Ratings for School Districts

Ratings of school districts are calculated based on the school ratings methodology for grades three through eight and on a weighting methodology for the high school level data similar to that used for high schools. Student assessment data included in the calculation of the indexes include data from students enrolled in the district as of the forty-fifth day of instruction; high school on-time graduation rate data are based on data from students enrolled for the first time in ninth grade four years prior to the year for which the ratings are calculated. A cumulative index based on the data from the elementary, middle, and high school levels is defined and the index is evaluated as described below.

Criteria for District Ratings

NOTE: The High School Ratings Advisory Working Group is meeting in Spring 2010 to review the components of the high school report card ratings. The Working Group may make recommendations to the EOC for changes to the high school rating components by Summer 2010. Changes to the components of the high school ratings may also lead to changes in the high school criteria for the district ratings. Such changes would not be anticipated to modify the district ratings until the 2010-2011 school year.

Absolute Ratings (2008-2009 and 2009-2010)

The district Absolute Rating index is calculated based on the following components:

(1) Student data used for the ratings calculations are listed in the table below. (Note: the Education Accountability Act was amended in 2006 (Section 59-18-920) to direct that data from students attending a charter school authorized by a local school district are not to be included in the calculation of the local school district ratings. Ratings for charter schools authorized by a local school district are to be reported separately on the school district report card.)

Students Whose Data Are Used to Calculate District Absolute Ratings

Rating Measure	Students
Palmetto Assessments of State Standards (PASS), End of Course Assessments administered in middle schools, & SC-Alt, Grades 3-8	Enrolled in district by 45th day and on first day of testing of year for which Absolute Rating is calculated.
HSAP First Attempt and SC-Alt	Enrolled in district during school year for which Absolute Rating is calculated; this includes students enrolled in junior high schools or other school organizations which include grade 9 and in which students are tested with HSAP in addition to students enrolled in high school. Also includes students tested with SC-Alt assessment.
On-time Graduation Rate	Enrolled in grade 9 first time four years prior to year on-time graduation rate calculated (e.g., expected senior year) (includes data from summer following current school year.)
End-of-Course Test Results	Enrolled in district during school year for which Absolute Rating is calculated (includes data from summer following current school year.)

(2) An index calculated using PASS and End of Course assessment performance and SC-Alt Assessment performance of district students in grades three through eight using the same mathematical formula for calculating an Absolute rating index for schools enrolling students in grades three through eight. The index should be calculated using the subject area weights for grades 3-5 and grades 6-8 specified in Act 254. The district index is an average of the indexes from grades 3-5 and grades 6-8 weighted by the total number of test scores across grades 3-8. Students who should be tested but are not tested will be assigned a weight of zero points in the Absolute ratings.

Note: Since the performance rating categories Not Met 1 and Not Met 2 are not available from the SC-Alt results, the following weights for the calculation of absolute and growth indexes should be used:

Weights for Calculation of Indexes Using SC-Alt Data

SC-Alt Score	Point Weight
Level 1	1.5
Level 2	3
Level 3	4
Level 4	5

(3) Points for district high school student performance based on the criteria in the table below on next page.

High School Components of School District Ratings for 2008-2009 and 2009-2010

Criterion	Points Assigned				
	5	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
First-attempt HSAP and SC-Alt Passage Rate	92.9% or more	83.1–92.8%	63.7–83.0%	53.9–63.6%	Below 53.9%
End-of-Course Test Results	77.2% or more	65.6–77.1%	42.4–65.5%	30.8–42.3%	Below 30.8%
On-time Graduation Rate	93.6% or more	85.2–93.5%	68.2–85.1%	59.7–68.1%	Below 59.7%

(4) A district index based on the data weights listed in the table below.

Weights for Components of District Absolute Ratings, 2008-2009 and 2009-2010

District Rating Component	Weight for Calculating Rating
Elementary and Middle School Component	
PASS, SC-Alt and middle school End of Course results, Grades 3-8	60%
High School Components:	
On-time Graduation Rate	30%
HSAP First Attempt Passage Rate	5%
End-of-Course Test Results	5%
Total	100%

(5) The sum of the weighted index points awarded to each component in the district index. Round the sum to the nearest tenth; this is the district Absolute rating index.

The resulting index determines the school district's Absolute rating as follows:

District Absolute Rating Criteria, 2008-2009 and 2009-2010

Range of Indexes Corresponding to Absolute Rating				
Excellent	**Good**	**Average**	**Below Average**	**At Risk**
3.9 and above	3.5–3.8	3.1–3.4	2.7–3.0	Below 2.7

Sample Calculation of an Absolute Rating for a School District

School Level	Measure	Performance Level	Points Assigned		Weight		Weighted Index Points
Elementary/Middle	PASS Grades 3-8	2.92	2.92	X	0.60	=	1.752
High School	HSAP 1st Attempt	79.4%	3	X	0.05	=	0.150
	End-of-Course Tests	70.2%	4	X	0.05	=	0.200
	On-time Graduation Rate	81.3%	3	X	0.30	=	0.900
District Index							3.002

District index rounded to nearest tenth: 3.0
Absolute Rating: Below Average

Growth Rating

The Education Accountability Act provides that the EOC may consider the performance of subgroups of students in the Growth ratings. Growth ratings are based on longitudinally matched student data, where available.

Calculation of the Growth Index

The district Growth rating index is calculated based on the following components:

(1) Student data used for the ratings calculations are listed in the table below. (Note: data from students attending charter schools authorized by the local school district are not to be used for calculating the local school district Growth rating.)

