

# Hot Topic Movies

[www.ncpublicschools.org/newsroom/topics](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/newsroom/topics)

## New ABCs Growth Formulas

*Presented by the NC Department of Public Instruction*

### TRANSCRIPT

Local school accountability has always been an important component of the ABCs of Public Education, North Carolina's primary school improvement program. The ABCs was one of the first accountability programs in the nation to track and set expected academic growth for individual students from one year to the next. This year, there is a change in the program. The formulas used to determine expectations for students' academic growth have changed. In addition, this year, for the first time, school districts can make growth information on most individual students available to teachers. In the past, even though growth has been tracked for students, the data has been accumulated and reported at the school level.

Growth is measured by student performance on state end-of-grade assessments for grades three through eight and certain end-of-course high school assessments.

Schools are recognized based on growth in student performance and the percentage of students' scoring at or above grade level. In the 10 years that the accountability program has been in place, the growth standards represented in the formula used to judge student growth have remained the same. But the reading and math curriculum and assessments have changed.

Effective with the 2005-06 school year, new growth formulas will be used. The new formulas should provide consistent and reliable performance measures of schools from year to year.

Dr. Lou Fabrizio, Director, Accountability Services, NCDPI: *"The General Assembly, two years ago, asked that we do an entire evaluation of the standards that are in place with the ABCs. Based on that evaluation we determined that it was time to make some changes to those growth formulas. We spent numerous months working on that, sharing that information with the various stakeholder groups and so this year, the 2005-2006 school year, is the first year that we will be using those new growth formulas to make determinations for the schools in North Carolina."*

Student performance levels used to judge growth will remain the same, ranging from Level IV, where the student shows consistent mastery beyond proficiency, to Level I, where the student shows insufficient mastery of knowledge and skills in the subject area. And school designations will remain the same, ranging from Honor Schools of Excellence to priority schools.

The new ABCs formulas are different enough that comparisons between the 2006 performance of schools and prior years should be avoided. The information on the growth of individual student's academic performance will be the best instructional indicator.

The 2005-06 school year is the year for new ABCs growth formulas and many other changes. Key to success for schools will be to:

- focus on curriculum delivery;
- actively engage all students;
- align resources to instructional priorities;
- use end of grade and end of course assessments as global needs indicators and
- conduct and analyze ongoing classroom assessments.



Dr. Elsie Leak, Associate Superintendent, Curriculum and School Reform, NCDPI: *“Even though the formulas have changed, we still use the same curriculum, our standard course of study. Our tests are still aligned to that curriculum. And, if in our schools, we will focus on delivering that curriculum to the very best of our ability, looking at our student needs and how to actively engage students in the teaching and learning process, then we will be in good shape. If a report comes back and a school didn’t do as well as they anticipated or even as well as they have in the past, I think it should be looked at as an opportunity for growth. What is it that we need to do this next year that will bring more focus to what we’re doing. And in thinking of children and how to get that done well, we want to be sure that all resources are aligned behind those instructional priorities. So the testing results will give us the global needs of a school, then added to that, the schools themselves, can really encourage teachers to do the ongoing assessment in classrooms. When they put those two things together, they really have a priority for where they need to move next. The other thing is to not dwell on testing. Testing is really a part of life. Our children can’t be legal drivers until they pass a test, so tests are with us. But if we don’t focus on the test, but focus on quality instruction for all children everyday, I think the results will come.*

You can access the ABCs accountability report on the Web at this site, <http://abcs.ncpublicschools.org/>. In addition, callers are invited to leave messages on this hotline, 800-431-7373, and answers will be returned promptly. Also, an email address at [abcs@dpi.state.nc.us](mailto:abcs@dpi.state.nc.us) is set up to accept questions regarding the ABCs and school accountability. Please access these tools to get answers about the ABCs of Public Education in North Carolina.

