Understanding the New Mexico A-F School Grading System

Module 1
January, 2012
Goals

To develop an accountability model that:

– Correctly holds schools accountable for student learning.
– Captures important differences regarding achievement.
– Avoids classifying schools based on characteristics outside their control.
– Provides information for school improvement.
– Creates the correct motivations for improvement.
What Comprises a School Grade

A school’s grade consists of these sets of factors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Elementary and Middle Schools</th>
<th>High Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Standing</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
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<td>Graduation</td>
<td></td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College and Career Readiness</td>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicators and Points - Elementary &amp; Middle Schools</td>
<td>Points</td>
<td></td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Performance in Math &amp; Reading</strong></td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Proficient</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Current Standing</strong></td>
<td>40</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did students perform in the most recent school year?</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value added conditioning of proficiencies, accounting for school characteristics for the past 3 years.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Growth</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the past 3 years did schools increase grade level performance</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Value added conditioning of proficiencies, taking into account school characteristics for the past 3 years.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>School Growth of Highest Performing Students</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the school foster an environment that facilitates learning?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance for all students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom survey</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student and Parent Engagement</strong></td>
<td>+5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the school encourage students and parents to be involved?</td>
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<td>Indicators and Points - High Schools</td>
<td>Points</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Graduation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>How does the school contribute to on-time graduation?</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percent graduating in 4 years</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Percent graduating in 5 years</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Value added conditioning of school growth, taking into account school characteristics for the past 3 years.</td>
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<td><strong>Career and College Readiness</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are students prepared for what lies after high school?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of all students that participated in one of the alternatives</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of participants that met a success benchmark</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Opportunity to Learn</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the school foster an environment that facilitates learning?</td>
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What Comprises a School Grade?

A School’s grade consists of these sets of factors:

Based on NM SBA

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A School’s grade consists of these sets of factors:

Based on NM SBA

The general idea behind using the SBA to measure current standing and growth is that we can address:

- How a school’s students perform at the end of each year;
- How a school improves one year to the next; and,
- How individual students are learning from one year to the next.

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Hanna Skandera
Secretary of Education
Current Standing consists of two components:

1) Percent Proficient and
2) Conditional Status.

Current Standing reflects the following:
- Student performance in a single school year;
- A snapshot of student performance compared to mastery of grade level standards;
- Measuring how well a student is prepared for college and career; and
- Student performance compared to similar schools based on student enrollment characteristics.
Current Standing: Percent Proficient

There are two ways we might display status results for a school.

Chart A displays the average scale score at Example Elementary School, while chart B displays the same results as the percent of students who are proficient or advanced.

Chart A

Chart B
Chart A displays the average scale score at Example Elementary School, while chart B displays the same results as the percent of students who are proficient or advanced.

The percent proficient component uses the percentage of students that are proficient or advanced in math and reading and multiplies this by the points for that component.

Status Points =
   Pct Proficient or Advanced (in math) X points
   + Pct Proficient or Advanced (in Reading) X points.
Current Standing: Percent Proficient

For Example Elementary:

\[.60 \times 12.5 = 7.5\]
Current Standing: Percent Proficient

For Example Elementary:

\[.60 \times 12.5 = 7.5\]

\[+ .40 \times 12.5 = 5.0\]
Current Standing: Percent Proficient

For Example Elementary:

\[0.60 \times 12.5 = 7.5\]
\[+0.40 \times 12.5 = 5.0\]

Total \(= 12.5\)

For the percent proficient component of Status, Example Elementary received 12.5 points.

But current standing also includes conditional status, which we present next.
Current Standing: Conditional Status

The average scale score, or the percent proficient, provides one indicator of how students are performing at a given point in time.

However, in thinking about holding schools accountable for student performance, we also need to acknowledge that schools serve different populations. We know that student performance is influenced by many factors and we want to isolate, as much as possible, what the school contributes to the students’ scores.

This also “levels the playing field” by accounting for the different circumstances of students in our schools.
Current Standing: Conditional Status

Conditional status provides an estimate of current standing that takes into account the different circumstances, or conditions, of schools. It is a way of comparing like with like and so attempts to “level the playing field.”

