

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the EOC

FROM: Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee

DATE: July 12, 2016

IN RE: Criteria for Identifying Underperforming Schools and Districts

The Education Oversight Committee (EOC) must determine how to identify underperforming schools and districts on the transitional report card beginning this fall, 2016. Act 281 of 2016 and a proviso in H.5001, the 2016-17 General Appropriation Act, as ratified on June 2, 2016, contain the following language regarding the 2016 state report cards.

Act 281

(7) Within thirty days after providing student performance data to the school districts as required by law, the department must provide to the Education Oversight Committee student performance results on assessments authorized in this subsection and end-of-course assessments in a format agreed upon by the department and the Oversight Committee. The Education Oversight Committee must use the results of these assessments in school years 2014-2015, 2015-2016, and 2016-2017 to report on student academic performance in each school and district pursuant to Section 59-18-900. The committee may not determine state ratings for schools or districts, pursuant to Section 59-18-900, using the results of the assessments required by this subsection until after the conclusion of the 2016-2017 school year; provided, however, state ratings must be determined by the results of these assessments beginning in the 2017-2018 school year. The Oversight Committee also must develop and recommend a single accountability system that meets federal and state accountability requirements by the Fall of 2017. While developing the single accountability system that will be implemented in the 2017-2018 school year, the Education Oversight Committee shall determine the format of a transitional report card released to the public in the Fall of 2016 and 2017 that will also identify underperforming schools and districts. These transitional reports will, at a minimum, include the following: (1) school, district, and

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statewide student assessment results in reading and mathematics in grades three through eight; (2) high school and district graduation rates; and (3) measures of student college and career readiness at the school, district, and statewide level. These transitional reports will inform schools and districts, the public, and the Department of Education of school and district general academic performance and assist in identifying potentially underperforming schools and districts and in targeting technical assistance support and interventions in the interim before ratings are issued.

H.5001

2016-17 General Appropriation Act, as Ratified on June 2, 2016

1A.80. (SDE-EIA: Report Cards) With the funds appropriated for assessment and the achievement results obtained from these assessments, the Education Oversight Committee shall not calculate absolute or absolute or growth performance ratings for the 2016-17 school year for schools or districts. Instead, the Education Oversight Committee shall determine the format of a transitional report card released to the public in the fall of 2016 that will also identify underperforming schools and districts. These transitional reports will, at a minimum, include the following: (1) school, district and statewide student assessment results in reading and mathematics in grades 3 through 8; (2) high school and district graduation rates; and (3) measures of student college and career readiness at the school, district, and statewide level. These transitional reports shall inform schools and districts, the public, and the Department of Education of school and district general academic performance and assist in identifying potentially underperforming schools and districts and in targeting technical assistance support and interventions in the interim before ratings are issued.

Recommendation

The Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee met on July 11, 2016 and recommended that the following criteria be used to identify underperforming schools and districts. The Subcommittee reiterates that the world class skills and life and career characteristics of the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate* are not reflected in the assessment results used in identifying underperforming schools.

Elementary & Middle Schools

For elementary and middle schools, “potentially underperforming” elementary and middle schools would equal the lowest performing 5 percent of all elementary and middle schools based on the following criteria:

1. Schools with the highest percentage of students scoring “Does Not Meet” in English language arts and mathematics on the 2015-16 administration of SC Ready.

2. Only schools that tested at least two grade levels would be identified in 2016; therefore, no primary school would be identified.

High Schools

For high schools, “potentially underperforming” high schools would equal the lowest performing 5 percent of all high schools based on the following criteria:

1. The on-time graduation rate for school year 2015-16.
2. The percentage of juniors earning a WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate of Silver or better in 2015-16. A Silver or better certificate implies that the student would be qualified for two-thirds or more of the jobs in the national database;
3. The percentage of juniors who on the ACT met or exceeded the benchmarks scores in Reading (22) or Mathematics (22) in 2015-16;
4. The percentage of students scoring a “D” or “F” on the end-of-course assessments in English I and Algebra I; and
5. Only high schools with at least thirty (30) ACT assessment results and thirty (30) WorkKeys certificate results in 2015-16 would be included.

School Districts

Any school district that met two or more of the following criteria would be identified as an underperforming school district:

1. Any district that had an on-time graduation rate of less than 70% would be identified. The average on-time graduation rate for South Carolina in 2014-15 was 82%.
2. Any district that had more than an average of 50 percent of students in grades 3 through 8 scoring “Does Not Meet Expectations” on SC Ready in reading and mathematics in 2015-16 would be identified. The district would be identified using the mean percentage of students scoring “Does Not Meet Expectations” in reading and mathematics.

3. Any district that had less than 20 percent of its 11th graders earning a WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate of Silver or better in 2015-16 would be identified.
4. Any district that had 5 percent or less of its 11th graders who on the ACT met or exceeded the benchmark scores in Reading (22) **or** mathematics (22) would be identified.

Explanation

The recommendations are based on the premise that the lowest performing five percent of elementary and middle schools and the lowest performing five percent of high schools would be identified. The rationale for identifying the lowest five percent is based on the federal legislation, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which requires states to identify the lowest performing 5 percent of **Title I** schools and high schools with graduation rates at or below 67 percent.

The number of districts would be contingent upon the number meeting two or more of the specific criteria as defined herein. No primary school or vocational center would be identified. Only schools with population size, or “n” size, of 30 or more would be considered in any criteria. The “n” size of 30 is consistent with the South Carolina Department of Education’s ESEA waiver.

