



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

Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee

Continually Low-Performing Schools:
2001-02 through 2003-04

SL 2003-284 Section 7.10 (c)

Date Due December 1, 2004

Addendum to Report #16 in 2004-05 DPI Chronological Schedule

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

HOWARD N. LEE

Chairman
Raleigh

JANE P. NORWOOD

Vice Chair
Charlotte

KATHY A. TAFT

Greenville

MICHELLE HOWARD-VITAL

Wilmington

EDGAR D. MURPHY

Durham

EVELYN B. MONROE

West End

MARIA T. PALMER

Chapel Hill

ROBERT "TOM" SPEED

Boone

WAYNE MCDEVITT

Asheville

JOHN TATE III

Charlotte

BEVERLY PERDUE

Lieutenant Governor
New Bern

RICHARD MOORE

State Treasurer
Kittrell

NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Patricia N. Willoughby, State Superintendent

301 N. Wilmington Street :: Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-2825 :: www.ncpublicschools.org

In compliance with federal law, NC Public Schools administers all state-operated educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability, or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law.

Inquiries or complaints should be directed to:

Dr. Elsie C. Leak, Associate Superintendent :: Office of Curriculum and School Reform Services
6307 Mall Service Center :: Raleigh, NC 27699-6307 :: Telephone 919-807-3761 :: Fax 919-807-3767
Visit us on the Web: www.ncpublicschools.org

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2001
SESSION LAW 2001-424
SENATE BILL 1005

(excerpt)

IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE TO THE HIGHEST PRIORITY ELEMENTARY
SCHOOLS

SECTION 29.1. Of funds appropriated from the General Fund to State Aid to Local School Administrative Units, the sum of ten million eight hundred seventy-six thousand four hundred thirty-eight dollars (\$10,876,438) for the 2001-2002 fiscal year and the sum of twelve million two hundred thirty-seven thousand nine hundred thirteen dollars (\$12,237,913) for the 2002-2003 fiscal year shall be used to provide the State's lowest-performing elementary schools with the tools needed to dramatically improve student achievement. These funds shall be used for the 37 elementary schools at which, for the 1999-2000 school year, over eighty percent (80%) of the students qualified for free or reduced-price lunches and no more than fifty-five percent (55%) of the students performed at or above grade level. Of these funds:

- (1) The sum of \$8,062,603 for the 2001-2002 fiscal year and the sum of \$8,062,603 for the 2002-2003 fiscal year shall be used to reduce class size at each of these schools to ensure that no class in kindergarten through third grade has more than 15 students;
- (2) The sum of \$973,455 for the 2001-2002 fiscal year shall be used to pay those teachers at these schools who elect to extend their contracts by five days for staff development, including staff development on methods to individualize instruction in smaller classes, and preparation for the 2001-2002 school year and the sum of \$2,334,930 for the 2002-2003 fiscal year shall be used to extend all teachers' contracts at these schools for a total of 10 days, including five additional days of instruction with related costs for other than teachers' salaries, for the 2002-2003 school year; and
- (3) The sum of \$1,840,380 for the 2001-2002 fiscal year and the sum of \$1,840,380 for the 2002-2003 fiscal year shall be used to provide one additional

instructional support position at each priority school.

No funds from the teacher assistant allotment category may be allotted to the local school administrative units for students assigned to these schools. Any teacher assistants displaced from jobs in these high-priority elementary schools shall be given preferential consideration for vacant teacher assistant positions at other schools, provided their job performance has been satisfactory. Nothing in this section prevents the local school administrative unit from placing teacher assistants in these schools.

Requested by: Senators Dalton, Lucas, Garrou, Carter, Plyler, Odom, Lee; Representatives Boyd-McIntyre, Rogers, Yongue, Hackney, Morgan, Easterling, Oldham, Redwine, Thompson

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS TO ADDRESS TEACHER SHORTAGE

SECTION 29.2.(a) Of the funds appropriated from the General Fund to State Aid to Local School Administrative Units, the sum of two million five hundred thousand dollars (\$2,500,000) for the 2001-2002 fiscal year and the sum of two million five hundred thousand dollars (\$2,500,000) for the 2002-2003 fiscal year shall be used to expand the pool of qualified teachers and to provide recruitment and retention incentives to attract and retain high-quality teachers to low-performing schools and schools with shortages of teachers in certain areas of certification. Of these funds:

