

LEARNS

Accountability

Work Group Kick

Off

Work Group Members

ADE Facilitator(s): Hope Worsham and Tiffani Grayer	
Adam Koehler , Cabot School District	Christopher Barnes , Conway School District
Alicia Thompson , Clinton School District	Dr. Jeff Flanigan , Springdale School District
April Rike , Little Rock School District	Dr. Taryn Echols , Hot Springs School District
April Rye Shy , Parent	Janet Caldwell , Sheridan School Board
Bethany Ratermann , LISA Academy	Kelli Dougan , Fayetteville School District
Bridget Buckley , Mena School District	Lesley Nelms , Hamburg School District
Carrie Comstock Gay , Eureka Springs School District	Maribel Childress , Gravette School District
	Susanna Post , Fort Smith School District

Meeting Norms

Prior to Meeting

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- Members review all materials and come prepared to share feedback.

During Meeting

- Mute yourself when not speaking.
- Keep feedback centered on topic at hand.
- Stay engaged (e.g., actively participate and use the chat function).
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FOIA

Legislative Intent:

To ensure that public business is performed in an open and public manner so that the electors shall be advised of the performance of public officials and of the decisions that are reached in public activity and in making public policy

FOIA

Who is subject to FOIA?

- All government entities
- Private entities that receive public funds and are intertwined with government activities

FOIA - Public Records

Definitions:

- Writings, sounds, electronic info, or videos that (a) are kept and (b) constitute a record of performance or lack of performance of official functions

LEARNS Act

LEARNS stands for Literacy, Empowerment, Accountability, Readiness, Networking, and Safety. On Jan. 11, 2023, Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders signed the LEARNS Executive Order, which calls for the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) to conduct an analysis of key aspects of the state's education system and produce corresponding reports.

On March 8, 2023, the LEARNS Act was signed into law, signaling the start of the largest overhaul of education in the state's history.

After completing these analyses called for in the LEARNS Executive Order, ADE is eager to engage stakeholders as implementation of the LEARNS commitments begins.



LEARNS Overview

The LEARNS Act sets up Arkansas to improve the experience of families and children by outlining an ambitious agenda including but not limited to:

- Access to high-quality early childhood seats;
- Rigorous academics, including early literacy instruction aligned to the science of reading;
- Prepared teachers and leaders;
- Graduates ready for the workforce; and
- Parents empowered through school choice and accountability.

Arkansas's accountability system should reflect and reinforce the vision laid out in Arkansas's ambitious LEARNS agenda.



Current Accountability Formula

Academic achievement and growth on ELA and math assessments make up the majority of school ratings – 70% of high school grade span scores and 85% of elementary and middle school grade span scores.

