



**SC EDUCATION  
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

-2012-  
MARCH  
REPORT



Reporting Facts.  
Measuring Change.  
Promoting Progress.



## SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*Current March 1, 2012*

*Neil C. Robinson, Jr., Charleston (Chairman)*

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*David Whittemore, Easley*

*Mick Zais, Columbia (ex-officio)*

*Individuals serving on the EOC during 2011:*

*Phillip Owens, Easley*

*Harold Stowe, Pawley's Island*

*Bill Whitmire, Walhalla*



# STUDENT/SCHOOL/DISTRICT PERFORMANCE

## Progress Toward the 2020 Vision

The 2020 Vision states:

By 2020, all students will graduate with the knowledge and skills necessary to compete successfully in the global economy, participate in a democratic society and contribute positively as members of families and communities.

On February 13, 2012 the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) released a report, *A Wake-Up Call for South Carolina*, documenting South Carolina's progress toward the 2020 Vision accordingly:

**Reading Proficiency** - Reading achievement in the the state is relatively flat with no significant or sustained improvement.

Goal: By 2020, 95% of all students in grades 3 and 8 will be reading on grade level.

Using student performance on the state assessment, the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS), the 2011 target for Grade 3 was that 81.0% of students in grade 3 would score Met or above on PASS. In 2011, 80.0% of students in grade 3 scored Met or above on PASS; however, African-American students, students receiving free or reduced-price lunches, and students with disabilities did not score at levels needed to reach the 95% level. In grade 8 the target was 73.5%; however, the actual number of students performing on grade level was 67.8%. And, **no** subgroup (African American, Hispanic, white, free or reduced-price lunch, pay-lunch students, students with disabilities, students without disabilities) were on track to meet the 2020 Vision.

**Graduation Rate** - While the graduation rate inched upward to 73.6%, the state did not meet its 2011 target of 76.1%. Moreover, the gaps between various subgroups of students did not close, and no subgroup met the target.

Goal: By 2020, 88.3 percent of our students will graduate on time.

**College Preparedness** - There was no improvement in the percentage of high school graduates who enrolled in two-year colleges, in four-year colleges, or in technical schools in the fall after their graduation in the prior spring. In 2011, 65.9% of high school graduates were enrolled in two-year, four-year colleges or technical colleges as compared to 65.8% in 2010.

**Schools Rated At Risk** – In 2010 and 2011 there were 69 schools with an absolute rating of At Risk. The bottom line is that based on the current trends the state will not reach the 2020 Vision for reading proficiency and for the graduation rate without dramatic improvements. In fact, the EOC found that only one-third of our schools will meet these goals at the current levels of improvement.

Goal: By 2020, there will be no At-Risk schools.

Based on national assessments, the same trends exist. With the 2011 release of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scores in reading and mathematics, South Carolina's achievement overall can best be described as static.

+ 4th Grade Reading (2011) -- 39th (among all 50 states and the District of Columbia)

+ 4th Grade Reading (2009) -- 39th (among all 50 states and the District of Columbia)

+ 8th Grade Reading (2011) – 38th (among all 50 states and the District of Columbia)

+ 8th Grade Reading (2009) – 42nd (among all 50 states and the District of Columbia)

+ 4th Grade Math (2010) – 37th (among all 50 states and the District of Columbia)

+ 4th Grade Math (2009) – 38th (among all 50 states and the District of Columbia)

+ 8th Grade Math (2011) – 34th (among all 50 states and the District of Columbia)

+ 8th Grade Math (2009) – 33rd (among all 50 states and the District of Columbia)

With respect to Advanced Placement tests, South Carolina is in the top half of states, ranking 20th in the nation for participation and 22nd in the nation for the percentage of students passing an AP exam.

On college admissions tests, South Carolina's achievement is mixed. On the ACT, SC improved from 46th in the nation in 2009, to 43rd in 2010, and up to 42nd in 2011 with a mean ACT score of 20.1. On the SAT, South Carolina remained at 48th for the second consecutive year.

