



The A-F Letter Grade System

Revised 07/20/2012



August 2, 2012

Dear Parents and Education Stakeholders:

It is my great pleasure to introduce you to the A-F Accountability System for schools. Included in this A-F Letter Grade Accountability System Guide you'll find answers to commonly asked questions, learn how the letter grade scoring system works and see how points received by a school translate to a corresponding letter grade.

Letter grades should be used as just one measure of how well a school is performing. With the new A-F system, parents benefit by having, at their fingertips, an easy-to-understand, equitable school grading system when deciding which educational environment best meets their children's needs. Schools benefit by identifying both areas of strength and areas that need improvement.

To hold schools accountable in a fair and equitable fashion, each school is equally evaluated both on how many of its students are passing AIMS each year and how much its students academically grow each year. Other factors such as dropout rate, graduation rate and English language learner reclassification rate are taken into consideration, when applicable.

While schools cannot control the knowledge level of new students (students starting kindergarten or transfer students), they can affect and are responsible for how much their full-academic year students learn from one grade to the next. The new accountability system measures and compares this student learning on a school-by-school basis.

All students deserve a quality public education that moves them academically ahead every year. The new letter grade accountability system measures that progress, grading schools on an intuitive and fair A to F scale. In the end, information obtained from the new A-F letter grade system will serve as an important starting point for parents making decisions about their children's education.

Empowering parents with useful information is a top priority. Collaborating with schools to ensure every student has access to an excellent education is essential.

