

**Questions and Answers  
DTC Meeting  
Peoples Auditorium, DHEC  
February 8, 2016**

**How do you like the Precode Listserv?**

DTCs don't want the Listserv to replace the Precode Manual. Mel Go assured DTCs that the Precode Manual will not be discontinued.

**Will the March update pick up new students and changes to the student demographics?**

Yes. There are several purposes for the update precode phase depending upon the testing program. First the contractors use the information to produce answer document labels for new students who were not included in the print phase precode extraction. Secondly, the contractor will update their database with the corrections or additions for student demographic data that was submitted by schools/districts. And lastly, the update precode phase is used to populate the online test sessions.

**What about the first day of testing file?**

The Office of Research and Data Analysis provide this file and they are working on it now. If you realize that incorrect data was transmitted during precoding, correct the data in the databases in time for your district's first-day-of-testing data transmission to the SCDE. The SCDE uses the first-day-of-testing demographic data as the basis for accountability data processing. Corrections made after precode and before first-day-of-testing data collections may affect the matching of student data with test data because of differences in demographic data values.

**AP Examinations**

The SCDE will pay for an AP examination administered to any student who has taken the appropriate AP course and who is

1. enrolled in a public school,
2. home-schooled under the auspices of a school district, or
3. enrolled in VirtualSC.

**SCPASS**

**Do the science and social studies online tests have to be administered on consecutive days?**

No, the SCPASS science and social studies online tests do not have to be administered on consecutive days. As you point out, that is why we offer a window--i.e., to provide districts with some flexibility in arranging a schedule that is compatible with their technology resources. Districts and schools should plan an online administration schedule that meets the needs of the schools, teachers, and students, while also taking into consideration test security issues.

**If test administrator data is collected for all testing programs, are seating charts still needed? Can we eliminate seating charts?**

The Office of Assessment (OA) will continue to require seating charts for a time. The OA is examining our options regarding the best way to collect the test administrator data for all of the testing programs. If the collection of test administrator data is accurate and comprehensive, there may not be a need for the seating chart information. This is a work in progress.

**The ACT®**

**The following questions and follow-up questions were in response to the discussion regarding the Joint Resolution and the requirement that districts test 11<sup>th</sup> grade students. Can you provide clarification of what it means for districts to “offer” the ACT to students? We need uniformity across the state. We encourage the state to provide guidance about how districts should “offer” the test to their students. The state should provide a sample letter. What is the line between student and parents (regarding who can choose to take the test or not)? Who must ultimately decide?**

In the spring of 2016 all public high schools and, where necessary, career centers, are required to offer The ACT® to each student in the eleventh grade on the dates provided in this memo. The SC-NCSC may be used as the alternate to The ACT for students who are alternate-assessment eligible.

**Is The ACT being administered this year?**

Yes, the launch communication from ACT, Inc. was sent to DTCs and STCs on February 9th. ACT, Inc. will send the information to those names they received through the WorkKeys’ Establishment process. The ACT Web site will be live on February 9.

**Has a testing window been set for High School ACT administration?**

Yes.

The ACT® Test Taken Online

- Weekdays April 19–May 3, 2016

The ACT® Test Taken on Paper

- Initial Test Date: April 19, 2016
- Makeup Test Date: May 3, 2016
- Accommodations Testing Window: April 19–May 3, 2016

**What is the Web site to use for The ACT? Do we order thru this Web site?**

The ACT-hosted website for The ACT is <http://act.org/aap/southcarolina/act.html>. Materials are ordered through PearsonAccess<sup>next</sup>, which can be accessed on the right-hand side of this Web page. Questions pertaining to ACT’s manuals, requirements, and communications should be directed to ACT, Inc. (1-800-553-6244 -extension 2800 for standard time testing, extension 1788 for accommodated testing).

**What is the definition of an 11<sup>th</sup> grader? Is it based on 9GR?**

Yes. The 9GR field is used for WorkKeys and the 11<sup>th</sup> grade assessment; these tests are administered to students in their third year in high school. The 9GR field for students taking those tests in 2015–16 is 14 (which represents 2013–14). See the PowerSchool Specific Fields manual at <http://ed.sc.gov/data/information-systems/power-school-administration/powerschool-manuals-for-s-c-pages/> for details related to this field.

**The following question related to the discussion of Section 2 of the Joint Resolution. Does this section forbid districts from administering the ACT to grades 9 and 10?**

The joint resolution does not prevent districts from testing student in grades 9 and 10. The state will not fund the testing.