### **Quality Counts Release**

In January 2012, *Quality Counts 2012, The Global Challenge: Education in a Competitive World*, the 16th annual report card, was released. The report published by *Education Week* uses a variety of sources for its annual evaluations, including NAEP data. This year, South Carolina again earned a perfect score of 100 for standards and school accountability and a score of 83.3 for assessments. In terms of rankings, South Carolina maintained its No. 1 ranking for improving the teaching profession and No. 6th nationally for academic standards, assessment and school accountability. However, SC ranked 45th in the report for K-12 Achievement. South Carolina earned an overall state grade of C+. Nationally, South Carolina ranked 24th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, slightly above the national average, but down from its ranking of 15<sup>th</sup> in 2011.

### **ALEC's Report Card on American Education**

Also in January 2012, the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) released its annual

report card, ranking states on their K-12 performance, progress, and reform. First, South Carolina received an education policy grade of C+. This ranking is based upon the state's academic standards; charter school policies; home school regulatory burdens; private school choice programs; teacher quality and policies; and online learning opportunities. Second, out of 50 states and the District of Columbia, South Carolina received a ranking of 50th based on NAEP performance of students in grades 4 and 8 in reading and mathematics who are eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program and served in general education classes. The report notes that gains made in South Carolina's 4th and 8th grade reading and math NAEP scores among various student groups were all significantly below the national gains for similar students.

### **SAT Results - At the District and School Level**

This year the EOC analyzed SAT data to identify school districts and high schools that both increased the number of SAT test takers and SAT scores. First, 18 school districts had a mean increase in the critical reading, mathematics and writing scores on the SAT. Of these 18 districts, 9 also had a net increase in the number of test takers. These nine districts were: Berkeley, Darlington, Hampton 1, Jasper, Lexington 3, Marion 1, Orangeburg 4, Spartanburg 5 and Union.

Then the EOC looked at individual high schools. There were 39 high schools that had gains on at least one SAT subject area (math, reading or writing) and an increase of 5% or more in the number of test takers. Of these 39 schools, 11 had gains on all three SAT subject tests. Then looking at Advanced Placement (AP) scores in these high schools, the study found 11 schools had increases in SAT subject scores, increases in AP passage rates and increases in students taking both tests.

## **STATE SUPPORT FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

### **Assessments/Ratings**

#### **2011 REPORT CARD RELEASE**

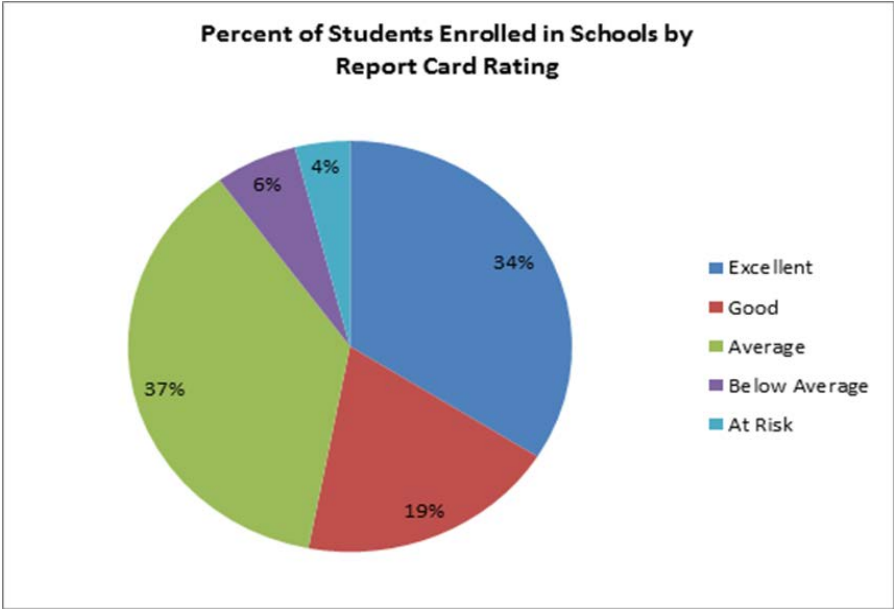
On November 10 the annual school and district report cards were released. The results showed two extremes. There were more schools and school districts in 2011 with an absolute rating of Excellent. However, more districts received an absolute rating of At Risk in 2011. Furthermore, there was no decline in the number of At-Risk schools.

