



# Arkansas Department of Education

*Division of Elementary and Secondary Education*

Johnny Key, Secretary

Dr. Ivy Pfeffer, Deputy Commissioner

Stacy Smith, Deputy Commissioner

November 9, 2022

CONTACT: Kimberly Mundell

PHONE: (501) 683-4788

[kimberly.mundell@ade.arkansas.gov](mailto:kimberly.mundell@ade.arkansas.gov)

## **2022 State, Federal Accountability Reports for Schools Released**

**LITTLE ROCK** — The Arkansas Department of Education’s Division of Elementary and Secondary Education released today the 2022 state and federal accountability reports for Arkansas public schools. The reports include information about student achievement and growth, graduation rates, and other indicators that measure student learning.

The state and federal reports, available on the My School Info website (<https://myschoolinfo.arkansas.gov>), mirror each other in many ways, with the state report including a letter grade for each school. This year marks the first time in three years that schools have received letter grades. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, statewide assessments were not administered in 2020, and accountability reports were not released. Assessments were given in 2021, and accountability reports, including ESSA School Index Scores, were released; however, the Arkansas Legislature granted a pause on issuing letter grades for 2020 and 2021 because of pandemic disruptions on student learning.

While the number of schools receiving A and B letter grades decreased in 2022 compared to 2019, nearly 60 percent of schools’ ESSA School Index Scores (explained in more detail below) increased when compared to 2021 scores.

“As expected, this year’s reports do not reflect a complete recovery from the pandemic’s effects on student learning; however, the results do suggest a rebound from the previous year,” ADE Secretary Johnny Key said. “Since the height of the pandemic, districts and the state have used federal ESSER funds to implement programs designed to accelerate learning. The impact of these programs is promising; however, it is essential that the state and local school communities stay focused and continue best practices that will accelerate learning.”

### **Additional 2022 Report Highlights**

The bullets below reflect additional highlights from this year’s reports.

- On average, schools’ 2022 ESSA School Index scores are relatively stable for elementary and middle schools and increased at the high school level when compared to 2021 scores.
- A total of 59.9 percent of schools’ ESSA School Index scores improved from 2021, compared to 11.79 percent from 2019 to 2021.

- Average Weighted Achievement scores increased for all grade spans in 2022 compared to 2021, demonstrating the early rebound noted in 2022 assessment results released in August 2022.
- Average Value-Added Growth scores were relatively stable in 2022 compared to 2021 and 2019.
- Average Graduation Rates for 2021 increased from 2020.
- Gains in Weighted Achievement were offset to some degree by lower School Quality and Student Success scores. This reflects a lagging impact of pandemic disruptions on student learning.
- The number of schools receiving A and B letter grades decreased, while the number receiving C, D, and F grades increased.

## **Background**

The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 required states to develop their own accountability systems to determine how well students are learning. Arkansas stakeholders, which included teachers, students, administrators, parents, legislators, and the community, developed Arkansas' system, which was approved by the U.S. Department of Education in January 2018.

In 2013, the Arkansas Legislature passed legislation that requires the state to implement an A-F grading scale for schools. At the request of Arkansas stakeholders, ADE aligned the state's accountability system, including the School Rating System, with the approved Arkansas Every Student Succeeds Act federal accountability plan.

The reports released today include numerous measures of student learning for multiple years. Trend data provide schools a sense of how students perform academically over time and whether schools are improving access and opportunity for success. Districts should review each measure closely and use the data to make informed decisions about student learning. Parents are encouraged to have conversations with their child's school to discuss the results.

## **ESSA School Index Scores Explained**

ESSA School Index Scores are comprised of four main weighted indicators: Weighted Achievement, Value-Added Growth, School Quality and Student Success, and Graduation Rate (where applicable).

