



**SC EDUCATION
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

Reporting facts. Measuring change. Promoting progress.

PO Box 11867 | 227 Blatt Building
Columbia SC 29211 | WWW.SCEOC.ORG

July 14, 2016

TO: Members, Education Oversight Committee

FROM: Melanie Barton *Melanie D. Barton*

RE: Meeting Materials

Mr. Robinson and I are pleased that you are participating in the annual retreat to be held this year in Lake City, South Carolina. The retreat begins at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday afternoon, July 31, 2016 and concludes after lunch on Monday, August 1. The dress attire is business casual. Directions to the Moore Farms Botanical Garden and the Inn at the Crossroads are attached.

The meeting materials are hole-punched to fit into a binder. We ask that you review your contact information and provide Hope Johnson-Jones at hjones@eoc.sc.gov with any corrections prior to July 29 so that revised listings can be provided to your fellow EOC members.

The objectives of the retreat this year are:

1. Gain a greater understanding from Darla Moore of the issues and challenges facing public education in rural South Carolina K-12;
2. Review the most recent data regarding college and career preparedness of our students in South Carolina; and,
3. Establish overriding goals and objectives that will inform the work of the Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee this fall in making recommendations for the joint state and federal accountability systems.

Should you have questions prior to the meeting, please call me at your convenience. I appreciate your dedication to strong successful public schools.

Neil C. Robinson, Jr.
CHAIR

Daniel B. Merck
VICE CHAIR

April Allen

Anne H. Bull

Bob Couch

Mike Fair

Raye Felder

Barbara B. Hairfield

Nikki Haley

R. Wesley Hayes, Jr.

Dwight A. Loftis

John W. Matthews, Jr.

Joseph H. Neal

Molly Spearman

Patti J. Tate

Ellen Weaver

Melanie D. Barton
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Sunday Afternoon:

Directions to:
Moore Farms Botanical Garden
100 New Zion Rd
Lake City, SC 29560

From Greenville: (Approximately 190 miles or Travel Time of 3+ Hours)

Take I-385 South to I-26 East.

Merge onto I-20 East via Exit 107B towards Florence.

Take the **SC-341** exit, EXIT 120, toward **Lynchburg/Bishopville**.

Go 0.34 miles

Merge onto Wisacky Hwy/SC-341 toward **Lynchburg/Elliott/Lake City/Lee Central High School**.

Go 2.71 miles

Keep **left** at the fork to go on SC-341.

Go 10.02 miles

SC-341 becomes SC Highway 341 S.

Go 3.56 miles

SC Highway 341 S becomes Lynches River Rd.

Go 6.97 miles

Lynches River Rd becomes N Bethel Rd/SC-403.

Go 8.03 miles

Turn **slight left** onto Olanta Hwy/SC-341.

Go 1.29 miles

Turn **right** onto W Turbeville Hwy/US-378 W.

Go 1.03 miles

Turn **left** onto Cooktown Rd.

Go 1.59 miles

Turn **right** onto S Morris St.

Go 0.35 miles

S Morris St becomes New Zion Rd.

100 New Zion Rd, Lake City, SC 29560-7752, 100 NEW ZION RD is on the **right**.

(If you reach Green Road you've gone about 1.3 miles too far)

From Charleston: (Approximately 92 Miles or Travel Time of 2 Hours)

Take I-26 W to Columbia

Take US-52 Exit, Exit 209B-A, toward Goose Creek/Moncks Corner.

Go 1 Mile.

Merge onto US-52 W via the ramp on **left** toward **Moncks Corner/Goose Creek/Kingstree**

Go 17.7 miles

Stay straight to go onto Rembert C Dennis Blvd/US-52 Byp N.

Go 2.0 miles.

Turn **slight right** onto N Highway 52/US-52 W/US-17 Alt N. Continue to follow US-52 W.

Go 39 miles

Turn **left** onto S Longstreet St/US-52 W/SC-527. Continue to follow US-52 W.

Go 15.3 miles

Turn **left** onto W Thomas St.

Turn **slight left** onto S Morris St. Go 3.1 miles

S Morris St becomes New Zion Rd.

100 NEW ZION RD is on the **right**.

(If you reach Green Road you've gone about 1.3 miles too far)

Directions to:
Moore Farms Botanical Garden
100 New Zion Rd
Lake City, SC 29560

From Rock Hill: (Approximately 121 miles or Travel Time of 2 ½ Hours)

Take I-77 South to Columbia.

Merge onto I-20 E toward **Florence**.

Go 21.9 miles

Take the **SC-341** exit, EXIT 120, toward Lynchburg/Bishopville.

Go 0.34 miles

Merge onto Wisacky Hwy/SC-341 toward Lynchburg/Elliott/Lake City/Lee Central High School.

Go 2.71 miles

Keep **left** at the fork to go on SC-341.

Go 10.02 miles

SC-341 becomes SC Highway 341 S.

Go 3.56 miles

SC Highway 341 S becomes Lynches River Rd.

Go 6.97 miles

Lynches River Rd becomes N Bethel Rd/SC-403.

Go 8.03 miles

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Go 1.03 miles

Turn **left** onto Cooktown Rd.

Go 1.59 miles

Turn **right** onto S Morris St.

Go 0.35 miles

S Morris St becomes New Zion Rd.

100 New Zion Rd, Lake City, SC 29560-7752, 100 NEW ZION RD is on the **right**.

(If you reach Green Road you've gone about 1.3 miles too far)

Directions to:
Moore Farms Botanical Garden
100 New Zion Rd
Lake City, SC 29560

From Columbia: (Approximately 90 Miles or Travel Time of 1 ½ Hours)

Take I-20 E toward **Florence**.

Take the **SC-341** exit, EXIT 120, toward **Lynchburg/Bishopville**.

Go 0.34 miles

Merge onto Wisacky Hwy/SC-341 toward **Lynchburg/Elliott/Lake City/Lee Central High School**.

Go 2.71 miles

Keep **left** at the fork to go on SC-341.

Go 10.02 miles

SC-341 becomes SC Highway 341 S.

Go 3.56 miles

SC Highway 341 S becomes Lynches River Rd.

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Turn **right** onto S Morris St.

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(If you reach Green Road you've gone about 1.3 miles too far)

DAY 1



**SC EDUCATION
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**Education Oversight Committee
July 31 and August 1, 2016**

Moore Farms Botanical Gardens
100 New Zion Road
Lake City, SC

AGENDA

Sunday, July 31, 2016

3:00 p.m. Welcome and Introductions Neil Robinson

Introduction of New EOC Member & Guests

3:15 p.m. Approval of Minutes of June 13, 2016 Neil Robinson

Tentative Meeting Schedule for 2016-17

3:30 p.m. Presentation Melanie Barton

With the end in mind, where do we start?

Neil C. Robinson, Jr.
CHAIR

4:00 p.m. Special Guest: Darla Moore
Issues and challenges in rural South Carolina

Daniel B. Merck
VICE CHAIR

Questions and Discussion

April Allen

Anne H. Bull

Bob Couch

Mike Fair

5:30 p.m. Subcommittee Report:
Academic Standards and Assessment Neil Robinson
Action: Identification of Low-Performing
Schools, 2016

Raye Felder

Barbara B. Hairfield

Nikki Haley

R. Wesley Hayes, Jr.

6:00 p.m. Dinner on the Grounds followed by check-in at:
The Inn at the Crossroads
128 West Main Street
Lake City

Dwight A. Loftis

John W. Matthews, Jr.

Joseph H. Neal

Molly Spearman

Patti J. Tate

Ellen Weaver

Melanie D. Barton
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting

June 13, 2016

Members in Attendance: Mr. Neil Robinson (Chair); Dr. Danny Merck (Vice-Chair); Ms. Anne Bull; Dr. Bob Couch; Sen. Mike Fair; Rep. Raye Felder; Ms. Barbara Hairfield; Rep. Dwight Loftis; Sen. John Matthews; State Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman; Ms. Patti Tate; and Ms. Ellen Weaver

EOC Staff in Attendance: Dr. Kevin Andrews; Mrs. Melanie Barton; Ms. Hope Johnson-Jones; Dr. Rainey Knight; Ms. Bunnie Ward; and Ms. Dana Yow

Mr. Robinson called the meeting to order.

The minutes of the April 11, 2016 meeting of the EOC were approved as distributed.

The chairman recognized Dr. Lee D'Andrea, Chair of the High School Task Force and former district superintendent of Anderson 4 and Pickens County. Dr. D'Andrea began by recognizing the members of the Task Force who were in attendance at the EOC meeting including Dr. Bob Couch, Rep. Dwight Loftis and Dr. Janie Lindle from the Moore School of Education at Clemson University. Dr. D'Andrea explained the research that was consulted and national experts who appeared before the Task Force. In looking at the high school experience and the system by which students are prepared for success in the future, the Task Force concluded that the current learning design is not working systemically for all students and is in critical need of systemic renovation. The Task Force found that:

1. The current SC high school diploma requirements reflect 20th Century thinking and planning. Twenty-four Carnegie units across math, science, social studies, English and elective courses may or may not prepare the student for college and/or career.
2. The current assessments in SC do not provide an aligned metric of learning progress of a student.
3. The work on seamless transitions from high school to higher education has slowed significantly in the immediate past.
4. There is a significant void in communication regarding college and career readiness and the South Carolina workforce needs/demands at many levels.
5. There is a significant lack of available data to determine if students are successful once leaving the K-12 public schools. For example, the unique SUNS ids do not follow a student into higher education.

The Task Force recognized that there are areas in our state where local leadership has already made significant steps toward changing the learning system. However, statewide, the Task Force made five recommendations to improve the learning system for all students:

1. The content/coursework requirements for a high school diploma must be updated to reflect the needs of workforce readiness in the current environment. The task force even proposed a sample learning design to be considered. Additional work is needed.
2. A coherent continuum of assessments must be established that measures content or knowledge as well as college and career readiness with meaningful and multiple measures.
3. A coordinating council or P-20 Council should be re-established and directed to fully implement the Education and Economic Development Act.

4. An extensive communication initiative should be developed and implemented using the College Foundation of North Carolina's website as an example.
5. There needs to be a comprehensive design for data to be established using a longitudinal data system without compromising individual student privacy.

Mr. Robinson expressed his appreciation for the work of the Task Force. Superintendent Spearman agreed with the findings and recommendations. She asked that at the September 2016 joint State Board of Education and EOC meeting that the Department report on how the agency is already implementing many of the recommendations. She noted that the Department had already pushed for and gotten State Board approval for a revised, uniform grading system. Data collection is still a significant challenge to the Department, having inherited a broken data system.

The chair then recognized the full-day 4K evaluation team, led by Dr. Bill Brown and including Dr. Fred Greer and Dr. Leigh D'Amico to present the initial results of the fall 2015 4K and 5K early literacy assessments. First, Dr. D'Amico presented the results of the 4K assessments which were Individual Growth and Development Indicators of Early Learning (IGDIs), Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS), and Teaching Strategies GOLD. On average, prekindergarten students scored below expectations for their age-range and were developmentally at-risk in some skills. On average, prekindergarten students in private centers scored higher than their peers in public schools. Dr. Greer presented the results of the Developmental Reading Assessment, 2nd Edition (DRA2), which was administered to 55,236 kindergartners in the fall of 2015. Overall, white kindergarten students were slightly more likely to be at higher levels than Black kindergartners, and Hispanic kindergarten students were at lower levels than White or Black children. When comparing the scores from the beginning of prekindergarten and kindergarten for the same children, the results showed that generally students who had participated in full-day 4K in private centers during the prior school year scored at the same levels as their peers who were in public schools. There were, however, significantly more children who attended full-day 4K in private centers who had little or no mastery of phonological awareness (34.2%) as compared to their peers who had attended full-day 4K in public schools (23.38%).

Rep. Felder asked why the data had not been reported earlier. The evaluators explained that the data files were not available until the middle to end of April. Dr. Couch asked about the cut scores on DRA2 and their meaning. The evaluators had not yet had an opportunity to review the cut scores but will in their final report.

Subcommittee Reports:

Academic Standards and Assessment - Mr. Robinson recognized Dr. Merck, Chair of the Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee. Dr. Merck reported the EOC has initiated the social studies standards review. Approximately 254 nominations were received from legislators, educators, EOC members, and members of the State Board of Education. To date, approximately 60 individuals will serve on the panels to review the standards.

EIA and Improvement Mechanisms – Mr. Robinson recognized Dr. Couch. Dr. Couch provided an overview of the Conference Report on the Fiscal Year 2016-17 General Appropriation Act. He also referred to the budget items and legislation that specifically addressed the Abbeville equity lawsuit. Then, Dr. couch presented the overall findings of the Teacher Loan Report.

Public Awareness - Ms. Hairfield noted that the Public Awareness Subcommittee will be working this summer and fall to address the recommendations of the high school task force report.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017

Tentative Meeting Schedule

Subcommittee	Full Committee
July 11, 2016	July 31 – August 1, 2016
	September 14, 2016 Joint Meeting with State Board of Education
September 19, 2016	October 10, 2016
November 7, 2016 November 28, 2016*	December 12, 2016
January 23, 2017**	February 13, 2017
March 20, 2017	April 10, 2017
May 15, 2017	June 12, 2017

* The EIA and Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee will likely meet twice in November to work on budget and proviso recommendations for FY2017-18.

** January 16 is Martin Luther King Day; therefore, the subcommittee meetings are moved to the following Monday, January 23.

Responsibilities of the Education Oversight Committee

New Responsibilities (Provisos refer to directives in the 2016-17 General Appropriation Act)

1. Recommend EIA teacher salary increases for special schools (Proviso 1A.4)
2. Evaluate 2015-16 Community Block Grants for Education Pilot Program grant awards (Provisos 1A.21)
3. Pilot computer science initiatives (Proviso 1A.75)

1A.75. (SDE-EIA: Digital Learning) Of the funds appropriated to the Education Oversight Committee for Partnerships for Innovation, \$1,600,000 will be authorized to be utilized to enter into one-year memoranda of agreements with public and private entities to pilot computer science initiatives in schools and school districts. The initiatives must focus on improving the digital literacy skills of students and teachers, expanding opportunities for students to learn coding, or providing computer science curriculum. To this end, at least \$1,300,000 must be authorized for schools or school districts that have poverty indices of eighty percent or greater based on the poverty index utilized the prior fiscal year that was student eligibility for the free or reduced price lunch program and Medicaid, or are a trial or plaintiff district in the Abbeville equity lawsuit. In these districts, the EOC will pilot a program that provides school districts with digital learning tools, digital resources, the curriculum foundry, technical support, and professional development.

4. Pilot Training for Military-Connected Children & Families (Proviso 1A.81)

1A.81. (SDE-EIA: EOC Military-Connected Children) Of the funds allocated for Partnerships for Innovation, the Education Oversight Committee is directed to expend \$100,000 to initiate in at least two school districts with high military density, a pilot program that will provide training, services, resources and research to teachers, counselors, mental health professionals, school nurses, service providers and military parents. The objective of the pilot is to increase the level of educational quality and support for military-connected children. The training and services must be provided by a non-profit entity that is an NBCC-Approved Continuing Education Provider and is an authorized provider by the international Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET). Pursuant to its responsibilities under Act 289 of 2014, the Education Oversight Committee will report on the expenditure of these funds and post-training evaluations in its annual report on the educational performance of military-connected children.

5. Pilot STEM Labs (Proviso 1A.82)

1A.82. (SDE-EIA: STEM Labs) Of the funds appropriated for customized STEM labs, the Education Oversight Committee shall work with the Department of Education, Office of Standards and Learning to solicit interested middle schools from the Abbeville trial and plaintiff districts to participate in implementing a STEM based curriculum. The pilot sites will receive a customized 6th - 8th grade STEM curriculum designed to address the needs of local industry. The curriculum provided will be aligned to state standards and certified by ACT WorkKeys and will include hands-on, problem based student labs. The curriculum will also be certified by ACT WorkKeys. Teachers in the pilot sites will receive ongoing, year-long professional development on cross curricular STEM implementation that will be aligned to state standards as well and the district strategic plan.

6. Identify underperforming schools and districts (Proviso 1A.85 and Act 281 of 2016)

1A.85. (SDE-EIA: Report Cards) With the funds appropriated for assessment and the achievement results obtained from these assessments, the Education Oversight Committee shall not calculate absolute or growth performance ratings for the 2016-17 school year for schools or districts. Instead, the Education Oversight Committee shall determine the format of a transitional report card released to the public in the fall of 2016 that will also identify underperforming schools and districts. These transitional reports will, at a minimum, include the following: (1) school, district and statewide student assessment results in reading and mathematics in grades 3 through 8; (2) high school and district graduation rates; and (3) measures of student college and career readiness at the school, district, and statewide level. These transitional reports shall inform schools and districts, the public, and the Department of Education of school and district general academic performance and assist in identifying potentially underperforming schools and districts and in targeting technical assistance support and interventions in the interim before ratings are issued.

7. DEW – Model Data-Sharing Agreement to include EOC (Proviso 83.8)

83.8. (DEW: Employment Training Outcomes Data Sharing) The Department of Employment and Workforce, in developing the Workforce and Labor Market Information System (WLMIS) improvements required of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (P.L. 113-128), will require integration of training and employment data for the purposes of improving longitudinal assessment of employment outcomes for the various training providers eligible to receive funding appropriated or authorized by this Act.

(A) As the entity with authority for the oversight and maintenance for the WLMIS, the department shall establish a Governance Policy for the management, development, security, partner collaboration, and sharing responsibilities no later than July 1, 2016.

(B) No later than July 22, 2016, the department must develop a model data-sharing agreement with eligible training providers (ETPs). As specified by the WIOA Act, this agreement will require ETPs to submit data related to the types of training programs offered, individual student coursework and outcomes, program completion and time to complete, program costs, and tuition assistance. It will further require reporting of personally identifiable information (PII) to match training and employment data to determine placement in companies and jobs by the North American Industry Classification (NAIC) System and Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) System and other information necessary for the department to accurately and completely assess the effectiveness and return on investment of all training programs offered by the entity.

(C) No later than January 1, 2017, the department must develop a model data-sharing agreement with the Department of Education, the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention and Advancement, and the Education Oversight Committee, the Vocational Rehabilitation Department, and the Commission on Higher Education to capture and match data as enumerated in item (B) of this provision. This agreement will ensure collaborative sharing of matched data with each partner agency for the purpose of program assessment and effectiveness in compliance with state and federal laws.

(D) The department and the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation shall, by January 1, 2017, enter into a data-sharing agreement to determine the average debt load carried by individuals who participate in training programs with eligible training providers. This agreement will ensure collaborative sharing of matched data for the purpose of program assessment and effectiveness in compliance with state and federal laws.

(E) No later than June 30, 2017, the department must develop a model data-sharing agreement with the Department of Social Services to capture data related to New Hire status and social service data and with the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation to capture licensing and licensing-related data. This agreement will ensure collaborative sharing of matched data for the purpose of program assessment and effectiveness in compliance with state and federal laws.

8. Act 241 of 2016 – Review of Title 59 to report obsolete and inapplicable statutes

Continuing Responsibilities

1. Evaluation of Full-Day 4K Program (Provisos 1.62 and 1A.30)
2. Evaluation of community partnerships that provide after school or summer reading camp programs (Proviso 1.63)
3. Implementation and evaluation of South Carolina Community Block Grants for Education Pilot Programs with focus being on expanding high-quality, early childhood programs (Provisos 1.70, 1.79, and 1A.71)
4. Administration of EIA funds for non-state entities including SC Autism Society (Provisos 1A.7. 1A.35. and 1A.50.
5. Identification of schools eligible to participate in the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program (Proviso 109.15)
6. Participation on K-12 Technology Initiative Committee, which includes developing a form to collect information on the amounts and uses of technology funds. (Provisos 3.6.and 117.27)
7. Teacher Salary Schedule Structure Study Committee - The Department of Education is required to convene stakeholders, including Education Oversight Committee, to examine and make recommendations regarding changes to statewide minimum state teacher salary schedule. (Proviso 1.75)
8. Ongoing reports of: SC Teacher Loan Program, Parent Survey, and Military-Connected Students per state law
9. **Merging of State and Federal Accountability systems**

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee: Academic Standards and Assessment

Date: July 31, 2016

ACTION ITEM

Criteria to Identify Underperforming Schools and Districts

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

Proviso 1A.80. of the 2016-17 General Appropriation Act, as ratified by the General Assembly, and Act 281 of 2016 requires the EOC to identify underperforming schools and districts on the transitional report card beginning this fall, 2016.

CRITICAL FACTS

Act 200 of 2014 suspended the state's accountability system for two school years, 2014-15 and 2015-16. With passage of the federal legislation, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the new federal accountability system will not be operational until school year 2017-18. Consequently, the General Assembly decided to implement in 2017-18 the new consolidated state and federal accountability system. However, in the meantime, the state will release to the public in the fall of 2016 and 2017 transitional report cards that must identify "potentially underperforming schools and districts" to ensure that technical assistance support and interventions are provided.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

The criteria for the identification of underperforming schools and districts were reviewed, amended, and adopted by the Subcommittee on July 11, 2016.

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

Cost:

Fund/Source: Agency Appropriations

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

Approved

ACTION TAKEN

Amended

Not Approved

Action deferred (explain)

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the EOC

FROM: Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee

DATE: July 12, 2016

IN RE: Criteria for Identifying Underperforming Schools and Districts

The Education Oversight Committee (EOC) must determine how to identify underperforming schools and districts on the transitional report card beginning this fall, 2016. Act 281 of 2016 and a proviso in H.5001, the 2016-17 General Appropriation Act, as ratified on June 2, 2016, contain the following language regarding the 2016 state report cards.

Act 281

(7) Within thirty days after providing student performance data to the school districts as required by law, the department must provide to the Education Oversight Committee student performance results on assessments authorized in this subsection and end-of-course assessments in a format agreed upon by the department and the Oversight Committee. The Education Oversight Committee must use the results of these assessments in school years 2014-2015, 2015-2016, and 2016-2017 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 2016-2017 school year; provided, however, state ratings must be determined by the results of these assessments beginning in the 2017-2018 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 2017. While developing the single accountability system that will be implemented in the 2017-2018 school year, the Education Oversight Committee shall determine the format of a transitional report card released to the public in the Fall of 2016 and 2017 that will also identify underperforming schools and districts. These transitional reports will, at a minimum, include the following: (1) school, district, and

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

statewide student assessment results in reading and mathematics in grades three through eight; (2) high school and district graduation rates; and (3) measures of student college and career readiness at the school, district, and statewide level. These transitional reports will inform schools and districts, the public, and the Department of Education of school and district general academic performance and assist in identifying potentially underperforming schools and districts and in targeting technical assistance support and interventions in the interim before ratings are issued.

H.5001

2016-17 General Appropriation Act, as Ratified on June 2, 2016

1A.80. *(SDE-EIA: Report Cards) With the funds appropriated for assessment and the achievement results obtained from these assessments, the Education Oversight Committee shall not calculate absolute or absolute or growth performance ratings for the 2016-17 school year for schools or districts. Instead, the Education Oversight Committee shall determine the format of a transitional report card released to the public in the fall of 2016 that will also identify underperforming schools and districts. These transitional reports will, at a minimum, include the following: (1) school, district and statewide student assessment results in reading and mathematics in grades 3 through 8; (2) high school and district graduation rates; and (3) measures of student college and career readiness at the school, district, and statewide level. These transitional reports shall inform schools and districts, the public, and the Department of Education of school and district general academic performance and assist in identifying potentially underperforming schools and districts and in targeting technical assistance support and interventions in the interim before ratings are issued.*

Recommendation

The Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee met on July 11, 2016 and recommended that the following criteria be used to identify underperforming schools and districts. The Subcommittee reiterates that the world class skills and life and career characteristics of the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate* are not reflected in the assessment results used in identifying underperforming schools.

Elementary & Middle Schools

For elementary and middle schools, “potentially underperforming” elementary and middle schools would equal the lowest performing 5 percent of all elementary and middle schools based on the following criteria:

1. Schools with the highest percentage of students scoring “Does Not Meet” in English language arts and mathematics on the 2015-16 administration of SC Ready.

2. Only schools that tested at least two grade levels would be identified in 2016; therefore, no primary school would be identified.

High Schools

For high schools, “potentially underperforming” high schools would equal the lowest performing 5 percent of all high schools based on the following criteria:

1. The on-time graduation rate for school year 2015-16.
2. The percentage of juniors earning a WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate of Silver or better in 2015-16. A Silver or better certificate implies that the student would be qualified for two-thirds or more of the jobs in the national database;
3. The percentage of juniors who on the ACT met or exceeded the benchmarks scores in Reading (22) or Mathematics (22) in 2015-16;
4. The percentage of students scoring a “D” or “F” on the end-of-course assessments in English I and Algebra I; and
5. Only high schools with at least thirty (30) ACT assessment results and thirty (30) WorkKeys certificate results in 2015-16 would be included.

School Districts

Any school district that met two or more of the following criteria would be identified as an underperforming school district:

1. Any district that had an on-time graduation rate of less than 70% would be identified. The average on-time graduation rate for South Carolina in 2014-15 was 82%.
2. Any district that had more than an average of 50 percent of students in grades 3 through 8 scoring “Does Not Meet Expectations” on SC Ready in reading and mathematics in 2015-16 would be identified. The district would be identified using the mean percentage of students scoring “Does Not Meet Expectations” in reading and mathematics.

3. Any district that had less than 20 percent of its 11th graders earning a WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate of Silver or better in 2015-16 would be identified.

4. Any district that had 5 percent or less of its 11th graders who on the ACT met or exceeded the benchmark scores in Reading (22) **or** mathematics (22) would be identified.

Explanation

The recommendations are based on the premise that the lowest performing five percent of elementary and middle schools and the lowest performing five percent of high schools would be identified. The rationale for identifying the lowest five percent is based on the federal legislation, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which requires states to identify the lowest performing 5 percent of **Title I** schools and high schools with graduation rates at or below 67 percent.

The number of districts would be contingent upon the number meeting two or more of the specific criteria as defined herein. No primary school or vocational center would be identified. Only schools with population size, or “n” size, of 30 or more would be considered in any criteria. The “n” size of 30 is consistent with the South Carolina Department of Education’s ESEA waiver.

Elementary & Middle Schools

Students scoring “Does Not Meet Expectations” on SC Ready are students achieving at the lowest performance level on the assessment administered in grades 3 through 8. For elementary and middle schools, the schools would be identified by looking at the percentages of students in each school who scored “Does Not Meet Expectations” on the English language arts (ELA) and mathematics sections of the SC Ready assessment in the 2015-16 school year. Writing performance is included in the ELA score of SC Ready. The percentages of students scoring “Does Not Meet Expectations” for these tests would be averaged, with the percent for each area, reading and mathematics, weighted equally. The number of schools identified as underperforming would be approximately five percent of the total number of elementary and middle schools receiving a state report card. Only schools that tested at least two grade levels would be identified in 2016; therefore, no primary school would be identified.

High Schools

The law requires the EOC to look at graduation rates and college and career readiness indicators. For high schools, the following information would be used to identify “potentially underperforming” high schools:

1. The on-time graduation rate for school year 2015-16.
2. The percentage of juniors earning a WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate of Silver or better in 2015-16. A Silver or better certificate implies that the student would be qualified for two-thirds or more of the jobs in the national database;
3. The percentage of juniors who on the ACT met or exceeded the benchmarks scores in Reading (22) or Mathematics (22) in 2015-16; and
4. The percentage of students scoring a “D” or “F” on the end-of-course assessments in English I and Algebra I.

Achievement of students in high schools would be evaluated accordingly across each of the above three criteria with high schools with the lowest student achievement across all indicators identified. The number of high schools identified as “underperforming” would be approximately five percent of the total number of high schools receiving a state report card. Only high schools with at least thirty (30) ACT assessment results and thirty (30) WorkKeys certificate results would be included.

School Districts

The following information would be used to identify “underperforming” school districts:

1. Any district that had an on-time graduation rate of less than 70% would be identified. The average on-time graduation rate for South Carolina in 2014-15 was 82%.
2. Any district that had more than an average of 50 percent of students in grades 3 through 8 scoring “Does Not Meet Expectations” on SC Ready in reading and mathematics in 2015-16 would be identified. The district would be identified using the mean percentage of students scoring “Does Not Meet Expectations” in reading and mathematics.

3. Any district that had less than 20 percent of its 11th graders earning a WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate of Silver or better in 2015-16 would be identified.
4. Any district that had 5 percent or less of its 11th graders who on the ACT met or exceeded the benchmark scores in Reading (22) **or** mathematics (22) would be identified.

Analysis Using Student Achievement Data from 2014-15

To assist the EOC in making the determinations, the staff retroactively identified schools and districts that would have been identified if the same criteria had been applied to the student achievement results from school year 2014-15 using ACT Aspire.

For elementary and middle schools, the identification of the lowest five percent of schools is based on the percentage of students who scored “In Need of Support” on the ACT Aspire Reading and Mathematics subtests. Students scoring “In Need of Support” were students achieving at the lowest performance level on ACT Aspire. There were only small differences between the number of students tested in Reading and Mathematics for any school. With nearly identical numbers of students taking these assessments, the percentages of students who scored “In Need of Support” were averaged. Schools were then ordered with respect to this one measure to identify the lowest five percent of schools.

For high school schools, the identification criteria were based on four different data: WorkKeys scores, ACT scores, on-time graduation rates, and end-of-course assessments in English 1 and Algebra I. The percentage of students that met the criteria for each of these areas was combined into a composite to identify high schools. The simplest approach to combining these percentages is to average them, computing the mean. However, because these percentages represent different achievements, were based on different students, and were based on different numbers of students, averaging may not have been the best approach. To ensure that each measure contributed equally to a composite measure, an alternative method was to convert each percentage to a z-score, and average the three z-scores. Schools would then be ordered using these z-scores.

Both approaches were conducted and results compared using a Pearson’s correlation coefficient to compare the average of the percentages to the average of the z scores,

the staff determined that the two measures were highly correlated. The Pearson's correlation coefficient was 0.98. A visual presentation of the relationship between the mean percentage and the mean z-scores is presented in the Appendix. Additionally, the list of high schools identified using both methods were compared. Of the 12 high schools identified, 10 were identified using both methods. The conclusion was that using the average of the three percentages to identify schools was as reliable as converting the percentages to a z-score. Because averaging the percentages is more straightforward, the staff used the mean percentage across all criteria to identify the schools.

School districts were identified using four criteria:

1. The percentage of 11th graders obtaining a Silver, Gold or Platinum National Career Readiness Certificate on WorkKeys;
2. The percentage of 11th graders that met the ACT benchmarks for college readiness on Reading **or** Mathematics, both a score of 22;
3. The on-time graduation rate for the district; and
4. The percentage of students in grades 3 through 8 who scored "In Need of Support" on ACT Aspire Reading or Mathematics in 2014-15.

Results of Elementary and Middle Schools:

In 2015 there were 894 elementary and middle schools that received report cards. Using ACT Aspire results for 2014-15, approximately **44** schools would have been identified as "underperforming" using these criteria. There would have been: 16 elementary schools, 24 middle and 3 combination elementary/middle schools. The schools would have been in 21 districts.

High Schools

In 2015 there were 236 high schools that received state report cards. Using the above criteria and applying it to 2014-15 data, there would have been **12** high schools identified as underperforming. These high schools are located in 10 school districts.

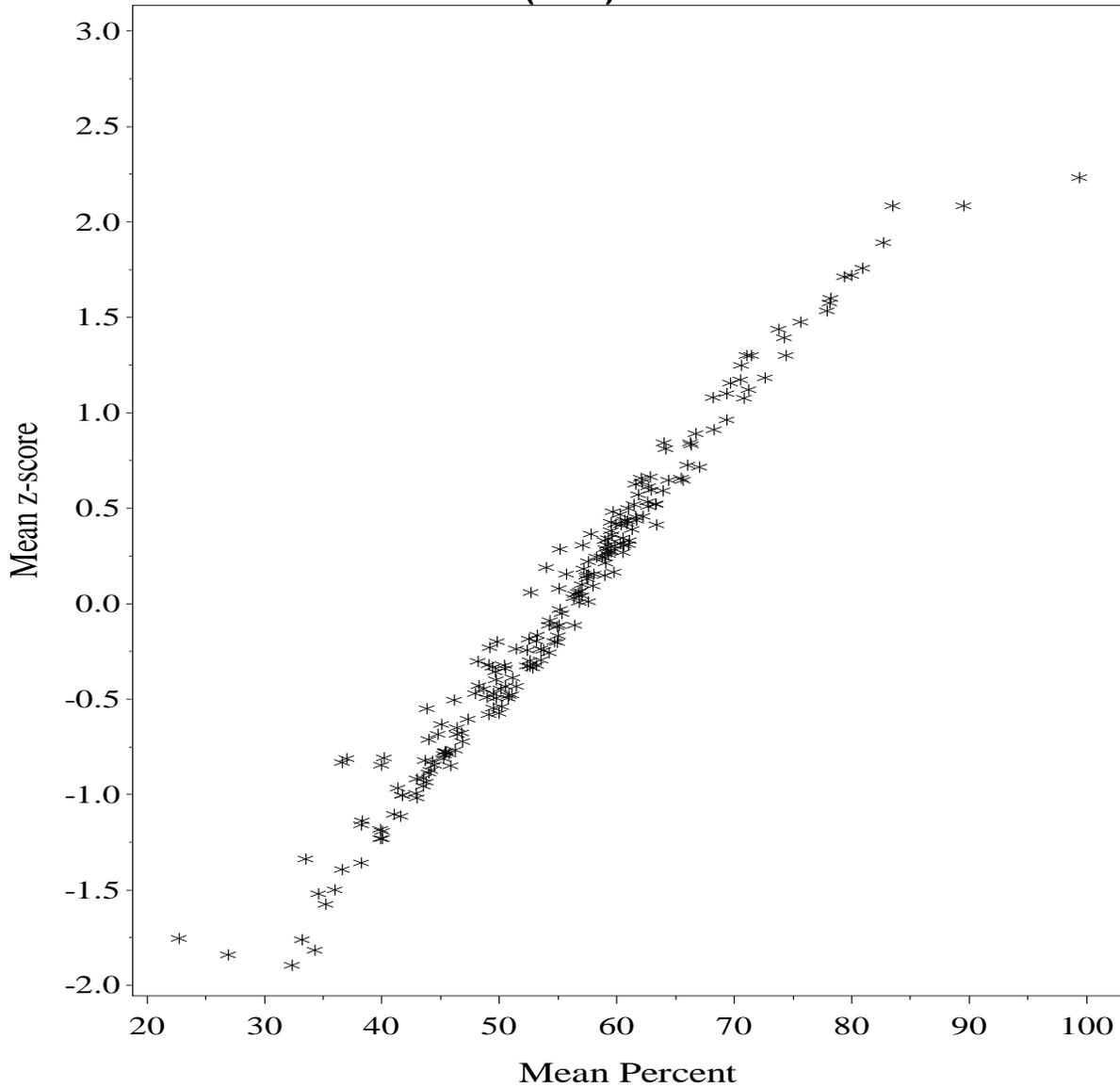
Districts

Of the 82 school districts, 4 or 5 percent would be identified as “underperforming” based on meeting at least two of the criteria as noted in the chart below:

Criteria	2 Criteria	3 Criteria
WorkKeys (<20% Silver or Better)	Hampton 2	Allendale
ACT (<5% College Ready, Reading & Math)	Hampton 2 Lee	Allendale
Graduation Rate	Florence 4	
SC Ready ELA & Mathematics Grades 3 – 8	Florence 4 Lee	Allendale

APPENDIX

**Comparison of High School Composite Measures:
Mean Percent and Mean z-score
($r=.98$)**



Summary: Proposed Regulations on Accountability, State Plans, and Data Reporting under ESSA

The U.S. Department of Education (Department) is issuing a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to implement provisions of the new Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) regarding school accountability, data reporting, and consolidated state plans, with the goal of giving states new flexibility to ensure that every child gets a high-quality and well-rounded education while enhancing equity and maintaining critical civil rights protections.

The bipartisan ESSA ensures that all students are prepared for college and careers while giving states and districts the opportunity to move beyond No Child Left Behind's reliance on a limited range of metrics and punitive "pass/fail" determinations for schools – and to use their planning and accountability processes to reimagine and redefine what a high-quality education should mean for their students. To that end, the proposed regulations clarify ESSA's statutory language by ensuring the use of multiple measures of school success based on academic outcomes, student progress, and school quality, thereby reinforcing that all students deserve a high-quality and well-rounded education that will prepare them for success. The regulations also build on the new law's flexibility around school improvement and intervention by providing further support for locally designed solutions to improve struggling schools, and a clear role for parents, families, educators, school leaders and stakeholders to meaningfully share in the implementation process. Finally, the regulations uphold the strong civil rights legacy of the law, which was originally signed by President Lyndon Johnson in 1965, by including all students and historically underserved subgroups in accountability decisions; ensuring meaningful action where whole schools or groups of students are falling behind; and providing clear and transparent information on critical measures of student success, school quality, and resource equity.

The passage and implementation of ESSA builds upon a period of important progress towards the promise of a world-class education for every student in America. Led by the hard work of students, families, and educators, the nation has hit important educational milestones. Graduation rates have reached an all-time high; dropout rates are at historic lows, fueled by dramatic reductions in the dropout rates for African-American and Hispanic students; and states and cities across the country are expanding access to high-quality preschool and free community college. At the same time, achievement gaps persist for historically underserved students – and, in far too many schools, those students continue to have less access to the resources and support needed to thrive.

ESSA presents an opportunity to continue making progress towards educational equity and excellence for all. For the first time, the reauthorization of the nation's defining elementary and secondary education law explicitly supports a preschool to college- and career-readiness vision for America's students. It also creates the flexibility for states, districts, and educators to reclaim the promise of a quality, well-rounded education for every student while maintaining the nation's commitment to every child by guaranteeing meaningful action is taken in our lowest performing schools, including high schools with low graduation rates, and in schools where subgroups of students underperform. The Department's proposed regulations will help realize that potential.

MAJOR PROVISIONS

Accountability

ESSA requires that all students be held to college- and career-ready standards. The proposed regulations reinforce the law's flexibility for states to incorporate new measures of school quality and student success into their accountability systems while upholding the core expectation that states, districts, and schools work to improve academic outcomes for all students, including individual subgroups of students. And

while states and districts will continue to be required to take action to turn around struggling schools, and to intervene in schools where groups of students are consistently underperforming, they have new flexibility, working closely with stakeholders, to choose interventions that are tailored to local needs.

Statewide Accountability Systems

- The proposed regulations affirm that states **set their own ambitious goals, and measurements of interim progress**, for academic outcomes, while also ensuring that states take into account the improvement necessary among subgroups of students to make significant progress in closing gaps in statewide proficiency and graduation rates.
- The proposed regulations reinforce the statutory requirement that states have **robust, multi-measure statewide accountability systems, while giving them the flexibility to choose new statewide indicators that create a more holistic view of student success**.
 - The proposed regulations include indicators of academic achievement, graduation rates (for high schools) or academic progress (for elementary and middle schools), and progress towards English language proficiency.
 - States would also have the opportunity to select new indicators of school quality or student success, while ensuring that those indicators:
 - Measure the performance of all students in all public schools (including public charter schools);
 - Allow for comparisons between subgroups of students;
 - Demonstrate variation across schools in the state; and
 - Are likely to increase graduation rates or academic achievement.
- To promote transparency in a format that is easily understandable by parents, the proposed regulations require states to assign a **comprehensive, summative rating** for each school to provide a clear picture of its overall standing. However, to ensure a nuanced picture of school success, states would also report a school’s performance on each indicator, in addition to the school’s summative result.
- To give states room to develop systems tailored to their individual needs, **the proposed regulations do not prescribe or suggest specific percentages for any of the indicators, or a range for weighting**; rather, they include the following provisions to ensure that states are emphasizing the academic indicators that the law requires be afforded “substantial” weight individually and “much greater” weight in the aggregate by stating that:
 - a school identified for comprehensive support cannot be removed from identification on the basis of an indicator of school quality or student success unless it is also making significant progress for all students on an academic one;
 - a school identified for targeted support because of a struggling subgroup cannot be removed from targeted support status on the basis of an indicator of school quality or student success unless that subgroup is making significant progress on at least one academic indicator; and
 - a school achieving the lowest level of performance on any academic indicator must receive a different summative rating than a school performing at the highest level on all of the indicators.
- Consistent with the statute’s focus on measures beyond graduation rates and test scores, the proposed regulations **clarify that states choose their own indicators of school quality or**

student success. Consistent with the law’s focus on equity, the proposal requires that states are able to compare subgroups of students on each measure. To maintain the focus on student learning, they also propose that the measures included within the indicators of Academic Progress and School Quality or Student Success be supported by research indicating that performance or progress on such measures are likely to increase student academic achievement or, at the high school level, graduation rates.

- Recognizing the growing numbers and diversity of the English learner population, the proposed regulations ensure that states consider unique student characteristics, including students’ initial English language proficiency level, in setting goals, measurements of interim progress, and determining performance on the **indicator of progress in achieving English language proficiency**.
- In order to provide a fair and accurate picture of school success, and help parents, teachers, school leaders, and state officials understand where students are struggling and how to support them, the law requires that all students participate in statewide assessments. States must factor into their accountability systems whether all schools have assessed at least 95% of all their students and 95% of each subgroup of students. The proposed regulations **do not prescribe how those rates must be factored into accountability systems**, but they do require states to take robust action for schools that do not meet the 95% participation requirement. **States may choose among options or propose their own equally rigorous strategy for addressing the low participation rate.** In addition, schools missing participation rates would need to develop a plan, approved by the district, to improve participation rates in the future.
- To ensure the statewide accountability system meaningfully **includes all students, especially historically underserved students**, the proposed regulations:
 - **ensure states consider each student subgroup separately.** A combined subgroup of students – or “super subgroup” – cannot replace an individual subgroup.
 - **do not specify what a State’s n-size must be for accountability purposes, but require that any State with an n-size larger than 30 students submit a justification for its n-size in its State plan**, including information about the number and percentage of schools that would not be held accountable for the results of students in each particular subgroup if a state adopted a higher n-size.
- To ensure states hold all public schools accountable, the proposed regulations **ensure that states include all public charter schools in their accountability systems**.
- To provide states with flexibility to develop thoughtful accountability systems, the proposed regulations **allow states to update their accountability systems as they are able to include new measures within their indicators**.

Supporting Low-performing Schools

- Under the proposed regulations, states must identify certain schools at least once every three years for **comprehensive support and improvement**, including:
 - the bottom 5% of Title I schools in the state;
 - high schools with graduation rates below 67% for all students based on the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate; and
 - Title I schools with chronically low-performing subgroups that have not improved after receiving additional targeted support.

- States must also identify schools for *targeted support and improvement*, including:
 - schools with a low-performing subgroup performing similarly to all students in the bottom 5% of Title I schools, identified each time the State identifies its schools for comprehensive support (these schools must be provided additional targeted support)
 - Title I schools with a consistently underperforming subgroup, as defined by the State, annually.
- The proposed regulations **provide suggested definitions of “consistently underperforming,” but allow states the flexibility to propose their own definitions** as long as they identify schools with subgroups that, based on the state’s indicators, underperform over two or more years.
- The proposed regulations **recognize the critical role of stakeholders, including parents, educators, principals, and other school leaders, in supporting the development and implementation of school improvement activities** by requiring that each district notify parents of students at schools identified for support and improvement of how to be involved in the school improvement process, so they can participate in developing a plan that fits its unique needs. These schools may have up to a year in the school year they are identified to conduct these planning and engagement activities.
- In place of prescriptive interventions required under No Child Left Behind, the proposed regulations **allow schools, districts, and states to select evidence-based strategies tailored to local needs**. They also would ensure that states set meaningful exit criteria so that schools implement additional actions where initial interventions do not work to improve student outcomes.
- In schools identified for comprehensive support or for additional targeted support, the proposed regulations would **require that their improvement plans review resource inequities**, including per-pupil expenditures and disproportionate access to ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers identified by the State and district, drawing on data already collected and reported under ESSA.
- Under the proposed regulations, **states must continue to direct funds set aside for school improvement** to schools most in need of support. In order to ensure sufficient funds to provide meaningful support, the proposed regulations require that a district that receives funds for school improvement receives a minimum of \$500,000 for each comprehensive support school it serves and \$50,000 for each targeted support school it serves, unless the state determines that a smaller amount is sufficient. Additionally, the proposed regulations reinforce the state’s key role in providing technical assistance, monitoring, and other support, including ongoing efforts to evaluate the use of these funds for evidence-based interventions to improve student outcomes.
- In order to provide time for an orderly transition to new ESSA accountability systems and to ensure there is not a gap in supports for students, the proposed regulations require that **all states identify schools for comprehensive and additional targeted support for the 2017-2018 school year**, with annual identification of schools with consistently underperforming subgroups for targeted support beginning in the 2018-2019 school year.

Data Reporting

One of the core goals of ESSA is to enable parents and other stakeholders to engage meaningfully in their education systems, which is only possible when they have access to clear, robust, and ongoing information about how their students and schools are doing. To accomplish this goal, the proposed

regulations seek to ensure that states and districts work with stakeholders to develop report cards that include timely and essential information to inform educational improvement for all kids, including by:

- requiring states and districts to **consult with parents in designing the report cards**, and make them publicly available no later than December 31st of each year. These report cards serve to inform parents and community members about how students and schools are doing in a timely way;
- ensuring that **report cards include a full set of accountability information** (including student assessment outcomes and graduation rates) in an easily accessible manner, so that stakeholders can fully understand school performance and better participate in developing solutions that target the specific needs of schools and students;
- clarifying requirements for new provisions, **including how students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who earn alternate diplomas may be included in graduation rate calculations**;
- **ensuring more transparency for parents, educators and community members around resource equity measures**, such as access to preschool, access to rigorous coursework, and school discipline;;
- clarifying that state and local **report cards must include specific information about district- and school-level per-pupil** expenditures calculated based on uniform, state-developed procedures, to ensure parents and educators have transparency into school funding; and
- **improving the quality of postsecondary enrollment data** included on report cards, so that stakeholders have greater insight into student preparation for programs of postsecondary education.

Consolidated State Plans

The proposed regulations give states the flexibility, and responsibility, to think holistically about how to improve educational outcomes for all of their students while helping to ensure access to a high-quality and well-rounded education. The proposed regulations are designed to encourage each state to engage meaningfully with a wide array of stakeholders as it thinks comprehensively about implementation of ESSA and promotes better coordination across state-based ESEA formula grant programs to improve student outcomes and close achievement gaps. The consolidated state plan requirements also are intended to eliminate duplication and streamline requirements across programs, reducing burden for states in meeting federal requirements.

- The proposed regulations would **require broad, robust, transparent engagement with a diverse, representative group of stakeholders** at multiple points during the design, development, and implementation of a consolidated state plan. Stakeholders must include superintendents, educators, parents, community leaders, civil rights organizations, representatives of Indian tribes, and others.
- The proposed regulations reinforce the ESSA’s strong emphasis on **equitable access to resources for all students**, particularly those who are traditionally underrepresented (including foster children, homeless students, and English learners). Through the consolidated plans, states must put forward plans to ensure that states meet the needs of all learners, including providing access to a well-rounded education that incorporates rigorous coursework such as STEM, history, foreign languages, music, and computer science.

- To ensure that educators have the training and support they need to best support their students, the proposed regulations ask **states to describe their strategies to support and develop excellent educators**, including efforts to enhance and expand their systems of professional development, retention, and advancement.
- To build upon the Administration’s Excellent Educators for All initiative, **“Educator Equity Plans” will be integrated into the consolidated application** to operationalize ESSA’s requirement that low-income and minority students in Title I schools not be taught at disproportionate rates by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers.

PUBLIC COMMENT

In crafting the proposed regulation, the Department conducted extensive stakeholder outreach, including more than 200 meetings and events and hundreds of public comments. The NPRM will be on public display with the Federal Register starting on Thursday, May 26th, and can be accessed directly on our website at www.ed.gov/essa. On Tuesday, May 31st, the Federal Register will publish the NPRM for public comment for 60 days. The public comment period will close on August 1st. We invite all interested parties and stakeholders to comment on the regulations. In addition, the NPRM contains several directed questions on which the Department is particularly seeking input.

DAY 2



**SC EDUCATION
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

Reporting facts. Measuring change. Promoting progress.

PO Box 11867 | 227 Blatt Building
Columbia SC 29211 | WWW.SCEOC.ORG

**Education Oversight Committee
July 31 and August 1, 2016**
Moore Farms Botanical Gardens
100 New Zion Road
Lake City, SC

Breakfast buffet on your own using vouchers at The Inn.

Meeting to convene at Moore Farms Botanical Gardens.

Monday, August 1, 2016

9:00 a.m. Results of Statewide Surveys on Accountability and Expectations
Graceanne W. Cole, Vice President of Research,
MarketSearch Corp.

Neil C. Robinson, Jr.
CHAIR

Daniel B. Merck
VICE CHAIR

April Allen

Anne H. Bull

Bob Couch

Mike Fair

Raye Felder

Barbara B. Hairfield

Nikki Haley

R. Wesley Hayes, Jr.

Dwight A. Loftis

John W. Matthews, Jr.

Joseph H. Neal

Molly Spearman

Patti J. Tate

Ellen Weaver

9:45 a.m. Discussion of Accountability System
Facilitated by Dr. Lee D'Andrea

Noon Lunch

After lunch, a tour of the gardens is available for anyone who would like to attend.

Melanie D. Barton
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Sunday Evening:

Directions from Moore Farms Botanical Garden

to

Inn At The Crossroads
128 W MAIN Street
Lake City, SC
(Travel: 3.9 miles or 6 minutes)

Start out going **northeast** on New Zion Rd toward S Morris St.

Go 0.03 miles

New Zion Rd becomes S Morris St.

Go 3.68 miles

Turn **right** onto W Main St/US-378 Bus E/SC-341.

Go 0.24 miles

Inn At The Crossroads, 128 W MAIN ST is on the **left**.

Monday Morning:

Directions from Inn at the Crossroads

to:

Moore Farms Botanical Garden
100 New Zion Rd
Lake City, SC 29560

(Travel: 3.9 miles or 6 minutes)

Turn **left** onto W Main Street (going **northwest** on W Main St/US-378 Bus W/SC-341 toward N McAllister St.)

Go 0.24 miles

Take the 2nd **left** onto S Morris St.

Go 3.68 miles

S Morris St becomes New Zion Rd.

Go 0.03 miles

100 NEW ZION RD is on the **right**.

(If you reach Green Rd you've gone about 1.3 miles too far.)



Grading South Carolina's Schools:

A Look at Awareness, Perceptions, Preferences and Expectations

Spring 2016

Study Specifications



Methodology: Online Surveys

Survey Dates: April 11 – May 4, 2016

Geographic Area: Statewide

**Audiences, Sources
and Sample Sizes:**

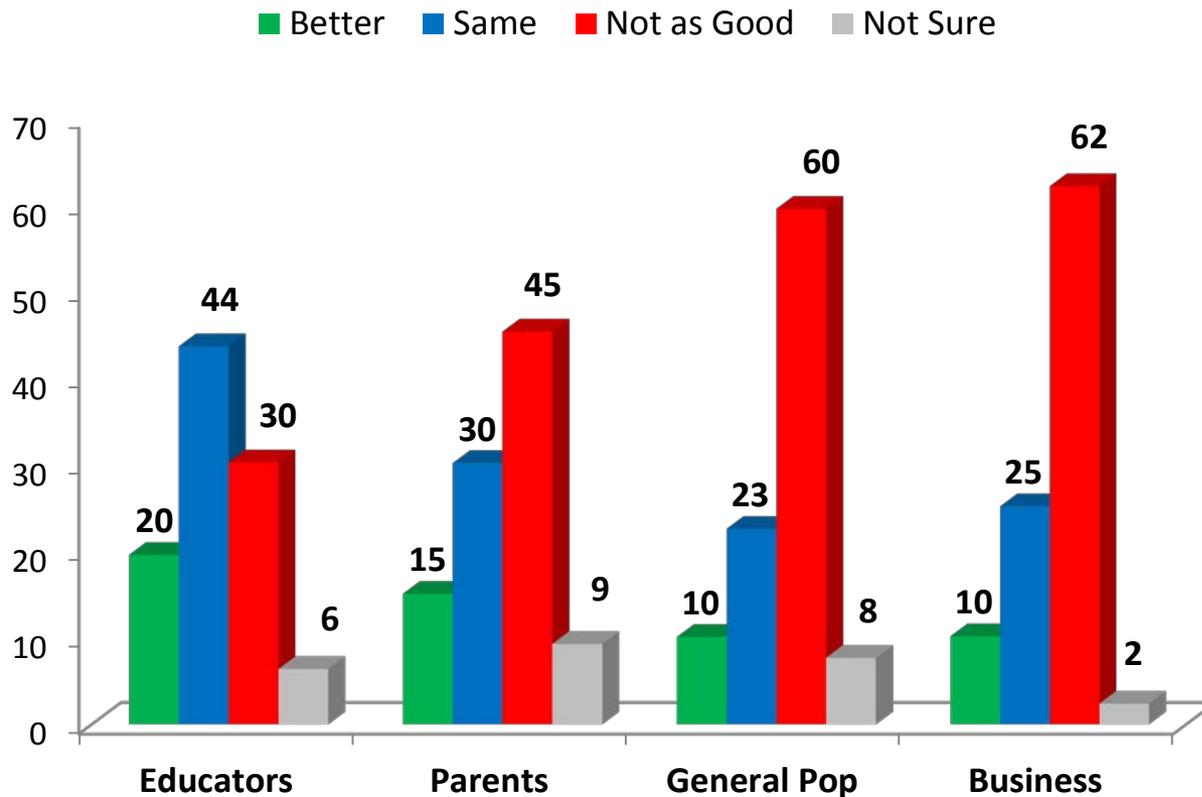
- General Population – N = 505
- Educators – N = 922
- Businesses – N = 206
- Parents of Students K-12 – N = 3183

General Perceptions of Education and Familiarity with Terms

Perceptions of How South Carolina's Schools Compare Nationally



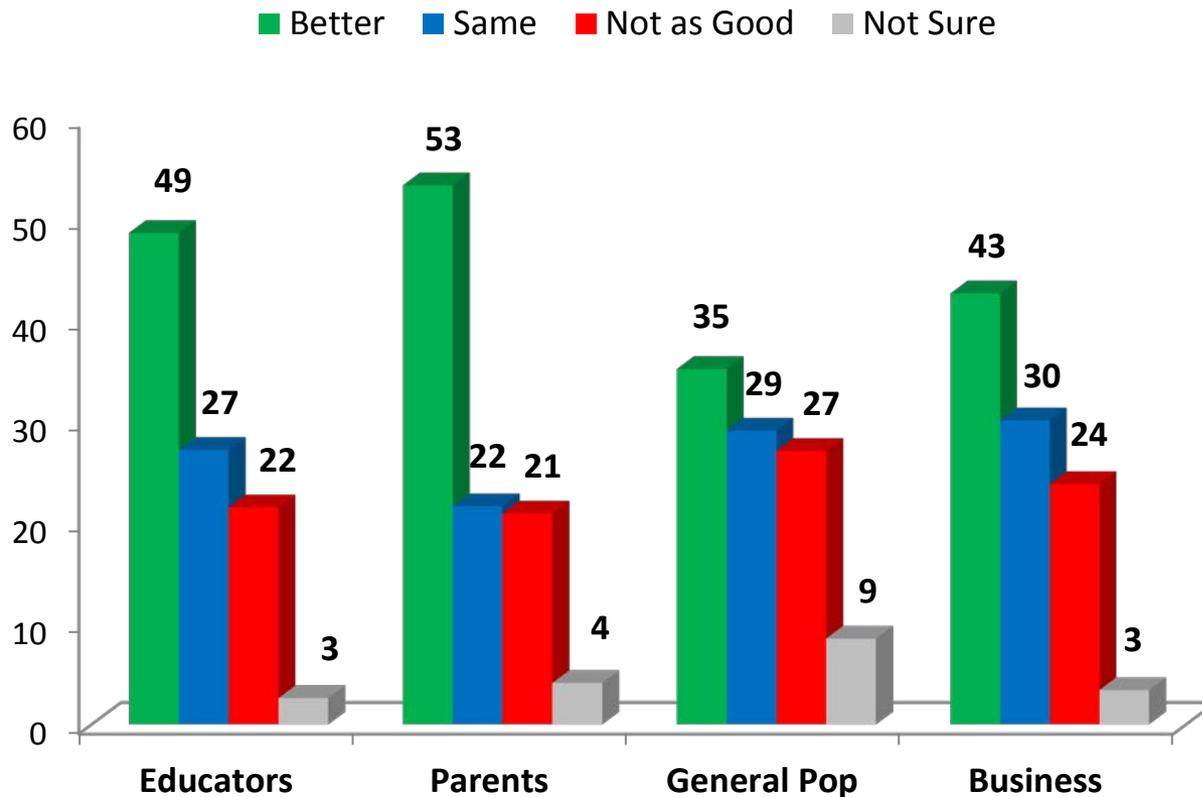
1. In general, how do you feel South Carolina's public schools (K through 12) compare to those across the nation?



Perceptions of How Local Schools Compare to Others in the State

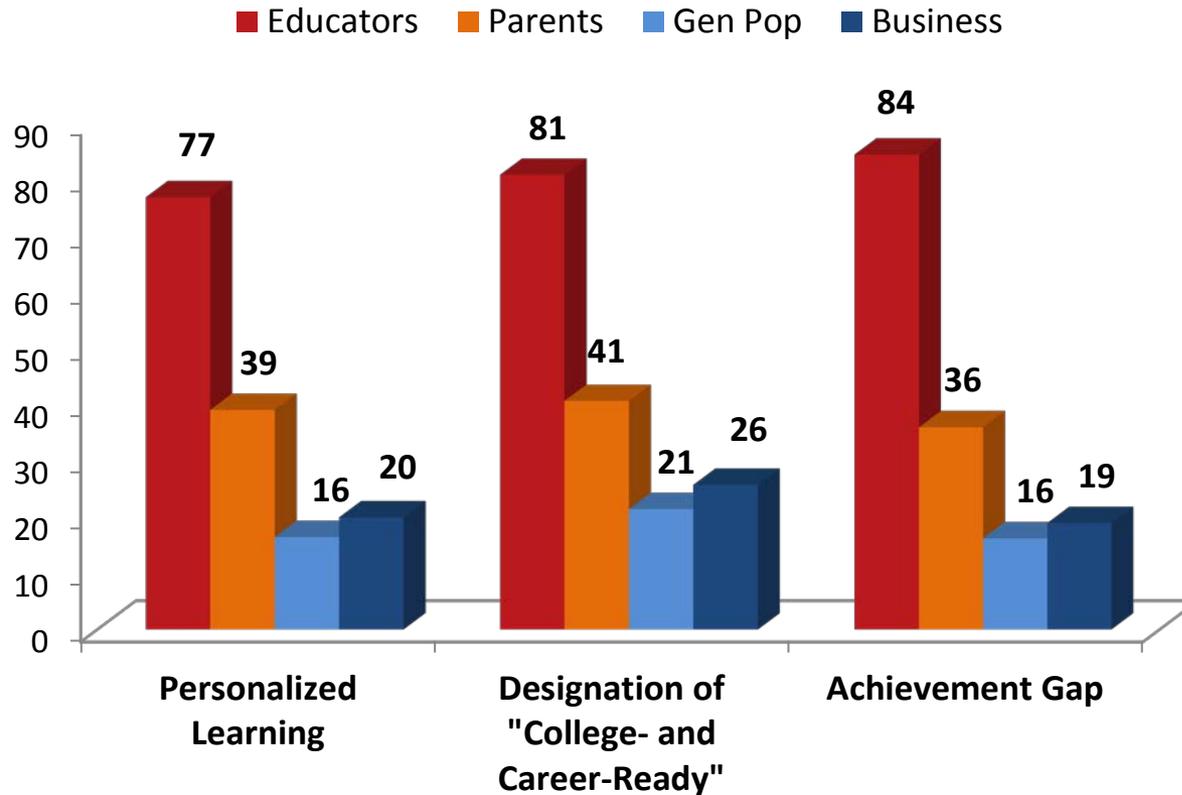


2. Thinking specifically about the schools that children in your neighborhood attend, how do you feel they compare to other schools across the state?



Familiarity with Terms and Issues

3. When it comes to public education (K-12), how familiar are you with each of the following terms and/or issues? [Graph entry represents % of respondents indicating they are *very familiar*.]

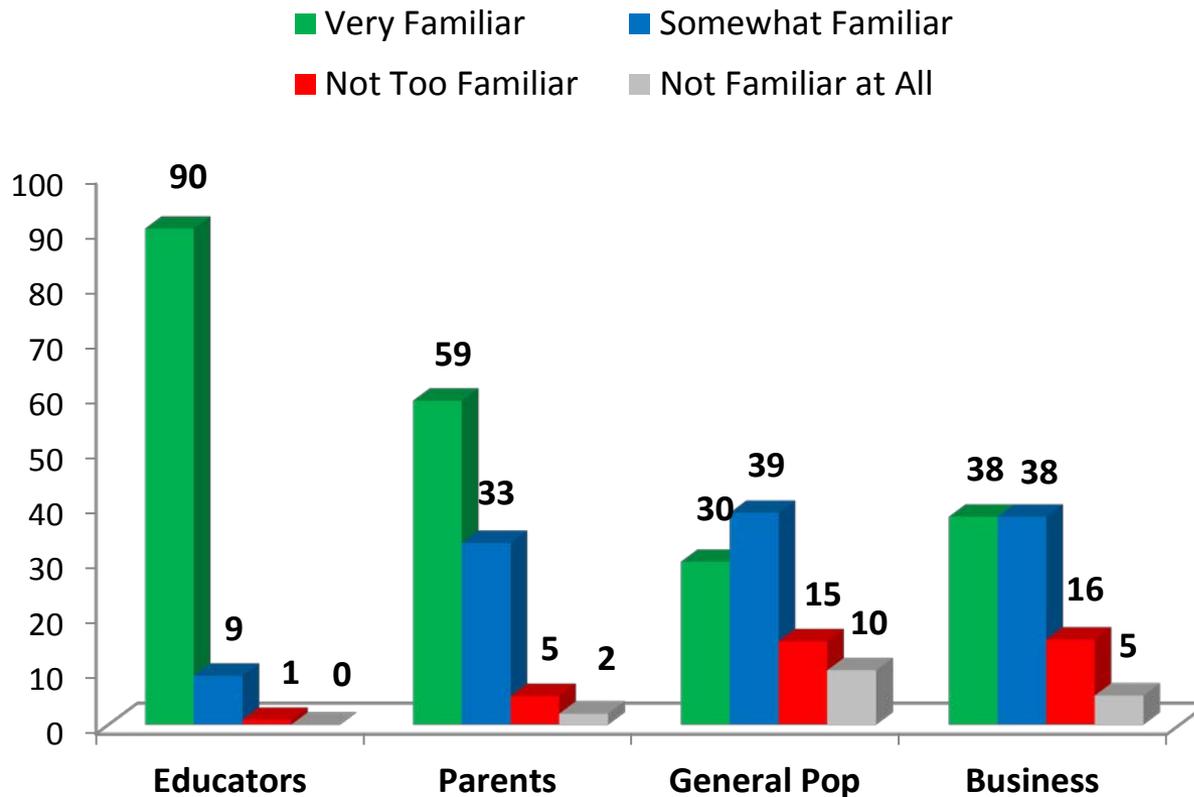


School and District Report Cards Familiarity, Experience, Expectations and Preferences

Familiarity with School and District Report Cards

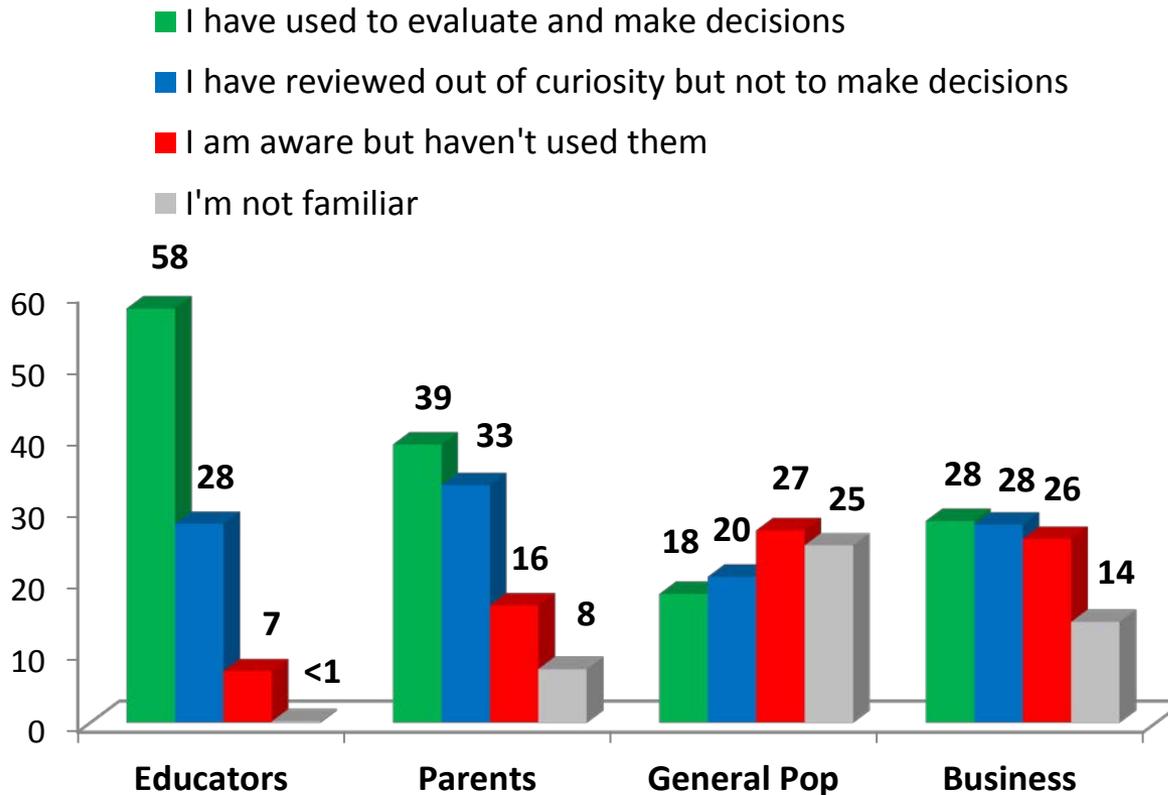


3b. When it comes to public education (K-12), how familiar are you with . . . Annual School and District Report Cards? [Graph entry represents % of respondents indicating they are *very familiar*.]



