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Department Terminates Statewide Assessment Contract

Suspends Grade 3-8 Testing Due to Vendor's Inability to Deliver Materials

NASHVILLE— Education Commissioner Candice McQueen announced today the department will terminate its statewide testing contract with Measurement Inc., effective immediately. While high school testing will continue as planned, the state will suspend grade 3-8 testing during the 2015-16 school year due to Measurement Inc.'s inability to deliver all testing materials.

After revising their shipping schedule for a third time this month, the state's testing vendor, Measurement Inc., failed to meet its most recent deadline. As of this morning, *all* districts were still waiting on some grade 3-8 materials to arrive with a total of two million documents yet to be shipped. In February, the department was forced to move from the originally planned online assessment delivery to a paper-based format due to the failure of the vendor's online platform.

"Measurement Inc.'s performance is deeply disappointing. We've exhausted every option in problem solving with this vendor to assist them in getting these tests delivered," Commissioner Candice McQueen said. "Districts have exceeded their responsibility and obligation to wait for grade 3-8 materials, and we will not ask districts to continue waiting on a vendor that has repeatedly failed us."

If districts have received materials for a complete grade or subject in grades 3-8 (i.e. fifth-grade math), they will have the *option* to administer that specific grade or subject level; however, the department will *only* be able to deliver limited student performance information for these particular grades and subjects. High school tests will be fully scored, and these results will be delivered later this fall.

"Challenges with this test vendor have not diverted us from our goals as a state. Tennessee has made historic and tremendous growth over the past several years. Higher standards and increased accountability have been a key part of this progress," Commissioner McQueen said. "Our work toward an aligned assessment plays a critical role in ensuring that all students are continuing to meet our high expectations and are making progress on their path to postsecondary and the workforce."

Flexibility that has already been provided for teacher evaluation through recent legislation will remain. If a teacher has TNReady data, in this case high school teachers, TNReady data will *only* be used if it helps the teacher. If a teacher does not have TNReady data, their evaluation will rely on data from prior years.

The department is currently working with the state's Central Procurement Office to expedite the selection of a vendor for both the scoring of this year's high school assessment and the development of next year's test. The department has also been in close contact with the United States Department of Education to ensure that Tennessee is in compliance with federal requirements and will continue to work with them on this issue.

TNReady, the state's new assessment in math and English language arts in grades 3-11, was designed to be administered in two parts. Part I was given in late February and early March, and Part II was scheduled to begin on April 25.

Additional resources can be found in this frequently asked questions document:
https://tn.gov/assets/entities/education/attachments/tntready_faq_suspension.pdf.

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