

The ABCs of Public Education: 2008-09 Growth and Performance of North Carolina Public Schools

Executive Summary (Updated September 16, 2009)

Statistical Summary of Results

ABCs Growth and Performance Results

For the 2008-09 school year, 2,472 public schools in North Carolina were assigned an ABCs status. These include regular public schools spanning combinations of grades K-12, charter schools, alternative schools, and charter schools evaluated as alternative schools. The statewide results appear in Table 1.

Thirty (30) schools were not assigned an ABCs status because they were special education schools, vocational/career schools, or hospital schools that participated in the ABCs on the basis of the schools they served. Thirteen (13) schools had insufficient data to be assigned an ABCs status.

Table 1. 2008-09 ABCs Results						
Category	High Growth	Expected Growth	Less than Expected	Alternative Schools	Row Total	Row Percent*
Honor Schools of Excellence	104	18			122	4.9
Schools of Excellence	4	1			5	0.2
Schools of Distinction	333	167			500	20.2
Schools of Progress	443	628			1,071	43.3
No Recognition Schools			243	8	251	10.2
Priority Schools	41	174	145		360	14.6
Low-Performing Schools			75		75	3.0
Total (Regular Schools)	925	988	463			
Alternative	51	37	8		96	3.9
Total (Regular and Alternative Schools)	976	1,025	471		2,472	
Percent	39.5	41.5	19.1		100	
No ABCs Status						
No Status					30	
Insufficient Data					13	
Unresolved					0	
Violated 95% Rule					0	
Total Number of Schools					2,515	
Percent Meeting at Least Expected Growth Standard		80.9				

* Row percents do not total 100% because alternative schools that do not make expected growth also appear in the No Recognition category.

AYP Results

The Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) results are presented below for 2,515 of the state's schools. Table 2 shows the number and percent of the schools that met AYP or did not meet AYP.

Table 2.	2008-09 AYP Results for Schools		
	AYP Status	Number	Percent
Met AYP	1,786	71.0	
Did Not Meet AYP	729	29.0	
Total	2,515	100.0	

Among the 1,123 Title I schools, 881 (78.5%) met AYP.

AYP results are presented by ABCs categories in Table 3. Schools must have received both an ABCs status and an AYP status to appear in this table. Schools that did not receive an ABCs status (i.e., special education schools, vocational/career schools, and hospital schools, and schools with insufficient data for reporting) are not reflected in Table 3.

Table 3.	2008-09 School AYP by ABCs Recognition Categories				
	Category	Met AYP		Did Not Meet AYP	
Number		Percent	Number	Percent	
Honor Schools of Excellence	122	100.0	0	0.0	122
Schools of Excellence	0	0.0	5	100.0	5
Schools of Distinction	444	88.8	56	11.2	500
Schools of Progress	807	75.4	264	24.6	1,071
No Recognition	128	51.0	123	49.0	251
Priority Schools	194	53.9	166	46.1	360
Low Performing Schools	20	26.7	55	73.3	75
Expected Growth	727	70.9	298	29.1	1,025
High Growth	827	84.7	149	15.3	976

Presentation of School Results

Results of the 2008-09 ABCs are presented online at <http://abcs.ncpublicschools.org>. AYP results are available by individual school and school district (LEA). There are also links to supplementary documents that explain ABCs calculations and ABCs technical information.

Background

The State Board of Education (SBE) 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 program focuses on strong Accountability, teaching the Basics with an emphasis on high educational standards, and maximum local Control.

In 2002-03, the ABCs program was expanded to incorporate the new statutory accountability requirements of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). This federal legislation sets a proficiency goal of 100% for all schools by 2013-14. The SBE adopted AYP as a “closing the achievement gap component” of the ABCs in response to General Statute 115C-105.35. New growth formulas were implemented in 2005-06 that make comparisons to previous years inappropriate.

