



FACT SHEET (Revised October 2011) School and District Report Cards

Report Cards

- Issued for all public schools and districts
- Posted online at www.ed.sc.gov and www.greenville.k12.sc.us
- Results publicized in local newspapers

Purposes

- Inform about the school's/school district's overall performance
- Assist in addressing the strengths and weaknesses within the school/district
- Recognize schools/districts with high performance and improvement
- Evaluate and focus resources on schools with low performance

Rating Terms

- Excellent
- Good
- Average
- Below Average
- At-Risk

Explanation of Ratings

- Absolute Rating - academic achievement of students for year measured against the target level of performance.
- Growth Rating
Elementary and Middle Schools - progress of achievement scores for the same students from one year to the next.
High Schools – improvement of different groups of students over time.
- Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) – requirement of Federal No Child Left Behind Act that statewide targets for Proficient or above are met for all student subgroups.

Ratings Criteria – How School Performance is Measured

K-2 Only Schools – none in Greenville County

Elementary Schools - percentage of students achieving at different levels on the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS), weighted by subject tested

Middle Schools - percentage of students achieving at different levels on the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS), and results on End-of-Course tests, weighted by subject tested

High Schools - percentage of students on first attempt passing the high school exit exam (High School Assessment Program or HSAP), longitudinal HSAP pass rate, percent of passing scores on End-of-Course tests, on-time graduation rate, and 5-year graduation rate

Career & Technology Centers - percentage of students who earn a 2.0 or above on the final course grade and the percentage of students who pass certification or licensure examinations; center's 12th grade graduation rate; and the percent of graduates who are placed in postsecondary instruction, military services, or employment

School Districts – PASS and SC-Alt results for grades 3-8, on-time graduation rate, 5-year graduation rate, first-attempt passage rate on HSAP and SC-Alt, and percent of passing scores on End of Course tests

(over)

FACT SHEET (Continued)

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How can a school score well on the State Report Card and not meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)?

A. Absolute and Growth ratings, established by the State, are based on student achievement across all levels for all tested content areas (Not Met through Exemplary). AYP is based on student achievement at the two highest levels - Met and Exemplary - in English/Language Arts and Math. Targets for percentages of students scoring Proficient or above in each content area have been established by the state and increase every three years through the year 2014 when 100 percent of students are expected to score Proficient or above.

Q. Why is South Carolina raising student and school performance expectations?

A. By setting high expectations for school and student performance, we expect student performance to improve. With higher standards and achievement, South Carolina's students will be prepared to compete globally.

Q. Why are schools with a greater diversity of students (poverty, special education, other languages, etc.) being held to the same standard as other schools?

A. We must create a system that provides the resources so all children can achieve. Evidence from other state accountability systems demonstrates that students achieve when there are high expectations. Our system provides an incentive to schools that significantly improve the achievement level of all student groups. This puts greater emphasis on ensuring high standards and improvement for ALL students.

Q. Why are test scores used to rate schools?

A. Test scores are a uniformly collected result of schooling at a point in time. Scores are used in the decisions schools make about students (promotion, program selection, admission to post-secondary education, eligibility for scholarships, etc). The emphasis on test scores reflects the primary mission of schools to provide academic competencies.

Q. Won't teachers feel compelled to teach to the test?

A. If the assessment measures what students should know and be able to do, then it is an effective tool to use in instruction. A criterion-referenced test is that kind of assessment.

Teachers who make appropriate use of the test results will be providing instruction that will prepare their students to be productive citizens of the 21st century.