Student Achievement & Accountability Issues

On Thursday, February 5, the Committee will focus on these issues. After a brief staff presentation, Lou Fabrizio and Elsie Leak will address, on behalf of the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), the following issues and questions:

- State tests, ABCs, NAEP, SAT, NCLB
- Are there enough or too many tests?
- How far has NC come? (i.e., a snapshot of where students performed the first year on ABC's compared to now)
- What are the trends?
- How credible are the results? – They have been asked to address the recent Education Trust report that questioned our graduation rates and to respond to why so many schools did so well this past year on the ABC's.
- What initiatives have enabled schools and students to perform at higher levels? Some of these would include high priority schools, staff development initiatives, assistance teams, etc
- What changes (such as to the writing tests, the dropout rate, etc.) have been made to the accountability system?
- What challenges do the State and local school administrative units have and what challenges are coming?

Following DPI's presentation, we have invited two very different school systems to give their perspectives on these issues.

Student Achievement summary (2/5/04; rsj)

North Carolina Testing Program
State Board of Education
Required Testing for 2003-04[1]

Grade Level	Reading	Math	Social Studies	Science	Writing	Other
3	Pretest & EOG	Pretest & EOG				*NC Alternate Assessments*[3]
4	EOG	EOG			Narrative[6]	*NC Alternate Assessments*[3]
5	EOG	EOG				*NC Alternate Assessments*[3]
6	EOG	EOG				*NC Alternate Assessments*[3]
7	EOG	EOG			Argumentative[6]	*NC Alternate Assessments*[3]
8	EOG	EOG				*NC Alternate Assessments*[3] / Computer Skills[4]
9	English I[2,9]	Algebra I[2,9]	ELPS[8,9]	Physical Science[2,9]		Competency Test[5,7]
10	High School Comprehensive Test / *NC Alternate Assessment*[3]	Geometry[2,9] / High School Comprehensive Test / *NC Alternate Assessment*[3]		Biology[2,9] / *NC Alternate Assessment*[3]	Informational[6]	
11		Algebra II[2,9]		Chemistry[2,9]		
12				Physics[2,9] / *NC Alternate Assessment*[3]		

[1]Tests currently administered as part of the North Carolina Testing Program are located in the boxes. Field tests may be administered annually in selected subjects and grades at randomly selected sites. Some North Carolina students also participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the PSAT, the SAT, and the ACT. The grade 3 pretest is administered during the first three weeks of school; the end-of-grade tests are administered during the last three weeks of school. The locally-selected test dates must be on consecutive school days.

[2]The end-of-course tests are administered where the courses are taught within the final 10 days of school (or the equivalent for alternative schedules).

[3]Students with disabilities and limited language proficiency who do not participate in the grade 3 pretest, the end-of-grade tests, or the writing assessment (grades 4, 7 and 10) must be administered a state-developed alternate assessment. Currently the state-mandated alternate assessments are the North Carolina Alternate Assessment Academic Inventory (NCAAAI, a curriculum-based checklist) and the North Carolina Alternate Assessment Portfolio (NCAAP-Reading, Mathematics, and Writing) for students with serious cognitive deficits. The alternate assessments are implemented in response to the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

[4]Students who entered the eighth grade in 1996-97 (Class of 2001 and beyond) are required to meet the proficiency standard on the computer skills multiple-choice and performance tests as a graduation requirement. A student with a disability who is following the Occupational Course of Study, as a graduation requirement, is required to meet the computer skills proficiency standard as stated in the student's Individual Education Program (IEP).

[5]Students are required to pass the competency tests in reading and mathematics to get a high school diploma for all students entering the ninth grade in 1994-95 and beyond and who are following the Career Preparation, College Technical Preparation, or College/University Preparation courses of study.

[6]The writing assessment at grades 4, 7, and 10 is being implemented statewide effective with the 2003-04 school year. Also effective with the 2003-04 school year, the North Carolina Writing Assessment Scoring Model will be used to score the assessments. Scores from the Writing Assessments as grades 4, 7, and 10 will NOT be included in the ABCs performance composite during the 2003-04 school year.

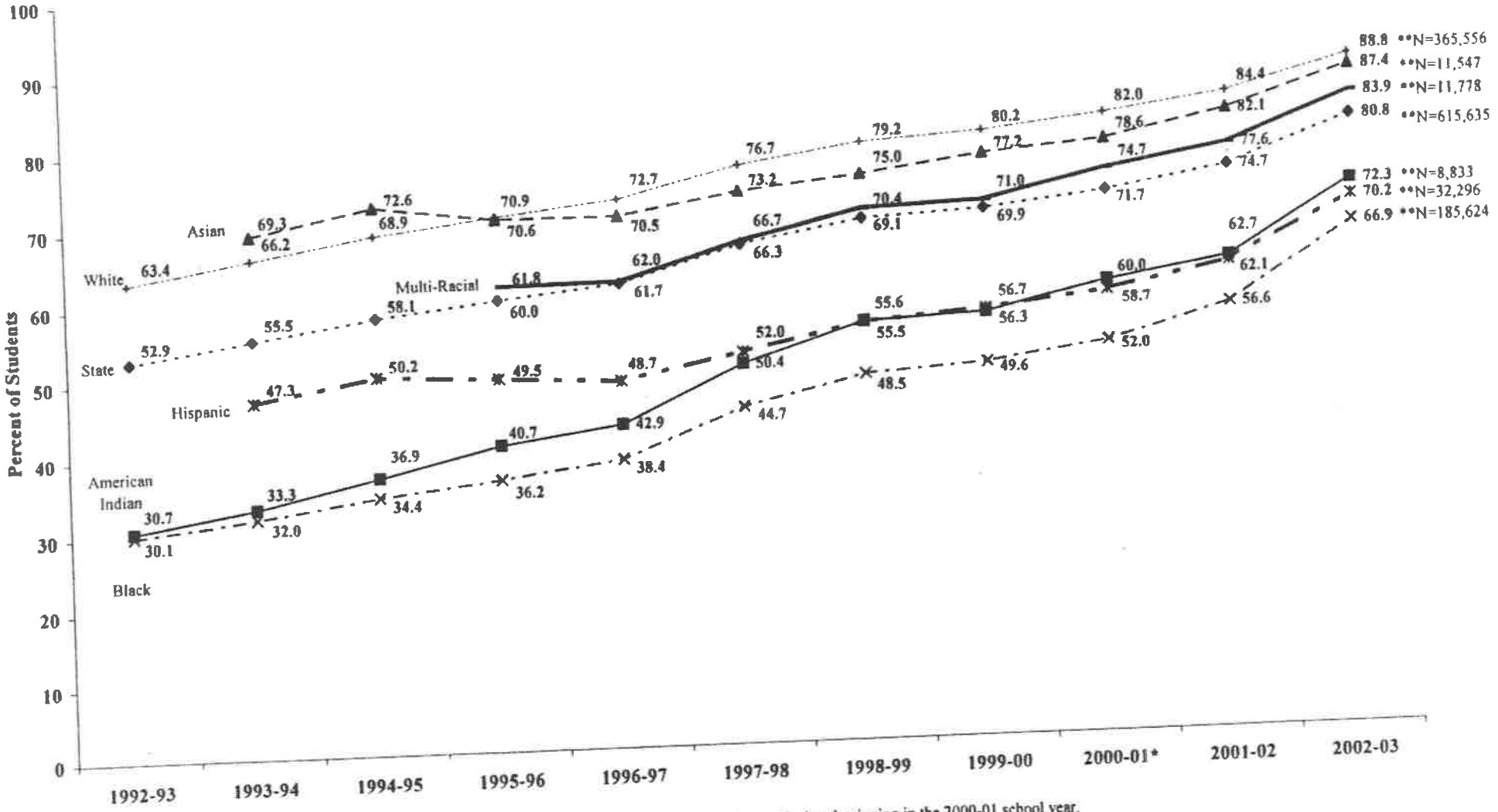
[7]Implementation of the North Carolina Exit Exam has been delayed due to action of the N.C. General Assembly.

[8]The Economic, Legal, and Political System (ELPS) End-of-Course test will be administered to all students who are enrolled in the ELPS course for credit.

[9]Students with disabilities and with limited English proficiency who are enrolled in a course for credit but are not able to participate in the EOC tests are required to participate in the EOC NCAAAI pilot.

Preliminary Report

Figure 3. 1992-93 to 2002-03 End-of-Grade Multiple-Choice Test Results
Percent of Students At or Above Level III in Both Reading and Mathematics
Grades 3-8, by Ethnicity



Notes: *The North Carolina mathematics tests measure the competencies in the 1998 North Carolina mathematics curriculum beginning in the 2000-01 school year.

**N counts equal the number of students tested; previous years are comparable.

The "Percent of Students At or Above Level III in Both Reading and Mathematics" is calculated by dividing the number of the students passing both reading and mathematics tests at or above Achievement Level III by the number of students with valid scores in both reading and mathematics; therefore, the data do not include students tested in only reading or mathematics or taking the alternate assessments.

Asian and Hispanic results were not reported in 1992-93. Results in the Multi-Racial category were not reported in 1992-93, 1993-94, and 1994-95.

Some data points are changed from previous publication to correct reporting errors.

Data received by LEAs and charter schools after August 19, 2003 are not included in this figure.

Prepared by the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/ Testing Program.

The North Carolina State Testing Results, Preliminary Report, 2002-03

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP)

Mathematics, Reading, Science and Writing

What is The Nation's Report Card?

THE NATION'S REPORT CARD, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), is a nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subject areas. Since 1969, assessments have been conducted periodically in reading, mathematics, science, writing, history, geography, and other fields. By making objective information on student performance available to policymakers at the national, state, and local levels, NAEP is an integral part of our nation's evaluation of the condition and progress of education. Only information related to academic achievement is collected under this program. NAEP guarantees the privacy of individual students and their families.

NAEP is a congressionally mandated project of the National Center for Education Statistics, within the Institute of Education Sciences of the U.S. Department of Education. The Commissioner of Education Statistics is responsible, by law, for carrying out the NAEP project through competitive awards to qualified organizations.

How does NAEP compare to the North Carolina End-of-Grade (EOG) tests?

While NAEP assessments offer our state some useful comparative information with other states there are some cautions in interpreting the results between NAEP and EOG assessments. Listed below are some of the differences between the two types of assessments.

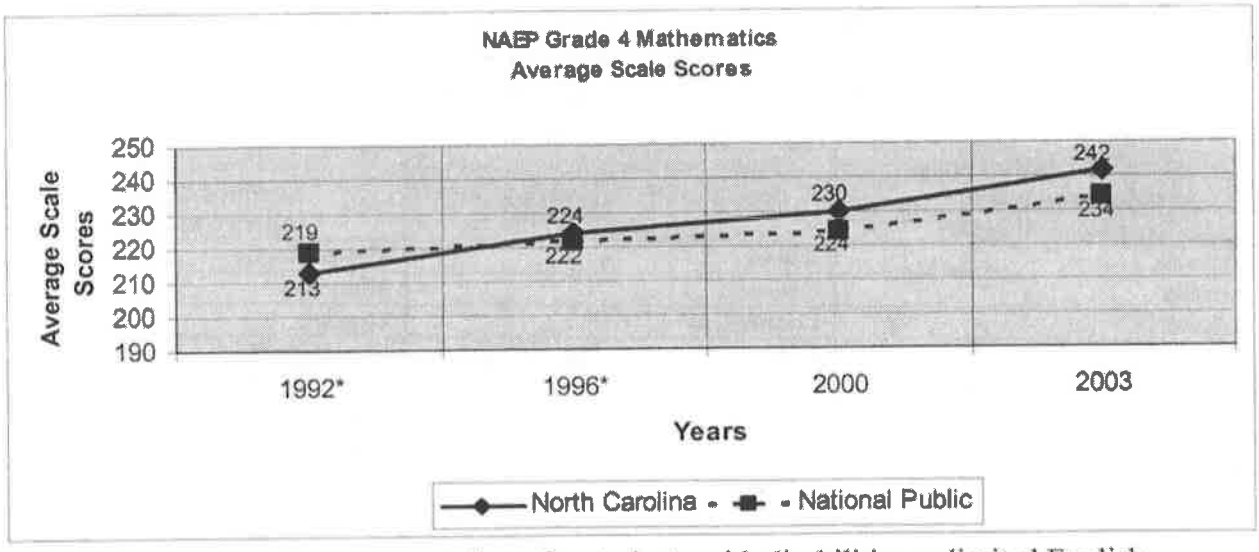
1. These are different assessment systems based on different standards. The EOG tests are based on the NC *Standard Course of Study* while the NAEP assessments are based on the NAEP Frameworks.
2. The standard setting procedures and processes used to determine proficiency are different for each system.
3. The EOG tests are administered to all students at a grade level (approximately 100,000 students per grade) while the NAEP assessments are taken by a sample of students statewide at the grades tested (approximately 3,000 students per grade).
4. The EOG tests have consequences for some students due to the Student Accountability Standards policy in grades 3, 5 and 8. Some LEAs also have a similar policy for grades 4, 6 and 7. This would provide more motivation on the part of the students taking the EOG tests than for the NAEP assessments.
5. Students get individual test results when they take the EOG tests; no individual or school scores are generated for students taking the NAEP assessments.
6. The formats for the assessments are different. The EOG tests contain all multiple-choice items while the NAEP assessments contain some constructed-response items in addition to the multiple-choice items.
7. The assessments have different reporting scales.

North Carolina
2003 Grade 4 Mathematics/Scale Score Comparison
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

North Carolina Average Scale Score: 242
National Average Scale Score: 234
South Census Average Scale Score: 233

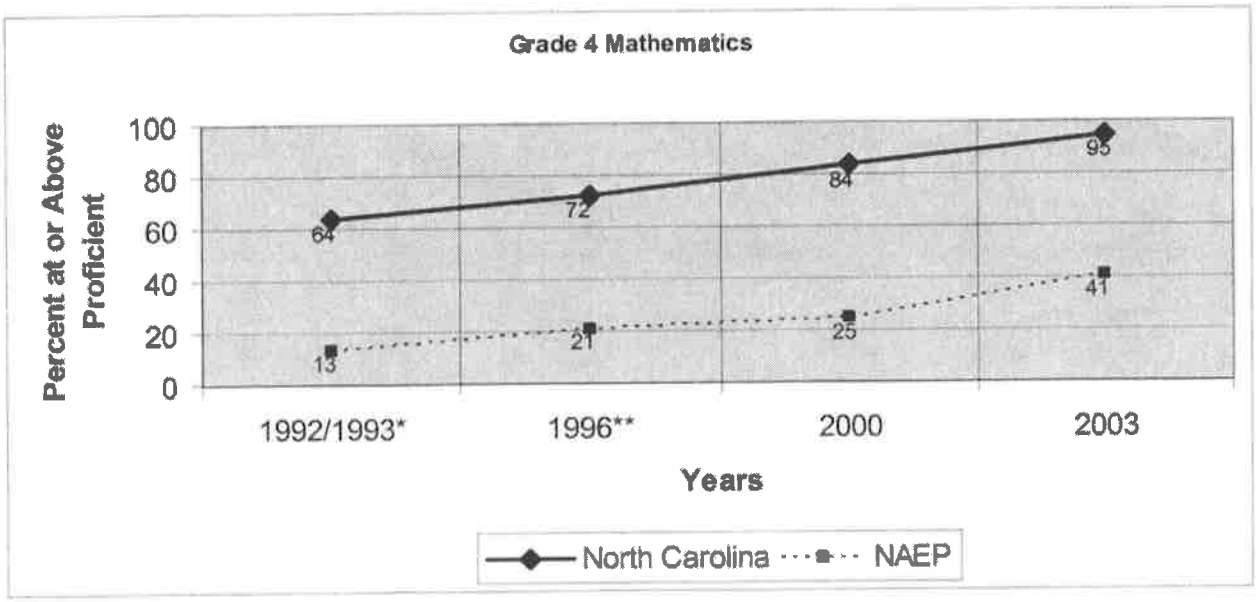
States and Jurisdictions Significantly Below North Carolina (44)	States and Jurisdictions Not Significantly Different from North Carolina (8)	States and Jurisdictions Significantly Above North Carolina (0)
Alabama	Connecticut	
Alaska	Kansas	
Arizona	Massachusetts	
Arkansas	Minnesota	
California	New Hampshire	
Colorado	Vermont	
Delaware	Virginia	
District of Columbia	Wyoming	
Florida		
Georgia		
Hawaii		
Idaho		
Illinois		
Indiana		
Iowa		
Kentucky		
Louisiana		
Maine		
Maryland		
Michigan		
Mississippi		
Missouri		
Montana		
Nebraska		
Nevada		
New Jersey		
New Mexico		
New York		
North Dakota		
Ohio		
Oklahoma		
Oregon		
Pennsylvania		
Rhode Island		
South Carolina		
South Dakota		
Tennessee		
Texas		
Utah		
Washington		
West Virginia		
Wisconsin		
DoDEA/DDES		
DoDEA/DoDDS		

Average Scale Score Comparisons
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
North Carolina and National Public



*NAEP did not provide accommodations for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students until 1998.

North Carolina End of Grade (NC EOG) and
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
Proficiency Percentages



*Data for NAEP are for school year 1991-92 and data for North Carolina are for school year 1992-93.

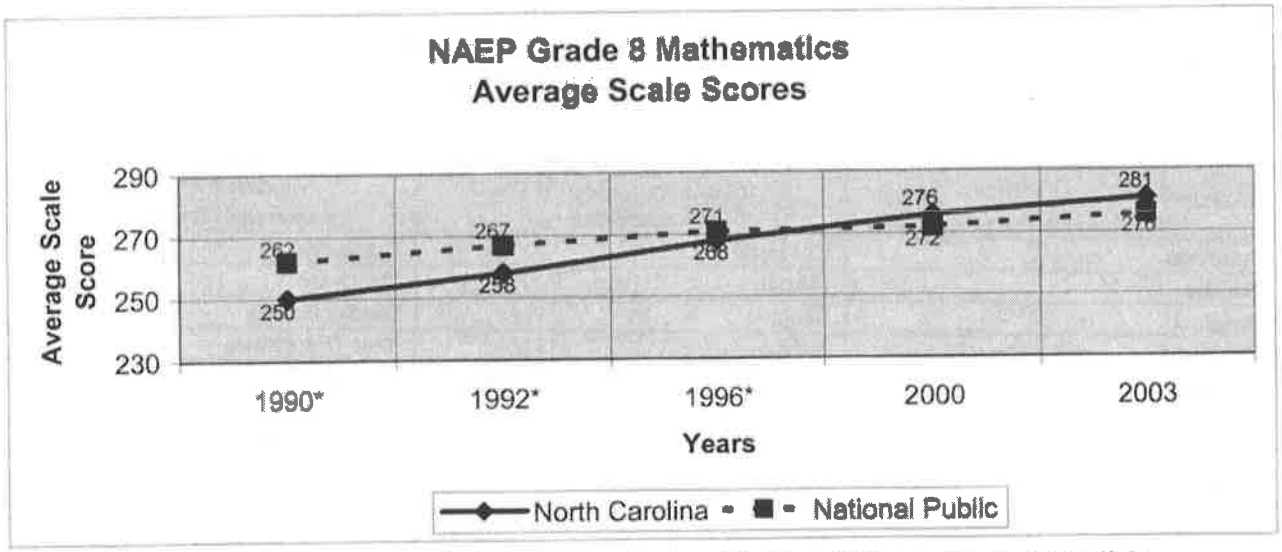
**NAEP did not provide accommodations for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students until 1998.

North Carolina
2003 Grade 8 Mathematics/Scale Score Comparison
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

North Carolina Average Scale Score: 281
National Average Scale Score: 276
South Census Average Scale Score: 274

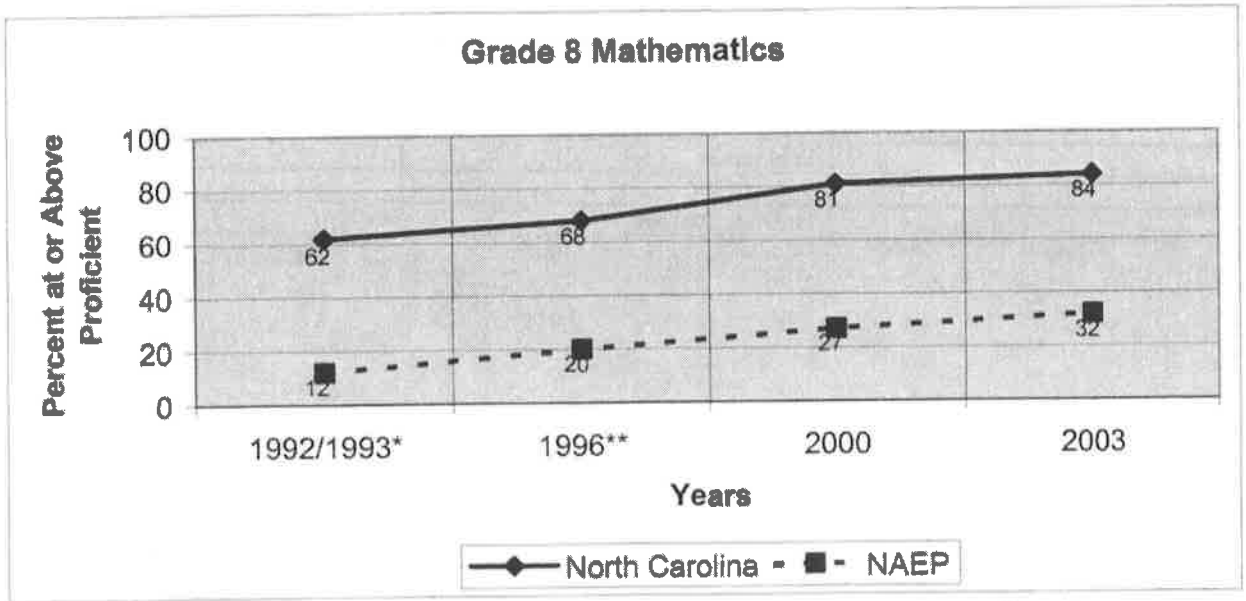
States and Jurisdictions Significantly Below North Carolina (22)	States and Jurisdictions Not Significantly Different from North Carolina (22)	States and Jurisdictions Significantly Above North Carolina (8)
Alabama	Alaska	Massachusetts
Arizona	Colorado	Minnesota
Arkansas	Connecticut	Montana
California	Idaho	New Hampshire
Delaware	Indiana	North Dakota
District of Columbia	Iowa	South Dakota
Florida	Kansas	Vermont
Georgia	Maine	DoDEA/DoDDS
Hawaii	Michigan	
Illinois	Missouri	
Kentucky	Nebraska	
Louisiana	New Jersey	
Maryland	New York	
Mississippi	Ohio	
Nevada	Oregon	
New Mexico	Pennsylvania	
Oklahoma	Utah	
Rhode Island	Virginia	
South Carolina	Washington	
Tennessee	Wisconsin	
Texas	Wyoming	
West Virginia	DoDEA/DDESS	

Average Scale Score Comparisons
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
North Carolina and National Public



*NAEP did not provide accommodations for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students until 1998.

