

North Carolina Education Commission

Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the

*Selection of Participants for a Pilot Program to
Test and Evaluate a Revised School Accountability
Model for the ABCs Plan*

March 2000



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
Selection of Participants for a Pilot Program to Test and Evaluate a
Revised School Accountability Model for the ABCs Plan**

Executive Summary

Section 8.36 of the special provisions in the 1999 Budget required the State Board of Education to establish a pilot program in up to five Local Education Agencies (LEAs) "for the purpose of determining whether revisions in the present accountability model are likely to result in more students demonstrating mastery of grade level subject matter and skills." Section 8.36 further specified that the Board shall report prior to March 15, 2000, "regarding the selection of participating school administrative units, the implementation of the pilot program, the estimated cost of providing bonuses under the pilot program, and possible sources of funds for the bonuses." This report fulfills the requirements for the March 15 report.

Based on applications submitted pursuant to Section 8.36, five LEAs are recommended for participation in the pilot program beginning in 2000-01. They are: Bladen County Schools (090); Craven County Schools (250); Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools (340); Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (600); and Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools (700). Based on preliminary analyses of the most recent ABCs data for schools in these LEAs, the cost to the state of awards under the ABCs Pilot Program in 2000-01 could be as much as \$4,542,661. Therefore the State Board of Education requests that at least this amount be budgeted for the purpose of awards for the ABCs Pilot Program during the 2000-01 school year.

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**Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee
Selection of Participants for a Pilot Program to Test and Evaluate a
Revised School Accountability Model for the ABCs Plan**

Background

In Section 8.36 of the special provisions in the 1999 Budget, the General Assembly required the State Board of Education to establish a pilot program in up to five LEAs "for the purpose of determining whether revisions in the present accountability model are likely to result in more students demonstrating mastery of grade level subject matter and skills." Section 8.36 further specified that the Board shall report prior to March 15, 2000, "regarding the selection of participating school administrative units, the implementation of the pilot program, the estimated cost of providing bonuses under the pilot program, and possible sources of funds for the bonuses." This report fulfills the requirements for the March 15 report.

Under the special provisions, local boards of education may volunteer to participate in the pilot. If so, they must first hold a public meeting and pass a resolution specifically approving the LEA's participation in the pilot program. Participants for the pilot must be selected from among Local Education Agencies who volunteer by submitting an application to the State Board of Education. Participation involves a commitment of local funds (on a 25% matching basis) for LEAs who do not qualify for Low-Wealth or Small School supplemental funding.

Selection of Participating School Administrative Units

In January, 2000 Superintendents of Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and Chief Officers of Charter Schools were formally invited to submit applications to participate in the ABCs Pilot Program required by Section 8.36. They were advised of the legislative requirements and provided a copy of the legislation and the preliminary guidelines for the pilot program. (See attached memorandum of January 18, 2000 with guidelines and legislation.) Applicants were required to submit their applications to the Department of Public Instruction by February 18, 2000 and to include results of their public meeting and a copy of the resolution passed by the local board approving their participation.

Six LEAs submitted applications. They were: Bladen County Schools (090); Craven County Schools (250); Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools (340); Roanoke Rapids City Schools (421); Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (600); and Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools (700).

The State Board of Education met March 1-2, 2000 and approved the applications for: Bladen County Schools (090); Craven County Schools (250); Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools (340); Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (600); and Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools (700). These LEAs provide good geographic, demographic, rural and urban coverage of the state as prescribed by Section 8.36. The application

from Roanoke Rapids City Schools (421) was not selected because of the legislative restriction to five LEAs and because the small number of schools in the district would add the least statistical information to the pilot study.

Implementation of the Pilot Program

The ABCs Pilot Program will be implemented starting with the 2000-2001 school year. Participation may continue through 2004-05 contingent on funding and evaluation results. Within each selected LEA, all schools containing any of the grades 3-8 will participate. (No high schools will be involved in the pilot due to the additional complexity of the high school ABCs and because of the anticipated transition to a prediction model for high school accountability in 2000-2001. High schools may be included in the pilot in later years, if feasible.)

Schools in the pilot will continue to be subject to standard ABCs requirements and the associated awards and sanctions will continue to apply. Awards achieved under the pilot program will be in addition to any earned under the standard ABCs program. For each school, additional awards will be contingent on meeting growth standards in ten subgroups of students. Subgroups are defined in terms of ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and prior achievement. Additional details are given in the Preliminary Guidelines for implementation of the pilot program that accompanied the January 18 memo to LEAs.

Estimated Cost of Providing Bonuses under the Pilot Program

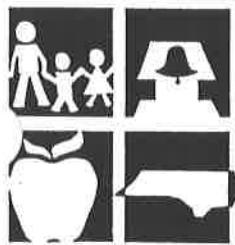
In the special provisions the General Assembly specified that pilot awards may be up to \$750 for each teacher and certified personnel and up to \$325 for each teacher assistant. To determine the most likely cost of the pilot, an analysis was completed using the 1998-99 ABCs data to determine which schools in the applicant LEAs would have met the pilot awards criteria if they had been in effect in 1998-99. Based on this preliminary analysis a conservative estimate of the cost of awards is \$2,014,899 if the legislative maximum dollar amounts are used. Of this amount, \$1,585,857 represents the state contribution and \$429,042 represents 25% matching local funds from LEAs who do not qualify for Low-Wealth or Small School supplemental funding.

