



A-B-C-D-F School Grading 2012 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

A. School Grading Basics

1. Why are schools being graded?

School Grading is part of a state and federal statute that mandates accountability for all public schools. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) enacted in 1965, which was reauthorized in 2001 as *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB), requires schools to show annual improvement in mathematics and reading. In 2011, New Mexico lawmakers enacted additional requirements that schools demonstrate progress through a grading system similar to that applied to students, A-B-C-D-F [§22-2-1, §22-2-2, and §22-2E-1 to §22-2E-4] [6.19.8.1 NMAC – N, 12-15-11].

2. Who participates in school grading?

Schools and districts under the jurisdiction of the Public Education Department (PED) must participate in school grading. These include:

- School districts, New Mexico has 89 districts.
- District schools, New Mexico has 750 non-charter schools
- Charter Schools, in 2011 New Mexico had 48 locally-authorized, and 33 state-authorized charter schools.

Non-PED schools are exempt from school grading, including private, home, and Bureau of Indian Education schools.

3. How does school grading relate to AYP?

AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) served as the primary gauge of school success from 2004 to 2011. In 2012 New Mexico's school grading model was approved by the U.S. Department of Education to serve as the state's ESEA accountability method for future years, replacing Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

4. Is school grading any better than AYP?

Key distinguishing features favor school grading over AYP:

- Partial credit is given for all indicators. In AYP, targets must be met by schools in an all-or-none fashion to get any credit. A school that scored near the threshold was treated no differently than a school that grandly missed the mark.
- AYP goals had become unreachable, with 87% of our schools failing to make targets. Therefore variability did not exist for assisting parents and community members to differentiate successful from poorly performing schools.
- The goal of accountability is to assist in the reform of poorly performing schools, while highlighting the methods of successful schools. The AYP model was too limited to inform this process. School grading, however, contains a rich set of feedback indicators that help schools identify weak areas, plan, and improve.
- Schools get to see how well they are growing students' learning over time. Moreover, they can differentiate whether their highest achieving students are learning better than their lowest achieving students.
- A letter grade is an easy metric to understand and compare.
- VAM (Value Added Modeling) provides a much more equitable system for comparing schools and seeing what their true effect has been (see discussion of VAM below).

5. Which assessments are used to determine a school's grade?

The Standards Based Assessment (SBA) has been used since 2005 and was designed to assess whether students meet grade-specific standards developed by New Mexico professionals. The New Mexico Alternate Performance Assessment (NMAPA) was similarly designed for special education students who meet qualifications for specialized testing. In school year 2014-2015 New Mexico will implement a new set of assessments designed to meet the state standards initiative known as the Common Core.

While districts and schools use other commercial assessments for various purposes, these assessments are not

administered in a standardized way across the state and are not aligned to the state's grade-specific standards. Therefore they cannot be used for statewide accountability. Similarly the state-sponsored *Access for ELLs* is not eligible for inclusion. This assessment is given annually to students whose primary language is not English. Its purpose is to test English fluency, and it does not measure if the student is meeting grade-level standards in reading or math.

6. Will science or social studies ever be included?

While PED would like to broaden the scope of school grading to these important domains, the funding was insufficient to include them in the assessment battery. When our state's fiscal picture improves, and if these assessments are reinstated for all grades, they may be included.

7. How will school grading be affected by the transition to Common Core Assessments?

Whenever a new set of assessments is introduced, or there is a dramatic change in an existing assessment, specific elements of the school grading system will need to be adjusted, but the overall framework will remain the same.

8. Who must be tested?

All public school students enrolled in grades 3-8, and 10-11 must participate. There are no standardized assessments for students in other grades. Schools are required to test all students in SBA grades.

9. What about students whose parents refuse to let their children take the test?

Those students are counted as non-participants when determining participation rates for a school. It is in the best interest of parents to make sure their students are represented in the assessed population.

10. Is there flexibility for alternative schools?

Yes. Beginning in 2012 New Mexico recognizes schools who specialize in students with disabilities, or in the mission of dropout recovery. These are known as SAM schools (Supplemental Accountability Model) and these schools are given additional ways to demonstrate success. For example, SAM graduation rates recognize the school's success in graduating students whose cohort has long since aged out of the 4-year, 5-year, and 6-year cohorts of typical high schools.

11. What happens to schools that do not have one of the tested grades?

New Mexico tests students only in grades 3-8, and 10-11. However, federal law requires that all schools receive a rating, even if they do not have a tested grade. Therefore a *Feeder School* method is used to assign scores from alumni of the feeder school. For example a kindergarten-only school (feeder school) will be rated using scores from their exited students that are now in grade 3. Where exited students cannot be found in the tested population, district ratings are given to the school, which is the next best substitute but rarely necessary.

