

**Note:** The MAT and AVT lookup table (Table 5) in this document has been updated to reflect the final and official growth targets estimated by Education Analytics (EA) using a quantile regression procedure based on three years of historically observed growth. Notes about changes to Table 5 are highlighted in blue. The text of this document was not revised to reflect the methods used by EA. Interested readers are referred to their document: [SC\\_2023\\_Introduction to Student Growth Targets.pdf](#)

# The Added-Value Growth Model

A Value-Added Model that Adds Value to Student Proficiency Levels

## ASA Subcommittee Recommendations:

**Recommendation 1:** 2023 School Report Cards shall report both the existing norm-referenced student growth model and the proposed Added-Value Growth Model. Points and Ratings for schools shall be calculated using the same model and method described in the SY 2021-22 Accountability Manual. Added-Value Growth Model metrics shall be defined in the SY 2022-23 Accountability Manual without associated Points or Ratings and shall appear on Report Cards for informational purposes only.

**Recommendation 2:** EOC Staff shall analyze SY 2021-22 accountability data, seeking input from SCDE and select stakeholders, to further explore the Added-Value Growth Model scoring methods currently under consideration. EOC Staff shall make a final recommendation to EOC members for a scoring system to be published in the SY 2023-24 Accountability Manual.

**Recommendation 3:** EOC Staff, in collaboration with SCDE, will produce Added-Value Growth Model scores based on SY 2022-23 accountability data to disseminate to school and district leaders for their reference in preparation for full transition to the proposed model in the SY 2023-24 Accountability Manual.

**Recommendation 4:** 2024 School Report Cards shall report Added-Value Growth Model metrics and shall use those metrics to calculate Points and Ratings. The previously used norm-referenced growth model shall no longer be reported on these or subsequent report cards.

The state of South Carolina currently uses a norm-referenced value-added model to compare achievement gains of students enrolled at a given school to those of similar students statewide who have similar prior achievement. The current model, provided by Education Analytics, analyzes matched current and prior year test scores for all students to estimate the amount of growth that is associated with prior achievement and with various student demographic attributes (such as poverty status, English learner status, disability status, or racial/ethnic identity) to determine the degree to which students enrolled at a given school perform better or worse than the statewide average for similar students.

In this way, the scores expected for each individual student are based on the scores observed for all other students in the state who took the same test in that same year. Schools whose students systematically perform better than similar students with similar prior achievement have higher value-added scores, while schools whose students systematically score worse than similar students have lower scores. Norm-referenced value-added scores cannot be projected or predicted in advance of testing since these scores are determined in comparison to the other tests taken at the same time and not in comparison to a predefined set of fixed criteria.

One criticism of commonly used value-added models is that, regardless of how well or poorly all students perform on the academic achievement test used in the model, about half of all students will demonstrate better than average growth and about half will demonstrate below-average growth. If the declared goal of the South Carolina accountability system is to improve educational outcomes for all students, then the norm-referenced nature of the current model seems to run counter to that goal. For example, if all students were to demonstrate extraordinary growth one year and were all to exceed expectations on the SCREADY, then growth that year would still be higher than average for about half of those students. Thus, students with below-average growth would still count negatively toward their schools' evaluation, even though they exceeded expectations.

By contrast, the educational disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted student learning statewide (see [EOC, 2021](#)). Although achievement testing, ratings, and value-added growth estimates were suspended during the pandemic, analyses of interim and benchmark assessment data from the same time suggested that average student growth statewide would have been unacceptably low if it had been measured, with more than seven out of ten students statewide expected to fall short of grade level expectations. In this case, a substantial number of students could have counted positively toward their schools' evaluations, even though their progress was insufficient to meet expectations or maintain current achievement levels. If the goal of the accountability system is to improve outcomes for all students, then that system should report it accurately when all students do poorly and properly recognize schools when all students do well. The current growth model does neither.

This paper explores the implications of norm-referenced growth models on student achievement in grades 3 through 8 and proposes an empirically derived, criterion-referenced growth model as a possible alternative. The first section presents some exploratory analyses of historical achievement data to understand the nature and magnitude of average learning gains and their implications for student achievement. The second section describes the proposed Added-Value Growth Model including the results of some simulations run with historical achievement data. The third section explores the implications of the proposed model for instruction, including possible applications with interim and benchmark assessments that could provide meaningful feedback on student progress toward meeting added-value growth targets. Finally, the paper closes with recommendations for adoption and implementation of the proposed model.

