

2009 Annual School and District Ratings Discussion Points

Based on data received from SCDE March 18, 2010; and March 24, 2010



RATINGS

Absolute Ratings

2009 Absolute ratings			
Schools rated Excellent	188 (16%)	Primary schools: 26 Elementary schools: 111	Middle schools: 26 High Schools: 25
Schools rated Good	185 (16%)	Primary schools: 3 Elementary schools: 105	Middle schools: 41 High Schools: 36
Schools rated Average	536 (46%)	Primary schools: 0 Elementary schools: 301	Middle schools: 142 High Schools: 93
Schools rated Below Average	169 (15%)	Primary schools: 0 Elementary schools: 85	Middle schools: 62 High Schools: 22
Schools rated At-Risk (Unsatisfactory)	83 (7%)	Primary schools: 0 Elementary schools: 33	Middle schools: 29 High Schools: 21

Table does not include ratings for career and technology centers or special schools. Percentages calculated using total number of schools receiving a report card in 2009 (1161 schools). Additionally, ratings were not reported for 29 schools.

South Carolina's Students – 2009

18.6% of students are enrolled in a school with an Absolute rating of *Excellent*.

18.1% of students are enrolled in a school with an Absolute rating of *Good*.

47.7% of students are enrolled in a school with an Absolute rating of *Average*.

10.8% of students are enrolled in a school with an Absolute rating of *Below Average*.

4.9% of students are enrolled in a school with an Absolute rating of *At Risk*.

Data based on enrollment across primary, elementary, middle, and high schools

Career and Technology Center Absolute Ratings

- Absolute ratings for Career and Technology Centers, as well as special schools, are not included in the overall “snapshot” of the ratings. However, 17 of the 37 Career and Technology Centers are rated *Excellent* (46 percent), down from 92 percent in 2008. Three of the career centers (8%) are rated *Below Average*.

Charter School Absolute Ratings

- The performance of charter schools is included in the overall “snapshot” of the ratings. Of the 40 charter schools who will receive an Absolute rating in 2009, six schools are rated *Excellent*. Fourteen of the charter schools are rated *At Risk* and six are rated *Below Average*.

District Absolute Ratings

- This year, 21 school districts are rated *At Risk* compared to 12 in 2008.

Absolute rating	2008 District Rating # (%)	2009 District Rating # (%)
<i>Excellent</i>	1 (1.2%)	1 (1.2%)
<i>Good</i>	5 (5.9%)	0
<i>Average</i>	32 (37.6%)	24 (28.2%)
<i>Below Average</i>	35 (41.1%)	39 (45.9%)
<i>At-Risk (Unsatisfactory)</i>	12 (14.1%)	21 (24.7%)

Growth Ratings

The table below shows the Growth ratings distribution for primary, elementary, middle, and high schools in 2009.

2009 Growth ratings			
Schools receiving Growth rating of Excellent	110 (10%)	Primary schools: 7 Elementary schools: 76	Middle schools: 8 High Schools: 19
Schools receiving Growth rating of Good	200 (17%)	Primary schools: 15 Elementary schools: 124	Middle schools: 25 High Schools: 36
Schools receiving Growth rating of Average	535 (46%)	Primary schools: 1 Elementary schools: 338	Middle schools: 185 High Schools: 11
Schools receiving Growth rating of Below Average	161 (14%)	Primary schools: 0 Elementary schools: 50	Middle schools: 50 High Schools: 61
Schools receiving Growth rating of At-Risk (Unsatisfactory)	148 (13%)	Primary schools: 1 Elementary schools: 46	Middle schools: 31 High Schools: 70

Table does not include Growth ratings for career and technology centers or special schools. Percentages calculated using total number of schools receiving a report card in 2009 (1154 schools). Additionally, Growth ratings were not reported for 36 schools.

