Frequently Asked Questions

The Department’s Proposal to Amend the State Board of Education’s High School Policy:
Phase-In of TNReady Scores in Students’ Grades & Utilization of Raw Score Data

1. What is the department's proposal for the weighting of TNReady in high school students’ grades?

   Due to the transition to TNReady, the department is recommending the following phase-in for including TNReady results in final grades for high school students:
   - 2016-17: 10 percent of final grade
   - 2017-18: 15 percent of final grade
   - 2018-19 (and in all subsequent years): 15–25 percent of final grade (district decision within this range)

   Prior to the department's recommendation, End-of-Course exams counted as 25 percent of a student's grade.

2. Why is the department proposing to provide raw scores instead of quick scores as in years past?

   The department believes that student grading is a local decision, typically driven by teachers in terms of assigning grades in the courses they teach. Districts should be empowered to make specific grading decisions based on their practices and philosophy while adhering to the scale prescribed by the Uniform Grading Policy and the percent weighting requirements outlined in the High School Policy.

   This change would allow districts to have the flexibility to choose methodology and set local board policy for converting raw scores into a format suitable for student grades. When raw scores are provided for the first time in January for fall block testing, the department will provide further guidance on potential methodologies that districts might use to convert raw scores for student grades.
3. Would district discretion in the methodology used for converting raw scores to a 100-point grading scale create variability from district to district?
   The department believes student grading is a local decision and this flexibility would be in line with the Uniform Grading Policy (here) for high schools. While the Uniform Grading Policy for high school prescribes a grading scale for use in HOPE scholarship determinations, the grading scale does not determine what assignments or the rigor of assignments needed to earn the grades using that scale. For example, some districts and schools use standards-based grading, strictly focused on content mastery; whereas, other districts include elements like attendance, behavior, and participation in course grading. Therefore, districts already have local discretion for determining which assignments should count toward a students’ final grade. The department believes that same flexibility should be in place for determining the methodology for converting raw scores on TNReady to a 100-point grading scale for inclusion in students’ grades.

4. What are some of the methods for score conversion that a district could consider?
   The department will provide additional guidance and sample templates for districts to consider in creating local policy and determining methodology when raw score reports are released in early January. These sample methods might include:
   
   a. **Cube-root** – This is the previous method that the department used to determine quick scores and is detailed here. This method creates a grading curve that scales to 100 points for all raw score results.

   b. **Comparative distribution to state** – The department will provide information on statewide averages and standard deviation for raw score results. Districts may choose to create a 100-point grading conversion by anchoring grades based on the state average with students exceeding state average earning higher grades and those below state average earning lower grades.

   c. **Comparative distribution to class grades** – Districts may decide to anchor average raw score for the class on TNReady to the average grade for class using all other assignments. For example, if before TNReady, the average grade for the class is 83, the district may choose to set the class average raw score on TNReady to an 83 on a 100-point scale. Then raw scores for students that are above the class average will earn grades from 83-100 and raw scores below class average will earn grades from 0-82.
5. **When should a district expect to receive results from 2016 fall block testing?**
   For 2016-17, raw scores for fall block will be returned in early January, after the winter holiday break and after the semester grading period ends for most districts. **This means that according to the policy provisions, districts can choose to not include TNReady results for 2016 fall block.** Some districts have already noted that student report cards for fall 2016 are not produced and distributed until after students return from the winter holiday break. Therefore, these districts have chosen to be consistent in applying TNReady in student grades for both fall and spring. **However, this is a local decision because of the timing of raw score results for fall block.**

6. **When should a district expect to receive results from 2017 spring block testing or traditional scheduling testing from 2016-17?**
   For spring block and traditional, raw scores will be available by May 22, which is before the end of the grading period for most districts. This means that according to the policy provisions, districts will be required to include TNReady results from 2017 spring block and 2016-17 traditional courses.

7. **How does this impact students in grades 3–8?**
   At the moment, there are no changes for grades 3–8. Any and all changes for grades 3–8 will require legislative action. In the meantime, please adhere to Public Chapter 256 ([here](#)).