North Carolina End of Grade (NC EOG) and
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
Proficiency Percentages



*Data for NAEP are for school year 1991-92 and data for North Carolina are for school year 1992-93.

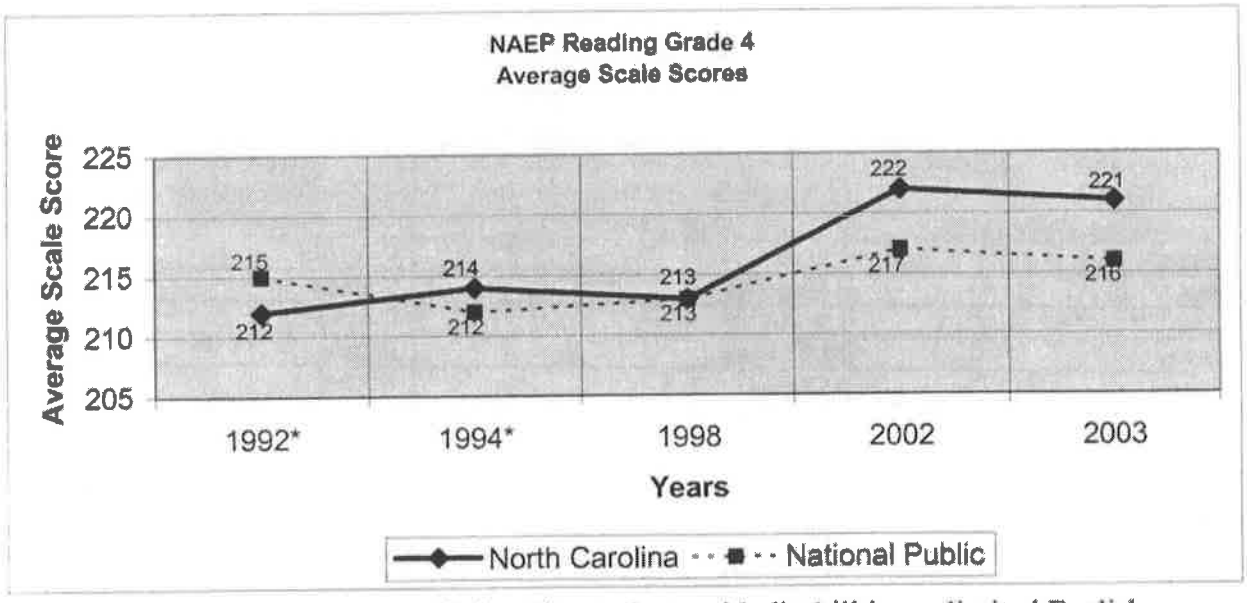
**NAEP did not provide accommodations for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students until 1998.

North Carolina
2003 Grade 4 Reading/Scale Score Comparison
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

North Carolina Average Scale Score: 221
National Average Scale Score: 216
South Census Average Scale Score: 215

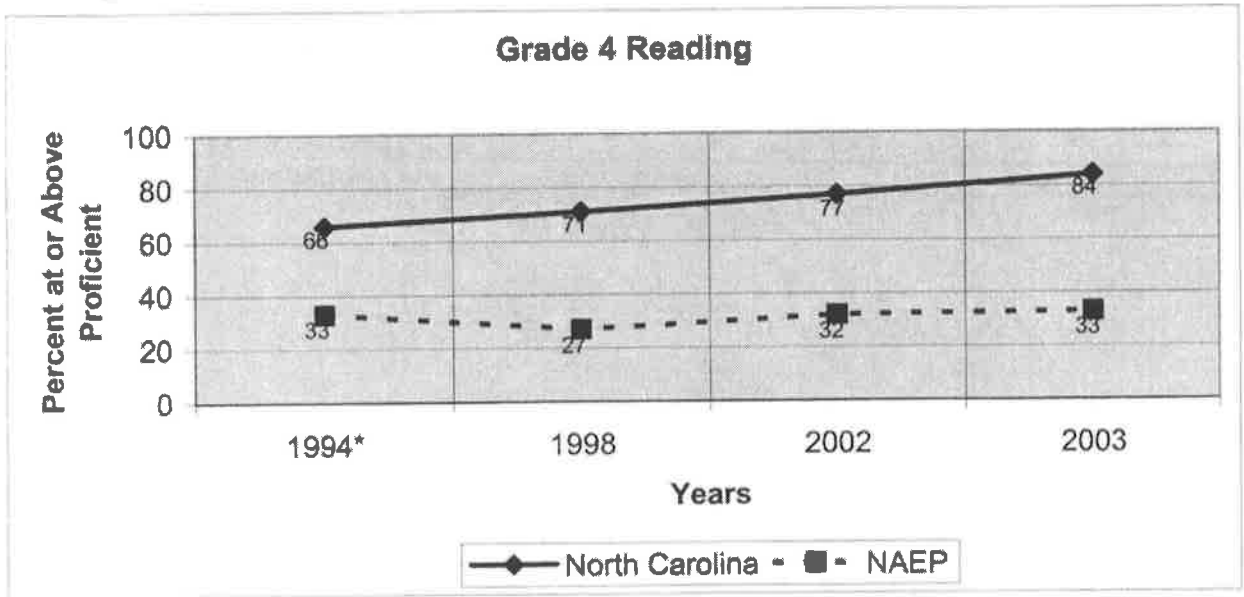
States and Jurisdictions Significantly Below North Carolina (19)	States and Jurisdictions Not Significantly Different from North Carolina (26)	States and Jurisdictions Significantly Above North Carolina (7)
Alabama	Colorado	Connecticut
Alaska	Florida	Delaware
Arizona	Idaho	Massachusetts
Arkansas	Indiana	New Hampshire
California	Iowa	New Jersey
District of Columbia	Kansas	Vermont
Georgia	Kentucky	DoDEA/DoDDS
Hawaii	Maine	
Illinois	Maryland	
Louisiana	Michigan	
Mississippi	Minnesota	
Nevada	Missouri	
New Mexico	Montana	
Oklahoma	Nebraska	
Oregon	New York	
Rhode Island	North Dakota	
South Carolina	Ohio	
Tennessee	Pennsylvania	
Texas	South Dakota	
	Utah	
	Virginia	
	Washington	
	West Virginia	
	Wisconsin	
	Wyoming	
	DoDEA/DDESS	

Average Scale Score Comparisons
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
North Carolina and National Public



*NAEP did not provide accommodations for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students until 1998.

North Carolina End of Grade (NC EOG) and
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
Proficiency Percentages



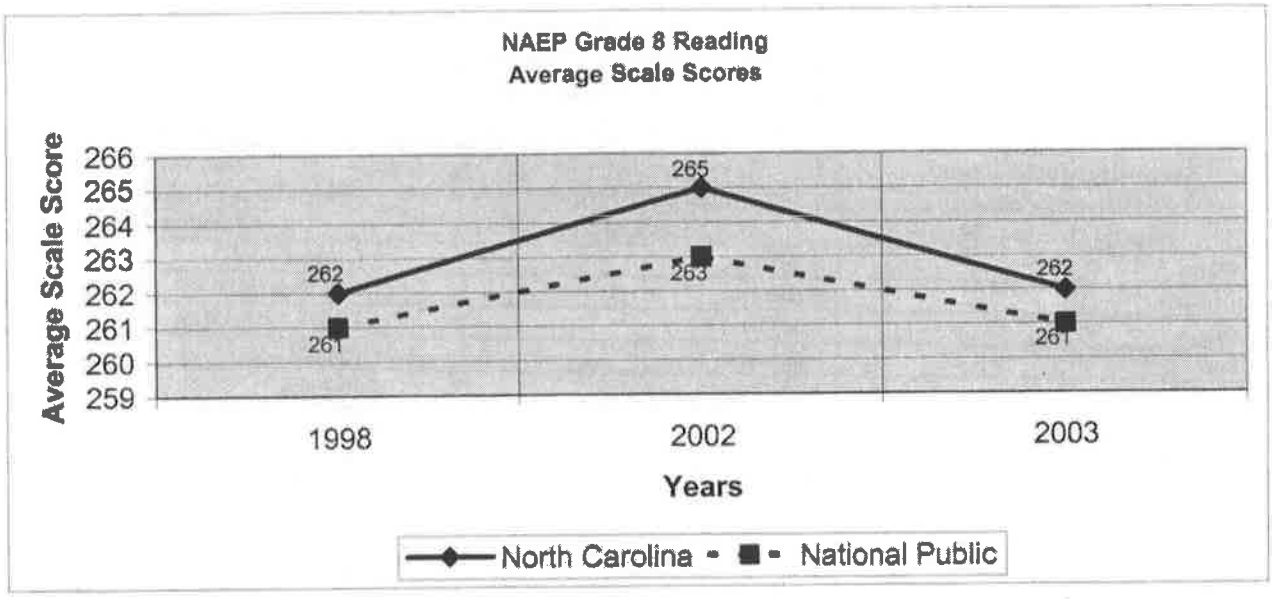
*NAEP did not provide accommodations for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

North Carolina
2003 Grade 8 Reading/Scale Score Comparison
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

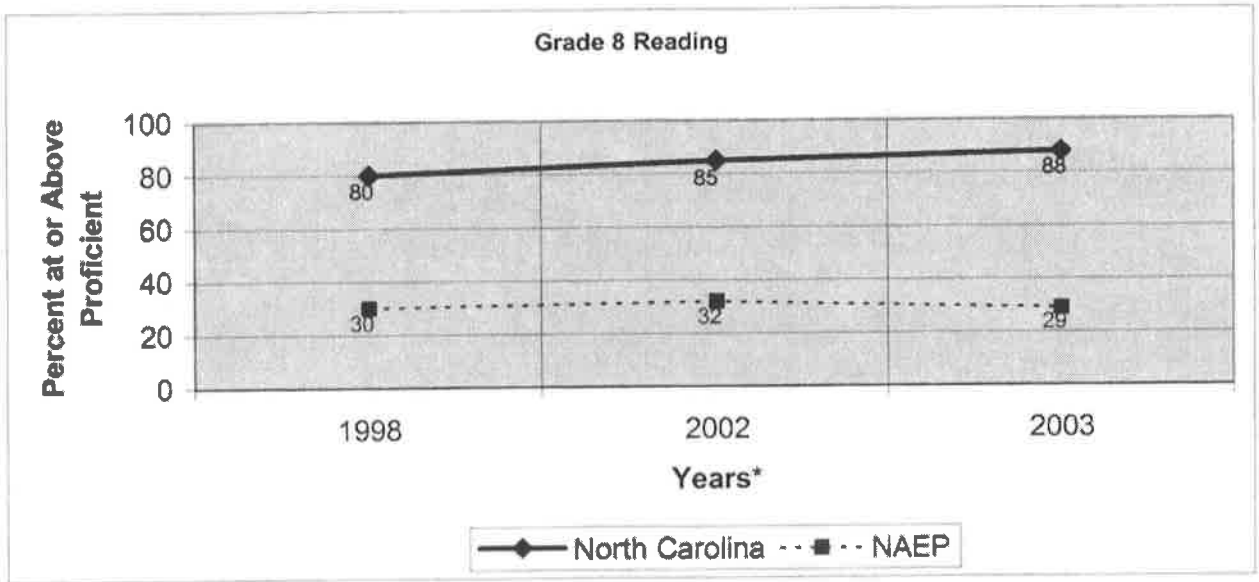
North Carolina Average Scale Score: 262
National Average Scale Score: 261
South Census Average Scale Score: 259

States and Jurisdictions Significantly Below North Carolina (15)	States and Jurisdictions Not Significantly Different from North Carolina (11)	States and Jurisdictions Significantly Above North Carolina (26)
Alabama	Idaho	Colorado
Alaska	Maryland	Connecticut
Arizona	Michigan	Delaware
Arkansas	Oklahoma	Illinois
California	Oregon	Indiana
District of Columbia	Pennsylvania	Iowa
Florida	Rhode Island	Kansas
Georgia	Texas	Kentucky
Hawaii	Utah	Maine
Louisiana	Washington	Massachusetts
Mississippi	West Virginia	Minnesota
Nevada		Missouri
New Mexico		Montana
South Carolina		Nebraska
Tennessee		New Hampshire
		New Jersey
		New York
		North Dakota
		Ohio
		South Dakota
		Vermont
		Virginia
		Wisconsin
		Wyoming
		DoDEA/DDESS
		DoDEA/DoDDS

Average Scale Score Comparisons
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
North Carolina and National Public



North Carolina End of Grade (NC EOG) and
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
Proficiency Percentages



*NAEP only assessed reading at the state level for grade 8 in 1998, 2002 and 2003.

North Carolina
2000 Grade 4 Science/Scale Score Comparison
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

National Average Scale Score: 147
North Carolina Average Scale Score: 147
Southeast Average Scale Score: 141

States and Jurisdictions Significantly Below North Carolina (11)	States and Jurisdictions Not Significantly Different from North Carolina (10)	States and Jurisdictions Significantly Above North Carolina (20)
Arizona	Alabama	Connecticut
California	Arkansas	DoDEA/DDESS
Georgia	Maryland	DoDEA/DoDDS
Guam	Nebraska	Idaho
Hawaii	New York	Indiana
Louisiana	Oregon	Iowa
Mississippi	Rhode Island	Kentucky
Nevada	Tennessee	Maine
New Mexico	Texas	Massachusetts
South Carolina	West Virginia	Michigan
Virgin Islands		Minnesota
		Missouri
		Montana
		North Dakota
		Ohio
		Oklahoma
		Utah
		Vermont
		Virginia
		Wyoming

North Carolina
2000 Grade 8 Science/Scale Score Comparison
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

National Average Scale Score: 149
North Carolina Average Scale Score: 145
Southeast Average Scale Score: 142

States and Jurisdictions Significantly Below North Carolina (7)	States and Jurisdictions Not Significantly Different from North Carolina (11)	States and Jurisdictions Significantly Above North Carolina (21)
California	Alabama	Maine
Guam	Arizona	Vermont
Hawaii	Arkansas	Massachusetts
Louisiana	Georgia	Connecticut
Mississippi	Maryland	Virginia
New Mexico	Nevada	Ohio
South Carolina	New York	Kentucky
	Rhode Island	Indiana
	Tennessee	Michigan
	Texas	Missouri
	West Virginia	Minnesota
		North Dakota
		Nebraska
		Oklahoma
		Utah
		Wyoming
		Montana
		Idaho
		Oregon
		DoDEA/DDESS
		DoDEA/DoDDS

North Carolina
2002 Grade 4 Writing/Scale Score Comparison
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

National Average Scale Score: 153
North Carolina Average Scale Score: 159
Southeast Average Scale Score: 151

States and Jurisdictions Significantly Below North Carolina (30)	States and Jurisdictions Not Significantly Different from North Carolina (14)	States and Jurisdictions Significantly Above North Carolina (3)
Alabama	DODEA/DDESS	Connecticut
Arizona	DODEA/DODDS	Delaware
Arkansas	Florida	Massachusetts
California	Iowa	
District of Columbia	Maine	
Georgia	Maryland	
Guam	Minnesota	
Hawaii	New York	
Idaho	Ohio	
Indiana	Pennsylvania	
Kansas	Rhode Island	
Kentucky	Vermont	
Louisiana	Virginia	
Michigan	Washington	
Mississippi		
Missouri		
Montana		
Nebraska		
Nevada		
New Mexico		
North Dakota		
Oklahoma		
Oregon		
South Carolina		
Tennessee		
Texas		
Utah		
Virgin Islands		
West Virginia		
Wyoming		

North Carolina
2002 Grade 8 Writing/Scale Score Comparison
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

National Average Scale Score: 152
North Carolina Average Scale Score: 157
Southeast Average Scale Score: 149

States and Jurisdictions Significantly Below North Carolina (30)	States and Jurisdictions not Significantly Different from North Carolina (11)	States and Jurisdictions Significantly Above North Carolina (5)
Alabama	Delaware	Connecticut
American Samoa	Florida	DODEA/DDESS
Arizona	Kansas	DODEA/DODDS
Arkansas	Maine	Massachusetts
California	Maryland	Vermont
District of Columbia	Nebraska	
Georgia	Ohio	
Guam	Oregon	
Hawaii	Pennsylvania	
Idaho	Virginia	
Indiana	Washington	
Kentucky		
Louisiana		
Michigan		
Mississippi		
Missouri		
Montana		
Nevada		
New Mexico		
New York		
North Dakota		
Oklahoma		
Rhode Island		
South Carolina		
Tennessee		
Texas		
Utah		
Virgin Islands		
West Virginia		
Wyoming		

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

Additional Information on the SAT

1

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

Mean Total SAT Scores for North Carolina, the United States, and the Southeast Region

- North Carolina's average yearly gain has been about 3.5 points on the SAT since 1989, compared with about 1.3 points for the nation.

2

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

Mean Total SAT Scores for North Carolina, the United States, and the Southeast Region

- North Carolina's 2003 mean total SAT score (1001) was a three point improvement over the previous year's score.
- The nation scored 1026 in 2003, a six point improvement over the previous year's score.
- North Carolina's mean total SAT score (1001) exceeded the Southeast's score (999) for the second straight year.

3

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

Performance of Public Schools in North Carolina and the Nation

- The mean total score (999) for North Carolina's ***public*** schools in 2003 was five points higher than the previous year's score.
- The score (1016) for the nation's ***public*** schools in 2003 increased by three points over the previous year's score.

4

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

Comparison of Mean Total SAT Scores for North Carolina and the Nation – Public & Private Schools

	All students[1]	Public School[2]
Nation	1026 [+6]	1016 [+3]
NC	1001 [+3]	999 [+5]
GAP	25 [+3]	17 [-2]

[1]Includes SAT scores for public and private schools in North Carolina.
[2]Includes only scores for North Carolina's public schools.
[ ] – Numbers between brackets show gain from previous year.

5

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

Gap between North Carolina's Score and the Nation's Score

- The 25 point gap between North Carolina's mean and the nation's mean in 2003 was less than one-half the gap in 1990 (when the gap was 53 points).
- The gap between North Carolina's score and the nation's score has narrowed by 70 percent since 1972 when the gap was 83 points.
- The SAT score gap between North Carolina and the nation is 12 points on the verbal and 13 points on the math portions in 2003.

6

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

Mean SAT Scores for North Carolina and the United States, 1972 to 2003

Year	United States (US)[1] Verbal	Math	Total	North Carolina (NC)[1] Verbal	Math	Total	US-NC Gap[2]
2003	507	519	1026	495	506	1001	25
2002	504	516	1020	493	505	998	22
2001	506	514	1020	493	499	992	28
2000	505	514	1019	492	496	988	31
1999	505	511	1016	493	493	986	30
1998	505	512	1017	490	492	982	35
1997	503	511	1014	490	488	978	36
1996	505	508	1013	490	486	976	37
1995	504	506	1010	488	482	970	40
1994	499	504	1003	482	482	964	39
1993	500	503	1003	483	481	964	39
1992	501	501	1001	482	479	961	40
1991	499	500	999	478	474	952	47
1990	500	501	1001	478	470	948	53
1989	504	502	1006	474	469	943	63
1988	505	501	1006	478	470	948	58
1987	507	501	1008	477	468	945	63
1986	509	500	1009	477	465	942	67
1985	509	500	1009	476	464	940	69
1984	504	497	1001	473	461	934	67
1983	503	494	997	472	460	932	65
1982	504	493	997	474	460	934	63
1981	502	492	994	469	456	925	69
1980	502	492	994	471	458	929	65
1979	505	493	998	471	455	926	72
1978	507	494	1001	468	453	921	80
1977	507	496	1003	472	454	926	77
1976	508	497	1004	474	452	926	80
1975	512	498	1010	477	457	934	76
1974	521	509	1026	480	466	954	72
1972	523	506	1029	487	468	955	74
1972	530	509	1039	489	467	956	83

[1]All SAT scores are reported on the recentered score scale (1995).
[2]Gap is the United States mean total SAT score minus North Carolina's mean total SAT score.

