



Wilson Consulting Services, LLC

“The Graduation Rate Indicator Ratings”

**A Snapshot of Horry County Schools
~Report 3 of 4~**



September 27, 2019

by

David C. Wilson

Founder / CEO

Wilson Consulting Services, LLC

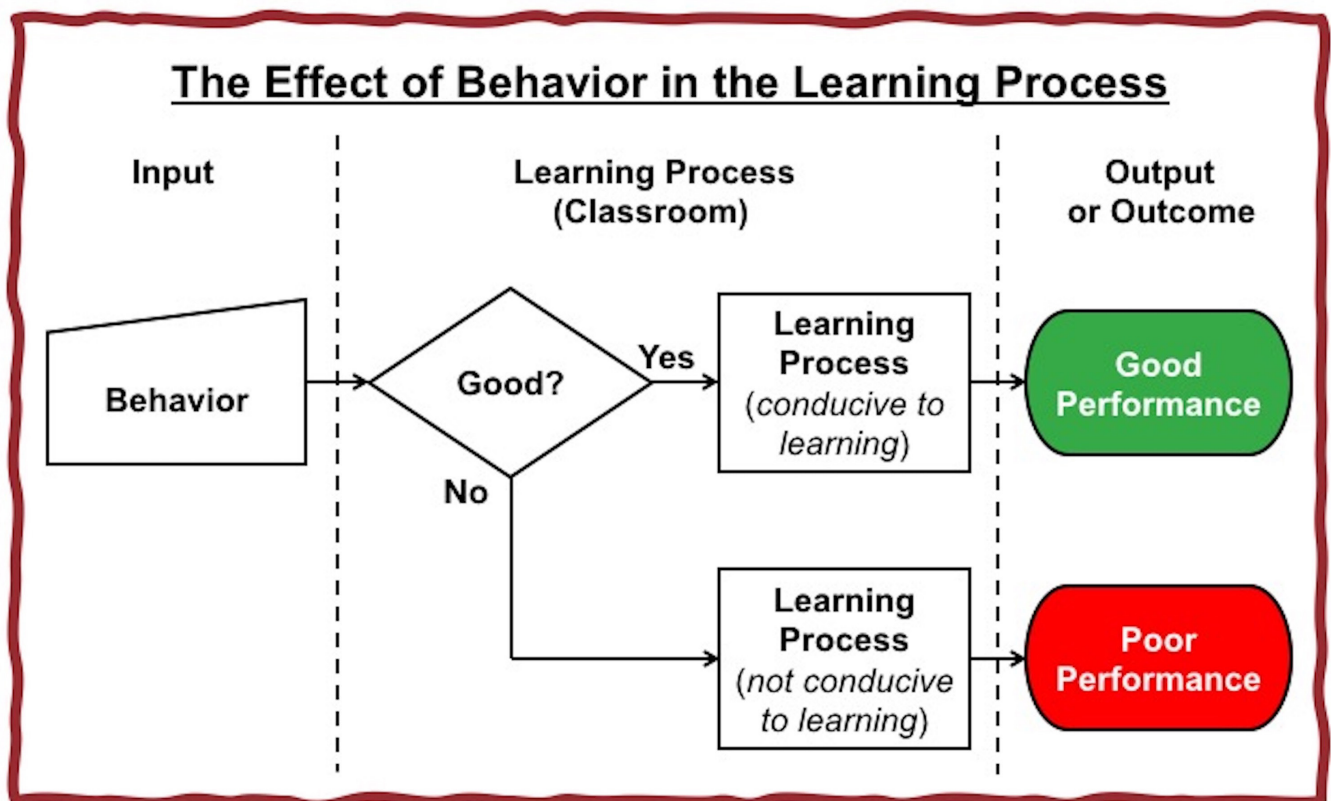
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“It must be demonstrated...”

We are proponents and advocates of literacy in STEM and statistics in a technological and data-driven world.



STEM = Σ (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics)

“The Graduation Rate Indicator Ratings”

A Snapshot of Horry County Schools ~Report 3 of 4~

Note:

The author has published reports on four of the seven indicators: (1) Academic Achievement, (2) Student Progress, (3) Graduation Rate, and (4) College/Career Readiness. As previously stated, this report discusses the Student Progress Indicator’s metric.

The links to all four reports are as following:

1. The Academic Achievement Indicator Ratings
https://www.wilsonconsultingservices.net/wcs_academic_19.pdf
2. The Student Progress Indicator Ratings
https://www.wilsonconsultingservices.net/wcs_progress_19.pdf
3. The Graduation Rate Indicator Ratings
https://www.wilsonconsultingservices.net/wcs_graduation_19.pdf
4. The College/Career Readiness Indicator Ratings
https://www.wilsonconsultingservices.net/wcs_college_19.pdf

Acknowledgments

This report is based primarily on data collected from the South Carolina Department of Education and its Office of Research and Data Analysis. Therefore, I would like to thank all the people from these agencies with whom I had the pleasure of communicating through emails, Freedom of Information Act requests, and personal conversations. They gave me valuable assistance in providing me with additional data and helping me interpret some key metrics that required analysis to generate this report. I am also grateful to my wife, Beverly, for her encouragement and gift of uninterrupted time to complete this and three similar reports, which were published simultaneously.

* * *

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Location of report:

https://www.wilsonconsultingservices.net/wcs_graduation_19.pdf

Contact information:

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The Author

Much is said about the quality of education a student receives by the time he or she graduates from high school. The workforce is becoming more complex, and the need for a high school diploma is not only growing, but having one has become paramount in today's world where technological literacy is expected. A high school diploma is required for almost any endeavor, whether it is admission to college or a technical school, military service, or an apprenticeship or job. Every field encompasses a multitude of skills; the list is infinite. A high school diploma is the starting point to gain entrance to this vast work spectrum.

In 2017, the South Carolina legislature amended the Education Accountability Act of 1998 with Act 94 of 2017. The amended act lays out the foundation and requirements for the South Carolina accountability system for public schools and school districts. The act established a performance-based accountability system for public education which focuses on improving teaching and learning so that students are equipped with a strong academic foundation, as outlined in the 2017–18 Accountability Manual, which includes seven indicator ratings, including a “Graduation Rate Indicator.” The primary focus of this report is an analysis of the graduation rate indicator.

The report provides an independent summary of Horry County Schools including an overall rating of every public school, including the Graduation Rate Indicator. This report allows parents, students, and others to see at a glance how the schools in their attendance area are performing in overall rating and on-time graduation rates. This allows for comparison of your child's school with other schools within the district.

In closing, this quote from Galileo Galilei (1564–1642) sums up the learning process best: “We cannot teach people anything; we can only help them discover it within themselves.” Furthermore, it is my hope that the report will provide some insight into one the seven indicators implemented to foster quality education in the state's public schools.

