



State Board of Education Resolution
Recommendations Related to STAR Framework and DC School Report Card
SR22-1

WHEREAS, the DC State Board of Education (State Board) is committed to prioritizing issues that disproportionately hurt and hinder the educational experience of our most vulnerable students;

WHEREAS, that commitment includes understanding the quality of our schools, knowing which are most in need of support and what support they most need, and ensuring these schools get the support they need to provide students with high quality education;

WHEREAS, the State Board approved SR20-11 in September 2020 that stated that “aspects of the current STAR Framework design produce ratings that are systematically lower for schools that enroll larger proportions of at-risk, Black, and Brown students — and that these lower ratings do not necessarily reflect lower quality education”;

WHEREAS, in SR20-11, State Board committed itself to further research and discussion on issues raised in the resolution and to require the then-Research Committee to “prepare further recommendations for a future vote”;

WHEREAS, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) developed the District’s Statewide Accountability Plan (STAR Framework and DC School Report Card) as its response to the federal Every Student Succeeds Act’s (ESSA) reporting and identification requirements. ESSA requires states to:

1. Report proficiency rates in math and reading, growth in English language proficiency among English-language learners (ELL), graduation rates for high schools, academic growth for elementary and middle-schoolers and performance on a “fifth indicator” for all students;
2. Report disaggregated data, showing the performance of students designated at-risk (AR), students with disabilities (SWD), ELLs, and each major racial/ethnic groups;
3. Use these data (and potentially additional data) to identify the lowest performing 5% of schools and schools with equally low performing subgroups; and provide federally provided financial assistance to these identified schools;

WHEREAS, the STAR Rating (a single summative score generated by the STAR Framework) is also used by different stakeholder groups for other purposes, including:

1. to hold schools “accountable” and incentivize strong performance by shining a public light on their performance;
2. by parents to choose schools for their children;
3. by school communities to diagnose school needs for school improvement;

WHEREAS, the State Board has found after multiple years of research and engagement with experts, stakeholders, and the public, that the STAR Framework is fundamentally flawed in the following areas:

1. Systemic Bias: High STAR Ratings are disproportionately awarded to schools with fewer students designated at-risk and lower STAR Ratings disproportionately to those with many

students designated-at-risk, while the data show that students’ academic growth (based on math and reading test scores) was much more even across schools in all wards. This is due to several indicators, including reenrollment rates and proficiency rates, being highly correlated to family income rather than school quality;¹

2. **Narrow View of Quality:** The current STAR Framework relies heavily on scores from a single statewide summative assessment. This provides an incomplete picture of a school’s performance and quality and may lead to over-emphasis on tested subjects at the expense of science, social studies, the arts, and students’ socio-emotional and physical well-being. Further, summative test scores are a “lagging” indicator of school quality; they reflect schools’ quality/effectiveness only up until the point of the test. Research shows “leading indicators” are likely to predict future student progress;
3. **Limited Support:** Currently, the STAR Framework leads to required financial and technical assistance to the bottom 5% of schools’ STAR Rating, as required by federal law. These schools are called Comprehensive Support Type I. This amounts to only eight of 240 schools in the District which receive significant supplemental financial support from the state to implement quality improvement. For all other schools with low ratings, including other schools designated as in need of Comprehensive Support or Targeted Support & Improvements under ESSA, the STAR Rating does not clearly or regularly lead to adequate assistance for improvement. A school reporting system must provide schools the support they need, transparency around school strengths and needs, facilitate a more informed public conversation about school needs, and empower school communities to advocate for needed support and assistance; and,

WHEREAS, according to the State Board’s surveys and engagements, many stakeholders are eager for a broader view of school quality and programming, including:

1. A more expansive list of indicators including school climate, safety, student engagement and satisfaction, teacher retention, and well-rounded education, as well as a very strong interest in student growth.
2. Information on school programing and available resources (e.g., availability of dual language and NAF programs), STEM infused industry-specific curricula, work-based learning experiences, before- and after-care, extracurricular programming, tutoring, and mental health supports;

WHEREAS, a single summative rating (such as stars, a number, or letter grades) is not a requirement under ESSA, and several states, including California, New Hampshire, and New York do not currently report a summative rating as part of their school accountability systems; and,

