

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Agenda
Monday, June 10, 2013
2:00 p.m.
433 Blatt Building

- | | | |
|------|--|--------------|
| I. | Welcome and Introductions | Mr. Robinson |
| II. | Approval of the Minutes of April 8, 2013 | Mr. Robinson |
| III. | Key Constituencies: | |

Cocky's Reading Express

Charles Bierbauer, Dean of the College of Mass Communications and Information Studies, USC

Elizabeth Quackenbush, Senior Director of Development, College of Mass Communications and Information Studies, USC

Kim Jeffcoat, Executive Director of the SC Center for Children's Books and Literacy

Microsoft Technology Academy

- | | | | |
|-----|--|----------------|--|
| IV. | Subcommittee Reports | | Neil C. Robinson, Jr.
CHAIR |
| | A. Academic Standards and Assessments
Action: Revisions to 2012-13 Accountability Manual
Action: Results of 2012 Parent Survey | Dr. Merck | Barbara B. Hairfield
VICE CHAIR
Phillip Bowers
Dennis Drew
Mike Fair |
| | B. EIA and Improvement Mechanisms
Information: FY2013-14 Budget Update | Mr. Drew | Nikki Haley
R. Wesley Hayes, Jr. |
| | C. Public Awareness Subcommittee
Information: Reading Public Awareness Campaign
Information: Teacher Appreciation Campaign
Information: 2013-14 Family Friendly Standards | Mrs. Hairfield | Alex Martin
John W. Matthews, Jr.
Daniel B. Merck
Joseph H. Neal
Andrew S. Patrick |
| | D. Special Reading Subcommittee | Mrs. Hairfield | Evelyn R. Perry
J. Roland Smith |
| V. | Executive Session | Mr. Robinson | Ann Marie Taylor |
| VI. | Adjournment | Mr. Robinson | John Warner
David Whittemore
Mick Zais |

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
Minutes of the Meeting
April 8, 2013

Members Present: Mr. Robinson; Mr. Bowers; Mr. Drew; Senator Fair; Senator Hayes; Mrs. Hairfield; Sen. Matthews; Dr. Merck; Rep. Neal; Rep. Patrick; Rep. Smith; Mr. Whittemore; and Dr. Zais

- I. Welcome and Introductions: Mr. Robinson welcomed members and guests to the meeting. He recognized and welcomed back to the EOC Senator John Matthews, the newest member of the EOC and the appointee of the Chairman of Senate Finance, Senator Hugh Leatherman.
- II. Approval of the Minutes of the February 11, 2013 Meeting - The minutes were approved as distributed.
- III. Special Guest – Dr. Dave Conley, of the Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC) at the University of Oregon was recognized. Earlier in the day Dr. Conley discussed with the cyclical accountability review panel whether or not students graduating from public schools in the United State are ready for college and careers. Dr. Conley summarized the work that EPIC has done at the state level with Texas in the creation of their college and career standards and with other states like Oregon and Maine. In addition, EPIC has worked in South Carolina to bring the faculty of high schools and the faculty of colleges together to improve course realignment and to make the transition to post-secondary education a smoother one. At the national level, Dr. Conley has worked with the College Board on the Advanced Placement course audits.

Mr. Robinson asked about his work with state accountability systems. Dr. Conley responded that state accountability systems with a variety of assessments including student self-reporting assessments seem to provide the most meaningful impact. Rep. Neal asked about the validation of data. Dr. Conley referred to his work in Maine working on course pathways and his work in Texas on the college and career readiness standards. Sen. Fair asked if a moratorium on assessments during the implementation of Common Core State Standards would be prudent and asked about computer adaptive testing. Dr. Conley responded that student learning progression is easier with computer adaptive testing. He also commented that, if, during a testing moratorium schools and school districts do not implement professional development or use alternative assessments to document student learning, then, a moratorium does not benefit the schools or students.

IV. Subcommittee Reports

The committee then turned to the Subcommittee reports.

A. Academic Standards and Assessments:

Dr. Merck updated the committee on the panel that will provide recommendations to the EOC on the cyclical review of the accountability system including an overview of the panel's focus group meetings in Charleston, Columbia and Greenville during the week of April 8.

B. EIA and Improvement Mechanisms

Mr. Drew updated the EOC on the EIA budget recommendations for Fiscal Year 2031-14 as adopted by the House of Representatives. He noted that the House concurred with almost all of the EOC's budget and proviso recommendations with one exception, being instructional materials. Mrs. Barton noted that the objective of the House was to increase the base student cost of the Education Finance Act (EFA).

Mr. Drew then presented the evaluation of the Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP) that analyzed the PASS results for the first and second cohorts of students who participated in CDEPP. The Committee discussed the results which did not produce dramatic improvement in student learning, noting the 14 percent retention rate of the first CDEPP Cohort. When looking at prior evaluations provided by the EOC, the lack of instructional support in CDEPP classrooms apparently continues to be an issue. Rep. Smith asked Dr. Zais how he would address improving the number of effective teachers in the classrooms of South Carolina. Dr. Zais responded that teachers and principals should be held accountable for their results. Mr. Drew noted that if the General Assembly chooses to expand the CDEPP program, there may be an impact on the child care industry, and there may not be the educational improvement provided that focusing resources on children from birth through age three may have.

Mr. Drew summarized the evaluation of the Teacher Loan Program for 2011-12. He noted the decline in the number of applicants and the fact that there are still not enough appropriations to cover all eligible applicants. The Committee voted unanimously to adopt the report, which will then be forwarded to the members of the General Assembly.

C. Special Reading Subcommittee

Mrs. Hairfield reported that Senate Bill 516 was introduced in March. Sponsored by Sen. Peeler and co-sponsored by Senators Courson, Hayes, and Fair, the bill would implement a comprehensive and systemic approach to reading. Mr. Robinson publically thanked Senators Hayes and Fair for their support and Senator Peeler for his leadership. Mrs. Hairfield noted that the reading subcommittee reviewed S.516 at its March 18 meeting and is surveying districts to get their response. Dr. Zais appreciated the focus on literacy and the commitment to reading instruction. Mrs. Hairfield noted that the focus on requiring all teachers to get appropriate training in reading is critical to assisting students in learning to read and in reading for comprehension in content areas.

V. Adjournment

Having no other business, the EOC adjourned.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE: Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee

DATE: June 10, 2013

REPORT/RECOMMENDATION

Revisions to 2012-13 Accountability Manual – Affecting Palmetto Gold and Silver Award and Growth Rating Calculation

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

Sections 59-6-100 and 59-6-110 require the EOC to monitor the development and implementation of the Education Accountability Act.

Section 59-18-900 also require the EOC to “determine the criteria for and establish five academic performance ratings of excellent, good, average, below average, and school/district at-risk” for the ratings of absolute and growth performance. “

Section 59-18-1100. requires State Board of Education, working with Accountability Division of the EOC to establish criteria for Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards Program

CRITICAL FACTS

In April of 2012 the EOC approved an alternative value table for the growth ratings calculation for elementary and middle schools. The following report determines the impact, if any, of the revised value table on: (1) the Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards Program; and (2) the calculation of the growth rating for elementary and middle schools that increase meet or exceed a criterion for closing the gap between historically underachieving groups on the Reading and Research assessment portion of PASS. Based on the information in the reports, the Subcommittee recommends two changes in the 2012-13 Accountability Manual.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

January 23, 2012 – ASA Subcommittee received information on the relationship between the absolute rating and the growth rating for elementary and middle schools

February 13, 2012 – Full EOC received as information the report on the relationship between the absolute rating and the growth rating

March 19, 2012- ASA Subcommittee reviewed three alternative value tables to replace the current value table along with public comments from school district officials and teachers. The Subcommittee is proposing to replace the current value table.

April 9, 2012 – Full EOC approves alternative value table for Growth ratings calculation.

May 20, 2013 – ASA Subcommittee reviewed impact of Growth ratings on HUG adjustments.

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

Cost: No fiscal impact to EOC

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

ACTION TAKEN

Approved

Amended

Not Approved

Action deferred (explain)

2013

Revisions to 2012-13 Accountability Manual – Affecting Palmetto Gold and Silver Award and Growth Ratings



**SC EDUCATION
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

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Background

On April 9, 2012 the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) approved a revised value table to be used in calculating Growth ratings for elementary and middle schools beginning with the release of the 2013 annual school and district report cards. In the following report, the staff of the EOC analyzed the impact of the Revised Growth Value Table on: (1) the Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards program, including the General Performance and Closing the Achievement Gap awards; and (2) the calculation of the Growth rating for elementary and middle schools that increase meet or exceed a criterion for closing the gap between historically underachieving groups on the Reading and Research assessment portion of Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS).

Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards

The EOC amended the criteria in October of 2012 to exclude schools having an Average or better Growth index for three years from being eligible to receive a Silver award. Regarding schools with steady Growth, only schools that had a Growth rating of Good or better for two consecutive years could receive a Palmetto Silver Award (Table 1). As a result of the change, approximately 277 elementary, middle and high schools did not receive a Silver Award for having three years of an Average or better Growth rating based upon academic achievement in school year 2011-12.

Table 1
Gold and Silver Awards Criteria for General Performance
Beginning with the 2011-12 Academic Year

Absolute Rating	Growth Rating	Award Designation	Steady Growth
Excellent	Excellent	Gold	
Excellent	Good	Gold	
Excellent	Average	Gold	
Good	Excellent	Gold	
Good	Good	Silver	
Average	Excellent	Gold	
Average	Good	Silver	
Below Average	Excellent	Gold	
Below Average	Good	Silver	
		Silver	Good or better Growth for 2 Years

Impact of New Growth Index

In April 2012, the EOC reviewed and approved a change in the Growth Value Table which is used to determine the indices for the Growth rating for elementary and middle schools. The EOC reviewed alternative value tables and adopted a revised Growth Value Table (Table 2) to be used in the calculations for elementary and middle schools **beginning with the release of the 2013 annual report cards, which is based upon data the 2012-13 academic year.** In the new value table, students receive 100 points for maintaining their previous level of achievement, 10 points less for each decrease in achievement of one level, and an additional 10 points for each increase in achievement of one level – with one exception. The exception is that students

scoring Not Met 1 or Not Met 2 receive 20 additional points for increasing their achievement by one level, and 10 points for subsequent increases of one level.

Table 2
Revised Growth Value Table for Elementary & Middle Schools
Beginning with 2012-13 Academic Year

Year One (Pre-test)	Year Two (Post-test)				
	Not Met 1	Not Met 2	Met	Exemplary 4	Exemplary 5
Exemplary 5	60	70	80	90	100
Exemplary 4	70	80	90	100	110
Met	80	90	100	110	120
Not Met 2	90	100	120	130	140
Not Met 1	100	120	130	140	150

Source: 2012-2013 Accountability Manual, p. 34.

Table 3
Growth Rating Criteria Based on Growth Indices
Elementary and Middle School Growth Ratings

Growth Rating	Range of Indices
Excellent	103.05 and higher
Good	102.10 to 103.04
Average	99.89 to 102.09
Below Average	98.84 to 99.88
At Risk	99.83 and lower

Source: 2012-2013 Accountability Manual, p. 36.

The Growth Value Table is only used to create the Growth ratings for elementary and middle schools. To determine the effect of the changes in the Growth Value Table on the Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards Program for the general performance awards, the EOC asked staff to use the new Growth indices to answer the following question regarding the Palmetto Gold and Silver:

If the revised Growth Value Table and Growth indices had been used in the determination of awards for the Palmetto Gold and Silver Award Program for the 2011-12 academic year, how many elementary and middle schools would have qualified for the award under the general performance criteria?

Staff reviewed data from the 2011 and 2012 school report cards to determine the impact of the new value table on the number (and percent) of schools that would receive Palmetto Gold and Silver awards. Table 4 presents the number and percent of Elementary and Middle schools that received Palmetto Gold and Silver awards for the 2011-12 academic year, and the number that

would have received awards had the new value table been used for each of the past two years. Because the Growth Indices and ratings were recomputed for each of the past two years using the revised value table, the percentages of schools receiving Palmetto Gold and Silver awards accurately represents the awards that would have presented for 2012, and should provide insight into the percentage of schools receiving future awards.

Using the new value table, the percentage of schools receiving a Palmetto Gold award would have decreased by seven percent (65 schools), with no change to the percentage of schools receiving Palmetto Silver awards (although six fewer schools would have received a Palmetto Silver award). A total of 438 elementary and middle schools would have received a Palmetto Gold and Silver Award using the new value table (268 Gold and 170 Silver). Of the 170 schools that would have received a Silver award, nine would have received the award for having a Growth rating of Good or better for two years.

Table 4
Current and Projected Palmetto Gold & Silver Awards
in Elementary and Middle Schools for the 2011-12 Academic Year

General Performance	Current Value Table*		New Value Table	
	Number of Schools	Percent	Number of Schools	Percent
Gold	333	35%	268	28%
Silver	176	18%	170	18%
No Award	<u>449</u>	47%	<u>520</u>	54%
TOTAL	958		958	

*These awards were announced by the SCDE on March 25, 2013.

The number of schools receiving Palmetto Gold and Silver awards based on each combination of Absolute and Growth rating is presented in Table 5. Using the current value table, schools with Absolute ratings of Excellent were much more likely to also receive a Growth rating of Excellent. Indeed, 233 schools received Palmetto Gold awards with Excellent Absolute and Growth ratings. Using the new value table, it is less likely that schools with Excellent Absolute ratings will also receive Excellent Growth ratings. The most frequently occurring combination of Absolute and Growth ratings eligible for an award is Excellent (Absolute) / Average (Growth) (112 schools).

Table 5
Combinations of Ratings for
Current and Projected Palmetto Gold & Silver Awards
in Elementary and Middle Schools for the 2011-12 Academic Year
for General Performance ONLY.

Absolute Rating	Growth Rating	Award	Current Value Table*	New Value Table
Excellent	Excellent	Gold	233	12
Excellent	Good	Gold	32	63
Excellent	Average	Gold	10	112
Good	Excellent	Gold	39	18
Good	Good	Silver	92	42
Average	Excellent	Gold	17	48
Average	Good	Silver	84	97
Below Average	Excellent	Gold	2	15
Below Average	Good	Silver	0	22
Good or better Growth for 2 Years		Silver	0	<u>9</u>
TOTAL			509	438

*These awards were announced by the SCDE on March 25, 2013.

Table 6 presents a history of the number of Palmetto Gold and Silver awards. From 2001-02 through 2007-08, the number of Palmetto Gold awards ranged from 114 to 285, and the number of Palmetto Silver Awards ranged from 77 to 149. In 2008-09, several changes were made: the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS) replaced the Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT), the value table methodology was adopted to create Growth indices and ratings, and the Palmetto Gold and Silver program was amended to include schools that closed the achievement gap. Closing the achievement gap awards were given when one or more of the historically underachieving student groups (African-American, Hispanic, students receiving subsidized meals, and students with disabilities) either (1) obtains a mean score on PASS Reading and Writing or PASS Mathematics that is as high or higher than that of the average of white and full-pay meals students, or (2) the Growth index (computed using scores from ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies) for one or more of the historically underachieving student groups is as high or higher than the average Growth index of white and full-pay meal students. For the 2012 report cards, the EOC amended the criteria to discontinue Palmetto Silver awards for schools having three years of Average or better Growth. By eliminating this award, the number of Palmetto Silver awards in 2011-2012 declined to 189 schools because 277 schools did not receive a Palmetto Silver award for having three years of Average Growth or better.

Table 6
Schools Receiving Palmetto Gold or Silver Award / EOC Closing the Gap Award *

Academic Year	Award Category	Number of Schools Receiving Gold Award	Number of Schools Receiving Silver Award	Total Number of Schools Receiving General Performance Award	Total Number of Schools Being Recognized for General Performance and /or for Closing the Achievement Gap	Number of Elementary and Middle Schools Receiving EOC Award for Closing the Achievement Gap
2000-01	General Performance	198	100	298	NA	NA
2001-02	General Performance	198	92	290	NA	87
2002-03	General Performance	229	77	306	NA	107
2003-04	General Performance	285	135	418	NA	132
2004-05	General Performance	187	125	312	NA	138
2005-06	General Performance	163	147	310	NA	135
2006-07	General Performance	114	126	240	NA	141
2007-08	General Performance	162	149	311	403	NA
	Closing Achievement Gap	79	163	242		NA
2008-09	General Performance	211	129	340	403	NA
	Closing Achievement Gap	66	150	216		NA
2009-10	General Performance	297	200	497	551	NA
	Closing Achievement Gap	55	243	298		NA
2010-11	General Performance	339	476	815	852	NA
	Achievement Gap	76	165	241		NA
2011-12**	General Performance	449	189	638	677	NA
	Achievement Gap	91	140	231		NA

* Totals reflect school report cards; based on grade configurations some schools receive more than one report card.

** Eliminated Silver awards for Average or better Growth for three consecutive years

Also awarded as a part of the Palmetto Gold and Silver awards program are awards for closing the achievement gap. A review of the current process when applied to data using the new value table indicated that the number of schools that would receive awards for closing the achievement gap will increase dramatically. An examination of the process of deriving closing the achievement gap awards is warranted.

The current process for making awards for closing the achievement gap is:

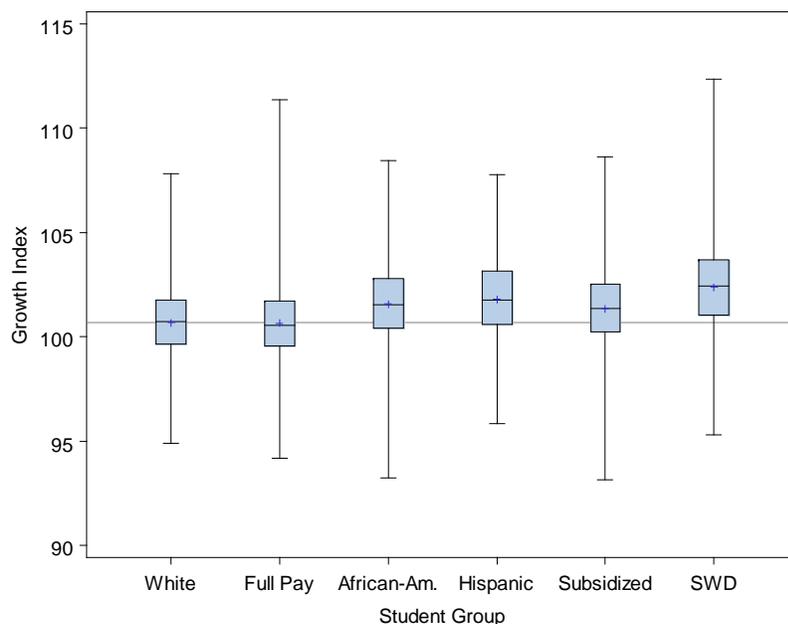
- 1) Determine the average school-level Growth indices for white students and for full-pay lunch students statewide. Average the Growth indices for white and full-pay lunch students to obtain a single statewide Growth index criterion.
- 2) Determine the average school-level Growth indices for each historically underachieving group (HUG: Hispanic, African-American, subsidized meal, students with disabilities) for each school.
- 3) Compare the Growth index for each HUG group to the criterion obtained in step 1. If at least one HUG group exceeds the Growth index criterion, the school receives an award for closing the achievement gap.

Given the changes that will occur in the Growth ratings due to the new value table, an investigation of the potential consequences for awards made for closing the achievement gap was conducted. Changing the value table has changed the ranges of Growth indices obtained for schools overall, and for each student group (white, African-American, Hispanic, full-pay meal, subsidized meal, and students with disabilities).

Figure 1 displays the distributions of Growth indices obtained in 2012 for each student group used in computing closing the achievement gap awards using box and whisker plots. Each box has four elements to it that indicate different summary statistics of the Growth indices for each group; the bottom of the box is the 25th percentile, the top of the box is the 75th percentile, the horizontal line inside the box is the median (50th percentile), and the "x" inside the box is the mean (average) Growth index. Recall the correct interpretation of a percentile; 25 percent of schools have Growth indices below the 25th percentile. The whiskers extend to the lowest and the highest Growth indices within each group.

The average Growth index for white and full-pay lunch students, which is the current Growth reference criterion from step (1) above is 100.66, and is presented as a horizontal line in Figure 1. Notice that for students with disabilities (SWD) the entire box is above the mean Absolute index for white and full-pay lunch students, which means that more than 75 percent of schools with 30 or more students with disabilities would be identified as closing the achievement gap. Similarly, very near to 75 percent of schools with 30 or more African-American students, Hispanic students, and subsidized meal students would also be identified as closing the achievement gap. For an individual school to be recognized for closing the achievement gap, it needs to have only one group with 30 or more students and a Growth index that exceeds the average Growth index of white and full-pay lunch students. It is projected that 87 percent of schools would receive awards for closing the achievement gap by the current process.

Figure 1. Distributions of Growth Indices by Student Group



An alternative strategy is proposed here. Because the distributions of Growth indices for white and full-pay lunch students are substantially lower than those of the four historically under-achieving groups, it was not possible to use white and full-pay lunch students as a reference point for defining closing the achievement gap awards. To provide consistency with the award rate with previous years, the number and percentage of schools that received awards for closing the achievement gap in 2013 was used as reference points. In 2013, 145 elementary and middle schools received awards for closing the achievement (approximately 15% of schools).

To consistently identify comparable percentage of schools, the new methodology is referenced to a distribution of Growth indices for each school. The Growth index for each school that is used is the highest Growth index of the historically underachieving groups that is based on 30 or more students. Any school that meets a Growth index criteria by comparing each group to a Growth index criteria will also meet the Growth index criteria by comparing the highest Growth index to the Growth index criteria. Therefore, rather than consider the Growth indices for all historically underachieving groups when deriving a Growth index criteria, it is sufficient to consider only the highest Growth index for each school.

The process of identifying schools, then, is as follows:

- 1) For each school, find the Growth index computed for each of the four historically under-achieving groups (African-Americans, Hispanic, subsidized meal, students with disabilities).
- 2) For each school, find the maximum Growth index among the Growth indices based on 30 or more students for the four historically underachieving groups.
- 3) Create a distribution of the maximum Growth indices obtained from step (2). Let the 85th percentile of this distribution be the Growth index criterion.
- 4) Compare the Growth index for each HUG group to the Growth index criterion obtained in step (3). If at least one HUG group exceeds the Growth index criterion, the school receives an award for closing the achievement gap.

To clarify step (2) above by example, consider Table 7 below, which presents the number of students and the Growth indices for each of the four historically underachieving groups in two schools. In both of these schools the number of African-American students, subsidized meal students, and students with disabilities is greater than 30, and the number of Hispanic students is less than 30. For both schools the maximum Growth index among all four groups is the Growth index for Hispanic students. However, because there are fewer than 30 Hispanic students, their Growth index is not considered when obtaining the maximum Growth index for determining the Growth index criterion. For school 1, the maximum Growth index for determining the Growth index criterion (103.429) is the Growth index for students with disabilities, and for school 2, the maximum Growth index for determining the Growth index criterion (102.061) is the Growth index for African-American students.

Table 7
Identifying the maximum Growth index used in finding the Growth index criterion.

School	African-American		Hispanic		Subsidized		Students with Disabilities		Maximum Growth Index	
	N	Growth Index	N	Growth Index	N	Growth Index	N	Growth Index	All Groups	For Criterion
1	349	102.748	21	111.000	517	102.730	63	103.429	111.000	103.429
2	509	102.061	22	106.136	749	101.311	150	100.468	106.136	102.061

To verify that the proposed methodology would consistently identify approximately 85 percent of schools, the proposed methodology was applied to data from the 2010, 2011, and 2012 academic years. Results of this analysis are provided in Table 8. By choosing the 85th percentile, the number of schools that would receive closing the achievement gap awards in 2012 is 131, which is 14% of schools. In 2010 and 2011 15% of schools are identified. In all three years, the targeted percentage of schools identified is matched.

Table 8
Percent of schools that would have received closing the achievement gap awards with various Growth index criteria.

Academic Year	80 th percentile		85 th percentile		90 th percentile	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
2010	182	20	137	15	92	10
2011	181	19	138	15	91	10
2012	178	19	131	14	84	9

Recommendation 1: The Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee recommends that the calculation of the Closing the Achievement Award for elementary and middle schools be amended beginning with the results of the 2013 state district and school report cards accordingly.

- 1) For each school, find the Growth index computed for each of the four historically under-achieving groups (African-Americans, Hispanic, subsidized meal, students with disabilities).
- 2) For each school, find the maximum Growth index among the Growth indices based on 30 or more students for the four historically underachieving groups.
- 3) Create a distribution of the maximum Growth indices obtained from step (2). Let the 85th percentile of this distribution be the Growth index criterion.
- 4) Compare the Growth index for each HUG group to the Growth index criterion obtained in step (3). If at least one HUG group exceeds the Growth index criterion, the school receives an award for closing the achievement gap.

Growth Ratings Calculations for Historically Underachieving Groups (HUG)

Also affected by the change in the value table will be changes to Growth ratings made because the achievement of one or more historically underachieving groups has been higher than expected. The process as presented in the current accountability manual is as follows:

A school's Growth rating may be increased by one level if the Growth in performance on the Reading & Research assessment of historically underachieving demographic groups of students meets or exceeds a criterion. Historically underachieving groups consist of African- American, Hispanic, and Native American students, those eligible for the free or reduced-price federal lunch program, Limited English Proficient (LEP) students, migrant students, and students with non-speech disabilities. The school's eligibility for the increased Growth rating is determined as follows:

- a. Calculate the reading & research Growth index for the group of eligible students. The group must consist of 40 or more students to be considered for analysis.
- b. Compare the reading & research Growth index for the group to the state two-year average reading & research Growth index for all students in the state. The state two-year average Growth index is the average of the Growth indices for all students for the current and prior years. If the Growth index for the historically underachieving group in the school exceeds the state two-year average Growth index by at least one standard deviation, the school's Growth rating may be increased by one level. If the school is rated Excellent for Growth on the basis of all students, the performance for groups also should be calculated and reported even though the school's rating cannot be increased. (*2012-13 Accountability Manual, page 36*)

As indicated in (b) above, the HUG criterion, the point each historically underachieving group is compared to, is one standard deviation above the state two-year average Growth index for all students. Using the new value table, the HUG criterion point is 101.044, computed as follows:

2-year Reading Index	+	Standard Deviation	=	HUG Criterion
99.47	+	1.57	=	101.04

The projected number and percent of schools that would receive HUG awards using the new value table in 2012 is presented in Table 9, and the number and percent of schools that received HUG awards in 2009 through 2012 is presented in Table 10.

In 2012, 8.9% of schools received HUG awards, and using the new value table and the current HUG calculation, 33.3% of schools are projected to receive a HUG award, nearly four times the current percentage of schools that would receive an award.

Table 9. Projected Number and Percent of Elementary and Middle Schools Receiving HUG Awards in 2012 using New Value Table

Award	HUG Awards	HUG Awards by Group			
		African-Am.	Hispanic	Subsidized	SWD
Eligible - Award	313 (33.3)	185 (19.9)	42 (5.1)	210 (22.4)	127 (13.9)
Eligible - No Award	626 (66.7)	461 (49.5)	55 (6.6)	622 (66.4)	77 (8.4)
Not Eligible (n<40)		286 (30.7)	735 (88.3)	104 (11.1)	712 (77.7)
Total	939	932	832	936	916

Table 10. Number and Percent of Schools that Received HUG Awards: 2009-2012.

Year	Number of Schools	Percent Receiving HUG	Number receiving HUG
2009-2012.	3788	8.3	315
2009	940	5.2	49
2010	939	15.3	144
2011	951	3.9	37
2012	958	8.9	85

Conclusion:

In essence, the HUG awards, which incentivize schools for making progress in improving the performance of historically underachieving groups and the revised Growth Value Table accomplish the same objective; maintaining both would inflate the percentage of schools receiving a HUG. In 2012, 8.9% of schools received HUG awards, and using the new value table and the current HUG calculation, 33.3% of schools are projected to receive a HUG award, nearly four times the current percentage of schools that would receive an award.

Recommendation 2: Based on the analysis of HUG award projections using the Revised Growth Value Table, the Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee recommends that the HUG award be deleted from the Growth ratings beginning with the release of the 2013 annual report cards. School districts will be notified of the change immediately. As in the past, the EOC will review, monitor, and adjust as needed.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee: Academic Standards and Assessment

Date: June 10, 2013

INFORMATION

Results of the 2012 Parent Survey

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

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

CRITICAL FACTS

The parent survey was commissioned by the EOC and designed by the Institute for Families in Society at the University of South Carolina in 2001. The survey is designed to determine parent perceptions of their child's school and to evaluate the effectiveness of state and local parental involvement programs. Since 2002 the South Carolina Department of Education has annually administered the survey, and the EOC has provided an annual review of the survey results. The attached report reflects the results of the 2012 administration of the parent survey.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

Study began in March 2013 and completed in May 2013

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

Cost: No fiscal impact beyond current appropriations

Fund/Source:

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

Approved

ACTION TAKEN

Amended

Not Approved

Action deferred (explain)

2013

Results of the 2012 Parent Survey



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Executive Summary

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

Since 2002 the SCDE has administered the parent survey to a sample of parents whose children attended public schools in South Carolina. The parents of students in the highest grade at all elementary, middle and high schools are surveyed. In high schools and career centers, parents of all 11th graders are surveyed. In schools with a grade configuration that spans multiple levels, parents of children in multiple grades are surveyed. For example, in a school with a grade span of grades 6 through 10, parents of children in grades 8 and 10 are surveyed. For parents in schools with a grade span of K-12, parents of children in grades 5, 8 and 11 are surveyed. Parents in schools containing grades 2 or lower (K-1, K-2, and 1-2 configurations) are not surveyed. Annually, the EOC has analyzed the results of the parent survey and issued reports. The reports are online at www.eoc.sc.gov.

Survey Responses: In 2012 the number of parent surveys completed and returned totaled 69,581, a decline of 4,174 surveys or 5.7 percent from the prior year. Between 38 and 44 percent of all eligible parents surveyed responded to the 2012 parent survey. In 2012 there were no changes in the administration of the parent survey. As in the prior year, there were no parent surveys printed in Spanish made available to parents by the South Carolina Department of Education. In 2012 the percentage of parents who completed the survey who identified themselves as Hispanic was 5.1 percent as compared to 4.6 percent in 2011 and 5.0 percent in 2010.

An analysis of the respondents to the 2012 parent survey concluded that the survey responses typically overrepresented the perceptions of parents who had children in elementary schools and underrepresented the perceptions of parents who had

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

The data documented that the parent survey responses were generally representative, within one percentage point, of the percentage of students enrolled in schools by their absolute rating. Nine percent of the parents who responded to the survey had children attending schools with an absolute rating of Below Average or At Risk, the same percentage as the number of students who were enrolled in a school with an absolute rating of Below Average or At Risk in school year 2011-12. On the other hand, sixty-one percent of the parents who responded to the survey had children attending schools with an absolute rating of Good or Excellent, the same percentage as the number of students who were enrolled in a school with an absolute rating of Good or Excellent in school year 2011-12.

2012 Absolute Rating	% of Students Enrolled in School 2011-12	% of Parents Responding to 2012 Survey
Excellent	39%	38%
Good	22%	23%
Average	30%	31%
Below Average	5%	6%
At Risk	4%	3%

Parent Survey Results: Despite a 5.7 percent decline in the number of parents responding to the annual parent survey, the results of the 2012 parent survey demonstrate that parent satisfaction levels with the three characteristics measured - the learning environment, home and school relations and social and physical environment of their child’s school—were consistent with the prior year’s results. Significant changes are estimated as an annual increase or decrease of three or more percent. Satisfaction is defined as the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed that they were

satisfied with the learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment of their child's school.

Percentage of Parents Satisfied with:

Characteristic	2012	2011	2010	Annual Increase or Decrease
Learning Environment	87.2	84.3	85.9	2.9
Home and School Relations	82.9	80.2	81.9	2.7
Social and Physical Environment	84.1	82.4	83.2	1.7

When comparing parent satisfaction in 2012 with parent satisfaction over the most recent three-year period, there were no significant increases in parent satisfaction levels.

Percentage of Parents Satisfied with:

Characteristic	2012	Mean % (2009-2011)	Difference
Learning Environment	87.2	85.2	2.0
Home and School Relations	82.9	81.2	1.7
Social and Physical Environment	84.1	82.8	1.3

Parents who completed the survey in 2012 were overwhelmingly more positive about the learning environment of their child's school than in 2011 when responding to the following three questions:

Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree to:

Learning Environment Questions	2012	2011	Difference
My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	89.9	86.7	3.2
My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	91.8	88.7	3.1
My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	81.9	78.7	3.2

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

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

Characteristic	Excellent Schools	At-Risk Schools	Difference
Learning Environment	90.5	81.3	9.2
Home and School Relations	85.5	82.1	3.4
Social and Physical Environment	88.2	73.6	14.6

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

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

Characteristic	Below Average Schools	At-Risk Schools	Difference
Learning Environment	80.7	81.3	(0.6)
Home and School Relations	79.5	82.1	(2.6)
Social and Physical Environment	77.8	73.6	4.2

Parents who responded to the 2012 annual survey reported comparable levels of parental involvement as in other years and identified work schedules as their greatest obstacle to involvement.

Parents Report Obstacles to Parental Involvement in 2012

Work Schedule	53.8%
Lack of timely notification of volunteer opportunities	23.5%
School does not encourage involvement	15.7%
Lack of child or adult care services	14.7%
Family and health problems	14.4%
Transportation	11.6%
Involvement not appreciated	10.6%

As in prior years, the inclusion of parents in school decisions and the development of parent leaders and representatives fall below the ideal. Opportunities for improving communication between parents and teachers also continue to exist.

Interest in the association between responses to the surveys and school achievement levels as measured by the absolute ratings (or index) has been rekindled by the proceedings conducted to date of the cyclical review of the accountability system. In this process the usage of parent and student surveys as a part of the accountability system in other states has been studied, and interest in utilizing the opinions of parents and students as elements of school ratings has been expressed by three focus groups.

Analysis of Parent, Student and Teacher Surveys: This investigation examined the relationship of the responses to these surveys with the absolute index at the item or question level. It was conducted: (1) to determine which of the items or questions

presented on each survey were related to the absolute index of the school, and (2) to identify the commonalities in the items across surveys that were highly related to the absolute index.

The analyses found that the best predictor of the absolute index of the school was found when all questions on the surveys were analyzed with no constraint that the same predictors be used for elementary, middle and high schools. However, when additional analysis was performed that required the same items to be used as a predictor in two of the three school types, the results showed that for the parent and teacher surveys, there was only a slight decline in predictability. Student surveys administered in elementary and middle schools were significantly less predictable while student surveys administered to high school students were just as predictive as the parent and teacher surveys. The implication is that the same predictive items could be included on the parent and teacher surveys; however, student surveys would need to be adjusted to reflect the school type.

Finally, there were communalities among the surveys that were predictive of the absolute index of schools:

- For parents and students, items related to high expectations for student learning;
- For parents and teachers, items related to student behavior;
- For parents and teachers, items related to parent participation in school activities; and
- A parent item that indicates they are invited to their child's classroom as is a teacher item that indicates that parents attend conferences when requested.