Experience with School and District Report Cards

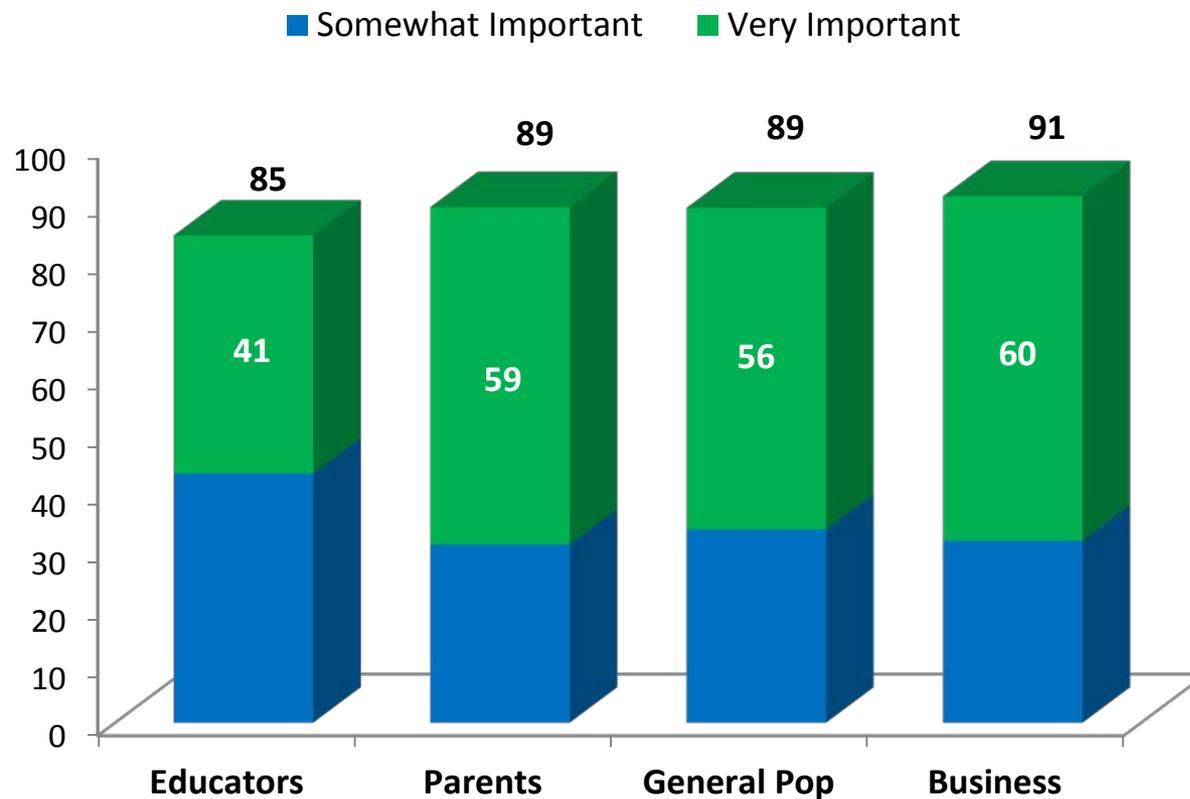
4. For many years, South Carolina has rated schools and districts using a state accountability system. A report card is prepared annually for each elementary, middle, and high school, as well as each district in the state to provide a summary of student performance on key factors and allow for comparisons across the state. What is your specific experience with these school report cards?



Importance of School and District Report Cards



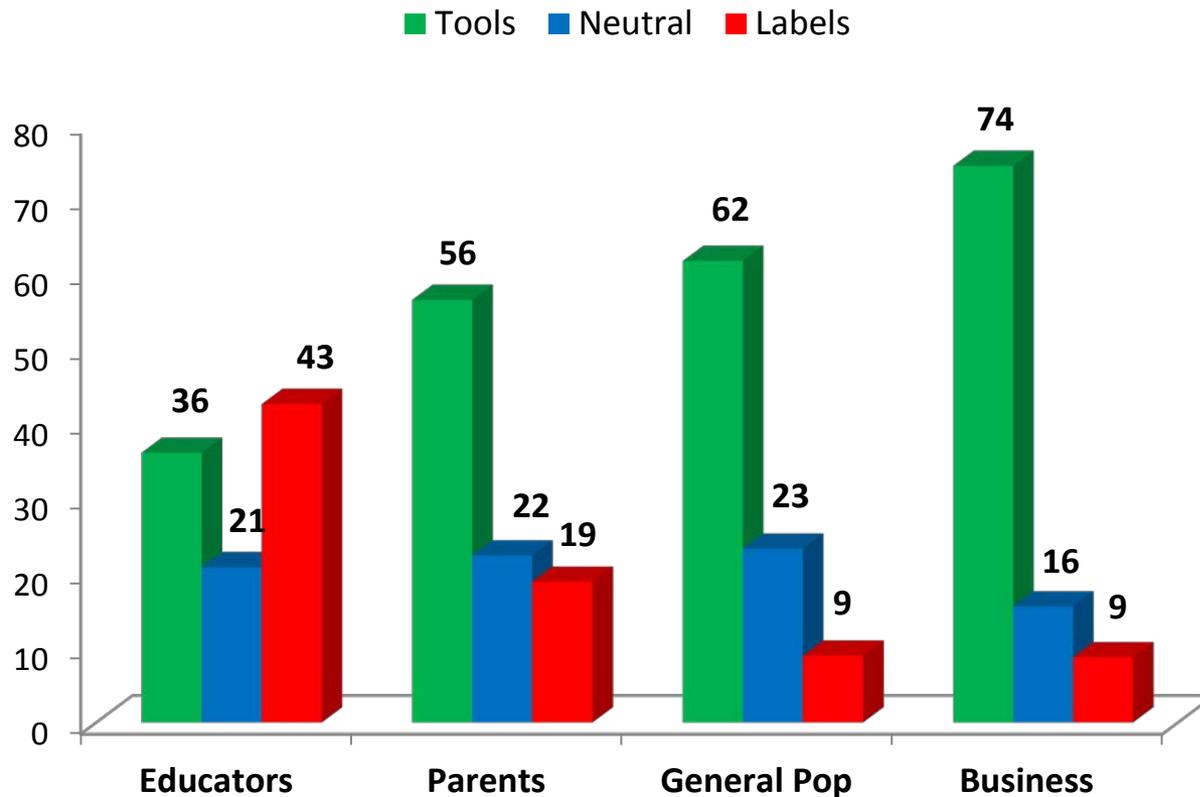
5. How important do you feel it is to be able to compare [your child's school/your school and district/ schools and districts in your community] with other schools in the area and state?



Are The Report Cards More Likely to Be Used as Tools or Labels?

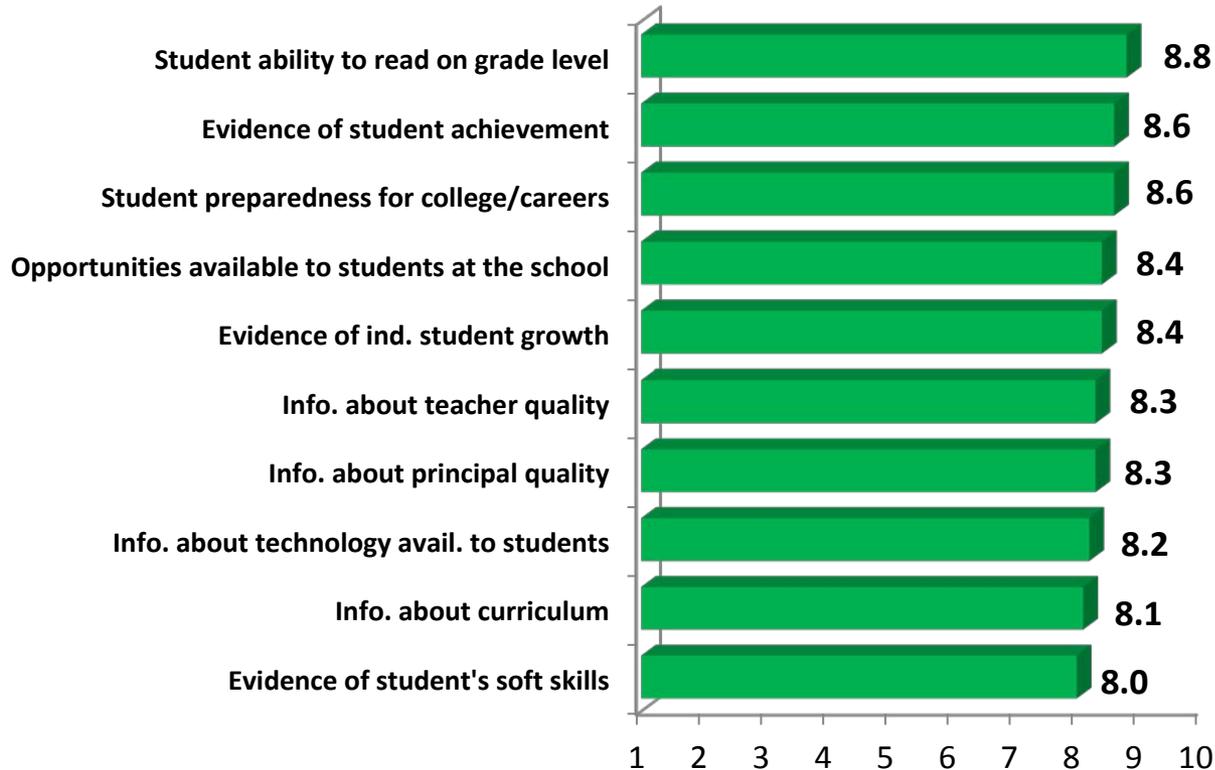


6. Some people say that the school and district report cards are effective tools and contain information to improve education in the state. Other people say that the report cards label schools and create more division. Which is closer to your position?



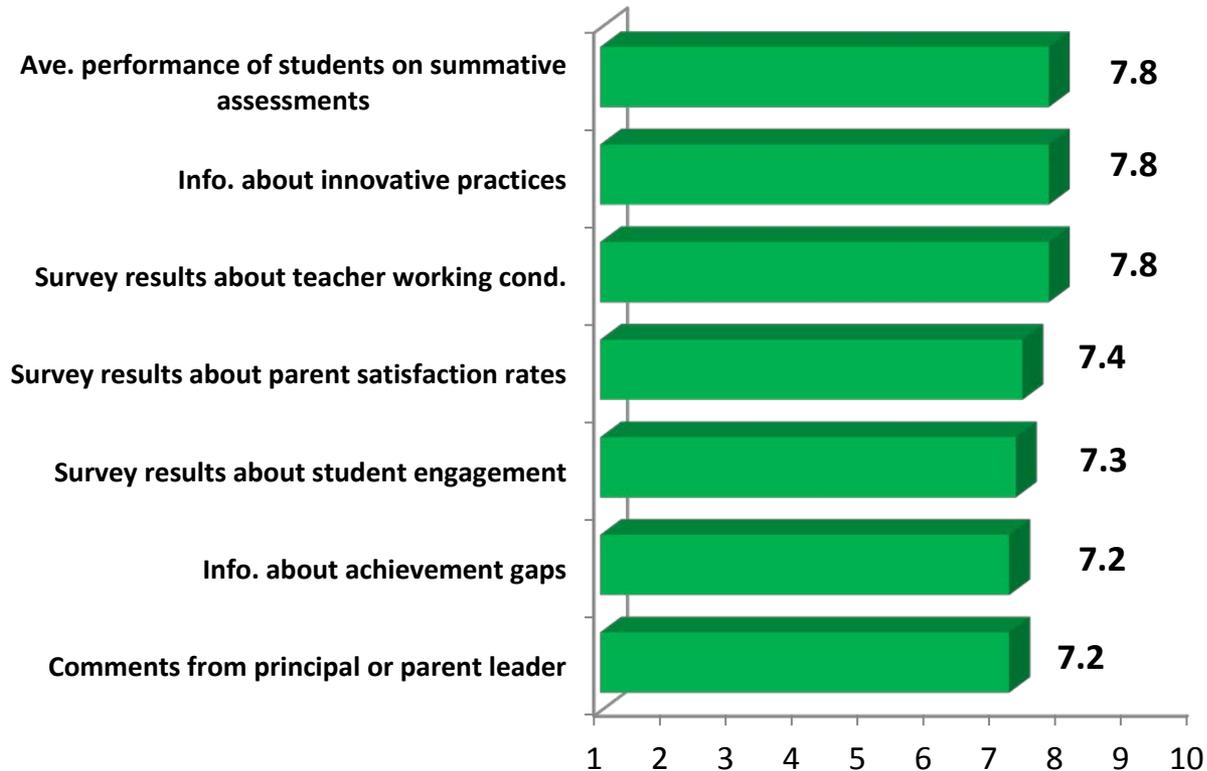
Priorities for Report Cards

7. Using a 10-point scale, where 10 is the highest rating and 1 is the lowest rating, please indicate how important you feel it would be to include each of the following topics and/or pieces of information in school and district report cards in South Carolina. [Mean score for ALL AUDIENCES COMBINED]
1 of 2



Priorities for Report Cards

7. Using a 10-point scale, where 10 is the highest rating and 1 is the lowest rating, please indicate how important you feel it would be to include each of the following topics and/or pieces of information in school and district report cards in South Carolina. [Mean score for ALL AUDIENCES COMBINED]
2 of 2



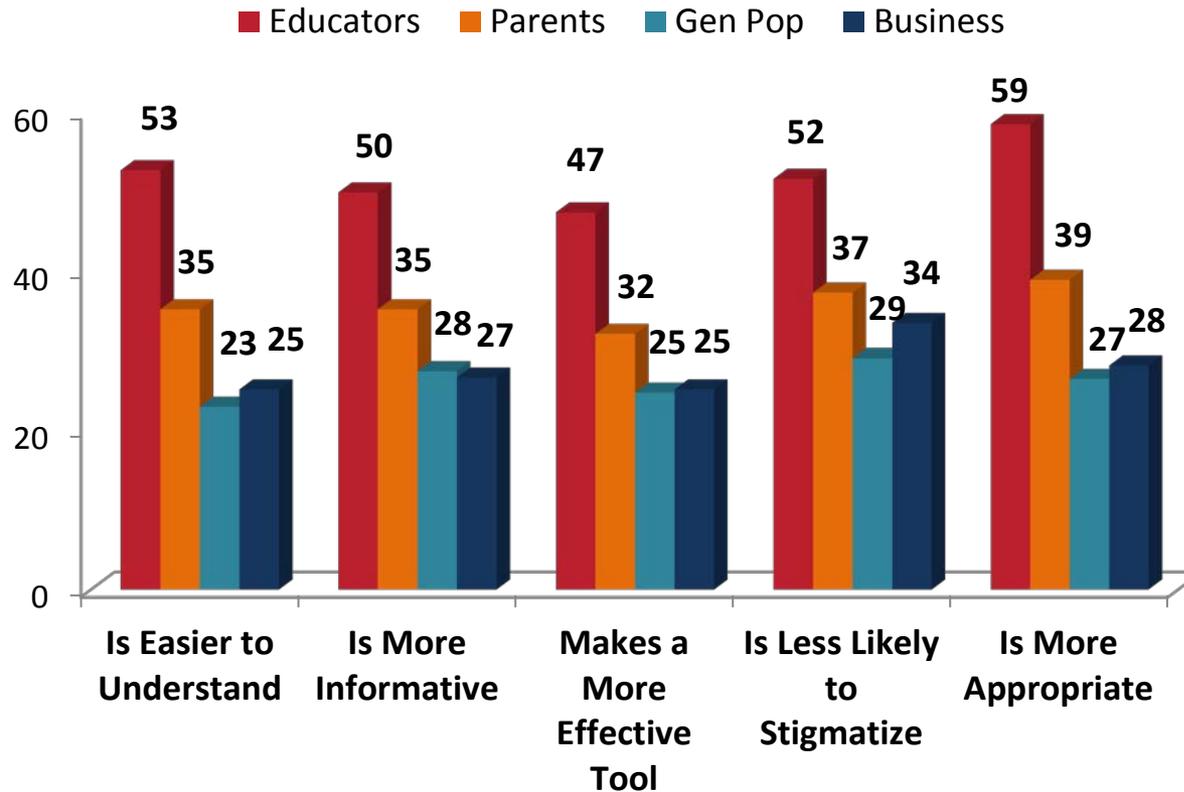
Top Report Card Priorities by Audience



Educators:	Evidence of student achievement (8.5) Evidence of student ability to read on grade level (8.4) Evidence of student preparedness toward college/careers (8.3) Opportunities available to students at the school (8.3)
Parents:	Evidence of student ability to read on grade level (9.1) Opportunities available to students at the school (9.0) Evidence of student achievement (8.9) Evidence of student preparedness toward college/careers (8.9) Information about teacher quality (8.9)
General Pop:	Evidence of student ability to read on grade level (8.9) Evidence of student preparedness toward college/careers (8.6) Information about teacher quality (8.6) Evidence of student achievement (8.5) Evidence of individual student growth (8.5)
Business:	Evidence of student ability to read on grade level (8.8) Evidence of student achievement (8.5) Evidence of student preparedness toward college/careers (8.5) Information on teacher quality (8.3)

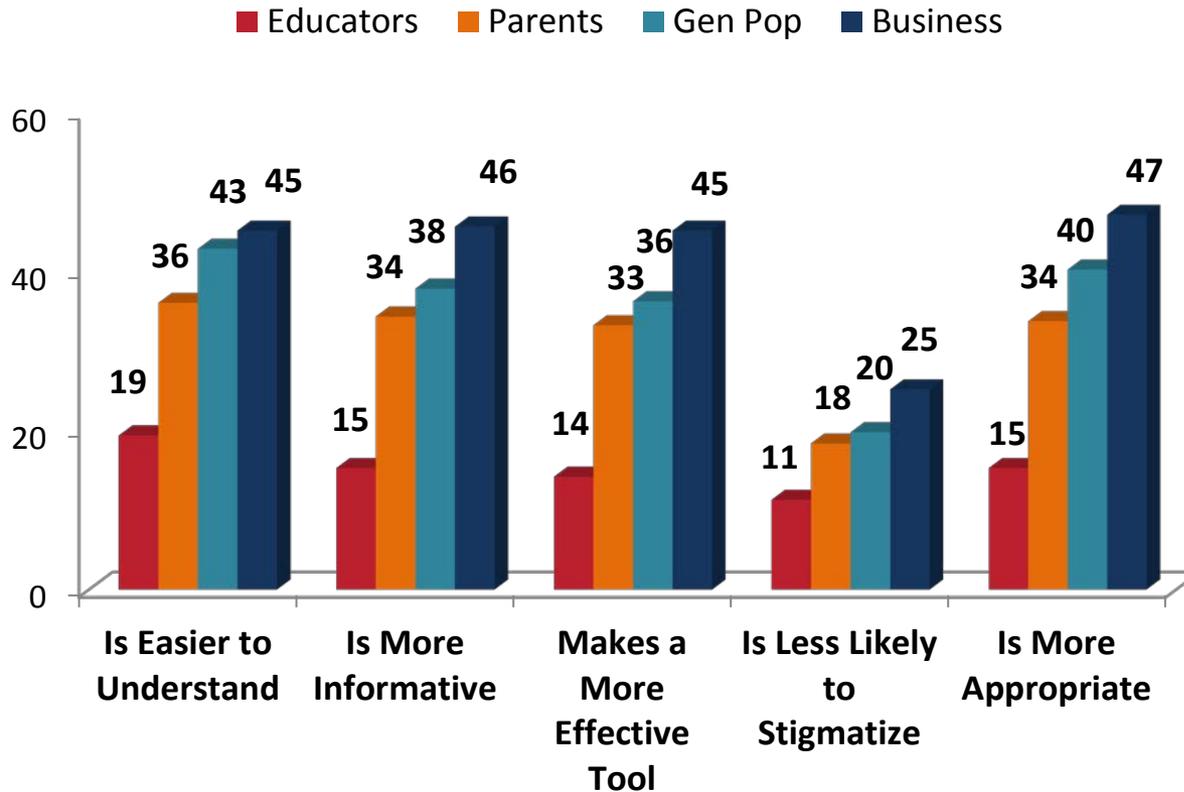
Grading Format Preferences

8. For over a decade, South Carolina has graded schools using the terms: Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and At Risk. Many states utilize an A-F grading scale. In general, which approach _____? [Graph represents % of respondents in each audience choosing the “**Excellent . . . At Risk**” option.]



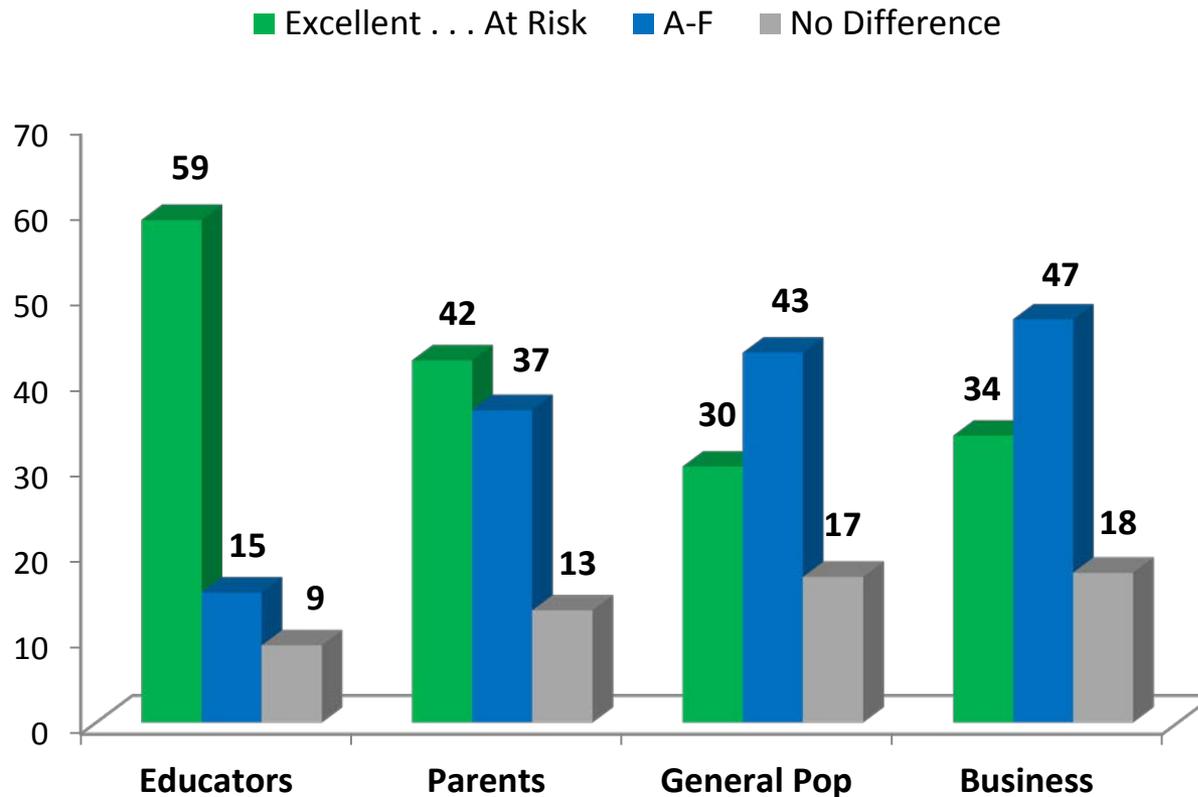
Grading Format Preferences

8. For over a decade, South Carolina has graded schools using the terms: Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and At Risk. Many states utilize an A-F grading scale. In general, which approach _____? [Graph represents % of respondents in each audience choosing the “A-F” option.]



Grading Format Preferences

8. For over a decade, South Carolina has graded schools using the terms: Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and At Risk. Many states utilize an A-F grading scale. In general, which approach would you recommend if asked to choose?



District, School and Student Expectations Based on Descriptions/Ratings

School and District Rating Expectations



9. School and district ratings/grades are primary based on two factors: % of students performing at grade level in English, reading, mathematics, and writing (as evaluated through state testing); and % of students achieving at least one year's academic growth from one school year to the next.
- a. In a school rates at the HIGHEST LEVEL in South Carolina: What percentage of students do you expect to be performing at grade level?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
% Performing at Grade level:				
100%	4.3%	10.2%	15.0%	12.6%
90% - 99%	44.7	54.6	52.2	49.1
75% - 89%	37.8	26.5	24.2	32.0
Less than 75%	2.9	1.9	3.2	2.9
Not sure	1.1	1.9	3.6	2.4
I do not agree with this type of grading	9.1	4.9	1.8	1.0
MEAN (percent that, on average, audiences feel should be performing at grade level, omitting <i>not sure</i> and <i>do not</i>	88.6	91.3	91.3	90.5

School and District Rating Expectations



9. School and district ratings/grades are primary based on two factors: % of students performing at grade level in English, reading, mathematics, and writing (as evaluated through state testing); and % of students achieving at least one year's academic growth from one school year to the next.
- b. In a school rates at the HIGHEST LEVEL in South Carolina: What percentage of students do you expect to demonstrate at least one year's academic growth from one school year to the next?

	Educator s (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
% Demonstrating Academic Growth:				
100%	7.7%	13.1%	14.5%	15.5%
90% - 99%	43.5	53.9	51.1	53.4
75% - 89%	35.3	23.7	24.0	24.7
Less than 75%	4.8	2.5	4.2	2.5
Not sure	1.4	2.4	3.4	2.9
I do not agree with this type of grading	7.4	4.5	2.6	1.0
MEAN (percent that, on average, audiences feel should be demonstrating one				

School and District Rating Expectations



10. Thinking about a 5th grade class in A TYPICAL South Carolina elementary school – what is your expectation of the percentage of students who should be at or above grade level in reading and math at the end of the school year?

	Educator s (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
% At or Above Grade Level in Reading and Math By the End of the Year at TYPICAL school:				
100%	4.8%	16.7%	18.2%	14.6%
90% - 99%	27.7	41.9	37.6	42.2
75% - 89%	53.4	33.9	32.3	35.0
50% to 74%	9.8	4.2	5.1	5.8
Less than 50%	0.8	0.8	1.8	0.5
Not sure	3.7	2.5	5.0	1.9
MEAN (percent that, on average, audiences feel should be at or above grade level in reading and math at the end of the school year, omitting <i>not sure</i>)	84.8	90.3	89.3	89.7

School and District Rating Expectations



11. And thinking about a 5th grade class in A HISTORICALLY UNDER-PERFORMING South Carolina elementary school – what is your expectation of the percentage of students who should be at or above grade level in reading and math at the end of the school year?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
% At or Above Grade Level in Reading and Math By the End of the Year at historically UNDER-PERFORMING school:				
100%	3.0%	11.0%	12.3%	8.7%
90% - 99%	13.0	20.7	19.4	20.9
75% - 89%	35.9	32.1	28.7	33.5
50% to 74%	30.7	24.0	20.6	23.8
Less than 50%	12.5	8.0	13.1	10.7
Not sure	4.8	4.2	5.9	2.4
MEAN (percent that, on average, audiences feel should be at or above grade level in reading and math at the end of the school year, omitting <i>not sure</i>)	71.8	78.1	76.0	76.6

School and District Rating Expectations

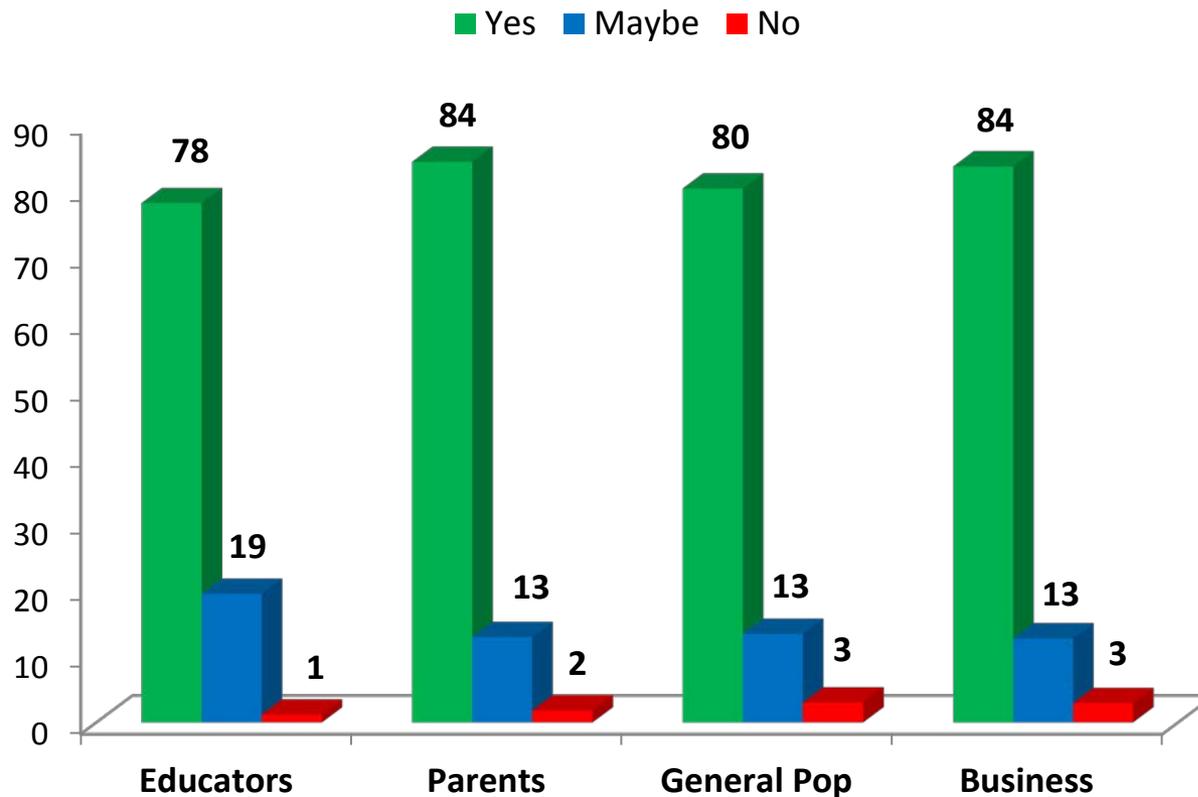


Table entry reflects the average percent of students each audience believes should be performing at or above grade level at the end of the school year. (Based on Qs 9a, 10, 11)

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
At Highest Level Schools (Q9a)	88.6	91.3	91.3	90.5
At a Typical School (Q10)	84.8	90.3	89.3	89.7
At a Historically Under-Performing School (Q11)	71.8	78.1	76.0	76.6

“On Track” Student Performance

12. Thinking about student performance . . . If a student’s performance on an assessment is labeled as being “on track,” is it your expectation that the student is performing on grade level?



“On Track” Student Performance

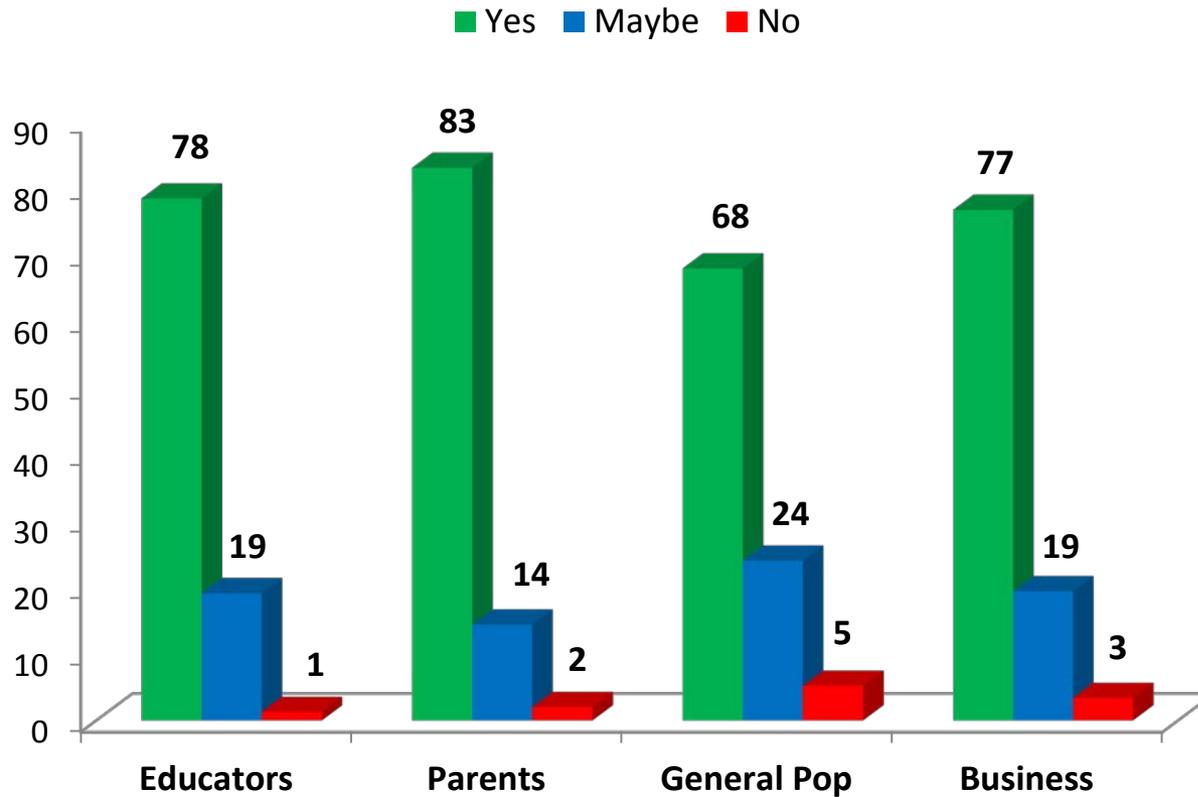


12. Thinking about student performance . . . If a student’s performance on an assessment is labeled as being “on track,” is it your expectation that the student is performing on grade level?

	Educator s (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Definitely	41.6%	56.1%	48.3%	52.9%
Probably	36.4	28.1	31.9	30.6
May or may not	19.3	12.8	13.3	12.6
Probably not	0.9	1.3	2.0	2.4
Definitely not	0.3	0.5	1.0	0.5
Not sure	1.4	1.2	3.6	1.0

College and Career Readiness

13. When a student graduates from a high school in South Carolina, is it your expectation that the student is on track for college and career readiness?



College and Career Readiness



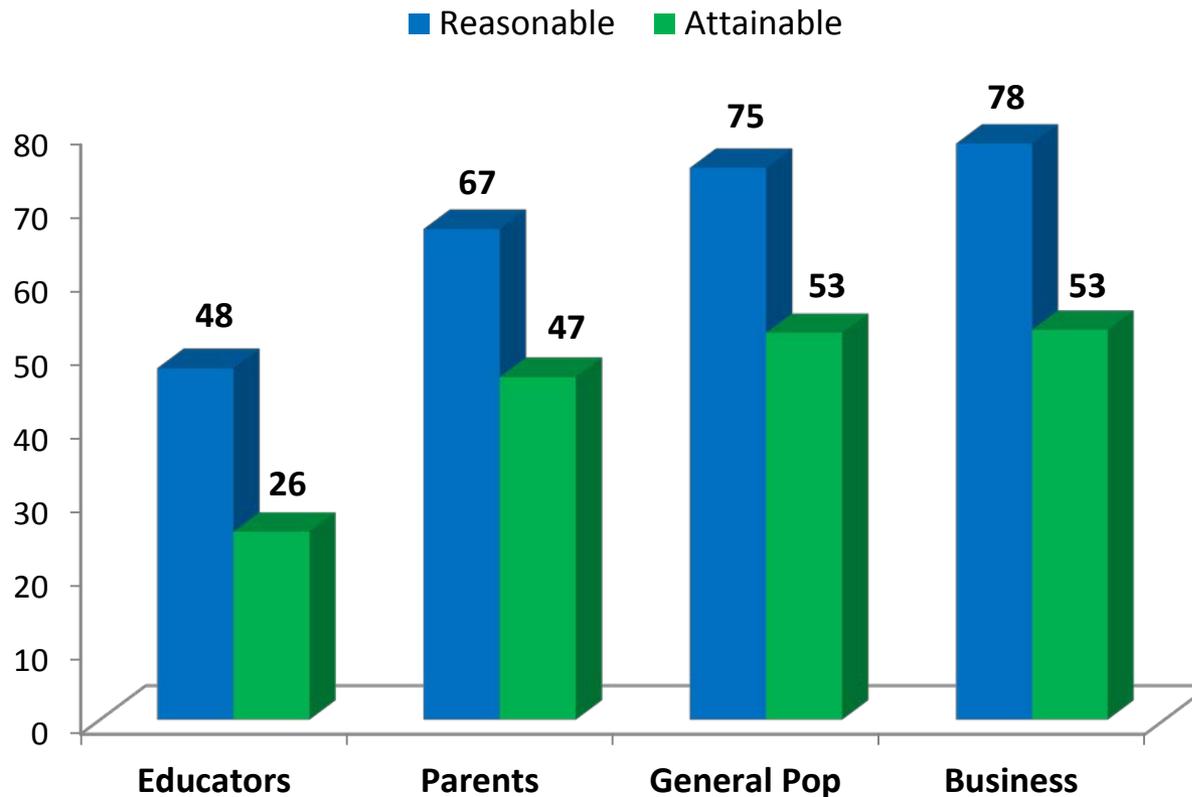
13. When a student graduates from a high school in South Carolina, is it your expectation that the student is on track for college and career readiness?

	Educator s (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Definitely	47.9%	61.4%	39.2%	42.7%
Probably	30.5	21.6	28.7	34.0
May or may not	19.1	14.4	24.0	19.4
Probably not	1.0	1.4	4.0	2.9
Definitely not	0.3	0.6	1.2	0.5
Not sure	1.2	0.6	3.0	0.5

Performance Goals

Kindergarten Readiness Goals

14. South Carolina does not currently have a statewide goal for Kindergarten readiness. How reasonable and attainable do you feel it is to expect that 95% of students entering 5-year-old kindergarten in South Carolina arrive “ready for learning”?



Kindergarten Readiness Goals



14. AMONG THOSE WHO FEEL A 95% “READY FOR LEARNING” GOAL FOR THOSE ENTERING 5-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN IS NOT ATTAINABLE > What level do you feel would be more realistic and achievable? [table entry reflects mean, omitting *don't know* responses]

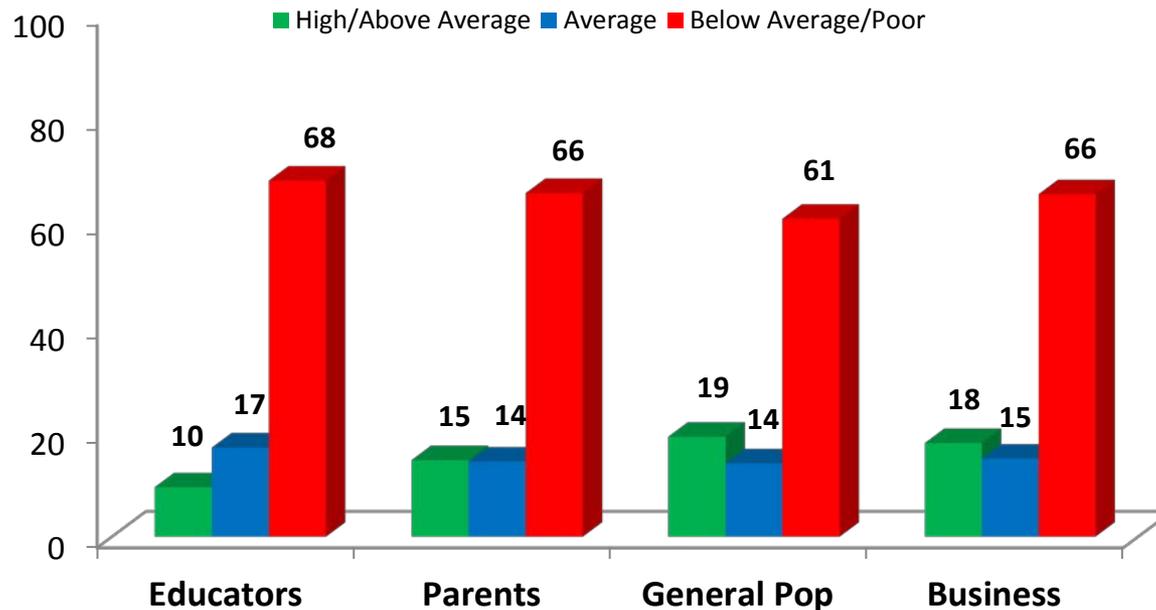
Educators (n=362)	Parents (n=690)	Gen Pop (n=89)	Business (n=37)
64.1	64.5	62.4	64.0

11th Grader College-Ready Benchmark Goals – READING



17. In 2015, 26% (or one out of every four) of 11th graders across the state met college-ready benchmarks on the Reading portion of the ACT College Readiness Assessment and 22% (or one out of every five) met college-ready benchmarks on the Math portion. How would you evaluate these levels of college-readiness for our state's 11th graders?

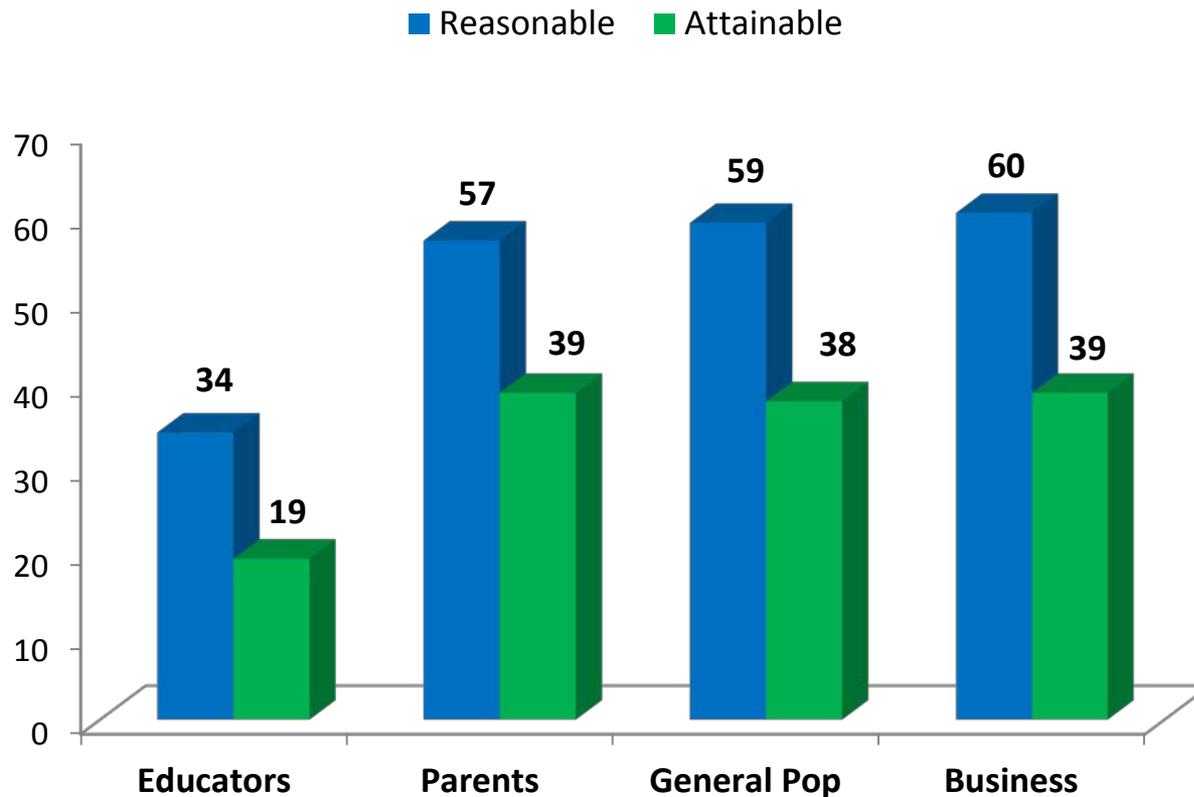
READING



11th Grader College-Ready Benchmark Goals – READING



18. By the year 2025, how reasonable and attainable do you feel it is to expect that 95% of South Carolina's 11th graders meet or exceed college-ready benchmarks on the READING portion of the ACT College Readiness Assessment?



11th Grader College-Ready Benchmark Goals – READING



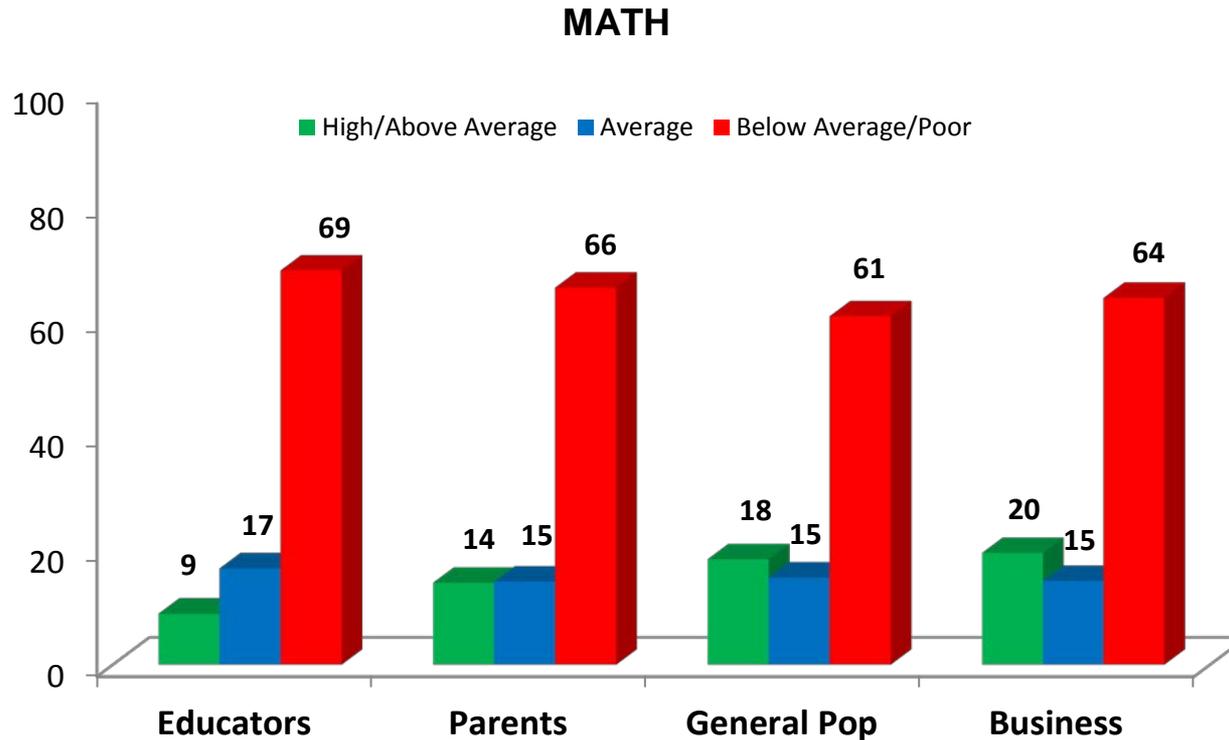
18. AMONG THOSE WHO FEEL IT IS NOT ATTAINABLE THAT, BY 2025, 95% OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WILL MEET OR EXCEED COLLEGE-READY BENCHMARKS FOR READING > What level do you feel would be more realistic and achievable? [table entry reflects mean, omitting *don't know* responses]

Educators (n=448)	Parents (n=991)	Gen Pop (n=160)	Business (n=65)
62.5	61.0	61.6	63.2

11th Grader College-Ready Benchmark Goals – MATH



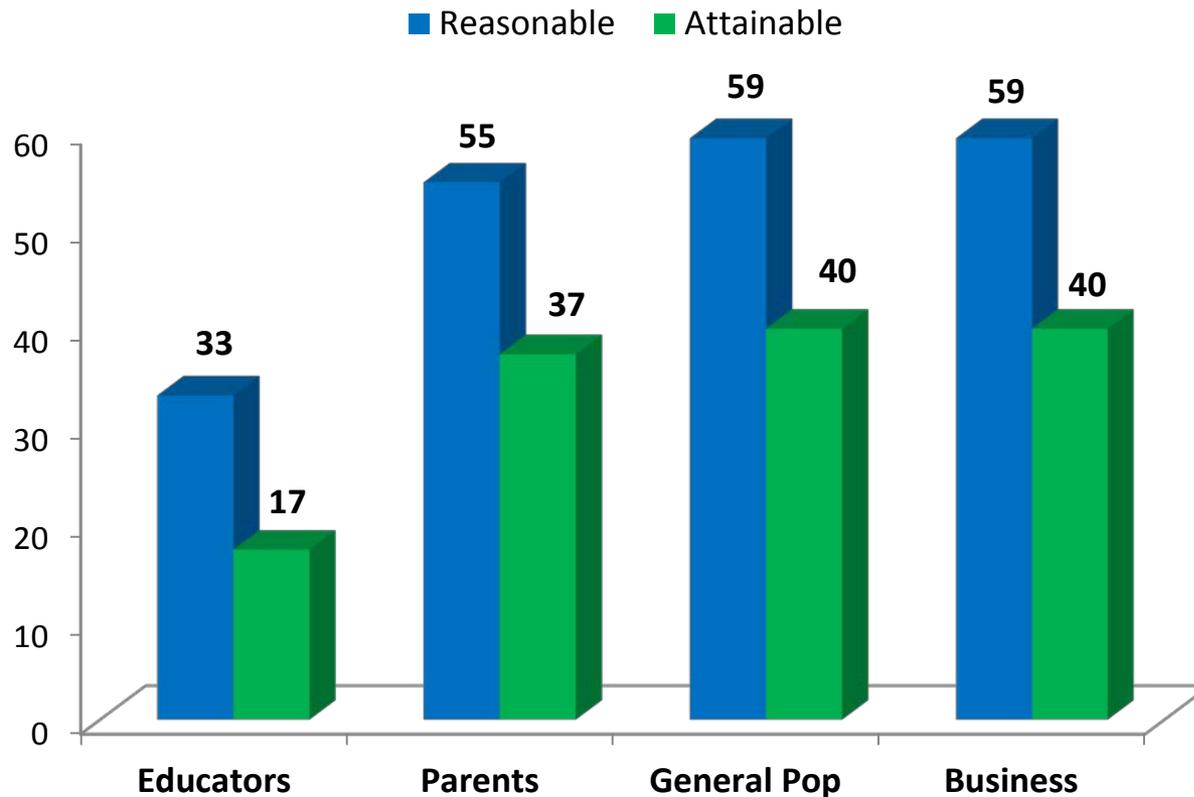
17. In 2015, 26% (or one out of every four) of 11th graders across the state met college-ready benchmarks on the Reading portion of the ACT College Readiness Assessment and 22% (or one out of every five) met college-ready benchmarks on the Math portion. How would you evaluate these levels of college-readiness for our state's 11th graders?



11th Grader College-Ready Benchmark Goals – MATH



19. And, by the year 2025, how reasonable and attainable do you feel it is to expect that 95% of South Carolina's 11th graders meet or exceed college-ready benchmarks on the MATH portion of the ACT College Readiness Assessment?



11th Grader College-Ready Benchmark Goals – MATH



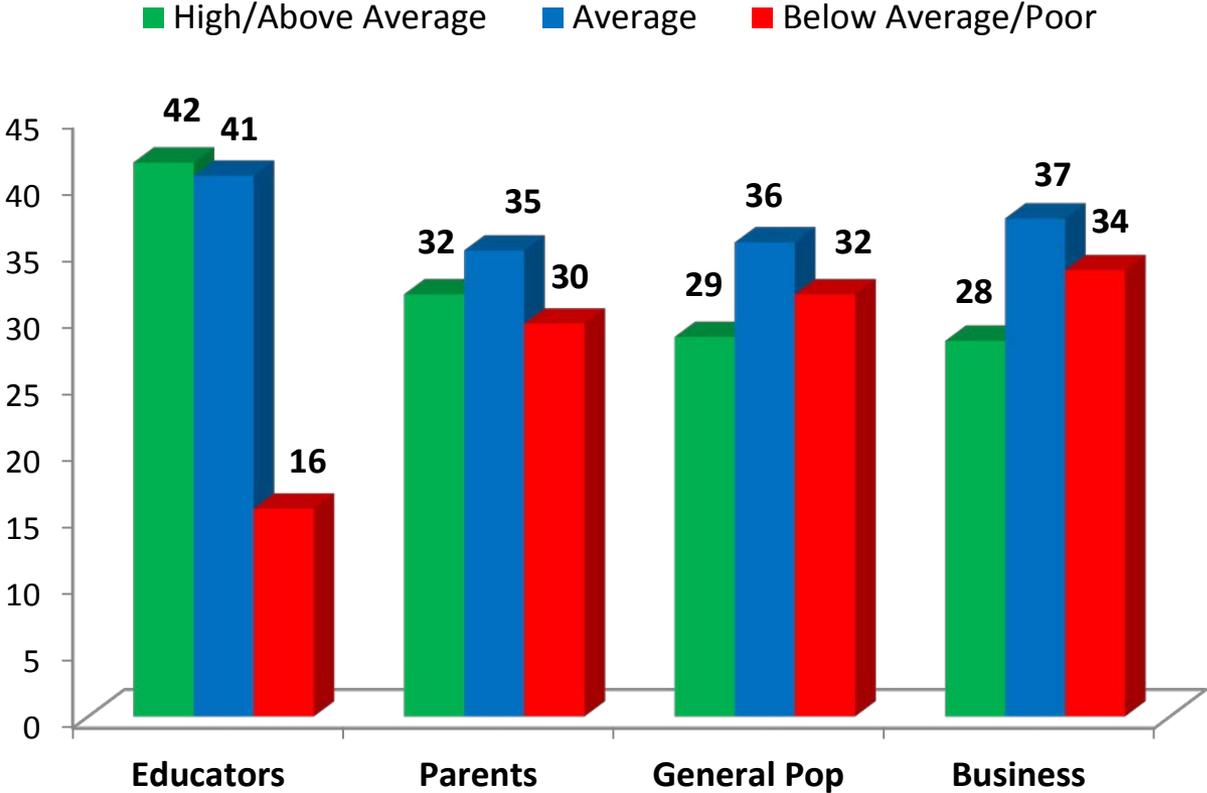
19. AMONG THOSE WHO FEEL IT IS NOT ATTAINABLE THAT, BY 2025, 95% OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WILL MEET OR EXCEED COLLEGE-READY BENCHMARKS FOR MATH > What level do you feel would be more realistic and achievable? [table entry reflects mean, omitting *don't know* responses]

Educators (n=456)	Parents (n=989)	Gen Pop (n=152)	Business (n=67)
62.1	59.6	59.8	59.7

High School Completion Goals



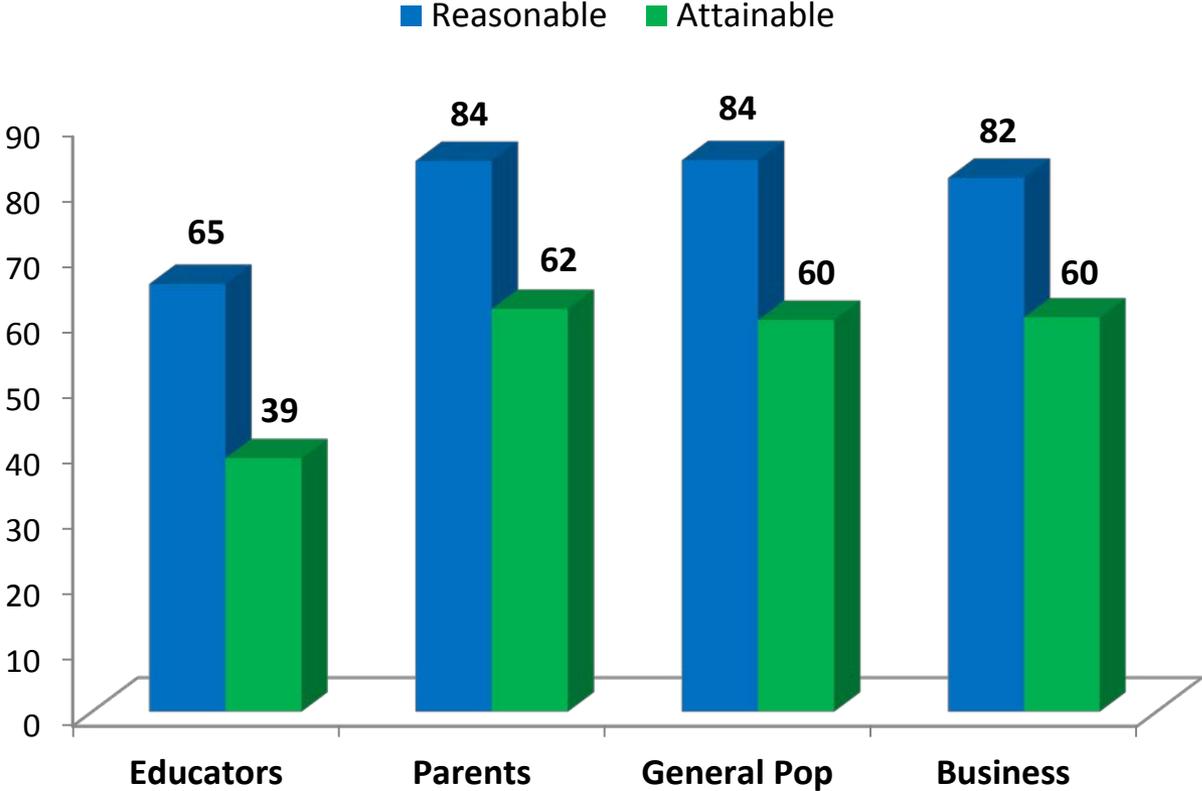
15. Currently, 80% of South Carolina students graduate high school within four years. Do you rate this level as very high, well above average, somewhat above average, about average, somewhat below average, well below average or very poor?



High School Completion Goals



16. South Carolina may implement a statewide goal for high school completion within four years. How reasonable and attainable do you feel it is to expect that, by the year 2025, 95% of high school students graduate within four years?



High School Completion Goals



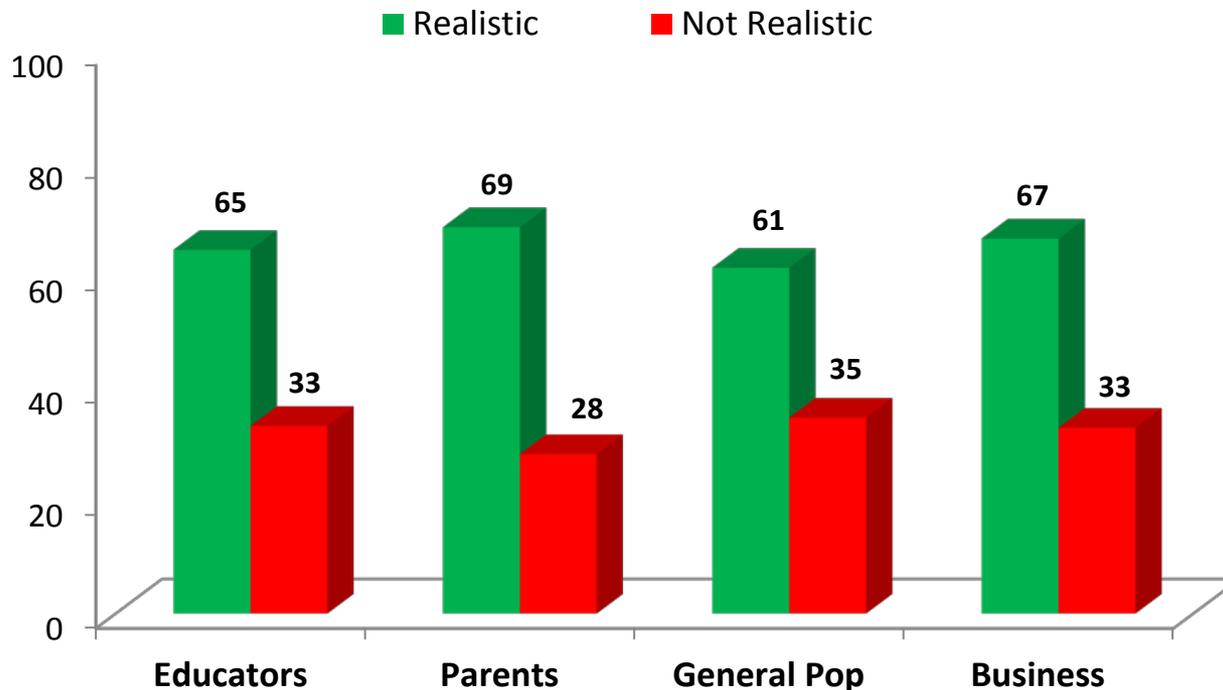
16. AMONG THOSE WHO FEEL IT IS NOT ATTAINABLE THAT, BY 2025, 95% OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WILL GRADUATE WITHIN FOUR YEARS> What level do you feel would be more realistic and achievable? [table entry reflects mean, omitting *don't know* responses]

Educators (n=223)	Parents (n=353)	Gen Pop (n=49)	Business (n=35)
79.3	79.7	78.9	75.9

Goals for Post-Secondary Education/ Degree Program Attainment



20. According to the US Census Bureau's 2011 data on educational attainment, 34% of South Carolina's adults (age 25 and older) hold 2- or 4-year degrees. The national average is 39%. Between 2013 and 2030, it is expected that 553,884 new jobs will be created in South Carolina. Of these jobs, 52% will require higher education. How realistic do you feel it is that by 2025 South Carolina will exceed the national average for adults holding 2- to 4-year degrees?



Summary of Key Findings

Summary of Key Findings



- ✓ Most respondents feel that public schools in the state are *the same to not quite as good* as those in other states, but have much more favorable impressions of schools in their own neighborhoods.
- ✓ All segments believe it is important to be able to compare schools and districts across the state.
- ✓ About three out of four of the public audiences (including *Parents, General Pop, and Business* respondents) are at least *somewhat familiar* with the school and district report cards, and

Nearly three out of four *Parents* represented in the study indicate they have reviewed them.

Summary of Key Findings



- ✓ In general, the public tends to see the report cards as effective tools to improve education. *Educators*, however, are somewhat more likely to view them as labels that are divisive.
- ✓ Priorities for the report cards vary somewhat by audience, but all want to see evidence of achievement and performing at grade level (especially on reading).
- ✓ In terms of the format for grading (by descriptors or letter grade), study findings identify mixed reactions and significant support for both approaches.

Educators and Parents identify a general preference for descriptors (such as *excellent, average, at risk*); *General Pop* and *Business* tend to prefer letter grades (A-F).

Summary of Key Findings

- ✓ There is disparity between *Educators* and other audiences when it comes to performance expectations for districts, schools and students. All audiences, however, have softer expectations for *Historically Under-Performing* schools.
- ✓ When it comes to Goals and Expectations, study findings generally indicate that, for many, expectations tend to be higher than actual performance, but that the goals under consideration seem unrealistic/unattainable.

Educators are somewhat more positive about current school performance but significantly more skeptical regarding attainment of projected goals.

Summary of Key Findings

- ✓ Overall, study findings identify:
 - Reasonable levels of engagement among all audiences;
 - Support for measurement and reporting of performance; and
 - Support for setting goals that may ultimately enhance South Carolina's public education system and the quality of education within the state, but they need to be realistic.

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Thank you!



Grading South Carolina's Schools:

A Look at Awareness, Perceptions, Preferences and Expectations

Spring 2016

Study Specifications



Methodology: Online Surveys

Survey Dates: April 11 – May 4, 2016

Geographic Area: Statewide

**Audiences, Sources
and Sample Sizes:**

General Population (research panel) – N = 505
Educators/Admin./District Personnel (EOC list) – N = 922
Businesses with 50+ Employees (research panel) – N = 206
Parents of Students K-12 (EOC list) – N = 3183

**Sampling Error at the
95% Confidence Level:**

General Population = ± 4.4 percentage points
Educators/Admin./DP = ± 3.2 percentage points
Businesses = ± 6.8 percentage points
Parents = ± 1.7 percentage points

Report Notes



- ✓ Unless otherwise indicated, results are presented in percent and based on the Total Sample for each audience.
- ✓ Question numbers are noted for each graph/table.
- ✓ In tables, bolded entries reflect those that are significantly different from the other audience segments (across the columns) at the 95% confidence level.
- ✓ On questions where respondents choose a rating on a 10-point scale, “means” are included for ease of comparison among the segments. *Don’t know* responses are omitted in calculating these means.

Means are also used for ease of comparison on questions where respondents choose a proportion of students they expect to perform at/achieve a particular level. In these cases, the means are based on ranges and represent a “calculated mean”, based on midpoints of given ranges and omitting *don’t know* responses.

Grading South Carolina's Schools: A Look at Awareness, Perceptions, Preferences and Expectations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary



- ✓ Most respondents feel that public schools in the state are *the same to not quite as good* as those in other states; relatively few feel they are *better*. (Q1) However, they tend to have much more favorable impressions of schools in their own neighborhoods. (Q2)
- ✓ All segments believe it is important to be able to compare schools and districts across the state (Q5) and, on average, about three out of four of the public audiences (including *Parents*, *General Pop*, and *Business* respondents) are at least *somewhat familiar* with the school and district report cards. (Q3b)

Nearly three out of four *Parents* represented in the study (72%) indicate they have reviewed the report cards and nearly two out of five (39%) have used them to evaluate and make decisions. In addition, 28% of *Business* respondents have reviewed the report cards for decision-making purposes. (Q4)

In general, the public (including *Parents*, *General Pop*, and *Business* audiences) tends to see the report cards as effective tools to improve education. *Educators* (including Administration, District Personnel, Elected Officials), however, are somewhat more likely to view them as labels that are divisive. (Q6)

Executive Summary



- ✓ Priorities for the report cards vary somewhat by audience, but all want to see evidence of achievement and performing at grade level (especially on reading). (Q7)
 - *Educators* put the top priority on: evidence of student achievement, their ability to read at grade level, preparedness toward college/careers, and opportunities at the school;
 - *Parent* priorities include: evidence of student ability to read at grade level, opportunities available to students at the school, evidence of student achievement and preparedness, and information about teacher quality;
 - The *General Population* identifies evidence of student ability to read at grade level, preparedness toward college/career, teacher quality, evidence of student achievement, and individual student growth as priorities for the report card; and
 - *Business Leaders* put the top priority on: evidence of student ability to read at grade level, achievement and preparedness, and teacher quality.

Of lesser importance among all segments are information on achievement gaps and comments from the principal or parent leader. (Q7)

Executive Summary



- ✓ In terms of the format for grading (by descriptors or letter grade), study findings identify mixed reactions and significant support for both approaches. *Educators* tend to feel the most strongly about the topic and the two most directly involved audiences (*Educators* and *Parents*) identify a general preference for descriptors (such as *Excellent*, *Average*, *At Risk*) over letter grades (A-F). (Q8)

- ✓ There is disparity between *Educator* and other audiences when it comes to performance expectations for districts, schools and students.

