



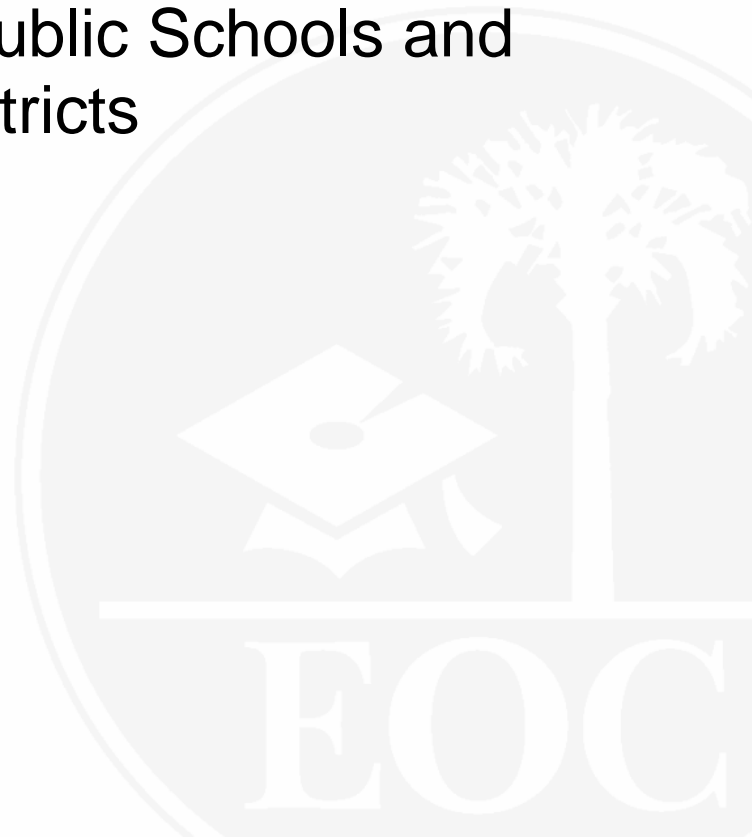
2004 – 2005 Accountability Manual

The 2004-2005 Annual
School and District Report
Card System for South
Carolina Public Schools and
School Districts

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June 2004



Contents

Section I	Introduction.....	1
	System Preamble and Purposes	1
	Components of the System	2
	Definitions of Critical Terms.....	5
	Manual Organization	6
Section II	2005 Accountability System	7
	Identification of School/Program Units for Report Cards.....	7
	Criteria for and Calculation of School and District Ratings.....	8
	PACT Performance Levels	10
	Ratings for Schools Enrolling Students in Only Grade Two or Below	10
	Ratings for Schools Enrolling Students in Grades Three through Eight..	15
	Ratings for High Schools	24
	Ratings for Career and Technology Centers	30
	Ratings for School Districts	34
	Ratings for Special Schools.....	39
Section III	2005 Accountability Rating Criteria and Standards	55
	Inclusion of New Assessments in Ratings.....	55
	Process for Determining Criteria for School/District Profile Information ..	55
	Minimum Size Requirements.....	55
	Quantitative Parameters for Each Rating Category	56
	Reporting of Subgroup Performance.....	56
	Ratings Conditional on the Performance of Student Subgroups	56
	Data Reported as "N/A" (School and District Report Cards)	56
Section IV	Longitudinally Matched Data	57
Section V	Schools Similar in Student Characteristics.....	58
	Districts and Schools Similar in Student Characteristics	58
	Building School Groups	58
Section VI	Report Card Information and Presentation.....	59
	General Design Issues	59
Section VII	System Safeguards	60
	Ratings Impact.....	60
	Serious Data Problems	60
	Ratings Changes	60
	Analyses Undertaken Prior to the Release of Ratings	60
	Analyses Undertaken After the Release of Ratings	61
Section VIII	Local Responsibilities	62

Section IX	Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards Criteria	64
	Statutory Authority	64
	Overview.....	64
	Criteria and Procedures.....	65
	Criteria for Selecting Schools for Awards: Grades Three through Eight, Career and Technology Centers, and Special Schools	66
	Criteria for Selecting Schools for Awards: High Schools	68
	Allocation of Funds and Non-Achievement Criteria	70
Section X	Preview of the 2005–2006 Accountability System.....	71
	System Evolution	71
Section XI	Additional Information.....	73
	Calendar for 2004–2005.....	73
	Persons to Call with Questions.....	73
Appendixes	74
Appendix A:	The Education Accountability Act of 1998 (as Amended in 2002)	
Appendix B:	Analyses of 2002–2003 Report Card Data and Changes Recommended	
	B-1: South Carolina School and District Ratings, 2002 and 2003	
	B-2: High School Ratings Criteria for the 2003–2004 School Year	
	B-3: Ratings for Schools Enrolling Students in Only Grade Two or Below	
	B-4: Retraining Assistance Program: Process for Review of Retraining Assistance Program, 2003–2004	
	B-5: Longitudinal Student PACT Performance	
	B-6: The Performance of Historically Underachieving Groups of Students in South Carolina: Small Steps Forward	
Appendix C:	Definitions and Formulas for School or District Profile Information	
Appendix D:	Table of Specifications by School or District for Report Card Data	

Section I INTRODUCTION

The *Accountability Manual* is a technical resource to explain South Carolina's public education accountability system. The accountability system is designed to promote high levels of student achievement through strong and effective schools.

This manual addresses the ratings and reporting processes for the November 2004 report cards and provides the initial specifications for the November 2005 report cards. It reflects changes made to the report cards resulting from federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements, changes to the high school testing program, and feedback from the field.

System Preamble and Purposes

The Education Accountability Act of 1998 provides the foundation for the South Carolina accountability system. The enabling legislation in the annotated Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, included the following preamble and purposes:

§ 59-18-100. The General Assembly finds that South Carolinians have a commitment to public education and a conviction that high expectations for all students are vital components for improving academic achievement. It is the purpose of the General Assembly in this chapter to establish a performance based accountability system for public education which focuses on improving teaching and learning so that students are equipped with a strong academic foundation. Accountability, as defined by this chapter, means acceptance of the responsibility for improving student performance and taking actions to improve classroom practice and school performance by the Governor, the General Assembly, the State Department of Education, colleges and universities, local school boards, administrators, teachers, parents, students and the community.

§ 59-18-110. The system is to:

- (1) Use academic achievement standards to push schools and students toward higher performance by aligning the state assessment to those standards and linking policies and criteria for performance standards, accreditation, reporting, school rewards, and targeted assistance;
- (2) Provide an annual report card with a performance indicator system that is logical, reasonable, fair, challenging, and technically defensible which furnishes clear and specific information about school and district academic performance and other performance to parents and the public;
- (3) Require all districts to establish local accountability systems to stimulate quality teaching and learning practices and target assistance to low performing schools;
- (4) Provide resources to strengthen the process of teaching and learning in the classroom to improve student performance and reduce gaps in performance;
- (5) Support professional development as integral to improvement and to the actual work of teachers and school staff; and

- (6) Expand the ability to evaluate the system and to conduct in-depth studies on implementation, efficiency and the effectiveness of academic improvement efforts.

Components of the System

Ratings

Beginning with the 2001 report cards, each school and district has received two state accountability system ratings, one for absolute performance level and one for improvement rate:

- ❑ **Absolute Rating:** The level of a school's academic performance on achievement measures for the current school year;
- ❑ **Improvement Rating:** The level of growth in academic performance when comparing current performance to the previous year's performance (based on longitudinally matched student data and on differences between cohorts of students when longitudinal data are not available). Improvement Ratings also reflect reductions in achievement gaps between majority groups and historically underachieving groups of students as well as sustained high levels of school or district achievement.

The five rating terms are Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and Unsatisfactory.

- ❑ **Excellent:** School performance substantially exceeds the standards for progress toward the 2010 South Carolina performance goal.
- ❑ **Good:** School performance exceeds the standards for progress toward the 2010 South Carolina performance goal.
- ❑ **Average:** School performance meets the standards for progress toward the 2010 South Carolina performance goal.
- ❑ **Below Average:** School is in jeopardy of not meeting the standards for progress toward the 2010 South Carolina performance goal.
- ❑ **Unsatisfactory:** School performance fails to meet the standards for progress toward the 2010 South Carolina performance goal.

In addition to the state accountability system ratings, each school and district will receive an indicator of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) based on the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation. AYP specifies annual targets for the testing and achievement of all students and of specific demographic subgroups. Information regarding the AYP indicators is available from the South Carolina Department of Education (www.myschools.com).

Standards-Based Assessments

The standards-based assessment system used in the development of school ratings includes the grades three through eight Palmetto Achievement Challenge Tests in mathematics, reading/English language arts (ELA), science, and social studies; the revised exit examination; and end-of-course assessments for selected high school courses.

The availability of assessments is dependent upon the development schedule approved by the State Board of Education and shown below:

Timeline for Implementation of New Assessments

Test	'98– '99	'99– '00	'00– '01	'01– '02	'02– '03	'03– '04	'04– '05	'05– '06	'06– '07	'07– '08
Readiness 1, 2				X						
PACT 1, 2	Deleted from EAA in 2001									
PACT 3–8 Math, ELA	X									
PACT 3–8 Science					X					
PACT 3–8 Social Studies					X					
HSAP Exit Exam Math, ELA						X				
HSAP Exit Exam Science										X
HSAP Exit Exam Social Studies						Not scheduled				
End-of-Course Algebra I					X					
End-of-Course English I						X				
End-of-Course Physical Science and Biology I						X				
End-of-Course Social Studies									X	
PACT Alternate Assess., Grades 3–8			X							
PACT Alternate Assess., High School						X				

Source: State Department of Education, November 12, 2003

For the November 2004 and 2005 report cards, the following assessments are used in the calculation of school and district ratings:

- Schools enrolling students in kindergarten through grade two: Criteria other than assessment data (e.g., student attendance, pupil-teacher ratios, parent involvement, external accreditation, and early-childhood professional development) are used for the rating, and beginning in 2005 a measure of the quality of the classroom environment will be added.

- ❑ Schools enrolling students in grades three through eight: 2003 and 2004 PACT ELA and math data for 2004 report card; 2004 and 2005 PACT ELA, math, science, and social studies data for 2005.
- ❑ Schools enrolling students in grades nine through twelve: High School Assessment Program (HSAP) results, BSAP Exit Examination results, percentages of students eligible for LIFE Scholarships (based on SAT/ACT test results and grade point average), graduation rates.
- ❑ Career and technology centers: Percentages of students mastering core competencies or certification requirements in center courses, along with graduation and placement rates.
- ❑ Special schools: Criteria appropriate for each school's mission.
- ❑ Districts: Assessments used for calculating the ratings for schools enrolling students in grades three through eight and high schools are used to calculate the district ratings.

School Profile Information

School or district profiles provide information about aspects of the educational environment over which the school community has influence and that affect performance.

Annual analyses of these and other data elements are to be conducted to determine the relationship to student academic performance.

Flexibility Status

Schools meeting certain requirements may be released from compliance with specific regulations and statutory provisions.

- ❑ For schools with exemplary performance: A school is given the flexibility of receiving exemptions from regulations and statutory provisions governing the defined program provided that, during a three-year period, the following criteria are satisfied:
 - the school has twice been a recipient of a Palmetto Gold or Silver Award, pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-18-1100 (Supp. 2002);
 - the school has met annual improvement standards for subgroups of students in reading and mathematics; and
 - the school has exhibited no recurring accreditation deficiencies.

Schools receiving flexibility status are released from those regulations and statutory provisions referred to above including, but not limited to, regulations and statutory provisions on class scheduling, class structure, and staffing.

To continue to receive flexibility pursuant to this section, a school must annually exhibit school improvement at or above the state average as computed in the school recognition program pursuant to § 59-18-1100 and must meet the gains required for subgroups of students in reading and mathematics. A school that does not re-qualify for flexibility status due to extenuating circumstances may apply to the State Board of Education for an extension of this status for one year.

In the event that a school is removed from flexibility status, the school is not subject to regulations and statutory provisions exempted under this section until the beginning of the school year following notification of the change in status by the State Department of Education. Subsequent monitoring by the State Department of Education in a school that is removed from flexibility status will not include a review of program records exempted under this section for the period that the school has received flexibility status or for the school year during which the school was notified of its removal from flexibility status.

- ❑ For schools designated as unsatisfactory: A school designated as unsatisfactory while in such status is given the flexibility of receiving exemptions from those regulations and statutory provisions governing the defined program or other State Board of Education regulations, dealing with the core academic areas as outlined in § 59-18-120, provided that the review team recommends such flexibility to the State Board of Education.
- ❑ For other schools: Other schools may receive flexibility when their strategic plan explains why such exemptions are expected to improve the academic performance of the students and the plan meets the approval by the State Board of Education. To continue to receive flexibility pursuant to this section, a school must annually exhibit overall school improvement as outlined in its revised plan and must meet the gains set for subgroups of students in reading and mathematics. A school that does not re-qualify for flexibility status due to extenuating circumstances may apply to the State Board of Education for an extension of this status for one year according to the provisions of § 59-18-1110(D).

Definitions of Critical Terms (S.C. Code Ann. § 59-18-320, Supp. 2002)

Oversight committee: The Education Oversight Committee (EOC) established in Section 59-6-10.

Standards-based assessment: An assessment in which an individual's performance is compared to specific performance standards and not to the performance of other students.

Disaggregated data: Data broken out for specific groups within the total student population, such as by race, gender, and family income level.

Longitudinally matched student data: Data that examines the performance of a single student or a group of students by considering their test scores over time.

Norm-referenced assessment: Assessments designed to compare student performance to a nationally representative sample of similar students known as the norm group.

Academic achievement standards: Statements of expectations for student learning.

Department: The State Department of Education.

Absolute performance: The rating a school will receive based on the percentage of students meeting standard on the state's standards-based assessment.

Improvement performance: The rating a school will receive based on longitudinally matched student data comparing current performance to the previous year's for the purpose of determining student academic growth.

Objective and reliable statewide assessment: Assessments that yield consistent results; that measure the cognitive knowledge and skills specified in the state-

approved academic standards; that do not include questions relative to personal opinions, feelings, or attitudes; and that are not biased with regard to race, gender, or socioeconomic status. It is not intended that the assessments be limited to true/false or multiple-choice questions.

Division of Accountability: The special unit within the Education Oversight Committee established in Section 59-6-100.

Ratings year: The academic year of the state test data that are incorporated into the performance level rating.

Manual Organization

The organization of this manual is structured to provide state and local education agencies with details regarding the implementation of the accountability system and to enable those agencies to plan for meaningful and accurate data collections, to work with their professional colleagues and public toward understanding of the elements reported, and to ensure that the system improves continuously.

Section II 2005 ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

Identification of School/Program Units for Report Cards

Report cards are to be issued for each school or district, to include the following:

- Each school or district organizational unit assigned a Basic Educational Data System (BEDS) code by the State Department of Education unless requested by the district.
- Each special school operating under the auspices of the State of South Carolina, including those operated by the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Felton Laboratory School at South Carolina State University, the Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities, the Governor's School for Science and Mathematics, the John de la Howe School, the Palmetto Unified School District, the S.C. School for the Deaf and the Blind, and the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School.
- Multiple report cards will be issued only if there are sufficient numbers of students in each group to meet the criteria for reporting disaggregated data (see Minimum Size Requirements, page fifty-five of this manual). When multiple report cards are issued for a school, data elements that are specific to the different grade levels will be different. All other data elements will be identical. In a school with grades seven through twelve, for example, the report card for grades seven and eight will include the number of students enrolled in courses for high school credit, while the report card for grades nine through twelve will include the number of students successfully completing AP/IB courses. Other data, such as attendance rates, will be identical on the two report cards. Each report card will contain unique measures of absolute performance and improvement performance to the extent that the methods that are adopted for those ratings depend on data that are routinely collected by grade level. If data that are not routinely collected by grade level are used to construct or to interpret the ratings, then identical information for these data will appear on all report cards issued for the school.

Superintendents may request that separate report cards be issued for special program units that meet the following criteria and that would not otherwise receive a separate report card:

- The program unit is a multi-grade unit directed toward a purpose (either curriculum, special population, or distinct methodology) housed on the campus of a BEDS-designated school.
- The program unit has an administrative leadership structure separate from the school that houses the program.
- The program unit is acknowledged generally by parents and the public to be separate and distinct from the school that houses the program.
- There is no overlap between the grades served by the program unit, any other program unit housed at the school, and the host school.

Requests for separate report cards must be made to the state superintendent of education by the first day of the school year preceding the report card year. The state superintendent will approve or deny such requests.

- A typical elementary school is defined as containing kindergarten through grade five; a typical middle school, grades six through eight; a typical high school, grades nine through twelve. Any school that includes a grade on either side of the typical pattern will be viewed as part of that organizational pattern. For example, if a school includes kindergarten through grade six, it will be considered elementary. If a school includes grades five through nine, it will be considered a middle school. If a school includes two or more grades on either side of the typical pattern (e.g., grades four through eight), two report cards will be produced. Due to the differences in data included in ratings for high school grades, any school that contains grade ten and crosses organizational patterns will require at least two report cards.

Criteria for and Calculation of School and District Ratings

District rating approaches will parallel those used at the school level. Depending on the method selected, district ratings will be calculated by aggregating student-level data. Following their third administration, student assessment results from the PACT Alternate and HSAP Alternate Assessments will be included in the calculation of the district but not the school ratings. Results from high school end-of-course assessments will be included in the calculation of high school and district ratings following the third administration of the assessments in at least four subject areas.

Students Included in the Ratings

- Absolute performance ratings for schools: Any student who is in membership in a school at the time of the forty-five-day enrollment count will be included in the absolute performance rating for a school for the ratings year if he or she was enrolled at the time of testing. (Therefore, students in membership but temporarily assigned to an alternative program are counted in the home school.) Students who have taken at least one complete subject area test (e.g., mathematics) will be included. Data from students repeating a grade are included in the calculation of the ratings.

Data from special education students administered the PACT tests with accommodations or modifications will be used for the calculation of school and district ratings. Scores from these students will be treated in the ratings calculations in the same manner as those from PACT administered in its standard format. Data from the results of modified administrations, such as off-level testing in which special education students are administered a test targeted for a lower grade level than that indicated by their chronological age, will also be treated in the ratings calculations in the same manner as data from the standard administration of PACT. Data from students administered the PACT Alternate Assessment will be used in the calculation of district ratings only. Data from students having Limited English Proficiency (LEP) will be used in school and district ratings as available.

- Absolute performance ratings for districts: Any student who is enrolled in a district at the time of the forty-five-day enrollment count will be included in the absolute

performance rating for a district for the ratings year, even if he or she has changed schools within the district. All other conditions stipulated for schools will apply for district ratings.

The student performance data for students attending multi-district schools in which 100 percent of the students have Individualized Education Plans and in which 90 percent or more of the students are assessed with the PACT Alternate or HSAP Alternate Assessments should be included in the data reported for each student's home district. The data from students attending such special schools will also be reported on the special school's report card.

Mobile students are of particular importance to the accountability system. The EOC will study the impact of student mobility on the accountability system.

- Improvement ratings for grades three through eight: Any student will be included if he or she is enrolled in a school (or district) on the forty-fifth day, can be matched to the previous year, and has PACT test scores for both years, even if the student attended a different school during the previous year. The percentage of matched students will be reported on the report card and will be calculated by dividing the number of students for whom current test data were matched with test data from the previous school year by the total number of students for whom current year test data are available.

Student Performance Categories

The State Board of Education, through the State Department of Education, is mandated to adopt or develop standards-based assessments in mathematics, English language arts (ELA), science, and social studies for grades three through eight, an exit examination to be first administered in grade ten, and end-of-course tests for gateway courses for grades nine through twelve.

Each test is to be reviewed and approved by the Education Oversight Committee. To date, the mathematics, English language arts, science, and social studies tests for grades three through eight (Palmetto Achievement Challenge Tests, or PACT) and the PACT Alternate Assessment have been reviewed and approved for use (results from the PACT science and social studies tests will be included in the calculation of the school and district ratings beginning with the November 2005 report card). The High School Assessment Program (HSAP) in ELA and math and the end-of-course tests in English I, Algebra I/Math for the Technologies II, Physical Science, and Biology I have also been approved for use. First-attempt HSAP results will be used in the calculation of high school and district ratings beginning with the November 2004 report card.

Baseline administration of PACT ELA and mathematics was conducted in April 1999. Based on data collected and a book-marking procedure, performance-level standards were established. Four performance levels—Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, and Advanced—indicate how an individual student is performing based on the curriculum standards assessed by the PACT.

PACT Performance Levels

Below Basic

A student who performs at the Below Basic level on the PACT has not met minimum expectations for student performance based on the curriculum standards approved by the State Board of Education. The student is not prepared for work at the next grade and must have an academic assistance plan; local district board policy will determine the student's promotion to the next grade level.

Basic

Performance at the Basic level means a student has passed the test. A student who performs at the Basic level on the PACT has met minimum expectations for student performance based on the curriculum standards approved by the State Board of Education. The student is minimally prepared for work at the next grade.

Proficient

A student who performs at the Proficient level on the PACT has met expectations for student performance based on the curriculum standards approved by the State Board of Education. The student is well prepared for work at the next grade. The Proficient level represents the long-term goal for student performance in South Carolina.

Advanced

A student who performs at the Advanced level on the PACT has exceeded expectations for student performance based on the curriculum standards approved by the State Board of Education. The student is very well prepared for work at the next grade.

Ratings for Schools Enrolling Students in Only Grade Two or Below

During the 2002–2003 school year, twenty-three schools served students enrolled in only grade two or below. These schools pose a complex challenge to the accountability system. Achievement testing is neither required nor recommended. The education of young children involves assisting them with developmental tasks as well as the acquisition of content that is the focus of upper grades. The model for accountability recommended below focuses not on test behaviors but on other correlates of school success. The model focuses on teacher behaviors, on classroom and school practices, and on parental and child behaviors that research indicates are related to school success.

Two ratings are to be assigned to schools. The ratings for absolute performance and improvement performance are defined in article 1 of the Education Accountability Act of 1998, Section 59-18-120:

“Absolute performance” means the rating a school will receive based on the percentage of students meeting standard on the state’s standards based assessment.

“Improvement performance” means the rating a school will receive based on longitudinally matched student data comparing current performance to their previous year’s for the purpose of determining student academic growth.

As required by the United States Department of Education through passage of the No Child Left Behind legislation, a notice of each school’s attainment of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) must be reported. AYP specifies statewide targets for testing and achievement to be met by all students and by specific demographic groups. Information on the determination of AYP is available from the South Carolina Department of Education (www.myschools.com).

Ratings Criteria

- ❑ Student attendance: Student attendance is to be calculated in the same manner as for other South Carolina schools. (See section C of the *Accountability Manual* for the formula.)
- ❑ Pupil-teacher ratios: Pupil-teacher ratio is to be calculated by dividing the number of students enrolled in the school on the forty-fifth day of school by the total number of teachers in the school (excluding counselors, librarians, administrative personnel, specialists, and teachers of the arts, physical education, or special education).
- ❑ Parent involvement: Involvement is to be calculated by dividing the number of students in the schools whose parents/guardians attend at least one individual parent conference (unduplicated count) during the school year by the 135th-day average daily membership (ADM).
- ❑ External accreditation: Accreditation that is early childhood specific is to be determined by application and/or receipt of accreditation. The scale ranges from State Department of Education accreditation through early childhood specific accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to the accreditation by the American Montessori Society or the National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- ❑ Professional development: The professional development time devoted exclusively to knowledge and skills working with young children (less than eight years) is to be calculated.

An additional criterion for 2005 and beyond is the following:

- ❑ Utilization of an environmental measure for program improvement (e.g., Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale).

Absolute Rating Calculation

The Absolute Ratings are calculated using a mathematical formula that results in an index. The absolute index is calculated using a mathematical formula in which point weights are assigned to the ratings criteria listed in the following table:

Absolute Ratings Criteria for Schools with Only Grade Two or Below

Criterion	Points Assigned				
	5	4	3	2	1
Student Attendance	98% or greater	96–97.99%	94–95.99%	92–93.99%	Less than 92%
Pupil-Teacher Ratio	21 or less	22–25	26–30	31–32	Greater than 32
Parent Involvement	90% or more	75–89 %	60–74%	30–59%	29% or less
External Accreditation	NAEYC or Montessori	SDE and SACS-early childhood	SDE	Conducting self-study	Not pursuing accreditation
Professional Development	More than 1.5 days	1 to 1.5 days	1 day	.5 to .9 day	Less than .5 day
Environmental Scale Ratings	(Values to be determined based on 2003–2004 data collected for simulations)				

The index is calculated by adding the points (weights or values) assigned to each rating criterion in the table above and dividing the total points by the number of criteria used to calculate the ratings (five through 2004, with one additional criterion in 2005).

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

Index Values for Determining Absolute Ratings

Year	Range of Indexes Corresponding to Absolute Rating				
	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average	Unsatisfactory
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	4.0 and above*	3.6–3.9*	3.2–3.5	2.8–3.1	Below 2.8
2010	4.1 and above*	3.7–4.0*	3.3–3.6	2.9–3.2	Below 2.9
2011	4.2 and above*	3.8–4.1*	3.4–3.7	3.0–3.3	Below 3.0
2012	4.3 and above*	3.9–4.2*	3.5–3.8	3.1–3.4	Below 3.1
2013	4.4 and above*	4.0–4.3*	3.6–3.9	3.2–3.5	Below 3.2
2014	4.5 and above*	4.1–4.4*	3.7–4.0	3.3–3.6	Below 3.3

*School must meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for *all* students.

Beginning with the November 2004 report card, the Absolute Rating of schools receiving an Excellent or Good rating initially may be decreased one rating category if the schools have not met Adequate Yearly Progress (i.e., the AYP performance and percent-tested criteria must be met) for *all* students, calculated by using available data for the entire student body in the school. Absolute ratings will not be decreased if AYP for subgroups is not met when AYP based on *all* students has been achieved. For example, if a school had an absolute index of 3.6 in 2005 but did not achieve AYP for *all* students, its rating would be lowered from Excellent to Good. A school in 2005 with an index of 3.2 that did not achieve AYP for *all* students would be awarded an Absolute Rating of Average rather than Good.

Sample Calculation of an Absolute Rating for a K–2 Only School

Student attendance is 92 percent:	2 points
Pupil-teacher ratio is 26 to 1:	3 points
Parent involvement is 65 percent:	3 points
External accreditation from SDE:	3 points
Professional development is .5 day:	<u>+2 points</u>
	Total Points: 13 points
Divided by 5 (number of criteria):	$\frac{13}{5}$
	2.6 Index
	Absolute Rating: Average

Note: This school's index of 2.6 is an Average Absolute Rating through the year 2003. From 2004 through 2007, a 2.6 index is Below Average, and from 2008 to 2014 it is Unsatisfactory.

Beginning in 2004:

Did the school meet AYP for *all* students? Yes/No.

If the school's Absolute Rating is Excellent or Good but the school did not meet AYP for *all* students, the Absolute Rating would be lowered by one level—from Excellent to Good or from Good to Average.

Improvement Rating Values

For schools enrolling students in only grade two or below, the Improvement Rating will be calculated based upon the change in the absolute performance rating index from year to year.

Note: Longitudinal student data are not available.

The Improvement Ratings are calculated using a mathematical formula that results in an index. The index is calculated by subtracting the school's Absolute Rating index for the prior year from the Absolute Rating index for the year on which the report card is based. The amount of change determines the rating as follows:

Improvement Rating Index Values

Rating	Improvement Index
Excellent	0.4 or greater
Good	0.3
Average	0.1–0.2
Below Average	0.0
Unsatisfactory	-0.1 or less

Sample Calculation of an Improvement Rating for a K–2 School

Absolute rating index for school year for which report card is based:	2.4
Absolute rating index for the prior school year:	<u>-2.2</u>
Difference:	0.2
Improvement Rating:	Average

Schools with Absolute Ratings of Excellent in Two Subsequent Years

If a school is rated Excellent for absolute achievement for both years, the school will receive an Improvement Rating of Good. If the school's weighted improvement index is a positive number (i.e., greater than zero), the school's Improvement Rating will be elevated to Excellent. Schools achieving an absolute index of 4.8 or higher for two consecutive years will be awarded an Excellent Improvement Rating.

Ratings for Schools Enrolling Students in Grades Three through Eight

Schools enrolling students in grades three through eight will receive ratings in accordance with the grade organization patterns and rules established in the *Accountability Manual* (adopted by the EOC on May 18, 2000, and updated annually).

Ratings Criteria

Two ratings are to be assigned to schools. The ratings for absolute performance and improvement performance are defined in article 1 of the Education Accountability Act of 1998, Section 59-18-120:

“Absolute performance” means the rating a school will receive based on the percentage of students meeting standard on the state's standards based assessment;

“Improvement performance” means the rating a school will receive based on longitudinally matched student data comparing current performance to their previous year's for the purpose of determining student academic growth.

As required by the United States Department of Education through passage of the No Child Left Behind legislation, a notice of each school's attainment of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) must be reported. AYP specifies statewide targets for testing and achievement to be met by all students and by specific demographic groups. Information on the determination of AYP is available from the South Carolina Department of Education (www.myschools.com).

Absolute Performance Rating

The absolute performance level is calculated on the basis of a weighted model in which student performance weights are assigned. A weighted model is one in which the percentage of student scores in each category is weighted to represent the importance of scoring in that category, as follows: Advanced, five points; Proficient, four points; Basic, three points; Below Basic 2, two points; and Below Basic 1, one point. (The Below

Basic performance category has been split into two subcategories—Below Basic 2 and Below Basic 1—so that improvement among low-scoring students is recognized.) The determination for the break point for Below Basic 2 and Below Basic 1 is two standard errors of measurement below the Basic cut point. The standard error of measurement values used are published in the *Technical Documentation for the 1999 Palmetto Achievement Challenge Tests of English Language Arts and Mathematics, Grades Three through Eight* (Huynh et al., 2000). The following tables provide the score ranges and cut points for each score category for each grade and subject area. Score ranges and cut points for the four performance levels were determined by the State Department of Education.

PACT English Language Arts Test Ranges and Cut-Offs

Grade	Range	Below Basic 2	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
8	736–864	792	797	813	827
7	636–764	691	696	712	729
6	536–664	590	596	612	629
5	436–564	488	495	511	531
4	336–464	389	395	410	430
3	236–364	290	296	310	331
2	136–264	183	194	207	NA
1	36–164	80	91	107	NA

PACT Mathematics Test Ranges and Cut-Offs

Grade	Range	Below Basic 2	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
8	754–853	793	800	818	827
7	653–756	691	700	717	727
6	555–656	591	599	617	628
5	458–552	490	499	517	528
4	351–452	389	399	416	427
3	260–344	290	298	316	326
2	136–264	183	195	214	NA
1	36–164	83	95	112	NA

Calculation of Absolute Ratings for Schools Enrolling Students in Grades Three through Eight

Ratings are calculated using a mathematical formula that results in an index reflecting the average performance level of students in the school. The index is calculated using the following mathematical formula:

- (1) Multiply the points assigned to each of the five PACT score categories (below) by the number of student scores falling into each of those categories for each subject area tested (currently English language arts and mathematics and eventually science and social studies).

The PACT score categories and their assigned points are as follows:

Advanced:	Five points
Proficient:	Four points
Basic:	Three points
Below Basic 2:	Two points
Below Basic 1:	One point

Test scores for students who should be tested but were not are assigned a point value of zero.

- (2) Add the points for each category. The total is the sum of weighted scores.
- (3) Determine the total number of student scores in each subject area tested (English language arts and mathematics, with the addition of science and social studies in 2005).
- (4) Divide the sum of weighted scores (step two) by the total number of scores (step three), and round to the nearest tenth of a point. This is the Absolute Rating index.

Note on rounding: Rounding is used when determining the final Absolute Rating index. Rounding was implemented to establish clear cut-off points between each rating category. The index is rounded to the tenths place. If the calculated index results in a decimal having values in the hundredths place or beyond, the value in the hundredths place is examined to determine if the value in the tenths place is to be rounded up to the next higher tenth. The value in the tenths place is rounded up if the hundredths values range from 0.05 through 0.09.

Examples:

3.34 rounds to 3.3
3.35 rounds to 3.4
3.349 rounds to 3.3
3.351 rounds to 3.4

- (5) Identify the school's Absolute Rating corresponding to the absolute index for the current year in the following table:

Index Values for Determining Absolute Ratings

Year	Range of Indexes Corresponding to Absolute Rating				
	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average	Unsatisfactory
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	4.0 and above*	3.6–3.9*	3.2–3.5	2.8–3.1	Below 2.8
2010	4.1 and above*	3.7–4.0*	3.3–3.6	2.9–3.2	Below 2.9
2011	4.2 and above*	3.8–4.1*	3.4–3.7	3.0–3.3	Below 3.0
2012	4.3 and above*	3.9–4.2*	3.5–3.8	3.1–3.4	Below 3.1
2013	4.4 and above*	4.0–4.3*	3.6–3.9	3.2–3.5	Below 3.2
2014	4.5 and above*	4.1–4.4*	3.7–4.0	3.3–3.6	Below 3.3

*School must meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for *all* students.

(6) Determine whether the school met the AYP goal for *all* students.

The index (step four, above) determines the school's Absolute Rating. However, in schools with an Excellent or Good rating based on the index, the rating will be lowered one level if the school did not achieve AYP for *all* students, calculated by using available data for the entire student body in the school. Absolute ratings will not be decreased if AYP for subgroups is not met when AYP based on *all* students has been achieved. For example, if a school had an absolute index of 3.6 in 2005 but did not achieve AYP for *all* students, its rating would be lowered from Excellent to Good. A school in 2005 with an index of 3.2 that did not achieve AYP for *all* students would be awarded an Absolute Rating of Average rather than Good.

The EOC is committed to a phase-in of the criteria as shown in the table above. Rigor will increase annually until the ratings definitions reach the 2010 target and the 2014 NCLB target.

Inclusion of Students with Disabilities

The inclusion of students with disabilities in the absolute performance rating is to be accomplished in the following manner:

- Students with accommodated administrations will be treated identically to students taking PACT in its standard form in absolute school and district ratings.
- Students taking alternate assessments will be included in the ratings calculation only at the district level beginning in 2004.
- Students taking modified assessments, including off-level tests, will be factored into the Absolute Rating according to the test score earned.
- The percentage of students taking PACT assessments on grade level and off grade level is to be published on the school report card and shown in comparison to the percentages statewide.

Inclusion of Students with Limited English Proficiency

Students with Limited English Proficiency are tested in accordance with federal guidelines; therefore, students excused from testing by federal rules are excluded from the number of students eligible for testing.

Sample Calculation of an Absolute Rating for Schools Enrolling Students in Grades Three through Eight

Subject Areas:
English language arts and mathematics

Score Category	Number of Scores	x	Score Category Points	
Advanced	27	x	5	= 135
Proficient	35	x	4	= 140
Basic	110	x	3	= 330
Below Basic 2	42	x	2	= 84
Below Basic 1	19	x	1	= 19
Not Tested	5	x	0	= 0
Total Number of Scores	238		Sum of Weighted Scores	= 708

$708 \div 238 = 2.97$
Rounded: 3.0
Absolute Rating: Good

Note: This school's index of 3.0 is a Good Absolute Rating through the year 2003. From 2004 to 2007, a 3.0 index becomes Average and from 2008 through 2011 it becomes Below Average. From 2012 through 2014, the rating becomes Unsatisfactory.

Did the school meet AYP for *all* students? Yes/No.

If the school's Absolute Rating is Excellent or Good but the school did not meet AYP for *all* students, the Absolute Rating would be lowered by one level—from Excellent to Good, or from Good to Average.

Improvement Rating

The Education Accountability Act provides that the EOC may consider the performance of subgroups of students in the school in the Improvement Ratings. Improvement ratings are based on longitudinally matched student data.

Calculation of the Improvement Index

- (1) For the students who qualify for inclusion (e.g., those students for whom both current- and prior-year test scores are available and who were enrolled in the school by the forty-fifth day of the current school year), absolute indexes for the current year and for the prior year should be computed. The absolute indexes for each year are calculated in a similar way as the absolute performance index, but the points assigned to PACT scores are selected from the following tables:

**English Language Arts (ELA)
Conversion of Scale Scores to Point Weights
for Calculating Improvement Rating**

Point Weight Grade	Below Basic 1				Below Basic 2				Basic				Proficient				Advanced
	1.00	1.25	1.50	1.75	2.00	2.25	2.50	2.75	3.00	3.25	3.50	3.75	4.00	4.25	4.50	4.75	5.00
8	749 or less	750	764	778	792	793	795	796	797	801	805	809	813	817	820	824	827 or more
7	649 or less	650	664	677	691	692	694	695	696	700	704	708	712	716	721	725	729 or more
6	549 or less	550	563	577	590	592	593	595	596	600	604	608	612	616	621	625	629 or more
5	448 or less	449	462	475	488	490	492	493	495	499	503	507	511	516	521	526	531 or more
4	348 or less	349	363	376	389	391	392	394	395	399	403	406	410	415	420	425	430 or more
3	249 or less	250	263	277	290	292	293	295	296	300	303	307	310	315	321	326	331 or more
2	147 or less	148	160	171	183	186	189	191	194	197	201	204	207 or more	NA	NA	NA	NA
1	46 or less	47	58	69	80	83	86	88	91	95	99	103	107 or more	NA	NA	NA	NA

Mathematics
Conversion of Scale Scores to Point Weights
for Calculating Improvement Rating

Point Weight Grade	Below Basic 1				Below Basic 2				Basic				Proficient				Advanced
	1.00	1.25	1.50	1.75	2.00	2.25	2.50	2.75	3.00	3.25	3.50	3.75	4.00	4.25	4.50	4.75	5.00
8	763 or less	764	774	783	793	795	797	798	800	805	809	814	818	820	823	825	827 or more
7	662 or less	663	672	682	691	693	696	698	700	704	709	713	717	720	722	725	727 or more
6	563 or less	564	573	582	591	593	595	597	599	604	608	613	617	620	623	625	628 or more
5	465 or less	466	474	482	490	492	495	497	499	504	508	513	517	520	523	525	528 or more
4	360 or less	361	370	380	389	392	394	397	399	403	408	412	416	419	422	424	427 or more
3	267 or less	268	275	283	290	292	294	296	298	303	307	312	316	319	321	324	326 or more
2	147 or less	148	160	171	183	186	189	192	195	200	205	209	214 or more	NA	NA	NA	NA
1	47 or less	48	60	71	83	86	89	92	95	99	104	108	112 or more	NA	NA	NA	NA

The appropriate point weight corresponding to each student's ELA and math PACT score is determined from the tables above, and the point weights are summed and averaged as in the calculation of the absolute index. These calculations are carried out for matched longitudinal data for both the current and prior year.

- (2) Subtract the absolute index for the prior year from the absolute index for the current year and round the difference to the nearest tenth. This difference is the improvement index. For example, if the current year absolute index is 3.58 and the prior year's absolute index was 3.24, the improvement index is 0.34, which rounds to 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 absolute index for calculating the improvement index for the same year may differ because of differences in the forty-five-day enrollments, the loss of student data that could not be longitudinally matched in the calculation of the improvement index, and the use of modified tables for converting test scores to point weights.
- (3) Compare the school's improvement index to those in the table below to determine the school's Improvement Rating. For example, the school achieving an improvement index of 0.3 would receive an Improvement Rating of Good.

Improvement Performance Rating Criteria

Rating	Improvement Index
Excellent	0.4 or greater
Good	0.3
Average	0.1–0.2
Below Average	0.0
Unsatisfactory	-0.1 or less

- (4) A school's Improvement Rating may be increased by one level if the improvement in performance of historically underachieving students meets or exceeds a criterion. Historically underachieving groups consist of African-American, Hispanic, and Native American students, those eligible for the free or reduced-price federal lunch program, Limited English Proficient (LEP) students, migrant students, and students with non-speech disabilities. The school's eligibility for the increased Improvement Rating is determined as follows:
 - a. Calculate the improvement index for the group of eligible students. The group must consist of forty or more students to be considered for analysis.
 - b. Compare the improvement index for the group to the state two-year average improvement index for all students in the state. The state two-year average improvement index is the average of the improvement indexes for all students for the current and prior years. If the improvement index for the historically underachieving group in the school exceeds the state two-year average improvement index by at least one standard deviation, the school's Improvement Rating may be increased by one level. If the school is rated Excellent for improvement on the basis of all students, the performance for groups should also be calculated and reported even though the school's rating cannot be increased.

Sample Calculation of an Improvement Rating for Schools Enrolling Students in Grades Three through Eight

Index for current school year:	3.34
Index for the prior school year:	<u>- 3.62</u>
Difference:	- 0.32
Round to:	- 0.3
Improvement Rating:	Unsatisfactory

Schools Having Grade Three as the Highest Grade Enrolled

Longitudinal analyses of scores from students enrolled in schools having grade organizations such as kindergarten through grade three, grades two through three, grades one through three, and so on, cannot be performed because these schools will have PACT data for grade three only. There is no PACT test in grade two administered on a statewide basis to serve as a pretest for the longitudinally matched data. The Improvement Rating for schools such as these will be calculated based on the change in absolute performance from year to year.

Schools with Absolute Ratings of Excellent in Two Subsequent Years

If a school is rated Excellent for absolute achievement for both years, the school will receive an Improvement Rating of Good. If the school's improvement index for all students is a positive number (i.e., greater than zero), the school's Improvement Rating will be elevated to Excellent. The performance improvement of the groups will also be reported for these schools. Schools achieving an absolute index of 4.8 or higher for two consecutive years will be awarded an Excellent Improvement Rating.

Ratings for High Schools

The performance and Improvement Ratings for high schools are calculated on a weighted model using the following criteria: longitudinal Exit Examination performance, the percentage of students eligible for LIFE Scholarships to a four-year institution, Exit Examination performance of tenth graders (first attempt), and graduation rate.

Two ratings are to be assigned to schools. The ratings for absolute performance and improvement performance are defined in article 1 of the Education Accountability Act of 1998, Section 59-18-120:

“Absolute performance” means the rating a school will receive based on the percentage of students meeting standard on the state’s standards based assessment;

“Improvement performance” means the rating a school will receive based on longitudinally matched student data comparing current performance to their previous year’s for the purpose of determining student academic growth.

As required by the United States Department of Education through passage of the No Child Left Behind legislation, a notice of each school’s attainment of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) must be reported. AYP specifies statewide targets for testing and achievement to be met by all students and by specific demographic groups. Information on the determination of AYP is available from the South Carolina Department of Education (www.myschools.com).

Ratings Criteria

- ❑ 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.
- ❑ First-attempt HSAP Exit Examination performance: The percentage of students taking the High School Assessment Program (HSAP) for the first time who passed both the English language arts and mathematics subtests by scoring at the performance level of 2 or higher.
- ❑ Eligibility for LIFE Scholarships: The percentage of students in the spring graduating class who qualify for Legislative Incentive for Future Excellence (LIFE) Scholarships (i.e., meeting both the grade point average and SAT/ACT criteria established by the state). Beginning with the 2002–2003 school year, this criterion has consisted of the percentage of students in the spring graduating class who qualify for LIFE Scholarships under the following criteria: SAT of 1100 or higher or ACT of 24 or higher, and B average; does not include class rank criterion. Beginning with the 2005–2006 school year, the percentage of students meeting the SAT/ACT score requirements and the B average requirement for the LIFE Scholarship program will be eliminated from the high school rating criteria. Beginning with the 2005–2006 school year, data from the end-of-course assessments in Algebra I, English I, Biology I, and Physical Science will be used as one of the criteria for determining high school ratings.
- ❑ Graduation rate: The percentage of all (including students with disabilities) ninth-grade students four years prior to the year of the report card who earn a standard high school diploma (not GED), adjusted for transfers in and out of the school. Transfers to adult education who fail to earn high school diplomas within four years (inclusive of summer school) after entering grade nine are to be counted as non-graduates in the calculation of the graduation rate for South Carolina accountability purposes. For a student to be considered a transfer to an adult education high school completion program, the student must comply with the program requirements of a minimum of 16 instructional hours per week with minimum attendance of 60 hours per earned Carnegie unit. Include data from students who meet the state diploma requirements as a result of attending summer school following their senior year in the calculation of the graduation rate; this should take effect as soon as the State Department of Education and school districts can arrange for timely receipt of the data needed.

