

NC State Board of Education 2025 Statewide Strategic Plan



Updated Strategic Plan Outline (07/30/19)

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Mission & Vision

Mission

The mission of the North Carolina State Board of Education is to use its constitutional authority to guard and maintain the right a sound, basic education for every child in North Carolina Public Schools.

Vision

Every public school student in North Carolina will be empowered to accept academic challenges, prepared to pursue their chosen path after graduating high school, and encouraged to become lifelong learners who will engage in a globally-collaborative society.

Guiding Principles Definitions (the Strategic Plan's foundation)

Whole Child:

- Every student enters school healthy and learns to practice a healthy lifestyle.
- Every student learns in an environment that is physically and emotionally safe.
- Every student actively learns, connects with their school, and engages in their broader community.
- Every student has access to personalized learning and support from qualified, caring adults.
- Every student is challenged academically and prepared for prepared for success in college or further and for employment and participation in a global environment.

Equity:

The State Board is committed to delivering equitable opportunity to every student in North Carolina, bearing in mind that “fair” is not always “equal”, and equal is not always equitable. Therefore, “Educational Equity” is the belief and practice of ensuring that every student is treated in a fair and just manner, providing the necessary allocation of resources for the success of every student, and eliminating discriminatory barriers to full participation and opportunities for every student.

Additional Definitions for Clarification

The following definitions demonstrate the way that the North Carolina State Board of Education uses these terms throughout this document.

- **Opportunity Gap**: Opportunity gaps are defined by the disparity in access to quality schools and resources needed for all children to be successful.
- **Educators**: This term includes teachers, administrators, instructional coaches, counselors, and others who work directly with students in K-12 public schools in North Carolina.
- **Mental Health Professionals**: This term includes nurses, counselors, social workers, and psychologists.
- **School Climate**: School climate refers to the quality of school life. A school's climate exhibits a sense of safety and belonging on the school's campus and is built on the beliefs and attitudes of students, their families, and those working within the school.
- **Postsecondary**: Postsecondary refers to anything a student decides to do after high school, including attending community college, attending a four-year university, obtaining a high-quality industry credential, entering the workforce, or joining the military.
- **Personalized Learning**: Personalized learning ensures that students are being met where they are, so they can grow. This term is not equivalent to digital/technological learning experiences.
The state believes that personalized learning should rest on four pillars, outlined in the state's ESSA Plan:
 - A student having a "learner profile" that documents and stimulates self-reflection on his or her strengths, weaknesses, preferences, and goals;
 - A student pursuing an individualized learning path that encourages him or her to set and manage personal academic goals;
 - A student following a "competency-based progression" that focuses on the ability to demonstrate mastery of a topic, rather than seat time; and,
 - A students' learning environment being flexible and structured in ways that support individual goals.
- **Safe School**: School safety is understood to mean that schools and school-related activities provide an environment where students are safe from violence, bullying,

harassment, substance use, and any other unsafe activities. “Safe schools” promote the protection of students from unsafe activities on school grounds.

- **Advanced Teaching Roles:** Opportunities to allow highly effective* classroom teachers to teach an increased number of students by:
 - assuming accountability for additional students;
 - becoming a lead classroom teacher accountable for the performance of all students taught by teachers on the lead classroom teacher’s team; or
 - leading a larger effort in the school to implement new instructional models to improve schoolwide performance.

**highly effective* denotes that the teacher exceeds growth on his/her EVAAS ratings and demonstrates proven student growth in the subject he/she teaches

- **Graduation Coordinator:** Support staff in schools whose primary job is to increase post-secondary attainment.

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Goal 1: Eliminate opportunity gaps by 2025.

It is important to the North Carolina State Board of Education (“the Board” hereafter) to make the elimination of opportunity gaps as the focus of the first goal. The Board recognizes that there are several out-of-school factors that impact student performance and attendance, and this goal is the Board’s attempt to acknowledge and act on those factors.

