



# Learning Matters

January 2006

## Where Are We Now?

### South Carolina's Progress Toward the 2010 Education Goal

In 1998, recognizing that a quality education system is the foundation for a prosperous economic future in South Carolina, a lofty, but necessary, education goal was set for our state. The goal states "by the year 2010, South Carolina's student achievement will be ranked in the top half of the states nationally. To achieve this goal, we must become one of the five fastest improving systems in the country."

To help guide students and schools toward the 2010 goal, the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC), in partnership with business, education, and elected leaders, identified nine strategic issues to

pursue and address: governance and structure of the system; sufficient funding for all school districts and schools; efficient use of resources and accountability; education for economic development; leadership and coalition building; teacher quality; early childhood education and development; community/parental support and involvement; and safe and healthy schools.

The annual publication of *Where Are We Now?* presents the most recent data on the nine evaluation points used in measuring student and school performance.

### Goal 1 ✓

**South Carolina will rank in the top half of states on NAEP examinations and other national and international measures.**

#### Measurements

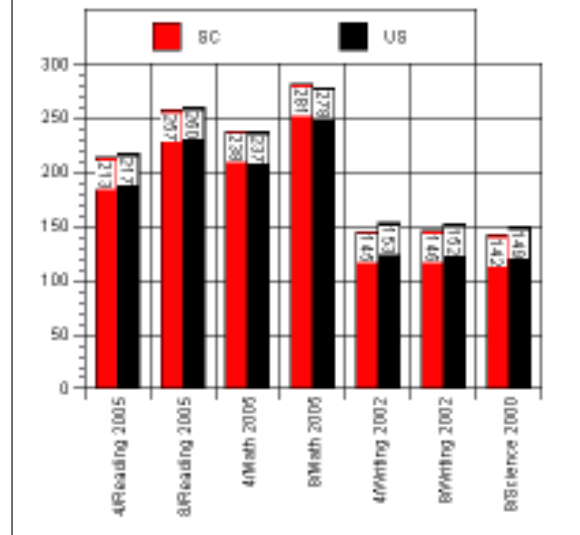
The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) assesses achievement. Since 1969, assessments have been conducted periodically in reading, mathematics, science, writing, U.S. history, civics, geography, and the arts.

The most recent data (2005) reveal steady improvement in mathematics for South Carolina's 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Mathematics performance in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade improved two points from 2003 to 2005. South Carolina's average scale score of 238 exceeds the national average of 237. In the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, the average scale score of 281 is three points higher than the national average and a four point improvement from 2003.

Reading performance, in both 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, dipped slightly. Fourth grade reading performance slipped two points from 2005 to 2003, compared to a national gain of one point. Average reading scale scores for 8<sup>th</sup> graders in reading slipped one point, which is in line with the nationwide one point dip.

The most recent administrations of the Science and Writing tests, given in 2000 and 2002 respectively, show South Carolina behind the national average. Science results will be reported in the spring of 2006.

Most Recent NAEP Performance  
SC and US Average Scale Scores



Source: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2005

## Goal 1 (continued)

**The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) 2003** is the third comparison of mathematics and science achievement carried out since 1995 by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), an international organization of national research institutions and governmental research agencies. In 2003, some 46 countries participated in TIMSS, at either the fourth- or eighth-grade level, or both.

	SC	Nation	International
Math	502	502	487
Science	515	515	488

Source: SDE, 2002

A state level comparison was not done in 2003. However, 8th graders in 38 countries, including the United States, were tested in the 1999 TIMSS. South Carolina was one of 13 states that volunteered to compare its student performance with that of the other nations. Of 13 participating states, South Carolina ranked ninth.

The next U.S. collection of TIMSS data will occur in Spring 2007.

## Goal 2

**Nine out of ten South Carolina students will score at or above grade level (proficient or advanced) on PACT, South Carolina's standards-based criterion-referenced assessments.**

### Measurements

**The Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT)** uses four terms to indicate student performance levels: *Below Basic*, *Basic*, *Proficient* and *Advanced*. Performance at the *Proficient* level or above means a student is well prepared for work at the next grade. The state is focused on all students scoring *Proficient* and above. The scores reported are based upon students enrolled in the school as of the 45<sup>th</sup> day and present for testing.