On average, about nine out of ten respondents (excluding *Educators*) expect students to be performing at grade level and demonstrating academic growth. This is the case whether the school is a *Typical* school or rated at the *Highest* level. All audiences, however, have softer expectations for *Historically Under-Performing* schools. (Qs 9, 10, 11)

- ✓ When it comes to Goals and Expectations, study findings generally indicate that, for many, expectations tend to be higher than actual performance, but that the goals under consideration seem unrealistic/unattainable.
 - *Kindergarten Readiness* – The public (including *Parents*, *General Pop*, and *Business* audiences) feels a “ready for learning” goal of 95% is reasonable, but not necessarily attainable. *Educators* are significantly more skeptical. (Q14)

Executive Summary



- *11th Grade Benchmarks* – About two out of three believe current student performance (measured by the ACT College Readiness Assessment) is *below average* or *poor*. (Q17) About half (excluding *Educators*) feel a goal of 95% readiness is reasonable, but less than two out of five feel it's attainable. Levels are about half that among *Educators*. (Q18)
 - *Graduation within 4 Years* – At 80%, the proportion of high school students graduating within four years is viewed as *average* to *above average* by study respondents. (Q15) A goal of 95% seems reasonable for about four out of five (excluding *Educators*) and attainable to about 60%. Perceptions are significantly lower, however, among *Educators*. (Q16)
 - *Post-Secondary Degrees* – Approximately two out of three feel it is *realistic* to expect South Carolina to exceed the national average for adults having a 2- or 4-year degree by the year 2025. (Q20)
- ✓ Overall, study findings identify reasonable levels of engagement among all audiences; support for measurement and reporting of performance; and for setting goals that may ultimately enhance South Carolina's public education system and the quality of education within the state, but they need to be realistic.

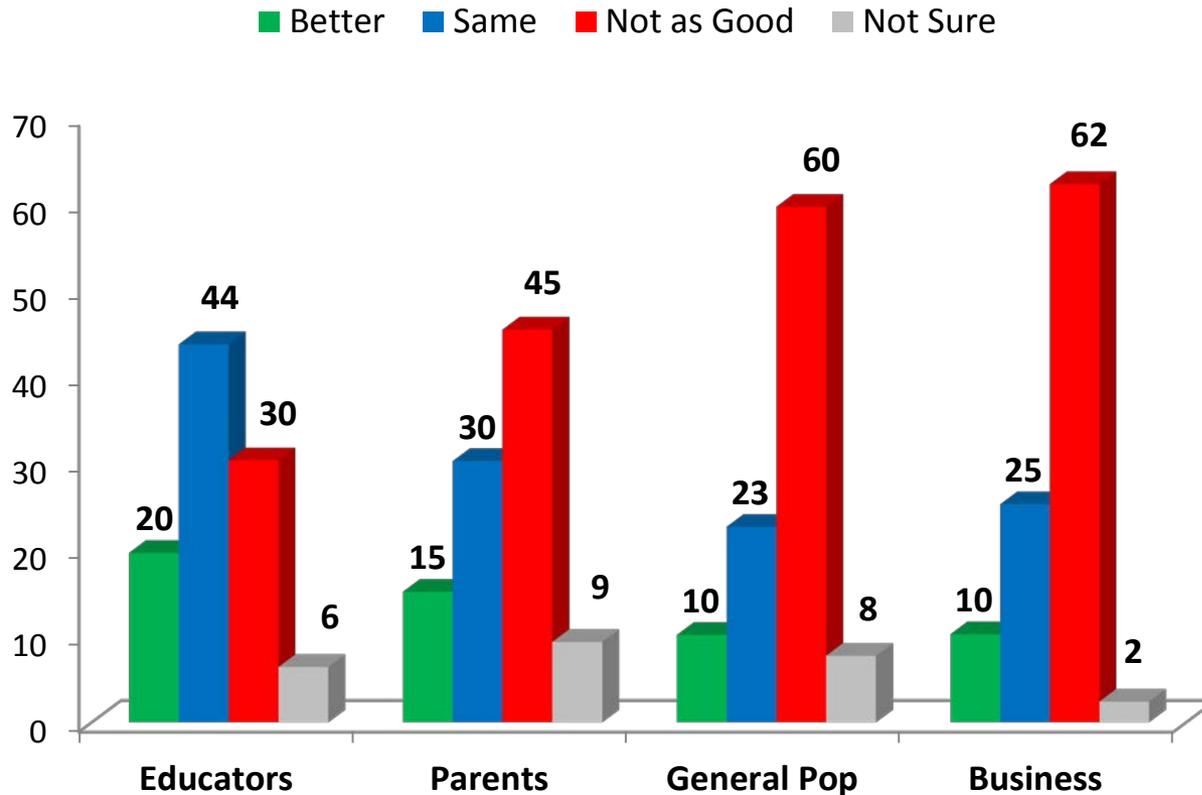
DETAILED STUDY FINDINGS:

**General Perceptions of Education
and Familiarity with Terms**

Perceptions of How South Carolina's Schools Compare Nationally



1. In general, how do you feel South Carolina's public schools (K through 12) compare to those across the nation?



Perceptions of How South Carolina's Schools Compare Nationally



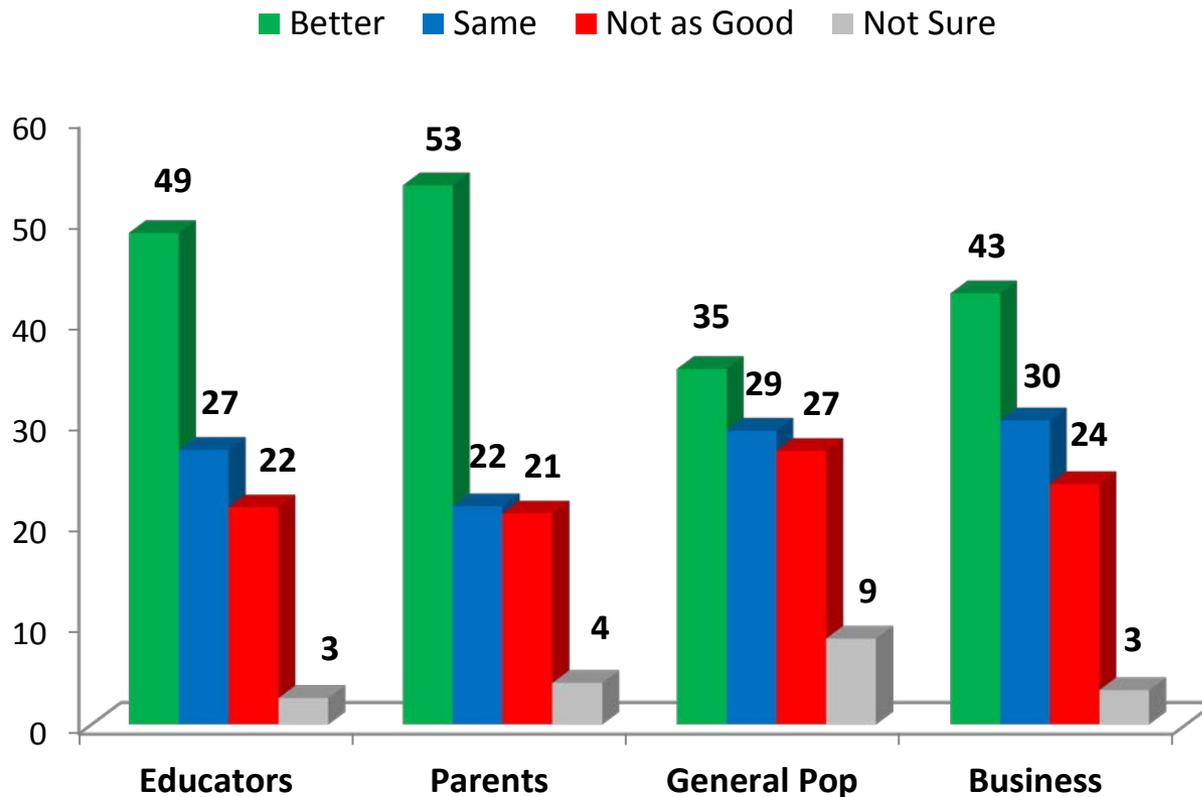
1. In general, how do you feel South Carolina's public schools (K through 12) compare to those across the nation?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
South Carolina's public schools are:				
Much better	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Somewhat better	19.6	15.1	10.1	10.2
About the same	43.7	30.2	22.6	25.2
Not quite as good	21.3	29.1	31.7	37.9
Not nearly as good	9.0	16.3	27.9	24.3
Not sure	6.4	9.3	7.7	2.4

Perceptions of How Local Schools Compare to Others in the State



2. Thinking specifically about the schools that children in your neighborhood attend, how do you feel they compare to other schools across the state?



Perceptions of How Local Schools Compare to Others in the State

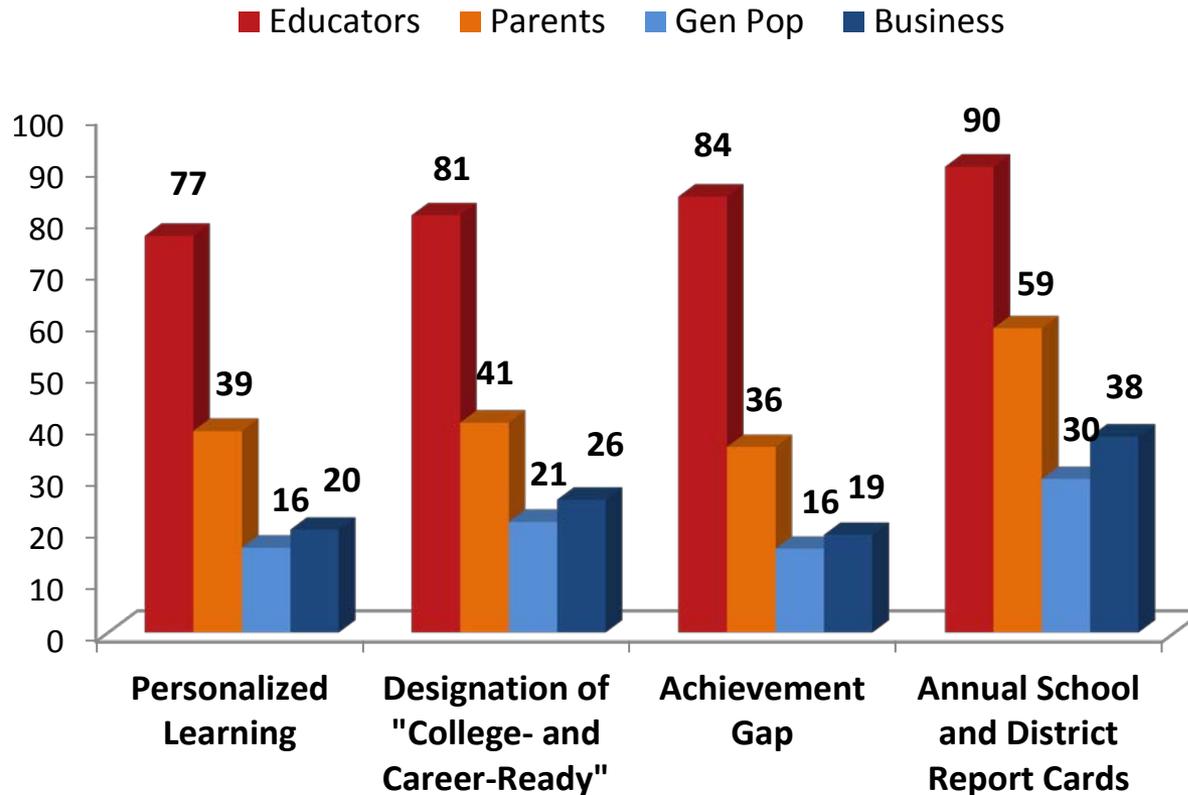


2. Thinking specifically about the schools that children in your neighborhood attend, how do you feel they compare to other schools across the state?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Schools that children in my neighborhood attend are:				
Much better	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Somewhat better	48.7	53.4	35.2	42.7
About the same	27.2	21.6	29.1	30.1
Not quite as good	14.9	14.3	15.4	12.6
Not nearly as good	6.6	6.6	11.7	11.2
Not sure	2.6	4.1	8.5	3.4

Familiarity with Terms and Issues

3. When it comes to public education (K-12), how familiar are you with each of the following terms and/or issues? [Graph entry represents % of respondents indicating they are *very familiar*.]



Familiarity with Terms and Issues



3. When it comes to public education (K-12), how familiar are you with each of the following terms and/or issues?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Annual School and District Report Cards				
Very familiar	90.2%	58.9%	29.7%	37.9%
Somewhat familiar	8.9	33.1	38.6	37.9
Not too familiar	0.9	5.2	15.2	15.5
Not familiar at all	0.0	2.0	9.9	5.3
Not sure	0.0	0.7	6.5	3.4
Achievement Gap				
Very familiar	84.4%	35.9%	16.2%	18.9%
Somewhat familiar	13.2	34.5	34.7	42.2
Not too familiar	1.8	17.3	23.0	21.4
Not familiar at all	0.4	9.5	18.0	12.1
Not sure	0.1	2.8	8.1	5.3

Familiarity with Terms and Issues



3. When it comes to public education (K-12), how familiar are you with each of the following terms and/or issues?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
A Designation of “College- and Career-Ready” for Students				
Very familiar	80.8%	40.6%	21.4%	25.7%
Somewhat familiar	16.2	32.6	32.7	41.7
Not too familiar	2.1	16.5	24.0	19.9
Not familiar at all	0.8	9.0	14.3	8.7
Not sure	0.2	1.4	7.7	3.9
Personalized Learning				
Very familiar	76.8%	39.0%	16.4%	19.9%
Somewhat familiar	19.7	33.0	35.2	37.9
Not too familiar	2.7	19.2	25.7	30.1
Not familiar at all	0.5	7.5	15.0	8.7
Not sure	0.2	1.4	7.5	3.4

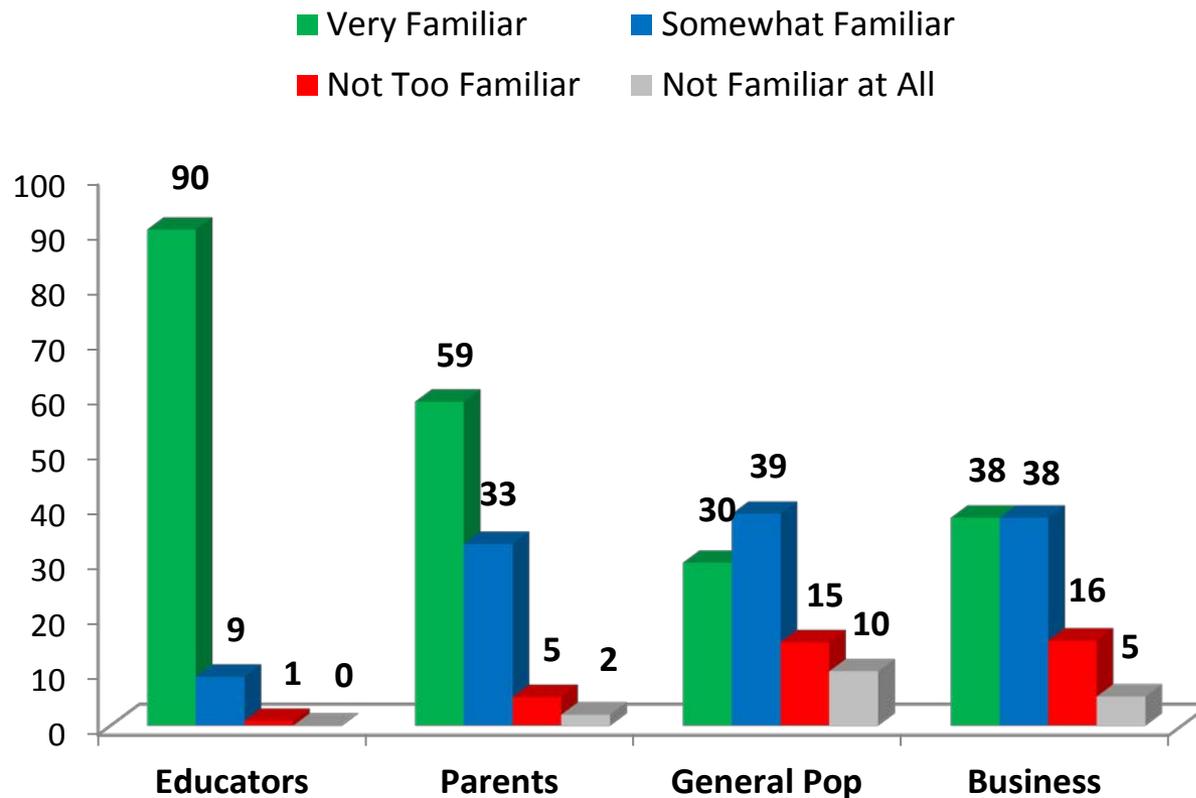
DETAILED STUDY FINDINGS:

School and District Report Cards Familiarity, Experience, Expectations and Preferences

Familiarity with School and District Report Cards



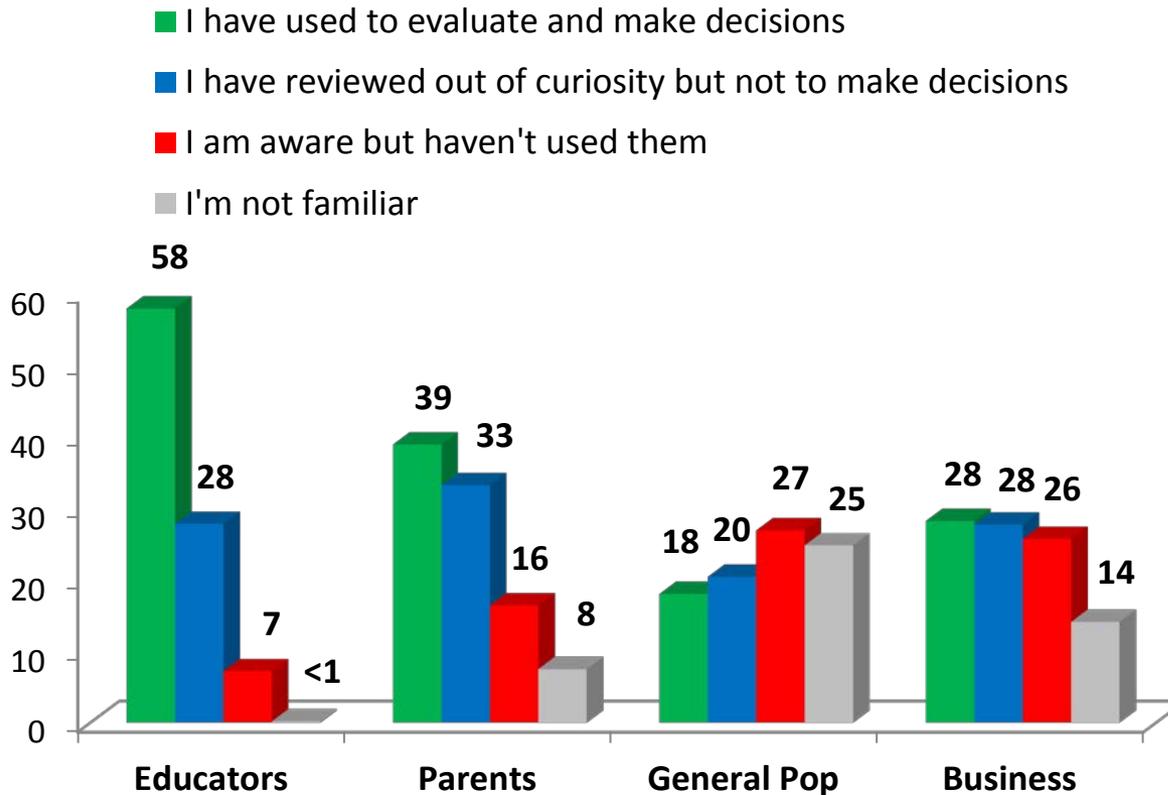
3. When it comes to public education (K-12), how familiar are you with . . . Annual School and District Report Cards? [Graph entry represents % of respondents indicating they are *very familiar*.]



Experience with School and District Report Cards



4. For many years, South Carolina has rated schools and districts using a state accountability system. A report card is prepared annually for each elementary, middle, and high school, as well as each district in the state to provide a summary of student performance on key factors and allow for comparisons across the state. What is your specific experience with these school report cards?



Experience with School and District Report Cards



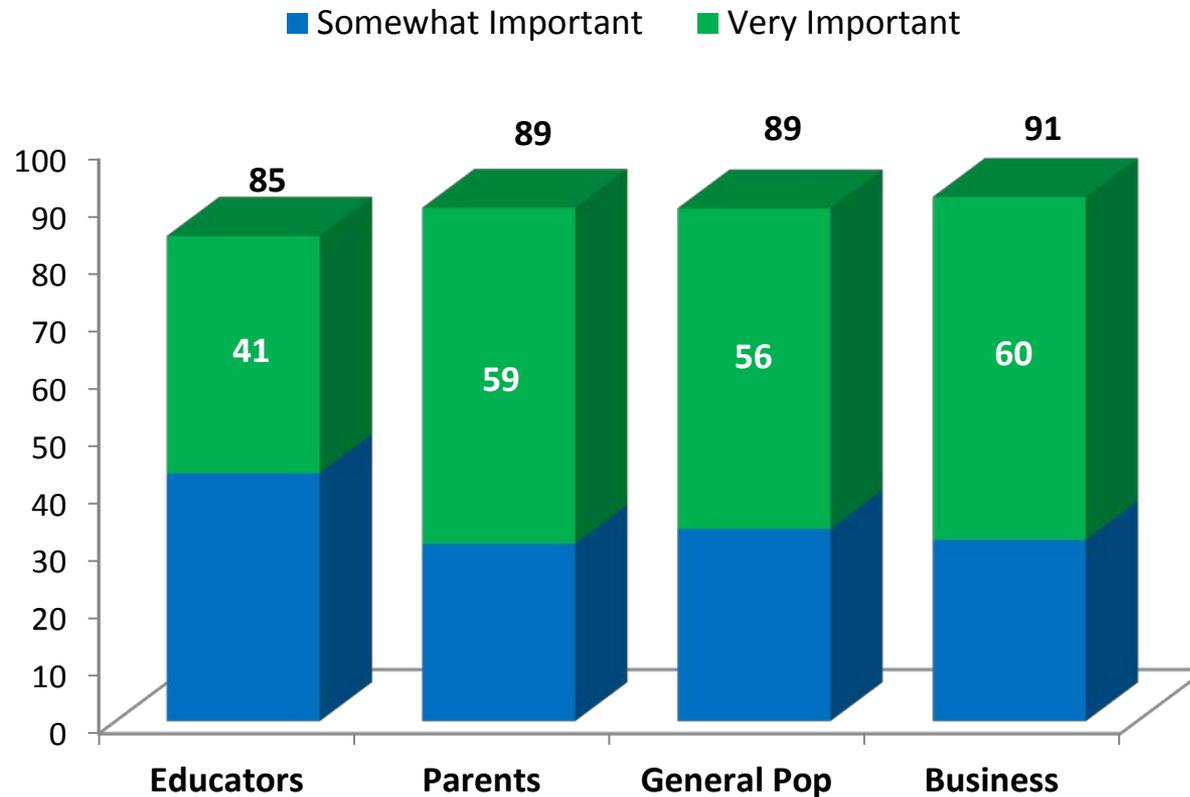
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	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
I have used the report cards to evaluate and make decisions or recommendations for my family, my schools, or others	57.9%	38.9%	18.0%	28.2%
I have reviewed the report cards but just out of curiosity, not to make assessments or decisions	27.8	33.2	20.4	27.7
I am aware of the report cards, but never used them/referred to them	7.2	16.4	26.9	25.7
I was not familiar, but am interested now and will seek them out	0.2	6.7	10.1	8.3
I was not familiar and have no interest	0.0	0.8	14.7	5.8
Something else	6.5	2.7	2.8	0.0
Not sure	0.4	1.3	7.1	4.4

Importance of School and District Report Cards



5. How important do you feel it is to be able to compare [your child's school/your school and district/ schools and districts in your community] with other schools in the area and state?



Importance of School and District Report Cards



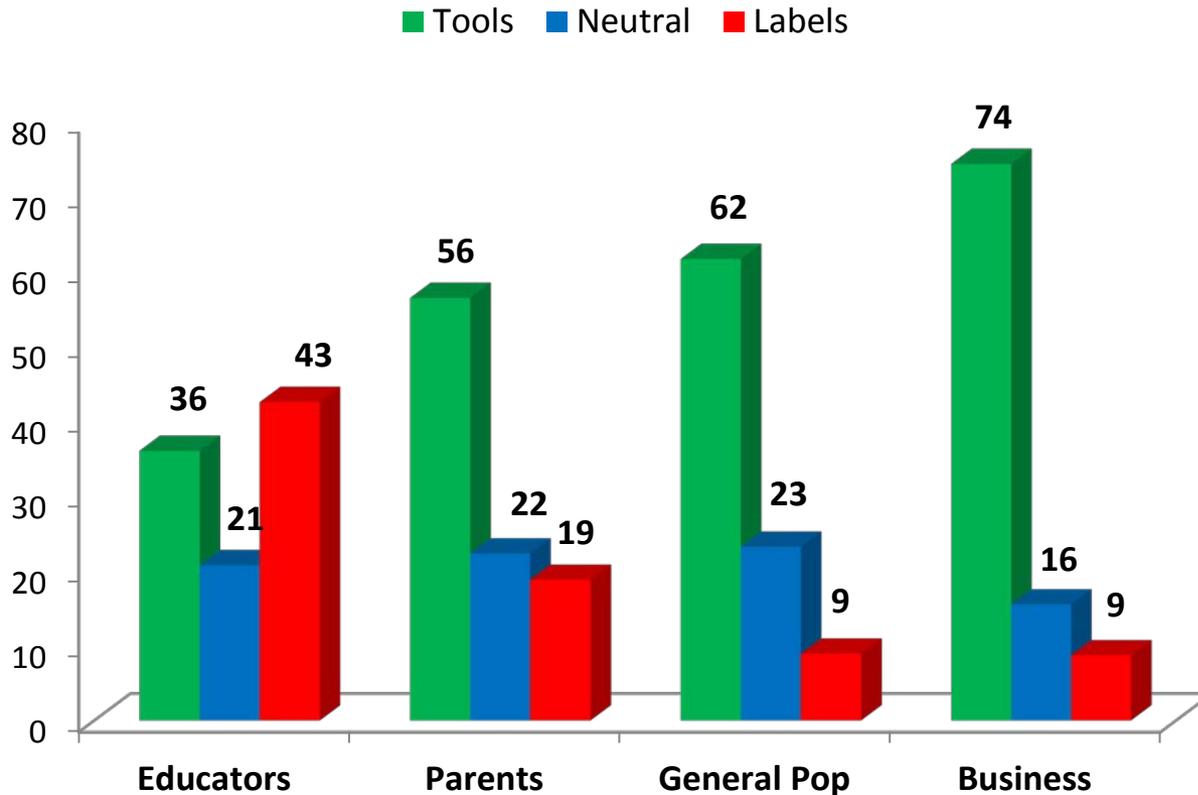
5. How important do you feel it is to be able to compare [your child’s school/your school and district/ schools and districts in your community] with other schools in the area and state?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Very important	41.3%	58.5%	55.8%	59.7%
Somewhat important	43.2	30.9	33.5	31.6
Not too important	11.4	6.1	3.8	6.8
Not important at all	3.7	2.1	3.4	1.5
Not sure/no answer	0.4	2.4	3.6	0.5

Are The Report Cards More Likely to Be Used as Tools or Labels?



6. Some people say that the school and district report cards are effective tools and contain information to improve education in the state. Other people say that the report cards label schools and create more division. Which is closer to your position?



Are The Report Cards More Likely to Be Used as Tools or Labels?

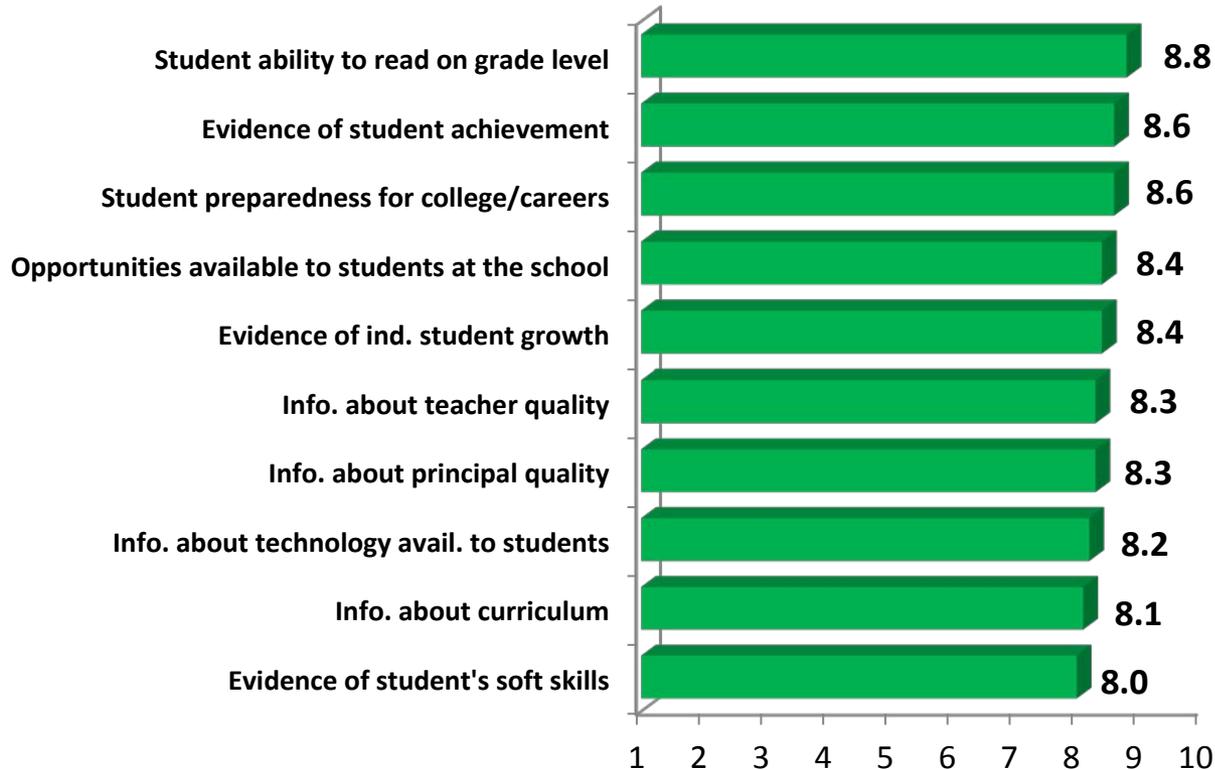


6. Some people say that the school and district report cards are effective tools and contain information to improve education in the state. Other people say that the report cards label schools and create more division. Which is closer to your position?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Strongly agree that school and district report cards are effective tools to improve education	10.4%	21.9%	26.7%	31.1%
Generally agree that school and district report cards are effective tools to improve education	25.6	34.5	34.9	43.2
Neutral	20.7	22.3	23.2	15.5
Generally agree that school and district report cards label schools and are divisive	27.3	13.4	7.1	6.3
Strongly agree that school and district report cards label schools and are divisive	15.2	5.4	1.8	2.4
Not sure	0.8	2.5	6.3	1.5

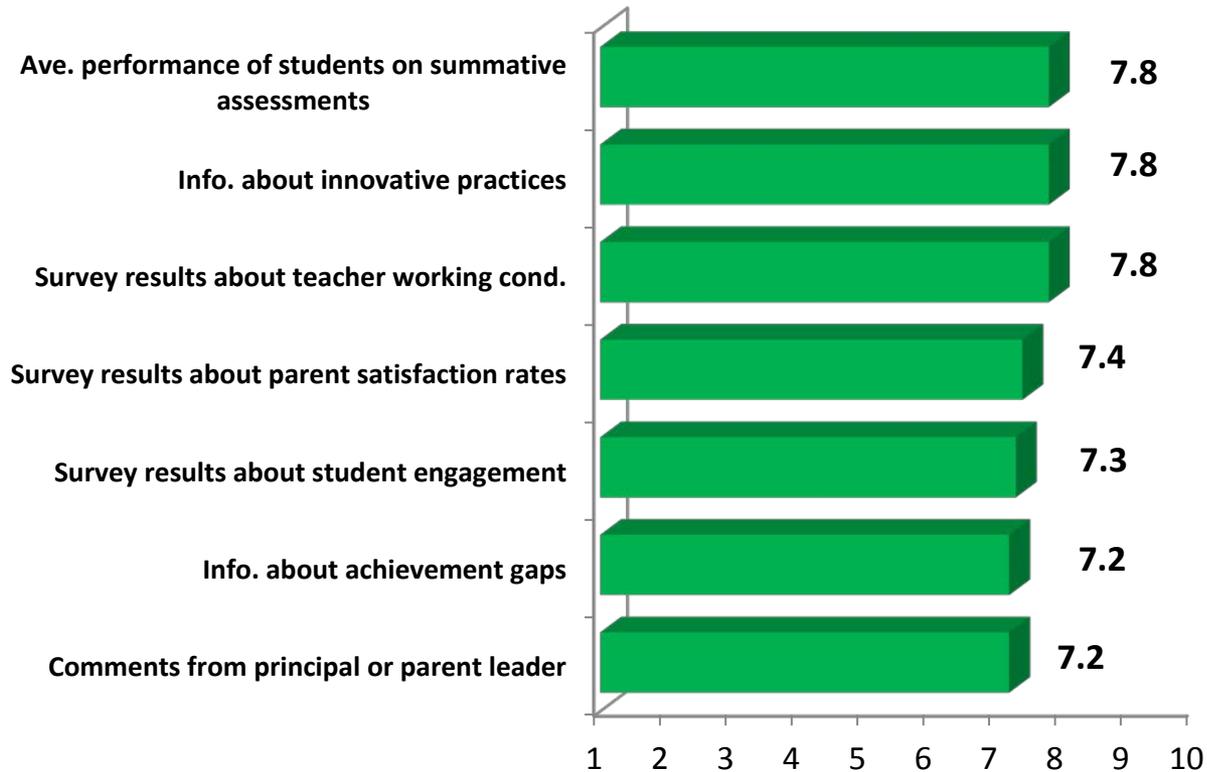
Priorities for Report Cards

7. Using a 10-point scale, where 10 is the highest rating and 1 is the lowest rating, please indicate how important you feel it would be to include each of the following topics and/or pieces of information in school and district report cards in South Carolina. [Mean score for ALL AUDIENCES COMBINED]
1 of 2



Priorities for Report Cards

7. Using a 10-point scale, where 10 is the highest rating and 1 is the lowest rating, please indicate how important you feel it would be to include each of the following topics and/or pieces of information in school and district report cards in South Carolina. [Mean score for ALL AUDIENCES COMBINED]
2 of 2



Importance of Specific Information for Inclusion in School Report Cards



7. Using a 10-point scale, where 10 is the highest rating and 1 is the lowest rating, please indicate how important you feel it would be to include each of the following topics and/or pieces of information in school and district report cards in South Carolina. [Table entry reflects a mean score on the 10-point scale, *don't know* responses are omitted in the calculation.]

1 of 3	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Evidence of students' ability to read on grade level	8.4	9.1	8.9	8.8
Evidence of student achievement	8.5	8.9	8.5	8.5
Evidence of student preparedness toward college and careers	8.3	8.9	8.6	8.5
Information about opportunities available to students at the school	8.3	9.0	8.2	8.2
Evidence of individual student growth	8.1	8.7	8.5	8.2
Information about teacher quality	7.9	8.9	8.6	8.3
Information about principal quality	8.0	8.8	8.3	8.1
Information about technology available to students	7.9	8.5	8.2	8.1

Importance of Specific Information for Inclusion in School Report Cards



7. *Continued* . . . Using a 10-point scale, where 10 is the highest rating and 1 is the lowest rating, please indicate how important you feel it would be to include each of the following topics and/or pieces of information in school and district report cards in South Carolina. [Table entry reflects a mean score on the 10-point scale, *don't know* responses are omitted in the calculation.]

2 of 3	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Information about curriculum	7.6	8.7	8.1	8.1
Evidence of students' soft skills (communication, collaboration, etc.) attainment	7.5	8.3	8.2	8.0
Average performance of students on summative assessments	7.6	8.2	8.0	8.1
Information about innovative practices such as personalized, project-based and competency-based learning	7.3	8.2	8.0	7.7
Survey results about teacher working conditions	7.4	8.3	7.9	7.5
Survey results about parent satisfaction rates	6.8	7.9	7.5	7.3

Importance of Specific Information for Inclusion in School Report Cards



7. *Continued* . . .Using a 10-point scale, where 10 is the highest rating and 1 is the lowest rating, please indicate how important you feel it would be to include each of the following topics and/or pieces of information in school and district report cards in South Carolina. [Table entry reflects a mean score on the 10-point scale, *don't know* responses are omitted in the calculation.]

3 of 3	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Survey results about engagement from students in the school	6.8	7.7	7.5	7.3
Information about achievement gaps (student performance broken out by demographic factors such as ethnicity and lunch status)	7.3	7.0	7.2	7.2
Narrative (comments) from the principal or parent leader	6.6	7.5	7.3	7.2

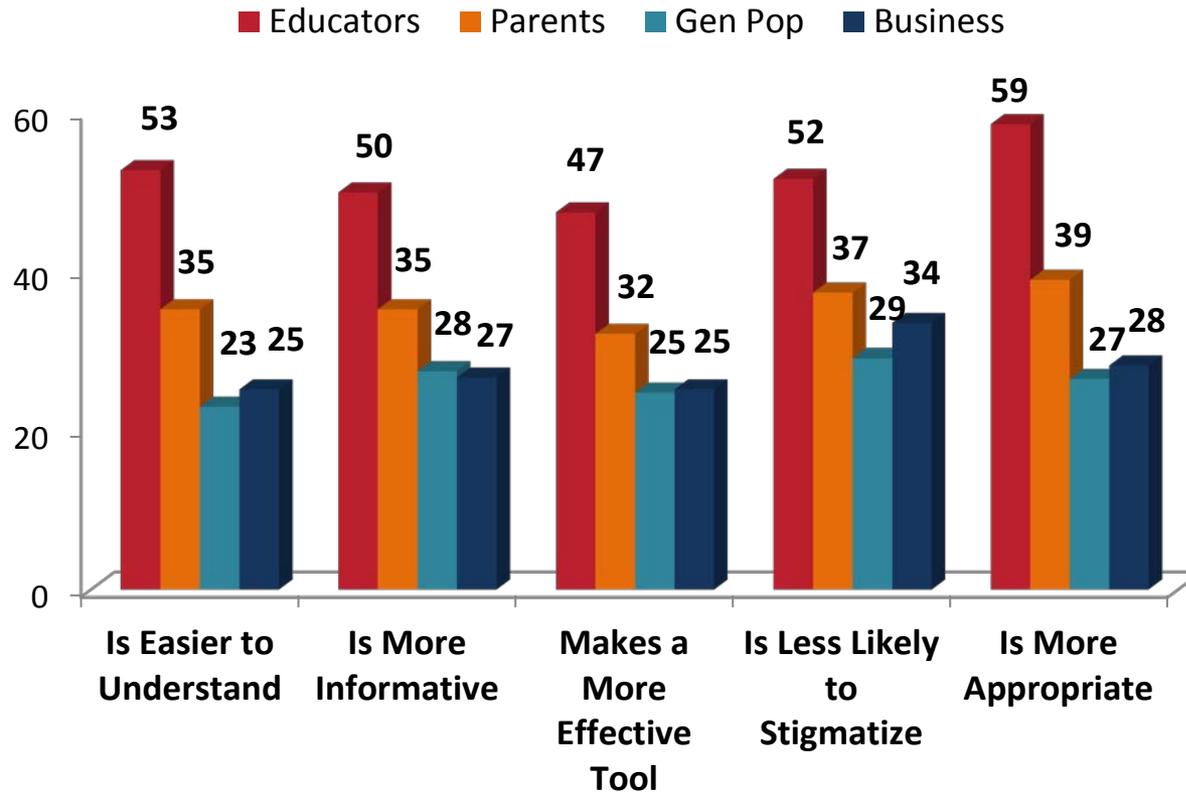
Top Report Card Priorities by Audience



Educators:	Evidence of student achievement (8.5) Evidence of student ability to read on grade level (8.4) Evidence of student preparedness toward college/careers (8.3) Opportunities available to students at the school (8.3)
Parents:	Evidence of student ability to read on grade level (9.1) Opportunities available to students at the school (9.0) Evidence of student achievement (8.9) Evidence of student preparedness toward college/careers (8.9) Information about teacher quality (8.9)
General Pop:	Evidence of student ability to read on grade level (8.9) Evidence of student preparedness toward college/careers (8.6) Information about teacher quality (8.6) Evidence of student achievement (8.5) Evidence of individual student growth (8.5)
Business:	Evidence of student ability to read on grade level (8.8) Evidence of student achievement (8.5) Evidence of student preparedness toward college/careers (8.5) Information on teacher quality (8.3)

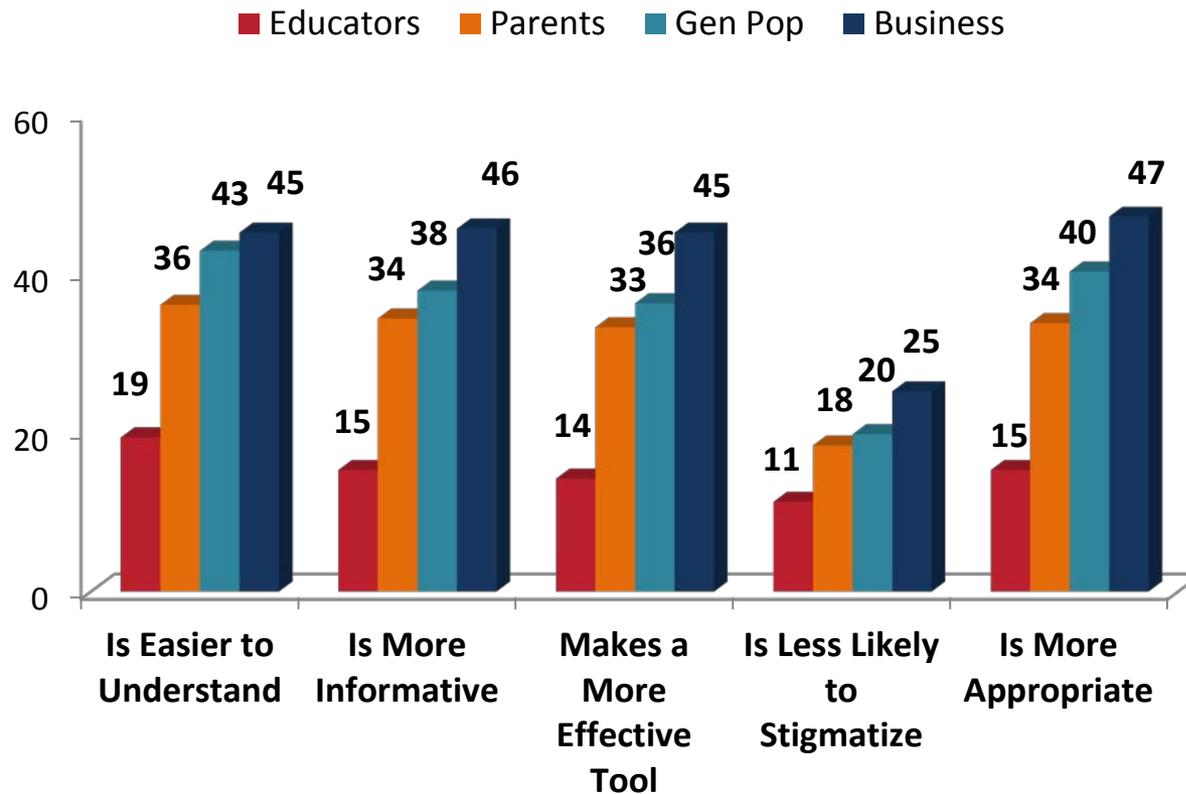
Grading Format Preferences

8. For over a decade, South Carolina has graded schools using the terms: Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and At Risk. Many states utilize an A-F grading scale. In general, which approach _____? [Graph represents % of respondents in each audience choosing the “**Excellent . . . At Risk**” option.]



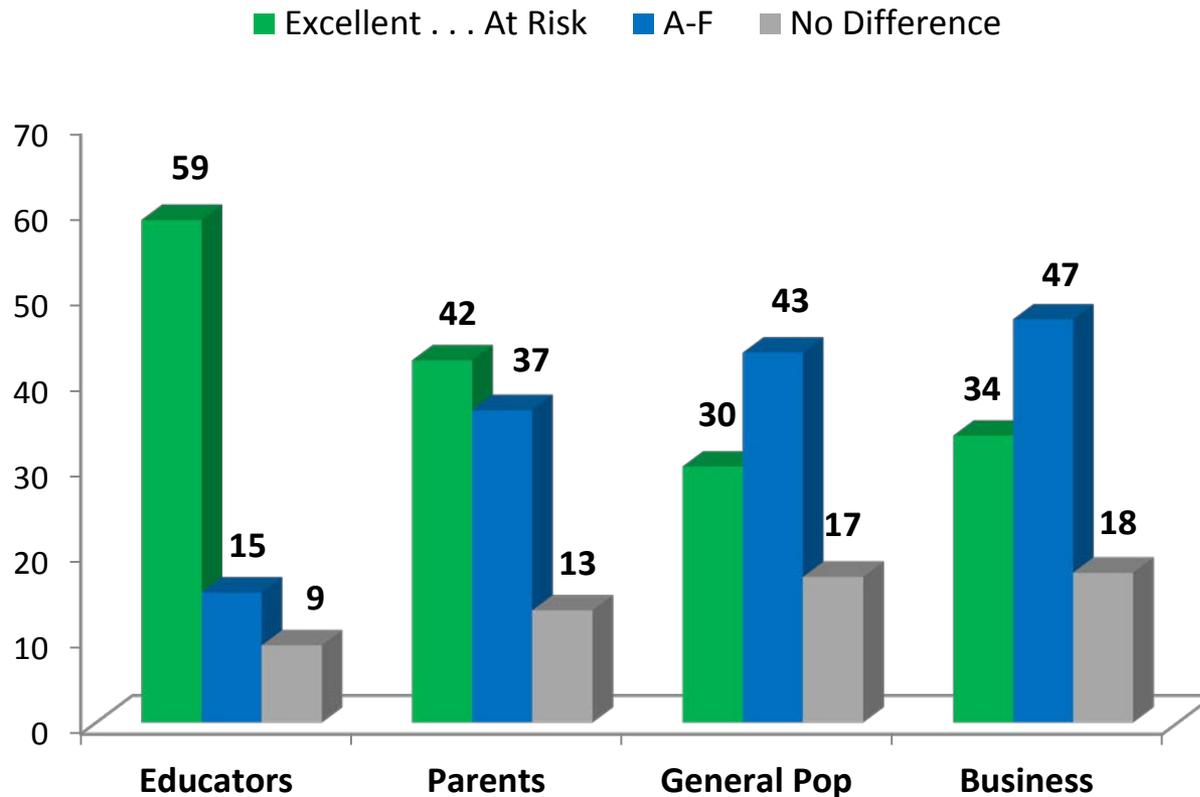
Grading Format Preferences

8. For over a decade, South Carolina has graded schools using the terms: Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and At Risk. Many states utilize an A-F grading scale. In general, which approach _____? [Graph represents % of respondents in each audience choosing the “A-F” option.]



Grading Format Preferences

8. For over a decade, South Carolina has graded schools using the terms: Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and At Risk. Many states utilize an A-F grading scale. In general, which approach would you recommend if asked to choose?



Grading Format Preferences



8a. For over a decade, South Carolina has graded schools using the terms: Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and At Risk. Many states utilize an A-F grading scale. In general, which approach is easier to understand?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Which approach do you feel is <i>easier to understand</i> ?				
Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, At Risk	52.7%	35.2%	23.0%	25.2%
A-F Grading	19.4	36.0	42.8	45.1
No Difference	20.2	25.3	27.7	27.7
Something else	6.1	1.4	1.4	0.5
None	1.6	2.1	5.1	1.5

Grading Format Preferences



8b. For over a decade, South Carolina has graded schools using the terms: Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and At Risk. Many states utilize an A-F grading scale. In general, which approach do you feel is more appropriate?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Which approach do you feel is <i>more appropriate</i> ?				
Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, At Risk	58.5%	38.9%	26.5%	28.2%
A-F Grading	15.3	33.7	40.2	47.1
No Difference	15.5	22.6	26.5	22.8
Something else	9.0	1.9	1.4	1.0
None	1.7	3.0	5.3	1.0

Grading Format Preferences



8c. For over a decade, South Carolina has graded schools using the terms: Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and At Risk. Many states utilize an A-F grading scale. In general, which approach do you feel makes for a more effective tool for improving education?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Which approach do you feel <i>makes for a more effective tool for improving education?</i>				
Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, At Risk	47.4%	32.1%	24.8%	25.2%
A-F Grading	14.2	33.2	36.2	45.1
No Difference	32.0	27.0	30.1	25.7
Something else	13.3	3.2	2.8	1.9
None	3.0	4.5	6.1	1.9

Grading Format Preferences



8d. For over a decade, South Carolina has graded schools using the terms: Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and At Risk. Many states utilize an A-F grading scale. In general, which approach do you feel is more informative?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Which approach do you feel <i>is more informative?</i>				
Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, At Risk	49.9%	35.2%	27.5%	26.7%
A-F Grading	15.3	34.3	37.8	45.6
No Difference	22.3	24.7	26.7	23.8
Something else	8.8	2.5	3.0	1.9
None	3.7	3.3	5.0	1.9

Grading Format Preferences



8e. For over a decade, South Carolina has graded schools using the terms: Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and At Risk. Many states utilize an A-F grading scale. In general, which approach do you feel is less likely to stigmatize low-performing schools?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Which approach do you feel <i>is less likely to stigmatize low-performing schools?</i>				
Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, At Risk	51.6%	37.3%	29.1%	33.5%
A-F Grading	11.3	18.4	19.8	25.2
No Difference	21.8	29.8	35.0	33.0
Something else	11.3	4.9	6.3	3.9
None	4.0	9.6	9.7	4.4

Grading Format Preferences



8f. For over a decade, South Carolina has graded schools using the terms: Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and At Risk. Many states utilize an A-F grading scale. In general, which approach would you recommend if asked to choose?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Which approach would you recommend if asked to choose?				
Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, At Risk	58.7%	42.3%	29.9%	33.5%
A-F Grading	15.2	36.5	43.2	47.1
No Difference	9.0	13.1	17.0	17.5
Something else	13.8	3.4	3.2	0.5
None	3.4	4.7	6.7	1.5

DETAILED STUDY FINDINGS:

District, School and Student Expectations Based on Descriptions/Ratings

School and District Rating Expectations



9. School and district ratings/grades are primary based on two factors: % of students performing at grade level in English, reading, mathematics, and writing (as evaluated through state testing); and % of students achieving at least one years' academic growth from one school year to the next.
- a. In a school rates at the HIGHEST LEVEL in South Carolina: What percentage of students do you expect to be performing at grade level?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
% Performing at Grade level:				
100%	4.3%	10.2%	15.0%	12.6%
90% - 99%	44.7	54.6	52.2	49.1
75% - 89%	37.8	26.5	24.2	32.0
Less than 75%	2.9	1.9	3.2	2.9
Not sure	1.1	1.9	3.6	2.4
I do not agree with this type of grading	9.1	4.9	1.8	1.0
MEAN (percent of students that, on average, audiences feel should be performing at grade level, omitting <i>not sure</i> and <i>do not agree</i>)	88.6	91.3	91.3	90.5

School and District Rating Expectations



9. School and district ratings/grades are primary based on two factors: % of students performing at grade level in English, reading, mathematics, and writing (as evaluated through state testing); and % of students achieving at least one year's academic growth from one school year to the next.
- b. In a school rates at the HIGHEST LEVEL in South Carolina: What percentage of students do you expect to demonstrate at least one year's academic growth from one school year to the next?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
% Demonstrating Academic Growth:				
100%	7.7%	13.1%	14.5%	15.5%
90% - 99%	43.5	53.9	51.1	53.4
75% - 89%	35.3	23.7	24.0	24.7
Less than 75%	4.8	2.5	4.2	2.5
Not sure	1.4	2.4	3.4	2.9
I do not agree with this type of grading	7.4	4.5	2.6	1.0
MEAN (percent of students that, on average, audiences feel should be demonstrating at least one year's academic growth from one school year to the next, omitting <i>not sure</i> and <i>do not agree</i>)	88.5	91.6	90.9	91.7

School and District Rating Expectations



10. Thinking about a 5th grade class in A TYPICAL South Carolina elementary school – what is your expectation of the percentage of students who should be at or above grade level in reading and math at the end of the school year?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
% At or Above Grade Level in Reading and Math By the End of the Year at TYPICAL school:				
100%	4.8%	16.7%	18.2%	14.6%
90% - 99%	27.7	41.9	37.6	42.2
75% - 89%	53.4	33.9	32.3	35.0
50% to 74%	9.8	4.2	5.1	5.8
Less than 50%	0.8	0.8	1.8	0.5
Not sure	3.7	2.5	5.0	1.9
MEAN (percent of students that, on average, audiences feel should be at or above grade level in reading and math at the end of the school year, omitting <i>not sure</i>)	84.8	90.3	89.3	89.7

School and District Rating Expectations



11. And thinking about a 5th grade class in A HISTORICALLY UNDER-PERFORMING South Carolina elementary school – what is your expectation of the percentage of students who should be at or above grade level in reading and math at the end of the school year?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
% At or Above Grade Level in Reading and Math By the End of the Year at historically UNDER-PERFORMING school:				
100%	3.0%	11.0%	12.3%	8.7%
90% - 99%	13.0	20.7	19.4	20.9
75% - 89%	35.9	32.1	28.7	33.5
50% to 74%	30.7	24.0	20.6	23.8
Less than 50%	12.5	8.0	13.1	10.7
Not sure	4.8	4.2	5.9	2.4
MEAN (percent of students that, on average, audiences feel should be at or above grade level in reading and math at the end of the school year, omitting <i>not sure</i>)	71.8	78.1	76.0	76.6

School and District Rating Expectations

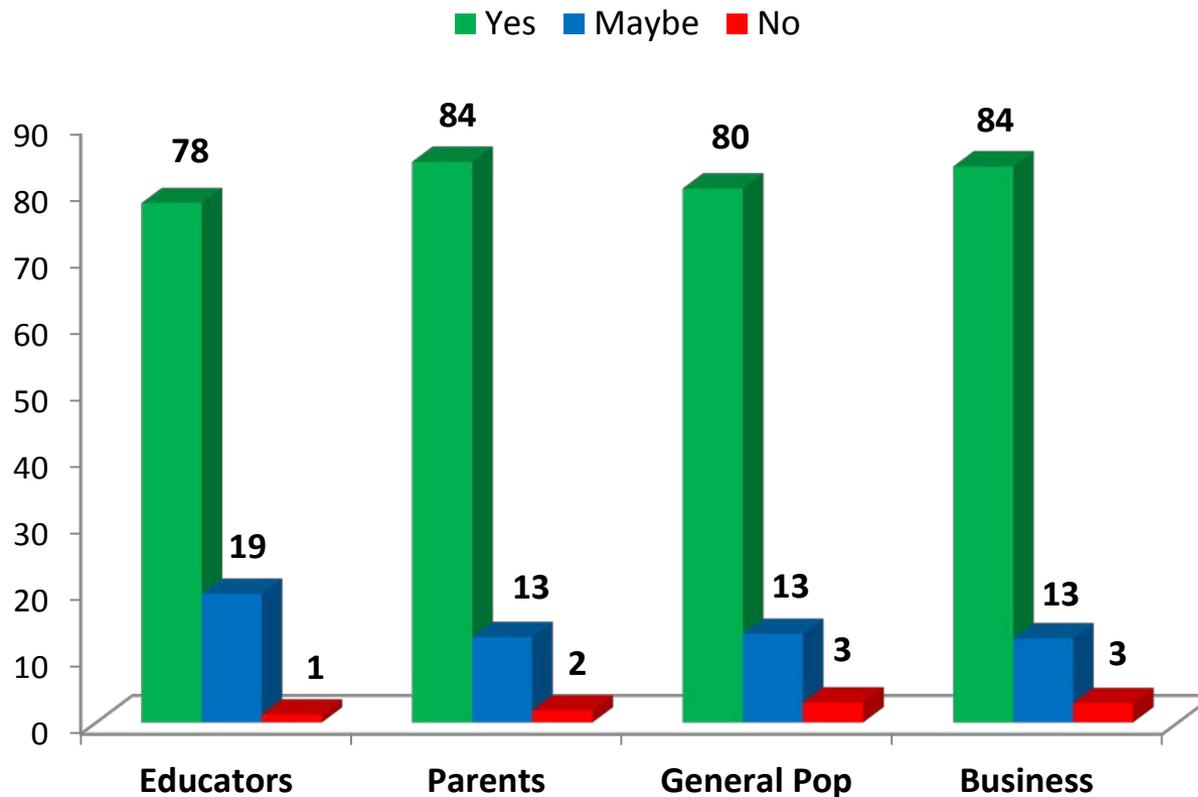


Table entry reflects the percentage of students that, on average, each audience believes should be performing at or above grade level at the end of the school year. (Based on Qs 9a, 10, 11)

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
At Highest Level Schools (Q9a)	88.6	91.3	91.3	90.5
At a Typical School (Q10)	84.8	90.3	89.3	89.7
At a Historically Under-Performing School (Q11)	71.8	78.1	76.0	76.6

“On Track” Student Performance

12. Thinking about student performance . . . If a student’s performance on an assessment is labeled as being “on track,” is it your expectation that the student is performing on grade level?



“On Track” Student Performance

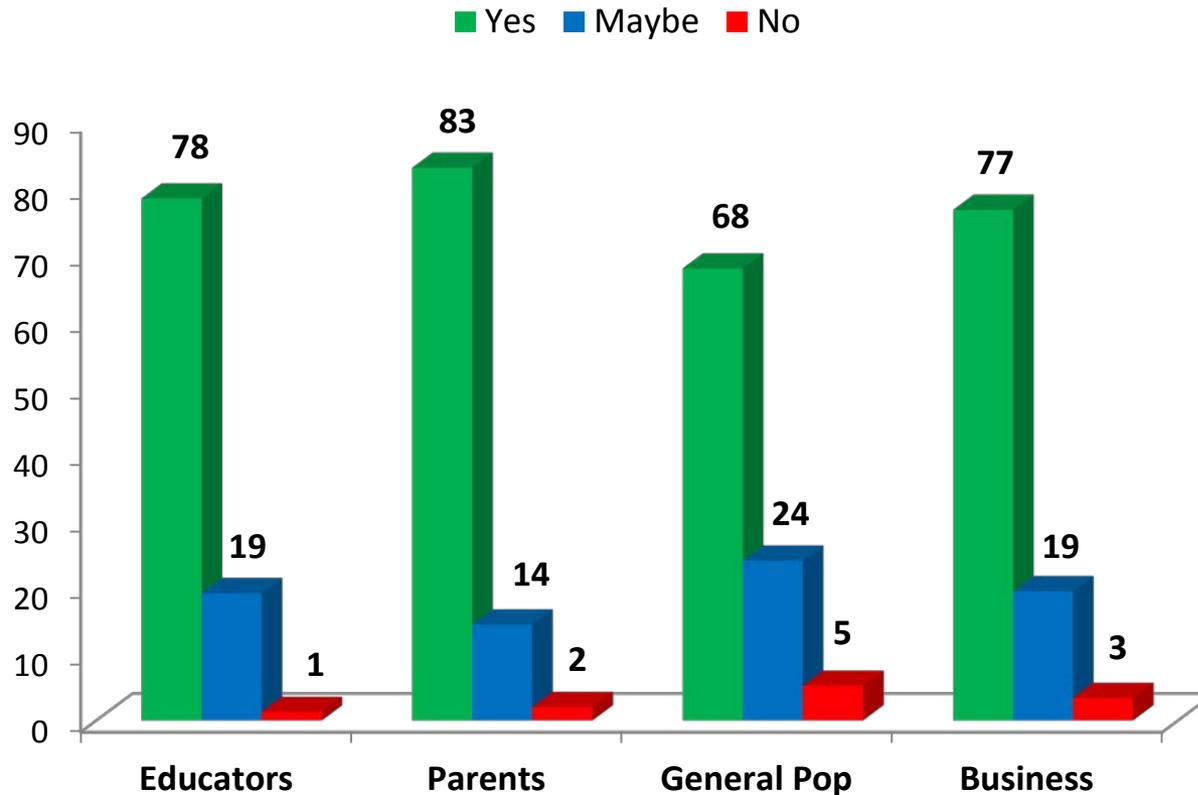


12. Thinking about student performance . . . If a student’s performance on an assessment is labeled as being “on track,” is it your expectation that the student is performing on grade level?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Definitely	41.6%	56.1%	48.3%	52.9%
Probably	36.4	28.1	31.9	30.6
May or may not	19.3	12.8	13.3	12.6
Probably not	0.9	1.3	2.0	2.4
Definitely not	0.3	0.5	1.0	0.5
Not sure	1.4	1.2	3.6	1.0

College and Career Readiness

13. When a student graduates from a high school in South Carolina, is it your expectation that the student is on track for college and career readiness?



College and Career Readiness



13. When a student graduates from a high school in South Carolina, is it your expectation that the student is on track for college and career readiness?

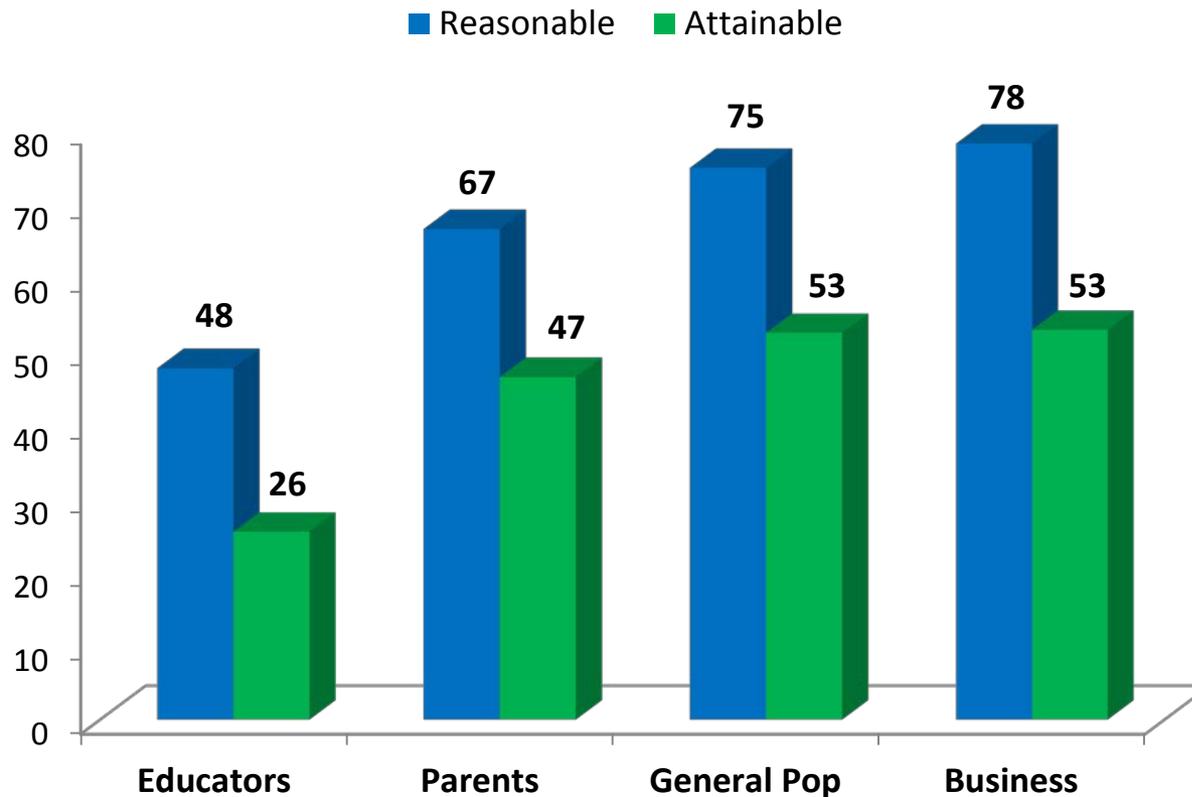
	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Definitely	47.9%	61.4%	39.2%	42.7%
Probably	30.5	21.6	28.7	34.0
May or may not	19.1	14.4	24.0	19.4
Probably not	1.0	1.4	4.0	2.9
Definitely not	0.3	0.6	1.2	0.5
Not sure	1.2	0.6	3.0	0.5

DETAILED STUDY FINDINGS:

Performance Goals

Kindergarten Readiness Goals

14. South Carolina does not currently have a statewide goal for Kindergarten readiness. How reasonable and attainable do you feel it is to expect that 95% of students entering 5-year-old kindergarten in South Carolina arrive “ready for learning”?



Kindergarten Readiness Goals



14. South Carolina does not currently have a statewide goal for Kindergarten readiness. How reasonable and attainable do you feel it is to expect that 95% of students entering 5-year-old kindergarten in South Carolina arrive “ready for learning”?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Reasonable:				
This is a <i>very reasonable</i> goal	15.6%	32.3%	33.1%	35.0%
Somewhat reasonable	32.1	34.3	41.8	43.2
Not too reasonable	27.2	18.3	16.0	16.5
Not reasonable at all	23.8	12.7	5.1	4.9
Not sure	1.3	2.3	4.0	0.5
Attainable:				
This is definitely attainable	8.1%	20.8%	22.2%	22.3%
This is probably attainable	17.4	25.7	30.3	30.6
Might or might not be	33.8	29.0	26.5	29.1
Probably not attainable	27.2	17.3	15.0	16.0
Definitely not attainable	12.0	4.3	2.6	1.9
Not sure	1.4	2.8	3.4	0.0

Kindergarten Readiness Goals



14. AMONG THOSE WHO FEEL A 95% “READY FOR LEARNING” GOAL FOR THOSE ENTERING 5-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN IS NOT ATTAINABLE > What level do you feel would be more realistic and achievable? [table entry reflects mean, omitting *don't know* responses]

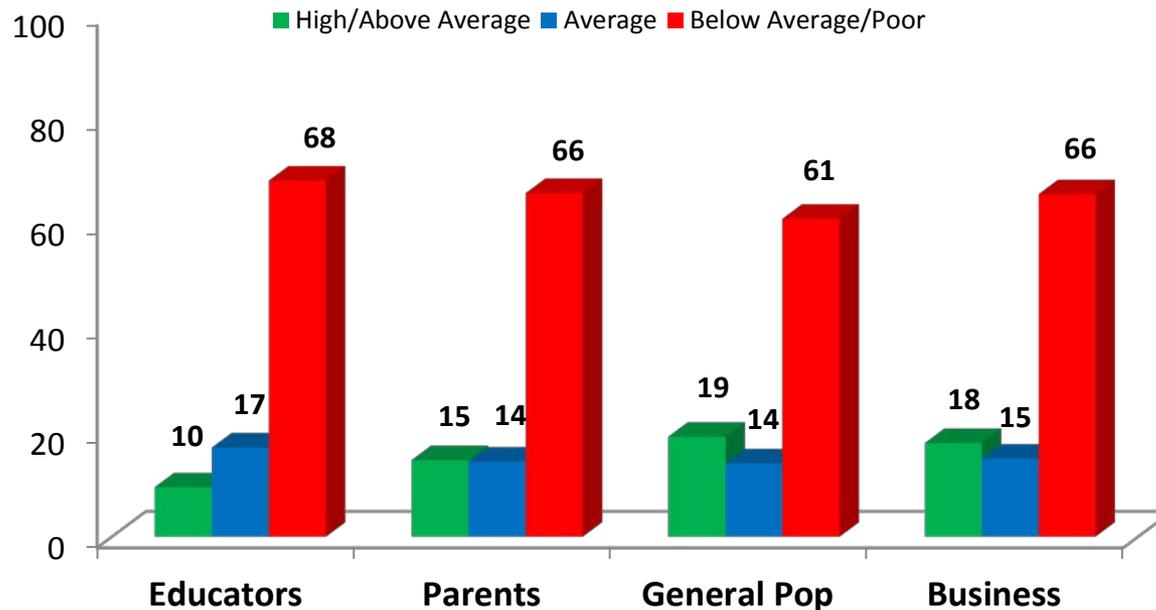
Educators (n=362)	Parents (n=690)	Gen Pop (n=89)	Business (n=37)
64.1	64.5	62.4	64.0

11th Grader College-Ready Benchmark Goals – READING



17. In 2015, 26% (or one out of every four) of 11th graders across the state met college-ready benchmarks on the Reading portion of the ACT College Readiness Assessment and 22% (or one out of every five) met college-ready benchmarks on the Math portion. How would you evaluate these levels of college-readiness for our state's 11th graders?

