



SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Reporting facts. Measuring change. Promoting progress.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

AGENDA

Monday, June 8, 2015
1:00 p.m.
433 Blatt Building

- | | | | |
|------|---|----------------|-------------------------------|
| I. | Welcome and Introductions | Mr. Whittemore | |
| II. | Approval of the Minutes of March 9, 2015 | Mr. Whittemore | |
| III. | 2015 Champions for Children Award | | |
| IV. | Special Presentation – <i>District Efficiency Study Results</i>
Tidwell & Associates | | |
| V. | Subcommittee Reports | | |
| | A. EIA and Improvement Mechanisms | Dr. Couch | |
| | Information: FY 2015-16 Budget | | |
| | Action: Annual Report on the South Carolina Teacher
Loan Program, 2013-14 | | David Whittemore
CHAIR |
| | Action: Results of the 2014 Parent Survey | | Daniel B. Merck
VICE CHAIR |
| | B. Early Readiness Assessment | Mrs. Hairfield | Anne H. Bull |
| | Action: Readiness Assessment Recommendation | | Bob Couch |
| | | | Mike Fair |
| | | | Raye Felder |
| | C. Public Awareness | Mrs. Hairfield | Margaret Anne Gaffney |
| | Action: 2014-15 School and District Report Card Format | | Barbara B. Hairfield |
| | Action: Development of Single Accountability System and
Public Engagement | | Nikki Haley |
| | Information: Student Reading Success Activity Guide | | R. Wesley Hayes, Jr. |
| | Information: Family-Friendly Standards Update | | Dwight A. Loftis |
| | | | Deb Marks |
| | | | John W. Matthews, Jr. |
| | | | Joseph H. Neal |
| | | | Neil C. Robinson, Jr. |
| | | | Molly Spearman |
| | | | Patti J. Tate |
| | Adjournment | | |

Melanie D. Barton
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
Minutes of the Meeting
March 9, 2015

Members in Attendance: David Whittemore (Chair); Dr. Danny Merck (Vice-Chair); Anne Bull; Dr. Bob Couch; Sen. Mike Fair; Rep. Raye Felder; Barbara Hairfield; Sen. Wes Hayes; Rep. Dwight Loftis; Deb Marks; Sen. John Matthews; and Patti Tate

EOC Members Participating Via Conference Call: Neil Robinson

EOC Staff Present: Dr. Kevin Andrews; Mrs. Melanie Barton; Ms. Paulette Geiger; Dr. Rainey Knight; Ms. Bunnie Ward; and Ms. Dana Yow.

Mr. Whittemore called the meeting to order and thanked South Carolina ETV for live streaming the meeting. He also welcomed Rep. Raye Felder who is the new representative of the House Education and Public Works Committee and Rep. Dwight Loftis, the House Ways and Means Committee designee, to the EOC.

The minutes of March 9, 2015 meeting were approved as distributed.

Dr. Merck reported on behalf of the Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee. The Subcommittee recommended that the new South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards in English language arts and mathematics be adopted along with the addendum. Dr. Merck noted that the Subcommittee took public comments on the proposed standards at its March 2, 2015 meeting. In addition the staff provided information and answered questions at both the March 2 meeting and at an informational meeting held prior to the full EOC's meeting. Dr. Merck noted that the question of developmental appropriateness of the standards in the early grades had been a concern. He asked EOC members to allow the staff to show a video that describes the difference between the appropriateness of standards and the appropriateness of curriculum and instruction. The EOC members watched the film.

Dr. Merck informed the EOC that all public two and four-year colleges and universities have endorsed the standards as being college and career ready. Dr. Merck expressed his belief that the standards raise expectations for students and teachers and are developmentally appropriate for children.

Sen. Fair expressed his gratitude for the South Carolina educators, parents, business, and community leaders who worked under a very tight timeframe to produce these standards. As he noted, the standards represent the best work of our citizens and reflect the values of our state.

Ms. Marks then expressed her opposition to the standards and asked that her remarks be made part of the committee's public record. With no opposition, the remarks are included as Appendix A of these minutes. She thanked the General Assembly for passing Act 200 in 20140 but based upon the opinion of national experts, she could not support the standards due to the fact that they are developmentally inappropriate for young children and are a rewrite of Common Core. She suggested that the standards be sent back for a rewriting and be debated further the public.

Sen. Hayes asked for clarification on the Department of Education's newest ESEA waiver process and the timeline. Mrs. Barton responded that the ESEA waiver application must be submitted prior to March 31 and that further delay in approving new standards would jeopardize

the ability of the Department of Education and the EOC to comply with implementing the new standards in school year 2015-16.

Sen. Hayes recommended approval of the standards along with a recommendation that the cyclical review occur at any point as needed prior to the seven year mandatory timeline. Rep. Loftis expressed his support of Sen. Hayes' recommendation, noting that changed in technology will likely necessitate that the standards be reviewed at least every five years.

Sen. Fair then shared with the Committee information that he had received from a pediatric neurologist in Greenville who had reviewed the standards in the early grades. Sen. Fair concluded that we have to trust our educators. Sen. Fair moved to adopt the Subcommittee's recommendations along with the importance of revising the standards at any point needed prior to the seven years. Sen. Matthews second the motion. The motion was adopted 11 to 1 with Ms. Marks asking to be recorded as voting no.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Attachment

Remarks to SC EOC Full Committee – March 9, 2015

Education Oversight Committee (EOC) member remarks by Deb Marks on whether or not to approve the First Reading drafts for the ELA and Mathematics standards as approved by the SC State Board of Education (SCSBE) on January 11, 2015 and February 11, 2015, respectively. I hereby request that these remarks any attached addendums be made part of the meeting records.

The basis for these remarks is based upon facts, legislation, research, expert analysis, public information and personal observation.

Accolades:

SC Legislature

The SC Legislature heard the public outcry in 2013/2014 regarding the Common Core ELA and Mathematics standards by passing Act 200. The Act required that the SC Department of Education (SCDOE) to write new standards to replace the Common Core ELA and Math standards to be implemented during the 2015/2016 school year. As a part of the process, a task force of parents, business and industry persons, community leaders and educators, to include special education teachers were to be an integral part of the entire process. Parents and business and industry representation has been minimal. What we have done is ignore the task of writing new standards that are not Common Core.

SC Department of Education

Former Superintendent Mick Zais promptly started the new standards writing process in July of 2014, producing a draft set of standards in October 2014. Current Superintendent Molly Spearman took the time to meet with grassroots activist leaders early in 2015 to listen to concerns regarding work on the drafts of the new ELA and Mathematics standards which are basically Common Core.

Education Oversight Committee (EOC) members

The EOC Assessments and Standards subcommittee and Full EOC Committee agreed in December 2014 to send the new draft ELA and Math standards back to the SC Department of Education to re-write them as they were found not to be acceptable. The panel reports recommended that the standards be sent back to the SCDOE to be revised according to their respective recommendations. Please note that the minutes of neither the ASA nor Full EOC reflect a decision or opinion to send the standards back to SCDOE to be revised.

Valid Ignored Information

According to national experts both the October 2014 draft and the First Reading drafts of the ELA and Math standards contain the following problems:

- 1) Developmentally inappropriate standards in K thru 3rd Grade based upon the review of Joan Almon, Co-founder and Director of Programs for the Alliance for Childhood. Testified before the Senate Education Committee in February 2014 regarding the developmentally inappropriateness of the Common Core standards in place in SC schools. Her main points of concern were: “devoting long hours to teacher-led instruction although young children learn best in creative, hands-on ways and in the context of meaningful real-life experiences; engaging in inappropriate standardized testing and avoiding more appropriate, broad-based assessments of physical, social-emotional and cognitive development; an intense focus on reading in kindergarten although there is no evidence that learning to read at this age is more effective in

the long-term than learning in first grade, and many children are not developmentally ready to read at five.” Ms. Almon’s concerns are still valid in the 2015 SCCR standards. (Remarks attached as an addendum).

By the SCDOE’s own admission via comments by Dr. Fowler, there is a professional disconnect on definitions of what is developmentally appropriate for grades K through 3 children. What should have been learned through the debate is that there are two distinct views on what is developmentally appropriate, directive versus student centered learning. There is a definite difference in opinion on how to teach young children. A statewide forum to vet what approach we need in SC needs to occur before these standards are approved.

- 2) Professor Sandra Stotsky has asserted repeatedly when asked, that the SC draft standards for both ELA and Mathematics have not gone thru a proper standards vetting process. Her description of the First Reading ELA standards as passed by the SCBOE was, ‘warmed over Common Core’. Professor Stotsky also expressed the following: “any set of ELA standards for SC should require students to read works of historically recognized SC authors/poets/playwrights as well as biographical (informational) material on famous SC people. She highly recommended that the EOC require that the new ELA standards be Massachusetts 2013 ELA standards with SC specifics put into the literature strand by a group of high school and college English teachers. For Math standards, the EOC could specify the K-12 Math standards now used in Minnesota (MN) and consult with Larry Gray at the University of MN to consult and work out adjustments for SC and use of the MN Math assessments he worked on. In summary, Professor Stotsky says that the EOC and the SC Legislature should declare that whatever the SCDOE has come up with is professionally incompetent work. A statement of NO CONFIDENCE will suffice. It is imperative to Professor Stotsky that SC needs to go outside its own SCDOE to get first-rate academic standards and must get a sign-off from “recognized literary scholars (at higher education institutions in other states) and from engineers, scientists, and mathematicians in other higher education institutions.”
- 3) Stanford University mathematician and former member of the Common Core Validation Committee, Dr. James Milgram, has stated that if the controversial standards are not replaced, America’s place as a competitor in the technology industry will be severely undermined. He refused to validate the Common Core standards. Dr. Milgram has characterized both the October 2014 draft and the First Reading draft of SC Mathematic standards as “amateur Ville”. He says that “the idiotic idea that each grade level should see exactly the same mathematical practice standards” was something that jumped out to him. He goes on to state that one of the biggest issues with Common Core is that “. . . the expected levels for the different grades are so far from what is generally expected in those grades, with K, 1, and 2, being far too difficult and 3-6 being progressively less challenging to the point that by grade 8 they are 2 or more years behind international expectations.” Milgram concludes by saying, “Too many of the Common Core expectations are repeated in the current SC draft.”
- 4) Ze’ev Wurman, former senior policy advisor in the US Department of Education and former member of the California Academic Content Standards Commission says on the October 2014 Math standards draft, “K-8 are essentially badly rewritten Common Core with a few minor changes”. Regarding the 2015 SCCR Math standard, Wurman says, “. . . it seems there are only minimal differences between the old version and the current one. In a few places it has a

few words of additional elaboration, in other cases a handful of standards were merged so that the new version seems to have slightly fewer standards, but the content essentially did not change.”

- 5) EOC staff prepared comparisons as requested by Senator Mike Fair and Deb Marks, reflect the following summaries:

Summaries prepared based upon the comparisons requested by Senator Mike Fair: These particular comparisons are showing a favorable view towards the Common Core ELA and Math standards and proving that the newly written SCCC standards are in fact nearly the same according to the percentages provided. The SC Legislature, in Act 200 asked for new SC standards in ELA and Math, not a version that closely mirrors the Common Core standards. That this has occurred in SC has been confirmed by national experts who have reviewed the newly written SC standards and have expertise on the content of the Common Core standards. The summaries are a part of the March 9, 2015 meeting packet.

Summaries prepared based upon the comparisons requested by Deb Marks: The 2015 SCCC Math Standards and the October 2014 Draft Math Standards are essentially the same percentage wise. The EOC Review Panels had the most criticisms made on the Math Standards. The percentages indicate very little change. The 2015 SCCC ELA Standards and the October 2014 Draft ELA Standards appear to show the most difference in regard to revisions made but are essentially 68% the same in content. This is also reflected in comments made by national experts. Note – this summary document is not included as part of the March 9, 2015 meeting packet materials.

Please note that the comparison percentages in the recent summaries provided by EOC staff appear to have come from the June 2010 *Common Core State Standards Initiative Comparative Review Report*, prepared for the State Board of Education and the Education Oversight Committee (CCSSICR) which was a document used to determine if SC would adopt the Common Core ELA and Mathematics Standards.

We were tasked with writing our own ELA and Math standards that were not Common Core. We have failed. Why are we sitting here today getting ready to vote on Common Core again?

- 6) Other valid concerns regarding the new standards writing process:

The SCBOE ignored the public documented concerns regarding the First Reading drafts expressed at the January and February 2015 Board meetings. A one day public notice was given on the revised draft for the ELA standards and two days were given to review the Mathematics standards. Not enough time for review.

It is increasingly apparent that parents and taxpayers are being largely ignored. If these standards are approved today, the growing divide between parents and taxpayers and the legislative appointed decision making bodies of the SCBOE and the EOC will continue to escalate.

Parents and business and industry had minimal involvement in the cyclical review process, more specifically, none were a part of the writing team and were given token spots on the EOC and SCDOE review panels. The main recourse for concern will fall again on the Legislature who will most assuredly be hounded by passage of these standards.

SCDOE is rushing through passage of these standards to meet a federal deadline, completion of the SC ESEA waiver, due on or before March 31, 2015 (see page 21 of SC waiver draft). As it is, SC meets the requirements of the ESEA waiver with our current Common Core ELA and Mathematic standards which are deemed 'college and career' ready and we have in place an assessment, (ACT) that is aligned with Common Core. The only 'hiccup' is that ACT 200 requires implementation of new ELA and Math standards by the school year beginning 2015/2016.

SC should not continue to allow the federal government to dictate our standards, assessments or approval process. States did not have any federal requirement prior to the acceptance of Goals 2000 which introduced tying funding to these types of requirements. SC signed on to this federal initiative thru a proviso and began writing standards prior to 1995.

There are four federal prohibitions stating there is no lawful role for the federal government in education, the Tenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the General Education Provisions Act of 1965, The Department of Education Organization Act of 1979, and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Specifics are cited in an attached document in the addendum.

Bottom line, the SCDOE in tandem with the SCBOE has not completed the legislative task of writing new standards that are not Common Core nor have we as members of the EOC in our review process task. We have failed to write new standards that are not Common Core.

Suggested Solutions

According to national experts, SC should scrap these standards and start over. Is that possible? Do we have the time and/or courage to do it? Can we delay the implementation of the new standards? How important is maintaining the ESEA waiver to SC?

Dissenters, mainly parents, grandparents and taxpayers in SC are increasingly angry about what is going on in SC classrooms with their children; teachers are by and large afraid of speaking out for fear of losing their jobs and may be encouraged to be silent. What is really sad is that there is a growing divide between parents and their children's teachers. When a teacher says, we know better than you what to do in the classroom with your child, i.e. we are the 'doctor' and you should not question us, the divide is extremely apparent.

I believe we all want this escalating divide and controversy on these standards to be behind us and desire to do what is in the best interest for children in SC. How do we do that?

- Hold a Statewide Panel Forum to be hosted by the Legislature made up of those who are Pro new standards, aka like common core and those against same. Both sides to present and vet their differences, each would make their case in public with public comment. This type of interchange has been repeatedly asked for during the standards debate since 2013.
- Legislature amend Act 200 to extend the implementation date for the new standards from 2015/2016 to 2016/2017 thus providing more time for the development of new standards that reflect what South Carolinians want and what the Legislature asked for, no common core standards.

- Continue the writing process, using national models that followed a better vetting process in reviewing the standards and have proven results.

This controversy is not going away today. This body has the opportunity to show itself as one that truly listens to all parties involved in the education of the children in this state. I urge you to vote NO today and send these standards back to the SCDOE with specific stipulations to convene a Statewide Forum co-hosted with the Legislature, ask for an amendment to Act 200 extending the implementation date to the school year 2016/2017 and follow a better writing and vetting process on newly written standards.

We have failed to write new standards that are not Common Core as mandated by the Legislature in Act 200

Addendum & References

Remarks to SC Senate Education Committee, by Joan Almon, Co-founder and Director of Programs, Alliance for Childhood, February 2014. Hard copy provided.

Selected pages from EOC Panel(s) report, *Evaluation of the Draft SC College and Career Ready Standards* submitted by the SC Department of Education on October 21 and 22, 2014', prepared by the Math and ELA Standards Evaluation Teams for the SC Education Oversight Committee and the SCDE ELA and Math Writing Teams. Accessed online here: [Report of the Evaluation Teams \(December 2014\)](http://www.eoc.sc.gov/Reports%20%20Publications/Standards%20Review/full%20report%20from%20panels2.pdf)
<http://www.eoc.sc.gov/Reports%20%20Publications/Standards%20Review/full%20report%20from%20panels2.pdf>

Selected pages from SCDOE red-line draft for ESEA waiver application due March 31, 2015, pages 21, 25-26, 28; 30; 36; 55. Accessed 3/8/2015 online:
<http://ed.sc.gov/agency/pi/documents/SCsESEAFlexWaiverRedline03-17-14.pdf>

Summary comparisons prepared by EOC staff, 2007 Math and 2008 ELA versus Common Core standards and the Common Core standards versus the draft SC College and Career-Ready (SCCCR) Math and ELA standards. Accessed 3/7/2015 online:
<http://www.eoc.sc.gov/Home/Standards%202015/One-page%20Summary%20of%20Comparison.pdf>

Summary comparisons prepared by EOC staff, Content & Cognitive Alignment of October 2014 Draft Math & ELA Standards and 2015 SCCCR Math and ELA Standards. Note: ELA did not have a cognitive level comparison prepared and are not available to the public online. Hard copy attached.

June 2010 *Common Core State Standards Initiative Comparative Review Report*, prepared for the State Board of Education and the Education Oversight Committee. Hard copy available electronically. Online copy no longer accessible.

"There is no lawful role for the federal government in education," information contained in an article entitled, "*What Parents Don't Like About Common Core*," published in *The Phyllis Schlafly Report*, January 2015. Accessed online March 9, 2015 <http://www.eagleforum.org/publications/psr/jan15.html>

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Education Oversight Committee

FROM: Melanie Barton *Melanie Barton*

DATE: May 18, 2015

IN RE: Update on 2015-16 General Appropriation Act, H.3701

On May 7, 2015 the Senate gave third reading to H.3701, the 2015-16 General Appropriation Act. As of this date, the Senate had not given third reading to the joint resolution appropriating available one-time monies from the Capital Reserve Fund bill one-time monies from the Capital Reserve Fund Bill, H.3702, Below are the highlights of the Senate-passed version of the appropriation bill that pertain to the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) and public education.

Education Finance Act (EFA) - \$1,548,569,004

The Senate recommended an increase of \$94.2 million for the EFA, a base student cost of \$2,220, the same level as the House-passed version of the budget, or a \$100 increase over the current fiscal year. In addition, the Senate recommended non-recurring funds of \$7.6 million to ensure that no district receives less funds in 2015-16 than in the current fiscal year. These “transition payments” are included because the legislature eliminated the \$29.9 million in lottery appropriations that were allocated this fiscal year.

Instructional Materials

In addition to the base appropriation of \$20.9 million in EIA revenues, the Senate increased funding of instructional materials by \$19.5 million as compared to the House increase of \$15.5 million. The EOC had recommended an additional \$19.8 million for digital and print instructional materials.

Read to Succeed

Like the House, the Senate funded staff for the Read to Succeed Office and increased funding for Reading Coaches by \$4.9 million, up from \$29.5 million this year and increased funding for Summer Reading Camps by \$1.5 million, up from \$6.0 million this year.

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South Carolina Virtual School Program

Like the House, the Senate increased funding for the program by \$2.9 million.

Education Improvement Act

Attachment A enumerates the line item recommendations for the EIA budget. Of note, per the EOC's recommendations, the Senate:

- Increased funding for modernization of vocational equipment by \$2.1 million, compared to the EOC recommendation of \$2.0 million;
- Increased funding for assessment of \$7.3 million, compared to EOC recommendation of \$4.2 million;
- Increased funding for technology for connectivity by \$2.1 million;
- Increased funding of SciencePLUS Institute by \$60,000 to expand professional development opportunities during school year; and
- Funded Reach Out and Read at \$500,000 in non-recurring funds and \$1.0 million in recurring funds with the goal of serving all children in Medicaid.

Full-Day 4K Program

Because four additional school districts now have a poverty index of 70 percent, the program will expand in 2015-16 to children residing in Anderson 2, Anderson 5, Greenwood 50 and Kershaw County school districts. Lapsed funds will be used to pay for the expansion in both public and private centers.

Education Oversight Committee

Funding for the South Carolina Autism Society comes through the EOC's budget. This year the General Assembly increased the EOC's line item appropriation by \$350,000 and redirected these funds to the South Carolina Autism Society. For Fiscal Year 2015-16, both the Senate and House increased the allocation to the Autism Society from \$350,000 to \$500,000. Funding for TransformSC of \$400,000 also comes through the EOC's budget through Provisos 1A.59. and 1A.64.

In addition, the Senate authorized that \$2.0 million in lapsed full-day 4K funds are to be allocated to the EOC for the South Carolina Community Block Grants for Education Pilot Program. The focus of the grants for 2015-16 must be on expanding high-quality early childhood education programs. The EOC will continue to identify schools eligible to participate in the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children Program and to evaluate the full-day 4K program.

Early Readiness Assessments

Provisos adopted by the Senate would direct the following changes in early readiness assessment. First, for all publicly funded 4K programs, the Department of Education would identify three formative assessments that providers would use to measure the early literacy and language development of children. Up to \$15 per child or a total of \$800,000 would be allocated to the providers to pay for the cost of the assessment. In public schools, all children entering five-year-old kindergarten would be assessed using the Diagnostic Reading Assessment with \$2.0 million in EIA funds used for this purpose.

Summary of Assessment Appropriations

Type	Allocation	Authority
4K – Formative Assessment in early literacy and language development	\$800,000	Proviso 1A.77.
5K – Diagnostic Reading Assessment for early literacy and progress monitoring of Read to Succeed	\$2,000,000	Proviso 1A.77.
Grades 3-8 in English language arts (ELA) & Mathematics Grades 4-8 in Science & Social Studies End-of-Course Assessments in English 1, Algebra 1, Biology and US History & Constitution Grade 11 – WorkKeys and College Readiness Assessment Advanced Placement Exams International Baccalaureate Exams PSAT Exams Gifted and Talented Identification Alternative Assessments: SC-Alt in Science & Social Studies NCSC Alternate Assessment in ELA Allocation to Districts for Formative Assessments (\$1.5 Million)	\$27,261,400 \$7,300,000	EIA Appropriation Proviso 1A.59.

Attachment

Appendix A

Education Improvement Act

	2014-15	EOC	Governor	House	Senate	Explanation
A. STANDARDS, TEACHING, LEARNING, ACCOUNTABILITY						
1. Student Learning						
Personal Service Classified Positions	58,629					
Other Operating Expenses	136,739					
High Achieving Students	0					
Aid to Districts	37,386,600					
School Health & Fitness Act -- Nurses	6,000,000					
Tech Prep	3,021,348					
Modernize Vocational Equipment	6,682,406	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$544,727	\$577,855	Senate: Plus \$1,501,367 in one-time EIA funds House: Plus \$1,296,407 in one-time EIA funds EOC & Governor: Additional funding for specialized equipment for CTE classes
Arts Curricula	1,487,571			\$1,000,000	\$0	House: Requested by Arts Alliance & SCDE Senate: Funded as separate line item under partnerships
Adult Education	13,573,736			\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	Senate& House: Per request by SCDE
Students at Risk of School Failure	79,551,723					
High Schools That Work	2,146,499					
NEW: Summer Reading Camp Expansion				\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	Senate & House: Increase above \$6.0 million appropriation in general fund monies
New: Reading Coaches				\$4,961,278	\$4,961,278	Senate & House: Increase above \$29 million appropriation in general fund monies
EEDA	6,013,832					
Subtotal	156,059,083					
2. Student Testing						
Personal Service Classified Positions	488,518					
Other operating Expenses	332,948					
Assessment / Testing	27,261,400	\$4,200,000	\$4,200,000			Senate & House: Funded with \$7,300,000 in non-recurring EIA revenues EOC & Governor: Increased costs of new assessments for WorkKeys, ACT, ACT Aspire less savings from HSAP and PASS ELA and Math
Subtotal	28,082,866					
3. Curriculum & Standards						
Personal Service Classified Positions	126,232					

Appendix A

Education Improvement Act

	2014-15	EOC	Governor	House	Senate	Explanation
Read to Succeed Office			\$270,600			Senate: Funded with \$276,000 in General Fund monies House: Funded with General Fund monies of \$205,000 in EIA budget Governor: Read to Succeed Office
Other Personal Service	4,736					
Other Operating Expenses	41,987					
Reading	6,542,052		\$662,013	\$0	\$0	Governor: Reading professional development
Instructional Materials	20,922,839	\$15,444,214	\$7,148,693	\$0	\$0	Senate: \$19.5 million in additional non-recurring (<i>Proviso 118.13</i>) House: \$14.5 million in additional nonrecurring general funds (<i>Proviso 118.13</i>) EOC: \$19.8 million total for digital and print Governor: \$12.0 million in recurring & nonrecurring funds for digital and print
Instructional Materials Non-Recurring	0					
Subtotal	27,637,846					
4. Assistance, Intervention, & Reward						
Personal Service Classified Positions	1,236,436					
Other Operating Expenses	1,174,752					
EAA Technical Assistance	8,800,000					
PowerSchool/Data Collection	7,500,000			\$2,100,000	\$0	House: Increased PowerSchool funding rather than K-12 Technology Initiative for Connectivity (Technical Issue)
Subtotal	18,711,188					
B. Early Childhood						
Personal Service Classified Positions	376,246					
Other Operating Expenses	556,592					
Alloc EIA - 4 YR Early Child	15,513,846					
SCDE-CDEPP	34,324,437	\$4,100,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	EOC: Four additional districts eligible to participate in 2015-16 (Anderson 2, Anderson 5, Greenwood 52 and Kershaw) with poverty indices now about 70% Governor: To use existing balance in program for any expansion
Subtotal	50,771,121					
C. TEACHER QUALITY						
1. Certification						

Appendix A

Education Improvement Act

	2014-15	EOC	Governor	House	Senate	Explanation
Personal Service Classified Positions	1,068,102					
Other Personal Service	1,579					
Other Operating Expenses	638,999					
Subtotal	1,708,680					
2. Retention & Reward						
Special Items						
Teacher of the Year Award	155,000					
Teacher Quality Commission	372,724					
Teacher Salary Supplement	127,640,691					
Teacher Salary Supplement - Fringe	15,766,752			\$5,000,000	\$2,500,000	House: Per SCDE Request
National Board Certification	55,500,000		(\$2,500,000)		(\$1,500,000)	Senate: Redirected to Governor's Rural Teacher Initiative due to attrition in program
<i>Rural Teacher Recruiting Initiative (NEW)</i>			\$1,500,000		\$1,500,000	
Teacher Supplies	13,596,000	\$1,254,900	\$0	\$0	\$0	EOC: \$300 per teacher with 49,503 eligible teachers
Subtotal	213,031,167					
3. Professional Development						
Special Items						
Professional Development	5,515,911		\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000	Senate, House & Governor: Professional Development technology
ADEPT	873,909					
Subtotal	6,389,820					
E. LEADERSHIP						
1. Schools						
2. State						
Personal Service Classified Positions	82,049					
Other Personal Service	83,121					
Other Operating Expenses	279,032					
Technology	10,171,826	\$2,100,000	\$0	\$0	\$2,100,000	House: See PowerSchool Increase EOC & Senate: Increased bandwidth needs and recommended by BCB as well
Employer Contributions	1,064,221					
Subtotal	11,680,249					
F. PARTNERSHIPS						
1. Business and Community						
2. Other Agencies & Entities						
State Agency Teacher Pay (F30)	73,861					

Appendix A

Education Improvement Act

	2014-15	EOC	Governor	House	Senate	Explanation
Education Oversight Committee (A85)	1,643,242				\$150,000	Senate: Increased from \$350,000 to \$500,000 allocation to SC Autism Society (<i>Proviso 1A.56.</i>) House: Increase from \$350,000 to \$500,000 funding for SC Autism Society from non-recurring funds (<i>Proviso 1A.56.</i>)
NEW: Reach Out and Read (A85)					\$1,000,000	Senate: Plus \$500,000 in one-time funds; goal to serve all children enrolled in Medicaid
Center for Educational Partnerships (H27)	715,933					
SC Council on Economic Education	300,000					
Science PLUS	503,406	\$60,119	\$0	\$60,000	\$60,000	EOC, House & Senate: Pilot on-going professional development program for PLUS participants during the school year along with additional resources for their classrooms; Provide materials for the American Society of Metals (ASM) camp participants; fund staff to travel to participants schools to conduct program quality checks; and to market program to teachers in I-95 corridor.
Gov. School Arts & Humanities (H63)	959,994					
Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School (H71)	605,294					
School for Deaf & Blind (H75)	7,439,286					
Disabilities & Special Needs (J16)	613,653					
John De La Howe School (L12)	417,734					
Clemson Ag Ed Teachers	889,758					
Centers of Excellence-CHE (H03)	1,137,526					
Teacher Recruitment Program-CHE (H03)	4,243,527					
SC Program for the Recruitment and Retention of Minority Teachers, SC State University (Base: \$339,482)						
Center for Ed, Recruitment, Ret, and Adv	531,680					
Teacher Loan Program-State Treasurer (E16)	5,089,881					
Gov. School Science & Math (H63)	533,130					
Science South	500,000				(\$500,000)	Senate: Deleted funding for program
STEM Centers SC	1,750,000					
Teach For America SC	3,000,000					
ETV - K-12 Public Education	2,829,281					
ETV - Infrastructure	2,000,000					
SC Youth Challenge Academy	1,000,000					
School Readiness Plan (A85) Non-Recurring						
Literacy & Distance Learning	415,000					
Regional Education Centers	1,302,000					

Appendix A

Education Improvement Act

	2014-15	EOC	Governor	House	Senate	Explanation
NEW: Arts Curricula (H91)					\$1,000,000	Senate: New Line item whereas House funded on Arts Curriculum line item
Subtotal	38,494,186					
G. TRANSPORTATION/BUSES						
Other Operating	12,575,684					
Subtotal	12,575,684					
H. Charter School District	56,253,692		\$11,877,927	\$11,877,927	\$11,877,927	Senate, House & Governor: For projected growth
New: Charter Schools Chartered by Institutions of Higher Education					\$1,440,000	Senate: Added for Felton Lab which is now chartered by SC State University
I. First Steps to School Readiness						
Personal Services	2,182,993					
Other Operating	1,872,789					
County Partnerships	11,262,214			\$1,431,051	\$1,431,051	House: Per OFS Request
CDEPP	9,767,864					
BabyNet Autism Therapy	437,476			\$885,500	\$1,262,372	House: Per OFS Request Senate: To Address Federal compliance Issues
Fringe Benefits	677,349			\$241,500	\$241,500	House: Allocation for fringe benefits
Subtotal	26,200,685					
EIA TOTAL	\$647,596,267	\$29,159,233	\$29,159,233	\$35,101,983	\$35,101,983	
Non-Recurring Appropriations	\$0					
NEW: Reach Out and Read		\$500,000				Senate & House: Recommended \$500,000 in non-recurring General Funds for Reach Out and Read EOC: Expand efforts statewide to include more medical providers and measure outcomes
Instructional Materials		\$4,351,307	\$4,851,307			EOC & Governor: Balance to instructional materials, both digital & print
Assessment				\$7,300,000	\$7,300,000	Proviso 1A.59.
Modernize Vocational Equipment				\$1,296,407	\$1,501,307	Proviso 1A.59.
District Technology, Devices & Content				\$204,900	\$0	Proviso 1A.59.
EOC: Partnerships for Innovation				\$900,000	\$900,000	Proviso 1A.59.
Allendale County School District				\$150,000	\$150,000	Proviso 1A.59.
Digital Instructional Materials					\$625,000	Proviso 1A.59.
TOTAL: Non-Recurring Appropriations		\$4,851,307	\$4,851,307	\$9,851,307	\$10,476,307	

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee: EIA and Improvement Mechanisms

Date: June 8, 2015

ACTION:

Annual Report on the South Carolina Teacher Loan Program, 2013-14

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

The Teacher Quality Act of 2000 provides that the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee "shall review the [SC Teacher] loan program annually and report to the General Assembly (Section 59-26-20 (j), SC Code of Laws of 1976, as amended.) This report is the annual report on the SC Teacher Loan Program covering the year 2013-14.

CRITICAL FACTS

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

Study began in April 2015 and completed in May 2015 with data collection beginning in March of 2015

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

Cost: No fiscal impact beyond current appropriations

Fund/Source:

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

Approved

ACTION TAKEN

Amended

Not Approved

Action deferred (explain)

2013-14

**South Carolina
Teacher Loan
Program**

Annual Report

Annual Report on the South Carolina Teacher Loan Program

The Teacher Quality Act of 2000 directed the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) to conduct an annual review of the South Carolina Teacher Loan Program and to report its findings and recommendations to South Carolina General Assembly. Pursuant to Section 59-26-20(j) of the South Carolina Code of Laws, the annual report documenting the program in Fiscal Year 2013-14 follows. Reports from prior years can be found on the EOC website at www.eoc.sc.gov.

June 8, 2015

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Acknowledgements

The Education Oversight Committee (EOC) staff expresses its appreciation to the following individuals who provided data and data analysis for this report. First, Mim Armour and Camille Brown at the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education were instrumental in merging files from the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation, the Professional Certified Staff (PCS) data file from the South Carolina Department of Education and scholarship data files from the Commission. The EOC thanks Ann Harvin Gavin of the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation and Laura Covington and Cynthia Hearn of the South Carolina Department of Education for the timely provision of data. The EOC is also grateful for data on South Carolina's teaching workforce, hiring trends over time, and the SC Teacher Loan Advisory Committee provided by Jane Turner of the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement at Winthrop University.

I. Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Historical data on the Teacher Loan Program can be found on the EOC website at www.eoc.sc.gov.

New Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1: In 2014-15, there were 2,219 individuals who graduated from a South Carolina teacher education program; however, there were nearly 5,300 teachers who left their classrooms.¹ The gap between the number of teachers leaving the classroom and the number graduating from a South Carolina teacher education program is growing. This state trend is occurring in nationally as well.

Finding 2: In 2013-14, state teacher education programs provided one-third of the new teacher hires. Another 30 percent of the hires came from another state, new graduates from teacher education programs in others, or through alternative certification programs.

Finding 3: In 2013-14 the number of applications to the Teacher Loan Program, 1,426, declined for the second consecutive fiscal year. Consequently, the number of loans approved also declined to 1,109.

Finding 4: For the first time since 1986-87 no funds were used from the Revolving Loan Fund to supplement the EIA appropriation. At the end of Fiscal Year 2013-14, the balance in the Revolving Loan Fund was \$13,878,579. The Revolving Fund includes monies collected by the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation from individuals who do not qualify for cancellation. And, for the first time since 1986-87, the program had a balance, which totaled \$241,926, at the end of the fiscal year. The total amount of monies loaned in 2013-14 was \$4,517,984, a decline of \$1.1 million from the prior fiscal year. All eligible loans were funded, with the average loan in Fiscal Year 2013-14 being \$4,070.

Finding 5: Approximately 68 percent of all schools in 2013-14 met the definition of critical need geographic schools.

Recommendation 1: To encourage students to choose teaching as a career and make college more affordable, a tiered loan forgiveness approach should be considered. Such a system would provide some form of loan forgiveness to all loan participants who teach in any public school in South Carolina, rather than just those students teaching in a critical need subject or geographic schools. And, if a student teaches in a critical need subject and/or in a critical need school the loan would be forgiven in a shorter period of time.

Recommendation 2: The Teacher Loan Advisory Committee and the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA) should continue their efforts to engage education partners in publicizing the Teacher Loan Program on their websites and in

¹ 1,170 of these teachers went to teach in another SC district.

communication materials. In addition they should explore and implement new marking and communication strategies to increase the applications to the Teacher Loan Program.

Findings from Previous Reports

- ⇒ The Teacher Loan Program continues to fulfill the statutory mission to attract individuals into the teaching profession and into areas of critical need as measured by the annual increase in applications and in the number of Teacher Loan Program recipients teaching in public schools in South Carolina.
- ⇒ Over time, one-third of all Teacher Loan recipients had their loans cancelled by fulfilling the teaching requirement with another 9 percent in the process of teaching and having their loans cancelled. The default rate has been consistently one percent of all loans made.
- ⇒ The Teacher Cadet program continues to be a pipeline for individuals pursuing education degrees with 38 percent of Teacher Loan applicants having participated in the Teacher Cadet program.
- ⇒ While the number of critical need subject areas declined over multiple years, from 2012-13 to 2013-14, the number rose. Vacancies in secondary mathematics, science, English and Special Education continue to exist. Special Education vacancies continue to exist across all levels, as well as middle level vacancies.
- ⇒ The number of critical need geographic schools continues to increase with approximately two-thirds of all schools meeting the defined criteria due to the increase in the number of schools that are eligible based on the poverty index.

II. Status of Educator Pipeline

After studying student achievement on various standardized assessments, the Rand Corporation concluded that an effective teacher greatly impacts student achievement:

- ⇒ Teachers matter more to student achievement than any other aspect of schooling,
- ⇒ Nonschool factors influence student achievement, but they are largely outside a school's control,
- ⇒ Effective teachers are best identified by their performance, not by their background or experience, and
- ⇒ Effective teachers tend to stay effective even when they change schools.²

In addition to test scores, teachers' impact on learning can also be measured by the quality of the teacher-child interaction. During a recent visit to South Carolina, Dr. Robert Pianta of the University of Virginia noted:

- ⇒ Early history of relationships with adults forms the "infrastructure" for school success, including: social competence with peers; self-regulation, emotional self-control, task orientation, persistence, and following directions.
- ⇒ Relationships and interactions with teachers and caregivers define quality and value of early education and are the path to improving school readiness.
- ⇒ Interactions are really important for children from low-income families and those who have difficulty adjusting to classroom environments may particularly benefit from exposure to high-quality early learning environments.³

National Perspective

Given the extreme importance of the quality of teachers and teacher-child interactions, it is crucially important that effective teachers instruct South Carolina's students. However, in order for the state's school districts to recruit, employ and retain effective teachers, the pipeline or supply of teachers must be adequate. There is a national trend that may directly impact South Carolina's teacher pipeline. A newly released report from ACT indicates interest in the teaching profession continues to decrease nationally. As part of the 2014 ACT college entrance exam, graduating high school students were surveyed about their future career interests. The survey made four critical findings:

- ⇒ While interest in becoming school administrative and support staff has increased, students are less interested in becoming teachers than they were in 2010.

² Rand Corporation (2014). http://www.rand.org/pubs/corporate_pubs/CP693z1-2012-09.html#relatedProducts.

³ Dr. Robert Pianta, *Elevating the Capacity of Classroom Experiences for Promoting Students' Learning and Development: Observation and Improvement of Teacher-Child Interactions* (February 12, 2015) Presentation hosted by Francis Marion University's Center of Excellence to Prepare Teachers of Children and Poverty.

- ⇒ On average, students interested in an education major do not score as well on the ACT. Those students who are interested in becoming education majors are not the highest-achieving.
- ⇒ Male students are not interested in majoring in education. Male interest in pursuing early-childhood education is especially low.
- ⇒ There is a lack of diversity among students interested in education. ACT estimates that 71 percent of students interested in education are white.⁴

States are also experiencing significant drops in enrollment in teacher preparation programs:

Massive changes to the profession, coupled with budget woes, appear to be shaking the image of teaching as a stable, engaging career. Nationwide, enrollments in university teacher-preparation programs have fallen by about 10 percent from 2004 to 2012, according to federal estimates from the U.S. Department of Education’s postsecondary data collection.⁵

A possible reason for the decrease in enrollment preparation programs is the increase in student debt. Nationally, about 69 percent of college seniors who graduated from public and private nonprofit colleges had student loan debt.⁶ For public and nonprofit graduates, state averages for debt at graduation ranged widely in 2013, from \$18,650 to \$32,800.⁷ Table 1 indicates South Carolina had the tenth highest average debt level for the class of 2013. Approximately 59 percent of South Carolina students in the class of 2013 graduated with debt. In 2013, graduates of high-debt public colleges had an average debt ranging from \$33,950 to \$48,850.⁸ Nationally, the Citadel and Clemson University were among the top twenty schools in the nation with the highest debt for its graduates.

Even Teach For America is experiencing unprecedented declines. According to a February 2015 report, “for the second year in a row, applicants for the elite program have dropped, breaking a 15-year growth trend. Applications are down by about 10 percent from a year earlier on college campuses around the country as of the end of last month.”⁹

⁴ Brenneman, R., “Fewer High School Students Show Interest in Teaching, Study Says,” *Education Week* (April 21, 2015). http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/teaching_now/2015/04/fewer-students-report-wanting-to-teach-study.html.

⁵ Sawchuk, S., “Steep Drops Seen in Teacher-Prep Enrollment Numbers,” *Education Week* (October 21, 2014). www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2014/10/22/09.

⁶ Institute for College Access and Success, *Student Debt and the Class of 2013*, (November 2014), 1.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid, 7-8.

⁹ Rich, M. “Fewer Top Graduates Want to Join Teach for America,” *New York Times*. (February 5, 2015), <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/06/education/fewer-top-graduates-want-to-join-teach-for-america.html>.

Table 1¹⁰
States with the Highest Average Debt per Student Upon Graduation

State	Average Debt Per Student
New Hampshire	\$32,795
Delaware	\$32,571
Pennsylvania	\$32,528
Rhode Island	\$31,561
Minnesota	\$30,894
Connecticut	\$30,191
Main	\$29,934
Michigan	\$29,583
Iowa	\$29,370
South Carolina	\$29,092

South Carolina Perspective

Since 2001 the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA) at Winthrop University has conducted an annual Teacher/Administrator Supply and Demand Survey. CERRA surveys each school district as well as the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Palmetto Unified School District to determine the number of authorized and filled teaching positions. CERRA publishes an annual report documenting the number of: teacher positions, teachers hired; teachers leaving; and vacant teacher positions. The survey results are provided to the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE). While state teacher education programs provided one-third of the new teacher hires in 2013-14, approximately 30 percent of the hires came from another state, new graduates from teacher education programs in other states, or alternative certification programs (Table 2).

¹⁰ Ibid at 3.

Table 2
Sources of New Teacher Hires

	2013-14	2012-13
New Graduates from Teacher Education Programs in SC	32.5%	36%
Transferred from one district in SC to another district	27%	28%
Hired from another state	15%	14%
New Graduates from Teacher Education Programs in Other States	8%	9%
Alternative Certification Programs	6.5%	5.5%
Inactive Teachers who Returned to Teaching	4%	3.5%
From Outside US	2%	2%
Other Teachers	5%	3%

Source: CERRA, Fall 2012 and Fall 2013, Supply and Demand Survey Reports.

Table 3 summarizes the results of the most recent supply and demand reports released by CERRA. The number of graduates coming out from our state’s colleges and universities is nearly half the number of new teacher hires each year. For 2014-15, there were 2,219 individuals who graduated from a South Carolina teacher education program but there were nearly 5,300 teachers who left their classrooms.¹¹ And, the gap is not closing.

¹¹1,170 of these teachers went to teach in another SC district.

Table 3
Key Data from CERRA's Supply and Demand Reports

School year	Number of newly hired licensed teachers	Number of licensed teachers who did not return to their classroom*	Number of graduates who completed a SC teacher education program (data obtained from CHE)	Number of licensed teachers who did not return after five or fewer years in the classroom*	Number of licensed teachers who did not return after one year or less in the classroom*
2012-2013	5,739.5	3,503	2,050	1,186.8	403.4
2013-2014	5,797.7	3,880.5	2,447	1,154.5	438
2014-2015	6,217.9	4,108.1	2,219	1,309	529.7

Source: CERRA

*These data exclude teachers who left to teach in another South Carolina public school district or special school.

Note: Full reports can be accessed at <http://cerra.org/research/supplyanddemand/overview.aspx>.

III. Overview of the South Carolina Teacher Loan Program

With revenues from the Education Improvement Act Trust Fund, the General Assembly has appropriated monies to support the Teacher Loan Program. Table 4 documents the amounts appropriated and expended over the past five fiscal years. In 2013-14, 6.2 percent of all funds expended for the program were spent on administration with \$4.5 million used to make loans, a decline of \$1.1 million from the prior fiscal year. All eligible loan applications were funded.

For the first time since 1986-87 no funds were used from the Revolving Loan Fund to supplement the EIA appropriation. The Revolving Loan Fund includes monies collected by the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation from individuals who do not qualify for cancellation. At the end of Fiscal Year 2013-14, the balance in the Revolving Loan Fund was \$13,878,579. And, for the first time since 1986-87, the Teacher Loan Program had a balance, which totaled \$241,926 at the end of the fiscal year. The total amount of monies loans in 2013-14 was \$4,517,984, a decline of \$1.1 million from the prior fiscal year. All eligible loans were funded, with the average loan in Fiscal Year 2013-14 being \$4,070.

Table 4
SC Teacher Loan Program: Revenues and Loans Over Time

Year	EIA Appropriation	Legislatively Mandated Transfers or Reductions	Revolving Funds from Repayments	Total Dollars Available	Administrative Costs	Percent of Total Dollars Spent on Administration	Amount Loaned
2009-10	\$4,000,722	0	\$3,000,000	\$7,000,722	\$360,619	5.2	\$6,640,103
2010-11	\$4,000,722	0	\$1,000,000	\$5,000,722	\$345,757	6.9	\$4,654,965
2011-12	\$4,000,722	0	\$1,000,000	\$5,000,722	\$359,201	7.2	\$4,641,521
2012-13	\$4,000,722	0	\$1,000,000	\$5,000,722	\$351,958	7.0	\$5,648,764
2013-14	\$5,089,881	0	\$0	\$5,089,881	\$329,971	6.5	\$4,517,984

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation

Critical Need Identification

The South Carolina Teacher Loan Program allows borrowers to have portions of their loan indebtedness forgiven by teaching in certain critical need geographic and subject areas. Statute 59-26-20(j) assigns the responsibility of defining the critical need areas to the State Board of Education (SBE): “Areas of critical need shall include both rural areas and areas of teacher certification and shall be defined annually for that purpose by the State Board of Education.”¹² Beginning in the fall of 1984, the SBE has defined the certification and geographic areas

¹² See Appendix A for full legislative language of Section 59-26-20.

considered critical and subsequently those teaching assignments eligible for cancellation. Only two subject areas – mathematics and science - were designated critical during the early years of the programs, but teacher shortages in subsequent years expanded the number of certification areas.

Data from CERRA’s annual Supply and Demand Survey are used to determine critical need subject areas. SCDE then determines the number of teaching positions available in the school year that were vacant or filled with candidates not fully certified in the particular subject area. Table 5 documents the critical need subject areas since 2010-11 as approved by the State Board of Education. While the number of critical need subject areas declined for multiple years, it rose in 2013-14. Vacancies in secondary mathematics, science, English and Special Education continue to exist. Middle level and Special Education experience vacancies in all areas.

Table 5
Critical Need Subject Areas¹³

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
1	Business Education	Agriculture	Business Education	Business Education
2	Speech and Drama, Theater	Media Specialist	Family/Consumer Science	Theatre
3	Industrial Technology	Business Education	Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Science)	Industrial Technology Education
4	Media Specialist	Dance	Media Specialist	Foreign Languages
5	Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Science)	Health	Theater	Media Specialist
6	Mathematics	Family/Consumer Science	Agriculture	Middle-Level areas (language arts, mathematics, science, social studies)
7	Family/Consumer Science	Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Science)	Secondary Mathematics	Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Science)
8	Foreign Languages (French, Spanish, Latin, and German)	Drama and Theatre	Secondary English	Family/Consumer Science
9	All Middle-level areas	Middle-Level areas (language arts, mathematics, science, social studies)	Art	Agriculture
10	English	English	Foreign Languages (French, Spanish,	Music

¹³ Ranked in Order of Greatest Number of Positions Vacant or Filled by not Fully Certified Candidates

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
			Latin, and German)	
11	Agriculture	Industrial Technology	Health	English as a Second Language
12	Special Education – All Areas	Special Education- All Areas	Special Education – All areas	Secondary English
13	Speech Language Therapist	Mathematics	Middle-Level areas (language arts, mathematics, science, social studies)	Secondary Mathematics
14	Art	Foreign Language (Spanish, French, Latin, and German)		Special Education All Areas
15	Physical Education	Speech Language Therapist		Computer Programming
16	Music			

Source: SCDE and CERRA

Section 59-26-20(j) was amended in 2006 to redefine geographic critical need schools to be: (1) schools with an absolute rating of Below Average or At-Risk/Unsatisfactory; (2) schools with an average teacher turnover rate for the past three years of 20 percent or higher; and (3) schools with a poverty index of 70 percent or higher. Table 6 documents the number of geographic critical need schools in South Carolina since 2009-10.

Table 6
Critical Geographic Need Schools

Year	Total Schools	Type of School					Qualification		
		Career Centers	Primary Schools	Elementary Schools	Middle Schools	High Schools	Absolute Rating	Teacher Turnover	Poverty Index
2009-10	785	3	29	420	209	106	476	286	669
2010-11	751	6	30	429	184	102	255	284	684
2011-12	742	2	34	455	204	103	174	218	706
2012-13	810	7	35	445	203	114	192	187	765
2013-14	850	3	37	463	214	133	147	200	803

Source: South Carolina Department of Education

Note: Some schools may be designated in more than one category (i.e., middle and high).

Data used to calculate the number of critical geographic need schools is based upon the most current data available. For example, the data used to calculate critical geographic need school for 2013-14 was based on the 2011-12 school year. In 2013-14 there were 850 schools that were classified as critical geographic need schools. For comparison purposes, in school year 2013-14 there was a total of 1,254 schools in the state.¹⁴ Therefore, 68 percent of all schools were critical geographic need schools. It should be further noted that the state poverty index in 2012-13 was 70.7 percent. As the poverty index of schools increases, the number of schools classified as critical geographic need schools will increase.

¹⁴ Includes all schools that received a state report card in 2014. < <http://www.ed.sc.gov/data/report-cards/2014/index.cfm>.

IV. Applications to the Teacher Loan Program

As in the prior fiscal year, applications to the Teacher Loan Program in 2013-14 declined to a total of 1,462. Of the 1,462 applications, 1,109 were approved (Table 7). Of the 280 applications who were denied, the overriding reason for denial was due to the failure of the applicant to meet the academic grade point criteria.

**Table 7
Status of Applicants**

Year	Total Applied*	Approved	Cancelled	Denied	Reason for Denial				
					Academic Reason	Credit Problem	Inadequate Funds	No EEE Praxis	Other**
2009-10	2,228	1,555	92	581	147	13	300	75	46
2010-11	1,717	1,114	97	506	89	4	308	72	33
2011-12	1,471	1,086	81	304	116	1	80	62	45
2012-13	1,472	1,112	85	275	134	1	37	64	39
2013-14	1,462	1,109	73	280	143	0	0	74	54

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation

*This is a duplicated count of individuals because the same individuals may apply for loans in multiple years.

**"Other" reasons include but are not limited to the following: (1) applicant was not a SC resident; (2) applicant was enrolled less than half time; (3) applicant was not seeking initial certification.

Description of Applicants

In the 1990s, several states, including members of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), implemented policies to attract and retain minorities into the teaching force. South Carolina specifically implemented minority teacher recruitment programs at Benedict College and South Carolina State University. Currently, only the South Carolina Program for the Recruitment and Retention of Minority Teachers (SC-PRRMT) at South Carolina State University remains in operation. The General Assembly in 2013-14 appropriated by proviso \$339,482 in EIA revenues to the program. SC-PRRMT promotes “teaching as a career choice by publicizing the many career opportunities and benefits in the field of education in the State of South Carolina. The mission of the Program is to increase the pool of teachers in the State by making education accessible to non-traditional students (teacher assistants, career path changers, and technical college transfer students) and by providing an academic support system to help students meet entry, retention, and exit program requirements.”¹⁵ The program “also administers an EIA Forgivable Loan Program and participates in state, regional, and national teacher recruitment initiatives.”¹⁶

In 2003, the EIA and Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee of the Education Oversight Committee requested that staff develop goals and objectives for the Teacher Loan Program. An advisory committee was formed with representatives from CERRA, SCSL, the Division of Educator Quality and Leadership at the State Department of Education, and the Commission on Higher Education. After review of the data, the advisory committee recommended the following three goals and objectives for the Teacher Loan Program (TLP) in 2004.

- ⇒ The percentage of African American applicants and recipients of the TLP should mirror the percentage of African Americans in the South Carolina teaching force.
- ⇒ The percentage of male applicants and recipients of the TLP should mirror the percentage of males in the South Carolina teaching force.
- ⇒ Eighty percent of the individuals receiving loans each year under the TLP should enter the South Carolina teaching force.

Historically, applicants for the program have been overwhelmingly white and/or female (Tables 8 and 9). This trend continued in 2013-14 with almost 81 percent of all applicants female and 79 percent, white. However, the number of African Americans who applied for the loan increased. Historically, about 79 percent of all public school teachers in the state are white and 79 percent are female while historically 12 percent of all teachers are black males.

¹⁵ 2012-13 EIA Program Report as provided to the EOC by the South Carolina Program for the Recruitment and Retention of Minority Teachers, September 28, 2012.

<<http://www.eoc.sc.gov/reportsandpublications/Pages/2012-13EIAProgramReport.aspx>>.

¹⁶ Ibid.

Table 8
Distribution of Applicants to the Teacher Loan Program by Gender

Year	# Applications	Male	%	Female	%	Unknown	%
2009-10	2,228	418	18.8%	1,763	79.1%	47	2.1%
2010-11	1,717	316	18.4%	1,324	77.1%	77	4.5%
2011-12	1,471	281	19.1%	1,122	76.3%	68	4.6%
2012-13	1,472	244	16.6%	1,168	79.3%	60	4.1%
2013-14	1,462	248	17.0%	1,179	80.6%	35	2.4%

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation.

Table 9
Distribution of Applicants to the Teacher Loan Program by Race/Ethnicity

Year	# Applications	Ethnicity							
		African American		Other		White		Unknown	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
2009-10	2,228	317	14	38	2	1,802	81	71	3
2010-11	1,717	228	13	35	2	1,373	80	81	5
2011-12	1,471	215	15	20	1	1,171	80	65	4
2012-13	1,472	242	16	23	2	1,149	78	58	4
2013-14	1,462	248	17	20	1	1,147	79	47	3

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation.

One approach to increase the supply of highly qualified teachers is school-to-college partnerships that introduce students early on to teaching as a career. In South Carolina the Teacher Cadet Program, which is coordinated by the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA) at Winthrop University, has impacted the applicant pool. As reported by CERRA, the mission of the Teacher Cadet Program "is to encourage academically talented or capable students who possess exemplary interpersonal and leadership skills to consider teaching as a career. An important secondary goal of the program is to provide these talented future community leaders with insights about teaching and school so that they will be civic advocates of education." Teacher Cadets must have at least a 3.0 average in a college preparatory curriculum, be recommended in writing by five teachers, and submit an essay on why they want to participate in the class. In 2013-14, 41 percent of all applicants to the Teacher Loan Program were participants in the Teacher Cadet Program (Table 10).

Table 10
Distribution of Applicants to the Teacher Loan Program by Teacher Cadet Program

Year	Number Applications	Teacher Cadets	%	Not Teacher Cadets	%	Unknown	%
2009-10	2,228	811	36	1,352	61	65	3
2010-11	1,717	662	39	1,024	60	31	2
2011-12	1,471	601	41	830	56	40	3
2012-13	1,472	556	38	871	59	45	3
2013-14	1,462	597	41	843	58	22	2

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation.

Overwhelmingly, applicants to the Teacher Loan Program are undergraduates. Table 11 showcases the number of applicants by academic level. While historically only 18 percent of program applicants are freshmen, consistently 60-plus percent are continuing undergraduates. In 2013-14 two-thirds of all applicants were continuing undergraduates. Students may be more willing to commit to a professional program after their initial year of post-secondary education. Anecdotal information provided by financial aid counselors about potential graduate student loan applicants identified a hesitancy to participate in the program because they were uncertain about where they might be living after completing their degrees.

Table 11
Distribution of Applicants to the Teacher Loan Program by Academic Level

Year	Number Applied	Academic Level Status									
		Freshman		Continuing Undergrad		1 st Semester Graduate		Continuing Graduate		Unknown	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
2009-10	2,228	404	18	1,370	61	204	9	207	9	43	2
2010-11	1,717	230	13	1,136	66	140	8	195	11	16	1
2011-12	1,471	246	17	961	65	112	8	140	10	12	1
2012-13	1,472	230	16	992	67	98	7	131	9	21	1
2013-14	1,462	263	18	974	67	96	7	113	8	16	1

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation.

