



## English Learners in Accountability

Updated June 19, 2019

This document provides schools with an overview of the ways in which the academic performance and progress of English Learners (ELs) is measured and used in CPS accountability systems. Our goal is to ensure that ELs are receiving the same high quality education as all students, along with the necessary supports required to develop English language proficiency at an appropriate pace.

### General

As a general rule, ELs are included in all applicable measures of student performance and progress on the School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP), principal and teacher evaluation, school progress reports, and other accountability instruments. For example, all students are included in non-assessment metrics such as attendance rate, dropout rate, graduation rate, and Freshman On-Track Rate. However, EL students at lower levels of English proficiency are excluded from attainment and growth measures for the NWEA and PSAT/SAT assessments, as described below.

## ELEMENTARY:

### Inclusion of ELs in NWEA Growth and Attainment results for the SQRP

ELs whose most recent Literacy Composite proficiency level is below **3.5** are not included in the School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP) attainment and growth measures for NWEA in grades 2-8.

The purpose of this exclusion is that NWEA is only administered in English and students with low English proficiency may not be able to demonstrate content knowledge with fidelity, since lower English language proficiency prevents students from accessing the assessment and demonstrating content knowledge. While the school may administer the assessment to these students if there is an educational benefit for instructional planning, the results for students below a **3.5** on ACCESS Literacy Composite will not be included in the SQRP growth and attainment results. However, schools should note that testing newly arrived ELs should be done with caution as these students may quickly reach frustration levels and/or may not be at all familiar with the online platform.

Please note that the determination to include a student's English language proficiency (ELP) score is based on the student's ACCESS Literacy Composite, not the Overall Composite ELP score. The ACCESS Literacy Composite is the average of the reading and writing. While the entirety of the ACCESS test is valuable in measuring a student's progress in English, CPS assessments primarily measure reading comprehension. Hence a student's proficiency in other domains of the overall ACCESS assessment (e.g., speaking and listening) is not relevant in determining a student's ability to take these assessments.

## **Inclusion of ELs in NWEA Participation Rate results for the SQRP**

For SQRP NWEA participation rate, students with a **3.0** or above are required to participate in the end of year administration of the assessment. (For more information about EL inclusion in participation rate read the latest assessment manuals located on the Assessment page of the [Knowledge Center](#) and review the participation rate metric guide [here](#).) ACCESS is administered in the winter of each year and the results delivered in the summer; schools will not know a student's current-year ACCESS score at the time of the NWEA administration. Therefore, schools must use prior-year data to determine whether students are required to take the test.

## **HIGH SCHOOL:**

### **Inclusion of ELs in PSAT/SAT Growth and Attainment results for the SQRP**

ELs whose most recent Literacy Composite proficiency level is below **3.5** are not included in the School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP) attainment and growth measures for PSAT/SAT.

The purpose of this exclusion is that PSAT/SAT is only administered in English and students with low English proficiency may not be able to demonstrate content knowledge with fidelity.

Please note that the determination to include a student's score is based on the student's ACCESS Literacy Composite proficiency level, not the Overall Composite level. The ACCESS Literacy Composite score is the average of the reading and writing scores. While the entirety of the ACCESS test is valuable in measuring a student's progress in English, CPS assessments primarily measure reading comprehension. Hence a student's proficiency in other components of the overall ACCESS score (e.g., speaking and listening) is not relevant in determining a student's ability to take these assessments.

### **Inclusion of ELs in PSAT/SAT Participation Rate results for the SQRP**

Because the PSAT9 and PSAT10 are state mandated test all students in grades 9-11 are required to test. Students with a WAPT or ACCESS Literacy score below 3.0 are still required to test, even though their scores will not be included in SQRP growth and attainment measures. However, these students will be included in the SQRP participation rate.

## **SY19 - 20 GUIDANCE:**

### **SY2019-2020 Guidance for ELEMENTARY**

For Spring 2020 testing, schools should use the following rules in identifying which students should take the spring assessments:

- A student whose Literacy score from the SY2019 ACCESS or SY2020 English Language Proficiency (ELP) screener (i.e., WIDA Screener) is less than 3.0 is not required to take the end of year (spring) NWEA assessment, as applicable. If the student does test, his/her score will not be used for SQRP growth or attainment, teacher or principal evaluation, regardless of the score the student receives on the SY2020 ACCESS.
- A student whose Literacy score from the SY2019 ACCESS or SY2020 ELP screener is

at or above 3.0 is required to take the end of year NWEA (spring) assessment. However, when the SY2020 ACCESS scores are received in the summer, CPS will exclude the student from the SQRP attainment and growth percentiles, and teacher and principal evaluation if the student's 2020 ACCESS Literacy Composite proficiency level is below 3.5. The student will be included in the participation rate regardless of the results of the 2020 ACCESS.