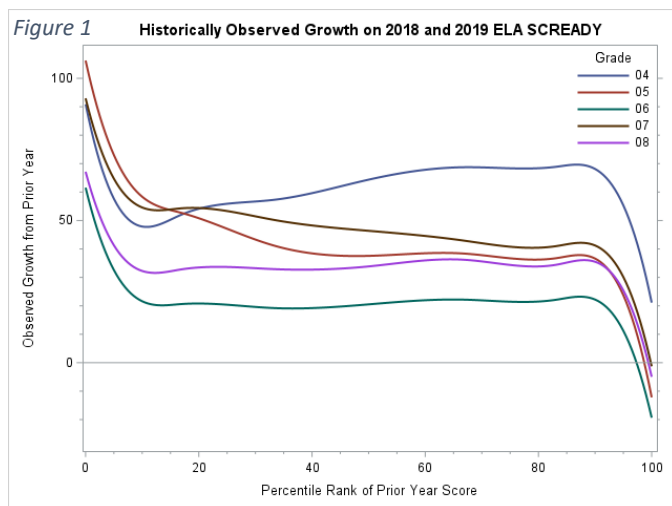
## Historical Growth Data

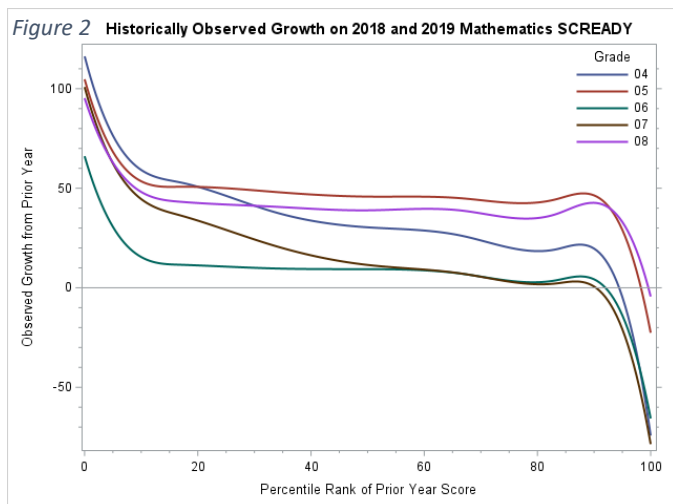
### Determining Expected Gains

Because the SCREADY achievement test uses a common vertical scale across grade levels, year over year changes in scores can be compared to determine the mean growth for each test at each point in the score distribution by grade level. We analyzed historical records that included 344,877 students with a score for the ELA SCREADY and 345,914 students with scores for the Mathematics SCREADY taken in 2017, another 352,375 students with scores for the ELA SCREADY and 352,491 students with scores for the Mathematics SCREADY taken in 2018, and 355,693 students with scores for the ELA SCREADY and 356,110 students with scores for the Mathematics SCREADY taken in 2019. We then matched records for students who tested in both 2017 and 2018 as well as those who tested in both 2018 and 2019, dropping records without a match.

Students must be continuously enrolled at the same school from the 45<sup>th</sup> day to the 160<sup>th</sup> day of the school year with no break in enrollment to be included in the Student Progress indicator for accountability that year. Thus, we removed records for students who were not continuously enrolled for the second year of each matched data set. Since no such requirement exists for continuous enrollment during the prior school year, no additional records were dropped for non-continuous enrollment. Because we were interested in identifying general historical trends for student growth from year to year rather than trends for a specific year, we combined these data sets to produce a single data set for the ELA SCREADY (containing 531,483 records) and a separate data set for the Mathematics SCREADY (containing 532,578 records). Both data sets contained scores from students continuously enrolled for the "current" year (i.e., tests taken in the spring of either 2018 or 2019) matched with scores from the prior year (i.e., the spring of either 2017 or 2018).

Analyses of historical achievement growth data indicates that, on average, South Carolina students gain about 40 vertical





scale score (VSS) points ( $M = 41.0$ ,  $Mdn = 40.0$ ,  $SD = 58.2$ ) on the ELA SCREADY and 29 VSS points ( $M = 28.7$ ,  $Mdn = 29.0$ ,  $SD = 63.2$ ) on the Mathematics SCREADY, regardless of current grade level and prior year score. However, as demonstrated by Figures 1 and 2 (to right and next page), mean growth from year to year is meaningfully different by grade level and depends on the student's position on the prior year score distribution. Specifically, students scoring at or below the fifth percentile of their grade-level peers typically exhibit much higher gains in a single year than students who score above the tenth percentile. Similarly, at the top of most score distributions, average growth becomes negative.

Since observed growth varies at each point along the score distribution, we further analyzed these growth data to determine not only typical gains for similarly scoring students, but progressively better than average gains as well. For these analyses, students were grouped together by grade level according to their prior year SCREADY score, rounded down to the nearest ten. For example, any sixth-grade student who scored from 520 to 529 on the fifth grade ELA SCREADY in the data set would be analyzed together to determine growth expectations for that test, grade level, and prior achievement. Specifically, observed learning gains for the 50<sup>th</sup>, 55<sup>th</sup>, 60<sup>th</sup>, 65<sup>th</sup>, 70<sup>th</sup>, 75<sup>th</sup>, and 80<sup>th</sup> percentiles of single-year growth were estimated at each point in the distribution of prior-year scores and graphed in SAS using PROC SGPLOT with PBSPLINE to smooth the curves. Estimates were recorded for expected gains at each percentile rank of growth at each point on the score distribution for each test and grade level.

## Applying Expected Gains

To determine the implications of historically observed expected gains, we considered the score trajectory of hypothetical students who are members of the Average family. For example, with a vertical scale score (VSS) of 314, Ashley Average scored the median historically-observed score in the Does Not Meet achievement level on the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade ELA SCREADY. Historically, students who scored from 310 to 319 on the ELA test in grade 3 demonstrated median achievement gains of 46 vertical scale points, giving Ashley a score of 360 on the 4<sup>th</sup> grade test. Students who scored from 360 to 369 on the ELA test in grade 4 demonstrated median achievement gains of 54 points, giving Ashley a score of 414 in grade 5. Ashley's score continues to progress in the same way, increasing by the median gains for students with a similar score on the prior year test until she ultimately scores 511 on the 8<sup>th</sup> grade ELA test, which is still in the Does Not Meet achievement level.

**Table 1**

*Progression of ELA Scores for Hypothetical Average Students Making Median Gains from Grades 3 through 8*

Student	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade		4 <sup>th</sup> Grade		5 <sup>th</sup> Grade		6 <sup>th</sup> Grade		7 <sup>th</sup> Grade		8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	
	VSS	Level	VSS	Level	VSS	Level	VSS	Level	VSS	Level	VSS	Level
Adam A.	579	Exceeds	642	Exceeds	671	Exceeds	690	Exceeds	729	Exceeds	762	Exceeds
Annie A.	494	Meets	565	Meets	604	Meets	629	Meets	671	Meets	708	Meets
Alberto A.	408	Appr	468	Appr	507	Appr	528	Appr	576	Appr	611	Appr
Ashley A.	314	DNM	360	DNM	414	DNM	432	DNM	483	DNM	511	DNM

*Note:* ELA = English language arts. DNM = Does Not Meet. Appr = Approaches. Score progression assumes that students made gains equivalent to the median observed for students with similar prior scores for that test and grade on historical SCREADY tests taken in 2017, 2018, and 2019.