Thank you for reading and sharing the report.

Sincerely,



David C. Wilson
Founder and CEO



David C. Wilson

David C. Wilson is an electrical engineer by training as well as an adjunct mathematics professor—now retired. He is a statistical consultant, local history researcher, author, and self-publisher.

Wilson is a graduate of the former Chestnut Consolidated High School (Horry County, South Carolina) and an army veteran. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in electrical engineering from the City College of New York and Manhattan College, respectively.

Wilson has worked in the engineering areas of product development, quality, and reliability for more than 35 years with multinational corporations such as IBM, General Electric, and Honeywell.

During his 25+ years as an adjunct professor, he taught engineering, mathematics, and statistics at Dutchess Community College (NY), Quinnipiac University (CT), and Horry Georgetown Technical College (SC). Additionally, he served one year with the prestigious IBM Faculty Loan Program.

He and his wife, Beverly, have two adult sons and six grandchildren. They reside in Conway, South Carolina.

Horry County Schools Board of Education

Per the Horry County Board of Education, its School Board is made up of 12 members, 11 of whom are elected from the single-member districts and the chairperson, who is elected at large.

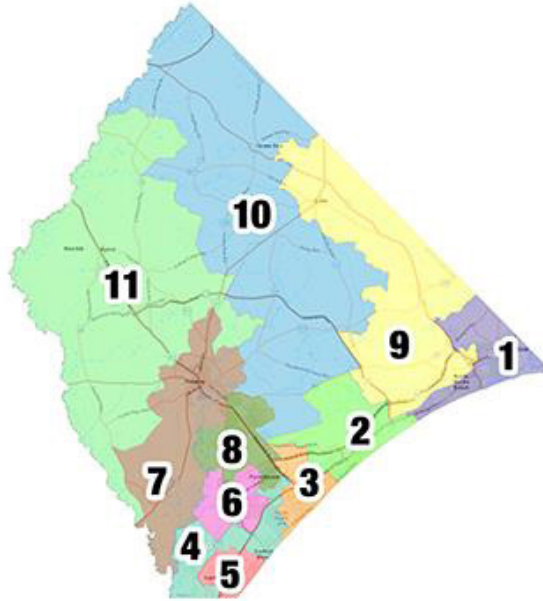


Table 1. HCS Board of Education Members*		
Name	District	Serving High School Attendance Areas
Ken Richardson	Chairperson	All
TBD	1	North Myrtle Beach and Myrtle Beach
Sherrie Todd	2	Myrtle Beach and Carolina Forest
Ray Winters	3	Myrtle Beach and Carolina Forest
David Cox	4	St. James, Socastee, Myrtle Beach, and Carolina Forest
Janice Morreale	5	St. James and Socastee
Helen Smith	6	Carolina Forest, Socastee, and St. James
Janet Graham	7	Conway and Carolina Forest
John Poston	8 (Vice Chair)	Carolina Forest and Socastee
Chris Hardwick	9	Loris, North Myrtle Beach, and Green Sea Floyds
Neil James	10	Carolina Forest, Conway, Green Sea Floyds, and Loris
Shanda Allen	11	Aynor, Conway, and Green Sea Floyds

Superintendent of Horry County Schools
Rick Maxey, PhD

*Members of the Horry County Board of Education represent the same voting districts as the Horry County Council. Click on the map to view voting districts in greater detail.

I. Introduction

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to share with parents and the public an independent summary of Horry County Schools' high school Graduation Rate Indicator Ratings, which measures on-time graduation rate relative to diploma earners in Horry County Schools and ratings scale. The information in this report is also in the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) Report Card; however, this report allows the reader to compare data for each of the public high schools in Horry County at a glance.

The countywide school district encompasses 56 schools in the nine attendance areas of Aynor, Carolina Forest, Conway, Green Sea Floyds, Loris, Myrtle Beach, North Myrtle Beach, Socastee, and St. James. Horry County Schools, with more than 45,000 students, is South Carolina's third-largest school district.

Before discussing graduation rate, I will provide a summary of how it fits into the overall discussion. The Education Accountability Act of 1998, as last amended by Act 94 of 2017, provides the foundation and requirements for the South Carolina accountability system for public schools and school districts. It appears that South Carolina has taken a holistic approach, starting in the 2017–18 school year, by establishing what is now known as the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate, which means that all students graduating from public high schools in South Carolina should have the knowledge, skills, and opportunity to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing college courses without the need for remedial coursework, postsecondary job training, or significant on-the-job training.

Therefore, to meet the amended ACT 94 of 2017, the South Carolina Department of Education's (SCDE) "2017–2018 Accountability Manual for the Annual School and District Report Card

System for South Carolina Public Schools and School Districts" established the following indicators: (1) Academic Achievement, (2) Preparing for Success, (3) Student Progress, (4) Student Engagement, (5) English Learners' Proficiency, (6) Graduation Rate, and (7) College/Career Readiness. These indicators (metrics) are based on a 100-point system whereby points are earned across various indicators for each school. The points earned from the indicators are compiled to determine each school's overall rating. Of the seven indicators listed above, the metrics for elementary and middle schools are as follows: (1) Academic Achievement, (2) Preparing for Success, (3) Student Progress, (4) Student Engagement, and (5) English Learners' Proficiency. Of the seven indicators, the indicators for high school are as follows: (1) Academic Achievement, (2) Preparing for Success, (3) Student Engagement, (4) English Learners' Proficiency, and (5) Graduation Rate, and (6) College/Career Readiness.

This report provides an analysis of the ratings scale for graduation rates; however, the author has published a separate report for four of the major contributors of the above seven indicators. For each of the above indicators as applicable, schools will also receive a rating for the indicator as required by the South Carolina Education Accountability Act 1998, as last by Act of 2017. The same ratings scale (excellent, good, average, below average, and unsatisfactory) will apply. Per SCDE, there will also be other data reported for these indicators that do not count in the rating but are required by state or federal law or provide additional information to assist educators and the public in understanding the accomplishments and challenges of the school and in designing interventions to improve outcomes.

This report is specifically written to share with the public an independent analysis of Horry County



Introduction, cont.

Schools' four-year, on-time cohort graduation rate. The Graduation Rate Indicator measures the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR)[†], which is the percentage of students who enter ninth grade, adjusted for students who transfer in or out of the cohort after ninth grade, and who graduate within four years. This indicator applies only to high schools. All graduation analyses throughout this report are based on the school year 2017–18. There is significant variation among the individual schools' graduation rates and ratings within the district. This includes all diploma-granting public high schools in the district. Hence, the Academy for the Arts, Science & Technology; the Academy for Technology and Academics; and the Scholars Academy are not diploma-granting high schools. Their students actually graduate from the base school they are assigned to, which is generally in the students' attendance areas. To emphasize, the graduation rates in percentages are the adjusted cohort graduation rates, which are the four-year, on-time cohorts.

