PEARSON’S HISTORY OF TESTING PROBLEMS
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FairTest: National Center for Fair & Open Testing
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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://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/wyoming/article_263ceb44-833a-11e0-911d-001cc4e002e0.html


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](http://www.tampabay.com/news/education/testing/testmaker-pearson-replaces-faulty-fcats-missing-cover-sheets/1153508)


Pearson ultimately replaced by CTB/McGraw Hill

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


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](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](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](http://www.clickorlando.com/news/Passing-score-lowered-for-FCAT-Writing-exam/-1637132/13396234/-/k1ckc2z/-/index.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](http://rochesterhomepage.net/fulltext?nxd_id=322122)


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](http://www.nypost.com/p/news/local/ed_blunder_mad_grads_JI2z8N6tA6Td0FGiwYSraP)


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](http://www.clarionledger.com/article/20121025/NEWS01/310240052/Pearson-North-America-scoring-error-prevented-5-Mississippi-students-from-graduating-affected-121-others)


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](http://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2013/04/26/pearson-vue-test-centers-experience-major-problems)

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/](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](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)


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 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 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 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


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 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

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-0dce21e223dstory.html

2015 Indiana – Cyber-attack on Pearson computerized exams raises security concerns,

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

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

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

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

2017 Mississippi – Testing company fired after exams misscored