



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | Mark Johnson, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*

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TO LEA Superintendents
Charter School Directors

FROM Maria Pitre-Martin, Ph.D. 
Deputy State Superintendent

Tammy L. Howard, Ph.D. 
Director, Accountability Services

GRADE 8 MATHEMATICS TESTING

For several years, including the 2016–17 school year, students enrolled in grade 8 and taking NC Math 1 were required to be assessed on both the grade 8 End-of-Grade (EOG) and the End-of-Course (EOC) mathematics assessments. The *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) no longer requires this “double testing.” Flexibility has been granted to states if the mathematics EOC is used for federal accountability and is administered to grade 8 students. This flexibility allows the achievement level for an eighth-grade student’s NC Math 1 EOC assessment to count for federal accountability in grade 8. Additionally, these same students will be required to take the NC Math 3 EOC assessment for federal accountability in high school.

In December, Accountability Services began conversations with the State Board of Education (SBE) about changes to State Board policy to eliminate double testing. In April, a policy outlining these changes was presented to the board for discussion, and a webinar was held to provide clarification and additional information to stakeholders. A survey was used to gather feedback from each local education agency (LEA) and charter school regarding preference for the higher-level math requirement at the high-school level. In May, the SBE voted to eliminate double testing for eighth grade students by approving SBE policy ACCT-021, which states:

“b. 1. Effective 2017–18 and beyond, all eligible students in membership at grade 8 enrolled for credit in NC Math 1 shall take the end-of-course assessment at the completion of the course. Schools shall exempt these students from being assessed on the grade 8 mathematics end-of-grade assessment. These students will take the NC Math 3 end-of-course assessment for federal accountability in high school.”

Beginning with the 2017–18 school year, students enrolled in grade 8 taking NC Math 1 will have their scores from this assessment used for federal accountability for that school year only. The scores for these students will not be banked for use at the high-school level. When these

DIVISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY SERVICES

Tammy L. Howard, Ph.D., *Director* | tammy.howard@dpi.nc.gov
6314 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-6314 | (919) 807-3787 | Fax (919) 807-3772
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same students reach the end of grade 11, they will be expected to have taken the NC Math 3 EOC assessment for federal accountability. Students enrolled in grade 8 taking grade 8 math for the 2017–18 school year, will have the grade 8 EOG score used for federal accountability in grade 8 only. When these students enter high school and complete NC Math 1, their score for this course will be used for federal accountability in high school at the end of grade 11.

All students enrolled in NC Math 3 during the 2017–18 school year will take the NC Math 3 North Carolina Final Exam (NCFE). The NC Math 3 EOC will be field tested in the fall and spring of 2017–18. A random sample of students across the state who are enrolled in NC Math 3 will take the NC Math 3 field test. Once the operational assessments are administered in 2018–19, a standard setting will be conducted to establish achievement levels for this new assessment.

A summary of requirements for grade 8 NC Math 1 and NC Math 3 is provided in the table below:

2017–18
8 th graders enrolled in NC Math 1 will be administered the NC Math 1 EOC assessment only
All high school students enrolled in NC Math 3 will be administered the NC Math 3 NCFE
A random sample of high school students enrolled in NC Math 3 will be administered the NC Math 3 EOC field test
2018–19
8 th graders enrolled in NC Math 1 will be administered the NC Math 1 EOC assessment only
All high school students enrolled in NC Math 3 will be administered the operational NC Math 3 EOC.

Accountability Services has developed a frequently asked questions (FAQ) document (attached) to address questions regarding this change in mathematics testing policy.

If you have questions regarding information within this memo or the FAQ, please contact your Regional Accountability Coordinator (RAC).