Year	Grade	English Language Arts	Mathematics	Social Studies	Science
		% Scoring Proficient & Above	% Scoring Proficient & Above	% Scoring Proficient & Above	% Scoring Proficient & Above
2002	Grade 3	40.7	31.1	NA	NA
2003	Grade 3	43.8	33.1	21.3	23.1
2004	Grade 3	56.0	30.0	24.3	21.9
2005	Grade 3	56.8▲	30.9▲	32.8▲	25.2▲
2002	Grade 4	32.5	35.6	NA	NA
2003	Grade 4	31.4	33.7	19.8	21.9
2004	Grade 4	38.4	35.7	27.1	26.0
2005	Grade 4	36.4▼	40.6▲	29.9▲	28.1▲
2002	Grade 5	24.0	28.3	NA	NA
2003	Grade 5	19.7	26.6	18.6	21.4
2004	Grade 5	27.1	32.3	21.2	23.9
2005	Grade 5	29.8▲	32.4▲	24.5▲	26.9▲
2002	Grade 6	32.7	28.8	NA	NA
2003	Grade 6	26.8	36.2	17.8	20.1
2004	Grade 6	28.6	38.2	26.4	26.6
2005	Grade 6	27.3▼	39.2▲	29.2▲	27.0▲
2002	Grade 7	26.2	26.7	NA	NA
2003	Grade 7	22.7	28.9	18.2	20.3
2004	Grade 7	25.2	31.6	21.3	26.2
2005	Grade 7	24.2▼	33.0▲	21.7▲	25.9▼
2002	Grade 8	26.2	18.9	NA	NA
2003	Grade 8	19.9	19.2	19.2	17.3
2004	Grade 8	26.3	22.3	24.4	19.5
2005	Grade 8	29.7▲	23.2▲	24.4	23.7▲

Source: SDE, 2005

## Goal 2 (continued)

### English Language Arts:

The percentage of students scoring *Proficient* or above in 2005 was 33.7 percent across all grades. This is a slight increase from 2004, when 33.4 percent of students scored *Proficient* or above. Grades 4, 6, and 7 each experienced a decrease in the percentage of students scoring *Proficient* or above, from 2004 to 2005.

### Mathematics:

The percentage of students scoring *Proficient* or above in 2005 was 33.2 percent across all grades. This represents an increase from 2004, when 31.8 percent of students scored *Proficient* or above. Every grade experienced an increase.

### Social Studies:

The percentage of students scoring *Proficient* or above in 2005 was 27 percent across all grades. This represents an increase from 2004 when 24.1 percent of students scored *Proficient* or above.

### Science:

The percentage of students scoring *Proficient* or above in 2005 was 26.1 percent across all grades. This represents an increase from 2004 when 24.1 percent of students scored *Proficient* or above.

## Goal 3

**South Carolina will rank in the top half of states on the SAT and ACT.**

### Measurements

Since 2000, the **Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)** scores in South Carolina have increased 27 points. When the 2005 performance is compared with the 2000 performance, the verbal score increased 10 points and the math increased 17 points in SC, as compared to a slight increase within that time period for the nation.

The SAT is used primarily in 23 states and the District of Columbia as a college admissions test. In 2005, 64 percent of high school graduates in SC took the SAT. Across the 24 SAT "state entities", the participation rate varies from a high of 92 percent in New York to a low of 50 percent in California.

The **American College Test (ACT)** is a national college admission and placement exam. In 25 states, more than 50 percent of high school graduates take the ACT. The percentage of graduating seniors who elect to take the ACT range from a low of four percent in Delaware to a high of 100 percent in Colorado and Illinois. Only 38 percent of SC's high school graduates took the ACT in 2005, up from 36 percent in 2004.

Year	Verbal		Math		Composite	
	SC	Nation	SC	Nation	SC	Nation
2000	484	505	482	514	966	1019
2001	486	506	488	514	974	1020
2002	488	504	493	516	981	1020
2003	493	507	496	519	989	1026
2004	491	508	495	518	986	1026
2005	494▲	508	499▲	520▲	993▲	1028▲
2000-05	+10	+3	+17	+6	+27	+9

Source: SDE, 2005

The range of scores for the verbal and math sections is 200 to 800.

The composite range is 400 to 1600.

### SC and National ACT Scores at a Glance, 2001-2005 Results

	SC	National
English 2001	18.8	20.5
English 2002	18.8	20.2
English 2003	18.7	20.3
English 2004	18.8	20.4
English 2005	18.8	20.4
Math 2001	19.3	20.7
Math 2002	19.1	20.6
Math 2003	19.0	20.6
Math 2004	19.1	20.7
Math 2005	19.3▲	20.7
Reading 2001	19.5	21.3
Reading 2002	19.3	21.1
Reading 2003	19.4	21.2
Reading 2004	19.4	21.3
Reading 2005	19.6▲	21.3
Science 2001	19.2	21.0
Science 2002	19.2	20.8
Science 2003	19.2	20.8
Science 2004	19.3	20.9
Science 2005	19.3	20.9
Composite 2001	19.3	21.0
Composite 2002	19.2	20.8
Composite 2003	19.2	20.8
Composite 2004	19.3	20.9
Composite 2005	19.4▲	20.9

Source: SDE, 2005

The range of scores for each ACT, as well as the composite score, is one to 36.

