**Schedule Guidance for the Spring NSCAS General Summative Assessment**

The spring NSCAS general summative assessment window is **March 22 – April 30, with a make-up window May 3 - May 7, 2021.** The following guidelines are intended to support districts and schools in scheduling the online administration of the summative assessment.

The NSCAS Phase I Pilot online assessment is untimed and designed to provide students with as much time as needed to complete each content area. In the spring of 2021, the English Language Arts (ELA) & Mathematics tests (Math) will be adaptive tests, which means students will see different items based on whether they answer the previous questions correctly or incorrectly.

**Testing Times**

The table below lists the number of test questions per content area and the recommended time needed for the majority of students for each content area. Recommended times were based on averages from the previous test administrations. Some students may require more time than others. When scheduling test sessions, these variances should be considered.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Level | Content Area | Approximate number of test questions\* | Recommended Scheduled Testing time |
| 3 – 8 | Mathematics | 35 | 60 minutes |
| 3 – 8 | English Language Arts | 35 | 60 minutes |
| 5 and 8 | Science | 20 and 17 | 60 minutes |

\*All students will be given the same number of test items.

**Tests Session Recommendations**

Due to the adaptive nature of the ELA and Math Phase I Pilot assessments, students will be required to answer each test question before a new question will be presented. At any point during the test session, proctors can end the test session, which will pause the students’ assessment. Later or on another day, the proctor can start a subsequent test session, and students can resume testing. This functionality provides schools with flexibility in scheduling test sessions. The Science test is a fixed-form Field Test. As with other tests, the NSCAS Science Field Test does not need to be completed in one test session. ***Reminder: Districts will not receive any results from the NSCAS Science Field Test. Districts will receive only individual test data and no aggregate reports from the NSCAS Phase I Pilot****.*

With the design of the NSCAS Phase I Pilot and the Science Field Test Pilot, schools may opt to plan one test session for each test; however, as in years past, schools may schedule two (2) sessions for students to complete the test. This is considered a local decision.

When scheduling test sessions, please consider the following:

* The estimated test-taking time does not include test ticket distribution, starting the test session, launching the secure browsers, and student log-in.
* Districts have access to the testing times of all their students that took the NSCAS assessments in 2019. The time elapsed data is in the district data file (column AF) and should be used to inform testing schedules. Note: test times from the 2019 Science test will not be helpful in anticipating testing times in Spring of 2021.
* Younger students will be more likely to need multiple test sessions.
* Within a test session, tests for individual students can be paused at any time.
* Additional sessions can be created for students that may need additional time.
* After 15 minutes of inactivity, the student will receive an inactivity warning on their screen and then be automatically logged out of the test. The student can resume testing only after the proctor allows the student to rejoin the session.
* Test sessions can be scheduled at any time during the school day but be cautious of starting late in the afternoon.
* Schools should prioritize student needs and not adult convenience when building a testing schedule. Proctors should not pace students. All schedules need to account for students that may need additional time to complete the test.
* Due to the adaptivity in the NSCAS English Language Arts Phase I Pilot assessment, the number of passages each student encounters will vary from 3 to 5 passages.
* Proctors for the NSCAS Phase I Pilot ELA can provide students a time warning to help avoid having students read half a passage and then having time run out. Districts may give students a ten-minute warning and/or a five-minute warning, such as: “Students, there are ten minutes left. Do not start another passage.” and/or “Students, there are five minutes left. Do not start a new passage.”
* Proctors for the Science Field Test can provide students a time warning to help avoid having students begin a new task and then having time run out. Districts may give students a ten-minute warning and/or a five-minute warning, such as: “Students, there are ten minutes left. Do not start another task.” and/or “Students, there are five minutes left. Do not start a new task.”
* There may be scheduled downtime for maintenance and product updates. These will be communicated to all partners (i.e., districts) in advance of the summative test window.
* Group breaks are no longer prohibited, but should only be needed for lengthy sessions which are not recommended.
* Balancing test time and instruction is important. Most students should not need more than 1 hour to complete one subject. Districts may stop a student at 2 hours unless educators feel there is an educationally valid reason to continue and one of the following is true:
* The student is still actively engaged in testing
* The student has a documented need for extended time
* The student requests additional time