A-B-C-D-F School Grading 2011
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

School Grading Basics

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. [6.19.8.1 NMAC - N, 12-15-11]

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.

How does school grading relate to AYP?
AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) has served as the primary gauge of school success for 8 years, and currently exists in tandem with the school grading system. However New Mexico has petitioned the federal government to recognize school grading as the prime accountability system for schools. The results of this request will be known and be implemented in the 2012 AYP season.

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 at the expense of their lowest achieving students.
- A school 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).

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

The Standards Based Assessment (SBA) has been used since 2004-2005 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 2014-2015 New Mexico will implement a new set of assessments designed to meet the national state standards initiative, 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 a student is meeting grade-level standards in reading or math.

Will science or social studies ever been 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 these assessments are reinstated for all grades, they may be included.

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.

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 at least 95% of their students.

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.

Is there flexibility for alternative schools?

There is no different grading model for alternative schools. However, the grading model is helping to level the playing field for these schools by utilizing value added components. PED continues to explore options for these specialty schools.

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 alumnae 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.

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 alumnae who have reached a testing grade, not on the entire elementary school grade. Also, if feeder school students feed into more than one school, then the feeder school score is partially based on each of those elementary school grades.

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. 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).

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* (PED website, A to Z, Assessment and Evaluation), 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.

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.

For example, Singing Arrow Elementary school serves an unusually high number of non-English speaking students while Pinon Mesa Elementary serves only English speakers. By the statistical application of VAM to reading (or math) outcomes, both schools' effect on achievement is isolated from their students' pre-existing English aptitude. It is as if both schools began the school year with students of the same English fluency. In this way we hold schools accountable for what they do with students and not who their students are.

What variables are considered in the Value Added Model?

The prediction for a school's performance is adjusted for the proportion of their student body:

- Male/Female
- Caucasian/Hispanic/African American/Asian/American Indian
- Qualifies for Free or reduced lunch (Economically Disadvantaged)
- With Disability (SWD)
- Language status (ELL)
- Full Academic Year (FAY)
- School size
- Prior achievement

The prediction is made for each student based on the average performance in New Mexico over the past three years. By basing predictions on prior average performance we can estimate what the average student, with any combination of the above characteristics is predicted to score – and we can then compare that prediction to what the student actually scored. We average all of the comparisons for a school to derive the value added estimate.

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. PED will continue to explore possibilities for enriching this list.

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 propagating their success strategies. PED will be working toward this goal in the oncoming months.

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.

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.

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.

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 nonproficient 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.

Understanding Points

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

Each component of a school's grade are assigned points that were negotiated with school superintendents, community leaders, legislative officials, and educational experts. The final point values are now part of New Mexico state law (see *Why are schools being graded?*). The points for each component is assigned 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 points breakdown for A, B, C, D, and F.

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.

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 this baseline year to get an accurate picture of realistic goals for improvement. The cut points will remain the same for all schools for several years. However, given dramatic change in either performance or assessments, the cut points will change. 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.

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.

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.

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

Points are assigned in terms of how well a school did 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.

Current Standing (Proficiency)

How is proficiency defined for the purposes of school grading?

Assessments rank students 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.

The proficiencies on my school grading report differ from those on my AYP report. Why?

PED issues three sets of proficiencies:

1. FAY students only. These were the familiar proficiencies reported for AYP

2. All students tested. These proficiencies include more mobile students who may not have been at a school for a full academic year, and they are published on the PED website (A to Z, SBA Statistics). These proficiencies form the basis for *Current Standing* in school grading.
3. Vendor reports.

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. Multiply the result (from # 3) by the points available. The result is the school's Current Standing.
5. 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.

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)?*"

The points generated from VAM will be available on school reports in 2012 so that schools may compare the unadjusted proficiency with the adjusted proficiency of subgroups.

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 occasionally have an exceptionally talented or unusually challenging class of students. Therefore the school grading system has integrated additional years of data in order to lend stability to the depiction of schools as well as other indicators that more accurately reflect a school's overall performance.

School Growth

What do you mean 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.

Doesn't this duplicate Current Standing?

No, for the following reasons:

1. *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.
2. 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 W*hat 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.

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.

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.

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 to the school level and then compared to state values. For example, an ELL 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.

Student Growth

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.

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, regardless of school. We use only that data to develop their historic path and to estimate how they will likely score today.

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 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.

Graduation

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").

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; access must be granted by the district's Superintendent; and, 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.

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?

See *How does School Growth work for schools that are new?*

Opportunity to Learn

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 (*OTL Survey*).

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.

How do I calculate attendance?

All students in kindergarten through 8th grades are included in the calculation, except in cases where these grades are not present (i.e. a 9th grade academy) and then all available grades are used. The calculation uses these steps:

All students enrolled up to the 120th day of school are included

1. For each student take the number of days enrolled (ENROLLED)
2. For each student take the number of days attended (ATTENDED)
3. For each student compute ATTENDED divided by ENROLLED
4. Average the numbers from step 4, and multiply by 100 to get the percentage

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. In 2010, the U.S. Department of Education considered special waivers for circumstances related to the H1N1 viral outbreak.

