

AGENDA

SC Education Oversight Full Committee Retreat

Beaufort Memorial Hospital Education Center
990 Ribaut Road, Beaufort, SC 29902, 4th Floor

Sunday, August 11, 2024
2:00 P.M.

- I. Welcome.....April Allen
- II. Approval of Full Committee Minutes
for June 10, 2024.....April Allen
- III. Remarks from 2024 SC State Superintendent of the Year
Dr. Frank Rodriguez
Beaufort County School District
- IV. Presentations & Information Items:
Education Accountability in South Carolina.....Dana Yow &
Dr. Matthew Lavery
*Research questions and considerations in preparation of the 2025 Cyclical
Review of the Accountability System*
- V. EOC Strategic Plan UpdateEOC Staff

5 PM: Depart for Check-in at Beaufort Sea Island Best Western Inn, 1015 Bay St., Beaufort, SC 29902

6 PM: Dinner to follow at the Beaufort Sea Island Inn, Dolphin Room. Catering provided by Sea Eagle Market Catering

Note: If a member of the public desires to attend the meeting, please contact the EOC Office at (803) 734-6148 or via email at ftenell@eoc.sc.gov by close of business on August 9, 2024. Because the event will be held at a facility with strict safety protocols, prior registration is required as well as proper identification upon entering the facility.

- April Allen
CHAIR
- Brian Newsome
VICE CHAIR
- Terry Alexander
- Melanie Barton
- Russell Baxley
- Neal Collins
- Bob Couch
- Bill Hager
- Barbara B. Hairfield
- Kevin L. Johnson
- Sidney Locke
- Dwight Loftis
- Jeri McCumbee
- Melissa Pender
- Patty J. Tate
- C. Ross Turner, III
- Ellen Weaver

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
Full Committee Meeting
Minutes of the Meeting
June 10, 2024

Members Present (in-person or remote): April Allen, Melanie Barton, Russell Baxley, Dr. Bob Couch, Rep. Bill Hager, Barbara Hairfield, Sen. Kevin Johnson, Sen. Dwight Loftis, Jeri McCumbee, Melissa Pender, Sen. Ross Turner

EOC Staff Present: Tenell Felder, Gabrielle Fulton, Hope Johnson-Jones, Dr. Rainey Knight, Dr. Matthew Lavery, Dr. Jenny May, Dana Yow

Guest(s) Present: Dr. Matthew Ferguson, SCDE; Sally Cauthen, Consultant; Dr. Sara Jane Arnett, Consultant

EOC Executive Director Dana Yow opened the meeting and welcomed EOC committee member Jeri McCumbee as the new business appointee of Senator Greg Hembree.

Ms. Yow then asked for a motion to approve the April 8 full committee minutes. After the minutes were approved, Academic Standards and Assessments (ASA) subcommittee Vice Chair Barbara Hairfield was asked to give a report of the May 20th ASA subcommittee meeting.

Ms. Hairfield reported the ASA subcommittee received one information item from EOC Deputy Director Dr. Matthew Lavery on the cut score concordance of college readiness exams – specifically for the ACT and SAT. The subcommittee has received data on this topic and had discussions for several months with the goal of finding an equivalent score for both tests.

The subcommittee did not act on this item and expect to receive it as an action item in September.

Next, Ms. Hairfield reported that the ASA subcommittee approved the 2023 Report on the Educational Performance of Military Connected Students. The report found that military connected students outperformed their peers on all measures of academics.

Citing an increase in students having one parent die as a result of military service, one report recommendation was to monitor military connected students who have experienced loss or trauma and work with school-based liaisons with specialized training to both identify and effectively support these students.

Ms. Hairfield stated the report also indicated a lack of military student identifier collection protocol at the national level. As a result, states have difficulty in accurately capturing data on military connected students. It was recommended processes be put in place to accurately identify military connected students, and that if not implemented, the reporting accuracy would continue to have challenges. Recommendations for this include working to incentivize school reporting for military connected students within school district information systems.

Also included in the report was a recommendation to include military connected students as a filter on the SC Education Data Dashboard which would give the public access to the data. By surfacing this data publicly, districts that currently do not report will be incentivized to change data collection practices to improve data collection and quality.

Ms. Hairfield concluded her report and asked for a motion from the committee to approve the 2023 Report on the Educational Performance of Military Connected Students.

The motion carried as all were in favor.

Ms. April Allen then invited Dr. Bob Couch, chairman of the Education Improvement Act committee, to share the committee's report.

Dr. Couch stated he would share with the committee the findings and recommendations presented of the Teacher Loan Program (TLP) report. He stated he would be reporting on the governance of the program, funding, data collection and quality, and on the teacher pipeline.

Dr. Couch informed the committee that the EIA subcommittee met on May 20th and received an EIA budget update from Dr. Knight. He stated that at the retreat the committee should have the final information for the 2024-25 budget.

The 2024 TLP report was presented to the EIA subcommittee by Sally Cauthen, Consultant to the EOC.

The following points were presented in the governance findings:

- The TLP statute did not provide governance structure conducive to a single entity to have the authority to manage the program – including to take the actions for the TLP recommendations.
- Funding for all loan types have remained at the same level for 10 years or more.
- Balance in the revolving loan fund has more than doubled. This was suggestive of the programs perceived value to program participants.

The following point was presented in the data collection and reporting findings:

- The reporting process is labor intensive and paper driven, including self-reported data for some of the more significant data points.

The following points were presented in the Teacher Pipeline findings:

- The percentage of Alternative Certification programs and international teacher hires are the only categories of teacher hires that have increased over the past year.
- Program goals for African American and Male TLP applicants and recipients are not being met even though the respective thresholds are low.
- After two years of noticeable decline the number of students enrolled in bachelor and masters level education preparation programs for public and private institutions declined only slightly
- Clemson and USC have 1/3 of the overall enrollment of education prep programs. Clemson shows a 56.7% bachelor's enrollment increase since 2014, USC-Columbia a 28% decrease (but a slight uptick the last two years).
- Teacher cadets continue to be a significant source of TLP recipients.

Dr. Couch then presented the EIA subcommittee recommendations which included the following:

- The Teacher Loan Advisory Committee (TLAC) be directed to perform a critical review of the TLP report and submit to the EOC viable recommendations.
- A single entity be designated to direct the program and implement changes.

- The review of core program components for all three loan types, statutes, provisos and regulations governance approach, goals, loans and loan structure amounts.
- Establish clearly defined and targeted goals with measurable outcomes.

He then presented other recommendations that included consolidating type 2 and 3 funding with type 1 funding, streamlining and modernizing the TLP application process, and emphasizing methods to increase efforts for each component of the teacher pipeline and establish goals and expectations for each. Dr. Couch bought the recommendations for approval to the committee, after which Ms. Allen asked if there were any questions or comments.

Melanie Barton commented that the education field is facing multiple issues, citing nationwide teaching shortages. She suggested using the \$21 million revolving loan funds to incentivize more people to consider teaching, especially in rural communities. Barton also stated that a major problem is that no one entity is responsible for the TLP.

Senator Kevin Johnson asked how schools fund positions before ESSER funds. He noted he would need to be able to explain that to constituents.

Ferguson responded that it was not currently known how many teachers would be affected by the withdrawal of ESSER funds, but that a lot of the positions were created as new positions with ESSER funding.

Senator Dwight Loftis then asked how many of those positions were teaching positions.

Ferguson responded that it depended on how the district allocated their resources, but that many of those positions were coaches and interventionists.

In summary, Ms. Yow stated that the biggest recommendation to come out of the report is the EOC asking the TLAC to provide a report to the EOC on the Teacher Loan Program. She also suggested that the \$21 million in the RLF could be used to innovatively market the program or to market the teaching profession.

Allen asked if there were any other questions. As there were none, she asked for a motion to accept the report and recommendations from the EIA subcommittee.

The motion carried.

Next Dr. Jenny May and Dr. Rainey Knight were called forward to present the findings of the EOC's Beating the Odds Investigative Study (BTOIS).

Dr. Knight the presented the questions that drove data collection for BTOIS and explained the different phases of the study. The study will be carried out in two phases – the exploration phase and the confirmation phase. Each phase will be repeated at the middle and high school levels.

Dr. Knight shared that the partner schools selected to take part in the study had to meet the following criteria:

- Enrollment of more than 100 students.
- “Excellent” overall rating with no “Below Average” or “Unsatisfactory” indicator ratings.
- Poverty ratio greater than or equal to 77.6% based on average poverty index of elementary schools with an overall rating of “Below Average.”
- Open enrollment policies that do not permit admission based on application or criteria.

The partner schools for the elementary level were as follows: Cleveland Elementary School, Spartanburg 7 School District; Monaview Elementary School, Greenville School District; Latta Elementary School, Dillon 3 School District; Kelly Edwards Elementary School, Barnwell 29 School District; Mathews Elementary School, Greenwood 50 School District; Merrywood Elementary School, Greenwood 50 School District and Waterloo Elementary School, Laurens 55 School District.

Dr. Knight then referred to the BTOIS graphic which outlined themes that EOC staff observed at the partner schools. We talked about our interviews and the themes that emerged.

The themes included High Expectations (There is a solution-oriented focus present at the school. Principal, teachers, student, and community consistently hold belief in students and adults.); Strong Leadership (There is a strong principal present and a supportive superintendent.); School culture (Family environment. Coaching up through individualized professional development. Coaching out is an option when needed. Teachers feel empowered and their voices heard); Community culture (There is a strength-based perspective and strong communication); Effective Teachers-Strong Tier 1 Instruction (Classroom teachers deliver high quality instruction with high quality resources), and Consistent Use of Data (Data usage is visible in the school. Data drives instruction with sense of urgency).