There are numerous reports about graduation rates of students in states and districts nationwide. Many of these reports use statistics compiled from the National Center for Education Statistics; this report uses statistics compiled from the SCDE. The advantage of this report is that the reader can quickly view and compare the graduation rates and ratings scale of every public high school in Horry County on one page. It allows parents, students, and others to see at a glance how school graduation rates and ratings measures when compared with other public schools within Horry County Schools (HCS).

The measures in this report are the number of

cohorts, percent, points earned, and ratings scale. The rating scale (qualitative) is based on points earned and is derived from the percent graduation rate. The points earned are based on converting the graduation rate for the ACGR onto either a 25- or a 30-point scale and subsequently to a ratings scale.

* * *

The ratings scale categories of excellent, good, average, below average, and unsatisfactory are used to qualitatively measure a school's on-time graduation rate. Each school percentage will be converted to a point scale; the earned points on the point scale will determine the indicator rating, which will be matched to the ratings scale.

* * *

For example, Carolina Forest High School (CFHS) has a graduation percentage rate of 83.2%, which equates to 16.59 points out of a maximum of 25 points. The 25-point scale means the school uses the ELP indicator measure and the 30-point scale means the school does not use the ELP indicator measure as an input to overall school rating[‡]. The computation for CFHS points were computed as following: $(\text{Graduation rate} - 50)/2 = (83.2 - 50)/2 = 16.59$ points; this average points earned equate to an indicator rating of good. On the other hand, if the school did not use the ELP indicator, then the average points would be computed by multiplying the results by $(30/25$ or 1.2). Hence, $16.59 * 1.2 = 19.91$ points, which also equates to a rating of good. This combination will often be shown in the online report card or the table in this report as 16.59/25. See Table 3.3.1 and Figure 3.2.1.

[†]Graduation rate will be used interchangeably with ACGR. For additional information, see report—Comparative Analysis of 2018 High School Graduation Rates Among School Districts
Link: https://wilsonconsultingservices.net/wcs_acgrdist_sc_19.pdf

[‡]The 25- or 30-point scale is based on whether the school is an English Learners' Proficiency (ELP) or not. An ELP means a population of 20 or more English learners (ELs).



II. High School: Overall Rating

2.1 High School: Overall Rating

The indicators listed in the introduction provide converted points, as outlined in Table 2.1.1, that are feeders into the 100% maximum overall rating per school. Table 2.1.1 list the indicators for high school.

The overall rating is pursuant to Section 59-18-120 of South Carolina’s Education Accountability Act of 1998, as last amended by Act 94 of 2017, which states that each school will receive an overall rating based on a 100-point scale. The 100 points may be earned across the seven indicators. This report examines the indicator for high school (Graduation Rate).

As shown in Table 2.1.1, the indicators for high schools are as follows: Academic Achievement, Preparing for Success, Student Engagement, English Learners’ Proficiency (ELP) Graduation

Rate, and College/Career Readiness. To receive a rating for the ELP indicator, a school must have a minimum of 20 students progressing toward ELP. Table 2.1.1 documents the total number of points each indicator may earn with and without a population of at least 20 English learners being assessed.

A computation example of North Myrtle Beach High School’s overall rating is as follows: Academic Achievement (13.5 points), Preparing for Success (5.72 points), Student Engagement (2.00 points), English Learners’ Proficiency (5.54 points), Graduation Rate (17.82 points), and College and Career Readiness (18.90 points). These contributors total 63.49 points, resulting in an overall numerical rating of 63%, which equates to an overall rating of good. See Table 2.2.1.

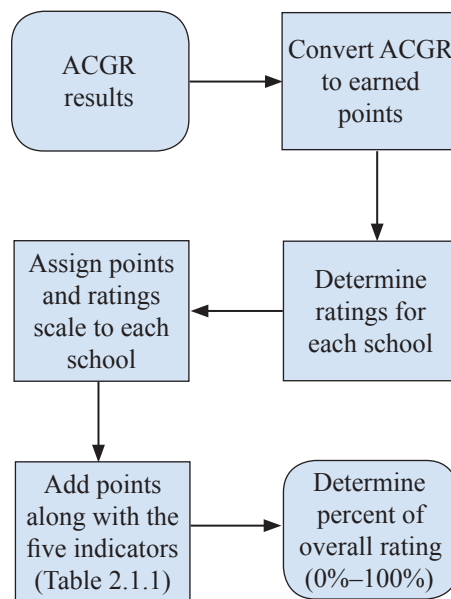
Table 2.1.1: Overall Rating: point totals by school type—high schools

Indicator	High Schools	
	Without ELs	With ELs
Academic Achievement	30	25
Preparing for Success	10	10
Student Progress (all students and lowest 20% of students)	N/A	N/A
Student Engagement	5	5
English Learners' Proficiency (ELP)	0	10
Graduation Rate*	30	25
College and Career Readiness	25	25
Total	100	100

Per SCDE, for each rating, a range of points was established based on results obtained from the 2015–16 and 2016–17 academic years.

Source: South Carolina Department of Education—Office of Research and Data Analysis

Figure 2.1.1: Flowchart from ACGR-to-point measure to overall rating in percent



*This is the indicator examined in this report.