¹ Proficiency is a vital goal for all students, but researchers generally regard proficiency rates as a poor proxy for school quality, as they correlate more closely with family income than school effectiveness. Further, students with disabilities tend to have lower proficiency scores, leaving schools with more students with disabilities with lower ratings than comparably effective schools. The Educational Opportunity Project at Stanford, run by Sean Reardon, defines test scores as reflecting “the total set of educational opportunities children have had from birth through middle school, including opportunities at home, in child-care and preschool programs, and among peers.” In contrast, the project says, “the average learning rate, [referred to in this document as academic growth], largely reflects school quality.” <https://edopportunity.org/help-faq/#educational-opportunity-definition>

WHEREAS, a single summative score is based on a set of indicators that may or may not be most valued by stakeholders or most useful in highlighting areas in need of support, and therefore creates a less accurate, less transparent, and less useful assessment of school quality than a dashboard with each indicator visible.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the State Board recommends that the State Superintendent implement the following recommendations for improving how the District reports on school and student performance by addressing the fundamental flaws outlined above, doing so in compliance with ESSA requirements, and responding to stakeholders needs and preferences;

1. The State Board recommends the elimination of a single summative rating of schools.
2. The State Board recommends that the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) provide ratings, scores, or percentages for designated “primary” indicators (noted below) on a dynamic display data dashboard to highlight how a school performs in relation to average outcomes for schools across the state.
3. The State Board recommends that design features of the dashboard should allow users to link to a more detailed explanation of each school indicator, include the ability to disaggregate indicators based on subgroups, and allow users to sort and compare schools by selecting indicators of interest. The State Board encourages the State Superintendent to explore additional subgroups for disaggregation including, for example, student enrollment longevity.
4. The State Board recommends that the front page of the data dashboard should be designed to prominently highlight the following primary indicators, accompanied by a clear definition:^{2 3}
 - A. School Climate refers to a school’s ability to create a nurturing and challenging environment that typically leads students to strong academic growth in the future.
 - B. Academic Growth encompasses students’ improvement in math and reading scores over a year.
 - C. Equitable Student Growth details the extent to which a school is providing needed attention to students who are designated AR, with disabilities, ELL, and from different racial/ethnic groups.
 - D. Well-Rounded-Education refers to the extent to which elementary schools provide adequate time for science, social studies, and the arts.
 - E. Teacher Retention, Experience, and Diversity captures the percentage of teachers who have returned from the previous year, their years of teaching, and their racial/ethnic diversity.

² By “front page,” we mean the content of the screen that users see immediately, without any need for scrolling.

³ See Appendix A for an example graphic.

F. Proficiency refers to the percentage of students who have reached the designated “proficient” score on the state assessment.

5. The State Board recommends that the development and implementation of an instrument to collect data for a school climate measure at the state level should be a priority.

6. The State Board recommends that the way in which academic growth is currently measured should be adjusted to reflect student growth more accurately.⁴

7. The State Board recommends that secondary indicators that can further assist stakeholders with educational decision-making and advocacy should also be displayed on the front page of the dashboard, though less prominently. Secondary indicators should include:

- Student safety (including information on incidents, safe passage and restorative justice)
- Reading growth in grades K-2
- School programs (specifics described below)
- Graduation and extended graduation rates
- Facility conditions

8. The State Board recommends that the front page should also include a prominent link to a school’s program offerings, instructional resources, and services. The list should include, but is not limited to special school programs, including NAF, STEM, AP/IB, foreign language offerings, outdoor education; school programs addressing social-emotional skills and learning; extra-curricular and sports programs; student support resources, including student-counselor and student-social worker ratios and the number of reading interventionists and librarians; the availability of before- and after-care; and a list of wrap-around social/health services that are often offered through a Community- or Connected-school as well as any organizations that partner with the school.

9. The State Board recommends that the formula used to identify the bottom 5% of schools as indicated by ESSA should include the following:

Elementary and Middle Schools	High Schools
Proficiency (Math and Reading)	Proficiency (Math and Reading)
English Language Learner Growth	English Language Learner Growth

⁴ See the findings of the DC Auditor in *Measuring What Matters: More and Better Data Needed to Improve D.C. Public Schools* and measurement researchers as Andrew Ho, Sean Reardon for additional information.

