

**ARKANSAS EDUCATION REPORT**  
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**OUTSTANDING EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE AWARDS:  
HIGHLIGHTING HIGH ACHIEVING ARKANSAS SCHOOLS, 2012**

**HIGHLIGHTING MOST IMPROVED SCHOOLS:  
BENCHMARK GROWTH 2006 TO 2012**

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## INTRODUCTION

Since our founding in 2003, the mission of the Office for Education Policy has been to look at pressing issues through the lens of academic research and disseminate our findings to educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders around Arkansas. *Every once in a while, however, we think it is okay to stray from issue analysis and simply share some good news!*

In this Arkansas Education Report (AER), we aim to highlight excellent performance and offer our congratulations. To that end, we are happy to highlight many excellent schools around the state in our now-annual AER, entitled the **O**utstanding **E**ducational **P**erformance Awards or the OEP awards.

Over a three month period this fall, a new set of **OEP Awards** will be released every couple of weeks to highlight the high performing schools in Arkansas on the Benchmark exam in math and literacy, and End-Of-Course (EOC) exams in Algebra, Geometry, Literacy (Grade 11), and Biology. This **second release** will begin by featuring high poverty high performing elementary and middle schools on Benchmark performance in literacy and math.

This year, we are using a new academic performance indicator, the **“GPA” rating system**, to rank the highest performing schools. In the past, the rankings were created based on the percentage of students scoring at the proficient or advanced level on each assessment. Generally, when discussing academic achievement on the Benchmark exams, policymakers focus on this figure. However, this indicator suffers from being an “all-or-nothing” measure, in which a student is either proficient or not.

For example, this mark “throws away” real information provided by student scores that are placed into the four different performance categories: below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced. The percent proficient and advanced measure, for example, does not differentiate between a school in which 100% of students score proficient and a school in which 100% of students score advanced. Both of these schools would show 100% of students performing at proficient and advanced levels; however, in the latter school, students actually performed at a significantly higher level. Thus, a slightly more informative indicator gives the most credit to students who score at the advanced level and the least credit to students who score at the below basic level. For these purposes then, we have created the “GPA” rating system. In this GPA measure, parallel to the familiar grade point average for individual students, we treat the benchmark test scores in a similar way, whereby a 4.0 is a perfect score!

Category	GPA Points Awarded
<b>Advanced</b>	4.0
<b>Proficient</b>	3.0
<b>Basic</b>	2.0
<b>Below Basic</b>	1.0

The GPA measure, we believe, is a better representation of student achievement on statewide standardized exams. In this report, we are presenting a list of the top 25 schools in each area. In some cases, these “top 25 lists” will contain more than 25 schools as some schools’ GPA scores

will be identical. This is not a new phenomenon, as we also exceeded 25 schools in previous reports when using the percent proficient and advanced metric as an indicator for student achievement; however, there are fewer ties using the more precise GPA measure.

After we present our overall snapshot of high performing schools, we will release subsequent reports every few weeks focusing on different subsets of schools. For example, in section two of the **OEP Awards** AER, we will feature schools that are beating the odds (that is, schools that have high levels of student achievement while serving a high percentage of low-income students). In the following weeks, we will focus on high performing elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools in the various regions across the state. Finally, we will conclude our report by focusing on the schools with the greatest improvement in test scores. Our release schedule is:

- **High Achieving “Overall” Schools in Arkansas**
- **Beating the Odds – High Achieving Schools Serving Low Income Communities**
- **High Achieving Elementary Schools by Region**
- **High Achieving Middle Schools by Region**
- **High Achieving High Schools Across Arkansas**
- **Most Improved Schools**

Stay tuned over the next ten weeks to see which schools in your area are recognized for our **OEP Awards**!

## **VI. 2012 OEP AWARDS: MOST IMPROVED ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS BETWEEN 2006 AND 2012**

This is one of sections that we really enjoy compiling, because this list goes beyond the standard ranking of schools based on the fraction of kids meeting proficient levels. Rather, here we recognize those schools and students experiencing improvement from year to year. In past years for this report, we considered a single year's worth of growth, which is interesting but does not necessarily reveal positive long-term benefits for kids.

For this reason, we are especially pleased to publish this year's list of most improved elementary and middle schools. Schools and students now have the benefit of many years of experience with the Benchmark exams in Arkansas, as students have been sitting for this exam since 2002.

### ***How Do We Measure School Growth?***

The score we use in this section is again the GPA rating system described earlier. With the GPA measure, schools are given credit for the number of advanced, proficient, basic, and below basic students.<sup>1</sup>

We focus on growth in GPA scores over a multi-year span. Thanks to the availability of many years of testing data, we were able to construct a growth score that is less susceptible to the potential instability of year to year changes due to an abnormally high or low score in either of the two observed years. To smooth out abnormally high or low scores in one particular year, we use multi-year averages for both the beginning score and the ending score over the five year time period. Specifically, our starting score is the average score from the 2005-06 and 2006-07 school years; our ending score is the average of the two most recent school years (2010-11 and 2011-12).

In this report, we rank the schools by greatest improvements, where our measure of improvement is simply the difference between the ending score and the starting score over this time period. This set of OEP Awards is given to the elementary and middle schools with the greatest improvements in math and literacy. Once again, we also highlight the five most improved elementary and middle schools in each region in the two subject areas.

### ***What Information Do the Tables Provide?***

In each table, we provide additional information on the award-winning schools, similar to prior sections. We include the school and district name, the grades served, region, and level of poverty (Free-and-Reduced Lunch rates), in addition to two measures of academic growth over roughly the past half-decade. To demonstrate academic growth, we not only show the GPA increase used to compile the rankings, but we also show the point increase in the percent of students achieving at the proficient or advanced levels over that same time period.

