

10-23-2019

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

Charlene A. Reid
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

Sarah C. McKenzie
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uark.edu/oepreport>



Part of the [Education Policy Commons](#), and the [Other Education Commons](#)

Citation

Reid, C. A., & McKenzie, S. C. (2019). High-Growth Middle Schools in Arkansas Based on Performance on the ACT Aspire Examinations. *Arkansas Education Reports*. Retrieved from <https://scholarworks.uark.edu/oepreport/66>

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by the Office for Education Policy at ScholarWorks@UARK. It has been accepted for inclusion in Arkansas Education Reports by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UARK. For more information, please contact scholar@uark.edu.

ARKANSAS EDUCATION REPORT
Volume 17, Issue 1

**OUTSTANDING EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE AWARDS:
HIGHLIGHTING HIGH-GROWTH ARKANSAS SCHOOLS, 2019**

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

October 23, 2019

By:

**Charlene A. Reid
Sarah C. McKenzie**

**Office for Education Policy
University of Arkansas
214 Graduate Education Building
Fayetteville, AR 72701
Phone: (479) 575-3773
Fax: (479) 575-3196
E-mail: oeplib@uark.edu**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
II. 2019 OEP Awards: High Achieving Middle Schools in Arkansas based on Content Growth in the ACT Aspire Exams	16
D. Middle School Overall ACT Aspire Growth Scores, 2019	17
E. Middle School Math ACT Aspire Growth Scores, 2019	21
F. Middle School ELA ACT Aspire Growth Scores, 2019	25
Appendix	A1

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 2018-19 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.

II. 2019 OEP AWARDS: HIGH ACHIEVING MIDDLE SCHOOLS IN ARKANSAS BASED ON CONTENT GROWTH IN THE ACT ASPIRE EXAMS

This section highlights elementary 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 2019 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.

D. Middle School Overall ACT Aspire Growth Scores, 2019

Table 19: Top 20 *Middle Schools* in Arkansas based on *Overall ACT Aspire Growth*

	School (District)	Region	Grades Served	Overall Content Growth
1	Flightline Upper Academy (Jacksonville Lighthouse Charter)	CN	5-8	86.60
2	Heber Springs Middle (Heber Springs)	NE	6-8	85.73
3	Paragould Junior High (Paragould)	NE	7-8	85.30
4	Lisa Academy North Middle Charter (Lisa Academy)	CN	6-8	85.24
5	Ray/Phyllis Simon Middle (Conway)	CN	5-7	84.68
6	Ruth Doyle Middle (Conway)	CN	5-7	84.52
7	Eureka Springs Middle (Eureka Springs)	NW	5-8	84.32
8	Northridge Middle (Van Buren)	NW	6-8	84.26
9	Oak Grove Middle (Paragould)	NE	5-6	84.15
10	Cabot Junior High North (Cabot)	CN	7-8	84.02
11	Gravette Middle (Gravette)	NW	6-8	83.95
12	Lincoln Junior High (Bentonville)	NW	7-8	83.91
12	Swifton Middle (Jackson Co.)	NE	5-7	83.91
14	Greenbrier Middle (Greenbrier)	CN	6-7	83.71
15	Glen Rose Middle (Glen Rose)	CN	5-8	83.62
15	Beebe Junior High (Beebe)	NE	7-8	83.62
17	Helen Tyson Middle (Springdale)	NW	6-7	83.55
18	Bergman Middle (Bergman)	NW	5-8	83.51
19	Woodland Junior High (Fayetteville)	NW	7-8	83.47
20	Pinkston Middle (Mountain Home)	NW	6-7	83.40
20	McNair Middle (Fayetteville)	NW	5-6	83.40

Tables 20-24: Top 5 *Middle Schools* in Arkansas by Regions, *Overall Growth*



Table 20: Top 5 schools in *Northwest* Region based on *Overall Middle ACT Aspire Growth*

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Overall Content Growth
1	Eureka Springs Middle (Eureka Springs)	5-8	174	84.32
2	Northridge Middle (Van Buren)	6-8	557	84.26
3	Gravette Middle (Gravette)	6-8	402	83.95
4	Lincoln Junior High (Bentonville)	7-8	737	83.91
5	Helen Tyson Middle (Springdale)	6-7	642	83.55



Table 21: Top 5 schools in the *Northeast* Region based on *Overall Middle ACT Aspire Growth*