- For students who do not have a current year WIDA Screener score or prior year ACCESS score, we will look as far back as two years prior for a WIDA Screener or ACCESS score.
- Alternate ACCESS scores are currently not included in the calculation of ACCESS growth for SQRP.

### **SY2019 - 2020 Guidance for HIGH SCHOOL**

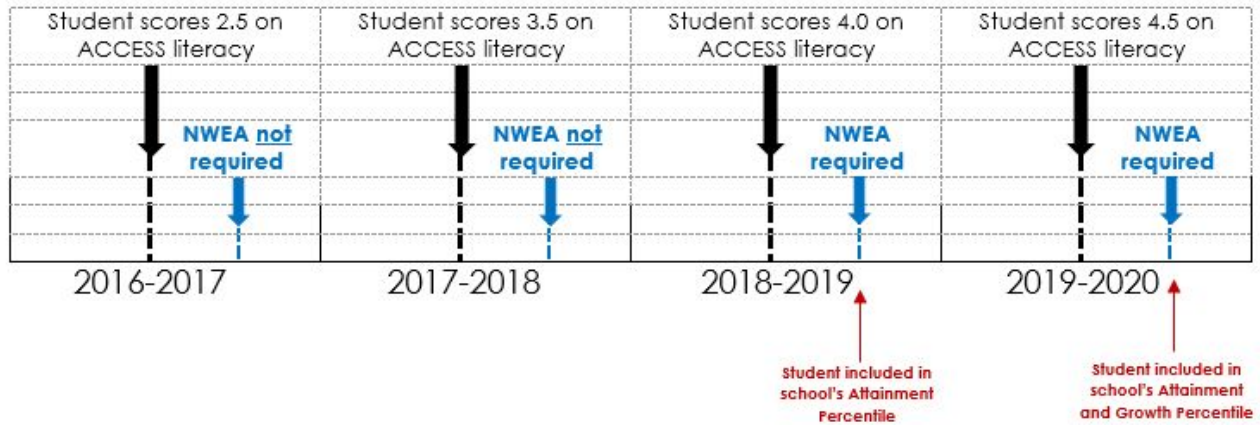
- ELs are required to participate in the PSAT/SAT assessment. However, when the SY2020 ACCESS scores are received in the summer, CPS will exclude the student from the SQRP attainment and growth percentiles, teacher, and principal evaluation if the student's 2020 ACCESS Literacy Composite proficiency level is below 3.5. The student will be included in the participation rate regardless of the results of the 2020 ACCESS administration.
- For students who do not have a current year WIDA Screener score or prior year ACCESS score, we will look as far back as two years prior for a WIDA Screener or ACCESS score.
- Alternate ACCESS scores are currently not included in the calculation of ACCESS growth for SQRP.

### **EXAMPLES:**

The illustrations below show examples of when students should be tested and when they will be included in the SQRP based on ACCESS data. Please see page 4 for some FAQs on this topic.