V. Recipients of a South Carolina Teacher Loan

In 2013-14 of the 1,462 applications received, 1,109 or 76 percent received a Teacher Loan. Table 12 documents the distribution of loan recipients over time by academic level. In 2013-14 87 percent of the loan recipients were undergraduate students. Looking at the undergraduate recipients, two-thirds were juniors or seniors, the same levels as in the prior year. Across the past five years, the data show that there is an annual decline in loan recipients between freshman and sophomore years. There are several possible reasons for the decline: (1) individuals may decide that they do not want to become teachers; (2) some students may leave college after freshman year; and (3) some individuals may no longer meet the qualifications to receive the loans. There are two primary reasons sophomores may no longer qualify for the loan: their GPA is below a 2.75 and/or they have not passed the Praxis I test required for entrance into an education program. No data exist on how many of the applicants were rejected for not having passed or how many had simply not taken the exam. Either way, the applicant would not qualify for additional TLP loans until the Praxis I was passed.

Table 12
Distribution of Recipients of the Teacher Loan Program by Academic Level Status

	Freshmen	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors	5 th Year Undergrads	1 st year Graduates	2 nd Year Graduates	3+ Year Graduates
2009-10	286	165	362	452	48	157	76	9
2010-11	126	120	254	379	43	107	62	23
2011-12	191	109	292	312	22	122	37	1
2012-13	173	138	270	345	22	118	43	3
2013-14	191	138	279	341	17	111	30	2

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation.

Table 13 compares the academic status of applicants to actual recipients in 2013-14. The data show that generally the percentage of applicants who are undergraduate reflects the percentage of recipients who were undergraduates.

Table 13
Comparisons by Academic Level of Applicants and Recipients, 2013-14,

	Undergraduate	Graduate	Unknown	Total
Applicants	1,237 (85%)	209 (14%)	16(1%)	1,462
Recipients	966(87%)	143(13%)	--	1,109

Teacher Loan recipients attended forty universities and colleges in 2013-14 of which twenty-seven or two-thirds were South Carolina institutions with a physical campus. For comparison purposes, the Commission on Higher Education reports that there are 59 campuses of higher learning in South Carolina: 13 public senior institutions; 4 public two-year regional campuses in

the USC system; 16 public technical colleges; 24 independent or private senior institutions; and 2 independent two-year- colleges.¹⁷ Table 14 documents the number of Teacher Loan recipients attending South Carolina public and private institutions.

Table 14
Teacher Loan Recipients by Institution of Higher Education, 2013-14

	Institution	Number Recipients
1	American Public University System	1
2	Anderson University	65
3	Charleston Southern University	20
4	Clemson University	93
5	Coastal Carolina University	33
6	Coker College	39
7	College of Charleston	115
8	Columbia College	23
9	Columbia International University	1
10	Converse College	34
11	Covenant College	1
12	Emory and Henry College	1
13	Erskine College	4
14	Fort Hays State University	1
15	Francis Marion University	54
16	Furman University	14
17	Gardner-Webb University	1
18	Grand Canyon University	2
19	Lander University	49
20	Liberty University	3
21	Limestone College	5
22	Mars Hill College	1
23	Newberry College	24
24	North Greenville University	27
25	NOVA Southeastern University	1
26	Presbyterian College	15
27	SC State University	14
28	Southern Wesleyan University	11
29	The Citadel	18
30	University of Southern California	1
31	USC-Aiken	29
32	USC-Beaufort	1
33	USC-Lancaster	1
34	USC-Upstate	52
35	USC-Columbia	212

¹⁷ Commission on Higher Education
<http://www.che.sc.gov/Students,FamiliesMilitary/LearningAboutCollege/SCCollegesUniversities.aspx>

	Institution	Number Recipients
36	University of West Alabama	5
37	Walden University	1
38	Western Governors University	5
39	Winthrop University	130
40	Wofford College	2
TOTAL		1,109

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation

The number of loan recipients at historically African American institutions remains significantly low. According to the Commission on Higher Education and SCSL, in 2013-14 there were a total of 14 teacher loans given to students attending South Carolina State University (Table 15).

Table 15
Teacher Loans to Historically African American Institutions

Institution	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12	2010-11	2009-10
Benedict College	0	0	0	0	2
Clafin University	0	0	1	0	1
Morris College	0	0	0	0	0
S.C. State University	14	11	11	9	9
TOTAL:	14	11	12	9	12

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation and CHE

Recipients of the Teacher Loan Program also receive other state scholarships provided by the General Assembly to assist students in attending institutions of higher learning in South Carolina. The other scholarship programs include the Palmetto Fellows Program, the Legislative Incentive for Future Excellence (LIFE) Scholarships, and the Hope Scholarships. The Palmetto Fellows Program, LIFE Scholarships, and Hope award scholarships to students based on academic achievement, but are not directed to teacher recruitment. In 1999 the General Assembly created the Teaching Fellows Program to recruit high achieving high school seniors each year into teaching. Students who receive a Teaching Fellows award go through a rigorous selection process, which includes an online application (scholastic profiles, school and community involvement, references, and an interest paragraph), an interview and presentation in front of a team of three educators, and a scored written response. Teaching Fellows are awarded up to \$6,000 per year to attend one of the approved Teaching Fellows Institutions in the state of South Carolina as long as they continue to meet criteria for participation. Teaching Fellows must maintain a minimum GPA of 2.75, attend regular Teaching Fellows meetings on their campus, engage in service learning activities, and participate in advanced professional development. Recipients agree to teach in South Carolina at least one year for each year they

receive an award, and they sign a promissory note that requires payment of the scholarship should they decide not to teach. The Teaching Fellows Program differs from the Teacher Loan Program in that recipients are not required to commit to teaching in a critical need subject or geographic area to receive the award.

Working with the Commission on Higher Education, the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation, and the South Carolina Department of Education, specific data files from the three organizations were merged and cross-referenced to determine how the scholarship programs interact with the Teacher Loan Program. Table 16 shows over the last five years the number of Teacher Loan recipients who also participated in the Hope, LIFE, or Palmetto Fellows programs and who were later employed by public schools. The merged data found a total of 3,154 loan recipients who were also LIFE, Palmetto Fellows or Hope Scholarships recipients and employed in public schools in South Carolina in 2013-14, a 9 percent increase over the prior year. Since Fiscal Year 2009-10 the number has increased by one-third.

Table 16
Loan Recipients serving in South Carolina schools
who received LIFE, Palmetto, Fellows and Hope Scholarships

Fiscal Year	LIFE	Palmetto Fellows	Hope	Total
2009-2010	1,932	116	67	2,115
2010-2011	2,097	145	93	2,335
2011-2012	2,331	171	110	2,612
2012-2013	2,582	188	125	2,895
2013-2014	2,796	211	147	3,154

Source: Commission on Higher Education

*Data Not Available

**Hope Scholarship established in 2002-03.

Policymakers also questioned how the state’s scholarship programs generally impact the number of students pursuing a teaching career in the state. Table 17 shows the total number of scholarship recipients each year. It is a duplicated count across years.

Table 17
Total Number of Scholarship Recipients for the Fall Terms

Year	LIFE	Palmetto Fellows	Hope
2009	31,607	5,894	2,716
2010	32,125	6,122	2,844
2011	32,600	6,410	2,853
2012	33,580	6,666	2,925
2013	34,378	6,818	3,185

Source: Commission on Higher Education

Of these individuals receiving scholarships in the fall of 2013, 9 percent of scholarship recipients had declared education as their intended major (Tables 18 and 19). The data, however, show a downward trend in the percentage of these very talented students initially declaring education as a major since the fall of 2005. With the policy goal of increasing the pool and improving the quality of teachers in classrooms, this trend raises concerns.

Table 18
Comparison of Scholarship Recipients and Education Majors, Fall 2013

Scholarship	# of Education Majors	# of Scholarships	Percent
Hope	398	3,185	12.5%
LIFE	3,234	34,378	9.3%
Palmetto Fellows	401	6,818	5.9%
Total	4,033	44,781	9.0%

Source: Commission on Higher Education

Table 19
Percent of Students who Received Scholarships for each Fall Term and had Declared an Education Major

Fall	LIFE	Palmetto Fellows	Hope	Total
2009	11.1	6.5	14.4	10.6
2010	11.0	6.7	12.7	10.5
2011	10.2	6.3	9.9	9.6
2012	9.6	6.0	13.2	9.3
2013	9.3	5.9	12.5	9.0

Source: Commission on Higher Education

Finally, over time, average SAT scores of loan recipients have increased. These scores reflect the mean for the critical reading and mathematics portions of the SAT (Table 20). And, if a student took the test more than once, the most recent score is used. In 2013-14, the average SAT score of 1,220.4 was well above the South Carolina average of 971 and the national 2013 SAT average of 1,010 in critical reading and mathematics.

Table 20
Mean SAT Scores¹⁸

Year	Teacher Loan Program Recipients	SC
2009	1,091.4	982
2010	1,107.0	979
2011	1,153.8	972
2012	1,181.4	969
2013	1,220.4	971

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation and College Board.

Repayment or Cancellation Status

South Carolina Student Loan Corporation (SCSL) reports that as of June 30, 2014, 17,423 loans were in a repayment or cancellation status. The following table is a comprehensive list of the status of all borrowers:

Table 21
Borrowers as of June 30, 2014

Number Borrowers	% of Borrowers	Status
2,563	15%	Never eligible for cancellation and are repaying loan
402	2%	Previously taught but not currently teaching
1,325	8%	Teaching and having loans cancelled
7,177	41%	Have loans paid out through monthly payments, loan consolidation or partial cancellation
114	1%	Loan discharged due to death, disability or bankruptcy
85	1%	In Default
5,757	33%	Loans cancelled 100% by fulfilling teaching requirement
17,423	TOTAL	

Source: South Carolina Student Loan Corporation, 2014

¹⁸ The composite score is the sum of the Critical Reading score average and the Mathematics score average (2006-2014).

Teacher Loan Program Recipients Employed in Public Schools of South Carolina

What information exists about the current employees of public schools in South Carolina who previously received a Teacher Loan? Data files from South Carolina Student Loan Corporation and South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) were merged. There were 7,450 Teacher Loan recipients employed by public schools in 2013-14, an increase of 290 or 4 percent over the prior year. Like the applicants, the Teacher Loan recipients who were employed in South Carolina's public schools were overwhelmingly white and female (Table 22). These 7,450 individuals served in a variety of positions in 2013-14 (Table 23).

Table 22
Loan Recipients in South Carolina Schools by Gender and Ethnicity, 2013-14

Gender	Number	Percent
Male	956	12.8
Female	6,444	86.5
Unknown	50	0.7
Total	7,450	

Ethnicity	Number	Percent
African American	967	13.0
Caucasian	6,274	84.2
Asian	20	0.3
Hispanic	44	0.6
American Indian	5	0.1
Unknown	140	1.9
Total	7,450	

Table 23
Loan Recipients Employed in SC Public Schools as of 2013-14 by Position

Position Code	Description	Number	Position Code	Description	Number
1	Principal	122	47	Director, Athletics	2
2	Assistant Principal, Coprincipal	204	48	Assistant Superintendent, Noninstruction	1
3	Special Education (Itinerant)	19	49	Assistant Superintendent, Instruction	3
4	Prekindergarten (Child Development)	152	50	District Superintendent	1
5	Kindergarten	341	53	Director, Instruction	2
6	Special Education (Self-Contained)	376	55	Supervisor, Secondary Education	2
7	Special Education (Resource)	456	57	Director, Career and Technology Education	3

in other positions, working in public schools in in administrative rather than direct or indirect instructional capacities (Table 24).

Table 24
Loan Recipients Employed in Public Schools By Various Functions, 2013-14

Position Code	Description	# Positions	Percent
04	Prekindergarten	152	2%
05	Kindergarten	341	5%
03, 06, 07	Special Education	851	11%
08	Classroom Teachers	4,804	64%
10	Library Media Specialist	284	4%
11	Guidance Counselor	167	2%
17	Speech Therapist	157	2%
All Others	Principals, Assistant Principals, Directors, Coordinators, etc.		9%
	Total	7,450	

Table 25 documents the primary area of certification of all Teacher Loan recipients who were employed in public schools in 2013-14.

Table 25

Loan Recipients Employed in SC Public Schools in 2013-14 by Primary Certification Area

Code	Certification Subject	Number Certified	Code	Certification Subject	Number Certified
1	Elementary	3,181	67	Physical Education	94
2	Generic Special Education	128	70	Superintendent	2
3	Speech - Language Therapist	155	71	Elementary Principal	24
4	English	406	72	Secondary Principal	4
5	French	32	78	School Psychologist III	1
6	Latin	1	80	Reading Teacher	5
7	Spanish	79	84	School Psychologist II	4
8	German	2	85	Early childhood	970
10	Mathematics	476	86	Guidance -Elementary	53
11	General Mathematics	4	89	Guidance – Secondary	11
12	Science	154		Unknown/Not Reported	12
13	General Science	14	1A	Middle School Language Arts	3
14	Biology	50	1B	Middle School Mathematics	3
15	Chemistry	11	1C	Middle School Science	2
16	Physics	2	1D	Middle School Social Studies	3
20	Social Studies	165	1E	Middle Level Lang. Arts	106
21	History	8	1F	Middle Level Mathematics	99
26	Psychology	1	1G	Middle Level Science	30
29	Industrial Technology Education	8	1H	Middle Level Social Studies	97
30	Agriculture	6	2A	Sp.Ed. Ed. Mentally Disabled	89
32	Distributive Education	1	2B	Special Education-Education of the Blind and Visually Impaired	4
35	Family and Consumer Science (Home Economics)	13	2C	Special Education Trainable Mentally Disabled	3
40	Commerce	1	2D	Special Education-Education of Deaf and Hard of Hearing	5
47	Business Education	41	2E	Special Education-Emotional Disabilities	102
49	Advanced Fine Arts	1	2G	Special Education – Learning Disabilities	185
50	Art	141	2H	Special Education-Mental Disabilities	34
51	Music Ed. - Choral	55	2I	Special Education-Multicategorical	89
53	Music Ed. - Voice	3	2J	Special Education-Severe Disabilities	3
54	Music Ed. - Instrumental	76	2K	Special Education-Early Childhood Ed	1
57	Speech and Drama	2	4B	Business/Marketing/Computer Tech	27
58	Dance	15	4C	Online Teaching	3
60	Media Specialist	97	AV	Electricity	2

Code	Certification Subject	Number Certified
63	Driver Training	9
5A	English As a Second Language	4
5C	Theatre	8
5G	Literacy Teacher	4
AC	Health Science Technology	1

Code	Certification Subject	Number Certified
BF	Small Engine Repair	1
DB	Protective Services	1
DC	Media Technology	1
7B	Elementary Principal Tier 1	21
7C	Secondary Principal Tier 1	1
TOTAL		7,450

VI. South Carolina Teacher Loan Advisory Committee

Proviso 1A.9. of the 2013-14 General Appropriations Act created the South Carolina Teacher Loan Advisory Committee (Committee). The Committee is charged with: (1) establishing goals for the Teacher Loan Program; (2) facilitating communication among the cooperating agencies; (3) advocating for program participants; and (4) recommending policies and procedures necessary to promote and maintain the program.¹⁹ For Proviso 1A.9 language, refer to Appendix B.

The Committee was formed in the fall of 2013. Working with the Committee are Marcella Wine-Snyder, CERRA Pre-Collegiate Program Director, and Dr. Jennifer Garrett, CERRA Coordinator of Research and Program Development. Serving on the Committee between the fall of 2013 and May of 2015 are the following individuals and the institution they represent:

- ⇒ Dr. Karen Woodfaulk – Commission on Higher Education,
- ⇒ Dr. David Blackmon – State Board of Education,
- ⇒ Patti Tate – Education Oversight Committee and Educator from York 3,
- ⇒ Jane Turner – CERRA,
- ⇒ Chuck Sanders – SC Student Loan Corporation,
- ⇒ Dr. Ed Miller – University of South Carolina, representing the SC Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators,
- ⇒ Gwendolyn Connor of Lancaster County School District, representing the SC Association of School Personnel Administrators,
- ⇒ Dr. Ed Jadallah of Coastal Carolina University, representing a public higher education institution with an approved teacher education program,
- ⇒ Dr. Valerie Harrison of Claflin University, representing a private higher education institution with an approved teacher education program, and
- ⇒ Dr. Sharon Wall – State Board of Education (will serve for 2015-16).

At the time of this report, the Committee met five times between January 2014 and April 2015. During this time, the Committee addressed Teacher Loan Program challenges and policy issues:

- ⇒ Communication strategies to enhance awareness of the Teacher Loan Program. CERRA staff integrated Teacher Loan Program information into its current communication activities, including the College Financial Newsletter.
- ⇒ Development of a Teacher Loan Program brochure in 2015. The Committee discussed translating the brochure into Spanish and the possible creation of a web-based application for the brochure.
- ⇒ Pending legislation and budget provisos impacting Teacher Loan Program, such as recruitment and retention of teachers in rural schools with higher turnover rates.

¹⁹ Proviso 1A.9. of the 2013-14 General Appropriation Act.

- ⇒ Differing semester structures impact the timing of a students' ability to apply for the loan.
- ⇒ A tiered loan forgiveness approach that would provide some form of loan forgiveness to all loan participants who taught in any South Carolina public school, rather than just those students teaching in a critical need subject or geographic school.
- ⇒ The criteria used by South Carolina Department of Education to determine critical need geographic schools. Since nearly two-thirds of all schools make the list each year, Committee members recommended raising the poverty index utilized to 80 percent or more.
- ⇒ The current South Carolina Department of Education formula used to determine critical need subject areas. The Committee was concerned it may not be an appropriate reflection of the areas that should be eligible for loan forgiveness. PACE teacher hires should not be considered 'irregular' and removed from the formula.
- ⇒ New partnerships with other education organizations, such as the South Carolina Alliance of Black School Educators.

Appendix A – Teacher Loan Fund Program

SECTION 59-26-20. Duties of State Board of Education and Commission on Higher Education.

The State Board of Education, through the State Department of Education, and the Commission on Higher Education shall:

(a) develop and implement a plan for the continuous evaluation and upgrading of standards for program approval of undergraduate and graduate education training programs of colleges and universities in this State;

(b) adopt policies and procedures which result in visiting teams with a balanced composition of teachers, administrators, and higher education faculties;

(c) establish program approval procedures which shall assure that all members of visiting teams which review and approve undergraduate and graduate education programs have attended training programs in program approval procedures within two years prior to service on such teams;

(d) render advice and aid to departments and colleges of education concerning their curricula, program approval standards, and results on the examinations provided for in this chapter;

(e) adopt program approval standards so that all colleges and universities in this State that offer undergraduate degrees in education shall require that students successfully complete the basic skills examination that is developed in compliance with this chapter before final admittance into the undergraduate teacher education program. These program approval standards shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(1) A student initially may take the basic skills examination during his first or second year in college.

(2) Students may be allowed to take the examination no more than four times.

(3) If a student has not passed the examination, he may not be conditionally admitted to a teacher education program after December 1, 1996. After December 1, 1996, any person who has failed to achieve a passing score on all sections of the examination after two attempts may retake for a third time any test section not passed in the manner allowed by this section. The person shall first complete a remedial or developmental course from a post-secondary institution in the subject area of any test section not passed and provide satisfactory evidence of completion of this required remedial or developmental course to the State Superintendent of Education. A third administration of the examination then may be given to this person. If the person fails to pass the examination after the third attempt, after a period of three years, he may take the examination or any sections not passed for a fourth time under the same terms and conditions provided by this section of persons desiring to take the examination for a third time.

Provided, that in addition to the above approval standards, beginning in 1984-85, additional and upgraded approval standards must be developed, in consultation with the Commission on Higher Education, and promulgated by the State Board of Education for these teacher education programs.

(f) administer the basic skills examination provided for in this section three times a year;

(g) report the results of the examination to the colleges, universities, and student in such form that he will be provided specific information about his strengths and weaknesses and given consultation to assist in improving his performance;

(h) adopt program approval standards so that all colleges and universities in this State that offer undergraduate degrees in education shall require that students pursuing courses leading to teacher certification successfully complete one semester of student teaching and other field experiences and teacher development techniques directly related to practical classroom situations;

(i) adopt program approval standards whereby each student teacher must be evaluated and assisted by a representative or representatives of the college or university in which the student teacher is enrolled. Evaluation and assistance processes shall be locally developed or selected by colleges or universities in accordance with State Board of Education regulations. Processes shall evaluate and assist student teachers based on the criteria for teaching effectiveness developed in accordance with this chapter. All college and university representatives who are involved in the evaluation and assistance process shall receive appropriate training as defined by State Board of Education regulations. The college or university in which the student teacher is enrolled shall make available assistance, training, and counseling to the student teacher to overcome any identified deficiencies;

(j) the Commission on Higher Education, in consultation with the State Department of Education and the staff of the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation, shall develop a loan program in which talented and qualified state residents may be provided loans to attend public or private colleges and universities for the sole purpose and intent of becoming certified teachers employed in the State in areas of critical need. Areas of critical need shall include both geographic areas and areas of teacher certification and must be defined annually for that purpose by the State Board of Education. The definitions used in the federal Perkins Loan Program shall serve as the basis for defining "critical geographical areas", which shall include special schools, alternative schools, and correctional centers as identified by the State Board of Education. The recipient of a loan is entitled to have up to one hundred percent of the amount of the loan plus the interest canceled if he becomes certified and teaches in an area of critical need. Should the area of critical need in which the loan recipient is teaching be reclassified during the time of cancellation, the cancellation shall continue as though the critical need area had not changed. Additionally, beginning with the 2000-2001 school year, a teacher with a teacher loan through the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation shall qualify, if the teacher is teaching in an area newly designated as a critical needs area (geographic or subject, or both). Previous loan payments will not be reimbursed. The Department of Education and the local school district are responsible for annual distribution of the critical needs list. It is the responsibility of the teacher to request loan cancellation through service in a critical needs area to the Student Loan Corporation by November first.

Beginning July 1, 2000, the loan must be canceled at the rate of twenty percent or three thousand dollars, whichever is greater, of the total principal amount of the loan plus interest on the unpaid balance for each complete year of teaching service in either an academic critical need area or in a geographic need area. The loan must be canceled at the rate of thirty-three and one-third percent, or five thousand dollars, whichever is greater, of the total

principal amount of the loan plus interest on the unpaid balance for each complete year of teaching service in both an academic critical need area and a geographic need area. Beginning July 1, 2000, all loan recipients teaching in the public schools of South Carolina but not in an academic or geographic critical need area are to be charged an interest rate below that charged to loan recipients who do not teach in South Carolina.

Additional loans to assist with college and living expenses must be made available for talented and qualified state residents attending public or private colleges and universities in this State for the sole purpose and intent of changing careers in order to become certified teachers employed in the State in areas of critical need. These loan funds also may be used for the cost of participation in the critical needs certification program pursuant to Section 59-26-30(A)(8). Such loans must be cancelled under the same conditions and at the same rates as other critical need loans.

In case of failure to make a scheduled repayment of an installment, failure to apply for cancellation or deferment of the loan on time, or noncompliance by a borrower with the intent of the loan, the entire unpaid indebtedness including accrued interest, at the option of the commission, shall become immediately due and payable. The recipient shall execute the necessary legal documents to reflect his obligation and the terms and conditions of the loan. The loan program, if implemented, pursuant to the South Carolina Education Improvement Act, is to be administered by the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation. Funds generated from repayments to the loan program must be retained in a separate account and utilized as a revolving account for the purpose that the funds were originally appropriated. Appropriations for loans and administrative costs incurred by the corporation are to be provided in annual amounts, recommended by the Commission on Higher Education, to the State Treasurer for use by the corporation. The Education Oversight Committee shall review the loan program annually and report to the General Assembly.

Notwithstanding another provision of this item:

(1) For a student seeking loan forgiveness pursuant to the Teacher Loan Program after July 1, 2004, "critical geographic area" is defined as a school that:

(a) has an absolute rating of below average or unsatisfactory;

(b) has an average teacher turnover rate for the past three years that is twenty percent or higher; or

(c) meets the poverty index criteria at the seventy percent level or higher.

(2) After July 1, 2004, a student shall have his loan forgiven based on those schools or districts designated as critical geographic areas at the time of employment.

(3) The definition of critical geographic area must not change for a student who has a loan, or who is in the process of having a loan forgiven before July 1, 2004.

(k) for special education in the area of vision, adopt program approval standards for initial certification and amend the approved program of specific course requirements for adding certification so that students receive appropriate training and can demonstrate competence in reading and writing braille;

(l) adopt program approval standards so that students who are pursuing a program in a college or university in this State which leads to certification as instructional or administrative personnel shall complete successfully training and teacher development experiences in teaching higher order thinking skills;

(m) adopt program approval standards so that programs in a college or university in this State which lead to certification as administrative personnel must include training in methods of making school improvement councils an active and effective force in improving schools;

(n) the Commission on Higher Education in consultation with the State Department of Education and the staff of the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation, shall develop a Governor's Teaching Scholarship Loan Program to provide talented and qualified state residents loans not to exceed five thousand dollars a year to attend public or private colleges and universities for the purpose of becoming certified teachers employed in the public schools of this State. The recipient of a loan is entitled to have up to one hundred percent of the amount of the loan plus the interest on the loan canceled if he becomes certified and teaches in the public schools of this State for at least five years. The loan is canceled at the rate of twenty percent of the total principal amount of the loan plus interest on the unpaid balance for each complete year of teaching service in a public school. However, beginning July 1, 1990, the loan is canceled at the rate of thirty-three and one-third percent of the total principal amount of the loan plus interest on the unpaid balance for each complete year of teaching service in both an academic critical need area and a geographic need area as defined annually by the State Board of Education. In case of failure to make a scheduled repayment of any installment, failure to apply for cancellation or deferment of the loan on time, or noncompliance by a borrower with the purpose of the loan, the entire unpaid indebtedness plus interest is, at the option of the commission, immediately due and payable. The recipient shall execute the necessary legal documents to reflect his obligation and the terms and conditions of the loan. The loan program must be administered by the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation. Funds generated from repayments to the loan program must be retained in a separate account and utilized as a revolving account for the purpose of making additional loans. Appropriations for loans and administrative costs must come from the Education Improvement Act of 1984 Fund, on the recommendation of the Commission on Higher Education to the State Treasurer, for use by the corporation. The Education Oversight Committee shall review this scholarship loan program annually and report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly. For purposes of this item, a 'talented and qualified state resident' includes freshmen students who graduate in the top ten percentile of their high school class, or who receive a combined verbal plus mathematics Scholastic Aptitude Test score of at least eleven hundred and enrolled students who have completed one year (two semesters or the equivalent) of collegiate work and who have earned a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.5 on a 4.0 scale. To remain eligible for the loan while in college, the student must maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale.

Appendix B – SC Teacher Loan Advisory Committee

1A.9. (SDE-EIA: XII.F.2-CHE/Teacher Recruitment) Of the funds appropriated in Part IA, Section 1, XII.F.2. for the Teacher Recruitment Program, the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education shall distribute a total of ninety-two percent to the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA-South Carolina) for a state teacher recruitment program, of which at least seventy-eight percent must be used for the Teaching Fellows Program specifically to provide scholarships for future teachers, and of which twenty-two percent must be used for other aspects of the state teacher recruitment program, including the Teacher Cadet Program and \$166,302 which must be used for specific programs to recruit minority teachers: and shall distribute eight percent to South Carolina State University to be used only for the operation of a minority teacher recruitment program and therefore shall not be used for the operation of their established general education programs. Working with districts with an absolute rating of At-Risk or Below Average, CERRA will provide shared initiatives to recruit and retain teachers to schools in these districts. CERRA will report annually by October first to the Education Oversight Committee and the Department of Education on the success of the recruitment and retention efforts in these schools. The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education shall ensure that all funds are used to promote teacher recruitment on a statewide basis, shall ensure the continued coordination of efforts among the three teacher recruitment projects, shall review the use of funds and shall have prior program and budget approval. The South Carolina State University program, in consultation with the Commission on Higher Education, shall extend beyond the geographic area it currently serves. Annually, the Commission on Higher Education shall evaluate the effectiveness of each of the teacher recruitment projects and shall report its findings and its program and budget recommendations to the House and Senate Education Committees, the State Board of Education and the Education Oversight Committee by October 1 annually, in a format agreed upon by the Education Oversight Committee and the Department of Education.

With the funds appropriated CERRA shall also establish, appoint, and maintain the South Carolina Teacher Loan Advisory Committee. The Committee shall be composed of one member representing each of the following: (1) Commission on Higher Education; (2) State Board of Education; (3) Education Oversight Committee; (4) Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement; (5) South Carolina Student Loan Corporation; (6) South Carolina Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators; (7) a local school district human resources officer; (8) a public higher education institution with an approved teacher education program; and (9) a private higher education institution with an approved teacher education program. The members of the committee representing the public and private higher education institutions shall rotate among those institutions and shall serve a two-year term on the committee. Initial appointments must be made by July 1, 2013, at which time the member representing CERRA shall call the first meeting. At the initial meeting, a chairperson and vice-chairperson must be elected by a majority vote of the committee. The committee must be staffed by CERRA, and shall meet at least twice annually. The committee's responsibilities are limited to: (1) establishing goals for the Teacher Loan

Program; (2) facilitating communication among the cooperating agencies; (3) advocating for program participants; and (4) recommending policies and procedures necessary to promote and maintain the program.

The Education Oversight Committee does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or handicap in its practices relating to employment or establishment and administration of its programs and initiatives. Inquiries regarding employment, programs and initiatives of the Committee should be directed to the Executive Director 803.734.6148.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee: EIA and Improvement Mechanisms

Date: June 8, 2015

INFORMATION

Results of the 2014 Parent Survey

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

Section 59-28-190 of the Parental Involvement in Their Children's Education Act requires the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) to "survey parents to determine if state and local efforts are effective in increasing parental involvement." In addition Section 59-18-900 of the Education Accountability Act (EAA) requires that the annual school report cards include "evaluations of the school by parents, teachers, and students" as performance indicators to evaluate schools. The tool that has been adopted by the EOC and administered by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) to meet these statutory requirements is the annual parent survey.

CRITICAL FACTS

The parent survey was commissioned by the EOC and designed by the Institute for Families in Society at the University of South Carolina in 2001. The survey is designed to determine parent perceptions of their child's school and to evaluate the effectiveness of state and local parental involvement programs. Since 2002 the South Carolina Department of Education has annually administered the survey, and the EOC has provided an annual review of the survey results. The attached report reflects the results of the 2014 administration of the parent survey.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

Study began in April 2015 and completed in May 2015

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

Cost: No fiscal impact beyond current appropriations

Fund/Source:

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

Approved

ACTION TAKEN

Amended

Not Approved

Action deferred (explain)

2014

**Results of the 2014
Parent Survey**

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Acknowledgements

The Education Oversight Committee (EOC) acknowledges the ongoing assistance of Cynthia Hearn and Ling Gao of the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) in providing data files, timely updates and important information on the annual administration of the parent survey. The EOC also appreciates the parents who took the time to complete and return the annual parent survey, because their perspective is critical in evaluating public schools. And, the EOC is also grateful for principals and administrators who encouraged parental participation in the survey and who oversaw the administration of the survey.

Executive Summary

Background: The parent survey was designed in 2001 to meet the requirements of the Education Accountability Act (EAA) and the Parental Involvement in Their Children's Education Act. Section 59-18-900 of the EAA requires that the annual school report card include "evaluations of the school by parents, teachers, and students" as performance indicators to evaluate schools. In addition Section 59-28-190 of the Parental Involvement in Their Children's Education Act requires the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) to "survey parents to determine if state and local efforts are effective in increasing parental involvement." The tool that has been adopted by the EOC and administered by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) to meet these statutory requirements is the annual parent survey.

Since 2002 the SCDE has administered the parent survey to a sample of parents whose children attended public schools in South Carolina. From its inception, the parent survey contains items regarding parent perceptions of the learning environment in the school, home and school relations, and the social and physical environment of the school. Additional questions document characteristics of the parents and the children of the parents responding to the survey. The 2014 parent survey contained many of the same items as the 2013 parent survey. Five items that were added to the 2013 survey to obtain information about parent views of teacher and principal effectiveness, student personalized learning experience, and parental awareness of federal and state report card grades were deleted from the 2014 survey.

The parents of students in the highest grade at all elementary, middle and high schools are surveyed. In high schools and career centers, parents of all 11th graders are surveyed. In schools with a grade configuration that spans multiple levels, parents of children in multiple grades are surveyed. For example, in a school with a grade span of grades 6 through 10, parents of children in grades 8 and 10 are surveyed. For parents in schools with a grade span of K-12, parents of children in grades 5, 8 and 11 are surveyed. Parents in schools containing grades 2 or lower (K-1, K-2, and 1-2 configurations) are not surveyed. Annually, the EOC has analyzed the results of the parent survey and issued reports. The reports are online at www.eoc.sc.gov.

Survey Responses: In 2014 the number of parent surveys completed and returned totaled 59,293, a decline of 7,494 surveys (11.2 percent) from the prior year. SCDE staff note two changes in the period of administration of the parent survey that may have affected the response rate. First, the survey occurred later in the year in 2014 (April 11 through May 9) than in 2013 (February 28 through March 25), and second, because of the later administration, the window of administration included Spring break for some school districts. Between 31.0 and 37.4 percent of

all eligible parents surveyed responded to the 2014 parent survey. As in the prior year, there were no parent surveys printed in Spanish made available to parents by the South Carolina Department of Education. In 2014 the percentage of parents who completed the survey who identified themselves as Hispanic was 5.7 percent, as compared to 5.3 percent in 2013, 5.1 percent in 2012, 4.6 percent in 2011, and 5.0 percent in 2010.

An analysis of the respondents to the 2014 parent survey concluded that the survey responses typically overrepresented the perceptions of parents who had children in elementary schools and underrepresented the perceptions of parents who had children in high school. Furthermore, the respondents typically obtained higher educational achievements and had greater median household incomes than the general population of South Carolina. As in prior years, the “typical” parent responding to the survey was a white female having attended or graduated from college and having a household income of greater than \$35,000. Furthermore, when compared to the enrollment of students in public schools, parents of African American students were underrepresented in the responses.

The data documented that the parent survey responses were generally representative, within four percentage points, of the percentage of students enrolled in schools by their Absolute Rating. Nine percent of the parents who responded to the survey had children attending schools with an Absolute Rating of Below Average or At Risk, the same percentage as students enrolled in a school with an Absolute Rating of Below Average or At Risk in school year 2013-14. On the other hand, 58 percent of the parents who responded to the survey had children attending schools with an Absolute Rating of Good or Excellent, compared to 62 percent of children who were enrolled in a school with an Absolute Rating of Good or Excellent in school year 2013-14.

2014 Absolute Rating	Percent of Students Enrolled in School 2013-14	Percent of Parents Responding to 2014 Survey
Excellent	43%	39%
Good	19%	19%
Average	30%	33%
Below Average	6%	7%
At Risk	3%	2%

Parent Survey Results: Despite an 11.2 percent decline in the number of parents responding to the annual parent survey, the results of the 2014 parent survey demonstrate that parent satisfaction levels with the three characteristics measured - the learning environment and social and physical environment of their child’s school—were consistent with the prior year’s results. Significant changes are estimated as an annual increase or decrease of three or more percent.

Satisfaction is defined as the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment of their child's school. Parent satisfaction with home and school relations appears to have declined dramatically from 2013 to 2014; however, the number of missing responses for this item increased from 3.4 percent in 2013 to 13.7 percent in 2014. The percentage of parents not satisfied in 2014 was 14.6 percent, a slight increase from 13.3 percent in 2013, which suggests a slight decrease in parental satisfaction with home and school relations. SCDE staff were consulted regarding this data anomaly; no explanation is apparent. EOC staff inquired whether a sample of survey documents could be spot-checked by the contractor to rule out scanning errors. This was not possible.

Percentage of Parents Satisfied with

Characteristic	2014	2013	2011	2010	Difference between 2014 and 2013
Learning Environment	86.7	87.0	87.2	84.3	(0.3)
Home and School Relations	71.7	83.3	82.9	80.2	(11.6)
Social and Physical Environment	84.4	84.3	84.1	82.4	0.1

When comparing parent satisfaction in 2014 with parent satisfaction over the most recent three-year period, the only significant change is in home and school relations, which can be attributed to the data anomaly previously discussed. There were no significant changes in parental satisfaction with respect to the learning environment or social and physical environment of the school.

Percentage of Parents Satisfied with

Characteristic	2014	Mean % (2010-2013)	Difference between 2014 and Mean of three years
Learning Environment	86.7	86.2	0.5
Home and School Relations	71.7	82.1	(10.4)
Social and Physical Environment	84.4	83.6	0.8

There also were minimal differences between item responses from 2014 compared to item responses from 2013 for the learning environment and social and physical environment of the school:

Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree to:

Learning Environment Questions	2014	2013	Difference
My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	88.9	89.6	(0.7)
My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	91.2	91.5	(0.3)
My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	81.9	81.7	0.2

Parental satisfaction, the percentage of parents agreeing or strongly agreeing, generally declines as the Absolute Rating of the school declines. The largest difference in parental satisfaction between the highest and lowest performing schools was in parent perception of the social and physical environment of their child’s school, followed by the learning environment. This trend is present for all school levels, though some anomalous results for parents of high school students make observing this trend more difficult.

Percentage of Parents whose Child Attends a School with Excellent or At-Risk Ratings, Satisfied with Each School Characteristic:

Characteristic	Excellent Schools	At-Risk Schools	Difference
All Schools			
Learning Environment	90.0	81.0	9.0
Home and School Relations	75.1	73.0	2.1
Social and Physical Environment	89.0	71.8	17.1
Elementary Schools			
Learning Environment	92.5	78.6	13.9
Home and School Relations	79.5	66.7	12.8
Social and Physical Environment	93.2	75.5	17.7
Middle Schools			
Learning Environment	88.2	70.0	18.2
Home and School Relations	69.8	56.9	12.9
Social and Physical Environment	85.7	65.7	20.0
High Schools			
Learning Environment	86.1	90.3	(4.2)
Home and School Relations	70.7	88.8	(18.8)
Social and Physical Environment	82.5	73.1	9.4

Across school types, parents whose child attended a school with an Absolute Rating of Below Average were less satisfied with the learning environment and home and school relations at their child’s school than parents whose child attended a school with an Absolute Rating of At Risk. This result, however, is only present for parents of students in high school in the areas of learning environment and home and school relations. For parents of children in elementary and middle schools, the percentage of parents satisfied with each school characteristic is lower for parents of students in schools with At Risk ratings than for parents of students in schools with ratings of Below Average.

Percentage of Parents whose Child Attends a School with Below Average or At-Risk Ratings, Satisfied with Each School Characteristic:

Characteristic	Below Average Schools	At-Risk Schools	Difference
All Schools			
Learning Environment	79.2	81.0	(0.8)
Home and School Relations	66.9	73.0	(6.1)
Social and Physical Environment	76.3	71.8	4.5
Elementary Schools			
Learning Environment	80.5	78.6	1.9
Home and School Relations	68.3	66.7	1.6
Social and Physical Environment	78.2	75.5	2.7
Middle Schools			
Learning Environment	77.7	70.0	7.7
Home and School Relations	65.7	56.9	8.8
Social and Physical Environment	74.0	65.7	8.3
High Schools			
Learning Environment	82.3	90.3	(8.0)
Home and School Relations	67.0	88.8	(21.8)
Social and Physical Environment	81.8	73.1	8.7

Parents who responded to the 2014 annual survey reported levels of parental involvement compared to previous years and identified work schedules as their greatest obstacle to involvement.

Parents Report Obstacles to Parental Involvement in 2014

Work Schedule	57.1%
Lack of timely notification of volunteer opportunities	25.5%
School does not encourage involvement	17.5%
Family and health problems	15.5%
Lack of child or adult care services	14.8%
Transportation	12.2%
Involvement not appreciated	11.9%

Impediments to parental involvement that are at least partially within the control of the schools are the processes by which schools notify parents of volunteer opportunities, the means by which the school encourages or enables parental involvement, and the approach of the school toward parental involvement.

Gallup Student Poll Results: The Gallup Student Poll collects information regarding non-cognitive student attributes that are associated with student success in academic and other endeavors. Results of the Gallup Student Poll indicate that 53 percent of students are Hopeful, 53 percent of students are Engaged, and 64 percent of students are Thriving. Results of the Gallup

Student Poll are consistent from 2013 to 2014 even though there was approximately a 40 percent increase in the number of student responses. Results of this survey are based on student results from participating schools. The Gallup Student Poll is available at no cost to schools; participating schools are provided a view of their students' disposition with respect to Hope, Engagement, and Well-Being.

PART ONE

Administration of the 2014 Parent Survey

The design and sampling methodology for the parent survey were established in 2001. The EOC contracted with the Institute of Families in Society at the University of South Carolina to design the survey and to recommend a medium for distributing the survey. To maintain complete anonymity and to maximize the return rate, the Institute recommended that the survey be mailed to a sample of parents along with a postage paid, return envelope. While the sampling methodology proposed by the Institute was implemented, the parent survey has never been mailed to parents due to budgetary restrictions. Instead, schools have been given the responsibility for distributing and collecting the forms. Generally, schools send the surveys home with students. Some schools have held parent meetings or special meetings at school during which the surveys were distributed.

Rather than surveying all parents of public school students, the parents of students in the highest grade at all elementary, middle and high schools are surveyed. In high schools and career centers, parents of all 11th graders are surveyed. In schools with a grade configuration that spans multiple levels, parents of children in multiple grades are surveyed. For example, in a school with a grade span of grades 6 through 10, parents of children in grades 8 and 10 are surveyed. For parents in schools with a grade span of K-12, parents of children in grades 5, 8 and 11 are surveyed. Parents in schools containing grades 2 or lower, which include primary schools, child development schools and schools with configurations like K, K-1, and K-2 are not surveyed. The parent survey is typically administered during the second semester of each school year. Appendix A provides the instructions used by schools in 2014 to administer the parent as well as student and teacher surveys.

As in 2014, there were no parent surveys printed in Spanish. A copy of the 2014 survey is in the Appendix B. The 2014 administration of the parent survey occurred over the following time period and involved the following actions.

April 11, 2014	All schools received survey forms.
May 9, 2014	Date for parent survey forms returned to school.
May 14, 2014	Last day for schools to mail completed forms to contractor.

A school survey coordinator, a staff person designated by the school principal, distributed and collected the parent surveys at each school according to instructions provided by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE). According to SCDE, an independent contractor hired by the agency to mail to each school the following:

- ✓ An administrative envelope containing;
 1. A letter to the principal from the Education Oversight Committee (EOC),
 2. Two sets of instructions for administering the surveys,
 3. A page of shipping instructions, and
 4. One pre-addressed, bar-coded UPS shipping label (used to return completed surveys to contractor, freight prepaid).
- ✓ Parent survey envelopes. Each envelope contains a letter from the State Superintendent of Education and a parent survey form.

- ✓ Student survey forms.¹

The name of each school was printed on the survey forms to assist parents who were completing surveys for multiple schools. Schools were also advised to “distribute the parent surveys as soon as possible” after delivery. The cost of printing, shipping, processing and scanning the parent surveys was approximately \$90,000.

Each school’s designated survey coordinator then distributed envelopes containing the parent survey and letter from the state Superintendent of Education to each classroom teacher within the designated grade being surveyed. Teachers gave each student an envelope and instructions to take the envelope home for their parents to complete and then return the completed survey to school in the sealed envelope. The envelopes were designed to maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of all parents. Parents were given the option of mailing the completed survey directly to SCDE with parents incurring the cost of the mailing or of returning the survey to the school. The school survey coordinator was expressly advised that mailing of the envelopes directly to the parents was allowed with all costs to be borne by the school. Information did not exist to document if any schools mailed the parent surveys to parents.

As in the prior year, the 2014 instructions contained the following special note that cautions schools against implementing policies that would create disincentives for parents who opt to mail in their survey responses:

SPECIAL NOTE: We appreciate that schools work diligently each year to encourage parents to complete and return the parent surveys. Some schools offer incentives such as ice cream treats or extra recess time to individual students or classes where all students have returned completed parent surveys. Each year parents call the Department to inform us that their child is upset that he/she cannot return the parent survey form to school and receive the special incentive because the parent wants to mail the survey form to the Department. Parents have the option to mail in the survey form, so we would encourage you to not penalize students whose parents’ mail in their completed survey form.²

Upon receiving the completed parent surveys, the school survey coordinator then mailed the forms to the independent contractor for scanning and preparation of the data files. Individual school results were tabulated by SCDE. The overall parent satisfaction scores of three questions relating to the school’s overall learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment were printed on the 2014 annual school report cards. For each school, SCDE aggregated the responses to all survey questions and provided the data files to the district office.

The 2014 parent survey contained a total of fifty-seven questions. Forty-seven questions were designed to elicit information on parental perceptions and parental involvement patterns. For the first twenty-three questions, parents were asked to respond to individual statements using one of the following responses: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree or Don’t Know. These twenty-one questions focused on three key components: learning environment, home and school relations, and the physical and social environment of their child’s school.

¹ “Administration of the 2014 Report Card Surveys,” South Carolina Department of Education.

² “Administration of the 2014 Report Card Surveys,” South Carolina Department of Education.

These components and individual activities reflect the framework devised by Dr. Joyce Epstein of the National Network of Partnership Schools.

Parents were asked five questions about their participation in various parental involvement activities both in and outside of the school. Parents were also asked whether each of a list of seven items were potential barriers to their involvement in their child's education. Finally, parents were asked to provide specific information about themselves, their child, and their household. Parents were asked four questions about their child: their child's grade in school, gender, race/ethnicity, and grades on his or her last report card. Four questions sought information about the parent: his or her gender, race/ethnicity, highest level of education and total yearly household income.

The parent survey administered in 2014 contains items that been a part of the parent survey since 2001. Five items that were included for the first time in the 2013 survey were not included in the 2014. The questions as included in the 2013 survey were:

1. My child's teacher is effective.
2. My child's principal is effective.
3. My child receives a personalized learning experience.
4. I have read BOTH the federal and state report cards for my child's school.
5. I have read BOTH the federal and state report cards by my child's school district.

The 2013 Parent Survey Report published by the EOC documented concerns with the ambiguity of these questions and with the choice of possible answers to the question.³ Consequently, the Department of Education deleted these five questions from the 2014 Parent Survey.

³ "Results of the 2013 Parent Survey," South Carolina Education Oversight Committee, available at: <http://www.eoc.sc.gov/Reports%20%20Publications/Current%20Reports%202008-14/Parent%20Survey/2013ParentSurvey.pdf>

- Wil Lou Gray School
- School for the Deaf and the Blind
- Governor’s School for Science and Mathematics
- Governor’s School for the Arts and Humanities

Schools containing grades 2 or lower were not included in the survey. This first method inflates the sample size because schools requested and received extra copies of the parent survey for parents who enrolled children in the second semester or who lost their original form.

A second method is to estimate the unknown eligibility of surveys by using the statewide 135-day average daily membership of all students in grades 5, 8 and 11 in school year 2013-14 as the sample size. On the 45th, 90th and 135th days of school, school districts report each student by grade and by a pupil classification system prescribed in the Education Finance Act. In school year 2013-14 the 135-day average daily membership for grades 5, 8 and 11 rounded to the nearest student totaled 158,479.⁶ This method underestimates the number of parents surveyed. The parents of some 3rd, 4th, 6th, 7th, 9th and 10th grade students also complete the survey because some schools have a grade configuration that spans multiple levels or these schools represent the highest grade level in the school.

As reflected in Table 1, the total number of parent surveys returned in 2014 was 59,293, which was 7,494 (11.2 percent) fewer than the number returned in the prior year. This is a substantial decrease in the number of parents responding. As a point of reference, from 2012 to 2013 there was a 4.0 percent decrease in the number of parent surveys returned. The number of parent surveys returned has declined each year from the maximum number returned in 2011.

SCDE staff⁷ note two changes in the period of administration of the parent survey that may have affected the response rate. First, the survey occurred later in the year in 2014 (April 11 through May 9) than in 2013 (February 28 through March 25), and second, because of the later administration, the window of administration included Spring break for some school districts.

Table 1
Total Number of Parent Surveys Returned

Year	Surveys
2014	59,293
2013	66,787
2012	69,581
2011	73,755
2010	69,474
2009	67,014
2008	68,761
2007	64,596
2006	69,495
2005	66,895
2004	66,283
2003	64,732

⁶ “SC 135-Day Average Daily Membership by Grade, by District, 2013-14, obtained from: <http://ed.sc.gov/agency/ie/rda/MembershipandAttendance.cfm>, April 1, 2015.

⁷ Ling Gao, SCDE in e-mail message to EOC, April 13, 2015.

Year	Surveys
2002	55,864

Using the two methods of determining response rates and the total number of parent surveys returned, two response rates were calculated in Table 2. Between 31.0 and 37.4 percent of all eligible parents surveyed responded to the 2014 parent survey. In the prior year (2013), using the same two methodologies, the response rate was between 36 and 43 percent. Compared to IAR’s definitions of acceptable response rates for email and online surveys, the response rate to the 2014 parent survey should be considered average. According to IAR, “generally, the better your respondents know you, the better your response rate. Respondents who you know by name or have regular contact with will be more likely to respond to your survey than respondents you do not know.”

**Table 2
Determining the Response Rate**

	Sample Size	Surveys Returned	Response Rate
Method 1: Surveys Distributed	191,500	59,293	31.0%
Method 2: ADM ⁶ of 5, 8 and 11 th grades	158,480	59,293	37.4%

Parents completing the survey were asked four questions about their child:

1. What grade is your child in? (3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th or 11th)
2. What is your child’s gender?
3. What is your child’s race/ethnicity?
4. What grades did your child receive on his/her last report card?

Parents were asked another set of four questions about themselves and their family:

1. What is your gender?
2. What is your race/ethnic group?
3. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
 - Attended elementary/high school
 - Completed high school/GED
 - Earned associate degree
 - Attended college/training program
 - Earned college degree
 - Postgraduate study/and/or degree
4. What is your family’s total yearly household income?
 - Less than \$15,000
 - \$15,000 - \$24,999
 - \$25,000 - \$34,999
 - \$35,000 - \$54,999
 - \$55,000 - \$75,000
 - More than \$75,000

Responses to these eight questions revealed the following about the parents who completed the 2014 parent survey (Table 3).

Table 3
Respondents to the 2014 Parent Survey
(n=59,293)

Gender	
Male	14.3%
Female	85.7%
Race	
African-American	30.8%
Caucasian/white	59.0%
Hispanic	5.9%
All Other	4.3%
Education	
Attended elementary/high school	10.3%
Completed high school/GED	22.3%
Earned Associate Degree	11.0%
Attended college/training program	20.0%
Earned college degree	22.9%
Postgraduate study/and/or degree	13.6%
Household Income	
Less than \$15,000	14.0%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	14.3%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	13.0%
\$35,000 - \$54,999	16.1%
\$55,000 - \$75,000	13.9%
More than \$75,000	28.8%
Their Child Enrolled in:	
Grades 3-5	44.7%
Grades 6-8	37.0%
Grades 9-11	18.3%
Their Child's Gender:	
Male	44.3%
Female	55.7%
Their Child's Ethnicity:	
African-American	31.3%
Caucasian/White	57.1%
Hispanic	5.9%
All Other	5.7%
Their Child's Grades:	
All or mostly A's and B's	64.0%
All or mostly B's and C's	26.2%
All or mostly C's and D's	8.2%
All or mostly D's and F's	1.6%

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

As in prior years, the "typical" parent responding to the survey was a white female having attended or graduated from college. Over 57 percent of the respondents who answered the

question about income reported earning over \$35,000. In 2014 the percentage of parents who completed the survey who identified themselves as Hispanic was 5.9 percent, as compared to 5.1 percent in 2013, 4.6 percent in 2011 and 5.0 percent in 2010.

To determine if the survey responses were representative of elementary, middle and high school parents, the following analysis was done. First, 57,290 parents who returned the 2014 survey indicated that their child was in 5th, 8th, or 11th grade. Defining grade 5 as elementary schools, grade 8 as middle school and grade 11, high school, approximately 45 percent of parents who completed the survey were elementary school parents, 37 percent middle school, and 18 percent high school (Table 4). As compared to the prior year, the percentage of surveys reflecting the perceptions of elementary school parents declined by 1 percent, middle school parents increased by 2 percent, and the percentage of parents of high school students decreased by 1 percent (from 19 to 18 percent).

The representativeness of the 2014 parent surveys returned of the population of students was investigated by comparing the grade level and ethnicity of students enrolled in the 2013-14 academic year to the grade level and ethnicity of students as reported by parents in the 2014 parent survey. Considering only students in grades 5, 8, and 11, 46 percent of the parent surveys indicate their child was enrolled in grade 5, yet according to the 135-day Average Daily Membership (ADM) enrollment, only 35 percent of students are in grade 5. The percentage of children parents report as enrolled in grade 8 is nearly identical to the percentage of student enrolled in grade 8 according to the ADM. The percentage of students parents report as enrolled in grade 11 (18 percent) is much smaller than the percentage of students enrolled in grade 11 from the ADM (30%). Elementary school students are, then, over-represented in the parent surveys returned and high school students are under-represented in these data.

**Table 4
Parental Respondents by Child's Grade**

Grade of Child	Surveys Returned	% of Surveys from Grades 5, 8, & 11		2013-14 135-day ADM	% of ADMs for Grades 5, 8 & 11
Grade 5	22,929	46%		54,517	35%
Grade 8	17,885	36%		56,632	35%
Grade 11	9,150	18%		47,330	30%
TOTAL	49,964			158,479	

When asked about their child's race or ethnicity, 57.1 percent of the parents responded that their child's ethnicity was white, 31.3 percent African American and 5.9 percent Hispanic. With respect to the ethnicity of children in the public schools of South Carolina in 2013-14, parents whose children are African American were underrepresented by 2.9 percent, and parents whose children are Hispanic were underrepresented by 1.6 percent in the respondents (Table 5).

**Table 5
Ethnicity of Children**

	2014 Parent Survey	Student Enrollment All Public Schools 2013-14⁸	Difference
White	57.1%	53.2%	3.9%
African American	31.3%	34.2%	(2.9%)
Hispanic	5.9%	7.5%	(1.6%)
Other	5.7%	5.1%	0.6%

Note: "Other" includes American Indian/Alaskan, Asian, Hawaiian Native/Pacific Islander and Two or more races.

With respect to educational attainment, 31.5 percent of parents who responded to the survey in 2014 had earned a bachelor or postgraduate degree. For comparison purposes, the United States Census Bureau projected that 25.1 percent of persons 25 years old and over in South Carolina had earned a bachelor's degree or higher in 2009.⁸

Regarding the annual household income of the respondents, in 2014 58.8 percent of the parents who completed the survey reported having an annual household income in excess of \$35,000. For comparison purposes, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the median household income in South Carolina from 2009-2013 was \$44,779.⁹

Finally, staff performed an analysis that compared the number of parents who responded to the survey according to the Absolute Rating of their child's school in 2014 with the percent of students enrolled in schools by their 2014 Absolute Rating (Table 6).¹⁰

**Table 6
Parents Responding and Student Enrolled in School by Absolute Ratings**

2014 Absolute Rating	% of Students Enrolled in School, 2013-14	% of Parents Responding to 2014 Survey
Excellent	43%	39%
Good	19%	19%
Average	30%	33%
Below Average	6%	7%
At Risk	3%	2%

The data document that for each report card rating, the percentages of students enrolled and parents responding are within four percent of one another. Nine percent of the parents who responded to the survey had children attending schools with an Absolute Rating of Below Average or At Risk, the same percentage as the number of students who were enrolled in a school with an Absolute Rating of Below Average or At Risk in school year 2013-14. Fifty-eight percent of the parents who responded to the survey had children attending schools with an Absolute Rating of Good or Excellent, which is slightly lower than the 62 percent of students

⁸U.S. Census Bureau, "State and County Quick Facts" <<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/45000.html>>, accessed April 13, 2015

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ "Student Performance in SC," South Carolina Education Oversight Committee, 2014. <http://www.eoc.sc.gov/Home/Report%20Card%20Data/2014/2014%20School%20Five%20Year%20List%20-%20for%20Annual%20Release.new11172014.pdf>

who were enrolled in a school with an Absolute Rating of Good or Excellent in school year 2013-14.

