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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Ashley Simmons
Chief Public Information Officer
Nash-Rocky Mount Public Schools
Phone: (252) 462-2509
Fax: (252) 459-2734
aesimmons@nrms.k12.nc.us

Families, community advised to prepare for significant drop in test scores

Nashville, NC – Nash-Rocky Mount Public Schools is reaching out to families and community members to prepare for the release of 2012-13 test scores, which were delayed due to the changes in assessments that students were tested on last school year.

During October, the State Board of Education adopted new academic achievement standards (also referred to as cut scores) to align the new assessments students with the new Common Core and Essential Standards curriculum. As a result of the higher standards, student scores across the state are expected to be significantly lower than in previous years.

Dr. Anthony Jackson, Superintendent, said the drop in scores is consistent with trends in other states, and with past re-norming of standards and corresponding assessments.

“As with any major change in assessments, there is an anticipated drop in performance -- as teachers adjust instruction to meet the new standards -- and students adjust to the higher levels of rigor,” said Jackson. “We want parents to understand that this is a reflection of both the major shift in

the rigor of the curriculum and the new testing process.”

The State Board of Education will approve the new accountability data for students and schools across the state On November 7. Schools will begin issuing individual score reports shortly after the State Board gives approval. On November 14, Schools will host parent nights, during which school administrators and educators will speak with parents about the test scores.

In a letter sent home to parents on October 29, Jackson asked parents to carefully review the score reports.

“Unfortunately, because these are new assessments, it is virtually impossible to compare this year’s performance to your child’s previous scores,” said Jackson in the letter. “Please see these scores as the baseline for your child’s performance moving forward.”

While proficiency scores are expected to be lower this year, the school district will also be highlighting school and district level growth data, which will give an indication of how students progressed, based on their performance from the previous year. Nash-Rocky Mount Public Schools will utilize the growth and proficiency data to adjust instructional strategies to support the needs of students as they develop the skills to meet the higher demands moving forward.

For more information about the release of test scores, parents and community members are invited to visit the NRMPS website, www.nrms.k12.nc.us. Several resources are available, including sample score reports, frequently asked questions, and descriptors of each achievement level. A detailed schedule of upcoming parent nights will also be available on the website.

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