

Utah Comprehensive Accountability System

UCAS

53A-1-1101 – 1113

Overview of Utah Comprehensive Accountability System

With the passage of state statute [53A-1-1101-1113](#) in March 2011, efforts began to develop a new comprehensive system. The USOE assembled a committee of policy makers, education leaders, and stakeholders from across the state. The committee, with technical assistance provided by the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, developed a comprehensive accountability system for Utah’s schools which incorporated the following design principles:

1. Promote progress toward and achievement of college and career readiness
2. Value both meeting standards (proficiency) and improving academic achievement (growth)
3. All schools, including those that serve traditionally low performing students, should have an opportunity to demonstrate success
4. Strong incentives for schools to improve achievement for the lowest performing students
5. Growth expectations for non-proficient students should be linked to attaining proficiency
6. Growth expectations for all students, including students above proficiency, should be appropriately challenging and meaningful
7. Clear and understandable to stakeholders

The resulting accountability system provides a straightforward determination of school performance and supports the design principles by valuing performance on state tests, prioritizing individual student growth toward meaningful achievement targets, promoting equity for low performing students, and incentivizing attainment of graduation and college/career readiness. The UCAS components and details have been reviewed and/or approved by:

- Legislative Education Interim Committee, November 2011
- State Board of Education, October 2011
- Policy Advisory Committee, January 2012
- Technical Advisory Committee, January 2012
- LEA Assessment and Accountability Directors, July 2012

Components

UCAS is centered on two components: achievement and growth, with readiness accounting for half of the achievement scores in high schools. Points allocated to each component are depicted in figure 1 for elementary and middle schools and figure 2 for high schools.

Figure 1: Structure of Elementary and Middle School Accountability Model.

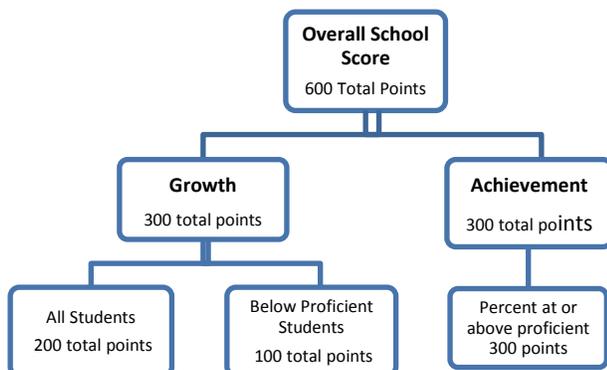
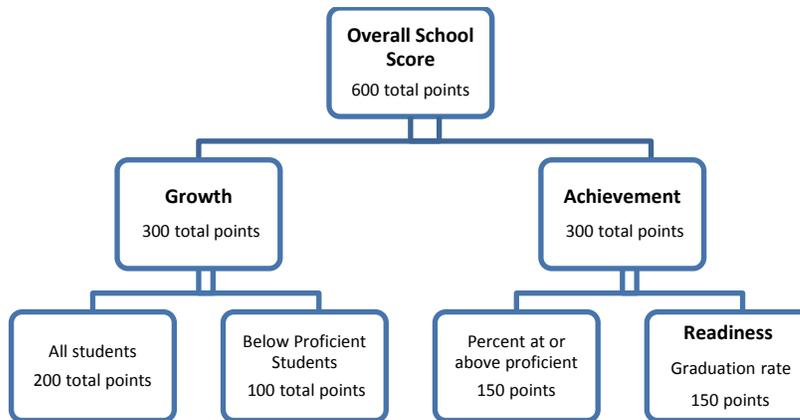


Figure 2: Structure of High School Accountability Model



Achievement

Achievement is measured as the percent of students scoring at or above proficient for all English language arts, mathematics, and science Criterion-Referenced Tests (CRTs) or on the NWEA adaptive assessment for the pilot schools and the direct writing assessment (DWA) in applicable grades. In grades with no DWA, each content area is weighted equally (one third). When the DWA is included, it counts for one half of the weight of one CRT content area. The weighted percent proficient is scaled such that a maximum of 300 points is attainable.

Readiness

Readiness accounts for 150 of the 300 points for high schools in the achievement component. The readiness component is the graduation rate calculation.

Growth

The Student Growth Percentile (SGP) method provides the basis for measuring academic growth. Student growth is determined by comparing each student's progress with other students in the state with the same prior achievement pattern. SGPs provide a familiar basis to interpret performance, the percentile, which indicates the probability of an outcome given the student's starting point and can be used to gauge whether the student's growth was atypically high or low. To evaluate growth for a school, the median of all individual SGPs is calculated and evaluated against a rubric. This rubric provides higher points for a rate of growth that is associated with attaining or maintaining proficiency. This process is completed for all students at the school and for only those students who are non-proficient. The overall outcome for growth is a whole-school score with a maximum value of 200 and a non-proficient student score with a maximum value of 100, for a total of 300 growth points available.

Composite Score

Performance in achievement and growth are summed to produce an overall composite score and a percentile ranking.

Reporting

Utah's current dynamic public data system, the Utah Public School Data Gateway, and Utah's educator data site, the USOE Data Display, will be used to display the Comprehensive Accountability System school report card. This electronic report card allows for dynamic reporting that includes pop up definitions and drill down disaggregation. The drillable reports will include the composite score, achievement score, progress score and percentile ranking. Additional data not used in the accountability calculations and detailed subgroup data will be prominently displayed.