**Section 3 of the Joint Resolution mandates the administration of the same tests in 2016–17 as were administered last year for K4 and K5 students. Can districts change the test selected for K4 administration?**

No, districts are expected to give the same tests that districts selected and administered in 2015–16.

**There was a lack of communication and difficulty receiving K4 and K5 information from the Early Childhood Office and the Office of Assessment. Will this improve?**

Yes, the Office of Assessment will be sending out information regarding the upcoming training sessions and the training sessions for summer and early fall.

**Questions arose from a discussion of the ESEA waiver that was approved by the U.S. Department of Education. By approving the waiver, the EOCEP Algebra 1 and English 1 courses were approved for federal accountability, therefore, Geometry and English 2 will not be administered. When do these students have to be tested? Some students stay in school until they are 21 years old.**

There is going to be a deadline. Now it is by the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade, however, the SCDE is currently discussing this issue and will provide guidance regarding the deadline.

**What is the ruling regarding mandatory online testing for 2016–17?**

The SCDE lawyers are currently saying that the mandatory online testing applies only to SC READY for next year. The Office of Assessment requested a delay of one year in this mandatory online testing, but it was denied.

**SC READY**

**Are students going to be timed on this test? Despite the recommended times, the test is not timed... correct?**

The SC READY tests will not be timed. Estimated testing times, however, will be provided to district and school testing staff for planning purposes. The testing times shared in this presentation (e.g.,

approximately 2 ½ hours per day for each session of the ELA test) should be considered very rough, initial estimates. Please check the SC READY web page, <http://ed.sc.gov/tests/middle/sc-ready/>, for updated estimates in several weeks.

**Some of the estimated times given for the tests exceed a 2-hour block. These are long time estimates.**

Every effort is being made to ensure that the tests administered this spring will provide valid and reliable results, while minimizing the length of testing time. When the tests are actually administered, teachers may find that students take less or more time than estimated. As with the SCPASS tests, students will code the “Start Time” and “Stop Time” on their answer documents; this information will be used to help the contractor and the SCDE make decisions about future test administrations.

Legislation requires that SC READY includes a measurement of student comparability to student achievement in other states. The set of *TerraNova* items is included in the SC READY assessments for this purpose. This lengthens the test. Juggling competing priorities and having multiple purposes for a test causes this problem. We have to maintain the reliabilities for the test while trying to keep it as short as possible.

**When will districts receive an electronic copy of the SC READY TAM?**

The electronic copy of the SC READY TAM will be posted to eDIRECT and the SC READY Web page at the end of February.

**If districts miss orders for some students in the precode, etc., will there be a charge to the district?**

No, the districts will not be charged for late orders.

**Is this test developed by the SCDE or the vendor? Are SCPASS and PACT items on SC READY?**

SC READY includes items developed by Data Recognition Corporation (DRC) and a set of *TerraNova* items which were purchased by DRC (and DRC now owns).

**Districts need a longer testing window for SC READY. Can the Office of Assessment do something about this?**

We know that the window is short given the requirement for online testing, but the legislators want testing to occur as close to the end of school as possible.

**Is SC READY available on Google Chromebooks? What other devices can be used?**

Yes, implementation procedures are located in the Technology User Guide Manual. Use the Fall/Winter edition for EOCEP until the Spring version is complete and posted to eDIRECT.

**English Language Arts (ELA)**

**The next set of questions was asked during the presentation regarding the SC READY ELA test. How is scoring different for SR? Is it worth more points? Is there partial credit? Are the communication standards included on the ELA part of the SC READY test?**

No, communication standards will not be tested this year.

**Does the first day of ELA contain more than the TDA item?**

Yes, there will be some SR items followed by the TDA item.

**Will the TDAs be scored by human readers or AI (Artificial Intelligence) or both?**

Two human readers will score each TDA.

**How many TDAs will be on the test and how it is scored?**

There will be one TDA on the ELA test. It will be scored with a holistic rubric. The rubric is located on the SC READY Web page:

[http://ed.sc.gov/scdoe/assets/File/tests/middle/scready/SC\\_READY\\_TDA\\_Scoring\\_Guidelines\\_With\\_Nonscore\\_Codes.pdf](http://ed.sc.gov/scdoe/assets/File/tests/middle/scready/SC_READY_TDA_Scoring_Guidelines_With_Nonscore_Codes.pdf)

Readers will assign a student a score from 1 to 4. The TDA will be weighted by 4. A student that is given a grade of 4 from the two readers using the holistic rubric will actually receive a total score of 16 points when weighted by 4.

