AGENDA

Academic Standards & Assessments Subcommittee Meeting

Monday, November 18, 2024
10:00 a.m.
Room 427, Blatt Building

I. Welcome ....Dr. Patty Tate

II. Approval of Minutes of September 16, 2024 ....Dr. Patty Tate

III. <u>Information Items:</u>
Report on SC High School Students
Focus Groups on Attendance ....Tenell Felder

2024 School Report Card Release ....Dana Yow

IV. Adjournment

<u>Academic Standards and Assessments Subcommittee</u>

Dr. Patty Tate, Chair	Sidney Locke
Rep. Terry Alexander	Sen. Dwight Loftis
Rep. Bill Hager	Melissa Pender
Barbara Hairfield	Sen. Ross Turner

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Patty J. Tate

C. Ross Turner, III

Ellen Weaver

Dana Yow
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Academic Standards & Assessments Subcommittee

Minutes of the Meeting

Sept. 16, 2024

Members Present (in-person or remote): Dr. Patty Tate, Rep. Terry Alexander, Rep. Bill Hager, Barbara Hairfield, Sen. Dwight Loftis, Melissa Pender, and Sen. Ross Turner

EOC Staff Present: Tenell Felder, Hope Johnson-Jones, Dr. Matthew Lavery, Dr. Jenny May and Dana Yow

ASA committee member Barbara Hairfield opened the meeting and asked for a motion to approve the ASA committee meeting minutes from May 20. After a motion was given and the minutes approved, Ms. Hairfield informed the committee that EOC staff member Dr. Matthew Lavery would present as an action item the cut score concordance of college readiness exams. She stated the action item staff recommendation would be to keep the current college ready criterion of the ACT at 20 and the concordance study to match with an SAT score of 1040. The proposed recommendation would not impact schools until the next school year and would require an amendment to the ESSA plan. She then called Dr. Lavery forward to present.

Dr. Lavery reviewed the concordance study, stating that purpose of the initial study in 2018 was to establish the relationship between the ACT and SAT to indicate roughly equivalent scores between the tests. He clarified that each assessment sets its college ready benchmarks differently (citing that the ACT looks at a 75% chance of earning a C or higher on a college course while the SAT uses a 75% chance of earning at least a C in the first semester college course). He stated that while the benchmarks are calculated differently, they helped to inform the staff recommendation.

Dr. Lavery then reviewed the questions committee members asked him regarding the study, one being how many students would be affected by the proposed recommendation. He stated that number came to 173 students, 0.3% of the total graduating cohort in 2023.

The committee also asked what district personnel thought about the proposed changes to which Dr. Lavery replied that his survey indicated district personnel thought the college ready criteria should indicate evidence that the student will be successful in college and that college ready criteria should reflect the admissions requirements of South Carolina colleges.

Dr. Lavery then reviewed the three proposed courses of action – stating that the second option was the one that the staff would recommend enacting. The second option being to make the current College-Ready criterion of ACT ≥ 20 and concordance study to match with SAT ≥ 1040. He stated that if approved, the change would not go into effect until the 2026 accountability manual.

This concluded Dr. Lavery's presentation, after which he accepted questions.

Senator Ross Turner thanked Dr. Lavery for his presentation then asked how the recommendation balances the fact that South Carolina colleges are accepting less than the college-ready scores.

Dr. Lavery responded that there were a couple of factors at work which included colleges moving towards a test-optional admission criteria and what the definition of college ready means. He said that from speaking with district personnel, the notion of college ready should present evidence that the student will be successful in college.

Barbara Hairfield then pointed out that there are also colleges that require scores higher than the recommendation. Senator Dwight Loftis agreed stating that colleges are also looking at other factors for college readiness instead of just testing to which Dr. Lavery agreed and stated that the College Ready school report card indicator captured those other factors. Senator Loftis then stated that they also look for leadership qualities which Dr. Lavery replied would be difficult for the accountability manual to measure those types of holistic qualities.

Matthew Ferguson commented that though he understood the principle behind the recommendation, he was concerned that implementing it would be of minor importance.

EOC Executive Director Dana Yow responded that while it appeared that not many students would be impacted, the issue had come before the EOC because there was a need to be able to equate the two assessments.

Senator Loftis then asked for the difference between the ACT and SAT, to which Dr. Lavery responded that the ACT measures four content areas while the SAT measures two.