On one end, there were 76 additional schools with an Excellent report card rating in 2011 than in 2010. More elementary, middle and high schools earned the absolute rating of Excellent. Overall, 226 schools with report cards, or 19%, improved their absolute rating from 2010 to 2011.

The number of school districts with an absolute rating of Excellent also improved from six in 2010 to 11 in 2011. Among the school districts joining the ranks of the state's best were Abbeville, Darlington, Florence 5, Spartanburg 1, and Spartanburg 6. These districts join York 4, Lexington 5, Anderson 1, Lexington 1, Greenwood 52, and York 2 who were Excellent in 2010

and in 2011. And, the number of districts with an absolute rating of Excellent or Good increased from 18 in 2010 to 33 in 2011.

At the other extreme, the number of At-Risk schools remained at 69 in 2011. In fact, there have been 37 schools receiving At-Risk report cards for each of the past three years. The number of At-Risk school districts increased from 6 in 2010 to 9 in 2011.



## Pursuing Innovation and Transformation

### INNOVATION INITIATIVE

The EOC endorsed a concept proposed by the State Board of Education to create a process whereby educators could test learning experiences that dramatically improve student success. The EOC collaborated with the State Board and SC Future Minds to begin the discussion of how to design, support, implement, evaluate, and replicate such innovation in education. Giving districts financial and regulatory flexibility within specific parameters has been a priority of the South Carolina General Assembly. Furthermore, promoting dramatic innovation in schools and school districts will likely require changes in the allocation of resources and additional regulatory or statutory flexibility. To assist educators and policymakers in looking at obstacles and opportunities to innovate, the EOC commissioned two reports that are available. The reports document existing statutes and regulations districts have to innovate and the current utilization of financial flexibility.

### 2012-2013 BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

As required by law, the EOC provides recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly each year regarding program priorities. On December 12, 2011 the EOC met and finalized its budget and proviso recommendations for the EIA for Fiscal Year 2012-13 that are premised on the following objectives to:

1. encourage collaboration with higher education, business and community leaders throughout the state to guarantee all students are college and career ready upon graduation from high school; and
2. promote innovation and transformation of our schools through public and private partnerships.

The EOC recommended that in addition to the current year's EIA base appropriation, an additional \$42.5 million in new EIA revenues be allocated to:

Education Infrastructure and Innovation Initiative	\$32.5 million
Aid to School Districts	\$ 6.4 million
S <sup>2</sup> TEM Centers South Carolina	\$ 1.7 million
Teach For America South Carolina	\$ 2.0 million

Having successful leaders in the classrooms of our most challenged schools is critical to changing the expectations and culture of many of our schools. The goal of **Teach For America** is the recruitment of top college graduates and professionals to teach in public schools in low-income communities with high teacher turnover rates and consistently low student achievement. If the state invested funds to expand the program, an additional 75 corps members could be teaching in South Carolina in 2012-13. Funding for **S<sup>2</sup>TEM** Centers is intended to transform the five regional math and science centers into an entity for innovation, research and implementation of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education.



Already, businesses like Boeing, BMW, Michelin and 3M support the work of the Centers.

Finally, the EOC recognized the need to develop a five-year plan to address **technology and infrastructure** needs and to promote innovation in education. The plan would determine the infrastructure needs of public schools, including charter schools and technical colleges; determine 21st century curriculum, instruction, assessments and accountability needs to promote improved learning through innovation; identify technology tools for the classroom, including instruction for children with disabilities; and identify professional development needs of teachers and administrators.

### **EOC FUNDING MODEL SIMULATION**

The General Assembly asked the EOC to determine what would have been the impact on the Education Finance Act (EFA) in Fiscal Year 2011-12 if the weights as proposed in the EOC's funding model had been implemented. The results showed that inclusion of the weights would have resulted in an increase in the total number of weighted pupil units at a total cost of \$81.9 million. However, comparing the actual appropriations of the EFA this fiscal year with the total State share of EFA with the weights, the increase in the State share of the EFA would have been only \$74.7 million. All school districts except York 2 and York 4 would have received more State EFA funds in Fiscal Year 2011-12 if the EOC model weights had been used and funded. The weights assign a 1.0 to all students in grades K-12. York 2 and York 4 would have to serve more students in the add-on classifications in order to offset the change in the general education weightings as proposed by the EOC.

