2018-19

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SC ACCOUNTABILITY WORKING GROUP

FINAL REPORT Submitted to the EOC

SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

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Acknowledgements

Throughout this process, the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) is grateful for the partnerships, participation and expertise from a number of organizations including the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education, the South Carolina Department of Commerce, South Carolina Department of Education, the South Carolina Technical College System and our South Carolina public schools. The following individuals provided technical expertise throughout discussions.

Ms. Stephanie DiStasio   South Carolina Department of Education

Dr. Terry Holiday   Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Consultant

Mr. Jeff Schilz   South Carolina Commission on Higher Education

Introduction

The Education Accountability Act (EAA) of 1998, as amended by Act 94 of 2017, provides the foundation and requirements for the South Carolina accountability system for public schools and districts. Specifically, the preamble and purposes of the EAA include:

> 59-18-100 The General Assembly finds that South Carolinians have a commitment to public education and a conviction that high expectations for all students are vital components for improving academic achievement. It is the purpose of the General Assembly in this chapter to establish a performance-based accountability system for public education which focuses on improving teaching and learning so that students are equipped with a strong educational foundation. Moreover, to meet the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate, all students graduating from public high schools in this State should have the knowledge, skills, and opportunity to be college ready, career ready, and life ready for success in the global, digital and knowledge-based world of the twenty-first century as provided in Section 59-1-50. All graduates should have the opportunity to qualify for and be prepared to succeed in entry-level, credit bearing college courses, without the need for remedial coursework, post secondary job training, or significant on-the-job training. Accountability, as defined in this chapter, means acceptance of the responsibility for improving student performance and taking actions to improve classroom practice and school performance by the Governor, the General Assembly. The State Department of Education, public colleges and universities, local school boards, administrators, teachers, parents, students, and the community.[1]

The state's accountability system is to improve teaching and learning so that all students will graduate with the world-class knowledge, the world class skills, and the life/career characteristics needed in this dynamic, highly competitive environment. To this end, in 2016, the South Carolina General Assembly Enacted Act 195, establishing the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate* as the "standard by which our high school graduates should be measured and are this state's achievement goals for all high school students."[2] The

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[1] South Carolina Code Section 59-18-100
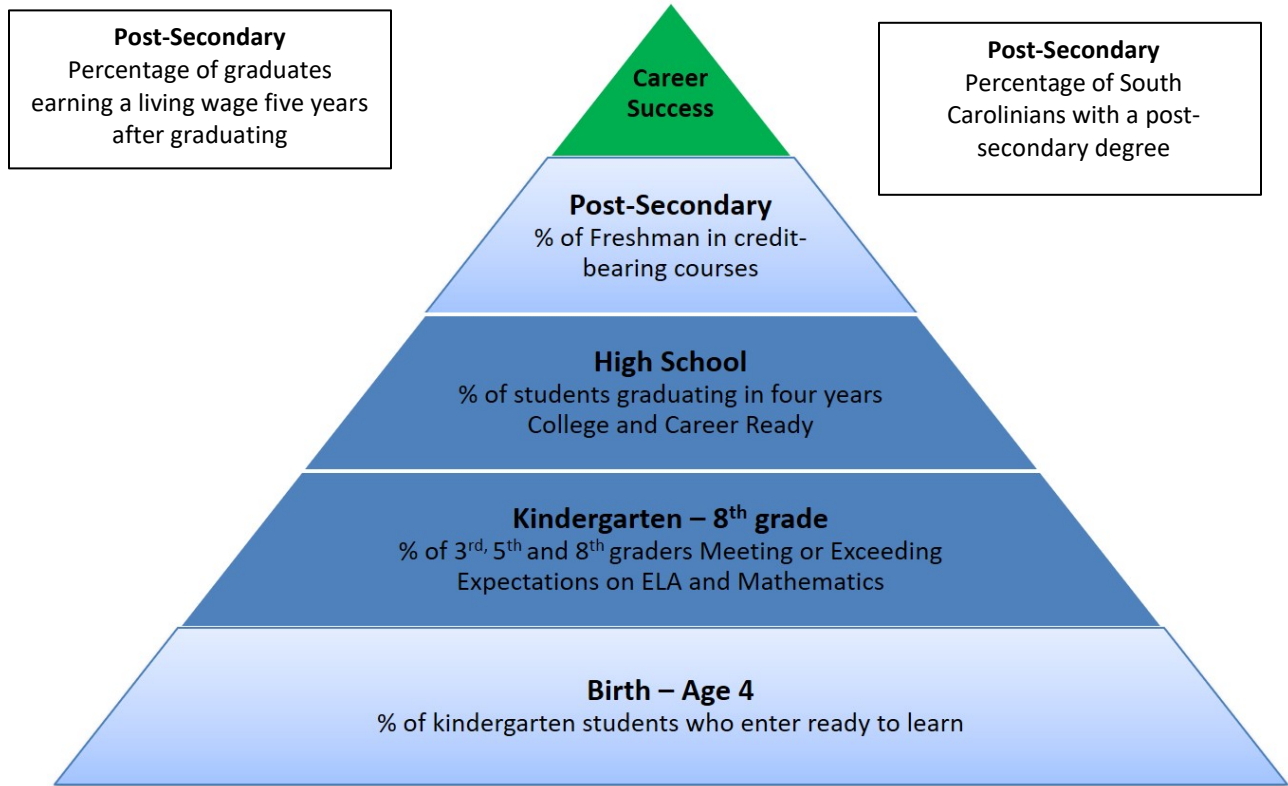[2] Act 195, 2016

Profile of the South Carolina Graduate is the vision for South Carolina and is showcased below.
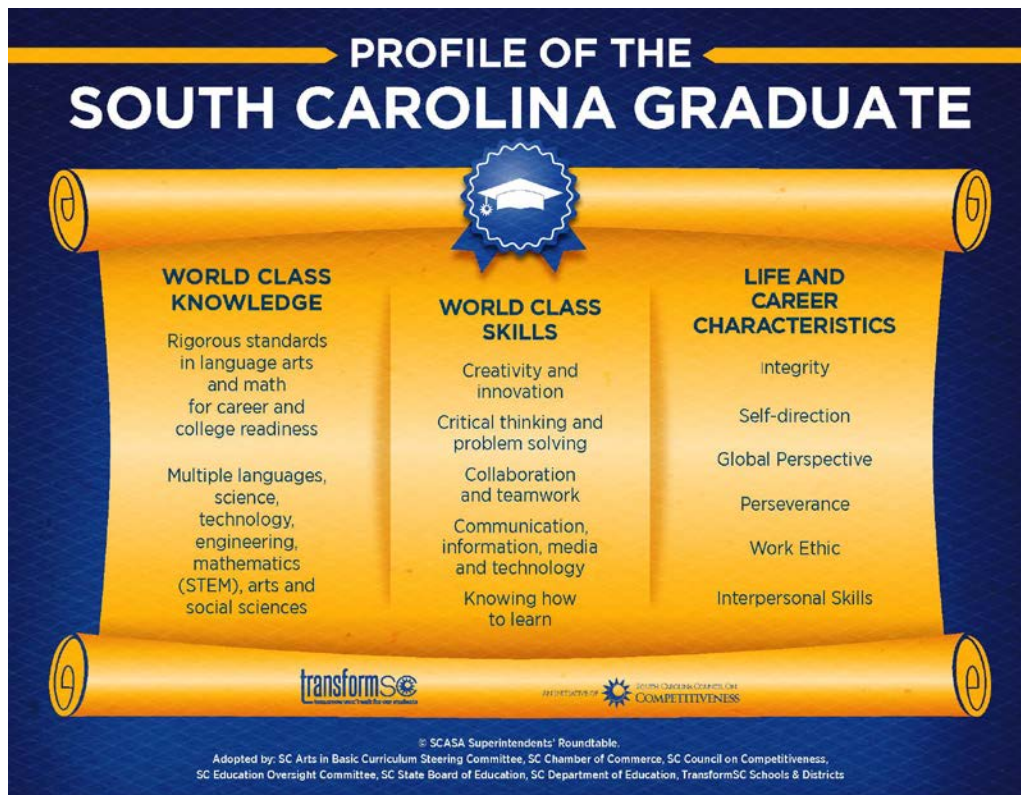
Over the past few years, the EOC has worked in conjunction with the South Carolina Department of Education (SDE) in merging Act 94 (the state accountability system) and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, the federal accountability system) to create a single accountability system for South Carolina. The EOC approved the state accountability plan in December 2017. The state accountability system must meet the requirements of the ESSA, which was approved on May 3, 2018. This new accountability system went into effect for this school year, 2017-18, with report cards published in November of 2018.

To further establish expectations for South Carolina students and to better meet the needs of the workforce, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) has established transformational goals (long term) and benchmarks (statewide leading metrics) as part of the state's ESSA plan as shown below.

Post-Secondary
Percentage of graduates earning a living wage five years after graduating

Career Success

Post-Secondary
Percentage of South Carolinians with a post-secondary degree

Post-Secondary
% of Freshman in credit-bearing courses

High School
% of students graduating in four years
College and Career Ready

Kindergarten – 8th grade
% of 3rd, 5th and 8th graders Meeting or Exceeding Expectations on ELA and Mathematics

Birth – Age 4
% of kindergarten students who enter ready to learn

Source: SC ESSA Plan, as approved on May 3, 2018

Transformational Goals (long term)

- By 2035, 90 percent of students will graduate "college and career ready" as outlined in the profile of the Graduate.
- Beginning with graduating class of 2020, the state, each district and each high school in South Carolina should increase annually by 5 percent, the percentage of student who graduate ready to enter the post-secondary education to pursue a degree or national industry credential without the need for remediation in mathematics or English.

While the current accountability system addresses many components of the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate*, there are components that are not being measured and components that could be strengthened to meet the vision for South Carolina students. Some components, such as creativity, knowing how to learn, collaboration, and perseverance, which speak to a well-rounded student, have traditionally been not only difficult to define but equally as difficult to measure. Other components could be considered to create an accountability system that more strongly aligns the academic

preparation of our students with the expectations of colleges/universities and career readiness to better prepare our students to meet the challenges beyond twelfth grade.

No system is perfect, but the flexibility of the current ESSA system allows states to evolve and change plans based on new information and research. The EOC believes the accountability system should be fluid and reflect the most current research and best practices on metrics that can be implemented to measure all aspects of a well-rounded high school graduate.

With these thoughts in mind, the EOC convened a Metrics Accountability Working Group for the purpose of reviewing the current accountability system and determining what metrics could be reported on the district and school report cards that address the world-class skills and life/career characteristics of the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate*. Questions poised were: Where are there gaps? What are we missing? Are the metrics currently in the accountability model at the level that will ensure career-readiness and college readiness? How can we strengthen the model to better prepare students for the twenty-first century? And, what, if any, recommendations made by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) to the EOC on October 9, 2017 for inclusion in the accountability system in 2018-19 should be implemented?

Overview of Metrics Accountability Working Group

The charge to the Metrics Accountability Working Group was twofold: (1) determine what metrics or evidence are currently reported on the district and school report cards to address the world class knowledge, skills and characteristics of the *Prolife of the South Carolina Graduate;* and (2) recommend what metrics or evidence could be reported or counted on the district and school report cards for school year 2018-19 or beyond to reflect the world class knowledge, skills and characteristics of the *Prolife of the South Carolina Graduate.* The goal is to continuously improve the state's accountability system to ensure that the accountability metrics are driving the behavior that is needed to improve student outcomes.

The Metrics Accountability Working Group was composed of the following individuals.

Name	Title
Dr. Jennifer Anderson	Director, Accountability and Personalized Learning, School District of Pickens County
Ms. Cynthia Ambrose	Deputy Superintendent, Learning Services, Charleston County School District
Ms. Ashley Brown	Arts Education Program Director, South Carolina Arts Commission
Dr. Jennifer Coleman	Executive Director of Research, Richland School District One
Mr. Christopher Leventis Cox	CEO, ACC Partners, and parent
Mr. Robert Davis	Workforce Development Coordinator, South Carolina Department of Commerce
Ms. Stephanie DiStasio	Director, Office of Personalized Learning, South Carolina Department of Education
Ms. Barbara Hairfield	Member, Education Oversight Committee
Dr. Tim Hardee	President & Executive Director, South Carolina Technical College System
Dr. Tammy Haile	Director, Career & Technology Education, Chesterfield County School District
Ms. Laura Hickson	Superintendent, Florence School District Three
Dr. Linda Lavender	Superintendent, Lexington County School District 4
Dr. Kevin O'Gorman	Chief Academic Officer, Berkeley County School District
Mr. Jeff Schilz	Interim President/Executive Director, South Carolina Commission of Higher Education

Others who participated in the meetings and assisted in the discussions were staff from the following state agencies:

      SCDE: Dr. John Payne and Dr. Dan Ralyea

      South Carolina Commission on Higher Education: Dr. John Lane, Dr. Lishu Yin, and Dr. Regine Rucker

      EOC stand EOC staff members: Melanie Barton, Dr. Kevin Andrews, Hope Johnson-Jones, Dr. Rainey Knight, Bunnie Ward, and Dana Yow

The Accountability Working Group met in Columbia on the following dates and discussed the following.

April 25, 2018 – Initial meeting focused on components of state's ESSA plan, the state accountability model, and *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate*, led by EOC staff.

May 31, 2018 – Dr. Terry Holiday, a consultant with the Southern Regional Education Board, facilitated the discussion that included:

- Review of the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate* and the requirements of the Federal law, Every Student Succeeds Act;
- Highlights from external reviewers who had evaluated South Carolina's ESSA plan;
- Discussion of accountability measures in the state's ESSA plan and their alignment to the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate*;
- Identification of internal measures of college and career readiness (state assessment results) and external measures of student academic performance (NAEP, ACT, etc.); and
- Recommendations from trusted sources and partners for future modifications to ESSA plan and accountability/report card structure

June 12, 2018 – Following up on the May discussion, the Metrics Accountability Working Group reviewed the areas of consensus and potential recommendations for improving the state's accountability system. Then the group was divided into three working subcommittees focused on elementary, middle and high school levels to discuss specific metrics. The groups had access to several support documents to use in its discussions, including the Superintendent of Education's proposal to the EOC on alternative data elements, "Revisions to the ESSA Accountability Plan" (Appendix B).

July 19, 2018 – The final meeting included a presentation on competency prototypes by Stephanie DiStasio, Director of Personalized Learning at the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE)[3]. She shared the work the SCDE is conducting to distill and operationalize the skill sets and dispositions as outlined in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate.   The SCDE is developing taxonomy around the competencies of:

- reading critically,
- expressing ideas,
- investigating through inquiry,
- reasoning quantitatively,
- Designing solutions,
- building networks,
- using sources,
- learning independently,
- leading teams,
- navigating conflicts,
- sustaining wellness; and
- engaging as a citizen.

The small group discussions, based on grade spans of elementary, middle and high schools, continued their deliberations as to what metrics could be included in the accountability model and issues related to current and proposed future accountability metrics. At the conclusion of the subgroup work, each subgroup reported out their discussions and as appropriate, suggestions/recommendations from the other members were incorporated into the work of each subgroup. Each subgroup, then, submitted a consolidated matrix outlining the consensus of the subgroup. Members of the metric accountability group were also allowed access to the consolidated matrices to submit additional questions and comments via a Google document.

