



Helping students find Connection, Compassion & Character
P.O. BOX 300 • 400 FLEMINGTON DRIVE • LAKE WACCAMAW, NORTH CAROLINA

October 16, 2023

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Legislation (G.S. §115C-83.15) passed during the 2013 long session of the North Carolina General Assembly provides parents with an additional measure of school performance in the form of School Performance Grades. Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, the annual North Carolina School Report Cards began assigning a letter grade of A, B, C, D, or F for each school in the state.

The School Performance Grades are based 80 percent on our school's achievement score (student proficiency) and 20 percent on students' academic growth. At Thomas Academy, our achievement score for the 2022-2023 school year is based on how well our students performed on Grades 6-8 Mathematics (5%) and English Language Arts/Reading (8.3%). Due to cohort size specifications from the Department of Public Instruction, our scores in 8th grade Science (56%), Math 1(38%), Biology (13%), English II (64%) and Math 3 (53%) did not count in the grade calculations. Additionally, our graduation rate went from 70% in 2021-2022 to 85% in 2022-2023.

Thomas Academy of Lake Waccamaw has been assigned a School Performance Grade of D for the 2022-2023 school year. As an alternative school, we received a designation of progressing, indicating student achievement growth. It is important to remember that just as no one single score or grade tells the whole story of a student, neither does it tell you everything about the performance of a school or the opportunities our school provides. Thomas Academy will continue to use data-driven instruction and mastery teaching to ensure students are progressing at their achievement level.

One of our top priorities for 2023-2024 is to improve our School Performance Grade. There are several key programs we have in place to help improve student performance. These include:

- Tier 2 and Tier 3 MTSS support provided by classroom teachers with the direction of the Administration, EC Department, and Academic Coach.
- An increase in family involvement nights that offer parents with topics of interest based on parent surveys.

- Implementation of IXL which allows students to practice foundational skills they have yet to master.
- Increased emphasis through the Teaching Family Model on using a strength-based behavioral intervention system to limit classroom behavior disruptions and increase instructional time.

We hope you will closely follow your student's academic progress and work with his or her teachers to help ensure they stay on track academically. Working together as a team, we can improve not only how well our students are performing individually, but how our school is performing as a whole. There is nothing more important to administrators and teachers at Thomas Academy than ensuring students are ready for the next step in their academic careers. I look forward to working with you to make sure your student is on track for success.

We have developed an improvement plan that specifically addresses how the school will improve both the school performance grade and school growth score. Thomas Academy's current school improvement plan can be found on <https://www.indistar.org/>. You can view the information using login GUESTS17733 and Password GUESTS17733.

Parents and Guardians are also welcome to attend the School Improvement Team meetings that happen the first Monday of each month. Please feel free to contact me at cathy.gantz@thomasacademync.org for more information about the SIT meetings or if you are interested in getting more involved with Thomas Academy activities.

Sincerely,

Dr. Cathy Gantz

Dr. Cathy Gantz
Principal