

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

AGENDA

Monday, December 9, 2013

1:00 p.m.

433 Blatt Building

- | | | | |
|------|---|----------------|--|
| I. | Welcome and Introductions | Mr. Robinson | |
| II. | Approval of the Minutes of October 14, 2013 | Mr. Robinson | |
| III. | Key Constituency: | | |
| | Dr. Nancy McGinley, Superintendent, Charleston County School District | | |
| IV. | Subcommittee Reports | | |
| A. | Academic Standards and Assessments | Dr. Merck | |
| | Action: Proposed Science Academic Standards | | |
| | Action: Cyclical Review of Accountability System | | Neil C. Robinson, Jr.
CHAIR |
| B. | EIA and Improvement Mechanisms | Mr. Drew | Barbara B. Hairfield
VICE CHAIR |
| | Action: FY2014-15 Budget Recommendations | | Phillip Bowers
Dennis Drew
Mike Fair
Nikki Haley |
| C. | Public Awareness Subcommittee | Mrs. Hairfield | R. Wesley Hayes, Jr.
Alex Martin |
| V. | Update on the P-20 Initiative to Improve Reading Performance | | |
| | Dr. Rainey Knight and Ms. Dana Yow | | John W. Matthews, Jr.
Daniel B. Merck
Joseph H. Neal
Andrew S. Patrick
Evelyn R. Perry
J. Roland Smith
Patti J. Tate
John Warner
David Whittemore
Mick Zais |
| VI. | Nominating Committee appointed | Mr. Robinson | |
| VII. | New Business | Mr. Robinson | |

Reminders:

Subcommittees will meet on January 27, 2014

The next EOC full committee meeting is February 10, 2014.

EOC offices are closed December 24, 25, and 26 and January 1 for the holidays.

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
Minutes of the Meeting
October 14, 2013

Members Present: Mr. Robinson; Mr. Bowers; Sen. Fair; Ms. Hairfield; Rep. Smith; Sen. Matthews; Dr. Merck; Rep. Patrick; Mr. Warner; Mr. Whittemore; and Dr. Zais.

Staff Present: Ms. Barton; Dr. Andrews; Ms. Geiger; and Ms. Yow

I. The minutes of the following meetings were approved as submitted: August 8-9; September 9 and September 16.

II. Key Constituency

Mr. Robinson recognized Pamela Lackey, President of AT&T South Carolina and co-chair of *TransformSC* and Jim Reynolds, CEO of Total Comfort Solutions and a member of *TransformSC*. Ms. Lackey presented an overview of the *TransformSC* initiative, focusing on the goal of the initiative to improve the educational outcomes of students, especially those students who do not graduate from high school or who graduate and still need remediation upon entering postsecondary institutions. Ms. Lackey explained why business is engaged in this effort – increasing difficulty in finding qualified applicants and finding employees who can be trained and retrained. With 65 percent of all jobs requiring postsecondary education or training by the year 2020, the outdated system of public education delivery must be transformed. Ms. Lackey described the results of a parent survey that 74 percent of parents of children in grades 6 through 12 believe that South Carolina should rethink how public education works. Also 68 percent of parents believe that teachers teach to the test while only 50 percent of parents believe that struggling students get the instructional help they need. There are currently 35 schools in 19 districts participating in *TransformSC*. Ms. Lackey noted that in addition to knowledge, learners need to exhibit creativity, integrity, self-direction and a strong work ethic.

EOC members engaged Ms. Lackey and Mr. Reynolds in a discussion that focused on the following: (1) how to determine what flexibility is needed by districts to innovate; (2) what is the role of instructional materials and assessments; (3) how will we know the initiatives are successful; and (4) how to expand the initiative to more districts. Mr. Reynolds focused on the importance of having more students graduating and more students graduating who are college and career ready. The members also discussed the transformation that must occur in the classroom with teachers able to personalize learning to all students, especially at the high school level.

III. Subcommittee Reports

The Committee then turned to the Subcommittee reports.

A. Academic Standards and Assessments:

Dr. Merck summarized the results of a study that determined the relationship between third grade reading performance and eventual graduation in South Carolina using PACT 2000 English language arts (ELA) scores of third graders. The results for South Carolina mirrored the national research in that students who scored at

Below Basic 1 on the 2000 PACT ELA test were less likely to be able to be identified as still being enrolled in public schools in South Carolina and were less likely to graduate than all other students. There was a statistically significant relationship between 3rd grade PACT ELA scores in 2000 and the likelihood that the student graduated in 2009 or 2010.

B. EIA and Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee

In the absence of Mr. Drew, Mrs. Barton notified that Committee that EIA-funded programs and entities as well as programs seeking EIA funds will have an opportunity on November 12 to present before the subcommittee. The final budget and proviso recommendations will be forwarded to the Committee in December.

C. Public Awareness Subcommittee

Ms. Hairfield reported that the subcommittee has not met since the last meeting.

D. Special Reading Subcommittee

In response to the report on third grade reading, Ms. Hairfield noted that the proposed reading legislation is focused on improving pre- and in-service training of teachers, on progress monitoring of struggling students, and on reading proficiency from early literacy through high school. Ms. Hairfield informed the Committee that EOC staff members, Dr. Rainey Knight and Ms. Yow will be traveling to Florida later in October to meet with individuals at the Just Read Office! and at the Florida Center for Reading Research at Florida State University and to tour schools in Tallahassee.

V. 2013-14 EOC Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives of the Committee for the current fiscal year were approved as distributed.

VI. New Business

Mr. Robinson called upon Mr. Warner to present his proposal for amending the state's education accountability system. The proposal highlighted systemic problems with the current system and demonstrated that transformation of public education must be based on treating teachers as professionals and empowering education entrepreneurs to develop alternative measures and metrics to personalize learning for students and to develop critical thinkers for the 21st century. The Committee discussed the proposal and its incorporation into the cyclical review of the accountability system report that the EOC will consider at its December meeting.

VII. Adjournment

Having no other business, the EOC adjourned.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee: Academic Standards and Assessments

Date: December 9, 2013

INFORMATION/RECOMMENDATION

Science Standards Revision

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

The statutory authority for the report is from the EAA, as amended in 2008 (Act 282 of 2008):

SECTION 59-18-350.

(A) The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Education Oversight Committee, shall provide for a cyclical review by academic area of the state standards and assessments to ensure that the standards and assessments are maintaining high expectations for learning and teaching. At a minimum, each academic area should be reviewed and updated every seven years. After each academic area is reviewed, a report on the recommended revisions must be presented to the Education Oversight Committee and the State Board of Education for consideration. After approval by the Education Oversight Committee and the State Board of Education, the recommendations may be implemented. However, the previous content standards shall remain in effect until approval has been given by both entities. As a part of the review, a task force of parents, business and industry persons, community leaders, and educators, to include special education teachers, shall examine the standards and assessment system to determine rigor and relevancy.

(B) The State Department of Education annually shall convene a team of curriculum experts to analyze the results of the assessments, including performance item by item. This analysis must yield a plan for disseminating additional information about the assessment results and instruction and the information must be disseminated to districts not later than January fifteenth of the subsequent year.

CRITICAL FACTS

On October 9, 2013 the State Board of Education gave first reading to the attached South Carolina Academic Standards and Performance Indicators for Science.

On November 18, 2013 the standards were revised by the Academic Standards and Assessments Subcommittee. A time for public input was also given.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

June 2012 – EOC adopts *Report on the Review of the South Carolina Science Academic Standards*

April to January 2013 – SCDE revises science standards

February 2013 - SCDE publishes draft standards published and online feedback survey tool designed to get input from educators

May to July 2013 - SCDE revised and edited draft standards per public comments

October 9, 2013 - State Board gives first reading to approve standards

November 18, 2013 – Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee reviews science standards and receive public input.

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

Cost: Absorbed in operating budget

Fund/Source:

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

ACTION TAKEN

Approved

Amended

Not Approved

Action deferred (explain)

November 25, 2013

TO: Members, Education Oversight Committee
FROM: Dr. Danny Merck
DATE: December 9, 2013
IN RE: Science Standards Review

The Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee met on November 18 to review the proposed *South Carolina Academic Standards and Performance Indicators for Science*, which will revise the 2005 *South Carolina Science Academic Standards*.

The Subcommittee received a presentation by staff of the South Carolina Department of Education that detailed the process by which the standards were reviewed and revised. Then the Subcommittee received input from the public.

Several district science coordinators offered their professional opinions on the standards. In addition, South Carolinians for Science Education offered feedback and recommendations. The Subcommittee engaged all presenters in a discussion of the standards. EOC staff also provided written feedback provided by Citizens for Nuclear Technology Awareness (CNTA) who had reviewed the draft standards for “those parts pertaining to the nuclear field” and found that the draft standards included content that high school graduates should know in order to be knowledgeable of the nuclear field. Staff also provided information on the recommendations made by Dr. Bert Ely, who served on the EOC’s national review panel for the standards and recommendations as well as recommendations made by teachers who had contacted the EOC directly.

The Subcommittee determined the following:

1. There is sufficient concern that science teachers and science coordinators may not have had adequate time to review the revised standards in September, and any feedback provided by science teachers and science coordinators may not have been incorporated into the draft standards.

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Mick Zais

Melanie D. Barton
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2. Additional information on the timeline and costs for implementation of the standards and assessments is needed.
3. The *Next Generation Science Standards* were not consulted in the preparation of the standards. In a letter dated November 8, 2013 South Carolina Department of Education staff wrote to members of the EOC:

The Science Standards before you are also mindful of the General Assembly's expressed intent in the passage of the 2012-13 and 2013-14 appropriations acts in which the legislature provided specific instruction on the development of the Science Standards currently before you. This instruction is provided through Proviso 1.68 of the 2013-14 General Appropriations bill, which states:

1.68. (SDE: Next Generation Science Standards) No funds shall be expended in the current fiscal year by the Department of Education, the Education Oversight Committee, or the State Board of Education to participate in, implement, adopt or promote the Next Generation Science Standards initiative.

The Subcommittee did not interpret the proviso to exclude South Carolina from using *Next Generation Science Standards* as a guidance tool in writing the standards. Instead, the proviso excluded the adoption or implementation in total of *Next Generation Science Standards* as had occurred with adoption of the Common Core State Standards in 2010. Members expressed their belief that the review of academic standards should always include the most current research and information available to ensure that South Carolina's academic standards are rigorous and reflect South Carolina's values.

Consequently, the Subcommittee voted unanimously to recommend to the full EOC that:

1. The *South Carolina Academic Standards and Performance Indicators for Science* be referred back to the Department of Education and the State Board of Education along with suggested recommendations for clarifying, condensing and streamlining performance indicators that are noted on the appendix; and
2. The Department of Education, in collaboration with science coordinators and science teachers, consider the *Next Generation Science Standards* and determine what, if any, changes should be made to the *South Carolina Academic Standards and Performance Indicators for Science* prior to the next meeting of the Academic Standards and Assessment on January 27, 2014.

Appendix

Recommended Changes to Proposed Science Standards

Page 15, Performance Indicator 1.E.3A.1 should be changed to the following to improve clarification:

Match data from personal observations with available sunrise and sunset data to describe and predict seasonal patterns of sunrise and sunset.

Page 15, Performance Indicator 1.E.3A.2 should be changed to the following to improve clarification:

Match data from personal observations with available moon data to describe and predict the appearance of the Moon and changes over time in predictable patterns.

Page 29, Performance Indicator 3.P.3A.2 should be changed to be more age-appropriate:

Use models to describe the path of an electric current in a complete simple circuit as it accomplishes a task (such as lighting a bulb or making a sound).

Page 52, Performance Indicators 6.L.5A.1 and 6.L.5B.1 should be deleted to provide for in-depth learning of other standards

Page 78, Performance Indicator H.B.5A.2. should be changed to the following to improve clarity:

Use data from a variety of sources to investigate and critically analyze aspects of the theory of biological evolution.

Page 95, Performance Indicator, H.P.2B.10 needs clarification or deletion

Page 107 Performance Indicator H.E.2B.1 and Page 110 Performance Indicator H.E.4A.1 should be combined accordingly:

Analyze and interpret data to compare the properties of Earth and other planets (including composition, density, surface expression of tectonic, climate, and conditions necessary for life) and to support claims that the physical conditions of earth enable the planet to support carbon-based life.

Page 110, Performance Indicator H.E.4A.5. should be amended to the following to improve clarity:

Use data from various dating methods (including index fossils, ordering of rock layers, and radiometric dating) to estimate geologic time at a specific location.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee: Academic Standards and Assessments

Date: December 9, 2013

INFORMATION/RECOMMENDATION

Cyclical Review of the State Accountability System

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

The statutory authority for the report is from the EAA, as amended in 2008 (Act 282 of 2008):

SECTION 59-18-910. Beginning in 2013, the Education Oversight Committee, working with the State Board of Education and a broad-based group of stakeholders, selected by the Education Oversight Committee, shall conduct a comprehensive cyclical review of the accountability system at least every five years and shall provide the General Assembly with a report on the findings and recommended actions to improve the accountability system and to accelerate improvements in student and school performance. The stakeholders must include the State Superintendent of Education and the Governor, or the Governor's designee. The other stakeholders include, but are not limited to, parents, business and industry persons, community leaders, and educators.

CRITICAL FACTS

Attached is a draft of the report which will be reviewed, amended and then forwarded to the full EOC along with the report from Educational Policy Improvement Center regarding the stakeholder feedback and accountability framework.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

January to October 2013 – Cyclical review conducted with panel, EPIC staff, stakeholders from across South Carolina, and EOC members.

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

Cost: \$163,996

Fund/Source: EOC operating budget

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

ACTION TAKEN

Approved

Amended

Not Approved

Action deferred (explain)

CYCLICAL REVIEW OF THE STATE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

Executive Summary

In 2008 the South Carolina General Assembly amended the Education Accountability Act (EAA) to require a five-year cyclical review of the state accountability system.

SECTION 59-18-910. Beginning in 2013, the Education Oversight Committee, working with the State Board of Education and a broad-based group of stakeholders, selected by the Education Oversight Committee, shall conduct a comprehensive cyclical review of the accountability system at least every five years and shall provide the General Assembly with a report on the findings and recommended actions to improve the accountability system and to accelerate improvements in student and school performance. The stakeholders must include the State Superintendent of Education and the Governor, or the Governor's designee. The other stakeholders include, but are not limited to, parents, business and industry persons, community leaders, and educators.

The Education Oversight Committee (EOC) spent the last year reviewing the state's accountability system with a broad-based group of stakeholders and with the assistance of the Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC). The review also included an analysis of the accountability systems of peer states and the recommendations of the State Superintendent of South Carolina, Dr. Mick Zais.

Findings

A. The academic performance of students in public schools and school districts in South Carolina is measured and reported by two accountability systems that give conflicting messages to parents, educators and communities.

B. While South Carolina has witnessed sustained improvement in student performance since passage of the Education Accountability Act in 1998, the rate of improvement must accelerate to meet the 21st century needs of our state. Too many South Carolina students are still ill-served by the current public education system.

Recommendations

To improve the accountability system:

1. South Carolina should redefine the goal for the State accountability system as follows:

All students graduating from public high schools in South Carolina should have the *knowledge, skills, and opportunity* to be college ready, career ready, and life ready for success in the global, digital and knowledge-based world of the 21st century.

All graduates should succeed in significant on-the job training; succeed in postsecondary job training; or qualify for and succeed in entry-level, credit bearing college courses without the need for remedial coursework.

2. South Carolina should move from an assessment system to a balanced system of multiple measures that give comprehensive, valid and vital data to ensure that every student is prepared for the 21st century. The measures used to determine how well our children are prepared for the 21st century will require accountability for the **knowledge, skills, and opportunity** as summarized below:

Knowledge

- a. To address the conflicting messages over the state and federal accountability systems, the state rating for **knowledge** should be consistent with the federal rating, if at all possible.
- b. Grade 3 summative assessments should be given only in English language arts and mathematics.
- c. Grades 4 to 8 summative assessments in English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies should be administered to all students and equally weighted in the accountability system.
- d. Individual student growth scores should continue to be measured.
- e. Reporting on subgroup scores is needed to close achievement gaps.
- f. Improving the performance of the bottom 25 percent of students should be a priority.
- g. At the high school, High School Assessment Program (HSAP) should be replaced with assessments that have a dual purpose: (1) accountability and (2) future goals of the student. All students in the 11th grade would take ACT WorkKeys **and** ACT plus Writing. Based upon the results of the assessments, students would then receive in their 12th grade year either the remediation needed to become college and career ready or opportunities such as dual enrollment or internships to take the next step in their career plans.

Skills

- a. Incorporating extended performance tasks across all content areas as part of the classroom experience and as a function of local district accountability will ensure students develop higher order thinking skills, including the ability to conduct sustained research; analyze information; experiment and evaluate; communicate in various forms; use technology; collaborate with others, problem solve; and persist. These skills cannot be measured by a single assessment.
- b. Annually each local school board member should be required to attend three hours of training in each of the following four key policy areas for a total of twelve hours of continuing education training each year: (1) fiscal; (2) accountability; (3) leadership; and (4) communication.

Opportunity

- a. Accountability for the adults in the school (i.e. teacher and principal evaluations that can be used for an overall school measure) is needed. These evaluations would include student academic achievement with a focus on student growth from one year to the next as well as other measures such as school climate surveys of teachers, students and parents.

b. To be college ready, career ready, and life ready for success in the global, digital and knowledge-based world of the 21st century, students need access to, participation in and achievement in several key areas, including:

- Arts programs;
- Gifted and talented programs;
- World languages;
- Dual enrollment courses, including online;
- Approved industry certification exams;
- International Baccalaureate/Advanced Placement courses;
- Dropout recovery programs;
- Virtual or online learning;
- Completing a college application;
- Filling out a FAFSA form; and
- Completing an individualized graduation plan

3. South Carolina must measure and report publically on the postsecondary success of its public school graduates and provide incentives for preparing the hardest-to-serve students for college and career.

To Accelerate Improvement in Student and School Performance:

4. Learning must be more personalized to each student including project-based learning, real-time diagnostic assessments, and technology-infused instruction.

In addition to the summative assessments and extended performance tasks, most individual student assessments should be formative and in real-time, so appropriate support can be provided by teachers and parents to improve student learning. Technology is one tool to accelerate learning. And, project-based learning will assist students in developing critical thinking skills and in applying knowledge to real-world problems. To facilitate the innovation, schools and districts that are transforming the delivery system of education may need to be exempted from the state accountability system for a specified time. Instead, these schools or districts would report publically on student mastery of learning using alternative measures rather than summative assessments.

5. Because teachers are no longer the providers of information and instead are the facilitators of learning, the transformative shift in pedagogy will require changes in pre-service teacher education programs, extensive professional development for existing teachers, especially in school districts without the local capacity, and expansion of wireless Internet access throughout the school building for portable devices.

Cyclical Review of the State Accountability System

Section 59-18-910 of the Education Accountability Act (EAA) requires the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) in collaboration with the State Board of Education and a broad-based group of stakeholders in 2013 to conduct a comprehensive cyclical review of the state's accountability system for public education.

SECTION 59-18-910. Beginning in 2013, the Education Oversight Committee, working with the State Board of Education and a broad-based group of stakeholders, selected by the Education Oversight Committee, shall conduct a comprehensive cyclical review of the accountability system at least every five years and shall provide the General Assembly with a report on the findings and recommended actions to improve the accountability system and to accelerate improvements in student and school performance. The stakeholders must include the State Superintendent of Education and the Governor, or the Governor's designee. The other stakeholders include, but are not limited to, parents, business and industry persons, community leaders, and educators.

In December of 2012 the EOC contracted with the Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC) to assist the EOC in facilitating the findings and recommendations of the cyclical review. According to EPIC, South Carolina's cyclical review process "is situated within a contemporary policy context that carries deeper and more fundamental questions for a revision of the state accountability system:

- A changing economy is demanding new skills of current and future workers;
- South Carolina ranks 37th among the states in adults with post-secondary credentials;
- Fifteen years into the accountability era, a cohort of chronically low-performing schools has shown little improvement under the current set of measures and stakes;
- A wave of local innovation – aided in part by technology advances – is shifting the delivery unit of learning from seat-time to competencies; and
- States across the country are leveraging lessons learned from the early era of accountability to engage in wholesale redesigns for 'next generation' accountability systems." ¹

¹ Collins, Sarah K. et. al. from the Educational Policy Improvement Center. *South Carolina Accountability Review & Revision: An Analytical Framework*. Provided to the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee on August 8, 2013.

Engagement of Stakeholders

Beginning in January of 2013 members and staff of the EOC identified thirty-five (35) individuals to serve on a panel to review the accountability system. (Appendix A) Nominations were taken from the committee, from the Speaker of the House, and from the President Pro Tempore of the Senate. The panel met in Columbia on the following dates and gathered information on the following:

- February 13, 2013 – The panel received an overview of the current accountability system from EOC staff, an update on the innovation initiative efforts led by New Carolina from Dr. Gerrita Postlewait, and a presentation by State Superintendent of Education Dr. Mick Zais on his recommendations for amending the accountability system.
- April 8, 2013 – Dr. David Conley, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of the Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC) at the University of Oregon, discussed the post-recession job growth, projections of the workforce needs of 2020, and the four keys to college and career readiness.
- June 10, 2013 – Dr. Conley and his team from EPIC presented results of three regional stakeholder meetings and an accountability framework.
- September 16, 2013 – Cyclical review panel and EOC met in a joint meeting to discuss the framework and related accountability issues.

Three regional stakeholder meetings were also held in Charleston, Columbia, and Greenville in April of 2013. Approximately 57 individuals attended the meetings with half of the members of the cyclical review panel in attendance along with representatives of the State Board of Education, business and industry, public education, higher education, parents, and community. EPIC staff led the four-hour meetings which focused on:

- Establishing the definition of and purpose of the state’s accountability system;
- Reviewing the accountability systems of four peer states, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky and New Hampshire. EPIC staff selected these states “based on the following criteria: (1) the accountability system has a clear theory of action that connects purpose, goals, and indicators; (2) at least one component of the state policy context mirrors the

environment of South Carolina; and (3) the state had recently undergone an accountability redesign process, reflecting the most contemporary educational policy agenda and available metrics for measuring school quality;² and

- Designing an accountability system with actual indicators.

Between August and December of 2013 members of the EOC discussed the framework and accountability system at each EOC meeting and received input from *TransformSC*, the initiative led by New Carolina, South Carolina's Council on Competitiveness, to transform the delivery system of education. The EOC also received a specific proposal from fellow board member John Warner, a business appointee to the EOC. Finally, the Academic and Standards Subcommittee of the EOC met in November to finalize the following findings and recommendations for the full EOC consideration at its December 9, 2013 meeting.

² Ibid.

Findings

The academic performance of students in public schools and school districts in South Carolina is measured and reported by two accountability systems that give conflicting messages to parents, educators and communities.

Quality Counts, a publication of the education newspaper, *Education Week*, annually measures each state's public education performance against six indicators, assigning both a letter grade and a numeral score to each state. Overall in 2013 South Carolina ranked at the national average. On Standards, Assessments and Accountability, the indicators for which the EOC's core mission focuses, South Carolina earned a **Grade of A** and a numerical score of **94.4** along with a national ranking of 6th best in the nation.³

When the Education Accountability Act (EAA) of 1998 was enacted, there was not a separate federal accountability system. South Carolina was a forerunner in establishing a formal reporting system for public schools and school districts. With passage of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001, South Carolina public schools have been accountable to two systems – the state accountability system that the EOC is charged with creating and the federal accountability system that once was based on Adequate Yearly Progress but now is governed by the Education and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) waiver as designed by the South Carolina Department of Education and approved by the United States Department of Education. Prior to the U.S. Department of Education's offer for states to receive waivers from certain requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 20 states had both a state and a federal accountability system.⁴ Furthermore, to receive Title I funds, which total approximately \$212 million annually, South Carolina must participate in either No Child Left Behind or the ESEA waiver process.

³ *Quality Counts, 2013*. Education Week. January 2013. < http://www.edweek.org/ew/qc/2013/state_report_cards.html>.

⁴ National Governors Association. "Creating a College and Career Readiness Accountability Model for High Schools." January 29, 2012. <<http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/1201EDUACCOUNTABILITYBRIEF.PDF>>.

While the two accountability systems use the same state assessments to measure performance, the systems are markedly different and create conflicting messages in schools and communities.

- The federal accountability system combines the absolute achievement and growth in achievement into one score across subgroups. Growth is the difference between the achievement of students in the prior year to students in the current year (two different groups of students); It should be noted that these cohorts are **NOT** the same students from year to year but compare the performance of students in the school in the prior year to the performance of students in the school in the current year (i.e. different cohorts of students.) The state system requires schools and districts to receive a status rating (Absolute Rating) and a separate growth rating (Growth Rating), which measures the improvement of **individual** student performance from year to year.
- The federal accountability system is based on **average scale scores** of students. These scores measure the **average** student performance in a school as well as average score of cohorts (students by ethnicity, disability, etc.) The federal system also measures gains made by subgroups of students. The state accountability system measures whether each **individual** student is meeting state standards or passing end-of-course assessments and the High School Assessment Program and whether each **individual** student improved from one year to the next. The state system focuses on whether students score Met, Not Met or Exemplary on the state assessment in grades 3 through 8, not on the individual student scale scores.
- Finally, due to the August release of the federal ratings, federal grades for high schools are based on the 2011-12, the previous school year's high school graduation rate and end-of-course assessments. The state ratings for high schools are based on the results of the 2012-13 school year graduate rate and assessment data.

District 2013 Federal and State Ratings

Federal Rating	Number	%		State Absolute Rating	Number	%
A	10	12%		Excellent	30	37%
B	32	39%		Good	20	24%
C	21	26%		Average	24	29%
D	9	11%		Below Average	6	7%
F	<u>10</u>	12%		At Risk	<u>2</u>	2%
Total	82				82	

While South Carolina has witnessed sustained improvement in student performance since passage of the Education Accountability Act in 1998, the rate of improvement must accelerate to meet the 21st century needs of our state. Too many South Carolina students are still ill-served by the current public education system.

Prior to enactment of the EAA in 1998, South Carolina:

- Did not have consistent standards in English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies across all districts and schools or assessments to measure student achievement across content areas;
- Did not publically report on the performance of schools or districts using consistent measures across time;
- Did not monitor individual student performance over time because unique student identifiers did not exist;
- Did not measure the achievement gaps between subgroups of students; and
- Did not know the graduation rate for its public schools because the reporting system was not available.

In the past fifteen years South Carolina students have made sustained progress. The state's graduation rate has improved from below 60 percent to 77.5 percent in 2013. South Carolina ranks in the top half of states in the percentage of students taking and passing Advanced Placement (AP) courses. South Carolina's average ACT scores increase annually. On the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), South Carolina's reading and mathematics scores at grades 4 and 8 are consistently ranked 34th to 39th nationally.

However, even with the improvement, approximately 41 percent of students who enter the two-year technical college system today require remediation in English language arts and/or mathematics at a cost to taxpayers of \$21.0 million. And, one out of every four students who enter the 9th grade do not graduate with a high school diploma four or five years later.

By 2020 the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce projects that 62 percent of the jobs in South Carolina will require postsecondary education.⁵ Of these jobs, 34 percent will require some college, an associate's degree or some postsecondary vocational certificate.⁶ As of 2011 the United States Census Bureau reports that only 34 percent of the working-age population in South Carolina had at least an associate degree. Appendix B includes a list by county of the percentage of working-age population with at least an associate's degree. The relationship between public and higher education has never been so critical to the economy of our state and to the future of our citizens.

Based upon the results of the stakeholder meetings and input from the cyclical review panel, the following recommendations are presented to the EOC for consideration:

⁵ *Recovery: Job Growth and Education Requirements Through 2020*. State Report. Center on Education and the Workforce, Georgetown University. June 2013. <http://cew.georgetown.edu/recovery2020/states/>

⁶ *Ibid.*

Recommendations

1. South Carolina should redefine what a strong academic foundation means for students and the goal of the State accountability system.

The original goal of the Education Accountability Act was “to establish a performance based accountability system for public education which focuses on improving teaching and learning so that students are equipped with a strong academic foundation.” The stakeholders defined a strong academic foundation for 21st century students as having a strong foundation in the basics, literacy and numeracy **and** in higher-order thinking skills. Other descriptors included students being college and career ready, having a love of learning, being global and digital literate, and having soft skills such as collaboration and personal responsibility. Consequently, the goal of the State’s accountability system for public education could be stated as follows:

All students graduating from public high schools in South Carolina should have the knowledge, skills, and opportunity to be college ready, career ready, and life ready for success in the global, digital and knowledge-based world of the 21st century.

All graduates should qualify for and succeed in entry-level, credit bearing college courses without the need for remedial coursework, in postsecondary job training, or significant on-the-job training.

This definition supports the Vision and Profile of the Successful Graduate as developed and adopted by the South Carolina Association of School Administrators and supported by *TransformSC* (Appendix C) And, the “student-centered” focus is consistent with the State Superintendent of Education’s recommendations for modernizing the EAA with a personalized system.

In 2013 the Arkansas legislature enacted Act 1081 which defines college and career readiness succinctly as:

“a set of criterion-referenced measurements of a student's acquisition of the knowledge and skills the student needs to be successful in future endeavors,

including credit-bearing, first-year courses at a postsecondary institution, such as two-year or four-year college, trade school, or technical school, or to embark on a career.”

Florida defines students as college and career ready when they have “the knowledge, skills, and academic preparation needed in introductory college credit-bearing courses within an associate or baccalaureate degree program without the need for remediation. These same attributes and levels of achievement are needed for entry into and success in postsecondary workforce education or directly into a job that offers gainful employment and career advancement.”⁷ Knowledge focuses on mastery of standards as well as higher levels of demonstrated competencies as measured by SAT, ACT, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate or Dual Enrollment. The term “skills” includes: effective communication skills; critical thinking and analytical skills; good time management skills; intellectual curiosity and a commitment to learning. Academic preparation encompasses students earning 24 credits, four each in English and mathematics and three each in science and social studies with one course taken online.

2. South Carolina should move from an assessment system to a balanced system of multiple measures that give comprehensive, valid and vital data to ensure that every student is prepared for the 21st century.

The measures used to determine how well our children are prepared for the 21st century will require accountability for the **knowledge, skills, and opportunity** that students acquire. These terms are defined below:

Knowledge – Do all students have the knowledge to be successful in the 21st century?

At the elementary and middle levels, knowledge would focus on measuring student understanding of content standards. Specifically, schools and districts should be held accountable for:

⁷ Florida Department of Education. Division of Florida Colleges. Accessed on August 27, 2013. <<http://www.fldoe.org/fcs/collegecareerreadiness.asp>>.

- Absolute scores on English language arts and mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and expanding to include science and social studies in grades 4 through 8 for all students with equal weighting of each content area in the state accountability system. Stakeholders wanted to focus on students having the numeracy and literacy skills needed by third grade;
- Student growth scores on assessments in English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies to measure development over time;
- Reporting on subgroup scores to close achievement gaps; and
- Improving the performance of the bottom 25 percent of students to focus on students who need the most help and could be missed in subgroup data if the cohort size is too small.

At the high school level, the stakeholders resoundingly believed that while graduating from high school is important, it is no longer sufficient. Instead, student assessments used at the high school level should have a dual purpose: (1) accountability; and (2) the future goals of the student; i.e. college and career. The stakeholders emphasized the need to have a measure that has “high currency outside of the accountability system.” Consequently, the framework should include a variety of a variety of assessments that measure both career and college readiness such as:

- Silver level or higher on WorkKeys;
- Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery;
- Compass; and
- ACT, SAT or Smarter Balanced 11th grade assessment.

The EOC endorses the replacement of the High School Assessment Program with assessments that measure college and career readiness. The two-year technical colleges already use Compass, an ACT product; the four-year colleges and universities in the state accept ACT Plus Writing scores in making admission decisions; and Governor Haley, in collaboration with the business community, has implemented SC Work Ready Communities. Given these facts, the EOC would recommend that South Carolina provide to every student in public schools the following:

All students in the 11th grade would take WorkKeys and ACT plus Writing. Based upon the results of the assessments, students would then receive in their 12th grade year either the remediation needed to become college and career ready or opportunities such as dual enrollment or internships to begin the next step in their jobs and career.

To address the conflicting messages over the state and federal accountability systems, the state rating for **knowledge** should be consistent with the federal rating, if at all possible. In addition, the use of student growth in the knowledge measurement is consistent with the State Superintendent of Education's recommendations to combine student achievement and student growth into one measure of performance.

Skills – Do all students have the skills to be successful? These skills include the higher order thinking skills that stakeholders value including the ability to conduct sustained research; analyze information; experiment and evaluate; communicate in various forms; use technology; collaborate with others, problem solve; and persist.

A 2012 report by the RAND Corporation evaluated 17 state assessments and determined that fewer than 2 percent of the mathematics test items and 21 percent of the English language arts test items tested students' abilities to analyze, synthesize, compare, connect, critique, hypothesize, prove or explain their ideas.⁸ What is most troubling is that these were 17 states evaluated to have the most rigorous standards and assessments.

No standardized assessment can adequately measure these abilities. Instead, states like New Hampshire and others are using quality **extended performance tasks** to measure these skills. These extended performance tasks engage students in applying their knowledge and skills to a problem or challenge. At the high school level, extended performance tasks could be linked to work-based learning, internship opportunities and service learning projects. The results of the performance tasks would be submitted to the local school board of trustees.

⁸ Yuan, K. & Le, V. (2012). Estimating the Percentage of Students Who Were Tested on Cognitively Demanding Items Through the State Achievement Tests. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

According to the Center for Collaborative Education, quality performance tasks “get at essential questions of curriculum and instruction: What content is most important? What do we want learners to be able to do with their learning? What evidence will show that students really understand and can apply learned content?”⁹ Performance tasks are comparable to the assessments used in the performing arts.

Nationally, organizations are creating test banks with extended performance tasks which South Carolina should have the opportunity to use. Designing rubrics and training teachers in how to assess the results of the tasks would be the next step. Two school districts, Lexington 1 and Saluda County School Districts have volunteered to work with the EOC this school year to pilot assessments of extended performance tasks.

Expanding the accountability functions of the local school boards of trustees will require board members to receive ongoing professional development and training. The recommendation is that annually each school board member attends three hours of training in each of the following four key policy areas for a total of twelve hours of continuing education training each year: (1) fiscal (2) accountability; (3) leadership; and (4) communication.

Opportunity – Do all students have the opportunity to be successful? The stakeholder groups identified several potential input measures whose inclusion in an accountability system could incentivize investment in a whole school curriculum and allow for multiple pathways that address college, career and life readiness.

Teacher and principal evaluations were recommended by stakeholders as a means to hold adults accountable for the overall school rating. These evaluations would include student academic achievement with a focus on student growth from one year to the next.

⁹ *Quality Performance Assessment: A Guide for Schools and Districts*. Center for Collaborative Education. Boston, MA. 2012.

Within the classroom, which is the most important change agent, the quality of teachers is critical. Stakeholders also emphasized the importance of school climate surveys of teachers, students and parents.

“School environment is one of the most important measures of school and district performance, but it is often overlooked.”¹⁰

National Governors Association

Finally, beyond summative assessments at the end of the year, access to, participation in and performance on other measures and assessments are important including:

- Arts programs;
- Gifted and talented programs;
- World languages;
- Dual enrollment courses;
- Approved industry certification exams;
- IB/AP exams;
- Dropout recovery programs;
- Virtual or online learning;
- Students completing a college application;
- Students filling out a FAFSA form; and
- Students completing an individualized graduation plan

The National Governors Association in 2012 proposed that “schools and districts should receive additional credit for supporting all students on the path to college and career readiness with a special emphasis on hard-to-serve student populations. . . . States could give more weight to a school’s scores on measures for students” who are “overage and undercredited, limited English proficient, or receiving special education services and those who scored in the bottom 25 percent on assessments in eighth grade.”¹¹

¹⁰ “Creating a College and Career Readiness Accountability Model for High Schools.” January 29, 2012. National Governors Association. <<http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/1201EDUACCOUNTABILITYBRIEF.PDF>>.