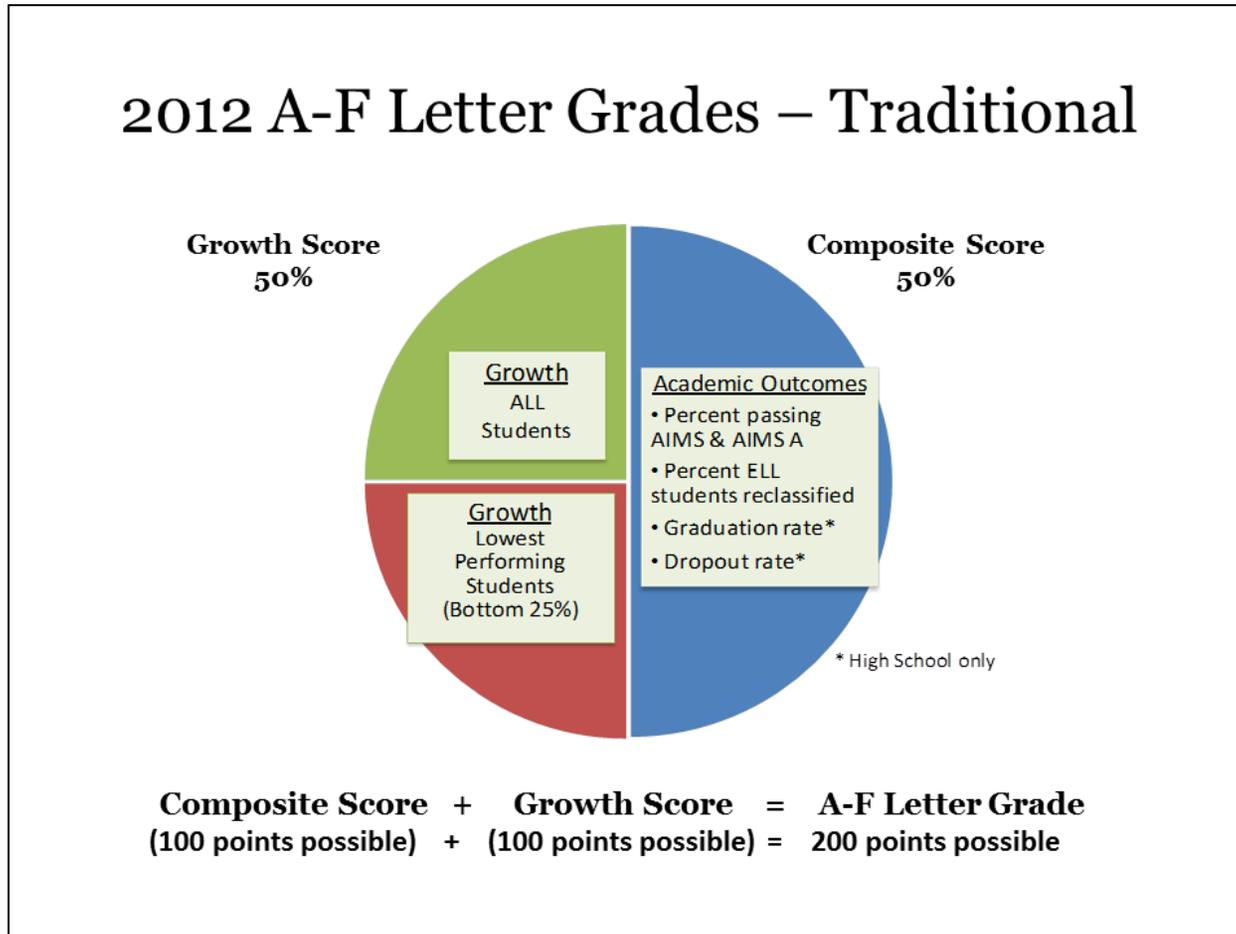
Sincerely,



John Huppenthal
Superintendent of Public Instruction



A-F Letter Grade Models and Components – Traditional Schools



Academic growth is determined by comparing the change in AIMS test scores from one year to the next for similarly achieving students across the state. This is done to evaluate how well a school is growing its students, academically, as they advance from one grade to the next.



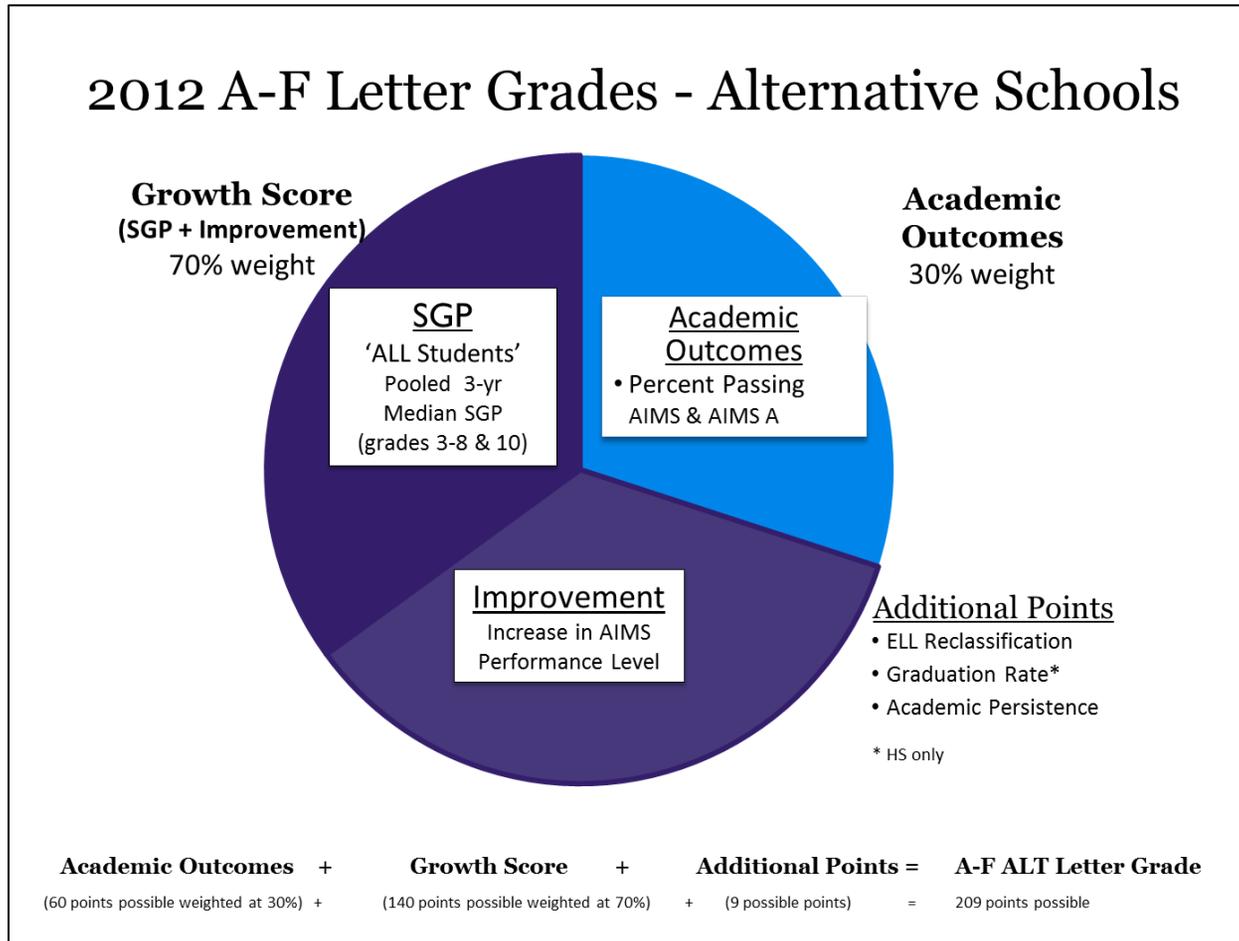
A-F Letter Grade Models and Components – Traditional Schools

