

This document describes final changes to the methodology for the 2012-13 Elementary/Middle/K-8 Progress Reports, and provides answers to frequently asked questions. **Changes to the Proposed Changes document published in April are reflected in bold underlined text.** These changes build on the methodology described in the [Educator's Guide to the 2011-12 Elementary/Middle/K-8 Progress Report](#). Through meetings with principals and community members conducted throughout April and May, we collected feedback about the proposed changes published in April. The final changes below take this feedback into account. If you have questions, please email PR_Support@schools.nyc.gov.

Next-Level Readiness and Long-Term Growth

As schools transition to the Common Core Learning Standards, expectations shift from year-to-year test score improvement to long-term growth and preparation for college and careers. The changes described below are designed to recognize and encourage this shift.

Middle School Readiness (Elementary School Progress Report) – Phase-In Metric

The change is adding an unscored phase-in metric to the Additional Information page of the Elementary School Progress Reports. The goal of this change is to raise the bar for student achievement and promote college and career readiness. To be college-ready, a student first needs to be ready for the steps that precede college, including middle school and high school.

- **Middle School Core Course Pass Rates of Former Students (Phase-In Metric – 0 points):** The percentage of the school's 2011-12 5th graders who, as 6th graders in 2012-13, received a passing grade in a full year core course in the four main subjects (English, math, science, and social studies). This metric will account for the middle schools students attend by adjusting for the average core course pass rate of similar students at the middle school. This metric will be reported but not scored in 2012-13. This metric is intended to be included as a scored metric in 2013-14.

High School Readiness (K-8/MS Progress Reports)

Last year, one new scored high school readiness metric (Percent of 8th Graders Earning High School Credit) was added to the Closing the Achievement Gap section and one new unscored high school readiness phase-in metric (9th Grade Credit Accumulation of Former 8th Graders) was added to the Additional Information page for the Middle School and K-8 Progress Reports. The goal of these changes was to raise the bar for student achievement and promote college and career readiness. This year, for the first time, 9th Grade Credit Accumulation of Former 8th Graders will be counted in the Closing the Achievement Gap section as a scored metric worth up to 1 point. The high school readiness metrics for 2012-13 include the following, worth a total of 2 points:

- **9th Grade Credit Accumulation of Former 8th Graders (1 point in Closing the Achievement Gap):** The percentage of the school's 2011-12 8th graders who, in 2012-13, earned 10 high school credits with six credits in at least three of the four main subjects (English, math, science, and social studies). Students who are not in a NYC DOE high school in 2012-13 are excluded. This metric was reported but not scored on the 2011-12 Progress Report.

Research indicates that the quality of the middle school a student attends is a strong predictor of early high school success regardless of the high school the student attends. In addition, the quality of instruction and the policies of the high schools students attend are likely to have some impact on these metric results. To address this issue, the metric will account for the high schools students attend by adjusting for the average credit accumulation of similar students at the high school. The metric is intended to reward schools that are preparing students for success in high school, and to encourage the academic, advising, and middle-to-high school bridge work that makes that success more likely.

Scoring: This metric will be scored by comparing a school's result to the historical results of its peer schools (at 75% weight) and to the historical results of all City middle or K-8 schools (at 25% weight). This is the same scoring methodology as the methodology used for the Percent of 8th Graders Earning High School Credit metric and the Student Progress, Student Performance, and School Environment sections.

- **Percent of 8th Graders Earning High School Credit (1 point):** No change for 2012-13. We will change this metric in 2013-14 to eliminate the incentive for students to take the new common core Algebra Regents in 8th grade by giving students credit for strong performance on the 8th grade math test.

Long-Term Growth (K-8/MS) – Phase-In Metric

The change is adding an unscored phase-in metric that will measure how much students' test scores improve from the time they enter school in sixth grade to the time they graduate from middle school. The purpose of the change is to recognize that schools need time to make progress with students and to shift focus away from year-to-year test results to long-term growth and preparation for college and careers. This metric will serve as a culminating metric on the Middle School Progress Report—similar to graduation rate on the high school report—which will evaluate the important work middle schools are doing to prepare their students for high school throughout all the middle school years.

