

**Recommendations From Meetings of High School Ratings Advisory Committee
December 19, 2002 and Conference Call January 14, 2003
Revised By Academic Standards and Assessments Subcommittee on February 11, 2003**

The committee reviewed the current method for calculating high school ratings; the 2002 report card results; graduation rate requirements in No Child Left Behind; simulations of graduation rate data from 2001-2002 data collection; and models for including graduation rate in the ratings formula.

The committee made the following recommendations:

1. Study the impact on ratings of the increase in SAT and ACT score criteria for LIFE scholarships.
2. Include summer school graduates when calculating graduation rate for the school ratings and for Adequate Yearly Progress. Consult with the State Department of Education to establish an acceptable time frame and methodology for including data from summer school graduates in the graduation rate.
3. Clarify what a "regular" high school diploma is for reporting graduation rates.
4. If all students are expected to graduate within four years, then additional resources are needed for summer school, block scheduling, Saturday school, or other methods to provide additional learning time to students.
5. Identify students with disabilities and students who do not speak English who will need five years to graduate and modify the calculation of graduation rate to include those students.
6. Investigate the factors underlying South Carolina's low graduation rate to identify needed changes in policy.
7. Do not include the end of course tests in the calculation of the high school ratings until the tests for four of the courses are in place.
8. Include graduation rates in the formula for calculating high school absolute ratings. The committee revised this recommendation on January 14, 2003, specifying the weights for each measure in the formula; the committee's recommendations were further revised by the Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee on February 11, 2003:
 - ✓ longitudinal Exit Exam 30%;
 - ✓ 10th grade Exit Exam 20%;
 - ✓ LIFE Scholarship eligibility 20%;
 - ✓ graduation rate 30%.

Members in Attendance December 19, 2002:

Mr. Allie Brooks, Jr.
Principal, Wilson High School

Mr. Joe Clarke
Principal, Spartanburg High School

Mr. Ed Curlee*
Executive Director, Secondary Education, Horry County
Schools

Dr. Lee D'Andrea
Assistant Superintendent, Instructional Services,
Anderson School District Five

Mr. W. Rutledge Dingle*
Principal, Sumter High School

Dr. Rallie Liston
Principal, Woodruff High School

Mr. Buddy Phillips
Superintendent, Hampton School District One

Mr. Robb Streeter*
Principal, Newberry High School

Mr. William Jay Ward*
Principal, Ridge Spring-Monetta High School

Dr. Steve Wilson*
Principal, Keenan High School

Dr. Jo Anne Anderson, Mr. David Potter
Staff, Education Oversight Committee

* Also participated in follow-up January 14, 2003 meeting.

Recommendation for Revision of High School Report Card Ratings To Include Graduation Rate

Ratings Criteria

- 1) Longitudinal Exit Examination Performance: This factor gauges the percentage of tenth grade students who pass the exit exam by the spring graduation two years later. Students transferring to other schools should be deleted from the calculation; however students dropping out are included;
- 2) Tenth Grade First attempt Exit Examination Performance: The percentage of 10th grade students in the current school year who meet the standards on all three Exit Examination subtests (Reading, Writing, Mathematics);
- 3) Eligibility for LIFE Scholarships: The percentage of students in the spring graduating class who qualify for LIFE Scholarships (i.e., meeting both the grade point average and SAT/ACT criteria established by the State). To maintain continuity with the 2001 ratings, the same criteria for LIFE scholarship eligibility will be used for the 2002 report card (e. g., SAT of 1050 or higher or ACT of 22 or higher, and B average). Beginning with the 2002-2003 school year, this criterion will consist of the percentage of students in the spring graduating class who qualify for LIFE scholarships under the criteria for the 2002-2003 school year (e. g., SAT of 1100 or higher or ACT of 24 or higher, and B average; does not include class rank criterion);
- 4) Graduation Rate: Calculation of the graduation rate is defined in the EOC Accountability Manual. This definition may need to be revised to meet Federal requirements in No Child Left Behind. Based on current available information, three options for calculating the graduation rate will need to be considered.

OPTION 1: Current EOC Definition of Graduation Rate

The definition published in the 2002-2003 EOC Accountability Manual is listed below:

Graduation Rate

DEFINITION:

General

This indicator reports the percentage of original ninth grade students who earn standard high school diplomas who graduate in four years or less (i.e., on time), excluding students with disabilities on a certificate plan.

