

South Carolina Response to the Fordham Report on Accountability Systems from 2014

South Carolina High School Report Cards are in an interim period between the old ESEA waiver requirements and the new ESSA requirements. As such, there are no overall ratings applied to schools or districts for the 2014-15 and 2015-16 school years. In 2014 (the year designated by Fordham for report card analysis), the state had two official report cards (one state report card which was featured in your review and a federal report card which was not featured). As such, there are several points of clarification that the Fordham report should include regarding the 2014 report cards.

1. *Does the state rate high schools' "academic achievement" using a model that gives additional credit for students achieving at an "advanced" level?*

The state rated high school performance on the HSAP exit exam for ELA and mathematics with a proficiency cut score of 200 and on End of Course Assessments based on pass rates of 70% or higher. This was referenced in the Fordham report, which caused the state to earn 0 points. However, on the federal report card, the state tracked "mean score growth" on both the HSAP and End of Course Assessments. Tracking the mean score growth allows for all students and subgroups at the top and bottom to push the mean score higher. Schools were encouraged to target improvements for all ability levels to increase their mean score. Additionally, the mean score target for ELA and mathematics (HSAP) and each end of course assessment (Biology, and US History) were raised annually to incentivize continuous improvement. *See Table 1 required mean scores for 2014* and note that the mean score requirement is well above the 200 it took to simply "pass the exam." Schools/districts received a full point if they met the mean target and partial points for improvement from the prior year to this year. *See Table 2 sample to learn how partial growth points were awarded.*

2014 Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO)			
	Elementary School	Middle School	High School
English Language Arts (ELA)	640	632	229
Math	640	632	226
Science / Biology	640	632	78
Social Studies / History	640	632	75
ELA - Percent Tested	95	95	95
Math - Percent Tested	95	95	95
Graduation Rate	N/A	N/A	75.1

TITLE	ELA Proficiency Met/Improved	Math Proficiency Met/Improved	Science Proficiency Met/Improved	Social Studies Proficiency Met/Improved	ELA Percent Tested	Math Percent Tested
ALL STUDENTS	1	1	1	1	1	1
Male	1	1	1	1	1	1
Female	1	1	1	1	1	1
White	1	1	1	1	1	1
African-American	0.8	0.9	1	1	1	1
Asian / Pacific Islander	1	1			1	1
Hispanic	1	1	1	1	1	1
American Indian / Alaskan						
Disabled	0	0	0.3	0.6	1	1
LEP	0.9	1			1	1
Subsidized Meals	0.9	0.9	1	1	1	1

2. *Does the state rate high schools' growth using a model that looks at the progress of all individual students, not just those below the "proficient" line?*

On both the state and federal report cards, South Carolina did report growth. The growth score is featured beside the achievement score on the State report card and is measured in the mean growth table as shown in the Table 2 above for the Federal report card. However, the high school growth model measures growth among cohorts of students rather than individual growth. This model was selected because of the state's use of a high school exit exam (HSAP) required for graduation and end of course assessments in science and social studies which were given when students took those particular courses. An individual growth model was not possible at the high school level. The individual growth model was used in elementary and middle school and growth scores were featured equally beside the achievement score on the report card.

3. *When calculating summative high school grades, does the state assign at least as much weight to “growth for all students” as it does to achievement?*

On the State report card, South Carolina assigned equal weight to the growth and achievement scores. The State report card reported two equal scores for schools and districts – an absolute score and a growth score. Both ratings were used to identify rewards such as Palmetto Gold and Palmetto Silver awards.

RATINGS OVER 5-YEAR PERIOD

YEAR	ABSOLUTE RATING	GROWTH RATING
2014	Excellent	Good
2013	Excellent	Excellent
2012	Excellent	Excellent
2011	Excellent	Excellent
2010	Excellent	Below Average

The federal report card used growth in the mean scores for each tested area (which allows for growth at the top as well as the bottom to factor into the mean) to be calculated on a weighted point index based on all students’ and all subgroups’ attainment of the mean target. Partial points were awarded for growth in the mean target from the prior year.

Total Number of Points	9	9.6	7.6	8.7	10	10
Total Number of Objectives	10	10	9	9	10	10
Percent of Objectives Met	90	96	84.44	96.67	100	100
Weight	0.4	0.4	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
Weighted Points Subtotal	36	38.4	4.22	4.83	5	5
Points Total	93.5					

4. *Does the state rate high schools' success in helping students earn college credit before graduating, via AP, IB, and/or dual enrollment programs?*

South Carolina does report student participation in earning college credit before graduating via AP, and IB programs on the State report card. It is not currently a part of the overall rating of the school or district.

	Our School	Change from Last Year	with Students Like Ours	Median High School
Students (n = 1,994)				
Retention Rate	2.4%	Up from 2.1%	2.1%	3.0%
Attendance Rate	95.2%	No change	95.8%	96.2%
Served by gifted and talented program	17.7%	Down from 18.7%	35.3%	17.7%
With disabilities	7.0%	Up from 6.9%	8.3%	11.5%
Older than usual for grade	4.1%	Up from 4.0%	4.2%	7.1%
Out-of-school suspensions or expulsions for violent and/or criminal offenses	3.2%	Down from 4.5%	0.9%	1.1%
Enrolled in AP/IB programs	26.0%	Up from 25.1%	46.8%	15.4%
Successful on AP/IB exams	70.1%	Up from 64.0%	58.7%	52.8%
Eligible for LIFE Scholarship	24.7%	Up from 23.9%	39.3%	30.6%

South Carolina is engaged in very exciting work that significantly enhances how we report school and district performance for ALL students with renewed emphasis on students scoring at the top levels. We have an opportunity to merge our state and federal system into one report card that looks at these four areas of focus in very different ways. We look forward to sharing our work to design a new ESSA accountability model in 2017-18.