

# North Carolina READY Accountability Model Technical Notes

## 2012-13 School Year

### Introduction

This document is designed to provide information on how data is calculated and reported in the new North Carolina READY Accountability Model.

Effective with the 2012-13 school year, the State Board of Education (SBE) adopted the READY Accountability Model, a new indicator-based reporting model. The READY Accountability Model replaces the ABCs of Public Education, which had been in place since 1996. This change was facilitated by the recommendations from The Blue Ribbon Commission, the college- and career-readiness content standards adopted by the SBE in June 2010, and the college- and career-readiness accountability indicators adopted by the SBE in December 2011. The SBE identified indicators that would help educators, parents and the public understand the status and progress that schools are making toward ensuring that all students are college- and/or career-ready. These new indicators include new state administered end-of-grade (EOG) and end-of-course (EOC) assessments, college- and career-readiness examinations (The ACT and ACT WorkKeys), math course rigor, and high school graduation rates. In addition to these indicators other valuable information is reported including school growth as measured by EVAAS and participation in a graduation project.

North Carolina continues to report Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) required for federal reporting under the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) waiver obtained by North Carolina in May 2012. This waiver granted North Carolina flexibility regarding specific requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001 (NCLB) in exchange for a rigorous and comprehensive state-developed plan designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction.

As specified in the ESEA Flexibility Waiver, North Carolina set state targets as goals to show improvement toward students becoming college- and career-ready. These targets focus on areas not covered by federal AMOs that are part of the key indicators reported in the new accountability model. The state targets do overlap with federal AMO targets, but they are reported the same way. The additional state targets include science, math course rigor, The ACT, and ACT WorkKeys.

This document provides further details regarding the indicators, growth measure, and targets reported in the accountability model and in accountability reporting. To access the READY Accountability Model reporting website, visit <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/reporting/>.

## Indicators

The indicators identified by the SBE focus on college- and career-readiness. These indicators allow districts, schools, teachers, and parents to identify areas of strength and weakness within a school, a district, or the state.

Key Indicators:

- Performance Composite
- The ACT
- Math Course Rigor
- ACT WorkKeys
- Cohort Graduation Rate
  - 4-year rate
  - 5-year rate

Additional Indicator:

- Graduation Project

Elementary and middle schools will have only the Performance Composite indicator on the READY Accountability Model website. High schools will show the remainder of the key indicators provided they have enough students taking the assessment to display a value on the indicator. Key indicators will be reported if there are at least 5 assessments/students available for reporting.

### Performance Composite

The Performance Composite consists of all EOG and EOC assessments. The assessments are as follows: EOG English Language Arts/Reading and Mathematics at grades 3–8, EOG Science at grades 5 and 8; EOC assessments in Math I (formerly Algebra I/Integrated I), English II, and Biology; and the alternate assessments for all EOG and EOC assessments (**NCEXTEND1** and **NCEXTEND2**). Please note that **NCEXTEND2** will not be available beginning in 2014-15.

For accountability reporting purposes, a school's Performance Composite is the percent of students identified as proficient on all assessments administered in the school. Proficiency is defined as a student meeting or exceeding the expected level of achievement on the assessment. The EOG and EOC assessments have 4 academic achievement levels (Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, and Level 4) with Level 3 and Level 4 being proficient.

Calculation: 
$$\frac{\text{Number of Proficient EOG/EOC Test Scores}}{\text{Total Number of EOG/EOC Test Scores}}$$

## The ACT

The ACT is administered to Grade 11 students. The ACT consists of four subject tests (English, Reading, Math, and Science) plus an additional Writing component. The four subject tests make up the Composite Score for The ACT. Students must have taken all four subject tests to receive a Composite Score. For accountability reporting purposes, a minimum Composite Score of 17 is displayed for the percent of students meeting the expected level of attainment (proficient). A Composite Score of 17 is the University of North Carolina (UNC) System’s minimum requirement for admission. Additionally, on the reporting website, the percent of students meeting The ACT college readiness benchmarks on each of the subject tests is reported along with total percent of benchmarks met.

