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High-Growth High Schools in Arkansas Based on Performance on the ACT Aspire Examinations

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ARKANSAS EDUCATION REPORT
Volume 16, Issue 4

**OUTSTANDING EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE AWARDS:
HIGHLIGHTING HIGH-GROWTH ARKANSAS SCHOOLS, 2018**

**HIGH-GROWTH HIGH SCHOOLS IN ARKANSAS
BASED ON PERFORMANCE ON THE ACT
ASPIRE EXAMINATIONS**

November 28, 2018

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INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Office for Education Policy is to examine educational issues through the lens of academic research and disseminate our findings to educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders around Arkansas. Annually, we highlight excellent schools around the state in our **Outstanding Educational Performance Awards**, or the OEP awards.

This edition of the **OEP Awards** highlights schools in Arkansas based on student growth on the ACT Aspire exams in Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA). This is a departure from prior awards, which were based on student proficiency.

We choose to focus on student growth for these OEP awards because we think it is a better reflection than proficiency rates of how the school is impacting students. Growth is calculated at the student level, and essentially reflects how much a student improved his or her score from the prior year compared to what was predicted based on prior achievement history. Proficiency rates, even those that move beyond the ‘percent proficient’ like our OEP GPA and Arkansas’ weighted achievement score, are more correlated with student demographics than growth scores. This means that schools can demonstrate high student growth regardless of the characteristics of the students that they serve.

In the 2017-18 academic year, ACT Aspire examinations were administered to students in grades 3 through 10 in Math, Reading, Writing, English and Science. For the purposes of this report, the scores obtained in Reading, Writing and English were combined to create a combined ELA score.

For the purposes of these awards, we are using the content-area growth calculated and reported by the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). Note that we used only growth for math and English Language Arts, excluding the growth score for English Learner progress to English Language Proficiency). In addition, we identify the highest growth schools by school level as identified by the ADE under Arkansas’ ESSA Plan: Elementary, Middle, and High school level. In this report, we present a list of the top 20 schools in the state for Overall growth (average of Math and ELA growth), Math growth, and ELA growth. In some cases, these “top 20 lists” will contain more than 20 schools as some schools’ growth scores will be identical. This is not a new phenomenon, as we also exceeded 20 schools in previous reports when using the OEP GPA as an indicator for student achievement.

In the following weeks, we will focus on high-growth elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools in the various regions across the state. We will conclude this edition of the report by highlighting schools that are beating the odds (that is, schools that have high levels of student growth while serving a high percentage of low-income students).

We are pleased to be able to highlight how students are growing academically in schools across the state, and hope the information will spark discussion among stakeholders about how to ensure all schools are growing the knowledge of Arkansas students.

III. 2018 OEP AWARDS: HIGH ACHIEVING HIGH SCHOOLS IN ARKANSAS BASED ON CONTENT GROWTH IN THE ACT ASPIRE EXAMS

This section highlights high schools across the state whose students demonstrated high growth on the Arkansas ACT Aspire exams. The ACT Aspire was administered to students in grades 3 through 10 in April 2018 in Math and ELA courses which include English, Writing, and Reading.

Each table in this section presents the Top 20 schools for the noted subject area and school level. In addition, these tables include the region in which the schools are located, the grades served at the school, the weighted achievement score, and the content growth score in that particular subject.

The level of the schools, namely Elementary, Middle, and High, have been based on the school allocation given through the [My School Info](#) portal of the Arkansas Department of Education website.

