

# Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Education

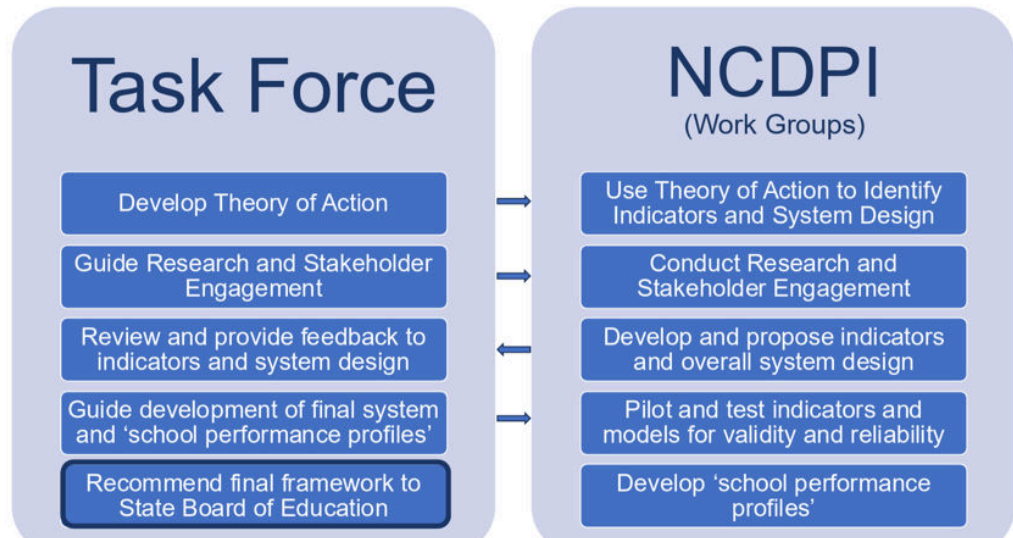
## From the NC Collaboratory:

### Update on the NC State Board of Education Task Force on Accountability for Public Schools

#### Background

The NC State Board of Education (NC SBE) Task Force on Accountability for Public Schools was established in October 2025 to develop a new statewide school-level accountability system that will: 1) recognize excellence in public schools, 2) identify schools in need of support to reach excellence, and 3) redefine expectations of what schools should do to support students, parents, and communities. [Task force membership](#) includes stakeholders from across the NC educational system. In partnership with the [Center for Assessment](#), a nonprofit organization that partners with districts and states to design, implement, and evaluate accountability systems, the task force will design a new theory of action and design principles for NC's accountability system. The task force will work collaboratively with the NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) (Figure 1), making high-level decisions during convenings while also providing specific feedback on system designs and implementation plans recommended by working groups.

**Figure 1.**  
*Task Force and NCDPI Work Group Responsibilities*  
Note. Adapted from *Accountability Redesign for Public Schools* [PowerPoint slides], by M. Maher, R. Fofaria, and C. Sonneman, December 5, 2025, North Carolina State Board of Education.



#### Why this Matters for North Carolina

During the 2024–2025 school year, 32% of NC's public schools received a [school report card](#) grade of a D or F. The task force found that the current A–F accountability system heavily depends on student performance on state tests. There is concern among task force members about whether the system accurately reflects what is happening in NC schools, whether it supports continuous improvement, and whether it aligns with the full scope of the [2025–2030 Strategic Plan for NC Public Schools](#).

## Meeting Summaries & Emerging Findings

To date, the task force met for a virtual kickoff meeting (Dec 2025), twice for full day meetings at NCDPI (Feb & April 2026), and once for a virtual convening (June 2026). Meeting resources can be found on the [NC SBE website](#) and [Task Force Google site](#).

### February 2026

#### Summary

- Reflected on what is and is not working in the current NC accountability system.
- Explored the idea of reciprocal accountability, where responsibility is shared across the school, district, and state levels.
- Articulated a collective vision for NC public schools and graduates.
- Identified the most important purposes and uses of a redesigned system.

#### Emerging Findings

- Members identified the A–F school grading structure as well understood by the public, but they questioned the accuracy and fairness of the current model, especially the [80%/20% weighting of achievement versus growth](#).
- Members described the current accountability system as placing a disproportionate share of accountability burden on schools relative to the state and districts.
- Members expressed a desire to hold schools accountable for outcomes that go beyond standardized test scores, including durable skills, student agency, postsecondary readiness across multiple pathways, and equitable access to opportunity.

### April 2026

#### Summary

- Moved from vision and purpose toward early system design.
- Refined the draft [theory of action](#).
- Established [accountability design principles](#).
- Identified and prioritized indicators to support a redesigned accountability system.

#### Emerging Findings

- Members rated current indicators in the state’s accountability system, revealing a desire to retain outcome-based accountability indicators, while broadening how indicators are defined and measured.
- Members rated a broader set of potential indicators that are not currently part of the state’s accountability system. Members prioritized new indicators for post-secondary readiness, performance on tests, and on-time graduation.
- Members recognized that difficult questions remain about which indicators should compose the accountability system, how indicators should be weighted, and how results should be publicly reported.

### June 2026

#### Summary

- Reviewed and discussed the [working group’s recommendations](#), including NCDPI’s feedback. The drafted recommendations from the working group include:
  1. **Achievement:** Transition from percentage of students proficient, which classifies students as proficient or not proficient, to proficiency indices, which show the percentage of students scoring at each achievement level.

2. **Growth Model:** Continue using a value-added growth model to calculate grades 3–8 growth indicators.
  3. **Extend Graduation Rate:** Use both the 4-year and 5-year adjusted cohort graduation rates as the graduation rate measure.
- Reviewed and initially discussed [aggregation](#), the process of combining indicator-level results into a single summative score.

### **Emerging Findings**

- **Achievement Recommendation:** Members favored the use of a proficiency index and discussed achievement level weighting within the index. The working group will follow up with proficiency index options.
- **Growth Recommendation:** Members favor a value-added model and would like to consider the continued use of EVAAS as well as other value-added models.
- **Extend Graduation Rate Recommendation:** Members are open to the 5-year graduation rate being added to the high school graduation indicator, with 4-year versus 5-year weighting to be determined.
- **Aggregation Methods:** Members initially discussed the benefits of compensatory and profile aggregation methods, agreeing that the recommended methods ought to be transparent to North Carolinians, while valuing student proficiency and growth.

### **Timelines and Deliverables**

The task force will meet four more times in 2026 and plans to present its model to the NC SBE in May 2027. Statewide implementation of the new model could begin in October 2027, dependent on legislative approval. Table 1 details a projected list of task force deliverables and completion dates.

**Table 1. Timelines and Deliverables**

<b>Action Step and/or Deliverable</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Anticipated Completion Date</b>
Theory of Action	Task Force & NCDPI Staff	2/2026
Landscape Review	Task Force & NCDPI Staff	6/2026
Design Framework Development	Task Force & NCDPI Staff	12/2026
Model Prototyping & Testing	NCDPI Staff	4/2027
Draft Report, Stakeholder Engagement & Policy Proposal	NCDPI Staff	4/2027
Presentation to State Board of Education	Task Force & NCDPI Staff	5/2027
Policy Adoption & Transition Phase	SBE & NCDPI Staff	TBD
Legislative Change	NCGA	6/2027
Establishment of School Performance Profiles	NCDPI	9/2028
Statewide Implementation	NCDPI & PSUs	9/2028