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[3] Competency Set and Continua Prototype, SCDE, 2018. May be accessed at
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ULuRalBLlhSjStD0bxoMV0ByuwXpJIP2tP-bKwgJQOI/edit#gid=1223617546

Summary of Reviews of South Carolina's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan

With states submitting their ESSA plan over the past year, independent groups have conducted various external reviews of state ESSA plans across the country. South Carolina submitted its plan in September 2017 and received approval from the US Department of Education on May 3, 2018. Overall the state's plan has been received positively. A summary of the reviews for South Carolina's plan including promising aspects of the plan and pressing issues are outlined below.[4] [5]

Promising Aspects of the Plan

- Indicators aligned with college and career readiness
- Addition of science and social studies shows need for well-rounded student
- Emphasis on growth of bottom 20% of students by including them in the growth model
- Reporting the percentage of students who are college and career ready
- State goes beyond minimum in identifying number of schools in need of comprehensive support and intervention
- Strong stance on 95 percent participation rate in testing; state will lower school's rating if 95 percent rate not met
- Assigns annual rating for schools

Pressing Issues for the Plan

- State's goals are overly complex and disconnected from the accountability system
- Plan overemphasizes high performing students; runs risk of masking performance of underperforming students and achievement gaps because subgroup performance is not included in the ratings
- In the awarding of funds to schools for improvement, state is not specific
- Defines proficiency as earning a D or better on end of course
- College and career readiness may be inflated because students that have dropped out or have not graduated are not included in the percentage

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[4] Bellwether Education Partners, December, 2017.
[5] Holliday, T., External Review of South Carolina Every Student Succeeds Act Plan, Report presented to the Metrics Accountability Working Group (May 31, 2018).

Findings and Recommendations

Overall, the Metric Accountability Working Group made the following generalizations regarding South Carolina's ESSA plan and our accountability system:

- South Carolina should not have separate state and federal accountability systems but instead should have one system as currently required by state law, Act 94 of 2017. Otherwise, the competing systems create distrust and confusion for the public and for educators.

- Creating an accountability system around the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate* and meeting the federal requirements of ESSA is like "putting a round peg into a square hole." The federal requirements are so prescriptive especially regarding Academic Achievement, which must only measure achievement in English language arts and mathematics. Consequently, South Carolina should focus on using the Other Academic Indicators and School Quality/Student Success Indicator under the current framework of ESSA to count or report other metrics that measure the world class skills and characteristics of the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate.*

- Before any metric is used to rate schools in the accountability system, the metric should be reported first on the annual school report card to ensure that data collection issues are resolved and to document the validity and reliability of the data.

The following are the key findings and recommendations for improving the state's accountability system as identified by a consensus of the members of the Metric Accountability Working Group. The findings and recommendations are listed by key components of the state's accountability plan – the State's ESSA goals and specific indicators.

State's ESSA Goals

Finding: The members of the Metric Accountability Working Group overwhelmingly do not believe that South Carolina will meet the overall goal of our ESSA plan:

- By 2035 90 percent of students will graduate college, career, and citizenship ready' as shown in the state's ESSA plan.

In addition, the overall goal of the state's ESSA plan and the metrics of the accountability system are inconsistent. For example, increasing by five (5) percent annually the percentage of students who graduate ready to enter postsecondary education to pursue

a degree or national industry credential without the need for remediation in mathematics or English will not result in the state achieving its 90 percent overarching goal.

A second issue is the lack of data or inconsistency of data. For example, the state currently cannot determine the percentage of high school graduates earning a living wage within five years of graduation. The state is still implementing its longitudinal data system as required by Act 94 of 2017. And, because each two-year institution establishes its own benchmarks to determine if students must take remediation or developmental courses in mathematics, reading or English, there is not a consistent measure to determine the percentage of freshman who are eligible to enroll in credit-bearing courses.

Recommendation: To improve the alignment of the state's ESSA goal with the accountability metrics and focus on student's success in college and careers, South Carolina should measure and count the percentage of high school graduates who:

➢ Earn a living wage within three and five years of graduation from high school. A definition of living wage will need to be created; and

➢ Enroll in a postsecondary institution and succeed. Success can be defined as earning 15 credits in the first semester or 30 credits per year.[6]

College and Career Readiness Indicator

Finding: South Carolina's definition of career readiness currently measures academic **or** technical skills of students, but not both. The definition also excludes the importance of essential skills, those skills formerly referred to as "soft skills."[7] These skills include teamwork, leadership, and agility. As defined in the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduat*e, career ready should include essential skills, academic skills and technical skills.

Recommendation: While no consensus was reached by the Metric Accountability Working Group, the EOC might consider for future accountability systems reviewing and revising the definition of career ready to include academic, technical **and** essential skills.

Finding: According to the state's ESSA plan, a student may demonstrate career readiness upon completion of a career and technical education (CTE) program with a state/national credential that leads to a living wage. Industry certifications levels vary

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[6] https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/momentum-summary.pdf and
https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED555671.pdf

[7] Building the Workforce of Tomorrow. https://files.ontario.ca/hsw_rev_engaoda_webfinal_july6.pdf

according to the knowledge and skills needed to meet the certification. Currently, for a state/national certification to be approved, the certifications are vetted and approved by the business community through the EEDA Coordinating Council, the Coordinating Council for Workforce Development, and others.

__Recommendation:__ In the annual review of industry certifications, the state could consider including those national/state certifications that ensure the credential earned that leads to a living wage job for a graduate that lead to careers identified in the South Carolina's WIOA state plan as being in high demand. Another approach is to award bonus points if students are becoming career ready in clusters that are identified in the state workforce plan and are tied to earning a living wage.[8] Finally, stackable credentials, which lead to a living wage career, should be identified and developed. Examples of states working in this area include Louisiana, New York, and South Dakota.

__Finding:__ South Carolina's current system gives points to students who are either college or career ready and does not incentivize students who are both college and career ready.

__Recommendation:__ To incentivize schools to prepare students who are college and career ready, provide incentives and tiered point system so that schools earn more points for students who are college AND career ready. Consideration should be given to carefully review and consider only those national/state certifications that ensure the credential is at a level that adequately prepares students for a career and leads to a living wage. Bonus points could also be earned if students are becoming career ready in clusters that are identified in the state workforce plan and are tied to earning a living wage.[9] Finally, stackable credentials, which lead to a living wage career, should be identified and developed. Examples of states working in this area include Louisiana, New York, and South Dakota.

School Quality/Student Success Indicator

__Finding:__ Currently, elementary, middle and high schools receive an overall rating for School Quality that is based on the results of a student engagement survey. In school year 2017-18, students in grades 3 through 12 took the AdvancED Student Engagement

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[8] South Carolina WIOA Unified State Plan, 2016. Access is provided by the link
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55119bb3e4b0ff5f4d08ac93/t/5b59f9e21ae6cf7e3a053e7e/15326233355
02/2018-2020+Modified+SC+WIOA+Unified+State+Plan.pdf

[9] South Carolina WIOA Unified State Plan, 2016. Access is provided by the link
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55119bb3e4b0ff5f4d08ac93/t/5b59f9e21ae6cf7e3a053e7e/15326233355
02/2018-2020+Modified+SC+WIOA+Unified+State+Plan.pdf

Survey to measure students' engagement in learning. Several educators on the Metric Accountability Work Group cited issues with the survey including poorly worded questions, technical issues, etc.

**Recommendation:** The members concluded that ESSA allows states to use multiple metrics to measure School Quality/Student Success. The members reviewed other states' ESSA plans that identify various inputs to measure School Quality/Student Success. For example, Michigan uses chronic absenteeism, access to advanced coursework, access to instruction in arts, world languages, etc.[10] Other inputs include a quality program review and use of state accreditation. Kentucky is developing a work ethic certification that is showing some promise in this area.[11]

The members did identify the following as other metrics of School Quality:

> **Chronic Absenteeism** – The members did not reach consensus on whether to include student chronic absenteeism as a measure of students' opportunity to learn. According to the Brookings Institute, students who are absent fewer than ten days per year are more likely to be promoted the next grade level.[12] Other research provides support that student attendance as an important factor in student learning. South Carolina does not currently count student absenteeism in the overall ratings of a school.

> **Teacher Attendance** – The majority of members of the group did agree that teacher attendance should count in School Quality.

> **Early Learning (Elementary Schools) 4K-3 accountability** – Some members of the group identified early learning in math and literacy as an area that needed to be reported on. There was consensus that early math is as important as early literacy. Currently, the percentage of kindergarteners ready to learn is reported on as is the percentage of students at end of 3rd grade who were on track or making progress. Examples of states working in this area are Ohio, Oklahoma, Georgia and North Carolina. The current 4K assessment administered in a school is a decision made by the district/school based on an approved list of three formative assessments provided by the state. The 4K assessment selected measures a variety of competencies depending on the instrument selected. There is a need to capture and be able to report 4K

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[10] ESSA, Michigan Department of Education, 2017, May be accessed at:
https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Michigan-ESSA-Plan_11-15-17_606136_7.pdf.
[11] Work Ethic Certification, Kentucky Department of Education, 2017. May be accessed at:
https://education.ky.gov/CTE/Pages/CTE-St-Acc.aspx
[12] Bauer, Lauren, Liu, Patrick, Schanzenbach, Diane, Shambaugh, Jay; Brooking Institute, 2018,
https://www.brookings.edu/research/reducing-chronic-absenteeism-under-the-every-student-succeeds-act/

readiness on a consistent basis statewide. Furthermore, the members agreed that having a 4K through grade 2 aligned assessment system is needed to allow the district, school or state to monitor children's progression over these critical years.

Teacher Working Conditions Survey (All school levels) – If South Carolina wants to use accountability to drive behavior, then the state might consider reporting teacher working conditions survey results, teacher perceptions of discipline, principal's expectations, etc. to measure School Quality. Teacher retention is an important fact in the maintaining quality teachers in the classroom. The working conditions of teachers and their opinions play a role in whether they remain in teaching. The level of school support, the culture of the school and perceptions on school effectiveness should be captured and reported on a statewide basis to be used as a tool to identify the issues affecting the retention of teachers.

Access and Participation (All school levels) – Consistent with the Department of Education's October 2017 recommendations to the EOC, the group recommended phasing-in a metric that first documents access to a well-rounded curriculum followed by documenting participation. The Group identified the following as examples of a well-rounded education system. Students would have access to:

> ➤ Advanced coursework;
> ➤ Computer science courses
> ➤ Arts
> ➤ World languages
> ➤ Physical education
> ➤ Virtual or online learning
> ➤ Career courses

World Class Skills and Life/Career Characteristics (All school levels) – The *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate* expects students to develop world class skills and life/career characteristics. Currently, there is no measure of these areas in the South Carolina accountability model. South Carolina should review and consider using other indicators to measure world class skills and characteristics as outlined in the *Profile of South Carolina Graduate*.

The SCDE has started foundational work on assessing the world class skills and characteristics found in the Profile. The recommendation is to continue to work with the SCDE and other groups to first report these measures in the accountability system (i.e., availability and participation.) When measurements

of quality are developed and refined, the group recommends measures count in a future accountability system. Several measures were mentioned by workgroup members as potential measures of world class skills and characteristics.

Academic Achievement Indicator

Finding: The use of Lexiles and Quantiles as measures to track student performance or student growth is a metric used by numerous states to report reading and mathematics performance. These measures track a students' trajectory of growth year to year. It is vertically aligned and a seamless way to communicate student growth and achievement. Through the SC Ready assessment, the state provides Lexile and Quantile scores in grades 3-8. Schools could provide Lexile and Quantile scores for grades K-2 to track student progress if they administered an assessment that provides Lexile/Quantile scores. Utilizing the Lexile and Quantile Framework, developed by MetaMetrics, Inc., would allow for progress monitoring across grades and grade levels. Furthermore, if changes in assessments occur, longitudinal data could still be reported.

Members also identified the fragmentation of the current assessment system in PK-8; the current system does not allow for effective progress monitoring of children as they progress through the grades. South Carolina should work with other states and the U.S. Department of Education to determine how to use Lexiles and Quantile results from grade 3 through 8 SC READY (and even earlier, possible grade 1) to measure Academic Achievement.

Recommendation: South Carolina should work with other states and the U.S. Department of Education to determine how to use Lexiles and Quantile results from grade 3 through 8 SC READY (and even earlier, possible grade 1) to measure Academic Achievement. The state should consider using Lexiles and Quantiles for high school end of courses as well. Using Lexiles and Quantiles will ensure that even if the state assessment changes, South Carolina can still compare assessment results and measure students' trajectory for college and career readiness. NAEP, SAT, ACT, and SC READY all can be tied to Lexile and Quantiles. These Lexiles and Quantiles can also be tired to individual career clusters as evidenced in work done in Georgia, West Virginia, Illinois, etc. and/or to progress as in Oklahoma, Georgia and North Carolina.

Finding: As required by ESSA, the subgroup performance will be reported on the South Carolina report card. And, the Student Progress indicator reflects the academic progress of all students in a school in English language arts and mathematics compared to other students in South Carolina who initially scored at the same levels and the academic

progress of the lowest 20 percent of students in a school relative to students statewide who initially scored at the same level. However, individual subgroup performance is not a measure on the state report card that counts in the schools' rating. See Appendix C for an analysis of the achievement gap between African American and White students, using SC READY Mathematics scores from 2017 and 2018.

Recommendation: The Metric Accountability Working Group did not reach consensus on if and how subgroup performance could be included in the accountability system.

Preparing for Success Indicator

Finding: A component in several states' ESSA plans is a readiness indicator that focuses on the metrics tracked to ensure students are being prepared as they matriculate through school. A study at the University of Chicago suggests there are three key factors that predict a student's success in school: student attendance, behavior and grades.[14]

For example, Arizona uses a menu approach that looks a variety of data points such as exceptional education children and the percent of time spent in the general curriculum, comparison of chronic absenteeism rates, attendance, grades, behavior, percent of students accelerating in math in grades 5-8, etc. Almost half the of the states established in their ESSA plans a readiness indicator based on students' progression in high school. An illustration of how some states are capturing this progression is shown below for high schools.

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[13] SC Ready Assessment, South Carolina Department of Education, 2017. May be accessed at: https://ed.sc.gov/data/test-scores/state-assessments/sc-ready/2017/State-Scores-by-Grade-Level-and-Demographic-Category/?ID=999999

[14] Allensworth, E. (2013). The use of ninth-grade early warning indicators to improve Chicago schools. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 18*(1), 68–83. Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ995400

State	Readiness Indicator	Target Audience
Connecticut	Minimum five units	Ninth graders
Illinois	Minimum five units/no F	Ninth graders
Nevada	Earning at least 25% of units required for graduation	Ninth graders
Oregon	Earning at least 25% of units required for graduation	Ninth and Tenth graders
Alaska	Five units incl. English, math, science and social studies	Ninth graders
Arkansas	Minimum number of units at each grade level	Ninth –Twelfth graders

Other Issues of Discussion

The Metric Accountability Working Group focused its efforts on addressing the gaps in current accountability model; however, the results of their discussions also revealed additional important issues related to the accountability system and to the functioning of public education. These issues, some of which directly impact state policy, are noted below.

1. Equity in educational opportunity across our state, within a district and school and in a classroom was an issue raised by the group. The group felt inequities in teacher quality and resources were evident across the state. Suggestions were made to include the demographics, the average family income and the average amount of money spent by schools in a section together on the report card which would inform the reader of the community the school serves as well as the support provide by the district/school. Other issues raised regarding equity related to the unacceptable performance gaps of minorities in our state and that this an important issue for our state.

2. An issue of funding as it related to career and technology education (CTE) courses in the middle schools was raised. CTE courses are not funded at the middle school level and it was suggested that the funding should follow the student, e.g., computer related courses and career related courses offered in the middle grades.

3. South Carolina must develop and implement a robust, longitudinal data system to must develop its longitudinal data system to ensure that higher education and labor success of our high school graduates is captured.

4. South Carolina must develop a system whereby math, reading and English remediation occurs in the senior year, 12th grade of high school, rather than in the two-year college system. Students should have a second opportunity to meet a college and career ready measure after the remediation. The change would save students and families money and would improve the success rate of students in our two-year colleges.

5. South Carolina must develop a cut score on college ready assessments, such as Accuplacer, that all two-year institutions agree is the minimum score for students to be eligible to enroll in courses at a postsecondary without the need for remediation in mathematics, reading or English. These cut scores would not affect a student's placement or acceptance into a specific field of study. For example, a student pursing a degree in a STEM field might need to have a higher mathematics score to be accepted into the program.