Note: Beginning in 2004, the performance of students in their second year of high school taking the HSAP for the first time (tenth graders for the most part, but some students classified as ninth graders may also be assessed) will be the tenth-grade first-attempt criterion. The BSAP Exit Exam results will continue to be used for the determination of longitudinal performance through 2005. The following table shows how performance on the two exams will be phased into the ratings system:

**Longitudinal and Tenth-Grade Exit Exam Patterns
by Year and Grade Level**

Year	Grade		
	10	11	12
2001	BSAP Exit Exam	BSAP Exit Exam	BSAP Exit Exam
2002	BSAP Exit Exam	BSAP Exit Exam	BSAP Exit Exam
2003	BSAP Exit Exam	BSAP Exit Exam	BSAP Exit Exam
2004	HSAP Exit Exam	BSAP Exit Exam	BSAP Exit Exam
2005	HSAP Exit Exam	HSAP Exit Exam	BSAP Exit Exam
2006	HSAP Exit Exam	HSAP Exit Exam	HSAP Exit Exam
2007	HSAP Exit Exam	HSAP Exit Exam	HSAP Exit Exam

Source: S.C. Department of Education

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):

Criteria for High School Ratings

Criterion	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%
First-attempt HSAP Passage Rate (20%)	62.9% or more	53.7–62.8%	37.4–53.6%	26.7–37.3%	Below 26.7%
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%)	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:

- (1) Match the school's data/performance to the points assigned to each rating criterion in the table above.
- (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:

Index Values for Determining Absolute Ratings

Year	Range of Indexes Corresponding to Absolute Rating				
	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average	Unsatisfactory
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	4.0 and above*	3.6–3.9*	3.2–3.5	2.8–3.1	Below 2.8
2010	4.1 and above*	3.7–4.0*	3.3–3.6	2.9–3.2	Below 2.9
2011	4.2 and above*	3.8–4.1*	3.4–3.7	3.0–3.3	Below 3.0
2012	4.3 and above*	3.9–4.2*	3.5–3.8	3.1–3.4	Below 3.1
2013	4.4 and above*	4.0–4.3*	3.6–3.9	3.2–3.5	Below 3.2
2014	4.5 and above*	4.1–4.4*	3.7–4.0	3.3–3.6	Below 3.3

*School must meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for *all* students.

The index determines the school's Absolute Rating. However, beginning in 2005 in schools with an Excellent or Good rating based on the index, the rating will be lowered one level if the school did not meet AYP (i.e., the AYP performance and percent-tested criteria must be met) for *all* students, calculated by using available data for the entire student body in the school. Absolute ratings will not be decreased if AYP for subgroups is not met when AYP based on *all* students has been achieved. For example, if a school had an absolute index of 3.6 in 2005 but did not achieve AYP for *all* students, its rating would be lowered from Excellent to Good. A school in 2005 with an index of 3.2 that did not achieve AYP for *all* students would be awarded an Absolute Rating of Average rather than Good.

Sample Calculation of an Absolute Rating for a High School

92% Longitudinal Exit Exam:	(3 X 0.3) = 0.9 points
64% Tenth-grade passage rate:	(3 X 0.2) = 0.6 points
25% Seniors qualifying for LIFE Scholarships:	(3 X 0.2) = 0.6 points
70% Graduation Rate:	(3 X 0.3) = <u>0.9 points</u>
	Sum = 3.0 Index
Absolute Rating:	Good

Note: This school's index of 3.0 is a Good Absolute Rating through the year 2003. From 2004 through 2007, an index of 3.0 is Average, and from 2008 through 2011 it becomes Below Average. After 2011 a 3.0 index is Unsatisfactory.

Beginning in 2005:

Did the school meet AYP for *all* students? Yes/No.

If the school's Absolute Rating is Excellent or Good but the school did not meet AYP for *all* students, the Absolute Rating would be lowered by one level—from Excellent to Good or from Good to Average.

Students who should be tested but are not tested will be assigned a weight of zero in the accountability ratings.

Inclusion of Students with Disabilities

The inclusion of students with disabilities in the absolute performance rating is to be accomplished in the following manner:

- ❑ Students with accommodated administrations will be treated identically to students taking the HSAP or BSAP Exit Exam in its standard form in absolute school and district ratings.
- ❑ Students taking modified assessments will be factored into the Absolute Rating according to the test score earned.
- ❑ Students taking alternate assessments will be included in the ratings calculation only at the district level.

Inclusion of Students with Limited English Proficiency

Students with Limited English Proficiency are only tested in accordance with federal guidelines; therefore, students excused from testing by federal rules are excluded from the number of students eligible for testing.

Improvement Performance Rating

Note: Longitudinal student-matched data are unavailable at the high school level because of the structure of the curriculum and assessments. Therefore, the methodology examines improvement of cohorts of students over time.

The Improvement Ratings are calculated using a mathematical formula that results in an index. The index is calculated by subtracting the school's Absolute Rating index from the prior year from the school's current year's Absolute Rating index. The difference determines the rating as follows:

High School Improvement Performance Rating Criteria

Rating	Improvement Index
Excellent	0.4 or greater
Good	0.3
Average	0.1–0.2
Below Average	0.0
Unsatisfactory	-0.1 or less

Sample Calculation of an Improvement Rating for a High School

Absolute Rating index for school year on which report card is based:	2.44	
Absolute Rating index for the prior school year:	<u>-2.22</u>	
	Difference =	0.22
	Rounds to:	0.2
	Improvement Rating:	Average

Note: Calculate the high school Improvement Ratings for 2003–2004 by recalculating the 2002–2003 absolute index based on HSAP field test criteria for first-attempt exit exam performance and subtracting it from the 2003–2004 absolute index that is based on 2004 HSAP performance.

A school's Improvement Rating may be increased by one level if the improvement in 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 school's eligibility for the increased Improvement Rating is determined as follows:

- (1) Calculate the improvement index for the group of eligible students. The group must consist of forty or more students to be considered for analysis.
- (2) Compare the improvement index for the group to the state two-year average improvement index for all students in the state. The state two-year average improvement index is the average of the improvement indexes for all students for the current and prior years. If the improvement index for the historically underachieving group in the school exceeds the state two-year average improvement index by at least one standard deviation, the school's Improvement Rating may be increased by one level. If the school is rated Excellent for improvement on the basis of all students, the performance for groups should also be calculated and reported even though the school's rating cannot be increased.

Schools with Absolute Ratings of Excellent in Two Subsequent Years

If a school is rated Excellent for absolute achievement for both years, the school will receive an Improvement Rating of Good. If the school's improvement index for all students is a positive number (i.e., greater than zero), the school's Improvement Rating will be elevated to Excellent. The performance improvement of the groups will also be reported for these schools. Schools achieving an absolute index of 4.8 or higher for two consecutive years will be awarded an Excellent Improvement Rating.

Ratings for Career and Technology Centers

Two ratings are to be assigned to schools. The ratings for absolute performance and improvement performance are defined in article 1 of the Education Accountability Act of 1998, Section 59-18-120:

“Absolute performance” means the rating a school will receive based on the percentage of students meeting standard on the state’s standards based assessment;

“Improvement performance” means the rating a school will receive based on longitudinally matched student data comparing current performance to their previous year’s for the purpose of determining student academic growth.

As required by the United States Department of Education through passage of the No Child Left Behind legislation, a notice of each school’s attainment of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) must be reported. AYP specifies statewide targets for testing and achievement to be met by all students and by specific demographic groups. Information on the determination of AYP is available from the South Carolina Department of Education (www.myschools.com).

State ratings criteria and definitions were developed through work with a group of career and technology center directors and with advice from the School-to-Work Advisory Council. Four criteria for use in the ratings are adopted as shown below. These criteria incorporate the requirements of the statute, as further detailed in the proviso.

The results from the ratings reported on the 2001 report card were reviewed with career and technology center principals and representatives from the State Department of Education. The 2001 ratings did not successfully differentiate levels of quality among centers (95 percent were rated Excellent, 2.5 percent were rated Good, and 2.5 percent were rated Average). The results from a review of the criteria by State Department of Education personnel indicate that the enrollment criterion in the rating did not reflect program quality but rather was affected by factors not under direct control of career and technology center personnel. For example, the percentage enrollment was dependent in some cases on the distance and time needed for students to travel between a center and its feeder high schools. These factors did not allow for improvement in enrollment in all cases.

At its March 21, 2002, meeting, the EOC adopted the following criteria:

- ❑ Mastering core competencies or certification requirements: The percentage of students enrolled in career and technology courses at the center who earn a 2.0 or above on the final course grade. Students are to be assessed on the competencies identified in the adopted syllabi or specified for certification programs (e.g., FAMS). This factor applies to any career and technology course in the center. This criterion is weighted at twice the value of other criteria.
- ❑ Graduation rate: The number of twelfth-grade career technology education students who graduate in the spring is divided by the number of twelfth graders enrolled in the center and converted to a percentage. This criterion incorporates passage of the Exit Examination required for graduation.
- ❑ Placement rate: The number of career and technology completers who are available for placement in either postsecondary instruction, military services, or employment is divided into the number of students over a three-year period who are actually placed and converted to a percentage. This criterion mirrors the Perkins standard.

The criteria should be weighted as follows:

- ❑ Mastering core competencies or certification requirements should be weighted 50 percent in the calculation of the rating.
- ❑ Graduation rate should be weighted 25 percent.
- ❑ Placement rate should be weighted 25 percent.

Absolute Rating Calculation

Ratings are calculated using a mathematical formula based on the point weightings in the table below, which results in an index.

Career and Technology Center Absolute Ratings Criteria

Criterion	Points Assigned				
	5	4	3	2	1
Mastery (weighted x 5)	86% or more	78–85%	70–77%	62–69%	61% or below
Graduation (weighted x 2.5)	97% or more	92–96%	87–91%	82–86%	81% or below
Placement (weighted x 2.5)	98% or more	95–97%	92–94%	89–91%	88% or below

The absolute index is calculated using the following formula:

- (1) Match the center's data/performance to the points assigned to each rating criterion (table above).
- (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. Weighting factors are:

$$\begin{array}{r}
 \text{Mastery} = 5.0 \\
 \text{Graduation} = 2.5 \\
 \text{Placement} = 2.5 \\
 \hline
 \text{Total Weight} = 10
 \end{array}$$

- (3) Add the points and divide the total by ten (the total of criteria weighting factors).

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

Career and Technology Center Absolute Performance Rating

Year	Range of Indexes Corresponding to Absolute Rating				
	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average	Unsatisfactory
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	4.0 and above	3.6–3.9	3.2–3.5	2.8–3.1	Below 2.8
2010	4.1 and above	3.7–4.0	3.3–3.6	2.9–3.2	Below 2.9
2011	4.2 and above	3.8–4.1	3.4–3.7	3.0–3.3	Below 3.0
2012	4.3 and above	3.9–4.2	3.5–3.8	3.1–3.4	Below 3.1
2013	4.4 and above	4.0–4.3	3.6–3.9	3.2–3.5	Below 3.2
2014	4.5 and above	4.1–4.4	3.7–4.0	3.3–3.6	Below 3.3

The index determines the school's Absolute Rating. Only those career and technology centers receiving Absolute Ratings of Unsatisfactory will fail to meet AYP for *all* students.

Sample Calculation of an Absolute Rating for a Career and Technology Center

78 percent of students exhibiting mastery:	(4 X 5) =	20.0 points
97 percent of twelfth graders graduating:	(5 X 2.5) =	12.5 points
73 percent placement rate:	(1 X 2.5) =	<u>+ 2.5 points</u>
	Total points:	35 points
	Divided by 10:	<u>÷10</u> (total of weights)
	Absolute index:	3.5
	Absolute Rating:	Excellent

Note: This center's index of 3.5 is an Excellent Absolute Rating in 2003–2004. A 3.5 index becomes Good in 2005, Average in 2009, and Below Average in 2013.

Improvement Rating

Note: Longitudinal student-matched data are unavailable for career and technology centers because of the structure of the curriculum and the criteria used in the ratings. Therefore, the methodology examines improvement of cohorts of students over time.

School indexes are compared using student cohort data. The absolute index of scores from year one is to be computed and compared to the absolute index from year two. The difference between the two indexes will be computed. For example, if the year two index is 3.54 and the year one index was 3.20, the difference would be .34, which rounds to 0.3. The amount of change (difference from one year to the next) determines the rating as follows:

Career and Technology Center Improvement Performance Rating

Rating	Improvement Index
Excellent	0.4 or greater
Good	0.3
Average	0.1–0.2
Below Average	0.0
Unsatisfactory	-0.1 or less

Sample Calculation of an Improvement Rating for a Career and Technology Center

Absolute Rating index for school year for which report card is based:	2.44
Absolute Rating index for the prior school year:	<u>-2.22</u>
	Difference = 0.22
	Round to: 0.2
	Improvement Rating: Average

A school's Improvement Rating may be increased by one level if the improvement in 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 school's eligibility for the increased Improvement Rating is determined as follows:

- (1) Calculate the improvement index for the group of eligible students. The group must consist of forty or more students to be considered for analysis.
- (2) Compare the improvement index for the group to the state two-year average improvement index for all students in the state. The state two-year average improvement index is the average of the improvement indexes for all students for the current and prior years. If the improvement index for the historically underachieving group in the school exceeds the state two-year average improvement index by at least one standard deviation, the school's Improvement Rating may be increased by one level. If the school is rated Excellent for improvement on the basis of all students, the performance for groups should also be calculated and reported even though the school's rating cannot be increased.

Schools with Absolute Ratings of Excellent in Two Adjacent Years

If a school is rated Excellent for absolute achievement for both years, the school will receive an Improvement Rating of Good. If the school's improvement index for all students is a positive number (i.e., greater than zero), the school's Improvement Rating will be elevated to Excellent. The performance improvement of the groups will also be reported for these schools. Schools achieving an absolute index of 4.8 or higher for two consecutive years will be awarded an Excellent Improvement Rating.

Ratings for School Districts

Two ratings are to be assigned to school districts. The ratings for absolute performance and improvement performance are defined in article 1 of the Education Accountability Act of 1998, Section 59-18-120:

“Absolute performance” means the rating a district will receive based on the percentage of students meeting standard on the state's standards based assessment;

“Improvement performance” means the rating a district will receive based on longitudinally matched student data comparing current performance to their previous year's for the purpose of determining student academic growth.

As required by the United States Department of Education through passage of the No Child Left Behind legislation, a notice of each district's attainment of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) must be reported. AYP specifies statewide targets for testing and achievement to be met by all students and by specific demographic groups. Information on the determination of AYP is available from the South Carolina Department of Education (www.myschools.com).

Both absolute performance and Improvement Ratings of school districts are to be calculated through a repetition of the school methodology for grades three through eight and high schools. Students included in the calculation of the indexes include any student

enrolled in the district as of the forty-fifth day of instruction and participating in the testing programs while enrolled in the district. The indexes for grades three through eight and high schools are to be weighted in accordance with the distribution of students in membership at those levels, using the 135-day average daily membership (ADM) for the determination of the weighting. A cumulative index is defined and the index is evaluated as described below.

The index is calculated using the following procedures:

- (1) Calculate an index using PACT performance and PACT Alternate Assessment performance of district students in grades three through eight using the same mathematical formula for calculating an Absolute Rating for schools enrolling students in grades three through eight.

Note: Since the performance rating categories Below Basic I and Below Basic II are not available from the PACT-Alt results, the following weights for the calculation of absolute and improvement indexes should be used:

Weights for Calculation of Indexes Using PACT-Alt Data Only

PACT-Alt Score	Point Weight
Below Basic	1.5
Basic	3
Proficient	4
Advanced	5

- (2) Calculate an index using performance of district students in grades nine through twelve using the mathematical formula for calculating an Absolute Rating index for schools enrolling students in grades nine through twelve.
- (3) Multiply the index for grades three through eight by the student enrollment in grades three through eight (135-day ADM).
- (4) Multiply the index for grades nine through twelve by the student enrollment in grades nine through twelve (135-day ADM).
- (5) Add the products from steps three and four. Divide this sum by the total 135-day ADM for grades three through twelve. Round the resulting index to the nearest tenth of a percentage.

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

District Absolute Rating

Year	Range of Indexes Corresponding to Absolute Rating				
	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average	Unsatisfactory
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	4.0 and above*	3.6–3.9*	3.2–3.5	2.8–3.1	Below 2.8
2010	4.1 and above*	3.7–4.0*	3.3–3.6	2.9–3.2	Below 2.9
2011	4.2 and above*	3.8–4.1*	3.4–3.7	3.0–3.3	Below 3.0
2012	4.3 and above*	3.9–4.2*	3.5–3.8	3.1–3.4	Below 3.1
2013	4.4 and above*	4.0–4.3*	3.6–3.9	3.2–3.5	Below 3.2
2014	4.5 and above*	4.1–4.4*	3.7–4.0	3.3–3.6	Below 3.3

*District must meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for *all* students.

The index determines the district's Absolute Rating. However, beginning in 2004 in districts with an Excellent or Good rating based on the index, the rating will be lowered one level if the district did not meet AYP (i.e., the AYP performance and percent-tested criteria must be met) for *all* students, calculated by using available data for the entire student body in the district. Absolute ratings will not be decreased if AYP for subgroups is not met when AYP based on *all* students has been achieved. For example, if a district had an absolute index of 3.6 in 2005 but did not achieve AYP for *all* students, its rating would be lowered from Excellent to Good. A district in 2005 with an index of 3.2 that did not achieve AYP for *all* students would be awarded an Absolute Rating of Average rather than Good.

Sample Calculation of an Absolute Rating for a School District

Student Grade Levels	Absolute Index	District ADM	Sum of Absolute Index x ADM
3–8	2.9	12,532	36,342.8
9–12	3.0	6,621	19,863.0
Totals		19,153	56,205.8

Sum of absolute index x ADM ÷ Total ADM = District absolute index

$$56,205.8 \div 19,153.0 = 2.934$$

Rounded to nearest tenth: 2.9

Absolute Rating: Average

Note: This school district's index of 2.9 is an Average Absolute Rating through the year 2006. From 2007 through 2010, an index of 2.9 is Below Average, becoming Unsatisfactory in 2011.

Beginning in 2004:

Did the district meet AYP for *all* students? Yes/No.

If the district's Absolute Rating is Excellent or Good but the district did not meet AYP for *all* students, the Absolute Rating would be lowered by one level—from Excellent to Good or from Good to Average.

Students who should be tested but are not tested will be assigned a weight of zero in the accountability ratings.

Inclusion of Students with Disabilities

Inclusion of students with disabilities in the absolute performance rating is to be accomplished in the following manner:

- ❑ Students with accommodated administrations will be treated identically to students taking other assessments in their standard form in absolute school and district ratings.
- ❑ Students taking alternate assessments will be included in the calculation of the ratings only at the district level.
- ❑ Students taking modified assessments, including off-level assessments, will be factored into the Absolute and Improvement Ratings according to the test score earned.
- ❑ The percentage of students taking PACT assessments on grade level and off grade level is to be published on the district report card and shown in comparison to the percentage statewide.

Inclusion of Students with Limited English Proficiency

Students with Limited English Proficiency are only tested in accordance with federal guidelines; therefore, students excused from testing by federal rules are excluded from the number of students eligible for testing.

Improvement Rating

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

Calculation of the Improvement Index

- (1) For the students who qualify for inclusion (e.g., those students for whom both current and prior year test scores are available and who were enrolled in the school by the forty-fifth day of the current school year), an absolute index for the current year and for the prior year will be computed. The absolute indexes for each year will be calculated in the same way as the absolute performance index.
- (2) Subtract the absolute index for the prior year from the absolute index for the current year. This difference is the improvement index. For example, if the current year absolute index is 3.5 and the prior year's absolute index was 3.2, the improvement 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 absolute index for calculating the improvement index for the same year may differ because of differences in the forty-five-day enrollments, the loss of student data that could not be longitudinally matched, and the use of modified table values for converting test scores to point weights.
- (3) Weight the indexes in grades three through eight and high schools in accordance with the distribution of students in membership at those levels, using the 135-day average daily membership for the determination of the weighting. Compare the district's cumulative improvement index to those in the table below to determine the district's Improvement Rating. For example, the district achieving an improvement index of 0.3 would receive an Improvement Rating of Good.

Improvement Performance Rating Criteria

Rating	Improvement Index
Excellent	0.4 or greater
Good	0.3
Average	0.1–0.2
Below Average	0.0
Unsatisfactory	-0.1 or less

- (4) A district's Improvement Rating may be increased by one level if the improvement in 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 Improvement Rating is determined as follows:

- a. Calculate the improvement index for the group of eligible students. The group must consist of forty or more students to be considered for analysis.
- b. Compare the improvement index for the group to the state two-year average improvement index for all students in the state. The state two-year average improvement index is the average of the improvement indexes for all students for the current and prior years. If the improvement index for the historically underachieving group in the district exceeds the state two-year average improvement index by at least one standard deviation, the district's Improvement Rating may be increased by one level. If the district is rated Excellent for improvement 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 years, the district will receive an Improvement Rating of Good. If the district's improvement index for all students is a positive number (i.e., greater than zero), the district's Improvement Rating will be elevated to Excellent. The performance improvement of the groups will also be reported for these districts. Districts achieving an absolute index of 4.8 or higher for two consecutive years will be awarded an Excellent Improvement Rating.

Ratings for Special Schools

THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS: PALMETTO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Students to Be Included in the Rating

High school eligible students who have participated in the educational program for a minimum of one hundred days during the fiscal year are to be included. All Palmetto Unified programs are to be reported as one school.

Criteria for the Rating

- GED completion rate: This is calculated by the number of successful completers divided by the number of students enrolled in the GED program. Those who completed the GED prior to one hundred days are to be included in the calculation;
- Vocational program completers: This is calculated by the number of program completers (federal definition) divided by the number of students enrolled in the vocational program; and
- Pretest and posttest gains on the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE): This average gain from the pretest to the posttest is calculated by adding the gains of individual students and dividing by the total number of students.

Calculation of the Absolute Performance Rating

Assign points (one through five) for each criterion in the following manner:

Absolute Performance Ratings Criteria

Criterion	Points Assigned				
	5	4	3	2	1
GED Completion %	81–100	61–80	41–60	20–40	19 or less
Vocational Completers %	81–100	61–80	41–60	20–40	19 or less
Pretest-Posttest TABE Gains	0.80 or more	0.60–0.79	0.40–0.59	0.20–0.39	Less than 0.20

Add the points and divide by three to yield an index. The index determines the school's Absolute Rating.

Absolute Performance Level Ratings

Rating	2010 Target	2001 (80% with increases of 0.1/year beginning in 2004)
Excellent	4.0 or more	3.2 or more
Good	3.6–3.9	2.9–3.1
Average	3.3–3.5	2.6–2.8
Below Average	3.0–3.2	2.4–2.5
Unsatisfactory	Less than 3.0	Less than 2.4

Improvement Rating

Using the absolute performance indexes, calculate annual gains based on current year minus previous year.

Palmetto Unified Improvement Ratings

Rating	Improvement Index
Excellent	Gains of .3 or above
Good	Gains of .2 to .29
Average	Gains of .1 to .19
Below Average	Gains of .01 to .09
Unsatisfactory	No gain or a loss

Schools with Absolute Ratings of Excellent in Two Adjacent Years

If a school is rated Excellent for absolute achievement for both years, the school will receive an Improvement Rating of Good. If the school's improvement index for all students is a positive number (i.e., greater than zero), the school's Improvement Rating will be elevated to Excellent. The performance improvement of the groups will also be reported for these schools. Schools achieving an absolute index of 4.8 or higher for two consecutive years will be awarded an Excellent Improvement Rating.

DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

The Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) requested that the formula for calculating its Absolute Rating be revised to better reflect student achievement in each of the two subject areas assessed (reading and math) by the California Achievement Test (CAT). The current formula combines reading and math scores when assigning the point weighting for the calculation of the index. The revised formula provides for point weightings to be assigned separately for reading and math performance. The resulting index will provide more variability, which will better reflect achievement changes in these subjects from year to year. The EOC adopted the revised formula requested on March 21, 2002. The revised formula took effect with the 2002–2003 report card.

Students to Be Included in the Rating

Students enrolled in the program eight months or more are to be included. Because of variations in school size and student assignment to DJJ facility, DJJ system schools are reported in an aggregated manner.

Criteria for the Rating

- ❑ California Achievement Test (CAT): A pretest is administered when the juvenile is first committed. A posttest is administered at the juvenile's eight-month anniversary and at each eight-month anniversary thereafter. Scores are reported as differences in grade equivalencies in reading and math.
- ❑ The Exit Exam is administered to juveniles who are enrolled at DJJ during the month of state testing. The sample of students who take the Exit Exam and have been

committed to DJJ for at least eight months will be reported as a percentage meeting standards.

Calculation of the Absolute Rating for 2003 and Beyond

Absolute Ratings Criteria for the Department of Juvenile Justice

Criterion	Points Assigned				
	5	4	3	2	1
% students gaining at least one grade on CAT reading	90–100	80–89	70–79	60–69	Less than 60
% students gaining at least one grade on CAT math	90–100	80–89	70–79	60–69	Less than 60
% students passing one or more subtests on Exit Exam	90–100	80–89	70–79	60–69	Less than 60

Add points relevant to percentage of students meeting goal and divide by three to determine the index. The index determines the school's Absolute Rating.

Absolute Performance Level Ratings

Rating	2010 Target	2001 (80% with increases of 0.1/year beginning in 2004)
Excellent	4.0 or more	3.2 or more
Good	3.6–3.9	2.9–3.1
Average	3.3–3.5	2.6–2.8
Below Average	3.0–3.2	2.4–2.5
Unsatisfactory	Less than 3.0	Less than 2.4

Improvement Rating

Using the absolute performance indexes, calculate annual gains based on current year minus previous year.

Department of Juvenile Justice Improvement Ratings

Rating	Improvement Index
Excellent	Gains of .3 or above
Good	Gains of .2 to .29
Average	Gains of .1 to .19
Below Average	Gains of .01 to .09
Unsatisfactory	No gain or a loss

Schools with Absolute Ratings of Excellent in Two Adjacent Years

If a school is rated Excellent for absolute achievement for both years, the school will receive an Improvement Rating of Good. If the school's improvement index for all students is a positive number (i.e., greater than zero), the school's Improvement Rating will be elevated to Excellent. The performance improvement of the groups will also be reported for these schools. Schools achieving an absolute index of 4.8 or higher for two consecutive years will be awarded an Excellent Improvement Rating.

THE SOUTH CAROLINA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND

Students to Be Included in the Rating

Students who are enrolled in the school as of the forty-fifth day of instruction and remain through the spring testing period are included in the rating.

Criteria for the Rating

- ❑ Mastery of Individualized Education Plan objectives: Mastery is documented through categorical scores in English language arts and math assessments (reported as Advanced, Proficient, Basic, and Below Basic).
- ❑ PACT Alternate Assessment: Student scores are reported on the state-adopted scale of Advanced, Proficient, Basic, and Below Basic.
- ❑ Brigance Performance: Gains per year on the developmental scale are converted to categories of Advanced, Proficient, Basic, and Below Basic.

Calculation of the Index

Absolute Ratings Criteria for the S.C. School for the Deaf and Blind

Criterion	Points Assigned				
	5	4	3	2	1
% Mastery of IEP objectives	90–100	76–89	60–75	50–59	Less than 50
PACT-Alt	Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Below Basic 2	Below Basic 1
Brigance gain	90–100	76–89	60–75	50–59	Less than 50

For each criterion, the value for individual students is assigned and aggregated across criteria and students. The aggregate is divided by the total number of student scores to yield an index.

Absolute Performance Level Ratings

Rating	2010 Target	2001 (80% with increases of 0.1/year beginning in 2004)
Excellent	4.0 or more	3.2 or more
Good	3.6–3.9	2.9–3.1
Average	3.3–3.5	2.6–2.8
Below Average	3.0–3.2	2.4–2.5
Unsatisfactory	Less than 3.0	Less than 2.4

The index determines the school's Absolute Rating. However, beginning in 2004 in schools with an Excellent or Good rating based on the index, the rating will be lowered one level if the school did not meet AYP for *all* students. For example, if a school had an absolute index of 3.5 in 2004 but did not achieve AYP for *all* students, its rating would be lowered from Excellent to Good. A school in 2004 with an index of 3.1 that did not achieve AYP for *all* students would be awarded an Absolute Rating of Average rather than Good.

Improvement Rating

Using the absolute performance indexes, calculate annual gains based on current year minus previous year.

S.C. School for the Deaf and Blind Improvement Ratings

Rating	Improvement Index
Excellent	Gains of .3 or above
Good	Gains of .2 to .29
Average	Gains of .1 to .19
Below Average	Gains of .01 to .09
Unsatisfactory	No gain or a loss

Schools with Absolute Ratings of Excellent in Two Adjacent Years

If a school is rated Excellent for absolute achievement for both years, the school will receive an Improvement Rating of Good. If the school's improvement index for all students is a positive number (i.e., greater than zero), the school's Improvement Rating will be elevated to Excellent. The performance improvement of the groups will also be reported for these schools. Schools achieving an absolute index of 4.8 or higher for two consecutive years will be awarded an Excellent Improvement Rating.

THE GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL FOR SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS

Students to Be Included in the Rating

Students enrolled in the school as of the forty-fifth day of instruction and continuing through the spring testing period are to be included.

Criteria for the Rating

- ❑ Advanced Placement passage rate: The percentage of students scoring three or above on Advanced Placement examinations.
- ❑ Freshman year GPA: The mean grade point average of students in the fall semester of their freshman year (these data are to be reported on students graduating in the previous year).
- ❑ SAT: The mean SAT performance of graduating seniors.

Calculation of the Index

Absolute Ratings Criteria for the Governor's School for Science and Mathematics

Criterion	Points Assigned				
	5	4	3	2	1
AP Passing Rate (.45)	87 or greater	81–86	75–80	69–74	Less than 69
Freshman GPA (.35)	3.5 or greater	3.3–3.49	3.1–3.29	2.9–3.09	Less than 2.9
Mean SAT (.20)	1300 or greater	1260–1299	1170–1259	1120–1169	Less than 1120

Note: Each criterion is weighted as indicated in parentheses.

Absolute Performance Level Ratings

Rating	2010 Target	2001 (80% with increases of 0.1/year beginning in 2004)
Excellent	4.0 or more	3.2 or more
Good	3.6–3.9	2.9–3.1
Average	3.3–3.5	2.6–2.8
Below Average	3.0–3.2	2.4–2.5
Unsatisfactory	Less than 3.0	Less than 2.4

The index determines the school's Absolute Rating. However, beginning in 2004 in schools with an Excellent or Good rating based on the index, the rating will be lowered one level if the school did not meet AYP for *all* students. For example, if a school had an absolute index of 3.5 in 2004 but did not achieve AYP for *all* students, its rating would be lowered from Excellent to Good. A school in 2004 with an index of 3.1 that did not achieve AYP for *all* students would be awarded an Absolute Rating of Average rather than Good.

Improvement Rating

Using the absolute performance indexes, calculate annual gains based on current year minus previous year.

Governor's School for Science and Mathematics Improvement Rating

Improvement Rating	Improvement Index
Excellent	Maintenance of Excellent absolute status or gains of .15 or more
Good	Maintenance of Good absolute status or gains of .10
Average	Gains of .06–.09
Below Average	Gains of .01–.05
Unsatisfactory	No gain or a loss

Schools with Absolute Ratings of Excellent in Two Adjacent Years

If a school is rated Excellent for absolute achievement for both years, the school will receive an Improvement Rating of Good. If the school's improvement index for all students is a positive number (i.e., greater than zero), the school's Improvement Rating will be elevated to Excellent. The performance improvement of the groups will also be reported for these schools. Schools achieving an absolute index of 4.8 or higher for two consecutive years will be awarded an Excellent Improvement Rating.

WIL LOU GRAY OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL

Students to Be Included in the Rating

All students who are enrolled in the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School for either of the two five-month program periods each fiscal year are to be included.

Criteria for the Rating

- ❑ GED completion rate: This is calculated by the number of students who successfully complete the GED test divided by the number of students eligible to take the GED test.
- ❑ Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) gains: This is calculated by determining the percentage of students not eligible to take the GED who achieve a five-month gain in math and reading as measured by pre- and post-TABE results. Students must attain the gain in each of the content areas to qualify as meeting the criterion.
- ❑ The Challenge Program: The number of students completing the Challenge Phase of the Youth Challenge Academy is divided by the number of students entering the Challenge Phase.
- ❑ Community service: The number of community service hours is calculated for each student and the percentage of students reaching levels of service is calculated by dividing the number of students at selected levels of involvement by the total number of students.

Calculation of the Absolute Performance Rating

Assign points (one through five) for each criterion in the following manner:

Absolute Ratings Criteria for the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School

Criterion	Points Assigned				
	5	4	3	2	1
GED Completion Rate	81–100%	61–80%	41–60%	20–40%	Below 20%
TABE Gains	90–100%	80–89%	70–79%	60–69%	Below 60%
Challenge Phase	86–100%	71–85%	55–70%	40–54%	Below 40%
Community Service	100% at forty or more hours, with 25% at more than forty hours and 5% at more than sixty hours	100% at forty or more hours, with 25% at more than forty hours	100% at forty or more hours	90–99% at forty or more hours	Below 90% at forty or more hours

Assignment of Value to Achievement Index

Calculate the achievement index by summing the points for each criterion listed above, dividing by four, and rounding to the nearest tenth of a point.

Absolute Performance Level Ratings

Performance Level	Achievement Index, 2001 and beyond
Excellent	4.0 or above
Good	3.6–3.9
Average	3.3–3.5
Below Average	3.0–3.2
Unsatisfactory	Below 3.0

Improvement Rating

Subtract the achievement index for the prior year from that of the current year to calculate annual gains (improvement index).

Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School Improvement Rating

Rating	Improvement Index
Excellent	0.4 or greater
Good	0.3
Average	0.1–0.2
Below Average	0.0
Unsatisfactory	-0.1 or less

Schools with Absolute Ratings of Excellent in Two Adjacent Years

If a school is rated Excellent for absolute achievement for both years, the school will receive an Improvement Rating of Good. If the school's improvement index for all students is a positive number (i.e., greater than zero), the school's Improvement Rating will be elevated to Excellent. The performance improvement of the groups will also be reported for these schools. Schools achieving an absolute index of 4.8 or higher for two consecutive years will be awarded an Excellent Improvement Rating.

FELTON LABORATORY SCHOOL

This kindergarten through eighth-grade school receives a report card using the same criteria and information used for public schools within local school districts.

JOHN DE LA HOWE SCHOOL

Students to Be Included in the Rating

Students who have participated in the educational program for a minimum of 135 days during the school year are to be included. (John De La Howe School operates on a traditional calendar with an extended session during the summer. The extended session provides students with an opportunity to make up days and catch up in academic subjects that they may have missed while waiting for placement at John de la Howe School. Student attendance is collected on SASI and on paper copies of attendance sheets.)

Criteria for the Rating

- ❑ PACT or Exit Exam performance: This is dependent upon student grade level assignment. For PACT, the English language arts and mathematics tests are included; for the Exit Exam, the results of tenth graders taking the test for the first time will be used.
- ❑ STAR reading and mathematics: Pretest to posttest gains are calculated for each student in each content area and assigned value according to the point structure

below. Gains are added together and divided by the number of students tested. Students who should have been tested but are not tested are assigned a point value of zero.

- Number of high school credits earned each year: The number of credits earned each year is assigned points as shown below.
- Number of middle school classes passed each year: The number of classes passed each year is assigned points as shown below.

Calculation of the Absolute Performance Rating

Assign points (one through five) for each criterion in the following manner:

Absolute Ratings Criteria for John de la Howe School

Criterion	Points Assigned				
	5	4	3	2	1
PACT	Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Below Basic 2	Below Basic 1
Exit Exams	Passed all three	Passed two	Passed one	Passed zero	
STAR Pretest-Posttest Gains	.81–1.0	.61–.80	.41–.60	.21–.40	.20 or less
High School Credits	7	6	5	4	Less than 4
Middle School Classes Passed	7	6	5	4	Less than 4

Add the points together and divide by the total number of students across all measures to determine index for school.

Calculation of Performance Rating for 2001, 2002, and 2003

(Values are to be reexamined after initial experiences.)

Absolute Performance Level Ratings

Performance Rating	Absolute Performance Index
Excellent	3.4 or higher
Good	3.0–3.3
Average	2.6–2.9
Below Average	2.2–2.5
Unsatisfactory	Below 2.2

The index determines the school’s Absolute Rating. However, beginning in 2004 in schools with an Excellent or Good rating based on the index, the rating will be lowered one level if the school did not meet AYP for *all* students. For example, if a school had an absolute index of 3.5 in 2004 but did not achieve AYP for *all* students, its rating would be

lowered from Excellent to Good. A school in 2004 with an index of 3.1 that did not achieve AYP for *all* students would be awarded an Absolute Rating of Average rather than Good.

Calculation of the Improvement Rating for 2001, 2002, and 2003

(Values are to be reexamined after initial experiences.)

Improvement Rating Levels

Improvement Rating	Improvement Index
Excellent	Greater than 0.4
Good	0.21 to 0.4
Average	-0.2 to 0.2
Below Average	-0.4 to -0.21
Unsatisfactory	Less than -0.4

Schools with Absolute Ratings of Excellent in Two Adjacent Years

If a school is rated Excellent for absolute achievement for both years, the school will receive an Improvement Rating of Good. If the school's improvement index for all students is a positive number (i.e., greater than zero), the school's Improvement Rating will be elevated to Excellent. The performance improvement of the groups will also be reported for these schools. Schools achieving an absolute index of 4.8 or higher for two consecutive years will be awarded an Excellent Improvement Rating.

S.C. GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES

Students to Be Included in the Rating

Students enrolled in the school as of the forty-fifth day of instruction and continuing through spring testing period are to be included.

Criteria for the Rating

- Student participation in state and national arts competitions, auditions, portfolio review, or other by senior year.
- Student recognition in state and national arts competitions, auditions, portfolio review, or other by senior year.
- Advanced Placement (one or more courses taken by senior year).
- Advanced Placement passage rate (exams scored three and above).
- SAT points scored above national mean.
- Eligibility for LIFE Scholarship.
- Seniors awarded scholarships, including LIFE Scholarship.

Calculation of the Index

Absolute Ratings Criteria for S.C. School for the Arts and Humanities

Criterion	Points Assigned				
	5 Excellent	4 Good	3 Average	2 Below Average	1 Unsatisfactory
Participation State/Nationals (.20)	85% or above	75–84%	65–74%	55–64%	54% or less
Recognition State/Nationals (.20)	65% or above	55–64%	45–54%	35–44%	34% or less
AP Course Taken (.12)	75% or above	65–74%	55–64%	45–54%	44% or less
AP Exam Pass Rate 3+ (.12)	85% or above	75–84%	65–74%	55–64%	54% or less
SAT Points Above National Mean (.12)	100 points or more	90–99 points	80–89 points	70–79 points	69 points or less
LIFE Scholarship (.12)	70% or above	60–69%	50–59%	40–49%	39% or less
Scholarship Awards (Include LIFE) (.12)	85% or above	75–84%	65–74%	55–64%	54% or less

Note: Each criterion is weighted as indicated in parentheses.

Assignment of Value to Achievement Index

Ratings for each of the seven standards of achievement described herein will determine the school's overall performance level. The performance achieved for each standard, as compared to the criteria established specifically for each standard, will be awarded points based on the following scale:

Excellent = four points
 Good = three points
 Average = two points
 Below = one point
 Unsatisfactory = zero points

Absolute Performance Rating

Points awarded for the first two standards will be weighted at 20 percent each, and points awarded for the remaining five standards will be weighted at 12 percent each. Calculate the achievement index by summing the weighted points for each criterion listed above and rounding to the nearest tenth of a point. The total score for achievement will earn an overall rating for absolute performance as provided in the following table.

Absolute Performance and Achievement

Performance Level Rating	Achievement Index
Excellent	3.5 or above
Good	3.0–3.4
Average	2.5–2.9
Below Average	2.0–2.4
Unsatisfactory	Below 2.0

The index determines the school's Absolute Rating. However, beginning in 2004 in schools with an Excellent or Good rating based on the index, the rating will be lowered one level if the school did not meet AYP for *all* students. For example, if a school had an absolute index of 3.5 in 2004 but did not achieve AYP for *all* students, its rating would be lowered from Excellent to Good. A school in 2004 with an index of 3.1 that did not achieve AYP for *all* students would be awarded an Absolute Rating of Average rather than Good.

Improvement Performance Rating

The overall improvement performance rating has been determined, since 2002, using the improvement performance index that has been adopted by the state for all high schools statewide and related provisions. High school improved performance is calculated by subtracting the school's Absolute Rating in the prior year from the current year's Absolute Rating. The difference determines the Improvement Rating as shown in the table below.

High School Improvement Performance Rating Criteria

Rating	Improvement Index
Excellent	0.4 or greater
Good	0.3
Average	0.1–0.2
Below Average	0.0
Unsatisfactory	-0.1 or less

Sample Calculation of an Improvement Rating for a High School

Absolute Rating index for school year for which report card is based:	2.4	
Absolute Rating index for the prior school year:	<u>-2.2</u>	
	Difference =	0.2
	Improvement Rating:	Average

Schools with Absolute Ratings of Excellent in Two Subsequent Years

If a school is rated Excellent for absolute achievement for both years, the school will receive an Improvement Rating of Good. If the school's improvement index for all students is a positive number (i.e., greater than zero), the school's Improvement Rating

will be elevated to Excellent. The performance improvement of the groups will also be reported for these schools. Schools achieving an absolute index of 4.8 or higher for two consecutive years will be awarded an Excellent Improvement Rating.

Section III 2005 ACCOUNTABILITY RATING CRITERIA AND STANDARDS

Inclusion of New Assessments in Ratings

New assessments are to be included in school and district Absolute Ratings upon their *third* administration. For example, the PACT science exam for grades three through eight was administered first in 2003. Data on student performance would be included in the November 2005 report card. Growth from the second to third administration would be used in the Improvement Rating.

Process for Determining Criteria for School/District Profile Information

The process for adding profile components to the annual school or district report card should incorporate four stages: (1) initial study and discussion; (2) study of pilot variable; (3) baseline collection; and (4) inclusion on published report card. At least one year must pass between the baseline collection and publication on the report card.

Minimum Size Requirements

Districts and schools with small numbers of students present a special challenge to the accountability system. There are two types of small numbers situations. One is small numbers of students within a group (e.g., few African-American test-takers in reading). The second is small numbers of total students (e.g., few total students tested).

Districts and schools with small numbers of total students present special challenges regarding the stability of the data as well as the confidentiality of student performance. While all districts and campuses are rated initially under standard evaluation, these small districts and schools are subject to special analysis under the circumstances specified below:

- ❑ If standard evaluation indicates that a rating of Excellent or Good is appropriate, then a special analysis is conducted when there are fewer than thirty total students tested in two or more PACT areas.
- ❑ If standard evaluation indicates that a rating of Below Average or Unsatisfactory may be appropriate, then special analysis is conducted only when there are fewer than thirty total students tested that caused the district/school to be considered Below Average or Unsatisfactory.
- ❑ When the standard evaluation results in a rating of Average, no further analysis is performed, even if the district or campus has fewer than thirty students tested in one or more subjects of the PACT (summed across all grades tested).

If special analysis is necessary, only total student performance is examined. Under special analysis, data will be checked for completeness and accuracy and the ratings adjusted if necessary.

Quantitative Parameters for Each Rating Category

Following analyses of the 2000 PACT data for elementary and middle schools, as well as Exit Exam and LIFE Scholarship eligibility and graduation rates for high schools, the parameters for each rating category were established by the Education Oversight Committee. The committee is implementing a phase-in of ratings criteria that increases rigor over time.

Reporting of Subgroup Performance

Student performance will be disaggregated in the following categories: gender, ethnicity, disability, Limited English Proficiency, migrant, and lunch status for each subtest. A disaggregated group will be reported if the group is comprised of at least ten students (summed across grades) for each subject area.

Ratings Conditional on the Performance of Student Subgroups

Schools and districts are accountable for the performance of all students regardless of ethnicity or lunch status. Performance levels for groups disaggregated for ethnicity or lunch status will be a condition in the Improvement Ratings consistent with the provisions of Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, § 59-18-900(C).

Data Reported as “N/A” (School and District Report Cards)

Beginning with the 2002 report cards, “N/A” (“not available”) should be reported only when appropriate. “Data not reported,” “data not collected,” or “insufficient sample” will be reported rather than “N/A,” when appropriate.

Section IV LONGITUDINALLY MATCHED DATA

“Improvement performance” means the rating a school will receive based on longitudinally matched student data comparing current performance to the previous year's for the purpose of determining student academic growth.

“Longitudinally matched student data” means examining the performance of a single student or a group of students by considering their test scores over time.

For grades three through eight, data will be matched longitudinally at the student level. The matching of student data may be accomplished by computer, provided that the matching information is consistent for each student and unique to that student. Current matching programs utilize some combination of name and demographic information.

Section V SCHOOLS SIMILAR IN STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Districts and Schools Similar in Student Characteristics

The statutory authority for this section is from the Code of Laws of South Carolina, Section 59-18-900(C):

In setting the criteria for the academic performance ratings and the performance indicators, the Education Oversight Committee shall report the performance by subgroups of students in the school and schools similar in student characteristics. Criteria must use established guidelines for statistical analysis and build on current data-reporting practices.

Beginning with the 2002 report cards for special schools, report data for comparison from schools similar in student characteristics—schools in which 100 percent of the students have Individualized Education Plans under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act that require either assessment with PACT Alternate Assessment and/or a special school placement as the least restrictive environment.

Building School Groups

As a result of a series of analyses and discussions among educators, a variable that combines information about the percentage of students in a school eligible for Medicaid services and the percentage participating in free or reduced-price lunch services (percent poverty, or PPOV) has been identified as the grouping variable for similar schools. PPOV was identified as the grouping variable based on its strong correlation with student outcome measures (see the *2000–2001 Accountability Manual* for a description of this analysis). The inclusion of Medicaid as an indicator of poverty is important for some schools and pockets of the population where families and individual students are resistant to applying for free or reduced-price meals.

