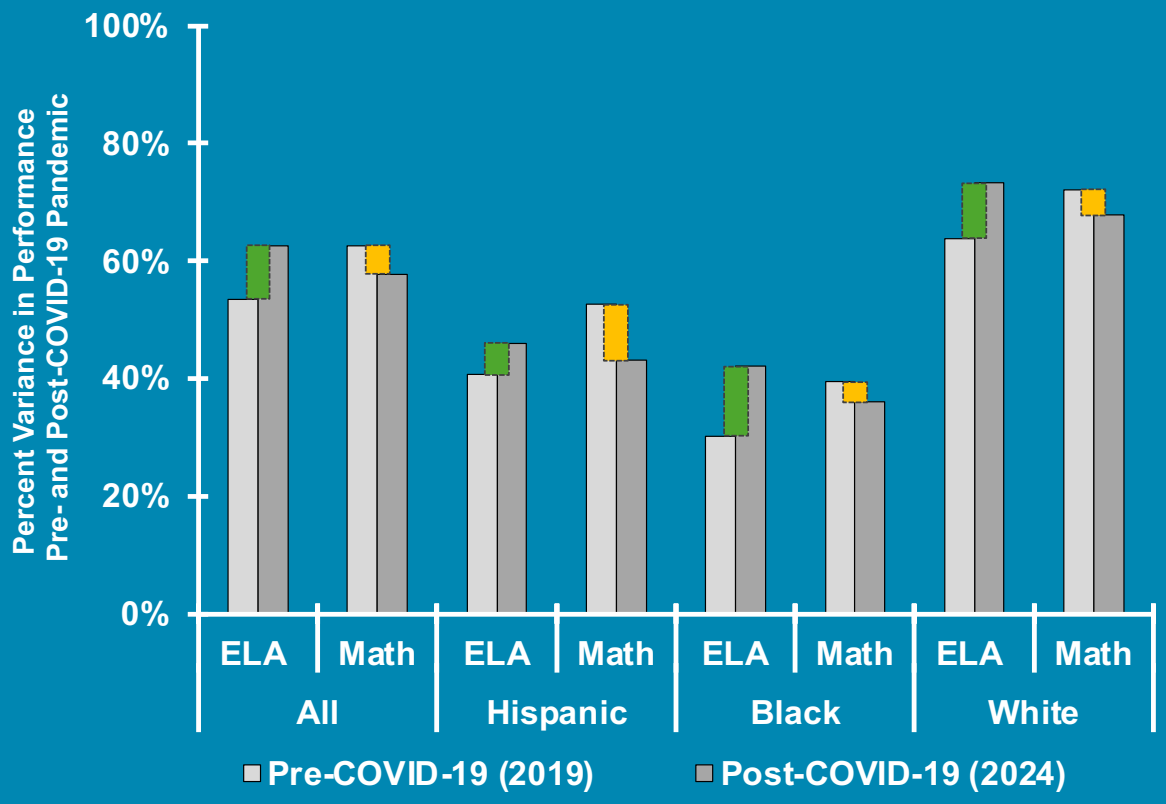
Wilson Consulting Services, LLC

Performance Comparison of Pre- and Post-COVID-19 Pandemic

Horry County Schools



April 16, 2025

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ACCREDITED BUSINESS BBB

Axiom: Without data, you are just one more person with an opinion.

Executive Summary

The document provides a comprehensive analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student learning in South Carolina (SC), with a particular focus on Horry County Schools. Utilizing data from the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Assessments (SC READY) for elementary and middle school students, as well as the End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP) for high school students, the analysis compares student performance in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics before the pandemic (2019) and (2024)1.

The findings reveal a mixed recovery. While performance in ELA and English II (ENG II) has returned to or exceeded pre-pandemic levels, performance in mathematics and Algebra (ALG) has not. This suggests that the pandemic had a more significant negative impact on these subjects The analysis underscores the need for targeted interventions to address the disparities in recovery across different subjects..

Performance Recovery: Pre- and Post COVID_19
Post-pandemic performance levels in ELA for elementary and middle school students in SC and HCS have shown significant improvement. Specifically, SC schools have seen increases of 17.4% and 19.1%, while HCS schools have experienced increases of 17.1% and 18.1% above pre-pandemic levels, respectively. However, performance in math has not returned to pre-pandemic levels, with SC schools showing declines of 11.6% and 1.5%, and HCS schools showing declines of 15.7% and 7.8% below pre-pandemic levels, respectively. For high school students, performance levels in ENG II and ALG have returned to or exceeded pre-pandemic levels. SC schools have seen improvements of 17.3% in ENG II and 16.6% in ALG, while HCS schools have seen improvements above pre-pandemic levels of 10.0% in ENG II and 22.1% in ALG.

Performance Comparison: HCS Versus SC (2017–2024)
HCS demonstrated superior performance compared to SC in various academic areas, including ELA and math at the elementary and middle school levels, with margins ranging from 12.5% to 23.4%. In specific subjects, HCS excelled in ENG II and ALG by 8.0% and 27.4%, respectively. This resulted in an overall performance advantage of 16.2% in ELA and math combined, and 17.7% in ENG II and ALG combined. ♦

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Chapter 1

Introduction

There has been much talk about how far behind students are in learning because of the shutdown of public schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many experts predicted it would be years before students' performance would return to pre-pandemic levels.*

To follow up on these predictions, I used South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) data to compare performance for the pre- and post-COVID-19 pandemic periods. The pre-COVID-19 pandemic period comprised school year ending in 20219, and the post-COVID-19 period comprised of school year ending in 2024. ** To highlight the current academic status, I analyzed pre- and post-COVID-19 pandemic performance data for South Carolina (SC) students and Horry County Schools (HCS) students in this report.

This report examines the performance recovery to pre-pandemic levels for the three largest racial or ethnicity groups of students in SC as a whole and for a subset of this data from Horry County Schools (HCS). This includes the two historical US demographic groups (White and Black, or African American) and the newer Hispanic or Latino demographic. In the interest of consistency, African Americans will be designated as Black throughout the report, and Hispanic or Latino will be designated as Hispanic. These three groups comprised more than 90% of the student population.

For elementary and middle school students, I used data from the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Assessments (SC READY) test, conducted by the SCDE, to perform the analysis. The SC READY is a set of standardized tests that measure student achievement in English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics (math), science, and social studies. For this report, I used ELA and math performance data for analysis. The satisfactory criteria for SC READY were that a student met or exceeded expectations.

For high school analysis, I used data from the End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP) for the analysis. The EOCEP measures student performance levels in algebra (ALG), biology, English II (ENG II), and United States History and the Constitution. The EOCEP results are used in the calculation of high school students' absolute ratings and growth ratings. Satisfactory performance

* In this report, pre-pandemic performance is the average of test scores , during 2017–2019 and post-pandemic performance is the average of test scores during 2022–2024.

**I extracted the performance data used in this report from South Carolina Department of Education Microsoft excel spreadsheets that are made available to researchers. The report cards for districts and schools are the same data; however, the percentages on report cards might vary from the performance in this report due to adjustments for the report card and rounding. See SCDE for complete details on the SC READY and EOCEP testing. Both tests are used to satisfy the federal Education Accountability Act. See links: https://ed.sc.gov/data/test-scores/state-assessments/sc-ready/ and https://ed.sc.gov/data/test-scores/state-assessments/end-of-course-examination-program-eocep/

Introduction, cont.

is based on a grade of C or higher.

The grade measurements are as follows:

- The student scores an F (0–59).
- The student scores a D (60–69).
- The student scores a C (70–79).
- The student scores a B (80–89).
- The student scores an A (90–100).

I selected the results from the EOCEP courses ENG II and ALG for high school students in this report. I selected the results of the ELA and math courses from SC READY to measure the performance by elementary and middle school students. All four subjects—ELA, Math, ENG II, and ALG—are foundational and encompass the three-Rs axiom: "reading, writing, and 'rithmetic."

To emphasize, in Chapters 2, 3, and 7, I present analysis for SC READY and in Chapters 4, 5, and 7, I present analysis for EOCEP. In Chapter 6, I show performance for both SC READY and EOCEP.

An interpretation of the column charts for the figures is shown in Chapters 2 and 4 (Figures 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 4.1.1, and 4.1.2) in this report is described as follows: Reading from left to right, there are two joining gray columns. The first column is light gray, and the second column is dark gray. Reading from left to right, the light gray column represents average SC READY performance pre-COVID-19 pandemic (2019). The dark gray column represents performance post-COVID-19 pandemic (2024). With emphasis, the first column represents the performance for school year ending in 2019, and the darker or second column represents the performance for school year ending in 2024. The notion here is to provide the reader an eyeball approximation of the performance pre- and post-pandemic along with the variance between the two time periods. For example, if the darker gray (right) column is taller than the lighter gray (left) column, then the average performance has returned to or above its pre-pandemic level. However, if the darker gray (right) column is shorter than the lighter gray (left) column, then the performance level has not returned to or above its pre-pandemic status. The variance associated with the two columns is shown with a green area to indicate that post-pandemic performance has exceeded pre-pandemic performance; moreover, if the area of the variance is gold, this means that the post-pandemic performance has not yet returned to its pre-pandemic level. If the column is the same height, then the percentage difference is zero, and post-pandemic performance has returned exactly to the pre-pandemic level. The percent at the top of the twin columns represents the variance of the green or gold area. The chart provides the reader with a graphical representation of the magnitude of the variance between pre- and post-pandemic performance, and it also provides the reader with the performance variance between pre- and post-pandemic levels. Additionally, see Chapter 2 and Tables 2.3.2 and 2.3.3 for SC READY pre- and post-pandemic performance and Chapter 4 and Tables 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 for the EOCEP pre- and post-pandemic performance in this report. The tables depict the percentages for the gray columns and the percent variance shown by the green and gold areas along with the gray columns. See Chapter 6 for long term performance.

All SC and HCS elementary and middle school students and selected groups (Hispanic, Black, and White) have recovered to or exceeded pre-COVID-19 levels in ELA; however, none have done so in math. The SC and HCS student performance have recovered at about the same rate for math in middle school but at a significantly different rate for elementary school (see Figures 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.1, and 2.2.2). All HCS high school students, including the selected groups, recovered to or exceeded pre-COVID-19 levels in ENG II and ALG.

There are seventy-nine school districts in SC with more than 700,000 students. HCS is the second school district in South Carolina following the Greenville County School District. Hispanic, Black, and White students comprised more than 90% of students in SC and HCS, respectively.

Note: *All original data used in this report to construct charts and graphs are from South Carolina Department of Education, Office of Research and Data Analysis; therefore, in the interest of redundancy, this source will not be cited on every page again in this report.*

Chapter 2

SC READY: Recovery in Lost Learning—Pre- and Post-Pandemic

The objective of this chapter is to depict the percentage difference in student performance before and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Horry County Schools (HCS) elementary school students are shown in Figure 2.1.1. The performance of all HCS elementary students in English language arts (ELA) reached 17.1% above its pre-pandemic level, whereas math performance was 7.8% below its pre-pandemic level. In the same figure, Black students as a group made the largest return above their pre-pandemic level, reaching 39.4% in ELA, whereas their math performance was 8.7% below its pre-pandemic level. Note: The large recovery in percentage from pre-pandemic to or above post-pandemic levels for ELA should not be misconstrued as a high-performing group because the achievement gap continue to persist. To that end, the achievement gap persists more than ever. For example, SC and HCS performed at 17.4% and 17.1% above their pre-pandemic levels for ELA in elementary school, respectively.

Although SC and HCS significantly exceeded their pre-pandemic levels, their average performance over the past seven years for elementary ELA and math combined was 48.5% (SC) and 56.6% (HCS). *This difference was statistically different in favor of HCS. Correspondingly, SC and HCS average performance in middle school ELA and math combined over the past seven years (2017–2024) were 40.2% (SC) and 47.5% (HCS).* The two differ significantly in favor of HCS. See Figures 6.1.1 and 6.1.2. Additionally, performance of SC and HCS middle school students are shown in Figures 6.2.1 and 6.2.2.

The recovery performance of SC and HCS middle school students in ELA reached 18.1% above its pre-pandemic level, whereas their math performance was not as robust—returning to within 15.7% below the pre-pandemic level, compared to SC at 19.1% above its pre-pandemic level, and its math was at 11.6% below pre-pandemic level. In either situation math has not recovered for either elementary or middle school students to or above pre-pandemic levels (see Figures 2.1.1–2.2.2.

Please keep in mind that pre- and post-pandemic performance differ from average performance over the past seven years, as shown in Chapters 3 and 5.

Overall, using pre-pandemic performance as a recovery benchmark, SC and HCS students performed statistically better above pre-pandemic levels in ELA and statistically worse below math pre-pandemic levels.

*These averages were adjusted for COVID-19 pandemic. Not adjusted for COVID-19 means counting performance data for school years ending in 2020 and 2021 when available. Adjusted for the COVID-19 pandemic means not counting performance data for school years ending in 2020 and 2021when available.

2.1 Elementary School: Recovery Status of Pre- and Post-Pandemic School Closure

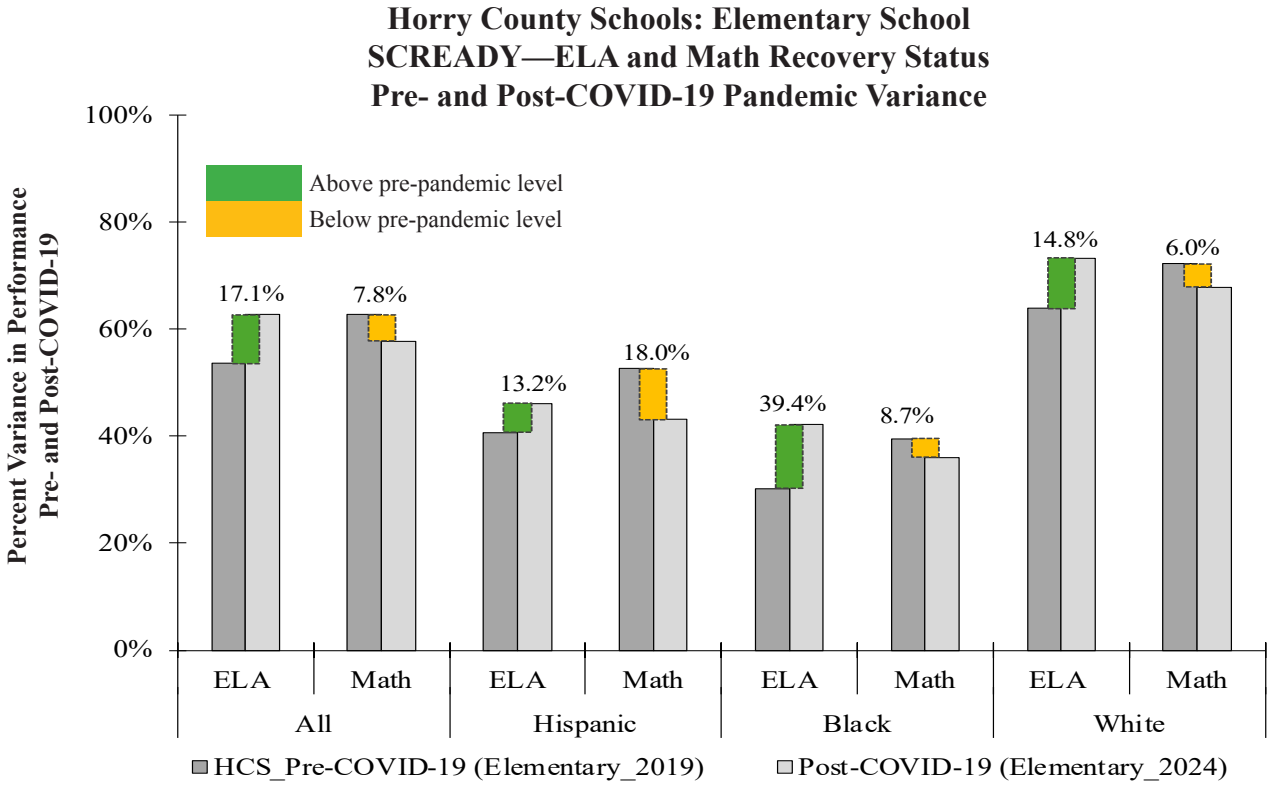


Figure 2.1.1 HCS: Elementary school recovery status for pre- and post-COVID-19 pandemic (Table 2.2.2)

