



BACKGROUND BRIEF

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA | STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION | DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION



2018-19 Accountability Framework

This briefing paper provides basic background information to help you understand the 2018–19 school accountability data, including how the test data are used under the state’s Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan.

Data being released to State Board of Education members at their September 4 meeting will provide insight into student academic progress and school performance for the 2018–19 school year.

This includes student performance on end-of-grade and end-of-course assessments, academic growth, School Performance Grades (SPG) for schools and school-level subgroups, long-term goals for schools to improve achievement and reduce performance gaps, and graduation rates.

Also included is information on the required identification of schools for support and improvement. Per ESSA, schools that do not meet performance standards must be identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement and for Targeted Support and Improvement. In addition, North Carolina General Statute requires the identification of schools that are low-performing or continually low-performing and districts that are low-performing.

With respect to the 2018-19 data and accountability reports, the following are noted:

1. Analysis of potential impact of loss of instructional days due to Hurricane Florence indicated the need for an adjustment to the grade 3 growth analysis. The adjustment accounts for the numbers of days missed and waived due to the hurricane and the resulting impact on the Beginning of Year assessment. This adjustment was made to ensure the validity and comparability of the growth analysis.
2. The loss of instructional days (number) due to Hurricane Florence will be noted on data reports, on accountability reports, and on the NC Report Card.
3. New mathematics tests were implemented in the 2018-19 school year and for reporting the results of these tests, four academic achievement levels were approved by the State Board of Education at its August meeting. Additional information on the reporting of the academic achievement levels is provided in the following section.

Student Performance on State Assessments

In the 2018-19 school year, new end-of-grade mathematics tests were administered in grades 3-8 and new end-of-course tests were administered in high school (NC Math 1 and NC Math 3). As with any new tests, a standard setting was held in July 2019 when panels of teachers and other content experts reviewed the content standards and the associated test items. The process yielded recommended academic achievement levels for reporting the results of the mathematics tests. The recommendations were approved by the State Board of Education at its August meeting.

Previously, the mathematics tests, and the reading and science tests, had five academic achievement levels. Beginning with the new mathematics tests, there will be four academic achievement levels: Level 5, Level 4, Level 3, and Not Proficient. The reading and science tests are reported as five academic achievement levels in 2018-19, but these assessments will also use the four-level reporting system in the 2019-20 school year. The chart below provides the reporting structure for the 2018-19 assessments that are included in the accountability reports.

Reading and Science	Mathematics
Level 5: Superior Command	Level 5: Comprehensive Understanding
Level 4: Solid Command	Level 4: Thorough Understanding
Level 3: Sufficient Command	Level 3: Sufficient Understanding
Level 2: Partial Command	Not Proficient: Inconsistent Understanding
Level 1: Limited Command	

Here are the state assessments that students took in the 2018-19 school year:

GRADE	ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA)	MATHEMATICS	SCIENCE	OTHER
3	Beginning of Grade/End-of-Grade	End-of-Grade	—	—
4	End-of-Grade	End-of-Grade	—	—
5	End-of-Grade	End-of-Grade	End-of-Grade	—
6	End-of-Grade	End-of-Grade	—	—
7	End-of-Grade	End-of-Grade	—	—
8	End-of-Grade	End-of-Grade/NC Math 1	End-of-Grade	—
9	—	NC Math 1	—	—
10	English II	—	—	Pre-ACT
11	—	NC Math 3	Biology	ACT
12	—	—	—	ACT WorkKeys

Academic Growth

Academic growth is an indication of the progress that students in the school made over the previous year. The standard is roughly equivalent to a year's worth of growth for a year of instruction. Growth is reported for each school as Exceeded Growth Expectations, Met Growth Expectations, or Did Not Meet Growth Expectations as measured by EVAAS, a statistical tool North Carolina uses to measure student growth when common assessments are administered.

School Performance Grades (SPG)

Since 2013-14, student performance data have been used to assign letter grades to North Carolina public schools as required by the North Carolina General Assembly. The grades are based on each school's achievement score (80 percent) and each school's students' academic growth (20 percent).

The total school performance score is converted to a 100-point scale and then used to determine a school performance grade of A, B, C, D or F. The final grade is based on a 15-point scale:

A: 85-100

B: 70-84

C: 55-69

D: 40-54

F: Less than 40

All public schools will receive a letter grade overall and for each student subgroup (Asian, American Indian, Black, Hispanic, Two or More Races, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Students with Disabilities, and English Learners). Subgroup performance is reported when the number of scores in a particular group is at least 30 for one or more parts of the accountability model.