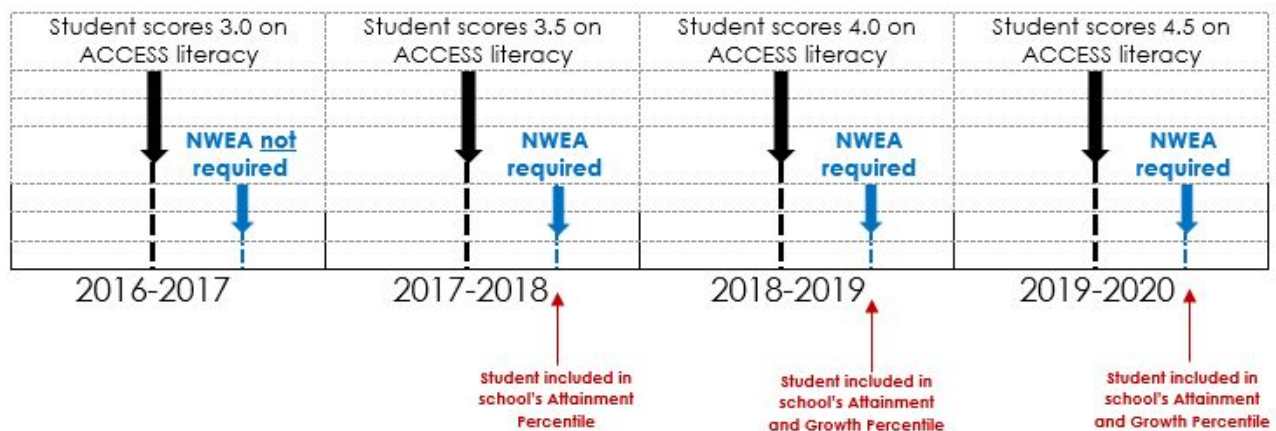
### Example 1

In this example, NWEA is not required in SY17 because the student's SY16 ACCESS Literacy proficiency level was below 3.0 and the student's SY17 ACCESS score will not be known at the time of the assessment.



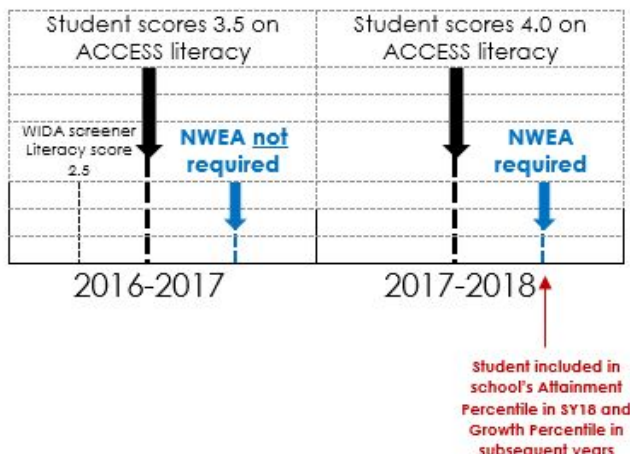
### Example 2

In this example, NWEA is not required in SY17 because the student's SY16 ACCESS Literacy proficiency level was at/above 3.0. Because the student's proficiency level is 3.5, the student's NWEA score will be used in the SQRP. If the student's SY17 ACCESS score had been less than 3.5, the NWEA score would not have been used in the SQRP.



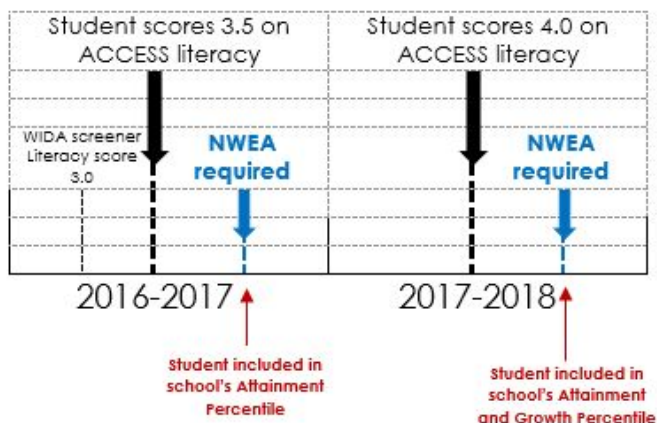
### Example 3

In this example, NWEA is not required in SY17 because the student's WIDA screener score was below 3.0 and the student's SY17 ACCESS score will not be known at the time of the assessment.



### Example 4

In this example, NWEA is required in SY17 because the student's WIDA screener score was at/above 3.0. Because the student's SY17 ACCESS literacy proficiency level is 3.5, the student's NWEA score will be used in the SQR. If the student's SY17 ACCESS score had been less than 3.5, the NWEA score would not have been used in the SQR.



### Frequently Asked Questions:

*Why does CPS use 3.5 as the cut-off when the state's proficiency cut-off is 4.8?*

The purpose for these two cut-off scores is different. The 4.8 Overall ELP score set by ISBE corresponds to the level at which a student is deemed proficient in English and is no longer considered an EL. This is a necessarily high bar to ensure students are not exited from EL support services before they're ready.

However, the purpose for the CPS cut-off for inclusion in accountability is very different. This is not a level at which a student is deemed to be fully English proficient, but is instead a level at which language proficiency is less of an interference when completing the grade-appropriate



assessments. For this, we are concerned with students having sufficient access to test content, though students may still be learning English vocabulary and/or phrasing. To understand the literacy expectations of students around a 3.5, please refer to the Can Do descriptors for each grade cluster here: <https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/can-do/descriptors>.