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<sup>1</sup> The GPA rating is a score derived from an average where, an advanced score is counted as a 4.0 like an "A", proficient score as a 3.0, like a "B", basic score as a 2.0, like a "C", and below basic as a 1.0, like a grade of "D".

Furthermore, at the top of each Top 20 list, the state growth averages are listed for each subject. It is important to consider the state averages in light of the growth that these schools made. The section begins with elementary schools in math and literacy and then highlights middle schools in math and literacy.

### ***Where Can You Find Growth Information for All Schools in Arkansas?***

On the Office for Education Policy website, you can access the complete growth database: <http://www.uark.edu/ua/oep/resources.html>. This database is especially helpful because it lists each school's annual benchmark results since the 2005-06 academic year. Schools can be compared by region, Free-and-Reduced Lunch (FRL) status, or by the similar schools index rating.

Due to the time span of the data, there are currently operating schools not included in this report, because these schools did not exist in the 2005-06 or 2006-07 school years. Therefore, we have created an additional database that covers growth over a shorter period of time. The three year database highlights growth by taking the difference between an average of the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years and an average of the 2007-08 and 2008-09 school years. We recommend you examine the database and see the growth that Arkansas' elementary and middle schools have made.

### ***Sneak Preview: What Did the Rankings Reveal?***

Overall, scores have increased on the Benchmark Exam considerably over time. More students are scoring proficient or advanced in the 2010-11 and 2011-12 academic years than the 2005-06 and 2006-07 academic years. As the proficiency rates have increased, it should be noted that more Arkansas students are scoring in the highest performance category (advanced).

The majority of the schools highlighted in this report for making the greatest improvements initially scored equal to or below the statewide averages and eventually grew to meet or exceed the statewide averages. There are a number of schools that serve high populations of lower-income students (as noted by the Free-and-Reduced Lunch percentages). These findings and others are presented in the conclusion of this report.

## BB. Elementary Schools, Mathematics

Table 105: Top 20 Most Improved Elementary Schools Based on Benchmark Mathematics Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

	School (District)	Region	Grades Served	% FRL <sup>2</sup>	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End <sup>3</sup>	GPA Initial→End <sup>4</sup>	GPA Growth <sup>5</sup>
	State Average			68%	64%→82%	2.80→3.25	+0.45
1	Augusta Elem. School (Augusta)	NE	P-7	89%	20%→70%	2.38→3.52	+1.14
1	SMC Elem. at Luxora (South Mississippi County)	NE	P-4	99%	45%→95%	2.31→3.45	+1.14
1	Weaver Elem. School (West Memphis)	NE	K-6	92%	47%→84%	1.73→2.87	+1.14
4	Marvell Primary School (Marvell)	SE	P-6	100%	28%→71%	1.95→3.07	+1.12
5	Trusty Elem. School (Fort Smith)	NW	K-6	96%	20%→67%	1.72→2.77	+1.04
6	Hardin Elem. School (White Hall)	CN	K-6	50%	51%→93%	2.47→3.48	+1.01
7	Jackson Elem. School (West Memphis)	NE	K-6	100%	34%→77%	2.08→3.08	+1.00
8	Vera Kilpatrick Elem. School (Texarkana)	SW	K-4	89%	42%→80%	2.31→3.31	+0.99
9	C. D. Franks Elem. School (Ashdown)	SW	2-3	62%	49%→85%	2.44→3.43	+0.98
10	Moody Elem. School (White Hall)	CN	K-6	41%	51%→88%	2.50→3.46	+0.96
11	Angie Grant Elem. School (Benton)	CN	K-5	66%	53%→88%	2.51→3.43	+0.92
12	Wilson Elem. School (Little Rock)	CN	P-5	95%	21%→56%	1.73→2.65	+0.91
13	Evening Shade Math & Science Academy (Cave City)	NE	K-4	89%	70%→93%	2.92→3.82	+0.90
14	Thirty-Fourth Avenue Elem. School (Pine Bluff)	CN	K-5	91%	29%→65%	1.91→2.80	+0.89
15	Fairview Elem. School (Texarkana)	SW	K-4	88%	46%→83%	2.37→3.26	+0.88
15	Glenview Elem. School (North Little Rock)	CN	K-5	96%	43%→80%	2.27→3.15	+0.88
17	C. B. Partee Elem. School (Brinkley)	SE	K-6	82%	49%→81%	2.44→3.31	+0.87
17	Park Hill Elem. School (North Little Rock)	CN	K-5	84%	39%→76%	2.17→3.04	+0.87
17	Howard Elem. School (Fort Smith)	NW	P-6	96%	31%→68%	1.98→2.84	+0.87
20	Centerpoint Intermediate School (Centerpoint)	SW	4-5	73%	54%→89%	2.50→3.36	+0.86
20	Cavanaugh Elem. School (Fort Smith)	NW	K-6	74%	60%→90%	2.60→3.46	+0.86

<sup>2</sup> Free-and-reduced lunch rates from the 2011-12 school year

<sup>3</sup> Initial Proficient/Advanced % is an average of the 2005-06 and 2006-07 school years. End Proficient/Advanced % is an average of the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years.

<sup>4</sup> Initial GPA is an average of the 2005-06 and 2006-07 school years. End GPA is an average of the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years.

<sup>5</sup> Due to rounding of numbers, there may be slight differences between the overall growth GPA and the GPA Initial→End column. Refer to the OEP growth database for exact numbers.