7

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

Mean Total SAT Mathematics Scores for North Carolina and the Nation, 1994 to 2003

- In 2003, North Carolina's mathematics score lagged the nation's score by 13 points, compared with 22 points in 1993.

8

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

Mean Total SAT Scores for the United States and North Carolina by Gender, 1994 to 2003

- The SAT score gap between males in North Carolina and males in the nation has narrowed from 39 points in 1994 to 28 points in 2003.
- North Carolina's females have narrowed the scoring gap between females in the nation from 33 points in 1994 to 21 points in 2003.

9

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

Mean Total SAT Mathematics Scores for the United States and North Carolina by Race/Ethnicity, 1994 to 2003

- Among racial/ethnic groups, North Carolina's Asian students attained the highest mean total SAT score (1052) in 2003, 27 points higher than their previous year's score.
- White students attained the second highest score (1050), four points higher than the previous year's score.

10

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

Mean Total SAT Mathematics Scores for the United States and North Carolina by Race/Ethnicity, 1994 to 2003

- North Carolina's Black-White score gap (211 points) increased four points from the previous year.
- Nationally, the Black-White score gap increased by three points, from 203 points in 2002, to 206 points in 2003.

11

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Facts About the NCLB Graduation Rate

- What is the NCLB graduation rate:

Under the No Child Left Behind legislative mandate, States are required to include graduation rates for public high schools in their definition of AYP. To meet the requirements stated in the federal regulations, the rate must calculate the percentage of students, measured from the beginning of their high school year, who graduate with a regular diploma, not a GED, in the standard number of years.

- How was it computed for 2002-03?

North Carolina proposed to start with what we called a "simple" definition based on the federal requirements. This simple definition was chosen because we had no data mechanism available that accurately tracked student mobility over time for all students in the ninth grade group that started high school four years ago. To accurately collect those data, school officials would have had to go back and determine what happened to each entering ninth-grader four years ago. Instead, we proposed (with US Department of Education [USED]approval) to start with the current graduating class of the 2002-03 school year and determine when those students took the 8th grade End-of-Grade test by electronically reviewing test data. This graduation rate was reported as the percentage of the 2002-03 high school graduates who received their diplomas in four years or less.

- How will it change?

Our plan (again approved by the USED) is eventually to report a graduation rate using the more complex process as we collect accurate data on student mobility and outcomes. We have established a way of collecting information on a cohort of ninth graders, and school districts will document these students' movement over four years so that the graduation rate is in line with the federal requirement. Schools were instructed to start with the incoming group of ninth graders for the 2002-03 school year so the new graduation rate can be reported as baseline data at the conclusion of the 2005-06 school year (i.e., four years later). It will be 2006-07 before we have two years in a row of data based on the complex process so we can show whether there has been progress.

- What was the recent controversy about?

The NC reported graduation rate for NCLB (92.5%) was controversial because it was confused with a "completion rate" which is much lower. The completion rate (which some advocates refer to as a graduation rate reports the proportion of all students who entered North Carolina schools as ninth-graders four years ago and the number of high school graduates this past year. Advocates of the completion rate point out that the dropout rate is reflected therein. This will be the case for us in NC when we move to the new definition.

Federal Timetable for Implementing "No Child Left Behind" for schools not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Year	Federal Interventions, Sanctions
Year 1 (2001-02)	**Starting point for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)** ▪ Measure progress of all students ▪ Measure progress of each subgroup: race/ethnicity, disability, low income, LEP ▪ All students proficient within 12 years
Year 2 (2002-03)	**State Report Card implemented** ▪ Publicly disseminated ▪ Disaggregated student achievement ▪ Percent of students not tested ▪ Professional qualifications of teachers **LEA Report Card implemented** ▪ Publicly disseminated ▪ Same info for the LEA and school Report Card ▪ Percent of schools identified for Title I school improvement Notify parents of schools that did not make Adequate Yearly Progress after two years (2001-02 and 2002-03)
Year 3 (2003-04)	**Mandatory Public School Choice** ▪ After two (2) years with no **AYP** ▪ Choice of another public school in LEA not identified for improvement ▪ Priority - lowest achieving students from low-income families
Year 4 (2004-05)	**Supplemental Services Begin** ▪ After three (3) years of no **AYP** ▪ Low income student – eligible ▪ Tutoring or other extra educational services ▪ Parents select service provider ▪ LEA contracts with provider ▪ LEA establishes performance goals for students being served ▪ Cost - LEA's per pupil allotment (PPA) or actual cost ▪ Funds available for transportation also

Year 5 (2005-06)	**Corrective Action** ▪ After four (4) years of no **AYP** ▪ LEA must take one or more actions: – Replace relevant school staff – Implement a new curriculum – Significantly decrease management authority of the school – Appoint outside expert – Extend school day or year – Restructure internal organization
Year 6 (2006-07)	**LEA develops governance plan** ▪ After five (5) years of no **AYP** ▪ The LEAs develop a plan for alternative governance in each of the Title I school improvement schools that have made no **AYP** over the past five (5) years
Year 7 (2007-08)	**Alternative Governance** ▪ After six (6) years of no **AYP** the LEAs must take one of the following actions: – Reopen school as a charter – Replace all or most of relevant school staff – Contract with private management – State takeover – Any other major restructuring

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
Title I School Improvement Schools
Revised November 24, 2003

The schools listed below are in Title I School Improvement for the 2003-2004 school year.

		Sanctions				
LEA	**School**	**PSC**	**SES**	**CA**	**PR**	**R**
Cumberland County	Teresa Berrien Elementary	X				
Duplin County	Warsaw Middle	X				
Durham County	Eastway Elementary	X	X	X		
Edgecombe County	Phillips Magnet	X				
Winston-Salem/Forsyth	Atkins Middle	X				
Winston-Salem/Forsyth	Forest Park Elementary	X				
Winston-Salem/Forsyth	Hill Middle	X				
Gaston County	Rhyne Elementary	X	X	X		
Halifax County	Enfield Middle	X				
Hertford County	Riverview Elementary	X				
Mecklenburg County	Westerly Hills Elementary	X				
Nash-Rocky Mount	Swift Creek Elementary	X				
Robeson County	Rex-Rennert Elementary	X				
Robeson County	Townsend Middle	X				
Washington County	Pines Elementary	X				
Wayne County	Dillard Middle	X				
Weldon City	Weldon Elementary	X*				
Weldon City	Weldon Middle	X*				

		Sanctions				
County	**Charter School**	**PSC**	**SES**	**CA**	**PR**	**R**
Alamance County	Lakeside Charter	X*				
Avery County	Crossnore Academy	X*				
Avery County	Grandfather Academy	X*				
Cumberland County	Alpha Academy	X*				
Durham County	Carter Community School	X*				
Durham County	Healthy Start Academy	X*				
Durham County	Omuteko Gwamaziima	X*	X			
Forsyth County	Quality Education Academy	X*				
Forsyth County	Woodson School of Challenge	X*	X	X	X	
Lee County	Provisions Academy	X*	X			
Lenoir County	Children's Village Academy	X*				
Mecklenburg County	Kennedy Charter	X*	X			
Mecklenburg County	Sugar Creek Charter	X*	X			
Scotland County	Laurinburg Charter	X*	X			
Scotland County	Laurinburg Homework	X*	X			
Wake County	SPARC Academy	X*				
Wake County	Torchlight Academy	X*	X			
Warren County	Haliwa-Saponi Tribal School	X*				

X* Schools that are subject to the public school choice requirement, but for which there are no options because these schools are either the only schools at their grade level in their LEA or because they are single-school LEAs.

Sanctions:

PSC - Public School Choice

A school in Title I School Improvement school must provide all students enrolled the option to transfer to another public school in the Local Education Agency that has not been identified for improvement (unless that option is prohibited by state law).

SES – Supplemental Educational Services

Supplemental Educational Services are tutoring services provided outside the regular school day to eligible children. The Local Education Agency shall arrange for the provision of supplemental educational services to eligible children in the Title I School Improvement school from a provider with a demonstrated record of effectiveness, that is selected by the parents and approved for that purpose by the State Education Agency. The term eligible children refers to children receiving free and reduced lunch.

CA – Corrective Action

A Local Education Agency with a Title I school designated as being in corrective action shall take at least one of the following actions:

- Replace the staff who are relevant to the failure to make adequate yearly progress;
- Institute and fully implement a new curriculum;
- Significantly decrease management authority at the school level;
- Appoint an outside expert to advise the school on its progress toward making adequate yearly progress based on its plan;
- Extend the school year or school day for the school; or
- Restructure the internal organizational structure of the school.

PR – Plan for Restructuring

A Local Education Agency with a Title I school designated for planning for restructuring shall plan for one year to implement one of the following alternative governance arrangements consistent with state law:

- Reopening the school as a public charter school;
- Replacing all or most of the school staff (which may include the principal) who are relevant to the failure to make adequate yearly progress;
- Entering into a contract with an entity, such as a private management company, with a demonstrated record of effectiveness, to operate the school;
- Turning the operation of the school over to the state, if permitted under state law and agreed to by the state; or
- Any other major restructuring of the school's governance arrangement that makes fundamental reforms, such as significant changes in the school's staffing and governance, to improve student academic achievement in the school and that has substantial promise of enabling the school to make adequate yearly progress as defined in the state plan under section 1111(b)(2).

R - Restructuring

A Local Education Agency with a Title I school designated for restructuring shall implement one of the following alternative governance arrangements consistent with state law:

- Reopening the school as a public charter school;
- Replacing all or most of the school staff (which may include the principal) who are relevant to the failure to make adequate yearly progress;
- Entering into a contract with an entity, such as a private management company, with a demonstrated record of effectiveness, to operate the school;
- Turning the operation of the school over to the state, if permitted under state law and agreed to by the state; or
- Any other major restructuring of the school's governance arrangement that makes fundamental reforms, such as significant changes in the school's staffing and governance, to improve student academic achievement in the school and that has substantial promise of enabling the school to make adequate yearly progress as defined in the state plan under section 1111(b)(2).

Sequence of Sanctions

Year	Status	Sanctions
Year 1	School fails to make AYP	None
Year 2	School fails to make AYP	None
Year 3	School fails to make AYP In Title I School Improvement	Public school choice
Year 4	School fails to make AYP In Title I School Improvement	Public school choice, supplemental educational services

Year 5	School fails to make AYP In Title I School Improvement	Public school choice, supplemental educational services, corrective action
Year 6	School fails to make AYP In Title I School Improvement	Public school choice, supplemental educational services, corrective action, plan for restructuring
Year 7	School fails to make AYP In Title I School Improvement	Implement plan for restructuring (public school choice and supplemental educational services still required)

If a school makes Adequate Yearly Progress at any point while it is in Title I School Improvement, it does not move to the next level of sanctions. For example, if a school met Adequate Yearly Progress at the end of year 3, it would not have to implement supplemental education services for at least one year. If at the end of year four the school did not meet Adequate Yearly Progress, it would then be required to provide supplemental educational services the next school year.

Title I School Improvement

Title I schools that, for two consecutive years, don't make Adequate Yearly Progress are identified for Title I School Improvement. Under No Child Left Behind, Title I School Improvement schools must meet Adequate Yearly Progress for two consecutive years to exit Title I School Improvement. Once a school exits Title I School Improvement, it is no longer subject to any sanctions.

North Carolina's Title I Adequate Yearly Progress Definition

North Carolina's AYP definition under No Child Left Behind can be found by going to http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/ayp.html.

Questions

Contact Bill McGrady at 919/807-3957 or Gongshu Zhang at 919/807-3810

north carolina

Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on

Senate Bill 1005 Section 28.17 (j)

February 2002

Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education • Department of Public Instruction
Office of Instructional and Accountability Services

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Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee
On
Senate Bill 1005 SECTION 28.17. (j)

Background

SECTION 28.17. (j) states that the State Board of Education shall develop and report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on its objectives for the Statewide Testing Program and on the implementation of that Program. The report shall include:

(1) A statement of the relationship between these objectives and the tests currently administered under the Program;
(2) An analysis of whether the current tests appropriately achieve these objectives;
(3) A statement of any actions that may be needed to coordinate the objectives and the tests more effectively; and
(4) Strategies for communicating the objectives of the Program, the tests administered under the Program, and the relationship between these objectives and tests to principals, teachers, parents, and students throughout the State.

Report

The State Board of Education Report is as follows:

The State Board of Education's objectives for the North Carolina Statewide Testing Program are consistent with the three purposes of the Statewide Testing Program specified in General Statute 115C-174.10.

Objective One

The first objective is to provide assurance that all high school graduates possess those essential skills and knowledge thought to be necessary to function as productive members of society. The Board believes that it has the responsibility to set forth specific, clear content standards that are measurable and send a clear message of what students should know and are able to do. The Board also believes that its required content standards are to provide assurances that every child completing a public education in the State has had ample opportunity to access and learn the basic skills that provide the foundation for learning and success at each level of schooling and especially upon graduation from high school. Although the Board focuses its emphasis on the content standards in the basic skills areas of reading, writing, and mathematics, it expects that specified content standards in other areas such as science, social studies including citizenship and history, computer skills, health, physical education, workforce development, and the arts be integrated into the delivery of the high priority disciplines.

The Board believes that it must provide the appropriate checkpoints at each level along each student's educational career. Its emphasis on administering end-of-grade (EOG) tests in the areas of reading and mathematics at the end of each grade in grades 3-8 provides such checkpoints and assurance that students are progressing through the grades appropriately and are learning the required competencies. A check of student writing skills in primary school at grade 4, again in middle school at grade 7, and again in high school at grade 10 provides additional assurance in the students' ability to communicate their ideas and thoughts in written form.

The Board has adopted and implemented the Student Accountability Standards (SAS) to provide a level of assurance that this objective is being met. By implementing the SAS, the Board uses the EOG tests to check and monitor student progress in primary school, in middle school, and it uses graduation tests in high school. These State checks using the EOG tests in reading and mathematics in grades 3, 5, and 8 ensure that students who are not progressing appropriately can be identified early so that the appropriate intervention can be implemented to assist students in realizing their potential and making progress toward acquiring the essential skills. In addition, the Board has expanded the State graduation requirements to include demonstration of computer skills proficiency and demonstration of proficiency in reading and mathematics on the high school competency tests. In response to General Statute 115C-12 (9b), the Board is in the process of developing an eleventh grade high school exit exam that is scheduled for initial implementation at the end of the 2003-04 school year as a graduation requirement for the graduates of 2005. The exit exam, a higher level test of essential skills acquired by the end of the eleventh grade, will replace the current competency tests in reading and mathematics.

Objective Two

The State Board of Education's second objective is also consistent with the second purpose of the Statewide Testing Program as specified in the General Statute 115C-174.10 which is to provide a means of identifying strengths and weaknesses in the education process in order to improve instructional delivery. The Board has chosen to continue to use the end-of-grade, end-of-course, and other North Carolina-developed curriculum-based tests to ensure that the assessments are aligned to state mandated content standards and yet at the same time provide some level of alignment with national standards as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The Board's process for test development ensures that specialists in key department areas such as content, testing, English as a Second Language (ESL), and students with disabilities specialists are involved in the process along with classroom teachers. This group of experts works collaboratively to ensure that the tests are valid for the purposes of measuring the specified competencies for all students regardless of their program of study. The tests are designed using a test blueprint that provides as broad a breadth of coverage of the content standards at the specified grade and subject as the tests can measure.

In response to the 1997 revised federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Board implemented a system of alternate assessments for students with disabilities effective with the 2000-01 school year. The alternate assessments ensure access and participation of all students in the Statewide Testing Program. The system includes a portfolio for students with serious cognitive deficits and an academic inventory (checklist) for students who are being taught competencies specified in the content standards in the areas of reading and mathematics and writing regardless of whether the student is working on or off-grade level in the specified content area.

The reports of student performance on the tests provide information about the strengths and weaknesses of the instructional delivery at each level—classroom, school district, and subgroups such as ethnicity and gender. This information is not only used for program evaluation but is also used by school improvement teams and other state and local curriculum staff as one of the strategies in working with schools identified as low performing or not making adequate annual progress. Due to the test administration time constraints, the curriculum-based tests are not sufficient in length (number of test questions) to provide extensive diagnostic information at the individual student level. However, individual student reports for students and parents are provided that give the student's scale score achieved in each content area, the student's general performance on the content strands for each content area, and the student's overall achievement level performance in each content area.

Objective Three

The State Board of Education has as its final objective for the Statewide Testing Program a means for making the education system at the State, local, and school levels accountable to the public for results. This objective is also consistent with the purpose of the Statewide Testing Program as specified in the General Statute 115C.174.10. Per General Statute 115C-105.20 (School-Based Management and Accountability Program), all tests included in the North Carolina Statewide Testing Program currently are included in the ABCs Accountability Program or plans are underway to include the tests in the accountability program once sufficient data are available. Locally-generated accountability reports are required in which schools report their performance on the tests in The Statewide Testing Program along with other indicators to their local community in addition to the state-generated reports issued annually reporting each school's ABCs accountability status.

Other Pertinent Information

(1) The relationship between the State Board of Education objectives and the tests currently administered under the Statewide Testing Program is as follows:

Objective	Tests in Statewide Testing Program
1.Assurance That Graduates Have Necessary Skills	End-of-Grade Tests Grades 3-8 ▪ Reading ▪ Mathematics End-of-Course Tests ▪ Algebra I ▪ English I ▪ Physical Science ▪ Biology ▪ U. S. History ▪ Economics, Legal, and Political Systems (ELPS)

	Computer Skills Proficiency Tests
	▪ Multiple-choice
	▪ Performance
	Alternate Assessments
	▪ Academic Inventory
	  ▪ Reading
	  ▪ Mathematics
	  ▪ Writing
	▪ Portfolio
	Writing Assessments
	▪ Grade 4
	▪ Grade 7
	▪ Grade 10
	High School Competency Tests
	▪ Reading
	▪ Mathematics

2.Improve Instructional Delivery	End-of-Grade Tests Grades 3-8
	▪ Reading
	▪ Mathematics
	End-of-Course Tests
	▪ Algebra I
	▪ English I
	▪ Physical Science
	▪ Biology
	▪ U. S. History
	▪ Economics, Legal, and Political Systems (ELPS)
	▪ Algebra II
	▪ Geometry
	▪ Chemistry
	▪ Physics
	Writing Assessment
	▪ Grades 4
	▪ Grade 7
	▪ Grade 10
	Alternate Assessments
	▪ Academic Inventory
	  ▪ Reading
	  ▪ Mathematics
	  ▪ Writing
	▪ Portfolio
	Computer Skills Proficiency Tests
	▪ Multiple-choice
	▪ Performance

3. Accountability	Grade 3 Pretests ▪ Reading ▪ Mathematics End-of-Grade Tests Grades 3-8 ▪ Reading ▪ Mathematics End-of-Course Tests ▪ Algebra I ▪ English I ▪ Physical Science ▪ Biology ▪ U. S. History ▪ Economics, Legal, and Political Systems (ELPS) ▪ Algebra II ▪ Geometry

	▪ Chemistry
	▪ Physics
	Writing Assessments
	▪ Grade 4
	▪ Grade 7
	▪ Grade 10 (When data are available)
	Alternate Assessments
	▪ Academic Inventory (Effective 2001-02)
	  ▪ Reading
	  ▪ Mathematics
	  ▪ Writing
	▪ Portfolio
	Computer Skills Proficiency Tests
	▪ Multiple-choice
	▪ Performance
	Competency Tests
	▪ Reading
	▪ Mathematics

The Board has observed significant gains in student performance since the initial implementation of the current structure of the North Carolina Statewide Testing Program and the ABCs Accountability Program. The percent of students statewide performing at level III and above in both reading and mathematics has increased from 52.9 percent in 1992-93 to 71.7 percent in 2000-01.

(2) The Board believes that the current tests serve to achieve the objectives of the Statewide Testing Program. The writing assessments at grades 4, 7, and 10, which are presently undergoing revision, will be included in the school-based accountability program first, in the performance composite and later, in both the growth and performance composites as sufficient data become available to support a data-based accountability algorithm. The assessments included in the Statewide Testing Program are constantly undergoing evaluations and revisions to ensure that they are appropriate for the established objectives and legislated purposes. The Board has also supported the implementation of a state-sponsored classroom assessment initiative to enhance information gathering at the building level and to provide a means of more frequent checks at the classroom level, as appropriate, to ensure that students are learning. A classroom assessment item bank has been developed for grades 3, 5, and 8 and selected high school courses. The assessment items are aligned with the content standards in reading and mathematics and are designed to provide teachers with formative and summative information on individual student performance as well as groups of students.

(3) The Board believes that no actions are needed at this time to coordinate its objectives and the tests more effectively. Recent reductions in the Statewide Testing Program due to budget constraints reduced some tests that had been implemented to support the Board objectives such as the high school comprehensive test in reading and mathematics at grade 10 (high school growth in reading and mathematics for the purpose of school accountability) and the open-ended assessments at grades 4 and 8 (to improve instructional delivery). The Board believes the existing tests currently included in the program and the objectives of the program are aligned.

The Board is concerned, however, about the actions that may be needed at this time and in the future to coordinate the objectives and the tests in the Statewide Testing Program with objectives and mandates of the federal reauthorization of the ESEA (No Child Left Behind) legislation. The ESEA legislation mandates that by 2005-06 states develop and annually administer reading and mathematics assessments for grades 3-8 which we are well-positioned to do since the current end-of-grade testing component of the Statewide Testing Program fulfills this requirement.