MPM/TLH/whw

c: Mark Johnson, State Superintendent
Lindsey Wakely, Sr. Policy Advisor & Chief Legal Counsel
Dave Machado, Director, Office of Charter Schools
Tiffany Perkins, Director, K–12 Standards, Curriculum and Instruction
JoAnn Honeycutt, Director, Career and Technical Education
William Hussey, Director, Exceptional Children
Sneha Shah-Coltrane, Director, Advanced Learning and Gifted Education
Eric Hall, Superintendent, North Carolina Innovative School District
Hope Lung, Section Chief, Test Development
Nancy Carolan, Section Chief, Testing Policy and Operations
Curtis Sonneman, Section Chief, Analysis and Reporting
Regional Accountability Coordinators
LEA Test Coordinators

Attachment

**Grade 8 Mathematics Testing Flexibility and NC Math 3
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
2017–18**

- 1. Are students who are enrolled in grade 8 but are taking the NC Math 1 in place of grade 8 mathematics required to take both the grade 8 End-of-Grade (EOG) and NC Math 1 End-of-Course (EOC) assessments during the 2017–18 school year?**

No. The *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) allows flexibility to states to eliminate double testing at grade 8. Beginning with the 2017–18 school year, these students are required to take only the NC Math 1 EOC.

- 2. With the elimination of double testing at grade 8, will grade 7 also be allowed this provision?**

The federal law allowing the grade 8 exception does not include grade 7; however, this request will be posed to the United States Department of Education in the state's ESSA plan. A final decision will not be known until a future date. Therefore, students enrolled in both NC Math 1 and grade 7 mathematics will take both tests for the 2017–18 school year and beyond until there is a final decision.

- 3. If a student takes NC Math 1 in 8th grade, what higher level math will be required at the high school level? At what grade level will this score be reported?**

Students taking the NC Math 1 EOC in 8th grade will be required to take the NC Math 3 EOC assessment in high school. For these students, the NC Math 3 score will be reported at grade 11 for federal accountability.

- 4. Will scores for 8th grade students taking NC Math 1 be banked for high school reporting in 2017–18?**

No. Beginning with the 2017–18 school year, students enrolled in grade 8 taking NC Math 1 will have their scores from this assessment used for grade 8 federal accountability and for state reports. The scores for these students will not be banked for use at the high-school level. When these students enter high school and complete NC Math 3 by the end of grade 11, their NC Math 3 scores will be used for federal accountability in high school.

- 5. What about scores for students that were in grade 8 in 2016–17 and took the NC Math 1? Will their scores be counted at the high school they attend in 2017–18 as banked scores?**

Yes. Scores will be banked to the high school for those students who were in grade 8 in 2016–17 and took the NC Math 1 assessment.

- 6. How do students who take the EOG in 8th grade and then NC Math 1 in high school count in accountability?**

Student scores on the grade 8 mathematics EOG will be reported for federal accountability at grade 8. These students will take NC Math 1 in high school, and the NC Math 1 score will be reported for federal accountability at the end of 11th grade.

7. Does NC Math 1 count as a high school math credit?

Yes. If a student takes NC Math 1 and passes the course, he/she earns high school credit. However, if a student takes NC Math 1 again in 9th grade, the 8th grade occurrence does not count as high school credit. Only the 9th grade occurrence counts.

8. Will students be required to take the NC Math 3 North Carolina Final Exam (NCFE) during the 2017–18 school year?

Yes. All students enrolled in NC Math 3 for the 2017–18 school year will take the NC Math 3 NCFE. Additionally, a sample of students from across the state enrolled in NC Math 3 will take the NC Math 3 EOC field test during the 2017–18 school year.

9. Will students be required to take the NC Math 3 EOC during the 2018–19 school year?

Yes. All students enrolled in NC Math 3 for the 2018–19 school year will take the NC Math 3 EOC. Standard setting (setting the achievement levels and proficiency score) for this new assessment will occur during the summer of 2019, so score reporting for NC Math 3 will be delayed in 2018–19.

10. How will the NC Math 3 EOC be used in accountability?

Beginning in 2018–19 students who took NC Math 1 in grade 8 in 2017–18 will use their NC Math 3 EOC score for high school accountability. The use of the score will include growth and proficiency.

11. Will student scores for NC Math 3 be included in federal accountability for students who took NC Math 1 in high school?

No, the students' NC Math 1 score will be used for federal accountability reporting in grade 11.

12. For 2017–18, what mathematics courses will be used to measure Educator Effectiveness?

For 2017–18, the Grade 8 EOG Mathematics, the NC Math 1 EOC, and the NC Math 2 North Carolina Final Exam (NCFE) will be used in Educator Effectiveness. (See the attached table Elimination of Double Testing.)