Representative Bill Hager commented there was a need to communicate with students that a lower ACT or SAT score did not mean that they would not make it in college, just that they would have to work harder.

Ferguson then stated that the SC Department of Education is currently working with CHE to develop college matching programs similar to programs in North Carolina and Georgia. Yow

expressed her support of that initiative stating that the programs in Georgia and North Carolina had seen success.

Hairfield then reiterated the need for the business community to contribute their thoughts on career readiness to help teachers prepare students adequately for life after graduation.

ASA subcommittee chair Patty Tate stated that she thought it was important to have a concordance between the SAT and ACT.

Sen. Turner then motioned to approve, Sen. Loftis seconded, and the motion passed.

Next, Ms. Yow presented the information item of the upcoming cyclical review of the accountability system. She discussed the priority topics that would be discussed during the review. She then reviewed the timeline of the review, projecting that the final reports and recommendations would go to the SC General Assembly in December 2025.

Following her presentation, questions were accepted. Sen. Loftis asked if there was an estimation of what topics were most important to parents. Ms. Yow responded that student safety was very important to parents.

On the topic of college and career readiness, Hairfield commented that the business community wants employees who are able to think critically and do problem solving. To which Loftis responded that students who have been in CTE have more hands-on learning.

Next on the agenda was the EOC strategic plan update by Ms. Yow and EOC Deputy Director Dr. Matthew Lavery.

Ms. Yow and Dr. Lavery gave an overview of the EOC's strategic goals which include reporting facts, measuring change and promoting progress. They reviewed each objective and the progress made for each one. During the presentation, Yow and Lavery updated the subcommittee on the following but not limited to progress points:

- EOC now has Data Sharing Agreements in place with SC Revenue and Fiscal Affairs, SC First Steps in addition to the SC Department of Education, outlining terms for the secure sharing and use of data for lawful purposes.
- The EOC was part of the development of the Unified State Plan, linking education and economic development (Passage of Statewide Education and Workforce Development Act of 2023).

- Publicly surfaced National Clearinghouse visualizations on DashboardSC.sc.gov
- Implemented new communication tools for external stakeholders to understand the report cards, their results and uses for them.
- Integrated the following new, actionable accountability measures: On Track measure, Five Year Student Success Measure, and the Criterion-Reference Added-Value Growth Model.
- Reported on Head Start data in annual CERDEP evaluation.
- Completed level linking study determining relationship between interim benchmark assessments and summative student assessment results.
- Completed the first year of a multi-year qualitative study, the Beating the Odds Investigative Study, that recognizes schools excelling while serving a high percentage of students in poverty.
- Has regularly received and responded to accountability questions from school and district level educators and leaders indicating EOC's role in accountability is more prominently recognized and understood in the field.
- Established a K-12 Military Readiness Task Force, a special EOC subcommittee, to define a "military-ready student." The EOC adopted the subcommittee's recommendations in June 2024.
- Expanded relationships and partnerships with outside agencies and groups.

Yow and Lavery also presented items that will be worked on in the upcoming year which includes but not limited to the following:

- To develop processes and systems to address deficiencies in data that have surfaced in public dashboarding.
- Develop a system to direct requests to the EOC for new Education Improvement Act funding.
- Finalize Stackable credential system for integration into accountability system.
- Focus on greater accessibility of agency websites and dashboards.
- Begin longitudinal analysis of the success of students who were early cohorts of state funded 4K.
- Examine impact of credit recovery on SC students and the current high school experience on the overall success of students.
- Hold regional listening sessions with external stakeholders as part of the Cyclical Review of the Accountability System.

- Establish criteria for Palmetto Gold and Silver that addresses achievement gap.
- Continue Beating the Odds Investigative Study analysis.
- Complete Preschool Development Grant work, alongside SC First Steps, to provide recommendations regarding 4K waitlists as well as a cost analysis of the CERDEP program

At the conclusion of this presentation, the meeting was adjourned.

2024
SC School Report Cards
FAST FACTS

SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
Reporting facts. Measuring change. Promoting progress.
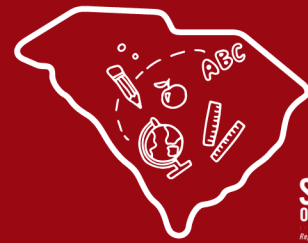
The **SC Education Oversight Committee** is the legislative committee that oversees the South Carolina Education Accountability Act which sets standards for improving the state's K-12 educational system. The EOC also oversees the **Accountability Manual for the Annual School and District Report Card System** for South Carolina Public Schools and School Districts.

