



News Release

December 13, 2018

Contact: Sharon Kebschull Barrett, Sharon.Barrett@publicimpact.com; 919.590.4154

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Opportunity Culture Schools in N.C. Outpace State on Student Growth, Public Impact Announces

CHAPEL HILL, N.C.— In 2017–18, while only 27 percent of non-Opportunity Culture schools in North Carolina exceeded student learning growth targets, nearly double that—53 percent—of Opportunity Culture schools exceeded growth, Public Impact announced.

Opportunity Culture schools in the state were also **far less likely to fall short of growth targets**—15 percent of schools versus 27 percent of non-Opportunity Culture schools. With about 80 schools currently, North Carolina is the state with the most schools so far implementing Opportunity Culture models to extend the reach of excellent teachers and their teams to more students, for more pay, within regular school budgets.

In Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Garinger High School posted the highest growth index of all high schools in the state, and fourth-highest overall. Garinger’s principal, Kelly Gwaltney, is in this year’s cohort of [Opportunity Culture Fellows](#).

The results are a testament to the importance of having the right instructional leadership roles—and the hard work of multi-classroom leaders, team teachers, principals, reach associates, and other colleagues who provide support, Public Impact said.

“Opportunity Culture schools are disrupting the notion that teachers and students are on a fixed bell curve. Opportunity Culture schools create an upward escalator for teacher and student success,” said Bryan C. Hassel, Public Impact co-president and co-founder of the Opportunity Culture initiative.

These results excluded any school where it was known that Opportunity Culture was not implemented in a tested grade or subject.

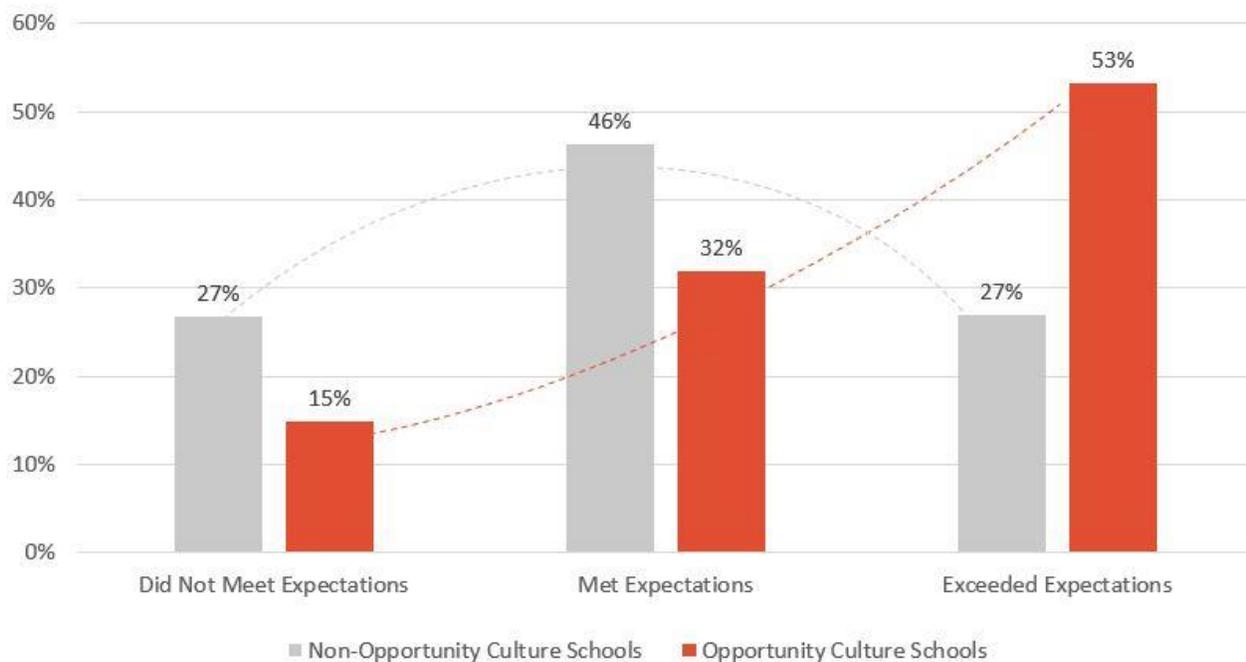
The results follow [research](#) released early this year showing that students on teaching teams led by Opportunity Culture multi-classroom leaders showed sizeable academic gains. In that study from the American Institutes for Research and the Brookings Institution released through the CALDER Center, team teachers were, on average, at the 50th percentile in the student learning gains they produced before joining a team led by a multi-classroom leader. After joining the teams, they **produced learning gains equivalent to those of teachers in the top quartile in math and nearly that in reading**.

Additional third-party research is planned. Meanwhile, in 2019 Public Impact will begin releasing free and low-cost support to boost reading results further, based on the science of reading.

Opportunity Culture districts in North Carolina span urban to suburban to rural, very large to small:

- [Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and Project L.I.F.T.:](#) Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools quickly [decided](#) to scale up Opportunity Culture districtwide after launching it in one school zone in 2013–14.
- [Edgecombe County Public Schools:](#) This rural North Carolina district began using Opportunity Culture models in 2017–18, and will have Opportunity Culture in all district schools by 2019–20.

- [Vance County Schools](#): This rural district collaborates with neighboring Edgecombe to improve the region, where many teaching positions had previously gone unfilled.
- [Cabarrus County Schools](#): 100 percent of this suburban district’s schools that implemented Opportunity Culture in a tested grade or subject achieved high growth last year.
- [Guilford County Schools](#): Guilford, not included in these results, just began using Opportunity Culture this year in seven schools and has more planned.



Results exclude any school where it was known that Opportunity Culture was not implemented in a tested grade or subject

###

About Public Impact

Public Impact’s mission is to improve education dramatically for all students, especially low-income students, students of color, and other students whose needs historically have not been well met. We are a team of professionals from many backgrounds, including former teachers. We are researchers, thought leaders, tool-builders, and on-the-ground consultants who work with leading education reformers.

Learn more about an Opportunity Culture on the OpportunityCulture.org website, which provides [tools](#)—all free—to build an Opportunity Culture, [videos of teachers and principals](#), and related [resources](#). Funding for development of resources to help schools design and implement Opportunity Culture models and support teachers taking on new roles has been provided by [national foundations](#).

Hear directly from educators who have worked in Opportunity Culture schools in [columns](#) published on national and state news sites.

For more information, please visit www.OpportunityCulture.org. To arrange an interview with Public Impact, contact Sharon Keschull Barrett at Sharon.Barrett@publicimpact.com; 919.590.4154.