Next, Dr. Knight stated that students holding high expectations believed they could do the work and that teachers had empowered their students to be able to do the work. The high expectations adults held meant that they did not see poverty as a factor in whether or not a child would be able to succeed. Teachers also provided “bell to bell” instruction with a “laser like” focus on instruction.

Dr. Knight then introduced the next theme: a strong school leadership team. This team consists of the instructional leadership team, strong principal and a supportive superintendent. She stated that of the leadership team, a strong principal was the most crucial aspect. Characteristics of strong principal observed during the study are as following: visibility in school and in the community, clear communication, approachable, supportive of staff, ability to use data for student success and have the ability to “coach up or coach out.”

Dr. Knight also noted that teachers expressed trust and respect for their leadership.

In conclusion for her section, Dr. Knight spoke of the superintendent’s role to support the principal, be knowledgeable of what is happening at the school, and to set reasonable high expectations. She also stressed the importance of the superintendent being seen in the community.

Next, Dr. May discussed the findings in school culture from the Beating the Odds Investigative Study. The study found that the culture at the partner schools reflected the following characteristics: strong relationships and authentic care for the community, teachers feeling heard and valued by school administration, professional development for staff is individualized and incorporated through “coaching up,” and celebration for success is balanced with consequences.

Dr. May then showed photos from schools visited during the study that showcased what school culture looked like in BTOIS partner schools. In one photo, Dr. May pointed out that school character posters were in English and Spanish which reflected the school culture valuing the community culture. In another photo, Dr. May showed how school signage was used to create a common culture in the school.

Next, Dr. May discussed the importance of BTOIS partner schools also having a strong community culture. She defined this as having strong relationships and utilization of all available resources in the community. She also defined it as the school valuing its community and not supplanting values and the existing culture. For specific examples of community culture, Dr. May showed photos from a community reading night she attended where books were supplied in English and Spanish for students. She also referred to a school that partnered with a local church to fund a math lab for students.

The next theme discussed was effective teachers and strong Tier 1 instruction for which teachers deliver high quality instruction with high quality resources. Other characteristic of this theme included preserved instructional time and longitudinal grade level planning.

Consistent use of data was the next theme observed at BTOIS partner schools. Dr. May stated that schools needed to monitor and know where their student are and to monitor progress. She recalled that in BTOIS partner schools, the following characteristics were observed: visible data usage, evidence of routine data meetings and progress monitoring, data-driven instruction, and a value and use of the accountability system for continuous quality improvement.

Dr. May referred to a specific principal who used data to also monitor students' patterns such as being picked up late or requests for additional food.

Following this Dr. May discussed the next steps of the BTOIS which includes a confirmatory analysis with additional qualifying BTOIS schools and an upcoming exploratory analysis for high schools and middle schools.

Questions and comments were then accepted.

Ms. Barton commented that the themes presented in the study were indicative of a well-functioning organization that knows their objective, problem solves, communicates and is data driven and asked the committee to consider how to duplicate its measures. She stated concern over keeping it going because of burn out that school principals experience. She also stated the need for principals and schools to be recognized for the hard work that they do.

Dr. Knight shared that the results of the study would be shared at SCASA by Drs. May and Lavery. She also stressed teachers using their instructional time effectively.

Dr. Couch then stated that having been a principal for ten years, he came to realize the importance of establishing relationships with teachers. He stated that what was revealed in the study concerning the importance of the school culture, leadership and standards was on target with what he experienced.

Melissa Pender commented that the report was powerful and that the importance of student self-efficacy and school culture stood out to her during the report. She asked if EOC staff saw any commonality in Tier 1 instruction beyond "bell-to-bell" instruction and goal setting.

Dr. Knight replied there was evidence of LETRS training, though not all schools were involved in LETRS. She stated it was evident that teachers felt responsibility for all students. Dr. May added that while there was not an overall uniformity in the instruction, EOC staff did observe progress monitoring. She also stated that she saw evidence in every school that when a teacher needed to supplement instruction after seeing that a child needed additional support, they were able to get the assistance needed to do so.

Ms. Yow stated they also observed Montessori instruction in some of the schools visited.

Ms. Pender then asked if the schools selected for this part of the study would be observed for a number of years or if new schools would be added.

Dr. Knight responded that these schools would be followed but that new schools would be added as well based on 2024 report cards. She also stated they are looking to add elementary and middle schools. She stated that for the confirmatory phase, the initial partner schools would be reviewed.

Ms. McCumbee then asked if EOC staff noted parental involvement in the visited schools and if they noted any behavioral issues.

Dr. May responded that a focus group of parents at one of the schools indicated that there was not enough parental involvement while the teachers at that same school regarded the parent involvement as fine. She noted this as an example of the differing opinions on the topic. She also added that in general, EOC staff did see a good bit of parental involvement.

Dr. Knight noted the importance of parents forming relationships with their students/ teachers.

This marked the conclusion of the presentation.

Next, Ms. Allen asked Dr. May to present to committee her findings for the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Fund Report.

Dr. May shared the timeline of the ECENC application process for schools. She then showed a graphic of the participating schools across the state noting that the upstate region had the most ECENC grants awarded at 670 and the most money per student.

She also noted that all CERRA regions had an increase in the number of grants though the funding decreased.

The EOC recommendations for the ECENC program were as follows:

- Convene the advisory committee of the ECENC, which is a requirement of Act 247.
- Offer summative state assessments to ECENC students in public schools.
- Consider the communication around the ECENC program and other scholarships.

Dr. May then asked if there were any questions.

Ferguson asked who should ask schools if they are interested in SC Ready, reiterating that the SC Department of Education's position was that any child could access SC Ready. He said if any schools in the program were trying to access SC Ready, that they could work to make it happen.

Senator Loftis asked for clarification if parent would go through the school to administer the SC assessment to which Ferguson replied yes.

That concluded Dr. May's presentation.

Following this, Ms. Yow was asked to present the recommendations from the SC K-12 Military Readiness Task Force.

She recalled that the task force was assembled in response to the vision statement adopted by the EOC on December 11, 2023 and that in January 2024, it was decided that the EOC would create a working group of Military Recruiters, School Liaison Officers, School Liaison Program Managers, SC Purple Star School District Point of Contacts and Department of Education staff to define and measure the academic and physical characteristics of a "military-ready" student.

It was decided that the working group would make recommendations to the EOC no later than June 30, 2024.

Ms. Yow then provided the guiding questions that led the task force's discussion:

- If we were to define and measure the academic and physical characteristics of military-ready students in K-12 public schools, what would that look like?
- What are the barriers to military readiness in the armed services that may be repaired with a focus on preparedness before enlistment?
- If the purpose of accountability is to incentivize behaviors (from students and adults) that lead to better student outcomes, is including military readiness in an accountability system advisable?

Key findings from the report were as follows:

- A lack of understanding of civics, misunderstanding of military service.
- There is difficulty in defining military readiness due to different requirements for each branch of service.
- SC currently uses the lowest published qualifying score (31) that any military branch uses for career-ready designation, although task force members noted that ASVAB scores are not consistently exclusionary.
- There is not currently a quantifiable, widely used way to measure physical fitness and general health among K-12 students.
- Meeting military readiness markers, enlistment, or receiving designations such as Purple Star should be incentivized for students and schools.

After presenting this, Ms. Yow presented the recommendations from the report. She stated that the recommendations were divided into four categories – accountability, physical fitness, civics education and awards/recognition.

For accountability recommendations, the task force stressed the importance of continuing to incorporate military readiness as a career readiness measure in the accountability system rather than making it a separate category. The task force also recommended that schools use military enlistment and/or entrance into an Officer Commissioning Program as a part of the Five-Year Student Success measure but stressed that the data must be provided from an authorized source and not self-reported.

For the physical fitness recommendation, the task force suggested that as a part of the 2025 cyclical review of the accountability system, an assessment of physical health and fitness be required. Ms. Yow stated that Connecticut includes physical fitness in its accountability.

As the recommendation for civics education, the task force suggested the removal of the state budget proviso that suspends the testing of social studies in grades 3-8.

As the recommendation for awards, it was suggested that military designations such as Purple Star are prominently displayed on a school and/or district's Report Card.

After reviewing the findings and recommendations, Ms. Yow asked if there were any questions. As there were none, Ms. Allen asked for a motion to approve.

Once the motion and the second were given and accepted, the motion passed.

Following this, Ms. Allen asked for a motion to accept the ECENC report. The motion and the second was given and the motion passed.

Next, Ms. Yow reminded members about the upcoming EOC retreat.

Following this, the meeting was adjourned.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Date: August 12, 2024

INFORMATION ITEM:

Cyclical Review of the Accountability System

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

§ 59-18-910. Cyclical review of accountability system; stakeholders; development of necessary skills and characteristics.

Beginning in 2020, the Education Oversight Committee, working with the State Board of Education and a broad-based group of stakeholders, selected by the Education Oversight Committee, shall conduct a comprehensive cyclical review of the accountability system at least every five years and shall provide the General Assembly with a report on the findings and recommended actions to improve the accountability system and to accelerate improvements in student and school performance. The stakeholders must include the State Superintendent of Education and the Governor, or the Governor's designee. The other stakeholders include, but are not limited to, parents, business and industry persons, community leaders, and educators. The cyclical review must include recommendations of a process for determining if students are graduating with the world-class skills and life and career characteristics of the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate to be successful in postsecondary education and in careers. The accountability system needs to reflect evidence that students have developed these skills and characteristics.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

The upcoming year marks the second time the accountability system will be reviewed, per state law.

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

No economic impact currently.

