

Performance Framework Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Measures: New “Higher Bar” Sub-Indicators



COLORADO
Department of Education

Overview

This resource describes the Higher Bar measures, which may be added to the performance frameworks. Due to data quality concerns, implementation of these measures has been paused and may be revisited in future years. This resource assumes knowledge about [state accountability](#), [performance frameworks](#), and [graduation guidelines](#). See the links for additional information.

Background

Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Indicator

The Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) indicator is included within the high school and district performance frameworks. Currently, the PWR indicator contributes 30% of the points in determining the overall high school or district plan type assignment. Currently, the PWR indicator consists of five sub-indicators (detailed in the blue sidebar). This fact sheet describes the potential calculation methodology for two new “Higher Bar” sub-indicators.

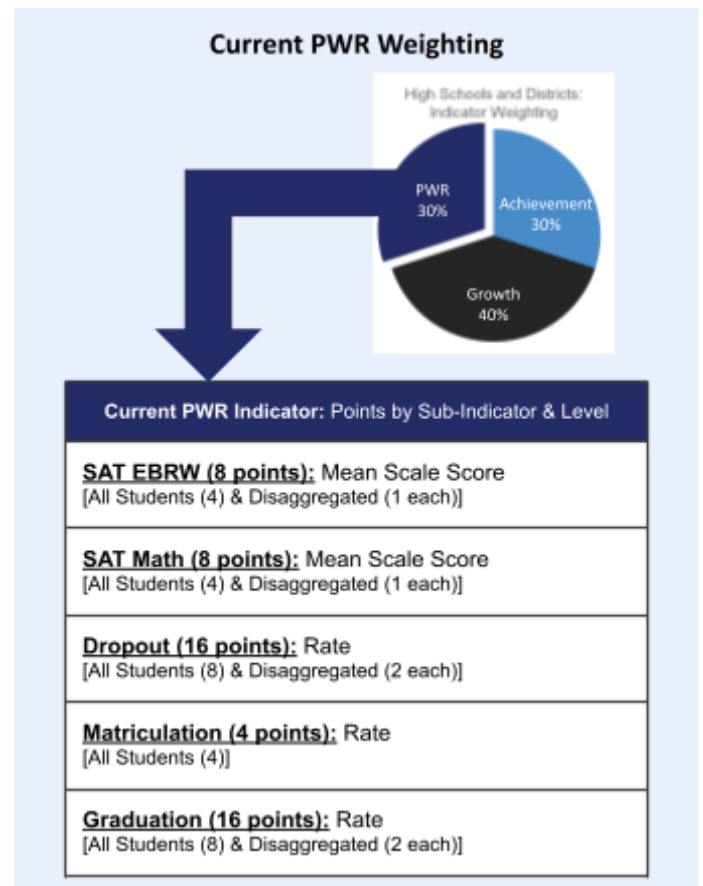
Higher Bar Sub-Indicators

Overall Description

With the full implementation of [Graduation Guidelines](#) in 2021-22, data from the Graduation Guidelines Student Interchange File (reported as part of the End of Year data collection), from the Colorado Department of Higher Education and from vendor data sources are being used to calculate two sub-indicators that may be included in future high school and district frameworks.

- Higher Bar for English Language Arts (ELA) and Math (S.B. 17-272):** Measures the proportion of graduating students attaining a higher level of achievement (as defined by the state board) in both ELA and math on certain graduation guidelines measures, including Accuplacer, ACT, ACT Work Keys, Advanced Placement (AP), Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), Concurrent Enrollment (CE), International Baccalaureate (IB), and SAT.
- Higher Bar for Other Courses (H.B. 18-1019):** Measures the proportion of graduating students attaining similar high expectations in AP, IB, and/or CE non-ELA and non-math courses. In practice, this measure complements the higher bar for ELA and math by giving schools and districts credit for students demonstrating high achievement in subjects other than ELA or math.

The new PWR sub-indicators would be an opportunity for schools and districts to demonstrate their students’ postsecondary readiness success in English language arts, math, and other non-ELA/non-math course offerings or exam subjects (e.g., history, psychology, science, cosmetology, automotive services). This data could also be used to



understand some ways students are completing their graduation requirements and how these trends vary across districts and schools.

Cut Scores

Higher Bar for ELA/Math: Where the Graduation Guidelines provide the minimum threshold for graduation, the state has also established higher expectations for students to receive a [PWR diploma endorsement](#) (adopted by the State Board of Education in [April 2019](#), item 11.01). The department elected to use these same cut scores for implementation of the Higher Bar for ELA and Math sub-indicator. The table below lays out the menu of options with the adopted cut scores for Graduation Guidelines (green/darker columns) and for the Higher Bar for ELA/Math sub-indicator (blue/lighter columns).