PART ONE

Administration of the 2012 Parent Survey

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

Rather than surveying all parents of public school students, the parents of students in the highest grade at all elementary, middle and high schools are surveyed. In high schools and career centers, parents of all 11th graders are surveyed. In schools with a grade configuration that spans multiple levels, parents of children in multiple grades are surveyed. For example, in a school with a grade span of grades 6 through 10, parents of children in grades 8 and 10 are surveyed. For parents in schools with a grade span of K-12, parents of children in grades 5, 8 and 11 are surveyed. Parents in schools containing grades 2 or lower, which include primary schools, child development schools and schools with configurations like K, K-1, and K-2 are not surveyed. The parent survey is typically administered during the second semester of each school year. Appendix A provides the instructions used by schools in 2012 to administer the parent as well as student and teacher surveys.

As in 2011, there were no parent surveys printed in Spanish. A copy of the 2012 survey is in the appendix. The 2012 administration of the parent survey occurred over the following time period and involved the following actions.

March 16, 2012	All schools received survey forms.
April 18, 2012	Date for parent survey forms returned to school.
April 25, 2012	Last day for schools to mail completed forms to contractor.

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

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

- ✓ Parent survey envelopes. Each envelope contains a letter from the State Superintendent of Education and a parent survey form.
- ✓ Student survey forms.¹

The name of each school was printed on the survey forms to assist parents who were completing surveys for multiple schools. Schools were also advised to “distribute the parent surveys as soon as possible” after delivery. Beginning in Fiscal Year 2007-08, SCDE entered into a five-year contract with a vendor to print, ship, process and scan the parent survey with the annual costs the same each year.² The annual costs of printing, shipping, processing and scanning the parent surveys are approximately \$54,000.

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

As in the prior year, the 2012 instructions contained the following special note that cautions schools against implementing policies that would create disincentives for parents who opt to mail in their survey responses:

SPECIAL NOTE: We appreciate that schools work diligently each year to encourage parents to complete and return the parent surveys. Some schools offer incentives such as ice cream treats or extra recess time to individual students or classes where all students have returned completed parent surveys. Each year parents call the Department to inform us that their child is upset that he/she cannot return the parent survey form to school and receive the special incentive because the parent wants to mail the survey form to the Department. Parents have the option to mail in the survey form, so we would encourage you to not penalize students whose parents’ mail in their completed survey form.³

Upon receiving the completed parent surveys, the school survey coordinator then mailed the forms to the independent contractor for scanning and preparation of the data files. Individual school results were tabulated by SCDE. The overall parent satisfaction scores of three questions relating to the school’s overall learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment were printed on the 2012 annual school report cards. For each school, SCDE aggregated the responses to all survey questions and provided the data files to the district office.

¹ “Administration of the 2012 Report Card Surveys,” South Carolina Department of Education.

² Cynthia Hearn, e-mail message to Melanie Barton, February 4, 2010.

³ “Administration of the 2012 Report Card Surveys,” South Carolina Department of Education.

As in prior years, the 2012 parent survey contained a total of fifty-four questions. Forty-six questions were designed to elicit information on parental perceptions and parental involvement patterns. For the first twenty-one questions, parents were asked to respond to individual statements using one of the following responses: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree or Don't Know. These twenty-one questions focused on three key components: learning environment, home and school relations, and the physical and social environment of their child's school. These components and individual activities reflect the framework devised by Dr. Joyce Epstein of the National Network of Partnership Schools.

The remaining questions on the survey addressed parental involvement activities and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. Parents were asked about their participation in various parental involvement activities both in and outside of the school. Parents were also asked to determine from a list of responses potential barriers to their involvement in their child's education. Finally, parents were asked to provide specific information about themselves, their child, and their household. Parents were asked four questions about their child: their child's grade in school, gender, race/ethnicity, and grades on his or her last report card. Four questions sought information about the parent: his or her gender, race/ethnicity, highest level of education and total yearly household income.

PART TWO

Respondents of the 2012 Parent Survey

The American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) in 2011 issued the seventh edition of *Standard Definitions: Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys*. The AAPOR notes that there are mixed mode surveys that “can consist of surveys in which there are separate samples which are conducted with different modes, a unified sample in which multiple modes are used for individual cases (e.g. in address-based samples employing both in-person and postal approaches to obtain responses), or a combination of both...However, for calculating outcome rates many of the detailed, mode-specific disposition codes are irrelevant. They can be collapsed into the major categories used in the outcome formulas used in *Standard Definitions*.”⁴ Therefore, as in prior years, the response rate for the parent survey is calculated accordingly:

$$\begin{array}{ll} \textbf{Numerator:} & \text{Complete surveys + Partial Surveys} \\ \textbf{Denominator:} & \text{(Completed + Partial Surveys Returned)} \\ & + \\ & \text{(Non-Returned Surveys) + (Estimate of proportion surveys of} \\ & \text{unknown eligibility that are eligible)} \end{array}$$

According to Instructional Assessment Resources at the University of Texas, acceptable response rates vary by the method of distribution:

- Mail: 50% adequate, 60% good, 70% very good
- Phone: 80% good
- Email: 40% average, 50% good, 60% very good
- Online: 30% average
- Classroom paper: > 50% = good
- Face-to-face: 80-85% good⁵

Distribution of the South Carolina parent survey does not fall within any of the above media for distribution. Consequently, two methods were developed to analyze the response rate for the 2012 parent survey to determine the percentage of eligible parents who completed and returned a parent survey.

One method is to compare the number of surveys mailed to schools with the number of completed surveys returned. According to SCDE, a total of 185,006 parent surveys were mailed to 1,150 schools for distribution. The schools included elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, career centers, charter schools, and schools in the South Carolina Public Charter School District as well as the following special schools:

⁴ The American Association for Public Opinion Research. 2011. *Standard Definitions: Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys*. 7th edition. AAPOR., p. 39.

⁵ Instructional Assessment Resources. University of Texas at Austin, 21 September 2011.
<<http://www.utexas.edu/academic/ctl/assessment/iar/teaching/gather/method/survey-Response.php>>.

- Felton Laboratory School
- John de la Howe School
- Wil Lou Gray School
- School for the Deaf and the Blind
- Governor’s School for Science and Mathematics
- Governor’s School for the Arts and Humanities

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

A second method is to estimate the unknown eligibility of surveys by using the statewide 135-day average daily membership of all students in grades 5, 8 and 11 in school year 2011-12 as the sample size. On the 45th, 90th and 135th days of school, school districts report each student by grade and by a pupil classification system prescribed in the Education Finance Act. In school year 2011-12 the 135-day average daily membership for grades 5, 8 and 11 rounded to the nearest student totaled 157,523.⁶ This method underestimates the number of parents surveyed. The parents of some 3rd, 4th, 6th, 7th, 9th and 10th grade students also complete the survey because some schools have a grade configuration that spans multiple levels or these schools represent the highest grade level in the school.

As reflected in Table 1, the total number of parent surveys returned in 2012 decreased by 5.7 percent or 4,174 over the number returned in the prior year.

Table 1
Total Number of Parent Surveys Returned

2012	69,581
2011	73,755
2010	69,474
2009	67,014
2008	68,761
2007	64,596
2006	69,495
2005	66,895
2004	66,283
2003	64,732
2002	55,864

Using the two methods of determining response rates and the total number of parent surveys returned, two response rates were calculated in Table 2. Between 38 and 44 percent of all eligible parents surveyed responded to the 2012 parent survey. In the prior year, 2011, using the same two methodologies, the response rate was between 40 and 47 percent. Compared to IAR’s definitions of acceptable response rates for email and

⁶ “SC 135-Day Average Daily Membership by Grade, by District, 2011-12,” South Carolina Department of Education. < <http://ed.sc.gov/agency/cfo/finance/Fiscal-Systems/DME12135.txt>>.

online surveys, the response rate to the 2012 parent survey should be considered average. According to IAR, “generally, the better your respondents know you, the better your response rate. Respondents who you know by name or have regular contact with will be more likely to respond to your survey than respondents you do not know.”

Table 2
Determining the Response Rate

	Sample Size	Surveys Returned	Response Rate
Method 1: Surveys Distributed	185,006	69,581	37.6%
Method 2: ADM of 5, 8 and 11 th grades	157,523	69,581	44.2%

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

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

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

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

Responses to these eight questions revealed the following about the parents who completed the 2012 parent survey. As in prior years, the “typical” parent responding to the survey was a white female having attended or graduated from college. Over 57 percent of the respondents who answered the question about income reported earning over \$35,000.

In 2012 the percentage of parents who completed the survey who identified themselves as Hispanic was 5.1 percent as compared to 4.6 percent in 2011 and 5.0 percent in 2010.

Table 3
Respondents to the 2012 Parent Survey
(n=69,581)

Gender

Male	14.4%
Female	85.6%

Race

African-American	32.1%
Caucasian/white	58.9%
Hispanic	5.0%
All Other	4.0%

Education

Attended elementary/high school	11.0%
Completed high school/GED	23.7%
Earned Associate Degree	10.5%
Attended college/training program	21.9%
Earned college degree	21.0%
Postgraduate study/and/or degree	11.9%

Household Income

Less than \$15,000	14.5%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	14.2%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	14.9%
\$35,000 - \$54,999	16.7%
\$55,000 - \$75,000	14.2%
More than \$75,000	26.3%

Their Child Enrolled in:

Grades 3-5	47.1%
Grades 6-8	39.0%
Grades 9-11	13.9%

Their Child's Gender:

Male	45.3%
Female	54.7%

Their Child's Ethnicity:

African-American	32.6%
Caucasian/White	57.1%
Hispanic	5.1%
All Other	5.2%

Their Child's Grades:

All or mostly A's and B's	61.4%
All or mostly B's and C's	27.7%
All or mostly C's and D's	9.1%
All or mostly D's and F's	1.8%

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

To determine if the survey responses were representative of elementary, middle and high school parents, the following analysis was done. First, 59,760 parents who returned the 2012 survey indicated that their child was in 5th, 8th, or 11th grade. Defining grade 5 as elementary schools, grade 8 as middle school and grade 11, high school, approximately 42 percent of parents who completed the survey were elementary school parents, 33 percent, middle school and 13 percent, high school (Table 4). As compared to prior years, the percentage of surveys reflecting the perceptions of elementary and middle school parents remained relatively unchanged; however, the percentage of parents of high school students declined from 20 to 18 percent.

Comparing the surveys returned with the 135-day average daily membership of the grade, while 42 percent of all the surveys returned were from parents whose child was enrolled in grade 5, these surveys represent 51 percent of all students in grade 5 according to the average daily membership count. At grade 8, the number of surveys returned accounted for 41 percent of all children enrolled in grade 8; however, at grade 11, the percentage drops to 18 percent (Table 4). As in prior surveys, the perceptions of parents in elementary schools are over represented and the perceptions of parents who have children in high school are underrepresented.

Table 4
Parental Respondents by Child's Grade

Child Enrolled in:	Surveys Returned	% of All Surveys	2011-12 135-day Average Daily Membership (ADM)	% of Surveys by Grades 5, 8 & 11 ADM
Grade 5	28,691	42%	55,867	51%
Grade 8	22,470	33%	54,259	41%
Grade 11	8,599	13%	47,397	18%
TOTAL	59,760		157,523	

When asked about their child's race or ethnicity, 57 percent of the parents responded that their child's ethnicity was white, 33 percent African American and 5 percent Hispanic. Compared to the ethnicity of children in the public schools of South Carolina in 2010-11, parents whose children are African American were underrepresented by 3.6% in the results (Table 5).

Table 5
Ethnicity of Children

	2012 Parent Survey	Student Enrollment All Public Schools 2010-11 ⁷	Difference
White	57.1%	53.4%	3.7%
African American	32.6%	36.2%	(3.6%)
Hispanic	5.1%	6.4%	(1.3%)
Other	5.2%	4.0%	1.2%

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

⁷ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "Documentation to the Common Core of Data State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Elementary/Secondary Education: School Year 2010-11." <<http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/pdf/STnonfis101agen.pdf>>.

With respect to educational attainment, 32.9 percent of parents who responded to the survey in 2012 had earned a bachelor or postgraduate degree. For comparison purposes, the United States Census Bureau projected that 24.3 percent of persons 25 years old and over in South Carolina had earned a bachelor's degree or higher in 2009.⁸

Regarding the annual household income of the respondents, in 2012 57.2 percent of the parents who completed the survey reported having an annual household income in excess of \$35,000. For comparison purposes, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the median household income in South Carolina in 2011 was \$44,587.⁹

Finally, staff performed an analysis that compared the number of parents who responded to the survey according to the absolute rating of their child's school in 2012 with the percent of students enrolled in schools by their 2012 absolute report card rating.¹⁰

2012 Absolute Rating	% of Students Enrolled in School, 2011-12	% of Parents Responding to 2012 Survey
Excellent	39%	38%
Good	22%	23%
Average	30%	31%
Below Average	5%	6%
At Risk	4%	3%

The data document that the parent survey responses were generally representative, within one percentage point, of the percentage of students enrolled in schools by their absolute rating. Nine percent of the parents who responded to the survey had children attending schools with an absolute rating of Below Average or At Risk, the same percentage as the number of students who were enrolled in a school with an absolute rating of Below Average or At Risk in school year 2011-12. On the other hand, sixty-one percent of the parents who responded to the survey had children attending schools with an absolute rating of Good or Excellent, the same percentage as the number of students who were enrolled in a school with an absolute rating of Good or Excellent in school year 2011-12.

⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, Table 233, "Educational Attainment by State: 1990 to 2009." <<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2012/tables/12s0233.pdf>>.

⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, "State and County Quick Facts" <<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/45000.html>>.

¹⁰ "Student Performance in SC," South Carolina Education Oversight Committee, 2012. <<http://www.eoc.sc.gov/Home/Report%20Card%20Data/Report%20Card%20Brief.forprinter.pdf>>.

Conclusions

- The total number of parent surveys completed and returned in 2012 was 69,581, a 5.7 percent or a 4,174 decline over the number of parent surveys returned in the prior year.
- Using two methods of calculating a response rate, one method that underestimated and one that overestimated the total number of parents eligible to take the survey, the response rate to the 2012 parent survey was between 38 and 44 percent, each of which by industry standards is considered average.
- An analysis of the respondents to the 2012 parent survey found that the survey responses typically overrepresented the perceptions of parents in elementary schools and underrepresented the perceptions of parents who have children in high school. Furthermore, the respondents typically have obtained higher educational achievements and have greater median household incomes than the general population of South Carolina.
- The data documented that the parent survey responses were generally representative, within one percentage point, of the percentage of students enrolled in schools by their absolute rating. Nine percent of the parents who responded to the survey had children attending schools with an absolute rating of Below Average or At Risk, the same percentage as the number of students who were enrolled in a school with an absolute rating of Below Average or At Risk in school year 2011-12. On the other hand, sixty-one percent of the parents who responded to the survey had children attending schools with an absolute rating of Good or Excellent, the same percentage as the number of students who were enrolled in a school with an absolute rating of Good or Excellent in school year 2011-12.

PART THREE

Results of the 2012 Parent Survey

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

Parent Perceptions of Their Child's School

The information below summarizes the results of the 2012 parent survey. The percentages do not add to 100 percent because invalid or incomplete responses are not reflected. At the school level, responses to these questions can reveal the strengths and weaknesses of parental involvement initiatives at the individual school site. Statewide, the data provide policymakers information on the overall effectiveness of policies and programs in promoting parental involvement. The following analysis focuses on parent perceptions or satisfaction with the learning environment, home-school relations, and the social and physical environment of their children's schools. In analyzing responses, "significant change" is defined as a change of three percent or more in satisfaction.

A. Learning Environment

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

Table 6 summarizes the total responses to these five questions for all parents who completed the 2012 parent survey. The data reflect the percentage of parents responding out of the total number of parents surveys completed, 69,581. Overall, 87.2 percent of parents responded that they were satisfied with the learning environment of their child's school. Across the five questions, the percentage of parents who disagreed or strongly disagreed was highest for questions 4 and 5. Approximately, one in five in parents either did not believe or did not know if their child received extra help when needed.

Table 6
Percentage of Parents in 2012 Responding:

Learning Environment Questions	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	89.9	7.8	2.3
2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	91.7	6.3	2.0
3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	91.8	5.4	2.8
4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	81.9	11.8	6.3
5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school	87.2	11.2	1.7

Table 7 compares the percentage of parents who responded that they agreed or strongly agreed to these questions each year from 2008 through 2012.

Table 7
2008-2012
Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree to:

Learning Environment Questions	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	89.9	86.7	89.0	89.9	86.9
2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	91.7	88.9	90.3	90.9	88.3
3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	91.8	88.7	90.4	90.9	88.2
4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	81.9	78.7	79.8	79.7	77.7
5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school	87.2	84.3	85.9	85.5	82.3

Parents who completed the survey in 2012 were overwhelmingly more positive about the overall learning environment of their child's school than in 2011. Comparing parent responses from 2012 to 2011, parents were significantly more positive on three of the five questions, Questions 1, 3 and 4 (Table 8).

Table 8
Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree to:

Learning Environment Questions	2012	2011	Difference
1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	89.9	86.7	3.2
2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	91.7	88.9	2.8
3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	91.8	88.7	3.1
4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	81.9	78.7	3.2
5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school	87.2	84.3	2.9

To determine if there are any significant changes in parent perception of the learning environment of their child's school over recent years, an analysis was done to compare the 2012 results with the average or mean results of the prior three years. Table 9 documents the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement regarding the learning environment of their child's school in 2012 compared to the average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement in years 2009 through 2011. The 2012 respondents were overall more satisfied with the learning environment of their schools than the average of the respondents over the past three years; however, the difference was did not exceed three percent on any one question.

Table 9
Comparing 2012 Results with Three-Year Average
(Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree)

Learning Environment Questions	2012	Mean % (2009-2011)	Difference
1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	89.9	88.5	1.4
2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	91.7	90.0	1.7
3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	91.8	90.0	1.8
4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	81.9	79.4	2.5
5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school	87.2	85.2	2.0

Comparing parental responses to Question 5 with the 2012 absolute rating of their child's school, Table 10 documents that a higher percentage parents whose child attended a school with an absolute rating of Excellent strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the overall learning environment at their child's school. Parental satisfaction generally declines as the absolute rating of the school declines, except for the case of parents whose child attends an At Risk school. Still, comparing parents whose child attended a school with an Excellent rating versus parents whose child attended a school with an At-Risk rating, there was an approximate 9 percent difference in parent satisfaction with the learning environment. Furthermore, the percentage of parents in schools rated At Risk or Below Average who disagrees or strongly disagrees with the question is approximately twice that of parents in schools with an Excellent absolute rating.

Table 10
I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child's School)

2012 Absolute Rating	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Excellent	90.5	8.3
Good	87.7	10.8
Average	84.4	13.6
Below Average	80.7	16.8
At Risk	81.3	15.9

Then, analyzing the responses across elementary, middle and high schools based again on absolute ratings, the data reveal that parent satisfaction with the learning environment of their child’s school tends to be greatest for parents whose children are enrolled in elementary schools and declines for parents whose children are enrolled in middle or high schools, even across absolute ratings (Table 11). The only exception is for parents whose children attend schools with an At-Risk rating. Parents whose children attend high schools with an At-Risk rating were more satisfied with the learning environment of their child’s school than were parents whose children attended elementary or high schools with an At-Risk rating. Included in Table 11 are the number of parent responses for each school level and absolute rating.

Table 11
I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child’s school.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child’s Elementary, Middle or High School)

2012 Absolute Rating	Type	Total Number Parent Responses	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Excellent	Elementary	13,139	93.1	6.1
	Middle	7,591	88.7	9.7
	High	4,853	86.1	11.8
Good	Elementary	8,071	91.5	7.5
	Middle	5,326	84.4	13.8
	High	1,904	80.6	16.1
Average	Elementary	10,508	87.6	10.8
	Middle	8,345	81.5	16.3
	High	2,057	80.2	17.4
Below Average	Elementary	2,179	83.7	14.4
	Middle	1,416	78.1	18.9
	High	112	57.1	35.7
At Risk	Elementary	558	76.7	18.3
	Middle	546	74.4	22.9
	High	831	88.9	9.8

B. Home and School Relations

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

Table 12 summarizes the total responses to these eleven questions for all parents who completed the 2012 parent survey.

Table 12
Percentage of Parents in 2012 Responding:

Home and School Relations Questions	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child	57.3	40.9	1.8
2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	65.4	32.6	2.0
3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	54.0	41.5	4.5
4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	81.0	13.5	5.6
5. My child's school includes me in decision-making.	69.8	24.3	5.9
6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	78.3	19.8	2.0
7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	52.6	24.6	22.8
8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	79.7	16.4	3.9
9. My child's school treats all students fairly.	70.0	17.4	12.6
10. My principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	82.4	9.9	7.8
11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school	82.9	13.7	3.4

Overall, 82.9 percent of parents were satisfied with home and school relations at their child's school. An examination of questions 1 through 10, which ask parents more specific questions about their personal experiences at their child's school, found the following.

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

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

As documented by Table 13, the trend is that parental satisfaction with home and school relations has increased since 2008.

Table 13
2004-2012
Home and School Relations
Question 11: I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child’s school.

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
Agree or Strongly Agree	82.9%	80.2%	81.9%	81.4%	77.8%	77.9%	76.6%	67.8%	66.9%
Disagree or Strongly Disagree	13.7%	13.9%	14.3%	14.9%	16.0%	17.1%	16.6%	17.7%	18.2%

Analyzing parental satisfaction trends over the recent years, Table 14 documents parental satisfaction with all eleven questions regarding home and school relations since 2008.

Table 14
2008-2012
Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree to:

Home and School Relations Questions	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	57.3	54.5	52.2	57.2	53.8
2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	65.4	62.4	64.1	64.4	62.2
3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	54.0	52.0	53.7	54.8	53.2
4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	81.0	77.7	79.5	79.3	75.0
5. My child's school includes me in decision-making.	69.8	66.7	67.8	67.9	65.1
6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	78.3	75.6	78.3	78.3	75.4
7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	52.6	49.2	50.1	50.5	47.8
8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	79.7	76.9	78.9	78.8	75.5
9. My child's school treats all students fairly.	70.0	67.3	67.5	67.4	63.4
10. My principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	82.4	80.1	81.4	80.8	77.3
11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school	82.9	80.2	81.9	81.4	77.8

An additional analysis was done comparing the mean or average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed to each statement over the past three years with the responses from 2012. Table 15 documents the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement regarding home and school relations at their child’s school in 2012 compared to the

average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement in years 2009 through 2011. Again, using a three percent change as “significant,” there was no significant increase or decrease in parental responses to any of these questions. However, Table 15 documents that the parental responses in 2012 to all questions related to home and school relations exceeded the three year-average of parental responses.

Table 15
Comparing 2012 Results with Three-Year Average
(Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree)

Home and School Relations Questions	2012	Mean % (2009-2011)	Difference
1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	57.3	54.6	2.7
2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	65.4	63.6	1.8
3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	54.0	53.5	0.5
4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	81.0	78.8	2.2
5. My child's school includes me in decision-making.	69.8	67.5	2.3
6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	78.3	77.4	0.9
7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	52.6	49.9	2.7
8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	79.7	78.2	1.5
9. My child's school treats all students fairly.	70.0	67.4	2.6
10. My principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	82.4	80.8	1.6
11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school	82.9	81.2	1.7

Comparing parental responses to Question 11 with the 2012 absolute rating of their child's school, Table 16 documents that a higher percentage of parents whose child attended a school with an absolute rating of Excellent strongly agreed that they were satisfied with home and school relations. Again, parental satisfaction declines proportionately as the absolute rating of the school declines. The difference between the percentage of parents whose children attended an Excellent Schools and the percentage of parents whose children attended an At-Risk school and who agreed or strongly agreed with Question 11 was 3.4 percent as compared to 9.2 percent regarding parent perceptions of the learning environment of their child's school.

Table 16
I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child's School)

2012 Absolute Rating	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Excellent	85.5	11.6
Good	82.3	14.1
Average	80.8	15.4
Below Average	79.5	16.9
At Risk	82.1	14.9

Then, analyzing the responses across elementary, middle and high schools based again on absolute ratings, the data reveal that parent satisfaction with the learning environment of their child’s school tends to be greatest for parents whose children are enrolled in elementary schools and typically declines for parents whose children are enrolled in middle or high schools, even across absolute ratings (Table 17). The only exception is again high schools with an absolute rating of At Risk where parent responses are significantly more positive than all other parents of high school students

Table 17
I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child’s school.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child’s Elementary, Middle or High School)

2012 Absolute Rating	Type	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Excellent	Elementary	89.6	8.2
	Middle	81.8	14.6
	High	80.1	16.1
Good	Elementary	87.4	10.3
	Middle	77.4	17.9
	High	74.6	20.0
Average	Elementary	85.0	11.6
	Middle	76.8	19.1
	High	76.1	19.5
Below Average	Elementary	83.0	14.2
	Middle	75.7	19.7
	High	60.0	33.6
At Risk	Elementary	79.8	16.1
	Middle	75.4	21.4
	High	88.0	10.0

C. Social and Physical Environment

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

Table 18 summarizes the total responses to these five questions for all parents who completed the 2012 parent survey.

Table 18
Percentage of Parents in 2012 Responding:

Social and Physical Environment Questions	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
1. My child's school is kept neat and clean.	91.3	5.5	3.1
2. My child feels safe at school.	90.9	7.1	2.1
3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	84.1	8.7	7.2
4. Students at my child's school are well behaved.	63.7	23.2	13.1
5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	84.1	12.2	3.7

Nine in ten parents agreed or strongly agreed that their child's school was kept neat and clean and that their child felt safe at school. On the other hand, over one out of three parents either did not believe or did not know that students at their child's school were well behaved. And, 15.0 percent of parents did not know or did not believe that their child's teachers cared about their child as an individual.

Table 19 compares the 2012 results of the South Carolina parent survey with the results of parent surveys administered since 2008. The data document that parental responses to the five questions regarding the social and physical environment of their child's school are consistent with the prior year's results. Over time, however, parent satisfaction with the social and physical environment of their child's schools as reflected in the responses to these five questions has increased.

Table 19
2008-2012
Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree to:

Social and Physical Environment Questions	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
1. My child's school is kept neat and clean.	91.3	90.0	91.0	90.7	87.9
2. My child feels safe at school.	90.9	89.7	90.5	90.1	86.3
3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	84.1	81.1	82.1	82.2	79.0
4. Students at my child's school are well behaved.	63.7	61.2	62.4	61.4	56.6
5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school	84.1	82.4	83.2	82.7	78.6

A final analysis was conducted to gauge parent satisfaction with the social and physical environment of their child's school in 2012 with the results of surveys completed during the prior three years. Table 20 documents the percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement regarding the social and physical environment at their child's school in 2012 compared to the average percentage of parents who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement in years 2009 through 2011. Again, there were no significant increases or decreases when comparing parental responses in 2012 with the average of the three prior years.

Table 20
Comparing 2012 Results with Three-Year Average
(Percentage of Parents who Agree or Strongly Agree)

Social and Physical Environment Questions	2012	Mean % (2009-2011)	Difference
1. My child's school is kept neat and clean.	91.3	90.6	0.7
2. My child feels safe at school.	90.9	90.1	0.8
3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	84.1	81.8	2.3
4. Students at my child's school are well behaved.	63.7	61.7	2.0
5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	84.1	82.8	1.3

Comparing parental responses to Question 5 with the 2012 absolute rating of their child's school, Table 21 documents that a higher percentage of parents whose child attended a school with an Excellent rating strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the social and physical environment at their child's school. Again, parental satisfaction generally declines as the absolute rating of the school declines. The difference between the percentage of parents whose children attended a school with an absolute rating of Excellent and those whose children attended a school with an absolute rating of At Risk and who agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the social and physical environment of their child's school was 14.6 percent as compared to 3.4 percent for learning environment and 9.2 for home and school relations.

Table 21
I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child's School)

2012 Absolute Rating	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Excellent	88.2	9.2
Good	84.3	12.0
Average	81.0	14.3
Below Average	77.8	17.9
At Risk	73.6	18.4

Then, analyzing the responses across elementary, middle and high schools based again on absolute ratings, the data reveal that parent satisfaction with the learning environment of their child's school tends to be greatest for parents whose children are enrolled in elementary schools and typically declines for parents whose children are enrolled in middle or high schools, even across absolute ratings. Table 22 documents the large differences between parent satisfaction between schools with an Excellent or Good absolute rating and schools with a Below Average or At-Risk rating. As in the answers to the prior questions, parents whose children attended a school with an absolute rating of Below Average were much less satisfied in 2012 with the overall performance of their child's school than even parents whose children attended a school with an absolute rating of At Risk.

Table 22

**I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child’s school.
(Percentage of parents by Absolute Rating of Child’s Elementary, Middle or High School)**

2012 Absolute Rating	Type	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Excellent	Elementary	92.5	6.0
	Middle	85.2	11.3
	High	80.9	14.8
Good	Elementary	89.8	7.8
	Middle	79.3	15.5
	High	75.5	19.7
Average	Elementary	85.8	10.4
	Middle	76.8	17.6
	High	73.9	21.5
Below Average	Elementary	81.9	14.8
	Middle	73.8	20.6
	High	46.8	45.9
At Risk	Elementary	76.6	19.1
	Middle	68.1	28.4
	High	75.3	10.9

Parental Involvement

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

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

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

- Type 5. Decision Making – Include families as participants in school decisions, and develop parent leaders and representatives.
- Type 6. Collaborating with the family – Coordinate resources and services from the community for families, students, and the school, and provide services to the community.

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

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

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

The responses are reflected in Table 23 with the fourth column highlighting the percentage of parents who expressed an interest in becoming involved in these school activities. These parents want to be involved but either have personal barriers preventing their involvement or face obstacles at the school level. At the school level, parents responding “I don’t do this but would like to” are the parents for whom school initiatives to improve parental involvement should be focused.

Table 23
Percentage of Parents in 2012 Responding:

	n =	“I do this”	“I don’t do but would like to”	“I don’t do & I don’t care to:	“The school does not offer this activity/event”
Attend Open Houses or parent-teacher conferences	(67,688)	80.4	15.4	3.3	1.0
Attend student programs or performances	(68,074)	80.3	15.2	3.1	1.4
Volunteer for the school	(67,119)	36.9	38.6	20.9	3.6
Go on trip with my child’s school	(67,409)	35.7	43.8	15.1	5.4
Participate in School Improvement Council Meetings	(66,378)	13.0	46.4	35.0	5.6
Participate in Parent-teacher Student Organizations	(67,327)	31.4	37.0	28.5	3.1
Participate in school committees	(66,765)	17.2	40.3	35.1	7.4
Attend parent workshops	(67,660)	26.6	40.0	19.1	14.3

Based on the responses in Table 22 and the six types of involvement, there are significant opportunities for improving parental involvement in South Carolina’s public schools.

- Decision-Making - Fewer parents report being involved in the School Improvement Council, Parent-Teacher-Student Organizations and school committees than in any other activity. Decision making, including parents and families in school decisions, and developing parent leaders and representatives are areas for growth where parents want to be involved in these decision-making organizations.
- Volunteering – Approximately 37 percent of the parents responded that they volunteered while 39 percent wanted to volunteer.
- Parenting - Over three-fourths of the parents attended open houses, parent-teacher conferences or student programs, all activities that support their children. Approximately one-fourth reported attending parent workshops while 7 percent contend that such workshops were not provided at their child’s school.

Parents were asked five questions about their involvement with their child’s education, both at the school site and at home. These questions are directed at learning at home, parents involved with their children’s homework and other activities and decisions. Parents could respond in one of three ways:

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

Table 24 summarizes parental responses to these five questions.

Table 24
Percentage of Parents in 2012 Responding:

	n=	“I do this”	“I don’t do but would like to”	“I don’t do & I don’t care to”
Visit my child’s classroom during the school day	(67,000)	33.9	50.7	15.5
Contact my child’s teachers about my child’s school work.	(68,239)	77.5	18.1	4.4
Limit the amount of time my child watches TV, plays video games, surfs the Internet	(67,645)	85.9	8.4	5.8
Make sure my child does his/her homework	(68,688)	95.5	3.3	1.2
Help my child with homework when he/she needs it.	(67,915)	94.3	4.5	1.2

Clearly, parents overwhelmingly report being involved in activities and decisions to support their child’s learning. At least 94 percent of parents reported helping their child with his or her

homework while 86 percent report limiting television and other distractions at home. Approximately one-third of parents responded that they visited their child’s classroom during the day while a majority wanted to become involved in this way. These responses are similar to parent responses in prior years.

There are obstacles that impede parental involvement in schools. These obstacles may include lack of transportation, family responsibilities, and work schedules. Schools may not encourage or facilitate parental involvement at the school level. The annual parent survey asks parents to respond “true” or “false” to seven questions on factors that impact their involvement. The results for 2012 as well as the results from 2004 are included in Table 25. Across time, work schedule is the most common obstacle to parent involvement. At the individual school, the responses to these questions may assist principals and teachers in scheduling parental involvement activities or even parent-teacher conferences at times and places convenient for both parents and teachers.

Table 25
2004-2012 Percentage of Parents Replying "True" to these questions

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
Lack of transportation reduces my involvement	11.6	11.5	11.8	11.7	11.6	11.8	12.9	12.3	12.5
Family health problems reduce my involvement.	14.4	14.3	14.3	14.7	14.9	15.0	15.5	15.4	14.9
Lack of available care for my children or other family members reduces my involvement.	14.7	14.5	15.1	15.4	15.2	15.4	16.1	15.9	15.5
My work schedule makes it hard for me to be involved.	53.8	54.4	55.1	55.6	56.2	55.4	55.6	55.5	56.2
The school does not encourage my involvement.	15.7	16.2	17.4	17.6	18.0	19.6	19.8	20.0	20.4
Information about how to be involved either comes too late or not at all.	23.5	24.6	25.3	25.7	26.8	27.3	28.2	28.3	29.1
I don't feel like it is appreciated when I try to be involved.	10.6	11.4	12.0	12.1	12.8	13.6	14.0	14.1	14.1

Finally, parents were also asked several questions about their child's school and its efforts at increasing parental involvement. Across these questions and across time, two-thirds or more of parents consistently rated the efforts of their child’s school at parental involvement efforts as good or very good (Table 26). Approximately twenty percent rated their child’s school overall as “okay.”

**Table 26
2009 – 2012**

Percentage of Parents who responded:

Question:	Very Good or Good				Bad or Very Bad				Okay			
	2012	2011	2010	2009	2012	2011	2010	2009	2012	2011	2010	2009
School's overall friendliness.	81.5	80.4	79.6	78.8	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.4	16.3	17.2	17.8	18.8
School's interest in parents' ideas and opinions.	63.9	63.0	61.4	61.7	7.2	7.6	7.9	7.8	28.9	29.5	30.5	30.6
School's effort to get important information from parents.	68.8	67.8	66.8	66.0	7.2	7.5	7.8	7.9	24.0	24.7	25.2	26.1
The school's efforts to give important information to parents.	74.3	73.3	72.7	71.7	6.0	6.2	6.3	6.5	19.7	20.5	20.9	21.8
How the school is doing overall.	77.5	76.4	75.1	74.3	3.2	3.4	3.5	3.7	19.3	20.2	21.3	22.0

Conclusions:

- Despite a 5.7 percent decline in the number of parents responding to the annual parent survey, the results of the 2012 parent survey demonstrate that parental satisfaction with their child's public schools as measured by the learning environment, home and school relations and social and physical environment, was at comparable levels to the prior year's survey results

Percentage of Parents Satisfied with:

Characteristic	2012	2011	2010	Difference between 2012 and 2011
Learning Environment	87.2	84.3	85.9	2.9
Home and School Relations	82.9	80.2	81.9	2.7
Social and Physical Environment	84.1	82.4	83.2	1.7

- When comparing parent satisfaction in 2012 with parent satisfaction over the most recent three-year period, there were no significant increases or decreases in parent satisfaction levels.