- **Long-Term Growth (Phase-In Metric – 0 points):** Report four new progress metrics based on long-term growth percentiles on the Additional Information page—ELA and math growth for all students in the school, and ELA and math growth for students in the school's lowest third. Long-term growth percentiles measure a student's growth from 4th/5th grade (the two years would be averaged as a baseline) to 8th grade, and therefore would focus on students in the 8th grade only. **Students must have been on the school's audited register for the two most recent school years to be included in this metric. Students enrolled at the school for less than this minimum will not be included.**

Peering Methodology

The change is a new peering methodology that better groups schools with those that are more demographically similar to each other.

Current Methodology:

- Peer schools have populations with the most similar *combination* of the student characteristics included in the peer index formula.
- Student population characteristics are combined into a single number using a linear formula:
Elementary/K-8 Peer Index = (Economic Need Index * 30) + (Percent students with disabilities * 30) + (Percent Black/Hispanic students * 30) + (Percent English language learners * 10)
Middle School Peer Index: (Average 4th grade English and Math proficiency) – (2 * Percent students with disabilities)

New Methodology:

- Peer schools have populations that are most similar across every student characteristic used for peering.
- For each student population characteristic, the mathematical difference between a given school’s result and that of all other potential peers is calculated separately. These differences are combined to create peer groups consisting of schools with the smallest difference on all characteristics.
- For Middle school peering, the methodology will no longer combine average 4th grade ELA/Math proficiency into one indicator. The new methodology will have two indicators; one for average 4th grade ELA proficiency and one for average 4th grade Math proficiency.
- Additionally, the change will add the % overage at Middle schools as an indicator in the peer grouping. Principals indicated, and research confirms, that students that are overage in middle school have lower outcomes than otherwise similar students. The inclusion of this indicator ensures that schools serving these students are evaluated fairly and accurately.

Examples:

ES/K-8

	Current Peering			New Peering		
	School A	School B [Old Peer]	Difference	School A	School C [New Peer]	Difference
Economic Need Index	0.91	0.86	-0.05	0.91	0.93	0.02
% IEP	21.7%	13.9%	-7.8%	21.7%	22.4%	0.7%
% ELL	13.9%	46.1%	32.2%	13.9%	13.7%	-0.2%
% Black or Hispanic	95.7%	99.2%	3.5%	95.7%	96.6%	0.9%

MS

	Current Peering			New Peering		
	School A	School B [Old Peer]	Difference	School A	School C [New Peer]	Difference
4 th Grade Proficiency	2.79	3.11	0.32	2.79	2.75	-0.04
% IEP	15.8%	29.8%	14.0%	15.8%	18.6%	2.8%
% Overage	13%	2%	-11%	13%	11%	-2%

School Environment

The NYC School Survey score contributes 10 points to the School Environment section grade. The change is that the weightings of responses in the survey scoring methodology will be adjusted. The new scoring methodology will change the point values of the responses so that “disagree” and “strongly disagree” will be treated more similarly than “disagree” and “agree.” The following table shows the former and new weight for each survey response option:

Response	Current Weight	New Weight
Strongly Agree	10	10
Agree	6.7	7.5
Disagree	3.3	2.5
Strongly Disagree	0	0

The Progress Report will also report results broken out by constituent group on the Additional Information page (unscored).

Finally, a school that serves grades 6-12 or K-12 will receive two separate survey reports: one for the middle (or K-8) school and one for the high school. In those cases, the first report will be based on the students in grades K-8 only and the high school report will be based on the students in grades 9-12 only. This change responds to feedback from principals that receiving separate reports will facilitate the process of using the data to target school improvements. **Although schools will receive separate reports, survey scores for these school types will continue to be based on the aggregate survey score for the entire school.**

We will analyze this year’s survey results to determine if new survey domains should be used going forward. New survey domains, including a college and career readiness domain, may be introduced next year based on an analysis of this year’s results.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How will grades be determined for 2012-13?

