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ABCs AND AYP RESULTS, WAKE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM (WCPSS): 2008-09

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ABCs

The ABCs Accountability Model includes a performance component and a growth component. The performance component is measured by the Performance Composite and addresses the percentage of test scores at or above grade level (Levels III or IV) for all students enrolled in the school on the first day of testing for the following tests:

- End of Grade (EOG)
- End of Course (EOC)
- Alternate assessments
- 8th grade Computer Skills
- 10th grade Writing
- 5th grade and 8th grade Science EOG (first time in 2008-09)

For the first time in 2008-09, students who did not achieve proficiency on the first administration of their EOG tests were administered a retest (Retest 1), giving them the chance to improve their scores. The higher score between the first administration and retest was included in calculations of the performance composite and AYP (see page 2). Retest 1 scores were not used in the ABCs growth computations.

The growth component of the ABCs deals with students' scores from one year to the next and includes only students who attended the same school for 140 days or more and had scores in the current year as well as the previous year's predictor(s). Growth calculations are based on:

- EOG scores
- Five EOC scores, since 2007-08 (Algebra I, Biology, Civics and Economics, English 1 and U.S. History)
- The change in number of students receiving a diploma (college, technical college, or university prep)
- Change in the school's dropout rate (High school)

For each school¹, an average growth score is computed by combining the individual growth on the current year's tests for each student. The average growth across all of these indicators has to be greater than or equal to zero for the school to meet the Expected Growth standard. In order to meet the High Growth standard, a school must first meet Expected Growth, and at least 60% of the students in the school have to meet their individual growth targets.

AYP

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is a series of targets that schools, school districts, and states must meet each year to fulfill the requirements of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (also referred to as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, or NCLB). The ultimate goal is for 100% of students to score proficient in reading and mathematics by 2013-14. Each of the 10 subgroups defined for a school (school as a whole, American Indian, Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Multiracial, White, economically disadvantaged, in North Carolina defined as free or reduced-price lunch (FRL), limited English proficient students, and students with disabilities (SWD)), have to meet specific targets:

- Two participation targets: at least a 95% participation rate in the reading assessment (Reading EOG for grades 3 to 8 and a combination of English 1 EOC and grade 10 writing for high schools) and at least a 95% participation rate in the mathematics assessment (Mathematics EOG for grades 3 to 8 and Algebra 1 EOC for high schools)
- Two proficiency targets set to increase incrementally every three years
 - ▶ 43.2% in grades 3 to 8 and 38.5% in grade 10 for reading in 2008-09
 - ▶ 77.2% in grades 3 to 8 and 68.4% in grade 10 for mathematics in 2008-09
- The other “academic indicator,” for school as a whole
 - ▶ Schools with 12th graders have to show progress in their graduation rate
 - ▶ All other schools have to show progress in their attendance rate.

All students in membership in the school as of the day of testing are included in the participation targets. However, only the students who have been in membership in the school for 140 days are included in the proficiency targets.

A school must meet all its targets in order to make AYP. If a school misses even one of its targets, the school fails to make AYP. Whether a school makes AYP influences its eligibility to be designated an Honor School of Excellence (see Table 1). Also, for schools that receive certain federal funding under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, failing to make AYP for multiple consecutive years can result in mandatory interventions such as supplementary tutoring, offering students the option to transfer to other schools, or even reconstituting the school with new staff in more extreme cases. In WCPSS, only elementary schools receive Title I funds at this time.

¹ Alternative schools follow a different model and were not included in these analyses. Special schools are not included in the ABCs model.

Under the overall NC accountability program, each school is classified into a recognition category. In order to be designated with one of the labels, a school must make at least the Expected Growth standard and have a certain percentage of its student test-scores fall into the Level III or Level IV range (see Table 1).

Table 1
Definition of ABCs Awards and Recognition Categories, 2008-09

Schools making <i>High Growth</i> attained their High Growth standard.
Schools making <i>Expected Growth</i> attained their Expected Growth standard (but not their High Growth standard).
<i>Honor Schools of Excellence</i> are schools that made at least Expected Growth, had at least 90% of their students' scores at or above Level III, and made AYP.
<i>Schools of Excellence</i> are schools that made at least Expected Growth and had at least 90% of their students' scores at or above Level III but did not make AYP.
<i>Schools of Distinction</i> are schools that made at least Expected Growth and had 80-89% of their students' scores at or above Level III.
<i>Schools of Progress</i> are schools that made at least Expected Growth and had 60-79% of their students' scores at or above Level III.
Schools receiving <i>No Recognition</i> did not make their Expected Growth standards but have at least 60% of their students' scores at or above Level III.
<i>Priority Schools</i> are schools that have less than 60% of their students' scores at or above Achievement Level III, irrespective of making their Expected Growth standards, and are not Low-Performing Schools.
<i>Low-Performing Schools</i> are those that failed to meet their Expected Growth standards and have less than 50% of their students' scores at or above Level III.