- Weighted Achievement scores reflect student academic attainment in English Language Arts and Mathematics across four levels: In Need of Support, Close, Ready, and Exceeds. The levels are weighted in the calculations. As a result, over time, schools can increase their Weighted Achievement scores by moving more students from lower to higher achievement levels.
- Students are expected to learn and grow academically each year based on their own test score history. Value-Added Growth scores separate the effects of non-school related factors (for example, poverty) on the student's change in achievement so that the student's growth expectation is more precise. This indicator includes English learner progress toward English language proficiency.
- The SQSS indicator combines measures of engagement, access, readiness, completion, and success criteria. Each measure focuses on the extent to which students are meeting important educational milestones (such as reading proficiently), important readiness criteria (based on ACT scores), and important postsecondary success indicators (attainment of Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or concurrent credits).

- In high school calculations, the school’s four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate and the five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate are calculated into the ESSA School Index scores. Students will be assigned to an adjusted cohort group the year the student is first enrolled as a ninth-grade student. Graduation Rates are lagging indicators, meaning the data are delayed by one year.

### School Highlights

To learn more about schools that showed improvements, visit <https://bit.ly/3WCoYHc>.

### School Ratings

For state accountability purposes, each school receives an A-F letter grade based on the school’s ESSA School Index score. When comparing 2022 scores to 2019 scores — a three-year gap — it is not surprising that more schools at all grade spans are clustered in the lower letter grades. It is important to keep in mind that the 2022 grades are reflective of many factors that include learning loss and other potentially lagging impacts of the pandemic.

The graph below summarizes the number of schools per letter grade for 2018, 2019, and 2022.

### More Information

For more information about the reports, go to <https://bit.ly/3TASyKU>. To learn more about how to access school reports, go to <https://bit.ly/3Tk2lo0>.

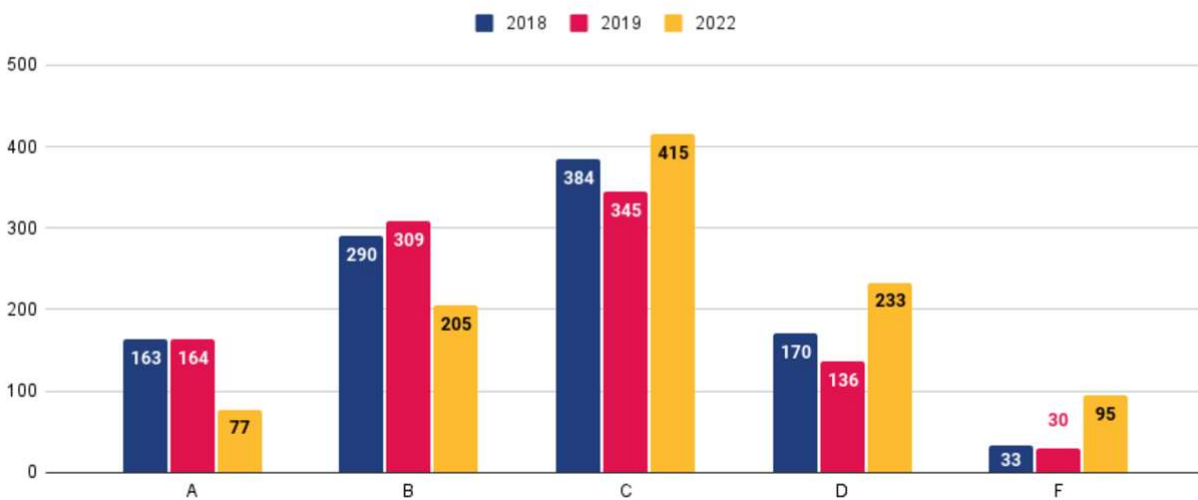
[Follow us on Twitter @ArkansasEd.](#)

[Like us on Facebook at Arkansas Department of Education.](#)

[Follow us on Instagram at arkansased.](#)

### Statewide A-F Distribution

3-Year Trend Data (2018, 2019, 2022)



dese.ade.arkansas.gov

Four Capitol Mall • Little Rock, AR 72201 • 501-682-4475

Share this email:



[Manage](#) your preferences | [Opt out](#) using TrueRemove®

Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.

View this email [online](#).

Four Capitol Mall  
Little Rock, AR | 72201 US

This email was sent to [kimberly.mundell@ade.arkansas.gov](mailto:kimberly.mundell@ade.arkansas.gov).  
*To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.*

emma®