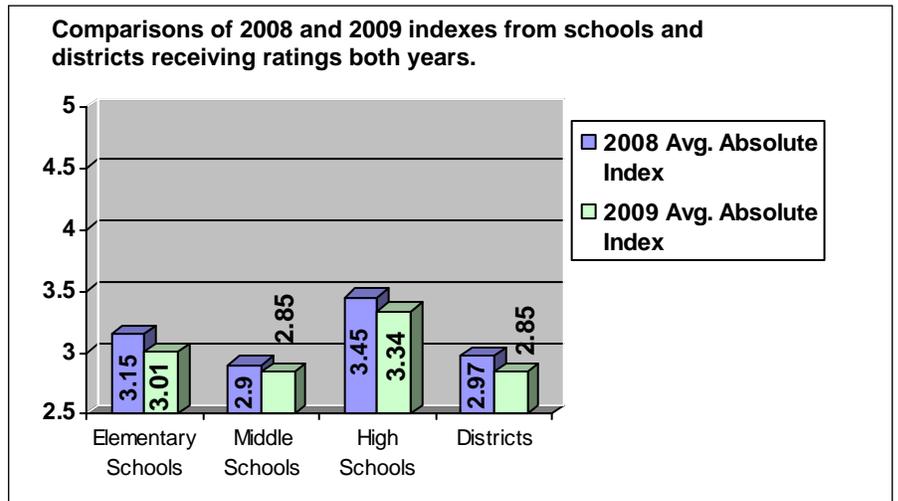
For information about changes made to the methodology and calculations of the Growth ratings for elementary and middle schools, access the 2009-2010 Accountability Manual online at http://www.eoc.sc.gov/reportsandpublications/2009_2010AccountabilityManual.htm.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Student performance drives the calculation of a school's index. The index determines a school's Absolute rating based upon a 5-point scale. Average student performance as measured by indexes, went down from 2008 to 2009 among elementary, middle, high schools, and school districts.

High Schools

In 2009, test data suggest erosion in high school performance. The components of high school ratings are on-time graduation rate, longitudinal HSAP performance, first-attempt HSAP, and End-of-Course test results. With the exception of longitudinal HSAP, performance on all of the measures declined.



There were changes to high school absolute ratings from 2008 to 2009 in the following manner:

“Improvers”

- 21 high schools, 11% of high schools receiving Absolute ratings both years, elevated their ratings

“Maintainers”

- 112 high schools, 57% of high schools receiving Absolute ratings both years, maintained their ratings

“Sliders”

- 64 high schools, 32% of high schools receiving Absolute ratings both years, lowered their ratings –
 - Eleven high schools dropped two rating levels; three high schools dropped three.

Achievement Gaps

Significant gaps in achievement continue to exist between students of different demographic groups and socio-economic status. A comparison of 2009 PASS performance in all tested subject areas among white students, African American students, Hispanic students, students who qualify for free- or reduced-price lunch, and pay-lunch students illustrates clearly that the gaps are persistent and require significant attention and educational investment. Similarly, achievement gaps exist between these students when analyzing performance by school Absolute rating.

	Percent of students scoring <i>Met or above</i> in an Elem/Middle school rated <i>Excellent</i>								
	All students	White students	African American students	White /AA Gap	Hispanic students	White /Hisp. Gap	Pay-lunch students	Free- or reduced price lunch students	Lunch status gap
Reading & Research	89%	93%	75%	18 %pts	76%	17 %pts	93%	78%	15 %pts
Math	87%	91%	69%	22 %pts	78%	13 %pts	92%	74%	18 %pts
Science	85%	89%	66%	23 %pts	71%	18 %pts	90%	70%	20 %pts
Social Studies	89%	92%	77%	15 %pts	78%	14 %pts	93%	78%	15 %pts
Writing	86%	89%	71%	18 %pts	75%	14 %pts	91%	72%	19 %pts

	Percent of students scoring <i>Met or above</i> in an Elem/Middle school rated <i>Average</i>								
	All students	White students	African American students	White /AA Gap	Hispanic students	White /Hisp. Gap	Pay-lunch students	Free- or reduced price lunch students	Lunch status gap
Reading & Research	73%	81%	64%	17 %pts	65%	16 %pts	84%	66%	18 %pts
Math	69%	78%	58%	20 %pts	67%	11 %pts	81%	62%	19 %pts
Science	65%	75%	52%	23 %pts	62%	13 %pts	78%	57%	21 %pts
Social Studies	71%	78%	63%	15 %pts	68%	10 %pts	82%	65%	17 %pts
Writing	68%	74%	59%	15 %pts	63%	11 %pts	79%	61%	18 %pts

	Percent of students scoring <i>Met or above</i> in an Elem/Middle school rated <i>At Risk</i>								
	All students	White students	African American students	White /AA Gap	Hispanic students	White /Hisp. Gap	Pay-lunch students	Free- or reduced price lunch students	Lunch status gap
Reading & Research	48%	58%	47%	11 %pts	48%	10 %pts	63%	46%	17 %pts
Math	41%	56%	39%	17 %pts	46%	10 %pts	54%	39%	15 %pts
Science	36%	55%	35%	20 %pts	40%	15 %pts	51%	34%	17 %pts
Social Studies	45%	58%	43%	15 %pts	49%	9 %pts	55%	44%	11 %pts
Writing	43%	51%	43%	8 %pts	45%	6 %pts	55%	42%	13 %pts

Confronting Poverty

Note: Numbers of schools will vary within data sets. Data provided from the SC Office of Data Management and Analysis includes information from schools that may not have received a report card or received more than one report card, depending on their school structure.

