

Frequently Asked Questions

Emergency Procurement Process to Select a Scoring Vendor for 2015-16 May 16, 2016

What process did the department use to select Pearson?

- The department collaborated with the state's Central Procurement Office (CPO) to conduct an emergency procurement process to secure a vendor to score assessments from the 2015-16 school year.
- T.C.A. § 12-3-505 authorizes state agencies to purchase, in the open market, specific goods or services for immediate delivery to meet emergencies arising from any unforeseen cause, including, but not limited to, delays by contractors, delays in transportation, unanticipated volume of work, and acts of God.
- The department carefully considered vendor ability to quickly begin large-scale scoring as well as experience in scoring and reporting large-scale assessments.
- Pearson was chosen as the vendor based on their capacity to move quickly in this unforeseen situation and complete scoring and reporting within the expedited timeframe.

Does the state currently work with Pearson?

- Yes, Pearson develops, administers, and scores SAT-10, the optional K-2 assessment that some districts chose to administer.
- Between 2003 and 2014, Pearson developed, administered, and scored grades 3–8 TCAP tests and/or high school End of Course exams in Tennessee.

What other states use Pearson for scoring?

- Pearson has administered and scored NAEP (better known as the Nation's Report Card) for nearly three decades. NAEP is administered in every state across the country and is seen as a gold standard in assessment.
- They also score the SAT and PSAT.
- Pearson partners with 25 states across the country, including Kentucky, Virginia, and Indiana.
- In addition, Pearson developed, administered, and scored graded 3–8 TCAP tests and/or high school End of Course exams in Tennessee from 2003 to 2014.
- Our emergency contract with Pearson is *only* for **scoring and reporting**. This will include high school End of Course exams, Part I of grades 3–8 tests, and any completed Part II of grades 3–8 tests.

Will Pearson be your vendor moving forward?

- The procurement process for the 2016-17 assessment is being conducted *separately*. This process is currently ongoing.

How will you select the vendor the 2016-17 assessments?

- We are collaborating with CPO to secure a new testing contract, and we are working to do this quickly.
- The department is considering a number of factors in the selection of the vendor for next year's assessment, including their ability to develop quality content aligned to the state's academic standards, their track record of administering large-scale assessment via paper and an online platform, as well as their ability to score and deliver results on a specific timeline.

How will the department strengthen their vendor selection process in the future?

- The department will work closely with CPO to strengthen the criteria. This will include but is not limited to providing specific technical requirements for the administration of both online and paper tests and examining successful experiences in other states.

When will the scoring contract with Pearson end?

- The contract to complete scoring and reporting for 2015-16 assessments will end Dec. 15, 2016.

Will districts send both used and unused testing materials directly to Pearson?

- Yes, districts will receive shipping labels, so they can ship materials directly to Pearson prior to the end of the school year.

Will the department obtain materials already shipped to Measurement Inc., including Part I materials?

- Yes, Measurement Inc. will send materials they have already obtained directly to Pearson.

Do the additional steps in the shipping process create any concerns over test security?

- No, districts have had specific instructions to keep their testing materials secure, and both Measurement Inc. and Pearson have a protocol in place to maintain secure test materials.