Academic Progress (Math and Reading)	Graduation Rate
Student perceptions of School Climate	Extended Graduation Rate
Equitable Growth	Equitable Growth

10. The State Board is open to the State Superintendent’s recommendation weights for the indicators above for the purpose of identifying the lowest performing 5% of schools as required by ESSA, provided that the indicators are weighted in a manner that reduces bias. ⁵

11. The State Board recommends that the OSSE create a more expansive and differentiated approach to identifying the kinds of supports schools require based on needs revealed in indicator ratings, scores, or percentages. The State Board would welcome partnering with OSSE, the Mayor, and the Council of the District of Columbia to develop mechanisms and funding for appropriate technical and/or resource support to schools in need.

12. The State Board recommends that all schools in the bottom 25% based on scores in the federal accountability system be eligible for a School Quality Review (SQR) that includes members of the school community, leading to specific recommendations for improvement that the school may implement. ⁶

13. The State Board recommends that OSSE use a model for its monitoring and technical assistance efforts on an annual basis, to analyze the recommended indicators and determine the level of equitable inputs and outputs of each school. ^{7 8 9}

14. The State Board recommends that, as soon as practicable, OSSE should utilize its emerging longitudinal data system to include an indicator for employment, career readiness, and college graduation to determine how schools are preparing students to be citizens who contribute to society in positive ways.

15. The State Board recommends that the State Superintendent review and explore alternatives to the current annual statewide assessment (i.e. PARCC) in the District to ensure that any assessment

⁵ For example, increased weight on indicators that are demonstrably less biased (e.g., academic growth and school climate versus proficiency) towards schools with more students designated AR.

⁶ A SQR is a report conducted by knowledgeable educators that reviews the strengths and weaknesses of schools, providing those schools and stakeholders with detailed diagnostic information and recommendations for improving student outcomes. Such a review would provide school leaders and stakeholders the basis for improving their schools and would alert District and LEA leaders to the specific resource needs schools have. The State Board understands that DCPCSB already provides SQRs under certain circumstances.

⁷ See Appendix B for a graphic representation.

⁸ This will be a multi-year process and will require the state to establish a set of expectations for equitable inputs each school should have as part of a high-quality education.

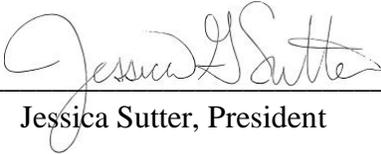
⁹ Inputs are defined as resources and conditions that may be beyond the control of the school (i.e., funding, staff position allocations, programs). Outcomes are the products of school resources and efforts (i.e., growth scores, graduation rates, school climate).



of students is primarily focused on assessing student achievement and growth and secondarily used for accountability at the school, state and/or federal level.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, The State Board asks the State Superintendent to ensure that this new dashboard system with its ratings of indicators, not schools, is in place in time for it to be used, instead of the existing rating system, the next time OSSE publishes ratings, likely December 2023.

Date Adopted: January 19, 2022

Signed: 
Jessica Sutter, President



Appendix A.



- LEARN MORE ABOUT**
- Resources/Programs/Services
 - Extended Graduation Rate
 - Facilities Conditions
 - Student Safety

Summary. Douglass High School is a school community in Ward # which serves ### students. We pride ourselves on our many special programs, including x, y, z, and especially our ###.

School Climate
Very Strong

School Climate tells us whether a school's values, attitudes, and culture are creating the nurturing, challenging environment that typically leads students to strong academic growth in the future.
[LEARN MORE](#)

Well-Rounded Education
Neutral

Well-Rounded Education refers to the extent to which elementary schools provide adequate time for science, social studies, and the arts.
[LEARN MORE](#)

Academic Growth
Strong

Academic Growth tells us how much students' math and reading scores rose in the last year. Researchers regard Growth as a strong measure of school effectiveness.
[LEARN MORE](#)

Teachers
Neutral

Teacher Retention, Experience, and Diversity captures the percentage of teachers who have returned from the previous year, their years of teaching, and their racial/ethnic diversity.
[LEARN MORE](#)