We “level the playing field” by estimating conditional status. We would like to condition on as many influences on student academic achievement, that schools cannot reasonably be expected to control, as possible, but limit what we include to what research indicates is meaningful and by what data are reliably available.
We “level the playing field” by estimating conditional status. We would like to condition on as many influences on student scores that schools cannot reasonably be expected to control as possible, but limit what we include to what research indicates is meaningful and by what data are reliably available.

These influences, or student background characteristics, include:
- Gender;
- Race/ethnicity;
- Free/reduced price lunch status;
- Disability status;
- Language status;
- Full Academic Year Status; and
- Prior achievement.
Current Standing: Conditional Status

Conditional Status is estimated using the Value Added Model (VAM) described in Module 2.

The NM VAM estimates two related pieces of information:
1) Conditional status and
2) School Growth.

We will return to school growth in the “Growth” section and focus on Conditional Status for a moment.
Current Standing: Conditional Status

Including student background variables in the VAM to estimate the conditional status of a school in no way relates to different expectations for individual students. We expect every student to be college or career ready when they graduate high school.

To get a better understanding of what conditional information provides – we need to understand the Value Added Model (VAM) NM uses to estimate how schools are improving.

We detail VAM in Module 2
Current Standing: Conditional Status

The conditional status for each school is estimated by comparing predicted performance of each student to the actual score of each student.

The predictions are based on NM state averages.
Current Standing: Conditional Status

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The predictions are based on NM state averages.

The prediction for each student is based on the student background characteristics that schools cannot control.
For example, let’s compare two students who are not FAY.

And let’s assume that the predicted score in NM for a non-FAY is 34.

We can then compare how that student actually performed to what was predicted.

The student in School A scored 2 points better than predicted.

The student in School B scored 10 points better than predicted.
Value Added Models

For example, let’s compare two students who are not FAY.

And let’s assume that the predicted score in NM for a non-FAY is 34.

We can then compare how that student actually performed to what was predicted.

The student in School A scored 2 points better than predicted.

The student in School B scored 10 points better than predicted.

Module 2 presents the VAM in detail.
Current Standing: Conditional Status

Recall that Current Standing consists of two components:

1) Percent Proficient and
2) Conditional Status.

We have already assigned a school points for Percent Proficient.

But we need to assign a school points for conditional status

We do this in the next slide.
Current Standing: Conditional Status

Assigning a school points for conditional status:

The average conditional status score in New Mexico in 2010-2011 is 0.

Even without knowing a school’s score exactly, there are some things we can say in general:
Current Standing: Conditional Status

Assigning a school points for conditional status:

The average conditional status score in New Mexico in 2010-2011 is 0.

Even without knowing a school’s score exactly, there are some things we can say in general:

A school that scores about 0 is doing about as well as the average school in NM.

The average actual performance of students is about equal to what was predicted.
Current Standing: Conditional Status

Assigning a school points for conditional status:

The average conditional status score in New Mexico in 2010-2011 is 0.

Even without knowing a school’s score exactly, there are some things we can say in general:

A school that scores about 0 doing about as well as the average school in NM.

A School scoring above 0 is doing better than average.

The average actual performance of students is better than what was predicted.
Assigning a school points for conditional status:

The average conditional status score in New Mexico in 2010-2011 is 0.

Even without knowing a school’s score exactly, there are some things we can say in general:

A school that scores about 0 doing about as well as the average school in NM.

A School scoring above 0 is doing better than average.
A school scoring below 0 is doing worse than average.

The average actual performance of students is worse than what was predicted.
Assigning a school points for conditional status:

Schools receive points for conditional status in reading and math separately.

But we can’t simply multiply a school’s conditional status value by the number of points because:
Assigning a school points for conditional status:

Schools receive points for conditional status in reading and math separately.

But we can’t simply multiply a school’s conditional status value by the number of points because:

A) Schools at the average score a 0 and 0 X points = 0 points, not the average amount the school should receive.
Assigning a school points for conditional status:

Schools receive points for conditional status in reading and math separately.

But we can’t simply multiply a school’s conditional status value by the number of points because:

A) Schools at the average score a 0 and 0 X points = 0 points, not the average amount the school should receive.