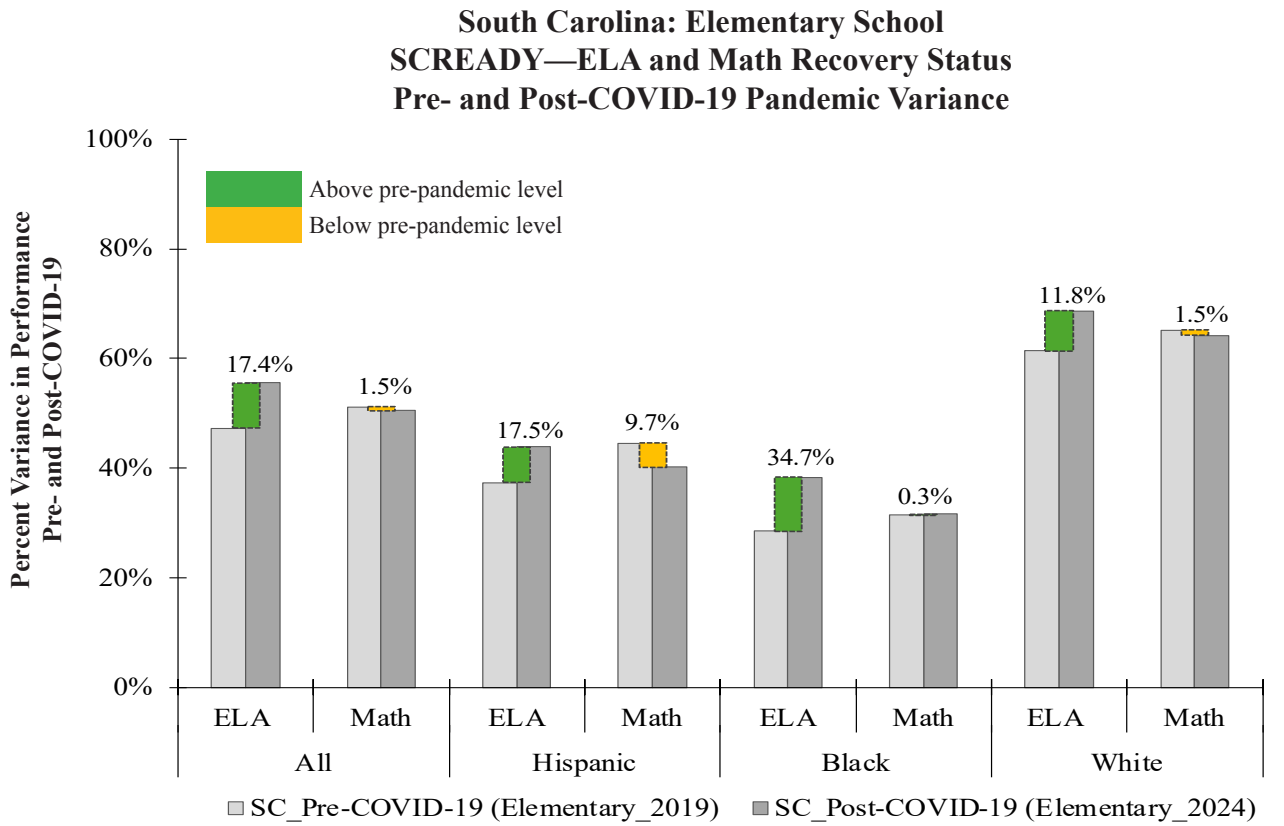


Figure 2.1.2 SC: Elementary school recovery status for pre- and post-COVID-19 pandemic (Table 2.2.3).

2.2 Middle School: Recovery Status of Pre- and Post-COVID-19 Pandemic

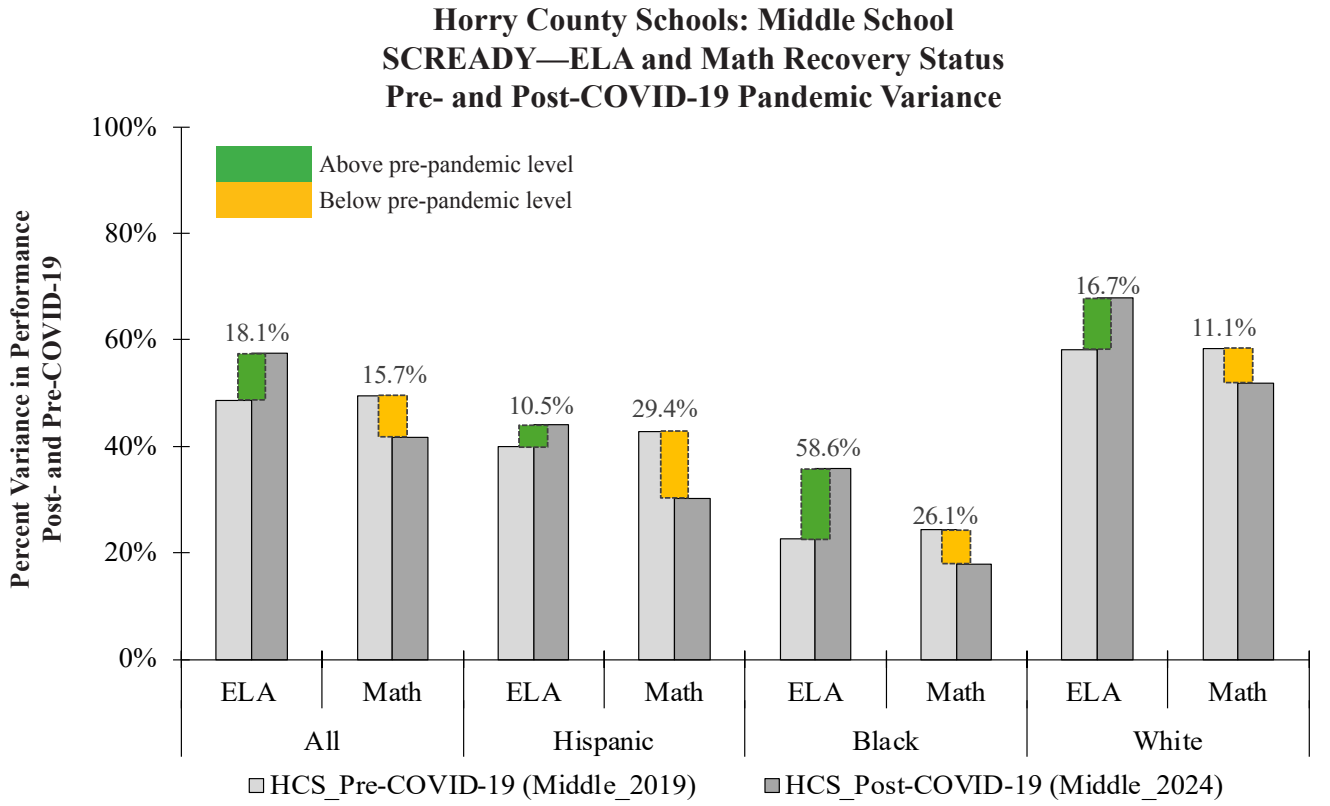


Figure 2.2.1 HCS:Middle school recovery status for pre- and post-COVID-19 pandemic (Table 2.2.4).

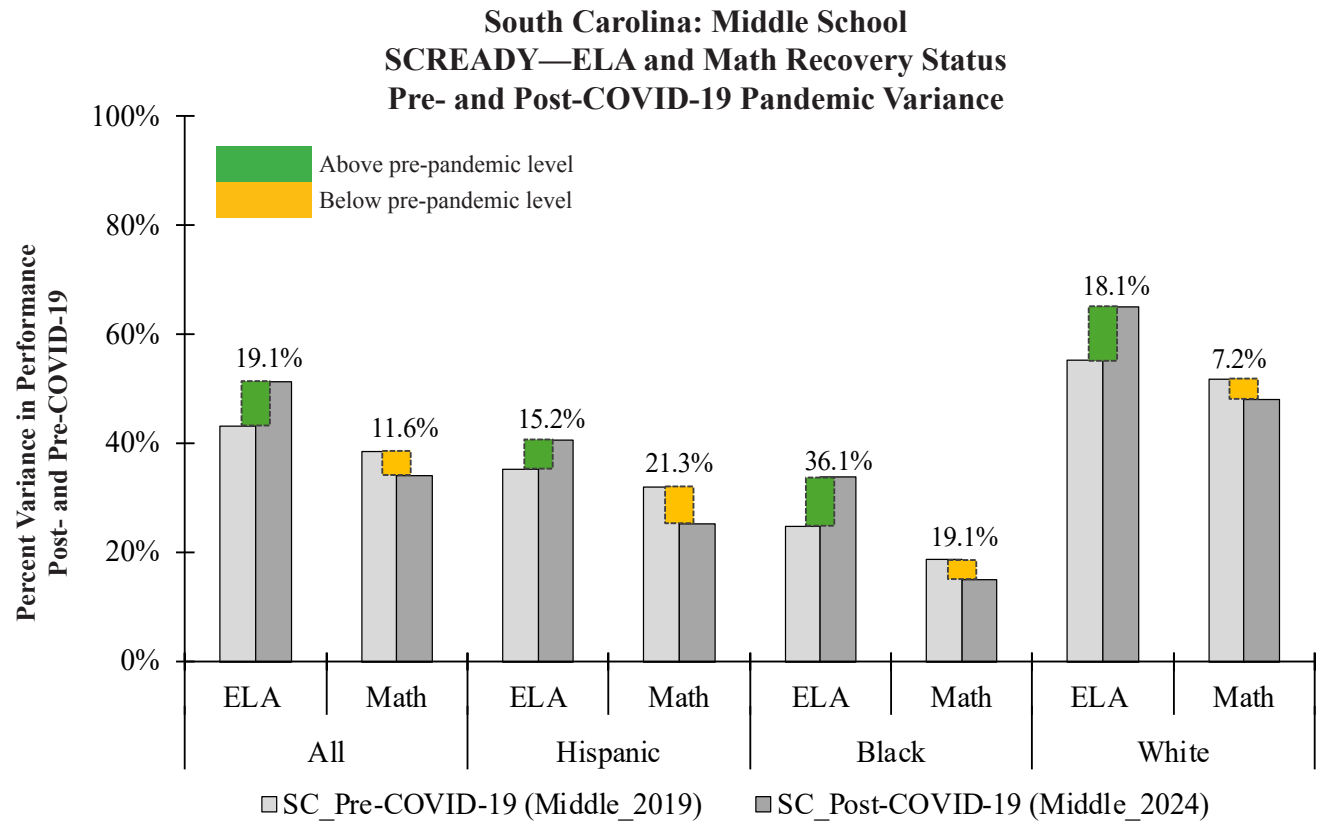


Figure 2.2.2 SC: Middle school recovery status for pre- and post-COVID-19 pandemic (Table. 2.2.5).

2.3 Elementary—Recovery Status: Data Tables of Pre- and Post-Pandemic

The tables shown in this section contains the data that generated Figures 2.2.2 and 2.2.5. For example, the performance percentages are not shown with the gray columns depicted in the figures; therefore, the reader can refer to Tables 2.3.2 and 2.3.3 for the percentages. The percentages in the columns represent the gray columns shown in the graphs for pre- and post-pandemic performances.

Table 2.3.1 SC and HCS—Headcount.

	South Carolina				Horry County Schools			
State	Students		Teachers		Students		Teachers	
Group	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	**788,908**	**100%**	**55,159**	**100%**	**48,024**	**100%**	**3,242**	**100%**
Hispanic	109,230	13.8%	1,373	2.5%	8,766	18.3%	66	2.0%
Black	244,707	31.0%	9,151	16.6%	7,796	16.2%	181	5.6%
White	369,307	46.8%	41,869	75.9%	27,171	56.6%	2,903	89.5%
Other†	65,664	8.3%	2,767	5.0%	4,291	8.9%	93	2.9%

Table 2.3.2 HCS—SC READY—elementary—pre- and post-pandemic performance.

HCS_Elementary School	SC READY Subject	Pre-pandemic (2019)	Post-pandemic (2024)	Points Variance*	Percent Variance*
All	**ELA**	53.5%	62.7%	9.1	17.1%
	Math	62.7%	57.8%	-4.9	-7.8%
Hispanic	**ELA**	40.7%	46.1%	5.4	13.2%
	Math	52.6%	43.1%	-9.5	-18.0%
Black	**ELA**	30.2%	42.1%	11.9	39.4%
	Math	39.5%	36.0%	-3.4	-8.7%
White	**ELA**	63.8%	73.3%	9.5	14.8%
	Math	72.2%	67.8%	-4.3	-6.0%

Table 2.3.3 SC: SC READY—elementary—pre- and post-pandemic performance.

SC_Elementary School	SC READY Subject	Pre-pandemic (2019)	Post-pandemic (2024)	Points Variance*	Percent Variance*
All	**ELA**	47.3%	55.5%	8.2	17.4%
	Math	51.2%	50.4%	-0.8	-1.5%
Hispanic	**ELA**	37.3%	43.9%	6.5	17.5%
	Math	44.5%	40.2%	-4.3	-9.7%
Black	**ELA**	28.5%	38.3%	9.9	34.7%
	Math	31.5%	31.6%	0.1	0.3%
White	**ELA**	61.4%	68.7%	7.3	11.8%
	Math	65.1%	64.2%	-1.0	-1.5%

*The negative sign (-) in front of the number means performance is below pre-pandemic level, whereas the absence of or no sign means performance is above pre-pandemic level.

2.4 Middle School Recovery Status—Data Tables of Pre- and Post-Pandemic

Table 2.4.1 HCS: SC READY—middle—pre- and post-pandemic performance.

HCS_Middle School	SC READY Subject	Pre-pandemic 2019	Post-pandemic 2024	Points Variance*	Percent Variance*
All	**ELA**	48.7%	57.5%	8.8	18.1%
	Math	49.5%	41.8%	-7.8	-15.7%
Hispanic	**ELA**	39.9%	44.0%	4.2	10.5%
	Math	42.8%	30.2%	-12.6	-29.4%
Black	**ELA**	22.6%	35.8%	13.2	58.6%
	Math	24.3%	18.0%	-6.3	-26.1%
White	**ELA**	58.2%	67.9%	9.7	16.7%
	Math	58.4%	51.9%	-6.5	-11.1%

Table 2.4.2 SC: SC READY—middle—pre- and post pandemic performance.

SC_Middle School	SC READY Subject	Pre-pandemic 2019	Post-pandemic 2024	Points Variance*	Percent Variance*
All	**ELA**	43.2%	51.4%	8.2	19.1%
	Math	38.6%	34.1%	-4.5	-11.6%
Hispanic	**ELA**	35.3%	40.7%	5.4	15.2%
	Math	32.1%	25.3%	-6.8	-21.3%
Black	**ELA**	24.8%	33.8%	9.0	36.1%
	Math	18.7%	15.1%	-3.6	-19.1%
White	**ELA**	55.2%	65.1%	10.0	18.1%
	Math	51.8%	48.1%	-3.7	-7.2%

*The negative sign (-) in front of the number means performance is below pre-pandemic level, whereas the absence of or no sign means performance is above pre-pandemic level.

Chapter 3

SC READY: Pre- and Post-Pandemic Trending: ELA and Math Performance (2017–2024)

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the behavior pattern between ELA and math from 2017 to 2024. There is a reversal between ELA and math performances between pre- and post-pandemic. Additionally, the charts exhibit the trends for South Carolina (SC) and Georgetown County School District (HCS) for students statewide and the school district.