Note: Adapted from <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/reporting/abc/2008-09/execsumm.pdf>

WCPSS Results 2008-09

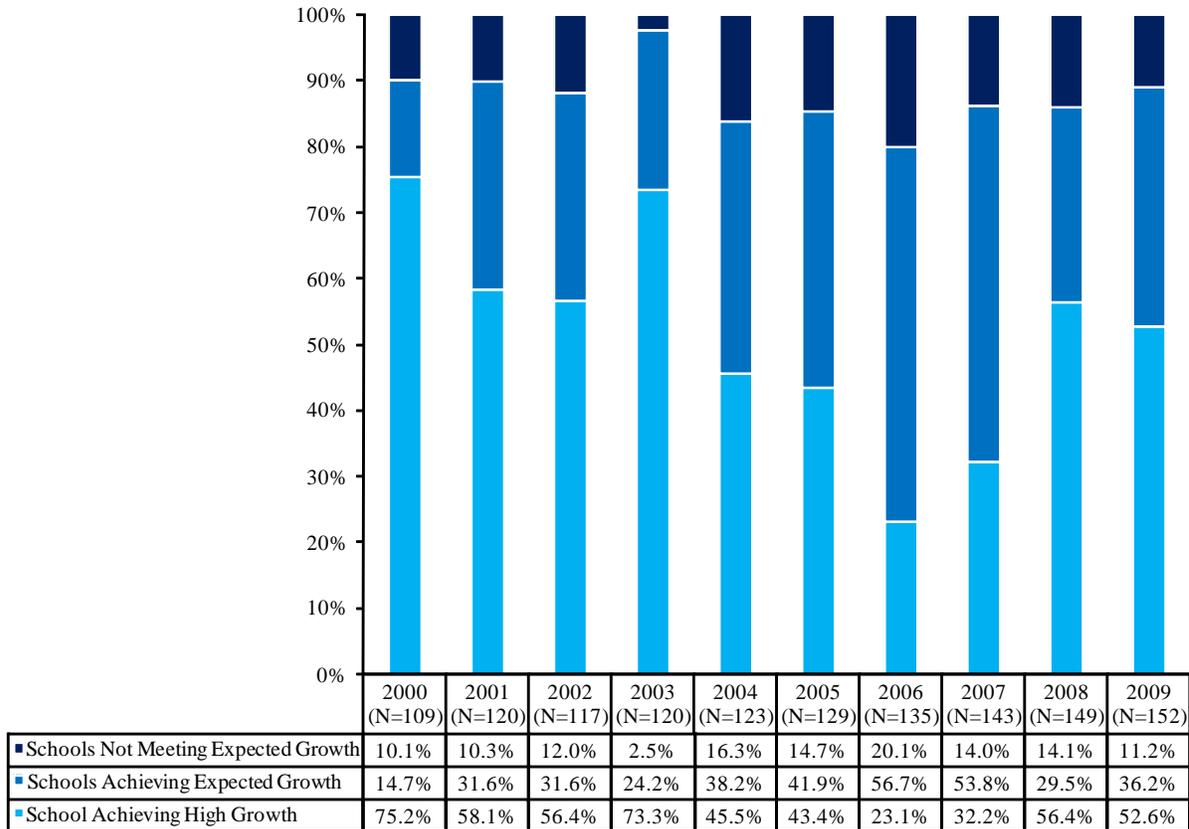
1. Most WCPSS schools have met Expected or High Growth standards every year the ABCs model has been in effect. In 2008-09, 89% of WCPSS schools met Expected or High Growth (Figure 1), nearly three percentage points increase from 2007-08. The percentage of schools that met High Growth decreased slightly (56% to 53%), while the percentage of schools meeting Expected growth increased (from 30% to 36%). WCPSS compared favorably to the state with 81% of North Carolina schools meeting Expected or High Growth (40% High Growth and 42% Expected Growth).
2. The percentage of schools meeting Expected or High Growth in WCPSS was greater than most similar LEAs, except for Charlotte Mecklenburg, which had the same percentage as WCPSS (89%), with a similar distribution in High (49%) and Expected Growth (40%) as well (Figure 2).
3. In 2008-09, almost 45% of WCPSS schools were designated as Schools of Progress (Figure 3). The second most frequent recognition was School of Distinction (33%). The proportion