Conclusions

- A total of 59,293 parent surveys were completed and returned in 2014, which was 7,494 (11.2 percent) fewer than the number returned in the prior year. The survey was administered approximately 2 months later in 2014 than in 2013, and the timeframe for parental response may have included Spring break.
- Using two methods of calculating a response rate, one method that underestimated and one that overestimated the total number of parents eligible to take the survey, the response rate to the 2014 parent survey was between 31 and 37 percent, which is much lower than the response rate of 36 and 42 percent in 2013, which by industry standards is considered average.
- An analysis of the respondents to the 2014 parent survey found that the survey responses typically overrepresented the perceptions of parents in elementary schools and underrepresented the perceptions of parents who have children in high school.
- Respondents typically have obtained higher educational achievements and have greater median household incomes than the general population of South Carolina.
- The percentages of respondents by racial/ethnic group are within 5 percent of the make-up of the South Carolina population.
- The data documented that the parent survey responses were generally representative, within four percentage points, of the percentage of students enrolled in schools by their Absolute Rating. Nine percent of the parents who responded to the survey had children attending schools with an Absolute Rating of Below Average or At Risk, the same percentage as the number of students who were enrolled in a school with an Absolute Rating of Below Average or At Risk in school year 2013-14. Also, 58 percent of the parents who responded to the survey had children attending schools with an Absolute Rating of Good or Excellent, while 62 percent of students who were enrolled in a school with an Absolute Rating of Good or Excellent in school year 2013-14.

PART THREE

Results for Items of the 2014 Parent Survey

The parent survey was designed to determine: (1) parent perceptions or satisfaction with their child’s public school and (2) parental involvement efforts in public schools. The following is an analysis that documents the actual parent responses to questions focusing on parental satisfaction and parental involvement.

Parent Perceptions of Their Child’s School

The information below summarizes the results of the 2014 parent survey. At the school level, responses to these questions can reveal the strengths and weaknesses of parental involvement initiatives at the individual school site. Statewide, the data provide policymakers information on the overall effectiveness of policies and programs in promoting parental involvement. The following analysis focuses on parent perceptions or satisfaction with the learning environment, home and school relations, and the social and physical environment of their children’s schools. In analyzing responses, “significant change” is defined as a change of three percent or more in satisfaction.

A. Learning Environment

Five questions in the parent survey ask parents to reflect upon the learning environment of their child’s school. Questions 1 through 4 are designed to elicit parental agreement with specific aspects of the learning environment at their child’s school, focusing on homework, expectations, and academic assistance. Question 5 offers parents the opportunity to report on their overall satisfaction with the learning environment at their child’s school. For each school, the aggregate parental responses to question 5 are included on the annual school report card if a sufficient number of parents complete the survey.

Table 7 summarizes the total responses to these five questions for all parents who completed the 2014 parent survey. Overall, 86.7 percent of parents responded that they were satisfied with the learning environment of their child’s school. Across the five questions, the percentage of parents who disagreed or strongly disagreed was highest for questions 4 and 5. Approximately, one in five in parents either did not believe or did not know if their child received extra help when needed.

Table 7
Percentage of Parents in 2014 Responding

Learning Environment Questions	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Don’t Know
1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	88.9	8.7	2.4
2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	91.6	6.4	2.0
3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	91.2	5.8	3.0
4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	81.9	12.1	6.0
5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school	86.7	11.6	1.7

Table 8 compares the percentage of parents who responded that they agreed or strongly agreed to these questions each year from 2010 through 2014. The pattern over time is high parental satisfaction with the learning environment, with the highest levels of parental satisfaction in the past three years.

Table 8
Percentage of Parents Who Agree or Strongly Agree: 2010 through 2014

Learning Environment Questions	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	88.9	89.6	89.9	86.7	89.0
2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	91.6	91.7	91.7	88.9	90.3
3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	91.2	91.5	91.8	88.7	90.4
4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	81.9	81.7	81.9	78.7	79.8
5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school	86.7	87.0	87.2	84.3	85.9

The differences between the percentages of parents who expressed that they are satisfied with the overall learning environment at their child's school in 2014 compared to 2013 are small and can be characterized as normal annual fluctuations (Table 9). The percentage of parents who believe that their child's teacher provides extra help when needed increased by 0.2 from 2013 to 2014. For the remaining questions regarding a school's learning environment there were very small decreases in the percentage of parents who view the learning environment favorably. It is worth noting, however, that the percentages of parents who agree or strongly agree with each statement reached their highest values in 2013, and slightly decreased in 2014. The values obtained in 2014 are the third highest overall. In this light, declines from 2013 to 2014 should not be over-interpreted.

Table 9
Percentage of Parents Who Agree or Strongly Agree: 2013 and 2014

Learning Environment Questions	2014	2013	Difference
1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	88.9	89.6	(0.7)
2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	91.6	91.7	(0.1)
3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	91.2	91.5	(0.3)
4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	81.9	81.7	0.2
5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school	86.7	87.0	(0.3)

To determine if there are any significant changes in parent perception of the learning environment of their child's school over recent years, an analysis was done to compare the 2014 results with the average or mean results of the prior three years. Table 10 documents the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement regarding the learning environment of their child's school in 2014 compared to the average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement in years 2011 through 2013. The 2014 respondents were overall more satisfied with the learning environment of their schools

than the average of the respondents over the past three years; however, the difference did not exceed three percent on any one question.

Table 10
Comparing 2014 Results with Three-Year Average
(Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree)

Learning Environment Questions	2014	Mean % (2011-2013)	Difference
1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	88.9	88.7	0.2
2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	91.6	90.8	0.8
3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	91.2	90.7	0.5
4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	81.9	80.8	1.1
5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school	86.7	86.2	0.5

Table 11 presents the responses to Question 5 by the Absolute Ratings schools received in 2014. The highest percentage of parents who agree or strongly agree that they were satisfied with the overall learning environment at their child's schools were parents whose child attended a school with an Absolute Rating of Excellent. Parental satisfaction generally declines as the Absolute Rating of the school decreases, except for the case of parents whose child attends a school rated At Risk. The percentage of parents of students who were satisfied with the overall learning environment in schools with Excellent Absolute Ratings was approximately 11 percent higher than the percentage of parents in schools with Below Average ratings. Furthermore, the percentage of parents in schools rated At Risk or Below Average who disagree or strongly disagree with the question is slightly more than twice that of parents in schools with an Excellent Absolute Rating.

Table 11
I am Satisfied With the Learning Environment at My Child's School.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child's School)

2014 Absolute Rating	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Excellent	90.0	8.8
Good	86.9	11.4
Average	84.4	13.6
Below Average	79.2	18.7
At Risk	81.0	16.6

Analyzing the responses by Absolute Rating for elementary, middle and high schools, a clear pattern emerges: among respondents with children in schools with ratings of Excellent, Good, or Average: parent satisfaction with the learning environment of their child's school tends to be greatest for parents whose children are enrolled in elementary schools and declines for parents whose children are enrolled in middle or high schools, regardless of the Absolute Rating (Table 12). For parents whose children are enrolled in schools with Below Average or At Risk ratings

different pattern emerges: parents of high school students view the learning environment most favorably, followed by parents of elementary students, and parents of middle school students.

Table 12
I am Satisfied With the Learning Environment at My Child’s School.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child’s Elementary, Middle or High School)

2014 Absolute Rating	School Type	Number of Responses	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Excellent	Elementary	12,183	92.5	6.8
	Middle	6,290	88.2	10.3
	High	4,676	86.1	12.0
Good	Elementary	5,871	90.7	8.3
	Middle	3,540	84.1	13.4
	High	1,420	78.5	18.9
Average	Elementary	9,219	87.4	11.1
	Middle	8,233	83.0	14.8
	High	1,649	74.8	21.8
Below Average	Elementary	1,709	80.5	18.0
	Middle	2,054	77.7	19.8
	High	277	82.3	15.2
At Risk	Elementary	434	78.6	18.4
	Middle	362	70.0	24.3
	High	538	90.3	7.6

B. Home and School Relations

The next eleven questions on the parent survey determine parent perception of home and school relations by focusing on the relationship between the parent and their child’s teacher and between the parent and the school. Question 11 offers parents the opportunity to report on their overall satisfaction with home and school relations at their child’s school. For each school, the aggregate parental responses to question 11 are included on the annual school report card.

Table 13 summarizes the total responses to these eleven questions for all parents who completed the 2014 parent survey.

Table 13
Percentage of Parents in 2014 Responding:

Home and School Relations Questions	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child	57.1	40.7	2.2
2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	63.5	34.0	2.5
3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	51.1	44.1	4.8
4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	80.8	14.0	5.2
5. My child's school includes me in decision-making.	69.9	24.5	5.7
6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	73.7	21.7	4.6
7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	54.5	24.3	21.3
8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	79.4	16.4	4.2
9. My child's school treats all students fairly.	71.0	16.9	12.2
10. My principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	82.2	10.0	7.8
11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school	71.7	14.6	13.7

Overall, 71.7 percent of parents were satisfied with home and school relations at their child's school, which is 11.6 percent less than the percentage in 2013. The percentage of parents who indicated that indicated dissatisfaction with home and school relations increased only slightly from 13.3 in 2013 to 14.6 in 2014. The decline in the percentage of parents indicating satisfaction can best be explained by a marked increase in the percentage of parents not providing a response, from 3.4 percent in 2013 to 13.7 percent in 2014 (a 10.3 percent increase). An examination of questions 1 through 10, which ask parents more specific questions about their personal experiences at their child's school, reveals the following.

- Parents overwhelmingly agreed that the principal at their child's school was available and welcoming.
- Approximately 80 percent of the parents agreed that their child's school returned phone calls or e-mails promptly and scheduled activities at times that parents could attend.
- Approximately four out of ten parents disagreed or strongly disagreed that their child's teachers contacted them to say good things about their child or invited the parents to visit the classroom during the school day.
- One third of the parents disagreed that their child's teachers told them how to help their child learn.

- One-fourth of parents disagreed or strongly disagreed that their child’s school included parents in decision-making or considered changes based on parental input.
- Nearly one in three parents did not believe or did not know if students were treated fairly at their child’s school.

As documented by Table 14, the trend is that parental satisfaction with home and school Relations increased from 2006 through 2013, but declined dramatically to 2014. The dramatic decline in satisfaction from 2013 to 2014 is not accompanied by a corresponding increase in the percentage of parents expressing dissatisfaction with home and school relations. Instead, there was a substantial increase from 2013 to 2014 in the percentage of parents who indicated they did not have an opinion of the home and school relations.

Table 14
2006-2014
Home and School Relations
Question 11: I am Satisfied with Home and School relations at My Child’s School.

	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Agree or Strongly Agree	71.7	83.3	82.9	80.2	81.9	81.4	77.8	77.9	76.6
Disagree or Strongly Disagree	14.6	13.3	13.7	13.9	14.3	14.9	16.0	17.1	16.6

Analyzing parental satisfaction trends over the recent years, Table 15 documents parental satisfaction for all eleven questions regarding home and school relations since 2010. For seven of the eleven questions, the percentages of parents who view the home and school relations favorably were highest in 2012. Among the remaining four questions, the highest ratings for three were obtained in 2014. The highest rating for the overall satisfaction with home and school relations came in 2013.

Table 15
2010-2014
Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree

Home and School Relations Questions	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	57.1	56.9	57.3	54.5	52.2
2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	63.5	64.5	65.4	62.4	64.1
3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	51.1	51.5	54.0	52.0	53.7
4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	80.8	80.9	81.0	77.7	79.5
5. My child's school includes me in decision-making.	69.9	69.2	69.8	66.7	67.8
6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	73.7	78.1	78.3	75.6	78.3
7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	54.5	52.0	52.6	49.2	50.1
8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	79.4	79.6	79.7	76.9	78.9
9. My child's school treats all students fairly.	71.0	70.3	70.0	67.3	67.5
10. My principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	82.2	82.2	82.4	80.1	81.4
11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school	71.7	83.3	82.9	80.2	81.9

An additional analysis was done comparing the mean or average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed to each statement over the past three years with the responses from 2014. Table 16 documents the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement regarding home and school relations at their child's school in 2014 compared to the average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement in years 2010 through 2013. Again, using a three percent change as "significant," the only question that demonstrated a significant difference was the overall satisfaction with home and school relations. The unusually low value obtained in 2014 has previously been discussed.

Table 16
Comparing 2014 Results with Three-Year Average
(Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree)

Home and School Relations Questions	2014	Mean % (2011-2013)	Difference
1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	57.1	56.2	0.9
2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	63.5	64.1	(0.6)
3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	51.1	52.5	(1.4)
4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	80.8	79.9	0.9
5. My child's school includes me in decision-making.	69.9	68.6	0.3
6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	73.7	77.3	(3.6)
7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	54.5	51.3	3.2
8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	79.4	78.7	(0.7)
9. My child's school treats all students fairly.	71.0	69.2	1.8
10. My principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	82.2	81.6	0.6
11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school	71.7	82.1	(10.4)

Table 17 presents the responses to Question 11 by the Absolute Ratings schools received in 2014. Table 17 documents that a higher percentage of parents whose child attended a school with an Absolute Rating of Excellent strongly agreed that they were satisfied with home and school relations. Again, parental satisfaction declines as the Absolute Rating of the school declines. The percentage of parents of students who were satisfied with the home and school relations in schools with Excellent Absolute Ratings was approximately 8 percent higher than the percentage of parents in schools with Below Average ratings. Recall that this difference was approximately 11 percent for parental perceptions of the learning environment in their child's school. The percentage of parents in schools with Below Average ratings who disagree or strongly disagree with the question is approximately 7 percent higher than the percentage of parents with students in schools with Absolute Ratings of Excellent.

The pattern of satisfaction with home and school relations obtained from the 2014 parent survey is very similar to the pattern obtained from the 2013 survey. The same decline from schools with ratings of Excellent to schools with ratings of Below Average is observed, and the differences between the percentages for parents in schools with ratings of Excellent and the parents of students in schools with ratings of Below Average are nearly the same as in 2013. It appears that the increase in non-response to this item from 2013 to 2014 did not occur within schools with any particular report card rating.

Table 17
I am Satisfied with Home and School Relations at My Child's School.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child's School)

2014 Absolute Rating	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Excellent	75.1	12.3
Good	70.5	14.7
Average	69.7	16.1
Below Average	66.9	19.4
At Risk	73.0	17.0

Analyzing the responses across elementary, middle and high schools based again on Absolute Ratings, the data reveal that among schools with Excellent, Good, or Average ratings, parent satisfaction with the learning environment of their child's school tends to be greatest for parents whose children are enrolled in elementary schools and typically declines for parents whose children are enrolled in middle or high schools (Table 18). Parents of children in schools with Below Average ratings have historically had the lowest levels of parental satisfaction with home and school relations.

Table 18
I am Satisfied with Home and School Relations at My Child's School.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child's Elementary, Middle or High School)

2014 Absolute Rating	School Type	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Excellent	Elementary	79.5	9.0
	Middle	69.8	15.5
	High	70.7	16.5
Good	Elementary	75.2	11.1
	Middle	65.6	18.0
	High	63.7	21.6
Average	Elementary	74.3	12.6
	Middle	65.7	18.8
	High	63.9	22.3
Below Average	Elementary	68.3	18.6
	Middle	65.7	20.0
	High	67.0	20.2
At Risk	Elementary	66.7	20.4
	Middle	56.9	26.3
	High	88.8	8.0

This is true for the 2014 survey with one exception, where the satisfaction among parents of high school students is the higher than any other combination of Absolute Rating and school type. This anomaly cannot be explained by either a small number of high schools with Absolute Ratings of At Risk or an unusually low number of parents from these schools responding to the survey. Respondents from schools with Absolute Ratings of At Risk come from 12 high schools

(6.3 percent of parents and 5.6 percent of schools), 13 middle schools (1.2 percent of parents and 4.34 percent of schools), and 17 elementary schools (1.5 percent of parents and 2.6 percent of schools). Although the number of high schools is small, it does not differ dramatically from the number of middle or elementary schools, and the number of parents from high schools responding is large enough that it cannot be attributed to a small sample size, but instead to differences in parent perception.

C. Social and Physical Environment

Five questions on the parent survey focus on the social and physical environment of schools. These questions are designed to elicit parent perceptions of the cleanliness, safety, and student behavior at their child’s school. Question 5 asks parents to report on their overall satisfaction with the social and physical environment of their child’s schools. For each school, the aggregate parental responses to question 5 are included on the annual school report card.

Table 19 summarizes the total responses to these five questions for all parents who completed the 2014 parent survey.

Table 19
Percentage of Parents in 2014 Responding

Social and Physical Environment Questions	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Don’t Know
1. My child's school is kept neat and clean.	90.6	6.4	3.1
2. My child feels safe at school.	91.2	6.9	1.9
3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	83.8	9.1	7.1
4. Students at my child's school are well behaved.	64.8	22.5	12.6
5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child’s school.	84.4	11.9	3.7

Nine in ten parents agreed or strongly agreed that their child’s school was kept neat and clean and that their child felt safe at school. On the other hand, over one out of three parents either did not believe or did not know whether students at their child’s school were well behaved, and 16.2 percent of parents did not know or did not believe that their child’s teachers cared about their child as an individual.

Table 20 compares the 2014 results of the South Carolina parent survey with the results of parent surveys administered since 2010. The data document that parental responses to the five questions regarding the social and physical environment of their child’s school are consistent with the prior year’s results. Over time, parent satisfaction with the social and physical environment of their child’s schools as reflected in the responses to these five questions has increased.

Table 20
2010-2014
Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree

Social and Physical Environment Questions	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
1. My child's school is kept neat and clean.	90.6	91.5	91.3	90.0	91.0
2. My child feels safe at school.	91.2	91.0	90.9	89.7	90.5
3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	83.8	83.7	84.1	81.1	82.1
4. Students at my child's school are well behaved.	64.8	64.0	63.7	61.2	62.4
5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school	84.4	84.3	84.1	82.4	83.2

A final analysis was conducted to gauge parent satisfaction with the social and physical environment of their child's school in 2014 with the results of surveys completed during the prior three years. Table 21 documents the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement regarding the social and physical environment at their child's school in 2014 compared to the average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement in years 2011 through 2013. Again, there were no significant increases or decreases when comparing parental responses in 2014 with the average of the three prior years.

Table 21
Comparing 2014 Results with Three-Year Average
(Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree)

Social and Physical Environment Questions	2014	Mean % (2011-2013)	Difference
1. My child's school is kept neat and clean.	90.6	90.9	(0.3)
2. My child feels safe at school.	91.2	90.5	0.7
3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	83.8	83.0	0.8
4. Students at my child's school are well behaved.	64.8	63.0	1.8
5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	84.4	83.6	0.8

Comparing parental responses to Question 5 with the 2014 Absolute Rating of their child's school, Table 22 documents that a higher percentage of parents whose child attended a school with an Excellent rating strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the social and physical environment at their child's school. Again, parental satisfaction generally declines as the Absolute Rating of the school declines. The difference between the percentage of parents whose children attended a school with an Absolute Rating of Excellent and those whose children attended a school with an Absolute Rating of At Risk and who agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the social and physical environment of their child's school was 17.2 percent as compared to 9.0 percent for learning environment and 2.1 for home and school relations.

Table 22
I am Satisfied with the Social and Physical Environment at My Child’s School.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child’s School)

2013 Absolute Rating	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Excellent	89.0	8.5
Good	84.4	12.1
Average	80.8	14.3
Below Average	76.3	18.5
At Risk	71.8	17.1

Analyzing the responses by school type (elementary, middle and high), for elementary and middle schools, the percentage of parents satisfied with the social and physical environment at their child’s school decreases as Absolute Rating decreases. For high schools this same pattern is present with one exception, which is that parents of students in schools with ratings of Below Average are more satisfied than are parents with students in schools with ratings of Good or Average.

The data also reveal that for schools with Absolute Ratings of Excellent, Good, or Average, parent satisfaction with the social and physical environment of their child’s school is greatest for parents whose children are enrolled in elementary schools and typically declines for parents whose children are enrolled in middle or high schools. Among schools with Absolute Ratings of Below Average, parents of students in high school are most satisfied with the social and physical environment of their child’s school, followed by parents of elementary school students, and parents of middle schools students. Among schools with Absolute Ratings of At Risk, parents of elementary school students are most satisfied with the social and physical environment of their child’s school, followed by parents of high school students, and parents of middle school students.

Table 23 documents the large differences between parent satisfaction between schools with an Absolute Rating of Excellent compared to schools with an Absolute Rating of At-Risk by school type. For parents with children in elementary school the difference is 17.7 percent, for parents with children in middle school the difference is 20.0 percent, and for parents with children in high school the difference is 9.4 percent.

Table 23
I am Satisfied with the Social and Physical Environment at My Child’s School.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child’s Elementary, Middle or High School)

2013 Absolute Rating	Type	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Excellent	Elementary	93.2	5.4
	Middle	85.7	11.0
	High	82.5	13.1
Good	Elementary	90.1	7.7
	Middle	80.1	15.1
	High	71.3	22.9
Average	Elementary	85.5	10.6
	Middle	77.8	16.5
	High	68.9	24.4
Below Average	Elementary	78.2	17.3
	Middle	74.0	20.0
	High	81.8	15.0
At Risk	Elementary	75.5	20.7
	Middle	65.7	28.0
	High	73.1	6.3

D. Parental Involvement

According to the National Network of Partnership Schools, founded and directed by Dr. Joyce Epstein at Johns Hopkins University, there are six types of successful partnerships between the school, family and community:¹¹

- Type 1. Parenting – Assist families with parenting skills and setting home conditions to support children as students. Also, assist schools to better understand families.
- Type 2. Communicating – Conduct effective communications from school-to-home and home-to-school about school programs and student progress.
- Type 3. Volunteering – Organize volunteers and audiences to support the school and students. Provide volunteer opportunities in various locations and at various times.
- Type 4. Learning at Home – Involve families with their children on homework and other curriculum-related activities and decisions.
- Type 5. Decision Making – Include families as participants in school decisions, and develop parent leaders and representatives.

¹¹ Epstein, et. al. 2002. *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action, Second Education*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.
http://www.csos.jhu.edu/P2000/nmps_model/school/sixtypes.htm.

- Type 6. Collaborating with the family – Coordinate resources and services from the community for families, students, and the school, and provide services to the community.

In addition to determining parent satisfaction with their child’s school, the annual survey of parents in South Carolina includes questions designed to elicit information on the level of parental involvement in schools. The questions focus on the first five types of parental involvement. It should be reiterated that parents self-report their involvement.

First, parents were asked to specifically respond to eight questions relating to their involvement in their child’s school. These questions focus on the following types of parental involvement: parenting, volunteering and decision making. Parents were asked specifically to respond to these eight questions in one of four ways:

- I do this.
- I don’t do this but would like to.
- I don’t do this and I don’t care to.
- The school does not offer this activity/event.

The responses are reflected in Table 24 with the middle column highlighting the percentage of parents who expressed an interest in becoming involved in these school activities. These parents want to be involved but either have personal barriers preventing their involvement or face obstacles at the school level. At the school level, parents responding “I don’t do this but would like to” are the parents for whom school initiatives to improve parental involvement should be focused.

Table 24
Percent of Parents Providing Each Response to
Parental Involvement Questions Regarding Activities at the School

<u>Parental Involvement Question</u>	I do this	I don’t but would like to	I don’t and don’t care to	Activity/event not offered
Attend Open Houses or parent-teacher conferences	79.9	14.8	4.2	1.1
Attend student programs or performances	80.7	14.3	3.6	1.4
Volunteer for the school	36.4	36.9	23.1	3.6
Go on trip with my child’s school	35.8	42.4	16.0	5.8
Participate in School Improvement Council Meetings	12.0	44.6	37.2	6.3
Participate in Parent-teacher Student Organizations	32.9	33.7	30.3	3.1
Participate in school committees	16.5	37.8	38.2	7.5
Attend parent workshops	24.8	37.8	22.6	14.8

Based on the responses in Table 24 and the six types of involvement, there are significant opportunities for improving parental involvement in South Carolina’s public schools.

- Decision-Making – Substantially fewer parents report being involved in the School Improvement Council and school committees than in any other activity.

Slightly less than one-third of parents report participating in Parent-Teacher-Student Organizations. Decision making, including parents and families in school decisions, and developing parent leaders and representatives are areas for growth where parents want to be involved in these decision-making organizations.

- Volunteering – Approximately 36 percent of the parents responded that they volunteered while 37 percent wanted to volunteer.
- Parenting - Over three-fourths of the parents attended open houses, parent-teacher conferences or student programs, all activities that support their children. Approximately one-fourth reported attending parent workshops while 15 percent contend that such workshops were not provided at their child’s school.

Parents were asked five questions about their involvement with their child’s learning, both at the school site and at home. Parents could respond in one of three ways:

- I do this
- I don’t do this but would like to
- I don’t do this and I don’t care to

Table 25 summarizes parental responses to these five questions.

Table 25
Percent of Parents Providing Each Response to
Parental Involvement Questions Regarding Their Child’s Learning

	I do this	I don’t but would like to	I don’t and don’t care to
Visit my child’s classroom during the school day	31.2	50.0	18.9
Contact my child’s teachers about my child’s school work.	76.3	17.9	5.8
Limit the amount of time my child watches TV, plays video games, surfs the Internet	83.5	8.8	7.7
Make sure my child does his/her homework	94.3	3.9	1.9
Help my child with homework when he/she needs it.	93.1	5.2	1.8

Clearly, parents overwhelmingly report being involved in activities and decisions to support their child’s learning. Over 93 percent of parents reported helping their child with his or her homework while 83.5 percent report limiting television and other distractions at home. Almost one-third of parents responded that they visited their child’s classroom during the day while a majority wanted to become involved in this way. These responses are similar to parent responses in prior years.

There are obstacles that impede parental involvement in schools. These obstacles may include lack of transportation, family responsibilities, and work schedules. Schools may not encourage or facilitate parental involvement at the school level. The annual parent survey asks parents to respond “true” or “false” to seven questions on factors that impact their involvement. The results

from 2008 through 2014 are included in Table 26. Consistently across years, work schedule is the most common obstacle to parent involvement. At the individual school, the responses to these questions may assist principals and teachers in scheduling parental involvement activities or even parent-teacher conferences at times and places convenient for both parents and teachers.

Table 26
Percentage of Parents Experiencing Each Impediment to Involvement in Schools

	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Lack of transportation reduces my involvement	12.2	11.6	11.6	11.5	11.8	11.7	11.6
Family health problems reduce my involvement.	15.5	14.6	14.4	14.3	14.3	14.7	14.9
Lack of available care for my children or other family members reduces my involvement.	14.8	14.1	14.7	14.5	15.1	15.4	15.2
My work schedule makes it hard for me to be involved.	57.1	54.6	53.8	54.4	55.1	55.6	56.2
The school does not encourage my involvement.	17.5	16.1	15.7	16.2	17.4	17.6	18.0
Information about how to be involved either comes too late or not at all.	25.5	23.7	23.5	24.6	25.3	25.7	26.8
I don't feel like it is appreciated when I try to be involved.	11.9	11.3	10.6	11.4	12.0	12.1	12.8

Finally, parents were also asked several questions about their child's school and its efforts at increasing parental involvement. Across these questions and across time, two-thirds or more of parents consistently rated the efforts of their child's school at parental involvement efforts as good or very good (Table 27). Approximately twenty percent rated their child's school overall as "okay". Fewer than 10 percent of parents have provided unfavorable responses regarding their child's school for any of these questions over the past three years.

Table 27
2012 – 2014
Percent of Parents Providing Each Response to Parental Involvement Questions Regarding School Effort

Question:	Very Good or Good			Bad or Very Bad			Okay		
	2014	2013	2012	2014	2013	2012	2014	2013	2012
School's overall friendliness.	80.6	79.3	81.5	1.6	2.2	2.2	16.9	18.4	16.3
School's interest in parents' ideas and opinions.	62.5	63.4	63.9	8.1	7.6	7.2	29.4	30.1	28.9
School's effort to get important information from parents.	68.6	67.4	68.8	7.5	7.6	7.2	24.0	25.1	24.0
The school's efforts to give important information to parents.	73.9	73.1	74.3	6.3	6.1	6.0	19.8	20.8	19.7
How the school is doing overall.	76.9	75.8	77.5	3.6	3.2	3.2	19.5	21.0	19.3

E. Conclusions

- Parental satisfaction with the Learning Environment (86.7 percent) and the Social and Physical Environment (84.4 percent) of their child's school is similar to the levels from 2013.
- Parental satisfaction with the Home and School Relations for their child's school decrease substantially from 2013 from 83.3 percent to 71.7 percent; however, this decline was accompanied by a corresponding increase in the number of parents not providing responses to this question. The percent of parents expressing dissatisfaction remained nearly constant (13.3 in 2013, 14.6 in 2014).
- Parental satisfaction in all areas decreases as the Absolute Rating of the school their child attends declines. This holds true for all three areas (Learning Environment, Home and School Relations, and Social and Physical Environment), and for schools of all levels (Elementary, Middle, and High).
- Parental work schedule continues to be the largest impediment to parental involvement in school activities.

PART FOUR

Results of the Gallup Student Poll – 2013 and 2014

The Gallup Student Poll collects information annually from students in grades 5-12. The survey is available free-of-charge to all schools in the United States, and is administered in the Fall of each year via a secure web-site. The survey was first administered in 2009. The survey provides information in three areas: Hope, Engagement, and Well-Being. The complete survey is included in Appendix C.

A. Gallup Student Poll Methodology

The following description of the Gallup Student Poll is provided with the U.S. Overall Student Poll Results:

The annual Gallup Student Poll is offered at no cost to public schools and districts in the United States. The online poll is completed by a convenience sample of schools and districts each fall. Schools participating in the annual Gallup Student Poll are not randomly selected and are neither charged nor given any incentives beyond receipt of school-specific data. Participation rates vary by school. The poll is conducted during a designated survey period and available during school hours Tuesday through Friday only. The Gallup Student Poll is administered to students in grades 5 through 12. The primary application of the Gallup Student Poll is as a measure of non-cognitive metrics that predicts student success in academic and other youth development settings.

The overall data from the annual administration of the Gallup student Poll may not reflect responses from a nationally representative sample of students, and the overall data are not statistically weighted to reflect the U.S. student population; thereby, overall data and scorecards should be used cautiously by local schools and districts as a data comparison. School and district data and scorecards provide meaningful data for local comparisons and may inform strategic initiatives and programming, though the results are not generalizable beyond the universe of the participating school or district¹².

B. National Results for 2013 and 2014

For each area, student responses are summarized so that each student is associated with one of three categories. The categories are unique to each area. The percentage of students associated with these categories for 2013 and 2014 are presented in Table 28. The Gallup organization, in their materials to educate users of the student survey¹³, indicate that the process of identifying students in each of the three categories for each area is a proprietary process, and that it is not simply a mean of the responses to the items in each area.

¹² “Gallup Student Poll Technical Report, Fall 2014”, Gallup Inc., 2010. Retrieved from: <http://www.gallup.com/services/177095/gallup-student-poll-technical-report.aspx>, April 15, 2015.

¹³ “Fall 2014 U.S. Overall Gallup Student Poll Results”, Gallup Inc., 2014. Retrieved from: <http://www.gallup.com/services/180029/gallup-student-poll-2014-overall-report.aspx>, April 15, 2015.

problem solving. All remaining items have from 80-89 percent of students providing favorable responses.

Table 29
Summary of 2014 Hope Items

Item	N	Percent Agree or Strongly Agree	Percent Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Item Mean
I know I will graduate from high school.	856,952	84	n/a	4.72
There is an adult in my life who cares about my future.	861,288	95	n/a	4.78
I can think of many ways to get good grades.	861,847	85	4	4.33
I energetically pursue my goals.	857,869	80	5	4.16
I can find lots of ways around any problem.	859,586	68	9	3.88
I know I will find a good job after I graduate.	850,108	85	4	4.38

n/a – Numeric values of any response category less than 5% are not available. When enough categories have missing information percentages cannot be determined.

Table 30 presents the average of the numeric score for all Hope items for the entire sample and by grade level for 2013 and 2014; this average is referred to as the Grandmean. Grandmean scores for 2014 range from 4.36 to 4.42 while grandmean scores for 2013 range from 4.35 to 4.42. There are only minor differences between Hope grandmean scores by grade level. Most noticeable is the dramatic increase in the number of students who responded to the survey from 2013 (589,997) to 2014 (827,246).

Table 30
Hope Grandmean by Year

Grade Level	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	All	N
2013	4.40	4.42	4.42	4.40	4.37	4.36	4.38	4.41	4.40	589,997
2014	4.39	4.42	4.41	4.38	4.36	4.35	4.36	4.40	4.39	827,246

D. Engagement

The section of the student survey identified as Engagement includes seven questions. The first two questions ask students about their comfort level at school as manifest by the presence of a best friend at school and their perception of their safety in the school setting. Two questions address the students' teachers; one asks whether the students' teachers communicate the importance of schoolwork to the student, and the other asks whether students have at least one teacher that instills excitement about the future to the student. The remaining questions address ways in which the school fosters student engagement: by providing students the opportunity to excel daily, recognizing excellent schoolwork, and building the strengths of each student.

Students respond to these items on the same 5-point scale as the items assessing Hope, again with the only verbal descriptions to values of the scale being associated with the lowest score of 1 (Strongly Disagree) and the highest score of 5 (Strongly Agree).

Table 31 presents the percentage of students giving favorable responses to each item and the mean item score for each Engagement item for the entire sample in 2014. The percentage of students providing positive responses for the Engagement items range from 57 to 85. The item with the most favorable response (85 percent) and highest item mean (4.43) indicates that students have a best friend at school. The item with the least favorable response (57 percent) and lowest item mean (3.49) addresses whether students have received recent recognition for the academic achievement. The two remaining items that address the school fostering student engagement have similar percentages of students with positive responses, 69 and 70 percent of students, respectively, agree that their school is committed to building their individual strengths and providing student the opportunity to do their best daily. Nearly the same percentages of students believe teachers make them feel schoolwork is important (78 percent) and perceive that at least one teacher makes them excited about the future (79 percent).

Table 31
Engagement Item Summary

Item	N	Percent Agree or Strongly Agree	Percent Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Item Mean
I have a best friend at school.	856,802	85	8	4.43
I feel safe in this school.	860,273	73	12	4.00
My teachers make me feel my schoolwork is important.	861,749	78	8	4.14
At this school I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.	858,675	70	13	3.91
In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good schoolwork.	847,050	57	25	3.49
My school is committed to building the strengths of each student.	849,121	69	12	3.92
I have at least one teacher who makes me excited about the future.	856,544	79	11	4.19

Table 32 presents the average of the numeric score for all Engagement items for the entire sample and by grade level for 2013 and 2014; this average is referred to as the Grandmean. Grandmean scores for 2014 range from 3.71 to 4.38 while grandmean scores for 2013 range from 3.81 to 4.38. The grandmeans decrease from grade 5 (4.37) through grade 11 (3.71), then remain steady for grade 12. One way to conceptualize the decrease in the grandmeans of 0.66 is that the typical student in grade 11 would respond to an item by “more than 1/2 of a category” lower than a grade 5 student. The dramatic increase in the number of students who responded to the survey from 2013 (589,031) to 2014 (826,853) is also evident in the area of Engagement.

Table 32
Engagement Grandmean by Year

Grade Level	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	All	N
2013	4.38	4.28	4.13	3.97	3.92	3.81	3.79	3.79	4.04	589,031
2014	4.37	4.28	4.10	3.93	3.87	3.74	3.71	3.73	4.00	826,853

E. Well-Being

The section of the student survey identified as Well-Being includes seven questions. The first question asks students to rate their well-being on a scale of 0 to 10, where each point is envisioned as a step on a ladder, with the bottom of the ladder representing the worst possible life, and the top of the ladder the best possible life. Students are asked to identify which rung on the ladder they currently stand on, and which rung of the ladder they will stand about five years from now. For well-being, the grandmean is the mean across students of where they expect to stand on the ladder with respect to their best/worst possible life. The goal of the Gallup organization was to assess students' future vision of their well-being².

Six additional items are presented that address distinct elements of well-being: personal integrity, laughter, learning, health, social network. Students are asked to respond, yes or no, whether they have experienced each of these indicators of well-being. For the item asking if students have health problems, the percent without health problems can be obtained by subtracting the obtained percent from 100. Table 33 presents the percentage of students responding Yes to each Well-Being item for the entire sample in 2014.

Table 33
Well-Being Item Summary

Item	N	Percent Yes
Were you treated with respect all day yesterday?	797,724	68
Did you smile or laugh a lot yesterday?	838,612	83
Did you learn or do something interesting yesterday/	837,173	75
Did you have enough energy to get things done yesterday?	835,308	73
Do you have health problems that keep you from doing any of the things other people your age normally can do?	817,849	16
If you are in trouble, do you have family or friends you can count on to help whenever you need them?	826,177	92

The item students respond to most favorably is that they have family or friends that they can count on (92 percent). Eight-four (84) percent responded that they did not have health problems and 83 percent stated that they smiled or laughed yesterday. Two-thirds of students responded that they were treated with respect all day yesterday (68 percent), a measure of the behavior of others that impact the students.

Table 34 presents the grandmean score for Well-Being for the entire sample and by grade level for 2013 and 2014. Recall that the grandmean for Well-Being comes from one item only, which is student perceptions of where they will be in five years on a ladder with steps from 0 to 10. Grandmean scores for 2014 range from 8.37 to 8.56. There is no particular pattern of grandmeans by grade level, in fact the lowest and highest values occur in grades 5 and 6, respectively. As with the other areas assessed, differences between 2013 and 2014 are small, which is interesting given the substantial increase in the number of students responding to the survey.

Table 34
Well-Being Grandmean by Year

Grade Level	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	All	N
2013	8.43	8.59	8.60	8.56	8.52	8.46	8.46	8.49	8.52	616,203
2014	8.37	8.56	8.56	8.53	8.51	8.45	8.44	8.48	8.49	867,546

F. Conclusions

The Gallup Student Poll is a measure of students' Hope, Engagement, and Well-Being.

- The initial survey was administered in 2009, and the number of responses increased by approximately 140,000 students from 2013 to 2014. (As measured by the number of responses to the first Well-Being question, which presents the largest item response rate).
- Fifty-three (53) percent of students are identified as Hopeful, 53 percent are identified as Engaged, and 64 percent are identified as Thriving.
- In the area of Hope, the overall student response is a score of 4.4 on a 5-point scale, with results consistent from 2013 to 2014. Minor differences exist by grade level, with no apparent trend by grade level.
- In the area of Engagement, the overall student response is a mean score of approximately 4.0 on a 5-point scale. Mean responses by grade level decline from grade 5 (4.37) to grade 11 (3.71), with the mean response for grade 12 (3.73) similar to grade 11.
- In the area of Well-Being, the overall student response is a mean score of 8.5 on a 10-point scale. There are no differences by grade level.
- There was approximately a 40 percent increase in the number of students responding to the poll from 2013 to 2014 (based on responses to questions on Well-Being).
- Monitoring student behavior in these three dimensions over time can provide important information to school/district personnel with respect to three important dimensions of student disposition that are minimally related to student achievement.

CONCLUSIONS

In 2014 the number of parent surveys completed and returned totaled 59,293, a decline of 7,494 surveys (11.2 percent) from the prior year. SCDE staff note two changes in the period of administration of the parent survey that may have affected the response rate. First, the survey occurred later in the year in 2014 (April 11 through May 9) than in 2013 (February 28 through March 25), and second, because of the later administration, the window of administration included Spring break for some school districts. Despite this decline, the results of the 2014 parent survey demonstrate that parent satisfaction levels with the three characteristics measured - the learning environment and social and physical environment of their child's school—were generally consistent with the prior year's results. Significant changes are estimated as an annual increase or decrease of three or more percent. Satisfaction is defined as the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment of their child's school. Parent satisfaction with home and school relations appears to have declined dramatically from 2013 to 2014; however, the number of missing responses for this item increased from 3.4 percent in 2013 to 13.7 percent in 2014. The percentage of parents not satisfied in 2014 was 14.6 percent, a slight increase from 13.3 percent in 2013, which suggests a slight decrease in parental satisfaction with home and school relations. SCDE staff were consulted regarding this data anomaly; no explanation is apparent. EOC staff inquired of the SCDE whether a sample of survey documents could be spot-checked by the contractor to rule out scanning errors. SCDE staff¹⁴ indicated that this was not possible.

Percentage of Parents Satisfied with

Characteristic	2014	2013	2011	2010	Difference between 2014 and 2013
Learning Environment	86.7	87.0	87.2	84.3	(0.3)
Home and School Relations	71.7	83.3	82.9	80.2	(11.6)
Social and Physical Environment	84.4	84.3	84.1	82.4	0.1

When comparing parent satisfaction in 2014 with parent satisfaction over the most recent three-year period, the only significant change is in home and school relations, which can be attributed to the data anomaly previously discussed. There were no significant changes in parental satisfaction with respect to the learning environment or social and physical environment of the school.

¹⁴ Ling Gao, SCDE e-mail message to EOC, April 8, 2015.

Percentage of Parents Satisfied with

Characteristic	2014	Mean % (2010-2013)	Difference between 2014 and Mean of three years
Learning Environment	86.7	86.2	0.5
Home and School Relations	71.7	82.1	(10.4)
Social and Physical Environment	84.4	83.6	0.8

There also were minimal differences between item responses from 2014 compared to item responses from 2013 for the learning environment and social and physical environment of the school:

Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree to:

Learning Environment Questions	2014	2013	Difference
My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	88.9	89.6	(0.7)
My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	91.2	91.5	(0.3)
My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	81.9	81.7	0.2

Parental satisfaction, the percentage of parents agreeing or strongly agreeing, generally declines as the Absolute Rating of the school declines. The largest difference in parental satisfaction between the highest and lowest performing schools was in parent perception of the social and physical environment of their child's school, followed by the learning environment.

**Percentage of Parents Whose Child Attends an Excellent or At-Risk School,
Satisfied with:**

Characteristic	Excellent Schools	At-Risk Schools	Difference
Learning Environment	90.0	81.0	9.0
Home and School Relations	75.1	73.0	2.1
Social and Physical Environment	89.0	71.8	17.1

Parents whose child attended a school with an Absolute Rating of Below Average were less satisfied with the learning environment and home and school relations at their child's school than parents whose child attended a school with an Absolute Rating of At Risk.

**Percentage of Parents whose Child Attends a School Rated Below Average or At-Risk,
Satisfied with:**

Characteristic	Below Average Schools	At-Risk Schools	Difference
Learning Environment	79.2	81.0	(0.8)
Home and School Relations	66.9	73.0	(6.1)
Social and Physical Environment	76.3	71.8	4.5

Parents who responded to the 2014 annual survey reported levels of parental involvement compared to previous years and identified work schedules as their greatest obstacle to involvement.

Parents Report Obstacles to Parental Involvement in 2014

Work Schedule	57.1%
Lack of timely notification of volunteer opportunities	25.5%
School does not encourage involvement	17.5%
Family and health problems	15.5%
Lack of child or adult care services	14.8%
Transportation	12.2%
Involvement not appreciated	11.9%

Items parents perceive as impediments to parental involvement that are at least partially within the control of the schools are the processes by which schools notify parents of volunteer opportunities, the means by which the school encourages or enables interaction between parents and the school, and the approach of the school toward parental involvement.

The Gallup Student Poll collects information regarding non-cognitive student attributes that are associated with student success in academic and other endeavors. From the Gallup Student Poll, 53 percent of students are identified as being Hopeful, 53 percent of students are identified as being Engaged, and 64 percent of students are identified as Thriving. Results of the Gallup Student Poll are consistent from 2013 to 2014 even though there was approximately a 40 percent increase in the number of student responses.



ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

APPENDIX A

The Education Accountability Act of 1998 specifies that “school report cards should include information in such areas as...evaluations of the school by parents, teachers, and students.” To obtain these evaluations, the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) has constructed student, teacher, and parent surveys that are designed to measure perceptions of three factors: home and school relations, the school’s learning environment, and the school’s social and physical environment. The purpose of these teacher, parent, and student surveys is to obtain information related to the perceptions of these groups about your school. Results will provide valuable information to principals, teachers, parents, School Improvement Councils, and community groups in their efforts to identify areas for improvement. Results will also appear on the annual school report cards.

SCHEDULE

Teacher Surveys – on <https://ed.sc.gov/apps/teachersurvey/>

- March 17, 2014 – Teacher Survey portal opens.
- April 25, 2014 – Teacher Survey portal closes.

Student & High School Student Surveys – paper forms

- April 11, 2014 – All schools should receive survey forms by this date, except schools in 10 districts that are on spring break on April 11 to receive the forms on April 14.
- May 14, 2014 – Last day for schools to ship completed survey forms to contractor.

Parent Surveys – paper forms

- April 11, 2014 – All schools should receive survey forms by this date, except schools in 10 districts that are on spring break on April 11 to receive the forms on April 14.
- May 9, 2014 – Date for parent survey forms to be returned to the school.
This is the due date in the letter to parents.
- May 14, 2013 – Last day for schools to ship completed survey forms to contractor.

CONTACTS

If your student or parent survey forms are damaged in shipment please contact Amanda Thomas with Scantron Corporation. Her email address is amanda.thomas@scantron.com.

If you have questions about administration procedures for any survey, please contact Dr. Ling Gao at lgao@ed.sc.gov or 803-734-4321.



ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

INDEX

This booklet is divided into sections by the different tasks required for the administration of surveys.

SECTION	PAGE	SECTION	PAGE
Changes This Year	2	Preparing Surveys for Shipment	6
General Guidelines	2	Shipping the Completed Surveys	6
Receipt and Distribution of Materials	3	Appendix A – Student and Parent	
Survey Guidelines	3	Survey Participants	7
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CHANGES THIS YEAR

Five questions have been deleted from the Parent Survey.

The look of the surveys and accompanying information may be different this year since the Department has contracted with a different vendor. But the questions and administration procedures have not been changed.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- ✓ Useful survey results are dependent upon candid responses. The survey administration must encourage candid responses by protecting the anonymity of the respondents and by communicating to respondents that the information is important and will be used for improvement purposes. A letter from the State Superintendent of Education enclosed with the parent survey explains the survey and its purpose.
- ✓ No names or other identifying information should appear on the survey forms or the envelopes containing the parent survey forms. Every effort should be made to ensure that responses to the surveys remain anonymous.
- ✓ While principals should be aware of survey procedures and due dates, they should not be involved in handling completed survey forms. School staff are not allowed to review completed surveys.
- ✓ School principals must designate a staff person to serve as the school’s survey coordinator. This person will be responsible for overseeing the distribution of surveys to students and parents and packaging completed surveys for return to contractor. The school survey coordinator also will keep teachers informed of the web-based teacher survey procedures and due dates and report any problems to the Department of Education.
- ✓ Guidelines established by the Education Oversight Committee determine the grade level(s) to be surveyed in each school. All students in the highest grade at elementary and middle schools should complete a student survey. Their parents should receive the parent survey form. For high schools and career centers the surveys should be administered to all 11th graders and their parents. Appendix A on page 7 lists the grade level(s) to be surveyed as determined by the grade span of the school.



ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

- ✓ Sampling is not allowed. All students in the designated grade and their parents should receive a survey. You do not need to have students complete a survey if they are absent on the day of administration or if they would have difficulty reading and responding to the items. However, these students should be given a parent survey to take home.
- ✓ Special education students are to be included and should be provided the same accommodations used for testing.
- ✓ Student and parent surveys should not be administered to children in grades two and below or their parents. For schools that contain only grades two and below, only the teacher survey will be conducted.
- ✓ These survey forms cannot be copied. The scanning equipment **cannot** scan photocopies.
- ✓ Retain the container in which you received the survey forms. That same container can be used to return the survey forms to the contractor.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

RECEIPT AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

- Check the materials received in your shipment to ensure that you have received the following items:
 - ✓ An administrative envelope containing;
 5. A letter to the principal from the Education Oversight Committee (EOC),
 6. Two sets of instructions for administering the surveys,
 7. A page of shipping instructions, and
 8. One pre-addressed, bar-coded UPS shipping label (used to return completed surveys to contractor, freight prepaid).
 - ✓ Parent survey envelopes. Each envelope contains a letter from the State Superintendent of Education and a parent survey form.
 - ✓ Student survey forms.
- The number of survey forms printed for your school is based on numbers provided by your district office. Contact Mike Pulaski if you received fewer surveys than ordered.
- Check a few student and parent survey forms to make sure that your school name is on the form. If you have received survey forms for another school, please contact Mike Pulaski.
- Keep the box in which the survey forms were delivered to use for the return shipment.
- Give the letter from the director of the Education Oversight Committee to your principal.
- Determine the number of student and parent survey forms you will need for each class at the designated grade level(s). Count the surveys into classroom stacks and distribute.

SURVEY GUIDELINES

Student & High School Student Surveys

- Student surveys should be administered in classroom settings.
- Each survey item has four response choices. Respondents must decide whether they agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree, or disagree with each statement. Students will mark their responses by darkening bubbles on the survey form. If they do not have knowledge relative to the statement, students should be instructed to skip the item and go on to the next one.
- Teachers should not read the survey items to the students, but they may answer student questions about the survey items. Teachers may read items to special education students with an oral administration testing accommodation. On the last page of these instructions is the script for teachers to use to explain the survey to students.
- It is important that the surveys not be folded, torn, stapled, or damaged in any way. Please have the students use pencils. A number 2 pencil is not required.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

Parent Surveys

- Schools will distribute envelopes containing parent surveys to students in the appropriate grade(s). Students should take the envelope home for their parents to complete the survey inside and then return the envelope to the school. Envelopes are used to maintain confidentiality.
- No names or other identifying information should appear on the survey forms or the envelopes containing the survey form. Every effort should be made to ensure that responses to the surveys remain anonymous.
- The parent survey should be administered to the parents of the same children participating in the student survey.
- Parents with children in the highest grade at two different schools will receive two survey forms to complete. The name of the school appears on the survey form to help avoid confusion for the parents.
- Parent surveys will not be administered to parents of children in grades two and below. For schools that contain only grades two and below, only the teacher survey will be conducted.
- The parent survey forms are identical for all grade levels. If you are surveying parents for more than one grade level, the correct number of survey forms for all grade levels will be in your shipment.
- Each survey should take approximately twenty minutes to complete. The letter enclosed with the survey form tells parents that they are being asked for their opinions about their child's school. Parents are asked to think about the entire year rather than a specific event or something that happened only once or twice. They are asked to provide honest responses that can help to improve the school.
- Parents should mark their responses by darkening bubbles on the survey. Although the scanning equipment can read pen marks, it is still a good idea to use a pencil should the parent need to change an answer. It is also important that the surveys not be folded, torn, stapled, or damaged in any way.
- Parents have the option of mailing their completed survey form to the Department of Education. The mailing address is provided in the letter to parents from the State Superintendent of Education.

SPECIAL NOTE: We appreciate that schools work diligently each year to encourage parents to complete and return the parent surveys. Some schools offer incentives such as ice cream treats or extra recess time to individual students or classes where all students have returned completed parent surveys. Each year parents call the Department to inform us that their child is upset that he/she cannot return the parent survey form to school and receive the special incentive because the parent wants to mail the survey form directly to the Department. **Parents have the option to mail in the survey form**, so we would encourage you to not penalize students whose parents' mail in their completed survey form.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

ADMINISTRATION OF SURVEYS

Student & High School Student Surveys

- Choose a day within the time period to administer the survey to the students. The survey should be administered to students at the same time (homeroom or advisory period for example).
- Copy the teacher instructions from the last page of these administration procedures and provide a copy of the instructions with the survey forms. Make sure the classroom teachers administering the student surveys are familiar with the administration instructions for your school.
- Distribute materials to each classroom teacher within the designated grade(s).
- Make sure you are available to respond to any problems that may arise during administration of the surveys.

Parent Survey

- Distribute the parent surveys **as soon as possible** after they are received at the school. This should allow sufficient time for parents to complete and return the survey prior to the March 25 due date.
- Distribute the envelopes containing the parent survey form and letter to each classroom teacher within the designated grade(s). Have the teachers distribute the envelopes to students. Teachers should ask students to take the envelopes home for their parents to complete the surveys. Students should be instructed not to remove the survey form or letter from the envelope. Students should bring the envelopes containing the completed surveys back to school as soon as possible. **Remind teachers that they should not write any student names on the envelopes.**
- If your budget allows, survey forms may be mailed to students' homes.
- Make sure you are available to respond to any problems that may arise during administration of the surveys.
- As the due date for returning the parent survey approaches, you may want to send home a note or use your automated phone system to remind parents of the due date.

Teacher Survey

- The teacher survey is conducted online over the internet. The survey can be accessed from the State Department of Education website at www.ed.sc.gov.
- Teachers, librarians, guidance counselors, and speech therapists at the school should complete the teacher survey. Part-time teachers may complete a survey form if they are on campus at least half of each school day or week.
- The survey may be completed using any computer with internet access. Teachers may use their home computers.
- There is no way to determine which teachers have completed the survey, but the internet site keeps track of how many survey forms have been completed for each school. A teacher survey reporting tool may be accessed from the first page of the teacher survey which will allow you to see how many surveys have been completed for your school.
- Problems with your school's internet access should be directed to your district technology coordinator.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014
REPORT CARD SURVEYS

PREPARING SURVEYS FOR SHIPMENT

Student & High School Student Surveys

- Place all surveys flat, face up, and turned the same way. Return all completed survey forms, even those that may be damaged. No changes or edits may be made to student responses. School personnel should not be allowed to review student responses.
- Carefully paper-band the completed forms with one strong paper band. Do not use rubber bands as they tear the forms. Two or three wraps with adding machine paper fastened with tape makes a strong band.
- Unused survey forms should be placed on top of the bound materials to be returned.

Parent Survey

- All parent surveys should be shipped to the contractor in their individual envelopes. Envelopes should be returned flat, face up, and all turned the same way.
- All parent surveys returned without the envelope should be placed on top of the envelopes. Place the survey forms flat, face up, and turned the same way. Return all completed survey forms, even those that may be damaged. No changes or edits may be made to parent responses. School personnel should not be allowed to review parent responses.
- Carefully paper-band the completed survey forms with one strong paper band. Do not use rubber bands as they tear the forms. Two or three wraps with adding machine paper fastened with tape makes a strong band.
- Unused survey forms should be placed on top of the bound materials to be returned.

SHIPPING THE COMPLETED SURVEYS

- Please return all of your school's completed student and parent survey forms at the same time. Package both types of surveys in the same sturdy box. Use crumpled paper, cardboard, or Styrofoam beads to fill the voids in the shipping carton to help keep surveys from being damaged during transit. You may want to use the box in which the survey forms were delivered for the return shipment.
- Attach the pre-addressed, **bar-coded UPS return shipping label to your package.** (NOTE: If you are re-using the original delivery box, remove or cover up the old label.) **Give the package to your UPS driver the next time a delivery is made to your school.** You can also drop off the package **at any UPS store or drop box as well** as select Office Depot and Staples locations. **Scheduling a special pick up from your school will cost you extra.**
- The **pre-addressed, bar-coded UPS return shipping label** was included in the administrative envelope along with these instructions. **If the return UPS shipping label is missing, please contact** Amanda Thomas with Scantron Corporation. Her email address is amanda.thomas@scantron.com.
- All surveys must be shipped on or before **Wednesday, May 14, 2013.**

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2014
REPORT CARD SURVEYS

Appendix A—Student and Parent Survey Participants

School's Grade Span	Grade Level of Students and Parents to be Surveyed		School's Grade Span	Grade Level of Students and Parents to be Surveyed
K-1, K-2, 1-2	none		4-9	5 & 9
K-3	3		5-9	9
1-3	3		6-9	9
2-3	3		7-9	9
K-4	4		8-9	9
1-4	4		K-10	5, 8, & 10
2-4	4		1-10	5, 8, & 10
3-4	4		2-10	5, 8, & 10
K-5	5		3-10	5, 8, & 10
1-5	5		4-10	5, 8, & 10
2-5	5		5-10	8 & 10
3-5	5		6-10	8 & 10
4-5	5		7-10	8 & 10
K-6	6		8-10	10
1-6	6		9-10	10
2-6	6		K-11	5, 8, & 11
3-6	6		1-11	5, 8, & 11
4-6	6		2-11	5, 8, & 11
5-6	6		3-11	5, 8, & 11
K-7	5 & 7		4-11	5, 8, & 11
1-7	5 & 7		5-11	8 & 11
2-7	5 & 7		6-11	8 & 11
3-7	5 & 7		7-11	8 & 11
4-7	5 & 7		8-11	11
5-7	7		9-11	11
6-7	7		10-11	11
K-8	5 & 8		K-12	5, 8, & 11
1-8	5 & 8		1-12	5, 8, & 11
2-8	5 & 8		2-12	5, 8, & 11
3-8	5 & 8		3-12	5, 8, & 11
4-8	5 & 8		4-12	5, 8, & 11
5-8	8		5-12	8 & 11
6-8	8		6-12	8 & 11
7-8	8		7-12	8 & 11
K-9	5 & 9		8-12	11
1-9	5 & 9		9-12	11
2-9	5 & 9		10-12	11
3-9	5 & 9		11-12	11

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS FOR STUDENT SURVEY

Surveys should be administered in a classroom setting. One student should be designated in each classroom to collect the student surveys and to bring them to the school survey coordinator. To ensure confidentiality, teachers should not collect completed surveys. Classroom teachers and school administrators are not to review completed student surveys.