PURPOSE

- SC School Report Cards are designed to increase the accountability of South Carolina's public schools by providing easy-to-understand ratings for families and the public.

RATINGS

- All public elementary, middle and high schools receive an **overall rating**, based on a 100 point scale.

- The Ratings - *Excellent*, *Good*, *Average*, *Below Average* and *Unsatisfactory* - are reflective of how well a school's students meet criteria for the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate.

INDICATORS

- South Carolina schools are measured in several areas, called **performance indicators**: Academic Achievement, Student Progress, High School Student Success, Preparing for Success, College and Career Ready, Multilingual Learners' Progress, Graduation Rate and School Climate (Classroom Environment, Student Safety and Financial Information are non rated indicators).

2024 REPORT CARD INSIGHTS

- South Carolina public schools slightly increased in the overall number of schools receiving an *Academic Achievement* rating of *Excellent* - an indicator which uses state summative assessment results to measure if students are meeting state standards in English Language Arts and Math.

- 1 in 5 of SC students were chronically absent during the 2022-23 school year.

- While this year's on-time graduation rate remains high at 85.4%, only 30% of those same SC graduates were college and career ready.

- The number of students in poverty has increased. 62.2% of SC students were classified as Pupils in Poverty in the 2023-24 school year.

RESOURCES

SC Report Cards: screportcards.com
Expect More SC: expectmoresc.com/sc-report-card

SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
Reporting facts. Measuring change. Promoting progress.

The School Report Cards, scheduled to be released on October 15, 2024, are the third Report Cards released with ratings since 2019. The two-year pause occurred because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The following data reflects data generated on **October 11, 2024.**

Summary of the Overall Ratings and indicators

Overall Ratings

- Based on a 100-point scale, per state law

Number and percentage of schools receiving Overall Ratings by school year

	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS			MIDDLE SCHOOLS			HIGH SCHOOLS		
	2022	**2023**	**2024**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	2022	2023	**2024**
Excellent	145 (21.8%)	161 (24.1%)	124 **18%**	71 (21.4%)	70 (20.8%)	43 **12%**	40 (16.7%)	48 (20.3%)	63 **25%**
Good	144 (22.1%)	161 (24.1%)	187 **28%**	76 (22.9%)	97 (28.9%)	87 **25%**	48 (20.0%)	46 (19.4%)	42 **17%**
Average	235 (35.3%)	240 (36.0%)	250 **37%**	131 (39.5%)	134 (39.9%)	158 **46%**	76 (31.7%)	68 (28.7%)	69 **27%**
Below Average	100 (15.0%)	80 (12.0%)	86 **13%**	43 (12.9%)	30 (8.9%)	44 **13%**	53 (22.1%)	45 (19.0%)	56 **22%**
Unsatis-factory	42 (6.3%)	25 (3.7%)	25 **4%**	11 (3.3%)	5 (1.5%)	8 **2%**	19 (7.9%)	30 (12.7%)	14 **6%**
# of Cards	666	667	**672**	332	336	**340**	240	237	**244**

Note: Totals do not include Career Centers or Special Schools. Eighteen schools did not receive Overall Ratings.

Ranges of scores necessary to receive overall Ratings by school type

Overall Rating	Elementary Schools	Middle Schools	High Schools
Excellent	61-100	56-100	67-100
Good	53-60	48-55	60-66
Average	42-52	36-47	51-59
Below Average	34-41	29-35	40-50
Unsatisfactory	0-33	0-28	0-39

Indicator Ratings

Academic Achievement: Indicator determines if students in a school are meeting state standards in English Language Arts (Reading and Writing) and Math.

*Counts 35 points for Elementary and Middle Schools; 25 points for High Schools

Scoring assumes there are 20 or more Multilingual Learners in a school.