More details on The ACT are available at <http://www.act.org/products/k-12-act-test/>.

Overall Calculation: 
$$\frac{\text{Number of The ACT Composite Scores at or above 17}}{\text{Total Number of The ACT Composite Scores}}$$

ACT Benchmarks (Effective with 2012–13 reporting.)

Subtest	Benchmark
English	18
Math	22
Reading	22
Science	23
Writing	7

## ACT WorkKeys

The ACT WorkKeys performance measure is administered to students who are identified as Career and Technical Education (CTE) Concentrators. CTE Concentrators are students who complete 4 units of CTE credit in a career cluster, with at least one credit in a Level 2 course. The ACT WorkKeys consists of 3 subtests (Applied Math, Locating Information, and Reading for Information). Students can earn ACT’s National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC). Certificates are awarded at the Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze level. For accountability reporting purposes, a minimum NCRC of Silver is required to meet the expected level of attainment (proficient). The results of the ACT WorkKeys assessments are used in accountability reporting when the student graduates from high school. Reporting this measure shows the percent of graduates that are CTE Concentrators who earned a Silver or better certificate on the ACT WorkKeys assessment.

More details on ACT WorkKeys are available at <http://www.act.org/products/workforce-act-workkeys/>.

Calculation: 
$$\frac{\text{Number of WorkKeys Silver or Above Certificates}}{\text{Total Number of ACT WorkKeys Certificates}}$$

## Math Course Rigor

Math Course Rigor is the measure of student success in higher-level math courses. Math Course Rigor measures the number of graduates, starting with the 9<sup>th</sup> grade cohort entering in 2009-10, who have earned credit in a designated math course. Credit can be obtained by taking and passing one of the following courses; Algebra II, Integrated Math III, or Math III.

For accountability reporting purposes, this indicator is measured by counting the number of graduates who have taken and passed the defined higher level math course divided by the number of students who graduated and are eligible to be included in the calculation. This measure includes all graduates, except those in the Occupational Course of Study (OCS) who do not have an opportunity to take any of these higher-level math courses due to the nature of their education track.

Calculation: 
$$\frac{\text{Number of Graduates who Successfully Complete Algebra II, Int. Math III or Math III}}{\text{Total Number of Graduates minus Graduates Who Followed the OCS Program}}$$

## Cohort Graduation Rate

The Cohort Graduation Rate is calculated for both a 4-year (standard) and 5-year (extended) rate. A student becomes a part of the cohort when he/she enters the 9<sup>th</sup> grade for the first time. Schools that have an additional year to graduate students, like some early college high schools, have their rates based on a 5-year (standard) and 6-year (extended) rate.

For accountability reporting purposes, the standard and extended rates are based on the number of students expected to graduate, in a cohort, compared to the number of students that actually graduate. For more information on how the graduation rate is calculated please use the following link: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/reporting/cohortgradratecalc13.pdf>.

## Graduation Project

The SBE (December 2011) included a graduation project as one of the six indicators in the high school accountability model. The Board specified that high school graduation projects must meet defined "Standards of Quality" in order for a high school to receive credit. High schools are not penalized if they do not require a graduation project; however, information is reported out for those that do and do not require a graduation project.

Effective with the 2012–13 data collection, implementation of a graduation project is reported on the accountability website as 'Yes', 'No', or 'N/A'. To review the procedures of implementing and reporting the graduation project, refer to the following document: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/gradrequirements/resources/standards-of-quality.pdf>.

## Growth

North Carolina has partnered with SAS Institute Inc. to produce a School-wide Accountability Growth measure. All EOG and EOC scores are included in the EVAAS School-wide Accountability Growth measure. For reporting purposes schools will be given a designation of 1) Exceeds Expected Growth, 2) Meets Expected Growth, or 3) Does Not Meet Expected Growth. Some schools may not have a designation because they do not administer assessments that are included in the growth measure or they do not have enough students taking the assessment to obtain a growth measure. More details on the growth model and other informational tools are available through the EVAAS public reporting site <https://ncdpi.sas.com/>.