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Overall Content Growth
1	Heber Springs Middle (Heber Springs)	6-8	326	85.73
2	Paragould Junior High (Paragould)	7-8	420	85.30
3	Oak Grove Middle (Paragould)	5-6	408	84.15
4	Swifton Middle (Jackson Co.)	5-7	176	83.91
5	Beebe Junior High (Beebe)	7-8	457	83.62



Table 22: Top 5 schools in the **Central** Region based on **Overall** Middle ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Overall Content Growth
1	Flightline Upper Academy (Jacksonville Lighthouse Charter)	5-8	100	86.60
2	Lisa Academy North Middle Charter (Lisa Academy)	6-8	212	85.24
3	Ray/Phyllis Simon Middle (Conway)	5-7	388	84.68
4	Ruth Doyle Middle (Conway)	5-7	554	84.52
5	Cabot Junior High North(Cabot)	7-8	778	84.02



Table 23: Top 5 schools in the **Southwest** Region based on **Overall** Middle ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Overall Content Growth
1	Ashdown Junior High (Ashdown)	6-8	294	82.45
2	Yerger Junior High (Hope)	7-8	192	82.28
3	Beryl Henry Upper Elementary (Hope)	5-6	219	82.27
4	Mena Middle (Mena)	6-8	362	81.45
5	DeQueen Middle (DeQueen)	6-7	338	81.27



Table 24: Top 5 schools in the **Southeast** Region based on **Overall Middle ACT Aspire Growth**

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Overall Content Growth
1	Dewitt Middle (Dewitt)	6-8	277	82.36
2	Stuttgart Junior High (Stuttgart)	7-8	206	81.09
3	Monticello Middle (Monticello)	6-8	398	80.90
4	Star City Middle (Star City)	6-8	305	80.88
5	Warren Middle (Warren)	6-8	351	79.87

E. Middle School Math ACT Aspire Growth Scores, 2019

Table 25: Top 10 *Middle Schools* in Arkansas based on ACT Aspire *Math* Growth

	School (District)	Region	Grades Served	Math Content Growth
1	Flightline Upper Academy (Jacksonville Lighthouse Charter)	CN	5-8	90.12
2	Heber Springs Middle (Heber Springs)	CN	6-8	88.55
3	Paragould Junior High (Paragould)	NE	7-8	88.04
4	Cabot Junior High North (Cabot)	NE	7-8	87.71
5	Lisa Academy North Middle Charter (Lisa Academy)	CN	6-8	87.13
6	Ray/Phyllis Simon Middle (Conway)	CN	5-7	87.01
7	Woodland Junior High (Fayetteville)	CN	7-8	86.74
8	Washington Junior High (Bentonville)	NW	7-8	86.64
9	Pinkston Middle (Mountain Home)	NW	6-7	86.45
10	Ruth Doyle Middle (Conway)	NW	5-7	86.27

Tables 26-30: Top 5 *Middle Schools* in Arkansas by Regions, *Math Growth*



Table 26: Top 5 schools in *Northwest* Region based on Middle *Math* ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Math Content Growth
1	Woodland Junior High (Fayetteville)	7-8	656	86.74
2	Washington Junior High (Bentonville)	7-8	632	86.64
3	Pinkston Middle (Mountain Home)	6-7	566	86.45
4	Helen Tyson Middle (Springdale)	6-7	642	86.19
5	Lincoln Junior High (Bentonville)	7-8	737	86.10



Table 27: Top 5 schools in *Northeast* Region based on Middle *Math* ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Math Content Growth
1	Heber Springs Middle (Heber Springs)	6-8	326	88.55
2	Paragould Junior High (Paragould)	7-8	420	88.04
3	Swifton Middle (Jackson Co.)	5-7	176	85.97
4	Beebe Middle (Beebe)	5-6	480	85.02
5	Beebe Junior High (Beebe)	7-8	457	84.56



Table 28: Top 5 schools in **Central** Region based on Middle **Math** ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Math Content Growth
1	Flightline Upper Academy (Jacksonville Lighthouse Charter)	5-8	100	90.12
2	Cabot Junior High North (Cabot)	7-8	778	87.71
3	Lisa Academy North Middle Charter (Lisa Academy)	6-8	212	87.13
4	Ray/Phyllis Simon Middle (Conway)	5-7	388	87.01
5	Ruth Doyle Middle (Conway)	5-7	554	86.27