Percentage of Parents Satisfied with:

Characteristic	2012	Mean % (2009-2011)	Difference between 2012 and Mean of three years
Learning Environment	87.2	85.2	2.0
Home and School Relations	82.9	81.2	1.7
Social and Physical Environment	84.1	82.8	1.3

- Parental satisfaction, the percentage of parents agreeing or strongly agreeing, declines as the absolute rating of the school declines. The largest difference in parental satisfaction between the highest and lowest performing schools is in parent perception of the social and physical environment of their child’s school, followed closely by the learning environment.

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

Characteristic	Excellent Schools	At-Risk Schools	Difference
Learning Environment	90.5	81.3	9.2
Home and School Relations	85.5	82.1	3.4
Social and Physical Environment	88.2	73.6	14.6

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

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

Characteristic	Below Average Schools	At-Risk Schools	Difference
Learning Environment	80.7	81.3	(0.6)
Home and School Relations	79.5	82.1	(2.6)
Social and Physical Environment	77.8	73.6	4.2

- Parents who responded to the 2012 annual survey reported comparable levels of parental involvement as in other years and identified work schedules as their greatest obstacle to involvement.
- As in prior years, the inclusion of parents in school decisions and the development of parent leaders and representatives fall below the ideal. Opportunities for improving communication between parents and teachers also continue to exist.

PART FOUR

Analysis of Parent, Teacher and Student Surveys

In addition to parents South Carolina students and teachers are also asked to complete annual surveys pursuant to Section 59-18-900 (D) of the Education Accountability Act which states:

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

Since 2002 the South Carolina Department of Education has administered all three surveys. Parents, teachers and student all respond to the following three questions.

- I am satisfied with the learning environment at my school or my child's school.
- I am satisfied with the home and school relations at my school or my child's school.
- I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my school or at my child's school.

The answers to these three questions and have been communicated to the public on the annual school report cards and through analyses published by the EOC.

While the actual content of the three surveys is different, these surveys have been constructed so that they obtain information regarding the overall attitudes of parents, teachers, and students toward the school in each of three areas: Learning Environment, Home and School Relations; and Social and Physical Environment. For each of these areas a number of questions are asked regarding specific aspects. The parent survey contains 46 questions; the student survey contains 44 questions, and the teacher survey contains 55 questions.

As a part of a more in-depth investigation of the 2007 parent survey, the ability of an overall score in each of the three areas (learning environment, social and physical environment, and home and school relations) to predict the absolute index was examined. The score for each area was obtained by averaging the items of each section – the overall question for each area was not used. Each of the three

components was found to be predictive of the absolute index for all school types, elementary, middle, and high.

Interest in the association between responses to the surveys and school achievement levels as measured by the absolute index or rating has been rekindled by the proceedings conducted to date of the cyclical review of the accountability system. In this process the usage of parent and student surveys as a part of the accountability system in other states has been studied, and interest in utilizing the opinions of parents and students as elements of school ratings has been expressed by three focus groups.

The following investigation examined the relationship of each survey with the absolute index at the item or question level. It was conducted to determine (1) which of the items presented on each survey were related to the absolute index of the school, and (2) identify the commonalities in the items across surveys that were highly related to the absolute index. This information may be useful in considerations of revising each of the surveys, and in identifying those elements that are most useful as predictors of absolute rating.

Data

Data were obtained from the South Carolina Department of Education for responses to the parent, student, and teacher questionnaires administered for the 2011-2012 academic year. Records were used when they contained a valid school identification number. The number of records of each type of survey used in these analyses is as follows:

Survey Type	Number of Records Used
Parent	69,037
Student	142,038
Teacher	38,510

Analyses

Each parent, student, or teacher responding to the survey provides responses with respect to their perceptions of a specific school. The responses for all parents evaluating the same school can be averaged to provide a summary of the attitudes of parents toward that school. Similarly, the responses of students and teachers associated with a specific school can be averaged to provide a summary of the attitudes of students and teachers towards that school for each item. In this analysis, the mean item scores created by school were used as predictors of the school absolute index. Three analyses were performed.

In the first analysis (Model 1), the three questions regarding satisfaction with the learning environment, social and physical environment, and home and school relations were used as predictors of the absolute index. No other specific questions were included in the model. This analysis provided a baseline for the relationship between parent, student, and teacher perceptions of the school and the absolute index of the school.

The second analysis (Model 2) includes the overall question for each area as predictors of the absolute index and allows the remaining individual items from all three areas of the questionnaire to be included based on a selection process. The result includes as predictors those items or questions that best enhance the ability to predict the absolute index and excludes those items that do not enhance the ability to predict the absolute

index. This analysis examines which of the specific items add to the prediction of the absolute index over and above the prediction made by the summary questions for the three areas. Analyses were performed separately by school type, and no attempt was made to modify the prediction equations from any school type to obtain consistency across school types.

The third analysis (Model 3) does not include any of the overall questions for the three areas as predictors of the absolute index in order to focus more exclusively on the efficacy of the individual items in the parent, student, and teacher surveys as predictors of the absolute index. As in the second analysis, this analysis includes as predictors those items that best enhance the ability to predict the absolute index, and does not include those items that do not enhance the ability to predict the absolute index. Once regression analyses were performed for elementary, middle, and high schools, the results were examined to find which items were included as predictors of the absolute index. When an item was included as a predictor in two of three school types, it was included as a predictor for all school types. When an item was included as a predictor for only one school type it was excluded as a predictor for all school types. The same items were ultimately used as predictors for elementary, middle, and high schools.

As already described, the second and third analyses employed a process which allows each item in the survey to be included as a predictor of the absolute index, but only included those items that enhance the prediction of the absolute index - this process is a "stepwise" regression. In a stepwise regression the items that are considered as potential predictors are identified, and analyzed in the following sequence. In the first "step", the item that is the best predictor of the absolute index is included in the regression equation. Each subsequent "step" in a stepwise selection process is actually composed of two parts. The first part finds the item that best predicts the absolute index - over and above items that have already been included. The second part of each step is to re-evaluate all of the variables that have been included as predictors to see if, because of adding the latest variable, all of the variables in the model still function as predictors. An item that is added as a predictor early in a stepwise process could be removed as a predictor at a later time. At the end of the stepwise selection process the most succinct group of items that provide the best prediction of the absolute index are included as predictors in the regression equation. For this analysis the statistical criterion for entry into an equation (the first part of each step) is a significance level of .05, and the criterion for removal from an equation (the second part of each step) is a significance level of .01.

The numeric indicator of the effectiveness of each regression equation is an R^2 value. As a statistical indicator, R^2 gives the percentage of variability in absolute indices that can be explained by the predictors included in a regression equation. Higher R^2 values indicate better prediction than do lower R^2 values. An R^2 value of .40 cannot, however, be regarded to be "twice as good" as an R^2 value of .20.

Results

Table 27 presents the results of the three regression processes for elementary, middle, and high schools for each survey (parent, student, and teacher).

Table 27
R² Values Obtained for Each Survey By School Type

Survey	School Type		
	Elementary	Middle	High
Parent	Model 1: 0.30	Model 1: 0.25	Model 1: 0.17
	Model 2: 0.54	Model 2: 0.57	Model 2: 0.40
	Model 3: 0.54	Model 3: 0.57	Model 3: 0.37
Student	Model 1: 0.11	Model 1: 0.19	Model 1: 0.19
	Model 2: 0.46	Model 2: 0.64	Model 2: 0.57
	Model 3: 0.26	Model 3: 0.27	Model 3: 0.33
Teacher	Model 1: 0.44	Model 1: 0.38	Model 1: 0.36
	Model 2: 0.64	Model 2: 0.69	Model 2: 0.57
	Model 3: 0.57	Model 3: 0.62	Model 3: 0.46

Within each survey type (parent, student, and teacher), Model 1 consistently provides the least effective prediction of the absolute index, as it consistently has the lowest R² values, regardless of school type. These results are as would be expected. Model 1 produced the most basic prediction of the absolute index because no information from the specific items of the questionnaires was allowed as predictors of the absolute index. The R² values are, then, the smallest of all three models.

Model 2 consistently provides the best prediction of the absolute index. The results presented in Model 2 include the overall questions, and allow any of the specific questions to be included as predictors. The models differ for elementary, middle, and high school in that for each school type, the best prediction possible was made by including the items that were best predictors for each school type – with no constraint that the same predictors be used for elementary, middle and high schools.

Model 3 provides a prediction that is not as effective as Model 2. For parents and teachers, predictions using Model 3 are only modestly effective than Model 2, however for students predictions using Model 3 are substantially less effective than Model 2. Model 3 differs from Model 2 in two important ways: (1) it does not include as predictors any of the overall questions, and (2) the same items were used as predictors for elementary, middle, and high schools. In order to be included as a predictor for Model 3, an item must have been selected as a predictor in two or three of the school types (elementary, middle, or high).

The second condition, in particular, means that the prediction equations used for elementary, middle, and high schools will not be optimal for each context. An item that was a predictor for elementary schools that was not a predictor for either middle or high schools was not included as a predictor for Model 3. That the R² values for Model 3 are as modestly lower than the R² values for Model 2 is interesting. For the parent and teacher surveys, although the requirement that the same predictors be used for elementary, middle, and high schools did result in a slight decrease in the R² values obtained, it did not seem to decrease the ability to predict the absolute index dramatically. For the student surveys the requirement that the same predictors be used for elementary, middle, and high schools did result in a pronounced decrease in the ability to predict the absolute index.

In general, responses to the teacher survey are more predictive of the absolute index than are responses to the parent survey. How the ability of responses to the student survey to predict the absolute index compares to that of the parent and teacher survey depends upon the model and the school type. For Model 1, responses to the student surveys in elementary and middle schools are not as predictive of the absolute index as the parent survey or the teacher survey; however, in high schools the student survey is similar in its ability to predict the absolute index as the parent survey. For Model 2 in elementary schools the student survey is not as predictive as either parents or teachers; however, in middle and high schools the students survey is more predictive than the parent survey, and similar in predictive power to that of the teacher survey. For Model 3 the student surveys are not as predictive as either the parent or the teacher surveys.

The most outstanding difference between the student surveys and the parent and teacher surveys is the difference between how well Models 2 and 3 predict the absolute index. For students, the difference between Models 2 and 3 is much larger. Recall that in Model 2 there is no attempt to identify common items across school types. For the student survey the items included as predictors for each school type are effective predictors; however, the items included differ across school types. When the condition of including only those items shown to be predictors in two or more school types is imposed (Model 3), the predictive ability of the student survey decreases substantially.

Table 28 includes the items selected within the analyses by parents, students and teachers as predictors of the absolute index.

Table 28
Common Items used as predictors for the parent, student, and teacher surveys

Parent	Student	Teacher
Learning Environment		
Q2) My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	Q15) The textbooks and workbooks I use at my school really help me to learn.	Q1) My school provides challenging instructional programs for students. Q15) Our school has a good selection of library and media material. Q18) There are relevant professional development opportunities offered to teachers at my school.
Social and Physical Environment		
Q4) Students at my child's school are well-behaved.		Q32) Students at my school behave well in class. Q34) Rules and consequences for behavior are clear to students.
Home and School Relations		
Q3) My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day. Q4) My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly. Q5) My child's school includes me in decision-making.	Q1) My parent knows what I am expected to learn in school. Q7) Parents volunteer and participate in activities at my school.	Q48) Parents attend conferences requested by teachers at my school.

Based on the presentation of Table 28, the following communalities across survey types can be noted:

- For parents and students, items related to high expectations for student learning are included.
- For parents and teachers, items related to student behavior are included.
- For parents and teachers, items related to parent participation in school activities are included.
- A parent item that indicates they are invited to their child's classroom is included, as is a teacher item that indicates that parents attend conferences when requested.

Details of the stepwise regression processes used to identify the common items identified as predictors for parents, students, and teachers are included in Appendices A, B, and C, respectively.

Should survey data be incorporated in any way in the report card process, these themes should be included in some way to ensure that aspects of school quality that are relevant for all school settings are represented.



ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2012 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

APPENDIX A

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

SCHEDULE

Teacher Surveys – on www.ed.sc.gov website

- February 27, 2012 – Teacher Survey portal opens.
- March 30, 2012 – Teacher Survey portal closes.

Student & High School Student Surveys – paper forms

- March 16, 2012 – All schools should receive survey forms by this date.
- April 25, 2012 – Last day for schools to ship completed survey forms to contractor.

Parent Surveys – paper forms

- March 16, 2012 – All schools should receive survey forms by this date.
- April 18, 2012 – Date for parent survey forms to be returned to the school.
This is the due date in the letter to parents.
- April 25, 2012 – Last day for schools to ship completed survey forms to contractor.

CONTACTS

If your student or parent survey forms are damaged in shipment please contact Mike Pulaski with Columbia Business Forms. His email address is mpulaski@mindspring.com.

If you have questions about administration procedures for any survey, please contact Cynthia Hearn at chearn@ed.sc.gov or 803-734-8269.

INDEX

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

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ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2012 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

CHANGES THIS YEAR

No changes.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- ✓ Useful survey results are dependent upon candid responses. The survey administration must encourage candid responses by protecting the anonymity of the respondents and by communicating to respondents that the information is important and will be used for improvement purposes. A letter from the State Superintendent of Education enclosed with the parent survey explains the survey and its purpose.
- ✓ No names or other identifying information should appear on the survey forms or the envelopes containing the parent survey forms. Every effort should be made to ensure that responses to the surveys remain anonymous.
- ✓ While principals should be aware of survey procedures and due dates, they should not be involved in handling completed survey forms. School staff are not allowed to review completed surveys.
- ✓ School principals must designate a staff person to serve as the school's survey coordinator. This person will be responsible for overseeing the distribution of surveys to students and parents and packaging completed surveys for return to contractor. The school survey coordinator also will keep teachers informed of the web-based teacher survey procedures and due dates and report any problems to the Department of Education.
- ✓ Guidelines established by the Education Oversight Committee determine the grade level(s) to be surveyed in each school. All students in the highest grade at elementary and middle schools should complete a student survey. Their parents should receive the parent survey form. For high schools and career centers the surveys should be administered to all 11th graders and their parents. Appendix A on page 7 lists the grade level(s) to be surveyed as determined by the grade span of the school.
- ✓ Sampling is not allowed. All students in the designated grade and their parents should receive a survey. You do not need to have students complete a survey if they are absent on the day of administration or if they would have difficulty reading and responding to the items. However, these students should be given a parent survey to take home.
- ✓ Special education students are to be included and should be provided the same accommodations used for testing.
- ✓ Student and parent surveys should not be administered to children in grades two and below or their parents. For schools that contain only grades two and below, only the teacher survey will be conducted.
- ✓ These survey forms cannot be copied. The scanning equipment can not scan photocopies.
- ✓ Retain the container in which you received the survey forms. That same container can be used to return the survey forms to the contractor.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2012 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

RECEIPT AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

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

SURVEY GUIDELINES

Student & High School Student Surveys

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

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2012 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

Parent Surveys

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

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

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2012 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

ADMINISTRATION OF SURVEYS

Student & High School Student Surveys

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

Parent Survey

- Distribute the parent surveys **as soon as possible** after they are received at the school. This should allow sufficient time for parents to complete and return the survey prior to the April 18 due date.
- Distribute the envelopes containing the parent survey form and letter to each classroom teacher within the designated grade(s). Have the teachers distribute the envelopes to students. Teachers should ask students to take the envelopes home for their parents to complete the surveys. Students should be instructed not to remove the survey form or letter from the envelope. Students should bring the envelopes containing the completed surveys back to school as soon as possible.
- If your budget allows, survey forms may be mailed to students' homes.
- Make sure you are available to respond to any problems that may arise during administration of the surveys.
- As the due date for returning the parent survey approaches, you may want to send home a note or use your automated phone system to remind parents of the due date.

Teacher Survey

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

**ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2012
REPORT CARD SURVEYS**

PREPARING SURVEYS FOR SHIPMENT

Student & High School Student Surveys

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

Parent Survey

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

SHIPPING THE COMPLETED SURVEYS

- Please return all of your school's completed student and parent survey forms at the same time. Package both types of surveys in the same sturdy box. Use crumpled paper, cardboard, or Styrofoam beads to fill the voids in the shipping carton to help keep surveys from being damaged during transit. You may want to use the box in which the survey forms were delivered for the return shipment.
- Attach the pre-addressed, bar-coded UPS return shipping label to your package. (NOTE: If you are re-using the original delivery box be sure to remove or cover up the old label.) Give the package to your UPS driver the next time a delivery is made to your school. You can also drop off the package at any UPS store or drop box as well as select Office Depot and Staples locations. **Scheduling a special pick up from your school will cost you extra.**
- The pre-addressed, bar-coded UPS return shipping label was included in the administrative envelope along with these instructions. If the return UPS shipping label is missing, please contact Mike Pulaski with Columbia Business Forms. His email address is mpulaski@mindspring.com.
- All surveys must be shipped on or before **Wednesday, April 25, 2012.**

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2012
REPORT CARD SURVEYS

Appendix A—Student and Parent Survey Participants

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

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS FOR STUDENT SURVEY

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

Pass out surveys and pencils.

The teacher should read the following script.

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

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

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

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

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

Thank You

South Carolina Parent Survey

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

MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

- Make solid marks that fill the circle completely.
- Erase cleanly any marks you wish to change.
- Make no stray marks on this form.
- Correct Mark: ● Incorrect Marks: ○ ⊗ ⊘ ⊚

Please mark how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the Learning Environment at your child's school.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	<input type="radio"/>				
2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	<input type="radio"/>				
3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	<input type="radio"/>				
4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	<input type="radio"/>				
5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.	<input type="radio"/>				

Please mark how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about Home and School Relations.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	<input type="radio"/>				
2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	<input type="radio"/>				
3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	<input type="radio"/>				
4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	<input type="radio"/>				
5. My child's school includes me in decision-making.	<input type="radio"/>				
6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	<input type="radio"/>				
7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	<input type="radio"/>				
8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	<input type="radio"/>				
9. My child's school treats all students fairly.	<input type="radio"/>				
10. The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	<input type="radio"/>				
11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school.	<input type="radio"/>				

Please mark how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the Social and Physical Environment at your child's school.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
1. My child's school is kept neat and clean.	<input type="radio"/>				
2. My child feels safe at school.	<input type="radio"/>				
3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	<input type="radio"/>				
4. Students at my child's school are well-behaved.	<input type="radio"/>				
5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	<input type="radio"/>				

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

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

Go on to next page.

APPENDIX B

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

Please rate your school on...	Very good	Good	Okay	Bad	Very bad
1. The school's overall friendliness.	<input type="radio"/>				
2. The school's interest in parents' ideas and opinions.	<input type="radio"/>				
3. The school's efforts to get important information from parents.	<input type="radio"/>				
4. The school's efforts to give important information to parents.	<input type="radio"/>				
5. How the school is doing overall.	<input type="radio"/>				

Please answer the following questions about <u>your child</u> who attends the school identified at the bottom of this page.
1. What grade is your child in? <input type="radio"/> 3rd <input type="radio"/> 4th <input type="radio"/> 5th <input type="radio"/> 6th <input type="radio"/> 7th <input type="radio"/> 8th <input type="radio"/> 9th <input type="radio"/> 10th <input type="radio"/> 11th
2. What is your child's gender? <input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female
3. What is your child's race/ethnicity? <input type="radio"/> African - American/Black <input type="radio"/> Hispanic <input type="radio"/> Asian American/Pacific Islander <input type="radio"/> Caucasian/white <input type="radio"/> Native American <input type="radio"/> Other
4. What grades did your child receive on his/her last report card? <input type="radio"/> All or mostly A's and B's <input type="radio"/> All or mostly C's and D's <input type="radio"/> All or mostly B's and C's <input type="radio"/> All or mostly D's and F's

Please answer the following questions about <u>yourself</u> . We are asking these questions because we want to be sure that schools are involving all parents. For each question, please mark only one answer. Your answers will be kept private.
1. What is your gender? <input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female
2. What is your race/ethnic group? <input type="radio"/> African - American/Black <input type="radio"/> Hispanic <input type="radio"/> Asian American/Pacific islander <input type="radio"/> Caucasian/white <input type="radio"/> Native American <input type="radio"/> Other
3. What is the highest level of education you have completed? <input type="radio"/> Attended elementary/high school <input type="radio"/> Earned Associate Degree <input type="radio"/> Earned college degree <input type="radio"/> Completed high school/GED <input type="radio"/> Attended college/training program <input type="radio"/> Postgraduate study and/or degree
4. What is your family's total yearly household income? <input type="radio"/> Less than \$15,000 <input type="radio"/> \$25,000 - \$34,999 <input type="radio"/> \$55,000 - \$75,000 <input type="radio"/> \$15,000 - \$24,999 <input type="radio"/> \$35,000 - \$54,999 <input type="radio"/> More than \$75,000

Thank you very much for completing this survey!

	DO NOT MARK IN THIS AREA 3205044	Leaphart Elementary
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APPENDIX C

Appendix C. Regression Coefficients from Stepwise Selection of the Parent Survey.

Item Number	Item Text	Elementary	Middle	High
LE_1	My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	.	.	.
LE_2	My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	0.45837	0.56618	0.73094
LE_3	My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	.	.	.
LE_4	My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	.	.	.
LE_5	I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.	.	.	.
HSR_1	My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	.	.	.
HSR_2	My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	-0.28486	.	.
HSR_3	My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	-0.22415	-0.76804	-0.99696
HSR_4	My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	0.68375	0.87115	.
HSR_5	My child's school includes me in decision-making.	-0.31031	-0.53968	.
HSR_6	My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	.	0.36580	.
HSR_7	My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	.	.	.
HSR_8	My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	.	.	.
HSR_9	My child's school treats all students fairly.	.	.	.
HSR_10	The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	-0.18840	.	.

APPENDIX C

Item Number	Item Text	Elementary	Middle	High
HSR_11	I am satisfied with home-school relations at my child's school.	.	-0.58303	.
SPE_1	My child's school is kept neat and clean.	.	.	.
SPE_2	My child feels safe at school.	.	.	.
SPE_3	My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	.	.	.
SPE_4	Students at my child's school are well-behaved.	0.49154	0.51380	0.60789
SPE_5	I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	.	.	.
RATE_1	The school's overall friendliness.	.	.	.
RATE_2	The school's interest in parents' ideas and opinions.	-0.67905	.	.
RATE_3	The school's efforts to get important information from parents.	.	.	.
RATE_4	The school's efforts to give important information to parents.	.	.	.
RATE_5	How the school is doing overall.	0.79750	.	.

APPENDIX D

Appendix D. Regression Coefficients from Stepwise Selection of the Student Survey.

Item Number	Item Text	Elementary	Middle	High
LE_1	My classes are challenging (not too easy; they make me think).	.	0.90903	.
LE_2	My teachers want me to understand what I am learning, not just remember facts.	.	.	.
LE_3	My teachers expect students to learn.	.	.	1.02516
LE_4	My teachers expect students to behave.	.	.	0.93591
LE_5	My teachers spend enough time helping me learn.	.	.	.
LE_6	My teachers help students when they do not understand something.	.	.	-0.93967
LE_7	My teachers do a good job teaching me mathematics.	.	0.56841	.
LE_8	My teachers do a good job teaching me English language Arts.	.	.	.
LE_9	My teachers give tests on what I learn in class.	0.70818	.	.
LE_10	My teachers give homework assignments that help me learn better.	-0.30639	.	.
LE_11	My classes are interesting and fun.	.	.	.
LE_12	Students at my school believe they can do good work.	.	.	.
LE_13	My teachers praise students when they do good work.	-0.37231	.	.
LE_14	Work done by students can be seen on the walls of my school.	.	.	.
LE_15	The textbooks and workbooks I use at my school really help me to learn.	-0.48552	-1.15510	-0.39646
LE_16	The media center at my school has a good selection of books.	0.17122	.	.
LE_17	I use computers and other technology at my school to help me learn.	.	.	.

APPENDIX D

Item Number	Item Text	Elementary	Middle	High
LE_18	I am satisfied with the learning environment in my school.	.	.	.
SPE_1	The grounds around my school are kept clean.	.	.	.
SPE_2	The hallways at my school are kept clean.	.	.	.
SPE_3	The bathrooms at my school are kept clean.	.	.	.
SPE_4	Broken things at my school get fixed.	.	.	.
SPE_5	There is enough room for students to learn at my school.	.	.	.
SPE_6	Students at my school behave well in class.	.	.	0.41232
SPE_7	Students at my school behave well in the hallways, in the lunchroom, and on the playground.	0.29850	.	.
SPE_8	Students at my school know the rules and what happens when students break the rules.	-0.35734	.	.
SPE_9	The rules about how students should behave in my school are fair.	.	.	.
SPE_10	The rules for behavior are enforced at my school.	0.39018	.	.
SPE_11	I feel safe at my school before and after school hours.	.	.	.
SPE_12	I feel safe at my school during the school day.	.	0.68152	.
SPE_13	I feel safe going to or coming from my school.	.	.	0.48503
SPE_14	Students from different backgrounds get along well at my school.	.	.	.
SPE_15	Teachers and students get along well with each other at my school.	0.33163	.	.
SPE_16	Teachers work together to help students at my school.	.	.	.
SPE_17	My school has a variety of extracurricular activities for students.	.	.	.

APPENDIX D

Item Number	Item Text	Elementary	Middle	High
SPE_18	I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my school.	.	.	.
HSR_1	My parent knows what I am expected to learn in school.	-0.59938	-1.60901	-0.89273
HSR_2	My parent knows how well I am doing in school.	0.53192	.	.
HSR_3	My school informs parents about school programs and activities.	.	.	-0.43687
HSR_4	Parents at my school know their children's homework assignments.	.	.	.
HSR_5	My parent helps me with my homework when I need it.	.	.	.
HSR_6	Parents are welcomed at my school.	.	.	.
HSR_7	Parents volunteer and participate in activities at my school.	0.36336	0.95986	0.42272
HSR_8	I am satisfied with home-school relations.	.	.	0.69669

APPENDIX E

Appendix E. Regression Coefficients from Stepwise Selection of the Teacher Survey.

Item Number	Item Text	Elementary	Middle	High
LE_1	My school provides challenging instructional programs for students.	0.46575	0.88361	.
LE_2	Teachers at my school effectively implement the State Curriculum Standards.	0.40354	.	.
LE_3	Teachers at my school focus instruction on understanding, not just memorizing facts.	.	.	.
LE_4	Teachers at my school have high expectations for students' learning.	.	.	.
LE_5	There is a sufficient amount of classroom time allocated to instruction in essential skills.	-0.19520	.	.
LE_6	Student assessment information is effectively used by teachers to plan instruction.	.	.	.
LE_7	Effective instructional strategies are used to meet the needs of low achieving students.	.	.	.
LE_8	My school offers effective programs for students with disabilities.	.	.	.
LE_9	Instructional strategies are used to meet the needs of academically gifted students.	0.17933	.	.
LE_10	The level of teacher and staff morale is high at my school.	.	.	.
LE_11	Teachers respect each other at my school.	-0.21652	.	.
LE_12	Teachers at my school are recognized and appreciated for good work.	.	.	.
LE_13	Students at my school are motivated and interested in learning.	.	.	.
LE_14	There are sufficient materials and supplies available for classroom and instructional use.	.	.	.
LE_15	Our school has a good selection of library and media material.	0.15118	0.22244	0.41973

APPENDIX E

Item Number	Item Text	Elementary	Middle	High
LE_16	Our school has sufficient computers for instructional use.	.	-0.12926	.
LE_17	Computers are used effectively for instruction at my school.	.	.	-0.36800
LE_18	There are relevant professional development opportunities offered to teachers at my school.	-0.24329	-0.29443	.
LE_19	The school administration communicates clear instructional goals for the school.	.	.	.
LE_20	The school administration sets high standards for students.	.	.	.
LE_21	The school administration has high expectations for teacher performance.	.	.	.
LE_22	The school administration provides effective instructional leadership.	.	.	.
LE_23	Student assessment information is used to set goals and plan programs for my school.	.	.	.
LE_24	Teacher evaluation at my school focuses on instructional improvement.	.	-0.25079	.
LE_25	The school administration arranges for collaborative planning and decision making.	.	.	.
LE_26	I am satisfied with the learning environment in my school.	.	.	.
SPE_27	The grounds around my school are kept clean.	.	.	-0.37108
SPE_28	The hallways at my school are kept clean.	.	.	.
SPE_29	The bathrooms at my school are kept clean.	.	.	.
SPE_30	The school building is maintained well and repaired when needed.	.	.	.
SPE_31	There is sufficient space for instructional programs at my school.	.	.	.

APPENDIX E

Item Number	Item Text	Elementary	Middle	High
SPE_32	Students at my school behave well in class.	0.38512	0.59898	0.88115
SPE_33	Students at my school behave well in the hallways, in the lunchroom, and on school grounds.	.	.	.
SPE_34	Rules and consequences for behavior are clear to students.	-0.17706	-0.33773	-0.46160
SPE_35	The rules for behavior are enforced at my school.	.	.	.
SPE_36	I feel safe at my school before and after school hours.	.	.	.
SPE_37	I feel safe at my school during the school day.	.	.	.
SPE_38	I feel safe going to or coming from my school.	.	.	.
SPE_39	Students from different backgrounds get along well at my school.	.	-0.35550	.
SPE_40	Teachers and students get along well with each other at my school.	.	.	.
SPE_41	Teachers at my school collaborate for instructional planning.	.	.	.
SPE_42	I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my school.	.	0.34990	.
HSR_43	Parents at my school are aware of school policies.	.	.	.
HSR_44	Parents at my school know about school activities.	.	.	.
HSR_45	Parents at my school understand the school's instructional programs.	.	.	.
HSR_46	Parents at my school are interested in their children's schoolwork.	.	.	.
HSR_47	Parents at my school support instructional decisions regarding their children.	-0.41800	.	.

APPENDIX E

Item Number	Item Text	Elementary	Middle	High
HSR_48	Parents attend conferences requested by teachers at my school.	0.49818	0.51263	.
HSR_49	Parents at my school cooperate regarding discipline problems.	.	-0.38837	.
HSR_50	Parents attend school meetings and other school events.	.	.	0.70520
HSR_51	Parents participate as volunteer helpers in the school or classroom.	0.23333	.	.
HSR_52	Parents are involved in school decisions through advisory committees.	.	.	.
LE_71	School administrators visit classrooms to observe instruction.	.	.	.
SPE_72	The rules about how students should behave in my school are fair.	.	.	.
HSR_73	I am satisfied with home and school relations.	.	.	.

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



ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2012 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

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

SCHEDULE

Teacher Surveys – on www.ed.sc.gov website

- February 27, 2012 – Teacher Survey portal opens.
- March 30, 2012 – Teacher Survey portal closes.

Student & High School Student Surveys – paper forms

- March 16, 2012 – All schools should receive survey forms by this date.
- April 25, 2012 – Last day for schools to ship completed survey forms to contractor.

Parent Surveys – paper forms

- March 16, 2012 – All schools should receive survey forms by this date.
- April 18, 2012 – Date for parent survey forms to be returned to the school.
This is the due date in the letter to parents.
- April 25, 2012 – Last day for schools to ship completed survey forms to contractor.

CONTACTS

If your student or parent survey forms are damaged in shipment please contact Mike Pulaski with Columbia Business Forms. His email address is mpulaski@mindspring.com.

If you have questions about administration procedures for any survey, please contact Cynthia Hearn at chearn@ed.sc.gov or 803-734-8269.

INDEX

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

SECTION	PAGE	SECTION	PAGE
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Receipt and Distribution of Materials	3	Appendix A – Student and Parent	
Survey Guidelines	3	Survey Participants	7
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ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2012
REPORT CARD SURVEYS

CHANGES THIS YEAR

No changes.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- ✓ Useful survey results are dependent upon candid responses. The survey administration must encourage candid responses by protecting the anonymity of the respondents and by communicating to respondents that the information is important and will be used for improvement purposes. A letter from the State Superintendent of Education enclosed with the parent survey explains the survey and its purpose.
- ✓ No names or other identifying information should appear on the survey forms or the envelopes containing the parent survey forms. Every effort should be made to ensure that responses to the surveys remain anonymous.
- ✓ While principals should be aware of survey procedures and due dates, they should not be involved in handling completed survey forms. School staff are not allowed to review completed surveys.
- ✓ School principals must designate a staff person to serve as the school's survey coordinator. This person will be responsible for overseeing the distribution of surveys to students and parents and packaging completed surveys for return to contractor. The school survey coordinator also will keep teachers informed of the web-based teacher survey procedures and due dates and report any problems to the Department of Education.
- ✓ Guidelines established by the Education Oversight Committee determine the grade level(s) to be surveyed in each school. All students in the highest grade at elementary and middle schools should complete a student survey. Their parents should receive the parent survey form. For high schools and career centers the surveys should be administered to all 11th graders and their parents. Appendix A on page 7 lists the grade level(s) to be surveyed as determined by the grade span of the school.
- ✓ Sampling is not allowed. All students in the designated grade and their parents should receive a survey. You do not need to have students complete a survey if they are absent on the day of administration or if they would have difficulty reading and responding to the items. However, these students should be given a parent survey to take home.
- ✓ Special education students are to be included and should be provided the same accommodations used for testing.
- ✓ Student and parent surveys should not be administered to children in grades two and below or their parents. For schools that contain only grades two and below, only the teacher survey will be conducted.
- ✓ These survey forms cannot be copied. The scanning equipment can not scan photocopies.
- ✓ Retain the container in which you received the survey forms. That same container can be used to return the survey forms to the contractor.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2012
REPORT CARD SURVEYS

RECEIPT AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

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

SURVEY GUIDELINES

Student & High School Student Surveys

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

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2012 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

Parent Surveys

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

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

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2012 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

ADMINISTRATION OF SURVEYS

Student & High School Student Surveys

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

Parent Survey

- Distribute the parent surveys **as soon as possible** after they are received at the school. This should allow sufficient time for parents to complete and return the survey prior to the April 18 due date.
- Distribute the envelopes containing the parent survey form and letter to each classroom teacher within the designated grade(s). Have the teachers distribute the envelopes to students. Teachers should ask students to take the envelopes home for their parents to complete the surveys. Students should be instructed not to remove the survey form or letter from the envelope. Students should bring the envelopes containing the completed surveys back to school as soon as possible.
- If your budget allows, survey forms may be mailed to students' homes.
- Make sure you are available to respond to any problems that may arise during administration of the surveys.
- As the due date for returning the parent survey approaches, you may want to send home a note or use your automated phone system to remind parents of the due date.

Teacher Survey

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

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2012
REPORT CARD SURVEYS

PREPARING SURVEYS FOR SHIPMENT

Student & High School Student Surveys

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

Parent Survey

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

SHIPPING THE COMPLETED SURVEYS

- Please return all of your school's completed student and parent survey forms at the same time. Package both types of surveys in the same sturdy box. Use crumpled paper, cardboard, or Styrofoam beads to fill the voids in the shipping carton to help keep surveys from being damaged during transit. You may want to use the box in which the survey forms were delivered for the return shipment.
- Attach the pre-addressed, bar-coded UPS return shipping label to your package. (NOTE: If you are re-using the original delivery box be sure to remove or cover up the old label.) Give the package to your UPS driver the next time a delivery is made to your school. You can also drop off the package at any UPS store or drop box as well as select Office Depot and Staples locations. **Scheduling a special pick up from your school will cost you extra.**
- The pre-addressed, bar-coded UPS return shipping label was included in the administrative envelope along with these instructions. If the return UPS shipping label is missing, please contact Mike Pulaski with Columbia Business Forms. His email address is mpulaski@mindspring.com.
- All surveys must be shipped on or before **Wednesday, April 25, 2012.**

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2012
REPORT CARD SURVEYS

Appendix A—Student and Parent Survey Participants

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

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS FOR STUDENT SURVEY

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

Pass out surveys and pencils.

