



A-F FAQ's

Q: What is the A-F School Report Card?

A: Oklahoma's A-F School Grading System is based on the concept that parents and community members should be able to quickly and easily determine how local schools are doing. The report card is a measurement for challenging students and communities to strengthen the effectiveness and performance of public schools.

As part of this effort, schools are required to report standardized testing results to the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE). That information is then used to calculate an overall letter grade for each school and its student body.

Q: How is the grade calculated?

A: The A-F Report Cards were released for the first time in 2012. After input from school administrators and the public, state lawmakers adjusted the formula for the 2013-2014 school year.

The report card is now comprised of two sections, each of which is worth half of the overall grade:

- Student Performance consists of student assessment scores from the summer and winter/trimester 2012 testing window as well as the spring 2013 testing windows. (The calculations did not count scores of below proficiency that occurred during a disruption in spring testing.) Ten or more student test scores were needed to qualify for a grade.
- Student Growth compares current student test scores to those of the prior year. Only students with previous exam scores were included in the formula. Students received one growth point if they met one of the following criteria: an increase in proficiency level from one year to the next; maintaining a proficient or advanced level for both years; or meeting or exceeding the Oklahoma Performance Index score from one year to the next. (The index score is derived from averaging scores of all students who demonstrated positive growth for the year.)

Student growth is divided into two parts, each of which equals 25 percent of the grade: overall student growth and the growth among the lowest-performing 25 percentile of students.

Schools also can earn up to 10 bonus points, depending on whether it is elementary, middle or high school. These points can be awarded for a school's attendance rate; dropout rate; high school graduation rate; advanced coursework (such as participation in pre-Advanced Placement, honors, International Baccalaureate, concurrent enrollment or qualifying CareerTech courses); college entrance exams; eighth-grade graduation rate; and overall end-of-instruction exam performance.

Q: How does this differ from the 2012 calculation?

A: The biggest change was removing the "school improvement" category that last year comprised 33 percent of a school's grade. Most items in the category were reassigned as bonus points this year while some items – such as the school climate survey and parent and community engagement – were eliminated entirely. This reweighted the formula to split evenly between student performance and student growth. Also changed this year is the formula for calculating a school's overall grade. Last year, a Grade Point Average (GPA) was used to calculate the overall grade. This year, an index score is used ranging from 0-100. This year, a school with an index score of 90 to 100 receives an A, 80 to 89 a B, 70 to 79 a C, 60 to 69 a D, and 59 and below an F.

A shift in scores had been anticipated as Oklahoma schools continue the important move toward increased academic rigor. The changes reflect a focus on ensuring that every Oklahoma high school graduate is adequately prepared for college, career and citizenship.

Q: What happens to an F school?

A: The A-F Report Card is not punitive. There is no loss of funding. A-F is merely a communication tool that lets parents and communities know how local schools are performing.

The OSDE does provide various supports to low-performing schools. Our office of School Support offers many professional development opportunities and other resources to spur school improvement. For the first time this year, the OSDE offered grants to high-performing schools with the caveat that they spend part of it partnering with low-performing counterparts to boost student achievement. We intend to offer similar grants going forward.

Perhaps most importantly, it is critical that parents and community members get involved to work toward improving low-performing schools in their neighborhoods. The A-F School Report Card helps start that conversation.