of schools designated as School of Distinction almost doubled from 2007-08. The percentage of schools receiving the highest recognition of Honor School of Excellence, was 7%, an increase from the previous year. WCPSS had a greater proportion of schools in the higher recognition categories than did the state. Eighty-six percent of WCPSS schools were in the recognition categories School of Progress, Schools of Distinction, School of Excellence, or Honor School of Excellence, while 69% of the schools in the state received those recognitions. About 25% of the state's schools received the recognition of School of Distinction or better (41% in WCPSS). Overall, both the state and WCPSS had a decrease in the percentage of schools receiving the recognition of Priority Schools (meaning having less than 60% of their students' scores at or above Level III), from 13% to 8% for WCPSS and from 29% to 15% for the state of North Carolina. WCPSS did not have any school categorized as a Low Performing School in 2008-09.

4. All subgroups saw their percentages of students meeting growth increase to above 50% in 2008-09. Asian students have been the most successful in meeting their growth targets in the past three years (Figure 4), including the almost 69% who met their growth targets in 2008-09. The rates for White, and Multiracial students also topped the threshold of 60%, the percentage of students who need to meet their growth targets for the state definition of High Growth². The subgroup that made the greatest progress was Black/African-American students increasing from 46.4% in 2007-08 to 51.5% in 2008-09.
5. In 2008-09, 98 WCPSS schools (62.8%) made AYP, a significant increase from 2007-08 (18.9%), see Figure 5. The percentage of schools making AYP had decreased since 2005-06 as new standards were introduced in both mathematics and reading, but spiked back up in 2008-09, partly because of the use of retest scores for Reading and Mathematics EOGs. As described above, schools have to meet four targets per available subgroup and the other academic indicator in order to make AYP. This represents a possible maximum number of 41 targets per school, if all subgroups are represented. Twenty-six schools (17%) missed AYP by one target only. Only fourteen percent of WCPSS schools missed at least one target in reading, and 33% percent missed at least one target in mathematics. The three subgroups that missed the most targets across all schools were the SWD (43), FRL (30), and Black/African American (28).
6. The NCLB Act of 2001 emphasizes the performance of all subgroups, by using the percentages of students who are above a certain threshold. In contrast, the ABCs growth model emphasizes students' progress, no matter where they started. In order to illustrate the relationship between the two measures, the combination of whether a school met AYP and achieved at least Expected Growth was studied. As can be seen in Figure 6, the proportion of schools that met Expected or High Growth was 75.4% for the schools that did not meet AYP and 96.9% for the schools that met AYP. There were a greater proportion of schools that met High Growth among the schools that met AYP (66.3%) than among those that did not meet AYP (29.8%). In conclusion a fair number of schools (43) that did not make AYP did meet the ABCs growth standards in 2008-09, and a very small number of schools (3) failed to meet their growth standards but still made AYP.

² Even though the state does not publish High Growth results by subgroups, this report presents results by subgroups, because one of WCPSS board goals pertains to subgroups meeting High Growth.

Figure 1
WCPSS ABCs Growth Summary over Time, 2000-2009



Interpretation Example: In 2009, 52.6% of WCPSS schools met High Growth, 36.2% met Expected Growth and 11.2% did not meet Expected Growth.

Figure 2
Comparison of WCPSS ABCs Growth Summary to Similar Large North Carolina Districts