The teacher should read the following script.

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

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

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

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

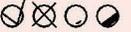
Have the student designated to collect surveys do so. Then, have the student take the completed surveys to the school survey coordinator.

Thank You

South Carolina Parent Survey

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

MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

- Make solid marks that fill the circle completely.
- Erase cleanly any marks you wish to change.
- Make no stray marks on this form.
- Correct Mark: ● Incorrect Marks: 

Please mark how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the Learning Environment at your child's school.

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

Please mark how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about Home and School Relations.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	<input type="radio"/>				
2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	<input type="radio"/>				
3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	<input type="radio"/>				
4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	<input type="radio"/>				
5. My child's school includes me in decision-making.	<input type="radio"/>				
6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	<input type="radio"/>				
7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	<input type="radio"/>				
8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	<input type="radio"/>				
9. My child's school treats all students fairly.	<input type="radio"/>				
10. The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	<input type="radio"/>				
11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school.	<input type="radio"/>				

Please mark how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the Social and Physical Environment at your child's school.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
1. My child's school is kept neat and clean.	<input type="radio"/>				
2. My child feels safe at school.	<input type="radio"/>				
3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	<input type="radio"/>				
4. Students at my child's school are well-behaved.	<input type="radio"/>				
5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	<input type="radio"/>				

Please tell us if you do the following.

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

Please tell us if you do the following.

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

Go on to next page. 

Please mark if each of the following is TRUE or FALSE.

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

Please rate your school on...

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

Please answer the following questions about your child who attends the school identified at the bottom of this page.

1. What grade is your child in? 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th 8th 9th 10th 11th
2. What is your child's gender? Male Female
3. What is your child's race/ethnicity?
 African - American/Black Hispanic Asian American/Pacific Islander
 Caucasian/white Native American Other
4. What grades did your child receive on his/her last report card?
 All or mostly A's and B's All or mostly C's and D's
 All or mostly B's and C's All or mostly D's and F's

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

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

Thank you very much for completing this survey!

DO NOT MARK IN THIS AREA



3205044

Leaphart Elementary

Appendix C. Regression Coefficients from Stepwise Selection of the Parent Survey.

Item Number	Item Text	Elementary	Middle	High
LE_1	My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	.	.	.
LE_2	My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	0.45837	0.56618	0.73094
LE_3	My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	.	.	.
LE_4	My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	.	.	.
LE_5	I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.	.	.	.
HSR_1	My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	.	.	.
HSR_2	My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	-0.28486	.	.
HSR_3	My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	-0.22415	-0.76804	-0.99696
HSR_4	My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	0.68375	0.87115	.
HSR_5	My child's school includes me in decision-making.	-0.31031	-0.53968	.
HSR_6	My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	.	0.36580	.
HSR_7	My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	.	.	.
HSR_8	My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	.	.	.
HSR_9	My child's school treats all students fairly.	.	.	.
HSR_10	The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	-0.18840	.	.

Item Number	Item Text	Elementary	Middle	High
HSR_11	I am satisfied with home-school relations at my child's school.	.	-0.58303	.
SPE_1	My child's school is kept neat and clean.	.	.	.
SPE_2	My child feels safe at school.	.	.	.
SPE_3	My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	.	.	.
SPE_4	Students at my child's school are well-behaved.	0.49154	0.51380	0.60789
SPE_5	I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	.	.	.
RATE_1	The school's overall friendliness.	.	.	.
RATE_2	The school's interest in parents' ideas and opinions.	-0.67905	.	.
RATE_3	The school's efforts to get important information from parents.	.	.	.
RATE_4	The school's efforts to give important information to parents.	.	.	.
RATE_5	How the school is doing overall.	0.79750	.	.

Appendix D. Regression Coefficients from Stepwise Selection of the Student Survey.

Item Number	Item Text	Elementary	Middle	High
LE_1	My classes are challenging (not too easy; they make me think).	.	0.90903	.
LE_2	My teachers want me to understand what I am learning, not just remember facts.	.	.	.
LE_3	My teachers expect students to learn.	.	.	1.02516
LE_4	My teachers expect students to behave.	.	.	0.93591
LE_5	My teachers spend enough time helping me learn.	.	.	.
LE_6	My teachers help students when they do not understand something.	.	.	-0.93967
LE_7	My teachers do a good job teaching me mathematics.	.	0.56841	.
LE_8	My teachers do a good job teaching me English language Arts.	.	.	.
LE_9	My teachers give tests on what I learn in class.	0.70818	.	.
LE_10	My teachers give homework assignments that help me learn better.	-0.30639	.	.
LE_11	My classes are interesting and fun.	.	.	.
LE_12	Students at my school believe they can do good work.	.	.	.
LE_13	My teachers praise students when they do good work.	-0.37231	.	.
LE_14	Work done by students can be seen on the walls of my school.	.	.	.
LE_15	The textbooks and workbooks I use at my school really help me to learn.	-0.48552	-1.15510	-0.39646
LE_16	The media center at my school has a good selection of books.	0.17122	.	.
LE_17	I use computers and other technology at my school to help me learn.	.	.	.

Item Number	Item Text	Elementary	Middle	High
LE_18	I am satisfied with the learning environment in my school.	.	.	.
SPE_1	The ground around my school are kept clean.	.	.	.
SPE_2	The hallways at my school are kept clean.	.	.	.
SPE_3	The bathrooms at my school are kept clean.	.	.	.
SPE_4	Broken things at my school get fixed.	.	.	.
SPE_5	There is enough room for students to learn at my school.	.	.	.
SPE_6	Students at my school behave well in class.	.	.	0.41232
SPE_7	Students at my school behave well in the hallways, in the lunchroom, and on the playground.	0.29850	.	.
SPE_8	Students at my school know the rules and what happens when students break the rules.	-0.35734	.	.
SPE_9	The rules about how students should behave in my school are fair.	.	.	.
SPE_10	The rules for behavior are enforced at my school.	0.39018	.	.
SPE_11	I feel safe at my school before and after school hours.	.	.	.
SPE_12	I feel safe at my school during the school day.	.	0.68152	.
SPE_13	I feel safe going to or coming from my school.	.	.	0.48503
SPE_14	Students from different backgrounds get along well at my school.	.	.	.
SPE_15	Teachers and students get along well with each other at my school.	0.33163	.	.
SPE_16	Teachers work together to help students at my school.	.	.	.
SPE_17	My school has a variety of extracurricular activities for students.	.	.	.

Item Number	Item Text	Elementary	Middle	High
SPE_18	I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my school.	.	.	.
HSR_1	My parent knows what I am expected to learn in school.	-0.59938	-1.60901	-0.89273
HSR_2	My parent knows how well I am doing in school.	0.53192	.	.
HSR_3	My school informs parents about school programs and activities.	.	.	-0.43687
HSR_4	Parents at my school know their children's homework assignments.	.	.	.
HSR_5	My parent helps me with my homework when I need it.	.	.	.
HSR_6	Parents are welcomed at my school.	.	.	.
HSR_7	Parents volunteer and participate in activities at my school.	0.36336	0.95986	0.42272
HSR_8	I am satisfied with home-school relations.	.	.	0.69669

Appendix E. Regression Coefficients from Stepwise Selection of the Teacher Survey.

Item Number	Item Text	Elementary	Middle	High
LE_1	My school provides challenging instructional programs for students.	0.46575	0.88361	.
LE_2	Teachers at my school effectively implement the State Curriculum Standards.	0.40354	.	.
LE_3	Teachers at my school focus instruction on understanding, not just memorizing facts.	.	.	.
LE_4	Teachers at my school have high expectations for students' learning.	.	.	.
LE_5	There is a sufficient amount of classroom time allocated to instruction in essential skills.	-0.19520	.	.
LE_6	Student assessment information is effectively used by teachers to plan instruction.	.	.	.
LE_7	Effective instructional strategies are used to meet the needs of low achieving students.	.	.	.
LE_8	My school offers effective programs for students with disabilities.	.	.	.
LE_9	Instructional strategies are used to meet the needs of academically gifted students.	0.17933	.	.
LE_10	The level of teacher and staff morale is high at my school.	.	.	.
LE_11	Teachers respect each other at my school.	-0.21652	.	.
LE_12	Teachers at my school are recognized and appreciated for good work.	.	.	.
LE_13	Students at my school are motivated and interested in learning.	.	.	.
LE_14	There are sufficient materials and supplies available for classroom and instructional use.	.	.	.

Item Number	Item Text	Elementary	Middle	High
LE_15	Our school has a good selection of library and media material.	0.15118	0.22244	0.41973
LE_16	Our school has sufficient computers for instructional use.	.	-0.12926	.
LE_17	Computers are used effectively for instruction at my school.	.	.	-0.36800
LE_18	There are relevant professional development opportunities offered to teachers at my school.	-0.24329	-0.29443	.
LE_19	The school administration communicates clear instructional goals for the school.	.	.	.
LE_20	The school administration sets high standards for students.	.	.	.
LE_21	The school administration has high expectations for teacher performance.	.	.	.
LE_22	The school administration provides effective instructional leadership.	.	.	.
LE_23	Student assessment information is used to set goals and plan programs for my school.	.	.	.
LE_24	Teacher evaluation at my school focuses on instructional improvement.	.	-0.25079	.
LE_25	The school administration arranges for collaborative planning and decision making.	.	.	.
LE_26	I am satisfied with the learning environment in my school.	.	.	.
SPE_27	The grounds around my school are kept clean.	.	.	-0.37108
SPE_28	The hallways at my school are kept clean.	.	.	.
SPE_29	The bathrooms at my school are kept clean.	.	.	.
SPE_30	The school building is maintained well and repaired when needed.	.	.	.

Item Number	Item Text	Elementary	Middle	High
SPE_31	There is sufficient space for instructional programs at my school.	.	.	.
SPE_32	Students at my school behave well in class.	0.38512	0.59898	0.88115
SPE_33	Students at my school behave well in the hallways, in the lunchroom, and on school grounds.	.	.	.
SPE_34	Rules and consequences for behavior are clear to students.	-0.17706	-0.33773	-0.46160
SPE_35	The rules for behavior are enforced at my school.	.	.	.
SPE_36	I feel safe at my school before and after school hours.	.	.	.
SPE_37	I feel safe at my school during the school day.	.	.	.
SPE_38	I feel safe going to or coming from my school.	.	.	.
SPE_39	Students from different backgrounds get along well at my school.	.	-0.35550	.
SPE_40	Teachers and students get along well with each other at my school.	.	.	.
SPE_41	Teachers at my school collaborate for instructional planning.	.	.	.
SPE_42	I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my school.	.	0.34990	.
HSR_43	Parents at my school are aware of school policies.	.	.	.
HSR_44	Parents at my school know about school activities.	.	.	.
HSR_45	Parents at my school understand the school's instructional programs.	.	.	.
HSR_46	Parents at my school are interested in their children's schoolwork.	.	.	.

Item Number	Item Text	Elementary	Middle	High
HSR_47	Parents at my school support instructional decisions regarding their children.	-0.41800	.	.
HSR_48	Parents attend conferences requested by teachers at my school.	0.49818	0.51263	.
HSR_49	Parents at my school cooperate regarding discipline problems.	.	-0.38837	.
HSR_50	Parents attend school meetings and other school events.	.	.	0.70520
HSR_51	Parents participate as volunteer helpers in the school or classroom.	0.23333	.	.
HSR_52	Parents are involved in school decisions through advisory committees.	.	.	.
LE_71	School administrators visit classrooms to observe instruction.	.	.	.
SPE_72	The rules about how students should behave in my school are fair.	.	.	.
HSR_73	I am satisfied with home and school relations.	.	.	.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Education Oversight Committee
FROM: Melanie Barton *Melanie Barton*
DATE: May 20, 2013
RE: H.3710, 2013-14 General Appropriation Bill

On December 10, 2012 the EOC adopted the budget recommendations for the EIA budget for Fiscal Year 2013-14. These recommendations are based upon the following principles that guide a ***student-centered, performance-based funding model***:

- Public funds for education will be allocated based on the needs of students with the ultimate goal being that all children are prepared for success in a career or in postsecondary education.
- Educators will be empowered to allocate resources at the school and classroom levels to best meet the academic needs of individual students. Such flexibility will allow teachers to provide innovative strategies and interventions to prepare all students for success in a career or in postsecondary education.
- Schools and school districts will be held accountable for the results, which will be based on student performance and the ability of each student to succeed in a career or postsecondary education.
- Consolidation of line item appropriations assists in the simplification of the public education funding system and in the targeting of resources to students.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Budget and Proviso Recommendations as Recommended by the Senate Finance Committee and as Reflected by Senate Actions through May 16, 2013

On May 8, 2013 the Senate Finance Committee reported out its Committee amendment on H.3710, the 2013-14 General Appropriation Bill. The full Senate began debating the bill on May 13. Debate continues in the Senate. Appendix A compares the EOC's budget recommendations for the EIA with the EIA budget as recommended by the Senate Finance Committee and the House of Representatives. Below are some of the key components of the Committee's recommendations:

- Regarding instructional materials, the Senate Finance Committee fully funded the Department of Education's request of \$61.8 million for instructional materials. Of this amount, \$32.2 million was in non-recurring EIA and General Fund monies. , the Committee allocated \$3.0 million in lottery funds for digital instructional materials.
- Regarding provisos, the Senate Finance Committee concurred with the House adopted the EOC's recommendations to create a Center for Educational Partnership at USC. Regarding technology, the Senate Finance Committee recommended that a representative from the EOC also serve on the K-12 Innovation Technology Initiative Committee. Appendix B contains the provisos of interest to the EOC.
- Regarding the Education Finance Act, the Senate Finance Committee concurred with the House and funded the base student cost at \$2,101. In the current fiscal year the base student cost is \$2,012. The Board of Economic Advisors projected a base student cost of \$2,771 which, if funded, would have required an additional \$364 million.
- Regarding the Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP), the Senate Finance Committee recommended expanding CDEPP to at-risk four-year-olds who live in any district with a poverty index of 75 percent or more at a cost of \$20,040,675 in recurring funds and \$4,120,000 in non-recurring funds for the new classrooms. The expansion would impact approximately 8,200 students in the following 17 school districts:

Fairfield	Greenwood 51	Anderson 3	Newberry
Calhoun	Sumter	Cherokee	Georgetown
Colleton	Richland 1	Spartanburg 7	
Dorchester 4	Chester	Lexington 3	
Darlington	Union	Lexington 2	

The EOC would be required to conduct an annual evaluation of CDEPP, as detailed below:

Of the funds appropriated, \$300,000 shall be allocated to the Education Oversight Committee to conduct an annual evaluation of the South Carolina Child Development Education Pilot Program and to issue findings in a report to the General Assembly by January 15 of each year. The evaluation shall include, but is not limited to: (1) student data including the number of at-risk four-year-old

kindergarten students served in publically funded programs, by county and by program; (2) program effectiveness including developmentally appropriate assessments of children to measure emerging literacy and numeracy; (3) individual classroom assessments to determine program quality; (4) longitudinal analysis of academic and non-academic measures of success for children who participated in the program; and (5) an evaluation of the professional development, monitoring and assistance offered to public and private providers.

To aid in this evaluation, the Education Oversight Committee shall determine the data necessary and both public and private providers are required to submit the necessary data as a condition of continued participation in and funding of the program. This data shall include developmentally appropriate measures of student progress. Additionally, the Department of Education shall issue a unique student identifier for each child receiving services from a private provider. The Department of Education shall be responsible for the collection and maintenance of data on the public state funded full day and half-day four-year-old kindergarten programs. The Office of First Steps to School Readiness shall be responsible for the collection and maintenance of data on the state funded programs provided through private providers. The Education Oversight Committee shall use this data and all other collected and maintained data necessary to conduct a research based review of the program's implementation and assessment of student success in the early elementary grades.

- The Committee also included \$1,500,000 in recurring general funds for the provision of summer reading camps and transportation to 3rd graders who are substantially not demonstrating reading proficiency at the end of 3rd grade.

To date, the Senate has approved a proviso to allow up to five schools districts to participate in a pilot assessment program. To be eligible to participate, the school “must have received an absolute rating of Excellent on its most recent state report card and a letter grade of “A” on the most recent federal report card. The district must also request and receive approval by the Education Oversight Committee and the State Board of Education to use an alternative assessment to current state assessments in grades 3 through 8 to measure student performance on English language arts, mathematics and science, and in high school the district may use alternative assessments to the High School Assessment program to measure college and career readiness, or any combination thereof as long as the assessments are aligned to college and career readiness standards. Unless otherwise provided for in law, students graduating in 2014 and in 2015 would still have to pass all exit exam requirements. The Education Oversight Committee, working with school districts in the pilot, would devise an alternative state district and school report card. In addition the South Carolina Department of Education would request changes to its ESEA waiver to permit alternative and innovative approaches to assessment.

Appendix A

EIA Budget Recommendations	Recurring EIA Base	Changes Recommended by EOC	House	Senate Finance
	2012-13	2013-14	2013-14	2013-14
Recurring EIA Base: \$616,727,053				
Students:				
CDEPP–SCDE (\$4,218 per child; 4,716 children served plus \$348,910 for state transportation)	\$17,300,000	\$2,940,998	\$2,940,998	\$2,940,998
Leadership and Teacher Support:				
Teach for America SC (Expand from 110 to 125 teachers)	\$2,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Teacher Supplies (\$275 per all eligible teachers)	\$12,999,520	\$396,480	\$396,480	\$396,480
Consolidate Teacher Salary Supplement & Teacher Salary Support Into One Line Item				
Teacher Salary Support State Share	\$38,625,010	(\$38,625,010)	(\$38,625,010)	(\$38,625,010)
Teacher Salaries	\$77,061,350	\$38,625,010	\$38,625,010	\$38,625,010
Science PLUS (Expand from 111 to 320 science teachers served)	\$150,000	\$353,406	\$353,406	\$353,406
Teacher Loan Program (Fund all eligible applicants, approximately 1,720 or a 506 increase)	\$4,000,722	\$1,999,278	\$1,089,159	\$1,089,159
CERRA – Teaching Fellows Scholarships (\$400,000 for 175 scholarships) and Teacher Cadet (\$110,000)		\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Greater Accountability and Consolidation:				
Writing Improvement Network (USC)	\$182,761	(\$182,761)	(\$182,761)	(\$182,761)
SC Geographic Alliance (USC)	\$155,869	(\$155,869)	(\$155,869)	(\$155,869)
School Improvement Council Project (USC)	\$127,303	(\$127,303)	(\$127,303)	(\$127,303)
E. Leadership/2.State/Other Operating (Proviso 1A.8.)				
Middle Grades Initiative	\$75,000	(\$75,000)	(\$75,000)	(\$75,000)
SC Educational Policy Center (USC)	\$75,000	(\$75,000)	(\$75,000)	(\$75,000)
<i>NEW:</i> Center for Educational Partnerships (USC)	\$0	\$1,000,000	\$715,933	\$715,933

EIA Budget Recommendations	Recurring EIA Base	Changes Recommended by EOC	House	Senate Finance
<i>New: SC Council on Economic Education (Proviso 1A.18.)</i>		\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000
Education Oversight Committee (Along with decrease of \$200,000 in General Funds)	\$1,193,242	(\$100,000)	\$100,000	\$100,000
Cost-Savings:				
National Board Supplement – Due to projected decline in number of teachers receiving supplement	\$64,000,000	(\$10,000,000)	(\$10,000,000)	(\$10,000,000)
Annualization of Non-Recurring EIA Funds:				
Teacher Salaries	\$0	\$10,070,600	\$10,070,600	\$10,070,600
State Agency Teacher Pay	\$209,381	\$506,942	\$506,942	\$506,942
STEM Centers SC	\$0	\$1,750,000	\$1,750,000	\$1,750,000
SCDE Requests:				
PowerSchool and Student Longitudinal Data System	\$5,000,000	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000
Technical Assistance	\$5,250,000	\$750,000	\$750,000	\$750,000
Instructional Materials Total of \$32,167,978 (Annualization of \$13,727,331 and increase of \$19,190,647)	\$20,922,839	\$25,842,499		
Transportation – (Move to General Fund, SCDE Budget)	\$17,462,672	(\$17,462,672)	(\$1,115,387)	(\$1,115,387)
SC Youth Challenge-(Move to General Fund; Adjutant General's Budget)	\$1,000,000	(\$1,000,000)		
ETV-K-12 Education – (Move to General Fund)	\$2,829,281	(\$2,829,281)		
ETV Infrastructure – (Move to General Fund)	\$2,000,000	(\$2,000,000)		
TOTAL Recurring EIA Increase:		\$15,902,317	\$11,242,198	\$11,242,198
Non-Recurring -- Instructional Materials *		\$6,325,479	\$8,000,000	\$8,000,000
Non-Recurring – School Readiness Plan				\$590,000
TOTAL EIA:		\$22,227,796	\$19,242,198	\$19,832,198

Appendix B
Provisos of Interest as Recommended by Senate Finance Committee

1.84. (SDE: Summer Reading Camps) For the current fiscal year, funds appropriated for summer reading camps must be allocated as follows: (1) \$300,000 to the Department of Education to provide bus transportation for students attending the camps; and (2) the remainder on a per pupil allocation to each school district based on the number of students who scored Not Met 1 on the third grade reading and research assessment of the prior year's Palmetto Assessment of State Standards administration. The reading camps must provide an educational program offered in the summer by each local school district for students who are substantially not demonstrating reading proficiency at the end of third grade. The camp must be six to eight weeks long for four or five days each week and include at least five and one-half hours of instructional time daily. The camps must be taught by compensated, licensed teachers who have demonstrated substantial success in helping students comprehend grade-appropriate texts. Schools and districts should partner with county or school libraries, community organizations, faith-based institutions, pediatric and family practice medical personnel, businesses, and other groups to provide volunteers, mentors, tutors, space, or other support to assist with the provision of the summer reading camps. 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, as amended.

1A.9. (SDE-EIA: XII.F.2-CHE/Teacher Recruitment) of the funds appropriated in Part IA, Section 1, XII.F.2. for the Teacher Recruitment Program, the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education shall distribute a total of ninety-two percent to the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA-South Carolina) for a state teacher recruitment program, of which at least seventy-eight percent must be used for the Teaching Fellows Program specifically to provide scholarships for future teachers, and of which twenty-two percent must be used for other aspects of the state teacher recruitment program, including the Teacher Cadet Program and \$166,302 which must be used for specific programs to recruit minority teachers: and shall distribute eight percent to South Carolina State University to be used only for the operation of a minority teacher recruitment program and therefore shall not be used for the operation of their established general education programs. ~~The current year administrative base reduction may be applied proportionately between CERRA and SC State University while none of the reduction may be applied to Teaching Fellows Scholarships.~~ Working with districts with an absolute rating of At-Risk or Below Average, CERRA will provide shared initiatives to recruit and retain teachers to schools in these districts. CERRA will report annually by October first to the Education Oversight Committee and the Department of Education on the success of the recruitment and retention efforts in these schools. The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education shall ensure that all funds are used to promote teacher recruitment on a statewide basis, shall ensure the continued coordination of efforts among the three teacher recruitment projects, shall review the use of funds and shall have prior program and budget approval. The South Carolina State University program, in consultation with the Commission on Higher Education, shall extend beyond the geographic area it currently serves. Annually, the Commission on Higher Education shall evaluate the effectiveness of each of the teacher recruitment projects and shall report its findings and its program and budget recommendations to the House and Senate Education Committees, the State Board of Education and the Education Oversight Committee by October 1 annually, in a format agreed upon by the Education Oversight Committee and the Department of Education.

With the funds appropriated CERRA shall also establish, appoint, and maintain the South Carolina Teacher Loan Advisory Committee. The Committee shall be composed of one member representing each of the following: (1) Commission on Higher Education; (2)

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

IA.52. (SDE-EIA: XII.F.2. Educational Partnerships) The funds provided to the Center for Educational Partnerships at the College of Education at the University of South Carolina will be used to create a consortium of educational initiatives and services to schools and communities. These initiatives will include, but are not limited to, professional development in writing, geography and other content areas; training; research; advocacy; and practical consultancy. The Center will establish collaborative educational enterprises with schools, school districts, parents, communities, and businesses while fulfilling the responsibilities of the School Improvement Council Assistance. The Center will focus on connecting the educational needs and goals of communities to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

IA.53. (SDE-EIA: XII.F.2. STEM Centers SC) All EIA-funded entities that provide professional development and science programming to teachers and students should be included in the state's science, technology, engineering and mathematics education strategic plan.

IA.58. (SDE-EIA: XII.F.2-CERRA/Teaching Fellows) The additional funds provided to CERRA in the current fiscal year must only be used to support the Teaching Fellows and Teacher Cadet programs.

IA.60. (SDE-EIA: South Carolina Success Program) From the funds in specific appropriations Assessment/Testing, the Department of Education shall issue a request for proposal to provide a statewide South Carolina Success Program, a program to be available to all public school districts and open-enrollment charters in the State of South Carolina. The department may use up to \$3,500,000 of the local assessment funds for this program. This program shall provide academic support to students and teachers to help ensure on grade level achievement in reading by making available for grades PreK-8 an online-delivered, interactive reading assessment and research-based intervention program for use both at school and at home. This online program must automatically place students into an individualized on-line curriculum and instruction, provide teachers and administrators with immediate reporting, provide recommendations for interventions and teacher lessons, and provide small group instruction lessons. The program must provide computer adaptive assessments at least eight times per year, and teachers, principals, and districts must have immediate on-line reporting to identify those students who are not reading on grade-level and those that are at risk of failing the state reading assessment pursuant to Section 59-18-310 of the 1976 Code, as amended. The program must make available to parents reporting and resources regarding student participation via a home portal. To ensure effective implementation of the program in conjunction with the beginning of the academic school year, the Department of Education

shall issue a request for proposal to carry out the requirements of this provision no later than July 5, 2013. Implementation of the program must begin no later than August 15, 2013.

Technology

91.28. (LEG: Technology Panel) Of the funds appropriated in XII.E.2. for Technology the K-12 Technology Initiative partnership shall provide a report to the House Education and Public Works Committee, the House Ways and Means Committee, the Senate Education Committee and the Senate Finance Committee, describing the state's efforts to facilitate the cost effective provision of connectivity and internet bandwidth to schools and libraries on a statewide basis, regardless of location, activities to assist schools and libraries in minimizing and detecting internet security threats, the development and utilization of technological and online resources to support student development and achievement, the development and utilization of curriculum and professional training to support the use of instructional technology in schools and libraries, and other educational technology related activities engaged in by the partnership. The report shall be submitted no later than February 1, 2014.

117.29. (GP: School Technology Initiative) From the funds appropriated/authorized for the K-12 technology initiative, the Department of Education, in consultation with the Budget and Control Board's Division of State Information Technology, the State Library, ~~and the~~ Educational Television Commission, and a representative from the Education Oversight Committee, shall administer the K-12 technology initiative funds. These funds are intended to provide technology, encourage effective use of technology in K-12 public schools throughout the state, conduct cost/benefit analyses of the various technologies, and should, to the maximum extent possible, involve public-private sector collaborative efforts. Funds may also be used to establish pilot projects for new technologies with selected school districts as part of the evaluation process. K-12 technology initiative funds shall be retained and carried forward to be used for the same purpose.

1.82. (SDE: Digital Instructional Materials) Utilizing the funds appropriated for digital instructional materials, the Department of Education shall determine a per pupil amount using the prior year's 135 ADM. These funds shall be made available to all school districts using the following procedure:

(1) The Department of Education shall create a digital instructional materials list composed of those items which have been requested by districts and that have received Board approval;

(2) Districts may request that the State Board of Education review digital instructional materials for inclusion on the list when the material has been reviewed by the district, received approval by the local board of trustees for use in its district and been found to reflect the substance and level of performance outlined in the state adopted grade specific educational standards, contain current content information, and are cost effective;

(3) Within 30 days of receiving the request, the State Board of Education must approve or disapprove the district's request. Those materials receiving approval shall be placed on the department's approved digital instructional materials list. Once items are placed on the approved list, all districts may choose items from that list; and

(4) On a form provided by the department, a district may request an allocation by denoting the number of students, grade level, and subject for which the digital materials will be used. Districts may only request digital materials in one subject area and may not receive textbooks for the students using digital materials in that subject area.

District requests must be submitted to the State Board of Education for consideration not later than August 15 of the current fiscal year. Any funds appropriated for digital instructional materials which have not been encumbered by January 15, shall be distributed to school districts which have not previously received an allocation. These districts shall receive a per pupil allocation which must be used for technology infrastructure needed to prepare the district for using digital instructional materials. These funds shall not be subject to flexibility.

EOC-Related

Senate Finance: 1A.36. (SDE-EIA: Carry Forward) EIA carry forward from the prior fiscal year and Fiscal Year ~~2012-13~~ 2013-14 and not otherwise appropriated or authorized must be carried forward and expended to provide \$200,000 to each school that was designated by the department as a Palmetto Priority School in the prior year but did not receive an allocation of EIA technical assistance funds in the prior fiscal year to improve teacher recruitment and retention, to reduce the district's dropout rate, to improve student achievement in reading/literacy, or to train teachers in how to teach children of poverty as stipulated in the school's renewal plan. If funds are not sufficient to provide \$200,000 to each qualifying ~~district~~ school, the \$200,000 shall be reduced on a pro-rata basis. Any balance remaining must be expended for school bus fuel costs, National Board Supplements, and Instructional Materials. ~~Any unexpended funds must be carried forward and expended for the same purpose.~~

House: 1A.36. (SDE-EIA: Carry Forward) EIA carry forward from the prior fiscal year and Fiscal Year ~~2012-13~~ 2013-14 and not otherwise appropriated or authorized must be carried forward and expended first, by July 31, 2013 to provide \$1,000,000 to the Education Oversight Committee for an innovative reading partnership with Clemson University, to provide \$200,000 to each school that was designated by the department as a Palmetto Priority School in the prior year but did not receive an allocation of EIA technical assistance funds in the prior fiscal year to improve teacher recruitment and retention, to reduce the district's dropout rate, to improve student achievement in reading/literacy, or to train teachers in how to teach children of poverty as stipulated in the school's renewal plan. If funds are not sufficient to provide \$200,000 to each qualifying ~~district~~ school, the \$200,000 shall be reduced on a pro-rata basis. Any balance remaining must be expended for school bus fuel costs, National Board Supplements, and Instructional Materials. ~~Any unexpended funds must be carried forward and expended for the same purpose.~~

Senate Finance: 1A.55. (SDE-EIA: EOC Partnerships for Innovation) Of the funds appropriated or carried forward from the prior fiscal year, the Education Oversight Committee is directed to participate in public-private partnerships to promote innovative ways to transform the assessment of public education in South Carolina that support increased student achievement in reading and college and career readiness. The Education Oversight Committee may provide financial support to districts and to public-private partnerships for planning and support to implement, sustain and evaluate the innovation and to develop a matrix and measurements of student academic success based

on evidence-based models. These funds may also focus on creating public-private literacy partnerships utilizing a 2:1 matching funds provision when the initiative employs research-based methods, has demonstrated success in increasing reading proficiency of struggling readers, and works directly with high poverty schools and districts. The committee will work to expand the engagement of stakeholders including state agencies and boards like the Educational Television Commission, businesses, and higher education institutions. The committee shall annually report to the General Assembly on the measurement results.

House: IA.55. (SDE-EIA: EOC Partnerships for Innovation) Of the funds appropriated or carried forward from the prior fiscal year, the Education Oversight Committee is directed to participate in public-private partnerships to promote innovative ways to transform the assessment of public education in South Carolina that support increased student achievement in reading and college and career readiness. The Education Oversight Committee may provide financial support to districts and to public-private partnerships for planning and support to implement, sustain and evaluate the innovation and to develop a matrix and measurements of student academic success based on evidence-based models. The committee will work to expand the engagement of stakeholders including state agencies and boards like the Educational Television Commission, businesses, and higher education institutions. The committee shall annually report to the General Assembly on the measurement results.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee: Public Awareness Subcommittee

Date: June 10, 2013

REPORT/RECOMMENDATION

Reading Public Awareness Campaign -- Billboards and Brochure

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

EAA, Section 59-18-1700 requires the EOC:

"establish an on-going public information campaign "to apprise the public of the status of the public schools and the importance of high standards for academic performance." "

CRITICAL FACTS

EOC staff contacted Calef Brown, a freelance illustrator, about obtaining permission rights for a billboard he created for a foundation in the Midwest (illustration attached). Permission rights have been obtained. The intent is for the billboard, with the addition of the EOC logo, to run for at least one year in locations all around the state. Through an arrangement with the SC Outdoor Advertising Association, the billboards will run as PSAs and the EOC will not be charged for space; only materials and labor. The billboards will be posted for over one year if they are still in good condition and the space is not reserved.

A brochure is also being created for adults in the community providing facts about reading and what people can do to help young people. Although the brochure was a request from the SC Baptist Convention, it is designed to be used for general audiences.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

Billboards: June 1, 2013-June 1, 2014 (guaranteed run)

Brochure: June 1 distribution

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Cost: Billboard: Permission rights for art: \$750.00; billboard placements not to exceed \$20,000. Brochure: in-house design; Calef Brown original cover illustration: not to exceed \$2,500. Printing and distribution fees not yet calculated.

Fund/Source:

Public Awareness

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

ACTION TAKEN

Approved

Amended

Not Approved

Action deferred (explain)



What We Know

Students who don't read well struggle to graduate from high school. They face an ongoing struggle to learn and even diminished success over their lifetime.

In 2012, one in five SC students in 3rd grade was not reading on grade level. By 8th grade, one in three students is not reading on grade level.

Have you heard that children learn to read before 3rd grade and after that, they read to learn? After third grade, the demands put upon students become greater. They are expected to know how to decode words and use basic skills to comprehend more complex texts.



The first three years of a child's life are critically important in shaping language development. Children from low-income families hear approximately 3 million words annually, 8 million fewer words than children in professional families.

Research shows that the more time students spend reading in and outside of school, the better readers they become.

The stakes for children who do not read over the summer are high. Research on summer reading loss shows it's usually the students who can least afford to lose ground as readers who are most likely to suffer from summer reading loss and fall far behind their peers. Some students lose as much as **two months' worth of achievement** in one summer! Reading five books over the summer can prevent learning loss.