K-2 schools will receive letter grades of the schools to which they send the highest percentage of students. Schools approved to use the state's alternative accountability model will be assigned a letter grade only for the purposes of identifying Comprehensive Support and Improvement schools and Targeted Support and Improvement schools, as required by federal statute.

The indicators for elementary and middle schools differ from the indicators for high schools as presented in the chart and explanation below:

ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL INDICATORS			HIGH SCHOOL INDICATORS	
· 3rd Grade ELA	· 3rd Grade Math	· 5th Grade Science	ASSESSMENTS	OTHER MEASURES
· 4th Grade ELA	· 4th Grade Math	· 8th Grade Science	· NC Math 1/Math 3	· 4-year Graduation Rates
· 5th Grade ELA	· 5th Grade Math	· NC Math 1	· English II	· Successful completion of high-level math courses
· 6th Grade ELA	· 6th Grade Math	· Growth	· Biology	· Growth (NC Math 1/NC Math 3 and English II)
· 7th Grade ELA	· 7th Grade Math	· English Learner Progress	· ACT	· English Learner Progress
· 8th Grade ELA	· 8th Grade Math		· ACT WorkKeys	

K-8 SPG Indicators

- **Tested Grades** – Statewide accountability testing is done in grades 3-8 only. For students in grades K-2, special age-appropriate assessments are used to chart students' academic progress and are not included in the accountability model.
- **End-of-Grade Tests** – Assessments in reading and mathematics in grades 3-8, NC Math 1 for some students in middle school, and science assessments in grades 5 and 8 are counted for academic growth and performance. NCEXTEND1 is an alternate assessment for students with disabilities instructed on the Extended Content Standards and is included in performance only, not in growth.
- **English Language Learners** – Students who are classified as English learners take an English language attainment assessment which is included in the accountability model for students in grades 3-8.

Elementary School/Middle School Model

Measure	Numerator	Denominator	Score used in final calculations
EOG Reading	50	100	
EOG Math and EOC NC Math 1	50	100	
EOG Science	20	30	
EL Progress	10	30	
Total Achievement	130 <i>(sum of numerators)</i>	260 <i>(sum of denominators)</i>	130/260 = 50
Composite Index			Score used in final calculations
Accountability Growth Score (Reading, Math, Science Composite)	-0.95		75.2

The overall score for the example shown above is calculated using this formula. The numeric score is then converted to a letter grade on a 100-point scale: $50(.8) + 75.2(.2) = 55.04 = 55$: School Performance Grade is a C

High School SPG Indicators

- **End-of-Course Tests** – Student performance on four end-of-course assessments – NC Math 1, NC Math 3, English II and Biology – is counted for performance. NC Math 1, NC Math 3, and English II are counted for growth. NCEXTEND1 is an alternate assessment for students with disabilities instructed on the Extended Content Standards and is included in performance only, not in growth.
- **Graduation Rates** – The percentage of students who graduate with their cohort in four years or less.
- **English Language Learners** – Students who are classified as English learners take an English language attainment assessment which is included in the accountability model for students in grade 10.
- **Math Course Rigor** – The percentage of grade 12 students taking and passing the NC Math 3 course.
- **ACT/WorkKeys** – The percentage of grade 12 students meeting either the UNC system admissions minimum requirement of a composite score of 17 on the ACT or at least a Silver Level Career Readiness Certificate on the ACT WorkKeys assessments.

High School Model

Measure	Numerator	Denominator	Score used in final calculations
EOC Math	250	300	
EOC English II	225	300	
4-year Cohort Graduation Rate	280	300	
EL Progress	45	100	
EOC Biology	200	300	
The ACT/ACT WorkKeys	190	200	
Math Course Rigor	200	300	
Total	1390 <i>(sum of numerators)</i>	1800 <i>(sum of denominators)</i>	1390/1800 = 77.2
Composite Index			Score used in final calculations
Growth Accountability Score (Reading and Math Composite)	-0.95		75.2

The overall score for the example shown above is calculated using this formula. The numeric score is then converted to a letter grade on a 100-point scale: $77.2(.8) + 75.2(.2) = 76.8 = 77$: School Performance Grade is a B

