

## 2021 ESSA School Index Summary for Governor's Office

### History of Arkansas ESSA Plan

The Arkansas ESSA Plan was approved January 16, 2018. The long-term goals were amended and approved on March 11, 2019, to accommodate for ACT Aspire cut score changes. On March 27, 2020, Arkansas received an assessment, accountability and reporting waiver due to COVID-19. An addendum to the Arkansas ESSA Plan was approved August 20, 2021, to allow the state to skip the 2020 data (no assessments given due to COVID-19) and continue with using the latest three years of data (2018, 2019, and 2021) to report the 2021 ESSA School Index, 2021 School Report Card and identify/exit schools in need of support and improvement.

### Timeline for Reporting the ESSA School Index and School Report Card

Dates	Action
September 27 - October 4, 2021	Schools have private viewing of 2021 ESSA School Index, review school improvement plans, and develop communication plan with stakeholders
October 15, 2021	All 2021 ESSA School Index reports available to the public on My School Info
January 5 - January 12, 2022	Schools have private viewing of 2021 School Report Card, and develop communication plan with stakeholders
January 19, 2022	Public has access to the 2021 School Report Card (with available data components) on My School Info. The 2021 School Report Card (all data components) will be finalized by April 15, 2022.

### Statewide Representation

The state is committed to testing 95% or greater of students to ensure a strong representation of the student body for accountability purposes. At the state level, 97% of students were tested in English Language Arts (ELA), math, and science in 2021 compared to 99% in 2019. At the school and district levels, the percent tested varied with 90% and 91% of schools testing at least 95% of all students in ELA and math. Schools were more likely to miss the mark of 95% tested for subgroups.