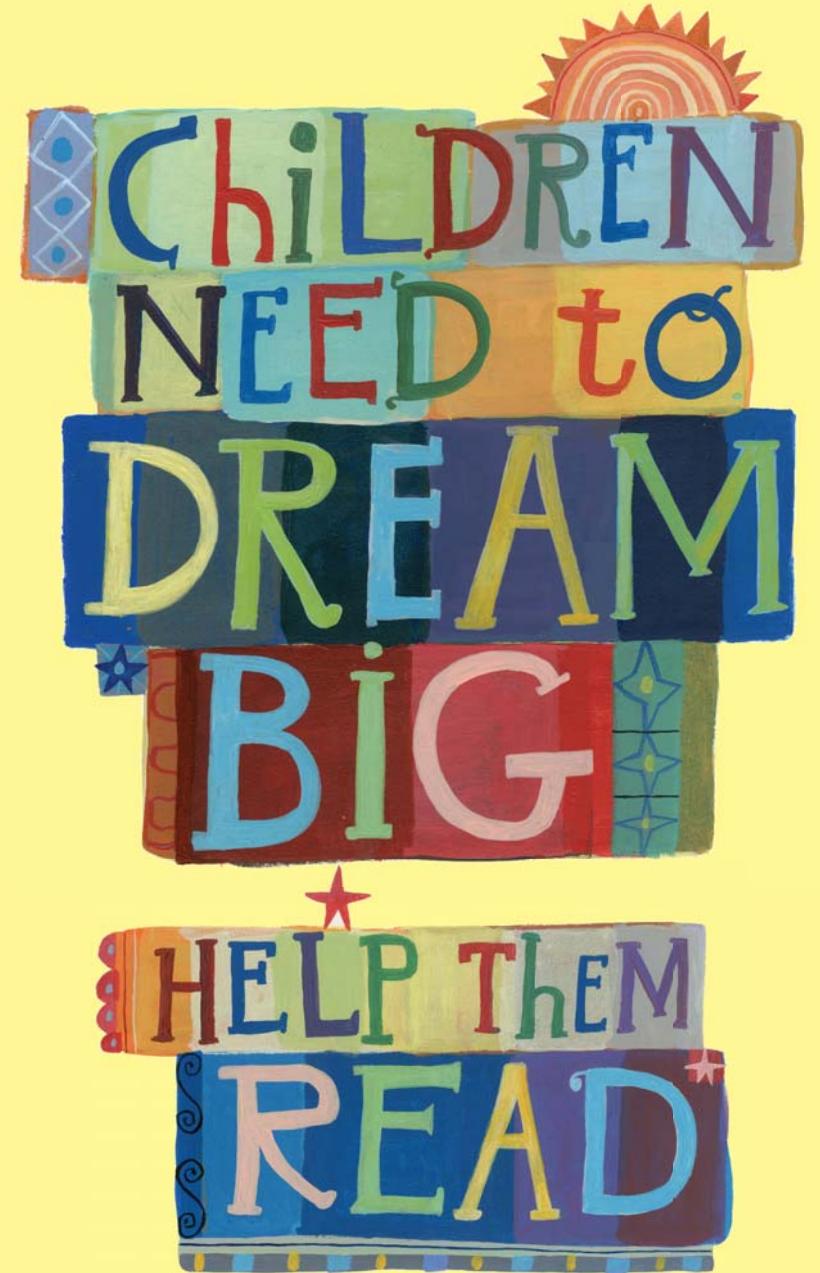
Reading is essential for success in school and young people learn best when nurturing, caring adults provide motivation and support.



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Involvement from the community and caring individuals is essential to create real and lasting improvements in reading achievement among young people. Here are some ways you can help:

Read to children - BIG and small! There is no better way to help a child than to read to them or with them. Empower children by allowing them to choose the books they want to read.

Encourage the children in your life to ask "Why?" and then find the answer through reading.

Volunteer to be a reading tutor for students who are not reading on grade level.

Contact the public library in your community to see if there is a homework help program you can be a part of.

Sponsor a teacher at a Boys and Girls Club, United Way, or afterschool program to give students the extra help they need.

Donate books to text-free or text-poor zones. Just 5 books can help a child prevent summer learning loss!



Donate or loan out transportation for summer and out-of-school-time reading programs.

Model good behavior and get caught reading! Show children you value reading.

Think of innovative ways to promote reading in your community or your workplace – company billboards can be a great space to spread the word or ask your community newspaper if you can write an article.

Congratulate students personally and publicly for academic achievement – every chance you get. Expect them to do their best in and out of school.

Participate as a lunch buddy or reading buddy to students at local schools.

Take extra children's books to your local schools or daycare centers – let the children pick out what THEY want to read.

Talk to the children in your life! Give them positive reinforcement and make certain they know that you are there for them.



EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee: Public Awareness Subcommittee

Date: June 10, 2013

REPORT/RECOMMENDATION

Teacher Appreciation Campaign -- Billboards

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

EAA, Section 59-18-1700 requires the EOC:

"to apprise the public of the status of the public schools and the importance of high standards for academic performance....The committee shall plan and oversee the development of a campaign, including public service announcements for the media and other such avenues as deemed appropriate for informing the public."

CRITICAL FACTS

The EOC is running electronic outdoor PSAs intended to show appreciation to SC teachers for their hard work on behalf of students. The PSAs will run in Charleston, Columbia, Greenville, and Florence during May (Teacher Appreciation Month). Artwork attached.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

May 2013

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Cost: Design (Clare Morris): \$2,500; Billboard space: approx. \$5,000

Fund/Source:
Public Awareness

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

ACTION TAKEN

Approved

Amended

Not Approved

Action deferred (explain)



SC TEACHERS:

THANK YOU
for your hard work on
behalf of our students.

SC EDUCATION
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee: Public Awareness Subcommittee

Date: June 10, 2013

REPORT/RECOMMENDATION

Family-Friendly Standards Website

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

Section 59-28-200 of the South Carolina Code of Laws requires the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) and the State Superintendent of Education "develop and publish jointly informational materials for distribution to all public school parents and to teachers." The informational materials shall include "an explanation of the grade-level academic content standards" and "printed information about the standards and advice relative to parental involvement in their children's education."

CRITICAL FACTS

This is a collaborative project with the EOC and SCDE.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

The website will go live before the end of May 2013 before the 2012-13 school year is complete. The website will be published to www.scfriendlystandards.org.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Cost: website hosting (State CIO): \$600/year; web design: \$1,000

Fund/Source:

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

ACTION TAKEN

Approved

Amended

Not Approved

Action deferred (explain)

Home

$E=mc^2$
 The Constitution
 $ax^2+bx+c=0$
 Σ
 comma splice

grades
k-5

grades
6-8

grades
9-12

Family-friendly guides

to South Carolina academic standards

[Hablas espanol?](#)

Know the standards

There are six key reasons why parents should be familiar with South Carolina's academic standards:

1. Standards set clear, high expectations for student achievement. Standards tell what students need to do in order to progress through school on grade level.
2. Standards guide efforts to measure student achievement. Results of tests on grade-level academic standards (i.e., PASS) show if students have learned and teachers have taught for mastery.
3. Standards promote educational equity for all. Instruction in every school in the state is based on the same academic standards.
4. Standards inform parents about the academic expectations for their child. Standards give parents more specific information for helping their child at home. Parents no longer have to guess the type of help their child needs to do better in school.
5. Standards enable parents to participate more actively in parent/teacher conferences. Knowledge of the academic standards helps parents understand more about what their child is learning and what they can do at each grade level. Parents are able to have conversations with teachers about student progress in specific areas and understand more completely the progress of their child.
6. Standards help parents see how the current

Become a member of your child's success team

A good educational system provides many tools that help children learn. Parents and families are a big part of a child's success team because a great deal of learning goes on outside the classroom. The information on this site can help you become familiar with what your child is learning at school and it includes activities to reinforce and support your child's learning, selected book titles for additional reading, and Web site addresses for extended learning.



This website provides information for parents and families about what their children should be learning in school for the school year 2013-2014. The information incorporates the new Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy and Mathematics in grades K-8. The standards for Science and Social Studies incorporate the most recent South Carolina Academic Standards for those subjects.

The information incorporates the new Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy and Mathematics in grades K-8, much of it provided with permission from the [Council of the Great City Schools](#). Please peruse the academic standards for each grade level by clicking on the corresponding icons at the top of

FYI



SOUTH CAROLINA
STATE DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION

Report to the
South Carolina General Assembly
And the
South Carolina Education Oversight Committee
On

Proviso 1A.19

SDE-EIA: Technical Assistance

March 2013

South Carolina Department of Education

Mick Zais, PhD

State Superintendent of Education

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I. INTRODUCTION

Since the School Year (SY)2007-08, technical assistance funding has been provided to low-performing schools designated as Palmetto Priority Schools (PPS). The schools with the PPS designation have earned an absolute rating of “At-Risk” for three consecutive years in the state report card ratings. Per Proviso 1A.19, the General Assembly has allocated Technical Assistance (TA) funding to support the school-wide transformational efforts for PPS (see Appendix B). In accordance with Proviso 1A.19, the SCDE is to submit an annual report documenting its findings from the monitoring of student achievement and technical assistance expenditures for PPS (see Appendix B). This report provides descriptive statistics for SY2011-12 on student achievement and technical assistance expenditures for the PPS. Given that the absolute rating index that is used to identify PPS is announced November of the following school year, this report reflects upon the previous academic year (SY2011-12) using the most recently available student achievement data (available November 2012).

II. SY2011-12 PALMETTO PRIORITY SCHOOLS

Using the “At-Risk” or below Absolute Rating as the determining factor, thirty-one (31) at-risk schools were identified as PPS for SY2011-12. There were ten (10) Tier One Schools, twelve (12) Tier Two Schools, and nine (9) Tier Three Schools. Below is the complete list of PPS identified for the SY2011-12.

2011–12 Palmetto Priority Schools

Indicates new Palmetto Priority School

*Indicates 2010–11 SIG Cohort Tier I School **Indicates 2011–12 SIG Cohort Tier II School

<u>Tier One</u>	
<u>District</u>	<u>School</u>
Allendale	Allendale-Fairfax Middle School (SIG)* Fairfax Elementary School (SIG)*
Bamberg 2	Denmark-Olar Middle School (SIG)*
Charleston	Burke High School (Middle) (SIG)** Morningside Middle School (SIG)* North Charleston High School (SIG)* St. John’s High School (SIG)**
Greenville	Carolina Academy (High) (SIG)*
Jasper	Ridgeland Middle School (SIG)*
Lee	West Lee Elementary School(SIG)*
<u>Tier Two</u>	
Allendale	Allendale-Fairfax High School
Charleston	Sanders-Clyde Elementary School
Fairfield	Fairfield Elementary School
Florence Three	Main Street Elementary School
Florence Four	Brockington Elementary School
Lee	Lee Central Middle School
Marion Seven	Creek Bridge High School (Middle)
Marlboro	Bennettsville Middle School Clio Middle School
Richland One	Alcorn Middle School Heyward Gibbes Middle School W.A. Perry Middle School
<u>Tier Three</u>	
Allendale	Allendale Elementary School
Charleston	Malcolm C. Hursey Elementary School Edmund A. Burns Elementary School
Hampton 2	Estill Elementary School
Jasper	Ridgeland Elementary School
Marlboro	Bennettsville Elementary School
Orangeburg Three	Ellore Elementary School (Middle)
Orangeburg Four	Hunter-Kinard-Tyler (Elementary) Hunter-Kinard-Tyler (Middle)

III. SY2011-12 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

For the SY2011-12, \$6,000,000 was allocated for state TA to be provided for PPS. Of the thirty-one (31) identified PPS for SY2011-12, twenty-one schools (21) received state TA funding. The other ten (10) PPS are recipients of the federal School Improvement Grant (SIG); therefore, they received a federal award for TA. However, per Proviso 1A.44, the ten (10) remaining PPS/SIG Schools are receiving \$200,000 state TA funding during SY2012-13 as part of the agency's carry forward amount (see Appendix C). The SY2011-12 allocations per school are reported below and on the next page.

Table 1. SY2011-12 TA Funding Allocations

<u>District</u>	<u>School</u>					
<u>Tier One</u>		<u>Tier 1 Allowance</u>	<u>Per Pupil</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>	<u>Total Per Pupil</u>	<u>Total for School:</u>
Allendale	Allendale-Fairfax Middle (SIG)*	\$0	\$0	310	\$0	\$0
	Fairfax Elementary (SIG)*	\$0	\$0	288	\$0	\$0
Bamberg 2	Denmark-Olar Middle (SIG)*	\$0	\$0	198	\$0	\$0
Charleston	Burke High (Middle) (SIG)**	\$0	\$0	660	\$0	\$0
	Morningside Middle (SIG)*	\$0	\$0	497	\$0	\$0
	North Charleston High (SIG)*	\$0	\$0	709	\$0	\$0
	St. John's High (SIG)**	\$0	\$0	322	\$0	\$0
Greenville	Carolina Academy (High) (SIG)*	\$0	\$0	723	\$0	\$0
Jasper	Ridgeland Middle (SIG)*	\$0	\$0	404	\$0	\$0
Lee	Dennis Intermediate (closure) (SIG)**	\$0	\$0	219	\$0	\$0
	West Lee Elementary School (SIG)*	\$0	\$0	193	\$0	\$0
						Total: \$0

Table 1. SY2011-12 TA Funding Allocations *continued*

Tier Two		Tier 2 Allowance	Per Pupil	Enrollment	Total Per Pupil	Total for School:
Allendale	Allendale-Fairfax High School	\$225,000	\$20	448	\$8,960	\$233,960
Charleston	Sanders-Clyde Elementary School	\$225,000	\$20	393	\$7,860	\$232,860
Fairfield	Fairfield Elementary School	\$225,000	\$20	727	\$14,540	\$239,540
Florence Four	Brockington Elementary School	\$225,000	\$20	443	\$8,860	\$233,860
Florence Three	Main Street Elementary School	\$225,000	\$20	464	\$9,280	\$234,280
Lee	Lee Central Middle School	\$225,000	\$20	463	\$9,260	\$234,260
Marion Seven	Creek Bridge High School (Middle)	\$225,000	\$20	373	\$7,460	\$232,460
Marlboro	Bennettsville Middle School	\$225,000	\$20	400	\$8,000	\$233,000
	Clio Middle School	\$225,000	\$20	206	\$4,120	\$229,120
Richland One	Alcorn Middle School	\$225,000	\$20	383	\$7,660	\$232,660
	Heyward Gibbes Middle School	\$225,000	\$20	351	\$7,020	\$232,020
	W. A. Perry Middle School	\$225,000	\$20	344	\$6,880	\$231,880
		Total: \$2,700,000			Total: \$99,900	Total: \$2,799,900
Tier Three		Tier 3 Allowance	Per Pupil	Enrollment	Total Per Pupil	Total for School:
Allendale	Allendale Elementary School	\$200,000	\$20	537	\$10,740	\$210,740
Charleston	Malcolm C. Hursey Elementary School	\$200,000	\$20	359	\$7,180	\$207,180
	Edmund A. Burns Elementary School	\$200,000	\$20	431	\$8,620	\$208,620
Hampton 2	Estill Elementary School	\$200,000	\$20	484	\$9,680	\$209,680
Jasper	Ridgeland Elementary School	\$200,000	\$20	1055	\$21,100	\$221,100
Marlboro	Bennettsville Elementary School	\$200,000	\$20	493	\$9,860	\$209,860
Orangeburg Three	Ellore Elementary School (Middle)	\$200,000	\$20	439	\$8,780	\$208,780
Orangeburg Four	Hunter-Kinard-Tyler School (Elementary)	\$200,000	\$20	364	\$7,280	\$207,280
	Hunter-Kinard-Tyler School (Middle)	\$200,000	\$20	107	\$2,140	\$202,140
		Total: \$1,800,000			Total: \$85,380	Total: \$1,885,380

IV. SY2011-12 ABSOLUTE RATINGS AND ABSOLUTE INDEX SCORES

Given that the Absolute Index Score used to identify PPS is available in November following each school year, the most recent Absolute Rating and Absolute Index Score available November 2012 pertains to SY2011-12. The most recent Absolute Rating and Absolute Index Score for the thirty-one (31) identified PPS that received TA Funding during SY2011-12 is on the next page. These SY2011-12 Absolute Rating and Absolute Index Scores will be used to determine which, if any, of the PPS will exit PPS status for SY2013-14.

Table 2. SY2011-12 PPS Absolute Ratings and Absolute Index Scores

Priority School	District	2012 Absolute Rating	2012 Absolute Index Score
1. Allendale-Fairfax High	Allendale	At Risk	2.20
2. Allendale Elem.	Allendale	Below Average	2.39
3. Fairfax Elem.	Allendale	At Risk	2.11
4. Allendale-Fairfax Middle	Allendale	At Risk	1.98
5. Denmark-Olar Middle	Bamberg 2	At Risk	2.31
6. North Charleston High	Charleston	At Risk	1.70
7. Burke High (middle grades)	Charleston	At Risk	2.19
8. St. Johns High	Charleston	Average	2.80
9. Edmund A. Burns Elem.	Charleston	At Risk	1.84
10. Morningside Middle	Charleston	Below Average	2.38
11. Malcolm C. Hursey Elem.	Charleston	Below Average	2.62
12. Sanders-Clyde Elem. (elementary grades)	Charleston	At Risk	2.16
13. Fairfield Elem.	Fairfield	Below Average	2.39
14. Main Street Elem.	Florence 3	Below Average	2.45
15. Brockington Elem.	Florence 4	At Risk	2.10
16. Carolina Academy High	Greenville	Below Average	2.6
17. Estill Elem.	Hampton 2	At Risk	2.10
18. Ridgeland Elem.	Jasper	At Risk	2.17
19. Hardeeville-Ridgeland Middle	Jasper	At Risk	2.27
20. Lee Central Middle	Lee	At Risk	2.04
21. West Lee Elem.	Lee	Below Average	2.40
22. Creek Bridge High	Marion 7	Average	2.66
23. Bennettsville Elem.	Marlboro	Below Average	2.55
24. Bennettsville Middle	Marlboro	Unsatisfactory	2.27
25. Clio Elementary/Middle (middle grades)	Marlboro	Below Average	2.46
26. Ellorete Elem. (middle grades)	Orangeburg 3	At Risk	2.13
27. Hunter-Kinard-Tyler High (middle grades)	Orangeburg 4	At Risk	2.29
28. Hunter-Kinard-Tyler Elem.	Orangeburg 4	At Risk	2.06
29. Alcorn Middle	Richland 1	Below Average	2.46
30. Heyward Gibbes Middle	Richland 1	At Risk	2.24
31. W. A. Perry Middle	Richland 1	Average	2.86

V. SY2011-12 PPS STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS ON PASS

Below is the most recent PASS data for the PPS served during SY2011-12.

Table 3. SY2011-12 PPS Student Achievement Results on PASS

Priority School	District	PASS MATH			PASS ELA		
		Percent of Students Scoring NOT MET	Percent of Students Scoring MET	Percent of Students Scoring EXEMPLARY	Percent of Students Scoring NOT MET	Percent of Students Scoring MET	Percent of Students Scoring EXEMPLARY
1. Allendale Elem.	Allendale	54.0	29.9	16.1	49.6	29.0	21.4
2. Fairfax Elem.	Allendale	61.8	32.6	5.6	58.4	30.3	11.2
3. Allendale-Fairfax Middle	Allendale	69.9	21.7	8.5	69.5	21.3	9.2
4. Denmark-Olar Middle	Bamberg 2	51.8	34.9	13.3	50.0	33.7	16.3
5. Burke High (middle grades)	Charleston	56.5	36.1	7.5	60.5	23.1	16.3
6. Edmund A. Burns Elem.	Charleston	76.0	22.6	1.4	69.2	27.4	3.4
7. Morningside Middle	Charleston	53.8	37.2	9.0	59.1	27.9	12.9
8. Malcolm C. Hursey Elem.	Charleston	44.6	33.9	21.4	41.1	30.4	28.6
9. Sanders-Clyde Elem. (elementary grades)	Charleston	52.8	39.1	8.1	54.7	38.5	6.8
10. Fairfield Elem.	Fairfield	52.2	30.7	17.0	55.6	30.0	14.4
11. Main Street Elem.	Florence 3	43.1	39.4	17.5	46.0	38.0	16.1
12. Brockington Elem.	Florence 4	62.6	29.7	7.7	62.6	27.7	9.7
13. Estill Elem.	Hampton 2	60.6	34.0	5.4	50.2	29.6	20.2
14. Ridgeland Elem.	Jasper	65.3	27.9	6.8	53.5	32.2	14.3
15. Hardeeville-Ridgeland Middle	Jasper	57.8	37.4	4.8	50.4	34.3	15.2
16. Lee Central Middle	Lee	65.1	29.3	5.6	63.8	28.0	8.1
17. West Lee Elementary	Lee	52.2	34.3	13.4	40.3	44.8	14.9

Table 4. SY2011-12 PPS Student Achievement Results on PASS *continued*

18. Creek Bridge High School (Middle)	Marion 7	45.8	40.5	13.7	42	32.1	26
19. Bennettsville Middle School	Marlboro	49.7	41	9.3	59.3	33	7.7
20. Bennettsville Elementary School	Marlboro	38.3	43.1	18.6	40.3	40.3	19.4
21. Clio Elementary (Middle)	Marlboro	59.1	34.1	6.8	50	27.3	22.7
22. Ellorete Elem. (middle grades)	Orangeburg 3	56.6	37.2	6.2	61.2	23.3	15.5
23. Hunter-Kinard-Tyler High (middle grades)	Orangeburg 4	54.8	32.1	13.1	46.4	38.1	15.5
24. Hunter-Kinard-Tyler Elem.	Orangeburg 4	66.1	30.0	3.9	62.2	27.8	10.0
25. Alcorn Middle School	Richland 1	42.5	41.6	15.9	47	39	14
26. Heyward Gibbes Middle	Richland 1	63.9	28.2	7.8	60.2	27.9	11.9
27. W. A. Perry Middle	Richland 1	38.3	44.4	17.3	30.5	42.5	27.1

VI. SY2011-12 PPS STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS ON HSAP

Below is the most recent HSAP data for the PPS served during SY2011-12.

Priority School	District	Percent of Students Passing HSAP on First Attempt	Percent of Students Passing HSAP by End of High School	Percent of Students Scoring 70 or Above on End-of-Course Tests by Subject			
				English 1	Algebra 1	Biology	US History and the Constitution
Allendale Fairfax High	Allendale	52.7	87.50	24.6	23.4	38.2	20.0
North Charleston High	Charleston	57.3	73.47	35.7	54.5	32.4	40.3
St. Johns High	Charleston	64.6	82.81	62.9	72.1	65.4	32.8
Carolina Academy (High)	Greenville	71.5	84.94	35.1	55.2	58.9	43.8

APPENDIX A: SY2011-12 MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT FOR PPS

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
2011–12 School Year of Implementation

This agreement is between the South Carolina Department of Education, _____, and the Local School Board of _____ for the purpose of supporting _____ in the implementation of the terms outlined in this Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), along with the individualized Palmetto Priority School Plan of Action MOA Addendum for the 2011–12 school year.

Whereas, the parties agree that the identified school will become part of the Palmetto Priority School program;

Whereas, the parties agree that with this designation, there are certain responsibilities and actions that must be taken for the success of the Palmetto Priority School;

Whereas, the school district and school understand that by becoming a Palmetto Priority School, the school receives the benefit of increased funding and support; but to maintain this support, the school district and school must comply with the terms of this MOA.

Whereas, the school district understands that improving school performance and student achievement is the responsibility of the school district and that the South Carolina Department of Education is dedicated to providing support to achieve that aim.

NOW THEREFORE, the parties agree to the following:

South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) Responsibilities

The SCDE shall:

- Meet the terms of this MOA.
- Provide **assistance**, as requested, to the Palmetto Priority School (PPS) in the areas of school-based finance, budgeting, and staffing.
- Provide educator **recruitment and retention** assistance, as requested, to the PPS and district.
- Assist the PPS and district in establishing **partnerships** with colleges/universities and the public/private sector, as well as community-based partners, for each of the identified schools.
- Assist the PPS and district in **connecting with other schools** across the state that have similar demographics and challenges, yet are achieving better student achievement results.

- Assign a **representative** to participate on the **PPS leadership team**.
- Provide advice and **assistance** through the PPS leadership team state representative to the PPS and district **on proven strategies** for improving school performance and student achievement.
- Develop and disseminate a **PPS Principal Job Description** and participate in the recruitment and **hiring process** of all newly hired principals of PPS.
- Provide support through the PPS leadership team state representative including:
 - assisting the district/school leadership in the **Needs Assessment Process**;
 - assisting in the development, implementation, and monitoring of the **PPS Plan of Action, MOA Addendum**;
 - helping to ensure **PPS funds and activities are dedicated** to improving school performance and student achievement; and
 - providing **assistance to the district/school leaders** as they continually make and monitor ongoing site adjustments, based on the specific needs and progress of the students in the PPS.
- **Provide available funds** to implement the transformation effort in selected PPS and districts.
- Assist the district and PPS in implementing a **value-added assessment** model (Teacher Advancement Program [TAP] model or another research-proven model similar to TAP), to include student, teacher, and principal performance data.

School District Responsibilities

The School District shall:

- Meet the terms of this MOA.
- Develop and implement a **recruitment and retention** plan as part of the PPS action plan that includes incentives for effective certified teachers, teacher leaders, and school administrators, ensuring that priority is given to the PPS in filling all vacancies, while working to ensure that the PPS is fully staffed with an effective and highly qualified instructional staff.
- Implement a **value-added assessment** program for certified teachers, teacher leaders, and school administrators that may be based in part on a model that is similar to the TAP model, to include student, teacher, and principal performance data.
- Provide **priority governance and leadership** to the PPS to promote student performance and school effectiveness.

- Ensure that all **PPS principals** have the appropriate school-level certification and have a minimum of three years of progressive leadership experience as a building principal, having demonstrated effectiveness as indicated by student achievement results. These principals must meet the criteria specified in the PPS Principal Job Description, developed by the SCDE.
- Ensure that all candidates who are being considered for the position of the PPS principal are submitted to the SCDE for review before being presented to the local school board for review or approval.
- Ensure that **eligible principals** complete the course work and attendance requirements for the SCDE School Leadership Executive Institute (SLEI) or Transformational Leaders Academy.
- Develop a **PPS leadership team**, including an SCDE representative.
- Identify and assign a **district contact person** as the district superintendent's representative for the PPS. That person shall:
 - Serve as an advocate for the PPS;
 - Review the allocation of resources;
 - Encourage collaboration;
 - Ensure equity of learning opportunities for all students at the PPS both school-wide and district-wide;
 - Monitor the implementation of the MOA;
 - Assist in the development, implementation, and monitoring of the SCDE approved PPS Plan of Action MOA Addendum; and
 - Submit required updates on a monthly basis to the SCDE.
- Ensure that funds provided by the SCDE for the PPS are NOT FLEXED, but are expended appropriately by the district in strict accordance to the implementation of the PPS Plan of Action MOA Addendum.
- Ensure the participation of the following individuals in all PPS/SCDE identified meetings:
 - District superintendent or superintendent's designee;
 - Local school board chairperson or chairperson's designee; and
 - PPS principal.
- Work with the principal to evaluate all programs and initiatives to determine the effectiveness of each one; and work with district and school leadership to **eliminate all ineffective programs and initiatives**, adhering only to those few that are essential to improving student achievement.
- **Reach out to community organizations** and businesses to garner their support for improving schools by establishing ongoing relationships with community and business entities in support of improving student achievement.

Palmetto Priority School Responsibilities

The *PPS*, through the leadership of the principal, shall:

- Meet the terms of this MOA.
- Develop a School Leadership Team.
- Develop and promote a school climate and culture that is student-centered.
- Collaborate with all stakeholders.
- Develop, implement, and monitor the SCDE approved PPS Plan of Action MOA Addendum.
 - Implement an approved curriculum that is aligned with the South Carolina state standards.
 - Develop a focus on curriculum and instruction, identifying specific ELA and math initiatives.
 - Monitor teachers' instructional practices through weekly observations, ensuring alignment with the curriculum; provide written feedback; conference with teachers regarding feedback; and make follow-up observations to ensure that effective adjustments have been made in the delivery of instruction.
 - Ensure that every teacher is assigned to an instructionally focused Communities Advancing Professional Practice (CAPP) and provide ongoing professional development support for staff.
 - Develop and implement effective strategies at specific grade levels/content areas to address weaknesses, using district-wide assessment tools to analyze results.
 - Rely on a clearly defined benchmark and assessment system to measure academic improvement throughout the school year.
 - Provide appropriate, comprehensive needs assessment, as prescribed by the Office of School Transformation, and adhere to specific school-level monitoring activities.
 - Elementary School
 - ✓ Analyze subgroup results of Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS).
 - ✓ Develop and implement an approved SCDE literacy initiative.
 - Middle School
 - ✓ Analyze subgroup results of PASS.
 - ✓ Analyze subgroup results of End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP).

- High School
 - ✓ Analyze subgroup results of High School Assessment Program (HSAP).
 - ✓ Analyze subgroup results of EOCEP.
 - ✓ Monitor the ninth grade field for Graduation Rate on a monthly basis.
- Evaluate all programs and initiatives, as directed by the local school district, to determine the effectiveness of each one; and work with district leadership to eliminate all ineffective programs and initiatives, adhering only to those few that are essential to improving student achievement.
- Complete the Quarterly Budget Report as it pertains to meeting the goals and implementing the strategies in the PPS Plan of Action MOA Addendum.
- Clearly delineate in the PPS Plan of Action MOA Addendum evidence of a decreasing dependence on state funds, being specific in how ongoing expenses will be assimilated in the budget as the PPS moves forward.
- Collaborate with the assigned PPSL on a weekly basis and follow the guidance of the PPSL, as directed by the Office of School Transformation.

Local School Board Responsibilities

- Meet the terms of this MOA as a way to transform and improve school performance and student achievement.
- Gain an understanding of the Local School Board's responsibility and accountability in monitoring the academic progress for the PPS, in accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 59-18-1520 of the Education Accountability Act of 1998.
- Monitor the implementation of the SCDE **support system and MOA**, as well as the SCDE approved **PPS Plan of Action MOA Addendum**, in accordance with the local school board policies and in conjunction with the South Carolina School Board Association policies and procedures for school boards.
- **Reach out to community organizations** and businesses to garner their support for improving schools. Create momentum and energy in the community for improving school performance and student achievement by establishing ongoing relationships with community and business entities in support of improving student achievement.
- **Monitor all PPS expenditures** to ensure that they are focused on improving school performance and student achievement.
- Allocate time on a quarterly basis, documenting meeting agendas, to **receive updates from the PPS principal** and/or the district superintendent.
- Send representation to all PPS Collaboration Meetings.

Funding

All SCDE travel and assigned school activities are contingent upon funding.

Enforcement of the Terms of this MOA

The **Office of School Transformation in the SCDE** will monitor the implementation of the MOA and the PPS Plan of Action MOA Addendum. In the event that the MOA and the PPS Plan of Action are not being fully implemented as determined by the Office of School Transformation, appropriate actions will be taken to ensure compliance. These actions may include:

- **A called meeting by the Director of the Office of School Transformation** to include the local school board chairperson, the district superintendent, and the principal. All parties shall attend this scheduled meeting in Columbia, South Carolina to discuss the lack of implementation.
- **Written notification from the State Superintendent of Education** to the local school board chairperson, with copies forwarded to the district superintendent and the principal, warning of an appearance before the State Board of Education if corrective action is not taken within thirty days.
- **Appearance of the local school board members, the district superintendent, and the principal before the State Board of Education.**
- **Termination of technical assistance and loss of funding**, in addition to any other remedy available to the State Superintendent of Education, as established by law.

The signatures below confirm that all parties understand and agree to support the terms as outlined in this MOA, to include the individualized PPS Plan of Action MOA Addendum to be finalized by the district/school leadership and to be reviewed for approval by the SCDE at the beginning of the 2011–12 school year.

Signed by: _____ Date _____
Mick Zais, State Superintendent
South Carolina Department of Education

Signed by: _____ Date _____
Montrio Belton, Director
Office of School Transformation

Signed by: _____ Date _____
Local School Board Chairperson

Signed by: _____ Date _____
School District Superintendent

Signed by: _____ Date _____
Palmetto Priority School Principal

APPENDIX B: PROVISIO 1A.20, SCDE-EIA: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

1A.19. (SDE-EIA: Technical Assistance) In order to best meet the needs of underperforming schools, funds appropriated for technical assistance to schools with an absolute rating of below average or at-risk on the most recent annual school report card must be allocated according to the severity of not meeting report card criteria.

Schools receiving an absolute rating of below average or at-risk must develop and submit to the Department of Education a school renewal plan outlining goals for improvements. Of the technical assistance funds allocated to below average or at-risk schools each allocation must address specific strategies designed to increase student achievement and must include measures to evaluate success. The school renewal plan may include expenditures for recruitment incentives for faculty and staff, performance incentives for faculty and staff, assistance with curriculum and test score analysis, professional development activities based on curriculum and test score analysis that may include daily stipends if delivered on days outside of required contract days. School expenditures of technical assistance shall be monitored by the Department of Education.

With the funds appropriated to the Department of Education for technical assistance services, the department will assist schools with an absolute rating of below average or at-risk in designing and implementing technical assistance school renewal plans and in brokering for technical assistance personnel as needed and as stipulated in the plan. In addition, the department must monitor student academic achievement and the expenditure of technical assistance funds in schools receiving these funds and report their findings to the General Assembly and the Education Oversight Committee by January first of each fiscal year as the General Assembly may direct. If the Education Oversight Committee or the department requests information from schools or school districts regarding the expenditure of technical assistance funds pursuant to evaluations, the school or school district must provide the evaluation information necessary to determine effective use. If the school or school district does not provide the evaluation information necessary to determine effective use, the principal of the school or the district superintendent may be subject to receiving a public reprimand by the State Board of Education if it is determined that those individuals are responsible for the failure to provide the required information.

No more than five percent of the total amount appropriated for technical assistance services to schools with an absolute rating of below average or at-risk may be retained and expended by the department for implementation and delivery of technical assistance services. Using previous report card data, the department shall identify priority schools. Up to \$6,000,000 of the total funds appropriated for technical assistance shall be used by the department to work with those schools identified as priority schools. These funds shall not be transferred to any other funding category by the school district without prior approval of the State Superintendent of Education.

The department will create a system of levels of technical assistance for schools that will receive technical assistance funds. The levels will be determined by the severity of not meeting report card criteria. The levels of technical assistance may include a per student allocation, placement of a principal mentor, replacement of the principal, and/or reconstitution of a school.

Reconstitution means the redesign or reorganization of the school, which includes the declaration that all positions in the school are considered vacant. Certified staff currently employed in priority schools must undergo a formal evaluation in the spring following the school's identification as a priority school and must meet determined goals to be rehired and continue their employment at that school. Student achievement will be considered as a

significant factor when determining whether to rehire existing staff. Educators who were employed at a school that is being reconstituted prior to the effective date of this proviso and to whom the employment and dismissal laws apply will not lose their rights in the reconstitution. If they are not rehired or are not assigned to another school in the school district they have the opportunity for a hearing. However, employment and dismissal laws shall not apply to educators who are employed in the district and assigned to the priority schools after the effective date of this proviso, in the event of a reconstitution of the school in which the educator is employed. Those rights are only suspended in the event of a reconstitution of the entire school staff. Additionally, the rights and requirements of the employment and dismissal laws do not apply to educators who are currently on an induction or annual contract, that subsequently are offered continuing contract status after the effective date of this proviso, and are employed at a school that is subject to reconstitution under this proviso.

The reconstitution of a school could take place if the school has been identified as a priority school that has failed to improve satisfactorily. The decision to reconstitute a school shall be made by the State Superintendent of Education in consultation with the principal and/or principal mentor, the school board of trustees, and the district superintendent. The decision to reconstitute a school shall be made by April first, at which time notice shall be given to all employees of the school. The department, in consultation with the principal and district superintendent, shall develop a staffing plan, recruitment and performance bonuses, and a budget for each reconstituted school.