Comparison of Cut Scores for the PWR Menu of Options

Demonstration Options	Reading, Writing & Communicating		Mathematics	
	Graduation Guidelines Cut Scores	Higher Bar and PWR Diploma Endorsement Cut Scores	Graduation Guidelines Cut Scores	Higher Bar and PWR Diploma Endorsement Cut Scores
ACCUPLACER Classic	62 Reading Comprehension or 70 Sentence Skills	80 Reading Comprehension or 95 Sentence Skills	61 Elementary Algebra	85 Elementary Algebra
ACCUPLACER Next Generation	241 Reading or 236 Sentence Writing	246 Writing	255 Arithmetic (AR) or 230 Quantitative Reasoning, Algebra, and Statistics (QAS)	265 on Arithmetic (AR) or 240 Quantitative Reasoning, Algebra, and Statistics (QAS) or Advanced Algebra and Function (AAF)
ACT	18 ACT English	18 ACT English	19 ACT Math	22 ACT Math
ACT WorkKeys	Bronze	Silver	Bronze	Silver
Advanced Placement (AP)	2	3	2	3
ASVAB	31	50	31	50

Demonstration Options	Reading, Writing & Communicating		Mathematics	
	Graduation Guidelines Cut Scores	Higher Bar and PWR Diploma Endorsement Cut Scores	Graduation Guidelines Cut Scores	Higher Bar and PWR Diploma Endorsement Cut Scores
Concurrent Enrollment	Passing Grade per district and higher education policy	Passing grade of C or higher in credit bearing college level course	Passing Grade per district and higher education policy	Passing grade of C or higher in credit bearing college level course
International Baccalaureate (IB)	4	4	4	4
SAT	470	480	500	530

Higher Bar for Other Courses: The table below outlines the score or course grade needed to demonstrate successful completion of non-ELA and non-Math AP exams, IB exams, or CE courses, per H.B. 18-1019.

Comparison of Cut Scores to Calculate the Higher Bar for Other Courses Sub-Indicator

Demonstration Options	Higher Bar for Other Courses Cut Scores
Advanced Placement (AP)	Examination score of 3 or higher
International Baccalaureate (IB)	Examination score of 4 or higher
Concurrent Enrollment	Course grade of B or higher

Process

During the Graduation Guidelines data collection, districts can designate which course offerings or exam subjects qualify as ELA and Math. For other courses, as recommended by the [Technical Advisory Panel \(TAP\)](#), CDE is following a narrow definition to include any course subject that is not designated as math, math subjects (e.g., statistics), ELA, reading, or writing. Combining scores reported in grad guidelines and from some vendors (College Board, IB and the Colorado Department of Higher Education), CDE will apply the above cut-scores to determine whether an individual has met the higher bar requirement in at least one course or exam during their 9th to 12th grade enrollment. CDE reviews statewide historical data submissions to ensure students receive credit for meeting either Higher Bar measures at any point and in any Colorado site during their high school careers. Note that assessment and course completion are the only measures used for the calculation of Higher Bar sub-indicators (e.g. portfolios while eligible for graduation aren't considered for these measures). Student data will be aggregated at the school and district level, representing the unduplicated count of current graduates successfully meeting the higher bar on at least one of the approved courses or exams.

$$\frac{\text{Calculating Higher Bar Measures: unduplicated count of current graduates meeting HB on at least one course/exam}}{\text{total number of current year graduates identified by the school/district}}$$

CDE plans to incorporate the All Students group results on the performance frameworks for points and provide informational disaggregated group results to schools and districts.

Inclusion in Frameworks

Based on the proportion of students achieving the higher bar metric in a school or district, a sub-indicator rating category will be assigned to each new measure on the performance frameworks. Cut-scores for each rating category are still to be determined, but will follow the same normative methodology used for most other framework metrics. The cuts will be based on the distribution of school-level results, and correspond to percentile ranks described in the table on the right. The total number of performance framework points eligible for each of the new Higher Bar PWR sub-indicators will be determined by the TAP and approved by the state board. The inclusion of these measures is unlikely to change the overall weighting of the PWR indicator (30%).

Percentile Ranks by Rating Category

Rating Category	Range of Percentile Ranks
Does Not Meet	1st - 14th
Approaching	15th - 49th
Meets	50th - 84th
Exceeds	85th - 99th

Timeline

In November 2023, the State Board of Education voted to delay these new measures for further study because of concerns around data quality. CDE will communicate when the measures will be implemented. As is typical practice, CDE will share data with districts first for informational purposes and then, the following year, for points in performance frameworks.

If you have questions about the contents of this fact sheet or need further assistance: Contact accountability@cde.state.co.us