Redesigning School Performance Grades: A workshop with the Polaris Team

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The National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment

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Raleigh, NC

North Carolina Department of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Welcome & Introductions

Catherine Truitt, *Superintendent of Public Instruction – NCDPI*

Dr. Michael Maher, *Deputy Superintendent – NCDPI*

Advisory Group Introductions
  1. Name
  2. Organization
  3. Why are you excited to be a part of this work?

Purpose for Today's Work Session

- Review ESSA requirements and state accountability systems

- Examine and explore North Carolina's state education values

- Identify characteristics of a "ready" student & high-quality school

- Brainstorm a "long list" of accountability indicators

About the Center for Assessment

- Founded September 1998; a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization.

- ***Our Purpose:*** to improve the educational achievement of students by promoting improved practices in educational assessment and accountability.

- ***Key Clients:*** 40 states, districts, USDOE, Foundations

- ***Key Partners:*** CCSSO, KnowledgeWorks, Education First

- ***What We Provide:*** Independent, Credible, Technically Sound information and advice

  - We are currently conducting an independent evaluation of North Carolina's Personal Assessment Tool (NCPAT) under IADA; we also serve on the NCDPI TAC

Federal Accountability Requirements

ESSA

ESSA Assessment Requirements

- Required annual assessments:
  - Reading/ ELA and mathematics in grades 3-8 and once in high school
  - Science once each in elementary, middle, and high school
- Assessments must be aligned to challenging state academic standards and provide information on whether a student is performing at grade level
- Assessments must meet high standards for technical defensibility which is evaluated through a federal peer review process. Requirements include:
  - Reliability
  - Validity
  - Comparability
  - Accessibility

ESSA Participation and Reporting Requirements

- Assessments must be administered to all public elementary and secondary students in the state (95% participation rate enforced through accountability)

- States must produce produce individual student interpretive and descriptive reports:
  - Performance must be reported with respect to at least three levels of achievement
  - Reports must include descriptions of the competencies associated with each level

- States must provide summary reports disaggregated by required groups/ categories

ESSA Accountability Design

Use student outcome information…	to identify schools for support and improvement
- Required assessments and other indicators - Optional indicators and assessments	**Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI):** "Bottom 5%" of all schools **Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI):** Consistently underperforming student groups **Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI):** Schools with a *student group* lower than "bottom 5%" of all schools using same method as CSI
And provide support for improvement	
Districts and state provide support for improvement (cascade if school does not exit by schedule determined by state)	

ESSA Accountability Requirements

States must include the following indicators…

Academic achievement in language arts and mathematics

Graduation rates for high schools

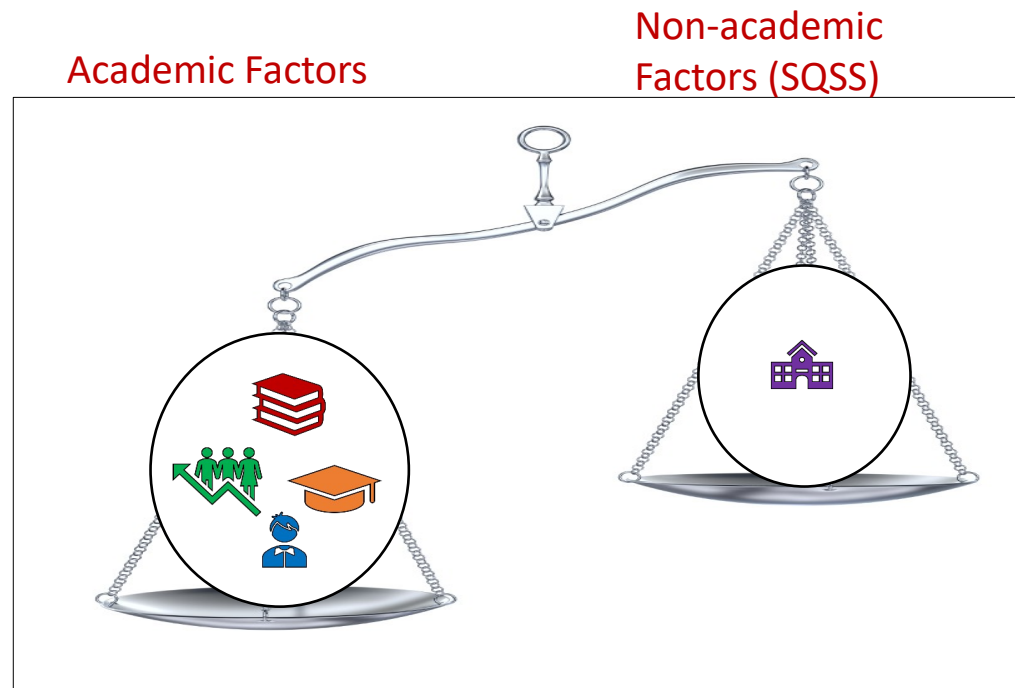"Other" indicator of academic progress (elementary/middle school)