Pass out surveys and pencils.

The teacher should read the following script.

Today you are being asked your opinions about our school. There are no right or wrong answers. When you read each item, think about the entire year rather than a specific event or something that happened once or twice. Please provide honest and true answers so that we can change and improve our school. Do not talk to other students, but you can ask me a question if you do not understand a statement. Do NOT write your name on the survey. Do not fold or bend the sheet.

First, read the instructions at the top of the form and mark your grade. Make sure you have a pencil. Do not use a pen. You will read each statement, and mark your response on your survey sheet. Darken the ovals completely with your pencil. Erase any stray marks or changes. Remember to continue on the back of the sheet.

There are four choices for each sentence. Decide whether you agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree, or disagree with each sentence. Do your best to decide. If you do not know anything about the subject, you can skip the sentence and go on to the next one.

When you have completed the survey, check to see that you have marked only one response to each sentence and that you have marked your correct grade. Then, place your survey on your desk. (The designated student) will collect the forms.

Have the student designated to collect surveys do so. Then, have the student take the completed surveys to the school survey coordinator.

Thank You

APPENDIX B

The 2014 Parent Survey

4803036903

**South Carolina
Parent Survey**

DIRECTIONS

- Correct Mark: ○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○
- Incorrect Mark: ● ● ● ● ● ●
- Erase completely to change.
- Use a No. 2 pencil only.
- Fill in bubble completely.
- Do not fold or staple.

Parents in South Carolina who have children in selected grades are being asked to complete this survey. This survey asks you how you feel about your child's school. Since this survey will be used to help make your child's school a better place, it is very important to tell us exactly what you think. Your answers will be kept private. The school will get a summary of the survey results.

Directions: Read each statement. Decide if you agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree or disagree with the statement. Then darken the bubble beside each statement. Do not write your name or address on this survey.

Learning Environment

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	○	○	○	○	○
2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	○	○	○	○	○
3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	○	○	○	○	○
4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	○	○	○	○	○
5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.	○	○	○	○	○

Home-School Relations

1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	○	○	○	○	○
2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	○	○	○	○	○
3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	○	○	○	○	○
4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	○	○	○	○	○
5. My child's school includes me in decision-making.	○	○	○	○	○
6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	○	○	○	○	○
7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	○	○	○	○	○
8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	○	○	○	○	○
9. My child's school treats all students fairly.	○	○	○	○	○
10. The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	○	○	○	○	○
11. I am satisfied with home-school relations at my child's school.	○	○	○	○	○

Social and Physical Environment

1. My child's school is kept neat and clean.	○	○	○	○	○
2. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	○	○	○	○	○
3. Students at my child's school are well-behaved.	○	○	○	○	○
4. My child feels safe at school.	○	○	○	○	○
5. My child's teachers and school staff prevent or stop bullying at school.	○	○	○	○	○
6. My child's school has an anti-bullying program to prevent or deal with bullying.	○	○	○	○	○
7. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	○	○	○	○	○

Please tell us if you do the following:

	I do this	I don't do this, but I would like to	I don't do this, and I don't care to	The school does not offer this activity/event
1. Attend Open Houses or parent-teacher conferences.	○	○	○	○
2. Attend student programs or performances.	○	○	○	○
3. Volunteer for the school (bake cookies, help in office, help with school fundraising, etc.).	○	○	○	○
4. Go on trips with my child's school (out-of-town band contest, field trip to the museum, etc.).	○	○	○	○
5. Participate in School Improvement Council meetings.	○	○	○	○
6. Participate in Parent-Teacher-Student Organizations (PTA, PTO, etc.).	○	○	○	○
7. Participate in school committees (textbook committee, spring carnival committee, etc.).	○	○	○	○
8. Attend parent workshops (how to help my child with school work, how to talk to my child about drugs, effective discipline, etc.).	○	○	○	○

Go on to next page.

The 2014 Parent Survey

4860026906

Please tell us if you do the following:

	I do this	I don't do this, but I would like to	I don't do this, and I don't care to
1. Visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Contact my child's teachers about my child's school work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Limit the amount of time my child watches TV, plays video games, surfs the Internet, etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Make sure my child does his/her homework.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Help my child with homework when he/she needs it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please mark if each of the following are True or False:

	True	False
1. Lack of transportation reduces my involvement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Family health problems reduce my involvement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Lack of available care for my children or other family members reduces my involvement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. My work schedule makes it hard for me to be involved.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. The school does not encourage my involvement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Information about how to be involved either comes too late or not at all.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I don't feel like it is appreciated when I try to be involved.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please rate your school on:

	Very Good	Good	Okay	Bad	Very Bad
1. The school's overall friendliness.	<input type="radio"/>				
2. The school's interest in parents' ideas and opinions.	<input type="radio"/>				
3. The school's efforts to get important information from parents.	<input type="radio"/>				
4. The school's efforts to give important information to parents.	<input type="radio"/>				

Please answer the following questions about your child:

- What grade is your child in? 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th 8th 9th 10th 11th
- What is your child's gender? Male Female
- What is your child's race/ethnicity? African American/Black Hispanic Asian American/ Pacific Islander Caucasian/White Native American Other
- What grades did your child receive on his/her last report card? All or mostly A's and B's All or mostly C's and D's All or mostly B's and C's All or mostly D's and F's
- Has your child been bullied at school this year? Yes No Don't know
- If yes, was your child bullied: (Check all that apply) In classroom Other location at school At sporting events On-line/texting during school On the bus After school
- If yes, was your child bullied: (Check all that apply) Physically Verbally Both

Bullying is when 1 or more students tease, threaten, spread rumors about, hit, shove, or hurt another student over and over again physically. It is not bullying when 2 students of about the same strength or power argue or fight or tease each other in a friendly way.

Please answer the following questions about yourself. We are asking these questions because we want to be sure that schools are including all parents. For each question, mark only one answer. Your answers will be kept private.

- What is your gender? Male Female
- What is your race/ethnicity? African American/Black Hispanic Asian American/ Pacific Islander Caucasian/White Native American Other
- What is the highest level of education you have completed? Attended elementary/high school Earned Associate Degree Earned college degree Completed high school/GED Attended college/training program Postgraduate study and/or degree
- What is your family's total yearly household income? Less than \$15,000 \$25,000 - \$34,999 \$55,000 - \$75,000 \$15,000 - \$24,999 \$35,000 - \$54,999 More than \$75,000

Thank you very much for completing this survey!

DO NOT MARK IN THIS AREA

The 2014 Gallup Student Poll Questions



MEASURING STUDENT HOPE, ENGAGEMENT, AND WELL-BEING

GALLUP STUDENT POLL QUESTIONS

The Gallup Student Poll is administered to students in grades five through 12 via a secure website. The survey includes demographic items: age, grade, race/ethnicity, and gender. The standard scorecard includes results for the core 20 items only. Gallup can provide demographic data and additional item results for a fee. For more information, visit www.gallupstudentpoll.com or contact us at Education@gallup.com.

- | | |
|---|--|
| Well-Being;
<i>presented with
ladder graphic</i> | 1. Please imagine a ladder with steps numbered from zero at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder would you say you personally feel you stand at this time? On which step do you think you will stand about five years from now? |
| Hope | 2. I know I will graduate from high school. |
| Hope | 3. There is an adult in my life who cares about my future. |
| Hope | 4. I can think of many ways to get good grades. |
| Hope | 5. I energetically pursue my goals. |
| Hope | 6. I can find lots of ways around any problem. |
| Hope | 7. I know I will find a good job after I graduate. |
| Engagement | 8. I have a best friend at school. |
| Engagement | 9. I feel safe in this school. |
| Engagement | 10. My teachers make me feel my schoolwork is important. |
| Engagement | 11. At this school, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day. |
| Engagement | 12. In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good schoolwork. |
| Engagement | 13. My school is committed to building the strengths of each student. |
| Engagement | 14. I have at least one teacher who makes me excited about the future. |
| Well-Being | 15. Were you treated with respect all day yesterday? |
| Well-Being | 16. Did you smile or laugh a lot yesterday? |
| Well-Being | 17. Did you learn or do something interesting yesterday? |
| Well-Being | 18. Did you have enough energy to get things done yesterday? |
| Well-Being | 19. Do you have health problems that keep you from doing any of the things other people your age normally can do? |
| Well-Being | 20. If you are in trouble, do you have family or friends you can count on to help whenever you need them? |

DEMOGRAPHIC ITEMS

The Gallup Student Poll always includes these items, so all students answer them. However, Gallup charges a fee to report these items.

- I am one of the best students in my class.
- I am very involved in activities, such as clubs, music, sports, or something else.
- What is your age?
- What is your gender?
- Do you consider yourself to be: (student chooses racial/ethnic origin)
- What is the grade you are in at school?

The Education Oversight Committee does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or handicap in its practices relating to employment or establishment and administration of its programs and initiatives. Inquiries regarding employment, programs and initiatives of the Committee should be directed to the Executive Director 803.734.6148.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee: Early Readiness Assessment

Date: June 8, 2015

ACTION ITEM

Recommendations on School Readiness Assessment

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

Pursuant to Act 287 of 2014, Section 59-152-33 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, the EOC is required to submit recommendations to the State Board of Education on what a comprehensive assessment to evaluate and measure the school readiness of students prior to their entrance into a prekindergarten or kindergarten program” should measure.

CRITICAL FACTS

The Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee met several times this year to gather evidence and information from a broad-based group of stakeholders. The Subcommittee also convened a working group of early childhood practitioners representing public schools, private child care centers, and Head Start. The result is the attached report that recommends a framework defining the characteristics of a comprehensive readiness assessment to evaluate “each child’s early language and literacy development, numeracy skills, physical well-being, social and emotional and development, and approaches to learning.”

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

November 17, 2014 – Subcommittee met and received input from experts from Department of Social Services, Head Start, Lexington 4 School District, and SC Council on Competitiveness
January 26, 2015 – Subcommittee met and received input from experts from State Office of First Steps, University of South Carolina, and Clemson University,
March 23, 2015 – Subcommittee met and received input from experts from South Carolina Department of Education, Florence 1 School District, and Pediatrics of Newberry
April 13, 2015 – Early Readiness Assessment Working Group reviewed framework and made recommendations on assessments
April 15, 2015 – EOC requested input from SC First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees
May 6, 2015 – SC First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees provided response to request

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

Cost:

Fund/Source: Agency Appropriations

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

Approved

ACTION TAKEN

Amended

Not Approved

Action deferred (explain)

**Readiness
Assessment
Recommendations
Per Act 287 of 2014**

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I. Overview

For young children to be ready for and successful in school, they must have foundational knowledge and skills in multiple areas, or domains. In 2014, the General Assembly fully supported the development of a comprehensive readiness assessment to gauge young children's acquisition of knowledge and skills. Legislative commitment to early assessment is evident in Proviso 1A.76 of the 2014-15 General Appropriation Act, as well as Act 284 (SC Read to Succeed Act) and Act 287 (First Steps to School Readiness Initiative) of 2014.

Act 287 (First Steps to School Readiness Initiative) defines school readiness as:

the level of child development necessary to ensure early school success as measured in the following domains: physical health and motor skills; emotional and social competence; language and literacy development; and mathematical thinking and cognitive skills. School readiness is supported by the knowledge and practices of families, caregivers, healthcare providers, educators, and communities.¹

With the implementation of early learning standards in multiple settings, statewide assessment of young children is used to:

- ⇒ inform instruction by providing essential information for caregivers and teachers to better understand individual children's developmental progress and how well they are learning,
- ⇒ screen for special education needs and identify additional services children may need,
- ⇒ guide program design and implementation,
- ⇒ apprise accountability systems by providing data about a program's impact on children., and
- ⇒ inform at the community or population level to determine the progress of a group of children over time.

South Carolina views readiness assessment with narrower focus as evident in Acts 284 and 287 of 2014. Act 284 (South Carolina Read to Succeed Initiative) defines a readiness assessment as an assessment "used to analyze students' literacy, mathematical, physical, social, and emotional-behavioral competencies in prekindergarten or kindergarten."² In this report, statewide readiness assessment is intended to provide formative and summative data to teachers, parents and policymakers to inform instruction and consider children's progress toward developmental competencies. This brief references five specific readiness domains: language and literacy, numeracy, physical well-being, social and emotional, and approaches to learning, which are listed in Acts 284 and 287.

Proviso 1A.76 (ratified by the General Assembly on June 5, 2014) requires the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) to recommend the characteristics of a readiness assessment for

¹ Act 287, "First Steps to School Readiness," Section 59-152-25(G).

² Act 284, "South Carolina Read to Succeed Act," Section 59-155-120(4).

children in prekindergarten and kindergarten, focused on early language and literacy development, to the State Board of Education no later than July 30, 2015. The EOC accomplished this initiative, which resulted in the adoption of the mClass:CIRCLE assessment. See Appendix D for additional detail.

During the summer of 2014, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) awarded Amplify, Inc. a one-year contract to provide the mClass:CIRCLE assessment (Circle) to young children in publicly-funded four-year old prekindergarten (4K) and five-year old kindergarten (5K) classrooms in both public school and private child care center settings. Initial findings regarding 4K and 5K students' status in language and literacy and social and emotional development will be included in the second part of EOC's evaluation of publicly-funded full-day 4K in summer of 2015. Data quality issues have delayed reporting.

The EOC established the Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee in response to Act 287 of 2014 (see Appendix A for language). Pursuant to Act 287 the EOC is making recommendations to the State Board of Education on what a comprehensive readiness assessment or assessments should be able to measure in each domain defined in law to determine the education needs of children. The EOC is also including potential assessments to be considered by the State Board of Education. Some of the assessments may have to be procured while others could merely be teacher observations or check lists developed by the South Carolina Department of Education. However, "selecting" an assessment cannot occur without having information on the amount of funds available to procure an assessment and without having to conform to the South Carolina Procurement Code.

The Subcommittee's mission was to gather information from early childhood experts and discuss recommendations for a statewide strategy for the assessment of young children's readiness for school. The Subcommittee met five times during 2014-15 and reviewed research or heard testimony from early childhood professionals and organizations including: University of South Carolina, Clemson University, Lexington 4 Early Childhood Center, Institute for Child Success, TransformSC, Head Start, Department of Social Services, First Steps State Office, and SC Department of Education. The EOC also convened a working group April 13, 2015 to discuss readiness assessment for 4K and 5K students and also solicited their feedback on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Framework included in this report. See Appendix G.

Conditions in which children live and learn greatly influence their development. Young children need supportive, nurturing, caring relationships with adults and stimulating, safe environments to thrive.³ Observational measures of home and learning environments are necessary to ensure they are conducive to children's development and learning. While there are several measures

³ Snow, C. E., and S. B. Van Hemel. *Early Childhood Assessment: Why, What, and How* (Washington D.C., The National Academies Press, 2008) http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=12446&page=R1.

to assess home and community environments, this report will primarily consider assessment of learning environments.

II. Purpose of Assessment - Overview

Assessment is an essential part of a larger early childhood system. It is necessary to efficiently deliver effective services, while consistently improving quality by implementing programs and interventions with fidelity. Provision of ongoing, supportive professional development for caregivers and teachers must also be considered. A comprehensive assessment system is a:

Coordinated and comprehensive system of multiple assessments—each of which is valid and reliable for its specified purpose and for the population with which it will be used—that organizes information about the process and context of young children’s learning and development in order to help early childhood educators make informed instructional and programmatic decisions. A comprehensive assessment system includes, at a minimum, screening measures, formative assessments, measures of environmental quality, and measures of the quality of adult-child interactions.⁴

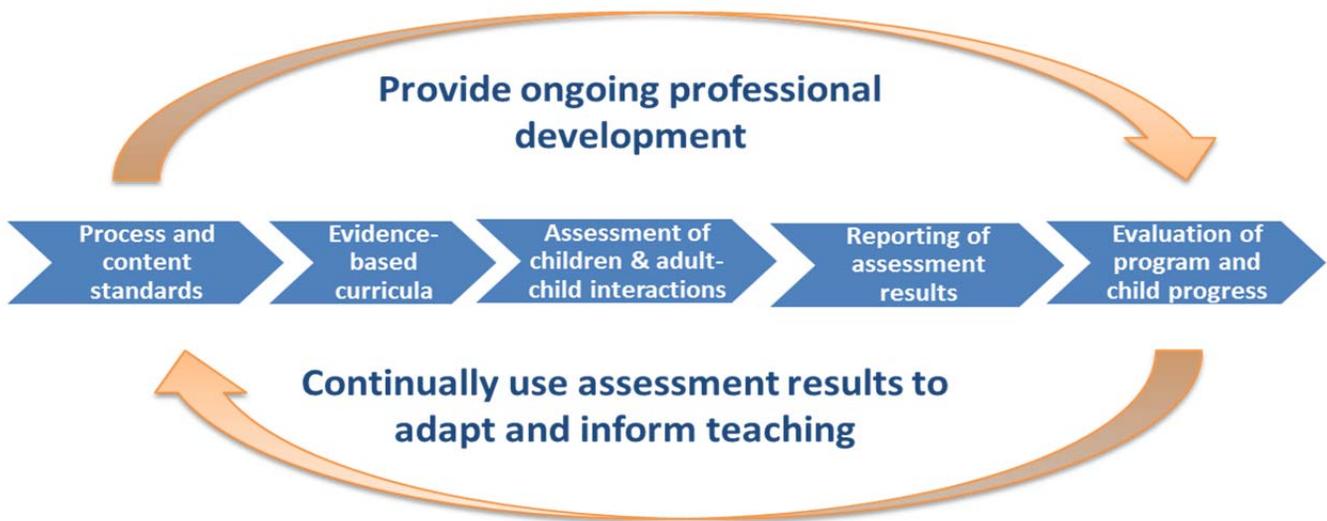
This broader consideration of assessment is important, and it is most effective if it is utilized to provide professional development to teachers in order to improve young children’s learning, and ultimately, school readiness and educational success. Figure 1 shows the cyclical nature of early childhood assessment, when it is effectively implemented. An evidence-based curriculum ensures State-adopted process and content standards are well-integrated into an early learning environment. Consideration of the adult-child interaction, as well as assessment of the child, provide a comprehensive picture of effectiveness for our youngest students. These assessments can be communicated to a diverse group of stakeholders including teachers, schools, parents, community leaders, policy makers, and the general public. Results can be used to inform instruction and provide ongoing professional development. Recent research notes a system should include:

- ⇒ “Standards: a comprehensive, well-articulated set of standards for both program quality and children’s learning,
- ⇒ Assessments: Multiple approaches to documenting program quality, as well as children’s learning and development. Assessments should be aligned to standards,
- ⇒ Reporting: An integrated database of assessment instruments and results that also provides information on how scores relate to standards and produces reports for various stakeholder groups,
- ⇒ Professional development: Ongoing opportunities for policy makers, program directors, administrators, and practitioners to further their understanding of standards and learn to use assessment results for their own purposes,

⁴ U.S. Department of Education. <http://www.ed.gov/early-learning/elc-draft-summary/definitions>

- ⇒ Opportunity to learn: Procedures to assess children’s environments and whether they offer safety, enjoyment, and high-quality support for development and learning, and
- ⇒ Inclusion: Procedures for ensuring that all children served by the program will be assessed fairly, regardless of their language, culture, or disabilities.”⁵

Figure 1
Assessment Cycle for Young Children



Source: B. Ward, EOC, 2015

National Perspective

Assessment of young children can be challenging. Traditionally, students’ academic achievement is assessed by using norm- or criterion-reference tests. Students read and answer items independently and teachers record their responses on an answer sheet or using a computer. Due to younger children’s developmental status, they may be unable to use a pencil or a computer independently. Young children also develop at different rates. There also may be significant variation in the skills and knowledge due to factors associated with families’ socioeconomic status or home language, children’s disabilities, or parent participation in the military. For these reasons, it is important that the assessment of young children be developmentally appropriate. Both the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education have issued a joint statement that supports young children’s assessment when it is used to:

⁵ Hanover Research, *Kindergarten Entry Assessments: Practices and Policies* (December 2013). <http://www.hanoverresearch.com/media/Kindergarten-Entry-Assessments-Practices-and-Policies.pdf>

Assess young children's strengths, progress, and needs, use assessment methods that are developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive, tied to children's daily activities, supported by professional development, inclusive of families, and connected to specific beneficial purposes: (1) making sound decisions about teaching and learning, (2) identifying significant concerns that may require focused intervention for individual children, and (3) helping programs improve their educational and developmental interventions.⁶

Both organizations also urge multiple sources of evidence be considered and recommend:

- ⇒ Assessment instruments are used for their intended purposes,
- ⇒ Assessments are appropriate for ages and other characteristics of children being assessed,
- ⇒ Assessment instruments are in compliance with professional criteria for quality [validity and reliability],
- ⇒ What is assessed is developmentally and educationally significant,
- ⇒ Assessment evidence is used to understand and improve learning,
- ⇒ Assessment evidence is gathered from realistic settings and situations that reflect children's actual performance,
- ⇒ Assessments use multiple sources of evidence gathered over time,
- ⇒ Screening is always linked to follow-up,
- ⇒ Use of individually administered, norm-referenced tests is limited, and
- ⇒ Staff and families are knowledgeable about assessment.⁷

These recommendations are useful when considering the three types of readiness assessment widely used today.

- ⇒ Direct assessments provide both individual student scores and aggregated data for large groups of children compared to a larger sample of children of the same chronological age. Direct assessment data are useful for considering trends within classrooms, schools or districts over a period of time. Since direct assessment is usually based upon particular set of skills or knowledge, adults who conduct the assessment can be external to the classroom or school as long as they are trained. However, a child's knowledge or skill at a particular point in time may not give a full understanding of the child's ability and may not provide enough information about program quality or teacher professional development needs.

⁶ National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE), *Early Childhood Curriculum, Assessment, and Program Evaluation: Building an Effective Accountable System in Programs for Children Birth through Age 8* (November 2003). <http://www.buildinitiative.org/TheIssues/EarlyLearning/StandardsAssessment/KEA.aspx>

⁷ Ibid.

- ⇒ Observation checklists and rating scales are another assessment strategy that is often viewed as “authentic” or “informal” because it depends on observation of children by familiar adults on a daily basis while they are participating in classroom activities and other educational settings. Observational assessments are also believed to provide a more comprehensive picture of children’s true ability. This assessment style is more labor intensive than direct assessment because it must be conducted by the classroom teacher and observations must be made over time. It may also provide a better sense of how learning occurs in the classroom and be especially useful for identifying training needs and developing professional development opportunities.
- ⇒ The collection of children’s work is another example of “authentic” assessment. Often referred to as “work sampling,” a teacher may collect samples of items created by children. Sometimes, teachers will document children’s learning with short videos or photos that can provide a picture of a child’s ability. Organizing work samples can be extremely time and labor intensive for teachers, and they have to be committed to continuously collecting and updating children’s work. Schools must also consider storage of work samples and how to communicate children’s skill sets to teachers in the next grade.

Recent research shows that states prefer “comprehensive observation-based protocols over direct assessments...At the same time, direct assessments appear to have their place in state Pre-K policies. Such measures can not only document discrete skills...but are especially useful for screening children for potential learning disabilities and/or diagnosing their need for specialized intervention.”⁸

South Carolina Perspective

Based upon recent legislation, the General Assembly envisions early assessment as a way to inform instruction and monitor children’s progress. In Act 284, the General Assembly views the purpose of readiness assessment to be “to provide teachers, administrators, and parents or guardians with information to address the readiness needs of each student...and providing appropriate instruction and support for each child.”⁹ In Act 287, the General Assembly also notes the assessment may include multiple assessments, and the purpose of assessment is to “provide teachers and parents or guardians with information to address the readiness needs of each student...The results of the assessment and the child’s identified needs must be provided, in writing, to the parent or guardian.”¹⁰

Given the substantive state investment in early education, the effectiveness of early education programs and interventions should also be considered. Progress at the programmatic, school

⁸ Debra J. Ackerman and Richard J. Coley, Educational Testing Service, *State Pre-K Assessment Policies: Issues and Status* (February 2012). <http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/PIC-PRE-K.pdf>.

⁹ Act 287, First Steps to School Readiness, Section 59-152-33(A).

¹⁰ Act 284, Read to Succeed, Section 59-155-150(A).

and community level can also be determined and result in program improvements. Assessment may also be used to screen children who may have additional needs (such as special education).

A comprehensive assessment system addresses several purposes, each with implications for data use. The purposes include (1) assessments used to support learning and instruction, (2) assessments used to identify children who may need additional services, (3) assessments used for program evaluation and to monitor trends such as the impact of modifications to the program. These assessments can further be classified into three tiers, summative, interim, and formative.

- ⇒ Summative assessments are often used one-time,
- ⇒ Interim assessments are those that are given a few times a year but are administered at the program, school, or district level, and
- ⇒ Formative assessment is embedded in instruction and administered across the school year.¹¹

¹¹ Shannon Riley-Ayers, Ph.D., Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes, *Formative Assessment: Guidance for Early Childhood Policymakers* (April 2014). http://ceelo.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/ceelo_policy_report_formative_assessment.pdf.

III. Purpose of Assessment – Understand Individual Child

While the discussion below is organized by each domain, all of the child development domains are interrelated and interdependent. Multiple systems also address the developmental domains. Prior to assessment, evidence-based expectations should be established. The importance of standards cannot be overemphasized. Children who participate in programs and interventions that adhere to high-quality standards “exhibit improved developmental and learning outcomes compared with children with no program or those experiencing a low-quality program.”¹²

The South Carolina Early Learning Standards detail these expectations for three-, four-, and five-year olds. The stated purpose of the standards is to “support the readiness of young children through nurturing early care and education environments and developmentally appropriate practices through the development of voluntary guidelines.”¹³ The standards’ Guiding Principles establish a strengths-based approach when considering young children’s progress and achievement. Originally established in the 1960s, Head Start also has its own child outcomes framework, with content that is similar to the South Carolina Early Learning Standards. Head Start staff also actively participated in the development of the state’s standards.

In addition to these early care and education systems, South Carolina’s grade level standards address the developmental domains of English language arts and mathematics. While the Early Learning Standards address content (what children should know) and process (how they should learn) at the beginning of kindergarten, the grade level standards address process and content expectations for children at the end of kindergarten. Both the Early Learning Standards and the grade level standards were revised during the 2014-15 timeframe. The process for their development and approval varies. The South Carolina Department of Social Services manages the development of the voluntary early learning standards with significant input from community and government stakeholders. The promulgation of grade level standards is more formal. The South Carolina Department of Education established a writing team of educators, business leaders and community members. The EOC established review panels of educators, business leaders and community members who reviewed the draft standards and recommended revisions. Both the State Board of Education and the EOC approved the standards for their adoption for the 2015-16 school year. At the time of this report, the revision of the Early Learning Standards was not complete.

¹² Snow, C. E., and S. B. Van Hemel. *Early Childhood Assessment: Why, What, and How* (Washington D.C., The National Academies Press, 2008), 45. http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=12446&page=R1.

¹³ <https://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/64/documents/EarlyLearningGoodStart.pdf>

Domain 1: Social and Emotional Development

Social and emotional development for young children is a critical, but often overlooked factor that impacts their ability to learn and be successful in school. They must be able to understand the feelings of others, control their own feelings and actions, and get along with teachers and their peers. Other related characteristics address how young children approach learning and may include initiative and curiosity, engagement, persistence, reasoning and problem solving skills.

Social-emotional issues among young children are common. Between 9.5 and 14.2 percent of children five years of age and younger experience social-emotional problems that negatively affect their functioning, development and school readiness.¹⁴ It is also important to note the social context of children's social-emotional development since family and environmental factors can make a child more vulnerable. Potential risk factors are associated with maternal well-being (mental health condition, domestic violence exposure) and neighborhood characteristics (low-income).¹⁵

Both Head Start and the SC Early Learning Standards address Social and Emotional Development. Head Start's commitment to children's mental health is evident by specific Head Start Program Performance Standards that address children's mental health, including self-concept, self-regulation, prosocial behavior, positive experiences and play. As part of the implementation of Circle during the 2014-15 school year, the South Carolina Department of Education requested teachers in school districts and private programs to rate 31 items included in the Social and Emotional Dimension of the assessment.

¹⁴ Cooper, Janice L, *Social-emotional Development in Early Childhood: What Every Policymaker Should Know*, (National Center for Children in Poverty at Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University, 2003), 3. http://www.nccp.org/publications/pdf/text_882.pdf

¹⁵ Ibid, 4-5.

Table 1
Social and Emotional Development Comparison

Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework	Current SC Early Learning Standards	mClass:Circle
Social relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • form healthy social relationships • express feelings and show concern for others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Social Behaviors (9 teacher ratings) • Classroom Community & Safety (6 teacher ratings)
Self-Concept and Self-Efficacy	demonstrate a positive sense of self.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotion & Behavior Regulation (8 teacher ratings)
Self-Regulation	demonstrate self-control, respect and responsibility.	
Emotional and Behavioral Health		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Care (2 teacher ratings)

Sources: SC Head Start Collaboration Office and SC Department of Social Services.

Domain 2: Approaches to Learning

As evidenced by the “Profile of the South Carolina Graduate,” social and emotional skills and the manner in which children approach learning are critical to children’s long-term success and their ability to become independent, productive adults. In fact, the Profile notes the importance of integrity, interpersonal skills, integrity, self-direction, perseverance, problem solving, work ethic, collaboration, and teamwork.¹⁶ While these soft skills may be overlooked in K-12 education, early childhood systems consider them Approaches to Learning.

Approaches to Learning are defined as “distinct, observable behaviors that indicate ways children become engaged in classroom interactions and learning activities.”¹⁷ Often Social and Emotional and Approaches to Learning domains are consolidated because they are interrelated. However, these domains are distinct from one another. Numerous studies have indicated that learning behaviors such as attention and persistence are related to early mathematics and literacy skills. A 2000 longitudinal study of children from kindergarten through second grade showed that teachers’ ratings of kindergartners’ work-related skills like those mentioned above were “significantly associated with children’s academic performance in kindergarten.”¹⁸ The most widely used measures of Approaches to Learning are teacher questionnaires. Table 2

¹⁶ The “Profile of the South Carolina Graduate” is approved by SCASA Superintendent’s Roundtable, SC Chamber of Commerce and the SC Council on Competitiveness. In February 2015, it was formally endorsed by the EOC and the State Board of Education. See Appendix D.

¹⁷ Snow, C. E., and S. B. Van Hemel. *Early Childhood Assessment: Why, What, and How*, The National Academies Press, 2008, 97. http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=12446&page=R1

¹⁸ Ibid, 99.

provides a comparison of Head Start’s Framework and the current South Carolina Early Learning Standards.

Table 2
Approaches to Learning Comparison

Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework	Current SC Early Learning Standards	mClass:Circle
Initiative and Curiosity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show curiosity, eagerness and satisfaction as a learner • engage in play as a means to develop their individual approaches to learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approaches to Learning (6 teacher ratings)
Persistence and Attentiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate initiative, engagement, and persistence in learning • demonstrate an increasing ability to envision a goal and to accomplish it • extend learning through the use of memory, reasoning, and problem solving skills. 	
Cooperation	Not specifically mentioned in standards	

Sources: SC Head Start Collaboration Office and SC Department of Social Services.

Domain 3: Language and Literacy Development

With the enactment of Act 284, the Read to Succeed Act, the General Assembly expressed its commitment to emergent language and literacy skills for young children from preschool through the early elementary grades. Language and literacy are closely linked but have different meanings: “Language is all about ideas passing from one person to another. Literacy is the ability to use and understand written words, or other symbols, in order to communicate.”¹⁹

Many experts and researchers have emphasized the impact of early language and literacy skills on a child’s development and success in school. According to the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), “literacy development starts early in life and is highly correlated with school achievement...oral language is the foundation for literacy development.”²⁰ NIEER continues by stating:

Learning to read and write starts long before first grade and has long-lasting effects. Learning to read and write is an ongoing process from infancy.

¹⁹ Office of Head Start National Resource Center, *News You Can Use* (July 2013).

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehsnrc/school-readiness/nycusranglit.htm>

²⁰ National Institute for Early Education Research, *Early Literacy: Policy and Practice in the Preschool Years* (April 2006), 1.

Contrary to popular belief, it does not suddenly begin in kindergarten or first grade. From the earliest years, everything that adults do to support children's language and literacy is critical.²¹

Vocabulary is the most widely assessed component.²² Other emergent skills include a general understanding of print (such as book handling, letter recognition), comprehension, phonological awareness, and writing. Table 3 below compares Head Start and the SC Early Learning Standards to the skills assessed by mClass:Circle.

²¹ Ibid, 3.

²² Snow, C. E., and S. B. Van Hemel. *Early Childhood Assessment: Why, What, and How*, The National Academies Press, 2008, 101. http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=12446&page=R1

Table 3
Language and Literacy Development Comparison

Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework	Current SC Early Learning Standards	mClass:Circle
Book Appreciation; Print Concepts and Conventions		Book and Print Concepts
Early Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing written communication • Producing written communication in a variety of forms 	Early Writing
Alphabet Knowledge		Letter Naming
Alphabet Knowledge		Letter-Sound Correspondence
Phonological Awareness		Phonological Awareness with listening, rhyming, alliteration, words in a sentence, syllabication, onset-rime
Receptive Language; Expressive Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and using literary texts • Understanding and using informational texts • Learning to read by applying appropriate skills and strategies • Applying inquiry skills and oral communication 	Story Retell and Comprehension with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • retell story with an introduction, • accurately or logically sequencing events, • retell with a logical summary or conclusion, comprehension with main idea, story sequence and • recalling story details
		Vocabulary Naming

Sources: SC Head Start Collaboration Office, SC Department of Social Services, and Amplify, Inc.

Read to Succeed also addresses early language and literacy development. The Act is a systemic and comprehensive approach to reading and addresses early identification of struggling readers in 4K through second grade. It further reinforces early identification by requiring a comprehensive readiness assessment that addresses all developmental domains by the 2016-17 school year. Read to Succeed also focuses on:

- ⇒ improving classroom instruction,
- ⇒ intervening to assist struggling readers upon identification,
- ⇒ communicating with parents or guardians when children have been identified as struggling readers,
- ⇒ improving pre- and in-service training of teachers,

- ⇒ requiring state and district reading plans, and
- ⇒ connecting reading instruction to statewide goals of college and career readiness.

Domain 4: Cognitive and Mathematics Development

Acts 284 (Read to Succeed Act) and 287 (First Steps to School Readiness Initiative) include mathematical skills as a critical developmental domain for young children. Act 287, however, includes math within a broader developmental area known as cognitive reasoning. Cognitive functioning denotes “general intellectual functioning; knowledge of specific topics, such as mathematics, science, and social studies; and more specific cognitive skills, such as executive function, attention and memory.”²³

Common components of math development are number sense, spatial sense and reasoning (geometry), measurement, classification and patterning (algebra) and number reasoning. Recently, the important role of math in determining school success may have been downplayed due to the increasing focus on language and literacy. However, American students’ performance in math ranks in the bottom third when compared to other students internationally. Longitudinal studies have also shown that mastery of some math concepts at school entry is the strongest predictor of later academic achievement.²⁴

Head Start takes a broader view of cognitive development and addresses math, science, social studies, and logic and reasoning. The state’s Early Learning Standards focus on math. See Table 4 for more detail.

²³ Ibid, 108-109.

²⁴ Ibid, 114-116.

Table 4
Math and Cognitive Development Comparison

Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework	Current SC Early Learning Standards
Mathematics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number Concepts & Quantities • Number Relationships & Operations • Geometry & Spatial Sense • Patterns • Measurement & Comparison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics Processes • Number & Operations • Algebra • Geometry • Measurement • Data Analysis & Probability
Science Knowledge & Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific Skills & Method • Conceptual Knowledge of the Natural & Physical World 	Do not address
Social Studies Knowledge & Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family & Community • History & Events • People & the Environment 	Do not address
Logic & Reasoning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasoning & Problem Solving • Symbolic Representation 	Addressed in Approaches to Learning

Sources: SC Head Start Collaboration Office, SC Department of Social Services

Cognitive assessment should focus on the child’s process of learning, as well as the child’s knowledge. During her January 26, 2015 presentation to the Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee, Dr. Sandra Linder of Clemson University noted it is important for assessment to measure *how* students should learn, as well as *what* students know:²⁵

- ⇒ Content is *what* students should know- Process is *how* students should learn the content.
- ⇒ Process standards are often overlooked, forgotten, or thought of as a separate set of items to teach.
- ⇒ “Cognitive development is far more than recognizing shapes, colors, and letters of the alphabet -- it is how children think and understand the world around them.” (National Education Goals Panel)

The SC Early Learning Standards capture both process and content components. Standard M-4K-1.2, a process standard, states a four-year-old should “generate conjectures based on

²⁵ Linder, Sandra M., *Examining Cognitive Skills for School Readiness*, Presentation to the EOC Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee (January 26, 2015).

personal experiences and simple reasoning.”²⁶ Standard M-4K-2.1, a content standard, states a four-year-old should “count orally forward to twenty and backward from three.”²⁷

South Carolina students’ math performance is an area of growing concern. The EOC analyzed student performance using SC Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (SCPASS) longitudinal data. The analysis showed the achievement gap between all students in South Carolina and students who participated in PUBLICLY-FUNDED FULL-DAY 4K has not narrowed. In math, the achievement gap may be increasing. The gap grew by 2.3 percent from 2012 to 2014.²⁸

Domain 5: Physical Health and Motor Skills

Similar to social and emotional development, children’s physical health is a foundational component that impacts children’s learning in every content area. Characteristics of child health and its impact on children’s school readiness is well-researched. A study related to the Early Development Instrument, another readiness assessment, found a child’s health and gender were the strongest indicators of school readiness.²⁹

Head Start is well-known for its focus on ensuring children are healthy so they can learn:

Health and school readiness begin long before a child enters a classroom. “Striking disparities in what children know and can do are evident well before they enter kindergarten. These differences are strongly associated with social and economic circumstances and they are predictive of subsequent academic performance (Shonkoff and Phillips, 2000).” Young children who are healthy and safe are more prepared for school.³⁰

Head Start Program Performance Standards address physical health, oral health, motor development, physical activity, nutrition, and sleep. South Carolina’s Early Learning Standards are aligned with Head Start’s Framework, except for systematically accounting for a children’s physical health status in an early learning environment.

²⁶ SC Early Learning Standards, 96. <https://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/64/documents/EarlyLearningGoodStart.pdf>.

²⁷ Ibid, 91.

²⁸ SC Education Oversight Committee, *SC Child Early Reading Development & Education Program Report for FY 2014 & 2015* (January 2015), 31.

²⁹ Linder, Sandra M., M. Deanna Ramey, Serbay Zambak, *Predictors of School Readiness in Literacy and Mathematics: A Selective Review of the Literature* (2013).

³⁰ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, by the National Center on Health, *Healthy Children Are Ready to Learn* (2013), 1. <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/health/physical-health/individual-wellness-plans/healthy-children-ready-learn.pdf>.

Table 5
Physical Well-Being Comparison

Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework	Current SC Early Learning Standards
Physical Health Status	Do not address
Health Knowledge & Practice	Personal Health Knowledge
Gross Motor Skills	Gross Motor Development
Fine Motor Skills	Fine Motor Control

Sources: SC Head Start Collaboration Office, SC Department of Social Services

In general, school readiness assessments for four- and five-year-olds address children’s health knowledge and skills and motor development. They do not include children’s physical health status within an assessment framework. Kentucky has included physical health status within its school readiness framework. Indicators for “health and physical well-being” include a child who:

- ⇒ Eats a balanced diet,
- ⇒ Gets plenty of rest,
- ⇒ Receives regular medical and dental care,
- ⇒ Has had all necessary immunizations,
- ⇒ Can run, jump, climb, and does other activities that develop large muscles, and
- ⇒ Uses pencils, scissors, etc. and does other activities that develop small muscles.³¹

At the national level, the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) benefit provides comprehensive and preventive health care services for children under age 21 who are enrolled in Medicaid. EPSDT is crucial to ensuring young children have access appropriate preventive, dental, mental health, developmental, and specialty services. The South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is responsible for EPSDT administration.

Assessment Gauges Students’ Ongoing Progress

In order for students to be successful throughout their school experience, a strong foundation of early learning must be established. A comprehensive readiness assessment would evaluate the foundation so education in the early elementary grades (primarily first, second and the beginning of third grade) can build upon the competencies and learning that occurred during pre-kindergarten and kindergarten. Again, ongoing, formative assessment of children’s

³¹ Hanover Research, *Kindergarten Entry Assessments: Practices and Policies* (December 2013), 29.
<http://www.hanoverresearch.com/media/Kindergarten-Entry-Assessments-Practices-and-Policies.pdf>

learning in the early elementary grades is critically important so teachers can make timely adjustments to their instruction to meet the educational needs of students.³² A requirement of Act 284 (SC Read to Succeed Act) is the ongoing evaluation of student progress. Section 59-155-110(2) states “classroom teachers periodically reassess their curriculum and instruction to determine if they are helping each student progress as a proficient reader and make modifications as appropriate.”

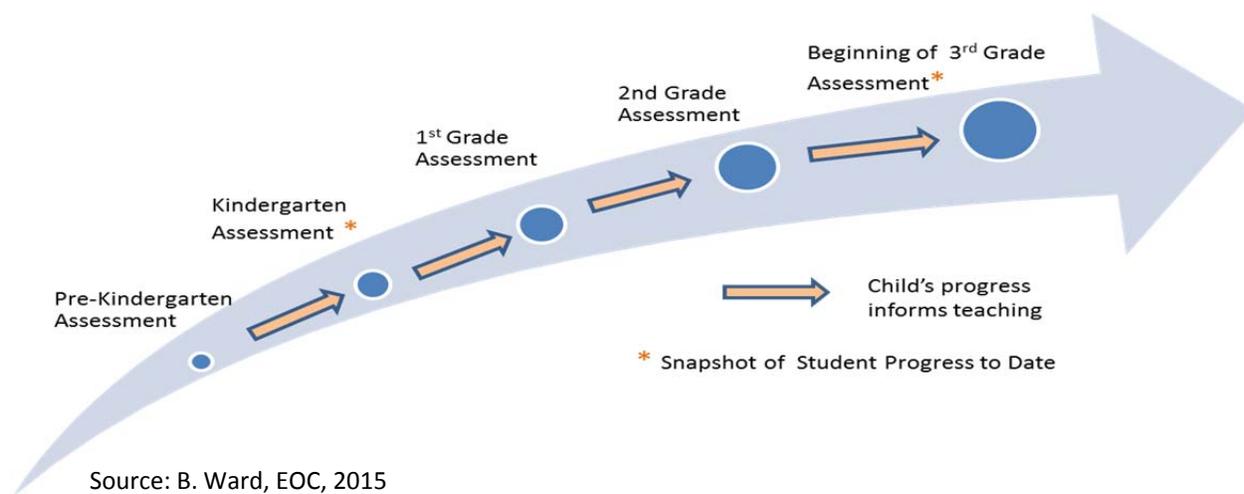
Kindergarten entry is a distinct point in child’s educational life where data can be used to gauge progress to date and support continued progress going forward. In the past few years, there has been more interest in formally and systematically measuring children’s developmental status upon their entry into kindergarten and into the primary grades. The 2011 Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge initiative spurred the interest in Kindergarten Entry Assessments (KEAs) since applicant states were given the option to propose how they would develop or improve KEAs.

A KEA measures across five developmental domains using observations, tasks and intentional situations. It is an assessment continuum that assesses children beginning in kindergarten through third grade. In response, 35 of the 37 applicant states have made plans to begin or improve wide-scale initiatives to develop a continuum of assessment from kindergarten through the early elementary years. North Carolina, Maryland and Washington are among the states. Maryland is a member of a four-state consortium that is utilizing Work Sampling System as its basis for assessment. Washington is a member of a three-state consortium that is developing its KEA on Teaching Strategies GOLD. North Carolina is also a lead state for a nine-state consortium that is developing a KEA.

As noted in Figure 2 below, throughout children’s educational experience, teachers consider their progress in order to inform and adapt instruction to better meet the individual needs of students. At critical transition times, such as the beginning of kindergarten or third grade assessment can provide a “snapshot” of a student’s growth at that time. This snapshot provides the school and teacher to more comprehensively assess a child’s needs and consider additional academic supports or interventions (such as Response to Intervention). At the same time the impact of interventions and programs that have been utilized (such as 4K) can also be evaluated so programmatic adjustments can be made.

³² Act 284 refers to formative assessment as assessment used within the school year to analyze strengths and weaknesses of students individually to adapt instruction to meet student needs, make decisions about appropriate intervention services, and inform placement and instructional planning for the next grade level.

Figure 2
Assessment Continuum for Young Children



North Carolina is a leader of a nine-state consortium, and the consortium members are developing their own state-developed KEA. The North Carolina consortium is committed to providing resources and an electronic platform that will help teachers gain a better understanding of the whole child, as well as students' progress toward learning standards.³³ KEAs provide a snapshot of a child's development at the beginning of kindergarten entry and subsequently inform instruction throughout a child's early elementary years. The teacher uses KEA data as a starting point to develop individualized instruction for each child. While South Carolina is not a named participant in the nine-state consortium, early childhood staff from the South Carolina Department of Social Services, State Office of First Steps, and the South Carolina Department of Education have participated in consortium discussions.

Assessment Provides a Snapshot of Child's Skills and Abilities

In the fall of 2014, the EOC established an Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee to discuss early readiness assessment and to make recommendations to the General Assembly about the characteristics of the assessment. The Subcommittee has convened three times, and the final meeting occurred May 18, with specific recommendations about the readiness assessment. Multiple experts, educators and practitioners have presented to the Subcommittee, including Dr. Bill Brown of USC, Dr. Sandra Linder of Clemson, Lillian Atkins

³³ Participating states are California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Kansas, Missouri, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, and Vermont.

of Lexington 4, Dr. Floyd Creech of Florence 1, and Dr. Becky White, a Newberry pediatrician who also participates in the Reach Out and Read program. The Subcommittee also heard from Dewayne Frederick of Beaufort Jasper Head Start, Dr. Dan Wuori of SC First Steps, Penny Danielson of the SCDE (SDE), and Leigh Bolick of DSS. Appendix F includes agendas from Subcommittee meetings.

With input from SDE, the EOC staff developed the attached “Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Framework” as a starting point for discussions. Staff considered Teaching Strategies GOLD and the Work Sampling System, as well as kindergarten entry assessments from Washington, Georgia, Maryland and Kentucky. Staff also consulted the SC Early Learning Standards and the SC Kindergarten Content Standards. EOC requested feedback about the Framework from multiple early childhood professionals, including representatives from Head Start, SCDE, SCDSS, State Office of First Steps, private child care, public school districts, TransformSC and higher education research. To review State Office of First Steps’ response, refer to Appendix I.

On April 13, 2015, EOC convened a Working Group to discuss readiness assessment and requested feedback on the Framework. During the Working Group session, participants also discussed the following language and literacy assessments for 4K: My IGDIS, ELSA, Teaching Strategies GOLD, PALS Preschool, and mCLASS:CIRCLE. Teaching Strategies GOLD is used by Head Start in South Carolina. Charleston County School District uses My IGDIS. Other assessments discussed for 5K readiness included the BESS for social-emotional development and TEAM for math competency. See Appendix G for a complete list of Working Group invitees and participants.

Skills and abilities included in the matrix below are meant to be illustrative, serving as examples of skills children entering kindergarten should possess. Since children’s learning and education is constantly developing and progressing, the Framework is not intended to be a comprehensive, exhaustive list of beginning-of-year kindergarten skills. Education from early childhood through high school graduation is a continuum of learning that evolves and changes over time. To reflect the continuous nature of children’s learning, the Framework also organizes domains and children’s skills around the “Profile of the SC Graduate” that is included in this report as Appendix D. It is important to note that children’s learning is also integrated across content areas in various informal settings. The Framework is organized by discrete domains and skills to facilitate the reader’s understanding; it does not suggest young children learn by teaching of discrete content areas and processes.

Table 6
EOC Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Framework

EOC KINDERGARTEN READINESS ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK			
Grad Profile	Domain	Area	Skill/Ability “At the beginning of Kindergarten, a student can...”
World Class Skills	Approaches to Learning	Curiosity & Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show curiosity in an increasing variety of ideas and interests. • Make predictions and test ideas. • Seek out new challenges and experiences. • Ask for help when needed.
		Confidence & Risk Taking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show increasing ability to identify and take appropriate risk when learning new knowledge and skills. • Express confidence in meeting new challenges and experiences.
		Persistence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain interest in self-selected activities, even if there are interruptions or challenges. • Identify a problem and be flexible in solving it. Able to change plans if necessary to solve problem.
		Creativity & Problem Solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show creativity and imagination in a variety of settings. • Engage creatively with others in play. • Demonstrate an increased ability to accomplish a task requiring multiple steps.
Life and Career Characteristics	Social -Emotional Development	Emotional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show initiative by making choices and accepting responsibility. • Adjust well to changes in routines and environments. • Express emotions and needs through appropriate words and actions.
		Social Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat others with respect in words and actions. • Show caring for others. • Follow directions and school rules. • Respect the property of others. • Work and play cooperatively with others. • Interact easily with familiar adults.
	Physical Well Being and Motor Skills	Physical Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access regular medical, dental, vision care. • Identify different food groups. • Understand and follow basic health and safety rules (hand washing). • Perform self-care independently (buttoning clothes, toileting).
		Fine Motor Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use hand eye coordination to perform various tasks (put together a puzzle, use scissors, tape). • Use drawing and writing tools with some control and purpose.
		Gross Motor Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use basic loco motor skills alone, with a partner and in a group. • Coordinate body movement to perform various tasks (kick a moving ball, throw a ball overhand). • Coordinate body movement across midline to perform various tasks (use right hand on left side of body).

Table 6
EOC Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Framework

EOC KINDERGARTEN READINESS ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK			
Grad Profile	Domain	Area	Skill/Ability “At the beginning of Kindergarten, a student can...”
World Class Knowledge	Mathematics	Mathematical Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to use and explain strategies to solve mathematical problems. • Use words and representations to describe mathematical ideas.
		Numbers & Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show understanding of relationship between number and quantity. • Begin to understand relationships between quantities.
		Patterns, Relationships, & Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sort objects into subgroups by classifying and comparing. • Recognize duplicates and extend patterns.
		Geometry & Spatial Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize and describe some attributes of shapes. • Show understanding of and use direction, location, and position words (over, under).
		Measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order, compare and describe objects by size, length, and weight. • Explore common instruments for measuring during work and play. • Estimate and measure using non-standard and standard units. • Show awareness of time concepts.
		Statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to collect data and make records by using pictures to develop lists or graphs.
	Language & Literacy	Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain meaning by listening. • Follow directions that involve a series of actions. • Demonstrate phonological and phonemic awareness (rhyme, alliteration, smaller and smaller units of sound).
		Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak clearly and convey ideas effectively. • Use expanded vocabulary and language.
		Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show interest in and knowledge about books and reading. • Show some understanding of concepts about print. • Know letters, sounds, and how they form words. • Comprehend and respond to various literary texts (fiction, nonfiction, poetry). • Retell familiar stories. • Begin to understand how personal experiences connect to texts.
		Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent stories through pictures, dictation, and play. • Use letter-like shapes, symbols, letters, and words to convey meaning. • Understand purposes of writing.

Source: B. Ward, EOC, 2015

IV. Purpose of Assessment: Determine Quality of Early Education Programs

In its annual report on publicly-funded full-day 4K (SC Child Early Reading Development and Education Program), the EOC discussed the importance of high-quality preschool education. Lasting improvements in school success include higher achievement test scores, lower rates of grade repetition and special education designation, and higher educational attainment.³⁴ Further, both the U.S. Department of Education and the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) include program monitoring and evaluation as crucial components for the provision of high-quality preschool.³⁵

Teacher-child interactions powerfully impact children’s learning. The ongoing measurement of this interaction, with subsequent professional development opportunities, is one way to enhance the quality of learning and instruction for young children. Currently there are several assessments that consider the quality of this interaction in a learning environment, including Classroom Assessment Scoring System, Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scales, Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation Tool, and Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool.

Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)

During a recent visit to South Carolina, Dr. Robert Pianta of the University of Virginia noted:

- ⇒ Early history of relationships with adults forms the “infrastructure” for school success, including: social competence with peers; self-regulation, emotional self-control; and task orientation, persistence, and following directions.
- ⇒ School readiness is a social process: relationships with teachers are a “medium” for learning.
- ⇒ Relationships and interactions with teachers and caregivers define quality and value of early education and are the path to improving school readiness.
- ⇒ Interactions are really important for children from low-income families and those who have difficulty adjusting to classroom environments may particularly benefit from exposure to high-quality early learning environments.³⁶

³⁴ Barnett, W.S., *Preschool education and its lasting effects: Research and policy implications* (2004) Boulder and Tempe: Education and the Public Interest Center and Education Policy Research Unit.
<http://epicpolicy.org/publication/preschooleducation>.

³⁵ U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *2014 Preschool Development Grants Executive Summary*, (2014).
<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/executivesummary-419b.pdg>.

Barnett, W.S., Carolan, M.E., Squires, J.H., Brown, K.C. “The State of Preschool 2013.” Rutgers: National Institute for Early Education Research (2013) <http://nieer.org/sites/nieer/files/yearbook2013.pdf>.

³⁶ Dr. Robert Pianta, *Elevating the Capacity of Classroom Experiences for Promoting Students’ Learning and Development: Observation and Improvement of Teacher-Child Interactions* (February 12, 2015) Presentation hosted by Francis Marion University’s Center of Excellence to Prepare Teachers of Children of Poverty.

One example of an assessment that measures this crucial interaction is the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), which evaluates the overall preschool classroom in terms of the teacher’s sensitivity, quality of instruction across all academic areas, and classroom management. A trained observer utilizes a seven-point Likert Scale to determine the emotional, organizational, and instructional supports provided by teachers that contribute to children’s social, developmental, and academic achievement.³⁷ Research has shown that children in pre-kindergarten classrooms offering higher levels of instructional support displayed better language skills at the end of the kindergarten year. Further, when high-quality instructional support is provided during the kindergarten year, it contributed to gains in children’s language and math abilities.³⁸

Classroom assessment is a tool for developing high-quality, ongoing professional development for teachers so they can continue to grow as educators and improve instruction. Professional development is integrated within CLASS and can be provided through a video library or one-to-one professional coaching. A teacher can access the video library and view various video clips that show a teacher interacting with young students. Utilizing an online portal a participating teacher can record his/her own interactions with students and upload the videos so they can be reviewed by a professional coach. In turn, the coach provides verbal feedback to the participating teacher via a phone call or email.

Research shows teachers with coaches grew more sensitive in their interactions with students and increased students’ engagement in instruction. In addition, children living in poverty benefited a great deal. Children with participating teachers made greater gains in tests of early literacy and demonstrated higher levels of expressive language.³⁹

A recommendation in EOC’s 2015 evaluation of publicly-funded full-day 4K emphasized the importance of high-quality instruction, as evident by meaningful interactions between teachers and children. In addition, a 2010 EOC evaluation of publicly-funded full-day 4K reported on the use of CLASS in 100 South Carolina classrooms in 2009 and 2010. The EOC noted:

Our classroom observations with the CLASS Pre-K have indicated that on the domains of Emotional Support and Classroom Organization that CDEPP [full-day four-year-old-kindergarten] classrooms were similar to other preschool classrooms in previous investigations. Nevertheless, for the domain of Instructional Support with accompanying dimensions of concept development, quality of feedback, and language modeling, the ratings were lower than previous investigators have reported. A continuous improvement approach to pre-kindergarten educational services indicates that targeted professional development and technical assistance might be helpful to local preschool personnel in the area of instructional support and high-quality teaching

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

interactions. State level early childhood administrators should carefully consider how to enhance professional development activities and technical assistance to support the efforts of local pre-kindergarten personnel.⁴⁰

Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale 3rd Edition (ECERS-3)

In general ECERS is an assessment of overall quality of early childhood programs. The Department of Social Services currently uses ECERS-2 for all environmental ratings of childcare quality. DSS also uses its own state-developed tool to assess childcare centers that are rated at Level B or better. The State Office of First Steps also uses ECERS to assess the quality of the private childcare learning environments for students enrolled in publicly-funded full-day 4K.

