



Kentucky's New School Accountability System Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

The Kentucky Board of Education vision for all Kentucky public school is to empower and equip every student to pursue a successful future. That means when students graduate from high school they are proficient in reading and math, and they are competent in technology and the essential skills needed to make it in the world today. To achieve that goal, Kentucky is improving learning, renewing our commitment to equity and changing the way we evaluate and support schools.

What is accountability?

Accountability is a way to evaluate local schools and how they are performing in the key areas or indicators that impact student success. Information about each indicator is reported and combined to determine the overall performance of the school or district. This information highlights a school's or district's strengths and weaknesses and should be used to drive continuous improvement. The Kentucky Department of Education uses information from the accountability system to identify the schools with the greatest need for improvement, which are provided targeted or comprehensive support.

How is school performance evaluated?

School performance is evaluated on a variety of factors that are called indicators in Kentucky's School Accountability System. Multiple indicators are used to determine performance. Information on each indicator is publicly reported.

For 2017-2018, three indicators per level will be used for accountability.

Elementary/Middle School

- *Proficiency*: Student performance on state K-PREP tests in reading and mathematics
- *A Separate Academic Indicator*: Student performance on state K-PREP tests in science, social studies and writing.
- *Growth*: Elementary and middle school student progress toward proficiency in reading and mathematics. This indicator also includes the progress of elementary and middle school English learners toward proficiency of the English language.

High School

- *Proficiency*: Student performance on the junior administration of the ACT in reading and mathematics
- *Transition Readiness*: This indicator uses several different measures, including
 - The number of high school students earning a diploma and meeting one type of academic or career readiness.
 - At the high school level, the number of English learners demonstrating English language proficiency on a national test.
- *Graduation Rate*: The average number of students who graduate from high school in 4 or 5 years.

Included beginning in the 2018-2019 school year and beyond:

- *Transition Readiness (elementary and middle school)*: The number of e students meeting or exceeding an established level of performance on combined test scores in reading, mathematics, science (grades 4 and 7) social studies (grades 5 and 8) and writing (grades 5 and 8).

- *Achievement Gap Closure*: Gaps in student performance based on state assessments in reading, mathematics, science, social studies and writing. Two different gaps will be included:
 - Gaps between various student groups (such as Hispanic students or students qualifying for free or reduced-price meals) and the highest-performing student group in the school; and
 - Gaps between how student groups perform compared to target scores, which are set to reduce the achievement gap.

Included beginning in the 2019-2020 school year and beyond:

- *Opportunity and Access*: These measures give parents and community members a clearer picture about their child's school environment and include:
 - *Rich Curriculum*: Includes student access to visual and performing arts, health and physical education, science, social studies, career and technical education in middle and high school, cultural studies and/or world languages in high school only, and essential skills (such as being able to demonstrate skills at collaboration and communication, at the high school level only);
 - *Equitable Access*: Includes students, regardless of race or gender, having equal access to gifted and talented services in elementary and middle school and rigorous classes in high school; and
 - *School Quality*: Includes the number of students who are chronically absent, behavior events (such as bullying or alcohol possession) and reports of students who are restrained or secluded.

How will I know how my child is performing?

As in the past, parents will receive reports in the fall of each year with individual student performance data. Parents will receive college entrance examination results directly from the vendor.

What does it take for a student to be considered transition ready?

The measures for Transition Readiness depend on whether the student is in elementary, middle or high school.

Elementary and Middle School Transition Readiness
 (not part of accountability until the 2018-2019 school year)

| Elementary | Middle |
|---|---|
| Meet a benchmark on a composite score that combines student performance on reading, mathematics, science, social studies and writing by grade 5 | Meet a benchmark on a composite score that combines student performance on reading, mathematics, science, social studies and writing by grade 8 |

(High school Transition Readiness continues on the next page.)

High School Students

(Part of accountability starting in the 2017-2018 school year)

| High School Diploma Earn a high school diploma by meeting/exceeding the Kentucky Minimum High School Graduation Requirements AND Meet the Requirements for Academic OR Career Readiness | | |
|--|---|---|
|  <h3>Academic Readiness</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Benchmarks, determined by Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) on a college admissions exam; OR ✓ A grade of B or higher in each course on 6 or more hours of KDE-approved dual credit; (Dual Credit will not be added until the 2018-2019 school year to allow for reliable data collection) OR ✓ A score of 3+ on exams in 2 or more Advanced Placement courses; OR ✓ A score of 5+ on 2 exams for International Baccalaureate courses; OR ✓ Benchmarks on 2 or more Cambridge Advanced International examinations; OR ✓ Completing a combination of academic readiness indicators listed above. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration of academic readiness shall include one quantitative reasoning or natural sciences and one written or oral communication, or arts and humanities, or social and behavioral sciences learning outcomes. |  <h3>Career Readiness</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Benchmarks on Industry Certifications (Approved by the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board on an annual basis)¹; OR ✓ Scoring at or above the benchmark on the Career and Technical Education End-of-Program Assessment for articulated credit; OR ✓ A grade of B or higher in each course on 6 or more hours of KDE-approved Career and Technical Education dual credit; (Dual Credit will not be added until the 2018-2019 school year to allow for reliable data collection) OR ✓ Completing a KDE/Education Workforce and Development Cabinet-approved apprenticeships; OR ✓ Completing a KDE-approved alternate process to verify exceptional work experience. (Exceptional work experience will not be added until the 2018-2019 school year to allow for reliable data collection). | <h3>English Language Readiness (only required for English Learners)</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Meeting exit criteria for English language proficiency assessment (Overall composite of a 4.5 on a Tier B/C) for any student who received English Language services during high school. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Language Learners are included in academic and career readiness in addition to English Language Readiness. |