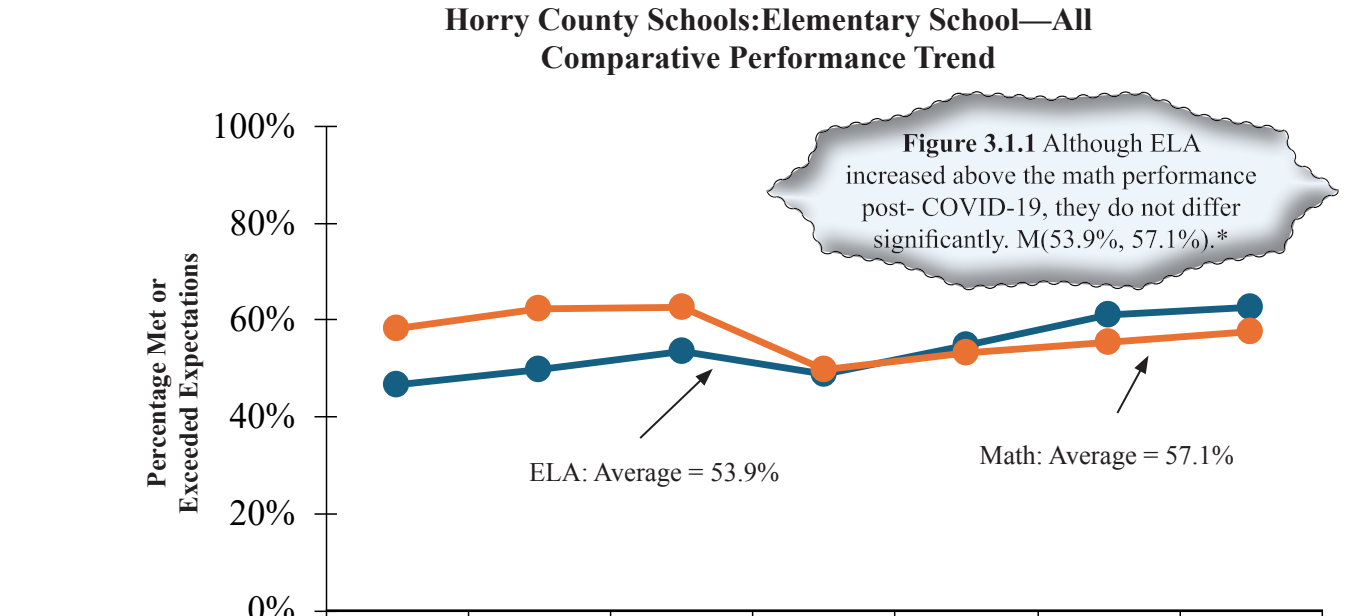
Starting with Figures 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 the reversal in performance is profoundly clear. ELA and math converged at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic period and then diverged in the post-pandemic time frame with a reversal of the trends from 2017 to 2024. The line graphs for the race and ethnicity groups (Hispanic, Black, and White) exhibit the same reversal in patterns; however, the race and ethnicity line graphs for the comparison between ELA and math are not included in the report. To that end, the trends for ELA and math have reversed performance levels in the post-pandemic time frame so far for elementary school students for SC and HCS. The behavior pattern for middle school students was as distinct as the elementary students.

In most cases where ELA and math were compared over time, math students were performing better than ELA students in elementary school, but this trend reversed in the post-pandemic time frame. In middle school, ELA performed better than math students during pre- and post-pandemic time frame. An examination of the data suggests that ELA students in middle school performed significantly better than math students in middle school. This is evident when compared to pre- and post-pandemic performance for the two courses. See Figures 3.2.1 and 3.3.2.

There is a short note appended to each graph with a statistical conclusion relative to the trending difference between ELA and math from 2017 to 2024. The averages depicted in the note appended to the graphs have not been adjusted* for the COVID-19 pandemic. This means that 2020 and 2021 data were not removed. This is because the graphs in this chapter were comparing performance differences during pre-pandemic, pandemic, and post-pandemic time frame between two entities, that is, ELA and math.

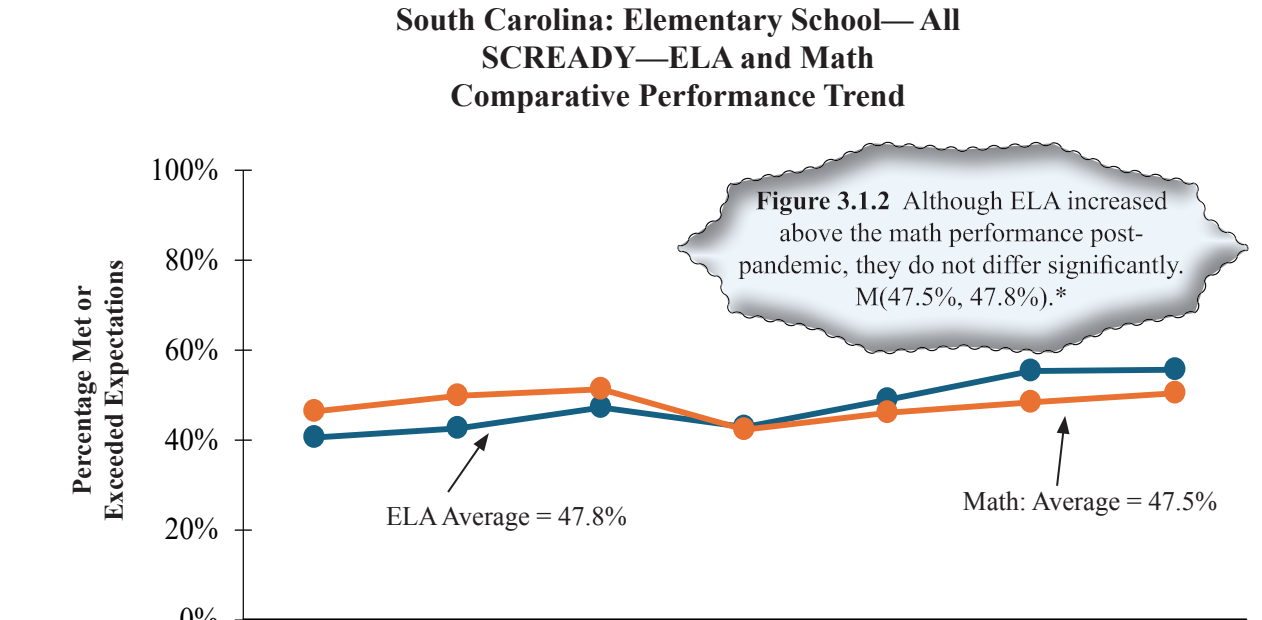
*These averages were adjusted for COVID-19 pandemic. Not adjusted for COVID-19 means counting performance data for school years ending in 2020 and 2021 when available. Adjusted for the COVID-19 pandemic means not counting performance data for school years ending in 2020 and 2021when available.

3.1 Elementary School: Comparison Between ELA and Math— All (2017–2024)



	2017E	2018E	2019E	2021E	2022E	2023E	2024E
HCS_ELA (All)	46.6%	49.9%	53.5%	48.9%	55.0%	61.1%	62.7%
HCS_Math (All)	58.2%	62.3%	62.7%	49.9%	53.3%	55.5%	57.8%

Figure 3.1.1 HCS: All—elementary school—SCREADY trending—ELA vs. math (2017–2024).

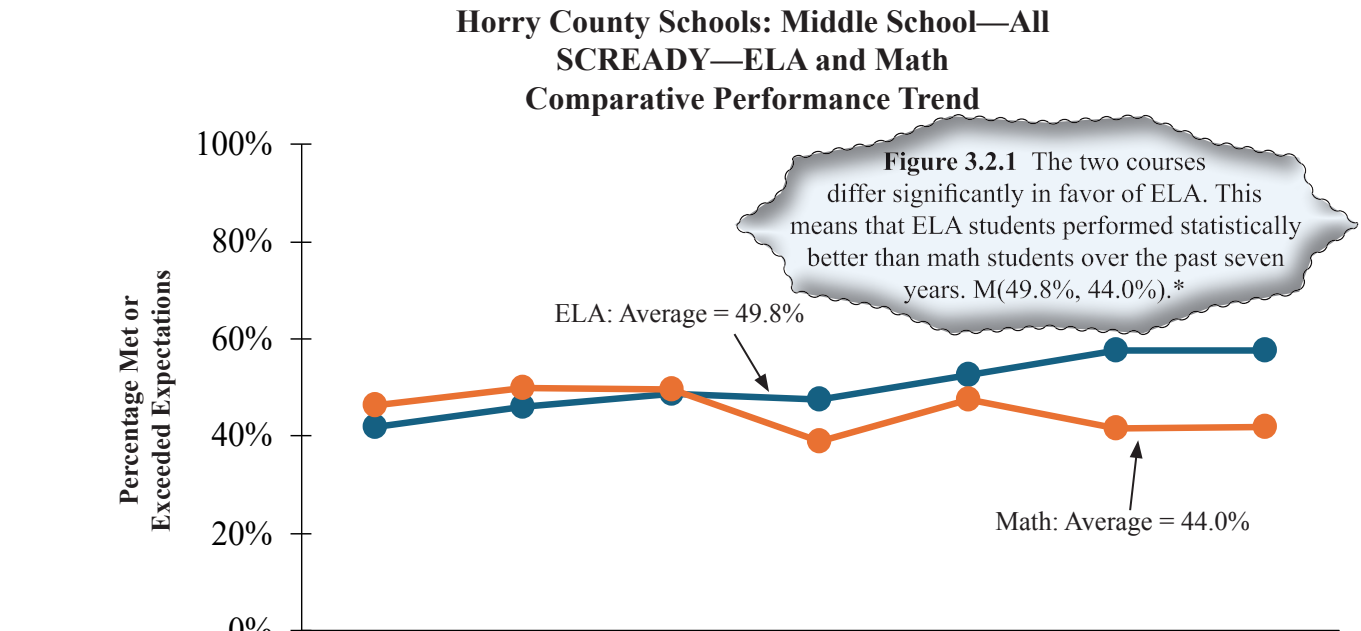


	2017E	2018E	2019E	2021E	2022E	2023E	2024E
SC_ELA (All)	40.4%	42.7%	47.3%	42.8%	48.9%	55.2%	55.5%
SC_Math (All)	46.3%	49.7%	51.2%	42.3%	45.9%	48.4%	50.4%

Figure 3.1.2 SC: All—elementary school—SCREADY trending—ELA vs. math (2017–2024).

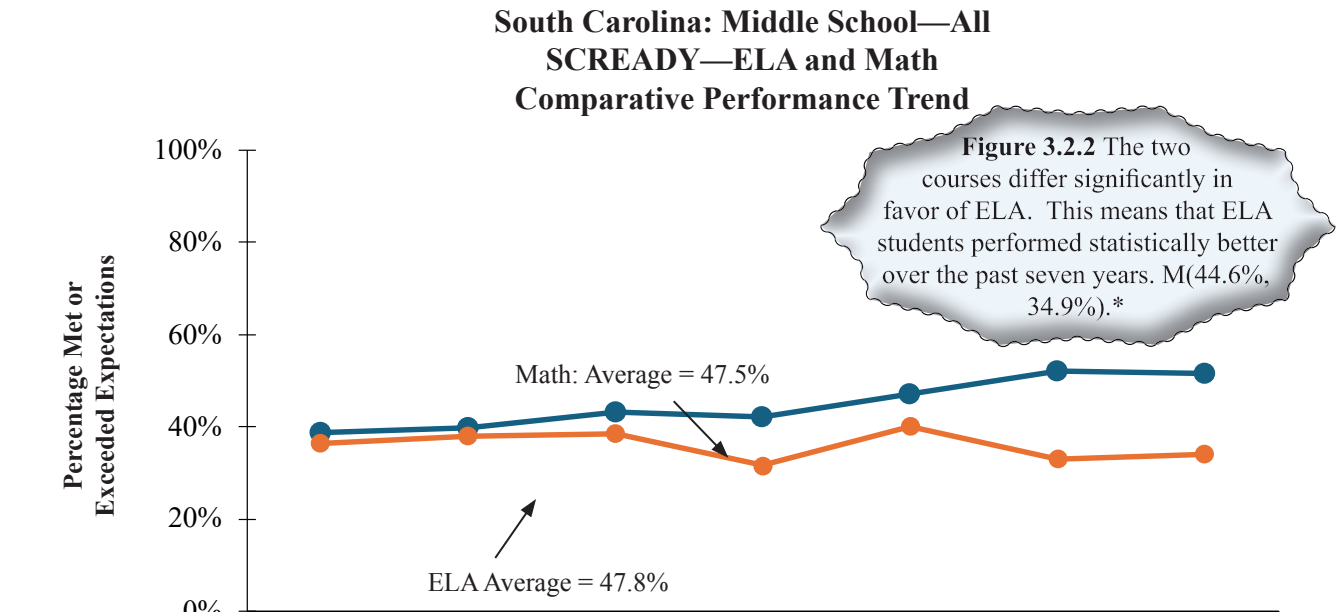
*Averages not adjusted for COVID-19 the pandemic. This does not affect the conclusions. The capital "M" shown in the notes stands for mean or average performance.

3.2 Middle School: Comparison Between ELA and Math— All (2017–2024)



	2017M	2018M	2019M	2021M	2022M	2023M	2024M
HCS_ELA (All)	42.0%	46.0%	48.7%	47.5%	52.6%	57.7%	57.5%
HCS_Math (All)	46.2%	49.8%	49.5%	39.0%	47.7%	41.5%	41.8%

Figure 3.2.1 HCS: All—middle school—SCREADY trending—ELA vs. math (2017–2024).



	2017M	2018M	2019M	2021M	2022M	2023M	2024M
SC_ELA (All)	38.7%	39.7%	43.2%	42.1%	47.1%	52.2%	51.4%
SC_Math (All)	36.4%	38.0%	38.6%	31.7%	40.1%	33.1%	34.1%

Figure 3.2.2 SC: All—middle school—SCREADY trending—ELA vs. math (2017–2024).

*Averages not adjusted for COVID-19 the pandemic. This does not affect the conclusions. The capital "M" shown in the notes stands for mean or average performance.

Chapter 4

EOCEP: Recovery in Lost Learning—Pre- and Post-Pandemic

The objective of this chapter is to depict the percentage difference in student performance before and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Horry County Schools (HCS) high school students are shown in Figure 4.1.1 and South Carolina (SC) high school students are shown in Figure 4.1.2. The performance of all (HCS) students in ENG II reached 10.0% above the pre-pandemic level, whereas ALG students reached 22.5% above its pre-pandemic level. In the same figure, Black students as a group made the greatest return above their pre-pandemic level with an astonishing 64.7% above its pre-pandemic level in ALG, whereas ENG II bounced back with 20.3% above its pre-pandemic level. This means that Black students experienced a robust bounce back from the pandemic in both ENG II and ALG.*

Although these are remarkable percentages above pre-pandemic levels, the achievement gap persists more than ever. For example, SC and HCS performed significantly above their pre-pandemic levels for ENG II and ALG; however, SC and HCS average performances over the past eight years (2017–2024) for ENG II were 63.6% (SC) and 68.8% (GCSD), and for ALG the performances were 45.0% (SC) and 59.3% (GCSD). See Figures 6.3.1 and 6.3.2. The two differ significantly in favor of HCS. Moreover, Black students experienced impressive percentage above their pre-pandemic levels such as 64.7% for ALG; however, their average performances in ALG from 2017 to 2024 were only 26.6% (SC) and 38.1% (HCS). * See Figures 6.3.1 and 6.3.2.

Please keep in mind that all groups are included in the designation "All" for all SC, or "All" for all HCS. The all designation includes Asians, American Indians, two or more races, and so on. Please keep in mind that pre- and post-pandemic performances differ from the overall performance over the past seven years because pre-pandemic includes school year ending in 2019 only and post-pandemic includes school year ending in 2024 only, as shown in Chapters 2 and 4.

Overall, using pre-pandemic performance as a recovery benchmark, SC and GCSD students performed statistically better above benchmark in ENG II and ALG.

*The large gain in percentage above pre-pandemic levels should not be misconstrued as a high-performing group because the achievement gap continues to persist.