Number and percentage of schools receiving ratings in Academic Achievement indicator by school year

	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS			MIDDLE SCHOOLS			HIGH SCHOOLS		
	2022	**2023**	**2024**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	2022	2023	**2024**
Excellent	120 (18.0%)	150 (22.5%)	170 **25%**	35 (10.5%)	58 (17.3%)	57 **17%**	8 (3.3%)	19 (8.2%)	21 **9%**
Good	97 (14.6%)	134 (20.1%)	140 **21%**	53 (16.0%)	63 (18.8%)	64 **19%**	24 (10.0%)	31 (13.3%)	44 **18%**
Average	238 (35.7%)	227 (34.0%)	224 **33%**	117 (35.2%)	123 (36.6%)	128 **37%**	48 (20.0%)	65 (27.9%)	73 **31%**
Below Average	133 (20.0%)	123 (18.4%)	121 **18%**	81 (24.4%)	72 (21.4%)	74 **21%**	66 (27.5%)	73 (31.3%)	74 **31%**
Unsatis-factory	78 (11.7%)	33 (4.9%)	17 **3%**	46 (13.9%)	20 (6.0%)	17 **5%**	94 (39.2%)	45 (19.3%)	27 **11%**
# of Cards	666	667	672	332	336	340	240	233	239

Note: Totals do not include Career Centers or Special Schools. Twenty-three schools did not receive Academic Achievement indicator Ratings.

Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations on SC READY by school year State Performance (Elementary and Middle Schools)

English Language Arts

2018-19	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
45.6%	42.4%	46.8%	52.7%	54.1%

Mathematics

2018-19	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
45.3%	37.0%	38.8%	39.6%	42.8%

Percent Earning a C or better on End-of-Course exams by school year
State Performance (High Schools)

English 2

2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
67.4%	66.84%	67.4%	66.4%

Algebra I

2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
34.6%	42.3%	44.86%	47.8%

Preparing for Success*: This indicator determines if students in a school are meeting state standards in Science (as measured by SC READY Science given in 4th and 6th grades) in Elementary Middle Schools. For High Schools, the indicator measures performance on both the Biology I and U.S. History and the Constitution End-of-Course exams.

*Preparing for Success *will not* be calculated or reported for elementary and middle schools for the 2024 Report Cards to allow scoring for the new SC READY Science test to be developed.

10 points for High Schools

*Scoring assumes there are 20 or more Multilingual Learners in a school.

Number and percentage of schools receiving ratings in
Preparing for Success by school year

PFS Rating	HIGH SCHOOLS		
	2022	2023	2024
Excellent	22 (9.8%)	9 (3.9%)	17 7%
Good	21 (9.3%)	12 (5.2%)	11 5%
Average	58 (25.8%)	59 (25.3%)	66 26%
Below Average	66 (29.3%)	73 (31.3%)	79 34%
Unsatis-factory	58 (25.8%)	80 (34.3%)	61 26%
# of Cards	225	233	234

Note: Totals do not include Career Centers or Special Schools. Eighteen schools did not receive Preparing for Success indicator Ratings.

Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations on SC READY/PASS Science by school year
State Performance (Elementary and Middle Schools)

Science

2018-19	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
49.1%	42.9%	46.0%	43.7%	Not measured this year

Percent Earning a C or better on End-of-Course exams by school year
State Performance (High Schools)

Biology I

2017-18	2018-19	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
49.2%	47.0%	39.3%	42.6%	42.9%	47.9%

U.S. History and the Constitution

2017-18	2018-19	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
50.2%	47.1%	37.1%	39.3%	44.67%	41.5%

Student Progress: This indicator determines how students are growing or improving academically in ELA and Math and how the lowest performing 20% of students in a school are growing academically.

*Counts 35 points for Elementary and Middle Schools; does not count for High Schools

Scoring assumes there are 20 or more Multilingual Learners in a school.

Number and percentage of schools receiving ratings in Student Progress indicator by school year

St Prog. Rating	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS			MIDDLE SCHOOLS		
	2022	**2023**	**2024**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**
Excellent	80 (12.1%)	84 (12.7%)	75 **11%**	22 (6.6%)	20 (6.0%)	22 **6%**
Good	158 (23.9%)	157 (23.7%)	145 **22%**	76 (22.8%)	76 (22.6%)	52 **15%**
Average	241 (36.5%)	245 (37.0%)	307 **46%**	172 (51.7%)	182 (54.2%)	143 **42%**
Below Average	144 (21.8%)	140 (21.1%)	109 **16%**	61 (18.3%)	53 (15.8%)	91 **27%**
Unsatisfactory	38 (5.7%)	37 (5.6%)	33 **5%**	2 (0.6%)	5 (1.5%)	32 **9%**
# of Cards	661	663	669	333	336	**340**

Note: Totals do not include Career Centers or Special Schools. *Thirteen elementary and middle* schools did not receive Preparing for Success indicator Ratings.