In the beginning of the Strategic Plan revision process, this goal was conceived as “narrowing achievement gaps.” After discussion with Strategic Planning Committee members of the Board and reviewing feedback from Board members and NCDPI staff, we realized that the real root of achievement issues lies within the opportunities that students have available to them. By striving to increase access to mental health professionals in schools, decrease exclusionary discipline practices, improve school climate measures across schools, and more listed below in our Goal 1 Objectives, we hope that students have more opportunities to experience success in schools. The Board believes that if we, as a state, work to eliminate opportunity gaps between subgroups of students, then school and district performance will improve.

Eliminating opportunity gaps also means that the state will work to eliminate gaps in educator representation. The Board has reviewed research about the great impact teachers of color can make on all students—especially students of color—and believes that increasing the number of diverse educators across the state will have a profoundly positive impact on students.

These opportunity gap measures are particularly important for the Board. In October 2018, the Board engaged in deep equity work with the Racial Equity Institute (REI) while at North Carolina Central University for the fall planning and work session. We delved into topics of defining equity and how the Board’s priorities align with equity, safety, and the concept of the Whole Child. Since that initial work, there have been additional conversations at the Board table about the Whole Child, the importance of school psychologists, and regular updates from the Healthy Active Child Board Committee. The Wake County Public Schools’ Office of Equity Affairs Team presented at the June 2019 Board Meeting, sharing their model and office structure and offering insight for how other LEAs and the state can uphold the value of equity. It is our hope that the opportunity gap objectives highlight the Board’s commitment to achieving equity for each student across the state.

Objectives for Goal 1 - Eliminate opportunity gaps by 2025.

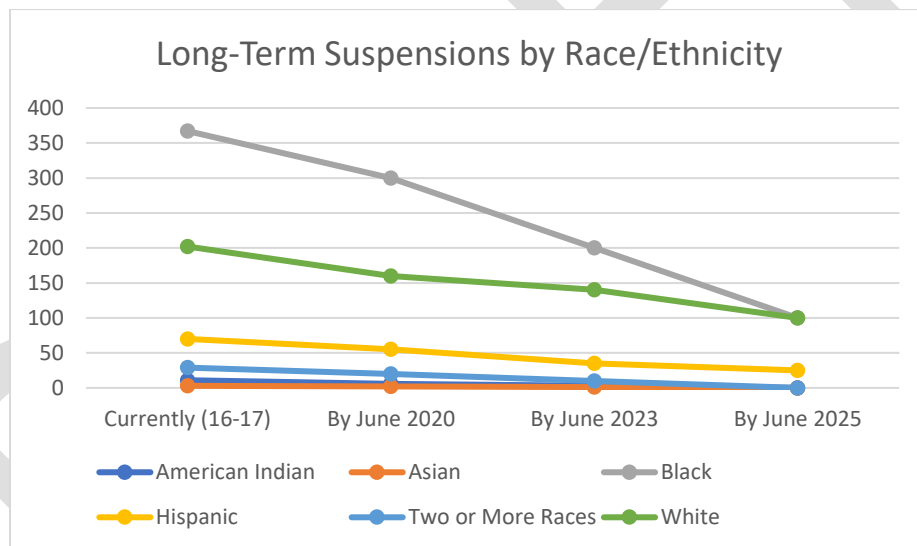
1.1: Decrease the number of exclusionary discipline practices by subgroup (suspensions and expulsions).