Grade	Total Score*
A	140-200
B	120-139
C	100-119
D	0-99

**These scores were approved by the AZ State Board of Education.*



A-F Letter Grade Models and Components – Alternative Schools



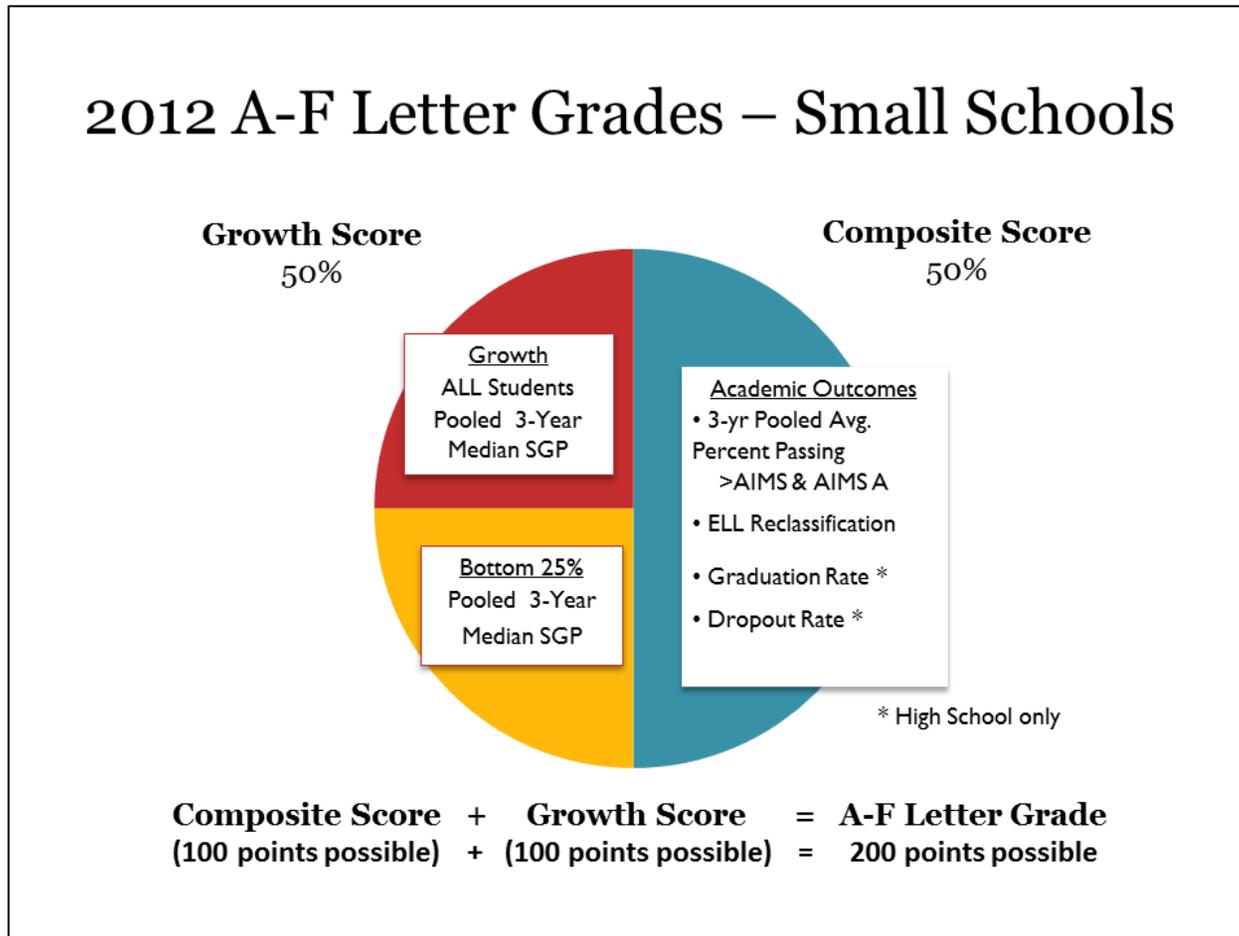
A-F Letter Grade Models and Components – Alternative Schools