Among the other requirements of the ESEA bill that concerns the Board is the requirement to administer academic assessments in reading and mathematics in one grade in each grade span 3-5 (EOG tests do this), 6-9 (EOG tests do this), and 10-12 (our area of concern). Previously, the high school comprehensive test in reading and mathematics fulfilled this requirement; but, the general use of this test was discontinued as a statewide grade 10 assessment effective with the 2001-02 school year due to budget constraints.

In addition, the ESEA bill requires that states implement science assessments by the 2007-08 school year in one grade in each grade span of 3-5, 6-9, and 10-12 (the Biology EOC test may meet this requirement.). Currently the objectives and requirements of the North Carolina Statewide Testing Program **do not** include end-of-grade tests in science in any of the grade spans 3-8. This presents an area of concern for the Board due to constrained resources. Although the ESEA bill provides funding to the states, a continuing concern is the need for additional staff in the area of testing and accountability.

(4) The Board's objectives for the Statewide Testing Program are widely communicated to principals, teachers, parents, and students throughout the State using every possible medium. Although department staff cutbacks of recent years have severely limited the resources available in this area, the Board, supported by the department's staff, has been resourceful in its efforts to disseminate the Board's objectives for the Statewide Testing Program. The Board uses the State Board of Education and Department of Public Instruction Websites, printed documents such as test administrators manuals, ABCs reports, testing results reports, superintendent's weekly messages, electronic announcements such as informationals for principals and teachers are used to convey messages about the Board's objectives for the Statewide Testing Program.

The Board believes that student learning has been enhanced and supported by the focus and thrust of the North Carolina Statewide Testing Program.

§ 115C-12. Powers and duties of the Board generally.

The general supervision and administration of the free public school system shall be vested in the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education shall establish policy for the system of free public schools, subject to laws enacted by the General Assembly. The powers and duties of the State Board of Education are defined as follows:

...

(25) Duty to Report to Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee. – Upon the request of the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the State Board shall examine and evaluate issues, programs, policies, and fiscal information, and shall make reports to that Committee. Furthermore, beginning October 15, 1997, and annually thereafter, the State Board shall submit reports to that Committee regarding the continued implementation of Chapter 716 of the 1995 Session Laws, 1996 Regular Session. Each report shall include information regarding the composition and activity of assistance teams, schools that received incentive awards, schools identified as low-performing, school improvement plans found to significantly improve student performance, personnel actions taken in low-performing schools, and recommendations for additional legislation to improve student performance and increase local flexibility.

Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee

Implementation of the ABCs

SL 1997-18, SEC 15 (a)

G.S. 115C-12(25)

Date Due: November 15, 2003
Report # 4 in October 2003 – December 2004
DPI Chronological Schedule

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Preface for the 2002-03 Report to JLEOC on the Implementation of the ABCs

This report has been substantially revised and shortened from its format in previous years. All reporting for the 2002-03 ABCs was electronically disseminated through the internet. Due to the inclusion of adequate yearly progress (AYP) as a component of the ABCs and due to the unprecedented coordination of the ABCs report, AYP results, and Supplemental Disaggregated State, School System and School Performance results for release on the same date (September 10, 2003) the reports released this year dramatically exceeded the volume of material it would have been practical to print. Consequently, there are no printed reports for the ABCs this year. All information is accessible on the website, as indicated in the Executive Summary that is incorporated into this report.

Specific sections of the report that appeared in the past, but have been deleted because of the electronic nature of the reporting include the following sections: Report of Growth and Performance of Schools; and ABCs Status of Alternative Schools. The elimination of these two sections reduces this report by approximately 66 pages over its length in previous years. The information covered by these two sections is readily available on the website.

Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the Implementation of the ABCs

Executive Summary

G. S. 115C-12(25) requires the State Board of Education to submit annually by October 15 a report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee regarding the continued implementation of the ABCs Plan. Information in the report includes update of the seventh year ABCs results for schools, report on State Assistance Teams, response to the Excellent Schools Act requirements, schools identified as low performing and composition and activities of the Assistance Teams.

Table of Contents

I. Update of Seventh Year of ABCs Results

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION :: Howard N. Lee, *Chairman* WWW.NCPUBLICSCHOOLS.ORG
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION :: Michael E. Ward, *State Superintendent*

September 10, 2003

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, North Carolina General Assembly

FROM: Howard N. Lee

Michael E. Ward

SUBJECT: Public School Investment Pays Off; Scores Reach Highest Level and Gaps Narrow

Today is a great day for our public schools. We will join Governor Easley this morning to announce that investments in the ABCs and focused work by students and teachers are resulting in more students who are at grade level than we've ever seen before. Achievement gaps are closing at a rate that was likely hoped for when the State Board of Education was directed to add a gap closing component to the ABCs in 2001. Schools are making the kind of growth we all hoped for when the ABCs program was envisioned in 1995.

All in all, we are very excited by the individual school results to be approved today by the State Board. Legislators are extremely important partners in our school success story, and we want you to share in the accomplishments.

The gains are so great that we checked and re-checked the numbers to ensure their validity. We know the pressure on our schools to perform has been substantial. We've heard from teachers and principals across the state that they've made major changes in day-to-day operations since the ABCs began in grades 3-8 in 1996-97. Principals are studying the data, teachers are focused on the curriculum, students are getting extra help to reach proficiency and beyond, and more and more citizens are signing on as tutors and mentors. The state that once aspired to lead the Southeast is now ranked with the top states in the nation on several measures.

At the end of 1996-97, the first year of the ABCs, a total of 61.7 percent of grades 3-8 students were at or above grade level in reading and mathematics. That percentage increased to 80.8 percent in 2002-03. Achievement gaps narrowed significantly with Black and American Indian students gaining approximately 10 percentage points each in one year.

Nearly three-fourths of all schools, 72.9 percent, met the standards for high growth in 2002-03. Nearly every school, 94.3 percent, met expected growth. More of our schools are at the two highest performance categories on the ABCs - Schools of Excellence or Schools of Distinction. Sixty-one percent of all schools earned recognition as Schools of Excellence or Schools of Distinction. You may recall that in order to be a School of

Distinction, schools must have met at least expected growth and have 80-89 percent or more of their student test scores at grade level or above. Schools of Excellence must at least meet their growth goals and have 90 percent or more student test scores at grade level or above. Just six schools statewide met the criteria of low performing, down from 123 the first year of the ABCs.

You may be concerned about preliminary information released on the federal Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) results. If so, you will be interested to learn that schools met a total of 90.5 percent of the federal Adequate Yearly Progress targets. Close to 300 schools missed making AYP by only one target. For 47.4 percent of our schools to make AYP when so many schools met most of their targets is unfair. We will continue to advocate for Congress to change the all-or-nothing provisions of AYP. To us, schools that meet 90 percent of their goals are making good progress and should not be penalized in the same way as schools that miss many of their targets.

We are pleased to announce that a new Web site for the ABCs makes it easier than ever to look at school performance. The new site has search capabilities similar to the N.C. Report Cards, and we are sure that parents and others will find this site to be user-friendly. The complete ABCs report is only available on the Web at: http://abcs.ncpublicschools.org/ Please review the results for schools in your area. You may wish to extend congratulations by contacting schools in your area that made improvement.

We think you will agree that sticking to the ABCs plan is making a real difference in student achievement. We sincerely appreciate your support of our schools. We look forward to continued momentum for better schools in 2003-04.

HNL: MEW:kw

Key to Status Abbreviations and Codes Used in the ABCs Report

Status Abbreviations

Hgh	School Making High Growth
Exp	School Making Expected Growth
MI	25 Most Improved K-8 Schools
MI	10 Most Improved High Schools
Exc	School of Excellence
Dst	School of Distinction
Pri	Priority School
NR	No Recognition
LP	Low-Performing *
EE	Excessive Exclusions
95R	Less than 95 percent tested

Special Codes

1	K-2 feeder school
2	Senior high school – grades 9-12 option
3	Senior high school – grades 10-12 option
9	School did not meet data requirements
*	Confidence interval applied

Executive Summary

Amended to include Corrections, October 02, 2003

Statistical Summary of Results

In the 2002-03 implementation of the ABCs, 2,219 public schools were assigned an ABCs status. These included traditional public schools spanning combinations of grades K-12; charter schools: alternative schools; and K-2 schools. There were 31 special education schools, vocational/career schools, and hospital schools that were not assigned an ABCs status, but they participated on the basis of the schools they served, as explained later in this document. Five schools were in the Schools Not Included category: Three schools had insufficient data; one school was in violation of the 95% rule, and one had unresolved data issues. The results for schools that were assigned an ABCs status appear in Table 1.

Table 1. **ABCs Results, 2002-03**

Category	High Growth	Expected Growth	Less than Expected Growth	K-2 Feeder	Alternative Schools	Total	Percent
Schools of Excellence	426	47				473	21.3
Schools of Distinction	752	134				886	39.9
Schools of Progress	354	196				550	24.8
No Recognition			105	0	3	108	4.9
Priority Schools	26	39	13			78	3.5
Low-Performing Schools			6		0	6	0.3
K-2 Feeder Schools	43	2				45	2.0
Alternative Schools	16	57				73	3.3
Total Schools	1,617	475	124	0	3	2,219	100.0
Percent of Schools	72.9	21.4	5.6	0.0	0.1	100.0	

Overall, 94.3% of the schools made either expected or high growth.

The 2002-03 ABCs program also reported the adequate yearly progress (AYP) of the state's schools during this first year's implementation of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. Table 2 shows the number and percent of the state's schools that met and did not meet AYP.

Table 2. **Statewide AYP Results, 2002-03**

AYP Status	Number	Percent
Schools that Met AYP	1,058	47.0
Schools that Did Not Meet AYP	1,194	53.0
Total	2,252	100.0

AYP results are presented by ABCs category in Table 3. Schools must have had both an ABCs status and an AYP status to appear in this table. This means that schools that did not receive an ABCs status, i.e., special education schools, vocational/career schools, hospital schools, schools not included in the ABCs, and schools with unresolved data issues are not reflected here.

Table 3. **AYP Results by ABCs Recognition Categories, 2002-03**

	Met AYP		Did Not Meet AYP		Total
Category	#	%	#	%	
Schools of Excellence	371	78.4	102	21.6	473
Schools of Distinction	460	51.9	426	48.1	886
Schools of Progress	168	30.5	382	69.4	550
No Recognition	26	24.1	82	75.9	108
Priority Schools	2	2.6	76	97.4	78
Low-Performing Schools	0	0	6	100	6
Expected Growth	127	26.7	345	73.3	472
High Growth	893	55.2	724	44.8	1,617

Presentation of Results

Results of the 2002-03 ABCs are presented online at http://abcs.ncpublicschools.org. The web site offers users the ability to view and search for ABCs growth, performance, and AYP results by individual school and school district. A map search feature is also available to search for data by region, county, and some cities. Users can design their own search by selecting desired school characteristics. In addition to the new features, the web site reports the traditional ABCs results for all schools, including schools in the following traditional categories: Alternative Schools; Schools of Distinction; Schools of Excellence; 25 Most Improved K-8 Schools; 10 Most Improved High Schools; Schools Making High Growth; Schools Making Expected Growth; Low-Performing Schools; Schools of Progress; Priority Schools; and Charter Schools. New categories include Schools Meeting AYP and Schools Not Meeting AYP.

Schools with No ABCs Status include special education schools; vocational/career schools; hospital schools; Schools Not Included in the ABCs, and Schools with Unresolved Data Issues. State and school district AYP results, and disaggregated subgroup statistics and supplemental data are also available from the web site.

There are also links to *Special Conditions*, a document that explains the adjustments for special conditions in 2002-03, and a link to *Technical Notes*. This document includes: a summary of standard conventions used in the analyses; a history of the ABCs; a table of some specific values used in the ABCs growth formula computations (constants and parameters); an example of how the alternate assessments (NCAAP and NCAAAI) results were incorporated into the performance composites; achievement levels for EOG mathematics, and the equating results for mathematics and reading.

Background

The State Board of Education (SBE) developed the ABCs of Public Education in response to the School-Based Management and Accountability Program enacted by the General Assembly in June 1996. The ABCs focuses on strong accountability; teaching the basics with an emphasis on high educational standards; and maximum local control.

In 2002-03, the ABCs program was expanded to incorporate the new statutory accountability requirements of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. This federal legislation sets a proficiency goal of 100% by 2013-14 for all schools and requires that all schools make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) toward that goal. The SBE adopted AYP as a "closing the achievement gap component" of the ABCs in response to General Statute 115C-105.35. Thus the 2002-03 ABCs report includes the AYP status for each school. The SBE made several decisions this year to align the ABCs with the requirements of NCLB. Those include:

a) Reinstating the North Carolina High School Comprehensive Test (NCHSCT) as a state-required test in Grade 10 to be used only for AYP purposes,
b) changing the ABCs 91-Day Rule for growth calculations in grades 3 through 8 to the 140–Day Rule for EOG (See Technical Notes for details),
c) changing the 98% Tested Rule in Grades 3-8 to the 95% Tested Rule, and
d) the SBE will review the ABCs Awards and Recognition categories after this year of implementation for alignment with NCLB in the future. The ABCs categories for 2002-03 were not changed.

In addition to these modifications, this year's model reflected the equating of the reading posttest scores with the original reading scale in order to enable use of the accountability formulas.

The ABCs accountability program sets growth and performance standards for each elementary, middle, and high school in the state. End-of-Grade (EOG) and End-of-Course (EOC) test results and other selected components are used to measure the schools' growth and performance. Schools that attain the standards are eligible for incentive awards or other recognition, i.e., Schools of Excellence, Schools of Distinction, Schools of Progress, 25 Most Improved K-8 Schools or 10 Most Improved High Schools. Priority Schools may request assistance from the Division of School Improvement. Schools where growth and performance fall below specified levels are designated as low-performing, and may receive mandated assistance based on action by the SBE.

Participating schools

In 2002-03, every school that contained one or more of the grades 3-12 that submitted appropriate data participated in the ABCs. Data submitted by a K-8 school may include test results in reading and mathematics; computer skills at grade 8; reading and

mathematics from the alternate assessments (NCAAP and NCAAAI), and any EOC tests for subject(s) taught in the school. High school data include

EOC test results, the percent of students completing courses of study (College University Prep/College Tech Prep), change in the ABCs dropout rates, and change in competency passing rates.

K-2 schools participated in the ABCs receiving their ABCs status, AYP status, and incentive awards (if applicable) based on the performance of the schools that received the largest percent of students from the K-2 schools.

Alternative schools are included in the ABCs per State Board of Education Policy HSP-C-013. Their ABCs status is based on achievement data (EOC, EOG, competency passing rates) and three "local options" specified in their school improvement plans and approved by their local boards of education. Their AYP status is determined using the same procedures as are used in traditional public schools. The only ABCs designations that an alternative school can receive are: High Growth, Expected Growth, No Recognition, or Low-Performing.

Special education schools, vocational/career schools, and hospital schools did not receive an ABCs status but they received prorated ABCs incentive awards, as appropriate, based on the schools they served. They also received an AYP status that was determined by the performance of the schools they served. They made AYP if at least half of the schools they served made AYP.

Analyses

ABCs Growth and Performance

A school's ABCs status is determined by three weighted composite scores: the expected growth composite, the high growth composite, and the performance composite. A school's grade span and/or courses determined the composition of these weighted measures, as explained below.

The expected growth composite may include:

a) Growth in EOG reading and mathematics for grades 3-8,
b) growth based on EOC tests,
c) change over a two-year baseline in the percent of students completing certain courses of study (college university prep/college tech prep),
d) change in the competency passing rate (from grade 8 to grade 10), and
e) change in the ABCs Dropout rate (compared to a two-year baseline).

The high growth composite includes the same components and is approximately 10% higher than the expected growth composite for grades 3-8. For EOC tests, the high growth composite is approximately 3% above the expected growth composite. There is no high growth standard applicable to changes in the competency passing rate, the percent of course of study completers, or the ABCs dropout rate.

The performance composite is the school's percentage of scores at or above Achievement Level III in reading and mathematics (from the EOG and alternate assessments), Computer Skills Test (Grade 8), and EOC tests: Algebra I and II; Biology; Chemistry; English I; Economic, Legal, and Political Systems (ELPS); Geometry; Physical Science; Physics, and U.S. History. Algebra I scores of ninth graders who took

Algebra I prior to ninth grade are included in the high school's performance composite. *(See Technical Notes in the Appendices for more information related to senior high schools and the alternate assessments.)*

The ABCs results published here were produced on a Dell Precision Workstation 650, MiniTower, 512K, 2.00GHz XEON/533 running under Microsoft Windows XP V. 5.1.

AYP Analyses

NCLB requires that each school be evaluated with respect to making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). In order for a school to make AYP, each student subgroup, i.e., School as a whole; American Indian; Asian; Black; Hispanic; Multi-Racial; White; Economically Disadvantaged; Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities, must have at least a 95% participation rate in the statewide assessments. Each subgroup must meet or exceed the State's annual measurable objectives, which were based on three years of performance data according to procedures prescribed by law and regulations of the U.S. Department of Education, and the school as a whole must show progress on the other academic indicator, which is either attendance or graduation rate (depending on the grade configuration of the school).

Definition of ABCs Awards and Recognition Categories

Schools Making High Growth attained their high growth standard. In schools attaining the High Growth standard, certified staff members each receive up to $1,500 and teacher assistants up to $500.

Schools Making Expected Growth attained their expected growth standard (but not their high growth standard). In schools attaining the Expected Growth standard (but less than High Growth), certified staff members each receive up to $750 and teacher assistants up to $375.

25/10 Most Improved Schools are the 25 Most Improved K-8 schools and the 10 Most Improved High Schools that attained the State's highest values on the high growth composite. (Any school with a combination of grades which includes Grade 9 or higher was eligible for the high school recognition rather than the K-8 recognition.) These schools will receive banners, certificates, and financial awards.

Schools of Excellence are schools that made at least expected growth and had at least 90% of their students' scores at or above Achievement Level III. These schools will receive banners and certificates. They will receive incentive awards for expected or high growth.

Schools of Distinction are schools that made at least expected growth and had at least 80 percent of their students' scores at or above Achievement Level III (but were not Schools of Excellence). They will receive plaques and certificates. They will receive incentive awards for expected or high growth.

Schools of Progress are schools that made at least expected growth and had at least 60% of their students' scores at or above Achievement Level III (but were not Schools of Excellence or Distinction). They will receive certificates and incentive awards for expected growth or high growth.

Schools Receiving No Recognition did not make their expected growth standards but have at least 60% of their students' scores at or above Achievement Level III.

Priority Schools are schools that have less than 60% of their students' scores at or above Achievement Level III, irrespective of making their expected growth standards, and are not Low-Performing Schools.

Low-Performing Schools are those that failed to meet their expected growth standards and have significantly less than 50% of their students performing at or above Achievement Level III.

Schools that violate the testing requirements are assigned a violation status and cannot receive financial awards or any another ABCs status, except low-performing. The low-performing schools that violate testing requirements are assigned the low-performing status in addition to the violation status. The State Board of Education may designate schools that violate testing requirements for two consecutive years as low-performing.

Corrections to The ABCs of Public Education: *2002-2003 Growth and Performance of North Carolina Sch*ools

LEA	School	LEASCH #	Correction
The New Dimensions School	The New Dimensions School	12A	This school should be added to the Schools with No ABCs status list, with an AYP status. The school's AYP status is Met AYP. (This is a K-2 Charter School).
Kannapolis	Jackson Park Elementary	132328	AYP status should be changed from Not Met AYP to Met AYP.

Results of School Building Appeals

The deadline for filing appeals of the ABCs results was Thursday, October 9, 2003. As of that date, there were no appeals.

Evolution of the ABCs

1995

- General Assembly directed the State Board of Education (SBE) to develop a restructuring plan for public education. The State Board conducted an in-depth study involving public hearings, surveys and interviews; reviewed current mandates and operating procedures; and undertook a major organizational analysis to relate all education operations to the mission. In May 1995, the New ABCs of Public Education outlined the framework for a dramatic restructuring.

1995-96

- One hundred eight schools in ten school districts piloted The New ABCs of Public Education. The systems were Albemarle, Alleghany, Asheville City, Elizabeth City-Pasquotank, Duplin, Halifax, Lexington, McDowell, Bladen, and Lincoln.

1996

- General Assembly approved the State Board's plan and put into law the School-Based Management and Accountability Program (the ABCs).

1996-97

- ABCs implementation began for schools with grades K-8.
- DPI communicated ABCs Procedures to principals and teachers.
- Assistance teams were formed and trained; assistance was offered to schools that asked for it.
- Steering Committee for Assessment and Accountability was established by the SBE to develop the High School Model.
- Compliance Commission for Accountability was established by the SBE to advise on testing and other issues related to school accountability and improvement. The commission was to be composed of two members from each of eight educational districts and four at-large members to represent parents, business, and the community.
- The first ABCs Report submitted to the State Board of Education in August.
- All schools achieving exemplary growth standards received incentive awards ($1,000 for certified staff; $500 for teacher assistants).

