



NORTH CAROLINA

NCLB

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For more information about this newsletter, please contact NC Department of Public Instruction Director of Communications and Information Vanessa Jeter at 919-807-3469 or vjeter@dpi.state.nc.us. Please email your NCLB-related questions you would like answered in the newsletter or on the Web to Charlotte Duren at cduren@dpi.state.nc.us. The **NC NCLB News** publication will be distributed to superintendents and Title I directors and available to others on the Web at www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb. If you have additional needs for hard copy editions, please contact Vanessa Jeter.

FEBRUARY 2007

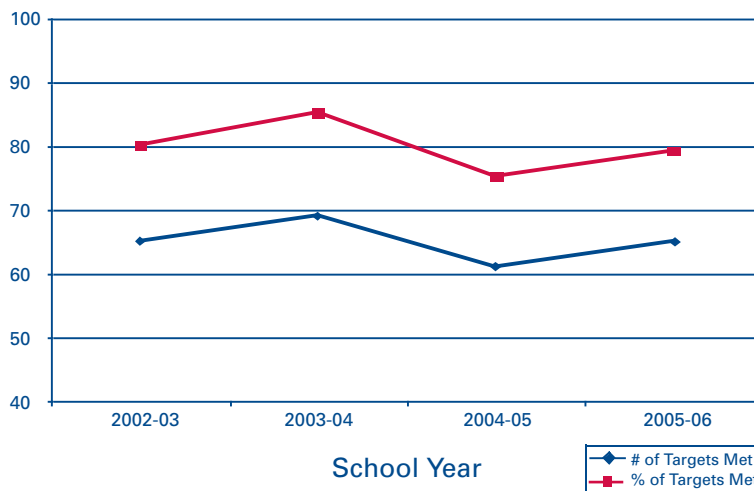
NCLB at 5 in NC

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) turned five years old in January. The law's core accountability principles have changed the conversation in education to focus on grade level or above proficiency by 2014, use of academic data to improve schools, requiring teachers to be highly qualified and the availability of school choice and supplemental educational services.

How has the state fared under the NCLB provisions? Have students improved their performance over the past several years? In looking at the statewide results of students meeting the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) targets, the number of targets statewide has remained nearly constant, only increasing by one (attendance rate) for 2005-06. The graph below illustrates two things: the percent of targets met and the number of targets met statewide since the inception of NCLB.

In 2003, the "state as a whole," which is similar to "school as a whole" at the school level, met 80.2 percent, or 65 of its 81 target goals. In 2004, the "state as a whole" met 69 of its 81 targets, or 85.2 percent. In 2005, "state as a whole" met 75.3 percent (61 out of 81 targets) and, in 2006, it met 79.3 percent (65 out of 82 targets). The state, as a whole, has consistently hit about 80 percent of its targets each year.

NORTH CAROLINA 2003-2006: MEETING AYP TARGETS IN READING



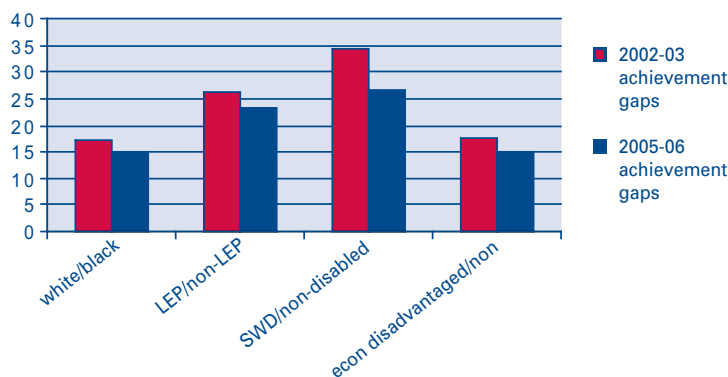
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NCLB at 5 in NC, *Continued*

Another way of looking at NCLB is based on one of the cornerstone goals of the law: to reduce the achievement gap between different groups of children. What does that look like in North Carolina? This graph shows key achievement gap areas narrowing slightly, between 1.9 percentage points for the gap between African American and white students and 7.9 percentage points for the gap between students with disabilities and their nondisabled peers.

