



# INDIANA’S STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

## QUESTIONS-AND-ANSWERS

Questions submitted by Indiana Educators and the Public  
Posted on Monday, February 18, 2008

In November 2006, the Indiana State Board of Education approved a new comprehensive testing plan for K-12 education, which included new computer-based diagnostic tools (grades K-8), moving the traditional ISTEP+ accountability testing to the spring (grades 3-8) and replacing the current Graduation Qualifying Exam (GQE) with high school End-of-Course Assessments in Algebra I and English 10.

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### I. Kindergarten through Grade 2 Diagnostic Tools

**Q: What are the K-2 diagnostic tools?**

A: The K-2 Diagnostic Tools include English/language arts and mathematics assessment options to enable teachers to target instruction to each student’s needs and to monitor each student’s progress toward mastery. The English/language arts tool, *mCLASS®: Reading 3D™*, is an integration of Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS®) and Reading Records. DIBELS alerts teachers to problems in student learning and informs teachers of student progress. Reading Records helps teachers learn more about students’ error patterns, reading strategies, and comprehension. The mathematics tool, *mCLASS®: Math*, is used to help identify students at-risk of not acquiring proficient early math skills and aids teachers in learning more about students’ mathematical thinking. *mCLASS®: Math* also offers suggestions for teachers in how to approach instruction after uncovering student information.

**Q: Which schools can apply for the K-2 diagnostic tools?**

A: The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) has an application posted on the IDOE Web site at [www.doe.in.gov/istep](http://www.doe.in.gov/istep). The eligibility criteria are outlined in the application.

**Q: How can we find out more information about participating if we are not part of the initial rollout?**

A: Public schools, charter schools, and accredited nonpublic schools are invited to purchase the voluntary K-2 Diagnostic Tools at the State-discounted rate, which is \$24 per student for the complete set of tools (*mCLASS®: Reading 3D™*, and *mCLASS®: Math*). Public schools that opt to participate at their own expense initially will receive top priority for state funding during subsequent years of the statewide rollout.

**Q: What is the timeline?**

A: Schools will apply during February. Those selected for 2008-09 implementation will be notified in late March.

**Q: Is there a fee per student or per corporation? How much does the state plan to cover?**

A: Schools that are funded through the state application process will be required to purchase teacher kits as needed at \$154 each, purchase the handheld devices, and meet the various implementation, training, and technology requirements outlined in the application. The State will pay the \$24 per student rate and will purchase up to three teacher kits per school. Schools that purchase the diagnostic tools outside of the State application process will be required to pay the \$24 per student rate in addition to purchasing the teacher kits and handheld devices as needed, and meeting the various implementation, training, and technology requirements outlined in the application.

**Q: Is the new K-2 tool truly voluntary?**

A: Yes.

**Q: We currently use DIBELS. Will we need to switch to the state plan at some point, and if so, when?**

A: The K-2 Diagnostic Tools are voluntary. Schools are not required to switch to this program.

**Q: How will the tools help kids if teachers must be absent from their classrooms in order to give the assessments?**

A: Teachers are not absent during the use of the tools. In fact, teacher classroom involvement is integral to the success of this program. Teachers are able to monitor individual student progress in the classroom using one minute "probes" in order to make decisions about subsequent instruction.

**Q: What type of personal digital assistants do we need to purchase? At what cost?**

A: Schools will purchase one approved Palm handheld device for each 20 students. Two of the approved devices are available on Quantity Purchase Agreements (QPAs) through the Indiana Department of Administration. The price structure provides an educational discount. Schools or corporations that buy 30 devices get three at no cost. The projected cost of each device is approximately \$175.

**Q: Will the Palm devices need to be connected to the Internet or synchronized with the Internet?**

A: The Palm devices must "sync" (upload) data to one computer at the school. This computer must be linked to the Internet.

**Q: Is there a place we may examine the materials and the process for using these materials?**

A: The Wireless Generation Web site includes a demonstration for both the reading and math tools. For *mCLASS® Reading 3D™*, see: <http://www.wgen.net/products.php?prod=mClass:Reading3D>. For *mCLASS®: Math*, see: <http://www.wgen.net/products.php?prod=mClass:Math>.

**Q: Is there any data about the results of using the programs?**

A: Although we do not have any Indiana-specific data to share, Wireless Generation does have various local testimonials and news releases regarding the success of these tools. Please see: <http://www.wgen.net/news.php> for various articles that relate to the success of the reading and math tools.

