



NC Public Schools on Track to Lead the Nation in Education

Grades improve for three indicators; hold steady on two in second annual First in America Progress Report.

★ High Student Performance

The performance of North Carolina's public school students increased significantly over the last year resulting in the state receiving a C+ for this indicator. North Carolina public schools experienced:

- Improvement in the percentage of students scoring proficient or better on the National Assessment of Educational Progress' (NAEP) mathematics tests.
- Modest improvements in scores on the state's end-of-grade and end-of-course tests for most grades and subjects.
- Good performance on Advanced Placement examinations.
- National attention in regard to the quality of our accountability standards for schools.

★ Safe, Orderly and Caring Schools

North Carolina's public schools are "warm and welcoming places for both students and parents, and are becoming more so." As a result, the state received a B- for this category for improvements in the following three priority areas:

- every school has adequate facilities and materials;
- every student is known and cared for; and
- every family is welcomed.

While the percentage of teachers rating the adequacy of facilities, equipment and materials in their schools improved to 63 percent, it still remains low.

★ Strong Family, Business and Community Support

North Carolina's public school children receive strong family support and increasing support from businesses and the community. North Carolina's B grade reflects:

- strong teacher efforts to communicate with parents;
- a high level of parental involvement in children's learning at home;
- sharp improvements in the percentage of employers offering special opportunities to support children's learning;
- a decline in the state's historically high infant mortality rate over the past two years;
- improvement in the rate for on-time immunization; and
- the increase in the percentage of children covered by health insurance.

★ Every Child Ready to Learn

Generally, the state is doing a good job providing children with access to quality child care, thus maintaining its C+ grade. This grade reflects the state's efforts in the areas of child care teacher preparation, family involvement in Smart Start, and the percentage of child care facilities earning at least three stars or more on the state's five-star rating system.

★ Quality Teachers and Administrators

Once again, the state received a B- for the Quality Teachers and Administrators category. North Carolina's public school teachers and principals do well on national examinations and the state leads the nation in the number of teachers attaining national certification. A high percentage of the state's teachers also are fully licensed.

For more information on North Carolina's progress to be First in America by 2010, please go to the following Web site, <http://www.firstinamerica.northcarolina.edu/>

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Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education
Dept. of Public Instruction