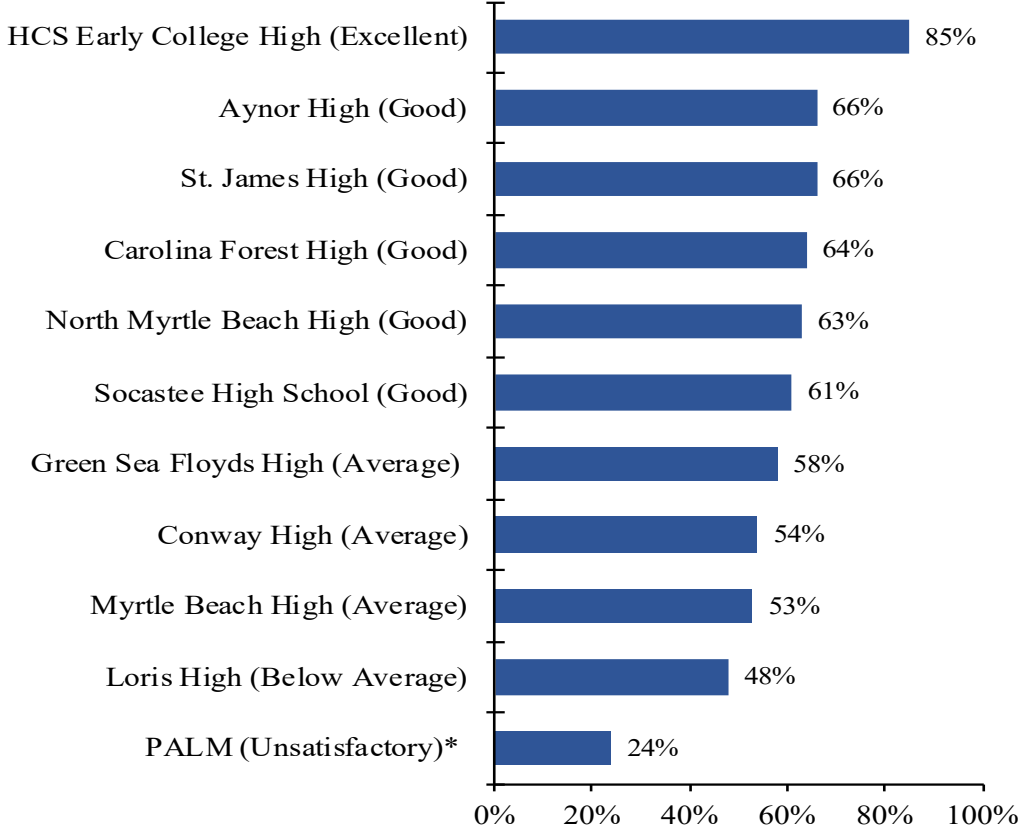


2.2. High School—Overall Rating by School

The graph in Figure 2.2.1 depicts the overall percentage and rating scale of high schools in HCS. The graph in Figure 2.2.2 shows a pie chart

with the number and percentage of total students associated with one of the five ratings depicted in Table 2.2.1.

Figure 2.2.1: Percentage distribution of overall ratings of high school students by school (11 schools)



Overall Ratings Scale

Excellent: School performance substantially exceeds the criteria to ensure all students meet the [Profile of the SC Graduate](#).

Good: School performance exceeds the criteria to ensure all students meet the [Profile of the SC Graduate](#).

Average: School performance meets the criteria to ensure all students meet the [Profile of the SC Graduate](#).

Below Average: School performance is in jeopardy of not meeting the criteria to ensure all students meet the [Profile of the SC Graduate](#).

Unsatisfactory: School performance fails to meet the criteria to ensure all students meet the [Profile of the SC Graduate](#).

Figure 2.2.2 depicts the total enrollment and percentage of HCS high school students enrolled in schools with one of the ratings shown in Table 2.2.1.

Figure 2.2.2: Enrollment and percentage distribution of overall ratings for all high school students (Enrollment: 13,302)

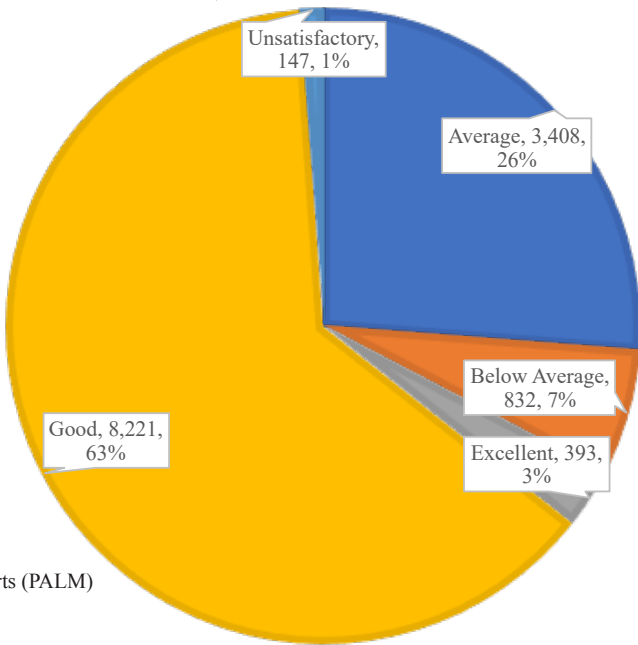


Table 2.2.1: Overall Ratings

Ratings Scale	High Schools
Excellent	67%–100%
Good	60%–66%
Average	49%–59%
Below Average	38%–48%
Unsatisfactory	0%–37%

Source: South Carolina Department of Education—Office of Research and Data Analysis

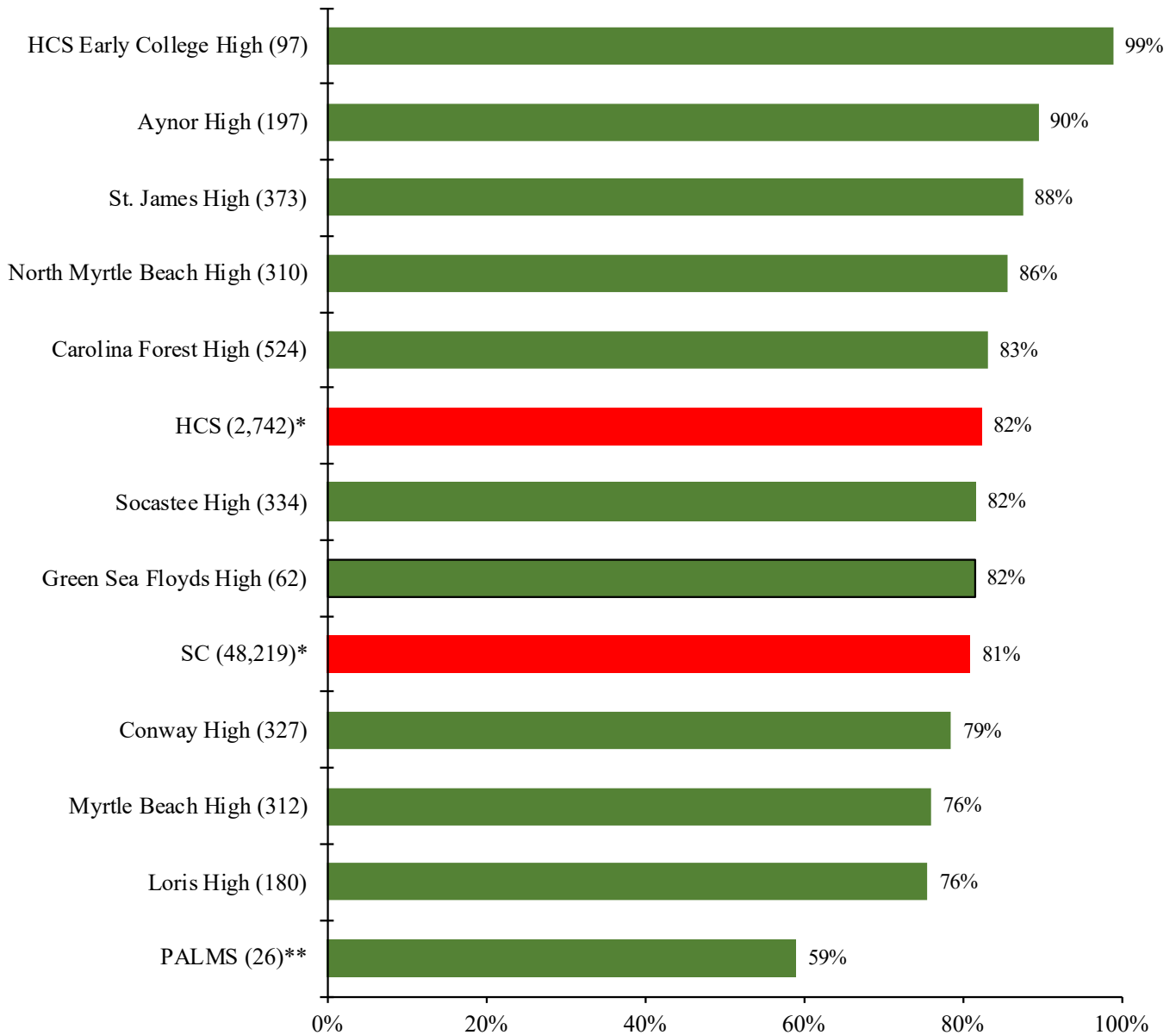
*Palmetto Academy For Learning Motorsports (PALM)