B) A school below average would get negative points and we want to keep all scores positive.
Current Standing: Conditional Status

Assigning a school points for conditional status:

Rather than taking the raw conditional status value to assign points for the school grade, we calculate where a school's score would place the school in relation to all the schools in NM.
Assigning a school points for conditional status:

Rather than taking the raw conditional status value to assign points for the school grade, we calculate where a school’s score would place the school in relation to all the schools in NM.

Let’s say Example Elementary has a conditional status score of 3. A score of 3 puts Example Elementary in the top 20% of all elementary and middle schools in NM.
Assigning a school points for conditional status:

Rather than taking the raw conditional status value to assign points for the school grade, we calculate where a school's score would place the school in relation to all the schools in NM.

Let's say Example Elementary has a conditional status score of 3. A score of 3 puts Example Elementary in the top 20% of all elementary and middle schools in NM.

In other words Example Elementary is in the 80th percentile.
Current Standing: Conditional Status

Assigning a school points for conditional status:

In other words Example Elementary is in the 80th percentile.

We use this 80th percentile to calculate the points for conditional status for a school:
Assigning a school points for conditional status:

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We use this 80th percentile to calculate the points for conditional status for a school:

Math Points = 7.5 \times 0.80 = 6.
Assigning a school points for conditional status:

In other words Example Elementary is in the 80\textsuperscript{th} percentile.

We use this 80\textsuperscript{th} percentile to calculate the points for conditional status for a school:

Math Points = 7.5 \times 0.80 = 6.

The points for reading would be estimated the same way, and very likely would place a school at a different percentile and so it would receive a different number of points for reading.
Current Standing: Summary

Current standing includes points for the:

1) Percent Proficient and
2) Conditional Status.

Percent Proficient captures the importance of meeting grade level standards.

Conditional Status captures the idea that schools face different circumstances and that schools should not be disadvantaged simply because they serve more diverse students.
Growth

The School Grading system considers two types of growth:

1) School growth and
2) Individual student growth.
Growth

The School Grading system considers two types of growth:

1) School growth and
2) Individual student growth.

Compares groups of students over time. For example 3rd graders in 2009 to 3rd graders in 2010.

We base school growth on the NM Value Added Model (VAM) detailed in Module 2.

The school growth estimate is based on tracking the Conditional Status described above over a three year period.
Growth

The School Grading system considers two types of growth:

1) School growth and
2) Individual student growth.

Follows the scores of individual students over time estimates a achievement growth trajectory for each student.

We estimate student growth using a growth model.
Growth: School Growth

We assign points for school growth using the percentile rank just as we did for conditional status.

That is, we determine where a school’s growth estimate would place a school in relation to all schools in the state. We multiply the school’s percentile rank by the points possible (for reading and math separately – and them together to calculate that part of a school’s growth score.
Growth: School Growth

We assign points for school growth using the percentile rank just as we did for conditional status.

That is, we determine where a school’s growth estimate would place a school in relation to all schools in the state. We multiply the school’s percentile rank by the points possible (for reading and math separately – and them together to calculate that part of a school’s growth score.

Math school growth points = Percentile Rank X points.
For Example Elementary:

School growth equals 1, which places it in the top 40%, or the 60th percentile.

.60 X 10 = 6.0.
Growth: Individual Student Growth

We next consider individual student growth.

We use an individual student growth model to estimate the average growth over three years for each student.
Growth: Individual Student Growth

We next consider individual student growth.

We use an individual student growth model to estimate the average growth over three years for each student.

It is important to note that given the current scale of the SBA, 0 equals a year’s worth of growth.

Growth above 0 is more than a year’s worth of growth and growth below 0 is less than a year’s worth of growth.
We next consider individual student growth.

We use an individual student growth model to estimate the average growth over three years for each student.

A student growth model does not condition growth the same way the VAM does.