The percentage of schools eligible for each letter grade will continue to be based on a set grade distribution resulting in 25% of elementary/middle/K-8 schools receiving As, 35% Bs, 30% Cs, 7% Ds and 3% receiving Fs.

2. How will the new state tests impact the Progress Report?

As curriculum and assessments align to the Common Core, accountability measures are also evolving to align to the Common Core. To ensure that no school is penalized solely for the changes to the state tests, the Progress Report will continue to control for changes in the state tests in two ways:

- Each school’s performance is compared to that of other schools. Schools whose test scores are lower than in past years can continue to perform well on the Progress Report if their students’ performance and progress are higher relative to schools serving similar students.

- The distribution of elementary/middle/K-8 schools' grades will remain fixed - there will not be an increase in the percentage of schools that receive low grades.

3. *How will the Progress Report be impacted by Hurricane Sandy or the bus strike?*

To ensure that no school is penalized for events outside their control, adjustments may be made to all schools and/or schools that were impacted uniquely by these circumstances. An example of an adjustment under consideration is removing November attendance data from schools' attendance rate metric values. Final adjustments will be based on an evaluation of attendance results and will be described in the email accompanying the Preliminary Workbook, as well as in the 2012-13 Educator Guide.

4. *How will the NYC DOE ensure that the core course passing rates reflect rigorous learning standards?*

At the beginning of the 2011-12 school year, updated expectations for grading policies were distributed to schools, networks, and superintendents. This guidance states that schools' grading policies must be based primarily on student mastery of the New York State learning standards and on progress toward meeting those standards. Schools are required to document grading policies that provide clear expectations for learning and make them transparent to staff, students, and families. Maintaining quotas for passing students is not allowed. The DOE is increasing oversight of schools' grading policies and schools have been informed that they may be asked to provide documentation of grading policies for review to justify student course performance results.

In addition, the Progress Report team will again be reviewing the course results for the 2012-13 school year. If cases are discovered where course passing rates are far out of alignment with both state exam performance and state exam progress, the Progress Report team may redistribute points from the course metrics to the exam metrics for those schools, as was the case in 2011-12.

5. *How will the Middle School Core Course Pass Rates of Former Students metric account for the middle school students attend?*

To account for the middle school students attend, each student's core course pass rate will be divided by the average core course pass rate of students with a similar incoming proficiency at the middle school the student attends to determine the student's contribution to the metric. Each student has a maximum contribution of 100% on the metric. Individual student contributions are averaged to determine the school's metric value.

6. *How will the 9th Grade Credit Accumulation of Former 8th Graders metric account for the high school students attend?*

To account for the high school students attend, each student's credit accumulation rate will be divided by the average credit accumulation rate of students with a similar incoming proficiency at the high school the student attends to determine the student's contribution to the metric. Each student has a maximum contribution of 100% on the metric. Only students that earn 8 or more credits are eligible for the adjustment. Individual student contributions are averaged to determine the school's metric value.

7. *How will the Student Work Pilot be incorporated into the Elementary School Progress Report?*

Schools will receive recognition on the Additional Information page for their participation in the Student Work Pilot. The Student Work Pilot was open to all elementary schools in the 2012-13 school year. Culminating assignments or assessments, rubrics, and corresponding graded student work submitted by participating schools each are being evaluated based on alignment to the expectations of the Common Core and then will be assigned a composite score. The DOE will use findings from the pilot to determine how DOE

accountability measures can incorporate evidence of student performance directly from classrooms.

8. *How can I receive additional support in understanding these changes?*

Please contact your network accountability liaison or email PR_support@schools.nyc.gov with any questions or feedback.