**NC STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT GAPS 2003-2006
(BASED ON EOG READING MULTIPLE CHOICE TESTS)**

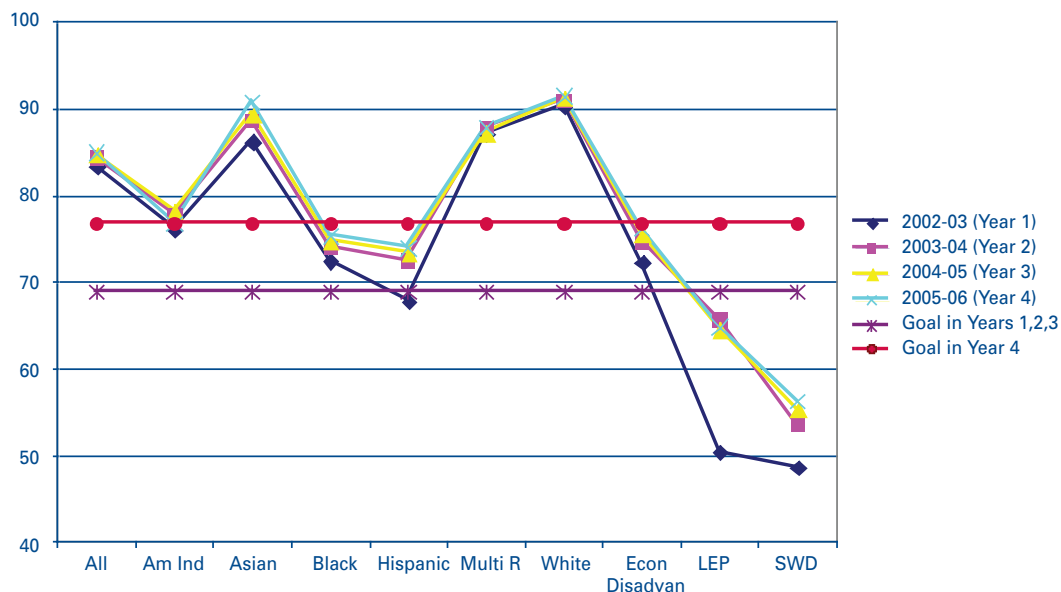


STUDENT GROUPS	2003 ACHIEVEMENT GAPS	2006 ACHIEVEMENT GAPS	GAP NARROWED BY ...
white/black	17.1	15.2	1.9
Limited English Proficient/non-LEP	26.4	23.4	3
Students With Disabilities (SWD)/non-disabled	34.4	26.5	7.9
Economically Disadvantaged/non-Econ. Dis.	17.5	14.9	2.6

The graph to the right shows the performance of "all" students and the different student groups statewide in reading grades 3-8 as it relates to the two target goal standards the state has seen thus far. The performance of "all" students increased slightly from 83.3 percent proficient in 2003 to 84.9 percent proficient in 2006.

The lack of comparable academic data from state to state makes it difficult, if not impossible, to gauge North Carolina's efforts relative to other states. Not only is the academic curriculum and assessment system different for every state, but each state has its own accountability plan by which it has incorporated NCLB requirements.

NORTH CAROLINA 2003-2006 PROFICIENCY IN READING



And those plans are constantly in flux. North Carolina alone has revised its accountability plan 29 times since 2002. For the most part, the changes were designed to take advantage of evolving flexibility from the US Department of Education. Changes have included:

- Applying a 95 percent confidence interval to the percentages of students scoring proficient to use in determining if student groups met target goals (January 2004).
- Requiring a Title I school not making AYP to miss targets in the same subject (e.g., reading) for two years in a row before entering Title I School Improvement (January 2004).

- Changing when Limited English Proficient students are tested and when their assessment results are included in AYP calculations (March 2004).
- Providing that an LEA enters Improvement only if it did not make AYP in the same subject area in each of three grade spans (elementary, middle and high school) for two consecutive years (March 2005).
- Including a growth model component as part of the process for determining AYP (July 2006).