6. South Carolina should consider an opportunity to have two windows of state assessment - one in early March and then a second assessment later in the year for students who needed additional remediation.

7. Access to high quality teachers continues to be a challenge in providing all students with the opportunity to achieve at high levels.

8. The metrics in the high school portion of the state report card should be closely analyzed and reviewed annually to ensure what is counted on the report card and how it is measured on the report card is aligned with what South Carolina needs in its college and career ready students.

9. The social and emotional learning (SEL) of all students is important but it is critically important to address this aspect of learning with students in the elementary grades. A recent meta-analysis of research on social emotional learning shows that a systematic approach to promoting student's social and emotional development is a common element of schools who report an increase in student achievement, stronger relationships with teachers and decreased occurrences of poor student behavior.[15]

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[15] Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development, 82*, 405-432. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01564.x

Appendix A

EXTERNAL REVIEW OF SOUTH CAROLINA EVERY STUDENT SUCCEDS ACT PLAN

Prepared for South Carolina Education Oversight Committee Study Group

Goals of report:

1) Provide analysis of external reviews of the SC ESSA plan and accountability system to enable working group members to comprehend reported strengths and opportunities for improvement of the SC ESSA plan and subsequent improvements/recommendations for SC accountability system;

2) Analyze the potential that South Carolina will achieve the common vision of the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate* and the subsequent long-range goals of the state ESSA plan and accountability system based on current performance of SC students;

- By 2035, 90 percent of students will graduate "college, career, and citizenship ready" as outlined in the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate.*
- Beginning with the graduating class of 2020, the state, each district, and each high school in South Carolina should increase annually by 5 percent, the percentage of students who graduate ready to enter postsecondary education to pursue a degree or national industry credential without the need for remediation in mathematics or English.

3) Provide systemic recommendations from trusted sources and current partners for South Carolina to continue to progress toward achieving the common vision and goals of *Profile of The South Carolina Graduate*.

Terry Holliday
Retired Kentucky Commissioner of Education 2009-2015
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Contents

Introduction

As a South Carolina retired educator, graduate of a South Carolina high school, and graduate of Furman University, Winthrop University, and University of South Carolina, it has been my honor to work closely with SC over the past 2 years as the state developed the federally required Every Student Succeeds Act plan.

I have been quite impressed with the level of cooperation and commitment to excellence exhibited by all partners across South Carolina. I worked closely with the SC Department of Education, Education Oversight Committee, SC Association of School Administrators, Charleston Chamber of Commerce, and Charleston area school districts.

State Superintendent Molly Spearman and her staff are to be commended for the level of stakeholder engagement in the development of the SC ESSA plan. Melanie Barton and her team at the Education Oversight Committee were invaluable in the development of this report. All the stakeholders in SC that I met over the past 2 years have been universally committed to the vision of *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate.*

The *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate* is the guiding force to develop a citizenry and workforce in South Carolina that is second to none in the nation. The state's education system will be the key driver for employment opportunities and economic opportunities for the citizens of the state. This is a fact that every Governor and legislature in the nation recognizes. Every state is working to better align state Workforce Innovation and Opportunities plans, economic development plans, and education plans to improve employment and economic opportunities for citizens.

The education system cannot drive all improvements needed in South Carolina to achieve *Profile of The South Carolina Graduate*. Indeed, as many states across the nation and countries across the world have learned, it takes an integrated and aligned system of supports to achieve education, employment, and economic goals.

This report and subsequent meetings and recommendations are offered to support the excellent work that South Carolina has already started through the ESSA plan and other support systems.

Terry Holliday
Retired Kentucky Commissioner of Education, 2009-2015
Retired SC Educator, 1972-1998

Executive Summary

Purpose of Working Group: "*We have assembled a working group of educators, business leaders, higher education leaders, etc., to work during the spring and summer on addressing changes to the accountability system. Specifically, we are looking at two things: (1) to determine what metrics or evidence that is reported on the district and school report cards to address the world class skills and characteristics of the Profile of the SC Graduate; and (2) determine what metrics or evidence can be reported or counted on the district and school report cards for school year 2018-19.*" Melanie Barton (EOC)

Goals of Report: The goals of the report are to;

1) Provide analysis of external reviews of the SC ESSA plan and accountability system to enable working group members to comprehend reported strengths and opportunities for improvement of the SC ESSA plan and subsequent improvements/recommendations for SC accountability system;

2) Analyze the potential that South Carolina will achieve the common vision of the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate* and the subsequent long-range goals of the state ESSA plan and accountability system based on current performance of SC students;

- By 2035, 90 percent of students will graduate "college, career, and citizenship ready" as outlined in the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate.*

- Beginning with the graduating class of 2020, the state, each district, and each high school in South Carolina should increase annually by 5 percent, the percentage of students who graduate ready to enter postsecondary education to pursue a degree or national industry credential without the need for remediation in mathematics or English.

3) Provide systemic recommendations from trusted sources and current partners for South Carolina to continue to progress toward achieving the common vision and goals of *Profile of The South Carolina Graduate*. Recommendations will also be based on 50 state analysis of ESSA plans.

Highlights from external reviews of South Carolina's ESSA plan submitted October 2017. See pages 16-18 for description of each review and link to the full review.

US Department of Education - As of April 14, 2018, the South Carolina ESSA plan has not been approved by the US Secretary of Education. In the Secretary's letter to State Superintendent Molly Spearman dated January 17, 2018 the following areas required additional information prior to approval. For specifics*, please refer to pages 19-22 in the report.*

- N-size, academic achievement long-term goals, academic achievement measurements of interim progress, long-term goals for four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate, measurements of interim progress for graduation rates, graduation rate indicator, school quality or student success indicator, annual meaningful differentiation, comprehensive and targeted support for improvement schools, exit criteria for improvement schools, Title II, Title III, Title V, and Title VII.

Bellwether Education Partners, in partnership with the Collaborative for Student Success, convened an objective, independent panel of accountability experts to review ESSA state plans. A diverse group of

peer reviewers with a range of political viewpoints and backgrounds were asked to review each state's accountability plan with an eye toward capturing strengths and weaknesses. *See pages 22-24 for additional information*

Overall Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths: What are the most promising aspects of the state's plan? What parts are worth emulating by other states?

- South Carolina's accountability system is built on indicators that are aligned with college and career readiness. The state deserves credit for including science and social studies in its accountability system, which will help signal the critical importance of a well-rounded education for all students. The state places a significant emphasis on the growth of schools' lowest-performing students. The state will also report the percentage of graduates who are college ready, career ready, or college and career ready.
- South Carolina's accountability system goes above and beyond ESSA's minimum requirements for identifying schools for comprehensive support and improvement. As a result, it is likely that the state will identify a greater number of very low-performing schools.
- In addition, its exit criteria for schools identified for comprehensive support requires schools to demonstrate some improvement rather than simply no longer qualify for the designation.
- South Carolina deserves credit for taking a strong stance on the 95 percent assessment participation rate. The state counts untested students as a zero for determining achievement ratings. Schools that miss the participation requirement cannot receive the highest rating in achievement or in the summative rating. In addition, the state threatens the loss of Title I funds if the problem persists.

Weaknesses: What are the most pressing areas for the state to improve in its plan? What aspects should other states avoid?

- South Carolina's plan could be improved in a number of ways. The state's goals are overly complex and disconnected from the accountability system. The state's approach to awarding points and assigning corresponding ratings to indicators and schools is also unnecessarily complicated. In its current form, this approach likely overemphasizes high-performing students and runs the risk of overlooking or masking underperformance and achievement gaps. This is particularly likely because student subgroup performance is not included in the state's rating system.
- South Carolina should provide greater detail about its plans to support and intervene in struggling schools. For example, the state says it plans to award all of its 7 percent set-aside for school improvement activities through a formula, but it does not specify how it would implement that formula. Moreover, the state would have had a stronger plan if it had used some portion of that money for competitive grants to the schools and districts with the strongest improvement plans. This step could materially improve the quality of interventions in identified schools. The state's identification criteria for targeted support schools and exit criteria both deserve further clarification and confirmation that sustained improvement is likely.

Partners for Each and Every Child – this report analyzed the stakeholder engagement process in the first 17 states that submitted ESSA plans in April 2017. South Carolina was not included in the review.

Fordham Institute - The analysis examines the plans submitted by all fifty states and the District of Columbia, and whether they are strong or weak (or in-between) in achieving three objectives:

- Assigning annual ratings to schools that are clear and intuitive for parents, educators, and the public; **(SC received a strong rating)**

- Encouraging schools to focus on all students, not just their low performers; **(SC received a strong rating)** and

- Fairly measuring and judging all schools, including those with high rates of poverty. **(SC received a medium rating)**

For additional information, see page 25 in report.

Center for American Progress – review of first 17 ESSA plans submitted in April 2017. South Carolina was not reviewed.

Alliance for Excellent Education - To summarize the strengths—and shortcomings—for each state's plan, the Alliance created a series of one-page quick-reference guides for anyone looking to determine how well a state's plan will address the needs of its students.

These ESSA Equity Dashboards use a red-yellow-green light–system to rate state plans on several indicators, including long-term goals, accountability provisions, and school rating systems.

Summary of ratings
Long-Term Goals

- Academic Achievement – *yellow*
- Academic Achievement by subgroup – *green*
- 4-year cohort graduation rate – *yellow*
- English language proficiency – *green*

Accountability

- Disaggregation of student subgroups – *green*
- N-size – yellow
- School quality and student success indicator – *yellow*
- High School graduation rate – *green*
- Weighting of academic indicators – *green*
- Testing participation rates – *green*
- Inclusion of student subgroup performance – *red*

Support and Intervention

- Definition of consistently underperforming to identify schools for targeted support – yellow
- High school graduation rate used to identify schools for comprehensive support – green

Concerns:

- South Carolina defines student proficiency as earning a "D" or better on end-of-year exams.
- College and career readiness indicator may appear inflated because it does not include students who may have dropped out or do not graduate in four years.

Bonus:

- South Carolina will lower a schools rating one step if it fails to meet 95% participation rate for 3 consecutive years.

For additional information, see pages 25-27 in report

National Center for Teacher Quality – South Carolina was not reviewed in the report.

Education Strategy Group and Advance CTE – Education Strategy Group and Advance CTE reviewed all state plans to examine and document the extent to which states took advantage of the ESSA opportunity to improve career readiness in grades K-12.

Criteria from report:
Career Readiness in Vision/Goals – SC yes
Career Readiness in accountability system – SC yes
Career Readiness indicator publicly reported – SC yes
Plans to adopt future career readiness indicator – SC yes
Discussion in Title II – SC no
Explicit plans in Title II – SC no
Use of Title IV to support career readiness – SC no
Explicit use of funds to support career readiness through SSAE – SC no
Prioritization of career readiness in community grants – SC no
Title I DSS set aside used to support career readiness – SC no

For additional information, see page 28 in report

Education Trust - focused tightly on three questions we believe are especially important in determining whether a plan is likely to promote opportunity and improve outcomes for all groups of students:
- Are states keeping student learning front and center?
- Do school ratings reflect how schools are doing for all groups of students?
- Is the state being honest about which schools need to take steps to improve for one or more student groups?

No specific mention of South Carolina in the report.

Results for America - In May 2017, Results for America's Evidence in Education Lab team identified in its Leverage Points report 13 key opportunities for states to advance the use of evidence, evaluation, and continuous improvement through their implementation of ESSA. Across all 51 state plans (50 states plus

the District of Columbia), they identified 162 promising practices for building and using evidence to improve student outcomes; all but five states included at least one promising practice.

- Only three states (Delaware, **South Carolina**, and Texas) described strong plans to prioritize the use of evidence and continuous improvement when exercising their authority to intervene in districts unable to improve their lowest-performing schools (Leverage Point 12); just nine states emphasized the use of evidence and continuous improvement in the design of their school improvement applications (Leverage Point 5); and only 14 states highlighted plans to base funding allocations at least in part on the proposed use of evidence (Leverage Point 4).

For other highlights for South Carolina, see pages 28-30 in report.

New Leaders – no specific mention of South Carolina.

Highlights of Current Academic Performance of South Carolina Students

2017 National Assessment of Education Progress

South Carolina saw significant declines in scale scores for 4th grade mathematics from 2015 to 2017. SC declined from 237 to 234. With a correlated decline in percentage of students achieving NAEP proficiency or above from 37% in 2015 to 32% in 2017. Significant gaps in performance among student subgroups were prominent (White 45% Black 13%). National scale score average was 239 (SC 5 points below) and percentage at or above proficient was 40% (SC 8% points lower).

South Carolina saw a decline in 8th grade math scale score from 276 in 2015 to 275 in 2017. The percentage of SC 8th grade students at or above proficiency in math improved from 25% in 2015 to 27% in 2017. The achievement gaps in performance among student subgroups were prominent (White 38% Black 8%). National scale score average was 282 (SC 7 points below) and percentage at or above proficient was 34% (SC 7% points below).

South Carolina saw a significant decline in 4th grade reading scale score from 218 in 2015 to 213 in 2017. With a correlated decline in percentage of students achieving NAEP proficiency or above from 33% in 2015 to 29% in 2017. Significant gaps in performance among subgroups were prominent (White 40% Black 15%). National scale score average was 221 (SC 8 points below) and percentage at or above proficient was 36% (SC 7% points below)

South Carolina maintained a scale score average of 260 for 8th grade reading. South Carolina increased in percentage of students at or above proficiency from 28% in 2015 to 30% in 2017. Significant gaps persist in student subgroups proficiency rates (White 42% Black 12%).

NAEP 8th grade proficiency rates in reading and mathematics have proven to be excellent predictors of the percentage of 12th graders who graduate academically prepared to be successful in entry level college coursework in reading and mathematics. Given the current percentage of SC 8th graders achieving proficiency or above in 8th grade reading (30%) and 8th grade math (27%), South Carolina has a challenge in meeting the goal of 90% of students achieving the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate* vision of "college ready" by 2035. Given the gap of at least 60% points, the rate of improvement over the next 17 years would require an annual rate of improvement of at least 3.5 percentage points. While SC has set a specific long-term goal of an annual 5% point improvement in percentage of graduates who reach college and career readiness, the rate of performance on NAEP since 2000 is as follows;

- 4th grade mathematics 2000 percent proficient or above was 16% compared to current performance of 32% reveals an annual average gain of less than 1%.
- 8th grade mathematics 2000 percent proficient or above was 15% compared to current performance of 27% reveals an annual gain of less than 1%.
- 4th grade reading 1998 percent proficient or above was 22% compared to current performance of 29% reveals an annual average gain of less than 1%.
- 8th grade reading 1998 percent proficient was 22% compared to current performance of 30% reveals an annual gain of less than 1%.

For more information on NAEP, see state snapshots on pages 32-34 in this report.

ACT Performance

South Carolina is one of 17 states that measures 100% of high school juniors with the ACT. Current state composite average is 18.7 compared to national average of 21. The percentage of students meeting ACT benchmarks on ACT is 25% compared to national average of 39%. Given that the increasing employability requirements project 65% of South Carolina graduates will need some type of postsecondary credential to qualify for jobs that pay a living wage, SC has a challenge to reach the 2035 vision for college and career readiness detailed in the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate*.

See page 35 for additional information

College Remediation Rates

College remediation rates vary significantly in South Carolina from as high as 70% or more students needing remediation in some community and technical colleges to less than 10% in universities. The ACT results reveal the best overall average prediction of remediation rates in South Carolina. Given that only 25% of graduates achieve ACT college readiness benchmarks and an estimated 60-65% of high school graduates apply to postsecondary institutions, the practical overall remediation rate for the state would range between 45-55%. This presents a challenge for the vision of 90% of graduates achieving college, career, and citizenship readiness.