The newest version, ECERS-3, was revised in 2015 and features less emphasis on materials and more on interactions based on the individual child's abilities. There are expanded items for math, language and literacy. It does not monitor the interaction as deeply as CLASS; instead it assesses a wider range of learning environment components. ECERS-3 has 35 items organized in 6 subscales and addresses: space and furnishings, personal care routines, language and literacy, learning activities, interactions and program structure. This revision requires more attention to how teachers use materials to stimulate children's learning. For example, instead of simply counting the number of books in a classroom, ECERS-3 measures how teachers expand children's vocabulary or encourage children's use of books. In the language and literacy subscale, it has more specific indicators provided in order to assess teacher strategies for guiding language and literacy awareness. ECERS-3 also addresses math, including three new items that focus on helping children become familiar with math.

Early Language & Literacy Classroom Observation Pre-K Tool (ELLCO-Pre-K)

Part of a larger early childhood assessment portfolio, ELLCO Pre-K is an observation instrument that has been specifically designed for use in center-based classrooms with three- to five-year-old children. It incorporates the most recent research on language and literacy development. ELLCO Pre-K includes four items on classroom structure and three items on curriculum, but focuses heavily on language and literacy, including:

⁴⁰ SC Education Oversight Committee, *Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP): 2009-10 Student and Classroom Assessment Report*, (October 11, 2010), 3.
[http://www.eoc.sc.gov/Information%20for%20Educators/CDEPP/CDEPP%20Report%20General%20Assembly%201-12-10%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.eoc.sc.gov/Information%20for%20Educators/CDEPP/CDEPP%20Report%20General%20Assembly%201-12-10%20(2).pdf).

- ⇒ Language Environment (4 items): Discourse Climate, Opportunities for Extended Conversation, Efforts to Build Vocabulary, and Phonological Awareness
- ⇒ Books and Book Reading (5 items): Organization of Book Area, Characteristics of Books, Books for Learning, Approaches to Book Reading, and Quality of Book Reading, and
- ⇒ Print and Early Writing (3 items): Early Writing Environment, Support for Children’s Writing, and Environmental Print.

Similar to ECERS-3, ELLCO Pre-K was revised to reduce some of the reliance on counting materials and activities and instead, to focus more on how materials are used and activities are instructed to support students’ learning. The SCDE currently uses ELLCO Pre-K to assess the quality of language and literacy instruction in publicly-funded full-day 4K and for implementation of Read to Succeed.

Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool for Preschool Classrooms (TPOT)

TPOT provides a tool for assessing the fidelity of implementation of the Teaching Pyramid Model. The Teaching Pyramid Model is a model focused on social and emotional development; it supports social competence and prevents challenging behavior in young children. The pyramid has four levels that guide teacher-child interactions to help social and emotional development:

- ⇒ First Level (at the bottom of the pyramid): builds positive relationships with children, families and colleagues
- ⇒ Second Level: implements classroom practices to prevent challenging behavior
- ⇒ Third Level: uses social and emotional teaching strategies,
- ⇒ Fourth Level (at the top of the pyramid): plans intensive, individualized interventions for children when necessary.

TPOT includes three subscales including Key Practices, Red Flags, and Responses to Challenging Behavior. Key Practices include schedules, routines, and activities. Red Flag items are teaching practices that are not aligned with the Teaching Pyramid Model, such as a teacher reprimanding or admonishing children for expressing their emotions. Responses to Challenging Behavior include teaching practices that are developmentally appropriate responses to challenging behavior, such as redirection. Table 7 below summarizes characteristics of the three quality measures discussed.⁴¹

⁴¹ Child Trends, *Quality in Early Childhood Education Settings: A Compendium of Measures Second Edition* (2010). Prepared under Contract with the Administration of Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/complete_compendium_full.pdf.

Table 7⁴²
Comparison of Assessments that Measure Quality of Early Childhood Programs

Assessment/ Measure	Ages Served and Learning Environment	Primary Purpose and Administration	Reliability and Validity ⁴³
Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)	Two versions are available: pre-school classroom and a K-3 classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Improvement/Evaluation • Observer must attend a training session and pass a reliability test. • Cost is \$600 per person for training and \$20 for manual • 2 hours to administer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not normed. Reliability: High (.80 or higher). Concurrent validity: Low (below .50). Significant correlations were found with other measures of classroom quality, but they were generally low, possible because this tool measures different aspects of the classroom than other quality measures. • Average inter-rater reliability reported in the Technical Appendix is 87%. Stability across time is uniformly high with almost all correlations above .90. • Results from NCEDL multi-state study show classroom quality as assessed by CLASS is associated with children’s performance at the end of pre-school as well as gains in in their performance across the preschool year.
Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale 3 rd Edition (ECERS-3)	Early childhood classrooms serving 2.5-5 year olds. New version published in late 2014.	Program Improvement, Monitoring/Accreditation, Research/Evaluation	Basic field test for reliability. Ongoing testing of reliability and validity, using Item Response Theory.

⁴² Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, *A Guide to Assessment in Early Childhood Infancy to Age Eight*,” (2008). http://www.k12.wa.us/earlylearning/pubdocs/assessment_print.pdf.

⁴³ Reliability refers to the consistency to which a test (or subtest) measures a given construct. In general terms, validity refers to the extent to which one can trust that a test measures what it is intended to measure.

Assessment/ Measure	Ages Served and Learning Environment	Primary Purpose and Administration	Reliability and Validity ⁴³
Early Language & Literacy Classroom Observation Tool (ELLCO Pre-K)	Center-based classrooms for 3- to 5- year-old children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Improvement, Research/Evaluation • Can be administered by teachers, principals, administrators, supervisors, program directors, or researchers • Cost is \$50 • 60-90 minutes to administer 	The ELLCO Research Edition was used for research purposes in more than 150 preschool classrooms; the reliability was 90% or better. ⁴⁴
Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT)	Pre-school classrooms	Research/Evaluation	Three separate studies with 174 classrooms. Inter-rater score reliability coefficients were generally acceptable for key practice items. Means percentage scores demonstrated adequate stability. Noteworthy relationships between scores for 10 of 14 TPOT key practice items and overall global classroom quality scores on ECERS-R. TPOT Red Flags subscale had substantial negative relationships with scores for all CLASS domain and dimension scores. Source: B. Ward, EOC, 2015

⁴⁴ Brookes Publishing Website (2015), <http://www.brookespublishing.com/resource-center/screening-and-assessment/ellco/ellco-pre-k/>.

V. Findings and Recommendations

- ⇒ Pursuant to Act 287 the EOC is making recommendation to the State Board of Education on what a comprehensive readiness assessment or assessments should be able to measure in each domain defined in law to determine the education needs of children. The EOC is also including potential assessments to be considered by the State Board of Education. Some of the assessment may have to be procured while others could merely be teacher observations or check lists developed by the South Carolina Department of Education. However, “selecting” an assessment cannot occur without having information on the amount of funds available to procure an assessment and without having to conform to the South Carolina Procurement Code.
- ⇒ Last year, the EOC provided recommendations and feedback about the characteristics of readiness assessment (see Appendix D). The EOC developed a 5K Readiness Assessment Framework (Table 6) that provides illustrative examples of 5K skills and capabilities that should be measured by any State-adopted assessment. It is essential to consider young children’s developmental and academic progression as a continuum that begins before 4K and expands beyond 5K. Act 284 (Read to Succeed) also requires progress monitoring for students’ language and literacy development from pre-kindergarten through the early elementary years. Instead of looking at these various systems of assessment as separate and isolated, these systems should be integrated into a single, comprehensive assessment strategy. A strategic approach will improve instruction and subsequently children’s academic progress.
- ⇒ In addition to assessment of individual children, a larger system should be considered, with integration of measurement of teacher-child interactions, ongoing and well-planned and responsive professional development with teachers, and online data capture and reporting to administrators and policy makers.
- ⇒ Since the General Assembly also considers children’s progress in a more holistic manner by looking at the development of the “whole child,” the additional integration or connections to other early childhood systems is also important.

Individual Child

- ⇒ **Finding 1:** Both at the national and state levels, significant progress has been made to better understand early learning and developmental skills that are essential to a child’s readiness for school. However, the current challenge in South Carolina is the majority of school districts do not assess language and literacy with a tool that gets to the level of data that is needed.

During the April 13, 2015 Working Group session, participants also discussed the following language and literacy assessments for 4K: My IGDIS, ELSA, Teaching Strategies GOLD, PALS Pre-K, and mCLASS:CIRCLE. Teaching Strategies GOLD is used by Head Start in South Carolina. Charleston County School District uses My IGDIS. Refer to Table 8 below for additional detail. Other assessments discussed for 5K readiness included the Behavioral and

Emotional Screening System for social-emotional development and Tools for Early Assessment in Math for math competency. See Appendix G for a complete list of Working Group invitees and participants.

Table 8⁴⁵

4K Early Language and Literacy Assessments Discussed in April 13, 2015 Working Group

Assessment	Description	Administration	Validity and Reliability ⁴⁶
Individual Growth Development Indicators (IGDIs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early literacy: picture naming (oral language and vocabulary); rhyming and alliteration (phonological awareness); sound identification (alphabet knowledge); comprehension • Early numeracy: oral counting, number naming, quantity comparison, one-to-one correspondence counting • Designed to support “Response to Intervention” model with whole group, small group and intensive intervention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No cost • 10 minutes per child • Currently used in Charleston County School District • Administered in fall, winter and spring • Can be administered by psychologists, teachers, paraprofessionals, volunteers • Age Range: 3-5 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not normed. Reliability: Adequate (.65 to .79). Concurrent validity: Adequate (.50 to .69) • In most instances, preschool administrations of the Early Literacy IGDIs were moderately correlated with kindergarten measures of alphabetic principle and phonological awareness. • Preschool Early Literacy IGDIs was found to be significantly predictive of later outcomes in oral reading fluency both at the end of kindergarten and at the end of first grade. The diagnostic utility of these measures was found to be strong.⁴⁷ • Psychometric information available at http://www.myigdis.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Missall-Reschly-et-al-2007.pdf.
Teaching Strategies GOLD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first 23 objectives focus on key predictors of school success in the areas of social–emotional, physical, cognitive, oral language, literacy, and math development and learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing and observation based • Currently used by Head Start and Early Head Start in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2012/2013 technical report was based on a nationally representative norm sample of 18,000 children. It contained children from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The Center for Educational Measurement and Evaluation

⁴⁵ Age range, cost, administration time obtained from April 13 Working Group meeting and Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, *A Guide to Assessment in Early Childhood Infancy to Age Eight*, (2008). http://www.k12.wa.us/earlylearning/pubdocs/assessment_print.pdf.

⁴⁶ Reliability refers to the consistency to which a test (or subtest) measures a given construct. In general terms, validity refers to the extent to which one can trust that a test measures what it is intended to measure.

⁴⁷ Missall, K., Reschly, A., Betts, J., McConnell, S., Heistad, D., Pickart, M., Sheran, C., Martson, D., “Examination of the Predictive Validity of Preschool Early Literacy Skills,” *School Psychology Review* 36, no. 3 (2007): 433-452.

Assessment	Description	Administration	Validity and Reliability ⁴⁶
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The remaining objectives help teachers plan instruction in science and technology, social studies, and the arts, and enable teachers to assess children’s English language acquisition. 	SC	<p>determined the norm sample from a total of 933,000 children who had scores available using <i>Teaching Strategies GOLD</i>® over the 2012/2013 school year. The norm sample contained 3,000 children in each of the six age or class/grade cohorts: birth to 1, 1 to 2, 2 to 3, 3 or preschool, 4 or prekindergarten, and kindergarten.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>Teaching Strategies GOLD</i>® assessment system continues to yield highly valid and reliable results.⁴⁸ Psychometric information available at http://teachingstrategies.com/content/pageDocs/TS-GOLD-Technical-Summary-2013.pdf.
PALS:Pre-K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PALS-PreK is a phonological awareness and literacy screening that measures preschoolers’ developing knowledge of important literacy fundamentals and offers guidance to teachers for tailoring instruction to children’s specific needs. The assessment reflects skills that are predictive of future reading success and measures name writing ability, upper-case and lower-case alphabet recognition, letter sound and beginning sound production, print and word awareness, rhyme awareness and nursery rhyme awareness. PALS consists of three instruments, PALS-PreK (for preschool students), PALS-K (for kindergartners), and PALS 1-3 (for students in Grades 1-3). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$75 Approximately 20-30 minutes per child Currently used in Georgetown School District. Can be administered in the fall, winter and spring. Administered by teachers who have read the manual and scoring guide. Age range is 4 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not normed. Reliability: High (.80 or higher). Concurrent validity: High (.70 or higher) From 2000-2004, four separate pilots have been conducted. Pilot data and data from regular screenings in Virginia’s preschools provide evidence of the reliability (including internal consistency and inter-rater reliability) and validity (including content, construct, and criterion-related validity) of PALS-PreK for the purposes for which it was intended. Spring developmental ranges suggest a range of performance that may be associated with later reading achievement provide a general guide for educators as they use PALS-PreK to guide the planning and implementation of early literacy instruction. Psychometric information available at https://pals.virginia.edu/pdfs/rd/tech/PreK_technical_chapter.pdf

⁴⁸Teaching Strategies GOLD *Technical Summary* (2013) <http://teachingstrategies.com/content/pageDocs/TS-GOLD-Technical-Summary-2013.pdf>.

Assessment	Description	Administration	Validity and Reliability ⁴⁶
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PALS is the state-provided screening tool for Virginia’s Early Intervention Reading Initiative (EIRI) and is used by 99% of school divisions in the state on a voluntary basis. 		
Early Literacy Skills Assessment (ELSA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Early Literacy Skills Assessment measures progress in all early childhood programs — including, but not limited to, those using the HighScope educational approach. The assessment meets the psychometric standards of demonstrated reliability and validity. • Measures phonological awareness, comprehension, print awareness and alphabetic principles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 20 minutes to administer per child. • An authentic assessment in the form of a children’s storybook. To conduct the assessment, a teacher reads the story with an individual child, stopping where indicated in the book to ask questions or elicit ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliability: The ELSA reliability estimates were consistently above .6 and were often .8 or higher across instruments, indicating that both the English and Spanish versions of the ELSA reliably measure children’s comprehension, phonological awareness, alphabetic principle, and concepts about print. • Concurrent validity: Although we did not have concurrent measures for all of the ELSA instruments, the alphabetic principle instrument correlated highly with similar items from the Woodcock Johnson and Pre-CTOPP. In addition, the phonological awareness and concepts about print also correlated over .6 with items reflecting phonological awareness and concepts about print in the Pre-CTOPP, indicating that the 3 of the 4 ELSA instruments for which concurrent measures were available overlapped substantially with previously validated measures. • More information available at http://www.highscope.org/file/Assessment/ELSAJacobs.pdf
mClass:CIRCLE	mCLASS Circle is designed to enable evaluation and ongoing monitoring of socio-emotional development, book and print awareness, early writing, and early math skills by facilitating one-to-one interaction between student and teacher.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administered to all publicly-funded full-day 4K and 5K students in SC during the 2014-15 school year. • Can be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliability: The mClass:CIRCLE Chronbach’s Alpha reliability estimates for phonological awareness subscale of the language and literacy were .91/.93. Chronbach’s Alpha for the social emotional scale .96. Test-retest reliability correlations ranged from .42 to .58. • Concurrent validity: Concurrent validity correlations

Assessment	Description	Administration	Validity and Reliability ⁴⁶
		<p>administered in the fall, winter and spring.</p>	<p>with the Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary test (EOWPVT) ranged from .28 to .80. Concurrent validity correlations with the Developing Skills Checklist (DSC) ranged from .10 to .35).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concurrent validity correlations with the Social and Emotional Skills-Checklist and Social Competence and Behavioral Evaluation-Preschool Edition were .25 to .61. Concurrent validity correlations with the Children’s Behavioral Checklist were .29 to .65.

Source: B. Ward, EOC, 2015

- **Recommendation 1a:** The State should consider a list of formative assessments specifically designed to identify children’s language and literacy ability levels. The assessments should be easy to administer after sufficient professional development has been provided. The assessments should provide teachers with targeted recommended activities for small groups and individual students based on the assessment data.
 - **Recommendation 1b:** The State should consider a group of assessments that measure the skills indicated in both the South Carolina Early Learning Standards for social-emotional, physical well-being, and cognitive domains. For English language arts and mathematics, assessments should be aligned with state-adopted standards.
- ⇒ **Finding 2:** Language and literacy has been the focus for assessing young children, due to the passage of Act 284 (SC Read to Succeed Act). In response to Act 284, Circle has been uniformly used to assess all publicly-funded four-year-old and five-year-old kindergartners within the first 45 days of the 2014-15 school year. However, both Acts 284 and 287 require the implementation of a more comprehensive readiness assessment that will measure children’s progress in their social-emotional development, cognitive skills, math competencies, and their physical health and motor skill development.
- **Recommendation 2:** For publicly-funded full-day 4K, an analysis of assessments approved by SCDE and State Office of First Steps should be conducted to determine the extent to which currently used assessments address all of the developmental domains. When possible, assessments currently used by districts should be integrated into the new portfolio of State-approved assessments to lessen the impact of change on instruction and children. For a list of assessments that are approved by the SCDE and the State Office of First Steps, please see Finding 6.
- ⇒ **Finding 3:** South Carolina’s current Early Learning Standards and several state kindergarten entry assessments do not address children’s physical health status as part of individual child assessments in early learning environments.
- **Recommendation 3:** When developing a comprehensive readiness assessment, the State should consider how to incorporate children’s physical health status as part of any assessment. One potential addition could be to collect information about whether a child receives ongoing, regular health care (physical, vision, dental) from a free health clinic, family doctor, pediatrician or emergency room.
- ⇒ **Finding 4:** Through consultation with other early care and education experts and organizations multiple recommendations were gathered.
- **Recommendation 4a:** Often, the voice of frontline professionals who have the greatest impact on our students is not considered. When discussing early education assessment systems and selecting assessments, local school districts, teachers, and school leaders should be included in the process.
 - **Recommendation 4b:** A single assessment does not offer the fullest picture of a child’s ability and progress. Consider an assessment that is triangulated with ongoing observations and artifact collection or work samples. Assessment should also include

performance-based tasks where teachers can gather evidence related to process standards.

- **Recommendation 4c:** Traditionally, school readiness assessment has focused on a young child’s knowledge, or content. A child’s process of learning, or how a child performs activities and tasks, is also important. Performance-based tasks should be considered as part of the assessment process so teachers can gather evidence related to process standards. In later grades, the process of learning is more evident. For example, in math it is important a student “shows the work” or provides the intermediate steps used to arrive at the answer. These intermediate steps need to be examined so a teacher can identify where the student may be struggling or not fully grasping a concept. The process for young children is just as important so additional supports can be provided as needed.

Programmatic Impact

- ⇒ **Finding 5:** Currently, the SCDSS promulgates the SC Early Learning Standards that address social-emotional, language and literacy, math, approaches to learning and physical well-being for three-, four- and five-year-olds. The SCDE is responsible for developing grade-level standards in content areas for kindergarten through high school. While there is collaboration among state agencies, there is no formal standards alignment process to ensure alignment of the SC Early Learning Standards with the kindergarten content standards.
 - **Recommendation 5:** A formal, continuous standards alignment and assessment process for early education should be established. Similar to the development and adoption of statewide standards for K-12 education, the State Board of Education should formally adopt the SC Early Learning Standards thereby ensuring they are aligned with content standards for 5K. The EOC developed a 5K Readiness Assessment Framework (Table 6) that provides illustrative examples of 5K skills and capabilities that should be measured by any State-adopted assessment.
- ⇒ **Finding 6:** Districts throughout the state significantly vary in the type of assessments currently used to measure children’s growth and development in publicly-funded full-day 4K. The SCDE approved the following four-year-old assessments to measure children’s growth and skill development for the 2014-15 school year:
 - Work Sampling System
 - Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum, Ages 3-5
 - GOLD by Teaching Strategies
 - HighScope Preschool Child Observation Record
 - Galileo Pre-K Online Assessment System
 - Learning Accomplishment File

- Montessori assessment.⁴⁹

For publicly-funded full-day 4K, private child care providers have used the Work Sampling System for assessment purposes, but this has been a site-based decision made by participating child care providers. During 2014-15, South Carolina First Steps encouraged the use of authentic assessment and portfolios based on state standards. Providers also completed Ages and Stages Questionnaire, third-edition developmental screening, in addition to mCLASS:Circle. All of this assessment information was provided to parents four times a year.

During the April 13, 2015 Working Group session, participants also discussed the following language and literacy assessments for 4K: My IGDIS, ELSA, Teaching Strategies GOLD, PALS Pre-K, and mCLASS:CIRCLE. Teaching Strategies GOLD is used by Head Start in South Carolina. Charleston County School District uses My IGDIS. Other assessments discussed for 5K readiness included the BESS for social-emotional development and TEAM for math competency.

- **Recommendation 6:** Based upon a review of the assessment analysis conducted under Recommendation 1, the State Board of Education should approve a shortened list of evidence-based assessment options for all publicly-funded four-year-olds. Upon approval, assessment options should be provided to public schools and private providers. Below is a recommended timeline that has been developed in collaboration with the SCDE.

Table 9
Timeline for 4K and 5K Assessment Implementation

Year	4K	5K
2015-16	Choice of Three Formative Assessments Selected by SDE	Language and Literacy Assessment Selected by SDE
2016-17	Choice of Three Formative Assessments Selected by SDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language and Literacy Assessment Selected by SDE • Readiness Assessment(s) or Checklist(s) for Other 4 Domains

⇒ **Finding 7:** There are multiple, significant components of an assessment system beyond individual student assessment. Other important factors include: standards, reporting, professional development, adult-child interactions and inclusion of children with disabilities. By addressing these other factors, the quality of instruction, and subsequently student achievement should improve.

⁴⁹ As listed in the SC Department of Education’s *South Carolina Child Development Education Program 2014-2015 Public School Guidelines*, effective July 2014.

- **Recommendation 7:** To improve the quality of instruction for young students from pre-kindergarten through early elementary grades, the General Assembly should support creative, evidence-based approaches to improving the quality of publicly-funded full-day 4K. The General Assembly should fund a pilot program that would encourage creative and innovative approaches to measuring and improving quality, such as the enhancement of teacher-child interactions in classroom settings.

⇒ **Finding 8:** Assessment of young children is vital to inform instruction and provide essential information for caregivers and teachers to better understand individual children’s developmental progress and how well they are learning. Some local districts and communities, like Florence 1 and Beaufort County, collaborate with local private childcare centers to provide additional professional development opportunities that align early learning with readiness goals for young children being served in diverse early learning environments.

- **Recommendation 8:** All children should be ready to learn when they enter kindergarten, regardless of their previous preschool learning environment. To prepare all children for kindergarten, including children served in private childcare settings, the State Board of Education, in consultation with the Department of Social Services, should consider providing any state-procured early readiness assessment(s) or checklists and associated professional development to childcare centers that want to voluntarily use the assessments and professional development to improve instruction. Any private childcare providers who voluntarily participate in a state-procured readiness assessment would be required to provide assessment data to the state. The State Board may want to consider using innovative examples of public-private partnerships like those in Florence 1 and Beaufort County as models of such collaboration.

Appendices

Appendix A: Act 287 of 2014 (First Steps Reauthorization)

SECTION 3. Chapter 152, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 59-152-33. (A) Before July 1, 2015, the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee shall recommend an assessment to evaluate and measure the school readiness of students prior to their entrance into a prekindergarten or kindergarten program per the goals pursuant to Section 59-152-30 to the State Board of Education. Prior to submitting the recommendation to the State Board, the Education Oversight Committee shall seek input from the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees and other early childhood advocates. In making the recommendation, the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee shall consider assessments that are research-based, reliable, and appropriate for measuring readiness. The assessment chosen must evaluate each child’s early language and literacy development, numeracy skills, physical well-being, social and emotional development, and approaches to learning. The assessment of academic readiness must be aligned with first and second grade standards for English language arts and mathematics. The purpose of the assessment is to provide teachers, administrators, and parents or guardians with information to address the readiness needs of each student, especially by identifying language, cognitive, social, emotional, and health needs, and providing appropriate instruction and support for each child. The results of the screenings and the developmental intervention strategies recommended to address the child’s identified needs must be provided, in writing, to the parent or guardian. Reading instructional strategies and developmental activities for children whose oral language and emergent literacy skills are assessed to be below the national standards must be aligned with the district’s reading proficiency plan for addressing the readiness needs of each student. The school readiness assessment adopted by the State Board of Education may not be used to deny a student admission or progress to kindergarten or first grade. Every student entering the public schools for the first time in prekindergarten and kindergarten must be administered a readiness screening by the forty-fifth day of the school year.

(B) The results of individual students in a school readiness assessment may not be publicly reported.

(C) Following adoption of a school readiness assessment, the State Board of Education shall adopt a system for reporting population-level results that provides baseline data for measuring overall change and improvement in the skills and knowledge of students over time. The Department of Education shall house and monitor the system.

(D) The South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees shall support the implementation of the school readiness assessment and must provide professional development to support the readiness assessment for teachers and parents of programs supported with First Steps funds. The board shall utilize the annual aggregate literacy and other readiness assessment information in establishing standards and practices to support all early childhood providers served by First Steps.”

Appendix B: Act 284 of 2014 (Read to Succeed)

Section 59-155-150. (A) With the enactment of this chapter, the State Superintendent of Education shall ensure that every student entering publically funded prekindergarten and kindergarten beginning in Fiscal Year 2014-2015 will be administered a readiness assessment by the forty-fifth day of the school year. Initially the assessment shall focus on early language and literacy development. Beginning in Fiscal Year 2016-2017, the assessment must assess each child's early language and literacy development, mathematical thinking, physical well-being, and social-emotional development. The assessment may include multiple assessments, all of which must be approved by the board. The approved assessments of academic readiness must be aligned with first and second grade standards for English/language arts and mathematics. The purpose of the assessment is to provide teachers and parents or guardians with information to address the readiness needs of each student, especially by identifying language, cognitive, social, emotional, health problems, and concerning appropriate instruction for each child. The results of the assessment and the developmental intervention strategies recommended to address the child's identified needs must be provided, in writing, to the parent or guardian. Reading instructional strategies and developmental activities for children whose oral language skills are assessed to be below the norm of their peers in the State must be aligned with the district's reading proficiency plan for addressing the readiness needs of each student. The results of each assessment also must be reported to the Read to Succeed Office.

Appendix C: Provisos 1A.2 and 1A.76 (Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Assessments)

1A.2. (SDE-EIA:XII.B - Half Day Program for Four-Year-Olds) Of the funds appropriated in Part IA, Section 1,XII.B. for half-day programs for four-year-olds, up to \$2,500,000 must be allocated for the administration in the current fiscal year of a formative readiness assessment or assessments that will analyze the early literacy competencies of children in publicly funded prekindergarten and public kindergarten so that students may receive the appropriate support and intervention to succeed in school. The assessments must be approved by the State Board of Education. Professional development and teacher training must be provided by the department. The remainder of the funds shall be distributed based on the prior year number of students in kindergarten eligible for free and reduce price lunch to school districts that are not participating or not eligible to participate in the Child Development Education Pilot Program.

H. 3701 as adopted by the House:

1A.67. (SDE-EIA: Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Assessments) For the current fiscal year, all publicly funded students entering a publicly funded prekindergarten or public kindergarten must be administered a readiness assessment approved by the State Board of Education that shall focus on early language and literacy development no later than the forty fifth day of the school year. ~~The readiness assessment must be approved by the State Board of Education. The approved readiness assessment must be aligned with kindergarten and first grade standards for English/language arts and mathematics.~~ The results of the assessment and the developmental intervention strategies recommended or services needed to address the child's identified needs must be provided, in writing, to the parent or guardian. The readiness assessment may not be used to deny a student admission or to progress to kindergarten or first grade.

~~The Education Oversight Committee shall recommend the characteristics of the readiness assessment for children in prekindergarten and kindergarten, focused on early language and literacy development, to the State Board of Education no later than July thirtieth. Prior to submitting the recommendation to the State Board, the Education Oversight Committee shall seek input from the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees and other early childhood advocates. The State Board must move expeditiously to approve or modify the criteria submitted by the committee. Once approved, with the assistance of the Education Oversight Committee, the board shall develop a solicitation to be used in procuring the assessment. The solicitation must be forwarded to the Executive Director of the State Fiscal Accountability Authority who must immediately move to procure the readiness assessment in order to meet the forty five day requirement. The Executive Director is authorized to make changes to the solicitation with the consent of the Chairman of the State Board of Education and the Chairman of the Education Oversight Committee. The Department of Education must bear the costs of the procurement.~~

Appendix D: June 30, 2014 EOC Memo to State Board of Education (Early Readiness Assessment Characteristics)

MEMORANDUM

TO: Barry Bolen, Chair of State Board of Education
Traci Young Cooper, Chair Elect of State Board of Education

FROM: Melanie Barton 

DATE: June 30, 2014

IN RE: Early Readiness Assessment Characteristics

On behalf of the Education Oversight Committee (EOC), I am forwarding to you the recommendations of the Committee regarding proviso 1A.76. of the 2014-15 General Appropriation Act as ratified by the General Assembly on June 5, 2014.

1A.76. (SDE-EIA: Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Assessments)
For the current fiscal year, all students entering a publicly funded prekindergarten or public kindergarten must be administered a readiness assessment that shall focus on early language and literacy development no later than the forty fifth day of the school year. The readiness assessment must be approved by the State Board of Education. The approved readiness assessment must be aligned with kindergarten and first grade standards for English/language arts and mathematics. The results of the assessment and the developmental intervention strategies recommended or services needed to address the child's identified needs must be provided, in writing, to the parent or guardian. The readiness assessment may not be used to deny a student admission or to progress to kindergarten or first grade.

The Education Oversight Committee shall recommend the characteristics of the readiness assessment for children in prekindergarten and kindergarten, focused on early language and literacy development, to the State Board of Education no later than July 30. Prior to submitting the recommendation to the State Board, the Education Oversight Committee shall seek input from the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees and other early childhood advocates. The State Board must move expeditiously to approve or modify the criteria submitted by the committee. Once approved, with the assistance of the

David Whittemore
CHAIR
Daniel B. Merck
VICE CHAIR
J. Phillip Bowers
Anne H. Bull
Mike Fair
Margaret Anne Gaffney
Barbara B. Hairfield
Nikki Haley
R. Wesley Hayes, Jr.
Alex Martin
John W. Matthews, Jr.
Joseph H. Neal
Andrew S. Patrick
Neil C. Robinson, Jr.
J. Roland Smith
Patti J. Tate
John Warner
Mick Zais

Melanie D. Barton
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Education Oversight Committee, the board shall develop a solicitation to be used in procuring the assessment. The solicitation must be forwarded to the Executive Director of the Budget and Control Board who must immediately move to procure the readiness assessment in order to meet the forty- five day requirement. The Executive Director is authorized to make changes to the solicitation with the consent of the Chairman of the State Board of Education and the Chairman of the Education Oversight Committee. The Department of Education must bear the costs of the procurement.

The proviso specifically requires that the EOC recommend “no later than July 30” to the State Board of Education the characteristics of a readiness assessment for children entering publicly funded prekindergarten (four-year-old kindergarten) and kindergarten (five-year-old kindergarten) by the 45th day of the school year, which equates to the first nine weeks of school. Prior to submitting its recommendations, the EOC is required to seek input from the Office of First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees and other early childhood advocates.

Background

The General Assembly focused several of its key public education initiatives on improving reading achievement. The General Assembly this session enacted the Read to Succeed legislation that addresses the importance of early identification and intervention of struggling readers, of teacher preparation and training, and of parental involvement and community support to systemically improve reading achievement. Furthermore, the General Assembly expanded the Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP). Any four-year-old who qualifies for the free or reduced price Federal lunch program and/or Medicaid and who resides in a school district where at a poverty index of least 70 percent or more is eligible to participate in a full-day education program in a public or private center at no cost. The legislature also addressed the importance of a readiness assessment focused on early literacy based on evidence that:

The assessment of emergent literacy skills can serve to identify those children who may be at risk for later reading difficulties. Furthermore, assessment can guide the content and delivery of early literacy instruction. Failure to identify children early and provide appropriate intervention to promote emergent literacy skills is likely to have serious repercussions for later development of conventional reading skills.⁵⁰

In the fall of 2013 the EOC contacted Dr. William H. Brown, leader of the previous CDEPP evaluations to assist the agency in planning and implementing an evaluation of the CDEPP Expansion. Dr. Brown and colleagues from the University of South Carolina convened a well-informed task force of individuals familiar with CDEPP and early childhood services including:⁵¹

- Dr. Lorin Anderson, Distinguished Professor Emeritus, University of South Carolina
- Dr. Kevin Andrews, EOC
- Lillian Atkins, Lexington School District 4, Early Childhood Center
- ~~Melanie Barton, EOC~~
- Leigh Bolick, DSS Early Care and Education

⁵⁰ Spencer, E., Spencer, T., Goldstein, H., & Scheider, N. (2013). Identifying early literacy learning needs: Implications for child outcome standards and assessment systems. In T. Shanahan & C. Lonigan (Eds.), *Literacy in preschool and kindergarten children: The National Early Literacy Panel and beyond* (pp. 45-70). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

⁵¹ *2013-14 Expansion of the SC Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP) Report*. Appendix I. SC Education Oversight Committee. January 21, 2014. 2013-14

- Dr. Bill Brown, University of South Carolina
- Floyd Creech, Florence School District 1
- Dr. Leigh D'Amico, Office of Program Evaluation, University of South Carolina
- Penny Danielson, SC Department of Education
- Mary Lynn Diggs, Head Start Collaboration
- Pam Dinkins, Central Carolina Technical College
- Dr. Christine DiStefano, University of South Carolina
- Dewayne Frederick, Beaufort Jasper EOC Head Start
- Rachael Fulmer, State Budget Division
- Dr. Susan Gehlmann, Berkeley County Schools, Director of Elementary Education
- Betty Harrington, Clarendon School District 2, Manning Early Childhood Center
- Ashley Hutchinson, Beaufort County Schools
- Debbie Hyler, The School Foundation, Florence School District 1
- Mellanie Jinnette, SC Department of Education
- Kassie Mae Miller, Office of Program Evaluation, University of South Carolina
- Jenny May, Children's Law Center, University of South Carolina
- Katy Sides, Institute for Child Success
- Dr. Reginald Williams, South Carolina State University
- Dr. Dan Wuori, Office of First Steps to School Readiness
- Dana Yow, EOC

The stakeholders met on November 1, 2013 in Columbia and began working on a framework and glossary. The framework and glossary were recommended and published in the EOC's annual evaluation of CDEPP.³ The framework identifies key academic and social accomplishments that must be addressed if children are to succeed in kindergarten. Included in these accomplishments are language and literacy skills defined as:

Critical language and literacy skills included but are not necessarily limited to communication of needs and preferences, listening, receptive and expressive vocabulary, phonological awareness, alphabetic principal and knowledge, print and book knowledge, prewriting and writing skills, and reading comprehension.

In addition the EOC has been working since last summer with officials from the Florida Center for Reading Research at Florida State University and from the Florida Just Read! Office and with early childhood experts in South Carolina at the school, district, higher education and state levels on the P-20 reading initiative.

In April of 2014, the EOC staff participated in a Think Tank on School Readiness in Greenville, sponsored by the Institute for Child Success (ICS) in Greenville. ICS had published an issue brief and extended white paper, *School Readiness: Moving Toward a Shared Definition, Standardized Assessment, and Unifying Language*. On June 16, 2014 the EOC contacted the staff of ICS and asked ICS to review the nine characteristics of a readiness assessment focused on early language and literacy development that were tentatively approved by the EOC on June 8. Based upon the input of the Think Tank and the research paper, ICS concurred that the nine

³ 2013-14 Expansion of the SC Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP) Report. Section V. SC Education Oversight Committee. January 21, 2014.

characteristics capture many of the elements ICS considers “essential to an effective early language and literacy assessment. ICS sees print awareness and orientation, verbal communication, picture and letter recognition, ability to tell a story, beginning of proper oral word use and sentence structure, alphabetic principle and knowledge, prewriting and writing/pretend, listening/story recall and vocabulary as important elements of this assessment, which are in line with the elements included in the EOC recommended assessment characteristics.”⁵²

On June 10, 2014 the EOC staff mailed and emailed letters to the Executive Director and Deputy Director of the Office of First Steps to School Readiness, to the Governor and to the Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees to the Office of First Steps requesting input on the proposed nine characteristics. The First Steps Board of Trustees met on June 26, 2014 and voted to recommend three additional characteristics of the assessment to the EOC. These recommendations are included in the following:

Recommendation:

Consequently, per the requirements of Proviso 1A.76. the Education Oversight Committee recommends to the State Board of Education, the following characteristics of an early language and literacy assessment for students entering four-year-old and five-year-old kindergarten programs during the 2014-15 school year.

A readiness assessment administered to children in four-year-old and five-year-old kindergarten in school year 2014-15 and focused on early language and literacy development should have the following characteristics:

1. The assessment should measure critical language and literacy skills including, but not limited to communication of needs and preferences, listening, receptive and expressive vocabulary, phonological awareness, alphabetic principles and knowledge, print and book knowledge, prewriting and writing skills, and reading comprehension.
2. The assessment must be supported by empirical data or evidence documenting that it measures these critical language and literacy skills and that these competencies are predictive of later reading and writing success.
3. The assessment should provide student-level results that can then inform individual literacy instruction by teachers.
4. The assessment should provide student-level results that can assist parents or guardians in providing appropriate support to assist their child's language development.
5. The assessment should be able to measure student growth from one year to the next, from 4K to 5K, at a minimum.
6. The assessment should provide accommodations for children with disabilities and children who are English language learners.
7. The assessment should give timely, student-level feedback and reports to parents, teachers, schools and the state.

⁵² Email from Katy Sides, Director of Research and Grants, Institute for Child Success, to Melanie Barton, Executive Director of the EOC, dated June 21, 2014.

8. The assessment should demonstrate alignment with South Carolina English language arts standards.
9. The assessment should have a well-documented and detailed description of its development and history, including what states use the assessment to guarantee the assessment's reliability and validity.
10. The assessment should be curriculum neutral and therefore not require the use of any specific early childhood curriculum in the publicly funded prekindergarten or public kindergarten programs.

In addition, based upon the input received, the EOC also recommends to the State Board of Education that vendors responding to the request for proposal be asked to:

- Document the specific components of the assessment, including but not limited to, print awareness and orientation, verbal communication, picture and letter recognition, ability to tell a story, beginning of proper oral word use and sentence structure, alphabetic principle and knowledge, prewriting and writing/pretend, listening/story recall and vocabulary;
- Document the amount of ongoing professional development that can be provided to schools and districts; and
- Document the amount of time that will be required to administer the assessment so that the assessment is respectful of classroom teachers' time and need for professional development.

cc: Nancy Busbee, SC Department of Education
Liz Jones, SC Department of Education

Appendix E:
Profile of the South Carolina Graduate

Profile of the South Carolina Graduate



World Class Knowledge

- Rigorous standards in language arts and math for career and college readiness
- Multiple languages, science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), arts and social sciences

World Class Skills

- Creativity and innovation
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Communication, information, media and technology
- Knowing how to learn

Life and Career Characteristics

- Integrity
- Self-direction
- Global perspective
- Perseverance
- Work ethic
- Interpersonal skills



Approved by SCASA Superintendent's Roundtable
and SC Chamber of Commerce



Note: Endorsed in February and March 2015 by State Board of Education and EOC

Appendix F: Meeting Agendas for EOC Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee



AGENDA

Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee

November 17, 2014
Lexington 4 Early Childhood Center
135 Lewis Rast Road, Swansea

- | | | |
|------|---|--|
| I. | Introductions | Ms. Barbara Hairfield, Chair |
| II. | Overview of Subcommittee Mission and Timeline | Ms. Barbara Hairfield |
| III. | Overview of Readiness Domains | |
| | <p>Dr. Leigh Kale D'Amico
<i>Research Assistant Professor, USC College of Education</i></p> <p>Leigh Bolick
<i>Director, DSS Division of Early Care and Education</i></p> <p>Mary Lynne Diggs
<i>Director, SC Head Start Collaboration Office</i></p> <p>Dwayne Johnson
<i>Director, Head Start of Beaufort and Jasper Counties</i></p> | |
| IV. | Discussion of Approaches to Learning and Social/Emotional Domains | <p>David Whittmore
CHAIR</p> <p>Daniel B. Merck
VICE CHAIR</p> <p>Anne H. Bull</p> <p>Mike Fair</p> <p>Margaret Anne Gaffney</p> <p>Barbara B. Hairfield</p> <p>Nikki Haley</p> <p>R. Wesley Hayes, Jr.</p> <p>Deb. Marks</p> <p>Alex Martin</p> <p>John W. Matthews, Jr.</p> <p>Joseph H. Neal</p> <p>Andrew S. Patrick</p> <p>Neil C. Robinson, Jr.</p> <p>J. Roland Smith</p> <p>Patti J. Tate</p> <p>Mick Zeis</p> |
| V. | Adjournment | |
| VI. | Lunch | |
| | <p><u>Subcommittee Members:</u>
Barbara Hairfield, Chair
Margaret Anne Gaffney, Co-Chair
Anne Bull
Sen. Mike Fair
Deb Marks
Rep. Andy Patrick
Patti Tate</p> | <p>Melanie D. Barton
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</p> |

**(REVISED)
AGENDA**

Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee

January 26, 2015
 2:00 pm
 Brown Building, Room 415

- I. Welcome & Introductions Mrs. Barbara Hairfield
- II. Action: Approval of Minutes - November 17, 2014
- III. Progress Update and Discussion Dr. Dan Wuori
 Deputy Director
 SC First Steps to School Readiness
- IV. Cognitive Skills Dr. Sandra M. Linder
 Assistant Professor
 Early Childhood Mathematics Education
 Clemson University
- V. Language and Literacy Dr. Bill Brown
 Professor
 Department of Educational Studies
 University of SC
- VI. Wrap Up and Discussion
- VII. Adjournment

Subcommittee Members
 Barbara Hairfield, Chair
 Margaret Anne Gaffney, Co-Chair
 Anne Bull
 Sen. Mike Fair
 Deb Marks
 Patti Tate

David Whittlemore
 CHAIR
 Daniel B. Merck
 VICE CHAIR
 Anne H. Bull
 Mike Fair
 Margaret Anne Gaffney
 Barbara B. Hairfield
 Nikki Haley
 R. Wesley Hayes, Jr.
 Deb. Marks
 John W. Matthews, Jr.
 Joseph H. Neal
 Neil C. Robinson, Jr.
 Molly Spearman
 Patti J. Tate
 Melanie D. Barton
 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

AGENDA

Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee

**Monday, March 23, 2015
 10:00 am
 Blatt Building, Room 433**

- I. Welcome & Introductions Mrs. Barbara Hairfield
- II. Action: Approval of Minutes – January 26, 2015
- III. Local Early Education Systems Dr. Floyd Creech
*Director of School Readiness
 Florence School District One*
- IV. Physical Health & Motor Skills Development..... Dr. Becky White
Pediatrics of Newberry
- V. Status of Early Childhood Assessment in SC..... Ms. Penny Danielson
*Program Manager, Early Learning & Literacy
 & Education Associate, CDEP, SCDE*
- VI. Discussion and Next Steps
- VII. Adjournment

- David Whitmore
CHAIR
- Daniel B. Merck
VICE CHAIR
- Anne H. Bull
- Bob Couch
- Mike Fair
- Raye Felder
- Margaret Anne Gaffney
- Barbara B. Hairfield
- Nikki Haley
- R. Wesley Hayes, Jr.
- Dwight A. Loftis
- Deb. Marks
- John W. Matthews, Jr.
- Joseph H. Neal
- Neil C. Robinson, Jr.
- Molly Spearman
- Patti J. Tate

Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee Members:

Mrs. Barbara Hairfield, Chairwoman
 Mrs. Margaret Anne Gaffney, Co-Chair
 Mrs. Anne Bull
 Sen. Mike Fair
 Ms. Deb Marks
 Ms. Patti Tate

Melanie D. Barton
 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Appendix G:

Readiness Assessment Working Group

April 13, 2015 1:00 p.m. 415 Brown Building

Lillian Atkins
Principal, Early Childhood Center
Lexington School District Four

Melanie Barton
Executive Director
SC Education Oversight Committee

*Michael Brenan
President
BB&T

Jean Brewington
Director, Elementary Education
Spartanburg School District Three

Bill Brown
Professor, Educational Studies
University of South Carolina

*Gina Carter
Coordinator, Early Childhood Education
Richland School District One

*Kim Chariker
Director
ABC Academy

Floyd Creech
Director, School Readiness
Florence School District One

Penny Danielson
CDEP Coordinator
SC Department of Education

Mary Lynne Diggs
Director
SC Head Start Collaboration Office

Christine DiStefino
Associate Professor of Educational Research
University of South Carolina

*Dewayne Federick
Director
Beaufort/Jasper Head Start

Kimberly Foxworth
Director, Child Development
Charleston School District

Fred Greer
Research Assistant Professor
Department of Educational Studies
University of South Carolina

Quantina Haggwood
Director, Early Childhood Education
Richland School District One

Barbara Hairfield
Chair, Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee
SC Education Oversight Committee

Patti Hammel
Executive Director, Student Performance & Federal
Programs
Georgetown School District

Betty Harrington
Principal, Manning Early Childhood Center
Clarendon School District Two

Elizabeth Jones
Director of Assessment
SC Department of Education

Jennifer McConnell
Director, Child Development Center
Brookland Baptist Church

*Noelle McInerney
Program Manager, ABC Program Monitoring
Activities
SC Department of Social Services

Linnie Miller
Director
Carolina C.A.A. Head Start & Early Head Start

James L. Pasley, Jr.
Executive Director/CEO
Waccamaw Economic Opportunity Council, Inc.

*Lindsay Singleton
Operator
Upstate Children's Center of Walhalla

Karen Sparkman
Director Early Intervention and Support Services
Greenville School District

Martha Strickland
State Director
SC First Steps

Bunnie Ward
Director, Policy Development & Evaluation
SC Education Oversight Committee

*David Whittemore
Chairman
SC Education Oversight Committee

*Dana Yow
Director, Public Engagement & Communications
SC Education Oversight Committee

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* Indicates invited but did not attend.



Appendix H: EOC Letter to SC First Steps Board Chair Requesting Input for the EOC Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Framework

April 15, 2015

Mr. Ken Wingate
Chairman
SC First Steps Board of Trustees
1300 Sumter Street, Suite 100
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Chairman Wingate:

Pursuant to Section 59-152-33(A) of the South Carolina Code of Laws the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) is required by July 1, 2015 to:

"to evaluate and measure the school readiness of students prior to their entrance into a prekindergarten or kindergarten program per the goals pursuant to Section 59-152-30 to the State Board of Education. Prior to submitting the recommendation to the State Board, the Education Oversight Committee shall seek input from the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees and other early childhood advocates. In making the recommendation, the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee shall consider assessments that are research-based, reliable, and appropriate for measuring readiness. The assessment chosen must evaluate each child's early language and literacy development, numeracy skills, physical well-being, social and emotional development, and approaches to learning. The assessment of academic readiness must be aligned with first and second grade standards for English language arts and mathematics. The purpose of the assessment is to provide teachers, administrators, and parents or guardians with information to address the readiness needs of each student, especially by identifying language, cognitive, social, emotional, and health needs, and providing appropriate instruction and support for each child. The results of the screenings and the developmental intervention strategies recommended to address the child's identified needs must be provided, in writing, to the parent or guardian. Reading instructional strategies and developmental activities for children whose oral language and emergent literacy skills are assessed to be below the national standards must be aligned with the district's reading proficiency plan for addressing the readiness needs of each student. The school readiness assessment adopted by the State Board of Education may not be used to deny a student admission or progress to kindergarten or first grade. Every student entering the public schools for the first time in prekindergarten and kindergarten must be administered a readiness screening by the forty-fifth day of the school year."

David Whittamore
CHAIR

Daniel B. Merck
VICE CHAIR

Anne H. Bull

Bob Couch

Mike Fair

Raye Felder

Margaret Anne Gaffney

Barbara B. Hairfield

Nikki Haley

R. Wesley Hayes, Jr.

Dwight A. Loftis

Deb Marks

John W. Matthews, Jr.

Joseph H. Neal

Neil C. Robinson, Jr.

Molly Spearman

Patti J. Tate

Melanie D. Barton
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mr. Ken Wingate
April 15, 2015
Page 2

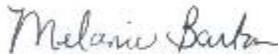
In the fall of 2014 the EOC established an Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee to make recommendations to the full EOC per the law. The subcommittee has convened three times with the final meeting to occur May 18 followed by the full EOC on June 8.

On Monday, April 13, 2015 a working group composed of early childhood coordinators in school districts, private child care center directors, Head Start officials, and representatives from the South Carolina Department of Education and the State Office of First Steps to School Readiness met to discuss readiness assessment. In order for them to consider specific assessments, the EOC drafted the attached document to ensure all working group participants were in general agreement about skills children should have upon entry into kindergarten. The working group discussed the attached document entitled State Readiness Assessment and provided feedback to the staff and committee. That information is being collected now.

The EOC respectfully asks the First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees consider the attached framework that the EOC will consider to determine the domains and areas that a comprehensive readiness assessment or assessments should measure to determine readiness for kindergarten. The information is based upon the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate which has been endorsed by the State Board of Education and the EOC and the newly adopted South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards in English language arts and mathematics for kindergarten students. The state's Early Learning Standards for children from birth to age 5 were also considered to ensure there were no conflicts. However, since they are still being amended, any potential changes to the Early Learning Standards were not part of the analysis. Therefore, the framework considered the end product – the world class skills, life and career characteristics and world class knowledge that South Carolina graduates from our public high schools should have – and the standards that five-year-olds should master upon completing kindergarten.

The EOC looks forward to getting input on how to improve and amend the framework to guarantee that students are ready to succeed by May 6, 2015, if at all possible, so that the Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee can incorporate the Board's recommendations.

Sincerely,



Melanie Barton
Executive Director

C: Susan DeVenny, Executive Director, State Office of First Steps
Dr. Dan Wuori, Deputy Director, State Office of First Steps
Barbara Hairfield, Chair, Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee

Attachment

Appendix I:
SC First Steps Input Regarding EOC Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Framework



Melanie Barton
Director
SC Education Oversight Committee
P.O. Box 11867
Columbia, SC 29211

May 6, 2015

Dear Mrs. Barton,

As you are aware, Section 59-152-33 (A) of the South Carolina Code of Laws requires that:

“Before July 1, 2015, the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee shall recommend an assessment to evaluate and measure the school readiness of students prior to their entrance into a prekindergarten or kindergarten program per the goals pursuant to Section 59-152-30 to the State Board of Education. Prior to submitting the recommendation to the State Board, the Education Oversight Committee shall seek input from the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees and other early childhood advocates. In making the recommendation, the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee shall consider assessments that are research-based, reliable, and appropriate for measuring readiness.”

Pursuant to this section and your written request dated April 15, 2015, I am writing to share the feedback of the SC First Steps Board of Trustees.

As relates to the Board’s feedback regarding the attributes of a high-quality readiness assessment, I am enclosing Attachment 1 – generated during the Board’s open dialogue during its March 19, 2015 meeting. This document detail’s the Board’s desires related to five key questions:

- What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for *students*?
- What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for *parents*?
- What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for *teachers*?
- What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for *policymakers*?
- What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for *other key stakeholders*?

In regard to the draft document shared by the EOC on April 15, we have been most appreciative of the EOC’s participation (along with that of the SC Department of Education, the Institute for Child Success, Transform SC and others) in a pair of recent meetings of the SC First Steps Board’s Program and Grants Committee – which is leading our own work under Section 59-152-32 (A) to create a description of school readiness to include:

*“(a) characteristics and development levels of a ready child that must include, but are not limited to, emerging literacy, numeracy, and physical, social, and emotional competencies;
(b) characteristics of school, educators, and caregivers that the board considers necessary to create an optimal learning environment for the early years of students’ lives; and
(c) characteristics of the optimal environment which would lead to the readiness of students and their continued success.”*

As part of this work the committee has recently created a crosswalk document comparing the EOC’s draft framework with the national milestones of the Parents as Teachers curriculum, South Carolina’s Good Start, Grow Smart Early Learning Standards and feedback recently offered by the Institute for Child Success, which I have attached in draft form as Attachment 2.

Appendix I:
SC First Steps Input Regarding EOC Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Framework

Based on the committee's work, we are pleased to note significant alignment across these four documents. As articulated to EOC staff during the committee's May 3rd teleconference, First Steps intends to use this document as a key source in the development of a parent- and community-friendly description of readiness as we have been charged in Section 59-152-32 (A). We hope that when completed, the EOC will consider endorsing this document alongside the State Board of Education as single description around which we can collectively plan on behalf of SC children.

We appreciate the opportunity to inform your important process and hope you won't ever hesitate to reach out as the First Steps Board of Trustees can be of assistance to you in our shared work.

Respectfully,

Ken Wingate
Chair
SC First Steps Board of Trustees

cc: David Whittemore, Chair, SC Education Oversight Committee
Superintendent Molly Spearman
Dr. Traci Young-Cooper, Chair, State Board of Education
Dr. Danny Varat, State Board of Education
Julia-Ellen Davis, Chair, SCFS Board of Trustees Program and Grants Committee
Susan DeVenny, Director, SC First Steps to School Readiness

What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for STUDENTS?

- Support the child's success: provide feedback, affirmation, direction
- Time for one-on-one time with teacher, relationship building. A comfortable time for students.
- Want to convey information with sensitivity, positivity
- Provide motivation and a hunger for learning
- Provide snapshot of strengths and weaknesses (to guide teacher for instructional planning)
- A measure of student growth
- A culturally sensitive measure that includes multiple areas of development

What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for PARENTS?

- What should they expect of their child? Information to inform against an objective range.
- Results provided to compare against milestones
- Help develop a relationship of trust
- Bridge of communication...two way conversation between parents and teachers
- Parent friendly in its delivery, help parents to understand. Uses accessible language.
- Letting parents know what their children need - insight as to what they can do to support their child's areas of weakness
- Sensitivity to range of normal (don't let parenting be competitive)
- Establishing communication and relationships

What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for TEACHERS?

- Snapshot of where the child is at that moment. In context that it is just for that moment.
- Flexibility.
- Opportunity to document progression in all areas.
- Encourage risk-taking in children, help work on their weaknesses.
- Assessment process needs to be sensitive to teacher overload.
- Should not be punitive to teachers.
- Tool that isn't influenced by student behavior. Some unable to focus, sit down and "be assessed."
- Help inform/drive instruction.
- The only thing we assess is content knowledge...Needs to measure characteristics and skills like integrity and perseverance. Approaches to learning.
- Give teachers flexibility to reinforce important attributes like caring, integrity.

What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for POLICYMAKERS?

- Data that allows them to make important decisions as they are setting policy.
- Help them understand the goals by age group and how do children measure up?
- Confidence that assessments are accurate.

What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for OTHER KEY STAKEHOLDERS?

- Is there a way to use assessment broadly to inform other key stakeholders?
- Is there a way to gather information from stakeholders such as pediatricians?