English language proficiency

At least one indicator of school quality or student success (SQSS)

ESSA Accountability Requirements

States must meaningfully differentiate schools via a summative determination to identify CSI/TSI/ATSI schools…

Academic Factors

Non-academic Factors (SQSS)

Academic factors must be given "much greater" weight.

CSI
- Lowest performing 5% of schools based on summative score
- Schools with graduation rate <66.7%
- Identification in NC every 3 years

ATSI
- Schools with a subgroup scoring lower than the highest identified CSI school.
- Identification in NC every 3 years

TSI
- Grade of "F" for the most recent and previous two years.
- Identification annually

ESSA Accountability Requirements

States set their own interim and long-term progress goals.

North Carolina Measures of Interim Progress, Reading

State Level Reading Grades 3–8	2015–16 Baseline Performance (Percent Proficient)	Percent Increase Per Year	2017–18 (Percent Prof)	2018–19 (Percent Prof)	2019–20 (Percent Prof)	2020–21 (Percent Prof)	2021–22 (Percent Prof)	2022–23 (Percent Prof)	2023–24 (Percent Prof)	2024–25 (Percent Prof)	2025–26 (Percent Prof)	2026–27 10-Year Goal (Percent Prof)	10-Year Percent Improvement
							Yearly Measures of Interim Progress						
All Students	45.8	2.003	47.8	49.8	51.8	53.8	55.8	57.8	59.8	61.8	63.8	65.8	20.0
Subgroups													
American Indian	30.4	2.473	32.9	35.3	37.8	40.3	42.8	45.2	47.7	50.2	52.7	55.1	24.7
Asian	66.4	1.760	68.2	69.9	71.7	73.4	75.2	77.0	78.7	80.5	82.2	84.0	17.6
Black	27.9	2.549	30.4	33.0	35.5	38.1	40.6	43.2	45.7	48.3	50.8	53.4	25.5
Hispanic	31.5	2.439	33.9	36.4	38.8	41.3	43.7	46.1	48.6	51.0	53.5	55.9	24.4
Two or More Races	46.7	1.976	48.7	50.7	52.6	54.6	56.6	58.6	60.5	62.5	64.5	66.5	19.8
White	58.8	1.606	60.4	62.0	63.6	65.2	66.8	68.4	70.0	71.6	73.3	74.9	16.1
Economically Disadvantaged Students	30.7	2.464	33.2	35.6	38.1	40.6	43.0	45.5	47.9	50.4	52.9	55.3	24.6
English Learners	11.1	3.062	14.2	17.2	20.3	23.3	26.4	29.5	32.5	35.6	38.7	41.7	30.6
Students with Disabilities	13.6	2.985	16.6	19.6	22.6	25.5	28.5	31.5	34.5	37.5	40.5	43.4	29.8

Accountability in North Carolina

North Carolina Theory of Action (Vision)