Schools are banded in such a way that each school is at the center of its own band of schools similar in student characteristics (except for schools at the extremes). Schools and school units are categorized as elementary, middle, or high, as previously defined (see pages seven and eight of this manual). Bands are based on the range in percentages. For example, schools are banded in such a way that other schools with PPOV within plus- or minus- five percentage points will be included in the school's band. Using this methodology results in band groupings that vary in the number of schools but that are similar in terms of the percentage of economically disadvantaged students.

In the 2002–2003 school year (most recent data available), PPOV for schools ranged from 5.5 percent to 99.5 percent, with a statewide mean of 63.4 percent. School bands will be recalculated annually. The band width will be determined annually based on the distribution of PPOV.

Section VI REPORT CARD INFORMATION AND PRESENTATION

Decisions on format and design of the report cards were made with the participation of members of the State Board of Education and the State Superintendent of Education. The data listed on each page of the school and district report cards are indicated in appendix D, Table of Specifications by School or District for Report Card Data.

The format and presentation, including issues of readability, are to be addressed in the annual reviews conducted by the Education Oversight Committee.

General Design Issues

The report card is to be printed in a format providing multiple pages of information (an eight-and-one-half-by-eleven-inch sheet, folded).

The report card is to be printed in four colors, providing ease in understanding of the graphics. Use of the colors is specified below. (**Note:** The Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2005 calls for the substitution of black and white shades for colors on the November 2004 report card because of limited funding.)

Note: Federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation may require additional modifications to some aspects of the report cards described in this edition of the *Accountability Manual*.

Section VII SYSTEM SAFEGUARDS

Ratings Impact

The State Department of Education conducts procedures to ensure that student performance on the PACT is measured properly and that accurate data are collected. Data used to rate schools and districts should undergo routine screening before and after the release of accountability ratings. The Education Oversight Committee bears responsibility for the annual review to determine the utilization of the report card and the impact of the accountability system on student, school, and district performance.

Serious Data Problems

If data problems of sufficient magnitude to question the validity of any accountability rating are uncovered, then the SDE should take one or more of the following steps after consulting with the district:

- Attempts will be made to rectify the data problems within the accountability calendar.
- If the problem cannot be resolved by the rating release date, then
 - a delayed rating may be issued; *or*
 - if the problem pertains to assessment data, ratings may be determined using assessment results for "all students tested."

Ratings Changes

The State Department of Education may change ratings of schools and districts after November 1 if problems in the data used to determine the ratings subsequently are discovered. As of June 2004, ratings for fifteen schools and two school districts have been modified as the result of reviews of the data.

Analyses Undertaken Prior to the Release of Ratings

Analyses to examine data reasonableness are undertaken prior to applying accountability system criteria. The State Department of Education and the Division of Accountability should analyze current year accountability information to include: the percent of test-takers at each school; excessive numbers of students having modified or alternate test forms; excessive absences during testing; unusual increases in percentage of students with disabilities; excessive rates of student mobility; and unusual changes in indicator or fact data. Secondly, the testing contractor for the student assessment program should notify the SDE of potential data problems for a school district. The school district is contacted by the State Department of Education about potential data problems for a school district.

The State Department of Education is responsible for the data collection and printing of the annual school and district report cards. This work includes analyses checking for incomplete results or data, inconsistency with assessment results, and other anomalies.

Questions

Inquiries concerning the analyses prior to the release of the ratings should be directed to the State Department of Education.

Analyses Undertaken after the Release of Ratings

The Education Oversight Committee assumes responsibility for annual and longitudinal reviews of the accountability system.

The annual reviews will address the following:

- ❑ the format and readability of the school and district report card;
- ❑ public and professional access to the report card and their use of it;
- ❑ patterns within the data reported;
- ❑ identification of potential data sources to increase understanding of school processes and results;
- ❑ accuracy in data reporting and analyses;
- ❑ study of the performance of subgroups of the student population; and
- ❑ other elements as identified by policymakers.

The longitudinal reviews of the accountability system will address the following:

- ❑ use and misuse of the system;
- ❑ intended and unintended consequences;
- ❑ validity of the ratings methodologies and categorical definitions;
- ❑ impact of the system on student, school, district, and state performance; and
- ❑ other studies as identified by policymakers.

Section VIII LOCAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Public notification of accountability results and utilization in school and district improvement efforts are governed by multiple statutory requirements. These are described in this section. The text of the statutes is provided in appendix A.

Report Card Narrative

The principal, in conjunction with the School Improvement Council, must write an annual narrative of a school's progress in order to further inform parents and the community about the school and its operation. The narrative must cite factors or activities supporting progress and barriers that inhibit progress.

Distribution of the Report Card

The school and district report cards must be furnished to schools no later than November 1 and to parents and the public no later than November 15. School and district report cards are mailed to parents of the school and the school district by the State Department of Education. (**Note:** Report cards will not be mailed to parents in 2005 because of budget cutbacks.) Schools, in conjunction with the school district board, must also advertise the results of their report card in an audited newspaper of general circulation in their geographic area within forty-five days of receipt of the report cards from the State Department of Education. The advertising requirement is waived if the audited newspaper has previously published the entire report card results as a news item.

Development of Local Accountability Systems

Each district board of trustees must establish and annually review a performance-based accountability system, or modify its existing system, to reinforce the state accountability system. Parents, teachers, and principals must be involved in the development, annual review, and revisions of the accountability system established by the district.

This accountability system must be developed in accordance with regulations of the State Board of Education.

Annual school improvement reports must be provided to parents on or by February 1.

Intervention and Assistance

When a school or district receives a rating of Below Average or Unsatisfactory, the school must undertake the actions outlined in the Code of Laws of South Carolina, Sections 59-18-1500 through 1590. These statutes establish the basis for improvement, assistance, and intervention and should be developed with the support of the State Department of Education.

Opportunities for Data Correction

Each data source for information published on the annual school or district report card has a prescribed process and calendar for collecting the information. The accuracy of ratings, recognitions, report cards, and other reports is in large measure dependent on the accuracy of the information submitted. Districts are responsible for submitting all data with the exception of testing results that are transmitted by the testing companies. The opportunities for correction of data are specified by the State Department of Education.

Section IX PALMETTO GOLD AND SILVER AWARDS CRITERIA

Statutory Authority

The statutory authority for the Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards is from the Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976 (Supp. 2002):

§ 59-18-1100. The State Board of Education, working with the division and the Department of Education, must establish the Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards Program to recognize and reward schools for academic achievement. Awards will be established for schools attaining high levels of absolute performance and for schools attaining high rates of improvement. The award program must be based upon improved performance on longitudinally matched student data and may include such additional criteria as:

- (1) student attendance;
- (2) teacher attendance;
- (3) student dropout rates; and
- (4) any other factors promoting or maintaining high levels of achievement and performance.

Schools shall be rewarded according to specific criteria established by the division. In defining eligibility for a reward for high levels of performance, student performance should exceed expected levels of improvement. The State Board of Education shall promulgate regulations to ensure districts of the State utilize these funds to improve or maintain exceptional performance according to their schools' plans established in Section 59-139-10. Funds may be utilized for professional development support.

Special schools for the academically talented are not eligible to receive an award pursuant to the provision of this section unless they have demonstrated improvement and high absolute achievement for three years immediately preceding.

Overview

The Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards Program was established by the Education Accountability Act of 1998. As an important part of the education accountability system in South Carolina, the awards program is designed to recognize and reward "schools for attaining high levels of absolute performance and schools for attaining high rates of improvement."

The Division of Accountability is responsible for developing criteria for the Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards Program. As with other efforts, an advisory group of South Carolina educators was formed to recommend criteria and statistical procedures. The criteria and procedures utilized for selecting schools to receive the Gold and Silver Awards are

based on the *Criteria for School and District Ratings* as approved by the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee on December 6, 2000.

The criteria and procedures established for the Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards Program reflect a fundamental belief that all schools, regardless of their socioeconomic status and geographic location, can improve toward high academic standards and excellence and that all children can learn at high levels. Schools will be recognized not only for high levels of student academic achievement but also for efforts that result in exemplary improvement.

In developing the criteria and procedures, the following essential elements were taken into consideration: fairness and equity, raising the performance levels of historically underachieving groups, and inclusiveness of as many schools as possible.

Criteria and Procedures

Eligibility

All schools and career and technology centers with student learning achievement outcome data will be eligible for participation in the Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards Program. No application is required.

There are no additional requirements for percentage of students tested and the inclusion of special education students, since the methodology for calculating the Absolute and Improvement Ratings addresses these issues.

According to the Education Accountability Act of 1998, Section 59-18-1100, "special schools for the academically talented are not eligible to receive an award pursuant to the provision of this section unless they have demonstrated improvement and high absolute achievement for three years immediately preceding."

Performance of Subgroups of Students and Gap Reduction

The criteria address improvement of performance for historically underachieving subgroups. There are three student subgroups to be considered:

- ❑ minority students,
- ❑ free/reduced-price meal students, and
- ❑ students with non-speech disabilities.

Note: Two additional groups were added for the 2002–2003 awards determination: Limited English Proficient (LEP) students and migrant students.

Minority students will be defined as African-American, Hispanic, or Native American students. These students will be combined for purposes of analysis. There must be at least thirty students in each subgroup in a school for the group to be considered. The method for considering the performance of subgroup improvement defined in the *Criteria for School and District Ratings* will be used as gap-reduction criteria. If the improvement index for each historically underachieving subgroup in the school exceeds the state two-year average improvement index by at least one standard deviation, the school's Improvement Rating will be increased by one level.

Criteria for Selecting Schools for Awards: Grades Three through Eight, Career and Technology Centers, and Special Schools

Three procedures will be utilized to select schools that meet the criteria for attaining high levels of absolute performance and high rates of improvement. Schools that are selected through any of the three procedures will be recognized through the Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards Program.

Primary Selection Procedure: Based on Absolute Performance and Improvement Ratings

The procedure is a combination of the absolute performance and Improvement Ratings as prescribed in the *Criteria for School and District Ratings*. The Improvement Rating used for selection of award-recipient schools includes adjustment for gap reduction.

To qualify for a Gold or Silver Award, a school’s absolute performance rating must be above Unsatisfactory. Schools will receive a Gold or a Silver Award when one of the following conditions occurs:

- ❑ Schools with an Excellent rating in absolute performance will receive a Gold Award for high level of academic performance as long as their Improvement Rating is equal to or above Average.
- ❑ Schools with an Excellent rating in improvement will receive a Gold Award for high levels of improvement as long as their absolute performance rating is above Unsatisfactory.
- ❑ Schools with a Good rating in improvement will receive a Silver Award for good improvement results as long as their absolute performance rating is above Unsatisfactory.

The following table shows the selection procedure:

Gold and Silver Awards Criteria

Absolute Performance Rating	Improvement Rating	Award Designation
Excellent	Excellent	Gold
Excellent	Good	Gold
Excellent	Average	Gold
Good	Excellent	Gold
Good	Good	Silver
Average	Excellent	Gold
Average	Good	Silver
Below Average	Excellent	Gold
Below Average	Good	Silver

Second Selection Procedure: Based on High Improvement Ranking by School Type

In order to ensure that each of the three school types (elementary, middle, and secondary) are approximately evenly recognized through the Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards Program, the following three steps will be performed each year:

- ❑ Rank order the improvement index for each school by school type.
- ❑ Select the schools with an improvement index percentile rank of eighty-fifth or higher, provided the improvement index is at least 0.15.
- ❑ Exclude schools that have an Unsatisfactory rating for absolute performance.

A school would be selected to receive a Silver Award if its percentile rank for its improvement index is eighty-fifth or higher among the schools of the same type housing similar grades and its absolute performance rating is above Unsatisfactory.

Third Selection Procedure: Based on Steady Growth over Three or More Consecutive Years

A school may qualify for a Silver Award if the school's absolute performance rating is above Unsatisfactory for the most recent year, and

- ❑ its improvement index is 0.20 or greater for two consecutive years, or
- ❑ its improvement index is 0.15 or greater for three consecutive years.

Schools Housing Kindergarten through Grade Two

Schools housing kindergarten through grade two will not qualify for a Palmetto Gold or Silver Award for lack of student learning achievement outcome data.

Wil Lou Gray Special School

The school may qualify for an award on its absolute performance and Improvement Ratings as defined in *Criteria for School and District Ratings*. However, the advisory group recommends that the committee reconvene to examine the criteria and data available again after two years.

Career and Technology Centers

Career and technology centers may qualify for a Gold or Silver Award based on the criteria developed for generating the center report cards. These three criteria are

- ❑ mastering for competencies or certification requirements,
- ❑ graduation rate, and
- ❑ placement rate.

As described in the *Criteria for School and District Ratings*, the mastery criterion will be weighted at twice the value of the other criteria. The proportion of students enrolling is not considered as part of the criteria.

Special Schools for the Academically Talented

According to the Education Accountability Act of 1998, Section 59-18-1100, "special schools for the academically talented are not eligible to receive an award pursuant to the provision of this section unless they have demonstrated improvement and high absolute achievement for three years immediately preceding."

Definition of Special Schools for the Academically Talented (Magnet Schools)

A special school for the academically talented is a district-operated school that has at least 50 percent of its enrollment of students based upon predicted or realized high achievement from across multiple school attendance zones.

Criteria for Awards for Special Schools for the Academically Talented

Special schools for the academically talented will qualify to receive a Gold Award when one of the following conditions occurs:

- ❑ Beginning with the school year 1999–2000, schools with an Excellent rating in absolute performance for three consecutive years will receive a Gold Award for attaining high levels of academic performance as long as their Improvement Rating is equal to or above Average for the most recent year.
- ❑ Schools with an Excellent rating in absolute performance for three consecutive years and an absolute performance index value of 4.5 for the most recent year will receive a Gold Award for attaining high levels of achievement.

Criteria for Selecting Schools for Awards: High Schools

Eligibility

Schools receiving a high school report card, in accordance with procedures outlined in the *Accountability Manual*, with student learning achievement outcome data will be eligible for participation in the Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards Program. Special schools for the academically talented are eligible in accordance with the requirements outlined in Section 59-18-1100 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina. These requirements state that "special schools for the academically talented are not eligible to receive an award pursuant to the provisions of this section unless they have demonstrated improvement and high absolute achievement for three years immediately preceding." No application is required.

Award Criteria

Two procedures are employed to select schools that meet the criteria for attaining high levels of absolute performance and high rates of improvement. Schools that are selected through one of the two procedures are recognized through the Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards Program.

Selection Procedure Based on Absolute Performance and Improvement Ratings

This procedure is a combination of the absolute performance and Improvement Ratings as prescribed in the *Criteria for School and District Ratings*. The Improvement Rating used for selection of award-recipient schools includes an adjustment for gap reduction. To qualify for a Gold or Silver Award, a school’s absolute performance rating must be above Unsatisfactory. Schools will receive a Gold or Silver Award when one of the following three conditions occurs:

- ❑ A school with an Excellent rating in absolute performance will receive a Gold Award for high levels of academic performance as long as its Improvement Rating is equal to or above Average.
- ❑ A school with an Excellent rating in improvement will receive a Gold Award for high levels of improvement as long as its absolute performance rating is above Unsatisfactory.
- ❑ A school with a Good rating in improvement will receive a Silver Award for good improvement results as long as its absolute performance rating is above Unsatisfactory.

The following table outlines the ratings blend for the awards:

Gold and Silver Awards Criteria

Absolute Performance Rating	Improvement Rating	Award Designation
Excellent	Excellent	Gold
Excellent	Good	Gold
Excellent	Average	Gold
Good	Excellent	Gold
Good	Good	Silver
Average	Excellent	Gold
Average	Good	Silver
Below Average	Excellent	Gold
Below Average	Good	Silver

Selection Procedure Based on Steady Growth over at Least Two Consecutive Years

This procedure is based upon steady growth demonstrated over a minimum of two consecutive years. A school may qualify for a Silver Award if the school’s absolute performance rating is above Unsatisfactory for the most recent year, and

- ❑ its improvement index is 0.20 or greater for two consecutive years, or
- ❑ its improvement index is 0.10 or greater for three consecutive years.

The 2000–2001 school year is set as the base year.

Procedure for Special High Schools for the Academically Talented

A special school for the academically talented is a district-operated school that has at least 50 percent of its enrollment of students based upon predicted or realized high achievement from across multiple school attendance zones.

Special schools for academically talented will qualify to receive a Gold Award when one of the following two conditions occurs:

- ❑ Beginning with the 2000–2001 school year, a school with an Excellent rating in absolute performance for three consecutive years will receive a Gold Award for attaining high levels of academic performance.
- ❑ A school with a Good or Excellent rating in absolute performance for three consecutive years and an absolute performance index value of 4.5 for the most recent year will receive a Gold Award for attaining high levels of achievement.

Allocation of Funds and Non-Achievement Criteria

School financial awards will be calculated on a per pupil basis in accordance with the particular criteria met. A school qualifying for a financial award will receive 80 percent of the per pupil allocation, plus up to an additional 20 percent based on the following criteria:

- ❑ student attendance, criterion set at a minimum of 97 percent;
- ❑ teacher attendance, criterion set at a minimum of 97 percent; and
- ❑ dropout rate, grades nine through twelve, criterion set at a maximum of 2.5 percent.

Schools qualifying for a Silver Award will receive two-thirds of the per-pupil allocation of schools receiving a Gold Award.

Section X PREVIEW OF THE 2005–2006 ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

System Evolution

From its inception, the accountability system was designed to evolve over time to encourage higher levels of student performance, incorporate additional information, meet statutory requirements as quickly as possible, and improve the information with which accountability decisions are made.

In order to provide schools and districts with adequate time to prepare for the rigor of the standards, this section presents a preview of how the accountability system is expected to evolve over the next few years.

Assumptions for Change

Additions and/or modifications of the state assessment system may require modifications of the ratings calculations. For example, in 2004, first-attempt HSAP performance was added as a criterion for the high school ratings. Assessments in science and social studies for students in grades three through eight, the revised exit examination, and end-of--course tests at the high school level will be added to the ratings calculations in future years.

What Is Expected to Stay the Same through the 2005 Report Card

- ❑ The ratings categories
- ❑ The use of disaggregated student groups
- ❑ PACT results for accountability purposes based upon the forty-fifth day membership
- ❑ Provisions for small numbers of students
- ❑ Statutory recognitions based on the performance results

Planning for the Future

The outline in this section presents data elements that may be added over the next several years. These include the following:

- ❑ School technology indicators (such as ratio of instructional computers to students in school) for reporting will be developed and piloted.
- ❑ Measures of library resources (such as average age of media collection) will be developed and piloted.
- ❑ Foreign language: The South Carolina Foreign Language Teachers Association has requested a measure of program quality for high school foreign language programs.
- ❑ Science and social studies assessments were added to the PACT program for grades three through eight in 2003. Results from these assessments will be included in the calculation of school and district ratings in 2005.

- End-of-course assessments are to be added for selected high school credit courses as they are developed by the State Department of Education. The results from end-of-course assessments will be used in the calculation of school ratings when examinations from at least four courses are available. The Algebra I end-of-course test was approved for use in 2003; assessments in English I, Biology I, and Physical Science were approved for use beginning in 2004. Beginning with the 2005–2006 school year, data from the end-of-course assessments in Algebra I, English I, Biology I, and Physical Science will be used as one of the criteria for determining high school ratings.
- Information on the quality of the classroom environments in schools enrolling students in only grade two or below will be added in 2005.
- Other changes in response to changes in the statutory provisions may include changes called for in recently enacted federal legislation (No Child Left Behind), such as the collection of information about high-quality teachers.

Section XI ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Calendar for 2004–2005

2005

March	2005 Exit Examination administration; review of <i>Accountability Manual</i> (and any proposed changes)
April/May	2005 PACT administration
Summer	Review of 2005 PACT performance, Exit Exam administration results
	District superintendents submit questions regarding school or district data calculations
First day of school year	Request for program unit to receive report card
November 1	SDE distribution of school and district report cards to schools and districts
November 15	Distribution of school and district report cards to parents and community members
Within 45 days	Publication of notice about report cards in area newspapers

Persons to Call with Questions

Data definitions:	Dr. David Burnett, SDE	734-8215
	David Potter, EOC	734-6148
Data collections:	Dr. David Burnett, SDE	734-8215
	David Potter, EOC	734-6148
Rating methodologies:	David Potter, EOC	734-6148
Similar schools:	David Potter, EOC	734-6148
Assessments:	Dr. Teri Siskind, SDE	734-8298
Publication of report card:	Dr. Sandra Lindsay, SDE	734-8396
General concerns:	Dr. Jo Anne Anderson, EOC	734-6148
	Dr. Sandra Lindsay, SDE	734-8396

Appendixes

Appendix A:	The Education Accountability Act of 1998 (as Amended in 2002)
Appendix B:	Analyses of 2002 and 2003 Report Card Data and Changes Recommended
Appendix C:	Definitions and Formulas for School or District Profile Information
Appendix D:	Table of Specifications by School or District for Report Card Data

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

The Education Accountability Act of 1998 (as Amended in 2002) Title 59 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976

The language shown in **bold type** refers to requirements for the annual school and district report cards, use of the ratings, and evaluation of public education programs, including the accountability system.

AN ACT TO AMEND CHAPTER 18 OF TITLE 59, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO QUALITY CONTROLS AND PRODUCTIVITY REWARDS, SO AS TO ENACT THE SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 1998 TO ESTABLISH STATEWIDE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS OF THOSE STANDARDS FOR SCHOOLS, TO PROVIDE ANNUAL REPORT CARDS FOR SCHOOLS WITH A PERFORMANCE INDICATOR SYSTEM, TO REQUIRE DISTRICTS TO ESTABLISH LOCAL ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS, TO PROVIDE SPECIFIED RESOURCES TO IMPROVE STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND TEACHER AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND ASSISTANCE, AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION AND OVERSIGHT OF THE ABOVE PROVISIONS; TO ADD SECTION 59-24-5 SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS IN REGARD TO SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND THEIR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT; TO AMEND SECTIONS 59-24-10, 59-24-30, BOTH AS AMENDED, AND 59-24-50, RELATING TO ASSESSMENT OF AND DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, SO AS TO FURTHER PROVIDE FOR SUCH ASSESSMENTS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANS; TO ADD SECTION 59-24-80 SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR A FORMAL INDUCTION PROGRAM FOR FIRST-YEAR PRINCIPALS; TO ADD SECTION 59-24-15 SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT CERTIFIED EDUCATION PERSONNEL WHO ARE EMPLOYED AS ADMINISTRATORS ON AN ANNUAL OR MULTI-YEAR CONTRACT WILL RETAIN THEIR RIGHTS AS A TEACHER UNDER APPLICABLE EMPLOYMENT, DISMISSAL, AND OTHER PROCEDURES BUT NO SUCH RIGHTS ARE GRANTED TO THE POSITION OR SALARY OF ADMINISTRATOR, AND TO PROVIDE THAT ANY SUCH ADMINISTRATOR WHO PRESENTLY IS UNDER A CONTRACT GRANTING SUCH RIGHTS SHALL RETAIN THAT STATUS UNTIL THE EXPIRATION OF THAT CONTRACT; TO AMEND SECTION 59-6-10, RELATING TO THE SELECT COMMITTEE TO OVERSEE THE EIA, SO AS TO CHANGE THE NAME OF THE COMMITTEE TO THE EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE, TO REVISE THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE AND THE MANNER IN WHICH ITS MEMBERS ARE SELECTED, AND TO REVISE ITS DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS INCLUDING A REQUIREMENT THAT IT REVIEW AND MONITOR THE EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 1998; TO ADD SECTIONS 59-6-100, 59-6-110, AND 59-6-120 SO AS TO ESTABLISH AN ACCOUNTABILITY DIVISION WITHIN THE EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE AND PROVIDE FOR ITS DUTIES, FUNCTIONS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES, TO PROVIDE THAT THE EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE SHALL APPOINT A TASK FORCE TO REVIEW CURRENT STATE PROGRAMS AND POLICIES FOR PARENT PARTICIPATION IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION; TO AMEND SECTION 59-29-10, RELATING TO REQUIRED SUBJECTS OF INSTRUCTION, SO AS TO REQUIRE INSTRUCTION IN PHONICS; TO ADD SECTION 59-63-65 SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT SCHOOL DISTRICTS WHICH CHOOSE TO REDUCE CLASS SIZE IN GRADES ONE THROUGH THREE TO A PUPIL-TEACHER RATIO OF FIFTEEN TO ONE SHALL BE ELIGIBLE FOR CERTAIN STATE FUNDING, AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THESE PROVISIONS INCLUDING A PROVISION ALLOWING PORTABLE OR TEMPORARY FACILITIES TO BE USED FROM FUNDING DERIVED FROM THE CHILDREN'S EDUCATION ENDOWMENT FUND, TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO PROVIDE A COPY OF THIS ACT TO EVERY DISTRICT SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT AND SCHOOL PRINCIPAL IN THIS STATE; TO REPEAL SECTION 59-6-12 RELATING TO CERTAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE; AND TO REPEAL SECTIONS

59-18-10, 59-18-11, 59-18-15, 59-18-20, 59-18-25, 59-18-30, AND 59-18-31 RELATING TO SCHOOL QUALITY CONTROLS AND PRODUCTIVITY.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

Citation

SECTION 1. This act will be known and may be cited as the "South Carolina Education Accountability Act of 1998."

Education Accountability Act of 1998

SECTION 2. Chapter 18, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

"CHAPTER 18
Education Accountability Act of 1998
Article 1
General Provisions

Section 59-18-100. The General Assembly finds that South Carolinians have a commitment to public education and a conviction that high expectations for all students are vital components for improving academic achievement. It is the purpose of the General Assembly in this chapter to establish a performance based accountability system for public education which focuses on improving teaching and learning so that students are equipped with a strong academic foundation. Accountability, as defined by this chapter, means acceptance of the responsibility for improving student performance and taking actions to improve classroom practice and school performance by the Governor, the General Assembly, the State Department of Education, colleges and universities, local school boards, administrators, teachers, parents, students, and the community.

Section 59-18-110. The system is to:

(1) use academic achievement standards to push schools and students toward higher performance by aligning the state assessment to those standards and linking policies and criteria for performance standards, accreditation, reporting, school rewards, and targeted assistance;

(2) provide an annual report card with a performance indicator system that is logical, reasonable, fair, challenging, and technically defensible which furnishes clear and specific information about school and district academic performance and other performance to parents and the public;

(3) require all districts to establish local accountability systems to stimulate quality teaching and learning practices and target assistance to low performing schools;

(4) provide resources to strengthen the process of teaching and learning in the classroom to improve student performance and reduce gaps in performance;

(5) support professional development as integral to improvement and to the actual work of teachers and school staff; and

(6) expand the ability to evaluate the system and to conduct in-depth studies on implementation, efficiency, and the effectiveness of academic improvement efforts.

Section 59-18-120. As used in this chapter:

(1) 'Oversight Committee' means the Education Oversight Committee established in Section 59-6-10.

(2) 'Standards based assessment' means an assessment where an individual's performance is compared to specific performance standards and not to the performance of other students.

(3) 'Disaggregated data' means data broken out for specific groups within the total student population, such as by race, gender, and family income level.

(4) 'Longitudinally matched student data' means examining the performance of a single student or a group of students by considering their test scores over time.

(5) 'Norm-referenced assessment' means assessments designed to compare student performance to a nationally representative sample of similar students known as the norm group.

(6) 'Academic achievement standards' means statements of expectations for student learning.

(7) 'Department' means the State Department of Education.

(8) 'Absolute performance' means the rating a school will receive based on the percentage of students meeting standard on the state's standards based assessment.

(9) 'Improvement performance' means the rating a school will receive based on longitudinally matched student data comparing current performance to the previous year's for the purpose of determining student academic growth.

(10) 'Objective and reliable statewide assessment' means assessments which yield consistent results and which measure the cognitive knowledge and skills specified in the state-approved academic standards and does not include questions relative to personal opinions, feelings, or attitudes and is not biased with regard to race, gender, or socioeconomic status. It is not intended that the assessments be limited to true/false or multiple choice questions.

(11) 'Division of Accountability' means the special unit within the oversight committee established in Section 59-6-100.

Article 3

Academic Standards and Assessments

Section 59-18-300. The State Board of Education is directed to adopt grade specific performance-oriented educational standards in the core academic areas of mathematics, English/language arts, social studies (history, government, economics, and geography),

and science for kindergarten through twelfth grade and for grades nine through twelve adopt specific academic standards for benchmark courses in mathematics, English/language arts, social studies, and science. The standards are to promote the goals of providing every student with the competencies to:

- (1) read, view, and listen to complex information in the English language;
- (2) write and speak effectively in the English language;
- (3) solve problems by applying mathematics;
- (4) conduct research and communicate findings;
- (5) understand and apply scientific concepts;
- (6) obtain a working knowledge of world, United States, and South Carolina history, government, economics, and geography; and
- (7) use information to make decisions.

The standards must be reflective of the highest level of academic skills with the rigor necessary to improve the curriculum and instruction in South Carolina's schools so that students are encouraged to learn at unprecedented levels and must be reflective of the highest level of academic skills at each grade level.

Section 59-18-310. (A) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the State Board of Education, through the Department of Education, is required to develop or adopt a statewide assessment program to measure student performance on state standards and:

- (1) identify areas in which students need additional support;**
- (2) indicate the academic achievement for schools, districts, and the State; and**
- (3) satisfy federal reporting requirements.**

All assessments required to be developed or adopted under the provisions of this section or chapter must be objective and reliable.

(B) The statewide assessment program in the four academic areas shall include grades three through eight, an exit examination which is to be first administered in grade ten, and end of course tests for gateway courses in English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies for grades nine through twelve.

(C) While assessment is called for in the specific areas mentioned above, this should not be construed as lessening the importance of foreign languages, visual and performing arts, health, physical education, and career/occupational programs.

Section 59-18-320. (A) After the first statewide field test of the assessment program in each of the four academic areas, and after the field tests of the end of course

assessments of benchmark courses, the Education Oversight Committee, established in Section 59-6-10, will review the state assessment program and the course assessments for alignment with the state standards, level of difficulty and validity, and for the ability to differentiate levels of achievement, and will make recommendations for needed changes, if any. The review will be provided to the State Board of Education, the State Department of Education, the Governor, the Senate Education Committee, and the House Education and Public Works Committee as soon as feasible after the field tests. The Department of Education will then report to the Education Oversight Committee no later than one month after receiving the reports on the changes made to the assessments to comply with the recommendations.

(B) After review and approval by the Education Oversight Committee, the standards based assessment of mathematics, English/language arts, social studies, and science will be administered to all public school students to include those students as required by the 1997 reauthorization of the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and by Title 1 at the end of grades three through eight. The exit examination in these four academic areas will be administered for the first time at the end of grade ten. For students with documented disabilities, the assessments developed by the Department of Education shall include the appropriate modifications and accommodations with necessary supplemental devices as outlined in a student's Individualized Education Program and as stated in the Administrative Guidelines and Procedures for Testing Students with Documented Disabilities.

(C) After review and approval by the Education Oversight Committee, the end of course assessments of benchmark courses will be administered to all public school students as they complete each benchmark course.

(D) Any new standards and assessments required to be developed and adopted by the State Board of Education, through the Department of Education, must be developed and adopted upon the advice and consent of the Education Oversight Committee.

Section 59-18-330. The State Board of Education, through the State Department of Education, shall develop, select, or adapt a first grade readiness test which is linked to the adopted grade one academic standards and a second grade readiness test which is linked to the adopted grade two academic standards. The first administration of this test must occur no later than the 2000–2001 school year. **The purpose of the tests is to measure individual student readiness, and they are not to be used as an accountability measure at the state level. However, the grade two readiness test will serve as the baseline for grade three assessment.**

Section 59-18-340. The State Board of Education, following the recommendations of the Accountability Division of the Education Oversight Committee, is directed to select a norm referenced test to obtain an indication of student and school performance relative to national performance levels. The test must be administered annually to a statistically valid random sample of students in at least three grades from grades three through eleven. The Oversight Committee shall determine an appropriate sampling plan for the norm referenced test that must be administered beginning in the 1998–1999 school year.

Section 59-18-350. High schools shall offer state-funded PSAT or PLAN tests to each tenth grade student in order to assess and identify curricular areas that need to be strengthened and re-enforced. Schools and districts shall use these assessments as diagnostic tools to provide academic assistance to students whose scores reflect the need for such assistance. Schools and districts shall use these assessments to provide guidance and direction for parents and students as they plan for postsecondary experiences.

Section 59-18-360. The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Education Oversight Committee, shall provide for a cyclical review by academic area of the state standards and assessments to ensure that the standards and assessments are maintaining high expectations for learning and teaching. All academic areas must be initially reviewed by the year 2005. At a minimum, each academic area should be reviewed and updated every four years. After each academic area is reviewed, a report on the recommended revisions must be presented to the Education Oversight Committee for its consideration. After approval by the Education Oversight Committee, the recommendations may be implemented. As a part of the review, a task force of parents, business and industry persons, community leaders, and educators, to include special education teachers, must examine the standards and assessment system to determine rigor and relevancy.

Section 59-18-370. The Department of Education is directed to provide assessment results annually on individual students and schools in a manner and format that is easily understood by parents and the public. In addition, the school assessment results must be presented in a format easily understood by the faculty and in a manner that is useful for curriculum review and instructional improvement. The department is to provide longitudinally matched student data from the standards based assessments and include information on the performance of subgroups of students within the school. The department must work with the Division of Accountability in developing the formats of the assessment results. Schools and districts shall be responsible for disseminating this information to parents.

Article 5
Academic Plans for Students

Section 59-18-500. (A) Beginning in 1998–99 and annually thereafter, at the beginning of each school year, the school must notify the parents of the need for a conference for each student in grades three through eight who lacks the skills to perform at his current grade level based on assessment results, school work, or teacher judgment. At the conference, the student, parent, and appropriate school personnel will discuss the steps needed to ensure student success at the next grade level. An academic plan will be developed to outline additional services the school and district will provide and the actions the student and the parents will undertake to further student success.

(B) The participants in the conference will sign off on the academic plan, including any requirement for summer school attendance. Should a parent, after attempts by the school to schedule the conference at their convenience, not attend the conference, the school will appoint a school mentor, either a teacher or adult volunteer, to work with the student and advocate for services. A copy of the academic plan will be sent to the parents by certified mail.

(C) At the end of the school year, the student's performance will be reviewed by appropriate school personnel. If the student's work has not been at grade level or if the terms of the academic plan have not been met, the student may be retained or he may be required to attend summer school for promotion. If there is a compelling reason why the student should not be required to attend summer school or be retained, the parent or student may appeal to a district review panel.

(D) At the end of summer school, a district panel will review the student's progress and report to the parents whether the student's academic progress indicates readiness to achieve grade level standards for the next grade. If the student is not at grade level or the student's assessment results show standards are not met, the student will be placed on academic probation. A conference of the student, parents, and appropriate school personnel will revise the academic plan to address academic difficulties. At the conference it must be stipulated that academic probation means if either school work is not up to grade level or if assessment results again show standards are not met, the student will be retained. The district's appeals process remains in effect.

(E) Each district board of trustees will establish policies on academic conferences, individual student academic plans, and district level reviews. Information on these policies must be given to every student and parent. Each district is to monitor the implementation of academic plans as a part of the local accountability plan. Districts are to use Act 135 of 1993 academic assistance funds to carry out academic plans, including required summer school attendance. Districts' policies regarding retention of students in grades one and two remain in effect.

(F) The State Board of Education, working with the Oversight Committee, will establish guidelines until regulations are promulgated to carry out this section. **The State Board of Education, working with the Accountability Division, will promulgate regulations requiring the reporting of the number of students retained at each grade level, the number of students on probation, number of students retained after being on probation, and number of students removed from probation. This data will be used as a performance indicator for accountability.**

Article 7
Materials and Accreditation

Section 59-18-700. The criteria governing the adoption of instructional materials shall be revised by the State Board of Education to require that the content of such materials reflect the substance and level of performance outlined in the grade specific educational standards adopted by the state board.

Section 59-18-710. By November, 2000, the State Board of Education, working with the Department of Education and recommendations from the Accountability Division, must promulgate regulations outlining the criteria for the state's accreditation system which must include student academic performance.

Article 9
Reporting

Section 59-18-900. (A) The Education Oversight Committee, working with the State Board of Education, is directed to establish an annual report card and its format to report on the performance for the individual elementary, middle, high schools, and school districts of the State. The school's ratings on academic performance must be emphasized and an explanation of their significance for the school and the district must also be reported. The annual report card must serve at least four purposes:

- (1) inform parents and the public about the school's performance;**
- (2) assist in addressing the strengths and weaknesses within a particular school;**
- (3) recognize schools with high performance; and**
- (4) evaluate and focus resources on schools with low performance.**

(B) The Oversight Committee shall determine the criteria for and establish five academic performance ratings of excellent, good, average, below average, and unsatisfactory. Schools and districts shall receive a rating for absolute and improvement performance. Only the scores of students enrolled in the school at the time of the forty-five-day enrollment count shall be used to determine the absolute and improvement ratings. The Oversight Committee shall establish student performance indicators which will be those considered to be useful for assessing a school's overall performance and appropriate for the grade levels within the school.

(C) In setting the criteria for the academic performance ratings and the performance indicators, the Education Oversight Committee shall report the performance by subgroups of students in the school and schools similar in student characteristics. Criteria must use established guidelines for statistical analysis and build on current data-reporting practices.

(D) The report card must include a comprehensive set of performance indicators with information on comparisons, trends, needs, and performance over time

which is helpful to parents and the public in evaluating the school. Special efforts are to be made to ensure that the information contained in the report cards is provided in an easily understood manner and a reader friendly format. This information should also provide a context for the performance of the school. Where appropriate, the data should yield disaggregated results to schools and districts in planning for improvement. The report card should include information in such areas as programs and curriculum, school leadership, community and parent support, faculty qualifications, evaluations of the school by parents, teachers, and students. In addition, the report card must contain other criteria including, but not limited to, information on promotion and retention ratios, disciplinary climate, dropout ratios, student and teacher ratios, and attendance data.

(E) The principal, in conjunction with the School Improvement Council established in Section 59-20-60, must write an annual narrative of a school's progress in order to further inform parents and the community about the school and its operation. The narrative must cite factors or activities supporting progress and barriers which inhibit progress. The school's report card must be furnished to parents and the public no later than November fifteenth.

Section 59-18-910. No later than June 1, 1999, the Accountability Division must report on the development of the performance indicators criteria and the report card to the Education Oversight Committee and the State Board of Education. A second report, to include uniform collection procedures for academic standards and performance indicators, is due by September 1, 1999. No later than September, 1999, the State Department of Education shall report to the Oversight Committee the determination of the levels of difficulty for the assessments by grade and academic area. By March 1, 2000, a report on the development of baseline data for the schools is due from the division.

Section 59-18-920. Charter schools established pursuant to Chapter 40, Title 59 will receive a performance rating and must issue a report card to parents and the public containing the rating and explaining its significance and providing other information similar to that required of other schools in this section. Alternative schools are included in the requirements of this chapter; however, the purpose of such schools must be taken into consideration in determining their performance rating. The Education Oversight Committee, working with the State Board of Education and the School to Work Advisory Council, will develop a report card for vocational schools.

Section 59-18-930. Beginning in 2001 and annually thereafter the State Department of Education must issue report cards to all schools and districts of the State no later than November first. The report card must be mailed to all parents of the school and the school district. The school, in conjunction with the district board, must also inform the community of the school's report card by advertising the results in at least one South Carolina daily newspaper of general circulation in the area. This notice must be published within ninety days of receipt of the report cards issued by the State Department of Education and must be a minimum of two columns by ten inches (four and one-half by ten inches) with at least a twenty-four point bold headline.

Article 11
Awarding Performance

Section 59-18-1100. The State Board of Education, working with the division and the Department of Education, must establish the Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards Program to recognize and reward schools for academic achievement. Awards will be established for schools attaining high levels of absolute performance and for schools attaining high rates of improvement. The award program must base improved performance on longitudinally matched student data and may include such additional criteria as:

- (1) student attendance;
- (2) teacher attendance;
- (3) student dropout rates; and
- (4) any other factors promoting or maintaining high levels of achievement and performance.

Schools shall be rewarded according to specific criteria established by the division. In defining eligibility for a reward for high levels of performance, student performance should exceed expected levels of improvement. The State Board of Education shall promulgate regulations to ensure districts of the State utilize these funds to improve or maintain exceptional performance according to their school's plans established in Section 59-139-10. Funds may be utilized for professional development support.

Special schools for the academically talented are not eligible to receive an award pursuant to the provisions of this section unless they have demonstrated improvement and high absolute achievement for three years immediately preceding.

Section 59-18-1110. (A) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a school is given the flexibility of receiving exemptions from those regulations and statutory provisions governing the defined program provided that, during a three-year period, the following criteria are satisfied:

- (1) the school has twice been a recipient of a Palmetto Gold or Silver Award, pursuant to Section 59-18-1100;**
- (2) the school has met annual improvement standards for subgroups of students in reading and mathematics; and**
- (3) the school has exhibited no recurring accreditation deficiencies.**

(B) Schools receiving flexibility status are released from those regulations and statutory provisions referred to above including, but not limited to, regulations and statutory provisions on class scheduling, class structure, and staffing. **The State Board of Education in consultation with the Education Oversight Committee must promulgate regulations and develop guidelines for providing this flexibility by December 1, 2001.**

(C) To continue to receive flexibility pursuant to this section, a school must annually exhibit school improvement at or above the state average as computed in the school

recognition program pursuant to Section 59-18-1100 and must meet the gains required for subgroups of students in reading and mathematics. A school which does not requalify for flexibility status due to extenuating circumstances may apply to the State Board of Education for an extension of this status for one year.

(D) In the event that a school is removed from flexibility status, the school is not subject to regulations and statutory provisions exempted under this section until the beginning of the school year following notification of the change in status by the State Department of Education. Subsequent monitoring by the State Department of Education in a school that is removed from flexibility status shall not include a review of program records exempted under this section for the period that the school has received flexibility status or for the school year during which the school was notified of its removal from flexibility status.

Section 59-18-1120. (A) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a school designated as unsatisfactory while in such status is given the flexibility of receiving exemptions from those regulations and statutory provisions governing the defined program or other State Board of Education regulations, dealing with the core academic areas as outlined in Section 59-18-120, provided that the review team recommends such flexibility to the State Board of Education.

(B) Other schools may receive flexibility when their strategic plan explains why such exemptions are expected to improve the academic performance of the students and the plan meets the approval by the State Board of Education. To continue to receive flexibility pursuant to this section, a school must annually exhibit overall school improvement as outlined in its revised plan and must meet the gains set for subgroups of students in reading and mathematics. A school which does not requalify for flexibility status due to extenuating circumstances may apply to the State Board of Education for an extension of this status for one year according to the provisions of Section 59-18-1110(D).

Article 13 District Accountability Systems

Section 59-18-1300. The State Board of Education, based on recommendations of the division, must develop regulations requiring that no later than August, 1999, each district board of trustees must establish and annually review a performance based accountability system, or modify its existing accountability system, to reinforce the state accountability system. Parents, teachers, and principals must be involved in the development, annual review, and revisions of the accountability system established by the district. The board of trustees shall ensure that a district accountability plan be developed, reviewed, and revised annually. In order to stimulate constant improvement in the process of teaching and learning in each school and to target additional local assistance for a school when its students' performance is low or shows little improvement, the district accountability system must build on the district and school activities and plans required in Section 59-139-10. In keeping with the emphasis on school accountability, principals should be actively involved in the selection, discipline, and dismissal of personnel in their particular school. The date the school improvement reports must be provided to parents is changed to February first. Until such time as regulations pursuant to this section become effective, school district accountability systems must be developed, adopted, and implemented in accordance with State Board of Education guidelines.

The Department of Education shall offer technical support to any district requesting assistance in the development of an accountability plan. Furthermore, the department must conduct a review of accountability plans as part of the peer review process required in Section 59-139-10(H) to ensure strategies are contained in the plans that shall maximize student learning. The department shall submit plans for the peer review process to the division for approval by August, 1999. School districts not having an approved plan by August 1, 1999, shall be provided a plan by the department within ninety days.

Article 15
Intervention and Assistance

Section 59-18-1500. (A) When a school receives a rating of below average or unsatisfactory, the following actions must be undertaken by the school, the district, and the board of trustees:

(1) The faculty of the school with the leadership of the principal must review its improvement plan and revise it with the assistance of the school improvement council established in Section 59-20-60. The revised plan should look at every aspect of schooling, and must outline activities that, when implemented, can reasonably be expected to improve student performance and increase the rate of student progress. The plan should provide a clear, coherent plan for professional development, which has been designed by the faculty, that is ongoing, job related, and keyed to improving teaching and learning. A time line for implementation of the activities and the goals to be achieved must be included.

(2) Once the revised plan is developed, the district superintendent and the local board of trustees shall review the school's strategic plan to determine if the plan focuses on strategies to increase student academic performance. Once the district board has approved the plan, it must delineate the strategies and support the district will give the plan.

(3) After the approval of the revised plan, the principals' and teachers' professional growth plans, as required by Section 59-26-40 and Section 59-24-40, should be reviewed and amended to reflect the professional development needs identified in the revised plan and must establish individual improvement criteria on the performance dimensions for the next evaluation.