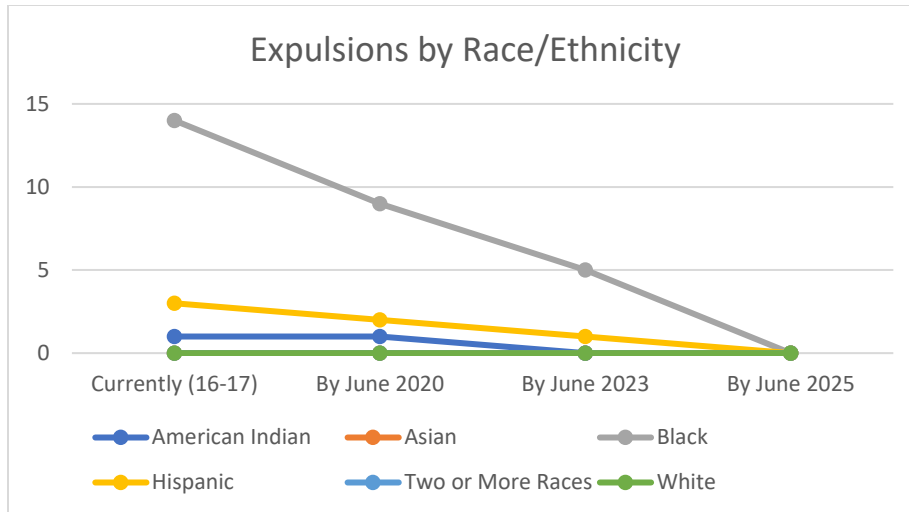
Metric: Disaggregated student discipline data, differentiated between in-school suspension (ISS), short-term suspensions (10 days or less), long-term suspensions (11 days or more), and expulsions; findings published annually

ACTION ITEM collect short-term suspensions data, establish time frame of suspensions, collect data on “offense” codes

ACTION ITEM create statewide definitions relating to discipline policy (e.g. disrespect, insubordination, etc.)

ACTION ITEM gather information on existing restorative justice practices and reentry tools/toolkits





1.2 (A): Improve school climate measures across all schools and grade levels

Metric: School Climate Survey (including student feedback); track chronic absenteeism (# of days per month); Safety App reports/ “Safe Schools Certification”; systematic review of lead in schools, family engagement

ACTION ITEM Board to develop a “Safe Schools Certification” to disseminate on social media, recognizing safe schools or Safe School of the Month based upon Safety App Reports. Development of NC school climate survey that is administered statewide during the same window as the NCTWC survey.

(B): Increase the number of school-based mental health professionals.

Metric: Ratio 1:250, 1 counselor for every 200-250 students, adjusted by school populations across rural vs. urban areas, over time in CSI-designated schools

ACTION ITEM Collect disaggregated data by mental health professional type (counselors, social workers) to establish baseline for our schools

(C): Increase opportunities to develop healthy habits in students.

Metric: Number of school gardens; number of minutes students receive physical activity on a daily basis; number of schools practicing mindfulness with students (meditation, yoga, calm breathing); inclusion of brochures discouraging “vaping”/facts on vaping along with all anti-smoking information

ACTION ITEM Encourage schools to take ownership, based on their students and existing school culture, of what climate measures and healthy habits will be best fit and display that commitment in the school

(D): Increase number of schools and school districts utilizing innovative “Breakfast After the Bell, Summer Meals, and At-Risk Afterschool Meals” programs to keep students fed, healthy, and engaged.

1.3: Increase percentage of 4-year old children enrolled in state Pre-K from 22%, (NIEER 2018 State of Pre-School Report) to 34% (above the current national average)

Metric: developmental screening data requested from Dept. Health and Human Services, (?), tracking number of pre-K seats

1.4 (A): Decrease the high school dropout rate for each subgroup

Metric: Disaggregated dropout numbers by subgroup; value added measure to be ratio - number of graduation coordinators after established counselor: student

ACTION ITEM Track dropout rates by subgroup to establish baseline, define specific percentage we will decrease by 2025, collect data/tracking on reason codes for drop outs