¹¹ “Creating a College and Career Readiness Accountability Model for High Schools.” Page 7.

3. South Carolina must measure the postsecondary success of its public school graduates and provide incentives for preparing the hardest-to-serve students for college and career.

The relationship between public and higher education has never been so critical to the economy of our State and to the future of our citizens. The stakeholders prioritized other measures including college acceptance rates, college persistence rates, and college matriculation rates. With development and implementation of the South Carolina Longitudinal Information Center for Education (SLICE), the State will have in the future the ability to report on the success of students in post-secondary institutions. Such data could be useful in the redesign of the high school curriculum.

In September of 2013 the Colorado Department of Higher Education released an online, searchable database that provides information on college-going rates, first-year postsecondary outcomes, concurrent enrollment and remedial education for the graduates of each school district.¹²

4. Learning must be more personalized to each student including project-based learning, real-time diagnostic assessments, and technology-infused instruction.

In addition to the summative assessments and extended performance tasks, most individual student assessments should be formative and in real-time, so appropriate support can be provided by teachers and parents to improve student learning. Technology is one tool to accelerate learning. And, project-based learning will assist students in developing critical thinking skills and in applying knowledge to real-world problems.

The EOC supports the recommendation of the State Superintendent of Education to personalize learning and the initiative of *TransformSC*. Many of the schools and districts participating in *TransformSC* are using project-based learning and blended learning

¹²District At A Glance. Tracking the Success of High School Graduates. Colorado Department of Higher Education. Accessed on September 6, 2013. < <http://highered.colorado.gov/Publications/districtataglance/districtglancedefault.html>>.

approaches to instruction. Other examples include the two high schools in South Carolina that are implementing the New Tech Network this year: Scotts Branch High School in Clarendon 1 and Cougar New Tech High School in Colleton County. Project-based learning is the instructional approach of these New Tech schools. Next High, a charter high school that will be opening in Greenville in 2015, will also employ project-based learning and web-delivered curriculum. These projects build upon pathways that represent the disciplines and skills in greatest demand relative to the regional industry and economic clusters of the community.

To facilitate the innovation, schools and districts that are transforming the delivery system of education may need to be exempted from the state accountability system for a specified time. Instead, these schools or districts would report publically on student mastery of learning using alternative measures rather than summative assessments.

5. Because teachers are no longer the providers of information and instead are the facilitators of learning, the transformative shift in pedagogy will require changes in pre-service teacher education programs, extensive professional development for existing teachers, especially in school districts without the local capacity, and expansion of wireless Internet access throughout the school building for portable devices.

Teachers are the critical component of transforming the delivery system of education. Consequently, South Carolina must invest in transforming the preparation of teachers by our colleges and universities for the 21st century classroom and the delivery of instruction in the classroom.

- Students in our colleges of education must have more hands-on practicum experience in schools before becoming classroom teachers as well as more knowledge of the needs of the 21st century graduate.
- Current and future teachers must transform their classroom instruction. No longer are teachers the provider of information; they are the facilitators of learning. Students can find knowledge from multiple sources; however, students must learn to think, analyze, collaborate, problem-solve and communicate.
- Blended learning opportunities using virtual courses and virtual coaching are necessary for both teachers and students.

Appendix A

Members of the Cyclical Review Panel

Name	Representative of or Expertise in:
Dr. Larry Allen, Clemson University	Higher Education
Dr. Cynthia Ambrose, Horry County School District	District Office/ Academic Officer
Ms. Mona Lisa M. Andrews, Florence 2 School Board	Local School Board of Trustees
Mr. Mike Brenan, President BB&T South Carolina	Business and Industry State Board of Education
Dr. Ray Brooks, President, Piedmont Technical College	Higher Education
Mr. Jon Butzon, Charleston	Community Leader
Dr. Jennifer Coleman, Richland 1	District Office/Accountability, Assessment, Research and Evaluation
Dr. James R. Delisle	Gifted and Talented Education
Mr. Jim Dumm, Tara Hall Home for Boys	Community Leader
The Honorable Mike Fair	Legislator
The Honorable Nikki Haley	Governor
Mrs. Jan Hammond, Lexington 2	Classroom Teacher
The Honorable Chip Jackson, Richland 2	Local School Board of Trustees
Dr. Rainey Knight, Darlington	District Superintendent
Ms. Charlie Jean "CJ" Lake, Saluda	Recent Student
The Honorable John W. Matthews	Legislator
Mrs. Amy McAllister	State Teacher of the Year
Mr. Charles O. Middleton, Jr.	Educator/Public Charter Virtual School
Ms. Glenda Morrison-Fair, Greenville County School District	Local School Board of Trustees
Mr. Wesley Mullinax	Business and Industry
Ms. Maggie Murdock	Parent
Ms. Linda O'Bryon	President SC ETV
Dr. Darryl F. Owing, Spartanburg 6	District Superintendent
Mr. Arthur Perry	Business Leader
The Honorable Joshua A. Putnam	Legislator
Mr. Jim Reynolds	Business Leader
Dr. Janet Rose, Charleston	Retired Educator
Mr. Phillip E. Waddell, Columbia	Business Leader
Dr. Gary West, Jasper County School District	District Office/Finance and Data Management
Dr. Leila W. Williams, Colleton	District Superintendent
Dr. Reginald Harrison Williams	Early Childhood Specialist
Dr. Carol B. Wilson, Upstate	Parent and Higher Education
Ms. Lee Yarborough, Greenville	Business Leader
The Honorable Mick Zais	State Superintendent of Education
Mr. Bernie Zeiler	Business Leader

Appendix B
Percentage of South Carolina adults (ages 25-64)
with at least an associate degree by county

Abbeville	26.03	Orangeburg	25.73
Aiken	32.63	Pickens	34.28
Allendale	18.68	Richland	46.60
Anderson	30.09	Saluda	21.45
Bamberg	35.93	Spartanburg	32.55
Barnwell	21.19	Sumter	28.82
Beaufort	42.18	Union	22.65
Berkeley	29.77	Williamsburg	18.79
Calhoun	31.39	York	39.99
Charleston	47.75		
Cherokee	20.56		
Chester	19.89		
Chesterfield	20.69		
Clarendon	21.56		
Colleton	21.08		
Darlington	24.58		
Dillon	15.72		
Dorchester	36.92		
Edgefield	25.73		
Fairfield	25.73		
Florence	31.43		
Georgetown	30.13		
Greenville	40.93		
Greenwood	32.72		
Hampton	18.68		
Horry	33.37		
Jasper	15.74		
Kershaw	28.29		
Lancaster	27.65		
Laurens	23.92		
Lee	16.03		
Lexington	38.92		
McCormick	27.79		
Marion	20.51		
Marlboro	12.93		
Newberry	30.54		
Oconee	32.21		

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Appendix C
2020 Vision Committee
Superintendents' Roundtable
(February 2013)

A clear picture of the new high school graduate will enable schools to best accomplish the goals of preparing students for the future.

Our vision for high school graduates is based on an education compass directed toward the future. Our vision and profile of our high school graduate follows. This vision is crafted toward preparing students for success and our communities, state and nation for prosperity in the 21st century world.

Vision of the EDCompass Graduate

“The EDCompass graduate of the K-12 public schools of South Carolina will be equipped for careers and college, lifelong learning and civic life in a global, digital and knowledge based world.

Our graduates will be creative, critical thinkers, problem solvers, collaborators, capable communicators and ethical.”

Profile of the EDCompass Graduate

World Class Knowledge:

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

World Class Skills:

1. Creativity and innovation
2. Critical thinking and problem solving
3. Collaboration and teamwork
4. Communication, information, media and technology
5. Knowing how to learn

Life and Career Characteristics:

1. Integrity
2. Self-direction
3. Global perspective
4. Perseverance
5. Work ethic
6. Interpersonal skills



SOUTH CAROLINA ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW & REVISION:

AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

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This report was prepared on behalf of the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC). The findings and conclusions contained within are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect positions or policies of the EOC.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1998, The Educational Accountability Act was passed by the legislature and signed into law for the state of South Carolina. The Act established a performance-based accountability system centered on the finding that “South Carolinians have a commitment to public education and a conviction that high expectations for all students are vital components for improving academic achievement.”¹ The objectives of the state accountability system were sixfold: 1) to use academic standards to increase student achievement through the alignment of assessments, policies, rewards, and assistance; 2) to provide public report cards of school quality that are clear and defensible; 3) to connect the state system with local accountability; 4) to provide resources to strengthen teaching and learning; 5) to support professional development as a key component of school improvement; and 6) to expand the state’s ability to evaluate the effectiveness of its public education system.

Also included in the Act was a provision that the accountability system undergoes a cyclical review and revision process every five years. Prior cyclical reviews have resulted in incremental changes to the component measures of school quality, including adjustments to how high school graduation rates are calculated and the transition away from the PSAT/PLAN assessments. The cyclical review process of 2013, however, is situated within a contemporary policy context that carries deeper and more fundamental questions for a revision of the state accountability system:

- A changing economy is demanding new skills of current and future workers;
- South Carolina ranks 37th among the states in adults with post-secondary credentials;
- Fifteen years into the accountability era, a cohort of chronically low-performing schools has shown little improvement under the current set of measures and stakes;
- A wave of local innovation - aided in part by technological advances - is shifting the delivery unit of learning from seat-time to competencies; and
- States across the country are leveraging lessons learned from the early era of accountability to engage in wholesale redesigns for “next generation” accountability systems.

To support the cyclical review process with an evidence-based analytical framework of accountability redesign and associated trade-offs, the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) contracted the services of the Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC). Since January of this year, EPIC has engaged in a three-part research initiative, conducting an environmental scan to understand the current policy context of South Carolina and to identify “peer state” accountability models, designing and facilitating a series of regional meetings to elicit the values and priorities of stakeholders in the education system, and constructing an analytical framework based on findings from those stakeholder meetings. The purpose of this document is to provide a summary report of these research activities alongside the formal presentation of the resulting analytical framework.

¹ *South Carolina Education Accountability Act of 1998*; GA Title 59; Chap. 18.

STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

In April 2013, three regional stakeholder meetings were held in Charleston, Columbia, and Greenville. EPIC researchers outlined selection criteria emphasizing that the stakeholder groups have diverse representation from K12, early learning, postsecondary, business, parents, and community partners, and the EOC issued invitations to potential participants within its network. In total, 57 stakeholders participated in the meetings across the three locations. A list of the participants and their affiliations can be found in Appendix A.

One consistent criticism of policy analysis – research activities similar to the present task of developing an analytical framework – is that it undermines basic democratic processes by replacing public participation with expert analysis.² Too often, stakeholder meetings constitute a formal presentation of information followed by limited or contrived opportunities for participants to provide feedback. Rather than replicating such a unidirectional approach to stakeholder engagement, these four-hour meetings were highly participatory. A series of activities invited stakeholders to act as co-designers of the analytical framework, each one intentionally organized to elicit preferences, priorities, and driving rationale for measuring school quality. The following section provides a description of each activity and summarizes high-level findings. A full report of the raw data collected at the meetings can be found in Appendix A.

Activity: Defining “True North”

In the first part of this activity, stakeholders reviewed South Carolina’s definition of accountability and its purpose: “to establish a performance based accountability system for public education which focuses on improving teaching and learning so that students are equipped with a strong academic foundation.”³ Next, participants discussed with a neighbor their personal vision of a strong academic foundation. To capture individual responses, one partner wrote on an index card while the other team member spoke. After five minutes, roles reversed. Reconvening as the larger group, stakeholders expressed components or definitions that emerged across pairs. These components were synthesized on a large butcher paper.

This led into the second part of the activity, in which each participant received three voting dots to place on their top three components to be included in the group’s definition of a solid academic foundation. The most highly rated components became the group’s “True North.” The activity closed out with a discussion of how South Carolina’s current accountability measures address or do not address the highest priority components of the group’s True North.

² Walters, L. C., Aydelotte, J., and Miller, J. (2000). Putting More Public in Policy Analysis. *Public Administration Review*. Vol. 60 (4): pp 349-360.

³ South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (2012). *2012-2013 Accountability Manual*. Columbia, SC: South Carolina Education Oversight Committee.

While stakeholders from each of the regional meetings independently defined their True North, there was surprising consistency across the three groups. The most strongly prioritized components of a solid academic foundation were: 1) literacy and numeracy, and 2) higher-order thinking skills. Other prioritized components common across the three stakeholder meetings included: love of learning, college and career readiness, soft skills such as collaboration and personal responsibility, leadership, creativity and innovation, confidence in abilities, learning how to learn, a well-rounded education (arts, civics, health, etc.), global literacy, and digital literacy.

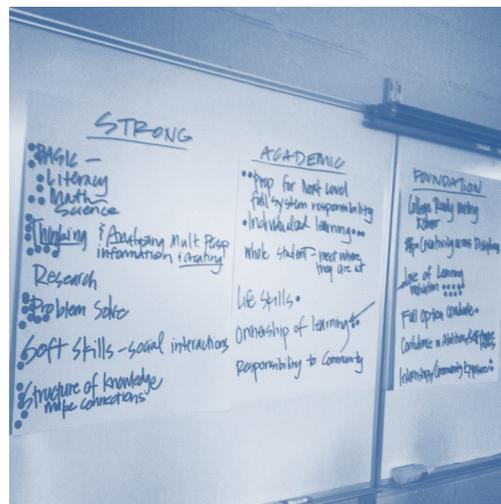


Figure 1. True North results from Columbia.

Activity: Round Robin Tournament of “Peer” States

Once participants had a common understanding of South Carolina’s accountability system and a shared definition of a solid academic foundation, stakeholders were briefed on accountability systems of four peer states: Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, and New Hampshire. These states were selected based on the following criteria: 1) the accountability system has a clear theory of action that connects purpose, goals, and indicators; 2) at least one component of the state policy context mirrors the environment of South Carolina; and 3) the state had recently undergone an accountability redesign process, reflecting the most contemporary educational policy agenda and available metrics for measuring school quality. The group discussed distinguishing qualities, strengths, weaknesses, and tradeoffs for each state’s accountability system. In summary, the distinguishing qualities of the state systems are as follows:

- **Kentucky.**⁴ Kentucky school ratings are comprised of data from three categories: Next Generation Learners, Next Generation Instruction and Support, and Next Generation Professionals. Within the Learner category, a score for college and career readiness is assigned alongside status, growth, and gap scores scores on subject area tests. The readiness score is computed based on percent of students meeting readiness benchmarks for college (ACT or CAMPASS placement exams), career (WorkKeys or ASVAB plus a specialized technical examination), or both. The Instruction and Support category is constituted by comprehensive school program reviews of subject areas not necessarily assessed by state exams (e.g., arts, world languages, practical living/career studies). The Professionals category takes into account performance evaluations for teachers and administrators.

⁴ Kentucky Department of Education (2011). *ESEA Flexibility Waiver Request*. Accessed from US Department of Education website at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/esea-flexibility/index.html>

- **New Hampshire.**⁵ New Hampshire school ratings are similarly comprised of data from three categories: Knowledge, Skills, and Opportunity. The Knowledge category includes status and growth scores from state standardized tests in ELA, Math, and Science. The Skills category includes student achievement on a set of extended performance tasks designed, administered, and scored by the state. Still in pilot phase and slated for statewide roll-out in the 2014-15 academic year, these extended performance tasks take 1-2 weeks to complete and are designed to assess skills such as complex problem-solving, research, and critical thinking. The Opportunity category includes a self-assessment (subject to state audit) of whole school programs, including provision of arts and CTE coursework, information technology, and tutoring/mentoring programs.

- **Florida.**⁶ Florida school ratings include a number of data sources on student achievement and success: status and growth scores on state ELA, Math, and Science assessments; participation and performance in accelerated coursework (e.g., AP/IB, Dual Enrollment, industry certifications); students meeting college readiness benchmarks on ACT, SAT, or the state placement exam; and graduation rates. Additionally, Florida calls out its lowest-performing students – those students who are struggling the most according to the previous year’s test data – as its primary subgroup of focus. School ratings include percent of the lowest-performing 25% of students who are making a year’s worth of progress in reading and mathematics as well as the graduation rates for the lowest-performing 25% of students.

- **Georgia.**⁷ Georgia recently transitioned its A-F school rating system to a numeric score derived from the College and Career Readiness Performance Index, with its stated goal being “100% of Georgia high school graduates must be college and career ready and supremely competitive with students from all around the globe.” The index score is composed of 19 indicators drawn from the broad categories of content mastery, post-high school readiness, and graduation rates:
 - 4-year Cohort Graduation Rate
 - 5-year Cohort Graduation Rate
 - Graduates Entering 2- or 4-Year Colleges NOT Requiring Remediation
 - Average ACT Score
 - Graduates Completing 3+ Pathway Options in the Arts or World Languages
 - Students Scoring 3 or Higher on AP Exams and/or 4 or higher on IB exams
 - Students Completing Accelerated Coursework (Dual Enrollment, AP, IB, etc.)
 - Graduated Students Earning High School 2+ Credits for a World Language

⁵ New Hampshire Department of Education (2012). *New Hampshire ESEA Flexibility Waiver Request*. Accessed from US Department of Education website at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/esea-flexibility/index.html>

⁶ Florida Department of Education (2011). *Florida ESEA Flexibility Waiver Request*. Accessed from US Department of Education website at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/esea-flexibility/index.html>

⁷ Georgia Department of Education (2011). *Georgia ESEA Flexibility Waiver Request*. Accessed from US Department of Education website at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/esea-flexibility/index.html>

- Students Completing 3+ Designated CTAE Pathway Courses
- CTAE Pathway Completers Earning a CTAE Industry-Recognized Credential
- Students Receiving a Silver or higher on the Georgia Work Ready Assessment
- Students Scoring at Meets or Exceeds on End-of-course-exams (9th Grade Literature, American Literature, Math I/Algebra, Math II/Geometry, Physical Science, Biology, US History, and Economics)

Participants were then asked to identify their preferences between state models. This was done through a maximum differential exercise – termed a “round robin tournament” – in which participants compared all possible pairs of state systems (NH vs. KY, NH vs. FL, NH vs. GA, GA vs. FL, GA vs. KY, KY vs. FL). Participants selected the model that they preferred most between the given two states and provided a rationale statement for their preference. Among the four states, Kentucky’s 3-part accountability model was most preferred by stakeholders at all three meetings, receiving a total of 92 votes. Florida received 83 votes, followed by New Hampshire’s 70 and Georgia’s 31 votes.

While this data reveals a basic rank-order of system preferences, some clear and compelling themes emerged in the rationale statements that accompanied stakeholders’ selections. Some stakeholders justified their preference based on what they didn’t like about the other state. This was most often the case with Georgia’s system, as many stakeholders found the single index score based on 19 indicators too confusing and lacking clarity. Those who did prefer Georgia over other state systems, however, liked the comprehensive nature of the system and the way it provided schools multiple options to support students’ pathways toward college and career readiness.



Figure 2. Overall scores from the Round Robin Tournament.

Overwhelmingly, New Hampshire’s inclusion of extended performance tasks to assess more complex thinking skills was the basis of most stakeholder preferences for that state system. Comments often echoed one participant’s sentiments: “If we’re going to teach to the test, let’s have meaningful tests worth teaching to, like the performance tasks in New Hampshire.” Other stakeholders acknowledged the importance of assessing these skills but were wary of technical feasibility and financial viability of statewide performance assessments.

Stakeholder preferences for Florida’s accountability model largely fell into two categories of rationale. First, the focus on the lowest-performing 25% as the state’s subgroup was often

viewed as an innovative and compelling alternative to racial subgroups. “It forces schools to focus on the kids who need the most support,” one stakeholder wrote. Second, the system’s inclusion of participation and performance in accelerated coursework was a compelling feature because: 1) it drove concrete behavior for school improvement beyond just increasing test scores; 2) it forced schools to provide these opportunities to students who might not have otherwise received them; and 3) performance in accelerated coursework had currency outside of the accountability system (i.e. student received college credit or industry certifications for future employment).

Similar to this last issue of currency outside the state accountability system, stakeholders often cited the college and career readiness measures for Kentucky’s accountability system as their preference rationale. Each of the assessments used to determine readiness had some sort of portability and value for the student’s future plans, whether its an ACT score for college applications, a WorkKeys score to share with potential employers, or an ASVAB score for entrance into military service. More than the currency of the readiness assessments, however, stakeholders most often cited the “balanced” and “comprehensive” approach to Kentucky’s system that holds schools accountable for student achievement, school programs, and effective educators.

“Balanced” and “comprehensive,” however, were not the sole province of the Kentucky system. These descriptors were consistently ascribed to all four systems as qualities stakeholders were looking for in an accountability model. Other common descriptors in stakeholder rationale statements included “innovative,” “feasible,” “meaningful,” “flexible,” and “easy to understand.” Several stakeholders noted how these qualities were often in opposition to one another (e.g., innovation/feasibility of performance assessments or flexibility/clarity of an index score). Others noted that no one system had a combination of qualities that fully satisfied their preferences. The opportunity to select and combine indicators to meet their preferences would be offered in the final two activities, yet with different constraints and tradeoffs attached.

Activity: Indicator Matrix

In the third activity of the day, participants independently completed a worksheet matrix with twenty-eight possible accountability indicators. Each participant individually rated every indicator on a scale of 0-3, ranging from 0 (not important) to 3 (most important) as it related to supporting the group’s True North. Stakeholders were also asked to provide a rationale statement for each rating, and they identified their top three indicators with stars. The worksheet also afforded space for indicators that stakeholders felt were missing from the list that supported components of their True North.

Data from this activity came in two forms: indicators with the highest average ratings and indicators with the most number of priority stars. Figure 3 provides a side-by-side comparison of the 10 indicators with the highest average rating and those most prioritized. These two “top 10” lists have interesting commonalities and differences. Given an unlimited set of choices, stakeholders tended to give high ratings to new indicators related to postsecondary readiness

and 21st Century skills. In a situation of constrained choices, they selected more traditional measures. In fact, every component of the state’s current accountability was among the stakeholders’ top 10 most prioritized indicators. The only “new” or “innovative” indicators that defied this trend were extended performance tasks, measures of teacher quality, and performance on ACT/SAT, each appearing on both preference lists.

Figure 3. Comparison of Highest Average and Most Prioritized Accountability Indicators

Indicators with Highest Average Ratings	Most Prioritized Indicators
Graduation Rates	Reporting on Subgroups
Extended Performance Tasks	Growth on Standardized Test Scores
Growth on Standardized Test Scores	Extended Performance Tasks
Reporting on Subgroups	Graduation Rates
Performance on ACT/SAT	Absolute Scores on State Standardized Tests
Measures of Teacher Quality	Performance on ACT/SAT
College Remediation Rates/Placement Scores	Measures of Teacher Quality
College Persistence Rates	End of Course Exams
Absolute Scores on State Standardized Tests	% of students who filled out a career plan
Performance in IB/AP	HS Exit Exams: ELA and Math

Activity: Create Your Prototype

In the final activity of the day, stakeholders broke out into small groups to build prototypes of their optimal accountability systems. They used their worksheet matrices, comparable states models, and True North definition to select indicators to include in their systems. A facilitator joined each group to document points of contention, non-negotiables, and trade-offs that were discussed. The day concluded with each team presenting their system to the larger stakeholder group.

The activity’s primary challenge was found in stakeholders reaching consensus on what elements to include in their optimal systems. Some teams accommodated this challenge by including everyone’s favorite indicators, resulting in systems that looked like laundry lists and lacked coherent frameworks. Others had such difficulty coming to agreement on certain issues that their systems were composed of a scant few indicators or key concepts. One interesting outcome of some group systems was the introduction of new indicators that had not yet been addressed in the day yet met criteria and rationale that were consistent through earlier conversations. Specifically, these indicators included a school climate survey and longitudinal tracking of students well into their postsecondary education and/or career path. Appendix A contains a full listing of each group’s prototype with accompanying facilitator notes, yet the following indicators were most common to the group system prototypes:

- Growth Scores on State Standardized Tests
- Performance Tasks/Extended Project
- Opportunity-to-Learn Measures
- Subgroup Data

- Educator Evaluations
- Participation and Performance Dual Enrollment/IB/AP
- Assessments of Soft Skills
- School Climate Surveys
- A CCR Indicator (undefined)



Figures 4 – 5 – 6. Stakeholders broke into small groups to negotiate and prototype optimal accountability systems.

In summary, the stakeholders convened by these three regional meetings brought a diverse set of perspectives alongside a shared commitment to improving public education for South Carolina students. Following the meetings, a survey was distributed to participants to gather feedback on their experiences. A full report of survey data is presented in Appendix B, where overall participants reported that the meetings were sufficiently diverse, informative, engaging, and effective in soliciting participants’ insights. In addition to convening an engaging public process, these meetings were successful in gathering a wealth of data to inform the construction of an analytical framework for the Educational Oversight Committee to evaluate options and tradeoffs for the revision of the state’s accountability system, discussed in the next section.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this analytical framework is to provide a structure for decision makers to consider the trade-offs associated with potential components of the next generation accountability system for South Carolina public schools. Cornerstone to the construction of the framework is the input of stakeholders into its very design. As such, researchers analyzed stakeholder meeting data to generate content for two axes of the framework: a rank-order listing of measurement options and a set of criteria to evaluate the extent to which the measures support the state’s (or the stakeholders’ goals and values, at the very least) underlying goals and values.

To generate the rank-order of potential measures, quantitative data from each of the stakeholder meeting activities was combined into a single preference rating for each indicator identified in the meetings. Rationale statements and facilitator notes then underwent a qualitative coding process, identifying additional counts of indicator preferences to be included in the preference ratings. A normative cut score was identified where overall ratings were two standard deviations from the mean, leaving a total of 29 indicators for consideration in the framework. Because this rating approach was a rough approximation of stakeholder preferences, criteria were sorted based on ratings yet overall scores were not reported in the framework. Appendix C defines each of the following rank-ordered indicators:

- 1) Growth Scores on State Standardized Tests: ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies
- 2) Extended Performance Tasks
- 3) Reporting on Subgroups
- 4) Input measures on School Programs/Program Reviews
- 5) Graduation Rates
- 6) Performance on College Aptitude Exam (SAT/ACT)
- 7) Performance on Commercial Career Readiness Exam (e.g., WorkKeys)
- 8) Percent Passing College Placement Exams
- 9) Performance in IB/AP courses
- 10) Performance in Dual Enrollment
- 11) Participation in IB/AP courses
- 12) Participation in Dual Enrollment
- 13) Educator Evaluations
- 14) Input measures on Teacher Quality
- 15) Performance or growth of the lowest 25%
- 16) College Persistence Rates
- 17) Absolute Scores on State Standardized Tests: ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies
- 18) End of Course Exams: ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies
- 19) HS Grades
- 20) Participation in ACT/SAT
- 21) College Matriculation Rates
- 22) College Acceptance Rates
- 23) Self-Reported School Climate
- 24) Metacognitive Assessment
- 25) % of students who filled out a career plan
- 26) HS Exit Exams: ELA & Math
- 27) Performance on military exams
- 28) % of students completing a college application
- 29) % of students filling out a FAFSA

To generate the evaluative criteria, stakeholder rationale statements and facilitator notes underwent another qualitative coding process to identify the most prevalent goals and values identified through each of the meeting activities. These goals and values were aggregated into 9 thematic categories, and researchers generated “essential questions” for each category.

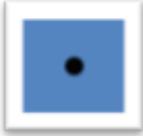
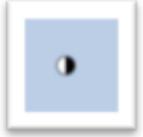
Documented separately in Appendix D, the criteria categories and essential questions are as follows:

- *Basic KSAs*: Does it assess the basic knowledge and skills students need to live, learn, and work in the 21st century?
- *Higher Order Thinking*: Does it assess the critical thinking and complex problem solving skills students need to live, learn, and work in the 21st century?
- *Meaningful*: Does the measure have meaning or currency outside of the accountability system?
- *Clear*: Can the measure be clearly communicated and understood by the public?
- *High Needs*: Does it address students with the highest need?
- *Pathways*: Does the measure promote high aspirations, regardless of their future pathway? (college, career, military)
- *Feasible*: Is it feasible to implement this measure with fidelity at the state level? (political, administrative, technical)
- *Whole School*: Does it hold the whole school accountable? Does it define quality across the whole school building? (curriculum, instruction, opportunities to learn, resources)
- *Aligned*: Does it promote alignment across the education system?

With the content of the axes identified based on stakeholder meeting data, researchers then completed the framework by answering the essential questions for each indicator. The extent to which the indicator satisfied each of the criteria was determined on a progressive scale of not met/satisfied, partially or conditionally met/satisfied, and met/satisfied. Figure 7 describes the symbols used in the framework to illustrate the progressive scale. The final element of the analytical framework is a brief discussion of trade-offs for each potential indicator. These trade-off discussions represent an accumulation of analysis collected through both previous EPIC policy analyses as well as research completed by other leading experts in accountability and educational measurement.

The following pages contain the full analytical framework, across 9 evaluative criteria and 28 indicators. A set of recommendations for using the framework closes this section of the report.

Figure 7. Framework Symbols for Criteria Rating

Symbol	Rating
	Met/Satisfied
	Partially Met/Satisfied
	Not Met/Satisfied



Indicator	Basic KSA	Higher Order Thinking	Meaningful	Clear	High Needs	Pathways	Feasible	Whole School	Aligned	Trade Offs	Overall Ranking
Growth Scores State Standardized Tests: grades 3- 8 (ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies)	●	○	○	●	○	○	●	○	●	Promotes alignment and measures development over time rather than benchmark status. Constraints are hyper focus on the test scores not addressing whole school quality. Challenges at exit level where large growth gains still don't meet postsecondary readiness trajectory.	1
Extended Performance Tasks	●	●	○	●	○	○	●	●	●	Generate better data on complex thinking, and focuses curriculum on readiness skills. Tasks must be integrated into regular instruction and meet technical adequacy requirements. Large scale version is not feasible at this point to without infrastructure to support implementation.	2
Reporting on Subgroups	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	○	●	Critical to addressing the achievement gap, highly rated by stakeholders. Technical constraints relate to N size variability - at what point is a subgroup a subgroup, statistically versus reality?	3
Input measures on School Programs/Program Reviews	○	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	○	Incentivizes investment in a whole school curriculum in exchange for a focus on activities vs. outcomes. Ensures curriculum is aligned with goals, allows multiples pathways that all address readiness; requires curriculum revision as an all-school activity and requires external reviews.	4
Graduation Rates	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	○	Critical prerequisite to postsecondary success; established and familiar focus of policy and research; clear target motivates some students. Tends to be more of an endurance measure than quality, with tremendous variability in KSAs and subject to manipulation.	5
Performance on College Aptitude Exam (SAT/ACT)	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	○	○	Exchanging a measure that has high currency outside of the system for a narrow focus and non-actionable data to inform individual student improvement. Offers longitudinal trend data and is normally distributed. An eligibility not a readiness measure; no real or natural cut score.	6
Performance on Commercial Career Readiness Exam (e.g., WorkKeys)	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	○	●	Provides an alternative/complement to college readiness measures that is used by employers as well. Basic skills assessment. Trade currency for rigor/challenge.	7
Percent Passing College Placement Exams	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	○	●	Useful tool with value outside the system in exchange for a narrow focus on basic skills. Procedural representation of postsecondary readiness. Focuses attention on the problem and linked to fiscal and financial issues. Diagnostic at item level analysis with individualized interventions.	8

Indicator	Basic KSA	Higher Order Thinking	Meaningful	Clear	High Needs	Pathways	Feasible	Whole School	Aligned	Trade Offs	Overall Ranking
Performance in IB/AP courses	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	Expensive for districts; cost-saving for students. External currency and spans all subject areas. Sets a high bar. Exams consistent across districts and states; more complex assignments. Access issues; bar might be too high for all students. Needs CTE complement.	9
Performance in Dual Enrollment	●	◐	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	Requires availability of dual enrollment programs; policy considerations to promote them. The higher number of college credits earned in HS, the higher the probability of postsecondary success.	10
Participation in IB/AP courses	○	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	Incentivizes activity over achievement. Increases access to a high bar for participating students offering more complex assignments and expectations. Not all students might need for desired career aspirations. Measure best implemented with CTE Acceleration/Certification for balance.	11
Participation in Dual Enrollment	○	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	Requires availability of dual enrollment programs; policy considerations to promote them. Promotes activity vs. performance. Large variance in courses requiring external review.	12
Educator Evaluations	○	○	●	○	○	○	◐	●	○	Holds adults accountable for overall school rating, yet high variability/unreliable methods for conducting evaluations when applied to such a high stakes context; Also, political feasibility is an issue that must be considered.	13
Input measures on Teacher Quality	○	○	●	◐	○	○	●	●	○	Focusing on inputs (teacher prep) and not student outcomes in exchange for holding adults accountable in the system. Need criteria to evaluate the input measures, but not strong research to understand relationship between inputs and outcomes.	14
Performance or growth of the lowest 25%	●	◐	○	●	●	○	●	◐	○	Focuses on the students who need the most help a critical population that could span (or be missed by) subgroup data, but typically applied to measures that focus on content knowledge.	15
College Persistence Rates	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	Data systems and infrastructures challenges. Holding K-12 accountable for a higher ed measure, assumes causation for an outcome prone to factors beyond the control of K-12 educators.	16

Indicator	Basic KSA	Higher Order Thinking	Meaningful	Clear	High Needs	Pathways	Feasible	Whole School	Aligned	Trade Offs	Overall Ranking
Absolute Scores State Standardized Tests: grades 3- 8 (ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies)	●	○	○	●	○	○	●	○	●	Narrow focus on content knowledge, bubble kids, kill/drill. Well established and typically correlate to first-year college GPA. Challenges are that they have low performance levels and ceiling effect issues.	17
End of Course Exams: ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies	●	○	○	●	○	○	●	●	○	When done well, EOC Exams can represent the cumulative knowledge in core content areas. Too many concerns in the state about the rigor, quality, and relevance of the current instruments and they are not connected to postsecondary aspirations/pathway.	18
HS Grades	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	●	○	Well established, familiar to public; somewhat of a composite measure; single metric for all subjects and courses; and no additional costs to administer. Challenges include highly variable composition; difficult to say what it measures; subject to false precision and gaming.	19
Participation in ACT/SAT	○	○	●	●	○	●	●	○	●	Promotes an activity that connects to postsecondary aspirations. Incentivizes an activity of taking the test not the quality instruction that promotes student success with them. Trading Access for learning	20
College Matriculation Rates	○	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	Data and technology infrastructure. Threat of gamification - pushing students into colleges when they are not ready nor wanting to go. Measure of how well high schools focus on college, tangible goal with strategies to increase; yet Indicator is influenced by outside factors.	21
College Acceptance Rates	○	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	Narrow measure of postsecondary options. Needs to be accompanied by other measures. Measure of how well high schools focus on college and promote student aspirations; eligibility does not equal readiness.	22
Self-Reported School Climate	○	○	○	●	○	●	●	●	○	Can cover a much wider range of variables, can be sufficiently reliable, relatively inexpensive, and generate actionable information. Challenges are the general distrust of self-reported information, can't be linked to high stakes accountability, and requires additional time for completion.	23
Metacognitive Assessment	○	●	○	●	○	○	○	●	○	Can cover a much wider range of variables, can be sufficiently reliable, relatively inexpensive, and generate actionable information. Challenges are the general distrust of self-reported information, can't be linked to high stakes accountability, and requires additional time for completion.	24

Indicator	Basic KSA	Higher Order Thinking	Meaningful	Clear	High Needs	Pathways	Feasible	Whole School	Aligned	Trade Offs	Overall Ranking
% of students who filled out a career plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	By making it a box to check, may have less meaning. Important goal if implemented with fidelity providing access to sometimes privileged information and advancing aspirations. Not a measure of readiness, many students will change career plans, and wide variance in level of effort.	25
HS Exit Exams: ELA & Math	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Too many concerns in the state about the rigor, quality, and relevance of the current instrument. Eliminating exit exam while still measuring graduation rates further incentivizes schools to push students through without having to demonstrate mastery at an exit level benchmark.	26
Performance on military exams	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Unique indicator with outside currency for students with military aspirations; low passage rates and challenge level to prepare students for a full range of postsecondary options. Best used as complement with career and college-oriented measures.	27
% of students completing a college application	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Important goal for accessing important privileged procedural information and goes beyond graduation rates, measures aspiration not readiness, can be "gamed" by having everyone apply and falls short of matriculation.	28
# of Students who fill out a FAFSA	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Requires parent/guardian involvement, need to consider undocumented students. Should be accompanied by other efforts (e.g., financial literacy). Could help students who don't think college is affordable see it as an attainable goal.	29

Recommendations for Using the Framework

As illustrated in the previous pages, no single indicator addresses all of the framework's evaluative criteria. Nor should that be the case, as stakeholders consistently called for an accountability model that was both balanced and comprehensive. This design consideration is echoed by the Council of Chief State School Officers' recent monograph, *Roadmap for Next-Generation Accountability Systems*, which recommends using a mix of indicators to support and enhance student achievement and postsecondary readiness.⁸ In identifying such a mix of indicators, this analysis recommends starting with those measures included in the current accountability system. Which evaluative criteria do these measures address? Are there certain criteria that are overemphasized in the current system while others go unaddressed? Based on both lessons learned from fifteen years of state accountability and the brief discussions of trade-offs in the framework, are there current indicators whose weaknesses outweigh their utility or strengths?