Both the Original and the Key Uses editions of Can Do descriptors are available on the WIDA website. The Key Uses is organized around overarching communicative purposes: recount, explain, argue, discuss. The Original Edition of Can Do descriptors for each grade cluster includes expectations for reading and writing. The Key Use Uses edition of Can Do descriptors includes reading and writing expectations in each of the key uses. Typically, students with a reading proficiency level between a 3 and a 4 should have sufficient proficiency to access most of the content of the NWEA and PSAT/SAT assessments, though they may still struggle with some academic/technical vocabulary and inferencing. Based on these proficiency levels as determined by ACCESS scores, CPS feels it is appropriate to include these students in accountability calculations.

Further, the SQRP's focus is on academic growth, as is also the case for teacher and principal evaluation. As such, all EL students with sufficient proficiency to access the assessment are included in the scoring. This is similar to inclusion of non-EL students who may also struggle with fluency. Although these students may have attainment scores that are, on average, lower than non-EL peers, the expectation is that all students can show growth.

*If the cut-off for SQRP is 3.5, why do I need to test a student with 3.0 for NWEA?*

Current-year ACCESS scores are not yet known during the window when NWEA assessments are administered, so we must still use prior-year scores to determine if students should participate in the NWEA assessment. In order to include as many students as possible while not requiring students with very low English proficiency to test, CPS is asking schools to administer NWEA assessments to students whose *prior-year* scores were at or above 3.0 Literacy Proficiency. The students with Literacy Proficiency scores between 3.0 to 3.4 on 2019 ACCESS have a very high likelihood of scoring at or above 3.5 on their 2020 ACCESS.

**NOTE:** For students in grades 9-11, all ELs must test regardless of proficiency level.

If, when ACCESS scores are returned any of these students' scores on Literacy proficiency remain below 3.5, their NWEA or PSAT/SAT score will NOT be included in the SQRP metrics.

*What if the student is below 3.0 in 2019 and tests, and is above 3.5 in 2020? (NWEA)*

Students with a 2019 ACCESS Literacy score below 3.0 are not required to take the NWEA assessment. If they do test, their scores will not be included in the SQRP metrics, regardless of their 2020 ACCESS scores. This ensures that the calculation of SQRP metrics is applied uniformly across all schools, including those that choose to administer the test to all students and those that do not.

*What if a student is above 3.5 in 2019 but below 3.5 in 2020? (NWEA/PSAT)*

All students who score below 3.5 will be excluded from SQRP metrics, including those who scored above 3.5 in prior years.

## Additional Information on ACCESS and SQRP

### Priority Group NWEA and PSAT/SAT Metrics

EL students who are included the NWEA or PSAT/SAT metrics, as described above, will also be included in the EL priority group growth calculation for the school. The EL priority group growth percentile is calculated the same way as the overall growth percentile, but is limited to students who have a state EL active status. In the year that the student exits the EL program, the student will still be included in the priority group. In subsequent years, however, he/she would not be included in the EL priority group.

### ACCESS Growth for Elementary School

The SQRP includes a measure of students' growth on the Literacy scale scores on the annual ACCESS assessment. The growth is measured for grades K-12, but SQRP will only consider growth in grades K-8, as this measure is not included in the high school SQRP model.

The metric that CPS will use for the SQRP will be defined as:

*The percentage of EL students in grades K-8 whose ACCESS Literacy scale score growth is in the 60th percentile or higher nationally, adjusted for grade level and prior ELP level.*

Schools will receive between 1 and 5 points for this metric, which makes up 5% of a school's overall SQRP rating. Scoring on the SQRP works as follows:

School-Level Result	SQRP Points
<25% of students reaching the 60th percentile	1 point
25% to 34.9% of students reaching the 60th percentile	2 points
35% to 44.9% of students reaching the 60th percentile	3 points
45% to 54.9% of students reaching the 60th percentile	4 points
>55% of students reaching the 60th percentile	5 points

The purpose of this metric is to measure the percentage of EL students in the school that show progress from year-to-year in the area of English language development.

Development of language proficiency (through English as a second language, or ESL instruction) is one of the main goals of bilingual education programs. ESL is required regardless of whether the program is required to provide content instruction in the native language or is allowed to provide content instruction in English using EL instructional

strategies and accommodations.