- (1) The sum of \$1,000,000 for the 2001-2002 fiscal year and the sum of \$1,000,000 for the 2002-2003 fiscal year shall be used to provide additional scholarship funds for teacher assistants taking courses that are prerequisites for teacher certification programs. Notwithstanding G.S. 115C-468(c) and G.S. 115C-471(1), scholarships shall be awarded in amounts to be determined by the State Board of Education; and
- (2) The sum of \$1,500,000 for the 2001-2002 fiscal year and the sum of \$1,500,000 for the 2002-2003 fiscal year shall be used to provide annual bonuses of one thousand eight hundred dollars (\$1,800) to teachers certified in and teaching in the fields of mathematics, science, or special education at middle and high schools with eighty percent (80%) or more of the students eligible for free or reduced lunch or with fifty percent (50%) or more of students performing below grade level in Algebra

I and Biology. The bonus shall be paid monthly with matching benefits. Teachers shall remain eligible for the bonuses so long as they continue to teach in one of these disciplines at a school that was eligible for the bonus program when the teacher first received the bonus.

SECTION 29.2.(b) In accordance with G.S. 115C-325 and by way of clarification, it shall not constitute a demotion as that term is defined in G.S. 115C-325(a)(4), if:

- (1) A teacher who receives a bonus pursuant to this section is reassigned to a school at which there is no such bonus;
- (2) A teacher who receives a bonus pursuant to this section is reassigned to teach in a field for which there is no such bonus; or
- (3) A teacher receives a bonus pursuant to this section and the bonus is subsequently discontinued or reduced.

SECTION 29.2.(c) The Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee shall study the effectiveness of providing benefits to part-time teachers as a means to recruit certified teachers back into the classroom. The Committee shall examine the effectiveness of different methods of providing these benefits. The Committee shall also examine the cost of the recruitment effort, including the cost of incorporating existing part-time teachers into the plan. The Committee shall make a report to the General Assembly by April 1, 2002.

SECTION 29.2.(d) The Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee shall study the potential effectiveness of increasing the size of the Teaching Fellows Program to improve the supply of qualified teachers for the public schools. In its analysis the Committee shall consider the retention of Teaching Fellows in the teaching profession.

Requested by: Senators Dalton, Lucas, Garrou, Carter, Plyler, Odom, Lee; Representatives Boyd-McIntyre, Rogers, Yongue, Easterling, Oldham, Redwine, Thompson

COMPREHENSIVE ASSISTANCE TO CONTINUALLY LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOLS

SECTION 29.3. Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 115C-105.37A. Continually low-performing schools; definition; assistance and intervention; reassignment of students.

- (a) Definition of Continually Low-Performing

Schools. - A continually low-performing school is a school that has received State-mandated assistance and has been designated by the State Board as low performing for at least two of three consecutive years. If the State Board identifies a school as continually low performing, the school improvement team at that school shall review its school improvement plan to ensure consistency with the plan adopted pursuant to G.S. 115C-105.38(3).

(b) Assistance to Schools That Are Low Performing for Two Years. - If a school that has received State-mandated assistance is designated by the State Board as low performing for two consecutive years or for two of three consecutive years, the State Board shall provide a series of progressive assistance and intervention strategies to that school. These strategies shall be designed to improve student achievement and to maintain student achievement at appropriate levels and may include, to the extent that funds are available for this purpose, assistance such as reductions in class size, extension of teacher and assistant principal contracts, extension of the instructional year, and grant-based assistance.

(c) Intervention in Schools That Are Low Performing for Three or More Years. - The State Board of Education shall develop and implement a series of actions for providing assistance and intervention to schools that have previously received State-mandated assistance and have been designated by the State Board as low performing for three or more consecutive years or for at least three out of four years. These actions shall be the least intrusive actions that are consistent with the need to improve student achievement at each such school and shall be adapted to the unique characteristics of each such school and the effectiveness of other actions developed or implemented to improve student achievement at each such school."