To select new - or replace current – indicators for the system, decision makers might consider using convergent consensus. Such a process would check and balance decision makers' preferences against the rank-ordered preferences captured in the stakeholder meetings. Comparing the EOC's preferences to that of the stakeholders, are there specific evaluative criteria that emerge as taking on greater importance or priority? What's the basis for this prioritization – political pragmatism, feasibility of implementation, commitment to reform, or otherwise? How does this compare to the underlying values of stakeholders' prioritization? An effective convergent consensus process would negotiate a middle ground between the priorities of decision makers and stakeholders.

Lastly, the identification of indicators should follow some structured framework for defining school quality, combining indicators in such a way that the state's theory of action or underlying values are clearly communicated. Recalling the structure of Kentucky's accountability model (Next Generation Learners, Instruction and Supports, and Professionals) or that of New Hampshire (Knowledge, Skills, and Opportunity), what framework of quality will the state's accountability measures combine to communicate? This framing issue is an important one, understanding that what is measured and reported must be tightly linked to requisite actions, supports, and interventions.

CONSTELLATION OF POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The revision of the state accountability system does not operate in isolation. As both a process and final set of decisions, it exists within a constellation of other policy considerations with deep implications for its capacity to measure and drive school quality. While not an exhaustive

⁸ Council of Chief State School Officers (2011). *Roadmap for Next-Generation State Accountability Systems*. Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers.

list, the following considerations were derived from an environmental scan of South Carolina's policy context and a set of "parking lot" issues generated during the three stakeholder meetings.

Multiple Accountability Systems

Currently, South Carolina schools are subject to accountability measures under state and federal systems that often send conflicting messages about school quality to educators and the public at large. For example, only one district met its federal Adequate Yearly Progress goals in 2011, meanwhile nearly 70 percent of South Carolina schools were given awards through the state Palmetto Gold and Silver Program that same year.⁹ Many states used the ESEA Flexibility Waiver as an opportunity to combine federal and state accountability requirements into a single system. Yet such a decision comes with trade-offs, exchanging clarity and focus for the constraints of federal requirements.

A set of alternatives exist, namely in forms of a "multiple measures" state report card and innovation districts. In a multiple measures report card, the EOC would report those measures of academic knowledge and skills as outlined by federal accountability requirements and managed by the South Carolina Department of Education, alongside new categories of school quality that emerged through the stakeholder meetings and analytical framework (e.g., 21st Century Skills, Opportunities to Learn, and Future Success Indicators). In such a system, schools would aim to earn "straight A's" across categories rather than a single rating, while at the same time the accountability system itself would communicate a more comprehensive profile of school quality to the public. Innovation districts, as were adopted by the state of Kentucky with through 2012 legislation, constitute a system within a system. In such a design, a select group of districts are released from certain state accountability provisions to develop, pilot, and incubate new models school reform and new measures of school quality.

Graduation Requirements

Across the three stakeholder meetings, graduation rates were identified as important outcomes, yet concerns were consistently raised as to the quality and rigor of the state's high school exit exam. This issue has recently been elevated to a critical level with the introduction of legislation to eliminate the exam altogether. These concurrent policy processes raise the fundamental questions of the meaning of a high school diploma, what knowledge and skills are signified by its award, and whether graduation rates then meet the quality criteria of this revision process. Furthermore, if the exit exam is removed from diploma requirements and graduation rates are retained as a component of the state accountability, the issue of "gaming" must be carefully considered. Holding aside considerations of the quality of the exam, the HSA has acted as an external check to the internal process of moving a student through high school to graduation. With no external check, the inclusion of graduation rates in a school rating

⁹ South Carolina Department of Education (2012). *South Carolina ESEA Flexibility Waiver Request*. Accessed from US Department of Education website at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/esea-flexibility/index.html>

creates a perverse incentive for schools to grant diplomas to students who may not necessarily be academically prepared to graduate.

There are, however, a number of mechanisms available to address this perverse incentive. An alternative assessment or external milestone could be introduced to state diploma requirements (e.g., a locally-administered senior capstone project). Graduation rates could also be given a quality rating. In this measurement approach, two schools with 70% graduation rates would receive different quality ratings if one graduated the majority of its students with the minimum diploma requirements and the other graduated the majority of its students with rigorous coursework (e.g., four years of math and science, a concentration in a career technical field that culminated in an industry certification, or focused pursuit of fine arts).

Defining the End Goal

Related to (but separate from) the issue of the high school graduation requirements is that of the end goal for students in the South Carolina public education system, and thus the target or “True North” driving school improvement through the state’s accountability system. The Education Accountability Act of 1998 stated a broad goal of equipping students with “a strong academic foundation,” and in 2009 the EOC adopted the 2020 Vision in which “all students will graduate with the knowledge and skills necessary to compete successfully in the global economy, participate in a democratic society, and contribute positively as members of families and communities.” What is lacking, however, is an explicit and actionable description of that academic foundation or the knowledge and skills to successfully learn, live, and work in the 21st Century. Whether termed a college and career readiness definition or otherwise, the adoption of such a description is fundamental to the identification of accountability indicators and alignment with the system’s theory of action. Moreover, the identification of a True North facilitates strategic investments in school and system improvements that are aligned with the state’s accountability system.

CONCLUSION

The review and revision the state accountability system presents a significant occasion for South Carolina to focus its efforts on impact, opportunity, and innovation. That is no small task, and this analytical framework aims to support the revision process by laying out an array of options, gathering feedback from stakeholders on their priorities and preferences, and exploring the tradeoffs associated with different accountability measures and models.

APPENDIX A – Stakeholder Meeting Raw Data

In April 2013, three stakeholder meetings were held in Charleston, Columbia, and Greenville. This included a total of 57 participants that were selected by the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC). Researchers requested that the EOC issue invitations to potential participants within their network. EPIC outlined selection criteria emphasizing that the final group have a diverse representation across K12, Early Learning, Postsecondary, Business, Parents, and Community partners. A list of the participants and their affiliations follow. Stakeholder meetings were specifically designed to elicit preferences, priorities, and driving rationale for measuring school performance.

Table A-1. Participants from Stakeholder Groups

Participant	Affiliation
Dr. Tammie Pawloski	Director of Center of Excellence to Prepare Teachers for Teaching Students in Poverty
Dr. Windy Schweder	Associate Professor of Special Education, USC-Aiken
Ms. Melanie Cohen	Principal, River Springs Elementary School
Dr. Karen Woodward	Superintendent, Lexington One School District
Mr. Chip Jackson	Chair, Richland School District Two Board of Trustees
Ms. Mary Margaret Hoy	Richland School District One, Div. of Accountability
Ms. Marjorie Cooper	Student at Columbia College, Teaching Fellow interning at EOC
Ms. Bunnie Lempesis Ward	Director, Early Education and Policy, United Way of the Midlands
Ms. Mildred Phyllis Harris	Parent
Ms. Rebecca Kolb	Youth and Family Services Supervisor, Richland Library
Mr. Ken May	Director, SC Arts Commission
Ms. Janet Lawrence-Patten	Principal, Aynor High School
Dr. Reginald Harrison Williams	SC State professor
Mr. Shawn Rearden	Parent
Ms. Kristen Setzker Simensen	Director, Calhoun County Library
Cindy Ambrose	CAO, Horry County Schools
Phil Waddell	South Carolina Chamber of Commerce
Lemuel Watson	Dean of USC School of Education
Dr. Tony Johnson	Dean, School of Education, The Citadel
Mr. Michael Petry	Teacher, Cane Bay High School
Mr. Brian Solski	Teacher, R.B. Stall High School
Gary West	Jasper County School District Office
Mr. Bill Jordan	Public Affairs Consultancy, Jordan House
Adrian R. King	Parent
Ms. Diette Courrege Casey	Reporter, Charleston Post and Courier
Jon Butzon	Charleston Education Network
Janet Rose	(Retired) Dir. Of Accountability with Charleston County School District
Jim Dumm	Tara Hall Home for Boys
Ms. Eileen Rossier	Trident United Way, VP of Education and Program Evaluation
Mr. Jim Frye	(Retired) Businessman
Dr. David Longshore (maybe)	SC State Board of Education
Ms. Alana J. Ward	Parent
Ms. Erika Taylor	Exec. Dir. Strategy and Communications, Charleston County School District

Ms. Lisa Patrick	Dept. of Assessment and Accountability, Dorchester School District 2
Jessica Jackson	K-12, Boeing
Barbara Hairfield	EOC
Ed Moore	Berkeley County School District Curriculum Specialist
Drew Miller	Science Applications Int'l Corp.
Sarah Hogenson	Boeing
Mike Petry	Berkeley County School ELA HS Teacher/Business Owner
Brian Solski	Charleston County HS SS Teacher
Sean Alford	Dorchester 2 School District
Ms. Dana Howard	Teacher, Daniel High School
Mr. Wallace Hall	Director of Special Projects, Greenwood 52
Ms. Dru James	SC State Board of Education
Glenda Morrison-Fair	Greenville County School Board
Dr. Darryl Owings	Superintendent, Spartanburg County School District 6
Ms. Cheryl Smith	FLUOR, Community and Public Affairs
Lee Yarborough	Propel HR and a parent
Geier Mullins	Director, Public Education Partners
William W. Brown	Wealth Coach / Family Legacy Inc.
Charles Middleton	Cyber Academy of NC; Cyclical Review Committee
Greg Tolbert	Director, Spartanburg Boys and Girls Club
Herb Johnson	Michelin North America
Jason McCreary	Greenville County Schools, Div. of Accountability and Quality Assurance
Dr. Sandy Addis	Associate Director, National Dropout Prevention Center, Clemson University
Ms. Jacki Martin	The Riley Institute, Furman University

Activity: Defining Our “True North”

In the first phase of this activity the stakeholder group reviewed South Carolina’s definition of accountability and its purpose: “to establish a performance based accountability system for public education which focuses on improving teaching and learning so that students are equipped with a strong academic foundation” (2012-2013 Accountability Manual, Education Oversight Committee).

Next, Participants discussed with a neighbor their personal vision of a strong academic foundation. To capture individual responses, one partner wrote on an index card while the other team member spoke. After five minutes, roles reversed. Reconvening as the larger group, stakeholders expressed components or definitions that emerged across pairs. These components were synthesized on a large butcher paper.

This led into the second phase of the activity, in which each participant received three voting dots to prioritize the components of a solid academic foundation. They were asked to place their voting dots on the top three components to be included in our group’s definition of a solid academic foundation. The most highly rated components became the group’s True North. The activity closed out with a discussion around South Carolina’s accountability measures and how the current indicators address or do not address the highest priority components of our True North.

Table A-2. Data collected from True North Activity

CHARLESTON		COLUMBIA		GREENSVILLE	
Themes	Votes	Themes	Votes	Themes	Votes
Thinking Skills/Analysis	15	Love of learning/motivation	9	College/Career/Citizen Readiness	11
Literacy	10	Thinking and Analyzing Multiple Perspectives, information and creating	7	Knowledge + Skills + Dispositions in context	8
Numeracy	7	Problem Solving	7	Basics R's	8
Soft Skills (Characters, Ownership)	5	Basic Literacy, math, science	6	Beyond the basics (Science skills, civics/history, arts education, physical/health)	5
Learn how to learn	4	Structure of Knowledge - make connections	5	Critical Thinking/Higher Order	3
Multiple Language	4	Full system responsibility	4	Soft Skills	2
Problem Solving	3	Soft Skills - social interactions	2	Communication	1
Current Events, Globally	3	Prep for next level	2	Individualized	1
Modes of Inquiry	3	Ownership of Learning g	2	Healthy Kids - Exercise and Diet	0
Collaboration Teamwork	2	Internship/community Exposure	2	Leadership	0
Disciplines for Broad Education	2	Life skills	1	Raising the bar to be competitive nationwide	0
Research Evaluating Information	2	Creativity Across Disciplines	1	Social Skills	0
Creativity/Innovation	2	Full Option Graduate	1	Well-Rounded Child/Full-Option Graduate	0
Digital Literacy	2	Research	0	Desire to Learn	0
Standard English	1	Individualized Learning	0		
Civics, Democracy	1	Whole Student - meet where they are at	0		
Life Ready Knowledge and Skills	0	College and Career Ready Writing	0		
Reading to 12th Grade	0	Motivation	0		
Scientific Inquiry	0	Confidence in Abilities/Self-Awareness	0		
Humanities Beyond Employability	0	Responsibility to community			

Life long learner	0				
Global Metric	0				
Competency, not seat time	0				
Individualized Learning	0				
Flexibility/Adaptability	0				

Activity: Comparable States

Once participants had a common understanding of South Carolina’s accountability system, stakeholders were briefed on accountability systems of four peer states: Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, and New Hampshire. These four states were selected based on the following criteria: 1) the accountability system has a clear theory of action that connects purpose, goals, and indicators; 2) at least one component of the state policy context mirrors the environment of South Carolina; and 3) the state had recently undergone an accountability redesign process, reflecting the most contemporary policy agenda and available metrics for measuring school quality. The group discussed distinguishing qualities, strengths and weaknesses, and indicator tradeoffs for each state’s accountability system. In summary, the distinguishing qualities of the state systems are as follows:

- Kentucky.** Kentucky school ratings are comprised of data from three categories: Next Generation Learners, Next Generation Instruction and Support, and Next Generation Professionals. Within the Learner category, an index score for college and career readiness is assigned alongside status, growth, and gap scores scores on subject area tests. The readiness index is computed based on percent of students meeting readiness benchmarks for college (ACT or CAMPASS placement exams), career (WorkKeys or ASVAB plus a specialized technical examination), or both. The Instruction and Support category is constituted by comprehensive school program reviews of subject areas not necessarily assessed by state exams (e.g., arts, world languages, practical living/career studies). The Professionals category takes into account performance evaluations for teachers and administrators.
- New Hampshire.** New Hampshire school ratings are similarly comprised of data from three categories: Knowledge, Skills, and Opportunity. The Knowledge category includes status and growth scores from state standardized tests in ELA, Math, and Science. The Skills category includes student achievement on a set of extended performance tasks designed, administered, and scored by the state. Still and pilot phase and slated for statewide roll-out in 2014-15, these extended performance tasks take 1-2 weeks to complete and are designed to assess skills such as complex problem-solving, research, and critical thinking. The Opportunity category includes a self-assessment (subject to

state audit) of whole school programs, including provision of arts and CTE coursework, information technology, and tutoring/mentoring programs.

- **Florida.** Florida school ratings include a number of data sources on student achievement and success: status and growth scores on state ELA, Math, and Science assessments; participation and performance in accelerated coursework (e.g., AP/IB, Dual Enrollment, industry certifications); students meeting college readiness benchmarks on ACT, SAT, or the state placement exam; and graduation rates. Additionally, Florida calls out its lowest-performing students – those students who are struggling the most according to the previous year’s test data – as its primary subgroup of focus. School ratings include percent of the lowest-performing 25% of students who are making a year’s worth of progress in reading and mathematics as well as the graduation rates for the lowest-performing 25% of students.
- **Georgia.** Georgia recently transitioned its school rating system to its new College and Career Readiness Performance Index, with stated goal being “100% of Georgia high school graduates must be college and career ready and supremely competitive with students from all around the globe.” The index is composed of 19 indicators drawn from the broad categories of content mastery, post-high school readiness, and graduation rates:
 - 4-year Cohort Graduation Rate
 - 5-year Cohort Graduation Rate
 - Graduates Entering 2 or 4 Year Colleges NOT Requiring Remediation
 - Average ACT Score
 - Graduates completing 3+ Pathway Options in the Arts or World Languages
 - Students Scoring 3 or Higher on AP Exams and/or 4 or higher on IB exams
 - Students Completing Accelerated Coursework (Dual Enrollment, AP, IB, etc.)
 - Graduated Students Earning High School 2+ Credits for a World Language
 - Students Completing 3+ Designated CTAE Pathway Courses
 - CTAE Pathway Completers Earning a CTAE Industry-Recognized Credential
 - Students Receiving a Silver or higher on the Georgia Work Ready Assessment
 - Students Scoring at Meets or Exceeds on End-of-course-exams (9th grade Literature, American Literature, MathI/Algebra, MathII/Geometry, Physical Science, Biology, US History, and Economics)

Participants were then asked to identify their preferences between state models. This was done through a maximum differential exercise – termed a “round robin tournament” – in which participants compared all possible pairs of state systems (NH vs. KY, NH vs. FL, NH vs. GA, GA vs. FL, GA vs. KY, KY vs. FL). Participants selected the model that they preferred most between the given two states and provided a rationale statement for their preference.

Table A-3. Data from Round Robin Activity

New Hampshire	Kentucky
18	29
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like the extended performance task for it focuses on assessing critical thinking. • More simplified but covers enough areas; project based. • I like the project based assessments; seems more simple. • Extended performance tasks. • Extended performance task; allow for a clearer measure of student ability. • Extended performance tasks can be project based learning with crossover; measures geared toward “real world” application. • NHs extended performance tasks as a measurement are good addition; Kentucky relies on evaluations that can be gamed. Ex. Teacher evaluation. • Seems to be the most comprehensive and thoughtful in terms of helping the state reach its long-term goals. • Longitudinal data and performance tasks. • Liked the opportunity to assess skills. • Performance tasks. • Like the summative, formative, and interim approach. • Forward thinking and ambitious, balanced. • The opportunity and potential to go beyond into the realm of qualitative measurement. • Although largely undefined, I believe the focus on performance tasks is what results in creating a love of learning in children and a confidence of readiness in a state education’s system. • NH through underdeveloped has a balanced approach. • Skills w/ performance. • I don’t believe test scores are an adequate way to see what students know because they are narrow and never written in a students perspective, so extended performance task are a better way of students being able to show what they learn. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a range of assessments. • Diversity of evaluation along with teacher accountability. • Student indicators. • Multifaceted; student performance linked to CCR. • System versatility. • More complex measure that is not simplistic. • I like the program reviews and the readiness index; performance tasks may complicate things a bit. • Program reviews. • Prefer the next generation of educators. • Program reviews if they are done thoroughly and objectively; I don’t agree with the use of teacher and principal evaluations. • NH is not practical at this point; KY includes program evaluation and education. • They address the K-3 grades. • Innovative Elements (with program reviews and next gen approach) but also doable “realistic” not as “too” outside the box like the NH extended performance tasks. • Looks at varying factors to determine success/achievement (skills, performance, key stakeholders). • More comprehensive/holistic by being international about educator’s quality and their accountability is realistic – fuel system responsibility. • More detail – was easier to feel comfortable it would get measured. • Detailed scoring and college/career preparedness; included instructional/support and professionals. • Includes input, through puts, and outputs. Assessments are portable. Gave kids options. • Looks at teachers, looks at other programs besides the basics, liked the benchmarks for college/career. • I like the fact they are calling out next gen learner, instruction/support, and professionals. • NH not tenable for SC population. • Program reviews, college readiness benchmarks, multiple measure for students, and gap/growth scores. • KY is more comprehensive, more measures. • Many stakeholders involved. • College/Career Readiness, Gap Scores, Program Reviews • Multiple measures, instructional support- applies to teaching and learning. Principal/teacher performance, gap scores, and College and Career. • College/Career Readiness – includes industry aptitude and teacher evals. • You didn’t ask me which I found to be most practical...that’s a whole other story – I like the concept of NHs 2-week project - I just can’t see how it’s implemented

Florida	Kentucky
18	26
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High risk students + accelerated learning. • High risk students. • I like the focus of Florida as opposed to KYs. • Like FL focus on at risk students + accelerated learning. • Florida’s focus on at-risk students is a great idea! • Wider range of assessments + inclusion of high risk students. • Florida participation balance and Kentucky is one dimensional. • Florida is attempting to design a system that’s flexible. • Access – gets to the most of student resource equality. • Proven results, subgroups recognized. • Accelerated learning, focus on high risk, looks at low, middle, and high performers. • Focuses on increasing access to AP/IB and focus on lowest 25% + minority groups. • FL drove behavior better. • Lowest 25% growth, accelerated course work available to all students. • Because of their focus on desired outcomes. • FLA rocks – few measures focus on high school performance and pushing schools to push students which is the best measure of future college success. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next generation educators – emphasis on teacher performance. • Kentucky has next generation for educators + program reviews. • Programs review. • I like that KY has the option of program reviews and an option for tracking teachers. • More focus on casual factors. • Focus on educational professions and CCR. • Kentucky was my favorite of all – not just focused on a student. • I like the reliance – program reviews and the focus on next generation education. • Focus on school staffing and programs vs. student achievement. • Good components. • Program review is balanced. • Their focus on the readiness in K-3. • This is tough. Forced to choose KY in that it is forward focused. Would like to see access to programs as part of the KY system. • Balanced approach. • Varied level of assessment – accountability. • Like systems approach with next generation indicators. • Inclusion – instruction/support & details – college/career. • Evaluate educators and program reviews. • Includes inputs and outputs, portable assessments, exit options. • Readiness index, program reviews, multiple measures of students • College readiness, Gap scores. • College Career Readiness tracks • Multiple measures • The clear breakdown of components that influence. Multiple entry points for success for differently abled students.

Georgia	Kentucky
9	37
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College and Career Readiness • Wider range of assessments. • Like the focus on factors to create a rating. • I like Georgia’s plan! • Comprehensive; College • Practically speaking? Kentucky works – but this is my choice, right? I still like Georgia’s multiple entry points for influence of all of the members of the school community. • # scale, multiple measures • Graduation Rate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program reviews – match program + achievement. • Fewer measurement indicators for consideration. • KY is slightly better, but neither is acceptable. • Don’t like KYs use of teacher evals, but GA system is too complicated. • Measurements focus on 3 specific areas, not just standards. • I like the program review and next gen educators. • I like the program reviews and next generation educators for their plan. • More inclusive of casual measures. • Next generation educators – emphasis on teacher effectiveness. • Next generation. • I just don’t like GAs at all. • Streamlined and 3 pronged. • More specific access; wider spectrum looked at whole school. • Easier to understand – transparency; system accountability includes educators. • GA is too complicated; KY is balanced. • Has a little focus on K-3. • More focused – GA tries to put too much in the formula. • KY seems to be more forward focused and does have program focus that includes things beyond typical standardized areas. • Evaluation included non-traditional consideration. • ACT Workkeys, skills assessment. • Readiness allows for different types of learners; program reviews. • Like causal factors in KY. • Seems less complicated. • Varies levels of accountability! • Forward thinking ability to instigate real change “whole system” approach looks at educators, schools, and students. GA seems hard to implement and managed – too complicated and focus is only on students.

Georgia	Florida
10	36
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like Georgia’s comprehensive approach vs. Florida’s targeted approach. • Multi-path for college/career readiness. • GA more inclusive; not subgroups. • Don’t like FL, GA allows multi-dimensions. • College/Career Readiness, multiple facets. • Same old story here...Georgia gives voice to so many stakeholders at the school level and without being across the curriculum will there even be school-wide efforts to reform? • No letter grades, # score. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like that Florida has the option to look at student grades as an indicators for efficacy; Georgia’s system seems too complicated. • I like the focus on high risk students. • I like the attention or focus on High Risk students. • Florida is better, but not acceptable. • Florida has a good mix and is less confusing. • Focus on high risk students. • Florida – good to focus on at risk students; GA too complicated, impossible to explain to public. • Inclusion of high-risk students. • GA is too complicated, FL focuses on high risk students. • Easier to read, better focus on their mission/vision. • Florida has participation: balance ‘jumping off ledge” vs. “being conservative” ; GA is “full” but complicated. Where are special needs students? • Hard to decide, but FL seems easier to implement and understand. Access focus is also a big difference. • Acknowledged awareness of the need to educate ALL kids and especially grouping different populations of students. • Access to courses. • Access/Accelerated. • Opportunities driving behavior – focus on lowest 25%. • Focus on all students and at risk students; proven results. GA is too complicated. • GA is too prescriptive + FL is open access for opportunity • GA is too complicated; FL focus on accelerated learning. • FL is more streamlined and responsive. I like focus on increasing access to AP/IB and on lowest 25%. GA doesn’t include enough incentive for real change. Focus on college/career is too extreme. • Focus on high risk students + subgroups + accelerated learning in readiness index. • Easier to understand; incentive-based and access to courses. • Focus on high risk students. • Drives innovation.

New Hampshire	Florida
18	29
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfair to compare schools based upon AP/IB excellent + performance. • Although the Florida focus at risk students, again like the different system of accountability that NH has. • Florida focus on high risk is fools gold, look at total population. • Florida’s approach seems to black or white. • NH more inclusive of student results rather than smaller populations. • NH provides a broader measure. • It’s better. • Again, the NH reliance upon a kind of portfolio assessment has the potential for a more authentic assessment. • Same.. performance tasks, project based learning, real world app. • NH just isn’t well defined in my opinion. • Forced to choose? NH because I think it would be modified to include those incentives (focus on lowest 25% and incentives opportunities) and would still have performance task focus. • Close – NH authentic measure, self-assessment, though with FL participation is included. Weakness for both: implementation. • Method of assessment. • Performance tasks. • Tough choice, but skills assessment wins. • Don’t like FL, FL – same out acct stuff. • FL is too predictable and “Safe.” I like focusing on the lowest 25%, but I feel like the middle kids are ignored in the model – and there's the fact that FL’s track record with past data interpretation is a little suspect. So, NH is my winner not because I love it (or completely understand it) but because the gaps and stat quo of some elements of FL are displeasing to me. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes into account high risk/starting point. • Florida because I think they are more defined. • Focus on high risk students. • Florida has a good mix of exactly what it is covering. • Focus on high risk groups – this is the challenge for all states. • Focus on high risk students and accelerated learning. • I think that Florida includes a grading component (looks at course grades). If administered objectively, this should be a good indicator. • Florida is the best so far, but I still don’t like any of the models. • Inclusion of high risk student assessment. • NH is less practical, FL focuses on high risk students. • Looks at all groups and then their focus on high risk students. • Multi-cultural recognition of different learners. • Opportunities for accelerated learning – FL drives behavior. • FL was realistic and thoughtful; I like the measurement of performance and access too. Lowest 25% focus is important. • Like breakout of 25%, incentive base for schools to take on more (participation), didn’t fully understand NHs model – vague? • More room for accountability, but hard to navigate. • More specifics available. • Lowest 25% measures of readiness. • Lowest 25% measure, plus push for AP. • Calling out and focusing on lowest 25%. • FLA plan rocks, we can up their 25% to 35% or 40%. • Dual credit/AP; focus on 25%. • Lowest 25%, access to/and performance in rigorous accelerated coursework, performance and gains. • Accelerated coursework, at risk emphasis. • FL because of focus on under performing population and accompanying incentives. • Lowest 25% growth, accelerated course work available to all students.

New Hampshire	Georgia
34	12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think NHs project-based learning assessment is an excellent idea! • Again, prefer the possibility of a more meaningful and more authentic assessment of student performance. • Like NHs performance tasks; GA system way too complicated. • Something different then what's being done in most states – allows more innovation and creativity. • I still don't like either, but I like GAs even less. • Innovative and like emphasis on project-based learning. • Extended performance tasks (focus on what kids can demonstrate). • Impossible to really know without seeing the weights of Georgia's measures. • Extended performance tasks. • Comprehensive had a lot of soft/squishy stuff. • NH is more simplified but covers what it needs; GA is too complex. • I think GAs system is a bit too complex in terms of a complete measure. • Projects, multi-prong. • NHs same as last time. • Speaks to more different and diverse students. • Individualized performance/application based. • NH is trying something different – it could work; GA is too bulky and complicated – I don't see it making a real impact. • Performance based and longitudinal. • Performance assessment offers great opportunities; GA too cumbersome and complicated. • Performance tasks and GA it too opaque. • Like summative, formative, interim approach – balanced – extended performance task. • Focus is not on tests only. Performance tasks are necessary. Instead of achievement of a set goal. • More clearly defined measures that don't appear to track students or label them. • Performance tasks would more clearly demonstrate what students can do (not just recall) and would be targeted to real world need (be they college, vocational, life skills, etc.) • Again, unlike NH, GA does not have a balanced approach. They include authentic measures and self-assessment. • Focus more on performance then testing. • GA is too complicated; NH input measures. • More holistic; more complete • Simple, allows more targeted resources to schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College Readiness Indicators • CCR; business industry competition • Career Readiness Comprehensive college includes more students, teachers and content and opportunities for various levels of students. • Again broad range of assessments. • Didn't it choose either because I wasn't sure about GA and I don't like NH. • Because they use the indexes instead of just using the standardized test scores. • College/Career, ACT score, Multiple Scores • Dual enrollment and pathway • NH not feasible in SC, GA has many of the good measures • Dual enrollment, pathway courses, holistic approach • All areas of Georgia Index covers entire curriculum of school • More comprehensive, grad rate, more involvement • Modules/lots of options, everyone included. • I love that GA provides involvement for everyone at the school level – despite the fact that it covers an almost obscene number of factors – I can't imagine helping parents process this information in a meaningful way.

Activity: Indicator Matrix

Participants completed a matrix with twenty-eight possible accountability indicators. Each participant individually rated every measure on a scale of 0-3, provided a rationale statement for each rating, and starred their top three indicators.

- 0: Not Important
- 1: Low Importance
- 2: Medium Importance
- 3: Most Important

Participants were asked to list indicators that were missing or that they thought should be represented based on their True North.

Table A-4. Data collected from Indicator Matrix

INDICATORS	AVERAGE	MODE	STARRED
<i>Graduation Rates</i>	2.44	3	9
<i>Extended Performance Tasks</i>	2.39	3	20
<i>Growth Scores State Standardized Tests: grades 3- 8 (ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies)</i>	2.35	3	21
<i>Reporting on Subgroups</i>	2.29	3	10
<i>Performance on ACT/SAT</i>	2.22	2	4
<i>Input measures on Teacher Quality</i>	2.16	3	5
<i>Percent Passing College Placement Exams</i>	2.06	2	1
<i>College Persistence Rates</i>	2.05	2	3
<i>Absolute Scores State Standardized Tests: grades 3- 8 (ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies)</i>	2.04	2	9
<i>Performance in IB/AP courses</i>	2.03	2	1
<i>Performance in WorkKeys</i>	2.02	2	4
<i>Input measures on School Programs</i>	2.01	3	2
<i>Participation on ACT/SAT</i>	1.99	2	0
<i>Performance in Dual Enrollment</i>	1.97	2	1
<i>Participation in Dual Enrollment</i>	1.96	2	0

End of Course Exams: ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies	1.92	2	5
<i>Participation in IB/AP courses</i>	1.90	2	0
<i>College Matriculation Rates</i>	1.90	2	2
<i>HS Grades</i>	1.81	2	4
<i>% of student who filled out a career plan</i>	1.79	3	5
<i>College Acceptance Rates</i>	1.78	2	0
<i>Self-Reported School Climate</i>	1.72	3	4
<i>ENGAGE or other Metacognitive Assessment</i>	1.71	2	4
HS Exit Exams: ELA & Math	1.67	2	5
<i>Performance on military exams</i>	1.65	2	0
<i>% of students completing a college application</i>	1.27	2	0
<i># of Students who fill out a FAFSA</i>	0.86	0	0

Activity: Create Your Prototype

Participants broke out into small groups to build a prototype of their optimal accountability systems. They used their indicator matrices, comparable states framework, and True North definition to select indicators to include in their hybrid system. A facilitator joined each group to document points of contention, non-negotiables, and trade offs that we discussed. Each team presented their system to the larger stakeholder group.