The growth model relies on the information that a student’s prior score history contains instead of conditioning performance on a set of student background variables.
Growth: Individual Student Growth

The only other information the growth model uses is whether or not the student attended the same school each year.
Growth: Individual Student Growth

The only other information the growth model uses is whether or not the student attended the same school each year and whether the student’s performance would have placed him in the bottom quartile (the lowest 25%) of student performance three years ago.
Growth: Individual Student Growth

The only other information the growth model uses is whether or not the student attended the same school each year and whether the student’s performance would have placed him in the bottom quartile (the lowest 25%) of student performance three years ago.

We estimate growth specifically for those students who were in the bottom quartile and separately for those students who were not in the bottom quartile for math and reading (separately as well).
Growth: Individual Student Growth

We estimate growth specifically for those students who were in the bottom quartile and separately for those students who were not in the bottom quartile for math and reading (separately as well).

For example Elementary, the growth estimate would be a single value that summarizes how much growth a student exhibited on average over three years.
Growth: Individual Student Growth

For example Elementary, the growth estimate would be a single value that summarizes how much growth a student exhibited on average over three years.

This represents an average growth rate of 6 points per year.

This might be how much growth the bottom quartile is achieving in reading at Example Elementary.
Growth: Individual Student Growth

Similar to how we generated points for school growth, we would compare the average growth in the state in reading among bottom quartile students and see where it falls in the distribution of all schools.

SBA Math Performance over Time

Growth Estimate
Growth: Individual Student Growth

Similar to how we generated points for school growth, we would compare the average growth in the state in reading among bottom quartile students and see where it falls in the distribution of all schools.

This amount of growth may place Example Elementary in the top 5%, or the 95th percentile.

So Example Elementary would receive 95% of the possible reading points for bottom quartile growth towards its school grade.
Growth: Individual Student Growth

So Example Elementary would receive 95% of the possible reading points for bottom quartile growth towards its school grade.

Example Elementary would receive:

\[ 0.95 \times 10 \text{ Points} = 9.5 \text{ points} \]

for growth of the bottom quartile in reading.
Other Indicators

Opportunity to Learn consists of two components:

1) Attendance and
2) Student Opportunity to Learn (OTL) Survey.
Other Indicators

Other indicators in Elementary and Middle School consist of two components:

1) Attendance and
2) Opportunity to Learn (OTL).

In High School there are two additional components:

1) Graduation and
2) College and Career Readiness.
Other Indicators: Attendance

Attendance is based on a target of a 95% attendance rate.
Other Indicators: Attendance

Attendance is based on a target of a 95% attendance rate.

Schools receive points based on a comparison of the actual attendance rate and the target.

If Example Elementary had a 90% attendance rate, it would earn

\[ \frac{90}{95} \times 5 \text{ points} = 4.74 \text{ points} \]

towards its school grade.
Other Indicators: OTL Survey

Student Opportunity to Learn (OTL) Survey is based on a survey of students, who are asked to indicate how often various teaching strategies take place.
Other Indicators: OTL Survey

Opportunity to Learn (OTL) is based on a survey of students, who are asked to indicate how often various teaching strategies take place.

For example:
My teacher introduces a new topic by connecting it to things I already know.

Or

My teacher gives me helpful feedback on work I turn in.
Other Indicators: OTL Survey

Opportunity to Learn (OTL) is based on a survey of students, who are asked to indicate how often various teaching strategies take place.

For example:
My teacher introduces a new topic by connecting it to things I already know.

Or

My teacher gives me helpful feedback on work I turn in.

Students choose from responses, such as:

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Other Indicators: OTL Survey

Opportunity to Learn (OTL) is based on a survey of students, who are asked to indicate how often various teaching strategies take place.

There are 10 questions and questions are worded slightly differently for elementary school students than for middle and high school students.

Questions are translated into Spanish.
Other Indicators: OTL Survey

Opportunity to Learn (OTL) is based on a survey of students, who are asked to indicate how often various teaching strategies take place.

Scores will be based on a school’s average score compared to the state average – and again assigning points based on the corresponding percentile rank:

OTL Percentile Rank X 5 points.
Other Indicators

We next turn to two indicators unique to high schools:

1) Graduation and
2) College and Career Readiness.
Other Indicators

Graduation

Schools receive points based on three components for graduation.

1) The four year graduation rate;
2) The five year graduation rate; and,
3) Growth in graduation rates over the past three years.
Other Indicators

Graduation

The basis for the four and five year rate is 95%.