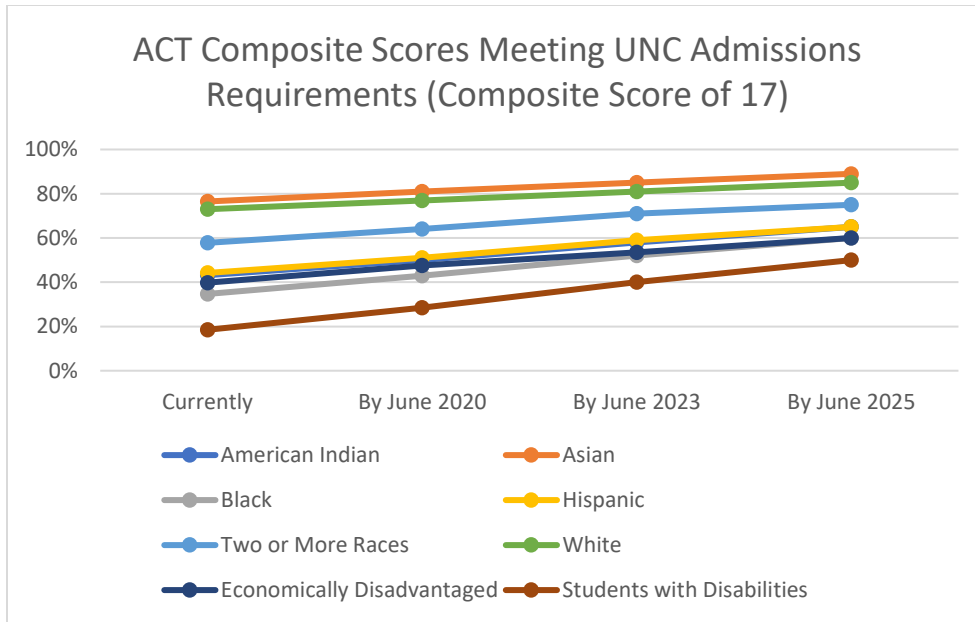
(B): Increase average composite score on state-mandated college entrance exam

Metric: Disaggregated ACT composite score data

ACTION ITEM Establish value added scoring to prevent simple comparison with prior year cohort

(C): Increase access, readiness, and attainment of early postsecondary opportunities (EPSOs), such as AP, IB, CTE, dual credit/enrollment, work-based learning, apprenticeships.

Metric: Number of postsecondary class opportunities per school/district (disaggregated by EPSO type) –



1.5: Decrease number of students taking remedial courses in college.

Metric: Disaggregated percentage of students in remedial courses over time, students enrolled in Math 4 Level

ACTION ITEM Collect data on remedial course requirements at time of graduation, work with post-secondary partners to ensure accurate data

As part of our commitment to the Whole Child and supporting our students to graduation and beyond, we will establish the long-term goal of increasing the percentage of students completing a form of postsecondary education (two-year college degree, four-year college degree, industry certification, military pathway). While this goal will not fit into our 2025 timeframe, the Board will begin collecting disaggregated percentages of students *completing* a two-year college degree, four-year college degree, and industry certifications – on a “self-report” basis from NC graduates, beginning with establishing a “1-year check-in” initiative.

1.6: Increase the number of educators of color in schools across North Carolina.

Metric: Disaggregated data over time of the educator workforce in NC;

ACTION ITEM Collect data on existing teachers of color to establish a baseline, define specific percentage we will decrease by 2025 (e.g. “increase the number of educators of color in schools across NC by X%”)

ACTION ITEM Collect current district data, differentiate between male and female and increase both by X%

1.7: Increase the number of charter schools providing equitable access to economically disadvantaged students or reflecting the LEA in which they are located

Metric: Weighted lotteries (per requirements based on CSP grant)

ACTION ITEM Collect current charter student enrollment

Abbreviations Key

TMR	Two or More Races	SWD	Students with Disabilities	EDS	Economically Disadvantaged
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Student disaggregated data incremental goals were created based on 2016-2017 North Carolina Drilldown student performance data, listed below.

Student Disaggregated Drilldown Performance Data (2016-2017)

Subject	Standard	AmerIndian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	TMR	White	EDS	SWD
Graduation Rate	4-Year	84.3%	93.8%	83.9%	80.5%	84.3%	89.3%	81.8%	70.3%
ACT Composite	Meets UNC Min	43.2%	76.5%	34.7%	44.2%	57.8%	73.0%	39.8%	18.5%

Color Code: values less than 50% = red, values between 50%-80% = yellow, values greater than 80% = green

Financial Considerations for Goal 1:

- Cost of teacher training on restorative justice practices
- Additional funding for ACT preparation for 11th graders
- Salary and benefits for in-school mental health providers
- Design or purchase of school climate survey
- Salary and benefits for more teachers teaching EPSO courses
- Increased marketing efforts for colleges of education to recruit candidates of color
- Research initiative on how increasing alternative licensure pathways could increase educators of color

Goal 2: Improve school and district performance by 2025.