13. When will the NC Math 3 EOC be used in Educator Effectiveness?

Beginning in 2018–19, all students enrolled in NC Math 3 will be required to take the NC Math 3 EOC, and the results will be used to measure Educator Effectiveness.

14. Will there be participation sanctions for NC Math 3?

Yes. A 95% participation requirement remains in effect for all EOC and EOG assessments.

15. How will students who take NC Math 1 in 8th grade be identified to determine their NC Math 3 score should be used for federal accountability in high school?

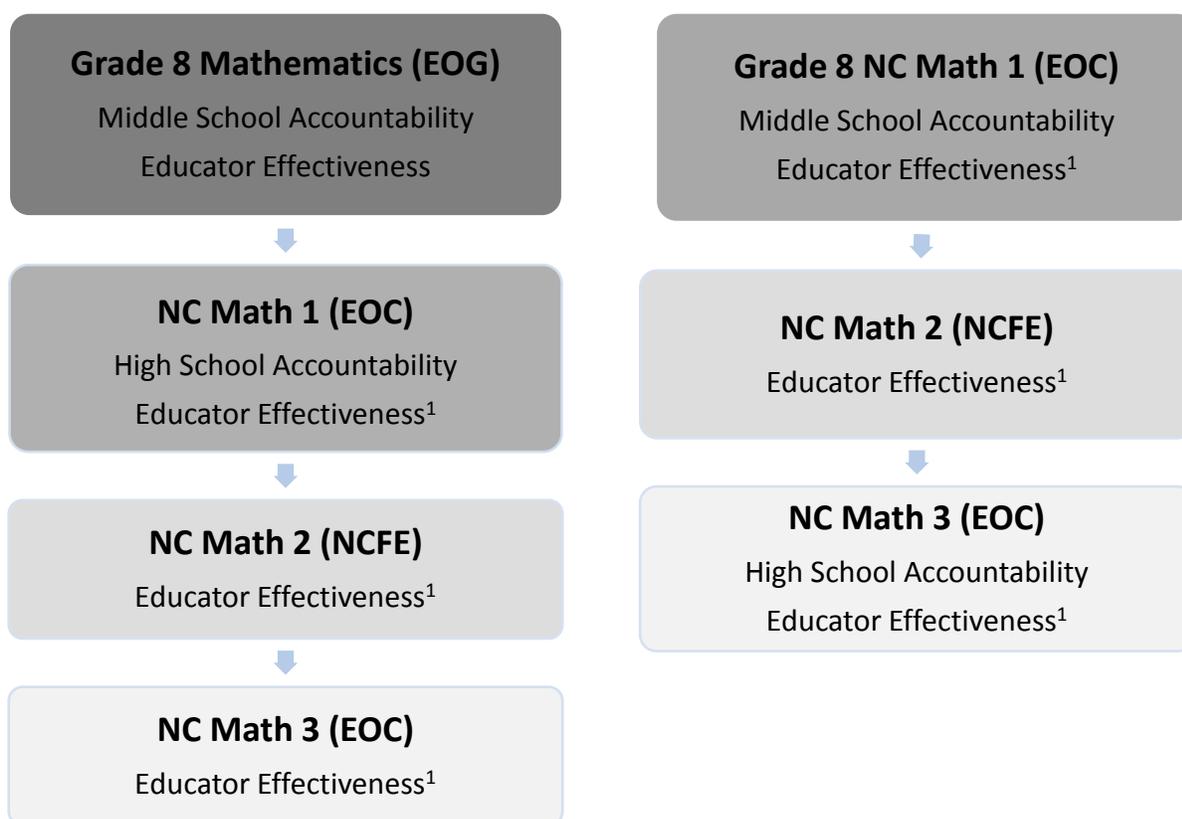
The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) will identify students who took NC Math 1 in 8th grade and note them as being expected to take NC Math 3 by the end of 11th grade.

Elimination of Double Testing

For several years, including the 2016–17 school year, students enrolled in grade 8 and taking the high school mathematics course that is used for federal accountability were required to be assessed on both the grade 8 End-of-Grade (EOG) and the high school End-of-Course (EOC) mathematics assessments. The *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) no longer requires this “double testing.” Flexibility has been granted to states if the mathematics EOC is used for federal accountability and is administered to grade 8 students. This flexibility allows the achievement level for an eighth-grade student’s NC Math 1 EOC assessment to count for federal accountability in grade 8. Additionally, these same students will be required to take the NC Math 3 EOC assessment for federal accountability in high school.