For example a school with a 85% four year rate and a 95% five year rate would earn the following points:

Four year points = $\frac{85}{95} \times 8 = 3.58$
Five year points = $\frac{95}{95} \times 4 = 4.00$
Other Indicators: Graduation

Graduation

Schools also receive points for growth in graduation rates over the past three years.

For example, if a school had gradation rates of:

2009 -- 75%
2010 -- 77%
2011 -- 80%

It would have an average growth rate of 2.5%/year.
Other Indicators: Graduation

Graduation

Schools also receive points for growth in graduation rates over the past three years.

For example, if a school had graduation rates of

2009 -- 75%
2010 -- 77%
2011 -- 80%

It would have an average growth rate of 2.5%/year.

We would see how the 2.5 percent graduation rate growth compares with the rest of the schools in NM and use the percentile rank methodology again.
Other Indicators: College and Career Readiness

College and Career Readiness

This consists of two components:

1) Participation and
2) Success.
Other Indicators: College and Career Readiness

In general students may be enrolled in several college or career courses and may have success in one or more of these.

The school grading model counts each student once, and therefore, a student’s BEST outcome is used for participation and success.
Other Indicators: College and Career Readiness

College and Career Readiness

Both participation and success use percents of students to calculate points towards the school grade.

For Participation, the percent of 9-12 grade students who participate in college prep activities and/or career courses is the value multiplied by 5:

Number of students in eligible courses  X 5 points
Total 9-12 grade enrollment
Other Indicators: College and Career Readiness

College and Career Readiness

Both participation and success use percents of students to calculate points towards the school grade.

For Success, the population consists of the students that attempted a college course, career prep curriculum, or college admission assessment. The percentage is computed from those students that met a benchmark for participation.

The percent of successful students is multiplied by 10. For students that have participated in multiple college/career efforts, their best single outcome is used. Each student is counted only once in the denominator:

\[
\text{Number of students successfully meeting benchmarks} \times 10 \text{ points} \div \text{Number of student participating (numerator from participation)}
\]
A-F School Grading Summary

A detailed table of the points schools can earn for each component of a school’s grade is detailed for Elementary/Middle Schools and High Schools in the following two slides.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance in Math &amp; Reading</td>
<td>Percent Proficient</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Standing</td>
<td>Value added conditioning of proficiencies, accounting for school characteristics for the past 3 years.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Growth</td>
<td>Value added conditioning of proficiencies, taking into account school characteristics for the past 3 years.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Growth of Highest Performing Students</td>
<td>Value added conditioning of proficiencies, taking into account school characteristics for the past 3 years.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Growth of Lowest Performing Students</td>
<td>Value added conditioning of proficiencies, taking into account school characteristics for the past 3 years.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to Learn</td>
<td>Attendance for all students</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student and Parent Engagement</td>
<td>Does the school encourage students and parents to be involved?</td>
<td>Bonus Points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 100
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Calculation</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Performance in Math &amp; Reading</strong></td>
<td>Percent Proficient</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Standing</strong></td>
<td>Value added conditioning of proficiencies, accounting for school characteristics for the past 3 years.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Growth of Highest Performing Students</strong></td>
<td>Value added conditioning of proficiencies, taking into account school characteristics for the past 3 years.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Growth of Lowest Performing Students</strong></td>
<td>Value added conditioning of proficiencies, taking into account school characteristics for the past 3 years.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graduation</strong></td>
<td>Percent graduating in 4 years</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Growth of Lowest Performing Students</strong></td>
<td>Value added conditioning of school growth, taking into account school characteristics for the past 3 years.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Career and College Readiness</strong></td>
<td>Percent of all students that participated in one of the alternatives</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Growth of Lowest Performing Students</strong></td>
<td>Value added conditioning of school growth, taking into account school characteristics for the past 3 years.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunity to Learn</strong></td>
<td>Attendance for all students</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Growth of Lowest Performing Students</strong></td>
<td>Value added conditioning of school growth, taking into account school characteristics for the past 3 years.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student and Parent Engagement</strong></td>
<td>Bonus Points</td>
<td>+5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>