

Section II Ratings Criteria

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 School Identification Number (SIDN) by the SC Department of Education (SCDE).
- ❑ 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 for a school crossing two or more organizational levels 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 67 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.

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 one 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.

Superintendent Requests

- Superintendents may request that separate report cards be issued for special program units that meet all of 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 SIDN-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.

- In districts with only one high school and only one ninth grade school (as defined by separate SIDNs), the district superintendent may request of the State Superintendent of Education by the first day of the school year preceding the report card year that the two schools are to be combined for purposes of the school rating and reporting system. In this circumstance, all performance data and school profile data are to be combined and one report card document is distributed for the two schools. If the district superintendent elects not to request that the data from both schools be combined, both the school containing grade 9 only and the high school will receive report cards listing all data, but only the high school will receive school ratings.

Criteria for and Calculation of School and District Ratings

Two ratings are to be assigned to schools. The ratings for absolute performance and growth 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.

“Growth” means the rating a school will receive based on longitudinally matched student data comparing current performance to the previous year’s performance 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 amendments to ESEA, a notice of each school’s attainment of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) must be reported. AYP specifies statewide targets for percent tested 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.ed.sc.gov).

Depending on the method selected, district ratings will be calculated by aggregating student-level data. Student assessment results from the SC-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, middle school, and district ratings following the third administration of the assessments.

End-of-course test results were included in the calculation of district ratings beginning in 2006, were included in the high school ratings beginning in 2007, and were included in the calculation of middle school Absolute Ratings beginning in 2008. The on-time high school graduation rate and fifth-year graduation rate are used, in addition to test results, for calculating high school and school district ratings.

Students Included in the Ratings

- Absolute performance ratings for schools: Data from any student who is in membership in a school at the time of the 45-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.) Data from students repeating a grade are included in the calculation of the ratings. Results from students taking state-administered End-of-Course tests for high school credit courses will be included in the ratings. For purposes of calculating on-time graduation rates, only those 9th grade students enrolled as of the 45th day are to be included. Data from student dropouts will be included in the calculations; data from students who transfer to another educational setting and are enrolled in a state high school diploma program are removed from the calculation. Fifth-year graduation rates are to be incorporated in the calculation of high school ratings, beginning in the 2010-2011 school year.

Data from special education students administered the state assessments with standard accommodations 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 the state assessment administered in its standard format. For the 2009-2010 school year, data from the results of administrations using non-standard accommodations were treated in the state ratings calculations in the same manner as data from the standard administration of state assessments. Beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, data from the results of test administrations using non-standard accommodations will be treated in the state ratings calculations in the same manner as in determination of Adequate Yearly Progress, in accordance with Federal regulation (*34 CFR Parts 200 and 300, Title I – Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged: Individuals With Disabilities Education Act – Assistance to States for the Education of Children with Disabilities*, Federal Register, Vol. 72, No. 67, April 9, 2007) and Non-Regulatory Guidance (*Modified Achievement Standards: Non-Regulatory Guidance, Section F-6.*, US Department of Education, July 20, 2007). Performance data from such students will be awarded zero points for the calculation of the absolute Indices; data from the students will be included in both the numerator and denominator of the index. Data from students administered the SC-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 in accordance with federal regulations.

- Absolute performance ratings for districts: Any student who is enrolled in a district at the time of the 45-day enrollment count and on the first day of testing 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 Education Accountability Act was amended in 2006 (Section 59-18-920) to direct that data from students attending a charter school authorized by a local school district are not to be included in the calculation of the local school district ratings. Ratings for charter schools authorized by a local school district are to be reported separately on the school district report card. Ratings for charter schools within the SC Public Charter School District (SCPCSD) will be reported on the SCPCSD report card.

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 SC-Alternate Assessments should be included in the data reported for each student's home district. The data from students attending such special schools also will be reported on the special school's report card.

- Growth Ratings for grades three through eight: Data from any student will be included if he or she is enrolled in a school (or district) on the forty-fifth day, the student's posttest data can be matched to data statewide from the previous year, and the student has valid state assessment test scores for both years, even if the student attended a different school during the previous year. Beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, test scores invalidated because of the use of non-standard accommodations will be used in the calculation of growth indices based on values from the growth rating value table. 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. For school year 2010-2011, longitudinally matched data from all state assessment subtests except Writing (Reading & Research (ELA), Math, Science, and Social Studies) will be used for calculating Growth Ratings.

Student Performance Categories

The State Board of Education, through the SC Department of Education (SCDE), 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. In Fall 2009, the EOC approved the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS), the state assessments for grades 3-8 in reading & research, writing, math, science, and social studies (Section 59-18-320(B); Section 59-18-1930(2)). 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, and Physical Science have also been approved for use and their results were included in the calculation of district ratings beginning in 2006. Approval of the end-of-course test in U.S. History and the Constitution followed in October 2008 and in June 2010, the EOC reviewed and approved the end-of-course test for Biology I/Applied Biology II which is operational in Fall 2010. End-of-course test results were used for the calculation of high school ratings beginning in 2007 and were used in the calculation of middle school ratings, beginning in 2008. First-attempt HSAP results (percent of students scoring at or above the “2” performance level) were used in the calculation of high school and district ratings beginning with the November 2004 report card. The percentage of students scoring at the “2” level or above on both the HSAP tests within two years after taking the tests for the first time (“longitudinal HSAP”) were used in the calculation of the high school and district ratings beginning in 2006.

PASS Performance Levels

The performance levels on state assessments in grades 3 through 8 in the English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies subject areas are listed in Section 59-18-900(B). The following Descriptors of Achievement Levels (DALs) were used during PASS standard setting:

Exemplary 5

The student demonstrates performance that consistently exceeds expectations for a typical student at this grade level.

Exemplary 4

The student demonstrates performance that exceeds expectations for a typical student at this grade level.

Met

The student demonstrates performance that meets expectations at this grade level.

Not Met 2

The student demonstrates performance that sometimes meets expectations at this grade level.

Not Met 1

There is significant need for additional instructional opportunities to achieve the met level.