The other members of the Average family similarly demonstrated the median observed score of their respective achievement levels on the initial 3<sup>rd</sup> grade ELA SCREADY test. Like Ashley, these students also demonstrated median

historically observed gains for students with similar prior year scores from year to year from grade 3 through grade 8, leading each of them to the final scores shown in Table 1. We then repeated this same process for the Mathematics SCREADY, again with each member of the Average family demonstrating the historical median score for their respective achievement levels in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and demonstrating median growth for similarly-scoring students each year until 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The results of the progression of Mathematics SCREADY scores are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2**

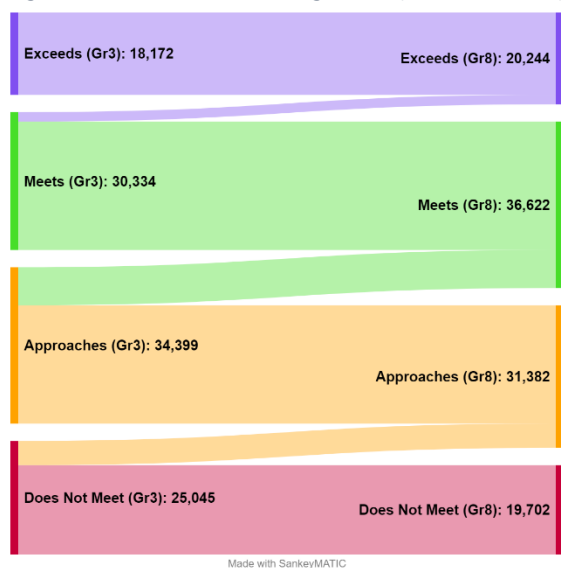
*Progression of Mathematics Scores for Hypothetical Average Students Making Median Gains from Grades 3 through 8*

Student	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade		4 <sup>th</sup> Grade		5 <sup>th</sup> Grade		6 <sup>th</sup> Grade		7 <sup>th</sup> Grade		8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	
	VSS	Level	VSS	Level	VSS	Level	VSS	Level	VSS	Level	VSS	Level
Adam A.	596	Exceeds	609	Exceeds	650	Exceeds	650	Exceeds	650	Exceeds	685	Exceeds
Annie A.	488	Meets	514	Meets	558	Meets	565	Meets	<b>571</b>	<b>Appr</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>Appr</b>
Alberto A.	402	Appr	438	Appr	484	Appr	492	Appr	509	Appr	547	Appr
Ashley A.	319	DNM	379	DNM	431	DNM	438	DNM	472	DNM	511	DNM

*Note:* DNM = Does Not Meet. Appr = Approaches. Score progression assumes that students made gains equivalent to the median observed for students with similar prior scores for that test and grade on historical SCREADY tests taken in 2017, 2018, and 2019. Note that median annual achievement gains led Annie Average to drop from the Meets achievement level to Approaches in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

By these analyses, median growth is insufficient to improve the academic achievement of any of the students in the Average family. In fact, median growth on the Mathematics SCREADY led Annie to fall below grade level expectations in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The children in the Average family, although an interesting thought experiment, do not give us a clear

*Figure 3 - ELA Achievement Progression (Median Growth)*



growth, and only 14% of students who had not met the standard in grade 3 (8,360 students statewide) were able to reach proficiency by the end of grade 8.

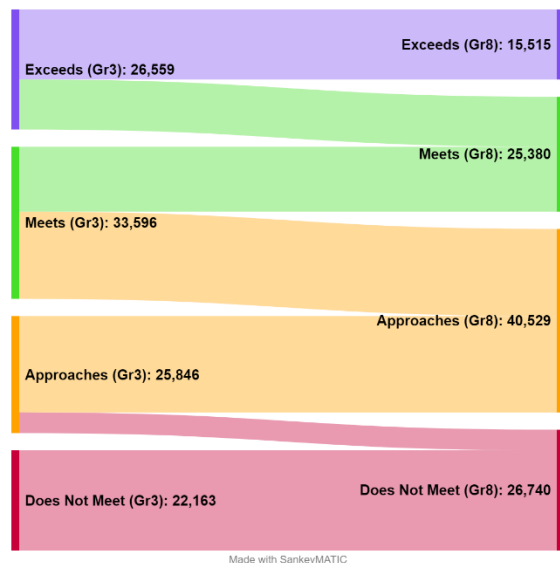
For the Mathematics SCREADY (see Figure 4), no students improve their achievement level from grade 3 through grade 8 with median growth. In fact, 32% of all students in the state fall to a lower achievement level and 32% of all students who had demonstrated proficiency in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade fall below expectations by the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

sense of how median year to year growth might affect the distribution of achievement levels among students in South Carolina schools. Thus, we used the same method of projecting median growth for all students who took a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade SCREADY test in either 2017 or 2018 ( $n = 107,950$  for ELA and  $n = 108,164$  for Mathematics) to determine their final achievement levels at the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

Applying historically observed median growth from grade 3 through grade 8 for the ELA SCREADY leads to the achievement level changes shown in Figure 3. Median growth leads 85% of students to maintain the same achievement level that they demonstrated in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

Only 15% of all students tested move to a higher achievement level under median

*Figure 4 - Math Achievement Progression (Median Growth)*



If typical growth generally does not lead students reach proficiency in ELA and leads to a general decline in achievement in Mathematics, then it raises the question whether better-than-typical growth is sufficient to move students who have not met expectations in grade 3 to proficiency by the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade. We sought to discern *how much* better than typical must achievement gains be to reach proficiency by grade 8.

To answer this question, we applied year to year achievement gains to the same sample of historically observed 3<sup>rd</sup> grade SCREADY scores at each percentile rank for which growth estimates had been generated. Table 3 (on the next page) displays the number and proportion of students who initially scored at each achievement level on the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade test, as well as the number and proportion of students who would score at each proficiency level after five years of steady achievement gains at the indicated percentile rank. For simplicity, results are only shown for growth at the 50<sup>th</sup>, 60<sup>th</sup>, 70<sup>th</sup>, and 80<sup>th</sup> percentile ranks, although analyses were also conducted with growth estimates at the 55<sup>th</sup>, 65, and 75<sup>th</sup> percentiles as well.

The findings displayed in Table 3 suggest that, for the students demonstrating the lowest initial achievement in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade to meet or exceed the grade level standard by the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade, they must make annual achievement gains that are as high or higher than were observed for 80% of similar students in the historical data set. Although growth at the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile of gains ensure that all students meet the standard within five years, goals set at this level are onerous and it may not be necessary to set goals this high for all students, particularly those who have already met or exceeded the grade level standard. Thus, a system of progressive targets for annual achievement gains may best support the goals of the South Carolina accountability system. We explored several possible methods with which to determine individual student achievement growth targets, desiring a system that would both move students to achieve proficiency by 8<sup>th</sup> grade and guarantee that all students either maintain or improve the achievement level they demonstrated on the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade SCREADY. The features of the system which best meets the needs of South Carolina are described in the next section.