If we…

- Create adaptive learning environments for personalized, digital-age learning

- Allow students to determine the pace at which they learn

- Support individualized PD of educators

- Empower educators to adopt innovative ideas, and

- Replicate and scale proven programs, and

Then…

- Students will be inspired to take ownership for their own path to success via an immediate career, post-secondary education, or both
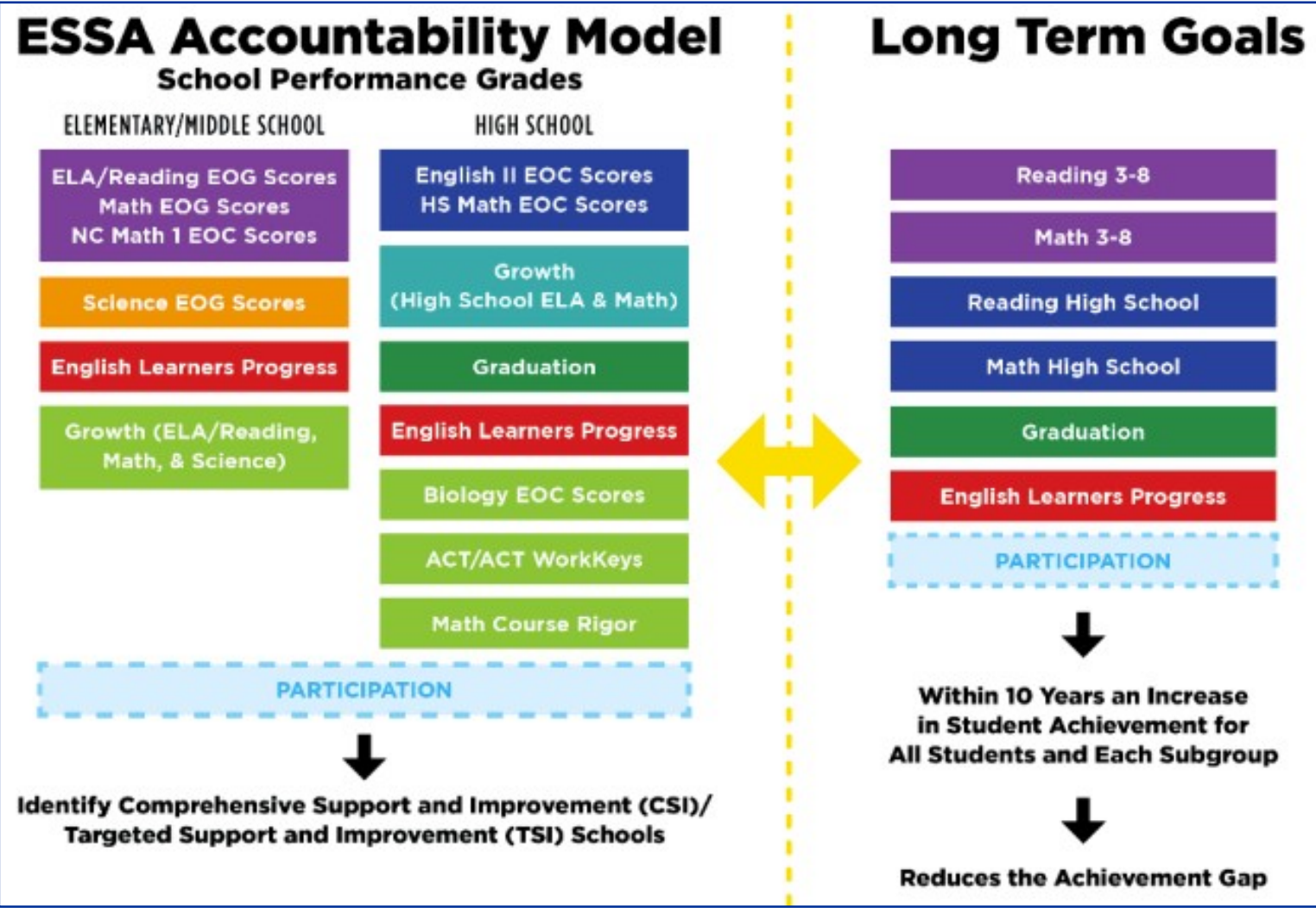
(Consolidated State Plan, p. 8).