## II. Grades 3 through 8 Diagnostic Tools

**Q: What exactly are the Grades 3-8 Diagnostic Tools?**

A: The Grades 3-8 Diagnostic Tools (called Acuity™) include English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies assessment options that enable teachers to target instruction to each student and to monitor each student's progress. Acuity™ predicts student performance, diagnoses student strengths and weaknesses, offers recommendations about ways to improve student achievement, provides flexible options for creating and delivering assessments, and includes items that are aligned to Indiana's Standards. Included in the Acuity™ package are the following: three predictive assessments, four interim benchmark tests, and an item bank from which teachers can create tests on demand in target areas. The tests can be given online and scored electronically – except for the constructed response items, which are teacher-scored. The tests also may be printed and scored locally.

**Q: How do we apply for the new monitoring tool?**

A: The IDOE has an application posted on its Web site at [www.doe.in.gov/istep](http://www.doe.in.gov/istep).

**Q: How can we find out more information about participating if we are not part of the initial rollout?**

A: Public schools, charter schools, and accredited nonpublic schools are invited to purchase the voluntary diagnostic tools at the State-discounted rate, which is \$14 per student for the complete set. Public schools that opt to participate at their own expense initially will receive top priority for state funding during subsequent years of the statewide rollout.

**Q: What is the timeline?**

A: Schools will apply during February. Those selected for 2008-09 implementation will be notified in late March.

**Q: Is there a fee per student or per corporation? And how much does the state plan to cover?**

A: Schools that are funded through the State application process must meet the various implementation, training, and technology requirements outlined in the application. The State will pay the \$14 per student rate. Schools that purchase the diagnostic tools outside of the State funding process must meet the various implementation, training, and technology requirements outlined in the application and pay the \$14 per student rate. These schools will receive top priority for state funding during subsequent years of the statewide rollout.

**Q: Is the new diagnostic tool truly voluntary?**

A: Yes.

**Q: We currently use another diagnostic tool. Will we need to switch to the state plan at some point, and if so, when?**

A: Corporations are not required to switch to Acuity™.

**Q: How soon will Acuity™ be a “predictive” test for ISTEP+ and aligned to Indiana’s Academic Standards?**

A: Acuity™ is a predictive assessment for each content area (English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies). Test content is aligned with Indiana's Academic Standards.

**Q: Is there a place we could see a demonstration of Acuity™?**

A: Information about Acuity and its use can be found at: <http://www.acuityforschool.com>.

**Q: Is there any data to share from the results of using the programs?**

A: Although no Indiana-specific research is available, information about Acuity™ and its research base can be found at: <http://www.acuityforschool.com/our-research/research-foundations.php>.

**Q: Will we be able to administer assessments below grade level to students with below grade level skills?**

A: Teachers will be able to administer assessments to meet students' individual needs.

### III. Indiana Statewide Testing of Educational Progress – Plus (ISTEP+)

#### CURRICULAR SEQUENCING and TEST DEVELOPMENT

**Q: What grade levels [and content areas] will be tested through the statewide system?**

A: The chart below summarizes Indiana’s Statewide Assessment System for the 2008-09 school year.

Content Area	Grade Level(s) tested	Test Window	AYP Factor	Graduation Requirement
<b>English/language arts</b>	ISTEP+ Grades 3-8	September 15-26, 2008	Yes	No
	ISTEP+ Grades 3-8	March 2-11, 2009 (open-ended) April 27 – May 6, 2009 (multiple-choice)	Yes	No
	GQE	September 16-18, 2008	Yes	Yes
	GQE Retest	March 10-12, 2009	Yes	Yes
	ECA Grade 10 (pilot)	Based on end of instruction	Yes (in 2009-10)	Yes (in 2009-10)
	ECA Grade 11	Based on end of instruction	No	No
<b>Mathematics</b>	ISTEP+ Grades 3-8	September 15-26, 2008	Yes	No
	ISTEP+ Grades 3-8	March 2-11, 2009 (open-ended) April 27 – May 6, 2009 (multiple-choice)	Yes	No
	GQE	September 16-18, 2008	Yes	Yes
	GQE Retest	March 10-12, 2009	Yes	Yes
	ECA Algebra I	Based on end of instruction	Yes (in 2009-10)	Yes (2009-10)
	ECA Algebra II	Based on end of instruction	No	No
<b>Science</b>	ISTEP+ Grades 5 & 7	September 15-26, 2008	No*	No
	ISTEP+ Grades 4 & 6	March 2-11, 2009 (open-ended) April 27 – May 6, 2009 (multiple-choice)	No*	No
	ECA Biology I	Based on end of instruction	No*	No
<b>Social Studies</b>	ISTEP+ Grades 5 & 7	March 2-11, 2009 (open-ended) April 27 – May 6, 2009 (multiple-choice)	No	No
	ECA U.S. History (pilot)	Based on end of instruction	No	No

