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NEWS-ACTION

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**FEB. 20
2008**

Welcome to The Alliance for Quality Education's *NEWS-ACTION*—a brief, periodic update on issues affecting Greenville public schools and actions you can take to help improve our schools.

Today's topic: Changing the State Testing System

NEWS

Legislation has been introduced to modify the state testing system. Changes to the state testing system, including changes to the Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT), are included in bill 4662 in the State House of Representatives. The bill has passed out of committee and is ready for debate by the full House.

Below are some significant elements of the legislation:

PACT Test Replacement

- A new state accountability test would replace PACT starting in the 2009-2010 school year. What test would replace PACT is not stated. It could be an existing "off-the-shelf" test (such as Measures of Academic Progress—MAP) or a new test developed by the state.
- The test would still cover four subjects—English/language arts, mathematics, science and social studies—in grades 3 through 8.
- The writing assessment part of the test would occur earlier in the school year with the multiple-choice sections administered as close to the end of the year as possible.
- Student test results would provide diagnostic information useful to teachers and parents for the next school year.
- Schools would receive the results by August 1.

PACT Performance Indicators

New student performance indicators would be used:

Current	Proposed
Below Basic	Not Met
Basic	Met
Proficient	
Advanced	Exemplary

The definition of "proficiency" under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law would be "Met" & "Exemplary" instead of "Proficient" and "Advanced." In other words, what has been "Basic" on the state assessment would now be considered "proficient" for purposes of NCLB.

Under NCLB, the percentage of students scoring proficient is a key factor in determining whether a school meets "Adequate Yearly Progress" (AYP). This change

would increase the percentage of students in our schools scoring proficient.

NCLB allows each state to set its own definition of “proficient.” Our state’s “Basic” level is equivalent to “proficient” in many other states.

Additional Subject for MAP Testing

In Greenville County Schools, MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) is administered at least twice a year in Reading, Language Arts, Math and Science. Under the proposed legislation, social studies would be an additional assessment.

[More information](#) concerning the proposed changes to the state testing system, including the current, proposed legislation, is available at the Alliance web site.

OUR VIEW The Alliance supports the following improvements to the state testing system:

- Diagnostic test results that improve teaching and learning
- Timely availability of test results
- Less time spent on testing and test preparation
- Lower cost of administering the tests
- Same rigor and high standards
- Better alignment with No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements

ACTION Debate on this legislation in the State House of Representatives will start soon.

Call your House member and tell them what changes you want in our state testing system (House bill 4662).

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