Tables 106-110: Top 5 Most Improved Elementary Schools in Arkansas by Region, Benchmark **Mathematics** Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12



Table 106: Top 5 Most Improved Elementary Schools in **Northwest** Arkansas Benchmark **Mathematics** Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

School (District)	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
1 Trusty Elem. School (Fort Smith)	K-6	96%	20%→67%	1.72→2.77	+1.04
2 Howard Elem. School (Fort Smith)	P-6	96%	31%→68%	1.98→2.84	+0.87
3 Cavanaugh Elem. School (Fort Smith)	K-6	74%	60%→90%	2.60→3.46	+0.86
4 Harry C. Morrison Elem. School (Fort Smith)	P-6	97%	34%→70%	2.10→2.94	+0.84
5 Jones Elem. School (Rogers)	K-5	84%	56%→90%	2.60→3.44	+0.83



Table 107: Top 5 Most Improved Elementary Schools in **Northeast** Arkansas Benchmark **Mathematics** Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

School (District)	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
1 Weaver Elem. School (West Memphis)	K-6	92%	47%→84%	2.38→3.52	+1.14
2 SMC Elem. at Luxora (South Mississippi County)	P-4	99%	45%→95%	2.31→3.45	+1.14
3 Augusta Elem. School (Augusta)	P-7	89%	20%→70%	1.73→2.87	+1.14
4 Jackson Elem. School (West Memphis)	K-6	100%	34%→77%	2.08→3.08	+1.00
5 Evening Shade Math & Science Academy (Cave City)	K-4	89%	70%→93%	2.92→3.82	+0.90





Table 108: Top 5 Most Improved Elementary Schools in **Central** Arkansas  
Benchmark **Mathematics** Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

School (District)	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
1 Hardin Elem. School (White Hall)	K-6	50%	51%→93%	2.47→3.48	+1.01
2 Moody Elem. School (White Hall)	K-6	41%	51%→88%	2.50→3.46	+0.96
3 Angie Grant Elem. School (Benton)	K-5	66%	53%→88%	2.51→3.43	+0.92
4 Wilson Elem. School (Little Rock)	P-5	95%	21%→56%	1.73→2.65	+0.91
5 Thirty-Fourth Avenue Elem. School (Pine Bluff)	K-5	91%	29%→65%	1.91→2.80	+0.89



Table 109: Top 5 Most Improved Elementary Schools in **Southwest** Arkansas  
Benchmark **Mathematics** Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

School (District)	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
1 Vera Kilpatrick Elem. School (Texarkana)	K-4	89%	42%→80%	2.31→3.31	+0.99
2 C. D. Franks Elem. School (Ashdown)	2-3	62%	49%→85%	2.44→3.43	+0.98
3 Fairview Elem. School (Texarkana)	K-4	88%	46%→83%	2.37→3.26	+0.88
4 Centerpoint Intermediate School (Centerpoint)	4-5	73%	54%→89%	2.50→3.36	+0.86
5 Blevins Elem. School (Blevins)	K-6	86%	54%→89%	2.17→3.01	+0.84



Table 110: Top 5 Most Improved Elementary Schools in **Southeast** Arkansas  
Benchmark **Mathematics** Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

School (District)	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
1 Marvell Primary School (Marvell)	P-6	100%	28%→71%	1.95→3.07	+1.12
2 C. B. Partee Elem. School (Brinkley)	K-6	82%	49%→81%	2.44→3.31	+0.87
3 Kingsland Elem. School (Cleveland County)	K-6	76%	43%→78%	2.31→3.14	+0.83
4 Jimmy Brown Elem. School (Star City)	K-5	62%	53%→79%	2.50→3.25	+0.75
5 Rison Elem. School (Cleveland County)	K-6	57%	58%→83%	2.64→3.37	+0.73

## CC. Elementary Schools, Literacy

*Table 111: Top 22 Most Improved Elementary Schools Based on Benchmark Literacy Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12*

School (District)	Region	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
State Average			68%	59%→80%	2.68→3.19	+0.51
<b>1</b> Gurdon Primary School (Gurdon)	SW	K-4	78%	48%→89%	2.40→3.52	+1.11
<b>2</b> Vera Kilpatrick Elem. School (Texarkana)	SW	K-4	89%	36%→79%	2.13→3.18	+1.04
<b>3</b> Oak Grove Elem. School (Pulaski County)	CN	P-5	73%	38%→81%	2.15→3.18	+1.03
<b>3</b> SMC Elem. at Luxora (South Mississippi County)	NE	P-4	99%	37%→86%	2.23→3.27	+1.03
<b>5</b> Lepanto Elem. (East Poinsett)	NE	K-4	84%	38%→82%	2.21→3.22	+1.01
<b>6</b> Jackson Elem. School (West Memphis)	NE	K-6	100%	29%→76%	2.07→3.04	+0.97
<b>7</b> Glenview Elem. School (North Little Rock)	CN	K-5	96%	38%→80%	2.19→3.14	+0.95
<b>8</b> Trusty Elem. School (Fort Smith)	NW	K-6	96%	21%→65%	1.91→2.84	+0.93
<b>8</b> Lynch Drive Elem. School (North Little Rock)	CN	K-5	96%	25%→69%	1.94→2.87	+0.93
<b>10</b> Jones Elem. School (Rogers)	NW	K-5	84%	48%→89%	2.44→3.35	+0.92
<b>11</b> Grace Hill Elem. School (Rogers)	NW	K-5	84%	52%→90%	2.53→3.43	+0.90
<b>11</b> No. Heights Elem. School (North Little Rock)	CN	K-5	94%	34%→72%	2.07→2.98	+0.90
<b>11</b> C. D. Franks Elem. School (Ashdown)	SW	2-3	62%	39%→76%	2.19→3.09	+0.90
<b>14</b> Edward D. Trice Elem. School (Texarkana)	SW	K-4	68%	46%→79%	2.32→3.21	+0.89
<b>15</b> Nashville Primary School (Nashville)	SW	K-3	74%	49%→84%	2.44→3.31	+0.87
<b>16</b> Meadowcliff Elem. School (Little Rock)	CN	P-5	93%	24%→66%	1.92→2.77	+0.84
<b>16</b> W. T. Cheney Elem. School (Pine Bluff)	CN	K-5	77%	41%→73%	2.14→2.97	+0.84
<b>16</b> Wonder Elem. School (West Memphis)	NE	K-6	97%	46%→84%	2.42→3.26	+0.84
<b>19</b> Mabelvale Elem. School (Little Rock)	CN	P-5	91%	28%→69%	1.99→2.83	+0.83
<b>19</b> Evening Shade Math & Science Academy (Cave City)	NE	K-4	89%	66%→91%	2.81→3.64	+0.83
<b>19</b> Angie Grant Elem. School (Benton)	CN	K-5	66%	48%→84%	2.44→3.26	+0.83
<b>19</b> Eastside Primary School (Warren)	SE	K-3	72%	40%→70%	2.17→2.99	+0.83