III. High School: Data Analysis of the Indicator

3.1 Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR) by School

Figure 3.1.1: Percentage distribution of ACGR by school (11 schools)



Source: South Carolina Department of Education— Office of Research and Data Analysis

*Graduation rates are assigned to state and school districts, but ratings are not assigned to school districts or state per SCDE.

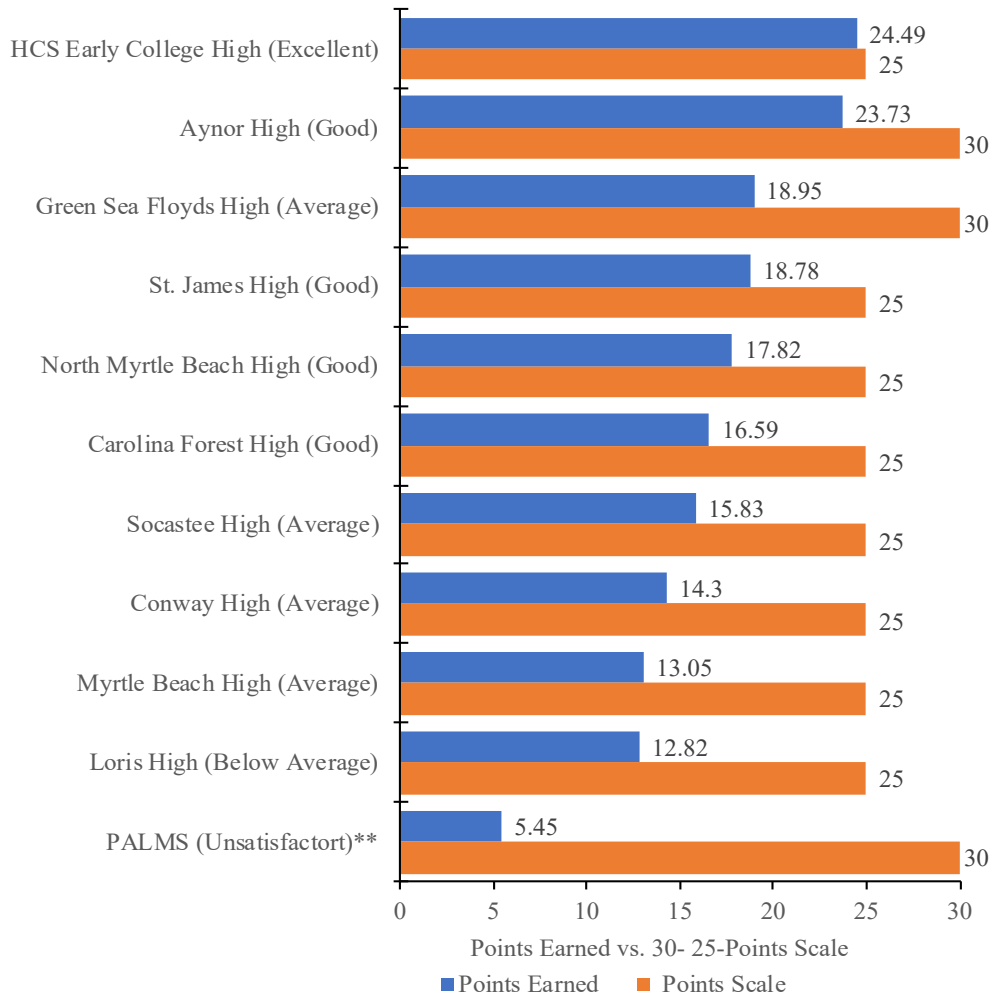
**Palmetto Academy For Learning Motorsports (PALM)

***Any high school with a graduation rate of 70% or less is deemed unsatisfactory. Any high school with a graduation rate of 90% is deemed excellent.



3.2 High School: ACGR—Average Points Earned and Indicator Rating by School

Figure 3.2.1 Distribution of ACGR converted points earned, points scale, and ratings scale*



Source: South Carolina Department of Education—Office of Research and Data Analysis

Table 3.2.1. Graduation Rate—converting points earned to rating

Ratings Scale	Points Earned Out of 25	Points Earned Out of 30
Excellent	20.00–25.00	24.00–30.00
Good	16.01–19.99	19.21–23.99
Average	13.01–16.00	15.51–19.20
Below Average	10.01–13.00	12.01–15.60
Unsatisfactory	0–10.0	0–12.00

Source: South Carolina Department of Education—Office of Research and Data Analysis

*See Table 3.3.1, column 7, for point/scale ratings.

**Palmetto Academy For Learning Motorsports (PALM)

Figure 3.2.1 depicts the points earned in the graduation rate indicator toward overall rating. If a school's ACGR is equal to or less than 70 percent, then the school is rated as unsatisfactory. If a school's ACGR is equal to or greater 90 percent, then the school is rated as excellent. Also, see Figure 3.1.1.

Overall Ratings Scale

Excellent:

School performance substantially exceeds the criteria to ensure all students meet the Profile of the SC Graduate.

Good:

School performance exceeds the criteria to ensure all students meet the Profile of the SC Graduate.

Average:

School performance meets the criteria to ensure all students meet the Profile of the SC Graduate.

Below Average:

School performance is in jeopardy of not meeting the criteria to ensure all students meet the Profile of the SC Graduate.

Unsatisfactory:

School performance fails to meet the criteria to ensure all students meet the Profile of the SC Graduate.