NOTE: This indicator may be revised to conform with federal requirements in No Child Left Behind legislation following publication of federal regulations which are expected to be published in August, 2002. Principals and superintendents will be notified of any changes as soon as possible.

Formula

School/District

1. Student Count
9th Grade Student Count for school year beginning 4 years before year of graduation.
(Count is taken from 9th grade Master Classification List.)
Subtract 9th grade repeaters - _____
Subtract all IEP non-diploma track students - _____
Subtract all students who transferred out of school/district - _____
Add all students who transferred into school/district + _____
Total Number of Students = _____
2. Diplomas, and or GED Issued
Number of students receiving diplomas _____
Number of students receiving GED + _____
Total Number of Diplomas, and/or GED Issued = _____
3. Graduation Rate
Divide (Step Two by Step One) _____

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Research

Reported by:

School Districts

Timeframe

190 day - Available 2003

Addendum: After Summer School

OPTION 2: EOC Definition Revised to Exclude GEDs

NCLB may not recognize the GED as a high school diploma for the purpose of determining the high school graduation rate. The EOC formula would thus be revised to include only the number of diplomas earned in the numerator for calculating the graduation rate.

OPTION 3: EOC Definition Revised to Exclude GEDs and to Include the Number of Students With Disabilities Who Are Not On a Diploma Track

NCLB may also require that the number of students with disabilities be included in the determination of the graduation rate. The EOC definition would further be revised to include the number of students with IEPs who are on a non-diploma track in the denominator for calculating the graduation rate.

Calculation of Absolute Rating

Ratings are calculated using a mathematical formula that results in an index. The following point distribution is applied to each of the criteria for the calculation of the absolute index (the percentage weighting for each criterion is applied to the calculation of the index):

Criterion (Weighting Factor)	Points Assigned				
	5	4	3	2	1
Longitudinal Exit Exam Passage Rate (30%)	100 %	97.5-99.9 %	90.7-97.4 %	87.3-90.6 %	Below 87.3 %
10 th Grade First Attempt Exit Exam Passage Rate (20%)	81.3 % or more	70.8-81.2 %	49.8-70.7 %	39.3-49.7 %	Below 39.3%
Eligibility for LIFE Scholarships (20%)	38.6 % or more	28.7-38.5 %	8.9-28.6 %	4.0-8.8 %	Below 4.0 %
Graduation Rate (30%)					
Option 1: Definition in 2002 Accountability Manual	92.2% or more	83.5-92.1%	66.0-83.4%	57.3-65.9%	Below 57.3%
Option 2: Accountability Manual definition; GEDs not counted in numerator	91.4% or more	82.7-91.3%	65.1-82.6%	56.4-65.0%	Below 56.4%
Option 3: GED not counted in numerator, students with IEPs included in denominator	88.3% or more	79.6-88.2%	62.2-79.5%	53.5-62.1%	Below 53.5%

The index is calculated using the following formula:

Step 1 – Match the school's data/performance to the points assigned to each rating criterion in the table above.

Step 2 - Add the weighted points for each criterion. Weighted points are calculated by multiplying the assigned points by the weighting factor assigned to each criterion.

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

Year	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average	Unsatisfactory
2001	3.4 and above	3.0-3.3	2.6-2.9	2.2-2.5	Below 2.2
2002	3.4 and above	3.0-3.3	2.6-2.9	2.2-2.5	Below 2.2
2003	3.4 and above	3.0-3.3	2.6-2.9	2.2-2.5	Below 2.2
2004	3.5 and above	3.1-3.4	2.7-3.0	2.3-2.6	Below 2.3
2005	3.6 and above	3.2-3.5	2.8-3.1	2.4-2.7	Below 2.4
2006	3.7 and above	3.3-3.6	2.9-3.2	2.5-2.8	Below 2.5
2007	3.8 and above	3.4-3.7	3.0-3.3	2.6-2.9	Below 2.6
2008	3.9 and above	3.5-3.8	3.1-3.4	2.7-3.0	Below 2.7
2009-2010	4.0 and above	3.6-3.9	3.2-3.5	2.8-3.1	Below 2.8

Simulations of High School Graduation Rate Revision of High School Ratings Criteria