## **Public Reporting**

### **FAMILY-FRIENDLY STANDARDS**

The Education Oversight Committee, in cooperation with the SC Department of Education, published the annual *Guide for Parents and Families About What Your Child Should Be Learning in School This Year*. The publication, available in both English and Spanish versions, provides current information on the standards in the four core content areas in grades K-12. An interactive version of the family-friendly standards still exists and is maintained by the SC State Library. The website, [www.scffs.org](http://www.scffs.org), provides families with interactive activities that support the teaching and learning that occurs in the state's public schools. The website currently provides content for English language arts, kindergarten through second grade.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY MANUAL**

The Education Oversight Committee staff annually produces the Accountability Manual, which provides detail on the ratings system for educators and interested individuals. Manuals are distributed to school and school district administrators each summer and contain the current information on formulas, expectations, procedures, etc. of the accountability system.

### **PARENT SURVEY**

Since 2002 the South Carolina Department of Education has administered the parent survey to a sample of parents whose children attended public schools in South Carolina. Annually, the EOC has analyzed the results of the parent survey and issued reports. In 2010, the number of



parent surveys completed and returned totaled 69,474, a 3.7 percent increase over the prior year. Based upon the total number of surveys approximately four out of every ten eligible parents anticipated. The results showed that parent satisfaction levels with the three characteristics measured – the learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment of their child’s school – were consistent with the prior year’s results.

<b>Percentage of Parents Satisfied With:</b>			
<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>% Increase</b>
Learning Environment	<b>85.9</b>	85.5	0.4
Home and School Relations	<b>81.9</b>	81.4	0.5
Social and Physical Environment	<b>83.2</b>	82.7	0.5

Comparing the 2010 parent survey results with the mean satisfaction levels of the three prior year survey results, parent satisfaction in 2010 exceeded the mean or average of the parent survey results from 2007 through 2009.

<b>Percentage of Parents Satisfied With:</b>			
<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Mean 2007-2009</b>	<b>% Difference</b>
Learning Environment	<b>85.9</b>	83.3	2.6
Home and School Relations	<b>81.9</b>	79.0	2.9
Social and Physical Environment	<b>83.2</b>	80.1	3.1

Finally, regarding parental involvement, parents reported comparable levels of parental involvement to other years and identified work schedules as their greatest obstacle to involvement.

<b>Parents Report Obstacles to Parental Involvement in 2010</b>	
Work Schedule	55.1%
Lack of timely notification of volunteer opportunities	25.3%
School does not encourage involvement	17.4%
Lack of child or adult care services	15.1%
Family and health problems	14.3%
Involvement not appreciated	12.0%
Transportation	11.8%

## **Standards**

### **SCIENCE STANDARDS REVIEW**

In December 2011 the EOC began the cyclical review of the science academic standards. The EOC has appointed a seven-member national panel of experts who will review the current standards and make recommendations for their improvement. Two other panels—one composed of teachers of students with limited English proficiency and students with disabilities and another composed of parents, business and industry officials, and community leaders—will also review the standards. The EOC contacted all school districts, instructional leaders, and special education administrators in the state as well as EOC members for nominations to these two panels. Over 165 names were provided to the EOC. Of these approximately 60 will be asked to serve.

Implementation of the English language arts and mathematics standards continues on schedule for implementation to begin in Fiscal Year 2013-14. The EOC interim executive director served on an advisory committee appointed by the State Board of Education to review options for an assessment to replace the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS). As of this date, the State Board of Education has not selected a new assessment.

## **Professional Development**

### **P-16 COUNCILS**

Leaders from Clemson University and the University of South Carolina addressed the EOC at its August retreat. In attendance from Clemson University were Dr. Mike Padilla, Director of the Eugene T. Moore School of Education and Associate Dean of Educational Collaborations; Dr. Larry Allen, Professor and Dean of the Department of Health, Education and Human Development; and Dr. Hans Klar, Assistant Professor in Education Leadership. Also on the panel was Dr. Lemuel W. Watson, Professor and the new Dean for the College of Education at the University of South Carolina who initiated the conversation about the need to have a more systemic approach to address educational outcomes in South Carolina.

