

Redesigning School Performance Grades Advisory Group Conversation Guide

Background

School performance grades (SPG) were first implemented using data from the 2013–14 school year. Reporting an A–F grade for each school in the state, the model consists of achievement indicators (80%) and a growth measure (20%). Since implementation, feedback has indicated the weighting of the indicators and the emphasis on test scores does not reflect the broader context of school quality in North Carolina. Most recently this was evident in the release of the 2021–22 school year’s school performance grades where the impact of lower test scores yielded higher Ds and Fs. Schools worked diligently to provide strong instructional settings for students during the pandemic, but the school performance grades did not reflect the schools’ successes. This supported a review of the purpose and the methodology of the system.

Process for Gathering Input on SPG Redesign

Operation Polaris, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Catherine Truitt’s four-year strategic vision aimed at improving outcomes for NC students, includes a goal for developing a multi-measure accountability model that moves beyond compliance with federal guidelines and represents North Carolina’s educational values. Led by Dr. Michael Maher, an advisory group that is composed of representatives from external stakeholders met on September 12, 2022, to begin a discussion of possible indicators for a robust accountability model that goes beyond test scores. The goal of the advisory group is to develop recommendations for the General Assembly to consider in the upcoming long-session that convenes in January 2023.

At its October 17, 2022, meeting, the advisory group reviewed input from a publicly available survey (closed October 10), disaggregated by participant roles. Following the meeting, advisory group members are encouraged to share with their peers and colleagues to gather additional input on the following questions:

- What are the big takeaways from the survey results?
- Of the highly ranked indicators, which are within schools’ locus of control?
- Which indicators identified in the survey show a school’s quality?

Next Steps

- Review [survey data presentation](#).
- Discuss the survey results with peers using the questions above.
- Based upon conversations with peers, take the indicator survey.