Upon approval of the school renewal plans by the department and the State Board of Education, a newly identified school or a currently identified school with an absolute rating of below average or at-risk on the report card will receive a base amount and a per pupil allocation based on the previous year's average daily membership as determined by the annual budget appropriation. No more than fifteen percent of funds not expended in the prior fiscal year may be carried forward and expended in the current fiscal year for strategies outlined in the school's renewal plan. Schools must use technical assistance funds to augment or increase, not to replace or supplant local or state revenues that would have been used if the technical assistance funds had not been available. Schools must use technical assistance funds only to supplement, and to the extent practical, increase the level of funds available from other revenue sources.

APPENDIX C: PROVISOR 1A.44, SCDE-EIA: CARRY FORWARD

1A.44. (SDE-EIA: Carry Forward) EIA carry forward from the prior fiscal year and Fiscal Year 2012-13 and not otherwise appropriated or authorized must be carried forward and expended to provide \$200,000 to each school that was designated by the department as a Palmetto Priority School in the prior year but did not receive an allocation of EIA technical assistance funds in the prior fiscal year to improve teacher recruitment and retention, to reduce the district's dropout rate, to improve student achievement in reading/literacy, or to train teachers in how to teach children of poverty as stipulated in the school's renewal plan. If funds are not sufficient to provide \$200,000 to each qualifying district, the \$200,000 shall be reduced on a pro-rata basis. Any balance remaining must be expended for school bus fuel costs. Any unexpended funds must be carried forward and expended for the same purpose.

EDUCATION WEEK

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SCIENCE IN PRACTICE: THE FIRST OF TWO PARTS

Common Science Standards Face Capacity Issues

Carrying out standards may be slow

By Erik W. Robelen

With the completion of new standards intended to reshape science education, the real heavy lifting now begins.

First, states must decide whether to adopt the **Next Generation Science Standards** developed by a coalition of 26 states and several national organizations. Already, though, considerable focus is turning to laying the groundwork for the biggest task of all: bringing the standards to life at the classroom level.

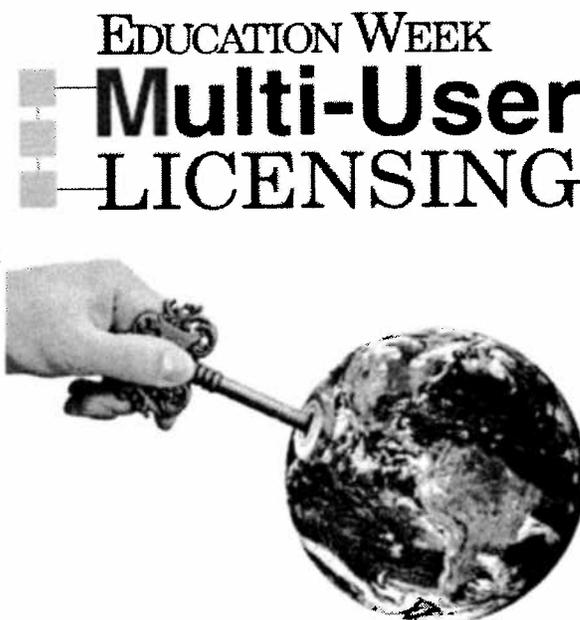
The capacity challenges for states and school districts are immense as they contemplate taking on the new standards, which call for bringing greater depth to science understanding and asking students to apply that knowledge through the practices of scientific inquiry and engineering design.

The standards have major implications for critical levers in the education system, including teacher education and professional development, curriculum and instructional materials, and assessments. Addressing all that will take substantial time and money.

Mindful of the huge task ahead, and the full plates of educators and systems—especially with most states and thousands of districts still coming to terms with the Common Core State Standards in math and literacy—organizers of the standards-development process are preaching a go-slow approach to science.

States should "have the courage to be patient," said Stephen L. Pruitt, a senior vice president of Achieve, a Washington-based organization that managed the development of all three sets of standards. "They shouldn't be rushing to implement the [science] standards. They should do it in their time, and when they're ready."

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By moving at a deliberate pace, Mr. Pruitt said, states and districts "have this opportunity to build some capacity and build the right infrastructure for success."

One of the biggest issues, experts say, and a costly endeavor, is helping teachers deeply understand the vision for science education espoused by the standards and gain the knowledge and skills to effectively deliver on it.

"There are more than 3 million teachers of science, a lot of them elementary included in that, who in many ways are going to have to change what they do as they see the standards come on board," said David L. Evans, the executive director of the National Science Teachers Association, based in Arlington, Va. "Finding the kinds of professional-development tools that are appropriate at scale is going to be a challenge for all of us."

A new generation of science assessment tools will also be needed to match the standards.

Initiatives are already underway to support implementation.

The congressionally chartered National Research Council, which crafted a framework to guide creation of the standards, is writing a report to inform the development of aligned assessments.

The NSTA, a partner in producing the standards, has generated some **resources**, including webinars, articles, and readers' guides to the standards and the framework. And the standards played a lead role in the NSTA's annual conference last month in San Antonio. Also, the group is working with Achieve and states to build a tool to guide states in ensuring that instructional units fit the standards.

In addition, teams from more than 40 states have met periodically since 2011 under an initiative called **Building Capacity for State Science Education**, with the standards being a core focus.

Peter McLaren, the past president of the Council of State Science Supervisors, which is spearheading that effort, said the next two-day meeting, in June, will focus on key implementation questions: "How is this going to affect the system of assessment, the system of instruction, of professional development?"

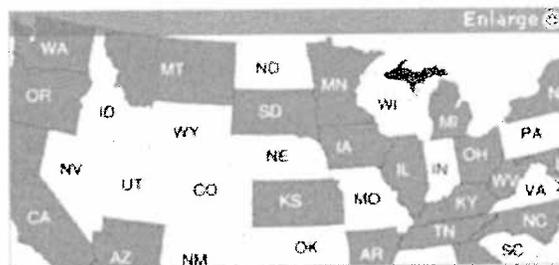
Even as Mr. McLaren sees big capacity challenges looming, he also sees great power in states' banding together around common science standards.

"We can look at models for professional development, and it can be ubiquitous across state lines," he said. "It's going to drive the bus in terms of [instructional] materials, in terms of preservice models."

New professional-development offerings are already emerging. For example, the **Next Generation Science Exemplar System**, being developed with support from a National Science Foundation grant, aims to provide a Web-based system of professional development

Coast to Coast

The 26 lead state partners in developing the Next Generation Science Standards have agreed to consider adopting them.



SOURCE: Achieve

that allows access to videos, texts, and tools at any time and that has a strong emphasis on demonstrating what a classroom looks like that reflects the standards' vision. Seven states, including Arkansas, California, and Minnesota, will pilot a unit on the physical sciences this year.

Whether the Next Generation Science Standards succeed will depend on the strength of the professional learning opportunities for educators, said Fred B. Ende, the regional science coordinator for the Putnam-Westchester area in New York state. "That to me is really going to be the glue that holds this together."

'Knowledge in Use'

The new standards were more than three years in the making. What sets them apart from existing state standards, and even those abroad, experts say, is how they weave together three dimensions: disciplinary core ideas; science and engineering practices; and "cross-cutting concepts" that span scientific disciplines.

"You can travel worldwide and you're not going to find standards like them," said Joseph S. Krajcik, a professor of science education at Michigan State University who served on the 41-member standards-writing team.

At the heart of them is a set of performance expectations that ask students to take actions to show their learning, such as plan and conduct investigations, make observations, analyze data, and devise models.

"It's about knowledge in use," said Mr. Krajcik. This is a "different way of thinking about teaching and learning."

(Major funding for developing the standards was provided by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Other funders include the Noyce Foundation. Both foundations help support *Education Week* news coverage.)

The practices are often mentioned as the dimension that may well be the most significant change, and challenge, in classrooms.

"That's the biggest take-away for my teachers, ... that their instruction will change drastically," said Diane E. Sanna, the director of curriculum and instruction for the 1,900-student Tiverton district in Rhode Island, where educators have been receiving professional development focused mainly on the NRC framework. "A lot of it has to do with the practices."

Three-Dimensional

The Next Generation Science Standards are built on three dimensions of science education that are woven together in each standard: science and engineering practices, cross-cutting concepts, and disciplinary core ideas.

Practices

Behaviors that scientists engage in as they investigate and build models and theories about the natural world, as well as practices that engineers use to design and build models and systems.

Cross-Cutting Concepts

Concepts that apply across all domains of science and are a way of linking them together. The seven concepts include energy and matter; scale, proportion, and quantity; and cause and effect.

Core Ideas

These ideas—such as energy, biological evolution, and earth's systems—cover the four domains of the physical sciences; life sciences; earth and space sciences; and engineering, technology, and applications of science.

SOURCE: Next Generation Science Standards

Mr. Pruitt of Achieve said the standards also demand deeper knowledge of core concepts, even though they cover less ground.

"There is going to be a much greater level of content knowledge needed here from both the teachers and the students," he said. "The reason for that is how they use the knowledge. ... Constructing an explanation is not just saying mitosis has four phases."

Defining 'Quality'

In the elementary grades, the task may be especially tough. Most teachers lack significant background in science and don't spend much time teaching the subject.

"The challenge for elementary schools is probably the most overwhelming because [the federal No Child Left Behind Act] has marginalized science and social studies and everything else that used to be in the elementary curriculum," said Suzanne M. Wilson, a professor of teacher education at Michigan State University.

Just one-fifth of K-3 educators teach science every day, a **recent national survey** found. And more than half of elementary teachers said they did not feel "very well prepared" to teach the subject.

Writing last month for the journal *Science*, Ms. Wilson argued that helping teachers acquire the "knowledge, skill, and will" to meet the standards is a "daunting enterprise requiring large-scale professional development."

The professional-development landscape is a "smorgasboard of opportunities" in which quality varies greatly, she said in an interview. "The average teacher in the average American school doesn't have access to those really high-quality learning opportunities."

Even the best training may come to naught, she added, if the school culture doesn't nurture it.

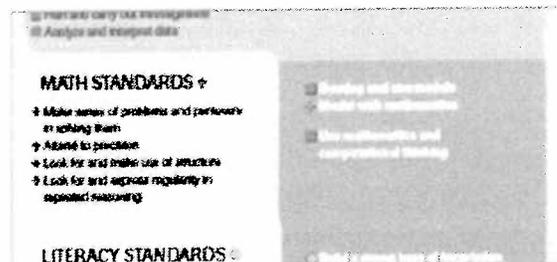
Designing curriculum and instructional materials that fit the letter and spirit of the standards, especially the integration of the core ideas, practices, and cross-cutting concepts, poses another major challenge.

"What we tell people is, if you go to any of the vendors who say, 'This is NGSS-ready,' stay far away from them, or laugh at them. There's no way that could be [true yet]," said Mr. McLaren from the science-supervisors council, who also is a science and technology specialist at the Rhode Island education department. "It's not as simple as taking a text editor and just putting in the practices and handing it back."

The NSTA and Achieve are working with states on a tool to gauge the alignment of instructional units.

Overlapping With the Common Core

The science and engineering practices embedded in the new science standards have considerable synergy with the practices and skills promoted in the common-core math and literacy standards.



SOURCES: Next Generation Science Standards; Tina Cheuk, Stanford University

"What this rubric was born out of was the idea of building a better consumer," said Mr. Pruitt, with the emphasis on identifying a common definition of quality. "It's very focused on instructional units. This is not for textbook evaluation or daily lessons."

Analysts say one big adjustment for textbook publishers will be whittling down the huge amount of material typically covered to reflect the standards' call for greater focus on a smaller number of concepts. Meanwhile, the science kits popular at the elementary level will also need to be redesigned to match the standards.

Although publishers don't necessarily need to start from scratch, several experts said, they do need to make substantial changes to their offerings and not simply tinker around the edges.

An appendix to the standards drives home the need for "focus" on fewer concepts in depth, as well as "coherence" in the curriculum.

"What this means to teachers and curriculum developers is the same ideas or details are not covered each year," it says. "Rather, a progression of knowledge occurs from grade band to grade band that gives students the opportunity to learn complex material."

The **NRC framework** itself has a chapter on implementation. In addressing curriculum matters, it says that "the adoption of [the] standards by multiple states may help drive publishers to align with it. Such alignment may at first be superficial, but schools, districts, and states can influence publishers if enough of them are asking for serious alignment."

Assessment is another looming issue of concern.

A 17-member NRC panel of experts is working on a conceptual framework for science exams and recommendations for developing "valid, reliable, and fair assessments." It will not, however, develop any test items.

"[M]uch of what is needed to effectively assess science learning [in line with the NGSS], either at the classroom level, or for purposes of system monitoring, has yet to be created, ... and the design and implementation challenges are substantial," writes James W. Pellegrino, the co-chairman of that NRC panel and a professor of the learning sciences at the University of Illinois at Chicago, in an article last month in *Science*.

At the same time, he identifies some "promising cases from which to learn and build," including a recently redesigned National Assessment of Educational Progress in science, the Program for International Student Assessment, or PISA, and revised Advanced Placement courses and exams in biology, chemistry, and physics.

Mr. Pellegrino cautions against moving too quickly. When "done poorly," assessment "sends the wrong signals and skews teaching and learning," he said. "Our greatest danger may be a rush to turn the NGSS into sets of assessment tasks for use on high-stakes state accountability tests."

As for other capacity issues, such as whether technology or science laboratory equipment is adequate, state officials and some experts said that while they are valuable tools in the service of the standards, special investments won't necessarily be required. Mr. Kracjik of Michigan State said the standards are "neutral" on such matters. That said, the standards may raise questions about uneven access to such resources.

What could hinder movement, of course, is the political landscape. The science standards have been subjected to some **sharp criticism**, particularly on the handling of the politically sensitive issue of climate change. And the whole concept of common standards has drawn fire from some quarters. Supporters of the common-core standards are defending them against a backlash in several states. (See *related story, Page 1.*)

None of the lead states in developing the standards had adopted them as of last week, though all have pledged to seriously consider doing so. Some are expected to adopt the standards this year, and a number of non-lead states may well follow suit.

'Reboot Opportunity'

The message to move slowly on implementation of the science standards seems to be resonating with state officials.

"Some people are still of the mindset of flipping a light switch," said Matt D. Krehbiel, a science education consultant for the Kansas education department. "I've cautioned, this is an opportunity to think carefully about your system of science education in your district and what needs to be revised, a three- to four-year implementation plan to do this slowly and carefully."

"A new standards adoption," he said, "is like a reboot opportunity."

Mr. McLaren also cites the light-switch metaphor to explain how states and districts should proceed.

"I don't think of a light switch," he said. "I think of a dimmer. The lights will come up slowly, become brighter and brighter."

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Common Core Supporters Firing Back

By Andrew Ujifusa

Supporters of the Common Core State Standards are [Back to Story](#) moving to confront increasingly high-profile opposition to the standards at the state and national levels by rallying the private sector and initiating coordinated public relations and advertising campaigns as schools continue implementation.

In states such as Michigan and Tennessee, where common-core opponents feel momentum is with them, state education officials, the business community, and allied advocacy groups are ramping up efforts to define and buttress support for the standards—and to counter what they say is misinformation.

Supporters assert that the common core remains on track in the bulk of the states that have adopted it, all but four at last count.

But the pressure is on for common-core champions to make sure their message gets through. U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan told the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Washington last month that the private sector had to snap out of what he portrayed as its lethargy and to prevent states from reverting to inferior standards, as he contended states did a decade ago under the No Child Left Behind Act.

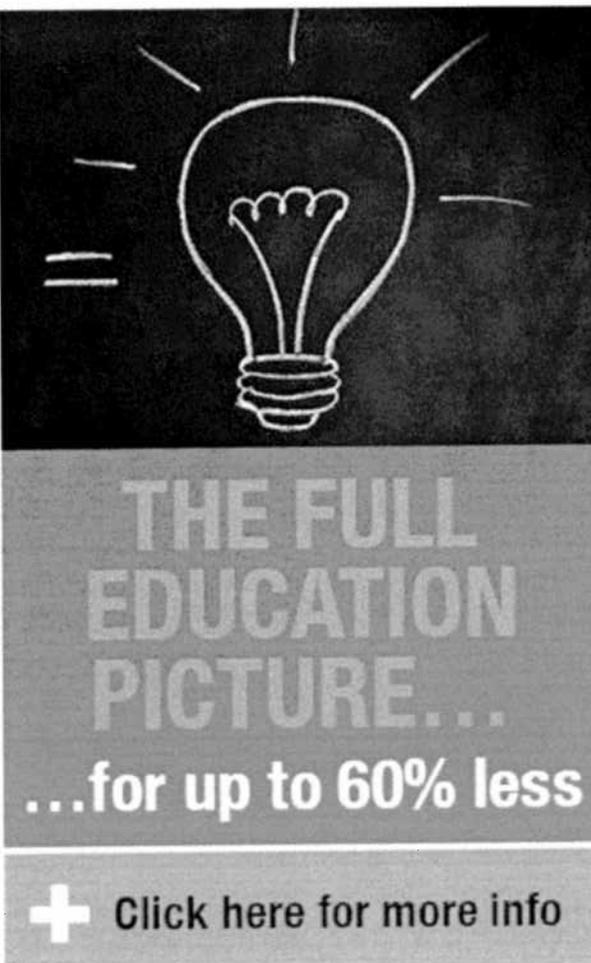
"I don't understand why the business community is so passive when these kinds of things happen," he said.

On May 1, former Michigan Gov. John Engler—now the president of the Business Roundtable, a Washington-based group of business leaders—took to the radio show of former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, a fellow Republican, **to defend the standards.**

And soon thereafter, Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder, another Republican, **reiterated his common-core support** in an appearance in that state with Secretary Duncan.

"States are standing up for what's right, and organizations are supporting them," said Chris Minnich, the executive director of the Council of Chief State School Officers, which led the effort

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to develop and promote the standards along with the National Governors Association. "There are several types of organizations that are doing that."

'Start at Square One'

Critics have made several arguments against the common core. Some say the standards are being crammed into classrooms by the federal government in a power grab of questionable legality. They and others say that the common core is a national curriculum in disguise, that claims about its rigor are inflated, or that it sets unrealistic expectations.

Criticisms also have arisen about the testing load the standards require, the timetable for implementation, and the pace of professional development for teachers.

Participating states are now implementing the standards, which cover English/language arts and math, and tests based on the common core are slated to begin in the 2014-15 academic year.

Perhaps the most prominent pushback has been in Indiana, where Gov. Mike Pence, a Republican, is expected to sign a bill that would require a fiscal and policy review of the standards.

Michigan, Ohio, and Tennessee are among the other states that, to varying degrees, have dealt with growing political opposition to the common core. Conservative organizations and tea party groups have pushed bills opposing the standards at the state level, but groups skeptical about the role of standardized tests and the private sector in education have also made inroads among progressives.

American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten, who says she continues to support the common core in principle, presented a critique on April 30 based on concerns about how quickly and effectively the standards are being implemented. In a speech to the Association for a Better New York, she called for a **delay in attaching high stakes to results from tests** based on the common core. Teachers should have more time to understand the standards and adapt instruction to fit them, she said.

Even as supporters say common core remains on track, they say they are taking its opponents seriously.

When the Tennessee education department started getting basic but increasingly frequent questions about the standards—along the lines of "Is the federal government now telling us what textbooks we have to purchase?"—supporters saw the need to act, said state Commissioner of Education Kevin Huffman.

"We realized that we had to start at square one and be able to start telling people, 'OK, this is the story

State Brush Fires

The Common Core State Standards have sparked debate and legislative battles in a number of states, including:

Alabama: Multiple legislative attempts have been made to derail the common core in this state. Gaining the most traction was a bill that would have required the state board of education to drop the standards. It was approved by the Senate education committee, but Senate President Pro Tem Del Marsh, a Republican, killed the bill.

Indiana: Gov. Mike Pence, a Republican, is expected to sign legislation initiating a fiscal and policy review of the common core. Schools Superintendent Glenda Ritz says the bill means Indiana's previous standards would remain alongside the common core. The state board of education has reiterated its support for the common standards; Gov. Pence can replace six of the boards' 10 members this summer.

of Tennessee's engagement with the common core,' " Mr. Huffman said.

In recent weeks, there have been renewed efforts in Tennessee from the State Collaborative to Reform Education, or SCORE, a nonprofit group led by former U.S. Sen. Bill Frist that promotes college and career readiness, to counter foes of the common core in the state. Opponents began holding public forums last month where representatives from anti-common-core groups made their case.

On April 30, Score announced that more than 200 groups had signed on to its Expect More, Achieve More Coalition. The coalition, begun by SCORE in 2009 and revived last year to support the common core, includes state businesses and school districts and stresses what it says is the importance of the common core.

The coalition has geared up a social-media campaign to promote the standards. It also released a fact sheet and history that says in part, "Standards do not dictate curriculum (e.g., textbooks and reading lists) or prescribe a method of instruction."

Mr. Huffman said he's also lobbied to shore up common-core support among state legislators.

In an op-ed essay earlier this month in *The Tennessean*, in Nashville, state Sen. Dolores Gresham, a Republican and the chairwoman of the Senate education committee, said the standards would **reverse the state's history** of having students perform well on state assessments but poorly on national tests that ask more of them.

Continue the Collaboration

States should remember how they collaborated to develop the standards and work to share best practices about keeping the standards politically viable and putting them into effect, argued Dane Linn, a vice president of the Business Roundtable who also oversaw work on the common core at the NGA.

"It's important to be patient, to not be alarmist, and to support states as they implement these standards," Mr. Linn said.

Still, the private sector is responding to what some supporters see as ominous developments.

For example, Business Leaders for Michigan, a nonprofit group of private-sector leaders in that state, sent an **open letter to state political leaders** on May 2, urging them to stand by the new standards, after the state House of Representatives passed a budget last month that would defund the common core.

Michigan: The House of Representatives approved a budget last month that would defund implementation of the common core. However, Gov. Rick Snyder, a Republican, reiterated his support for the standards in an appearance with U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan on May 6.

Ohio: Groups such as Ohioans Against Common Core and Education Freedom Ohio have held public meetings in recent months to denounce the standards and stepped up pressure on state lawmakers to force Ohio to drop them.

Tennessee: Local groups critical of the common core have held meetings in opposition, sometimes feature opponents from national groups. In support of the standards, the state education department has published a history of the common core in the state and basic information about the standards. Tennessee's State Collaborative on Reforming Education, a group drawn from the business and philanthropic communities, has also intensified its efforts to support the standards.

SOURCE: *Education Week*

"Adopting the common core gives us even a better way of seeing how well we're doing. And for the amount of money we're spending on public education, we should want that," Doug Rothwell, the president and CEO of Business Leaders for Michigan, said in an interview.

Both Mr. Rothwell and Mr. Linn said they were somewhat surprised by the ability of what they deemed small groups of opponents to get political traction. But groups outside the private sector are being proactive as well—before Mr. Snyder's May 6 remarks, Education Trust's Midwest affiliate, which advocates for a focus on transparent data and student achievement, also stressed in a May 2 statement the **broad support for the standards**, including the state PTA.

But supporters also were jolted by the Republican National Committee's decision last month to oppose the standards, said Chester E. Finn Jr., the president of the pro-common-core Thomas B. Fordham Institute in Washington.

"Some people have suddenly discovered that they might need a few people with at least faint Republican credentials besides [former Florida Gov.] Jeb Bush to say that the common core is a good thing," he said. He added that he thought conservative efforts in state legislatures posed the bigger threat to the common standards, compared with opposition from the political left.

Drawing Connections

Standards supporters are also becoming more active on the airwaves.

Stand for Children Indiana, a pro-common-core group, which supports broad early-education opportunities and charter schools, released two different 30-second TV advertisements, one on **March 5** and another on **April 16**, defending the standards. The campaign also included radio spots.

A spokesman for the group, Jay Kenworthy, declined to disclose how much it spent on the ads and said it hadn't decided whether to renew the public relations push when common-core hearings get underway in Indiana this summer.

That state is also ground zero for a pro-common-core argument aimed at a liberal audience: that many of the loudest common-core opponents hold other political views that the audience would find abhorrent.

For example, Larry Grau, the director of the Indiana affiliate of Democrats for Education Reform, or DFER, wrote **on the group's blog** April 23 that GOP Sen. Scott Schneider wants schools to teach creationism and has sought to make enforcement of President Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act a felony. DFER Indiana has also used language that warned about "bedfellows" in the anti-common-core movement that could cause someone to say, "I hate myself for this in the morning." Mr. Grau said he wanted the group's rhetoric to be "a little edgy."

He argued that Democrats suspicious of other policy proposals, like vouchers, should not let those views lead them to lash out at the common core. "They're not thinking before they're saying who they're partnering with on the common core," Mr. Grau said in an interview.

Others make an economic argument in favor of the standards. Legislators weighing whether to ditch the common core should keep in mind that education technology providers already have

been designing products based on the standards, said Bob Wise, the former governor of West Virginia who is now president of the Washington-based Alliance for Excellent Education, which works to improve high school graduation rates.

He argued it would end up costing states more to backtrack than to implement the common core.

Opposition Persists

The federal government has provided \$360 million to support two consortia of states developing common-core-based assessments.

But without new federal enticements to follow through and implement the common core, supporters don't have much gas left in the tank, argued Jim Stergios, the president of the Boston-based Pioneer Institute, which opposes the standards and has sent representatives to forums in Tennessee and elsewhere.

"Michigan wasn't even on our radar screen," he said. "A lot of representatives and senators are starting to feel the heat."

Parents, in particular, are also catching on to the "propaganda" coming from corporate and foundation-based common-core supporters, said Julie Woestehoff, a co-founder of the Chicago-based Parents Across America, a progressive-oriented group that is concerned about the common core's

standardized-testing requirements. (She is also executive director of Parents United for Responsible Education, located in Chicago.) "What we're seeing is people with a lot of money throwing money at a PR problem that they see happening," she said.

But Mr. Minnich of the CCSSO maintains that there is a broad consensus in support of the common core that isn't fracturing and that wants implementation to continue.

On this front, the GE Foundation has traveled to districts to discuss work on the standards, and has helped the Erie school district in Pennsylvania, for example, travel to receive **additional common-core training**. (The GE Foundation provides grant support for *Education Week's* coverage of college- and career-ready standards' implementation.)

"Implementation is critical. ... Simply adopting a set of standards isn't going to make things better," Mr. Minnich said.

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The New York Times

April 20, 2013

The First Race to the Top

By WILLIAM J. REESE

FOR the nearly 50 million students enrolled in America's public schools, tests are everywhere, whether prepared by classroom teachers or by the ubiquitous testing industry. Central to school accountability, they assume familiar shapes and forms. Multiple choice. Essay. Aptitude. Achievement. NAEP, ACT, SAT.

To teachers everywhere, the message is clear: Raise test scores. No excuses. The stakes are very high, as the many cheating scandals unfolding nationally reveal, including most spectacularly the recent indictment of 35 educators in Atlanta.

But we should also be wondering, where did all this begin? It turns out that the race to the top has a lot of history behind it.

Members of the Boston School Committee fired the first shots in the testing wars in the summer of 1845. Traditionally, an examination committee periodically inspected the local English grammar schools, questioned some pupils orally, then wrote brief, perfunctory reports that were filed and forgotten.

Many Bostonians smugly assumed that their well-funded public schools were the nation's best. They, along with many visitors, had long praised the local system, which included a famous Latin school and the nation's first public high school, founded in 1821.

Citizens were in for a shock. For the first time, examiners gave the highest grammar school classes a common written test, conceived by a few political activists who wanted precise measurements of school achievement. The examiners tested 530 pupils — the cream of the crop below high school. Most flunked. Critics immediately accused the examiners of injecting politics into the schools and demeaning both teachers and pupils.

The testing groundwork was laid in 1837, when a lawyer and legislator in Massachusetts named Horace Mann became secretary of the newly created State Board of Education, part of the Whig Party's effort to centralize authority and make schools modern and accountable. After a fact-finding trip abroad, Mann claimed in 1844 in a nationally publicized report that Prussia's schools were more child-friendly and superior to America's. Boston's grammar masters, insulted, attacked Mann in print, and he returned the favor. In December, some Whig reformers, including Mann's close friend Samuel Gridley Howe, were elected to the School Committee and soon landed on the examining committee.

Howe masterminded the use of written tests. His committee arrived at Boston's grammar schools with preprinted questions, which angered the masters and terrified students. Pupils had one hour to write down their answers on each subject to questions drawn from assigned textbooks.

The examiners explained in a lengthy report that they wanted “positive information, in black and white,” to reveal what students knew. For further comparison, Howe’s committee gave the same test in towns outside of Boston, including Roxbury, then a prosperous suburb.

All summer, Howe and his colleagues hand-graded the tests, evaluating 31,159 responses. The average score was 30 percent. The committee wrote a searching commentary on the outcome and prepared tables ranking the schools by average score. They all fell short of the standard achieved in Roxbury.

At the School Committee meeting in August, when masters were traditionally reappointed, the three examiners presented their findings. Newspapers were packed with editorials and letters to the editor, attacking or praising Howe’s report, which Mann publicized in his influential *Common School Journal*. Urban districts across the nation started giving similar tests.

The examiners’ report lambasted the schools. “Some of the answers are so supremely absurd and ridiculous,” the committee noted, that one might think the pupils were “attempting to jest with the Committee.” Pupils had memorized material they often did not understand. Those who could repeat lines from the famous poem “Thanatopsis” could not define the word in the title. Students could not explain whether Lake Ontario flowed into Lake Erie or the other way around. Anyone who has ever listened to children who just took a standardized test can imagine their consternation.

The examiners believed that the teacher made the school, a guiding assumption in the emerging ethos of testing. Tests, they said, would identify the many teachers who emphasized rote instruction, not understanding. They named the worst ones and called for their removal.

Controversies surrounded every aspect of the exam. Examiners caught one master leaking questions to his pupils. They censured the head teacher in the segregated Smith School for not seeing potential in African-American children, whose scores were abysmal. They asked why Boston had fallen behind a suburban rival. They presciently suggested that tests would one day compare schools across national boundaries.

Anticipating an angry reaction from parents, Mann told Howe to deflect criticism from the examiners by blaming the masters for low scores. While the School Committee fired a few head teachers, parents nevertheless accused Howe of deliberately embarrassing the pupils and bounced him out of office in the next election.

Other reformers took Howe’s place, and the testing continued. No one could explain, however, why some schools did better than others. Statistical analysis was in its infancy, and written examinations documented unequal results without easy solutions. “Comparison of schools cannot be just,” the chairman of the examining committee wrote in 1850, “while the subjects of instruction are so differently situated as to fire-side influence, and subjected to the draw-backs inseparable from place of birth, of age, of residence, and many other adverse circumstances.”

What can we learn from the advent of what we learned to call “high-stakes testing”? What transpired then still sounds eerily familiar: cheating scandals, poor performance by minority groups, the narrowing of the

curriculum, the public shaming of teachers, the appeal of more sophisticated measures of assessment, the superior scores in other nations, all amounting to a constant drumbeat about school failure.

Raising test scores is still the mantra of every school reformer, whatever their motivations. Yet the same issues that plagued 19th-century Boston remain. Poor children lag and affluent parents patronize the most exclusive schools to separate their children from anyone labeled “below average.” The survival instinct encourages many teachers to teach to the test, relying on the rote methods that the original exams sought to expose.

The members of Howe’s committee were mesmerized by the charms of numbers, tables and ranked lists, but they also warned that schools performed many important tasks, not easily measured statistically, like teaching norms of civility and good citizenship. And what the public wants from its schools has only grown.

We have come a long way since the summer of 1845. Public education, then in its infancy, is now universal. Testing yields essential, valuable knowledge about school performance, but its exaggerated use distorts teaching and ignores the broader purpose of education. As Howe’s committee insisted, test results should not be the full and final judgment on schools and their teachers. There is more to a child’s education than “positive information, in black and white.”

William J. Reese is a professor of educational policy studies and history at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and the author of “Testing Wars in the Public Schools: A Forgotten History.”

EDUCATION WEEK

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Experts: Later School Start Helps Sleep-Deprived Teens

Symposium looks at research, solutions

Rockville, Md.

Mystery still surrounds what sleep is actually for, but multiple research studies suggest that it is critical to brain development, memory function, and cognitive skills, especially among children and teenagers, according to experts and advocates at a symposium here this month.

Organized by a pair of Maryland-based advocacy groups—the **Lloyd Society** and **Start School Later**—the event explored adolescents' need for sleep, and the consequences of and need for appropriate start times for schools across the country.

It's difficult to pinpoint the exact benefits of later start times. But a May 2012 study in *Education Next* looked at more than 146,000 middle schoolers in the Wake County, N.C., district and found that pushing back their start times an hour **increased standardized math and reading scores** by 2 to 3 percentile points.

Although the sample is small, the study's main author, economist Finley Edwards from Colby College in Waterville, Maine, said the findings are significant enough to be important, suggesting that later start times can be a relevant policy change for those districts trying to find ways to improve students' academic achievement.

Sleep deprivation is considered a **widespread, chronic health problem** among adolescents, according to the Arlington, Va.-based National Sleep Foundation, and can have negative effects on their cognitive development and cause mental and emotional problems.

Experts recommend that high-school-age youths get around nine hours of sleep per night, but the reality is that many teenagers get seven hours or less, according to the sleep foundation.

Sleep-Wake Cycles

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Sleep changes in adolescents are "kind of a perfect-storm scenario," said Dr. Judith Owens, the director of sleep medicine at Children's National Medical Center in Washington, with many factors "conspiring to increase the risks of insufficient sleep in this population."

As adolescents hit puberty, their natural sleep-wake cycles begin to shift, and they are unable to fall asleep as early as they did when they were in elementary school. Hence, it's normal for teenagers to be awake until about 11 p.m., according to Dr. Owens.

But with some schools starting as early as 7 a.m., that means many teenagers aren't getting the recommended nine hours of sleep for proper rest and development.

As more research becomes available on the relationship between adolescent sleep and school start times, educators, parents, and students throughout the country are taking steps to bring start times into the spotlight.

When the school system in Arlington County, Va., first considered pushing back high school start times in 1999, officials had to take into consideration the start times for all school levels and for outside programs like child care, said Deborah DeFranco, a supervisor for the health, physical, and driver education department.

One of the challenges Arlington County faced was competition for interscholastic sports and facilities use. But after some trial and error, Ms. DeFranco said, and work with neighboring Fairfax County, Va., and the Arlington recreation department to share facilities, educators were able to devise a strategy that allowed everyone to participate in something.

Around the same time Arlington was looking at the issue, Ms. DeFranco said, other counties, including Fairfax and Maryland's Montgomery County, were also examining their start times, but most of those movements died. She credits Arlington's success in changing its school start times to the superintendent at the time, Robert Smith, and a focused school board.

In Maryland, a bill was introduced in February to set up a task force to study school start times and sleep needs of adolescents.

The Maryland chapter of Start School Later, a conference co-sponsor and a national coalition of parents, educators, students, and professionals, started a petition specifically for Montgomery County, to change schools' start times to 8:15 a.m. or later.

Health and Behavior

Michael Rubinstein, the public coordinator for the organization, said there's an untapped interest in the issue, and the online petition helped catalyze it.

"We need to start with the premise that 'it must be done,' " said Terra Ziporyn Snider, a medical writer, historian, and co-founder of Start School Later.

In Columbia, Mo., the board of education voted 6-1 to delay start times for the district's high schools after a grassroots effort led by Student's Say, a student-run advocacy group in the district, successfully pushed to delay start times from 7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m., according to a Start School Later press release.

When adolescents don't get adequate sleep, they experience health problems, according to the

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National Sleep Foundation, including impaired alertness and attention, which is important in academics but also important for those teenagers who drive to and from school.