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

ACTION TAKEN

Approved
 Not Approved

Amended
 Action deferred (explain)

SC State Code Citations and Current Budget Provisos that impact the State Accountability System

Code/Proviso	Relevant Text	History and Explanation	Research Questions/Considerations
<p>§ 59-6-100</p>	<p>Within the Education Oversight Committee, an Accountability Division must be established to report on the monitoring, development, and implementation of the performance-based accountability system and reviewing and evaluating all aspects of the Education Accountability Act and the Education Improvement Act.</p>	<p>HISTORY: 1998, Act No. 400</p> <p>Established the EOC as the reviewer of the state accountability system and Education Improvement Act (EIA), which was implemented in 1984.</p> <p>When the Education Accountability Act (EAA) of 1998 was enacted, there was not a separate federal accountability system. SC was a forerunner in establishing a formal reporting system for evaluating the performance of public schools and school districts.</p> <p>With passage of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001, SC public schools were accountable to two systems – the state accountability system AND a federal accountability system that was based on Adequate Yearly Progress and following the allowance of Education and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) waivers from certain requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 which were granted to many states.</p>	<p>While South Carolina has witnessed improvements in student performance since passage of the Education Accountability Act in 1998, the rate of improvement has not accelerated to meet the ever-expanding needs of our state. Too many South Carolina students are ill-served by the current public education system.</p> <p>Will recent changes made to the growth system in the accountability system for elementary and middle schools and greater access to data tools allow schools to focus efforts and interventions for students in a more focused way?</p>
<p>§ 59-6-110. Duties of Accountability Division</p>	<p>The division must examine the public education system to ensure that the system and its components and the EIA programs are functioning for the enhancement of student learning. The division will recommend the <u>repeal or modification of statutes, policies, and rules that deter school improvement</u>. The division must provide annually its findings and recommendations in a report to the Education Oversight Committee no later than February first. <u>The division is to conduct in-depth studies on implementation, efficiency, and the effectiveness of academic improvement efforts and:</u> <u>(1) monitor and evaluate the implementation of the state standards and assessment;</u></p>	<p>HISTORY: 1998, Act No. 400</p> <p>Established the EOC’s authority as it relates to examining EIA programs and other programs that impact school improvement.</p> <p>Established the EOC as authority for state accountability system, “a performance based accountability system for public education which focuses on improving teaching and</p>	<p>Current limitations in data collection prohibit in-depth studies that target the effectiveness of efforts – i.e. are programs/policies impacting student performance?</p> <p>Will current efforts of the Coordinating Council for Workforce Development (CCWD) and others allow for a cohesive, usable PK-workforce longitudinal data system and strategy in order to evaluate impact and return on investment (ROI) of state dollars?</p>

SC State Code Citations and Current Budget Provisos that impact the State Accountability System

Code/Proviso	Relevant Text	History and Explanation	Research Questions/Considerations
<p>§59-18-120 (7), Definitions</p>	<p>(2) oversee the development, establishment, implementation, and maintenance of the accountability system;</p> <p>(3) monitor and evaluate the functioning of the public education system and its components, programs, policies, and practices and report annually its findings and recommendations in a report to the commission no later than February first of each year; and</p> <p>(4) perform other studies and reviews as required by law.</p> <p>The responsibilities of the division do not include fiscal audit functions or funding recommendations except as they relate to accountability. It is not a function of this division to draft legislation and neither the director nor any other employee of the division shall urge or oppose any legislation. In the performance of its duties and responsibilities, the division and staff members are subject to the statutory provisions and penalties regarding confidentiality of records as they apply to students, schools, school districts, the Department of Education, and the Board of Education.</p>	<p>learning so that students are equipped with a strong academic foundation.”</p>	<p>Does the current rating system communicate properly and transparently to students, families, and the general public?</p> <p>In two statewide public opinion research studies conducted by the EOC, the expectation is that 80 to 90 percent of students should be on grade level in a school rated <i>Excellent</i>; that is not true in the current system.</p>
<p>§ 59-18-310(B)(1)</p>	<p>(B)(1) The statewide assessment program must include the subjects of English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies in grades three through eight, as delineated in Section 59-18-320, and end-of-course tests for courses selected by the State Board of Education and approved by the Education Oversight Committee for federal accountability, which award units of credit in English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. A student's score on an end-of-year assessment may not be the sole criterion for placing the student on academic probation, retaining the student in his current grade, or</p>	<p>HISTORY: 1998 Act No. 400,</p> <p>Revisions made in June 2017 merged the state and federal accountability systems into one system.</p> <p>Established a rating system for schools based on a 100-point scale.</p> <p>HISTORY: 1998 Act No. 400,</p> <p>Revisions made in June 2017 eliminated the need for students to take an exit exam to receive a high school diploma.</p>	<p>Did the removal of the requirement for a high school exit exam help students, schools, or the system?</p> <p>While we don't have impact data, students are graduating from SC high schools while not passing end-of-course exams in core content areas.</p> <p>The EOC is studying the prevalence of credit recovery in SC schools, which allows students to recover the credits and not pass the end-of-course exam. Does this practice help students, schools, or the system?</p>

SC State Code Citations and Current Budget Provisos that impact the State Accountability System

Code/Proviso	Relevant Text	History and Explanation	Research Questions/Considerations
§ 59-18-325(8)(A)	<p>requiring the student to attend summer school. Beginning with the graduating class of 2010, students are required to pass a high school credit course in science and a course in United States history in which end-of-course examinations are administered to receive the state high school diploma. Beginning with the graduating class of 2015, students are no longer required to meet the exit examination requirements set forth in this section and State Regulation to earn a South Carolina high school diploma.</p> <p>Beginning in eleventh grade for the first time in School Year 2017-2018 and subsequent years, all students must be offered a college entrance assessment that is from a provider secured by the department. In addition, all students entering the eleventh grade for the first time in School Year 2017-2018 and subsequent years must be administered a career readiness assessment. The results of the assessments must be provided to each student, their respective schools, and to the State to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) assist students, parents, teachers, and guidance counselors in developing individual graduation plans and in selecting courses aligned with each student's future ambitions; (2) promote South Carolina's Work Ready Communities initiative; and (3) meet federal and state accountability requirements. 	<p>HISTORY: 1998 Act No. 400,</p> <p>Revisions made in June 2017 required that students be offered a college entrance exam and they must take a career readiness exam.</p>	<p>Some states are beginning to phase in a requirement for students to have a measure of college-or-career readiness before they can receive a high school diploma. Should SC consider a similar requirement?</p> <p>Are the current career readiness exam offerings providing students with something of value when they leave high school?</p> <p>Are the results of the assessments being used in accordance with the law, in developing and selecting courses best suited to students?</p> <p>Some states are also using a college readiness assessment to measure ELA and math performance at the high school level.</p>
§ 59-18-320. Review of field test; general administration of test; accommodations for students with disabilities; adoption of new standards.	<p>(A) After the first statewide field test of the assessment program in each of the four academic areas, and after the field tests of the end of course assessments of high school credit courses, the Education Oversight Committee, established in Section 59-6-10, will review the state assessment program and the course assessments for alignment with the state standards, level of difficulty and validity, and for the ability to differentiate levels of achievement, and will make recommendations for needed changes, if any. The review will be provided to the State Board of Education, the State Department of Education, the Governor, the Senate Education Committee, and the House Education and Public Works Committee as soon as feasible after the field tests. The Department of Education will then report to the Education Oversight Committee no later than one month after receiving the reports on the changes made to the assessments to comply with the recommendations.</p>	<p>HISTORY: 1998 Act No. 400</p> <p>Revisions made in 2017 removed obsolete language</p> <p>Outlines the process by which the EOC reviews and is part of the process of adoption of new standards and reviews and adopts assessments</p> <p>Social studies summative testing currently suspended by Proviso 1.72 in the 2024-25 Appropriation Act in all grade levels expect high school.</p>	<p>The EOC will need to do a review of upcoming assessments to meet the requirements of statute. The current schedule requires the EOC to review upcoming tests on this schedule:</p> <p>Fall/Winter 2024: Review Biology I (including Alt assessment)</p> <p>Fall 2025: SC READY Science; SC READY ELA; English 2 (all Alt assessments included)</p> <p>Fall 2026: SC READY Math, Algebra I (includes Alt)</p>

SC State Code Citations and Current Budget Provisos that impact the State Accountability System

Code/Proviso	Relevant Text	History and Explanation	Research Questions/Considerations
	<p>(B) After review and approval by the Education Oversight Committee, and pursuant to Section 59-18-325, the standards-based assessment of mathematics, English/language arts, social studies, and science will be administered for accountability purposes to all public school students in grades three through eight, to include those students as required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act and by Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. To reduce the number of days of testing, to the extent possible, field test items must be embedded with the annual assessments. To ensure that school districts maintain the high standard of accountability established in the Education Accountability Act, performance level results reported on school and district report cards must meet consistently high levels in all four core content areas. For students with documented disabilities, the assessments developed by the Department of Education shall include the appropriate modifications and accommodations with necessary supplemental devices as outlined in a student's Individualized Education Program and as stated in the Administrative Guidelines and Procedures for Testing Students with Documented Disabilities.</p> <p>(C) After review and approval by the Education Oversight Committee, the end of course assessments of high school credit courses will be administered to all public school students as they complete each course.</p> <p>(D) Any new standards and assessments required to be developed and adopted by the State Board of Education, through the Department of Education for use as an accountability measure, must be developed and adopted upon the advice and consent of the Education Oversight Committee.</p>		

SC State Code Citations and Current Budget Provisos that impact the State Accountability System

