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**OUTSTANDING EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE AWARDS:
HIGHLIGHTING HIGH-GROWTH ARKANSAS SCHOOLS, 2023**

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

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
II. 2023 OEP AWARDS: HIGH GROWTH MIDDLE SCHOOLS IN ARKANSAS BASED ON CONTENT	
GROWTH IN THE ACT ASPIRE EXAMS	15
D. Middle School Overall ACT Aspire Growth Scores, 2023	16
E. Middle School Math ACT Aspire Growth Scores, 2023	20
F. Middle School ELA ACT Aspire Growth Scores, 2023	24
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).

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. In this case, the calculations are based on the 2021-22 scores. 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 2022-23 academic year, ACT Aspire examinations were administered to students in grades 3 through 10 in Math, Reading, Writing, English, and Science. The scores obtained in Reading, Writing, and English were combined to create an overall score for English Language Arts (ELA).

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 week, 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. 2023 OEP AWARDS: HIGH GROWTH MIDDLE SCHOOLS IN ARKANSAS BASED ON CONTENT GROWTH IN THE ACT ASPIRE EXAMS

This section highlights middle 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 2023 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, 2023

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

	School (District)	Region	Grades Served	Overall Content Growth
1	Lincoln Junior High (Bentonville)	Northwest	7-8	86.69
2	Washington Junior High (Bentonville)	Northwest	7-8	86.19
3	LISA Academy Rogers-Bentonville Middle (LISA Academy)	Northwest	6-8	85.58
4	Vilonia Middle (Vilonia)	Central	7-8	85.40
5	LA. Chaffin Middle (Fort Smith)	Northwest	6-8	85.20
6	LISA Academy North Middle (LISA Academy)	Central	6-8	84.92
7	Woodland Junior High (Fayetteville)	Northwest	7-8	84.84
8	Forrest City Junior High (Forrest City)	Northeast	7-8	84.66
9	eStem Junior High (eStem Public Charter School)	Central	7-9	84.59
10	Valley Springs Middle (Valley Springs)	Northwest	5-8	83.95
11	Gravette Middle (Gravette)	Northwest	6-8	83.88
12	Atkins Middle (Atkins)	Northwest	5-8	83.80
13	eStem East Village Junior High (eStem Public Charter School)	Central	7-9	83.73
14	Bright Field Middle (Bentonville)	Northwest	5-6	83.59
15	LISA Academy Springdale (LISA Academy)	Northwest	K-8	83.57
16	Pea Ridge Middle (Pea Ridge)	Northwest	5-6	83.41
17	KIPP Delta College Prep (KIPP Delta)	Southeast	6-8	83.38
18	Quitman Middle (Quitman)	Northeast	6-8	83.31
19	Hope Academy of Public Service (Hope)	Southwest	5-8	83.20
20	Ray/Phyllis Simon Middle (Conway)	Central	5-7	83.17

Tables 20-24: Top 5 Middle Schools in Arkansas by Region, 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	Lincoln Junior High (Bentonville)	7-8	575	86.69
2	Washington Junior High (Bentonville)	7-8	624	86.19
3	LISA Academy Rogers-Bentonville Middle (LISA Academy)	6-8	30	85.58
4	L.A. Chaffin Middle (Fort Smith)	6-8	639	85.20
5	Woodland Junior High (Fayetteville)	7-8	662	84.84



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

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Overall Content Growth
1	Forrest City Junior High (Forrest City)	7-8	247	84.66
2	Quitman Middle (Quitman)	6-8	194	83.31
3	Cave City Middle Career And Collegiate Preparatory (Cave City)	6-8	257	82.95
4	Highland Middle (Highland)	5-8	424	82.87
5	Westside Middle (Westside Consolidated Craighead)	5-7	359	82.12



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

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Overall Content Growth
1	Vilonia Middle (Vilonia)	7-8	447	85.40
2	LISA Academy North Middle (LISA Academy)	6-8	286	84.92
3	eStem Junior High (eStem Public Charter School)	7-9	369	84.59
4	eStem East Village Junior High (eStem Public Charter School)	7-9	259	83.73
5	Ray/Phyllis Simon Middle (Conway)	5-7	429	83.17



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

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Overall Content Growth
1	Hope Academy of Public Service (Hope)	5-8	206	83.20
2	DeQueen Middle (DeQueen)	6-7	328	82.86
3	Cabe Middle (Gurdon)	5-8	155	82.43
4	Beryl Henry Upper Elementary (Hope)	5-6	190	81.88
5	Mena Middle (Mena)	6-8	331	80.56



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

	School (District)	Grades Served	# of Test Takers	Overall Content Growth
1	KIPP Delta College Prep (KIPP Delta)	6-8	164	83.38
2	Star City Middle (Star City)	6-8	311	82.21
3	Stuttgart Junior High (Stuttgart)	7-8	240	82.20
4	Warren Middle (Warren)	6-8	341	82.07
5	DeWitt Middle (DeWitt)	6-8	242	80.33

E. Middle School Math ACT Aspire Growth Scores, 2023

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

	School (District)	Region	Grades Served	Math Content Growth
1	Washington Junior High (Bentonville)	Northwest	7-8	90.47
2	Lincoln Junior High (Bentonville)	Northwest	7-8	89.31
3	Vilonia Middle (Vilonia)	Central	7-8	88.55
4	Woodland Junior High (Fayetteville)	Northwest	7-8	88.47
5	Pea Ridge Middle (Pea Ridge)	Northwest	5-6	86.54
6	Atkins Middle (Atkins)	Northwest	5-8	86.35
7	LISA Academy North Middle (LISA Academy)	Central	6-8	86.17
8	DeQueen Middle (DeQueen)	Southwest	6-7	85.60
9	L.A. Chaffin Middle (Fort Smith)	Northwest	6-8	85.47
10	Alma Middle (Alma)	Northwest	6-8	85.22