READING



11th Grader College-Ready Benchmark Goals – READING



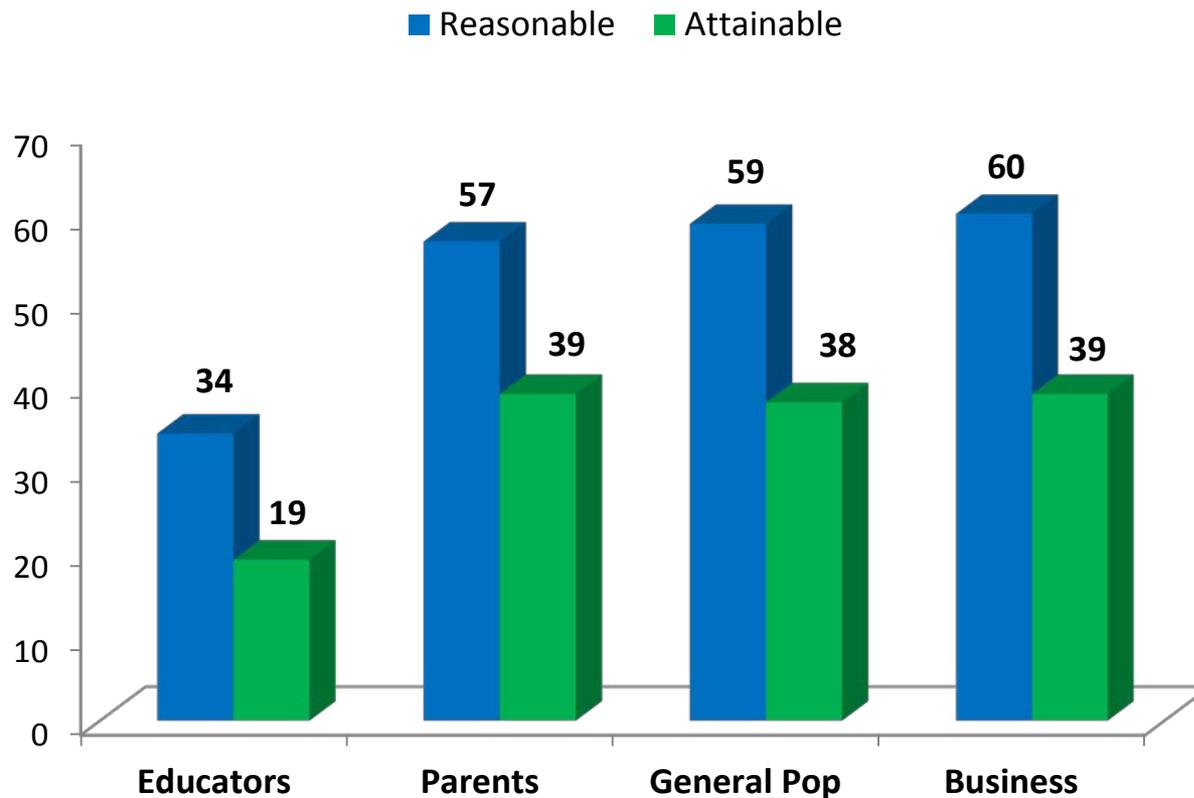
17. In 2015, 26% (or one out of every four) of 11th graders across the state met college-ready benchmarks on the Reading portion of the ACT College Readiness Assessment and 22% (or one out of every five) met college-ready benchmarks on the Math portion. How would you evaluate these levels of college-readiness for our state’s 11th graders?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Reading:				
Very high	1.1%	2.3%	3.4%	3.9%
Well above average	2.5	5.1	6.3	6.3
Somewhat above average	5.9	7.3	9.5	7.8
About average	17.1	14.4	14.1	15.0
Somewhat below average	27.8	25.6	23.2	23.8
Well below average	27.1	21.9	23.8	24.8
Very poor	13.3	18.3	13.9	17.0
Not sure	5.2	5.2	5.9	1.5

11th Grader College-Ready Benchmark Goals – READING



18. By the year 2025, how reasonable and attainable do you feel it is to expect that 95% of South Carolina's 11th graders meet or exceed college-ready benchmarks on the READING portion of the ACT College Readiness Assessment?



11th Grader College-Ready Benchmark Goals – READING



18. By the year 2025, how reasonable and attainable do you feel it is to expect that 95% of South Carolina’s 11th graders meet or exceed college-ready benchmarks on the READING portion of the ACT College Readiness Assessment?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Reasonable:				
This is a <i>very reasonable</i> goal	5.7%	20.0%	21.4%	28.2%
Somewhat reasonable	28.4	36.9	37.6	32.0
Not too reasonable	35.6	24.4	25.5	28.2
Not reasonable at all	27.3	15.1	11.5	10.7
Not sure	2.9	3.6	4.0	1.0
Attainable:				
This is definitely attainable	4.3%	14.6%	15.4%	19.4%
This is probably attainable	14.8	24.2	22.4	19.4
Might or might not be	29.6	26.1	26.5	28.6
Probably not attainable	31.5	22.6	24.8	24.3
Definitely not attainable	17.1	8.5	6.9	7.3
Not sure	2.7	4.0	4.0	1.0

11th Grader College-Ready Benchmark Goals – READING



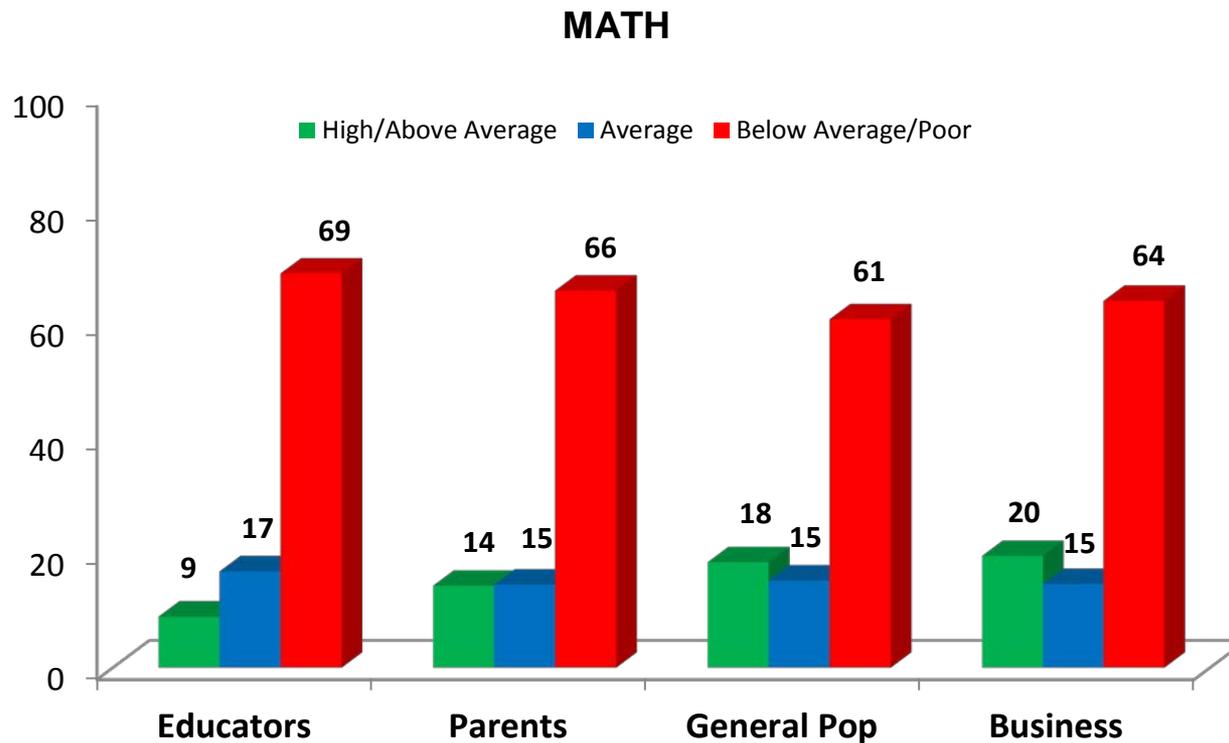
18. AMONG THOSE WHO FEEL IT IS NOT ATTAINABLE THAT, BY 2025, 95% OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WILL MEET OR EXCEED COLLEGE-READY BENCHMARKS FOR READING > What level do you feel would be more realistic and achievable? [table entry reflects mean, omitting *don't know* responses]

Educators (n=448)	Parents (n=991)	Gen Pop (n=160)	Business (n=65)
62.5	61.0	61.6	63.2

11th Grader College-Ready Benchmark Goals – MATH



17. In 2015, 26% (or one out of every four) of 11th graders across the state met college-ready benchmarks on the Reading portion of the ACT College Readiness Assessment and 22% (or one out of every five) met college-ready benchmarks on the Math portion. How would you evaluate these levels of college-readiness for our state's 11th graders?



11th Grader College-Ready Benchmark Goals – MATH



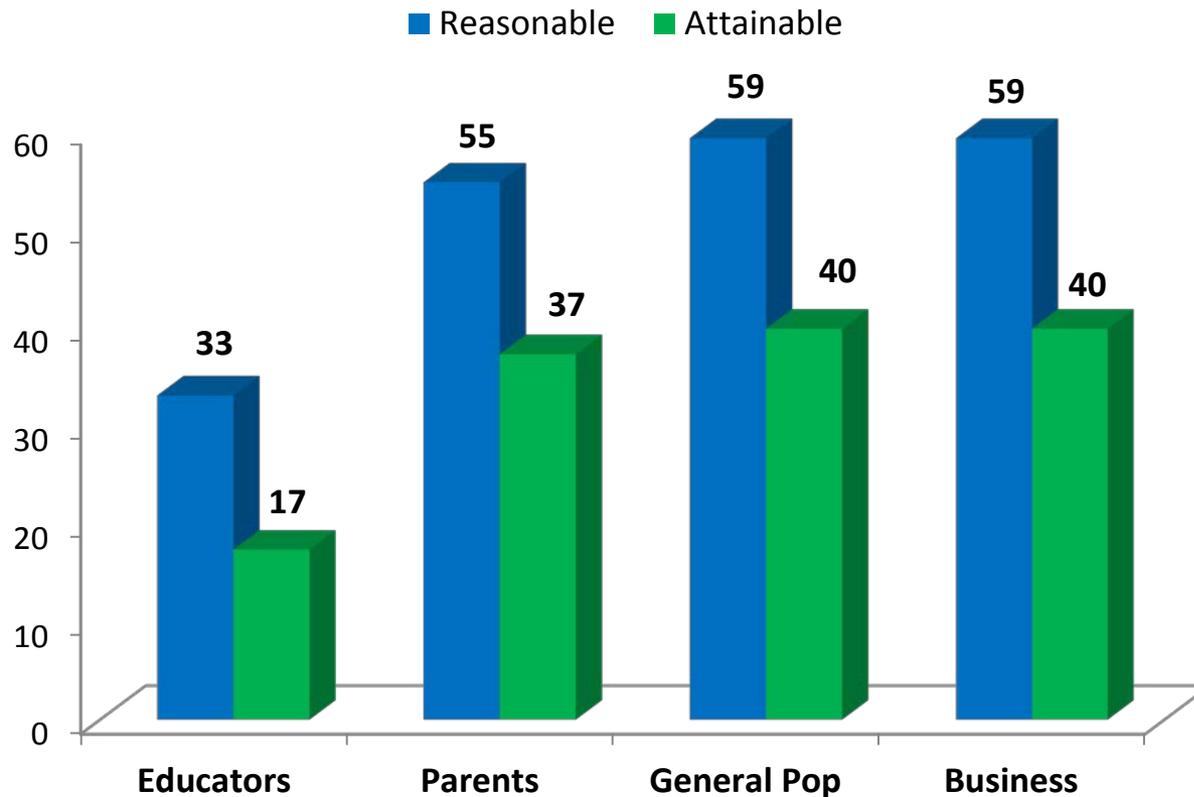
17. In 2015, 26% (or one out of every four) of 11th graders across the state met college-ready benchmarks on the Reading portion of the ACT College Readiness Assessment and 22% (or one out of every five) met college-ready benchmarks on the Math portion. How would you evaluate these levels of college-readiness for our state’s 11th graders?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Math:				
Very high	0.8%	2.0%	2.8%	3.4%
Well above average	2.7	4.8	6.5	4.4
Somewhat above average	5.4	7.5	9.1	11.7
About average	16.8	14.5	15.2	14.6
Somewhat below average	27.8	25.9	24.4	21.8
Well below average	27.1	21.7	20.8	26.7
Very poor	13.9	18.2	15.6	15.5
Not sure	5.5	5.4	5.5	1.9

11th Grader College-Ready Benchmark Goals – MATH



19. And, by the year 2025, how reasonable and attainable do you feel it is to expect that 95% of South Carolina's 11th graders meet or exceed college-ready benchmarks on the MATH portion of the ACT College Readiness Assessment?



11th Grader College-Ready Benchmark Goals – MATH



19. And, by the year 2025, how reasonable and attainable do you feel it is to expect that 95% of South Carolina’s 11th graders meet or exceed college-ready benchmarks on the MATH portion of the ACT College Readiness Assessment?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Reasonable:				
This is a <i>very reasonable</i> goal	6.1%	18.8%	22.4%	25.2%
Somewhat reasonable	26.9	35.9	36.8	34.0
Not too reasonable	34.8	25.7	22.3	27.2
Not reasonable at all	28.7	15.8	13.5	12.1
Not sure	3.5	3.9	4.8	1.5
Attainable:				
This is definitely attainable	4.1%	13.8%	16.2%	17.5%
This is probably attainable	13.2	23.4	23.6	22.3
Might or might not be	30.0	27.6	25.5	26.2
Probably not attainable	33.0	22.3	21.2	20.9
Definitely not attainable	16.5	8.8	8.9	11.7
Not sure	3.1	4.2	4.6	1.5

11th Grader College-Ready Benchmark Goals – MATH



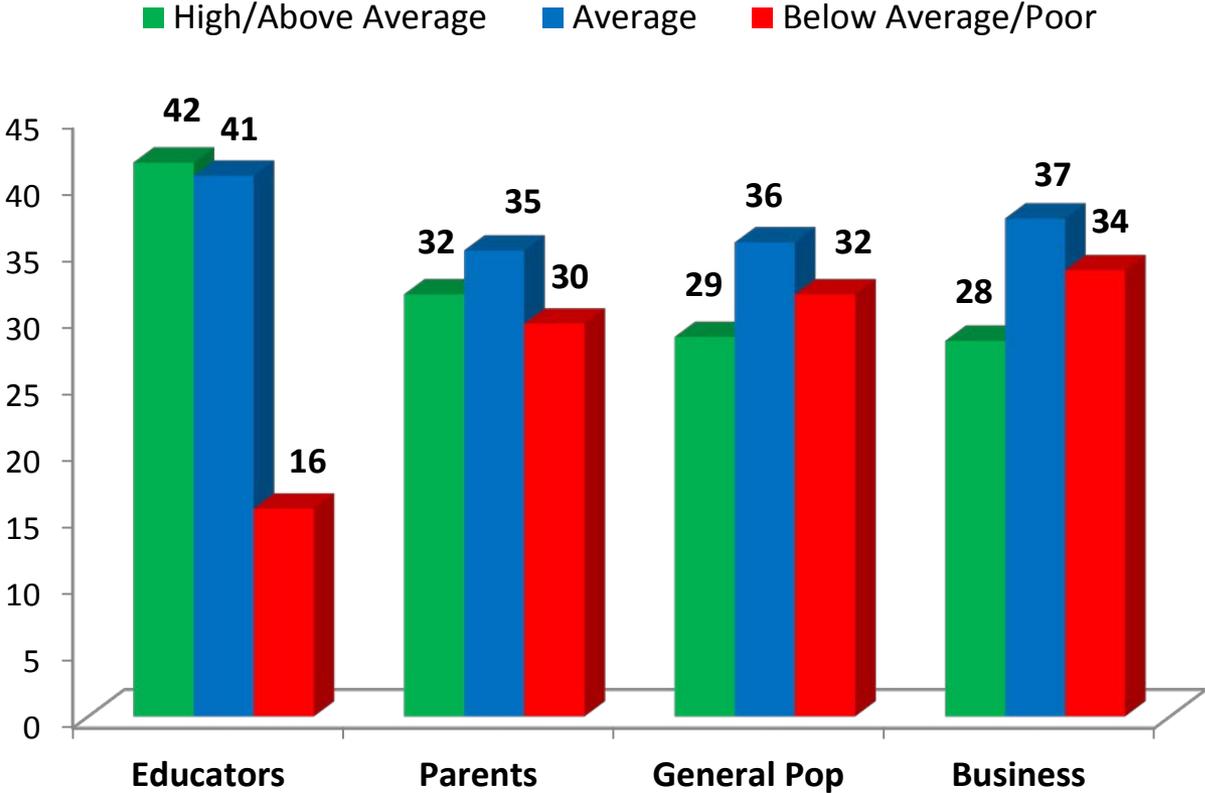
19. AMONG THOSE WHO FEEL IT IS NOT ATTAINABLE THAT, BY 2025, 95% OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WILL MEET OR EXCEED COLLEGE-READY BENCHMARKS FOR MATH > What level do you feel would be more realistic and achievable? [table entry reflects mean, omitting *don't know* responses]

Educators (n=456)	Parents (n=989)	Gen Pop (n=152)	Business (n=67)
62.1	59.6	59.8	59.7

High School Completion Goals



15. Currently, 80% of South Carolina students graduate high school within four years. Do you rate this level as very high, well above average, somewhat above average, about average, somewhat below average, well below average or very poor?



High School Completion Goals



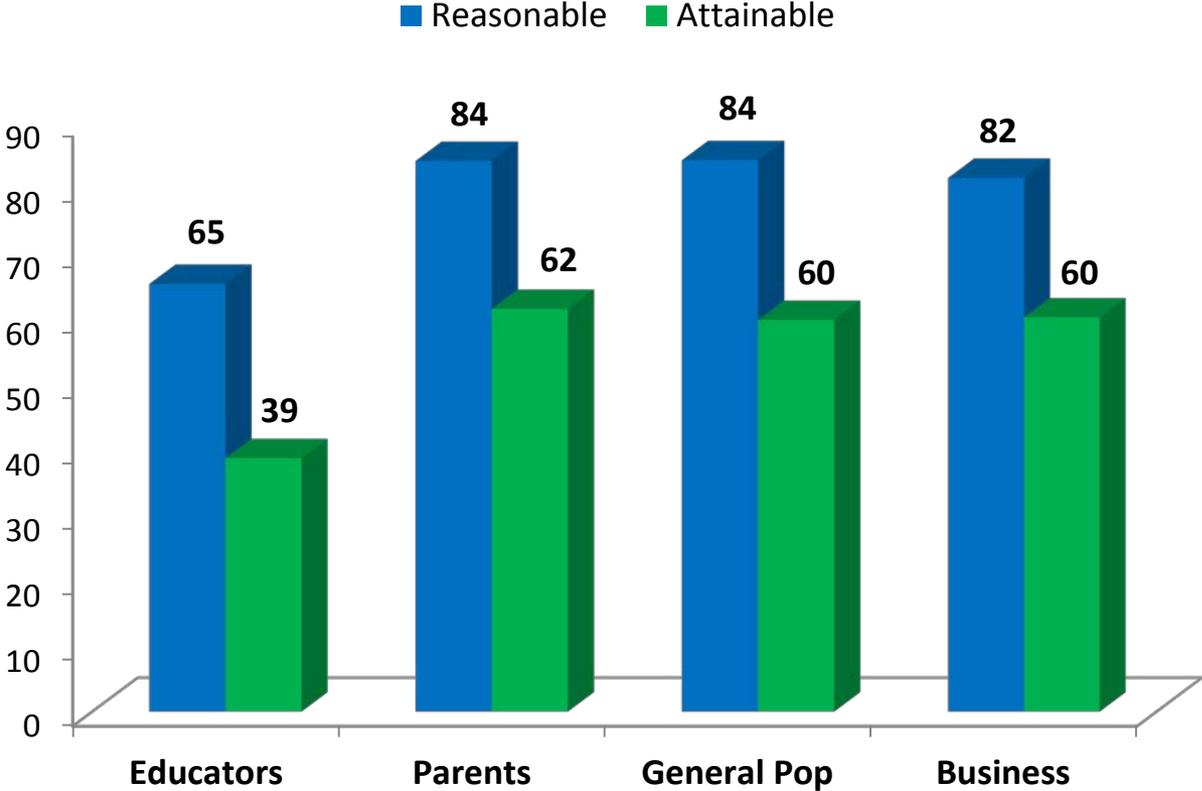
15. Currently, 80% of South Carolina students graduate high school within four years. Do you rate this level as very high, well above average, somewhat above average, about average, somewhat below average, well below average or very poor?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Very high	2.0%	2.9%	2.6%	4.4%
Well above average	15.9	9.8	9.7	5.8
Somewhat above average	23.9	19.0	16.2	18.0
About average	40.6	35.0	35.6	37.4
Somewhat below average	12.4	21.8	23.4	25.2
Well below average	2.2	4.9	6.3	5.8
Very poor	1.0	2.8	2.0	2.9
Not sure	2.2	3.9	4.2	0.5

High School Completion Goals



16. South Carolina may implement a statewide goal for high school completion within four years. How reasonable and attainable do you feel it is to expect that, by the year 2025, 95% of high school students graduate within four years?



High School Completion Goals



16. South Carolina may implement a statewide goal for high school completion within four years. How reasonable and attainable do you feel it is to expect that, by the year 2025, 95% of high school students graduate within four years?

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Reasonable:				
This is a <i>very reasonable</i> goal	19.7%	43.9%	43.0%	45.6%
Somewhat reasonable	45.6	40.2	41.2	35.9
Not too reasonable	22.9	10.4	10.1	14.1
Not reasonable at all	10.1	3.3	2.4	3.9
Not sure	1.7	2.2	3.4	0.5
Attainable:				
This is definitely attainable	11.7%	28.0%	24.6%	24.8%
This is probably attainable	27.0	33.5	35.2	35.4
Might or might not be	35.2	25.1	26.5	22.8
Probably not attainable	18.5	8.8	8.1	14.1
Definitely not attainable	5.6	2.3	1.6	2.9
Not sure	1.8	2.4	4.0	0.0

High School Completion Goals



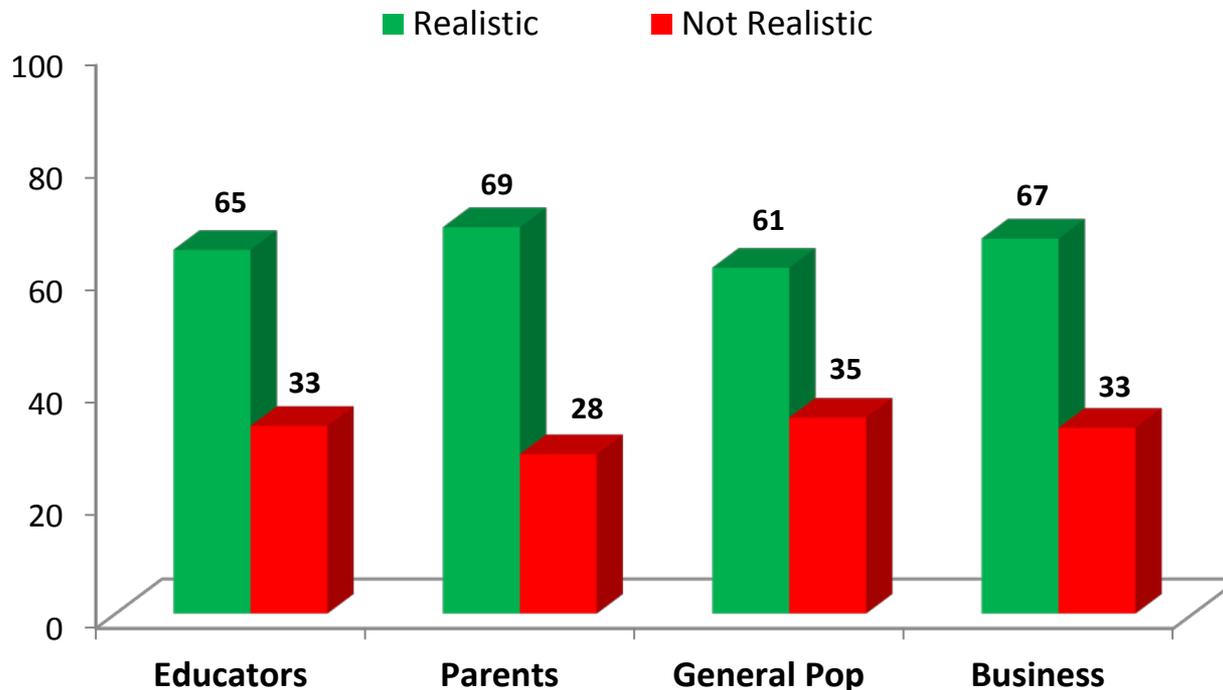
16. AMONG THOSE WHO FEEL IT IS NOT ATTAINABLE THAT, BY 2025, 95% OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WILL GRADUATE WITHIN FOUR YEARS> What level do you feel would be more realistic and achievable? [table entry reflects mean, omitting *don't know* responses]

Educators (n=223)	Parents (n=353)	Gen Pop (n=49)	Business (n=35)
79.3	79.7	78.9	75.9

Goals for Post-Secondary Education/ Degree Program Attainment



20. According to the US Census Bureau's 2011 data on educational attainment, 34% of South Carolina's adults (age 25 and older) hold 2- or 4-year degrees. The national average is 39%. Between 2013 and 2030, it is expected that 553,884 new jobs will be created in South Carolina. Of these jobs, 52% will require higher education. How realistic do you feel it is that by 2025 South Carolina will exceed the national average for adults holding 2- to 4-year degrees?



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	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Very realistic	9.4%	14.8%	14.1%	16.0%
Somewhat realistic	55.2	53.8	47.3	50.5
Not too realistic	28.4	24.3	29.5	28.6
Not realistic at all	4.9	4.0	5.3	4.4
Not sure	2.1	3.1	3.8	0.5

Goals for Post-Secondary Education/ Degree Program Attainment



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	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Very realistic	9.4%	14.8%	14.1%	16.0%
Somewhat realistic	55.2	53.8	47.3	50.5
Not too realistic	28.4	24.3	29.5	28.6
Not realistic at all	4.9	4.0	5.3	4.4
Not sure	2.1	3.1	3.8	0.5

DETAILED STUDY FINDINGS:

**Demographic and Geographic Profile
of Study Segments**

Respondent Gender



	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Gender:				
Female	74.6%	84.0%	50.3%	40.8%
Male	25.4	16.0	49.7	59.2

Region of the State



	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Region:				
Upstate	47.0%	64.4%	37.6%	40.8%
Midlands	25.2	21.9	23.6	24.8
Low Country	27.9	13.7	38.8	34.5

Length of Time Living in South Carolina



	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
How long have you lived in South Carolina?				
2 years or less	1.3%	4.7%	8.5%	4.9%
3 to 10 years	5.9	12.3	24.2	21.4
11 to 25 years	14.8	21.7	23.2	28.6
More than 25 years	77.1	59.4	43.8	45.1
Not applicable/No answer	1.0	2.0	0.4	0.0

Area of Residence



	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Would you describe the area in which you live as . . . ?				
Urban	NA	6.8%	10.7%	NA
Suburban		53.4	58.0	
Rural		32.9	27.7	
Other		2.2	1.6	
Not sure/No Answer		4.8	2.0	

Household Size



	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Including yourself, how many people currently live in your household?				
One	NA	1.1%	14.9%	NA
Two		6.9	40.2	
Three		22.3	19.8	
Four		42.7	15.0	
Five or more		24.1	9.9	
Prefer not to say/No answer		2.8	0.2	

Children in the Household



	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
How many children under the age of 18 live in your household on a full-time basis?				
None	NA	10.1%	62.4%	NA
One		30.1	18.4	
2 to 3		57.9	21.7	
4 or more		4.9	3.5	
Prefer not to say		0.7	0.7	

Children Enrolled in Public Schools in South Carolina



	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Do you have any children currently enrolled in public schools in South Carolina?				
Yes	NA	88.8%	25.1%	NA
No		11.3	74.3	
Prefer not to say		1.1	0.9	

Ethnicity

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Which of the following best describes your primary ethnicity?				
Caucasian	NA	77.2%	83.0%	NA
African American		8.2	9.1	
Hispanic		1.7	1.0	
Asian/Pacific Islander		1.2	1.6	
A combination of two or more		2.8	1.2	
Something else		0.4	0.6	
Not sure		0.1	0.0	
Prefer not to answer/No answer		8.4	3.6	

Household Income



	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Into which of the following does your annual household income fall?				
Under \$35,000	NA	7.2%	16.4%	NA
\$35,000 to \$49,999		9.1	17.6	
\$50,000 to \$74,999		16.6	22.8	
\$75,000 to \$99,999		17.2	14.9	
\$100,000 to \$149,999		21.6	12.7	
\$150,000 or more		13.0	3.6	
Prefer not to answer/No answer		15.4	12.1	

Age

	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Age:				
18 to 34	NA	12.8%	26.9%	NA
35 to 44		42.7	25.1	
45 to 54		33.0	14.1	
55 to 64		7.2	12.7	
65 and over		2.5	21.2	
No answer		1.8	0.0	

Association with SC Public Schools



	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Which of the following best describes your association or position with South Carolina public schools?				
Educator	50.0%	NA	NA	NA
Administrator	32.2			
District Personnel	13.0			
Elected Official	0.3			
Other	3.3			
No answer	1.2			

Length of Time Associated with SC Public School System



	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
How long have you worked in/been associated with the South Carolina public school system?				
2 years or less	3.4%	NA	NA	NA
3 to 10 years	17.0			
11 to 25 years	42.7			
More than 25 years	35.6			
Not applicable	1.3			

Length of Time Business Has Been Operating in South Carolina



	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
How long has your business been in operation in South Carolina?				
2 years or less	NA	NA	NA	2.9%
3 to 10 years				17.5
11 to 25 years				27.7
More than 25 years				50.0
Not sure				1.9

Type of Business



	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
Which of the following most closely describes your general category of business?				
Manufacturing	NA	NA	NA	21.8%
Professional services				13.6
Retail				11.2
Financial				7.3
Government				6.8
Charity/non-profit				5.8
Construction/development				5.8
Insurance				4.4
Real estate				2.9
Medical				2.4
Transportation				2.4
Other				15.6

Number of Employees



	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
How many of each of the following categories of employees are employed by your organization throughout the state of South Carolina?				
Full-time	NA	NA	NA	
Any				96.1%
Average # of these employees				97.1
Part-time				
Any				71.9%
Average # of these employees				90.3

Type of Employees



	Educators (N=922)	Parents (N=3183)	Gen Pop (N=505)	Business (N=206)
How many of each of the following categories of employees are employed by your organization throughout the state of South Carolina?				
Professionals	NA	NA	NA	
Any				85.9%
Average # of these employees				95.6
Skilled Labor				
Any				74.3%
Average # of these employees				92.7
Unskilled Labor				
Any				59.7
Average # of these employees				90.8

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Thank you!

The Next Step

Using Longitudinal Data Systems To Improve Student Success



DATAQUALITY
CAMPAIGN

Using Data To Improve Student Achievement

DATAQUALITY CAMPAIGN

Using Data To Improve Student Achievement

The Data Quality Campaign is a national, collaborative effort to encourage and support state policymakers to improve the availability and use of high-quality education data to improve student achievement. The campaign will provide tools and resources that will help states implement and use longitudinal data systems, while providing a national forum for reducing duplication of effort and promoting greater coordination and consensus among the organizations focused on improving data quality, access and use.

www.DataQualityCampaign.org

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Ensure that data can be accessed, analyzed and used, and communicate data to all stakeholders to promote continuous improvement.....	11
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement systems to provide all stakeholders timely access to the information they need while protecting student privacy• Create progress reports with individual student data that provide information educators, parents and students can use to improve student performance• Create reports that include longitudinal statistics on school systems and groups of students to guide school-, district- and state-level improvement efforts	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a purposeful research agenda and collaborate with universities, researchers and intermediary groups to explore the data for useful information• Implement policies and promote practices, including professional development and credentialing, to ensure that educators know how to access, analyze and use data appropriately• Promote strategies to raise awareness of available data and ensure that all key stakeholders, including state policymakers, know how to access, analyze and use the information	
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Moving from Collecting Data for Compliance to Using Data for Continuous Improvement

Faced with the need to create a competitive workforce and dramatically improve the quality of America’s education system, states have embraced an aggressive policy agenda to better prepare students for postsecondary education and careers. To inform this agenda, states also have made enormous progress over the past three years on developing robust student-level longitudinal data systems that can track individual student progress over time, from prekindergarten through 12th grade and into postsecondary education. These systems provide better information for policymakers and educators about student and system performance at the school, district and state levels.

Creating state longitudinal data systems and having the information to answer key questions about performance is a vital first step, but collecting data alone will not lead to continuous improvement and, ultimately, student success. States also must have policies and practices in place so that stakeholders throughout the education system can have access to, understand and be able to use the information effectively.

Changing the culture around data use

Using the information from state longitudinal data systems for continuous improvement requires a cultural shift. Until now, most states have collected data only for accountability and compliance with reporting requirements. Accountability often has been associated with negative consequences, and data were perceived as the tool for imposing those consequences.

But with longitudinal data systems, key stakeholders — including governors, legislators, chief state school officers, school board members, district and school administrators, early learning administrators, postsecondary and K–12 educators, state higher education executives, parents, students, and advocacy/improvement/research organizations — have the data for the first time to determine not just whether an individual student’s performance is improving but also how and why. They can use the information proactively to alter policies, programs and practices to

spur continuous improvement at every level — from individual students to the system as a whole — rather than reactively to impose consequences for previous performance. Greater access to and use of data lead to increased data quality as well. When data were just reported up the chain of command to check the “compliance box,” there was little incentive or reason to be concerned about the quality of the data. Now everyone has a vested interest in the accuracy of the data, especially because information is reported back to local schools to be used.

Stakeholders need the ability to use the same data in different ways. A parent needs to look at performance data to see whether her child is on track to master the content for the student’s grade level and, ultimately, whether her child will be prepared for the demands of the workplace. A teacher needs to be able to view performance data for each student in his class but also aggregate data to analyze trends, determine which content needs to be reinforced and decide how to alter his teaching methods accordingly. A policymaker must be able to understand the analysis of this aggregate data to be able to answer questions such as: Which schools are producing the greatest amount of student growth? What can we learn from those programs? What implications does that have for resource allocation, curriculum decisions or teacher training? What do our students need to be ready for success in college?

Therefore, the most efficient and cost-effective process is to collect the information at the state level and provide users appropriate access to it. However, the vast majority of these stakeholders need guidance on what longitudinal data are, how to interpret and use the information, and how to ask questions to make decisions and help students succeed.

Removing barriers and taking action

This shift to using data for continuous improvement also requires building the political will and taking the practical steps to remove current barriers to accessing, sharing and using data.

When states have longitudinal data that can be shared, are user friendly and timely, and are tailored to users' needs, stakeholders can do more than just gather data, they can act on the information to:

- Use data for continuous improvement, rather than solely for compliance with federal and state reporting requirements;
- Better define student success with transparent, well understood and broadly accepted performance indicators;
- Accurately forecast a student's readiness for key transitions from preschool through high school and into college and careers and take action as needed;
- Answer day-to-day questions and evaluate issues such as strengths and weaknesses identified by formative assessments, intervention effectiveness, and the relationships among attendance, mobility and standardized test scores; and
- Allocate resources (e.g., time, money and staff) based on returns on investment.

Moving forward

Over the next three years, the Data Quality Campaign's (DQC) partners will continue to provide support and information about building robust student-level longitudinal data systems via the 10 essential elements. But the campaign's primary focus now shifts toward helping states identify and put in place the necessary policies and practices so that key stakeholders actually use longitudinal data to help students succeed. Even states that have not finished building their longitudinal data systems have a wealth of new information that they can use right away.

In addition to longitudinal data, states need to collect, analyze and use many other types of data to effectively manage schools and school systems. For example, how much time does it take for a high-performing school system to hire a new teacher? Are the most successful schools more likely to be located in districts that allocate more of their money toward instruction than are less successful schools? This type of process management information, combined with information on student performance from the state longitudinal data system, can guide important decisions that have an impact on student achievement. While the DQC hopes to draw attention over the next three years to the need for states

and districts to promote the use of process management data, the campaign will continue to focus on longitudinal data and data systems.

Similarly, many of the issues discussed in this paper also apply to districts. As part of its work in this phase of the campaign, the DQC plans to help states and districts work together to ensure that state systems meet district needs. However, this paper focuses on the 10 actions that states should take to ensure that all stakeholders use state longitudinal data effectively for continuous improvement. Future DQC surveys will include questions to assess state progress on taking these actions.

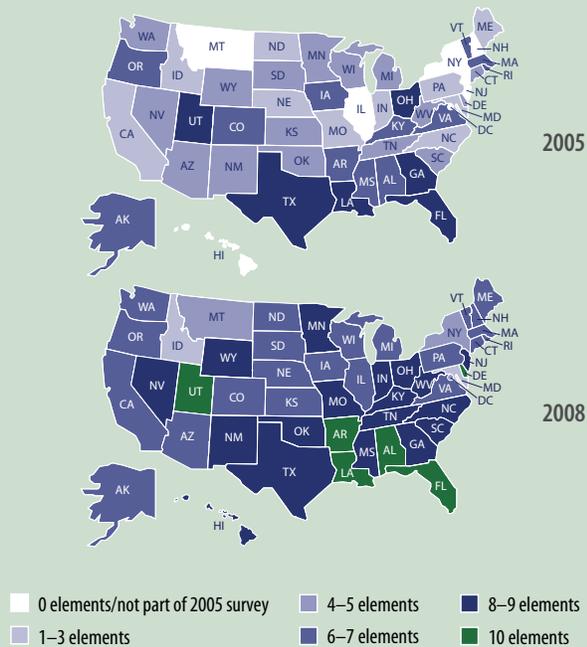
Data Should Be Used by All Stakeholders

Following are examples of how stakeholders throughout the education system can use longitudinal data to improve student performance:

- **Governors and legislators** — to create policies that support continuous improvement and to allocate state resources;
- **Chief state school officers** — to shape education policies and programs, allocate state education agency resources to help districts, and create professional development around proper use of data;
- **School board members (state and local)** — to evaluate effective programs, textbooks and interventions;
- **Postsecondary educators and state higher education executives** — to identify necessary courses, effective transition strategies and staffing resources to meet the needs of incoming students;
- **Early childhood learning administrators** — to evaluate how their programs prepare children for success in elementary schools;
- **District administrators** — to improve curriculum and practice both systemically and in specific schools, allocate teacher and staff resources, and provide professional development opportunities;
- **School administrators** — to guide staff and time resources, teaching, course assignments, and testing;
- **Teachers** — to create individual student education plans;
- **Parents and students** — to monitor academic progress and to inform decisions about courses and programs;
- **Advocacy/improvement/research organizations** — to assess the impact of policies, programs and practices; and
- **Other public agencies serving children** — to understand the relationship between their services and educational outcomes.

States Make Remarkable Progress on Building Data Systems

Since the Data Quality Campaign (DQC) launched in 2005, states have made remarkable progress in developing longitudinal data systems that can track student progress over time, from prekindergarten through 12th grade and into postsecondary education. In 2005, no state had all 10 essential elements of a high-quality longitudinal data system. In 2008, six states had all 10 elements, and 48 had five or more elements in place. Within the next three years, 47 states plan to have eight or more elements.



By gathering these data, states now collect the information needed to answer vital questions, such as:

- Which schools produce the strongest academic growth for their students? (39 states collect the data needed to answer this question, up from 21 in 2005)
- What achievement levels in middle school indicate that a student is on track to succeed in rigorous courses in high school? (12 states, up from 3 in 2005)
- What is the state's graduation rate, according to the calculation agreed to in the 2005 National Governors Association compact? (42 states, up from 14 in 2005)
- What high school performance indicators (e.g., enrollment in rigorous courses or performance on state tests) are the best predictors of students' success in college or the workplace? (10 states, up from 2 in 2005)
- What percentage of high school graduates take remedial courses in college? (27 states, up from 8 in 2005)
- Which teacher preparation programs produce the graduates whose students have the strongest academic growth? (16 states, up from 5 in 2005)

Each year, the DQC surveys all 50 states and the District of Columbia to assess states' progress toward implementing the 10 essential elements of a longitudinal data system. To see complete survey results, go to www.DataQualityCampaign.org.

10 Essential Elements of a Longitudinal Data System

The DQC has identified 10 essential elements that states must include to build a highly effective longitudinal data system:

1. A unique statewide student identifier that connects student data across key databases across years (48 states report having this element, up from 36 in 2005)
2. Student-level enrollment, demographic and program participation information (49 states, up from 38 in 2005)
3. The ability to match individual students' test records from year to year to measure academic growth (48 states, up from 32 in 2005)
4. Information on untested students and the reasons they were not tested (41 states, up from 25 in 2005)
5. A teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students (21 states, up from 13 in 2005)
6. Student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned (17 states, up from 7 in 2005)
7. Student-level college readiness test scores (29 states, up from 7 in 2005)
8. Student-level graduation and dropout data (50 states, up from 34 in 2005)
9. The ability to match student records between the P-12 and postsecondary systems (28 states, up from 12 in 2005)
10. A state data audit system assessing data quality, validity and reliability (45 states, up from 19 in 2005)

■ Changing Culture and Maximizing Investments in Data

Now that the longitudinal data are collected, states must take action so that key stakeholders can use the information to improve student performance at the school and classroom levels and also provide feedback to the state on data they need to make the improvement continuous.

Historically, state education agencies (SEAs) have served as conduits of K–12 data — they collected specific pieces of data from local education agencies (school districts) and passed them to the U.S. Department of Education as required by law, or they produced state-mandated reports. Then, as states built K–12 longitudinal data systems, SEAs set up and implemented the systems, with support from state policymakers.

The SEA can support efforts to use these data by providing key information and tools — such as creating central data repositories to house district data — to reduce financial and time burdens on districts and schools. However, the SEA also needs to work in

partnership with districts to ensure that state systems are built with district needs in mind.

The SEA is not the only state agency with a role to play. Agencies that deal with human capital issues — such as early learning, workforce development, K–12 education and postsecondary education — are all working toward the same goal of preparing individuals for success in an increasingly knowledge-based economy and world, and they all have their own data systems. As such, these agencies must work together, and their data systems need to be able to exchange information.

Policymakers and educators also need to ask themselves what they are doing to change the culture around data use and make it feasible for stakeholders at all levels to use data daily. These questions include:

- Have our expectations about how data will be used in schools and classrooms changed? How well do we communicate those expectations?
- Are there ways we can better facilitate data use? Technology investments? Training?
- Do teachers have the autonomy and authority to change practices and the way they use their time as a result of having access to better information?
- How are school and district administrators using data to allocate resources? How are they sharing the data and communicating expectations with teachers?
- How can education agencies across multiple levels work together to develop and support common achievement goals?
- Do we need more and different data to inform decisions?
- What is the process for changing which data are collected if key policy questions cannot be answered? How do we work with the SEA to ensure the appropriate data are collected?
- How can I support data use in my day-to-day activities and in my institution?

More Than IT

To date, information technology (IT) staff — including chief information officers and state and local data managers — have provided vital leadership in developing state longitudinal data systems, but now data users must take on a more prominent role.

Building, maintaining and effectively using data systems is not solely an IT project. Educators and program staff (e.g., special education, bilingual, Title I) are the owners of the data; they are responsible for their data and must take a leadership role in terms of knowing what data they need and how the information is used. They need to advise the IT team on what data should be collected, how the data should be defined, how often they need to be collected, and how they need to be analyzed and reported. IT staff are responsible for addressing data owners' needs and maintaining the security and integrity of the data. Just as we do not ask construction workers to turn our houses into livable homes, we cannot ask IT staff to be solely responsible for turning large databases into robust information systems.

10 State Actions To Ensure Effective Data Use

The DQC has identified three overarching imperatives for changing the culture around data use and maximizing states' investments in longitudinal data systems. Within these imperatives, the DQC also has identified 10 actions states need to take to ensure key stakeholders use the data effectively.

Expand the ability of state longitudinal data systems to link across the P–20 education pipeline and across state agencies.

- 1 Link state K–12 data systems with early learning, postsecondary education, workforce, social services and other critical state agency data systems.
- 2 Create stable, sustained support for robust state longitudinal data systems.
- 3 Develop governance structures to guide data collection, sharing and use.
- 4 Build state data repositories (e.g., data warehouses) that integrate student, staff, financial and facility data.

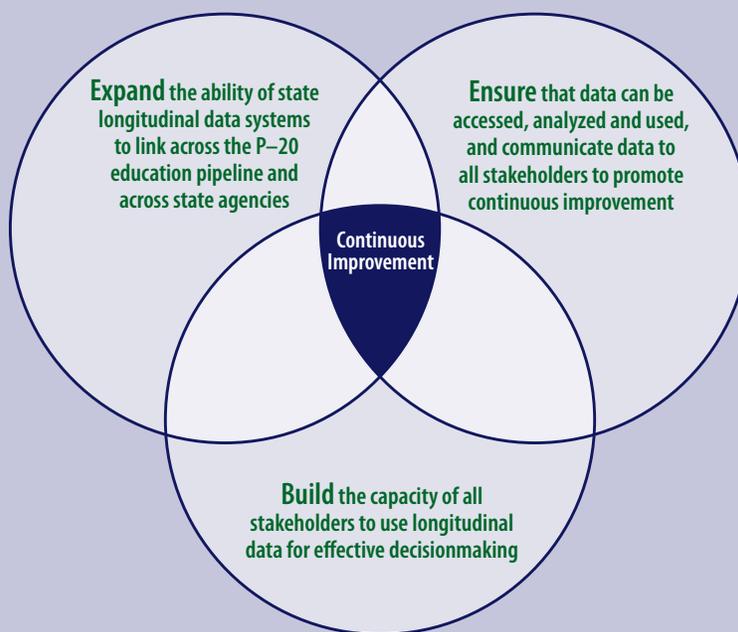
Ensure that data can be accessed, analyzed and used, and communicate data to all stakeholders to promote continuous improvement.

- 5 Implement systems to provide all stakeholders timely access to the information they need while protecting student privacy.
- 6 Create progress reports with individual student data that provide information educators, parents and students can use to improve student performance.
- 7 Create reports that include longitudinal statistics on school systems and groups of students to guide school-, district- and state-level improvement efforts.

Build the capacity of all stakeholders to use longitudinal data for effective decisionmaking.

- 8 Develop a purposeful research agenda and collaborate with universities, researchers and intermediary groups to explore the data for useful information.
- 9 Implement policies and promote practices, including professional development and credentialing, to ensure that educators know how to access, analyze and use data appropriately.
- 10 Promote strategies to raise awareness of available data and ensure that all key stakeholders, including state policymakers, know how to access, analyze and use the information.

Changing the Culture around Data Use

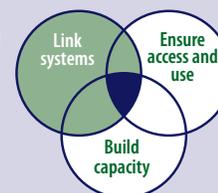


Priorities will necessarily vary across states, but the DQC has identified three overarching imperatives for changing the culture around data use and maximizing states' infrastructure investments:

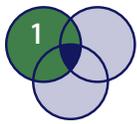
- Expand the ability of state longitudinal data systems to link across the P-20 education pipeline and across state agencies;
- Ensure that data can be accessed, analyzed and used, and communicate data to all stakeholders to promote continuous improvement; and
- Build the capacity of all stakeholders to use longitudinal data for effective decisionmaking.

Within these three imperatives are *10 actions* that states should take to change how data are used to make state and local decisions to improve student performance. This list is not exhaustive — it is designed to push states beyond their current practices and policies. Just as no SEA had all 10 essential elements in 2005, it is unlikely that any state has developed a process for fully using its longitudinal data. Some of the examples provided show how states are starting to use data or what they are considering; not all examples represent long-term or fully developed processes.

Expand the ability of state longitudinal data systems to link across the P-20 education pipeline and across state agencies



Even though states have made remarkable progress on building longitudinal data systems over the past three years, most are still in the process of developing them. As states continue this work, they also need to consider how to expand the system and increase its effectiveness. The DQC's 10 essential elements and the 10 state actions described in this paper focus primarily on P-12 systems, but for policymakers, educators, parents and students to have the information they need to truly improve student performance, these data systems must be built to exchange information across traditional barriers, such as with postsecondary, workforce, early learning, health, social services and juvenile justice systems. This information sharing must be possible both within and among districts and states. To support this sharing, states must:



Link state K–12 data systems with early learning, postsecondary education, workforce, social services and other critical state agency data systems

College and career readiness is quickly becoming the expectation for high school graduates, but ensuring that students have the preparation they need does not begin in high school. The only way to evaluate whether students, schools and districts are meeting the college and career readiness expectation is to collect and analyze student-level data across the P–20 spectrum to provide feedback on readiness and enable continuous improvement. Ensuring that student information can be linked and shared back and forth among early learning, K–12 and postsecondary education and workforce is critical.

However, academic data and performance histories alone cannot provide a complete picture of the challenges students face and the programs and services they take part in outside the classroom that affect achievement. For example, students who are in foster care programs may change homes and, in turn, schools one to two times a year, which can negatively affect their academic performance. Social services agencies and educational institutions need to share data about individual students to ensure that students receive services for which they are qualified and to seamlessly transfer records and allow prompt school and program enrollment. In addition, researchers need access to this information to identify and analyze effective interventions and programs for students. (For more information on connecting data systems, go to www.DataQualityCampaign.org.)

Connecting data seamlessly across various educational systems requires developing interoperable data standards at the start and using them throughout the entire process. Just as it is more efficient and less expensive if the people building your house — carpenters, brick layers, electricians, plumbers, etc. — work from the same blueprints and use the same measurements, open, technical data standards help increase data quality, improve services and reduce cost. Policymakers and IT leaders must therefore ensure that national data standards and the organizations that facilitate their development are supported. (For more information on interoperability, go to www.DataQualityCampaign.org.)



Sharing P–20 Data in Minnesota

To meet the governor's goal of connecting the K–12 and postsecondary systems,

Minnesota worked through the P–16 Education Partnership, a voluntary advisory group tasked with improving the student transition from P–12 to postsecondary education. The full P–16 Education Partnership, including private and public postsecondary systems, teachers unions, the Career College Association, and the Minnesota Department of Education, determined the questions that this data sharing would answer. The P–16 Student Identification System Working Group was developed to help determine which P–12 and higher education data should be collected and potentially shared to provide these answers. Many of the elements the working group identified during its two years of collaborative review, such as race and ethnicity, already were being collected; others, such as participation in college readiness programs and completion of college-level courses, were not. The partnership's proposal to use the existing K–12 student identifier to follow students into postsecondary systems via their transcripts was codified into law in 2008. For more information, see www.DataQualityCampaign.org.



Interoperability in Connecticut

There is a growing commitment across Connecticut to develop interoperability

among agencies to improve data-driven and cross-agency decisionmaking. The Connecticut General Assembly has required that the Early Childhood Education Cabinet propose data interoperability recommendations for 2009. Work is under way for an Early Childhood Information System (ECIS) based on unique child and program identifiers that will capture information on all prekindergarten programs that receive state funding and be able to follow individual students into elementary education. In addition, the departments of Labor, Higher Education and K–12 Education have worked together to ensure data on postsecondary education, training and employment can be exchanged, matched and linked to better serve individuals, provide state policymakers with key information on education and labor market outcomes, and improve programs and services throughout the education pipeline. See the DQC Web site for more on the state's ECIS and efforts to link data systems across higher education and labor.

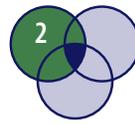
Although linking and using these data systems are important for policy, management and instructional decisions that focus on individual student success, these needs must be balanced with appropriate protections for the privacy of student records. In particular, the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) imposes limits on the disclosure of student records by educational agencies and institutions that receive funds from the U.S. Department of Education.

Since FERPA was enacted, the state role around data collection, sharing and use has expanded, which has raised new issues about how states' sharing and use of longitudinal data relates to student privacy protections. The DQC has created a resource center (www.DataQualityCampaign.org) to help states ensure privacy while supporting the sharing, linking and use of data to improve student achievement.

To make it possible for appropriate entities to share these critical data, state actions include, but are not limited to:

- Defining the purposes for linking and sharing data across agencies;
- Reviewing and clarifying state privacy laws (including regulations and guidelines) on the role of the longitudinal data system;
- Authorizing the data system through state law to be able to share data among state agencies;
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities for protecting individual privacy;
- Promoting cross-system interoperability, including the development of common standards for data architecture and definitions; and
- Developing agreements between K–12, postsecondary and other agencies to match data records.

(See www.DataQualityCampaign.org for a complete list of state actions to ensure individual privacy.)



Create stable, sustained support for robust state longitudinal data systems

Although many policymakers have viewed the building of a statewide longitudinal data system as a one-time expense, it is not. As with other critical infrastructure, the longitudinal data system will require maintenance and enhancements over time. In addition, as state-of-the-art technology becomes available, it needs to be incorporated in state data systems to ensure that limited resources — both money and staff time — are allocated effectively.

A key factor for ensuring that state longitudinal data systems remain viable over time is building demand for the information among all users. Users who understand the value of and actively seek out the information will provide the vocal support and feedback to ensure the systems are sustained and remain useful.

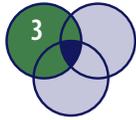
Therefore, states need to:

- Make support and resources for educational data systems a standard line item in state budgets and protect them from cuts, even in a difficult economy, and
- Promote the use of information from state longitudinal data systems to build demand.



California's Legislative Support for Longitudinal Data Systems

The California legislature has mandated that the SEA build and sustain three critical data systems to ensure that all stakeholders have access to the information necessary to improve education in the state: the California School Information Services, the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System and the California Longitudinal Teacher Integrated Data Education System. Several other states also are developing legislation to codify, authorize and support their state longitudinal data systems. Visit the DQC Web site (www.DataQualityCampaign.org) to see a case study of the California legislation and for links to all of the state legislation dealing with state longitudinal data systems.



Develop governance structures to guide data collection, sharing and use

Traditionally, organizations within the education sector — as well as other state agencies — have worked in silos, with each developing its own data systems and policies and practices for collecting and using the information. As states work to link the state longitudinal data system with other systems, setting up governance structures will be essential.

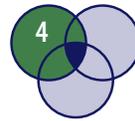
Data governance is one of the most underdeveloped but critical aspects of data management. Through data governance, organizations define the roles and responsibilities needed to institutionalize their commitment to data quality and use. Without a data governance strategy, there is no clear ownership of the data, no clear business processes for collecting and reporting data, and no accountability for data quality. Examples of issues to address in data governance policies include, but are not limited to:

- Establishing Memoranda of Understanding outlining what data are shared and how, where they will be stored, how often they will be updated, who will conduct what analyses, how privacy will be protected, etc.;
- Creating a data sharing committee with representatives from all state agencies that meets regularly to oversee the governance policy and structure;
- Engaging support from state-level policymakers to share data across agencies; and
- Developing common standards (e.g., ensuring “retention” means the same thing in P–12 as in postsecondary, establishing interoperability standards and specifications, etc.).



Tennessee’s Data Governance Structure

Tennessee officials spent the first year of their efforts to build a longitudinal data system on establishing a detailed data governance structure. The state did not spend any money on software or hardware until the roles, responsibilities and data ownership processes were developed and all program areas agreed to them. For more information, see www.DataQualityCampaign.org.



Build state data repositories (e.g., data warehouses) that integrate student, staff, financial and facility data

State educational data warehouses are essentially storage facilities, in which detailed and reliable educational data from several areas that affect student performance are stored and integrated. These data then can be used to produce a variety of reports that can be made readily available to a wide range of users, from the general public to individual teachers (see State Actions 6 and 7). Because several years of data are integrated from many separate silos, these data can be analyzed and used in ways never before possible. For example, in states that are able to connect teacher and student data, analyses can be conducted on which teachers best serve different groups of students, thereby informing teacher assignments. (For more information, see www.DataQualityCampaign.org.)



New Mexico’s Data Warehouse

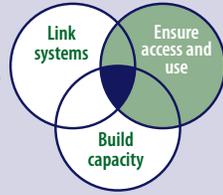
New Mexico has implemented its data warehouse, which fully integrates student, staff, course and assessment data to strengthen student performance, influence decisionmaking, identify specific areas for improvement, examine relationships between cost and effectiveness, and improve administrative time management and mandated reporting. The SEA is sharing data with other state agencies to inform parents and citizens about student progress, school quality, and college and career readiness options. For more information, see www.DataQualityCampaign.org.

However, the need to share data (State Action 1 on page 8) does not mean that all data have to be maintained in a single warehouse. The systems only need to be connected and able to share the necessary data points with appropriate technology.

To create these data repositories, states need to:

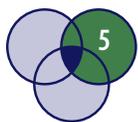
- Identify project scope, build strong project plans and stick to the plans;
- Generate realistic estimates of time and cost;
- Include representatives of all user groups in the planning process; and
- Address security issues up front.

Ensure that data can be accessed, analyzed and used, and communicate data to all stakeholders to promote continuous improvement



As states have developed longitudinal data systems over the past three years, they have dramatically increased the amount of data they collect. However, most stakeholders still are not able to access the information. They are forced to rely on state, district and school report cards — which may or may not be available online and provide only a limited amount of data — to provide a snapshot of state, district or school success. Rarely is this information used to inform their daily activities or decisions because it is not timely and it is not in a form that is relevant or useful to various stakeholder audiences.

States need to change how data are accessed and analyzed, and they need to communicate the information differently to ensure that educators (classroom, school, district, higher education and early learning) and state and local policymakers can use it regularly to assess performance; alter practice; and allocate resources, time, money, staff and tools (e.g., computers, equipment, buildings and supplies) for continuous improvement. Parents, students and others also need to be able to access and use these data to improve student performance. Without a concerted effort among all stakeholders in the state to change the way the education “business” is conducted, the desired improvement in student performance is unlikely. To support this change, states must:



Implement systems to provide all stakeholders timely access to the information they need while protecting student privacy

Data are only useful if people are able to access, understand and use them. If they do not have timely and ready access to academic and performance information, stakeholders are forced to make decisions based on anecdote, experience or instinct.

Yet although stakeholders must have access to data to inform their decisions, everyone does not need access to all data, nor does everyone involved in education need to suddenly become a statistician. Rather, teachers need to teach, principals to lead, parents to ask questions and make decisions in the best interest of their children, and policymakers to allocate resources.

At the same time, states must ensure that confidential student and teacher information remains private. Creating systems that provide access based on the role of the data user enables the state to share appropriate data with each group of stakeholders while protecting individual privacy.

For example, school, district and state performance statistics may be available to the general public, but a student’s parents, teachers and administrators may be the only people able to view confidential information about that student. The information available also may vary depending on the role of the person accessing the data — a parent may see information such as a lunchroom account balance; the teacher may not.

In general, the key distinction between roles is based on whether or not an individual has a reason to be allowed access to confidential student and teacher information. Examples of access include:

- Students have access to their own academic and performance history;
- Parents have access to their own children’s data;
- Teachers have access to individual student data;
- Principals and district administrators have access to student-level data for the students in their schools;
- Researchers with research contracts with the SEA have access to the individual student data specified in the contract; and
- Everyone, including students, teachers, administrators, parents, state board of education members, legislators, governors, researchers and members of the general public, may view aggregate data for schools, programs, districts and the state.

States must develop the system and procedures to allow or prevent access to the information so that privacy can be protected without restricting users' legitimate access to information (see section on protecting privacy under State Action 1). Regarding access, states particularly need to:

- Develop and issue guidelines or regulations that address the ability of the state longitudinal data system to be part of data sharing agreements with other agencies; and
- Make clear the procedures and expectations to access and protect state longitudinal data for research and improvement purposes.



Arkansas' Role-Based Access

Arkansas has built a Web-based reporting system that allows different stakeholders

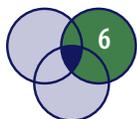
to view different information based on their need and level of responsibility for students. Current roles defined in the system include teachers; counselor/registrar; school administrators, district administrator; district system administrator; and key SEA staff. Each individual is provided with a unique account that requires authentication when signing onto the system and determines which reports — student, classroom, grade or school level — he or she can access. Arkansas also is working to add parent and student access as part of the next phase of the system. For more information, see www.DataQualityCampaign.org.

information, states should develop a variety of reports that analyze the data in different ways. Some types of reports the state might provide include:

- **Diagnostic reports** on individual students to guide efforts by teachers and parents to provide timely and effective help to students and to make sure that instruction challenges them appropriately.
- **Early warning system reports** that provide information on whether individual students are at risk and in need of extra assistance. These reports can make it possible to address student academic and behavioral difficulties as early as possible.
- **Readiness reports** to identify whether and to what extent each elementary, middle and high school student is on track for college and career readiness by high school graduation. These reports can focus both on a student's current performance level and rate of academic growth.
- **Predictive reports** on individual students that analyze past performance to see whether students are likely to reach a performance goal.

While protecting student and teacher privacy by limiting access to appropriate users (see State Action 5), the state should place these reports online so they are readily available. At the same time, states should provide more advanced users access to the data so they can perform their own analyses to meet their needs. These reports also need to include information such as how terms are defined, how calculations were made and when the data were collected to help users understand the context for the reports.

With a state data warehouse system and a full set of reports available online, educators, parents and students with the appropriate access would be able to view and use all of the relevant diagnostic, early warning and readiness-related information from a student's academic record, even if the student has just changed schools or districts. Having the state put this system together, as opposed to school districts, also will ensure that all educators, parents and students statewide — even those in small and less well-financed districts — have access to the information, and it is more cost effective than creating the same system multiple times at the district level.



Create progress reports with individual student data that provide information educators, parents and students can use to improve student performance

Currently, most accountability reports rely on a single high-stakes test score to determine whether students are on track to succeed. Longitudinal data enrich the information available to parents and teachers by providing information on a student's academic history, including courses taken, grades received, and scores on formative and statewide assessments. To help educators, parents and students interpret and use the new



Louisiana's Dropout Early Warning System

Louisiana piloted its Dropout Early Warning System in 2008. The indicators

used in the pilot include attendance, grade point average, discipline data and student age to identify students who are likely to drop out of school so that schools can work to keep those students in school and increase the chances that they will graduate. Pilot schools were required to develop an intervention plan. For more information, see the DQC's case study (www.DataQualityCampaign.org).



Create reports that include longitudinal statistics on school systems and groups of students to guide school-, district- and state-level improvement efforts

All stakeholders need information on school, district and state performance to gauge progress and make decisions to support continuous improvement at all education levels. The state should take the lead on creating and providing access to a variety of reports that analyze performance and answer key questions. These reports should include longitudinal statistics, which provide valuable information about the effectiveness of schools, programs, policies and interventions for students who start out at different academic levels. They also need to include information on definitions, calculations and other details to help users understand the context for the data. In addition, states should provide more advanced users access to the longitudinal statistics separate from the reports.

Routinely creating these reports and making them readily available online will minimize requests for ad hoc analysis, saving states valuable staff time and resources. Examples of the kinds of longitudinal statistics and reports states can provide districts, schools and advocacy/improvement/research organizations include:

- **Feedback reports from higher education to K–12 schools and districts, from high schools to middle schools, and from middle schools to elementary schools.** How did the school's graduates perform in the next level of education? How was this related to their academic levels when they entered and left the school?
- **Information on student academic performance and growth disaggregated by students' prior achievement levels.** For example, what percentage of students who entered middle school and high school at low performance levels are growing fast enough to get them on track to college and career readiness by the time they graduate from their current schools?
- **Longitudinal graduation rates disaggregated by prior achievement and other suitable at-risk indicators.** Are some high schools much more effective than others in getting at-risk students to graduate? How many of these students graduate college and career ready?
- **Statistics on the relationship between and among course completion and course grades, exam results, and later enrollment and success in college.** What percentage of students receiving credit for various courses in the school or district later met benchmarks on college readiness exams, enrolled in college, and graduated from college with a degree or certificate? Does course completion predict later success only if the student earns good grades?

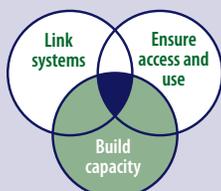


Kentucky's Feedback Reports

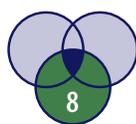
The Kentucky Council on

Postsecondary Education has developed a series of reports that the state shares with high schools to show how their graduates ultimately perform in Kentucky postsecondary education. In many states, higher education agencies provide high schools with reams of paper reports about subsequent student performance in higher education. Kentucky officials developed succinct, easy-to-read and easy-to-interpret reports that are now used by educators and policymakers. For more information, see the DQC's January 2008 quarterly meeting and issue brief (www.DataQualityCampaign.org).

Build the capacity of all stakeholders to use longitudinal data for effective decisionmaking



Most stakeholders who need to use data to understand and improve student performance are not trained statisticians. Policymakers, school board members, educators and administrators, business and community leaders, parents, advocacy and school improvement organization staff, journalists, and others often need additional support to learn how to uncover the context for the data, such as how the data were collected, when the data were collected, what policies were in place that might have affected the data, etc. Therefore, in addition to providing access, tools and policies to enable stakeholders to use the data, the state also must:



Develop a purposeful research agenda and collaborate with universities, researchers and intermediary groups to explore the data for useful information

To make full use of the longitudinal data they are collecting, states need people with high-level analytical skills and research training to mine the data and answer the multitude of policy and evaluation questions. Few states have the resources to add researchers and analysts to their staff; however, all states have access to public and private universities and other organizations that conduct educational research and/or serve as advocacy organizations that can use and communicate the data and data analysis as part of their action agendas. Strategic partnerships with these organizations could inform decisionmaking and improve student performance. Key research topics and advocacy areas include:

- Effectiveness of teacher preparation;
- Differences between high-performing schools and districts and average or low-performing schools and districts;

- Educational background of students who experience the least difficulty in transitioning to college; and
- Effectiveness of dropout prevention programs.



Kansas' Research Consortium

Kansas has launched a research consortium in partnership with the University of Kansas, Kansas State University and the Kansas Board of Regents to develop and implement a statewide agenda of key research topics, develop a process for using data to improve instruction and student achievement, and build a network of scholars that shape education as well as deliver it. For more information, see www.DataQualityCampaign.org.