Code/Proviso	Relevant Text	History and Explanation	Research Questions/Considerations
<p>§ 59-18-325(6)</p>	<p>Within thirty days after providing student performance data to the school districts as required by law, the department must provide to the Education Oversight Committee student performance results on assessments authorized in this subsection and end-of-course assessments in a format agreed upon by the department and the Oversight Committee. The results of these assessments must be included in state ratings for each school beginning in the 2017-2018 School Year. <u>The Oversight Committee also must develop and recommend a single accountability system that meets federal and state accountability requirements by the Fall of 2017. While developing the single accountability system that will be implemented in the 2017-2018 School Year, the Education Oversight Committee shall determine the format of a transitional report card released to the public in the Fall of 2016 and 2017 that will also identify underperforming schools and districts. These transitional reports will, at a minimum, include the following: (A) school, district, and statewide student assessment results in reading and mathematics in grades three through eight; (B) high school and district graduation rates; and (C) measures of student college and career readiness at the school, district, and statewide level. These transitional reports will inform schools and districts, the public, and the Department of Education of school and district general academic performance and assist in identifying potentially underperforming schools and districts and in targeting technical assistance support and interventions in the interim before ratings are issued.</u></p> <p>(7) When standards are subsequently revised, the Department of Education, the State Board of Education, and the Education Oversight Committee shall approve assessments pursuant to Section 59-18-320.</p>	<p>HISTORY: 2014 Act No. 155</p> <p>Revisions made in 2017 outlined the formation of a <u>single accountability system</u>.</p> <p>During the development of a single system, State law suspended ratings of schools and districts from school year 2014-15 until school year 2017-18.</p> <p>Outlines the requirement for EOC to approve assessments when standards are revised.</p>	
<p>§ 59-18-350.</p> <p>Cyclical review of state standards and assessments; analysis of assessment results.</p>	<p>(A) The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Education Oversight Committee, shall provide for a cyclical review by academic area of the state standards and assessments to ensure that the standards and assessments are maintaining high expectations for learning and teaching. At a minimum, each academic area should be reviewed and updated every seven years. After each academic area is reviewed, a report on the recommended revisions must be presented to the Education Oversight Committee and the State Board of Education for</p>	<p>HISTORY: 1998 Act No. 400</p> <p>Revisions in 2014 provided for 7-year review of academic content standards and removed SC as part of Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium</p>	<p>EOC to begin review of Social Studies standards in 2025.</p>

SC State Code Citations and Current Budget Provisos that impact the State Accountability System

Code/Proviso	Relevant Text	History and Explanation	Research Questions/Considerations
<p>§ 59-18-355. Content standards revisions; required approval.</p>	<p>consideration. The previous content standards shall remain in effect until the recommended revisions are adopted pursuant to Section 59-18-355. As a part of the review, a task force of parents, business and industry persons, community leaders, and educators, to include special education teachers, shall examine the standards and assessment system to determine rigor and relevancy.</p> <p>(A)(1) A revision to a state content standard recommended pursuant to Section 59-18-350(A), as well as a new standard or a change in a current standard that the State Board of Education otherwise considers for approval as an accountability measure, may not be adopted and implemented without the:</p> <p>(a) advice and consent of the Education Oversight Committee; and</p> <p>(b) approval by a Joint Resolution of the General Assembly.</p> <p>(2) General Assembly approval required by item (1)(b) does not apply to a revision recommended pursuant to Section 59-18-350(A), other approval of a new standard, and other changes to an old standard if the revision, new standard, or changed standard is developed by the State Department of Education.</p> <p>(B) A revision to an assessment recommended pursuant to Section 59-18-350(A), as well as a new assessment or a change in a current assessment that the State Board of Education otherwise considers for approval as an accountability measure, may not be adopted and implemented without the advice and consent of the Education Oversight Committee.</p> <p>(C) Upon initiating a change to an existing standard, including a cyclical review, the Education Oversight Committee and the Department of Education shall provide notice of their plans and intent to the General Assembly and the Governor.</p> <p>(D) Nothing in this section may be interpreted to prevent the Department of Education, Board of Education, and Education Oversight</p>	<p>HISTORY: 2014 Act No. 200 (H.3893), § 2, eff June 19, 2014.</p> <p>Codifies process for adoption and implementation of standards and EOC's involvement.</p>	

SC State Code Citations and Current Budget Provisos that impact the State Accountability System

Code/Proviso	Relevant Text	History and Explanation	Research Questions/Considerations
<p>§ 59-18-900(A) Annual report cards; performance ratings; criteria; annual school progress narrative; trustee training; data regulations; military-connected student performance reports.</p>	<p>Committee from considering best practices in education standards and assessments while developing its own standards and assessments.</p> <p>The Education Oversight Committee, working with the State Board of Education, is directed to establish the format of a comprehensive, web-based, annual report card to report on the performance for the State and for individual primary, elementary, middle, high schools, career centers, and school districts of the State. The comprehensive report card must be in a reader-friendly format, using graphics whenever possible, published on the state, district, and school websites, and, upon request, printed by the school districts. The school's rating must be emphasized and an explanation of its meaning and significance for the school also must be reported. The annual report card must serve at least six purposes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) inform parents and the public about the school's performance including, but not limited to, that on the home page of the report there must be each school's overall performance rating in a font size larger than twenty-six and the total number of points the school achieved on a zero to one hundred scale; (2) assist in addressing the strengths and weaknesses within a particular school; (3) recognize schools with high performance; (4) evaluate and focus resources on schools with low performance; (5) meet federal report card requirements; and (6) document the preparedness of high school graduates for college and career. 	<p>HISTORY: 1998 Act No. 400, Revisions in 2017 outlines the need to document college and career readiness on the report card</p> <p>Outlines the purposes of the web-based school report cards</p> <p>Primary, career and district report cards removed in 2017.</p>	<p>College and career readiness measures for high school accountability are widely regarded as generous. And, in many instances, we do not have documented data that show that these measures do in fact lead to readiness in college or careers.</p> <p>How can high school accountability be strengthened to allow students to achieve more successful outcomes upon leaving high school?</p> <p>Schools with lower performance often receive more assistance. How can schools with higher performance be recognized and rewarded?</p>
<p>§ 59-18-900</p>	<p>(B)(1) The Education Oversight Committee, working with the State Board of Education and a broad-based group of stakeholders, including, but not limited to, parents, business and industry persons, community leaders, and educators, shall determine the criteria for and establish performance ratings of excellent, good, average, below average, and</p>	<p>HISTORY: 1998 Act No. 400, Revisions in 2017 tied ratings to the Profile of the SC Graduate</p>	<p>Do current school ratings provide a transparent picture of school performance?</p> <p>Do the indicators used in the current accountability system provide meaningful measures for students, schools, and the system as a whole?</p>

SC State Code Citations and Current Budget Provisos that impact the State Accountability System

Code/Proviso	Relevant Text	History and Explanation	Research Questions/Considerations
	<p>unsatisfactory for schools to increase transparency and accountability as provided below:</p> <p>(a) Excellent—School performance substantially exceeds the criteria to ensure all students meet the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate;</p> <p>(b) Good—School performance exceeds the criteria to ensure all students meet the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate;</p> <p>(c) Average—School performance meets the criteria to ensure all students meet the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate;</p> <p>(d) Below Average—School performance is in jeopardy of not meeting the criteria to ensure all students meet the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate; and</p> <p>(e) Unsatisfactory—School performance fails to meet the criteria to ensure all students meet the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate.</p> <p>(2) The same categories of performance ratings also must be assigned to individual indicators used to measure a school's performance including, but not limited to, academic achievement, student growth or progress, graduation rate, English language proficiency, and college and career readiness.</p> <p>(3) Only the scores of students enrolled continuously in the school from the time of the forty-five-day enrollment count to the first day of testing must be included in calculating the rating. Graduation rates must be used as an additional accountability measure for high schools and school districts.</p> <p>(4) The Oversight Committee, working with the State Board of Education, shall establish student performance indicators which will be those considered to be useful for inclusion as a component of a school's overall performance and appropriate for the grade levels within the school.</p>		<p>What is the status of SCDE's measuring of skills/life and career characteristics in Profile?</p>

SC State Code Citations and Current Budget Provisos that impact the State Accountability System

Code/Proviso	Relevant Text	History and Explanation	Research Questions/Considerations
	<p>(C) In setting the criteria for the academic performance ratings and the performance indicators, the Education Oversight Committee shall report the performance by subgroups of students in the school and schools similar in student characteristics. Criteria must use established guidelines for statistical analysis and build on current data-reporting practices.</p> <p>(D) The comprehensive report card must include a comprehensive set of performance indicators with information on comparisons, trends, needs, and performance over time which is helpful to parents and the public in evaluating the school. In addition, the comprehensive report card must include indicators that meet federal law requirements. Special efforts are to be made to ensure that the information contained in the report card is provided in an easily understood manner and a reader-friendly format. This information should also provide a context for the performance of the school. Where appropriate, the data should yield disaggregated results to schools and districts in planning for improvement. The report card should include information in such areas as programs and curriculum, school leadership, community and parent support, faculty qualifications, evaluations of the school by parents, teachers, and students. In addition, the report card must contain other criteria including, but not limited to, information on promotion and retention ratios, disciplinary climate, dropout ratios, dropout reduction data, dropout retention data, access to technology, student and teacher ratios, and attendance data.</p> <p>(E) After reviewing the school's performance on statewide assessments and results of other report card criteria, the principal, in conjunction with the School Improvement Council established in Section 59-20-60, must write an annual narrative of a school's progress in order to further inform parents and the community about the school and its efforts to ensure that all students graduate with 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. The narrative must be reviewed by the district superintendent or appropriate body for a local charter</p>		