¹Under the accountability system, schools earn a bonus for students completing industry certificates in one of the five high need sectors.

NOTE: Students participating in the alternate assessment program and earning an alternate diploma must meet criteria for Transition Readiness based on alternate assessment requirements and employability skills attainment.

Is the performance of different student groups reported?

Yes. For each state indicator, performance levels are provided for all students and for student groups at the school.

Which student groups are included?

Performance of the following student groups must be considered in the state accountability system:

- English learners
- Socioeconomically disadvantaged
- Students with disabilities
- Racial/ethnic groups, including:
 - African-American
 - American Indian/Alaska Native
 - Asian
 - Hispanic
 - Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
 - Two or more races
 - White
 - All students

What about the performance of other groups?

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires the performance of additional groups to be reported, but the groups are not included in accountability. Plans are for them to be included in the new online School Report Card later this year

- Male
- Female
- Foster youth
- Homeless youth
- Students with parents in the Armed Forces

How many students must be in a group before performance is reported?

Performance levels will be reported for all students and any student group that has at least 10 students

How do the indicators combine to determine overall performance?

The Kentucky Board of Education has approved the following approximate weights of each indicator, which combine to produce an overall performance determination.

| School level | Proficiency | Separate Academic Indicator | Growth | Transition Readiness | Graduation Rate | Achievement Gap Closure | Opportunity and Access |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Elementary/ Middle Schools | 15-25 | 15-25 | 20-30 | 5-10 ¹ | --- | 15-25 ¹ | 10-20 ¹ |
| High Schools | 10-40 | 10-20 | --- | 15-30 | 5-15 | 10-25 ¹ | 10-20 ¹ |
| Districts | 10-20 ² | 10-20 ² | 10-20 ² | 10-20 ² | 5-15 ² | 10-20 ² | 10-20 ² |

¹Prior to the inclusion of all the indicators in accountability, weights for these indicators will be redistributed across the current indicators.

²District accountability will not begin until the 2018-2019 school year.

How is overall performance reported?

Because we are transitioning to a new accountability system, for the 2017-2018 school year and not all indicators are included, schools will be identified only as needing Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI); Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI); or Other.

In future years, schools will be rated from 1 to 5 stars, representing the poorest to the best performing schools. Schools that are poorest performing or with poor performance in certain areas also will be identified for CSI and TSI and will receive support for improvement.

How does the state determine which schools qualify for Comprehensive Support and Improvement and how do they exit?

A school can be identified as in need of Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) if it meets *any one* of these criteria:

- **CSI I** – Student performance is as low as the bottom 5 percent of schools at the same grade level (elementary, middle and high school). CSI I schools are identified annually beginning in 2017-2018 for services in the 2018-19 school year.
- **CSI II** – Any high school with a graduation rate below 80 percent for high schools. CSI II schools are identified annually beginning in 2017-2018 for services in the 2018-19 school year.
- **CSI III** – Any school previously identified as a Tier II Targeted Support and Improvement school for at least three years that has not met exit criteria. **CSI III schools will be identified annually beginning in 2020-2021 for services in the 2021-2022 school year.**

To establish a profile of performance for CSI, a group of education stakeholders evaluated school performance data from the 2017-2018 school year today and made a recommendation on what it takes for a low-performing school to qualify for improvement support. The Kentucky Board of Education approved the cutscores on each of the indicators used for accountability. A school must perform below the cutscore on all three indicators to qualify as CSI. [A list of all Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools](#) is available on Open House under Accountability.

A school may exit Comprehensive Support and Improvement when it meets the criteria that put it in CSI.

- **CSI I** – When student performance is above the bottom 5 percent of schools and the school has demonstrated continued progress on the data that served as the basis for identification.
- **CSI II** – When a high school has a graduation rate above 80 percent and has demonstrated continued progress on the data that served as the basis for identification.
- **CSI III** – When all student group or groups' performance is above all students in any of the lowest 5 percent of schools and the school has demonstrated continued progress on the data that served as the basis for identification.

How does the state determine which schools qualify for Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) and how do they exit?

A school can be labeled for Targeted Support and Improvement if it meets the criteria.