The ABCs accountability program sets growth 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 other selected components are used to measure a school’s growth and performance. Schools that attain the standards are normally eligible for incentive awards or other recognition, i.e., Honor Schools of Excellence, Schools of Excellence, Schools of Distinction and Schools of Progress. Schools where growth and performance fall below specified levels are designated as low-performing, and may receive mandated assistance based on action by the SBE.

In 2008-09, the attainment of ABCs growth standards was calculated as usual, but incentive awards were suspended because of the state’s economic crisis. ABCs recognitions and AYP determinations were continued in the normal manner.

Unlike in 2007-08, when a two-stage release of accountability results was employed, as a consequence of scaling and standard-setting for new test editions, a normal reporting cycle was implemented in 2008-09 and the traditional one-stage reporting schedule was employed for both the ABCs and AYP results.

Participating schools

All schools with sufficient data are included in the report. K-2 schools participating in the ABCs received their ABCs status and AYP status based on the performance of the schools that received the largest percent of students from the K-2 schools.

Alternative schools are included in the ABCs per State Board of Education Policy GCS-C-013. Their ABCs status is based on achievement data (EOC, EOG) and three “local options” specified in their school improvement plans (from a list available in GCS-C-013) and approved by their local boards of education. The only ABCs designations that an alternative school can receive are: High Growth, Expected Growth, or No Recognition. The procedures used in determining AYP for regular schools apply to alternative schools as well.

Special education schools, vocational/career schools, and hospital schools did not receive an ABCs status, but they received prorated ABCs incentive awards, based on the schools they served. They also received an AYP status that was determined by the performance of the schools they served. They made AYP if at least half of the schools they served made AYP.

Analyses

ABCs Growth and Performance

A school's ABCs growth status is determined by its growth calculation and its change ratio (a measure of the percent of students meeting their individual growth targets). A school's grade span and/or courses determine the composition of these measures, as described below.

In 2008-09, the growth calculation for a school may include:

- a) Total growth on EOG reading and mathematics for grades 3-8 and any EOC tests approved by the SBE for growth calculations.
- b) Change over a two-year baseline in the percent of students completing the college/university prep and college tech prep courses of study.
- c) Change in the ABCs dropout rate (compared to a two-year baseline).

The schools whose total growth is equal to or exceeds the growth expectation (shown by a difference of 0.00 or better) are said to have met expected growth.

The State Board of Education reinstated the Biology EOC into ABCs growth calculations and geometry was dropped for 2008-09. In addition two modifications to specific components of the ABCs growth formulas were implemented in 2008-09:

1. The U.S. History formula for academic change was revised to use Civics and Economics as the primary predictor in conjunction with English I as the secondary predictor (when available). Biology was substituted as primary predictor when Civics and Economics was not available.
2. The ABCs growth formula for College University Prep/College Tech Prep (CUP/CTP) was modified to give additional credit to schools when the baseline was greater than ninety percent (90%) and the current year's percentage was above 90%.

Retest scores (first retest only) for students who scored below the Achievement Level III standard on EOG reading and mathematics assessments in grades 3 through 8 and science in grades 5 and 8 were used in calculations of AYP and the ABCs performance composites. Students in grades 3-8 who scored Achievement Level II on the first administration of the EOG reading, mathematics and/or science assessments and/or their alternate assessments were required to take a retest. (Students who scored Level I could "opt in" to take the retest at their parents' request.) The higher of the original score or the first retest score was used in the calculation of the ABCs performance composites and AYP.

For the first time, EOG Science scores for grades 5 and 8 were used in calculating the ABCs performance composite in 2008-09. Science scores were not used in the calculation of AYP.

In 2008-09, the change ratio used to determine the attainment of high growth may include:

- a) The growth status of individual students on EOG reading and mathematics for grades 3-8 and any EOC tests approved by the SBE for growth calculations.
- b) Change over a two-year baseline in the percent of students completing the college/university prep and college tech prep courses of study.
- c) Change in the ABCs dropout rate (compared to a two-year baseline).

The factors are arranged such that the number of students meeting their individual growth standards is in the numerator along with the college/university prep and college tech prep courses of study. Students not meeting their individual growth standard are in the denominator and the decrease in dropout rate is subtracted from the denominator. Schools that have a growth result of 0.00 or better (met expected growth) and have a change ratio of 1.50 or better are said to have met high growth.