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Multilingual Learners' Proficiency: Indicator determines if students in a school who are non-native-English speakers are meeting growth targets to learn the English Language.

*Counts 10 points for all schools with 20 or more Multilingual Learners.

Number and percentage of schools receiving ratings in Multilingual Learners' Progress indicator by school year

MLP Rating	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS			MIDDLE SCHOOLS			HIGH SCHOOLS		
	2022	**2023**	**2024**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**
Excellent	57 (15.5%)	49 (13.1%)	8 **1%**	20 (11.0%)	11 (6.0%)	2 **1%**	3 (2.2%)	1 (0.7%)	1 **1%**
Good	157 (42.8%)	167 (44.7%)	63 **18%**	53 (29.3%)	57 (31.0%)	11 **6%**	35 (25.4%)	36 (25.0%)	10 **7%**
Average	115 (31.3%)	127 (34.0%)	160 **46%**	74 (40.9%)	73 (39.7%)	48 **27%**	60 (43.5%)	66 (45.8%)	35 **25%**
Below Average	36 (9.8%)	31 (8.3%)	107 **31%**	32 (17.7%)	41 (22.3%)	83 **47%**	38 (27.5%)	38 (26.4%)	74 **52%**
Unsatis-factory	2 (0.5%)	0 (0%)	10 **3%**	2 (1.1%)	2 (1.1%)	31 **18%**	2 (1.4%)	3 (2.1%)	22 **15%**
# of Cards	367	374	**348**	181	184	**175**	138	144	**142**

Note: Totals do not include Career Centers or Special Schools. *609 schools without 20 or more Multilingual Learners did not receive ratings for this indicator.*

School Climate: Indicator uses results from the Teacher and Student Climate surveys to measure perceptions of safety, working conditions, and social-physical environment.

*Counts 10 points for Elementary and Middle Schools; 5 points for High Schools

Number and percentage of schools receiving ratings in School Climate Indicator

Sch Clim. Rating	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS			MIDDLE SCHOOLS			HIGH SCHOOLS		
	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024
Excellent	76 (11.6%)	135 (20.2%)	162 **24%**	38 (12.0%)	44 (13.1%)	71 **21%**	26 (10.9%)	31 (12.9%)	50 **20%**
Good	120 (18.4%)	128 (19.2%)	137 **20%**	56 (17.7%)	84 (24.9%)	91 **27%**	29 (12.2%)	41 (17.0%)	57 **23%**
Average	223 (34.2%)	212 (31.7%)	215 **32%**	110 (34.8%)	109 (32.3%)	127 **37%**	92 (38.7%)	78 (32.4%)	93 **38%**
Below Average	155 (23.7%)	123 (18.4%)	109 **16%**	71 (22.5%)	57 (16.9%)	42 **12%**	55 (23.1%)	53 (22.0%)	35 **14%**
Unsatis-factory	79 (12.1%)	70 (10.5%)	49 **7%**	41 (13.0%)	43 (12.8%)	9 **3%**	36 (15.1%)	38 (15.8%)	11 **4%**
# of Cards	653	668	**672**	316	337	**340**	238	241	**246**

Note: Totals do not include Career Centers or Special Schools. For this indicator, 16 schools did not receive a rating.

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High School Student Success: This indicator shows if high school students have earned the required 24 credits (four in English and four in math) to be eligible for graduation in four years OR shows if students have reached a successful high school outcome within five years of beginning high school.

Number and percentage of schools receiving ratings in High School Student Success by school year

High School Student Success Rating	2024
Excellent	69 (28%)
Good	72 (29%)
Average	59 (24%)
Below Average	27 (11%)
Unsatisfactory	18 (7%)
Number of Cards	**245**

Note: Totals do not include Career Centers or Special Schools. Seven high schools were not rated for this indicator in 2024.

Graduation Rate: Indicator determines what percentage of students who entered the high school in the 9th grade graduated in at least 4 years.

*Counts 19 points for High Schools only.