Tables 112-116: Top 5 Most Improved Elementary Schools in Arkansas by Region, Benchmark **Literacy** Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12



Table 112: Top 5 Most Improved Elementary Schools in **Northwest** Arkansas Benchmark **Literacy** Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

School (District)	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
1 Trusty Elem. School (Fort Smith)	K-6	96%	21%→65%	1.91→2.84	+0.93
2 Jones Elem. School (Rogers)	K-5	84%	48%→89%	2.44→3.35	+0.92
3 Grace Hill Elem. School (Rogers)	K-5	84%	52%→90%	2.53→3.43	+0.90
4 Eureka Springs Elem. School (Eureka Springs)	K-4	69%	56%→87%	2.61→3.42	+0.80
5 Green Forest Elem. School (Green Forest)	K-3	88%	60%→91%	2.70→3.49	+0.79
5 Lincoln Elem. School (Lincoln)	P-5	76%	52%→82%	2.49→3.28	+0.79



Table 113: Top 5 Most Improved Elementary Schools in **Northeast** Arkansas Benchmark **Literacy** Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

School (District)	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
1 SMC Elem. at Luxora (South Mississippi County)	P-4	99%	37%→86%	2.23→3.27	+1.03
2 Lepanto Elem. (East Poinsett)	K-4	84%	38%→82%	2.21→3.22	+1.01
3 Jackson Elem. School (West Memphis)	K-6	100%	29%→76%	2.07→3.04	+0.97
4 Wonder Elem. School (West Memphis)	K-6	97%	46%→84%	2.42→3.26	+0.84
5 Evening Shade Math & Science Academy (Cave City)	K-4	89%	66%→91%	2.81→3.64	+0.83



Table 114: Top 5 Most Improved Elementary Schools in **Central** Arkansas  
Benchmark **Literacy** Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

School (District)	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
1 Oak Grove Elem. School (Pulaski County)	P-5	73%	38%→81%	2.15→3.18	+1.03
2 Glenview Elem. School (North Little Rock)	K-5	96%	38%→80%	2.19→3.14	+0.95
3 Lynch Drive Elem. School (North Little Rock)	K-5	96%	25%→69%	1.94→2.87	+0.93
4 No. Heights Elem. School (North Little Rock)	K-5	94%	34%→72%	2.07→2.98	+0.90
5 Meadowcliff Elem. School (Little Rock)	P-5	93%	24%→66%	1.92→2.77	+0.84
5 W. T. Cheney Elem. School (Pine Bluff)	K-5	77%	41%→73%	2.14→2.97	+0.84



Table 115: Top 5 Most Improved Elementary Schools in **Southwest** Arkansas  
Benchmark **Literacy** Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

School (District)	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
1 Gurdon Primary School (Gurdon)	K-4	78%	48%→89%	2.40→3.52	+1.11
2 Vera Kilpatrick Elem. School (Texarkana)	K-4	89%	36%→79%	2.13→3.18	+1.04
3 C. D. Franks Elem. School (Ashdown)	2-3	62%	39%→76%	2.19→3.09	+0.90
4 Edward D. Trice Elem. School (Texarkana)	K-4	68%	46%→79%	2.32→3.21	+0.89
5 Nashville Primary School (Nashville)	K-3	74%	49%→84%	2.44→3.31	+0.87



Table 116: Top 5 Most Improved Elementary Schools in **Southeast** Arkansas  
Benchmark **Literacy** Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

School (District)	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
1 Eastside Primary School (Warren)	K-3	72%	40%→70%	2.17→2.99	+0.83
2 C. B. Partee Elem. School (Brinkley)	K-6	82%	44%→83%	2.43→3.21	+0.78
3 Park Avenue Elem. (Stuttgart)	K-4	68%	44%→75%	2.32→3.09	+0.76
4 Lakeside Upper Elem. School (Lakeside)	3-5	87%	33%→71%	2.21→2.94	+0.74
5 Drew Central Elem. School (Drew Central)	K-4	78%	52%→82%	2.50→3.24	+0.73

## DD. Middle Schools, Math

Table 117: Top 20 Most Improved Middle Schools Based on Benchmark *Mathematics* Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

