

## How Are Letter Grades Earned?

Stakeholders requested Arkansas align all accountability systems. The Arkansas Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan (federal) was approved January 16, 2018. Act 744 of 2017 aligned the state accountability systems with the federal requirements and permitted the use of the ESSA School Index score as the universal score for accountability.

### ***Steps for Assigning Letter Grades Earned***

The ESSA School Index score and stakeholder recommended rating scale are used to determine the letter grades for schools. The following steps are utilized to determine letter grades or school ratings:

1. First each school is assigned to a grade span based on the grades the school serves - elementary, middle or high school.  
[https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/20201214170240\\_Grade\\_Ranges\\_and\\_Ratings\\_10\\_7\\_2020.pdf](https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/20201214170240_Grade_Ranges_and_Ratings_10_7_2020.pdf)
2. Then a schools' overall ESSA School Index score is calculated by determining the school's weighted achievement score, value added growth score, graduation rate, and school quality and student success score.  
[https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/20201126143234\\_What\\_is\\_the\\_ESSA\\_School\\_Index.pdf](https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/20201126143234_What_is_the_ESSA_School_Index.pdf). The scores are multiplied by the following weights:

		Weight of Indicator within Index for Grade Spans Elementary & Middle		Weight of Indicator within Index for Grade Span High School
Weighted Achievement Indicator		35%	Weighted Achievement and Academic Growth Indicators	70% total with Weighted Achievement accounting for half (35%) and Growth Score accounting for half (35%)
Growth Indicator Academic Growth and English Language Progress		50%		
Graduation Rate Indicator 4-Year Adjusted Cohort Rate 5-Year Adjusted Cohort Rate		NA	Graduation Rate Indicator 4-Year Adjusted Cohort Rate 5-Year Adjusted Cohort Rate	15% total 4-Yr = 10% 5-Yr = 5%
School Quality and Student Success Indicator		15%	School Quality and Student Success Indicator	15%

3. Finally, the total score for each school will determine the school rating. The school ratings for each grade span are listed below:

Grade Span	Letter Grade	Cut Scores effective October 1, 2018
Elementary	A	79.26 <= Score
	B	72.17 - 79.25
	C	64.98 - 72.16
	D	58.09 - 64.97
	F	Score < 58.09
Middle	A	75.59 <= Score
	B	69.94 - 75.58
	C	63.73 - 69.93
	D	53.58 - 63.72
	F	Score < 53.58
High School	A	73.22 <= Score
	B	67.96 - 73.21
	C	61.10 - 67.95
	D	52.95 - 61.09
	F	Score < 52.95

Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Public School Rating Systems on Annual School Performance and the School Recognition Program, Effective October 1, 2018

[https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/20201102115047\\_ade\\_334\\_-\\_Rules\\_Governing\\_the\\_School\\_Rating\\_System.pdf](https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/20201102115047_ade_334_-_Rules_Governing_the_School_Rating_System.pdf)