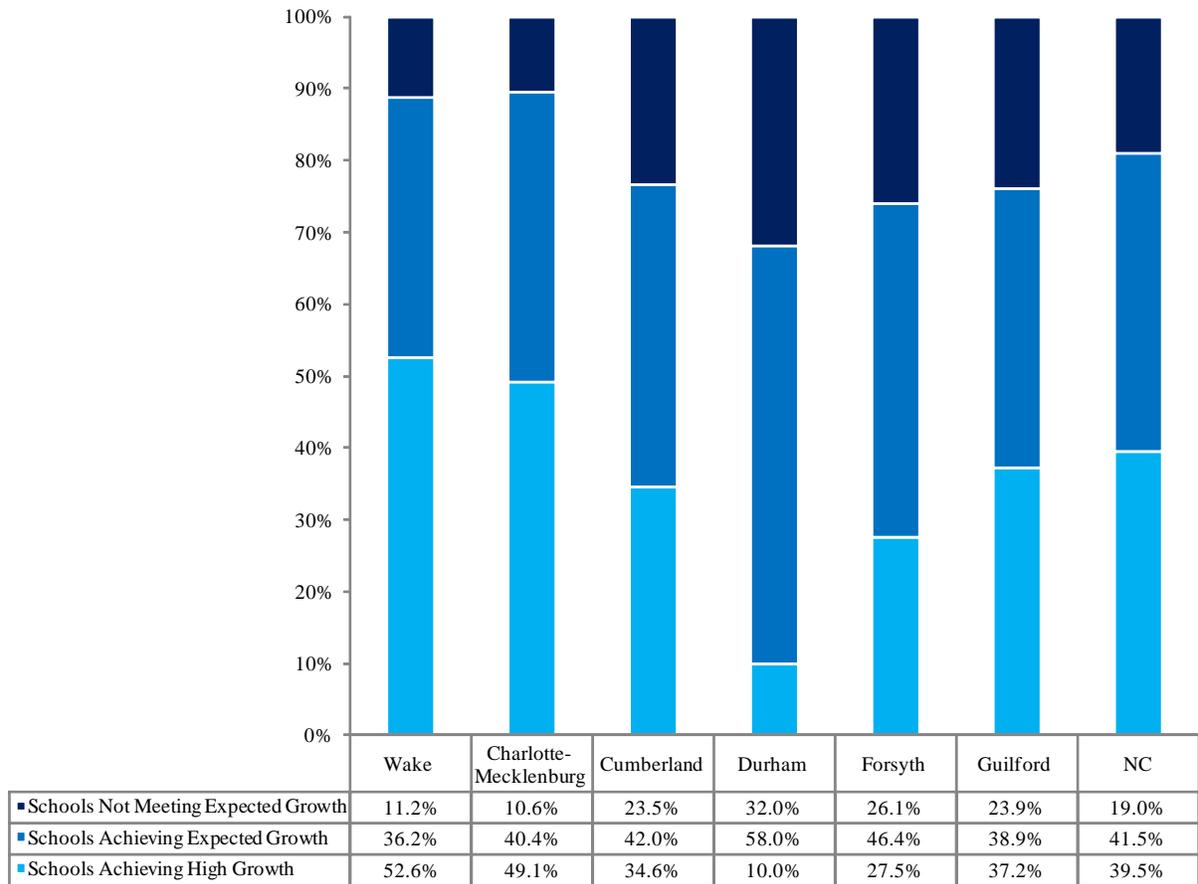


Figure 3
Percentages of WCPSS Schools by ABCs Designation, 2007-2009

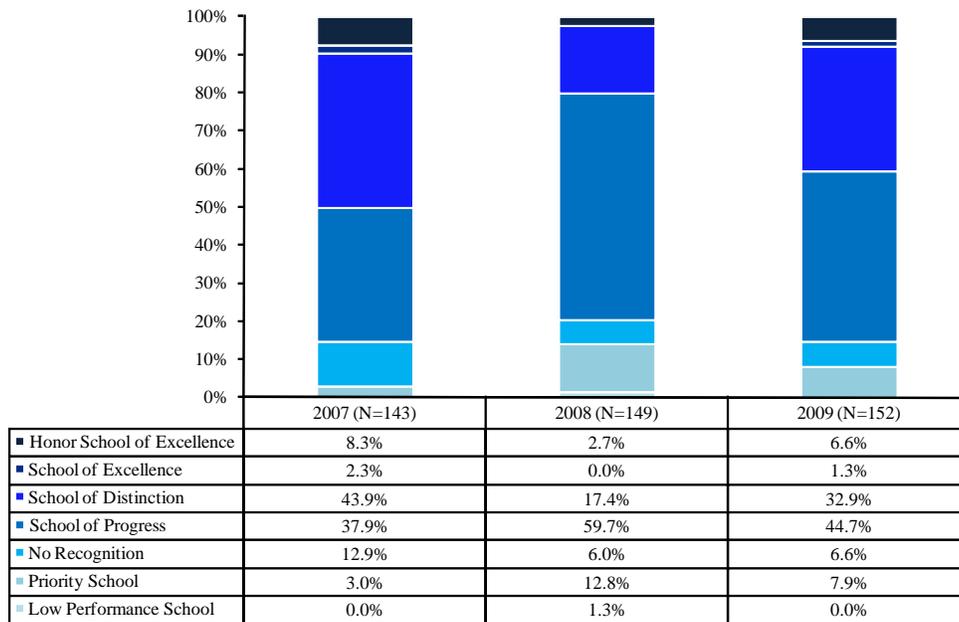
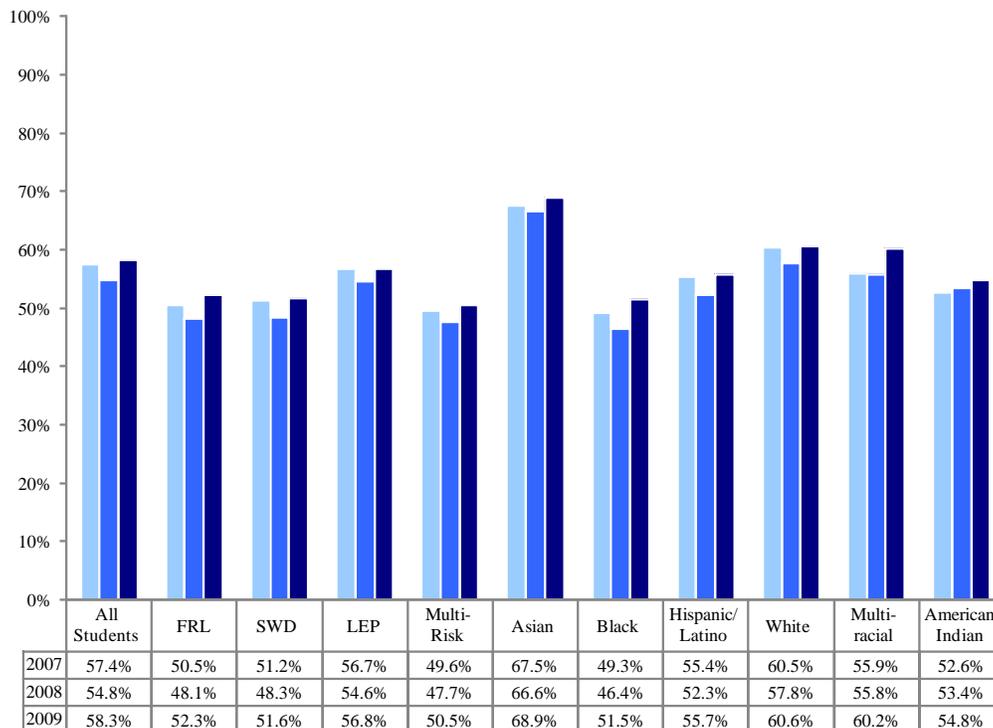