Table A-5. Prototypes and Facilitator Notes

CHARLESTON		
	Chart Paper Transcript	Facilitator Notes
Group 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure growth as opposed to status. • Focus on low achievers and closing the achievement gap.: sub groups by race are not valuable. • Performance Review (objective and comprehensive) • End of course exams for math, ELA, science, History, Etc. 	
Group 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth – long tests thru elementary, middle, and high school. • Subgroups vs. low achievers (?) • Some sort of extended project. • Connectivity. 	<p><i>growth, going back and forth - longitudinal test from element - hs to show growth (learning progression); difficult to agree. Future ready indicators and connectivity (relevance)</i></p>
Group 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple, clear • Based on growth • Extended performance • Measure the things that cause learning • Somebodies called to account • Measure what children need to know and be able to do – whatever that is. <p><i>Sticking Points:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived different between college and career readiness. • Political, economic, community 	<p><i>Simple, clear based on growth (some disagreement) Extended performance measure instead of just a number on a test measure the things that cause learning (need to identify those) Measure or not that makes any difference? Hold the accountability system accountable. Somebody needs to be held accountable.</i></p>
Group 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive list of standardize tests/certifications/classes. • Employment -> how man hs graduates find employment? Track students post graduation. • Program review • Portfolio review • Teacher development – by actual teachers. • Prerequisite skills updated. 	<p><i>Comprehensive and Varietal - standardized test, certifications</i></p> <p><i>-Employment: track students post graduation, how many are employed? HS, 2 year, etc.</i></p> <p><i>-Program Review</i></p> <p><i>-Portfolio Review</i></p> <p><i>Instead of Teacher Evaluation, talking bout teacher development by actual teacher (not someone who hasn't actually been in the college) How to measure what's necessary in the prerequisites. Tension around hi-stakes</i></p>

COLUMBIA		
	Chart Paper Transcript	Facilitator Notes
Group 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Tasks • Grades • Well-designed standardized tests – performance, growth, readiness baseline, subgroups • Soft Skills • College/Career Readiness • Graduation Rate • Opportunity Measures (programs, facilities, Arts) • Teacher Evaluation • "Schools like ours" 	<p><i>Performance tasks</i></p> <p><i>Grades</i></p> <p><i>Well designed standardized tests (performance and growth, readiness baseline that starts at school entry, lowest quartile of students and subgroups).</i></p> <p><i>Soft Skills</i></p> <p><i>College/Career Readiness</i></p> <p><i>Graduation Rate</i></p> <p><i>Opportunity measures - program availability, arts, community resources, to measure the school climate</i></p> <p><i>Teacher Evals - tiptoed into this knowing its contreverisal, value-added measures, and whole schools like ours measures to be certain we're comparing similar schools.</i></p> <p><i>Lens "schools like ours"</i></p> <p><i>Soft skills - metacognitive assessments, engage functioning skills (empathy, attitude leader indicators)... standardized and authentic. Soft - Skills, Metacognitive Assessments, engage functioning skills</i></p>
Group 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System that supports competencies • Variety of assessments with summative accountability measures at key points (not all at the end of the year) • Use of extended performance tasks (metacognitive) • Consideration of resources and inputs/out of school factors • Focus on college/career readiness indicator • Focus on critical content standards • Postsecondary longitudinal measures 	<p><i>System that supports competencies not finite skills (a comment learning)</i></p> <p><i>variety of assessment with summative accountability measures at key points (not all the end of the year, and not all of the time) Not testing all the time for summative testing for accountability, but formative assessment to inform how we're teaching our students. Use of performance task within soft skills (setting goals to accomplish the task), consideration of resource, inputs, out of school factors necessary for our students to achieve. Focus on CCR indicators (pathway out and after high school) to be a productive citizen. Post secondary longitudinal measures.</i></p> <p><i>Focus on critical content standards. Where are our students 10 years down the road - maybe they got into college, but they weren't able to finish but they went back 10 years and are now a productive citizen, but are incarcerated (community resources)</i></p> <p><i>Differences in formative and summative reports to move forward and revamp some things vs. what we hold in regard to student achievement.</i></p> <p><i>Empirical data to support</i></p> <p><i>Sticking points: absolute scores vs. growth</i></p>
Group 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Climate (objective and subjective) inclusive of community • Productive Citizen Measure (GED, HS, Diploma, Get a Job, Military, not living off of 	<p><i>Climate self-study of positive and negative about what makes their school functions well to diagnose what they need to do. Don't trust self assessment overall. Make it work if the rest of the</i></p>

	<p>unemployment, not in jail)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Teacher/Principal Evaluation •Growth/absolute K-2,3-8, 9-12 (achievement and readiness measures) •Extended Performance Tasks •High Expectations of reporting for all subgroups •Including soft skills measurements •Portfolio/authentic assessment component, evidence measure •SAT/ACT 	<p><i>accountability system ... condition of the school building, objective measure that an building engineer could look at. opposed to someone giving subjectivity. Need to build in self-reflectiveness. Subjectivity and objectivity - push/pull balanced. Graduation Rate vs job - our are students able to leave in 4 years with a diploma? Subgroup. When they leave the hs, measure to move forward to being a productive citizen? OBSAP Productive Citizen Measure.</i></p> <p><i>Evaluation - teacher qualification, building managers? or leadership for the teachers? Teacher and principal evaluation. Not anybody that's directly accountable. Superintendent can be fired by the board. Tension between growth and absolute.</i> <i>(could an elementary student or middle school students)</i> <i>Special education and make sure its not an excuse for poor performance.</i> <i>Soft skills/metacognitive assessment</i></p> <p><i>Need to measure how a school functions a learning environment - objectives and subjective, inclusive of the community.</i> <i>Product Citizen Measure - what do they look like when the leave (GED, HS, Get a job, Military, not living off of unemployment, not in jail)</i> <i>Teacher/Principal Evaluation - both in some way to see inputs are putting in both sides and contributing to an effective school.</i> <i>Growth/Absolute - k-2, 3-8, 9-12 achievement measures and readiness measures. Hit all these levels, no accountability for K-2, needs to be standardized and developmentally appropriate.</i> <i>Extended performance tasks with project based learning, community exposure and internships, talked about HS but could be brought down grade wise. Progression of writing, creativity... etc.</i> <i>High expectations of reporting for all subgroups with high expectations.</i> <i>Including soft skills measurements - curiosity, professional academic dispositions</i> <i>Portfolios/authentic assessment component evaluative measure - observational protocols, not just about a test informal authentic measure.</i> <i>ACT/SAT college readiness benchmark - common measure to college entrance. Accepted to college.</i> <i>Growth and absolute measures was a discussion and climate object/subject fear of gaming</i></p>
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GREENVILLE		
	Chart Paper Transcript	Facilitator Notes
Group 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth • Diagnostic • Basic R's – emphasize Reading • Dual Credit • Opportunity to Learn 	<p>1) Growth 2) Diagnostic - actionable and usable 3) Basics Rs - emphasize Reading 4) Dual Credit 5) Opportunity to Learn - input measures A lot of performance, dual credit (CCR indicator), balance with OTL measure.</p> <p>Lot of time thinking about backwards design and meaningful long term, policies, changes to curriculum, daily operating procedures that must changed... a lot has to be done on the front end. What other industry in the world has stayed on the same schedule.</p>
Group 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content – absolute + growth measure • Skills & dispositions – work keys or others • Climate – teachers, students, parents, input • Opportunity – exposure to college/careers • College Readiness – matriculation, persistence, remediation <p>Less is more</p>	<p>IDEAL SCA "Less is more" Content - absolute and growth measure. recognized that there was a place for absolute, from the perspective of a parent. great if they are 8th grade and shows 2 years, but they are at a 5th grade level we need to know what to do. Skills + dispositions - work keys or others, is the student going thru the system successfully and how do we measure those success points. Year after - matriculation, persistence, and rumination. Climate - teachers + students + parents input o how well a school is doing. Climate is the under foundation for so much of this, much of these measures won't work. and this is in the hands of staff. NM includes a 10 Qs that goes to teachers, parents, and students. Opportunity - exposure to college and careers. What's exposure - opportunities if the kids don't know there is an opportunity to have someone speak to them or visit a place, won't know what's avail to them. What is our accountability measure for career readiness.</p>

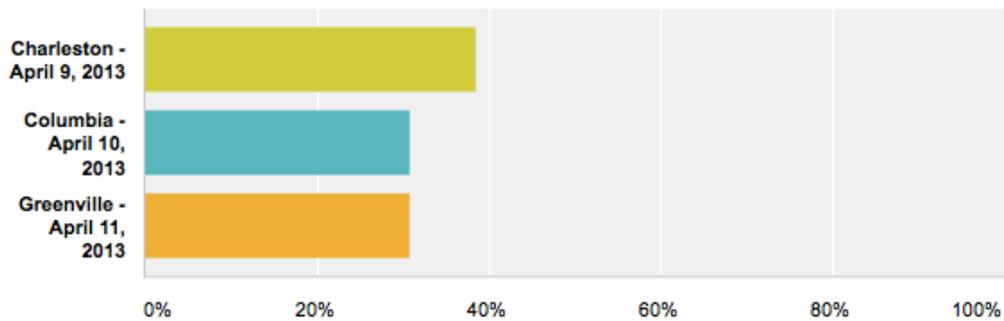
Group 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduation Rates - % of students participating/completing AP/IB/Dual Enrollment • Measure schools ability to produce opportunities to identify and explore college/career interests • Measures (static and growth) – Kindergarten Readiness, 3rd grade reading and math literacy, 8th grade pre-college assessment, gap measures 	<p><i>Philosophically, opportunity to allow every child to reach the most potential. What can you do to set an accountability system to drive that. Makes a school system that becomes all things for all kids.</i></p> <p><i>1) graduation rates (started with end in mind) all kids by 10th grade be college and career ready. Opportunity to experience at least a college course for credit, % participation/completion of AP?IB/enrollment.</i></p> <p><i>2) measure a schools systems ability to say what is your college/career passion and what's your roadmap to get there. What is your passion, virtual shadowing, getting in a class, or turning in for someone to look at. Identify a car roadmap to get there.</i></p> <p><i>3) kindergarten, 3, 8 - status and growth and college readiness at 8th grade (what are we going to do at the lower levels to remediate earlier to the maximum potential)</i></p> <p><i>4)GAP measures</i></p>
Group 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure of Readiness K-4 • Measure of Growth 2-8 • Measure of performance on EOCs (redesigned assessments) • Measure of performance on ACT/SAT/AP/ASVAB/COMPASS/WORRKEYS • Improvement of Subgroups • Project-based performance task •Participation AP/IB/DE • Subgroup Improvement • Teacher and Principal Evaluation • College Remediation Rates 	<p><i>Longitudinal study across all grade levels - measures of performance on redesigned assessments. Redesigned to have feedback and be more performance driven. Room for improvement. A little more actionable.</i></p> <p><i>Evaluation of levels of improvement.</i></p> <p><i>Project-based performance task, success with project based learning.</i></p> <p><i>Participation in college experiences - expanding dual enrollment career specific. Broaden and expand Teacher/principal evaluation piece - remediation, matriculation, and persistence - in a nice tidy number.</i></p>

APPENDIX B – Stakeholder Feedback Survey

Approximately one week after the stakeholder meetings, a survey was distributed to participants to gather feedback on their experiences. Out of 57 participants, 13 completed the feedback survey (response rate of 23%). The following pages present summaries of data to for each survey question.

Which stakeholder meeting did you attend?

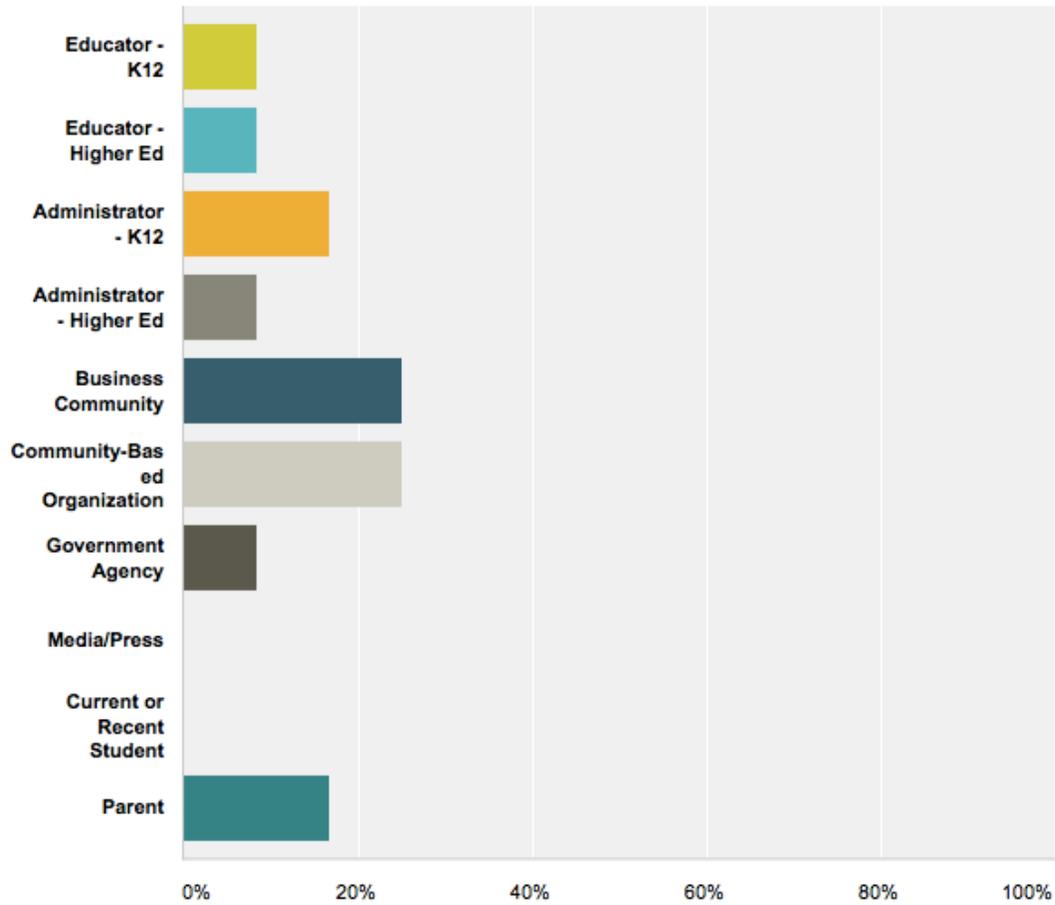
Answered: 13 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Charleston - April 9, 2013	38.46% 5
Columbia - April 10, 2013	30.77% 4
Greenville - April 11, 2013	30.77% 4
Total	13

What is your affiliation? (mark all that apply)

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1



**Please rate the extent to which you agree
with the following statements:**

Answered: 13 Skipped: 0

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
The meeting convened a diverse group of stakeholders engaged in South Carolina public education.	83.33% 10	8.33% 1	8.33% 1	0% 0	0% 0	12
The meeting allowed diverse perspectives to be heard.	76.92% 10	15.38% 2	7.69% 1	0% 0	0% 0	13
Meeting facilitators provided adequate information to foster rich discussion by stakeholders.	66.67% 8	33.33% 4	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	12
Meeting activities were engaging.	61.54% 8	38.46% 5	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	13
Meeting activities effectively captured my insights and perspectives.	69.23% 9	23.08% 3	7.69% 1	0% 0	0% 0	13
I learned something new in the meeting.	84.62% 11	15.38% 2	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	13

**If you have any questions or comments
about the process or content of the
stakeholder meetings, please share them
here.**

Answered: 3 Skipped: 10

● **Responses (3)** Text Analysis My Categories

Categorize as... Filter by Category Search responses ?

Showing 3 responses

What is next?
4/16/2013 1:29 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

I thought the process was effective in helping to determine the ideals we hold dear. It also was thought-provoking.
4/16/2013 1:22 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

Noble work but in the end we will allow 1/3 to not get a minimally adequate education, and a much larger portion will not have the skills to compete and thrive as adults. It's bigger than schools but we are looking to the schools to do it. We need to broaden our vision to include social connectedness for all and low cost interventions for those destined to fail.
4/16/2013 11:01 AM [View respondent's answers](#)

APPENDIX C – Framework Indicators Defined

Indicator	Definition
% of Students who fill out a FAFSA	Number of students who complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, a form that is submitted annually by prospective (and current) college students to determine eligibility for financial aid.
% of students completing a college application	Percentage of students who fill out an application for college admission, which generally consists of academic transcripts, letters of recommendation, and essay responses.
% of students who filled out a career plan	Percentage of students who create a structured outline of career goals and the action steps required to meet their individual goals.
Absolute Scores State Standardized Tests: grades 3- 8 (ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies)	Student achievement results from state standardized tests, as benchmarked against performance standards.
College Acceptance Rates	Percentage of students who are accepted into a college or university.
College Matriculation Rates	Percentage of students who enroll into a college or university.
College Persistence Rates	Percentage of students continuing college after their freshman year.
End of Course Exams: ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies	Measures student acquisition of content knowledge at the end of a course of study.
Extended Performance Tasks	Project that requires students to apply a wide range of skills to solve a complex problem.
Graduation Rates	Percentage of students that successfully graduated high school by meeting state or local diploma requirements.
Growth Scores State Standardized Tests: grades 3- 8 (ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies)	Measures change in students' scores on state achievement tests from one year to the next.
HS Exit Exams: ELA & Math	Tests that students must pass to receive a diploma and graduate from high school.
HS Grades	Summative classroom-based evaluation measures of student performance in individual courses often aggregated up to a 4-point scale.
Input measures on School Programs/Program Evaluation	May include an array of inputs and activities within a school building which the state deems important for students' opportunity to learn. This could include curriculum review for each subject area and other input metrics (e.g., student-to-computer ratio, average instructional time, access to tutoring services).

Indicator	Definition
Input measures on Teacher Quality	Reports on staff certification levels within a school building.
Metacognitive Assessment	Students fill out a self-report survey regarding non-cognitive skills (e.g., time management, goal setting, persistence).
Participation in ACT/SAT	Measures how many students are taking the ACT/SAT standardized test, which assesses a student's aptitude for college and is used for most college admissions.
Participation in Dual Enrollment	Measures how many students are accessing the Dual Enrollment program, which involves high school students taking college courses at a local institution of higher ed while they are still enrolled in high school.
Participation in IB/AP courses	Measures how many students are accessing the International Baccalaureate or Advanced Placement programs, which offer college-level curriculum and examination to high school students.
Percent Passing College Placement Exams/Remediation Rates	Postsecondary Institutions use assessment instruments in subjects like math and English to check the academic levels of entering students. These test scores are used to decide if a student is ready for entry-level credit bearing courses.
Performance in Dual Enrollment	Measures student achievement in a program which involves high school students taking college courses at a local institution of higher ed while they are still enrolled in high school.
Performance in IB/AP courses	Measures student achievement in International Baccalaureate or Advanced Placement programs, that offer college-level curriculum and examination to high school students.
Performance in Commercial Career Readiness Assessment (e.g., WorkKeys)	Measures student achievement on a job skills assessment which looks at common skills required for success in the workplace.
Performance on ACT/SAT	Measures student performance on the ACT/SAT standardized test, which assesses a student's aptitude for college and is used for most college admissions.
Performance on military exams	Measures student achievement on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, which determines whether a student is qualified to enlist in the U.S. military.
Performance or growth of the lowest 25%	Reports results for students who performed in the bottom 25% in the previous year's standardized tests.
Reporting on Subgroups	Compares/Isolates student test results for African-American, Hispanic, Native American, special education, low income, and ELL students.
Self-Reported School Climate	Results from a survey taken by staff, students, and parents in regards to the school's environment (i.e., physical, social, and academic).

APPENDIX D: Framework Criteria Categories and Essential Questions

Criteria	Essential Question
Basic KSAs	Does it assess the basic knowledge and skills students need to live, learn and work in the 21st century?
Higher Order Thinking	Does it assess the critical thinking and complex problem solving skills students need to live, learn, and work in the 21st century?
Meaningful	Does the measure have meaning or currency outside of the accountability system?
Clear	Can the measure be clearly communicated and understood by the public?
High Needs	Does it address students with the highest need?
Pathways	Does the measure promote high aspirations, regardless of their future pathway? (college, career, military)
Feasible	Is it feasible to implement this measure with fidelity at the state level? Political, administrative, technical
Whole School	Does it hold the whole school accountable? Does it define quality across the whole school building? (Curriculum, instruction, opportunities to learn, resources)
Aligned	Does it promote alignment across the system?

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee: EIA and Improvement Mechanisms

Date: December 9, 2013

INFORMATION

Budget and Proviso Recommendations, Fiscal Year 2013-14

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

Section 59-6-10 of the Education Accountability Act requires the EOC to "review and monitor the implementation and evaluation of the Education Accountability Act and Education Improvement Act programs and funding" and to "make programmatic and funding recommendations to the General Assembly."

CRITICAL FACTS

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

August 15, 2013	EIA program report and budget request surveys online
August 30, 2013	Preliminary EIA revenue projections for FY2014-15 made by BEA
October 1, 2012	All EIA program reports and budget requests due to EOC
November 12, 2013	Subcommittee holds public hearing open to all EIA-Funded entities and new requests
November 18, 2013	Subcommittee meets and makes budget recommendations BEA makes first official EIA revenue projections
December 9, 2013	Subcommittee meets to finalize budget recommendations

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

Cost: No fiscal impact beyond current appropriations

Fund/Source:

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For Information

Approved

ACTION TAKEN

Amended

**Not Approved
(explain)**

Action deferred

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Education Oversight Committee
FROM: Melanie Barton *Melanie Barton*
DATE: November 26, 2013
IN RE: FY2014-15 Budget Recommendations

The EIA and Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee will meet at 11:00 a.m. on December 9, 2013 to finalize its budget and proviso recommendations. The full EOC will have an opportunity to review, amend and approve those recommendations at its 1:00 p.m. meeting. If you need any specific information prior to December 9, please contact me.

Neil C. Robinson, Jr.
CHAIR

Barbara B. Hairfield
VICE CHAIR

J. Phillip Bowers

Dennis Drew

Mike Fair

Nikki Haley

R. Wesley Hayes, Jr.

Alex Martin

John W. Matthews, Jr.

Daniel B. Merck

Joseph H. Neal

Andrew S. Patrick

Evelyn R. Perry

J. Roland Smith

Patti J. Tate

John Warner

David Whittemore

Mick Zais

Melanie D. Barton
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Update to the EOC on the P-20 Initiative
to Improve Reading Performance



**SC EDUCATION
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**



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

Development of State Early Literacy Plan

The EOC has been working with Dr. Baron Holmes who is developing a plan that challenges stakeholders to improve early literacy by focusing on what abilities must be focused on with very young children and who should be charged with nurturing these skills.

On November 14, a group of early childhood leaders met to discuss how family literacy programs, family services programs, center-based programs, and community organizations could collaborate to provide services designed to promote high levels of early literacy. A follow-up meeting in early 2014 is being planned.

The EOC is also working with Bud Ferillo at the USC Children's Law Center on producing a video on the development of reading skills throughout a person's life. Through interviews with experts and practitioners, the final product will look at the importance of language and reading on the brain development of infants, the need for K-12 students to have access to materials and teachers trained in diagnosing and intervening when students have reading difficulties, as well as the role reading has on the economic development of SC. The video is scheduled to be available in February 2014 to coincide with the release of SC's progress toward the 2020 Vision.

Stakeholders involved:

Leigh Bolick, SC Dept. of Social Services
Callee Boulware, SC Reach Out and Read
Bill Brown, University of SC School of Education
Penny Danielson, SC Dept. of Education
Mary Lynne Diggs, SC Head Start
Tim Ervolina, United Way Association of SC
Baron Holmes, University of SC
Sara Beth King, Nurse Family Partnership
Mary Anne Matthews, SC First Steps
Lynne Noble, Columbia College
Karen Oliver, United Way of the Midlands
Debbie Robertson, SC First Steps
Bunnie Ward, United Way of the Midlands

Early Childhood Literacy Discussion Paper

Prepared by Baron Holmes and Liyun Zhang

Introduction

The Read to Succeed legislation challenges SC stakeholders to improve early literacy dramatically by answering and then acting on the following: a) What literacy abilities must be cultivated; b) For whom; c) When; d) Addressed by which programs; e) Addressed how; therefore: f) What must be done by whom and how they must do it.

What literacy abilities must be cultivated: oral language (receptive & expressive), written language skills, interactive & independent reading, reading comprehension, motivation to read, and writing.

For whom: young children demonstrating low language and literacy ability & skills predictive of being unable in school to “substantially demonstrate reading proficiency”. Research shows widening language deficits beginning as early as when children begin to talk and substantial deficits soon afterward in their literacy development.

When: as early as the children and their serious deficits can be identified accurately.

Addressed by: center-based early care & education (ECE) programs, Head Start, and schools; and parents receiving support from Family Literacy services.

How: through evidence-based literacy development programs and practices with proven effectiveness for enhancing language and literacy skills.

What must be done and how: promote receptive and expressive language skills, print awareness, and emergent literacy skills, including early writing. These skills should be promoted through substantial interactive dialogue of increasing complexity, reading to and with the child, encouraging and guiding inventive writing and emergent spelling skills, and nurturing development of both comprehension skills and ability to express understandable and increasingly complex thoughts, information, and explanations.

What must be done and how they must do it: Parents and family members should engage each child in: extensive dialogue and interactive discussion to build increasingly complex inquiry and expressive skills; exposure to print through interactive reading; and development of rudimentary writing which expresses ideas and messages of growing clarity.

What must be done and how they must do it: Center-based programs, because of their challenging child-to-adult ratios, generally must pursue language & literacy development through small and large group reading, through productive child-to-child dialogue, and during literacy-infused play. Since most adult dialogue in center-based programs with an individual child is inevitably intermittent and of short duration, the dialogue must be used purposefully to build skills of expression, analysis, and persuasion involving increasingly complex language and thoughts. Staff must be creative and organized in promoting child language and literacy through shared peer projects and collaborative activities, such as during center-time activities.

What must be done and how they must do it: Community Literacy Collaboratives can promote language and literacy through diverse opportunities for family, child, and community

interaction. Community programs can bring together families with their young children for a wide variety of activities that enhance language and literacy development. These programs can be sponsored by such organizations as churches in which families of young children are already members or through specially created programs emphasizing literacy development or simply infusing child literacy as part of a broader array of offerings. An explicitly literacy-focused program might be a book fair with story-character plays & puppet theater, all organized around specific books which parents and family read with their children before and after the book fair.

The early literacy challenge: Although families have most of the contact time with children up to age 5, the dearth of conclusive evaluation evidence on family literacy programs as typically implemented thus far provides little assurance that these programs will enable families to improve their children's language and literacy substantially. However, much research has been done on early literacy development through small, well-planned interventions and observational studies. These studies found promising early literacy growth results that could and should be replicated by family literacy, center-based, and community language and literacy development programs.

Which major programs serve and can thus provide access to how many children (or families) of what ages (before 5 will be what most programs would be able to identify): [to be determined for the following]

- Family literacy = PAT, NFP, PCHP, Healthy Families, Healthy Steps, Early Start
- Family services: pediatricians and other primary care, WIC, TANF, SNAP, Parts C&B
- Center-based programs: child care, Head Start, Early Head Start, and 4K preschool
- Community: libraries, churches (child care and Sunday school), and United Ways

Which of the programs serving young children address literacy and how? [Summarize briefly in this discussion document the currently delivered literacy promotion efforts. Then ask each of the organizational contacts to summarize succinctly how much is done for how many of which children; their longer summaries can be presented as appendices to the report.]

Literacy deficits: Literacy deficits have typically been publicized for 3rd grade reading proficiency when standardized testing begins with the high stakes consequences of retention in grade, referral to special education, and stigma for teachers and schools with large numbers of students failing to achieve proficiency. The most widely used reading data comparable across states comes from the National Assessment of Educational Progress, which is administered first in the 4th grade. This carefully constructed assessment is administered in every state. The 2013 NAEP in South Carolina found that only 28% of 4th graders tested proficient in reading, but 40% scored below basic and the remaining 32% scored at the basic level. For the US overall, 34% were proficient in reading and 33% were below basic. Subgroup disparities have been alarmingly large in SC. The 2013 NAEP rates of 4th graders scoring below basic were: 51% vs. 21% for poor vs. not poor children, 53% vs. 28% for black vs. white students, and 43% vs. 35% for males vs. females. The rates scoring proficient in 4th grade were: 17% vs. 46% poor vs. not poor, 13% vs. 39% black vs. white, and 35% vs. 31% female vs. male.

On the last SC Readiness Assessment, teachers rated as “not consistently ready” one-quarter of kindergarten and 1st grade students in reading and writing and one-third in their communication skills. The Stanford Reading First test in the fall of 1st grade determined that in high-poverty schools 54% needed substantial intervention, while only 20% of students had reading skills at grade level.

SCRA 2008	Reading (% not consistently ready)	Writing (% not consistently ready)	Communication (% not consistently ready)
Kindergarten	24%	20%	32%
1 st grade	25%	28%	33%

Stanford Reading First 2004-2008	At Grade Level	Needs Substantial Intervention %
1 st grade	20%	54%
2 nd grade	36%	31%
3 rd grade	26%	47%

Children who are slow in becoming capable readers:

- **Reached school far behind in language and literacy skills (family literacy deficits).** High-risk children constituting one-quarter of all 4-year-olds were found by the DIAL screening assessment to have low language skills as compared with national norms: 19% below 95% of all students nationally; 30% below 90% nationally; and 50% below 75% nationally.
- The Stanford Reading First test found that 41% of students entering 1st grade in high poverty schools have Speaking Vocabulary which needs substantial intervention, while only 37% have Speaking Vocabulary at grade level of national norms.

DIAL Language at entry to 4K preschool		
(% SC students scoring at national percentiles)	Percent	Ratio
At or below 5th percentile	19%	4:1
At or below 10th percentile	30%	3:1
At or below 25th percentile	50%	2:1

Stanford Reading First Speaking Vocabulary in Fall of 1st grade (at risk schools 2004-2008):	
At grade level	37%
Needs additional intervention	22%
Needs substantial intervention	41%

- Exhibited serious phonological or other reading difficulties:** The Stanford Reading First test found that one-third of children entering 1st grade in high poverty schools need substantial intervention for phonemic awareness and phonics.

Stanford Reading First Phonemic Awareness (at risk schools in Fall of 2004-2008):	1st grade	2nd grade	3rd grade
At grade level	56%	65%	78%
Needs additional intervention	11%	21%	15%
Needs substantial intervention	33%	14%	6%

Stanford Reading First Phonics (at risk schools in Fall of 2004-2008):	1st grade	2nd grade	3rd grade
At grade level	28%	9%	8%
Needs additional intervention	42%	35%	26%
Needs substantial intervention	30%	56%	66%

A matrix profile with serious reading problems in 3rd grade was created by linking disadvantaged children from a 1995/96 birth cohort to their outcomes on the Stanford Reading First (ARF) test for grade 3. These children were predominately low income (75% free & reduced lunch) and non-white (77%), mainly from lower SES school districts which participated

in the Reading First program. The chart below shows the SRF rates of very low performance (below the national 20th percentile classified as Needs Substantial Intervention) for a variety of risk groups listed in the first column. Most of these risk groups have been identified as disproportionately having the worst educational and risk-taking (teen pregnancy, juvenile justice) outcomes as compared with the full SC population of public school students. Grade 3 is the point at which the frequently repeated “truism” is said to require a major shift from “learning to read” to “reading to learn”. Thus the Reading Comprehension column is an important reflection of which risk groups with a predominately low income , minority population are most in need of substantial reading intervention services, not only in the 3rd grade and beyond but more importantly previously during early childhood and grades K-3. Overall 31% of the students in the Reading First schools needed substantial intervention for their reading comprehension, as compared with 22% for those with none of the following 3 risk factors: a) low literacy family (mother with less than a high school degree); b) disabled; c) having an emotional-behavioral problem identified by the kindergarten teacher. Of students with 2 of these 3 risk factors, 49% needed substantial intervention. For demographic groups, 39% of minority males, 28% of minority females, 23% of white males, and 21% of white females needed substantial intervention. The NSI rates for other reading competencies are shown in the table below. Overall the highest rate was for Phonics (51%), followed by vocabulary development (36%), Reading Comprehension (31%), Oral Reading (30%), and Reading Fluency (29%). The lowest NSI rates were for Speaking Vocabulary, and Phonemic Awareness (21%). As an approach for targeting and screening young children with the high risk of serious reading problems, the risk factor characteristics from this cohort analysis would provide a starting point. The young children to be targeted could include those: 1) born into low literacy families such as a mother who did not complete high school; 2) having speech and language disability; 3) having emotional-behavioral and executive functioning deficits; and with other somewhat less predictive risk factors such as low income, male, English as a second language, and lack of family support and stability (including abuse, neglect, & foster care). These factors should be used only to identify children for screening. Decisions about selection for language and literacy intervention should be based on the screening and then on further diagnostic assessment to determine verifiable language and literacy needs to be addressed through appropriate services.

Thus the rows of the matrix table specify For whom and the columns present What reading deficiencies must be addressed. Not presented in the table are How and By which programs the reading deficits should be addressed. However, the various sections of this paper will review research and data that explain Which programs address What reading competencies and How they must be addressed at home and through center-based services.

[Present any additional language and literacy data available before 4K (use ECLS-B&K); then any school district data from MAP, etc., PASS 3rd grade ELA, NAEP reading 8th, TEC reading scores, etc.]

Early identification: It has been 13 years since the passage of the First Steps to School Readiness legislation, 24 years since Family Literacy programs were created through the 1989 Target 2000 legislation, and 29 years since preschools for 4-year-olds were initiated by the EIA of 1984. Despite the passage of several important legislative acts and despite of the passage of

decades of implementation, there is still little data assessing needs, determining progress, and evaluating effectiveness of our early childhood efforts. This is certainly the case for early literacy. It is now time to: 1) decide what assessments should be administered to whom, 2) collect representative sample data to reflect the statewide picture for priorities such as early language & literacy, and 3) identify the children with serious language & literacy deficits requiring services, training, and supports. To remedy the rarity of formally recorded and reported early identification and the consequential limited data, what additional data should be gathered by whom for which children? All potential reporting sources could be asked to receive training for performing initial language & literacy screenings. The trained screeners would report into a literacy skills bank the deficits data and contact information for each child with low language and literacy skills. The data would be used to assure attention in all programs' admission decisions and to alert programs to a child's potential need for receiving such language and literacy support as may be available. The data could also be used to guide child-find recruitment by Head Start, 4K preschool, disability programs, community services, family literacy, book distributions, etc. Additional trained assessors could be designated in each larger community or region to perform more reliable literacy assessment on children identified through the screening as potentially at-risk. The assessors could also train program personnel how to perform their own language and literacy assessments more reliably.

Literacy competency components: The eight competencies listed below were identified through detailed examination of three dozen journal articles on early literacy development, but do not constitute a definitive list.

1. Oral language: a) expressive (vocabulary, spoken sentence structure, communication content and coherence); b) receptive (vocabulary, listening comprehension, phonemic awareness)
2. Written language skills: (alphabet knowledge, print concepts/awareness, invented spelling, early decoding, word recognition, concepts about book reading, decontextualized language, literacy register, sentence structure, grammar, syntax)
3. Writing: individual words, phrases, sentences, spelling, text content and coherence
4. Comprehension
5. Motivation to read
6. Child participation during reading:
 - a) Reading to an adult,
 - b) Listening to the adult reading,
 - c) Responding to adult reading,
 - d) Answering questions,
 - e) Labeling,
 - f) Narrating the story
 - g) Interpreting,
 - h) Predicting,
 - i) Drawing on own experience
7. Effects on adult behavior from child speech, reading ability, & comprehension strengths

8. Independent reading

The eight literacy competencies listed above should be compared with the competencies identified by the National Early Literacy Panel report based upon an exhaustive set of meta-analyses.

Two recent documents provided consensus or narrative summaries of a portion of the research literature concerning the relationship between early precursor skills and later conventional literacy skills. Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998), in their report of the National Research Council's panel on preventing reading difficulties in young children, identified weaknesses in oral language, phonological awareness (PA), and alphabet knowledge (AK) as prime targets of intervention to prevent the occurrence of significant reading problems. Similarly, Whitehurst and Lonigan (1998) identified skills in the domains of oral language, print and letter knowledge, and phonological processing as encompassing two aspects (outside-in and inside-out skills) of emergent literacy that are related to later conventional forms of reading and writing. Whereas these two documents provided the beginnings of a structure to understand those skills that may serve as the developmental precursors to reading and writing abilities, neither document was based on a comprehensive summary of the published literature.

Summary of Primary Analyses: *When measured in kindergarten or earlier, several variables are moderate to strong predictors of later outcomes in conventional literacy. A summary of the results of the three meta-analyses and a summary of findings from multivariate studies are shown in Table 2.4 for literacy-related variables with at least a moderate zero-order [correlational] relationship with at least one conventional literacy outcome. Strength of relationship is based on the following ratings (0–0.29 = small; 0.30–0.49 = moderate; ≥ 0.50 = strong). Ten variables meet this criterion. Of these 10 variables, six variables [alphabet knowledge (AK), phonological awareness (PA), rapid naming of letters and digits, rapid naming of objects and colors, “writing or writing name,” phonological short-term memory (STM)] were consistently related to later conventional literacy outcomes, and these six variables continued to be predictive when other variables were controlled in multivariate analyses. Most of these findings are the result of a relatively large number of studies that included a large number of children. Consequently, these relationships between these variables and later conventional literacy outcomes not only are sizable, but they are likely to be highly reliable and stable.*

Table 2.4. Summary of Meta-Analytic and Multivariate Results for Literacy-Related Predictor Variables with Moderate to Strong Relationships with Conventional Literacy Outcomes

Predictor Variable	Decoding	Reading Comprehension	Spelling	Multivariate Significance
AK	++	+	++	Yes
PA	+	+	+	Yes
Concepts about print	+	++	+	Sometimes
RAN letters and digits	+	+	NA	Yes
RAN objects and colors	+	+	+	Yes
Writing or writing name	+	+	+	Yes
Oral language	+	+	+	Sometimes
Phonological STM	—	+	+	Yes
Visual perception	—	—	+	No
Print awareness	—	+	NA	NA

Note: ++ = strong relationship based on zero-order correlations; + = moderate relationship based on zero-order correlations; — = weak relationship based on zero-order correlations; NA = no relevant data available for analysis.