\*Participation required

**Q: What grade level standards will be tested on the spring test? Will they include some of the previous grade level standards?**

A: Assessments will be on-grade and summative. As in past years, the ISTEP+ assessments are also cumulative.

**Q: The applied skills part of the new spring test is early in the spring (March). Will teachers know which standards must be covered by this point in the school year?**

A: The IDOE will use important information collected from the field regarding curricular sequences. For two years, IDOE has worked with committees of K-12 educators, curriculum specialists, and content coaches to identify priorities in content. The State will use these findings, test blueprint information, and the information collected from the schools to inform decisions about each assessment. The State will disseminate necessary information to schools.

**Q: Can you explain the format of the two proposed ISTEP+ tests?**

A: There will be one test for each grade level, but the test will be divided into two administrations. The first administration will take place in March and will include open-ended items for all four content areas – extended-response items, constructed response items, and essay items. Essentially, all non-multiple-choice items will be tested in early March. The remaining items, all multiple-choice items, will be given in late April / early May.

**Q: Will the tests continue to assess all indicators on a six year cycle to keep the length down?**

A: The State does not assess indicators on a six year cycle.

**Q: Will the tests assess the new Core Standards (only the indicators associated with the Core Standards)?**

A: The Core Standards will be used to inform decisions about the assessments. Because NCLB requires alignment to the adopted grade level standards and because the Core Standards are based on the adopted grade level standards, there is a high degree of alignment between what is tested and what the Core Standards include. It is important to note that the Core Standards are currently undergoing revisions based on public feedback.

**Q: Will any information be provided to social studies teachers (prior to testing) concerning the standards upon which the assessments will be focused (since social studies is a new area to be tested)?**

A: The IDOE will offer information about test content, which will directly tie to grade level and content area Standards.

#### **CUT SCORE SETTING**

**Q: Who will set, or reset, the cut scores for Pass, Pass+, and Did Not Pass for the spring test?**

A: The existing cut scores will be revisited and reviewed as the changes to the assessment system occur. In social studies, cut scores will have to be established. The State will continue to use the process it has always used – by asking for the help of teachers representing various state demographics to come to Indianapolis and inform the decision-making. The cut score review will be facilitated by Indiana Department of Education staff in conjunction with CTB/McGraw-Hill. Any information regarding changes or modifications will be subject to review by Indiana's Education Roundtable, the Indiana State Board of Education and, finally, the United States Department of Education.

#### **PARTICIPATION and POLICY**

**Q: Will current Grade 10 students (2007-08 school year) take the current GQE, or will they have the option of taking the ECAs?**

A: Current Grade 10 students will continue with the current GQE for graduation purposes and also will take ECAs for any courses they complete for which an ECA is available.

**Q: Will current Grade 9 students (2007-08 school year) continue to take the ISTEP+ in spring, or will they also take the ECAs?**

A: Any Grade 9 student taking Algebra I will take the ECA this spring (2008). Next year, when the student moves on to Grade 10, the student will take the GQE. The transition from the current GQE to the "new" Graduation Examination requirement (Algebra I and English 10 ECAs) will begin with this year's Grade 8 students (class of 2012).

**Q: Will current Grade 8 students (2007-08 school year) take the ISTEP+ next fall?**

A: Grade 8 students (class of 2012) are expected to take only the ECAs for the high school courses they complete.

**Q: If a Grade 10 student takes the GQE in the fall of 2008 and passes, must the student pass the end of course exams in Algebra I, Biology I, and English 10 to graduate?**

A: The new graduation requirement applies to this year's Grade 8 students (class of 2012). If current Grade 10 students have passed the GQE, they have met the GQE requirement for testing. If these same Grade 10 students are enrolled in Algebra I, Algebra II, Biology I, or English 11, they take the ECAs in these courses as part of State school accountability under P.L. 221. They do not need to pass the ECAs in these courses to graduate. The P.L. 221 requirement is school participation. For this year's Grade 8 students (class of 2012), the graduation requirement will change to meeting the achievement standards for the English 10 and Algebra I ECAs.