Guiding Principle

- Transform from industrial age practices of providing the <u>same</u> inputs and opportunities…
- To digital age practices in which all students and educators have access to <u>unique</u> learning experiences based upon their individual needs and aspirations"
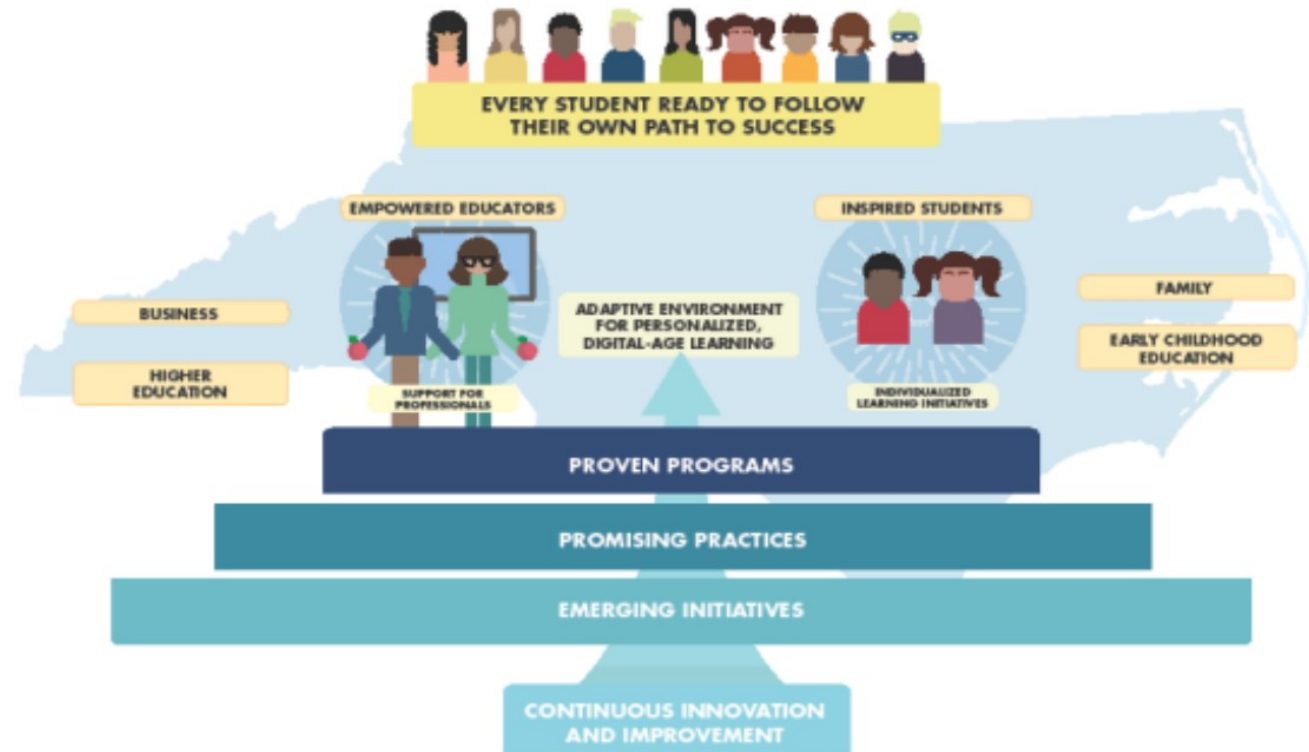
North Carolina's Current Accountability System

North Carolina School Grading Scale

- Schools graded on a weighted A-F scale
  - A = 100-85
  - B = 84-70
  - C = 69-55
  - D = 54-40
  - F = 39 and below

- Composite score calculation is weighted as follows:
  - Achievement = 80% [# Proficient (Rdg + Math + Sci)] + EL Progress)
  - Growth = 20% (EVAAS Reading and Math Composite Score)

Scoring Example: Annual Measurable Differentiation (AMD)