Students Whose Data Are Used to Calculate District Growth Ratings

Rating Measure	Students
Palmetto Assessments of State Standards (PASS) & SC-Alt, Grades 3-8	Enrolled in district by 45th day of year for which Growth rating is calculated and students enrolled by 45th day of previous school year
HSAP First Attempt	Enrolled in district during school year for which Growth rating is calculated and students enrolled during previous school year. Includes students enrolled in junior high schools or other school organizations which include grade 9 and in which students are tested with HSAP in addition to students enrolled in high school
On-time Graduation Rate	Enrolled in grade 9 first time four years prior to year on-time graduation rate calculated (e.g., expected senior year) (includes data from summer following current school year).
End-of-Course Test Results	Enrolled in district during school year for which Growth rating is calculated and students enrolled in district during previous school year; includes data from summer following current school year.

(2) For the students whose data are to be included in the growth index calculation (see Section II, Students Included in the Ratings), a calculated index for the current year and for the prior year. The indexes for each year should be calculated in the same way as the absolute performance index. The 2008-2009 school year marks a transition from PACT to PASS assessment results in elementary and middle schools. For the 2008-2009 school year the elementary and middle school state assessment data component of the indexes for computing the district Growth rating should be based on matched longitudinal data using the point weights for performance listed in the tables on pages 30-33 in the 2007-2008 Accountability Manual for calculating Growth ratings for schools enrolling grades three though eight. The use of the 2007-2008 tables requires that 2009 PASS scores for all subjects but Writing be converted to PACT scale scores based on the table in South Carolina Standard Setting Study 4: Linking Study. Since PASS Writing scores cannot be converted to PACT Writing scores, the Writing scores are not included in the district Growth ratings for 2008-2009. The converted 2009 PACT scores are assigned point weights based on the 2007-2008 tables and the indexes for 2008 and for 2009 are then calculated. The elementary and middle school component of the district growth index is the difference score created by subtracting the 2008 index from the 2009 index.

For the 2009-2010 school year, the elementary and middle school state assessment data component of the indexes for computing the district Growth rating should be based on matched longitudinal PASS data using the point weights for performance used for calculating Absolute ratings for schools enrolling grades three though eight. PASS student performance levels for every subject area (Reading & Research, Writing, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies) for both the current and previous year are assigned the point weights: Exemplary 5= 5 points; Exemplary 4 = 4 points; Met = 3 points; Not Met 2 = 2

points; Not Met 1 = 1 point. Using the same methodology as used to calculate Absolute ratings, absolute indexes for the current year are calculated. The elementary and middle school component of the district growth index is the difference between the current year index minus the previous year index.

The high school component of the district growth index is calculated in the same way as the high school component of the district absolute index. The district indexes for the current and previous years are calculated by assigning weights to the components of the district index as listed in the table:

Weights for Components of District Growth Ratings, 2008-2009 and 2009-2010

District Rating Component	Weight for Calculating Rating
Elementary and Middle School Component	
PASS and SC-Alt, Grades 3-8	60%
High School Components:	
On-time Graduation Rate	30%
HSAP First Attempt Passage Rate	5%
End-of-Course Test Results	5%
Total	100%

(3) Subtract the district index for the prior year from the district index for the current year and round the result to the nearest tenth. This difference is the growth index. For example, if the current year district index is 3.54 and the prior year's district index was 3.23, the rounded growth index is 0.3. An important point to note is that the absolute performance index calculated to determine the absolute performance rating for a given year and the index for calculating the growth index for the same year may differ because of differences in the 45-day enrollments, and the loss of student data that could not be longitudinally matched.

(4) Compare the district's growth index to those in the table below to determine the district's Growth rating. For example, the district achieving a growth index of 0.3 would receive a Growth rating of "Good."

District Growth Rating Criteria

Rating	Growth Index
Excellent	0.4 or greater
Good	0.3
Average	0.1–0.2
Below Average	0.0
At Risk	-0.1 or less

(5) A district's Growth rating may be increased by one level if the achievement growth in reading & research performance of historically underachieving students meets or exceeds a criterion. Historically underachieving groups consist of

African-American, Hispanic, and Native American students, Limited English Proficient (LEP) students, migrant students, those eligible for the free or reduced-price federal lunch program, and students with non-speech disabilities. The district's eligibility for the increased Growth rating is determined as follows:

(1) Calculate the reading & research growth index for the group of eligible students. The group must consist of 40 or more students to be considered for analysis.

(2) Compare the reading & research growth index for the group to the state two-year average reading & research growth index for all students in the state. (Since data for two years are not available for the 2008-2009 Growth rating analysis, the comparison in 2008-2009 will be based on performance in 2008-2009.) The state two-year average growth index is the average of the growth indexes for all students for the current and prior years. If the growth index for the historically underachieving group in the district exceeds the state two-year average growth index by at least one standard deviation, the district's Growth rating may be increased by one level. If the district is rated Excellent for Growth on the basis of all students, the performance for groups should also be calculated and reported even though the district's rating cannot be increased.

Districts with Absolute Ratings of Excellent in Two Subsequent Years

If a district is rated Excellent for absolute achievement for both the current and the previous years, the district will receive a Growth Rating of Good. If the district's growth index for all students is a positive number (i.e., greater than zero), the district's Growth Rating will be elevated to Excellent. The performance growth of the groups will also be reported for these districts. Districts achieving an absolute index of 4.75 or higher for two consecutive years will be awarded an Excellent Growth Rating.