...Continued on Page 3

NCLB at 5 in NC, *Continued*

In spite of these flexibilities used in redefining AYP, more Title I schools enter sanction phases each year.

2005-2007 NUMBERS OF NC TITLE I IMPROVEMENT SCHOOLS

TITLE I SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SCHOOLS IN...	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Year 1 (choice)	140	95	167
Year 2 (choice, SES)	14	79	65
Year 3 (choice, SES, corrective action)	6	12	59
Year 4 (restructuring planning)	0	6	10
Year 5 (restructuring implementation)	0	0	2

In 2004, 70.5 percent of the state's schools made AYP, followed by only 56.3 percent in 2005 and 45.2 percent in 2006.

This trend most probably will continue, as target goals increase again in 2007-08 and in three-year increments until 2014 when all students are expected to perform at or above proficiency in reading and math according to NCLB goals. (Access the target goal chart on the Web at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/nclb/abcayp/overview/targetgoalschart.doc>.) Higher target goals increase the difficulty of making AYP.

As more schools enter Title I School Improvement, more must offer public school choice and then supplemental educational services (SES).

Choice drew applause in President George Bush's state of union address on January 23, when he called for NCLB reauthorization saying, "We can lift student achievement even higher by giving local leaders flexibility to turn around failing schools, and by giving families with children stuck in failing schools the right to choose some place better."

But, in North Carolina, only a small percentage of students elect to exercise school choice or SES options. Statewide, in 2005-06, there were 76,089 students in North Carolina who were offered the option of school choice under NCLB. Of those students, fewer than 4 percent (2,826) transferred to other schools. In 2005-06, 6,546 of 33,153 students eligible for SES, or 20 percent (up from 12 percent of the 5,539 eligible students in 2004-05), received services.

ANSWERS TO FAQs...

Question: If our school makes AYP this year in the identified subject, does it move out of School Improvement?

Answer: If a Title I school makes AYP in any one year after entering Title I School Improvement, it doesn't move to the next level of sanctions. If a Title I School Improvement school doesn't make AYP the year after it made AYP, it moves to the next level of sanctions. If it makes AYP in the identified subject for two years in a row, it moves out of School Improvement.

ANSWERING KEY QUESTIONS MAY IMPROVE SES PROGRAMS

Principals at schools offering Supplemental Educational Services (SES) should be getting a call this winter or spring from either Dr. Allison Potter or Dr. Steven Ross to set up times to monitor the effectiveness of provider services. In the meantime, here are some key questions for schools offering SES to ask themselves:

- Does the entire school staff understand what SES is and why it is being offered?
- Does the entire staff understand the enrollment process for SES?
- Does the entire staff understand the criteria for student eligibility?
- Does the entire staff understand the budget for SES?
- Does the entire staff understand what a Learning Plan Agreement is and what their role is in this document?
- Does the entire staff understand students' information can only be disclosed with a signed parental release?
- Has the administration of the school met with the providers to discuss the plans for improving student achievement and begin forming collaborative relationships?
- Is the school using Child Nutrition Services for a snack resource?
- Is there a mailbox for providers at the school? Do they know about sign-in procedures?
- Do non-English speaking parents understand the services they may be eligible for in regard to SES?

SES pilot participants are being asked by the US Department of Education for interim report information in February. Contact Lisa Huber or Dr. Belinda Black if your district has questions regarding this process.

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Whole Faculty Study Groups Work in Franklin County Schools

In a continuous effort to better a child's education, teachers are always looking for resources to improve their instructional skills. Franklin County Schools has implemented a plan that utilizes perhaps the best resource of all – the teachers themselves. For the second full year, all Franklin County Schools employees are taking part in Whole Faculty Study Groups (WFSG).

Each group of up to six teachers or administrators meets twice a month to focus on one essential student need. The needs are addressed by viewing student work. Early release days began last year specifically to help with the implementation of WFSG.

"This is a work in progress," said Franklin County Schools Superintendent Bert L'Homme. "We've not chosen the easy route, but some very foundational pieces in the belief that this tree will blossom."

Teachers in WFSG on all grade levels address a variety of common concerns in education. Topics range from reading to math, but the case studies are very specific. Some groups focus on items such as note-taking, while others may focus on identifying context clues or analyzing maps and graphs.