Figure 4
Percentages of Students Meeting Growth Targets, by Subgroup, 2007-2009



Note: Academic multi-risk students have two or more of the following characteristics: FRL, SWD, and/or LEP

Figure 5
WCPSS Schools Making Adequate Yearly Progress, 2003-2009

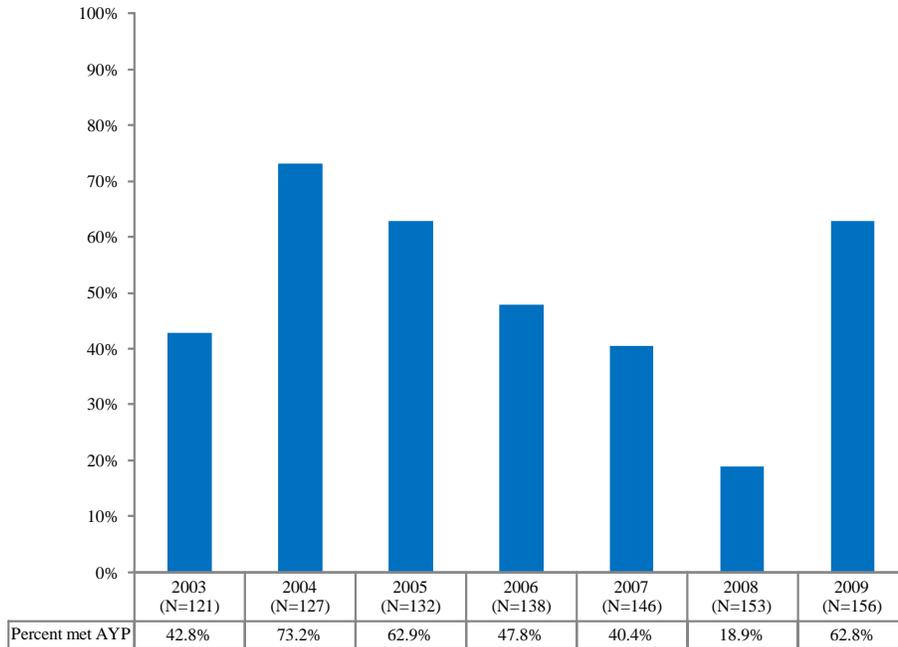


Figure 6
WCPSS Schools: ABCs Growth and Adequate Yearly Progress 2008-09

