



**STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

MOLLY M. SPEARMAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Career and Technology Education (CATE) Coordinators, Career Center Directors, Principals, Testing Coordinators and **Health Science Teachers**

FROM: Angel Clark, Health Science Education Associate
Office of Career and Technology Education (OCTE)

CC: Susan C. Flanagan, Director, OCTE

DATE: November 5, 2015

RE: National Health Science Assessment (NHSA) - <http://www.precisionexams.com/nchse/>

Background

Since 2008, the National Health Science Assessment (NHSA) has served as the end-of-program assessment for health science completers. Established by the National Consortium for Health Science Education (NCHSE), the National Health Science Assessment and Certificate Program provide a way to identify and measure student achievement in health science education. Teachers and administrators have access online to a year-end group analysis of their students' results, a tool that can be used to revise and improve curriculum delivery. The assessment is aligned to the National Healthcare Foundation Standards <http://www.healthscienceconsortium.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/National-Health-Science-Standards.pdf>. The National Health Science Assessment (NHSA) is available in two parts; the pre-test, an indication of what students know upon entry into a health science program of study, and the post-test, which measures student mastery of the foundation knowledge and skills needed by all healthcare professionals. Students who meet the passing standard receive a certificate of achievement.

South Carolina Information

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE), Office of Career and Technology Education (OCTE), has determined that four courses in the Health Science cluster are better aligned with the career and technical skill proficiencies assessed on the National Health Science Assessment (NHSA) than others. In order to ensure that the technical skill assessment South Carolina uses to measure performance on Perkins Indicator 2S1 is fair and appropriate for this purpose, only those Health Science completers (students who earn a minimum of 4 units in Health Science courses that includes at least 2 units in the following courses) are required to take the NHSA. The identified courses are Health Science 1 (5550), Health Science 2 (5551), Health Science 3 (5552) and Health Science Clinical Study (5560). Please note that *any* Health Science completer reported using a CIP code in any pathway in the Health Science cluster *may* take the test. *All* NHSA results that match end-of-year completer data in PowerSchool will be used to calculate performance on Perkins Indicator 2S1 for 2015–16; however, these results **will not be used** to measure technical skill attainment as reported for **career centers** on the Annual School Report Card.

In 2014-15, 86 SC schools participated and 1841 tests were administered. The statewide pass rate was 71% compared with the national pass rate of 69%. The SC average assessment score was 72%; the national average score was 70%. The range of scores was 16% to 95%.

2015-16 Assessment Process

Two testing windows:

1st semester completers: November 30, 2015–February 5, 2016

2nd semester completers: April 1–June 3, 2016

The 100 item multiple-choice online assessment is not timed; students generally finish in one hour. Immediate results feedback is given to the students. If students have an individualized education plan (IEP), all accommodations as outlined in their plan can be provided. Health science teachers are NOT allowed to be testing coordinators or proctors in the room when the post-test is administered.

Funding for this assessment (\$12.00/test) is provided through a partnership grant between the SCDE and the South Carolina Hospital Association (SCHA). This funding is available ONLY to cover the cost of post-tests. When purchasing post-tests, a school purchase order is NOT needed; the testing agency will invoice SCHA for all SC students. The cost of the pre-test (\$12.00) is not covered by the partnership grant.

Teachers and proctors must have a unique ID to sign in. Teachers are not required to have an ID unless they are giving the Pre-Test. If your proctor and teacher will be the same as last year, their ID will be the same one they used last year. If you have a new proctor or new teacher, they must register with us to receive their ID. The registration form to receive an ID must be submitted no later than 4 weeks prior to your testing date. If this process is followed, the teacher will receive their ID as soon as possible or within 2 weeks after registering. The registration form is at this link:

https://scde.formstack.com/forms/hs_program_assessment

One form should be submitted for each teacher who has students testing. You will be assigned and e-mailed a teacher ID number that you should keep secure. Teachers may use this ID number for pre-testing. Your proctor will also be assigned a secure ID number, which will be used for post-testing. These numbers are confidential and not to be shared. Make sure to let your proctor know that he or she will be receiving an e-mail with this information. After receiving your ID number, you will proceed to registration on the Precision Exams web page listed below. Teachers and testing coordinators/proctors will all register under the proctor registration section. Current information for instructors and proctors is posted at <http://www.precisionexams.com/nchse/>.

To take the test, students will register by entering their individual State ID Number (sometimes called SUNS [State Unique Numbering System] number), a 10-digit number found in Power School. When students register, the student's first and last name must be entered and **must match the Power School name exactly**. It will be the teacher's responsibility to make sure that each student is supplied with the correct name and State ID number, to register. Students will only go through the registration process once. After registering, the student will be set up to sign in for testing. To sign-in during pre-testing or post-testing, the students will need to use the name and ID used when they originally registered. Again, it will be the teacher's responsibility to supply this to the student. Please refer to the student and proctor guidelines on the support link, <http://www.precisionexams.com/nchse/welcome/training.php>.

For questions, contact Angel Clark, Health Science Education Associate, at aclark@ed.sc.gov, or call Precision Exams at 803-734-0372: Trevor Perkins, tperkins@precisionexams.com or 801-653-9356; Adam Sanchez, asanchez@precisionexams.com . ***For immediate testing assistance, contact: 801-653-9356 or support@precisionexams.com.***