"It's a good experience for teachers to get together and share ideas," Louisburg High School Curriculum Resource Teacher Joyce Bettini said. "If everyone is engaged in an atmosphere of sharing and looking at student work, teachers will get new ideas, and they will have the opportunity to test them."

"Reform has to be at the teacher level and they have to be given the tools and the time," Dr. L'Homme said.

A major source of data for WFSG is student work. Each group establishes an essential question or concern and sets a goal to reach. Teachers then implement newly-derived teaching strategies and later test to measure effectiveness.

"The benefits are starting to show," Franklinton High School Curriculum and Resource Teacher Kelly Clemmer said. "We are only in our second full year, and I think we are turning the corner. We are spending time together and talking about student learning. As professionals, we are learning we have great resources within ourselves. We are learning from each other's real-life experiences."

Clemmer believes the key to success for WFSG is the fact that student work is analyzed for both negative and positive qualities. "Rather than just focusing on the negative of what is wrong with a student's work, we focus on all aspects of student work and analyze what is working and what is not working. We really get an opportunity to look at work, rather than just grade it."

Nathan Moreschi, of Franklin County Schools, contributed to this article.

Franklin County Schools' Beliefs

- Effort is as important as intellectual ability. (Schlechty)
- Every student will learn more than they learn now if they are provided engaging schoolwork. (Schlechty)
- If you believe you can and if you work hard enough, you get smart. (Howard)

Franklin County Schools' Framework for Learning

- Phil Schlechty's book, *Working on the Work*, challenges school leaders to examine student work rather than teachers and students themselves. (What?)
- Carlene Murphy's research and implementation of Whole Faculty Study Groups serves as the platform to examine student work. (How?)

Professional Learning Communities Can Drive Instructional Change

The article below was adapted from two articles written by Stephen Greene, coordinator of professional development for the NC Department of Public Instruction. Access the articles in their entirety on the Web at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/profdev/newsletter/>.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are school staffs that share a mission, vision, values and goals and are characterized by collective inquiry, action orientation, collaborative teams and continuous improvement. PLCs are oriented toward learning, rather than teaching, and are focused on results rather than process.

In a PLC, administrators and teachers make a commitment to work together in a culture devoted to "our kids." Every student is expected to learn and every teacher is expected

to make sure that learning is happening. Everyone is expected and empowered to work together in the service of learning.

Professional development through PLCs differs from the workshop-driven approach. Teams meet on a regular basis to learn, plan lessons and problem solve to improve their daily work.

The school's culture centers around some of the following questions:

- Does every teacher understand what each student should know and be able to do after completing the unit of instruction, course, grade level?
- What systems are in place to monitor each student's learning on a timely basis?

...Continued on Page 5

Professional Learning Communities, *Continued*

- What happens when a student is not learning?
- What systems are in place to provide these students additional time and support?

PLCs require that the school schedule be organized in such a way that grade levels or department teachers have a common planning time to meet during the school day. Conversations between teachers in a PLC reflect on instructional practices that are successful. There is openness and a willingness to rethink what they do in their classrooms based on the work of their colleagues and on student achievement data (both formal and informal) gathered throughout the school year.

The promise of successful reform in education lies in leadership that can effectively create cultures of PLCs. Leadership today must be a shared responsibility which creates a culture of initiative and opportunity.

When schools emphasize learning rather than teaching, it means a signifi-

cant change in the organization's culture. Research shows that traditionally, leaders and schools have been designed to measure teacher skills and abilities as compared to student achievement. In a PLC, the priority switches to student performance. Teaching skills are important, but they are looked at through the results of student performance.

For example, PLC leaders know they will not improve student literacy results by thinking first about how to improve literacy test scores. PLC leaders and teachers improve literacy scores by concentrating on the deep needs for literacy learning for all students – particularly the most fragile learners. This is difficult when schools and school districts feel pressed to make annual literacy test gains to meet Adequate Yearly Progress. But, pretesting students then applying intensive coaching to the percentile that falls below the passing mark is not effective. This kind of process does not create improvement that matters. PLCs utilize a variety of student performance measures to monitor learning

and growth. PLC leaders know that authentic improvement is not a series of pre-tests and post-tests to graph annual increments. Learning is not instant or steady and doesn't always immediately show. PLCs care about learning that results in lasting improvement. Leaders who create PLCs know that there is an urgent need for immediate results, but that authentic, lasting and widespread change is a journey.