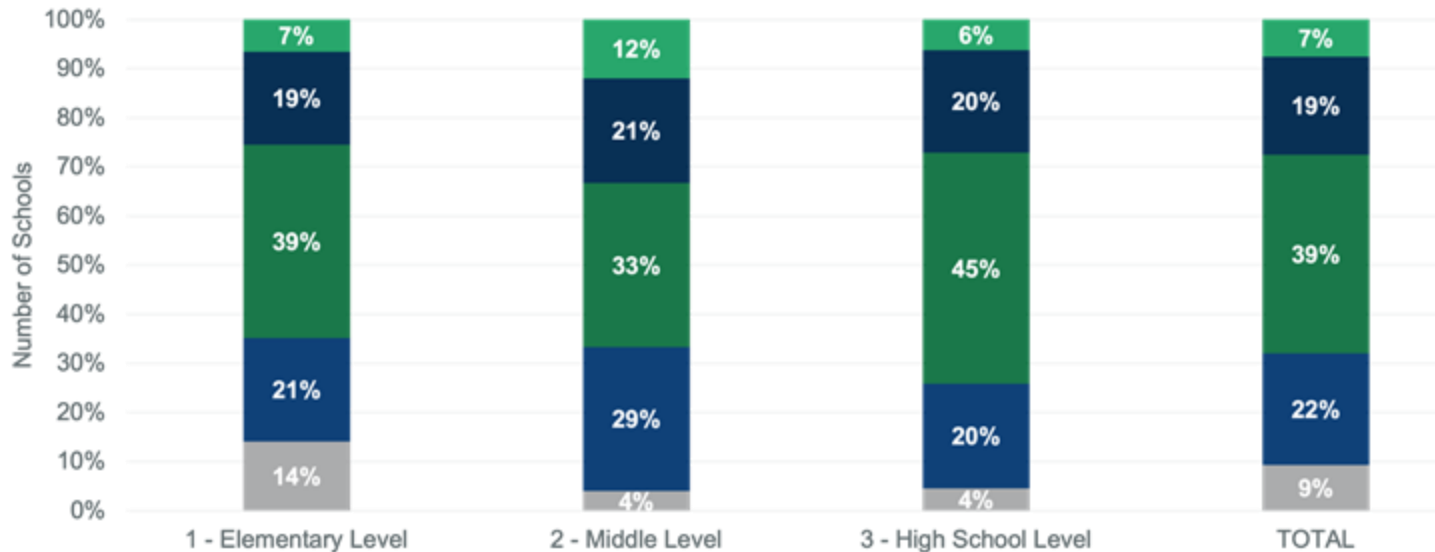
OVERALL LETTER GRADE/ESSA SCHOOL INDEX SCORE INDICATORS

Indicator/Weight	Elementary Grade Span	Middle School Grade Span	High School Grade Span	Key Components
Weighted Achievement Indicator	35%	35%	35%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELA Assessment Results • Math Assessment Results
Growth Indicator: Content & English Language Proficiency	50%	50%	35%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content (ELA & Math) combined proportionally with English Language Proficiency (ELP) to yield the value added scores.
Graduation Rate	-	-	15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-year cohort graduation rate (10%) • 5-year cohort graduation rate (5%)
School Quality & Student Success (SQSS) Indicator	15%	15%	15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 components at the K-8 level • 11 components at the 9-12 level

Recent Scores and Ratings

Across grade configurations, 80% of schools earn “B”, “C”, or “D” ratings with the largest percentage of schools (39%) earning a “C” rating.

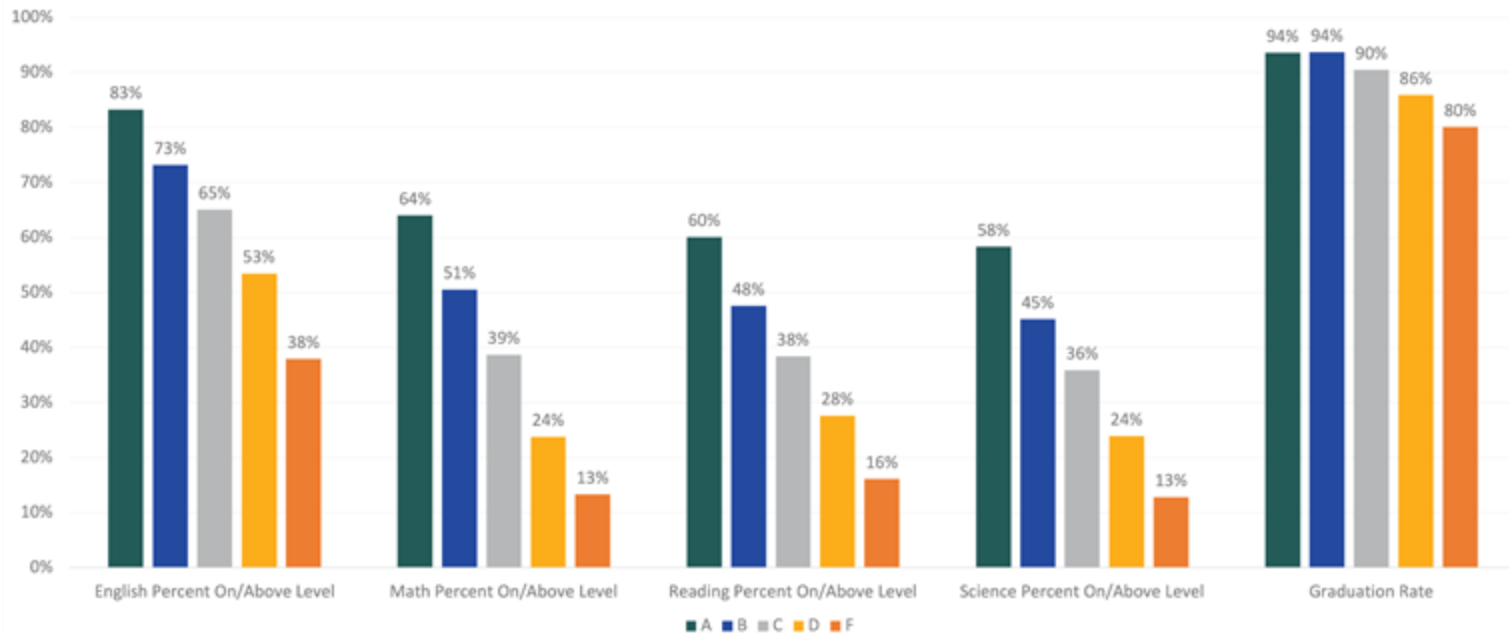
DISTRIBUTION OF LETTER GRADES BY SCHOOL TYPE (2021-2022)



What Earns an "A" Rating?