Requested by: Senators Dalton, Lucas, Garrou, Carter, Plyler, Odom, Lee; Representatives Boyd-McIntyre, Rogers, Yongue, Easterling, Oldham, Redwine, Thompson

ADDITIONS TO THE LOCAL SUPERINTENDENT'S PLAN TO IMPROVE A LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOL

SECTION 29.4.(a) G.S. 115C-105.37(a1) reads as rewritten:

"(a1) By July 10 of each year, each local school administrative unit shall do a preliminary analysis of test results to determine which of its schools the State Board may identify as low-performing under this section. The

superintendent then shall proceed under G.S. 115C-105.39. In addition, within 30 days of the initial identification of a school as low-performing by the local school administrative unit or the State Board, whichever occurs first, the superintendent shall submit to the local board a preliminary plan for addressing the needs of that school. school, including how the superintendent and other central office administrators will work with the school and monitor the school's progress. Within 30 days of its receipt of this plan, the local board shall vote to approve, modify, or reject this plan. Before the board makes this vote, it shall make the plan available to the public, including the personnel assigned to that school and the parents and guardians of the students who are assigned to the school, and shall allow for written comments. The board shall submit the plan to the State Board within five days of the board's vote. The State Board shall review the plan expeditiously and, if appropriate, may offer recommendations to modify the plan. The local board shall consider any recommendations made by the State Board."

SECTION 29.4.(b) This section becomes effective when this act becomes law.

Requested by: Senators Dalton, Lucas, Garrou, Carter, Plyler, Odom, Lee; Representatives Boyd-McIntyre, Rogers, Yongue, Easterling, Oldham, Redwine, Thompson

APPROPRIATIONS FOR CONTINUALLY LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOLS

SECTION 29.5. Of funds appropriated from the General Fund to State Aid to Local School Administrative Units, the sum of one million eight hundred seven thousand two hundred fifty-six dollars (\$1,807,256) for the 2001-2002 fiscal year and the sum of one million nine hundred eighty-six thousand six hundred ninety-one dollars (\$1,986,691) for the 2002-2003 fiscal year shall be used to provide the State's chronically low-performing schools with tools needed to dramatically improve student achievement. These funds shall be used to implement any of the following strategies at the schools that have not previously been implemented with State or other funds:

- (1) The sum of \$471,366 for the 2001-2002 fiscal year and the sum of \$471,366 for the 2002-2003 fiscal year shall be used to reduce class size at a continually low-performing school to ensure that the number of teachers allotted for students in grades four and five is one for every 17 students; and
- (2) The sum of \$1,207,595 for the 2001-2002 fiscal year

- and the sum of \$1,207,595 for the 2002-2003 fiscal year shall be used to reduce class size at a continually low-performing school to ensure that the number of teachers allotted in grades six through eight is one for every 17 students, and that the number of teachers allotted in grades nine through twelve is one for every 20 students; and
- (3a) The sum of \$128,295 for fiscal year 2001-2002 shall be used to extend teachers' contracts at these schools by five days for staff development, including methods to individualize instruction in smaller classes and preparation for the 2001-2002 school year. Of these funds, the sum of \$10,175 shall be used for the extension of contracts of the additional teachers in grades four and five provided in subdivision (1) of this section and the sum of \$118,120 shall be used for the extension of all teachers' contracts at continually low-performing middle and high schools for the 2001-2002 school year; and
- (3b) The sum of \$307,730 for fiscal year 2002-2003 shall be used to extend teachers' contracts for a total of 10 days, including five days of additional instruction with related costs for other than teachers' salaries for the 2002-2003 school year. Of these funds, the sum of \$24,405 shall be used for the extension of contracts of the additional teachers in grades four and five provided in subdivision (1) of this section and the sum of \$283,325 shall be used for the extension of all teachers' contracts at continually low-performing middle and high schools for the 2002-2003 school year.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the State Board of Education may implement intervention strategies for the 2001-2002 school year that it deems appropriate.

Requested by: Senators Dalton, Lucas, Garrou, Carter, Plyler, Odom, Lee; Representatives Boyd-McIntyre, Rogers, Yongue, Hackney, Morgan, Easterling, Oldham, Redwine, Thompson

EVALUATION OF INITIATIVES TO ASSIST HIGH-PRIORITY SCHOOLS

SECTION 29.6.(a) In order for the high-priority schools identified in Section 29.1 of this act to remain eligible for the additional resources provided in this section, the schools must meet the expected growth for each year and must

achieve high growth for at least two out of three years based on the State Board of Education's annual performance standards set for each school. No adjustment in the allotment of resources based on performance shall be made until the 2004-2005 school year.

SECTION 29.6.(b) All teaching positions allotted for students in high-priority schools and continually low-performing schools in those grades targeted for smaller class sizes shall be assigned to and teach in those grades and in those schools. In grades K-3 in high-priority schools, the maximum class size for the portion of the 2001-2002 school year beginning with January 1, 2002, shall be no more than two students above the allotment ratio in that grade. The maximum class size for subsequent school years in grades K-3 in high priority schools and in grades K-5 in continually low-performing schools shall be no more than one student above the allotment ratio in that grade. The Department of Public Instruction shall monitor class sizes at these schools at the end of the first month of school and report to the State Board of Education on the actual class sizes in these schools. If the local school administrative unit notifies the State Board of Education that they do not have sufficient resources to adhere to the class size maximum requirements, the State Board shall verify the accuracy of the request. If additional resources are determined necessary, the State Board of Education may allocate additional teaching positions to the unit from the Reserve for Average Daily Membership Adjustments.