12. My feeder school (grades K-2) got a D even though our elementary school (grades 3-5) received a grade of C. Why?

Feeder schools are rated on only *their alumni* who have reached a tested grade, not on the entire elementary school grade. Also, if feeder school students feed into more than one school, then the grade determination for the feeder school is based on the grades from each of those elementary schools receiving their alumni.

13. What is a scaled score?

The scaled score is another measure of performance where students earn a score from 0 to 80 in each subject area on the SBA. The score for *Proficient* is always set at 40 for every grade. A student who scores the same from year to year, for example 38 in math the first year and again 38 the second year, has made one-year's worth of growth. That is, they did not lose ground, but they also did not close the gap between their score and being considered on grade level in math (40 = Proficient).

14. Since this scale changed in 2011, how can you use scaled scores from earlier

years?

The metric of the scale changed, but the assessment did not. The vendor assisted PED with the *Bridge Study* which provides corresponding values between the new and old scales. All historic scaled scores were converted to the new scale that ranges from 0 to 80. These new scaled scores are detailed in reports by school, grade, and subgroup on the PED website at: <http://www.ped.state.nm.us/AssessmentAccountability/AcademicGrowth/NMSBA.html>

15. What is VAM (Value Added Modeling)?

Value Added Modeling refers to a statistical adjustment of a school's outcome that takes the school's characteristics into account, in particular the makeup of the student body. It is a concept about fairness that allows a school's grade to more genuinely reflect the impact the school made on student learning, rather than the pre-existing characteristics of the student body. The result is a truer picture of the school's impact (value added) on student achievement.

16. What variables are considered in the Value Added Model?

The prediction for a school's performance is adjusted for these variables:

- Full Academic Year (FAY) – the percent of the student body that is FAY
- School size – overall enrollment in all grades
- Prior achievement – student scores from the prior two years

For each student, their prior achievement is used to predict a current scaled score. The student's current score is then compared to the baseline of what an average student is predicted to score, and when these differences are positive, they indicate that the student scored higher than anticipated. The individual student differences are accumulated for a school to reach the value added estimate.

17. Why don't you include crime statistics in the VAM?

We would like to remove all influences on scores that schools cannot reasonably be expected to control. However, we are limited to those that research indicates are meaningful and have data that are reliably available.

18. Is it possible for me to see which other schools are like mine in VAM student characteristics?

The comparison of schools that have similar characteristics is useful, especially for identifying star performers and replicating their success strategies. The School Grading Report Card supplies this information in the table *Similar Schools* which is being expanded to a separate report in the next year.

19. I notice that VAM seems to always use 3 years worth of data. Why?

Average scores can be unstable for very small schools, because shifts of even one or two students can cause changes in the averages. By using data over several years, we get a clearer picture of the school's overall course.

The second purpose of using 3 years worth of data is to inform growth. Both school growth and student growth use information gained from knowing where the school or student has been in the past.

20. What is FAY?

"Full Academic Year" is defined as continuous enrollment in the same school from test season to test season (e.g. Spring 2008 to Spring 2009). FAY is an approximate measure of student mobility, and schools with a higher proportion of FAY students are considered to have a more stable population. In prior years for AYP, only FAY students were counted in proficiencies. With school grading all students tested are counted, regardless of FAY.

21. Are all schools graded the same?

For the most part, yes; each school is classified either as an Elementary/Middle School or a High School based on the predominance of grades the school serves. The two grading systems allocate points slightly differently and have slightly different components. The emphasis in early grades is more competency-based, while the emphasis in high school is on successful completion and preparation for college or career. The framework for grading is shown in the tables at the end

of this document, along with the point assignments. Charter schools are held to the same standards and calculations as regular public schools.