Overall Summary: *These results provide compelling evidence as to what some of the important early developing precursor skills are to reading, writing, and spelling development. Across three different outcome domains—decoding, reading comprehension, and spelling—a consistent collection of predictor variables emerged that possess moderate to strong relationships to these important outcomes. In many cases, these variables provided significant prediction of later literacy outcomes even when other variables were controlled. Based on these findings, there is strong evidence for the importance of AK, PA, rapid naming tasks, “writing or writing name,” and phonological STM as predictors of later reading and writing skills. Less consistent evidence exists for the importance of oral language and concepts about print as predictors of later reading and writing skills, mainly because these variables do not always continue to predict literacy outcomes once other variables, such as AK or PA, are controlled.*

The important predictor variables continued to have moderate to strong relationships with later measures of literacy regardless of the age at which the predictor variable was assessed (e.g., preschool versus kindergarten) or the age at which the outcome variable was assessed (e.g., kindergarten versus first or second grade). Although there were some minor differences involving age of assessment of the predictor variable, age did not influence the strongest predictor variables. Greater differences were observed depending on when the outcome assessments were administered; generally, there were higher correlations with kindergarten outcomes than with first- or second-grade outcomes. However, this is most likely due to the closer time proximity of these assessments than to age differences, per se.

Implications for Research and Practice: *The results suggest a need for more careful study of the role of oral language in literacy development. Some aspects of oral language were clearly more strongly related to later literacy outcomes than were other aspects of oral language. Notably, measures of simple vocabulary knowledge were fairly weak predictors of later decoding and reading comprehension, and these measures tended to not remain significant when other variables were included in multivariate analyses. In contrast, more complex aspects of oral language, such as grammar, definitional vocabulary, and listening comprehension, had more substantial predictive relations with later conventional literacy skills. These results suggest that an instructional focus on vocabulary during the preschool and kindergarten years is likely a necessary but insufficient approach to promoting later literacy success.*

The value of these variables for predicting later literacy success is without question, and future research could help to provide systematic investigation into which combinations of predictors would work best in various contexts. There is less certainty that teaching these variables early on will result in later achievement improvement. This is because these studies provide correlational data, and such data are not sufficient for determining a causal connection between these factors and later learning.

Results from the analysis of findings related to PA appear to have instructional implications for early childhood educators. These findings suggest the importance of attending to children’s progress along a developmental continuum of PA, rather than an emphasis on particular PA skills. These analyses did not reveal important differences in phonological memory, synthesis, or segmentation. However, they do suggest an order to the development of all of these skills across a progression of smaller and smaller units of sound. Rather than trying to teach any particular

skill (such as phonological STM), it may be of greater value to ensure that progress is occurring and that children are becoming progressively more able to deal with smaller and smaller units of sound (e.g. words, syllables, onset rimes, phonemes).

How literacy components should be promoted: Common to family, center-based, and community literacy development programs are 7 proven-effective or promising approaches:

- 1) training program workers and parents/family to carry out the following six literacy development approaches effectively;
- 2) strengthening oral language through high quality talk/dialogue to build vocabulary, sentence complexity, communication of coherent thoughts, interactive give & take discussion skills, comprehension of ideas, and habits of curiosity and courtesy in exploring ideas;
- 3) helping the child learn to read and understand environmental print;
- 4) making widely available many attractive books and other written materials appropriate for the children, and promoting reading them extensively throughout each day;
- 5) taking advantage of opportune times and activities for dialogue or reading to occur, including not only independent reading but also adult-child literacy interactions during meals, travel, dressing, and play;
- 6) assuring that reading experiences are high quality, including a) reading to or with the child, b) listening to the child reading and then responding; c) frequent reading; d) repeated readings of the same book; e) teaching & engagement techniques (questions, labeling, responses and feedback to the child, positive reinforcement, paraphrasing, variation of the “demand level” according to child language and ability level);
- 7) tutoring the child in developing reading skills of types and levels appropriate for the child (including letter knowledge, phonemic awareness, word recognition, print concepts, comprehension, and writing).

The NELP meta-analyses investigated the effectiveness of the primary program approaches, instructional strategies, and practices thought to be effective in enhancing “*conventional literacy and its predecessor skills in early childhood*”. Effectiveness was based on calculation of Effect Sizes [ES] for each intervention which are categorized as: small = 0.30 – 0.49, moderate = 0.50 – 0.79, and large = 0.80 or greater. The significance of an effect size is also calculated by taking into account the number of studies available from the intervention.

Instructional Practices That Enhance Early Literacy Skills: *The panel also set out to identify studies that employed experimental or quasi-experimental methods to determine the effectiveness of instructional strategies, programs, or practices in imparting conventional literacy skills or any of these precursor skills to young children. The panel did not set out to find evaluations of previously identified programs or interventions but searched for all such studies that had been published in refereed journals in the English language. The panelists then grouped*

the identified studies into five analytical categories. The categories of intervention and the number of studies within each category included the following:

- Code-focused interventions (n = 78): Interventions designed to teach children skills related to cracking the alphabetic code. Most code-focused interventions included PA instruction.
- Shared-reading interventions (n = 19): Interventions involving reading books to children. These interventions included studies of simple shared reading and those that encouraged various forms of reader-child interactions around the material being read.
- Parent and home programs (n = 32): Interventions using parents as agents of intervention. These interventions may have involved teaching parents instructional techniques to use with their children at home to stimulate children's linguistic or cognitive development.
- Preschool and kindergarten programs (n = 33): Studies evaluating any aspect of a preschool or kindergarten program. Ten studies in this category concerned one particular intervention (the Abecedarian Project). Other studies evaluated effects of educational programs, curricula, or policies, such as extended-year experience, on kindergartners.
- Language-enhancement interventions (n = 28): Studies examining the effectiveness of an instructional effort aimed at improving young children's language development.

The code-focused instructional efforts reported statistically significant and moderate to large effects across a broad spectrum of early literacy outcomes. Code-focused interventions consistently demonstrated positive effects directly on children's conventional literacy skills. Book-sharing interventions produced statistically significant and moderate-sized effects on children's print knowledge and oral language skills, and the home and parent programs yielded statistically significant and moderate to large effects on children's oral language skills and general cognitive abilities. Studies of preschool and kindergarten programs produced significant and moderate to large effects on spelling and reading readiness. Finally, language-enhancement interventions were successful at increasing children's oral language skills to a large and statistically significant degree. Together, these findings suggest that there are many things that parents and preschools can do to improve the literacy development of their young children and that different approaches influence the development of a different pattern of essential skills.

There is great interest in the idea of providing age-appropriate interventions. However, there were few important differences among these categories of study with regard to age; one important exception was in the area of language interventions, which showed greater effectiveness early on. Otherwise, when age-level comparisons were possible, the large and significant effects of the various interventions were obtained with groups of both younger and older children. This means that most of the types of instruction that are effective in kindergarten are very similar to those that can be used in preschool. Unfortunately, there have not been direct tests of age differentiation in early literacy instruction across kindergarten and preschool, and

there are still too few studies of preschool literacy instruction to provide comparison results that can be embraced with a high degree of certainty.

Few interventions improved conventional literacy skills or the precursor skills most related to later literacy growth, the exception being code-focused interventions. One reason so few interventions were found to foster improvement in these measures is that few intervention studies with young children included measures of such outcomes. Generally, code-focused intervention studies included such measures, while studies of other instructional approaches did not. It is possible that some of these other approaches may also be effective in improving early literacy skills, but that can only be determined through studies employing such measures. Code-focused programs, book sharing, programs for parents to use at home, and language-enhancement instruction all improved children's oral language skills. The panel wanted to determine whether any child characteristics influenced the effectiveness of the instructional interventions. In most cases, the panel could not determine the role of children's characteristics because of reporting limitations in the original studies. In general, however, variables, such as age, SES, and race, did not seem to alter the effectiveness of the various interventions, and it will take future research to determine whether certain interventions would be effective with particular groups of children.

It should be noted that the interventions that produced large and positive effects on children's code-related skills and conventional literacy skills were usually conducted as one-on-one or small-group instructional activities. These activities tended to be teacher-directed and focused on helping children learn skills by engaging in the use of those skills. Almost all of the code-focused interventions included some form of PA intervention. These PA activities generally required children to detect or manipulate (e.g., delete or blend) small units of sounds in words. Few of the interventions used rhyming activities as the primary teaching approach. Teaching children about the alphabet (e.g., letter names or letter sounds) or simple phonics tasks (e.g., blending letter sounds to make words) seemed to enhance the effects of PA training.

Of the five NELP chapters on interventions, the oral language chapter is more readily understood by persons lacking knowledge of advanced statistics and of the reading terminology such as phonological awareness, decoding, and phonological STM. Oral language is defined in NELP as: *the ability to produce, comprehend, or both aspects of spoken language, including semantics, syntax, or both; often measured by a standardized test, such as the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test or the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals.*

Thus language development addressing primarily oral language is an easier topic for reading research novices to start on deciphering the NELP analyses. Also it provides a smooth transition into the issues regarding Family Literacy programs which are addressed immediately after the Language Development chapter findings.

Language Development (CHAPTER 7)

Description of the Language-Enhancement Studies: The studies of language-enhancement interventions used various outcome measures to evaluate the effectiveness of these approaches. All of these studies included some measure of oral language development—most often a vocabulary

measure—while others evaluated the effects of language-enhancement efforts on phonemic awareness; cognitive ability; decoding; memory; print knowledge; rapid automatic naming (RAN); general readiness; and reading. No studies evaluated alphabet knowledge (AK), spelling, visual motor skills, or writing. Although these studies considered many different learning outcomes, there were usually too few studies to allow for analysis of the overall impact of language interventions on these variables (there had to be three studies that measured a particular construct to allow the results to be meta-analyzed). Table 7.1 includes the average effect sizes (ESs) presented in alphabetical order, numbers of studies, and significance of the interventions on the various outcomes.

Table 7.1. Estimates of Effect Sizes Across Outcome Domains for Language-Enhancement Interventions

Dependent Variable	Fixed ES	Random ES	95% CI		N of Studies	p for ES
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Cognitive ability	0.85	0.85	0.27	1.42	1	0.004
Oral language	0.61	0.63	0.42	0.84	19	0.0001
PA	0.55	0.57	0.01	1.14	2	0.05
Print knowledge	0.81	0.81	0.20	1.41	1	0.009
RAN	0.54	0.54	-0.05	1.13	1	0.075
Readiness	0.62	0.62	0.08	1.16	1	0.024
Reading	0.20	0.36	-0.38	1.10	2	0.343

Note: CI = CI based on random-effect model.

To be included in the analyses reported in this chapter, studies had to consider the

Table 7.3. Distribution of Outcome Measures Used in 19 Language-Enhancement Studies

Outcome Assessments	Percentage of Studies
Language output (e.g., mean length of utterance, frequency of word use)	15
Gains in specific words or grammatical structures	10
Composite language scores	26
Complexity of multiword utterances	26
Listening comprehension	16
Literacy outcomes	15

effectiveness of some instructional effort implemented to improve young children’s language ability and skills. The 19 studies varied considerably in outcomes measured, intervention durations, and ages of the children. About 70 percent of the studies included preschoolers or kindergarten children, with the rest considering the language growth of infants and toddlers (only one study included infants below one year of age). About half of the studies involved a relatively short intervention (less than 10 weeks), and, of those with longer interventions, the length was still usually no more than a few months, with a couple lasting for an entire school year. About 40 percent of the studies focused on children with language and learning delays. Most of the studies used random assignment of children to conditions (68 percent), with outcomes measured soon after the end of the intervention (79 percent). Only four of the 19 studies evaluated sustained effects at some later point after the completion of the intervention. The person administering the intervention ranged from a researcher or clinician (53 percent of the studies) to teachers (26 percent) or parents (16 percent), and, in one study, a computer administered the intervention. To measure the interventions’ effectiveness on children’s learning, a broad range of outcomes was included in these 19 studies. These are summarized in Table 7.3. There was a great deal of variability across the 19 studies in the type of intervention implemented. In general, interventions differed on such factors as amount of direction or structure provided, the social context of the intervention, feedback to the child, and the type of language skill targeted for change. A typical intervention evaluated here might be referred to as focused-stimulation interventions (26 percent). These were usually conducted within a naturalistic context in which the child heard specified language input (e.g., vocabulary, question types) often in game-like or play activities within their daily routines. Another frequent approach had children engaged in language activities, such as responding to wh questions or talking about similarities and differences in pictures (21 percent). Two other categories of language interventions were similar in the direct training of components of language, such as phonology (16 percent) or sentence structure (16 percent). Some studies did not easily fit into any of these categories. For example, only single studies examined the following approaches: the use of computer feedback to train vocabulary; building language through motor exercises; and building listening comprehension through exposure to stories read aloud.

Do Language-Enhancement Interventions Improve Children’s Language and Literacy Learning?

The studies that looked at oral language development outcomes were grouped into three overlapping clusters for analysis. The first cluster,

general oral language enhancement, included any measures of oral language, and this cluster included all 19 studies. A second cluster of eight studies, language composite, was drawn from these 19 studies and looked at composite or general measures of oral language development. Finally, a third group of 10 studies, oral language (vocabulary enhancement), focused specifically on vocabulary improvement alone.

General Oral Language Enhancement as a Function of Language Intervention: *These 19 studies attempted to improve young children's performance on a wide variety of oral language outcomes, including expressive or receptive vocabulary skills and grammatical development. The interventions were delivered in differing ways but usually in a small-group format. Parents, teachers, graduate trainees, speech-language clinicians, or trained home visitors delivered the interventions. These interventions were varied and included efforts to teach specific words, phonology, or morpho-syntax, incidental teaching, enriched play experiences, and encouragement of creative thinking. Children with and without language problems were included, as were gifted kindergarten children and children in low- and middle-income families.*

The evaluation of language-enhancement interventions across these 19 studies showed that such interventions successfully improved children's oral language development. The average ES for these 19 studies is 0.63 (using a random-effect model), which is considered to be a moderate-sized effect.

Oral Language (Language Composite) Enhancement as a Function of Language Intervention: *Eight studies contributed to the analysis of a mixed set of language outcomes (hence the term language composite). Among these, children with language delays or atypical communication skills were included in four of the studies, and toddlers or preschoolers were included as subjects in six of the studies. The interventions varied considerably, from focused or direct training methods to training contextualized in adult-child interactive play or storybook-reading sessions to a motor-skill or physical-education context to which enriched language was added. For example, an interactive, child-centered stimulation program delivered by speech-language pathologists and focusing on vocabulary expansion and two- and three-word combinations was the enhancement delivered in one study of late-talking 21- to 30-month-olds. In a second study of children with language delays or deviant communication skills, adult-child dyads with carefully scripted adult roles moved from imitation of child play toward more mature cooperative interactions, thus promoting an interpersonal context for communication instead of one directed more pointedly at speech production and comprehension. The comparison group received a more traditional, language-focused intervention. A third study provided language-enhanced physical-education activities for the treatment group, while the comparison group engaged in physical-education activities without language enhancement, with children in special education, typical pre-kindergarten and Head Start pre-kindergarten classes, in 24 sessions in an eight-week time frame. Yet another study varied instructional-unit size for kindergartners in the training of listening comprehension, using story reading in each intervention session, and comparing 1:1, 1:7, and 1:15 teacher-to-child ratios. Although diverse in their intervention methods, agents, target areas of language enhancement, and rationales, the studies share the characteristic of casting a rather broad net of assessments as outcomes of interest. Virtually all of the studies were conducted in a center-based or school-based context, with the exception of one reporting that the enhancement sessions took place uniformly in*

one locale for each child, either at the child’s preschool or at home. The evaluation of language enhancement versus control across these eight studies yielded a significant result for the dependent measure, oral language (language composite). It is therefore worthwhile to report the measures represented in the composite group. These included measures of expressive vocabulary, oral language, verbal IQ, listening comprehension, language skills (not otherwise specified), phonemic awareness, concept of word, memory, oral-expression composite, RAN graphological and RAN non-graphological, reading comprehension, and visual motor skill.

Oral Language (vocabulary enhancement) as a Function of Language Intervention: *The 10 studies included in this cluster were an array of language enhancements, usually delivered in small-group format in several sessions over several weeks, and almost all guided by teachers, graduate trainees, or speech-language clinicians. Two of the studies used parents as interventionists, and one employed computer-based training of vocabulary. The focus of language enhancement ranged from specific target-word learning to incidental teaching to encouragement of enriched play experiences or enhancement of creative thinking to training via phonological intervention or morpho-syntax intervention. The oral language and vocabulary outcomes included expressive or receptive vocabulary skills and additional oral language abilities. Children with and without language problems were sampled in the mix of 10 studies, as were gifted kindergartners. The evaluation of language enhancement versus control across the 10 studies yielded a non-significant result for the dependent measure, oral language–vocabulary. Again, this finding is limited by the strict inclusion criteria applied to all studies examined in the NELP report and by the intervention versus no-treatment comparison methodology required for this analysis. See Table 7.4 for a comparison of outcomes by type of language measure used (simple vocabulary measures versus composite measures of language).*

Table 7.4. Effect Sizes of Oral Language Interventions on Measures of Simple Vocabulary and Composite Measures of Oral Language

Measures	Mean ES	SE	95% CI		t	N ^a	p
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound			
Vocabulary	0.54	0.13	0.28	0.79	4.14	10	< 0.0002
Composite	0.80	0.22	0.37	1.22	3.68	8	< 0.0002

^a One of the 19 studies included in this analysis contributed both measure and is reflected in the total n.

Even though it is impossible to provide further analysis of those outcome measures that were used in fewer than three studies, it is important to note that various non-oral language outcomes were examined in several studies and often with good results. For example, two studies considered the impact of oral language interventions on children’s phonological awareness (PA) and found significant improvement. Similarly, there were significant and sizable gains evident in individual studies that considered cognitive ability, print knowledge, and reading readiness. With more language-intervention studies that include these types of outcome measures in the future, it will be possible to determine whether other aspects of literacy-related learning are enhanced.

Are Interventions That Target Children Younger Than Three Years Old More Effective Than Those with Older Children? Four intervention studies tested the

effectiveness of a language intervention for children younger than three years old; three included toddlers (25.6 to 31 months), and one targeted infants (9–15 months). These four interventions varied somewhat, but all were toy centered, three were child directed with an emphasis on giving language stimulation in response to the child's interest, and the one with infants involved provision of different approaches to encourage vocal sound and word approximations. The four interventions ranged in duration from one to three months and so were relatively brief in nature. These four studies were contrasted with the other 15 interventions that had targeted children older than three years of age (range 3.5 to five years). These 15 interventions also varied greatly on many dimensions (e.g., duration, intervention approach, person providing the intervention). Significant differences were found between the two groups of studies with greater effectiveness found for the interventions that included children younger than three years of age. These results suggest that intervening earlier versus later is advantageous for enhancing children's language development.

Does the Effectiveness of Language Interventions Depend on the Agent (e.g., teacher, parent, computer) Who Delivers It? *There were inadequate numbers of studies to make comparisons with regard to intervention agents. It was not possible, for instance, to determine whether teachers were as effective as speech-language pathologists. Some studies involved both parent and professionals as agents of intervention. However, there were adequate numbers of studies to compare teachers to parents. Three of the studies used teachers as interventionists, while four used parents. All three of the teacher-interventionist studies took place in kindergartens, without particular note of language delay or impairment in the samples studied; two of these included explicit teacher training in the program package or method of question generation that was the target of intervention. In the third, pre-service teachers conducted the intervention sessions by reading prepared stories and instructions for the questions asked about the stories. In contrast to the studies using teachers as agents of intervention, those that employed parents as interventionists included children both at and younger than kindergarten age, with half of the four studies including samples of children with language difficulties or delays. The comparison between intervention agents—teacher versus parent—yielded no significant difference in outcomes. It did not seem to matter who delivered the interventions, as children benefited in either case. Again, the small study set in this contrast limits its utility, as does the marked differences in the types of interventions being implemented by teacher versus parent as agent.*

Are Interventions That Are Structured Such That Feedback Is Given to the Child After He or She Responds More Effective Than Those That Do Not Provide Feedback? *This question was possible to address because four of the intervention studies were similar in terms of providing some form of feedback to a child based on the type of response the child gave. These four studies were contrasted with eight intervention studies that did not give any form of systematic feedback following a child's response. No significant differences were found in intervention effectiveness as a function of the provision of feedback following a child response.*

Are Interventions That Require a Child to Respond More Effective Than Those That Do Not Have This Requirement? *Seven intervention studies were designed to require a child*

receiving the intervention to provide a response. In all seven studies, the child was required to respond in a range of ways, such as (1) answer a question (e.g., “What is this called?” while the interventionist points to or shows a picture or object), (2) repeat a modeled utterance, (3) describe characteristics of objects or ask questions about them, or (4) provide the name of a toy after hearing its name. Thus, for all seven of these interventions, the interventionist provided a certain degree of structure that might be expected to facilitate greater language learning. Five were carried out with five-year-olds, and two interventions targeted two- and three-year-olds. Six intervention studies that did not require a child to give a response were contrasted with the seven studies that did. All six of these were also included as part of the eight studies in the previous section that did not provide feedback to a child’s response. When these two groups of studies were examined for differences in effectiveness, no significant differences were found ($Q[1,11] = 0.35, p = 0.56$).

Summary and Conclusions: *Interventions designed to improve young children’s oral language skills have been effective. These interventions enhance oral language when it is defined as a diverse set of outcomes, such as expressive and receptive language skills, phonemic awareness, and verbal intelligence. It might be expected that oral language–enhancement interventions would work better with children who struggle with language or have some form of language impairment, but these analyses suggest this not to be the case, though differences might emerge from a larger sample of studies. The one difference that did seem to matter in the effectiveness of language-enhancement interventions concerned the children’s ages. Older children, between three and five years of age, did not get as big a language boost from these interventions as did the younger children. It would appear that intervening earlier rather than later is advantageous, although the exact process of this impact is not addressed here. Similarly, there seemed to be no key features to these interventions that consistently gave an advantage. All of these programs seemed to work. In fact, of the 19 studies, 18 had individual outcome effects that were moderate to large. There is a set of questions of both pressing practical significance and enormous theoretical importance that could not be addressed in these analyses. These are challenging questions that, if answered, would inform the field about teaching materials or strategies that provide maximum benefit for children’s language growth in the birth-to-five-year-old age range.*

Among those questions are the following:

- *Is there benefit to the adoption of specific approaches to teaching in language interventions (e.g., direct instruction versus naturalistic or milieu-based interventions)?*
- *Can we comment on the effectiveness of specific curricula developed for the birth-to-five-year-old population (e.g., computer software–based curricula, commercially available curricula with instruction delivered through teachers and curricular materials, researcher-mounted curricula delivered through teachers, parents, or researchers)?*
- *Is there information on best practices for delivering language interventions for specific populations of children (e.g., children with language impairments, children who are English-language (or whatever the language of school instruction is) learners, children in low-income families)?*
- *Does success vary as a function of the agent of intervention (e.g., researchers, speech-language pathologists, other professionals)?*
- *Does outcome differ with the intensity of the intervention (e.g., frequency of applications per week, group size, group versus individual training)?*
- *How shall we conceptualize the interaction of intervention strategy, frequency of application, and age group?*

Considerations for Future Research: *The following areas of research are suggested as a starting point for generating a better understanding of what interventions work and for which children, as well as the aspects of early language and literacy development that they enhance:*

- *examinations of language curricula and programs addressing the ages at which they are most effective.*
- *more replication studies of the interventions that show positive effects.*
- *attention to large cohort studies that examine programs that might show efficacy in enhancing specific aspects of language development. These include expressive and receptive language for vocabulary, syntax, semantics, and pragmatic skills.*
- *attention to the need for a more unifying terminology of characteristics of children at risk for language problems and those identified as language impaired.*
- *more longitudinal research that provides information on the sustainability of the effectiveness of intervention programs.*

The importance of addressing these questions is clear, and the information we lack precludes making careful and precise statements to guide practice. While an unsatisfying conclusion, this is nonetheless a highly pertinent one; gaps in systematically collected data (that is, the studies meeting criteria for the evaluation of language interventions) leave us with only a sketchy response to extremely important curricular and intervention questions.

Efforts of Family Literacy programs: Promotion of language and literacy by family literacy programs currently is neither extensive nor intensive. [present NFP & PAT language & literacy practices] These programs annually serve approximately 2% of all children under age 5. If only children and their parents from low income and language families (approximately one-third) are considered the target group, then perhaps 6% of those targeted are served each year; thus, roughly 10-15% of the target group is being served for at least a year or two before kindergarten. This means that more than five of every six families anticipated to need training and coaching on literacy promotion will not receive the needed assistance from family literacy programs. It should be noted that children spend approximately 80% of their waking hours before kindergarten in the care of their family or relatives. Families are able to provide one-on-one language and literacy interaction with their children, though their available time must be spread across the number of children in the family. Since parents have four times the hours available and typically only one-fourth to one-half as many children to work with as compared with center-based teachers, it seems logical to engage and train as many families as possible to cultivate the language and literacy of their own children. In providing the needed parent training and support, family literacy programs should partner with center-based programs, especially Head Start and preschool programs which have greater literacy programming capacity than the majority of child care programs. However, most contact of Head Start and preschools is with four-year-olds, starting after language and literacy development have been determined for three or four full years by the cultural habits of families.

The literacy promotion habits of families with young children in SC have neither been recorded nor reported, despite more than two decades of family literacy programs since being initiated

through the Target 2000 legislation enacted in 1989. For most of the two decades, parenting/family literacy programs were primarily Parents as Teachers plus a few Parent Child Home programs, and in recent years the Nurse Family Partnership. These programs have gathered very little data on the quantity and quality of family literacy practices such as the number of times parents read to and with their children each week, what they read, how engaged the children are, or what skills the children have developed. PAT programming decisions are typically decentralized, with the content and methods being decided by each family in consultation with the home visitor. Little data on child literacy growth has been generated, thus literacy results accountability is not possible. Programs managed by the SCDE and First Steps have gathered participation data in the past, but only the 2009 High/Scope evaluation has provided any evaluation data on literacy skills growth. Data from the Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI) reported to First Steps by its county-sponsored programs show improvement in the literacy practices of both parents and their children increasing during participation in interactive reading promoted by family literacy programs. Evaluation data from national studies of the family literacy programs has been limited in amount, methodological rigor, and findings on program impact, though with a few gratifying exceptions. The findings for language and literacy growth have been even scarcer, since the parenting, family literacy, and family support programs usually address a wide variety of outcomes other than literacy, as determined jointly by the family served and the program worker (often a home visitor). PAT has sponsored a number of evaluations using correlation analysis that found modest positive results. However, a control-experimental evaluation by SRI International for PAT in Northern California found no impact on vocabulary development (near-zero effect sizes of 0.02 and 0.06 for the PPVT at age 3). NFP has carried out randomized trials to evaluate subsequent academic outcomes for the children it served, though its service is from late in pregnancy only to age 2. Its modest effect size of 0.3 or less for early language development and later academic skills including reading was achieved without the opportunity to impact the potential for early reading and language development occurring after the 2nd birthday. Overall, the national family literacy evaluation findings are at best quite limited, and most of the results for literacy are in the small to moderate range.

Language development is one of the primary foundations for literacy which can be readily understood by most persons, as contrasted with phonics, phonemic awareness, memory retrieval, and other skills which are typically unfamiliar concepts. Language skills such as vocabulary, listening skills, and expressive ability are related to important literacy competencies, especially reading comprehension and writing which become the primary focus of literacy after decoding has been mastered, usually by grade 3. The NELP analysis had access to very few longitudinal studies past 1st and 2nd grades, thus provides little perspective for the impact of language abilities on reading comprehension and writing proficiency in grades 3 and above (i.e., “reading to learn” and “writing to inform”). Excerpts from the NELP report indicate

that as much or more remains to be learned about language and literacy as what can be verified now from “evidence-based” and “proven-effective” programs and practices.

Reading Skills Development: Numerous published studies of the literacy practices of family members and center-based workers have focused on interaction methods between adult and child while sharing books and other literacy materials, as well as adult-child dialogue. Some of the studies are simply observational (no comparison group), with the adult and child reading or talking, usually together, but sometimes for the child reading and writing alone. Many other studies are experimental with a child and an adult or just a child reading & writing in one or more ways that are compared with similar children and adults not involved in applying the specified literacy approaches. These studies have addressed the following practices:

1. Reading: a) adult reading to or with child, b) listening to child reading and then responding; c) reading frequently; d) repeated readings of a book; e) teaching & engagement techniques (questions, labeling, responses & feedback to the child, positive reinforcement, paraphrasing, variation of demand level according to child language level and overall ability).
2. Parent tutoring/teaching the child to acquire reading skills such as letter knowledge, phonemic awareness, word recognition, etc.
3. Learning from environmental print
4. Dialogue/talk
5. Location/activity of talk or reading: with family during a) b) dressing; c) bath; d) toy & other play, e) car travel; and in center-based programs through a) whole group; b) small group; c) individualized; d) in activity centers; and e) meals;
6. Availability of books
7. Parent beliefs about reading & literacy development of their children
8. Dialogic reading

Most of the evidence from these studies is correlational, while a much smaller number of evaluations used comparison groups, some few of which were randomized at the program, classroom, or child level. The findings are both extensive and revealing, thus provide useful guidance for what should be done to enhance language and literacy growth. These findings will be presented first as summarized through meta-analyses and reviews of the research.

Summaries of the research findings are helpful, but their limitations must also be considered because of numerous substantive and methodological concerns. At the simplest level, the summaries all find that parent support for literacy has been effective for various competencies. In a meta-analysis of 33 studies, Bus & colleagues found that *“parent-preschooler reading is related to outcome measures such as language growth, emergent literacy, and reading achievement. The overall effect size of $d = .59$ indicates that book reading explains about 8% of*

the variance in the outcome measures. The results support the hypothesis that book reading, in particular, affects acquisition of the written language register. The effect of parent-preschooler reading is not dependent on the socioeconomic status of the families or on several methodological differences between the studies. However, the effect seems to become smaller as soon as children become conventional readers and are able to read on their own." The effect size overall was 0.59: (0.67 for language skills, 0.58 for emergent literacy, and 0.55 for reading achievement, all indicating a moderate level of impact). However, the studies reviewed in the meta-analysis varied substantially for the types of interventions. Even though the sole intervention variable used in the Bus meta-analysis was frequency of joint book reading, this in effect lumped together all types of joint book reading practices and all ages ranging from 26 to 96 months at the time of the outcome analysis. Also, only 9 of the 33 studies were experimental, with the other studies correlational, longitudinal, or retrospective. The largest effect size was for language skills, showing that joint book reading was substantially successful in developing the "written literacy register" of books for grammar, syntax, and a variety of sentence forms. For early emergent literacy versus later reading skills, the impact of book reading frequency was similar, thus indicating that *"preschoolers who are already ahead in literacy proficiency maintain their position relative to other children"*. The benefit from joint reading was smaller for older children, probably *"because the school environment or independent reading by the child may compensate for the lack of family reading experiences. However, book reading seems to make the start at school easier. This is particularly important for children from low socioeconomic status families. The [declining] age effect [of joint book reading] is reduced for children from lower class families. This is because these children are less stimulated to read independently."* Therefore joint book reading at home appears to remain important for their literacy development. This speculation, however, was based on only two studies.

A second meta-analysis was performed by Senechal & colleagues using only experimental studies to investigate family literacy interventions in grades K-3. Their meta-analysis investigated three types of family literacy activities. *"The first category consists of studies in which parents were asked to read to their children. Another category includes interventions in which the parents were asked to listen to children read books. The final category includes those interventions in which parents were trained to do literacy exercises with their children."* The meta-analysis produced effect sizes of 0.65 overall, 1.15 for tutoring a child to read, 0.52 for listening to a child read, and only 0.18 for reading to a child. The insignificant result for parents reading to their children appears to provide some confirmation for Bus' finding that joint parental reading with children declines with age; however, the Senechal meta-analysis for grades K-3 found that listening to the child read is significant, whereas reading to the child is not. One important qualification is that Senechal omitted oral language as an outcome. So it

appears likely that such oral language benefits as vocabulary development continue to result from reading to a child as well as from listening to a child read during the early school years.

Neither the Bus nor the Senechal meta-analyses generate results identified and evaluated at a detail level, for example the benefits from listening to a child read gained by “*providing corrective feedback, encouraging the child to use context clues to aid in comprehension or praising and reading alone with the child to promote self-confidence and motivation.*” Such specific practices analysis must be extracted from individual research reports and then summarized overall, a very laborious and confusing undertaking. However, there is extensive evidence that reading to and with young children has been shown effective in building oral language, comprehension, literacy register, print awareness, and other written language skills. But just because it was shown in published research studies that these skills can be improved does not explain how these skills can best be cultivated through the use of specific effective practices. Understanding these effective practices and helping families and center-based workers to adapt and carry them out with fidelity is the enormous challenge facing early childhood literacy development efforts, both local and statewide, as envisaged by the Read to Succeed legislation. Moreover, parents must be coached and supported by well-trained workers who themselves understand and can communicate the specifics of the effective practices. Achieving significant improvement in the language and literacy skills of young children, especially those from families with low income and limited education, requires support and guidance for the families to adopt and carry out effective literacy practices. Moreover such guidance and coaching depends on well-trained home visitors and other family literacy workers. Similar training and guidance is likewise necessary for center-based workers to cultivate the language and literacy skills and nurture the interests of young children at-risk of low language, literacy, and reading proficiency.

Research findings such as those reviewed by Bus, Senechal, and Scarborough were subjected to rigorous statistical investigation through the NELP meta- analyses. The NELP report found benefits from parent and home literacy activities, especially for oral language development. However, the NELP meta- analyses revealed huge gaps in rigorous research for most facets of literacy development through parent and home literacy efforts.

Home and Parent Programs (CHAPTER 5)

Overall Estimates of Intervention Impacts: *As can be seen in Table 5.1, home and parent programs had statistically significant effects on measures of oral language (small) and cognitive ability (moderate to large). There were two other statistically significant effects of home and parent programs (i.e., memory, writing); however, each of these effects was based on a single study, which represents too few studies to allow unambiguous interpretation. Examination of the confidence intervals (CIs) for the oral language and cognitive ability ES estimates shows that they were overlapping. Hence, the effects of home and parent programs were statistically equivalent on these*

two outcomes. Overall, the results reported in Table 5.1 indicate that home and parent intervention programs included in these studies had a statistically significant and positive impact both on young children’s oral language skills and general cognitive abilities.

Table 5.1. Estimates of Effect Sizes Across Outcomes for Home and Parent Literacy Programs for Each Dependent Variable

Dependent Variable	Fixed ES	Random ES	95% CI		N of Studies	p for ES
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
AK	-0.03	-0.03	-0.31	0.24	1	0.81
Cognitive ability	0.65	0.92	0.22	1.62	6	0.01
Memory	1.17	1.17	0.50	1.84	1	0.0006
Oral language	0.28	0.37	0.18	0.55	18	0.0001
PA	0.22	0.21	-0.12	0.54	2	0.21
Reading	0.28	0.28	-0.12	0.68	1	0.17
Reading readiness	-0.05	0.05	-0.33	0.22	1	0.71
Spelling	0.09	0.09	-0.18	0.37	1	0.51
Writing	0.52	0.52	0.23	0.81	1	0.0005

Note: CI = CI for random-effect model.

