

5. The numerator for participation is the count of all valid and scorable tests. Students who received an ELA exemption (TC=3) are counted for participation provided they have successfully completed the English language proficiency examination in lieu of the ELA assessment.
6. Students who are FAY=Y at one school (their *Accountable School*), but take the test at another school, are reassigned to their accountable school. Students who are FAY=N are assigned an accountable school based on their enrollment status closest to their testing date.
7. Examinees whose tests are invalidated for various reasons (see *IV. Conditioning of Data, TC Codes*) do not receive a score and do not count in the numerator for participation.
8. Examinees whose tests are exempted (*Medical Exemption, ELA Exemption, 9th Grade Spanish ELA Exemption, Course Less than 50% Complete Exemption*) are excused from both the numerator and the denominator of the participation rate.
9. Students who were identified as having transferred out of the system are excused from both the numerator and the denominator of the participation rate.
10. Participation rates are not computed for schools with only grades earlier than third grade. These schools, sometimes called “feeder schools” are exempted from the participation rate requirement.
11. A participation penalty is applied only to schools with 100 or more eligible students.
12. Schools designated as SAM schools are excused from the participation penalty.

VIII. LEA Grades

Local educational agency (LEA) report cards are required by federal statute: Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) section 1111(h)(2) as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act. Grades in the report cards have been calculated and reported since 2012 using the method that follows.

1. LEA grades are calculated and published annually after A-F School Grading appeals for schools have been fully adjudicated, typically in September.
2. Summary letter grades are calculated for multi-school LEAs. State-authorized charter schools qualify as a single-school LEA. Therefore these schools’ A-F School Grading letter grade serves as their LEA rating and an additional score is not needed.
3. The LEA grade results from a weighted average of the schools within the district.
 - A. The process weights only the schools’ overall points and not individual component scores (e.g., *Q1 Student Growth*).
 - B. Because the LEA’s average is weighted by the school’s size, larger schools contribute more to the LEA grade than smaller schools.
 - C. The weight for each school is derived from the number of students in kindergarten through grade 12. Student counts are derived from the STARS 120D snapshot for the year of the accountability assessment.
 - D. Weighting ensures that the LEA is held accountable for all of their students and that each student carries the same weight.
 - E.

4. The LEA's weighted overall score is converted to a letter grade using a framework that is a compromise between the two models used in school grading. Elementary and middle schools have slightly different cut points for letter grades than do high schools. The LEA points are rounded to a single decimal (i.e., tenths) prior to the assignment of a letter grade.
5. Like schools, LEAs must meet the 95% participation threshold. Failure of an LEA to test the minimum percentage of eligible students results in lowering the letter grade by one. The participation rate calculation follows the procedure for schools except for the following:
 - A. Students in off-site settings (i.e., correctional facilities, treatment centers, homebound, or hospitalized) are included.
 - B. Three-year averaging is not applied.

LEA Letter Grade Framework

Grade	Overall Points
A	75.0 or More
B	62.5 to 74.9
C	50.0 to 62.4
D	36.2 to 49.9
F	36.1 or Less

Participation failures are noted on the reporting of the LEA grades by an asterisk with a footnote: "This LEA's grade was lowered by one letter because it failed to test 95% of all students."

Illustration of LEA Grade Weighting

School	Y Overall Points	Z Enrollment (N)	Y x Z	Averaged Total Points Per Student (13,000/200)	The final score of 65.0 yields an LEA letter grade of B.
Hilltop	60	100	6,000		
Elm	70	50	3,500		
Cedar	70	50	3,500		
		200	13,000	65.0	

The weighted mean score is 65.0 which produces the letter grade of B. An unweighted mean of the three schools would be 66.7 [(60+70+70)/3]. However, because Hilltop had twice as many students as the other two schools the weighted mean shifts slightly toward that school's overall score.

In practice, the overall points are computed using 14 decimal places until arriving at the final *Averaged Total Points per Student*, at which time the points are rounded to the nearest tenth prior to the assignment of a letter grade.