SECTION 29.6.(c) If a local board of education determines that the local school administrative unit is unable to implement the class-size limitation in accordance with this section for any high-priority school located in the unit, the local board may request a waiver for the school for the 2001-2002 school year. The request shall include the documentation required in G.S. 115C-105.26(a). If the State Board grants the waiver, the State Board shall withdraw the additional teacher positions allotted to the local school administrative unit for the school and reinstate the regular allotment for teacher assistants for the school.

SECTION 29.6.(d) 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 2001-2002 and the sum of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) for fiscal year 2002-2003 shall be used by the State Board of Education to contract with an outside organization to evaluate the initiatives set forth in this act.

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 forth in this act 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 into teaching, (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 an initial report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee regarding the results of this evaluation by December 1, 2002, and annually thereafter. The State Board of Education shall submit its recommendations for changes to these initiatives to the Committee at any time.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2003
SESSION LAW 2003-284
HOUSE BILL 397

EVALUATION OF INITIATIVES TO ASSIST HIGH-PRIORITY SCHOOLS

SECTION 7.10.(a) In order for the high-priority schools identified in Section 7.9 of this act to remain eligible for the additional resources provided in this section, the schools must meet the expected growth for each year and must achieve high growth for at least two out of three years based on the State Board of Education's annual performance standards set for each school. No adjustment in the allotment of resources based on performance shall be made until the 2004-2005 school year.

SECTION 7.10.(b) All teaching positions allotted for students in high-priority schools and continually low-performing schools in those grades targeted for smaller class sizes shall be assigned to and teach in those grades and in those schools. The maximum class size in grades K-3 in high-priority schools and in grades K-5 in continually low-performing schools shall be no more than one student above the allotment ratio in that grade. The Department of Public Instruction shall monitor class sizes at these schools at the end of the first month of school and report to the State Board of Education on the actual class sizes at these schools. If the local school administrative unit notifies the State Board of Education that they do not have sufficient resources to adhere to the class size maximum requirements and requests additional teaching positions, the State Board shall verify the need for additional positions. If the additional resources are determined necessary, the State Board of Education may allocate additional teaching positions to the unit from the Reserve for Average Daily Membership adjustments.

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.

Continually Low-Performing Schools: 2001-02 through 2003-04

December 2004



Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education/Department of Public Instruction
Office of Curriculum and School Reform Services
Division of School Improvement

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	i
Continually Low-Performing Schools Initiatives	1
Section I: Student:Teacher Ratios in Continually Low-Performing Schools, 2002-03 and 2003-04	3
Section II: Activities in Continually Low-Performing Schools.....	4
Section III: Achievement Results for Continually Low-Performing Schools, . 2000-01 to 2003-04	6

Executive Summary

The 2001 Session of the North Carolina General Assembly, in SB 1005, Sec. 29.6(d) (Session Law 2001-424), directed the State Board of Education to conduct an evaluation of the initiatives being implemented in High-Priority and Continually Low-Performing public schools across the state, as specified in SB 1005, Sec. 29.1 (Session Law 2001-424). The specific initiatives to be evaluated are focused on class size reduction and extension of teacher contracts. The overall purpose of the legislation is to study the effectiveness of these initiatives in improving student achievement in these schools.

This report details findings to date with respect to Continually Low-Performing (CLP) schools over the past three years¹. Overall, the number of schools identified as CLP has declined each year, from a high of six in the first year (2001-02) to only one in 2003-04, and none for 2004-05. Although the 2001-02 Cohort of CLPs experienced mixed levels of implementation of the initiatives early on, as detailed in the December 2002 version of this report, the later cohorts of CLPs did achieve the class size reductions called for in the legislation. In general, all cohorts of CLPs have also made significant progress to date on a variety of indicators, including End-of-Course test scores, performance composites, and ABCs status.