Analysis of Intervention Effects by Type of Intervention: The 18 studies that included oral language as an outcome were diverse in the focus, content, and duration of intervention studied. Two studies examined the effect of training parents to use dialogic reading (DR) (see Chapter Four). Six studies used a home visiting program to either teach parents general stimulation activities for their children or teach parents more focal oral language stimulation activities. Five additional studies taught parents similar general stimulation or language interaction strategies in a university or clinic setting. One of these studies was the Abecedarian project, in which parents received training and support for more than four years. Two studies taught parents to act as speech-language clinicians for their children with speech-language disorders. Two studies investigated the impacts of having parents engage in activities coordinated with activities occurring in their children’s kindergarten or preschool. Finally, one study examined the impact of an intervention program that included both parent training and weekly parent-child sessions at the children’s preschool.

Given the variability in the types of interventions (e.g., from general stimulation programs for infants to parents acting as speech-language therapists for their children with speech-language disorders) as well as the relatively low number of studies in this group, it was difficult to identify meaningful subgroups of studies to examine possible moderators of ES estimates. More than half of the studies yielded moderate to large positive ESs. Interventions in the six studies that yielded near zero to negative ESs seemed not to share any obviously meaningful characteristic. One of the studies was the Abecedarian project which included one of the more focused and intensive parent interventions. One of the studies examined the effects of a general home-visiting program by paraprofessionals and nurses. One study examined the effects of teaching parents to encourage and support children’s

narratives. Two studies concerned the impact of parents acting as intervention agents for their children with speech-language disorders, and one study examined the impact of adding a parent-based intervention component to a center-based program.

Summary and Conclusions: *Results from this meta-analysis of the impacts of home and parent programs on the literacy skills of young children indicate that these interventions yield a moderate to large effect on oral language outcomes and general cognitive abilities. These effects appear to be robust to variations in children's ages and demographic characteristics of families. Additionally, the effects of these programs on children's oral language skills were consistent across measures of simple vocabulary and measures of more complex oral language skills. Although home and parent programs could impact other aspects of literacy, only a handful of studies included these other outcomes, and no other outcome was included in more than two of these studies (for example, alphabet knowledge [AK] was included in only one study, and phonological awareness [PA] in only two). Therefore, it was not possible to determine whether there were other effects of home and parent programs.*

The commonality across all of the programs examined by this group of studies is that they somehow involved parents as the agents of intervention for children. Nevertheless, these programs varied greatly in potentially important ways. For example, some of the programs had more general goals (such as trying to improve children's health, behavior, or cognitive functioning); others aimed at more specific literacy goals (such as improving language skills). Because of the great amount of variation evident in these approaches, it is not yet possible to point to one or two examples of replicated models of successfully involving parents in enhancing their children's developmental outcomes. Additional research on identification of key aspects of home and parent programs is needed.

It was not possible to examine the question of the additive effects of home and parent programs in the context of high-quality center-based education programs. A few of the studies contrasted the effects of PI combined with an early childhood program with early childhood programs alone. In some cases, there was an additive effect of the parent program, and, in some cases, there was not. Many of the interventions included in this group of studies involved frequent home visits or one-on-one parent-training sessions. With the growing availability of universally available, federal- or state-funded early childhood education programs, understanding the impact of home and parent programs in the context of high-quality early childhood education deserves attention.

Ultimately, attention to the nature, quality, and scope of home and parent intervention programs is required to identify those likely to be successful and those less likely to be successful. In the majority of studies examined in this meta-analysis, the interventions were delivered to parents by the developers of the intervention or by those who were supervised closely by the developers. Whether such interventions could be taken to scale—implemented broadly by individuals with limited or no contact with the developers—is yet unknown.

Finally, it is important to recognize that none of the more commonly used programs of enhancing PI in young children's literacy development (e.g., Chicago Child-Parent Centers, Parents as Teachers) was evaluated in the set of studies reviewed. Consequently, the results of this meta-

analysis do not confirm effectiveness of these specific programs. Notably, only one study included in the analysis involved the typical model in which parent education, parenting education, and parent-child time was evaluated. Whereas this study yielded a moderate ES (0.74), the degree of PI was relatively intensive. In addition to participating in parent education and parenting classes, each mother worked as a teaching assistant in her child's classroom. In this context, the program was effective. Knowing whether all of these components and this level of intensity are required to achieve a positive outcome are questions that need to be addressed by future studies.

Shared Reading Interventions (CHAPTER 4):

Shared reading in a one-on-one relationship is primarily a family activity rather than a routine center-based learning support, since the pupil-teacher ratios in preschool make individual and even small group reading difficult to schedule routinely. This was learned by Whitehurst and colleagues in their dialogic reading research at child care centers. Their small group (1:5 ratios or less for 3 year-olds) dialogic reading program was discontinued in all centers as soon as the research on dialogic reading was completed. The discontinuation occurred because the teachers felt that the daily small group sessions were impractical to schedule. One-on-one shared reading in center-based programs seems impossible without the expensive services of a reading interventionist instructor.

Shared-reading practices—a parent reading a picture book with a toddler or a teacher reading a book to a class of preschoolers—are reading practices that are widely recommended to promote language and other skills related to early literacy development. Shared-reading activities are often recommended as the single most important thing adults can do to promote the emergent literacy skills of young children. Scarborough and Dobrich (see also Bus, van Ijzendoorn, & Pellegrini, 1995) provided a summary of studies that examined the effect of shared reading on young children's emergent literacy skills, and their results called into question the positive effects often claimed for reading or sharing picture books with young children.

Accordingly, the National Early Literacy Panel (NELP) examined the effects of interventions that primarily or entirely focused on shared reading. These shared-reading interventions included those that involved parents, teachers, or the combination of parents and teachers implementing some form of shared reading with children individually or in groups. The studies included in NELP's analysis of shared-reading interventions differ from those included in the earlier Scarborough and Dobrich and Bus et al. reports in a number of ways. NELP's analysis considered only those studies that had undergone some independent scientific review, included studies of both preschool and kindergarten children, and included only studies that evaluated the effects of interventions. NELP subjected the studies to a more rigorous set of screening criteria to increase the likelihood that the effects were causally interpretable, and finally, NELP included studies that had not yet been published at the time of the earlier review.

Children, in most of these studies, were exposed to some kind of a short-term (i.e., one to six months) shared-reading intervention that either represented a substantial increase in frequency of shared-reading activities or a change in the style of shared-reading activities (such as engaging the children

actively in telling the story rather than being passive listeners). There were many variations on these procedures, with some delivered by teachers and others by parents. Some studies examined whole-class interventions; one study examined the impact of providing books and information to parents during well-baby pediatrician visits; and two other studies examined the impact of computerized storybook interventions. Children in the comparison groups in these studies usually received less exposure to shared reading than did the children in the experimental group, and the shared reading they did receive rarely involved more than the adult just reading books to children. In most cases, the researcher did not specify or control what the children experienced in the comparison-group condition, meaning that these children's exposures to shared reading were to the usual practices of their teachers or parents. Consequently, these studies provide comparisons of some kind of intensified or improved effort to read to children with the usual kinds of shared reading that children commonly experience.

Overall Estimates of Intervention Impacts: Most of the shared-reading intervention studies measured the impact of the interventions on oral language skills (16 studies). Fewer studies examined the impact of these interventions on phonological awareness (PA) (two studies), general cognitive ability (one study), alphabet knowledge (AK) (two studies), print knowledge (four studies), reading readiness (one study), or writing (one study).

These studies indicate that shared-reading interventions can have a significant, substantial, and positive impact both on young children's oral language skills and on young children's print knowledge. Shared-reading interventions appear to have no impact on young children's PA skills or their AK; however, there have been too few studies using these—or other—outcome measures to provide a reliable estimated ES.

Table 4.1. Estimates of Effect Sizes Across Outcome Domains for Interventions Involving Shared Reading or Sharing Books with Young Children for Each Dependent Variable

Dependent Variable	Fixed ES	Random ES	95% CI		N of Studies	p for ES
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
AK	-0.06	-0.06	-0.47	0.35	2	0.78
Cognitive ability	0.10	0.10	-0.21	0.41	1	0.52
Oral language	0.66	0.73	0.27	1.20	16	0.002
PA	0.11	0.11	-0.15	0.35	2	0.42
Print knowledge	0.51	0.50	0.28	0.73	4	0.0001
Readiness	-0.14	-0.14	-0.64	0.36	1	0.58
Writing	0.52	0.52	0.23	0.81	1	0.0005

Note: CI = CI for random-effect model.

The largest impact of shared reading was on oral language outcomes, with an average ES of 0.73. This result means that, on average, children who received a shared-reading intervention scored, on oral language, more than 0.7 of a standard deviation higher than children who had not received

such instruction. To put this in context, if the average children who were not read to in the enhanced format scored 100 on a standardized test of oral language (with a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15), then the average children who were read to in these enhanced or extended ways would score 111 on the test (i.e., the difference between scoring at the 77th percentile versus scoring at the 50th percentile).

Children’s early childhood education teachers, children’s parents, and combinations of teachers and parents have conducted shared-reading interventions. Table 4.9 lists the ES estimates from interventions in which teachers, parents, or both teachers and parents provided the shared-reading intervention (or the computerized intervention was used). There was no statistically reliable difference in ESs depending on how the shared reading was delivered. Comparison of the studies involving parents reading to their children and studies involving both parents and teachers doing the reading did not have statistically reliable differences in ESs (the CIs overlap). When the ROR study (involving parent reading) was excluded from the analysis, the estimated ES for parent-provided reading was reduced to 0.57 ($p = 0.16$). [The ROR study was excluded because the researchers did not directly assess language development but asked parents to estimate their children’s vocabulary performance.]

Table 4.9. Effect Sizes for Oral Language Outcomes for Study Classification Based on Agent of Intervention

Agent of Intervention	Mean ES	SE	95% CI		t	n	p
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound			
Parent	1.35	0.40	0.56	2.14	3.36	3	0.006
Teacher	0.84	0.32	0.21	2.60	2.60	5	0.023
Parent and teacher	0.29	0.30	-0.29	0.88	0.99	6	0.34
Computer	0.36	0.50	0.61	1.34	0.73	2	0.48

Summary and Conclusions: Results from this meta-analysis of the impacts of shared-reading interventions on the early literacy skills of young children indicated that these interventions yielded moderate effects on oral language skills and print knowledge. For oral language skills, these effects were robust across variations in the type of shared-reading intervention and the children’s ages or their risk status. Although it is possible that shared reading could affect other aspects of children’s literacy and language development, only four studies even included print knowledge as an outcome variable, and even fewer studies included any other variable. Therefore, it was not possible to determine whether there were other benefits of shared reading.

Given the ubiquity of both the practice of and the recommendation for shared reading in early childhood education settings, it is somewhat surprising that more studies have not investigated the impact of these practices. Although it is clear that shared reading improves oral language skills and print knowledge, there is not yet evidence that shared reading promotes the development of other emergent literacy skills, and there is no evidence that shared reading promotes any improvement in conventional literacy skills. Although it is often claimed that reading to children improves their reading ability, too few studies have been conducted with emergent literacy outcome measures (such as PA, AK, readiness, and writing) or conventional literacy outcome measures (such as decoding, reading comprehension, or spelling) to provide statistically reliable evidence that shared reading

improves such skills (and, if so, which ones). Given these important gaps in what is known about the effectiveness of shared reading, it seems prudent to conclude that shared reading alone would not be a sufficient response to the literacy learning needs of young children. This would be particularly true for those at risk or who show weaknesses in those specific emergent literacy skills that have not been shown to improve due to reading to children (such as PA or AK).

Despite any analytical limitations, these studies indicate that shared-reading interventions provide early childhood educators and parents with a useful method for successfully stimulating the development of young children's oral language skills. For some reason, the impact of shared-reading interventions is larger for vocabulary outcomes than for more complex aspects of oral language (such as grammar, narrative understanding, or listening comprehension) or broader measures of oral language that include aspects of both vocabulary and more complex oral language skills. Whether this is due to real differences in outcomes or to the nature of the shared-reading interventions that have been studied and the outcome measures used so far is as yet unknown. Additional research will be needed to better explain this finding.

Future research needs to examine the types of shared-reading interventions that have been studied and how these interventions have been delivered. Interventions that used an interactive style of shared reading, such as dialogic reading (DR), produced larger effects on children's oral language outcomes than did non-interactive interventions, but these differences did not reach statistical significance. However, only studies using DR resulted in an average ES that was statistically significant. Direct studies of the contrast between interactive shared reading and non-interactive shared reading could help to clarify the meaning of this difference. For the existing studies, there were no significant differences in outcomes due to who delivered the shared-reading interventions, whether books were provided as part of the intervention, or how much the adults read to the children. It is important to note that statistical significance is not the only issue of importance in the context of a meta-analysis. Statistical significance—that is, the determination that an effect is sizable enough that it would unlikely have occurred by chance or normal variation—is affected by both the size of a difference and the number of observations (in the case of meta-analysis, the number of studies). The sizes of the differences found here for DR, agent delivering the intervention, amount of reading, and book availability were large enough to be of educational importance but were simply not found across a sufficiently large sample of studies to achieve statistical significance.

For studies conducted in preschool or kindergarten classes, the teacher or other adult most often read to children in small groups. Notably, the estimated ESs for shared reading do not reflect the impact of the typical program of shared reading conducted in early childhood settings (e.g., whole-group shared reading during circle time), which was typically the comparison condition in studies of shared reading in schools. Consequently, the results of this analysis do not provide evidence that typical early childhood education classroom practices promote the development of oral language and print knowledge skills.

Overall, the evidence supports the positive impact of shared-reading interventions that are more intensive in frequency and interactive in style on the oral language and print knowledge skills of young children.

Efforts of center-based programs: Despite wonderful opportunities in center-based programs to cultivate the language and literacy development of young children, little data and too few reports have been generated to describe, evaluate, and celebrate the impact on the literacy of children served, though many other perspectives on these center-based programs have been studied and reported thoroughly. Now is the time for literacy practices and results to be given the same critical scrutiny. There are approximately 300,000 children under the age of 5 in SC. As stated above, roughly four-fifths of their waking hours before kindergarten are spent with their family members. During the remaining 20% of waking hours, the children are in the care of non-family services, primarily in center-based programs or with family childcare providers. A survey of parents sponsored by the ABC program a decade ago determined the shares of waking hours for each of the caretakers other than family. Of the hours in out-of-family care, children in low income families below 185% of poverty spent their waking hours overall before age 5 as follows in: child care centers (11.4%), family child care (4.4%), Head Start (1%), and 4K preschool (2%). Of the non-family hours, over half were center-based childcare, and roughly 30% of the hours were with family childcare providers, leaving less than 20% split between Head Start and 4K preschool. Even taking into account possible bias in reported hours, it is obvious that the providers most difficult to work with have the preponderance of the waking hours.

Since parents and relatives have roughly 80% of all the hours and childcare providers have over 80% of the non-family hours, children are spending the least amount of their time in the care of the two provider systems that are easiest to work with in organizing higher quality literacy promotion. Both Head Start and public schools have education requirements for their teaching workforces and both have support and supervision systems with the capacity to train, guide, and assist their teachers, at least at a minimally adequate level. Whether these two systems actually provide the support and training will be reviewed later, but they do have the potential. Since family childcare providers are very small, they would be the most difficult to work with, as would many small childcare centers. Therefore, simple logistics would suggest that only half of the non-family hours of children (10% or less of all hours) offer plausible prospects for providing effective partners in literacy promotion. All the other children must be reached through several thousand family childcare and small center-based childcare providers; or through more than 100,000 families and their relatives. This clearly implies that the early literacy promotion campaign must be strategic, targeted, and networked through all potential support systems. As stated previously, targeting is necessary to focus efforts to assist those young children least likely to become proficient readers and writers. Children from families with low income and limited education can be targeted for screening. Center-based providers such as Head Start, 4K preschool, and those childcare providers with a large numbers of children receiving ABC vouchers or SNAP/food stamps should be engaged as active partners in performing the

screening necessary to identify children with the lowest oral language and print awareness. The children identified with the lowest language and literacy should be served through such center-based and family literacy programming as can be made available. Ideally the center-based programs would engage families in their own literacy development efforts at home for the higher risk children, with training, guidance, and support from teachers and others. Such an approach would simply follow the standard Family Literacy model but with continuing support to facilitate the application of proven-effective practices both at home and at the centers in a coordinated manner.

Serving the highest-risk children (through childcare, Head Start, & 4K preschool) [to be determined are the following]:

- How many providers have how many children of which ages?
- What literacy services do they provide?
- What specific literacy programs or approaches are being used to serve the most children and families?
- What support do they receive to strengthen their literacy services and from whom?
- What workforce literacy training is being provided to whom, by whom, and for what facets of language and literacy?
- How can we gauge the receptiveness of providers to work seriously on language and literacy development?
- What data on language & literacy services and results are available?
- What national studies are most informative regarding the content & results of literacy programming for each type of provider (Head Start, 4K, etc.)?
- Who has the best expertise on early literacy in SC? Elsewhere?

The findings from NELP's review of all rigorous evaluations of the effect of preschool and kindergarten programs on early literacy skills is perplexing at the least and very discouraging if the findings are what they suggest. First, there were only 33 studies that met the NELP criteria and just 24 when the 10 Abecedarian studies are counted as a single program evaluation. One would expect more studies, given the widespread enthusiasm for center-based early childhood interventions, especially those following the Perry Preschool and Chicago CPC model of serving 4-year-olds that are widely seen as the most effective path to school readiness which one would assume to include reading readiness. One would also expect stronger proof of effectiveness. The NELP analyses found that preschool and kindergarten had a significant and substantial impact only on readiness and spelling. Readiness was measured as a composite assessment of alphabet knowledge (AK), concepts of print, vocabulary, memory, and phonemic awareness (PA). Moreover, these positive readiness results appear to occur primarily in kindergarten

rather than during the preschool years. The preschool Effective Size for oral language was a negative 0.03 as compared with a small 0.28 in kindergarten. For reading, the preschool ES was a small 0.33 as compared with a large 0.88 in kindergarten. Most advocates who have promoted preschool have assumed that the 17:1 benefit to cost ratio of Perry Preschool included dramatic improvement in school readiness, especially for the critical competency of early literacy. The fact that the Abecedarian program had no impact on oral language, despite the training and support provided to its parents for more than four years, is especially troublesome.

So did these preschool programs neglect literacy development altogether? Or if the programs did address early language & literacy, were their approaches poorly designed? Or was the problem a lack of training or ineffective training for the preschool teachers? The NELP review does not answer those troubling puzzles. However, these findings and resulting questions appear to impose a heavy obligation on center-based preschool providers, whether serving 4-year-olds or much younger children such as those who were served for 4 years in the Abecedarian program. The obligation must involve: designing their literacy programming based on best practices, training the staff thoroughly, and monitoring results continuously to refine approaches until substantial positive results are demonstrated. Considering 1) the lack of evaluation proof of effectiveness in developing early literacy skills, 2) the small share of waking hours spent by young children in center-based services away from family, and 3) the even smaller share of waking hours spent in center-based programs with the size and support needed for effective programming design and training, all these combine into a strong challenge for these programs to implement early literacy programming based on proven-effective language & literacy practices.

Preschool and Kindergarten Programs (CHAPTER 6):

A variety of early childhood programs have been studied since the early 1960s to determine their effectiveness in improving social and academic outcomes for young children. For example, Perry Preschool Project and the federally funded program Head Start, along with a variety of state preschool programs, have been the focus of research, as have other programs such as the Abecedarian project, the Chicago Child-Parent Center, and a plethora of early prevention efforts.

The National Early Literacy Panel (NELP) examined the effectiveness of several of such preschool and kindergarten programs and interventions aimed at the development of early literacy and conventional literacy skills. (Unfortunately, the studies of some of the widely known programs have either not been reported in refereed journals or have not focused on literacy-learning outcomes, so they could not be examined here). The panel set out to determine whether such programs confer children with an advantage in literacy learning or in the development of early skills that predict later literacy success. The studies included in this chapter met the selection criteria established by the panel for the meta-analysis including (1) group design using either a randomized control trial

(RCT) or a quasi-experimental design (QED) with initial group equivalency, (2) an intervention that measured effectiveness on early literacy or conventional literacy skills, and (3) sufficient data to calculate an effect size (ES). A total of 33 studies met these criteria. Ten of these studies evaluated the effectiveness of the Abecedarian project, and, since nine of these studies involved the same sample of children longitudinally, the results of these nine studies were combined and treated as a single group.

Overall Estimates of Intervention Impacts: *Table 6.1 provides a summary of the overall effects of the various preschool and kindergarten interventions across all the different outcomes. The majority of the studies in this category provided effects for oral language (12 studies) and reading (nine studies). Fewer studies examined the impact of these interventions on alphabet knowledge (AK) (four studies), cognitive ability (four studies), readiness (three studies), spelling (three studies), phonological awareness (PA) (two studies), memory (two studies), print knowledge (two studies) and writing (two studies). Although cognitive ability per se did not arise in the predictor study, this variable is closely aligned with the various measures of IQ that were found to have predictive value in that earlier analysis. For that reason, the cognitive ability outcome is examined here.*

As indicated in Table 6.1, preschool- and kindergarten-based interventions resulted in large, statistically significant outcomes for readiness measures (1.23) and small to moderate effects on spelling measures (0.34). Although statistically significant effects also were found for memory (0.47) and print knowledge (1.00), these outcomes were measured in too few studies to allow for a reliable determination of the impact of preschool and kindergarten experiences on these skills. It should be noted that readiness tests do not represent a single skill; they are composite measures encompassing many early literacy predictors, including AK, concepts of print, vocabulary, memory, and PA.

Although the average ESs for preschool and kindergarten programs were large enough to be of educational importance for several literacy variables (such as reading, writing, and AK), these differences did not reach statistical significance for the small numbers of studies combined in these analyses. Perhaps as more studies are completed with these kinds of outcomes, it would be possible to conclude that kindergarten and preschool interventions have a general ability to improve student literacy performance. However, the oral language outcomes were both statistically insignificant and so small as to be of questionable importance, though preschool and kindergarten efforts with a more explicit focus on oral language development may have very different results.

Table 6.1. Estimates of Effect Sizes Across Domains for Interventions Involving Preschool and Kindergarten Programs for Each Dependent Variable

Dependent Variable	Fixed ES	Random ES	95% CI		N of Studies	p for ES
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
AK	0.31	0.23	-0.18	0.64	4	0.27
Cognitive ability	0.30	0.35	-0.11	0.80	4	0.13
Memory	0.47	0.47	0.15	0.79	2	0.004
Oral language	0.10	0.13	-0.06	0.31	12	0.17
PA	0.08	0.08	-0.15	0.31	2	0.49
Print knowledge	1.00	0.98	0.25	1.70	2	0.008
Readiness	1.23	1.22	0.05	2.38	3	0.04
Reading	2.05	0.75	-0.38	1.89	9	0.19
Spelling	0.34	0.34	0.07	0.60	3	0.01
Writing	0.72	0.67	-0.14	1.48	2	0.11

Note: CI= CI based on random-effect model.

Summary and Conclusions: *Preschool and kindergarten programs do affect young children’s development of conventional literacy skills as well as important emergent literacy skills. Results of the meta-analyses examining the overall effects of preschool and kindergarten programs across outcome measures revealed two main findings. The largest impact of the preschool and kindergarten programs was on the composite measure of readiness, indicating that they were highly effective in preparing children for school entry. The other main effect was a small to moderate impact of programs on spelling outcomes. Although the ES for spelling was smaller than that for readiness, it is significant that only kindergarten programs improved spelling. This might have resulted from the possibility that kindergarten programs were more likely to focus on spelling; such skills are rarely expected of preschoolers. Early spelling work is often proposed as a valuable component of beginning reading instruction because it involves the integration of phonemic awareness skills with AK. The studies that contributed to this finding also included literacy-focused curricula, including teacher PD, further reinforcing the importance of these variables for effective implementation.*

A number of the other outcome variables had sufficient numbers of studies to allow for a meta-analysis of the results. For example, oral language had 12 studies, reading had 9 studies, and AK and cognitive ability had 4 studies each. Yet, none of these outcome variables reached statistical significance. As has been explained earlier, in a meta-analysis magnitude of difference is as important as statistical significance. In this case, the oral language outcomes seem particularly modest, meaning that the range of preschool and kindergarten programs examined here would not be expected to exert much impact on this outcome. But contrast this with the large ES for reading outcomes; although, again, this difference did not reach statistical significance, the size of the difference is so large as to be of educational importance. These findings suggest that kindergarten and preschool programs can have an impact on children’s reading development.

The RCT reflected greater impacts for reading outcomes, although these findings may also reflect differences in whether teacher PD was included in the study. These findings suggest a need in future research for the characteristics of preschool and kindergarten programs to be explicitly compared.

The most commonly measured outcome in all of the NELP intervention categories was oral language. Nine of the 33 preschool and kindergarten program studies included a composite measure of oral language skills, a measure of vocabulary, or both. The estimated ESs for programs on oral language and for vocabulary tended to be small, and these effects were not statistically reliable.

The impacts of three types of preschool or kindergarten program characteristics were examined: literacy-focused curricula, PD for teachers, and parent involvement (PI). The presence of literacy-focused curricula and the availability of PD for teachers both strongly affected the reading outcomes for children in kindergarten programs. However, with the studies' inclusion of both literacy-focused curricula and PD for teachers, it is impossible to separate the effects of the curriculum from the provision of teacher PD. Additionally, the studies contributing to this finding all focused on kindergarten children only; there is a clear need for research that examines such efforts with preschool children.

Studies involving preschool and kindergarten programs with PI did not yield significant findings or sizable effects. Such findings had not been expected because of the reported effectiveness of high-profile preschool and kindergarten programs with strong PI (e.g., Abecedarian project, Chicago Child-Parent Center Study, Head Start, and the Perry Preschool Project). It appears that, although PI in preschool or kindergarten programs has been strongly encouraged in the field, the specific impacts of such PI on early literacy outcomes have not been widely studied, and there is not yet a clear, empirically proven best way to use this involvement toward improved literacy performance for young children. There is great interest in the impact of instructional programs on the learning of different racial, ethnic, linguistic, and economic groups of children. The data on preschool and kindergarten programs simply were not adequate to permit this kind of analysis. Future research will need to explore this issue more directly.

Code-focused Interventions (CHAPTER 3)

The code-focused section has the most studies (83) to analyze and the most outcome variables (5) addressed by ten or more studies: PA 51, reading 36, AK 24, spelling 15, and oral language 14. The five outcomes all had significant effect sizes: PA 0.82, spelling 0.61, reading 0.44, AK 0.38, and oral language 0.32. Forty seven of the studies were for children in kindergarten but only thirteen for preschoolers. Most of the studies for preschoolers were for PA only. Since many persons who work on early childhood issues have little or no acquaintance with phonological awareness (PA), readers should note that the NELP report defines PA as *the ability to detect, manipulate, or analyze components of spoken words independent of meaning. Examples include detection of common onsets between words (alliteration detection) or common rime units (rhyme detection); combining syllables, onset rimes, or phonemes to form words; deleting sounds from words; counting syllables or phonemes in words; or reversing phonemes in words. PA is often assessed with a measure developed by the investigator, but sometimes assessed with a standardized test, such as the Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing.*

The preschool interventions reviewed by NELP investigated larger speech units such as syllables and onset-rime awareness more frequently than the small phoneme units. Given the strong correlations of PA with decoding (.40), reading comprehension (.44), and spelling (.40) and also the large effect size (0.87) for PA in preschool, EC advocates and program managers need to become more knowledgeable about PA and the code-focused components of early literacy.

The National Early Literacy Panel (NELP) identified 83 studies that examined the effectiveness of various interventions that attempted to teach children code-related skills. Interventions in this category focused on teaching aspects of the alphabetic principle (i.e., the knowledge that letters in written words represent the sounds in spoken words). This was the largest collection of intervention studies that the panel reviewed, and it included interventions aimed at the development of phonological awareness (PA), alphabet knowledge (AK), and early decoding skills (i.e., phonics).

Virtually all studies in this category of interventions included some form of PA training. These interventions involved training children either individually or in small groups to identify sounds in words (e.g., match words with the same initial sound) or, more often, to manipulate sounds in words (e.g., combine sounds to form words, segment or delete parts of words). In some studies, these PA training activities were combined with other code-focused training activities, forming two broad categories of combined interventions. One category of combined interventions included studies in which the activities included both PA training and training activities designed to teach children AK, such as letter names or, occasionally, both letter names and letter sounds. The second category of combined interventions included studies of training activities that combined PA instruction and instruction in some aspect of phonics or decoding. Often, this phonics training involved teaching children about letters and simple decoding tasks involving the use of letter sounds. There were also three studies that evaluated the effectiveness of alphabet instruction alone (all three of these studies in this category examined the impact of exposure to Sesame Street–like video materials).

Overall Estimates of Intervention Impacts: *A large number of studies in this category examined the impacts of the interventions on outcome variables reflecting PA (51 studies), AK (24 studies), reading (36 studies), spelling (15 studies), and oral language (14 studies). Fewer studies of these interventions examined the impacts on outcome variables reflecting general cognitive ability (2 studies); memory (9 studies); print knowledge (5 studies); rapid automatic naming (RAN) (8 studies); reading readiness (3 studies); and writing (5 studies). None of these studies considered the impact of the interventions on visual or perceptual processing as an outcome variable. It should be noted that, although specific tests of cognitive ability or memory per se were not identified in Chapter Two as being particular predictors of later literacy achievement, such measures are clearly implicated in various IQ tests, which were identified as significant predictors in Chapter Two.*

Table 3.1. Estimates of Effect Sizes Across Outcome Domains for Interventions Classified as Code-Focused for Each Dependent Variable

Dependent Variable	Fixed ES	Random ES	95% CI		N of Studies	p for ES
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
AK	0.31	0.38	0.18	0.58	24	0.0002
Cognitive ability	-0.47	-0.41	-0.78	-0.01	2	0.04
Memory	0.20	0.27	0.06	0.48	9	0.01
Oral language	0.27	0.32	0.09	0.56	14	0.008
PA	0.76	0.82	0.68	0.96	51	< 0.0001
Print knowledge	0.44	0.47	0.18	0.76	5	0.0013
RAN	0.35	0.38	0.08	0.69	8	0.013
Reading readiness	0.20	0.20	0.02	0.38	3	0.034
Reading	0.41	0.44	0.27	0.60	36	< 0.0001
Spelling	0.55	0.61	0.43	0.80	15	< 0.0001
Writing	0.43	0.61	0.18	1.04	5	0.006

As can be seen in Table 3.1, code-focused interventions usually had moderate to large effects both on measures of conventional literacy (i.e., reading, spelling) and on measures of precursor literacy skills (e.g., PA, AK). ESs of the interventions across all outcome variables were statistically reliable (i.e., $p < 0.05$). In all but one case, the average ESs for code-focused interventions were positive. Consequently, the results reported in Table 3.1 indicate that code-focused interventions have a significant, substantial, and positive impact both on young children’s conventional literacy skills and on early skills that predict later literacy achievement. The largest impact of code-focused interventions was on PA, with an average ES of 0.82. This result means that, on average, children who received a code-focused intervention scored 0.82 of a standard deviation higher on measures of PA than did children who did not receive a code-focused intervention. To put this in context, if the average children not receiving a code-focused intervention scored 100 on a standardized test of PA that had a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15, the average children receiving a code-focused intervention scored 112 on the test (i.e., the difference between scoring at the 50th and 79th percentiles).

A summary of the estimates of ESs of code-focused interventions for preschool-age and kindergarten-age children separately is shown in Table 3.3. There were no statistically significant differences in the ES estimates for PA, AK, oral language, reading, and spelling. ESs were somewhat larger for studies that included preschool children than for those that included kindergarten children for AK, reading, and spelling outcomes; these differences were not statistically reliable. The separate ESs for preschool- and kindergarten-age children continued to be statistically reliable (except for the ES estimates for these interventions with oral language outcomes).

Table 3.3. Summary of Effect Sizes for Outcome Variables for Study Classification Based on Age of Children in Study

Age Group	ESs for Outcome Variable and (n) of Studies Contributing to ES				
	PA	AK	Oral Language	Reading	Spelling
Preschool	0.87*** (10)	0.67** (5)	0.26 (3)	0.75** (4)	0.78** (2)
Kindergarten	0.81*** (38)	0.32** (18)	0.34* (11)	0.43*** (30)	0.58*** (13)

Note: ESs based on random-effect model. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

Overall, these sub-analyses indicate that the strong, positive, and statistically significant impacts of code-focused interventions on children’s skills in the domains of PA, AK, oral language, reading, and spelling reported for the overall analyses hold regardless of the age of the children included in the studies and, for most outcomes, the prior literacy levels of the children included in the studies. These findings are important because they indicate (a) that it is possible to affect substantially those skills that are most predictive of later decoding, reading comprehension, and spelling for preschool-age children; (b) that these interventions show positive effects on reading and spelling skills (presumably mediated, in part, by the positive impacts on PA and AK); (c) that these results can be obtained with preschool-age children as well as with kindergarten children; and (d) that these substantial impacts are consistent regardless of children’s existing early literacy skills.

The results of these analyses indicate that the impacts of most code-focused interventions are positive, moderate to large, and statistically reliable across a broad range of key early literacy and reading indicators (i.e., PA, AK, reading, spelling). Not surprisingly, the interventions that did not include a print-focused component (i.e., those with PA training only) had a significantly weaker effect on print-specific outcomes (i.e., AK). Regardless, the results were generally consistent across outcome domains, indicating that interventions that include variations of PA training affect not only PA skills but also measures of reading and spelling. In addition to examining the relative impacts of different types of code-focused interventions, the relative impacts of variations in the nature of the PA interventions were examined. PA varies along at least two independent dimensions: level of linguistic complexity and cognitive operation. Level of linguistic complexity refers to the size of the sound unit on which PA is demonstrated, and it ranges along a continuum from word-level units to phoneme-level units. The target skill of different PA interventions is sometimes one point on this continuum and sometimes multiple levels of this continuum. A common theoretically relevant split on this continuum is phoneme-level tasks or targets (i.e., phonemic awareness) versus sub-phonemic tasks or targets (i.e., syllable awareness, onset-rime awareness). Cognitive operation refers to the type of task performed on these linguistic units and can involve identity (e.g., rhyme oddity detection), synthesis (e.g., blending or putting linguistic units together to form new linguistic units, typically words), or analysis (e.g., separating a linguistic unit from a larger linguistic unit through deletion or counting), with analysis tasks often considered the more developmentally advanced cognitive operation.