The Board fully recognizes that performance on statewide or federally-mandated tests is not a complete, accurate representation of who children are or how a school or district performs; rather, it is only one piece of a complex puzzle to identify overall performance.

The measures around math and language arts proficiency metrics are federally required through Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) that was passed in 2015. Since the state's ESSA Plan already requires these measures to be collected, we felt it appropriate to show in this Strategic Plan that the Board—along with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI)—also cares about proficiency. It is imperative that students have basic reading and math competency in elementary school before tackling more serious content in middle and high school grades. Though proficiency can be a contentious measure, there must be a standard for students to meet to achieve mastery of content.

The Board understands that there are multiple ways to measure proficiency. NCDPI's Innovative Assessment Pilot will hopefully provide districts and schools opportunities to give students alternate assessments to determine content knowledge. Looking at objectives such as decreasing dropout rates or tracking access and completion of early postsecondary opportunities (EPSOs) can be additional ways to see how schools and districts are performing relative to student preparation for post-secondary success.

Further, the Board also understands that measuring growth, at both a student and school level, is imperative in determining school and district overall performance. Student growth throughout the year can be measured formatively, as to inform the teacher of the student's needs. Using metrics such as comparing third grade Beginning-of-Grade test scores with End-of-Grade test scores can show reading growth, as well as looking at a student's Lexile level as it develops throughout the year. School and district growth—as it pertains to overall performance—is also a topic addressed in North Carolina's ESSA Plan. Schools and districts that do not meet student subgroup growth can be labeled as "Targeted Support and Intervention." This federal designation, if unchecked and growth declines or stagnates, can lead to the school or district becoming a "Comprehensive Support and Improvement" school—an even more intensive label. The Board believes that the growth measures used in these objectives can be powerful drivers to school and district performance.

Objectives for Goal 2 - Improve school and district performance by 2025.

2.1: Increase the percentage of grades 3-8 math and ELA EOG subgroup test scores meeting the ESSA Yearly Measures of Interim Progress.

Metric: Disaggregated subgroup data on EOG assessments in reading & math by grade level; innovative assessment pilot progress monitoring data

ACTION ITEM confirm new metrics based on Istation? Commitment to a growth or value-added measure with this new vendor?

2.2: Increase the percentage of students proficient in math by subgroup.

Metric: Disaggregated subgroup data on grades 5 & 8 math EOGs and subgroup data on advanced math course enrollment in high school

ACTION ITEM Establish current proficiency basis and make a specific commitment for 2025

2.3: Increase the percentage of students proficient in reading by the end of 3rd grade.

Metric: Disaggregated reading data for 3rd grade students

ACTION ITEM Metric to include new reading diagnostics from Istation, comparison of BOG and EOG scores (growth)

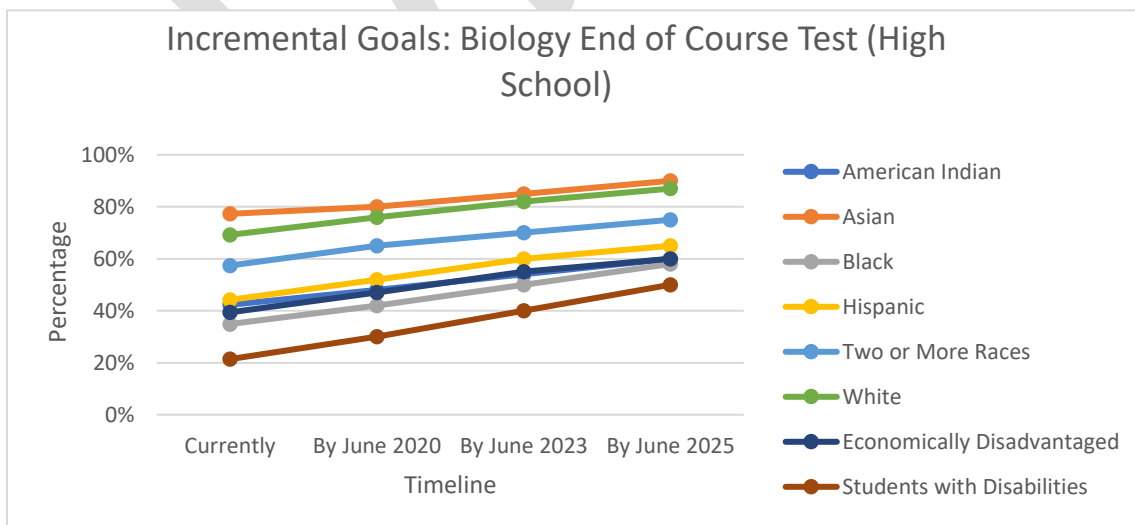
2.4: Increase the percentage of high school reading subgroup test scores meeting the ESSA Yearly Measures of Interim Progress.