3.3 High School: Analysis of Indicator by School

Table 3.3.1. Percentage distribution for graduation rates, indicator ratings, and overall ratings by school

Name	Number	ACGR Percentage by School ¹				Indicator Rating ² Quantitative/ Qualitative		Overall Rating ³ Quantitative/ Qualitative	
		2015	2016	2017	2018	Points/ Scale ⁴	Ratings Scale	Percent Rating	Ratings Scale
South Carolina	48,219	81.5%	81.1%	80.4%	81.0%	----- Not Rated -----			
Horry County Schools	2,742	80.3%	82.6%	84.6%	82.4%	----- Not Rated -----			
Aynor High	197	87.7%	84.1%	82.8%	89.6%	23.73/30	Good	66%	Good
Carolina Forest High	524	77.8%	81.5%	79.9%	83.2%	16.59/25	Good	64%	Good
Conway High	327	77.2%	74.7%	72.6%	78.6%	14.3/25	Average	54%	Average
Green Sea Floyds High	62	81.1%	72.2%	76.2%	81.6%	18.95/30	Average	58%	Average
HCS Early College High	97	97.9%	100%	100%	99.0%	24.49/25	Excellent	85%	Excellent
Loris High	180	81.7%	80.1%	84.0%	75.6%	12.82/25	Below Average	48%	Below Average
Myrtle Beach High	312	79.6%	78.0%	75.7%	76.1%	13.05/25	Average	53%	Average
North Myrtle Beach High	310	83.8%	82.7%	87.5%	85.6%	17.82/25	Good	63%	Good
PALM ⁵	26	26.3%	41.7%	43.9%	59.1%	5.45/30	Un- satisfactory	24%	Un- satisfactory
Socastee High	334	83.3%	83.2%	81.0%	81.7%	15.83/25	Average	61%	Good
St. James High	373	83.2%	83.4%	81.3%	87.6%	18.78/25	Good	66%	Good

Source: South Carolina Department of Education—Office of Research and Data Analysis

¹Graduation rate percentage of relative to this indicator.

²Points earned are converted from percent total per school and counted towards the overall rating.

For example, St. James High School 18.78 points (equates to good) from this indicator are counted towards the school's total overall rating of 66%, which equates also to "Good." The maximum points are based on a 25- or 30-point scale depending on whether the school met the threshold of 20 students for ELP or not.

³Percent overall rating is based on adding the applicable indicators shown in Table 2.1.1.

⁴Ratio of points earned to maximum allowed on the- 25 or 30-point scale.

⁵Palmetto Academy for Learning Motorsports (PALM).



IV. Summary

Summary

The intent of this paper was not to report on graduation rates per se but to provide information on the percentage of high school diploma earners who contributed to the overall rating of public high schools in Horry County. To that end, this report provides parents, students, educators, political leaders, the public, and others with a snapshot of HCS high school’s on-time graduation cohorts between June 17, 2017–June 16, 2018, and how these rates are converted to points to be matched onto the ratings scale. The indicator points are included in the numerical count for overall rating. Although this report is based on data from school year 2017–18, statistically speaking, the pattern across schools will most likely remain largely unchanged in the 2018–19 state report card, which is scheduled to be released in November 2019.

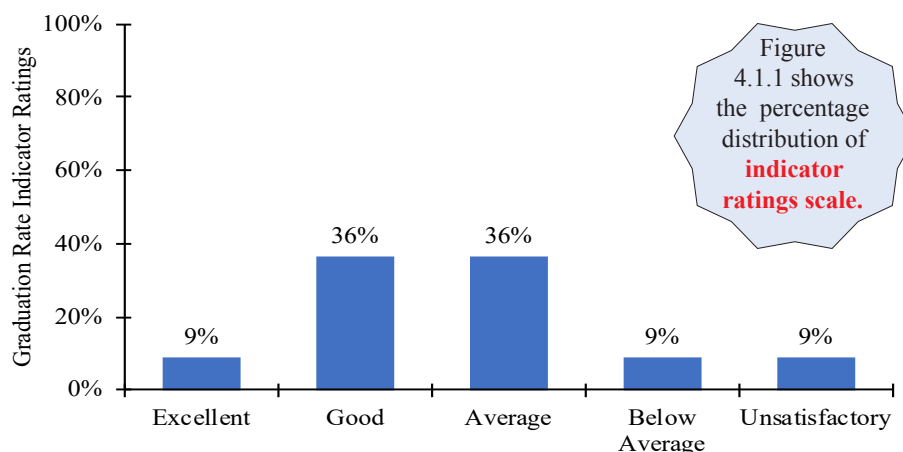
There were expected variations among discrete high schools. The variations among schools within HCS relative ACGR earned points were up to a maximum of 127% and a minimum of 3% differences between two schools. For example, Loris High School (LHS) and Aynor High School (AHS)—comparable sizes of cohorts graduating—experienced a graduation percentage difference in ACGR earned points of about 63% in favor of AHS. Moreover, the percentage

difference between the overall rating for LHS and AHS is about 32% in favor of AHS. (Table 3.3.1 and Figure 3.2.1).

A quality education for high school graduates and varying levels of postsecondary education is a growing need, and prospective postsecondary institutions and employers expect it. Students who take advantage of the opportunity to obtain a quality education will have a good start in life, regardless of whether they attend college or join the workforce. In contrast, students who do not avail themselves of the opportunity for a quality education run the risk of being severely incapacitated, resulting in limited opportunities for becoming productive members of society.

In closing, it is my hope that this report provides the reader with a better understanding of graduation rates and ratings, and especially of the need to better prepare HCS students by the time that they graduate from high school to enter the workforce and/or pursue postsecondary education or training without the need for remediation work. Furthermore, I implore every parent, guardian, or anyone interested in the education of the children of South Carolina to read SCDE’s accountability manual*.

Figure 4.1.1: Percentage distribution of ratings scale of high school graduation rate indicator ratings (11 schools)