Professional learning communities are at the heart of professional development because they value different ways of learning and create the interactions and relationships for sharing them. Leaders cultivate and recreate an educational environment that has the capacity to stimulate ongoing school-wide improvement.

"Learning organizations [are] organizations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire"

Peter Senge, *The Fifth Discipline* (1990)



Stephen Greene began his work as coordinator of professional development at the NC Department of Public Instruction last September. The primary focus of his work at the NCDPI is to help design a system of professional development for NC educators.

Dr. Greene worked as an elementary and middle school teacher for 10 years in Concord, MA, and as an elementary principal in Newton, MA, for seven years before moving to Chapel Hill in 2000. He served as principal of The Frank Porter Graham Elementary School for five years.

He received his doctoral degree in Educational Administration from Boston College, his master's in education

degree from the University of Massachusetts, and his bachelor's degree from Northeastern University.

In his 22-year career, he has taught graduate courses in curriculum and educational leadership at the University of Massachusetts and at UNC-Chapel Hill. He spent three years working with educational consultant and researcher Bob Marzano developing Dimensions of Learning, a model based on five dimensions of learning or types of thinking that are essential to successful learning. He spent a year working with educator and clinical psychologist Beverly Daniel Tatum and principals in diversity training designed to combat racism in classroom practices.

ANSWERS TO FAQs...

Question: When an LEA is identified for improvement, it must reserve not less than 10 percent of its Title I, Part A funds for high-quality professional development for instructional staff that is specifically designed to improve classroom teaching. The LEA must continue to reserve and use these funds for this purpose during each fiscal year it is identified for improvement. What is "high-quality" professional development?

Answer: High-quality professional development is professional development as defined in section 9101(34) of the ESEA. In general, the definition recommends professional development that is sustained and classroom-focused. It must contribute to an increase both in teachers' knowledge of the academic subjects they teach and in their use of effective, scientifically-based instructional strategies with a diverse range of students. It must be provided over time and not take the form of one-day or short-term workshops. High-quality professional development is an integral part of effective improvement plans, at both the school and LEA levels.

EVAAS Can Help Schools and Districts Identify Areas of Need

How effective has my school been with children at risk of not making AYP? That's a question that diagnostic reports available through SAS® EVAAS® for K-12 can help answer. By looking at colorful, easy-to-understand charts and graphs accessed on the Web, users can produce reports that predict student success, show the effects of schooling at particular schools, or reveal patterns in subgroup performance.

SAS® EVAAS® for K-12, a customized software system used in 37 NC districts and eight charter schools, helps school and district teachers and administrators work proactively to provide students with opportunities for appropriate growth and to successfully manage differentiated instructional needs.

"This is a statistically valid program that can predict success," said Eddie Ingram, executive director of curriculum for Franklin County Schools. "It gives you statistical evidence to put students in high level courses." He hopes that the program can help to identify ways to increase the graduation rate in his district. In Franklin County Schools, the program is used to provide projection reports to assist high school course registration, to identify middle school Algebra I students, and to help elementary school teachers plan instructional differentiation.

Often, different groups of students aren't making growth at different grade levels in different subjects -- all at the same school. SAS® EVAAS® software helps target remedies and supports to specific students or groups of students to keep a school from repeating the same mistakes and to use resources in the most strategic way possible.

The software program follows the student through all NC schools and offers a precise measurement of student progress over time and a reliable diagnosis of opportunities for growth based on up to five years of data for an individual student (EOGs and EOCs), not just one or two years. Student data from all subjects are used in predictions. (Three school districts are also sending in SAT scores to use.) The software program, which provides reports on students who have at least three test scores, takes testing beyond snapshot assessment to the diagnostic level teachers need in order to be most effective. The program can be used to identify which students are at risk for underachievement, regardless of their achievement level.

