thank you for your cooperation and patience as the NCDPI worked to finalize its process to ensure the most accurate scores to reflect your child's performance.

Sincerely,

(Name of Superintendent or LEA Test Coordinator)

Enclosure 1: Child's score report

Enclosure 2: Score report interpretative document