

PEARSON'S HISTORY OF TESTING PROBLEMS

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FairTest: National Center for Fair & Open Testing

Updated June 11, 2019

1998 **California** – test score delivery delayed

1999-2000 **Arizona** – 12,000 tests misgraded due to flawed answer key

2000 **Florida** – test score delivery delayed resulting in \$4 million fine

2000 **Minnesota** – misgraded 45,739 graduation tests leads to lawsuit with \$11 million settlement – judge found "years of quality control problems" and a "culture emphasizing profitability and cost-cutting."
http://www.news.minnesota.publicradio.org/features/200211/25_pugmiret_testsettle/ (FairTest consulted with plaintiffs' attorneys)

2000 **Washington** – 204,000 writing WASL exams rescored

2002 **Florida** -- dozens of school districts received no state grades for their 2002 scores because of a "programming error" at the DOE. One Montessori school never received scores because NCS Pearson claimed not to have received the tests.

2005 **Michigan** -- scores delayed and fines levied per contract

2005 **Virginia** -- computerized test misgraded – five students awarded \$5,000 scholarships
http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_8014/is_20051015/ai_n41291590/

2005-2006 **SAT college admissions test** – 4400 tests wrongly scored; \$3 million settlement after lawsuit (note FairTest was an expert witness for plaintiffs)

2007-2011 **Mississippi** – subcontractor programs correct answer as incorrect resulting in erroneous results for almost four years during which time 126 students flunked the exam due to that wrongly scored item. Auditors criticized Pearson's quality control checks, and the firm offered \$600,000 in scholarships as compensation

2008 **South Carolina** -- "Scoring Error Delays School Report Cards" The State, November 14, 2008

2008-2009 **Arkansas** -- first graders forced to retake exam because real test used for practice

2009-2010 **Wyoming** – Pearson's new computer adaptive PAWS flops; state declares company in "complete default of the contract;" \$5.1 million fine accepted after negotiations but not pursued by state governor
http://trib.com/news/state-and-regional/article_d7fae426-7358-5000-a86b-aeafcae258a2a.html
http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/wyoming/article_263ceb44-833a-11e0-911d-001cc4c002e0.html

2010 **Florida** – test score delivery delayed by more than a month – nearly \$15 million in fines imposed and paid. <http://www.tampabay.com/news/education/k12/florida-hits-fcat-contractor-pearson-with-another-12-million-in-penalties/1110688>

2010 **Minnesota** -- results from online science tests taken by 180,000 students delayed due to scoring error
http://www.twincities.com/ci_15533234?nclick_check=1#

2011 **Florida** – some writing exams delivered to districts without cover sheets, revealing subject students would be asked to write about <http://www.tampabay.com/news/education/testing/testmaker-pearson-replaces-faulty-fcats-missing-cover-sheets/1153508>

2011 **Florida** – new computerized algebra end-of-course exam delivery system crashes on first day of administration http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2011-05-17/features/os-algebra-test-pearson-problems-20110517_1_tests-algebra-high-schools

2011 **Oklahoma** – “data quality issues” cause “unacceptable” delay in score delivery -- <http://newsok.com/errors-in-testing-data-hold-up-results-for-oklahoma-districts-students/article/3597297>
Pearson ultimately replaced by CTB/McGraw Hill
http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/article.aspx?subjectid=11&articleid=20120714_19_A1_Afters391504

2011 **Guam** – score release delayed because results based on flawed comparison data; government seeks reimbursement -- <http://www.guampdn.com/article/20111021/NEWS01/110210303>

2011 **Illinois** – 144 student in five Chicago schools wrongly received zeroes due to scoring error. The state sought nearly \$1.7 million from Pearson, which could not explain how the errors occurred.

2011 **Iowa** – State Ethics and Campaign Finance Disclosure Board opens investigation of Iowa Education Department director Jason Glass for participating in all-expenses-paid trip to Brazil sponsored by Pearson Foundation -- <http://news.yahoo.com/formal-complaint-against-iowa-education-chief-190455698.html>

2011 **New York** – Attorney General Eric Schneiderman subpoenas financial records from Pearson Education and Pearson Foundation concerning their sponsorship of global junkets for dozens of state education leaders -- <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/22/education/new-york-attorney-general-is-investigating-pearson-education.html>

2011 **Oklahoma** – State identifies 18 significant problems with Pearson’s tests leading to \$8 million penalty settlement. <http://newsok.com/oklahoma-education-department-reviews-contracts-in-wake-of-standardized-testing-errors/article/3601417>

2011 **Wyoming** – Board of Education replaces Pearson as state’s test vendor after widespread technical problems with online exam http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/wyoming/state-education-officials-choose-new-paws-vendor/article_6ba18e9f-858c-5846-8274-db31c13494c1.html

2012 **New York** – “Pineapple and the Hare” nonsense test question removed from exams after bloggers demonstrate that it was previously administered in at least half a dozen other states – <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/21/nyregion/standardized-testing-is-blamed-for-question-about-a-sleeveless-pineapple.html>

2012 **New York** – More than two dozen additional errors found in New York State tests developed by Pearson - <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304203604577394492500145150.html>