## REMEDICATION, RETESTING, and WAIVERS

### Q: Will remediation plans change?

A: Given the change in the GQE (from GQE to Algebra I and English 10 ECAs), changes to remediation are likely.

### Q: How many chances will a student get to retest?

A: For the GQE, retest options will stay the same. There will be retest opportunities for the ECAs that will make up the new graduation requirement, but the specific policy details have not been established.

### Q: What if a current high school student does not pass the current GQE prior to the end of the student's fourth year in high school? Will the student retest the GQE as a 5<sup>th</sup> year senior or switch to the new system?

A: A student who has not passed the GQE by its final administration will switch to the new ECA requirement. Such a student still is eligible for the GQE "waiver" process. The changes to the graduation examination requirements (from the GQE to Algebra I and English 10 ECAs) will start with this year's Grade 8 students. The student described above would be held to the current GQE achievement standard.

### Q: Will there still be a waiver process? Will the workplace assessment still be an option?

A: Yes. The demonstration of proficiency and workforce skills assessments are included in state statute. The nature of the new assessments may dictate some changes in procedures.

## REPORTING

### Q: How will schools keep track of the multiple score reports and types of reports involved in the new assessment plan with ISTEP+ and the ECAs?

A: All reports and data will be supplied electronically for easy integration with local student information systems. The State is committed to working out a manageable solution with the selected vendors.

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES and LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP) STUDENTS

### Q: Will accommodations for students with disabilities and LEP students stay the same under the new system?

A: Generally, yes. However, the accommodations must be reviewed in light of the new assessments, which could lead to additional accommodations or rules for accommodations.

### Q: Will LEP students still be held to the same requirements?

A: Yes. These are NCLB accountability tests and the same requirements for assessing students remain in place.

## TESTING FORMAT

### Q: Will the ISTEP tests take place online?

A: Yes. The new spring test will be administered online for up to 20% of the students.

## TRANSITION PLAN

### Q: What is the reason we will be taking ISTEP+ twice in the 2008-09 school year?

A: NCLB requires the State to make AYP determinations for every school each school year (the Fall 2008 test will determine AYP for 2007-08; the Spring 2009 test will determine AYP for 2008-09). Without two test administrations, there would be a gap in AYP.

### Q: Will there be a transition from the GQE to the ECAs as there was from the "old" to "new" GQE?

A: Every student must take the Algebra I and English 10 ECAs as the new GQE beginning with the class of 2012. Because the Algebra I and English 10 assessments are based on Indiana's Academic Standards taught for several years to every student, there is no need for a transition as there was when the new tests assessed new subject matter and the State needed to ensure that students were taught new material before testing.

## IV. Core 40 End-of-Course Assessments (ECAs)

### CURRICULAR SEQUENCING and TEST DEVELOPMENT

**Q: What grade levels and content areas will be tested through the statewide system?**

A: The chart in the previous section (III. Indiana Testing of Statewide Educational Progress – Plus) summarizes Indiana’s Statewide Assessment System for the 2008-09 school year, which includes information on the Core 40 End-of-Course Assessments (ECAs).

**Q: Core 40 ECAs are given later in the spring but before some of the material tested has been taught. Will the state let teachers know what must be covered by the time of testing?**

A: ECAs are given when courses are complete, and all course content will be subject to assessment.

**Q: What are the plans for developing high quality ECAs?**

A: The State uses the same test development process, consisting of the following formal phases, for all of its assessments:

- 1) Test blueprint is determined with direct input from our teachers.
- 2) Vendors develop items with IDOE guidance and oversight.
- 3) IDOE facilitates item reviews where teachers review all test items.
- 4) Items are piloted statewide.
- 5) Item data are used to determine items that will appear on the test.

**Q: When does the IDOE plan to develop and pilot the English 10 test?**

A: The IDOE plans to develop and pilot the English 10 test during the 2008-09 school year.