## Goal 4

**South Carolina Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Programme passage rates will be at or above the national average, and South Carolina students will receive college credit as well as high school credit for courses offered under PACE or university program sponsorship.**

AP Exam Results, 1997-2005										
All Exams										
Year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
Number of Tests Taken in SC	14,177	14,994	14,894	14,560	15,703	16,628	17,429	18,044	20,479	
Percent 3 or Higher	SC	53%	54%	55%	55%	56%	59%	57%	56%	54%▼
	Natl	63%	63%	62%	62%	60%	62%	60%	60%	58%▼

Source: SDE, 2005

### Measurements

**Advanced Placement (AP)** participation is increasing at the national and state levels. Students who score 3, 4, or 5 on an AP exam are, in many instances, considered qualified to receive credit for the equivalent course(s) at colleges and universities that give credit for AP exams.

Currently, SC's average of qualifying scores is below the national average by four percentage points.

SC AP Student Participation, 1997-2005										
Year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
SC	8,962	9,269	9,402	9,130	9,349	10,094	10,646	10,988	12,313	▲
Natl	467,133	509,895	568,895	617,547	681,308	706,129	828,487	1,081,102	1,221,110	▲

Source: College Board, 2005

\* From 2004 to 2005, SC AP student participation has increased 12 percent.

The number of schools offering **International Baccalaureate (IB)** programs, the number of students participating in IB, and the number of exams taken are increasing statewide and nationwide. Since 1999, the percentage of qualifying scores has declined slightly but participation has increased substantially.

SC and National IB Scores, 1999-2005						
Year	South Carolina				United States	
	# Schools Participating	# Students taking at least 1 IB subject exam	# Exams	% Qualifying	% Qualifying	# Exams Taken
1999	12	303	809	76%	81%	43,017
2000	9	290	750	77%	81%	50,737
2001	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	57,695
2002	12	548	1,296	71%	NA	67,692
2003	14	686	1,646	73%	NA	76,052
2004	17	811	1,965	79%	81%	85,182
2005	19▲	879▲	2,079▲	74%▼	NA	110,780▲

Sources: International Baccalaureate Organization; SDE, 2005

The enrollment in the **USC Program for Accelerated College Education (PACE)** has been declining in recent years. Credit earned in PACE is transferable to most institutions of higher education in the United States.

Dual Credit: USC PACE Evaluations, 1994-2005												
Year	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Program Enrollment	929	1,175	1,119	1,171	1,292	1,263	1,048	1,145	1,015	994	501	480*▼

Source: University of South Carolina, 2005

\* This figure does not include students involved with Project Lead The Way, a pre-engineering program.

## Goal 5

**High school completion rate will be at or above the national average.**

### Measurements

The high school completion or graduation rate is the percentage of ninth grade students who earn a standard high school diploma and graduate in four years or less (i.e., on time.)

2001 High School Completion Rate	
SC	51%
National	67%
SC Ranking	50

Source: National Board on Educational Testing and Public Policy, 2004

## Goal 5 (continued)

The latest high school completion rate (2001), reported by the National Board on Educational Testing and Public Policy, is calculated by comparing the estimated number of public high school graduates in 2001 with the 9<sup>th</sup> grade enrollment in the fall of 1997. The statistic ranks below the national average and includes transfers to other high schools, but excludes transfers to adult education programs.

The high school graduation rate reported on the 2005 South Carolina high school report cards was calculated by comparing the number of graduates in 2005 with the 9<sup>th</sup> grade enrollment in the fall of 2001. It is important to note that graduation rates published on the report cards may be higher than the actual rates because of incomplete data on students who are no longer enrolled in the school or district.

### 2005 SC Graduation Rate

Average Rate	75.4%
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Source: SC Dept. of Education, 2005  
Reported on 2005 School Report Cards  
Minimum and Maximum rates unavailable at time of publication.

## Goal 6

*The high school dropout rate will be ranked in the lower half of the states.*

### Measurement

South Carolina calculates annual dropout rates by dividing the total number of dropouts for grades 9-12 by the total enrollment for grades 9-12. This is expressed as a percentage. South Carolina's dropout rate for 2003-04 increased from 3.2 percent in 2002-03 to 3.4 percent. National data are not available for 2002 although the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reports that rates have stagnated nationally since the 1990s.