2012 **Florida** – After percentage of fourth grades found “proficient” plunges from 81% to 27% in one year, state Board of Education emergency meeting “fixes” scores on FCAT Writing Test by changing definition of proficiency. <http://www.clickorlando.com/news/Passing-score-lowered-for-FCAT-Writing-exam/-/1637132/13396234/-/k1ckc2z/-/index.html>

2012 **Virginia** – Error on computerized 3rd and 6th grade SOL tests causes state to offer free retakes. http://www.newsplex.com/home/headlines/Error_on_SOL_Reading_Test_Gives_Students_Option_to_Retake_154191285.html

2012 **New York** – Parents have their children boycott “field test” of new exam questions because of concerns about Pearson’s process http://rochesterhomepage.net/fulltext?nxd_id=322122

2012 **Oklahoma** – After major test delivery delays, state replaces Pearson as its testing contractor http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/article.aspx?subjectid=19&articleid=20120714_19_A1_Afters391504

2012 **New York** – More than 7,000 New York City elementary and middle school students wrongly blocked from graduation by inaccurate “preliminary scores” on Pearson tests http://www.nypost.com/p/news/local/ed_blunder_mad_grads_JI2z8N6tA6Td0FGiwYSraP

2012 **New York** – State officials warn Pearson about potential fines if tests have more errors <http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/education/fines-bad-questions-state-tests-article-1.1187220>

2012 **Mississippi** – Pearson pays \$623,000 for scoring error repeated over four years that blocked graduation for five students and wrongly lowered scores for 121 others <http://www.clarionledger.com/article/20121025/NEWS01/310240052/Pearson-North-America-scoring-error-prevented-5-Mississippi-students-from-graduating-affected-121-others>

2012 **Texas** – Pearson computer failure blocks thousands of students from taking state-mandated exam by displaying error message at log on <http://www.statesman.com/news/news/local-education/computer-glitch-prevents-some-texas-students-from-nTMCP/>

2013 **New York** – Passages from Pearson textbooks appear in Pearson-designed statewide test, giving unfair advantage to students who used those materials <http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/practice-material-found-upstate-exams-article-1.1321448>

2013 **New York** – three Pearson test scoring mistakes block nearly 5,000 students from gifted-and-talented program eligibility <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/20/education/score-corrections-qualify-nearly-2700-more-pupils-for-gifted-programs.html>

2013 **Worldwide** – Pearson VUE testing centers around the globe experience major technical problems, leaving thousands unable to take scheduled exams or register for new ones <http://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2013/04/26/pearson-vue-test-centers-experience-major-problems>

2013 **New York** – Second error found in New York City gifted-and-talented test scoring makes 300 more students eligible for special programs <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/11/education/new-error-found-in-test-scoring-for-gifted-programs.html>

2013 **England, Wales and Northern Ireland** – General Certificate of Secondary Education exam in math leaves out questions and duplicates some others <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/10118879/Exam-board-apologises-over-GCSE-test-paper-blunder.html>

2013 **Texas** – State Auditor finds inadequate monitoring of Pearson’s contract: vendor determined costs of assessment changes without sufficient oversight and failed to disclose hiring nearly a dozen former state testing agency staff <http://www.texastribune.org/2013/07/16/state-auditor-finds-testing-contract-oversight-lac/>

2013 **Virginia** – 4,000 parents receive inaccurate test scorecards due to Pearson error in converting scores to proficiency levels http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/pearson-miscalculates-scorecards-for-more-than-4000-va-students/2013/08/13/5620cc42-042d-11e3-a07f-49ddc7417125_story.html

2013 **New York** – New Pearson Common Core textbooks are “full of errors,” including in sample test items <http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/education/textbooks-recommended-dept-education-full-errors-teachers-article-1.1512852>

2013 **New York** – Pearson fined \$7.7 million by New York State for using its non-profit foundation arm to steer business to the firm <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/13/nyregion/educational-publishers-charity-accused-of-seeking-profits-will-pay-millions.html>

2014 **National** – Pearson notifies students who took the Miller Analogies Test (MAT) in 2011 that their exams had been miscored <http://dianeravitch.net/2014/04/17/pearsons-errors-matter/>

2014 **Florida** – State education commissioner seeks penalties after schools in 26 counties suspend Pearson’s new computerized tests because server problems prevent students from logging on and freeze screens <http://www.tampabay.com/news/education/k12/pasco-hernando-schools-battling-computer-problems-during-fcat/2176268>

2014 **New York** – Printing errors result in missing questions and blank pages in Pearson-designed statewide math assessment <http://news.wbfo.org/post/missing-pages-statewide-math-assessments>

2014 **Texas** – Pearson emails out two test questions to teachers days before the exam is administered <http://educationblog.dallasnews.com/2014/05/questions-on-two-staar-exams-were-accidentally-emailed-out-last-month.html/>

2014 **Texas** – STAAR test answer sheets shipped to Pearson are lost, requiring students to retake the exam in the middle of summer <http://www.kxii.com/home/headlines/Denison-ISD-officials-say-164-STAAR-tests-missing-262643421.html>