SC State Code Citations and Current Budget Provisos that impact the State Accountability System

Code/Proviso	Relevant Text	History and Explanation	Research Questions/Considerations
<p>§ 59-18-910. Cyclical review of accountability system; stakeholder development of necessary skills and characteristics.</p>	<p>school. The narrative must cite factors or activities supporting progress and barriers which inhibit progress. The school's report card must be furnished to parents and the public no later than November fifteenth for the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 School Years. To further increase transparency and accountability, for the 2018-2019 School Year, the school's report card must be furnished to parents and the public no later than October first. For the 2019-2020 School Year, and every subsequent year, the school's report card must be furnished to parents and the public no later than September first.</p> <p>(F) The percentage of new trustees who have completed the orientation requirement provided in Section 59-19-45 must be reflected on the school district website.</p> <p>(G) The State Board of Education shall promulgate regulations outlining the procedures for data collection, data accuracy, data reporting, and consequences for failure to provide data required in this section.</p>	<p>HISTORY: 1998 Act No. 400, Revisions made in 2017</p>	<p>The first cyclical review of the system occurred in 2020; to comply with State law, the 2nd review will commence in 2025.</p> <p>The requirement to consider the Profile of the Graduate in the cyclical review proved a challenge in 2020; will the competency-based work that the SCDE has done help? What is the status?</p>

SC State Code Citations and Current Budget Provisos that impact the State Accountability System

Code/Proviso	Relevant Text	History and Explanation	Research Questions/Considerations
<p>§ 59-18-920. Report card requirements for charter, alternative, and career and technology schools.</p>	<p>A charter school established pursuant to Chapter 40, Title 59 shall report the data requested by the Department of Education necessary to generate a report card and a rating. The performance of students attending charter schools sponsored by the South Carolina Public Charter School District must be included in the overall performance ratings of each school in the South Carolina Public Charter School District. The performance of students attending a charter school authorized by a local school district must be reflected on a separate line on the school district's report card. An alternative school is included in the requirements of this chapter; however, the purpose of an alternative school must be taken into consideration in determining its performance rating. The Education Oversight Committee, working with the State Board of Education and the School to Work Advisory Council, shall develop a report card for career and technology schools.</p>	<p>HISTORY: 1998 Act No. 400 Latest revisions made in 2017 During the development of a single system, State law suspended ratings for schools and districts from school year 2014-15 until school year 2017-18. Beginning with the report cards for SY 2017-18, there was no requirement for districts or primary schools to receive ratings. Efforts have been made to develop primary report cards and cards for career and technology schools, to comply with this law, but each have not been successful.</p>	<p>We have an opportunity to develop career center report cards that are both creative and meaningful to stakeholders. How can we be successful? How can these complement work of the CCWD? Do ratings for districts need to be considered again?</p>
<p>§ 59-18-1960. School growth measurement system.</p>	<p>In measuring annual school growth, with approval of the State Board of Education and the Education Oversight Committee, the State shall use a value-added system that calculates student progress or growth. A local school district may, in its discretion, use the value-added system to evaluate classroom teachers using student progress or growth. The estimates of specific teacher effects on the educational progress of students will not be a public record and will be made available only to the specific teacher, principal, and superintendent. Furthermore, the estimates of specific teacher effects also may be made to any teacher preparation programs approved by the State Board of Education. The estimates made available to the teacher preparation programs shall not be a public record and shall be used only in evaluation of the respective teacher preparation programs. Furthermore, educator effectiveness data must be exempt from public disclosure pursuant to Section 30-4-30, and may not be subject to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act. An institution or postsecondary system receiving the estimates shall develop a policy to protect the confidentiality of the data.</p>	<p>HISTORY: 2017 Act No. 94 (H.3969), § 3, eff June 10, 2017.</p>	<p>Will recent changes made to the growth system in the accountability system for elementary and middle schools and greater access to data tools allow schools to focus efforts and interventions for students in a more focused way?</p>
<p>§ 59-29-240. Civics test</p>	<p>(A) For purposes of this section, "civics test" means the one hundred questions that, as of January 1, 2015, and updated accordingly, officers</p>	<p>HISTORY: 2015 Act No. 52 (S.437), § 2, eff June 3, 2015.</p>	<p>Self-reported by schools</p>

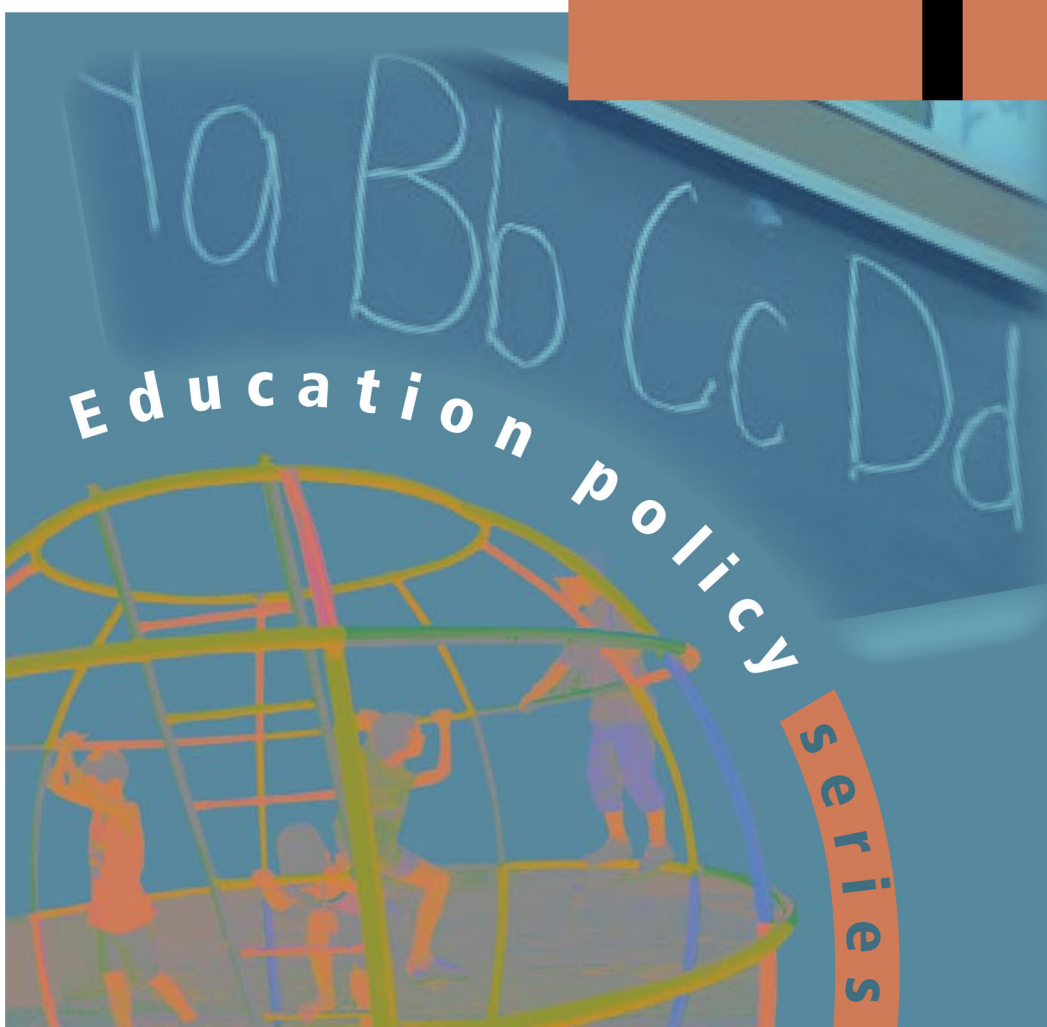
SC State Code Citations and Current Budget Provisos that impact the State Accountability System

Code/Proviso	Relevant Text	History and Explanation	Research Questions/Considerations
<p>required; report.</p>	<p>of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services use in order that the applicants can demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the fundamentals of United States history and the principles and form of United States government, as required by 8 U.S.C. 1423.</p> <p>(B) As part of the high school curriculum regarding the United States government required credit, students are required to take the civics test, as defined in subsection (A), provided there is no cost to a school or school district for obtaining and giving the test, but are not required to obtain a minimum score. However, a student who receives a passing grade, as determined by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, or better, may be recognized by the school district. This requirement applies to each student enrolled in a public or charter school in this State. This requirement does not apply to a student who is exempted in accordance with the student's individualized education program plan.</p> <p>(C) Each public school, including charter schools, must report the percentage of students at or above the designated passing score on the test to the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee which must then include such on the school report card.</p> <p>(D) No school or school district of this State may impose or collect any fees or charges in connection with this section.</p> <p>(E) This section must be applied to any student entering ninth grade beginning in the 2016-2017 school year.</p>		<p>Is this the most effective measure of civic readiness and is it valuable to students, schools, and the system?</p>
<p>§ 59-16-70. Review of student records by Education Oversight Committee.</p>	<p>At the end of each semester, the State Department of Education shall provide student records, including course grades and performance on state assessments, to the Education Oversight Committee. The Education Oversight Committee shall monitor the impact of credits earned in the virtual school, on the school and district ratings, with particular attention to performance on end-of-course examinations and graduation rates.</p>	<p>HISTORY: 2007 Act No. 26, § 1, eff May 15, 2007.</p>	

Accountability in education

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Jo Anne Anderson

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International Academy of Education



International Institute for Educational Planning

The International Academy of Education



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Preface

Education policy booklet series

The International Academy of Education and the International Institute for Educational Planning are jointly publishing the Education Policy Booklet Series. The purpose of the series is to summarize what is known, based on research, about selected policy issues in the field of education.