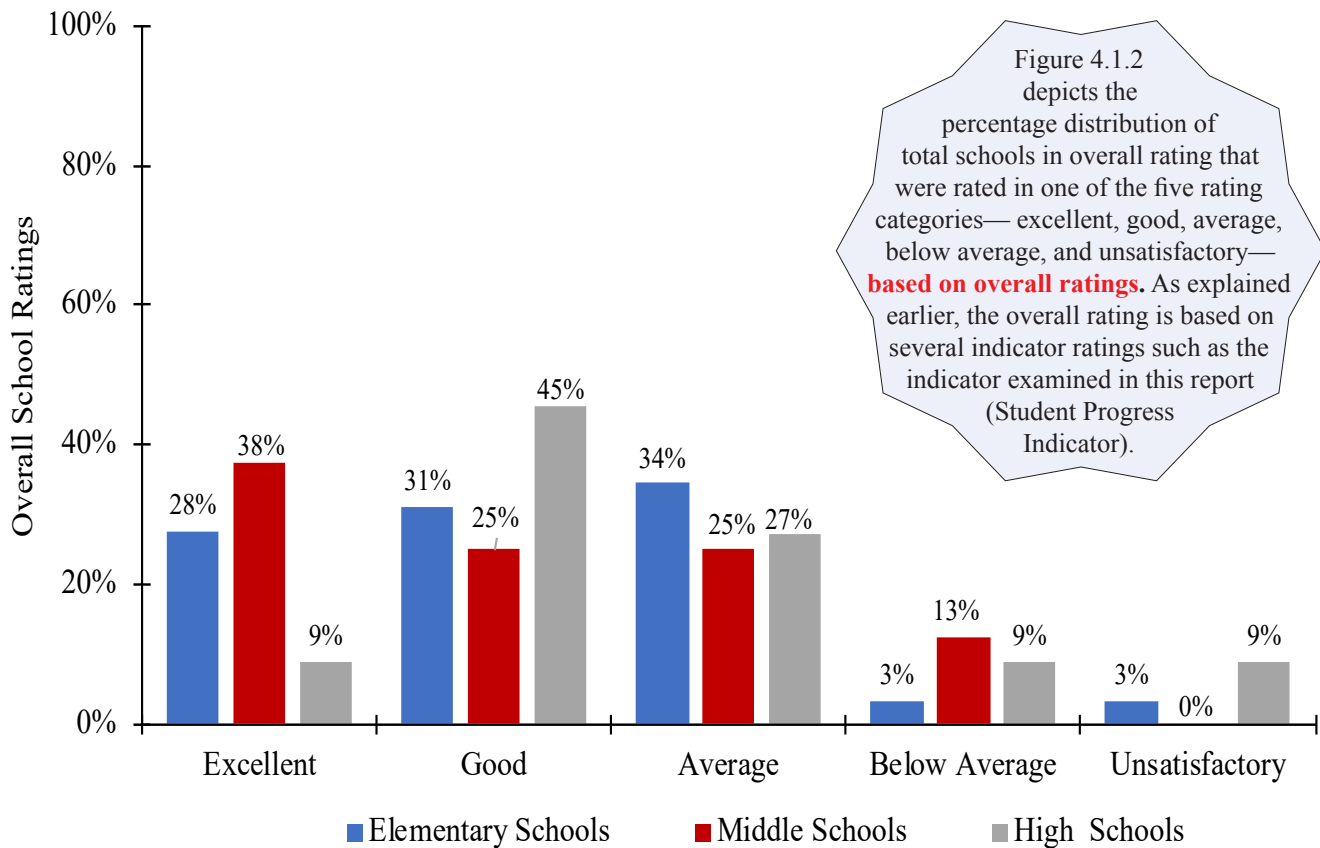
*The location of the manual: <https://ed.sc.gov/data/report-cards/sc-school-report-card/files/accountability-manual/>

Summary, cont.

The graph in Figure 4.1.2 shows a percentage distribution of the descriptive ratings of the public schools of Horry County. The percentages represent the number in percent of schools that were rated in one of the five categories of

excellent, good, average, below average, and unsatisfactory. the overall ratings are based on the compilation of points earned from the seven indicators as described in SCDE 2017–18 Accountability Manual*. ■

Figure 4.1.2: Percentage distribution of overall ratings (56 schools)



*The location of the manual: <https://ed.sc.gov/data/report-cards/sc-school-report-card/files/accountability-manual/>



References

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Wilson, David C. 2019 Comparative Analysis of 2018 Graduation Rates Among School Districts

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https://wilsonconsultingservices.net/wcs_2018testscores_sc_18.pdf

Profile of the South Carolina Student: Horry and Georgetown Counties Public Schools
https://wilsonconsultingservices.net/wcs_profile_sc_18.pdf