Poverty and Absolute Ratings

- Only 55 schools (5%) serve a population of 30% poverty or less.
- Of 1155 schools that had poverty indexes in both 2008 and 2009, 841 (72.8%) showed an increase in the poverty index in 2009.
- Over half (58%) of all South Carolina schools have at least 70% of their students living in poverty in 2009. This percentage increased from 2008 when 56% of schools were affected. In 2005, 50% of schools served at least 70% of students in poverty.
- Almost one-quarter of schools (24.0 %) serve a population of students in very high poverty (90% or more.)

Absolute Rating	Average 2008 Poverty Index	Average 2009 Poverty Index
Excellent	49.9% (n=97)	47.7% (n=188)
Good	53.1% (n=182)	62.8% (n=185)
Average	66.6% (n=402)	74.4% (n=532)
Below Average	82.1% (n=281)	90.2% (n=168)
At-Risk	92.2% (n=185)	93.9% (n=82)

2006-2009 School Ratings Poverty Levels Across Primary, Elementary, Middle, and High Schools Report Cards

	Extent of Poverty (Poverty Index)		
	High Poverty (70%+)	Very High Poverty (80%+)	Extreme Poverty (90%+)
Total Number of Report Cards (% of 1178 Report Cards in 2009; 1171 in 2008; 1128 in 2007; and 1106 in 2006)	2009: 684 (58.1%) 2008: 656 (56.0%) 2007: 601 (53.3%) 2006: 599 (54.2%)	2009: 493 (41.9%) 2008: 471 (40.2%) 2007: 421 (37.3%) 2006: 402 (36.3%)	2009: 283 (24.0%) 2008: 278 (23.7%) 2007: 228 (20.2%) 2006: 215 (19.4%)

Poverty by Organizational Level – School Absolute Ratings

Primary and elementary schools constitute a disproportionately-larger percentage of those schools with extreme poverty rates. Primary and elementary schools represent 56.3% of all schools, but 62.1% of schools with a poverty Index of 90% or greater.

An analysis of poverty and school Absolute Ratings shows clearly that high poverty in a school does not necessarily mean a school is low-achieving. Schools with extreme poverty are earning Absolute ratings of *Excellent* and *Good*.

Elementary

- Twelve of the 295 (4.1%) elementary schools with a poverty index of 80% or greater earned an absolute rating of *Excellent* or *Good*. Four of the 176 (2.3%) elementary schools with a poverty index of 90% or greater earned an absolute rating of *Excellent* or *Good*.

Middle Schools

- The impact of poverty presents a great challenge for middle schools. In 2009, no middle schools with a poverty index of 80% or greater earned an absolute rating of *Excellent* or *Good* while 83 of 108 (76.9%) of these schools earned an absolute rating of *At Risk* or *Below Average*.

High Schools

- Twelve of the 56 (21.4%) high schools with a poverty level of 80% or greater earned an absolute rating of *Excellent* or *Good*, down from 30.5% in 2008.

School Districts

- The average poverty index for school districts has increased from a level in 2008 of 73.6% to 74.7% in 2009.

Poverty by Organizational Level – Growth Ratings

- Twenty-eight of 269 (10%) schools (primary, elementary, middle, and high) with a poverty index of 90% or greater earned a Growth rating of *Excellent* or *Good*.
- Fifty-nine of 474 (12%) schools with a poverty index of 80% or greater earned a Growth rating of *Excellent* or *Good*.
- Of the 662 schools with a poverty index of 70% or greater, 107 (16%) earned a Growth rating of *Excellent* or *Good*.

Growth Rating	2008 Average Poverty Index	2009 Average Poverty Index
Excellent	62.6% (n=104)	51.5% (n=110)
Good	66.7% (n=166)	61.9% (n=200)
Average	68.8% (n=147)	75.0% (n=533)
Below Average	70.2% (n=356)	78.8% (n=160)
At Risk	76.8% (n=368)	81.8% (n=145)

Blue Ribbon Schools/Red Carpet Schools – Absolute Ratings

- To assist with rewards for successful schools, the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program seeks to honor those elementary and secondary schools in the United States that make significant progress in closing the achievement gap or whose students achieve at very high levels. The schools are selected based on one of three criteria:
 - Schools with at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds that dramatically improve student performance on state tests, as determined by the state school chief;
 - Schools whose students, regardless of background, achieve in the top 10 percent on state tests; and
 - Private schools that achieve in the top 10 percent in the nation.

