

**A Report Card for the ABCs of Public Education Volume I:
1999 - 2000 Growth and Performance of Public Schools in North Carolina**
Revised to reflect State Board of Education actions through October 5, 2000

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Key to Status Abbreviations, Codes Used in ABCs Report

Status Abbreviations

Exc	School of Excellence
Dst	School of Distinction
MI	25 Most Improved K-8 School
MI	10 Most Improved High School
Exm	School Making Exemplary Growth/Gain
Exp	School Making Expected Growth/Gain
LP	Low-performing
NR	School Receiving No Recognition
EE	Excessive Exemptions
98R	Less than 98 percent tested
95R	Less than 95 percent tested

Adjustment Codes for Special Conditions

1	K-2 feeder school
2	Senior high school – grades 9-12 option
3	Senior high school - grades 10-12 option
4	High school in first year of operation
5	High school in second year of operation
6	Mandated end-of-course test has been moved to a different grade level
7	High school with major demographic changes due to district reassignments
9	School did not meet data requirements
*	Confidence interval applied

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Executive Summary

Background

The State Board of Education 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 with an emphasis on high educational standards; teaching the basics; and maximum local control. The first ABCs accountability model was implemented in elementary and middle schools in 1996-97; a high school accountability model was developed during 1996-97, and was implemented for the first time in 1997-98. In 1998-99 the two models were combined into one comprehensive ABCs model for elementary, middle and high schools. In 1999-2000 this model has been implemented again, augmented by a new policy for participation of alternative schools. Additionally, the 1999-2000 accountability year is the first year of reporting ABCs results for schools that are administered by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Office of Juvenile Justice. These schools are given a special LEA code of 997 and 998, respectively, in the following report. Their inclusion is based on action of the General Assembly, which requires their participation in the ABCs.

The ABCs accountability program sets growth/gain 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 selected other components are used to measure the schools' growth/gain and performance. Schools that attain the standards are eligible for incentive awards or other recognition (including Schools of Excellence, Schools of Distinction, 25 Most Improved K-8 Schools or 10 Most Improved High Schools in Academic Growth/Gain). To be eligible for incentive awards, schools also must not have excessive exemptions and must test at least 98% of their eligible students in K-8, and at least 95% of students enrolled in specific courses or grades in high school. Schools where growth/gain *and* performance fall below specified levels are designated as low-performing.

Participating schools

In 1999-2000, every school that contained one or more of the grades 3-12 and that submitted the appropriate data participated in the ABCs. K-8 schools' data include test results in reading, mathematics, and writing; high schools' data include EOC and North Carolina High School Comprehensive Test results, percent of completers of College Prep/College Tech Prep courses of study, and competency passing rate. K-2 schools sending more than half of their students to a single receiving school were eligible for incentive awards if the receiving school earned an incentive award based on making its growth standard.

High schools that were affected by the extreme weather events during the fall of 1999-2000 were given the option not to test English II in the fall block (1999). Five high schools took advantage of this option; their data are so reflected in this report.

Alternative schools followed a special plan of inclusion in the ABCs in 1999-2000. Accountability in these schools was based on achievement data (EOC, EOG, NCHSCT, Competency) and on local options. The local options were selected objectives that were specified on school improvement plans and approved by the local boards of education. The status and incentive awards for alternative schools were determined using the criteria specified in State Board of Education Policy HSA-C-013. Results are reported here in a special section for alternative schools.

Special education schools, vocational/career centers and hospital schools were considered for incentive awards based on the performance of the schools they served. They received prorated incentive awards on this basis. These schools appear in a special section of the report.

Analyses

The status of schools and incentive awards were determined by the values of three composite scores in the ABCs. They are the expected growth/gain composite, the exemplary growth/gain composite, and the performance composite. These composite scores consisted of many components, depending on the grade span and curriculum of the school, as follows.

Expected growth/gain composites include growth for K-8 and grade 10 reading and mathematics based on three factors: statewide average growth, the previous performance of students in the school, and a statistical adjustment which is needed whenever test scores of the same students are compared from one year to the next. Expected growth/gain composites also include change, or gain over a two-year baseline in EOC and writing at grades 4 and 7. The college prep/college tech prep gain in percent of completers and change in competency passing rate from grade 8 to grade 10 are included in the expected growth/gain composite.

The exemplary growth/gain composite includes exemplary growth in reading and mathematics at grades 3 through 8 and 10. This standard factors in an additional ten percent above the statewide average growth. The exemplary gain computed for EOC indexes requires that a school improve by a specific amount over and above expected. There is no exemplary standard for the competency passing rate, writing at grades 4 and 7, and the gain in the percent of college prep/college tech prep completers.

The performance composite is based on the percentage of scores at Achievement Level III or above in reading, mathematics and writing in grades K-8, and specific courses and grades in high schools. Student test scores in Algebra I and II, Biology, Chemistry, English I and II, ELPS, Geometry, Physical Science, Physics, U.S. History, and the High School Comprehensive Test are included in the performance composite. The 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 Appendix for an explanation of how scores are handled in senior high schools.)*

The ABCs results published here were produced on a Compaq Computer, Model 6450X/9100/CD, Pentium II processor with 128 MB RAM running under Windows 98 (Full Version). Additional detail and technical information about ABCs analyses are provided in the Appendix.