G. High School Overall ACT Aspire Scores, 2018

Table 37: Top 20 *High Schools* in Arkansas based on *Overall ACT Aspire Growth*

	School (District)	Region	Grades Served	Overall Content Growth
1	LISA Academy North High Charter (LISA Academy)	CN	9-12	86.63
2	Southside Charter High (Southside (Independence))	NE	10-12	85.12
3	Van Buren Freshman Academy (Van Buren)	NW	9	85.06
4	Haas Hall Academy At the Lane (Haas Hall Academy)	NW	7-12	84.83
5	Haas Hall Academy Jones Center (Haas Hall Academy)	NW	7-12	84.75
6	Washington Academy (Texarkana)	SW	7-12	84.66
7	Eureka Springs High (Eureka Springs)	NW	9-12	84.65
8	Greenbrier Junior High (Greenbrier)	CN	8-9	84.50
9	South Side High (South Side (Van Buren))	NW	7-12	84.48
10	Haas Hall Academy Bentonville (Haas Hall Bentonville)	NW	7-12	84.31
11	Danville High (Danville)	NW	9-12	84.20
12	Dardanelle High (Dardanelle)	NW	9-12	83.98
13	Greenwood Freshman Center (Greenwood)	NW	9	83.85
14	Haas Hall Academy (Haas Hall Academy)	NW	7-12	83.66
15	Russellville Junior High (Russellville)	NW	8-9	83.61
16	Ouachita High (Ouachita)	CN	7-12	82.98
17	Hazen High (Hazen)	SE	9-12	82.95
18	Arkansas Arts Academy High (Arkansas Arts Academy)	NW	9-12	82.86
19	Arkansas High (Texarkana)	SW	9-12	82.64
20	Concord High (Concord)	NE	7-12	82.62

Tables 38-42: Top 5 **High Schools** in Arkansas by Regions, **Overall Growth**



Table 38: Top 5 schools in **Northwest** Region based on **Overall High ACT Aspire Growth**

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Overall Content Growth
1	Van Buren Freshman Academy (Van Buren)	9	362	85.06
2	Haas Hall Academy At the Lane (Haas Hall Academy)	7-12	107	84.83
3	Haas Hall Academy Jones Center (Haas Hall Academy)	7-12	123	84.75
4	Eureka Springs High (Eureka Springs)	9-12	79	84.65
5	South Side High (South Side (Van Buren))	7-12	154	84.48



Table 39: Top 5 schools in the **Northeast** Region based on **Overall High ACT Aspire Growth**

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Overall Content Growth
1	Southside Charter High (Southside (Independence))	10-12	141	85.12
2	Concord High (Concord)	7-12	129	82.62
3	Batesville High (Batesville)	10-12	212	82.52
4	Marmaduke High (Marmaduke)	7-12	200	82.44
5	Quitman High (Quitman)	7-12	178	82.40



Table 40: Top 5 schools in the **Central** Region based on **Overall High ACT Aspire Growth**

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Overall Content Growth
1	LISA Academy North High Charter (LISA Academy)	9-12	92	86.63
2	Greenbrier Junior High (Greenbrier)	8-9	498	84.50
3	Ouachita High (Ouachita)	7-12	150	82.98
4	Sheridan High (Sheridan)	10-12	296	82.60
5	Bismarck High (Bismarck)	9-12	133	82.48



Table 41: Top 5 schools in the **Southwest** Region based on **Overall High ACT Aspire Growth**

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Overall Content Growth
1	Washington Academy (Texarkana)	7-12	25	84.66
2	Arkansas High (Texarkana)	9-12	436	82.64
3	Junction City High (Junction City)	7-12	194	82.30
4	Ashdown High (Ashdown)	9-12	214	82.29
5	DeQueen Junior High (DeQueen)	8-9	324	81.62



Table 42: Top 5 schools in the *Southeast* Region based on *Overall* High ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Overall Content Growth
1	Hazen High (Hazen)	9-12	79	82.95
2	Rison High (Cleveland County)	6-12	309	82.00
3	Des Arc High (Des Arc)	7-12	154	81.87
4	Star City High (Star City)	9-12	224	81.76
5	Hamburg High (Hamburg)	9-12	297	81.42