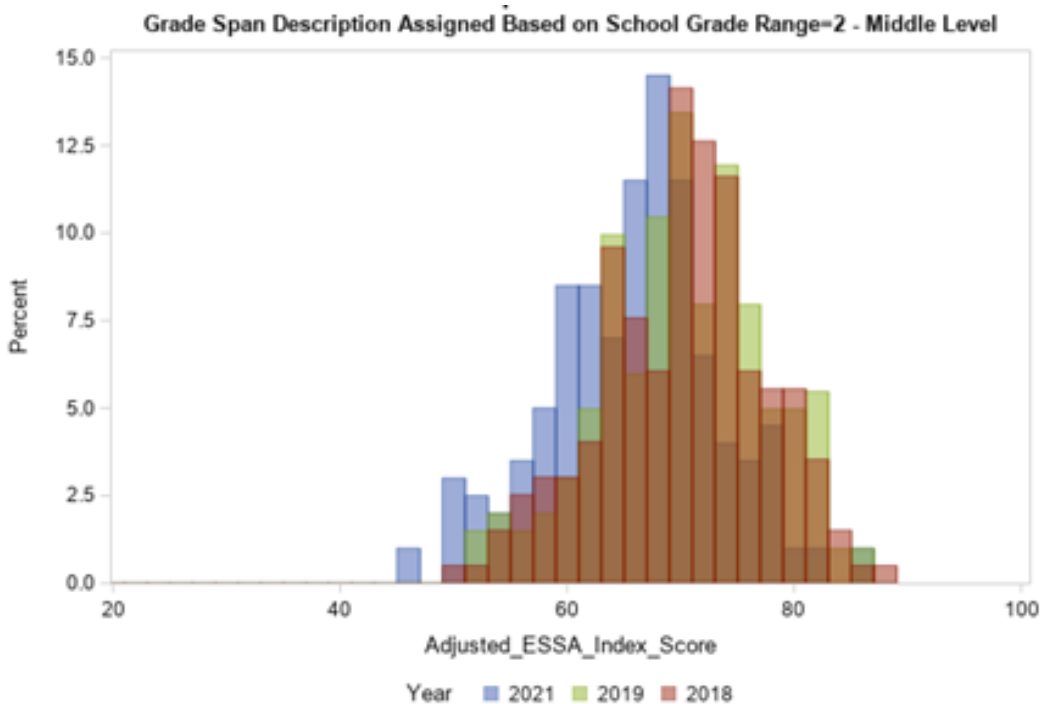
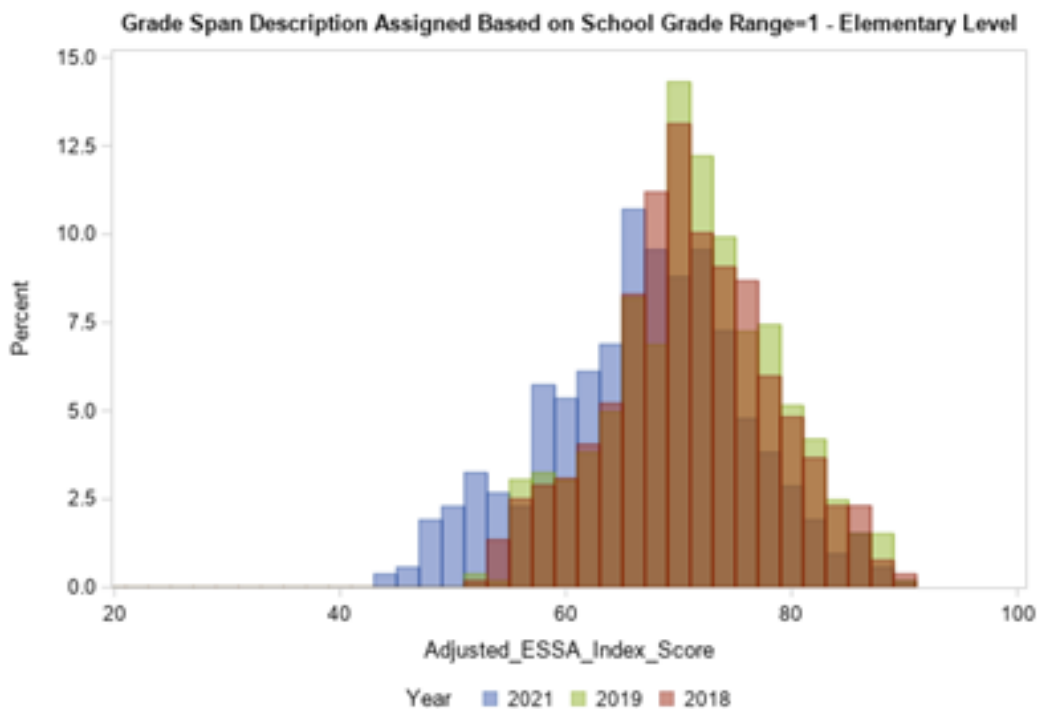
The ESSA School index Score includes an adjustment to the Weighted Achievement score whenever a school tests less than 95% of its students. This adjustment helps ensure that schools who did not have 95% tested are not advantaged over those schools that tested at least 95%.