**Table 3**

*Number and Proportion of Students Scoring at the Different Achievement Levels on the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade SCREADY after Demonstrating Five Years of Consistent Achievement Growth at Various Percentile Ranks*

Achievement Level	Initial (Grade 3) <i>n</i> (%)	After PR50 Gains <i>n</i> (%)	After PR60 Gains <i>n</i> (%)	After PR70 Gains <i>n</i> (%)	After PR80 Gains <i>n</i> (%)
<b>ELA SCREADY</b>					
Exceeds	18,172 (16.8%)	20,244 (18.8%)	46,241 (42.8%)	72,213 (66.9%)	97,696 (90.5%)
Meets	30,334 (28.1%)	36,622 (33.9%)	31,981 (29.6%)	26,130 (24.2%)	10,254 (9.5%)
<b>Meets or Exceeds</b>	<b>48,506 (44.9%)</b>	<b>56,866 (52.7%)</b>	<b>78,222 (72.5%)</b>	<b>98,343 (91.1%)</b>	<b>107,950 (100.0%)</b>
Approaches	34,399 (31.9%)	31,382 (29.1%)	29,575 (27.4%)	9,603 (8.9%)	— (0.0%)
Does Not Meet	25,045 (23.2%)	19,702 (18.3%)	153 (0.1%)	— (0.0%)	— (0.0%)
<b>Not Met</b>	<b>59,444 (55.1%)</b>	<b>51,084 (47.3%)</b>	<b>29,728 (27.5%)</b>	<b>9,603 (8.9%)</b>	<b>— (0.0%)</b>
<b>Mathematics SCREADY</b>					
Exceeds	26,559 (24.6%)	15,515 (14.3%)	39,180 (36.2%)	71,309 (65.9%)	97,617 (94.0%)
Meets	33,596 (31.1%)	25,380 (23.5%)	32,129 (29.7%)	25,806 (23.9%)	6,209 (6.0%)
<b>Meets or Exceeds</b>	<b>60,155 (55.6%)</b>	<b>40,895 (37.8%)</b>	<b>71,309 (65.9%)</b>	<b>97,115 (89.8%)</b>	<b>103,826 (100.0%)</b>
Approaches	25,846 (23.9%)	40,529 (37.5%)	36,855 (34.1%)	11,049 (10.2%)	— (0.0%)
Does Not Meet	22,163 (20.5%)	26,740 (24.7%)	0 (0.0%)	— (0.0%)	— (0.0%)
<b>Not Met</b>	<b>48,009 (44.4%)</b>	<b>67,269 (62.2%)</b>	<b>36,855 (34.1%)</b>	<b>11,049 (10.2%)</b>	<b>— (0.0%)</b>

*Note:* PR50 = 50<sup>th</sup> percentile rank. PR60 = 60<sup>th</sup> percentile rank. PR70 = 70<sup>th</sup> percentile rank. PR80 = 80<sup>th</sup> percentile rank. Initial scores were taken from students in South Carolina who took the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade SCREADY either in 2017 or 2018. Score progression assumes that students made gains through 8<sup>th</sup> grade equivalent to those at the indicated percentile rank observed for students with similar prior scores for that test and grade on historical SCREADY tests taken in 2017, 2018, and 2019.

# The Proposed Added-Value Growth Model

## Setting Individual Student Growth Targets

We propose using a criterion-referenced value-added model, the Added-Value Growth Model, to measure student progress in the SC accountability system. Under the proposed model, each student in grades 4 through 8 will have two individualized target scores for each of the SCREADY assessments that they will take that year based upon their prior year SCREADY scores. The first growth target shall be a median annual target (MAT), which shall be set to the median level of growth observed for students with similar scores on the prior year test. Any student who meets or exceeds their MAT will earn at least one point for their school in the accountability model. Near the top of the distribution for prior achievement, when historically observed median growth becomes negative, MATs shall be set to 0 so that all students are always expected to earn the same VSS or higher than the previous year.

The second growth target shall be an added-value target (AVT), which is a target set progressively according to prior year achievement levels based on the analyses described in the previous section. The historically observed percentile ranks of gains upon which AVTs are set are shown in Table 4. Any student who meets or exceeds their individual AVT will earn additional points for their school in the accountability model, with more points awarded for more ambitious targets.

AVTs for students whose prior year SCREADY score falls in Prior Achievement Band 6 (PAB6; *≈ Exceeds*) shall be set based on historically observed growth at the 55<sup>th</sup> conditional growth percentile. At the top of the score distribution for prior achievement, when historically observed growth at the 55<sup>th</sup> percentile becomes negative, AVTs shall be set to 5 so that all students are expected to improve on the VSS earned in the prior year. The 55<sup>th</sup> percentile is used for PAB6 because this is the minimum level of historically observed growth at which all students who performed at the Exceeds level in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade maintained that achievement level through the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade. AVTs for students with prior achievement in Prior Achievement Band 5 (PAB5; *≈ Meets*) shall be based on 60<sup>th</sup> percentile growth because this is the level of historical growth at which all students at the Meets level in grade 3 maintained or improved that level through grade 8.

For students who have not yet met grade level expectations, the Approaches and Does Not Meet achievement levels have each been split in half at the median historically observed score for that level to allow for a smoother progression of growth targets. Students whose prior year score falls in Prior Achievement Band 1 (PAB1; *≈ lower half of Does Not Meet*) have AVTs based on 80<sup>th</sup> percentile of observed gains because that was the first growth percentile at which all of the students who scored at the Does Not Meet level in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade met or exceeded the grade level standard by the end of 8<sup>th</sup>

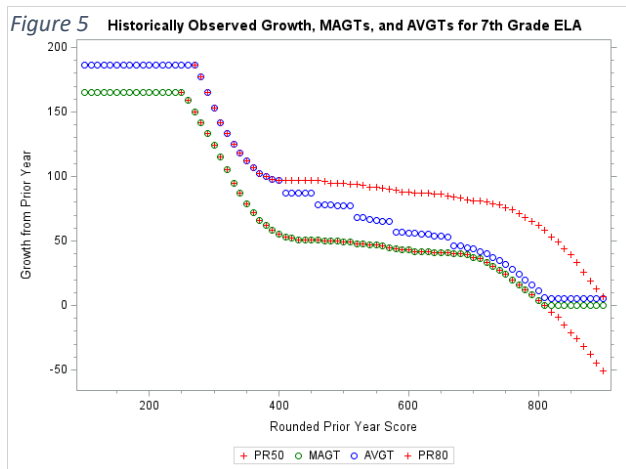
**Table 4**

*Historically Observed Conditional Growth Percentiles (CGPs) Used to Set Added-Value Targets (AVTs) for Growth by Prior SC READY Scores*