2014 **Virginia** – Error in scoring Pearson’s SOL Civics & Economics test question results in 500 changed scores, including 224 students moving from failing to passing <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2014/08/14/scoring-error-on-one-sol-test-question-meant-hundreds-of-virginia-students-who-failed-really-passed/>

2014 **Texas** – Pearson goes after University of Texas–Austin education professor who testified that the company’s products do not measure what they claim to measure <http://www.texasobserver.org/walter-stroup-standardized-testing-pearson/>

2014 **Colorado** – Pearson test-scoring error delays release of Colorado Measures of Academic Success scores <http://www.9news.com/story/news/education/2014/10/16/state-delays-release-new-tests/17356299/>

2014 **Minnesota** – State expresses concern that Pearson computer testing technology is outmoded and cannot support new online exams http://www.twincities.com/localnews/ci_27211647/minnesota-schools-hit-glitches-online-testing

2014 **New Mexico** – American Institutes of Research claims “bid-rigging” in Common Core award to Pearson http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/marketplacek12/2014/07/air_says_it_will_appeal_big_pearson_common-core_contract_in_nm_court.html

2015 **Colorado** – Pearson’s glitches slow social studies and science tests http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci_27914137/pearson-glitches-slow-colorado-science-social-studies-tests

2015 **New York** – Quality of Pearson-designed questions on state exam challenged
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2015/04/19/educators-alarmed-by-some-questions-on-n-y-common-core-tests/>

2015 **California** – Pearson battles over award of state testing contract to rival firm
<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2015/04/22/testing-titans-pearson-ets-battle-over-calif.html>

2015 **New York** – State must clear up mystery of unscored test questions <https://citylimits.org/2015/03/16/ny-state-must-clear-up-mystery-of-missing-test-items/>

2015 **Minnesota** – Statewide testing suspended due to Pearson computerized administration system collapse
<http://www.grandforksherald.com/news/education/3728107-minnesota-suspends-clunky-online-proficiency-testing>

2015 **Florida** – State end-of-course testing suspended due to PearsonAccess log-in problems
<http://www.tampabay.com/blogs/gradebook/florida-doe-calls-for-temporary-testing-halt-amid-log-in-troubles/2229436>

2015 **Virginia** – State testing interrupted three times because of Pearson testing system problems
http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/va-testing-interrupted-three-times-because-of-issues-with-pearson-system/2015/05/20/3243a030-ff38-11e4-8b6c-0dcce21e223d_story.html

2015 **Indiana** – Cyber-attack on Pearson computerized exams raises security concerns,
<http://www.fox28.com/story/29124495/2015/05/21/istep-security-concerns-after-cyber-attack>

2015 **New York** – State ditches controversial test-maker <http://ny.chalkbeat.org/2015/07/09/new-york-ditches-controversial-test-maker-pearson/#.VbD5e5dLUZwC>

2015 **Texas** – Pearson loses bulk of state testing contract after repeated problems
<http://www.statesman.com/news/news/local/pearson-is-losing-bulk-of-standardized-testing-con/nmJkX/>

2015 **Minnesota** – Pearson Pays \$5.7 million in fines and services for testing screw ups
<http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Welcome/News/PressRel/023455>

2016 **New York** – Missing and unlabeled pages in English exam cause confusion
<http://ny.chalkbeat.org/2016/04/06/missing-and-unlabeled-pages-on-state-english-exams-cause-confusion/>

2016 **New Jersey** – Statewide testing cancelled due to computer problems
http://www.nj.com/education/2016/04/parcc_testing_postponed_statewide_after_technical.html

2016 **Indiana** – Online testing encounters glitches
<http://www.jconline.com/story/news/education/2016/04/21/istep-test-part-deux/83343720/>

2016 **Great Britain** – Answers published online day before test administration
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/2016/05/10/sats-answers-published-online-by-mistake-for-second-time/>

2016 **Indiana** – Test score reporting delayed again <http://www.journalgazette.net/news/local/indiana/ISTEP-scores-again-delayed-13896176>

2017 **Mississippi** – Nearly 1000 tests misgraded; graduation may have been affected
<http://www.clarionledger.com/story/news/2017/06/16/mde-testing-company-misgraded-nearly-1-000-exams/405130001/>

2017 **Mississippi** – Testing company fired after exams mis-scored <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/mississippi/articles/2017-06-16/mississippi-fires-testing-firm-after-exams-wrongly-scored>

2017 **Indiana** – Test-maker goof invalidates scores at 21 schools <http://www.wibc.com/news/local-news/istep-goof-invalidates-scores-21-schools>

2018 **Australia** – Failure of online medical licensing exams forces hundreds of retakes <http://www.smh.com.au/national/hundreds-of-trainee-doctors-forced-to-resit-1800-exam-after-unknown-technical-fault-20180219-p4z0wj.html>

2018 **Minnesota** – Another problem involving testing company's computerized exams <http://www.kaaltv.com/education/minnesota-mca-pearson-testing-issues/4881444/>

2018 **Indiana** – Damages sought for ISTEP Delay <http://www.journalgazette.net/news/local/schools/20180906/damages-sought-for-istep-delay>