



# New York State Teacher Certification Examinations™

## Understanding Candidate Score Reports

### New and Redeveloped Content Specialty Tests<sup>1</sup>

Candidates who take the New York State Teacher Certification Examinations™ (NYSTCE®) can view their score reports as PDF documents on the Internet and may also elect to have them sent via email. The score report includes a section for each test taken on the test date indicated on the report. Each section includes information regarding the candidate's Pass/Did Not Pass status for that test, the total test score, and the performance on the major content competencies of the test. An individual's test scores are reported to the candidate, the New York State Education Department, and the institution that the candidate indicated during registration, unless the candidate notified Evaluation Systems in writing not to release scores to that institution.

### Interpreting the Total Test Scores

The results for each of these NYSTCE tests are reported as a score in the range from 400 to 600. The minimum passing score for each test is 520. A candidate with a total test score of 520 or above passes the test. A candidate with a total test score below 520 does not pass the test. The minimum passing score was established by the New York State Commissioner of Education, with input from New York State educators. The total test score is based on the *total* number of selected-response test questions answered correctly and on the score(s) for any constructed-response assignment(s) on the test. Each selected-response question counts the same toward the total score. There is no penalty for wrong answers.

### Interpreting Detailed Performance Information

Performance indices are provided for each competency of these NYSTCE tests. This information is descriptive only and may help assess strengths and identify areas where additional preparation may be necessary. There is no "passing" score associated with individual test components.

#### Performance Index Definitions

- ++++ Performance on the skills and knowledge is well above the level represented by the minimum passing score.
- +++ Performance on the skills and knowledge is just at or above the level represented by the minimum passing score.
- ++ Performance on the skills and knowledge is just below the level represented by the minimum passing score.
- + Performance on the skills and knowledge is well below the level represented by the minimum passing score.

### Responses to the Constructed-Response Written Assignments

Constructed-response assignments are scored by at least two qualified New York State educators. Scorers are unaware of the identities of the individuals whose responses they score. Scorers receive extensive orientation in standardized scoring procedures and take a qualifying assessment to ensure that they are ready to score. For most constructed-response assignments, scores are assigned according to a four-point scale that describes various levels of performance.

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<sup>1</sup> Includes content specialty tests updated in 2014 and beyond

## NYSTCE: Understanding Candidate Score Reports

Scorers judge the *overall effectiveness* of each response while focusing on a set of characteristics that have been defined by New York State educators as important for the test. Scorers provide an overall judgment; they do not indicate specific errors. Candidates do not pass or fail the constructed-response section. If a candidate's response is blank, unrelated to the assigned topic or off-task, unreadable, written in a language other than English/the target language, or contains an insufficient amount of original work to score, or is otherwise unscorable, the candidate will receive a "U" (unscorable) and may not pass the test. The response should be the candidate's original work, written in his or her own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work. The performance characteristics against which responses are scored and examples of strong responses to sample constructed-response assignments are provided in the study guide for each test. Study guides are available on the NYSTCE website at [www.nystce.nesinc.com](http://www.nystce.nesinc.com).

### CST Constructed-Response Assignments

For most single-subject Content Specialty Tests (CSTs) (excluding CSTs for languages other than English, the American Sign Language CST, and the Blind and Visually Impaired CST) and the Mathematics subtest of the Multi-Subject tests, the constructed-response assignment counts for 20% of the test score, and the selected-response section counts for 80%. For the Literacy and English Language Arts subtest of the Multi-Subject tests, the constructed-response assignment counts for 30% of the test score, and the selected-response section counts for 70%. (For more information on individual CSTs, refer to the appropriate study guide.) A candidate's response to a CST constructed-response assignment is evaluated on the basis of the extent to which it fulfills the charge of the assignment, accurately and effectively applies the relevant knowledge and skills, and is supported by appropriate examples and/or sound reasoning reflecting an understanding of the relevant knowledge and skills. The constructed-response assignment for most CSTs assesses content knowledge and skills, not writing ability. However, the candidate's response must be communicated clearly enough to permit valid judgment of these factors by scorers. The candidate should present a thoughtful, reasoned response to the assignment, written in his or her own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work. The final version of the response should conform to the conventions of edited American English. Each NYSTCE CST study guide contains an example of a strong response to a sample CST constructed-response assignment. To prepare for the CST constructed-response assignment, a candidate may wish to practice by responding to the sample assignment in the study guide and obtaining feedback on his or her response from faculty members or other advisors.