	School (District)	Region	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/ Advanced % Initial→ End	GPA Initial→ End	GPA Growth
	State Average			61%	52%→74%	2.41→2.91	+0.49
1	Pea Ridge Middle School (Pea Ridge)	NW	6-8	45%	52%→89%	2.43→3.55	+1.13
2	Crossett Middle School (Crossett)	SE	5-8	56%	25%→70%	1.77→2.73	+0.96
2	Tuckerman High School (Jackson County)	NE	8-12	62%	52%→84%	2.34→3.31	+0.96
4	Southeast Middle School (Pine Bluff)	CN	6-7	88%	21%→57%	1.63→2.56	+0.93
4	Robert F. Morehead Middle School (Dollarway)	CN	6-8	93%	14%→55%	1.51→2.43	+0.93
5	Gosnell High School (Gosnell)	NE	7-12	61%	38%→79%	2.05→2.98	+0.92
6	Concord High School (Concord)	NE	7-12	57%	41%→79%	2.13→3.03	+0.90
7	Bruno-Pyatt High School (Ozark Mountain)	NW	7-12	83%	35%→81%	2.02→2.92	+0.89
9	Pocahontas Junior High School (Pocahontas)	NE	7-9	59%	46%→82%	2.26→3.14	+0.88
10	Rural Special High School (Mountain View)	NE	7-12	64%	55%→87%	2.42→3.29	+0.87
10	Spring Hill High School (Spring Hill)	SW	7-12	50%	47%→90%	2.26→3.13	+0.87
12	Ozark Middle School (Ozark)	NW	6-7	53%	54%→87%	2.54→3.40	+0.86
12	Flippin Middle School (Flippin)	NW	6-8	65%	44%→81%	2.25→3.11	+0.86
12	Western Yell Co. High School (Western Yell County)	NW	7-12	75%	33%→76%	1.97→2.82	+0.86
12	Kingston High School (Jasper)	NW	7-12	64%	54%→85%	2.37→3.23	+0.86
16	Eliza Miller Junior High School (Helena/W. Helena)	SE	7-8	98%	15%→52%	1.46→2.31	+0.85
16	Ozark Junior High School (Ozark)	NW	8-9	54%	40%→78%	2.11→2.96	+0.85
18	Centerpoint High School (Centerpoint)	SW	6-12	67%	48%→78%	2.29→3.07	+0.79
19	West Junior High School (Wes Memphis)	NE	7-9	62%	49%→82%	2.32→3.10	+0.78
20	Norphlet High School (Norphlet)	SW	7-12	46%	33%→75%	1.96→2.73	+0.77

Tables 118-122: Top 5 Most Improved Middle Schools in Arkansas by Region, Benchmark Mathematics Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12



Table 118: Top 5 Most Improved Middle Schools in Northwest Arkansas Benchmark Mathematics Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

School (District)	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
1 Pea Ridge Middle School (Pea Ridge)	6-8	45%	52%→89%	2.43→3.55	+1.13
2 Bruno-Pyatt High School (Ozark Mountain)	7-12	83%	35%→81%	2.02→2.92	+0.89
3 Ozark Middle School (Ozark)	6-7	53%	54%→87%	2.54→3.40	+0.86
3 Flippin Middle School (Flippin)	6-8	65%	44%→81%	2.25→3.11	+0.86
3 Western Yell Co. High School (Western Yell County)	7-12	75%	33%→76%	1.97→2.82	+0.86
3 Kingston High School (Jasper)	7-12	64%	54%→85%	2.37→3.23	+0.86



Table 119: Top 5 Most Improved Middle Schools in Northeast Arkansas Benchmark Mathematics Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

School (District)	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
1 Tuckerman High School (Jackson County)	8-12	62%	52%→84%	2.34→3.31	+0.96
2 Gosnell High School (Gosnell)	7-12	61%	38%→79%	2.05→2.98	+0.92
3 Concord High School (Concord)	7-12	57%	41%→79%	2.13→3.03	+0.90
4 Pocahontas Junior High School (Pocahontas)	7-9	59%	46%→82%	2.26→3.14	+0.88
5 Rural Special High School (Mountain View)	7-12	64%	55%→87%	2.42→3.29	+0.87





Table 120: Top 5 Most Improved Middle Schools in *Central* Arkansas Benchmark Mathematics Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

School (District)	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
1 Southeast Middle School (Pine Bluff)	6-7	88%	21%→57%	1.63→2.56	+0.93
1 Robert F. Morehead Middle School (Dollarway)	6-8	93%	14%→55%	1.51→2.43	+0.93
3 Redfield Junior High School (White Hall)	7-9	47%	42%→77%	2.17→2.92	+0.75
4 White Hall Junior High School (White Hall)	7-9	34%	51%→82%	2.38→3.09	+0.71
5 Greenbrier Junior High School (Greenbrier)	8-9	32%	58%→87%	2.43→3.12	+0.70



Table 121: Top 5 Most Improved Middle Schools in *Southwest* Arkansas Benchmark Mathematics Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

School (District)	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
1 Spring Hill High School (Spring Hill)	7-12	50%	47%→90%	2.26→3.13	+0.87
2 Centerpoint High School (Centerpoint)	6-12	67%	48%→78%	2.29→3.07	+0.79
3 Norphlet High School (Norphlet)	7-12	46%	33%→75%	1.96→2.73	+0.77
4 Taylor High School (Emerson-Taylor)	7-12	39%	50%→83%	2.40→3.12	+0.72
5 Hampton High School (Hampton)	7-12	62%	37%→67%	2.00→2.72	+0.71



Table 122: Top 5 Most Improved Middle Schools in *Southeast* Arkansas Benchmark Mathematics Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

School (District)	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
1 Crossett Middle School (Crossett)	5-8	56%	25%→70%	1.77→2.73	+0.96
2 Eliza Miller Junior High School (Helena/W. Helena)	7-8	98%	15%→52%	1.46→2.31	+0.85
3 Meekins Middle School (Stuttgart)	5-6	66%	44%→72%	2.25→2.98	+0.73
4 McGehee High School (McGehee)	7-12	75%	34%→64%	1.94→2.60	+0.65
5 Star City Middle School (Star City)	6-8	63%	55%→78%	2.53→3.16	+0.64