While the overall level of student performance remains relatively low in these schools, substantial progress has been made (and continues to be made) in these schools since they have received assistance under the legislative initiatives cited above. Difficulty in recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers, however, continues to be an issue for CLP schools. While it is difficult to say whether (or which of) the specified initiatives may have “caused” improved student achievement in the CLPs, these schools have clearly made substantial gains in recent years, to the point where there are no schools that even qualify as a CLP school for 2004-05.

¹ The annual evaluation of the High-Priority schools initiatives is reported in a separate document.

Continually Low-Performing Schools Initiatives

North Carolina G.S. 115C-105.37A defines a Continually Low-Performing school as a school that has

- received State-mandated assistance due to low student achievement, **and**
- has been designated by the State Board of Education as “Low Performing” based on results from the state’s testing and accountability program for at least 2 of 3 consecutive years.

The first cohort of six Continually Low-Performing schools (CLPs) was identified beginning with the 2001-2002 school year. In each year, all identified CLPs to date have all been high schools (Table 1). Two schools – Northampton High School East and Northampton High School West – have been on the list twice. All other schools have been identified for only one year.

Table 1: Continually Low-Performing Schools, 2001-02 through 2004-05.

2001-02	
LEA	School
Halifax	Northwest Halifax High School
Northampton	Northampton High School-East
Northampton	Northampton High School-West
Robeson	Saint Pauls High School
Robeson	South Robeson High School
Warren	Warren County High School
2002-03	
LEA	School
Northampton	Northampton High School-West
Weldon City	Weldon High School
Halifax	Southeast Halifax High School
Hertford	Hertford County High School
2003-04	
LEA	School
Northampton	Northampton High School-East
2004-05	
LEA	School
	<i>No CLP schools identified</i>

The Current Operations and Capital Improvements Appropriations Act of 2001 (i.e., 2001-02 Budget Bill passed by the NC General Assembly) authorized additional funding for

these CLPs to improve student achievement. Those funds could be used to reduce class size (i.e., ensure that the number of teachers allotted is no less than 1 per 20 students) and/or to extend teacher contracts by five days in 2001-02. For subsequent school years, funds could be used to extend teacher contracts for a total of 10 days, including five days of additional instruction with related costs for other than teachers' salaries. There is some flexibility in the ways remaining funds are used. Tutors, instructional resource materials, substitute pay and travel (according to state guidelines) are options for remaining funds.

However, due to the late status of state budget approval for fiscal 2001-02, the six CLPs that year were unable to meet all of the requirements of the initiatives. Therefore, the State allowed the initial cohort of six schools to submit plans to the State Board of Education detailing how those funds would be spent during the 2001-02 school year. Those plans were evaluated and approved by the State Board of Education in 2002.

This report focuses on three specific topics: The extent to which CLPs have been able to reduce class size, a summary of what the schools were able to accomplish to date based on assistance team feedback from 2002-03, and the available evidence as to whether student achievement has improved for the CLPs since the implementation of the initiatives.

Data collected by NCDPI in 2002-03 and 2003-04 indicate that the majority of the CLPs did have student:teacher ratios that were at or below 20:1 in core classes. The most recent data available on this issue are detailed in Section I of this report.

Data collected by the voluntary assistance teams assigned to CLPs in 2002-03 alludes to some of the continuing challenges to improving instruction in those schools. Although significant academic progress has been made, issues related to recruiting and retaining high-quality staff remain problematic in many schools. More detailed information on these topics is contained in Section II of the report.

With respect to student achievement in CLPs, results presented in Section III suggest that they are making good progress overall on various indicators of student achievement. While it is difficult to say whether (or which of) the specified initiatives may have "caused" improved student achievement in CLPs, these schools have clearly made substantial gains in recent years, to the point where there are no schools that even qualify as a CLP school for 2004-05.

Section I
Student:Teacher Ratio Data for Specific High School Subjects in
Continually Low-Performing Schools
2002-03 and 2003-04