It is possible once the pilot is implemented in 2000-01 and the applicant LEAs focus energy on the specific goals of the pilot that the success may exceed that suggested by the 1998-99 data. Therefore a more liberal cost estimate was developed based on all schools in the five applicant LEAs that reached expected growth levels in reading and mathematics as a school in 1998-99. If all such schools satisfied the pilot awards criteria, the cost of awards would be \$5,791,123. Of this amount, \$4,542,661 represents state funding and \$1,248,462 represents 25% matching local funds from LEAs who do not qualify for Low-Wealth or Small School supplemental funding.

Therefore it is recommended that at least \$4,542,661 be budgeted for the purpose of awards for the ABCs Pilot Program during the 2000-01 school year.

Possible Sources of Funds for the Bonuses

At the November, 1999 meeting of the State Board of Education, members expressed that funds be requested from the General Assembly for implementation (including bonuses) for the ABCs Pilot Program for 2000-01 and for the continuation of the program in succeeding years if merited.



Public Schools of North Carolina

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January 18, 2000

To: LEA Superintendents
Chief Officers of Charter Schools

From: Henry L. Johnson, Associate Superintendent
Instructional and Accountability Services

HLJ
Louis M. Fabrizio, Director
Accountability Services

Re: "Pilot Program to test and evaluate a revised school accountability Model for the ABCs Plan"

During its last session, the General Assembly established legislation to provide for a pilot program to test and evaluate a revised school accountability model for the ABCs to explore ways of going beyond existing standards for school growth and status. A copy of the legislation is attached for your reference.

Please note in the legislation that local Boards of Education may volunteer to participate in the pilot. If so, they must first hold a public meeting and pass a resolution specifically approving the Local Education Agency's (LEA) participation in the pilot program. Participants for the pilot will be selected from among LEAs who volunteer by submitting an application to the State Board of Education (SBE). This application will include results of the public meeting and a copy of the resolution passed by the local board approving your participation, if selected. Also, please note that participation will involve a commitment of local funds (on a 25% matching basis) for LEAs who do not qualify for Low-Wealth or Small School supplemental funding.

LEAs wishing to volunteer for participation must hold their public meeting, pass their resolution and send their application directly to Louis M. Fabrizio, Division of Accountability Services so that it is received by 5:00 p.m. on February 18, 2000.

The State Board of Education will select participants in March. Additional planning and preparation will take place in the spring of 2000. The pilot will begin at the start of the 2000-2001 school year. Preliminary guidelines are attached. Implementation is contingent on determination of existing funding by the SBE and/or appropriation of funds by the General Assembly.

HLJ:LMF:glw
Enclosures

OLAS-394

Pilot Program to Test and Evaluate a Revised School Accountability Model for the ABCs Plan

Preliminary Guidelines

Legislative requirements include:

1. Statewide, no more than five LEAs will be selected to participate in the pilot
2. The LEA must hold a public hearing and the local Board of Education must approve participation in the event the LEA is selected
3. The LEA must submit an application to the State Board of Education
4. The LEA must contribute 25% matching funds, if not qualified for Low-Wealth or Small School supplemental funding.
5. The pilot program will be implemented starting with the 2000-2001 school year and could continue through 2004-2005

Administrative requirements:

1. Within each selected LEA, all schools containing any of the grades 3-8 shall participate
2. Standard ABCs requirements, awards and sanctions will continue to apply to schools in the participating LEAs
3. The pilot will be restricted to grades 3-8. (No high schools will be involved in the pilot due to the additional complexity of the high school ABCs and because of the anticipated transition to a prediction model for high school accountability in 2000-2001. High schools may be included in the pilot in later years, if feasible.)
4. Awards achieved under the pilot program are in addition to any earned under the standard ABCs program
5. Additional awards under the pilot will be based on growth in the following subgroups:
 - 5.1. American Indian
 - 5.2. Asian
 - 5.3. Black
 - 5.4. Hispanic
 - 5.5. White
 - 5.6. Other (including multi-racial)
 - 5.7. Students eligible for free/reduced price lunches
 - 5.8. Students not eligible for free/reduced price lunches
 - 5.9. Students whose pretest scores were in Level I/II in reading or mathematics
 - 5.10. Students whose pretest scores were in Level III/IV in reading or mathematics
6. Pilot awards may be up to \$750 for each teacher and certified personnel and up to \$325 for each teacher assistant (to be determined by the SBE)

7. Pilot awards will be based on:
 - 7.1. Expected growth composites calculated for each subgroup,
 - 7.2. using the same formula used in the standard ABCs, including weighting the components if done for the standard ABCs,
 - 7.3. restricted to reading and mathematics only (writing will not be included),
 - 7.4. across all applicable grades 3-8 in the school
8. To receive awards under the pilot, schools must make the growth expectation in all subgroups that meet the following conditions:
 - 8.1. There must be at least 15 students contributing to the composite (i.e., across all grades/subjects) in each subgroup for it to count
 - 8.2. Subgroups with less than 15 students contributing to the composite will be dropped from the pilot accountability requirements for that school (i.e., if there are less than 15 Asian students, then the school must meet the remaining nine subgroup goals)
9. All of the above requirements are subject to change, pending further developments or additional information

The following is an excerpt from the special provisions in the 1999 Budget of the North Carolina General Assembly.