It is important to understand why growth and not attainment is part of this measure. The goal is not to have ELs reach proficiency as soon as possible, since based on data and research, this does not guarantee long term academic success for ELs, but rather to ensure that ELs are making appropriate progress on their English language development. For example, research has shown that students in Dual language or bilingual programs where native language instruction is provided with fidelity, might take longer to reach proficiency, but actually show more long term benefits in their academic success. On average, ELs take 5-7 years to reach proficiency.

For that reason, the purpose of the ACCESS literacy growth measure is to see whether ELs are making the expected growth in their proficiency, not whether or not they have reached proficiency. Each student's expected growth is related to their previous year's score and grade level, so the growth norms are appropriate for students at different stages of their language development.

The growth norms CPS will use are reported in Table 1 at the end of this document. These are national norms established by the WIDA Consortium (<https://wida.wisc.edu/>), which is the developer of the ACCESS assessment, and are limited to growth on the ACCESS Literacy scale.

Growth is measured as the difference in each student's Literacy scale score from one year to the next. The Literacy score ranges from 100-600 and is the average of the student's Reading and Writing scale scores. While the student's Literacy proficiency level (which ranges from 1-6) is used to establish the appropriate growth norm for that student, growth itself is not measured by changes in this score. More information on why scale scores are more appropriate than proficiency levels for measuring growth, as well as other information for the ACCESS assessment can be found on the WIDA website [here](#).

The WIDA growth norms control for each student's prior-year grade cluster (K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9-12) and prior-year ACCESS Literacy proficiency level. Therefore, students at different starting points, or at the same starting point but different grade levels, receive growth norms that are appropriate to them.

All students in grades K through 8 are included in this metric if they have an ACCESS score for the past two consecutive years. Students who took an ELP screener in the prior year but not the ACCESS assessment are not included.

Finally, for the purposes of this metric, students are assigned to the school in which they were enrolled for the greatest amount of time between the two ACCESS assessments. This is similar to the "annualization" concept used for many of the SQRP metrics, but spans multiple years, as ACCESS is administered in the middle of the year.

### **Promotion Policy**

In order for the Promotion Criteria for English Learners to apply, schools must ensure that any English Learners (ELs) are correctly identified as ELs (EL State Status Active) in the system. However, ELs whose parents refused EL services (EL CPS Status Inactive) will be subject to standard promotion criteria, including DWA scores. ELs will complete their general academic



curriculum in their native language and/or English. ELs in the benchmark grades, regardless of Program Year, shall be promoted to the next grade at the end of the academic year if they receive final report card grades of “C” or above in reading and math. An EL’s DWA scores shall not be used for purposes of promotion. ELs with DWA scores above the 24th percentile and a low grade of “D” shall be promoted according to General Promotion Criteria.

ELs who fail to meet the academic performance criteria noted above will be promoted to the next grade only upon satisfactory completion of summer school. ELs are not required to take the Summer Exit Exam. Students with an active CPS EL status will be placed in Bridge summer school classrooms with: Spanish Bilingual instruction for Spanish speaking ELs and English as a Second Language instruction for non-Spanish speaking ELs.

Appropriate summer school placement will be determined by the Office of Teaching and Learning. For questions regarding promotion criteria for ELs, please call the Department of Language and Cultural Education at (773) 553-1930.

Charter schools are not required to follow the Board’s policy on promotion.

#### Appendix: SY 2017-2018 WIDA norms table

Prior Year Grade Level	Prior Year ELP Score Range (ACCESS Literacy)	Minimum Benchmarks (measured by scale score growth from prior year on ACCESS Literacy scale)			
		20th Percentile	40th Percentile	60th Percentile	80th Percentile
K	1.0-1.4	125	143	154	166
K	1.5-1.9	78	90	100	112
K	2.0-2.4	36	48	61	77
K	2.5-2.9	22	34	48	65
K	3.0-3.4	11	25	40	56
K	3.5-3.9	2	18	34	50
K	4.0-4.4	-8	11	26	42
K	4.5-4.9	-16	4	19	33
K	5.0-5.4	-19	3	15	28
K	5.5-5.9	7	16	21	21
K	6.0	*	*	*	*
1	1.0-1.4	67	80	88	102
1	1.5-1.9	36	50	62	78