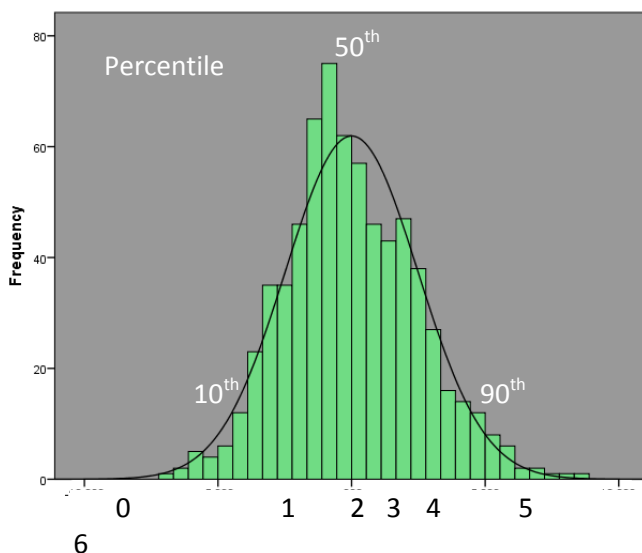
22. What is the 1% Cap?

In order to prevent over-identification of the most significantly cognitively disabled students, the U.S. Department of Education placed limits on the numbers of these students who could be counted as proficient. Students counted as proficient using the New Mexico Alternate Performance Assessment (NMAPA) cannot exceed 1% of the tested population at either the district or state level. The consequence of exceeding this cap is that proficient scores in excess of 1% are reversed to non-proficient prior to calculating school and district grades. This cap is not applied at the school level and does not change a student's score for reporting.

B. Understanding Points

1. How are points assigned on each part of the report card?

Each component of a school's grade is assigned points. The final point values are now part of New Mexico state law (see *A. Why are schools being graded?*). The points for each component are summed to assign a grade. Additionally, the points from all components total 100 for each school, which is used to determine the school's overall grade. The boundaries of points that determine the grade for each component are appended at the end of this document, as well as the total point spans for A, B, C, D, and F.



Example of point conversion:

Rather than assigning points for the school grade on raw proficiencies, similar to AYP, the PED assigns a score based where a school is in relation to all other schools in NM.

The graph shows that a school that achieved proficiencies that placed them in the top 10% of the schools (90th percentile) would earn a score of 5.4 on a 6 point scale.

The 50th percentile was used to set the criterion for a "C" in 2011.

2. Since grades using a distribution will always force some schools high, and some schools low, how can I ever improve?

This process of setting grade boundaries using the grade distribution was important the baseline year (2011) to get an accurate picture of realistic goals for improvement. The cut points now remain the same for all schools and do not change. However, given dramatic change in either performance or assessments, the cut points will be reset. For an example, see "*How will school grading be affected by the transition to Common Core Assessments?*" Every school has a chance to make an A.

3. My school got over half of the available points for Graduation, but they still got a "D". How can this be?

The boundaries for each school's grade were set using the distribution of all schools. For some indicators, such as *Graduation*, the bulk of schools did fairly well. Because a school has to rank higher than their peers to get an A, and in this case their peers were close behind, they have to score near the top of the available points.

4. Were the grade distributions standardized across all indicators before setting points?

No, the grade distributions are different for each, and therefore the qualifying points differ. To interpret the points, use the tables appended to the end of this document.

5. My elementary school got the same points for *Current Standing* as the high school, but each school got a different grade. Why?

Remember that there are different points and grading schemes for high schools and elementary/middle schools. Because the two grading systems weigh certain components differently (see *Are all schools graded the same?*), the point values have slightly different interpretations. For that reason it is better to look at the grade than the points.

6. How are points assigned, since each indicator is on a different scale?

Points are assigned in terms of how well a school performed when compared to a target. Some indicators have absolute criteria (attendance and graduation), while others (Current Standing, School Growth, Student Growth, College and Career Readiness) are based on the state distribution in each of these indicators. For indicators with absolute criteria, points are assigned based on the ratio of the school's performance to the target. For the other indicators, we rank every school in relation to all schools in the state. For example the school that is in the 80th percentile has scored better than 80% of their peers. This percentile is then used to compute what portion of the available points the school earned. If the indicator is worth 10 points, the school has earned 8 points.

C. Current Standing (Proficiency)

1. How is proficiency defined for the purposes of school grading?

Assessments rank student as Beginning Step, Nearing Proficient, Proficient, or Advanced. Students achieving Proficient or Advanced are considered proficient for the "Current Standing" rates calculated for the school.

2. The proficiencies on my school grading report differ from those on other reports. Why?

PED issues several sets of proficiencies to meet different needs:

1. FAY students only. These were the familiar proficiencies reported for AYP in prior years on the *School Accountability Report*. This filter is no longer being applied in auxiliary files on the PED website.
2. All students tested. These proficiencies include all students tested, including the more mobile students who may not have been at a school for a full academic year. They are published on the PED website (A to Z, SBA Statistics). Note that high schools include only H3 students (juniors), to be consistent with historical data on the same site.
3. Current Standing. This second page of the *School Grading Report* shows all students tested (above) with the addition of H2 students (sophomores) for high schools, since both grades are included in the calculation of this indicator.
4. Vendor reports. These reports are sorted in such a way that printed reports go to the school where a student is currently enrolled. This school may differ from the accountable school, where the student's score was assigned for calculations.

