

Home Base/RttT Biweekly Update



September 18, 2014

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- Reminders/Tips for Creating Benchmark Assessments in Home Base
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- Upcoming Webinars and Workshops

NEW THIS WEEK

Upgrade to Schoolnet Version 16.1 Coming Soon

Version 16.1 in Schoolnet resolves both of the current outstanding issues, and it adds a lot of new functionality. We are finalizing testing and hope to be able to upgrade Schoolnet soon. Look for a communication as soon as that date is determined.

The fixes:

Fix #1: Resolves the issue with express tests. Express tests were not populating all items. For example, in a 10-question test the last four questions might be blank.

Fix #2: Resolves the issue with test start dates. The error message some users were receiving were a result of the student enrollment date being after the test start date. Students could not access assessments with a start date prior to one day after the enrollment date.

The new functionality:

Restricted Content Options: A new operation has been added called "View Restricted Content." This operation will be part of the roles *Access to Assessment Management and Leadership*. Users with this role will now have options to restrict the access to test content

when creating a test (or in editing test properties). Restricting access to the content prevents the teacher from seeing the content of the items. This is intended for use with more secure type assessments where the teacher would not need to see the actual items prior to the administration of the assessment. The options for restricting content are listed below.

Restrict Content Access:

- At no time
- Before start date
- Before start date and after end date
- Always

Assessment Co-Authoring: In previous versions of Schoolnet, users were given the option to co-author assessment items. This feature has been enhanced to allow for the co-authoring of assessments. This functionality allows you to select other staff or teachers to serve as “co-authors” in creating assessments. All co-authors assigned to a test will have the rights to edit and make changes to the test until you are ready to make public and schedule.

Enhanced Options with Rubrics: When entering point values for a rubric, the values can now be entered with a decimal value (up to two decimal places). This allows for more flexibility when defining rubrics and when scoring items associated with rubrics. Student scores can also contain decimal values.

Printing Options: When creating an assessment or editing test properties, users now have the ability to set the printing options for the assessment. A new section “Enable Printing” has been added and users can choose whether or not to enable the following print options:

- Student test booklet (.pdf)
- Student test booklet (.doc)
- Test Rubrics (.pdf)
- Answer Key (.pdf)
- Scoring Instructions (.pdf)
- Cover Sheet (.pdf)

Enhancements to Gridded Items: The negative sign has been added as an option for the gridded item type. The user will also have more flexibility to determine the display of the options for gridded items. The user can show or hide a negative sign, fraction “slash” and/or the decimal point on the grid. The user can also specify an optional pre-populated decimal point column on the grid.

Lesson Planner Color Customization: Teachers now have the option to customize their lesson planner color by section. Currently the system defaults to colors based on the order of the sections. Teachers can now override the default color options and customize the colors by section for how things display on their lesson planner. The color options are under “My Account” and then on the tab for Sections & Rosters.

Created by Me Filter: *Only for users with the added role of Access to Curriculum Manager.* When searching for materials in curriculum manager, a new filter has been added to allow users to filter by materials “Created by Me.”

Student Workspaces: Students and teachers can leverage Student Workspace to create, manage and comment on student work. Within their personal workspace, students can create and upload work items within portfolios that link back to their classes. Teachers can leverage

this new student workspace in their classrooms for everyday student assignment work, independent projects and performance tasks. They can collaborate and review student work in this space as well.

MORE INFO: To find out more about Schoolnet, please visit <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/homebase/>.

Reminders/Tips for Creating Benchmark Assessments in Home Base

As you are creating district level benchmark assessments, below are some reminders and tips to locate and use the secure district benchmark items.

Remember, district-level users have access to **both** classroom and district benchmark assessments items. The only statewide benchmark items loaded in the system at this time are under the Publisher name **NCDPI_Benchmark**. All other publishers are used for classroom level items that are available to all users within the system and are intended for use by teachers at the classroom level.

