



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MOLLY M. SPEARMAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Test Coordinators
District Accountability Directors

FROM: Elizabeth Jones, Director, Office of Assessment
Roy Stehle, Director, Office of Federal and State Accountability
Paul Butler-Nalin, Director, Office of Research and Data Analysis

DATE: April 2, 2015

RE: Guidance to Districts on Advanced Students Taking The ACT[®] Early and for students scheduled to take The ACT[®], but who have already taken the test during the 2014-15 school year

This memorandum provides guidance to school districts that receive a request from a parent/guardian of an 11th grade student for permission to allow that student to take The ACT[®] in spring 2015 who is not scheduled to be tested because the student is not yet in the third year of high school and for students scheduled to take The ACT[®] but have already taken the test during the 2014-15 school year.

Background

Act 155, passed by the General Assembly in April 2014, amended the Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, by adding Section 59-18-325, which stipulates that, "... all students entering eleventh grade for the first time in school year 2014-15 and subsequent years must be administered a college and career readiness assessment".

For school year 2014-15, the grade 11 college- and career-readiness assessment is The ACT[®]. In April 2015, The ACT[®] will be administered to all 11th graders (as defined in PowerSchool, by 9GR status).

Requests for Advanced Students to Take The ACT® Early

If requested by a parent/guardian of an “advanced student” who is currently enrolled in 11th grade, (but who is not scheduled to take The ACT® in April 2015 because the student’s PowerSchool 9GR code does not correspond to the 9GR code required for ACT testing in spring of 2014–15), a district may determine whether to allow the student to take The ACT® early.

For students in the 11th grade due to their advanced academic standing (i.e., students who have earned sufficient academic credits to be enrolled in 11th grade, ahead of their 9GR cohort), a parent or guardian of the student may request from the district permission to take The ACT® early. If a district receives such a request, the district may determine whether the student is, in fact, enrolled in the 11th grade (based on grade level and true grade in PowerSchool), has sufficient credits to be allowed to test early, and it would be feasible for the student to take The ACT® early.

Only actively enrolled students coded as enrolled in 11th grade in PowerSchool, in both Grade Level and True Grade may be considered to take The ACT® early.

How will The ACT® test score of advanced students who test early be used for Assessment and Accountability purposes?

For Assessment purposes, The ACT® score of an advanced 11th grade student who takes The ACT® early will be included in aggregate results reported for the school year when the student takes The ACT®.

For Accountability purposes, The ACT® score of an advanced 11th grade student who takes The ACT® early will be included in The ACT® results of 11th grade students along with their 9GR cohort. Advanced students allowed to test early will be counted in The ACT® participation rate(s) of the school and district in their 9GR cohort year.

Note: If The ACT is not the college readiness assessment in the cohort year, students who test early will be required to take the new college readiness assessment along with students in their 9GR cohort for accountability purposes.

District Documentation and Reporting Requirements

Districts that receive requests to allow an advanced student(s) to take The ACT® early should retain the following documentation: a copy of the parent or guardian’s request, evidence of the

student's advanced academic standing (e.g., from the student's transcript), and the district's decision regarding the request to take The ACT® early.

Students scheduled to take The ACT®, but who have already taken the test during the 2014-15 school year

With proper documentation, districts may accept a previous ACT score(s) of a currently enrolled 11th grade student (PowerSchool, 9Gr) as fulfilling the current ACT testing requirement in Act 155.

Districts must send copies of score reports from The ACT® to the South Carolina Department of Education's Office of Research & Data Analysis, during The ACT® Preview 1 cohort process. (Preview 1 for The ACT® cohort will be available to districts in June.)

If there are questions, please contact:

- Lisa Woodward, Office of Research and Data Analysis
LWoodard@ed.sc.gov, (803) 734-8573
- Kevin Fatica, Office of Assessment
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- Jewell Stanley, Office of Federal and State Accountability
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cc: District Superintendents
District PowerSchool Coordinators
District Technology Directors