South Carolina Kindergarten Readiness

For the first time in over a decade, all students entering kindergarten in the public schools of South Carolina in school year 2017-18 were administered a kindergarten readiness assessment during the first 45 days of the school year, the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA).[1] The purpose of the KRA is to provide information to stakeholders at the local, regional, and state levels about how prepared children are for kindergarten.

Many states are using kindergarten readiness as a predictor of future success in schooling. The current readiness rates in SC are 36% overall with a significant gap between white (44%) and black (27%) students. Given that the kindergarten class of 2017-18 will graduate in 2030 and beyond, this cohort of

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[1] The Ready for Kindergarten: Early Childhood Comprehensive Assessment System is a partnership between the Maryland State Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Education, in collaboration with the Johns Hopkins University Center for Technology in Education and WestEd, that is supported by a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant from the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (CFDA 84.412A) and by a Race to the Top grant from the U.S. Department of Education (CFDA 84.395).

students will require significant interventions throughout their public school career to reach the vision of the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate* goal of 90% college, career, and citizenship ready.

For more information, see pages 36-38 in report

Why Is This Important to South Carolina – article in Post and Courier, April 12, 2018

Volvo needs to fill 700 jobs — but fewer than 4 percent of applicants meet basic requirements

Volvo is competing for workers with the region's other advanced manufacturing firms, such as a new Mercedes-Benz Vans plant in North Charleston, which is looking to hire 1,300 people by 2020. ReadySC, a worker training program that's part of the state's technical college system, is in charge of recruiting and training most new Volvo employees. Recent workshops for residents interested in jobs at the plant drew overflow crowds. "We are going to put a lot of jobs in place here," said Katarina Fjording, the Volvo vice president in charge of getting the Berkeley County plant on the ground.

But only about 4 percent of the people who apply through ReadySC have the basic skills, education and aptitude needed to make it through the screening process. That includes scoring well on a standard assessment test, making a good impression during telephone and in-person interviews, completing a training program and passing a drug test and background check.

Recommendations

Given the purpose of the task force, I would recommend the first meeting result in a brief summary of strengths, weakness, and opportunities for improvement of the state ESSA plan based on this review, information from the SC State Department of Education, data from the Education Oversight Committee staff, and other relevant information presented by task force members and other sources.

I am including two reports that will form the basis for the May 31 meeting with the task force. These reports come from two groups that South Carolina has collaborated in the recent past. The structure of the May 31 meeting would focus on the components recommended in these reports and how future revisions to the state ESSA plan and other key support systems could incorporate these recommendations.

Southern Regional Education Board - *States Need Accountability Systems That Value Both "Cs" in College and Career Readiness*: Gene Bottoms and Kirsten Sundell, Southern Regional Education Board

Six Key Areas and Improvement Strategies

- Building Accountability Systems That Value Career Readiness
- Defining and Measuring College Readiness
- Defining and Measuring Academic Career Readiness
- Defining and Measuring Technical Career Readiness
- Essential Elements of College- and Career-Ready Accountability Systems
- Other Policies and Practices That Support College and Career Readiness

National Conference of State Legislatures – *No Time to Lose: How to Build a World-Class Education System State by State*, August 2016.

ELEMENTS OF A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION SYSTEM

Children come to school ready to learn, and extra support is given to struggling students so that all have the opportunity to achieve high standards.

- Necessary resources ensure that all children enter the first grade with the cognitive and non-cognitive skills needed to master a first-grade curriculum set to high standards.

- Once students are in school, resources are distributed so that students who may find it harder to meet high standards will be given the extra resources—especially highly effective teachers—they need to succeed.

A world-class teaching profession supports a world-class instructional system, where every student has access to highly effective teachers and is expected to succeed.

- The highly professional teaching force is well-prepared, well-compensated and well-supported throughout their careers.

- Teachers support a well-designed instruction system that includes high standards for learning, a core curriculum created by world-class teachers, and high-quality assessments designed to measure complex skills demanded by the standards and curriculum.

- All students are expected to be ready for college and career, and all educators are expected to get them there.

A highly effective, intellectually rigorous system of career and technical education is available to those preferring an applied education.

- A powerful, hands-on applied curriculum is built, requiring strong academic skills.

- The system has no "dead ends," and pathways to university are clear and always available.

- Schools partner with employers to ensure that high standards are set for the students and provide on-the-job training and learning opportunities to enable them to reach those standards.

Individual reforms are connected and aligned as parts of a clearly planned and carefully designed comprehensive system.

- All policies and practices are developed to support the larger education system.
- The coherent system of education is designed to ensure that every student meets the same goal of college and career readiness.

Excerpts from South Carolina ESSA plan submitted October, 2017

Source: https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/stateplan17/scconsolidatedstateplan.pdf

South Carolina is an ambitious state. While our state has one of the highest poverty rates in the nation, South Carolina is determined to work and is capable of working its way to the forefront of twenty-first century industry while ensuring that its citizens – rural and urban – have equitable access to opportunity. Education plays a critical role in this upward climb for each and every South Carolinian, and we, as a citizenry, are united around what is necessary for all South Carolina students to succeed. Organizations as diverse as the South Carolina Association of School Administrators, the South Carolina Council on Competitiveness, and the South Carolina General Assembly have come together to adopt the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate as a common vision for all South Carolina children, beginning with Pre–K education and continuing through college and careers. The Profile of the South Carolina Graduate outlines the world-class knowledge, world-class skills, and life and career characteristics necessary for children and our state to be successful in the global marketplace.

Profile of the South Carolina Graduate

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

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

Life and Career Characteristics
- Integrity
- Self-direction
- Global perspective
- Perseverance
- Work ethic
- Interpersonal skills

transformSC
tomorrow won't wait for our students

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

an initiative of NEW CAROLINA

The Profile of the South Carolina Graduate serves as the foundation for the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) mission, which is that all South Carolina students graduate prepared for success in college, careers, and citizenship. This mission drives all agency activity, from the design of its integrated accountability system, to revision of the state's diploma pathways, to the streamlining of teacher certification processes.

SCDE Strategic Initiatives

The SCDE has built a state-level framework which connects agency work to statewide student learning and to achievement of the Profile to support South Carolina's mission that students graduate prepared

for success in college, careers, and citizenship. Agency goals are focused around three main strategic initiatives as outlined below.

Personalized and Competency-Based Learning

Personalized learning supports *all* students as they seek to achieve the knowledge, skills, and characteristics identified in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate. By fostering student ownership of learning, by restructuring learning around quality evidence of competence, by developing learner profiles and learning pathways, and by adopting flexible learning environments, each student's educational experience is tailored to meet his or her unique strengths, needs, and interests. The SCDE is working with all South Carolina districts across a variety of personalized and competency-based learning models to ensure that every district in the state includes at least one school fully committed to personalized and/or competency-based learning.

Expanded Learning

All students must have the opportunity to develop world-class knowledge, world-class skills, and life and career characteristics. Providing this opportunity requires a diversity of options outside the traditional school day or building. Ensuring that all students – not just those in high income, high capacity districts – have access to career and technical education, virtual options, world languages, the arts, advanced credit in middle school, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and dual credit coursework is critical to achieving the SCDE's mission. The SCDE is working to increase the number of students achieving industry credentials and to increase the number of students earning a silver certificate or higher on the National Career Readiness Certificate; is partnering with high needs schools to supply needed virtual programming; and is increasing professional learning support needed by teachers to provide world-class content. The state is also committed to early childhood education as a way of supporting kindergarten readiness before school even begins. Community partnerships, especially with the faith-based community, are an important component in supporting opportunity and success in expanded learning options for students. The SCDE is working to measure, support, and increase high-quality expanded learning opportunities and partnerships across the state.

School Improvement

Educational success should not be a function of zip code or history. In the 2016–17 academic year, South Carolina instituted a tiered support system and the use of transformation coaches for identified high-need schools in the state. Under ESSA, these schools are designated for Comprehensive Support and Intervention (CSI) or Targeted Support and Intervention (TSI). Instead of allowing schools and districts to flounder on their own, the SCDE is providing direct support and guidance based on a portfolio of evidence-based school turnaround strategies. The SCDE is not afraid to take management of long-term failing schools identified in the top tier of intervention, but all interventions are put in place with the goal of building local success and capacity for long-term positive change. Furthermore, school improvement across the state is supported by having all districts engage in high-quality systems review and accreditation and by ensuring that the state has a world-class accountability system and a central data warehouse which can be used across programs and agencies to improve educational processes and outcomes in the state. The SCDE is working to improve data feedback loops and to improve reporting with all districts while focusing attention on the improvement of academic performance in districts and schools identified as low-performing.

Three additional strategic initiatives revolve around district support, individual educator support, and internal excellence. To support innovation in educational systems, internally and across the state, the SCDE has instituted indicators of quality and a strong continuous improvement process to ensure successful delivery of strategic initiatives. The SCDE indicators of quality, in the form of evidence- and research-based rubrics, inform overall agency and individual office self-assessment. These indicators include the following:

- *Return on Investment:* Educational productivity including efficient achievement of educational outcomes, as well as the institution of strong, equitable fiscal processes;
- *Fidelity:* Knowledge of and adherence to law, guidance, and/or program design;
- *Stakeholder Satisfaction:* Stakeholder perception that communication and implementation have been purposeful, responsive to stakeholder needs, two-way, supportive, and impactful; and
- *Effectiveness:* Educational productivity, including efficient achievement of educational outcomes and/or program effectiveness as well as institution of strong, equitable fiscal processes and risk management.

The SCDE believes that targeted strategic initiatives guided by these indicators of quality will result in strong statewide learning outcomes which will ensure that all students meet the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate and that all students graduate prepared for success in college, careers, and citizenship.

Throughout development of its ESSA consolidated state plan, the SCDE has worked to ensure strong communication and consultation with a diversity of stakeholders across the state. Exit survey data from three statewide stakeholder meetings provided in Appendix A show stakeholders grew in their understanding and engagement with ESSA over time and viewed the SCDE's consultation process favorably. Appendix B documents, the SCDE's outreach at over 120 meetings between December 2015 and July 2017, and Appendix C provides a summary of SCDE responses to stakeholder feedback.

South Carolina Transformational Goals and Benchmarks

To meet the profile of the South Carolina Graduate, South Carolina will set two overarching long term goals and report on the progress of key indicators along the continuum of a student's journey through the system from birth through career.

Goal One

By 2035, 90 percent of students will graduate "college, career, and citizenship ready" as outlined in the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate*.

Goal Two

Beginning with the graduating class of 2020, the state, each district, and each high school in South Carolina should increase annually by 5 percent, the percentage of students who graduate ready to enter postsecondary education to pursue a degree or national industry credential without the need for remediation in mathematics or English.

Statewide Leading Metrics

Post-Secondary
Percentage of graduates earning a living wage 5 years after graduating

Post-Secondary
Percentage of South Carolinians with a post-secondary degree

Post-Secondary
Percentage of freshman in credit-bearing courses

High School
Percentage of students graduating in four years college and career ready

Kindergarten–Grade 8
Percentage of 3rd, 5th and 8th graders Meeting or Exceeding Expectations on ELA and mathematics

Birth–Age 4
Percentage of kindergarten students who enter ready to learn

10

Independent Reviews of State ESSA Plans

US Department of Education –. The following link provides access to status of South Carolina's ESSA plan. The initial Secretary of Education letter to State Superintendent Spearman can be accessed here and the peer review feedback. As of date of this review, the SC ESSA plan had not been approved. https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/stateplan17/map/sc.html

Bellwether Education Partners - Bellwether Education Partners, in partnership with the Collaborative for Student Success, convened an objective, independent panel of accountability experts to review ESSA state plans. A diverse group of peer reviewers with a range of political viewpoints and backgrounds were asked to review each state's accountability plan with an eye toward capturing strengths and weaknesses**.** https://bellwethereducation.org/publication/independent-review-essa-state-plans

Partners for Each and Every Child - *Have State Engagement Efforts Under ESSA Been Meaningful?* We are excited to share ***Process and Protest***, a report exploring how thoughtful, meaningful, structured, and ongoing engagement among a variety of stakeholders is essential to unlocking the promise of ESSA and advancing excellence with equity in our schools. http://partnersforeachandeverychild.org/process-and-protest/

Fordham Institute - The Every Student Succeeds Act grants states more authority over their accountability systems than did No Child Left Behind, but have they seized the opportunity to develop school ratings that are clearer and fairer than those in the past? Our new analysis examines the plans submitted by all fifty states and the District of Columbia, and whether they are strong or weak (or in-between) in achieving three objectives:

- Assigning annual ratings to schools that are clear and intuitive for parents, educators, and the public;
- Encouraging schools to focus on all students, not just their low performers; and
- Fairly measuring and judging all schools, including those with high rates of poverty.

https://edexcellence.net/publications/rating-the-ratings

Center for American Progress - Sixteen states and Washington, D.C., submitted their ESSA plans—which cover multiple provisions of the law—to the U.S. Department of Education for review during the first submission window. The Center for American Progress reviewed these submissions for their school classification systems and school improvement plans. The summary provides critical context and methodology. The 17 individual state fact sheets break down each state's school classification system in addition to school improvement timeline, grant structure, types of schools identified, and key improvement strategies. https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education-k-12/reports/2017/08/04/436963/school-accountability-first-round-essa-state-plans/

Alliance for Excellent Education - Under ESSA, states received flexibility to chart their own path to educational success, but they must submit a plan to the U.S. Department of Education explaining how they will reach these goals. To summarize the strengths—and shortcomings—for each state's plan, the Alliance created a series of one-page quick-reference guides for anyone looking to determine how well a state's plan will address the needs of its students.

These ESSA Equity Dashboards use a red-yellow-green light–system to rate state plans on several indicators, including long-term goals, accountability provisions, and school rating systems. https://all4ed.org/essa/essa-in-your-state/

National Center for Teacher Quality - The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) released its analyses of educator equity in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) state plans of 16 states and the District of Columbia. These analyses highlight the strengths and opportunities in states' work to ensure that low-income and minority students are not disproportionately taught by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers. NCTQ designed these analyses, along with our ESSA Educator Equity Best Practices Guide, to support states' educator equity work under the ESSA. https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/ESSAAnalysesPressRelease

Education Strategy Group and Advance CTE - The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) presented states with a significant opportunity to design their K-12 education systems to prepare all students for college and careers. States used this occasion to set and execute a vision that provides students with multiple, meaningful opportunities to engage in pathways that build awareness of career opportunities, provide real-world instruction and lead to credentials with labor market value. Education Strategy Group and Advance CTE reviewed all state plans to examine and document the extent to which states took advantage of the ESSA opportunity to improve career readiness in grades K-12. http://edstrategy.org/resource/career-readiness-the-every-student-succeeds-act/

Education Trust - At The Education Trust we've been closely following the decisions states are making in their new accountability systems. Our analysis of state ESSA plans focused tightly on three questions we believe are especially important in determining whether a plan is likely to promote opportunity and improve outcomes for all groups of students:
1. Are states keeping student learning front and center?
2. Do school ratings reflect how schools are doing for all groups of students?
3. Is the state being honest about which schools need to take steps to improve for one or more student groups?

https://edtrust.org/resource/trends-state-essa-plans/

Achieve - The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) provided an opportunity for states to rethink their accountability systems and redesign them to emphasize multiple measures of student and school performance, including academic achievement, student growth, graduation rates, improving the English language proficiency of English learners, and other indicators of school quality and student success. States took different approaches to developing their state plans under ESSA. Many states took the opportunity to develop a new vision and strategy for their education systems and designed an accountability system to incent improved student outcomes. Other states approached the development of a state ESSA plan as an exercise to meet new federal requirements for their accountability systems.