What is the OTL 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.

How do you prevent students from negative venting on the OTL 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 OTL surveys are highly related to student performance.

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

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

Who will proctor the OTL 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.

Career and College Readiness

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:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. Dual 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.
4. 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. The benchmark score is 3 or higher.

5. Career 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.

How do you 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.

How is participation calculated in CCR?

The numerator for participation consists of a count of students in grades 9-12 who attempted any one of the five programs any time during their tenure in high school. Clearly 12th graders will have more chances to participate than 9th graders but all are counted.

The denominator for participation consists of all students who belong to the high school cohort predicted to graduate in the year prior to the test. In 2012, that will be the graduation cohort of 2011. [In this baseline year, the denominator was taken from enrollment in 2011 which approximates the cohort counts closely].

The rate is (numerator/denominator) X 100 and is represented as a percentage.

Since most CCR programs aren't used by 9th graders, won't including 9th graders penalize schools?

While including 9th graders will cause the rates to be lower, it does not penalize the school's grade. The CCR indicator, like other secondary indicators, is examined on a distribution for all schools statewide when establishing cut points for the baseline grade. Since all schools experience the same challenge inherent in including lower grades, all schools are held to the same standard. 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.

Will *International Baccalaureate* (IB) programs count toward CCR?

PED is exploring opportunities to expand CCR to other nationally-recognized academic credentials including IB. However in this inaugural year data sharing agreements were not in place with all vendors, and PED did not want to burden districts with additional data collection. Even so, schools that wish to include IB as part of CCR are encouraged to work with PED to identify enrollees and verify performance. PED will consider integrating these students into the school's CCR indicators.

How is CCR Success computed?

1. The numerator for the success rate is the count of all students who met one of the CCR benchmarks below.
2. The denominator for the success rate is the count of all students who attempted any of the CCR indicators. Note that this count comes from the numerator of CCR participation.
3. The rate is (numerator/denominator) X 100 and is represented as a percentage.

What are the benchmarks for success in CCR?

For the PSAT and ACT, students are given partial credit. For example, a student meeting ACT benchmarks in only English and Math is awarded one-half credit toward success. Students who repeat any of the tests or programs, or who attempt multiple programs are awarded full credit for their best outcome. For example a student who

attempted Dual Credit but did not meet the benchmark grade, and who also took the ACT and met benchmarks will be awarded full success points for the ACT.
The minimum conditions required for success are:

1. PSAT
- English Composition/Verbal- Grade 10=49, Grade 11=50
- Mathematics- Grade 10=47, Grade 11=50
- Writing- Grade 10=48, Grade 11=49

2. ACT
- English - 18
- Mathematics - 22
- Reading - 21
- Science - 24

3. Dual Credit
- A student must complete the course with a "C" or better

4. AP
- A student must score 3 or higher on any single course

5. Career
- A student must complete all identified career-path coursework with a C or better; coursework is outlined in the Perkins Act that qualifies the student to be a Concentrator, and eventually a Completer.
- The student must also graduate from high school with a regular diploma

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

The student counts 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 full credit for that success.

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. However these mechanisms will not be fully available until spring of 2012. In this inaugural baseline process using historic data some of your 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.
- Misidentification of the student's school through enrollment data.

While these impediments may add a little turbulence to the data, the imprecision is randomly dispersed across all schools and is accounted for in the grading system (see *Since most CCR programs aren't used by 9th graders, won't including 9th graders penalize schools?*).

Miscellaneous

What is the timeline for the next round of grades?

Grades will be recomputed with this year's assessment and a new cohort of students in mid-summer. This second round will reward star performing schools and also trigger assistance for struggling schools.

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 (available January 27, 2012)
Module 1 PowerPoint, School Grading A to Z

Module 2 PowerPoint, Value Added Modeling (available January 17, 2012)
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 Component	Notes	Data Source
Enrollment	These figures represent all grades K-12 that were reported at the 120th day of 2011; your STARS Coordinator can run the same report, called "Membership"	STARS
Participation	These figures were drawn from your Reading Proficiencies of 2011; In general, Reading and Math are the same, and when they are not, Reading is usually slightly higher. Figures include both NMAPA and SBA assessments and should match what you see on your AYP Report for 2011 for Participation Rates.	SBA NMAPA AYP 2011
Current Standing	Unlike AYP, these proficiency figures are for ALL students, not just those who were FAY. Therefore they will not match your AYP proficiencies. These proficiencies can be confirmed on the PED Web page (A to Z, Academic Growth and Analysis, SBA Results, Proficiencies 2011)	PED, Data Planning and Analysis
Growth 75% Growth 25%	These are the raw growth estimates for your 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. The FAQ released Friday will give you more on how these were derived and how to interpret them.	Performance data, 3 years, PED, Data Planning and Analysis
Attendance	These are the same attendance rates used for AYP and should match your AYP report	STARS
College and Career Readiness	See FAQs on College and Career Readiness	Test Vendors, STARS

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.