H. High School Math ACT Aspire Scores, 2018

Table 43: Top 10 *High Schools* in Arkansas based on ACT Aspire *Math Growth*

	School (District)	Region	Grades Served	Math Content Growth
1	Haas Hall Academy At the Lane (Haas Hall Academy)	NW	7-12	88.05
1	LISA Academy North High Charter (LISA Academy)	CN	9-12	88.05
3	Hazen High (Hazen)	SE	9-12	87.70
4	Haas Hall Academy Bentonville (Haas Hall Bentonville)	NW	7-12	86.65
4	Haas Hall Academy Jones Center (Haas Hall Academy)	NW	7-12	86.65
4	South Side High (South Side (Van Buren))	NW	7-12	86.65
7	Greenbrier Junior High (Greenbrier)	CN	8-9	85.95
7	Haas Hall Academy (Haas Hall Academy)	NW	7-12	85.95
7	Southside Charter High (Southside (Independence))	NE	10-12	85.95
7	Van Buren Freshman Academy (Van Buren)	NW	9	85.95

Tables 44-48: Top 5 **High Schools** in Arkansas by Regions, **Math Growth**



Table 44: Top 5 schools in **Northwest** Region based on High **Math** ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Math Content Growth
1	Haas Hall Academy At the Lane (Haas Hall Academy)	7-12	107	88.05
2	Haas Hall Academy Bentonville (Haas Hall Bentonville)	7-12	201	86.65
2	Haas Hall Academy Jones Center (Haas Hall Academy)	7-12	123	86.65
2	South Side High (South Side (Van Buren))	7-12	154	86.65
5	Haas Hall Academy (Haas Hall Academy)	7-12	214	85.95
5	Van Buren Freshman Academy (Van Buren)	9	362	85.95



Table 45: Top 5 schools in **Northeast** Region based on High **Math** ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Math Content Growth
1	Southside Charter High (Southside (Independence))	10-12	140	85.95
2	Quitman High (Quitman)	7-12	178	85.25
3	Gosnell High (Gosnell)	7-12	358	84.20
4	Concord High (Concord)	7-12	129	83.15
4	Manila High (Manila)	9-12	149	83.15



Table 46: Top 5 schools in **Central** Region based on High **Math** ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Math Content Growth
1	LISA Academy North High Charter (LISA Academy)	9-12	92	88.05
2	Greenbrier Junior High (Greenbrier)	8-9	498	85.95
3	SIATech High Charter (SIATech Little Rock Charter)	9-12	7	84.90
4	Ouachita High (Ouachita)	7-12	150	83.85
5	Bismarck High (Bismarck)	9-12	133	83.50



Table 47: Top 5 schools in **Southwest** Region based on High **Math** ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Math Content Growth
1	Arkansas High (Texarkana)	9-12	436	83.50
1	Washington Academy (Texarkana)	7-12	25	83.50
3	Junction City High (Junction City)	7-12	194	82.45
4	DeQueen Junior High (DeQueen)	8-9	324	81.75
5	Ashdown High (Ashdown)	9-12	214	81.40
5	Smackover High (Smackover-Norphlet)	9-12	151	81.40



Table 48: Top 5 schools in *Southeast* Region based on High **Math** ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Math Content Growth
1	Hazen High (Hazen)	9-12	79	87.70
2	Des Arc High (Des Arc)	7-12	154	82.10
3	Hamburg High (Hamburg)	9-12	297	81.75
3	Rison High (Cleveland County)	6-12	309	81.75
5	Star City High (Star City)	9-12	224	81.40

I. High School ELA ACT Aspire Scores, 2018

Table 49: Top 10 *High Schools* in Arkansas based on ACT Aspire *ELA Growth*

	School (District)	Region	Grades Served	ELA Content Growth
1	Washington Academy (Texarkana)	SW	7-12	85.95
2	Danville High (Danville)	NW	9-12	85.25
2	LISA Academy North High Charter (LISA Academy)	CN	9-12	85.25
4	Shirley High (Shirley)	NW	7-12	84.55
5	Capital City Lighthouse Upper Academy (Capital City Lighthouse Academy)	CN	7-12	84.20
5	Southside Charter High (Southside (Independence))	NE	10-12	84.20
5	Van Buren Freshman Academy (Van Buren)	NW	9-9	84.20
8	Cross County High A New Tech (Cross County)	NE	7-12	83.85
8	Greenwood Freshman Center (Greenwood)	NW	9-9	83.85
8	Lavaca High (Lavaca)	NW	9-12	83.85
8	Lead Hill High (Lead Hill)	NW	7-12	83.85
8	Russellville Junior High (Russellville)	NW	8-9	83.85