This series of briefs analyzes states' widely-varying approaches to long-term goal setting around graduation rates and academic achievement, science and STEM education, inclusion of on-track to graduate measures, and – coming soon – college and career readiness measures in their accountability systems. For a more detailed look at all components of each state's accountability plan as submitted

under ESSA, and to compare two states' plans, take a look at our online tracker. Details on each state's long-term goals can be viewed in the goals tracker. https://www.achieve.org/accountability-in-essa

Results for America - The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) gives states, school districts, and schools new flexibility to design K-12 education systems that reflect local needs and priorities. In exchange, ESSA encourages, and in some cases requires, the use of evidence-based approaches and continuous improvement to drive improved outcomes. In May 2017, Results for America's Evidence in Education Lab team identified in its Leverage Points report 13 key opportunities for states to advance the use of evidence, evaluation, and continuous improvement through their implementation of ESSA. In July 2017, RFA published an initial analysis of the first 17 ESSA consolidated state plans submitted to the U.S. Department of Education (USED) that highlighted the extent to which these states propose to use the 13 leverage points to strengthen how they use evidence, evaluation, and continuous improvement. https://results4america.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/RFA-ESSA-50-State-Report_final.pdf

New Leaders - In their plans to carry out the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), states universally recognize what New Leaders has long known: leadership changes everything. In fact, every single state has committed to directing some portion of its federal funding into investments in leadership—from teacher leaders to principals and superintendents. file:///C:/Users/comhl/Desktop/consulting/sc%20accountability/2018.NL_.ESSA-State-Plan-Policy-Brief-FINAL.pdf

Highlights from External Reviews of the SC Every Student Succeeds Act Plan

Secretary of Education Letter to Superintendent Spearman – 1/17/18

Items That Require Additional Information or Revision in South Carolina's Consolidated State Plan
Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies (LEAs)

A.4.ii.a: Minimum N-Size for Accountability
In its State plan, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) states that it will use an nsize of 20 for student subgroups. Later in its State plan, SCDE states that if there are fewer than 30 students with scores in the current and previous year, the school rating will be based on the all students group progress score for the other academic indicator. The ESEA requires each State to describe the minimum number of students that the State determines are necessary to be included for the purposes of accountability. While the State may have different n sizes for different aspects of its accountability system, it is unclear what n-size SCDE intends to use, specifically whether it will use 20 or 30 as its n-size. Therefore, it is unclear whether SCDE meets this requirement.

A.4.iii.a.1: Academic Achievement Long-term Goals
ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(a)(i)(I) requires State-designed long-term goals that show improved academic achievement for all students and separately for each subgroup of students. Because its long-term goals for academic achievement do not show improved academic achievement for each subgroup of students, SCDE has not met the statutory requirements for the establishment of longterm goals for academic achievement.

A.4.iii.a.2: Academic Achievement Measurements of Interim Progress
In its State plan, SCDE does not provide measurements of interim progress by subgroup for mathematics and reading/language arts proficiency. The ESEA requires States to establish ambitious long-term goals, including measurements of interim progress toward meeting such goals, for all students and separately for each subgroup for improved academic achievement, as measured by proficiency on annual mathematics and reading/language arts assessments.

A.4.iii.b.1: Long-term Goals for Four-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate
ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(a)(i)(I) requires State-designed long-term goals that show improvement in high school graduation rates for all students and separately for each subgroup of students. Because its long-term goals for high school graduation rates do not show improvement for each subgroup of students, SCDE has not met the statutory requirements for the establishment of longterm goals for high school graduation rates.

A.4.iii.b.3: Measurements of Interim Progress
In its State plan, SCDE does not provide measurements of interim progress by subgroup for high school graduation rates. The ESEA requires States to establish ambitious long-term goals, including measurements of interim progress toward meeting such goals, for all students and separately for each subgroup for high school graduation rates.

A.4.iv.c: Graduation Rate Indicator
In its State plan, under "students included in the rating," SCDE states that it will not include students who withdraw in the graduation rate. The ESEA requires that a State use the criteria in section 8101(25) to calculate the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate, which provides the specific scenarios in which a student may not be counted in the denominator (e.g., documentation confirming that the student has transferred out, emigrated to another country, or transferred to a prison or juvenile facility, or is deceased). All other students must be included in the denominator when

calculating the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate. Therefore, it is unclear whether SCDE has meets the statutory requirement for calculation of the graduation rate indicator.

A.4.iv.e: School Quality or Student Success Indicator(s)
The ESEA requires that a State must include at least one School Quality or Student Success indicator that is valid, reliable, comparable, and statewide with the same indicator or indicators used for each grade span, as such term is determined by the State. Among the indicators proposed in this section, SCDE proposes a Positive & Effective Learning Environments Engagement Tool but it is unclear whether the State intends to use this indicator in its system of annual meaningful differentiation beginning in the 2017-2018 school year. If SCDE intends to include this indicator, the ESEA requires the State to fully describe the indicator in order to demonstrate that the statutory requirements are met. If SCDE is not intending to use the indicator at this time, SCDE should clarify the timeline for inclusion in the system of annual meaningful differentiation and amend its plan with the necessary information to demonstrate that the statutory requirements are met before the indicator may be included in the accountability system.

A.4.v.c: If Applicable, Different Methodology for Annual Meaningful Differentiation
In its State plan, SCDE describes a number of public schools on p. 64 and in Appendix F that will be excluded from the State's system of annual meaningful differentiation and notes that the proposed alternative methodologies for annual meaningful differentiation are still under development by the Education Oversight Committee (EOC). The ESEA requires that the State establish a system of meaningfully differentiating, on an annual basis, all public schools in the State. Because SCDE does not clearly describe how all public schools in the State will be included in its system of annual meaningful differentiation, and whether the different methodology is limited to schools for which an accountability determination cannot otherwise be made, it is unclear whether SCDE meets the statutory requirements.

A.4.vi.c: Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools—Additional Targeted Support Not Exiting Such Status
The ESEA requires the State to identify for comprehensive support and improvement schools that do not exit additional targeted support within a State-defined period of time. In its State plan, SCDE describes identifying additional targeted support schools that do not exit due to low performing subgroups based on "graduation rate, college and career readiness, and student engagement for two consecutive identification cycles." Therefore, it appears that SCDE is not identifying schools for additional targeted support and improvement based on all indicators. The ESEA requires the State to identify for additional targeted support any school that has a subgroup of students that, on its own, would lead to identification as performing as poorly as the lowest five percent of Title I schools on all indicators.

A.4.vi.e: Targeted Support and Improvement Schools—"Consistently Underperforming" Subgroups
In its State plan, SCDE defines "consistently underperforming subgroups," as schools with one or more "historically underperforming groups" at or below the bottom 10 percent of schools for three consecutive years across all indicators. SCDE further defines "underperforming subgroups" as "those *historically under-achieving groups* who are performing in the bottom 10 percent across all accountability metrics" (emphasis added). The ESEA requires that the State identify any school for targeted support and improvement where any subgroup meets the State's definition of "consistently underperforming." In addition, it is not clear from the State's description that it will annually identify schools, if any, with consistently underperforming subgroups for targeted support and improvement.

A.4.vi.f: Targeted Support and Improvement Schools— Additional Targeted Support
In its State plan, SCDE describes identifying schools for additional targeted support based on a subset of the indicators included in its accountability system that does not include the Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency indicator. The ESEA requires a State to describe a

methodology for identifying schools for additional targeted support (schools in which the performance of any subgroup of students, on its own, would lead to identification under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D)(i)(I) using the State's methodology under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D)) that is based on all indicators.

A.4.viii.b: Exit Criteria for Schools Receiving Additional Targeted Support
The ESEA requires a State to establish statewide exit criteria for schools identified for additional targeted support, which shall be satisfied within a State-determined number of years. It is not clear in the plan what the State-determined number of years will be.

Title II, Part A: Supporting Effective Instruction
D.5: Data and Consultation In its State plan, SCDE describes its comprehensive efforts to engage stakeholders in developing
its State plan. SCDE also describes how it will convene the State Human Capital Team to examine data, and SCDE will share data and strategies with an SCDE-external stakeholder group for consultation. However, SCDE does not address how it will use ongoing consultation with all required stakeholder groups. The ESEA also requires a State to describe how it will use ongoing consultation with all required stakeholders consistent with ESEA section 2101(d)(3), which includes teachers, principals, other school leaders, paraprofessionals (including organizations representing such individuals), specialized instructional support personnel, charter school leaders (in a State that has charter schools), parents, community partners, and other organizations or partners with relevant and demonstrated expertise in programs and activities designed to meet the purpose of Title II.

Title III, Part A, Subpart 1: English Language Acquisition and Language Enhancement
E.1: Entrance and Exit Procedures
In its State plan, SCDE does not describe consultation with LEAs representing the geographic diversity of the State. The ESEA requires a State to describe how the SEA will establish and implement, with timely and meaningful consultation with LEAs representing the geographic diversity of the State, standardized, statewide entrance and exit procedures.

Title V, Part B, Subpart 2: Rural and Low-Income School Program
H.1: Outcomes and Objectives
The ESEA requires a State to provide information on program objectives and outcomes for activities under Title V, Part B, Subpart 2, including how the SEA will use funds to help all students meet the challenging State academic standards. While SCDE provides a description of its program objectives and outcomes under the ESEA generally, SCDE does not identify its objectives and outcomes for activities under the Rural and Low-Income School program (RLIS) (*e.g.*, which of the objectives and outcomes under the ESEA programs in 5222(a) are the objectives and outcomes for RLIS; or objectives and outcomes tailored specifically to SCDE's plans for RLIS). The ESEA requires a State to include a description of how it will use RLIS funds to help all students meet the challenging State academic standards

H.2: Technical Assistance
The ESEA requires a State to describe how it will provide technical assistance specifically to LEAs eligible for funds under the RLIS program to help such agencies implement the activities described in ESEA section 5222. While SCDE provides a description of how it will provide technical assistance to LEAs generally, this description does not specifically address technical assistance for RLIS-eligible LEAs. In particular, the ESEA requires a State to include information about how the SEA will provide technical assistance to RLIS-eligible LEAs (*i.e.*, the methods and strategies). Additionally, the ESEA requires that the description specifically address how the SEA's technical assistance will assist RLIS-eligible LEAs' implementation of RLIS activities.

Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Title VII, Subtitle B
I.7: Assistance from Counselors
While SCDE describes the professional development provided to school counselors on the requirement to provide assistance to homeless students, and that all students participate in a series of Individual Graduation Plan conferences beginning in the eighth grade, the plan does not describe how homeless youths will receive assistance from counselors to advise such youths, and prepare and improve the readiness of such youths for college. The McKinney-Vento Act requires a State to describe how homeless youths will receive assistance from counselors to advise such youths and prepare and improve the readiness of such youths for college.

Bellwether Education Partners, in partnership with the Collaborative for Student Success, convened an objective, independent panel of accountability experts to review ESSA state plans. We sought out a diverse group of peer reviewers with a range of political viewpoints and backgrounds, and we asked them to review each state's accountability plan with an eye toward capturing strengths and weaknesses.

Overall Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths: What are the most promising aspects of the state's plan? What parts are worth emulating by other states?

South Carolina's accountability system is built on indicators that are aligned with college and career readiness. The state deserves credit for including science and social studies in its accountability system, which will help signal the critical importance of a well-rounded education for all students. The state places a significant emphasis on the growth of schools' lowest-performing students. The state will also report the percentage of graduates who are college ready, career ready, or college and career ready.

South Carolina's accountability system goes above and beyond ESSA's minimum requirements for identifying schools for comprehensive support and improvement. As a result, it is likely that the state will identify a greater number of very low-performing schools.

In addition, its exit criteria for schools identified for comprehensive support requires schools to demonstrate some improvement rather than simply no longer qualify for the designation.

South Carolina deserves credit for taking a strong stance on the 95 percent assessment participation rate. The state counts untested students as a zero for determining achievement ratings. Schools that miss the participation requirement cannot receive the highest rating in achievement or in the summative rating. In addition, the state threatens the loss of Title I funds if the problem persists.

Weaknesses: What are the most pressing areas for the state to improve in its plan? What aspects should other states avoid?

South Carolina's plan could be improved in a number of ways. The state's goals are overly complex and disconnected from the accountability system. The state's approach to awarding points and assigning corresponding ratings to indicators and schools is also unnecessarily complicated. In its current form, this approach likely overemphasizes high-performing students and runs the risk of overlooking or

masking underperformance and achievement gaps. This is particularly likely because student subgroup performance is not included in the state's rating system.

South Carolina should provide greater detail about its plans to support and intervene in struggling schools. For example, the state says it plans to award all of its 7 percent set-aside for school improvement activities through a formula, but it does not specify how it would implement that formula. Moreover, the state would have had a stronger plan if it had used some portion of that money for competitive grants to the schools and districts with the strongest improvement plans. This step could materially improve the quality of interventions in identified schools. The state's identification criteria for targeted support schools and exit criteria both deserve further clarification and confirmation that sustained improvement is likely.

Plan Components

Each state's plan has been rated on a scale of 1 ("This practice should be avoided by other states") to 5 ("This could be a potential model for other states").

Goals: Are the state's vision, goals, and interim targets aligned, ambitious, and attainable? Why or why not? **SC Rating - 2**

South Carolina sets a strong overarching vision by articulating a comprehensive "profile for a graduate" that includes world-class knowledge, world-class skills, and life/career characteristics. While the vision is aspirational, it is not easy to measure against student performance. The goals the state proposes to meet that vision are overly complex, the time span is long, and there is some ambiguity about the interim target numbers. Finally, it does not appear that performance against the goals matters in the state's accountability system.

Standards and Assessments: Is the state's accountability system built on high-quality standards and assessments aligned to college and career readiness? Why or why not? **SC Rating - 3**

South Carolina is in the midst of a transition on its assessments and will have fully transitioned by 2018. Its assessments are aligned to its standards, which are in turn aligned to college- and career-readiness benchmarks. The plan clearly explains its standards-setting process and how it aligned the new assessments to the standards, but it is too early to tell if its assessments and standards alignment will set students up for success.

Indicators: Are the state's chosen accountability indicators aligned to ensure targets and goals are met and likely to lead to improved educational outcomes for students? Why or why not? **SC Rating - 3**

South Carolina's selection of indicators and weights (with the exception of English language proficiency) are generally strong, but there are concerns about how performance on the indicators translates into an overall rating for schools.

Academic Progress: Has the state created sufficient incentives for schools to care about both student proficiency and student growth over time? Why or why not? **SC Rating - 3**

In its performance index, South Carolina will weight student growth comparably to academic achievement and will give significant weight to both. However, neither measure places much weight on students reaching grade-level standards. To measure achievement, South Carolina plans to use a

performance index that rewards performance at all levels, but especially for students scoring at the highest levels. The particular points system South Carolina has chosen de-emphasizes the proficiency threshold and may result in overlooking or undervaluing underperforming students.

All Students: Does the state system mask the performance of some subgroups of students, or does it have adequate checks in place to ensure all students (including all subgroups of students) receive a high-quality education? Why or why not? **SC Rating - 2**

South Carolina's rating system does not specifically take into account the performance of student subgroups. The state's growth measure, which applies to elementary and middle schools, is split 50-50 between the growth of all students and the growth of the bottom quintile. This approach will encourage schools to prioritize the academic growth of its lowest-performing students; still, it does not specifically incorporate student subgroups.

Identifying Schools: Is the state's plan to identify schools for comprehensive and targeted support likely to identify the schools and student groups most in need? **SC Rating** - **3**

South Carolina's policy to identify schools for comprehensive schools is strong. However, the state's targeted support policy warrants further attention.

Supporting Schools: Are the state's planned interventions in comprehensive and targeted support schools evidence-based and sufficiently rigorous to match the challenges those schools face? Why or why not? **SC Rating** - **3**

South Carolina has developed a Tiered Support and Intervention Matrix to guide the implementation of improvement strategies based on a school's relative need. Schools are assigned a tier from 1 to 4 based on key elements within the school. These tiers correspond with interventions and supports the school improvement team will pursue to raise achievement in that school. The higher the tier, the less autonomy and more evidence required to support the intervention.