4.1 High School—EOCEP—Recovery Status of Pre- and Post-Pandemic

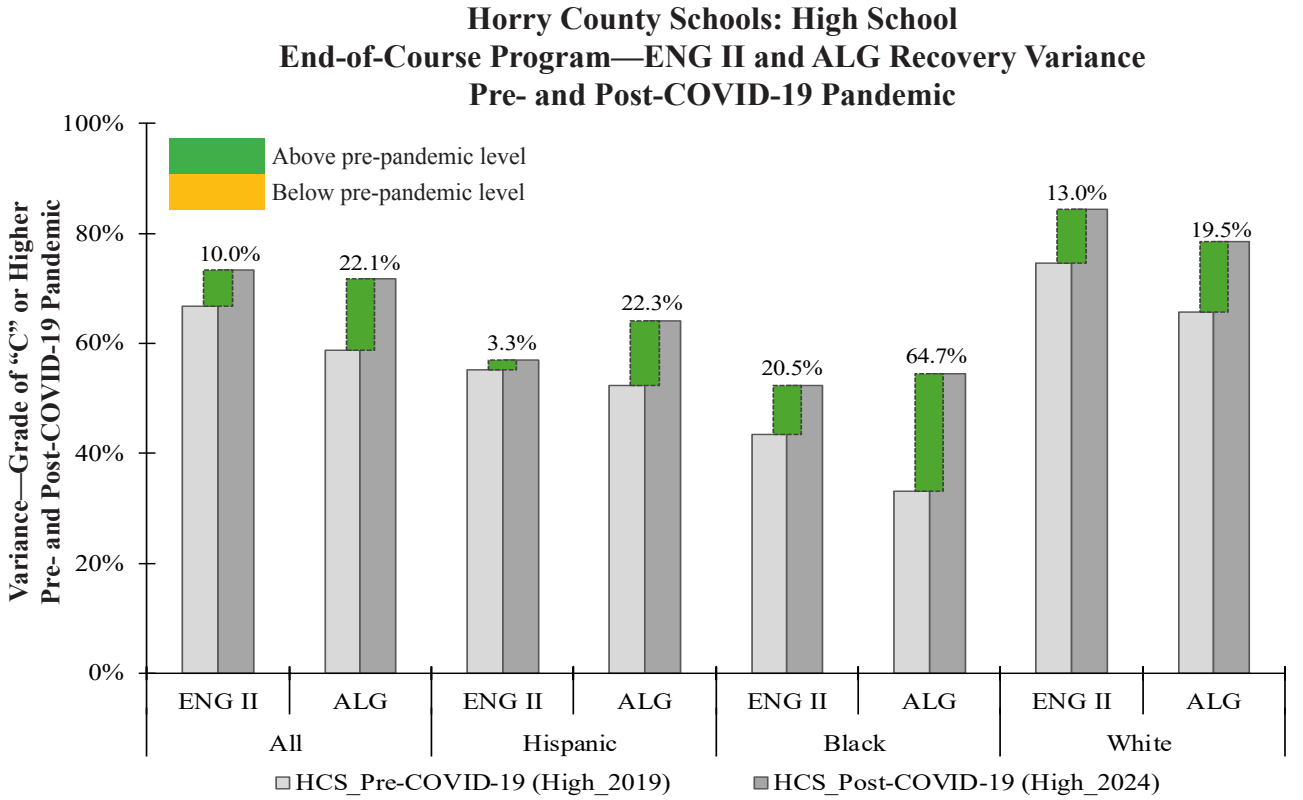


Figure 4.1.1 HCS: EOCEP school variance in percentage for pre- and post-COVID-19 pandemic

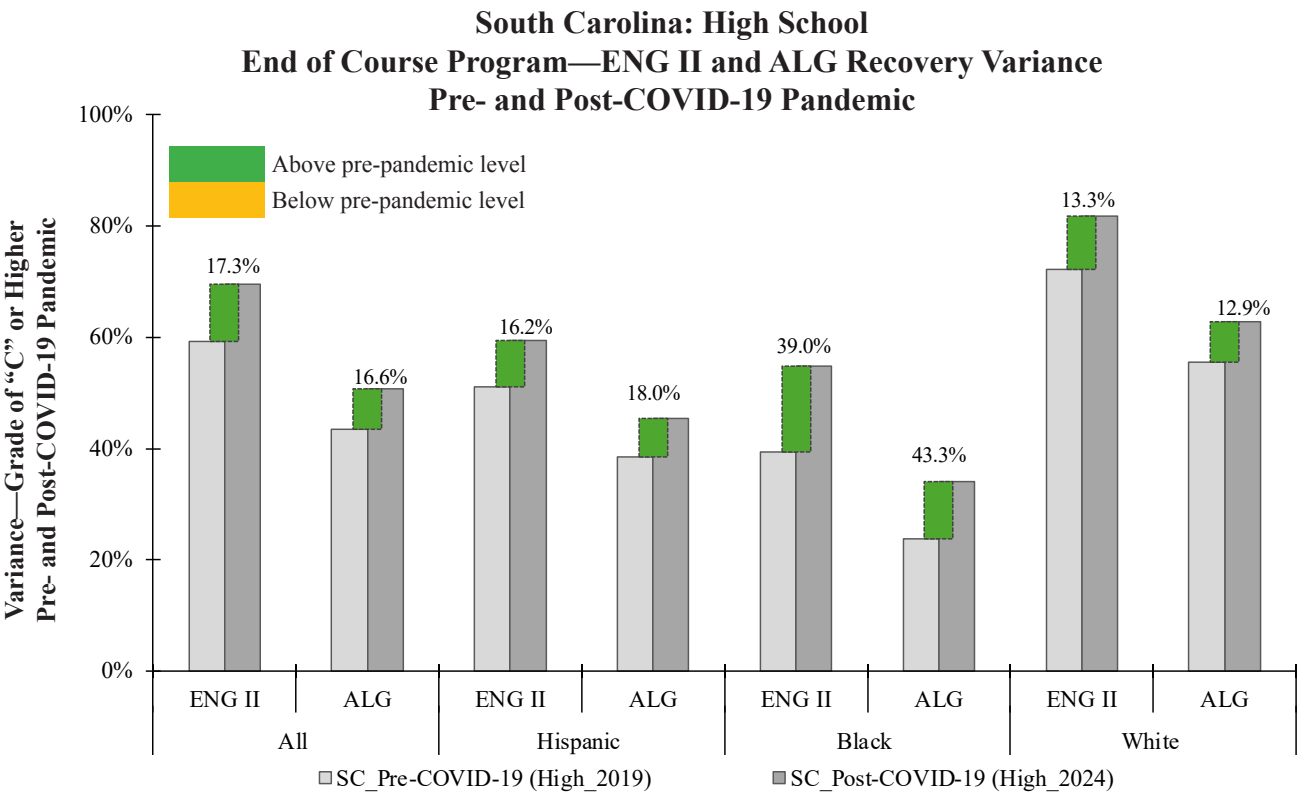


Figure 4.1.2 HCS: EOCEP school variance for pre- and post-COVID-19 pandemic.

4.2 Middle School HCS and SC Recovery Status—Data Tables of Pre- and Post-Pandemic

The tables shown in this section contains the data used to generate the Figures 4.1.1 and 4.1.2. For example, the performance percentages are not shown on the columns in the figures; therefore, the reader can refer to Tables 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 for pre- and post-pandemic. The percentages in the tables represent the gray columns shown in the graphs for pre- and post-pandemic performances.

Table 4.2.1 SC and HCS—Headcount.

	South Carolina				Horry County Schools			
State	Students		Teachers		Students		Teachers	
Group	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	**788,908**	**100%**	**55,159**	**100%**	**48,024**	**100%**	**3,242**	**100%**
Hispanic	109,230	13.8%	1,373	2.5%	8,766	18.3%	66	2.0%
Black	244,707	31.0%	9,151	16.6%	7,796	16.2%	181	5.6%
White	369,307	46.8%	41,869	75.9%	27,171	56.6%	2,903	89.5%
Other†	65,664	8.3%	2,767	5.0%	4,291	8.9%	93	2.9%

Table 4.2.2 HCS: EOCEP—high school pre- and post-pandemic performance.

HCS_High School	EOCEP Subject	Pre-pandemic (2019)	Post-pandemic (2024)	Points Variance*	Percent Variance*
All	**ENG II**	66.7%	73.4%	6.7	10.0%
	ALG	58.8%	71.8%	13.0	22.1%
Hispanic	**ENG II**	55.2%	57.0%	1.8	3.3%
	ALG	52.4%	64.1%	11.7	22.3%
Black	**ENG II**	43.5%	52.4%	8.9	20.5%
	ALG	33.1%	54.5%	21.4	64.7%
White	**ENG II**	74.6%	84.3%	9.7	13.0%
	ALG	65.7%	78.5%	12.8	19.5%

Table 4.2.3 SC: EOCEP—high school pre- and post-pandemic performance.

SC_High School	EOCEP Subject	Pre-pandemic (2019)	Post-pandemic (2024)	Points Variance*	Percent Variance*
All	**ENG II**	59.3%	69.6%	10.3	17.3%
	ALG	43.5%	50.7%	7.2	16.6%
Hispanic	**ENG II**	51.1%	59.4%	8.3	16.2%
	ALG	38.5%	45.4%	6.9	18.0%
Black	**ENG II**	39.4%	54.8%	15.4	39.0%
	ALG	23.8%	34.1%	10.3	43.3%
White	**ENG II**	72.2%	81.8%	9.6	13.3%
	ALG	55.6%	62.8%	7.2	12.9%

Chapter 5

EOCEP: Pre- and Post-Pandemic Trending: ELA versus Math Performance (2017–2024)

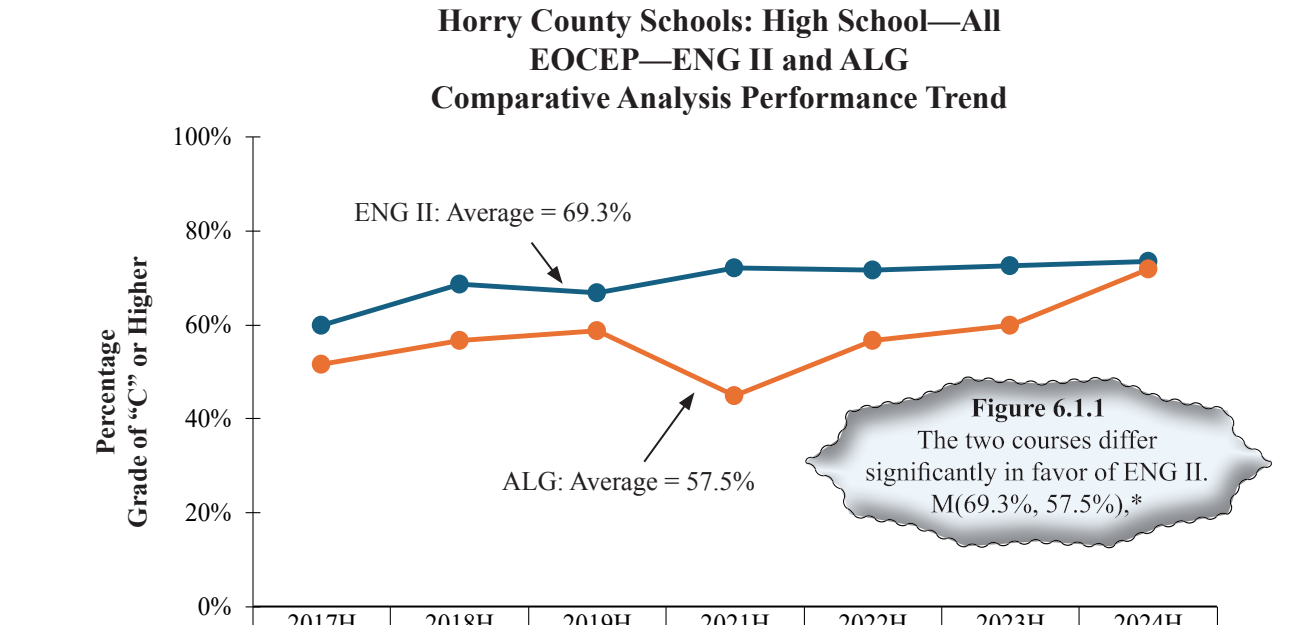
The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the behavior pattern between ENG II and ALG from 2017 to 2024 in the Horry County Schools (HCS). The behavior pattern with End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP) performance is remarkably different from SC READY patterns depicted in Chapter 3. For example, a reversal between ELA and math, where the convergence and divergence of ELA and math performances pre- and post-pandemic, was a profound trend in which the performance levels of math decreased significantly post-pandemic.

The EOCEP trending pattern did not converge; rather the trending between the courses showed a more parallel pattern, where ENG II consistently performed better than ALG. The trends for Hispanic, Black, and White students are the same, as shown in the statewide line graph in this chapter. An observation of Figures 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 can be parlayed with the line graphs in this chapter—Figures 5.1.1 and 5.1.2. For example, in Figures 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 the green area on the columns exceeds the pre-pandemic performance for ENG II and ALG with ENG II significantly higher in performance, as shown in the line graphs in this chapter.

There is a note with a statistical conclusion attached to each chart relative to the trends from 2017 to 2024. The note with each graph for the average (mean) performance has not been adjusted* for school closures during the pandemic. See the averages in parentheses in the notes appended to the graphs in this chapter.

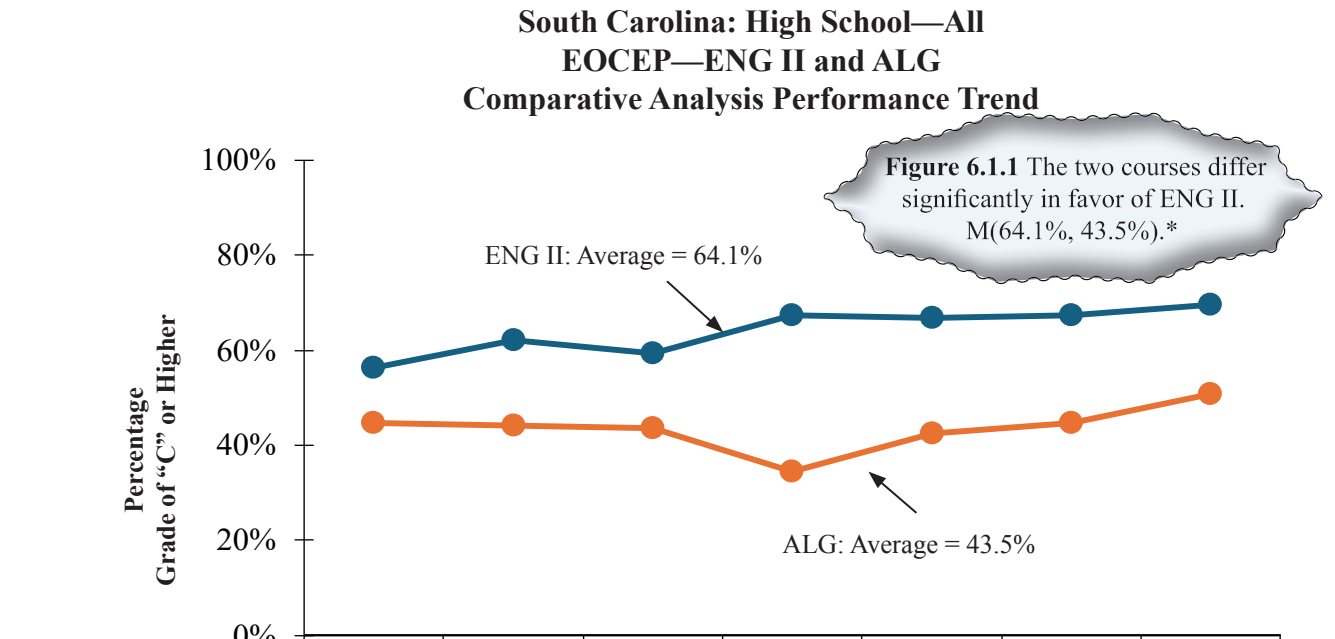
*These averages were adjusted for COVID-19 pandemic. Not adjusted for COVID-19 means counting performance data for school years ending in 2020 and 2021 when available. Adjusted for the COVID-19 pandemic means not counting performance data for school years ending in 2020 and 2021when available.