Tips for searching for only NCDPI_Benchmark:

Hover over Assessment Admin and click on Find an Item, Passage or Rubric. On the Item Central Screen, select Benchmark Items (and choose items with 4-answer choices or 3-answer choices). Then add any other filters (like for grade, subject, standard, etc.) and the results pulled will be only those that are NCDPI_Benchmark.

Hover over Assessment Admin and click on Find an Item, Passage or Rubric. On the Item Central Screen, click on Advanced Search. In the publisher field, enter NCDPI_Benchmark and then select any other filters (like grade, subject, standard, etc.). Click on Search Items and the results displayed will only be those with the publisher name NCDPI_Benchmark.

School-level users and teachers do not have access to any of the items with the publisher name NCDPI_Benchmark (unless they have been given roles at the district level that allow them this level of access).

When creating a district benchmark assessment, you should **ALWAYS** choose the option to "Create a Test Manually." This will allow you to look up the items in Item Central and follow the tips above to search for NCDPI_Benchmark only (or to create your own items as appropriate).

When creating a district benchmark assessment, you should **NEVER** choose the option to "Create an Express Test." The Express Test feature does not give you control over the items that are pulled in. The system will pull items based on the standards you selected, but it will not limit them by publisher. This will result in items on the test that could be from the classroom-level banks and could have already been exposed to students on classroom assessment given by their teachers.

MORE INFO: For more information on the assessment tools in Home Base, please visit [http://www.ncpublicschools.org/homebase/training/materials/category?category=Classroom%20and%20Benchmark%20Assessment%20\(Schoolnet\)](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/homebase/training/materials/category?category=Classroom%20and%20Benchmark%20Assessment%20(Schoolnet)).

Maintenance Weekend is Sept. 19-22

The next Home Base maintenance weekend is planned Friday, Sept. 19, through Monday, Sept. 22. The system will shut down Friday at 5 p.m. Once maintenance is completed a message will be sent to notify users that the system is up and available for use.

Home Base will be returned to service no later than 6 a.m., Sept. 22. If a delay in bringing up the system should occur, users will be notified via NC SIS email.

The feature will be turned back on once maintenance weekend is completed. If you have questions, please let us know via NC SIS email or the Home Base Support Center at homebase.incidents@its.nc.gov.

This maintenance weekend will include updates and/or additions of the following:

- LEA/School Workflow Improvement for State Collections,
- PMR Data Collection and Validation,
- SAR Data Collection and Validation,
- RPG Data Collection and Validation,
- Dropout Data Collection and Validation,
- AIG Data Collection,
- Discipline Collection and Validation,
- GDVS Collection and Validation,
- ALP Collection,
- Common Follow Up Collection,
- CRDC Data Entry Pages,
- CRDC Report – Part 1 and 2 Collection, and
- Extended Schema Definitions.

The Statewide Student Search in PowerSchool will also be unavailable all day Friday, Sept. 19 (prior to the start of maintenance weekend) as Pearson tries to research and resolve the long delays that occur when performing a search. We apologize for the disruption in service; however, project directors thought it necessary and more convenient to use this time which leads into a maintenance weekend to explore a resolution.

MORE INFO: Please refer to the 2014 North Carolina Release Notes accessible on the Release Highlights page of the NC SIS website at http://www.nc-sis.org/release_highlights.html for more details.

Changes in Educator Evaluation System

The following changes to the Truenorthlogic system, Educator Effectiveness, were to be put into effect the weekend of Sept. 13. We are currently working with the source file issue which has caused no uploads this week into TNL. The issue has been identified and we are working on the resolution ASAP. If you have made changes to the source files this week that should be reflected in TNL, they have not been uploaded. They will be uploaded when the correction is made. There is no need to change the source files again.

The initial ASW upload for teacher schedule validation has not been completed. We are working on the solution. We will notify when the ability to begin the validation process is available.