Exiting Improvement Status: Are the state's criteria for schools to exit comprehensive and targeted support status sufficient to demonstrate sustained improvements? Why or why not? **SC Rating - 3**

The peers felt that South Carolina's exit criteria for comprehensive support was strong; however, the targeted support exit criteria policy warrants improvement.

Continuous Improvement: Has the state outlined a clear plan to learn from its implementation efforts and modify its actions accordingly, including through continued consultation and engagement of key stakeholders? If not, what steps could the state take to do so? **SC Rating** - **2**

In its plan, South Carolina provides some general information about its continuous improvement activities. For example, the state plans to evaluate annually the results of the district strategic plans to assess the effectiveness of interventions. This could eventually be positive, but it is difficult to tell from the plan.

Partners for Each and Every Child – this report analyzed the stakeholder engagement process in the first 17 states that submitted ESSA plans in April 2017. South Carolina was not included in the review.

Fordham Institute - The Every Student Succeeds Act grants states more authority over their accountability systems than did No Child Left Behind, but have they seized the opportunity to develop school ratings that are clearer and fairer than those in the past? Our new analysis examines the plans submitted by all fifty states and the District of Columbia, and whether they are strong or weak (or in-between) in achieving three objectives:

- Assigning annual ratings to schools that are clear and intuitive for parents, educators, and the public;
- Encouraging schools to focus on all students, not just their low performers; and
- Fairly measuring and judging all schools, including those with high rates of poverty.

To determine whether South Carolina's proposed ESSA accountability system accomplishes these three objectives, this analysis evaluates its state plan, as submitted to the U.S. Department of Education on October 13, 2017, as explained below.

Are the labels or ratings for schools clear and intuitive for parents, educators, and the public? South Carolina's plan is **strong** on this point because it proposes to annually rate schools with a system that combines a one-hundred-point scale with text labels that are easy to understand. This model immediately conveys to all observers how well a given school is performing.

Does the rating system encourage schools to focus on all students? There are two primary ways for state accountability systems to encourage schools to focus on all students: (1) use a performance index or scale scores in place of proficiency rates when measuring achievement and (2) measure the growth of all students. South Carolina receives a **strong** rating because those two components constitute 60 percent of schools' annual ratings. Performance indexes count for 40 percent, which encourages schools to look beyond those pupils who are near the cutoff for proficiency. And a measure of growth for all students constitutes another 20 percent of schools' summative ratings, which should also lead schools to heed the educational needs of every child.

Is the rating system fair to all schools, including those with high rates of poverty? South Carolina earns a **medium** here because academic growth will constitute 40 percent of schools' annual ratings—split evenly between a measure of growth for all students and a measure of students scoring in the bottom quartile of achievement. Growth measures gauge changes in pupil achievement over time, independent of prior achievement, and are therefore less correlated with poverty—thus affording high-poverty schools the opportunity to earn positive ratings.

Center for American Progress – review of first 17 ESSA plans submitted in April 2017. South Carolina was not reviewed.

Alliance for Excellent Education - Under ESSA, states received flexibility to chart their own path to educational success, but they must submit a plan to the U.S. Department of Education explaining how they will reach these goals. To summarize the strengths—and shortcomings—for each state's plan, the Alliance created a series of one-page quick-reference guides for anyone looking to determine how well a state's plan will address the needs of its students.

AN ANALYSIS OF SOUTH CAROLINA'S ESSA PLAN

This dashboard analyzes South Carolina's plan under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), specifically its commitment to equity and excellence and its compliance with the law. This analysis is not all-encompassing but rather focuses on the indicators most essential for advancing equitable educational opportunities for all students. South Carolina submitted its plan on October 13, 2017; full text is available at https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/stateplan17/scconsolidatedstateplan.pdf. View ESSA equity dashboards for other states at www.all4ed.org/essa.

ESSA EQUITY DASHBOARD

SOUTH CAROLINA

LONG-TERM GOALS

Academic Achievement

🟡 90% of students proficient in reading and math by 2035
Yellow

Academic Achievement by Student Subgroup

🟢 Same long-term goals for each subgroup
Green

4-Year Cohort High School Graduation Rate

🟡 90% of students graduating by 2035
Yellow

English Language Proficiency

🟢 Accounts for student's initial proficiency level in setting student goals with maximum of 5 years to attain proficiency
Green

SUPPORT AND INTERVENTION

Definition of "Consistently Underperforming" Used to Identify Schools for Targeted Support

🟡 Definition is meaningfully different from statutory definition of "additional targeted support," but a student subgroup must fail all indicators to trigger intervention
Yellow

High School Graduation Rate Used to Identify Schools for Comprehensive Support

🟢 4-year cohort graduation rate
Green

! CONCERN

South Carolina defines student proficiency as earning a "D" or better on end-of-course exams

ACCOUNTABILITY

Disaggregation of Student Subgroups

🟢 Disaggregates subgroups by race, ethnicity, income, English language proficiency, and disability status
Green

N-Size

🟡 20 students
Yellow

School Quality and Student Success (SQSS) Indicator

🟡 Preparing for success (performance in science and social studies), college and career readiness, and positive and effective learning environment (survey tool still under development) for all schools
Yellow

High School Graduation Rate

🟢 Does not use extended-year cohort graduation rates
Green

Weighting of Academic Indicators

🟢 95% weight for high schools; 90% weight for elementary and middle schools
Green

Testing Participation Rates

🟢 No credit for untested students; requires schools that do not meet 95% participation rate to develop plan to increase participation
Green

Inclusion of Student Subgroup Performance

🔴 Subgroup performance does not affect school ratings
Red

! CONCERN

College and career readiness indicator may appear inflated because it does not account for students who drop out or who do not graduate in 4 years

★ BONUS

South Carolina will lower a school's rating one step if it fails to meet 95% participation rate for 3 consecutive years

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Note: Some indicators do not apply to some states and do not appear in the analysis included on the front of this document. The Alliance for Excellent Education set the parameters associated with the green, yellow, and red designations.

LONG-TERM GOALS

Academic Achievement

- 🟢 Green: 75% or more of all students proficient on statewide assessments by 2030 or equivalently rigorous goal
- 🟡 Yellow: 60–74.9% of all students proficient by 2030 or 75% or more proficient by 2031–39 or equivalently rigorous goal
- 🔴 Red: Less rigorous goals and/or longer timeline than 2040

Academic Achievement by Student Subgroup

- 🟢 Green: Same long-term goals for each subgroup or similarly ambitious commitment to closing achievement gaps
- 🟡 Yellow: Less ambitious goals but requires higher rates of growth from lower-performing subgroups
- 🔴 Red: Same or similar rates of academic growth for all subgroups

4-Year Cohort High School Graduation Rate

- 🟢 Green: 90% or more of students graduating by 2030
- 🟡 Yellow: 85–89.9% of students graduating by 2030 or 90% or more graduating by 2031–39
- 🔴 Red: Less rigorous goals and/or longer timeline than 2040

Extended-Year Cohort High School Graduation Rate

- 🟢 Green: At least 3 percentage points higher than 4-year cohort rate goal or 1 percentage point higher if 4-year cohort rate goal is at least 90%
- 🟡 Yellow: 1–2 percentage points higher than 4-year cohort rate goal
- 🔴 Red: Goals are the same or state does not set goals for each cohort rate

English Language Proficiency

- 🟢 Green: Accounts for initial age/grade or proficiency level in setting student targets with maximum timeline of no more than 6 years to achieve proficiency
- 🟡 Yellow: Accounts for initial age/grade or proficiency level with maximum timeline of 7 years to achieve proficiency
- 🔴 Red: Does not account for initial age/grade or proficiency level and/or sets maximum timeline of 8 or more years to achieve proficiency

ACCOUNTABILITY

Disaggregation of Student Subgroups

- 🟢 Green: State does not use super-subgroup or uses it only in addition to disaggregated subgroups for school ratings and/or identifying schools for support
- 🔴 Red: State uses super-subgroups instead of required subgroups for school ratings and/or identifying schools for support

N-Size

- 🟢 Green: N-size for accountability of 15 or fewer students
- 🟡 Yellow: N-size for accountability of 16–25 students
- 🔴 Red: N-size for accountability of 26 or more students

School Quality and Student Success (SQSS) Indicator

- 🟢 Green: Evidence-based statewide SQSS measures are disaggregated by student subgroup
- 🟡 Yellow: Inconclusive evidence for SQSS measures or significant measures are in development but still statewide and disaggregated by student subgroup
- 🔴 Red: No evidence for SQSS measures and/or not statewide or disaggregated by student subgroup

High School Graduation Rate

- 🟢 Green: Exclusively uses or gives more weight to 4-year cohort graduation rate
- 🟡 Yellow: Uses 4- and extended-year cohort rates and weights 4-year rate equally or less than other rates
- 🔴 Red: Does not use 4-year cohort rate or uses another unlawful graduation rate calculation

Weighting of Academic Indicators

- 🟢 Green: 75% or more weight on academic indicators
- 🟡 Yellow: 50–74% weight on academic indicators
- 🔴 Red: Less than 50% weight on academic indicators or weight is unclear in plan

Testing Participation Rates

- 🟢 Green: No credit for untested students or similarly rigorous consequences
- 🟡 Yellow: Less rigorous consequences that have limited implications for accountability
- 🔴 Red: Does not specify consequences for untested students

Inclusion of Subgroup Performance

- 🟢 Green: Schools receive lower rating if they have a struggling subgroup or subgroup performance is an independent and substantial portion of rating index
- 🟡 Yellow: Subgroups have lesser but still meaningful effect on a school's rating
- 🔴 Red: Subgroups have little to no effect on a school's rating

SUPPORT AND INTERVENTION

Definition of "Consistently Underperforming" Used to Identify Schools for Targeted Support

- 🟢 Green: Definition is meaningfully different from "additional targeted support" (ATS) and triggers intervention based on 2 or fewer indicators
- 🟡 Yellow: Definition is meaningfully different from ATS and triggers intervention based on 3 or more indicators
- 🔴 Red: Definition is not meaningfully different from ATS or does not comply with ESSA

High School Graduation Rate Used to Identify Schools for Comprehensive Support

- 🟢 Green: 4-year cohort graduation rate
- 🟡 Yellow: 5-year cohort graduation rate
- 🔴 Red: 6-year (or longer) cohort graduation rate

National Center for Teacher Quality – South Carolina was not reviewed in the report.

Education Strategy Group and Advance CTE **–** The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) presented states with a significant opportunity to design their K-12 education systems to prepare all students for college and careers. States used this occasion to set and execute a vision that provides students with multiple, meaningful opportunities to engage in pathways that build awareness of career opportunities, provide real-world instruction and lead to credentials with labor market value. Education Strategy Group and Advance CTE reviewed all state plans to examine and document the extent to which states took advantage of the ESSA opportunity to improve career readiness in grades K-12.

While a number of states defined a college-and career-ready graduate, only 13 states actually connected their long-term goals to that vision. This is a missed opportunity for bringing alignment across K-12 and postsecondary education. Leading examples from round 2 include;

- **South Carolina** connects its goals to the ***Profile of a South Carolina*** graduate. First, by 2035, the state seeks to have 90 percent of graduates meeting that definition. Second, beginning with the graduating class of 2020, South Carolina aims for the state, each district, and each high school to annually increase the percentage of students who graduate ready to enter postsecondary education without remediation by 5 percent.

Criteria from report:
Career Readiness in Vision/Goals – SC yes
Career Readiness in accountability system – SC yes
Career Readiness indicator publicly reported – SC yes
Plans to adopt future career readiness indicator – SC yes
Discussion in Title II – SC no
Explicit plans in Title II – SC no
Use of Title IV to support career readiness – SC no
Explicit use of funds to support career readiness through SSAE – SC no
Prioritization of career readiness in community grants – SC no
Title I DSS set aside used to support career readiness – SC no

Education Trust - At The Education Trust we've been closely following the decisions states are making in their new accountability systems. Our analysis of state ESSA plans focused tightly on three questions we believe are especially important in determining whether a plan is likely to promote opportunity and improve outcomes for all groups of students:
- Are states keeping student learning front and center?
- Do school ratings reflect how schools are doing for all groups of students?
- Is the state being honest about which schools need to take steps to improve for one or more student groups?

No specific mention of South Carolina in the report.

Results for America - The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) gives states, school districts, and schools new flexibility to design K-12 education systems that reflect local needs and priorities. In exchange, ESSA encourages, and in some cases requires, the use of evidence-based approaches and continuous improvement to drive improved outcomes. In May 2017, Results for America's Evidence in Education

Lab team identified in its Leverage Points report 13 key opportunities for states to advance the use of evidence, evaluation, and continuous improvement through their implementation of ESSA. In July 2017, RFA published an initial analysis of the first 17 ESSA consolidated state plans submitted to the U.S. Department of Education (USED) that highlighted the extent to which these states propose to use the 13 leverage points to strengthen how they use evidence, evaluation, and continuous improvement Across all 51 state plans (50 states plus the District of Columbia), we identified 162 promising practices for building and using evidence to improve student outcomes; all but five states included at least one promising practice. Here are the main findings from the analysis:

- Eleven states described in their plans the largest number of promising practices related to the 13 ESSA evidence leverage points: New Mexico (9), Minnesota (8), Connecticut (7), Delaware (7), Iowa (7), Rhode Island (7), Tennessee (7), Indiana (6), Massachusetts (6), Ohio (6), and Oklahoma (6).
- Only three states (Delaware, **South Carolina**, and Texas) described strong plans to prioritize the use of evidence and continuous improvement when exercising their authority to intervene in districts unable to improve their lowest-performing schools (Leverage Point 12); just nine states emphasized the use of evidence and continuous improvement in the design of their school improvement applications (Leverage Point 5); and only 14 states highlighted plans to base funding allocations at least in part on the proposed use of evidence (Leverage Point 4).
- No state fully articulated a clear vision for using and building evidence outside of Title I school improvement (e.g., in ESSA Title II and Title IV), although 17 states did include promising approaches to advancing evidence-based strategies under these titles.

South Carolina is instituting a new set of indicators of quality in the form of evidence and research-based rubrics to inform statewide, programmatic, and local self-assessment of progress toward successful delivery of strategic initiatives. All LEAs, in addition to programmatic SEA leaders, will engage in these regular systems reviews informed by data collected and warehoused centrally (pp. 2–3). Several states are designing multitiered systems of support that focus in part on supporting the thoughtful use of evidence, data, and continuous improvement. For example, North Dakota's system includes five components: assessment, data-driven decision making, multilevel evidence-based instruction, infrastructure and support mechanisms, and fidelity and evaluation. CSI and TSI schools will also be assigned a liaison from the state's School Improvement and Intervention Office, as well as a partner success manager through the School Improvement Network (p. 76). Similar approaches are planned in **South Carolina** (pp. 66–71) and Arkansas (pp. 54–58), which includes a focus on support at the LEA level.

South Carolina has designed a catalog of state-approved evidence-based practices and interventions from which identified schools are required to select based on their tiered level of need and support. Schools and districts will receive support in finding, implementing, and monitoring evidence-based interventions by Transformation Coaches, but the amount and frequency of support—as well as the required level of evidence for interventions—will vary based on the assigned tier (p. 71).

In Washington (pp. 52–53) and New Hampshire (p. 51), non-exiting schools will be required to undergo a new comprehensive needs assessment and use the results to amend their improvement plans to (1) address reasons for failing to meet exit criteria, including whether interventions were implemented with fidelity and quality; (2) continue addressing any previously identified or new resource inequities; and (3) include additional evidence-based interventions supported by strong or moderate levels of evidence. Similarly, **South Carolina** (p. 70) and Wyoming (p. 26) will require CSI schools that fail to meet exit criteria to amend their improvement plans to include evidence-based interventions supported by moderate or strong evidence.

In **South Carolina**, an SEA-appointed support liaison will be paired with LEAs serving a significant number or percentage of identified schools to help carry out technical assistance activities such as

systems-level capacity reviews, plan reviews and revisions, evaluations of implementation and impact of plan strategies, and guidance resources on selecting and monitoring implementation of evidence-based practices (pp. 72–73).

