

**STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES**  
**Service Agreement for Systemwide Diagnostic Assessment System**

**Request:** The North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) received approval from the Division of Purchase and Contract on February 1, 2012, and from the State Board of Community Colleges on March 16, 2012, to contract with College Entrance Examination Board (College Board) for the delivery of a comprehensive diagnostic placement testing system. This contract will expire on June 30, 2016. NCCCS requests approval for an extension to the current contract with College Board for the period of July 1, 2016, through June 30, 2018.

The extension of this contract will maintain the cost of the test units purchased from the College Board at a discounted price of \$1.35 per unit from July 1, 2016, through December 31, 2016. The price per test unit in the 2017-2018 contract period will shift to the state-approved pricing of \$1.50 per test for the remaining 18 months (January 1, 2017, through June 30, 2018.)

Research and evaluation is needed to determine the effectiveness of the North Carolina Diagnostic Assessment and Placement (NC DAP) test. Although the test has been in use for 3 years, we do not yet have enough student data to complete valid research on its effectiveness. Therefore, we request to extend the College Board contract for 2 additional years for the following reasons:

- As part of the existing contract, College Board will shortly begin a study of the NC DAP math test modules to determine the validity of cut scores. A validity study of reading and English cut scores will follow.
  - The Community College System needs to generate enough data to validate cut scores. We currently have enough student data for math but need 2 additional academic years to generate enough data for reading and English, as these tests were implemented after math was implemented.
  - Failure to approve the current contract extension will result in loss of student data that will determine the effectiveness of the NC DAP test.

**Background:** In 2010, the NCCCS *Developmental Education Initiative* State Policy Team began its work to redesign developmental math, reading, and English courses. It established two faculty-driven task forces to create the new curricula. The first task force redesigned developmental math; as a result, the Curriculum Review Committee approved eight new developmental math modules in February 2012.

In February 2012 the State Board of Community Colleges adopted a policy to approve a new single diagnostic placement test for North Carolina Community Colleges. Prior to that approval, the Presidents' Association positively reviewed this policy change. All colleges implemented the new developmental math curriculum and diagnostic placement assessment by August 1, 2013.

College Board, the chosen vendor, also created an English/Reading diagnostic assessment after it received the redesigned curriculum from the NCCCS DEI English/Reading Task Force.

**Rationale:** Because it is customized to NCCCS modules/courses, the statewide diagnostic assessment system supports proper student placement into the new developmental curricula. Diagnostic assessment is an improvement over past placement tests, which assess students based on fairly large skill domains, because it identifies more discrete and narrow areas of skills and deficits. The assessments have helped students move into their curriculum courses more quickly, improved student success, and reduced student financial aid resources allocated to developmental education.

**Method of Procurement:** In accordance with the procurement practice of the State of North Carolina, approval is being sought by outside purchasing authorities. Approval of the contract by the State Board is contingent upon approval by the State Department of Administration, Division of Purchase and Contract.

**Contract Amount and Time Period:** The contract amount is \$1.35 per test for the period July 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016 and \$1.50 per test for the period January 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018.

**Fund Source and Availability:** Funds come from the community colleges based on the number of tests administered to their respective students. The College Board will invoice each community college separately based upon their usage. Funds are contingent on availability.

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