## EE. Middle Schools, Literacy

Table 123: Top 20 Most Improved Middle Schools Based on Benchmark **Literacy** Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

	School (District)	Region	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
	State Average			61%	60%→75%	2.68→3.03	+0.36
1	Green Forest Intermediate School (Green Forest)	NW	4-8	80%	46%→82%	2.46→3.18	+0.72
2	Rural Special High School (Mountain View)	NE	7-12	64%	59%→89%	2.73→3.43	+0.70
2	Mt. Judea High School (Deer/Mt. Judea)	NW	7-12	82%	42%→77%	2.28→2.98	+0.69
4	Southeast Middle School (Pine Bluff)	CN	6-7	88%	24%→55%	2.00→2.65	+0.65
4	Timbo High School (Mountain View)	NE	7-12	77%	53%→82%	2.59→3.23	+0.65
5	Nashville Elem. School (Nashville)	SW	4-6	67%	52%→81%	2.58→3.22	+0.64
6	Marshall High School (Searcy County)	NW	7-12	68%	62%→87%	2.68→3.31	+0.62
7	Cabe Middle School (Gurdon)	SW	5-8	72%	50%→80%	2.53→3.14	+0.61
9	Oark High School (Jasper)	NW	7-12	77%	44%→71%	2.36→2.97	+0.61
10	Dierks High School (Dierks)	SW	7-12	52%	60%→83%	2.68→3.29	+0.60
10	Bruno-Pyatt High School (Ozark Mountain)	NW	7-12	83%	53%→81%	2.56→3.16	+0.60
12	Pottsville Middle Grades (Pottsville)	NW	4-6	48%	72%→92%	2.93→3.53	+0.60
12	Gosnell High School (Gosnell)	NE	7-12	61%	47%→80%	2.47→3.07	+0.60
12	Hoxie High School (Hoxie)	NE	7-12	70%	56%→83%	2.59→3.18	+0.59
12	Eliza Miller Junior High School (Helena/W. Helena)	SE	7-8	98%	30%→61%	2.11→2.69	+0.59
16	Benton Junior High School (Benton)	CN	8-9	35%	70%→92%	2.85→3.44	+0.59
16	Ozark Junior High School (Ozark)	NW	8-9	54%	60%→83%	2.62→3.20	+0.58
18	Wilson Intermediate School (Malvern)	CN	5-6	75%	51%→76%	2.52→3.09	+0.57
19	Kingston High School (Jasper)	NW	7-12	64%	67%→89%	2.71→3.28	+0.57
20	Kirksey Middle School (Rogers)	NW	6-8	54%	65%→88%	2.81→3.38	+0.57



Tables 124-128: Top 5 Most Improved Middle Schools in Arkansas by Region, Benchmark Literacy Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12



Table 124: Top 5 Most Improved Middle Schools in Northwest Arkansas Benchmark Literacy Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

School (District)	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
1 Green Forest Intermediate School (Green Forest)	4-8	80%	46%→82%	2.46→3.18	+0.72
2 Mt. Judea High School (Deer/Mt. Judea)	7-12	82%	42%→77%	2.28→2.98	+0.69
3 Marshall High School (Searcy County)	7-12	68%	62%→87%	2.68→3.31	+0.62
4 Oark High School (Jasper)	7-12	77%	44%→71%	2.36→2.97	+0.61
5 Bruno-Pyatt High School (Ozark Mountain)	7-12	83%	53%→81%	2.56→3.16	+0.60
5 Pottsville Middle Grades (Pottsville)	4-6	48%	72%→92%	2.93→3.53	+0.60



Table 125: Top 5 Most Improved Middle Schools in Northeast Arkansas Benchmark Literacy Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

School (District)	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
1 Rural Special High School (Mountain View)	7-12	64%	59%→89%	2.73→3.43	+0.70
2 Timbo High School (Mountain View)	7-12	77%	53%→82%	2.59→3.23	+0.65
3 Gosnell High School (Gosnell)	7-12	61%	47%→80%	2.47→3.07	+0.60
4 Hoxie High School (Hoxie)	7-12	70%	56%→83%	2.59→3.18	+0.59
5 Pangburn High School (Pangburn)	7-12	48%	55%→81%	2.54→3.09	+0.55



Table 126: Top 5 Most Improved Middle Schools in **Central** Arkansas Benchmark Literacy Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

School (District)	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
1 Southeast Middle School (Pine Bluff)	6-7	88%	24%→55%	2.00→2.65	+0.65
2 Benton Junior High School (Benton)	8-9	35%	70%→92%	2.85→3.44	+0.59
3 Wilson Intermediate School (Malvern)	5-6	75%	51%→76%	2.52→3.09	+0.57
4 Greenbrier Junior High School (Greenbrier)	8-9	32%	70%→91%	2.82→3.36	+0.54
5 Lakewood Middle School (North Little Rock)	7-8	46%	60%→81%	2.68→3.20	+0.52



Table 127: Top 5 Most Improved Middle Schools in **Southwest** Arkansas Benchmark Literacy Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

School (District)	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
1 Nashville Elem. School (Nashville)	4-6	67%	52%→81%	2.58→3.22	+0.64
2 Cabe Middle School (Gurdon)	5-8	72%	50%→80%	2.53→3.14	+0.61
3 Dierks High School (Dierks)	7-12	52%	60%→83%	2.68→3.29	+0.60
4 Spring Hill High School (Spring Hill)	7-12	50%	60%→89%	2.64→3.20	+0.56
5 Barton Junior High School (El Dorado)	7-8	62%	57%→80%	2.63→3.18	+0.54



Table 128: Top 5 Most Improved Middle Schools in **Southeast** Arkansas Benchmark Literacy Achievement from 2005-06/2006-07 to 2011-11/2011-12