LEA CODE	LEA NAME	SCHOOL CODE	SCHOOL NAME	SUBJECT	STUDENT/ TEACHER RATIO
SCHOOL YEAR 2002-2003					
420	HALIFAX COUNTY	358	SOUTHEAST HIGH	ENGLISH I	16
420	HALIFAX COUNTY	358	SOUTHEAST HIGH	ALGEBRA I	12
420	HALIFAX COUNTY	358	SOUTHEAST HIGH	BIOLOGY	18
420	HALIFAX COUNTY	358	SOUTHEAST HIGH	ELP	16
420	HALIFAX COUNTY	358	SOUTHEAST HIGH	U S HISTORY	18
660	NORTHAMPTON COUNTY	324	NORTHAMPTON HI-WEST	ENGLISH I	20
660	NORTHAMPTON COUNTY	324	NORTHAMPTON HI-WEST	ALGEBRA I	10
660	NORTHAMPTON COUNTY	324	NORTHAMPTON HI-WEST	BIOLOGY	17
660	NORTHAMPTON COUNTY	324	NORTHAMPTON HI-WEST	ELP	14
660	NORTHAMPTON COUNTY	324	NORTHAMPTON HI-WEST	U S HISTORY	14
422	WELDON CITY	324	WELDON HIGH	ENGLISH I	17
422	WELDON CITY	324	WELDON HIGH	ALGEBRA I	10
422	WELDON CITY	324	WELDON HIGH	BIOLOGY	17
422	WELDON CITY	324	WELDON HIGH	ELP	10
422	WELDON CITY	324	WELDON HIGH	U S HISTORY	14
460	HERTFORD COUNTY	320	HERTFORD COUNTY HIGH	ENGLISH I	19
460	HERTFORD COUNTY	320	HERTFORD COUNTY HIGH	ALGEBRA I	22
460	HERTFORD COUNTY	320	HERTFORD COUNTY HIGH	BIOLOGY	24
460	HERTFORD COUNTY	320	HERTFORD COUNTY HIGH	ELP	26
460	HERTFORD COUNTY	320	HERTFORD COUNTY HIGH	U S HISTORY	23
SCHOOL YEAR 2003-2004					
660	NORTHAMPTON COUNTY	336	NORTHAMPTON HI-EAST	ENGLISH I	18
660	NORTHAMPTON COUNTY	336	NORTHAMPTON HI-EAST	ALGEBRA I	20
660	NORTHAMPTON COUNTY	336	NORTHAMPTON HI-EAST	BIOLOGY	21
660	NORTHAMPTON COUNTY	336	NORTHAMPTON HI-EAST	ELP	17
660	NORTHAMPTON COUNTY	336	NORTHAMPTON HI-EAST	U S HISTORY	20

Section II

Activities in Continually Low-Performing Schools, 2002-03

During the 2002-03 school year, three (3) continually low-performing schools (CLPs) at Level I and one (1) Level II CLP were identified and assigned mandated State assistance teams. Level I schools are those that have been low-performing two (2) consecutive years or two years of the last three (3) years. Level II schools are those that have been low-performing three (3) consecutive years or three of the last four (4) years. Level I schools were Weldon High School, Southeast Halifax High School and Hertford County High School. The Level II school identified was Northampton County High School – West.

In addition to being served full-time by the State assistance teams through the mandated assistance process, the schools received additional funds set aside by the General Assembly to implement additional interventions that would significantly improve student achievement. These interventions may include, but are not limited to, additional days of employment for teachers and reduced class size.

All of the schools in 2002-03 implemented additional days of employment that were used for professional development for teachers. Some professional development sessions were content-specific and others dealt with school-wide issues. The schools did have difficulty reducing class size because the additional staff required were not available. In fact, many classrooms are currently managed by long-term substitutes and/or lateral entry teachers.

Other strategies that were supported by additional funds included stipends for teachers who taught in after-school tutorial programs, transportation for student participants, educational incentives for students, professional development activities, instructional support materials, substitute pay and teacher travel to events such as NCDPI's annual Minority and At-Risk Student Conference.

In addition, the CLPs in 2002-03 were provided services beyond those provided to "regular" low-performing schools. These activities were also supported by the additional funds set aside for CLP schools. Quarterly collaborative meetings were required for school improvement teams, school administrators, central office staff and the State assistance teams. The meetings included professional development sessions, problem-solving activities and leadership building activities. The culminating activity for the CLP schools was a two-day instructional institute held in June 2003. Staffs from the CLP schools, central offices and assistance teams were required to attend. The institute focused on brain biology, how students learn, and how the curriculum can be layered to differentiate for individual student needs. Time was also provided for networking, reflecting on the past year and preparing for the upcoming year.

The one CLP Level II school (Northampton West) participated in all of the above activities. In addition, an external review team visited the school on two separate occasions. The committee, composed of LEA educators and DPI staff, reviewed all facets of the school's organization and operation as well as all content areas. The external committee also examined

the work of the school's mandated assistance team. The team then wrote a formal report on their findings and recommendations. The report was shared with the superintendent, the school principal, assistance team, state superintendent and chairman of the State Board of Education. A component of the second visit was to follow up to monitor which of the recommendations from the first report had been fully implemented.