Elementary/Middle School

Measure	Numerator	Denominator	Score used in final calculations
EOG Reading	362	841	
EOG Math	341	842	
EOG Science	189	289	
EL Progress	8	32	
Total Achievement	900 (sum of numerators)	2004 (sum of denominators)	900/2004= 44.9

	Composite Index		Score used in final calculations
Accountability Growth Score (Reading, Math, Science Composite)	-0.95		75.2

School Score = 44.9 (.8) + 75.2(.2) = 51.0

Low-Performing Schools and Districts
State Designations

Designation	2018–19	2021–22	Difference
Low-Performing Schools	488	864	**+376**
Low-Performing Districts	8	29	**+21**
Recurring Low-Performing Schools	423	464	**+41**
Continually Low-Performing Charter Schools	38	35	**-3**

Schools Identified for Comprehensive or Targeted Support and Improvement
Federal Designations per ESSA

Designation	Identified at beginning of 2018–19	Identified at beginning of 2022–23	Difference
CSI-Low-Performing Schools	72	83	+11
CSI-Low Graduation Rate	42	39	-2
TSI-Consistently Under-performing Subgroups	1,740	1,040	-700
TSI-Additional Targeted Support	1,634	892	-742

There are a total of 114 CSI schools. CSI schools can be identified as both CSI-Low Performing and CSI-Low Graduation Rate.

Questions and Discussion

Other State Accountability Designs

Examples

Main Points

- States have wide discretion concerning their accountability systems under ESSA
  - What to include
  - How to include
  - When to make CSI and ATSI school identifications
  - Etc.

- States can also choose to create separate state and federal accountability systems to pursue what is valued by the state

ESSA Accountability Design

Use student outcome information	To identify schools for support and improvement
Required assessments and other indicators Optional indicators and assessments	Required to identify TSI annually Required to identify CSI through "bottom 5%" of all schools and ATSI of schools with a student group lower than "bottom 5%" of all schools
And provide support for improvement	
Districts and state provide support for improvement (cascade if school does not exit by schedule determined by state). *And note that today's session focuses on indicators/measures for a state model.*	

Flexibilities in ESSA Assessment Design

Requirements for assessments, other indicators	Flexibilities
• Reading/ELA and mathematics (grades 3-8 and once in high school) • Science (once in elementary, middle, and high school) • Progress in English language proficiency for English language learners (grades 3-12) • High School Graduation rate (4-year cohort) • Weight of academic indicators must be substantially greater than SQSS indicator • Measures must meet Peer Review (related to valid, reliable, fair)	• State sets content standards • Reading *or* ELA • State can add assessed grades • State can determine "other academic indicators" (e.g., growth) • State can determine "school quality/student success" indicators • State can add additional grad rates • State determines how to measure, criteria, other rules

Flexibilities in ESSA Accountability Design

Accountability	Flexibilities
• Required to identify low-performing schools TSI annually • Required to identify CSI through "bottom 5%" of all schools • Required to identify ATSI of schools with a student group lower than "bottom 5%" of all schools	• TSI: State can determine rules, criteria for identification • CSI, ATSI: State determines when (maximum of every 4 years) • State determines criteria, weights, and other rules for determining identification • State has broad discretion in how, what of supports offered • State determines exit criteria, timelines, and processes • State determines "additional consequences" if a school does not exit

States' accountability designs: two⁺ approaches

- Take advantage of flexibilities provided in ESSA law
  - State has federally approved accountability system or system striving for approval
    - State system is not fully approved and state is slowly interacting with USED about becoming compliant

 and/or

- Have separate state and federal accountability systems
  - State has federally approved accountability system *and*
  - State has another state accountability system, which it usually emphasizes in consequences and communication

- Some states threatened to decline federal ESEA funds and not have a federally compliant system… but to date no state has done so

ESSA-compliant accountability systems: considerable variation in indicators

- Several different possible indicators of what states use to portray student outcome and school quality
  - E.g., see ECS survey (2021) https://www.ecs.org/50-state-comparison-states-school-accountability-systems/

- What
  - Chronic absenteeism; college/career/military ready; percent of students Advanced; reduction in percent of students scoring at lowest level; etc.