School (District)	Grades Served	% FRL	Proficient/Advanced % Initial→End	GPA Initial→End	GPA Growth
1 Eliza Miller Junior High School (Helena/W. Helena)	7-8	98%	30%→61%	2.11→2.69	+0.59
2 Crossett Middle School (Crossett)	5-8	56%	44%→71%	2.42→2.96	+0.53
3 Woodlawn High School (Woodlawn)	7-12	32%	62%→81%	2.71→3.21	+0.50
4 Star City Middle School (Star City)	6-8	63%	57%→76%	2.60→3.09	+0.49
5 Anna Strong Middle School (Lee County)	5-8	88%	28%→52%	2.10→2.54	+0.45

## Conclusion: What did the Rankings Reveal?

### Statewide Growth

It is always a pleasure to recognize successful schools, thus, we would like to congratulate **ALL** of the schools on the **Most Improved** lists. Additionally, it is important to step back and see how the state has grown overall on the Benchmark Exam since the 2005-06 school year. Some of this growth may be attributed to increased familiarity with the benchmark exam, though not all growth can be attributed to that. Indeed, it is important to recognize the hard work of these students and schools. The figures below display Arkansas Benchmark Exam growth over this time span. In both math and literacy, fewer students scored below basic and basic. Furthermore, in both subjects, roughly the same fraction of students scored in the single category of proficient, while more students across the state earned an advanced score.

Figure 1: Arkansas **Math** Benchmark Growth over time, 2005-06/2006-07 to 2010-11/2011-12

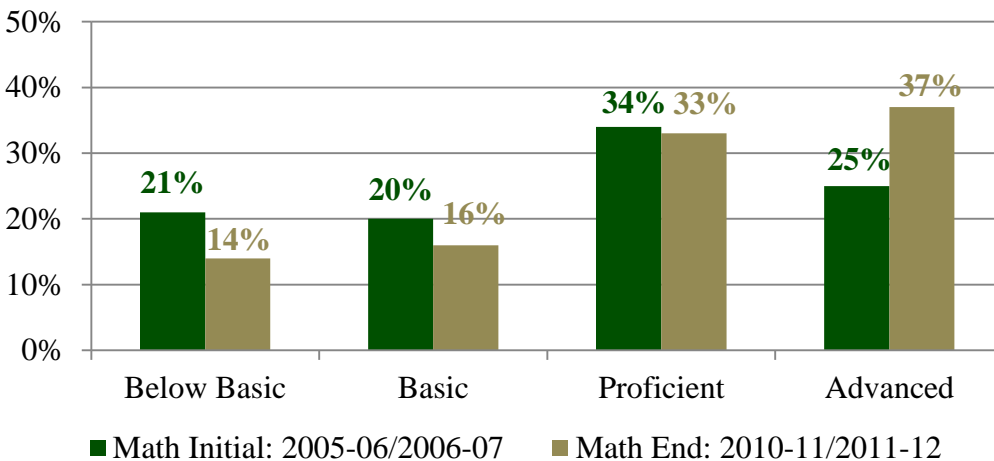
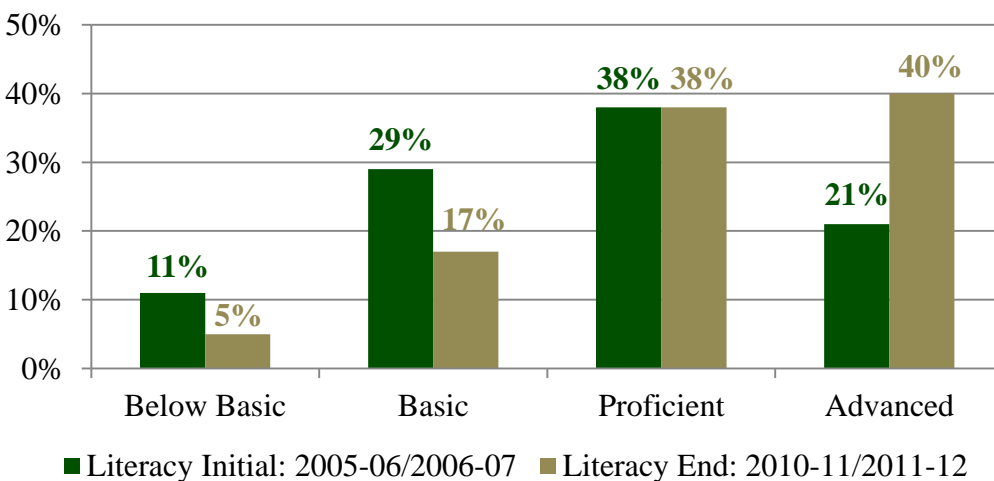


Figure 2: Arkansas **Literacy** Benchmark Growth over time, 2005-06/2006-07 to 2010-11/2011-12



### *Trends Appearing in the Rankings*

The majority of the top 20 most -improved schools initially scored equal to or below the state averages and eventually grew to equal or eclipse the state averages. It is important to note that the majority of these schools were not the overall highest performing in the state in 2011-12. Most of the highest performing schools (from 2005-06) have not experienced these amounts of considerable growth due to a ceiling-effect: these schools performed higher during the initial years and so they did not have as much room to grow.

In order to be on the elementary top 20 lists in math and literacy, a school must have grown *at least* 0.75 points. According to our 2005-06 School-level Benchmark Database, there were approximately 25 schools with a math benchmark GPA at or above 3.25; even if these schools pushed every student to advanced, they would not experience a gain of .75 GPA points and thus could not make the least due the high scores in the early years. For example, schools such as the Vilonia Academy of Technology (with a math GPA of 3.58 in 2005-06) and Wilburn Elementary School (with a math GPA of 3.50 in 2005-06) simply scored so high in the early years that there was a ceiling to their growth, limiting the ability of such schools to earn a place on the lists above. Of course, however, even though these schools may not be included on the current lists recognizing growth, this does not mean that they are not high achieving schools.