3. How do I calculate the *Current Standing* for a school?

The first part, Percent Proficient, uses the following formula:

1. Numerator: The number of students scoring Proficient or Advanced

2. Denominator: The total number of students tested.
3. Divide the numerator by the denominator
4. This rate is calculated separately for reading and for math. This figure is the familiar proficiency rate that was used in prior years for AYP.
5. Multiply the result (from # 3) by the points available. The result is the school's Current Standing.

The second part of Current Standing statistically adjusts the school's performance to acknowledge the characteristics of the student body. See "*What is VAM (Value Added Modeling)?*"

4. What does Current Standing really mean for a school?

Knowing how many students are proficient in a given year is a measure of the school's overall success. Even so, single-year performance will vary with differing classes of students. It is not unusual for a school to have an exceptionally talented or unusually challenging class of students occasionally. Therefore the school grading system has integrated additional years of data in order to lend stability to the depiction of schools.

D. School Growth

1. What is meant by School Growth?

The concept is similar to *student* growth, only for schools. The idea is that schools should demonstrate increased abilities over time, in particular the ability to produce better-prepared students. It is measured through reading and math scores of the students enrolled in a current year, compared to the students from prior years. While these are different sets of students, the school that is improving will do a better job each year of bringing these student groups higher. This notion is similar to thinking about the unemployment rate. We can readily compare this year's rate to last year's rate and draw some conclusions about the economy – even though the population changes every year.

2. Doesn't this duplicate Current Standing?

No, for the following reasons:

- Current Standing refers to whether a student is proficient or not. While this is an important feature of a school, it is a less-sensitive barometer of improvement. Students that are below the proficiency line can still make dramatic improvement. Similarly proficient students above the line can still make dramatic improvement.
- The ability of a school to impact student performance is influenced by the characteristics of their student body and is outside the school's control (see What is VAM?). School Growth does not measure schools by who their students are, but by what the school was able to do with the students they were given.

3. How does School Growth work for schools that are new?

When schools do not have the full 3-year complement of scores, their growth must be estimated from what is known about their peers in the state. While this is not ideal, it is the best approximation that can be made under the circumstances. As these new schools develop a history of their own, their grades will more accurately reflect their particular school.

4. If my school got an A in School Growth, what does that really mean?

It means that this past year the school implemented strategies that really helped students. It may be specialized training for their teachers, a new schedule, a refocused curriculum, involving parents in a unique way, or engaging students in an after-school math club. The end product was that students performed better academically than prior classes of students.

5. Is School Growth expressed as a change in the "percent proficient"?

No. Growth is computed from students' actual test scores compared to their predicted test scores. The difference between the predicted and actual scores is aggregated at the school level and then compared to state values. For example, an elementary student might be predicted to score 32 in reading based on everything we know about him. Instead we find that he scored 38, 6 points higher than predicted. These differences are averaged for a school to yield an average growth:

- 0 means that the students did about as predicted, no better, no worse. While some students may have performed better than predicted, they were equally balanced by students that did worse.
- Scores above 0 mean that the students on average scored higher than was predicted. This is an exciting finding, especially if these students are below the proficiency line (lowest quartile generally), because they are closing the gap and gaining on their higher-performing companions.
- Scores below 0 mean that students lost ground. They performed below expectations and are losing ground with their peers.

E. Student Growth

1. How does Student Growth differ from School Growth?

Just like schools, individual students are predicted to increase achievement over time. We use three years of test results to estimate average annual growth. Student growth takes into account only the student's prior scores, and does not adjust for their socio-demographic characteristics. There is a clear expectation that all students have the capacity to attain the same goals.

2. Does the student have to be enrolled in the same school for 3 years?

No. The best predictor of how a student will score today comes from their score in the prior year and the year before that. We use prior data only to develop the student's historic path and to estimate how they will likely score today.

3. Students that are already scoring near 80 on the assessment have no room to grow. Doesn't this hamper schools with these students?

Theoretically, yes. However, even the fastest growing and highest performing schools in our state have plenty of room to grow and likely will not reach that ceiling within the next 4 years. Should that occur, a happy event, the state will recalibrate the grading scale to assure that schools continue to be differentiated.