Current Grade Level:	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Prior Achievement Band 6 (≈ Exceeds)					
Prior ELA score range:	540 – 825	600 – 850	660 – 875	670 – 900	710 – 925
Prior Math score range:	550 – 825	570 – 850	630 – 875	630 – 900	650 – 925
Historical CGP on which AVT is based:	55				
Prior Achievement Band 5 (≈ Meets)					
Prior ELA score range:	460 – 539	510 – 599	560 – 659	580 – 669	620 – 709
Prior Math score range:	440 – 549	490 – 569	540 – 629	550 – 629	580 – 649
Historical CGP on which AVT is based:	60				
Prior Achievement Band 4 (≈ upper half of Approaches)					
Prior ELA score range:	410 – 459	470 – 509	510 – 559	520 – 579	570 – 619
Prior Math score range:	410 – 439	450 – 489	490 – 539	500 – 549	540 – 579
Historical CGP on which AVT is based:	65				
Prior Achievement Band 3 (≈ lower half of Approaches)					
Prior ELA score range:	360 – 409	420 – 469	450 – 509	460 – 519	520 – 569
Prior Math score range:	360 – 409	410 – 449	450 – 489	460 – 499	490 – 539
Historical CGP on which AVT is based:	70				
Prior Achievement Band 2 (≈ upper half of Does Not Meet)					
Prior ELA score range:	320 – 359	360 – 419	410 – 449	420 – 459	470 – 519
Prior Math score range:	320 – 359	370 – 409	420 – 449	420 – 459	460 – 489
Historical CGP on which AVT is based:	75				
Prior Achievement Band 1 (≈ lower half of Does Not Meet)					
Prior ELA score range:	100 – 319	100 – 359	100 – 409	100 – 419	100 – 469
Prior Math score range:	100 – 319	100 – 369	100 – 419	100 – 419	100 – 459
Historical CGP on which AVT is based:	80				

*Note: Because prior-year SC READY scores are rounded down to the nearest multiple of ten (10) before assigning the Added-Value Target (AVT), score ranges shown for Prior Achievement Bands do not correspond precisely to the performance level descriptors used for Academic Achievement.*





grade. Students in in Prior Achievement Band 2 (PAB2; *≈ upper half of Does Not Meet*), have AVTs based on 75<sup>th</sup> percentile gains. Students in Prior Achievement Band 3 (PAB3; *≈ lower half of Approaches*) have AVTs based on the 70<sup>th</sup> percentile and students in Prior Achievement Band 4 (PAB4; *≈ upper half of Approaches*) have AVTs based on the 65<sup>th</sup> percentile. Near the floor of the score distribution, there were points at which the sample of historical scores was too small to accurately estimate median and 80<sup>th</sup> percentile growth for DNM1. In these cases, the distance between the 50<sup>th</sup> and the 80<sup>th</sup> growth percentile at the lowest prior year score for which both scores could be estimated was maintained as the distance between the MAT and AVT for prior year scores from 100 to that point. **(Note: This issue was only encountered during**

**the development of the model. The quantile regression methods used to generate the operational MATs and AVTs is able to estimate targets at all points along the score distribution.)** Figure 5 shows the historically observed gains at the 50<sup>th</sup> and 80<sup>th</sup> percentile (PR50 and PR80) plotted as red plusses with MATs and AVTs plotted as green and blue circles, respectively, for the 7<sup>th</sup> grade ELA SCREADY to illustrate how growth targets are set for the Added-Value Growth Model.

To find an individual student's target score for the SCREADY, round down their prior-year VSS (whether ELA or Mathematics) to the nearest multiple of 10 and find that score in the gray, center column of Table 5. For the ELA SCREADY, track left on that row to the student's current grade level to find growth targets for this year's test. Follow the same procedure for the Mathematics SCREADY but track right to the current grade level to find growth targets for this year's test. The minimum VSS point gains that are needed to meet the MAT goal are shown in the unshaded column and gains needed to meet the AVT goal are shown in the shaded column. To find the target scores for the student for this year's test, add the number of points shown to their prior year VSS for that test. An example is given in the next paragraph.

**Table 5**

**Median-Annual Growth Target (MAT) and Added-Value Growth Target (AVT) Lookup Table** **(updated to final, official values)**

Growth Targets for ELA SCREADY										Prior Year Score (round down)	Growth Targets for Mathematics SCREADY									
Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8			Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8	
MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT		MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT
226	307	338	438	285	327	264	387	334	339	100	256	302	265	301	285	363	318	342	327	334
212	278	309	393	269	307	264	387	327	332	110	240	282	258	292	278	348	308	335	326	334
202	260	291	365	258	294	264	387	322	327	120	229	268	252	285	273	338	301	329	324	332
192	244	273	340	247	281	264	387	315	320	130	218	255	245	278	267	327	294	323	321	329
181	228	257	316	235	269	264	387	308	314	140	207	242	238	270	260	315	285	315	317	326
171	214	241	293	224	256	264	387	300	308	150	196	229	230	261	252	304	277	307	312	321
160	201	225	273	213	243	264	387	292	300	160	185	217	222	252	243	291	268	299	306	315
150	188	211	254	201	231	264	387	283	292	170	173	204	213	243	234	279	259	290	299	309
140	177	197	237	190	219	264	387	273	284	180	162	192	204	234	225	267	249	280	292	302
130	167	184	221	178	207	250	353	263	275	190	152	181	194	224	215	254	239	271	283	294
120	158	171	206	167	195	237	327	253	266	200	141	170	185	214	205	242	229	260	274	286
111	149	160	193	156	184	225	303	242	256	210	131	160	175	204	194	229	219	250	265	277
102	142	148	181	145	173	213	280	231	246	220	121	150	165	195	183	216	208	239	255	267
94	136	138	170	134	162	201	259	220	236	230	111	141	155	185	172	204	198	228	244	258
86	130	128	161	123	152	189	240	208	225	240	102	132	145	175	161	191	187	218	233	247
79	125	119	152	113	142	177	222	197	215	250	94	124	135	166	149	179	176	207	222	237
73	121	111	144	103	133	165	206	185	204	260	86	117	125	157	138	167	166	196	210	226
68	118	103	138	94	124	154	191	174	193	270	78	111	116	148	127	155	155	185	199	216
63	116	96	132	85	115	143	177	162	183	280	72	106	107	140	116	144	145	174	187	205
60	114	89	126	76	108	133	165	151	172	290	66	102	98	132	105	133	135	164	175	194
58	113	83	122	68	100	123	153	139	162	300	61	99	90	125	94	123	125	153	163	183
57	113	78	118	60	94	113	143	128	152	310	56	96	83	119	84	113	115	143	152	173