Number and percentage of schools receiving ratings in Graduation Rate indicator by school year

Graduation Rate Rating	High Schools			
	2019	2022	2023	2024
Excellent	65 (27.9%)	77 (32.1%)	79 (33.3%)	84 (35%)
Good	92 (39.5%)	82 (34.2%)	81 (34.2%)	73 (30%)
Average	46 (19.7%)	54 (22.5%)	48 (20.3%)	61 (25%)
Below Average	14 (6.0%)	14 (5.8%)	17 (7.2%)	16 (7%)
Unsatisfactory	16 (6.9%)	13 (5.4%)	12 (5.1%)	8 (3%)
Number of Cards	233	240	237	242

Note: Totals do not include Career Centers or Special Schools. Ten high schools were not rated for this indicator in 2024.

State Graduation Rate

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
82.6%	84.6%	81.0%	81.1%	82.2%	83.3%	83.8%	83.8%	85.4%

College and Career Ready: Indicator determines if students who are graduating from a high school are prepared for college or careers after graduating.

*Counts 25 points for High Schools only.

Number and percentage of schools receiving ratings in College and Career Ready indicator by school year

CCR Rating	High Schools		
	2022	**2023**	**2024**
Excellent	53 (22.1%)	46 (19.4%)	85 (35%)
Good	57 (23.8%)	60 (25.3%)	68 (28%)
Average	86 (35.8%)	86 (36.3%)	66 (27%)
Below Average	32 (13.3%)	34 (14.3%)	17 (7%)
Unsatisfactory	12 (5.0%)	11 (4.6%)	6 (2%)
Number of Cards	240	237	**242**

Note: Totals do not include Career Centers or Special Schools. Ten high schools were not rated for this indicator in 2023.

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Percent of Students College OR Career Ready

2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
61.1%	61.1%	65.8%	64.7%	71.5%

*Students can be counted more than once as they may meet more than one option.

Percent of Students College AND Career Ready

2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Not calculated	28.7%	29.0%	29.3%	30.6%

Percent of Students Career Ready

2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2023-24
61.1%	55.7%	62.8%	69.6%

Career Ready Detail

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
CTE completer with certification	13.8%	17.5%	20.6%	**25.1%**
Work-based learning	3.1%	5.3%	7.7%	**9.7%**
Silver or higher on Career Readiness assessment	48.0%	54.1%	47.8%	**55.1%**
ASVAB	6.7%	5.9%	6.9%	**9.0%**
SC High School Employability Credential	Not yet implemented	0.6%	0.7%	**0.7%**

Percent of Students College Ready

2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
34.1%	32.0%	32.6%	32.5%

College Ready Detail

CR Measure	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
ACT: 20 or higher	15.4%	11.3%	11.8%	**12.4%**
SAT: 1020 or higher	20.5%	20.5%	20.0%	**19.3%**
AP: 3 or higher	16.0%	14.9%	15.1%	**14.9%**
IB: 4 or higher	1.1%	0.9%	0.8%	**0.7%**
Dual Credit: C or better	15.3%	14.1%	15.2%	**15.8%**

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State Education Agencies celebrate Academic Achievement of schools while stressing the need for statewide improvement

Greenwood, SC – October 15, 2024 – Tuesday morning, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) and the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC) released the 2024 SC School Report Cards at Pinecrest Elementary School in Greenwood School District 50. These report cards, available at www.screportcards.com, provide insights into student performance and school quality for the 2023-2024 school year.

All South Carolina public schools receive overall report card ratings based on a 100-point scale. Schools also receive ratings on various indicators such as academic achievement, student progress, college and career readiness, and graduation rate.

Overall Ratings for the 2024 and 2023 school report cards are as follows:

Rating	2024	2023
Excellent	230	278
Good	316	301
Average	477	439
Below Average	186	155
Unsatisfactory	47	60

South Carolina public schools increased in the overall number receiving an Academic Achievement rating of *Excellent*, an indicator that uses state summative assessment results to measure if students are meeting state standards in English Language Arts and Math.

For school year 2023-24, 54% of 3rd through 8th graders scored *Met* or *Exceeds Expectations* on SC READY ELA.

"As South Carolina schools continue to recover from the disruptions of the pandemic, programs like LETRS, grounded in the Science of Reading, are proving to be effective in fostering foundational literacy skills in early grades," said State Superintendent of Education Ellen Weaver.

Student performance on the high school end-of-course exams improved in school year 2023-24 for all required assessments except U.S. History and the Constitution.

Superintendent Weaver celebrated the successes of SC public schools while emphasizing the work ahead: "As we continue to strive towards at least 75% of students performing at or above grade level, the school report cards allow us to shine a light on the successes of schools across South Carolina."