The series was designed for rapid consultation “on the run” by busy senior decision-makers in Ministries of Education. These people rarely have time to read lengthy research reports, to attend conferences and seminars, or to become engaged in extended scholarly debates with educational policy research specialists.

The booklets have been (a) focused on policy topics that the Academy considers to be of high priority across many Ministries of Education – in both developed and developing countries, (b) structured for clarity – containing an introductory overview, a research-based discussion of around ten key issues considered to be critical to the topic of the booklet, and references that provide supporting evidence and further reading related to the discussion of issues, (c) restricted in length – requiring around 30-45 minutes of reading time; and (d) sized to fit easily into a jacket pocket – providing opportunities for readily accessible consultation inside or outside the office.

The authors of the series were selected by the International Academy of Education because of their expertise concerning the booklet topics, and also because of their recognized ability to communicate complex research findings in a manner that can be readily understood and used for policy purposes.

The booklets will appear first in English, and shortly afterwards in French and Spanish. Plans are being made for translations into other languages.

Four booklets will be published each year and made freely available for download from the web site of the International Institute for Educational Planning. A limited printed edition will also be prepared shortly after electronic publication.

This booklet

As the economies of nations compete for strong positions within a competitive global market place, many governments have become increasingly interested in the performance of all aspects of their education systems. This trend, coupled with the enormous expenditures that are devoted to education, has also precipitated widespread public requests for higher levels of scrutiny concerning the quality of education. These demands for information about school system performance can only be addressed through the implementation of systematic accountability systems.

Historically, the education profession has conformed to the requirements of regulatory or compliance accountability systems (usually based on government statutes), and has also subscribed to professional norms established by associations of educators. However, at the beginning of the 21st Century, accountability systems have also been required to respond to demands that professional performance be judged by the results that have been achieved.

This booklet offers a set of principles and strategies to be considered in the development and implementation of results-based accountability systems. Technical and political issues are addressed as well as the ways in which educators, policymakers, and community members can use the information from accountability systems to improve results.

The statements presented here about accountability systems are likely to be generally applicable throughout the world. Even so, they should be assessed with reference to local conditions, and adapted accordingly. In any educational setting or cultural context, suggestions or guidelines for practice require sensitive and sensible application, and continuing evaluation.

Jo Anne Anderson

has been active in the development and evaluation of educational policy for over twenty years, serving directly or in an advisory capacity to state, regional, and national organizations.

She currently holds the position of Executive Director of the Education Oversight Committee for the state of South Carolina in the United States. This agency is responsible for the creation and implementation of the State Accountability System.

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Types of accountability system

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- *There are three main types of accountability systems that are sometimes applied simultaneously in education systems.*
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In the field of education there are three main types of accountability system: (a) compliance with regulations, (b) adherence to professional norms, and (c) results driven. School accountability systems operate according to a set of principles and use a variety of implementation strategies. In this booklet, these principles and strategies are described, with particular attention given to the political and technical aspects of accountability. Accountability systems are not new. The differences between current systems and those employed previously are matters of “for what” and “to whom.”

Educators have worked mostly within three accountability systems, often simultaneously. The first system demands compliance with statutes and regulations such as those embodied in the British Office for Standards in Education. Anchored in an industrial model of education, compliance systems view the school as the embodiment of constant processes and allow for variation in results, generally attributed to the varying characteristics of students. Simply stated, educators were **accountable for** adherence to rules and **accountable to** the bureaucracy.

The second system is based upon adherence to professional norms. Although neither mandated nor required, the impact of widespread agreement on certain principles and practices has done much to elevate education as a profession. In the United States, the curriculum and evaluation

standards for school mathematics (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 1989), the standards for educational and psychological testing (American Educational Research Association, 2000), and the program evaluation standards (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 1994) exemplify the professional norm approach to accountability. Within this system, educators are **accountable for** adherence to standards and **accountable to** their peers.

The third accountability system is based upon results, with results defined in terms of student learning. This system has emerged from increasing political involvement in education. The “No Child Left Behind” requirements in the United States and the Australian National Education Performance Monitoring Task Force are examples of results-based systems. In these systems educators are **accountable for** student learning and **accountable to** the general public.

Educators often find themselves responding to all three systems, attempting to balance the requirements of each. Professional norms complement both compliance and results systems. On the other hand, compliance and results systems often conflict. Part of this conflict stems from the fact that the emergence of results systems has been fostered by dissatisfaction with historic results; that is, those achieved under compliance systems. At present, accountability systems focus less on compliance and more on results.

What are the components of a workable, defensible accountability system that is based primarily on results, while at the same time being attentive to professional norms and regulatory compliance requirements. First, the system defines educators’ responsibility for all students, regardless of the advantages or disadvantages they bring to school. Second, the system must be built upon aligned components—objectives, assessments, instruction, resources, and rewards or sanctions. Third, the technical aspects of the system must meet high standards. Fourth, the system must provide the vehicle for positive change.

Values and aspirations

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- ***Accountability systems embody prevailing societal values and aspirations.***
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The relationship between the educational attainment of citizens and the quality of their life has grown from a point of research interest to a call for action. In the second half of the 20th century governments in a number of Western nations experienced (a) low relative performance of their students on academic assessments when compared with students from certain Asian nations; and (b) a loss of historic industries (and jobs) to these nations.

Within the United States, the insistence on comprehensive accountability systems was intensified by two events: widespread publication in the popular press of results from the 1995 Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS) and the 1996 National Governors Association Education Summit. The TIMSS results suggested that United States students in Grade 3 were slightly behind their peers in other developed countries and, importantly from a policy perspective, this difference increased the longer they remained in school. At the Summit the governors from almost every state committed to introduce strong accountability measures to ensure that public schools performed at the level necessary for economic supremacy. Within two years, United States educators were grappling with the change imposed by the shift in accountability systems from those based on compliance and professional norms to one based on results.

United States educators are not alone. Reviews of accountability programs throughout the world provide evidence

that accountability is an international issue. England has a national curriculum accompanied by assessments and measures for rating schools. France, Hong Kong, China, Japan, and others use national assessments to measure student and school progress and to make decisions about each. Many European systems use examinations to determine student access to the next level of education. All these systems are based on explicit definitions of what students are expected to learn and to what level they are expected to perform. Furthermore, examinations are used to monitor student learning, with the data providing the basis for changes within the system.

Educational opportunity, an extension of civil rights and economic inclusion, has been redefined: concerns for equal access and treatment have been replaced with an emphasis on equal attainment. To have equal attainment, however, variations in access and, particularly, treatment must be available to meet the needs of increasingly diverse populations of students.

This focus on equal attainment has led us back to the age-old question, “What’s worth learning?” That is, what should we expect students to attain as a result of the formal education they receive? The answer to this question depends primarily on societal values. The population of students to whom this question applies depends to a great extent on the aspirations societies have for their citizens.

3 The goals of schooling

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- ***Accountability systems are based on the expectation that students can and will achieve the goals of schooling.***
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Traditionally, schools have been expected to teach students. However, there has been general acceptance that only those students who bring advantages to the school are likely to benefit from the exposure to this teaching. Minority students, economically disadvantaged students, disabled students, and other groups simply have not been expected to learn at the level of their advantaged peers.

Current research findings counter the premise that some students cannot benefit from schooling. Almost a quarter century ago, Ron Edmonds' (1979) work on effective schools identified principles that should underlie school practices. Subsequently, teaching practices have been identified and instructional models developed that promote high levels of learning for large numbers of students, regardless of the disadvantages they bring into the classroom. Intense study of Asian school systems suggests that the combination of national aspiration, cultural support, and individual effort overcomes both real and perceived barriers.

Assuming responsibility for the learning of all students transforms the school and the classroom environment and, to some degree, the way that teachers view their profession and themselves. The popular literature is replete with heroic educators who, despite overwhelming odds, are able to change and improve a school through their zeal. A challenge of accountability systems is to make the heroic, customary. In results-based systems, students'

learning failures are attributed to weaknesses in educational programs and practices rather than to students' characteristics and backgrounds.

Schools that are accomplishing the goal of all students achieving success are most likely to have strong and stable teachers and administrators. Strength comes from factors such as greater content knowledge and visionary instructional leadership. Stability, in terms of commitment to the school over time, is needed to shape the school culture and climate. Stability enables the development of relationships with parents and the community that are anchored in mutual trust and focused upon students' present and future needs.

Why then, is there scepticism about goals based upon all students learning? Educators may find themselves overwhelmed by the disadvantages that students bring to the learning environment over which they have no control. Educators also have little control over the resources available to them to achieve the goals. Administrators must build consensus around the goals and cultivate a professional dialogue that encourages the definition of solvable problems. This dialogue must be extended to the broader community so that the disadvantages students bring to the school can be ameliorated over time.

Workable, defensible accountability systems are built upon aligned components—objectives, assessments, instruction, resources, and rewards or sanctions.

4 The main components of accountability systems

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- ***Accountability systems should include five components: objectives, assessments, instructions, resources, and rewards or sanctions.***
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Analyses of current results-based accountability systems reveal agreement on five guiding questions: What do we expect students to know and be able to do? How satisfied are we that students have mastered the established content standards? How are teachers prepared to be effective in their classrooms with all students? How and to what degree is the public informed about school results and the contributors to those results? How does society respond to the information they receive about the performance of schools?

Content standards have shifted from the *trivium* of ancient Greece to today's workforce preparation. Throughout the world, education systems emphasize literacy, mathematical reasoning, scientific inquiry, and historical and social understanding to support civic participation. Within developing nations, literacy is the most often defined learning expectation. Within developed nations, the emphasis is on increasing mathematical and scientific competence. In general, curricula mirror the economic focus of nations.