**Q: Will the end-of-course tests for Algebra I and English 10 be the current ECAs or some other tests?**

A: The Algebra I test blueprint will be reviewed in light of the new role the tests will play. The Algebra I ECA will replace the Grade 10 GQE in mathematics. There is no existing English 10 ECA; therefore, the test blueprint will be designed and the test will be developed and piloted over the 2008-09 school year.

**Q: What opportunities will be available for teachers and administrators to learn more about the social studies test?**

A: There is a student item sampler for United States History posted on the IDOE Web site. Please see: <http://doe.state.in.us/core40eca/welcome.html>.

**Q: Will the ECAs assess the new Core Standards?**

A: The Core Standards will be used to inform decisions about the assessments. Because NCLB requires alignment to the adopted grade level standards and because the Core Standards are based on the adopted grade level standards, there is a high degree of alignment between what is tested and what the Core Standards include. It is important to note that the Core Standards are currently undergoing revisions based on public feedback.

**Q: Will the ECAs assess only the indicators associated with the Core Standards?**

A: The Core Standards will be used to inform decisions about the assessments. The Core Standards are currently being revised; therefore, the indicators listed in the drafts posted to the IDOE Web site are subject to change.

**Q: Will the tests continue to assess all indicators on a six year cycle to keep the length down?**

A: The End-of-Course Assessments do not assess indicators on a six year cycle. The tests assess what students need to know and do upon the completion of the course. Percentages of Standards coverage are available within each student item sampler. All student item samplers can be found at: <http://doe.state.in.us/core40eca/welcome.html>.

**Q: As the Algebra I ECA is electronic, will there be a way for teachers to review the content of the test (even if simultaneously with student administration) so that they can understand the assessment, assess its validity, and challenge a student's score should they disagree with the state's scoring results?**

A: Teachers can look at the student item sampler to learn more about the Algebra I ECA. Teachers can currently request rescues on the ECAs.

### **CUT SCORE SETTING**

**Q: Will the cut scores for Algebra I be refigured considering the statewide passing rate?**

A: The cut scores for Algebra I will be revisited and reviewed.

**Q: If the Algebra I ECA is rewritten, will there be new cut scores?**

A: The Algebra I ECA will not be rewritten, but the blueprint will be revisited and reviewed to ensure the validity of its intended use.

### **PARTICIPATION and POLICY**

**Q: Will the participation rate be calculated by the number of students enrolled in the specific ECA courses, or will it be figured on total number of students in the school, whether they are in the ECA courses or not?**

A: Participation for the ECAs is based on enrollment in the course.

**Q: When the last group of sophomores takes the GQE, will they also have to take the ECAs?**

A: Current Grade 9, Grade 10, Grade 11, and Grade 12 students will continue to be on the current GQE track – which means this is the federal accountability and graduation requirement for these students. These students must take the GQE in English and mathematics as well as the Biology I End-of-Course Assessment. These students will continue to take the existing Core 40 End-of-Course Assessments, as appropriate to their coursework, which are required under P.L. 221: Algebra I, Algebra II, English 11, and U.S. History.

Current Grade 8 students (those who will enter Grade 9 in Fall 2008) and students who enter high school in subsequent years will be on the new GQE track – which means the federal accountability and graduation requirement for them includes Algebra I and English 10. These students will take Biology I for federal and state accountability. These students will also continue to take the existing Core 40 End-of-Course Assessments, as appropriate to their coursework, which are required under P.L. 221: Algebra II, English 11, and U.S. History.

**Q: Which school, the middle or high school, is responsible for Algebra I ECA results for students who take the test while still in middle school?**

A: This is currently under review; more information will follow.

**Q: If students come to our school having taken the Algebra I course in Grade 8, but not having taking the ECA, are they still able to take Geometry and take the Algebra I ECA at the end of the year?**

A: Taking and passing an ECA has nothing to do with a school's decision to offer courses. Current Grade 8 students (those who will enter Grade 9 in Fall 2008) and students who enter high school in subsequent years will be on the new GQE track – which means the federal accountability and graduation requirement for them includes Algebra I and English 10. These students will take Biology I for federal and state accountability. These students will also continue to take the existing Core 40 End-of-Course Assessments, as appropriate to their coursework, which are required under P.L. 221: Algebra II, English 11, and U.S. History.

