

# Innovative Assessment: North Carolina's pathway to the NC Personalized Assessment Tool (NCPAT)

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## IADA: The North Carolina Experience

- The purpose of this presentation is to address the following key questions:
  - What motivated your state to pursue assessment innovation?
  - Why did you feel like you needed the IADA to do this?
  - What have been your most important successes thus far?
  - What have been your biggest challenges?
  - What do you know now that you wish you knew when you were applying?

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## Why Innovative Assessment

- The State of North Carolina has always been on the leading edge of exploring innovative ways to approach standardized testing.
- In the early 1990s, North Carolina led the way as it implemented statewide summative assessments aligned to grade-level content standards.
- In the intervening twenty-five years, these assessments have been revised multiple times to align with newly adopted content standards, continuously increasing expectations for students and ensuring students graduate ready for success in college and career

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## Why Innovative Assessment

- Though educators recognized the importance of test data in support of education, they expressed major concerns about the current summative system:
  - summative assessment did not generate actionable data to inform classroom practices. Educators frequently referred to summative reports as “autopsy data”
  - schools and students spent a lot of time away from instruction to prepare for standardized assessments.
  - the high stakes use of standardized assessments generated a lot of anxiety.

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## NC Innovative Assessment Framework

- In October 2014, to address these concerns the NC State Board of Education (SBE) convened a Task Force on Summative Assessment.
- In 2015, following a year long of consultative talks with a diverse group of stakeholders, the Task Force final recommendations to the SBE were:
  - Determine the feasibility of administering a “through-course” model that would replace interim benchmark and End-of-Grade assessments
  - “Through-course” testing would consist of 3 to 4 tests occurring at setpoints during the school year
  - Establish the criteria showing students meet proficiency standards and growth while meeting state and federal accountability standards (i.e., accommodations for students with disabilities and ELLs)

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## NC Innovative Assessment Framework

- In 2015–16 school year, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) conducted a proof of concept pilot to explore the feasibility of implementing a “through-grade” system.
- Results from the proof of concepts led to the development of interim assessments known as “NC Check-Ins” and now “NC Check-Ins 2.0”
- The main purpose of NC Check-Ins is to provide educators, students, and stakeholders with immediate and detailed feedback on student performance on grade-level-specific content standards so classroom instruction could to be tailored to individual student’s needs

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## Innovative Assessment - IADA

- In June 2019, the U.S. Department of Education (USED) granted an Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority (IADA) to North Carolina.
- North Carolina General Assembly Session Law 2019-212 (SB 621) states, “It is the intent of the General Assembly that the State **move toward** a through-grade assessment model, in which the State-mandated assessments are administered in multiple short testing events throughout the school year rather than a single long testing event at the end of the year.”

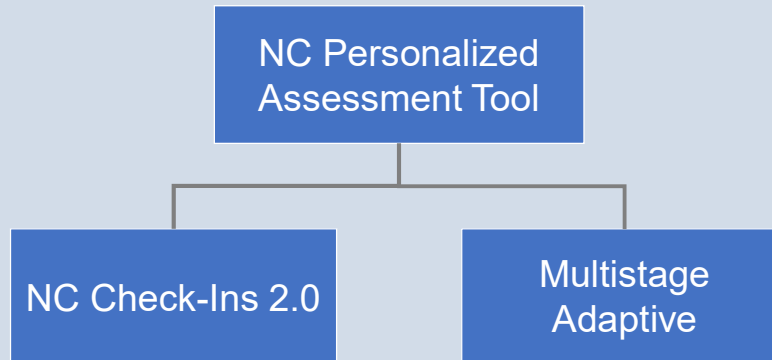
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## Innovative Assessment - IADA

- In 2018-19, NC Check-Ins were administered to approximately 50% of students across the state as a formative model focusing on giving immediate feedback on student performance to teachers.
- IADA offered the opportunity to expand this concept to develop a comprehensive assessment system that would support the use of a “through-grade” model in-lieu of current summative assessment (as recommended by the Task Force).
- IADA allowed for the flexibility during the pilot phase to concurrently report student achievement from both the innovative and traditional systems without double testing.

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## North Carolina Personalized Assessment Tool



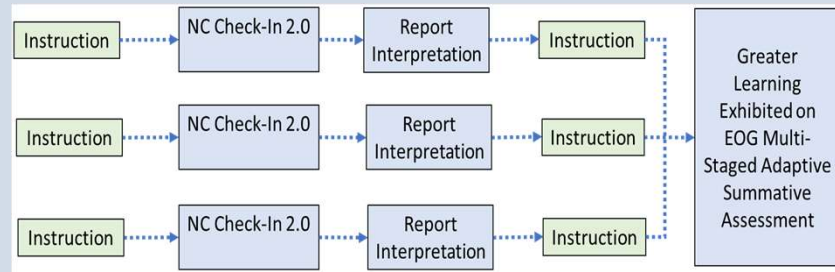
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## NCPAT– Purpose

- The current design purpose of the North Carolina Personalized Assessment Tool are to:
  - provide educators, students, and stakeholders with immediate and detailed feedback on student performance on grade-level-specific content standards so classroom instruction may be tailored to individual student’s needs;
  - provide a reliable estimate to inform a student’s multistage adaptive assessment.
  - Improve test experience for all students particularly those at the top and bottom end of the scale as each test form is adapted to be most informative at different ability ranges along the scale.

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## North Carolina Personalized Assessment Tool (NCPAT)



NC CHECK-INS 2.0 Formative Evaluation Report: *National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, August 2023*

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## NCPAT Feedback

- The NC Check-Ins 2.0 continues to receive positive ratings from educators.
- Feedback from educators show strong support to maintain the formative purpose of these interim assessments.
- Feedback also show educators would not be supportive of a system in which these NC Check-Ins 2.0 will also become the main source for accountability data on student performance and growth.
- Participation of NC Check-Ins 2.0 continue to be voluntary for schools across the state.

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## IADA: NCPAT Milestones

Year	Development Activity	
2019–20	Item Development and Planning	✓
2020–21	Test Specifications, Item Development, and Professional Development	✓
2021–22	Developed and administered NC Check-Ins 2.0 in grades 4 and 7 mathematics and reading in volunteer pilot schools	✓
2022–23	<b>-NC Check-Ins 2.0 : grades 4,5, 7 and 8</b> <b>-Multistage fixed adaptive forms for grades 4 and 7 in mathematics and reading administered in pilot schools</b>	✓
2023–24	<b>Ready to Scale NCPAT statewide</b>	

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## IADA : Lessons Learned

- Change is really hard when happening in real time
- Designing an innovative system while implementing it at the same time makes for challenging communication plan.
- There is a huge difference between what is technically possible versus what is practical. Finding the balance between these has been key to our design particularly for a state with local control of curriculum.
- Don't over promise.

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# QUESTIONS



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