F. Graduation

1. How are graduation rates calculated?

In 2008, the PED moved to the calculation of a 4-year cohort rate. This rate tracks students from the beginning of their 9th grade year, to successful graduation with a standard diploma within 4 years. Detail about the calculation of the cohort graduation rate is provided in the companion document, *FAQ - Cohort Graduation Rate*, that is posted on the PED webpage (A to Z directory, "Graduation").

2. I am a school official. How do I verify my graduation rate?

A school will not be able to calculate the rate without the detailed student listing that is available in the secure online program *GradCohort*. This listing is available only to authorized personnel and access must be granted by the district's Superintendent. Additionally, credentials are issued by the district's SOAP Manager. Once inside the program, the **Consolidated Outcome Report** contains student members of the cohort, their outcomes, and the contribution each student made to the school's rate. Districts use this listing to verify student outcomes prior to the calculation of the assigned rate. Data review for graduation typically lasts for 3 to 4 weeks, after which, data are certified and closed to further updates.

3. Some new high schools do not yet have any members in the graduation cohort, and therefore don't have a grad rate. How can they get a grade?

School Grading calculations adjust for high schools that do not yet have cohorts. These schools are graded only on their remaining non-cohort indicators, eliminating Graduation and Career/College Readiness from the total points. Their final

score is rated on a reduced scale of 0 to 68 total points, with different cut points for A, B, C, D, and F.

4. How does graduation contribute to a high school grade?

The school is rated on its ability to graduate students in four years, five years, and beginning in 2012 six years. The school is also judged on its ability to increase the overall 4-year rate from year to year, called Graduation Growth. All of these indicators together account for 17 points in the overall grade.

5. Are SAM schools treated differently?

Beginning in 2012, the PED recognizes a class of schools with unique properties that serve specialized populations of students (see *School Grading Basics*, 10). For graduation, a senior completer method is used to supplement regular 4-year cohort graduation rates. This method recognizes returning dropouts and students that were not cohort members that the school successfully graduated in the current year.

G. Opportunity to Learn

1. What do you mean by “Opportunity to Learn” (OTL)?

OTL refers to a school’s general learning environment. This indicator rewards schools that engage students and parents in ways that ensure students come to school (*Attendance*). It also samples the classroom experiences of students through an annual survey to see if teachers are utilizing good learning practices (*Student Survey*).

2. What is the target for attendance?

The target for attendance rate is 95.0%. This means that schools that have an attendance rate of 85% will get fewer points than those that get 95%, but they will get partial credit. On the other hand, if a school has 100% attendance they can earn a little higher than the maximum points.

3. How do I calculate attendance?

All students in all grades are included in the calculation. The calculation uses these steps:

1. All students enrolled up to the 120th day of school are included.
2. For each student take the number of days enrolled (ENROLLED) For each student take the number of days attended (ATTENDED) For each student compute ATTENDED divided by ENROLLED
3. For each student take the number of days attended (ATTENDED) For each student compute ATTENDED divided by ENROLLED
4. Average the numbers from step 4, and multiply by 100 to get the percentage.

4. How was the target for attendance established?

The attendance target was negotiated with the federal government when AYP was first established. These and other federally approved rules can be viewed in the New Mexico Accountability Workbook which is available on the NMPED website http://www.ped.state.nm.us/ayp2010/NM%20acct%20workbook%2020101119_22.pdf.

5. What is the student survey?

Once a year, a survey which poses 10 statements about experiences in the classroom is given to students. For example:

My Teacher introduces a new topic by connecting it to things I already know.

(Students rate this statement on a scale of *Never* to *Always*).

The questions are customized to the student’s grade level, and the survey has been found to reliably predict student success and achievement in documented research. A bibliography of published evidence is available upon request.

6. How will PED prevent students from negative venting on the survey?

Students, when provided an objective opportunity to provide feedback on their learning opportunities, generally do so. Prior research indicates that when teachers and students are asked the same questions about OTL, the results tend to be in

line with one another. Student surveys are preferable to teacher surveys because teachers can only provide a response for the whole class, while each individual student can respond based on his/her individual experience. Student responses on surveys are highly related to student performance.

7. High school students can have 6 to 7 teachers. How do they answer the survey?

We do not use the survey to rate an individual teacher, rather to form a general notion of the types of opportunities provided to students overall at a school. High School students will be asked to comment on the teachers they currently have – again providing a general sense of opportunities at a school.