1997-98

- Designated Low-Performing schools received assistance teams.
- The next phase of statewide reform was implemented with the high school accountability model. It was considered a "work in progress" with re-examination, changes and adjustments to come.
- The model included results on five mandated EOCs, a high school writing test (English II – time was extended to allow students 100 minutes); percentages completing College Prep/CollegeTech Prep (based on a year to year change); SAT scores and participation rates were reported.
- Two measures, the passing rates on the high school competency tests and dropout rates, were scheduled for implementation for the subsequent year.
- The Comprehensive Test in Reading and Mathematics was administered to determine cohort growth from grade 8 to grade 10. This was to satisfy the Senate Bill 1139 legislation that called for measuring student growth (for high schools). Initially, results were to "count" for the accountability year, but it was decided to delay inclusion of these data in the growth composite for high schools until the following year.
- Growth for K-8 schools was computed using both the "old" *unmatched* grade 3 parameters, and the "new" (1996-97) *matched* group grade 3 parameters. The higher of the two growth computations was used in the final computations for growth.
- 7th Grade Writing was included in computing growth, since this was the third year of data collection; it had previously been used only in the performance composite.
- Algebra I scores from grades prior to the ninth grade were included in the computations for performance composite for high schools.
- A confidence band for the performance composite was computed; this allowed schools a safety margin for measurement error. Schools could be slightly below 50% at or above grade level and not be penalized.
- ABCs status label *No Recognition* was changed to *Adequate Performance*.
- Charter Schools were included in the ABCs reporting for the first time.
- A Comprehensive model was defined for schools that had grades included in both the K-8 and high school configurations. The school faculty voted on whether the Comprehensive model would be used to evaluate the school for the accountability year, and the vote was to be reflected in the School Improvement Plan.
- Alternative schools were asked to submit proposals of better ways to be evaluated in subsequent accountability years.
- Reporting guidelines were developed to accommodate feeder patterns for special education schools, alternative schools and K-2 feeder schools; high schools with major demographic shifts were accommodated under special conditions; reporting accommodations were implemented for schools with insufficient data, and guidelines were developed to handle senior high schools under the ABCs.
- It was decided that during this accountability year, no alternative schools or special schools were to be identified as Low-Performing.
- EOC test scores of students in middle grades were used in the high school portion of the performance composite score but not the gain composite score.

1997-98 continued...

- K-8 and high school results under the ABCs were reported in A Report Card for the ABCs of Public Education, Volume I.
- All schools making Expected or Exemplary Growth/Gain were awarded incentives per the Excellent Schools Act, enacted by the General Assembly ($1500 for certified staff, $500 for
- teacher assistants in schools making Exemplary Growth/Gain; schools making Expected growth/gain received $750 for certified staff; $375 for teacher assistants).
- A Report Card for the ABCs of Public Education was made available on the DPI web site.

1998-99

- The SBE increased the membership of the Compliance Commission for Accountability from the original 20 members to 22 members to include an SBE member and an additional At-Large business member.
- The Comprehensive model was applied to all schools.
- Five additional EOC tests were added to the performance composite score.
- The High School Comprehensive Test growth parameters were approved; the growth component was included in the high school growth/gain computations.
- The competency passing rate was included in the high school growth/gain computations.
- Algebra I scores for middle grades counted toward gain and performance at high schools.
- Data collection guidelines and procedures were documented in an Accountability Processing Checklist to incorporate roles of LEA, regional coordinators, and the agency staff.
- Insufficient data rule was documented for high schools (less than 30 students in a given course for a given year of the three years data).
- Dual enrollment policies were documented and disseminated.
- Membership rule for Comprehensive Tests was approved (160 days).
- Revised grade 3 parameters were applied to the grade 3 growth computations.
- A Report Card for the ABCs of Public Education, Volume 2 included ABCs dropout data.
- Alternative schools with sufficient data were included in the ABCs on the basis of their data; schools with insufficient data were awarded prorated incentives based on the feeder schools.
- The labels *Top 10/25 Schools* and *Adequate Performance* were changed to *Most Improved 10/25* and *No Recognition,* respectively.

1999-00

- A rule for dropping courses in high school (10/20 Day Rule) was implemented.
- Alternative Schools were included in the ABCs under HSP-C-013. Web interface was developed for data collection for alternative schools to enter local option data online.
- Department of Health, Human Services (DHHS) and Office of Juvenile Justice (OJJ) Schools were included in the ABCs.
- Schools were given test administration options for fall English II Tests due to catastrophic weather.
- The SBE appointed a Writing Assessment Task Force.
- Full ABCs documentation was made available on the Accountability web site.

2000-01

- EOC prediction formulas for 10 multiple-choice EOCs were implemented; this fully addressed concerns related to comparing different cohorts over time at the high school level.
- Dropout rate change was added to the growth computations in high schools.
- Computer Skills testing results at grade 8 were added to the performance composite.
- EOC prediction formulas' exemplary growth standard was adjusted from 105% to 103%.
- Weighting the ABCs growth composites was adopted by the SBE in part to eliminate concern over small groups of students having the same impact as large groups of students in the determination of whether the school met growth standards.
- Alternate Assessment Portfolio was added to the performance composite.
- Writing at grades 4 and 7 was removed from the growth composites, but remained a part of the performance composite.
- The North Carolina Alternate Assessment Academic Inventory and the Computerized Adaptive Testing System were approved by SBE to be pilot tested and included in ABCs Volume II Report.

2001-02

- The State Board of Education approved revisions to the ABCs classifications for the 2001-2002 school year.
- The term **high** growth will now be used in place of *exemplary* growth.
- The term **growth** will now be used in place of *growth/gain* in all designations of meeting or exceeding growth or gain standards.
- Three tests were eliminated for the 2001-2002 school year: Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, Open-ended Assessments in grades 4 and 8, and the High School Comprehensive Tests in Reading and Mathematics at grade 10. (Only the latter had been included in the ABCs.)
- English II was suspended and will not be included in the ABCs until new tests are developed.
- Revised format for reporting data in ABCs Volume II, and changed the name to *Reports of Supplemental Disaggregated State, District and School Performance Data for 2000-2001.*
- SBE approved the revised achievement levels determined from the Summer of 2001 equating study for student reporting, student accountability standards gateways, student competency standard, and ABCs reporting (performance composites).
- SBE approved the growth formulas that were used for grades 3-8 with the 2000-2001 ABCs for growth calculations for the 2001-2002 ABCs.

2002-03

- ABCs 91-Day Rule for Growth Calculations changed to 140-Day Rule to align with NCLB full academic year (FAY) requirement.
- The 98% Rule in Grades 3-8 Under the ABCs was changed to 95% to conform with NCLB 95% tested requirement.
- No exclusions allowed.
- Added Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as a "closing the gap component" of the ABCs.
- North Carolina Alternate Assessment Portfolio (NCAAP) scoring revised to yield Reading and Mathematics scores.
- The ABCs Report, The ABCs of Public Education 2002-2003 Growth and Performance of North Carolina Schools was made available in electronic format on DPI website. No hardcopy reports were published.

From: Brenda Winston
To: Lou Fabrizio
Date: Thu, Nov 6, 2003 11:22 AM
Subject: EC Directors' Advisory Council Meeting

The EC Directors will meet for the first time this year on Thursday, November 20 from 9:00 -3:00 in the State Board Room. You may recall the Sept. meeting was cancelled because of Hurricane Isabell. You are invited to attend the meeting and bring for discussion and feedback accountability and current testing issues that affect programs and services for children with disabilites in our schools. As you may recall, there are two EC Directors from each region on this committee and a regional consultant who will take information back to the regions for feedback.

Let me know as soon as possible how much time you'll need on the agenda. I have openings starting at 10:45 a.m. - noon and 12:30 - 3:00 p.m. Thanks.

Brenda C. Winston, Section Chief
Policy, Monitoring, and Audit Section
NC Department of Public Instruction
bwinston@dpi.state.nc.us

SBE Recommendation for Distribution of Incentive Awards:
ABCs of Public Education and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act

On June 6, 2002, the SBE adopted the following recommendation (which awaits North Carolina General Assembly action) for distributing incentive awards.

Retain current ABCs with less financial incentives for Expected and High Growth but with additional incentives for meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

Expected Growth - $600 High Growth - $600 AYP - $600

Certified staff members at schools that made any or all of the above categories would receive $600 for each component the school attained with $1800 being the maximum a certified staff member could receive. Teacher assistants would receive $200 for each component with $600 being the maximum a teacher assistant could receive.

NORTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Policy Manual

Policy Identification
Priority: High Student Performance
Category: ABCs Accountability Model
Policy ID Number: HSP-C-005

Policy Title: 16 NCAC 6G.0305 Policy delineating the annual performance standards for Grades K-12 under the ABCs Model

Current Policy Date: 02/07/2002

Other Historical Information: Previous board date: 01/01/1998; 05/04/2000; 09/14/2000; 02/01/2001

Statutory Reference:

Administrative Procedures Act (APA) Reference Number and Category: 16 NCAC 6G.0305

***** Begin Policy *** (Do not tamper with this line)**

.0305 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS, GRADES K-12

(a) For purposes of this Section, the following definitions shall apply to kindergarten through twelfth grade:
  (1) "Accountability measures" are SBE-adopted tests designed to gauge student performance and achievement.
  (2) "b_0" means the state average rate of growth used in the regression formula for the respective grades and content areas (reading and mathematics) in grades 3 through 8 and grade 10; or the state average performance used in the prediction formula for respective high school end-of-course tests. The constant values for b_0 shall be as follows:
    (A) for reading:
      (i) 6.2 for grade 3;
      (ii) 5.2 for grade 4;
      (iii) 4.6 for grade 5;
      (iv) 3.0 for grade 6;
      (v) 3.3 for grade 7;
      (vi) 2.7 for grade 8; and
      (vii) 2.3 for grade 10.
    (B) for mathematics:
      (i) 12.8 for grade 3;
      (ii) 7.3 for grade 4;

(iii) 7.4 for grade 5;
(iv) 7.1 for grade 6;
(v) 6.5 for grade 7;
(vi) 4.9 for grade 8; and
(vii) 2.3 for grade 10.

(C) for EOC courses:
(i) 60.4 for Algebra I;
(ii) 55.2 for Biology;
(iii) 54.0 for ELPS (Economic, Legal, and Political Systems);
(iv) 53.3 for English I;
(v) 56.0 for U.S. History;
(vi) 59.3 for Algebra II;
(vii) 56.9 for Chemistry;
(viii) 58.5 for Geometry;
(ix) 53.8 for Physical Science; and
(x) 56.1 for Physics.

(3) "b_1" means the value used to estimate true proficiency in the regression formulas for grades 3 through 8 and grade 10. The values for b_1 shall be as follows:

(A) for reading:
(i) 0.46 for grade 3;
(ii) 0.22 for grades 4 through 8; and
(iii) 0.24 for grade 8 to 10.

(B) for mathematics:
(i) 0.30 for grade 3;
(ii) 0.26 for grades 4 through 8; and
(iii) 0.28 for grade 8 to 10.

(4) "b_2" means the value used to estimate regression to the mean in the regression formula for grades 3 through 8. The values for b_2 shall be as follows:

(A) for reading:
(i) -0.91 for grade 3;
(ii) -0.60 for grades 4 through 8.

(B) for mathematics:
(i) -0.47 for grade 3;
(ii) -0.58 for grades 4 through 8.

(5) "b_{IRP}" means the value used to estimate the effect of the school's average reading proficiency on the predicted average EOC test score. The values for b_{IRP} shall be as follows:

(A) 0.71 for Biology;
(B) 0.88 for ELPS;
(C) 1.01 for English I;
(D) 0.68 for U.S. History;
(E) 0.43 for Algebra II;
(F) 0.42 for Geometry; and
(G) 0.58 for Physical Science.

(6) "b_{IMP}" means the value used to estimate the effect, as determined by

analysis of empirical data, of the school's average math proficiency on the predicted average EOC test score. The values for b_{IMP} shall be as follows:

(A) 0.88 for Algebra I;
(B) 0.318 for Biology;
(C) 0.88 for ELPS;
(D) 0.15 for U.S. History;
(E) 0.39 for Geometry;
(F) 0.34 for Physical Science; and
(G) 0.58 for Physics.

(7) "b_{IAP}" means the value used to estimate the effect of the school's average Algebra I proficiency on the predicted average EOC test score. The values for b_{IAP} shall be as follows:

(A) 0.89 for Algebra II;
(B) 0.18 for Chemistry; and
(C) 0.43 for Geometry.

(8) "b_{IBP}" means the value used to estimate the effect of the school's average Biology proficiency on the predicted average EOC test score. The values for b_{IBP} shall be 0.51 for Chemistry and 0.66 for Physics.

(9) "b_{IEP}" means the value used to estimate the effect of the school's average English I proficiency on the predicted average EOC test score. The values for b_{IEP} shall be 0.27 for Chemistry and 0.32 for Physics.

(10) "Compliance commission" means that group of persons selected by the SBE to advise the SBE on testing and other issues related to school accountability and improvement. The commission shall be composed of teachers, principals, central office staff representatives, local school board representatives, charter schools, and at-large members who represent parents, business, and the community.

(11) "Composite score means a summary of student performance in a school. A composite score shall include reading, writing, and mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and in Algebra I & II, Biology, ELPS, English I, Geometry, Chemistry, Physics, Physical Science, and U.S. History in a school where one or more of these EOC tests are administered, as well as student performance on the NC Computer Skills Test, competency passing rate, dropout rates, and percent diploma recipients who satisfy the requirements for College Prep/College Tech Prep courses of study in grades 9 through 12 to the extent that any apply in a given school.

(12) "Eligible students" means the total number of students in membership minus the number of students excluded from participation in a statewide assessment.

(13) "Expected growth" means the amount of growth in student performance that is projected through use of the regression formula in grades 3 through 8 and grade 10 in reading and mathematics.

(14) "Exemplary growth" means the amount of growth in student performance in grades 3 through 8 and grade 10 in reading and mathematics that is projected through use of the regression formula that includes the state average rate of growth adjusted by an additional ten percent (10%).

(15) "Growth standards" means and includes collectively all the factors defined

in this paragraph that are used in the calculations described in paragraph (j) of this Rule to determine a school's growth/gain composite.

(16) "IRM" is the index for regression to the mean used in the regression formula. The SBE shall compute the IRM for reading by subtracting the North Carolina average reading scale score from the local school average reading scale score. The SBE shall compute the IRM for mathematics by subtracting the North Carolina average mathematics scale score from the local school average mathematics scale score. The SBE shall base the state average (the baseline) on data from the 1994-95 school year.

(17) "ITP" is the index for true proficiency used in the regression formula. The SBE shall compute the ITP by adding the North Carolina average scale scores in reading and mathematics and subtracting that sum from the addition of the local school average scale scores in reading and mathematics. The SBE shall base the state average (the baseline) on data from the 1994-95 school year.

(18) "IRP" is the index of reading proficiency used in the prediction formula. The SBE shall compute the "IRP" by calculating the average reading scale score for students in the school and subtracting the average reading scale score for North Carolina schools. The SBE shall base the state average for North Carolina schools (the baseline on data from the 1998-99 school year.

(19) "IMP" is the index of mathematics proficiency used in the prediction formula. The SBE shall compute the "IMP" by calculating the average mathematics scale score for students in the school and subtracting the average mathematics scale score for North Carolina schools. The SBE shall base the state average for North Carolina schools (the baseline) on data from the 1998-99 school year.

(20) "IAP" is the index of Algebra I proficiency used in the prediction formula. The SBE shall compute the "IAP" by calculating the average Algebra I scale score for students in the school and subtracting the average Algebra I scale score for North Carolina schools. The SBE shall base the state average for North Carolina schools (the baseline) on data from the 1998-99 school year.

(21) "IBP" is the index of Biology proficiency used in the prediction formula. The SBE shall compute the "IBP" by calculating the average Biology scale score for students in the school and subtracting the average Biology scale score for North Carolina schools. The SBE shall base the state average for North Carolina schools (the baseline) on data from the 1998-99 school year.

(22) "IEP" is the index of English I proficiency used in the prediction formula. The SBE shall compute the "IEP" by calculating the average English I scale score for students in the school and subtracting the average English I scale score for North Carolina schools. The SBE shall base the state average for North Carolina schools (the baseline) on data from the 1998-99 school year.

(23) "Performance Composite" is the percent of scores of students in a school that are at or above Level III, are at a passing level on the Computer Skills

Test (students in eighth grade only) as specified by 16 NCAC 6D .0503(c), and at proficiency level or above on the Alternate Assessment Portfolio to the extent that any apply in a given school. The SBE shall:

(A) determine the number of scores that are at Level III or IV in reading, mathematics, or writing across grades 3 through 8, or on all EOC tests administered as a part of the statewide testing program; add the number of scores that are at a passing level on the NC Computer Skills Test (students in eighth grade only); add the number of scores that are proficient or above on the Alternate Assessment Portfolio; and use the total of these numbers as the numerator;

(B) determine the number of student scores in reading, mathematics, or writing, across grades 3 through 8; or on all EOC tests administered as part of the statewide testing program; add the number of student scores on the N.C. Computer Skills Test (students in eighth grade only); add the number of student scores on the Alternate Assessment Portfolio; and use the total of these numbers as the denominator; and

(C) total the numerators for each content area and subject, total the denominators for each content area and subject, and divide the denominator into the numerator to compute the performance composite.

(24) "Predicted EOC mean" is the average student performance in a school on an EOC test that is projected through the use of the prediction formula.

(25) "Predicted EOC exemplary mean" is the average student performance in a school on an EOC test that is projected through the use of the prediction formula that includes the state average adjusted by an additional five percent (5%).

(26) "Prediction formula" means a regression formula used in predicting a school's EOC test mean for one school year.

(27) "Regression formula" means a formula that defines one variable in terms of one or more other variables for the purpose of making a prediction or constructing a model.

(28) "Standard deviation" is a statistic that indicates how much a set of scores vary. Standard deviation baseline values used for the growth standards are as follow:

(A) for reading in grades K-8:
- (i) 1.7 for grade 3;
- (ii) 1.3 for grade 4;
- (iii) 1.2 for grade 5;
- (iv) 1.3 for grade 6;
- (v) 1.1 for grade 7;
- (vi) 1.2 for grade 8; and
- (vii) 1.6 for grade 10.

(B) for mathematics in grades K-8:
- (i) 2.6 for grade 3;
- (ii) 2.1 for grade 4;

(iii) 2.0 for grade 5;
(iv) 2.1 for grade 6;
(v) 2.0 for grade 7;
(vi) 1.7 for grade 8; and
(vii) 2.0 for grade 10.

(C) for courses with an EOC test:
(i) 3.3 for Algebra I;
(ii) 2.6 for Biology;
(iii) 3.1 for ELPS;
(iv) 1.8 for English I;
(v) 2.2 for U.S. History;
(vi) 2.9 for Algebra II;
(vii) 2.5 for Chemistry;
(viii) 2.5 for Geometry;
(ix) 2.5 for Physical Science;
(x) 3.3 for Physics;
(xi) 10.0 for College Prep/College Tech Prep (CP/CTP);
(xii) 12.8 for Competency Passing Rate; and
(xiii) Dropout Rate will be determined based upon data from the 2000-01 school year.

(29) "Weight" means the number of students used in the calculation of the amount of growth/gain for a subject or content area.

(b) In carrying out its duty under G.S. 115C-105.35 to establish annual performance goals for each school, the SBE shall use both growth standards and performance standards.

(1) The SBE shall calculate the expected growth rate for grades 3 through 8 and grade 10 in an individual school by using the regression formula "Expected Growth = $b_0 + (b_1 \times ITP) + (b_2 \times IRM)$."

(2) The SBE shall calculate the predicted EOC expected mean for courses in which end-of-course tests are administered by using the prediction formulas that follow.

(A) "Predicted Algebra I Mean Score = $b_0 + (b_{IMP} \times IMP)$," where $(b_{IMP} \times IMP)$ is the impact of Mathematics Proficiency.

(B) "Predicted Biology Mean Score = $b_0 + (b_{IRP} \times IRP) + (b_{IMP} \times IMP) + (b_{IMP}^2 \times IMP^2) + (b_{IMP}^3 \times IMP^3)$," where $(b_{IRP} \times IRP)$ is the impact of Reading Proficiency and $(b_{IMP} \times IMP)$ is the impact of Mathematics Proficiency.

(C) "Predicted ELPS Mean Score = $b_0 + (b_{IRP} \times IRP)$," where $(b_{IRP} \times IRP)$ is the impact of Reading Proficiency.

(D) "Predicted English I Mean Score = $b_0 + (b_{IRP} \times IRP)$," where $(b_{IRP} \times IRP)$ is the impact of Reading Proficiency.

(E) "Predicted U.S. History Mean Score = $b_0 + (b_{IRP} \times IRP) + (b_{IMP} \times IMP) + (b_{IMP}^2 \times IMP^2)$," where $(b_{IRP} \times IRP)$ is the impact of Reading Proficiency and $(b_{IMP} \times IMP)$ is the impact of Mathematics Proficiency.

(F) "Predicted Algebra II Mean Score = $b_0 + (b_{IRP} \times IRP) + (b_{IAP} \times IAP)$," where $(b_{IRP} \times IRP)$ is the impact of Reading Proficiency and

(b_{IAP} x IAP) is the impact of Algebra Proficiency.

(G) "Predicted Chemistry Mean Score = b_0 + (b_{IAP} x IAP) + (b_{IBP} x IBP) + (b_{IEP} x IEP)," where (b_{IAP} x IAP) is the impact of Algebra Proficiency, (b_{IBP} x IBP) is the impact of Biology Proficiency, and (b_{IEP} x IEP) is the impact of English I Proficiency.

(H) "Predicted Geometry Mean Score = b_0 + (b_{IRP} x IRP) + (b_{IMP} x IMP) + (b_{IAP} x IAP)," where (b_{IRP} x IRP) is the impact of Reading Proficiency, (b_{IMP} x IMP) is the impact of Mathematics Proficiency, and (b_{IAP} x IAP) is the impact of Algebra I Proficiency.