Metric: Disaggregated subgroup data on EOC reading assessment (English II)

2.5: Increase the percentage of students proficient in science by subgroup.

Metric: Disaggregated subgroup data on grades 5 & 8 science EOGs and high school biology EOC

ACTION ITEM Establish current proficiency and make percentage increase commitment for 2025



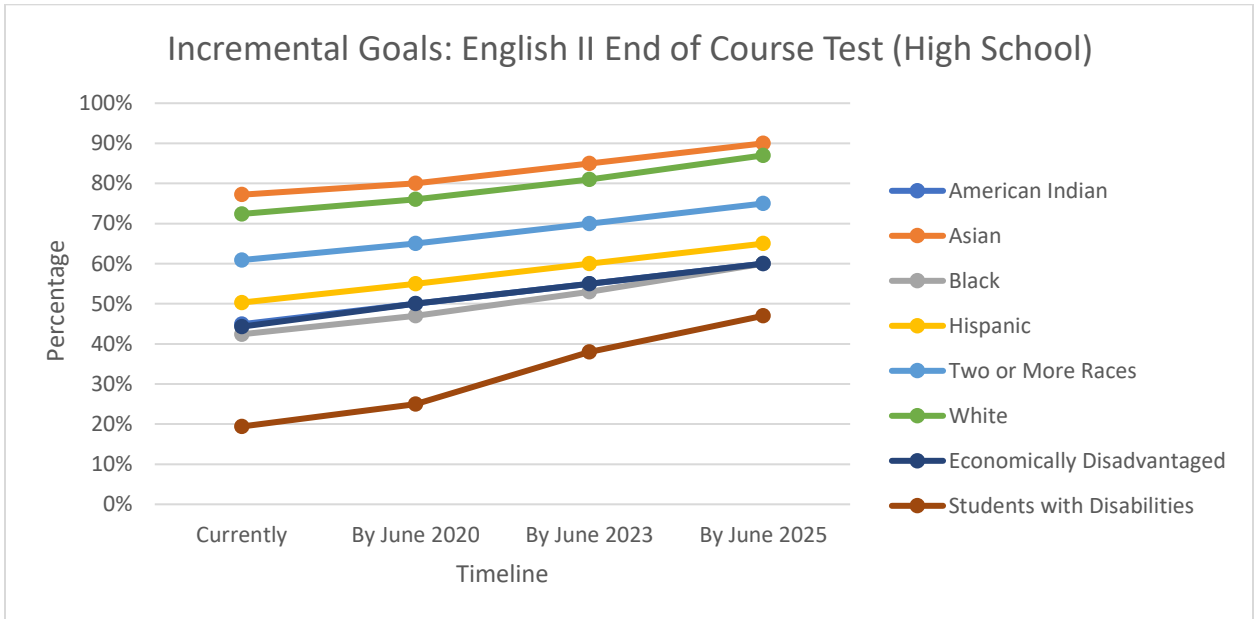
2.6 (A): Increase number of schools meeting or exceeding growth measure by subgroup

