South Carolina
HIGH SCHOOLS

ALLIANCE FOR EXCELLENT EDUCATION

High School Graduation Gains Equal Economic Success

In many states and across the nation, high school graduation rates are rising and economies are seeing the benefits. South Carolina's graduation rate increased by 3.1 percentage points from the Class of 2011 to the Class of 2012.[1] These additional **2,000** graduates represent gains of as much as **$428 million** in increased lifetime earnings and **$2 million** in annual state and local tax revenues.[2]

If South Carolina increased its overall graduation rate to 90 percent, the economic benefits from these **18,000** additional graduates would likely include as much as

- **$194 million** in increased annual earnings and **$18 million** in annual state and local tax revenues;
- **1,700** new jobs and a **$250 million** increase in the gross state product; and
- **$384 million** in increased home sales and **$21 million** in increased auto sales.[3]

Progress Has Been Made, But Graduation Gaps Remain

Despite Gains, Not All Students Are Graduating from High School at the Same Rates …

High School Graduation Rates by Race (Class of 2011)[4]

	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian
SC	74%	77%	70%	69%	84%	67%
Nation (Avg.)	79%	85%	67%	71%	87%	64%

… and Even Fewer Are Graduating from College

Four-Year[†] College Graduation Rates[5]

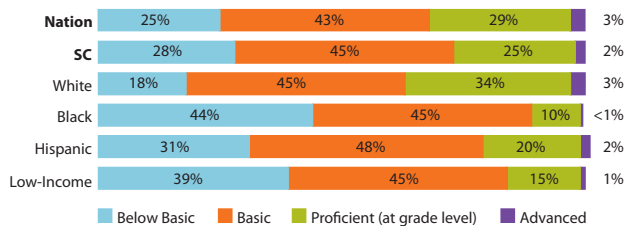|	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian
SC*	57%	63%	40%	56%	65%	48%
Nation*	56%	60%	38%	48%	68%	39%

[†]Due to data limitations for two-year institutions, particularly as they relate to students who transfer from their first institution, two-year college graduation rates have been omitted.
*Graduation within six years of entrance (Cohort from 2005 to 2011)

Better Preparation Is Key for Success in College and a Career

Literacy Is an Underlying Problem for Many Students

School Year (SY) 2010–11 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Reading Scores for South Carolina Eighth Graders[6]

	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient (at grade level)	Advanced
Nation	25%	43%	29%	3%
SC	28%	45%	25%	2%
White	18%	45%	34%	3%
Black	44%	45%	10%	<1%
Hispanic	31%	48%	20%	2%
Low-Income	39%	45%	15%	1%

Insufficient or no data was reported for other subgroups

… and They Also Struggle in Other Subject Areas

Percentage of ACT-Tested Graduates Ready for College-Level Course Work in 2012[7]

	English	Math	Reading	Science	All Four Subjects
SC	61%	39%	46%	24%	19%
Nation	67%	46%	52%	31%	25%

Commitment Is Paying Off, But Struggling Schools Remain

About 10% of all high schools still produce 40%+ of the nation's dropouts. In these "dropout factories," 60% or fewer of freshmen are promoted to senior year on time. Nationally, students of color and Native students are nearly four times more likely than their white peers to be enrolled in a dropout factory.[8] **Improving these schools must remain a national priority.**

South Carolina High Schools

Federally Reported High Schools[9]	195 (SY 2009-10)	197 (SY 2010-11)
Dropout Factories[10]	60 (3 yr avg. 2008-10)	62 (Class of 2011)

An additional 46 high schools in South Carolina had a promoting power between 60 and 70 percent in SY 2010–11.[11]
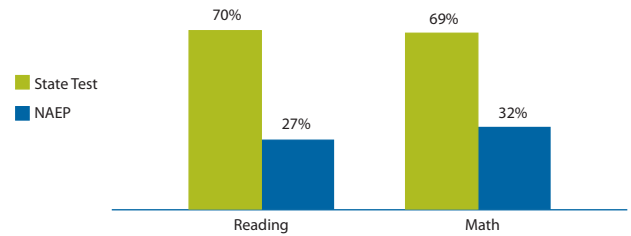
Nationally, the number of dropout factories decreased 12% (from 1,617 to 1,424).[12] The number of all high schools decreased less than 1% from SY 2009–10 to SY 2010–11.[13]

States Are Strengthening Standards to Improve Preparedness

South Carolina, along with 45 states and the District of Columbia, has adopted a common, state-created set of world-class standards for college and career readiness in English language arts and math. The four remaining states have their own college- and career-ready standards.

More Accurate Measures of Student Proficiency Are Needed

South Carolina's Eighth-Grade Proficiency as Measured by State Test vs. the Nation's Report Card (NAEP) for SY 2011–12[14]

	Reading	Math
State Test	70%	69%
NAEP	27%	32%

Nationwide, the average gaps between state- and NAEP-reported **reading** and **math** scores are **40 percentage points** and **32 percentage points**, respectively.

States Are Working to Create New and Better Assessments

Forty-two states participate in one of two consortia to develop Common Core State Standards–aligned next-generation assessments, which are scheduled to be administered during SY 2014–15. **South Carolina participates in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium**.

Excellent Teacher Training Is Critical to Increased Student Achievement

To promote higher levels of student achievement, 27 states have committed to educating and preparing better teachers and administrators through **teacher licensing, program accreditation**, and **effective data use policies. South Carolina has joined this coalition of states focusing on educator preparation and entry into the profession**.[15]

Connecting Technology to Schools and Students

Having access to a broadband network—connectivity—is crucial to taking advantage of the world of technology and what it offers in the classroom. South Carolina does have a statewide broadband network for its schools.[16]

The use of technology lends flexibility to schools and classrooms. South Carolina does allow additional flexibility by permitting schools to use funding for instructional materials on digital resources.[17]

The Next Frontier: Deepen and Personalize Learning

Today's modern economy requires more than basic content knowledge. Leading states are building an engaging and personalized education process to achieve deeper learning outcomes of core content knowledge, creative and critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.

To foster such learning, school districts like Colorado's Adams County School District 50, and even entire states, like New Hampshire and Oregon, permit students to advance their grade level based on mastery of content rather than on amount of time spent in the classroom.

1) Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, *Diplomas Count: 2012*; 2) Unpublished data from Alliance for Excellent Education (Alliance); 3) Alliance, "The Crisis and Economic Potential in America's Education System," 2011; 4) U.S. Dept. of Education, "Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates"; 5) National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2012; 6) NCES, *Nation's Report Card: Reading 2011*; 7) ACT, "The Condition of College and Career Readiness: 2012;" 8) Analysis of data from Everyone Graduates Center and NCES Common Core of Data; 9) NCES, *Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe, 2005–2011*, 2012; 10) Unpublished data from Everyone Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins University, 2013; 11) Ibid.; 12) Ibid.; 13) NCES, *Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe, 2005–2011*, 2012; 14) NCES, *Nation's Report Card: Reading 2011*; NCES, *Nation's Report Card: Math 2011*; South Carolina Department of Education, 2013; 15) Council of Chief State School Officers, *Our Responsibility, Our Promise*, 2012; 16) State Educational Technology Directors Association State Education Policy Center, 2012; 17) Digital Learning Now!, "2012 Digital Learning Report Card," 2012

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