Grade	Total Score*
A	167-200
B	132-166
C	97-131
D	0-96

**These scores are applicable for 2012.*



A-F Letter Grade Models and Components – Small Schools



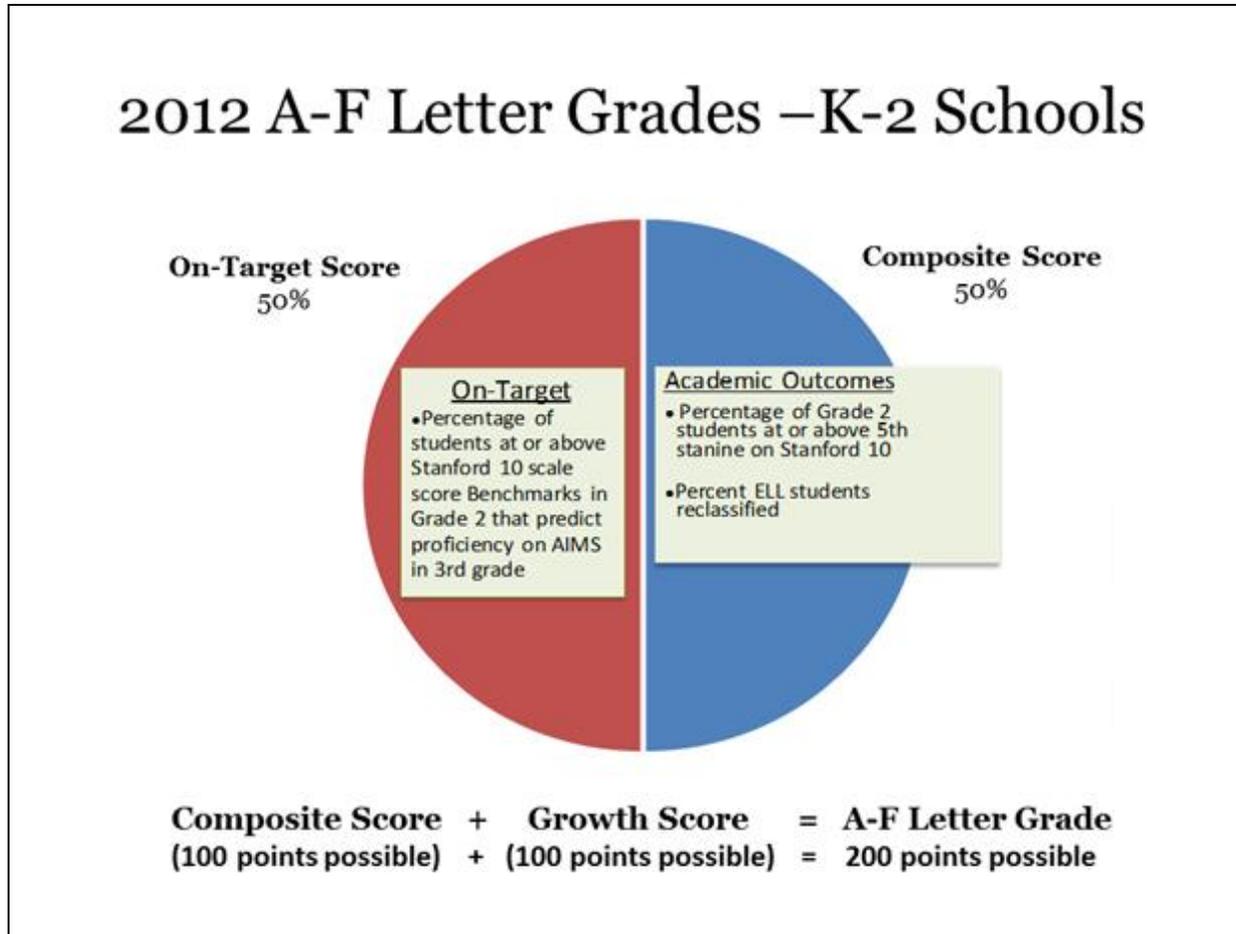
A-F Letter Grade Models and Components – Small Schools