**We would also like scores on the different domains. If holistic grading is used, then teachers will not receive enough information about the student's writing. The teachers for the next school year will want to know about their new students.**

The TDA is very different from the independent writing that students were required to do on SCPASS and Aspire. College and Career Ready Standards focus primarily on providing evidence from text in both reading and writing. The wording of the holistic scoring rubric emphasizes that focus, rather than scoring four separate domains on an equal basis. If teachers are teaching writing on a regular basis, they should be aware of a student's strengths and weaknesses in writing long before the administration of the summative assessment. One suggestion: Writing portfolios with samples of a student's writing could be passed along to the next teacher. If that is not possible (or convenient), most teachers can quickly assess a student's writing abilities from an on demand writing sample.

**We would like detailed exemplars.**

We can provide more TDA examples but we cannot provide you scored student samples from South Carolina because we do not have the data; the test has not been administered in S. C.

**For the online ELA test, how will the reading text and items be displayed on a computer screen?**

The students will see a split screen. The passage or text will be on the left and a box for the questions and responses will be on the right section of the screen.

**Is there a zero on the TDA?**

No. There will be nonscorable codes for those students whose response is illegible, in another language, blank, etc. The nonscorable codes will be posted on the SC READY Web page when approved.

### **Will the TDA focus more on organization rather than content?**

Organization (structure) and “content” both represent standards in Reading Literary Texts, Reading Informational Texts, and Writing. As such, all could be a possible focus for a TDA.

### **Will the Office of Assessment provide more samples than those posted for grades 4 and 7?**

The Office of Assessment invited teachers to come to the Rutledge Building during the next two weeks to develop more TDAs. The teachers will find rich passages and create TDA prompts for release to the districts.

### **When will the SC READY OTT be ready?**

The Office of Assessment is in the process of selecting items to include in the OTT. It should be completed by the end of February.

### **Is ENRICH going to be updated for SC READY?**

Yes, they are in the process of updating ENRICH now.

### **Why hasn't ENRICH been updated to include ACCESS?**

Because of the delays in the new state agency handling RFPs, we had to do an Emergency Procurement to acquire the rights to administer ACCESS for one year. Since it was so late in the year, there was not enough time to update ENRICH. The accommodations listed are based on last year's assessment.

**Communications and policies regarding the testing of VirtualSC students need to be addressed. Why are districts receiving multiple lists of students from VirtualSC who need to be administered EOCEP tests in our schools? 1) A list came in fall, but VirtualSC did not indicate the students would need to be tested in spring. 2) There is an increasing number of students and some districts do not have the space or sufficient teachers to administer EOCEP tests to extra students; this situation is also presenting an economic hardship for the receiving districts. 3) The lists need to come from the SCDE; we are receiving calls and information from schools saying we need to test their students. 4) There is also the issue of IEP information for these students. They may not be tested with the correct accommodations if the receiving districts are not provided this information.**

These are issues that need to be addressed with VirtualSC to improve the communications districts receive. The Office of Assessment will set up a meeting with VirtualSC staff to discuss the points that DTCs have mentioned.

### **Is the first year exemption for foreign students applicable to SC READY?**

Yes there is a first year exemption for SC READY. A memo was sent to DTCs concerning this issue. To determine the date by which students had to enter the country, use the last day of make-up testing for the previous year.

## **SC READY Math**

**Since students do not finish taking the test at the same time, how will test administrators or students handle the transition to the non-calculator section? How do we ensure that students turn in calculators when they have completed the calculator section of the math test?**

The TAM will provide good instructions for test administrators. Test administration directions include a script for the teachers regarding the calculator section. Students are told to raise their hands when they have completed the calculator section and the teachers will collect the calculator at that time. Then students can proceed to the non-calculator section. The TAs must continually monitor students during testing. The math paper/pencil format is one test booklet with two sections. There are separator pages and side tabs so that, at a glance, teachers can tell where in the test booklet students are working.

**How are the SR (Selected-Response) items scored if they require multiple responses?**

The students must get all parts correct or select all correct responses to receive 1 point for the SR items. No partial credit will be awarded to student response.

**Does the number of points on the math blueprint correspond to the number of math items on the test?**

Yes, it does.

**How does the gridded response work on the online and Paper/pencil tests? Are they similar?**

The students respond in the same format on both types of test. For the online test, the keypad is restricted to the same options as found on the paper/pencil tests.

## **Accommodations**

**What does the loose leaf online version look like?**

The online version will have 1 item on a screen.

**In the past, the writing prompt was read to students. Why is there no reading to students with SC READY?**

There has been no study to show that oral administration is valid with this type of ELA test. The Office of Assessment needs to conduct a study to show if it is a valid accommodation or not. We need test data to begin the research on this issue.