Here are the changes:

Educator Evaluation and Professional Development Plan (PDP) Changes

1. NCDPI Person Import Update - allow district admins to distinguish between import-created and manually-created accounts
2. Evaluations: Dashboard enhancement to allow some activities to report status but not be required for overall Evaluation completion
3. Observations: Allow Re-open Admin to re-open both activities and observations
4. Professional Development: Section Date/Time Should Not Default to current time
5. Evaluations: Configuration Option to hide Activity Rating Total Column
6. Observations: Standards to display within observations when marking elements
7. Professional Development: Video display in Moodle correction to allow play/FF/pause functionality visibility.
8. Staff List: In-actives should not show on the administrative side.

Analysis of Student Work (ASW) Changes

9. NCDPI ASW - Prevent reviewers from seeing teacher's names
10. NCDPI ASW - Allow teachers to choose multiple objectives per class
11. NCDPI ASW - Need validation on ASW activities
12. NC DPI ASW - Automatically choose for ASW participation
13. NCDPI ASW - Pop up message when teacher indicates schedule is incorrect
14. NCDPI ASW - Notify reviewers and arbitrators when they are added to the role.

MORE INFO: Tad Piner, Tad.Piner@dpi.nc.gov.

NC Teacher Working Conditions Survey Data, Resources, and Training Available

Data from the Teacher Working Conditions Survey is now compiled; in addition, a variety of tools and resources are available on the NC Teaching Conditions website at www.ncteachingconditions.org.

The website includes activity guides, presentations and facilitator notes to support the discussions among school district leaders and staff on whether certain teaching conditions are present in their district (or school) and to ensure data is used in district (or school) improvement planning. The materials suggest specific strategies to help address and improve those teaching conditions.

The New Teacher Center (NTC) is available to provide regional trainings on using survey results to support school improvement planning at the regional, district, and/or school level. These trainings (60 minutes to full-day sessions) can be arranged through NCDPI staff. The feedback received so far on these trainings has been positive, and the data shared has proven beneficial.

MORE INFO: For more, contact Yvette Stewart at Yvette.Stewart@dpi.nc.gov or your

corresponding Regional Education Facilitator at
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/educatoreffectiveness/regional/>.

The guide describes how to attach standards to assignments, how to work with standards grades, and how to analyze and report final grades.

Office of Early Learning Offers K-3 Teachers Webinar on Formative Assessment Process

The Office of Early Learning's K-3 Team will host the second of a three-part webinar series on the formative assessment process from 3:30-4:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 3.

This webinar shares information about the formative assessment process in a K-3 classroom. There are multiple strategies and techniques to elicit evidences of student learning that fit seamlessly in the flow of a K-3 classroom.

This webinar highlights how educators can teach in the moment and ensure that students are advancing toward established learning goals using the K-3 Formative Assessment Process.

Register here: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/801718104>.

Office of Early Learning Listserve, Wiki and Formative Assessment Work

Visit the Office of Early Learning's wiki to learn more about its ongoing work, funded by Race to the Top, in developing that K-3 Formative Assessment Process to support teachers' instruction and students' learning. Wiki link:

<http://rtt-elc-k3assessment.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/Newsletter+Articles>

North Carolina uses different types of assessment for different purposes. The state's Balanced Assessment System is aligned to state content standards and includes Summative Assessments, Interim/Benchmark Assessments and Formative Assessment.

The NCDPI adopted the Council of Chief State School Officers' definition of Formative Assessment: A process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to help students improve the achievement of intended instructional outcomes.

MORE INFO: Here how to join the Office of Early Learning Listserv:

1. Send an email to the Office of Early Learning PreK-Grade 3 Listserv by cutting and pasting the following address into your "To" box within your email application:

join-office_of_early_learning_pre-k-grade-3@lists.dpi.state.nc.us

2. Leave the subject line and the body of the message blank.

3. Once you have successfully subscribed, you will receive a confirmation email.

From the Field: A Brunswick Principal Talks About Data-Driven Instruction

Have you checked out our NCDPI YouTube Channel? Find it here:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/ncpublicschools>.