The software can help a school or district increase students' likelihood of future success, increase a school's effectiveness, increase equity in student learning opportunities and answers questions such as:

- * Is the academic support at my school meeting the needs of my students?
- * Are our instructional strategies working for all of our students?
- * Which groups of students are underserved academically?

School data tables and graphs can be used to impact instruction. For example, graphs may show performance indicating a narrow curricular focus, especially when looking at growth patterns of students at different achievement levels. Educators can see trends. For instance, the standard course of study might have been delivered, but only Level III students show expected growth. Seeing results like these indicates a need for more differentiated instruction. Other schools might show more than expected growth for Level I students, indicating successful intervention at those levels, while other groups don't make growth.

The chart seen here indicates how much progress students in each school in a district have made compared to students in other schools in the state. The mean for each school is provided for each grade for the current year and the average of the most recent three years, when available.

In the chart seen here, green indicates that students in the school made significantly more progress in this subject than students in the average school in the state; yellow indicates the progress of students in this school was not detectably different from the state average; light red indicates students in this school made significantly less progress than the average school in the

state. Schools in this light red category need to be very targeted in their interventions.

The diagnostic report for schools shown on page 7 can be used to identify patterns or trends of progress among students at different achievement levels. The data is presented in both a chart and a table. The green line across the middle is the reference line, or the amount of progress students must make to keep up with their peers. Blue bars show the progress of students in the most recent year. Gold bars show the progress of students in up to three



2006 Value Added Summary Report for Epsilon End of Course

School Name	Algebra I	Algebra II	Biology	Chemistry	Civics and Economics	English I	Geometry	Physical Science	Physics	US History
Genevieve High School	2006 -3.21	-0.86	-1.43	0.81	-0.28	-0.92	-0.34	-1.13	--	-0.45
Gilbert High School	2006 -0.38	-2.20	0.91	-1.38	-0.39	0.16	-1.36	1.30	--	0.52
Gloria Middle School	2006 -1.74	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Gracie Middle School	2006 -3.76	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Helene High School	2006 0.02	-0.43	0.39	2.82	0.81	-0.23	-0.30	1.45	2.44	1.20
Henri Middle School	2006 1.26	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Hernan Middle School	2006 -1.32	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Hortense High School	2006 2.99	0.81	1.02	0.19	0.60	0.58	4.09	-0.68	--	0.04
Hugo Middle School	2006 -3.73	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Humbero High School	2006 -0.21	-0.74	-0.94	2.64	-1.13	0.72	1.21	-0.37	-4.63	-1.17
Ignacio Middle School	2006 -3.07	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

	Progress significantly Above the average school in the state.
	Progress Not Detectably Different from the average school in the state.
	Progress significantly Below the average school in the state.
	-- The school does not have data for this test and subject in the most recent year.

EVAAS Can Help Schools and Districts Identify Areas of Need, *Continued*

previous years, when data are available. The mean of the difference between students' observed test performance and their predicted performance appears for each subgroup.

A large negative mean indicates that students within a group made less progress than expected. A large positive mean indicates more progress than expected. The progress of each group should be at least 0.0, indicating progression at an average rate. Students projected to be in the lowest subgroups must make better than average progress if they are to move up in proficiency.

In this report, students are assigned to one of the five groups based on where their predicted score falls in the statewide distribution -- bottom 20 percent, 20-40 percent, etc. This report can be helpful because Level III students sometimes comprise half of a school's population and the number of Level I students can be statistically insignificant. There is, however, a similar EVAAS report in which students are assigned to subgroups based on their predicted performance level (Levels I-IV).

In the chart below, the elementary school is ineffective with its students in fourth grade reading, except for those performing at the highest levels. Lower- and middle-achieving students are losing ground instead of improving. The students at the highest levels of achievement are making better than average progress. The enrichment offered at this school is superior, whereas remediation and support for struggling students is lacking.

within those groups that need the most help to make expected progress.

The report below disaggregates progress for specific students that can be grouped according to the users' choosing, enabling the user to see how effective the school has been with the lowest-, middle-, and highest-achieving students in the group selected. The user can see how a student performed in relationship to expected scores based on the student's previous testing history.