Appendix I:
SC First Steps Input Regarding EOC Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Framework

Parents as Teachers Milestones	EOC	ICS Priorities	SC 4K Preschool Standards	SC First Steps: Proposed Consensus Language
Language and Literacy				
Listening, Speaking, Understanding				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can learn a song and the actions that go with the words. • I carry out four simple, related directions in order (e.g., steps to get ready to go outdoors). • I use six to eight words in a sentence. • I use future and past tenses. • I carry on a conversation for multiple turns on the same topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain meaning by listening. • Follow directions that involve a series of actions. • Demonstrate phonological and phonemic awareness (rhyme, alliteration, smaller and smaller units of sound). • Speak clearly and convey ideas effectively. • Use expanded vocabulary and language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal communication* • Recognition of speech sounds • Answering questions • Ability to tell a story* • Rhyming • Using language to solve a problem • Self-expression • Cultural competencies • English skills for non-native speakers • Dual language learners (may have these skills but not in English) • Family/community experience • Learning objects • Beginning of proper word use and sentence structure (orally)* • Listening/story recall* • Expressive and receptive language skills • Vocabulary* 	<p>ELA -4K-1.2 Make relevant comments or appropriate responses to story events or characters.</p> <p>ELA-4K-1.3 Distinguish between descriptions of story events and spoken words of characters.</p> <p>ELA-4K-1.4 Respond to elements of colorful language in stories and poetry.</p> <p>ELA-4K-1.5 Retell one or two events from a story read aloud.</p> <p>ELA-4K-1.7 Recall some details in stories read aloud.</p> <p>ELA-4K-1.10 Begin to ask questions about the causes of events they observe or hear about in books.</p> <p>ELA-4K-3.7 Begin using appropriate voice volume, sentence, structure (syntax), and vocabulary.</p> <p>ELA-4K-3.9 Recognize rhyming words with adult modeling.</p>	<p>I can listen to stories and understand their meaning.</p> <p>I can carry on a conversation, taking turns speaking, listening.</p> <p>I can answer questions that others ask of me.</p> <p>I can follow directions that have several steps.</p> <p>I can remember details and retell stories.</p> <p>I can speak clearly and express my ideas and questions.</p> <p>I have a growing vocabulary and speak in sentences of at least six to eight words.</p> <p>I can use words to seek help and solve problems.</p> <p>I can recognize and name rhyming words.</p>

Appendix I:
SC First Steps Input Regarding EOC Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Framework

Early Reading				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I identify my own name when I see it printed. • I can predict a suitable ending to a simple story. • I can fill in a word that is missing from a rhyme, chant or song (e.g., Jack and Jill went up the ____.) • I can “read” environmental print and symbols print (e.g., McDonald’s, STOP, Exit). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show interest in and knowledge about books and reading. • Show some understanding of concepts about print. • Know letters, sounds, and how they form words. • Comprehend and respond to various literary texts (fiction, nonfiction, poetry). • Retell familiar stories. • Begin to understand how personal experiences connect to texts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print awareness and orientation* • Picture and letter recognition* • Alphabetic principle and knowledge* 	<p>ELA-4K-1.6 Begin to identify significant words from text read aloud.</p> <p>ELA-4K-3.1 Begin to use both pictures and text read aloud as cues to meaning of unfamiliar words.</p> <p>ELA-4K-3.3 Display curiosity and interest in learning new words.</p> <p>ELA-4K-3.13 Identify several letters and their general order in the alphabet.</p> <p>ELA-4K-3.14 Beginning to understand that letters can represent speech sounds.</p> <p>ELA-4K-3.20 Identify familiar environmental print such as business logos and traffic signs.</p> <p>ELA-4K-3.22 Understand relationship between print and pictures on page.</p>	<p>I know that printed text has a meaning.</p> <p>I can recognize my written name and maybe some other familiar words.</p> <p>I recognize many letters of the alphabet.</p> <p>I know that letters represent spoken sounds and know some of them – especially the ones in my name.</p> <p>I recognize and understand the meaning of familiar signs and logos in the world around me. (STOP, McDonalds, etc.).</p> <p>I have an interest in books and reading.</p> <p>I can make predictions about the things that will happen next in a story being read to me.</p> <p>I can use the pictures in a book to help me.</p> <p>I know how books work and can show you the front and back and turn the pages in correct order.</p> <p>I can fill in a word that is missing from a rhyme, chant or song. (e.g. “Jack and Jill went up the ____.”)</p>

Appendix I:
SC First Steps Input Regarding EOC Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Framework

Early Writing				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I use scribbles, shapes and letter-like symbols to write. • I try to write for a variety of purposes (e.g., lists, messages, pretend play). • I print some letters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent stories through pictures, dictation, and play. • Use letter-like shapes, symbols, letters, and words to convey meaning. • Understand purposes of writing. 	Prewriting and writing/pretend* writing/drawing	ELA-4K-2.6 Begin to understand graphic information which he/she has participated in creating. ELA-4K-3.4 Begin understanding how print is used to bring meaning. ELA-4K-4.3 Creates a picture and labels it orally. ELA-4K-4.6 Understands that each person in the class has a first and last name. ELA-4K-4.9 Makes some upper case letters without regard to proportion or placement. ELA-4K-5.1 Combine some letters with pretend writing. ELA-4K-5.2 Use drawings, letters, or words to create narratives about people and things in their environment.	I can print – or am learning to print - my name. I can write by combining some letters with other kinds of pretend writing (scribbles, letter-like shapes, symbols). I can print some letters. I can draw a picture and tell about it. I know that print carries a meaning and can “read” you what I have written. I sometimes write as a part of my play. (I might make a sign or a “grocery list” for example.)
Cognitive and General Knowledge				
Attention and Memory				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I stay with a task of my choice, without supervision, for more than 5 minutes • I can recall several details of a sequence of events with more detail. • I can reengage in a task after an interruption. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain interest in self-selected activities, even if there are interruptions or challenges. • Identify a problem and be flexible in solving it. Able to change plans if necessary to solve problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaningful engagement • Persistence • Ability to sit for a certain amount of time • The ability to complete tasks • Memory • Attention Object permanence (early memory)	AL-4K- 3.3 Show ability to focus attention for increasing variety of chosen tasks and activities for short periods of time (10-20 minutes). AL-4K-4.2 Demonstrate an increasing ability to organize actions and materials in the learning environment. AL-4K-5.1 Represent prior events and personal experiences in one or more ways. AL-4K-5.2 Demonstrate increasing ability to use prior knowledge to understand new experiences.	I am able to pay attention to a single task for a period of several minutes. When I am interrupted from a task I can go right back to it and pick up where I left off. As I play and go about my day, I am able to identify problems and change my plans to solve them. I use things I have learned previously and apply them in new situations. I can maintain my attention

Appendix I:
SC First Steps Input Regarding EOC Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Framework

				<p>to a story being read or through a short conversation with a friend or grown up.</p> <p>When I start something simple, I can maintain my attention long enough to finish it.</p>
Mathematics: Numbers, Counting				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can spontaneously recognize a group of five presented in a non-linear, organized way (e.g., on dice). • I count 10 objects out loud. • I can evenly divide a set of four objects between myself and a friend. • I can place five objects in order and explain my decision. • I can recognize some numerals. • I use a variety of vocabulary to make comparisons of quantity, size and weight (e.g., more, less, biggest). • I can use non-standard units to measure objects (e.g., determine how many blocks in the length of a table). • I can make reasonable estimates of small quantities of objects (up to seven or eight). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show understanding of relationship between number and quantity. • Begin to understand relationships between quantities. 	<p>Counting and using numbers to describe and compare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizing, and sorting shapes • Predicting • A sense of quantity (more vs. less) 	<p>M-4K-2.1 Count orally forward to twenty and backward from three.</p> <p>M-4K-2.2 Show one-to-one correspondence through ten when counting real objects.</p> <p>M-4K-2.3 Compare sets of no more than ten objects using the terms “more than” or “same as”.</p>	<p>I can count out loud to 20.</p> <p>I can count backward from three.</p> <p>I can count a group of up to 10 objects accurately.</p> <p>I recognize some printed numbers.</p> <p>I understand that there is a connection between a printed number and a quantity of objects.</p> <p>I use words to compare quantity (more and less), size (big and small) and weight (light and heavy).</p> <p>I can compare small sets of objects and accurately describe them using words like “more than” and “same as.”</p> <p>I recognize basic shapes like a circle, square and triangle.</p>

Appendix I:
SC First Steps Input Regarding EOC Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Framework

Matching sorting classifying				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I identify items based on category when looking at a picture book (e.g., animals, foods or toys). • I can sort objects into groups according to their characteristics. • I can create a predictable pattern. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sort objects into subgroups by classifying and comparing. • Recognize duplicates and extends patterns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making comparisons • Positioning/direction • Basic patterns/emergent algebra • Classification and use of symbols • Observational skills – what does not belong and what is missing 	<p>ELA-4K-6.3 Classify objects and information by observable attributes into predetermined categories.</p> <p>M-4K-1.4 Locate patterns in the environment.</p> <p>M-4K-3.2 Identify and copy a simple pattern.</p> <p>M-4K-3.4 Sort and classify objects by one attribute (size, shape, or color).</p>	<p>I can sort objects into groups that are “the same.”</p> <p>I can create simple patterns using real objects.</p> <p>I can point out simple patterns in the world around me.</p> <p>I can tell why an item or items does not belong in a group.</p>
Reasoning				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I explore the effects of forces in nature such as wind, gravity and magnetism (e.g., observe that a toy car rolls slower when a ramp is lowered). • I can use materials to design a solution to a simple problem (build a wall of rocks to stop water flowing through sand or mud). • I can predict (not necessarily with accuracy) the results of an action and test out my idea. • I explore changes in matter and describe what happens (e.g., cooking). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show creativity and imagination in a variety of settings. • Engage creatively with others in play. • Demonstrate an increased ability to accomplish a task requiring multiple steps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using objects in play, experimenting with materials • Problem solving • Understanding a sequence of events/cycles 	<p>AL-4K-2.2 Demonstrate eagerness and interest as a learner by questioning and adding ideas.</p> <p>ELA-4K-6.1 Ask “how” and “why” questions about things in books and their environment.</p> <p>M-4K-1.2 Generate conjectures based on personal experiences and simple reasoning.</p>	<p>I can predict the results of an action and test my idea.</p> <p>I show creativity and imagination in a variety of settings.</p> <p>I can complete tasks that take several steps to accomplish.</p> <p>I ask “how” and “why” questions.</p> <p>I can overcome challenges and use materials to solve problems.</p>

Appendix I:
SC First Steps Input Regarding EOC Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Framework

Scientific Knowledge				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I make comparisons and categorize living things. (e.g. All fish have fins.) • I combine two-dimensional shapes to create complex designs (e.g. place triangles around a circle to make a flower.) • I use time-related words (without accuracy) to describe the sequence and duration of events. • I can use simple tools to explore the physical properties of objects (e.g. magnifiers, scales, thermometers) • I can represent new knowledge, plans or steps of an experiment (e.g., draw observed changes, characteristics or results). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show curiosity in an increasing variety of ideas and interests. • Make predictions and test ideas. • Seek out new challenges and experiences. • Ask for help when needed. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation skills • Creativity, curiosity, motivation, persistence ** • Curiosity* • Problem solving • Representation – using items/tools creatively (outside the box) 	<p>AL-4K-2.1 Show curiosity in an increasing variety of activities, tasks, and learning centers.</p> <p>AL-4K-2.2 Demonstrate eagerness and interest as a learner by questioning and adding ideas.</p> <p>AL-4K-3.1 Demonstrate growing initiative in selecting and carrying out activities.</p> <p>AL-4K-4.4 Try to solve problems encountered in play.</p>	<p>I am curious about the world around me and ask questions to gain greater understanding.</p> <p>I seek out new challenges and experiences. I want to try new things.</p> <p>I ask for help when needed.</p> <p>I use my senses to learn about the world around me and make observations about the things I experience.</p>
Social Emotional				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I incorporate emotion during pretend play. • I show when I experience complex emotions (e.g., embarrassment, pride, shame, guilt). • I can label and show understanding of others' feelings. • My displayed emotion is appropriate for the situation, but what I'm feeling may be different. • I can regain my calm in a changing or disappointing situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Express emotions and needs through appropriate words and actions. • Adjust well to changes in routines and environments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilience and perseverance through frustration* • Express and identify emotions appropriately 	<p>AL-4K-1.2 Demonstrate increasing ability to identify and take appropriate risks in order to learn and demonstrate new skills.</p> <p>AL-4K- 2.3 Demonstrate delight or satisfaction when completing a task, solving a problem, or making a discovery.</p> <p>SE-4K-1.1 Describe characteristics of self and others.</p> <p>SE-4K-1.2 Demonstrate self-direction by making choices among peers, activities and materials.</p> <p>SE-4K-1.3 Demonstrate</p>	<p>I express my emotions through appropriate actions and words.</p> <p>I show when I experience different emotions.</p> <p>I can label and show understanding of others' feelings.</p> <p>I can adjust well to changes in my routine and environments.</p> <p>I can role play different emotions during pretend play.</p>

Appendix I:
SC First Steps Input Regarding EOC Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Framework

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can follow external directions to inhibit my behavior. • I can give up an immediate reward to earn a more valued reward. • I share toys or equipment with other children without being asked. • I seek out play partners who have something in common with me. • I play cooperatively with a group of two or more children with the same goal in mind. • I verbalize what I want to another person prior to physical expression (e.g., saying “I want a turn” before grabbing a toy). • I comply with adults’ requests most of the time (e.g., talk quietly, come to the table). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work and play cooperatively with others. • Show caring for others. • Treat others with respect in words and actions. • Respect the property of others. • Interact easily with familiar adults. • Follow Directions and school rules. • Demonstrate increasing ability to identify and take appropriate risk when learning new knowledge and skills. • Express confidence in meeting new challenges and experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-regulation/delaying gratification* • Self-control • Relationship with peers Have opportunities to form friendships/ability to build relationships* • Exploring cooperation • Learning how to act, interact and react with people and their environment (early learning standards language)* • Classroom management (follow age-appropriate requests from adults) • Recognition of authority • Following directions 	<p>confidence by participating in most classroom activities. SE-4K-1.4 Stand up for rights much of the time. SE-4K-1.5 Respond respectfully to positive and negative feedback from adults most of the time. SE-4K-2.1 Follow classroom rules and procedures with reminders. SE-4K-2.2 Use classroom materials responsibly, most of the time. SE-4K-2.3 Manage transitions positively when told what to expect. SE-4K-2.4 Recognize effect on others of own behavior most of the time. SE-4K-2.5 Demonstrate with adult guidance simple techniques to solve social problems. SE-4K-3.1 Recognize own feelings and describe them some of the time. SE-4K-3.2 Develop strategies to express strong emotion with adult help. SE-4K-4.2 Develop friendships with one or two preferred children.</p>	<p>I can regain my calm in a changing or disappointing situation.</p> <p>I can follow directions and change my behavior.</p> <p>I can give up an immediate reward to earn something more valued later.</p> <p>I can show self-control.</p> <p>I can work and play cooperatively with others.</p> <p>I can share toys and equipment with other children without being asked.</p> <p>I can take turns.</p> <p>I can play cooperatively with other children.</p> <p>I show my caring for others.</p> <p>I show respect for the property of others.</p> <p>I can interact easily with familiar adults.</p> <p>I follow simple rules and directions.</p> <p>I stand up for my rights.</p> <p>I recognize authority and will change my behavior as directed by my teacher or parent.</p> <p>I solve my problems without resorting to violence – by</p>
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Appendix I:
SC First Steps Input Regarding EOC Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Framework

				<p>using words and seeking the help of trusted adults.</p> <p>I can make friends.</p>
Physical well-being and motor development				
Gross				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can bounce and then catch a large ball. I can balance on one foot for 10 seconds. I can run and pivot to change directions without stopping. I can gallop. I adjust my body rhythm when music tempo changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use basic locomotor skills alone, with a partner and in a group. Coordinate body movement to perform various tasks (kick a moving ball, throw a ball overhand). Coordinate body movement across midline to perform various tasks (use right hand on left side of body). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate gross and fine motor skill development* Ability to set and respect physical boundaries 	<p>PD-4K-1.1 Move with balance and control while walking, running, jumping, marching, hopping, and galloping.</p> <p>PD-4K-1.2 Coordinate movements to perform more complex tasks.</p>	<p>I can move with control and with balance while walking, running, jumping, marching, hopping and galloping.</p> <p>I can bounce, throw, kick and catch a large ball.</p> <p>I can run and change directions without stopping.</p> <p>I can balance on one foot for ten seconds.</p>
Fine				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can string half-inch beads with ease. I can draw a square, a triangle and zigzag lines, imitating an adult. I can draw a person with four parts. I can cut out simple pictures following a general outline. I can build block structures that extend out and up. I can pour liquid or sand into a small container without spilling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use hand eye coordination to perform various tasks (put together a puzzle, use scissors, tape). Use drawing and writing tools with some control and purpose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate gross and fine motor skill development* 	<p>PD-4K-2.1 Use strength and control to perform more complex tasks.</p> <p>PD-4K-2.2 Use hand-eye coordination to perform more complex tasks.</p> <p>PD-4K-2.3 Show beginning control of drawing and writing tools.</p>	<p>I can draw a person with four parts.</p> <p>I can grasp a pencil or crayon and use it with some control and purpose.</p> <p>I use hand-eye coordination to perform simple tasks, like putting together a puzzle.</p> <p>I can use scissors to cut a piece of paper.</p> <p>I can use my fingers to pick up and manipulate small objects.</p>

Appendix I:
SC First Steps Input Regarding EOC Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Framework

Health				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access regular medical, dental, vision care. • Identify different food groups. • Understand and follow basic health and safety rules (hand washing). • Perform self-care independently (buttoning clothes, toileting). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-help skills* • Self-care* • Up to date immunizations • Nutritional needs are met • Body awareness • Address needs/condition of exceptional children (not considered a limitation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Health and development screenings with appropriate services/interventions • Healthy nutrition, exercise and sleep routines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access and Utilization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Prenatal and perinatal care o Medical home with case management that connects and promotes utilization of various services o Service coordination, wrap around services, partnerships with families • Established routines to promote health (appropriate amounts of sleep) • Screen time • Prenatal and perinatal care 	<p>PD-4K-3.1 Perform some self-care tasks independently.</p> <p>PD-4K-3.2 Follow basic health rules most of the time.</p> <p>PD-4K-3.3 Follow basic safety rules most of the time.</p> <p>PD-4K-3.4 Demonstrate adequate stamina and strength for program activities.</p>	<p>I use self-care skills to do things like use the bathroom, wash my hands, button my clothes, brush my teeth.</p> <p>I have access to regular health and dental care. I follow basic health rules most of the time.</p> <p>I get 8-10 hours of sleep each night.</p> <p>I have enough strength and stamina to make it through daily activities.</p>

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee: Public Awareness Subcommittee

Date: June 8, 2015

INFORMATION/RECOMMENDATION

Format Review of 2014-15 School and District Report Cards

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

Pursuant to Section 59-18-325(C)6 "The Education Oversight Committee must use the results of these assessments in school years 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 to report on student academic performance in each school and district pursuant to Section 59 18 900. The committee may not determine state ratings for schools or districts, pursuant to Section 59 18 900, using the results of the assessments required by this subsection until after the conclusion of the 2015-2016 school year; provided, however, state ratings must be determined by the results of these assessments beginning in the 2016-2017 school year. The Oversight Committee also must develop and recommend a single accountability system that meets federal and state accountability requirements by the Fall of 2016."

CRITICAL FACTS

The attached are drafts of formats for the school and district report cards to be published in November 2015 for school year 2014-15. Report cards for special schools, primary schools, and career centers are under development. Decisions made on these templates will be applied appropriately to those cards. The SCDE will add information related to the reporting requirements of the ESEA waiver following the state reporting section for this year's cards.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

November 2015 Report Card Publication

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

Cost: none

Fund/Source:

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

ACTION TAKEN

Approved

Amended

Not Approved

Action deferred (explain)

Bethel Hanberry Elementary School

125 Boney Road
Blythewood, SC 29016



South Carolina State Report Card

State and federal laws require public schools to release report cards to the public each year. This year, the report card has been updated to reflect changes in reporting directed by the SC Education Oversight Committee. Schools will not be rated for state accountability purposes until Fall 2017 when the state will transition to a single accountability system. The following reports student performance in school year 2014-15.

Grades: PK-5 Elementary

Principal: Tracy M. Footman

Enrollment: 659 students

Superintendent: Debbie Hamm

School Phone: 803-691-6880

Board Chair: Calvin Jackson

School Website: www.richland2.org/bhe



Profile of the SC Graduate

World Class Knowledge

- Rigorous standards in language arts and math for career and college readiness
- Multiple languages, science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), arts and social sciences*

World Class Skills

- Creativity and innovation
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Communication, information, media and technology
- Knowing how to learn

Life and Career Characteristics

- Integrity
- Self-direction
- Global perspective
- Perseverance
- Work ethic
- Interpersonal skills

* Current examples of course offerings in Social Sciences include History, Geography, Economics, Government and Civics.

WORLD CLASS SKILLS & LIFE AND CAREER CHARACTERISTICS

Our school is helping all students develop the world class skills and life and career characteristics of the Profile of the Graduate by...

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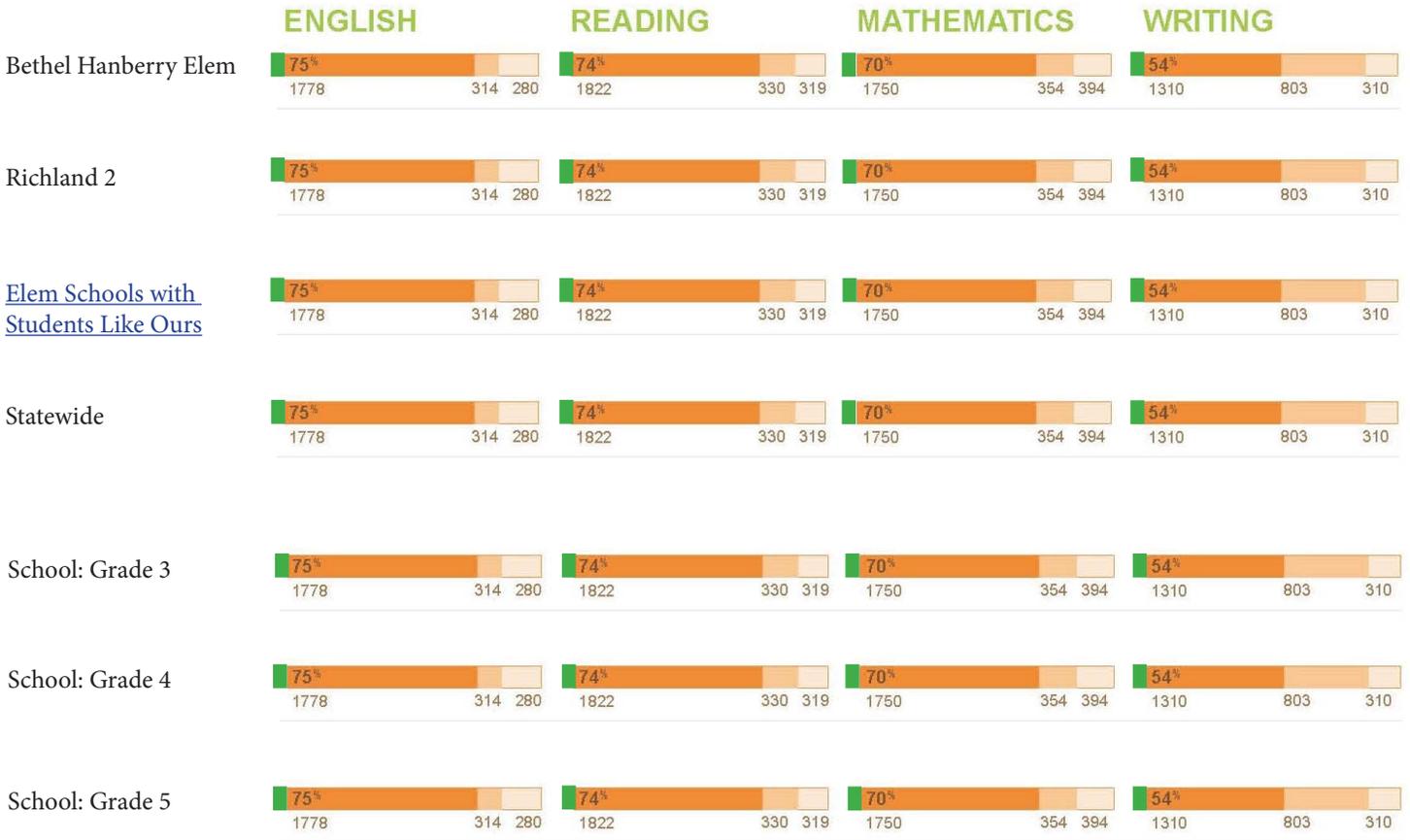
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Principal Name

SIC Chair Name

KNOWLEDGE

The ACT Aspire assessment was given to students in grades 3-8 in Spring 2015. Students were assessed in the subject areas of Reading, English, Mathematics and Writing.



Note: All data in this document are FOR PLACEMENT ONLY AND ARE NOT A REFLECTION OF THE PERFORMANCE OF A SCHOOL OR DISTRICT.

For the data elements above, the number and percentage of students and each category should be published on the report card.

Abbreviations for Missing Data

- N/A-Not Applicable
- N/AV-Not Available
- N/C-Not Collected
- N/R-Not Reported
- I/S-Insufficient Sample

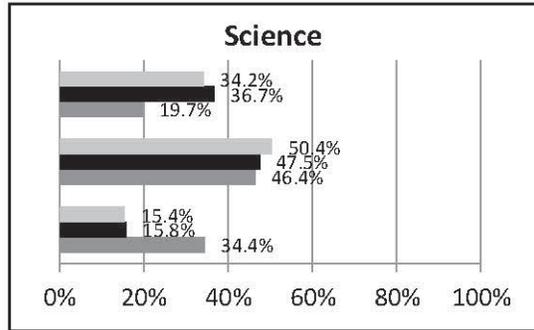
KNOWLEDGE

The SC Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS) was given to students in grades 4-8 in Spring 2015. Students were assessed in the subject areas of Science and Social Studies.

Exemplary
demonstrated exemplary performance in meeting the grade level standard.

Met
met the grade level standard

Not Met
did not meet the grade level standard



Our School

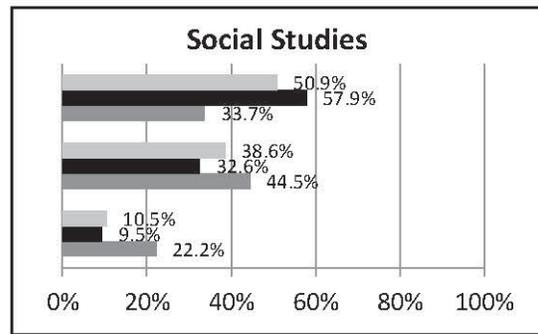
Elementary Schools with Students Like Ours

Elementary Schools Statewide

Exemplary
demonstrated exemplary performance in meeting the grade level standard.

Met
met the grade level standard

Not Met
did not meet the grade level standard



Science PASS	
Our School: Percent Met and Above for each grade level	
4th grade	5th grade
Social Studies PASS	
Our School: Percent Met and Above for each grade level	
4th grade	5th grade

Note: Results include SC-Alt assessment results.

[School PASS ratings from prior years](#)

Exemplary
Met
Not Met

“Exemplary”: student demonstrated exemplary performance in meeting the grade level standard.

“Met”: student met the grade level standard.

“Not Met”: student did not meet the grade level standard.

Abbreviations for Missing Data

N/A-Not Applicable N/AV-Not Available N/C-Not Collected N/R-Not Reported I/S-Insufficient Sample

OPPORTUNITIES

For students to meet the Profile of the SC Graduate

	Our School	Change from Last Year	Elem Schools with students like ours
Students (n = 659)			
Percent of students eligible for free- or reduced-price lunch and/or Medicaid-eligible (poverty index)			
Attendance Rate			
With disabilities			
Out of school suspensions or expulsions for violent and/or criminal offenses			
Percentage of students served by gifted and talented programs			
Percentage of students retained			
Teachers (n = 42)			
Percentage of teachers with advanced degrees			
Percentage of teachers on continuing contract			
Teachers returning from previous year			
Teacher attendance rate			
Average teacher salary*			
Professional development days/teacher			
Percentage of teacher vacancies for more than 9 weeks			
School			
Principal's years at school			
Student-teacher ratio in core subjects			
Prime instructional time			
Opportunities in the arts			
Opportunities in foreign languages			
SACS accreditation			
Parents attending conferences			
Character development program			
Avg. age of books / electronic media in the school library			
Number of resources available per student in the school library media center			
Bandwidth capacity			
Percent of classrooms with wireless access			
Percent of students who have their own learning device			
Technology devices per teacher			
Percentage of classes not taught by highly qualified teachers			
Dollars spent per pupil**			
Percent of expenditures for instruction**			

* Includes current year teachers contracted for 185 days or more.
 ** Prior year audited financial data are reported.

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OPPORTUNITIES

Evaluation of School Climate

Evaluations by Teachers, Students and Parents

	Teachers	Students*	Parents*
Number of surveys returned	37	117	72
Percent satisfied with learning environment	94.6%	81.2%	86.2%
Percent satisfied with social and physical environment	94.6%	76.7%	82.8%
Percent satisfied with school-home relations	100.0%	93.2%	67.6%

* Only students at the highest elementary school grade level and their parents were included.

State Ratings History of School

Year	Absolute Rating	Growth Rating
2014	Excellent	Excellent
2013	Excellent	Excellent
2012	Excellent	Excellent

Based on state law, schools will not be rated for state accountability purposes until Fall 2017.

Additional Resources

[SC State Content Standards](#)
[Family-Friendly Guides to the SC Content Standards](#)
[2014-15 Accountability Manual](#)
[Data files](#)

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Grades: 6-8 Middle
Enrollment: 1,273 students
School Phone: 803-699-2750
School Website: www.richland2.org/dm

Principal: David Basile
Superintendent: Debbie Hamm
Board Chair: Calvin Jackson



Profile of the SC Graduate

World Class Knowledge

- Rigorous standards in language arts and math for career and college readiness
- Multiple languages, science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), arts and social sciences*

World Class Skills

- Creativity and innovation
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Communication, information, media and technology
- Knowing how to learn

Life and Career Characteristics

- Integrity
- Self-direction
- Global perspective
- Perseverance
- Work ethic
- Interpersonal skills

* Current examples of course offerings in Social Sciences include History, Geography, Economics, Government and Civics.

WORLD CLASS SKILLS & LIFE AND CAREER CHARACTERISTICS

Our school is helping all students develop the world class skills and life and career characteristics of the Profile of the Graduate by...

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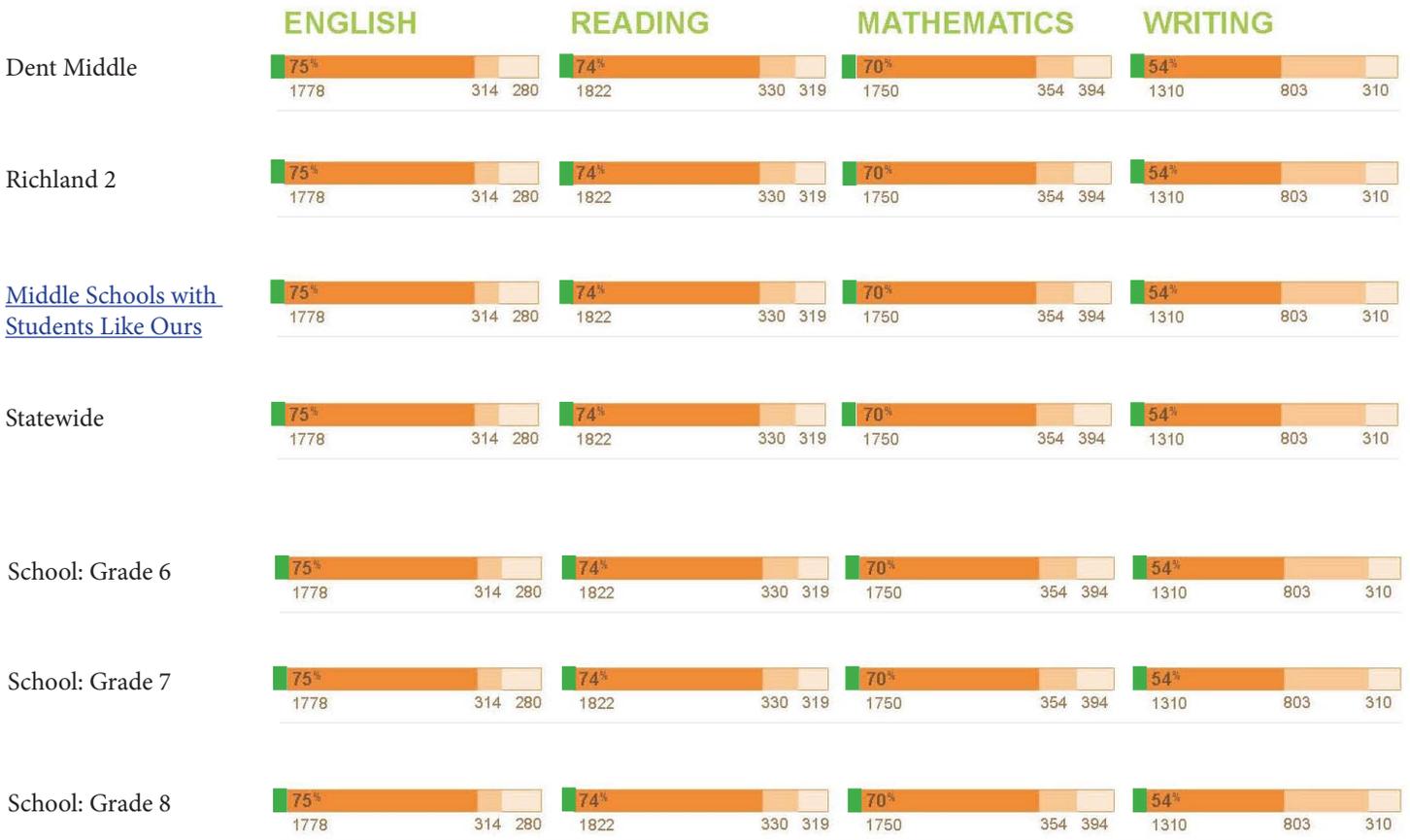
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Principal Name

SIC Chair Name

KNOWLEDGE

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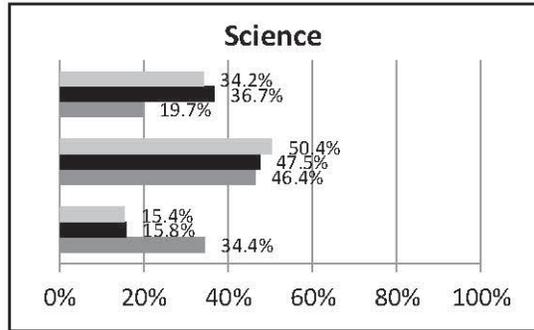
KNOWLEDGE

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Exemplary
demonstrated exemplary performance in meeting the grade level standard.

Met
met the grade level standard

Not Met
did not meet the grade level standard



Our School

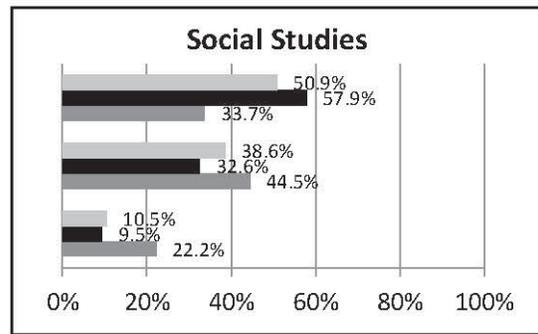
Middle Schools with Students Like Ours

Middle Schools Statewide

Exemplary
demonstrated exemplary performance in meeting the grade level standard.

Met
met the grade level standard

Not Met
did not meet the grade level standard



Exemplary

Met

Not Met

“Exemplary”: student demonstrated exemplary performance in meeting the grade level standard.

“Met”: student met the grade level standard.

“Not Met”: student did not meet the grade level standard.

Science PASS

Our School: Percent Met and Above for each grade level		
6th grade	7th grade	8th grade

Social Studies PASS

Our School: Percent Met and Above for each grade level		
6th grade	7th grade	8th grade

Note: Results include SC-Alt assessment results.

[School PASS ratings from prior years](#)

End of Course Tests

Percent of tests with scores of 70 or above on:	Our Middle School	Middle Schools with Students Like Ours
Algebra 1/Math for the Technologies 2	100.0%	98.3%
English 1	N/A	98.3%
Biology 1	N/A	N/A
US History and the Constitution	N/A	N/A
All Subjects	100.0%	98.1%

Middle schools with Students Like Ours are middle schools with a poverty index 5% above or below the school.

Abbreviations for Missing Data

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OPPORTUNITIES

For students to meet the Profile of the SC Graduate

	Our School	Change from Last Year	Middle Schools with students like ours
Students (n = 1,273)			
Percent of students eligible for free- or reduced-price lunch and/or Medicaid-eligible (poverty index)			
No. of students (7th and 8th grade) enrolled in high school credit courses			
Attendance Rate			
With disabilities			
Out of school suspensions or expulsions for violent and/or criminal offenses			
Percentage of students served by gifted and talented programs			
Percentage of students retained			
Annual dropout rate			
Teachers (n = 88)			
Percentage of teachers with advanced degrees			
Percentage of teachers on continuing contract			
Teachers returning from previous year			
Teacher attendance rate			
Average teacher salary*			
Professional development days/teacher			
Percentage of teacher vacancies for more than 9 weeks			
School			
Principal's years at school			
Student-teacher ratio in core subjects			
Prime instructional time			
Opportunities in the arts			
Opportunities in foreign languages			
SACS accreditation			
Parents attending conferences			
Character development program			
Avg. age of books / electronic media in the school library			
Number of resources available per student in the school library media center			
Bandwidth capacity			
Percent of classrooms with wireless access			
Percent of students who have their own learning device			
Technology devices per teacher			
Percentage of classes not taught by highly qualified teachers			
Dollars spent per pupil**			
Percent of expenditures for instruction**			

* Includes current year teachers contracted for 185 days or more.

** Prior year audited financial data are reported.

N/A-Not Applicable

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OPPORTUNITIES

Evaluation of School Climate

Evaluations by Teachers, Students and Parents

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Percent satisfied with social and physical environment	94.6%	76.7%	82.8%
Percent satisfied with school-home relations	100.0%	93.2%	67.6%

*Only students at the highest middle school grade level and their parents were surveyed.

State Ratings History of School

Year	Absolute Rating	Growth Rating
2014	Average	Average
2013	Average	Average
2012	Good	Average

Based on state law, schools will not be rated for state accountability purposes until Fall 2017.

Additional Resources

[SC State Content Standards](#)
[Family-Friendly Guides to the SC Content Standards](#)
[2014-15 Accountability Manual](#)
[Data files](#)

Abbreviations for Missing Data

N/A-Not Applicable

N/AV-Not Available

N/C-Not Collected

N/R-Not Reported

I/S-Insufficient Sample

Blythewood High School

10901 Wilson Blvd.
Blythewood, SC 29016



South Carolina State Report Card

State and federal laws require public schools to release report cards to the public each year. This year, the report card has been updated to reflect changes in reporting directed by the SC Education Oversight Committee. Schools will not be rated for state accountability purposes until Fall 2017 when the state will transition to a single accountability system. The following reports student performance in school year 2014-15.

Grades: 9-12 High

Principal: Dr. Brenda Hafner

Enrollment: 1,666 students

Superintendent: Debbie Hamm

School Phone: 803-691-4090

Board Chair: Calvin Jackson

School Website: www.richland2.org/bh



Profile of the SC Graduate

World Class Knowledge

- Rigorous standards in language arts and math for career and college readiness
- Multiple languages, science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), arts and social sciences*

World Class Skills

- Creativity and innovation
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Communication, information, media and technology
- Knowing how to learn

Life and Career Characteristics

- Integrity
- Self-direction
- Global perspective
- Perseverance
- Work ethic
- Interpersonal skills

WORLD CLASS SKILLS & LIFE AND CAREER CHARACTERISTICS

Our school is helping all students develop the world class skills and life and career characteristics of the Profile of the Graduate by...

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Donec suscipit sit amet dui interdum ultricies. Etiam condimentum, dui faucibus porttitor interdum, erat sem auctor neque, at molestie lectus erat nec enim. Donec et eros vestibulum, porttitor lorem ac, sagittis nunc. Duis eget est nisi. Nunc varius, odio et maximus ullamcorper, lectus ligula iaculis ipsum, et rhoncus sem metus in libero. Phasellus aliquam dolor diam, feugiat facilisis nulla hendrerit sit amet. Sed pretium eu nibh ac mattis. Proin commodo dui in lorem semper malesuada. Suspendisse ut metus sed nisi ultricies imperdiet ac nec turpis. Fusce consequat dolor nunc, nec interdum ante commodo ac. Nullam ac placerat nisi, quis feugiat neque. Aenean et turpis ut nulla laoreet tincidunt rhoncus sed arcu.

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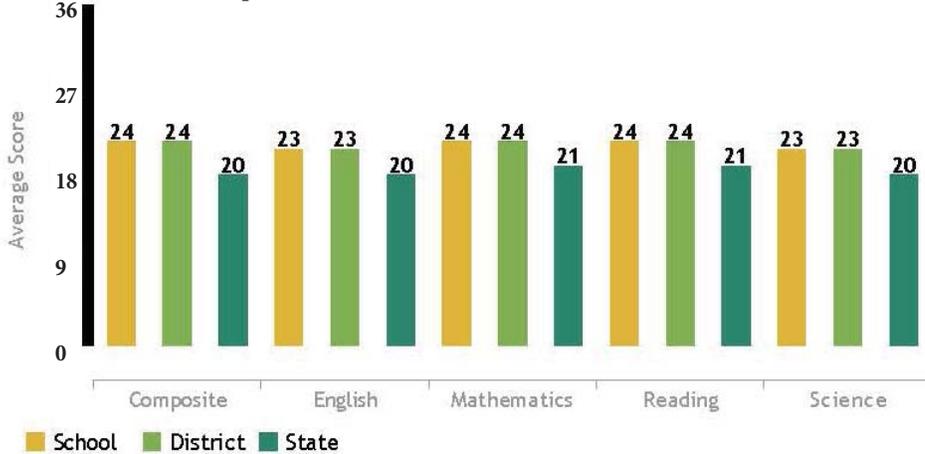
* Current examples of course offerings in Social Sciences include History, Geography, Economics, Government and Civics.

Principal Name

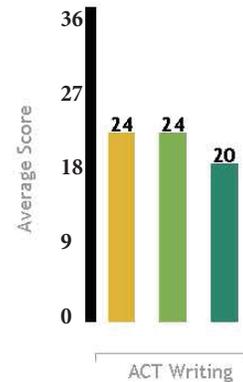
SIC Chair Name

KNOWLEDGE

Average ACT Score Achieved by Students: English, Math, Reading, Science, Composite of all four tests, 2015

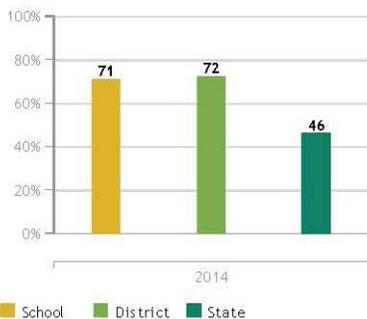


Average ACT Score Achieved by Students: Writing



The ACT, a college-readiness, assessment, was given to every South Carolina 11th grader in 2015. The ACT scores range from 0 to 36. A college-ready composite score of 21 or higher on the ACT shows that students have learned important academic skills that they will need in order to succeed in college and careers. The district and state averages are included for comparison. State averages for ACT data are based on regular public schools and do not include private schools in the state.

Percent of Students Ready for College Course Work



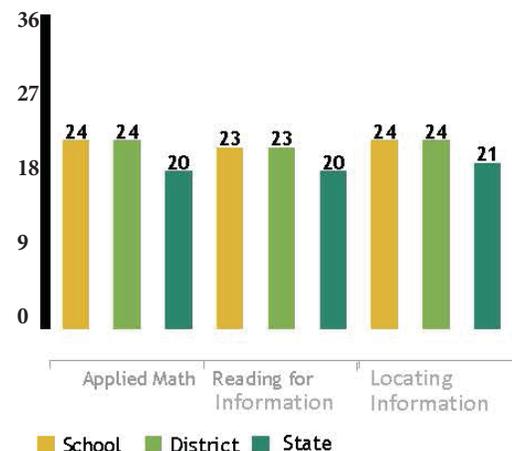
Percent of Students Meeting ACT College-Ready Benchmarks, 2015				
English Benchmark Score: 18	Math Benchmark Score: 22	Reading Benchmark Score: 22	Science Benchmark Score: 23	All 4 subjects
60.4	39.2	39.2	32.9	24.2

ACT benchmarks are scores on the ACT subject-area tests that represent the level of achievement required for students to have a 50% chance of obtaining a B or higher, or about a 75% chance of obtaining a C or higher, in corresponding credit-bearing first-year college courses.

The percentage of students who achieved a combined score of at least 21 on the ACT are classified by ACT as being Ready for College Coursework. The district and state average is displayed on the left for comparison.

ACT WorkKeys is a job skills assessment system measuring “real world” skills that employers believe are critical in the workplace. The assessment is given to every South Carolina 11th grader. The assessment consists of three subtests: Applied Math, Reading for Information, and Locating Information. Students can earn certificates at the Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze level on WorkKeys assessments. Students earn a National Career Readiness Certificate if they earn a minimum score of Silver.

Percent of Students Earning Platinum, Gold or Silver Certificates on WorkKeys, 2015



[See how SC students compare to students in other states who test 100% of 11th graders using The ACT.](#)

KNOWLEDGE

School SAT Performance

Percent of Students Tested	Average Critical Reading Score	Average Math Score	Average Writing Score	Average Composite Score

The highest composite score on the SAT is a 2400. For each of the three sections of the test, the highest score is 800.

End of Course Tests

Percent of tests with scores of 70 or above on:	Our High School	High Schools with Students Like Ours*	State
Algebra 1/Math for the Technologies 2	86.6%	85.6%	
English 1	89.9%	81.9%	
Biology 1/Applied Biology 2	90.6%	89.2%	
US History and the Constitution	79.8%	76.9%	
All Subjects	87.5%	83.9%	

High schools with Students Like Ours are high schools with a poverty index 5% above or below the school.

OUTCOMES

School Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate

2015	2014	2013	2012
87.5	87.5	87.5	87.5

State Graduation Rate

Four-Year	Five-Year
70.0	70.0

School Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rate

2015	2014	2013	2012
87.5	87.5	87.5	87.5

Percentage of Seniors Eligible for LIFE Scholarship

Our School	District	State
60.4	60.4	60.4

Percentage of Students from 2014 Graduation Class Enrolled in a two- or four-year college or technical college pursuing an associates degree, certificate, or diploma in Fall 2014

Our School	District	State
60.4	60.4	60.4

Abbreviations for Missing Data

N/A-Not Applicable N/AV-Not Available N/C-Not Collected N/R-Not Reported I/S-Insufficient Sample

OPPORTUNITIES

	Our School	Change from Last Year	High Schools with students like ours
Students (n = 1,666)			
Percent of students eligible for free- or reduced-price lunch and/ or Medicaid-eligible (poverty index)			
Attendance Rate			
Served by gifted and talented program			
With disabilities			
Out of school suspensions or expulsions for violent and/or criminal offenses			
Enrolled in AP/IB programs			
Successful in AP/IB programs			
Career/tech students in co-curricular organizations			
Enrollment in career/technology courses			
Students participating in work-based experiences			
Number of seniors who have completed FAFSA forms			
Percentage of seniors completing college applications			
Number of students enrolled in dual enrollment courses			
Success rate of students in dual enrollment courses			
Annual dropout rate			
Dropout recovery rate			
Percentage retained			
Teachers (n = 99)			
Percentage of teachers with advanced degrees			
Percentage of teachers on continuing contract			
Teachers returning from previous year			
Teacher attendance rate			
Average teacher salary*			
Professional development days/teacher			
Percentage of classes not taught by highly qualified teachers			
Percentage of teacher vacancies for more than 9 weeks			

* Includes current year teachers contracted for 185 days or more.

** Prior year audited financial data are reported.

Evaluation of School Climate

Evaluations by Teachers, Students and Parents

	Teachers	Students*	Parents*
Number of surveys returned	37	117	72
Percent satisfied with learning environment	94.6%	81.2%	86.2%
Percent satisfied with social and physical environment	94.6%	76.7%	82.8%
Percent satisfied with school-home relations	100.0%	93.2%	67.6%

*Only 11th grade students and their parents were surveyed.

Abbreviations for Missing Data

N/A-Not Applicable

N/AV-Not Available

N/C-Not Collected

N/R-Not Reported

I/S-Insufficient Sample

OPPORTUNITIES

	Our School	Change from Last Year	High Schools with students like ours
School			
Principal's years at school			
Student-teacher ratio in core subjects			
Prime instructional time			
Opportunities in the arts			
Opportunities in foreign languages			
Number of dual enrollment courses offered			
Number of online or blended (50% online) courses offered			
SACS accreditation			
Parents attending conferences			
Character development program			
Avg. age of books / electronic media in the school library			
Number of resources available per student in the school library media center			
Bandwidth capacity			
Technology devices per teacher			
Percent of classrooms with wireless access			
Ratio of students to electronic learning devices			
Dollars spent per pupil**			
Percent of expenditures for instruction**			
Percent of expenditures for teacher salaries**			

* Includes current year teachers contracted for 185 days or more.

** Prior year audited financial data are reported.

State Ratings History of School

Year	Absolute Rating	Growth Rating
2014	Excellent	Excellent
2013	Excellent	Excellent
2012	Excellent	Excellent

Based on state law, schools will not be rated for state accountability purposes until Fall 2017.

Additional Resources

[SC State Content Standards](#)
[Family-Friendly Guides to the SC Content Standards](#)
[2014-15 Accountability Manual](#)
[Data files](#)

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N/AV-Not Available

N/C-Not Collected

N/R-Not Reported

I/S-Insufficient Sample

Richland 2 School District

6831 Brookfield Rd.
Columbia, SC 29206



South Carolina State Report Card

State and federal laws require public schools to release report cards to the public each year. This year, the report card has been updated to reflect changes in reporting directed by the SC Education Oversight Committee. Schools will not be rated for state accountability purposes until Fall 2017 when the state will transition to a single accountability system. The following reports student performance in school year 2014-15.

Grades: PK-12 District

Superintendent: Debbie Hamm

Enrollment: 26,783 students

Board Chair: Calvin Jackson

District Phone: 803-787-1910

District Website: www.richland2.org



Profile of the SC Graduate

World Class Knowledge

- Rigorous standards in language arts and math for career and college readiness
- Multiple languages, science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), arts and social sciences*

World Class Skills

- Creativity and innovation
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Communication, information, media and technology
- Knowing how to learn

Life and Career Characteristics

- Integrity
- Self-direction
- Global perspective
- Perseverance
- Work ethic
- Interpersonal skills

WORLD CLASS SKILLS & LIFE AND CAREER CHARACTERISTICS

Our district is helping all students develop the world class skills and life and career characteristics of the Profile of the Graduate by...

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* Current examples of course offerings in Social Sciences include History, Geography, Economics, Government and Civics.

Superintendent Name

KNOWLEDGE

The ACT Aspire assessment was given to students in grades 3-8 in Spring 2015. Students were assessed in the subject areas of Reading, English, Mathematics and Writing.



Note: All data in this document are FOR PLACEMENT ONLY AND ARE NOT A REFLECTION OF THE PERFORMANCE OF A SCHOOL OR DISTRICT.

For the data elements above, the number and percentage of students and each category should be published on the report card.

Note: Results include alternate assessment results.



Abbreviations for Missing Data

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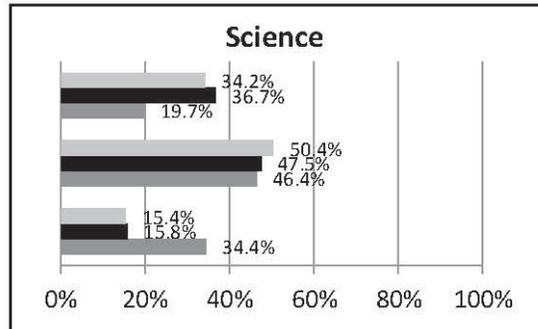
KNOWLEDGE

The SC Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS) was given to students in grades 4-8 in Spring 2015. Students were assessed in the subject areas of Science and Social Studies.

Exemplary
demonstrated exemplary performance in meeting the grade level standard.

Met
met the grade level standard

Not Met
did not meet the grade level standard



Our District

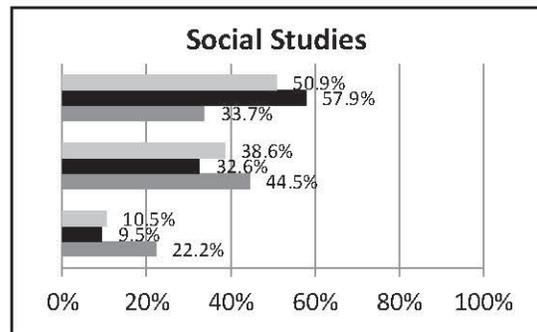
[Districts with Students Like Ours](#)

Districts Statewide

Exemplary
demonstrated exemplary performance in meeting the grade level standard.

Met
met the grade level standard

Not Met
did not meet the grade level standard



Exemplary

Met

Not Met

“Exemplary”: student demonstrated exemplary performance in meeting the grade level standard.

“Met”: student met the grade level standard.

“Not Met”: student did not meet the grade level standard.

Science PASS				
Our District: Percent Met and Above for each grade level				
4th grade	5th grade	6th grade	7th grade	8th grade

Social Studies PASS				
Our District: Percent Met and Above for each grade level				
4th grade	5th grade	6th grade	7th grade	8th grade

Note: Results include SC-Alt assessment results.

[District PASS ratings from prior years](#)

Abbreviations for Missing Data

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KNOWLEDGE

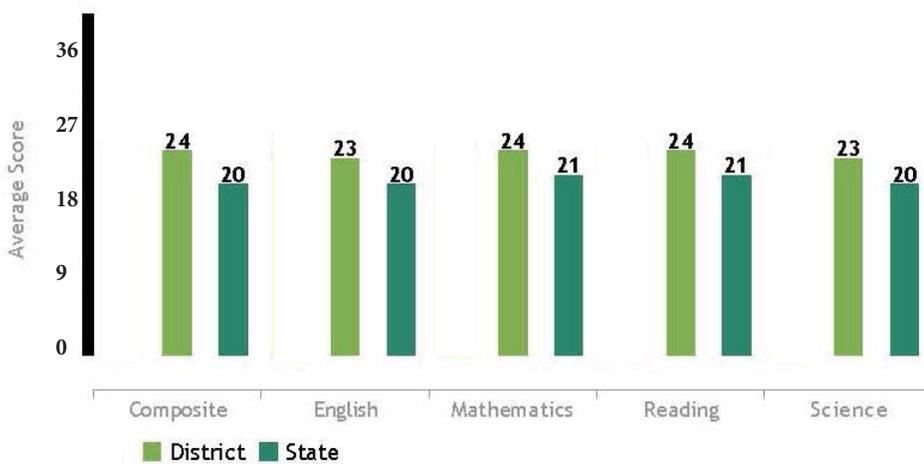
End of Course Tests

Percent of tests with scores of 70 or above on:	Our District	Districts with Students Like Ours	State
Algebra 1/Math for the Technologies 2	86.6%	85.6%	
English 1	89.9%	81.9%	
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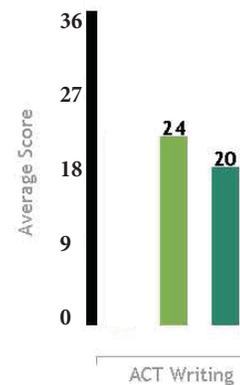
Districts with Students Like Ours are school districts with a poverty index 5% above or below the district.

The ACT, a college-readiness, assessment, was given to every South Carolina 11th grader in 2015. The ACT scores range from 0 to 36. A college-ready composite score of 21 or higher on the ACT shows that students have learned important academic skills that they will need in order to succeed in college and careers. The district and state averages are included for comparison. State averages for ACT data are based on regular public schools and do not include private schools in the state.