(I) "Predicted Physical Science Mean Score = b_0 + (b_{IRP} x IRP) + (b_{IMP} x IMP)," where (b_{IRP} x IRP) is the impact of Reading Proficiency and (b_{IMP} x IMP) is the impact of Mathematics Proficiency.

(J) "Predicted Physics Mean Score = b_0 + (b_{IMP} x IMP) + (b_{IBP} x IBP) + (b_{IEP} x IEP)," where (b_{IMP} x IMP) is the impact of Mathematics Proficiency, (b_{IBP} x IBP) is the impact of Biology Proficiency, and (b_{IEP} x IEP) is the impact of English I Proficiency.

(c) Schools shall be accountable for student performance and achievement. This paragraph describes the conditions under which an eligible student's scores shall be included in the accountability measures for the school that the student attended at the time of testing.

(1) To be included in accountability measures for the growth standard, a student in grade three through grade eight must:

(A) have a pre-test score and a post-test score in reading and mathematics. For students in grade three the pre-test score refers to the score from the third-grade end-of-grade test administered in the Fall of the third grade and the post-test score refers to the score from the end-of-grade test administered in the Spring of the third grade. For students in grades four through eight, the pre-test score refers to the score from the previous year's end-of-grade test and the post-test score refers to the score from the current year's end-of-grade test and

(B) have been in membership more than one-half of the instructional period (91 of 180 days).

(2) To be included in accountability measures for Algebra I, Algebra II, Biology, Chemistry, Economic Legal and Political Systems, English I, Geometry, Physical Science, Physics, or U.S. History, a student must have scores for all tests used in the prediction formula.

(3) Students shall be included in the performance composite without reference to pretest scores or length of membership.

(d) The SBE shall include in the accountability system on the same basis as all other public schools each alternative school with an identification number assigned by the Department. Test scores for students who attend programs or classes in a facility that does not have a separate school number shall be reported to and included in the students' home schools.

(e) Each K-8 school shall test at least 98 percent of its eligible students. If a school

fails to test at least 98 percent of its eligible students for two consecutive school years, the SBE may designate the school as low performing and may target the school for assistance and intervention. Each school shall make public the percent of eligible students that the school tests.

(f) High schools shall test at least 95 percent of enrolled students who are subject to EOC tests. High schools that test fewer than 95 percent of enrolled students for two consecutive years may be designated as low-performing by the SBE.

(g) All students who are following the standard course of study and who are not eligible for exclusion as set out in paragraph (h) of this Rule shall take the SBE-adopted tests. Every student, including those students who are excluded from testing, shall complete or have completed by a school employee designated by the principal an answer document (except in writing). The answer sheet for an excluded student shall contain only student identification information and the reason the student was excluded. Both the school and the LEA shall maintain records on the exclusions of students from testing. The Department may audit these records.

(h) Individual students may be excluded from SBE-adopted tests as follows:

(1) Limited English proficient students may be excluded for one year beginning with the time of enrollment in the LEA if the student's English language proficiency has been assessed as novice/low to intermediate/low in listening, reading, and writing. A student whose English language proficiency has been assessed as intermediate/high or advanced may be excluded from tests in which the student writes responses for up to two years. Twelve months after a limited English proficient student has enrolled in the LEA, the student must be reassessed on the same language proficiency test that was used as a part of the identification of the student for inclusion in the limited English proficiency program in that LEA. A student assessed as novice/low to intermediate/low after 12 months may be excluded for an additional 12 months. A student assessed as intermediate/high or above must participate in the state testing program. After two years from the time of initial enrollment in the LEA, all limited English proficiency students must participate in the state testing program. LEAs shall report results of the initial language proficiency test and the results on the same test 12 months after enrollment in the LEA to the Department. LEAs shall use other assessment methods for excluded students to demonstrate that these students are progressing in other subject areas.

(2) All students with disabilities including those identified under Section 504 shall be included in the statewide testing program through the use of state tests with appropriate accommodations or through the use of other state assessments designed for these students. The student's IEP team shall determine whether a testing accommodation is appropriate for that student's disability or whether the student should be assessed using another state assessment designed for that student's disability.

(i) Students in grades 3-8 with IEPs and serious cognitive deficits and whose program of study focuses on functional/life skills shall participate in the North Carolina Alternate Assessment Portfolio as an alternative.

(j) The SBE shall calculate a school's expected growth/gain composite in student performance using the following process:

(1) Review expected and exemplary growth standards for all grades and subjects, and review the predicted EOC mean for expected standard gain and the exemplary standard gain for EOC courses.

(2) Determine the actual growth in reading and mathematics at each grade level included in the state testing program, using data on groups of students identified by paragraph (c)(1) of this Rule and determine the actual EOC mean for EOC tests using data on the groups of students identified by paragraph (c)(2) of this Rule from one point in time to another point in time.

(3) Subtract the expected growth from the actual growth in reading and mathematics at grades 3 through 8 and grade 10; then subtract the predicted EOC mean from the actual EOC mean for EOC tests.

(4) Divide the differences for reading and mathematics by the standard deviations of the respective differences in growth/gain at each grade level and for each EOC to determine the standard growth score.

(5) The SBE shall calculate a school's gain composite in college prep/college tech prep using the following process:

(A) Compute the percent of graduates who receive diplomas who completed either course of study in the current accountability year. Students shall be counted only once if they complete more than one course of study.

(B) Find the baseline, which is the average of the two prior school years' percent of graduates who received diplomas and who completed a course of study.

(C) Subtract the baseline from the current year's percentage.

(D) Subtract 0.1, unless the percentages are both 100. If both percentages are 100, the gain is zero.

(E) Divide by the associated standard deviation. The result is the standard gain for college prep/college tech prep.

(6) The SBE shall calculate a school's expected gain composite in the competency passing rate by comparing the grade 10 competency passing rate to the grade 8 passing rate for the group of students in grade 10 who also took the 8th-grade end-of-grade test.

(A) Subtract the grade 8 rate from the grade 10 rate.

(B) Subtract 0.1.

(C) Divide by the standard deviation. The result is the standard gain in competency passing rate.

(7) Multiply the expected standard growth scores for reading and mathematics at each grade level from grade 3 to 8, EOC prediction, gain in competency passing rate, gain in college prep/college tech prep, and change in dropout rate by the respective weight for each, as they may apply in a given school. These values shall be summed and divided by the sum of all the weights. If the resulting number is zero or above, the school has made the expected growth standard.

(8) The SBE shall compute exemplary growth using the exemplary growth

standard (b_o x 1.10) in the accountability formula for grades 3 through 8 in reading and mathematics, and (b_o x 1.03) for predicted EOC means. There is no exemplary standard for competency passing rate or college prep/college tech prep gain.

(9) To determine the composite score for exemplary standards:

(A) Subtract the exemplary growth/gain from the actual growth/gain standard in reading and mathematics at grades 3 through 8; subtract the predicted exemplary EOC mean from the actual EOC mean for each EOC test.

(B) Divide the difference in growth/gain by the standard deviations of the respective differences in growth/gain to determine the standard growth/gain score.

(C) Multiply the exemplary standard growth/gain scores for reading and mathematics at each grade level from grade 3 to 8, EOC gain, expected standard gain in Competency Passing Rate, Dropout Rate, and for College Prep/College Tech Prep by the respective weight for each, as they may apply in a given school. These values shall be summed and divided by the sum of all the weights. If the resulting number is zero or above, the school has met the exemplary growth standard.

(k) If school officials believe that the school's growth standards were unreasonable due to specific, compelling reasons, the school may appeal its growth standards to the SBE. The SBE shall appoint an appeals committee composed of a panel selected from the compliance commission to review written appeals from schools. The school officials must clearly document the circumstances that made the goals unrealistic and must submit its appeal to the SBE within 30 days of receipt of notice from the Department of the school's performance. The appeals committee shall review all appeals and shall make recommendations to the SBE. The SBE shall make the final decision on the reasonableness of the growth goals.

History Note: Authority G.S. 115C-12(9)c4.;
Eff. January 1, 1998;
Amended Eff. April 1, 2002; September 1, 2001; December 1, 2000;
Temporary Amendment Eff. March 5, 2001.

II. Report on Assistance Teams

Status of Personnel in Systems Receiving Mandatory Assistance 2002 - 2003

Status of Superintendents of School Systems Having More than Half of Their School Identified as Low Performing

The ABCs legislation in G.S. 115 C-105.32 permits the State Board to appoint an interim superintendent in a local school administrative unit when more than half of the schools have been identified as low performing schools. Low-performing schools are those that have not met the minimum growth standards defined by the State Board and a majority of students are performing below grade level.

The results of the ABCs of Public Education for 2002-03 did not show any school systems as having more than half of their schools identified as low performing. Therefore, State Board action was not required.

155C-333. Evaluation of Certified Employees including Certain Superintendents; Action Plans; State Board Notification Upon Dismissal of Employees.

Local Board Evaluation of Certain Superintendents: Each year the local board of education shall evaluate the superintendent employed by the local school administrative unit and report to the State Board the results of that evaluation if during that year the State Board designated as low-performing:

(1) **One or more** schools in a local school administrative unit that has no more than *10 schools.*

(2) **Two or more** schools in a local school administrative unit that has no more than *20 schools*

(3) **Three or more** schools in a local school administrative unit that has more than *20 schools.*

LEA	Criteria From Above	Total Number of Schools	Number of Low-Performing Schools
Hertford County	1	5	1
Weldon City	1	4	1
Vance County	2	15	1
Halifax County	2	15	1
Northampton	1	10	1

Status of Principals of Schools Receiving Mandatory Assistance in 2002 - 2003

The General Assembly revised the ABCs legislation to require local boards and superintendents to take the first actions regarding principals located in low-performing schools. The revision provides four options for superintendents to consider in dealing with principals who are in low-performing schools:

1. Retain in the same position, if principal was in the school two years or less before it was identified as low performing;
2. Retain with a remediation plan;
3. Transfer; or
4. Demote or dismiss according to G.S. 115C-325.

LEA	School	Retained: has less than two years at the school	Retained with remediation plan: has more than two years at the school	Transferred	Demoted or Dismissed	Resigned Or Retired
Halifax	Southeast High School		x			
Weldon City	Weldon High School	x				
Hertford	Hertford County High School					x
Northampton	Northampton High-West	x				
Vance	Northern Vance High			x		

Composition and Activities of Assistance Teams

Background: For the sixth year (2002-2003) of the assistance teams, members were selected to replace team turnover. There were a total of 69 team members, down from 80 members last year. The teacher shortage caused a decrease in the number of applications received.

Composition: Assistance teams were composed of practicing principals, assistant principals, classroom teachers and central office supervisors on leave from local education agencies (LEAs) and retired educators.

Profile:	Average of 24 years of educational experience
77%	Advanced Degrees
19%	Work in advanced degree underway
Race Ethnicity:	
13	White Males
8	African-American Males
26	White Females
22	African-American Females

Retention: During the 2002-03 school year, 16 team members returned to their home school systems or accepted other positions. Team members who returned to LEAs were usually placed in leadership roles where they have a positive impact on student achievement and teacher performance. Thirty mandated assistance team members served five (5) high schools. The remaining 39 members provided voluntary assistance in high priority elementary schools (as defined by the General Assembly). All 37 high priority schools were offered assistance.

Major Activities in Low-Performing Schools

Low Performing Schools: As a minimum, assistance teams

- conducted an entry conferences with superintendents and principal or interim school leader at assigned school.
- conducted a needs assessment to identify school strengths and areas needing improvement.
- evaluated certified personnel, including principals.
- developed recommendations for improvement based on results of needs assessment.
- revised the to School Improvement Plan, as needed.
- developed and implement strategies, time lines and persons responsible for implementation of improvement strategies.
- assisted the school in implementing the revised School Improvement Plan.
- monitored and assessed progress frequently.

- prepared a formal needs assessment report, submitted monthly progress reports and developed an annual report summarizing accomplishments and continuing needs.

Continually Low-Performing Schools (CLPs) - Level I: In addition to the services above, assistance teams provided the additional services to CLPs:

- collaboratively developed a budget plan for the use of the additional funds allotted to CLPs. Collaborating group includes assistance team members, school improvement team members and central office staff members).
- monitored the implementation of the budget plan after its approval.
- met quarterly with the collaborative group (central office staff, school improvement team, school administrative team and assistance team) to trouble shoot, problem solve, and share concerns and successes.
- made recommendations for continuing progress and growth during the next school year (2003-2004).

Continually Low-Performing Schools (CLPs) – Level II: Schools that are continually low performing for the second year receive additional services and sanctions as described below.

- continued strategies adopted by the State Board of Education for Continually Low-Performing Schools- Level I.
- provided additional strategies for Level II as outlined below:
  - ✓ conducted External Review Committee on-site visits,
  - ✓ offered public school transfer option through a letter of notification to parents, and
  - ✓ reviewed district budget with special emphasis on local expenditures.
- made recommendations for the next school year (2003-2004).

Mandated Assistance for 2002-2003
Assistance Team Assignments
9 – 12 Schools

LEA	School	Team Leader	Team Reviewers	Division of School Improvement
Halifax	Southeast High School	Brock Ridge	Donyea Daniels Michele Halley Marylin Newkirk Brenda Parsons Betty Jo Rogers Jennifer Smith	Marilyn Palmer, Section Chief and Liaison
Hertford	Hertford County High School	Sheneel Branch	Jeraldine Brooks Allen Conway Ana Cuomo Melinda Harris Earnestine McNeil Karen Rodman	Debora Sydnor, Section Chief Gary Miller, Liaison & Math support
Northampton	Northampton High-West School	Doyle Brinson	Shirley Allen Richard Caldwell Lisa Jefferys Kathy Lewis Linda Phillips	Marilyn Palmer, Section Chief Carol White, Liaison
Vance	Northern Vance High School	Linda Mabe	Judy Craver Martha McLeod Kim Shropshire Joel Simpson Jane Teague Betty Jo Slozak	Charlotte Hughes, Section Chief Gladys Logan, Liaison
Weldon City	Weldon High School	Charles Johnson	Sally Arthur Carolyn Cooper Robert Kepner Joyce Williams Linda Wooten	Marilyn Palmer, Section Chief and Liaison

Team Activities

September 23 - 27, 2002	Teams conducted entry conferences with superintendents, principals and school staffs.
September 30 – June 30, 2003	Team members are sharing information to build a greater understanding of the ABCs and the specific responsibilities of the team, working with assigned schools to conduct a needs assessment which includes observation of all certified personnel, continuing to build trust and integrate the staff into their efforts and providing professional development (demonstration lessons, team teaching, workshops and training sessions, "walkthrough visits," building parental involvement and effective use of instructional time.

Progress Reports and Debriefing

October 2002	Regional meetings scheduled with team members and with collaborative groups to debrief, problem-solve, share experiences and provide information.
November-Dec. 2002	Regional meetings scheduled with collaborative groups to debrief, problem-solve, share experiences and provide information
December 13, 2002	First full-team sharing session with the Division of School Improvement staff
December 5, 2002	Needs Assessment Report submitted to Director of School Improvement
February 2003	Regional meetings scheduled with collaborative groups to debrief, problem-solve, share experiences and provide information
March 14, 2003	Second full-team sharing session with School Improvement Division staff
Mid-May 2003	Regional meetings scheduled with collaborative groups to debrief, problem-solve, share experiences and provide information
June 13, 2003	Third full-team sharing session with School Improvement Division staff

Support and Visitations

September 2002-June 2003	Team liaisons and section chiefs visited with teas as often as necessary. Team leaders stayed in contact with Agency personnel through phone conversations, faxed messages and e-mail almost daily.
September 2002-June 2003	Director of the Division of School Improvement held team leaders' meetings on a bimonthly basis. Sharing days for all members were held on a quarterly basis.
September 2002 –June 2003	Director and assistant director made periodic visits throughout the year.

Summary Remarks

The teams were received extremely well during 2002-03. Team members were focused and task oriented. In their full-team meetings and regional meetings, they shared experiences and concerns with members of the School Improvement Division. They received ongoing support and guidance from the School Improvement staff. The 2002-03 school year was a unique year for the assistance teams as only high schools (5) were designated as low-performing and assigned an assistance team. Team members with K-8 expertise provided assistance to high priority elementary schools. The teams also entered their assigned schools 1½ months later than usual because of the late release of the ABCs results. Therefore, service time preceding the next testing period was somewhat reduced in high schools having the block schedule. For the first time, the teams were serving a *continually low performing school - Level II.* This group was composed of schools that had received assistance in the past and were low performing three consecutive years out of the last four years or had been low-performing three out of the recent four years. Despite these hindrances, **all schools receiving assistance from assistance teams met or exceeded their growth expectations.**

Performance Record of Schools Assigned State Mandated Assistance Teams

School Year	Exemplary Growth	Expected Growth	No Recognition	Low-Performing	Total Schools Served
1997-98	13	1	1	0	15
1998-99	7	2	0	2	11
1999-00	5	0	0	2	7
2000-01	5	4	3	2	14
2001-02	High growth - 2	7		4	13
2001-02	1	4	0	0	5
2002-03	High Growth - 10	6	0	0	16

During the past six years of service provided by the State Assistance Teams, eleven schools have required more than one year of having a team to overcome low-performing status.

Schools Eligible for Voluntary Assistance – 2002 – 2003

Voluntary assistance was provided to the high priority elementary schools and Title I Schools in school improvement that accepted the services. High priority schools were first identified in 1999-2000 and are schools with 80% or more of their students on free or reduced lunch rates and 55% or less performing on grade level.

High Priority Schools

	LEA	School	Grade Span	Performance Composite 2001-02	Performance Composite 2002-03
1.	Anson	Wadesboro Primary	K-3	45.2	61.3
2.	Bertie	Windsor Elementary	K-5	55.7	77.2
3.	Cumberland	Pauline Jones Elementary	PK-5	53.5	68.3
4.	Cumberland	Teresa Berrien Elementary	PK-5	55.2	66.2
5.	Forsyth	Cook Elementary	PK-5	44.7	67.9
6.	Forsyth	Forest Park Elementary	PK-5	54.9	64.3
7.	Guilford	Fairview Elementary	PK-5	54.2	72.5
8.	Hertford	Riverview Elementary	PK-5	56.7	73.3
9.	Northampton	Rich Square-Creecy	PK-5	67.5	73.8
10.	Robeson	West Lumberton Elementary	PK-4	84.0	86.1

Title I Schools In School Improvement

	LEA	School	Grade Span	Performance Composite 2001-02	Performance Composite 2002-03
1.	Halifax	Northwest Halifax High	9-12	40.9	*
2.	Wayne	Goldsboro High School	9-12	45.1	52.8

*Services were discontinued in February 2003.

Activities

September 12, 2002	Superintendents and principals notified that high priority elementary schools are eligible to receive voluntary assistance
September 18, 2002	Response to the offer of voluntary assistance received
September 20, 2002	Orientation session conducted
September 2002	Voluntary services began
September 2002 –June 2003	Ongoing assistance and support provided to schools accepting assistance.

Support and Visitation

September 2002-June 2003	Assistance team members, school improvement consultants and section chiefs received ongoing support and guidance from section chiefs, the assistant director and director of School Improvement.

Summary Remarks

Voluntary assistance went well. The Division of School Improvement served high priority elementary schools, Title I Schools in school improvement and Title I Schools on Watch with the assistance of education consultants in the School improvement Division. As time permitted and staff were available, other schools were assisted as requested. In some cases, school principals thought that "voluntary" meant they could decide if they wanted to implement services recommended by the team. Through conferences with these principal and explanations to school improvement teams, the understanding of "voluntary" was clarified. The term "voluntary" simply means it was the choice of the school as to whether or not they accepted services. Once the school opted to receive services, the operations of the team were the same as in mandated assistance, with the exception of teacher evaluations. Teams in voluntary assistance did not do formal teacher evaluations but conducted "walk throughs" and informal observations to determine how to best assist individual teachers and the school as a whole. Feedback on informal observations was provided to the teachers and to the principal.

ABCs Assistance Team Training

Topics and Subtopics: The team members work with local, state, national and international educational trainers and leaders.

1. The ABCs Plan
   - Context Setting and Training Goals
   - Local Participation, Local Flexibility, and School-Based Accountability
   - Improving Low Performing Schools
   - Issues, Questions and Concerns

2. Building a High-Performance Team
   - What Comprises a Team
   - High performance Teams
   - Roles/Responsibilities of Assistance Teams
   - Working as a Team
   - Team Mission and Code of Conduct
   - Issues, Questions and Concerns

3. Effective Schools
   - How the Correlates Inform and Assist the Team's Work
   - Excellence Without Excuses
   - Using Effective School Correlates as a Way to Structure Intervention
   - Case Studies of Effective Schools in High Poverty Areas
   - Issues, Questions, and Concerns

4. School Improvement Plans
   - Components of Plans
   - Development of Plans (process)
   - Developing Plans for Elementary and Middle Schools
   - Implementing School Improvement Plans

5. Effective Curriculum and Instruction Programming
   - The Non-Negotiable: The Standard Course of Study
   - Aligning the Curriculum in Reading
   - Aligning the Curriculum in Writing
   - Reading/Writing Across the Curriculum
   - Teaching Mathematics in Elementary, Middle and High Schools
   - Teaching Reading and Writing in Elementary and Middle Schools
   - Teaching English in High School
   - Coaching, Mentoring and Conferencing
   - Service Models
   - Managing Classrooms
   - Recognizing and Respecting Cultural Differences

6. Team-School Relations and Home-School Relations
   - Teams Entering Schools
   - Teams Working with Schools: Case Study
   - Strategies for Involving Parents/Families
   - Facilitating Positive Home-School Relations

7. Personnel Evaluations
   - Purpose and Use of the Principals Revised Evaluation Program
   - Purpose and Use of the Teacher Performance Appraisal Instrument (TPAI)
   - TPAI Use (24 hours of training)
   - Evaluating Support Personnel
   - Evaluating the Media Center Collection

8. Needs Assessment
   - Overview of Needs Assessment
   - Conducting a Needs Assessment
   - Interpreting, Using and Reporting Data

9. Student Supports and Staff Development
   - Student Support Activities
   - Student Support Programming
   - School Improvement Plans and Staff Development: Matching Needs
   - Planning and Implementation

10. Building Teams
    - Team Relationships
    - Team Relationships with Schools
    - Team Work: Case Studies
    - Team Presentations

11. Communicating with the School Community
    - Reporting Results to the Local Board and Communities
    - Group Case Study Presentation

Additional Topics Addressed in Training During July: Presenters were members of the DPI staff and staff from other organizations.

