Recognition and Reward School Calculations for 2015

Act 1429 of 2013 specified the Arkansas School Recognition and Reward Program which was amended by Act 854 of 2015.

Act 854 of 2015 revised the Arkansas Recognition and Reward Program (A.C.A § 6.15.2107) to establish two separate rankings for Recognition and Rewards. Specifically, "The Arkansas School Recognition and Reward Program is created to provide financial awards to public schools that experience *high student performance* and those *with high student academic growth which includes high school graduation rate comparisons* for secondary schools."

The Act specified two levels of awards: the top 5% and the next 5% (schools in the top 6-10%). *The two levels are* "...top five percent (5%) of all public schools in Arkansas...under the criteria set forth by rule of the State Board of Education..." (A.C.A § 6.15.2107(c)(1)(A)(i)(a - c) and the public school or public charter school "is in the top ten (10%) but below the top five percent (5%)..." (A.C.A § 6.15.2107(c)(1)(A)(ii)(a - c).

Revised emergency rules for Section 9.13.1 of the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment and Accountability Program (ACTAAP) and the Academic Distress Program were approved pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-2107. The emergency rules established the value-added growth model (longitudinal student growth model) as the metric for student academic growth.

Performance Rankings

Schools' rankings were based on schools' percentages of non-mobile students meeting or exceeding grade level standards (Levels 4 and 5 on PARCC and Levels 3 and 4 on NCSC) for math and ELA. Schools percentages are calculated as the sum of the number of students meeting grade level standards for math and ELA divided by the total number of math and ELA tests taken for students who completed a full academic year (not highly mobile).

$$\text{School Performance} = \frac{\text{\# students met or exceeded standards ELA} + \text{\# students met or exceeded standards math}}{\text{Total \# of ELA tests} + \text{Total \# of Math tests}} \ (*\ 100)$$

A school must have at least 25 non-mobile students in math or ELA for a school's inclusion in the performance rankings. This is the minimum number of students required for school accountability.

Schools meeting the minimum N were ranked on their school performance. Schools with ranks in the top 5% were included in the highest award level for performance (up to $100 per student). Schools in the next award (top 10% but below the top 5%) were included in the next award level for performance (up to $50 per student).

Academic Growth/Graduation Rate Rankings

The second set of rankings identified "those [schools] *with high student academic growth which includes high school graduation rate comparisons* for secondary schools."

Growth Ranking: The weighted average of a school's value-added growth scores (VAS) for ELA and math were used for the academic growth component.

$$School\ VAS = \frac{(\#ELA\ Scores * ELA\ VAS) + (\#\ Math\ Scores * Math\ VAS)}{\#\ ELA\ Scores + \#\ Math\ Scores}$$

In order to use School VAS in Recognition and Rewards in the same way it is used in the School Rating System (A-F), schools' VAS were transformed from standard scores to a grade scale using the following formula.

$$School\ Growth\ Score = (School\ VAS * 35) + 80.85$$

The growth scores for 2015 were capped with a minimum of 70 and a maximum of 95 points. The minimum N used for inclusion in the growth rankings was 25 students in math or ELA.

Graduation Rate Rank for Secondary Schools For schools with a graduation rate, the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for all students was used. Secondary schools with a graduation rate were ranked by their graduation rate. The rank of secondary schools' graduation rate were used in the final school rankings for academic growth/graduation rate awards.

Schools meeting the minimum N were ranked either on academic growth (School Growth Score) or graduation rate (for secondary schools). Schools with ranks in the top 5% were included in the highest award category for growth or graduation rate (up to $100 per student). Schools in the next level (top 10% but below the top 5%) were included in the next award level (up to $50 per student).