New Leaders - In their plans to carry out the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), states universally recognize what New Leaders has long known: leadership changes everything. In fact, every single state has committed to directing some portion of its federal funding into investments in leadership—from teacher leaders to principals and superintendents.

- **52** states, including DC and Puerto Rico intend to invest in leadership
- **24** states plan to use the Title II 3 percent set-aside for school leadership1
- **46** states identify, require, or prioritize evidence-based strategies to support school leadership or school improvement

No specific mention of SC other than inclusion in bullets above.

South Carolina 2017 NAEP Results

Overall Results

- In 2017, the average score of fourth-grade students in South Carolina was 234. This was lower than the average score of 239 for public school students in the nation.
- The average score for students in South Carolina in 2017 (234) was lower than their average score in 2015 (237) and was higher than their average score in 2000 (220).
- The percentage of students in South Carolina who performed at or above the NAEP *Proficient* level was 32 percent in 2017. This percentage was not significantly different from that in 2015 (36 percent) and was greater than that in 2000 (18 percent).
- The percentage of students in South Carolina who performed at or above the NAEP *Basic* level was 75 percent in 2017. This percentage was smaller than that in 2015 (79 percent) and was greater than that in 2000 (59 percent).

Compare the Average Score in 2017 to Other States/Jurisdictions
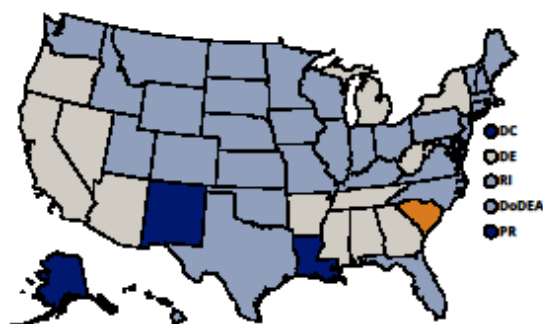
In 2017, the average score in South Carolina (234) was

- lower than those in 34 states/jurisdictions
- higher than those in 5 states/jurisdictions
- not significantly different from those in 13 states/jurisdictions

DoDEA = Department of Defense Education Activity (overseas and domestic schools)

Results for Student Groups in 2017

Reporting Groups	Percentage of students	Avg. score	Percentage at or above Basic	Percentage at or above Proficient	Percentage at Advanced
Race/Ethnicity					
White	50	245	86	45	9
Black	34	219	59	13	1
Hispanic	10	230	71	26	4
Asian	1	‡	‡	‡	‡
American Indian/Alaska Native	#	‡	‡	‡	‡
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	#	‡	‡	‡	‡
Two or more races	4	232	73	31	4
Gender					
Male	52	235	75	34	6
Female	48	233	75	30	5
National School Lunch Program					
Eligible	62	226	67	22	3
Not eligible	36	248	88	51	11

\# Rounds to zero.
‡ Reporting standards not met.
NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding, and because the "Information not available" category for the National School Lunch Program, which provides free/reduced-price lunches, is not displayed. Black includes African American and Hispanic includes Latino. Race categories exclude Hispanic origin.
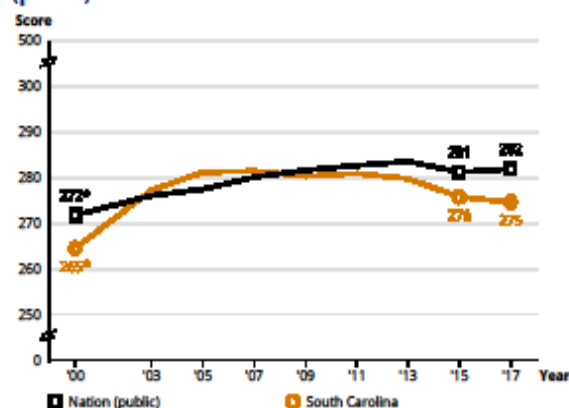
Achievement-Level Percentages and Average Score Results

* Significantly different ($p < .05$) from state's results in 2017. Significance tests were performed using unrounded numbers.
NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

Average Scores for State/Jurisdiction and Nation (public)

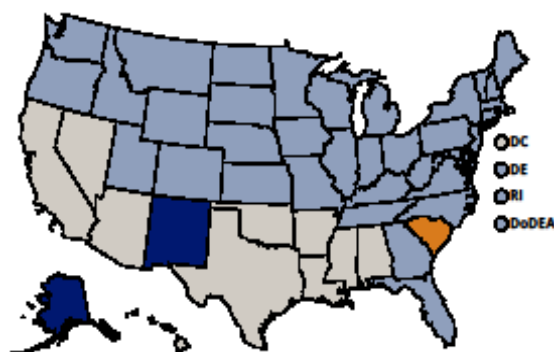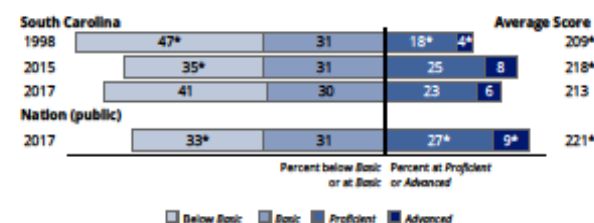* Significantly different ($p < .05$) from 2017. Significance tests were performed using unrounded numbers.

Score Gaps for Student Groups

- In 2017, Black students had an average score that was 26 points lower than that for White students. This performance gap was not significantly different from that in 2000 (30 points).
- In 2017, Hispanic students had an average score that was 15 points lower than that for White students. Data are not reported for Hispanic students in 2000, because reporting standards were not met.
- In 2017, male students in South Carolina had an average score that was not significantly different from that for female students.
- In 2017, students who were eligible for free/reduced-price school lunch, an indicator of low family income, had an average score that was 22 points lower than that for students who were not eligible. This performance gap was not significantly different from that in 2000 (26 points).

Overall Results

- In 2017, the average score of eighth-grade students in South Carolina was 275. This was lower than the average score of 282 for public school students in the nation.
- The average score for students in South Carolina in 2017 (275) was not significantly different from their average score in 2015 (276) and was higher than their average score in 2000 (265).
- The percentage of students in South Carolina who performed at or above the NAEP *Proficient* level was 26 percent in 2017. This percentage was not significantly different from that in 2015 (26 percent) and was greater than that in 2000 (17 percent).
- The percentage of students in South Carolina who performed at or above the NAEP *Basic* level was 62 percent in 2017. This percentage was not significantly different from that in 2015 (65 percent) and was greater than that in 2000 (53 percent).

Compare the Average Score in 2017 to Other States/Jurisdictions
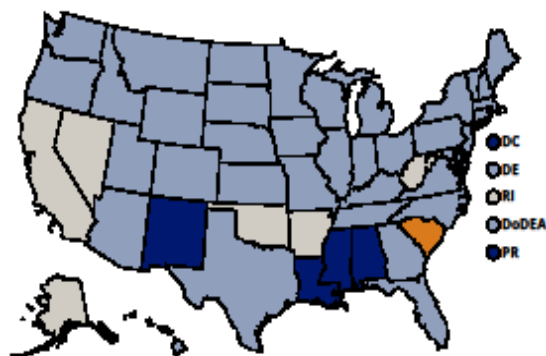
In 2017, the average score in South Carolina (275) was
- lower than those in 39 states/jurisdictions
- higher than those in 6 states/jurisdictions
- not significantly different from those in 7 states/jurisdictions

DoDEA = Department of Defense Education Activity (overseas and domestic schools)

Results for Student Groups in 2017

Reporting Groups	Percentage of students	Avg. score	Percentage at or above Basic	Percentage at or above Proficient	Percentage at Advanced
Race/Ethnicity					
White	51	288	78	38	9
Black	34	253	37	8	1
Hispanic	9	272	64	19	3
Asian	2	‡	‡	‡	‡
American Indian/Alaska Native	#	‡	‡	‡	‡
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	#	‡	‡	‡	‡
Two or more races	3	278	71	27	4
Gender					
Male	51	274	61	26	7
Female	49	275	64	26	5
National School Lunch Program					
Eligible	54	263	50	14	2
Not eligible	44	290	79	42	10

\# Rounds to zero.
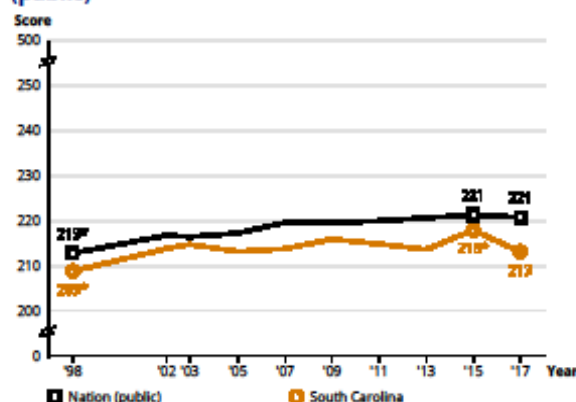‡ Reporting standards not met.
NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding, and because the "Information not available" category for the National School Lunch Program, which provides free/reduced-price lunches, is not displayed. Black includes African American and Hispanic includes Latino. Race categories exclude Hispanic origin.

Achievement-Level Percentages and Average Score Results

* Significantly different (p < .05) from state's results in 2017. Significance tests were performed using unrounded numbers.
NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

Average Scores for State/Jurisdiction and Nation (public)

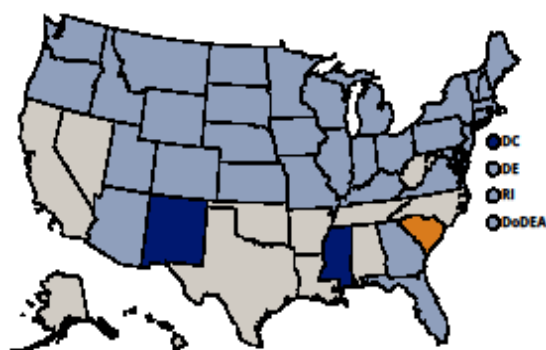* Significantly different (p < .05) from 2017. Significance tests were performed using unrounded numbers.

Score Gaps for Student Groups

- In 2017, Black students had an average score that was 35 points lower than that for White students. This performance gap was not significantly different from that in 2000 (30 points).
- In 2017, Hispanic students had an average score that was 16 points lower than that for White students. Data are not reported for Hispanic students in 2000, because reporting standards were not met.
- In 2017, male students in South Carolina had an average score that was not significantly different from that for female students.
- In 2017, students who were eligible for free/reduced-price school lunch, an indicator of low family income, had an average score that was 28 points lower than that for students who were not eligible. This performance gap was not significantly different from that in 2000 (29 points).

The Nation's Report Card

Overall Results

- In 2017, the average score of fourth-grade students in South Carolina was 213. This was lower than the average score of 221 for public school students in the nation.
- The average score for students in South Carolina in 2017 (213) was lower than their average score in 2015 (218) and was higher than their average score in 1998 (209).
- The percentage of students in South Carolina who performed at or above the NAEP *Proficient* level was 29 percent in 2017. This percentage was not significantly different from that in 2015 (33 percent) and was greater than that in 1998 (22 percent).
- The percentage of students in South Carolina who performed at or above the NAEP *Basic* level was 59 percent in 2017. This percentage was smaller than that in 2015 (65 percent) and was greater than that in 1998 (53 percent).

Compare the Average Score in 2017 to Other States/Jurisdictions

In 2017, the average score in South Carolina (213) was

- lower than those in 38 states/jurisdictions
- higher than those in 2 states/jurisdictions
- not significantly different from those in 11 states/jurisdictions

DoDEA = Department of Defense Education Activity (overseas and domestic schools)
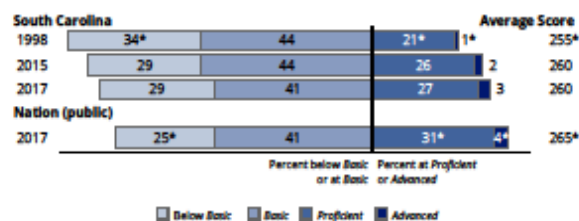
Results for Student Groups in 2017

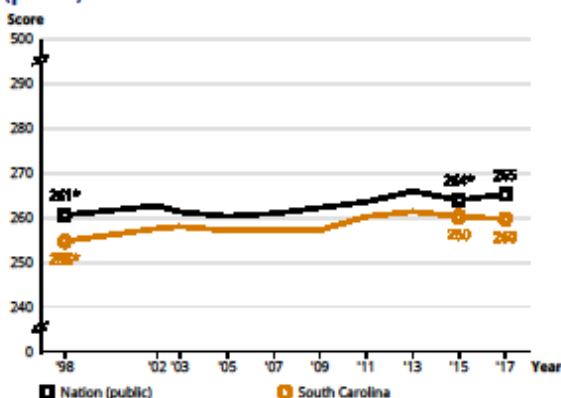| Reporting Groups	Percentage of students	Avg. score	Percentage at or above Basic	Percentage at or above Proficient	Percentage at Advanced
Race/Ethnicity					
White	50	225	72	40	9
Black	34	196	40	15	2
Hispanic	11	205	51	22	5
Asian	1	‡	‡	‡	‡
American Indian/Alaska Native	#	‡	‡	‡	‡
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	#	‡	‡	‡	‡
Two or more races	4	224	71	37	9
Gender					
Male	51	210	55	28	6
Female	49	217	63	31	7
National School Lunch Program					
Eligible	62	202	48	19	3
Not eligible	35	233	79	48	12

\# Rounds to zero.

‡ Reporting standards not met.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding, and because the "Information not available" category for the National School Lunch Program, which provides free/reduced-price lunches, is not displayed. Black includes African American and Hispanic includes Latino. Race categories exclude Hispanic origin.

Achievement-Level Percentages and Average Score Results

* Significantly different ($p < .05$) from state's results in 2017. Significance tests were performed using unrounded numbers.
NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

Average Scores for State/Jurisdiction and Nation (public)

* Significantly different ($p < .05$) from 2017. Significance tests were performed using unrounded numbers.

Score Gaps for Student Groups

- In 2017, Black students had an average score that was 29 points lower than that for White students. This performance gap was not significantly different from that in 1998 (29 points).
- In 2017, Hispanic students had an average score that was 20 points lower than that for White students. Data are not reported for Hispanic students in 1998, because reporting standards were not met.
- In 2017, female students in South Carolina had an average score that was higher than that for male students by 7 points.
- In 2017, students who were eligible for free/reduced-price school lunch, an indicator of low family income, had an average score that was 31 points lower than that for students who were not eligible. This performance gap was not significantly different from that in 1998 (29 points).

The Nation's Report Card

Overall Results

- In 2017, the average score of eighth-grade students in South Carolina was 260. This was lower than the average score of 265 for public school students in the nation.
- The average score for students in South Carolina in 2017 (260) was not significantly different from their average score in 2015 (260) and was higher than their average score in 1998 (255).
- The percentage of students in South Carolina who performed at or above the NAEP *Proficient* level was 30 percent in 2017. This percentage was not significantly different from that in 2015 (28 percent) and was greater than that in 1998 (22 percent).
- The percentage of students in South Carolina who performed at or above the NAEP *Basic* level was 71 percent in 2017. This percentage was not significantly different from that in 2015 (71 percent) and was greater than that in 1998 (66 percent).