AYP Analyses

Several modifications were required in the reporting of AYP results for 2008-09:

1. For AYP purposes, students taking the OCS EXTEND2 assessments were counted as non-participants. The SBE made this decision after the U.S. Department of Education (USED) disallowed the use of NCDPI's OCS assessments for AYP because the link between the general curriculum and the OCS curriculum was judged to be insufficient during the Peer Review process. For this reason, OCS students were included in the denominator but excluded from the numerator when determining the participation rate for AYP.
2. Retest scores (first retest only) for students who scored below the Achievement Level III standard on EOG assessments in grades 3 through 8 were used in the calculation of AYP. Students in grades 3-8 who scored Achievement Level II on the first administration of the EOG reading, mathematics and/or science (grades 5, 8) assessments and/or their alternate assessments were required to retake the test (Retest 1). (Students who scored Level I could "opt in" to take the retest at their parents' request.) The higher of the two scores from the student (either from the initial test or Retest 1) was used in AYP determinations.
3. When an existing Students with Disabilities (SWD) subgroup missed its AYP proficiency target, scores for students with disabilities (SWD), who exited their SWD category within the previous two years, were included in AYP calculations. (This is similar to a provision that had been available for students with limited English proficiency.)

For the 2009-10 school year, students who do not meet the Achievement Level III standard on EOCs will be required to be retested (Retest 1) and the higher of the original or Retest 1 EOC scores will be included in the calculation of ABCs Performance Composites and AYP results (where applicable) in the future.

NCLB requires that each school be evaluated with respect to making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). In order for a school to make AYP, each student subgroup (School as a

whole; American Indian; Asian; Black; Hispanic; Multi-Racial; White; Economically Disadvantaged; Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities) must have at least a 95% participation rate in the statewide assessments. Each subgroup must meet or exceed the State's percent proficiency targets in reading and in mathematics (annual measurable objectives). In addition, the school as a whole must show progress on the other academic indicator, which is either attendance or graduation rate (depending on the grade configuration of the school). For additional information, see *Determining AYP Status* (linked from the blue sidebar at <http://abcs.ncpublicschools.org/>).

Definition of ABCs Categories

Because of the state's economic situation, no financial awards were distributed in conjunction with the 2008-09 ABCs. All of the usual ABCs awards and recognition categories were determined however. The definitions of the various categories appear below.

Schools that violate the testing requirements are assigned a violation status and cannot receive financial awards or any ABCs status, except low-performing. Low-performing schools that violate testing requirements are assigned the low-performing status in addition to the violation status. The State Board of Education may designate schools that violate testing requirements for two consecutive years as low-performing.

Schools Making High Growth attained their high growth standard.

Schools Making Expected Growth attained their expected growth standard (but not their high growth standard).

Honor Schools of Excellence are schools that made at least expected growth, had at least 90% of their students' scores at or above Achievement Level III, and made AYP. These schools receive banners and certificates.

Schools of Excellence are schools that made at least expected growth and had at least 90% of their students' scores at or above Achievement Level III but did not make AYP. These schools receive banners and certificates.

Schools of Distinction are schools that made at least expected growth and had at least 80% of their students' scores at or above Achievement Level III (but were not Honor Schools of Excellence or Schools of Excellence). They receive plaques and certificates.

Schools of Progress are schools that made at least expected growth and had at least 60% of their students' scores at or above Achievement Level III (but were not Honor Schools of Excellence or Schools of Excellence or Distinction). They receive certificates.

Schools Receiving No Recognition did not make their expected growth standards but have at least 60% of their students' scores at or above Achievement Level III.

Priority Schools are schools that have less than 60% of their students' scores at or above Achievement Level III, irrespective of making their expected growth standards, and are not Low-Performing Schools.

Low-Performing Schools are those that failed to meet their expected growth standards and have less than 50% of their students' scores at or above Achievement Level III.