8. Who proctors the survey?

The survey is incorporated into the annual standards-based assessment. As such, it is subjected to the same strict standards for test security and administration, which are reviewed with school officials annually. Schools have been operating successfully under these austere guidelines for many years, and PED has operational procedures for identifying and prosecuting any evidence of tampering or cheating.

9. How is the survey scored?

The survey answers are ranked from 0 to 5 in order of least (*Never*) to most beneficial (*Always*) for student outcomes. For a score, the 10 items are summed for a total score ranging from 0 to 50. Just like attendance, the school's proportion of positive responses is converted to points. The school's performance on each individual item is shown in the detail of the A-F School Grading Report. The survey contributes 5 points to the school's overall grade.

H. Career and College Readiness

1. What is Career and College Readiness (CCR)?

This indicator captures a school's ability to prepare students to enter post-secondary education or industry-recognized certification. All students enrolled in grades 9 through 12 are eligible for participation in these programs:

- **PSAT/NMSQT**, Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, cosponsored by the College Board and National Merit Scholarship Corporation. The assessment yields scores in English Composition (verbal), Mathematics, and Writing and offers benchmark scores that indicate college readiness in two age groups, sophomores and younger, and juniors and older.
- **SAT** keeps pace with what colleges are looking for today, measuring the skills required for success in the 21st century. The SAT is the most widely used college admission test. The SAT yields scores in three subjects: Math, Reading and Writing.
- **ACT** national college admissions examination that is recognized internationally. The ACT yields scores in four areas, English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science, and offers benchmark scores that indicate college readiness in each.
- **Concurrent Enrollment/Dual Credit** in an accredited New Mexico post-secondary institution offering college credit. In 2011 all courses were included including electives. In futures years courses will likely be limited to core classes that yield non-remedial credit toward a degree.
- **AP** (Advanced Placement) aligned to 34 college level courses. Most four-year colleges give students credit, advanced placement, or both on the basis of the score on the AP exam for that subject.
- **CAREER PATHWAY** groundwork that indicates students have completed the coursework required for industry-recognized certification examinations. Foundations for career readiness are built from the *Carl Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology* grant definitions. To be considered successful, the student must complete all coursework with a C or better, and graduate from high school with a regular diploma.
- **PLAN** helps 10th graders build a solid foundation for future academic and career success and provides information needed to address school districts' high-priority issues. It is a comprehensive guidance resource that helps students measure their current academic development, explore career/training options, and make plans for the remaining years of high school and post-graduation years. PLAN serves as the midpoint measure of academic progress in ACT's College and Career Readiness System and includes four multiple-choice tests: English, Math, Reading and Science

- **ACCUPLACER** is an adaptive placement test, implying that the questions are chosen for each student on the basis of the answers to previous questions. This technique selects just the right questions for each student's ability level. Each test is untimed so that students can give each question as much thought as needed. The Accuplacer test may consist of answering questions covering: reading, mathematics, writing and language use skills and writing an essay on a familiar topic.
- **COMPASS** test is a computer adaptive college placement test that helps educators to quickly evaluate incoming students' skill levels in reading, writing skills, writing essays, math and English as a second language. It is an untimed computerized test that helps to place students into appropriate courses.
- **IB** or the International Baccalaureate offers high quality programs of international education to a worldwide community of schools. For the IB Diploma Programs, students study six courses at higher level or standard level. Students must choose one subject from each of groups 1 to 5, thus ensuring breadth of experience in languages, social studies, the experimental sciences and mathematics. The sixth subject may be an arts subject chosen from group 6, or the student may choose another subject from groups 1 to 5. In addition the program has three core requirements that are included to broaden the educational experience and challenge students to apply their knowledge and understanding.

2. How does PED know which students participated in any of these CCR programs?

Through a special agreement with test vendors and the Higher Education Department, a list of examinees/enrollees is supplied to PED. From these lists PED then identifies New Mexico public education students through a matching process, and assigns their high school through enrollment data. At the time of testing, students have the right to block the access to their scores by schools and by PED, and approximately 15% of the examinees do. This process likely undercounts students, however the undercounts are not concentrated in any single school. PED is working with vendors to resolve issues around student identification.

3. How is participation calculated in CCR?

The 4-year cohort forms the basis of the CCR point calculations, using the *Shared Accountability* method (see *Graduation*) to assign credit for student outcomes to all high schools the student ever attended. A school's participation rate results from the weighted count of students in the numerator and denominator, similar to graduation:

$$\text{Participation rate} = \frac{\text{sum of shared accountability fraction of students who participated in any indicator}}{\text{sum of shared accountability fraction of students in 4-year graduation cohort}}$$

Cohort members will count as a *participant* when they attempted any one or more of the CCR indicators any time during their four year tenure in high school. Students who attempt multiple indicators are counted only once.