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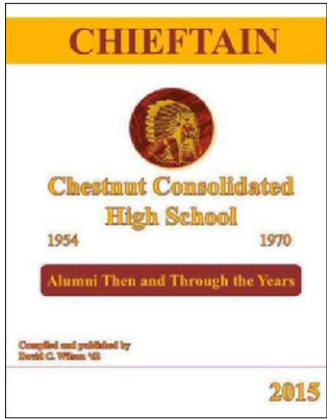
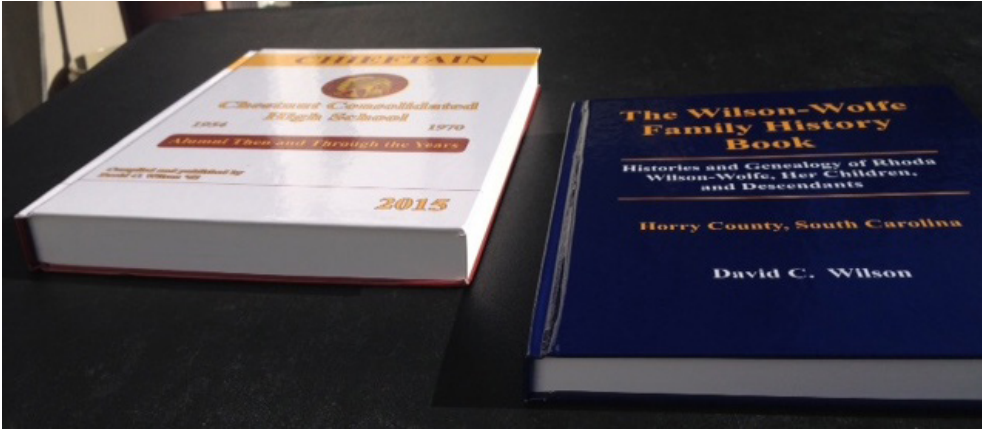
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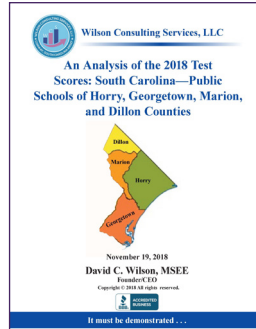
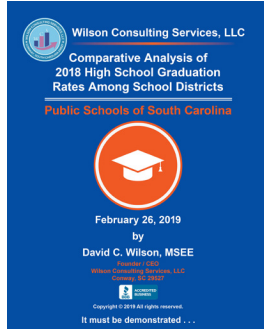
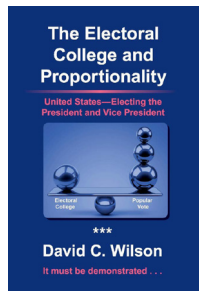
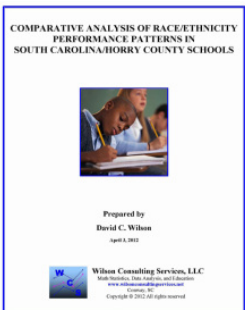
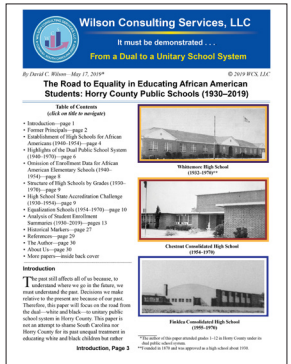
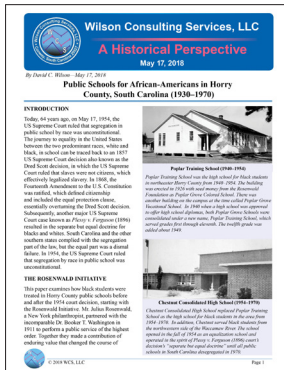
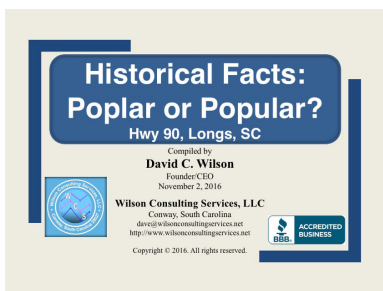
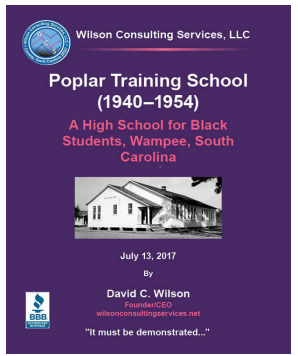
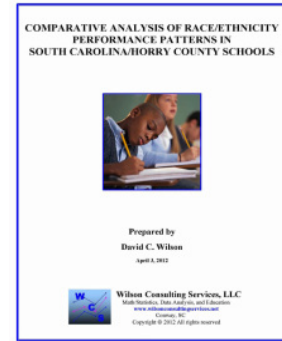
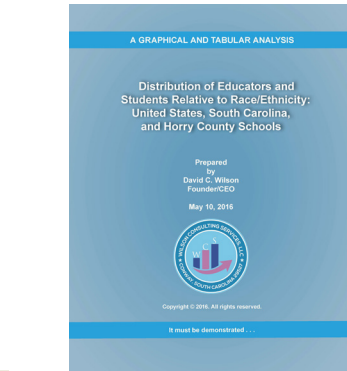
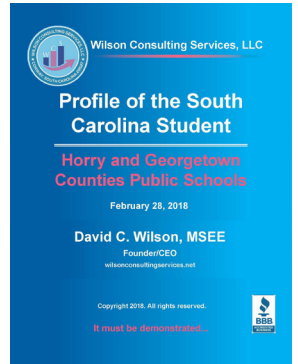
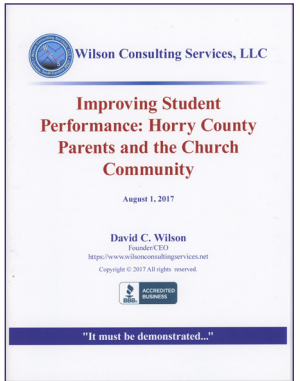
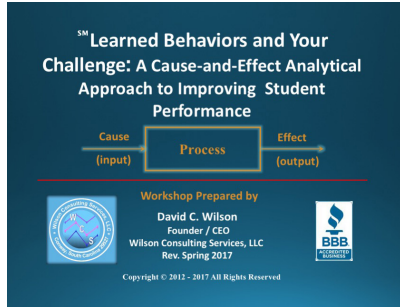
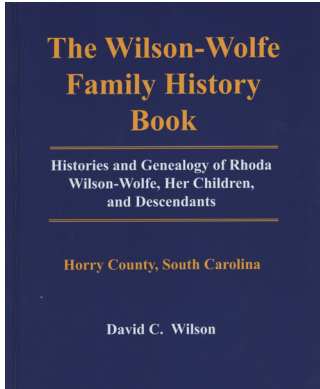
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The "Four Cs"



"C"
Communication

Sharing, thoughts,
questions, ideas,
and solutions



"C"
Critical Thinking

Looking at problems
in a new way and
linking learning
across subjects and
discipline



"C"
Collaboration

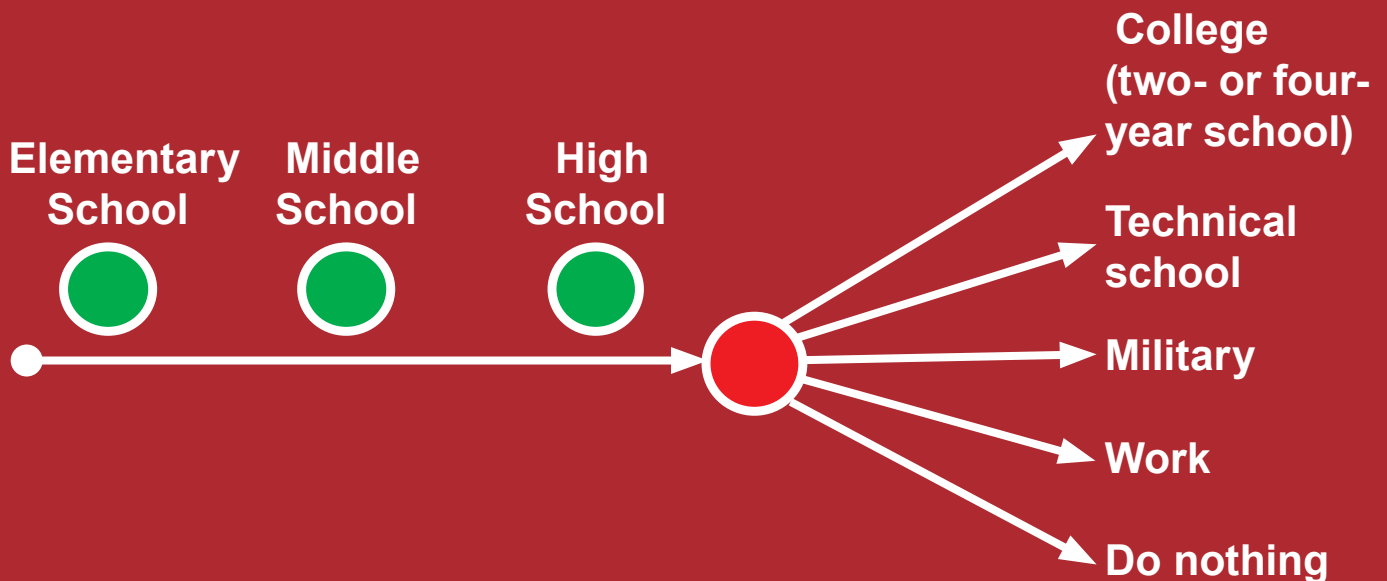
Working together to
reach a goal. Putting
talents, expertise,
and smart to work.



"C"
Creativity

Trying new
approaches to get
things done equals
innovation and
invention

Which choice will you make?



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