Funding for CLP schools for 2002-03 and 2003-04 was as follows:

2002-03

Southeast Halifax High School.....	\$407,507
Hertford County High School.....	\$615,639
Northampton County High School – West	\$238,186
Weldon High School.....	\$224,965

2003-04

Northampton County High School – East	\$373,000
---	-----------

Each CLP school was required to submit a budget and have it approved prior to expending any of the CLP funds. Budget amendments also had to be approved by the Division of School Improvement before changes in expenditures could occur.

The State assistance teams were successful in helping to remove all CLP schools from low-performing status in 2002-03 and 2003-04. However, it may prove difficult for these schools to sustain their progress because of the many challenges schools face with recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers. Teacher turnover, the lack of certified teachers, low expectations for teacher and student performance and a larger percentage of marginal teachers, lateral entry teachers and inexperienced teachers are the major challenges. Many of these same factors were also cited in relation to the 2001-02 CLP cohort in a previous installment of this report².

² This previous report is available online at
http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/evaluation/legislative/0211_HSP13_Attach.pdf.

Section III

Achievement Results for Continually Low-Performing Schools 2000-01 to 2003-04

In general, the student achievement changes seen in Continually Low-Performing schools (CLPs) during the first three years of the initiative - 2001-02 and 2003-04 - are generally positive. Average performance composites have increased each year for CLPs (Figure 1), as has the ABCs growth status of CLP schools (Table 2). Mean performance composites of CLP schools, although they remain relatively low, have increased each year. In addition, all CLP schools in each cohort have made either expected or high growth under the ABCs during the year they began the initiatives. One school (Northampton West) received CLP assistance for two years before they made expected growth, and one other (Northampton East) returned to CLP status in one year after making expected growth, then made high growth in 2003-04. All other CLP schools have achieved and maintained expected or high growth status in the years following being designated as a CLP school (Table 2).

With respect to the achievement provisions of the newly-implemented No Child Left Behind Act, no CLP school from either cohort met the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) standard in 2002-03. However, two former CLPs - Northampton High-West and Weldon City High - both made AYP in 2003-04.

Figure 1: Mean Performance Composites for CLPs by Cohort.