(4) The school, in conjunction with the district board, must inform the parents of children attending the school of the ratings received from the State Board of Education and must outline the steps in the revised plan to improve performance, including the support which the board of trustees has agreed to give the plan. This information must go to the parents no later than February first. This information must also be advertised in at least one South Carolina daily newspaper of general circulation in the area. This notice must be published within ninety days of receipt of the report cards issued by the State Department of Education and must be a minimum of two columns by ten inches (four and one-half by ten inches) with at least a twenty-four point bold headline. The notice must include the following information: name of school district, name of superintendent, district office telephone number, name of school, name of principal, telephone number of school, school's absolute performance rating and improvement performance rating on

student academic performance, and strategies which must be taken by the district and school to improve student performance; and

(5) Upon a review of the revised plan to ensure it contains sufficiently high standards and expectations for improvement, the Department of Education is to delineate the activities, support, services, and technical assistance it will make available to support the school's plan and sustain improvement over time. Schools meeting the criteria established pursuant to Section 59-18-1560 will be eligible for the grant programs created by that section.

Section 59-18-1510. (A) When a school receives a rating of unsatisfactory or upon the request of a school rated below average, an external review team must be assigned by the Department of Education to examine school and district educational programs, actions, and activities. The Education Oversight Committee, in consultation with the State Department of Education, shall develop the criteria for the identification of persons to serve as members of an external review team which shall include representatives from selected school districts, respected retired educators, State Department of Education staff, higher education representatives, parents from the district, and business representatives.

(B) The activities of the external review committee may include:

(1) examine all facets of school operations, focusing on strengths and weaknesses, determining the extent to which the instructional program is aligned with the content standards, and recommendations which draw upon strategies from those who have been successful in raising academic achievement in schools with similar student characteristics;

(2) consult with parents, community members, and members of the School Improvement Council to gather additional information on the strengths and weaknesses of the school;

(3) identify personnel changes, if any, that are needed at the school and/or district level and discuss such findings with the board;

(4) work with school staff, central offices, and local boards of trustees in the design of the school's plan, implementation strategies, and professional development training that can reasonably be expected to improve student performance and increase the rate of student progress in that school;

(5) identify needed support from the district, the State Department of Education, and other sources for targeted long-term technical assistance;

(6) report its recommendations, no later than three months after the school receives the designation of unsatisfactory to the school, the district board of trustees, and the State Board of Education; and

(7) report annually to the local board of trustees and state board over the next four years, or as deemed necessary by the state board, on the district's and school's progress in implementing the plans and recommendations and in improving student performance.

(C) Within thirty days, the Department of Education must notify the principal, the superintendent, and the district board of trustees of the recommendations approved by the State Board of Education. After the approval of the recommendations, the department shall delineate the activities, support, services, and technical assistance it will provide to the school. With the approval of the state board, this assistance will continue for at least three years, or as determined to be needed by the review committee to sustain improvement.

Section 59-18-1520. If the recommendations approved by the state board, the district's plan, or the school's revised plan is not satisfactorily implemented by the school rated unsatisfactory and its school district according to the time line developed by the State Board of Education or if student academic performance has not met expected progress, the principal, district superintendent, and members of the board of trustees must appear before the State Board of Education to outline the reasons why a state of emergency should not be declared in the school. The state superintendent, after consulting with the external review committee and with the approval of the State Board of Education, shall be granted the authority to take any of the following actions:

- (1) furnish continuing advice and technical assistance in implementing the recommendations of the State Board of Education;
- (2) declare a state of emergency in the school and replace the school's principal; or
- (3) declare a state of emergency in the school and assume management of the school.

Section 59-18-1530. (A) Teacher specialists on site must be assigned in any of the four core academic areas to a middle or high school in an impaired district or designated as below average or unsatisfactory, if the review team so recommends and recommendation is approved by the State Board of Education. Teacher specialists on site must be assigned at a rate of one teacher for each grade level with a maximum of five to elementary schools in impaired districts or designated as below average or unsatisfactory. The Department of Education, in consultation with the Division of Accountability, shall develop a program for the identification, selection, and training of teachers with a history of exemplary student academic achievement to serve as teacher specialists on site. Retired educators may be considered for specialists.

(B) In order to sustain improvement and help implement the review team's recommendations, the specialists will teach and work with the school faculty on a regular basis throughout the school year for up to three years, or as recommended by the review committee and approved by the state board. Teacher specialists must teach a minimum of three hours per day on average in team teaching or teaching classes. Teacher specialists shall not be assigned administrative duties or other responsibilities outside the scope of this section. The specialists will assist the school in gaining knowledge of best practices and well-validated alternatives, demonstrate effective teaching, act as coach for improving classroom practices, give support and training to identify needed changes in classroom instructional strategies based upon analyses of assessment data, and support teachers in acquiring new skills. School districts are asked to cooperate in releasing employees for full-time or part-time employment as a teacher specialist.

(C) To encourage and recruit teachers for assignment to below standard and unsatisfactory schools, those assigned to such schools will receive their salary and a supplement equal to fifty percent of the current southeastern average teacher salary as projected by the State Budget and Control Board, Office of Research and Analysis. The salary and supplement is to be paid by the State for three years.

(D) In order to attract a pool of qualified applicants to work in low-performing schools, the Education Oversight Committee, in consultation with the Leadership Academy of the South Carolina Department of Education, shall develop criteria for the identification, selection, and training of principals with a history of exemplary student academic achievement. Retired educators may be considered for principal specialists. A principal specialist may be hired for a school designated as unsatisfactory, if the district board of trustees chooses to replace the principal of that school. The principal specialist will assist the school in gaining knowledge of best practices and well-validated alternatives in carrying out the recommendations of the review team. The specialist will demonstrate effective leadership for improving classroom practices, assist in the analyses of assessment data, work with individual members of the faculty emphasizing needed changes in classroom instructional strategies based upon analyses of assessment data, and support teachers in acquiring new skills designed to increase academic performance. School districts are asked to cooperate in releasing employees for full-time or part-time employment as a principal specialist.

(E) In order to attract a pool of qualified principals to work in low-performing schools, the principal specialists hired in such schools will receive their salary and a supplement equal to 1.25 times the supplement amount calculated for teachers. The salary and supplement are to be paid by the State for two years.

(F) The supplements are to be considered part of the regular salary base for which retirement contributions are deductible by the South Carolina Retirement System pursuant to Section 9-1-1020. For the purpose of determining average final compensation as defined in Section 9-1-10, the supplement authorized in this section shall entitle a specialist to have added to their average final compensation at the time of retirement an amount not to exceed an additional forty-five days' pay, based on the specialist's regular annual compensation at their home school location. A specialist shall be entitled to fifteen days' pay, for the purposes of this section, for each year of service as a specialist on site. Principal and teacher specialists on site who are assigned to below average and unsatisfactory schools shall be allowed to return to employment with their previous district at the end of the contract period with the same teaching or administrative contract status as when they left but without assurance as to the school or supplemental position to which they may be assigned.

(G) For retired educators drawing benefits from the state retirement system who are serving in the capacity of principal or teacher specialist on site, the earnings limitations which restrict the amount of compensation that may be earned from covered employment while drawing benefits under the state retirement system do not apply to any compensation paid to them as an on-site specialist not to exceed one year of such employment whether they are working directly for the school district or for some entity in this capacity. However, no further contributions may be made to the state retirement system related to this compensation and no additional retirement benefits or credits may be received or accrued.

(H) Within the parameters herein, the school district will have final determination on individuals who are assigned as teacher specialists and principal specialists.

Section 59-18-1540. Each principal continued in employment in schools in districts designated as impaired or in schools designated as below average or unsatisfactory must participate in a formal mentoring program with a principal. The Department of Education, working with the Education Oversight Committee, shall design the mentoring program and provide a stipend to those principals serving as mentors.

Section 59-18-1550. Each teacher employed in schools designated as below average or unsatisfactory who participate in the professional development activities and the improvement actions of the school which go beyond the normal school day and year may earn credits toward recertification according to the criteria established by the State Board of Education. To receive credit, activities must be based on identified professional development needs outlined in the school's improvement plan and must include at least one of the following:

- (1) summer institute with follow-up activities;
- (2) practice of new teaching strategies with peers regularly throughout the school year;
- (3) work with peer study groups during the academic year in planning lessons; and
- (4) observing and coaching regularly in one another's classrooms.

The activities must be approved by the Department of Education and the department shall determine the amount of credit earned by the participation.

Section 59-18-1560. (A) The State Board of Education, working with the Accountability Division and the Department of Education, must establish grant programs for schools designated as below average and for schools designated as unsatisfactory. A school designated as below average will qualify for a grant to undertake any needed retraining of school faculty and administration once the revised plan is determined by the State Department of Education to meet the criteria on high standards and effective activities. A school designated as unsatisfactory will qualify for the grant program after the State Board of Education approves its revised plan. A grant or a portion of a grant may be renewed annually over the next three years, if school and district actions to implement the revised plan continue. Should student performance not improve, any revisions to the plan must meet high standards prior to renewal of the grant. The revised plan must be reviewed by the district and board of trustees and the State Department of Education to determine what other actions, if any, need to be taken. A grant may be extended for up to an additional two years, if the State Board of Education determines it is needed to sustain academic improvement. The funds must be expended based on the revised plan and according to criteria established by the State Board of Education. Prior to extending any grant, the Accountability Division shall review school expenditures to make a determination of the effective use of previously awarded grant funds. If deficient use is determined, those deficiencies must be identified, noted, and corrective action taken before a grant extension will be given.

(B) The State Board of Education, working with the Department of Education and with the approval of the Education Oversight Committee, will develop guidelines outlining

eligibility for the grant programs and methods of distributing funds which will be in effect until such time as the school ratings in Section 59-18-900(B) are implemented. In developing the eligibility guidelines, the board should consider criteria similar to that used in the former impaired district program. Until such time as regulations are promulgated, the funds shall be distributed on a per teacher basis for use only as outlined in the revised school plan.

(C) A public school assistance fund shall be established as a separate fund within the state general fund for the purpose of providing financial support to assist poorly performing schools. The fund may consist of grants, gifts, and donations from any public or private source or monies that may be appropriated by the General Assembly for this purpose. Income from the fund shall be retained in the fund. All funds may be carried forward from fiscal year to fiscal year. The State Treasurer shall invest the monies in this fund in the same manner as other funds under his control are invested. The State Board of Education, in consultation with the commission, shall administer and authorize any disbursements from the fund. The State Board of Education shall promulgate regulations to implement the provisions of this section.

Section 59-18-1570. (A) When a district receives a rating of below average, the State Superintendent, with the approval of the State Board of Education, shall appoint an external review committee to study educational programs in that district and identify factors affecting the performance of the district. The review committee must:

(1) examine all facets of school and district operations, focusing on strengths and weaknesses, determining the extent to which the instructional program is aligned with the content standards and shall make recommendations which draw upon strategies from those who have been successful in raising academic achievement in schools with similar student characteristics;

(2) consult with parents and community members to gather additional information on the strengths and weaknesses of the district;

(3) identify personnel changes, if any, that are needed at the school and/or district level and discuss such findings with the board;

(4) work with school staff, central offices, and local boards of trustees in the design of the district's plan, implementation strategies, and professional development training that can reasonably be expected to improve student performance and increase the rate of student progress in the district;

(5) identify needed support from the State Department of Education and other sources for targeted long-term technical assistance;

(6) report its recommendations, no later than three months after the district receives the designation of unsatisfactory, to the superintendent, the district board of trustees, and the State Board of Education; and

(7) report annually over the next four years to the local board of trustees and state board, or as deemed necessary by the state board, on the district's and school's

progress in implementing the plans and recommendations and in improving student performance.

(B) Within thirty days, the Department of Education must notify the superintendent and the district board of trustees of the recommendations approved by the State Board of Education. Upon the approval of the recommendations, the Department of Education must delineate the activities, support, services, and technical assistance it will provide to support the recommendations and sustain improvement over time. The external review committee must report annually to the local board of trustees and the state board over the next four years, or as deemed necessary by the state board, on the district's progress in implementing the recommendations and improving student performance.

(C) The review committee shall be composed of State Department of Education staff, representatives from selected school districts, higher education, and business.

Section 59-18-1580. If recommendations approved by the State Board of Education are not satisfactorily implemented by the school district according to the time line developed by the State Board of Education, or if student performance has not made the expected progress and the school district is designated as unsatisfactory, the district superintendent and members of the board of trustees must appear before the State Board of Education to outline the reasons why a state of emergency should not be declared in the district. The state superintendent, with the approval of the State Board of Education, is granted authority to do any of the following:

(1) furnish continuing advice and technical assistance in implementing the recommendations of the State Board of Education;

(2) recommend to the Governor that the office of superintendent be declared vacant. If the Governor declares the office vacant, the state superintendent may furnish an interim replacement until the vacancy is filled by the board of trustees or until an election is held as provided by law to fill the vacancy if the superintendent who is replaced is elected to such office. Local boards of trustees negotiating contracts for the superintendency shall include a provision that the contract is void should the Governor declare that office of superintendency vacant pursuant to this section. This contract provision does not apply to any existing contracts but to new contracts or renewal of contracts;

(3) declare a state of emergency in the school district and assume management of the school district.

Section 59-18-1590. To assist schools and school districts as they work to improve classroom practice and student performance, the Department of Education must increase the delivery of quality technical assistance services and the assessment of instructional programs. The department may need to reshape some of its organization and key functions to make them more consistent with the assistance required by schools and districts in developing and implementing local accountability systems and meeting state standards. The Department of Education must:

(1) establish an ongoing state mechanism to promote successful programs found in South Carolina schools for implementation in schools with similar needs and students, to review evidence on instructional and organizational practices considered to be effective, and to alert schools and classroom teachers to these options and the sources of training and names of implementing schools;

(2) provide information and technical assistance in understanding state policies, how they fit together, and the best practice in implementing them; and

(3) establish a process for monitoring information provided for accountability and for assessing improvement efforts and implementation of state laws and policies which focuses on meeting the intent and purpose of those laws and policies.

Article 17 Public Information

Section 59-18-1700. (A) An on-going public information campaign must be established to apprise the public of the status of the public schools and the importance of high standards for academic performance for the public school students of South Carolina. A special committee shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Education Oversight Committee to include two committee members representing business and two representing education and others representing business, industry, and education. The committee shall plan and oversee the development of a campaign, including public service announcements for the media and other such avenues as deemed appropriate for informing the public. The plan must be reported to the Governor, the Senate Education Committee, and the House Education and Public Works Committee by March 15, 1999.

(B) A separate fund within the state general fund will be established to accept grants, gifts, and donations from any public or private source or monies that may be appropriated by the General Assembly for the public information campaign. Members of the Oversight Committee representing business will solicit donations for this fund. Income from the fund shall be retained in the fund. All funds may be carried forward from fiscal year to fiscal year. The State Treasurer shall invest the monies in this fund in the same manner as other funds under his control are invested. The Oversight Committee shall administer and authorize any disbursements from the fund. Private individuals and groups shall be encouraged to contribute to this endeavor.

Article 19 Miscellaneous

Section 59-18-1900. (A) The State Board of Education, working with the Department of Education and the Education Oversight Committee, shall establish a competitive grant program to fund at least ten alternative schools. Districts are authorized and encouraged to cooperate in establishing alternative schools and such jointly established schools will be given priority in awarding the grants. Alternative schools established prior to this act shall not be prohibited from participation in this program. These schools must be at a site separate from other schools, unless operated at a time when those schools are not in session. These schools shall provide appropriate services to middle or high school students who for academic or behavioral reasons are not benefiting from the regular school program. The regulations must include guidelines to ensure that effective practices are adopted.

(B) To be eligible for funding, the school districts must develop a plan for the school which establishes a comprehensive program to address student problems. State

requirements for staffing may be waived if the plan meets the criteria and has a reasonable expectation of success. The plan must include:

- (1) the mission of the school;
- (2) policy for the basis of enrollment in the school;
- (3) a low pupil-teacher ratio, to include one on one assistance, independent computer assisted learning and distance learning;
- (4) provision for transportation to the school;
- (5) establishment of comprehensive staff development;
- (6) appointment of a mentor teacher at the student's original school in order to ease transition back to that school when such a transfer occurs; and
- (7) a process for community involvement and support.

The districts shall contract with the school for each student attending for an amount that is no less than the amount equal to that generated by the student's EFA weight.

Section 59-18-1910. The State Board of Education shall establish grant programs to fund homework centers in schools and districts designated as below average and unsatisfactory. Until such time as these ratings are established, all schools in districts declared to be impaired are eligible to receive funding on a per pupil basis. Schools receiving such designations must provide centers that go beyond the regular school hours where students can come and receive assistance in understanding and completing their school work. Funds provided for these centers may be used for salaries for certified teachers and for transportation costs. Homework centers meeting the criteria established by the board shall receive funds as appropriated by the General Assembly. For 1998–99, of the funds appropriated for assessment, up to five hundred thousand dollars shall be used for homework centers.

Section 59-18-1920. (A) The State Board of Education, through the Department of Education, shall establish a grant program to encourage school districts to pilot test or implement a modified school year or school day schedule. The purpose of the grant is to assist with the additional costs incurred during the intersessions for salaries, transportation, and operations, or for additional costs incurred by lengthening the school day. For a district to qualify for a grant, all the schools within a specific feeder zone or elementary-to-middle-to-high-school attendance area, must be pilot testing or implementing the modified year or day schedule. Districts declared to be impaired will have priority in obtaining such grants.

(B) To obtain a grant, a district shall submit an application to the state board in a format specified by the Department of Education. The application shall include a plan for implementing a modified year or day that provides the following: more time for student learning, learning opportunities that typically are not available in the regular student day, targeted assistance for students whose academic performance is significantly below promotion standards, more efficient use of facilities and other resources, and evaluations of the impact of the modified schedule. Local district boards of trustees shall require students whose performance in a core subject area, as defined in Section 59-18-300, is

the equivalent of a 'D' average or below to attend the intersessions or stay for the lengthened day and receive special assistance in the subject area. Funding for the program is as provided by the General Assembly in the annual appropriations act. Each grant award for program pilot testing or implementation may not exceed a three-year period.

Section 59-18-1930. The Education Oversight Committee shall provide for a comprehensive review of state and local professional development to include principal leadership development and teacher staff development. The review must provide an analysis of training to include what professional development is offered, how it is offered, the support given to implement skills acquired from professional development, and how the professional development enhances the academic goals outlined in district and school strategic plans. The Oversight Committee shall recommend better ways to provide and meet the needs for professional development, to include the use of the existing five contract days for in service. Needed revisions shall be made to state regulations to promote use of state dollars for training which meets national standards for staff development."

Findings

SECTION 3. Article 1, Chapter 24, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

"Section 59-24-5. The General Assembly finds that the leadership of the principal is key to the success of a school, and support for ongoing, integrated professional development is integral to better schools and to the improvement of the actual work of teachers and school staff."

Assessment and development plans for administrators

SECTION 4. Sections 59-24-10 and 59-24-30 of the 1976 Code, as last amended by Act 458 of 1996, are further amended to read:

"Section 59-24-10. Beginning with the school year 1999–2000, any person prior to permanent appointment as a principal for any elementary school, secondary school, or vocational center must be assessed for instructional leadership and management capabilities by the Leadership Academy of the South Carolina Department of Education. Districts may appoint such persons on an interim basis until such time as the assessment is completed. A report of this assessment must be forwarded to the district superintendent and board of trustees. The provisions of this section do not apply to any persons currently employed as principals on the effective date of the provisions of this paragraph nor to any persons hired as principals before the beginning of school year 1999–2000.

Section 59-24-30. All school administrators shall develop an on-going individual professional development plan with annual updates which is appropriate for their role or position. This plan shall support both their individual growth and organizational needs. Organizational needs must be defined by the districts' strategic plans or school renewal plans. Individuals completing the assessment for instructional leadership will develop their professional development plan on the basis of that assessment. The Department of Education shall assist school administrators in carrying out their professional

development plans by reviewing the school and district plans and providing or brokering programs and services in the areas identified for professional development."

Professional development

SECTION 5. Section 59-24-50 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

"Section 59-24-50. By January 1, 1999, the South Carolina Department of Education's Leadership Academy shall develop, in cooperation with school districts, district consortia, and state-supported institutions of higher education, continuous professional development programs which meet national standards for professional development and focus on the improvement of teaching and learning. By July 1, 1999, programs funded with state funds must meet these standards and must provide training, modeling, and coaching on effective instructional leadership as it pertains to instructional leadership and school-based improvement, including instruction on the importance of school improvement councils and ways administrators may make school improvement councils an active force in school improvement. The training must be developed and conducted in collaboration with the School Council Assistance Project."

Formal induction program

SECTION 6. Article 1, Chapter 24, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

"Section 59-24-80. Beginning with school year 1999–2000, each school district, or consortium of school districts, shall provide school principals serving for the first time as the head building administrators with a formalized induction program in cooperation with the State Department of Education. The State Board of Education must develop regulations for the program based on the criteria and statewide performance standards which are a part of the process for assisting, developing, and evaluating principals employed in the school districts. The program must include an emphasis on the elements of instructional leadership skills, implementation of effective schools research, and analysis of test scores for curricular improvement."

Contract status and rights retained; exceptions

SECTION 7. The 1976 Code is amended by adding:

"Section 59-24-15. Certified education personnel who are employed as administrators on an annual or multi-year contract will retain their rights as a teacher under the provisions of Article 3 of Chapter 19 and Article 5 of Chapter 25 of this title but no such rights are granted to the position or salary of administrator. Any such administrator who presently is under a contract granting such rights shall retain that status until the expiration of that contract."

Education Oversight Committee; membership; duties

SECTION 8. Section 59-6-10 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

"Section 59-6-10. (A) In order to assist in, recommend, and supervise implementation of programs and expenditure of funds for the Education Accountability Act and the Education Improvement Act of 1984, the Education

Oversight Committee is to serve as the oversight committee for these acts. The Education Oversight Committee shall:

(1) review and monitor the implementation and evaluation of the Education Accountability Act and Education Improvement Act programs and funding;

(2) make programmatic and funding recommendations to the General Assembly;

(3) report annually to the General Assembly, State Board of Education, and the public on the progress of the programs;

(4) recommend Education Accountability Act and EIA program changes to state agencies and other entities as it considers necessary.

Each state agency and entity responsible for implementing the Education Accountability Act and the Education Improvement Act funded programs shall submit to the Education Oversight Committee programs and expenditure reports and budget requests as needed and in a manner prescribed by the Education Oversight Committee.

The committee consists of the following persons:

(1) Speaker of the House of Representatives or his designee;

(2) President Pro Tempore of the Senate or his designee;

(3) Chairman of the Education and Public Works Committee of the House of Representatives or his designee;

(4) Chairman of the Education Committee of the Senate or his designee;

(5) Governor or his designee;

(6) Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives or his designee;

(7) Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Senate or his designee;

(8) State Superintendent of Education or the superintendent's designee who shall be an ex officio nonvoting member;

(9) Five members representing business and industry who must have experience in business, management, or policy to be appointed as follows: one by the Governor, one by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, one by the Speaker of the House, one by the Chairman of the Senate Education Committee, and one by the Chairman of the House Education and Public Works Committee; and

(10) Five members representing public education teachers and principals to be appointed as follows: one by the Governor, one by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, one by the Speaker of the House, one by the Chairman of the Senate Education

Committee, and one by the Chairman of the House Education and Public Works Committee.

Initial appointment must be made by July 31, 1998, at which time the Governor or his designee shall call the first meeting. At the initial meeting, a chairman elected from the members representing the business and industry appointees and a vice chairman representing the education members shall be elected by a majority vote of the committee. The members appointed pursuant to items (1) through (8) may serve notwithstanding the provisions of Section 8-13-770. Their terms of office on the committee must be coterminous with their terms of office as Governor, Superintendent of Education, or members of the General Assembly.

(B) The terms of office of the members of the Education Oversight Committee, except for the legislative members, Governor, and State Superintendent of Education, are four years and until their successors are appointed and qualify except of those first appointed the terms must be staggered as follows:

(1) initial terms of two years shall be served by the two members of the business and industry community appointed by the chairmen of the Education Committees;

(2) initial terms of three years shall be served by the members of the education community appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House; and

(3) all other voting members shall serve initial four-year terms. The terms of chairman and vice chairman shall be two years. At the end of each two-year term, an election must be held for the chairmanship and vice chairmanship by majority vote of the members attending with quorum present. No member shall serve more than four consecutive years as chairman or vice chairman.

Members of the committee shall meet no less than once a quarter and annually shall submit their findings and recommendations to the General Assembly before March first of each fiscal year. The staff positions of the Select Committee and the people presently in those positions initially shall be transferred to the Education Oversight Committee as administrative staff to carry out its functions."

Accountability division established

SECTION 9. Chapter 6, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

"Section 59-6-100. Within the Education Oversight Committee, an Accountability Division must be established to report on the monitoring, development, and implementation of the performance based accountability system and reviewing and evaluating all aspects of the Education Accountability Act and the Education Improvement Act.

The Education Oversight Committee will employ, by a majority vote, for a contract term of three years an executive director for the Accountability Division. The director must be chosen solely on grounds of fitness to perform the duties assigned to him and must possess at least the following qualifications: a demonstrated knowledge of public education, experience in program evaluation, and experience in a responsible managerial capacity. No member of the General Assembly nor anyone who will have

been a member for one year previously will be contracted to serve as director. The director will have the authority to employ, with the approval of the subcommittee, professional and support staff as necessary to carry out the duties of the division, which shall be separate from the administrative staff of the Education Oversight Committee.

Section 59-6-110. The division must examine the public education system to ensure that the system and its components and the EIA programs are functioning for the enhancement of student learning. The division will recommend the repeal or modification of statutes, policies, and rules that deter school improvement. The division must provide annually its findings and recommendations in a report to the Education Oversight Committee no later than February first. The division is to conduct in-depth studies on implementation, efficiency, and the effectiveness of academic improvement efforts and:

(1) monitor and evaluate the implementation of the state standards and assessment;

(2) oversee the development, establishment, implementation, and maintenance of the accountability system;

(3) monitor and evaluate the functioning of the public education system and its components, programs, policies, and practices and report annually its findings and recommendations in a report to the commission no later than February first of each year; and

(4) perform other studies and reviews as required by law.

The responsibilities of the division do not include fiscal audit functions or funding recommendations except as they relate to accountability. It is not a function of this division to draft legislation and neither the director nor any other employee of the division shall urge or oppose any legislation. In the performance of its duties and responsibilities, the division and staff members are subject to the statutory provisions and penalties regarding confidentiality of records as they apply to students, schools, school districts, the Department of Education, and the Board of Education.

Section 59-6-120. The State Department of Education, the State Board of Education, and the school districts and schools shall work collaboratively with the Division of Accountability to provide information needed to carry out the responsibilities and duties of its office. The Division of Accountability may call on the expertise of the state institutions of higher learning and any other public agencies for carrying out its functions and may coordinate and consult with existing agency and legislative staff."

Task force

SECTION 10. When parents are involved with their children's education, students achieve more, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnic/racial background, or the parents' education level. The more extensive the parent involvement, the higher level of the student achievement. Therefore, the Education Oversight Committee shall appoint a task force to review current state programs and policies for parent participation in their

children's education. The task force is to look for ways to encourage and induce parents to oversee and support student academic performance and behavior that contributes to academic improvement. The membership of the task force should include: public school educators from rural, urban, and suburban schools and districts; parents of public school children; social service representatives; and a juvenile justice representative. The task force must be appointed no later than September 1, 1998, and shall provide its report and recommendations to the Education Oversight Committee by October 15, 1999.

Phonics required

SECTION 11. Section 59-29-10 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

"Section 59-29-10. The county board of education and the board of trustees for each school district shall see that in every school under their care there shall be taught, as far as practicable, orthography, reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, English grammar and instruction in phonics, the elements of agriculture, the history of the United States and of this State, the principles of the Constitutions of the United States and of this State, morals and good behavior, algebra, physiology and hygiene (especially as to the effects of alcoholic liquors and narcotics upon the human system), English literature, and such other branches as the state board may from time to time direct."

Class size reduction; funding; facilities

SECTION 12. Title 59, Chapter 63 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

"Section 59-63-65. School districts which choose to reduce class size to fifteen to one in grades one through three shall be eligible for funding for the reduced pupil-teacher ratios from funds provided by the General Assembly for this purpose. Funding for schools in districts designated as impaired or for schools rated as unsatisfactory on the accountability ratings will receive priority in the distribution of funds. Funding for the impaired district schools and schools ranked unsatisfactory will be allocated based on the average daily membership in grades one through three in those schools for implementing reduced class size of fifteen to one in those grades. Other school districts will receive funding allocated based on free and reduced lunch eligible students. Local match is required for the lower ratio funding based on the Education Finance Act formula. Boards of trustees of each school district may implement the lower pupil-teacher ratios on a school by school, grade by grade, or class by class basis. District boards of trustees implementing the reduced ratios must establish policies to give priority to reduce the ratios in schools with the highest number of students eligible for the federal free and reduced lunch program, and these students must be given priority in implementing the reduced class size. Unobligated funds from state appropriations which become available to a district during a fiscal year shall be redistributed to fund additional teachers on a prorated basis.

Districts choosing to implement the reduced class size must track the students served in classes with a 15:1 ratio for three years so that the impact of smaller class size can be evaluated. The Department of Education, working with the Accountability Division, will develop a plan for evaluating the impact of this initiative and report to the Education Oversight Committee no later than December 1, 2001. School districts must document the use of these funds to reduce class size and the State Department of Education will conduct audits to confirm appropriate use of class size reduction funding.

As used in this section, 'teacher' refers to an employee possessing a professional certificate issued by the State Department of Education whose full-time responsibility is instruction of students. Pupil-teacher ratio is based on average daily membership.

Portable or other temporary classroom space may be used to meet any facilities needs for reducing class size to fifteen to one, and notwithstanding the provisions of Section 59-144-30, funding derived from the Children's Education Endowment Fund may be used to acquire such portable or temporary facilities."

Repeal

SECTION 13. Sections 59-6-12, 59-18-10, 59-18-11, 59-18-15, 59-18-20, 59-18-25, 59-18-30, and 59-18-31 of the 1976 Code are repealed.

Copy of act to be provided

SECTION 14. The Department of Education must provide a copy of this act to every district superintendent and school principal in this State.

References

SECTION 15. The Code Commissioner is directed to change all references in the Code of Laws to the Select Committee so as to read the Education Oversight Committee.

Time effective

SECTION 16. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

Approved the 10th day of June, 1998.

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APPENDIX B

Analyses of 2002–2003 Report Card Data and Changes Recommended

B-1: South Carolina School and District Ratings, 2002 and 2003

B-2: High School Ratings Criteria for the 2003–2004 School Year

**B-3: Ratings for Schools Enrolling Students in Only Grade Two
or Below**

**B-4: Retraining Assistance Program: Process for Review of
Retraining Assistance Program, 2003–2004**

B-5: Longitudinal Student PACT Performance

**B-6: The Performance of Historically Underachieving Groups of
Students in South Carolina: Small Steps Forward**

Appendix B-1

South Carolina School and District Ratings 2002 and 2003

Summary Tables

Report card ratings are awarded to each school organizational unit: primary, elementary, middle, or high. A school that has kindergarten through eighth grade receives two sets of ratings (and two sets of report cards). One set of ratings pertains to the elementary grades in the school (Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test [PACT] results in grades three through five), and the other set of ratings is based on the middle school grades (PACT results from grades six through eight). Primary level schools that do not contain PACT-tested grades (such as a school having kindergarten through second grade) and career and vocational centers also receive ratings based on different sets of criteria. Some schools, such as new schools, do not receive ratings.

The frequencies of ratings reported for all primary, elementary, middle, and high schools in South Carolina are listed in the tables that follow.

Table 1
ALL SCHOOLS (K–2 PRIMARY, ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, AND HIGH SCHOOLS)
2001–2002 and 2002–2003 School Report Card Ratings
Number and Percentage of School Report Cards

Rating	2003 Absolute Performance Rating Number (%)	2002 Absolute Performance Rating Number (%)	2003 Improvement Rating Number (%)	2002 Improvement Rating Number (%)
Excellent	217 (19.9)	191 (18.1)	76 (7.0)	94 (8.9)
Good	359 (32.9)	354 (33.5)	176 (16.3)	183 (17.4)
Average	319 (29.3)	304 (28.7)	90 (8.3)	186 (17.6)
Below Average	151 (13.9)	159 (15.0)	274 (25.4)	311 (29.5)
Unsatisfactory	44 (4.0)	50 (4.7)	464 (43.0)	280 (26.6)
New/Special—No Rating	14	22	14	26
Total	1090 (100)	1058* (100)	1080* (100)	1054* (100)

Note: Totals may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding. Some schools may have received more than one report card if the school contained more than one organizational grade level (elementary, middle, high). Based on data from the S.C. Department of Education, October 2003.

*Twenty-four schools receiving Absolute and Improvement Ratings in 2003 were missing 2002 data, most likely because they were new schools in 2003.

Table 2
K-2 PRIMARY SCHOOLS ONLY (GRADE TWO IS HIGHEST GRADE LEVEL)
2001-2002 and 2002-2003 School Report Card Ratings
Number and Percentage of School Report Cards

Rating	2003 Absolute Performance Rating Number (%)	2002 Absolute Performance Rating Number (%)	2003 Improvement Rating Number (%)	2002 Improvement Rating Number (%)
Excellent	23 (100)	20 (100)	4 (20.0)	10 (55.6)
Good	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	16 (80.0)	8 (44.4)
Average	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Below Average	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Unsatisfactory	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
New/Special—No Rating	0	3	3	5
Total	23 (100)	20 (100)	20 (100)	18 (100)

Note: Totals may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding. Based on data from the S.C. Department of Education, October 2003.

Table 3
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS ONLY
2001-2002 and 2002-2003 School Report Card Ratings
Number and Percentage of School Report Cards

Rating	2003 Absolute Performance Rating Number (%)	2002 Absolute Performance Rating Number (%)	2003 Improvement Rating Number (%)	2002 Improvement Rating Number (%)
Excellent	114 (18.8)	108 (18.3)	27 (4.5)	36 (6.1)
Good	227 (37.4)	211 (35.8)	94 (15.5)	124 (21.1)
Average	196 (32.3)	191 (32.4)	52 (8.6)	99 (16.8)
Below Average	66 (10.9)	74 (12.6)	141 (23.3)	152 (25.8)
Unsatisfactory	4 (0.7)	5 (0.8)	292 (48.2)	178 (30.2)
New/Special—No Rating	2	2	3	2
Total	607 (100)	589* (100)	606* (100)	589* (100)

Note: Totals may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding. Some schools may have received more than one report card if the school contained more than one organizational grade level (elementary, middle, high). Based on data from the S.C. Department of Education, October 2003.
 *Eighteen schools receiving Absolute and Improvement Ratings in 2003 were missing 2002 data, most likely because they were new schools in 2003.

Table 4
MIDDLE SCHOOLS ONLY
2001–2002 and 2002–2003 School Report Card Ratings
Number and Percentage of School Report Cards

Rating	2003 Absolute Performance Rating Number (%)	2002 Absolute Performance Rating Number (%)	2003 Improvement Rating Number (%)	2002 Improvement Rating Number (%)
Excellent	13 (4.8)	14 (5.3)	1 (0.4)	8 (3.0)
Good	72 (26.8)	73 (27.7)	16 (5.9)	28 (10.6)
Average	95 (35.3)	90 (34.1)	23 (8.6)	77 (29.2)
Below Average	70 (26.0)	66 (25.0)	91 (33.8)	104 (39.4)
Unsatisfactory	19 (7.1)	21 (8.0)	138 (51.3)	47 (17.8)
New/Special—No Rating	1	2	1	2
Total	269 (100)	264* (100)	269 (100)	264* (100)

Note: Totals may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding. Some schools may have received more than one report card if the school contained more than one organizational grade level (elementary, middle, high). Based on data from the S.C. Department of Education, October 2003.
*Four schools receiving Absolute and Improvement ratings in 2003 were missing 2002 data, most likely because they were new schools in 2003.

Table 5
HIGH SCHOOLS ONLY
2001–2002 and 2002–2003 School Report Card Ratings
Number and Percentage of School Report Cards

Rating	2003 Absolute Performance Rating Number (%)	2002 Absolute Performance Rating Number (%)	2003 Improvement Rating Number (%)	2002 Improvement Rating Number (%)
Excellent	67 (35.1)	49 (26.5)	44 (23.8)	40 (21.9)
Good	60 (31.4)	70 (37.8)	50 (27.0)	23 (12.6)
Average	28 (14.7)	23 (12.4)	15 (8.1)	10 (5.5)
Below Average	15 (7.8)	19 (10.3)	42 (22.7)	55 (30.0)
Unsatisfactory	21 (11.0)	24 (13.0)	34 (18.4)	55 (30.0)
New/Special—No Rating	11	15	6	17
Total	191 (100)	185* (100)	185* (100)	183* (100)

Note: Totals may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding. Some schools may have received more than one report card if the school contained more than one organizational grade level (elementary, middle, high). Based on data from the S.C. Department of Education, October 2003.
*Two schools receiving Absolute and Improvement ratings in 2003 were missing 2002 data, most likely because they were new schools in 2003.

Table 6
DISTRICTS ONLY
2001–2002 and 2002–2003 District Report Card Ratings
Number and Percentage of District Report Cards

Rating	2003 Absolute Performance Rating Number (%)	2002 Absolute Performance Rating Number (%)	2003 Improvement Rating Number (%)	2002 Improvement Rating Number (%)
Excellent	9 (10.6)	3 (3.5)	4 (4.7)	1 (1.2)
Good	26 (30.6)	27 (31.8)	7 (8.2)	3 (3.6)
Average	32 (37.7)	33 (38.8)	24 (28.2)	28 (33.3)
Below Average	12 (14.1)	20 (23.5)	20 (23.5)	45 (53.6)
Unsatisfactory	6 (7.1)	2 (2.4)	30 (35.3)	7 (8.3)
New/Special –No Rating	0	0	0	1
Total	85 (100)	85 (100)	85 (100)	84 (100)

Note: Totals may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding. Based on data from the S.C. Department of Education, October 2003.

Analysis of the Absolute Ratings provides the following information:

- The number of schools rated Unsatisfactory or Below Average has decreased over time.

	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>
• Unsatisfactory	71 (6.4%)	60 (5.2%)	44 (4.0%)
• Below Average	200 (18.1%)	170 (14.7%)	151 (13.9%)

- There were changes to school Absolute Ratings from 2002 to 2003 in the following manner:
 - 154 schools elevated their ratings
 - 771 schools maintained their ratings
 - 112 schools lowered their ratings
- Even with changes in the high school rating criteria (addition of graduation rate criterion), the number of high schools rated Excellent or Good rose to 127 in 2003 from 119 in 2002.
- Analysis shows that 10.4 percent of schools with a poverty composite of 90 percent or greater earned an Absolute Rating of Excellent or Good. Also, 12.5 percent of schools with a poverty composite of 80 percent or greater earned an Absolute Rating of Excellent or Good.
- There is movement to the outer ends of the rating scale for school districts.
 - The number of districts rated Excellent has grown from three to nine.
 - The number of districts rated Unsatisfactory has grown from two to six.

Analysis of the Improvement Ratings provides the following information:

- ❑ There were changes to school Improvement Ratings from 2002 to 2003 in the following manner:
 - 196 schools elevated their rating
 - 378 schools maintained their rating
 - 461 schools earned lower Improvement Ratings
- ❑ The number and percentage of elementary and middle schools rated Unsatisfactory increased. These ratings likely reflect declines in performance on PACT English language arts as students progress to upper elementary and middle grades.
- ❑ High school Improvement Ratings rose. The calculation incorporated like data from 2002 and 2003 for the Legislative Incentive for Future Excellence (LIFE) Scholarship criterion and did not include graduation rate.
- ❑ There were sixty-seven schools that benefited from the incentive for improving the performance of historically underachieving student groups. When these groups of students demonstrate gains greater than the average gains for all students statewide, the school's Improvement Ratings are elevated one level.
- ❑ Analysis shows that 14.6 percent of schools with a poverty composite of 90 percent or greater earned an Improvement Rating of Excellent or Good. Also, 12.8 percent of schools with a poverty composite of 80 percent or greater earned an Improvement Rating of Excellent or Good.
- ❑ Of the fifty schools rated Unsatisfactory in 2002, 36 percent earned Average or above Improvement Ratings in 2003. Also, 27 percent of schools rated Below Average in 2002 earned Average or above Improvement Ratings in 2003.

The analysis of the data over the last three years raises four critical issues. South Carolina must:

- ❑ Exercise patience to solve historical underachievement and continue to support improvement strategies;
- ❑ Sustain the gains in ratings and student performance made by schools emerging from Unsatisfactory status;
- ❑ Utilize the student performance data to understand how schools and the education system can improve; and
- ❑ Implement multi-disciplinary strategies to ensure maximum impact from school services in communities with deep social and economic challenges.

Appendix B-2

High School Ratings Criteria for the 2003–2004 School Year (Adopted by EOC on March 18, 2004)

HSAP First-attempt Performance Replaces BSAP Exit Exam First-attempt Criterion

The High School Assessment Program (HSAP) tests in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics replace the Basic Skills Assessment Program (BSAP) Exit Examination tests in reading, writing, and mathematics beginning with the 2003–2004 school year. Beginning with the class of 2006, in addition to attaining the twenty-four Carnegie units of course credit, students must pass both the HSAP ELA and math tests by achieving a performance level of two or higher to receive a state high school diploma. For example, students attending their second year of high school in 2003–2004 will take the HSAP tests for the first time in spring 2004. If they do not pass both the ELA and math tests on their first attempt, they will have additional opportunities to retake the test(s) before their graduation date in 2006. The BSAP Exit Examination tests will not be administered to tenth-grade students in spring 2004. Table 1 below illustrates the sequence of implementation of the HSAP tests and the gradual phasing out of the use of the BSAP tests.

Table 1
Longitudinal and Tenth-Grade Exit Exam Patterns
By Year and Grade Level

Year	Grade		
	10	11	12
2001	BSAP Exit Exam	BSAP Exit Exam	BSAP Exit Exam
2002	BSAP Exit Exam	BSAP Exit Exam	BSAP Exit Exam
2003	BSAP Exit Exam	BSAP Exit Exam	BSAP Exit Exam
2004	HSAP Exit Exam	BSAP Exit Exam	BSAP Exit Exam
2005	HSAP Exit Exam	HSAP Exit Exam	BSAP Exit Exam
2006	HSAP Exit Exam	HSAP Exit Exam	HSAP Exit Exam
2007	HSAP Exit Exam	HSAP Exit Exam	HSAP Exit Exam

Source: S.C. Department of Education

The ratings criteria used for high school Absolute Ratings in the 2002–2003 school year are listed in the section that follows.

Ratings Criteria through 2002–2003 School Year

- (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 tenth grade students in the current school year who meet the standards on all three BSAP Exit Examination subtests (reading, writing, mathematics) in 2003, or the percentages of students in their second year of high school (ninth or tenth grades) taking the High School Assessment Program (HSAP) for the first time who passed the English language arts and mathematics subtests.
- (3) Eligibility for Legislative Incentive for Future Excellence (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 (i.e., 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 (i.e., SAT of 1100 or higher or ACT of 24 or higher, and B average; does not include class rank criterion).
- (4) Graduation rate: The percentage of all (including students with disabilities) ninth-grade students four years prior to the year of the report card who earn a standard high school diploma (not GED), adjusted for transfers in and out of the school.

Note: Until the new standards-based High School Assessment Program (HSAP) is administered (beginning 2004), student performance on the BSAP Exit Examination will be used for the calculation of high school ratings. Beginning in 2004, the performance of students in their second year of high school taking the HSAP for the first time (tenth graders for the most part, but some students classified as ninth graders may also be assessed) will be the tenth-grade first-attempt criterion. Since the standards have not yet been set on HSAP, the point weights corresponding to school levels of performance may need to be reexamined. The BSAP Exit Exam results will continue to be used for the determination of longitudinal performance through 2005.

Criterion number two above must be revised to reflect the change to the state testing program.

Recommendation 1:

Recognizing that the BSAP Exit Examination will not be administered to students in their second year of high school in spring 2004 and that the HSAP tests in ELA and math will be administered to these students, the high school ratings criterion related to first-attempt exit examination performance should be revised to state the following:

- (2) First-attempt HSAP Exit Examination performance: The percentage of students taking the High School Assessment Program (HSAP) for the first time who passed both the English language arts and mathematics subtests by scoring at the performance level of two or higher.

Simulations of High School Ratings Based on HSAP Field Test Data

Data were collected from the performance of students on the HSAP field test, administered to all students in their second year of high school in spring 2003. These data were used to simulate the high school ratings by replacing BSAP Exit Exam tenth-grade first-attempt performance (e.g., percentage of students in the school passing all three BSAP tests) with HSAP field test first-attempt performance (e.g., percentage of students passing both the ELA and math tests at a score of two or above). The results of these simulations were discussed with the High School Ratings Advisory Committee on March 4, 2004 (see appendix A following appendix B-2). An attempt was made to choose criteria for school performance on the HSAP first attempt that would reflect the pattern of school Absolute Ratings awarded for the 2002–2003 school year. The results of the simulation of the high school ratings based on 2003 data for the HSAP field test, longitudinal BSAP Exit Exam performance, LIFE Scholarship eligibility, and graduation rate based on criteria for HSAP performance chosen with the advice of this committee are illustrated in table 2 below.