Definition of Awards and Recognition Categories

Schools were classified into several categories for the purpose of awarding incentives and recognition. The award or recognition a school receives is determined in most cases by the school's attainment as reflected in the growth/gain composites (expected and exemplary) and the performance composite. (Exceptions include K-2 feeder schools, alternative schools, and special schools). The categories are defined as follows.

Schools of Excellence

A School of Excellence is a school that made expected growth/gain and had at least 90 percent of its students performing at or above Achievement Level III. Such schools will be recognized at a statewide event sponsored by the State Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction in fall 2000. They will receive a dated banner to hang in the school and a certificate. In addition, they will receive whatever incentive award they earn as having made expected or exemplary growth/gain.

Schools of Distinction

A School of Distinction is a school that had at least 80 percent of its students performing at or above Achievement Level III irrespective of growth or gain (but does not qualify as a School of Excellence). Schools of Distinction will receive a plaque and a certificate.

25/10 Most Improved Schools in Academic Growth/Gain

The 25 Most Improved K-8 schools are those that attained the State's 25 highest values on the exemplary growth/gain composite. The 10 Most Improved High Schools attained the State's 10 highest values on the exemplary growth/gain 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.) These schools will be recognized at the statewide event in fall 2000. In addition, they will receive a dated banner to hang in the school, a certificate and financial awards.

Schools Making Exemplary Growth/Gain

These schools attained their exemplary growth/gain standard. They will receive a certificate and incentive awards. Incentive awards for making exemplary growth/gain are \$1500 per person for certified staff and \$500 per person for teacher assistants.

Schools Making Expected Growth/Gain

These schools attained their expected growth/gain standard (but not their exemplary growth/gain standard). They will receive a certificate of recognition and financial awards. Incentive awards for making expected growth/gain are \$750 per person for certified staff and \$375 per person for teacher assistants.

Schools with No Recognition

These schools did not make their expected growth/gain standards; *but* they have at least half their students scoring at or above Achievement Level III as measured by the performance composite.

Low-Performing Schools

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

In addition to the growth/gain and performance standards, there are testing requirements that all schools must meet. K-8 schools must test at least 98% of their eligible students. (Students who are individually exempted from testing in accordance with guidelines for North Carolina testing programs are not considered “eligible.”) High schools must test at least 95% of all students enrolled in courses/grades for which EOC tests or the NCHSCT are given respectively. Also, schools must not have excessive exemptions.

In this report, schools that violate testing requirements are assigned a violation status and cannot receive 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.

Schools that violate any of the testing requirements are not eligible for financial awards. In addition, schools that violate testing requirements for two consecutive years may be designated as low-performing by the State Board of Education.

Presentation of Results

The results are presented in *A Report Card for the ABCs of Public Education Volume I: 1999-2000 Growth and Performance of Public Schools in North Carolina*. The first section of this report, Growth/Gain and Performance of Schools presents the growth/gain and performance of all non-alternative schools in North Carolina participating in the ABCs. Other sections, Schools of Excellence, Schools of Distinction, 25 Most Improved K-8 Schools, 10 Most Improved High Schools, Schools Making Exemplary Growth/Gain, Schools Making Expected Growth/Gain, and Low-Performing Schools, follow. Charter Schools with sufficient data to participate in the ABCs appear in the previous sections where appropriate and are also included in a separate section, Charter Schools, for easy reference. Alternative schools appear *only* in a section designated Alternative Schools. Special education schools, vocational/career centers, and hospital schools also appear in a special section of the report. Schools that were unable to submit complete data before the processing deadlines are included in a section called Schools with Unresolved Data Issues. In sections of the report where appropriate, a status column indicates each school’s ABCs status or failure to meet testing requirements. North Carolina public schools that are not included in the ABCs because of data requirements are listed in the final section, Schools Not Included.

The Appendix includes an explanation of adjustments for special ABCs conditions, a summary of standard conventions used in the ABCs analyses in Technical Notes, and a

table of the values, called Constants and Parameters, used in the ABCs growth formula and the gain computations.

Statistical Summary of Results

In the 1999-2000 implementation of the ABCs, 2115 public schools were assigned an ABCs status. These included traditional public schools spanning combinations of grades K-12; charter schools; alternative schools; and certain K-2 schools (those that fed more than 50% of their students into a single receiving school in 1999-2000). There were 31 special education, vocational/career centers and hospital schools who were not assigned an ABCs status, but participated on the basis of the schools that they served, as explained above. Schools that violated testing requirements were assigned a violation status and did not receive another ABCs status, except low-performing. There were 3 schools that violated testing requirements, two of which were low-performing. Twelve schools were not included in the ABCs because they failed to meet data requirements. The results for schools who were assigned a status appear below.

ABCs Results for All Schools

Award or Recognition Category	Number of Schools			%
	K-12	Alt.	Total	
Schools Making Exemplary Growth/Gain	935	21	956	45.2
Schools Making Expected (not Exemplary) Growth/Gain	482	38	520	24.6
Schools Receiving No Recognition	589	6	595	28.1
Low-performing Schools	42	2	44	2.1
Total ABCs Schools	2048	67	2115	100.0

In addition, the following numbers of schools received special recognition. (These categories may overlap categories in the above table.)

Schools Receiving Other Recognition		
Category	Number of Schools	Percent of Schools
Schools of Excellence	73	3.5
Schools of Distinction	509	24.1
25 Most Improved K-8 Schools	25	1.2
10 Most Improved High Schools	10	0.5

Overall, 69.8% of the public schools made either expected or exemplary growth/gain standards under the 1999-2000 ABCs Accountability model.