Sleep deprivation can also inhibit the ability to solve problems, cope with stress, and retain information, and is often associated with problems such as depression and substance abuse.

The other conference co-sponsor, the Silver Spring, Md.-based Lloyd Society, which studies at-risk youths, looked at whether sleep deprivation had an impact on youth behavior.

According to Ann Gallagher, one of the society's principal investigators, statistics show that violent crimes committed by teenagers tend to occur when school is out for the day, which implies that later end times could narrow the opportunity for such crimes.

Studies show that **insufficient sleep was associated with a range of risky behaviors**, including substance abuse, sexual activity, and aggression.

Dr. Owens of Children's National Medical Center suggested that even a modest change, say 30 minutes, can improve teenagers' sleep habits, which then may have an impact on their health and academic performance.

Teenagers have erratic sleep cycles, Dr. Owens said, and they try to overcompensate during the weekend to "make up" for lost sleep, but the cycle just keeps going. "They're in a semipermanent state of jet lag," she said.

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An examination
of school culture
and student well-being

RULES FOR ENGAGEMENT

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EDUCATION WEEK

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Online Testing Suffers Setbacks in Multiple States

By **Michelle R. Davis**

Widespread technical failures and interruptions of recent online testing in a number of states have shaken the confidence of educators and policymakers in high-tech assessment methods and raised serious concerns about schools' technological readiness for the coming common-core online tests.

The glitches arose as many districts in the 46 states that have signed on to the Common Core State Standards are trying to ramp up their technological infrastructure to prepare for the requirement that students take online assessments starting in 2014-15.

Disruptions of testing were reported across Indiana, Kentucky, Minnesota, and Oklahoma and were linked to the states' assessment providers: CTB/McGraw-Hill, in Indiana and Oklahoma; ACT Inc., in Kentucky; and the American Institutes for Research, in Minnesota.

Thousands of students experienced slow loading times of test questions, students were closed out of testing in mid-answer, and some were unable to log in to the tests. Hundreds, if not thousands, of tests may be invalidated.

The difficulties prompted all four states' education departments to extend testing windows, made some state lawmakers and policymakers reconsider the idea of online testing, and sent district officials into a tailspin.

The testing problems were "absolutely horrible, in terms of kids being anxious," said Eric F. Hileman, the executive director of information technology services for the 43,000-student Oklahoma City schools. Some high school students were taking Oklahoma's high-stakes tests, which require that students pass four out of seven end-of-instruction tests to graduate.

"It was heartbreaking to watch them," Mr. Hileman said. "Some of them were almost in tears."

System Overload

The problems in Oklahoma and Indiana began on April 29.

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In Oklahoma—where roughly 300,000 students were using online tests and about 3,000 experienced problems—it was the end of the testing window for grades 3-8 and the middle of the testing window for high school students, said Tricia Pemberton, a spokeswoman for the state department of education.

At 9 a.m., students' testing sessions were disrupted by the glitches, and some were unable to restart or to proceed, she said. The problems continued the following day, when the system crashed at 10 a.m.

Indiana experienced similar problems on those days, and districts were instructed later in the week by the state education department to reduce the number of tests being given by half to proceed with the state assessments.

Ms. Pemberton said the simple explanation from Monterey, Calif.-based CTB/McGraw-Hill was that computer servers could not handle the testing load.

In a statement, CTB/McGraw-Hill officials said that earlier practice simulations "did not fully anticipate the patterns of live student testing, and as a result, our system configuration experienced service interruptions that impacted the testing process."

Kentucky officials were forced to suspend online end-of-course exams last week after problems, including slow or dropped connections, were reported in about 25 of the state's school districts, said department of education spokeswoman Nancy Rodriguez. About 60 percent of Kentucky's district's deliver those state-mandated exams online, while the rest use paper-and-pencil assessments.

State officials issued a statement saying that the test vendor, ACT Inc., indicated the problem occurred when its system became overloaded, and that capacity for it had been subsequently increased. Online testing was scheduled to resume early this week, and state officials said they would provide districts with guidance on how to "maximize the testing system's capacity" to avoid additional breakdowns.

In Minnesota, problems with online testing began on April 16 and were experienced in multiple districts

Online Testing Derailments

Several states experienced major mishaps with their statewide assessments recently, breakdowns that caused delays and disruption for teachers and students.

Indiana

April 29: Over 30,000 test sessions were interrupted as students began taking state tests. The state department of education extended the testing window by three days.

April 30: Test interruptions spiked to 8 percent of test-takers, and the department suspended testing for the rest of the day.

May 1: The education department instructed districts to continue testing students, but to reduce the number of tests they plan to give daily by 50 percent.

May 2: The department extended the testing window an additional two days, for a total of five extra testing days.

Kentucky

May 1: School systems were ordered to suspend online end-of-course tests after dropped and slow connections were reported in about 25 districts throughout the state.

May 2: State officials said the problem was caused when its testing vendor, ACT Inc., reported that its system became overloaded. Company officials told the state that the capacity of the system would be increased, but the state department of education also said it would work with local districts to help them "maximize the testing system's capacity" and avoid other problems. Online testing was scheduled to resume by May 8. State officials say they will provide districts that give online tests paper exams as an alternative.

Minnesota

April 16: Schools reported widespread problems with online testing. Up to 5,000 students' tests were disrupted.

April 17: Testing resumed.

April 23: Test interruptions resurfaced. About 48 districts reported slow loading

across the state, affecting up to 5,000 students, said Charlene Briner, a spokeswoman for the state education department.

A week later, on April 23, 48 districts reported disruptions in online testing, and the following day, a handful of districts experienced further problems, she said.

Jon Cohen, an executive vice president of the AIR, the Washington-based not-for-profit research and assessment organization that provided the online tests in Minnesota, said the tests are designed to allow students to pause and log back in later if they're experiencing technical problems.

According to AIR data, he said, about 3,000 students out of 15,000 being tested at the time had slower load times of more than 30 seconds. He said AIR servers were overloaded not by the number of test-takers, but by the large amount of diagnostic data the organization was collecting.

About 95 percent of students in Minnesota take the math portion of the state tests online, but only about 30 percent take the reading portion online, Ms. Briner said. That will change under the common-core standards, which Minnesota has adopted for English/language arts but not for math. All students will eventually have to take ELA tests online.

Ms. Briner said that in light of the recent online testing problems, however, the state is evaluating "whether or not a paper option is better for accountability testing."

"We believe in moving to a next-generation set of assessments," she said, "but we're also believers in making sure people have confidence in the accuracy of the information we report."

On 'Pause'

Others were also worried about the future, particularly when it comes to common-core testing.

Coincidentally, just before the testing problems arose in Indiana, the state legislature passed and sent to the governor **a bill that would "pause" common-core implementation** there.

Glenda Ritz, Indiana's superintendent of public instruction, told *Education Week* that the state might pull out of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, or PARCC, one of two consortia developing common-core tests.

She called the testing problems the state experienced last month "unacceptable."

Wendy Y. Robinson, the superintendent of the 30,900-student Fort Wayne, Ind., community schools, said she doesn't know how students, parents, or educators can now have confidence using online testing for the common core.

"Teacher pay, school evaluations, student grades ... are all going to be tied to a system that none of us have any faith in anymore," she said.

times or other problems.

April 24: A handful of districts reported persistent testing interruptions. About 60 students were affected.

May 1: Minnesota added one day to its testing cycle to allow districts to catch up.

Oklahoma

April 29: Students were taking state tests online when problems began at 9 a.m.

April 30: Testing began at 7 a.m.; problems arose again around 10 a.m. About 3,000 out of 300,000 students statewide experienced some test irregularities.

May 1: The state extended its testing window by two days to allow districts to catch up.

In Oklahoma, lawmakers such as Rep. Curtis McDaniel, a Democrat, called for a moratorium on online testing. "If we can't get this little piece of the puzzle working in the right direction, how are we going to get it right for the whole state or the country?" he said.

"Common core has some good values," he said, "but we need to re-evaluate what we're doing."

But Chad Colby, a spokesman for PARCC, said despite the problems, the advantages of computer-based testing remain, especially when it comes to evaluating student knowledge, offering more interactive testing, and maintaining test security.

He acknowledged, however, that the tests must be reliable.

"The benefits of computer-based assessments for students and teachers vastly outweigh the growing pains and issues in a few states," he said. PARCC will work to solve any technical problems before the common-core online tests are rolled out, he added.

Anticipating Glitches

Joe Willhoft, the executive director of Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, the other group developing common-core tests, said a number of states in his consortium have already been using online testing with all their students for years without major incidents. He said he was confident any kinks could be worked out before common-core tests were launched.

But educators around the country remain concerned about their technical preparedness for common-core online testing, said Keith R. Krueger, the CEO of the Washington-based Consortium for School Networking, or CoSN.

A survey that CoSN released in March found that preparing for the online tests ranked second among the top priorities for the group's members.

Though districts have primarily been worried about their own infrastructure and testing capacity, now they are realizing that even if they are well prepared, some problems are out of their control, Mr. Krueger said.

"I would think of this as the canary in the coal mine," he said of the recent testing problems. "These things are not easy to pull off on a statewide basis. We need to do it in a careful way and plan for the unexpected."

Mr. Cohen of the AIR, which is working with Smarter Balanced to deliver adaptive pilot tests that adjust the difficulty of questions based on how well a student is answering them, said his organization's assessments are designed in a way that allows for glitches and gets students back on track when they occur.

"The tests need to be designed as online tests and not as paper tests," he said. "You recognize that the technology is going to fail somewhere, sometime, and you build the test to be robust."

Douglas Levin, the executive director of the State Educational Technology Directors Association, or SETDA, based in Glen Burnie, Md., added that there can be risks with paper tests, too, such as when floods washed out warehouses of tests in the past year, he said.

Even so, Mr. Levin—like Ms. Ritz in Indiana—said the recent problems with online testing were unacceptable.

While there's been an emphasis on getting districts technologically ready to administer online testing for the common core, he said, "there is a need for the assessment industry to ensure that it has the capacity to serve these larger numbers of kids with a quality of service that really has to be very high."

'Doubt and Uncertainty'

In the meantime, districts were just trying to deal with the logistical and emotional fallout from the online testing problems.

John Althardt, a spokesman for the 30,000-student Indianapolis public schools, said students in 50 buildings experienced testing disruptions, and the district was just focusing on getting through the testing cycle before thinking about how to proceed in the future.

"Some of our folks would say they're ready to go back and use stone tablets at this point," Mr. Althardt said.

In Oklahoma, Superintendent Keith Ballard of the 42,000-student Tulsa public schools, said in a statement that the testing problems were "nothing short of disastrous," adding that the district would be forced to invalidate at least 460 tests.

Ms. Pemberton of the Oklahoma education department said all students will have an opportunity to retake the tests if they want to. Those who scored enough to receive a proficient grade on the tests do not need to retake them, even if they did not finish.

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But the logistics of extending the testing window and retesting students are significant.

In the Oklahoma City system, for instance, one middle school had bused its students to a local university because the school lacked enough devices for students to take the online tests.

Education observers will be watching whether the spate of problems helps prepare both districts and testing companies for the online common-core tests.

Mr. Levin of SETDA said the testing problems will provide an additional argument for opponents of the common core.

"There are people who, for all sorts of reasons, are looking for ammunition to spread fear and doubt and uncertainty about the implementation of common core overall," Mr. Levin said. "I wouldn't be surprised if this ends up among the arrows in their quiver."

Education Week Assistant Editors Sean Cavanagh and Michele McNeil contributed to this report.

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EDUCATION WEEK

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'Personalized Learning' Varies for Race to Top Districts

By Michele McNeil

The 16 **Race to the Top** district winners, pushed by \$400 million in federal grants that put a premium on personalized learning, are embarking on vastly different makeovers of the classroom experience—from districtwide approaches to a narrower blueprint focused on middle school math.

Despite the divergent approaches, a review of the winning applications shows those districts are tapping similar tactics: mobile devices and individualized learning plans for students, personalized learning coaches for teachers, and data dashboards that collect all student learning information in one place.

What's more, many of the districts are embracing the philosophy that learning isn't defined by time spent in class, but by mastery of a particular subject or lesson.

For example, the Middletown city school district in New York is piloting a policy in which elementary students advance to the next grade when they show mastery of grade-level standards. In Carson City, Nev., high school students who master their high school subjects in the middle of the year can move right into earning college credit.

Last year's grant contest was the first time the U.S. Department of Education used its signature Race to the Top brand to try to push for education redesign at the local level, specifically around personalized learning.

In putting the grant money up for grabs by districts, federal officials sketched out a broad definition of what they wanted in a personalized learning environment: one in which educators used data and 21st-century tools—such as mobile devices and "learning algorithms"—to customize instruction to the needs of individual students.

The original Race to the Top competition, launched with money from the 2009 federal economic-stimulus measure, was considered successful in getting states to adopt certain policies favored by the Obama

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Making It Personal

As part of last year's Race to the Top contest for districts, applicants had to design a four-year plan that would

administration, such as charter school expansion and teacher evaluations tied to student academic growth. But it remains unclear how successful the district iteration, funded through fiscal 2012 congressional appropriations, will be, experts in personalized learning say.

"What Race to Top does best is change the fundamental condition under which school happens—whether that's policy or market conditions," said Michael B. Horn, the education executive director of the Innosight Institute, a San Mateo, Calif.-based think tank that promotes personalized learning. "But when Race to the Top delves into operations of school districts," he said, "that's a whole other matter."

But if nothing else, Mr. Horn said, the latest Race to the Top has "elevated student-centric learning onto the radar."

Local Leaders

In December, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced the 16 district winners, which include three charter school districts, two educational cooperatives, one large urban district (Miami-Dade County in Florida), and 10 midsize districts. Grants ranged from \$10 million to \$40 million. Mr. Duncan and his staff have hailed the portfolio of winning districts as leaders in upending the traditional school experience.

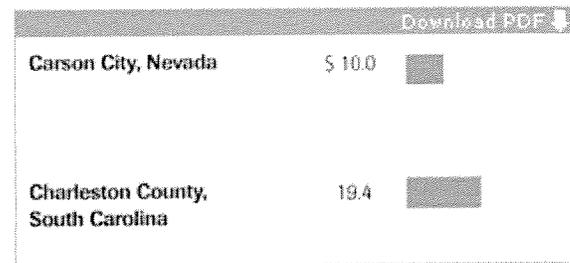
Most of the winning districts plan to buy new technology with their grants. In fact, a review of the project budgets for those districts shows that at least \$77 million of the \$400 million total will be spent on technology—from iPads to additional bandwidth for schools. For example:

- The 12,000-student Metropolitan School District of Warren Township in Indianapolis will buy 6,750 new iPads so elementary and middle school students can, among other activities, keep up to date on their progress toward academic goals.
- In Guilford County, N.C., each of the district's 17,000 students use hand-held devices to access digital content, a new online learning platform, instructional software, and subscriptions to various services.
- The 345,000-student Miami-Dade system will offer 30 new laptops for students in its highly individualized middle school math program to take home.
- And elementary students in New York's 7,000-student Middletown district, which has budgeted for half its \$10 million grant on new devices, will share 40 new Google Chrome netbooks.

And even in districts that don't plan to buy iPads or other tablets for students, the goal is the same: expand Internet access so students have more opportunity to learn outside the physical boundaries of a school.

Green River's Approach

personalize learning for students. Through programs and technology, the 16 winners approach personalized learning in different ways.



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education; Individual District Applications

The Green River Educational Cooperative in Kentucky, which encompasses 112 schools and 59,311 students in rural parts of the state, will use its grant to put Wi-Fi on buses so students can learn during long rides to and from school. Eventually, the cooperative wants to expand access to churches and businesses—an acknowledgment that in sparsely populated areas, Internet access in each student's home is no guarantee.

But Green River's plan clearly states that it is "not a technology initiative."

One of its primary components aims to spark a culture shift in students by making them more responsible for their own learning.

Students will start to align their learning and goals with career aspirations even in the early grades.

"I'm not talking about making Einsteins out of 3-year-olds," said George Wilson, the executive director of the Green River cooperative. "It's about having them say: 'What I do now matters about my future.' "

In Charleston County, S.C., a new digital learning platform will serve as one-stop shopping for all student data so parents, teachers, and students can track academic progress.

"One of the most important things we're pushing is students owning their learning," said Lisa Herring, the associate superintendent for academic and instructional support for the 45,000-student district. "But that also does not minimize the very important role of the teacher."

Getting students engaged in their own learning—and allowing them to pursue their own interests—is a common strategy of the winning districts.

The 24,400-student Harmony public schools, a charter school network in Texas, has designed a "custom day" with two hours of flextime for students to receive remediation in math or English/language arts, take advanced classes in those subjects, or pursue electives.

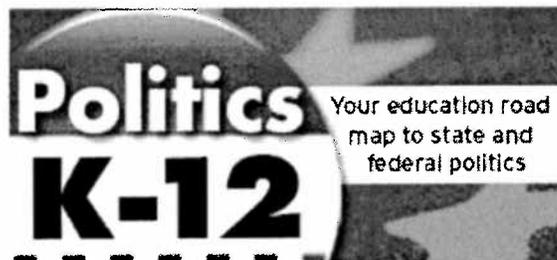
The Iredell-Statesville district in North Carolina gives students 30 minutes of "SWAG time" (shorthand for one high school's Supporting Warriors to Achieve Greatness program) to pursue personal interests—learning to play the guitar or practicing French, for example.

That is just a small part of a much more comprehensive approach to customized learning, district officials say.

"I think the biggest change is the way instruction is delivered. This is a major culture shift," said Melanie Taylor, an associate superintendent of the 20,000-student Iredell-Statesville schools.

Making the change means incorporating digital learning into the classroom, but it also means using "blended learning coaches" in each building who can help Iredell-Statesville teachers use new technology and smaller-group instruction in their daily lessons.

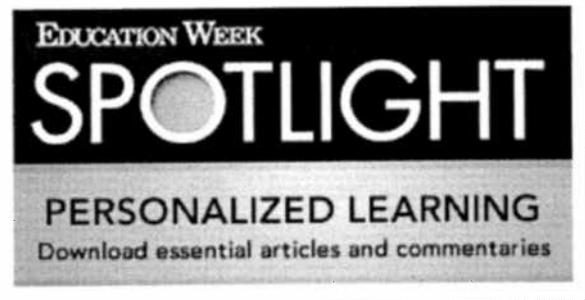
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"There's less lecture, less students sitting in desk. There will be more of a rotation around project-based learning and small-group instruction, and more work happening on a device," said Kelly Marcy, the executive director of student services. "More subtle will be that the teacher is the leader."

Coverage of "deeper learning" that will prepare students with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in a rapidly changing world is supported in part by a grant from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, at www.hewlett.org.



Vol. 32, Issue 26, Pages 1,16-17

EDUCATION WEEK

Published Online: March 11, 2013

Published in Print: March 13, 2013, as **Next Stage for Testing Envisioned**

Commission Calls for 'Radically Different' Tests

Panel offers a 10-year plan

By Sarah D. Sparks

Emerging technology and research on learning have the potential to dramatically improve assessments, if educators and policymakers take a more balanced approach to using them.

That's the conclusion of two years of analysis by the Gordon Commission on the Future of Assessment in Education, a panel of top education research and policy experts that was launched in 2011 with initial funding from the Educational Testing Service.

In a report that was set for release this week, the commission lays out a **10-year plan for states to develop systems of assessment** that go beyond identifying student achievement for accountability purposes and toward improving classroom instruction and giving greater insight into how children learn.

Joanne Weiss, the chief of staff to U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan but not part of the commission, said the report "shines a needed spotlight on the future of assessment, pushing us to make the next stages of this vital work coherent, coordinated, and sustainable."

"When we get assessment right, it helps families, teachers, schools, and systems tailor learning to students' needs and make wise decisions," Ms. Weiss said in a statement. "Today, we stand on the cusp of the biggest advances in assessment in a generation, with assessments that are more useful and less intrusive, thanks in part to advances in education technology."

At a time when student performance on state tests is used to judge everything from teacher effectiveness to school improvement to a high school senior's right to a diploma, many in the education world have been pushing hard for better assessments.

Interest in the so-called "next generation" assessments being developed for the Common Core State Standards is so high that last summer visitors **crashed the Internet servers of the**

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Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, or PARCC, one of the consortia developing the tests, when it posted sample test items.

Not 'Revolutionary'

Both PARCC and the Smarter Balanced Assessment consortium are building computer-based testing systems accompanied by benchmarking tools to help guide instruction. However, the Gordon Commission says the common-core tests planned for rollout in the academic year 2014-15, "while significant, will be far from what is ultimately needed for either accountability or classroom instructional-improvement purposes."

The common-assessment consortia "are trying hard to reform what we currently do, and the commission has been thinking about revolutionary change," said Edmund W. Gordon, the commission's chairman and a professor emeritus of psychology at Yale University and Teachers College, Columbia University.

"Assessment has been almost hung up on a commitment to help account for status and to use those assessments of prior achievements to hold individuals and systems accountable," Mr. Gordon said in an interview.

By contrast, the commission argues that future educators should use systems of aligned assessments, which would inform instruction through a balance of fine-grained classroom diagnostic tests, challenging tasks and projects, and even **analytic tools to sift through background data** produced by students in the classroom or online.

Such tools would be used in conjunction with larger-grained accountability tests, which are administered less frequently and tend to have too long a turnaround time to be used to help teachers.

For example, middle school students learning to subtract mixed numbers might use several different methods and substeps to solve different types of problems within that unit, and a teacher might give multiple formative tests on the subject. Formative tests are diagnostic tools that measure a student's growth in an academic area over time. In contrast, summative tests provide a snapshot of student achievement at a specific point and are more commonly used for accountability.

"It makes a lot of sense to check along the way to see where your kids are doing well and getting hung up," said Robert J. Mislevy, a member of the commission and the chairman in measurement and statistics at the Princeton, N.J.-based ETS, which has helped design the National Assessment of Educational Progress, the SAT, Advanced Placement tests, and other well-known exams.

But in an accountability test, he said, a state education chief may need only a representative sample of students to be given a handful of mixed-number-subtraction problems to get a picture of how well the state's students understand that area.

"To have 20 or 30 problems for every 5th grader to take—that's a waste of time," Mr. Mislevy said.

Assessment Council

Roy Pea, a professor of education and learning sciences at Stanford University, who was not part of the commission, agreed that tests developed for accountability purposes "largely ignore" the need for formative diagnostic tests used to improve instruction.

"There are boundless benefits to endorsing [the commission's] proposal of transforming assessment to render it for education so as to inform and guide daily progress in learning and development, supporting education's primary learning and teaching processes with richer pedagogies informed by the learning sciences," he said in a statement.

The commission calls for states to create a permanent "council on educational assessments," modeled on the Education Commission of the States and supported with a small tax on sales of tests.

The council would, among other tasks, evaluate the effectiveness of the common-core assessments; help set performance-level benchmarks for cross-state tests; provide professional development for teachers and the public on how to use different tests; and develop and study policies and protocols to protect students' privacy while allowing the use of assessment data for research.

The Gordon commission also urges that the next iteration of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act—the federal government's centerpiece education law, currently called the No Child Left Behind Act—encourage states and districts to experiment with new, even "radically different" forms of assessments.

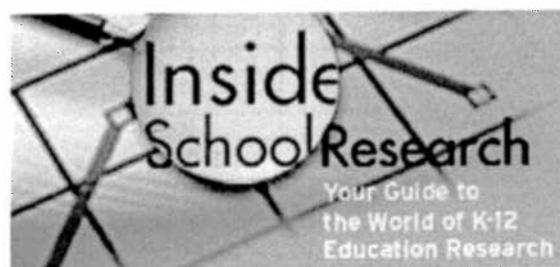
For example, Mr. Mislevy pointed to diagnostic systems now used in computer-based programs such as Carnegie Learning and Khan Academy, in which students work through individual topics at their own pace, taking brief tests of their mastery along the way, with feedback delivered to the student and teacher on individual processes or misconceptions that cause the student problems.

The panel members also advocate developing more tools to collect information as students work through a task in the classroom, in the same way that some programs are beginning to analyze background data generated by students working online.

"It's assessment, not testing per se," said Jim Pellegrino, a co-chairman of the commission and a co-director of the Learning Sciences Research Institute at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Rather than trying to build a single test that will cover content and other cognitive competencies, Mr. Pellegrino envisioned, for example, giving teams of students a series of challenging mathematics problems to tackle as a group, and then observing both their ultimate answer and how they collaborate to solve it.

"That's how you get these other dimensions of competence into the picture, but it's very difficult to create a single test," he said. "It's why a dropped-in-from-the-sky accountability test, no matter how well designed, can't give you everything you want to know about the competencies of students."

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At the Margins

Mr. Mislevy of the ETS said he believes the biggest assessment breakthroughs will come at the margins, through individual groups like Carnegie and Khan, rather than the "big machine" of the federal and state testing industries.

"And maybe that's OK," he said. "Making things happen in the big machine is hard. You need to be more quick, nimble, easy to fail. The big machine doing it all at once is a bad place to try new things and fail at scale."

The commission acknowledges that its paper does not grapple with several big hurdles in developing more-comprehensive assessment systems, among them the cost of developing complex test items and the widely disparate digital infrastructures of the schools that would use the tests.

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EDUCATION WEEK

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Published in Print: May 8, 2013, as **Rifts Deepen Over Direction of Education Policy in U.S.**

Includes correction(s): May 8, 2013

Rifts Deepen Over Direction of Ed. Policy in U.S.

By Michele McNeil

In statehouses and cities across the country, battles are raging over the direction of education policy—from the standards that will shape what students learn to how test results will be used to judge a teacher's performance. [Back to Story](#)

Students and teachers, in passive resistance, are refusing to take and give standardized tests. Protesters have marched to the White House over what they see as the privatization of the nation's schools. Professional and citizen lobbyists are packing hearings in state capitols to argue that the federal government is trying to dictate curricula through the use of common standards.

New advocacy groups, meanwhile, are taking their fight city to city by pouring record sums of money into school board races.

Not since the battles over school desegregation has the debate about public education been so intense and polarized, observers say, for rarely before has an institution that historically is slow to change been forced to deal with so much change at once.

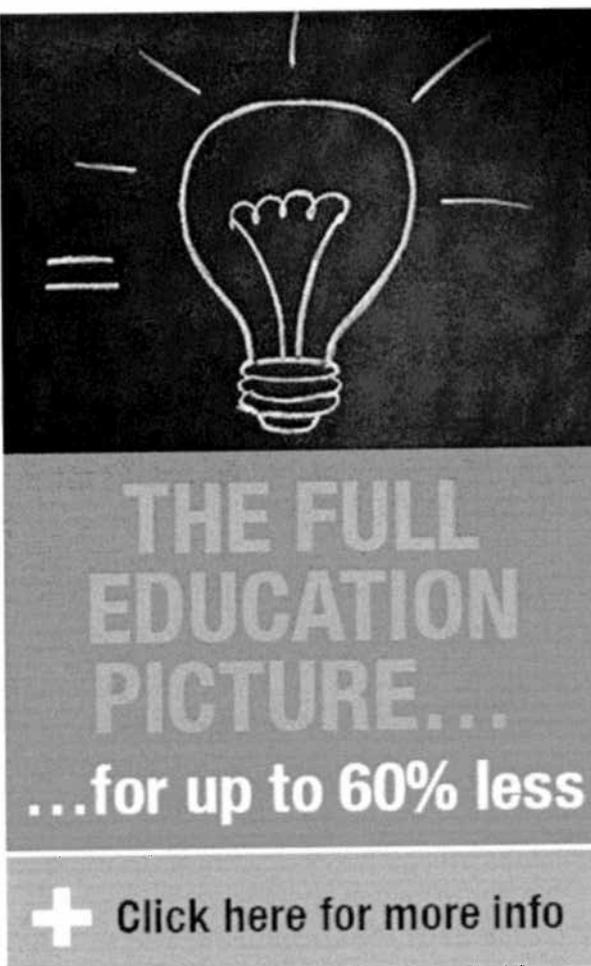
Forty-six states and the District of Columbia are implementing the **Common Core State Standards**, and nearly as many are developing common tests that are expected to debut in 2014-15.

More than three dozen states are working on incorporating student test scores into evaluations of teachers and principals.

And a majority of states are creating new accountability systems as part of the flexibility federal officials are offering through No Child Left Behind Act waivers.

All this change—and more—in education is happening against a backdrop of rapidly shifting demographics, technology that is changing lives at blazing speeds, and an economy still recovering from the Great Recession.

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At the same time, education is caught in a push for state and federal budget austerity and faces a Congress so gripped by gridlock that some educators are wondering if the withering Elementary and Secondary Education Act will ever get rewritten.

"As the country has become more polarized and the inability to compromise has become seen as a badge of honor, it shouldn't be a surprise that we'd see a more polemical debate in education, because it reflects the rest of the country," said Joshua Starr, the superintendent of schools in Montgomery County, Md.

Though he supports the "right" standardized tests, Mr. Starr has become something of a hero to the anti-testing movement after calling in December for a three-year moratorium on standardized testing until the common core is fully in place.

"I've got a big mouth, and I'm not afraid to open it. One of the things that concerns me is not enough practitioners speak up publicly," he said.

As policymakers, "we are not focused on the actual problems," he said. "We still fall into this quick-fix, silver-bullet mentality."

Unusual Alignments

For historians, today's debates are reminiscent of the development of the system of common schools in the early 19th century, and the centralization of city schools in the early 20th century.

"Every school reform has been about centralization or decentralization, and this is the first wave of federal centralization," said Jonathan Zimmerman, a professor of history and education at New York University, pointing to the No Child Left Behind Act, signed into law in 2002, and federal support for common standards and tests. "Now we're waiting to see ... whether there's a rebellion against it."

These movements spark such intense feelings, Mr. Zimmerman said, because people are so intimately connected to their schools.

"Some of the 'corporate' rhetoric is about, 'Who are you, Bill Gates, and who are you, Eli Broad, with your big stack of bills coming in and telling us how to improve our schools?'" Mr. Zimmerman said, pointing to the leaders of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Broad Foundation, which are major philanthropies that work in education.

The fault lines in today's current education policy landscape don't fall neatly along typical partisan—or ideological—divides.

Skeptics and outright opponents of such measures as the common standards and high-stakes common tests include, on the left, progressives who are fierce defenders of the public schools against what they see as corporate interests and, on the



NEW YORK: Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo and legislative leaders leave a news conference at the Capitol in Albany. If New York City can't reach a deal on teacher evaluations, Mr. Cuomo says the state will impose one.
—Mike Groll/AP-File

right, staunch conservatives who think the federal government has reached too far into local schooling.

The resulting coincidental coalitions include the progressive activists of **Parents Across America** and champions of limited government at the **Heritage Foundation**.

Even as antipathy to the common core fosters some otherwise unlikely alignments, support for charter schools and so-called "parent trigger" laws brings together many Democrats and Republicans in the name of more choice and power for parents.

The lineup on the side of such proposals includes long-standing and new advocacy groups like **Stand for Children**, **Democrats for Education Reform**, and **StudentsFirst** (founded by former District of Columbia Schools Chancellor Michelle A. Rhee). And it features such influential conservative groups as the **American Legislative Exchange Council**.

Critics of market-oriented approaches, such as the education historian Diane Ravitch, assail "corporate reformers" and their ideas for sparking what she calls an unprecedented effort to privatize public education through school closings, voucher programs, and charter schools.

Such efforts are not helping boost student achievement, she argues. Instead, she and others want more emphasis on civics and the arts, more school funding and community wraparound services, and smaller class sizes.

"There have been many debates about how to fix and how to improve public schools; these debates have gone on since 1900," Ms. Ravitch said. "But now the debate is about privatizing public schools. This is different in every respect."

Today's education debates are different, but for different reasons, others contend.

Paul Manna, an associate professor of government at the College of William and Mary, said, for instance, that major players such as companies and foundations have emerged from the sidelines because of the sheer size and nature of the challenges confronting the country.

"The stakes are higher," Mr. Manna said, referring to the rapidly changing economy and the crucial need to prepare students for college and careers.

What's more, he said, the influx of new immigrants, which is shaking up the U.S. demographic mix, has been profound.

"There's an astonishing transition that's underway," he said.

Indiana might be ground zero for too much happening too fast.

Tony Bennett, a Republican, was elected superintendent of public instruction in 2008 and used his four years in office to usher in big changes—from implementing the nation's most expansive tuition-voucher program to creating a new A-F school grading system. He was also a major champion of the common

standards, approved by the state board of education in 2010.

He was booted out of office after just one term, losing to Democrat Glenda Ritz, a common-standards skeptic, in a surprising about-face for a state whose voters tilt to the GOP.

And now, state lawmakers have voted to slow down implementation of the common core in a bill that was headed last week to the desk of Gov. Mike Pence.

"I don't care what they're called. Good standards should be in place," said Ms. Ritz, who is particularly concerned about the quality of the common math standards. "There's a dialogue in the education community here about the standards themselves. That dialogue did not get to happen in 2010."

'More Screaming'

Elsewhere, policy issues and proposed changes are provoking angry responses locally that then reverberate nationally.

In Chicago, parent and teacher groups are protesting plans to close a record 53 schools. In Charlotte, N.C., and Providence, R.I., students, parents, and other activists have dressed up as zombies to protest standardized testing. Teachers in a Seattle high school in January refused to give district tests.

Blogs and Twitter have helped carry those messages beyond those particular cities.

"There's vastly more screaming in every imaginable medium," said Chester E. Finn Jr., the president of the **Thomas B. Fordham Institute**, a Washington think tank that favors charter schools, as well as common academic standards and testing.

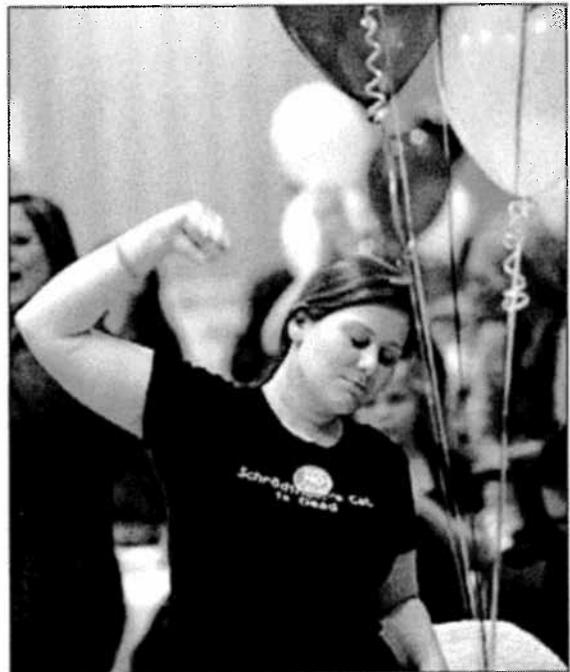
Local school board races, which usually draw little attention, are now on the front lines—including in Los Angeles, New Orleans, and Nashville, Tenn. Groups such as StudentsFirst and large donors such as former New York City Schools Chancellor Joel I. Klein have invested large amounts in selected local races. (Big-money candidates haven't always won.)

"They've either promoted or bought into the theory that if you just shake things up, things will get better," Randi Weingarten, the president of the **American Federation of Teachers**, itself a force in politics at all levels, said of such players. "But instead of addressing the issues head-on, they fight."

Just last week, Ms. Weingarten, in a speech in New York City, called for a temporary halt to all high stakes tied to the common core to give educators time to implement the standards.

Issues Obscured?

