

2012 Update on Technical Processes in Colorado School Grades

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The 2012 Colorado School Grades were calculated in a very similar manner as the 2011 grades. There were small changes made to the grading method to account for changes made to the input data by the Colorado Department of Education.

The basic grading procedure continues to rank schools based on their scores and assigns grades based on the Colorado School Grades grading curve. The same grade curve was used in 2012 as in 2011. Please refer to the December 1, 2011 technical processes memo for a complete description of grading methodology.

Changes in Input Data

The input data used for the Colorado School Grades comes from the School Performance Framework (SPF) created by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) as part of the state's accountability system. The SPF provides information on school performance and rates each school in one of four categories ranging from lowest to highest: Turnaround, Priority Improvement, Improvement, and Performance.

Colorado's No Child Left Behind waiver unifies the federal and state accountability systems. Several changes were made to the SPF as part of the waiver, details about these changes can be found on the CDE web site at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/Accountability/NCLBWaiver.asp>. The change that has the largest impact on Colorado School Grades is the inclusion of growth on an English language proficiency assessment (CELApro) as part of the growth measure component of the SPF.

The other change made to the state's accountability framework is the inclusion of disaggregated graduation rates in the postsecondary and workforce readiness indicator.

Changes to Colorado School Grades Methodology

There are three primary changes to Colorado School Grades based on these changes to the input data:

First, Colorado School Grades uses the growth data provided by CELApro to provide a separate growth grade for English Language Learners. This is only possible when the school meets the minimum student count of 20. This grade is calculated in the same fashion as all other components within Colorado



School grades. As the English language growth is part of the growth indicators in the SPF, this data is also counted as part of the growth subgrade and overall grade for schools in Colorado School Grades.

Second, the Colorado School Grades methodology will now grade middle schools separately from elementary schools. This change was done to more closely match state's methodology for the SPF.

Third, Colorado School Grades will factor the new disaggregated graduation rate data into the calculation of a school's overall grade. However, the disaggregated graduation rates, other than the English Language Learners, will not be reported.