- Weights and Rules
  - Choose Status or Growth, whichever is higher
  - If performance is X, then rating cannot be higher than Y

- Who

Example 1: A state accountability system with local variation in indicators

- Unusual example with local variation in indicators
- Texas allows local accountability measures
  - When district performs high enough
  - Local accountability measures are approved by the state
  - Performance on local accountability measures count up to 50% of total (state measures are at least 50%) for *state* accountability results
- Note: ESSA and state accountability systems: local does not affect ESSA district ratings or school identifications
- Increases individualization, decreases comparability

https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability/academic-accountability/performance-reporting/2022-accountability-rating-system

Example 2: ESSA-compliant accountability system w/ separate state system w/ different indicators, weights

- State has federally approved ESSA-compliant accountability system AND

- State has a separate state system, with the state's communication and consequences focused on the state system. (Wisconsin https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/accountability/pdf/State_vs_Federal_Accountability_Crosswalk_2018-19_Final.pdf)

Wisconsin	State Accountability System	ESSA Federal Accountability System
Overall Goal	All schools and districts in the state are meeting or exceeding accountability expectations covering academic outcomes and student engagement, reflecting the college and career readiness of all students.	Within six years, cut the gap in half for English language arts proficiency rates, mathematics proficiency rates, and graduation rates. Within six years, increase the percentage of English learners on-track to English language proficiency.

Example 2: ESSA-compliant accountability system w/ separate state system w/ different indicators, weights - 2

Wisconsin	State Accountability System	ESSA Federal Accountability System
Primary Purpose	To provide robust and detailed performance reporting to drive continuous improvement and meaningfully differentiate the performance of all schools in the state.	To appropriately identify public schools, based on overall and subgroup performance, most in need of support and systems improvement.
Primary Product	State Accountability Report Cards *Report cards are generated for both schools and districts.*	ESSA Accountability Reports *Schools receive ESSA Accountability Reports as part of district Joint Federal Notification Packets (which include additional federal reporting and accountability requirements).*
Applicability	All schools and districts, including public, charter and private schools participating in the choice program.	Only public schools (including charters) and subgroups within a school; does not apply to choice schools.

Example: ESSA-compliant accountability system w/ separate state system w/ different indicators, weights - 3

Wisconsin	State Accountability System	ESSA Federal Accountability System
Reportings (include ratings and identifications)	Annual reporting covers five performance ratings, ranging from *Fails to Meet Expectations* to *Significantly Exceeds Expectations,* with corresponding star ratings and accountability score on a scale of 0-100.	Annual reporting for all public schools, leading to one of three ESSA identifications: 1. *Comprehensive Support & Improvement (CSI)* 2. *Targeted Support & Improvement (TSI)* *Additional Targeted Support & Improvement (ATSI)* 3. *Not Identified.* Any public school may be identified for CSI if it graduates less than 67% of students. Title I receiving schools may be identified for CSI for overall performance in the bottom 5% of all Title I receiving schools. Any public school can be identified for TSI with student group(s) in the bottom 10% of statewide student group performance and ATSI with student group(s) in the bottom 5% of Title I school performance.
Reporting Timeline	Annually by November 30.	Annual reporting; identification timelines differ: *CSI & ATSI* identifications occurs every three years; *TSI* identifications occur every year.