Long-term Goals

Also required by the ESSA, North Carolina established long-term goals with yearly measures of interim progress for the following:

- **Reading and mathematics assessments in grades 3-8**
- **Reading assessments in grade 10**
- **Mathematics assessments in grade 11**
- **4-year cohort graduation rate**
- **English learner progress**

The Long-term Goals are set with the purpose of increasing student achievement and reducing performance gaps among student

subgroups. The 10-year goals were set for each school, based on the school's starting point for each measure for each student subgroup. For example, School A has a long-term goal of increasing the percent of Hispanic students who score Level 4 and above on the reading and mathematics assessments. This long-term goal is broken into 10 yearly interim progress targets. The accountability reports will include the number and percentage of schools that met each interim progress target by student subgroup. If all schools met all progress targets across the 10 years, the state-level percentage of students meeting the Level 4 and above achievement standard would increase and the performance gap among student subgroups would decrease.

Identifying Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools and Targeted Support and Improvement Schools

Under ESSA, North Carolina must identify schools with low performance for providing additional support. These schools are classified as Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) schools and Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) schools.

There are two categories of CSI schools:

- **CSI – Low Performing:** Lowest performing five percent of all Title I schools
- **CSI – Low Graduation Rate:** High Schools with graduation rates lower than 66.7 percent

These schools receive support and interventions from the state for at least four years before being eligible to exit. These schools were identified at the beginning of the 2018–19 school year and a new identification list will not be generated until the beginning of the 2021–22 school year.

There are also two categories of TSI schools:

- **TSI – Consistently Under-performing Subgroups (TSI-CU):** Any school with one or more of the same subgroup receiving a grade of “F”, per School Performance Grades analysis, for the most recent and the previous two (2) years.
- **TSI – Additional Targeted Support (TSI-AT):** Any school with one or more subgroup(s) where the SPG score is below the highest identified CSI school's All Students during the identification year and the school was on the TSI-CU list for the subgroup(s) for the previous year.

These schools receive support locally to improve the subgroup performance within the school. TSI-CU schools are identified annually beginning with the 2019–20 school year using 2018–19 and 2017–18 data. TSI-AT schools were identified at the beginning of the 2018–19 school year and a new identification list will not be generated until the beginning of the 2021–22 school year. If the TSI-AT schools fail to improve within three years, they can be identified as a CSI school.

Identifying Low-Performing Schools and Districts

Per North Carolina statute, School Performance Grades and EVAAS growth data are used to determine whether a school or a district is low-performing.

As defined by General Statute 115C-105.37, low-performing schools are those that receive a School Performance Grade of D or F and a school accountability growth score of met expected growth or did not met expected growth. To avoid a low-performing designation, schools must earn a School Performance Grade of C or better or exceed growth.

Schools identified as low performing must develop a plan for improvement that specifically addresses the strategies the school will implement to improve both its School Performance Grade and School Growth designation (G.S. 115C-105.37(a1)). Schools also must notify parents of the school's low-performing status and actions it is taking to improve student performance.

Low-performing districts are those in which the majority of schools that receive a school performance grade and school growth score are identified as low performing.

As defined by General Statute 115C-105.39A, districts identified as low performing must develop a district plan for improving both the school performance grade and school growth score of each low-performing school in the district (G.S. 115C-105.39A(b2)).

School and district improvement plans are to be shared with the public, including parents, guardians, and staff and made available through the districts' website and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's website. Additional strategies for reform, changes to personnel, supports and interventions may apply to schools and districts that are continually low performing.



RESOURCES

DATA BY STATE/DISTRICT/SCHOOL – www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/reporting

NORTH CAROLINA STANDARD COURSE OF STUDY – www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/

TESTING PROGRAM GENERAL INFORMATION AND POLICIES –
www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/policies/geninfopoliciesindex

RELEASED TEST FORMS AND ANSWER KEYS FOR END-OF-GRADE AND END-OF-COURSE TESTS – Parents and educators can see firsthand the rigor of questions on the assessments.
www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/releasedforms

2018 INFORMATION CONTACTS

ACCOUNTABILITY/BASIS FOR STATUS – Accountability Services Division, Director Tammy Howard, 919.807.3787

COMMUNICATIONS AND GENERAL INFORMATION – Communication and Information Services, 919.807.3450

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION – www.ncpublicschools.org