

Accountability Redesign for Public School Units

Michael Maher, Chief Accountability Officer

Rupen Fofaria, Director of State Board Operations & Policy



Background and Context



Achieving Educational Excellence



Lead Transformative Change

- **Focus Area 4, Action 1**

Establish an SBE Task Force to develop a new school-level accountability system that will: Consider the variability among high schools with respect to available opportunities and funding, such as Advanced Placement, CTE courses, etc.; Reliably assess multiple measures of student performance in grades 3-12 that includes measures of progress towards ensuring all students graduate prepared for their next phase of life

Current Context

- NC's accountability system has guided school improvement for nearly 30 years.
- Early models (ABCs, mid-1990s): performance on state EOG/EOC tests + growth.
- 2001 NCLB added federal requirements for identifying schools needing support.
- 2015: NC General Assembly codified A–F School Performance Grades (G.S. 115C-83.15).
- ESSA (2015) aligned federal and state systems; NC law (G.S. 115C-83.16) integrated requirements.



ESSA Federal Requirements

- Proficiency in reading and math.
- English learner progress.
- Science proficiency (grades 5 & 8).
- 4-year high school graduation rate.
- Additional state-determined indicators of school quality/student success:
 - *Elementary/Middle*: growth in reading, math, science.
 - *High Schools*: growth in NC Math 1, Math 3, English II.



Vision



Why This Matters

- Current A–F system heavily weighted on EOG/EOC test scores
- Limited reflection of readiness for college, career, and life
- Inequities in access to AP, CTE, and enrichment opportunities
- Opportunity to modernize and lead nationally



Vision

- Multiple valid and reliable measures across grades K–12
- Emphasis on readiness beyond graduation (college, career, military)
- Recognition of growth and equality of opportunity
- Transparent reporting for parents, educators, and communities



Plan of Action



Scope of Task Force

- Two Phases
- Developing a Theory of Action for the redesigned accountability system
- Conducting research and stakeholder engagement to inform system redesign, including different models for grade bands
- Redesigning the accountability model, including guiding principles, components, growth models, and measures and weighting structures
- Piloting and testing redesign models for validity and reliability
- Developing “school performance profiles” for public reporting



Action Requested

- **Action Requested: Establish the Task Force**
- Representatives: SBE, NCGA, educators, researchers, policy experts, student advocates, community & business leaders
- Charged with designing a revised accountability framework
- Work begins immediately upon SBE approval



Project Timeline

- **Sept. 2025:** Planning & Setup (form Task Force, define scope)
- **Oct. 2025 – Feb. 2026:** Phase 1 -- Research & Engagement
- **Spring 2026:** Phase 1 -- Framework Design (indicators, weighting, reporting)
- **Summer 2026:** Phase 1 -- Draft Proposal & Policy Development
- **2026-27:** Phase 1 -- Pilot System & Update Law, Rule or Policy
- **2027–28:** Phase 1/2 -- Implementation (profiles, legislative action, federal waiver); commence engagement around Phase 2



Closing



Questions?