## Targets

With the ESEA waiver, North Carolina was allowed to transition away from reporting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for schools with the expectation that more ambitious performance targets be set for accountability reporting. As a result North Carolina will report all federally required targets, as in the past, in reading (English/language arts), math, attendance, and cohort graduation rate (4-year and 5-year). In addition, North Carolina will be reporting out as state-level targets, science, The ACT, ACT WorkKeys, Math Course Rigor, and current year EOC participation. The state will also begin to report out data on the additional subgroup of Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) students. New targets will be set using 2012-13 data. The new targets are available at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/reporting/>.

The new performance targets are set on each subgroup and are designed to reduce the number of non-proficient students within six years. Therefore, subgroups that are further behind are expected to improve at a faster rate in order to close the achievement gap. In addition, the minimum number of students needed to report a subgroup (known as “n-count”) was lowered from 40 to 30. The reduction increases the number of subgroups reported for targets and holds more schools accountable. Targets for subgroups with less than 30 students will not be reported.

The subgroups reported are:

- 1) School as a whole (All Students)
- 2) American Indian
- 3) Asian
- 4) Black
- 5) Hispanic
- 6) Two or More Races
- 7) White
- 8) Economically Disadvantaged Students

- 9) Limited English Proficient
- 10) Students with Disabilities
- 11) Academically or Intellectually Gifted

When reporting targets schools and districts are able to meet a target using alternative calculations if they fall below the state target.

In some instances a confidence interval is used. Proficiency statistics (e.g., percent proficient) provide an estimate of a student group's performance or a school's aggregate proficiency. The more students taking the test in a particular group, the more confident are of the results. A confidence interval acknowledges a margin of uncertainty associated with any group statistic. For each student group, a 95 percent confidence interval is used around the percentages of students scoring proficient to determine whether target goals are met.

For the graduation rate targets, schools may show improvement in their 4-year or 5-year cohort graduation rate. A school must increase its 4-year rate by 2% or its 5-year rate by 3% over the previous year to show improvement.

## Participation

Participation is vital to accurate reporting and ensuring that all students and schools are treated equitably within the accountability model. Therefore, the minimum participation rate will remain at 95% for all targets. Beginning in 2012-13 the consequences for not meeting the 95% participation rule are as follows:

**Year 1 Not Meeting Participation Rate Requirements for Any Subgroup:** Within 30 days after the accountability results are approved by the SBE, the school must send a letter (text provided by the NCDPI) to all parents informing them of the participation rate. The letter must include a plan of action for ensuring full participation for all subgroups specifically targeting those that did not have adequate participation.

**Year 2 Not Meeting Participation Rate Requirements for Any Subgroup:** The school will be labeled as a "consistently low-participating school" and will be required to create and implement an intensive intervention plan aligned with ensuring the participation rates for all subgroups reaches 95%. At the state level, within the Statewide System of Support, these schools will receive the most intensive support around the issue of participation rates.

**Year 3 Not Meeting Participation Rate Requirements for Any Subgroup:** The NCDPI will count non-participating students as not proficient. The number of additional students who will be counted as not proficient will be equal to the number of students that would be needed to achieve a 95% participation rate in any subgroup. An additional letter to parents (text provided by the NCDPI) must be sent by the school indicating a third year of inadequate participation and providing a plan to ensure full participation for all subgroups.

## Special Notes

The NCDPI will suppress results to protect the privacy of students in reporting data for small cells in compliance with the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)* guidelines and agency standards for public distribution of data. Below are the rules that are followed on the accountability reporting website.

- 1) >95% and <5%
  - a. When a result shows that more than 95% or less than 5% of students were successful on a particular Performance Indicator these values are capped. Graphs will show a cap of 95% or show 5% if a value falls in those ranges and tables will show >95 or <5.
- 2) Small cell suppression
  - a. When a subgroup or indicator is too small (fewer than 5 students) the data will be masked. In graphs there will be no data shown and in tables the data will appear as an “\*”, “N/A”, or “ID”.