5.1 High School: Comparison Between ENG II and ALG—All (2017–2024)



	2017H	2018H	2019H	2021H	2022H	2023H	2024H
HCS_ENG II (All)	60.0%	68.7%	66.7%	72.1%	71.6%	72.6%	73.4%
HCS_ALG (All)	51.6%	56.6%	58.8%	44.9%	56.7%	60.0%	71.8%

Figure 5.1.1 HCS— All—EOCEP comparative analysis of ENG II and ALG (2017–2024).



	2017H	2018H	2019H	2021H	2022H	2023H	2024H
SC_ENG II (All)	56.2%	62.1%	59.3%	67.4%	66.8%	67.4%	69.6%
SC_ALG (All)	44.6%	44.0%	43.5%	34.5%	42.3%	44.7%	50.7%

Figure 5.1.2 SC— All—EOCEP comparative analysis of ENG II and ALG (2017–2024).

*Averages not adjusted for COVID-19 the pandemic. This does not affect the conclusions. The capital "M" shown in the notes stands for mean or average performance.

Chapter 6

SC READY: ELA and Math Performance; EOCEP: ENG II and ALG Performance (2017–2024)

The graphs shown in this chapter depict the average summary of performance from 2017 to 2024 for South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Assessments (SC READY) foundational courses in English language arts (ELA) and Mathematics (Math). The entities depicted in this report are South Carolina (SC) and Horry County Schools (HCS). Additionally, this chapter examines the average performance for End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP) core courses in English II (ENG II) and Algebra (ALG) and mathematics from 2017 to 2024.

The performance averages depicted the graphs provide more than a snapshot of performance for a single year rather they illustrate performance over seven years. There are no data for school year ending in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, school year ending in 2021 as part of adjusting for the pandemic has also been excluded from these averages. The average performances are depicted in Figures 6.1.1–6.2.2 for SC READY and Figures 6.3.1 and 6.3.2 for EOCEP students.

To emphasize, the behavior pattern with for SC READY and EOCEP performance is depicted in Chapters 7 and 8. Therefore, the reader would not see the behavior pattern associated with the charts in this chapter. For example, in Chapter 7, the line graphs show the yearly performance which are depicted as yearly averages whereas the column charts in Chapter 6 show the total averages from 2017 to 2024 depicted in Figures 6.1.1–6.2.2. Additionally, the line graphs provide discrete differences among the race or ethnicity groups. The EOCEP pattern in Chapter 5 did not show a similar behavior pattern where ENG II performance continued to higher than ALG before and after the pre- and post-pandemic. See my report examining the achievement gaps among the three student groups depicted in this report.

*These averages were adjusted for COVID-19 pandemic. Not adjusted for COVID-19 means counting performance data for school years ending in 2020 and 2021 when available. Adjusted for the COVID-19 pandemic means not counting performance data for school years ending in 2020 and 2021when available.

6.1 Elementary School: Average Performance Distribution by Race/Ethnicity: 2017–2024

The charts in Figures 6.1.1 and 6.1.2, depict the average performance of SCREADY. For example, Figure 6.1.1 contains the average summaries of performance from 2017 to 2024, adjusting for the pandemic. Note: To show the reader the behavior during pre- and post-pandemic the averages in the figures shown in Chapter 5 were not adjusted for the pandemic. The advantage of the line graphs are they provide a summary of performance year by year which show the overall changes in behavior patterns per year before and after the pandemic.

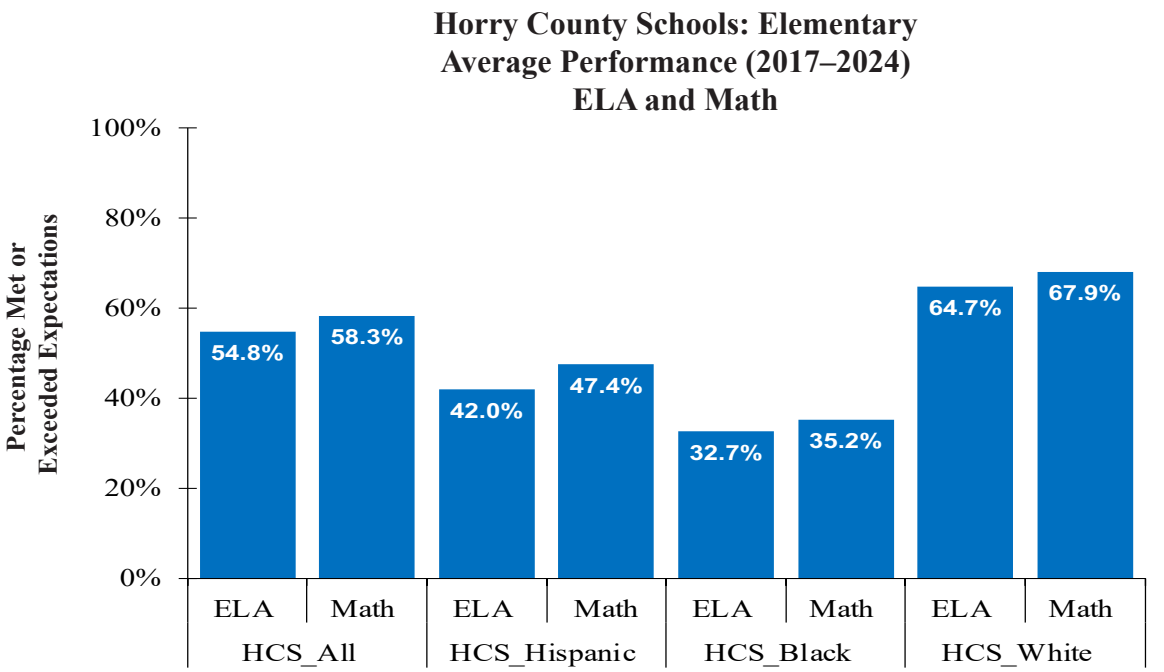


Figure 6.1.1 HCS: Elementary school—ELA and math average performance (2017–2024).

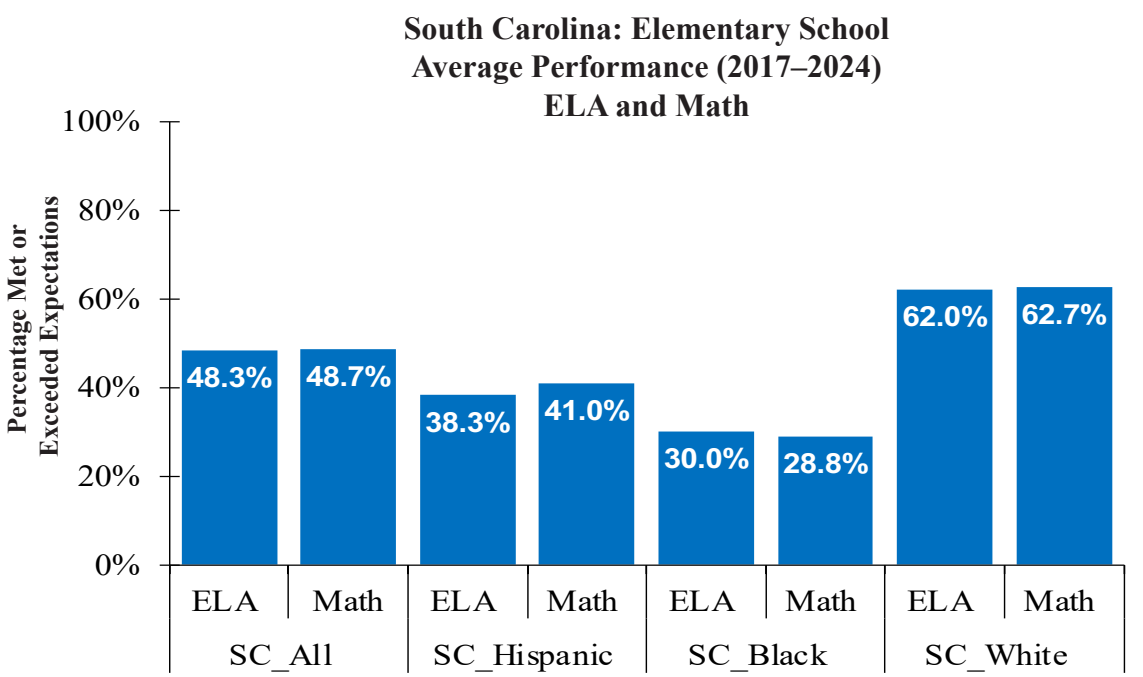


Figure 6.1.2 SC: Elementary school—ELA and math average performance (2017–2024).

6.2 Middle School: Average Performance by Race/Ethnicity: 2017–2023

The charts in Figures 6.2.1 and 6.2.2, depict the average performance of SCREADY for middle school students. For example, Figure 6.1.1 contains the average summaries of performance from 2017 to 2024, adjusting for the pandemic. Note: To show the reader the behavior patterns during pre- and post-pandemic the in the figures shown in Chapter 5 were not adjusted for the pandemic. As noted in Chapter 2, some groups such as Hispanic and Black showed large performances exceeding their pre-pandemic levels; however, the performance by these groups over the past seven years need improvements far beyond the pre-pandemic levels. With emphasis, see Figures 6.2.1 and 6.2.2.

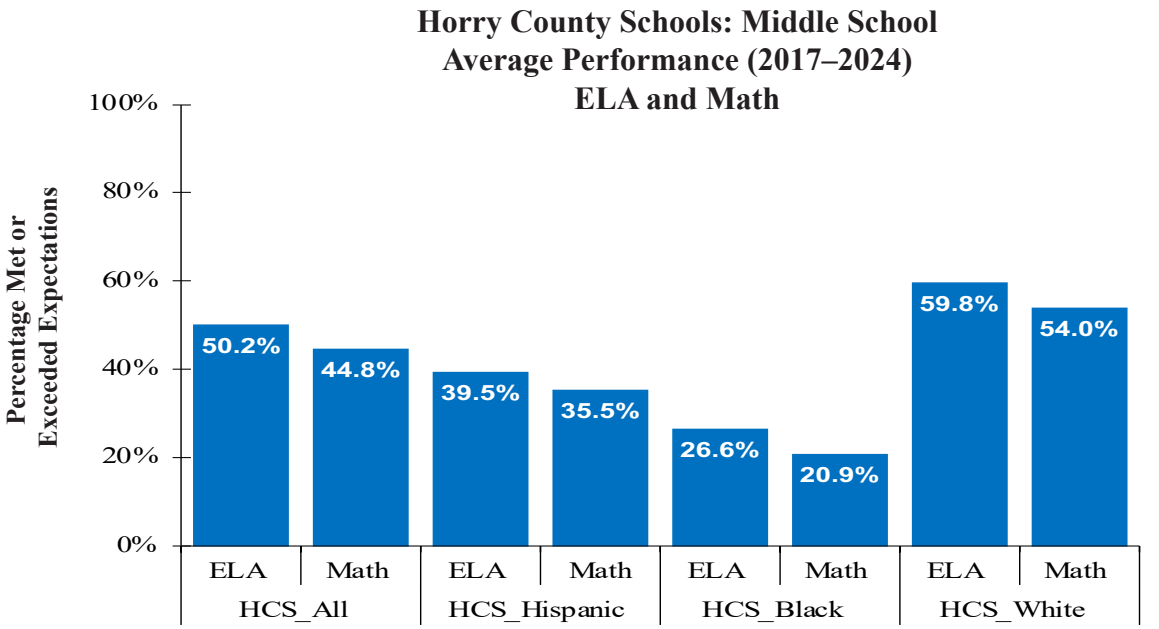


Figure 6.2.1 HCS: Middle school—ELA and math average performance (2017–2024).

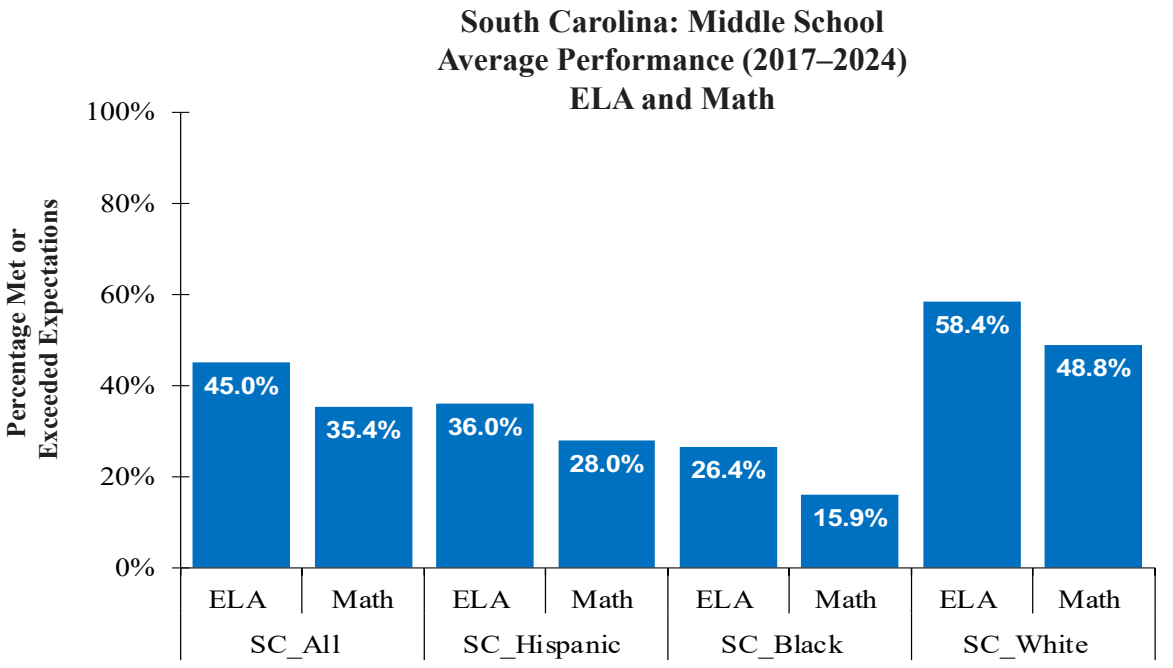


Figure 6.2.2 SC: Middle school—ELA and math average performance (2017–2024).

6.3 Chapter 5: Average Performance Distribution by Race/Ethnicity: 2017–2023, cont.

The graphs shown in Figures 7.3.1–7.2.2 show the test scores for two of EOCEP's HCS and SC for two of the four courses, namely ENG II and ALG, respectively. Although the charts in Figures 7.1.1, 7.1.2, 7.2.1, and 7.2.2 depict the performance by year from 2017 to 2024, the graphs in Figures 7.3.1 and 7.3.2 capture these trends in an average form. The advantage of the charts in this section allows the reader immediately to observe the performance for all students and race/ethnicity. Refer to table yet to be designed for percentages comparisons.

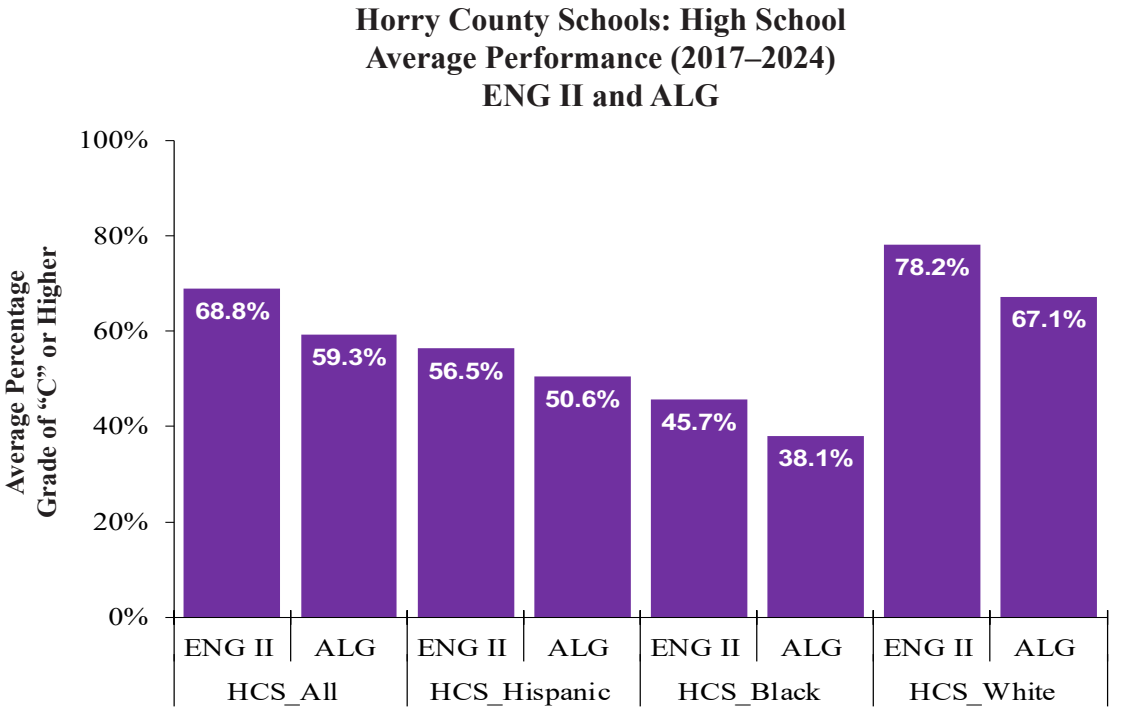


Figure 6.3.1 HCS: High school—ENG II and ALG average performance (2017–2024).