These leaders noted that the role of higher education is changing. Universities must be responsible for education change and provide research, evaluation and expertise as needed. Higher education also has a responsibility to school districts to provide staff and curriculum development to assist schools. There was consensus that teaching, research and service must be provided by higher education if public education is to be transformed. Dr. Watson also noted that a P-20 initiative is needed to connect data to instruction so that all children in South Carolina achieve. He emphasized the importance of the state having an innovative and creative, data system.

In its budget recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly, the EOC emphasized the importance of having a formal system of collaboration between public and secondary education that is needed now more than ever in South Carolina. The existence of the Education and Economic Development Coordinating Council has been extended only until July 1, 2012. If all graduates of our public schools are to be ready for college and careers, then the relationship

between public and higher education must be virtually seamless.

### **READING PARTNERSHIP**

The EOC in partnership with South Carolina Kids Count and the South Carolina Department of Education assisted the South Carolina Reading Achievement Systemic Initiative in defining the focus and priorities for South Carolina to improve reading achievement. The panel was composed of twenty-five individuals representing the business community, the General Assembly, the Office of First Steps to School Readiness, the State Library Board, the medical profession, literacy organizations, teachers, literacy coaches, reading experts, parents, and principals. The State Superintendent of Education also served and chaired the panel. While the final report has not been issued at the time of this report, the focus of the panel is on policies and practices that address the following:

1. Birth to age 5 – Early Intervention
2. Family and Community engagement
3. Reading Instruction
4. Professional Development
5. Teacher and other Educator Preparation
6. School District Operations
7. State Education Agency Operations

***“Upon completing my degree in education, I knew how to teach reading, but I did not know how to teach a reader.”***

Comment from member of SC Reading Achievement Systemic Initiative Panel

## **ADVISORY GROUPS**

### **South Carolina Reading Achievement Systemic Initiative**

Leigh Bolick, Columbia  
William Brasington, Jr., Woodruff  
D'Etta P. Broam, Lexington  
Dr. Charles Castles, III, Columbia  
Dr. Cherry Daniel, Columbia  
Cynthia Downs, Newberry  
Sen. Mike Fair, Greenville  
Dr. Kathy Headley, Seneca  
Baron Holmes, Columbia  
Angela, Hutto, Hampton  
Pamela Lackey, Columbia  
Debbie Milner, Spartanburg  
Earl Mitchell, Charleston  
Dr. Lynn Moody, Rock Hill  
Mary Annette Parrott, Sumter  
Audrea Phillips, Conway  
Jay W. Ragley, Columbia  
Kelli Sanders, Orangeburg  
Rose Sheheen, Camden  
Amy Sprague, Moncks Corner  
Molly C. Talbot-Metz, Spartanburg  
Ann Marie Taylor, Aiken  
Mary Elizabeth Thomas, Columbia  
Marisa Vickers, Columbia  
Rep. Mark Willis, Fountain Inn  
Dr. Mick Zais, Columbia

### **Innovation Initiative**

David Blackmon, Hartsville  
Mike Brennan, Columbia  
Trip Dubard, Florence  
Penny Fisher, Greenville  
Don Gordon, Greenville  
Don Herriott, Columbia  
Jacki Martin, Greenville  
Gerrita Postlewait, Horry  
Jim Reynolds, Columbia  
Chad Walldorf, Charleston  
Karen Woodward, Lexington

### **South Carolina Family-Friendly Standards Team**

Cathy Jones, Columbia  
Regina King, Columbia  
Laura Sponhour, Columbia  
Amanda Stone, Columbia  
Dana Yow, Columbia

### **Parent Survey Analysis**

Cynthia Hearn, Columbia

Special thanks to the numerous individuals who provided expertise and assistance on one or more projects during the period February 1, 2011-January 31, 2012.



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PO Box 11867 2 2 7 Blatt Building | Columbia SC 29211 | [WWW.EOC.SC.GOV](http://WWW.EOC.SC.GOV)

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