Weaver called out the performance of Pinecrest Elementary School in Greenwood School District 50, the host school for the annual release of report cards. Pinecrest earned an Excellent overall rating on the 2024 School Report Cards and also received the highest rating in both Academic Achievement and Student Progress. Of the student population that Pinecrest serves, 87% of them are considered Pupils in Poverty.

"The performance of schools like Pinecrest Elementary reminds us that though poverty is a challenge, it does not have to be destiny," stated Weaver. "The faculty, staff, and students at these schools are living proof of the progress that is possible with a clear vision, focused leadership and high expectations for every student."

While 44% of South Carolina public schools received an overall rating of *Excellent* or *Good*, data from this year's report card also indicates areas of needed improvement.

"Moving forward, South Carolina will continue to expand evidence-based efforts to advance early literacy by investing in teacher knowledge and Science of Reading-aligned classroom materials and practice. Improving math proficiency must also be an urgent, parallel priority to ensure that all students are fully prepared for future success. The Department's newly launched Palmetto Math Project is positioned to do just that," said Weaver.

April Allen, Chair of the SC Education Oversight Committee, the group that determines the components of the school accountability system, pointed to the disconnect between

the on-time high school graduation rate and the rate at which those same students are college-or career-ready.

"This year's report card data shows a disparity between the percentage of high school students who graduate on time and the rate at which those same students are college and career ready. We want to ensure that our students are adequately prepared for life after graduation. "

Additionally, Allen stated that the committee is looking closely at the impact of chronic absenteeism on students and schools.

"The state's 2022-23 chronic absenteeism rate is 22% which means 1 in 5 students are chronically absent," Allen stated. "The data confirm that if students are not present at school, they can't learn." Allen emphasized that it takes parents and families as well as communities to work on solving this problem.

For more detailed information on the 2024 School Report Cards and district-specific performance, please visit www.screportcards.com.

Overall Ratings for the 2024 and 2023 school report cards by school type are as follows:

Rating	2024				2023			
	Total	**Elem**	**Middle**	**High**	**Total**	**Elem**	**Middle**	**High**
Excellent	**230**	124	43	63	**278**	160	70	48
Good	**316**	187	87	42	**301**	158	97	46
Average	**477**	250	158	69	**439**	240	132	67
Below Average	**186**	86	44	56	**155**	81	30	44
Unsatisfactory	**47**	25	8	14	**60**	25	5	30

2024
EOC SC Report Card Remarks
SUMMARY

Remarks by April Allen, South Carolina Education Oversight Committee's Chairperson.

MATHEMATICS

- Statewide, only 43% of 3rd through 8th graders are scoring Meets or Exceeds Expectations on the SC READY Math test, which measures grade-level standards in mathematics.

- At the high school level, less than half of students are scoring a "C" or better on the Algebra I End-of-Course Assessment

EOC'S STATEMENT ON MATHEMATIC ACADEMIC CONCERN

"Despite the improvement, math is an area of academic concern for the EOC and our partners at the Department. Data on math achievement is even more concerning when we look at Pupils in Poverty who are also chronically absent – the latter of which applies to 62% of our students. Students are struggling in math and as a State, we want to provide schools, teachers and students the tools and resources they need to improve."

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

- Data from the US Department of Education indicate that high Chronic Absenteeism rates are a national issue that worsened following the COVID pandemic with national rates rising to 26% during the 2022-23 school year.

- In South Carolina, 1 in 5 of students were chronically absent during the 2022-23 school year.

- Chronic Absenteeism & Math: 23% of students statewide who were Chronically Absent in 22-23 met or exceeded grade level standards in math compared to 47% of students who were not chronically absent.

EOC'S STATEMENT ON CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

"Chronic Absenteeism – which is defined as being absent for 10% or more of the school year – is another area of significant concern for the EOC that must be addressed. Alarmingly, studies also indicate that Chronic Absenteeism has a significantly negative impact on student achievement. It makes sense; if students aren't in school, it is unlikely that they are going to stay on track for success."

GRADUATION RATES/COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

- SC's on-time graduation rate remains high at 85.4% yet only 30% of those same SC graduates were college *and* career ready.

EOC'S STATEMENT ON GRADUATION RATES/COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

Graduation Rate alone is not an adequate measure of success; we also must ensure that South Carolina students are sufficiently prepared for life after high school -- rather that be a career, military or college.