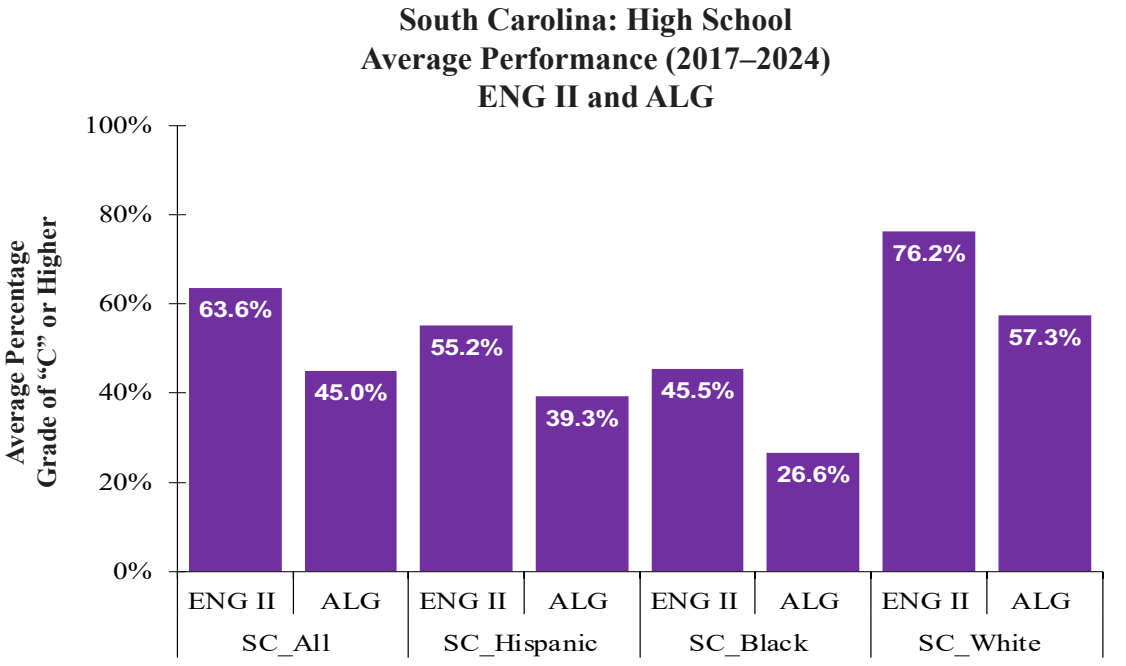


Figure 6.3.2 SC: high school— ENG II and ALG average performance (2017–2024).

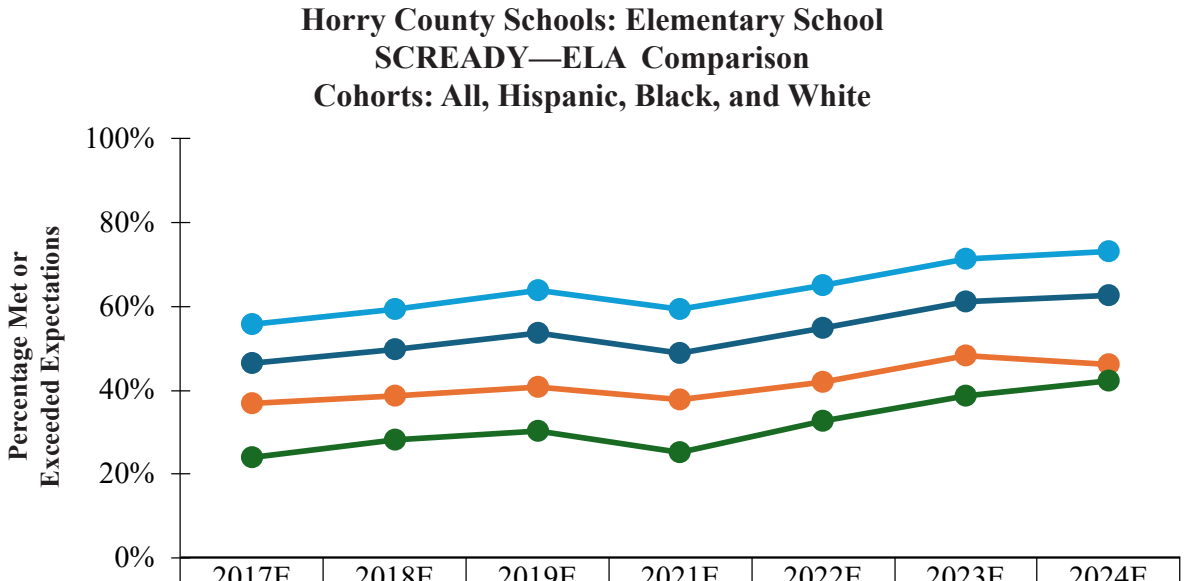
Chapter 7

SC READY: ELA and Math Performance Trending—All, Hispanic, Black, and White Students (2017–2024)

The graphs shown in this chapter depict the average summary of performance from 2017 to 2024 for South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Assessments (SC READY) foundational courses in English language arts (ELA) and Mathematics (Math). The entities depicted in this report are South Carolina (SC) and Horry County Schools (HCS). The averages shown in these graphs provide more than a snapshot of performance for a single year rather they illustrate performance over seven years. There are not data for school year ending in 2020; therefore, the school year 2020 is not included in these graphs because it does not exist. Furthermore, the school year ending in 2021 has also been excluded from these averages. To that end, the average in this chapter is slightly different from those shown in the appended notes attached to the line graphs in Chapters 3 and 5.

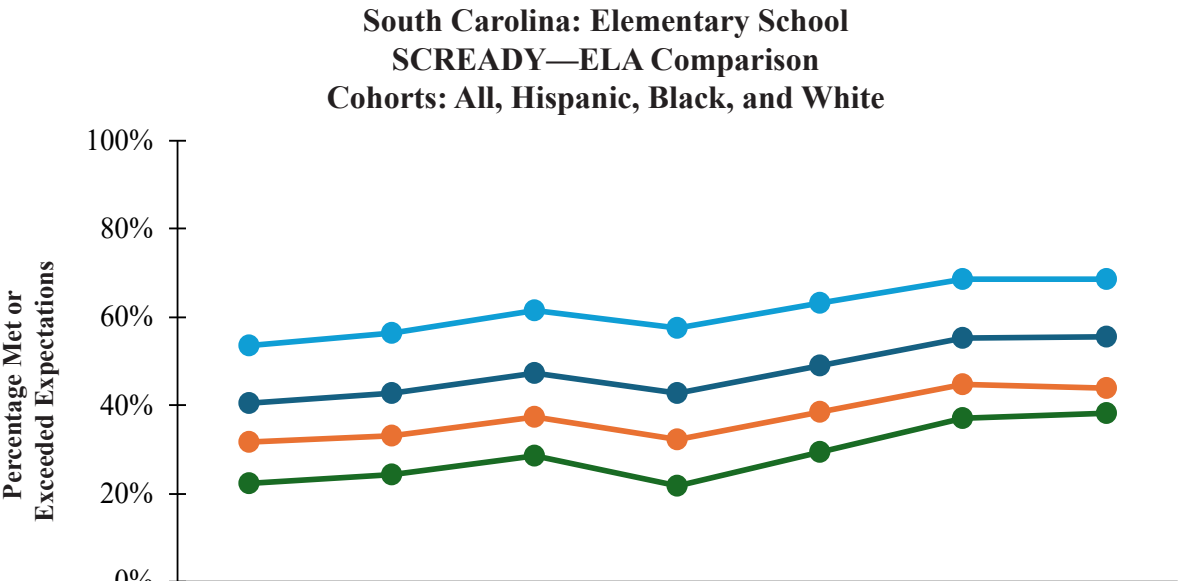
Therefore, the reader will see the behavior patterns associated with the charts in this chapter. For example, in Chapter 7, the line graphs show the yearly performance which are depicted as yearly averages whereas the column charts in Chapter 6 show the total averages from 2017 to 2024 depicted in Figures 6.1.1–6.2.2. Additionally, the line graphs provide discrete differences among the race or ethnicity groups. See my report examining the achievement gaps among the three student groups depicted in this report.

7.1 Elementary School: English Language Arts Trending—All, Hispanic, Black and White



	2017E	2018E	2019E	2021E	2022E	2023E	2024E
HCS_ELA (All)	46.6%	49.9%	53.5%	48.9%	55.0%	61.1%	62.7%
HCS_ELA (Hispanic)	36.8%	38.6%	40.7%	37.9%	41.9%	48.2%	46.1%
HCS_ELA (Black)	24.0%	28.1%	30.2%	25.2%	32.8%	38.8%	42.1%
HCS_ELA (White)	55.7%	59.3%	63.8%	59.4%	65.1%	71.2%	73.3%

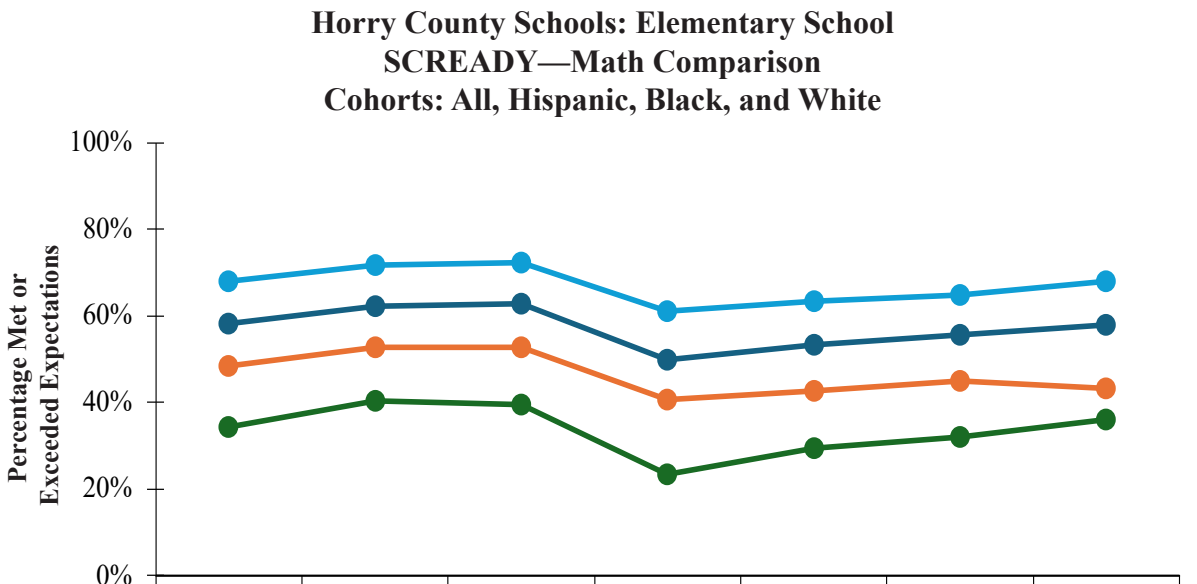
Figure 7.1.1 HCS: Elementary school—ELA comparative analysis (2017–2024).



	2017E	2018E	2019E	2021E	2022E	2023E	2024E
SC_ELA (All)	40.4%	42.7%	47.3%	42.8%	48.9%	55.2%	55.5%
SC_ELA (Hispanic)	31.8%	33.1%	37.3%	32.2%	38.6%	44.8%	43.9%
SC_ELA (Black)	22.4%	24.3%	28.5%	21.7%	29.5%	37.0%	38.3%
SC_ELA (White)	53.7%	56.3%	61.4%	57.4%	63.2%	68.6%	68.7%

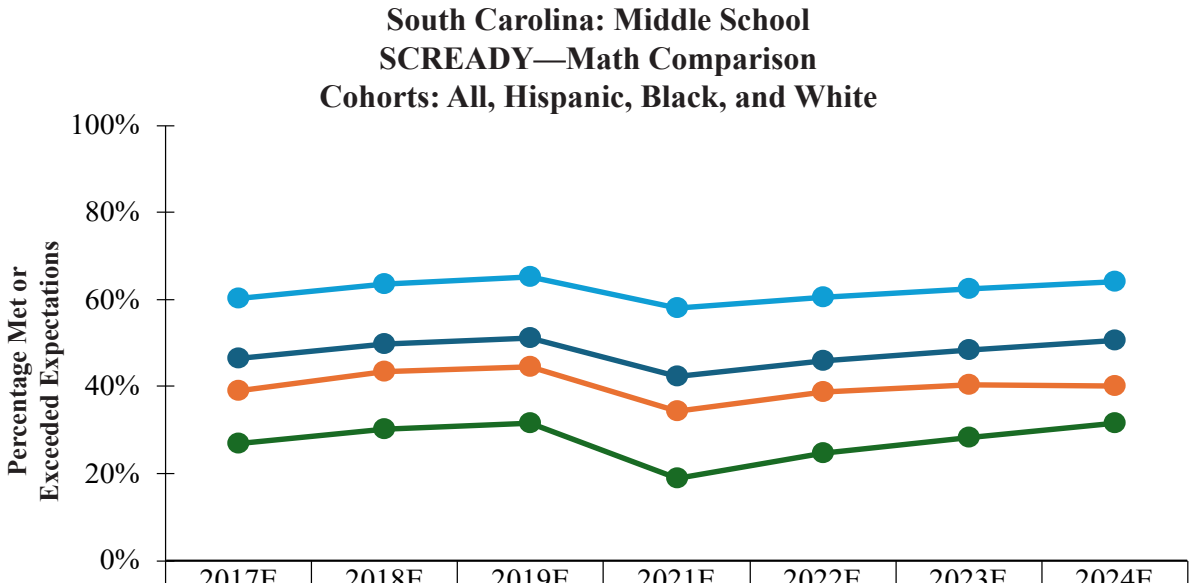
Figure 7.1.2 SC: Elementary school—ELA comparative analysis (2017–2024).