	Dropout rate
1996-97	2.7%
1997-98	2.7%
1998-99	2.7%
1999-00	3.2%
2000-01	3.3%
2001-02	3.3%
2002-03	3.2%
2003-04	3.4%▲

Source: SC Dept. of Education, 2005

## Goal 7

*SC will be in the top half of states in the percentage of students with disabilities earning a high school diploma.*

### Measurement

The percentage of students with disabilities receiving a diploma or certificate increased from 2003 to 2004, to 32.3 percent. Recent data for the nation are not available.

Year	Students with Disabilities in SC, Ages 17-21			% of students with disabilities receiving a diploma or certificate
	Total # students	# Receiving Diploma	# Receiving Certificate	South Carolina
2000	7,380	1,033	986	27.4%
2001	7,522	1,120	1,106	29.6%
2002	9,046	1,361	1,479	31.4%
2003	9,924	1,530	1,599	31.5%
2004	10,653	1,818▲	1,623▲	32.3%▲

Source: SC Dept. of Education, 2005

## Goal 8

*SC will be in the top half of states in freedom from drugs, weapons, violence and teacher victimization by students.*

### Measurements

In 2004, crime reports were modified in accordance with No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Using data reported by schools, the SC Dept. of Education developed criteria to identify a "persistently dangerous" school. The following eight categories of violent offences are used: homicide, forcible sex offenses, kidnapping/abduction,

aggravated assault, drug distribution, robbery, and weapons offenses. A school will be designated as "persistently dangerous" if any two of the seven criteria exist for three consecutive years. In 2005, no South Carolina schools were designated "persistently dangerous." No national data are available for comparison at this time.

## Goal 9

**The gap among achievements of students of different racial/ethnic groups and different economic status will be eliminated.**

### Measurements

#### SAT

Differences in SAT performance among white, African-American and Hispanic students are to be eliminated. In 2005, African American and white ethnic groups experienced gains in SAT mathematics and verbal performance. Hispanic students experienced drops in math and verbal performance.

Between 2004 and 2005, the achievement gap between African-American students and white students narrowed slightly in mathematics and verbal scores. During the same time period, the gap between white and Hispanic students increased in both areas after seeing a significant improvement last year.

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
African-American	412	412	407	407	407	414	421	421	425	423	430
White	499	500	502	502	504	510	515	519	521	517	523
<b>W-AA Diff</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>93▼</b>
Hispanic**	NA	NA	477	479	468	489	479	495	483	494	483
<b>W-His Diff</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>40▲</b>

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
African-American	415	419	415	414	415	415	420	418	422	419	425
White	506	508	508	508	509	514	514	515	518	515	519
<b>W-AA Diff</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>94▼</b>
Hispanic**	NA	NA	482	483	473	490	485	487	491	494	484
<b>W-His Diff</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>35▲</b>

Source: College Board, 2005

\* 8 percent of students did not report an ethnic group in 2005.

\*\* Hispanic excludes Mexican, Mexican American and Puerto Rican.

Note: Data for free/reduced price lunch participation status are not available.

#### ACT

The ACT assessment includes four tests: English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science Reasoning. Results are reported for each of the four tests as well as the overall composite. Scores range from 1 to 36. The achievement gap between white and African-American students increased two-tenths of a point from 2004 to 2005.

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
African-American	17.1	17.2	17.2	16.5	16.2	16.3	16.5	16.5
White	21.3	21.4	21.3	20.9	21.0	21.0	21.1	21.3
<b>W-AA Diff</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>4.8▲</b>
Hispanic	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Source: South Carolina Dept. of Education, 2005

\*These totals will not add up to the number of students who took the ACT in SC because not all students reported a race/ethnicity.

#### Advanced Placement

Differences in Advanced Placement performance (percent of qualifying scores) among white, African-American, and Hispanic students are to be eliminated. Students who score 3, 4, or 5 on an AP exam are, in many instances, considered qualified to receive credit for the equivalent course(s) at colleges and universities that give credit for AP exams. The percentage of qualifying scores in advanced placement

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
African-American	21%	24%	24%	17%	25%	23%	26%	32%	30%	29%	27%
White	55%	55%	58%	60%	60%	60%	61%	62%	61%	59%	58%
Hispanic	60%	69%	55%	55%	60%	58%	59%	61%	60%	57%	56%
Asian	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	66%

Source: South Carolina Dept. of Education, 2005; College Board, 2005

	# Test Takers	# of Exams	# (%) scoring 3-5
African-American	1,702	2,447	660 (27%)
White	9,296	15,617	8,992 (58%)
Hispanic	259	435	244 (56%)
Asian	489	1,048	692 (66%)

Source: South Carolina Dept. of Education, 2005; College Board, 2005

dropped for each ethnic group reported. Between 2004 and 2005, the performance gap existing between African American students and their white and Hispanic counterparts went up slightly.