Growth Targets for ELA SCREADY										Prior Year Score (round down)	Growth Targets for Mathematics SCREADY									
Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8			Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8	
MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT		MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT
57	101	73	115	53	88	104	135	118	142	320	53	85	76	113	74	103	106	134	140	163
58	102	68	112	46	82	95	127	107	133	330	50	84	69	108	64	95	97	125	129	153
59	103	65	110	41	78	88	120	97	124	340	48	83	64	104	55	87	88	116	118	143
61	104	62	108	35	74	80	114	87	116	350	46	82	59	101	47	79	80	108	107	134
62	96	59	96	31	71	74	110	78	108	360	45	73	55	99	39	73	72	100	97	125
63	98	57	94	27	68	68	106	70	100	370	43	71	52	88	32	67	64	93	88	117
63	99	55	93	24	67	63	102	62	94	380	41	69	50	87	26	63	58	87	79	110
64	100	53	92	22	66	59	100	55	88	390	39	68	49	88	21	59	51	82	71	103
65	102	51	91	21	66	56	98	48	83	400	38	67	48	88	16	56	46	77	63	97
67	92	50	89	20	58	54	97	42	79	410	36	57	48	79	12	54	41	73	57	92
68	94	48	78	21	59	52	87	38	75	420	34	56	48	80	10	45	37	63	51	88
70	96	47	77	21	60	52	87	34	73	430	32	55	48	81	8	45	33	61	46	84
72	97	45	76	22	62	51	87	31	72	440	31	46	48	81	7	45	30	59	42	82
73	98	44	76	23	54	51	87	29	71	450	30	45	48	70	7	37	27	57	40	81
74	90	43	75	24	55	50	79	28	72	460	29	44	47	69	7	37	25	48	38	72
74	89	42	63	24	56	50	78	28	64	470	28	44	47	68	7	37	23	47	37	72
74	89	42	63	25	57	49	77	29	66	480	27	43	46	68	7	37	21	45	37	73
74	89	42	62	25	57	48	76	30	69	490	26	42	45	60	7	30	19	44	37	65
74	89	42	62	26	57	48	74	31	71	500	25	41	45	60	6	30	18	35	37	66
74	89	42	56	27	49	47	73	32	72	510	24	40	45	60	5	30	16	34	38	66
73	88	42	56	27	50	47	66	33	65	520	23	39	45	61	4	29	15	33	38	67
73	88	42	56	28	50	47	66	34	65	530	22	38	45	62	3	29	14	32	38	67
72	80	41	56	29	50	46	66	34	65	540	21	37	45	62	2	19	13	31	38	58
70	78	40	55	29	50	46	66	35	65	550	20	28	45	62	1	18	11	23	37	58
69	76	39	53	29	43	46	65	35	65	560	19	28	45	62	1	17	10	22	36	57
67	73	37	51	29	42	45	65	36	59	570	18	28	44	54	1	16	8	21	36	57
65	71	35	49	28	42	44	57	36	59	580	16	27	43	54	0	16	7	20	36	50
62	68	33	47	28	41	43	57	37	59	590	14	26	42	53	0	15	6	19	36	50
59	64	32	40	27	40	42	57	37	59	600	12	24	41	52	0	15	5	18	36	51
56	61	30	39	26	40	42	57	37	59	610	8	22	39	51	0	14	5	18	36	51
52	57	29	36	26	39	41	57	37	51	620	5	18	37	50	0	14	4	17	36	51
48	54	27	34	25	39	41	57	37	51	630	1	14	35	48	0	5	4	11	35	51
43	50	24	31	23	38	41	57	37	50	640	0	10	34	46	0	5	3	11	35	51
38	45	21	28	22	36	41	57	37	49	650	0	5	32	44	0	5	2	10	34	42
33	41	17	25	20	28	41	56	36	48	660	0	5	30	41	0	5	0	9	33	41
28	36	13	21	18	26	41	47	35	46	670	0	5	27	38	0	5	0	7	32	41
22	31	9	17	16	24	40	47	33	45	680	0	5	25	35	0	5	0	6	31	41
16	26	4	12	14	21	39	47	32	44	690	0	5	22	32	0	5	0	5	30	40
10	20	0	7	12	19	38	46	30	42	700	0	5	20	28	0	5	0	5	29	39
4	14	0	5	9	16	36	44	28	34	710	0	5	17	25	0	5	0	5	28	38
0	8	0	5	6	13	34	42	26	33	720	0	5	14	21	0	5	0	5	27	37
0	5	0	5	3	9	32	39	24	31	730	0	5	11	17	0	5	0	5	26	35
0	5	0	5	0	6	29	36	21	28	740	0	5	7	13	0	5	0	5	25	33
0	5	0	5	0	5	25	32	17	25	750	0	5	3	8	0	5	0	5	23	31
0	5	0	5	0	5	21	28	13	21	760	0	5	0	5	0	5	0	5	22	28
0	5	0	5	0	5	17	23	9	17	770	0	5	0	5	0	5	0	5	20	26
0	5	0	5	0	5	13	18	4	12	780	0	5	0	5	0	5	0	5	18	23
0	5	0	5	0	5	8	13	0	7	790	0	5	0	5	0	5	0	5	16	21
0	5	0	5	0	5	3	8	0	5	800	0	5	0	5	0	5	0	5	13	18
0	5	0	5	0	5	0	5	0	5	810	0	5	0	5	0	5	0	5	11	16
0	5	0	5	0	5	0	5	0	5	820	0	5	0	5	0	5	0	5	7	13
		0	5	0	5	0	5	0	5	830			0	5	0	5	0	5	4	11
		0	5	0	5	0	5	0	5	840			0	5	0	5	0	5	0	9
		0	5	0	5	0	5	0	5	850			0	5	0	5	0	5	0	7
				0	5	0	5	0	5	860				0	5	0	5	0	5	5
				0	5	0	5	0	5	870				0	5	0	5	0	5	5
						0	5	0	5	880							0	5	0	5
						0	5	0	5	890							0	5	0	5