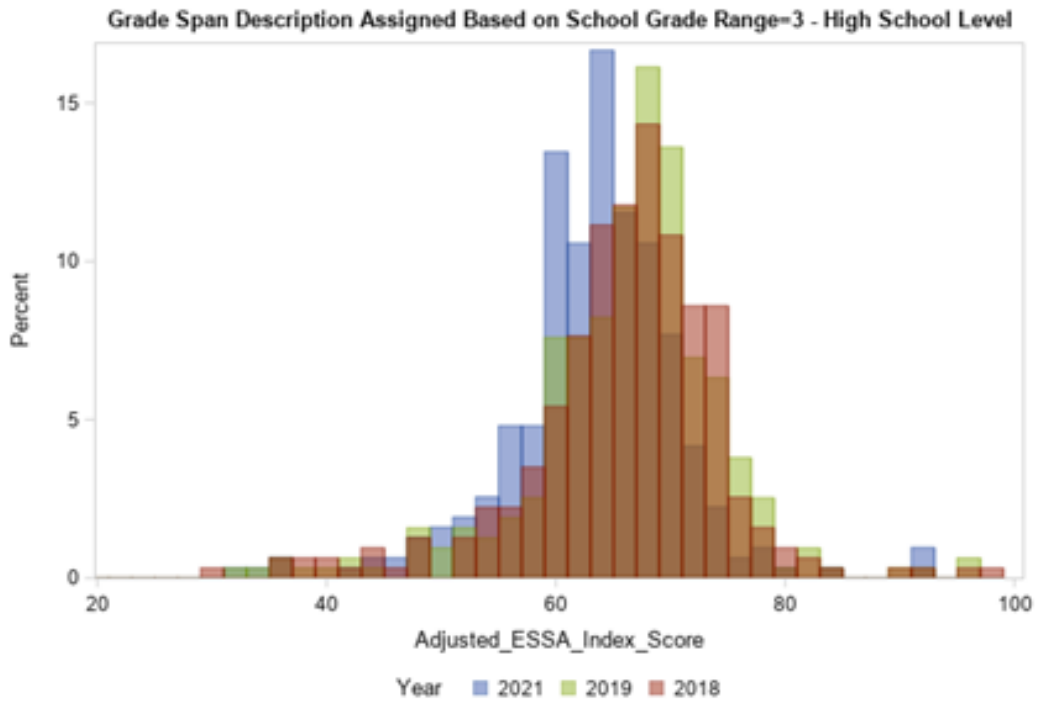
### Summary of Observations about the 2021 ESSA School Index Reports

The average ESSA School Index scores are within 5.5 to 6.1% of the averages in 2018 and 2019. Most schools experienced a decline as can be seen by the lower averages in 2021.

Grade Span	All ESSA Index Scores in this table are the adjusted ESSA Index Scores	Number of Schools	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
1 - Elementary Level	2021 ESSA School Index Score	523	66.93	8.85	44.49	90.42
	2019 ESSA School Index Score	512	71.41	7.31	51.63	89.77
	2018 ESSA School Index Score	506	71.12	7.32	51.36	90.19
2 - Middle Level	2021 ESSA School Index Score	200	65.87	7.44	46.89	85.66
	2019 ESSA School Index Score	191	70.35	7.20	52.35	86.98
	2018 ESSA School Index Score	188	70.23	7.17	50.06	87.55
3 - High School Level	2021 ESSA School Index Score	312	63.25	7.58	32.72	92.85
	2019 ESSA School Index Score	303	66.93	7.67	31.60	96.37
	2018 ESSA School Index Score	301	66.68	7.70	30.84	97.40

The overlay of the distributions of 2018, 2019, and 2021 ESSA School Index Scores in the charts below indicate that at each grade span the distribution of ESSA School Index scores shifted lower, overall, and maintained a similar spread or range among scores within each year.





Notable bright spots are evident in this year's scores. The table below provides the percentage of schools whose ESSA School Index Scores Improved over 2019 scores and the percentage of schools that declined compared to 2019 scores.

Percentage of Schools Improving or Declining		
Subgroup	Progress	
	Declined	Improved
<b>1 All</b>	88.21	11.79
<b>2 Black/ African American</b>	87.25	12.75
<b>3 Hispanic/Latino</b>	81.03	18.97
<b>4 White</b>	85.25	14.75
<b>5 Economic Disadvantage</b>	87.29	12.71
<b>6 EL</b>	84.59	15.41
<b>7 SPED</b>	72.73	27.27

Despite the challenges of the past 18 months, almost 12% of schools in elementary, middle, and high school grade spans improved their ESSA School Index scores by 2.7, 2.3, and 1.75 score points respectively, for all students. Additionally, 13% to 27% of schools improved the ESSA School Index scores for their subgroups. Uncovering the story behind these improvements will be critical to informing the work that needs to be done to support those schools who saw declining scores.

On average, schools declined by 5.7, 5.1, and 4.11 score points for Elementary, Middle, and High School. Elementary schools represented the highest average decline and the highest average improvement. This is not surprising given that grades 3-5 generally experienced some of the largest declines in math achievement in 2021.