Tables 26-30: Top 5 Middle Schools in Arkansas by Region, **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	Washington Junior High (Bentonville)	7-8	624	90.47
2	Lincoln Junior High (Bentonville)	7-8	575	89.31
3	Woodland Junior High (Fayetteville)	7-8	662	88.47
4	Pea Ridge Middle (Pea Ridge)	5-6	366	86.54
5	Atkins Middle (Atkins)	5-8	271	86.35



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	Forrest City Junior High (Forrest City)	7-8	247	85.06
2	Quitman Middle (Quitman)	6-8	193	84.25
3	Highland Middle (Highland)	5-8	424	84.02
4	Cave City Middle Career And Collegiate Preparatory (Cave City)	6-8	257	83.33
5	Heber Springs Middle (Heber Springs)	6-8	339	82.78



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	Vilonia Middle (Vilonia)	7-8	447	88.55
2	LISA Academy North Middle (LISA Academy)	6-8	286	86.17
3	eStem Junior High (eStem Public Charter School)	7-9	369	85.02
4	Benton Middle (Benton)	5-7	1227	84.82
5	Lakeside Middle (Lakeside (Garland))	5-6	510	84.34



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	DeQueen Middle (DeQueen)	6-7	328	85.60
2	Hope Academy of Public Service (Hope)	5-8	206	83.73
3	Genoa Central Junior High (Genoa Central)	7-9	248	83.17
4	Cabe Middle (Gurdon)	5-8	155	82.47
5	Beryl Henry Upper Elementary (Hope)	5-6	190	82.11



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	Star City Middle (Star City)	6-8	311	84.68
2	Warren Middle (Warren)	6-8	339	84.38
3	KIPP Delta College Prep (KIPP Delta)	6-8	164	83.04
4	DeWitt Middle (DeWitt)	6-8	242	82.85
5	Stuttgart Junior High (Stuttgart)	7-8	240	81.15

F. Middle School ELA ACT Aspire Growth Scores, 2023

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

	School (District)	Region	Grades Served	ELA Content Growth
1	LISA Academy Rogers-Bentonville Middle (LISA Academy)	Northwest	6-8	87.87
2	L.A. Chaffin Middle (Fort Smith)	Northwest	6-8	84.92
3	Forrest City Junior High (Forrest City)	Northeast	7-8	84.26
4	eStem Junior High (eStem Public Charter School)	Central	7-9	84.15
5	Lincoln Junior High (Bentonville)	Northwest	7-8	84.07
6	Robert F. Morehead Middle (Pine Bluff)	Central	7-9	83.99
7	LISA Academy North Middle (LISA Academy)	Central	6-8	83.78
8	KIPP Delta College Prep (KIPP Delta)	Southeast	6-8	83.72
9	Westwind School for Performing Arts (Westwind School For Performing Arts)	Central	6-8	83.71
10	eStem East Village Junior High (eStem Public Charter School)	Central	7-9	83.69

Tables 32-36: Top 5 Middle Schools in Arkansas by Region, **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	LISA Academy Rogers-Bentonville Middle (LISA Academy)	6-8	30	87.87
2	L.A. Chaffin Middle (Fort Smith)	6-8	639	84.92
3	Lincoln Junior High (Bentonville)	7-8	575	84.07
4	Gravette Middle (Gravette)	6-8	419	83.56
5	Valley Springs Middle (Valley Springs)	5-8	212	83.50



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	Forrest City Junior High (Forrest City)	7-8	247	84.26
2	Westside Middle (Westside Consolidated Craighead)	5-7	359	82.60
3	Cave City Middle Career And Collegiate Preparatory (Cave City)	6-8	257	82.58
4	Quitman Middle (Quitman)	6-8	194	82.36
5	Wonder Junior High (West Memphis)	7-9	273	82.16



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	eStem Junior High (eStem Public Charter School)	7-9	369	84.15
2	Robert F. Morehead Middle (Pine Bluff)	7-9	182	83.99
3	LISA Academy North Middle (LISA Academy)	6-8	285	83.78
4	Westwind School for Performing Arts (Westwind School For Performing Arts)	6-8	65	83.71
5	eStem East Village Junior High (eStem Public Charter School)	7-9	258	83.69



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	Hope Academy of Public Service (Hope)	5-8	206	82.66
2	Paulette Smith Middle (Fouke)	6-8	240	82.41
3	Cabe Middle (Gurdon)	5-8	155	82.38
4	Beryl Henry Upper Elementary (Hope)	5-6	190	81.66
5	Washington Middle (El Dorado)	5-6	509	81.19



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	KIPP Delta College Prep (KIPP Delta)	6-8	164	83.72
2	Stuttgart Junior High (Stuttgart)	7-8	240	83.26
3	Hamburg Middle (Hamburg)	6-8	367	80.58
4	Conner Middle (McGehee)	6-8	232	80.18
5	Meekins Middle (Stuttgart)	5-6	187	80.06

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 2022-23 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
- Combined Content Growth Score Number of Students Current Year
- Combined Math Growth Score Number of Students Current Year
- Combined ELA Growth Score Number of Students Current Year

Notes:

- When charter systems are located in a different geographic region than an associated charter school, we determine region based on school location.
- OEP Awards are limited to schools with at least 10 students included in the growth calculation.

For more information about how school levels were assigned, see https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/20201126142421_Grade%20Spans%20and%20Grade%20Configurations%20rv%201%2024%2020.pdf

For more information about how growth values were calculated, see https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/20201126144918_School%20Growth%20Explanation%20for%20ES%20and%20DC%20111017.pdf