



# PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION :: Howard N. Lee, *Chairman*

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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION :: Patricia N. Willoughby, *State Superintendent*

May 24, 2005

To: LEA Superintendents and Charter School Directors

From: Louis M. Fabrizio, Director  
Accountability Services

Christopher I. Cobitz, Chief  
Reporting Section

Subject: Recent Changes in Board Policies for the 2005-06 ABCs

As you know, the State Board of Education (SBE) met on May 4 and 5. Some of their actions have implications for the 2005-06 accountability year and beyond.

Changes to SBE policies that will be effective with the 2005-06 year are:

1. The inclusion of Computer Skills Test results from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade in the calculation of the Performance composite will use the 8<sup>th</sup> grade membership as the denominator instead of the number of tested 8<sup>th</sup> graders. This change brings school accountability in line with board policy on testing computer skills in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
2. Students in their first year in US schools scoring below intermediate high on the reading section of the IPT test will count as having participated in the state writing assessments if they have participated in the writing section of the IPT.
3. Clarification of the test participation rules. As in the past, all eligible students must be assessed.
4. The use of only students with a full academic year for ABCs growth calculations in high schools. This change defines full academic year for EOC tests as 140 days prior to testing for traditional scheduled high schools and 70 days of the tested semester for block scheduled high schools. This change makes the high school EOC model similar to the lower grade level model.
5. Removing the requirement of an answer sheet for students who are not tested. This should decrease the level of paperwork and decrease the possibility of errors. Instead, the number of students in courses and grade levels will be identified using either SIMS or NC WISE; students without an answer sheet will be counted as not tested (unless they have an alternate assessment sheet).
6. Clarification of demographic data collection. This change should decrease the coding burden on schools as well as decrease the likelihood of miscoding, but does rely heavily on correct data in SIMS, NC WISE, CECAS, and the child nutrition software.

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7. Modifications to the growth formulas for all grade levels and subjects. Attached is a simple summary of the advantages to the new formulas. This change should stabilize the growth model but does require some fundamental changes to the way data are submitted to DPI. For LEAs using NC WISE, these changes will result in a decrease in effort on the part of the LEA.
8. Modification to the high growth standard. For 2005-06, high growth will be determined by having both met expected growth and having at least 60% of students meeting the individual growth expectation (in high schools change in CTP/CUP graduates, change in dropout rate and change in competency test pass rate will be including in the ratio used for high growth).
9. The ability for schools and LEAs to calculate growth reports at the classroom and student levels. This feature, although requiring the use of discretion and understanding the margin of uncertainty, should help guide instructional practice.
10. The ability for schools and LEAs to calculate growth reports for AYP subgroups. This feature, although requiring the use of discretion and understanding the margin of uncertainty, should help guide instructional practice.

As we move forward into next year, a variety of materials explaining the new formulas and new policies will become available. We are cautious to ensure that there is a clear delineation between the policies passed for 2005-06 and those in place for the ABCs and AYP release for the 2004-05 year. Please be aware that these changes (in response to a provision in House Bill 1414 from 2004) may produce different ABCs results. The Reporting Section will work to provide some indication to schools how they would have fared in the 2004-05 year, had the new policies been in effect.

Further documentation is available at: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/reporting/growthformulas>

Should you have comments or questions, please feel free to contact your Regional Accountability Coordinator or Chris Cobitz at 919-807-3787 or [ccobitz@dpi.state.nc.us](mailto:ccobitz@dpi.state.nc.us).

Thank you for your hard work in ensuring a quality education for all students.

CC: Janice Davis  
Regional Accountability Coordinators  
LEA Testing Coordinators  
DPI Accountability Advisory Committee  
Compliance Commission

Attachment: Features of the New Formulas