## Goal 9 (continued)

### PACT

With the exception of Math, ELA, and Science scores dipping for American Indian / Alaskan students, PACT performance increased in all subject areas for all ethnic groups reported between 2004 and 2005. However, the results continue to show achievement disparities among students of demographic groups who are historically underachieving (African American, Hispanic, and free /

reduced price meal), and their typically higher achieving peers (white, full pay meal).

Improvement is evident, as a notable, steady increase of students who receive free or reduced priced meals, scored *Proficient* or above in ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies. However, full pay students are gaining at a faster rate, widening the gaps in 2005.

PACT Performance (Mathematics and English Language Arts) by Ethnic Group, 2002-2005								
	PACT Mathematics % Proficient and Above				PACT English Language Arts % Proficient and Above			
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2002	2003	2004	2005
White	40.2	41.7	43.9	45.0	42.9	37.8	44.4	44.8
African American	12.7	13.4	15.5	17.0	15.3	13.6	18.7	18.8
<i>W-AA Diff</i>	<b>27.5</b>	<b>28.3</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b>28.0▼</b>	<b>27.6</b>	<b>24.2</b>	<b>25.7</b>	<b>26.0▲</b>
Asian/Pacific Islander	56.7	56.6	56.4	58.5	52.2	45.5	50.7	52.4
Hispanic	23.7	22.2	21.6	23.5	24.5	17.9	22.5	23.7
<i>W-His Diff</i>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>19.5</b>	<b>22.3</b>	<b>21.5▼</b>	<b>18.4</b>	<b>19.9</b>	<b>21.9</b>	<b>21.1▼</b>
American Indian / Alaskan	26.9	28.2	30.1	29.5	28.4	24.2	30.7	28.7
Free / Reduced Price Meal	15.2	16.1	18.5	20.1	16.7	14.6	20.3	20.6
Full Pay	42.8	44.5	46.1	47.8	46.4	41.4	47.3	48.3
<i>Full Pay - Free/Red. Diff.</i>	<b>27.6</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b>27.6</b>	<b>27.7▲</b>	<b>29.7</b>	<b>26.8</b>	<b>27.0</b>	<b>27.7▲</b>

Source: SDE, 2005

PACT Performance (Science and Social Studies) by Ethnic Group, 2003-2005						
	PACT Science % Proficient and Above			PACT Social Studies % Proficient and Above		
	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005
White	31.3	35.8	38.2	28.5	34.9	38.1
African American	7.0	8.9	10.1	6.9	9.9	12.1
<i>W-AA Diff</i>	<b>24.3</b>	<b>26.9</b>	<b>28.1▲</b>	<b>21.6</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>26.0▲</b>
Asian/Pacific Islander	39.4	43.5	46.4	38.1	43.4	49.2
Hispanic	12.1	14.4	16.2	12.3	15.6	19.0
<i>W-His Diff</i>	<b>19.2</b>	<b>21.4</b>	<b>22.0▲</b>	<b>16.2</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>19.1▼</b>
American Indian / Alaskan	19.4	23.7	23.1	16.8	21.8	25.5
Free / Reduced Price Meal	9.1	11.5	13.1	7.8	11.4	14.2
Full Pay	33.7	38.3	41.1	31.8	38.2	41.1
<i>Full Pay - Free/Red. Diff.</i>	<b>24.6</b>	<b>26.8</b>	<b>28.0▲</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>26.8</b>	<b>26.9▲</b>

Source: SDE, 2005



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## Where Are We Now?

This annual report, *Where Are We Now: South Carolina's Progress Toward the 2010 Goal*, presents the most recent progress on the nine evaluation points used in measuring student and school performance.

### Goals

1. SC will rank in the top half of states on NAEP examinations and other international and national measures.
2. Nine out of ten SC students will score at or above grade level (proficient or advanced) on PACT, South Carolina's standards-based criterion-referenced assessments.
3. SC will rank in the top half of states on the SAT and ACT.
4. SC Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Programme passage rates will be at or above the national average, and SC students will receive college credit as well as high school credit for courses offered under PACE or university program sponsorship.
5. High school completion rate will be at or above the national average.
6. The high school dropout rate will be ranked in the lower half of the states.
7. SC will be in the top half of states in the percentage of students with disabilities earning a high school diploma.
8. SC will be in the top half of states in freedom from drugs, weapons, violence and teacher victimization by students.
9. The gap among achievements of students of different racial/ethnic groups and different economic status will be eliminated.