Summary and Conclusions: *Results from this meta-analysis of the impacts of code-focused interventions on the early literacy and conventional literacy skills of young children indicate that these interventions yield a moderate to large effect on the predictors of later reading and writing (i.e., PA, AK) and on measures of reading and writing. These effects were robust to variation in the type of code-focused intervention, to variation in children's ages or developmental levels, and to variations in methods of teaching young children PA. At this time, few studies allow fine-grained analysis of other population variables, such as SES, ethnicity, or population density. However, existing studies provide no evidence that the effects of code-focused interventions are altered by these sample characteristics. The majority of code-focused interventions involved some form of PA training activity. Consequently, most of the substantially positive impacts on children's early literacy skills need to be interpreted in this context. That is, these analyses show that some form of PA training, either alone or in combination with more or less complex instruction related to print knowledge (i.e., letter-name instruction, instruction in early decoding skills) is likely to yield growth in children's skills related to later reading and writing achievement. Whereas the literature contains both debate and findings concerning the type of PA training required to produce positive impacts on reading skills, the results of these analyses did not reveal any statistically reliable differences between variations in PA interventions. Categorizing the nature of PA training according to two theoretically relevant dimensions, the level of linguistic complexity that was the focus of the training and the nature of the cognitive operation taught in the PA training, did not indicate that one form of training was more or less effective than another form of training across a range of outcome measures. Importantly, there was no evidence that the effectiveness of code-focused interventions was influenced by age or developmental level of the children. That is, the impacts of code-focused interventions were observed in children whether they were preschool age or kindergarten age, and these interventions were equally successful across a range of levels of prior literacy knowledge (from minimal AK to being able to read). These findings indicate that there is not a point along either an age or a developmental continuum at which code-focused interventions become more or less beneficial to children's early literacy skills. The findings also suggest that there is no preexisting level of knowledge or skill that children must attain before these interventions can be used successfully.*

Most of the code-based interventions tested here are not available commercially. The majority of interventions included in these analyses were designed and implemented by researchers, and there was a great deal of variability in the specifics of the various interventions. This suggests that some instructional variations may be more effective than others, so, ultimately, it will be important and necessary to distill the specific components of these interventions to determine what types of intervention activities produce the most positive effects on children's early literacy skills. It is not sufficient to merely label interventions as PA training, phonics, or code focused for them to be effective. Successful code-focused interventions will likely include all or most of the components of the interventions noted in this meta-analysis; thus, interventions should include PA training with activities involving higher-level PA skills, such as actively engaging in analysis or synthesis of words at the syllable, onset-rime, or phoneme level with feedback on correct and incorrect responses. Although PA training can be conducted alone, the results of this meta-analysis suggest that there

may be an advantage of combining such training with activities designed to teach children about specific aspects of print, such as letter names and letter sounds.

The majority of the code-focused interventions summarized by this meta-analysis were conducted as either individual-level or small group-level interventions. There was no evidence that whole-class or large-group code-focused interventions will produce similar-sized effects on children's reading-related skills. While it is not the case that research has shown whole-class or large-group implementation of code instruction to be ineffective (such approaches were not tested at all), it would be a mistake to assume that teachers could successfully implement these interventions with large groups. Extant studies do not allow an adequate examination of the relative effectiveness of code-focused instruction for specific subpopulations of children. To their credit, most studies included mixed samples of children from different socioeconomic backgrounds, ethnic groups, and living environments (e.g., population density). Unfortunately, the data in these studies were usually not reported in a way that differential effectiveness could be studied. Although the early childhood education field is interested in specific questions about which interventions will work best for children living in poverty, children from traditionally underrepresented ethnic groups, children who are English-language learners, or children growing up in rural or urban environments, there are not yet studies focusing on these specific subpopulations or that allow examination of these subpopulations to answer these questions. Given the clear success of code-focused instruction with these mixed populations, it seems prudent to make such instruction available to all populations of young children, at least until research more directly addresses this question.

Conclusions:

Recommendations:

Development of Teacher Training/Higher Education Plan

Dr. Tony Johnson, former Dean of the College of Education at the Citadel, has been working with the EOC to create a plan for the in-service and pre-service training and professional development of teachers and other school personnel. The current legislation outlines guidelines for additional coursework and add-on endorsements.

On November 12, the EOC hosted a meeting of reading faculty and deans representing 18 postsecondary institutions to begin discussions on enhancing the pipeline of teachers and better preparing both in-service and pre-service teachers to assist struggling readers. Dr. Johnson's draft proposals involve a high level of cooperation between local school districts and post-secondary teacher preparation programs.

Stakeholders involved:

Ann Aust, North Greenville Univ.
Jennifer Barrett-Mynes, College of Charleston
C.C. Bates, Clemson University
Shirley Carr Bausmith, Francis Marion University
Barbara Gilbert, Lander University
Kathy Headley, Clemson University
Susan Henderson, Coker College
Ashlee Horton, Lander University
Vanessa Lancaster, Morris College
Cheryl Mader, Winthrop University
Kathryn McColskey, North Greenville Univ.
Shelly Meyers, Limestone College
Lisa Midcalf, Bob Jones University
Kavin Ming, Winthrop University
Jennifer Morrison, Newberry College
Lynne Noble, Columbia College
Jennie Rakestraw, Winthrop University
Ginger Riddle, Newberry College
Windy Schweder, University of SC Aiken
Emily Skinner, College of Charleston
Diane Stephens, University of SC
Renarta Tompkins, USC Beaufort
David Virtue, University of SC
Margaret Walworth, Anderson University
Kim Welborn, Southern Wesleyan University

DRAFT # 4

Teacher Preparation in Literacy

For

Pre-service Teacher Candidates and Practicing Professionals

(The Role of Higher Education)

The following proposals assume an effective working partnership between local districts and higher education teacher preparation programs:

Pre-Service Programs

1. Beginning with the 2015—2016 school year all pre-service teacher education programs (including MAT degree programs) require all candidates seeking licensure at the early childhood or elementary level complete a 12 semester credit sequence in literacy that includes a school-based practicum and ensures that candidates grasp the theory, research and practices that support and guide the teaching of reading. The components of the reading process identified by the International Reading Association and those established by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards provide the focus for this sequence to ensure that all teacher candidates are skilled in diagnosing a child's reading problem and capable of providing an effective intervention.

Professors Tom Gill of Appalachian State University and Kevin Flanagan of West Chester University continue to use this approach providing undergraduate teacher candidates in early childhood and elementary education programs with the knowledge and skills necessary for assisting all children in becoming effective readers. The ideal is for teacher candidates to enroll as a cohort in two literacy courses (e.g. Foundations of Reading and Assessment and Instructional Interventions in Reading and Language Arts) during the fall semester of their junior year. In partnership with an area school district—preferably one with students experiencing reading difficulties—each course is offered on-site with the first course meeting on Tuesday mornings and the second on Thursday morning at the same location for three hours.

During the first five weeks of the 15 week semester, the college or university instructor presents literacy as a developmental process demonstrating the basics of literacy instruction with children from the school and modeling assessment techniques and intervention strategies. Emphasis is placed on ensuring that

teacher candidates understand the significant benchmarks of literacy development and how to assist children in becoming effective readers. During the first five weeks of approximately thirty hours of instruction and modeling, teacher candidates learn how to diagnose a child's reading ability. Once teacher candidates are able to identify the child's reading level and his/her reading problem, the focus shifts toward differentiated instruction and using the most appropriate strategy for addressing a particular reading problem. During the remaining ten weeks, teacher candidates are assigned in pairs to tutor a child experiencing reading difficulties under the careful supervision of the college or university instructor. For the remainder of the semester on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, each session is divided into approximately one hour of instruction and modeling by the college or university instructor, one hour devoted to teacher candidates working in pairs with a student on specified tasks, and the final hour debriefing with the college instructor and planning for the next session's activities.

During the spring semester, teacher candidates are placed in the same or similar school setting for a more comprehensive 6 semester credit practicum. Employing a similar format, university or college faculty will continue to model appropriate literacy instruction for teacher candidates. Under the supervision of the college or university instructor, candidates will interact in more substantive ways with students experiencing reading difficulties. During this semester long practicum, teacher candidates are expected to engage in one on one tutoring, instruction of homogenous groups, and using increasingly sophisticated assessments to more effectively determine the needs of groups and individual students.

It is important to note that the 12 semester credit pre-service teacher training requirement in literacy described above integrates the theory, research and practices identified by the International Reading Association and others as necessary for ensuring that all teacher candidates develop the knowledge and skills necessary to assist all children in becoming effective readers. Using this exemplary program as a guide, all literacy teacher preparation programs are to be approved by the Read to Succeed Office to ensure that teacher education candidates possess the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively assist all children in becoming proficient readers.

2. Beginning with the 2015-2016 school year all pre-service teacher education programs (including MAT degree programs) require candidates seeking licensure at the middle or secondary level complete a 6 semester credit sequence in literacy that includes a course in the foundations of literacy and a course in

content area literacy preferably taught by a content area faculty member. These two courses are to include a carefully selected school based practica to ensure that middle and high school teacher candidates understand reading as a developmental process and possess the knowledge and skills to assist struggling readers to more effectively read content material. In addition, student teaching or internship placements are to be carefully assigned to compliment the practica experiences incorporated into these two courses. All middle and secondary teacher preparation programs are to be approved by the Read to Succeed Office to ensure that all teacher candidates possess the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively assist all adolescents in becoming proficient readers. The purpose of the Read to Succeed Office's review of these teacher preparation literacy programs is to ensure that all teacher candidates possess the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively assist all adolescents in becoming proficient readers.

3. While it may be possible in the future for programs to document in different ways that their candidates possess the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively assist all students in becoming proficient readers, our current assessment instruments are not sufficiently sophisticated to ensure that teacher candidates have mastered the necessary competencies. Also, it may be possible to develop add-on literacy licensures at the undergraduate level but doing so will further segregate the have and have-not districts and dilute the statewide impact of this literacy initiative.

Practicing Professionals

To ensure that practicing professionals possess the knowledge and skills necessary to assist all children and adolescents in becoming proficient readers, multiple pathways are needed for developing this capacity.

The preferred path is for extant licensed teachers to enroll in and complete either the master's degree in literacy or the required coursework for the literacy teacher add-on endorsement. To the extent possible the coursework for the degree and/or literacy add-on endorsement are to be provided by higher education institutions (IHE) with nationally recognized (International Reading Association) programs. Currently, four institutions of higher education (Clemson, The Citadel, University of South Carolina –Columbia, and Winthrop University) provide these nationally recognized programs. Since it is not possible for these four institutions to provide the programs necessary for all professional educators to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to assist all children and youth in becoming proficient readers, other institutions—both

public and private—are encouraged to develop masters’ level programs in compliance with the standards of the International Reading Association.

More programs are needed to meet the demand for ensuring all professional educators are capable of assisting all children in becoming proficient readers. Until more nationally recognized programs are developed, the IHEs with nationally recognized programs need to partner with area school districts and neighboring higher education programs to deliver the graduate level coursework required for this add-on endorsement and degree. For example, literacy faculty from the College of Charleston could partner with The Citadel in delivering The Citadel’s nationally recognized program to professional educators in the Lowcountry. In similar fashion, faculty from Newberry College could assist USC-Columbia in expanding its graduate programs in literacy to districts in the middle of the state. Similar partnerships could be developed between Winthrop and Clemson Universities and other IHEs throughout the state. In collaboration with the Commission on Higher Education and the state Department of Education, the Read to Succeed office is charged with facilitating the development of these partnerships and is responsible for implementing them. In order to effectively impact the quality of literacy instruction throughout the state, tuition assistance for practicing professionals from the state is necessary.

To augment this preferred pathway, school districts, higher education institutions, and the Read to Succeed Office will collaborate in identifying the essential competencies required of all educators to enable all children and youth to become proficient readers. Once these competencies are identified in detail (Florida has taken the lead here), districts—in collaboration with higher education institutions and the Read to Succeed Office--can develop professional development for all professional staff focused on these essentials of instructional literacy.

In fostering a statewide model of professional development for enabling all practicing professionals to develop the essential competencies for effective literacy instruction, the Read to Succeed may consider implementing a modified version of the cohort approach currently employed by the University of South Carolina College of Education.

For this to work, it is necessary for the Read to Succeed office to establish and coordinate a consortium of IHEs and local school districts to offer graduate level literacy courses throughout the state, empowering practicing professionals to assist students of all ages in becoming proficient readers. The syllabi for these graduate offerings are developed by regular or adjunct faculty hired by the IHE granting credit for these courses. The Read to Succeed office is charged with reviewing the credentials of the IHE faculty (typically, a doctorate in literacy or

related field) to ensure that they are capable of overseeing instructors with masters degrees capable of delivering the course content to cohorts of area teachers. The regular or adjunct professors serve as instructors of records for these cohort courses and could supervise multiple cohort sections each semester.

By employing this modified cohort approach along with the more traditional option for obtaining a master's degree or add-on certification in literacy, the Read to Succeed office could enable all practicing teachers to qualify for an add-on literacy teacher or literacy coach licensure and enable school administrators to acquire the necessary literacy competencies for becoming effective instructional leaders.

Whatever model that the Read to Succeed office chooses to embrace, funding to support the necessary professional development is needed. Should the Read to Succeed office embrace the USC model, the contract rate for the on-site courses offered by masters level instructors must be negotiated with the IHE granting the credit. In addition, the Read to Succeed office must collaborate with State Department of Education to ensure that the courses offered meet the requirements for the add-on licensure.

Since practicing professionals are likely to pursue the add-on licensure or literacy degree by enrolling in the professional development coursework offered by IHEs on-site in their district, and by enrolling in the more traditional route of IHE based courses, the Read to Succeed office must creatively pursue multiple ways of supporting practicing professionals. For example, The Citadel in collaboration with area school districts offers its masters' degrees in literacy and leadership to cohorts of teachers selected by the district. The cost of the program is shared equally with the teacher paying a third, the district paying a third, and The Citadel reducing the tuition by a third.

Everyone wins from this arrangement. It is cost effective for the IHE since a cohort of twenty or more students generates more revenue than it costs to provide the courses. The district wins by developing a teacher corps capable of assisting all students in becoming proficient readers, and the practicing professional wins by enhancing their professional skills and credentials.

***For more information about this cohort model, see the documents developed by Dr. Dianne Stephens, the Swearinger Professor of Education at The University of South Carolina.**

For all non-practicum courses, teachers and administrators have the option – subject to availability –of taking web-based courses or taking them at an IHE. Some districts may choose to partner with an IHE and offer the courses on-site in

their districts. Practicums would be conducted at school sites and could involve children enrolled in after-school programs or summer reading camps. As noted earlier, the Read to Succeed Office will work with IHEs and school districts to provide the coursework at a cost effective rate for practicing professionals.

Teacher Qualifications

For

Retained Third grade Students

Third grade students retained must have a reading improvement plan and an assignment with a teacher with at least one year of teaching experience and either an add-on literacy teacher license or demonstrated competency as an effective teacher of literacy.

Development of Model District Reading Plan

On November 12, a work group completed their four-month effort on the model statewide, comprehensive district reading plan. Dr. Rainey Knight, former superintendent of Darlington County Schools, led the group of instructional leaders in K-12 and higher education on developing the plan that is required in the proposed legislation. Currently, 10 districts have agreed to pilot the reading plan. The purpose of the pilot will be for districts to continue to guide the EOC in the development of the plan by assembling a district literacy team whose responsibility will be to create a plan using the model developed. Pilot districts will submit plans beginning in January 2014 using a web-based text entry system.

Additionally, Dr. Knight was asked to develop a guidance document for school districts about the funding districts will receive to begin offering summer reading camps in summer 2014.

Stakeholders involved:

Rhonda Allen, Reading Specialist/Instructional Facilitator, Congaree-Wood Early Childhood Center, Lexington 2

Stacey Bannister, Teacher, Darlington County Schools

Tara Dean, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Laurens 55

Carrie Daniel, Teacher, Greenwood 51

Becca Doswell, Office of Instructional Practices and Evaluation, SC Dept. of Education

Angela Enlow, Teacher, Richland One

Dr. Marcella Heyward-Evans, Chief Instructional Officer, Lexington School District 2

Grace Griffin, Teacher, 4th Grade, Sandy Run School

Michael Guliano, Lexington School District 5

Patti Hammel, Executive Director for Student Performance and Federal Programs, Georgetown County School District

Katty Hite, Reading Specialist/READ 120 Teacher, Davis Early Childhood Center for Technology

Dr. Baron Holmes, University of SC

Sheila Huckabee Quinn, Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services, Clover School District

Jacqueline Jamison, Executive Director of Academic, Orangeburg School District 5

Harriet Jaworowski, Associate Superintendent, Rock Hill School District 3

Neely Kelly, Elementary Curriculum Coordinator, Fairfield County School District

Nancy Lind, Principal, Meadow Glen Elementary School, Lexington One

Dr. Jane Clark Lindle, Professor, Clemson University

Michelle Martin, Augusta Baker Chair for Childhood Literacy, University of SC

Christina Melton, Chief Instructional Officer, School District 5 of Lexington and Richland Counties

Dr. Heidi Mills, University of South Carolina

Barbara Nesbitt, Early Childhood, Elementary and Instructional Technology Coordinator, Pickens County School District

Dr. Kevin O'Gorman, Chief Academic Officer, Berkeley County School District

Felicia Oliver, Literacy Coordinator, Spartanburg School District 2

Dr. Mildred Rowland, Director of Instruction and Assessment, York School District 1

Angela Rush, Director of Professional Development and Standards, Horry County School District

Angi Sandy, Reading Specialist/Instructional Facilitator, Congaree-Wood Early Childhood Center, Lexington 2

Donna Selvey, Principal, Barnwell Primary School, Barnwell 45

Diane Sigmon, Darlington County School District

Dr. Diane Stephens, University of SC

Gloria Talley, Chief Academic Officer, Lexington School District 1

Jennifer Thomas, Teacher, Hollywood Elem. School, Saluda School District

Jennifer Young, High Progress Literacy Associates

Members of the SCASA Instructional Leaders Roundtable *(25 members responded to request to offer feedback to the model district reading plan following a request made on October 17.)*

Meeting dates:

August 27, 10 AM-2 PM

October 1, 10 AM-2 PM

November 12, 10 AM-2 PM

South Carolina Read to Succeed Draft District Reading Proficiency Reading Plan*

Revised Draft – as of December 9, 2013

Goal:

**Ensure that 95% of students are reading on grade level
by 2020**

(2020 Vision adopted by the Education Oversight Committee in 2009)

District Reading Proficiency Plan Guide

Introduction

Reading proficiency is a fundamental life skill vital for the educational and economic success of our citizens and the State. Every student should develop and sustain high levels of reading proficiency prekindergarten through grade 12 (4K-12). Every student should be able to read, write and think at high levels and be prepared to pursue careers and college after graduation from high school. This helps ensure that the state of South Carolina has a highly employable population and a highly educated workforce.

Based on the 2013 state reading data, however, only 82.9 % of students meet the third grade reading standard (Level 3 or above) as measured by the state's summative assessment, the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS). PASS data indicate the percentage of students who meet the grade level reading standard generally declines each year as students progress from elementary to middle school.

To ensure that, by 2020, 95% of all students will be reading on grade level by the end of third grade, South Carolina has approved a statewide reading initiative, *Read to Succeed*, a comprehensive and strategic approach to improve the reading proficiency for students in public schools prekindergarten through grade 12.

Purpose of the District Reading Proficiency Plan Guide

The *Read to Succeed* legislation requires districts to develop a comprehensive, systemic district reading proficiency plan (Plan). This Guide is intended to provide support and assistance by promoting critical thinking, discussion, and reflection among district staff as they develop, implement, sustain and refine their plans.

Rationale for the District Reading Proficiency Plan

By providing direction, guidance and coordination to its schools, school districts play a critical role in improving the reading proficiency levels of its students. Districts not only take the lead in the development and implementation of a reading plan; they are also responsible for ensuring the progress of students as readers and writers, monitoring the impact of the Plan and using data to make improvements to the Plan in subsequent years.

Essential Components of District Reading Proficiency Plan

The District Reading Proficiency Plan is divided into four components: (1) Curriculum Instruction and Assessment; (2) Instructional Leadership; (3) Professional Expertise and (4) Planning and Evaluation. Each component is designed to develop and support reading proficiency at all grade levels. Each component lists action statements, which reflect the intent of the *Read to Succeed* legislation. Questions then expand upon the intent of the action statement. Districts are required to provide detailed answers to all questions and to do so in a manner consistent with the legislation. The cumulative responses should detail how:

- measurable student achievement goals are clearly established and clearly described.
- data analysis is an ongoing process that drives decisions.
- research-based, data-driven reading instruction is provided for all students.
- a supplemental, research and data-based support system is provided to all students who cannot yet comprehend grade level text.

- professional learning is meaningful and systemic.
- district and school leadership are actively involved in the planning, implementing and monitoring of the district and school plans.
- and districts will fund the plan.

Role of the District in the Development of the Plan

Districts should create a District Literacy Team whose responsibility is to provide the leadership, support, direction and guidance in the development and implementation of the District Reading Proficiency Plan. The District Literacy Team should reflect members who represent all grade spans (early childhood, elementary, middle and high) and include members with responsibilities in the areas of reading, writing, exceptional education, etc. Each District’s Reading Proficiency Plan should be individualized to reflect the strengths and needs of its educators and students. The district should view schools on an individual basis and distribute resources based on the students’ and teachers’ strengths and needs. The district should design a method to distribute and communicate the Plan throughout the district including students, teachers, parents, and community. The Plan should be a guide to help all educators understand the importance of and urgency for students to attain higher levels of reading proficiency.

Timeline for Submitting Plan

The District’s Reading Proficiency Plan narrative will be completed through a web based text entry system. Plans are due to the Read to Succeed office by _____ , _____ for a preliminary review. The Read to Succeed office will review all district plans online and districts will receive feedback on their plans through an online comment process. Either an approved or a revised status will be submitted to districts by _____ , _____. Plans requiring revisions must be received by the Read to Succeed Office by _____ , _____.

South Carolina *Read to Succeed*

District Reading Proficiency Plan Template

Part I. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

The district should base its district reading proficiency plan and reading instruction on the South Carolina English/language arts standards. The standards are located at: <http://www.ed.sc.gov>. The reading materials a district select should be research-based and support high quality classroom instruction. Resources and materials used in the reading program should include a diverse selection of grade-level texts written on a wide range of reading levels matched to the reading and interest levels of students.

In grades K-5, there should be at least 90 minutes of uninterrupted instructional time for reading that includes a balance of whole group and small group differentiated instruction. In addition across all grades, students should spend at least 60 minutes a day engaged in reading, writing, and viewing texts in English Language Arts, social studies, mathematics, and, as applicable, art, career and technology education, and physical and health education. Teachers should help students understand the discipline-specific features or content-area print and non-print texts. They should help students learn vocabulary, including the content-area vocabulary, understand the various genres, purposes, audiences and conventions of print and be able to use specialized literacy skills and strategies (e.g., morphemic analysis). Teachers should also help students make sense of information, which is new to them, provide opportunities for students to question and discuss print and non-print texts with peers to deepen understanding. Students must focus on reading as meaning making rather than on reading at the word level, stop when something does not make sense, and problem-solve at the text, chapter, and paragraph and word level.

To achieve these goals, all curricular and instructional decisions for in-classroom and supplemental support should be grounded in text-based formative

assessments. In all classrooms, teachers should use the data from such assessments to make decisions about whole group instruction, to flexibly group students and inform one-on-one conferences. Data should also inform instruction in all supplemental settings.

In all classrooms, teachers should provide high-quality instruction, which supports students as readers, writers, speakers, listeners and viewers of print and non-print texts. Teachers should ensure that, without supplement support, 80% of the students in a heterogeneous group yearly make at least a year's progress on a text-based measure of comprehension. Students who begin the year not yet able to comprehend texts with which have a grade equivalent of six months or more lower than the students' grade level should receive intervention services both from the classroom teacher and a reading interventionist (in both cases, via small group or one-on-one instruction). Reading interventionists who have a literacy teacher add-on endorsement are responsible for providing supplement support. With support from both the classroom teachers and reading interventionists, students receiving supplement services should make, on average, a year and a half growth each year. (For some of these students, progress might be slow at first and then accelerate, e.g., a year's growth the first year and two year's growth the second). The goal is to have students independently comprehend grade-appropriate text and be discontinued from intervention services.

All teachers should periodically reassess curriculum, instruction and engagement of students to determine if they are helping each student progress as a proficient reader and writer. Teachers should make modifications as appropriate so that all students will be able to comprehend grade-appropriate print and non-print texts in all content areas.

Part I. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

Section for Elementary Schools (grades 4K-5)

Action #1: Increase access to texts students can comprehend

1. How will districts ensure that all 4K- 5 classrooms have books on high-interest topics, written at a range of grade levels?
2. How will districts ensure that all students have access, across all content areas (4K-5), to a wide selections of print and non-print texts over a wide range of genres and written on a wide range of reading levels which match the reading levels of students?
3. Which of the state-approved systems will be used to determine text complexity (e.g., leveling of texts)?

Action #2: Increase the volume of engaged reading and writing students do in and out of school.

1. How will districts ensure they increase the amount of time 4K – 5 students spend during the school year in engaged reading and writing (a) in school? (b) out of school (including homework and voluntary reading)?
2. How will districts document and report reading and writing volume in and out of school?
3. How will districts document the volume of reading done by students in the summer?

Action #3: Ensure that all 4K-5 students are provided with at least ninety minutes of daily uninterrupted reading and writing instruction and that there are high volumes of reading and writing in all content areas.

1. How will your district and school ensure that students have this amount of uninterrupted reading and writing time?

2. How will this time be structured to ensure that all students are fully engaged as readers and writers during this time?

Action #4. Ensure that information from text-based measures informs instruction

1. How will your district ensure that all the members of district and 4K – 5 school-literacy teams (classroom and interventionist teachers, school and district administrators with expertise in reading, other support staff, as applicable) are able to administer and interpret text-based assessment measures and use results to inform instruction?
2. How will your district ensure that 4K- 5 reading teachers are able to administer and interpret text-based measures?
3. How will your district ensure that 4K – 5 reading teachers can effectively use the information from text-based measures to inform and differentiate instruction?
4. What steps will your district take to intervene to improve instruction in 4K – 5 classrooms and supplemental/intervention settings if students are not making adequate progress?

Action #5: Ensure high quality text-based and research-based Tier One Instruction and Intervention for all students.

1. How will your district ensure that 4K – 5 school staff are making effective research-based and text-based decisions grounded in data from students' responses to instruction?
2. List the 4K – 5 reading materials to be used in Tier 1 instruction.
3. How will your district ensure 4K – 5 teachers emphasize complex text and provide opportunities for students to progress along a continuum of increasing text complexity in their reading?
4. How will your district ensure teachers, and reading staff are incorporating effective instructional strategies into daily instruction?
5. How will all 4K – 5 teachers develop and incorporate reading into all content areas to extend and build discussions of text in order to deepen understanding?

6. How will your district periodically reassess their 4K – 5 curriculum, instruction and engagement of students to determine if they are helping each student progress as a proficient reader and a proficient writer and make modifications as appropriate?

Action #6: Document student readiness/achievement.

Part A: Early Childhood Readiness

1. How will the district ensure there is a process at each 4K-K school that addresses the readiness screening for each 4K-K student? How will the district be assured each 4K-K student is assessed by the 45th day of school?
2. How will the district ensure the school has a plan in place for each student whose readiness assessment indicates the student is below the national standard for school readiness?
3. How will the district ensure each 4K-K school provides the results of the readiness assessment, in writing, to the parent/guardian?

Part B: 4K - 5 Achievement

1. What formative assessments will your district implement for 4K – 5 screening, for diagnostics and for progress monitoring? Include information about alternate assessments for students with disabilities, ELL students, etc.
2. Describe your district plan for implementing 4K – 5 formative assessments (screening, diagnostic and progress monitoring) using the schedule provided by the Read to Succeed office.
3. Describe your district problem-solving process for showing how grade 4K – 5 student assessment data from screening and/or progress monitoring will be used to determine the specific reading instructional needs in the classroom and, as applicable, in intervention settings, for all students in grades 4K-5, including those not yet able to comprehend grade-appropriate print and non-print texts.
4. Describe how your district will monitor the reading progress of 4K – 5 students using text-based measures

5. Describe how your district will analyze and share data about 4K – 5 student progress with students, teachers, administrators and parents/guardians.

Action #7: Determine eligibility for Tier Two Intervention

1. How will your district use state guidelines to compile a list of which 4K - 5 students are not yet able to comprehend grade-level, print and non-print texts and are therefore eligible for Tier Two intervention during the school year and in the summer (reading camps)?
2. Who will be responsible for ensuring that parents/guardians are notified in writing that the student is not able to read grade level text and is eligible for intervention services?
3. How will your district ensure that all 4K-3 students who are not able to comprehend grade level material are provided with supplemental support?
4. What before-school, after-school, summer reading camp activities and mentoring activities will be utilized to support and encourage reading and writing for 4K – 5 students outside of school? Include how these activities will be linked to school instruction.

Action #8: Provide at least 30 minutes daily of supplemental Tier Two Intervention for 4K-3 students

1. How will your district ensure that 4K – 5 students receive effective Tier Two intervention customized to the individual needs of students in one-on-one or small group settings?
2. How will your district ensure that 4K – 5 students' individual strengths and needs are the primary consideration for grouping students for supplemental instruction?
3. What modifications will be made to the daily schedule to accomplish this task?
4. Describe the research-based materials used for 4K – 5 reading interventions at the schools.
5. What are the district expectations as to the design of the summer reading camps? Include the schedule, personnel, student/teacher ratio, description of instruction, progress monitoring of students, interventions planned, etc.

6. How will district scaffold every experience so students assume responsibility for their learning following a gradual release of responsibility model?

Action #9: Track progress in Tier Two Intervention

1. How often does your district expect school personnel to conference and share progress monitoring data with parents/guardians of 4K- 5 students?
2. When students who are receiving supplemental support do not make, more than a year's growth in a year, how will your district seek support within and outside the district to alter that trajectory? How will student progress be monitored?

Action #10. Review of Grade 3 Student Reading Results

1. How will the district ensure schools notify parents, in writing, at the beginning of grade 3, if the student is substantially not meeting reading proficiency and may be retained at the end of the grade 3? How will the district ensure schools continue to provide parents notification of the student's progress each month and at the end of each grading period? (Written notification should include interventions, suggestions for assistance to be provided at home student progress using formative assessments, classroom grades, observations, tests, etc.)
2. How will the reinforcement/enhancement class for a retained grade 3 student be structured to accelerate his/her learning and address the specific needs of the student? Include personnel, student/teacher ratio, time scheduled for reading, curriculum, instructional strategies, interventions, progress monitoring, etc.)

Section for Middle Schools (grades 6-8)

Action #1: Increase access to texts students can comprehend

1. How will districts ensure that all grade 6 - 8 classrooms have books on high-interest topics, written at a range of grade levels?
2. How will districts ensure that all students have access, across all content areas (grade 6 - 8), to a wide selections of print and non-print texts over a

wide range of genres and written on a wide range of reading levels which match the reading levels of students?

3. Which of the state-approved systems will be used to determine text complexity (e.g., leveling of texts)?

Action #2: Increase the volume of engaged reading and writing students do in and out of school

1. How will districts ensure they increase the amount of time 6 – 8 students spend during the school year in engaged reading and writing (a) in school? (b) out of school (including homework and voluntary reading)?
2. How will districts document and report reading and writing volume in and out of school?
3. How will districts document the volume of reading done by students in the summer?

Action #3. Ensure that information from text-based measures informs instruction

1. How will your district ensure that all the members of district and grades 6 - 8 school-literacy teams (classroom and interventionist teachers, school and district administrators with expertise in reading, other support staff, as applicable) are able to administer and interpret text-based assessment measures and use results to inform instruction?
2. How will your district ensure that grades 6- 8 English/language arts teachers are able to administer and interpret text-based measures?
3. How will your district ensure that grades 6 - 8 English/language arts teachers can effectively use the information from text-based measures to inform and differentiate instruction?
4. What steps will your district take to intervene to improve instruction in grades 6- 8 classrooms and supplemental/intervention settings if students are not making adequate progress?

Action #5: Ensure high quality text-based and research-based Tier One Instruction and Intervention for grade 6 - 8 students.

1. How will English/language arts time be structured to ensure that all students are fully engaged as readers and writers during this time?
2. List the grades 6- 8 reading materials to be used in Tier 1 instruction.
3. How will your district ensure all grade 6 - 8 teachers emphasize complex text and provide opportunities for students to progress along a continuum of increasing text complexity in their reading?
4. How will all grade 6 - 8 teachers develop and incorporate reading into all content areas to extend and build discussions of text in order to deepen understanding?
5. How will your district periodically reassess their grade 6- 8 curriculum, instruction and engagement of students to determine if they are helping each student progress as a proficient reader and a proficient writer and make modifications as appropriate?

Action #6: Document student readiness/achievement

Part A. Not Applicable

Part B: Grades 6- 8 Achievement

1. What formative assessments will your district implement in grades 6 - 8 for progress monitoring? Include information about alternate assessments for students with disabilities, ELL students, etc.
2. Describe your district plan for implementing progress monitoring in grades 6- 8 using the schedule provided by the Read to Succeed office.
3. Describe your district problem-solving process for showing how grade 6 - 8 student assessment data from progress monitoring will be used to determine the specific reading instructional needs in the classroom and, as applicable, in intervention settings, for all students in grades 6 -8.

4. Describe how your district will analyze and share data about grade 6 -8 student progress with students, teachers, administrators and parents/guardians.

Action #7: Determine eligibility for Tier Two Intervention

1. How will your district use state guidelines to compile a list of which grade 6 - 8 students are not yet able to comprehend grade-level, print and non-print texts and are therefore eligible for Tier Two intervention during the school year?
2. Who will be responsible for ensuring that parents/guardians are notified in writing that the student is not able to read grade level text and is eligible for intervention services?
3. How will your district ensure that all grade 6 - 8 students who are not able to comprehend grade level material are provided with supplemental support?
4. What before-school, after-school, summer reading camp activities and/or mentoring activities will be utilized to support and encourage reading and writing for grade 6 - 8 students outside of school? Include how these activities will be linked to school instruction.

Action #8: Track progress in Tier Two Intervention

1. How often does your district expect school personnel to conference and share progress monitoring data with parents/guardians of grade 6 -8 students?
2. When students who are receiving supplemental support do not make, more than a year's growth in a year, how will your district seek support within and outside the district to alter that trajectory? How will student progress be monitored?

Section for High Schools (grades 9 - 12)

Action #1: Increase access to texts students can comprehend

1. How will districts ensure that all grade 9-12 English classrooms have books on high-interest topics, written at a range of grade levels?

2. How will districts ensure that all students have access, across all content areas (grade 9 - 12), to a wide selection of print and non-print texts over a wide range of genres and written on a wide range of reading levels which match the reading levels of students?
3. Which of the state-approved systems will be used to determine text complexity (e.g., leveling of texts)?

Action #2: Increase the volume of engaged reading and writing students do in and out of school

1. How will districts ensure they increase the amount of time grade 9 -12 students spend during the school year in engaged reading and writing (a) in school? (b) out of school (including homework and voluntary reading)?
2. How will districts document and report reading and writing volume in and out of school?
3. How will districts document the volume of reading done by students in the summer?

Action #3: Ensure high quality text-based and research-based Tier One Instruction and Intervention for grade 9 -12 students.

1. How will English/language arts time be structured to ensure that all students are fully engaged as readers and writers during this time?
2. List the grade 9-12 reading materials to be used in Tier 1 instruction.
3. How will your district ensure all grade 9 - 12 teachers emphasize complex text and provide opportunities for students to progress along a continuum of increasing text complexity in their reading?
4. How will all grade 9 -12 teachers develop and incorporate reading into all content areas to extend and build discussions of text in order to deepen understanding?

5. How will your district periodically reassess their grade 9 -12 curriculum, instruction and engagement of students to determine if they are helping each student progress as a proficient reader and a proficient writer and make modifications as appropriate?