Implement policies and promote practices, including professional development and credentialing, to ensure that educators know how to access, analyze and use data appropriately

Just as collecting the data alone is not enough to improve student performance, making the data available to educators is not sufficient to drive data use. If teachers and principals have not been trained to access, analyze, interpret and use the information, the new system likely will not lead to the desired changes in student performance. The state should take the lead in setting up policies and promoting practices that will lead to educators' having a better understanding of how to use the data to improve student performance, including:

- Requiring educators seeking certification or certification upgrades to receive training and show competence in the analysis, interpretation and use of data;
- Promoting professional development and tutorials that are available in multiple formats in a variety of venues, including online tutorials related to using existing reports;

- Providing incentives for educators to take part in training and other professional development;
 - Promoting best practice research on data usage; and
 - Encouraging districts to ensure educators have the technological tools necessary for accessing data, time for discussions with other teachers, and autonomy to change the teaching process (instructional strategies, tools, use of time) based on the results of data analysis.
- Promoting training on data use for parents, students, school board members, state executive and legislative staff, SEA personnel, education writers and journalists, community leaders, and the general public; and
 - Ensuring that training is provided in multiple formats, including online tutorials, easy-to-access documentation, webinars, courses offered in conjunction with local schools and community colleges, etc.



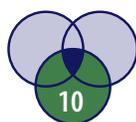
Oregon's Professional Development Program

Oregon has developed two primary data system training efforts to date. The first training program is aimed at instructional professional development, while the second is more of a technical strand for district data submitters. For more information, see www.DataQualityCampaign.org.



Florida's Sunshine Connections

Florida has developed a Web-based portal that provides legislators with access to a variety of reports about how schools in their legislative districts are performing. Florida Department of Education staff members have worked closely with legislative staff over the years to make sure that the data are understood and used appropriately, and these reports have been based on feedback and questions from legislators to meet their needs when evaluating policy. For more information, see www.DataQualityCampaign.org.



Promote strategies to raise awareness of available data and ensure that all key stakeholders, including state policymakers, know how to access, analyze and use the information

Educators will be the primary users of data to improve student performance, but other stakeholders also need to know what data are available and be able to access, interpret and use data effectively. Without access to timely and accurate data, state policymakers are flying blind when weighing the potential impact of new legislation in terms of the costs, return on investment, and effects on students and schools. School board members at the state and district levels also need access to timely and accurate information to make informed decisions.

However, access alone is not sufficient to ensure that data are used and interpreted correctly. Very few people have had access to longitudinal statistics in education; consequently, few will automatically know how to use the new information effectively. The state should take the lead in:

Implications for Policymakers To Ensure Data Can Be Accessed, Shared and Used

Although states have made impressive progress on implementing their longitudinal data systems, too few have taken the necessary steps to ensure that the information produced by these data systems is harnessed to inform and improve the processes and outcomes of states' education efforts. This shift requires building the political will and taking the practical steps to remove current barriers to accessing, sharing and using these data.

Following is an overview of priority areas for action by federal and state policy leaders (the executive branch, Congress, governors, state legislators, state boards of education, chief state school officers and others). Effective, action-oriented data systems are as critical to a state's education infrastructure as bridges are to the transportation infrastructure. The data systems must remain a priority for federal, state and local policymakers.

Actions for federal and state policymakers include:

Expand the ability of state longitudinal data systems to link across the P–20 education pipeline and across state agencies.

- Ensure that there is a line item in the state budget for the maintenance and growth of these systems;
- Clarify state and federal policies that ensure the protection of personally identifiable information while also authorizing the state longitudinal data system to collect, share and link data from multiple systems for the purposes of evaluation and continuous improvement;
- Create a governance structure and implement the necessary agreements (political, legal and practical) among various agencies to ensure data can be shared across and among P–12 and postsecondary systems and other critical data systems in ways that protect data quality, ensure transparency and promote efficiency;

- Emphasize interoperability across systems and states (e.g., standard definitions, specifications); and
- Create the political demand for sharing data — use the bully pulpit to talk about the need for information to follow individual students, even across state and district lines, and to break down the traditional silos.

Ensure that data can be accessed, analyzed and used, and communicate data to all stakeholders to promote continuous improvement.

- Ensure all stakeholders have appropriate access to longitudinal data;
- Promote the effective and timely presentation of this information to advance its use; and
- Support the development of early warning systems, growth models and predictive analysis tools that use longitudinal student data to inform and improve teaching and learning.

Build the capacity of all stakeholders to use longitudinal data for effective decisionmaking.

- Emphasize the role of robust data systems in the school improvement planning process and professional development activities;
- Change teacher certification requirements and offer incentives to ensure that teachers have facility with accessing and using data; and
- Support and invest in advances in technology to improve the efficiencies of data access, analysis and communication.

An Attainable Goal

Using valid, reliable and consistent information to drive all decisions across the education sector — a transformation that was not even conceivable a mere three years ago — is now an attainable goal. Thanks to the hard work and leadership of states and the growing national momentum behind this agenda, policymakers, educators and families increasingly have the information they need to ensure every child has the knowledge and skills to succeed.

Over the next three years, the DQC will continue to assist states in developing data systems based on the 10 essential elements and in using the information to improve student performance. To help ensure that states benefit from their infrastructure investments, the DQC will focus on two high-priority needs: building demand for the newly available information and helping state agencies assist all stakeholders in harnessing this powerful source of information.

Managing Partners of the Data Quality Campaign

Achieve, Inc.
Alliance for Excellent Education
Council of Chief State School Officers
Education Commission of the States
The Education Trust
National Association of State Boards of Education
National Association of System Heads
National Center for Educational Achievement
National Center for Higher Education Management Systems
National Governors Association Center for Best Practices
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National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification
The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education
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New England Board of Higher Education
Pathways to College Network
Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council
Pre-K Now
Roads to Success
Southern Regional Education Board
Thomas B. Fordham Institute
Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

To join the DQC as an endorsing partner, visit www.DataQualityCampaign.org.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is the DQC's founding funder; additional support has been provided by the Casey Family Programs, the Lumina Foundation for Education, and the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation.

Visit the Data Quality Campaign Web site (www.DataQualityCampaign.org) for more about the:

- 10 essential elements and the 10 state actions required to establish, maintain and use a quality longitudinal data system;
- Results of the DQC's annual update of its survey that show where your state stands on the 10 essential elements and the 10 state actions;
- Tools, materials, meetings and information that can aid states and interested organizations seeking to ensure increased quality, accessibility and use of data; and
- Information on how your organization can partner with the DQC to generate the understanding and will to build and use state longitudinal data systems.

Visit www.SchoolDataDirect.org for information about public schools nationwide.

DATAQUALITY
CAMPAIGN

Using Data To Improve Student Achievement

www.DataQualityCampaign.org

COMMON EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

**A Foundation for
Success in the Workplace:**
*The Skills All Employees Need,
No Matter Where They Work*

PERSONAL SKILLS
PEOPLE SKILLS
APPLIED KNOWLEDGE
WORKPLACE SKILLS

A Cross-Industry Approach to Foundational Skills

COMMON EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

Today, employers in every industry sector emphasize the need for employees with certain foundational skills. These include, a strong academic grounding in reading and math, as well as individual abilities such as teamwork, problem solving, work ethic and integrity. While employers rely on employees to have the same basic skills, they do not always talk about or label them the same way. This makes it difficult for prospective employees and educators to know exactly what it takes to be ready to succeed in *any* career path in *any* industry.

The National Network has brought together the organizations that represent employers from major economic sectors, and they have worked to identify the core set of fundamental skills that potential employees need in the workplace – and a common vocabulary to explain them.

This model can take its place as the foundation for all industries to map skill requirements to credentials and to career paths. In doing so, this model allows employees to understand the skills that all industries believe prepare individuals to succeed.¹ Educators and other learning providers will also have an industry-defined roadmap for what foundational skills to teach, providing individuals the added benefit of being able to evaluate educational programs to ensure they will in fact learn skills that employers value.

Employability skills can be acquired in a variety of ways, including military service, work experiences and community service, as well as traditional education.

The National Network has identified the Common Employability Skills for all jobs, which benefit:

- Employers, who can now identify the common skills that all their employees should exhibit
- Potential employees, who know what basic skills employers expect them to have for any job in the workplace, and can better communicate their skill levels to employers
- Educators and other learning providers, who know what foundational skills to emphasize



PERSONAL SKILLS

INTEGRITY: *Treating others with honesty, fairness and respect*

- Demonstrate respect for company's time and property
- Accept responsibility for one's decisions and actions

INITIATIVE: *Demonstrating a willingness to work and seek out new work challenges*

- Take initiative in seeking out new responsibilities and work challenges, increasing the variety and scope of one's job
- Pursue work with energy, drive and effort to accomplish tasks
- Establish and maintain personally challenging, but realistic work goals
- Strive to exceed standards and expectations

DEPENDABILITY & RELIABILITY: *Displaying responsible behaviors at work*

- Behave consistently, predictably and reliably
- Fulfill obligations, complete assignments and meet deadlines
- Follow written and verbal directions
- Comply with organization's rules, policies and procedures
- Demonstrate regular and punctual attendance

ADAPTABILITY: *Displaying the capability to adapt to new, different or changing requirements*

- Be open to learning and considering new ways of doing things
- Actively seek out and carefully consider the merits of new approaches to work
- Embrace new approaches when appropriate and discard approaches that are no longer working
- Effectively change plans, goals, actions or priorities to deal with changing situations

PROFESSIONALISM: *Maintaining a professional demeanor at work*

- Demonstrate self-control by maintaining composure and keeping emotions in check even in difficult situations
- Maintain professional appearance by dressing appropriately for the job and maintaining personal hygiene
- Use professional language when speaking with supervisors, co-workers and customers
- Maintain a positive attitude
- Take ownership of one's work



PEOPLE SKILLS

TEAMWORK: *Demonstrating the ability to work effectively with others*

- Establish a high degree of trust and credibility with others
- Interact professionally and respectfully with supervisors and co-workers
- Develop constructive working relationships and maintain them over time
- Use appropriate strategies and solutions for dealing with conflicts and differences to maintain a smooth workflow

COMMUNICATION: *Maintaining open lines of communication with others*

- Demonstrate sensitivity and empathy
- Listen to and consider others' viewpoints
- Recognize and interpret the verbal and nonverbal behavior of others
- Speak clearly, in precise language and in a logical, organized and coherent manner

RESPECT: *Working effectively with those who have diverse backgrounds*

- Demonstrate sensitivity and respect for the opinions, perspectives, customs and individual differences of others
- Be flexible and open-minded when dealing with a wide range of people
- Value diversity of approaches and ideas

¹ The competencies come from the existing Industry Competency Models, which were created and vetted by each of the industries

READING: *Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work-related documents*

- Read and comprehend work-related instructions and policies, memos, bulletins, notices, letters, policy manuals and governmental regulations
- Read and comprehend documents ranging from simple and straightforward, to more complex and detailed
- Attain meaning and comprehend core ideas from written materials
- Integrate what is learned from written materials with prior knowledge
- Apply what is learned from written material to work situations

WRITING: *Using standard English to clearly communicate thoughts, ideas and information in written form*

- Prepare written materials that are easy to understand using correct wording
- Communicate thoughts, ideas, information, messages and other written information in a logical, organized and coherent manner
- Use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation and capitalization
- Write in a factual manner in a tone appropriate for the target audience in multiple formats

MATHEMATICS: *Using mathematics to solve problems*

- Add, subtract, multiply and divide whole numbers, fractions, decimals and percents
- Convert decimals to fractions; convert fractions to percents
- Calculate averages, ratios, proportions and rates
- Take measurement of time, temperature, distance, length, width, height and weight; convert one measurement to another
- Translate practical problems into useful mathematical expressions

SCIENCE: *Knowing and applying scientific principles and methods to solve problems*

- Understand basic scientific principles
- Understand the scientific method (i.e., identify problem, collect information, form opinion and draw conclusion)
- Apply basic scientific principles to solve problems and complete tasks

TECHNOLOGY: *Using information technology and related applications to convey and retrieve information*

- Navigation and File Management
 - Understand common computer terminology
 - Use scroll bars, a mouse and dialog boxes to work within the computer's operating system
 - Access and switch between applications and files of interest
 - Adhere to standard conventions for safeguarding privacy and security
- Internet and Email
 - Navigate the Internet to find information
 - Open and configure standard browsers
 - Use searches, hypertext references and transfer protocols (enter URLs)
 - Send and retrieve electronic mail (email)

CRITICAL THINKING: *Using logical thought processes to analyze and draw conclusions*

- Identify inconsistent or missing information
- Critically review, analyze, synthesize, compare and interpret information
- Draw conclusions from relevant and/or missing information
- Test possible hypotheses to ensure the problem is correctly diagnosed and the best solution is found

PLANNING & ORGANIZING: *Planning and prioritizing work to manage time effectively and accomplish assigned tasks*

- Able to plan and schedule tasks so that work is completed on time
- Ability to prioritize various competing tasks
- Demonstrate the effective allocation of time and resources efficiently
- Will take necessary corrective action when projects go off track

PROBLEM SOLVING: *Demonstrating the ability to apply critical thinking skills to solve problems by generating, evaluating, and implementing solutions*

- Able to identify and define the problem
- Will communicate the problem to appropriate personnel
- Capable of generating possible solutions
- Ability to choose and implement a solution

DECISION MAKING: *Applying critical thinking skills to solve problems encountered in the workplace*

- Identify and prioritize the key issues involved to facilitate the decision making process
- Anticipate the consequences of decisions
- Involve people appropriately in decisions that may impact them
- Quickly respond with a back-up plan if a decision goes amiss

BUSINESS FUNDAMENTALS: *Having fundamental knowledge of the organization and the industry*

- Understand the importance of one's role in the functioning of the company and the potential impact one's performance can have on the success of the organization
- Recognize the importance of maintaining privacy and confidentiality of company information, as well as that of customers and co-workers, and comply with intellectual property laws
- Understand the significance of maintaining a healthful and safe environment and report any violations/discrepancies to appropriate personnel

CUSTOMER FOCUS: *Actively look for ways to identify market demands and meet customer or client needs*

- Understand and anticipate customer needs
- Provide personalized service with prompt and efficient responses to meet the requirements, requests and concern of customers or clients
- Be pleasant, courteous and professional when dealing with internal and external customers or clients
- Evaluate customer or client satisfaction

WORKING WITH TOOLS & TECHNOLOGY: *Selecting, using and maintaining tools and technology to facilitate work activity*

- Identify, select and use appropriate tools and technological solutions to frequently encountered problems
- Carefully consider which tools or technological solutions are appropriate for a given job, and consistently choose the best tool or technological solution for the problem at hand
- Operate tools and equipment in accordance with established operating procedures and safety standards
- Seek out opportunities to improve knowledge of tools and technologies that may assist in streamlining work and improving productivity



These employability skills are interconnected to allow employers to look at the full scope of what skills are necessary in all major economic sectors. Together, attainment of these business-defined skills prepares individuals for careers and for further education and training.

ABOUT THE NETWORK:

The National Network represents major business sectors and is funded through a collaborative partnership of Business Roundtable (BRT), ACT Foundation, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Joyce Foundation and Lumina Foundation. Members include leaders in the manufacturing, retail, healthcare, energy, construction, hospitality, transportation and information technology sectors. They represent the source of nearly 75 percent of projected U.S. job growth through 2020 (an estimated 30 million new jobs). More information on the National Network can be found at businessroundtable.org/closingtheskillsgap and actfdn.org.



Making the Grade

A 50-State Analysis of School Accountability Systems

By Carmel Martin, Scott Sargrad, and Samantha Batel May 2016

Center for American Progress



Making the Grade

A 50-State Analysis of School Accountability Systems

Part of a Series on Implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act

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Introduction and summary

One of the most enduring and contentious debates in education circles concerns the best way to hold schools and districts accountable for improving outcomes for students and closing achievement gaps. Lawmakers, teachers, district administrators, parents, and other stakeholders—all with strong and differing opinions—have wrestled for decades with questions about the appropriate role of the federal government compared with that of states and school districts in the operation of schools and the measurement of their success. Over the past 15 years, however, a national consensus slowly has emerged among the disparate parties and coalesced into a clear movement toward more sophisticated accountability systems and fewer federal mandates.

The Every Student Succeeds Act, or ESSA, signed into law in December 2015, was in many ways the culmination of the accountability movement. After months of negotiations, Congress outlined new requirements for statewide accountability systems that give states the opportunity to design their own systems that move beyond just test scores, while maintaining a clear federal role to protect historically underserved students.

Under ESSA, states must hold schools accountable for student performance in English language arts, or ELA, and mathematics; a second academic indicator, such as growth in ELA and mathematics; progress in achieving English language proficiency; high school graduation rates, if applicable; and at least one measure of school quality or student success. In addition, states are required to disaggregate these indicators, excluding English language proficiency, by individual subgroups of students, including those from low-income families, those from major racial and ethnic groups, those with disabilities, and English language learners.¹

Along with requiring states to use specific categories of indicators, ESSA also includes requirements related to the emphasis that states must place on the different indicators. States must give “substantial weight” to the first four indicators above and “much greater weight” to the combination of those indicators than to the measures of school quality or student success.²

ESSA's new requirements build on the history of school accountability, which began at the state level in the 1990s amid a broader effort to measure school performance.³ The No Child Left Behind Act, or NCLB—the 2001 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, or ESEA—increased the federal role in accountability.⁴ Under NCLB, states were responsible for improving student proficiency in ELA and mathematics as well as high school graduation rates. Additionally, schools were required to meet proficiency targets for every subgroup of students annually, with the targets increasing to 100 percent proficiency by 2014.⁵

ESSA, the most recent reauthorization of ESEA, gives states greater flexibility in designing more holistic accountability systems that take into account multiple indicators of school success, while continuing to hold schools accountable for academic achievement. This report analyzes the measures that states currently include in their accountability systems and examines how state systems compare with the new law's provisions, which will take effect in the 2017-18 school year.⁶ To this end, the Center for American Progress analyzed ESEA flexibility waivers and accountability workbooks, supplementing the data from those sources with information and materials from state departments of education.

The authors find that statewide accountability measures fall into one of seven main categories of indicators: achievement indicators, such as proficiency in reading and mathematics; student growth indicators in multiple academic subjects; English language acquisition indicators; early warning indicators, such as chronic absenteeism; persistence indicators, such as graduation rates; college- and career-ready indicators, such as participation in and performance on college entry exams; and other indicators, such as access to the arts.

It is apparent from the research for this report that state accountability systems vary in complexity. It is also abundantly clear that while the majority of states have surpassed the requirements of NCLB, nearly all states will need to make adjustments to comply fully with the new law. As states plan for this transition, CAP recommends that they take the following steps:

- **States should set a vision for their accountability systems and be purposeful about the incentives they create when selecting system indicators.** All states, for example, should set as a clear objective that all students graduate from high school ready for college and a career. States must then select indicators to quantify this goal and gauge progress, while being mindful of the actions and opportunities that these measures encourage schools to prioritize.

- **States must weigh the trade-offs between simplicity and complexity to create a tailored yet comprehensive system of accountability.** States should be thoughtful in designing systems that capture a complete picture of student success and strike a balance between straightforward and nuanced accountability. Systems should be comprehensive, but states should not dilute their systems with unnecessary measures.
- **States, districts, and schools should increase transparency and clarity of school accountability and rating methodology for communities and families.** States' accountability systems align with federal requirements and state priorities, but they serve a much greater purpose than compliance. They also must clearly communicate to communities and families which measures determine a school's performance rating in order to enable stakeholders to make informed choices and better advocate for students.

Over the next year, states should take advantage of the opportunity to improve their current accountability systems with a set of indicators that better captures student achievement and school success.

Statewide school accountability: A brief history

Passed in 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act initially awarded more than \$1 billion per year to districts serving disadvantaged students.⁷ The 1994 reauthorization of ESEA, the Improving America's Schools Act, or IASA, increased accountability for states and districts. IASA required states to establish reading or English language arts and mathematics standards; assess students at least once in elementary, middle, and high school against those standards; make assessment results public and break them out by student subgroup; and intervene in schools whose students were not making adequate yearly progress, or AYP.⁸

Alongside IASA, some states began to implement school accountability systems that not only reported student academic performance but also tied achievement to rewards and sanctions.⁹ In 1993, for example, Texas began to rate schools as “low-performing,” “acceptable,” “recognized,” or “exemplary.” Texas schools rated as low performing could face serious consequences, such as layoffs or closure.¹⁰

In the late 1990s, Massachusetts also designed a system of school performance and improvement ratings. Low student achievement and improvement data could designate schools as “underperforming” and trigger required support and oversight from local and state education authorities.¹¹ Conversely, schools with positive ratings could serve as exemplars of effective teaching or administration practices.¹²

The 2001 reauthorization of ESEA, No Child Left Behind, increased the federal role in holding states responsible for students' academic progress. Expanding on IASA, NCLB required states to test students in reading and mathematics in third through eighth grades and once in high school and in science once in elementary school, middle school, and high school.¹³ The law also required states to publicly report results for all students and subgroups of students, including major racial and ethnic groups, students with disabilities, English language learners, and students from low-income families.¹⁴

NCLB also outlined accountability provisions, requiring that all states develop and implement a single, statewide system that used sanctions and rewards to hold schools accountable for student achievement.¹⁵ As part of that system, schools were required to bring all students to proficiency in reading and mathematics by the 2013-14 school year and set annual measurable objectives, or AMOs, as progress benchmarks. If a school failed to reach its proficiency goals for any subgroup of students, it failed to make AYP. If a school failed to make AYP for two or more years in a row, NCLB guidelines required it to take particular improvement actions, including offering free tutoring or the option for students to transfer to another public school.¹⁶

In response to the law's 100 percent proficiency goal, some states lowered their standards to avoid missing yearly targets. From 2005 to 2007, for example, 15 states lowered their benchmarks in fourth- or eighth-grade reading or mathematics, and three states lowered standards in both subjects at both grade levels.¹⁷ As a result of these changes, lower state test scores qualified as proficient under NCLB, making it easier for schools to meet their proficiency targets without actually improving student achievement.¹⁸

In addition, an increasing number of schools, many of which were traditionally high performing, failed to meet the law's requirements. In 2007, for example, 28 percent of schools failed to make AYP. By 2011, this number had risen to 38 percent.¹⁹ By the end of 2011, more than 50 percent of schools in several states failed to make AYP, including some states that had previously lowered their standards.²⁰

As states and schools struggled with NCLB's AYP requirements, parents, educators, advocates, and other stakeholders called on Congress to rewrite the law. Although NCLB was due for reauthorization in 2007, Congress still had not passed a new bill by 2011. That same year, in response to state and local requests to move beyond NCLB's rigid accountability framework, the U.S. Department of Education began to offer states waivers from NCLB's provisions.²¹

Through these waivers, known as "ESEA flexibility," states were no longer required to meet AYP. Instead, states had the opportunity to design new, more holistic systems of school accountability that looked at individual student achievement and growth in at least ELA or reading and mathematics, graduation rates, and school performance and progress over time.²²

Under ESEA flexibility, states also were required to set ambitious but achievable AMOs in at least ELA or reading and mathematics. Unlike NCLB, these targets did not need to result in 100 percent proficiency, and states could determine exactly how to set their goals and targets to best support improvement for all students.²³ Together, these new proficiency goals and accountability indicators would help states more accurately differentiate schools and better support those that were lowest performing than under NCLB.

When the Every Student Succeeds Act was signed into law, the Department of Education already had approved 42 states and the District of Columbia for ESEA flexibility. Using these waivers, states designed new accountability systems to varying degrees of complexity, from mirroring NCLB requirements to incorporating multiple measures of student performance and school success. Eight states still operated under NCLB.²⁴

Statewide accountability systems

Today, statewide accountability systems across all 50 states and the District of Columbia range in sophistication and include a variety of indicators, for a total of 60 unique measures nationwide. To provide a framework for understanding all of these indicators, the authors of this report organize measures into seven main categories of indicators: achievement indicators; student growth indicators; English language acquisition indicators; early warning indicators; persistence indicators; college- and career-ready indicators; and other indicators.

Each state has its own distinct system with measures from some or all of the seven categories. Some states also have put in place a state accountability system in addition to their federal statewide accountability system. The authors analyzed these systems to capture fully how states hold schools accountable for student success.²⁵ In addition, some state indicators consolidate more than one measure into an indicator. The authors reported each measure in these composite indicators as its own indicator to better show the range of measures included.

TABLE 1
Indicators across states

Number of indicators	Number of states
Less than 5	3
5 to 10	24
11 to 15	15
16 to 20	7
Greater than 20	2

Note: The minimum number of indicators is four, and the maximum number of indicators is 26.
Source: Data are based on authors' analysis of ESEA flexibility waivers, state accountability workbooks, and information and materials from state departments of education.

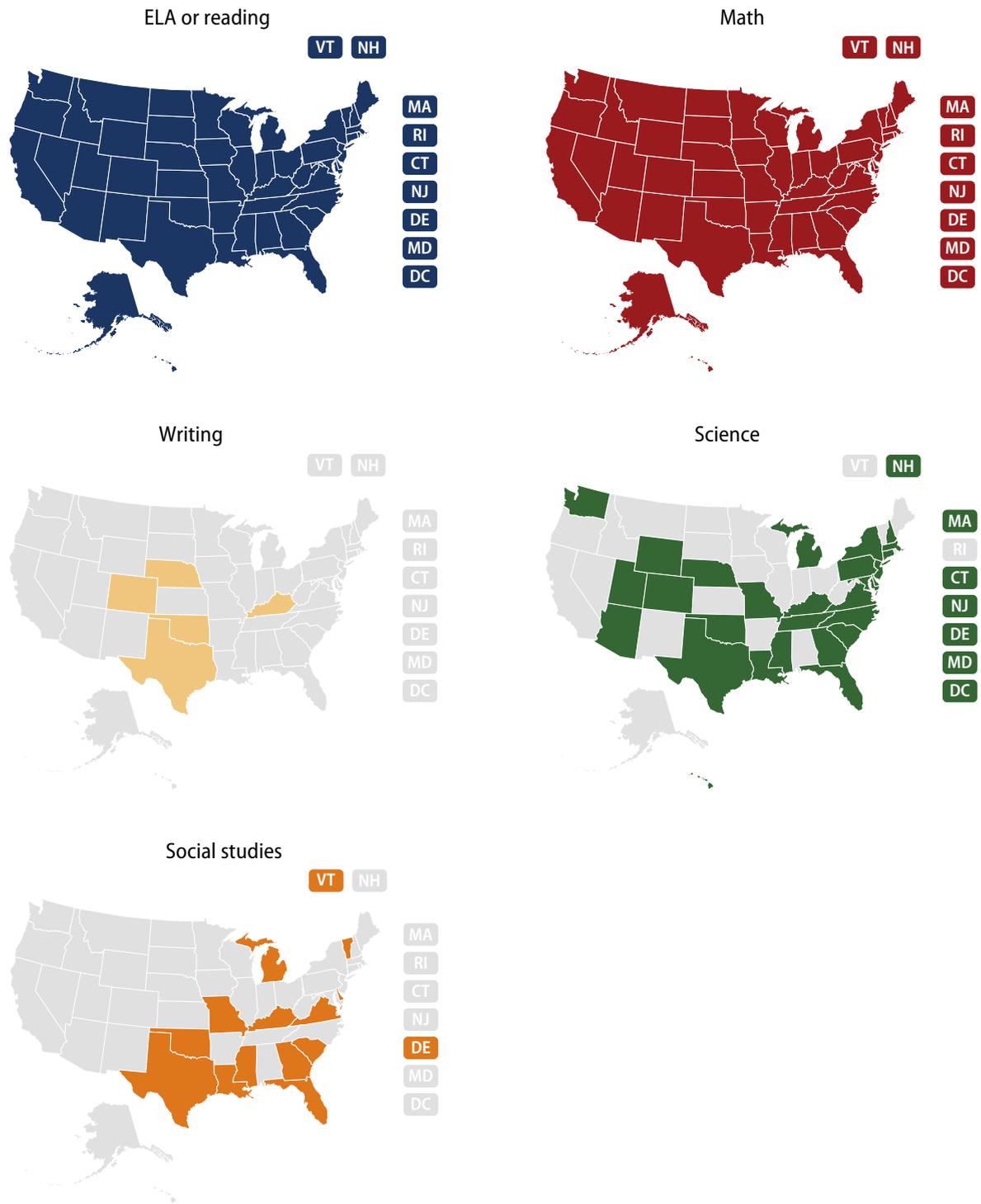
On average, states include a total of 11 indicators across some or all indicator categories in elementary, middle, and high school accountability systems, with a minimum of four indicators and a maximum of 26 indicators.²⁶

The following analysis also quantifies how states weight accountability indicators to determine a school's overall rating or grade. The weighting analysis, like the indicator analysis, is based on the authors' seven-category framework such that individual category weightings within each state sum to 100 percent. Average weights of each category across states, however, do not sum to 100 percent, as they do not include data from states that do not include or weight indicators in that category.

Overall, the authors excluded 15 states from the weighting analysis for various reasons. These states do not have an Elementary and Secondary Education Act flexibility waiver or additional state system—and therefore use adequate yearly progress for accountability; do not combine their accountability indicators in a way that results in an overall score or grade; use business rules that do not translate to weightings; or are transitioning to a new system.

For more detail, see Appendix A.

FIGURE 1
Achievement indicators by state



Source: Data are based on authors' analysis of ESEA flexibility waivers, state accountability workbooks, and information and materials from state departments of education.

Achievement indicators

Every state measures student academic achievement in English language arts and mathematics, and 29 states include a measure of student academic achievement in science, writing, or social studies. Of the states that measure additional academic subjects, 15 states measure science; two states measure science and writing; nine states measure science and social studies; and three states measure science, writing, and social studies.²⁷

Holding schools accountable for academic achievement gives states a picture of how all students perform each year. In addition to this baseline understanding of achievement, some states also hold schools responsible for other slices of proficiency, such as subgroup achievement gaps and school progress. West Virginia, for example, includes in its accountability system schoolwide proficiency rates in ELA and mathematics and achievement gaps between certain subgroups—including low-income students and non-low-income students; students of color and white students; migrant and nonmigrant students; English language learners and non-English language learners; and students with and without disabilities.²⁸ Nebraska, on the other hand, includes in its accountability system the three-year nonproficiency trend and the three-year school improvement trend, in addition to a school's average score in reading, mathematics, writing, and science.²⁹

To measure achievement, states rely on a variety of assessments. In the 2015-16 school year, for example, 23 states planned to participate in assessments developed by two consortia of states, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.³⁰ At least 25 states planned to administer state-developed assessments, such as the Kentucky Performance Rating for Educational Progress, or K-PREP, and the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, or STAAR, in multiple subjects.³¹ And Wyoming and Wisconsin, along with a handful of other states, are assessing high school students' ELA and mathematics proficiency using college readiness exams such as the SAT and ACT.³²

Furthermore, states rely on different statistical methods to incorporate achievement data into their accountability systems. Maryland, for example, counts the percentage of students who score “proficient” or “advanced” in ELA, mathematics, and science.³³ This method is intuitive, easily communicating achievement to

schools, parents, and students. However, focusing on the proficiency cut point limits the information to a label and masks student performance at both high and low achievement levels. States also may set different cut points, so a proficient student in one state may not be the same as a proficient student in another.³⁴

South Carolina, on the other hand, uses scale scores to incorporate ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies achievement into its accountability system.³⁵ Scale scores convert a student’s raw score to a common scale—for example, 300 to 900—and in doing so, are better able to distinguish the relative performance of students at the high and low ends of the same proficiency level.³⁶ Using this method, however, does require more context to understand what scores mean in terms of proficiency, and states using scale scores each have their own conversion table.

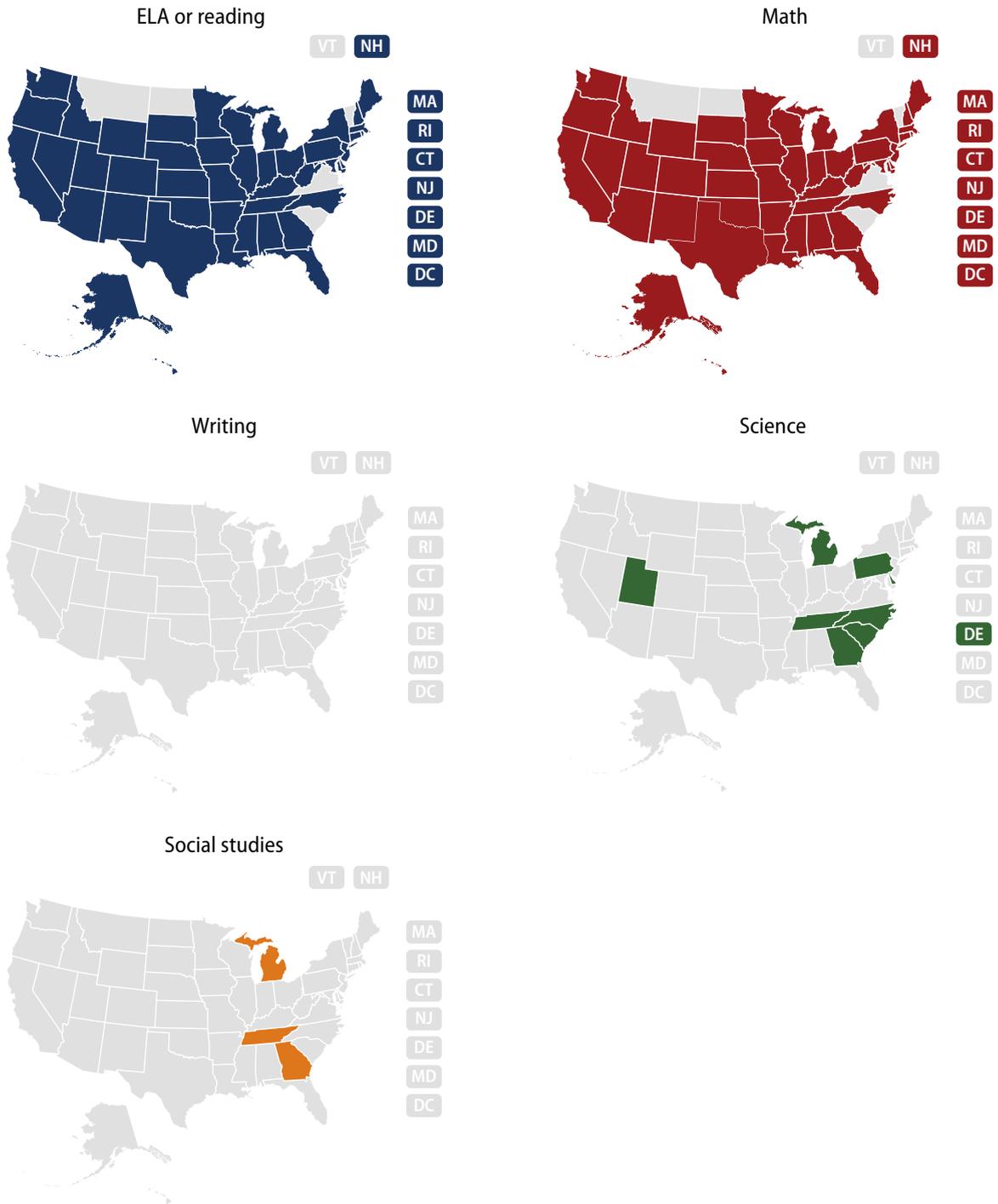
Of the states that weight the indicators in their accountability systems, academic achievement accounts for an average of 48 percent of a school’s accountability rating, ranging from 20 percent for elementary and middle schools and 15 percent for high schools to 100 percent for all schools. States assign greater weight to achievement in elementary and middle school systems—51 percent, on average—than high school systems—42 percent, on average.³⁷

TABLE 2
Achievement indicators
Elementary and middle schools

Weighting	Number of states
0% to 25%	4
26% to 50%	19
51% to 75%	9
76% to 100%	4

Note: The minimum weighting is 20 percent, and the maximum weighting is 100 percent.
Source: Data are based on authors’ analysis of ESEA flexibility waivers, state accountability workbooks, and information and materials from state departments of education.

FIGURE 2
Student growth indicators by state



Source: Data are based on authors' analysis of ESEA flexibility waivers, state accountability workbooks, and information and materials from state departments of education.

Student growth indicators

Compared with academic achievement, which provides a snapshot of student proficiency each year, student growth indicators capture the difference in individual student proficiency between two points in time to assess student progress from year to year. Growth measurements enable schools to better understand student performance by identifying students who have improved but are not yet proficient and those who have progressed to meet proficiency but are not yet advanced.

Forty-six states measure growth in ELA and mathematics, and seven states also measure growth in science or science and social studies.³⁸ Definitions of growth vary by state, such as the percentage of students making one year's growth or the percentage of students who are on track to be on grade level within three years.³⁹ Some states, in addition to measuring growth for all students, include measures that capture the growth of historically disadvantaged subgroups.⁴⁰

Like academic achievement, states use different methods to incorporate growth into their accountability systems. The state of Washington, for example, uses student growth percentiles, or SGPs. SGPs measure the amount of growth a student makes in a subject relative to his or her peers, which include students in the same grade who had similar scores in that subject the previous year. A student with an SGP of 85, for example, has shown more growth than 85 percent of his or her academic peers. The state also calculates a median SGP to summarize growth for districts and schools.⁴¹

Colorado, on the other hand, uses adequate growth percentiles, or AGPs. AGPs build on the basics of SGPs to determine if a student has made sufficient growth. In other words, AGPs measure the growth percentile needed for a student to catch up to or to maintain proficiency in a subject. Colorado calculates the AGP for every student and also aggregates the percentiles to create a median AGP, which is the growth needed for a typical student in a school or district, on average, to reach or to maintain proficiency.⁴²

Rather than percentiles, Florida uses what it calls “learning gains” to measure student growth from one year to the next in ELA and mathematics for all students, as well as the lowest-performing 25 percent of students. Students can demonstrate learning gains in four different ways: increasing at least one achievement level, which categorizes a student's level of proficiency based on cut scores; improving performance within Achievement Level 1 or Achievement Level 2; remaining at Achievement Level 3 or 4 and increasing their scale score; or maintaining the highest achievement level—Achievement Level 5.⁴³

Lastly, states such as Pennsylvania and Tennessee use value-added models to measure a district or school’s impact on academic progress.⁴⁴ Typically, value-added measures determine the amount of growth expected for a classroom and calculate the amount of growth that the class actually makes. The difference between these two measures is the “value” that the school added. In addition to student test scores, value-added models often include student and teacher characteristics, such as student demographics.⁴⁵

Of the states that measure student growth, 32 states weight student growth for elementary and middle schools and 25 states weight student growth for high schools.⁴⁶ Overall, these states assign greater weight to growth in elementary and middle school accountability systems—45 percent, on average, with a minimum of 20 percent and a maximum of 75 percent—compared with high school systems—30 percent, on average, with a minimum of 10 percent and a maximum of 50 percent.⁴⁷ Some states—such as Delaware, Minnesota, and Oregon—weight growth more heavily than academic achievement.⁴⁸

TABLE 3
Achievement indicators

High schools

Weighting	Number of states
0% to 25%	8
26% to 50%	20
51% to 75%	5
76% to 100%	3

Note: The minimum weighting is 15 percent, and the maximum weighting is 100 percent.
Source: Data are based on authors’ analysis of ESEA flexibility waivers, state accountability workbooks, and information and materials from state departments of education.

TABLE 4
Student growth indicators
 Elementary and middle schools

Weighting	Number of states
0% to 25%	4
26% to 50%	17
51% to 75%	11
76% to 100%	0

Note: The minimum weighting is 20 percent, and the maximum weighting is 75 percent.

Source: Data are based on authors' analysis of ESEA flexibility waivers, state accountability workbooks, and information and materials from state departments of education.

TABLE 5
Student growth indicators
 High schools

Weighting	Number of states
0% to 25%	10
26% to 50%	15
51% to 75%	0
76% to 100%	0

Note: The minimum weighting is 10 percent, and the maximum weighting is 50 percent.

Source: Data are based on authors' analysis of ESEA flexibility waivers, state accountability workbooks, and information and materials from state departments of education.

Together, academic achievement and student growth make up a combined average of 91 percent of elementary and middle school ratings—with a minimum of 71 percent and maximum of 100 percent—and an average of 63 percent of high school ratings—with a minimum of 40 percent and a maximum of 100 percent.⁴⁹

TABLE 6
Combined achievement and student growth indicators

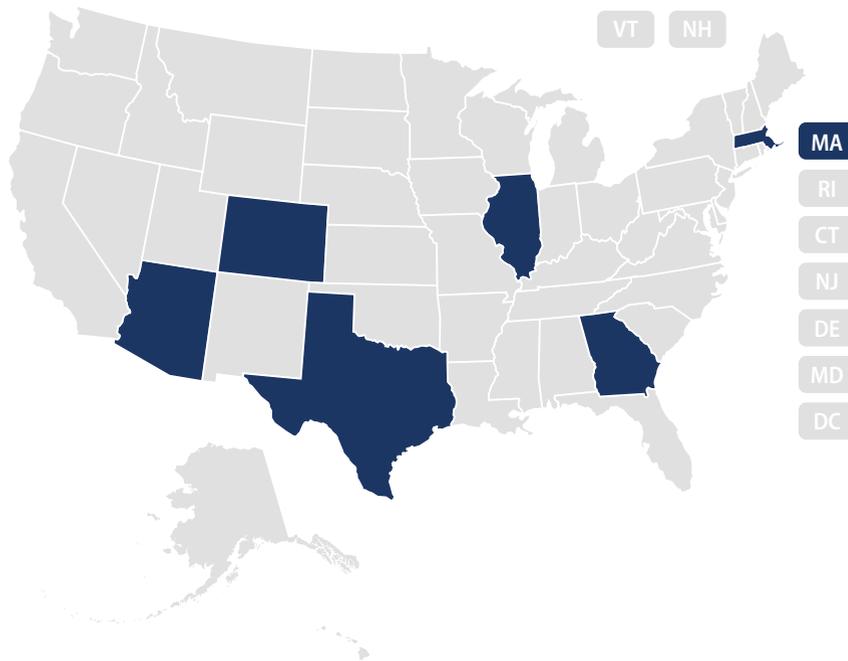
Elementary and middle schools

Weighting	Number of states
0% to 25%	0
26% to 50%	0
51% to 75%	3
76% to 100%	33

Note: The minimum weighting is 71 percent, and the maximum weighting is 100 percent.

Source: Data are based on authors' analysis of ESEA flexibility waivers, state accountability workbooks, and information and materials from state departments of education.

FIGURE 3
English language acquisition indicators by state



Source: Data are based on authors' analysis of ESEA flexibility waivers, state accountability workbooks, and information and materials from state departments of education.

English language acquisition indicators

Under No Child Left Behind, states were responsible for improving English learners' language proficiency in addition to their academic achievement. NCLB, however, treated language acquisition differently than subject area achievement, which required states to set up a separate accountability system that only applied to districts, not schools.⁵⁰

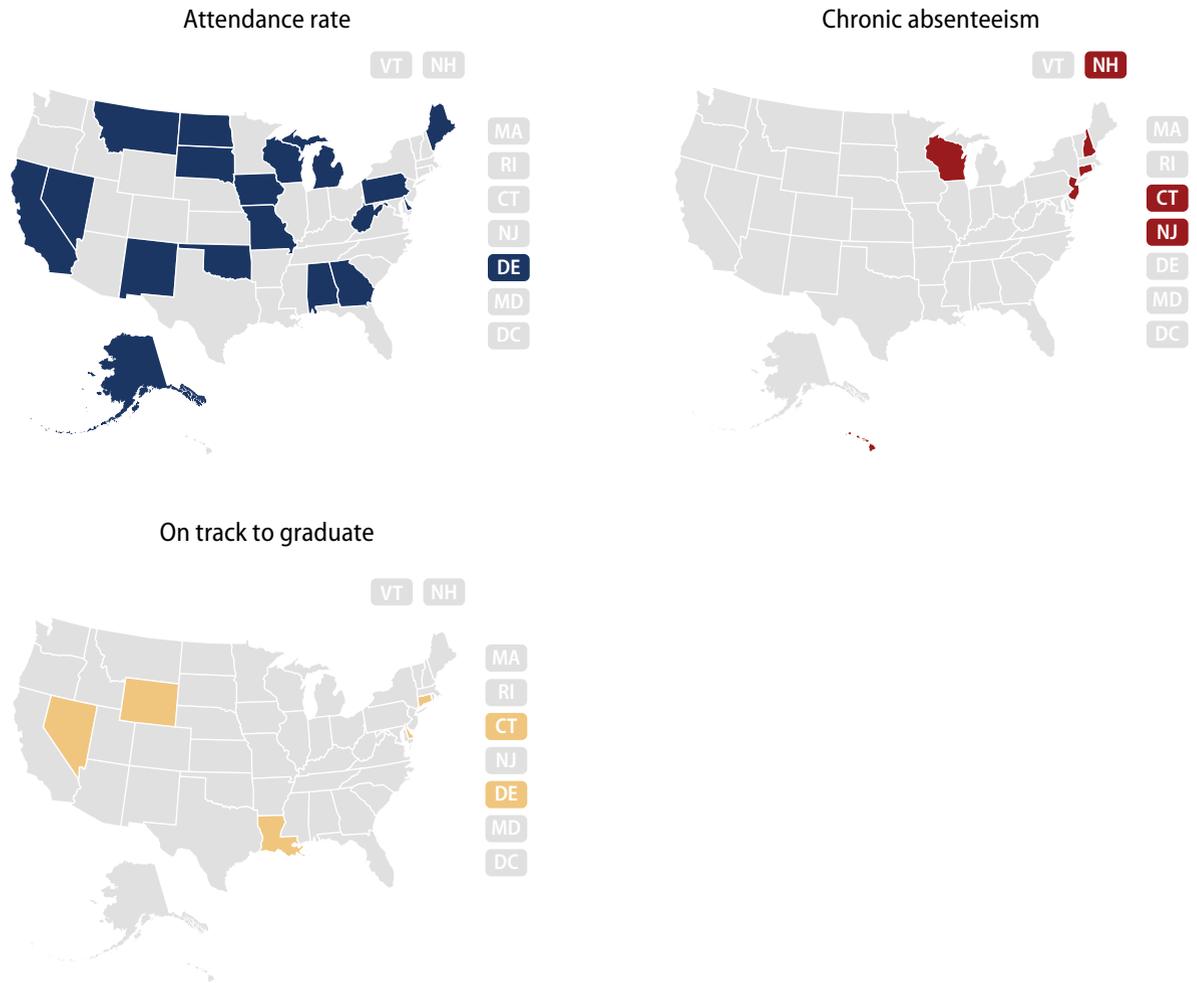
Through ESEA flexibility, six states—Arizona, Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts, and Texas—incorporated a measure of English language proficiency or growth into their statewide accountability systems.⁵¹ Under the Every Student Succeeds Act, all states will be required to include a measure of progress in achieving English language proficiency as a specific indicator in statewide accountability systems.

Like achievement and growth, states that currently include English language acquisition in accountability use different measures to incorporate this indicator. Arizona, for example, includes in its system the English language learner reclassification rate on the Arizona English Language Learner Assessment, or AZELLA.⁵² Georgia, on the other hand, measures the percentage of English language learners who have improved to a higher state-determined performance band on the Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners exam, or ACCESS for ELLs.⁵³ And Illinois assesses English language proficiency by the percentage of students achieving a half score increase or a maximum score on the ACCESS for ELLs.⁵⁴

On average, states that measure English language acquisition weight this indicator as 7 percent of elementary and middle school systems and 6 percent of high school systems.⁵⁵ Illinois and Colorado give the most weight to language proficiency, with an average of 13 percent and 6 percent across all schools, respectively. Massachusetts schools, through extra credit points, and Georgia elementary and middle schools weight language proficiency, on average, as 3 percent of a school's total possible rating. Georgia high schools earn bonus points for improving students' English language skills.

FIGURE 4

Early warning indicators by state



Source: Data are based on authors' analysis of ESEA flexibility waivers, state accountability workbooks, and information and materials from state departments of education.

Early warning indicators

Early warning indicators help educators identify students who are at risk of academic failure, dropping out of school, or not being on track to graduate high school college and career ready.⁵⁶ Poor academic performance and low attendance rates, for example, are early warning signs of students who are at risk of dropping out of school. By implementing systems to collect and use these data,

educators can better identify these students and provide appropriate supports and interventions.⁵⁷ Aggregating early warning system data at the school level also allows school and district leaders to identify areas for school improvement and develop turnaround strategies.⁵⁸

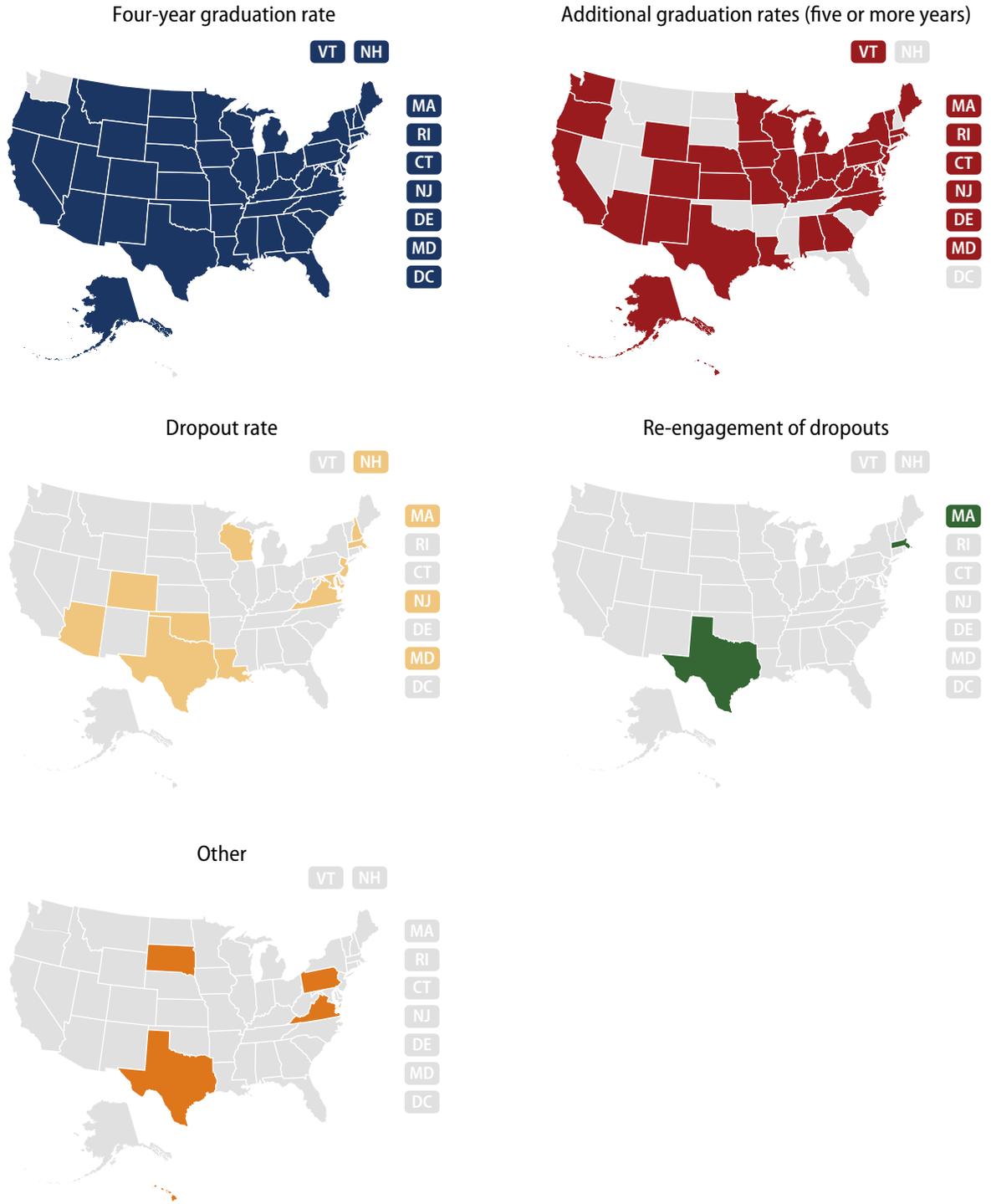
Under NCLB, states were required to include academic achievement in English language arts and mathematics in their accountability systems. States also were required to include in their systems an additional academic indicator for elementary and middle schools; for high schools, states were required to include the graduation rate. States commonly relied on attendance, or the percentage of students who come to school each day, as their additional academic indicator.⁵⁹

As an early warning indicator, however, average daily attendance masks what schools want to prevent—chronic absence—by focusing on the number of students who attend school on a given day rather than on those students who persistently fail to show up and are most at risk of struggling academically.⁶⁰ Accordingly, some states with ESEA waivers opted to include other or additional early warning indicators in their accountability systems, such as chronic absenteeism.

Overall, 24 states include at least one early warning indicator in their systems. Of these 24 states, 18 states measure attendance rates, and five states measure chronic absenteeism, with one state measuring both.⁶¹ Additionally, some states, such as Connecticut and Louisiana, incorporate an indicator that measures whether a ninth-grade student is on track to graduate.⁶²

Of states measuring and weighting these indicators, early warning indicators make up an average of 11 percent of elementary and middle school ratings, with a minimum of 2 percent and maximum of 25 percent. For high schools, these indicators make up an average of 7 percent of ratings, with a minimum of 1 percent and a maximum of 14 percent.⁶³

FIGURE 5
Persistence indicators by state



Source: Data are based on authors' analysis of ESEA flexibility waivers, state accountability workbooks, and information and materials from state departments of education.

Persistence indicators

NCLB required states to measure and set targets for graduation rates in determining AYP. Most states measured the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate, and through ESEA flexibility, many states also incorporated extended graduation rates—such as five-, six-, or even seven-year rates—to better reflect the success of all students and subgroups.⁶⁴

Accordingly, persistence indicators include the four-year cohort graduation rate and the extended cohort graduation rates. All states but one include the four-year graduation rate, and 37 states capture at least one extended-year cohort graduate rate, including the state that does not include the four-year rate, Washington. In addition, some states include in their accountability systems closing graduation gaps between target groups of students.⁶⁵

Graduation rates are the standard measure of student persistence and high school success, while dropout rates are an annual measure of the percentage of students who drop out of school in a given year. As a result, while the cohort graduation rate captures whether students ultimately succeed in graduating high school, the dropout rate can provide a more real-time measure of student persistence. Eleven states measure dropout rates, and Massachusetts and Texas also capture the rate at which schools re-engage dropouts.⁶⁶ Some states incorporate both dropout and graduation rates into their systems, while other states include the annual dropout rate when graduation rate data are unavailable.⁶⁷

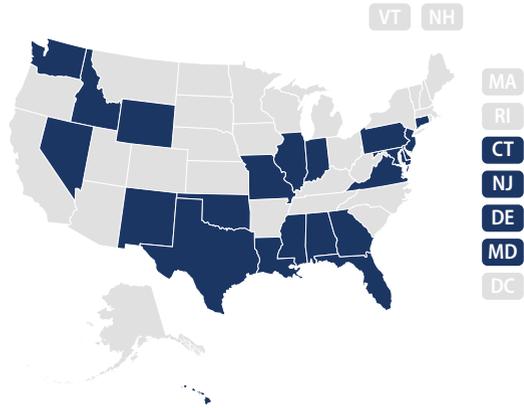
Further, five states incorporate other measures of persistence into accountability, including the percentage of students graduating from a particular program or with a GED certificate.⁶⁸ Texas, for example, includes a graduation plan component, which captures the annual percentage of graduates who have graduated through a regular or a distinguished achievement program.⁶⁹ Virginia incorporates into its graduation index students who earn a GED certificate or certificate of completion.⁷⁰ And South Dakota includes a completer rate, which captures the percentage of students who have attained a diploma or GED certificate.⁷¹

Overall, of states measuring and weighting these indicators, persistence indicators account for an average of 22 percent of high school accountability scores, with a minimum of 2 percent and a maximum of 50 percent.⁷² Some systems, such as the District of Columbia's, do not factor graduation rates into a school's score but

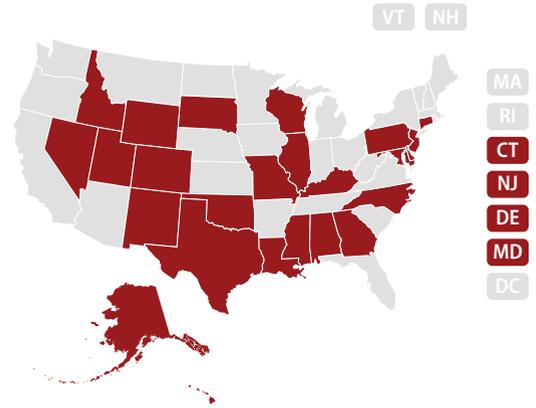
rather use this indicator separately to identify high-performing schools or those in need of improvement.⁷³ Of elementary and middle school systems that include persistence indicators—such as retention, promotion, or dropout rates—these measures account for an average of 3 percent of a school’s total score.⁷⁴

FIGURE 6
College- and career-ready indicators by state

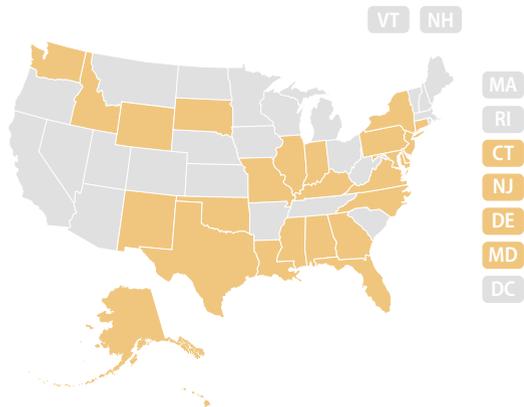
Participation in or performance on advanced course work or exams



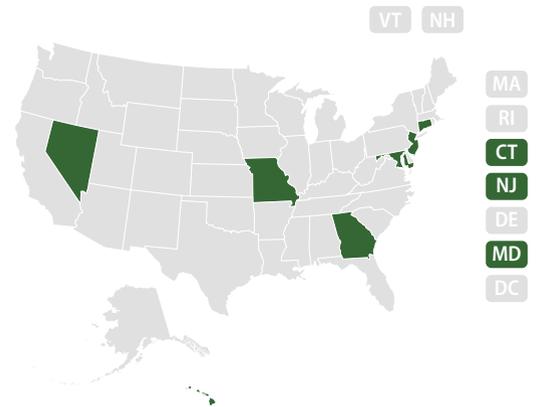
Participation in or performance on college entry exams



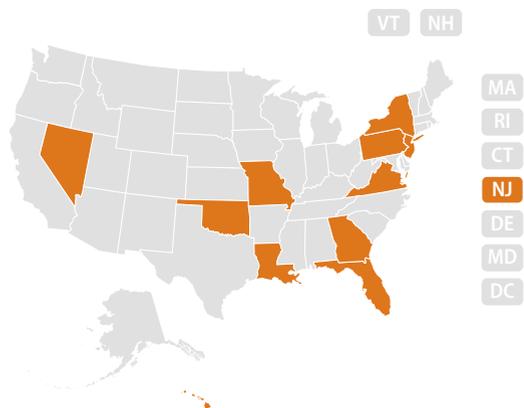
Career preparedness participation or performance



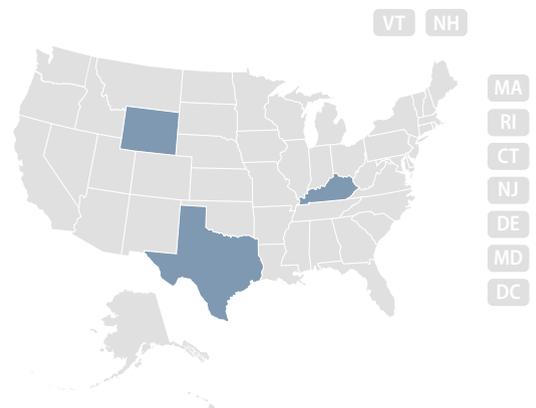
Postsecondary enrollment



Other advanced coursework indicators



Other college- and career-ready indicators



Source: Data are based on authors' analysis of ESEA flexibility waivers, state accountability workbooks, and information and materials from state departments of education.

College- and career-ready indicators

The ultimate goal of the K-12 education system is not only to ensure that all students graduate from high school but also that they are college and career ready. Academic achievement and growth, early warning indicators, and measures of persistence are necessary to get students to the finish line but do not fully capture whether students are prepared for success after high school.

Accordingly, 30 states include some measure of college and career readiness in their accountability systems. College- and career-ready indicators include participation and performance in advanced course work or exams and college entry exams; participation in career and technical education courses and earning career readiness certificates; postsecondary enrollment; and participation of middle school students in high-school-level courses.⁷⁵

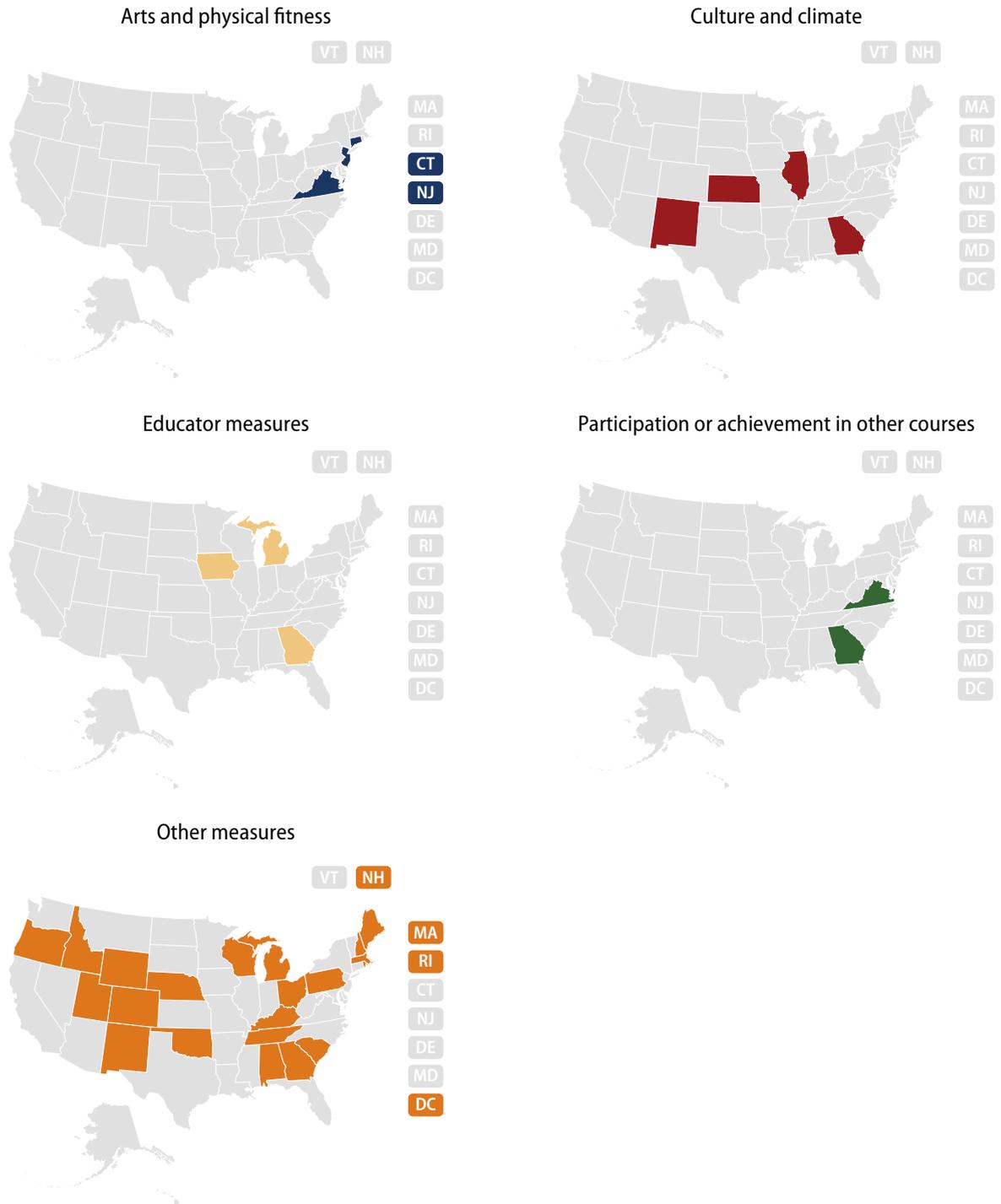
Utah, for example, includes one college- and career-ready measure, while other states, such as New Mexico and Nevada, capture multiple measures of college and career readiness, from taking the PSAT to the percentage of students required to take remedial course work in college.⁷⁶ Other indicators include the percentage of students who receive advanced or honors diplomas and the percentage of graduates who join the armed forces.⁷⁷

Notably, the specific measures that states include as college- and career-ready indicators can create very different incentives. Participation in advanced placement, or AP, classes and performance on AP exams, for example, are discrete measures that may have different implications. The former motivates schools to expand access to advanced course work, at the risk of ignoring whether students actually succeed in those courses. The latter motivates schools to improve results, while creating the potential incentive to exclude students from advanced courses who may not perform well.

Accordingly, accountability systems that include both of these measures as indicators ensure that schools are held responsible for both student participation and attainment in advanced course work. Some states that include performance on the SAT or ACT in high school accountability systems fund all students to take these exams to ensure participation.⁷⁸

Overall, of states measuring and weighting these indicators, college- and career-ready indicators average 15 percent of high school accountability scores, with a minimum of 3 percent and a maximum of 30 percent. Of middle school systems that include these measures, college- and career-ready indicators average 11 percent of school scores.⁷⁹

FIGURE 7
Other indicators by state



Source: Data are based on authors' analysis of ESEA flexibility waivers, state accountability workbooks, and information and materials from state departments of education.