The establishment of content standards impacts on the nature and structure of the curriculum. Teachers must exhibit an understanding of the structure of the curriculum both horizontally (within levels) and vertically (across levels). Access to a variety of learning resources (including supplementary materials) and extended or enriched in-

formal learning opportunities are important. In practical terms, the introduction of content standards has proceeded at a much faster pace than have the learning resources and supportive opportunities that must be aligned with the standards if the intended learning is to occur.

The use of assessments to inform decisions about students, schools, and personnel has been accelerated by the rise of results-based accountability systems. Aligned with the content standards, assessments are used to make decisions about student eligibility for and progress to the next level of school; for administrator and teacher employment and rewards; and for resource allocation. When these assessments are used in this way, they are referred to as “high stake” assessments. These “high stakes” decisions generate demands that information from assessments can be used to improve the teaching-learning process. Because they are designed for administration to large numbers of students, however, accountability assessments generally do not offer sufficient diagnostic information for teacher planning and in-class work with individual students. Some assessment programs release items and/or parallel assessments so that teachers are comfortable with both the content to be tested and the manner in which each standard is assessed.

Changes in expectations about students should lead to changes in instruction. The rapid change of the curriculum, particularly in mathematics and science, has left many teachers responsible for teaching content they may not have learned in a formal setting. Teachers also are expected to adapt their teaching for students from diverse backgrounds, exhibiting a range of motivations and prior experiences. Instead of a consistent methodology yielding differentiated results, teachers are expected to differentiate their methodologies to yield consistent results for diverse student populations.

Results-based accountability systems utilize public reporting to a greater degree than do the compliance or professional norms systems. In the latter two systems information about student performance is held within

the profession. Results-based systems rely upon widespread communication of results to parents and the general public. Many results-based systems generate school report cards or school profiles for distribution to general audiences. These reports include summaries of the performance of students or subgroups of students as well as information about resources (for example, per student expenditures), programs (for example, participation in accelerated courses), and behaviour (for example, student attendance.) Providing this information to the public has required that teachers and administrators become comfortable discussing strengths and weaknesses, explaining a variety of statistical data, and facilitating positive change. This new communications role for educators can be intimidating as educators struggle both to understand underperformance and to inspire confidence that they can lead the change process needed to improve performance.

Finally, in most results-based accountability systems performance is publicly acknowledged and rewards, sometimes financial, are provided to those schools or individuals exhibiting high and/or improving performance. Schools not succeeding are provided encouragement and often technical assistance. Technical assistance is most effective when the local school assumes ownership of the results-based change process. Schools needing to improve dramatically benefit from increased attention and resources. Yet these schools also may be overwhelmed by the infusion of new practices and greater expectations for simultaneous rapid and long-lasting change. In extreme circumstances another layer of educational governance may assume management of the school. The continuum from providing technical assistance to taking control often is ill defined. Technical assistance should provide immediate and temporary support whereas assumption of responsibility extends to governance and data management. All schools are most vulnerable when the public demands quick change, rather than exercising the patience to implement sustainable changes. Long-lasting change requires integration of remedies across community agencies and responsibilities.

5 Aligning the components of an accountability system

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- ***Attention, scrutiny, and discipline should be exercised to ensure that the five components are aligned, with concerns for alignment evident from planning through implementation.***
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The foundation of results-based accountability systems is clear expectations for student learning, both what students are to learn and how that learning is to be demonstrated. Thus, content standards and the accompanying assessments are the components with which the other components, most importantly, instructional materials and teaching-learning strategies, must be aligned. When content standards, assessments, materials, and strategies are aligned, students have the maximum opportunity to learn. Also, when the public understands data derived from an “aligned” accountability system, they are more likely to respond to the performance of schools in a thoughtful and supportive way.

Concerns for alignment are relatively new. Throughout much of the 20th century, textbooks formed the basis for instructional planning. Although the structure and content of textbooks changed in response to discipline-based organizations, the presumption was that textbooks incorporated all that was needed to facilitate the desired student learning. Thus, alignment was part and parcel of buying into the textbook “package”. As access to multi-media and a wider range of materials increased, reliance on a primary textbook for the design of an instructional plan began to fade. Currently, the specification of content standards presumes independence from a primary text and the use of diverse materials and teaching-learning strategies.

How are decisions of alignment reached? Policy and disciplinary organizations, government agencies, and local school districts typically employ a professional judgment methodology. In the United States, the Council of Chief State School Officers (State Education Improvement Partnership, 1996) and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS, 2003) are among the organizations that have developed structured processes for the review of content standards and assessments. These processes require agreement on the depth and breadth of the knowledge expected within a content standard or assessment, the degree of cognitive demand and evidence of discrete or integrated knowledge, the emphasis placed on the standard in instruction or assessment, and the ways in which student learning is reported.

These methodologies are relatively new and there are not similarly consistent strategies for use by local administrators and teachers. As studies of alignment expand to address instructional validity, practitioner tools and skills should be developed to inform local decisions about instructional materials and the teaching-learning process within each school community.

6 The use of student assessment data

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- ***Data from student assessments should be the primary source for identifying the problems to be solved.***
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Similar concerns for alignment are evident in the testing industry. Accountability systems emphasize student mastery of specified content and rely more on criterion-referenced assessments than on norm-referenced ones to determine how well students are learning. If these measures are misaligned with content standards, the information they yield is irrelevant to determining school effectiveness.

Assessments in results-based accountability systems must be of sufficient technical quality to support the decisions that are based on the results. In the United States, recommended voluntary standards for the construction and use of accountability systems have been developed in a collaborative project between the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing (CRESST) and the Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE) (Baker et al., 2002). When these standards are examined in the context of the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, some general principles for using assessments in accountability systems emerge:

- Make explicit the purposes that the assessment system and individual assessments are intended to serve;
- decide on a strategy to meet the testing requirements at various grade levels;

- determine the degree to which validity evidence is available or could be accumulated for multiple purposes and “the widest possible range of students;”
- determine a standard of adequacy for technical quality; and
- make plans to acquire needed technical quality information during piloting, field trials and implementation.

Assessment systems can “lower the stakes” when educators and others have sufficient documentation that the assessments have met technical standards and there is clear understanding of how the assessment data are to be used. The stakes also are lowered when assessment data are used for positive purposes such as providing technical assistance to schools, initiating supplemental services to students, and amending policies and practices that interfere with goal attainment. When the stakes are consistently negative, the assessment data are viewed sceptically; when the stakes lead to improvements, assessment data can become accepted as an integral and necessary part of the decision-making process that leads to educational improvement.

Information about the context of accountability systems

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- ***Supporting information about teacher quality, curriculum rigor, and resource allocation should provide the basis for selecting or designing strategies that are most likely to solve problems.***
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School quality is not only evident in assessment results, but also in the diversity of programs offered, the preparation and performance of educational professionals, student behaviour and attitudes, and the relationship between the school and the community. School reports should publish contextual and programmatic information along with assessment results. This additional information provides a more complete description of the school and enhances the public's understanding of its overall performance. The information also offers a point of comparison among schools as patterns of inputs, processes, and outputs are related to levels of school performance.

Inputs include fiscal and other resources, teacher quality, students' backgrounds, and parent/community norms. Processes include the organization of schools, the curriculum and pedagogy, and opportunities for student participation in non-academic activities. Outputs include student achievement, participation, attitudes, and aspirations (Porter, 1991). Other potentially useful information includes attendance (both teacher and student), student behaviour (or misbehaviour), teacher professional development, and parents' and students' perceptions of the school. As school reports gain public attention, program advocates view publication of data as a way of ensuring much needed attention to their programs.

Collecting and reporting these data are mammoth tasks. Few countries have educational data systems with the flexibility to extract contextual information. Most reporting systems, therefore, rely upon supplementary self-reported data. As reliance on self-reporting increases, data on program characteristics are vulnerable to hurried collections, natural inclinations to present the factor positively, and inadvertent errors. At school sites, data collection is relegated to one of many tasks in a busy environment and often becomes secondary to more immediate concerns.

Results-based accountability systems require both educators and the public to understand the meaning of data, the implications of the ways in which data are aggregated, and, of greater import, ways in which the data can be used to make improvements. For example, disaggregated student mathematics scores are interesting and may point to a gap in achievement, but only when those data are interpreted within our knowledge of the curriculum and instruction are we able to determine how best to improve student performance.

8

The need for high quality information

All data collection instruments and procedures used in the construction of information systems must meet or exceed specified standards of quality.

Accountability systems demand that schools establish and maintain data bases that can be manipulated in response to a variety of inquiries. The most extensive system includes different security levels and permits inquiries on a school, classroom, or student basis. Data systems, however simple or complex, require administrative time and attention to accuracy. When the data are meaningful to those reporting them, use of the data is more likely to impact the quality of reporting. As data are used in decision-making at the school level, attention to accuracy should increase. Users of the data should not forget that while standardized collections offer uniformity and consistency, the unique aspects of a school or program may be sacrificed to standardization.

There are several ways of enhancing the validity, credibility, and positive impact of assessments used for accountability purposes while minimizing their negative effects. Linn (2000) recommends the following five actions:

- Provide safeguards against selective exclusion of students. One way of doing this is to include all students in accountability calculations.
- Make the case that high-stakes accountability requires new high-quality assessments each year that are equated to those of previous years. Failure to do this can result in distorted results (for example, inflated,

non-generalizable gains) and distortions in education (for example, narrowly teaching to the test).