- Student Accountability Standards
- ABCs Law/
- Critical Issues for Team Members
- Conducting Entry Conferences
- Conducting a Needs Assessment
- Mediation and Facilitation Training
- Instructional Profile
- Science Update K-12
- ESL Issues
- CRISS Training
- True Colors
- Team Leader Responsibilities
- English Language Arts Update K-12
- TPAI-Revised
- Language Acquisition/ESL Strategies
- Team Responsibility
- High Expectations
- Review of Skill Packets
- Workshop Facilitation
- K- 2 Assessment
- Testing Update/Issues
- Teams in Action
- Exceptional Children's Issues
- Principal Performance Appraisal
- PPA System Revised
- Evaluation of Team Members
- Affirming Diversity
- Mentoring
- Blending Educational Strategies and Educational Technology

III. Response to Excellent Schools Act Requirements

Response to Excellent Schools Act Requirements
Certified Staff Testing Under the Excellent Schools Act

Senate Bill 1126, ratified in May 1998, amended the teacher competency testing provisions of the Excellent Schools Act to ensure that only teachers were tested whose unsatisfactory performance was judged in whole or part due to lack of general knowledge. While no teachers were identified for testing at the end of the 1997-98 school year under this provision, the State Board of Education approved the use of the *Florida College Level Academic Skills Test* (CLAST) to assess the general knowledge of certified staff subject to testing. In the Summer of 1998, standard-setting procedures were conducted, and in the Fall of 1998 the State Board of Education set "passing" scores for the reading and writing portions of this test.

For 2002-03, there were no teachers recommended by the assistance teams or by principals in low-performing schools that were not served by assistance teams to take the General Knowledge Test. A variety of resources were made available to assist teachers in low-performing schools. The State Board of Education allocated funds appropriated by the General Assembly to continually low-performing schools and high priority schools. These funds were in addition to support provided by the assistance teams. The UNC Center for School Leadership Development agreed to provide remediation assistance requested for teachers in low-performing schools as the need arose. The low-performing schools were also served by assistance teams. Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) Grants provided financial support to about 100 schools in the State.

The State Board of Education approved contracts with seven vendors (colleges, universities, public schools, SERVE, and the Principals' Executive Program) to develop evaluation instruments aligned with the new standards for professional educators adopted in May 1998. The instruments were piloted in 1999-2000 and were available for use by school systems beginning with the 2000-2001 school year. While the focus of the individual instruments vary, each included means of rating teaching performance. In the fall of 2001-2002, all systems were required to implement the new evaluation instruments(s) they adopted.

IV. ABCs Recognition and Schedule of Recognition Activities

ABCs Recognition

Top schools around the State receive special recognition as part of the ABCs of Public Education. There are three levels of recognition in the student growth area and two levels of recognition for student performance. Because of the significant number of schools exceeding growth and reaching *School of Distinction* or *School of Excellence* status, recognition events will be conducted at the LEA level, unless an LEA has an unusual circumstance and requests an individual school visit. All K-12 schools that make significant growth are deemed high growth and receive a certificate of achievement. Certified employees in these schools also receive an incentive bonus. All K-12 schools meeting 100% of their student growth/gains standard are considered as having met expected growth/gain and receive a certificate.

For student performance, a School of Excellence is the designation for those schools where at least 90% of the students tested performed at or above grade level and the school made expected growth/gains (as a minimum). These schools will receive a banner to hang in the school and a certificate of achievement. Schools in which 80.0-89.9 percent of student scored at or above grade level are designated as Schools of Distinction. They receive a certificate and a plaque.

In November, December and January, the Chairman of the State Board of Education and/or the State Superintendent, Senior Leadership, or a State Board member will visit the designated schools/LEAs to present recognition banners. Teachers, parents, students, administrators and community leaders proudly participate in these local celebrations.

Number and Percent of Public Schools in North Carolina Receiving Awards and Recognition, 1997-2003[1]

	1996-97[2]		1997-98[3]				1998-99[4]		1999-00		2000-01		2001-02		2002-03	
	K-8		K-8		HS		K-8/HS		K-8/HS		K-8/HS		K-8/HS		K-8/HS	
Category	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	%	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Schools of Excellence	12	0.7	24	1.4	0	0.0	50	2.5	73	3.5	171	7.9	300	13.7	473	21.3
Schools of Distinction[5]	158	9.7	289	16.8	1	0.2	408	20.6	509	24.1	640	29.7	647	29.5	886	39.9
Schools Making High Growth[6]	531	32.5	1137	66.0	265	63.2	1156	58.2	956	45.2	521	24.1	779	35.5	1618	72.9
Schools Making Expected Growth	395	24.2	308	17.9	83	19.8	456	23.0	520	24.6	769	35.6	863	39.3	476	21.4
Schools Not Making Expected Growth[7]	706	43.3	276	16.0	65	15.5	371	18.7	639	30.2	865	40.1	552	25.2	127	5.7
Low-Performing Schools	123	7.5	15	0.9	15	3.6	13	0.7	44	2.1	31	1.4	19	0.9	6	0.3
Made Expected or High Growth	926	56.7	1445	83.9	348	83.1	1612	81.2	1476	69.8	1290	59.7	1642	74.8	2094	94.3
Total ABCs Schools[8]	1632		1722		419		1985		2115		2158		2194		2221	

[1]ABCs results for 1996-97, 1997-98, 1998-99, 1999-00, 2000-01, 2001-02, and 2002-03 reflect State Board of Education actions through October 2, 1997, October 1, 1998, October 7, 1999,
October 5, 2000, November 1, 2001, October 3, 2002, and September 10, 2003, respectively.

[2]The first year of implementation of the ABCs was in 1996-97; only K-8 schools were included in the model.

[3]The ABCs high school model was first implemented in 1997-98. (Schools whose grades spanned K-12 were included in statistical summaries for both K-8 and high schools, so there is duplication in these counts.)

[4]The comprehensive ABCs model has been applied since 1998-99; there is no duplication in these counts.

[5]Beginning in 2002, *Schools of Distinction* were required to make at least expected growth for the first time.

[6]*High Growth* was referred to as *Exemplary Growth* prior to 2002.

[7]*Schools Not Making Expected Growth* was included in two categories prior to 2002: *Schools Receiving No Recognition* and *Low Performing Schools*.

[8]*Total ABCs Schools* is the total number of schools participating in the ABCs for a given year; this total does not reflect the sum of the column; *Schools of Excellence*, *Schools of Distinction*, and *Low-Performing Schools* are not exclusive categories and may include schools that appear in other categories.

***Caution**: Comparisons across years should be made with the above footnotes in mind.*

LEA Codes

Refer to the chart below to locate school systems referenced by code when reading the lists of 2002-2003 *Most Improved Schools Growth and Performance Results 1998-2003 and 2002-2003 Schools of Excellence, Growth and Performance Results.*

010	Alamance-Burlington	240	Columbus	480	Hyde	760	Randolph
020	Alexander	241	Whiteville City	490	Iredell-Statesville	761	Asheboro City
030	Alleghany	250	Craven	491	Mooresville City	770	Richmond
040	Anson	260	Cumberland	500	Jackson	780	Robeson
050	Ashe	270	Currituck	510	Johnston	790	Rockingham
060	Avery	280	Dare	520	Jones	800	Rowan-Salisbury
070	Beaufort	290	Davidson	530	Lee	810	Rutherford
080	Bertie	291	Lexington City	540	Lenoir	820	Sampson
090	Bladen	292	Thomasville City	550	Lincoln	830	Scotland
100	Brunswick	300	Davie	560	Macon	840	Stanly
110	Buncombe	310	Duplin	570	Madison	850	Stokes
111	Asheville City	320	Durham	580	Martin	860	Surry
120	Burke	330	Edgecombe	590	McDowell	861	Elkin City
130	Cabarrus	340	Winston-Salem/Forsyth	600	Mecklenburg	862	Mount Airy City
132	Kannapolis City	350	Franklin	610	Mitchell	870	Swain
140	Caldwell	360	Gaston	620	Montgomery	880	Transylvania
150	Camden	370	Gates	630	Moore	890	Tyrrell
160	Carteret	380	Graham	640	Nash-Rocky Mount	900	Union
170	Caswell	390	Granville	650	New Hanover	910	Vance
180	Catawba	400	Greene	660	Northampton	920	Wake
181	Hickory City	410	Guilford	670	Onslow	930	Warren
182	Newton Conover City	420	Halifax	680	Orange	940	Washington
190	Chatham	421	Roanoke Rapids City	690	Pamlico	950	Watauga
200	Cherokee	422	Weldon City	700	Elizabeth City/ Pasquotank	960	Wayne
210	Edenton-Chowan	430	Harnett	710	Pender	970	Wilkes
220	Clay	440	Haywood	720	Perquimans	980	Wilson
230	Cleveland	450	Henderson	730	Person	990	Yadkin
231	Kings Mountain City	460	Hertford	740	Pitt	995	Yancey
232	Shelby City	470	Hoke	750	Polk	679	Camp Lejeune (Federal)
						209	Cherokee Central (Federal)
						269	Fort Bragg (Federal)

2002-2003 Most Improved Schools
Growth and Performance 1998-99 through 2002-03

School Code		Name	Grade Span	1998-99 Status	PC	1999-00 Status	PC	2000-01 Status	PC	2001-02 Status	PC	2002-03 Status	PC
020	308	ELLENDALE ELEM	0K-5	Exm Dst	80.8	Exm Dst	83.8	Exm Dst	87.8	Exc Hgh	92.0	Exc Hgh MI	93.0
040	308	ANSONVILLE ELEM	PK-6	Exm	75.0	NR	72.8	NR	73.2	NR	75.4	Dst Hgh MI	89.1
090	352	PLAIN VIEW PRI	PK-5	Exm MI	67.6	NR	58.0	NR	65.5	Pro Hgh	77.5	Dst Hgh MI	88.6
110	388	PISGAH ELEM	0K-5	Exm	74.7	Exm Dst	81.2	Exm Exc	90.0	Dst Hgh	87.5	Exc Hgh MI	92.6
120	356	MOUNTAIN VIEW EL	PK-5	NR	59.6	Exm MI	78.6	Exp Dst	86.8	Dst Hgh	86.1	Exc Hgh MI	90.7
16A	000	CAPE LOOKOUT HS	9 -12		.	Exm	41.5	Exp	46.0	Pri Exp	53.8	Pri Hgh MI	44.7
180	312	BANOAK ELEM	0K-6	Exm	72.7	NR	69.9	NR	76.4	NR	67.9	Dst Hgh MI	87.4
20A	000	THE LEARNING CT	0K-5	Exp	68.6	NR	57.8	NR	77.1	NR	71.8	Pro Hgh MI	72.2
231	304	BETHWARE ELEM	PK-4	Exm	77.8	Exm Dst	80.5	Exp Dst	83.3	Dst Hgh	85.7	Exc Hgh MI	93.0
231	316	EAST ELEM	0K-4	Exm Dst MI	85.6	Exm Exc MI	91.8	Exm Exc	94.5	Exc Hgh	91.6	Exc Hgh MI	93.9
32H	000	RESEARCH TRI CH	0K-7		.	LP	31.4	NR	49.1	Pro Hgh	72.4	Dst Hgh MI	80.6
330	328	N EDGECOMBE MAG	9 -12	Exm	49.7	Exm	50.8	Exp	48.7	Pri Hgh MI	56.5	Pri Hgh MI	55.8
330	358	TARBORO HS	9 -12	Exm	57.3	Exm	57.6	Exm	59.4	Pro Hgh MI	66.5	Pro Hgh MI	68.5
34D	000	WOODSON SCH	0K-12	LP	38.6	Exp	44.8	NR	42.6	LP	39.3	Pro Hgh MI	64.3
34E	000	EAST WINSTON PR	0K-4	LP	3.30	Exp	20.8		.	Pro Hgh MI	76.8	Pro Hgh MI	76.6
360	308	ARLINGTON ELEM	PK-5	Exp	52.4	Exm	60.1	Exm Dst	81.2	Dst Hgh	89.4	Exc Hgh MI	93.7
360	484	RHYNE ELEM	PK-5	LP	44.2	NR	48.8	NR	59.5	Exc Hgh	96.0	Pro Hgh MI	79.3
360	520	WOODHILL ELEM	PK-5	Exp	45.1	LP	39.2	Exp	53.0	Pri	52.1	Pro Hgh MI	72.4
420	348	PITTMAN ELEM	PK-5	Exm Dst MI	84.3	Exm	77.0	Exm	79.4	NR	.	Exc Hgh MI	94.6
54A	000	CHILDREN'S ACAD	0K-6	Exm	55.1	NR	54.9	NR	47.0	Pri	48.6	Pro Hgh MI	60.2
550	342	NORTH BROOK EL	0K-5	Exm	73.4	Exm	77.3	Exm Dst	83.4	Exc Hgh	90.1	Dst Hgh MI	88.0
560	332	NANTAHALA SCH	0K-12	NR	73.6	Exm	79.9	NR	77.9	Pro Exp	78.8	Dst Hgh MI	84.5
560	332	NANTAHALA SCH	0K-12	NR	73.6	Exm	79.9	NR	77.9	Pro Exp	78.8	Dst Hgh MI	84.5
570	316	LAUREL ELEM	0K-5	Exm Dst MI	80.6	Exp	69.1	Exm Exc MI	92.0	NR	87.0	Exc Hgh MI	97.8
620	316	EAST MONTGOMERY	9 -12	Exm	43.6	Exp	47.2	Exp	50.3	Pri Exp	54.4	Pro Hgh MI	73.5
66A	000	GASTON COLLEGE	5 -6		.		.		.	Exc Hgh MI	91.8	Exc Hgh MI	99.6
770	318	FAIRVIEW HEIGHTS	0K-3	Exm	67.9	Exm	60.8	Exm	64.9	Dst Hgh MI	80.3	Dst Hgh MI	86.9
770	366	ROHANEN PRI	PK-3	Exm Dst	89.2	Exp	71.8	NR	51.1	Pro Hgh	78.5	Dst Hgh MI	87.0
780	325	FAIRMONT HS	9 -12	Exm	37.4	LP	40.6	Exp	47.3	Pro Hgh MI	62.9	Pro Hgh MI	71.1
780	328	GREEN GROVE EL	PK-3	Exm	76.1	Exm	66.0	Exm MI	72.6	Pro Hgh	68.2	Pro Hgh MI	79.5
780	344	MAGNOLIA ELEM	PK-8	NR	57.5	NR	60.2	NR	60.3	Pro Exp	64.2	Dst Hgh MI	86.5
780	356	OXENDINE ELEM	PK-6	Exm	71.7	Exm	66.3	NR	68.6	Pri	58.3	Dst Hgh MI	87.4
78A	000	CIS ACAD	6 -8	Exp	29.0	LP	26.0	Exm	39.0	Pri Exp	50.7	Pro Hgh MI	79.2
820	349	LAKEWOOD HS	9 -12	Exm MI	50.2	Exm MI	57.1	Exm	60.5	Pro Hgh MI	68.5	Pro Hgh MI	72.0
830	345	SCOTLAND ACCEL	PK-3		.		.		.		.	Dst Hgh MI	82.5
83B	000	LAURINBURG HOM	8 -12		.	LP	33.3	LP	15.4	LP	37.5	Pri Hgh MI	52.9

V. Testing Program Redevelopment and Issues for Further Consideration

Testing Program Redevelopment and Issues for Further Consideration

The enactment of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act in 2002 caused DPI and the SBE to develop an accountability plan that would meet the requirements of the legislation and ultimately be approved by the US Department of Education (USED). Several aspects of that plan are being reconsidered based on the first year's AYP results. The SBE will finalize its recommendations in January and then DPI must seek approval from the USED.

Another issue is the decision on the part of the NC General Assembly to restructure the ABCs incentive system to incorporate AYP status as part of the system.

Finally, with the ultimate goal of NCLB that 100% of students score proficient on state tests by the end of the school year 2013-14, it provides challenges to the state in terms of developing newer editions of the state tests based on revisions to the state curriculum and whether the achievement standards (levels) should be raised during this time period.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2003

SESSION LAW 2003-284
HOUSE BILL 397

AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR CURRENT OPERATIONS AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS FOR STATE DEPARTMENTS, INSTITUTIONS, AND AGENCIES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, AND TO IMPLEMENT A STATE BUDGET THAT ENABLES THE STATE TO PROVIDE A SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY THROUGH STRONG EDUCATIONAL AND ECONOMIC TOOLS.

EVALUATION OF INITIATIVES TO ASSIST HIGH-PRIORITY SCHOOLS

SECTION 7.10.(c) Of funds appropriated from the General Fund to State Aid to Local School Administrative Units, the sum of five hundred thousand dollars ($500,000) for fiscal year 2003-2004 and the sum of five hundred thousand dollars ($500,000) for fiscal year 2004-2005 shall be used by the State Board of Education to contract with an outside organization to evaluate the initiatives set forth in this section. The evaluation shall include:

(1) An assessment of the overall impact these initiatives have had on student achievement;
(2) An assessment of the effectiveness of each individual initiative set for this section in improving student achievement;
(3) An identification of changes in staffing patterns, instructional methods, staff development, and parental involvement as a result of these initiatives;
(4) An accounting of how funds and personnel resources made available for these schools were utilized and the impact of varying patterns of utilization on changes in student achievement;
(5) An assessment of the impact of bonuses for mathematics, science, and special education teachers on (i) the retention of these teachers in the targeted schools, (ii) the recruitment of teachers in these specialties into targeted schools, (iii) the recruitment of teachers certified in these disciplines, and (iv) student achievement in schools at which these teachers receive these bonuses; and
(6) Recommendations for the continuance and improvement of these initiatives.

The State Board of Education shall make a report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee regarding the results of this evaluation by December 1 of each year. The State Board of Education shall submit its recommendations for changes to these initiatives to the Committee at anytime.

Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee

Evaluation of the High Priority Schools Initiatives

SL 2003-284 Section 7.10 (c)

Report #18 in October 2003-December 2004
DPI Chronological Schedule

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North Carolina
Department of Public Instruction

First Annual Evaluation
of the
High Priority Schools Initiatives
2001-2002 and 2002-2003

September 2003

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North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Aiming to provide the state's highest priority elementary schools with immediate assistance, in 2001 the North Carolina General Assembly passed legislation that appropriated supplementary funds for the state's lowest performing elementary schools. The set of high priority schools targeted for this assistance were those in which over 80% of students qualified for free- or reduced-price lunches, and no more than 55% of the students performed at or above grade level during the 1999-2000 school year. Across the state, 36 elementary schools were identified as High Priority (HP) schools. The HP schools legislation specified that funds be used to:

- Reduce class size in kindergarten to grade three so that there is a 15:1 student-teacher ratio;
- Pay teachers in 2001-2002 (Year 1) who elect to extend their contract by five days for staff development and to extend all teacher contracts at these schools in 2002-2003 (Year 2) by 10 days including five additional days of instruction; and
- Provide one additional instructional support position at each priority school

This same legislation also authorized the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) to contract with an outside organization to evaluate the High Priority Schools Initiative. After issuing a request for proposals (RFP), Metis Associates, Inc. was selected in December 2002 to conduct an evaluation of the impact of the HP initiatives on improving student achievement. This summarizes the results included in Metis' full Evaluation Report.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HIGH-PRIORITY INITIATIVES

The following listing identifies the key aspects of the implementation of the HP Initiative:

Class Size Reductions in Grades K-3 were accomplished through a variety of [1]

- Scheduling Changes (e.g., Team Teaching)
- Strategies used to create additional classroom space (e.g., Use of mobile units/portable classrooms)

Teacher Contract Extension for Professional Development resulted in

- Lessons that incorporate the NC Standard Course of Study
- Small group instruction
- Classroom management techniques
- Cooperative learning
- Technology as a learning tool
- Differentiated instruction
- Individualized instruction

[1] In Year 1, 18 schools requested and were granted a waiver. In Year 2, one school requested and was granted a waiver.

Extended School Year for Students

- Of those schools that implemented the extended school year initiative, about half added the days during the school year on weekends or school breaks and half providing additional instructional days to extend the school year.
- Regardless of how it was being implemented, the content was described mostly as an extension of the regular school year instruction.

Additional Instructional Support Positions

- K-3 classroom teacher
- Curriculum specialist
- Literacy or reading specialist
- Student support staff
- Resource teacher
- Staff developer

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Impact of the HP Initiatives on Student Achievement

- By the end of Year 2, all 35 HP schools were successful in realizing ABCs growth expectations.
- The HP schools showed significantly greater numbers of students than the comparison schools that attained consistent mastery of grade level content (at or above Level III) in both reading and math from baseline to Year 2.
- Students who remained in HP schools over several years realized statistically significant mean gains in reading and math.

