

## INDICATOR "TRAFFIC LIGHT" TABLE

The table below lists a variety of measures that some states are considering for inclusion in their school accountability systems. While data quality matters for all indicators, some of these measures pose bigger accuracy concerns than others. Using the colors green, yellow and red, the table suggests the level of confidence — or conversely, caution — that advocates should have when thinking about whether to include each measure in school ratings, in a needs assessment that follows the rating (a look at a broader range of data to understand school-based causes of underperformance), and in public reporting, respectively.

**GREEN** means a relatively high level of confidence. While data quality is always a concern, it is less of an issue with these indicators.

**YELLOW** means a medium level of caution. If interested in including these measures, advocates need to pay special attention to data quality.

**RED** means a high level of caution/use discouraged.

Note: More indicators to be added.

Indicator Type	Indicator	Ratings	Needs Assessment	Public Reporting	Notes
Academic measures	Percent of students meeting state academic standards (based on statewide annual assessments)	Green	Green	Green	Required by law
	Graduation rates	Green	Green	Green	Required by law
	Progress toward English-language proficiency	Green	Green	Green	Required by law
	Individual student growth - Comparative (e.g., student growth percentiles or value added)	Yellow	Green	Green	Comparative measures do not tell you how much growth a student or group is making or how the progress of one group compares with the progress of another. If these measures are not used and communicated correctly, their inclusion in accountability could be misleading and even detrimental to the goal of equity. See "Individual Student Growth" fact sheet for more detail.
	Individual student growth – Criterion-based (e.g., percent on track to meet standards or percent gaining achievement levels)	Green	Green	Green	See "Individual Student Growth" fact sheet.
	Successful completion of college-preparatory course sequence aligned with requirements for admission to state universities	Yellow	Green	Green	How the state defines the sequence of classes that form a college-prep sequence is hugely important. At minimum, your state should be able to show that its college-prep course of study is aligned with admission requirements in its institutions of higher education. See "College-Prep Course Sequence Completion" fact sheet.
	Participation and success in AP, IB, or dual enrollment courses	Yellow	Green	Green	If including this measure in school ratings, it's important to include both participation and success. States will also need to ensure that dual enrollment courses offer students credit that will be accepted by institutions of higher education. See "Advanced Coursework" fact sheet for more detail.
	Percent of students scoring college ready on ACT, SAT, or similar assessment	Green	Green	Green	See "Assessment-Based Measures of College Readiness" fact sheet.
	Participation in early education programs	Red	Green	Green	This indicator may not be actionable at the school level. Usually, districts control which schools offer early education programs.
School culture/ climate	Chronic absenteeism rates	Yellow	Green	Green	The definition of "chronic absenteeism" — both who counts as absent and how much time a student needs to miss for absenteeism to become chronic — matters. States will also need to have quality controls in place to ensure data accuracy. See "Chronic Absenteeism" fact sheet for more detail.
	Average daily attendance	Red	Yellow	Green	The majority of schools report high average daily attendance. Because most schools look very similar on this measure, it is not useful for accountability purposes and may not meet the "meaningful differentiation" requirement in ESSA. See "Chronic Absenteeism" fact sheet for more detail.
	School discipline measures such as suspension/expulsion rates	Yellow	Green	Green	Including suspension/expulsion rates in school ratings could incentivize schools to under report disciplinary events. States will need to have quality controls in place to ensure data accuracy. See "School Discipline" fact sheet for more detail.
	Indicators of social-emotional learning	Red	Yellow	Red	Given concerns about validity, reliability, and possible bias in these measures, as well as their potential to contribute to a deficit-oriented mindset toward students, SEL measures should not be included in school ratings. See "Social Emotional Indicators" fact sheet for more detail.
	Incidents of violence	Red	Green	Yellow	While this information is critically important, today, most states do not collect consistent, reliable data on this issue. Moreover, inclusion of such data in school ratings may lead to underreporting of incidents of school violence.
	School climate surveys	Yellow	Green	Green	High-quality student and parent surveys can provide important information about a school, but including this information in school ratings could actually corrupt it. Parents and students may feel a great deal of pressure to "make schools look good" if results are included in school ratings.
Access to key educational resources	Teacher qualifications such as the percent of teachers who are effective or highly effective	Red	Green	Green	While all of these measures are incredibly important, they cannot be disaggregated by student group within a school and, therefore, cannot be used to rate schools under ESSA. Even if ESSA did not prohibit their use, however, including them in school ratings still wouldn't be a good idea. That's because whenever we add a measure into a school rating, we make other measures count less. Including indicators that cannot be disaggregated by student group takes the focus away from how schools are serving all groups of students: the core of what accountability is all about.
	Number of advanced (AP, IB, dual enrollment) courses offered	Red	Green	Green	
	Availability of early childhood programs	Red	Green	Green	
	Number of computers, books, and other resources available	Red	Green	Green	