**Q: We currently have several Grade 7 and Grade 8 students enrolled in Algebra I who will take the Core 40 test this spring. Will it be possible to count these scores toward their graduation requirement if the student passes? If not, will this attempt be counted as one of the attempts toward this requirement?**

A: Every student enrolled in the course needs to take the appropriate ECA. It is too early to tell exactly how performance on the current test will align with the final approved test and how it will fit into the waiver process. It is critical that students take the ECA at the end of instruction and not wait.

**Q: If students pass their Algebra I and English 10 ECAs but do not pass the courses, do they still need to earn credit in the courses?**

A: Yes. Granting credit for courses is a local decision.

**Q: If students pass their Algebra I and English 10 courses but do not pass the ECAs in these content areas, do they move on in the coursework and just keep retaking the ECAs?**

A: Beginning with this year's Grade 8 students (class of 2012), students must pass the Algebra I and English 10 ECAs as Graduation Qualifying Exams. If a student passes the course and not the ECA, remediation will be handled in a manner similar to the protocol for the current GOE; however, specific details have not yet been determined.

**Q: If students are not taking Algebra I for credit, do they still need to take the ECA?**

A: Yes.

**Q: Will passing all of the ECAs become a requirement of the Core 40 diploma?**

A: There have been discussions, but no decisions, about tying ECAs to diploma eligibility.

**Q: Will passing scores on the Algebra I and English 10 ECAs be required for graduation or is the data to be used only for internal school improvement?**

A: Algebra I and English 10 will replace the GOE and be required for graduation starting with this year's Grade 8 students (class of 2012).

**Q: How will P.L. 221 categories be established since we won't have Grade 9 to Grade 10 results to share anymore? How will growth be measured?**

A: This issue is currently under discussion. Information is forthcoming.

**Q: If students are not doing well in say, Biology I, and we know they will not pass and will have to retake the class, do they still take the ECA?**

A: Yes. Any student enrolled in the course must take the ECA.

**Q: When will United States History be required?**

A: The current plan is for United States History to become operational in the 2009-10 school year. Operational means that assessment is no longer a pilot, cut scores will be determined, and the test will be included in the state accountability system.

**Q: When will Geometry or Algebra II be required?**

A: There is currently no End-of-Course Assessment for Geometry, and no decisions have been made to require students to pass Algebra II.

**Q: It is my understanding that a school may use a Core 40 ECA as a placement test to determine where to place a student, particularly in Math. Is this the case and, if so, how do the schools get copies of these placement tests?**

A: The State does not develop or administer any placement tests.

### **REMEDIATION, RETESTING, and WAIVERS**

**Q: If a student does not pass the Algebra I or English 10 ECA, but may have received a passing grade for the corresponding course and received credit, the student will not retake the course. What type of remediation would be expected?**

A: Remediation will be handled in a similar manner to the protocol for the current GOE, but specific details have not yet been determined.

**Q: Will the students taking the ECAs as a graduation requirement have the same number of attempts at passing as the GQE?**

A: Retesting will be handled in a similar manner to the protocol for the current GQE, but specific details have not yet been determined.

**Q: When and how will retesting take place?**

A: Retesting will be made available at various points throughout the year when a student could be completing the course, but specific details have not yet been determined.

**Q: If a student does not pass the test the first time, will the student be able to retest every trimester thereafter?**

A: Students will be able to retest upon completing the course. The number of times a student can retest will be limited, but specific details have not yet been determined.

**Q: Will there be a process similar to the GQE “waiver”?**

A: Yes. The alternatives to passing the graduation examination are included in statute. Specific details necessitated by the different nature of the new assessments have not yet been determined.

## REPORTING

**Q: ISTEP results currently are reported to the public by grade level. With the Algebra I ECA, students in six different grade levels take the course. How will results get reported to the public and for accountability purposes? Will a cohort group be used?**

A: This is currently being discussed; any policy established will require approval by the United States Department of Education. Information will follow.

**Q: Will school corporations be able to access the current Grade 8 Algebra I ECA scores through a state file with student test numbers?**

A: The current plan is for results, for all grades, to be made part of each student’s permanent record.

**Q: Will the ECA reports be similar to the ISTEP+ reports in they way they aggregate data?**

A: Yes.

**Q: How are results reported so students know what standards they need to work on before a second attempt?**

A: The reports will continue to provide information on students’ strengths and weaknesses and will offer information about mastery at the Standards level.

**Q: Is there confidence that results will be returned in a timely enough fashion to be included in grade calculations for a course?**

A: Reports will be returned later only during the first test administration because of the various standard setting tasks (i.e., setting standards for English 10 and revisiting for Algebra I).