Three of the 5 SC Blue Ribbon public schools awarded a 2009 Blue Ribbon School Award winner received *Excellent* absolute ratings. One school received a rating of *Good*; one *Average*. Two schools received a *Good Growth Rating*, 2 *Average*, and 1 *At Risk*.

- Each year, the SC State Dept. of Education honors schools who exhibit family-friendly philosophies and environments, as well as good customer service. The schools are listed as Red Carpet Schools. The distributions of absolute ratings among 2009 Red Carpet schools are: *Excellent* – 14%; *Good* - 29%; *Average* - 45%; *Below Average* - 2%; and *At Risk* - 7%. One winning school did not receive a rating in 2009.

Appendix A

Index ranges for 2009 Absolute Ratings

*Absolute rating criteria for **elementary and middle schools** (adopted by EOC, January 2010)*

Absolute Rating	Range of Indexes
Excellent	3.40 or above
Good	3.18 to 3.39
Average	2.65 to 3.17
Below Average	2.32 to 2.64
At Risk	2.31 or below

*Current Absolute rating criteria for **primary schools, high schools, career centers, and districts***

Absolute Rating	Range of Indexes
Excellent	3.9 and above
Good	3.5 to 3.8
Average	3.1 to 3.4
Below Average	2.7 to 3
At Risk	2.6 or below

Appendix B

The Use of Different Scales for Elementary & Middle Schools and High Schools & Districts in the 2009 Ratings (EOC statement issued March 26, 2010)

The 2009 district absolute and growth ratings require clear communication and explanation because of the use of two different scales for elementary and middle schools and for high schools and districts.

The tasks associated with setting student performance levels for PASS, the methodology for calculating elementary and middle school absolute and growth ratings and the decision to re-center performance for those schools yielded a scale different from that used in the past for all levels of schools and the districts. The differences were anticipated throughout the work conducted and communicated in 2009 and early 2010. While everyone would have preferred to reshape the entire system at one time, those resources were not available.

Not unlike the years in which different content assessments were incorporated into the system, 2009 is a transition year and should be understood as such. Because the EOC anticipated the differences, a group of educators began work in February to analyze the criteria used in calculating high school ratings and to study the potential for re-centering. Those decisions should be made by late summer and are to apply to the 2010-11 high school and district ratings calculations.

In the interim, that is, 2009, communities and audiences for the ratings should understand that a different index distribution is used for elementary and middle schools than for high schools and districts. For example, the elementary and middle schools are designated *Excellent* with an index of 3.4 or higher. The historic and unchanged scale used for high schools and districts remains with a value of 3.9 or higher necessary for a rating of *Excellent*. Indexes, not ratings, are used in the calculation of district ratings.

We also advise people to remember the following:

- Students are included in the district ratings who may not be included in a school rating. These include mobile students, students in group homes, students who are administered the SC-Alt;
- From 2008 to 2009, overall elementary and middle school performance on the state assessment remained flat or declined;
- In high schools, overall first-attempt HSAP performance declined as did performance on end-of-course tests; and
- Based on state AYP data, the statewide graduation rate for 2009 is reported as 73.7%, down from 74.9% in 2008.

The use of two different scales, one yielding “better” ratings raises the question “was the bar lowered” with the introduction of the PASS tests. Information on the process by which student performance standards were established is available at www.eoc.sc.gov/EAAof1998.htm. That process aligns the PACT expectations for Basic (grade-level performance) with the PASS expectations for Met (grade-level performance). The process did not include an alignment of PACT Proficient and Advanced with PASS Exemplary.

The realignment of high school and district ratings is scheduled for EOC action in August 2010 with application to the 2010-11 school performance. Preliminary information from the 2010 High School Working Group should be available in early summer for review and comment.

Web Resources

Revisions to *2008-09 Accountability Manual*

2009-10 Accountability Manual

<http://www.eoc.sc.gov/reportsandpublications/publications.htm> (Manuals are available under *Accountability*)

Information about revisions to accountability criteria and methodology for elementary and middle schools

www.eoc.sc.gov/EAAof1998.htm