ESTABLISH A PILOT PROGRAM TO TEST AND EVALUATE A REVISED SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY MODEL FOR THE ABCs PLAN

Section 8.36. The State Board of Education shall establish a pilot program in up to five local school administrative units for the purpose of determining whether revisions in the present school accountability model under the ABCs Plan are likely to result in more students demonstrating mastery of grade level subject matter and skills on the end-of-grade tests or demonstrating mastery of course subject matter or skills on end- of-course tests. The State Board, in selecting pilot sites, shall consider geographical areas of the State and urban and rural areas.

The revised school accountability model shall be common for all schools in all local school administrative units that participate in the pilot program. For purposes of the pilot program, the State Board shall disaggregate student performance within designated demographic groups or designated student performance level groups or both. The pilot school accountability model shall take into account student performance for each designated group and shall incorporate that performance in the overall school accountability model for the pilot program. The statewide ABCs Plan school accountability model also shall apply to the participating schools.

During the 1999-2000 school year, the State Board shall select local school administrative units to participate in the pilot program. The units shall be located geographically throughout the State, have different demographic profiles, and must have volunteered to participate in the program. A local board shall submit an application to the State Board in order to be considered for participation in the pilot program. Before a local board may submit an application to the State Board, it shall hold a public meeting and pass a resolution specifically approving its participation in the pilot program. The State Board shall implement the pilot program in the participating units during the 2000-2001 school year.

Personnel in schools that participate in the pilot program and that achieve the pilot program school accountability goals shall be eligible to receive financial awards for that achievement. Personnel in schools that participate in the pilot program and that achieve the statewide ABCs Plan school accountability goals also shall be eligible to receive financial awards under G.S. 115C-105.36. The financial awards for achieving the pilot program goals shall be separate from and in addition to the financial awards that are provided under G.S. 115C-105.36. All other statutory and regulatory provisions of the statewide ABCs Plan school accountability model shall apply to local school administrative units, schools, and school personnel that participate in the pilot program. Notwithstanding any other law and in accordance with G.S. 115C-325(a)(4), the following shall not constitute a demotion: the reduction or elimination of bonus payments under the pilot program; the termination of the pilot program in a local school administrative unit or all participating units; or the statewide implementation of the pilot program school accountability model in the place of or as incorporated into the current ABCs Plan school accountability standards.

The State Board shall set a uniform level of financial awards for personnel in schools that achieve the pilot program goals, and the awards may be up to seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750.00) for each teacher and certified personnel and up to three hundred twenty-five dollars (\$325.00) for each teacher assistant. The State Board shall establish a match of twenty-five percent (25%) in local funds for participating school units that do not qualify for Low-Wealth or Small School supplemental funding. The match shall be used to meet the pilot program financial awards level in those school units.

The State Board shall evaluate the pilot program on an annual basis regarding its implementation in each participating unit, the student performance achieved by schools participating in the pilot, whether the student performance of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch is improved, and how the student performance in pilot program schools compares with the statewide results under the ABCs Plan. The State Board also shall determine whether the pilot program should be continued or terminated in each unit. The State Board may, in its discretion, terminate the pilot program in a local school administrative unit. The State Board shall terminate the pilot program in a local school administrative unit at the request of the unit's local board of education. However, the State Board shall not terminate a pilot program in a participating unit during the school year.

The State Board shall make a preliminary report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by November 15, 1999, and prior to the selection of any local school administrative units to participate in the pilot program regarding the development of the revised school accountability model for the pilot program and the selection of local school administrative units to participate in the program. The Committee shall review the report and may make any recommendations to the State Board the Committee deems appropriate. The State Board shall report again to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee prior to March 15, 2000, regarding the selection of participating school administrative units, the implementation of the pilot program, the estimated cost of providing bonuses under the pilot program, and possible sources of funds for the bonuses. The State Board also shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by October 15, 2001, and annually thereafter, its findings and recommendations regarding the continued implementation, expansion, and modification of the pilot program.

The Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee shall study issues related to the development of a revised school accountability model including the disaggregation of student performance, models used in other states, and possible sources of funds for bonuses under a revised mode. The Committee may report its findings and recommendations to the 2000 Regular Session of the General Assembly, or to the 2001 General Assembly.

This section becomes effective July 1, 1999, and expires with the payment of pilot program incentive awards for the 2004-2005 school year.

North Carolina Counties

LEAs Selected for Participation in the ABCs Pilot Program