As the rankings were compiled using the GPA measure, the rankings reflect the movement of students into higher categories across all four categories. If the percent of students scoring proficient or advanced was used to compile the awards, the rankings would be slightly different. We chose to use the GPA measure, as we believe it is a better indicator to highlight growth, as it accounts for the four categories. For example, **Evening Shade Math and Science Academy** (Cave City School District) had 70% of students scoring proficient or advanced during the initial years (2005-06/2006-07) and grew to 93% of students scoring proficient or advanced during the final years (2010-11/2011-12). This percentage point increase of proficient and advanced students was not as high as other schools; however, the school's GPA grew from 2.92 to 3.82. Therefore, the school increased the fraction of students scoring in the top (advanced) category from 36% in the baseline to a whopping 88% in the outcome year.

As previously mentioned, we encourage you to examine the OEP growth database (<http://www.uark.edu/ua/oep/resources.html>) to see the growth of all schools in the state.

### *High-Poverty Schools*

In this section, there are a number of schools that serve high populations of lower-income students (as noted by the Free-and-Reduced Lunch percentages). For example, **Trusty Elementary**, in the Fort Smith School District, was on the top 20 lists for both elementary math and literacy for most improved. Trusty Elementary has a FRL rate of 96%, and it was the only elementary in the state to receive a School Improvement Grant in the past three years. The **Fort Smith School District** had three schools on the math elementary top 20 list. The **West Memphis School District** had three schools represented between the math and literacy elementary top 20 lists. These schools, **Jackson Elementary**, **Weaver Elementary**, and **Wonder Elementary**, also serve high populations of FRL students.

On the middle school math top 20 list, two schools in the top five, **Southeast Middle School** (Pine Bluff School District) and **Robert F. Moorhead Middle School** (Dollarway School District) have high populations of FRL students yet produced considerable growth over this time span. **Southeast Middle School** is also on the middle school literacy top 20 list.

*We at the OEP are pleased to recognize these schools and many others for moving their students forward.*

\* \* \* \* \*

This concludes the **Most Improved Elementary and Middle Schools** Outstanding Educational Performance Awards. Our next installment, **Most Improved High Schools**, takes a deeper look at High Schools that have shown considerable over the past several years on the End-of-Course exams and highlights these schools.

## APPENDIX

### A. Methods

The Office for Education Policy strives to make all of our calculations and publications transparent to our readers. Thus, in this appendix we describe our data source, calculations performed on these data for the purposes of our reporting, and our method for determining a school's classification as an elementary, middle, or high school.

All data used in this report were obtained from the Arkansas Department of Education. Benchmark and End-of-Course exam scores were obtained from the testing section (<http://www.arkansased.org/divisions/learning-services/student-assessment>). Other data, such as the percent of students eligible for free and reduced lunch, were obtained from the Arkansas Department of Education Data Center (<http://adedata.arkansas.gov>).

All data were analyzed at the school level; however, the ADE provides the percentage of scores at the proficient and advanced level by grade. Therefore, in order to present an accurate *school* level percentage of students scoring proficient and advanced across all grades, a weighted average for each school was calculated to account for different levels of enrollment at each grade level. In an effort to highlight schools that were strong in both subject areas, we calculated a simple average of the school level percent proficient and advanced in math *and* literacy at the elementary and middle school levels.

As previously discussed in the introduction, in order to calculate the GPA measure we treat the benchmark test scores similar to the existing grade point system.

Category	GPA Points Awarded
Advanced	4.0
Proficient	3.0
Basic	2.0
Below Basic	1.0

We calculated the GPA measure for every schools math, literacy, and combined math and literacy scores. The GPA measure is comprehensive in that it takes into account all of the test score levels (advanced, proficient, basic, and below basic), instead of lumping together advanced and proficient scores.

### C. School Classification

For the OEP Awards, we classified schools based on the following rules:

- Elementary School: primarily grades 3-5 (minimum grade P, K, 1, 2, 3, or 4)
- Middle School: primarily grades 6-8 (minimum grade of 4, 5, or 6 and maximum grade of 7, 8, or 9)

There were also a few “comprehensive schools,” such as K-8 or K-12 schools, that we included as either middle schools or elementary schools based on their enrollment numbers. The following table lists every grade configuration and their classifications.

*Table A: School Classifications*

Elementary Schools		Middle Schools
1-5		6
1-6		4-6
1-8		4-8
2-3		5-6
2-4		5-7
2-5		5-8
2-6		6-12
3-4		6-7
3-5		6-8
3-6		7-12
4-5		7-8
5*		7-9
K-3		8
K-4		8-9
K-5		K-12*
K-6		8-12*
K-7		
K-8		
P-2		
P-3		
P-4		
P-5		
P-6		
P-7		
P-8		

\*Only one school categorized by this configuration

#### D. School Classification – High School Awards

For the OEP High School Awards, we primarily classified schools based on the following rules:

- Junior High: primarily grades 7 – 9 (maximum grade of 9)
- High School: primarily grades 9 – 12

For the Algebra EOC, schools are classified differently, as the test is taken at different levels. These classifications are explained in the Algebra EOC section.

*Table B: School Classifications*

<b>Junior High</b>		<b>High School</b>
8-9		9-12
7-9		10-12
7-8		11-12
6-8		9-10
6-7		7-12
5-8		6-12
5-7		5-12
4-8*		K-12
1-8*		
K-8*		

\*For the purposes of the High School Awards, these schools are considered a Junior High because they have an 8<sup>th</sup> grade.