The impact of declines in student achievement in ELA and math are captured in the Weighted Achievement scores provided below. Weighted Achievement scores demonstrate the most notable declines among all the indicators within the ESSA School Index Score.

<b>Weighted Achievement Score Adjusted for Percent Tested</b>						
<b>Grade Span</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Schools</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
<b>1 - Elementary Level</b>	<b>2021</b>	523	52.20	16.37	13.05	96.84
	<b>2019</b>	516	64.45	14.76	26.34	101.84
	<b>2018</b>	510	64.24	14.62	28.74	100.85
<b>2 - Middle Level</b>	<b>2021</b>	200	51.30	15.64	12.89	92.40
	<b>2019</b>	191	62.19	15.42	22.87	98.46
	<b>2018</b>	188	62.18	15.04	22.89	99.24
<b>3 - High School Level</b>	<b>2021</b>	312	40.62	15.38	1.04	110.31
	<b>2019</b>	305	49.74	15.92	0.00	114.21
	<b>2018</b>	303	50.40	15.20	1.56	117.37

The lower the grade span the higher the score decline. This mirrors the lower achievement seen in the ACT Aspire and DLM test score releases for 2021.

Weighted Achievement represents 35% of the ESSA School Index score. The other components include Value-Added Growth scores, School Quality and Student Success Scores, and for high schools, 4- and 5-Year Graduation Rates.

The Value-Added Growth Scores indicate whether, on average, students are improving in achievement as expected based on where they have been (score history). The Value-Added School Growth score captures changes in achievement that are more nuanced than those captured by changes in achievement levels in weighted achievement and it does so personalized to each student. Therefore, the Value-Added

School Growth score is an important indicator that precedes changes in achievement levels. Scores at or above 80 represent students improving in achievement as well or better than expected. Scores below 80 indicate students, on average, are not improving in achievement as well as expected. These scores provide a school metric that communicates if students are learning and improving. Note that for all years the means are near 80 at the state level for all students. This is expected. The maximum and minimum scores communicate the range of schools' growth scores.

Value-Added School Growth Scores						
Grade Span	Year	Number of Schools	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
1 - Elementary Level	2021	523	80.26	4.15	60.73	91.75
	2019	512	80.69	3.26	71.19	88.59
	2018	506	80.40	3.56	69.17	89.57
2 - Middle Level	2021	200	80.38	2.43	74.18	85.78
	2019	191	80.90	2.25	75.51	86.76
	2018	188	80.69	2.41	74.38	86.39
3 - High School Level	2021	312	79.62	2.00	74.69	85.63
	2019	305	79.73	2.33	68.65	86.50
	2018	303	79.74	2.19	73.85	86.50

At the elementary level, schools varied from the lowest growth (60.73) to the highest growth scores (91.75). The extremes at the elementary level explain, to some extent, the greater declines and improvement demonstrated at the elementary grade span. It will be important to uncover the stories of the schools with extremely high growth scores to inform the work that needs to be done in those schools where growth in academic achievement was below a score of 80.

The School Quality and Student Success (SQSS) Indicator incorporates a number of components that are proxies for engagement, reading at grade level, science achievement and growth, access to rigorous high school opportunities, and attainment of college and career readiness achievement levels. The middle and high school levels saw slight declines in 2021 with the elementary level maintaining a similar average with lower maximum and minimum than prior years.

School Quality and Student Success Indicator						
Grade Span	Year	Number of Schools	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
1 - Elementary Level	2021	523	56.89	12.66	22.47	95.59
	2019	513	56.56	9.63	31.75	100.00
	2018	506	56.08	9.39	29.91	89.61
2 - Middle Level	2021	200	51.51	8.42	28.44	72.86
	2019	191	54.22	8.42	29.87	75.01
	2018	188	54.12	8.38	31.06	75.26
3 - High School Level	2021	312	51.91	8.89	12.70	90.91
	2019	304	53.50	8.65	7.56	82.54
	2018	302	53.00	8.64	1.21	84.50