Metric: annual subgroup growth scores on EOGs/EOCs

(B) Allocate financial, business and technology resources according to State and Federal laws and State Board of Education policies

Metric: ESSA mandates, SBOE policies

ACTION ITEM Identify and list high priority mandates and policies with this Plan



2.7(A): Increase the number of charter schools meeting or exceeding academic, operational, and financial goals

Metric: Performance rubric

ACTION ITEM Development of performance rubric - formulated similarly to charter schools, begin collecting data to establish current numbers in order to increase by 2025

(B): Increase the percentage of schools with charter-like flexibilities (Innovative Schools, Innovation Zones, Restart Schools, Renewal School Districts, Lab Schools) meeting or exceeding annual expected growth

Metric: Performance rubric, tracking to being in 2020-2021 SY

Abbreviations Key

TMR	Two or More Races	SWD	Students with Disabilities
EDS	Economically Disadvantaged	GLP	Grade Level Proficient

Student disaggregated data incremental goals were created based on 2016-2017 North Carolina Drilldown student performance data, listed below.

Student Disaggregated Drilldown Performance Data (2016-2017)

Subject	Standard	AmerIndian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	TMR	White	EDS	SWD
EOG Reading, Gr. 3-8	GLP (3+)	42.8%	76.9%	39.6%	43.9%	59.8%	70.6%	42.5%	21.1%
EOG Math, Gr. 3-8	GLP (3+)	40.0%	81.9%	35.7%	47.2%	54.5%	67.3%	40.8%	20.9%
EOG Science, Gr. 5 & 8	GLP (3+)	63.8%	87.6%	55.8%	63.6%	74.8%	83.8%	60.6%	37.6%
EOC English II	GLP (3+)	44.9%	77.2%	42.4%	50.3%	60.9%	72.4%	44.3%	19.4%
EOC Biology	GLP (3+)	42.3%	77.3%	34.9%	44.2%	57.4%	69.2%	39.4%	21.4%

Color Code: values less than 50% = red, values between 50%-80% = yellow, values greater than 80% = green

Financial Considerations for Goal 2:

- Cost of teacher training on reading proficiency tool
- Salary and benefits / incentives for science teachers
- More ACT prep courses / ACT coaches
- Purchase / Development of multiple performance evaluation tools
- Increasing supplemental funding for poor and rural counties

Goal 3: Increase educator preparedness to meet the needs of every student by 2025.

The Board, Governor Cooper, and Superintendent Johnson agree: we all want the best educators teaching North Carolina's students. The Board believes that if we can increase and improve educator preparedness, then the needs of each child can be met across the state.

This goal is particularly ambitious as it requires partnership and collaboration with educator preparation programs (EPPs). Despite the goal's audacious nature, we find it a worthy cause that should be pursued to do what is best for the children of North Carolina. Schools, districts, EPPs, the Board, and NCDPI must work together to find the best ways to recruit and retain top educators, starting with educator preparation candidates and early career educators. There is innovative work being done in states like Tennessee and Texas where formal partnerships are formed with EPPs and LEAs. These partnerships are typically facilitated by state departments of education, building strong educator pipelines through clinical practice and collaboration. Early career educators historically have high turnover rates, implying that teacher candidates may not be fully prepared for the job at hand or may experience a lack of support in their school building. Ensuring mentorship opportunities for these new educators can extend their time in the classroom.

Additionally, the Board believes that expanding access to culturally-relevant, equity-focused professional development trainings will equip more teachers to connect with more students and their families. Not only do we hope to see an increase in *opportunities for culturally-relevant trainings*, but we also want to see an increase in the *number of culturally-relevant educators* teaching in our schools. The North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards require educators be leaders both within and outside of their schools' walls, and it is our hope that this goal and its corresponding objectives can help advance that work. Several districts have been piloting initiatives promoting teacher advancement (e.g. Project ADVANCE in Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools and the Opportunity Culture advanced teaching roles model in Edgecombe County), and we hope to learn more from them as we move forward.

Objectives for Goal 3 - Increase educator preparedness to meet the needs of every child by 2025.