1	2.0-2.4	24	38	51	66
1	2.5-2.9	18	34	47	59
1	3.0-3.4	16	30	41	52
1	3.5-3.9	12	24	33	44
1	4.0-4.4	7	17	26	36
1	4.5-4.9	0	10	19	29
1	5.0-5.4	-4	5	14	24
1	5.5-5.9	-7	2	10	19
1	6.0	-14	-7	3	11
2	1.0-1.4	77	88	96	107
2	1.5-1.9	27	41	54	71
2	2.0-2.4	14	28	42	58
2	2.5-2.9	12	27	39	52
2	3.0-3.4	11	24	34	46
2	3.5-3.9	8	19	28	39
2	4.0-4.4	4	14	23	33
2	4.5-4.9	0	9	18	28
2	5.0-5.4	-4	5	14	23
2	5.5-5.9	-8	2	11	19
2	6.0	-9	-3	7	14

3	1.0-1.4	47	81	95	112
3	1.5-1.9	31	47	62	78
3	2.0-2.4	25	39	52	65
3	2.5-2.9	22	35	46	59
3	3.0-3.4	18	30	40	51
3	3.5-3.9	12	23	32	43
3	4.0-4.4	5	16	25	36
3	4.5-4.9	0	11	20	31
3	5.0-5.4	-5	6	16	27
3	5.5-5.9	-8	3	13	25
3	6.0	-11	2	12	24
4	1.0-1.4	83	100	109	121
4	1.5-1.9	33	50	63	79
4	2.0-2.4	11	25	40	56
4	2.5-2.9	6	21	34	48
4	3.0-3.4	4	18	30	43
4	3.5-3.9	3	15	25	37
4	4.0-4.4	0	11	21	32
4	4.5-4.9	-3	8	17	28
4	5.0-5.4	-6	5	14	24
4	5.5-5.9	-6	3	12	21
4	6.0	-7	1	9	19
5	1.0-1.4	67	78	87	95
5	1.5-1.9	19	32	43	57
5	2.0-2.4	-3	7	20	37
5	2.5-2.9	-11	2	15	32
5	3.0-3.4	-16	-1	12	26
5	3.5-3.9	-19	-4	6	17
5	4.0-4.4	-21	-9	0	9
5	4.5-4.9	-26	-16	-7	2
5	5.0-5.4	-31	-22	-13	-4
5	5.5-5.9	-37	-26	-19	-9
5	6.0	-40	-31	-24	-13
6	1.0-1.4	38	52	61	70
6	1.5-1.9	14	25	35	49
6	2.0-2.4	7	19	30	46

6	2.5-2.9	2	16	28	43
6	3.0-3.4	-2	12	23	35
6	3.5-3.9	-6	6	15	26
6	4.0-4.4	-11	0	8	18
6	4.5-4.9	-15	-4	3	13
6	5.0-5.4	-17	-7	2	11
6	5.5-5.9	-16	-8	1	10
6	6.0	-19	-11	-7	4
7	1.0-1.4	28	41	52	61
7	1.5-1.9	13	24	33	46
7	2.0-2.4	8	19	31	46
7	2.5-2.9	4	16	29	43
7	3.0-3.4	-1	12	24	36
7	3.5-3.9	-5	6	16	27
7	4.0-4.4	-9	1	9	19
7	4.5-4.9	-13	-3	5	14
7	5.0-5.4	-16	-6	2	11
7	5.5-5.9	-19	-10	-2	7
7	6.0	-23	-16	-11	3
8	1.0-1.4	59	70	77	85
8	1.5-1.9	39	50	59	71
8	2.0-2.4	29	41	51	63
8	2.5-2.9	21	33	44	57
8	3.0-3.4	13	25	36	49
8	3.5-3.9	4	17	28	41
8	4.0-4.4	-1	12	23	35
8	4.5-4.9	-3	9	19	30
8	5.0-5.4	-5	7	16	27
8	5.5-5.9	-4	8	15	24
8	6.0	-4	8	13	18
9-12	1.0-1.4	35	50	59	72
9-12	1.5-1.9	12	22	32	44
9-12	2.0-2.4	4	14	24	37
9-12	2.5-2.9	1	12	23	36
9-12	3.0-3.4	-2	9	20	34
9-12	3.5-3.9	-6	6	18	30

9-12	4.0-4.4	-9	4	14	26
9-12	4.5-4.9	-11	1	11	22
9-12	5.0-5.4	-13	-1	8	18
9-12	5.5-5.9	-14	-4	4	14
9-12	6.0	-15	-6	0	10