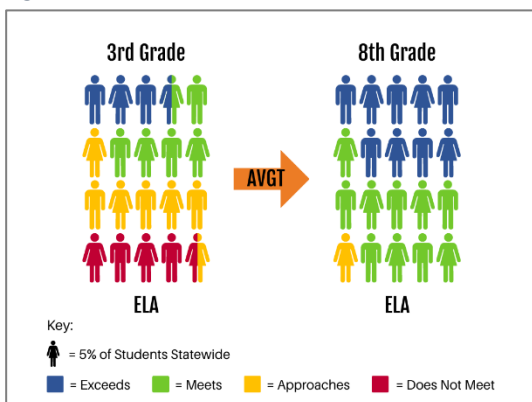
Growth Targets for ELA SCREADY										Prior Year Score (round down)	Growth Targets for Mathematics SCREADY									
Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8			Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8	
MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT		MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT	MAT	AVT
						0	5	0	5		900						0	5	0	5
								0	5	910								0	5	
								0	5	920								0	5	

Note: The MATs and AVTs displayed in this table have been updated to reflect the targets estimated by Education Analytics (EA) and distributed to schools and districts in SC on October 19, 2022. These targets have been estimated using a quantile regression procedure (described by EA in a paper distributed with the new targets) that estimates growth targets based on year-to-year achievement growth historically observed in SC in a combined data set that includes growth from the 2017 to the 2018 SCREADY, from the 2018 to 2019 SCREADY, and from the 2021 to 2022 SCREADY.

Note that, because MATs and AVTs are assigned based on rounded-down scores, all students whose prior year scores round down to the same score are assigned the same target gains, even if the rounded score falls into a different achievement level than the student’s unrounded score. For example, imagine that Anna is in 5<sup>th</sup> grade and scored 419 on the ELA SCREADY last year. Anna’s score falls within the lower half of Approaches (for which growth targets are typically set to 70<sup>th</sup> percentile gains). However, since the rounded score of 410 falls within the upper half of Does Not Meet, Anna’s growth target is based on 75<sup>th</sup> percentile gains. Table 5 indicates that MAT = 43 and AVT = 80 for Anna. Thus, if Anna scores 462 or higher (i.e., her prior year score of 419 plus her MAT of 43) on the ELA SCREADY in 5<sup>th</sup> grade, she will earn at least one point for her school in the accountability system. If Anna scores 499 or higher (i.e., 419 + 80) on the 5<sup>th</sup> grade ELA test, she will earn additional points for meeting her AVT. Although the exact scoring structure will be determined after an additional year of data has been collected and analyzed, several scoring systems have been tested using historical data and will be discussed in general terms in the next section.

## Applying the Added-Value Growth Model

Figure 6 - Achievement Levels in ELA under AVTs



As a first test of how effectively the proposed model moves students to grade-level proficiency, we applied its growth targets to the same sample of historical 3<sup>rd</sup> grade SCREADY scores analyzed in the previous sections. For each of the 107,950 3<sup>rd</sup> grade ELA scores and each of the 108,164 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Mathematics scores, we assumed that the students in question exactly met the expected achievement gains described by the AVTs shown in Table 5 when they took the 4<sup>th</sup> grade tests. We then used that predicted score to generate the AVTs for the 5<sup>th</sup> grade test, and so on each year to determine the students’ final achievement level at the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade. On the 8<sup>th</sup> grade ELA test, after five years of consistently meeting AVTs, 44% of students would score at the Exceeds level, 51% at the Meets level, and only 5% at the Approaches level (see Figure 6). On the Mathematics test, 36% would score at the Exceeds level, 51% at the Meets level, and only 13% at the Approaches level (see Figure 7). After consistently meeting AVTs, the students whose achievement remains below grade level expectations all started at the DNM1 achievement level in grade 3, scored at the Appr2 level in grade 8, and had scores within 13 points of Meets for ELA and within 26 points of Meets for Mathematics.

5% at the Approaches level (see Figure 6). On the Mathematics test, 36% would score at the Exceeds level, 51% at the Meets level, and only 13% at the Approaches level (see Figure 7). After consistently meeting AVTs, the students whose achievement remains below grade level expectations all started at the DNM1 achievement level in grade 3, scored at the Appr2 level in grade 8, and had scores within 13 points of Meets for ELA and within 26 points of Meets for Mathematics.

As a second test, we applied the proposed model to generate estimated Ratings Points and Ratings for schools using available historical data. This approach allowed us to compare estimated scores that schools would have received under the Added-Value Growth Model in 2018 and 2019 to the scores that schools received under the norm-referenced growth model that was in use at the time. We also tested estimated scores for relationships with known school characteristics. Note that we are not yet recommending a specific scoring system for the Added-Value Growth Model until after the scoring systems currently being considered can be tested against an additional year of collected growth data. However, all scoring systems tested met the following criteria:

- (a) Students whose SCREADY scores fall short of their individualized MATs earn zero Indicator Points for their school.
- (b) Students who meet or exceed their MATs earn at least one Indicator Point for their school.
- (c) Students who meet or exceed their AVTs earn substantially more Indicator Points for their school.
- (d) Students whose AVTs are based on higher percentile gains earn more Indicator Points for meeting those targets than students with AVTs based on lower percentile gains.