3.1: Increase the number of culturally-relevant, equity-focused resources for educators

Metric: Number of professional learning opportunities designated CRP (culturally relevant pedagogy) in which educators participate (at least 1 per year), Educator Feedback Survey, cultural measures from School Climate Survey

ACTION ITEM Board definitions of CRP, development of District level incentives for developing/attending CRP professional development (use of NC resources such as “Project ADVANCE” model)

3.2: Increase the number of mentors available to beginning educators.

Metric: Admin/Department-determined ratio at each school, Educator Feedback Survey

ACTION ITEM Begin collecting informal (formal ASAP) feedback on what educators need from mentors (match based on subject and years taught?), development support guidelines for mentor ratios

3.3 Strengthen relationships between educator preparation programs (EPPs), districts, and schools to foster collaboration and better teaching practice.

Metric: Number of EPPs in active partnership with districts as noted by a [Primary Partnership Agreement](#), Educator Feedback Survey, number of “2 + 2” or other programs at community colleges that are teaching focused

ACTION ITEM Begin measuring EPP and district collaboration (until establish a more formalized process), collect information on teaching preparation programs at community college level, alternative licensure in districts

3.4: Increase opportunities for educator engagement inside and outside of school

Supporting teachers in successful alignment with North Carolina’s Professional Teaching Standards, especially “Teachers demonstrate the value of lifelong learning and encourage their students to learn and grow”.

Metric: Number of districts offering advanced teacher roles over time, reduction in number of teacher chronic absenteeism; partnership on project development with TOY/RTOYs, number of teachers participating in the implementation of initiatives to improve education/advocating for positive change in policies and practices affecting student learning

ACTION ITEM Collect past data on advanced teacher roles, and collect to upcoming 2020 school year, establish X% District level increase by 2025

Financial Considerations for Goal 3:

- Cost of teacher training on culturally-relevant, equity-focused pedagogy
 - Money for substitutes if the training is on a school day
 - Payment for trainer/speaker
 - Any cost of culturally-relevant, equity-focused pedagogy materials for staff use
 - Cost of possible cultural PD development by Board
 - Review of current PD by Board
- Stipend to pay mentor teachers
- Budget for advanced teacher roles across the state (LEAs look to districts like Edgecombe where advanced teaching roles are now embedded in their schoolwide budgets)
- Development of Educator Feedback Survey

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Strategies & Initiatives to Accomplish our Goals

Strategies	Potential Initiatives
<p>Ensure strong curriculum aligned to standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity: Every child gets what (s)he needs to understand academic concepts. • Whole Child: Every child is challenged academically and prepared for success in college or further student and for employment and participation in a global environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blended learning models Work-based learning opportunities Social-emotional learning supports Global Awareness/Readiness College and career advising Personalized learning (access to a variety of courses that match a student’s interest)
<p>Ensure effective educators for every child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity: Effective teachers and instructional best practice lead to increased student learning for every child. • Whole Child: Students have access to personalized learning and is supported by qualified, caring adults. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher preparation School leader preparation Ongoing educator development Relationships between EPPs and LEAs Literacy training that focuses on reading science for all educators (teachers, principals, coaches) Beginning Teacher Mentorship/Partnerships Properly licensed educators Develop licensure pathways
<p>Ensure excellent districts and schools for every child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity: Every child in North Carolina deserves to learn in a school with good teachers, leaders, and resources. • Whole Child: Students are actively engaged in learning and are connected to the school and broader community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on foundational learning (PreK-3) Innovative school models (e.g. early college high schools, charter schools, renewal schools, Restart schools, etc.) Relationships between EPPs and LEAs Effective and efficient operations School support and turnaround Literacy coach support for low-performing schools Data systems
<p>Use data to inform resource allocation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity: Schools require different resources and should be granted such to ensure success for every student. • Whole Child: Every child’s basic academic, emotional and safety needs are met. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficient use of resources/data (e.g. summer reading camp) Up-to-date financial and technical systems Fully-staffed schools Students in need of supports receive supports Local flexibility in funding (support district action on reading) Meet basic school needs