Table 2
High School Ratings Criteria
2003 HSAP Field Test Percentage Passing All Sections at Level Two or Above
Simulated Absolute Ratings

Absolute Rating	2003 ratings based on BSAP (# schools [%])	Simulated ratings based on HSAP (# schools [%])
Excellent	66 (34.9%)	62 (32.8%)
Good	57 (30.2%)	62 (32.8%)
Average	31 (16.4%)	24 (12.7%)
Below Average	15 (7.9%)	21 (11.1%)
Unsatisfactory	20 (10.6%)	20 (10.6%)
Total	189 (100)	189 (100)

Based on the simulation, the following recommendation is made:

Recommendation 2:

The point weights assigned to the HSAP first-attempt criterion should be revised as indicated in the table of ratings criteria that follows.

Criteria for High School Ratings

Criterion	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%
First-attempt HSAP Passage Rate (20%)	62.9% or more	53.7–62.8%	37.4–53.6%	26.7–37.3%	Below 26.7%
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%)	88.3% or more	79.6–88.2%	62.2–79.5%	53.5–62.1%	Below 53.5%

Addition of Adequate Yearly Progress to Determination of High School Absolute Ratings

As adopted by the Education Oversight Committee on March 20, 2003, for implementation in the 2003–2004 school year, high schools awarded Excellent or Good Absolute Ratings on the basis of their absolute achievement indexes will also have to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for percent tested and percent proficient for *all* students. Under the criteria adopted by the EOC, high schools awarded an Excellent or a Good Absolute Rating must meet the following conditions:

- The school's Absolute Rating index must be at the appropriate level;
- The school must have met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for achievement in each subject area (currently English language arts and mathematics) for *all* students (this does not include demographic subgroups of students); and
- The school must have met AYP for the 95 percent-tested criterion in each subject area for *all* students (this does not include demographic subgroups of students).

Data on high school AYP were not available when the Education Oversight Committee adopted the above Absolute Rating criteria. Those data are now available for the 2002–2003 school year and are listed in table 3, which shows the numbers and percentages of high schools that met or did not meet the AYP requirements for *all* students.

Table 3
High School Ratings Criteria
2003 AYP Data (All Students Only) for Schools Having Excellent (67) or Good (57)
Absolute Ratings

AYP Criterion (all students only, not subgroups)	Yes, met AYP criterion (# schools [%])	No, did not meet AYP criterion (# schools [%])	Insufficient Sample (# schools [%])	Total
Graduation Rate	73 (58.9%)	50 (40.3%)	1 (0.8%)	124 (100%)
ELA 95% tested	34 (27.4%)	90 (72.6%)	—	124 (100%)
ELA % Proficient+	115 (92.7%)	9 (7.3%)	—	124 (100%)
Math 95% Tested	32 (25.8%)	90 (74.2%)	—	124 (100%)
Math % Proficient+	111 (89.5%)	13 (10.5%)	—	124 (100%)

The data in table 3 reveal that over 70 percent of the high schools rated Excellent or Good in 2003 failed to meet the requirements that at least 95 percent of the students eligible be tested with HSAP ELA and math. High school officials have not received reports from the 2003 HSAP field test that would allow them to determine which students were tested and which were not, and, as pointed out by the members of the High School Ratings Advisory Committee, the lack of information has hampered their efforts to identify ways to increase the percentage of students tested in 2004. The advisory committee members indicate that the percentage tested has also been affected by the change in the rules in 2003 for identifying which students are eligible to take the HSAP examinations as a first attempt, which has led to some lingering uncertainty in the schools regarding who should sit for the examination in 2004. High school educators have also not received reports from the 2003 HSAP field test administration indicating how many or which students scored above or below the passing level of two.

Since sufficient information from the field test administration has not been available for high school educators to effectively identify ways to improve the percentage of students tested with HSAP or to identify the instructional needs of students who do not achieve the passing score of two, the following recommendation is made:

Recommendation 3:

Delay for one year the implementation of the requirement that high school Excellent or Good Absolute Ratings will be lowered by one rating level if the school fails to make Adequate Yearly Progress for *all* students for the 95 percent tested requirement and for the percentage of students meeting the proficiency requirement. This change is only for the report card ratings for the 2003–2004 school year; the AYP adjustment will be applied in 2004–2005 and thereafter.

Addition of End-of-Course Test Results to High School Ratings Criteria, Use of Graduation Rate as Criterion in the Ratings, and Elimination of the Percent Eligible for LIFE Scholarship Criteria from the High School Ratings

Note: Recommendations 4 and 5 in this section are from the EOC staff; the High School Ratings Advisory Committee did not provide recommendations regarding the issues in this section of the report.

Achievement ratings for schools and school districts are established in Section 59-18-900 (B) of the Education Accountability Act of 1998 as follows:

The Oversight Committee shall determine the criteria for and establish five academic performance ratings of excellent, good, average, below average, and unsatisfactory. Schools and districts shall receive a rating for absolute and improvement performance. Only the scores of students enrolled in the school at the time of the forty-five-day enrollment count shall be used to determine the absolute and improvement ratings. The Oversight Committee shall establish student performance indicators which will be those considered to be useful for assessing a school's overall performance and appropriate for the grade levels within the school.

Since standards-based achievement tests have not yet been available for the evaluation of high school achievement, ratings for high schools have been based on alternate criteria such as LIFE Scholarship eligibility as authorized through an annual proviso. For 2004–2005, this authority lies in General Appropriations Bill 2004–2005, H.4925, Proviso 1.38, Section 1, H63, Department of Education, Part 1B:

1.38. (SDE: EAA Report Card Criteria) Pending implementation of standards-based assessments for students in grades 9-12 and revised examination scores, the Education Oversight Committee may base ratings on criteria relevant to high school or career and technology center performance including, but not limited to, current exit examination performance and other criteria identified by technical experts and appropriate groups of educators. For other schools without standards-based assessments the ratings may be based upon criteria identified by technical experts and appropriate groups of educators. All ratings criteria must be approved by the Education Oversight Committee.

Under the conditions of this proviso, high school ratings will be based on criteria other than results from the standards-based assessments until such results become available for use. The High School Assessment Program (HSAP) standards-based exit examinations will be implemented beginning in spring 2004. HSAP results for students taking the test for the first time will be incorporated into the high school rating calculation for 2003–2004. Longitudinal results from the HSAP program will be available for use in the ratings system at the end of the 2005–2006 school year.

The end-of-course test in Algebra I was implemented in 2002–2003, and the English I, Biology I, and Physical Science tests are being implemented during the 2003–2004 school year. Based on this timetable for implementation, data from the four end-of-

course tests will be available for use in the determination of high school ratings for the 2005–2006 school year.

LIFE Scholarship eligibility (percentage of students meeting the SAT or ACT score requirements and the grade point requirement) is one of the criteria used for high school ratings under the terms of this proviso. This criterion was chosen as an indicator of high school achievement in lieu of data from end-of-course assessments. This criterion has been controversial because students may be eligible for the LIFE Scholarship program on the basis of the additional criterion of ranking in the top 30 percent of the graduating class along with either the SAT/ACT achievement level or the B average, but this additional factor is not included in the ratings criteria. The reluctance of non-college bound students to participate in the SAT or ACT testing programs has also led to concerns.

The high school graduation rate has been included as one of the criteria for high school achievement ratings under the terms of the proviso. High school graduation rate is also one of the indicators for Adequate Yearly Progress for No Child Left Behind. Increasing the high school graduation rate is one of the highest priorities for the South Carolina educational system. Given its importance as an indicator of student and school success, its continued use in the ratings system is vital.

Based on these factors the following recommendations are made:

Recommendation 4:

Beginning with the 2005–2006 school year, the percentage of students meeting the SAT/ACT score requirements and the B average requirement for the LIFE Scholarship program will be eliminated from the high school rating criteria. Beginning with the 2005–2006 school year, data from the end-of-course assessments in Algebra I, English I, Biology I, and Physical Science will be used as one of the criteria for determining high school ratings.

Recommendation 5:

Section 59-18-900 of the Education Accountability Act of 1998 should be amended to allow the inclusion of graduation rate as one of the criteria for high school and school district report card ratings.

Recommendation 5A (proposed and adopted at March 18, 2004, EOC meeting):

Transfers to adult education who fail to earn high school diplomas within four years (inclusive of summer school) after entering ninth grade are to be counted as non-graduates in the calculation of graduation rate for South Carolina accountability purposes.

Additional Recommendations from the High School Ratings Advisory Committee

The High School Ratings Advisory Committee met in Columbia on March 4, 2004, to consider the proposed changes to the high school ratings (see appendix A following appendix B-2 for the agenda of that meeting). In the course of the discussion, the committee members identified several issues of concern and made recommendations for consideration by the Education Oversight Committee.

An overarching concern expressed by the members of the committee was that they had not had an opportunity to examine and analyze the results from the HSAP field test administered in spring 2003. Because it was a field test, the State Department of Education did not provide reports to schools and districts of their results on the 2003 HSAP field test. High school principals thus do not know how their students performed on the 2003 HSAP field test. Principals were provided their school Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) results, which were based on the HSAP field test data. The AYP results were based on the percentage of students tested in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics and whether the percentage of students scoring at the three level or above in each subject area was above or below the state criterion for AYP. High schools were also informed if their school met the AYP criterion for graduation rate.

School and district administrators did not receive HSAP results for individual students or reports on the percentages of students scoring at the four performance levels (one, two, three, and four). Students must score at the two level or above on both the HSAP ELA and math tests to meet the high school graduation requirement. The information revealing this “passing” information from the HSAP field test was not reported to schools or districts.

The committee members expressed deep concerns regarding the use of HSAP data to make decisions regarding criteria for school ratings when the data are not available for school personnel to evaluate and plan instructional programs. The *EOC Accountability Manual* calls for data from new assessments to be included in the rating system upon the third administration of the new assessment. In the case of the HSAP tests, however, the requirements of the state plan for No Child Left Behind (NCLB) shortened the phase-in of the new HSAP tests and replacement of the BSAP tests. In spring 2004, the BSAP Exit Examination tests will be administered only to students in eleventh or twelfth grades taking the high school test for graduation for the first time and students who have previously failed one or more parts of the BSAP exams. Students in the class of 2006 will take the HSAP tests. The only first-attempt high school exit examination data available in spring 2004 for use in determining high school ratings will be HSAP data.

In addition to recommendations identified earlier in this document, the advisory committee made the following recommendations for consideration by the Education Oversight Committee:

Recommendation 6:

Calculate the high school Improvement Ratings for 2003–2004 by recalculating the 2002–2003 absolute index based on HSAP field test criteria for first-attempt exit exam performance and subtracting it from the 2003–2004 absolute index, which is based on 2004 HSAP performance.

Recommendation 7:

Include data from students who meet the state diploma requirements as a result of attending summer school following their senior year in the calculation of the graduation rate.

B-2: High School Ratings Criteria for the 2003–2004 School Year

APPENDIX A

High School Ratings Advisory Committee Membership

March 4, 2004, Meeting

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Robert E. Staton
Chairman

Alex Martin
Vice Chairman

Traci Young Cooper
Robert C. Daniel
Dennis Drew
Mike Fair
Warren Giese
Robert W. Harrell, Jr.

The State of South Carolina

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Harry Lightsey, III
Susan Marlowe
George Martin
Joseph H. Neal
Harold C. Stowe
Inez M. Tenenbaum
Robert E. Walker
Judy H. Williams
G. Larry Wilson

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Jo Anne Anderson

High School Ratings Advisory Committee

Rescheduled Meeting
Blatt Building, Room 201
March 4, 2004
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

AGENDA

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Current Method for Calculating Ratings
- III. Ratings Criteria Which Include HSAP First-attempt Results
 - A. Absolute Ratings
 - B. Improvement Ratings
 - C. Other Models?
- IV. Planning for the Future
 - A. End of Course Tests
 - B. Other Issues
- V. Adjournment

**High School Ratings Advisory Committee
March 4, 2004
Columbia, S.C.**

***Allie E. Brooks, Jr.**
Principal
Wilson High School

Terry Pruitt
Superintendent
Hampton School District One

Daryl C. Brown
Principal
Carvers Bay High School

William Jay Ward
Principal
Ridge Spring-Monetta High School

Joe Clarke
Principal
Spartanburg High School

Steve Wilson
Principal
Keenan High School

Ed Curlee
Exec. Director for Secondary Education
Horry County School District

Also participating in the March 4
meeting:

***Lee D'Andrea**
Asst. Superintendent, Instructional
Services
Anderson School District Four

Dr. David Burnett, Office of Research
SC Department of Education

Dr. Paul Horne, Division of
Accountability EOC

W. Rutledge Dingle
Principal
Sumter High School

Mr. David Potter, Division of
Accountability EOC

Karen Neal
Principal
Woodruff High School

*Did not attend March 4, 2004, meeting

Appendix B-3

Ratings for Schools Enrolling Students in Only Grade Two or Below

A: Absolute Rating Criterion Number Six to Be Implemented Beginning in 2004

6. Professional Preparation: The proportion of teachers with degrees and certification in early childhood education.

In November and December 2003, primary schools were surveyed regarding the current certification and education of their teachers. This data collection and subsequent discussions with primary level educators revealed the following issues:

- (1) Changes in certification requirements: Currently, pre-kindergarten (4K) and kindergarten (5K) teachers are required to be certified in early childhood education; first and second grade teachers can be either elementary or early childhood certified. Beginning in September 2005, however, the ranges of grades for certification will change, with early childhood teachers certified for 4K through grade three and elementary teachers certified for grades two through six. Thus, after September 2005, teachers of grade one will have to be early childhood certified (current elementary certified teachers teaching first grade would have until 2006 to attain early childhood certification under a proposal currently under consideration by the General Assembly). For example, in 2006, the classroom teachers in a primary school housing 4K through grade two would have to be early childhood certified in 4K, 5K, and grade one; grade two teachers could be either early childhood or elementary certified.
- (2) All of the classroom teachers in schools that have 5K or grade one as their highest grade will have to be early childhood certified by 2006. Currently, five of the twenty-four primary schools have 5K or grade one as their highest grade level. The remaining nineteen schools have at least one second grade classroom. All of the 4K, 5K, and grade one classroom teachers in these schools will also have to be early childhood certified by 2006, leaving only second grade classroom teachers allowed to be either elementary or early childhood certified. The grade two teachers will not be required to be early childhood certified. Educators in these schools point out that, since all teachers in grade one and below will be required to be early childhood certified, they may be at a disadvantage compared to the other primary schools that do not have a second grade if this criterion is used for determining Absolute Ratings on report cards.
- (3) The 2003 data collection revealed that, of the 466 teachers in the fifteen primary schools that provided data, 334 (71.7 percent) are currently early childhood certified; 280 teachers (60.1 percent) had early childhood degrees. However, the data collection also revealed that some of the teachers who were not certified in early childhood or who did not have early childhood degrees were related arts (art, music, physical education) teachers, guidance counselors, or special education teachers. Primary school principals have expressed concerns that rating schools on the basis that teachers on their current teaching staff have early childhood degrees when the degrees were not required for certification is an unreasonable expectation.

Recommendation A:

Since the changes to the teacher certification system will increase the grade levels in primary schools for which early childhood certification is required to all grades but grade two, and since requiring all teachers to have early childhood degrees will impose extensive logistical difficulties, it is recommended that this criterion be eliminated from the criteria used for calculating the Absolute Ratings for primary schools.

B: Absolute Rating Criterion Number Seven to Be Implemented in 2004

7. Utilization of an environmental measure for program improvement (e.g., Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale Revised—ECERS-R).

The ECERS-R is a nationally validated observational instrument used for assessing the quality of a 4K or 5K classroom. It was not designed for use in first or second grade classrooms. Staff in the Office of Early Childhood Education of the South Carolina Department of Education (SDE) have received training from its authors on the administration and interpretation of the ECERS-R and have developed a plan to collect data from a sample of primary schools during the 2003–2004 school year. These data will be used to simulate the criteria to be used in calculating the 2004–2005 Absolute Ratings for all primary schools (see appendix A following appendix B-3 for a description of the proposed data collection).

The ECERS-R is an observational instrument consisting of forty-three items, each rated on a scale from one through seven. The SDE will assess the first thirty-eight of the ECERS-R items; these items evaluate space and furnishings; personal care routines; language-reasoning; activities; interaction; program structure; and provisions for parents. A random sample of 4K and 5K classrooms will be assessed at each school. Schools will receive scores based on the averages of the item ratings. The national average ECERS-R score is approximately four on the scale of one to seven; a score of three represents a minimally acceptable level of quality.

Data will be collected this spring from approximately one-third of the twenty-four South Carolina schools that currently have the highest grade level of two or below. The data from these schools will be used to simulate Absolute Ratings that include the environmental measure. Schools will be evaluated at least once every five years; schools that have made changes designed to improve their ECERS-R scores will have the opportunity to be reevaluated upon their request.

Recommendation B1:

Since data on a classroom environment measure for simulation of the primary school Absolute Ratings are currently in the process of being collected and are not yet available, the use of such data in the ratings criteria should be deferred for the 2003–2004 school year. The classroom environment measure will be used to calculate primary school Absolute Ratings beginning with the 2004–2005 school year.

Recommendation B2:

The Office of Early Childhood Education of the State Department of Education will conduct evaluations of the classroom environment qualities of 4K and 5K classrooms in primary schools on a sample basis using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale Revised (ECERS-R). Data from the ECERS-R assessment will be reported to the schools and will be used as one of the criteria in the calculation of Absolute Ratings for primary schools. Schools will be evaluated on a five-year cyclical basis, with opportunities for reevaluation more frequently at the request of schools based on improvements in classroom quality made by the schools. Pilot data collected in 2003–2004 will be used for ratings simulation to establish Absolute Rating criteria for use beginning in the 2004–2005 school year. Schools from whom pilot data are collected in 2003–2004 may elect to retain their evaluation results for use in calculating their ratings or may choose to be reevaluated.

B-3: Ratings for Schools Enrolling Students in Only Grade Two or Below

Appendix A

Proposed Implementation by the South Carolina Department of Education of Classroom Environmental Quality Measure for Use in Calculation of Absolute Report Card Ratings for PK–2 Primary Schools (Proposal to the Education Oversight Committee)

The *2003–2004 Accountability Manual* ratings criteria for schools enrolling students in only grades two or below include: student attendance, pupil-teacher ratios, parent involvement, external accreditation, professional development, and, for 2004 and beyond, professional development and utilization of an environmental measure for program improvement (e.g., Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale).

This proposal addresses the "utilization of an environmental measure for program improvement (e.g., Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale)."

Proposal 1:

Observe and assess specific groupings to determine the quality of the programs (e.g., specifically 4K and 5K classrooms).

Rationale:

We know from numerous studies on quality that the level of quality in our preschools has a significant impact on children's academic success in first and second grades (the *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes* study, 1993, 1999). Therefore, in order for our young children to be successful when they enter first and second grades and beyond, they must attend quality early childhood programs serving children through five years old. It is critical we assess the quality of the programs serving our youngest students. According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation policies and procedures, accreditation is for early childhood programs serving preschools, kindergartens, and before- and after-school programs. Regular first and second grades are not included in the accreditation process. Therefore, by following national policies and procedures, we will observe and assess the four- and five-year-old programs in order to determine a quality rating. ECERS is used to assess programs serving groups two-and-a-half to five years old.

Proposal 2:

Observe and assess only one-third of the classrooms to determine a quality rating for the school.

Rationale:

Following the policies and procedures for NAEYC accreditation, only a sampling of specific groupings is used to determine the quality of the total program. In other words, one-third of the total number of 4K and 5K classrooms, as well as one-third of each specific group, would be assessed to determine a rating. A random sampling of

classrooms is made the day of the observation by placing the classrooms for each specific group in a hat and by pulling out one-third. The school's overall quality rating score would be calculated in two ways: (1) If all of the classrooms observed score above three on the scale, an average of the classroom scores will be used to determine the school's rating; (2) If one classroom observed scores below a three, the school's rating is its lowest classroom score. A program is only as strong as its weakest link.

Proposal 3:

Maintain "quality rating status" for a period of five years with an annual report submitted that addresses areas cited for improvement and any major changes, such as staff turnover, addition or removal of a specific group, additions or renovations to the facility, etc.

Rationale:

Following the policies and procedures for NAEYC accreditation, programs will be awarded a quality rating for a five-year term. This is designed to help better manage demand and to make the process more efficient for the school. During that five-year period, schools will be required to send in an annual report stating any program improvements made in response to the recommendations of the ECERS-R assessment team and any major changes that have occurred within the school. In order to achieve a higher rating, a school may submit a written request asking for an assessor to come in and observe and rate their school before the five-year period. The written request must include stated improvements.

Proposal 4:

Point values will be assigned as follows:

- Five points: average rating 5.0 or higher
- Four points: average rating 4.99–4.5
- Three points: average rating 4.49–4.0
- Two points: average rating 3.99–3.5
- One point: average rating 3.49 or below

Rationale:

According to the authors of the rating systems, a score of three indicates minimal quality or basic custodial quality. The national average score is a four. A rating of five means good, stable quality, which in turn means the likelihood of average child development. High-quality programs create average children who can perform on an average rate or at the norm. A program that meets the definition of developmentally appropriate care put forth by NAEYC would be expected to score in the range of five or higher.

B-3: Ratings for Schools Enrolling Students in Only Grade Two or Below

ECERS Update February 24, 2004

ECERS Training with Authors

- A core group representing the Department of Education, First Steps, and the ABC Child Care Program/DSS was trained to reliability by the authors in January. The eight in the core group are the only folks in South Carolina trained to reliability.

ECERS Training

- The authors conducted a one-day ECERS overview training on January 12. It was available through distance education in six sites across the state. Early childhood coordinators were notified of the one-day training. SCETV has permission to rebroadcast the overview training three more times for public schools. Dates will be set, and early childhood coordinators and primary schools' principals will be notified. Districts will be able to tape the all-day session and use it for additional professional development.

Primary Schools

- ECERS books were ordered and disseminated to primary school principals, 4K teachers, and 5K teachers at the meeting on February 23.
- An ECERS meeting for primary schools was held on February 23, 2004, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the American Red Cross Building in Columbia. A team of at least three attended the training—school principal/administrator, district early childhood coordinator, and a lead 4K or 5K teacher from the school.
- ECERS visits to primary schools will begin mid-March and continue through April. Principals will specify three exclusion days during that time. Visits will not be scheduled on the exclusion days or state holidays.
- The Office of Early Childhood Education (OECE) will select a fifteen-day window within which the visit will occur and will communicate that information to the school. The assessor will contact the school twenty-four hours prior to the visit to inform the school of the confirmed date.
- One-third of the 4K classes and one-third of the 5K classes will be observed. Classes will be randomly selected the day of the visit.
- Each school will receive one score. This score will be an average score from the classes observed. The school's overall quality rating score would be calculated in two ways: (1) If all of the classrooms observed score above three on the scale, an average of the classroom scores will be used to determine the school's rating; (2) If one classroom observed scores below a three, the school's rating is its lowest classroom score. A program is only as strong as its weakest link.
- The school will receive written feedback within a month. The feedback will consist of the school's rating and general comments and then specific reports for

- each classroom observed, indicating the classroom rating and strengths and weaknesses.
- The school's score will not be reported until the 2005 report card. Therefore this year will be like a practice run. If they are not pleased with their score, they can request another visit for the spring of 2005.

Technical Assistance

- Technical assistance will be provided to primary schools via a two-day institute during the summer for principals/administrators and early childhood coordinators. Specific information on how to increase scores will be provided during the two days.
- The one-day ECERS overview training by the authors will be rebroadcast three times this spring. Dates have not yet been finalized.
- The Office of Early Childhood Education (OECE) will provide technical assistance through on-site visits and email.
- An ECERS web page will be added this summer to the OECE website. The web page will include frequently asked questions and other pertinent information on ECERS. Also we will provide a link to the Frank Porter Graham site.
- A list of the twenty-four primary schools with contact information will be sent to the principals this week so they may begin networking with each other.
- In the fall, in-depth subscale training will be provided through distance learning via the USC/Gateway Center.

Appendix B-4

Retraining Assistance Program: Process for Review of Retraining Assistance Program 2003–2004

The following process is used by the accountability division of the Education Oversight Committee for the review of the retraining grant. Throughout the process, representatives from the accountability division consult and work with representatives of the State Department of Education responsible for the implementation of the program.

Overall Process

The accountability division of the Education Oversight Committee examines data from three sources to complete the review of expenditures of the Retraining Assistance Program: the school renewal plan submitted to the State Department of Education; the information provided by the school on the internet survey sent by the accountability division to each participating school; and the student achievement data from each school. As part of the review, the specific professional development activities listed in the school renewal plan are compared to the specific activities the school reports on the internet survey sent by the accountability division. Discrepancies between the two lists of activities are noted. Information provided through the internet survey is also analyzed through the criteria for evaluation listed below. Student achievement data are then analyzed for improvement consistent with the goals of the school renewal plan.

Statutory Authority

The Education Accountability Act of 1998 (§59-18-1560) establishes grant programs for schools designated as below average or unsatisfactory:

“The State Board of Education, working with the Accountability Division and the Department of Education, must establish grant programs for schools designated as below average and for schools designated as unsatisfactory. A school designated as below average will qualify for a grant to undertake any needed retraining of school faculty and administration once the revised plan is determined by the State Department of Education to meet the criteria on high standards and effective activities. A school designated as unsatisfactory will qualify for the grant program after the State Board of Education approves its revised plan. A grant or a portion of a grant may be renewed annually over the next three years, if school and district actions to implement the revised plan continue. Should student performance not improve, any revisions to the plan must meet high standards prior to renewal of the grant. The revised plan must be reviewed by the district and board of trustees and the State Department of Education to determine what other actions, if any, need to be taken. A grant may be extended for up to two additional years, if the State Board of Education determines it is needed to sustain academic improvement. The funds must be expended based on the revised plan and according to criteria established by the State Board of Education. Prior to extending any grant, the Accountability Division shall review school expenditures to make a determination of the effective use

of previously awarded grant funds. If deficient use is determined, those deficiencies must be identified, noted, and corrective action taken before a grant extension will be given.”

Criteria for Evaluation

The criteria used for the review of the Retraining Assistance Program include the following, drawn from the State Board of Education-approved *Professional Development Standards for South Carolina*: The most important element of the Retraining Assistance Program is the improvement of student learning. During the initial two award years, the use of retraining assistance funds is reviewed and presented as advisory only; the third year review is provided to the State Board of Education for its consideration during deliberations to determine if the grant is to be extended. Student achievement data are considered in the third year review. The reviews in each of the three years consider effective use against the professional development standards shown below. Sample indicator questions, drawn from the sample indicators for each listed standard, are also included.

- ❑ Standards 4 and 5: Funds are expended in a manner to accomplish the acquisition of new behavior and long-term skill improvement by all teachers. Sample indicator questions include:
 - Are professional development activities scheduled to ensure time for recipients to learn together and improve practice?
 - Is time for professional development activities provided during the workday (common planning time, peer observation, etc.)?
 - Are all stakeholders in the school involved in the determination of the professional development activities to be conducted?
 - Are professional development activities held at a time when all stakeholders can attend?

- ❑ Standards 2, 5, 7, 9 and 12: Funds are expended in a manner that addresses the three phases of the change process: initiation, implementation, and institutionalization. Sample indicator questions include:
 - Do school leaders participate with staff in professional development activities?
 - Are all stakeholders in the school involved in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the professional development activities conducted?
 - Is collaboration occurring among the teachers at the school to support change and innovation?
 - Are the professional development activities designed to relate to ongoing programs at the school?
 - Are follow-up opportunities provided for all professional development activities, and are the follow-up opportunities monitored and supported with human and financial resources?

- Standards 3 and 8: Funds are expended on activities chosen through data-driven decision making, that are research-based and provide theory, demonstration, practice with feedback, and follow-up for all participants. Sample indicator questions include:
 - Are professional development activities aligned with the school improvement plans?
 - Are the professional development activities chosen after careful analysis of disaggregated data?
 - Are professional development activities designed to address gaps in achievement among all student groups?

- Standards 6 and 11: Funds are expended in a manner that recognizes differing levels of educator expertise (i.e., diverse participant needs) in regards to content knowledge and pedagogical practices. Sample indicator questions include:
 - Are the professional development activities presented by credible providers?
 - Are the professional development activities presented in multiple formats (action research, self-study, training, etc.)?
 - Do all training activities provide theory, demonstration, practice, feedback, and coaching opportunities?

Data Sources

- Guidelines for Retraining Assistance Program
- NSDC Standards for Staff Development*
- Professional Development Standards for South Carolina*
- School renewal plans
- School survey responses
- Student achievement data (PACT, HSAP, EOCEP, AP, etc.)

Time Line

Event	Time Frame	Involved Parties
Superintendents notified that survey is to be sent to principals	Early May	EOC, LEAs
Survey sent to principals, with instructions on how to complete the survey and reply deadline	Early May	EOC, LEAs
Superintendents notified of response status of schools in district regarding the survey	Mid June	EOC, LEAs
*Superintendents notified of schools not replying to survey	Mid July	EOC, LEAs
*State Board of Education notified of schools not replying to survey	Mid July	EOC, SBE
Analyze non-achievement components of the data, including survey on demographics and attitudes, activities reported by the schools, and the school renewal plan	July–August	EOC, SDE
Superintendents and principals notified of non-achievement data analysis, request documentation of inaccurate data deadline three weeks after sent	October	EOC, LEAs
Add school achievement data to other data	As available	EOC
Draft with detail on deficiencies provided to superintendents and principals of schools, request documentation of inaccurate data	Mid November	EOC, LEAs
Present final report to EIA Subcommittee and full EOC	Mid December	EOC
Forward recommendations to SBE, following EOC action	Mid December	EOC

*These steps are provided pending adoption in the fiscal year 2005 budget of the revision to Proviso 1A.48: “Furthermore, any school that does not provide the evaluation information necessary to determine effective use as required by Section 59-18-1560 is not eligible to receive additional funding until the requested data is provided as outlined in the program guidelines.”

Appendix B-5

Longitudinal Student PACT Performance South Carolina Education Oversight Committee September 18, 2003

How is improvement measured in the rating system?

- ❑ The Improvement Rating index is the average of individual student achievement gains in the current year compared to the previous year.
- ❑ Each student's progress in test scores is tracked longitudinally from the previous year to the current year. A student who scored Below Basic 1 (BB1—the lowest score range on the test) in math last year and scored BB1 on the current year's math test has not made progress and would make a zero contribution to the improvement index for the school. A student who scored BB1 last year but scored Below Basic 2 (BB2—scores just below the cutoff score for Basic) in the current year has made progress and would make a positive contribution to the improvement index for her school. The student who scored Basic last year but scored BB2 in the current year has lost ground and would make a negative contribution to the improvement index for the school.
- ❑ Each school's or district's improvement index is converted to a rating. A negative index (less than zero) indicates that, on average, individual students in the school scored lower on the PACT tests in the current year than they did in the previous year; the negative index results in an Unsatisfactory rating. A positive index indicates that, on average, individual students scored higher on the PACT tests in the current year compared to their scores in the previous year; positive indexes earn Average, Good, or Excellent ratings based on the size of the positive index. An index of zero indicates that, on average, individual students made the same scores in the current year as they did in the previous year; no gain earns a Below Average rating.
- ❑ The Improvement Rating a school or district is awarded may be higher than indicated by the improvement index alone. Since it is difficult for students who are already scoring very high to score even higher the next year, schools earning Excellent Absolute Ratings for both the current and previous years are awarded a Good Improvement Rating, even if their index is zero or negative. If these schools have a positive improvement index, they receive an Excellent Improvement Rating. Improvement Ratings are also increased one rating level if the gains of students belonging to historically underachieving groups of students in the school are exceptionally high compared to the gains of all students across the state.

How do the school improvement indexes in 2001–2002 compare to those from 2000–2001?

**Table 1
Median School Improvement Indexes
Elementary and Middle Schools
2000–2001 and 2001–2002 School Years**

School Year*	Elementary Schools	Middle Schools
2000–2001	0.015	-0.012
2001–2002	-0.013	0.027

*Improvement indexes for 2000–2001 represent achievement gains from 1999–2000 compared to 2000–2001; improvement indexes for 2001–2002 represent achievement gains from 2000–2001 compared to 2001–2002.

- ❑ The data indicate that, on average, schools made little or no progress in increasing individual students' achievement levels over each school year evaluated. While many students may have scored at the same achievement level each year and some increased their achievement levels from one year to the next, an approximately equal number scored lower, resulting in overall gains of approximately zero.
- ❑ The performance of students scoring at the Below Basic 1 (BB1), Below Basic 2 (BB2), and Basic levels must increase over time and the performance of students currently scoring Proficient or Advanced must not drop if we are to meet the 2010 goal and fulfill the requirements of No Child Left Behind.

What has been the pattern of achievement among individual students studied for three consecutive years, rather than the two years evaluated for the Improvement Ratings?

- ❑ The PACT ELA and math scores for 1999–2000, 2000–2001, and 2001–2002 were matched for each student. The resulting data allows us to evaluate the progress of students who were attending the following grades in 1999–2000: grade three (test data from grades three, four, and five); grade four (test data from grades four, five, and six); grade five (test data from grades five, six, and seven); and grade six (test data from grades six, seven, and eight). Data from students repeating grades during this period were also matched. The analyses include data only from students who were tested in the same school district for all three years studied.

Students Scoring Below Basic (BB1 or BB2) in 1999–2000

The data from students who failed to pass PACT ELA and/or math in 1999–2000 (scored BB1 or BB2) were analyzed to determine the number and percentage who passed the test at the Basic level or higher in 2001–2002 (i.e., improved performance) and the number and percentage who continued to fail the test (scored below Basic) in 2001–2002 (i.e., failed to improve).

Table 2
Three-Year Longitudinal Progress of Students
Initially Scoring Below Basic 1 or Below Basic 2
PACT ELA and Math
1999–2000 through 2001–2002

PACT Test	Students Scoring Below Basic 1 in 1999–2000		Students Scoring Below Basic 2 in 1999–2000		Totals—Students Scoring Below Basic 1 or Below Basic 2 in 1999–2000	
	Improved by 2001–2002	Failed to Improve by 2001–2002	Improved by 2001–2002	Failed to Improve by 2001–2002	Improved by 2001–2002	Failed to Improve by 2001–2002
	# (%)	# (%)	# (%)	# (%)	# (%)	# (%)
ELA	6,577 (23.6)	21,314 (76.4)	8,280 (46.2)	9,645 (53.8)	14,857 (32.4)	30,959 (67.6)
Math	6,245 (19.4)	25,917 (80.6)	12,339 (43.6)	15,937 (56.4)	18,574 (30.7)	41,854 (69.3)

- Students scoring just below the Basic cutoff (Below Basic 2) were much more likely to score Basic or higher at the end of the three-year period than students initially scoring Below Basic 1.
- Less than one-third of the students initially failing the test passed it at the end of the three years studied.

Students Scoring Below Basic 1 in 1999–2000

- A special study of the students whose 1999–2000 scores were in the lowest range (Below Basic 1) was conducted to identify the number and percentage that continued to score Below Basic 1 every year for three years.

Table 3
Students Scoring Below Basic 1 for Three Consecutive Years
PACT ELA and Math
1999–2000 through 2001–2002

PACT Test	# Scoring BB1 in 1999–2000	# (%) Scoring BB1 Every Year 1999–2000 through 2001–2002
ELA	27,966	11,234 (40.2)
Math	32,162	12,525 (38.9)

- The students who continue to score at the lowest levels present a considerable challenge to the system. The 11,234 students consistently scoring BB1 on PACT ELA represent 6.8 percent of all students with ELA data (165,098); the 12,525 students consistently scoring BB1 on PACT math are 7.5 percent of all students with math data (166,156).

Students Scoring Basic in 1999–2000

- ❑ The progress over the three years of students initially scoring at the minimal passing level (Basic) in ELA and math was also tracked.
- ❑ Three categories of students who initially scored Basic in 1999–2000 were identified:
 - Students whose scores neither increased nor decreased (i.e., also scored Basic in 2001–2002);
 - Students whose scores in 2001–2002 were above Basic (i.e., Proficient or Advanced);
 - Students whose scores in 2001–2002 had fallen below Basic.

Table 4
Three-Year Longitudinal Progress of Students Initially Scoring Basic
PACT ELA and Math
1999–2000 through 2001–2002

PACT Test	Students Scoring Basic All Three Years # (%)	Students Scoring Above Basic in 2001–2002 # (%)	Students Scoring Below Basic in 2001–2002 # (%)	Total # of Students Scoring Basic in 1999–2000
ELA	40,132 (65.8)	8,206 (13.5)	12,613 (20.7)	60,951
Math	38,913 (59.1)	13,245 (20.1)	13,644 (20.7)	65,802

- ❑ A higher percentage of students increased their scores above Basic in math than in ELA at the end of the three-year period.
- ❑ The percentage and number of students whose math scores increased was similar to the number and percentage that decreased over the three years.
- ❑ The number and percentage of students whose ELA scores decreased was considerably larger than the number and percentage whose scores increased over the three years.
- ❑ The percentage of students whose ELA scores decreased below Basic was the same as the percentage of students whose math scores decreased.

Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced in 1999–2000

- ❑ The progress of students whose ELA or math scores were initially at the Proficient or Advanced levels in 1999–2000 was also studied.
- ❑ Two groups were identified among the students who initially scored Proficient or Advanced:
 - Students who maintained at least Proficient scores between 1999–2000 and 2001–2002;
 - Students whose scores dropped below Proficient by 2001–2002.

Table 5
Three-Year Longitudinal Progress of Students
Initially Scoring Proficient or Advanced
PACT ELA and Math
1999–2000 through 2001–2002

PACT Test	Students Who Maintained Proficient or Above from 1999–2000 through 2001–2002 n (%)	Students Whose Scores Dropped Below Proficient in 2001–2002 n (%)	Total Number of Students Initially Scoring Proficient or Advanced in 1999–2000
ELA	37,679 (64.6)	20,652 (35.4)	58,331
Math	30,028 (75.2)	9,888 (24.8)	39,916

- Approximately one-fourth of the students initially scoring Proficient or Advanced in math saw their scores decrease at the end of three years.
- Over one-third of the students initially scoring Proficient or Advanced in ELA saw their scores decrease over the three years.
- In 1999–2000 fewer students scored Proficient or Advanced in math than in ELA, but by 2001–2002 a higher percentage of students had maintained their high math scores.
- Students initially scoring Proficient or Advanced in ELA were more likely to see their scores decrease than students initially scoring at the same level in math.

Performance of Students Belonging to Different Demographic Groups

- The three-year longitudinal data were also analyzed by student demographic group.

Table 6
Statewide Analysis of Three-Year Longitudinal Data by Student Demographic Group
PACT ELA and Math
1999–2000 through 2001–2002

Student Group	% Students Initially Scoring BB1 Who Improved by 2001–2002		% Students Initially Scoring BB2 Who Improved by 2001–2002		% Students Initially Scoring Proficient or Advanced Who Maintained High Scores through 2001–2002		% Students Initially Scoring Basic Whose Scores Were Higher Than Basic in 2001–2002		% Students Initially Scoring Basic Whose Scores Dropped Below Basic in 2001–2002	
	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
All Students	23.6	19.4	46.2	43.6	64.6	75.2	13.5	20.1	20.7	20.7
Free/Reduced Lunch	22.2	18.2	42.6	40.1	47.6	61.8	9.3	14.5	25.9	26.9
Pay Lunch	27.9	23.1	54.4	50.3	70.5	78.8	18.1	25.0	14.9	15.3
African-American	20.3	16.1	41.3	38.5	47.9	60.6	8.7	13.1	26.2	28.0
White	31.1	26.7	53.6	50.6	68.9	77.7	17.2	24.4	16.3	16.3
African-American Free/Reduced Lunch	20.1	16.0	40.4	37.5	42.4	55.5	7.7	11.8	28.1	30.2
White Free/Reduced Lunch	30.2	25.9	48.2	46.8	52.7	66.2	12.0	18.7	22.0	22.1
African-American Pay Lunch	21.4	16.8	46.6	43.4	57.4	68.5	12.2	17.3	19.5	21.3
White Pay Lunch	31.9	27.3	57.7	53.3	71.9	79.5	19.6	26.6	13.7	14.0

- The percentages of students initially scoring Below Basic in ELA whose scores improved were larger than the percentages in math for most groups.
- The percentages of students initially scoring Proficient or Advanced in math who maintained their high scores were higher than those for ELA.
- The percentages of students initially scoring Basic in math who improved their scores were also higher than for ELA.

How can these analyses be used to improve academic achievement?

- District- and school-level analyses will help instructional leaders better evaluate their school or district performance over time and help them identify program strengths and weaknesses.
- Analyses such as these have not been available in the past.
- The availability of a unique student ID would allow districts to monitor their own longitudinal data.
- Longitudinal data reports can provide the basis for district and school personnel to ask (and answer) substantive questions about their programs.

Some Questions Suggested by the Data

- Are there consistent patterns of improvement (or lack of it) across grade levels or school groupings?
 - In ELA?
 - In math?
- How much progress are the Below Basic students making?
- Where are the consistently Below Basic students and the improving Below Basic students?
- Are students scoring at the Basic level improving or is their performance slipping?
- Are students scoring Proficient or Advanced sustaining their performance over time?
- Where are the students who maintain their Proficient or Advanced performance?
- What do the data indicate about achievement gaps—are they decreasing, increasing, staying about the same?

Appendix B-6

The Performance of Historically Underachieving Groups of Students in South Carolina: Small Steps Forward

**South Carolina Education Oversight Committee
June 19, 2003**

The achievement gap between demographic groups of students has been described extensively (Jencks and Phillips, 1998). The focus in many of these studies is on historically underachieving groups of students (members of racial minority groups and students in poverty). Several states have identified achievement gaps between white and African-American students and between students in poverty and students above the poverty line and have taken steps to reduce those gaps. Reducing achievement gaps between student groups by raising the scores of lower-scoring members of those groups is recognized as a necessary component of efforts to raise overall educational levels.

The state of North Carolina has established a program requiring schools to implement their own plans to close achievement gaps, provided increased funding directed toward reducing gaps, and created a Closing the Achievement Gap section at the State Department of Public Instruction to provide technical assistance to schools and districts regarding gap reduction (N.C. Department of Public Instruction, 2003). On a similar note, the South Carolina African-American Student Achievement Committee issued a report in 2001 with recommendations for increasing the achievement of African-American students (S.C. Department of Education, 2001).

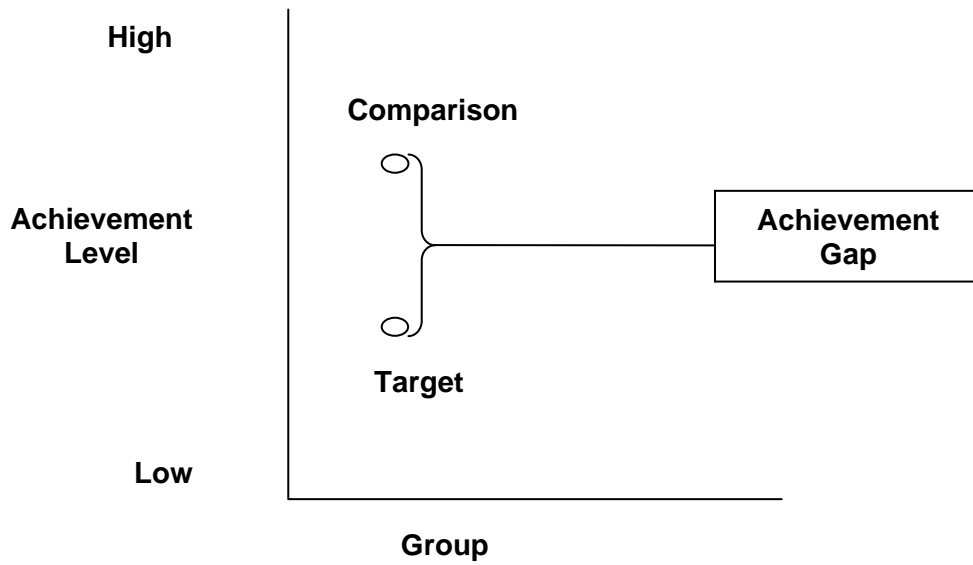
The achievement gap is an area of particular interest, and the Education Oversight Committee has requested that staff conduct in-depth studies of South Carolina's educational system. We reviewed the data to provide a description of the achievement gap in elementary and middle schools and identified a set of schools that is closing the gaps in specific subjects for specific student groups.

What is the achievement gap?

The achievement gap is often described in terms of differential performance by different student demographic groups on state or national achievement tests. For example, a finding from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is that the performance of white students exceeds that of African-American students and the performance of students living above the poverty line exceeds that of students living in poverty (Grissmer, Flanagan, and Williamson, 1998; Hedges and Nowell, 1998). An important education reform goal is to close the achievement gap between the demographic groups by raising the performance of all groups, with the expectation that the lower-scoring groups must improve more rapidly than the higher-scoring groups to "catch up."