The rhetoric around these fights is becoming sharp, even personal.



IDAHO: Jane Miceli, whose husband, Tim Miceli, teaches math at Nampa High School in Boise, celebrates the defeat in November of ballot measures on technology and teacher performance pay at an election party.

—Darin Oswald/The Idaho Statesman/AP-File

In Alabama, one critic of the common standards warned state lawmakers that the federal government was developing technology to read students' faces during tests to determine what they ate at home, according to media coverage of a legislative hearing.

During a rally in front of the U.S. Department of Education's headquarters last month, a Miami-Dade County, Fla., teacher leading an effort to get parents and students to "opt out" of standardized testing leveled a racial insult—from the main stage—against Ms. Rhee, who is Asian-American.

"I fully understand the sentiment that is coming from parents and teachers and schools around the frustration with testing," Ms. Rhee said in an interview. "But the bottom line is, the answer is in the middle. Tests are not evil. That reasonable point of view is what gets lost."

She added: "Let's not turn this into a debate about how I want to corporatize education. The polarization is not helping."

As he addressed the American Educational Research Association in San Francisco last week, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan was booed for his stands on a number of issues, including testing. The next day, he got a warm reception at a "summit" of the NewSchools Venture Fund, which raises money from philanthropies to seed education entrepreneurs, charter organizations among them.

The problem is that "the legitimate debate about these issues—and there is one—gets lost," said Chris Minnich, the executive director of the Council of Chief State School Officers, which helped lead the initiative that produced the common standards.

The role of private philanthropies in promoting education policies and initiatives has also been a flashpoint.

Educators and activists point, for example, to the Gates Foundation, which has helped drive teacher-effectiveness programs and common standards, and the Walton Family Foundation, which has funded charter schools and groups that advocate parent-trigger laws.

Education Week, a publication of the nonprofit Editorial Projects in Education, has been criticized for receiving grant support from Gates, which currently helps underwrite coverage of the education industry and K-12 innovation, and Walton, which helps support coverage of parent empowerment. (The newspaper retains sole control of the content of that coverage, its editors emphasize.)

To be sure, the pace of change accelerated when President Barack Obama took office and put Mr. Duncan, a former Chicago schools CEO, at the helm of the Education Department.

Armed with nearly \$100 billion in education aid from the 2009 economic-stimulus package passed by Congress, Secretary Duncan used \$4 billion to entice



CHICAGO: Maria Llanos, left, watches her daughter, Xochilt Fernandez, hug a classmate at Lafayette

states into embracing common standards, charter schools, and teacher evaluations tied to student test scores through his Race to the Top contest.

School at the end of the day. Lafayette is on the list of schools the district plans to close as part of a cost-cutting effort opponents say will disproportionately affect minority children.
—Charles Rex Arbogast/AP-File

He's advanced that general platform more recently by granting states waivers from compliance with many of the core tenets of the NCLB law if they adopt the Obama administration's preferred improvement ideas—even as education research paints a mixed picture about whether such measures as charter schools and merit pay have much effect on student learning.

For supporters of those ideas, a frequent argument is that the "status quo" isn't working either.

In an interview, Mr. Duncan shrugged his shoulders at the backlash against high-stakes testing and common standards, declaring that "if a state wants to dummy down standards, they have every right to do that."

His ideas for improving education—from tying teacher evaluations to student test results to embracing charter schools—have clashed head-on with many who gave President Obama major political support. Like unions.

"You have to give credit to President Obama and Secretary Duncan. They challenged their core constituency," said Patricia Levesque, the CEO of the Foundation for Excellence in Education, an advocacy organization started by former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush.

"But you also have so many governors who made education reform a priority ... and the growth of education advocacy groups," she said. "There's a lot more bipartisanship on education."

Scope of Dissatisfaction

If Ms. Ravitch—one of education's most prominent speakers and writers—is the face of the progressive, anti-corporate reform movement, then Pearson has become the face of the antagonist.

The giant testing and publishing company, based in London and New York City, is being hammered over what some educators and activists see as its undue influence on teaching, learning, and testing.

In one recent example, in Texas, critics upset in part with Pearson are trying to persuade lawmakers to scale back standardized testing in a state that served as inspiration for the NCLB law.

"Our social mission as a company and everything we do is about improving people's lives through learning. The public trust is fundamental," said Shilpi Niyogi, the executive vice president for public affairs at Pearson. "So we absolutely take the protests and the concerns and the level of anxiety out there very seriously."

From the Archives

Previously in *Education Week*...

"Obama Echoes Bush on Education Ideas," April 8, 2009

He's hitting similar themes as his predecessor on issues such as accountability and teacher quality—and drawing some fire.

"In War of Words, 'Reform' a Potent Weapon," March 2, 2011

Key phrases provide powerful shorthand for those with a particular policy bent.

"Frustrated Educators Aim to Build Grassroots Movement," June 15, 2011

Organizers of the Washington march say U.S. policymakers are moving in the wrong

Whether these education debates are taking place only on the fringes or among policy elites, or represent a growing, broader backlash, is unclear.

Polls paint a complicated picture of teacher sentiment, for example. On the one hand, there is evidence morale is low. Just 39 percent of teachers reported being "very satisfied with their jobs," down 23 percentage points in five years, according to the **2012 MetLife Survey of the American Teacher**.

But on the flip side, teachers give themselves high marks for their general well-being, ranking No. 2 behind physicians for their physical, emotional, and financial health, according to the **2013 Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index**. That means, for example, that teachers report having a lot of daily positive experiences.

While a majority of the public supports using student achievement as a factor in teacher evaluations, an even greater proportion reports having confidence in teachers in general, according to the **2012 Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup poll**.

As a more anecdotal indicator, a 2011 Save Our Schools rally in Washington—organized by educators and others unhappy with high-stakes testing and other policies—drew about 3,000 people, but subsequent protests drew far fewer. The "opt out" protest against standardized testing at the Education Department last month drew a couple dozen people.

Other Priorities

For Larry Ferlazzo, a teacher of English-learners in Sacramento, Calif., and many of his colleagues at Luther Burbank High School, the common core—in English/language arts and math—is accepted as the new way of doing things.

But, he said, "if you ask teachers and principals what [are] the most important things that can be done, new standards would not even make the top 20. How about social services, new technology, and time for teacher collaboration?"

For students and parents, at least in Mr. Ferlazzo's classroom, daily concerns are pretty basic. "They're more concerned about paying the rent this month," said Mr. Ferlazzo, who also writes a **blog for Education Week Teacher**.

Jonah Edelman, who co-founded Stand for Children, agrees that parents, for the most part, have other fundamental concerns. He helps organize parents in states to support policies such as the common core, preschool funding, and new teacher evaluations—and the organization supports candidates in local and state elections.

direction to bring about school improvement.

"New Advocacy Groups Shaking Up Education Field,"^{May 16, 2012}

The organizations' influence over policy and politics appears to be growing, especially at the state and local levels.

"Relationship Between Advocacy Groups, Unions Uneasy,"^{May 23, 2012}

New organizations are jousting with teacher groups for influence on policy issues

"Pressure Mounts in Some States Against Common Core,"^{Feb. 6, 2013}

Opponents of the Common Core State Standards are ramping up pressure to get states to scale back—or even scrap—the effort, even as implementation moves ahead.

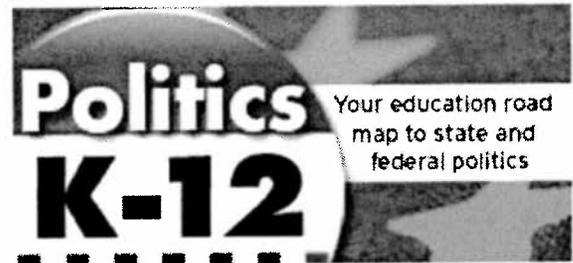
"At the parental level, there's less ferment," Mr. Edelman said. "The parents we work with want the same thing as all parents want. They want high-quality schools that will help their kids to be successful."

But more and more parents, who may not have the political clout of large unions or companies, are starting to get active.

"I do feel like we are at a point where large numbers of people are completely fed up," said Pamela Grundy, a parent of a 6th grader in Charlotte, N.C., and a co-founder of Parents Across America, which is fighting high-stakes testing and other "corporate reforms."

"The key is the money, which we don't have nearly as much of," she said. "We have to do more grassroots campaigns, and it takes more time."

Vol. 32, Issue 30, Pages 1,14-16

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EDUCATION WEEK

Published Online: March 26, 2013

Published in Print: March 27, 2013, as **States' Score Cards Pinpoint Problems of School Climate**

States Use School Score Cards to Target Climate Problems

By Nirvi Shah

Accountability isn't just for academics anymore.

In 11 states, a new score card for high schools has been designed to measure school climate in an attempt to put safety and discipline, student engagement, and students' connection to school on the same footing as their performance in mathematics and reading. The new report cards or indices—which must be posted online in an easy-to-find place—are based on a combination of student, staff-member, and parent perceptions of school climate and hard data on discipline, attendance, graduation, and dropout rates.

States are enacting the new measures with support from roughly \$37 million in **Safe and Supportive School**—or S3—grants won three years ago from the U.S. Department of Education.

"This project has brought climate to the forefront," said Kim Schanock, a social worker at West High School in Green Bay, Wis. She oversees the S3 grant project for all four of the Green Bay district's high schools.

While schools there and across the country may already have been addressing climate-related issues to an extent, academic initiatives driven by student-achievement data have always taken precedence in the past.

Balancing Priorities

Especially as states tackle the implementation of the **Common Core State Standards**, the balance between addressing the conditions necessary for students to learn and what students are actually learning has become more difficult to strike. The S3 grants aim to eliminate the need to prioritize one or the other.

Winning states chose high schools—about 400 in all—at which to administer anonymous climate surveys that ask about a collection of issues, such as whether students feel there is an adult they connect with on campus, if students have experienced or witnessed bullying, and if they have used drugs or alcohol recently. The states are now using the bulk of the grant money to

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implement specific evidence-based interventions to address the problems revealed by the surveys and the data on student discipline and graduation rates collected from the schools. Schools will give the surveys at least until the grant ends next school year. Some will be able to query their students annually now that the survey instruments have been developed, and in many states, the surveys are now available for any school to use, albeit without the money to respond to the findings.

Anonymous school climate surveys are not new, nor is the separate tracking of school discipline statistics, though for years, the two sets of information were collected and circulated in independent orbits. Typically in the past, those data were used to inform officials about what needed to stop occurring at their schools or were collected but not acted on.

The Safe and Supportive School grant work is intended to help schools continue to dissuade students from making poor choices and behaving improperly, and also to promote measures that are working, said David Osher. He is the principal investigator at the **National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments**, which is overseeing the grant program, and a vice president of the American Institutes for Research, in Washington, where he is an expert on school climate.

"It's that subtle but not unimportant difference between not staying home [from school] because you're scared but wanting to be there because it's an exciting, supportive place," Mr. Osher said. "It's really understanding that what you want to do is create emotionally safe and supportive conditions in school so people work together better and learn better together."

In recent testimony before a U.S. House of Representatives committee about school safety, Mr. Osher noted that in the 3½ months since the **massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn.**, he has been collaborating with other branches of the federal Education Department that address school safety and emergency response.

"That work doesn't begin and end with preventing a horrible thing from happening," he said. When students feel comfortable talking to adults at their schools, they are more likely to share information about planned events of violence, episodes of bullying, and other issues that can affect school safety.

"This [grant program] was the first attempt at this benchmark—really measuring in some tangible way—school climate, and then blending that with incident data like attendance, referrals, suspensions, then saying, 'Here are areas that need to be addressed,' " said Sandy

Grant-Supported Interventions

Eleven states were awarded federal Safe and Supportive School grants in 2010. They must spend 80 percent of their grant money on interventions at low-performing high schools to address concerns raised by school climate surveys and student-suspension and -behavior data.

ARIZONA	\$5.9 million
CALIFORNIA	\$2.2 million
IOWA	\$3.5 million
KANSAS	\$2.4 million
LOUISIANA	\$3.2 million
MARYLAND	\$3.1 million
MICHIGAN	\$6.0 million
SOUTH CAROLINA	\$1.7 million
TENNESSEE	\$3.3 million
WEST VIRGINIA	\$2.2 million
WISCONSIN	\$3.5 million

Note: Dollar amounts are rounded.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education

Keenan Williamson, the director of the National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments.

Surprising Findings

The competitive S3 grants replaced larger, formula-based chunks of money that every state received in the past for enhancing school safety and drug prevention. Another indication of how much the federal government values school climate endeavors: In **the plan to improve school and community safety** that President Barack Obama unveiled after the Newtown shootings, he recommended a \$50 million initiative to help 8,000 schools train teachers and other staff members to implement evidence-based strategies to improve school climate, among other proposals. The president said his administration also will devise a school climate survey designed to provide reliable data to help schools implement policies to improve climate.

A few of the 11 state S3 grantees have a long history of using a tool to measure student and staff perceptions of school climate, including California and Kansas. For other grant-winning states, such as West Virginia, the survey process was entirely new.

At some participating schools, administrators suspected one thing was a problem yet found students saw something else to be an issue.

"There were a lot of surprises," said Andrea Alexander, the specialist for school climate initiatives in Maryland who oversees that state's S3 program. "People are learning things from this data."

A number of schools have found that problems are best addressed by instituting a formal anti-bullying program or training teachers in restorative practices to work on changing students' behavior. Many schools are **adopting Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports**, or PBIS, which addresses both student behavior and students' engagement in school, or pieces of that approach.

Changing Policies

For example, in Maryland, Ms. Alexander said, some schools are taking cues from PBIS by asking teachers or other staff members to check in with particular students every morning to see how they are doing and do so again before school lets out. In other cases, teachers have been asked to mentor students who seem disengaged or disconnected. The grant provides money for a stipend for those teachers.

At schools in Arizona with large numbers of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions, administrators

Scoring Student Perceptions

The states asked students, staff members, and parents an array of questions that were answered anonymously. The results factored into schools' climate scores and were the basis for interventions. Among the questions:

CALIFORNIA

Answer one of the following:
not at all true, a little true, pretty much true, or very much true.

At my school, there is a teacher or some other adult ...

1. Who really cares about me.
2. Who tells me when I do a good job.
3. Who notices when I'm not there.
4. Who always wants me to do my best.
5. Who listens to me when I have something to say.
6. Who believes that I will be a success.

IOWA

Answer strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree to the following:

1. Students in my school treat each other with respect.
2. Students have friends at school they can turn to if they have questions about homework.
3. Students have friends at school they can

have changed their procedures to cut down on disciplinary actions that eject students from school.

"Suspensions were being handed out very loosely," said Jean Ajamie, the director of school safety and prevention for the Arizona education department, "as though that's going to change behavior and help that student." At these schools, the intervention—an overhaul of school disciplinary procedures—"is a reduction in the problem behavior of the administration."

Out-of-school suspension rates are dropping in some schools already, she said, a first step toward improving student engagement and, in the long run, academic performance.

At other schools, formal intervention efforts are being coupled with very small changes that administrators believe could have a profound effect on students' school experience—or that students have asked for specifically.

Students at one Louisiana high school, for example, reported that they simply wanted their teachers to occasionally offer them a smile, so now, teachers make a point to do that. At another, teachers occasionally send postcards to parents about positive school moments, connecting with those who are used to hearing nothing from the school or only hearing something when there's a problem.

Teachers in some of the Green Bay schools, Ms. Schanock said, are being trained in a classroom-management model, and school aides who monitor the hallways and cafeterias, escort students around campus, and stand watch in study halls are being trained in calming a situation in which a student may begin behaving improperly. The training was a direct result of a close examination of schools' out-of-school suspension data.

"Our most frontline staff often have the least training," Ms. Schanock said.

As a result of the grant program, some schools have also invested in additional supports for students moving from middle to high school, a time when many can become lost in the shuffle and begin skipping school, falling behind, and ultimately, dropping out.

Others have created youth-leadership teams to attract students who aren't naturally inclined to be involved in school activities.

"We wanted students [who were] experiencing specific barriers to their education," said Cyndy Erickson, a consultant to the Iowa education department who oversees state's grant. These teams may include teenage parents, students with

trust and talk to if they have problems.

4. Students generally work well with each other even if they're not in the same group of friends.

5. Students have friends at school to eat lunch with.

6. Students try to make new students feel welcome in the school.

MARYLAND

Answer strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree to the following:

1. *I feel safe...*

___ At this school.

___ Going to and from this school.

2. *How do you usually get to and from school?*

___ Walk/bike/skateboard

___ Ride the bus

___ Ride in a car driven by a parent

___ Drive yourself

SOURCES: California, Iowa, and Maryland Education Departments

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disabilities, and students who had dropped out of school.

While every Iowa school involved in the program faces different issues, student engagement—or a lack of it—showed up as a factor nearly everywhere. The student teams can advise administrators about student needs, Ms. Erickson said, and simultaneously, they can build relationships with

adults at their schools, another critical area of need illuminated by the climate surveys. And as in other states, schools are asking teachers to make an effort to get to know students better, greeting them in the morning and wading into the hallways during class changes.

"It's not necessarily a special program," she said. "It's just those simple things."

Coverage of school climate and student behavior and engagement is supported in part by grants from the Atlantic Philanthropies, the NoVo Foundation, the Raikes Foundation, and the California Endowment.



An examination
of school culture
and student well-being

RULES FOR ENGAGEMENT

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EDUCATION WEEK

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Arizona Weighing 'Performance Funding' for Schools

Governor backs the model

By Sean Cavanagh

Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer is backing an unusual effort [← Back to Story](#) to tie a relatively small portion of school funding to districts' performance on the state's A-F grading system, a step her administration argues will create a monetary hook for school improvement.

Legislation that would establish a performance-based funding model is **in play** in the Republican-controlled legislature. But the primary vehicle for the plan, if it goes forward, is likely to be the budget negotiated by Gov. Brewer and state lawmakers, according to the governor's office.

The Republican governor spelled out the idea in her **budget proposal** for the coming year, saying the goal was to reward schools for both high achievement and improvement and "promote local innovation and competition and enhance student performance at every school." As described in the governor's plans, local education agencies could earn "per-pupil achievement payments" by securing enough points on the state's grading scale to get a mark of A, B, or C. Arizona is one of a number of states where A-F grading systems, pioneered in Florida, have taken hold.

A second pool of incentive money would go to schools that improved their scores in the state's grading system. The Brewer administration, saying that it recognizes the challenges in improving the lowest-performing schools, wants a higher per-pupil "improvement payment" to go to local education agencies that make progress from a D or F grade.

A majority of the funding for the program would come from money moved from other parts of the budget, rather than reallocated aid from K-12, said Dale Frost, the governor's education adviser.

In the first year of the initiative, for instance, the program would receive \$54 million, \$36 million of which would be new money, rather than reallocated education funding. Also in the

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first year, the performance system would account for 1 percent of the state's overall education funding formula.

Local education agencies—which would include districts and charter schools—would be given flexibility in deciding how to spend money coming to them through performance funding, according to the governor's office.

Winner-Loser System?

The Arizona Education Association **opposes the measure**, saying in an analysis that the system would reallocate money from state K-12 schools that are already struggling financially, and create a "winner-loser performance-funding system."

The union pointed to an **analysis** by an associate professor at Arizona State University, David Garcia, who concluded that the achievement-funding model would favor wealthier school systems.

Andrew Morrill, the president of the Arizona Education Association, said that the union has a history of supporting performance-funding measures, but that given the recent funding cuts in education, the legislation would pose a hardship Arizona schools don't need.

If enacted, the proposal would increase the funding inequities across public schools, said Mr. Morrill. Districts would be asked to reapportion their funding in exchange for a small amount of performance-based aid from the state. That system, heavily tied to standardized-test scores, would penalize schools with high numbers of students living in poverty, Mr. Morrill said.

Mr. Frost, the governor's adviser, disputed Mr. Garcia's conclusion. He said it failed to fully account for the way the funding system was weighted to help academically struggling school systems, many of which were disadvantaged economically.

Editorial Intern Victoria O'Dea contributed to this article.

Coverage of entrepreneurship and innovation in education and school design is supported in part by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

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EDUCATION WEEK

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Texas Trying to Scale Back Graduation Mandates

Fewer tests, core courses proposed

By Erik W. Robelen

Leading Texas lawmakers are working to rewrite the state's **high school graduation requirements** with plans to change the default course of study and lower from 15 to five the number of end-of-course exams most students must pass to earn a diploma.

Proponents call the legislative effort a reasonable approach to reduce testing and give students more flexibility in selecting high school courses. But critics, including some Texas business leaders and national advocacy groups, argue that it represents a step backward for a state they see as being in the vanguard nationally in setting policies to better prepare young people, especially low-income and minority students, for college and careers.

Some observers say the plans would take Texas in the opposite direction of states that have worked to ratchet up their graduation requirements and embrace end-of-course exams.

The legislation, approved last week by the Texas House of Representatives in a landslide vote, would replace the state's "recommended" high school pathway—popularly known as "4x4"—under which students must successfully complete four years of coursework in English, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Instead, the measure would create a new "foundation" diploma, with fewer specific course requirements. Students would be able to earn specified "endorsements" for such areas as STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) and business/industry if they wished.

Students also would have to pass far fewer end-of-course exams. Among those no longer required would be Algebra 2, chemistry, physics, and English 3.

Similar legislation, separated into two bills, was approved recently by the Senate education committee. The full Senate had been slated to take those measures up last week, but that action was postponed.

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Meeting Student Needs

Sixteen business groups and large companies, including the Texas Association of Business, the Austin Chamber of Commerce, ExxonMobil, and Texas Instruments, sharply criticized the measures in a letter to state lawmakers last month.

"We have been a national leader in promoting higher expectations for all students, and our young people have reaped big rewards," they wrote. "Now is not the time to reverse progress when Texas needs a more skilled workforce to meet the demands of the 21st-century economy."

But Catherine P. Clark, the government-relations director for the Texas Association of School Boards, called the changes a common-sense approach to rein in state requirements that have gone too far.

"What we have done to change public education in the last four or five years has gone overboard," she said, "requiring students to take 15 end-of-course tests that count for graduation. That is just high-stakes testing gone wild."

Ms. Clark said the changes to the high-school-diploma pathway would make it "more flexible for students to graduate and meet their own personal needs." She said that with so many students trying to take four years of courses in math, science, social studies, and English, it's hard to find time for other courses that fit better with their interests and career plans.

"We're not softening expectations," Ms. Clark said, "we're trying to meet the needs of students."

More than two-thirds of recent Texas graduates, based on state data for the class of 2011, followed the state's "recommended" 4x4 program. Starting with freshmen in 2007-08, that became the default graduation pathway.

A student who wished to opt out and pursue a "minimum" program with lesser course requirements had to have the written consent of a parent and a school counselor. About 18 percent of students opted for the minimum program in the class of 2011. About 13 percent of pursued the "distinguished" program, which included all the 4x4 requirements plus other ones.

The House bill would replace the 4x4 program, as well as the minimum and distinguished programs, with a "foundation" high school program that required students to complete four credits in English, three in math, three in social studies, and three in science, including biology, as well as integrated physics/chemistry and an "advanced" science course. Students would have to pass end-of-course exams to graduate only for English 1 and 2, Algebra 1, biology, and U.S. history.

In addition, students could earn "endorsements" by completing additional credits in specific areas.

The lead sponsor is Republican Rep. Jimmie Don Aycocock, the chairman of the House education committee. The Senate legislation is spearheaded by Sen. Dan Patrick, also a Republican and the chairman of the Senate education panel.

'The Bad Old Days'

The plans have split the business community in Texas, one of just four states that did not adopt the Common Core State Standards. A **coalition of 22 trade groups**, for example, including the Texas Association of Builders and the Texas Chemical Council, backs the House and Senate bills.

Graduation requirements have caused "a growing skills gap for Texas employers," they wrote House members last week, saying the changes would allow schools to "develop relevant, up-to-date programs that reflect" workforce needs.

But the National Council of La Raza and the Education Trust, two Washington-based organizations that advocate in behalf of poor and minority students, in a **letter last month** to Texas lawmakers call the legislation a "retreat from progress Texas has made" in recent years. "The proposed changes would take Texas back to the bad old days of pervasive tracking, ignoring the clear evidence that all students, regardless of the path they choose after high school, need the same rigorous course content to succeed," the groups write.

A strength of the current system, say its advocates, is that students, with parental support, must opt out of the more rigorous pathway to graduation, rather than opt in, which they say has led far more students to follow the 4x4 program than would have otherwise.

"You've got to grab mom and say, 'I am willingly putting myself onto the minimum program,'" said Drew Cheberle, a vice president of the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce. The House and Senate bills "put students onto the lowest plan and have them opt in [to more advanced work]."

But Mary Ann Whiteker, the superintendent of the 2,700-student Lufkin district in east Texas, criticized the 4x4 program as a "one-size-fits-all" approach to education.

"We're just saying, let's have more flexibility in identifying these rigorous courses that are more relevant, so students are engaged and excited about learning and see the relevance in why they have to learn this," she said.

As for the 15 end-of-course exams, Ms. Whiteker said: "It's overwhelming. It truly is. Right now, under our current system, if you look at the days identified for testing and retesting, we are looking at 45 days of testing in the state of Texas, and our students only go 180 days. It's totally absurd."

State Commissioner of Education Michael L. Williams agrees that having 15 required end-of-course exams is too much, said Debbie Ratcliffe, a spokeswoman for the education agency, but has argued that cutting them back to five goes too far.

"The commissioner spoke out in favor of potentially eight tests, two per subject, for the four core subjects," she said.

Implementation of the end-of-course tests began last year.

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High Stakes

Allissa R. Peltzman, a vice president of Achieve, a Washington-based research and advocacy group, said it was striking that Texas was "reversing course" on end-of-course exams, given that so many other states have introduced them. By her organization's latest count, 29 states use such exams, though she said requiring 15 is more than most and perhaps all other states do.

But rather than abandon most of those exams, perhaps the state might rethink the stakes attached to them, Ms. Peltzman suggested.

In Texas, students in the "recommended" program must pass all 15 exams, and each one also counts for 15 percent of the grade in a given course.

"The assessments don't have to have high-stakes consequences to send meaningful signals," Ms. Peltzman said, arguing they can still provide valuable information to students, educators, and the state.

Josh Havens, a spokesman for Republican Gov. Rick Perry, declined to comment on the House-approved bill. But he did say that while the governor "supports efforts to re-examine how we prepare and evaluate our students throughout their entire high school career, he will protect the academic rigor that prepares students for career and college."

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EDUCATION WEEK

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COMMENTARY

We Need a New Approach to Principal Selection

By **Ronald J. Bonnstetter & Bill J. Bonnstetter**

In charting a course to sail your boat around the world, you don't hire a navigator who still believes the Earth is flat. Yet we continue to ask those vested in our present education system to create a new vision for educating our children. We must move away from the biased opinions of the past to create a new, more effective job description for principals who can turn around failing schools.

While the investment in current principals is significant, it may not necessarily be able to provide the new direction needed. This is because it is based on a paradigm reliant on outdated geography. As **W. Edwards Deming**, an American scientist who won the National Medal of Technology in 1987 and who helped create the Japanese manufacturing and innovation boom, reportedly said when asked for his view of American education, "If you continue to do what you're doing, you will continue to get what you're getting." We believe, based on experiences working with groups of education leaders and analysis of the skills of educators over the last 30 years, that the present system is fraught with old-school, flat-earth-style methods and self-serving practices.

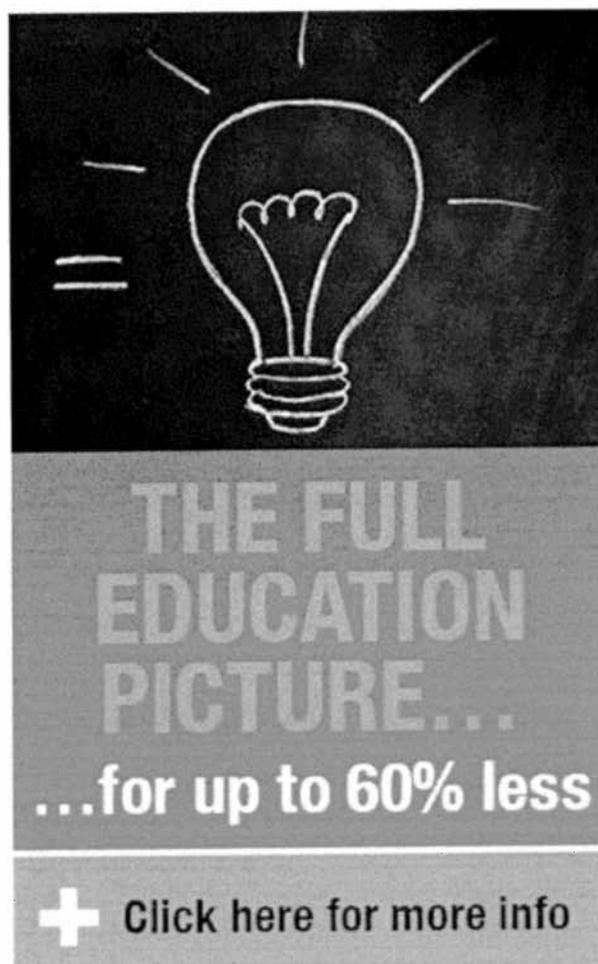
Let's look at the facts.

The current American educational system does not work for many. Dropout rates are high. Job satisfaction among teachers remains low. Employers and universities complain students are not adequately prepared. Compared with international students, American students are falling further behind, according to the 2009 Program for International Student Assessment test results. What we have is not effective in the 21st century.

Like other stakeholders, we believe meaningful educational change can only come from effective and visionary leadership. Those charged with reforming education in the United States must identify truly reform-oriented leaders if valid and effective change is to occur. How do we find these people?

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We believe business is one place to begin looking for ideas. Despite the economic recession of recent years, the American economy has been wildly successful and remains the world's largest. (In 2011, *The Economist* **reported** that the state of Michigan had a larger and healthier economy than the country of Taiwan.)

Using ideas from business to reform education disturbs many, but business and schools have much in common. For instance, both require accountability to shareholders, board members, parents, teachers, and governing board members. Business demands profitability; schools demand learning outcomes. In addition, both attempt to put the right people in the right job. In business, this is done using complex systems and large and powerful human resources departments, as well as corporate headhunters who doggedly pursue the most talented individuals. What might happen if we looked to business models to ensure visionary education leadership?

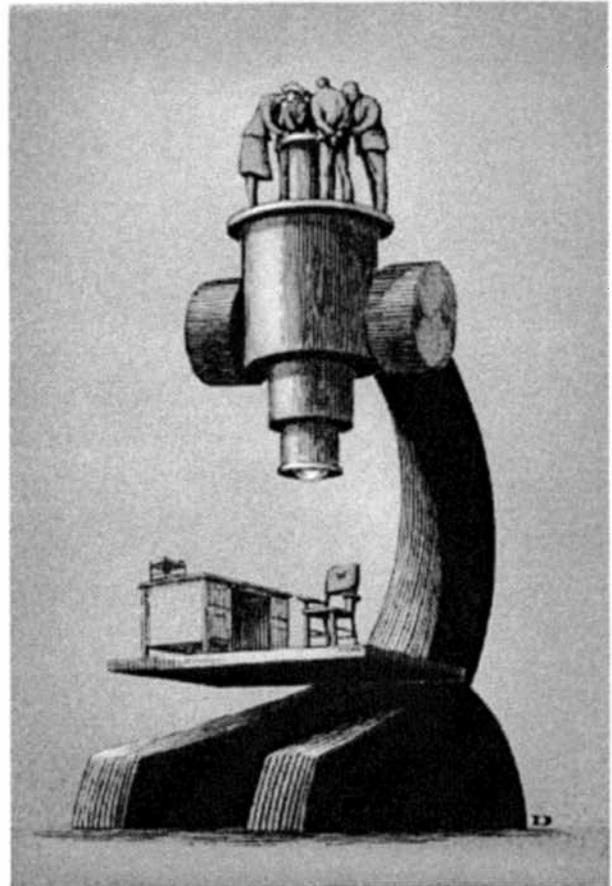
While teachers remain the single largest factor influencing student achievement, strong leadership has an impact on teacher development and retention, as well as student outcomes. **Research** conducted in 2004 for the **Wallace Foundation** found 25 percent of student achievement can be traced to the school leader. With such high stakes, hiring the right principal is a key ingredient to the future of education.

Identifying an effective principal requires a clear vision of the job duties, expectations, and required personal attributes. While most selection committees would agree with these criteria, the present selection system ends up being filled with personal biases and status quo mentalities. That's why we recommend using **benchmarking**.

Benchmarking is an objective process that surveys stakeholders, team members, management, and employees to determine the key accountabilities of the position. Job benchmarking saves time and money by hiring the right people the first time and reducing the learning curve with new employees who are strategically matched to fit the company.

Simply put, the process of benchmarking allows for a job to "talk" and describe itself, free of the prior constraints of how any one person would do the job. In the process, soft skills, behaviors, and motivators required to be successful in the job are also identified. Once this job is clearly identified and clearly described, applicants can be compared to that benchmark to produce a list of best-fit individuals for consideration.

The concept of benchmarking has been used in business since the 1990s and has been applied to thousands of specific business-related jobs.



—Bob Dahm

In the fall of 2011, working with six nationally recognized reform-oriented educational leaders, we tested this idea of a job-benchmarking strategy for a large philanthropic foundation interested in identifying and funding the training of a new generation of principals.

Encouraged by the potential of applying the concept to education, we were surprised when things took a negative turn. The group with which we worked seemed unable or unwilling to let the job of principal "talk." Again and again, they could not describe the job without embedding how they would do it. In other words, they carved into the benchmark their own personal biases, and the resulting benchmark was a match with the traditional job of principal.

After reflecting on the failed process, a new group of nationally recognized educators and a business representative was once again convened. This group was also knowledgeable, but not as invested in the present educational system. Drawing from our experience with the first group, we were able to drive home the need to remove self from the discussion and let the job talk. What we found was surprising. Instead of a resistance to change, the assembled school leaders freely talked about new ideas—ideas that could open the doors to professional growth. The benchmark results were very different and quite revealing.

Together, this group generated 37 separate job-related areas, including 23 competencies needed from the new-generation principal. It also revealed six motivations unique to this position, as well as eight particular behavioral traits that the job of an effective school leader demands. For example, the key competencies include: personal effectiveness, leadership, interpersonal skills, goal orientation, futuristic thinking, continuous learning, decisionmaking, persuasion, and creativity/innovation.

We then turned to our database of assessments of over 74,000 employed adults. We extracted and reviewed the results from the subset of those educators and found K-16 educators typically emphasize a very different set of competencies. The new, objective benchmark provided a novel job description that may translate into greater job effectiveness and a much-needed new approach.

We recognize hiring leaders with the right qualities still may not be enough for education reform to take hold. But rethinking the roles of principals and creating a new criterion that reflects an openness to change and an ability to execute will be a positive first step. If armed with a solid benchmarking process, schools, including university schools of education, can screen applicants and ultimately hire a new generation of more effective leaders, who are not basing their work on the beliefs of the past. Building a program with candidates who possess these job-related characteristics has proven to be crucial for success in many fields outside of education. We believe it is worthy of a chance within education.



Ronald J. Bonnstetter is a professor emeritus of science education at the University of Nebraska -Lincoln and serves as the senior vice president of research and development for Target Training International Ltd., a private company based in Scottsdale, Ariz., that develops and

distributes human-behavior and skill assessments to businesses and organizations in 90 countries. Bill J. Bonnstetter is the chairman of Target Training International.

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