Effectiveness of the Individual HP Initiatives on Student Achievement

- Across grades, students at the HP non-waiver and waiver schools significantly outperformed their peers at the comparison schools in reading in spring 2003
- In spring 2003, students' average math performance at the HP non-waiver schools was similar to that of students at the comparison schools.

Key Stakeholders' Perceptions of Achievement Gains or Other Outcomes

- Changes attributed to the **reduced class size initiative:**
  - Increased use of small group instruction
  - Increased time spent on instruction
  - Greater incidence of individualized student instruction
  - Improved student achievement
  - Improved classroom discipline
  - Improved teacher scheduling

- With respect to **contract extension professional development,** staff believed their teaching skills have improved the most as to:
  - using technology to support learning

- Strategies with manipulatives
- Small group instruction
- Lessons based on the Standard Course of Study

- Staff reported far less improvement in
  - Teaching ELL students and students with disabilities
  - Strategies for increasing parental involvement
- The **extended school year for students** is contributing to low morale among teachers and students and is not believed to be achieving its intended benefits for students.
- District-level respondents believed that it was too early to determine the impact of the HP initiatives on student academic performance.
  - District-level respondents also mentioned two primary negative effects of the initiative - increased pressure on HP-designated schools and the stigma or embarrassment that exists for schools with the HP designation.

USE OF ALLOCATED FUNDS AND PERSONNEL RESOURCES BY THE HP SCHOOLS

- Preliminary findings of an analysis of financial data show a significant correlation between the increase in dollars and the increase in test scores.
- There was a great deal of variation in how HP funds were allocated to support HP initiatives among different districts.
- It was found that HP schools and districts were using different types of funding, aside from HP funds, to support HP initiatives.
- Because dollars were not fully allocated to all the schools in the HP Initiative until the second year, it is difficult to draw conclusions in the first year of the initiative.

The Impact of the HP Initiatives on Other Outcomes

- Instructional Changes
  - Most of the HP districts had implemented reduced class size efforts aside from those efforts associated with the HP Schools Initiative.
  - A number of additional school-wide initiatives have been implemented in an effort to improve the academic performance of students at HP schools.
- Staffing Patterns
  - Clearly, the most significant impact the HP Initiative has had on staffing patterns at the 35 schools is related to the loss of the teaching assistant positions.
- Parent Involvement
  - While the initial intent of the HP legislation was to increase parental involvement through the added instructional support position, this aspect was clearly not realized at the school level.
  - None of the schools used the HP allocation to support a staff person whose main responsibilities were to conduct parent outreach and education (such as a parent advocate or parent coordinator), though several schools hired student support staff such as guidance counselors or social workers.
- Implementation Issues/Challenges
  - Some district-level staff as well as staff at the HP schools believed that sufficient resources were not provided by the state to support the HP initiative.
  - Many cited a number of unexpected costs that districts and/or schools had incurred because of the HP Schools Initiative.

- It was also learned that HP schools are having difficulty recruiting and maintaining experienced and qualified teachers.
- In addition, some district respondents expressed dissatisfaction with DPI in terms of its communication to the district regarding the HP Initiative.
- At the school level, confusion existed at many schools regarding what HP funds were available to them to assist with implementation of the four legislative initiatives.

- There is a need for **increased communication** between DPI, the participating school districts, and the HP schools regarding the expectations and requirements of the HP Schools Initiative. We note that, as of August of 2003, DPI has already started to convene regular meetings with HP staff regarding these expectations and requirements.
- It is suggested that some **flexibility with implementation** be established. There are particular issues that should be addressed for HP schools where the average class size was at or below the 1:15 student to teacher ratio before the HP Schools Initiative began. In these schools, since the additional teacher allocations were not needed/warranted, the difficulties associated with the loss of the teaching assistants were more pronounced.
- Stakeholders at the district and school level reported unanticipated financial burdens (e.g., ancillary costs such additional instructional supplies, portable classrooms, custodial services for additional days), shortages of experienced teachers, scarcity of facilities/space, and loss of teaching assistants.
- There is some concern from both district- and school-level staff about the stigma associated with being an HP school and that none of the schools received recognition for improvements made since the HP designation in 1999-2000. At the same time, stakeholders were apprehensive that state funding for reduced class size and professional development, in particular, would not be continued if an HP school showed improvements in student achievement. Perhaps the state could develop a strategy for **rewarding HP schools** that achieve marked improvements, while continuing to provide the HP funding and support.
- Recognizing that reduced class size may not boost achievement unless teachers are appropriately trained, the North Carolina legislation required that HP schools provide five days of staff development. To strengthen this initiative, the state should **provide research-based suggestions or guidance** to the districts and the HP schools regarding the **scope and content for this professional development.**
- The intent of the HP legislation was to **improve parental involvement** through funding a parent coordinator or parent advocate-type position at each HP school. However, the evaluation showed that the legislation did not explicitly state how these positions were to be used, and that districts and HP schools were not aware of the objective to provide the additional instructional support staff position. The state should fully inform the districts and the HP schools about this provision, so that they view the additional position as a viable mechanism that could facilitate positive effects on parent involvement.
- While the current evaluation study began to explore the combinations of variables (i.e., conditions) that were associated with academic achievement within the HP schools, the results were relatively inconclusive. It is simply too early in the life of the initiative to expect unambiguous findings. As the initiative moves through its subsequent phases of implementation, longitudinal data should be maintained on the cohorts of students who are touched by the initiative, and that **additional statistical techniques** should be used to help define best practice.

Metis Associates' Evaluation of the High Priority Schools Initiative, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI)

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

I. INTRODUCTION

Aiming to provide the state's highest priority elementary schools with immediate assistance, in 2001 the North Carolina General Assembly passed legislation that appropriated supplementary funds for the state's lowest performing elementary schools. Approximately $10.8 million for the 2001-2002 fiscal year and $12.2 million for the 2002-2003 fiscal year were to be used to provide these schools with tools needed to substantially improve student achievement, creating the High Priority Schools Initiative. The set of high priority schools targeted for this assistance were defined as those in which over 80% of students qualified for free- or reduced-price lunches, and no more than 55% of the students performed at or above grade level during the 1999-2000 school year. Across the state, 36 elementary schools were identified as High Priority (HP) schools.

The HP schools legislation specified that funds be used to:

- Reduce class size in kindergarten to grade three so that there is a 15:1 student-teacher ratio
- Pay teachers in 2001-2002 (Year 1) who elect to extend their contract by five days for staff development and to extend all teacher contracts at these schools in 2002-2003 (Year 2) by 10 days including five additional days of instruction
- Provide one additional instructional support position at each priority school

Importantly, the legislation did not allow funds for teacher assistants to be allotted to these schools. Rather, the school districts' teacher assistant allotments were to be reduced based on average daily membership (ADM) for each of the HP schools. In place of the teacher assistant allotments, additional teaching positions were to be allocated to each HP school so that all classrooms at the targeted grade levels reached an allotment ratio of 1:15.

Given the late approval of the legislation in 2001-2002, a waiver clause was included that allowed districts to "opt-out" of implementing the HP initiatives for Year 1. Among the 36 HP schools, 17 applied to NCDPI for a waiver. With all waivers being approved by NCDPI, those schools' allotments were reversed–withdrawing the additional teaching position allotments and reinstating the teaching assistant position allotments. In Year 2, despite not being afforded waiver status again, one elementary school opted not to accept the HP resources and did not implement any of the HP initiatives. Thus, the total pool of HP schools was reduced to 35 elementary schools, representing 15 school districts across the state.

This same legislation also authorized the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) to contract with an outside organization to evaluate the High Priority Schools Initiative. NCDPI issued a request for proposals (RFP) in December 2001 soliciting proposals from contractors who were interested in performing the work. A proposal team within NCDPI, together with State Board of Education staff with particular experience with low-performing schools and/or educational policy evaluation and research, were responsible for evaluating proposals submitted by interested contractors. In December 2002, Metis Associates,

Inc. was selected to conduct an evaluation of the impact of the HP initiatives on improving student achievement. More specifically, the evaluation sought to study the implementation and effectiveness of the preceding legislative initiatives. In accordance with the legislation, the major areas of focus for the evaluation were as follows:

1. The overall impact of the HP initiatives on student achievement.
2. The effectiveness of each individual HP initiative on student achievement.
3. The changes that occurred in HP schools with respect to staffing patterns, instructional methods, staff development, and parental involvement as a result of implementing the HP initiatives.
4. An accounting of how funds and personnel resources made available to the HP schools were utilized and the impact of varying patterns of utilization on changes in student achievement.
5. Recommendations for the continuance and improvement of these initiatives.

II. Report Structure

This report is organized into eight sections. Section III presents an overview of the body of literature on reduced class size implementation, noting several areas that were relevant to this evaluation. Section IV provides a brief summary of the evaluation design that was used, including the different data collection methods. Next, Section V summarizes the level of implementation of the HP initiatives and discusses implementation challenges, and Section VI presents findings organized by the evaluation areas mentioned above. Finally, Sections VII and VIII offer conclusions of the various evaluation results and recommendations, respectively.

III. Context – What the Research Says

Due to a variety of methodological and conceptual flaws, early research on reduced class size (RCS) offered little information about its challenges and benefits (Achilles, 1997). This changed, however, with a landmark evaluation conducted in the 1980s on Tennessee's reduced class size initiative (Murphy & Rosenberg, 1998). Known as the STAR (Student Teacher Achievement Ratio) study, this research yielded valuable information about the impacts of reduced class size and spawned other large-scale, rigorous evaluations of reduced class size initiatives, as well as a number of smaller studies (e.g., Achilles; Cromwell, 1998; Harvey, 1993; Malloy & Gillman, 1989; Nye, 1995; Word, Johnston, Bain, Fulton, Boyd-Zaharias, Lintz, Achilles, Folger, & Breda, 1990). Since the STAR evaluation, a growing body of literature is emerging on the effects of RCS on a variety of education-related outcomes, including impacts on both students and teachers. The findings of research to date are discussed in the "Outcomes Associated with Reduced Class Size" section below.

Undeniably, a number of challenges are associated with implementing RCS initiatives. For example, research and experience suggest that schools embracing RCS often face difficulties associated with a shortage of qualified teachers. In fact, under-qualified teachers without proper teaching credentials and/or limited teaching experience must often be hired to meet staffing needs. As a result, time, money, and other resources must be dedicated to

ensuring that staff are provided with the training and support necessary to deliver high quality classroom instruction (Achilles, 1997; Cromwell, 1998).

Yet another challenge associated with RCS is the need to find appropriate classroom space without displacing other valuable educational programs (Achilles, 1997). Often, schools acquire needed space through the addition of portables—mobile units that may be used to house classrooms outside the main school facility. In addition to portables, schools have been found to employ a variety of other means of acquiring space, including reconfiguring existing classroom space, re-opening vacant school buildings, and seeking funds to support the construction of new space. Importantly, when securing additional classroom space is not possible, some districts have been found to use creative scheduling or team-teaching strategies in an attempt to reap the benefits of reduced class size without having to increase the number of classrooms (McRobbie, 1996; Joint Legislative Audit Committee, 1999; O'Connell & Smith, 2000).

While the obstacles of RCS presented above are significant, educators and policy-makers assert that the biggest challenge associated with RCS may be the cost. In order to implement RCS within a school setting, funds are typically needed for additional teachers and classroom space. There may be other costs as well, such as those associated with the purchase of the instructional and classroom materials needed to equip new classrooms and with providing professional development to increased numbers of faculty (Achilles, 1997). RCS costs are often at the heart of debate over these initiatives.

Outcomes Associated with Reduced Class Size

As previously noted, some of the most conclusive findings on reduced class size have come from several large-scale studies. Tennessee's Project STAR, perhaps, has offered the most comprehensive information of any study to date. This research had a number of advantages over past research, including large study size (79 schools with 7,000 students followed for 4 years); random assignment to conditions; and an in-school design (all participating schools implemented at least one of the three types of classrooms studied in the research, in order to counter the effects of variations resulting from differences among schools). Undeniably, findings from the STAR study favored reduced class size, uncovering numerous benefits associated with this initiative. Furthermore, the positive effects were found to hold for white and minority students, as well as students from inner city, urban, suburban, and rural schools (Cromwell, 1998). Importantly, the original STAR study spawned two other major studies of the reduced class size initiative in Tennessee schools: the Lasting Benefits Study, which followed students over time to ascertain the extent and duration of outcomes, and Project Challenge, a study of the application of reduced class size in the state's poorest counties. As with the original STAR study, both of these evaluations highlighted the benefits of RCS (Achilles, 1997).

Another large-scale study of reduced class size that yielded important information about RCS initiatives was Indiana's PRIME TIME evaluation. Results of this investigation revealed positive outcomes in such areas as time on task, student behavior, teacher satisfaction, and individualized instruction. Interestingly, however, results regarding impact on students' academic achievement were mixed. Methodological issues associated with the research limit the interpretations that may be drawn (Center for School Assessment, 1986; Malloy & Gilman, 1989; McGiverin, Gilman, & Tillitski, 1989; Muller, Chase, & Walden, 1988).

Overall, research to date indicates that reduced class size may offer a number of benefits for students, particularly when children are placed in smaller classrooms beginning at school entry (Achilles, 1997). These include higher test scores, greater levels of student participation, decreased grade retention, and improved student behavior. Furthermore, research suggests that reduced class size may lead to increased engagement in school among affected students. This in turn has been linked to improved academic performance and reduced risk of non-compliant behaviors (e.g., tardiness, absenteeism, lack of attention within the classroom) (Finn, 1989; Finn, 1993; Finn & Rock, 1997; Maier, Molnar, Percy, Smith, & Zahorik, 1997; Steele, 1992). Importantly, research suggests that these effects may be maintained over time, rather than evaporating once children are no longer in a reduced class setting (Achilles, 1997; Achilles, Kiser-Kling, Owen, & Aust, 1994). Furthermore, while RCS has been shown to benefit all children, gains appear to be greatest for minority students and students of low socio-economic status (Achilles, 1997).

In addition to its noted impact on students, reduced class size also has been found to have positive effects on teaching. Specifically, teachers in small classes have been shown to demonstrate more effective teaching strategies, improved communication with parents, improved ability to monitor student behavior, increased ability to gauge children's grasp of course content, greater use of enrichment activities and supplementary materials, and increased morale (Achilles, 1997). Research also indicates that smaller classes allow instructors to devote more time to individualized instruction and identify students at risk of learning problems who may be in need of additional supports (Achilles; Achilles et al., 1994; Bain, Achilles, Zaharias, & Mckenna, 1992; Bourke, 1986; Elvertson & Folger, 1989; Harvey, 1993; Kiser-Kling, 1995).

Importantly, research and experience strongly suggest that the use of teaching aides to lower staff-student ratios may not yield the same benefits as reduced class size. Experts argue that when children are attended to by teaching assistants or aides, they lose the benefit of a teacher's professional knowledge and experience. Rather than engaging children in meaningful learning, classroom assistants may simply involve children in rote activities intended to fill time. As such, the use of aides in lieu of smaller classes may not be a desirable option (Achilles, 1997).

Reduced Class Size and Professional Development

An important consideration in reduced class size initiatives is access to high quality instruction. As previously noted, as RCS increases the demand for teachers, schools are less likely to have a staff of fully credentialed, well trained, highly experienced teachers. For example, research on the introduction of RCS in California revealed that the number of under-qualified teachers employed by schools increased significantly following the implementation of a RCS initiative (Bohrnstedt & Stecher, 1999). Similarly, another recent study found that more than 1 million of California's 5.7 million students are enrolled in schools staffed by an unacceptable number of poorly qualified teachers, suggesting that any positive effects that might have resulted from reduced class size may have been negated (Shields, Esch, Humphrey, Young, Gaston, & Hunt, 1999).

Related to that which is described above, schools implementing reduced class size initiatives are also faced with the challenge of helping teachers learn to use reduced class size effectively (Achilles, 1997). In fact, research suggests that many teachers often fail to change their teaching strategies when placed in smaller classrooms (Shapson, Wright, Easton, & Fitzgerald, 1980). For instance, a study of reduced class size in California revealed that

teaching strategies, student grouping practices, and content coverage did not change in any substantial way after the institution of RCS (Bohrnstedt & Stecher, 1999).

While research to date offers no definitive conclusions as to what teaching strategies are most effective in a reduced class size setting, experts assert that in order to support RCS initiatives, professional development should be school-based, ongoing, and designed to facilitate an atmosphere in which teachers work together to uncover the most promising strategies for working with children in a reduced class size setting. Also suggested is the use of mentoring or "master teachers" as a tool for developing the skills of less experienced instructors, a method which may be particularly salient for schools forced to hire less qualified teachers in order to meet the demands of RCS (Bohrnstedt & Stecher, 1999; McRobbie, 1996; O'Connell & Smith, 2000).

In conclusion, experts have offered a number of suggestions for maximizing the benefits of reduced class size initiatives. For instance, experts assert that districts may benefit from taking advantage of waivers that allow for increased flexibility in the use of financial resources. Rather than simply employing funds to add classroom space and hire additional teachers, schools may choose to use funds to support such efforts as increased professional development opportunities or the hiring of master teachers. Alternatively, schools may opt to implement creative scheduling strategies, such as staggering the daily arrivals and departures of students to ensure all children spend at least part of the day in a reduced class size setting (Egelson, Hartman, & Achilles, 1996; O'Connell & Smith, 2000). Finally, in an effort to maximize benefits, districts may opt to target resources toward those students who have the most to gain from RCS initiatives, such as minority and low-income students (O'Connell & Smith, 2000). As the effects of such efforts are evaluated, educators will have additional guidance regarding the efforts that yield the greatest benefits for the least amount of cost.

IV. Evaluation Design

The overall approach to the evaluation was participatory in nature. The Metis evaluation team and the DPI Evaluation Committee, which included the following core group of members: Brad McMillen, Senior Evaluation Consultant, Division of Accountability Service; Elsie Leak, Associate Superintendent for Curriculum and School Reform Services; Marvin Pittman, Director of School Improvement; Jackie Colbert, Assistant Director of School Improvement; and Charlotte Hughes, Section Chief for Effective Practices, held regularly scheduled progress meetings over the course of the evaluation.

Through the progress meetings, the Metis evaluation team engaged the DPI Committee in discussions about selecting case study schools, refining survey instruments and interview protocols, and assisting with the comparison group design. The meetings also served as a means for sharing formative evaluation information with DPI, such as preliminary findings, challenges encountered in data collection, and impressions from the field. In addition, the evaluation team submitted periodic status reports to DPI, describing challenges and successes with data collection activities underway and providing written summaries of preliminary findings.

Data Collection

The evaluation team used the following methods to collect data relevant to the research questions:

Review of Extant Data: The evaluation team reviewed different documents from the HP schools, such as School Improvement Plans and school calendars, and collected various testing and student information files and financial spreadsheets from DPI. School Improvement Plan summaries were created to begin to learn about implementation of the HP initiatives at the various schools. Electronic files were constructed that contained test results and other student outcomes for the 35 HP schools for three years: 2000-2001 (baseline), 2001-2002 (Year 1), and 2002-2003 (Year 2).

Case Study Visits: In order to gain a richer and more in-depth understanding of both the processes and outcomes of the legislative initiatives being implemented, the summative evaluation activities were supplemented with case studies of a sample of eight HP schools. The case study sites were selected to represent a cross-section of the 35 schools, taking into account variables such as size of the school, geographic location, poverty level, percentage of limited English proficient students, waiver status, presence of state voluntary technical assistance teams, and indicators of school achievement (ABCs results[2]). Members of the evaluation team spent approximately two days at each case study school. On-site activities included observations of staff development (if possible) and target classrooms, interviews with the principals, and focus groups with school staff and parents.

Individual Interviews with District-Level Stakeholders: Beginning in February 2003, the evaluation team began conducting individual interviews with District Finance Officers (DFOs) in school districts with HP schools. These interviews continued through May 2003 until the DFOs at all 15 participating school districts were interviewed. The evaluation team used a semi-structured set of questions, and the interviews averaged one hour in length.

In addition, telephone interviews were conducted with district-level administrators who had oversight for the HP Schools Initiative in 14[3] of the 15 participating districts. This included Directors of Instruction, Directors of Curriculum or Instructional Support, Directors of Elementary Education, Assistant Superintendents, Deputy Superintendents, and Directors of School Improvement. All of the interviews were conducted using a structured protocol to guide the discussion, and were about 45 minutes in length.

Surveys of School Administrators, Staff, and Parents: The evaluation team asked principals at each HP school to complete an Administrator Survey and to assist in disseminating an HP School Staff Survey to all instructional staff at their schools. Administrator Surveys were returned from all 35 participating school principals. Additionally, assistant principals from 15 schools also returned an Administrator Survey, bringing the total number of completed Administrator Surveys to 50. Approximately 972 staff members from the 35 HP schools returned a completed survey to Metis. The number of Staff Surveys returned from each school ranged from nine to 73, with an average of 28 per school.

Principals from each HP school were also asked for student addresses, so that a Parent Survey including a self-addressed, postage-paid envelope could be mailed to parents or

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[2] In the ABCs Model, a school's growth and performance are summarized using growth and performance composite scores. The growth measure summarizes a school's growth over all grade levels and subjects included in the accountability model. The performance composite summarizes the percent of tests' passed (i.e., at or above Achievement Level III - consistent mastery of subject/course content matter) in subjects taught at a school and included in the accountability model. These composites are used to determine which North Carolina schools may need special assistance.

[3] The outstanding Director of Instruction interview has been scheduled for late September 2003.