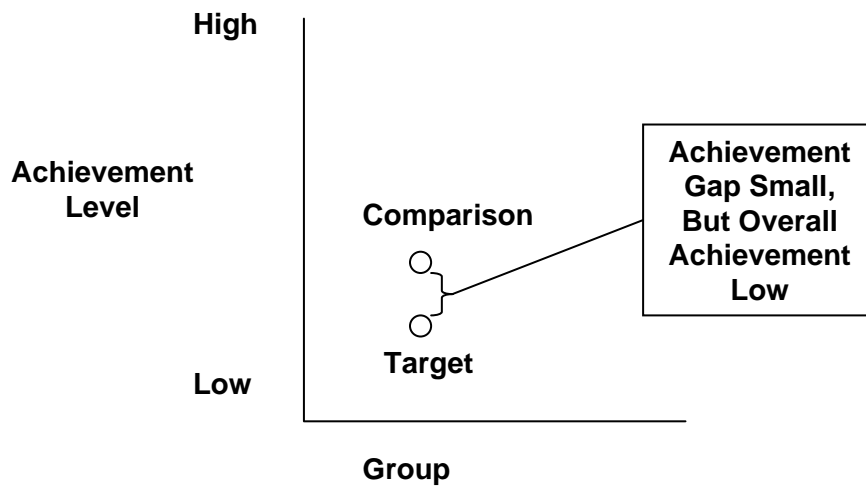
The gap is described in terms of the target group (the lower-scoring demographic group) and the comparison group (the higher-scoring group) (see figure 1). The difference in achievement between the target and comparison groups at various performance levels (Basic, Proficient, Advanced) is the achievement gap.

Figure 1



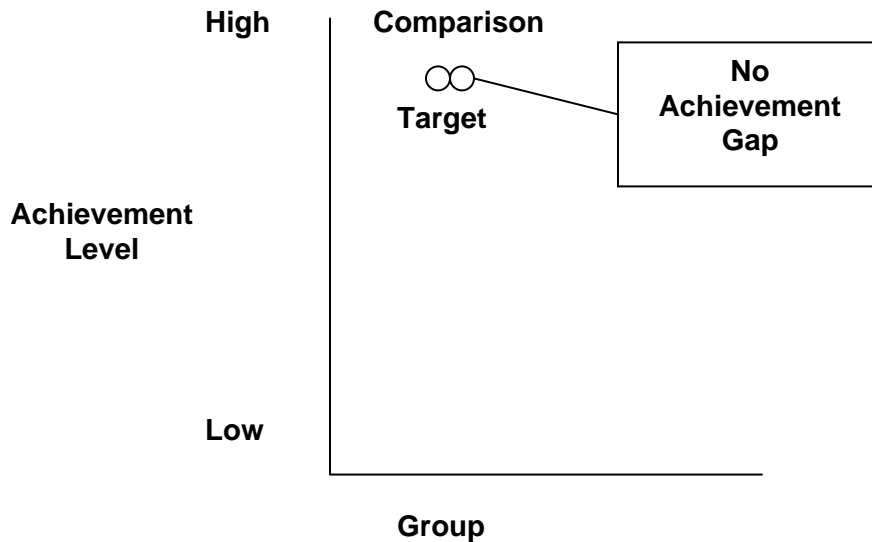
Reducing the gap can be accomplished in a couple of ways. All the groups can be poorly performing, resulting in small gaps (see figure 2). This is not a desirable outcome.

Figure 2



The achievement of both target and comparison groups can be raised to a high level (figure 3). This is the desirable outcome and the approach we are pursuing in South Carolina.

Figure 3



The Study

We studied the 2001–2002 performance on PACT English language arts (ELA) and mathematics in grades three through eight of African-American and white students and of students participating in the federal free/reduced-price lunch program and students who pay for lunch. The target groups were African-American students and students participating in the free/reduced-price lunch program. The comparison groups were white students and students not participating in the lunch program (pay lunch).

Table 1 provides some additional insight into these demographic groups.

Table 1
South Carolina Demographic Statistics
Measures of Child Well-being
2000 Census Data

Measure	African-American	Non-Hispanic White
Children ages 6–17 Years	259,282	399,219
% children in poverty, 1999	33.7%	9.2%
Number of children ages 6–17 years in poverty	87,378	36,728
Median family income, 1999	\$28,742	\$50,794
% children in neighborhoods where more than 32.2% of families are female-headed, no spouse	50.5%	13.3%
% children in neighborhoods with more than 18.6% persons in poverty	47.5%	13.0%
% children in neighborhoods where more than 14.7% of persons 16–19 are high school dropouts	36.0%	30.4%
% children in neighborhoods where more than 38.1% of working-age men are unemployed	22.8%	4.7%
% children with all four characteristics	9.9%	1.1%
% children (pre-K–12) in public school	95.9%	82.0%
% children (pre-K–12) in private school	4.1%	18.0%

Source: Kids Count, 2003

African-American children are more likely to be living in poverty than white students. Even though there are more white children than African-American, there are more than twice as many African-American school-aged children in poverty as white children. The depth and breadth of poverty for South Carolina’s children, especially among African-American children, is a major factor to consider when attempting to understand the source of achievement differences among different demographic groups of children.

The achievement levels studied were the percentages of students in each group scoring Basic or higher (Basic, Proficient, or Advanced) and percentages of students scoring Proficient or higher (Proficient or Advanced) on the PACT ELA and math tests administered in spring 2002.

In addition to studying the performances of the target and comparison groups described above, we also studied the PACT performance of each of the combinations of student demographic groups (African-American free/reduced-price lunch, African-American pay lunch, white free/reduced-price lunch, and white pay lunch). The study of the combinations helps to understand the effects of poverty when evaluating the

performance of demographic groups. For example, is the higher performance of white students in part because fewer white students live in poverty than African-American students? By studying the performance of poor and non-poor white and African-American students, we can help to control for effects related to socioeconomic status.

We also studied an additional factor—the overall achievement level of the school attended. School overall achievement level was defined as school Absolute Rating (Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and Unsatisfactory). This study was done to identify the relationships among school overall achievement and the achievement gap.

Finally, we identified a group of schools that was closing the achievement gap for at least one of the target groups in at least one subject area. In the future we hope to further study these schools and other schools like them to identify common educational practices that can be encouraged and implemented in other schools.

Results from the Study

Data for the study came from two primary sources: 2002 PACT test results for demographic groups published on the S.C. Department of Education (SDE) website (www.myscschools.com) and the original 2002 PACT test data files to obtain data on the combinations of demographic groups (white pay lunch, African-American free/reduced-price lunch, etc.). The 2002 PACT results reported on the SDE website are from students who were attending the same school on both the forty-fifth day and on the first day of testing; these data also include data from students with disabilities tested at a lower grade level than their nominal grade based on age (off-level testing). The data on the forty-fifth day and on off-level testing were not available for the combinations of demographic groups studied from the PACT test data files.

Achievement Gaps in 2002

The data analysis is presented first at the statewide level for four demographic groups: African-American students; white students; students participating in the federal free/reduced-price lunch program (subsidized meals); and students not participating in the federal lunch program (full-pay meals). The data for these four groups are then analyzed at the school level, where school-level data are analyzed by their 2002 Absolute Rating status (Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and Unsatisfactory). The same analyses are then reported based on the combinations of the demographic groups (African-American free lunch; African-American pay lunch; white free lunch; white pay lunch). These last analyses permit the estimation of the effects of poverty within the racial groups; further insights are provided when the data are analyzed by school rating, providing a control for school overall achievement. The analyses are presented for English language arts (ELA) percent Basic or above; ELA percent Proficient or Advanced; math Basic or above; and math Proficient or Advanced.

The statewide results for the 2002 ELA PACT tests are listed in table 2 and figures 4 through 7, and the achievement gaps are listed in table 3. (Figures 4 through 31 appear at the end of this appendix.)

Table 2
2002 PACT Results by Demographic Group

Demographic Group	ELA		Math	
	% Basic or Above	% Proficient or Advanced	% Basic or Above	% Proficient or Advanced
All Students	74.8	31.2	68.2	28.6
White	84.8	42.9	80.4	40.2
African-American	61.2	15.3	51.7	12.7
Free/Reduced Lunch	63.3	16.7	55.3	15.2
Pay Lunch	86.9	46.4	81.8	42.8

Table 3
2002 PACT Achievement Gaps between Demographic Groups

Target and Comparison Group Difference	ELA		Math	
	% Basic or Above	% Proficient or Advanced	% Basic or Above	% Proficient or Advanced
African-American and White	-23.6	-27.6	-28.7	-27.5
Free/Reduced Lunch and Pay Lunch	-23.6	-29.7	-26.5	-27.6

The data in table 2 indicate that pay lunch students have the highest scores and African-American students have the lowest. The percentages of students scoring Proficient or Advanced in both subjects are considerably lower than the percentages scoring Basic or above for all groups.

The achievement gaps between the groups listed in table 3 were calculated by subtracting the performance of the comparison groups (white and pay lunch) from that of the target groups (African-American and free/reduced-price lunch). Since the comparison groups score higher than the target groups, the differences are negative. For example, the percentage of African-American students scoring Basic or above in ELA is 23.6 percentage points lower than white students. The gaps in 2002 ranged from -23.6 percent (ELA percent Basic or above and percent Proficient or Advanced for African-American vs. white students) to -29.7 percent (ELA percent Proficient or Advanced, free/reduced vs. pay lunch students).

The achievement levels for the demographic groups by school Absolute Rating are shown in figures 8 through 11, and the achievement gaps between the groups by school rating are exhibited in figures 12 through 15. Several observations are evident from figures 8 through 11:

- The overall achievement levels for each group are highest in Excellent schools and lowest in Unsatisfactory schools.

- ❑ For ELA percent Basic or above (figure 8), the percentages of African-American and free/reduced-price lunch students scoring Basic or above in Unsatisfactory schools are approximately half of the percentages of white and pay lunch students in Excellent schools.
- ❑ For ELA percent Proficient or Advanced (figure 9), the percentages of African-American and free/reduced lunch students scoring Proficient or Advanced in Unsatisfactory schools are approximately one-eighth the percentages of white and pay lunch students in Excellent schools.
- ❑ For math percent Basic or above (figure 10), the percentages of African-American and free/reduced lunch students scoring Basic or above in Unsatisfactory schools are slightly more than one-third the percentages of white and pay lunch students in Excellent schools.
- ❑ For math percent Proficient or Advanced (figure 11), the percentages of African-American students and of free/reduced lunch students scoring Proficient or Advanced in Unsatisfactory schools are approximately one-tenth the percentages of white and pay lunch students in Excellent schools.

Figures 12 through 15 reveal the following:

- ❑ The pattern of gaps across schools having different ratings differs between scores of percent Basic or above and percent Proficient or Advanced.
- ❑ The sizes of the gaps between African-American and white students and between free/reduced and pay lunch students are similar.
- ❑ For ELA and math percent Basic or above, the sizes of the gaps for all groups are similar for all school rating levels.
- ❑ For ELA and math percent Proficient or Advanced, the magnitude of the gaps for all groups increases from Unsatisfactory to Excellent schools, with Excellent schools having the largest gaps and Unsatisfactory schools having the smallest.
- ❑ The sizes of the gaps in percent Proficient or Advanced for lower-rated schools may be affected by the very low proportions of students from all groups in these schools scoring at higher performance levels; the very low performance limits the size of the differences between groups.

As indicated earlier, one of the goals for these analyses was to shed some light on the association of race and socioeconomic status with PACT performance in 2002. We know from the data that the average performance of African-American students is lower than that of white students and that the performance of free/reduced-price lunch students is lower than that of pay-lunch students. The data in table 1 indicate that African-American students are more likely to be living in poverty than white students. Without further analysis, we cannot tell from the data the extent to which the lower performance of African-American students is due to poverty.

To gain some insight into this question, we reanalyzed the data by subdividing the racial groups into two categories: those participating in the free/reduced-price lunch program and those who paid for their lunches. This enabled us to control or compensate for the effects of poverty on the performance of different racial groups.

However, it is important to keep in mind that the use of the federal subsidized lunch data allows only partial control for the effects of poverty because of the different levels of poverty in the African-American and white communities. The U.S. Census data reported by Kids Count indicate that poverty in South Carolina is deeper and more pervasive

among African-American families than white families. These data reveal that the median income of African-American families in 2000 was \$28,742, while the median for white non-Hispanic families was \$50,794. The upper income limit of eligibility for the federal reduced-price lunch program for a child from a family of four is \$33,485; for the free lunch program it is \$23,530 for a family of four (S.C. Department of Education, 2003). The median family income for African-American families is at a level to qualify for the reduced-price lunch program, while the median family income for non-Hispanic white families is well above the cut-off for the program. When reviewing the findings from this analysis, it is important to keep in mind that the use of the federal subsidized lunch eligibility data may not provide an adequate control for socioeconomic status. It is likely, for example, that the poverty of African-American children participating in the free/reduced-price lunch program may be greater than that of white children participating in the program and that the family wealth of African-American children not participating in the program may still be considerably lower than that of white pay lunch children. Thus the differences in performance between African-American and white children who have the same federal lunch program status may be related to differences in economic status between the racial groups that cannot be detected with the data available for this analysis.

The analysis for all students statewide is presented in figures 16 through 23.

Figures 16 through 19 reveal that:

- ❑ For all tests and performance levels, white pay-lunch students score the highest and African-American free/reduced-price lunch students score lowest.
- ❑ For ELA, African-American pay-lunch students and white free/reduced-price lunch students score at similar levels; this trend is also seen to a lesser degree for math.
- ❑ For both ELA and math, the percentage of African-American free/reduced-price lunch students scoring Basic or above is approximately 60 percent of the percentage of white pay lunch students.
- ❑ For both ELA and math, the percentage of African-American free/reduced-price lunch students scoring Proficient or Advanced is approximately one-fourth the percentage of white pay-lunch students.

The gaps between poverty groups holding race constant and between racial groups holding poverty constant are shown in figures 20 through 23:

- ❑ For both subjects and for both performance levels (percent Basic or above and percent Proficient or Advanced), the largest gaps are between African-American free/reduced-price lunch students and white pay-lunch students, while the smallest gaps are between African-American full-pay students and white free/reduced-price lunch students.
- ❑ For ELA percent Basic or above (figure 20), the gaps between poverty groups within racial groups and between racial groups within poverty groups are similar in magnitude.
- ❑ For ELA percent Proficient or Advanced (figure 21), the gap between white students in poverty and white students not in poverty and the gap between African-American students and white students who pay for their lunches are similarly large.

- ❑ For math percent Basic or above (figure 22), the gaps between racial groups with the same lunch status are larger than the gaps between students having the same race but different lunch status.
- ❑ For math percent Proficient or Advanced (figure 23), the pattern is similar to that for ELA percent Proficient or Advanced.

The analysis of the demographic subgroups was also conducted at the school level. The performance of each subgroup was summarized by school Absolute Rating. The results are shown in figures 24 through 27.

- ❑ Across both ELA and math and for each performance level (percent Basic or above and percent Proficient or Advanced), the performance for each subgroup was higher for each higher level of school rating.
- ❑ Across both ELA and math and for each performance level and for all school rating levels, the achievement of white pay-lunch students was the highest and the achievement of the African-American free/reduced-price lunch students was the lowest, while African-American pay-lunch students and white free/reduced-price lunch students showed similar levels of achievement.

These data are also exhibited in figures 28 through 31. The graphs in figures 28 through 31 show the levels of achievement for each subgroup for each school rating level along with the achievement gaps between the subgroups. The 95-percent confidence intervals for the subgroup means are also indicated on these figures. The size of the confidence intervals is indicated with a box around each data point. Larger boxes signify larger confidence intervals. A 95-percent confidence interval specifies the range within which we are 95 percent sure the “true” mean lies. The size of the confidence interval depends in large part on the size of the sample from which the data are calculated. For example, in Unsatisfactory schools there were only 399 white pay-lunch students for whom test data were available, while there were 6,262 African-American free/reduced-price lunch students with test data. The size of the confidence interval in Unsatisfactory schools for white pay-lunch students is thus much larger than that for African-American free-lunch students in the Unsatisfactory schools. This pattern is reversed in Excellent schools: 27,052 white pay-lunch students and 4,041 African-American free-lunch students were tested in those schools, resulting in a very small confidence interval for white pay-lunch students and a somewhat larger, though still small, confidence interval for African-American free/reduced-price lunch students. Data points that have intersecting confidence interval boxes can be considered not significantly different.

Figures 28 through 31 show:

- ❑ For both ELA and math and for both performance levels (percent Basic or above and percent Proficient or Advanced), the achievement levels of African-American pay-lunch students and that of white free/reduced-price lunch students are similar for most school rating levels.
- ❑ For both ELA and math percent Basic or above (figures 28 and 30), the magnitude of the gaps between the subgroups are similar across the school rating levels.
- ❑ For both ELA and math percent Proficient or Advanced (figures 29 and 31), the achievement gaps are larger for schools with higher Absolute Ratings than for lower-rated schools, especially the gap between African-American free/reduced-price lunch students and white pay-lunch students.

The analysis of the achievement of demographic subgroups generated several additional issues to be considered:

- ❑ The similar achievement levels of African-American pay-lunch students and white free/reduced-price lunch students statewide and for all school Absolute Rating levels may in part reflect our study's inadequacies in the control of economic differences between the racial groups. It may be that the average income of the families of pay-lunch African-American students is just above the cut-off for eligibility for the subsidized lunch program, and the average family incomes of the white free/reduced-price lunch eligible students may be just below the cut-off. The two groups may thus be more similar in their socioeconomic status than the lunch program eligibility would indicate. Unfortunately, the available data did not permit an exploration of this hypothesis.
- ❑ The overall achievement of all the subgroups was quite low in Unsatisfactory and Below Average schools, especially for the percent Proficient or Advanced achievement level. The smaller gaps in the percent Proficient or Advanced category in these schools may simply reflect the low overall achievement levels, which would limit the size of the gap attainable.
- ❑ While the average performance of African-American students participating in the free/reduced-price lunch program is highest in schools rated Excellent, the achievement level for these students is at the same level as white free/reduced-price lunch students in Average schools. The low achievement at the percent Proficient or Advanced levels by African-American free/reduced-price lunch students in schools receiving high Absolute Ratings is a matter of deep concern and should be a major focus of attention for personnel in those schools.

Trend Data

What changes in the achievement gap have taken place since the first year of PACT testing in 1999? PACT data for 1999 and 2001 are available for comparison. The 2002 PACT demographic data reported by the SDE cannot be compared to data for previous years because the 2002 data were calculated differently. Unlike in previous years, the data from students who were not present in the same school on both the forty-fifth day and on the first day of testing in the spring were omitted from the 2002 results. The 2002 data included results from students with disabilities tested off level (at a grade level lower than their nominal grade based on age), while data from previous years did not. The 1999 and 2001 data and trends are indicated in tables 4 and 5.

Table 4
1999 and 2001 PACT Results for Selected Demographic Groups

Group	ELA						Math					
	% Basic or Above		Difference	% Proficient or Advanced		Difference	% Basic or Above		Difference	% Proficient or Advanced		Difference
	2001	1999	2001-1999	2001	1999	2001-1999	2001	1999	2001-1999	2001	1999	2001-1999
All Students	73.3	63.8	9.5	31.9	25.3	6.6	64.4	53.3	11.1	26.1	16.5	9.6
White	84.0	76.5	7.5	43.7	35.8	7.9	76.9	68.3	8.6	36.9	23.2	13.7
African-American	58.6	46.7	11.9	15.7	11.0	4.7	47.2	32.8	14.4	11.4	5.2	6.2
Free/Reduced Lunch	60.7	48.5	12.2	17.0	11.8	5.2	50.4	36.2	14.2	13.2	5.9	7.3
Pay Lunch	85.2	78.4	6.8	46.1	37.9	8.2	77.7	69.3	8.4	38.6	26.4	12.2

Table 5
Differences in Achievement Gaps, 1999–2001 PACT

Target and Comparison Group Difference	ELA Achievement Gaps				Math Achievement Gaps			
	% Basic or Above		% Proficient or Advanced		% Basic or Above		% Proficient or Advanced	
	1999	2001	1999	2001	1999	2001	1999	2001
African-American and White	-29.8	-25.4	-24.8	-28.0	-35.5	-29.7	-18.0	-25.5
Free/Reduced Lunch and Pay Lunch	-29.9	-24.5	-26.1	-29.1	-33.1	-27.3	-20.5	-25.4

Table 4 shows that the achievement levels of all the demographic groups improved between 1999 and 2001. However, the groups showed different rates of improvement for different performance levels. African-American students and free/reduced-price lunch students made larger increases than white and pay-lunch students at the Basic or above performance levels on both the ELA and math tests. Conversely, white and pay-lunch students increased their performance at the Proficient or Advanced levels more than African-American and free/reduced-price lunch students.

These differences among the groups at different performance levels affected the sizes of the achievement gaps between groups over time (table 5). At the Basic or above levels for both the ELA and math tests, the sizes of the gaps were reduced between 1999 and 2001 for African-American compared to white students and for free/reduced-price lunch eligible students compared to pay-lunch students. However, the gaps in the percentages of students scoring Proficient or Advanced increased between the African-American and white students and between the free/reduced-price and pay-lunch students.

Although the gaps remain large, the reduction of the gaps at the Basic or above performance levels is a real sign of progress. However, the federal requirement in No Child Left Behind and the South Carolina achievement goals in the S.C. Education Accountability Act both demand that students score at least at the Proficient level. The increases in the gaps at the Proficient or above level are thus a real cause for concern.

Identification of Schools Closing the Gap

To provide further insight into the achievement gap in South Carolina, we identified schools that had high levels of performance by one or more of the target groups in ELA, math, or both. The performance of the target group of students had to be in the range of the performance of the comparison group (or higher). For example, a school in which the percentage of African-American students (target group) scoring Proficient or Advanced was in the range of or higher than the percentage of white students (comparison group) scoring at that level statewide would meet the criteria for selection. The process used to identify these schools is described below.

The following prerequisite conditions had to be met for a school to be considered:

- The school must have test results from at least one of the target groups to be considered.
- The size of the target group in the school must be large enough to provide reliable information (at least thirty students).

To obtain the achievement cut points to identify schools making exemplary progress in closing the gap, schools were ranked by the PACT achievement performance of all students in the school for these tests and performance levels:

- ELA—percent scoring Basic or higher;
- ELA—percent scoring Proficient or Advanced;
- Math—percent scoring Basic or higher;
- Math—percent scoring Proficient or Advanced.

The achievement level for each test corresponding to the 75th percentile and the 90th percentile for all schools was identified. These data and the averages of the school percentages of students scoring at each achievement level for all students and for the

demographic groups are shown in table 6. These analyses were carried out with school as the level of analysis, so the percentages listed in table 6 represent the percentile ranks of schools and the average of the school percentages for all schools.

Table 6
75th and 90th Percentiles and Averages of
School Percentages of Students in Each Category
2002 PACT Test Performance

PACT Test Performance Levels	All Students – 75th Percentile and Above of All Schools	All Students – 90th Percentile and Above of All Schools	Average School Performance of All Students	Average School Performance of African-American Students	Average School Performance of White Students	Average School Performance of Free/Reduced Lunch Students	Average School Performance of Pay-Lunch Students
ELA % Basic or Higher	84.3%	90.0%	74.7%	61.2%	84.8%	63.3%	86.9%
Math % Basic or Higher	79.6%	87.0%	68.2%	51.6%	80.4%	55.4%	81.8%
ELA % Proficient or Advanced	39.5%	50.0%	31.2%	15.3%	42.9%	16.7%	46.4%
Math % Proficient or Advanced	38.7%	48.0%	28.6%	12.7%	40.2%	15.2%	42.8%

Source: S.C. Department of Education (www.myschools.com)

The performance of each qualifying target group (having at least thirty tested students) in each school was evaluated against the performance corresponding to the 75th and 90th percentiles for all schools statewide. The criteria for identification were that the target group had to score at least at the level of the 75th percentile for all students in all schools (this level of performance was near that of the comparison groups). For example, a school in which thirty-six of the forty-two African-American students (85.7 percent) tested scored Basic or higher on the ELA test would be identified as a school closing the gap because 85.7 percent of the target group (African-American students) scored Basic or higher, which is greater than the 75th percentile for all students (84.3 percent).

The performance of each target group in schools meeting the 75th percentile criterion was also examined to see if it was at or above the 90th percentile for all students in all schools (exceeded the performance of the comparison group). In our example school, the 85.7 percent scoring Basic or higher was less than the criterion at the 90th percentile (90.0 percent).

Schools in which at least one target group met or exceeded the 75th or 90th percentile for each test were identified as schools showing strong evidence of closing the achievement gap.

Results

Fifteen of 859 schools with data did not have sufficient students (at least thirty) in any of the target groups and so could not be evaluated. The remaining 844 schools were eligible for consideration.

Eighty-seven schools (two of which had both elementary and middle school grades and thus two report cards) were identified. These schools represent approximately 10 percent of all schools having sufficient numbers of students in the target groups for analysis. Fifty-seven schools had at least one target group achieve between the 75th and 89th state percentiles, and thirty had at least one group achieve at the 90th percentile or higher. The schools are listed in table 7.

**Table 7
Schools with Target Demographic Groups Scoring at or Above the 75th or 90th Percentiles**

District	School	Group(s) Identified**							
Aiken	Hammond Hill Elementary	A-A ELA 75th Basic+	F/R ELA 75th Basic+						
Aiken	Chukker Creek Elementary	F/R Math 75th Basic+							
Anderson 1	Cedar Grove Elementary*	F/R ELA 75th Prof+	F/R ELA 90th Basic+	F/R Math 90th Basic+					
Anderson 1	Concrete Elementary*	F/R Math 75th Basic+	F/R ELA 90th Basic+						
Anderson 1	West Pelzer Elementary	F/R ELA 75th Basic+	F/R ELA 75th Prof+	F/R Math 75th Prof+					
Anderson 1	Spearman Elementary	F/R Math 75th Basic+							
Anderson 1	Wren Elementary	F/R ELA 75th Basic+	F/R ELA 75th Prof+						
Anderson 1	Hunt Meadow Elementary*	F/R ELA 75th Prof+	F/R Math 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Prof+	F/R ELA 90th Basic+				
Anderson 2	Marshall Primary	F/R Math 75th Basic+							
Anderson 2	Honea Path Elementary*	A-A Math 75th Basic+	F/R ELA 75th Basic+	F/R Math 90th Basic+					

District	School	Group(s) Identified**							
Anderson 4	La France Elementary*	F/R ELA 90th Basic+	F/R Math 90th Basic+						
Anderson 4	Pendleton Elementary*	A-A Math 90th Basic+	F/R Math 90th Basic+						
Anderson 4	Townville Elementary*	F/R ELA 75th Prof+	F/R Math 75th Prof+	F/R ELA 90th Basic+	F/R Math 90th Basic+				
Bamberg 1	Richard Carroll Primary	A-A Math 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Basic+						
Beaufort	St. Helena Elementary	A-A ELA 75th Basic+	A-A Math 75th Basic+	A-A Math 75th Prof+	F/R ELA 75th Basic+	F/R ELA 75th Prof+	F/R Math 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Prof+	
Berkeley	Sangaree Elementary	A-A ELA 75th Prof+							
Berkeley	Menriv Park Elementary*	F/R Math 75th Basic+	F/R ELA 90th Basic+	F/R ELA 90th Prof+					
Berkeley	Marrington Elementary	F/R ELA 75th Prof+	F/R Math 75th Basic+						
Charleston	James Island Middle	A-A ELA 75th Basic+							
Charleston	Orange Grove Elementary	A-A Math 75th Basic+							
Charleston	Stono Park Elementary	A-A ELA 75th Basic+	A-A Math 75th Basic+	A-A Math 75th Prof+	F/R ELA 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Prof+		
Charleston	Ashley River Elementary	A-A ELA 75th Basic+							

District	School	Group(s) Identified**							
Charleston	James B. Edwards Elementary	F/R ELA 75th Basic+							
Charleston	Buist Academy*	A-A ELA 90th Basic+	A-A ELA 90th Prof+	A-A Math 90th Basic+	A-A Math 90th Prof+				
Charleston	Charleston School of the Arts*	A-A ELA 75th Prof+	A-A Math 75th Basic+	A-A ELA 90th Basic+	F/R ELA 90th Basic+	F/R Math 90th Basic+			
Charleston	Charles Pinckney Elementary	F/R ELA 75th Basic+							
Cherokee	Goucher Elementary	F/R Math 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Prof+						
Chesterfield	Edwards Elementary*	F/R Math 75th Prof+	A-A Math 75th Basic+	F/R Math 90th Basic+					
Clarendon 2	Manning Primary	A-A Math 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Basic+						
Darlington	Pate Elementary*	A-A ELA 75th Prof+	A-A Math 75th Basic+	F/R ELA 75th Prof+	F/R Math 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Prof+	A-A ELA 90th Basic+	F/R ELA 90th Basic+	
Dillon 2	East Elementary	A-A Math 75th Prof+	F/R Math 75th Prof+						
Dillon 2	Stewart Heights Elementary*	A-A Math 90th Prof+	F/R Math 90th Prof+						
Dorchester 2	Rollings Middle School*	A-A Math 75th Basic+	F/R ELA 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Basic+	A-A ELA 90th Basic+	A-A ELA 90th Prof+	F/R ELA 90th Prof+		

District	School	Group(s) Identified**							
Dorchester 2	Oakbrook Elementary	F/R Math 75th Basic+							
Edgefield	Merriwether Elementary*	A-A Math 75th Prof+	A-A ELA 90th Basic+	A-A Math 90th Basic+	F/R ELA 75th Basic+	F/R Math 90th Basic+			
Florence 1	Royall Elementary	F/R Math 75th Basic+							
Greenville	Brook Glenn Elementary	F/R ELA 75th Basic+	F/R ELA 75th Prof+	F/R Math 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Prof+				
Greenville	Bakers Chapel Elementary	A-A ELA 75th Basic+							
Greenville	Mountain View Elementary	F/R ELA 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Basic+						
Greenville	Oakview Elementary	A-A ELA 75th Basic+							
Hampton 1	Brunson Elementary*	A-A ELA 90th Basic+	F/R ELA 90th Basic+						
Horry	Aynor High	F/R Math 75th Basic+							
Horry	Daisy Elementary	F/R Math 75th Basic+							
Horry	Homewood Elementary*	A-A Math 75th Prof+	F/R ELA 75th Prof+	F/R Math 75th Basic+	F/R Math 90th Prof+				
Horry	Kingston Elementary	F/R Math 75th Basic+							
Horry	Lakewood Elementary*	F/R ELA 75th Basic+	F/R ELA 75th Prof+	F/R Math 75th Basic+	F/R Math 90th Prof+				

District	School	Group(s) Identified**							
Horry	St. James Elementary	F/R Math 75th Basic+							
Horry	Pee Dee Elementary	A-A Math 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Basic+						
Horry	Waccamaw Elementary	F/R Math 75th Basic+							
Horry	Forestbrook Elementary*	F/R ELA 90th Basic+	F/R ELA 90th Prof+	F/R Math 90th Basic+	F/R Math 90th Prof+				
Horry	Carolina Forest Elementary*	A-A Math 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Prof+	F/R Math 90th Basic+					
Horry	Seaside Elementary	F/R ELA 75th Prof+							
Kershaw	Baron-Dekalb Elementary	F/R ELA 75th Basic+							
Kershaw	Bethune Elementary	A-A Math 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Basic+						
Kershaw	Jackson School	A-A Math 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Basic+						
Kershaw	Lugoff Elementary*	A-A Math 75th Prof+	F/R ELA 75th Prof+	F/R Math 75th Prof+	F/R ELA 75th Basic+	A-A ELA 90th Basic+	A-A ELA 90th Prof+	A-A Math 90th Basic+	F/R Math 90th Basic+
Lexington 2	Saluda Elementary for Arts	F/R Math 75th Prof+							
Lexington 5	Dutch Fork Elementary*	A-A ELA 75th Basic+	A-A ELA 75th Prof+	A-A Math 75th Prof+	F/R ELA 75th Basic+	F/R ELA 75th Prof+	A-A Math 90th Basic+	F/R Math 90th Basic+	F/R Math 90th Prof+
Lexington 5	Seven Oaks Elementary	A-A Math 75th Basic+							

District	School	Group(s) Identified**							
		A-A ELA 75th Basic+	A-A ELA 75th Prof+	A-A Math 75th Basic+					
Lexington 5	River Springs Elementary	A-A ELA 75th Basic+	A-A ELA 75th Prof+	A-A Math 75th Basic+					
Oconee	Keowee Elementary	F/R ELA 75th Basic+							
Oconee	Northside Elementary	F/R ELA 75th Basic+							
Oconee	James M. Brown Elementary	F/R Math 75th Basic+							
Oconee	Ravenel Elementary	F/R ELA 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Basic+						
Oconee	Westminster Elementary*	F/R Math 90th Basic+							
Oconee	Orchard Park Elementary	F/R ELA 75th Basic+							
Pickens	Ambler Elementary*	F/R ELA 90th Basic+							
Pickens	East End Elementary	F/R Math 75th Basic+							
Pickens	Holly Springs Elementary*	F/R ELA 75th Basic+	F/R Math 90th Basic+						
Pickens	Liberty Elementary	F/R ELA 75th Prof+							
Richland 1	H. B. Rhame Elementary	A-A ELA 75th Basic+							
Richland 2	North Springs Elementary	A-A ELA 75th Basic+	A-A ELA 75th Prof+	A-A Math 75th Basic+	F/R ELA 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Basic+			
Richland 2	Rice Creek Elementary	A-A ELA 75th Basic+							

District	School	Group(s) Identified**							
		A-A ELA 75th Basic+	A-A Math 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Basic+					
Richland 2	Bookman Road Elementary	A-A ELA 75th Basic+	A-A Math 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Basic+					
Spartanburg 1	Campobello- Gramling School	F/R ELA 75th Prof+	F/R Math 75th Basic+						
Spartanburg 1	Holly Springs- Motlow Elementary	F/R ELA 75th Basic+							
Spartanburg 1	New Prospect Elementary	F/R ELA 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Basic+						
Spartanburg 2	Boiling Springs Junior High*	A-A ELA 75th Basic+	F/R ELA 75th Prof+	F/R ELA 90th Basic+					
Spartanburg 2	Cooley Springs- Fingerville Elementary	F/R Math 75th Prof+							
Spartanburg 3	Clifdale Elementary	F/R ELA 75th Basic+							
Spartanburg 6	Pauline Glenn Springs Elementary*	F/R ELA 75th Prof+	F/R ELA 90th Basic+	F/R Math 90th Basic+					
Sumter 2	Shaw Heights Elementary	F/R ELA 75th Basic+							
Williamsburg	W. M. Anderson Primary	A-A ELA 75th Prof+	A-A Math 75th Basic+	A-A Math 75th Prof+	F/R ELA 75th Prof+	F/R Math 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Prof+		
Williamsburg	M. B. Lee Sr. Primary*	A-A Math 75th Prof+	F/R Math 75th Prof+	A-A Math 90th Basic+	F/R Math 90th Basic+				

District	School	Group(s) Identified**							
Williamsburg	St. Mark Elementary*	F/R Math 75th Basic+	A-A Math 90th Basic+						
York 2	Bethany Elementary*	F/R Math 75th Prof+	F/R ELA 90th Basic+	F/R ELA 90th Prof+	F/R Math 90th Basic+				
York 2	Crowders Creek Elementary	A-A Math 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Basic+	F/R Math 75th Prof+					

*School had at least one group score at or above the 90th percentile.

**Groups are:

- A-A ELA 75th Basic+ = African-American students, ELA test, at or above 75th percentile, scored Basic or higher
- A-A ELA 90th Basic+ = African-American students, ELA test, at or above 90th percentile, scored Basic or higher
- A-A Math 75th Basic+ = African-American students, Math test, at or above 75th percentile, scored Basic or higher
- A-A Math 90th Basic+ = African-American students, Math test, at or above 90th percentile, scored Basic or higher
- A-A ELA 75th Prof+ = African-American students, ELA test, at or above 75th percentile, scored Proficient or Advanced
- A-A ELA 90th Prof+ = African-American students, ELA test, at or above 90th percentile, scored Proficient or Advanced
- A-A Math 75th Prof+ = African-American students, Math test, at or above 75th percentile, scored Proficient or Advanced
- A-A Math 90th Prof+ = African-American students, Math test, at or above 90th percentile, scored Proficient or Advanced
- F/R ELA 75th Basic+ = Free/reduced lunch students, ELA test, at or above 75th percentile, scored Basic or higher
- F/R ELA 90th Basic+ = Free/reduced lunch students, ELA test, at or above 90th percentile, scored Basic or higher
- F/R Math 75th Basic+ = Free/reduced lunch students, Math test, at or above 75th percentile, scored Basic or higher
- F/R Math 90th Basic+ = Free/reduced lunch students, Math test, at or above 90th percentile, scored Basic or higher
- F/R ELA 75th Prof+ = Free/reduced lunch students, ELA test, at or above 75th percentile, scored Proficient or Advanced
- F/R ELA 90th Prof+ = Free/reduced lunch students, ELA test, at or above 90th percentile, scored Proficient or Advanced
- F/R Math 75th Prof+ = Free/reduced lunch students, Math test, at or above 75th percentile, scored Proficient or Advanced
- F/R Math 90th Prof+ = Free/reduced lunch students, Math test, at or above 90th percentile, scored Proficient or Advanced

Not surprisingly, since these schools were chosen because their target demographic groups were achieving near or above the levels of the comparison groups statewide, their overall achievement tended to be high. Of the eighty-nine report card Absolute Ratings issued for these eighty-seven schools (two schools received both elementary and middle school report cards), fifty-one were Excellent, thirty-six were Good, and two were Average. These schools also received recognition for achievement and for other qualities in the past two years:

- ❑ Fifty-eight had received Palmetto Gold Awards, twenty-eight of them for two consecutive years;
- ❑ Thirteen had received Palmetto Silver Awards;
- ❑ Three were National Blue Ribbon Award schools; and
- ❑ Thirty had received Red Carpet awards.

In an attempt to identify characteristics of these schools that would help to differentiate them from other schools, we compared their report card profile data to those from all schools in the state and to those from schools rated Excellent or Good. These comparisons for selected report card data are listed in table 8.

Table 8
Comparison of 2002 Selected Report Card Variables
Schools in Which Target Group Scores Are at or Above 75th Percentile for All Students
Compared to All Schools and to Schools Rated Excellent or Good

Report Card Variable	Above 75th Percentile Schools			Excellent or Good Schools			All Schools (Grades 3-8)		
	Mean	5th percentile	95th percentile	Mean	5th percentile	95th percentile	Mean	5th percentile	95th percentile
Poverty Index	52.8	17.7	90.9	49.0	18.3	79.2	64.2	26.2	95.5
% Students Below Basic	13.2	5.7	21.2	18.0	7.5	26.5	29.4	10.2	54.7
Dollars Per Student	5545.17	4140.00	7000.00	5531.35	4172.00	7075.00	5664.51	4194.00	7681.00
Student-Teacher Ratio	19.2	14.4	22.9	19.2	12.3	24.5	18.4	10.6	24.5
Student Attendance	96.5	95.2	97.7	96.3	94.1	97.5	96.1	93.5	98.0
Teacher Attendance	95.1	92.1	97.4	95.4	92.4	98.3	95.2	92.4	98.2
Student Retention	3.5	0.6	7.5	3.1	0.5	7.0	4.1	0.7	9.2
Days Prof. Development	11.0	6.9	17.1	10.6	6.5	16.7	10.5	5.8	16.4
Teachers w/ Advanced Degrees	50.7	30.0	71.4	51.4	30.0	71.1	48.3	25.6	69.0
% Cont. Contract Teachers	85.6	71.2	97.4	86.1	71.2	97.3	81.6	58.6	96.4

Table 8 (continued)

Report Card Variable	Above 75th Percentile Schools			Excellent or Good Schools			All Schools (Grades 3-8)		
	Mean	5th percentile	95th percentile	Mean	5th percentile	95th percentile	Mean	5th percentile	95th percentile
Teachers Out of Field	1.4	0	7.0	1.6	0	7.4	2.3	0	9.5
Teacher Retention	88.1	79.5	95.0	86.7	75.4	94.4	83.9	69.1	93.6
Average Teacher Salary	40057.28	36178.00	44433.00	40334.86	36333.00	44433.00	39347.35	34807.00	43707.00
% Spent on Teacher Salaries	65.1	54.9	72.3	65.7	57.5	74.5	64.9	55.5	74.1
Principal's Years At School	6.8	1.0	17.0	6.1	1.0	17.0	5.3	1.0	16.0
% Parents Conferencing	97.2	82.8	100	96.6	80.6	99.8	92.3	61.3	99.7
Gifted and Talented Students	19.9	5.2	40.4	21.6	6.8	41.5	14.7	1.4	35.8
Students w/ Disabilities	7.9	3.3	14.6	8.9	3.4	17.0	10.2	3.3	20.1
Teacher Satisfaction Learning Environment	96.2	84.4	100	94.2	79.2	100	86.5	53.6	100
Student Satisfaction Learning Environment	90.1	76.6	100	85.7	67.2	97.6	80.7	56.3	96.6

Report Card Variable	Above 75th Percentile Schools			Excellent or Good Schools			All Schools (Grades 3-8)		
	Mean	5th percentile	95th percentile	Mean	5th percentile	95th percentile	Mean	5th percentile	95th percentile
Parent Satisfaction Learning Environment	90.4	77.8	100	88.0	71.3	100	82.5	60.0	97.4
Teacher Satisfaction Phys. & Social Environment	95.2	81.8	100	94.0	80.0	100	87.4	55.6	100
Student Satisfaction Phys. & Social Environment	88.7	73.1	98.8	86.3	69.1	97.8	81.5	59.6	97.1
Parent Satisfaction Phys. & Social Environment	89.4	77.8	100	86.9	70.0	99.2	80.5	56.1	97.6
Teacher Satisfaction Home-School	88.5	55.2	100	87.5	56.5	100	69.5	23.8	100
Student Satisfaction Home-School	91.9	83.3	100	89.9	78.8	98.8	87.8	75.1	97.7
Parent Satisfaction Home-School	81.5	63.8	94.4	76.9	56.3	92.1	72.7	50.0	90.2
Enrollment	542.2	224.0	955.0	600.1	232.0	1043.0	545.6	213.0	955.0

The identified schools had a higher poverty rate than the Excellent or Good schools but lower than that for all schools. Their dollars spent per student was less than all schools but slightly higher than Excellent or Good schools. However, most of the differences between the identified schools and other schools were small. One exceptional area was in the teacher, student, and parent survey results, where the identified schools tended to have consistently higher results than the comparison schools. Parents, teachers, and students in the gap-reducing schools tended to be much more satisfied with home-school relations than survey respondents from other South Carolina schools. This suggests that teachers, students, and parents perceive these schools to be welcoming and positive places with a strong focus on learning.

The performance of the identified target group(s) in these schools was at such a high level that the achievement gap for those students compared to comparison students statewide was virtually eliminated. What the adults in these schools and their communities do every day is making a positive difference for their students. It would be helpful to further study these schools to identify practices and policies they have in common that would be helpful to other schools.

Discussion

Unsatisfactory and Below Average schools demonstrate an undesirable gap reduction (exhibited in figure 2): overall low achievement for all groups leads to small achievement gaps. The challenge for these schools is to raise the achievement levels of all groups. The large gaps between student demographic groups in the percentages of students scoring Proficient or Advanced in Excellent and Good schools presents a somewhat different challenge. The challenge for these schools is to raise the achievement of their lower-income students and students of color while maintaining the high levels of achievement of their higher-scoring students.

The need to reduce the achievement gaps among demographic groups of students is clear if we are to meet our goal that all students achieve at high levels of performance. While the achievement gaps remain large, the trend data indicate that South Carolina educators have risen to the initial challenge to reduce the numbers of poor and African-American children who are scoring below grade level. However, in 2002 it appears that only about 10 percent of South Carolina elementary and middle schools are coming close to eliminating the gap and then only for some groups in one subject area in many cases. The trend data indicating that the gaps have increased at the Proficient and Advanced levels should prompt us to focus our efforts at increasing the performance of all students to higher levels.

The data also indicate that what the adults in schools and in communities do makes a difference and that schools can be successful in raising the achievement levels of all students to a high level regardless of the risk factors students bring to school with them. The challenge now is to raise our expectations for all groups of students.

