

# Arkansas School Grading System

The A-F grading scale is a widely accepted way to identify how well a student is performing in school, especially on tests and assignments. Beginning in 2015, a school's performance will be evaluated using this same A-F grading scale, but what does this scale mean? While it's easy to understand that an A school is excellent, other questions arise, such as does a school rating of a C really mean the school is simply average?

It is important to understand that several factors are taken into consideration when determining a school's grade. For example, if 93 percent of a school's students score well on statewide tests, a school can still receive a lower grade if certain subgroups of students are not performing as well as others. This lower grade reflects an achievement gap.

## History and Goal:

- The Arkansas Legislature passed Act 696 in 2013. The law required the state to implement an A-F grading scale for schools.
- The goal is to help parents and the public better understand how well a school is performing and to begin conversations to continually improve education.

## What the Grades Represent:

- How well students are performing in math and literacy on statewide tests such as the Benchmark and End of Course exams.
- Whether schools are meeting yearly student performance goals and showing improvement or expected growth for all students.
- Whether schools are meeting graduation goals for all students and at-risk groups.
- Whether the school has an achievement gap and if that gap is sizable.

## What the Grades Are Not:

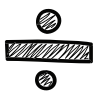
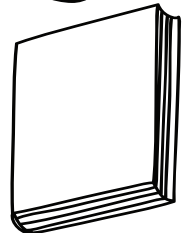
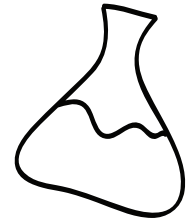
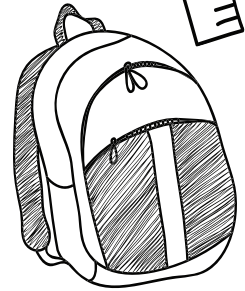
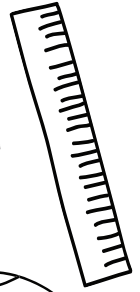
- It does not measure how well an individual student or teacher is doing.
- It does not take into consideration other things the school may be doing well, such as meeting students' nutrition and health needs or how well students are performing in other subject areas.

## Who Was Involved:

- Educators
- Arkansas Department of Education
- Business and Policy Leaders
- Legislators

## What Parents Can Do:

- Become aware of how well schools are performing in the community.
- Talk with teachers and school officials about how to help the school.
- Volunteer at school and engage in areas that need improvement.
- Ensure their children have excellent attendance, complete all assignments, and are engaged in learning.



# School Grades and Grading Scale

## 300 Point Grading Scale:

A = 270 to 300 points

B = 240 to 269 points

C = 210 to 239 points

D = 180 to 209 points

F = Less than 180 points

### What the Scores Mean:

A school may have one or more of the following areas for improvement.

#### **A: 270 to 300 Points**

- Students score well on statewide tests.
- School meets its yearly student performance goals.
- Groups of students (for example white, African American, special education, English as a Second Language, low income) meet progress goals.
- High schools meet graduation goals.
- Any achievement gap is offset by how well the school is doing in other areas.

#### **B: 240 to 269 Points**

- Students score well on statewide tests, but a few students need additional help.
- School meets most student performance goals but others need improvement.
- Some high schools may not meet their graduation goals.
- Some schools may have an achievement gap within the school.

#### **C: 210 to 239 Points**

- Some students score "proficient" on statewide tests, but some students need additional help.
- Schools may not meet some performance goals.
- Specific groups of students may need help to meet progress goals.
- Some high schools may not meet graduation goals.
- Some schools may have an achievement gap within the school.

#### **D: 180 to 209 Points**

- Most students do not score "proficient" on statewide tests and need additional help.
- Schools may not meet most performance goals.
- Specific groups of students may need help to meet progress goals.
- Some high schools may not meet graduation goals.
- Some schools may have a sizable achievement gap within the school.

#### **F: Less than 180 Points**

- Most or a large number of students do not score "proficient" on statewide tests and need additional help.
- Schools do not meet performance goals.
- Most groups of students do not meet progress goals.
- Some high schools may not meet graduation goals.