4. Since most CCR programs are not used by 9th graders, won't including 9th graders penalize schools?

The inclusion of all grades in high school, including 9th grade, in career and college readiness is purposeful. It helps to reinforce the vision that all high school students strive toward preparation for what lies after high school. While 9th graders have fewer opportunities for CCR attempts, by the time the student has become a senior they will have had four high school years to participate. Since the graduation cohort forms the basis for this calculation, all students will have had more than just a single year. All schools experience the same challenge inherent in including lower grades, so all schools are held to the same standard.

5. Will additional programs count toward CCR?

The PED is open to recommendations for expanding CCR to other nationally-recognized academic credentials. In the baseline year the preliminary list of five programs was expanded to nine, and in 2013 to 10. However, data sharing agreements are not in place with all vendors, and the PED is sensitive to the burden of additional data collection on schools, so future proposals will be carefully appraised.

6. How is CCR Success computed?

The success rate follows the same process as participation, resulting from weighted numerators and denominators from

Shared Accountability. Students who achieve any one or more of the benchmarks (below) are considered successful in the numerator, while students who attempted any program or assessment form the denominator. The success rate is the percent of *participants* (numerator for participation) that succeeded.

7. What are the benchmarks for success in CCR?

Students who repeat any of the tests or programs, or who attempt multiple programs are awarded full credit for their single best outcome. For example a student who attempted a dual credit course but did not meet the benchmark grade, and who also completed the national exam for an Advanced Placement (AP) credential and scored 4 will be awarded full success points for the AP. The minimum conditions required for success were determined from published research and criteria established by institutions of higher education:

- Achieving a '3' on an Advanced Placement (AP) exam
- Achieving *College Readiness* benchmark scores on any of four content areas of the ACT.
 - English Composition (18)
 - Social Sciences [Reading] (21)
 - College Algebra [Mathematics] ((22)
 - Biology [Science] (24)
- Achieving *College Readiness* benchmark scores on any of four content areas of the PLAN.
 - English Composition (15)
 - Social Sciences [Reading] (17)
 - College Algebra [Mathematics] ((19)
 - Biology [Science] (21)
- Achieving *College Readiness* benchmark scores on any of three content areas of the PSAT.
 - Reading (50)
 - Mathematics (50)
 - Writing (49)
- Achieving *College Readiness* benchmark scores on any of three content areas of the SAT.
 - Reading (450)
 - Mathematics (450)
 - Writing (450)
- Achieving *College Readiness* benchmark scores on any of four content areas of the Accuplacer.
 - Reading (85)
 - Writing (109)
 - Elementary Algebra (117)
 - College Mathematics (115)
- Achieving a "C" or better on a *dual or concurrent credit* course from an accredited post-secondary institution.
- Achieving a *College Readiness* benchmark score on any of six areas of study from an authorized International Baccalaureate curriculum.
 - Literature (Language A)(4)
 - Language B(4)
 - Individuals & Society(4)
 - Experimental Science(4)
 - Mathematics(4)
 - Arts(4)
- Completing all course requirements for *Career Technical Education* with a "C" or better, and graduating with a regular diploma in 4 years.
- Achieving *College Readiness* benchmark scores on any of the following 3 content areas for the COMPASS
 - Reading (≥ 78)
 - Algebra (≥ 55)

- Writing (≥ 75)

8. If a student cannot pass the AP exam, do they count against the school?

The student will count positively for the CCR participation rate, but they will count only in the denominator for the CCR success rate. If this student demonstrates success in some other part of CCR, such as the ACT, the school gets their *Shared Accountability* credit for that success.

9. I am a school administrator and I have evidence that more students participated in these CCR opportunities than you show in my report. How do I fix that?

PED will work with schools to maximize the identification and placement of students. Note that some students might have been missed through various means:

- Voluntary blocking of their scores by the student at the time of testing; PED cannot override this legal right.
- Too little information from test vendors to identify enrolled students through the matching algorithm.
- The students that you expect to see might belong to a different graduation cohort. While they don't count for the current year, they will count for future years when the student ages into their 4th year.

I. Miscellaneous

1. What is the timeline for the next round of grades?

Grades are computed annually in July. The reports are released in July for schools to review in preparation for the upcoming school year.