- **Tier I** – One or more student groups performing as poorly as all students in any of the lowest-performing 10 percent of schools at the same grade level (elementary, middle and high school) for two consecutive years. **Tier I schools will be identified annually beginning in 2019-2020 for services in the 2020-2021 school year.**
- **Tier II** – One or more student groups performing as poorly as all students in any of the lowest-performing 5 percent of schools (CSI) at the same grade level (elementary, middle and high school). Tier II schools are identified annually beginning in 2017-2018 for services in the 2018-19 school year.

[A list of all Targeted Support and Improvement Schools](#) is available in Open House under accountability.

A school may exit Targeted Support and Improvement status when it meets these criteria:

- **Tier I** – When the underperforming student group or groups move above the performance level of all students in the bottom 10 percent of schools in Comprehensive Support and Improvement. Districts may require additional exit criteria for identified schools if they wish to apply more rigorous standards than the state minimum.
- **Tier II** – When the underperforming student group or groups move above the performance of all students in the bottom 5 percent of schools in Comprehensive Support and Improvement. The school also must demonstrate continued progress on the data that served as the basis for identification.

What test results are used for accountability?

Kentucky keeps its state testing to a minimum. With the exception of reading and mathematics, which is tests every year from grade 3 to grade 8 and once at the high school level, subjects are tested once at the elementary, middle and high school levels.

2017-2018 testing

| Grade | Reading | Math | Science | Social Studies | Writing | ACT exam | WIDA ACCESS 2.0 (English learners only) |
|----------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--|-----------|----------|---|
| 3 Grade | X | X | | | | | X |
| 4 Grade | X | X | X | | | | X |
| 5 Grade | X | X | | X | On-demand | | X |
| 6 Grade | X | X | | | | | X |
| 7 Grade | X | X | X | | | | X |
| 8 Grade | X | X | | X | On-demand | | X |
| 9 Grade | | | | No HS SS test until new standards in place | | | X |
| 10 Grade | | | | | | | X |
| 11 Grade | X ¹ | X ¹ | X ¹ | | On-demand | X | X |
| 12 Grade | | | | | | | X |

¹ No separate test. Scores taken from junior administration of ACT.

Will state testing change in the 2018-2019 school year?

Yes. High school students will participate in field tests for new Kentucky assessments in reading and math and take a new science test.

2018-2019 testing

| Grade | Reading | Math | Science | Social Studies | Writing | College admissions exam ¹ | WIDA ACCESS 2.0 (English learners only) |
|----------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 3 Grade | X | X | | | | | X |
| 4 Grade | X | X | X | | | | X |
| 5 Grade | X | X | | X | On-demand | | X |
| 6 Grade | X | X | | | | | X |
| 7 Grade | X | X | X | | | | X |
| 8 Grade | X | X | | X | On-demand | | X |
| 9 Grade | | | | No HS SS test until new standards) | | | X |
| 10 Grade | Field test of new exam | Field test of new exam | | | | X ² | X |
| 11 Grade | X ³ | X ³ | X (new test) | | On-demand | X | X |
| 12 Grade | | | | | | | X |

¹Test vendor to be determined

² Senate Bill 1 (2017) calls for a college entrance exam to be given in 10th grade. However, the test is dependent on state funding.

³Scores taken from junior administration of ACT.

What are Kentucky's long-term accountability goals?

Kentucky's long-term goals for academic achievement prioritize increasing the number of students from all student groups reaching proficient and distinguished performance on state tests, as well as reducing gaps in academic achievement between student groups by 50 percent by 2030. Each student group of 10 or more students shall be compared to a reference group, which is the highest-performing student group that is at least 10 percent of the student population.

Progress on long-term and interim goals will be reported publicly as required by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act. Goals will be developed for all students and every student group for academic achievement in each content area of reading, mathematics, science, social studies and writing; the content areas combined; 4- and 5-year graduation rates; and progress on English proficiency for English learners.

The goal for graduation rates for all students is 95 percent for the 4-year graduation rate and 96 percent for the 5-year graduation rate. Kentucky's long-term goal for English learners is to increase the proportion of students making significant progress toward becoming proficient in the English language.

Where can I find state, school and district accountability and assessment data?

Data files are available in [Open House](#) under Supplemental data. An overview of state data may be found in the state news release and Media Briefing Packet available on the [main communications page](#) on the Kentucky Department of Education website.

Why can't I see my school's 2017-2018 data in the online school report card?

Kentucky is in the process of developing a new, easier to use and understand online school report card. We anticipate it will go live with data from the 2017-2018 school year later in Dec. 2018.

What will the new Kentucky School Report Card look like?

The report card will give parents a quick overview of the things they care about at their school. It also will list accountability information for schools and districts, student performance data (by grade and student group) as well as financial and other data to give stakeholders a more balanced view of a school and how students are performing.

Mock up for demonstration only
Data shown in example is not based on actual scores.

KDE will be collecting feedback on the new School Report Card this year and using it to ensure the card is parent/community/educator-friendly.