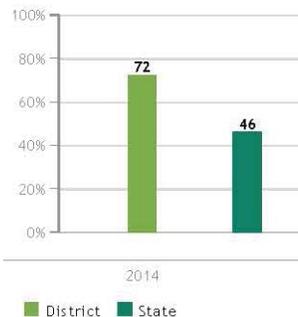
Average ACT Score Achieved by Students: English, Math, Reading, Science, Composite of all four tests, 2015



Average ACT Score Achieved by Students: Writing



Percent of Students in District Ready for College Course Work



Percent of Students in District meeting ACT College-Ready Benchmarks, 2015				
English Benchmark Score: 18	Math Benchmark Score: 22	Reading Benchmark Score: 22	Science Benchmark Score: 23	All 4 subjects
60.4	39.2	39.2	32.9	24.2

ACT benchmarks are scores on the ACT subject-area tests that represent the level of achievement required for students to have a 50% chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75% chance of obtaining a C or higher in corresponding credit-bearing first-year college courses.

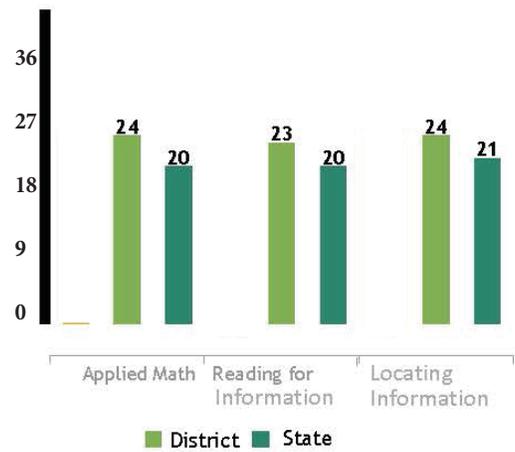
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[See how SC students compare to students in other states who test 100% of 11th graders using The ACT.](#)

KNOWLEDGE

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Percent of Students Earning Platinum, Gold or Silver Certificates on WorkKeys, 2015



District SAT Performance				
Percent of Students Tested	Average Critical Reading Score	Average Math Score	Average Writing Score	Average Composite Score

The highest composite score on the SAT is a 2400. For each of the three sections of the test, the highest score is 800.

OUTCOMES

School Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate

2015	2014	2013	2012
87.5	87.5	87.5	87.5

State Graduation Rate

Four-Year	Five-Year
70.0	70.0

School Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rate

2015	2014	2013	2012
87.5	87.5	87.5	87.5

Percentage of Seniors Eligible for LIFE Scholarship

District	State
60.4	60.4

Percentage of Students from 2014 Graduation Class Enrolled in a two- or four-year college or technical college pursuing an associates degree, certificate, or diploma in Fall 2014

District	State
60.4	60.4

OPPORTUNITIES

	Our District	Change from Last Year	<u>Districts with students like ours</u>
Students (n = 26,783)			
<u>Percent of students eligible for free- or reduced-price lunch and/ or Medicaid-eligible (poverty index)</u>			
<u>Attendance Rate</u>			
<u>Served by gifted and talented program</u>			
<u>With disabilities</u>			
<u>Out of school suspensions or expulsions for violent and/or criminal offenses</u>			
<u>Enrolled in AP/IB programs</u>			
<u>Successful in AP/IB programs</u>			
<u>Career/tech students in co-curricular organizations</u>			
<u>Enrollment in career/technology courses</u>			
<u>Dual enrollment student count</u>			
<u>Students participating in work-based experiences</u>			
<u>Number of seniors who have completed FAFSA forms</u>			
<u>Percentage of seniors completing college applications</u>			
<u>Number of students enrolled in dual enrollment courses</u>			
<u>Success rate of students in dual enrollment courses</u>			
<u>Annual dropout rate</u>			
<u>Dropout recovery rate</u>			
<u>Percentage retained</u>			
<u>Enrolled in adult education GED or diploma programs</u>			
<u>Completed in adult education GED or diploma programs</u>			
Teachers (n = 1,867)			
<u>Percentage of teachers with advanced degrees</u>			
<u>Percentage of teachers on continuing contract</u>			
<u>Teachers returning from previous year</u>			
<u>Teacher attendance rate</u>			
<u>Average teacher salary*</u>			
<u>Professional development days/teacher</u>			
<u>Ratio of teachers to technology devices</u>			
<u>Percentage of classes not taught by highly qualified teachers</u>			
<u>Percentage of teacher vacancies for more than 9 weeks</u>			

OPPORTUNITIES

	Our District	Change from Last Year	Districts with students like ours
District			
Superintendent's years at district			
Student-teacher ratio in core subjects			
Prime instructional time			
Opportunities in the arts			
Opportunities in foreign languages			
Number of schools with SACS accreditation			
Parents attending conferences			
Bandwidth capacity			
Percent of classrooms with wireless access			
Percent of students served by one-to-one computing			
Ratio of students to electronic learning devices			
Number of online or blended (50% online) courses offered			
Dual enrollment courses offered			
Dollars spent per pupil**			
Percent of expenditures for instruction**			
Percent of expenditures for teacher salaries**			
Average administrator salary			

State Ratings History of District

Year	Absolute Rating	Growth Rating
2014	Excellent	Excellent
2013	Excellent	Excellent
2012	Excellent	Excellent

Based on state law, districts will not be rated for state accountability purposes until Fall 2017.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee: Public Awareness Subcommittee

Date: June 8, 2015

INFORMATION/RECOMMENDATION

Development of Single Accountability System

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

Pursuant to Section 59-18-325(C)6 "The Oversight Committee also must develop and recommend a single accountability system that meets federal and state accountability requirements by the Fall of 2016."

CRITICAL FACTS

The attached is a plan for review that outlines involvement of stakeholders in the development and communication of a single accountability system.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

January – March 2016

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

Cost:

Fund/Source: Public Awareness/Operating Budget

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

ACTION TAKEN

Approved

Amended

Not Approved

Action deferred (explain)

Legislative directive: EOC must develop and recommend a single accountability system by Fall 2016 (Act 200)

1. Goal: More effectively communicate new accountability system : Focus on goals of college and career readiness for students

Guiding Question: How can we more effectively communicate the performance and opportunities that exist within public schools and districts, making the system meaningful while maintaining transparency?

Audience: ALL education stakeholders – parents, teachers, administrators, policymakers, and the public.

Proposed Public Engagement Process

Timeframe: January-March 2016

Form and convene **Accountability System Design Working Groups** – Three regional groups (members designated by EOC, State Board of Education members, district superintendents, business and community leaders, higher education stakeholders)

Designees should include parents, educators, community stakeholders, students, school district PIOs, school district technology coordinators, parent liaisons, ESOL liaisons, special education parents, etc.

Working groups will consider the guiding question, determining how the state and federal education accountability system will be BLENDED using the EOC-adopted framework for schools and districts. They will also make recommendations regarding the communication of the system and the possibility of developing a dynamic online tool for the public.

Note: Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee will begin working on the recommendations as well beginning Fall of 2015.

RATING STATES, GRADING SCHOOLS

WHAT PARENTS AND EXPERTS SAY STATES SHOULD CONSIDER TO MAKE SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS MEANINGFUL

Ohio School Report Cards

2012-2013 Report Card for **Hillview Elementary School**

Achievement **Coming in 2015** **Component Grade**

Gap Closing **Coming in 2015** **Component Grade**

K-3 Literacy **Coming in 2015** **Component Grade**

Financial Data **VIEW DATA**

Progress **Coming in 2015** **Component Grade**

Value-Added

Graduation Rate **Coming in 2015** **Component Grade**

Prepared for **Coming in 2015** **Component Grade**

Arizona Department of Education

SCHOOL REPORT CARD 2013

Red Mountain High School

Principal Not Avail

Entity ID 4984

CTDS 070204275

Grades Served 10 - 12

Students Enrolled 3285

Type of School Regular Facility - In A Unified School District

Office Hours 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM

Number of Instruction hours 341

Number of Instruction days Not Avail

School Year Start and End Not Avail

A-F Letter Grade For The School A

The Federal School Improvement Status N/A

The AMO Status For This School Not Met

The AYP Status For This School Discontinued

Test Results for Spring 2013

Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS)

Subject	2011	2012	2013
Math	75	78	83
Read	87	90	91
Write	77	80	84

Norm Referenced

Subject	2012	2013
Math	85	85
Read	74	74
Language	69	62

Measure of Academic Progress (MAP)

Coming Soon

On campus Incidents: 34

13 incidents associated with drug possession.
5 incidents of assault.

Arizona English Language Learners Assessment (AZELLA)

ELL Reclassification Rate NA

School Performance Measures

Attendance Rate	
Promotion Rate**	96.3%
Dropout Rate	94.0%
Four-Year Graduation Rate*	1.3%
Five-Year Graduation Rate*	86.8%
	89.3%

* Graduation Rate does not apply to K-8 Schools
** Promotion Rate is based on self-reported data (October 1 Enrollment and year-end number of students promoted)
NA - Not Applicable

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Education Commission
of the States

AUGUST 2014

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Citation: Marga Mikulecky and Kathy Christie, *Rating States, Grading Schools: What Parents and Experts say States Should Consider to Make School Accountability Systems Meaningful* (Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States, May 2014).

This paper is available online at: www.ecs.org/docs/rating-states,grading-schools.pdf.

Note: American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands are included in the ECS school [accountability database](#), but their numbers are not included in this paper.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Parents and policymakers have long sought to measure the quality of their public schools and to report that publicly in ways that are fair and equitable. In recent years, with a renewed focus on student outcomes, this effort has become a very public and sometimes acrimonious debate.

With this project, ECS sought to answer three key questions from various stakeholders in a way that assists parents and policymakers in creating school accountability systems or “report cards” that are transparent and effective.

The key questions we asked:

- ✦ *Of researchers* – Are the report cards easy to find?
- ✦ *Of parents* – Are the report cards easy to understand?
- ✦ *Of experts* – What indicators are essential for measuring school and district performance?

The responses, in brief:

Researchers agreed upon eight state report cards as easy-to-find, informative and readable. Their top three picks are in bold:

- ✦ **Arizona**
- ✦ **Delaware**
- ✦ **Massachusetts**
- ✦ **Illinois**
- ✦ **Kentucky**
- ✦ **Maine**
- ✦ **Ohio**
- ✦ **Louisiana**

Parents identified six state report cards as the best of the 50 states, based on ease of reading, providing sufficient data and overall usefulness. Their top three picks are in bold:

- ✦ **Delaware**
- ✦ **Arkansas**
- ✦ **District of Columbia**
- ✦ **Ohio**
- ✦ **Illinois**
- ✦ **Wisconsin**

Experts selected five indicators they see as essential for any state’s school accountability system:

- ✦ **Student achievement**
- ✦ **Student academic growth**
- ✦ **Achievement gap closure**
- ✦ **Graduation rates**
- ✦ **Postsecondary and career readiness**

The co-authors of this report then reviewed ECS’ 50-state [accountability database](#), released in January, and identified 14 states that are both including all five essential indicators in calculating their state school reports and publicly reporting all five indicators. Those 14 states:

- ✦ **California**
- ✦ **Nevada**
- ✦ **Pennsylvania**
- ✦ **Colorado**
- ✦ **New Mexico**
- ✦ **Tennessee**
- ✦ **Florida**
- ✦ **North Carolina**
- ✦ **Utah**
- ✦ **Kentucky**
- ✦ **Ohio (final element coming in 2015)**
- ✦ **Wisconsin**
- ✦ **Louisiana**
- ✦ **Oklahoma**

Interestingly, different states excelled in different aspects considered in this project. At ECS, we believe states can improve their education systems by learning from each other. We hope this report assists in those continuing efforts.

INTRODUCTION

State leaders are striving to increase transparency about how well their public schools are educating children. The result is an increase in the information about schools' challenges and successes being shared with their communities through annual reports, often in the form of "report cards." This wave of accountability makes it important — now more than ever — to analyze which measures best signal the quality of schools and how that information is effectively shared and used to improve performance.

Transparency is important but, unlike in years past, it is not itself the end goal. Ultimately, today's accountability systems are designed to hold schools responsible for their contribution to students' postsecondary success and to equip parents with the information they need to insist upon change if they don't believe their children are being well-served. Valid metrics are necessary if policymakers are to implement meaningful school ranking systems and, subsequently, school improvement plans that parents and others can trust.

This report includes input from three different groups in an attempt to help state policymakers create accessible, useful and effective school report cards.

The key questions and responding groups:

- 1. *Are the report cards easy to find?***
Experienced researchers at the Education Commission of the States (ECS) were asked to find selected state report cards online to determine the accessibility of the cards.
- 2. *Are they understandable to parents?***
More than a dozen parents were asked to rate the report cards on a 1-5 scale in the categories of "easy to read," "provides sufficient data" and "useful."
- 3. *What are best practices?***
Finally, a dozen experts convened to discuss the essential metrics for any accountability system, key considerations for policymakers and important decision points.

ACCOUNTABILITY EFFORTS: A NATIONAL EVOLUTION

State school accountability systems, and their goals, have evolved over the years:

- ✦ **Accountability 1.0 (1900–80) – Accreditation:** Initially based on inputs such as staff degrees and numbers of library books, this version evolves in the 1980s into a focus on performance.
- ✦ **Accountability 2.0 (1990–2001) – Standards-Based Accountability:** State lawmakers set academic standards and begin state testing, sometimes with rewards and/or sanctions. Florida launches the first state school report cards, grading schools from A to F.
- ✦ **Accountability 3.0 (2001–10) – No Child Left Behind:** Federal lawmakers mandate state testing and outline incentives and consequences with an unprecedented level of detail. Parents in some states receive report cards with two sets of ratings, state and federal.
- ✦ **Accountability 4.0 (2010–present) – Race to the Top:** With the renewal of NCLB stalled in Congress, President Obama entices states to implement reforms, such as linking student test scores to teacher evaluations, with Race to the Top grants.
- ✦ **Accountability 5.0 (2013–present) – Standards, Round 2:** States adopting standards such as the Common Core are figuring out new assessments and tweaking accountability systems to measure and report results.

Door plates to D's: Common indicators of today's report cards

States have long sought to publicly report school quality but the measures used to determine quality look much different today than they did 100 years ago. As early as 1897, the state of Minnesota enacted a law requiring schools to meet certain minimum requirements to receive state aid. In 1907, Illinois began awarding door plates to schools it deemed "superior." And by 1925, 30 state departments of education were publicly reporting on factors such as the number of teachers with academic and professional qualifications and the frequency of community meetings.¹

Today, every state annually publishes individual district and school report cards to provide a snapshot of how well that district and school is educating its students. The metrics used vary but the focus has clearly shifted from inputs, such as the number of library books in a school, to outcomes, such as student academic growth on state exams. Door plates have given way to report card rating systems including A-F grades, 1 to 5 stars, numerical index scores, colors such as green

for good schools and red for struggling schools, or various descriptors, such as a "continuous improvement" or "reward" school.

Researchers at the Education Commission of the States compiled a 50-state database of what's measured and reported by each state. What's measured and what's reported are not necessarily identical. States may measure various data and use that information in calculating a final letter grade, index score, color or descriptor. But not all data collected by all states is factored into such calculations; some states simply report out additional information for the public to see.

As part of this report, ECS convened a School Accountability Advisory Group to discuss which measures should be included in every state's accountability system. The members, listed in the appendix, identified five essential indications. The indicators, and the states currently measuring and reporting those indicators according to the ECS [accountability database](#), are shown below.

STATES AND THE FIVE ESSENTIAL INDICATORS FOR SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY

Data from ECS' 50-state database on school accountability systems show which states are using the indicators:

Indicator Used for School Accountability	No. of States Measuring	No. of States Reporting
<i>Student achievement</i>	50 + Washington, D.C.	50 + D.C.
<i>Student academic growth</i>	42 + D.C.	34 + D.C.
<i>Achievement gap closure</i>	36 + D.C.	39 + D.C.
<i>Graduation rates</i>	50 + D.C.	50 + D.C.
<i>Postsecondary and career readiness</i>	20 (explicit mention; 25 if count proxies for readiness)	13 (30 + D.C. if count proxies for readiness)

Source: Education Commission of the States, http://www.ecs.org/html/educationissues/accountability/stacc_intro.asp.²

What's the difference between what's measured and what's reported?

What's measured refers to data that states use in calculating their school performance ratings. What's reported refers to data that states make publicly available but do not necessarily include in those calculations. Twenty-three states include all five essential indicators in measuring school performance: Alabama (2015-16), Alaska, California, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

What is meant by postsecondary and career readiness indicators or their proxies?

Some states explicitly refer in their accountability laws to postsecondary and career readiness indicators while others use indicators that serve to suggest such readiness, including college-going rates and ACT/SAT results.

Communication and trust: Two factors that matter, but aren't rated

ECS' review of school accountability systems found calculations used by states to reach a school's final grade or rating are rarely simple, often relying on algebraic equations and other mathematical formulas. While this may be necessary to ensure numerous indicators are represented and to create the most accurate ratings, such formulas can be difficult to communicate clearly to the public.

Teachers, parents and communities like to have a basic understanding about how a school's grade was derived. Weights and proportions matter. States can measure carefully selected indicators of quality but if the indicators are weighted incorrectly — at least, according to some observers — the result can be a grade or rating that some members of the public see as inaccurate and, worse, intentionally so.

Trust is an issue. This is not surprising since the results of school ratings can range from accolades to staff firings to closures. Letter grades are easiest for parents and other constituents to understand. But if a clear rating sits atop a hill of measures that communities don't trust, questions are likely to follow.

Where does it go wrong? Here are some common complaints:

- ✦ The metrics aren't right. For example, too much emphasis is placed on test performance and/or too few subjects are tested.
- ✦ The metrics, weights, measures and formula do not accurately reflect school performance.
- ✦ Composite scores are seen as less transparent and nuanced than separate indicators.
- ✦ Communication about how the grades are determined is vague or inconsistent.
- ✦ Even a rocket scientist can't figure out the formula.
- ✦ The metrics, weights, formula and report card do not reflect public values.

Creating a robust, valid and easy-to-understand report card is harder than it sounds. State legislatures and departments of education have worked years to create such report cards — only to be rewarded with a cacophony of criticism from their constituents. The rest of this paper is divided into three sections — researchers, parents and experts — that seek to help state policymakers get it right.

IT'S COMPLICATED: ATTEMPTING TO OVERCOME "COMPOSITION BIAS"

An issue with nearly every performance indicator is composition bias. Simply stated, this refers to the correlation between a school's student demographics and its performance levels. Attempts to resolve this concern have resulted in greater attention to academic growth, rather than absolute performance levels, and a number of more complicated accountability systems.

For example, states may use regression analysis, a statistical process for estimating the relationships among variables, to determine the weight to give poverty. Or a state may use value-added modeling, charting student progress over time, in an attempt to determine teaching contributions to student growth. While these techniques may be used to improve accuracy, they can be difficult to easily explain in communications about accountability systems.

WHAT'S THE SECRET FORMULA? IT HAS TO BE UNDERSTANDABLE!

Examples of easy-to-understand state report card formulas include Louisiana, one of the top states selected by researchers and experts.

HOW ARE SCHOOL GRADES CALCULATED?

Starting with the 2012-2013 school year, the Louisiana Department of Education has improved the way schools are graded by aligning with higher standards, rewarding the gains schools have already made, and focusing on students below grade level. This means:

<div style="background-color: #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">A 120-200</div> <div style="background-color: #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">B 105-119.9</div> <div style="background-color: #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">C 90-104.9</div> <div style="background-color: #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">D 75-89.9</div> <div style="background-color: #ccc; padding: 5px;">F 0-74.9</div>		<div style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">A 100-150</div> <div style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">B 85-99.9</div> <div style="background-color: #00BCD4; color: white; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">C 70-84.9</div> <div style="background-color: #9E9E9E; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">D 50-69.9</div> <div style="background-color: #004D40; color: white; padding: 5px;">F 0-49.9</div>
--	--	--

EASIER TO UNDERSTAND SCALE
(100+ = A)
(<50 = F)

OLD SCALE
NEW SCALE

OLD CALCULATION

- ELEMENTARY (K-6)**
90% Tests + 10% Attendance
- MIDDLE (K-8)**
90% Tests + 5% Attendance + 5% Dropout
- HIGH SCHOOL (9-12)**
70% Tests + 30% Graduation Rate
- COMBINATION SCHOOL**
Average of: (K-8 SPS x # Students) + (HS SPS x # Students)

NEW CALCULATION

- ELEMENTARY (K-6)**
100% Tests
- MIDDLE (K-8)**
95% Tests + 5% High School Credits Earned by End of Freshman Year
- HIGH SCHOOL (9-12)**
25% ACT Composite + 25% End of Course + 25% Graduation Rate + 25% Quality of Diploma
- COMBINATION SCHOOL**
Average of: (K-8 SPS x # Students) + (HS SPS x # Students)

WHAT HAS IMPROVED THIS YEAR?

NO POINTS BELOW GRADE LEVEL

PLACES VALUE ON RIGOROUS TESTING

+ PREPARES KIDS FOR POST SECONDARY

FIRST TIME

PROGRESS with = UP TO 10 BONUS POINTS

Struggling Students

= "A" schools earn 5 bonus points or grows 5 points from old system.
 = "B-F" schools earn 10 bonus points or grows 10 points from old system.
 * Cannot be in school improvement.

Source: <http://www.louisianaschools.net/docs/test-results/8-19-13-report-card-infographic.pdf?sfvrsn=6>

EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES | PAGE 5

SECTION I: RESEARCHERS

Are the report cards easy to find?

Researchers with the Education Commission of the States were assigned to find state report cards online in an effort to see how easy the cards are to locate. They were given the name of a particular school in a particular state and asked to find its most recent report card. One goal was to ascertain the level of computer skill required to find the state-issued cards. In many cases, private school-rating websites such as [GreatSchools.org](#), [city-data.com](#) or [50Can.org](#) came up first in computer searches, while serious diligence and technical understanding were needed to find the state-sponsored reports.

The three researchers were asked to rate each report card from 1 (unsatisfactory) to 3 (excellent)

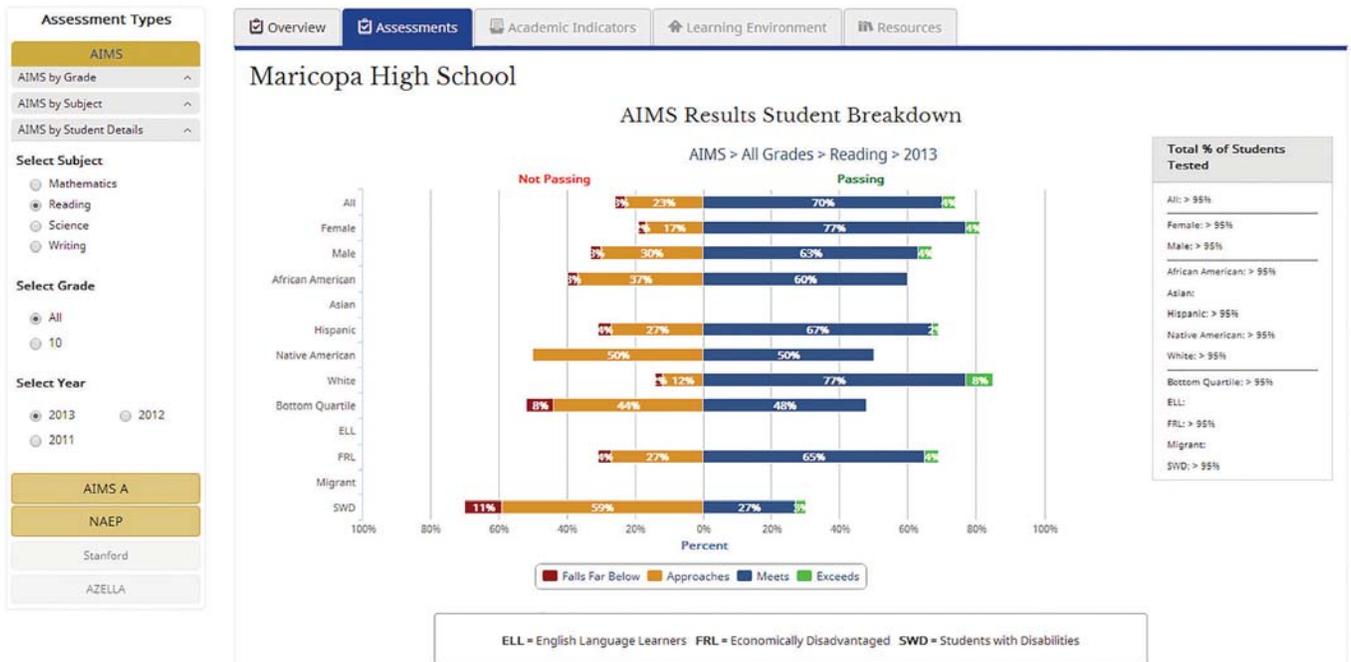
in the following categories: Findable, Readable, Understandable and Graphics. For the latter category, the question was “Were graphics used well to convey the information?” Even those experienced in online research had difficulty: “I wasn’t able to find school-level report cards,” lamented one while another noted, “Could not find using a Google search – lots of confounding search results.” They identified eight report cards as above average in all categories: [Arizona](#), [Delaware](#), [Illinois](#), [Kentucky](#), [Louisiana](#), [Massachusetts](#), [Maine](#) and [Ohio](#). Of those, they agreed Arizona, Illinois and Ohio had overall the best easy-to-find, informative and readable report cards.

RESEARCHERS’ RATINGS: “THESE STATES DO IT BEST!”

ARIZONA

Summary: This report card received excellent ratings in nearly all categories. It was particularly noted for being easy to find and to understand, though the PDF version of the card was not rated as highly.

“The simple format is very reader-friendly. All the essential information is present and easy to process ... The graphics are well-done and convey information at a glance.”



ILLINOIS

Summary: Given top marks in most categories, this report card was particularly noted for being easy to understand and for its use of graphics. Also praised: Links allowing readers to “drill down” to learn more.

“I really like the overview on the first page with the snapshot and basic graphs. It made the basic information very easy to understand and to digest. I also liked how the graphics were interactive.”

CANTON HIGH SCHOOL

1001 N MAIN ST CANTON, IL 61520 1118
(309) 647-1820

Grades: 9-12
District: CANTON UNION SD 66

Principal: Mrs Robin Tonkin
Superintendent: Roy Webb

Are students ready for college and careers?

	2012-2013	2011-2012	IL Average
Graduation Rate, 4-Year: Percentage of students who graduated within 4 years	87%	79%	83%
Graduation Rate, 5-Year: Percentage of students who graduated within 5 years	81%	82%	87%
Ready for College Coursework: Percentage of students meeting or exceeding college readiness benchmarks on the ACT	35%	39%	46%
Post-Secondary Enrollment: Percentage of graduates who enroll at colleges and universities	Coming in 2014		

How do students perform on measures of academic success?

Percentage of students who meet or exceed state standards on the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE)	2012-2013	2011-2012	IL Average
PSAE Overall	46%	48%	53%
Mathematics	43%	48%	52%
Reading	49%	47%	55%
Science	45%	53%	49%

What does the 5Essentials survey tell us about the school's learning conditions?

This year, for the first time, Illinois schools piloted an anonymous statewide survey of learning conditions, the 5Essentials Survey. The 5Essentials Survey provided an opportunity for students in grades 6 through 12 and all teachers to share their perspectives on essential conditions for learning. Next year, results from the 2014 survey will appear on the report card in the format below. A detailed report for all schools and districts will also be made available in 2014.

Effective Leaders Do principals and teachers implement a shared vision for success?

Collaborative Teachers Do teachers collaborate to promote professional growth?

Supportive Environment Is the school safe, demanding, and supportive?

Ambitious Instruction Are classes challenging and engaging?

Involved Families Does the entire staff build strong external relationships?



	Response Rate	IL Average
Students	81%	85%
Teachers	82%	82%

For more information: Illinois5essentials.org

District- and school-level results on individual questions within the survey are available online at IllinoisReportCard.com

OHIO

Summary: Another report card with nearly perfect scores, Ohio’s effort was lauded for its graphics and for being easy to read and understand. One concern: Several data points are labeled “Coming in 2015.”

“Very well-designed and easy to understand. The graphics are outstanding. I really like the little ‘gauge’ graphics.” The different data points are explained well and concisely.”

2012-2013 Report Card for Cuyahoga Falls High School

View Printable PDF

Overview | Achievement | Progress | Gap Closing | Graduation Rate | K-3 Literacy | Prepared for Success

SCHOOL GRADE

Coming in 2015

SCHOOL DETAILS

VIEW DISTRICT

Financial Data

These measures answer several questions about spending and performance. How much is spent on Classroom instruction? How much, on average, is spent on each student? What is the source of the revenue? How do these measures compare to other districts and schools?

VIEW DATA



Achievement

This grade combines two results for students who took the state tests. The first result answers the question - How many students passed the state test? The second result answers the question - How well did the students do on the state test?

Performance Index 83.6% **B**
Indicators Met 100.0% **A**

COMPONENT GRADE

Coming in 2015

VIEW MORE DATA



Progress

This is your school's average progress for its students in math and reading, grades 4-8. It looks at how much each student learns in a year. Did the students get a year's worth of growth? Did they get more? Did they get less?

Value-Added
Overall..... **NR**
Gifted..... **NR**
Lowest 20% in Achievement..... **NR**
Students with Disabilities..... **NR**

COMPONENT GRADE

Coming in 2015

VIEW MORE DATA



Gap Closing

This grade shows how well all students are doing in your school in reading, math, and graduation. It answers the question - Is every student succeeding, regardless of income, race, culture or disability?

Annual Measurable Objectives 73.3% **C**

COMPONENT GRADE

Coming in 2015

VIEW MORE DATA



Graduation Rate

This grade answers the question - How many ninth graders graduate in four years or five years?

Graduation Rates
91.7% of students graduated in 4 years..... **B**
94.4% of students graduated in 5 years..... **B**

COMPONENT GRADE

Coming in 2015

VIEW MORE DATA

RESEARCHER REVIEW “LIKES”

IS THE REPORT CARD EASY TO FIND?

“It was relatively easy to find (after minimal digging) and I like that you can download the report.”

“The school-specific information did not come up through an Internet search, but found relatively easily through the state education department.”

IS THE REPORT CARD EASY TO READ?

“The report card was very good. Easy to read. Not too much information shown, but links to more detailed information were easily accessible.”

“I also liked that information was available in Spanish.”

IS THE REPORT CARD EASY TO UNDERSTAND?

“I like that there’s a two-page snapshot as well as the more detailed online version. Information was broken down into tabs, which I think is helpful.”

“Nice balance of data and narrative explanation. ‘For Parents’ and ‘for Educators’ are GREAT features to see.”

DOES THE USE OF GRAPHICS HELP CONVEY INFORMATION?

“The graph titles also provide additional information by hovering over the text.”

“I really like the overview on the first page with the snapshot and basic graphs. It made the basic information very easy to understand and digest. I also liked how the graphics were interactive and allow users to click through for more details.”

RESEARCHER REVIEW “DISLIKES”

IS THE REPORT CARD EASY TO FIND?

“When I searched for report cards on the Department of Education site, the first link it brought up was broken. It took me nine minutes to get to the accountability reporting system page.”

“Found right away with a Google search, but the website doesn’t work right with Firefox. Worked fine with MS Explorer.”

IS THE REPORT CARD EASY TO READ?

“This report card was clearly not designed with parents in mind. It looks like it’s just to meet state/or federal reporting requirements. There’s no explanation of the contents and no total score or rating.”

“I don’t think the format (requires lots of clicks) is user-friendly.”

IS THE REPORT CARD EASY TO UNDERSTAND?

“Oddly, the school’s A-F grade doesn’t appear on the report. You have to go to the Excel spreadsheet to get the A-F grade. There’s information on the web page about how the grades are calculated, but you have to be willing to click and read several different documents.”

“I see that the school got a four-star rating, but I don’t see any content around that. Four out of what? Five? Ten?”

DOES THE USE OF GRAPHICS HELP CONVEY INFORMATION?

“There are a bunch of nice charts and graphs, but you have to click on each thing separately to see them.”

“Nearly unreadable. It was very difficult to understand what was being tracked or scored.”

SECTION II: PARENTS

Do the report cards contain useful information?

To determine how useful the report cards actually are to parents, ECS asked parents from across the country to follow a link to an individual school report card from each of the 50 states. The 14 parents were selected by ECS staff and represent a mix of educational attainment, ethnicity, income levels and geography, both in terms of urban/rural and in terms of U.S. states. Their children range in age from kindergarten to high school.

Each of the parents reviewed report cards from all 50 states and rated them from 1 (unacceptable) to 5 (excellent) in the categories of “easy to read,” “provides sufficient data” and “useful.” ECS selected for review a mix of elementary, middle and high schools that were moderately diverse in student population and that received ratings in the moderate to upper range.³

Overall, the parents favored report cards with clear graphics that made the data easy to understand. They also liked when additional information was available if a viewer wanted to drill down. However, there was not always consistent agreement. On the same high school report card, for example, one parent labeled the report card as unacceptable in each category while another parent labeled the report card as excellent in all categories.

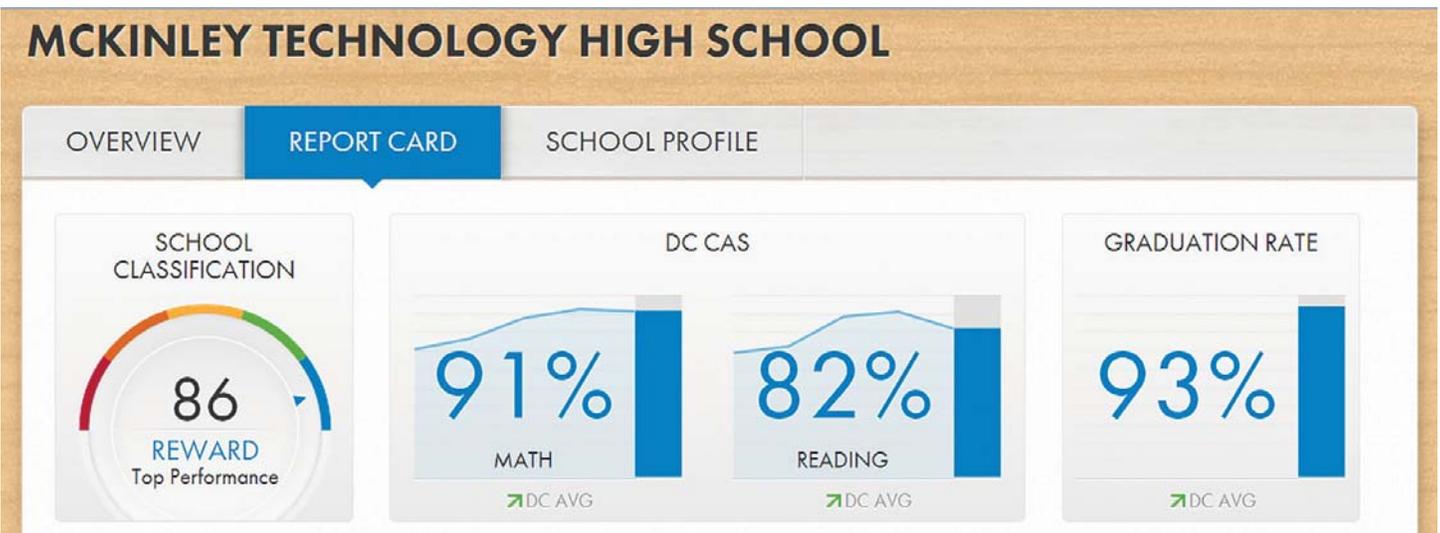
Report cards from [Illinois](#) and the [District of Columbia](#) were identified as favorites by a majority of parents, or eight of the 14. They were closely followed by [Delaware](#) (chosen by six parents) and then [Arkansas](#), [Ohio](#) and [Wisconsin](#) (each selected by five parents).

PARENTS SPEAK: “THESE STATES GOT IT RIGHT!”

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Summary: Parents raved about the “very clear” presentation of information and features such as the ability to compare schools and the option to ask for more data via a readily available email form.

“Wow!! This is one of my favorites. The ability to ‘explore’ the data is really nice. No other school we looked at had this feature,” said one parent while another noted, “I wanted to read it more.”



ILLINOIS

Summary: Parents applauded this site for being easy for navigate, noting its clear directions and ‘appealing’ graphics. They liked the ability to compare schools and to convert information to Excel.

“Fabulous graphics on Fast Facts front page. Also, terrific tech use of ‘scan QR code’ on the At-A-Glance report,” said one parent while another noted “The whole website is really easy to interpret.”

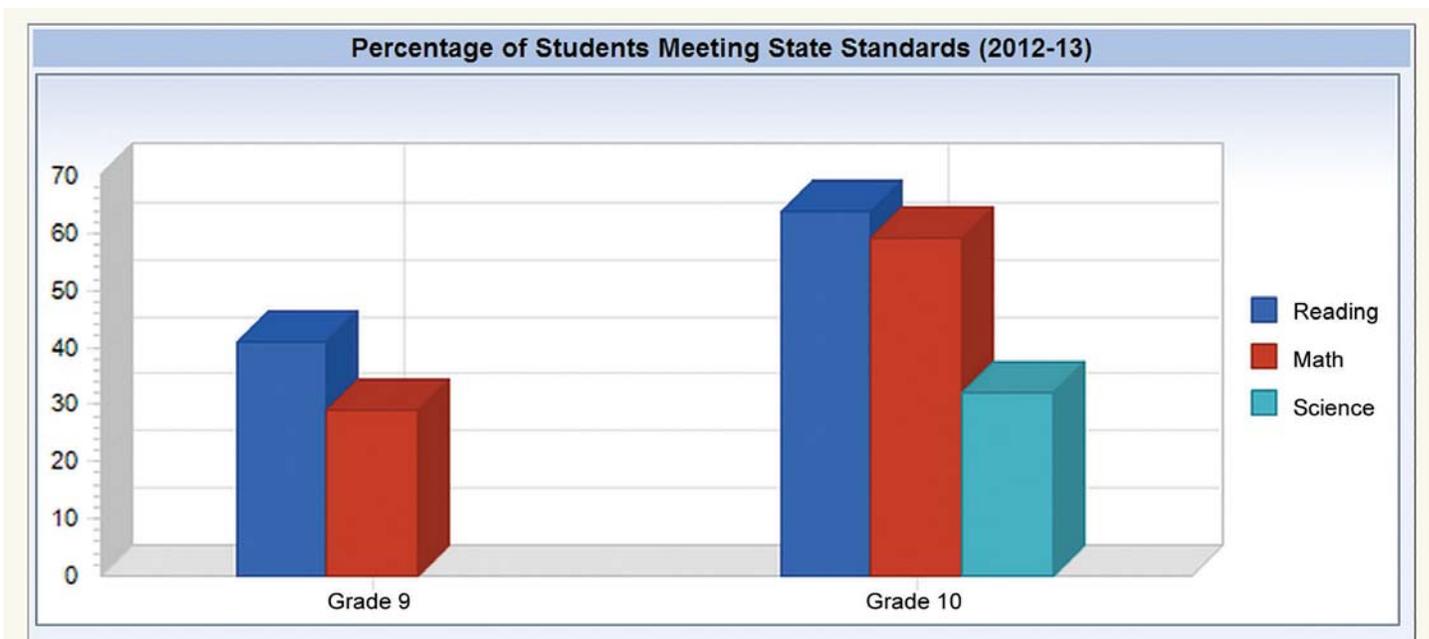
Fast Facts About MACARTHUR MIDDLE SCHOOL



DELAWARE

Summary: Parents were enthusiastic about the inclusion of more staff data than other states and the ability to drill down from tabs labeled School, Student and Staff. A common refrain: “User friendly.”

“Loved this one – especially the school, teachers, students tabs to help sort out data!” said one parent while another commented, “Nice front-page summary, easy to drill down for more data.”



A Clear Winner: Illinois

Illinois was the only state whose school report cards, found easily at: www.illinoisreportcard.com, were selected in the top three by both researchers and parents.

The interactive site is rich with graphics, pop-up explanations and links to at-a-glance reports, videos and additional resources. Indicators are typically accompanied by tabs labeled “Explanation of Display,” “Context” and “Resources.”

An example is the display regarding student academic growth, a concept that can be tough to explain. Illinois uses a short video to explain the concept, describes how growth fits into the overall performance picture and links to a Frequently Asked Questions document prepared by the state.

Additional comments from parents:

“Easily accessible.”

“Easy to navigate.”

“Provided directions as to how to navigate the page and was not overwhelming with data.”

“Had links to compare the school to district & state.”

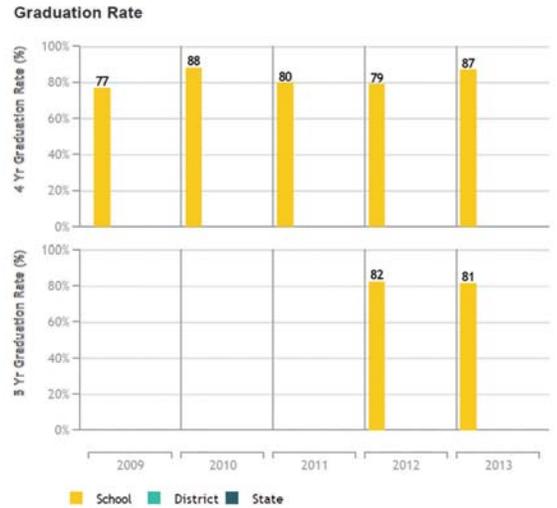
“Very informative.”

Additional comments from researchers:

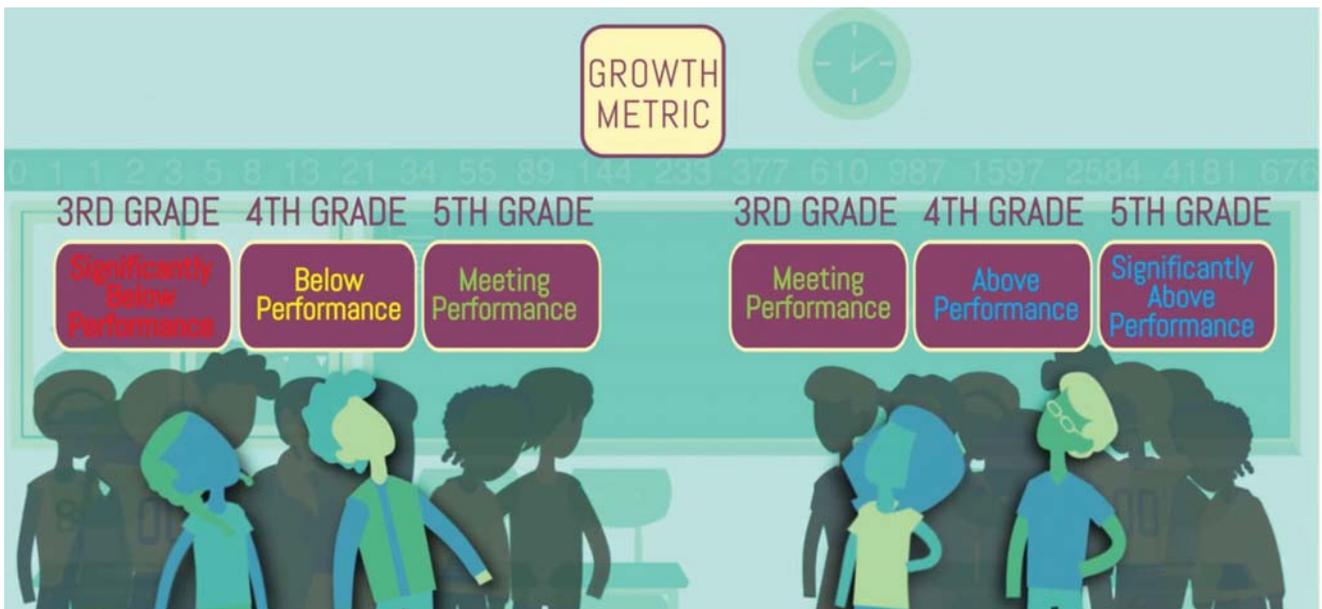
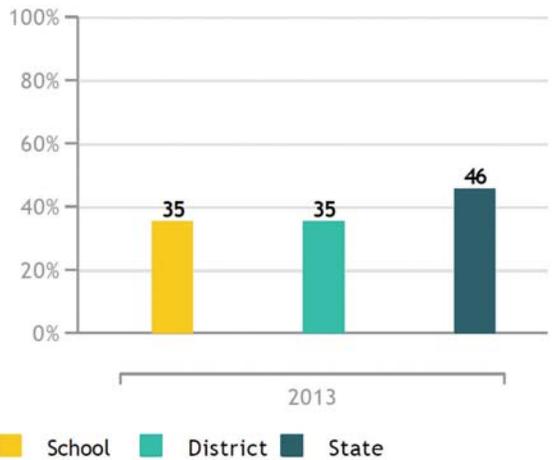
“Very good. Easy to read. Not too much information shown, but links to more detailed information were easily accessible.”

“THE BEST SO FAR. Easy to interpret, everything is clickable for more information.”

CANTON HIGH SCHOOL



Ready for College Course Work



PARENT REVIEW "LIKES"

IS THE REPORT CARD EASY TO READ?

*"I like that the data is presented in both table and bar graph format.
Four-color bar graph easy to decipher at a glance."*

"Everything is on one page. You can get additional information from just one click on the graph and the breakdown of data pops up. The information is very clearly presented."

"Tabs across top make navigation quick."

DOES THE REPORT CARD PROVIDE SUFFICIENT DATA?

"As a parent, I could find information that would be important to me when making decisions about schools. I felt like I got an understanding of the school without going there from what is on this site."

"I could learn about more than just data about the schools from this site."

"Very thorough - WOW! Could be a bit much to some but I'm sure most parents would love more information than less."

IS THE REPORT CARD USEFUL?

"Additional information such as school safety, graduation rates, etc., help to paint a whole picture of this school."

"Great summary/comparison to the state - demonstrating this school outperforms state average."

"Postsecondary and workforce readiness category is nice to know."

PARENT REVIEW "DISLIKES"

IS THE REPORT CARD EASY TO READ?

"This report made the user have to use dropdown boxes and select what you wanted to see. Not easy to compare everything like charts and spreadsheets/graphs."

"They use words that are not meaningful to the general public (Cell Count, etc.)."

" +/- I really liked this report card although it is not supported for tablet or smartphone."

DOES THE REPORT CARD PROVIDE SUFFICIENT DATA?

"So much emphasis on enrollment in the past 10 years, but not much information on performance or assessment."

"Not much reference or explanation of the 'B' grade in the upper right-hand corner. Amount of data insufficient."

"No growth comparisons from years past. Data is very limited."

IS THE REPORT CARD USEFUL?

"Extremely boring and data in tables not clearly labeled or explained."

"Nice summary, but very little info. Would not be good if you were moving to area and wanted more school info. Where is the rest of the data?"

"Like reading a corporate financial report of 20 pages to get information. Lot of data that is scattered and not formatted to be easily understood."

An important consideration

Overall, parent reactions to the report cards broke down into a fairly even distribution — a third of the cards rose to the top, a third sank to the bottom and a third landed somewhere in the middle. Individual reactions to some state’s accountability reports, however, were widely disparate. A sampling of those opinions is presented here to further illustrate how difficult it can be to create public reporting systems that please everyone:

ONE CARD, DIFFERENT RESPONSES: A MATTER OF PREFERENCE

While many of the scores reported by the parent panel were in the same range, there were definite differences of opinion.

ALASKA

- PRO – “Performance index was easy to read and provides a good feel for each school’s performance” and “Good data, easy to read!”
- CON – “One 96-page document with one page for each school in Alaska. Rates three subjects and just gives percent proficient, not levels or what percentages were in previous years. No demographic or teacher data included. ... What is a good score?”

VERMONT

- PRO – “You have a lot of control in building the type of reports you want to view. If you know exactly what you are looking for, this is a useful website.”
- CON – “Vague, would like to see a grade in the district – A, B, C.”



SECTION III: EXPERTS

Essential metrics states should use to measure school success

Because of the complexities involved with selecting school measures that accurately and reliably signal the quality and health of schools, ECS convened a panel of 12 experts in December 2013 to look at what states measure and what they should report regarding the quality and health of their schools.⁴ The robust discussion covered the maturation of state accountability and report card efforts, and the pitfalls facing states when the measures become political liabilities. The experts pinpointed essential metrics, caveats, key considerations and important policymaker decision points.

The ECS School Accountability Advisory Group grappled with many questions, including:

- ✦ Is more information necessarily better?
- ✦ Do metrics and formulas accurately measure which schools are doing well?
- ✦ What level of data is necessary? Student-level or cohort-level?
- ✦ Is there an absolute level on an indicator below which no school should operate?
- ✦ Do you weigh progress toward a goal or an absolute measure?
- ✦ Since you cannot account for everything, what are the best metrics for examining the health of a school or system?
- ✦ How do you ensure growth toward a goal is recognized while not losing focus on reaching the goal?

Key Findings:

1. Set a clear goal or “North Star”

The expert group noted that states need a clear goal or “North Star” of what they are trying to accomplish with renewed school improvement efforts.

For example, Kentucky lists its “College or career ready for all” goal with their formula and on the state landing page for its school report cards.

Or, if a state such as Massachusetts wants to focus on a P-20 system, measures should signal success throughout that system. That might mean inclusion of a pre-K indicator. Creating a common goal for the state encourages public buy-in and a cohesive message.

When choosing the indicators or metrics to measure school performance, experts say it is important to link the causes, interventions and reliable outcomes that will lead to achieving the overall goal or “North Star.”

2. Beware unintended consequences

Prior to delving into essential indicators for states, the experts’ panel discussed over-arching concerns about accountability. A major theme was that states and districts must be careful in how they hold schools accountable and how the information is reported to the public. That’s because what is measured and reported has the possibility of driving bad behaviors.

For example, grading a school based on the number of expulsions may have the unintended consequence of encouraging teachers and administrators to be more lenient on behavioral infractions.

3. Ensure state systems can handle the data

Because the most accurate accountability systems typically require a reliable student-level data system, the experts noted policymakers must consider the capacity of their state longitudinal data system and staff when choosing metrics. Many state data systems were initially created to track school-level accountability data and weren’t designed to capture student-level data in a secure and shareable manner. Portability of data across schools, districts and platforms is critical for understanding the growth students are making, but existing state data systems may not be up to the task.

Five essential indicators every state should measure and report

While the experts encouraged additional metrics based on individual state and district issues, they recommended every state report card include these indicators:

- ✦ Student achievement
- ✦ Student academic growth
- ✦ Achievement gap closure
- ✦ Graduation rates
- ✦ College and career readiness

For each indicator, the experts examined the various metrics used, advantages, caveats and key state decision points. Detailed findings for each indicator are listed on the following pages.⁵

ECS EXPERTS' ADVICE TO POLICYMAKERS

- ✦ Identify and publicize your state's "North Star."
- ✦ Re-engage people in your schools. Good communication is vital to ensuring the data and accountability story is easily understood by everyone.
- ✦ Choose your indicators and metrics carefully. Know how to use an indicator — make it less about grading and shaming and more about what research says works and how to address problems.
- ✦ Be realistic about the limits of your data system. Highly mobile students may create special challenges in tracking proficiency and growth data.
- ✦ Consider the potential unintended consequences of what's being measured, rewarded or punished.



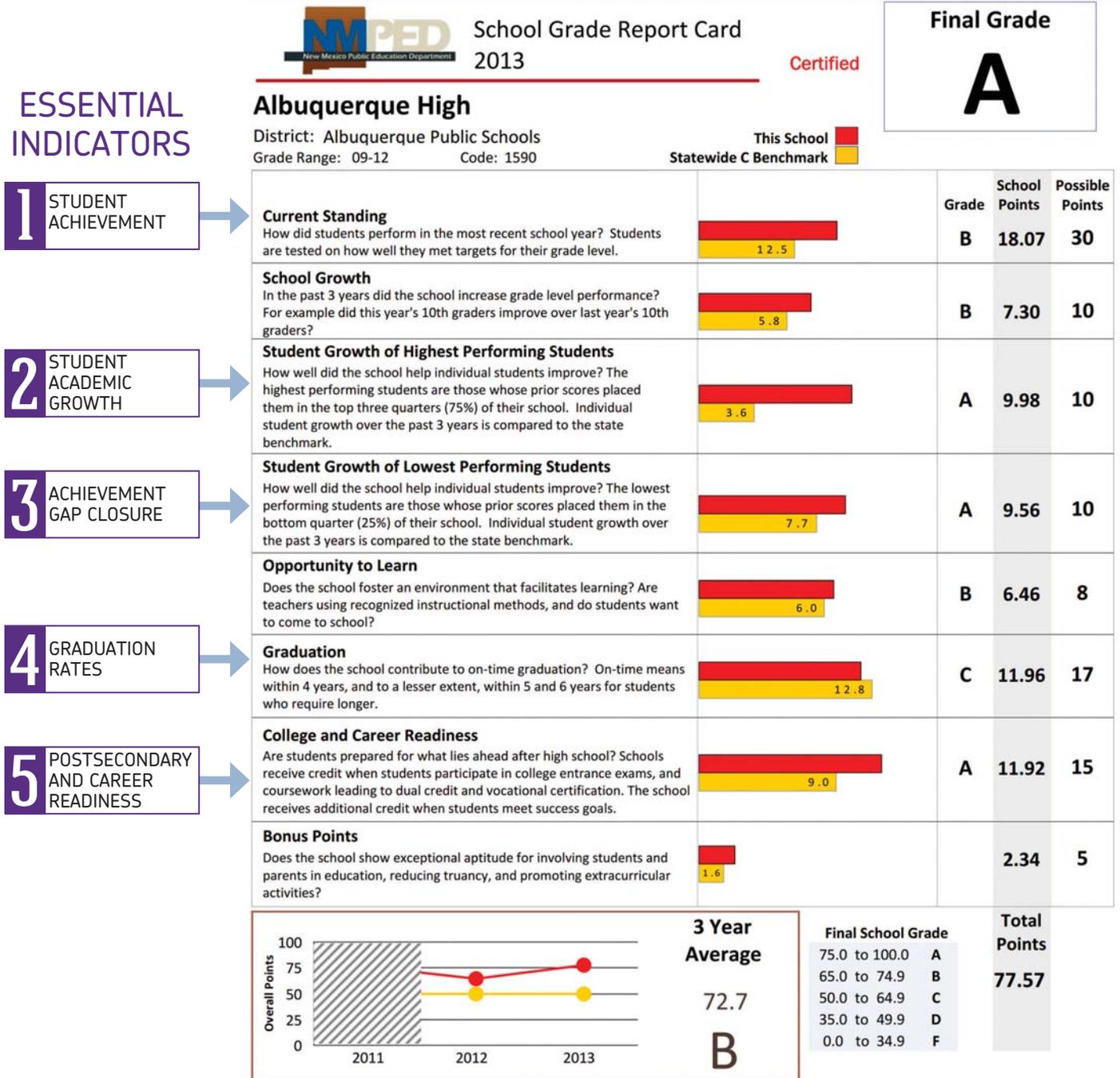
Making the Grade: States Meeting the Five Essential Indicators

The experts convened by ECS did not focus on how to find state report cards or, once found, how to navigate them. Their charge was different: Identify the essential metrics for any accountability system.

So it may not be surprising that there is little cross-over between the top states picked by parents and researchers and those states identified as measuring and reporting on the five essential indicators.

The 14 states identified as meeting the experts' criteria are [California](#), [Colorado](#), [Florida](#), [Kentucky](#), [Louisiana](#), [Nevada](#), [New Mexico](#), [North Dakota](#), [Ohio](#), [Oklahoma](#), [Pennsylvania](#), [Tennessee](#), [Utah](#) and [Wisconsin](#).

This example of a New Mexico state [report card](#) for Albuquerque High School illustrates the use of the five essential indicators:



Source: http://webapp2.ped.state.nm.us/SchoolData/docs/1213/SchoolGrading/001_590_ALBUQUERQUE_PUBLIC_SCHOOLS_ALBUQUERQUE_HIGH_SchoolGrading_2013.pdf

Essential Indicator #1: Student Achievement

Every state gives students standards-based assessments and reports those results to schools and parents. States choose the subjects to be tested and set the cut scores necessary for students to show proficiency. Reporting overall or absolute levels of student achievement typically indicates the number or percentage of a school's students who are deemed to be performing proficiently in particular subjects. Many states have defined proficient as achieving grade-level expectations.

But many students come to schools with significant disadvantages. Some states, such as Tennessee, seek to accommodate for such disadvantages with statistical models. These models attempt to reduce the likelihood that schools serving large numbers of disadvantaged students will have their performance designation affected by conditions over which they have little control.