- Place more emphasis on comparisons of performance from year to year than from school to school. This allows for differences in starting points while maintaining expectations of improvement for all.
- Consider both value added and status measures in the system. A value added measure provides schools that start out far from the goal a reasonable change to show improvement. In contrast, a status measure guards against “institutionalizing” low expectations for these same students and schools.
- Recognize, evaluate, and report the degree of uncertainty in the reported results. Assessments do not yield perfect data. Rather, all data are flawed in some way. The amount of error in the data as well as in the decisions made based on the data should be recognized, reported, and evaluated. In addition, the use of multiple assessments (rather than a single assessment) enables educators to better understand and take into consideration the nature and magnitude of the error.

9 Performance standards

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- ***There is a need to establish clear and explicit performance standards by which success will be determined.***
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Results-based accountability systems are based on student performance. There are three general ways in which student performance can be interpreted and reported: status of a cohort of students against a criterion; change in status of a cohort of students over time; and longitudinal change in the performance of individual students.

Status against a criterion is the simplest to collect, report, and explain. Cohorts of students are used as the unit of analysis. The report might state that “68 percent of our students in grades three through five met the standard.” Extensions of this type of reporting include the percentage of students scoring at various performance levels or the achievement patterns of various subgroups.

Reporting change in status of a cohort over time is based on the assumption that school performance should improve from one year to the next, regardless of the students who make up the cohort. This report might state that the “percentage of elementary students meeting the standard this year is twelve percent higher than last year.” Subgroup performance also can be reported.

In the longitudinal change model, the student, not the cohort, is the unit of analysis. Individual students are followed from one year to the next and the stability or change in performance is reported. The report might say that “This year 34 percent of students scored at a higher level than they (the same students) scored last year.”

This approach provides greater measurement precision by tracking assessment data for individual students over time but requires more frequent administration of assessments.

This booklet began with the premise that current results-based accountability systems are broadening the responsibility of educational systems for all students. At the same time, however, reliable and valid measures of the impact of schooling necessitate that students be enrolled in the school for an amount of time sufficient for the school to have an impact. Therefore, in practice, accountability systems have had to address several questions.

- For what portion of the school year must students be enrolled for the school to be held accountable for their performance?
- Are there groups of students that should not be included in the system (e.g., students with severe disabilities, non-native language speakers)?
- Because the results are the basis for substantive organizational decisions and the results are available to the general public, should a minimum number of students in a group be required before the data are reported?

Performance standards simultaneously must protect the individual student, support needed changes, and promote the aspirations of the society for its educational system.

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The generation of useful information

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- ***Accountability systems should provide data that enable educators to do their job better.***
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Results-based accountability systems should provide information that is understood and can be used by a variety of audiences. Systems fail when they yield only a single level of analysis and fall prey to the assumption that one report satisfies the needs of all audiences. Each audience should have sufficient information to carry out its particular responsibilities. For educators, the information must enable them to identify needed services and resources (in terms of both substance and quality) and evaluate the impact.

Stewardship of resources such as time, teacher quality, and positive working relationships with parents and the community stimulates higher levels of student performance. School personnel generally focus their energies on those elements over which they can exercise control. For example, thorough analysis of student and teacher performance data can help educators identify the conditions they can alter to increase attendance. Parents, on the other hand, view schools differently and, in surveys, have suggested that they are interested in issues of school and student safety, teacher qualifications, and student performance indicators such as dropouts or graduation rates. Parents and the community may be less interested in reviewing student demographics than educators are in presenting them. Educators argue that the demographics enable parents and the community to understand the context in which the school performances should be in-

terpreted. Parents and the community often lament that schools use the demographics as excuses for low performance.

Educators tend to benefit when the results-based accountability reports are accompanied by substantiating technical information. As schools seek to improve, reports should provide a sufficiently high level of detail so that their accuracy and validity can be maintained. At various organizational levels, expanded assessment reports (for example, information about curricular strands and objectives, performance of subgroups of students on specific objectives) are essential to plan for program changes.

Although using indicator data has the potential to increase understanding, a balance must be achieved. Placing too great an emphasis on one factor can distort perceptions and lead to questionable decisions. For example, high levels of teacher attendance are desirable, but not at the cost of denying teachers opportunities to participate in meaningful professional development. Missing two days of face-to-face teaching to learn an effective instructional strategy could lead to higher results than perfect teacher attendance.

Some systems employ a data warehouse with varying access to levels of analysis. Parents may have access to information about their individual child but are precluded from data on other children or teacher performance. Decisions about warehousing data should consider retrieval strategies and security.

11 Parent and community involvement

- *Accountability systems should provide data that increase parent involvement and community support as well as inform public policy and the allocation of resources.*

Each audience should have sufficient information to carry out its responsibility within the overall accountability framework. Parents have a responsibility to make decisions for their children, to advocate for their children, and to support positive changes in the educational system (both locally and elsewhere).

Useful reports for parents are those that help them understand what is in the best interest of their child(ren). Consequently, these reports should be private, but allow for interpretation of the child's progress against explicit standards, against grade level expectations, and in comparison to peers. School reports should be provided in formats that are easy-to-read and at reading levels appropriate to the general population. Graphic representations should be used and ancillary materials provided to parents who wish to go beyond the published summary.

Parents are expected to use the information to encourage and motivate their children and as a basis for interacting with school personnel. Ultimately parents also are expected to portray the school factually to the community and to advocate citizen responsibility for creating a culture of high expectations and performance.

Policymakers range from local officials through members of state and national governing bodies. What do those

who make the rules want to know? They require information to help them understand what progress is being made, to inform their resource allocation decisions, and to enable them to ensure that the system meets not only the present requirements and needs but those of the future.

Public policies provide the framework for the actions of those who work in and benefit from results-based accountability systems. Those policies serve as both the foundation and the subject of the system. This booklet began with the premise that accountability systems embody the values and aspirations of a society. Societies communicate their values through their policies and practices.

Policymakers need to know that the measures used to assess student performance and evaluate school performance provide valid descriptions of the quality of education. They need to understand the meaning of the assessment results. They also need to know the populations of students to whom the results do (and do not) apply.

Because no society has unlimited resources, those charged with policy development must examine the available information to determine how resource allocations promote or hinder achievement of the primary goals. Patterns of allocation and usage that slow progress must be redirected.

Finally, as advocates for the future, policymakers need information to ensure that the system continues to improve. As substantive and technical challenges arise, accountability systems can be modified to focus more intently on desired learning, to assess that learning more accurately and precisely, and to communicate assessment results in proper forms to a variety of audiences. Sound and defensible policies provide for these changes, enabling growth over time.

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Education Oversight Committee Strategic Plan

2021-2025

Summary Strategies and Objectives

approved by Strategic Planning Subcommittee, May 17, 2021

Strategy I: Report Facts

To support all stakeholders in making informed decisions for the continuous improvement of schools and student outcomes, the EOC will advocate for, access, and use a comprehensive, quality, statewide data system

Objective A: Enhance the EOC's direct access to comprehensive, quality, statewide data for reporting information

- Advocate for EOC staff to have secure, administrative-user access to Student Information System data
- Institute processes for EOC staff to have co-equal access to files that contain student-level data used for accountability
- Establish quality control processes to ensure accurate accountability reporting

Objective B: Advocate for the synthesis of existing data sources into a comprehensive, quality statewide data system that is secure, transparent and relevant to decision making for schools and student outcomes

- Partner with existing stakeholder groups to establish policies and processes to connect existing data systems
- Advocate for the establishment of policies and processes to ensure the security, privacy, and appropriate use of all stakeholder data

Objective C: Transform data into information that equips multiple stakeholder groups to act for the continuous improvement of schools and student outcomes

- Create information, to include data visualizations, that empowers multiple stakeholders to take more action-oriented approaches to continuous improvement of schools and student success
- Increase the use of state and school report cards and other sources of data for decision making and continuous school and student improvement
- Streamline the accessibility and transparency of information

Strategy II: Measure Change

To more accurately and efficiently measure change, the EOC will refocus accountability to emphasize school improvement and the success of students

Objective D: Align system-wide (PK-12) accountability measures with characteristics of college and career readiness (CCR)

- Study the ability of current accountability measures to predict college and career success
- Select accurate and appropriate measures of CCR progress throughout the PK-12 system
- Establish a framework to include international and national benchmarks of student success
- Monitor student CCR success and the continuous improvement of schools

Objective E: Design and implement an educational accountability system that enables stakeholders to take action and focus on continuous improvement

- Research the needs of multiple stakeholder groups to determine appropriate measures
- Develop measures to meet identified needs

Objective F: Identify and reward school accountability success

- Recognize schools that demonstrate success
- Include select awards on school report cards



**SC EDUCATION
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

Reporting facts. Measuring change. Promoting progress.

Strategy III: Promote Progress

To more effectively promote progress throughout South Carolina schools, the EOC will strengthen partnerships with key stakeholders and promote collaborative, coordinated action for the continuous improvement of schools and student success

Objective G: Clarify the role of the Education Oversight Committee as the authority in PK-12 school accountability

- Solidify the EOC's role as responsible for the development of federal and state accountability
- Become a co-equal partner in the procurement of measures used for school accountability (e.g. assessments, surveys)

Objective H: Realign EOC resources to become a more effective advisor and honest broker to multiple stakeholder groups

- Research the needs of multiple stakeholder groups
- Serve as a bridge to connect research to policy and practice for the following stakeholder groups: policy makers, educators, families / students, and business / community leaders

Objective I: Collaborate with other agencies, schools, and organizations to jointly explore topics relevant to school and student success

- Convene stakeholders to collaboratively update the accountability standards for a Vision 2030 document
- Convene forums / speakers on relevant education topics