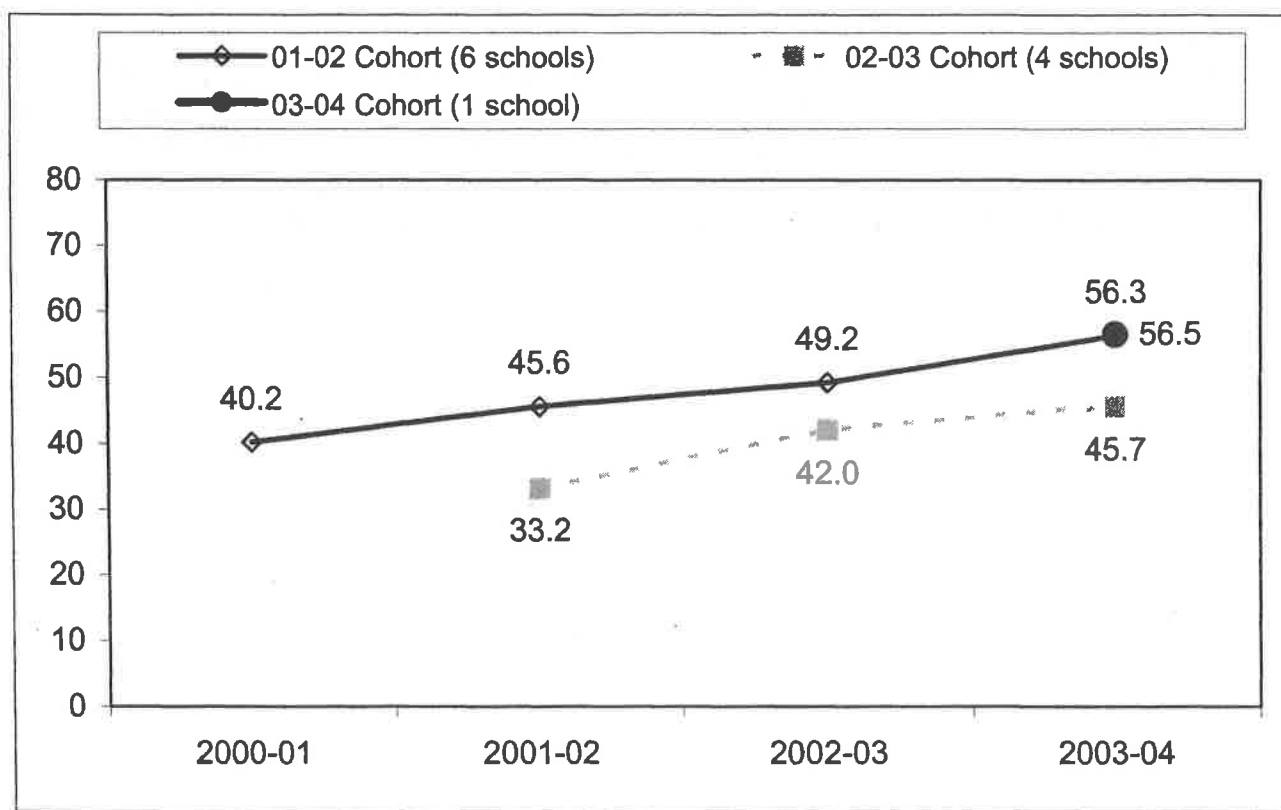


Table 2: ABCs Growth Status of CLPs by Cohort.

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
2001-02 Cohort				
Northwest Halifax High School	LP	Expected	Expected	Expected
Northampton High School-East	LP	Expected	LP*	High
Northampton High School-West	LP	LP	Expected	High
Saint Pauls High School	LP	Expected	High	Expected
South Robeson High School	LP	Expected	Expected	Expected
Warren County High School	LP	High	High	High
2002-03 Cohort				
Northampton High School-West	---	LP	Expected	High
Hertford County High School	---	LP	Expected	Expected
Weldon High School	---	LP	High	High
Southeast Halifax High School	---	LP	Expected	Expected
2003-04 Cohort				
Northampton High School-East	---	---	LP	High

Note: LP = Low Performing.

* - School was re-designated as CLP for the 2003-04 school year.

Since the implementation of the CLP initiatives, student performance on selected End-of-Course tests have risen in these schools as well. For the 2001-02 Cohort of CLPs, gains in the percentage of students scoring at or above Level III over the past three years are evident in Algebra I, English I, and Biology, with the largest gains seen in English I. In each case, the gains in the CLPs were larger than the corresponding statewide figures (Table 3).

Table 3: Selected End-of-Course Test Results for CLPs, 2001-02 Cohort.

	<u>Percent Proficient</u>		
	Algebra I	English I	Biology
2000-01 (<i>year prior to CLP designation</i>)	49.8%	48.0%	35.0%
2001-02 (<i>CLP year</i>)	51.2%	47.4%	48.3%
2002-03 (<i>1 year post-CLP</i>)	56.8%	67.2%	40.8%
2003-04 (<i>2 years post-CLP</i>)	59.9%	70.7%	41.7%
Change, 2000-01 to 2003-04			
CLP 2001-02 Cohort	+10.1	+22.7	+6.7
State of NC	+4.0	+13.3	+0.5

For the 2002-03 Cohort, one-year gains in the percentage of students scoring at or above Level III were seen in Algebra I, English I and Biology, all of which were larger than the corresponding statewide gains between 2001-02 and 2003-04 (Table 4). As was true for the 2001-02 Cohort, the largest gains for the 2002-03 Cohort were also in English I.

Table 4: Selected End-of-Course Test Results for CLPs, 2002-03 Cohort.

	<u>Percent Proficient</u>		
	Algebra I	English I	Biology
2001-02 (<i>year prior to CLP designation</i>)	41.1	41.2	23.7
2002-03 (<i>CLP year</i>)	51.1	64.4	27.4
2003-04 (<i>1 year post-CLP</i>)	55.1	59.9	28.4
Change, 2001-02 to 2002-03			
CLP 2002-03 Cohort	+14.0	+18.7	+4.7
State of NC	1.1	+12.0	-7.8

Summary

For a variety of reasons, it is difficult to determine whether the initiatives in Continually Low-Performing schools may have “caused” higher achievement gains at this point, or which of those initiatives may be having more or less of an impact. The short period of time that has elapsed since implementation, the fact that school-level gains are based on test scores different groups of students from one year to the next, the changing cohorts of CLP schools from year to year, and the inability to control for other possible confounding factors are just some of the reasons. The analyses presented here are at best a descriptive look at achievement in these schools since the beginning of the initiatives. However, these results do suggest that the Continually Low-Performing schools that were identified up until 2003-04 continue to make good progress overall.