Other indicators

Lastly, 27 states include other indicators, or measures that are unique to individual states or outside the scope of the main categories of indicators. Other indicators may reflect particular state values or incentives for particular school activities. Accordingly, this category captures measures ranging from arts access and physical fitness to students earning credit in courses such as world languages and physics.⁸⁰

Virginia, for example, includes additional criteria in its Virginia Index of Performance, or VIP, program. Schools in the commonwealth may earn VIP points for offering foreign language instruction in elementary grades and for students who participate in advanced science, technology, engineering, and mathematics course work, among other measures. Schools meeting particular VIP point thresholds earn awards from the governor or the Virginia Board of Education.⁸¹

Ohio includes an indicator for improving K-3 literacy.⁸² Georgia awards additional points to schools based on what it terms “exceeding the bar” indicators, which include measures such as the percentage of teachers using the state’s longitudinal data system, the percentage of graduates earning three or more high school credits in the same world language, and the percentage of middle school or elementary school students with disabilities served in general education classes for more than 80 percent of the school day.⁸³ And Iowa factors staff retention into school ratings.⁸⁴

In addition, several states include a measure of school climate and culture in their accountability systems. Illinois, for example, awards bonus points to schools that have received an “excellent” school rating for fostering a positive learning environment.⁸⁵ New Mexico incorporates in its school ratings results from an opportunity-to-learn student survey, which measures how well teachers’ instructional methods facilitate student learning.⁸⁶ And Georgia schools may earn additional points for school programming aimed at improving the school climate, such as conflict mediation, mentoring, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.⁸⁷

A group of nine districts in California, known as the California Office to Reform Education, or CORE, have taken this work a step further.⁸⁸ In addition to incorporating student, staff, and parent culture-climate survey results into accountability, CORE districts include measures of students’ social-emotional skills, which are increasingly recognized as important for student success.⁸⁹ To capture these skills,

students self-report on a series of behaviors and beliefs based on four competencies: growth mindset, or a student’s belief that his or her “abilities can grow with effort”; self-efficacy, or a student’s belief in his or her ability to meet a goal; self-management, or a student’s ability to control his or her emotions; and social awareness.⁹⁰

In addition, NCLB required that schools test at least 95 percent of all students and subgroups of students in the required grades and academic subjects.⁹¹ Through ESEA flexibility, some states chose to limit or reduce the overall rating or classification of schools that miss this threshold. Oklahoma, for example, docks schools a whole letter grade if fewer than 95 percent of students have valid scores.⁹² Rhode Island, similarly, classifies schools that fail to test at least 95 percent of all students as “Warning Schools”—the third lowest of six classifications—at best.⁹³ South Carolina, on the other hand, includes meeting participation requirements as a percentage of a school’s index score.⁹⁴ ESSA continues to require that schools annually measure the achievement of at least 95 percent of all students and each subgroup of students as a stand-alone factor in statewide accountability.⁹⁵

Of the states measuring and weighting these measures, other indicators make up an average of 10 percent of elementary and middle school accountability scores—with a minimum of 5 percent and maximum of 23 percent—and an average of 12 percent of high school scores—with a minimum of 6 percent and maximum of 23 percent.⁹⁶ For CORE districts, other indicators account for 24 percent of school accountability.⁹⁷

Next steps for statewide accountability

Going forward, states will need to revamp their current accountability systems to comply with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act.

ESSA requires states to incorporate the following measures into their accountability systems:

- Student achievement in English language arts and mathematics
- A second academic indicator, such as growth in ELA and mathematics
- English language acquisition
- Graduation rates, which take the place of a second academic indicator for high schools
- At least one measure of school quality or student success

States are required to disaggregate all indicators, excluding English language acquisition, by the following subgroups of students: economically disadvantaged students; students from major racial and ethnic groups; students with disabilities; and English language learners. ESSA further requires states to give “substantial weight” to the first four indicators above and “much greater weight” to the combination of those indicators compared with the measures of school quality or student success.⁹⁸

Currently, all states measure achievement in mathematics and reading, and all but five states measure growth in those subjects. For high schools, nearly all states include the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate, and almost three-quarters of states include an extended cohort graduation rate in rating school performance. The majority of states, however, will need to incorporate a measure of English language acquisition into their statewide accountability systems. Furthermore, some states that already include this measure, such as Massachusetts and Georgia, may have to revise their methodology to afford English language acquisition “substantial weight” in school determinations.⁹⁹

When it comes to satisfying the most novel component of ESSA—the school quality or student success indicator—states can measure student engagement, educator engagement, student access to and completion of advanced course work, postsecondary readiness, school climate and safety, or any other measure that the state chooses as long as the measure allows for meaningful differentiation among schools and is valid, reliable, comparable, and statewide.¹⁰⁰ At present, 42 states include in their accountability systems at least one early warning indicator, persistence indicator other than graduation rates, college- and career-ready indicator, or other indicator—excluding test participation—that might fulfill ESSA criteria.¹⁰¹

However, not all of the states that include a school quality or student success indicator in their accountability systems do so for all schools. For example, 14 states incorporate a measure that might meet these criteria only in their high school accountability systems.¹⁰²

Furthermore, under ESSA, the school quality or student success indicator must receive substantially less weight than academic achievement, a second academic indicator, English language proficiency, and graduation rates combined.¹⁰³ Currently, of states that weight their systems and include at least one school quality or student success measure, these indicators average 16 percent of elementary and middle school scores and 21 percent of high school scores.¹⁰⁴

In addition to outlining the indicators that states must include in their accountability systems, ESSA also requires that states disaggregate indicators by subgroup. Under No Child Left Behind, states were required to disaggregate academic achievement, graduation rate, and the other academic indicator for elementary and middle schools by several subgroups of students: economically disadvantaged students; students from major racial and ethnic groups; students with disabilities; and English language learners.¹⁰⁵ Under ESSA, states will have to disaggregate all indicators by these same subgroups, excluding indicators of English language acquisition.¹⁰⁶

Meeting this requirement necessitates that states re-evaluate their current systems to ensure that every indicator can be disaggregated. It also requires that states select new indicators—such as the school quality or student success measure—that they can measure by subgroup. Disaggregating data by subgroup also increases complexity and data collection costs, which also will factor into state decisions that determine which indicators to incorporate.

Recommendations

In August 2016, states will transition from No Child Left Behind and Elementary and Secondary Education Act flexibility to the Every Student Succeeds Act. States will have an additional year to implement their new accountability systems, which must be in place by the 2017-18 school year.¹⁰⁷ As states plan for this transition, CAP recommends that they take the following steps.

Set a vision for accountability systems and be purposeful about incentives when selecting system indicators

States must first create a vision for their accountability systems and then choose the indicators that align with their goals. All states, for example, should set as a clear objective that all students graduate from high school ready for college and a career. But within this broad objective, states may have different specific targets based on the challenges and struggles of schools on the ground. Perhaps a state wants to increase its college-going rate, boost graduation rates, or improve student engagement; by setting a clear aim, states will be better able to design systems that meet particular needs.

When choosing indicators, states must be purposeful about the incentives they create. For example, by selecting particular college- and career-ready measures, states may incentivize participation in advanced course work; performance on AP or International Baccalaureate, or IB, exams; or both. Similarly, by holding schools accountable for subjects other than English language arts and mathematics, states encourage schools to prioritize content areas such as science and social studies. In addition, by measuring student growth, states are recognizing schools' success when it comes to helping students improve, rather than simply focusing on student proficiency.

Weigh the trade-offs between simplicity and complexity to create a tailored yet comprehensive system of accountability

ESSA outlines the minimum requirements that states must include in their accountability systems, while ensuring that academic achievement is not masked. This, however, does not mean that states should just tinker around the edges for compliance. Instead, states should be thoughtful in designing systems based on a clear vision that capture a complete picture of student success while maintaining clarity for stakeholders. While a system that includes dozens of indicators might send the signal that all of these indicators are important to the state, it also makes it nearly impossible for school leaders to know where to focus and difficult for parents to understand why their child's school received a particular rating.

To accomplish this goal, states must weigh trade-offs between simplicity and complexity. School accountability should be comprehensive, but states should not dilute their systems with unnecessary measures. Instead, states should select the fewest number of indicators needed to provide the most impactful outcomes and yield measures that paint an accurate and clearly discernible picture of whether schools have achieved their system's objective.

States also face trade-offs between simplicity and complexity when choosing how to measure system indicators. Value-added models, for example, may more accurately reflect student growth than other methods but are also more difficult for stakeholders to understand. States must weigh the pros and cons to strike a balance between straightforward and nuanced accountability.

Increase transparency and clarity of school accountability and rating methodology for communities and families

States design accountability systems to comply with federal requirements and their own priorities. Accountability systems, however, are much more than just government tools. Accountability systems also must speak to communities and families to communicate clearly which measures determine a school's performance rating. Clear and transparent accountability will allow parents to make more informed choices and better advocate for students.

Accordingly, states and districts should provide all stakeholders clear guidance that explains which indicators states include in accountability systems and how states use these systems to calculate school scores. Stakeholders also must have access to information on how states use these systems to intervene in schools. The purpose of school accountability is to identify struggling schools and provide them with additional supports. It is not enough for stakeholders to understand how a school is scored; they also must know what measures produced that score, the purpose of those measures, and how the score will be used.

Conclusion

Many states are on the right track to meet the accountability requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act, capturing measures of academic proficiency and student growth, early warning indicators, persistence indicators, measures of college and career readiness, and other measures of student performance. The majority of states, however, will need to incorporate a measure of English language acquisition into their accountability systems and ensure that subgroup performance is considered for all indicators in order to comply fully with the law. In addition, many states have the opportunity to include new indicators of school quality and student success in their systems to move beyond exclusively test-score-based measures of achievement.

However, designing accountability systems is just the first step. States must use these systems to effectively differentiate schools and provide proper supports for those that are struggling. Statewide accountability is a resource to help states know where and how to intervene effectively in schools. As states develop their new systems, it is critical that they stay focused on their ultimate objective: ensuring that all students succeed.

About the authors

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Martin has appeared on PBS, NBC, CNN, and Fox. She has been cited in publications including *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. She also was named one of the five women who shape education policy by the *National Journal* in 2014 and has testified as an expert witness in front of legislative committees.

She is a graduate of the University of Texas School of Law and holds a master's degree in public affairs from the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs.

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She graduated with a bachelor's degree from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University.

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Appendix A: Methodology

CAP analyzed the federal statewide accountability systems of all 50 states and the District of Columbia using approved Elementary and Secondary Education Act waivers and state accountability workbooks. The authors supplemented their analysis with publicly available information from state departments of education, including technical manuals and school letter-grade calculation appendices. The authors also reached out to state contacts to review the analysis, some of whom confirmed data or provided updated information.

The authors conducted their analysis in two phases: an indicator analysis and a weighting analysis. The indicator analysis includes all indicators used in school ratings, such as A–F grades and school classifications, and identification of schools for rewards or interventions. The analysis excludes measures used only for reporting purposes. Some states use different or additional indicators for subsets of schools, such as K-2 schools, small schools, or alternative and special needs schools. These measures also are excluded from the analysis.

To complete the indicator analysis, the authors recorded all unique measures in each of the seven indicator categories. For example, some states include the percentage of students earning a particular score on reading and mathematics exams as a separate indicator in their accountability systems. The authors did not record meeting state benchmarks on these exams as a unique indicator, as it is simply a different way of examining achievement data. In addition, some state systems consolidate multiple measures into an indicator. The authors reported each measure in these composite indicators as its own indicator. Accordingly, the analysis may reflect fewer or more indicators than how a state describes its system.

For the second phase of the analysis, the authors determined the weights that states assign to each of the indicator categories to determine a school's score. Fifteen states were excluded from this analysis. The authors calculated weightings based on total points or percentage points a school can earn or the relative weights of each indicator. The weightings of the seven categories of indicators sum to 100 percent for each state.

The authors assigned the weighting of nonunique measures that were excluded from the indicator analysis to the corresponding indicator category for the weighting analysis. For example, while the authors excluded meeting state benchmarks on reading and mathematics exams from the indicator analysis, they included the weight assigned to this measure in the weighting of the state's achievement indicators category.

Also of note, the student growth indicators category is based on individual student growth between two points in time. Accordingly, some measures labeled as “growth” or “progress” in a state's accountability system in fact measure the performance of different cohorts of students from year to year. The authors added the weight that states assigned to these indicators to the weighting of the achievement indicators category.

Appendix B: Indicator analysis

TABLE A1
Achievement indicators by state

State	ELA or reading	Math	Writing	Science	Social studies
Alabama	✓	✓			
Alaska	✓	✓			
Arizona	✓	✓		✓	
Arkansas	✓	✓			
California	✓	✓			
Colorado	✓	✓		✓	
Connecticut	✓	✓		✓	
District of Columbia	✓	✓		✓	
Delaware	✓	✓		✓	✓
Florida	✓	✓		✓	✓
Georgia	✓	✓		✓	✓
Hawaii	✓	✓		✓	
Idaho	✓	✓			
Illinois	✓	✓			
Indiana	✓	✓			
Iowa	✓	✓			
Kansas	✓	✓			
Kentucky	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Louisiana	✓	✓		✓	✓
Maine	✓	✓			
Maryland	✓	✓		✓	
Massachusetts	✓	✓		✓	
Michigan	✓	✓		✓	✓
Minnesota	✓	✓			
Mississippi	✓	✓		✓	✓
Missouri	✓	✓		✓	✓

State	ELA or reading	Math	Writing	Science	Social studies
Montana	✓	✓			
Nebraska	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Nevada	✓	✓			
New Hampshire	✓	✓		✓	
New Jersey	✓	✓		✓	
New Mexico	✓	✓			
New York	✓	✓		✓	
North Carolina	✓	✓		✓	
North Dakota	✓	✓			
Ohio	✓	✓			
Oklahoma	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Oregon	✓	✓			
Pennsylvania	✓	✓		✓	
Rhode Island	✓	✓			
South Carolina	✓	✓		✓	✓
South Dakota	✓	✓			
Tennessee	✓	✓		✓	
Texas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Utah	✓	✓		✓	
Vermont	✓	✓			
Virginia	✓	✓		✓	✓
Washington	✓	✓		✓	
West Virginia	✓	✓			
Wisconsin	✓	✓			
Wyoming	✓	✓	✓	✓	

TABLE A2
Student growth indicators by state

State	ELA or reading	Math	Writing	Science	Social studies
Alabama	✓	✓			
Alaska	✓	✓			
Arizona	✓	✓			
Arkansas	✓	✓			

State	ELA or reading	Math	Writing	Science	Social studies
California	✓	✓			
Colorado	✓	✓			
Connecticut	✓	✓			
District of Columbia	✓	✓		✓	
Delaware	✓	✓			
Florida	✓	✓			
Georgia	✓	✓		✓	✓
Hawaii	✓	✓			
Idaho	✓	✓			
Illinois	✓	✓			
Indiana	✓	✓			
Iowa	✓	✓			
Kansas	✓	✓			
Kentucky	✓	✓			
Louisiana	✓	✓			
Maine	✓	✓			
Maryland	✓	✓			
Massachusetts	✓	✓			
Michigan	✓	✓		✓	✓
Minnesota	✓	✓			
Mississippi	✓	✓			
Missouri	✓	✓			
Montana					
Nebraska	✓	✓			
Nevada	✓	✓			
New Hampshire	✓	✓			
New Jersey	✓	✓			
New Mexico	✓	✓			
New York	✓	✓			
North Carolina	✓	✓		✓	
North Dakota					
Ohio	✓	✓			
Oklahoma	✓	✓			
Oregon	✓	✓			

State	ELA or reading	Math	Writing	Science	Social studies
Pennsylvania	✓	✓		✓	
Rhode Island	✓	✓			
South Carolina					
South Dakota	✓	✓			
Tennessee	✓	✓		✓	✓
Texas	✓	✓			
Utah	✓	✓		✓	
Vermont					
Virginia					
Washington	✓	✓			
West Virginia	✓	✓			
Wisconsin	✓	✓			
Wyoming	✓	✓			

TABLE A3
English language acquisition indicators by state

State	English language acquisition
Alabama	
Alaska	
Arizona	✓
Arkansas	
California	
Colorado	✓
Connecticut	
District of Columbia	
Delaware	
Florida	
Georgia	✓
Hawaii	
Idaho	
Illinois	✓
Indiana	
Iowa	
Kansas	

State	English language acquisition
Kentucky	
Louisiana	
Maine	
Maryland	
Massachusetts	✓
Michigan	
Minnesota	
Mississippi	
Missouri	
Montana	
Nebraska	
Nevada	
New Hampshire	
New Jersey	
New Mexico	
New York	
North Carolina	
North Dakota	
Ohio	
Oklahoma	
Oregon	
Pennsylvania	
Rhode Island	
South Carolina	
South Dakota	
Tennessee	
Texas	✓
Utah	
Vermont	
Virginia	
Washington	
West Virginia	
Wisconsin	
Wyoming	

TABLE A4
Early warning indicators by state

State	Attendance rate	Chronic absenteeism	On track to graduate
Alabama	✓		
Alaska	✓		
Arizona			
Arkansas			
California	✓		
Colorado			
Connecticut		✓	✓
District of Columbia			
Delaware	✓		✓
Florida			
Georgia	✓		
Hawaii		✓	
Idaho			
Illinois			
Indiana			
Iowa	✓		
Kansas			
Kentucky			
Louisiana			✓
Maine	✓		
Maryland			
Massachusetts			
Michigan	✓		
Minnesota			
Mississippi			
Missouri	✓		
Montana	✓		
Nebraska			
Nevada	✓		✓
New Hampshire		✓	
New Jersey		✓	
New Mexico	✓		
New York			

State	Attendance rate	Chronic absenteeism	On track to graduate
North Carolina			
North Dakota	✓		
Ohio			
Oklahoma	✓		
Oregon			
Pennsylvania	✓		
Rhode Island			
South Carolina			
South Dakota	✓		
Tennessee			
Texas			
Utah			
Vermont			
Virginia			
Washington			
West Virginia	✓		
Wisconsin	✓	✓	
Wyoming			✓

TABLE A5
Persistence indicators by state

State	Four-year graduation rate	Additional graduation rates (five or more years)	Dropout rate	Re-engagement of dropouts	Other, such as percentage of students earning a GED certificate
Alabama	✓	✓			
Alaska	✓	✓			
Arizona	✓	✓	✓		
Arkansas	✓				
California	✓	✓			
Colorado	✓	✓	✓		
Connecticut	✓	✓			
District of Columbia	✓				
Delaware	✓	✓			

State	Four-year graduation rate	Additional graduation rates (five or more years)	Dropout rate	Re-engagement of dropouts	Other, such as percentage of students earning a GED certificate
Florida	✓				
Georgia	✓	✓			
Hawaii	✓	✓			✓
Idaho	✓				
Illinois	✓	✓			
Indiana	✓	✓			
Iowa	✓	✓			
Kansas	✓	✓			
Kentucky	✓	✓			
Louisiana	✓	✓	✓		
Maine	✓	✓			
Maryland	✓	✓	✓		
Massachusetts	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Michigan	✓	✓			
Minnesota	✓	✓			
Mississippi	✓				
Missouri	✓	✓			
Montana	✓				
Nebraska	✓	✓			
Nevada	✓				
New Hampshire	✓		✓		
New Jersey	✓	✓	✓		
New Mexico	✓	✓			
New York	✓	✓			
North Carolina	✓	✓			
North Dakota	✓				
Ohio	✓	✓			
Oklahoma	✓		✓		✓
Oregon	✓	✓			
Pennsylvania	✓	✓			✓
Rhode Island	✓	✓			
South Carolina	✓				
South Dakota	✓				✓

State	Four-year graduation rate	Additional graduation rates (five or more years)	Dropout rate	Re-engagement of dropouts	Other, such as percentage of students earning a GED certificate
Tennessee	✓				
Texas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Utah	✓				
Vermont	✓	✓			
Virginia	✓	✓	✓		✓
Washington		✓			
West Virginia	✓	✓			
Wisconsin	✓	✓	✓		
Wyoming	✓	✓			

TABLE A6
College- and career-ready indicators by state

Participation in or performance on advanced course work or exams		
State	Participation in advanced course work, including AP or IB classes or dual enrollment	Performance in advanced course work, including AP or IB exams and dual enrollment course grades
Alabama	✓	✓
Alaska		
Arizona		
Arkansas		
California		
Colorado		
Connecticut	✓	✓
District of Columbia		
Delaware		✓
Florida		✓
Georgia	✓	✓
Hawaii	✓	
Idaho	✓	✓
Illinois	✓	✓
Indiana	✓	✓
Iowa		
Kansas		

State	Participation in advanced course work, including AP or IB classes or dual enrollment	Performance in advanced course work, including AP or IB exams and dual enrollment course grades
Kentucky		
Louisiana	✓	✓
Maine		
Maryland		✓
Massachusetts		
Michigan		
Minnesota		
Mississippi	✓	✓
Missouri		✓
Montana		
Nebraska		
Nevada		✓
New Hampshire		
New Jersey	✓	✓
New Mexico	✓	✓
New York		
North Carolina		
North Dakota		
Ohio		
Oklahoma	✓	✓
Oregon		
Pennsylvania		✓
Rhode Island		
South Carolina		
South Dakota		
Tennessee		
Texas	✓	
Utah		
Vermont		
Virginia	✓	
Washington	✓	
West Virginia		
Wisconsin		
Wyoming	✓	

Participation in or performance on college entry exams

State	Participation in college entry exams such as SAT or ACT	Performance on college entry exams such as SAT, ACT, ACCUPLACER, or COMPASS	Participation in PSAT or ACT Aspire	Performance on PSAT or ACT Aspire	Participation and performance in SAT subject tests
Alabama		✓			
Alaska		✓			
Arizona					
Arkansas					
California					
Colorado		✓			
Connecticut		✓			
District of Columbia					
Delaware		✓			
Florida					
Georgia		✓			
Hawaii		✓	✓		
Idaho		✓			
Illinois		✓			
Indiana					
Iowa					
Kansas					
Kentucky		✓			
Louisiana		✓			
Maine					
Maryland					
Massachusetts					
Michigan					
Minnesota					
Mississippi		✓			
Missouri	✓	✓			
Montana					
Nebraska					
Nevada	✓				
New Hampshire					
New Jersey	✓	✓	✓		
New Mexico	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

State	Participation in college entry exams such as SAT or ACT	Performance on college entry exams such as SAT, ACT, ACCUPLACER, or COMPASS	Participation in PSAT or ACT Aspire	Performance on PSAT or ACT Aspire	Participation and performance in SAT subject tests
New York					
North Carolina		✓			
North Dakota					
Ohio					
Oklahoma	✓	✓			
Oregon					
Pennsylvania		✓	✓		
Rhode Island					
South Carolina					
South Dakota		✓			
Tennessee					
Texas		✓			
Utah		✓			
Vermont					
Virginia					
Washington					
West Virginia					
Wisconsin	✓	✓			
Wyoming		✓			

Career preparedness participation or performance

State	Career preparedness participation, including completing career and technical education classes or WorkKeys assessments and participating in job training	Career preparedness performance, including earning credentials or certificates, performance on WorkKeys, and grades in career and technical education courses
Alabama		✓
Alaska	✓	✓
Arizona		
Arkansas		
California		
Colorado		
Connecticut	✓	
District of Columbia		
Delaware		✓
Florida		✓

State	Career preparedness participation, including completing career and technical education classes or WorkKeys assessments and participating in job training	Career preparedness performance, including earning credentials or certificates, performance on WorkKeys, and grades in career and technical education courses
Georgia	✓	✓
Hawaii	✓	
Idaho	✓	✓
Illinois		✓
Indiana		✓
Iowa		
Kansas		
Kentucky		✓
Louisiana		✓
Maine		
Maryland		✓
Massachusetts		
Michigan		
Minnesota		
Mississippi	✓	✓
Missouri	✓	✓
Montana		
Nebraska		
Nevada		
New Hampshire		
New Jersey	✓	
New Mexico	✓	✓
New York		✓
North Carolina		✓
North Dakota		
Ohio		
Oklahoma	✓	✓
Oregon		
Pennsylvania		✓
Rhode Island		
South Carolina		
South Dakota		✓
Tennessee		

State	Career preparedness participation, including completing career and technical education classes or WorkKeys assessments and participating in job training	Career preparedness performance, including earning credentials or certificates, performance on WorkKeys, and grades in career and technical education courses
Texas	✓	
Utah		
Vermont		
Virginia		✓
Washington		✓
West Virginia		
Wisconsin		
Wyoming		✓

Postsecondary enrollment

State	Postsecondary enrollment	Military enrollment within six months of graduation	College remedial course enrollment	Percentage of graduates not requiring college remediation
Alabama				
Alaska				
Arizona				
Arkansas				
California				
Colorado				
Connecticut	✓			
District of Columbia				
Delaware				
Florida				
Georgia				✓
Hawaii	✓			
Idaho				
Illinois				
Indiana				
Iowa				
Kansas				
Kentucky				
Louisiana				
Maine				
Maryland	✓			
Massachusetts				

State	Postsecondary enrollment	Military enrollment within six months of graduation	College remedial course enrollment	Percentage of graduates not requiring college remediation
Michigan				
Minnesota				
Mississippi				
Missouri		✓		
Montana				
Nebraska				
Nevada			✓	
New Hampshire				
New Jersey	✓			
New Mexico				
New York				
North Carolina				
North Dakota				
Ohio				
Oklahoma				
Oregon				
Pennsylvania				
Rhode Island				
South Carolina				
South Dakota				
Tennessee				
Texas				
Utah				
Vermont				
Virginia				
Washington				
West Virginia				
Wisconsin				
Wyoming				

Other advanced coursework indicators

State	Percentage of students earning an advanced diploma	AP, International Baccalaureate, or college credit offered	Participation of middle school students in honors, pre-AP, or high school level courses	Percentage of middle schoolers who passed a high-school-level end-of-course assessment or earned industry certification
Alabama				
Alaska				
Arizona				
Arkansas				
California				
Colorado				
Connecticut				
District of Columbia				
Delaware				
Florida				✓
Georgia			✓	
Hawaii			✓	
Idaho				
Illinois				
Indiana				
Iowa				
Kansas				
Kentucky				
Louisiana				✓
Maine				
Maryland				
Massachusetts				
Michigan				
Minnesota				
Mississippi				
Missouri				✓
Montana				
Nebraska				
Nevada	✓			
New Hampshire				
New Jersey			✓	

State	Percentage of students earning an advanced diploma	AP, International Baccalaureate, or college credit offered	Participation of middle school students in honors, pre-AP, or high school level courses	Percentage of middle schoolers who passed a high-school-level end-of-course assessment or earned industry certification
New Mexico				
New York	✓			
North Carolina				
North Dakota				
Ohio				
Oklahoma			✓	
Oregon				
Pennsylvania		✓		
Rhode Island				
South Carolina				
South Dakota				
Tennessee				
Texas				
Utah				
Vermont				
Virginia	✓		✓	
Washington				
West Virginia				
Wisconsin				
Wyoming				

Other college- and career-ready indicators

State	State exit-level or college placement test	Unweighted GPA
Alabama		
Alaska		
Arizona		
Arkansas		
California		
Colorado		
Connecticut		
District of Columbia		
Delaware		
Florida		

State	State exit-level or college placement test	Unweighted GPA
Georgia		
Hawaii		
Idaho		
Illinois		
Indiana		
Iowa		
Kansas		
Kentucky	✓	
Louisiana		
Maine		
Maryland		
Massachusetts		
Michigan		
Minnesota		
Mississippi		
Missouri		
Montana		
Nebraska		
Nevada		
New Hampshire		
New Jersey		
New Mexico		
New York		
North Carolina		
North Dakota		
Ohio		
Oklahoma		
Oregon		
Pennsylvania		
Rhode Island		
South Carolina		
South Dakota		
Tennessee		
Texas	✓	
Utah		

State	State exit-level or college placement test	Unweighted GPA
Vermont		
Virginia		
Washington		
West Virginia		
Wisconsin		
Wyoming		✓

TABLE A7
Other indicators by state

Arts and physical fitness			
State	Percentage of students meeting or exceeding physical fitness standards	Participation in nutrition and physical activity program	Participation in visual and performing art classes
Alabama			
Alaska			
Arizona			
Arkansas			
California			
Colorado			
Connecticut	✓		✓
District of Columbia			
Delaware			
Florida			
Georgia			
Hawaii			
Idaho			
Illinois			
Indiana			
Iowa			
Kansas			
Kentucky			
Louisiana			
Maine			
Maryland			
Massachusetts			

State	Percentage of students meeting or exceeding physical fitness standards	Participation in nutrition and physical activity program	Participation in visual and performing art classes
Michigan			
Minnesota			
Mississippi			
Missouri			
Montana			
Nebraska			
Nevada			
New Hampshire			
New Jersey			✓
New Mexico			
New York			
North Carolina			
North Dakota			
Ohio			
Oklahoma			
Oregon			
Pennsylvania			
Rhode Island			
South Carolina			
South Dakota			
Tennessee			
Texas			
Utah			
Vermont			
Virginia		✓	
Washington			
West Virginia			
Wisconsin			
Wyoming			

Culture and climate

State	Measure of school climate and culture	Student and parent engagement	Promotion of extracurricular activities	Reduction of truancy
Alabama				
Alaska				

State	Measure of school climate and culture	Student and parent engagement	Promotion of extracurricular activities	Reduction of truancy
Arizona				
Arkansas				
California				
Colorado				
Connecticut				
District of Columbia				
Delaware				
Florida				
Georgia	✓			
Hawaii				
Idaho				
Illinois	✓			
Indiana				
Iowa				
Kansas				
Kentucky				
Louisiana				
Maine				
Maryland				
Massachusetts				
Michigan				
Minnesota				
Mississippi				
Missouri				
Montana				
Nebraska	✓			
Nevada				
New Hampshire				
New Jersey				
New Mexico	✓	✓	✓	✓
New York				
North Carolina				
North Dakota				
Ohio				

State	Measure of school climate and culture	Student and parent engagement	Promotion of extracurricular activities	Reduction of truancy
Oklahoma				
Oregon				
Pennsylvania				
Rhode Island				
South Carolina				
South Dakota				
Tennessee				
Texas				
Utah				
Vermont				
Virginia				
Washington				
West Virginia				
Wisconsin				
Wyoming				

Educator measures

State	Teacher use of state data systems or school use of teacher-student data systems	Reporting educator effectiveness labels	Staff retention
Alabama			
Alaska			
Arizona			
Arkansas			
California			
Colorado			
Connecticut			
District of Columbia			
Delaware			
Florida			
Georgia	✓		
Hawaii			
Idaho			
Illinois			
Indiana			
Iowa			✓

State	Teacher use of state data systems or school use of teacher-student data systems	Reporting educator effectiveness labels	Staff retention
Kansas			
Kentucky			
Louisiana			
Maine			
Maryland			
Massachusetts			
Michigan	✓	✓	
Minnesota			
Mississippi			
Missouri			
Montana			
Nebraska			
Nevada			
New Hampshire			
New Jersey			
New Mexico			
New York			
North Carolina			
North Dakota			
Ohio			
Oklahoma			
Oregon			
Pennsylvania			
Rhode Island			
South Carolina			
South Dakota			
Tennessee			
Texas			
Utah			
Vermont			
Virginia			
Washington			
West Virginia			
Wisconsin			
Wyoming			

Participation or achievement in other courses

State	Students earning credits in other courses, such as world languages and physics	School has earned certification in science, technology, engineering, and math or has students taking advanced course work in these subjects	School offers foreign language in elementary school	Percentage of elementary and middle school students completing career-related projects
Alabama				
Alaska				
Arizona				
Arkansas				
California				
Colorado				
Connecticut				
District of Columbia				
Delaware				
Florida				
Georgia	✓	✓		✓
Hawaii				
Idaho				
Illinois				
Indiana				
Iowa				
Kansas				
Kentucky				
Louisiana				
Maine				
Maryland				
Massachusetts				
Michigan				
Minnesota				
Mississippi				
Missouri				
Montana				
Nebraska				
Nevada				
New Hampshire				
New Jersey				

State	Students earning credits in other courses, such as world languages and physics	School has earned certification in science, technology, engineering, and math or has students taking advanced course work in these subjects	School offers foreign language in elementary school	Percentage of elementary and middle school students completing career-related projects
New Mexico				
New York				
North Carolina				
North Dakota				
Ohio				
Oklahoma				
Oregon				
Pennsylvania				
Rhode Island				
South Carolina				
South Dakota				
Tennessee				
Texas				
Utah				
Vermont				
Virginia	✓	✓	✓	
Washington				
West Virginia				
Wisconsin				
Wyoming				

Other measures

State	Improving K-3 literacy	Innovative practice	State law compliance factors	Program reviews, including those for arts and humanities, writing, and practical living and career studies
Alabama				
Alaska				
Arizona				
Arkansas				
California				
Colorado				
Connecticut				
District of Columbia				

State	Improving K-3 literacy	Innovative practice	State law compliance factors	Program reviews, including those for arts and humanities, writing, and practical living and career studies
Delaware				
Florida				
Georgia		✓		
Hawaii				
Idaho				
Illinois				
Indiana				
Iowa				
Kansas				
Kentucky				✓
Louisiana				
Maine				
Maryland				
Massachusetts				
Michigan			✓	
Minnesota				
Mississippi				
Missouri				
Montana				
Nebraska				
Nevada				
New Hampshire				
New Jersey				
New Mexico				
New York				
North Carolina				
North Dakota				
Ohio	✓			
Oklahoma				
Oregon				
Pennsylvania				
Rhode Island				

State	Improving K-3 literacy	Innovative practice	State law compliance factors	Program reviews, including those for arts and humanities, writing, and practical living and career studies
South Carolina				
South Dakota				
Tennessee				
Texas				
Utah				
Vermont				
Virginia				
Washington				
West Virginia				
Wisconsin				
Wyoming				

Other measures (continued)

State	Percentage of students with disabilities served in general education environments for more than 80 percent of the day	Test participation of less than 95 percent of students limits or reduces overall rating or classification	Use of online assessment format	Other local indicator
Alabama				✓
Alaska				
Arizona				
Arkansas				
California				
Colorado		✓		
Connecticut				
District of Columbia		✓		
Delaware				
Florida				
Georgia	✓			
Hawaii				
Idaho		✓		
Illinois				
Indiana				
Iowa				
Kansas				

State	Percentage of students with disabilities served in general education environments for more than 80 percent of the day	Test participation of less than 95 percent of students limits or reduces overall rating or classification	Use of online assessment format	Other local indicator
Kentucky				
Louisiana				
Maine		✓		
Maryland				
Massachusetts		✓		
Michigan		✓		
Minnesota				
Mississippi				
Missouri				
Montana				
Nebraska		✓		
Nevada				
New Hampshire		✓		
New Jersey				
New Mexico		✓	✓	
New York				
North Carolina				
North Dakota				
Ohio		✓		
Oklahoma		✓		
Oregon		✓		
Pennsylvania		✓		
Rhode Island		✓		
South Carolina		✓		
South Dakota				
Tennessee		✓		
Texas				
Utah		✓		
Vermont				
Virginia				
Washington				
West Virginia				
Wisconsin		✓		
Wyoming		✓		

Appendix C: Weighting analysis

TABLE A8
Color key for weighting analysis

	A blank cell signifies that a state: (1) does not have an ESEA flexibility waiver or additional state system and therefore uses AYP for accountability; (2) does not combine its accountability indicators in a way that results in an overall score or grade; (3) uses business rules that do not translate to weightings; or (4) is transitioning to a new system.
--	A double dash signifies that a state does not include this category of indicators in its accountability system at the state or school level.
	A light blue cell means that the weighting data for some or all of the indicators in this category could not be unpacked from another indicator category's weighting. The cell in the corresponding category of indicators with the weighting is also light blue.
	A medium blue cell means that this category of indicators contributes to bonus points not included in the category's weighting or in a school's classification.
	A dark blue cell means that performance of some or all of the indicators in this category contribute to a point or rating deduction or to a school's classification.

A list of sources for this analysis can be found in Appendix D.

TABLE A9
Achievement indicators weighting

State	Percentage of elementary school rating	Percentage of middle school rating	Percentage of high school rating
Alabama	50.0%	50.0%	25.0%
Alaska	35.0%	35.0%	20.0%
Arizona			
Arkansas	51.0%	51.0%	34.6%
California			
Colorado	25.0%	25.0%	15.0%
Connecticut	35.3%	33.3%	48.0%
District of Columbia	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Delaware	30.0%	30.0%	25.0%
Florida	42.9%	44.4%	40.0%
Georgia	50.0%	48.0%	33.8%
Hawaii	52.4%	46.3%	34.1%
Idaho	25.0%	25.0%	20.0%
Illinois	50.0%	50.0%	22.2%
Indiana	50.0%	50.0%	26.7%
Iowa	57.2%	62.5%	55.5%
Kansas			
Kentucky	51.3%	43.1%	30.8%
Louisiana	100.0%	95.0%	50.0%
Maine	50.0%	50.0%	80.0%
Maryland	70.0%	70.0%	64.0%
Massachusetts	66.7%	66.7%	50.0%
Michigan			
Minnesota	33.3%	33.3%	25.0%
Mississippi	42.9%	42.9%	30.0%
Missouri	75.0%	75.0%	50.0%
Montana			
Nebraska			
Nevada	30.0%	30.0%	30.0%
New Hampshire	20.0%	20.0%	50.0%
New Jersey			
New Mexico	33.3%	33.3%	28.6%
New York			

State	Percentage of elementary school rating	Percentage of middle school rating	Percentage of high school rating
North Carolina	80.0%	80.0%	45.7%
North Dakota			
Ohio			
Oklahoma	45.5%	45.5%	46.4%
Oregon	25.0%	25.0%	20.0%
Pennsylvania	51.9%	51.9%	41.0%
Rhode Island	75.0%	75.0%	80.0%
South Carolina	90.0%	90.0%	55.0%
South Dakota	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%
Tennessee			
Texas			
Utah	50.0%	50.0%	33.3%
Vermont			
Virginia			
Washington	40.0%	40.0%	32.0%
West Virginia	60.0%	60.0%	55.0%
Wisconsin	55.0%	55.0%	62.5%
Wyoming			

TABLE A10
Student growth indicators weighting

State	Percentage of elementary school rating	Percentage of middle school rating	Percentage of high school rating
Alabama	30.0%	30.0%	15.0%
Alaska	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%
Arizona			
Arkansas	49.0%	49.0%	32.7%
California			
Colorado	67.9%	67.9%	45.0%
Connecticut	47.1%	44.4%	--
District of Columbia			
Delaware	60.0%	60.0%	45.0%
Florida	57.1%	44.4%	40.0%
Georgia	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%

State	Percentage of elementary school rating	Percentage of middle school rating	Percentage of high school rating
Hawaii	34.1%	26.8%	14.6%
Idaho	75.0%	75.0%	50.0%
Illinois	35.0%	35.0%	23.3%
Indiana	50.0%	50.0%	13.3%
Iowa	28.6%	25.0%	22.2%
Kansas			
Kentucky	25.7%	21.6%	15.4%
Louisiana			
Maine	50.0%	50.0%	--
Maryland	30.0%	30.0%	--
Massachusetts	29.6%	29.6%	22.2%
Michigan			
Minnesota	66.7%	66.7%	50.0%
Mississippi	57.1%	57.1%	40.0%
Missouri			--
Montana			
Nebraska			
Nevada	60.0%	60.0%	10.0%
New Hampshire	60.0%	60.0%	--
New Jersey			
New Mexico	52.4%	52.4%	28.6%
New York			
North Carolina	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
North Dakota			
Ohio			
Oklahoma	45.5%	45.5%	45.5%
Oregon	75.0%	75.0%	30.0%
Pennsylvania	38.5%	38.5%	37.4%
Rhode Island	25.0%	25.0%	--
South Carolina	--	--	--
South Dakota	40.0%	40.0%	--
Tennessee			
Texas			
Utah	50.0%	50.0%	33.3%
Vermont			

State	Percentage of elementary school rating	Percentage of middle school rating	Percentage of high school rating
Virginia			
Washington	60.0%	60.0%	32.0%
West Virginia	35.0%	35.0%	15.0%
Wisconsin	25.0%	25.0%	--
Wyoming			

TABLE A11
English language acquisition indicators weighting

State	Percentage of elementary school rating	Percentage of middle school rating	Percentage of high school rating
Alabama	--	--	--
Alaska	--	--	--
Arizona			
Arkansas	--	--	--
California			
Colorado	7.2%	7.2%	5.0%
Connecticut	--	--	--
District of Columbia	--	--	--
Delaware	--	--	--
Florida	--	--	--
Georgia	2.5%	3.0%	
Hawaii	--	--	--
Idaho	--	--	--
Illinois	15.0%	15.0%	10.0%
Indiana	--	--	--
Iowa	--	--	--
Kansas			
Kentucky	--	--	--
Louisiana	--	--	--
Maine	--	--	--
Maryland	--	--	--
Massachusetts	3.7%	3.7%	2.8%
Michigan			
Minnesota	--	--	--

State	Percentage of elementary school rating	Percentage of middle school rating	Percentage of high school rating
Mississippi	--	--	--
Missouri	--	--	--
Montana			
Nebraska			
Nevada	--	--	--
New Hampshire	--	--	--
New Jersey			
New Mexico	--	--	--
New York			
North Carolina	--	--	--
North Dakota			
Ohio			
Oklahoma	--	--	--
Oregon	--	--	--
Pennsylvania	--	--	--
Rhode Island	--	--	--
South Carolina	--	--	--
South Dakota	--	--	--
Tennessee			
Texas			
Utah	--	--	--
Vermont			
Virginia			
Washington	--	--	--
West Virginia	--	--	--
Wisconsin	--	--	--
Wyoming			

TABLE A12
Early warning indicators weighting

State	Percentage of elementary school rating	Percentage of middle school rating	Percentage of high school rating
Alabama	10.0%	10.0%	--
Alaska	25.0%	25.0%	10.0%
Arizona			
Arkansas	--	--	--
California			
Colorado	--	--	--
Connecticut	11.8%	16.7%	12.0%
District of Columbia	--	--	--
Delaware	10.0%	10.0%	5.0%
Florida	--	--	--
Georgia	2.5%	3.0%	1.9%
Hawaii	12.2%	2.4%	1.2%
Idaho	--	--	--
Illinois	--	--	--
Indiana	--	--	--
Iowa	7.1%	6.3%	5.6%
Kansas			
Kentucky	--	--	--
Louisiana	--	--	--
Maine	--	--	--
Maryland			--
Massachusetts	--	--	--
Michigan			
Minnesota	--	--	--
Mississippi	--	--	--
Missouri	12.5%	12.5%	7.1%
Montana			
Nebraska			
Nevada	10.0%	10.0%	14.0%
New Hampshire	10.0%	10.0%	12.5%
New Jersey			
New Mexico	4.8%	4.8%	2.9%
New York			

State	Percentage of elementary school rating	Percentage of middle school rating	Percentage of high school rating
North Carolina	--	--	--
North Dakota			
Ohio			
Oklahoma	9.1%	5.5%	--
Oregon	--	--	--
Pennsylvania	4.8%	4.8%	2.3%
Rhode Island	--	--	--
South Carolina	--	--	--
South Dakota	20.0%	20.0%	--
Tennessee			
Texas			
Utah	--	--	--
Vermont			
Virginia			
Washington	--	--	--
West Virginia	5.0%	5.0%	--
Wisconsin	20.0%	20.0%	
Wyoming			

TABLE A13
Persistence indicators weighting

State	Percentage of elementary school rating	Percentage of middle school rating	Percentage of high school rating
Alabama	--	--	20.0%
Alaska	--	--	20.0%
Arizona			
Arkansas	--	--	32.7%
California			
Colorado	--	--	26.3%
Connecticut	--	--	16.0%
District of Columbia	--	--	
Delaware	--	--	15.0%
Florida	--	--	10.0%
Georgia	--	--	15.0%

State	Percentage of elementary school rating	Percentage of middle school rating	Percentage of high school rating
Hawaii	1.2%	--	26.8%
Idaho	--	--	15.0%
Illinois	--	--	33.3%
Indiana	--	--	30.0%
Iowa	--	--	11.1%
Kansas			
Kentucky	--	--	15.4%
Louisiana	--		25.0%
Maine	--	--	20.0%
Maryland	--	--	28.0%
Massachusetts	--	--	25.0%
Michigan			
Minnesota	--	--	25.0%
Mississippi	--	--	20.0%
Missouri	--	--	21.4%
Montana			
Nebraska			
Nevada	--	--	30.0%
New Hampshire	--	--	25.0%
New Jersey			
New Mexico	--	--	16.2%
New York			
North Carolina	--	--	11.4%
North Dakota			
Ohio			
Oklahoma	--	1.8%	5.5%
Oregon	--	--	50.0%
Pennsylvania	4.8%	4.8%	2.3%
Rhode Island	--	--	20.0%
South Carolina	--	--	30.0%
South Dakota	--	--	30.0%
Tennessee			
Texas			
Utah	--	--	16.7%

State	Percentage of elementary school rating	Percentage of middle school rating	Percentage of high school rating
Vermont			
Virginia			
Washington	--	--	32.0%
West Virginia	--	--	30.0%
Wisconsin	--	--	32.5%
Wyoming			

TABLE A14
College- and career-ready indicators weighting

State	Percentage of elementary school rating	Percentage of middle school rating	Percentage of high school rating
Alabama	--	--	30.0%
Alaska	--	--	10.0%
Arizona			
Arkansas	--	--	--
California			
Colorado	--	--	8.8%
Connecticut	--	--	16.0%
District of Columbia	--	--	--
Delaware	--	--	10.0%
Florida	--	11.1%	10.0%
Georgia	--	--	9.4%
Hawaii	--	24.4%	23.2%
Idaho	--	--	15.0%
Illinois	--	--	11.1%
Indiana	--	--	30.0%
Iowa	--	--	--
Kansas			
Kentucky	--	12.3%	15.4%
Louisiana	--	5.0%	25.0%
Maine	--	--	--
Maryland	--	--	8.0%
Massachusetts	--	--	--
Michigan			

State	Percentage of elementary school rating	Percentage of middle school rating	Percentage of high school rating
Minnesota	--	--	--
Mississippi	--	--	10.0%
Missouri	12.5%	12.5%	21.4%
Montana			
Nebraska			
Nevada	--	--	16.0%
New Hampshire	--	--	--
New Jersey			
New Mexico	--	--	14.3%
New York			
North Carolina	--	--	22.9%
North Dakota			
Ohio			
Oklahoma	--	1.8%	2.7%
Oregon	--	--	--
Pennsylvania	--	--	16.8%
Rhode Island	--	--	--
South Carolina	--	--	--
South Dakota	--	--	30.0%
Tennessee			
Texas			
Utah	--	--	16.7%
Vermont			
Virginia			
Washington	--	--	4.0%
West Virginia	--	--	--
Wisconsin	--	--	5.0%
Wyoming			

TABLE A15
Other indicators weighting

State	Percentage of elementary school rating	Percentage of middle school rating	Percentage of high school rating
Alabama	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Alaska	--	--	--
Arizona			
Arkansas	--	--	--
California			
Colorado			
Connecticut	5.9%	5.6%	8.0%
District of Columbia			
Delaware	--	--	--
Florida	--	--	--
Georgia	5.0%	6.0%	
Hawaii	--	--	--
Idaho			
Illinois			
Indiana	--	--	--
Iowa	7.1%	6.3%	5.6%
Kansas			
Kentucky	23.0%	23.0%	23.0%
Louisiana	--	--	--
Maine			
Maryland	--	--	--
Massachusetts			
Michigan			
Minnesota	--	--	--
Mississippi	--	--	--
Missouri	--	--	--
Montana			
Nebraska			
Nevada	--	--	--
New Hampshire	10.0%	10.0%	12.5%
New Jersey			
New Mexico	9.5%	9.5%	9.5%
New York			

State	Percentage of elementary school rating	Percentage of middle school rating	Percentage of high school rating
North Carolina	--	--	--
North Dakota			
Ohio			
Oklahoma			
Oregon			
Pennsylvania			
Rhode Island			
South Carolina	10.0%	10.0%	15.0%
South Dakota	--	--	--
Tennessee			
Texas			
Utah			
Vermont			
Virginia			
Washington	--	--	--
West Virginia	--	--	--
Wisconsin			
Wyoming			

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Our Mission

The Center for American Progress is an independent, nonpartisan policy institute that is dedicated to improving the lives of all Americans, through bold, progressive ideas, as well as strong leadership and concerted action. Our aim is not just to change the conversation, but to change the country.

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As progressives, we believe America should be a land of boundless opportunity, where people can climb the ladder of economic mobility. We believe we owe it to future generations to protect the planet and promote peace and shared global prosperity.

And we believe an effective government can earn the trust of the American people, champion the common good over narrow self-interest, and harness the strength of our diversity.

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GPS

INDICATORS FRAMEWORK



GPS

INDICATORS FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

This chart is designed to give policymakers, educators, and advocates a framework to evaluate how well states, districts, and schools address areas critical to student success. The chart is designed similarly to a logic model—allowing states and districts to visualize the resources, policies, and practices fundamental to achieving student success.

BACKGROUND

In 2008, the National Education Association renewed its commitment to advocate for a “great public school” for every student. Shortly thereafter, NEA launched the Great Public Schools (GPS) Indicators Project. The primary objective of the GPS Indicators Project is to highlight the strengths and weaknesses in states’ and districts’ support of public schools. The Project’s goals are to: 1) develop criteria (i.e. characteristics or qualities of public schools, staff, and students) in seven critical areas; 2) identify appropriate ways to measure the key criteria; and, 3) report on the status of these indicators in the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

In 2010-2011, the GPS Indicators Project, with the assistance of an independent advisory panel consisting of leading researchers, developed an initial framework of indicators that would serve as a basis for analyzing resources, policies, practices, and outputs related to the GPS criteria. The final indicators are the result of over three years’ of research and collaboration. The final product is seven criteria, 31 subcriteria, and more than 200 research- and evidence-based qualitative and quantitative indicators at the state, district, and school levels.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The seven criteria—which represent general areas deemed critical to the success of public schools and students—are listed on the top row of the chart. The criteria are: 1) School Readiness; 2) Standards and Curriculum; 3) Conditions of Teaching and Learning; 4) Workforce Quality; 5) Accountability and Assessments; 6) Family and Community Engagement; and, 7) School Funding.

In the row below the GPS criteria you will find several subcriteria (e.g. Appropriate Student Assessments), each corresponding to a single GPS criterion. These subcriteria represent the outcomes integral to closing opportunity and achievement gaps and preparing students for the future with 21st century skills. The subcriteria are followed by the indicators that determine the extent to which states, districts, and schools address the GPS criteria.

The indicators are grouped by **Resources, Policies and Practices**, and **Outputs**. **Resource** indicators refer to the human capital, technical assistance, and funding that are needed to achieve outcomes. **Policies and Practices** are the indicators that need to be implemented to achieve outcomes. **Outputs**, such as “Percentage of students with less than 10 absences in a school year,” are a result of the resources invested and the policies and practices implemented, and measure proximity to the outcomes, or goals.

NOTE: This chart is a living document; the categories and descriptions you see here may change as advances in research are made. NEA has provided policy materials to accompany and support our advocacy work for all children, including those in poverty, students with disabilities, and English language learners.



GREAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS CRITERIA

It is incumbent upon state policymakers and districts to collect and publicly report on indicators data disaggregated by district, school, and student subgroups.* Indicators data can be used to pinpoint areas of strength and weakness and better enable stakeholders to implement legislative and practice changes at the state, district, and school levels, turning every school into a great public school.

All students have a basic right to a great public school. The framework is NEA's vision of what great public schools need and should provide. NEA's vision acknowledges that the changing global society requires a change in the criteria to prepare all students for the future. Meeting these GPS criteria require not only the continued commitment of all educators, families, and community stakeholders, but the concerted efforts of policymakers at all levels of government. We believe these criteria will:

- Prepare all students for the future with 21st century skills
- Create enthusiasm for learning and engage all students in the classroom
- Close achievement gaps and raise achievement for all students
- Ensure that all educators have the resources and tools they need to get the job done

These criteria form a basis for NEA's priorities in offering Congress a framework for the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The reauthorization process must involve all stakeholders, especially educators. Their knowledge and insights are key to developing sound policies. For more information please visit nea.org/gpsindicators.

NOTE: These criteria are taken from NEA's Positive Agenda for ESEA Reauthorization, adopted July 2006. www.nea.org/home/13193.htm

*Student subgroups include race, ethnicity, gender, disability, English language learners, socioeconomic status, and temporary housing.

Quality programs and services that meet the full range of all children's needs so that they come to school every day ready and able to learn.

High expectations and standards with a rigorous and comprehensive curriculum for all students.

Quality conditions for teaching and lifelong learning.

A qualified, caring, diverse, and stable workforce.

Shared responsibility for appropriate school accountability by stakeholders at all levels.

Parental, family, and community involvement and engagement.

Sufficient, equitable, and sustainable funding.

CRITERIA		School Readiness				
SUB-CRITERIA		ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD	MANDATORY FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN ATTENDANCE	TEACHER PREPARATION AND EFFECTIVENESS	COMPREHENSIVE SCREENING AND FOLLOW-UP	TRANSITIONAL ALIGNMENT
INDICATORS	RESOURCES	State subsidizes Early Head Start, Head Start, and Preschool.	State funds full-day kindergarten, at minimum, at the same level as grades 1–12.	<p>State provides funding for professional learning and technical assistance to state-funded preK programs.</p> <p>State provides financial support for teachers seeking certification in early- childhood education and development.</p> <p>State compensates teachers certified in early-childhood education and development on the same pay scale as comparably educated K–12 teachers.</p>	State provides public health insurance—state children’s health insurance program (SCHIP)—to all children from low-income families.	<p>State provides funding for transition activities.</p> <p>State-subsidized early-learning programs receive funds for joint professional learning activities for child care providers, preK, and kindergarten teachers.</p>
	POLICIES & PRACTICES	<p>State defines early-learning standards for child development and state-funded preK.</p> <p>State uses a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS).</p> <p>Districts offer early education services for the home (e.g. home visitation, early literacy, prenatal, social services).</p>	<p>State requires that districts provide full-day, five-day/week kindergarten.</p> <p>State requires mandatory attendance for all eligible students.</p> <p>Districts provide full-day, five-day/week kindergarten.</p>	<p>State policy has standards for preparation of early-childhood educators.</p> <p>State monitors the credentials, licenses, and certification of all early-childhood educators.</p> <p>State monitors the credentials, licenses, and certification of all preK–3 educators.</p>	<p>State has implemented streamlined procedures to facilitate enrollment in Medicaid and SCHIP.</p> <p>State requires that all school-aged children are appropriately immunized before entering school.</p> <p>State requires that all school-aged children undergo developmental and comprehensive child health screenings (e.g. ear, oral, vision).</p>	<p>State-subsidized early-learning programs are required to implement early-childhood curricula that are aligned with state preK–grade 3 early-learning standards.</p> <p>State has a policy outlining transition from early-learning programs to elementary schools.</p> <p>State-funded preK programs implement early-childhood curricula aligned with state preK–grade 3 early-learning standards.</p> <p>Districts conduct transition activities for preK students and their families.</p> <p>Districts provide transition information to preK students and their families.</p> <p>Districts provide joint professional learning activities for child care providers, preK, and kindergarten teachers.</p>
	OUTPUTS	<p>Percentage of eligible students enrolled in state-funded Early Head Start.</p> <p>Percentage of eligible students enrolled in state-funded Head Start.</p> <p>Percentage of eligible children under age six receiving child care that is fully or partially paid for with a child care subsidy.</p> <p>Percentage of families that spend no more than 10 percent of the regional median family income on quality care (3–5 stars).</p> <p>Percentage of eligible students age zero–three enrolled in an early-intervention program.</p> <p>Percentage of eligible students participating in QRIS-rated programs.</p> <p>Percentage of students demonstrating readiness at kindergarten entry.</p>	Percentage of eligible students in full-day, five-day/week kindergarten.	<p>Percentage of teachers of state-funded preK with a bachelor’s degree or higher.</p> <p>Percentage of kindergarten teachers licensed and/or certified in early-childhood education and development.</p>	<p>Percentage of eligible children enrolled in SCHIP.</p> <p>Percentage of children who have undergone developmental and comprehensive child health screenings.</p> <p>Percentage of children from birth to age eight who have received all required immunizations.</p>	<p>Percentage of kindergarten teachers surveyed indicating alignment between early-learning programs and kindergarten.</p> <p>Percentage of parents surveyed who received transition information from their district.</p>

CRITERIA		Standards and Curriculum			
SUB-CRITERIA		INTEGRATED AND CONTINUOUS CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT	COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM CONTENT	APPROPRIATE INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES	ACCOMMODATION AND DIFFERENTIATION
INDICATORS	RESOURCES	<p>State provides high-quality resources that are aligned with standards and curriculum.*</p> <p>Districts provide resources to help educators understand and apply content standards.**</p> <p>*Resources may include textbooks, workbooks, technology, and supplies.</p> <p>**Resources may include funding for professional learning.</p>	<p>State provides funding to implement rigorous courses aligned with college- and career-ready standards for all districts.*</p> <p>State provides funding to implement college preparatory courses in math and science.**</p> <p>State provides funding to all districts for fine arts education.</p> <p>State provides funding to all districts for physical education.</p> <p>*Rigorous courses could include dual enrollment, Honors, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and career and technical education (CTE) certification.</p> <p>**College-preparatory courses are algebra 1, algebra 2, geometry, trigonometry, calculus, biology, chemistry, and physics.</p>	<p>State provides funding for job-embedded professional learning opportunities to help educators improve their instructional repertoire.</p>	<p>State provides funding for accommodations and differentiations in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.</p>
	POLICIES & PRACTICES	<p>State policy requires educator involvement in developing content standards and curriculum guidelines.</p> <p>State has an autonomous curriculum review board with a majority of active preK-12 educators.</p> <p>State policy requires educator involvement in developing implementation plans for standards and curriculum.</p> <p>State developed a plan to solicit feedback from classroom teachers and adjust curriculum guidelines and resources accordingly.</p> <p>State policy mandates alignment among content standards, curriculum, resources, and assessments.</p> <p>Schools include educators in curriculum design.</p> <p>Schools include educators in implementation plan development for standards and curriculum.</p>	<p>State developed a policy that requires alignment between curricular content and rigorous standards that address the needs of students of all abilities, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds in all academic subjects.</p> <p>State policy recognizes the value of fine arts in curricula.</p> <p>State policy recognizes physical education as a core subject.</p> <p>Schools align curriculum content to rigorous standards that address the needs of students of all abilities, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds in all academic subjects.</p> <p>Schools offer fine arts education to their students.</p> <p>Schools implement the National Association of Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) standards for physical education.*</p> <p>Schools use the community as a contextualized learning environment.**</p> <p>*NASPE recommends 150 minutes of instructional physical education for elementary school students and 225 minutes for middle and high school students per week for the entire school year.</p> <p>**Connect education to community through public libraries, zoos, parks, work experience opportunities, service learning, the school library, and afterschool programs.</p>	<p>Districts align professional learning with standards, curriculum, and assessments.</p> <p>Districts support regular, job-embedded professional learning opportunities.</p>	<p>State developed a policy that requires accommodations and differentiations in curriculum, instruction, and assessment to meet the range of students' needs.</p> <p>Districts provide job-embedded professional learning to help educators provide accommodations to meet the range of students' needs.</p> <p>Schools implement Response to Intervention (RTI).</p> <p>Schools implement Universal Design for Learning (UDL).</p> <p>Schools implement Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports/Positive Behavior Supports (PBIS/PBS).</p>
	OUTPUTS	<p>Percentage of educators surveyed indicating alignment among standards, curriculum, resources, and assessments.</p> <p>Percentage of educators surveyed indicating access to sufficient curriculum resources.</p>	<p>Percentage of students enrolled in a Gifted and Talented education program.</p> <p>Percentage of students enrolled in at least one Advanced Placement (AP) course.</p> <p>Percentage of high school seniors who have completed all college-preparatory courses in math and science.</p> <p>Percentage of students enrolled in a fine arts course.</p> <p>Percentage of students enrolled in a physical education course that meets NASPE standards.</p> <p>Percentage of students participating in service learning and/or an afterschool program.</p>	<p>Percentage of educators surveyed indicating alignment among professional learning, standards, curriculum, and assessments.</p> <p>Percentage of educators who participated in job-embedded professional learning opportunities in the previous year.</p>	<p>Percentage of teachers with at least eight hours of professional learning on analyzing student data to differentiate instruction for students with disabilities, as needed.</p> <p>Percentage of teachers with at least eight hours of professional learning on analyzing student data to differentiate instruction for students with limited English proficiency.</p> <p>Percentage of teachers with at least eight hours of professional learning on analyzing student data to differentiate instruction for students with gifts and talents.</p> <p>Percentage of teachers trained in PBIS/PBS.</p>

CRITERIA		Conditions of Teaching and Learning				
SUB-CRITERIA		GUIDANCE AND SUPPORTS FOR INSTRUCTION	GUIDANCE AND SUPPORTS FOR LEARNING	EDUCATOR VOICE IN ACCOUNTABILITY	POSITIVE CLASSROOM ECOLOGY	POSITIVE SCHOOL ECOLOGY
INDICATORS	RESOURCES	<p>State provides resources for planning, instructional support, and collaboration.*</p> <p>Districts provide funding for educators to access professional learning that addresses new education research and technology that will help improve instruction or support for students.</p> <p>*Instructional support and collaboration may include professional learning communities, professional learning teams, lesson study, cohort learning, mentoring, and induction.</p>	<p>State allocates funding towards comprehensive school guidance systems with standards and benchmarks that address the academic needs of all students.</p> <p>Districts provide a favorable student-to-specialized instructional support personnel (SISP) ratio.*</p> <p>Districts provide adequate resources for SISP to collaborate with teachers, education support professionals (ESP), parents, and students.</p> <p>*Optimal ratios include: school counselors–250:1 school nurses–750:1 school psychologists–500-700:1 school social workers–250:1</p>	<p>Districts dedicate resources toward lifting the educator voice.</p>	<p>Districts allocate funds to increase educators’ culturally relevant pedagogy.</p>	<p>Districts allocate resources toward interventions around student safety issues (e.g. LGBT bullying and harassment).</p>
	POLICIES & PRACTICES	<p>State policy supports regular, job-embedded planning, instructional support, and collaboration.</p> <p>State requires districts to obtain educator input on instructional minutes.</p> <p>Districts implement scheduled, job-embedded planning, instructional support, and collaborative time.</p> <p>Districts maintain and support a professional library of education publications for staff.</p> <p>Districts survey educators on teaching and learning conditions.</p> <p>Districts obtain educator input on instructional minutes.</p>	<p>State developed a policy that requires supports for students’ social, emotional, and physical well-being.</p> <p>Districts implement and track guidance standards and benchmarks for all students.</p> <p>Districts provide adequate professional learning time for SISP.</p> <p>Districts have outreach plans for harder-to-access student populations.*</p> <p>Eligible schools are enrolled in free and reduced-price school breakfast and lunch programs.</p> <p>*Outreach may include a peer-support program, mentors, and full-time specialized instructional support personnel (SISP).</p>	<p>State has an autonomous standards board, the majority of whom are active preK–12 educators.*</p> <p>State requires that all planning and decision-making bodies related to the educator profession include active preK–12 educators.</p> <p>Districts provide formal opportunities for educators to participate in district policy setting (e.g. accountability systems, hiring and evaluation of administrators).</p> <p>*Standards board jurisdiction includes teacher licensing, teacher preparation program approval, and professional learning approval.</p>	<p>State developed a comprehensive cultural competency policy to increase educators’ cultural and linguistic competence through preservice education, licensure, and ongoing professional learning.</p> <p>State policy mandates class size limits based on subject matter and grade level.</p> <p>Districts have class size limits based on subject matter and grade level.</p> <p>Districts track the relationship between student achievement and the amount of teacher training/education in culturally relevant pedagogy.</p>	<p>State developed a policy that requires annual reporting by school on school climate and student engagement.</p> <p>State policy requires schools to collect and publicly report data recording behavior and behavioral interventions leading to disciplinary exclusion from school.*</p> <p>Districts educate all school personnel on intervention techniques in incidents of student bullying and harassment.</p> <p>Schools annually report on school climate and student engagement.</p> <p>Schools have data-driven, site-based school climate, and student engagement plans.</p> <p>Schools collect and publicly report data recording behavior and behavioral interventions leading to disciplinary exclusion from school.</p> <p>Schools report on incidents of student bullying on a daily or weekly basis.</p> <p>*These disciplinary actions include in-school/out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, arrests, and referrals to law enforcement.</p>
	OUTPUTS	<p>Percentage of educators surveyed indicating satisfaction with the time dedicated to planning.</p> <p>Percentage of educators surveyed indicating satisfaction with instructional time.</p> <p>Percentage of educators surveyed indicating satisfaction with collaborative time.</p> <p>Percentage of educators surveyed indicating satisfaction with professional learning time and opportunities.</p> <p>Percentage of educators surveyed indicating satisfaction with guidance and supports for instruction.</p>	<p>Percentage of students surveyed indicating they feel supported in their school.</p> <p>Percentage of SISP surveyed indicating satisfaction with professional learning time.</p> <p>Percentage of eligible students enrolled in free and reduced-price school breakfast and lunch programs.</p>	<p>Percentage of educators surveyed indicating satisfaction with the number of opportunities to participate in school policy setting.</p> <p>Percentage of educators surveyed indicating satisfaction with the number of opportunities to participate in district policy setting.</p>	<p>Percentage of teachers who have received professional development in culturally relevant pedagogy.</p> <p>Percentage of students surveyed indicating satisfaction with the classroom environment.</p>	<p>Percentage of students subjected to disciplinary action in the past year.</p> <p>Percentage of students surveyed indicating they feel safe at their school.</p> <p>Percentage of students surveyed indicating they feel listened to and understood by their educators.</p> <p>Percentage of students with less than 10 absences in a school year (or less than 5 percent of the school year).</p> <p>Percentage of public school employees in each job category who have received in-service training on intervention techniques in incidents of student bullying and harassment.</p>