Including absolute levels of student achievement as an indicator in an accountability system is typically seen as an advantage for schools serving more affluent populations. To balance that concern, many states include changes in school achievement levels over time in their ratings formulas and some include student academic growth measures. In addition, a number of states have created comparisons among schools of similar demographics. California, for example, ranks its schools statewide and compares each school to another 100 schools with similar rates of poverty, parent education and other indicators.

FACTORS FOR POLICYMAKERS TO CONSIDER:

- ✦ Critics believe a focus on test scores may create a “high-stakes” environment for students, teachers and administrators.
- ✦ Communities may have a hard time rallying behind the tests without alignment between the tests, grade levels and learning requirements.
- ✦ Setting the cut scores for proficiency on the tests is not a perfect science.
- ✦ If tests change, school accountability systems should too. When moving to a new assessment, states should carefully align the old and new tests to validate that the standards are being met.

QUESTIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS TO CONSIDER:

- ✦ Which subjects will be tested and in which grades?
- ✦ Do the tests fully align to the standards and do they meet college- and career-ready expectations?
- ✦ How are the cut scores for the assessments determined? Who makes those decisions and how often will the cut scores be re-examined?
- ✦ Will the results for groups of students, such as English language learners, minorities or low-income students, be explicitly reported as part of the accountability system? Will these results factor in a school's final ranking or grade?
- ✦ Does the accountability system consider trend data, such as the past two or three years, or is it based on one year's results?
- ✦ Will end-of-course exams or other assessments, such as college entrance tests including the ACT or SAT, be included in the school and district rating system?

Essential Indicator #2: Student Academic Growth

A small but increasing number of states are refining their accountability systems to measure and reward student academic growth. Based on a review of students' test score gains from previous grades, researchers can predict the amount of growth those students are likely to make in a given year and then compare to actual performance. This differs from changes in school-level performance over time because actual individual student performance is tracked, even as students move in and out of schools.

This prediction can help determine whether a student is making expected progress in a particular subject. Measuring student academic growth is one way of analyzing test data to measure teaching and learning. It's often referred to as "value-added" or looking to see whether a teacher has added value to a student's body of knowledge.

In addition, measuring student academic growth and using past growth to predict future results can be used as part of "catch up" or "keep up" indicators. The "catch up" indicator examines the progress of lower-performing students who need to catch up to the performance of their peers. The "keep up" indicator looks at the growth of the highest-performing students, who may stagnate if growth isn't recognized as a priority.

Measuring and reporting student academic growth is generally seen as a way of resolving concerns about composition bias and of recognizing schools and districts that are working hard, even if their results fall short of absolute performance goals.

FACTORS FOR POLICYMAKERS TO CONSIDER:

- ✦ "Growth" is often perceived as being too confusing — people may not understand it because the underlying statistical calculations are complex and not easily replicated by non-statisticians.
- ✦ Communication strategies for explaining growth are critically important. It is possible to keep the explanations simple, even if the methodology is complex.
- ✦ Because simple growth models depend largely on the formula determining individual student growth, it is possible to game the system and make the data look better than it actually is. Calculations should address students who switch schools midyear, those who start or finish a course outside of the normal academic calendar, who have missing data or those who are far below or above grade level for their cohort.
- ✦ Attempting to control for student demographics may increase the precision of results in models that don't use all available prior achievement data, but it might have the effect of implying there are different standards for different students.

QUESTIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS TO CONSIDER:

- ✦ Will growth be measured against an absolute proficiency standard or against "peer" schools with similar demographics?
- ✦ How can growth calculations keep from working against or accommodate for high-performing schools with less room for growth? Does your state rating formula ensure that achievement growth within the highest-performing quartile also matters?
- ✦ Will student academic growth be considered in evaluating teacher performance? If so, does the system used for determining growth align with what's needed to measure teacher performance?

Essential Indicator #3: Achievement Gap Closure

Gaps in achievement separating groups of students by income and ethnicity have been the focus of numerous studies, policy innovation and public concern for many years. Researchers have identified a variety of factors that appear related to these achievement gaps, including family income, parent education levels, access to high-quality preschool, peer influences, curricular and instructional quality, and teacher expectations.

Many states have chosen to focus on these particular achievement gaps as a means of ensuring progress — or a lack thereof — is highlighted. Equally as important, however, are indicators that focus on achievement gaps such as those between English language learners and native English speakers, students performing in the lowest quartile versus those performing better, male students and female students, and so on. In short, the intent of reporting and/or measuring achievement gaps should be to ensure that all students are being served.

It's also important to consider the size of the groupings used in this analysis. For example, the performance of all boys versus all girls in a school may not be useful. But a further breakdown by academic subject and grade may yield more helpful data.

FACTORS FOR POLICYMAKERS TO CONSIDER:

- ✦ While challenging, experts agree it is important to measure and report disparities in performance levels among different groups of students.
- ✦ Closing achievement gaps should benefit all students – accelerating the growth of lower performers without reducing growth in higher achievers.
- ✦ In addition to subgroups based on student demographics, consider subgroups based solely on achievement. For example, closing gaps between historically struggling and higher-performing readers in a grade level or school.
- ✦ Decisions surrounding determination of subgroup size matter. Subgroup size can enhance fairness but the use of “super subgroups” — such as grouping all ethnicities under the term minority versus breakdowns by individual ethnicity — may risk covering up low performance by smaller subgroups.
- ✦ Federal regulations governing the reporting of assessment results for minimum sample sizes, to avoid releasing personally identifiable information, should be consulted.

QUESTIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS TO CONSIDER:

- ✦ Which achievement measures will be used — test scores, graduation rates, growth, etc.?
- ✦ Which subgroups should be included and which excluded — by income, race, achievement level, etc.?
- ✦ Are achievement gaps measured within schools and within districts?
- ✦ Are multiple years of data used for school performance measures?
- ✦ Should performance measures specifically target academic growth of the lowest quartile by giving that group additional weight in the accountability formula?
- ✦ How can unintended consequences of subgroup size be accommodated in small, rural schools?

Essential Indicator #4: Graduation Rates

Measuring graduation rates is intended to encourage all schools to ensure all students complete requirements to receive a diploma. The credential, which data has long demonstrated results in better employment prospects and higher pay, can have a profound impact on student life outcomes.

The U.S. Department of Education's required calculation for a school's four-year graduation rate is to divide the number of students graduating in four years with a regular high school diploma by the number of students who entered the school as freshmen four years previously. This calculation is adjusted to account for student movement in and out of the school during the four-year period.

A graduation rate would seem to be a fairly easy metric on its face. Yet it offers a myriad of complexities when considering how to encourage schools to serve students who might "count" against them, such as those who have left school and returned or who have been slow to accumulate enough credits to graduate. For example, how does a state consider students who take five or six years to graduate? Such decisions can have a significant influence on the effort schools put forth in educating at-risk students.

FACTORS FOR POLICYMAKERS TO CONSIDER:

- ✦ Allowing credit for five-year and six-year graduation rates, in addition to the four-year rate, could encourage schools to work with struggling students.
- ✦ Alternately, does allowing credit for five-year and six-year graduation rates reduce pressure to help students reach credential completion within four years?
- ✦ Because graduation requirements differ in states, with some requiring end-of-course exams versus credit accumulation, accurate cross-state comparisons are difficult.
- ✦ Managing student mobility data requires a strong longitudinal data tracking system.
- ✦ Even with common calculations, schools have the potential to "game the system" by being selective about which students are included in a four-year graduation rate.

QUESTIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS TO CONSIDER:

- ✦ Should five-year and six-year graduation rates be included in the state accountability system to encourage schools to work with struggling students?
- ✦ Will a school's graduation rate be measured against an absolute goal, such as 100 percent, or a state average when determining a grade or score for the report card?
- ✦ Similarly, should a school's graduation rate be compared against demographically similar or "peer" schools, all schools or perhaps both?
- ✦ Will trend data, such as three years' worth of graduation rates, be used to determine if progress is being made?
- ✦ Consider potential loopholes schools might use to improve their ratings, such as excluding some students, and figure out how to close them.
- ✦ Is there a minimum graduation rate below which a school would fall into the lowest performance category?

Essential Indicator #5: Postsecondary and Career Readiness

While many states are working to define postsecondary and career readiness, the ECS School Accountability Advisory Panel defined it as when a student can perform college level-work without the need for remediation. Often, the more explicit definition in terms of metrics is provided at the state level. An indicator of career readiness creates the need for clarity in defining what career-ready looks like.

These indicators of postsecondary and career readiness were commonly used by states:

- ✦ Dual enrollment participation and/or completion
- ✦ Advanced Placement participation and/or results
- ✦ ACT/SAT participation and/or results
- ✦ International Baccalaureate program participation
- ✦ College-going rate
- ✦ Percentage of students taking algebra in grade 8
- ✦ Industry certifications earned
- ✦ Percentage of students enrolled in postsecondary programs
- ✦ Percentage of students assessed as needing college remediation

FACTORS FOR POLICYMAKERS TO CONSIDER:

- ✦ No single formula or definition guarantees freshman-year college success.
- ✦ States must increase the dialogue between all aspects of K-12 and postsecondary education to create an aligned P-20 system. Each part of the system provides a necessary building-block for postsecondary success or workforce readiness. Those blocks must be aligned for individual college- and career-readiness measures.
- ✦ Measures related to dual enrollment should recognize that dual enrollment may be limited by student location or availability of online courses. Additionally, whether students take part in dual enrollment may be limited by counseling availability and teacher support.
- ✦ When including courses and tests that students select into, such as Advanced Placement, ACT and SAT, include both the course or test-taking and the course or test-passing rates.
- ✦ Including Advanced Placement participation and results in an accountability formula bring into question the availability of courses offered in person and online and test cut scores.
- ✦ Determining whether students entered college ready to perform college-level work requires a relatively stable student population and a strong longitudinal data tracking system.

QUESTIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS TO CONSIDER:

- ✦ What other metrics might be considered to measure postsecondary or career readiness? Is the data capability available to measure those?
- ✦ Which advanced offerings, such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate or dual enrollment courses, are available to all students?
- ✦ Does the state have the longitudinal student-level data necessary to determine if students are successful in postsecondary education and/or the workforce?
- ✦ Do the state metrics accurately tell the story of whether K-12 students are attending college without the need for remediation?

CONCLUSION

For more than a century, states have created different ways of reporting on the quality of their public schools. It's only in the last 30 years, however, that the reporting has shifted from inputs to outcomes and to how well children are being served. This is a dramatic change and one that likely will continue to evolve.

Increased public reporting about school performance has prompted concerns about the fairness of comparing schools serving different populations. Many states have sought to address this issue by compensating for poverty, which is linked to many out-of-school factors affecting achievement, in some way in their district and school rating systems. Often, this has sparked criticism that expectations are lower for different groups of students. Balancing fairness for all schools and rigor for all students is widely viewed as a challenge in creating accountability systems.

The findings of the ECS School Accountability Advisory Group, the results from researchers and the survey of parents make it clear that communication of a state's overarching goal for schools is imperative. To what end are schools being graded? Schools have long served, and continue to serve, as community centers. Accountability systems impacting schools carry the potential for disrupting communities. For

a state school and district rating system to be most effective, students, parents, teachers, administrators, policymakers, employers and community members must understand the state's goal and what their schools are doing — or not doing — to achieve it.

Is your state's "North Star" ensuring college and career readiness for all? Is it graduating students with 21st century skills? Is it serving the whole child? Is it reducing the gap between high-achieving and low-achieving students and providing opportunities for all students? Is it providing an accurate picture of school quality — or the lack thereof?

As states continue with their efforts, some may need to re-evaluate their ratings systems and make necessary course corrections to reach their goals. State leaders should consider whether the public reports are providing increased transparency and serving the needs of parents and communities. A perfect metric, accountability formula or school report card does not exist. There is always room for improvement and the accountability landscape will continue to evolve. The key is to determine which metrics will drive the desired outcomes and whether measuring, reporting, incentivizing or leveling sanctions will best move the state closer to its goal.



APPENDIX

Members of the ECS School Accountability Advisory Group

The Education Commission of the States convened its School Accountability Advisory Group on Dec. 12-13, 2013 in Denver. Members are the following:

- ✦ *Facilitator - Christopher Cross*
Chairman of Cross & Joftus, LLC and an ECS 2014 Distinguished Senior Fellow
- ✦ *Jean-Claude Brizard*
President, UpSpring Education and former Chief Executive Officer, Chicago Public Schools
- ✦ *Sandy Kress*
Partner, Akin, Gump, Straus, Hauer & Feld, LLP
- ✦ *Eric Lerum*
Vice President for National Policy, Students First
- ✦ *Patricia Levesque*
Chief Executive Officer, Foundation for Excellence in Education
- ✦ *Aaron Pallas*
Professor of Sociology and Education, Teachers College Columbia University
- ✦ *Paul Reville*
Professor of Educational Policy and Administration, Harvard Graduate School of Education
- ✦ *Joan Sullivan*
Chief Executive Officer, Partnership for Los Angeles Schools
- ✦ *Philip "Uri" Treisman*
Executive Director, Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas, Austin
- ✦ *John White*
Director, SAS EVAAS for K-12, SAS Institute
- ✦ *Priscilla Wohlstetter*
Senior Research Fellow, Consortium for Policy Research in Education

ENDNOTES

1. *Education in the States: Nationwide Development since 1990*, Jim B and Edgar Fuller (editors), Pearson (Author), National Education Association (Publisher), 1969.
2. Data notes for this graph:
 - ✦ Determinations were based on statutory requirements, although we also reviewed state-requested waivers to the No Child Left Behind Act. Reconciling the two made it difficult to maintain accurate counts.
 - ✦ Achievement gap elements reflect state statutory language explicitly targeting closing achievement gaps or explicit targeting of the lowest-performing quartile or English Language Learners.
 - ✦ Some states explicitly measure college and/or career readiness (and measure via proxies such as ACT/SAT scores, dual enrollment, college-going rate, industry certifications) while others might simply measure and/or report on the proxies of readiness.
3. Education Commission of the States' School Accountability Parent Panel reviewed state school report cards between Jan. 20 and Feb. 10, 2014. For parent feedback, ECS selected a mix of elementary, middle and high schools that were moderately diverse in student population and received ratings that were in the moderate to upper range. This resulted in a total of 700 report card reviews – 14 parents, each reviewing 50 state school report cards = 700 report card reviews.
4. The ECS School Accountability Advisory Group met Dec. 12-13, 2013 in Denver. Members of the group are identified by name and title in an appendix to this report. The group was facilitated by Christopher Cross, chairman of Cross & Joftus, LLC, and an ECS 2014 Distinguished Senior Fellow.
5. Gillian Locke, Joe Ableidinger, Bryan C. Hassel and Sharon Kebschull Barrett, *Virtual Schools: Assessing Progress and Accountability, A Final Report of Study Findings* (Washington D.C.: National Charter School Resource Center at American Institutes for Research, February 2014),
<http://www.charterschoolcenter.org/sites/default/files/Virtual%20Schools%20Accountability%20Report.pdf>.

Below are links where you can find school accountability reports for each state.

Alabama	Idaho	Minnesota	North Dakota	Vermont
Alaska	Illinois	Mississippi	Ohio	Virginia
Arizona	Indiana	Missouri	Oklahoma	Washington
Arkansas	Iowa	Montana	Oregon	West Virginia
California	Kansas	Nebraska	Pennsylvania	Wisconsin
Colorado	Kentucky	Nevada	Rhode Island	Wyoming
Connecticut	Louisiana	New Hampshire	South Carolina	Washington D.C.
Delaware	Maine	New Jersey	South Dakota	American Samoa
Florida	Maryland	New Mexico	Tennessee	Guam
Georgia	Massachusetts	New York	Texas	Puerto Rico (Spanish)
Hawaii	Michigan	North Carolina	Utah	U.S. Virgin Islands



Education Commission of the States

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“Williams: Texas Will Get A-F School Rating System”

Associated Press, April 2, 2013

“Oklahoma House Passes Bill Changing A-F Grading System”

The Oklahoman, March 5, 2013

“Grades for Utah Schools Expected to Stir Controversy”

Deseret News, Aug. 27, 2013

“Some Michigan School Leaders Criticize New Scorecards that Give Few Schools High Ratings”

Detroit Free Press, Aug. 20, 2013

“Maine Public Schools To Be Assigned Letter Grades: Democratic Legislators, School Officials Cry Foul Over Gov. Paul LePage’s Education Initiative”

Portland Press Herald, April 27, 2013

“Georgia About to Roll Out New Grading System for Schools and Districts”

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, April 4, 2013

“Schools Get Taste of Own Medicine: States Assign A-F Grades”

Wall Street Journal, Jan. 9, 2013

Student Reading Success Activity Guide



A guide designed for Student Success Teams (families, caregivers, tutors, teachers, etc.) working with young children in Kindergarten-3rd grade

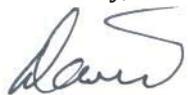
Student Reading Success Activity Guide

Dear Student Success Team Member,

Thank you for your important work! Reading with young children is a **proven way** to promote early literacy. Helping to make sure children are reading on grade level by third grade is one of the most important things we can do to prepare children for a successful future. **Reading with a child for 20 minutes per day and making a few simple strategies a part of your daily routine can make a positive impact on a child's success in school.**

The SC Education Oversight Committee is happy to provide you with this Student Reading Success Activity Guide, which includes age-appropriate games to help children become more proficient readers! We are grateful to the SC General Assembly which allows our agency the ability to produce publications like this for the public through innovative partnerships designed to increase student achievement (*2014-15 Appropriations Act, Proviso 1A.53*).

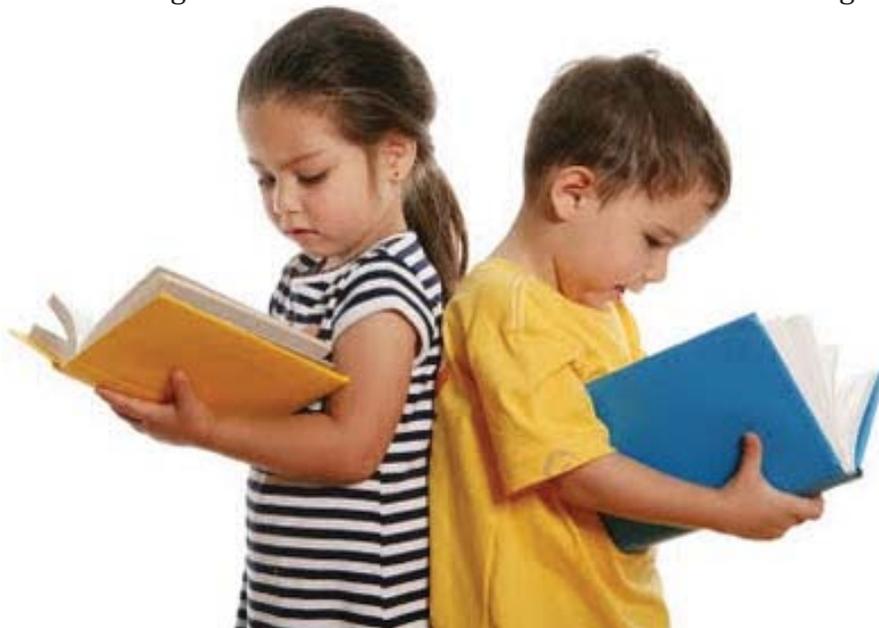
Sincerely,



David Whittemore, Chairman
SC Education Oversight Committee



Dr. Danny Merck, Vice Chairman
SC Education Oversight Committee



Phonemic Awareness

Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear and distinguish sounds. This includes:

- **Recognizing sounds, alone and in words**
- **Adding sounds to words**
- **Taking apart words and breaking them into their different sounds**



Activities—

Kindergarten - 1st Grade

- Play “I Spy” with your child, but instead of giving a color say, “I spy something that starts with /b/.” or “I spy something with these sounds, /d/ /õ/ /g/.” Have your child do the same.
- Play a game in which you say a word and your child has to break apart all the sounds. Ask your child to stretch out a word like dog and he/she can pretend to stretch a word using their hands. Your child should say /d/ /õ/ /g/.
- Play the “Silly Name Game”. Replace the first letter of each family member’s name with a different letter. For example, ‘Tob’ for ‘Bob’, ‘Watt’ for ‘Matt’, etc. Have the child identify the beginning letter/sound.
- Say a sentence aloud and ask your child to determine how many words were in the sentence.
- Explain that rhymes are words that sound the same at the end.
- Read books over and over again containing rhymes.
- As you read, have your child complete the rhyming word at the end of each line.
- Orally provide pairs of words that rhyme and pairs that do not rhyme (EX; pan/man; pat/boy). Ask, “Do ‘pan’ and ‘man’ rhyme? Why? Do ‘pat’ and ‘boy’ rhyme? Why not?”
- Prompt your child to produce rhymes. Ask, “Can you tell me a word that rhymes with ‘cake’?”
- Sing rhyming songs like “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” or “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”.
- Give your child a small car (such as a Matchbox car). Write a 3-4 letter word on a piece of paper with the letters spaced apart. Have your child drive the car over each letter saying the letter sound. Have your child begin driving the car slowly over the letters and then drive over them again slightly faster. Continue until the word is said at a good rate.

Activities—Kindergarten - 1st Grade

- ❑ To help your child separate (segment) sounds in words:
 - ❑ Give your child 3-5 blocks, beads, bingo chips, or similar items. Say a word and have your child move an object for each sound in the word.
 - ❑ Play Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes with sounds. Say a word and have your child touch his/her head for the first sound, shoulders for the second sound, and knees for the third while saying each sound.
 - ❑ Jump for Sounds. Say a word and have your child jump for each sound in the word while saying the sound.



Activities—2nd Grade - 3rd Grade

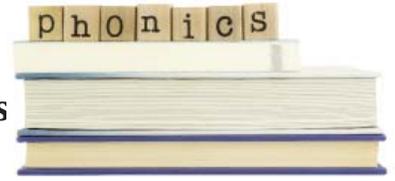
- ❑ Demonstrate clapping a word into its syllables. Ask your child to clap words into syllables.
- ❑ Make tally marks for the number of syllables in the names of people in your family, favorite foods, etc.
- ❑ Give your child a small car (such as a Matchbox car). Write a 5+ letter word on a piece of paper with the letters spaced apart. Have your child drive the car over each letter saying the letter sound. Have your child begin driving the car slowly over the letters and then drive over them again slightly faster. Continue until the word is said at a good rate.
- ❑ To help your child segment (separate) sounds in words:
 - ❑ Give your child 4-7 blocks, beads, bingo chips or similar items. Say a word and have your child move an object for each sound in the word.
 - ❑ Play Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes with sounds. Say a word and have your child touch his/her head for the first sound, shoulders for the second sound, and knees for the third while saying each sound.
 - ❑ Jump for Sounds. Say a word and have your child jump for each sound in the word while saying the sound.



Phonics

Phonics is the ability to understand the relationship between letters and the sounds they represent. This includes:

- Recognizing letter combinations that represent sounds
- Syllable patterns
- Word parts (prefixes, suffixes, and root words)



Common Consonant Digraphs (a pair of letters representing a single speech sound) and Blends:

bl, br, ch, ck, cl, cr, dr, fl, fr, gh, gl, gr, ng, ph, pl, pr, qu, sc, sh, sk, sl, sm, sn, sp, st, sw, th, tr, tw, wh, wr

Common Consonant Trigraphs (three letters spelling one consonant or vowel): nth, sch, scr, shr, spl, spr, squ, str, thr

Common Vowel Digraphs:

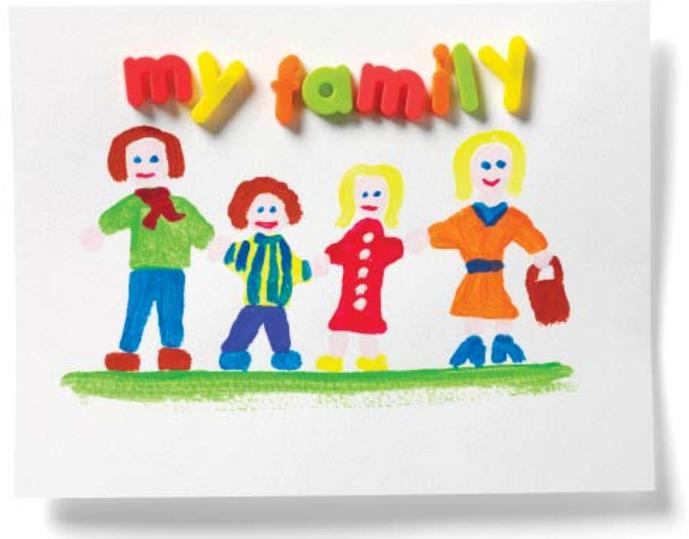
ai, au, aw, ay, ea, ee, ei, eu, ew, ey, ie, oi, oo, ou, ow, oy

Activities—Kindergarten - 1st Grade

- Make letter-sounds and have your child write the letter or letters that match the sounds.
- Play word games that connect sounds with syllables and words. (for example, if the letters “p-e-n” spell pen, how do you spell hen?).
- Write letters on cards. Hold up the cards one at a time and have your child say the sounds (for example, the /d/ sound for the letter d).
- Teach your child to match the letters in his/her name with the sounds in his/her name.
- Point out words that begin with the same letter as your child’s names (for example, John and jump). Talk about how the beginning sounds of the words are alike.
- Use alphabet books and guessing games to give your child practice in matching letters and sounds. A good example is the game, “I am thinking of something that starts with /t/.
- Write letters on pieces of paper and put them in a paper bag. Let your child reach into the bag and take out letters. Have your child say the sounds that match the letters.
- Take a letter and hide it in your hand. Let your child guess in which hand is the letter. Then show the letter and have your child say the letter name and make the sound (for example, the letter m matches the /m/ sound as in man).
- Make letter-sounds and ask your child to draw the matching letters in cornmeal or sand.
- Take egg cartons and put a paper letter in each slot until you have all the letters of the alphabet in order. Say letter-sounds and ask your child to pick out the letters that match those sounds.
- Building words - Using magnetic letters, make a three letter word on the refrigerator (cat). Have your child read the word and use it in a sentence. Every day, change one letter to make a new word. Start by changing only the beginning letter (cat, bat, hat, sat, mat, rat, pat). Then change only the ending letter (pat, pal, pad, pan). Finally, change only the middle letter (pan, pen, pin, pun).

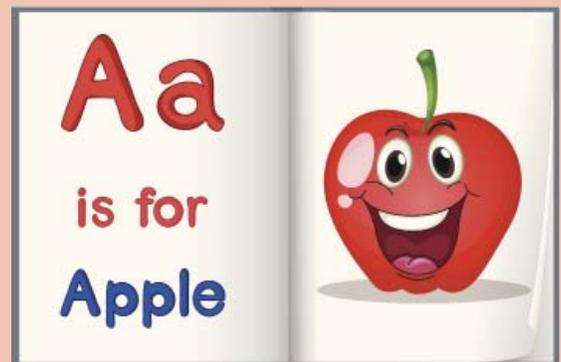
Activities—Kindergarten - 1st Grade

- ❑ Making words - For this game, you will need magnetic letters and three bags. Put half of the consonants into the first bag. Put the vowels into the middle bag, and put the remaining consonants into the last bag. Have your child pull one letter from the first bag. That will be the first letter of their word. Then have your child pull from the vowel bag for the second letter of the word and from the other consonant bag for the third letter of the word. Next, the child will read the word and decide if it is a real word or a nonsense word. Take turns, replacing the vowels as needed until there are no more consonants left.
- ❑ Labeling words - When reading with your child, keep Post-it notes handy. Every so often, have your child choose one object in the picture and write the word on a Post-it. Put the note in the book to read each time you come to that page.
- ❑ Practicing words with pictures - Choose pictures from a magazine or catalog. Say the name of the picture, have your child say the sound that the picture begins with and the name of that letter.
- ❑ Hunting for words - Choose a letter and have your child hunt for five items beginning with that letter sound. As each object is found, help your child write the word on a list. For example, if the target sound is “m”, the child might find and write mop, mat, Mom, money, and microwave.
- ❑ Teach your child to recognize the letters in his or her name.



Hints for helping your child sound out words

- First Sound - Have your child say the first sound in the word and make a guess based on the picture or surrounding words. Double-check the printed word to see if it matches the child’s guess.
- Sound and Blend - Have your child say each sound separately (sss aaa t). This is called “sounding it out”, and then say the sounds together (sat). This is “blending”.
- Familiar Parts - When your child starts reading longer words, have him notice the parts of the word that he already knows. For example, in a word such as “presenting”, your child may already know the prefix pre-, the word “sent,” and the word ending -ing.



Activities—Kindergarten - 1st Grade

- ❑ Use magnetic letters to spell words on the refrigerator or spell names of family members and friends.
- ❑ Discuss how names are similar and different.
- ❑ Recognizing shapes is the beginning of recognizing the features of letters. Have your child sort letters by tall tails, short tails, hooks, humps, and circles. Your child can continue to sort by feature combinations as well (Ex: circles and tall tails, hooks and circles, humps and tall tails, etc.)
- ❑ Ask your child to name stores, restaurants, and other places that have signs. This is called environmental print. Have your child cut the images of these signs from bags, take-out containers, and fliers and post them somewhere to make an Environmental Print Word Wall.
- ❑ Ask your child to look through ads to point out things he/she recognizes. Ask if they know any of the letters on the page.



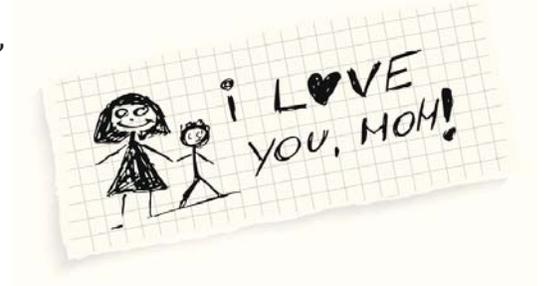
- ❑ Use stores as an opportunity for learning! Ask questions like, “Can you find something that has a letter C? Can you find a word that begins with an M? Can you find something with 4 letters?” Praise all efforts and keep it like a game.

- ❑ Make alphabet letters out of Play-doh®.
- ❑ Write letters with your finger on your child’s back and have them guess the letter. Have your child do the same to you.
- ❑ Play “Memory” or “Go Fish” using alphabet cards.
- ❑ Read alphabet books to your child and eventually ask him/her to name the items on the page that you know he/she can successfully tell you.



Activities—2nd Grade - 3rd Grade

- ❑ Make blend-sounds and have your child write the letters that match the sounds.
- ❑ Play word games that connect sounds with syllables and words (for example, if the letters "l-a-t-e-r" spell later, how do you spell hater? How many syllables are in later?).
- ❑ Write vowel and consonant digraphs, trigraphs, and blends on cards. Hold up the cards one at a time and have your child say the sounds (for example, the long e sound /ē/ for the vowel digraphs ea and ee).
- ❑ Writing words - Many children love to send and receive notes, and writing is a great way to reinforce phonics skills. Send your child notes in his/her backpack or place notes on the pillow. Have a relative or friend send a letter or email to your child. Whenever your child receives a note, have him/her write back. Don't be concerned about spelling. Instead, have your child sound out the words to the best of his/her ability.
- ❑ Hunting for words - Choose a blend and have your child hunt for five items beginning with that sound. As each object is found, help your child write the word on a list. For example, if the target sound is "bl", the child might find and write blanket, blood, blue, blizzard, blast.
- ❑ Play "Memory" or "Go Fish" using consonant and vowel digraphs, trigraphs, and blends. Common vowel digraphs in English include ai (as in rain), ay (day), ea (teach), ea (bread), ea (break), ee (free), ei (eight), ey (key), ie (piece), oa (road), oo (book), oo (room), ow (slow), and ue (true). Common consonant digraphs in English include ch (as in church), ch (school), ng (king), ph (phone), sh (shoe), th (then), th (think), and wh (wheel).



Hints for helping your child sound out words

- First Sound - Have your child say the first sound in the word and make a guess based on the picture or surrounding words. Double-check the printed word to see if it matches the child's guess.
- Sound and Blend - Have your child say each sound separately (sss aaa t). This is called "sounding it out", and then say the sounds together (sat). This is "blending".
- Familiar Parts - When your child starts reading longer words, have him notice the parts of the word that he already knows. For example, in a word such as "presenting", your child may already know the prefix pre-, the word "sent," and the word ending -ing.



Fluency

Fluency is the ability to read with sufficient speed to support understanding.

This includes:

- **Automatic word recognition**
- **Accurate word recognition**
- **Use of expression**

Activities—Kindergarten -1st Grade

- ❑ Repeated reading - Choose a passage that will not be very difficult for your child. Read the passage aloud to your child, and then read it together, helping your child figure out any tricky words. Next, have your child read the passage to you with a focus on accuracy. Finally, have your child read the passage to you again, paying attention to fluency and expression. The goal is to sound smooth and natural.
- ❑ Use different voices - When reading a familiar story or passage, try having your child use different voices. Read the story in a mouse voice, cowboy voice, or a princess voice. This is another way to do repeated reading, and it adds some fun to reading practice.



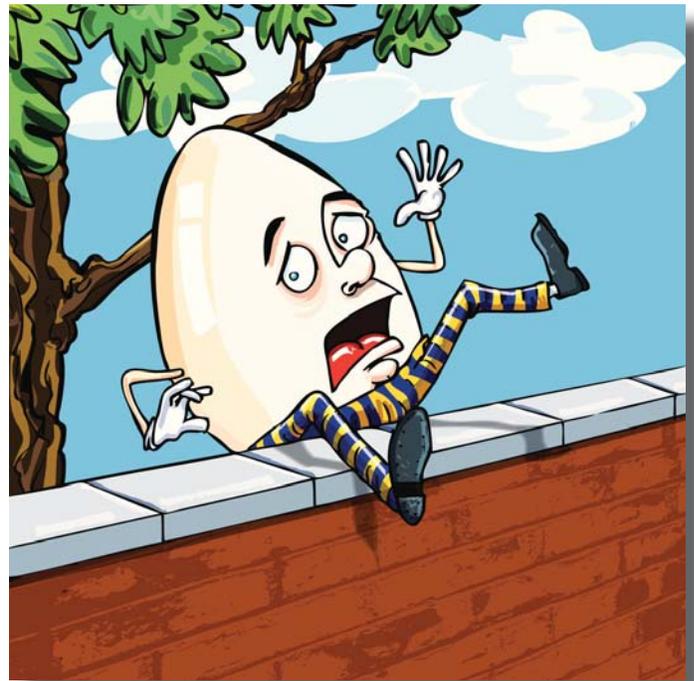
- ❑ Read to different audiences - Reading aloud is a way to communicate to an audience. When a reader keeps the audience in mind, he/she knows that his reading must be fluent and expressive. Provide a variety of opportunities for your child to read to an audience. Your child can read to stuffed animals, pets, siblings, neighbors, grandparents - anyone who is willing to listen. This is a good way to show off what was practiced with repeated reading.
- ❑ Record the reading - After your child has practiced a passage, have him/her record it with a tape player, phone, or MP3 device. Once

recorded, your child can listen to his reading and follow along in the book. Often, he/she will want to record it again and make it even better!

- ❑ When you read a story, use appropriate expression during dialogue. Encourage your child to mimic your expression. Talk with him/her about what that expression means. Ex: If the character is excited about going to the park, he/she should sound like that in his/her voice. Encourage your child to repeat key phrases or dialogue.
- ❑ Recite nursery rhymes and poems to build familiar phrases in speech.
- ❑ In a repetitive text, ask your child to repeat the familiar phrase with you. Ex: For the story, “The House that Jack Built” your child can recite with you “in the house that Jack built.”

Activities—Kindergarten -1st Grade

- ❑ When you read a story, use appropriate expression during the speaking parts (dialogue). Encourage your child to copy your expression. Talk with him/her about what that expression means. Ex: If the character is excited about going to the park, he/she should sound like that in his/her voice. Encourage your child to repeat key phrases or dialogue.
- ❑ Point out punctuation marks that aid in expression such as question marks, exclamation points and quotation marks. Demonstrate how your voice changes as you read for each. Only focus on one during a book. Remember it is important to enjoy it first and foremost.
- ❑ Encourage child to sing favorite songs and repeat favorite lines of songs.
- ❑ Make your own books of favorite songs for child to practice “reading”. This builds confidence and helps your child identify him/herself as a reader.
- ❑ Say a sentence to your child and ask him/her to repeat it to you. Challenge your child to increase the number of words he/she can repeat. As you say it, put it in meaningful phrases. Ex: The boy went/ to the store /with his mother.
- ❑ Alternate repeating the favorite lines of a poem or nursery rhyme with your child. He/ she will mimic your phrasing and expression.



Activities—2nd Grade - 3rd Grade

- ❑ Repeated reading - Choose a passage that will not be very difficult for your child. Read the passage aloud to your child, and then read it together, helping your child figure out any tricky words. Next, have your child read the passage to you with a focus on accuracy. Finally, have your child read the passage to you again, paying attention to fluency and expression. The goal is to sound smooth and natural.
- ❑ Use different voices - When reading a familiar story or passage, try having your child use different voices. Read the story in a mouse voice, cowboy voice, or a princess voice. This is another way to do repeated reading, and it adds some fun to reading practice.
- ❑ Read to different audiences - Reading aloud is a way to communicate to an audience. When a reader keeps the audience in mind, he/she knows that his reading must be fluent and expressive. Provide a variety of opportunities for your child to read to an audience. Your child can read to stuffed animals, pets, siblings, neighbors, grandparents - anyone who is willing to listen. This is a good way to show off what was practiced with repeated reading.
- ❑ Record the reading - After your child has practiced a passage, have him/her record it with a tape player, cell phone, or MP3 device. Once recorded, your child can listen to his reading and follow along in the book. Often, he/she will want to record it again and make it even better!
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- ❑ Make your own books of favorite songs for child to practice “reading”. This builds confidence and helps your child identify him/herself as a reader.
- ❑ Alternate repeating the favorite lines of a poem with your child. He/ she will mimic your phrasing and expression.



Vocabulary

Vocabulary is students' knowledge of and memory for word meanings.

This includes:

- **Receptive Vocabulary** — words we understand when read or spoken to us
- **Expressive vocabulary** — words we know well enough to use in speaking and writing

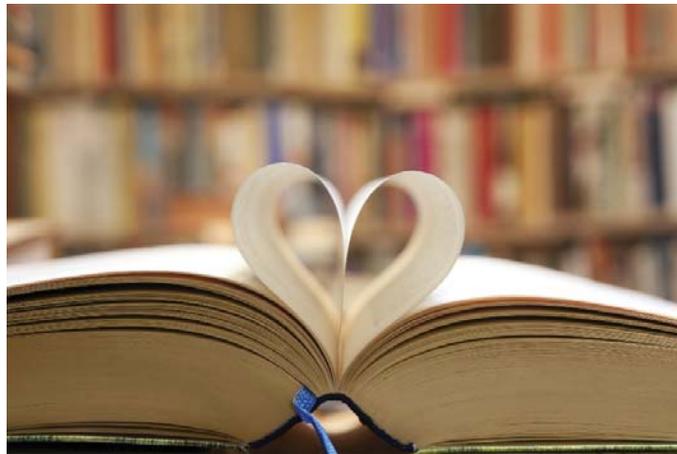
Activities—Kindergarten - 1st Grade

- ❑ Read aloud - Continue to read aloud to your child even after he is able to read independently. Choose books above your child's level because they are likely to contain broader vocabulary. This way, you are actually teaching him new words and how they are used in context.
- ❑ Preview words - Before reading to or with your child, scan through the book, choose two words that you think might be interesting or unfamiliar to your child. Tell your child what the words are and what they mean. As you read the book, have your child listen for those words.
- ❑ Hot potato (version 1) - Play hot potato with synonyms. Choose a word, and then your child has to think of another word that means the same thing. Take turns until neither player can think of another word. For example, you may say, "Cold," and your child might say, "Freezing." Then you could say, "Chilly," and so on. Try the game again with antonyms (opposites).
- ❑ Hot potato (version 2) - Play hot potato with categories. For younger children, the categories can be simple: pets, clothes, family members. For older children, the categories can be quite complex: The Revolutionary War, astronomy, math terms.
- ❑ Word Collecting - Have each family member be on the look out for interesting words that they heard that day. At dinner or bedtime, have everyone share the word they collected and tell what they think it means. If the child shares an incorrect meaning, guide him/her to the correct meaning. Try to use some of the words in conversation.
- ❑ Introduce your child to a variety of experiences to help build background knowledge he/she can use while making sense of print by taking them to the park, museums, the zoo, etc.
- ❑ Play "categories" with your child. Name a topic such as "farms" and ask your child to think of all the words he/she can related to that topic. This is a great way to build word knowledge!
- ❑ Discuss opposites (antonyms).



Activities—Kindergarten - 1st Grade

- ❑ Discuss positional words such as beside, below, under, over, etc. Make it into a game at dinner by asking your child to place his/her fork in different places in relation to his/her plate. Ex: Put your fork above your plate.
- ❑ Use the language of books such as author, title, illustrator, title page, etc.
- ❑ Discuss ordinal words such as first, last, beginning, middle, etc.
- ❑ Talk about how things are similar/alike as well as how things are different. Ex: How is a dog like a cat? How is a dog different from a cat?
- ❑ Use a variety of words to describe feelings and emotions. For example, your child says he/she is happy. You can validate that by saying, "I'm so glad you are so joyful today! You sure look happy!"
- ❑ Trips to everyday places build vocabulary. Discuss what you are doing and seeing as you are going through the store, for example. "I'm here in the bakery. I can find donuts, cookies, and bread." Ask your child, "What else do you think I could find here?"
- ❑ When you read a book about a topic, ask him/her to tell you all the words related to it. Ex: If you read a book about a dog, he/she might say dog, puppies, toy, food, play, leash. Add other words to help expand upon what he/she says.
- ❑ When you read a book, ask your child to identify categories for words he/she has read. Ex: If you read a book about pumpkins, you could put the words pumpkin, leaf, stem, and seeds into a category about the parts of a plant.



Activities—2nd Grade - 3rd Grade

- ❑ Read aloud - Continue to read aloud to your child even after he is able to read independently. Choose books above your child's level because they are likely to contain broader vocabulary. This way, you are actually teaching him new words and how they are used in context.
- ❑ Preview words - Before reading to or with your child, scan through the book, choose two words that you think might be interesting or unfamiliar to your child. Tell your child what the words are and what they mean. As you read the book, have your child listen for those words.
- ❑ Hot potato (version 1) - Play hot potato with synonyms (words with similar meanings). Choose a word, and then your child has to think of another word that means the same thing. Take turns until neither player can think of another word. For example, you may say, "Cold," and your child might say, "Freezing." Then you could say, "Chilly," and so on. Try the game again with antonyms (opposites).
- ❑ Hot potato (version 2) - Play hot potato with prefixes or suffixes. The prefixes dis-, ex-, mis-, non-, pre-, re-, and un- are common. Common suffixes include -able/-ible, -ed, -er, -est, -ful, -ish, -less, -ly, -ment, and -ness.
- ❑ Hot potato (version 3) - Play hot potato with categories. For younger children, the categories can be simple: pets, clothes, family members. For older children, the categories can be quite complex: The Revolutionary War, astronomy, math terms.
- ❑ Word Collecting - Have each family member be on the look out for interesting words that they heard that day. At dinner or bedtime, have everyone share the word they collected and tell what they think it means. If the child shares an incorrect meaning, guide him/her to the correct meaning. Try to use some of the words in conversation.
- ❑ Play "categories" with your child. Name a topic such as "ecosystems" and ask your child to think of all the words he/she can related to that topic. This is a great way to build word knowledge!
- ❑ When you read a book about a topic, ask him/her to tell you all the words related to it. Ex: If you read a book about dinosaurs, he/she might say Tyrannosaurus Rex, paleontologist, herbivore, carnivore, fossil. Add other words to help expand upon what he/she says.



Comprehension

Comprehension is the ability to understand and draw meaning from text.

This includes:

- Paying attention to important information
- Understanding specific meanings in text
- Identifying the main idea
- Verbal responses to questions
- Using new information gained through reading

Activities—Kindergarten -1st Grade



- ❑ Sequencing errands - Talk about errands that you will run today. Use sequencing words (sequence, first, next, last, finally, beginning, middle, end) when describing your trip. For example, you might say, "We are going to make three stops. First, we will go to the gas station. Next, we will go to the bank. Finally, we will go to the grocery store."
- ❑ Every day comprehension - Ask your child who, what, when, where, why, how questions about an event in his/her day. For example, if your child attended a party, you could ask, "Who was there? What did you do? When did you have cake? Where did you go? Why did the invitation have dogs on it? How did

the birthday child like the presents?" Once your child is comfortable answering these questions about his/ her experiences, try asking these questions about a book you've read together.

- ❑ Think aloud - When you read aloud to your child, talk about what you are thinking. It is your opportunity to show your child that reading is a lot more than just figuring out the words. Describe how you feel about what's going on in the book, what you think will happen next, or what you thought about a character's choice.

Reading Fiction

- ❑ Before reading - Point out the title and author. Look at the picture on the cover and ask, "What do you think is going to happen in this story? Why?" This will help your child set purpose for reading.
- ❑ During reading - Stop every now and then to ask your child to tell you what has happened so far or what he/she predicts will happen. You might also ask for your child's opinion. "Do you think the character did the right thing? How do you feel about that choice?" Explain any unfamiliar words.
- ❑ After reading - Ask your child to retell the story from the beginning, and ask for opinions, too. "What was your favorite part? Would you recommend this to a friend?"

Reading Nonfiction

- ❑ Before reading - Point out the title and author. Look at the picture on the cover and ask, "What do you think you'll learn about in this book? Why?" This helps your child consider what he already knows about the topic. Look at the table of contents. You and your child may choose to read the book cover to cover or go directly to a certain chapter.
- ❑ During reading - Don't forget the captions, headings, sidebars, or any other information on the page. Young readers tend to overlook these, so it's a good idea to show that the author includes lots of information in these "extras".
- ❑ After reading - Ask your child, "What was it mostly about? What do you still want to know? Where could you find out?"

Other Ideas

- ❑ Before your child reads a story, read the title and look at the cover. Ask, "What do you think will happen in the story?"
- ❑ Take a quick "book look" and encourage your child to talk about what he/she thinks about what might happen in the story.
- ❑ As your child reads, ask questions that start with who, what, where, when, why, and how. If your child does not answer with an appropriate response, redirect by saying, "I think you mean a person because it was a "who" question" then restate the question.
- ❑ After you read a few pages, ask "What do you think will happen next?"
- ❑ Ask your child to talk about the beginning, middle and end of the story. You will need to model this several times first.
- ❑ Discuss words related to stories such as characters, problem, and solution. For example, "How did characters of the Three Bears solve the problem of the porridge being too hot?" If the child does not know, show the picture or reread the page.
- ❑ After reading, ask your child, "What was your favorite part? Show me. Why do you like that part?"
- ❑ Ask questions about character traits. Ex: "Which character do you think was kind? Which character was bossy? How do you know?" If your child doesn't know, give your answer. You may need to do this many times before your child can do it. He/she may also "mimic" your answer. Encourage your child's attempts.
- ❑ Encourage deeper thinking by asking, "If the story kept going, what do you think would happen next?"
- ❑ Help your child make connections to his/her life experience while reading. You could say, "Is there anything you read in the story that reminds you of something? The boy who went to the zoo with his family reminds me of when we went to the zoo over the summer. What do you think?"
- ❑ As you are reading, think out loud to your child. Ask questions such as "I wonder why the boy is crying in the picture? Will he find his lost toy?" This demonstrates that reading and comprehension is an active process, not passive.
- ❑ Make puppets to help your child retell a favorite story or use stuffed animals as props to retell a story or part of a favorite story.



Activities—2nd Grade - 3rd Grade

- ❑ Sequencing comics - Choose a comic strip from the Sunday paper. Cut out each square and mix the squares up. Have your child put them in order and describe what is happening. Encourage your child to use words like first, second, next, finally, etc.
- ❑ Every day comprehension - Ask your child who, what, when, where, why, how questions about an event in his/her day. Once your child is comfortable answering these questions about his/ her experiences, try asking these questions about a book you've read together.



Reading Fiction

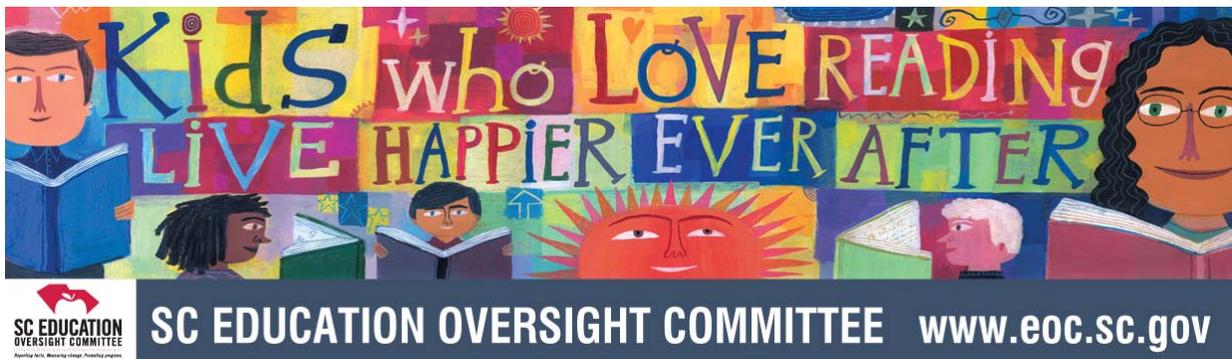
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- ❑ After reading - Ask your child, "What was it mostly about? What do you still want to know? Where could you find out?"

Other Ideas

- ❑ Discuss words related to stories such as characters, problem, and solution. For example, “How did the Wright Brothers find a solution to help their plane fly longer?” If the child does not know, show the picture or reread the page.
- ❑ Ask questions about character traits. Ex: “Which character do you think was kind? Which character was bossy? How do you know?” If your child doesn’t know, give your answer. You may need to do this many times before your child can do it.
- ❑ Encourage deeper thinking by asking, “If the story kept going, what do you think would happen next?”
- ❑ Help your child make connections to his/her life experience while reading. You could say, “Is there anything you read in the story that reminds you of something?”





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MILESTONES OF EARLY LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

NEWBORN TO 6 MONTHS

TALK, READ, SING, PLAY Right from birth, babies are listening, looking, and learning. So find, and enjoy, those everyday moments when you can talk, read, sing, and play together with your baby.



6 TO 12 MONTHS

holds head steady
sits in lap without support
grasps book, puts in mouth
drops, throws book

MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

What your child is doing

COMMUNICATION AND COGNITION

What your child is saying and learning

12 TO 24 MONTHS

holds and walks with book
no longer puts book in mouth right away
turns board book pages

says single words, then 2- to 4-word phrases
gives book to adult to read
points at pictures
turns book right-side up
names pictures, follows simple stories

2 TO 3 YEARS

learns to turn paper pages, 2 to 3 pages at a time
starts to scribble

adds 2-4 new words per day
names familiar objects
likes the same book again and again
completes sentences and rhymes in familiar stories

3 TO 4 YEARS

turns pages one at a time, and from left to right
sits still for longer stories
scribbles and draws

recites whole phrases from books
moves toward letter recognition
begins to detect rhyme
pretends to read to dolls and stuffed animals

4 TO 5 YEARS

starts to copy letters and numbers
sits still for even longer stories

can listen longer
recognizes numbers, letters
can retell familiar stories
can make rhymes
learning letter names and sounds

ANTICIPATORY GUIDANCE

What parents can do

Ask questions and wait for your child to answer

Read and speak in your first language

smile and answer when your child speaks or points

let your child help turn the pages; keep naming things
use books in family routines: naptime, bedtime; on the potty; in the car, bus
use books to calm or distract your child while waiting

ask "Where's the dog?" or "What is that?"

be willing to read the same book again and again
as you read, talk about the pictures
keep using books in daily routines

ask "What happens next?" in familiar stories

point out letters, numbers
point out words and pictures that begin with the same sound
together, make up stories about the pictures

relate the story to your child's own experiences

let your child see you read
ask your child to tell the story
encourage writing, drawing
point out the letters in your child's name

WHAT TO READ

board and cloth books; books with baby faces; nursery rhymes

board books; rhyming books; picture books; books that name things

rhyming books; picture books that tell stories; search and find books

picture books that tell longer stories; counting and alphabet books

fairy tales and legends; books with longer stories, fewer pictures

LET YOUR CHILD CHOOSE WHICH BOOK TO READ. FIND STORIES ABOUT THINGS YOUR CHILD LIKES.

www.reachoutandread.org

reachoutandread





INDICADORES DEL DESARROLLO INICIAL DE LA LECTOESCRITURA

RECIÉN NACIDO A 6 MESES

HABLEN, LEAN, CANTEN, JUEGUEN Ya desde que nacen, los bebés escuchan, miran y aprenden. Entonces, busque y disfrute esos momentos cotidianos en los que puede hablar, leer, cantar y jugar junto con su bebé.



6 A 12 MESES

DESARROLLO

MOTRIZ

Qué hace su hijo

sostiene bien la cabeza
se sienta en el regazo
sin ayuda
sujeta el libro, se lo lleva a la boca
deja caer o arroja los libros

12 A 24 MESES

sostiene el libro y camina con él
no se lleva el libro a la boca
enseguida
voltea las páginas de libros de cartón

2 A 3 AÑOS

aprende a voltear las páginas de papel, 2 a 3 páginas a la vez
empieza a hacer garabatos

3 A 4 AÑOS

voltea las páginas una a la vez y de izquierda a derecha
se queda sentado sin moverse con cuentos más largos
garabatea y dibuja

4 A 5 AÑOS

empieza a copiar letras y números
se queda sentado sin moverse con cuentos más largos aun

COMUNICACIÓN Y CONOCIMIENTO

Qué dice y aprende su hijo

sonríe, balbucea, gorjea
le gusta su voz y desea escucharla
le gustan las imágenes de las caras de bebés
empieza a decir "ma", "ba", "da"
responde a su propio nombre
palmea las imágenes en el libro para mostrar interés

dice palabras sueltas, luego frases de 2 a 4 palabras
le da el libro al adulto para que lo lea
señala las imágenes
voltea el lado correcto del libro hacia arriba
nombra imágenes, sigue historias sencillas

aprende 2 a 4 palabras nuevas por día
nombra objetos familiares
le gusta el mismo libro una y otra vez
completa oraciones y rimas en historias conocidas

recta frases enteras de libros
empieza a reconocer las letras
empieza a detectar la rima
juega a leerles a muñecos y peluches

puede escuchar durante más tiempo
reconoce números y letras
puede repetir cuentos conocidos
puede hacer rimas
aprende los nombres y los sonidos de las letras

ORIENTACIÓN ANTICIPATORIA

Qué pueden hacer los padres

Haga preguntas y espere que su hijo responda

Lea y hable en su primer idioma

hable y responda a su bebé; haga contacto visual
abrázelo, cante, hable, juegue, lea
señale y nombre las cosas: nariz, pelota, bebé, perro...

señale y nombre las cosas: siga las indicaciones del bebé para "más" o "basta"
juegue con el niño a "cu-cú" o "a las palmas"

sonría y responda cuando su hijo hable o señale
deje que el niño ayude a voltear las páginas; siga nombrando cosas
use libros en las rutinas familiares: para la hora de la siesta, del juego o de dormir; cuando va al baño; en el automóvil o autobús
use libros para calmar o distraer a su hijo mientras esperan

libros de cartón, libros de rimas, libros de imágenes, libros que nombran cosas

DEJE A SU HIJO ELEGIR QUÉ LIBRO DESEA LEER. BUSQUE HISTORIAS SOBRE COSAS QUE LE GUSTAN A SU HIJO.

libros de rimas, libros de imágenes que cuentan historias; libros de buscar y encontrar

libros de imágenes que cuentan historias más largas; libros con el alfabeto y los números

cuentos de hadas y leyendas; libros con historias más largas y menos imágenes

QUÉ PUEDEN LEER

libros de cartón y de tela; libros con caras de bebés; canciones de cuna



RESOURCES

Family-Friendly Guides to the SC Academic Standards

<http://scfriendlystandards.org/>

Everyday Learning Opportunities for Children

<http://storytimeoregon.com/>

Activities for the 5 Components of Reading

<http://www.fcrr.org/for-educators/sca.asp>

Put Reading First:

Helping Your Child Learn to Read – A Parent Guide(K-3)

http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/PutReadingFirst_ParentGuide.pdf

Strategies for Teaching English Language Learners

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/strategies-teaching-english-language-learners>

Parent Tips: Help Your Child Have a Good School Year

<http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/33152/>

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