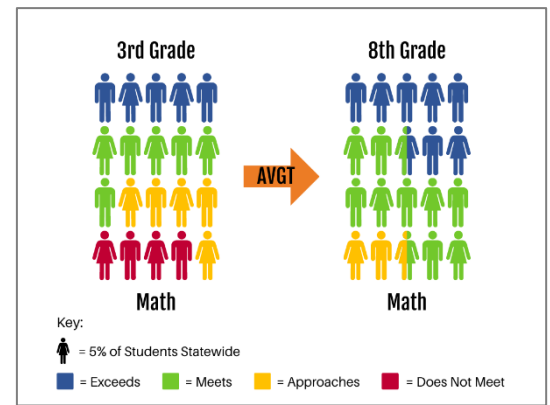
In addition to criteria (a) through (d), some scoring systems were tested in which a portion of the additional Indicator Points available for meeting AVTs could be earned for gains that are higher than MATs, but which fall short of reaching the AVT. All scoring systems tested were designed to minimize the correlation between the criterion-referenced value-added score and the proportion of students in poverty served by the school. In addition, since Academic Achievement and Student Growth are different but related constructs, scores generated by the proposed growth model are expected to correlate with Academic Achievement scores, but that correlation should not be too strong. Ideally, the magnitude of correlation between Added-Value Growth Model scores and both the school poverty index and Academic Achievement scores is expected to be less than 0.20. Finally, if the proposed criterion-referenced growth model is measuring the same or very similar construct of student achievement growth that the existing norm-referenced growth model measures, then scores generated by the proposed model should be strongly correlated with previously awarded Student Progress ratings. Most of the scoring systems tested met these performance criteria, and all tested scoring systems correlated with norm-referenced value-added scores at 0.80 or greater. These findings suggest that an additional year of data will allow us to select the most appropriate scoring system for use in the SC accountability system.

## Student Growth Applied Beyond Accountability

One possible advantage of the proposed criterion-referenced value-added model and the method it uses to assign individual growth targets is that similar methods can be applied to interim and benchmark assessments used throughout the school year to appropriately measure a student's progress toward their AVT. For example, according to publicly released information about the [Conditional Growth Percentile](#) reported by NWEA's MAP assessments, this metric is calculated and reported in a manner that will allow it to be directly compared to the percentile ranks shown in Table 4 that were used to determine AVTs. In this way, MAP data could provide timely insight into whether students are making enough growth to meet their AVTs.

Providers of the other interim and benchmark assessment systems approved for use in South Carolina may already provide similar metrics or could be encouraged to add them to reporting systems that support the state's effort to promote student growth that adds value to proficiency levels. These kinds of applications could make the Added-Value Growth Model useful for instructional planning and progress monitoring and not just for the purposes of accountability. The South Carolina Department of Education has already begun exploring methods with which to leverage this model for

Figure 7 - Achievement Levels in Math under AVTs



instructional applications, and EOC Staff are committed to supporting such efforts in any way possible. We recommend continuing to explore how the features of this model can be used to inform teaching and instructional interventions.

## A Value-Added Model that Meets the Needs of SC

### Desiderata for a Growth Model

According to the [Education Accountability Act of 1998, as last amended by Act 94 of 2017](#), its declared goal is to establish a performance-based accountability system to improve teaching and learning so that all students are equipped with a strong academic foundation and are prepared to meet the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate. The South Carolina accountability system has included a measure of student achievement growth for many years and has incorporated a value-added model since the 2017-18 school year. Including a measure of student growth is critically important to the goal of the accountability system.

Although the goal remains to ensure that all students meet or exceed grade level expectations each year, a student could arrive at a school far enough behind previous grade level expectations that getting them to proficiency in a single year would be a monumental and extremely difficult task. Our current norm-referenced value-added growth model encourages schools to ensure that such students demonstrate more gains than most other similar students in the state. Unfortunately, the analyses in this paper demonstrate that better than average growth is often insufficient to move students to proficiency. In these situations, it is in the interest of the State and all its residents to encourage schools to promote sufficient growth each year that students move closer to achieving grade level proficiency.

As EOC Staff began to explore a criterion-referenced value-added model to move students to proficiency, we identified eight desiderata (or desired attributes) for a model that would meet the state's needs. The desired growth model would:

- Desiderata 1:** Produce a specific, individualized growth target for each student based on that student's prior achievement.
- Desiderata 2:** Produce growth targets that, if met, would move all students toward proficiency and either maintain or improve all students' prior achievement levels.
- Desiderata 3:** Produce targets that can be understood by, calculated by, and communicated to all stakeholders.
- Desiderata 4:** Produce targets that are as rigorous as necessary to attain grade level proficiency, but do not unnecessarily inflate targets to avoid setting expectations that are seen as unreasonable or impossible.
- Desiderata 5:** Make it possible for all students and schools to perform well (or to perform poorly) against previously established criteria, independent of the performance of other students or schools.
- Desiderata 6:** Support a scoring system that can be understood by and projected by school and district leaders.
- Desiderata 7:** Produce school scores that are as uncorrelated as possible with the proportion of pupils in poverty served by the school.
- Desiderata 8:** Produce scores that are minimally correlated with Academic Achievement scores.

### ASA Subcommittee Recommendations

The Added-Value Growth Model described in this paper meets all eight of these desiderata. In addition, the proposed model has exciting implications for applications which support classroom instruction and instructional interventions at the school and district level. The proposed model is appropriate for an accountability system that promotes continuous improvement and supports improved outcomes for all students.

For these reasons, the ASA Subcommittee recommends adopting the Added-Value Growth Model to replace the current norm-referenced growth model for the Student Progress indicator in the South Carolina accountability system. Specifically, the following recommendations are made:

**Recommendation 1:** 2023 School Report Cards shall report both the existing norm-referenced student growth model and the proposed Added-Value Growth Model. Points and Ratings for schools shall be calculated using the same model and method described in the SY 2021-22 Accountability Manual. Added-Value Growth Model metrics shall be defined in the SY 2022-23 Accountability Manual without associated Points or Ratings and shall appear on Report Cards for informational purposes only.

**Recommendation 2:** EOC Staff shall analyze SY 2021-22 accountability data, seeking input from SCDE and select stakeholders, to further explore the Added-Value Growth Model scoring methods currently under consideration. EOC Staff shall make a final recommendation to EOC members for a scoring system to be published in the SY 2023-24 Accountability Manual.

**Recommendation 3:** EOC Staff, in collaboration with SCDE, will produce Added-Value Growth Model scores based on SY 2022-23 accountability data to disseminate to school and district leaders for their reference in preparation for full transition to the proposed model in the SY 2023-24 Accountability Manual.

**Recommendation 4:** 2024 School Report Cards shall report Added-Value Growth Model metrics and shall use those metrics to calculate Points and Ratings. The previously used norm-referenced growth model shall no longer be reported on these or subsequent report cards.