This week we've added comments from a high school principal discussing how teachers are using data in Schoolnet to drive personalized instruction. West Brunswick High Principal Brock Ahrens notes: "Our teachers' schedules are extremely busy. Schoolnet is immediate ...

immediate feedback on how kids are doing to really inform their instruction.”

View the clip here: <http://bit.ly/1nTjmAe>.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Principal READY Support Sessions Resume This Fall

We are excited to announce the 2014-15 Principal READY sessions for this fall in each region. Building on the foundation we established during fall and spring of 2013-14. Principal READY will focus on instructional leadership to help the principal support teachers. Participants will collaboratively explore curriculum tools and resources that will help their teachers improve content knowledge and instructional skills, with a specific focus on mathematics. These meetings and supporting resources are part of the State’s READY work, with Principal READY providing a unique opportunity for administrators to work in groups, discussing the standards and classroom observations. Principals will collaborate with colleagues and NCDPI staff to support instructional capacity through a strong, consistent implementation of the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System.

Region 4 met in Fayetteville Sept. 17. Remaining sessions are:

- Region 1: Monday, Sept. 29, in Greenville;
- Region 2: Tuesday, Sept. 30, in Wilmington;
- Region 3: Wednesday, Oct. 22, in Cary;
- Region 5: Monday, Oct. 27, in Greensboro;
- Region 6: Monday, Oct. 20, in Charlotte;
- Region 7: Wednesday, Oct. 15, in North Wilkesboro; and
- Region 8: Wednesday, Oct. 8, in Asheville.

MORE INFO: Find additional details on the statewide schedule here, include the link to register:

<http://ncees.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/READY+Principals+Fall+2014>

Upcoming Webinars and Workshops

➤ *PowerTeacher Gradebook Workshop* - There are two more opportunities to attend this workshop held at NCDPI in Raleigh: Friday, Sept. 19, and Monday, Nov. 3. The workshop covers basic PowerSchool and PowerTeacher functionality such as taking attendance, creating assignments, entering assignment grades, working with categories/groups, printing reports, final grade setup/weights, and more. The workshop runs from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. each day. Register here:

<http://www.timetosignup.com/powerschooltraining/folder/1905>

➤ *SAR Webinar* - This webinar, Thursday, Oct. 9, at 10 a.m., will discuss SAR policy, fatal errors and exceptions, and PowerSchool functionality as needed. Register at:

<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/214930640>

- *PMR Webinar*- This webinar will discuss Principal's Monthly Report (PMR) in PowerSchool - how to run as well as how to clean up data. It's repeated Wednesday, Sept. 24, at 1 p.m. Register at: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/987582217>.

- *Discipline Incidents in PowerSchool Webinar* - This webinar will demonstrate how to enter disciplinary incidents into the PowerSchool application.

Sessions are:

- Friday, Sept. 19, at 9 a.m.
Register here: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/416979905>
- Monday, Nov. 17, at 1 p.m.
Register at: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/558287457>

- *End-of-Term Process in PowerSchool Webinar* - This webinar will cover the End-of-Term Process and how to prepare for the end of the marking period.

Sessions are:

- Friday, Oct. 17 at 9 a.m. Register here:
<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/153748801>
- Thursday, Oct. 23, at 1 p.m. Register at:
<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/218332281>

- *Mid-year Graduates in PowerSchool Webinar* - This webinar will discuss the process for handling records of students graduating mid-year.

Sessions are:

- Thursday, Dec. 4, at 1 p.m. Register here:
<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/204543489>
- Tuesday, Dec. 16, at 9 a.m. Register at:
<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/366059760>
- Tuesday, Jan. 13, at 9 a.m. Register here:
<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/444470360>

HOME BASE WEEKLY UPDATE INFO

We encourage you to share this Update, and for past issues of Home Base Weekly and Biweekly Updates, please visit <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/homebase/updates/biweekly/?year=2014>.

***LINKS: PC users might need to press the CTRL button when clicking on a hyperlink in this document.