

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

**Revised Cut-Score for Math Portion of the North Carolina Diagnostic Assessment and Placement (NC DAP) Test**

**Background:**

As part of the state's *Developmental Education Initiative*, NCCCS contracted with the College Board in 2012 to create the NC Diagnostic Assessment and Placement Assessment to serve as an improved placement tool. The NC DAP directly aligns with new developmental courses in the state's Combined Course Library, curricula that were created by faculty panels from across the state during 2011-12. The new developmental courses are shorter and more flexible than previous long sequences of courses through which few students successfully persisted. The goal is that streamlined courses paired with new placement tools will promote student acceleration toward credit-bearing college level courses and into programs of study.

In March 2013, the State Board of Community Colleges approved Testing Policies for the North Carolina Diagnostic Assessment and Placement (NC DAP) Test prior to the rollout of the math portion of the assessment in April 2013. These policies included a statewide cut-score to indicate placement into or out of each of the eight new one-credit developmental math modules.

In May 2013, the State Board of Community Colleges approved a Temporary Placement Testing Policy because of problems encountered with the implementation of NC DAP in its early weeks. This policy allowed colleges to revert to previous State Board-approved assessments or to continue using the NC DAP math assessment with a locally-determined cut-score between six (6) and nine (9), inclusive.

Since May, a working group of instructional and student development administrators, developmental math faculty, and college testing coordinators has met regularly with System Office staff and College Board to make recommendations for improving the NC DAP and to re-establish statewide cut-scores.

The working group asked College Board to facilitate a Standards Verification Process in December 2013. This process included 1) math faculty review of test items; 2) analysis of data examining historical placement comparisons; and 3) analysis of DMA outcomes for students placed using the NC DAP this past Fall.

At the conclusion of the two-day meeting, the NC DAP working group recommended moving the math cut-score from nine (9) to seven (7) in order to more accurately place students into or out of the developmental math modules.

(Of note, almost all colleges using the NC DAP during Summer and Fall 2013 under the Temporary Placement Policy independently chose a cut-score of 7 and reported average DMA module success rates of more than 70 percent. The System Office report on these outcome data is available at [successnc.org/dei](http://successnc.org/dei).)

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**Request:**

NCCCS requests that the State Board of Community Colleges re-instate the February 2013 Testing Policies for the NC DAP with the following changes:

**Assessment and Placement Testing Policies**

- 1) North Carolina community colleges will implement the North Carolina Diagnostic Assessment and Placement (NC DAP) test to assess students' English, reading and math college readiness skills. The test will be administered to students who do not meet the High School Grade Point Average or ACT/SAT placement criteria included in the Multiple Measures for Placement Policy adopted by the State Board of Community Colleges on February 15, 2013. Any college that opts to delay implementation of the Multiple Measures for Placement Policy as defined in that policy must administer the NC DAP for placement decisions until the Multiple Measures Policy is implemented.
- 2) The NC DAP for mathematics will be implemented ~~Fall Semester 2013~~ by March 15, 2014. Colleges may continue to use Accuplacer, Asset or COMPASS for English/Reading until NC DAP is fully implemented ~~Fall~~ for students enrolling Spring Semester 2015.
- 3) NC DAP scores will be valid for use for placement for five (5) years.
- 4) NC DAP scores are transferable to other colleges with permission of the student.
- 5) Colleges must develop and implement processes to validate student identification for testing.
- 6) Colleges must determine their own retest policies.
- 7) Students taking the NC DAP for developmental math will receive ~~eight (8)~~ separate test results, ~~one for each of the eight developmental math modules~~ for each module. The range of possible scores for each test component is 1 to 12; the cut score that indicates proficiency for each developmental math module component is ~~nine (9)~~ seven (7).
- 8) Students must satisfy all developmental pre- or co-requisites as indicated by test scores.

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