Achievement-Level Percentages and Average Score Results

South Carolina	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced	Average Score
1998	34*	44	21*	1*	255*
2015	29	44	26	2	260
2017	29	41	27	3	260
Nation (public)					
2017	25*	41	31*	4*	265*

Percent below Basic or at Basic · Percent at Proficient or Advanced

☐ Below Basic ☐ Basic ■ Proficient ■ Advanced

* Significantly different (p < .05) from state's results in 2017. Significance tests were performed using unrounded numbers.
NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

Compare the Average Score in 2017 to Other States/Jurisdictions

○ DC
○ DE
○ RI
○ DoDEA

In 2017, the average score in South Carolina (260) was
☐ lower than those in 36 states/jurisdictions
■ higher than those in 3 states/jurisdictions
☐ not significantly different from those in 12 states/jurisdictions

DoDEA = Department of Defense Education Activity (overseas and domestic schools)

Average Scores for State/Jurisdiction and Nation (public)

* Significantly different (p < .05) from 2017. Significance tests were performed using unrounded numbers.

Results for Student Groups in 2017

Reporting Groups	Percentage of students	Avg. score	Percentage at or above Basic	Percentage at or above Proficient	Percentage at Advanced
Race/Ethnicity					
White	51	272	82	42	4
Black	34	241	52	12	#
Hispanic	9	256	66	27	3
Asian	2	‡	‡	‡	‡
American Indian/Alaska Native	#	‡	‡	‡	‡
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	#	‡	‡	‡	‡
Two or more races	3	267	79	34	3
Gender					
Male	51	254	66	25	2
Female	49	265	75	35	4
National School Lunch Program					
Eligible	56	249	61	19	1
Not eligible	42	274	84	45	5

\# Rounds to zero.
‡ Reporting standards not met.
NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding, and because the "Information not available" category for the National School Lunch Program, which provides free/reduced-price lunches, is not displayed. Black includes African American and Hispanic includes Latino. Race categories exclude Hispanic origin.

Score Gaps for Student Groups

- In 2017, Black students had an average score that was 31 points lower than that for White students. This performance gap was wider than that in 1998 (25 points).
- In 2017, Hispanic students had an average score that was 16 points lower than that for White students. Data are not reported for Hispanic students in 1998, because reporting standards were not met.
- In 2017, female students in South Carolina had an average score that was higher than that for male students by 11 points.
- In 2017, students who were eligible for free/reduced-price school lunch, an indicator of low family income, had an average score that was 25 points lower than that for students who were not eligible. This performance gap was not significantly different from that in 1998 (26 points).

SC Class of 2017 ACT Results

ACT PROFILE REPORT - State: SECTION I, EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Graduating Class 2017

Total Students in Report: 50,936

PAGE 6
Code 419999
South Carolina

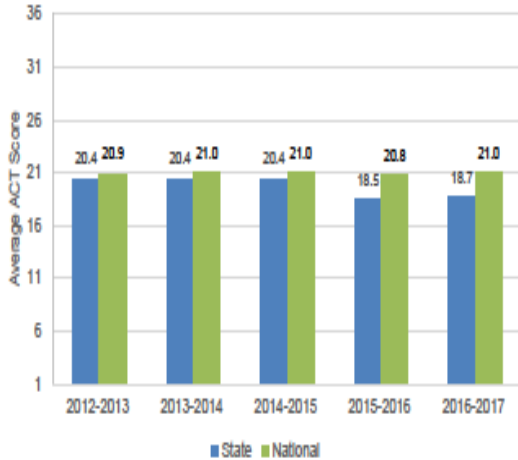**Figure 1.1. Average Composite Scores: 5 Years of Testing***

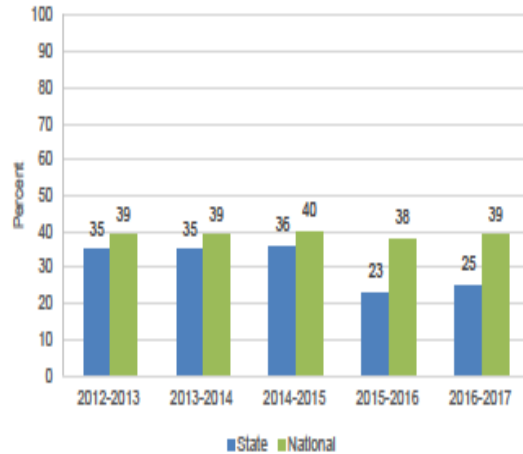**Figure 1.2. Percent Meeting 3 or 4 Benchmarks: 5 Years of Testing***

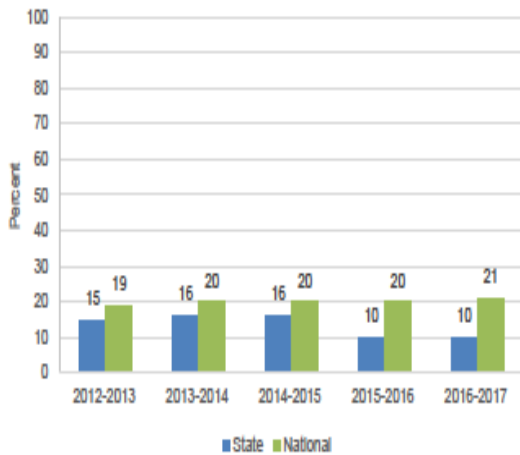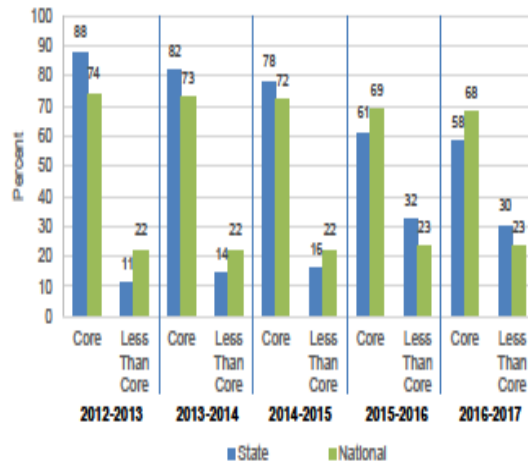**Figure 1.3. Percent Meeting STEM Benchmark: 5 Years of Testing***

Figure 1.4. Percent Taking A Core Curriculum: 5 Years of Testing*

* Missing columns in above graphs reflect years in which no students were tested.

35

South Carolina Kindergarten Readiness

For the first time in over a decade, all students entering kindergarten in the public schools of South Carolina in school year 2017-18 were administered a kindergarten readiness assessment during the first 45 days of the school year, the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA).[2] The purpose of the KRA is to provide information to stakeholders at the local, regional, and state levels about how prepared children are for kindergarten. [3] The assessment may not be used to deny a student admission to kindergarten. Instead, the results are used for the following objectives:

1. At the macro level, at the state, district and county level and pursuant to Section 59-152-33 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, the results should be used by policymakers to measure progress toward kindergarten readiness and by educators to inform instruction, to guide the expansion or improvement of early childhood programs, etc.
2. At the student level, the "results of the assessments and the developmental intervention strategies recommended or services needed to address each child's identified needs" are to be provided to teachers and parents to assist in the development of the child.

The KRA assesses four areas of early learning:

- Social Foundations- including social and emotional development, and approaches toward learning

- Mathematics

- Language and Literacy

- Physical Well-being and Motor Development

The assessment has three performance level descriptors (PLDS):

- Demonstrating Readiness: The child demonstrates foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him or her for instruction based on kindergarten standards.
- Approaching Readiness: The child demonstrates some foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him or her for instruction based on kindergarten standards.
- Emerging Readiness: The child demonstrates minimal foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him or her for instruction based on kindergarten standards.

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[2] The Ready for Kindergarten: Early Childhood Comprehensive Assessment System is a partnership between the Maryland State Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Education, in collaboration with the Johns Hopkins University Center for Technology in Education and WestEd, that is supported by a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant from the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (CFDA 84.412A) and by a Race to the Top grant from the U.S. Department of Education (CFDA 84.395).
[3] https://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Early-Learning/Kindergarten/Ohios-Kindergarten-Readiness-Assessment/Kindergarten-Readiness-Assessment-for-Data-Manager/KRA_Technical_Report_Addendum_2015_Final.pdf.aspx

In addition to South Carolina, the states of Maryland and Ohio administer annually the KRA. The results of the 2017 administration of KRA in SC are summarized in the following tables. Overall readiness levels at the county level can be found at: https://www.scprofile.com/
The EOC will publish district level data in June.

Percentage of Readiness Levels on KRA Tasks

Children	Emerging Readiness	Approaching Readiness	Demonstrating Readiness
Overall			
54,927	26%	38%	36%
Social Foundations			
54,927	28%	27%	45%
Language and Literacy			
54,927	23%	43%	34%
Mathematics			
54,927	31%	38%	31%
Physical Development and Well-Being			
54,927	28%	24%	48%

Percentage of Readiness Level on KRA Tasks by Ethnicity

Task	Children	Emerging Readiness	Approaching Readiness	Demonstrating Readiness
Overall				
African American	18,142	32%	41%	27%
Hispanic	5,466	39%	39%	22%
White	27,253	19%	37%	44%
Social Foundations				
African American	18,142	34%	28%	38%
Hispanic	5,466	35%	28%	37%
White	27,253	23%	26%	51%
Language and Literacy				
African American	18,142	28%	45%	27%
Hispanic	5,466	41%	40%	19%
White	27,253	17%	42%	41%
Mathematics				
African American	18,142	39%	41%	20%
Hispanic	5,466	45%	37%	18%
White	27,253	23%	37%	40%
Physical Development and Well-Being				
African American	18,142	33%	25%	43%
Hispanic	5,466	30%	26%	44%
White	27,253	26%	22%	52%

Source: Education Oversight Committee. Files provided by SC Department of Education to EOC on February 1, 2018.

SECTION 59-152-33. School readiness assessment.

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

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

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

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

HISTORY: 2014 Act No. 287 (H.3428), Section 3, eff June 18, 2014.

Appendix B

Revisions to the ESSA Accountability Plan proposed by the South Carolina Department of Education

<u>Recommendation 1</u> – Effective 2017-18

Include ALL AP and IB courses in the College and Career Ready metrics. The EOC recommendation only includes AP and IB courses in English, mathematics, science, and social studies, which excludes college level courses in the arts, technology, and world languages where students take examinations and earn passing scores that lead to college credit. These courses are not only key facets of the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate*, they are also rigorous college-level courses that integrate reading, writing, mathematics, and social science knowledge within the disciplines. They also represent fields of study where students can obtain viable skills that lead to careers in the state, nation, and world.

<u>Recommendation 2</u> – Effective 2017-18

In the career readiness metric for CATE completers with an <u>industry credential</u>, allow for 1) a national or <u>state-recognized</u> industry certification, or 2) a successful state-approved work-based learning exit evaluation from an employer, or 3) a state-approved end-of-pathway assessment to document career-readiness (Example: *Precision Exams, KOSSA* assessments, or other end-of-course assessments across CATE programs that document technical skill attainment). Southern Regional Education Board published *A Blueprint for College Readiness: Incorporating Measures of Career Readiness* where they document and endorse several states' approaches to validating authentic career readiness. All three options listed above were praised and are in use in other states. For example, Georgia allows both national and state-recognized industry certifications as well as work-based learning employee evaluations to document career readiness. Kentucky also uses state-approved, end-of-course exams entitled the Kentucky Occupational Skills Standards Assessment (*KOSSA*). The CATE programs in South Carolina that do not have a nationally-recognized industry credential include Cosmetology and Agriculture.

<u>Recommendation 3</u> – Effective 2017-18

Include social studies dual credit/enrollment courses in the courses that count for college readiness if a student earns a C or higher. The current EOC recommendation only includes English, mathematics, science, engineering and technology dual credit/enrollment courses to be counted for college-ready. There is no research to support the notion that college-level courses in history/social sciences are less rigorous, valuable, or viable for a student's intellectual development and global awareness. The *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate* specifically names the social sciences in the world class knowledge we expect students to attain. Additionally, AP and IB social studies/social science courses are already approved in the college ready metrics.

<u>Recommendation 4</u> – Effective 2018-19

Include a college and career readiness metric that is aligned to the outcomes of the SC Employability Credential and IDEA for students with moderate to severe disabilities to demonstrate career readiness aligned to their IEP goals and career transition plans. Although these students represent a statistically small population in South Carolina, they should be able to work in ways that are meaningful to them to become career ready. Career preparation is a central part of their high school curriculum, but the appropriate metrics to measure career readiness for these students are not a part of the four "career-ready" metrics in the current EOC proposal. Documentation of career readiness should include:

- ✓ A career portfolio that includes a multimedia presentation project;
- ✓ Work readiness assessment results that demonstrate the student is ready for competitive employment;

✓ Work-based learning/training that totals at least 360 hours

Recommendation 5 – Effective 2018-19

Develop a Student Success metric for elementary and middle school that measures student participation, progress and/or mastery in non-tested subjects aligned to the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate*. ESSA explicitly describes the expectation that students have access to a well-rounded education. The EOC recommendation for elementary and middle schools does not reflect opportunities for students to demonstrate progress and proficiency outside of English, mathematics, science, and social studies. This metric should include:

✓ Documented student participation and "meets or exceeds expectations" performance levels in Arts, Technology and/or STEM, World languages, Physical Education, and/or Character Education

Recommendation 6 – Effective 2018-19

Include a School Quality metric that documents continuous improvement initiatives and/or high quality curricular programs (*STEM, STEAM, Arts in Basic Curriculum, Primary Years International Baccalaureate Programme*, etc.) for schools that receive externally-validated scores on national or international program evaluation rubrics. First, schools and districts are intensely involved in continuous improvement initiatives that focus on specific priorities identified within the school and district and externally recommended by external review teams. School quality is documented by an external team on an international rubric across five high leverage standards of quality including mission and vision, governance and leadership, teaching and learning, resource management, continuous improvement which lead to a district Index of Educational Quality (IEQ) Score. Districts with higher IEQ scores indicate that the system is working to create the conditions necessary for effective teaching and learning. Second, the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate* highlights world class skills (critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and innovation, collaboration and teamwork, communication, and knowing how to learn) and world class characteristics (integrity, self-direction, global perspective, perseverance, work ethic, interpersonal skills). Student focus groups in South Carolina identified that students gain these skills and dispositions through project-based learning and other engaging curricular programs that are deeply embedded into the school instructional program. Students also gain these skills and dispositions through participation in extra-curricular, co-curricular, and athletic programs. Suggestions for this metric include:

✓ Differentiated points could be distributed using accreditation or school improvement scores (Ex. AdvancED rating) that are *at or above the state average*. The district IEQ score, which is a compilation of each school's rating, is compared to the state and national IEQ average.

✓ Initiatives, such as STEM certification, Arts in Basic Curriculum, Primary Years and Middle Years International Baccalaureate Programme, Lighthouse Status for Leader in Me, Learning Forward Designation, Partial Immersion Programs, etc. use external teams to validate high levels of curricular implementation in the school.

✓ Other student-centered measures of school quality can be obtained by analyzing the unduplicated student participation in a wide range of academic clubs and competitions, service learning programs, sports, and co-curricular programs.

Achievement Gap on SC Ready Mathematics 2017 and 2018
(Comparison of African American and White Students)

Grade 3	2017 % Students at Meets or above	2018 % Students at Meets or above
All Students	**52.5**	**55.7**
African American Students	**34.3**	**36.9**
White Students	**66.2**	**69.2**
Gap	**31.9**	**32.3**

Grade 4	2017 % Students at Meets or above	2018 % Students at Meets or above
All students	**46.4**	**48.1**
African American Students	**26.1**	**27.8**
White Students	**60.8**	**62.7**
Gap	**34.7**	**34.9**

Grade 5	2017 % Students at Meets or above	2018 % Students Meets or above
All students	**40.0**	**45.2**
African American students	**20.2**	**25.5**
White Students	**53.5**	**58.8**
Gap	**33.3**	**33.3**

The SC Education Oversight Committee is an independent, non-partisan group made up of 18 educators, business persons, and elected leaders. Created in 1998, the committee is dedicated to reporting facts, measuring change, and promoting progress within South Carolina's education system.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
If you have questions, please contact the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) staff for additional information. The phone number is 803.734.6148. Also, please visit the EOC website at www.eoc.sc.gov for additional resources.

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.