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**B-6: The Performance of Historically Underachieving Groups of Students in
South Carolina: Small Steps Forward**

**Figures 4–31
from
The Performance of Historically Underachieving Groups of
Students in South Carolina: Small Steps Forward**

**S.C. Education Oversight Committee
June 19, 2003**

Figure 4: 2002 PACT English Language Arts—Percent Basic or Above

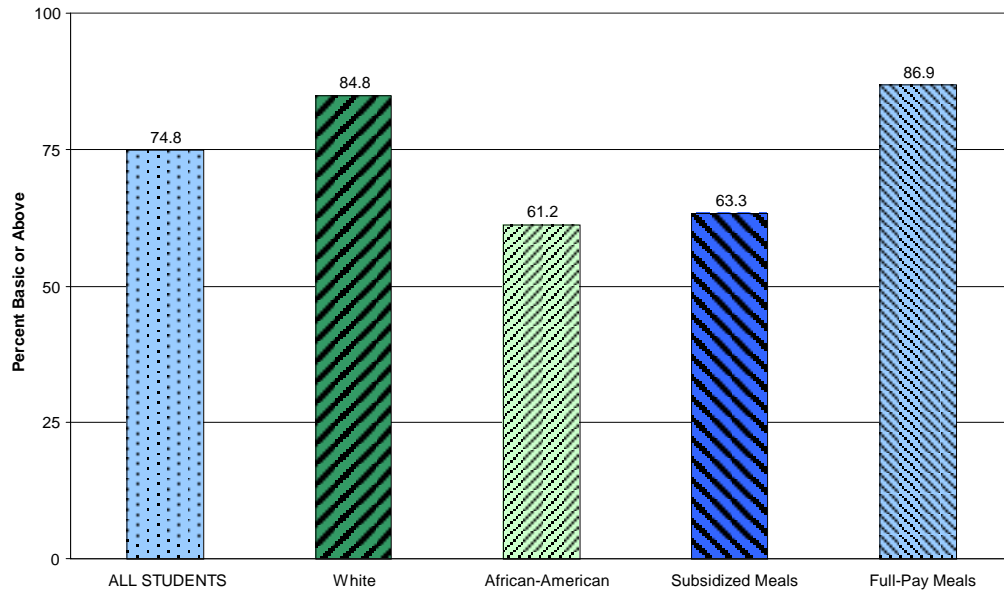


Figure 5: 2002 PACT English Language Arts—Percent Proficient or Advanced

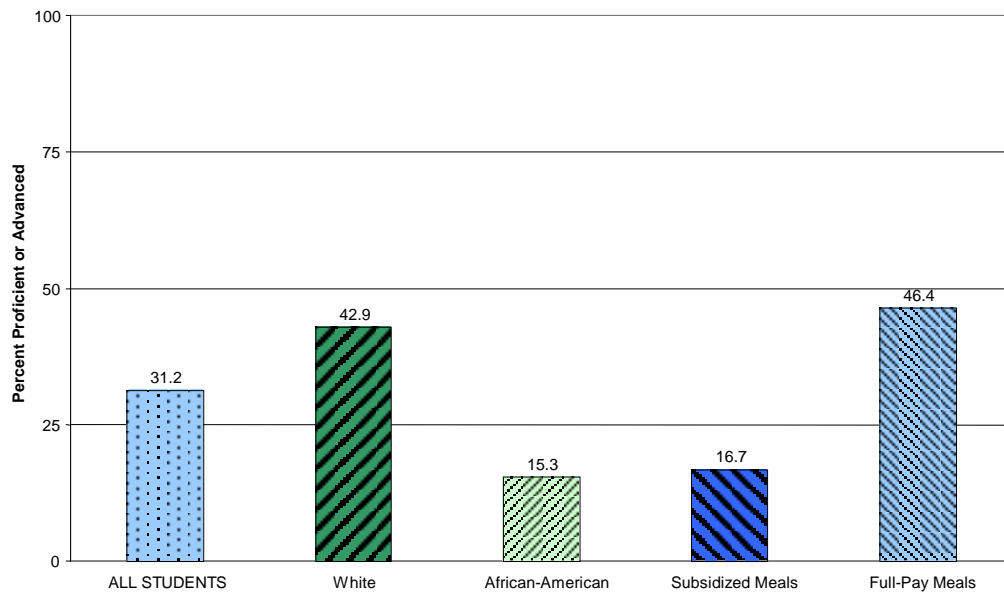


Figure 6: 2002 PACT Math—Percent Basic or Above

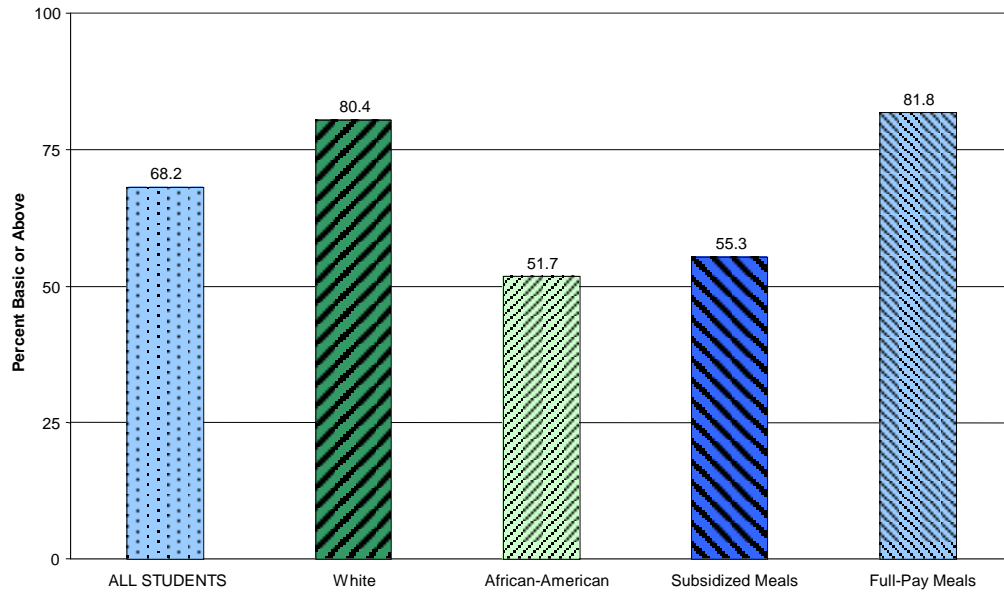


Figure 7: 2002 PACT Math—Percent Proficient or Advanced

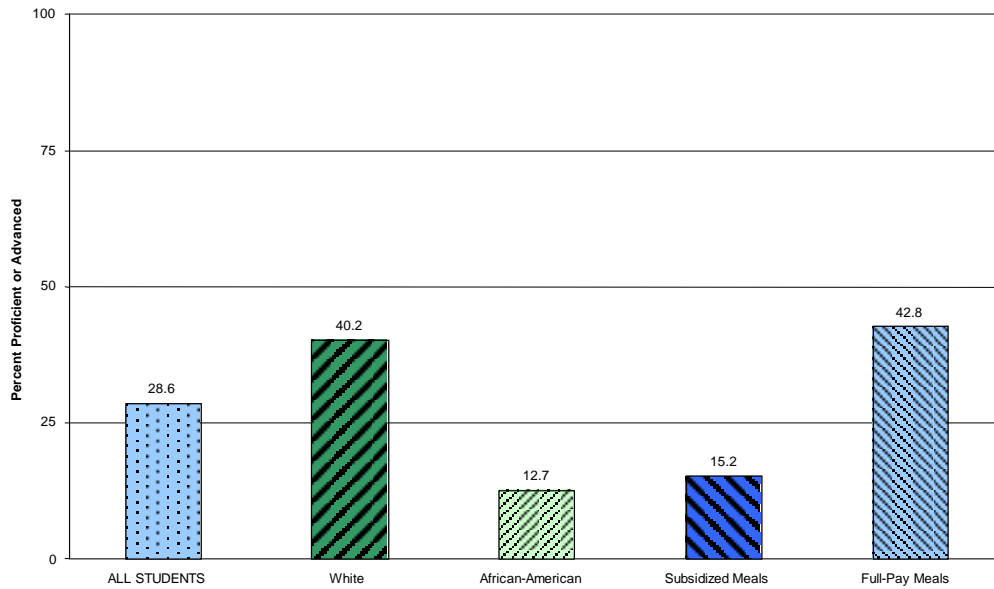


Figure 8: 2002 PACT English/Language Arts—Percent Basic or Above by Rating

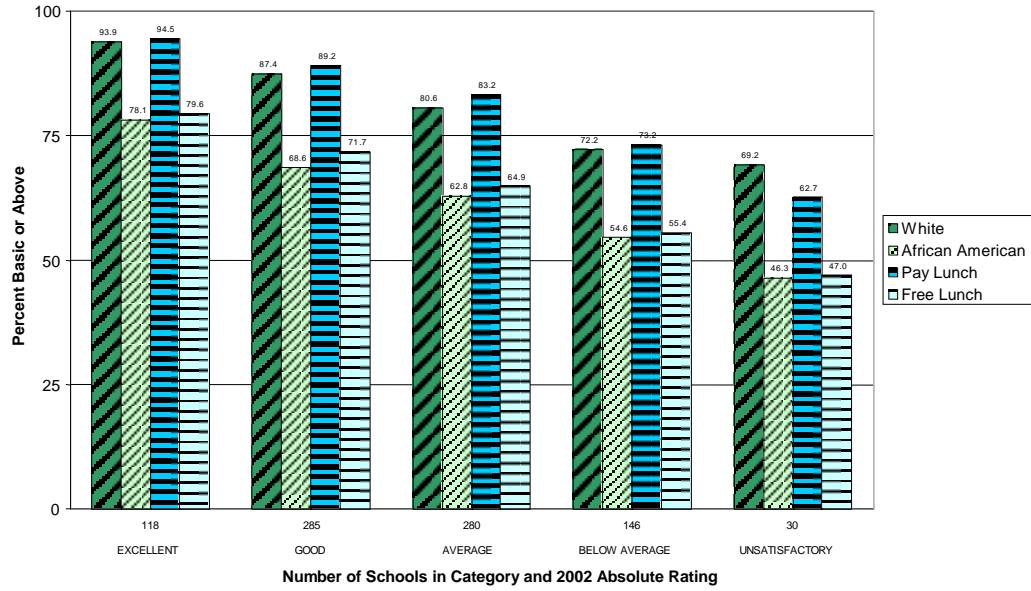


Figure 9: 2002 PACT English/Language Arts—Percent Proficient or Advanced by Rating

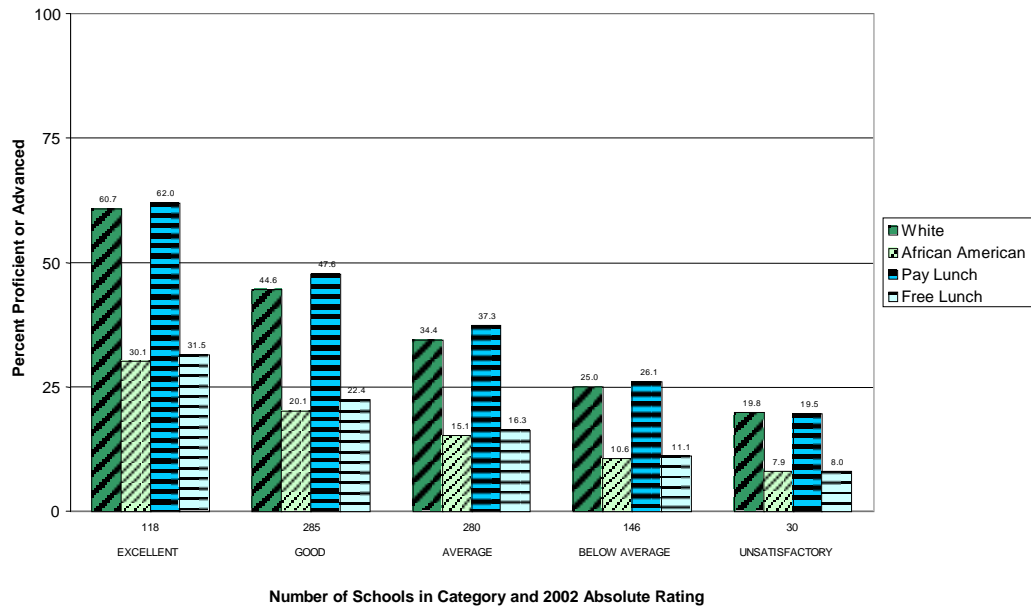


Figure 10: 2002 PACT Math—Percent Basic or Above by Rating

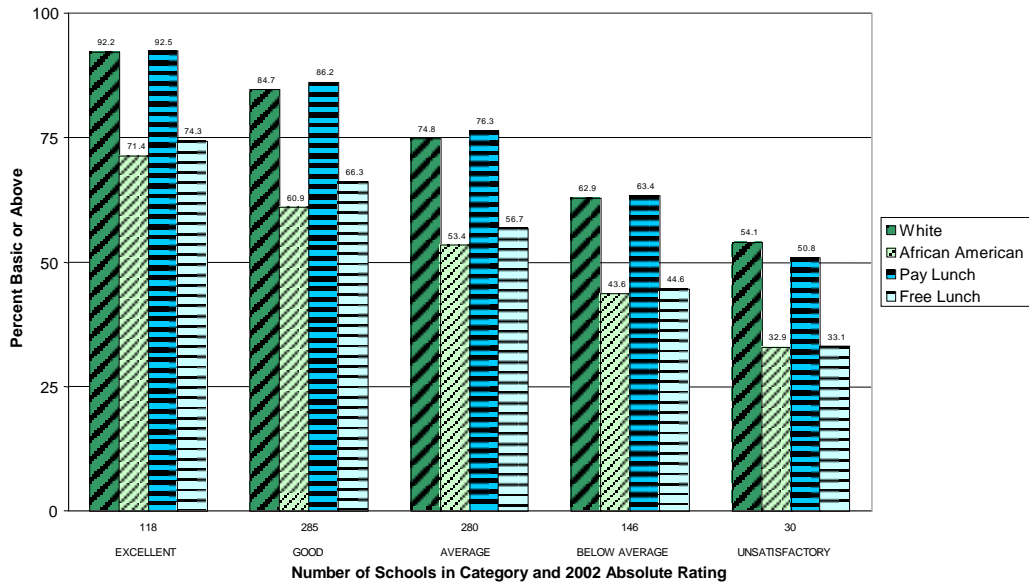
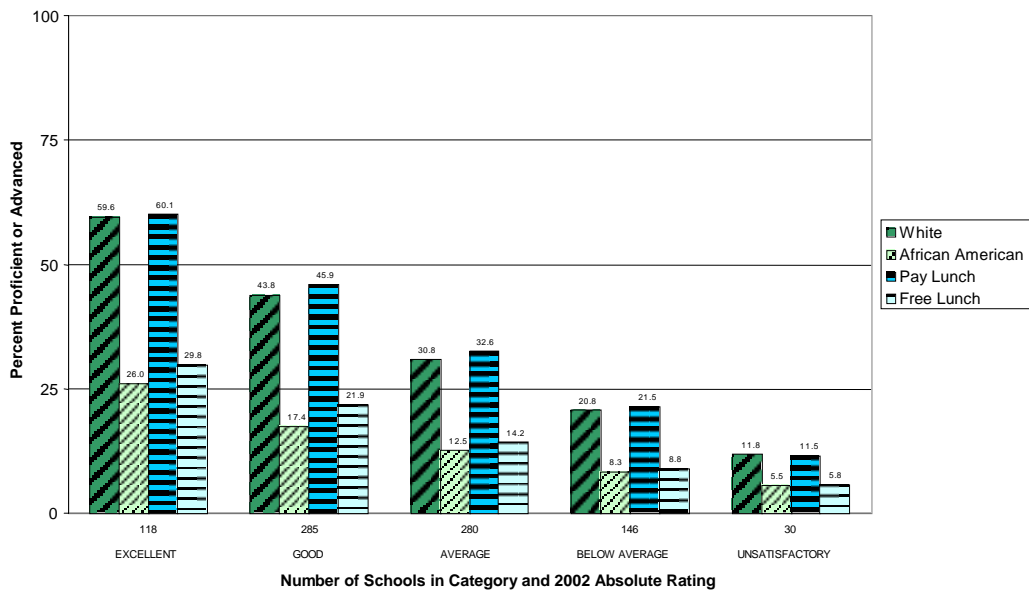
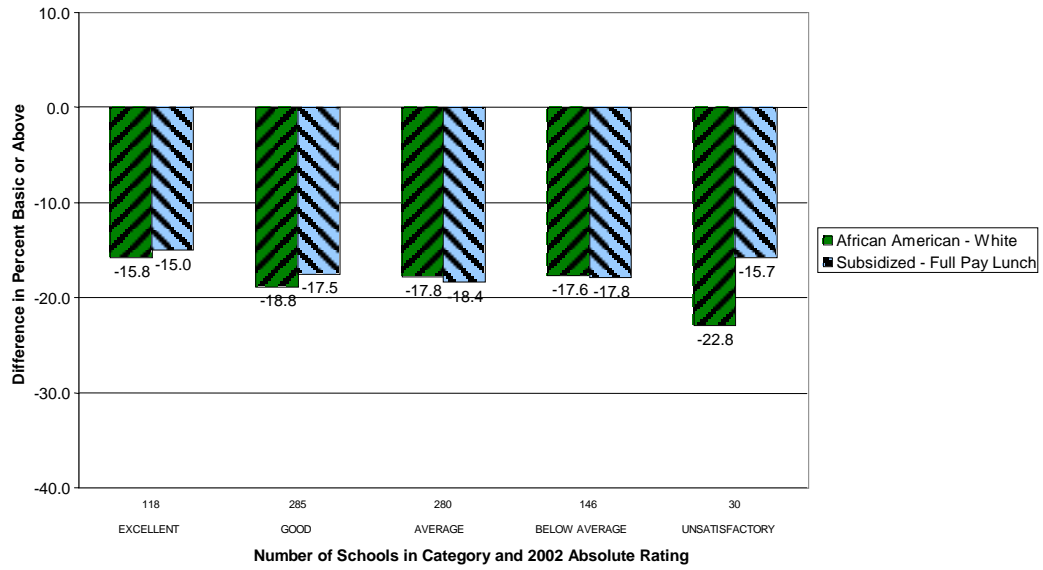


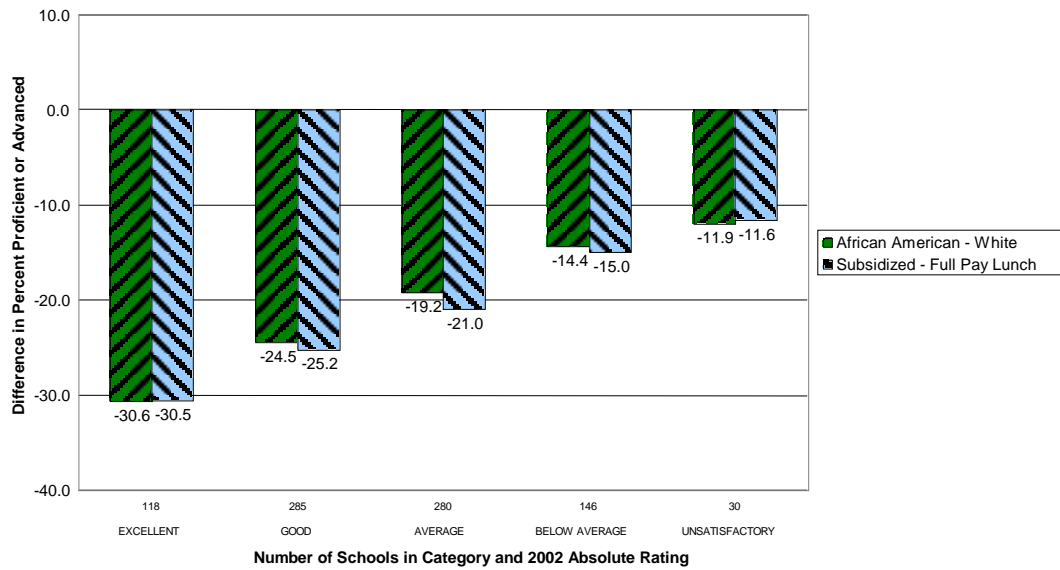
Figure 11: 2002 PACT Math—Percent Proficient or Advanced by Rating



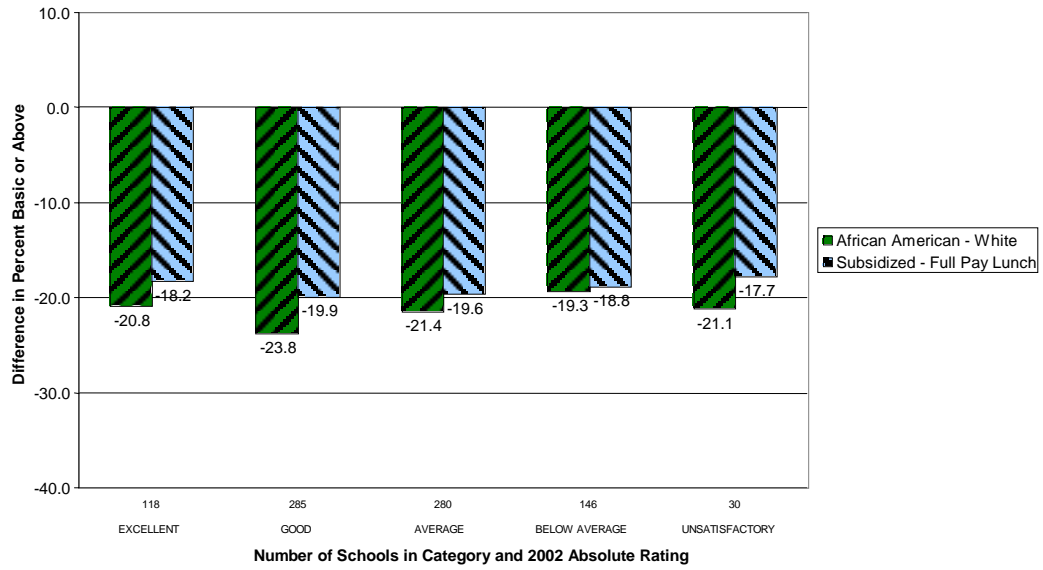
**Figure 12: 2002 PACT English Language Arts
Gap in Percent Basic or Above**



**Figure 13: 2002 PACT English Language Arts
Gap in Percent Proficient or Advanced**



**Figure 14: 2002 PACT Math
Gap in Percent Basic or Above**



**Figure 15: 2002 PACT Math
Gap in Percent Proficient or Advanced**

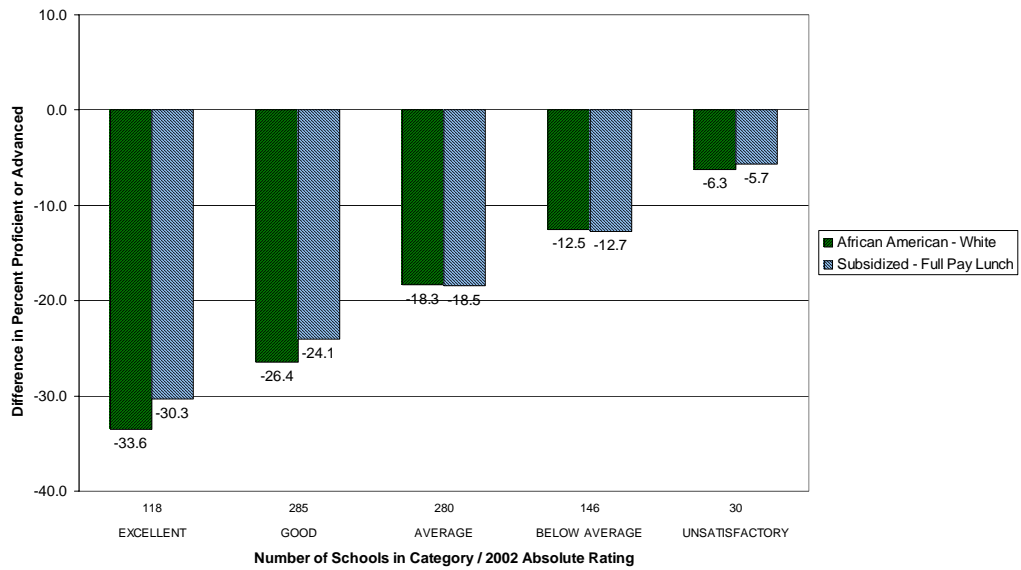


Figure 16: 2002 PACT English Language Arts—Percent Basic or Above

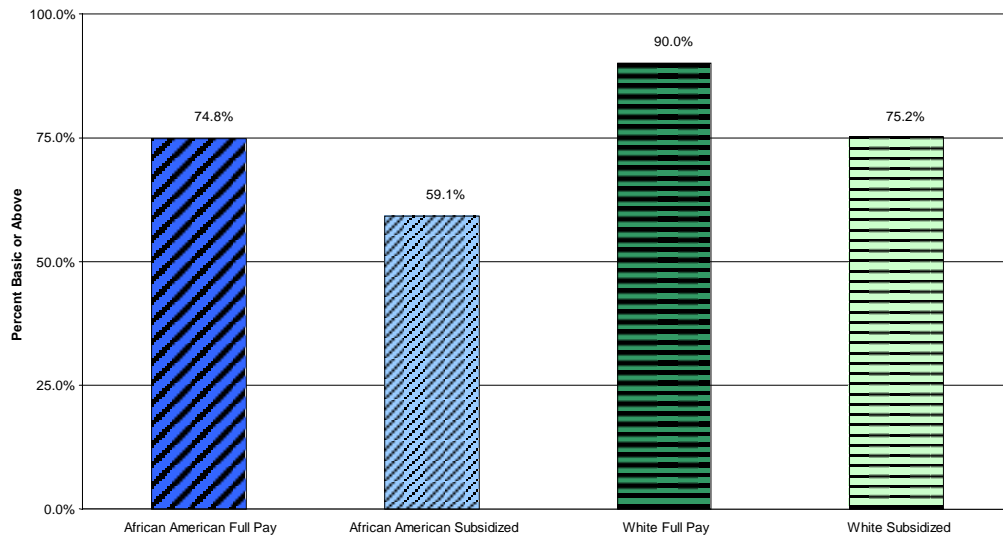


Figure 17: 2002 PACT English Language Arts —Percent Proficient or Advanced

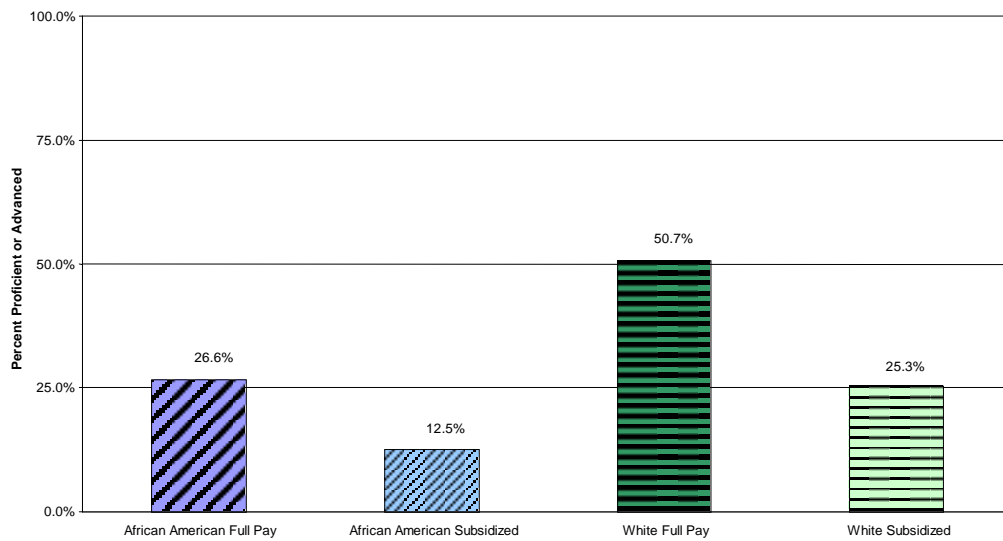


Figure 18: 2002 PACT Math—Percent Basic or Above

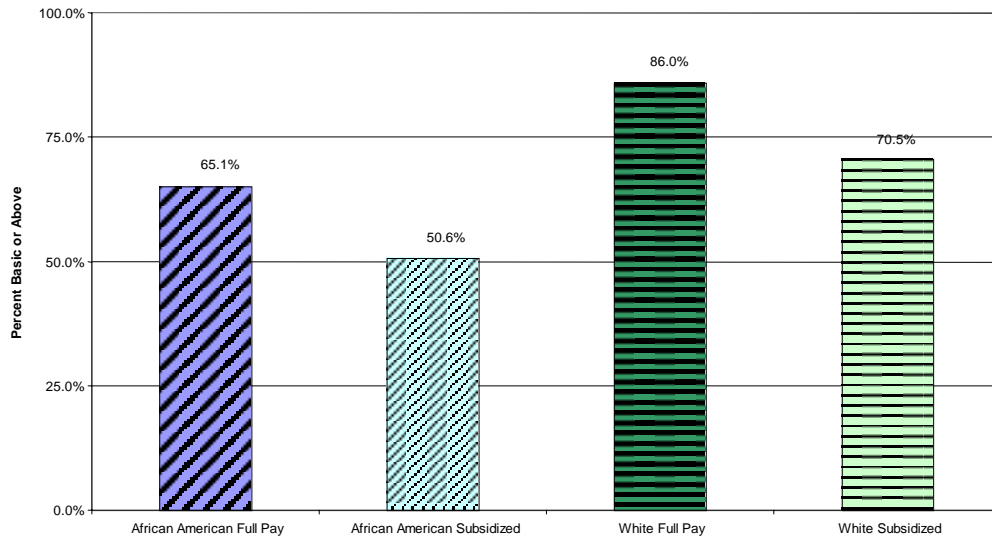


Figure 19: 2002 PACT Math—Percent Proficient or Advanced

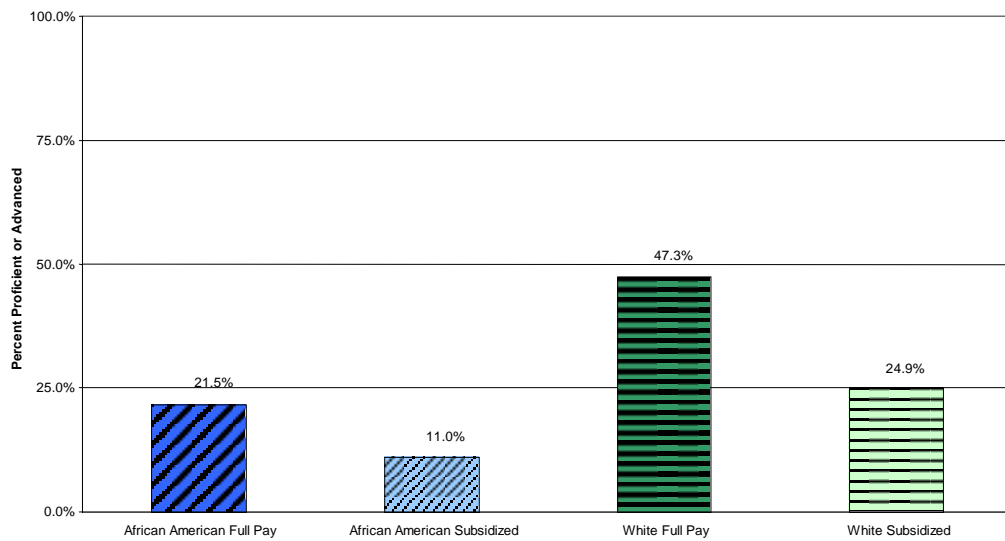


Figure 20: 2002 PACT English Language Arts
Gap in Percent Basic or Above

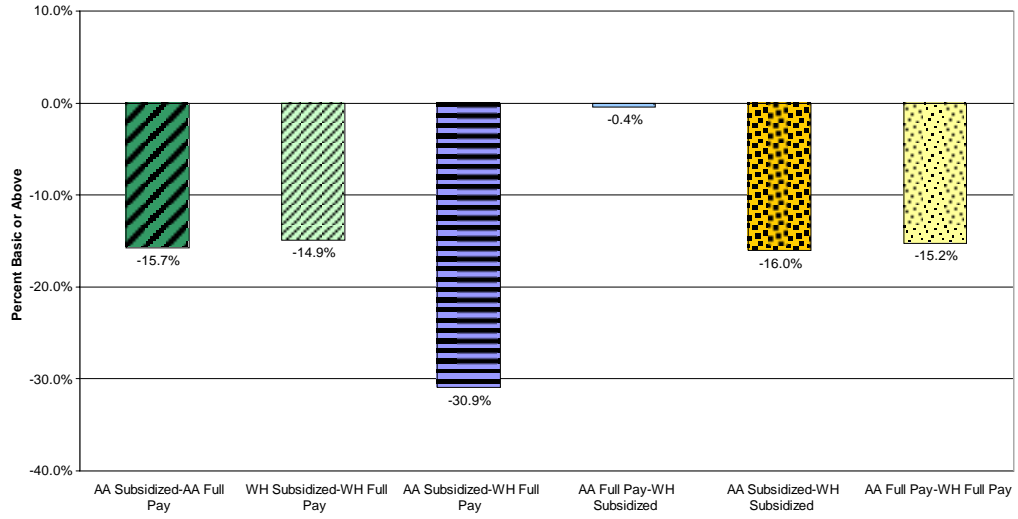


Figure 21: 2002 PACT English Language Arts
Gap in Percent Proficient or Advanced

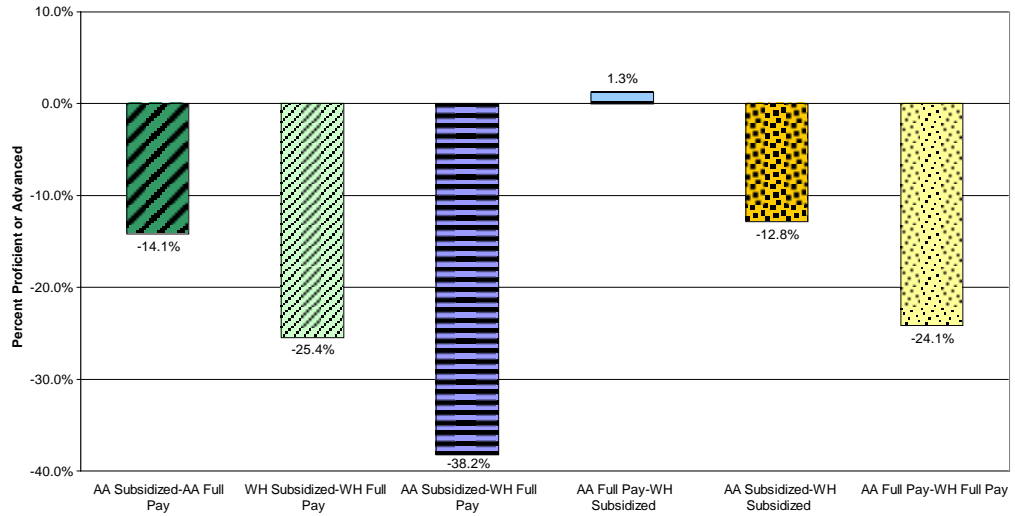


Figure 22: 2002 PACT Math
Gap in Percent Basic or Above

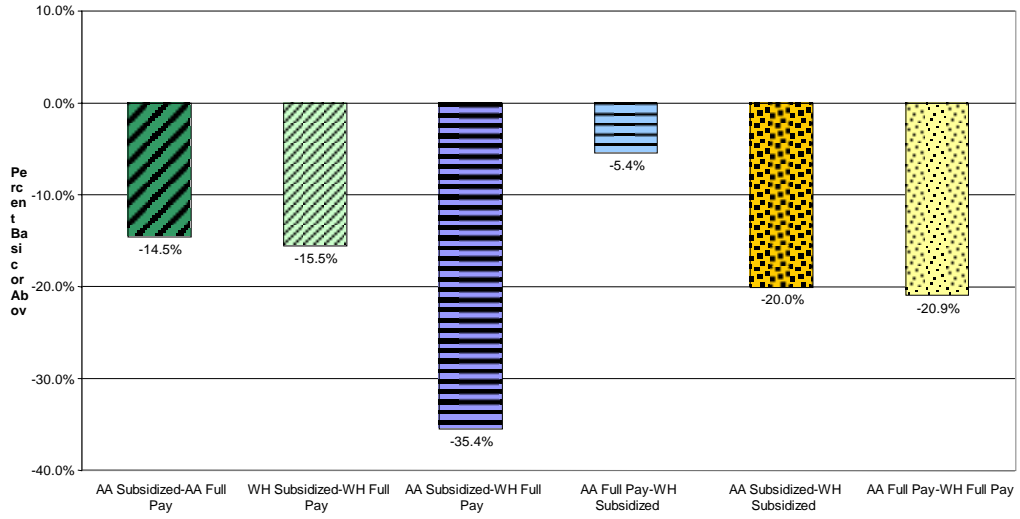


Figure 23: 2002 PACT Math
Gap in Percent Proficient or Advanced

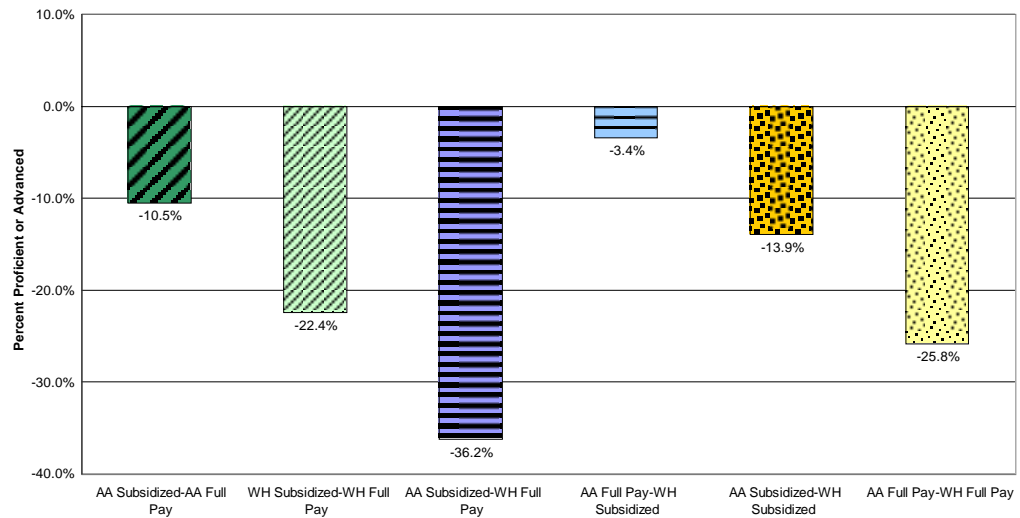


Figure 24: 2002 PACT English Language Arts—Percent Basic or Above by Rating

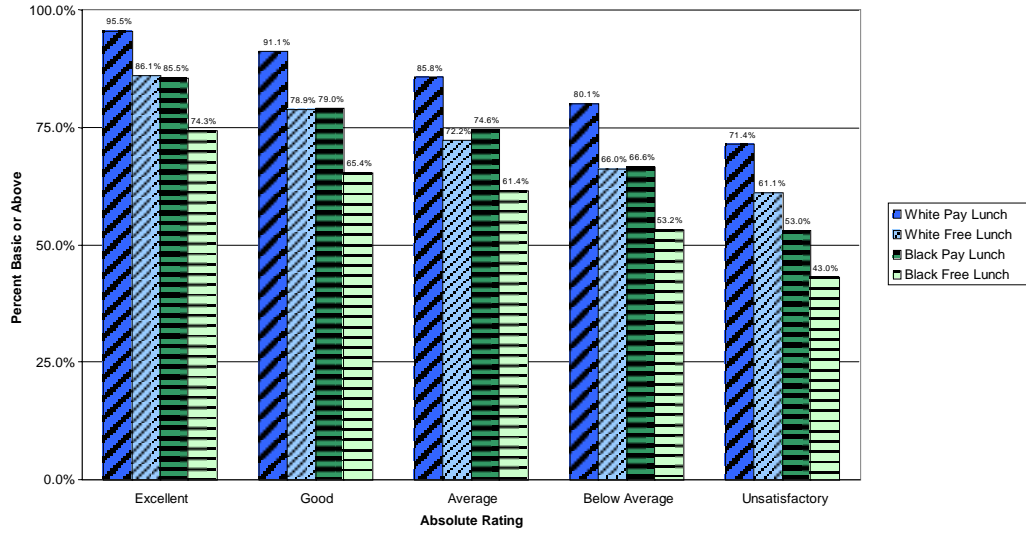


Figure 25: 2002 PACT English Language Arts—Percent Proficient or Advanced by Rating

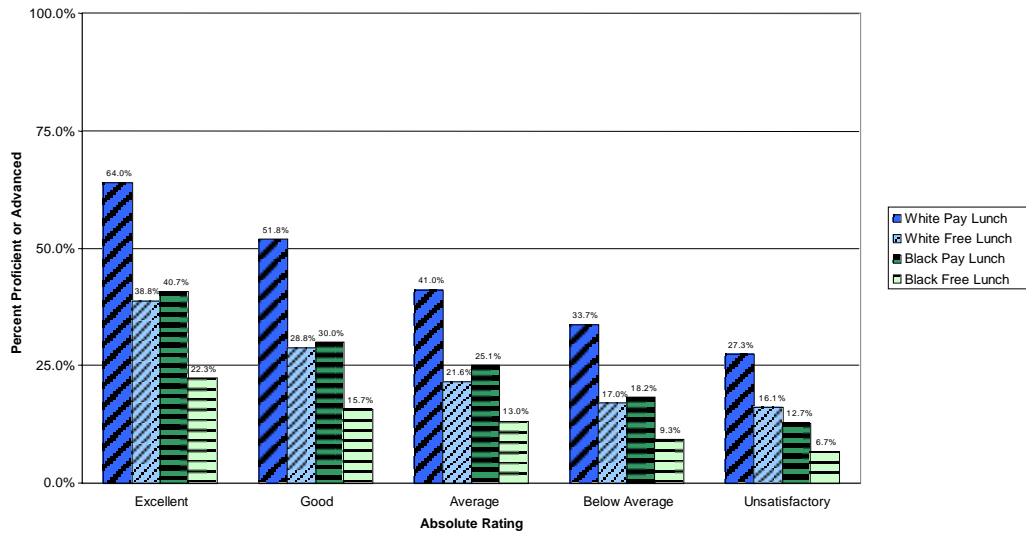


Figure 26: 2002 PACT Math—Percent Basic or Above by Rating

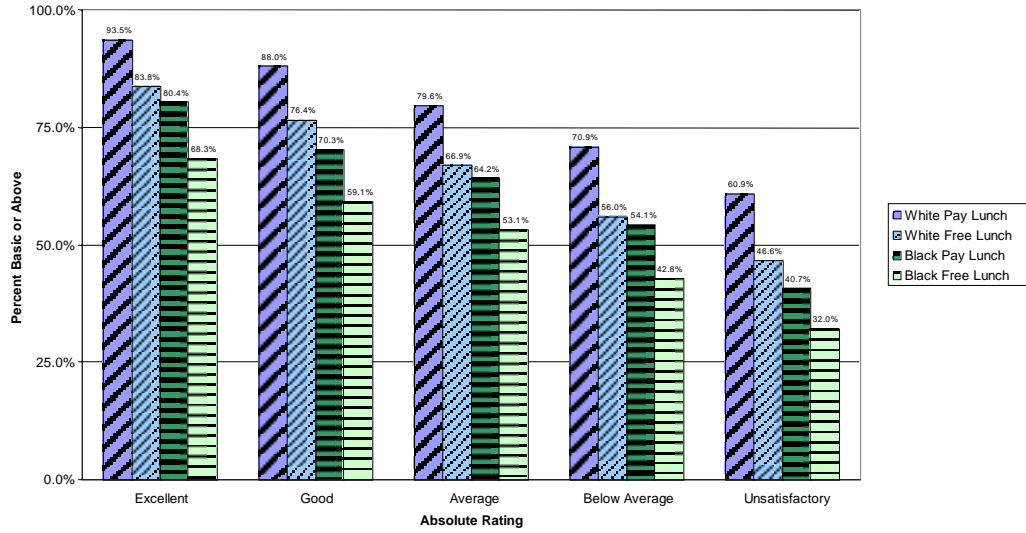
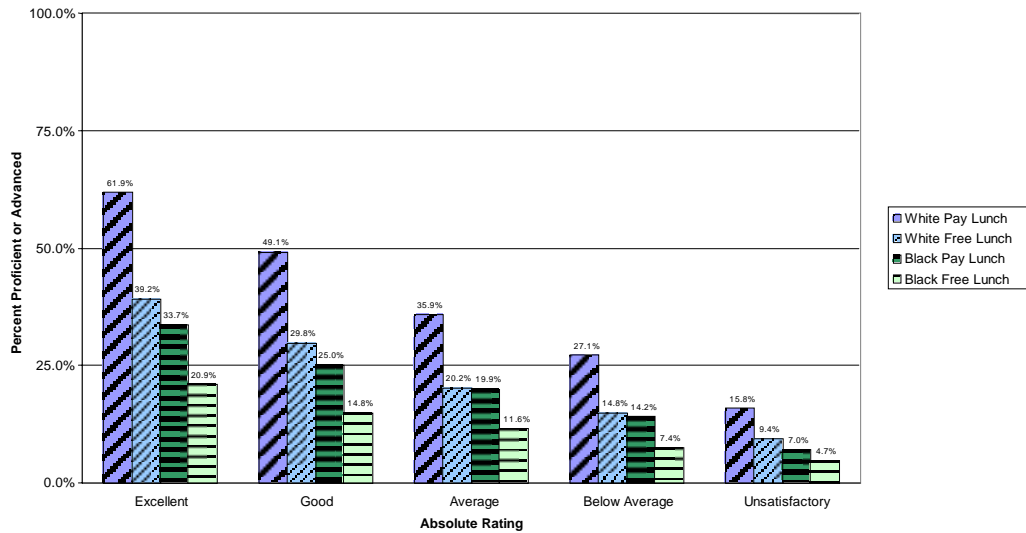
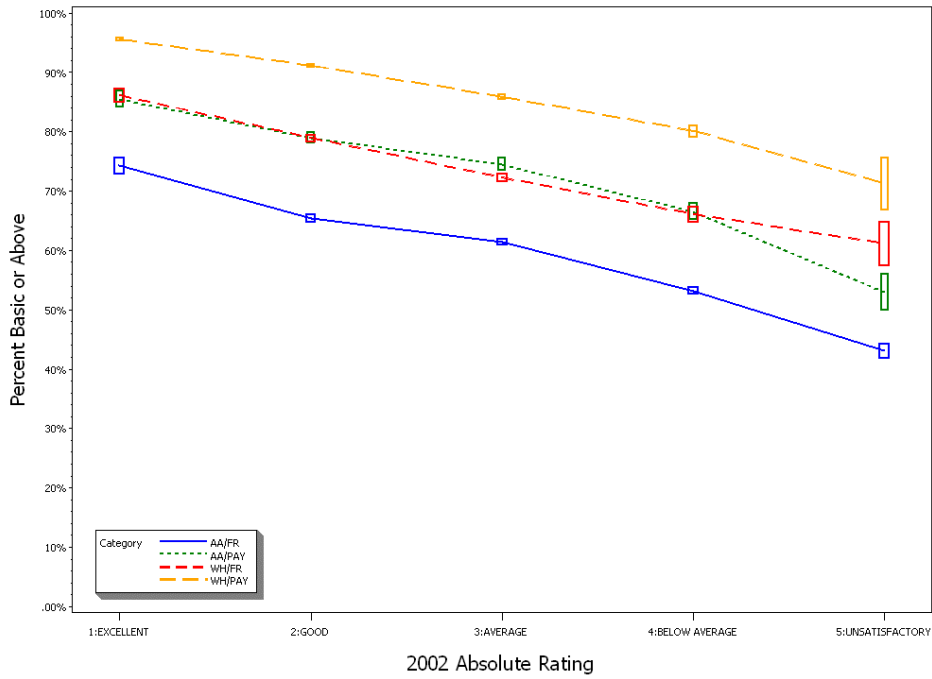