7.2 Elementary School: Mathematics Trending—All, Hispanic, Black and White



	2017E	2018E	2019E	2021E	2022E	2023E	2024E
HCS_Math (All)	58.2%	62.3%	62.7%	49.9%	53.3%	55.5%	57.8%
HCS_Math (Hispanic)	48.4%	52.7%	52.6%	40.6%	42.6%	45.0%	43.1%
HCS_Math (Black)	34.3%	40.3%	39.5%	23.3%	29.4%	31.9%	36.0%
HCS_Math (White)	67.8%	71.6%	72.2%	61.0%	63.2%	64.8%	67.8%

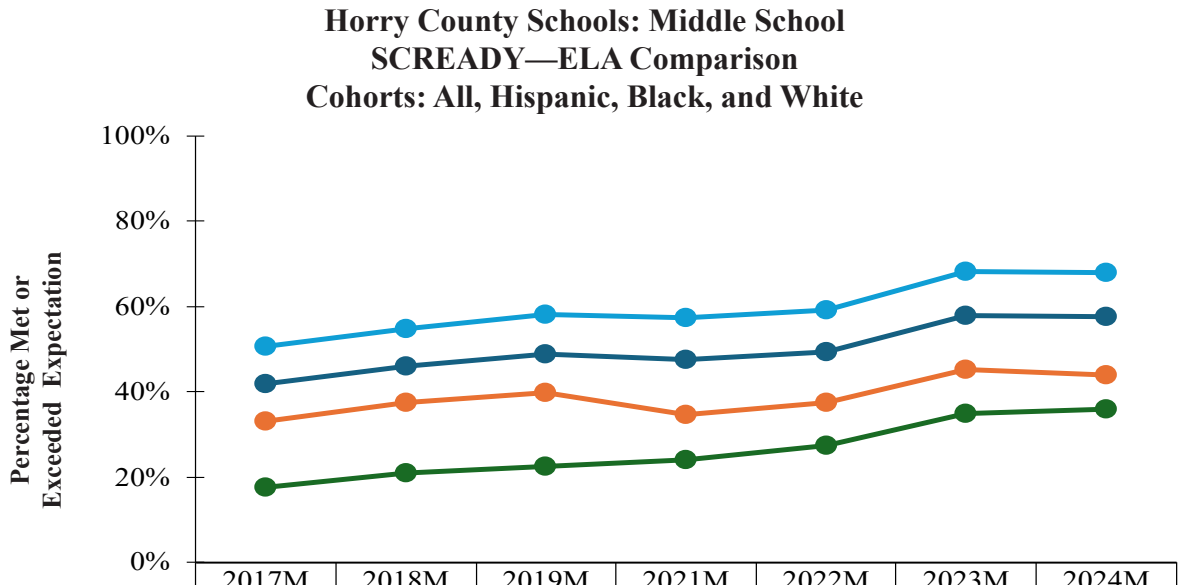
Figure 7.2.1 HCS: Elementary school—math comparative analysis (2017–2024).



	2017E	2018E	2019E	2021E	2022E	2023E	2024E
SC_Math (All)	46.3%	49.7%	51.2%	42.3%	45.9%	48.4%	50.4%
SC_Math (Hispanic)	39.1%	43.4%	44.5%	34.3%	38.6%	40.4%	40.2%
SC_Math (Black)	26.9%	30.1%	31.5%	18.8%	24.7%	28.3%	31.6%
SC_Math (White)	60.2%	63.6%	65.1%	58.0%	60.5%	62.4%	64.2%

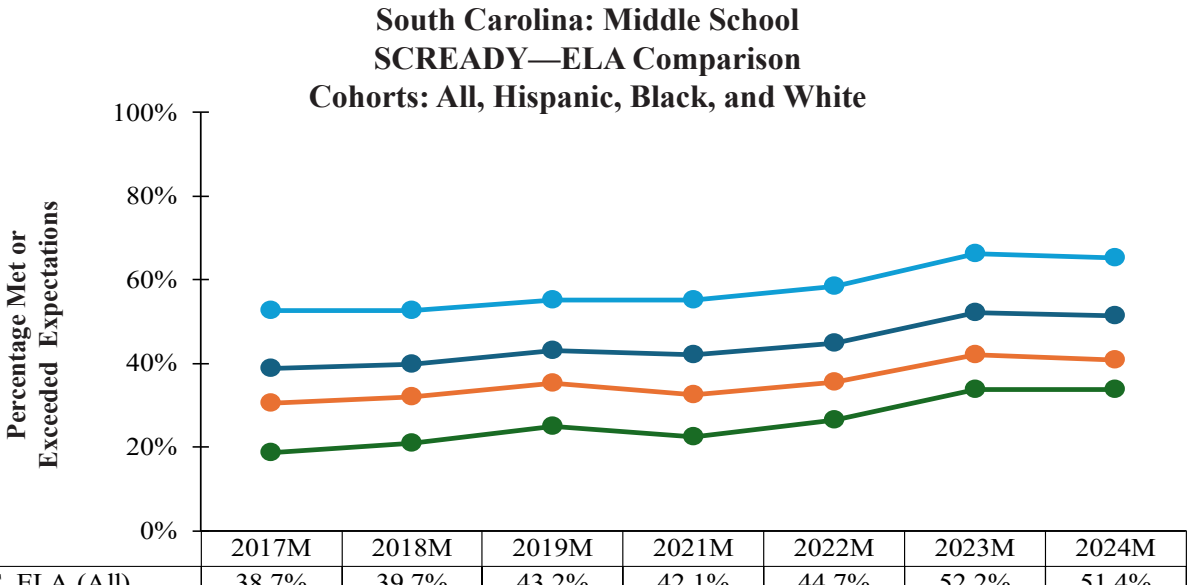
Figure 7.2.2 SC: Elementary school—math comparative analysis (2017–2024).

7.3 Middle School: English Language Arts Trending—All, Hispanic, Black and White



	2017M	2018M	2019M	2021M	2022M	2023M	2024M
HCS_ELA (All)	42.0%	46.0%	48.7%	47.5%	49.5%	57.7%	57.5%
HCS_ELA (Hispanic)	33.1%	37.4%	39.9%	34.7%	37.4%	45.2%	44.0%
HCS_ELA (Black)	17.6%	21.0%	22.6%	24.0%	27.4%	35.0%	35.8%
HCS_ELA (White)	50.6%	54.9%	58.2%	57.4%	59.2%	68.1%	67.9%

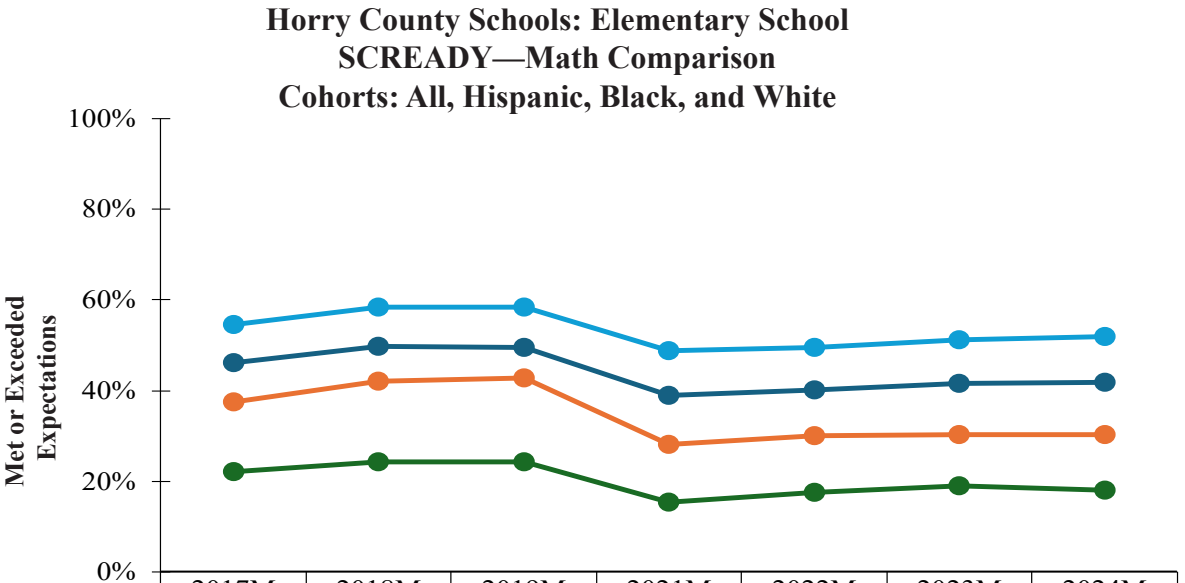
Figure 7.3.1 HCS: Middle school—ELA comparative analysis (2017–2024).



	2017M	2018M	2019M	2021M	2022M	2023M	2024M
SC_ELA (All)	38.7%	39.7%	43.2%	42.1%	44.7%	52.2%	51.4%
SC_ELA (Hispanic)	30.5%	31.9%	35.3%	32.6%	35.6%	42.2%	40.7%
SC_ELA (Black)	18.6%	20.9%	24.8%	22.4%	26.4%	33.8%	33.8%
SC_ELA (White)	52.7%	52.6%	55.2%	55.3%	58.5%	66.2%	65.1%

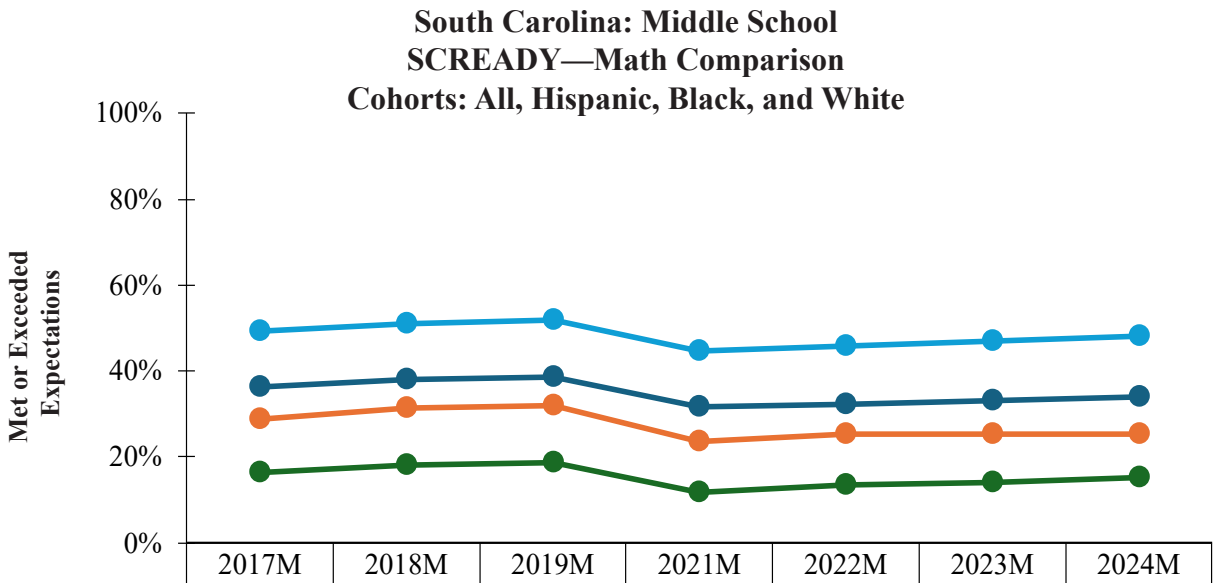
Figure 7.3.2 SC: Middle school—ELA comparative analysis (2017–2024).

7.4 Middle School: Mathematics Trending—All, Hispanic, Black and White, cont.



	2017M	2018M	2019M	2021M	2022M	2023M	2024M
HCS_Math (All)	46.2%	49.8%	49.5%	39.0%	40.1%	41.5%	41.8%
HCS_Math (Hispanic)	37.4%	42.1%	42.8%	28.1%	30.1%	30.3%	30.2%
HCS_Math (Black)	22.1%	24.4%	24.3%	15.4%	17.6%	18.9%	18.0%
HCS_Math (White)	54.6%	58.5%	58.4%	48.8%	49.5%	51.2%	51.9%

Figure 7.4.1 HCS: Middle school—math comparative analysis (2017–2024).



	2017M	2018M	2019M	2021M	2022M	2023M	2024M
SC_Math (All)	36.4%	38.0%	38.6%	31.7%	32.3%	33.1%	34.1%
SC_Math (Hispanic)	28.7%	31.3%	32.1%	23.6%	25.3%	25.2%	25.3%
SC_Math (Black)	16.5%	18.0%	18.7%	11.7%	13.4%	14.0%	15.1%
SC_Math (White)	49.2%	51.0%	51.8%	44.7%	45.8%	46.9%	48.1%

Figure 7.4.2 SC: Middle school—math comparative analysis (2017–2024).

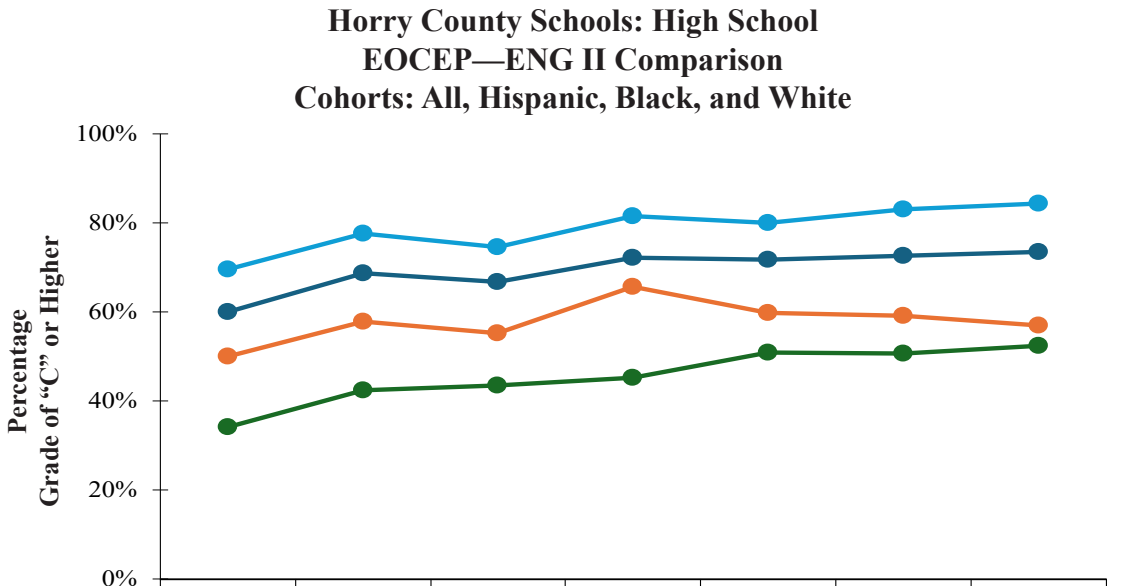
Chapter 8

EOCEP: ENG II and ALG Performance Trending—All, Hispanic, Black, and White Students (2017–2024)

The purpose of this chapter is to highlight the performance patterns and differences among the three largest groups of students, namely Hispanic, Black, and White. These graphs depict all public-school students in South Carolina (SC) and Horry County Schools (HCS). As can be seeing by all the line graphs in this chapter, the school year ending in 2021 indicates that there was an interruption in the learning process in 2020 that impacted all students. There were no test data for school year ending in 2020.

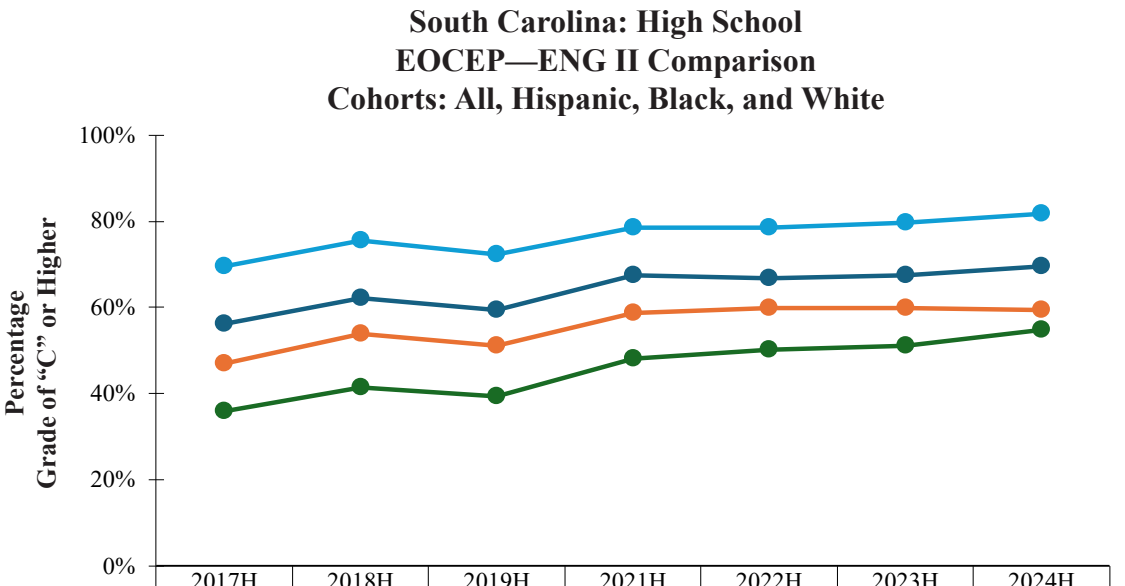
This interruption is consistent with school closure and other disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, almost all the line graphs show a robust recovery in the English language arts (ELA) measures and but not in math. None of the math students in neither ethnic nor racial group recovered completely in math for HCS students. The graphs in this chapter are based on the charts in Chapter 6. However, the charts in Chapter 6 do not include school years ending in 2020 and 2021 because to do so would not reflect the true performance from 2017 to 2024.For example, Figure 6.3.1 shows the average performance from 2017 to 2024, adjusted for COVID-19, whereas the line graph in Figure 8.1.1 which is the counterpart to Figure 8.1.1, depicts the pattern in performance by year from 2017 to 2024, including school year ending in 2021.