Example: ESSA-compliant accountability system w/ separate state system w/ different indicators, weights - 4

Wisconsin	State Accountability System	ESSA Federal Accountability System
Report Type	Public (redacted) report cards published as PDFs on DPI website since 2011-12. Secure (unredacted) report cards also available to schools and districts. Report cards include summary and detailed versions.	Public reports published as PDFs on DPI website since 2018-19 (for 2017-18 accountability). Reports are released securely to schools and districts prior to public release.
Measures	Four Report Card Priority Areas: 1. Student Achievement (3-11) 2. School Growth (4-11) 3. Closing Gaps 4. On-Track & Post-secondary Readiness Plus two Student Engagement Indicators: 1. Chronic Absenteeism 2. Dropout Rate	Five ESSA Indicators: 1. Academic Achievement (3-8 and 11) 2. Student Growth (4-8) 3. Graduation (HS) 4. Progress in English Language Proficiency 5. Chronic Absenteeism
Scoring	100 point accountability index *Scores are based on performance averages and normative data.*	Indicator outcomes on a 0-100 point scale *Scores are based on percentile ranks.*

Summary

- States have **wide discretion** concerning their accountability systems under ESSA
  - What to include
  - How to include
  - When to make CSI and ATSI school identifications

- States can also choose to create separate state and federal accountability systems to **pursue what is valued by the state**

- **Decide *what* you value, then create *how* to accomplish that**

Questions and Discussion

- What measures and indicators from other state models are relevant in North Carolina?
- How do (or don't) these other states' indicators reflect important values in NC?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of specific indicators and measures?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of more vs. less prescriptive systems?

Portrait of a Graduate

Envision the Future: Brainstorm Possible Student Outcomes for Accountability

Activity 1

Activity Overview

1. **What are the outcomes you expect a student to demonstrate if they were fully prepared for success at three key milestones (Grade 12, 8, and 5)?**

2. Write down as many outcomes and /or indicators as you can (1 sticky note/outcome)
    A.   End of Grade 12 (5 minutes)
    B.   End of Grade 8 (2-3 minutes)
    C.   End of Grade 5 (2-4 minutes)

3. Individual members will place sticky notes with individual outcomes on the chart paper (Grade 12, 8, and 5) with their small group.

4. Small groups will organize outcomes into common categories (e.g., 21st Century Skills, Academic)

5. Small groups will go on a gallery walk to review other groups' outcomes and categories (Group 1 to Group 2, Group 2 to Group 3, etc.)

6. Each person will be invited to add any *new outcomes or indicators* that were not reflected in the original brainstorming process.

Rules

- Brainstorm outcomes, indicators, and/or measures
- Consider conversations from the morning session
- Avoid self-censoring
- Be creative; don't worry about whether or how an outcome can be measured. This step comes later.
- Judgment free zone

Envision the Future: More Complex Outcomes Involving Combined Student Data

Activity 2

Activity Overview

1. Accountability systems may find it valuable to consider more complex outcomes that involve combinations of student data.

2. Some examples

3. Brainstorm: Use a different color sticky note to write down additional "combined data" outcomes you think might be valuable to consider for accountability

4. Paste sticky notes with the appropriate category in your small group's final list of outcomes (may create new categories).

5. Discussion

Post-Activity Reflection

- What outcomes stood out to you and why?

- How might you decide which outcomes to prioritize? Consider…

    - How might these outcomes shift priorities for schools?

    - How might these outcomes – when applied to an accountability system - affect teaching and learning in North Carolina schools?

    - What unintended consequences might emerge, and how can we address these moving forward (e.g., Campbell's Law)?

Next Steps

- Summarize today's information (Center for Assessment)

- Gather feedback on possible indicators

School Performance Grade Redesign Timeline

January '23
Policy Recommendations Shared with General Assembly

September '22 - November '22
Advisory Group Convenes Monthly, Stakeholder Engagement (Survey + Feedback Sessions), New Measures Identified

September '21 - August '22
Operation Polaris - Testing & Accountability Committee Formed, Research on Multiple Measures

IMPLEMENTATION

DESIGN

'23-'24 School Year
New Measures Potentially Piloted Data Collection Processes Refined

RESEARCH

December '22 - January '23
New Measures Examined by Content Experts, Advisory Group Considers New Criteria for School Performance Grades

Advisory Group Meeting Schedule

- October 17, 2022 at 2:00PM – Virtual

- November, 2022 (Date/Time TBD) - Virtual

- December, 2022 (Date/Time TBD) - Virtual

- January, 2023 (Date/Time TBD) - In-Person

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