Figure 27: 2002 PACT Math—Percent Proficient or Advanced by Rating



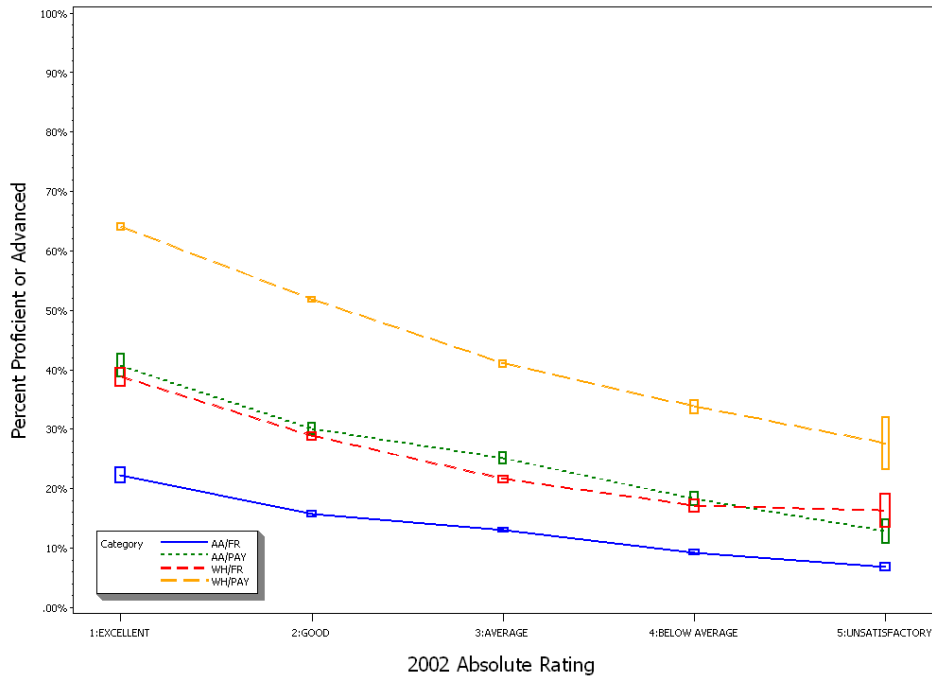
2002 PACT: English/Language Arts Percent Basic or Above

Figure 28



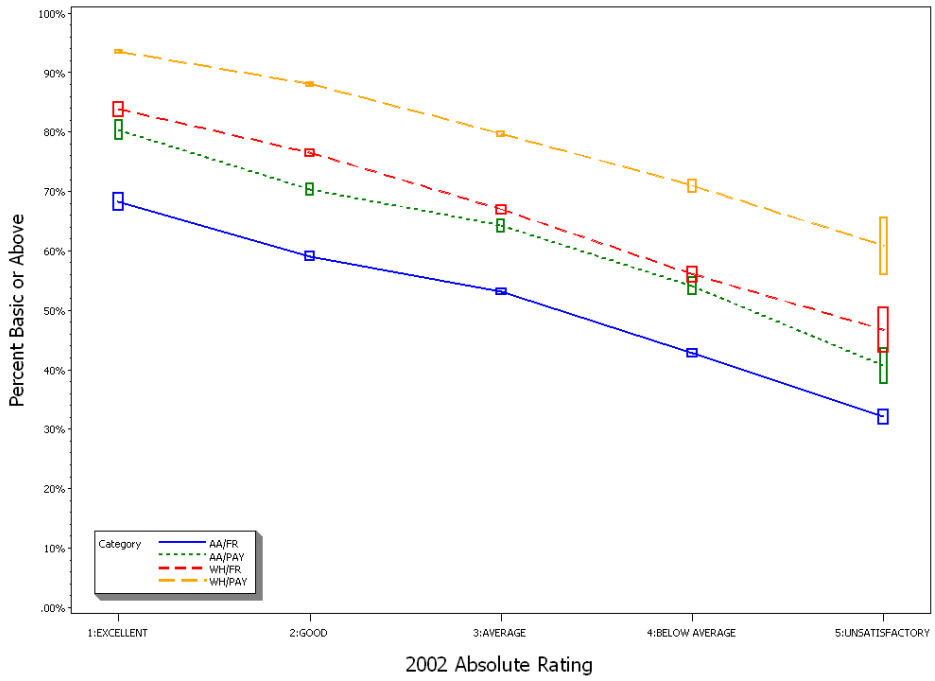
2002 PACT: English/Language Arts Percent Proficient or Advanced

Figure 29



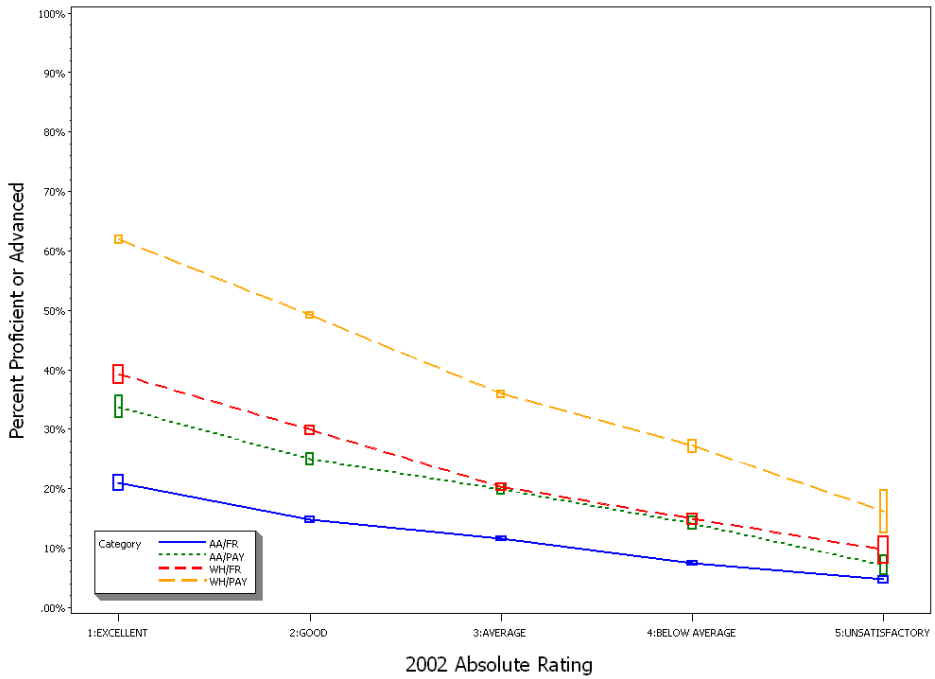
2002 PACT: Math Percent Basic or Above

Figure 30



2002 PACT: Math Percent Proficient or Advanced

Figure 31



APPENDIX C

Definitions and Formulas for School or District Profile Information

Contents

Definitions and Formulas for School or District Profile Information

Academic Plans, Students On	C-4
Academic Probation, Students On	C-4
Accreditation, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.....	C-5
Adult Education/GED Programs, Students Completing	C-5
Adult Education/GED Programs, Students Enrolled	C-6
Advance Placement/International Baccalaureate (AP/IB) Participation Rate	C-6
Advance Placement/International Baccalaureate (AP/IB) Success Rate.....	C-7
Advanced Degrees, Teachers with	C-7
Arts, Opportunities in the.....	C-8
Attendance Rate, Students, Average Daily	C-9
Attendance Rate, Teachers, Average Daily	C-9
Average Teacher Salary	C-10
Board Orientation Training, Percent New Trustees Completing	C-10
Character Education Program.....	C-11
Continuing Contracts, Teachers.....	C-12
Disabilities Other Than Speech, Students with	C-12
Dollars Spent per Pupil	C-13
Dropout Rate.....	C-13
Enrollment in School/District	C-14
Enrollment in Career Technology Courses, Comprehensive High Schools.....	C-14
Enrollment at Career Technology Centers.....	C-15
Expenditures, Percentage Spent on Teacher Salaries	C-15
Facilities, Average Age, District	C-16
Full-Day Kindergarten, First Graders Who Attended	C-16
Gifted and Talented Services, Students State Eligible.....	C-17
Governance, School District.....	C-17
Graduation Rate.....	C-18
High School Credit Courses, Seventh and Eighth Grade Students Enrolled	C-19
Older Than Usual for Grade, Students.....	C-19
Organizations, Participation in Co-Curricular Career Technology	C-20
Parents Attending Conferences	C-20
Percentage of Student Records Matched	C-21
Portable Classrooms, District.....	C-21
Prime Instructional Time	C-22
Principal's Years at School	C-22
Professional Development Days, Teachers	C-23
Ratio Core Subjects, Student-Teacher	C-24
Retention, Student	C-25
Salaries, Administrative Comparisons	C-26
Schools, Alternative	C-26
Schools, Charter	C-27
Schools, Magnet	C-27
Students With Non-Speech Disabilities Taking PACT Off Grade Level.....	C-27
Superintendent's Years, District.....	C-28
Suspensions or Expulsions for Violent and/or Criminal Offenses, Out-of-School.....	C-29

Teachers, Highly Qualified	C-30
Teachers Returning From the Previous School Year.....	C-30
Teachers on Emergency or Provisional Certificates	C-31
Vacancies, More than Nine Weeks, Teacher.....	C-31
Work-Based Experiences, Students	C-32

Students on Academic Plans

DEFINITION:

General

This fact reports the percentage of grade four through eight students at this school/district that have state-required individualized plans for improvement of student academic performance.

Formula

School

- (1) Determine the total number of students in grades four through eight who have state-required individual academic plans in the school.
- (2) Divide the sum by the total enrollment in grades four through eight at the school.

District

- (1) Determine the total number of students in grades four through eight who have state-required individual academic plans in the district.
- (2) Divide the sum by the total enrollment in grades four through eight in the district.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Research

Reported by:

School districts

Timeframe:

November 15

Students on Academic Probation

DEFINITION:

General

This fact reports the percentage of students in grades five through eight in danger of repeating current grade level because of low/poor performance in classroom and/or standardized assessments.

Formula

School

- (1) Determine the total number of students at school designated as being in danger of repeating current grade level assignment because of low/poor performance in classroom and/or standardized assessments.
- (2) Divide by the total number of students enrolled in grades five through eight at the school.

District

- (1) Determine the total number of students in district designated as being in danger of repeating current grade level assignment because of low/poor performance in classroom and/or standardized assessments.
- (2) Divide by the total number of students enrolled in grades five through eight in the district.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Research

Reported by:

School districts

Timeframe:

November 15

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) Accreditation

DEFINITION:

General

School Report Card: School is/is not accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

District Report Card: Percentage of schools in the district accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Formula

School: Accreditation is indicated with a "Yes" or "No."

District: The number of accredited schools is divided by the total number of schools in the district and converted to a percentage.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education

Reported by:

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

Timeframe:

Periodic

Number of Students Completing Adult Education Diploma or GED Preparation Programs

DEFINITION:

General

This fact reports the number of students receiving a GED or a diploma through adult education programs.

Formula

Determine the number of students completing requirements for a GED or a high school diploma through adult education programs in the district.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Adult Education

Reported by:

Adult education directors

Timeframe:

End of school year

Number of Students Enrolled in Adult Education Diploma or GED Preparation Programs

DEFINITION:

General

This fact reports the number of students enrolled in adult education diploma or GED preparation programs.

Formula

Determine the total unduplicated count of the number of students enrolled in adult education diploma or GED preparation programs in the district.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Adult Education

Reported by:

Adult education directors

Timeframe:

End of school year

Advance Placement/International Baccalaureate (AP/IB) Participation Rate

DEFINITION:

General

This indicator reports the participation rate as the unduplicated count of students enrolled in AP or IB courses divided by the forty-five-day average daily membership (ADM), expressed as a percent.

Formula

Present this indicator as a ratio.

- (1) Determine the unduplicated number of students enrolled in Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) classes at the school.
- (2) Divide the count in step one by the forty-five-day ADM and express as a percent.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Research

Reported by:

School districts

Timeframe:

January–March: Precode

Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate Scores: Educational Testing Service (ETS) reported to schools in July each year

Advance Placement/International Baccalaureate (AP/IB) Success Rate

DEFINITION:

General

This indicator reports the success rate in AP or IB courses as the unduplicated count of students scoring three or above on the AP tests, or four or above on the IB examinations, divided by the unduplicated count of students taking the tests, expressed as a percentage.

Formula

Present this indicator as a percent.

- (1) Determine the unduplicated count of students enrolled in Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) classes at the school scoring three or above on the AP tests, or four or above on the IB examinations.
- (2) Divide the count in step one above by the unduplicated number of students taking the tests and express the answer as a percentage.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Research

Reported by:

School districts

Timeframe:

January–March: Precode

Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate Scores: Educational Testing Service (ETS) reported to schools in July each year

Teachers with Advanced Degrees

DEFINITION:

General

This indicator reports the percentage of teachers with earned degrees above the bachelor's.

Formula

School

- (1) Determine the total number of teachers at the school with master's degrees and above.
- (2) Divide the sum by the total number of teachers in the school.

District

- (1) Determine the total number of teachers in the district with master's degrees and above.
- (2) Divide the sum by the total number of teachers in the district.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Research

Reported by:

School districts via Professional Certification System

Timeframe:

190 day

Opportunities in the Arts

DEFINITION:

General

The number of arts disciplines offered in a school and the percentage of arts classes taught by teachers certified in the arts discipline (music, visual art, drama, dance).

Formula

Category A: Number of arts disciplines offered during school year, including those offered through interactive technology.

Elementary schools: During the school day for at least an average of thirty minutes per arts disciplines each week.

Middle/High School: For a minimum of one semester credit/unit.

<u>Option</u>	<u>Point Value</u>
0 or 1 discipline	1
2 disciplines	4
3 disciplines	7
4 disciplines	8

Category B: Percentage of the arts disciplines taught by teachers certified in the arts discipline(s) they are teaching (defined the same at all school levels).

<u>Option</u>	<u>Point Value</u>
Less than 50%	1
50%	2
75%	3
100%	4

Total Score: $\frac{A+B}{2}$

Interpretation of Total Scores

Poor	=	2.5 or below
Fair	=	2.6–3.5
Good	=	3.6–4.9
Excellent	=	5 or above

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education

Reported by:

School districts

Timeframe:

End of school year

Average Daily Attendance Rate, Students

DEFINITION:

General

This indicator reports the average number of students present on each day.

Formula

- (1) Determine the total number of days present for students in the school on the 135th day.
- (2) Divide this amount by the number of days students were enrolled at the school.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Finance

Reported by:

School district financial reports

Timeframe:

135-day data collection

Average Daily Attendance Rate, Teachers

DEFINITION:

General

This indicator reports the average percentage of teachers present on each school day.

Formula

School

- (1) Total the number of days present for teachers in the school. (Annual leave days for teachers in state special schools are excluded.)
- (2) Multiply number of teachers by 190 contract days (or number of contract days).
- (3) Divide step one by step two.

Itinerant teachers should be included in calculations proportionate to assignment.

Until the teacher contract year reaches 195 days, teacher absences for professional development activities for which the district or school has paid a stipend or registration fee or activities teachers attend with permission from a school or district administrator are excused from the absence calculation. All activities that are excused must meet state-adopted standards for professional development.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

Department of Education, Office of Research/Office of Finance

Reported by:

School district survey

School districts

Timeframe:

End of school year

Average Teacher Salary

DEFINITION:

General
School

This indicator reports the average salary of teachers at the school. This average is compared to the state average teacher salary on the school report card.

District

This indicator reports the average salary of teachers in the district. This average is compared to the state average teacher salary on the district report card.

Formula

School

- (1) Add the salaries of the total full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers assigned to the school (based on 190 days).
- (2) Divide the sum by the total FTE teachers assigned to the school (based on 190 days).

District

- (1) Add the salaries of the total FTE teachers assigned to the district (based on 190 days).
- (2) Divide the sum by the total FTE teachers assigned to the district (based on 190 days).

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Finance

Reported by:

District financial officers

Timeframe:

135-day data collection

Percent New Trustees Completing Board Orientation Training

DEFINITION:

General

Reports the percentage of newly elected school board trustees who have completed the orientation program for new school board trustees. Reported on district report card.

Formula

The number of new trustees who have completed the training is divided by the total number of new trustees and converted to a percentage.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education

Reported by:

School districts

Timeframe:

Periodic

Character Education Program (Beginning in 2004)

DEFINITION:

General

The character development of students and staff in the school is measured using a rubric developed by the S.C. Character Education Partnership Team.

Formula

The scores from the rubric are converted to ratings based on the following scale points:

Rating Terms	Point Scale
Excellent	3.6 to 4.0
Good	2.6 to 3.5
Average	1.6 to 2.5
Below Average	.6 to 1.5
Unsatisfactory	0 to .5

Definitions of Rating Terms

Excellent: The school has a comprehensive character development initiative that ensures that all students and staff perform to their maximum potential.

Good: The school has a comprehensive character development initiative that is producing results among students and staff.

Average: The school is addressing character development, but its efforts are not comprehensive.

Below Average: The school is developing the structure needed to begin a character development initiative.

Unsatisfactory: The school is not actively engaged in addressing the character development of its students or staff.

PROCEDURE:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Safe Schools and Youth Services

Reported by:

School districts

Timeframe:

Spring data collection

Teachers with Continuing Contract Status

DEFINITION:

General

This indicator reports on the percentage of teachers in the school/district with continuing contract status.

Formula

School

Divide the total number of full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers at the school with continuing contract status during the ratings year by the total number of FTE teachers in the school.

District

Divide the total number of FTE teachers in the district with continuing contract status during the school year of the report card data collection by the total number of FTE teachers in the district.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Certification

Reported by:

School districts
Professional Certification System

Timeframe:

End of school year

Percentage of Students with Disabilities Other Than Speech

DEFINITION:

General

The percentage of students qualifying under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and receiving services in programs for students with disabilities (excluding students receiving speech services only).

Formula

School

- (1) Determine the total number of students at the school qualifying under IDEA and receiving services in programs for students with disabilities (excluding students receiving speech services) on the forty-fifth day.
- (2) Divide the total by the number of students enrolled at the school on the forty-fifth day of school.

District

- (1) Determine the total number of students enrolled in the district qualifying under IDEA and receiving services in programs for students with disabilities (excluding students receiving speech services) on the forty-fifth day.
- (2) Divide the total by the number of students enrolled at the district on the forty-fifth day of school.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Research

Reported by:

School district, SASI, Precode data

Timeframe:

January–March

Dollars Spent per Pupil

DEFINITION:

General

This indicator reports the federal, state, and district funds spent for the education of each student during the most recent school year.

Formula

School

(1) Determine annual operating expenses for all school activities. Include In\$ite™ categories for instruction, instructional support, operations, and leadership. Exclude expenses for capital outlay and debt service categories.

(2) Divide the sum by the average daily membership (ADM) of the school.

District

(1) Determine annual operating expenses for all district activities. Include In\$ite™ categories for instruction, instructional support, operations, and leadership. Exclude expenses for capital outlay and debt service categories.

(2) Divide the sum by the average daily membership (ADM) of the district.

Note: Footnote on report card with statement "Prior year's financial data."

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Finance

Reported by:

School district financial officers

Timeframe:

135-day data collection

Note: These data are for the year preceding the ratings year.

Annual Dropout Rate

DEFINITION:

General

This fact provides information on the annual rate of students who leave the school or district for any reason, other than death, prior to graduation or completion of a course of studies without transferring to another school, district, or institution, divided by the total number of students enrolled at the school (grades seven through twelve) (SDE guidelines).

Formula

School/district (grades seven through twelve only)

Calculated for each school/district with grades seven through twelve (overall).

(1) Determine the number of students who dropped out of school during the previous school year (as per SDE guidelines).

(2) Add the number of students who failed to return after the summer.

(3) Divide the sum of step one and step two by the total number of students enrolled on the last day of school during the previous school year.

Note: Data will be two years behind.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Career and Technology Education

Reported by:

School district

Timeframe:

Forty-fifth day of the following school year

Enrollment in School/District

DEFINITION:

General

Total number of students enrolled in the school/district on the forty-fifth day of school.

Formula

School

Determine the student count for the total number of students enrolled in the school on the forty-fifth day of school.

District

Determine the student count for the total number of students enrolled in the district on the forty-fifth day of school.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Research

Reported by:

School district

Timeframe:

January–March

Enrollment in Career Technology Courses at Comprehensive High Schools

DEFINITION:

General

The total number of students that are enrolled in career technology (occupational) courses at the comprehensive high school. Each course must meet a minimum of 250 minutes weekly.

Formula

Determine the total number of students that are enrolled in career technology courses of study at the comprehensive high school on the forty-fifth day of school.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

Office of Career and Technology Education

Reported by:

School district, SASI, Precode data

Timeframe:

January–March

Enrollment at Career Technology Centers

DEFINITION:

General

The number of students enrolled in classes at the career technology center.

Formula

Determine total number of students enrolled at the career technology center on the forty-fifth day.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Career and Technology Education

Reported by:

Career technology center directors

Timeframe:

Forty-five-day data collection

Percentage of Expenditures Spent on Teacher Salaries

DEFINITION:

General

This fact provides information on the percentage of per student expenditures spent on teacher, instructional assistant, and substitute salaries.

Formula

School

- (1) Add teacher salaries, instructional assistant salaries, and substitute teacher pay for the year of the report card data (school).
- (2) Divide by the total dollars spent per students.

District

- (1) Add teacher salaries, instructional assistant salaries, and substitute teacher pay for the year of the report card data (district).
- (2) Divide by the total dollars spent per student.

Note: Footnote on report card with statement "Prior year's financial data."

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Finance

Reported by:

School district financial officers

Timeframe:

135-day data collection

Note: Data will be one year behind.

Average Age of Facilities in the District*

DEFINITION:

General

The average age (years since construction) of all school facilities in the district.

Formula

- (1) Determine the age of each school facility in the district.
- (2) Total the ages (years since construction) for all school facilities in the district.
- (3) Divide the sum (step two) by the total number of school facilities in the district.

*Buildings used for the instruction of students.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Facilities

Reported by:

School districts

Timeframe:

End of school year

Percentage of First Graders Who Attended Full-day Kindergarten

DEFINITION:

General

This fact reports the percentage of first graders at the school who participated in full-day kindergarten programs.

Formula

- (1) Determine the total number of first-grade students at the school site who participated in full-day kindergarten programs (public, private if available).
- (2) Divide the total by the total number of students enrolled at the school on the forty-fifth day of school year.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Early Childhood

Reported by:

School districts

Timeframe:

Fall data collection

Students Eligible for State Gifted and Talented Services

DEFINITION:

General

This fact reports the percentage of students who meet the state guidelines for receiving gifted and talented services.

Formula

School

- (1) Determine the number of students (grades three through ten) at the school who qualify to receive gifted and talented services as per state-identified guidelines.
- (2) Divide the sum by the total number of students enrolled in grades three through ten at the school on the forty-fifth day.

District

- (1) Determine the number of students (grades three through ten) in the district who qualify to receive gifted and talented services as per state-identified guidelines.
- (2) Divide the sum by the total number of students enrolled in grades three through ten the district on the forty-fifth day.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

Office of Research, Office of Finance

Reported by:

School districts
Precode reporting process

Timeframe:

January–March

Governance, School District

DEFINITION:

General

Reports the type of governance for the school district. Reported on district report card.

Formula

The following information is reported:

- board membership: number of trustees and election/selection method;
- fiscal authority: governing body with authority to levy and expend funds;
- average hours of training annually: number of hours provided to school board trustees divided by the total number of trustees and converted to a percentage.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education

Reported by:

School districts

Timeframe:

Periodic

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). Transfers to adult education who fail to earn high school diplomas within four years (inclusive of summer school) after entering ninth grade are to be counted as non-graduates in the calculation of graduation rate for South Carolina accountability purposes. For a student to be considered a transfer to an adult education high school completion program, the student must comply with the program requirements of a minimum of 16 instructional hours per week with minimum attendance of 60 hours per earned Carnegie unit. Include data from students who meet the state diploma requirements as a result of attending summer school following their senior year in the calculation of the graduation rate.

Formula

School/District

(1) Student Count

Ninth-grade student count for school year beginning four years before year of graduation. (Count is taken from ninth-grade master classification list.) _____

Subtract ninth-grade repeaters - _____

Subtract all students who transferred out of school/district - _____

Add all students who transferred into school/district + _____

Total number of students = _____

(2) Diplomas Issued

Total number of diplomas, and/or GED issued = _____

(3) Graduation Rate

Divide (step two by step one), convert to percentage _____

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Research

Reported by:

School districts

Timeframe:

End of school year

Addendum: After summer school

Percentage of Seventh and Eighth Grade Students in High School Credit Courses

DEFINITION:

General

This fact reports the percentage of seventh and eighth grade students that enroll in courses for high school credit.

Formula

- (1) Determine the total number of students enrolled on forty-fifth day in grades seven and eight enrolled in courses for high school credit
- (2) Divide the total by the number of seventh and eighth graders enrolled at the school on the forty-fifth day.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Research

Reported by:

School districts

Timeframe: January–March

Students Older Than Usual for Grade (Two or More Years)

DEFINITION:

General

This fact provides information on the percentage of students who are more than two years over age for grade.

Formula

- (1) Determine the total number of students enrolled at forty-fifth day who are more than two years older than the typical age of pupils at student's current grade assignment (September as reference date).
- (2) Divide the sum by the total number of students enrolled at the school on the forty-fifth day.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Research

Reported by:

School districts

Precode testing file

Timeframe:

January–March

Participation in Co-Curricular Career Technology Organizations

DEFINITION:

General

This fact reports the percentage of students attending career technology centers or comprehensive high schools that participate in career technology co-curricular organizations.

Formula

Career Technology Centers

- (1) Determine the unduplicated number of students at the career technology center that participate in school-related clubs/organizations (VICA, FBLA, FHA, HERO, DECA, HOSA, TSA, FFA).
- (2) Divide the sum by the total number of students enrolled at the school on the forty-fifth day of school.

Comprehensive High School

- (1) Determine the unduplicated number of students at the comprehensive high school that participate in school-related clubs/organizations (VICA, FBLA, FHA, HERO, DECA, HOSA, TSA, FFA).
- (2) Divide the sum by the total number of students enrolled in career technology courses on the forty-fifth day of school.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Career and Technology Education

Reported by:

School district career technology coordinators, directors

Timeframe:

End of school year

Parents Attending Conferences

DEFINITION:

General

The percentage of students in the school whose parents/guardians participate in or attended an individual parent conference and/or an academic plan conference. Conferences include face-to-face, telephone, and two-way e-mail conferences.

Formula

- (1) Count the number of students in the school whose parents/guardians attended at least one individual parent conference (unduplicated count) or an academic plan conference during the school year.
- (2) Divide the total number of students in the school whose parents/guardians attended at least one individual parent conference or an academic plan conference at the school (step one) by the total number of students enrolled at the school on the 135th day of school.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education

Reported by:

School districts

Timeframe:

End of school year

Percentage of Student Records Matched

DEFINITION:

General

This fact provides information on the degree to which student PACT test records were matched longitudinally from the previous year to the current year. The matched student test records are used for the calculation of the school and district Improvement Rating.

Formula

Calculated for each school in which PACT-tested grade levels are housed and for each school district.

- (1) Determine the number of students for whom the current-year PACT test data are successfully matched with the individual student test data from the previous school year.
- (2) Divide the total from step one by the total number of students for whom current-year PACT test data are available for matching.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Assessment and Office of Research

Reported by:

School district

Timeframe:

Summer of current school year

Percentage of Portable Classrooms in the District

DEFINITION:

General

This fact reports the number of portable (relocatable units)* classrooms (shown as a percentage of the total classrooms).

Formula

- (1) Determine the number of classrooms classified as portable structures (relocatable units)* in the district during the school year for which data is being reported.
- (2) Divide by the total number of classrooms.

*Designation given in *Statewide Summary Capital Needs, 1998–99*, State Department of Education, Office of Facilities

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Facilities

Reported by:

School districts

Timeframe:

End of school year

Prime Instructional Time

DEFINITION:

General

This indicator provides information on the percentage of instructional time available when both teachers and students are present.

Formula

- (1) Calculate average teacher load:
$$\frac{\text{Number of students ADM}}{\text{Number of contract classroom teachers}}$$
- (2) Calculate the number of days teachers are absent from the classroom for any reason. (Annual leave for teachers in state special schools is excluded.)
- (3) Calculate the number of days students are absent from the classroom for any reason.
- (4) Calculate the total instructional time in days:
$$\text{Number of students ADM} \times 180 \text{ (or number of instructional days)}$$
- (5) Prime instructional time = $1.00 - \frac{(\text{step one} \times \text{step two}) + \text{step three}}{\text{step four}} \times 100\%$

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Research

Reported by:

School districts
SASI pupil accounting system
End-of-year attendance survey

Timeframe:

End of school year

Principal's Years at School

DEFINITION:

General

This fact reports the length of time that the principal has been assigned to the school.

Formula

Total the principal's actual length of time at the school:
Ninety days or less = .5 year; more than ninety days = 1 year

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Professional Certification System

Reported by:

District superintendent

Timeframe:

End of school year

Professional Development Days, Teachers

DEFINITION:

General

This indicator reports the average number of professional development days per teacher.

Formula

- (1) Multiply the number of professional staff paid on the teacher salary schedule by the five statutory days for professional development.
- (2) Add the product of the number of additional days for which the district or school has paid a stipend, or registration fee, or the teacher has permission from school or district administrator for professional development that meets the state-adopted standards by the number of teachers participating. Until the teacher contract year reaches 195 days, this formula may include activities occurring on instructional days.
- (3) Divide the sum of step one and step two by the total number of professional staff in item one.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Research

Reported by:

School districts

Timeframe:

End of school year

Student-Teacher Ratio for Core Subjects (Each Class)

DEFINITION:

General

This fact reports the average student-teacher ratio for English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies classes.

Formula

Grades K–5

- (1) Determine the number of students enrolled at the school on the forty-fifth day of school.
- (2) Determine the total number of teachers in the school (excluding counselors, librarians, administrators, specialists, and teachers of art, music, physical education, or special education).
- (3) Determine the number of self-contained students with disabilities enrolled in the school on forty-fifth day.
- (4) Determine the total number of teachers of self-contained classes at the school.
- (5) Find the total number of students: #1 + #3.
- (6) Find the student-teacher ratio in “regular” core classes: #1 / #2.
- (7) Find the student-teacher ratio in self-contained classes for the disabled: #3 / #4.
- (8) Find the sum of the student-teacher ratios, weighted by the proportion of students: $[(\#1 / \#5) * \#6] + [(\#3 / \#5) * \#7]$.

Grades 6–12

- (1) Determine the unduplicated number of students enrolled in math, English language arts, science, and social studies classes on the forty-fifth day of school.
- (2) Determine the number of FTE classroom teachers of English language arts, math, science, and social studies at the school.
- (3) Determine the number of self-contained students with disabilities enrolled in the school on forty-fifth day.
- (4) Determine the total number of teachers of self-contained classes at the school.
- (5) Find the total number of students: #1 + #3.
- (6) Find the student-teacher ratio in “regular” core classes: #1 / #2.
- (7) Find the student-teacher ratio in self-contained classes for the disabled: #3 / #4.
- (8) Find the sum of the student teacher ratios, weighted by the proportion of students: $[(\#1 / \#5) * \#6] + [(\#3 / \#5) * \#7]$.

District

- (1) Determine the number of students enrolled in kindergarten through grade five in the district on forty-fifth day.
- (2) Determine the number of students (grades six through twelve) enrolled in math, English language arts, science, and social studies classes in district on forty-fifth day.
- (3) Determine the number of self-contained students with disabilities enrolled in the school district on forty-fifth day.
- (4) Divide the sum (#3) by the total number of teachers of self-contained classes at the school.
- (5) Divide the total number of students by the total number of teachers.
$$\frac{(\text{step 1+ step 3}) \text{ total number of students}}{(\text{step 2+ step 4}) \text{ total number of teachers}}$$

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Research

Reported by:

School districts—SASI

Timeframe

January–March

Student Retention

DEFINITION:

General

This indicator reports the percentage of students required to repeat grade levels because of poor grades, low test scores, and/or teacher judgment in the last completed school year.

Formula

Grades K–8

School

- (1) Determine the total number of students classified at the same grade level for two consecutive years (kindergarten through eighth grade).
- (2) Divide the sum by the total student enrollment (kindergarten through eighth grade) at the school on the forty-fifth day.

District

- (1) Determine the total number of students classified at the same grade level for consecutive years (kindergarten through eighth grade).
- (2) Divide the sum by the total student enrollment (kindergarten through eighth grade) at the school on the forty-fifth day.

Grades 9–12

School

- (1) Determine the total number of students enrolled on forty-fifth day not earning enough units to be classified at the next grade level in the school.
- (2) Divide the sum by the number of students enrolled in the school on the forty-fifth day.

District

- (1) Determine the total number of students not earning enough units to be classified at the next grade level in the district.
- (2) Divide the sum by the number of students enrolled in the district on the forty-fifth day.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Research

Reported by:

School district, Precode reporting

Timeframe

January–March

Average Administrative Salary Comparisons

DEFINITION:

General

This fact reports the average salary of administrators in the district. The average district salary is compared to national and state average salary for these educators.

Formula

- (1) Determine the aggregate salaries of administrators in the district (paid on administrative schedule).
- (2) Divide the sum by the total number of administrators in the district.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Finance

Reported by:

School districts

Timeframe:

End of school year

Number of Alternative Schools in the District

DEFINITION:

General

This fact reports the total number of alternative schools in the district accredited through the State Department of Education, Office of Organizational Development.

Formula

Determine the number of alternative schools in the district accredited through the State Department of Education, Office of Organizational Development.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of School Quality

Reported by:

District pupil accounting system, SASI

Timeframe:

End of school year

Number of Charter Schools in the District

DEFINITION:

General

This fact reports the total number of charter schools in the district. Under state law, a charter school is "a public, non-sectarian, non-religious, non-home-based, non-profit corporation forming a school which operates within a public school district."

Formula

Determine the number of charter schools in the district that have been approved for operation by the local school board or the State Board of Education.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of School Quality

Reported by:

School districts

Timeframe:

End of school year

Number of Magnet Schools in the District

DEFINITION:

General

This fact reports the total number of magnet schools in the district accredited through the State Department of Education, Office of Organizational Development.

Formula

Determine the number of magnet schools in the district accredited through the State Department of Education, Office of Organizational Development.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of School Quality

Reported by:

District pupil accounting system, SASI

Timeframe:

End of school year

Students with Non-Speech Disabilities Taking PACT Off Grade Level

DEFINITION:

General

The percentage of students who take a PACT test at a grade level one or more grade levels below their Education Finance Act (EFA) grade designation.

Formula

Determine the number of students who take a PACT test that is one or more grade levels below their designated EFA grade level. Divide by the number of students tested and convert to percentage.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Research

Reported by:

School district

Timeframe:

End of school year

Superintendent's Years in Office

DEFINITION:

General

The number of years that the current district superintendent has held that position.

Formula

Determine the length of time the superintendent has been in office. The total time should be reported in years.

Ninety days or less = .5 year; more than ninety days = 1 year.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Research

Reported by:

School district

Timeframe:

End of school year

Out-of-School Suspensions or Expulsions for Violent and/or Criminal Offenses

DEFINITION:

General

This fact provides information on the percentage of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions for physical violence and/or criminal offenses.

Formula

School

- (1) Determine the unduplicated count of students dismissed from school (out-of-school suspensions and expulsions) for incidents occurring on school grounds, on school transportation, or at school-sponsored events, to include: 1. Aggravated Assault; 2. Simple Assault; 3. Intimidation; 4. Drug Violations; 5. Larceny/Theft; 6. Liquor Law Violations; 7. Disturbing Schools (bomb threats, false fire alarms, disorderly conduct); 8. Vandalism; 9. Weapons Possessions; 10. Sex Offenses; 11. Arson; 12. Robbery; 13. Burglary/Breaking and Entering; 14. Vehicle Theft; 15. Homicide; 16. Other Criminal Offenses.
- (2) Divide the count from step one above by the 45-day ADM and express as a percentage.

District

- (1) Determine the unduplicated count of students dismissed from school (out-of-school suspensions and expulsions) for incidents occurring on school grounds, on school transportation, or at school-sponsored events, to include: 1. Aggravated Assault; 2. Simple Assault; 3. Intimidation; 4. Drug Violations; 5. Larceny/Theft; 6. Liquor Law Violations; 7. Disturbing Schools (bomb threats, false fire alarms, disorderly conduct); 8. Vandalism; 9. Weapons Possessions; 10. Sex Offenses; 11. Arson; 12. Robbery; 13. Burglary/Breaking and Entering; 14. Vehicle Theft; 15. Homicide; 16. Other Criminal Offenses.
- (2) Divide the count from step one above by the 45-day ADM and express as a percentage.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education

Reported by:

School districts and individual schools

Timeframe:

End of school year

Teachers, Highly Qualified

DEFINITION:

General

The percentage of teachers of core academic subjects in the school or district who are highly qualified based on criteria outlined in No Child Left Behind legislation.

Formula

Highly qualified teachers have:

- Earned at least a bachelor's degree;
- Demonstrated content knowledge in each core content area he/she teaches;
- Do not have any waivers of the requirements for full State certification.

Specific definitions are outlined in the SDE publication, *Identifying Highly Qualified Teachers*, available from the Division of Teacher Quality.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Teacher Preparation, Support, and Assessment

Reported by:

School districts

Timeframe: End of school year

Teachers Returning from the Previous School Year

DEFINITION:

General

This indicator provides information on the percentage of classroom teachers returning to the school/district from the previous school year for a three-year period.

Formula

School

- (1) Determine total number of teachers assigned to school in year previous to ratings performance year.
- (2) Determine number of teachers who returned in the ratings year.
- (3) Divide step two by step one.
- (4) Average the result yielded in step three for the preceding three-year period.

District

Total number of certified teachers assigned to each school in the district during the school year prior to report card distribution.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Research

Reported by:

School districts, Professional Certification System

Timeframe:

End of school year

Teachers on Emergency or Provisional Certificates

DEFINITION:

General

This indicator reports the percentage of teachers who do not have full teaching certification.

Formula

- (1) Determine the total number of teachers.
- (2) Determine the number of teachers with emergency or provisional certificates.
- (3) Divide step two by step one and convert to a percentage.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Teacher Certification

Reported by:

School district

Timeframe:

End of school year

Teacher Vacancies Unfilled for More Than Nine Weeks

DEFINITION:

General

This indicator reports the percentage of teaching positions that remain unfilled for more than nine weeks.

Formula

- (1) Determine the number of classroom teacher positions, excluding media specialists and guidance counselors, that remained unfilled by certified teachers under contract for more than nine weeks.
- (2) Divide the total by the number of classroom teacher positions, excluding media specialists and guidance counselors, in the district.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Research

Reported by:

School district

Timeframe:

End of school year

Students in Work-Based Experiences

DEFINITION:

General

This fact reports the percentage of students involved with in-depth learning experiences at a work site providing students with work-related knowledge and skills (youth apprenticeships, registered apprenticeships, cooperative education, mentoring, shadowing, internships, and service learning).

Formula

Career Technology Centers

- (1) Determine the total number of students participating in structured experiences with an outside agency or business (types listed in general definition).
- (2) Divide the total (step one) by the total number of students enrolled at the center on the forty-fifth day of school.

Comprehensive High Schools

- (1) Determine the total number of students that participate in structured experiences with an outside agency or business.
- (2) Divide the total (step one) by the total number of students enrolled in courses at the high school.

PROCEDURES:

Collected by:

State Department of Education, Office of Career and Technology Education

Reported by:

School districts

Timeframe:

End of school year

APPENDIX D

**Table of Specifications
by School or District for Report Card Data**

**APPENDIX D
TABLE OF SPECIFICATIONS**

Data for each noted item should be included in the school or district report card
for a school or district enrolling students in the designated grades

Element	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Career/ Technology	Charter	Alternative	Special	District
Title Page																		
School/district name, Address Principal, superintendent, and board chairman names Telephone numbers	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Fiscal authority																		•
Grades and total enrollment	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Absolute and Improvement Ratings	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Adequate Yearly Progress	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Similar schools/districts—Absolute Ratings	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Improvement incentive—HUGs				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
S.C. Performance Goal	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
SDE and EOC website addresses	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Achievement Performance Page(s)																		
School/district name	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Performance trends	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Critical definitions • PACT performance levels	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Percent student records matched					•	•	•	•	•									•

Element	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Career/ Technology	Charter	Alternative	Special	District
Graphic display (pie charts) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State assessment data, by content area Distribution among the four performance levels (PACT) This school/district Schools/districts with students like ours 				●	●	●	●	●	●						As applicable to the program			●
Table display <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of students scoring Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, or Advanced by content area (PACT) Number tested Percent not tested Disaggregated student performance in the following categories: all, gender, racial/ethnic, disability status, migrant status, English proficiency, and socioeconomic status¹ State objective 				●	●	●	●	●	●						●	●	●	●
Table display <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of students scoring Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, or Advanced by grade level and content area for the current year and previous year (PACT) Number tested Percent not tested 				●	●	●	●	●	●						●	●	●	●
Table display <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percent seniors eligible for LIFE scholarship Percent seniors meeting SAT/ACT requirement Percent seniors meeting grade point average requirement This school/district Schools/districts with students like ours 										●	●	●	●		As applicable to the program			●

¹ **Note:** Subgroup scores should be reported consistent with the minimum requirements stated in section 3 of this manual.

Element	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Career/ Technology	Charter	Alternative	Special	District
<p>Table display</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of students scoring pass on 3, 2, 1, or 0 tests on first (tenth grade) attempt on high school Exit Exam (2003); percentage passing on 2, 1, 0 subtests on first attempt on HSAP (2004 and beyond)—for current year and previous two classes This school/district Schools/districts with students like ours 										●	●	●	●		As applicable to the program			●
<p>Table display</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Beginning 2004) Percentage of students at each performance level on each HSAP subtest (first attempt) Disaggregated student performance in the following categories: all, gender, racial/ethnic, disability status, migrant status, English proficiency, and socioeconomic status Number tested Percent not tested State objective 										●	●	●	●		As applicable to the program			●
<p>Table display</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longitudinal Exit Exam passage rate for current senior class Disaggregated student performance in the following categories: all, gender, racial/ethnic, disability status, migrant status, English proficiency, and socioeconomic status 										●	●	●	●		As applicable to the program			●
<p>Table display</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eligibility for LIFE scholarships Disaggregated student performance in the following categories: all, gender, racial/ethnic, disability status, migrant status, English proficiency, and socioeconomic status 										●	●	●	●		As applicable to the program			●

Element	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Career/ Technology	Charter	Alternative	Special	District
Table display <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduation rate (percent) Disaggregated student performance in the following categories: all, gender, racial/ethnic, disability status, migrant status, English proficiency, and socioeconomic status Met state objective 										●	●	●	●		As applicable to the program			●
Table display <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduation rate (percent) Number of students This school/district Schools/districts with students like ours 										●	●	●	●		As applicable to the program			●
Table display <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longitudinal Exit Exam passage rate This school/district Schools/districts with students like ours 										●	●	●	●		As applicable to the program			●
Table display (under development) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of students scoring pass on end-of-course tests by academic content area and by course This school/district Schools/districts with students like ours 										●	●	●	●		As applicable to the program			●
K-2 Only Schools																		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student attendance 	●	●	●												As applicable to the program			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent involvement 	●	●	●												As applicable to the program			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student-teacher ratio 	●	●	●												As applicable to the program			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early childhood school accreditation by external group [group(s) accrediting school indicated] 	●	●	●												As applicable to the program			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional development time devoted to early childhood 	●	●	●												As applicable to the program			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom environment ratings (2005 and beyond) 	●	●	●												As applicable to the program			

Total Printing Costs.....	\$8,152.00
Units Printed.....	2,000
Cost Per Unit.....	\$4.076

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