8.1 High School: ENG II Trending—All, Hispanic, Black and White



	2017H	2018H	2019H	2021H	2022H	2023H	2024H
HCS_ENG II (All)	60.0%	68.7%	66.7%	72.1%	71.6%	72.6%	73.4%
HCS_ENG II (Hispanic)	50.1%	57.8%	55.2%	65.6%	59.9%	59.1%	57.0%
HCS_ENG II (Black)	34.2%	42.5%	43.5%	45.2%	50.9%	50.6%	52.4%
HCS_ENG II (White)	69.6%	77.6%	74.6%	81.4%	80.0%	82.9%	84.3%

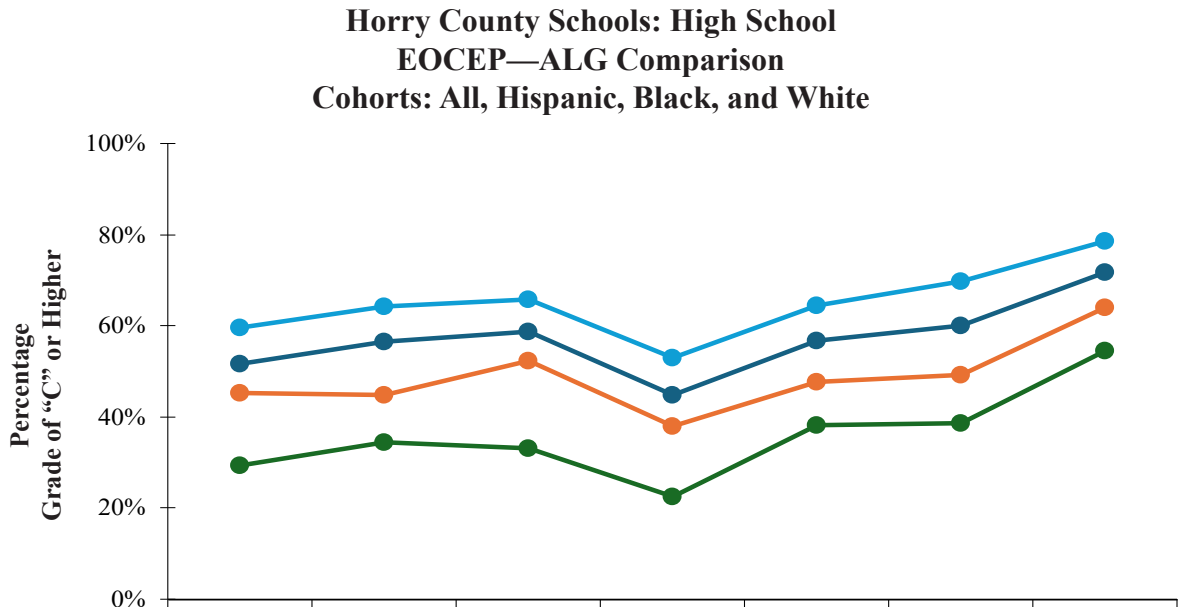
Figure 8.1.1 HCS: High school—ENG II comparative analysis (2017–2024).



	2017H	2018H	2019H	2021H	2022H	2023H	2024H
SC_ENG II (All)	56.2%	62.1%	59.3%	67.4%	66.8%	67.4%	69.6%
SC_ENG II (Hispanic)	46.9%	53.8%	51.1%	58.8%	60.0%	59.9%	59.4%
SC_ENG II (Black)	36.0%	41.5%	39.4%	48.0%	50.2%	51.1%	54.8%
SC_ENG II (White)	69.5%	75.4%	72.2%	78.4%	78.5%	79.6%	81.8%

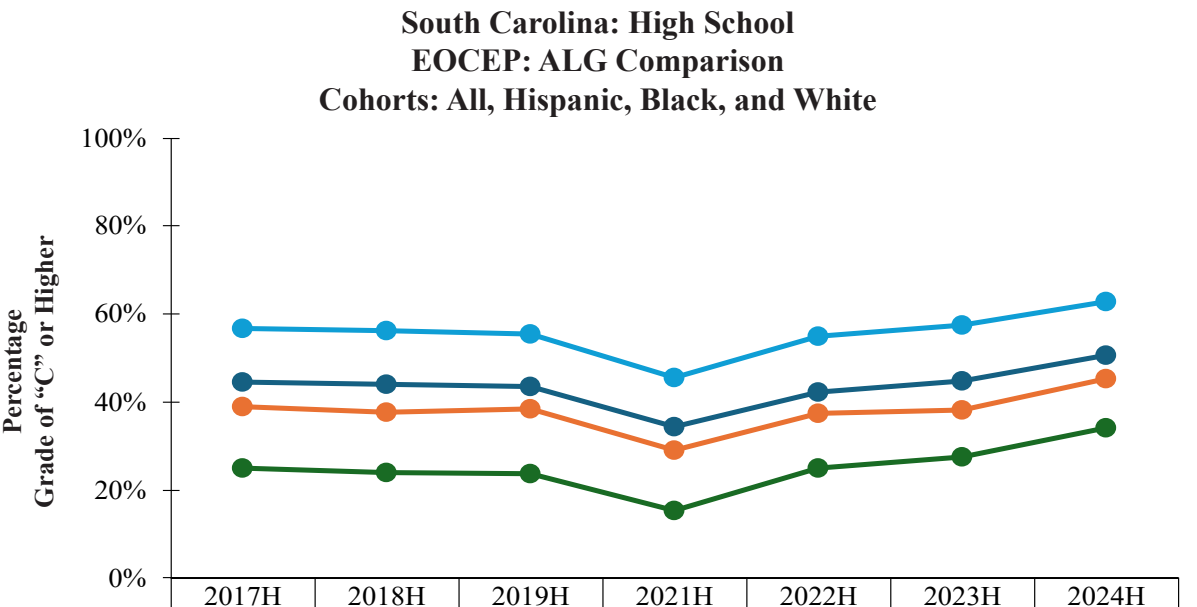
Figure 8.1.2 SC: High school—ENG II comparative analysis (2017–2024).

8.2 High School: Algebra Trending—All, Hispanic, Black and White



	2017H	2018H	2019H	2021H	2022H	2023H	2024H
HCS_ALG (All)	51.6%	56.6%	58.8%	44.9%	56.7%	60.0%	71.8%
HCS_ALG (Hispanic)	45.3%	44.8%	52.4%	38.0%	47.7%	49.3%	64.1%
HCS_ALG (Black)	29.4%	34.4%	33.1%	22.4%	38.3%	38.6%	54.5%
HCS_ALG (White)	59.7%	64.3%	65.7%	53.0%	64.6%	69.7%	78.5%

Figure 8.2.1 HCS: High school—ALG comparative analysis (2017–2024).



	2017H	2018H	2019H	2021H	2022H	2023H	2024H
SC_ALG (All)	44.6%	44.0%	43.5%	34.5%	42.3%	44.7%	50.7%
SC_ALG (Hispanic)	38.9%	37.6%	38.5%	29.1%	37.5%	38.1%	45.4%
SC_ALG (Black)	25.1%	24.1%	23.8%	15.3%	25.0%	27.6%	34.1%
SC_ALG (White)	56.8%	56.2%	55.6%	45.6%	55.0%	57.6%	62.8%

Figure 8.2.2 SC: High school—ALG comparative analysis (2017–2024).

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About WCS

Wilson Consulting Services, LLC is a limited liability company that provides consulting in measurement processes, statistical analyses, mathematics education, and family history research.

Our core values are integrity, quality, and customer satisfaction.

Our mission is to provide each client with the most effective and ethical service possible, and to preserve and promote evidence-based decision making for our clients.

The Author and Founder/CEO
David C. Wilson

David C. Wilson is an electrical/electronics engineer and adjunct math professor—now retired. He founded Wilson Consulting Services, LLC. He is a local and family history researcher, author, and self-publisher.

Wilson is a five-generation Horry County native. He attended the following former segregated public schools in Horry County, South Carolina: Todd Swamp Colored School, Poplar Elementary School, and Chestnut Consolidated High School.

Wilson earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in electrical engineering from the City College of New York and Manhattan University (formerly Manhattan College), respectively.

Wilson worked in the engineering areas of product development, quality, and reliability for more than 35 years with multinational corporations such as General Electric, Honeywell, and IBM. He statistics and math as an adjunct professor more than 25 years at schools such as Dutchess Community College, Quinnipiac University, and Horry County Technical College. He earned numerous professional and community service awards and citations for his professional work and volunteer activities.

David C. Wilson
CEO / Author

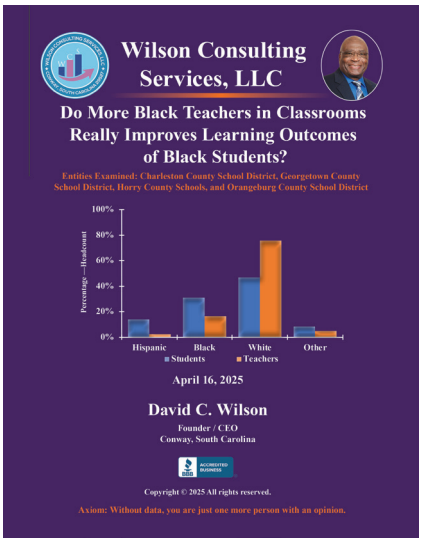
He and his wife, Beverly, have two sons, six grandchildren, and one greatgrandchild. They reside in Conway, South Carolina.

Appendix—Related Reports

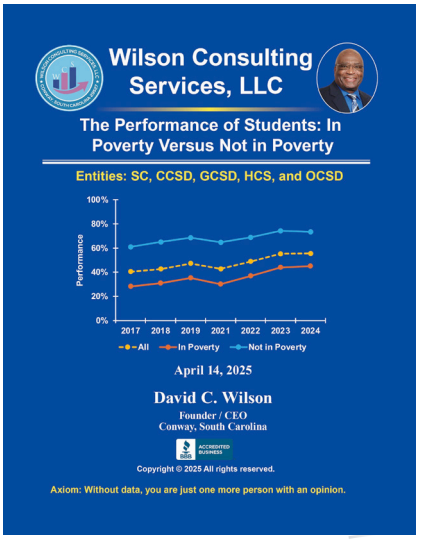
This page provides links to reports published on April 16, 2025, which can be accessed via images or report numbers. The data for these reports was sourced from the South Carolina Department of Education, Office of Research and Data Analysis, and was used to create various charts, graphs, and tables across seven reports, including this report.

Should you have a problem accessing the reports please click on or cut and paste the link in your browser:

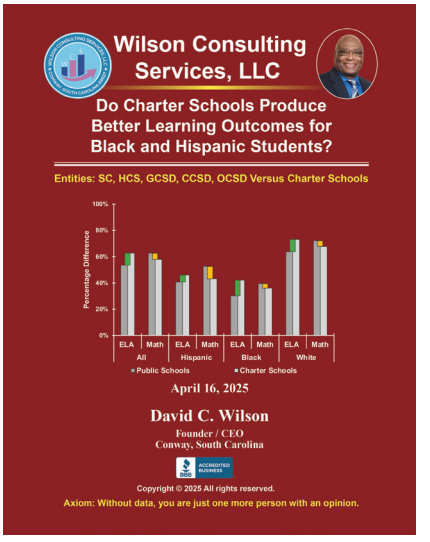
Report 1: https://wilsonconsultingservices.net/wcs_blackteachers.pdf
Report 2: https://wilsonconsultingservices.net/wcs_studentpoverty.pdf
Report 3: https://wilsonconsultingservices.net/wcs_charterschools.pdf
Report 4: https://wilsonconsultingservices.net/wcs_ccsdcovid.pdf
Report 5: https://wilsonconsultingservices.net/wcs_gcsdcovid.pdf
Report 6: https://wilsonconsultingservices.net/wcs_hcscovid.pdf
Report 7: https://wilsonconsultingservices.net/wcs_ocsdcovid.pdf



Report 1



Report 2



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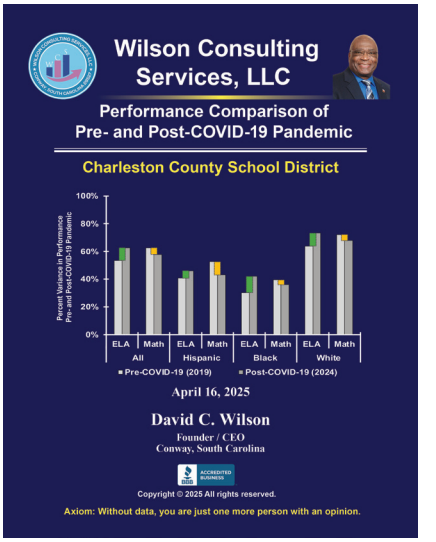

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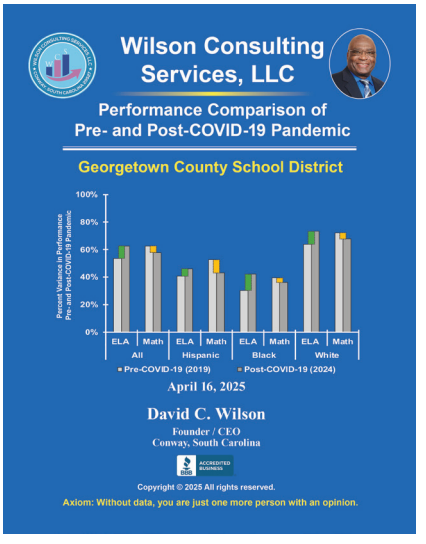
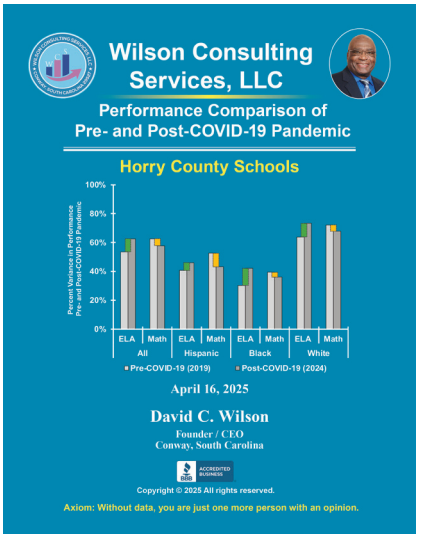
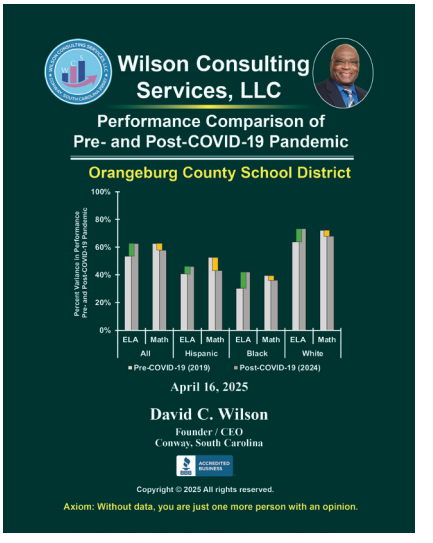


Report 5



Report 6



Report 7

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