Although only 77 of ~1,050 (9%) Arkansas schools are "A"-rated, students at these schools excel: at least 10% more of students at top rated schools are meeting/exceeding expectations compared to peers at "B" rated schools.

Key data points in schools with an "A" rating from the 2021-2022 school year, include the following:



LEARNS Alignment Timeline

Build the Framework

Spring 2023 – Fall 2023

- **Launch review of the accountability system** – evaluate the existing system and engage stakeholders to get input on opportunities for refinement through an ADE Work Group.
- **Hold initial engagements** – convene the ADE Work Group and engage families, educators, stakeholders, and the broader community around the draft framework for the future of the accountability system.
- **Publish framework** – engage stakeholders on the draft proposal before bringing to the State Board of Education (SBE) in December 2023.

Support the Transition

Spring 2024 – Fall 2024

- **Administer the ATLAS** – begin statewide administration in Spring 2024.*
- **Review ATLAS results** – launch a process for assessment modeling and standard setting and vet policy shifts that incorporate ATLAS and the accountability framework with Arkansas stakeholders.
- **Facilitate the transition to updated A-F ratings** – bring policy shifts to the SBE, develop tools to support districts and schools with the transition, and plan for needed changes to report cards.

*This will necessitate a delay in 2023-24 score and ratings release.

Establish a new Baseline

Beginning Spring 2025

- **Implement recommended revisions in the A-F ratings** – calculate and publish 2023-2024 results using the updated accountability formula and ATLAS results by April 15, 2025 and align supports across ADE to the expectations set and measured in the updated formula.
- **Resume annual ratings release in the fall** – publish 2024-2025 reports and ratings on the typical fall cadence beginning Fall 2025.



Timeline: Building the Framework

The LEARNS Executive Order (EO) report on Parental Empowerment for accountability outlined a process for reviewing the accountability system beginning with building a framework during Spring, Summer, and Fall 2023. .

Timeframe	Phase 1: Build the Framework	Key ADE Activities to Build the Framework
Spring 2023	Launch Review of the Accountability System	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate the existing accountability system & engage stakeholders to get input on opportunities for refinement.• Identify members of an ADE Work Group to review feedback and develop a draft framework for the future of the accountability system, aligned to the LEARNS Act and grounded in stakeholder input.
Summer 2023	Hold Initial Engagements Draft a Framework for the Future of Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Convene the ADE Work Group.• Engage families, educators, stakeholders, and the broader community around the draft framework for the future of the accountability system.
Fall 2023	Publish Framework (by Dec 2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue engaging stakeholders on the draft proposal for the future of the accountability system.• Update and finalize the framework for the future of the accountability system based on stakeholder/public feedback.

Work Group Purpose

The Arkansas Department of Education is convening work groups around key areas of LEARNS for external stakeholders to **provide ideas, expertise, and feedback to ADE as they develop rules and policies.**

- School Safety
- Early Learning
- Parental Empowerment
- Teaching and Learning
- Educator Workforce
- Career Readiness



Accountability Work Group Charge

This Work Group is focused on accountability policy.

The Work Group will:

- Review public feedback through the summer and fall engagements to understand stakeholders' perceptions.
- Discuss recommendations for an accountability framework, to guide ADE & State Board of Education (SBE) policy shifts to establish a new baseline of scores in 2024-2025.

Engagement from this group and other stakeholders is essential to ensure that the policy on accountability is representative of the perspectives of all part of the state's measurement system.

Scope and Sequence

This group will tentatively meet five times and discuss the following topics in order to accomplish its goals.

	Proposed Date	Key Topics
1	July 13, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Objectives and structures for the Work Group• Background/Current state
2	August 22, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• OIE listening sessions and public survey• Student growth• Reporting
3	September 19, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SQSS• Strength of Diploma
4	October 17, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overall formula• Rewards• Interventions and Levels of Support
	November 7, 2023	If needed for final review of framework

Adjustments may be made at a later date based on the pace and timing of work group meetings.



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Next Steps

- ADE (Hope Worsham) will send draft materials and pre-work in advance of next meeting
- Work group members review background materials
 - [LEARNS Executive Order Report on Accountability](#)
 - Additional resources regarding accountability are available [here](#)