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES and LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP) STUDENTS

**Q: What are the accommodations for students with a disability and LEP students?**

A: The accommodations are currently the same as ISTEP+, but all will undergo review.

**Q: What is the state doing to assure we are fairly and accurately assessing our LEP students?**

A: The State is currently following all of the federal requirements for assessing LEP students.

**Q: Some Limited English Proficiency students may not take English 10 until their senior year. Is that when they will take the ECA, or must they take the ECA at the end of their second year in high school, regardless of their English ability?**

A: All students will take the English 10 test upon completing the course.

**Q: If students with disabilities never take English 10 – because they are direct serve – do they have to take the exam if they never take the course?**

A: If these students do not take English 10, they would not take the assessment. Any student not on a “diploma track” would be assessed according to the requirements of his or her IEP.

#### TESTING FORMAT

**Q: Will the ECAs take place online, or will there be a paper-and-pencil option?**

A: The tests will continue to be offered in both testing formats: online and paper-and-pencil.

**Q: Will ECAs be offered at the end each semester or only at the end of the year?**

A: The ECAs will be offered at various points in the year that correspond to the different times students could be completing the course.

**Q: Does the state plan to have a testing window for summer school?**

A: ECAs will be available for those students who complete Algebra I, English 10, or Biology I in the summer.

**Q: How can students take ECAs at the end of the course if the school’s technology doesn’t allow all students to test at the same time? Will students effectively be penalized because their schools lack the technology to test within the last two days in all content areas?**

A: For the spring administration of ECAs, schools are not required to offer the ECAs online.

#### TRANSITION PLAN

**Q: When will the English 10 and Algebra I ECAs officially replace the GQE?**

A: The transition will occur with the current Grade 8 students (class of 2012).

**Q: In the past, when a new assessment program has been implemented, students continued on the old program once they had begun it. How will that work with the transition from GQE to ECAs?**

A: Current Grade 9, Grade 10, Grade 11, and Grade 12 grade students will continue to be on the current GQE track – which means this is the federal accountability and graduation requirement for these students. These students must take the GQE in English and mathematics as well as the Biology I End-of-Course Assessment. These students will continue to take the existing Core 40 End-of-Course Assessments, as appropriate to their coursework, which are required under P.L. 221: Algebra I, Algebra II, English 11, and U.S. History.

Current Grade 8 students (those who enter Grade 9 in Fall 2008) and students who enter high school in subsequent years will be on the new GQE track – which means the federal accountability and graduation requirement for them includes Algebra I and English 10. These students will take Biology I for federal and state accountability. These students will also continue to take the existing Core 40 End-of-Course Assessments, as appropriate to their coursework, which are required under P.L. 221: Algebra II, English 11, and U.S. History.

## V. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

**Q: How will the move from fall to spring and from GQE to ECAs impact AYP calculations? Which scores will be used to calculate AYP for 2007-2008 and 2008-2009?**

NCLB requires the State to make AYP determinations for every school each school year. The Fall 2008 test will be used for AYP for 2007-08. The Spring 2009 test will be used for AYP for 2008-09. Since federal requirements mandate that the State make AYP determinations for each school year, double testing in 2008-09 is required.

**Q: With spring testing, how will AYP and P.L. 221 placements be determined for a school that is K-2 only?**

A: The process will remain the same as it is now.

**Q: How will school accountability be determined? AYP and Indiana's accountability system, as well as NCA's accreditation system, are based on the premise that assessment results will be valid and comparable. As the GQE results in all areas (especially math) are significantly different – as is the content of the assessment – how will schools be measured? Has attention been paid to this matter with regard to regional accreditation agencies?**

A: These issues are currently under discussion. Information will be made available as soon as possible.

**Q: Will high ability students comprise a new student group for accountability purposes and will there be another cut score for these students that will affect AYP?**

A: No.

**Q: In terms of AYP for high schools, will the "Safe Harbor" calculation (reduction in percentage of non-proficient students by 10%) be based on a grade level, as it currently is, or will it be based on the exam results from a cohort group?**

A: It will be based on reporting cohorts.

**Q: Will the scores of students who take the Algebra I ECA in Grade 7 or Grade 8 be held until those students are in Grade 10 for AYP purposes?**

A: This issue is currently under discussion. Information will be made available as soon as possible.