CRITERIA		Workforce Quality				
SUB-CRITERIA		HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATOR PREPARATION AND LICENSURE	LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND STABILITY	EDUCATOR QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS	EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION	INCENTIVES AND SUPPORTS (ALL SCHOOL PERSONNEL)
INDICATORS	RESOURCES	<p>State provides funding for preparation programs to establish residency programs with local school districts.</p> <p>State provides funding for induction programs.</p>	<p>State provides funding for teacher and school leadership programs.</p> <p>State policy provides resources to complete voluntary national certification and endorsements that promote teacher leadership opportunities.</p>	<p>State provides funding for “peer assistance” and “peer assistance and review” (PAR) teams.</p>	<p>State provides funding and technical assistance to strengthen professional learning in high-poverty, high-minority areas with emphasis on mentoring and cultural competency.</p> <p>Districts provide extra resources and assistance for those in harder to staff schools.</p>	<p>Districts offer financial incentives for teachers to earn National Board certification.</p> <p>Districts offer incentives for teachers to take on differentiated or hybrid roles.</p> <p>Districts offer starting salaries at or above \$40,000 for teachers and \$28,000 for education support professionals (ESP).</p>
	POLICIES & PRACTICES	<p>State developed a policy to use Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards to accredit/ approve educator preparation programs and license educators.</p> <p>Districts mandate successful completion of a residency program prior to obtaining initial licensure.</p> <p>Districts developed selection criteria to identify cooperating teachers.</p> <p>Districts provide training for cooperating teachers.</p> <p>Districts partner with teacher preparation programs on teacher residencies and induction.</p> <p>Preparation programs require school-based experiences beyond a semester of student teaching.</p> <p>Preparation programs use preservice performance assessments to determine candidate preparedness prior to program completion and/or initial licensure.</p> <p>Preparation programs survey graduates about their preparedness to serve as the teacher-of-record and report their response rates.</p> <p>Preparation programs work with local school districts to recruit high-achieving high school graduates to pursue careers in education.</p>	<p>State policy includes a state-level endorsement/certificate for teacher leaders.</p> <p>State policy codifies Teacher Leader Model Standards and/or other standards for teacher leadership.</p> <p>State policy promotes ongoing professional learning and support for principals.</p> <p>State policy codifies principal retention.</p> <p>Districts provide teacher leadership development.</p> <p>Districts have differentiated pay structures for clearly defined roles and responsibilities that account for hybrid/varied educator roles within a school.</p> <p>Districts use multiple measures to evaluate administrators and school leaders.</p> <p>Districts provide ongoing professional learning and support for principals.</p>	<p>State policy mandates multi-professional collaboration on educator support and evaluation systems staffed by active preK–12 educators.</p> <p>State policy requires that evaluations be based on multiple measures of performance to determine effectiveness.*</p> <p>State policy requires school districts to track the equitable distribution of effective teachers and leaders.**</p> <p>Districts design, monitor, and implement evaluation systems based on state framework in partnership with educators and their associations.</p> <p>Districts use performance evaluations employing multiple measures.</p> <p>Districts use evaluations aligned with induction.</p> <p>Districts provide educators with targeted support based on formative and summative evaluation results.</p> <p>Districts provide “peer assistance” or “peer assistance and review” (PAR) teams.</p> <p>Districts track the distribution of effective teachers and leaders.</p> <p>*Measures may include classroom observations, portfolios, leadership roles, and professional learning.</p> <p>**Teachers with full licensure and rated effective in their positions according to multiple measures of performance.</p>	<p>State policy supports recruitment of promising future educators including underrepresented populations.</p> <p>State tracks educator shortages.</p> <p>Districts have plans to recruit educators from underrepresented populations.</p> <p>Districts have plans to recruit educators for shortage areas, such as special education and second language acquisition.</p> <p>Districts have plans to recruit and retain accomplished educators.</p> <p>Districts have professional learning plans, including induction and mentoring, for teachers, education support professionals (ESP), and specialized instructional support personnel (SISP).</p> <p>Districts begin cultivation and recruitment a year prior to the present school year.</p>	<p>State law provides bargaining rights for public education employees over terms and conditions of employment.</p> <p>State law provides bargaining rights for public education employees over education policy that advances student support and learning.</p> <p>State law provides bargaining rights for public education employees over dues deduction.</p> <p>Districts are represented by unions with collective bargaining rights.</p> <p>District contracts include procedures for dispute resolution.</p> <p>Districts have binding arbitration.</p> <p>District contracts have defined benefit plans that provide replacement of at least 75 percent of final salary, protects against inflation, and is guaranteed by the state.</p> <p>Districts permit educators to bargain length of day/year.</p> <p>Districts permit educators to bargain preparation periods.</p> <p>Districts permit educators to bargain class load/size.</p> <p>Districts permit educator dues deduction, agency fee, and PAC deduction.</p> <p>Districts use the NEA professional growth salary scale.</p>
	OUTPUTS	<p>Percentage of teachers that have passed a preservice performance assessment prior to obtaining their initial license.</p> <p>Percentage of preparation program graduates surveyed indicating satisfaction with their preparedness to serve as the teacher-of-record.</p> <p>Percentage of licensed teachers that have successfully completed both a teacher residency program before becoming the teacher-of-record and induction program within the first three years of teaching.</p>	<p>Percentage of teacher leaders with a leadership endorsement/certificate.</p> <p>Principal retention.</p> <p>Percentage of teacher leaders rated effective based on multiple measures of performance.*</p> <p>Percentage of administrators rated effective based on multiple measures of performance.</p> <p>*Measures may include classroom observations, portfolios, leadership roles, and professional learning.</p>	<p>Percentage of teachers rated effective based on multiple measures of performance.</p>	<p>Educator shortage.</p> <p>Percentage of teachers teaching out of field.</p> <p>Percentage of teachers with less than 10 absences in a school year (or less than 5 percent of the school year).</p> <p>Percentage of teachers who leave the profession after five years.</p>	<p>Percentage of teachers surveyed indicating satisfaction with the terms of employment.</p> <p>Percentage of teachers surveyed indicating satisfaction with the conditions of employment.</p> <p>Percentage of teachers with National Board certification.</p>

CRITERIA		Accountability and Assessments			
SUB-CRITERIA		APPROPRIATE STUDENT ASSESSMENTS	POSITIVE ACHIEVEMENT OUTCOMES	ADEQUATE SCHOOL CAPACITY	SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS
INDICATORS	RESOURCES	State allocates funding towards the development of a valid student assessment system.	State allocates funding to programs to ensure positive achievement outcomes for all students, including strategies to reduce learning gaps.	Districts provide resources and funding for job-embedded professional learning for teachers to become proficient users of formative and summative assessment data.	State offers support to low-performing schools.* *Support includes needs assessments, on-site evaluations, assistance and training in data analysis, additional funding for the school improvement planning process, professional learning, school support teams, and additional student resources.
	POLICIES & PRACTICES	<p>State developed a policy that requires the use of both formative and summative student assessments that adhere to the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL).</p> <p>State developed a policy that requires educators to be involved in assessment design and development.</p> <p>State policy requires that assessment systems employ multiple measures of student growth.*</p> <p>Districts use both formative and summative student assessments that adhere to the principles of UDL.</p> <p>Districts involve educators in assessment design and development.</p> <p>Districts assessment systems employ multiple measures of student growth.</p> <p>*Measures of student growth may include pre- and post-tests, percent change in GPA, group work or presentations, end-of-course papers or portfolios, and project-based inquiry activities.</p>	<p>State has policies and programs to prevent dropouts.</p> <p>State has policies and programs to increase the number of students who graduate and are college and career ready.</p> <p>Districts offer programs with 21st century interdisciplinary themes (e.g. global and financial literacy).</p>	<p>State requires that districts provide resources and job-embedded professional learning for teachers to become proficient users of formative and summative assessment data.</p> <p>State has a comprehensive, aligned, and integrated information management system that enables districts and schools to analyze, evaluate, and continuously improve student, educator, and school performance.*</p> <p>Districts train school personnel to interpret data system results to inform and improve instruction and identify needed supports.</p> <p>Districts routinely produce monthly data reports on multiple measures of student performance by class and subject.</p> <p>Districts release assessment results in time to inform learning.</p> <p>*A comprehensive system must include multiple measures of student, educator, and school performance.</p>	<p>State collaborates with educators to develop school performance indicators.</p> <p>State monitors results.</p>
	OUTPUTS	<p>Percentage of teachers surveyed indicating assessments adhere to the principles of UDL.</p> <p>Percentage of teachers surveyed indicating satisfaction with the quality of student assessments.</p> <p>Percentage of teachers indicating satisfaction with the sources used to measure student growth.</p>	<p>Percentage of third-grade students proficient in literacy.</p> <p>Percentage of students passing Algebra 1 in grades 7 and 8.</p> <p>Percentage of students at or above a 3.0 GPA.</p> <p>Percentage of students receiving a score of 3 or above on the AP exam.</p> <p>Percentage of students who took the SAT or ACT in the past year.</p> <p>Percentage of students who graduate.</p> <p>Percentage of students who dropout.</p> <p>Percentage of students who go on to a four-year college, vocational program, or public service.</p> <p>Percentage of students entering a two- or four-year college who do not require remediation or learning support courses.</p>	<p>Percentage of educators surveyed indicating they feel confident in analyzing and interpreting formative and summative assessment data.</p> <p>Percentage of educators surveyed indicating satisfaction with the time allotted to analyze assessment results and inform instruction.</p>	<p>Percentage of students in a school categorized as "low-performing" receiving additional supports.</p>

CRITERIA		Family and Community Engagement			
SUB-CRITERIA		COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES TO IMPROVE ACHIEVEMENT	INCLUSIVENESS AND OUTREACH TO FAMILIES	COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (WRAP-AROUND SERVICES)	STAFF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING IN FAMILY ENGAGEMENT
INDICATORS	RESOURCES	<p>State policy provides employer incentives for parents and/or caregivers to participate in school-related activities.</p> <p>State provides districts with technical assistance and support to address engagement strategies.</p>	<p>State provides resources to school districts to engage families and the community on school district policies, processes, and procedures.</p> <p>Districts hire school-community liaisons who enhance outreach efforts with knowledge of a community's history, language, and cultural background.</p>	<p>State provides resources for an integrated system of academic enrichment and social services to support children's intellectual, social, emotional, physical, and linguistic development.</p>	<p>State policy provides resources for professional learning in family and community engagement for all school personnel.</p>
	POLICIES & PRACTICES	<p>State policy supports family engagement as a driver of student academic performance and vital component of meeting school improvement goals.</p> <p>State requires annual reporting at the district level on family and community engagement.</p> <p>Districts annually report on family and community engagement.</p> <p>Schools developed data-driven, site-based family and community engagement plans.</p>	<p>State mandates family and community outreach.</p> <p>State maintains an information sharing system readily available to families and communities in multiple formats and languages.</p> <p>Districts share information on academic standards, school procedures, and student progress data in multiple formats and languages.</p> <p>Districts collect parent and caregiver feedback.*</p> <p>Schools host trainings for families.**</p> <p>*Methods of collection include surveys, focus groups, parent governing councils, etc.</p> <p>**Trainings could include information sessions on school policies, standards, and community services.</p>	<p>Schools provide access to extended onsite services for students and families. (e.g. school library, computer facilities, gym, etc.).</p> <p>Schools maintain partnerships/collaborations to provide development activities for caregivers.</p> <p>Schools maintain partnerships/collaborations with community providers to offer support for at-risk youth.*</p> <p>Schools maintain partnerships/collaborations with community providers to provide access to family support services/social services.</p> <p>Schools have a formal agreement with a community partner to provide student health services.</p> <p>*Support includes summer school, after-school programs, mentoring, and tutoring.</p>	<p>Districts collaborate with higher education institutions to infuse family and community involvement in education into teacher and administrator preparation programs.</p> <p>Districts provide professional learning in family and community engagement for all school personnel.</p>
	OUTPUTS	<p>Number of formal school-parent collaborations.*</p> <p>Percentage of parents surveyed indicating school-parent collaboration has contributed to improved student achievement.</p> <p>*Collaborations could include parent governing councils, parent classroom assistants, parent recess leaders, parent lunch leaders, parent readers, and parent after-school tutors.</p>	<p>Percentage of parents surveyed indicating satisfactory access to school materials and information.</p> <p>Percentage of parents surveyed indicating they feel listened to and included.</p> <p>Percentage of parents that attended a school training for families in the previous year.</p>	<p>Percentage of parents surveyed indicating satisfaction with student services.</p> <p>Percentage of parents surveyed indicating satisfaction with parent and family services.</p>	<p>Percentage of educators who have taken coursework on family and community engagement.</p> <p>Percentage of school personnel who have participated in professional learning designed to improve family and community engagement.</p>

CRITERIA		School Funding			
SUB-CRITERIA		SUFFICIENCY OF FUNDING	EQUITY IN FUNDING	PRODUCTIVE USE OF FUNDS	FUNDING SUSTAINABILITY
INDICATORS	RESOURCES	<p>State maintains or increases its fiscal effort (state funding of education relative to state fiscal capacity).</p> <p>State guarantees each school district a sufficient foundation level with appropriate adjustments for school level, school size and location, variation in costs across regions, and student characteristics.*</p> <p>*Student characteristics such as special needs, English language learners, and those in poverty and concentrated poverty.</p>	<p>State uses “pupil weights” in its base formula to adjust for diverse student needs.</p> <p>State rewards high fiscal effort, low wealth districts.</p>	<p>State offers performance incentives to ensure productive use of funds by school districts.</p> <p>State invests in capacity building to guide districts in the efficient use of resources.</p> <p>State maintains or increases its investment in research and development.*</p> <p>*Researching and developing improvements in productivity.</p>	<p>State funds local efforts to diversify revenue streams.</p>
	POLICIES & PRACTICES	<p>State determines the cost necessary for each student to meet state content and performance standards; updates costs as significant changes are made to its standards, and reports its findings publicly.</p> <p>State solicits educator input for cost studies.</p> <p>State incorporates findings of its cost study into its education finance system.</p> <p>State has an independent body of stakeholders that includes active preK–12 educators and administrators who annually assess if state funding is sufficient to provide all students the opportunity to meet rigorous academic standards.</p> <p>Districts adjust funding according to school level, school size and location, variation in costs across regions, and student characteristics.</p>	<p>State policy codifies equity in funding—recognizing explicitly that the amount of funding needed to provide a high-quality education varies from student to student.</p> <p>State mandates that districts report on the distribution of state-certified teachers, education support professionals (ESP), and specialized instructional support personnel (SISP).</p> <p>State mandates that districts report on average per-student expenditures disaggregated by federal, state, and local dollars.</p> <p>Districts use “pupil weights” in its base formula to adjust for diverse student needs.</p> <p>Districts report on personnel full-time equivalents (FTE) and salaries funded with state and/or local funds at the school level.*</p> <p>Districts report on non-personnel expenditures funded with state and/or local funds and federal, state, and/or local funds at the school level.</p> <p>*Personnel reporting categories include teachers, ESP, and SISP.</p>	<p>State requires annual district level compliance audits.</p> <p>Districts are part of a district-level consortium to bring down costs of bulk purchases.</p> <p>Districts post an up-to-date budget plan online.</p>	<p>State holds public events to inform government officials and voters of sustainability issues.</p> <p>State implements measures to broaden its tax base.</p> <p>State reports annually on the dollar amount of state tax expenditures.</p> <p>Districts hold public events to inform government officials and voters of sustainability issues.</p> <p>Districts implement measures to broaden their tax base.</p> <p>Districts have multi-year school budgets.</p>
	OUTPUTS	<p>Percentage of schools receiving sufficient levels of funding according to an independent body of stakeholders that includes active preK–12 educators and administrators.</p> <p>Percentage of principals surveyed indicating school funding levels are sufficient to meet rigorous academic standards.</p>	<p>Percentage of schools exhibiting a low correlation between property wealth and resources for students.</p>	<p>Percentage of schools that use their funds productively according to an independent body of stakeholders that includes active preK–12 educators and administrators.</p>	<p>Percentage of schools with a sustainable multi-year budget according to an independent body of stakeholders that includes active preK–12 educators and administrators.</p>

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How State Accountability Systems Affect Student Learning

By Contributing Blogger on March 7, 2016 4:56 PM |

This post is by Adriana Martinez and Joey Hunziker, Senior Associates with the Innovation Lab Network at CCSSO

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/learning_deeply/2016/03/essa_and_maria_how_state_accountability_systems_affect_student_learning.html

It's 1:00 pm on a Wednesday afternoon in late June, 2020. Maria just spent several hours rehearsing her capstone presentation that she is about to give. She shouldn't feel nervous, though, because she's already given this presentation to a panel of teachers and students. But this time it's different. This time, the audience will include her parents, community members, and members of the local business community. When she received her initial feedback from her teachers and fellow students, she immediately regretted her decision to invite her parents and community members to the final presentation. They gave her a lot of positive and constructive feedback, but asked her challenging questions that required her to revise her work and push herself further than she had originally done. Maria worked through the feedback, extended her research and revised part of the presentation's infographics, giving her teachers and fellow students insight into her project and the internship where she has worked for the past nine months. This final audience of parents and community members will prove to be the toughest yet.

You see, the idea for her capstone project originally stemmed from them. Maria interned at one of the prominent local tech companies working to build apps for several online marketplaces. Maria discussed with her teachers and friends the work she was doing at her internship, but she always struggled to explain it to her parents and their friends--they didn't get the technology, because they didn't use it. And they didn't think that something done outside of school should be counted as school. After venting her frustrations to her teachers and talking to other students, she decided to focus her capstone project, which was required to graduate, on how tech companies can build bridges and connections to the Hispanic community of her town in order to expand access to those resources.

Maria set out to facilitate a series of roundtables with representatives from the Hispanic community and the local tech companies. Through careful planning and coordination with her teachers and Extended Learning Opportunities coordinator, Maria devised a project that she was proud of and that would solve a real challenge in her community. Maria aligned her project with six main learning goals, or competencies, which would demonstrate to her school how she has grown academically in knowledge and skills through this process. For example, the business roundtables would help her build and demonstrate a goal around public speaking, leadership, and collaboration. The final written report, which included statistical and demography work, would give her the chance to demonstrate key skills in mathematics, critical thinking, and writing.

At first, Maria hypothesized that tech companies needed to prioritize and invest in translating services, but through the roundtables, the community identified a wider array of needs. Maria determined that businesses needed to do much more than translate. Many of the references, imagery, and "slang" used in marketing outreach have cultural references that are often foreign and unrelatable for the Hispanic community. The roundtables helped Maria and the participating businesses understand how to cater their products to the Hispanic community. This final presentation, with her parents, community, and local businesses, would be an opportunity for Maria not only to show the importance of her project, but to demonstrate to her parents and the community that this activity, focused on a real-world problem outside the school day, does translate into what they traditionally think of "school." The pressure was high, and her nerves on edge, but Maria leapt at the challenge and never looked back.

Maria's journey through her schooling hasn't always been easy, but it was dramatically different from the experiences of those who came before her. And it all changed after December 2015.

Why Does Maria's Story Matter?

Maria is fictional; her story is not. It is an example of what is happening in several schools across the country today (for specific examples, please see the [Next State of Learning](#)). Our challenge is we have to shift these schools--and stories like Maria's--from being the exception to the norm.

Today, that challenge is pressing. It is difficult to change a system; it is even harder to change a system when the policies and regulations underpinning it disincentivize the changes you want to see within the system. For example, many traditional schools have found it difficult to implement innovative approaches to education, such as personalized learning and competency-based education, because they face barriers in their state's accountability system.

Now every state has the opportunity to remove those barriers because of new flexibility and authority in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Maria's experience in school is an example of the fundamental shifts in teaching and learning that states across the country--including those participating in the Council of Chief State School Officers' (CCSSO) **Innovation Lab Network** (ILN)--are already working toward. With the new federal law, we hope these can become a reality in every state.

Passed in December 2015, ESSA differs from its predecessor, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), in that it provides states a greater role in the design and implementation of education accountability systems. The new law allows states to move away from the "one size fits all" approach of NCLB to a model of state-driven accountability that could build local engagement and ownership of student learning. Most importantly, ESSA provides the opportunity for states to rethink how their accountability systems can foster and scale new models for teaching and learning--so Maria's story can become the new normal. States can enhance their systems to make sure students have engaging, relevant learning experiences that prepare them for college, career, and life. The question states must address now is: what are the design elements of an accountability system that support this type of learning?

Several ILN states explored four key design elements throughout 2015, which they will work to incorporate in various ways into the design of their new accountability plans under ESSA. These design elements have the potential to fuel personalized, competency-based teaching and learning in more states, getting us to a vision of student-centered deeper learning that is supported and incentivized by state accountability systems:

- Dashboards with Multiple Measures
- School Quality Reviews
- Performance Assessments
- Professional Growth & Capacity Systems

We'll talk about two of those elements in this post.

Data Dashboards with Multiple Measures

Maria's story is a good example because her school not only required her learning to be aligned to academic standards, but it also created opportunities for her to learn in engaging ways where she could apply what she learns in real-life situations. Her school emphasized non-academic factors that many education policy leaders believe are important, such as a positive school climate, student engagement, and social-emotional learning. Meaningful learning goes beyond the gathering and retention of knowledge and academics; it involves real-world application of that knowledge to other problems, as well as the creation of new knowledge.

But how can education systems capture that learning, and communicate it to parents and communities? ESSA provides states with the opportunity to design dashboards that communicate a broader range of indicators of school quality and student learning. States must still establish rigorous standards and report on student academic achievement, as well as incorporate a measure of school quality beyond academic achievement that will help parents, communities, and education leaders understand levels of opportunity, access and engagement. A dashboard with multiple measures can be a powerful driver for improvement, giving schools and districts the information needed to identify specific areas of strength and target areas that need improvement. They also signal to communities and districts that education is broader than achievement alone; that the "secret sauce" of education is a much more complex mix of inputs and outputs that combine to develop our children all across this country.

For an example of a dashboard, see the work of the CORE Districts in California. The CORE districts developed a [School Quality Index](#) that includes various measures in four domains: academic achievement, social and emotional skills, school culture and climate, and access to learning opportunities. The social-emotional measures, which are being developed, will assess growth mindset, self-management, self-efficacy, and social awareness; they will be measured through student and teacher surveys. Additionally, the California Department of Education developed a [School Quality Snapshot](#) that includes various indicators on student achievement, student engagement, and school climate.

States face a tremendous opportunity in rethinking how their reporting systems, but they need to be thoughtful in design and development of dashboards. For example, dashboards can increase transparency, but adding multiple measures to a state report card might be more confusing to parents and the public. States should be thoughtful in how data is displayed so that it's easily understood by the general public. They might also consider ways they can engage with the community in this process so that stakeholders can provide guidance on how to make data accessible to them. Another concern is that some districts may use multiple indicators to mask low performance academically with high scores on other non-academic measures. To address this, the new federal law ensures that academic measures carry more weight than non-academic measures. In addition, a dashboard format requires data on all measures be displayed, including student achievement.

School Quality Reviews

Shifting to a system based on multiple measures requires states to gather different kinds of information to provide a more accurate snapshot of school performance. That information is valuable both for the state and school systems, but also for parents and communities that want to know more about the quality and progress of their schools. To gather this data, states are pursuing statewide diagnostic or "School Quality" review systems. We **wrote about this previously** as a way of illustrating not only that this strategy is possible, but that states are working together to explore building these systems--and create the types of accountability systems that would support the learning that Maria, in the story above, enjoyed.

In Vermont, for example, the state is working to create learning environments like the one described in Maria's story. To support these environments, the state recognizes it must have different kinds of data to measure its success. In addition to collecting quantifiable metrics and displaying them in a dashboard, the state will gather qualitative data about schools through an in-depth diagnostic review, which will provide more complex information about the state's Supervisory Unions (a governance structure comprising groups of districts and/or schools) on three-year cycles. This system of combined metrics will give the state the knowledge needed to determine whether or not students like Maria have equitable opportunities for learning. It provides the state with more robust information upon which it can make decisions. The state's Education Quality Review (EQR) system is in the **pilot stage right now**, a process that will

inform the long-term evolution and development of the EQR system that eventually will be used statewide.

Conclusion

Under the new federal law, states face a tremendous opportunity to revisit their accountability systems and rethink how they can better serve students, teachers and parents. Many states already have made progress on their systems to include multiple measures and provide the data parents and teachers need to make more informed decisions. Going forward, as states begin to implement ESSA at a state and local level, they should consider the measures they use and how results are displayed to ensure these systems remain meaningful.

What if we could really ensure that every student, no matter their ability, background, race, or language had the opportunity to learn in an adaptive, learner-centered environment similar to Maria's? We are not far away from achieving that vision. Several states already are working tirelessly to build accountability systems that support this type of learning. We hope other states can learn from their experience to chart out the future of their accountability systems. Every student should have the opportunity to learn as Maria did; now we just have to figure out how to make that happen at scale.

Statewide Postsecondary-Readiness Agenda

Statewide Postsecondary-Readiness Standards

State policy should:

- Require public schools and postsecondary education institutions to identify and agree on a specific, statewide set of postsecondary-readiness standards in reading, writing and math skills.
- Define the postsecondary-readiness knowledge and skills needed to succeed in all credit-bearing, first-year coursework in associate and bachelor's degree programs in non-STEM majors.

Junior-Year Progress Assessments

State policy should:

- Require assessment of students' performance in achieving statewide readiness standards no later than the junior year of high school.
- Require postsecondary performance benchmarks to empirically predict success in first-year degree coursework in collegiate and career degree programs.
- States should require assessments that measure the achievement of postsecondary-readiness standards for workforce or career credential programs.
- Use readiness assessments to identify students who need additional help to meet readiness standards — but not as high-stake graduation tests.

Senior-Year Transitional Courses

State policy should:

- Require all high schools statewide to provide postsecondary-readiness transitional courses based on statewide college- and career-readiness standards.
- Require all students who are assessed as needing help with achieving the readiness standards to take the appropriate transitional courses.
- Ensure transitional courses carry high school credit and are eligible to be funded through the public school funding formula; ensure math transitional course is creditable as a fourth-year math course in high school.
- Provide professional development to all high school transitional course teachers.

Postsecondary Application of Statewide Readiness Standards and Assessments

State policy should:

- Have high school students who are assessed as meeting the readiness standards (during the junior year):
 - a. not be required to undergo further readiness testing when admitted to postsecondary education.
 - b. be allowed to begin postsecondary work while in high school.
- Require students who are entering postsecondary education and who have not met the readiness standards on the junior-year assessments or passed senior-year transition courses to:
 - a. have their literacy and mathematics readiness skills evaluated by placement assessments that are aligned to the same standards as on the junior-year assessments.
 - b. Entering students who do not meet the readiness benchmarks on the placement assessment should be evaluated further to determine if learning support is needed, and guided to one of the following paths.
 1. begin degree-credit coursework without learning support and monitor their performance.
 2. undertake learning support with degree-credit coursework, or embedded in the degree credit courses. The performance of these students should be monitored carefully.

School and Postsecondary Accountability for Increasing Readiness

State policy should:

- Require schools to show progress each year in increasing the readiness rates of high school graduates.
- Require postsecondary education institutions to reduce each year the percentage of incoming students who need remedial education (as defined by the statewide performance-readiness standards).
- Require postsecondary education institutions to increase the credential-completion rates of incoming students who are identified upon entry as not ready (whether or not learning support is provided).

Selected Bibliography with Abstracts on Educational Attainment and Related Economic and Workforce Trends

Cahalan, M., Perna, L., Yamashita, M., Ruiz, R. & Franklin, K. (2016). *Indicators of Higher Education Equity in the United States: 2016 Historical Trend Report.* Washington, DC: Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education, Council for Opportunity in Education (COE) and Alliance for Higher Education and Democracy of the University of Pennsylvania (PennAHEAD).

The purposes of this project are “to report the status of higher education equity in the United States and to identify changes over time in measures of equity; to identify policies and practices that promote and hinder progress; and to illustrate the need for increased support of policies, programs and practices that not only improve overall attainment in higher education but also create greater equity in higher education opportunity and outcomes.”

Carnevale, C. & Rose, S.J. (2015). *The Economy Goes to College: The Hidden Promise of Higher Education in the Post-Industrial Service Economy.* Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University, Center on Education and the Workforce.

“The U.S. economy has undergone a fundamental transition from an industrial economy centered around high school-educated workers to a post-industrial service economy in which the typical middle-class worker has at least some postsecondary education or training. Roughly 20 percent of the rising demand for college-educated workers derives from a shift in economic consumption from less education intensive goods production to more education intensive services – from high school-educated blue collar workers in industries like manufacturing to college-educated white-collar workers in industries like finance, information technologies, healthcare, business services, education, and government.”

Carnevale, A.P., Jayasundera, T. & Gulish, A. (2015). *Good Jobs Are Back: College Graduates Are First in Line.* Washington D.C.: Georgetown University, Center on Education and the Workforce.

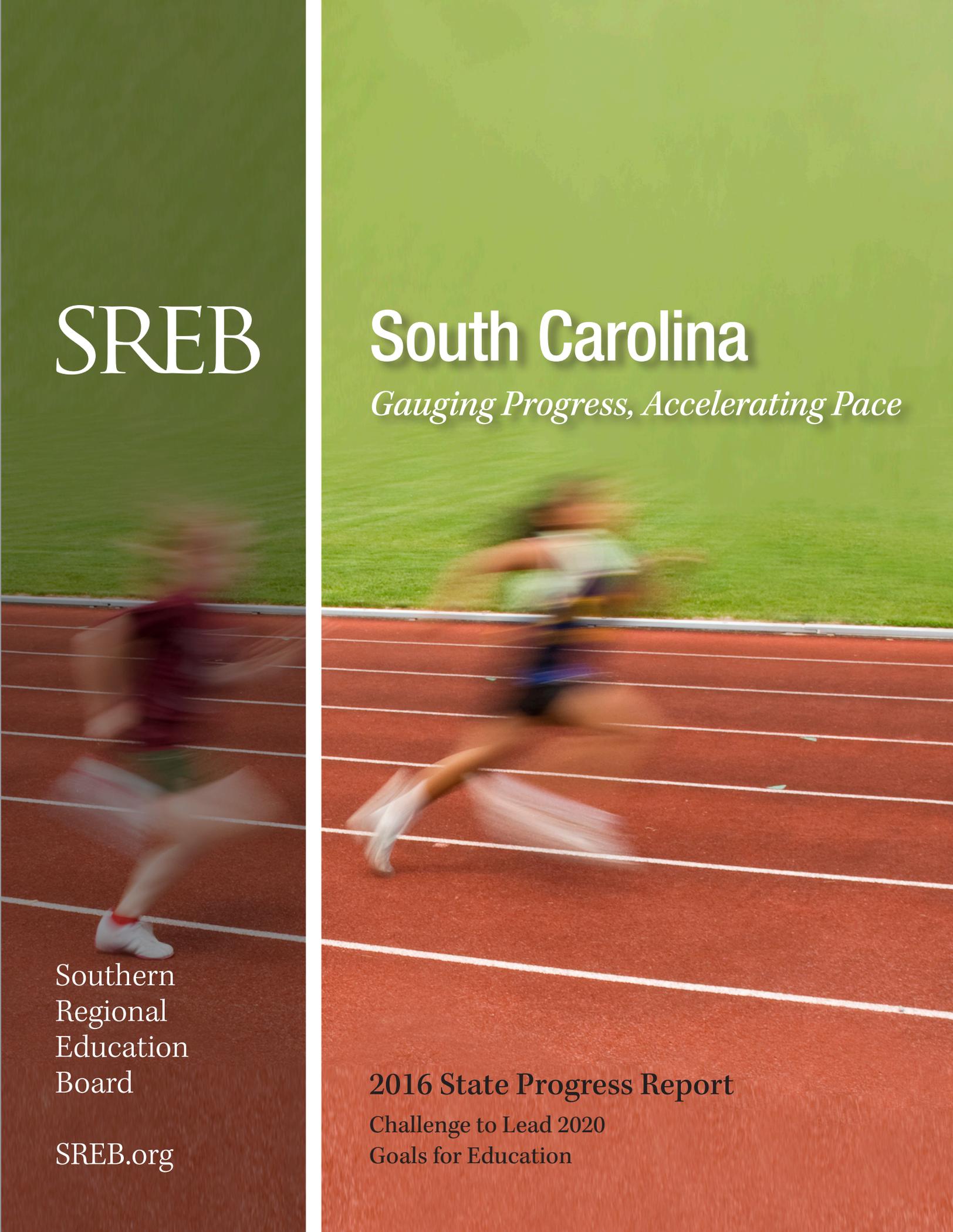
“The economic recovery still has a long way to go. After all, this has been the worst recession since the Great Depression, and an unusually weak recovery. Yet, the American job machine is producing jobs again, especially for college graduates. But are these good jobs? Many media accounts suggest the nation is flooded with baristas who were trained to create business plans and Uber drivers who can solve differential equations. Certainly such overqualified workers exist, as they would in any economy, but we find they are the exception, not the norm. The surge in hiring is not concentrated in dead-end McJobs. If anything, the surge is concentrated at the other end of the scale: in good, high-paying jobs that provide benefits.”

Kroeger, T., Cooke T. & Gould E. (2016). *The Class of 2016: The labor market is still far from ideal for young graduates.* Economic Policy Institute. Retrieved from www.epi.org.

“Summary: Young high school and college graduates were hit hard in the Great Recession. While young graduates’ economic prospects have brightened in recent years, they still face elevated unemployment rates and stagnant wages. Many groups – including graduates of color, as well as young high school graduates entering the workforce – face particularly difficult economic realities. This report looks at trends in unemployment, underemployment, and wages of young high school and college graduates to paint a picture of the economy for the Class of 2016.”

Lumina Foundation. (2016). *A Stronger Nation: Postsecondary Learning Builds the Talent That Help us Rise.* Indianapolis, IN: Lumina Foundation.

The report includes: the postsecondary attainment rate of the U.S. and every state, showing how rates have changed over seven years; the attainment rate for every county and the 100 most populous metropolitan areas in the U.S.; breakdowns of the attainment data including by race and ethnicity; and, an estimated attainment percentage for those who hold high-quality postsecondary certificates, nationally and in each state.



SREB

South Carolina

Gauging Progress, Accelerating Pace

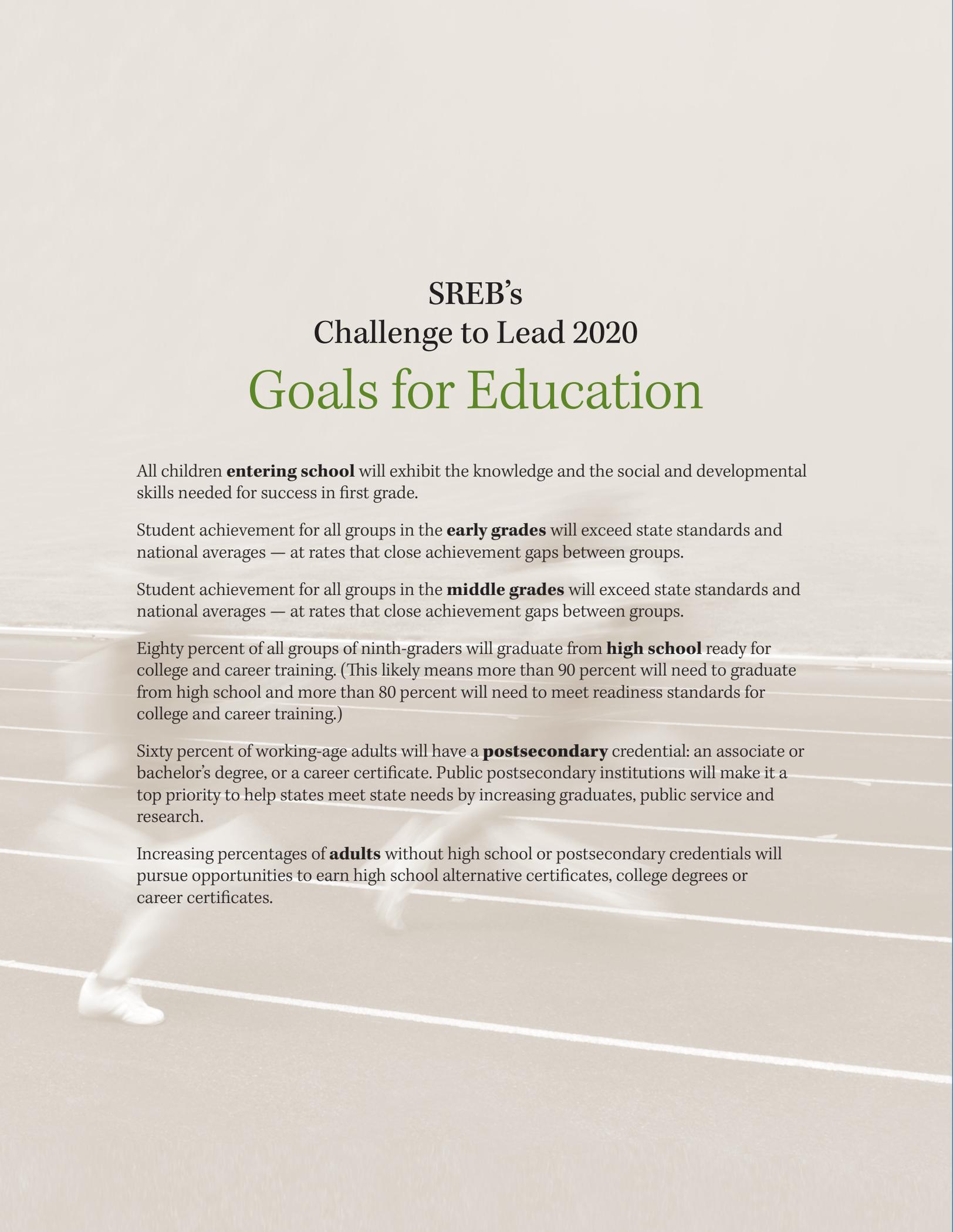
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2016 State Progress Report

Challenge to Lead 2020

Goals for Education



SREB's Challenge to Lead 2020 Goals for Education

All children **entering school** will exhibit the knowledge and the social and developmental skills needed for success in first grade.

Student achievement for all groups in the **early grades** will exceed state standards and national averages — at rates that close achievement gaps between groups.

Student achievement for all groups in the **middle grades** will exceed state standards and national averages — at rates that close achievement gaps between groups.

Eighty percent of all groups of ninth-graders will graduate from **high school** ready for college and career training. (This likely means more than 90 percent will need to graduate from high school and more than 80 percent will need to meet readiness standards for college and career training.)

Sixty percent of working-age adults will have a **postsecondary** credential: an associate or bachelor's degree, or a career certificate. Public postsecondary institutions will make it a top priority to help states meet state needs by increasing graduates, public service and research.

Increasing percentages of **adults** without high school or postsecondary credentials will pursue opportunities to earn high school alternative certificates, college degrees or career certificates.

South Carolina

Gauging Progress, Accelerating Pace

2016 State Progress Report on the
Challenge to Lead 2020
Goals for Education

Southern Regional Education Board

Jenny Hite, policy analyst, coordinated the SREB team, including former policy analyst, Caitlin Daugherty, that developed this report. It was edited by Matia Edwards, chief editor, Communications, and designed by Lety Jones, senior designer and production manager, Communications.

The report is a part of the larger Challenge to Lead education goals series, led by Jeff Gagné, director, Policy Analysis and Joan Lord, vice president, Education Data, Policy Research and Programs.

A full listing of the goals is printed on the inside front cover. *Challenge to Lead 2020 Goals for Education* is available at www.sreb.org. For more information, email jeff.gagne@sreb.org or call (404) 875-9211.



A Message From the President of SREB

Challenge to Lead 2020 Goals for Education, SREB's latest in a series of education goals, has provided benchmarks and timelines for assessing educational progress in our states since 2012. The customized state reports help states know how well students — from pre-K through adult learning programs — have performed on key education outcomes. SREB has helped states improve and watched as greater percentages of students hit key benchmarks, including math and reading achievement, high school graduation and college completion. But, work remains for states in helping more of their residents meet the education levels necessary for the workforce and as citizens.

That's why we have focused this report on *gauging progress* — and on determining what it will take to help states *accelerate their pace* and reach important education milestones quicker. In the past two years, three SREB commissions made policy recommendations to advance educational achievement. SREB refreshed *Challenge 2020* to link these policy recommendations with the goals. You'll find these commission recommendations have been added to the essential policies' sections of *Challenge 2020* to provide states more guidance on what works and to help leaders bring home success. Be sure to take a close look at *Challenge to Lead 2020: Refreshed 2016*.

We have focused this report
on gauging progress —
and on determining what
it will take to help states
accelerate their pace.

Gauging Progress, Accelerating Pace reports on recent growth on outcomes and policy activity in the SREB region in several key areas:

- **Leading the nation in early childhood education** — SREB states retained their leadership position in the nation on pre-K access and quality. In 2015, four of seven states nationwide that enrolled at least half of 4-year-olds in state-funded pre-K were SREB states. Also, four SREB states — of only six nationwide — met all 10 nationally recognized standards of program quality for state-funded pre-K that year. Another four SREB states met nine of 10 standards.
- **Closing achievement gaps** — Most SREB states gained ground on persistent achievement gaps for black and Hispanic fourth- and eighth-graders in math on NAEP — the National Assessment of Educational Progress — at the Proficient level. For fourth-graders, 11 SREB states saw either black or Hispanic students — or both groups — narrow gaps with their white peers. For eighth-graders, nine SREB states saw one or both groups narrow gaps with their white peers. Taken together, 13 states made gains.
- **Improving high school graduation rates** — SREB states exceeded the national rate in high school graduation for the second year. The most recent high school graduation rate for the SREB region was 3 points ahead of the nation. Fifteen SREB states improved their rates from 2011 to 2014.

This report also details where **South Carolina** stands in education. You and your state can take pride in these highlights on key outcomes measures and policy implementation.

Notable outcomes in South Carolina

- Fourth-graders outpaced the region and nation in gains in reading achievement on NAEP at the Proficient level, ranking third in gains nationwide.
- The high school graduation rate outpaced the nation in growth.
- The increase in the percentage of graduating seniors who took an AP exam while in high school outpaced the nation.

A Message From the President of SREB (continued)

- The six-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time freshmen who entered public, four-year colleges and universities topped the national and regional rates.

Policy updates in South Carolina

- The state is one of 10 states in the nation — all in the SREB region — that require school districts to offer full-day kindergarten programs.
- The state approved industry exams for specific career and technical education (CTE) courses.
- CTE teachers must hold an appropriate industry certification in the fields they teach.

I am encouraged by the progress reflected in all the state progress reports. But I also see three challenges in the pages of these reports that warrant all of our attention.

- **While more students in our region are graduating from high school on time, far too many are not ready for postsecondary study.** The readiness gap shows up in ACT and SAT results in high school: for example, 22 percent of students in SREB states who took the ACT met all four ACT college-readiness benchmarks — in English, reading, math and science. That means far too many did not measure up. The readiness gap begins much earlier. NAEP reading results show that a third of fourth-graders in the SREB region — and for some states as many as 40 percent — scored below the NAEP Basic level.
- **College affordability poses a threat to college access.** Nearly 60 percent of public school students in SREB states are from low-income families. Yet last year, declining numbers of high school graduates from this group received federal Pell Grants specifically designed to help them attend college. Pell Grants have shrunk in value over the years. Alone, these grants cannot cover the costs of a college education for these students nor entice them to take some aid and bear the rest of the cost. States need to find a combination of ways to bring college costs in line with the family budgets of these students — or risk losing the chance to attract them. This means cost cuts, programs that save students money and targeted state grants.
- **College completion rates need to rise faster if SREB states are to meet educational attainment goals and workforce requirements.** Research now documents that postsecondary certificates add about 5 percentage points to adult attainment rates nationwide and in SREB states. This research places these credentials in perspective and sharpens the focus on degree completion as a driver of adult postsecondary educational attainment. Some SREB states posted modest increases for bachelor's degrees and some exceeded national bachelor's degree completion rates. Still the median increase from 2012 to 2014 was less than 2 percentage points. At this rate of gain, the region will not fill critical job vacancies.

SREB is committed to working with states to ensure progress continues. We look to state leaders to draw on strong and effective education policies — like the ones just added to *Challenge to Lead 2020: Refreshed 2016*. Together, we can boost student achievement and help SREB states achieve their educational, economic and workforce goals.



Dave Spence

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Foreword

Gauging Progress, Accelerating Pace is the seventh biennial report to SREB states on their progress in meeting SREB's Challenge to Lead goals for education. It provides a customized state progress report for each SREB state. These state reports document progress on both measurable outcomes and state policies. Through effective policy implementation, the goals can help states drive improvements in student achievement, high school graduation, college completion and work force readiness.

SREB's 2002 commission report on goals, ***Challenge to Lead Goals for Education***, boldly declared that SREB states could lead the nation in education progress and established 10 goals for the region. Between 2008 and 2012, SREB hosted four formal policy commissions and several key study groups. Each one made recommendations on essential policies to help states reach the goals.

By 2012, leaders in SREB states could see measurable progress on the 2002 goals, but they knew their work was not finished. So, in 2012, SREB updated the Challenge to Lead goals. This effort resulted in six revised goals to guide SREB states through 2020. State leaders in the region then linked the recommended policies to the goals as a way to ensure their best ideas guided state efforts and promoted increases in student achievement. As states adopt and implement the recommended policies, they cannot guarantee that increases in student results will necessarily follow. Yet, the six goals now set the stage for success.

SREB promised to help states achieve the goals by monitoring, measuring and reporting on outcomes for each state — and by benchmarking implementation of these policies. *Challenge to Lead 2020's* six goals focus on the student — from prekindergarten through postsecondary education and into the adult years. The biennial reports showcase progress on the educational milestones student must reach at each stage. They also pay attention to the transitions between stages. Research shows that many students drop out of school during these transitions because they are not fully prepared for success at the next educational level.

Since the 2014 biennial progress reports were published, three SREB commissions have developed and presented recommendations — including ones that can be linked to the Challenge 2020 goals. By 2018, state progress on implementing these policies will be incorporated in the state progress reports. In the meantime, the 2016 biennial reports have taken note of these recommendations and laid the groundwork for future assessments. These commissions addressed career and technical education, community colleges and early childhood education.

What to expect in this report: The progress reports begin with demographic and economic perspectives to situate SREB states in their regional and national contexts. The South's overall population growth and particularly school enrollment growth have outpaced the rest of the nation in the last decade. The region has become more racially and ethnically diverse during the same period. And, it has been hit hard by the recent economic recession. These perspectives provide a critical back drop for the remainder of the report — underscoring the importance and difficulty of making educational gains in SREB states.

Reporting on outcome measures continues in this report. Policymakers have come to expect SREB to report on such key measures as results on the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), ninth-grade enrollment bulge, high school graduation rates and college-enrollment rates of recent high school graduates. These particular measures give a picture of progress on how well current students are thriving as they move through school

Since the 2014 biennial progress reports were published, three SREB commissions have developed and presented recommendations — including ones that can be linked to the Challenge 2020 goals.

and what challenges SREB states face in helping students make critical education transitions. Whenever possible, the reports show outcome measures in national and regional contexts and over time so that policymakers can determine how students in their states stack up with students elsewhere and whether they are making gains.

Policymakers will also find information about how and whether important policies are implemented in their states. In several instances, the elements of these policies — as they are related to the goals — are laid out in clear tables. In other cases, color-shaded maps of the region allow policymakers to compare states on these policies. These tables and maps now include policy elements recommended by the last three SREB commissions. They give policymakers an indication of where their states stand on these critical, emerging issues.

While the 2020 finish line is nearing, policymakers still have time to ***gauge progress*** in their states on the following measures:

- How many students are ready for first grade on day one?
- How many students can read proficiently — no later than fourth grade?
- What about the reading proficiency of fourth-graders? What about those from low-income families and English language learners?
- How are all eighth-graders performing in reading and math?
- What percentage of eighth-graders are making successful transitions to high school, so they are ready for its more rigorous curriculum?
- As high school graduation rates improved, have gaps narrowed for students of racial and ethnic groups, for students from low-income families and for students with disabilities?
- What percentage of high school graduates measure up on benchmarks of college and career readiness?
- What percentage of recent high school graduates are enrolling in postsecondary institutions?
- And, what percentage of entering college students make it to their sophomore year?
- What percentage earn a credential?

For policymakers who do not like the answers to these questions — all available in this report — it is not too late for them to set policies and programs in motion that can make a difference. It's time to ***accelerate the pace*** and ensure that all students measure up by 2020 and thereafter. Chances are, SREB's policy commissions have already made recommendations that can help.

SREB states have already come a long way. In the past dozen years, they have made gains in publicly funded pre-K access, NAEP achievement in reading and math, and high school graduation rates. For the most part, these gains resulted from the efforts of inspired SREB state leaders, who championed research and policy. They implemented important policies with good planning that called for state and local support — and they were committed to putting their plans in place and achieving their goals over the long haul. SREB will continue to help states, especially as they close in on the finish line for the Challenge 2020 goals — by keeping its commitment to measure outcomes and benchmark progress on policy.

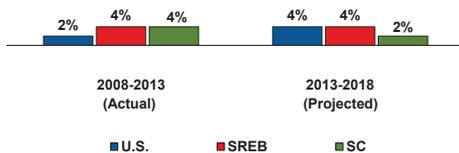


Demographics

This biennial report on each SREB state's progress in meeting SREB's *Challenge to Lead 2020* goals can only be valuable if each state recognizes the contexts that propel its students toward achievement and hinder them from making gains. The goals are ambitious — targeting high achievement for all groups of students and emphasizing the need for states to close stubborn achievement gaps. Striving to meet the goals — even with clear policies laid out — has been all the more difficult in recent years because SREB states have seen rising enrollment and dynamic population changes. At the same time, they have experienced a historic economic downturn. The strains on the region's education systems etched by its demographic and economic profile — more students, more children in poverty, more children entering school not speaking English — only bolstered the states' resolve. Indeed, these strains have not limited what SREB states have been able to achieve. Understanding the challenges they present has been the key to overcoming them.

The overall population in SREB states grew 6 percent from 2008 to 2013, so it is no surprise that **public elementary and secondary school enrollment** also grew. Over the same period, enrollment increased 4 percent in SREB states — slower than the regional population growth but faster than enrollment growth nationally, which rose 2 percent.

Public Elementary and Secondary Enrollment Changes in South Carolina



Source: SREB, based on data from the National Center for Education Statistics

Thirteen SREB states had higher enrollment in 2013 than in 2008, two SREB states had fairly constant enrollment, and one SREB state had a decline. The changes ranged from an increase of 8 percent to a decrease of 1 percent.

Looking ahead, national public school enrollment is projected to increase at a faster rate from 2013 to 2018

than it did from 2008 to 2013. In the region, enrollment is projected to increase by 4 percent from 2013 to 2018. Even so, four SREB states could see declines in enrollment through 2018.

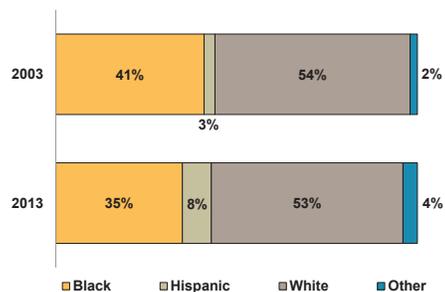
In South Carolina:

- The public school enrollment rate kept pace with growth in the SREB region from 2008 to 2013, but it is not expected to keep pace with the region from 2013 to 2018. About 746,000 students were enrolled in South Carolina's public schools in 2013.
- From 2003 to 2013, the proportions of black and white students enrolled in public schools declined, and the proportion of Hispanic students grew.
- The percentage of children living in poverty increased 3 percentage points since 2009.

Coupled with this sheer growth in numbers in public school enrollment is increased diversity over the past decade. In fall 2013, 50 percent of public school students in the United States were white, down 9 percentage points from 2003. Likewise, the proportion of black public school students declined 1 percentage point from 2003 to 2013. The proportion of Hispanic students in the United States grew from 19 percent of public school enrollment to 25 percent over the period.

All SREB states mirrored the nation in growing **more diverse** from 2003 to 2013. The fastest-growing student group — Hispanic students — increased its share of the overall student population in the region by 18 percentage

Public Elementary and Secondary Enrollment By Race in South Carolina



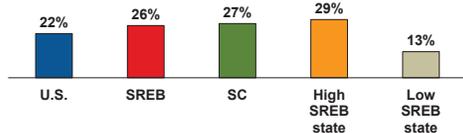
Source: SREB, based on data from the National Center for Education Statistics

points during this time. These students — many from low-income households and with limited English language proficiency — will need extra support to graduate from high school ready for college and careers.

The U.S. Department of Education projects that this trend of rising diversity will continue. Through fall 2020, the proportion of public school students in the nation who are white is expected to continue to decline as other minority groups grow. In particular, the proportions of Hispanic students and students who report themselves as multiracial are projected to rise substantially.

In 2014, most SREB states were still bouncing back from the nation's most recent recession, which began in 2007, during which they suffered lagging state revenues, high unemployment and weak housing markets. These trends led to rising poverty rates, particularly among young families with children. About 15.7 million children under 18 years old in the United States lived in **poverty** in 2014 — about 22 percent of the nation's children. More than 42 percent of the nation's children living in poverty resided in SREB states. The U.S. Census Bureau measures poverty by income and household size. The poverty threshold in 2014 was equivalent to \$24,230 in annual income for a household of four.

Percentage of Children Under 18 Years Old Living in Poverty in South Carolina, 2014



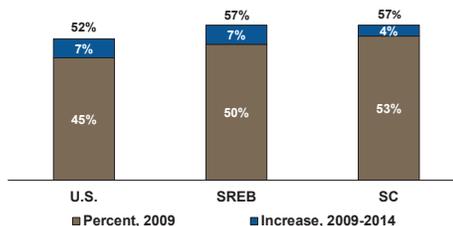
Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation

The percentages of children living in poverty in the nation and in the region increased from 2009 to 2014. The percentage rose in 12 SREB states. In fact, 12 SREB states had higher childhood poverty rates than the nation in 2014. Across the region, these percentages ranged from 13 to 29 percent of all children.

Likewise, the percentage of students living in **low-income households** in the nation rose from 45 percent

in 2009 to 52 percent in 2014. At the same time, the percentage also grew in the region from 50 percent to 57 percent. In fact, it rose in all but two SREB states. Federal law defines low income as eligibility for free or reduced-price meals in the National School Lunch Program — available to students from households with incomes up to 185 percent of the annual poverty level (for example, up to \$43,568 for a household of four during the 2013-14 school year).

Percentage of Students Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Meals in South Carolina, 2014



Source: SREB, based on data from the National Center for Education Statistics

Why does low family income matter? Research indicates it can cause frequent family relocation and lead to higher absenteeism — disrupting student learning. It also can result in poor nutrition, inadequate health care and weak family engagement with schools — all factors that affect student achievement.

In addition to students from low-income households, two other student groups — English language learners and students with disabilities — account for a significant proportion of public school enrollment. In fall 2013, 10 percent of all students in the nation were classified as English language learners. And, 13 percent of students nationwide received special education services in spring 2013. That percentage was even higher in five SREB states. Most of the students in these groups will need specialized services and supports to succeed in school.

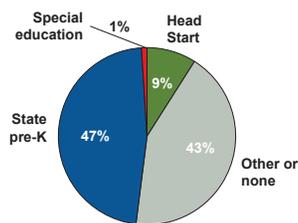
Rising enrollment, growing diversity, continuing economic strain — all are part of the educational back drop for SREB states and the nation. These trends could become excuses. But, with *Challenge to Lead 2020* setting the stage, these trends fuel policymakers' desire to push ahead — to ensure that students in their states make gains despite adversity. And, when they do, the gains are even more meaningful.



Early Learning

The Challenge to Lead 2020 goals call for SREB states to increase the percentages of all groups of 3- and 4-year-olds who enroll in public prekindergarten to above national averages. The goals also caution states to increase the percentages within groups who meet targets for school readiness. The goals stress the importance of both access to early learning programs and the quality of these programs as states take steps to ensure that their pre-K programs are aligned with kindergarten and the early grades.

Four-Year-Old Enrollment in Publicly Funded Pre-K in South Carolina By Program, 2015



Source: National Institute for Early Education Research

Research is clear: if young children enter first grade ready to learn, their chances for success throughout school are greatly improved. SREB states invest wisely when they commit state funds to pre-K so more children can get a firm foundation for reading and math skills as early as possible.

The challenge for all SREB states — strapped by limited financial resources — is to provide adequate **access** to pre-K to serve all the 4-year-olds whose families desire their participation and all the 3-year-olds who are at risk of not being ready for school, while maintaining high standards for programs. Some states stretch public dollars by forging partnerships between public school districts, federally funded Head Start and private providers to deliver pre-K to as many children as possible. Successful partnerships facilitate high standards and provide incentives for programs to reach a common goal: school readiness.

Historically, SREB states have led the nation in pre-K access for 4-year-olds. Two SREB states were the first in the nation to offer universal access to state-funded pre-K

programs — Georgia and Oklahoma. In 2005, 14 SREB states offered pre-K for 4-year-olds; by 2015, all 16 SREB states did. Over this period, the percentage of 4-year-olds enrolled in state-funded pre-K rose in 12 of the 14 SREB states that offered programs. In 2015, four of the seven states nationwide that enrolled at least half of 4-year-olds in state-funded pre-K were in the SREB region.

Yet, too few SREB states serve 3-year-olds in their state-funded pre-K programs, as called for in *Challenge 2020*. In 2015, seven SREB states enrolled 3-year-olds in their state programs — five of which enrolled them at rates at or above the national average of 5 percent. However, only two of them served more than 10 percent of 3-year-olds statewide. All SREB states face challenges ahead to provide sufficient access to high-quality pre-K programs for 3- and 4-year-olds who are at risk of not being ready for school.

While access is important, quality is the key to achieving long-term gains for young children. The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) has identified 10 **standards of quality**, most of which are now widely accepted as the basic elements of *structural quality* necessary for a pre-K program. These include class-size limits, child-to-staff ratios and state monitoring requirements. SREB states have been national leaders in implementing these standards. The first states to implement and maintain all 10 were SREB states — Alabama and North Carolina. In 2015, six states in the nation met all 10 standards — four of which were SREB states. Another four SREB states met nine of the 10 standards.

While structural quality contributes to high program quality, recent research indicates that it does not guarantee long-term outcomes for young children. SREB's 2015

In South Carolina:

- In 2015, approximately 47 percent of 4-year-olds were enrolled in state-funded prekindergarten programs.
- Since 2005, state-funded pre-K enrollment for 4-year-olds has increased 17 percentage points.
- NIEER reported that South Carolina's largest state-funded pre-K program met six of the 10 standards of quality for pre-K in 2015, including three of the four teacher standards.

Early Childhood Commission recommended that states push toward *process quality*, which is more closely related to instruction, learning and long-term academic gains. It is associated with program elements, such as developmentally appropriate and evidence-based curricula, aligned standards, and most importantly, highly skilled teachers.

Challenge 2020 emphasizes strong **teacher qualifications** and continuing professional development for early learning teachers. National standards spell out the minimal specialized training and staffing requirements that lead and assistant pre-K teachers need to be prepared for their roles. Four of the 10 NIEER standards relate to these types of staff qualifications. Eight states in the nation met the four NIEER teacher qualification standards in 2015 — five of which were SREB states.

Research points to a correlation between pre-K teachers who hold a bachelor's degree and their students' academic outcomes. Specifically, it shows a stronger positive relationship if pre-K teachers have specialized training in early childhood education. Assistant pre-K teachers need the Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential. Ongoing, hands-on professional development is also important for all classroom teachers. Despite this, few pre-K teachers and their assistants have the degrees, credentials and training they need.

The SREB Early Childhood Commission report, *Building a Strong Foundation: State Policy for Early Childhood Education*, recommends that states align high-quality programming from pre-K through third grade. Research indicates this so-called **P-3 alignment** helps resist the fade-out of academic gains some studies of publically

funded preschool programs report. To ensure a state's early childhood system is aligned, the state should implement key policies: statewide, comprehensive early learning standards that recognize the cognitive, social, emotional, physical and language domains of child development; full-day programs for young learners; and childhood development and learning assessment from an early age.

Teacher Quality Standards for State-Funded Pre-K* In South Carolina, 2015

Teacher Quality Checklist	
Standard	State Required
Lead teacher has bachelor's degree	✓
Lead teacher has specialized pre-K training	✓
Assistant teacher has the CDA Credential or equivalent	
Teachers earn at least 15 hours/year of in-service professional development	✓

* Standards reported for South Carolina's state-funded pre-K program with the largest enrollment — South Carolina EIA Child Development Program (4K).

Source: National Institute for Early Education Research

Every SREB state has developed comprehensive early learning standards, and most have aligned them to state K-12 academic standards. Only 10 states in the nation require school districts to offer full-day kindergarten programs — all are in the SREB region. Clearly, SREB states are leading the way as they begin to develop aligned P-3 education systems, ensuring children are set for success when they enter the early grades.

P-3 Alignment in South Carolina

Policy Elements	Status	Comments
Adopted statewide, comprehensive early learning standards	Yes	Early learning standards were aligned to state K-12 standards, but currently they are under revision.
Aligned early learning standards to K-12 standards	No	
Requires providers to offer full-day, state-funded pre-K	Varies	SC 4K is full day; SC CDEPP is part day.
Requires school districts to offer full-day kindergarten	Yes	Requires kindergarten attendance
Requires early childhood learning and development assessment in kindergarten	Yes	At kindergarten entry and exit

Source: SREB analysis of state documents and National Institute for Early Education Research



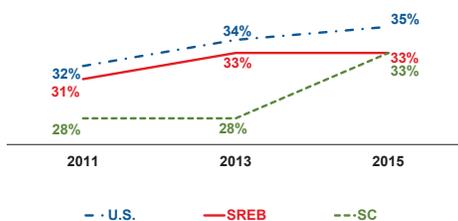
Early Grades

Challenge to Lead 2020 goals call for 90 percent of fourth-graders to score at or above the Basic level in reading and math on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and for percentages of fourth-graders scoring at or above the Proficient level in these subjects to increase regularly — to above national averages. The NAEP Proficient level is most closely associated with college and career readiness.

Known as the Nation's Report Card, NAEP's series of exams measure student achievement in specific subjects and grades. It is given every two years, most recently in 2015.

In **reading**, the percentages of fourth-graders in the nation and SREB region scoring at or above the NAEP Basic and Proficient levels improved from 2011 to 2015. Gains in SREB states in the percentage of these students scoring at or above the Basic level kept pace with the nation, and 12 SREB states made gains during the period. No SREB state reached the 90 percent Challenge to Lead goal set at the Basic level for fourth-graders in reading. However, six states reached 70 percent or more.

**NAEP Fourth-Grade Reading in South Carolina
Percentage Scoring At or Above Proficient**

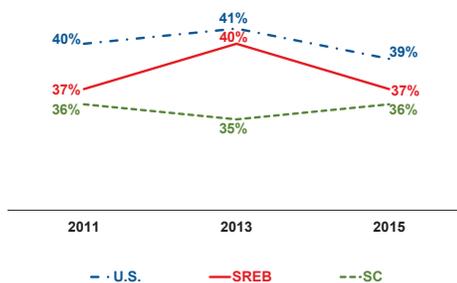


Source: National Center for Education Statistics

From 2011 to 2015, the percentage of students in SREB states scoring at or above the Proficient level in reading increased at a slower pace than it did for their national peers. Even so, 14 SREB states increased the percentage of students scoring at or above the Proficient level. In 2015, six SREB states had a greater percentage scoring at or above this level than the nation. The SREB region is making progress toward the Challenge to Lead 2020 goal in reading at the Proficient level.

In **math**, the percentages of fourth-graders in the nation and region scoring at or above the NAEP Basic and Proficient levels did not rise from 2011 to 2015. The percentage of students in SREB states achieving at or above the Basic level matched the national percentage in 2015. While no SREB state reached the 90 percent goal at Basic in math, half of SREB states are within 10 percentage points of the goal.

**NAEP Fourth-Grade Math in South Carolina
Percentage Scoring At or Above Proficient**



Source: National Center for Education Statistics

Nine SREB states increased the percentage scoring at or above the Proficient level from 2011 to 2015, and seven SREB states had a greater percentage of fourth-graders scoring at or above Proficient than the nation in 2015.

The early grades' goal emphasizes the need for SREB states to close achievement gaps for students of racial

In South Carolina:

- In math, the percentages of black and Hispanic students scoring at or above Proficient on NAEP improved from 2011 to 2015, narrowing the gaps with white students — to 32 and 14 percentage points, respectively. The percentage of white students scoring at that level fell over the period.
- In reading, the gap between black and white students scoring at or above Proficient widened by 4 points from 2011 to 2015 — to 31 points. The gap for Hispanic students widened by 6 points over the period — to 25 points.

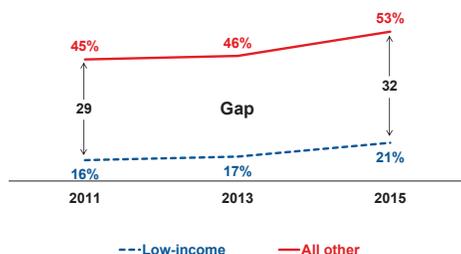
and ethnic groups, for those from low-income households, and for those who are English language learners.

In reading and math at the NAEP Proficient level, white fourth-graders outperformed their black and Hispanic peers in SREB states in 2015. Achievement gaps in **reading** at the Proficient level between black and Hispanic students and their white peers widened in the region from 2011 to 2015.

In **math** at the Proficient level, black students narrowed the gap with their white peers in the SREB region during the period. Hispanic students outpaced achievement gains made by their white peers in the region and narrowed the achievement gap. Moreover, Hispanic fourth-graders in the region outperformed their national peers during the period.

The gaps in **reading** achievement at both the Basic and Proficient levels on NAEP between fourth-graders from low-income families and all other fourth-graders in the region narrowed from 2011 to 2015. In **math**, the gaps at the Basic and Proficient levels did not improve over the period for children from low-income households. These fourth-graders in the region outperformed their national peers in reading and math achievement at the Basic and Proficient levels. Despite regional gain, academic outcomes related to household income contribute to some of the largest and most pervasive achievement gaps across the nation.

**NAEP Fourth-Grade Reading* in South Carolina
Percentage Scoring At or Above Proficient
By Income Group**



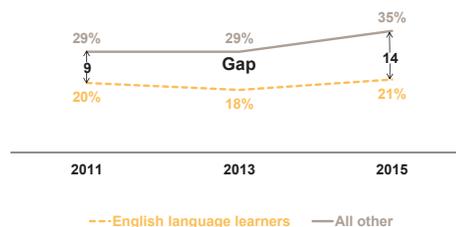
* In math, the gap narrowed by 2 points — to 33 points in 2015.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics

English language learners often enter school with little to no exposure to the English language and struggle in U.S. classrooms, especially in reading instruction. Data indicate this group will account for an increasing proportion

of enrollments in SREB states in the immediate future. In 2015, these fourth-graders in SREB states outperformed their national peers in **reading** at the Proficient level. Still, significant achievement gaps persist between them and other classmates. In reading at the Proficient level, this gap in SREB states remained constant from 2011 to 2015, while the respective gap in the nation widened. In **math** at the Proficient level, the gap between English language learners and their other classmates in the region widened over the period.

**NAEP Fourth-Grade Reading in South Carolina
Percentage Scoring At or Above Proficient
For English Language Learners**



Source: National Center for Education Statistics

Despite growing enrollments, demographic changes and the persistence of achievement gaps, many SREB states made promising gains in reading and math achievement. Even so, many SREB states still have a high proportion of school-aged children considered at risk of falling behind and dropping out of school — that is, unless states intervene to help them meet standards and reach higher academic levels.

The 2015 report of the SREB Early Childhood Commission, *Building a Strong Foundation: State Policy for Early Childhood Education*, emphasized the significance of reading proficiency in the early grades. Research suggests that persistent language gaps develop in the first months of life. These early language and literacy deficits lay the foundation for later reading problems. By the end of third grade, a child who is not reading proficiently is four times more likely not to graduate high school on time than a child who can read proficiently. States should monitor each child's early language and literacy development from prekindergarten through at least the third grade to ensure that more children have the necessary skills to flourish later in school.



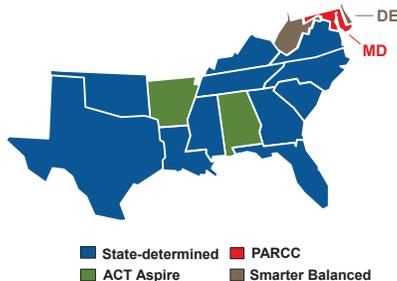
Early Grades

State leaders need strong tools to measure student progress in key subjects and by grade if they are to know whether more children make the transitions from early to middle grades with skills they need to be successful. In 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education published *A Nation at Risk*, which called for states to address perceived shortfalls in public education that jeopardized national security. In response to the report's call, state leaders initiated education reforms that would span more than 30 years. Committed state leaders, especially in SREB states, led the way.

The efforts of these leaders over the three decades produced three powerful policy tools, still widely used — standards, assessments and accountability. Since 2002, states have regularly revised their standards and assessments for elementary, middle and high school. Expectations have changed periodically — with college and career readiness being the latest focus — so the tools have needed to be honed and sharpened.

Between 2010 and 2014, nearly all states adjusted their standards and assessments. By 2016, 11 of 16 SREB states administered state-determined **assessments** in grades three through eight. Two others administered ACT Aspire, and two administered Smarter Balanced — all to students in grades three through eight. One state administered PARCC in these grades.