Table 29: Top 5 schools in **Southwest** Region based on Middle **Math** ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Math Content Growth
1	College Hill Middle (Texarkana)	6-6	298	83.35
2	DeQueen Middle (DeQueen)	6-7	338	82.57
3	Ashdown Junior High (Ashdown)	6-8	294	82.10
4	Goza Middle (Arkadelphia)	6-8	379	82.03
5	Barton Jr. High (El Dorado)	7-8	599	82.01



Table 30: Top 5 schools in *Southeast* Region based on Middle **Math** ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Math Content Growth
1	Dewitt Middle (Dewitt)	6-8	277	84.43
2	Stuttgart Junior High (Stuttgart)	7-8	206	82.22
2	Star City Middle (Star City)	6-8	305	82.22
4	Warren Middle (Warren)	6-8	351	80.93
5	KIPP:Delta College Prep (KIPP Delta Public Schools)	6-8	188	79.68

F. Middle School ELA ACT Aspire Growth Scores, 2019

Table 31: Top 10 *Middle Schools* in Arkansas based on ACT Aspire *ELA Growth*

	School (District)	Region	Grades Served	ELA Content Growth
1	Beryl Henry Upper Elementary (Hope)	SW	5-6	85.97
2	Bergman Middle (Bergman)	NW	5-8	85.75
3	Yerger Junior High (Hope)	SW	7-8	84.68
4	Pleasant View Campus (Mulberry/Pleasant View Bi-County Schools)	NW	5-8	84.50
5	Oak Grove Middle (Paragould)	NE	5-6	84.43
6	Ruth Barker Middle (Bentonville)	NW	5-6	84.24
7	Northridge Middle (Van Buren)	NW	6-8	84.00
8	Westside Middle (Westside Cons. (Craighead))	NE	5-7	83.93
9	Riverview Junior High (Riverview)	NE	7-8	83.79
10	Decatur Middle (Decatur)	NW	P-8	83.59

Tables 32-36: Top 5 Middle Schools in Arkansas by Regions, ELA Growth



Table 32: Top 5 schools in Northwest Region based on Middle ELA ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	ELA Content Growth
1	Bergman Middle (Bergman)	5-8	297	85.75
2	Pleasant View Campus (Mulberry/Pleasant View Bi-County Schools)	5-8	110	84.50
3	Ruth Barker Middle (Bentonville)	5-6	436	84.24
4	Northridge Middle (Van Buren)	6-8	557	84.00
5	Decatur Middle (Decatur)	P-8	139	83.59



Table 33: Top 5 schools in Northeast Region based on Middle ELA ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	ELA Content Growth
1	Oak Grove Middle (Paragould)	5-6	408	84.43
2	Westside Middle (Westside Cons. (Craighead))	5-7	383	83.93
3	Riverview Junior High (Riverview)	7-8	162	83.79
4	Southside Junior High (Southside (Independence))	7-9	417	83.54
5	Heber Springs Middle (Heber Springs)	6-8	326	82.92



Table 34: Top 5 schools in **Central** Region based on Middle **ELA** ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	ELA Content Growth
1	Lisa Academy North Middle Charter (Lisa Academy)	6-8	212	83.36
2	Bauxite Middle (Bauxite)	6-8	340	83.21
3	Flightline Upper Academy (Jacksonville Lighthouse Charter)	5-8	100	83.09
4	Ruth Doyle Middle (Conway)	5-7	554	82.76
5	Ray/Phyllis Simon Middle (Conway)	5-7	388	82.35



Table 35: Top 5 schools in **Southwest** Region based on Middle **ELA** ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	ELA Content Growth
1	Beryl Henry Upper Elementary (Hope)	5-6	219	85.97
2	Yerger Junior High (Hope)	7-8	191	84.68
3	Ashdown Junior High (Ashdown)	6-8	294	82.80
4	Nashville Junior High (Nashville)	7-9	420	82.20
5	Hope Academy Of Public Service (Hope)	5-9	240	82.06



Table 36: Top 5 schools in *Southeast* Region based on Middle *ELA* ACT Aspire Growth

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	ELA Content Growth
1	Monticello Middle (Monticello)	6-8	398	82.53
2	Lakeside Middle (Lakeside (Chicot))	6-8	215	81.00
3	Dewitt Middle (Dewitt)	6-8	277	80.29
4	Dumas Junior High (Dumas)	7-9	243	79.97
5	Stuttgart Junior High (Stuttgart)	7-8	206	79.96

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 2018-19 school year, using the ESSA School Index report. Values included

- 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

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