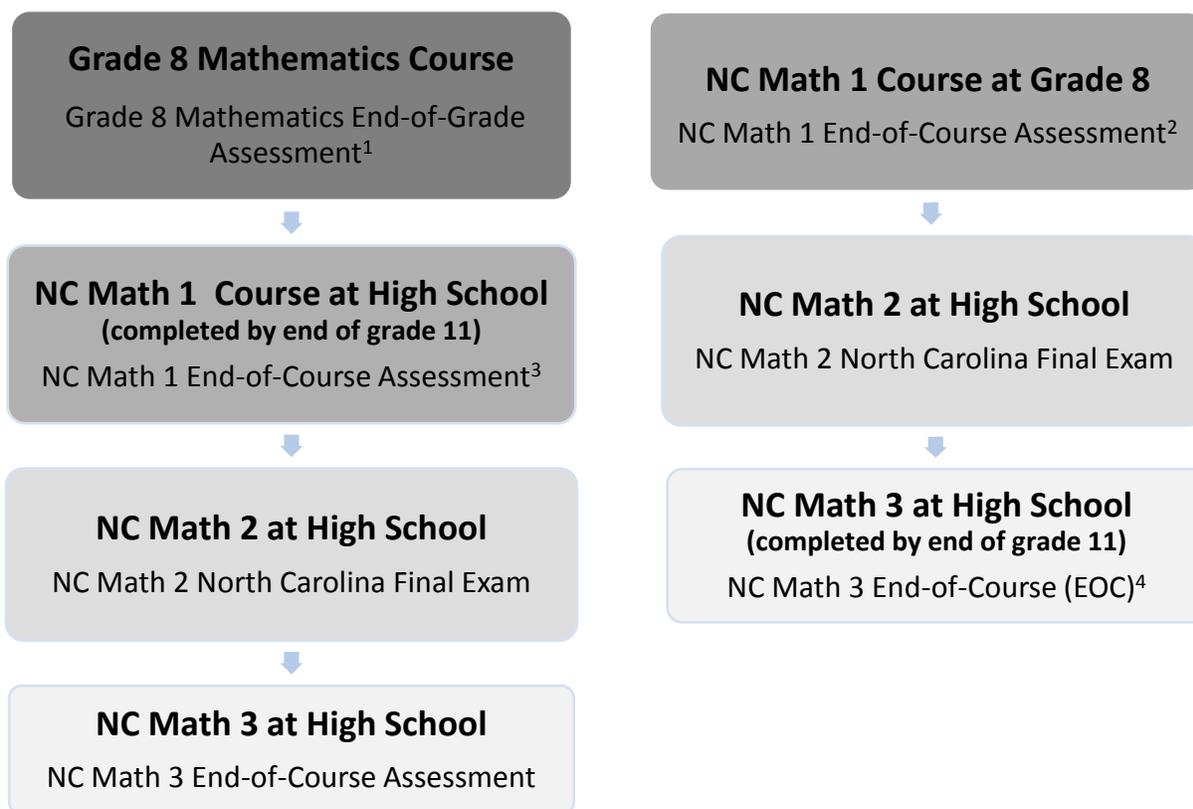
The Mathematics Pathways chart below explains how a student will progress through mathematics options beginning at grade 8 and how scores will be used.

Mathematics Assessments: Use of Scores



¹ Public schools shall use results from all course-specific operational assessments as a minimum of twenty percent (20%) of the student's final grade for each respective course. (State Board Policy TEST-016)

Mathematics Student Pathways: Required Assessments



¹Student scores on the grade 8 mathematics End-of-Grade (EOG) assessment will be used for federal accountability at grade 8.

²Beginning with the 2017–18 school year, students taking NC Math 1 in grade 8 will have their scores for the NC Math 1 assessment used for federal accountability at grade 8.

³Students taking NC Math 1 in high school will have their NC Math 1 assessment score used for federal accountability reporting in grade 11.

⁴Students who took NC Math 1 in grade 8 will take NC Math 3 at high school, and the NC Math 3 score will be used for federal reporting at the end of grade 11.