

Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Department of Public Instruction Sets State Achievement Standard Cut Scores for the North Dakota Alternate Assessment 2 (NDAA2) Based on Modified Achievement Standards

Bismarck, ND – The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction announces the adoption of state achievement standards for the North Dakota Alternate Assessment-2 (NDAA2) in reading, mathematics, and science. Dr. Wayne G. Sanstead, State Superintendent, approved the adoption of the state achievement standards for the NDAA2 following a process that sought the input of statewide special educators and content specialists. These state achievement standards for the NDAA2 become the basis for the scoring of student performance in reading, mathematics, and science on the NDAA2. The NDAA2 measures student achievement in terms of the state's content and modified achievement standards for students with persistent learning difficulties.

Dr. Sanstead approved the adoption of the state achievement standards for the NDAA2 after reviewing the committee's recommendations and supporting documentation generated during the review process. State law places responsibility for the supervision of the North Dakota assessment system, including the NDAA2 for students with persistent learning difficulties, with the State Superintendent.

An achievement standard, or cut score, is a score a student must attain or exceed to be placed into a corresponding achievement level. North Dakota identifies four achievement levels: novice, partially proficient, proficient, and advanced. It is the stated goal that all students demonstrate

knowledge, skills, and abilities at the levels of proficient or advanced. All student and school reports reference student achievement in terms of these four levels.

On February 9-10, 2009, a committee of statewide educators reviewed the results of the 2008-09 NDAA2 and set cut scores using a bookmark standards setting process. In this process, the standards-setting committee reviewed impact data from the NDAA2, conducted several rounds of voting to set the cut scores for each subject and grade level, reconciled variances among grades, and recommended final cut scores to the State Superintendent. The standards-setting committee members were nominated by their supervisors and peers and selected by the Department of Public Instruction.

The State Superintendent considered the recommendations of the standards-setting committee and independent statistical analysis by an external technical advisor to set and approve the final state modified achievement standards. The final, approved state modified achievement standards for the NDAA2 are listed in the table below. This table presents achievement data generated when the approved cut scores are applied onto the 2008-09 NDAA2 results for reading, mathematics, and science, respectively. Any student with a scale score below "partially proficient" is designated as "novice." Any student with a scale score below "proficient" is designated as "partially proficient." Any student with a scale score below "advanced" is designated as "proficient." Any student with a scale score at or above "advanced" is designated as "advanced."

The Department of Public Instruction will generate student, school, school district, and state achievement reports based on the approved cut scores. It is anticipated that reports will be available in late April 2009.

State and federal laws require the reporting of student achievement on the state's academic assessment in terms of valid and reliable achievement standards. These student achievement results are referenced to generate annual student achievement report cards or profile reports for every public school, school district, and the state. The NDAA2 is administered annually to measure the achievement of students with persistent learning difficulties in terms of the state's content standards. The Department of Public Instruction will issue a technical manual for the NDAA2 in May 2009, which will present a summary analysis of the performance of the NDAA2 in all subject and grade levels.

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Table
North Dakota Alternate Assessment-2 (NDAA2)
Final Cut Scores and Associated Impact Data*
Reading, Mathematics, and Science

Grade/Content Area	Cut Scores				Associated Impact Data		
	Partially Proficient	Proficient	Advanced	Novice	Partially Proficient	Proficient	Advanced
3 Math	19	28	44	0.0%	12.3%	75.4%	12.3%
4 Math	16	22	40	4.2%	11.3%	71.4%	13.1%
5 Math	15	25	41	1.1%	13.1%	72.8%	13.1%
6 Math	22	28	45	2.8%	18.8%	59.1%	19.3%
7 Math	17	24	35	3.7%	15.7%	59.3%	21.3%
8 Math	15	21	35	3.0%	18.0%	59.0%	20.0%
11 Math	14	25	36	.5%	22.4%	58.3%	18.8%
3 Reading	14	22	39	4.8%	19.9%	66.7%	8.6%
4 Reading	19	27	38	3.0%	19.7%	64.4%	12.9%
5 Reading	16	24	36	2.9%	20.9%	65.2%	11.1%
6 Reading	16	24	38	2.5%	15.2%	79.1%	3.3%
7 Reading	16	25	37	3.1%	19.7%	64.1%	13.0%
8 Reading	18	28	40	2.7%	19.2%	70.5%	7.6%
11 Reading	17	29	43	1.1%	19.9%	71.8%	7.2%
4 Science	18	27	38	2.1%	17.1%	67.1%	13.6%
8 Science	22	27	36	7.7%	23.9%	58.1%	10.3%
11 Science	15	24	33	2.6%	31.4%	60.3%	5.8%

Note: Cut Scores are presented as total points earned on each respective NDAA2 assessment. Associated Impact Data presents the rates of student achievement within each respective achievement level (i.e. novice, partially proficient, proficient, and advanced).