Action #4: Document student readiness/achievement

Part A. Not Applicable

Part B: Grades 9 - 12 Achievement

1. What formative assessments will your district implement in grades 9 -12 for progress monitoring? Include information about alternate assessments for students with disabilities, ELL students, etc.
2. Describe your district plan for implementing progress monitoring in grades 9 - 12 using the schedule provided by the Read to Succeed office.
3. Describe your district problem-solving process for showing how grade 9 -12 student assessment data from progress monitoring will be used to determine the specific reading instructional needs in the classroom and, as applicable, in intervention settings, for all students in grades 9 -12.
4. Describe how your district will analyze and share data about grade 9 - 12 student progress with students, teachers, administrators and parents/guardians.

Action #5: Determine eligibility for Tier Two Intervention

1. How will your district use state guidelines to compile a list of which grade 9 - 12 students are not yet able to comprehend grade-level, print and non-print texts and are therefore eligible for Tier Two intervention during the school year?
2. Who will be responsible for ensuring that parents/guardians are notified in writing that the student is not able to read grade level text and is eligible for intervention services?
3. How will your district ensure that all grade 9 -12 students who are not able to comprehend grade level material are provided with supplemental support?

4. What before-school, after-school, and/or mentoring activities will be utilized to support and encourage reading and writing for grade 9 -12 students outside of school? Include how these activities will be linked to school instruction.

Action #6: Track progress in Tier Two Intervention

1. How often does your district expect school personnel to conference and share progress monitoring data with parents/guardians of grade 9 -12 students?
2. When students who are receiving supplemental support do not make, more than a year's growth in a year, how will your district seek support within and outside the district to alter that trajectory? How will student progress be monitored?

Section for All Grade Levels (4K – 12)

Action #1: Help parents/guardians understand how they can support the student as a reader and writer at home.

1. How will parents/guardians be informed about the school's reading goals/programs, the status of their student's progress towards his/her goals, and what the school is doing if the student is not substantially meeting his/her goals?
2. How will districts ensure that all parents/guardians are fully informed about what they can do at home to support their student as a reader and writer?
3. What materials/information/resources will the district provide to parents to support students as readers and writers?

Action #2: Develop partnerships “with county libraries, volunteers, social and community organizations, faith-based organizations, pediatric/family practice medical personnel and school media specialists to promote reading.”

1. What are the out-of-school agencies and organizations your district will coordinate with to promote community literacy? How will your district work to collaborate with the agencies and organizations? Include how each partner will assist and support your district reading plan.

2. Who is responsible at the district level for coordinating partnerships in the communities? How will the district ensure schools develop and implement partnerships?

Part II. The Role of Instructional Leadership

At both the school and district levels, district and school leaders play a critical role in planning, implementing and monitoring of the District Reading Proficiency Plan. As such, district and school leaders need the knowledge and skills to understand and support the needs of classroom teachers, coaches and interventionists in this endeavor. Strong literacy leadership at both the district and school levels is essential to the success of a district and school reading plan and ultimately to the progress of the students.

Each district should create a district literacy team whose responsibility is to plan and design the district reading proficiency plan; to provide support to schools in the implementation of the Plan; to guide and provide appropriate professional learning and to monitor and provide feedback to schools regarding implementation of the Plan. The district literacy team should continuously monitor, assess, review and revise all aspects of the Plan on a periodic basis and provide feedback to schools. In addition, the district leadership team should devise a mechanism for receiving feedback from schools regarding their needs and concerns during implementation in order to update and make changes to the district plan.

At the school level, the principal should oversee the reading program and work collaboratively with teacher leaders, coaches, interventions and others on a school literacy team. The school literacy team should take the lead on developing a school plan which accesses the expertise of all educators in the building. They should solicit feedback on the school plan from parents and other stakeholders. Community partnerships and resources will be necessary for the plan's success. The more opportunities the plan has for exposure to its stakeholders the greater chance all perspectives will have been considered for inclusion in the plan and thus a greater degree of ownership in the school plan.

The school plan should be consistent with the state and district plan and, as such, include a system for ensuring that in all classrooms, students have ample time to read, access to books they can read and instruction (whole-group, small group and one-on-one) which helps them develop their ability to comprehend grade level texts. The school literacy team, working collaboratively with classroom teachers, should monitor the reading growth of all students, determine if supplemental support is needed and oversee supplemental instruction to ensure that student needs and strengths are being addressed in a manner that leads to reading growth. Finally the school literacy team should coordinate resource support so that student needs are met in a cohesive and consistent manner.

Part II. Role of Instructional Leadership

Action #1: Ensure that all school leaders excel as literacy leaders.

1. How will your district ensure that principals and district leaders have the knowledge base needed to be literacy leaders who provide appropriate support to teachers? What is the time frame for existing leaders to accomplish this task? What is the expected time frame for newly hired leaders?
2. How will your district ensure that principals are regularly in classrooms observing students and consulting with teachers about the progress of those students?
3. How will your district ensure that principals are using their literacy knowledge effectively to support teachers?
4. How will your district ensure that principals are sharing student and teacher information with individuals at the district office?
5. How will an action plan be created for teachers if their students are not making adequate progress?
6. How will an action plan be created by districts for principals if students in their schools are not making adequate progress?

Action #2. Ensure that that all staff is aware of their responsibilities relative to the literacy growth of students:

1. How will your district ensure that all teachers, interventionists, administrators and, if employed by the school/districts, coaches understand their particular responsibilities relative to helping all students comprehend grade level text?
2. How will your district form school and district data/literacy teams to ensure consistency of approach across service providers (e.g., reading interventionists, speech teachers, exceptional education teachers)?
3. How will your district ensure that only teachers who hold an add-on certification as a Literacy Teacher provide Tier Two and Tier Three Intervention?
4. If your district employs literacy coaches, how will the district ensure that only teachers who hold an add-on certification as a Literacy Coach serve in that role?
5. If your district employs literacy coaches, how will the district provide leadership and support in defining the role of a coach and communicating that to staff?

Action #3. Ensure that all staff, parents, and guardians understand the state, district and school plans.

1. How will your district ensure that all teachers and administrators in the district understand the content and expectations of district and school plans?
2. How will your district share this information with staff and parents/guardians?

Part III. Ensuring Professional Expertise

High quality, sustained professional learning opportunities based on the needs of teachers and principals ensures that students receive the kind of instruction that leads to improved student achievement. The literature suggests that effective

learning opportunities are long term, site-based, work-embedded, and strongly supported by school leaders, including the school principal. Professional learning provided for the implementation of the Plan is a multi-year endeavor, which progressively builds on the previous year's results to strengthen, assist and support the knowledge base and practices of all participants.

Districts should develop a professional learning plan for all teachers, coaches, interventionists, and school-based administrators as well as district office staff whose responsibility it is to assist with the reading proficiency. This plan should be grounded in an assessment of the strengths and needs of all these individuals. All involved individuals should know how to:

1. Utilize and interpret formative assessments.
2. Use student data to guide instruction.
3. Understand and implement research-based reading practices.
4. Understand and implement the response to intervention (RTI) model,
5. And understand and utilize in-class and supplemental interventions for struggling readers.

Administrators and teacher leaders should be provided opportunities to understand the implementation of the district reading proficiency plan including effective monitoring of the Plan, importance of classroom observations and follow-up discussions by district and school literacy teams, the role of the district and school literacy teams and the role of the coaches and interventionists.

Part III. Ensuring Professional Expertise

Action #1 – Ensure that all teachers and administrators have their required add-on certifications and course work

1. What is your district plan to ensure that all current teachers and administrators have their required add-on certifications and course work within the time frame required by the law?

2. How will your district recruit and retain new teachers and administrators who possess state-required add-on certifications and course work?

Action #2 - Provide Professional Learning

1. What is your district plan to provide comprehensive, sustained and intensive professional learning needed to ensure that the district and school plans are effectively implemented and that increasing numbers of students achieve reading proficiency?
2. How will the district support principals and teachers during the time frame that they are acquiring their required add-on certifications and course work?
3. What professional learning will teachers receive related to improving reading instruction in ELA, history/social studies, science, art, career & technology, physical and health science that is collaborative and brings together teachers from multiple classrooms and disciplines as well as school principals and other administrative staff in communities of practice to inquire into reading and writing in the content areas?
4. Provide the district schedule for professional learning that will build district capacity in literacy for all stakeholders: paraprofessionals, teachers, coaches, principals, and central office personnel.
5. How will the district and schools ensure that teacher and administrator needs, including student assessment data, guide professional learning?
6. How will your district monitor and determine the effectiveness of professional learning? How will modifications be made as needed?

Part IV. Planning and Evaluation

Planning and evaluation are part of a continuous cycle the district should use to plan, develop, implements, assess, refine and evaluate the district reading proficiency plan. The Plan is a roadmap created by each district to guide and direct the actions of the district and schools in implementing its reading plan. It is also a working document that should be reviewed and refined on an ongoing basis. The

strengths and challenges of the Plan as evidenced during implementation should initiate discussions among district and school staff. These discussions along with student data and teacher needs identify areas for improvement year to year.

The district literacy team along with input from the schools should establish a series of incremental goals that move the district towards meeting the state vision of 95% of students reading on grade level by 2020. The goals should be in the SMART (Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely) format. It is expected that incremental goals will be written for each grade level (kindergarten through grade 10) to cover the three-year period of 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18.

Part IV. Planning and Evaluation

Action #1: Design, Secure Funding for, and Implement a District Plan

1. Who in your district contact person for the district reading plan? Contact address? Contact email? Contact phone number?
2. How will/did your district literacy leadership team develop, implement, monitor and sustain the district reading plan?
3. How will your district fund its reading plan? *(Sample format to be provided.)*

Action #2: Design and Secure Funding for Plans for Individual Schools

1. How will your district oversee the development of the school plans?
2. How will the schools with the greatest needs receive the greatest support?

Action #3: Annually report student progress toward the district's reading proficiency goals.

1. What are your district's measurable student achievement goals for reading for 2015-2106? For 2016-17? For 2017-18? Establish incremental goals to meet the 2020 state goal of 95% of students meeting reading proficiency. Include goals for grades K - 10. (Ensure goals are in SMART format).

2. Describe the progress your district has made toward meeting those goals.

Action #4: Annually review all aspects of the district plan, addressing its effectiveness and making any needed modifications

1. What data will your district use to determine the effectiveness of your district literacy plan? Include data such as formative assessment, summative assessment, teacher effectiveness, professional learning quality and implementation, etc.)
2. Who in your district will be responsible for analyzing data in order to determine the effectiveness of the district reading plan?
3. How and when will this analysis be carried out?
4. How will the district ensure that the district and school leadership communicates on a regular basis concerning student progress, program challenges and successes to appropriate stakeholder groups?
5. How will decisions be made about where additional support is needed?
6. How will support be provided, when and by whom?
7. Who will be responsible for plan modifications?

Action #5: Address the effectiveness of school reading plans.

1. What data will each school use to determine the effectiveness of their school literacy plan? Include data such as formative assessment, summative assessment, teacher effectiveness, professional learning quality and implementation, etc.)
2. Who in your district will be responsible for analyzing data in order to determine the effectiveness of school reading plans?
3. Who will be responsible for plan modifications?
4. Who will be responsible for sharing findings from the analysis with individuals within the school? With parents/guardians? With the district office?

Proposed Plans for Piloting the Draft District Reading Proficiency Plan

In anticipation of the South Carolina Legislature adopting legislation to create a statewide, comprehensive reading plan, *Read to Succeed*, the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) has been charged with developing a draft of a District Reading Proficiency Plan. It is anticipated the District Reading Proficiency Plan would guide districts in their thinking, discussion and reflection as they develop, implement, sustain and refine their plans.

During the fall of 2013, the EOC established a District Reading Plan Committee, composed of school and district level instructional leaders, district and school administrators, and higher education faculty whose charge was to provide guidance and direction for a District Reading Proficiency Plan template. The Committee met several times and provided invaluable expertise and suggestions in the creation of a draft District Reading Proficiency Plan template. In addition, the Committee shared recommendations and considerations for developing and implementing the Plan, including professional learning needs, funding concerns, and resource allocations.

In order to provide for additional feedback and input from local districts, the EOC is piloting the draft District Reading Proficiency Plan in ten school districts across the state in the spring of 2014. These districts are: Barnwell 45; Darlington; Florence 1; Georgetown; Greenwood 50, Orangeburg 5; Pickens; Spartanburg 2; Williamsburg; and York 1. The purpose of the pilot will be for districts to continue to guide the EOC in the development of the plan by assembling a district literacy team whose responsibility will be to create its district reading plan using the District Reading Proficiency Plan template. It is anticipated that pilot districts will submit their plan using a web based text entry system.

Each district will be provided support in this initiative with face-to-face meetings, telephone conferences and electronic meetings, as needed. The timeline for the pilot is mid-January through mid-March. Districts have the flexibility to complete the plan by any means that works for them.

The deliverables for the pilot will include a completed District Reading Proficiency Plan including questions, comments and concerns expressed by districts regarding the questions in the plan, the format of the plan, the materials needed for implementation of the plan, the personnel needed for implementation of the plan, certification requirements for educators, and the overall funding needs for the plan. The EOC will also ask districts to document the total time required to complete the plan.

The feedback received from the districts regarding the creation of their Plan will assist the EOC in making the necessary revisions to the Plan template as well as to the overall implementation of the *Read to Succeed* legislation.

Proposed Guidelines for 2014 Summer Reading Camps

In 2013, the South Carolina Legislature funded the 2014 Summer Reading Camps to support and assist third grade students with reading difficulties. The purpose of the summer reading camps will be to provide opportunities for students who scored Not Met 1 on the Palmetto Assessment State Standards (PASS) to improve and advance their reading skills. During the summer reading camp experience, high quality reading instruction will be provided in order for students to achieve the goal of reading on grade level.

For the summer of 2014, districts should follow district policy/guidelines regarding retention for grade 3 students. The 2014 Summer Reading Camps are meant to provide an additional opportunity to struggling readers in preparation for grade 4. In addition, a district may offer summer reading camps for students who are not exhibiting reading proficiency in prekindergarten through grade 2 and may charge fees based on a sliding scale pursuant to Section 59-19-90 of the 1976 Code. Priority seats for the summer reading camps should be given to third grade students with reading difficulties.

Funding for the 2014 Summer Reading Camps was determined by the number of students who scored Not Met 1 on the reading portion of PASS in 2013. In the spring of 2014, districts should carefully review all students' progress in third grade reading for the 2013-14 school year to determine which students are substantially not demonstrating reading proficiency at the third grade level. A variety of data points should be included in the student review such as teacher observations, teacher grades, progress monitoring results, and benchmark assessment results to determine if a student is substantially not demonstrating reading proficiency. (Note: PASS scores will not available prior to the start of the reading camp.)

Students who are not substantially demonstrating reading proficiency should be invited and encouraged to attend the summer reading camp for the purpose of improving their reading skills, however, students are not required to attend.

Districts must adhere to the following requirements for its summer reading camps.

1. The reading camp must be six to eight weeks in length.
2. The reading camp must be four to five days per week and include at least five and one-half hours of instructional time daily.
3. The reading camp classes must be taught by compensated, licensed teachers who have demonstrated substantial success in helping students comprehend grade level texts.

Districts should consider the following recommendations in implementing its reading camps.

1. Create a program designed to: a. teach students strategies to assist them in understanding the meaning of what they have read as opposed to reading words; b. make the reading experience pleasurable for students, building upon the interest of students in the program; and c. promote the belief in students that they can be successful readers, developing and building their self-efficacy.
2. Establish partnerships to provide mentors, tutors and/or instructional assistants with community-based organizations such as the Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCA, PTOs, county libraries, parent volunteers, etc.; faith-based organizations; local colleges/universities; nonprofits such as Save the Children and Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools.
3. Establish class sizes of no more than 15 students per licensed teacher.
4. Licensed teachers should have expertise in tailoring instruction to meet the individual needs of students as well as in accelerating student learning.
5. Ensure the focus of the camp is on intensive reading intervention.
6. Utilize evidence-based instructional materials in the reading program to include components of learning to read, i.e., oral language, phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension.
7. Utilize a response to intervention system for each site. Administer a progress monitoring assessment to each student within the third day of the reading camp and establish appropriate intervention(s) immediately. Periodically re-assess each student to determine the progress of the student and the effectiveness of the instruction.
8. Establish a data system to record the reading progress of each child.
9. Plan to actively involve parents/guardians in supporting their child in developing his/her reading skills during the camp participation such as creating a Read to Parent Day, sending home daily reading activities parents can do with their child, signing up for a library card, etc.
10. Provide access to the media center for use in schools as well as necessary technology and computer labs.
11. Ensure the onsite camp administrator/supervisor monitors instruction daily.
12. Develop a system to communicate with parents throughout the camp experience and consider integrating a family night or other opportunity to promote family literacy and showcase the work of the students.

13. Consider funding sources in addition to the state allocation such as IDEA, Title 3, Title 1, etc.
14. Consider providing each child with a certain number of books to take home at the end of the camp to reinforce reading strategies.
15. Consider a thematic approach to the camp structure such as careers, arts, animals/nature, local history, etc.

2014 Summer Reading Camp Data Collection

(Note: It is anticipated this form will be available for districts to submit online.)

District Contact:

Contact Phone:

Contact Email:

Camp Sites: (List sites of camp sites in district)

Total Number of Students Expected to be Served:

Dates of Camp: (Start/End Dates)

Days of Camp: (Mon-Fri)

Hours Per Day: (Hours of Daily Operation)

Hours of Instruction Per Day: (Hours of Actual Daily Instruction)

Estimated Student/Classroom Teacher Ratio: (Ratio of students to classroom teacher)

Media Center Available: (Yes/No)

Computer Access for Students: (Yes/No)

Camp Schedule: (Provide schedule for an expected week of instruction)

Partnerships for Camps: (List partnerships for each site and what role the partner will play)

List Main Reading Intervention Program(s):

List Primary Instructional Reading Materials:

List Progress Monitoring Tools:

Plan for evaluating individual student performance:

Student data will be collected as a result of the summer reading camps. Districts will flag students in PowerSchool as participants in the district reading camp. Data points in PowerSchool will indicate the 2013 Reading PASS level of the student, the pre/post

assessment data and whether student was promoted to next grade level. Instructions will be provided to school districts on the method to record the information.

Draft

Essential Elements of State Policy for College Completion

SREB

Policy Brief

State Policies to Support a Statewide College- and Career-Readiness Agenda

Since 2006, the Southern Regional Education Board has supported statewide college- and career-readiness initiatives in many states across the region. SREB has worked side by side with states as they implemented policies and practices. This hands-on experience, including deep discussions with state policy-makers, educational leaders and state legislators, has led to clarifications and conclusions about the purpose and focus of these readiness initiatives and the kinds of state policies needed to support them.

Although the readiness of high school graduates to succeed in postsecondary education or career training has been an issue for many years, increasing readiness did not become a major priority for states until the early 2000s for a number of reasons:

- It was popularly assumed that while students should have broad access to enter postsecondary education, many students would not or did not need to succeed in higher education; postsecondary education was considered more discretionary than it is today.
- States recognized the readiness problem but greatly underestimated the true extent of it. No statewide, shared view of readiness existed, because postsecondary agencies and institutions applied varied and ineffective standards and assessments in evaluating entering students. Those uneven practices masked the size of the readiness problem, and this is still true today.

Over the past eight to 10 years, the priority of postsecondary readiness has grown. Most fundamentally, states are recognizing the need for larger percentages of young adults to complete some form of postsecondary education to fuel economic development as well as to provide opportunity for individuals to enter the economic middle class, which increasingly depends on having some postsecondary attainment. So *success* has joined *access* as a priority for postsecondary education policy. Degree completion depends in large part on a student's readiness to learn at the college level — which places a premium on readiness and pressures public schools to make it a higher priority.

The increased focus on postsecondary readiness also has been reinforced by states' implementation of the Common Core State Standards and other rigorous standards for college and career readiness. Agreement on these standards by both K-12 and postsecondary education lends force to the readiness concept. As assessments for these readiness standards are put into place over the

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SREB's College- and Career-Readiness Action Agenda

SREB's College- and Career-Readiness Action Agenda includes five essential components across the educational pipeline:

1. **Adopt statewide readiness standards.** Establish statewide postsecondary readiness standards for literacy and mathematics skills; ensure that those skills are emphasized in course work; and have both K-12 and postsecondary education agree on the specific standards.
2. **Assess high school juniors.** Assess students in 11th grade to determine their progress in achieving the readiness standards.
3. **Offer transitional readiness courses.** Offer supplemental transitional postsecondary-readiness courses, and require juniors assessed as underprepared to take the classes in 11th or 12th grade.
4. **Apply the standards in college.** Ensure that public postsecondary institutions apply the readiness standards agreed to with K-12 in deciding whether students need additional learning support after admission and, if so, the form of such support.
5. **Hold schools accountable.** Include increasing postsecondary readiness as an important criterion in school accountability systems.

next few years, the early rounds of results will likely reveal a more severe readiness problem than heretofore was recognized, further increasing state interest in the readiness issue.

SREB, Achieve and other organizations have worked with states to develop and implement statewide college- and career-readiness initiatives, using a comprehensive series of policy actions to help *all* of a state's public schools and postsecondary institutions increase the readiness of high school graduates. A number of states have put into place some or all elements of such an action agenda.

This is detailed, comprehensive and collaborative work that brings together public K-12 and postsecondary education to agree on expectations, in essence aligning requirements and narrowing the readiness gap between what students learn in high school and the skills they need to do well in college and complete certificates or degrees.

SREB strongly believes that each and all of these steps are needed to establish and sustain an effective statewide initiative to significantly increase the percentages of high school students who graduate ready to earn a college degree or career certificate. *Strong state policy is required to initiate the actions statewide and bring all public schools*

and postsecondary education together in common purpose and action. States that support these comprehensive actions with strong state policy will be better prepared to withstand resistance that is likely to emerge over the next several years as the higher standards and new, more rigorous assessments reveal a deeper readiness problem than was recognized in the past.

Policy Issues Considered: Refining the Focus of the Readiness Agenda

The purpose of a statewide college- and career-readiness agenda is to signal clearly and universally to all K-12 schools in a state what knowledge and learning skills or readiness standards are essential for students to succeed in a substantial majority of postsecondary education programs. To be effective, *all* of postsecondary education in a state need to send these signals. Schools need to be confident that asking students to meet readiness standards will mean they are academically ready for entry-level, credit-bearing courses in most postsecondary education programs. The standards need to be reinforced by a series of additional steps that include assessment, supplemental course work, and school accountability.

In developing the statewide readiness agenda presented in this report, SREB worked with state leaders through a number of issues and, in some cases, obstacles that impeded consensus. Several of the more fundamental issues are described here with clarification and resolution.

Academic Readiness

This statewide readiness agenda addresses only students' academic preparation: the development of the knowledge and learning skills needed to succeed at higher levels. To be sure, their success in postsecondary education involves other critical attributes: motivation, knowing how to apply to college, financial knowledge and support, tenacity or grit, and others. Schools need to play an important role in developing these qualities. However, without diminishing the importance of these other key factors, the focus of a statewide readiness agenda is the *academic content and learning skills* necessary for postsecondary success: a content knowledge base and the skills to read, write and think at higher levels.

Learning Skills

Focusing on the literacy and mathematics-related skills needed to succeed in postsecondary education does not diminish the need for students to engage in course work with content that encourages and even requires the development of these learning skills. Students must take courses with the appropriate level of challenge and complexity.

However, SREB's statewide readiness agenda asserts that just taking the right courses does not always result in students developing the critical reading, writing and mathematics *learning* skills that they need to continue learning successfully in college and careers. Therefore, the agenda presented here primarily emphasizes the development of learning skills in reading and writing and in thinking abilities in mathematics. The statewide readiness agenda is based on the view that in addition to content, such learning skills must be explicitly taught and assessed.

Readiness for the Vast Majority of Degree Programs

Empirical evidence and practice now provide a substantially clearer picture of what reading, writing and mathe-

matics skills are needed for most postsecondary degree programs, both associate's and baccalaureate. However, this single set of readiness standards for the great majority of degree programs will not reach the math levels needed to prepare for most STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) programs.

In addition, there is not enough empirical evidence about the academic skills needed to be ready for non-degree career-preparation programs. Most likely, the same standards for non-STEM degrees would ensure readiness for non-degree programs as well. In short, one set of readiness skills will not guarantee preparation for all possible postsecondary programs, but it will ensure readiness for a vast majority of them.

While clarifying that the readiness standards do not necessarily apply to certain STEM postsecondary programs, it is important that K-12 embrace the goal of preparing all students to achieve at least the core set of statewide readiness standards related to non-math-based degree programs. This will prepare students for the widest set of postsecondary options in degree and certificate programs.

Critical Postsecondary Role

While the focus of the readiness initiative lies primarily with K-12, postsecondary education across a state has an important role as well, in two ways. First, postsecondary education as a whole needs to work with K-12 to identify and embrace the readiness standards and their importance. Second, postsecondary education statewide needs to reinforce the K-12 emphasis on the readiness standards by using the standards to help determine whether incoming students need further learning support. A number of policies and practices will be needed to ensure postsecondary education's full support of and alignment with the postsecondary standards.

Postsecondary education can cement its alignment with the specific readiness standards in two critical ways. First, it can ensure the effective and consistent use of the results of the junior-year Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) readiness assessments (and similar assessments used in other states). Second, postsecondary education can adjust its own placement/readiness assessments to reflect the performance standards eventually set and validated in the

junior-year assessments. The recommendations below outline specific statewide policies and practices for this.

Importance of Teacher Development

How well students achieve the readiness standards depends fundamentally on the teacher. While not addressed in detail in the policy recommendations below, it is absolutely essential to refocus both pre-service and in-service teacher development statewide on effective teaching of the postsecondary readiness standards; this agenda assumes that states will make this a priority in policy and action. Additionally, teacher evaluation systems need to emphasize effective teaching of the new standards. In essence, all of the steps in the statewide postsecondary readiness agenda in this report depend on successful teacher development.

Preparation in High School

The recommendations below focus heavily on high school and the transition to postsecondary study. However, the teaching and learning of the postsecondary-readiness standards must begin in the earliest school years. When this is done effectively, over the next seven to 10 years more students will enter high school with increasingly solid foundations in these standards. In the meantime, schools must address the needs of students who have reached the upper high school years without achieving the readiness standards.

State Policies to Support a Readiness Agenda

State policies are needed to make increasing college and career readiness a statewide priority. Such policy must address both K-12 and postsecondary education and bring both sectors together in joint pursuit of common readiness goals. These state-level, statewide policies can be legislative, interagency or both.

The policies need to establish each step of the readiness action agenda and embody shared understandings on a number of crucial points and issues on which effective statewide readiness initiatives are based. Lack of mutual understanding or different interpretations of fundamental terms, definitions and goals can dilute the effectiveness of these concerted efforts.

State policy should address directly the following essential elements of the statewide readiness agenda: school standards and curriculum, readiness assessments, transitional course work, postsecondary application of the standards, and accountability.

1. Statewide Standards for Readiness

State policy should:

- a. **Establish a statewide default high school curriculum that includes content through which the postsecondary-readiness standards can be taught and learned.** Immersing students in the appropriate kind and level of course work to require development of readiness skills is fundamental.
- b. **Place strong and specific emphasis within the curriculum on teaching and learning the literacy and mathematics-related readiness skills.** While taking and passing the right courses are necessary parts of academic preparation for postsecondary education, this does not ensure, without special emphasis, the skills needed to learn after high school.
- c. **Require public schools and postsecondary education, as a whole within a state, to identify and agree on a specific set of postsecondary-readiness standards in reading, writing and mathematics-related skills.** All public schools in a state need a single set of readiness standards on which they can focus with confidence that all postsecondary institutions have committed to the standards' value and use. The Common Core State Standards, and similar readiness standards in other states, provide College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards that are a sound set of readiness skills around which both sectors can coalesce. Moreover, PARCC and SBAC are developing high school assessments that will establish empirically based postsecondary-readiness performance levels shared by states and by postsecondary institutions within states.
- d. **Define the postsecondary education readiness skills as the academic skills needed to succeed in all credit-bearing, first-year course work in associate's and bachelor's degree programs in non-mathematics-based majors.** Empirical studies to date have focused on the impact of the readiness skills on degree programs; mathematics-based majors will require higher

math-readiness skills. Postsecondary education generally applies lower readiness standards in most certificate and diploma programs, although empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of these standards is inconclusive. Until the readiness standards needed for non-degree programs also are empirically defined, postsecondary education will decide on the applicability of the degree-based standards to non-degree programs.

- e. **Establish that the readiness standards are not intended to affect *admission* to open-door or broad-access, two-year and four-year institutions.** Access needs to be protected. Selective-admission institutions will continue to use related but more competitive criteria (grades, SAT/ACT, etc.). Admission and readiness will continue to be determined independently.
- f. **Set performance levels for assessments on the standards that strongly and empirically predict postsecondary success.** Otherwise, the standards will not be effective in laying the groundwork for higher levels of success in postsecondary completion. The PARCC and SBAC assessment performance standards will be validated by 2015.
- g. **Set and apply the performance levels on the new readiness standards immediately upon their validation.** Avoid phasing in these higher readiness standards over time.
- h. **Recognize that, at least in the near term, achieving the new postsecondary readiness standards cannot realistically be a criterion for high school graduation.** The aspiration that high school graduation should guarantee postsecondary readiness emerged recently, in a time when postsecondary readiness standards were unclear, not universally applied, and lower than predictive of college success. The new readiness standards and their associated assessments will highlight a wide achievement gap between what reasonably can be expected for threshold high school graduation and for postsecondary readiness. Immediately requiring that the standard high school diploma equate to college readiness is unrealistic and would have a minimizing effect on the level of the readiness standards.

- i. **Establish the high school mission as helping all students prepare for the broadest and highest postsecondary academic and career-preparation options.** All students should be encouraged and guided to pursue a standard, default high school diploma, the requirements for which should include college-preparatory core courses. Students opting out of the default diploma curriculum should complete a curriculum based on literacy and mathematics-related standards that prepare students to begin some form of non-degree postsecondary education. While it is unrealistic in the near term to expect that minimum high school diploma requirements will reach postsecondary degree-readiness skill levels, it is important that the diploma have substantial meaning for future careers and postsecondary study.
- j. **Ensure that all career-technical pathways to the standard high school diploma include core college-preparatory course work and college-readiness skills expectations.** Career-technical pathways should require students to take both the academic core courses and a series of career-technical education courses that also include the literacy and mathematics-related college-readiness standards.

2. Junior-Year Assessments of Progress

State policy should:

- a. **Require that students' status in achieving statewide postsecondary-readiness standards be assessed by statewide, common readiness tests no later than the junior year.**
- b. **Require that the same assessments be applied in all high schools statewide.**
- c. **Require that these readiness assessments be based on the readiness standards adopted and shared by the public schools and postsecondary education.**
- d. **Require that postsecondary performance benchmarks be set at levels that empirically predict success in first-year degree course work.**
- e. **Recognize that students will not be required to achieve the readiness performance levels on the readiness assessments as a requirement for earning a high school diploma.** The new readiness standards are empirically based to prepare students to succeed

in college and careers. The new assessments for them will reveal a wide achievement gap between these new expectations and current threshold requirements for the high school diploma. It is not reasonable to expect, in the near term, that a high proportion of students will meet the higher standards. It will take time to bring minimum diploma standards closer to the postsecondary-readiness standards.

3. Transitional College- and Career-Readiness Courses

The following policy recommendations support offering senior-year transitional courses statewide to help students achieve readiness standards before high school graduation. These courses are urgently needed to address the significant percentage of students who are not meeting current readiness standards and to mitigate the imminent spike anticipated in the proportion of students who will not meet the new, higher readiness standards on the common readiness assessments due to be implemented in 2015. In the next few years, students will be taking new tests with higher standards as schools move to full implementation of the Common Core and similar standards. States that do not provide these courses statewide to help students before high school graduation could see postsecondary remediation rates increase substantially in the short term.

The following state policies will ensure that these crucial courses are a priority and that they are offered to and taken by all students needing them.

- a. **Require that all high schools statewide provide postsecondary-readiness transitional courses.**
- b. **Require transitional courses to be based on the Common Core College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards or similar standards adopted by the public schools and all postsecondary institutions statewide.**
- c. **Require that all students be assessed for college and career readiness no later than the junior year, based on the statewide postsecondary-readiness standards and assessments.**
- d. **Require that all students assessed as *not meeting* the readiness standards take the appropriate high school transitional courses.**

- e. **Ensure that the math transitional course is creditable as a fourth-year math course in high school.**
- f. **Ensure that the transitional courses carry high school credit and are eligible to be funded through the public school funding formula.** This provision is needed to give high priority to these courses.
- g. **Provide professional development to all high school teachers of the transitional courses.** Collaborative opportunities among postsecondary and high school faculty should be maintained to ensure that transitional courses continue to target gaps in students' readiness skills.

4. Postsecondary Application of Statewide Readiness Standards and Assessments

State policy should:

- a. **Require that high school students who *meet* the readiness standards on the readiness assessments (during the junior year) be afforded the following benefits.**
 - Students will not be required to undergo further readiness or placement testing when admitted to postsecondary education after high school graduation. The junior-year assessment should be used to determine students' *placement* in postsecondary study but not their *admission* to a college or university.
 - Students may begin postsecondary course work while still in high school, through early admission, dual credit and other acceleration options.
- b. **Require that students entering postsecondary education who have *not met* the readiness standards on the junior-year assessments be treated as follows.**
 - Students should have their literacy and mathematics-related readiness skills assessed through new readiness assessments based specifically on the same readiness content and performance expectations (standards) as the junior-year assessments. This will entail, across and within states, development of a new, common placement or readiness assessment that parallels the junior-year assessments and is based on the same perfor-

mance standards. Another option is to use the same readiness assessments employed in the junior year.

- Entering students who do not meet the readiness benchmarks on the placement assessment should be evaluated further to determine the kind of monitoring or learning support they need. Additional measures of student readiness should be used, such as course grades or other evidence of academic success. To the extent they reflect the readiness standards included in the junior-year assessments, scores on the standardized achievement or admission tests (ACT and SAT) could be used. In these cases, the validated college-readiness benchmarks recommended on these assessments should be applied.
- Based on this further evaluation, students should be guided to one of the following paths.
 - ◆ Students begin degree-credit course work without learning support, and their performance is monitored.
 - ◆ Students undertake some form of learning support in parallel with degree-credit course work, or embedded in the degree-credit courses. The performance of these students should be monitored carefully and the results collected and analyzed to empirically determine effective practice.

For high schools and their students to make achieving the postsecondary-readiness standards a high priority, postsecondary education should speak and act with one statewide voice in support of the standards and their importance.

5. School Accountability for Increasing Readiness

State policy should require public school accountability to be based both on increasing the percentage of students who meet the standard high school *graduation* requirements and on increasing the percentage of high school graduates who meet the state-adopted *postsecondary-readiness* standards. This can be measured by performance on the statewide, school-based postsecondary-readiness assessments and related postsecondary placement tests. SREB supports the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation goal of having 80 percent of high school students graduate and meet postsecondary-readiness standards. Most estimates gauge the current rate at below 40 percent (a 75 percent graduation rate with less than 50 percent of graduates meeting readiness standards). Holding schools accountable for increasing both graduation and readiness is essential to meeting the goal.

Building Statewide Policy Support to Increase Readiness

From its founding in 1948, SREB's mission has been to help states improve education to grow their economies. Getting more students ready for college and careers is a critical priority at a time when postsecondary degrees and credentials drive jobs and prosperity. Many states, with the adoption of college- and career-readiness standards, are on their way to real progress. The steps in this readiness agenda will help build the statewide infrastructure for students, teachers and schools to reach the standards and for states to stay the course so that the region sees a new generation of students graduate ready to do well in postsecondary education and equipped with learning skills relevant to the workplace.

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