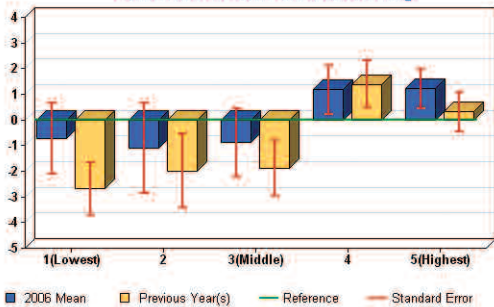
2006 End of Grade (Grade 4): Reading Students

Select	Student Name	Predicted Score	Observed Score	2006 Percentile	Perf Level	School Name
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student 135497	240.2	241	12	2	Alpha Elementary School
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student 135522	259.7	258	73	4	Alpha Elementary School
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student 135523	263.2	266	96	4	Alpha Elementary School
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student 135524	258.8	262	87	4	Alpha Elementary School
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student 135534	250.2	244	18	3	Alpha Elementary School
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student 135540	249.0	245	21	3	Alpha Elementary School
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student 135576	243.2	239	8	2	Alpha Elementary School

Virtual professional development sessions for NC districts on "Improving AYP," "Improving Graduation Rate," "Improving Competitiveness in Math and Science," and "Closing the Achievement Gap with Minority Students" are available through SAS by contacting Sandy.Horn@sas.com. Virtual users participate from their own desk via internet and phone (audio) access in sessions typically running 30-45 minutes. To find out more about how SAS® EVAAS® works and how to purchase it for your school district, contact June.Rivers@sas.com.



2006 Diagnostic Report for Elementary School in Epsilon 4th Grade End of Grade Reading



		Observed minus Predicted Score by Predicted Score Quintile					
		1 (Lowest)	2	3 (Middle)	4	5 (Highest)	
Reading	2006	Mean	-0.7	-1.1	-0.9	1.2	1.2
		Std Err	1.4	1.8	1.3	0.9	0.8
		Nr of Students	12	12	16	25	16
		% of Students	14.8	14.8	19.8	30.9	19.8
Previous Year(s)		Mean	-2.7	-2.0	-1.9	1.4	0.3
		Std Err	1.0	1.4	1.1	0.9	0.8
		Nr of Students	14	16	14	27	18
		% of Students	15.7	18.0	15.7	30.3	20.2

When the means among groups vary markedly, schools may want to explore ways to improve the instruction for the students making less progress. Using other EVAAS diagnostic reports, educators can target specific subjects and grade levels (i.e., fourth grade math or EOC biology)

64 DISTRICTS ARE IN TITLE I DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT

Sixty-four NC districts are in Title I District Improvement for 2006-07; 21 of those are in corrective action.

Districts entering corrective action and having Title I schools in or entering corrective action must assign a local team of four to five members to develop and implement an assistance plan. State assistance is available in different tiers of support, depending on the status and capabilities of each district. Tiers of support are outlined on the Web at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/district/faq/>.

A packet on the Web at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/nclb/district/07packetdeca.doc> will guide the initial work of the local team and will lead to the development of the assistance plan to be implemented for the remainder of the year.

About Mailing Title I District Improvement Letters...

In accordance with NCLB law, districts in Improvement must mail letters regarding the district's status to the parents of each student in the district (not just the Title I schools). More information and resources including letter prototypes and FAQs regarding answers to logistical concerns (including instructions for reimbursement) are available on the Web at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/district/improvement/>. Letters were to have been mailed by February 9 and reimbursement information is due to the NCDPI by February 28.

USED Releases NCLB Reauthorization Proposal

The US Department of Education released recently its NCLB reauthorization proposal, which is summarized below and available on the Web at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/nclb/factsheets/blueprint.html>. The Council of Chief State School Officers' (CCSSO) proposal is available at http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/ES_EA_rec_final.pdf and the Aspen Institute's proposal is available at www.nclbcommission.org. NCLB will be up for reauthorization this year.