Data for simulating the high school graduation rate were collected by the South Carolina Department of Education in Summer 2002. Schools were asked to provide information required for calculation of the graduation rate as defined in the Accountability Manual: ninth grade student count in 1998-99 school year adjusted for ninth grade repeaters and the numbers of students who transferred out of or transferred into the school; number of students having IEPs who are on a non-diploma track; number of students receiving diplomas in Spring 2002 and Fall 2001; number of students receiving GEDs. The graduation rates for high schools were then calculated from these data. Three high schools reported data indicating that more than 100% of their ninth grade students graduated; data from these schools were deleted from the simulations. This was the first year such data were collected. Subsequent data collections should be more complete and accurate, especially when unique student IDs can be assigned and the data warehouse is completed.

The high school graduation rates were calculated based on three optional methods. Option 1 used the method outlined in the EOC Accountability Manual. Option 2 used the same method, with the revision that students receiving GEDs were no longer counted as high school graduates. Option 3 used the same method as Option 2, with the additional revision that students with disabilities who were not on a diploma track were included in the calculation as potential graduates. The graduation rate simulations were then included with the other measures (longitudinal Exit Exam performance; 10th grade first attempt Exit Exam performance; and percent eligible for LIFE scholarship criteria) to simulate the ratings. The descriptive statistics for these data are reported in Tables 1 and 2.

The graduation rates from each optional calculation method were then combined with the other measures using the weights recommended by the Academic Standards and Assessments Subcommittee to simulate the school ratings for 2002 if graduation rate had been included in the calculation. These simulations are reported in Table 3.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for 2001-2002 High School Ratings Variables

Variable	Mean	Median	Number Observations	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Option 1 Grad. Rate (EOC Model)	74.7	76.3	190	11.65	34.6	98.8
Option 2 Grad. Rate (Minus GEDs)	73.9	75.2	190	11.62	34.6	98.8
Option 3 Grad. Rate (Minus GEDs, Plus Non-Diploma Track)	70.8	71.9	190	11.56	30.0	98.8
% Longitudinal Exit	92.2	93.6	188	5.945	65.3	100.0
% 10 th Grade 1st Attempt Exit	64.5	66.0	191	13.54	23.1	98.4
% LIFE Scholarship (SAT/ACT + B Avg.)	18.4	15.6	191	13.51	0	90.4
Absolute Index	3.0	3.0	186	0.80	1.0	5.0

Table 2
Correlations Among High School Ratings Variables for 2001-2002 School Year

Variable	Option 1 Grad. Rate (EOC Model)	Option 2 Grad. Rate (Minus GEDs)	Option 3 Grad. Rate (Minus GEDs, Plus Non-Diploma Track)	% Long. Exit	% 10 th Exit	% LIFE Schol.	Absolute Index
Option 1 Grad. Rate (EOC Model)	1.0	.99	.96	.42	.53	.47	.52
Option 2 Grad. Rate (Minus GEDs)	-	1.0	.97	.39	.52	.46	.50
Option 3 Grad. Rate (Minus GEDs, Plus Non-Diploma Track)	-	-	1.0	.46	.55	.51	.56
% Longitudinal Exit	-	-	-	1.0	.57	.52	.74
% 10 th Grade 1 st Attempt Exit	-	-	-	-	1.0	.76	.88
% LIFE Scholarship (SAT/ACT + B Avg.)	-	-	-	-	-	1.0	.87

Table 3
Comparisons of Simulated High School Absolute Ratings and 2002 Ratings

Rating	Option 1 Grad. Rate (EOC Model) No. (%) [*]	Option 2 Grad. Rate (Minus GEDs) No. (%) [*]	Option 3 Grad. Rate (Minus GEDs, Plus Non-Diploma Track) No. (%) [*]	2002 Report Card Results No. (%) [*]
Excellent	50 (27.2%)	50 (27.2%)	48 (26.1%)	47 (25.5%)
Good	63 (34.2%)	63 (34.2%)	62 (33.7%)	70 (38.0%)
Average	37 (20.1%)	36 (19.6%)	39 (21.2%)	24 (13.0%)
Below Average	13 (7.1%)	14 (7.6%)	13 (7.1%)	17 (9.2%)
Unsatisfactory	21 (11.4%)	21 (11.4%)	22 (12.0%)	26 (14.1%)

* Total may differ from 100% due to rounding.