Tables 50-54: Top 5 **High Schools** in Arkansas by Regions, **ELA Growth**



Table 50: Top 5 schools in **Northwest** Region based on High **ELA ACT Aspire Growth**

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	ELA Content Growth
1	Danville High (Danville)	9-12	120	85.25
2	Shirley High (Shirley)	7-12	102	84.55
3	Van Buren Freshman Academy (Van Buren)	9-9	361	84.20
4	Greenwood Freshman Center (Greenwood)	9-9	253	83.85
4	Lavaca High (Lavaca)	9-12	115	83.85
4	Lead Hill High (Lead Hill)	7-12	98	83.85
4	Russellville Junior High (Russellville)	8-9	675	83.85



Table 51: Top 5 schools in **Northeast** Region based on High **ELA ACT Aspire Growth**

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	ELA Content Growth
1	Southside Charter High (Southside (Independence))	10-12	141	84.20
2	Cross County High A New Tech (Cross County)	7-12	161	83.85
3	Marmaduke High (Marmaduke)	7-12	200	82.80
3	Tuckerman High (Jackson Co.)	8-12	187	82.80
5	Batesville High (Batesville)	10-12	208	82.45
5	Heber Springs High (Heber Springs)	9-12	226	82.45
5	Izard Co. Cons. High (Izard County Consolidated)	9-12	55	82.45



Table 52: Top 5 schools in **Central** Region based on High ELA ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	ELA Content Growth
1	LISA Academy North High Charter (LISA Academy)	9-12	92	85.25
2	Capital City Lighthouse Upper Academy (Capital City Lighthouse Academy)	7-12	11	84.20
3	Dollarway High (Dollarway)	9-12	127	83.50
3	Sheridan High (Sheridan)	10-12	295	83.50
5	Greenbrier Junior High (Greenbrier)	8-9	498	83.15



Table 53: Top 5 schools in **Southwest** Region based on High ELA ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	ELA Content Growth
1	Washington Academy (Texarkana)	7-12	25	85.95
2	Ashdown High (Ashdown)	9-12	214	83.15
3	Caddo Hills High (Caddo Hills)	7-12	157	82.80
4	Strong High (Strong-Huttig)	7-12	63	82.45
5	Junction City High (Junction City)	7-12	194	82.10



Table 54: Top 5 schools in *Southeast* Region based on High *ELA* ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	ELA Content Growth
1	Hermitage High (Hermitage)	7-12	144	82.45
2	Rison High (Cleveland County)	6-12	308	82.10
2	Star City High (Star City)	9-12	224	82.10
4	Des Arc High (Des Arc)	7-12	154	81.75
4	DeWitt High (DeWitt)	9-12	162	81.75

APPENDIX

A. Methods

All data used in this report were obtained from the Arkansas Department of Education via the link <https://myschoolinfo.arkansas.gov/Plus/Schools>.

We generated a statewide report for the 2017-18 school year, using the ESSA School Index report. Values included

- Final Weighted Achievement Adjusted for 95% Tested
- Grade Range
- Grade Span (School Level)
- Poverty Rate
- Combined Content Growth Score Current Year
- Combined Math Growth Score Current Year
- Combined ELA Growth Score Current Year

For more information about how school levels were assigned, see [http://www.arkansased.gov/public/userfiles/ESEA/Documents to Share/Grade Spans and Grade Configurations_rv.pdf](http://www.arkansased.gov/public/userfiles/ESEA/Documents%20to%20Share/Grade%20Spans%20and%20Grade%20Configurations_rv.pdf)

For more information about how growth values were calculated, see [http://www.arkansased.gov/public/userfiles/ESEA/Documents to Share/School%20Growth%20Explanation%20for%20ES%20and%20DC%20111017.pdf](http://www.arkansased.gov/public/userfiles/ESEA/Documents%20to%20Share/School%20Growth%20Explanation%20for%20ES%20and%20DC%20111017.pdf)