- Expect 100 percent grade level proficiency by 2014;
- Rely on continued diagnostic use of disaggregated annual assessment data on student subgroups' performance;
- Provide the latest National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results on state report cards, alongside state results;
- Formalize regulations allowing states to tailor assessments to small groups of students with disabilities (2 percent per district) with modified or alternate achievement standards;
- Provide for state accountability systems to acknowledge significant progress in teaching limited English proficient (LEP) children critical English language skills;

J.B. BUXTON BEGINS AS DEPUTY



J.B. Buxton began his work as Deputy State Superintendent of the NC Department of Public Instruction Feb. 1. Buxton was the Senior Education Advisor to Gov. Mike Easley. He succeeded Dr. Janice Davis, who served as Deputy State Superintendent since 2004.

- Use the National Governors Association's Graduation Rate Compact to report four-year cohort graduation rates by 2011-12;
- Develop high school academic standards demanding at least two college preparatory courses each in English and math by 2010-11 and report publicly on those assessments by 2012-13;
- Develop teacher incentive funds to help fill STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) positions in middle and high schools, especially in low-income areas;
- Begin the Math Now program for elementary and middle schools, which will be on a competitive grant system similar to Reading First;
- Include science as part of AYP by 2008-09 with proficiency expected by 2019-20;
- Expand the definition of "rural," giving new teachers in small, rural school districts more time to meet Highly Qualified teacher requirements;
- Substantially increase federal Title I funds to serve low-income high school students; (Funding for low-income elementary and middle schools will be protected.)
- Stiffen and restrict options for schools in the restructuring phase of school improvement;
- Establish "Promise Scholarships," enabling low-income students from persistently underperforming schools to transfer to private schools or out-of-district public schools, or receive intensive tutoring;
- Demand that the supplemental educational services (SES) option coexist with the public school choice option in the first year of Title I School Improvement; (If the 20 percent of Title I, Part A funds is not spent, it's forfeited rather than carried over.)
- Allow schools identified for restructuring to convert into charter schools, even if the total number of charter schools would then surpass a state's charter cap.

Upcoming Meetings and Conferences

NC Association of Compensatory Educators – Southwest District

Union County
February 20
Contact Yvette Richardson at 919-807-3962 or yrichardson@dpi.state.nc.us or Rosemary Smith at 828-429-3723 or rsmith@dpi.state.nc.us

NC Association of Compensatory Educators – Northeast District

Halifax Community College
February 23
Contact Barbara Hardison at 252-789-4907 or bhardison@dpi.state.nc.us or Rhonda Muhammad at 919-807-3960 or rmuhammad@dpi.state.nc.us

NC Association of Compensatory Educators – Southeast District

Duplin County
February 28
Contact Donna Brown at 919-807-3959 or dbrown@dpi.state.nc.us or George Hancock at 910-521-5614 or ghancock@dpi.state.nc.us

National Association of Federal Education Program Administrators

"NCLB: Today's Challenges, Tomorrow's Opportunities"
Crystal City Hyatt, Arlington, Virginia
March 11-14
Go to <http://www.nafepa.org/> for more information

Schoolwide Institute – West (Day 3)

University Charlotte Hilton, Charlotte
March 21
Contact Juanita Morrison at 919-807-3963 or jhmorris@dpi.state.nc.us

NC Association of Compensatory Educators – Northeast District

Title I application meeting
Edgecombe County
March 23
Contact Barbara Hardison at 252-789-4907 or bhardison@dpi.state.nc.us or Rhonda Muhammad at 919-807-3960 or rmuhammad@dpi.state.nc.us

NC Association of Compensatory Educators – Northwest District

Title I application meeting
Guilford County
March 26
Contact Lori Bruce at 919-843-1359 or lori_bruce@dpi.state.nc.us or Juanita Morrison at 919-807-3963 or jhmorris@dpi.state.nc.us

Schoolwide Institute – East (Day 3)

Sheraton, New Bern
March 29
Contact George Hancock at 910-521-5614 or ghancock@dpi.state.nc.us

NC Association of Compensatory Educators – Southwest District,

Title I application meeting
Clay County
April 12
Contact Yvette Richardson at 919-807-3962 or yrichardson@dpi.state.nc.us or Rosemary Smith at 828-429-3723 or rsmith@dpi.state.nc.us