Grade	Total Score*
A	140-200
B	120-139
C	100-119
D	0-99

**These scores were approved by the AZ State Board of Education.*



A-F Letter Grade Models and Components – K-2 Schools



A-F Letter Grade Models and Components – K-2 Schools

Grade	Total Score*
A	167-200
B	123-166
C	79-122
D	0-78

**These scores were approved by the AZ State Board of Education.*



Q&A

Q: *When was Arizona's A-F Letter Grade System created?*

A: Governor Brewer signed SB 1286 into law in 2010, after it was passed by the Arizona state legislature.

Q: *Why was the A-F Letter Grade System created?*

A: The A-F Letter Grade System was created to provide clear, easy-to understand information to parents so that they could base their educational decisions on the best information available about the overall academic performance of schools and districts/charter holders.

Q: *What is the difference between AZ LEARNS Legacy and the A-F Letter Grade System?*

A: The AZ LEARNS Legacy accountability system used students' scores on the AIMS tests to determine which of the achievement profiles the school would receive. The A-F Letter Grade System uses a combination of students' scores on the AIMS tests (50 percent) and the academic growth of students from one year to the next (50 percent). This more complete view of student learning provides a clearer picture of how well schools and districts/charter holders are educating their students.

Q: *How were the A-F Letter Grades developed?*

A: Based on SB 1286, the Arizona State Board of Education adopted the formula and created the following descriptions for the A-F Letter Grades:

"A" schools demonstrate an excellent level of performance. For example, "A" schools earn points equal to a school that has 90 percent of students passing AIMS and achieves greater academic growth with its population of students than most schools.

"B" schools demonstrate an above average level of performance. For example, "B" schools earn points equal to a school that has 70 percent of students passing AIMS and generally achieves typical or greater academic growth with its population of students than most schools.

"C" schools demonstrate an average level of performance. For example, "C" schools earn points equal to a school that has 50 percent of students passing AIMS and generally achieves typical academic growth with its population of students than most schools.

"D" schools demonstrate a below average level of performance. For example, "D" schools earn fewer points than a school that has 50 percent of students passing AIMS and does not achieve typical or greater academic growth with its population of students than most schools.

"F" schools are those that score as a "D" school for three consecutive years. "F" schools are placed in school improvement by the Arizona Department of Education.