2. I would like more detail on the exact calculations. Where can I find help?

Please consult these documents on the PED website:

- Technical Manual for School Grading
- School Grading FAQ (this document)
- Module 1 PowerPoint, School Grading A to Z
- Module 2 PowerPoint, Value Added Modeling
- The help desk at ped.assessment@state.nm.us

PED is working to provide student level reports through a secure online system so that authorized school officials can examine lists of students that contributed to each indicator. New data reviews are being put in place for CCR, and student growth.

Table 1: Data Sources for School Grading

Table Component	Notes	Data Source
Enrollment	These figures represent all grades K-12 that were reported at the 120 th day of the current year; your STARS Coordinator can run the same report, called "Membership".	STARS
Participation	These figures were drawn from reading proficiencies of the current year. In general, reading and math are the same, and when they are not, reading is usually slightly higher. Figures include a combination of NMAPA and SBA assessments.	SBA, NMAPA, AYP 2011
Current Standing	These proficiencies can be confirmed on the PED Web page http://www.ped.state.nm.us/AssessmentAccountability/AcademicGrowth/NMSBA.html . High schools will need to add 10 th and 11 th grades (H2, H3) together to duplicate their figures.	PED, Data Planning and Analysis
Growth 75% (Q3) Growth 25% (Q1)	These are the raw growth estimates for students, averaged within subgroups. They may look a little dissimilar from the overall growth summary on the first page because the final school group was graded on a curve, and they were also adjusted for the unreliability inherent in small sample sizes where the school was small. Both the summary and the disaggregated subgroup growths are important because each gives slightly different information.	Performance data, 3 years, PED, Data Planning and Analysis
Attendance	These attendance rates use the same calculations as in years past and can be confirmed on the <i>Rolling Attendance Update</i> report in STARS.	STARS
College and Career Readiness	See FAQ on College and Career Readiness.	Test Vendors, STARS

Table 2: Point Boundaries for All Indicators

Elementary and Middle Schools

Indicator	Grade	Points*
Current Standing	A	30.6 or above
	B	23.8 to 30.5
	C	18.9 to 23.7
	D	14.6 to 18.8
	F	14.5 or below
School Growth	A	8.9 or above
	B	6.6 to 8.8
	C	5.0 to 6.5
	D	3.4 to 4.9
	F	3.3 or below
Growth of Highest Performing Students	A	13.7 or above
	B	8.6 to 13.6
	C	5.8 to 8.5
	D	3.0 to 5.7
	F	2.9 or below
Growth of Lowest Performing Students	A	18.6 or above
	B	16.5 to 18.5
	C	14.2 to 16.4
	D	11.5 to 14.1
	F	11.4 or below
Opportunity to Learn	A	9.0 or above
	B	8.0 to 8.9
	C	7.0 to 7.9
	D	6.0 to 6.9
	F	5.9 or below
Overall Grade	A	75.0 or above
	B	60.0 to 74.9
	C	50.0 to 59.9
	D	37.5 to 49.9
	F	37.4 or below

High Schools

Indicator	Grade	Points*
Current Standing	A	18.8 or above
	B	14.2 to 18.7
	C	10.9 to 14.1
	D	9.0 to 10.8
	F	8.9 or below
School Growth	A	This indicator was combined with the next two indicators in 2011. It will be reported separately in 2012.
	B	
	C	
	D	
	F	
School Growth of Highest Performing Students	A	13.9 or above
	B	10.9 to 13.8
	C	6.8 to 10.8
	D	3.8 to 6.7
	F	3.7 or below
School Growth of Lowest Performing Students	A	12.4 or above
	B	8.4 to 12.3
	C	6.3 to 8.3
	D	5.1 to 6.2
	F	5.0 or below
Opportunity to Learn	A	9.0 or above
	B	8.0 to 8.9
	C	7.0 to 7.9
	D	6.0 to 6.9
	F	5.9 or below
Graduation	A	16.2 or above
	B	13.6 to 16.1
	C	12.1 to 13.5
	D	10.0 to 12.0
	F	9.9 or below
Career College Readiness	A	13.6 or above
	B	10.0 to 13.5
	C	8.6 to 9.9
	D	6.1 to 8.5
	F	6.0 or below
Overall Grade	A	75.0 and above
	B	65.0 to 74.9
	C	50.0 to 64.9
	D	35.0 to 49.9
	F	34.9 and below

* Points are rounded for tables for simplicity. However in calculations, figures were carried out to 6 or more decimals. Therefore, letter grades at the highest and lowest boundary of a point span may not be apparent because of rounding. Unrounded figures are available upon request from PED's Data Planning and Analysis Bureau.