Assessments in the Early and Middle Grades in SREB States, 2015-16



Source: SREB analysis of state documents

Each of the new assessment results in English and math can be reported in categories that define a range of student performance by levels. Nearly all states designate at least two levels for passing: one group demonstrating subject mastery and who are ready to move on without assistance and one group not demonstrating subject

mastery but who are ready to move to the next grade with assistance.

SREB began comparing student results on state assessments to NAEP results in 2005 to help state policymakers understand better how their state standards and assessment results compare in a larger context. SREB's 2016 analysis focuses on the percentages of fourth-graders achieving subject mastery on state-adopted assessments in reading and math to the percentage of these students scoring at or above the NAEP Proficient level — the level closely associated with college and career readiness.

Fourth-Grade Assessment Results In South Carolina, 2015

Subject	Percentage Scoring At or Above Proficient		Gap* (Percentage Points)
	NAEP	ACT Aspire	
Reading/English	33%	33%	0
Math	36%	50%	-14

*A negative gap number indicates that a greater percentage of students were at or above proficient on the state assessment than on NAEP.

Sources: National Center for Education Statistics and South Carolina Department of Education

In **reading**, a higher percentage of fourth-graders performed at or above the mastery level on state-adopted assessments than at or above the Proficient level on NAEP in 13 SREB states. The gaps in these states ranged from 1 to 37 percentage points. A lower percentage of students performed at or above the mastery level on the state-adopted assessments than at or above the NAEP Proficient level in two states, and in one state the percentages were equal.

In **math**, a higher percentage of fourth-graders performed at or above the mastery level on state-adopted assessments than at or above the Proficient level on NAEP in 11 SREB states. The gaps across the 11 states ranged from 2 to 37 percentage points. A lower percentage of students performed at or above the mastery level on the state-adopted assessments than at or above the NAEP Proficient level in five states.

When the percentage of students scoring at or above benchmarks on state assessments is close to the percentage scoring NAEP Proficient, the standards, cut scores and reporting categories likely indicate college and career readiness.

Educator Effectiveness

Challenge 2020 recognizes the significance of educator effectiveness. The six goals include essential policies for success that focus on developing effective teachers. As SREB states implement the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, state education agencies will be able to adopt strategies that prioritize high-quality feedback and professional growth in their educator evaluation systems. Before state leaders consider how to set priorities, they should review SREB's essential policies and its research on educator evaluation systems.

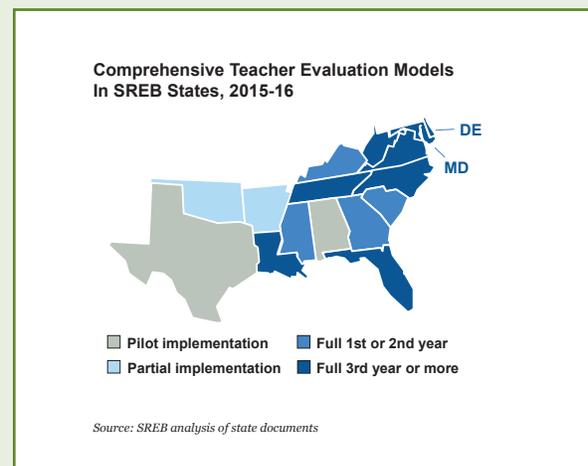
Several SREB states surveyed teachers in 2014 and 2016 about their **comprehensive teacher evaluation models**. They asked teachers to indicate their level of trust in the process and whether the process led to instructional improvement. Educators in some states reported more positive attitudes toward their evaluation systems in 2016 than in 2014. Yet, a significant percentage of educators doubted that the evaluation and feedback systems contributed to their professional growth.

While many SREB states reported an increase in the amount of feedback given to teachers in these systems from 2014 to 2016, evidence showed it lacked quality and specificity. SREB conducted focus-group research with hundreds of teachers, principals and district staff in SREB states. In these focus groups, the researchers found examples of enterprising educators creating roadmaps for how to transform evaluation by delivering what teachers and principals need to improve their effectiveness.

SREB researchers also found local leaders who embraced the difficulty of the work and did not hesitate to offer feedback to the state on how to improve the system. These leaders reported the importance of refining the evaluation process to help educators bring about immediate and purposeful changes in their instruction. SREB concluded that the opinions expressed in the surveys were important, but they should not mask promising developments in classrooms and schools.

SREB also provided technical support to help states address the challenges they face in educator evaluation. This work informed a regional report, SREB's *State Actions to Advance Teacher Evaluation*. The report recommends 10 actions for states to consider as they refine their educator evaluation systems.

First, the report encourages states to emphasize high-quality expert feedback and greater use of student data as they consider refinements to their educator evaluation systems. It also recommends that state leaders clarify the role and use of student growth measures and to understand why the growth measures they have adopted have met widespread teacher resistance.



Second, the report includes examples of how state education agencies have contributed to the implementation of district evaluation systems. The examples show how to help district leaders build a culture of professional growth in every school by equipping school administrators with better evaluation tools; rewarding educators who provide support to peers during the evaluation and feedback process; and linking observation and feedback to professional learning opportunities.

The report also urges states to use their data to pinpoint where and whether evaluation strategies are working. An annual evaluation of the state model could help leaders reform the evaluation system and make smarter resource decisions. Monitoring could surface local success stories leaders could use to spread as successful practices.

Throughout, state leaders should solicit feedback from all stakeholders being evaluated. While no SREB state has perfected its educator effectiveness system — even after years of effort, what has emerged over the years are better tools and strategies for improvement.



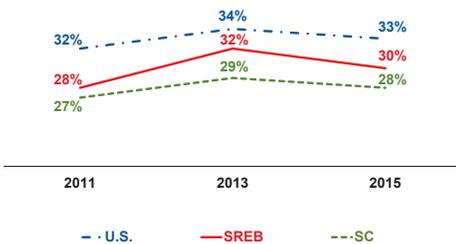
Middle Grades

Like the goals set for fourth-graders, *Challenge to Lead 2020* calls for 90 percent of eighth-graders to score at or above the Basic level on NAEP in reading and math. It also calls for percentages of these students scoring at or above the Proficient level to increase regularly to above national percentages. The Proficient level is closely associated with college and career readiness.

While no SREB state has reached the 90 percent target for eighth-graders in reading or math on NAEP, and few have exceeded national percentages, SREB states did make some notable gains. But, significant challenges remain.

From 2011 to 2015, national and SREB regional percentages of students scoring at or above the Basic level in **reading** remained flat. However, five SREB states made gains in the percentage of these students scoring at the Basic level. Six states met or outperformed the nation in the percentage of students scoring at Basic in 2015.

NAEP Eighth-Grade Reading in South Carolina
Percentage Scoring At or Above Proficient



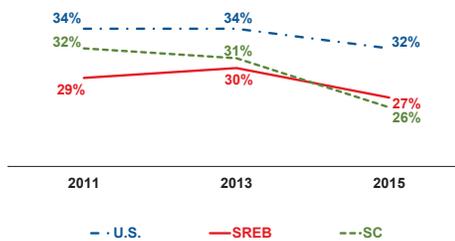
Source: National Center for Education Statistics

From 2011 to 2015, the percentages of eighth-graders in the nation and SREB region scoring at or above the Proficient level on NAEP in reading rose. In fact, SREB states outpaced the nation in gains. Seven SREB states increased the percentage of these students scoring at or above the Proficient level over the period. In three SREB states, a greater percentage of eighth-graders scored at or above the Proficient level in 2015 than their national peers. In four states, students made greater gains from 2011 to 2015 than their national peers.

In **math**, achievement waned for middle-graders in SREB states and in the nation from 2011 to 2015. The

percentages of eighth-graders in the region and nation scoring at or above the NAEP Basic and Proficient levels fell during the period. One SREB state increased the percentage of students scoring at or above the Basic level during the period. Yet, in 2015, most SREB states were further from the 90 percent target for eighth-graders in math than in 2011.

NAEP Eighth-Grade Math in South Carolina
Percentage Scoring At or Above Proficient



Source: National Center for Education Statistics

Percentages of eighth-graders scoring at or above the Proficient level in math fell equally in both the SREB region and the nation from 2011 to 2015. Two SREB states increased the percentage of eighth-graders scoring at the Proficient level during the period. In 2015, three SREB states had a greater percentage of students scoring at or above the Proficient level in math than the nation.

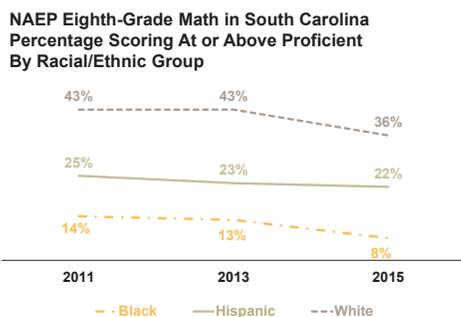
In South Carolina:

- In reading, the gap between black and white students scoring at or above Proficient on NAEP widened by 1 percentage point from 2011 to 2015 — to 27 points. The gap for Hispanic students widened by 6 points over the period — to 21 points.
- In reading, the gap between students from low-income families and all other students scoring at or above Proficient widened by 4 points from 2011 to 2015 — to 26 points. In math, the percentages of both student groups scoring at the Proficient level fell over the period.

The middle grades' goal emphasizes the need for SREB states to close achievement gaps for all groups of students — including those of racial and ethnic groups, those from low-income households, and students with disabilities.

In reading and math, white students outperformed their black and Hispanic peers in the SREB region at the NAEP Proficient level in 2015, perpetuating achievement gaps. The gap in **reading** achievement at the Proficient level between Hispanic students and their white peers in the region widened from 2011 to 2015, while the gap between black and white students in the region remained the same.

In **math** at the Proficient level, Hispanic students in the region narrowed the gap with their white peers from 2011 to 2015, while the gap between black and white students remained constant.

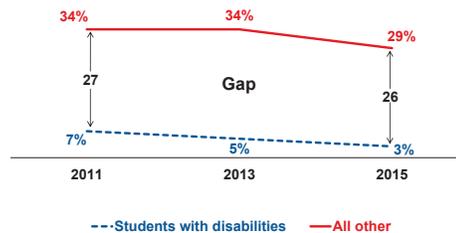


Source: National Center for Education Statistics

At the same time, gaps in reading and math achievement at the Proficient level between eighth-graders from low-income families and all other students in the region held steady, although these same gaps widened in the nation. Even so, substantial gaps based on income continued in most SREB states in 2015.

For students with disabilities in SREB states, achievement gaps with their classmates on NAEP continued in 2015. These gaps in **reading** at the Basic and Proficient levels widened from 2011 to 2015. In **math** at the Proficient level, eighth-graders with disabilities narrowed the gap over the period. At the Basic level, however, this gap remained the same. Even with gains in some SREB states, performance on NAEP at the Basic and Proficient

NAEP Eighth-Grade Math in South Carolina Percentage Scoring At or Above Proficient For Students With Disabilities



Source: National Center for Education Statistics

levels in reading and math for eighth-graders with disabilities in the region lagged behind their national peers.

Despite growing enrollments and demographic changes in public schools, some SREB states made promising gains in reading achievement on NAEP and narrowed long-standing reading and math achievement gaps between student groups. Even so, gaps remain in all 16 SREB states. Too many states have a high proportion of middle grades students considered at risk of falling behind or dropping out of high school — unless states implement policies and programs that can make a difference.

Just as reading proficiency is a stumbling block for many children in the early grades, math mastery begins to hinder student success in the middle grades. The root of academic problems often extends back to the early grades. SREB has a long record of supporting state efforts to align math curriculum so students are ready for middle grades and high school math.

Studies indicate algebra is the critical building block to high school math success. *Challenge to Lead 2020* calls for all students to pass Algebra I in eighth grade — but not later than ninth grade. Unfortunately, the 2015 NAEP results indicate that too many SREB states struggled with raising math achievement for most middle-graders.

Challenge to Lead 2020 calls for stronger standards, better alignment of standards and curricula, effective teacher professional development, attention to STEM (science, technology, engineering and math), and access to technology to promote learning and to address literacy and math achievement in the middle grades.



Middle Grades

Policymakers have long been interested in the percentages of students who meet performance benchmarks on state assessments in English, math, science and social studies. SREB's 2016 analysis of assessment results focuses on the percentages of eighth-graders who achieved subject mastery on state-adopted assessments in English and math compared to the percentages of these students scoring at or above the Proficient level — the level most closely associated with college and career readiness — on NAEP in reading and math.

In **reading**, a higher percentage of eighth-graders scored at or above the mastery level on state-adopted assessments than at or above the Proficient level on NAEP in 15 SREB states. The gaps in these 15 states ranged from 1 to 46 percentage points. A lower percentage of students performed at or above the mastery level on the state-adopted assessments than at or above the NAEP Proficient level in one state.

In **math**, a higher percentage of eighth-graders scored at or above the mastery level on state-adopted assessments than at or above NAEP Proficient in 12 SREB states. The gaps in these states ranged from 4 to 36 percentage points. A lower percentage of students scored at or above the mastery level on the state-adopted assessments than at or above the NAEP Proficient level in four states.

When the percentage of students scoring at or above benchmarks on state assessments is close to the percentage scoring NAEP Proficient, the standards, cut scores and reporting categories likely indicate college and career readiness.

SREB's 2011 Middle Grades Commission developed a framework for advancing the middle grades: hold schools and districts accountable for meeting the mission; focus

**Eighth-Grade Assessment Results
In South Carolina, 2015**

Subject	Percentage Scoring At or Above Proficient		Gap* (Percentage Points)
	NAEP	ACT Aspire	
Reading/English	28%	47%	-19
Math	26%	32%	-6

*A negative gap number indicates that a greater percentage of students were at or above proficient on the state assessment than on NAEP.

Sources: National Center for Education Statistics and South Carolina Department of Education

the curriculum on literacy and STEM disciplines; intervene to help students likely to drop out of school; and refocus teacher professional development. This framework remains important and is captured in the essential policies delineated in *Challenge 2020*.

The commission also called for states to ensure that all students create an **academic plan** for success in high school and identify and explore potential careers. Developing such a plan helps students develop the vision and commitment needed to achieve their goals. Students may change their plans in high school. But, having a plan helps students to focus on the paths that will help them succeed in high school and pursue a postsecondary credential.

While 15 states require all middle school students to develop high school graduation plans, 13 SREB states also require that all middle grades students begin exploring various career options. Eight SREB states require middle school students to learn about the various postsecondary options available to them after high school graduation.

Middle Grades Career and Academic Planning in South Carolina

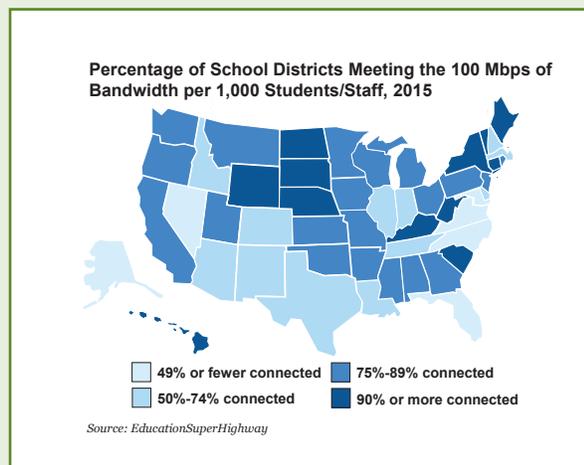
Policy Element	State Required	Policy Type
Students develop high school graduation plans	Yes	State statute
Students explore careers	Yes	
Students learn about postsecondary education options	No	N/A
Summary of eighth-grade requirements	Students develop individual graduation plans, participate in a career-interest assessment and research career opportunities. In creating the plan, students choose one of 16 career clusters as a focus.	

Source: SREB analysis of state documents

Educational Technology

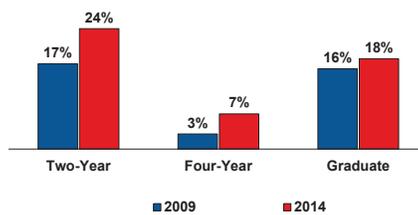
Challenge 2020 recognizes educational technology as a critical element for success at all levels of education. Project Tomorrow, a nonprofit education organization, reports that today's high school students connect the use of their personal technology to the "development of college, career and citizenship skills that will empower their future capabilities."

However, public schools are having trouble keeping up with growing broadband needs. As students bring their electronic devices to school, demand for broadband to support learning — and give students and teachers the full benefit of technologies — all too often consumes school bandwidth capacity. In 2012, the State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA) recommended a state standard for technology infrastructure needs for schools. It called for schools to provide 100 megabits per second (Mbps) of **bandwidth** per 1,000 students/staff by 2014-15 and to increase to 1 gigabit per second (Gbps) by 2018 — which will require the use of high-speed fiber optic networks.



The nonprofit EducationSuperHighway reported in 2015 that three SREB states had at least 90 percent of their school districts connected to the internet at a minimum of 100 Mbps per 1,000 students/staff. Five SREB states had less than 50 percent of districts connected at that rate. States will need aggressive action plans if they are to meet the 1 Gbps standard by 2018. To reach the affordability goal of \$3 per Mbps, states will need to partner with broadband providers and education networks.

Percentage of Instruction Through e-Learning at Public Colleges and Universities in South Carolina



Source: SREB Data Exchange

Many students who want to continue their education beyond high school have turned to **e-learning** as a viable option for reaching education and career goals. More college coursework now takes place in online courses. Of the 15 states reporting to SREB's Data Exchange on e-learning at public four-year colleges and universities, the median percentage of all *undergraduate* instruction delivered by e-learning in 2014 was 12 percent. The median percentage of all *graduate* instruction delivered by e-learning was 29 percent. In 11 states reporting e-learning enrollment at public two-year colleges, the median percentage was just over 20 percent.

Prior to the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 2010, discussion arose on the interstate regulation of distance education, particularly on financial aid and consumer protection. By 2012, the U.S. Department of Education formed a commission to address these issues and make recommendations. In response, SREB and others formed the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) to regulate interstate e-learning.

States join SARA through their respective regional compacts; colleges and universities participate in SARA through their states, allowing these institutions to be authorized to offer interstate e-learning. The process eliminates the need for institutions to be approved by other states in which their students reside. It simplifies access to offerings for students, eases the regulatory burden on individual institutions, and places the burden for quality control on states.



High School

SREB states have made strides toward the target of a 90 percent high school graduation rate, adopted in SREB's *Challenge to Lead 2020* goals for education. In 2014, eight SREB states had high school graduation rates above 85 percent. When the first Challenge to Lead goals were set in 2002, the median graduation rate in SREB states was 69 percent, 2 percentage points below the national average. By 2014, the SREB rate was 85 percent, 3 points ahead of the nation.

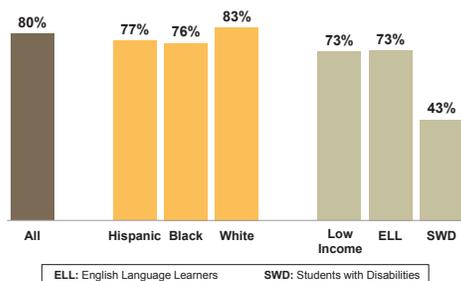
In 2014, SREB began reporting high school graduation rates using the federal **Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR)**. Unlike rates used previously, ACGR does not estimate who completes high school in four years. Instead, it accounts for cohorts of students across their high school careers. It requires states to identify all first-time ninth-graders each fall and track the freshman cohort over the next four years. Documented transfers are added to or subtracted from their respective cohorts, particularly to ensure that transfers and dropouts are not confused. Ultimately, ACGR reflects the students who graduate in four years with a standard diploma.

In 2014, 76 percent of students from low-income families in SREB states graduated from high school — outpacing their peers across the nation. The percentages ranged from 62 to 84 percent for the 16 SREB states. Percentages for these students in 11 SREB states exceeded the national rate. In SREB states, English language learners and students with disabilities graduated from high school at rates higher than their peer groups nationwide.

In South Carolina:

- The high school graduation rate increased by 6 percentage points from 2011 to 2014.
- As graduation rates for white, black and Hispanic students increased from 2013 to 2014, the gaps in rates widened between black and white students and narrowed between Hispanic and white students.
- The percentage of ninth-graders progressing to 12th grade in four years increased from 67 percent in 2011 to 73 percent in 2014.

High School Graduation Rates in South Carolina, 2014



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Ed Data Express

Graduation-rate gaps between black and white students and between Hispanic and white students persisted from 2013 to 2014, but they narrowed. In 2014, 75 percent of black students, 76 percent of Hispanic students and 88 percent of white students in the SREB region graduated from high school on time. Black and white students in SREB states graduated at rates higher than their peers nationwide in 2014, while Hispanic students in the region graduated at a rate lower than their peers nationwide.

No doubt SREB states improved on graduation rates from the early days of the Challenge to Lead goals. But, the previous formula for calculating rates only provided estimates through 2010. ACGR was first reported in 2011, and the SREB regional rate was 78 percent, one point below the nation. By 2014, SREB's graduation rate increased 7 percentage points. Fifteen SREB states' high school graduation rates increased from 1 to 14 points. At the same time, over half of the SREB states had graduation rate increases for student groups based on income, native language, disability, race and ethnicity.

Ninth-Grade Enrollment Bulge

For every 100 eighth-graders in South Carolina in 2012-13,



there were 14 MORE ninth-graders in 2013-14.

$$100 + \text{14 stick figures} = 114$$

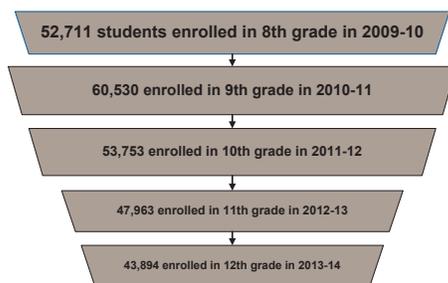
Source: SREB, based on data from the National Center for Education Statistics

SREB states have consistently noted the swell in the ranks of ninth-grade enrollment — compared to eighth-grade enrollment — as a possible indicator that middle-graders did not make a successful transition to high school. This **ninth-grade enrollment bulge**, seen both in the nation and the SREB region, is calculated by comparing the enrollment of ninth-graders in a given year to that of eighth-graders the prior school year. It generally indicates that ninth-graders failed to pass enough subjects in a year to be promoted — and continued to be classified as ninth-graders for a second year.

In most states, some bulging is expected as middle-graders from private and home schools enroll in public high schools for the first time. This cohort growth is somewhat offset by eighth-graders who exit public schools for private high schools. Such shifts in enrollment differ by state and require state analysis.

It remains, however, that in SREB states, 10 more ninth-graders were enrolled in public schools in 2014 for every 100 eighth-graders in 2013. The 2014 ninth-grade enrollment bulge rate in SREB states ranged from 3 to 18 points. States need to monitor eighth- and ninth-grade enrollments to ensure that all students are well-prepared for high school, can make a smooth transition and receive the supports they need to be successful in high school.

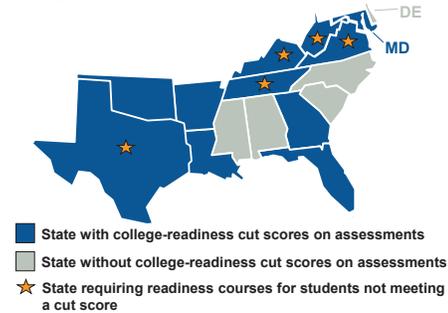
Grade-Level Progression in South Carolina



Source: SREB, based on data from the National Center for Education Statistics

The ninth-grader is not the only one who is likely to struggle and ultimately drop out of high school. States need data systems that monitor **grade-level progression** from high school entry to graduation so they can identify other problem areas and show state leaders where their state needs policies and programs to support success.

Link Between High School Assessments and College and Career Readiness, 2015-16



The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) gives state policymakers and education leaders greater flexibility and responsibility than previous federal legislation. ESSA gives states the lead designing their state accountability systems with two requirements. At a minimum, states must incorporate indicators of assessment participation, academic proficiency on tests in reading, math and science, a measure of progress for students learning English as a second language, and an additional indicator, which may include a measure of individual student growth or a statewide indicator of student learning for elementary and middle grades. States must also include graduation rate for high schools and one non-academic indicator related to school quality, such as teacher or student engagement. States must place greater weight on the academic indicators.

ESSA also encourages states to include indicators for college and career readiness as part of their accountability systems. By 2016, many SREB states had adopted a college- and career-readiness agenda linked to their accountability systems. Eleven SREB states have college- and career-readiness cut scores associated with their statewide high school assessments. Five SREB states also require that students failing to meet this college- and career-readiness cut score participate in interventions to catch up with their peers in high school — and prepare for postsecondary study.

Challenge to Lead 2020 goals recognize state accountability systems that incorporate a strong college- and career-readiness focus tied to high school graduation as a key policy lever for academic quality and postsecondary readiness.



High School

While SREB states applaud the substantial progress they made in raising high school graduation rates to above national rates, they also acknowledge their college- and career-readiness indicators show far too few recent high school graduates are prepared to succeed in careers and postsecondary endeavors. SREB's *Challenge to Lead 2020* calls for states to close this substantial gap between high school graduation and postsecondary readiness by getting 80 percent of ninth-graders ready for college and careers by the time they complete high school.

The College Board and ACT established college- and career-readiness (CCR) benchmark scores for their respective college admissions tests — SAT and ACT — based on results from each. By 2015, 28 percent of the nation's high school graduating seniors who had taken the **ACT** while in high school met all four ACT college-readiness benchmarks — in English, math, reading and science. Graduating seniors in the SREB region trailed, with 22 percent meeting the benchmarks in these four subjects. Of the nation's graduating seniors who had taken the **SAT** while in high school, 42 percent met the SAT college- and career-readiness benchmark.

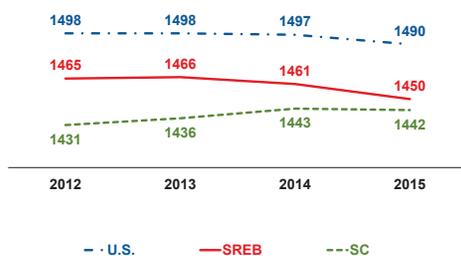
2015, the SREB regional score declined from 20.3 to 20.1. Across the SREB region, the percentage of students taking the test grew from 54 percent in 2012 to 69 percent from 2012 to 2015.

The median SAT composite score among SREB states was 1450, compared to 1490 nationally. The SREB regional median score dropped 15 points from 2012 to 2015. Participation rates have grown from 50 to 53 percent from 2012 to 2015.

In South Carolina:

- The state average composite SAT score for the graduating class of 2015 was 1442, compared with the SAT college- and- career readiness benchmark score of 1550 set by the College Board.
- From 2012 to 2015, SAT participation rose 2 percentage points from 63 to 65 percent of graduating seniors.
- In 2015, 34 percent of graduates had taken at least one AP exam while in high school, compared with 37 percent in the nation.

Average Composite SAT Scores Of Graduating Seniors in South Carolina



Source: The College Board

Increases in the proportions of graduating seniors taking the ACT and SAT partially explain why scores fell in SREB states. Generally, as a greater proportion takes a college admission test, the state average score drops. The expanding group includes as many students as ever who are prepared for college, but — with the increases — it includes more students who are not as prepared.

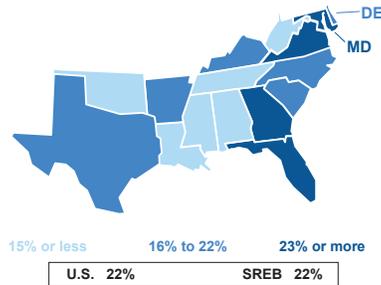
By 2015, eight SREB states required all high school students to take a college admissions test, generally in their junior year. Of those states, seven required the ACT, and one required the SAT. Six of these states use ACT results as a measure of college readiness. These results are also tied to high school accountability systems to help schools improve. Using the test results as measures of college readiness can help schools work more effectively with students in their senior year to become more prepared for postsecondary study.

Challenge 2020 calls for graduating seniors in SREB states to take **AP exams** while in high school at rates higher than the national average. These courses can help students prepare for college while still in high school. Research shows that students who take AP courses in

Student performance on existing state and national assessments provides states with important information about the rigor of state standards and curricula and the college and career readiness of students. They have long looked to such national measures as the ACT, SAT and Advanced Placement (AP) exams and state end-of-course exams as measures of their students' postsecondary readiness.

In 2015, the SREB regional average composite ACT score was 20.1, compared to 21.0 nationally. From 2012 to

Percentage of Graduating Seniors Scoring 3 or Higher On One or More AP Exams, 2015



Source: The College Board

high school and attempt the exams are more successful academically as college freshmen, even if they do not earn a score of 3 or higher on the test — considered passing and generally sufficient to earn college credit.

In 2015, eight SREB states exceeded the national average in AP participation. Four of these states also outpaced the nation in the number of graduates who earned scores of 3 or higher on at least one AP exam. In fact, one SREB state, Maryland, led the nation with the highest percentage of the class of 2015 passing an AP exam during high school. To help states meet the Challenge 2020 goal of graduating 80 percent of ninth-graders ready for college and careers, SREB states developed a **college- and career-readiness action agenda**. It calls for the adoption of five policies statewide:

- adopt CCR standards for math and literacy
- assess student progress on CCR
- offer transitional readiness courses to students who do not meet the readiness standards
- align college admissions and placement policies to state readiness standards
- make postsecondary readiness a high school accountability measure.

SREB states have developed partnerships with business and industry to reduce the gap between student preparation and employer needs. As state economic development priorities underscore the necessity for career readiness, education leaders realize that serious career exploration needs to occur well before high school and extend to postsecondary education. Twelve SREB states explicitly require career exploration for students in the middle grades and extend it into high school.

Eight SREB states currently require — or offer — students who do not meet the college-readiness cut score on their state exam to take a readiness course in math or literacy. These readiness courses are purposely designed to help students learn and think independently, read for information and solve problems. They are designed to help close the gap between high school and college by providing reading, writing and math skills that students need to succeed in the workplace and college. For all the students who do not meet state college-readiness benchmarks in high school, state leaders will continue to look for policies that will ensure more students are ready for college.

College and Career Readiness (CCR) in South Carolina

Policy Element	Status	Details
Adopted statewide readiness standards	Yes	South Carolina College- and Career- Ready Standards
Gives assessment to high school juniors with CCR test	Yes	ACT and WorkKeys
Offers readiness courses to juniors or seniors not ready for college and careers	No	Considering SREB Readiness Courses for 2016-2017
Requires postsecondary institutions to use grade 11 results for college placement	No	
Exempts “ready” students from placement testing	No	
Incorporates CCR measures into state’s accountability system	Yes	End-of-course exams: English I, Algebra I, Biology I and U.S. History

Source: SREB analysis of state documents

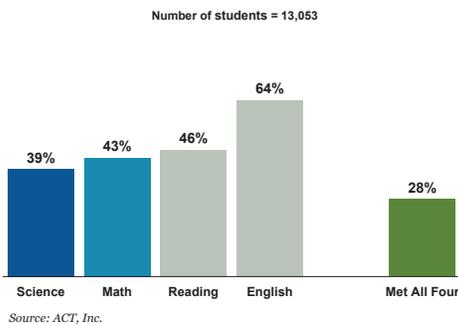


High School

With an eye on economic development and projected workforce needs, SREB states have focused on increasing the proportion of seniors who complete high school prepared to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) — and health. SREB's 2015-2016 Commission on Computer Science and Information Technology studied ways to help SREB states support computer science education and prepare more students for key technology careers. The charge was to help reduce critical workforce shortages that could stymie economic progress in years to come. Particularly threatened by a shortage of highly trained technical workers are fields such as cybersecurity and computer programming.

ACT's 2015 college-readiness benchmark report spotlights the gap between the percentage of students graduating from high school and those ready for college while ACT's *Condition of STEM 2015* focuses on graduating seniors who took the ACT while in high school and expressed an interest in **STEM** careers — about half of all tested graduates across the nation in 2015.

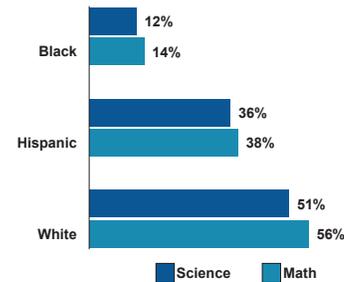
STEM-Interested Seniors Who Met ACT's College-Readiness Benchmarks in South Carolina, 2015



Nationally, 33 percent of the STEM-interested students who took the ACT while in high school met all four college-readiness benchmarks compared to 26 percent of the STEM-interested seniors in the SREB region. Far too many of the STEM-interested students were not ready to pursue a STEM major.

Lower percentages of black and Hispanic STEM-interested graduating seniors met the ACT college-readiness benchmarks in science and math than their white peers in every SREB state in 2015. The gaps on the science and math benchmarks between black and Hispanic STEM-

STEM-Interested Seniors Who Met ACT's College-Readiness Benchmarks in South Carolina By Racial/Ethnic Group, 2015



interested seniors and their white peers ranged from 2 to 47 percentage points in SREB states.

Also, lower percentages of STEM-interested females met these benchmarks than their male peers in every SREB state in 2015. In SREB states, the gaps on the science and math benchmarks between STEM-interested females and males ranged from 6 to 19 points.

As SREB states make strides toward the high school graduation goal adopted in *Challenge to Lead 2020*, they remain a long way from the college-readiness goal. Achieving the goal will require a strong focus on high school paths that emphasize postsecondary readiness and career preparation.

Challenge 2020 encourages SREB states to offer more than one path to high school graduation — with at least one path built on high academic rigor and career technical programs of study. Almost every SREB state has established college- and career-readiness standards and has some industry exams for high school students that

In South Carolina:

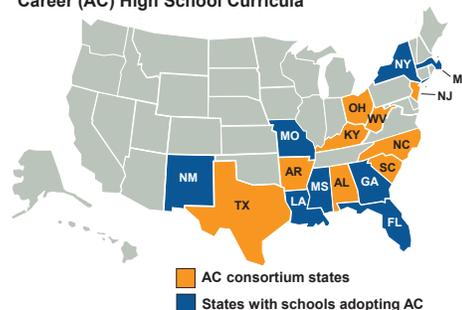
- Of the 2015 graduating seniors taking the ACT while in high school, 37 percent of female students interested in STEM careers met the ACT college-readiness benchmark in math, compared with 50 percent of males.
- Of these students, 34 percent of females met the ACT benchmark in science, compared with 45 percent of males.

lead to credentials. SREB's 2015 Commission on Career and Technical Education urges states to expect all students to graduate ready for both college and careers.

The Commission's report describes the **essential elements of career pathways** from high school to higher education and high-demand, well-paying jobs. It recommends that SREB states develop meaningful pathways from secondary to postsecondary education involving links to industry that ensure students graduate ready to be productive in critical industries. The report urges states to provide sufficient funding and appropriate accountability systems to develop these critical career pathways — not just in high schools and technical centers, but in community and technical colleges and other postsecondary institutions.

In developing career pathways that lead to well-paying jobs in high-demand fields, SREB states need to invest in new curricula that blend college-readiness academics with challenging technical studies and provide a framework for creating rigorous assignments. The Commission recommends that state K-12 and postsecondary agencies work together with employers to identify, evaluate and approve industry certification examinations, technical skill assessments, dual credit courses and end-of-course assessments that are part of a system of stackable credentials that offer long-term value to students, employers and the economy. On the outcome side of the equation, accountability systems need to reward high schools and postsecondary institutions that increase the number of students who earn recognized industry credentials and secure high-skill, high-wage jobs.

States and Schools Adopting SREB's Advanced Career (AC) High School Curricula



Source: SREB's High Schools That Work, January 2016

To aid in this effort, SREB has partnered with states in developing model pathway courses — **Advanced Career (AC) pathways** — in advanced manufacturing, aerospace engineering, clean energy technology, energy and power, global logistics, health informatics, informatics, innovations in science and technology and integrated production technologies. Designed with secondary, postsecondary and industry experts, each AC pathway includes four courses built around challenging projects that incorporate rigorous academic and technical knowledge and encourage students to explore careers. AC provides high school students with a greater depth of knowledge and skill — and prepares them for more options after they graduate.

High School Career and Technical Education (CTE) in South Carolina

Policy Element	State Required
State has career-academic and readiness standards for CTE completers	No
State has approved industry-recognized exams for specific CTE courses	Yes
Students who pass industry-recognized exams earn postsecondary credit	No
State-established goal for increasing credentials in high-demand career fields	No
New alternatively certified CTE teachers must:	
Hold an appropriate industry certification in the field taught	Yes
Pass a core-academic test	No
Be under contract early enough to participate in intensive professional development before the school year starts	No

Source: SREB interviews with state CTE directors, February 2016



High School

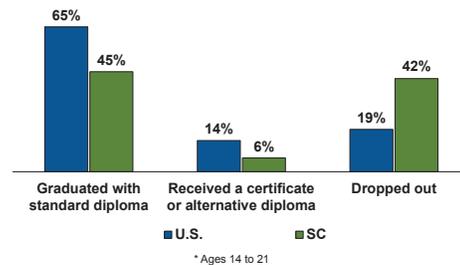
As SREB states worked to increase high school graduation rates since 2004, they developed an array of policies to grapple with the problems underlying poor graduation rates, starting with the most basic: absenteeism. Noted researcher Robert Balfanz estimated that more than five million students missed about a month of school every year. Absenteeism is associated with lower grades, dropping out and juvenile crime, so getting students to school is key. Keeping them in school is also crucial.

In 2009, the National Governors Association called for all states to raise the **minimum dropout age** to 18. In 2005, SREB reported that nine SREB states set the compulsory attendance age at 16, three states set it at 17, and four states set it at 18. Five of these states raised the age since then. While states focused on ways to make it harder for students to drop out, SREB's 2014 report, *Focus on Compulsory Attendance Policies*, documents that meaningful classes and strong support are just as critical for students at risk of dropping out.

As SREB states have made progress toward the Challenge to Lead high school graduation target of 90 percent, with strong state policy implementation and local efforts, they continue to struggle to raise rates for specific student groups. None has been more discouraging than the results for students with disabilities.

earned a standard diploma was significantly lower than the national average in nine SREB states. These results are particularly disappointing because only a minority of these students have disabilities that prevent them from being successful in postsecondary courses.

High School Exit Status of Students With Disabilities* In South Carolina, 2013



Source: Education Week Research Center

In 2013, about one in six students with disabilities in the nation left high school with an **alternative diploma or certificate of completion** — a credential that is not recognized for admission by postsecondary institutions or diploma-equivalent by employers. Another 19 percent of these students dropped out of high school in 2013.

Students with disabilities need strong preparation to transition out of high school successfully. Through age 21, these students can receive comprehensive services and supports through public schools under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). This funding ends when these students exit high school, making this transition lifechanging beyond school. IDEA requires that transition planning begin by age 14 and services be in progress by age 16. To help more students with disabilities graduate from high school ready for college and careers, states should ensure that these students receive the early preparation, credentials and transition services they need for success beyond high school.

Policymakers and education leaders should find ways to make high school more meaningful to all students. This will require paths to graduation that connect students to the future. In doing so, states can help more students graduate on time, ready to pursue some type of postsecondary credential and a better career.

Earliest Age Students Can Drop Out of High School In SREB States, 2015-16



Note: Maryland moves to Age 18 in 2017-18.

Source: SREB analysis of state documents

Too many students with disabilities leave high school without the diploma they need to enroll in postsecondary education or to enter a career. In 2013, the median rate for these students who earned a standard diploma in SREB states was 61 percent. The rate ranged from 29 to 85 percent. In fact, the percentage of these students who

Education Data

Educators have long relied on research and data to identify effective teaching and learning strategies. Policymakers and others have depended on access to accurate data to identify critical education issues, gauge progress and assess policy implementation. In today's digital world, electronic data offer greater promise for informing policy. At the same, they require more secure systems to guard against breaches and better training to ensure necessary privacy, especially of students and teachers. The balance between security and privacy on the one hand and access to data on the other is tenuous. Current research and best practice provides states with clear recommendations.

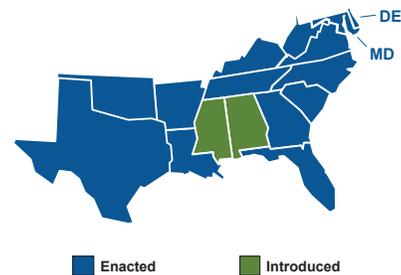
State policy needs to clarify data governance for P-20 education data collection, access, sharing and security. Policy should also specify notification processes for misuses of data and data breaches.

In 2013, Oklahoma became the first state to enact legislation to address student data privacy and security. Other states quickly followed its lead. Between 2013 and 2015, more than 300 bills addressing education data privacy and security had been introduced in state houses nationwide. These bills sought to address specific education data privacy and security issues, including data governance, processing, storage, collection, sharing and transparency. In all, 34 states — including 12 SREB states — enacted **education data privacy and security laws** during this time.

As states adopt new laws, policymakers should monitor implementation to ensure their states strike the balance between security, privacy and access. If the scale tips, states need mechanisms to correct the balance. In 14 SREB states, boards of education have rule-making authority on data governance, making it easier for them to adjust policies as needed.

Maryland and Virginia have comprehensive privacy training requirements for education personnel. These policies ensure that personnel who have access to student data know how to secure, protect and use it effectively and ethically. IBM reports that human error is a factor in 95 percent of data security incidents. Experts say many data breaches could be avoided if personnel were properly trained and supervised. Yet, school-level data are all too often entered by the employees with the least training.

Education Data Privacy Legislation in SREB States, 2013 to 2015 State Legislative Sessions



Source: National Association of State Boards of Education

Public concern about data privacy and security in recent years has been fueled in part by lack of trust, which in turn was founded on a perceived lack of transparency about how state data were collected, used and made available. State data policies should ensure strong communication that informs the public, especially students and parents, about current policies and proposed changes.

Communication about data policies should be easy for the public to find — not buried on websites. The text should be concise and easy to read, without jargon. It should indicate how data are collected, shared and used; who has access; and what safeguards protect student privacy. In 2016, the National Association of State Boards of Education reported that Colorado, Louisiana, West Virginia and Wisconsin increased transparency on state education privacy policies with methods that respectively included published fact sheets, a published state guide, statewide forums and a well-designed, privacy-focused website.

SREB's Education Technology Cooperative (ETC) has identified education data privacy and security as one of its 10 Critical Issues. It will focus attention on the issue and develop strategies to help states for at least the next three years. During this time, the ETC will develop materials to help states improve policies and communication strategies in this area.

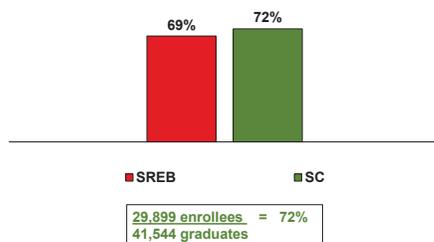


Postsecondary

To achieve the goal that 60 percent of working-age adults earn some type of postsecondary credential, states need to increase postsecondary enrollment rates for recent high school graduates. Considering the demographic profiles of SREB states, they will need to focus more effort on increasing the enrollment of students who are first-generation college-goers.

In fall 2014, 69 percent of the SREB region's recent high school graduates were enrolled in postsecondary education. The range among SREB states was 58 to 83 percent. For the first time, SREB calculated these rates using state-provided high school graduate counts. These numbers were also the basis for state calculations of the adjusted cohort graduation rates — ACGR. In prior years, the **recent enrollment rate** was based on state definitions of “graduate.” With the ACGR, the formula has now been standardized for all states.

Postsecondary Enrollment Rates of Recent High School Graduates in South Carolina, Fall 2014



Source: SREB, based on data from states and the National Center for Education Statistics

Increasing college enrollment rates for student groups is a critical step in closing college completion gaps and raising overall state postsecondary attainment rates. From 2009 to 2014, postsecondary enrollment in the SREB region decreased for black and white students, while Hispanic students increased by 29 points. This increase may result from the 2012 federal Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals.

Providing sufficient student financial aid is important for improving student access to postsecondary institutions. Most SREB states provide some combination of need-based and merit aid. While state aid programs vary considerably by SREB state, financial aid remains an important tool in closing the **affordability gap** for

In South Carolina:

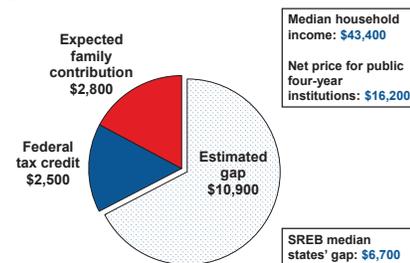
- From 2011-12 to 2013-14, the number of Pell Grant recipients decreased by 8,867 or 8.3 percent.
- For 2013-14, the average Pell Grant award per recipient attending public colleges across the nation was \$3,535, compared with SREB's median of \$3,506.
- From 2008 to 2014, the average student loan debt for graduates of four-year public and private colleges increased by \$8,006 or 38 percent.

students. The 2016 SREB Affordability Commission's recommendations addressed the critical challenge of increasing degree completion — a challenge that grows yearly as more students are priced out of postsecondary education and better careers.

Federal Pell Grants assist students from low-income families by providing federal funding support that does not have to be paid back after graduation. The proportions of college costs Pell Grants actually cover has declined steadily over the last decade. In 2013-14, the median Pell awards by state in the SREB region ranged from \$3,228 to \$3,947. Even so, all 16 SREB states saw the number of students receiving Pell Grants decrease from 2011-12 to 2013-14.

In 2014, SREB began using net price data as a cost indicator. National Center for Education Statistics defines net price as the total cost of attendance minus the average state, federal, and institutional scholarship and grant

College Affordability Gap in South Carolina, 2014



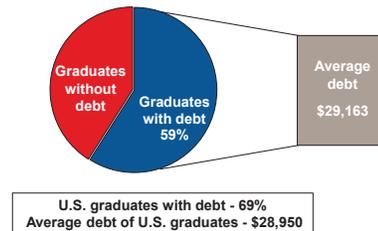
Sources: The College Board, National Center for Education Statistics, SREB Data Exchange and U.S. Department of Education

aid. It factors in what students can expect, on average, to receive in all types of financial aid, including state-aid programs.

The total cost of attendance is the sum of tuition, fees, books, supplies, and a weighted average room, board and other expenses related to living costs for on- and off-campus students. The net price cost for one year for undergraduate students to attend a public four-year institution in SREB states ranged from \$9,164 to \$16,211 in 2014. Families are expected to pay a share of these costs. When they complete the federal financial aid application, their expected contribution — called the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) — is calculated based on tax and financial aid information.

Tax credits and loans can help reduce the remaining cost. All students whose families pay taxes are eligible for the federal American Opportunity Tax Credit, up to \$2,500. The full credit is available to individual taxpayers whose modified adjusted gross income is \$80,000 or less — or \$160,000 or less for married taxpayers who file a joint return. For 2014, the EFC and the federal tax credit, taken together, did not cover the net price at public four-year colleges for students from median-income families for any SREB state. State, institutional and private scholarships can offset a portion of this affordability gap. Student loans can also help cover this gap, but loans stretch out the cost with interest added — requiring students to make payments that can span a decade or more beyond graduation. Approximately 69 percent of U.S. college seniors graduated with **student debt** in 2014. Their average debt was \$28,950. Across the SREB states, average debt ranged from \$23,000 to \$29,400.

Debt Status for 2014 Graduates of Public and Private Nonprofit Colleges and Universities* in South Carolina



* Four-year institutions only
Source: Projectionstudentdebt.org

Interest rates on federal student loans doubled to 6.8 percent, beginning in 2014. In addition, many college graduates can find it difficult to get jobs in their fields at wages that permit them to make significant dents in repaying their college loans. Rising student debt and interest rates may push more students to enroll part time, delay attending or not apply.

Cost and debt are serious concerns for many high school students and their parents. Many need choices to find one viable postsecondary path to fit their budgets. Students should feel confident that if they choose to start their postsecondary studies at two-year or technical colleges, they can progress along an academic and career pathway to good paying jobs without impediments when they **transfer** to another institution. Well-designed pathways can lead the way to advanced credentials — helping high school graduates with viable short- and long-term educational and career possibilities.

Affordability and Transferability in South Carolina

Policy Questions	Status	Notes and References
Which group sets tuition?	I	The Board for Technical Education sets tuition.
Provides financial aid (merit, need, both)?	Merit	91% of aid is merit-based.
Guarantees full transfer of general education credits?	Yes	Six general education blocks
Guarantees full transfer of associate degree credits?	Yes	If degree contains transfer block

Note: I=institutions

Source: SREB analysis of the South Carolina Code of Laws and NASSGAP Survey 2013-14



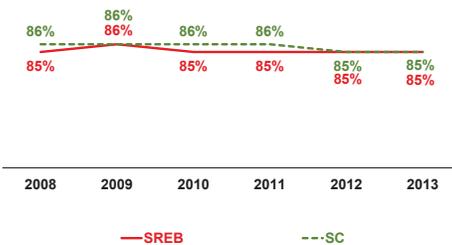
Postsecondary

While college enrollment rates of recent high school graduates in SREB states increased steadily from 2004 to 2010, they remained relatively flat from 2010 to 2014. The opposite is true for college completion rates for students attending four-year institutions. These completion rates were relatively flat from 2004 to 2010, but the rates increased steadily from 2010 to 2014.

To achieve the Challenge to Lead 2020 goal of 60 percent of working-age adults with degrees and certificates by 2020, SREB states will need to increase college enrollment for recent high school graduates, especially for those students who would be first in their families to attend college. Many of the first-generation college-goers will need greater levels of support services to help them enroll, apply for financial aid and successfully complete some type of postsecondary credential. States will also need to attract working-age adults to their postsecondary programs. Strong state access and support policies can help ensure that postsecondary institutions provide the kinds of support all these students need to succeed.

States need to monitor their freshmen **persistence rate** as a key performance indicator. This rate measures the percentage of first-year students who return to their college for a second year of college study. Colleges and universities in SREB states collect and report these data to SREB as part of the SREB Data Exchange.

First-Year Persistence Rates at Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities in South Carolina



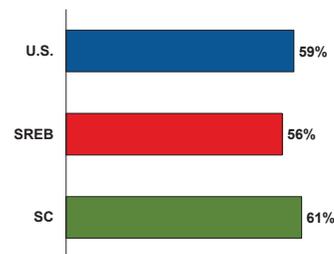
Source: SREB Data Exchange

Unlike other persistence rates reported across the country, the SREB freshmen persistence rate counts data about students who transfer to other colleges their second year. In 2013, the persistence rate for students attending public four-year institutions in SREB states

was 85 percent. Among SREB states, the rates ranged from 76 to 92 percent. Seven SREB states increased their rates from 2008 to 2013.

Another key performance indicator for states is the **six-year graduation rate** for four-year public colleges and universities. Institutions must report this rate to the U.S. Department of Education.

Six-Year Graduation Rates for Fall 2008 First-Time, Full-Time Freshmen at Public Four-Year Colleges And Universities in South Carolina, 2014



Source: SREB Data Exchange

Federal law defines the rate as the percentage of freshmen who enter college in the fall term and remain at the same institution through graduation. It provides evidence of how well the institution serves this group. But, the rate does not account for students who enroll in other terms, part-time students and those who transfer from other institutions. Thus, it provides an incomplete picture of college graduation rates.

The SREB region increased its six-year graduation rate for four-year colleges and universities for first-time freshmen from 53 to 56 percent from 2010 to 2014. It trailed the nation on this indicator by 3 percentage points in both 2010 and 2014. Six SREB states had graduation rates that exceeded the national average of 59 percent for students who enrolled in 2008 and graduated by 2014. Graduation rates for black, Hispanic and white students in five of the six states exceeded rates for their respective peer groups nationwide. Among SREB states, graduation rates for black students ranged from 25 to 54 percent. For Hispanic students, the range was 39 to 78 percent.

While many students graduate from college within six years, a large number of others show significant progress toward graduation — but do not finish within that time. The SREB Data Exchange and its partnering states

In South Carolina:

- Percentages of working-age black and white adults with bachelor's degrees or higher trailed the rates of their respective peers in the nation and region.
- Percentages of working-age black and Hispanic adults with associate degrees or higher trailed the rates of their respective peers in the nation and region.
- The postsecondary attainment rate for all postsecondary credentials, including certificates, exceeds the rate for associate degrees and higher — by 4 percentage points.

track students for up to 10 years from the year they enter college to calculate the SREB progression rate — the percentage of first-time freshmen who complete a bachelor's degree, remain enrolled or transfer to another institution after initial enrollment.

In 2014, the SREB progression rate at the six-year mark for the students who entered public four-year colleges and universities in 2008 was 77 percent. This percentage includes 56 percent who graduated in 2014, plus 21 percent who remained enrolled or transferred to other institutions. States and institutions should step up efforts to help this large percentage of students who are still actively pursuing a credential after six years.

SREB states have considered three types of policies to address college completion:

- greater access to a variety of postsecondary programs
- rewards for postsecondary institutions that meet or exceed completion performance targets
- alignment between the needs of postsecondary education and the workforce.

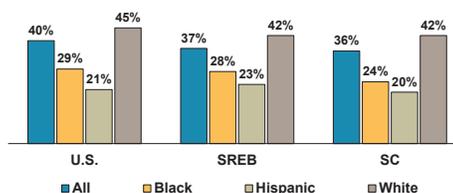
Opening more pathways to postsecondary certificates and degrees is important for several groups: (1) recent high school graduates who want to enter the workforce; (2) working adults who need to retool their skills; and (3) adults with some college but no credential who want better paying jobs. Strategies vary for increasing the number of students in certificate and degree programs from each group.

SREB's 2015 Community College Commission recommends that states and institutions create clear, well-defined pathways to help students complete postsecondary credentials. Community colleges also need to evaluate their program offerings regularly against state economic development priorities to ensure they support workforce development. They need strong advisement programs with student assessment on entry, help in tracking progress, feedback and support — all designed to keep students on track to graduate.

The Challenge 2020 **adult educational attainment** goal of 60 percent of working-age adults in SREB states with a postsecondary credential by 2020 counts postsecondary certificates as well as associate and bachelor's degrees.

In the SREB region, 37 percent of working-age adults, ages 25 to 64, held an associate degree or higher in 2014 — trailing the nation by 3 percentage points. Three SREB states matched or exceeded the national average of 40 percent. The percentages of black and white adults with an associate degree or higher across the SREB region trailed their respective peer groups across the nation in 2014.

Percentage of Working-Age Adults With Associate Degrees or Higher, By Race/Ethnic Group In South Carolina, 2014



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The U.S. Census does not currently include individuals with postsecondary certificates in its measurements of adult attainment. However, the Lumina Foundation reports that the attainment rate rises by 5 percentage points nationwide when postsecondary certificates are considered. The regional rise is also 5 points, while the range across SREB states is 3 to 15 points.

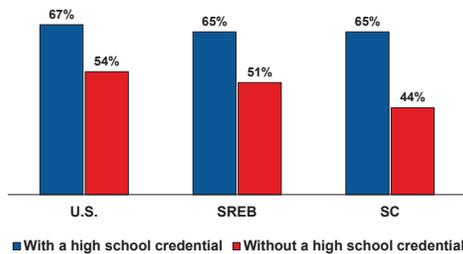


Lifelong Learning

Working-age adults who have met the Challenge to Lead adult attainment goal — and have a postsecondary certificate or degree — **earn higher wages** and have better health than their peers — and have an improved quality of life. They also are generally less dependent on state and federal services and contribute more in tax revenues.

Adults, ages 25 and older, who graduated from high school earned on average \$7,300 more in 2014 than adults who did not graduate from high school. Those with bachelor's degrees earned on average \$22,600 more than those with only high school diplomas and \$29,900 more than those without high school diplomas.

Employment Rates for Adults, Ages 25 to 64, Without a Postsecondary Credential in South Carolina, 2014



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The 2007-2009 economic recession hit adults who had a high school diploma or less the hardest, especially in **employment opportunities**. According to a 2012 study by Georgetown University, job losses exceeded 5 million among those with high school credentials or less. Those with bachelor's degrees or better, however, gained 187,000 jobs during the recession. In 2015, Georgetown University reported that of the 2.9 million “good jobs” created since 2010, only 100,000 were filled by adults with less than a bachelor's degree. Good jobs typically pay above the median wage for that occupation and offer workplace benefits. Job market projections show that higher educated adults will continue to be more employable.

States can improve their adult **educational attainment** rates if they can attract more adults to education programs and help them to complete postsecondary credentials. In particular, state programs can help three groups of adults improve their levels of education:

In South Carolina:

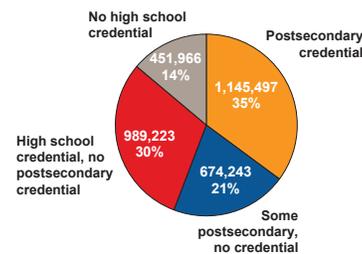
- The earnings gap between adults over age 25 with a bachelor's degree and those with only a high school credential was \$20,167 in 2014.
- In that year, the percentage of adults over age 25 without a high school credential was higher than the national rate by 1 percentage point.

- adults with some postsecondary education but no credential
- adults with a high school credential but no postsecondary education
- adults without a high school credential.

In total, these three groups comprised between 55 and 74 percent of the adult population in SREB states in 2014. To meet future job needs, states and colleges need to ensure that more adults enroll and move progressively toward college completion — and then earn degrees.

Unfortunately, about one in five adults in the SREB region and in the nation fall into the first group — those who earned some college credits but no credential. In 2013, researchers at the Institute for Higher Education Policy studied adults who had earned substantial credits but had not earned degrees. They evaluated more than 41,000 former students from 60 postsecondary institutions that offer associate degrees — including colleges in SREB states. These students each accumulated 60 credit hours

Educational Attainment of Adults, Ages 25 and Over, in South Carolina, 2014



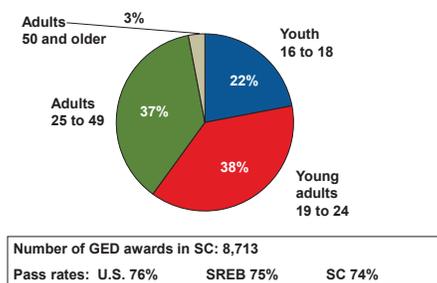
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

but left school without a degree. The researchers found that more than 16 percent of these adults were eligible for degrees without additional courses.

The third group holds significant promise for improving statewide college completion rates. All SREB states provide adult education programs for adults who have not completed high school, generally through their K-12 or community college agencies. With federal funding, they provide basic literacy and math skills through Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs, English instruction through English Language Acquisition (ELA) programs, and preparation for high school equivalency credentialing through Adult Secondary Education programs, including **GED** (or General Education Development) programs.

In 2014, more than two out of five adults, ages 25 and older, who did not finish high school nationwide had not completed ninth grade. These adults likely need ABE or ELA programs.

GED Awards by Age in South Carolina, 2013

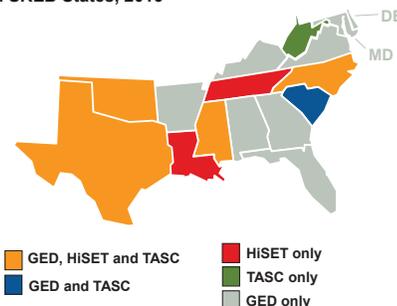


Source: American Council on Education

Traditionally, GED preparation programs serve mostly younger adults who recently dropped out of high school. In 2013, more than half of GED recipients in the SREB region were 16 to 24 years old. These numbers suggest that too few adults, ages 25 and older, who need high school equivalency credentials took advantage of preparation programs.

The options for high school equivalency credentials changed substantially in recent years. The 2002 series GED test was last offered in 2013. An updated, more college- and career-readiness-aligned GED test was released in January 2014. It is more rigorous and expensive than previous GED tests. States saw surges in the numbers of GED recipients in 2013 as people rushed to take the

High School Equivalency Assessments Offered In SREB States, 2016



Source: SREB analysis of state documents

expiring test. From 2008 to 2013, the number of GED recipients nationwide rose 13 percent, compared to an 11 percent rise in the SREB region.

With the roll-out of the new GED test in 2014, two alternate **high school equivalency assessments**, the HiSET (or High School Equivalency Test) and the TASC (or Test Assessing Secondary Completion) emerged. These assessments provided greater flexibility to test takers than the GED, including lower cost and more testing formats. Some states began to administer more than one of these assessments to provide adults with choice.

The U.S. Office of Vocational and Adult Education provides states with grant funding for adult education programs. Congress appropriated about \$569 million for adult education in 2015. SREB states received approximately \$222 million or 39 percent of the funds allocated to states.

The federal formula grant for adult education distributes funds to states based on the number of adults over age 16 in each state who are not enrolled in and have not completed high school. In turn, states must provide a 25 percent in-kind match for the federal funding they receive and satisfy a “maintenance of effort” provision, requiring that they spend at least 90 percent of what they spent in the prior year on adult education programs. SREB advises states to invest more state funds in adult education than required by the grant to promote higher educational attainment.

By focusing on all three groups of adult learners — those with some college credit but no degree, those with only a high school credential, and those without a high school credential — states can ensure more residents complete college and succeed in the job market.

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June 2016 (16E07-SC)

Description of Methods to Measure School or District Growth

Simple Growth (Growth=Year 2 score – Year 1 score)

Simple growth measures are the differences between the scores in adjacent years for a specific subject. These can only be computed when there is a continuous (multi-level) score scale. The interpretation of gains is difficult without an understanding of the how scores are associated with each grade level

What is the process?

- 1) The difference in scores in year 1 and year 2 is found. These are usually computed as (year 2 – year 1) so that most students have a positive difference that reflects a positive gain.
- 2) Student growth is summarized using the mean or the median.

What are the advantages?

- 1) Simple to calculate.

What are the disadvantages?

- 1) A continuous (multi-level) score scale is required of the assessment.
- 2) The magnitude of the gain may be deceptively simple. A 10 point gain for a student from grade 3 to grade 4 may be an expected amount of gain, but for a student from grade 7 to 8 it may be a large gain.
- 3) There is not a reference for what an expected amount of growth is for a student or a school.

Value Table (most recent SC growth methodology)

Value tables measure gains of scores that are usually groups into some number of levels (usually 5 to 10). A sample value table using 5 levels is provided below.

		Year 2 Level				
		1 (lo)	2	3	4	5 (hi)
Year 1 Level	5 (hi)	60	70	80	90	100
	4	70	80	90	100	110
	3	80	90	100	110	120
	2	90	100	120	130	140
	1 (lo)	100	120	130	140	150

What is the process?

- 1) Each student is awarded points based on the combination of year 1 and year 2 score levels. For example, a student who scored at level **3** in year 1 and level **4** in year 2 is awarded **110** points.
- 2) Points for all students are then averaged to create a “growth index”, a single number that represents growth.
- 3) The growth index is then usually converted to a growth rating (Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, At Risk).

What are the advantages?

- 1) A continuous (multi-level) score scale is not necessary.
- 2) Simple to calculate, can be calculated by any school or district.
- 3) Can be computed for any subgroup.
- 4) If all students make larger gains, the growth index (and rating) increases.
- 5) Gains can be averaged over more than one year (similar to the use of data from more than one year for value-added methodologies).
- 6) Either the mean or the median can be used as summary statistics.
- 7) Any number of desired “levels” can be used.

What are the disadvantages?

- 1) At this time, the uncertainty (error) in each index cannot be obtained.
- 2) Small student gains (or losses) that do not result in a change in score level are not represented as gains or losses.

Student Growth Percentiles

Student growth percentiles measure how much a student's performance has changed from one year to the next compared to other students who scored similarly in the past.

What is the process?

- 1) All students in the same grade with the same score (or scores) on the same assessment(s) in Spring of the first year are considered as a group of "academic peers". All of these students are presumed to have the same initial level of achievement. For instance, all students who initially scored 600 on PASS. (This can be broadened to include more scores to be considered for identifying a "similar student" reference group).
- 2) The scores obtained by all of these students in the Spring of the second year are obtained.
- 3) For each student, find the percent of their "academic peers" they scored better than on the second year assessment. This percentage is the student growth percentile for the student.
- 4) To summarize student growth for a group of students (e.g., class, school, district, or some sub-group of students), find the median of the individual student growth percentiles.

What are the advantages?

- 1) A continuous (multi-level) score scale across all grade levels is not necessary.
- 2) The question of whether the gains made by a student are good or bad are better answered because there is a reference to the gains made by other students.
- 3) You can use as many first-year measures as you want to create a "similar student" reference group. For instance you could use both math and science as first year measures to identify similar students for either math or science.
- 4) The process could be run using only the data from a district, but this would only give information that enables you to compare schools within the district.
- 5) Median Student Growth Percentiles can be computed for any group of students of interest (gender, race/ethnicity, economic status, etc.) very easily.

What are the disadvantages?

- 1) To obtain student growth percentiles with respect to all students in the state, the process must be done using all data in the state, and cannot be replicated by individuals at a school or school district.
- 2) If over time all students actually gain more from one year to the next, Student Growth Percentiles will not increase.
- 3) Student Growth Percentiles always compare each student's growth to the growth made by other students, not to any absolute measure of growth (they are norm-referenced).
- 4) The growth measure for each student is a percentile rank. These should not be averaged. The appropriate measure to summarize all students in a group is the median, not the mean. Many people who do not understand this will probably average the student growth percentiles.
- 5) Although the median is the appropriate summary statistic, it is not perceived to reflect the growth of each individual student.

Value-Added Methods

Value-added measures provide summary information at the school or district level. For each subject area, a predicted score is obtained for each student using as much prior information (test scores, demographic information) as desired.

What is the process?

- 1) Assessment results from as many years, and for as many subjects as desired are collected prior to year 2.
- 2) Additional information (gender, race/ethnicity, economic status, etc.) can also be collected.
- 3) Using all desired previous information, a predicted score for each student in year 2 is obtained.
- 4) The scores obtained by all of these students in the state in year 2 are also obtained.
- 5) The difference between the actual score obtained in the second year and the predicted score is the basis for the Value-Added measure.
- 6) The difference is expressed in a score called a "z-score". The average of these z-scores is 0 across all students, and the standard deviation of these scores is 1.0. Most of the scores will be in the range from -3.0 to +3.0. (The final scores reported could be transformed (changed) so they have some other mean and standard deviation.)
- 7) The scores across subject areas are then combined to create a final value-added score.
- 8) An alternative method to treating each subject separately and combining (utilized by SAS), is to predict the outcomes for all subjects (e.g., Reading and Mathematics) at the same time, in what is known as a multivariate model.

What are the advantages?

- 1) A continuous (multi-level) score scale across all grade levels is not necessary.
- 2) Information other than test scores can be used as predictors of year 2 achievement.
- 3) As scores from more previous years are included as predictors, prediction gets better (3 is usually the maximum number of previous year's scores that are utilized).
- 4) Value-added scores for individual students can be averaged at the level of the school or district.
- 5) The uncertainty (error) associated with school and district averages can be obtained to help avoid over-interpretation of the results.
- 6) The assessments do not have to be the same over time.

What are the disadvantages?

- 1) The process must be done using statistical processes, and cannot be replicated by individuals at a school or school district.
- 2) To utilize more than the previous year of data, computing capabilities may dictate using an outside vendor for computations.
- 3) Similar to student growth percentiles, the outcomes of Value-Added methods always compare each student's growth to the growth made by all students, not to any absolute measure of growth.
- 4) Changes in the growth of all students can mask increases or decreases in the growth of specific student groups.