Elementary & Middle Schools

Students scoring “Does Not Meet Expectations” on SC Ready are students achieving at the lowest performance level on the assessment administered in grades 3 through 8. For elementary and middle schools, the schools would be identified by looking at the percentages of students in each school who scored “Does Not Meet Expectations” on the English language arts (ELA) and mathematics sections of the SC Ready assessment in the 2015-16 school year. Writing performance is included in the ELA score of SC Ready. The percentages of students scoring “Does Not Meet Expectations” for these tests would be averaged, with the percent for each area, reading and mathematics, weighted equally. The number of schools identified as underperforming would be approximately five percent of the total number of elementary and middle schools receiving a state report card. Only schools that tested at least two grade levels would be identified in 2016; therefore, no primary school would be identified.

High Schools

The law requires the EOC to look at graduation rates and college and career readiness indicators. For high schools, the following information would be used to identify “potentially underperforming” high schools:

1. The on-time graduation rate for school year 2015-16.
2. The percentage of juniors earning a WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate of Silver or better in 2015-16. A Silver or better certificate implies that the student would be qualified for two-thirds or more of the jobs in the national database;
3. The percentage of juniors who on the ACT met or exceeded the benchmarks scores in Reading (22) or Mathematics (22) in 2015-16; and
4. The percentage of students scoring a “D” or “F” on the end-of-course assessments in English I and Algebra I.

Achievement of students in high schools would be evaluated accordingly across each of the above three criteria with high schools with the lowest student achievement across all indicators identified. The number of high schools identified as “underperforming” would be approximately five percent of the total number of high schools receiving a state report card. Only high schools with at least thirty (30) ACT assessment results and thirty (30) WorkKeys certificate results would be included.

School Districts

The following information would be used to identify “underperforming” school districts:

1. Any district that had an on-time graduation rate of less than 70% would be identified. The average on-time graduation rate for South Carolina in 2014-15 was 82%.
2. Any district that had more than an average of 50 percent of students in grades 3 through 8 scoring “Does Not Meet Expectations” on SC Ready in reading and mathematics in 2015-16 would be identified. The district would be identified using the mean percentage of students scoring “Does Not Meet Expectations” in reading and mathematics.

3. Any district that had less than 20 percent of its 11th graders earning a WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate of Silver or better in 2015-16 would be identified.
4. Any district that had 5 percent or less of its 11th graders who on the ACT met or exceeded the benchmark scores in Reading (22) **or** mathematics (22) would be identified.

Analysis Using Student Achievement Data from 2014-15

To assist the EOC in making the determinations, the staff retroactively identified schools and districts that would have been identified if the same criteria had been applied to the student achievement results from school year 2014-15 using ACT Aspire.

For elementary and middle schools, the identification of the lowest five percent of schools is based on the percentage of students who scored “In Need of Support” on the ACT Aspire Reading and Mathematics subtests. Students scoring “In Need of Support” were students achieving at the lowest performance level on ACT Aspire. There were only small differences between the number of students tested in Reading and Mathematics for any school. With nearly identical numbers of students taking these assessments, the percentages of students who scored “In Need of Support” were averaged. Schools were then ordered with respect to this one measure to identify the lowest five percent of schools.

For high school schools, the identification criteria were based on four different data: WorkKeys scores, ACT scores, on-time graduation rates, and end-of-course assessments in English 1 and Algebra I. The percentage of students that met the criteria for each of these areas was combined into a composite to identify high schools. The simplest approach to combining these percentages is to average them, computing the mean. However, because these percentages represent different achievements, were based on different students, and were based on different numbers of students, averaging may not have been the best approach. To ensure that each measure contributed equally to a composite measure, an alternative method was to convert each percentage to a z-score, and average the three z-scores. Schools would then be ordered using these z-scores.

Both approaches were conducted and results compared using a Pearson’s correlation coefficient to compare the average of the percentages to the average of the z scores,

the staff determined that the two measures were highly correlated. The Pearson's correlation coefficient was 0.98. A visual presentation of the relationship between the mean percentage and the mean z-scores is presented in the Appendix. Additionally, the list of high schools identified using both methods were compared. Of the 12 high schools identified, 10 were identified using both methods. The conclusion was that using the average of the three percentages to identify schools was as reliable as converting the percentages to a z-score. Because averaging the percentages is more straightforward, the staff used the mean percentage across all criteria to identify the schools.

School districts were identified using four criteria:

1. The percentage of 11th graders obtaining a Silver, Gold or Platinum National Career Readiness Certificate on WorkKeys;
2. The percentage of 11th graders that met the ACT benchmarks for college readiness on Reading **or** Mathematics, both a score of 22;
3. The on-time graduation rate for the district; and
4. The percentage of students in grades 3 through 8 who scored "In Need of Support" on ACT Aspire Reading or Mathematics in 2014-15.

Results of Elementary and Middle Schools:

In 2015 there were 894 elementary and middle schools that received report cards. Using ACT Aspire results for 2014-15, approximately **44** schools would have been identified as "underperforming" using these criteria. There would have been: 16 elementary schools, 24 middle and 3 combination elementary/middle schools. The schools would have been in 21 districts.

High Schools

In 2015 there were 236 high schools that received state report cards. Using the above criteria and applying it to 2014-15 data, there would have been **12** high schools identified as underperforming. These high schools are located in 10 school districts.

Districts

Of the 82 school districts, 4 or 5 percent would be identified as “underperforming” based on meeting at least two of the criteria as noted in the chart below:

Criteria	2 Criteria	3 Criteria
WorkKeys (<20% Silver or Better)	Hampton 2	Allendale
ACT (<5% College Ready, Reading & Math)	Hampton 2 Lee	Allendale
Graduation Rate	Florence 4	
SC Ready ELA & Mathematics Grades 3 – 8	Florence 4 Lee	Allendale

APPENDIX

**Comparison of High School Composite Measures:
Mean Percent and Mean z-score
($r=.98$)**