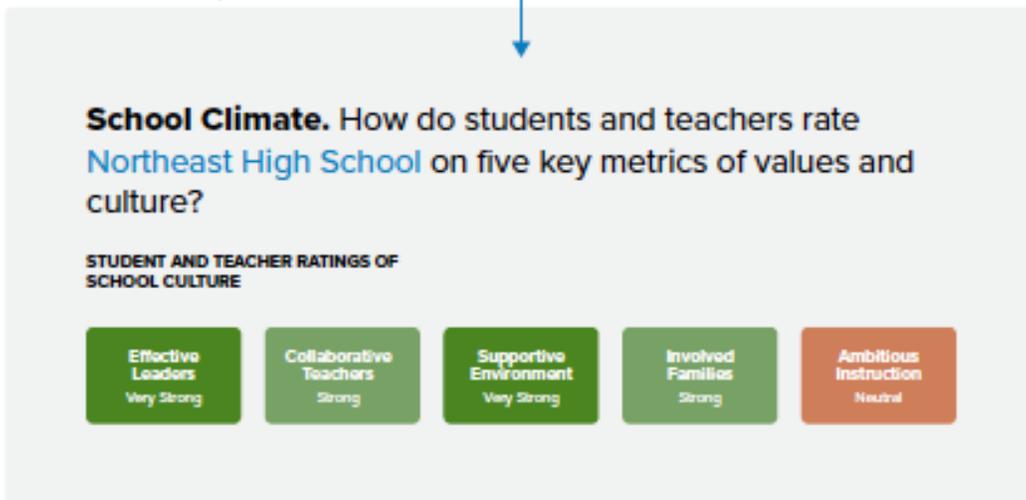
Equitable Growth
Neutral

Equitable Student Growth tells us the extent to which a school is providing needed attention to students who are designated at-risk, with disabilities, English-language learners and from different racial/ethnic groups.
[LEARN MORE](#)

Academic Proficiency
Weak

Proficiency tells us how many students have reached the designated "proficient" score. Researchers say proficiency reflects family income more than school effectiveness. Proficiency is our goal for every student, but a school's ability to lift students to proficiency is best seen in the school's Growth score
[LEARN MORE](#)

Strong school climate is an important predictor of academic growth. Let's see, in detail, how students and teachers rate the culture at Northeast High School



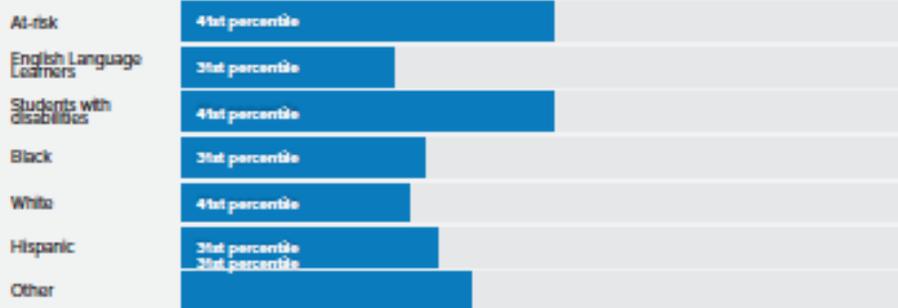
Academic Growth

ANNUAL GROWTH IN READING AND MATH SCORES FOR ALL STUDENTS



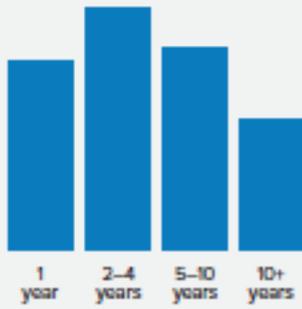
Equitable Growth. Does Northeast High School provide the needed attention to students who require extra help?

AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH IN SCORES FOR DIFFERENT STUDENT GROUPS

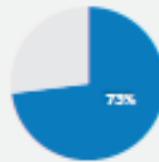


Teachers

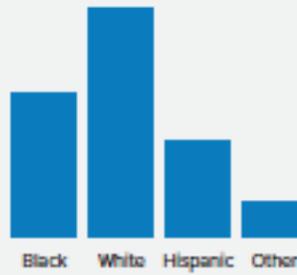
NUMBER OF YEARS TEACHING EXPERIENCE



RATE OF TEACHER RETENTION



RACE/ETHNICITY OF TEACHERS



Appendix B.

<p>High Inputs High Outcomes</p>	<p>High Inputs Low Outcomes</p> <p><i>These schools require corrective action to better serve students from focus sub-groups</i></p>
<p>Low Inputs High Outcomes</p>	<p>Low Inputs Low Outcomes</p> <p><i>These schools need significant support</i></p>