

Comparison School Rating Details

The comparison school rating represents a school's overall rating as compared to schools from the same school type (i.e., elementary, middle, high and combined¹ schools) with similar student demographics. The comparison school rating is a complex measure that requires the calculation of the comparison school index and the determination of comparison groups. The following three sections provide a basic discussion concerning how the ODE calculates the comparison school index, determines the comparison group, and calculates the comparison school rating for the school report card.

Comparison School Index

Each school with sufficient student enrollment² has a comparison school index. The comparison school index is the critical determinant of a school's comparison group and an important contributor to the comparison school rating as well as the like-school averages on the school report card. The ODE derived the comparison school index from four demographic variables using principal components analysis (PCA). The four demographic variables are (1) the percent of students identified as economically disadvantaged, (2) the percent of students identified as ever English learners³, (3) the percent of students identified as belonging to an underserved racial/ethnic group⁴, and (4) the percent of students identified as mobile within the school year⁵.

PCA is a multivariate statistical technique that applies a linear transformation to a number of similar variables (e.g., demographic variables) in order to produce a smaller set of uncorrelated and independent components (e.g., comparison school index). The aim of PCA is to retain the component(s) that explain the most variation in the original variables. ODE employs a PCA model that produces two components, and ODE uses the first component as the comparison school index. Thus, the comparison school index is simply the weighted linear combination of the four demographic variables that explains the largest amount of variability in those variables.

Comparison Group

The procedure that ODE uses to determine a school's comparison group is the following: (1) separate schools by type (i.e., elementary, middle, high and combined schools), (2) sort the comparison school index from lowest to highest, and (3) select the 10 schools immediately above and 10 schools immediately below a school's respective comparison school index. The comparison group will typically contain 20 schools; however, schools at the extreme ends of the comparison school index will have less than 20 schools because there are fewer schools above or below their comparison school index. Table 1 shows the comparison group for a fictitious elementary school: Jackie Robinson Elementary School. Note that (1) all the schools in the table are from the same school type (i.e., elementary) and (2) the values within the comparison school index are in order from lowest to highest. The comparison group for Jackie Robinson Elementary School includes 20 schools and ranges from George Washington Elementary School to Eleanor Roosevelt Elementary School (i.e., the 10 schools above the comparison school index) and Jason Lee Elementary School to William Clark Elementary School (i.e., the 10 schools below the comparison school index).

¹ Combined schools are schools that are a combination of high school grades and any grades 7 and lower.

² Schools with a student enrollment ≥ 40 students according to Spring Membership 2013-2014.

³ These are students who were ever eligible for or participating in a program to acquire academic English.

⁴ These are students who are either American Indian/Alaska Native, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

⁵ These are students who experienced one or more of the following: (a) attended more than one Oregon public school during the school year, (b) entered the Oregon public education system late (i.e., after October 1st), (c) exited the Oregon public education system early (i.e., before May 2nd without earning a diploma, certificate, etc.), and (d) had significant gaps in enrollment during the school year totaling ten or more consecutive school days.

Table 1. Example Comparison Group.

School Name	Comparison School Index
Sacagawea Elementary School	-1.404
Eleanor Roosevelt Elementary School	-1.400
Babe Didrikson Elementary School	-1.387
Margaret Mead Elementary School	-1.352
Roberto Clemente Elementary School	-1.341
Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School	-1.340
Marie Curie Elementary School	-1.329
Rosa Parks Elementary School	-1.300
Marcus Whitman Elementary School	-1.294
Susan B. Anthony Elementary School	-1.292
George Washington Elementary School	-1.282
Jackie Robinson Elementary School	-1.282
Jason Lee Elementary School	-1.281
Ronald Reagan Elementary School	-1.280
Meriwether Lewis Elementary School	-1.275
Harriet Tubman Elementary School	-1.271
Abraham Lincoln Elementary School	-1.266
Clara Barton Elementary School	-1.241
John Adams Elementary School	-1.240
Hank Aaron Elementary School	-1.231
Helen Keller Elementary School	-1.226
William Clark Elementary School	-1.216
Louisa May Alcott Elementary School	-1.214

Comparison School Rating

Each school will receive a comparison school rating unless it (a) does not receive an overall rating or (b) does not have sufficient students to calculate a comparison school index. The comparison school rating represents a school's overall rating as compared to schools from the same school type with similar student demographics (i.e., similar comparison school indices). However, in lieu of a direct comparison between rating levels, the comparison school rating uses the weighted percent of points which determines the level for the overall school rating. The weighted percent of points denotes the weighted points a school earns across all applicable rating indicators (i.e., achievement, growth, subgroup growth, graduation, and subgroup graduation). Thus, the comparison school rating is the comparison between a school's weighted percent of points⁶ and the points for the schools in its respective comparison group. Note that the percent of points by rating indicator, weighted percent of points, and the overall rating are found on the first page of the school's rating detail report (see <http://www.ode.state.or.us/data/reportcard/reports.aspx>).

⁶ Some schools receive a rating penalty if they (1) fail to meet the participation target of 94.5% for one or more subgroups or (2) have a graduation rating of Level 1. ODE will lower a school's overall rating by one category if the school misses the participation target (e.g., Level 4 to a Level 3). Also, a school can have an overall rating of no higher than Level 2 if its graduation rating is Level 1. When either or both occur, ODE translates the new overall rating to the maximum weighted percent of points available for that respective rating level.

The procedure that ODE uses to produce the comparison school rating is the following: (1) separate schools by type, (2) sort the comparison school index from lowest to highest, (3) compute the mean and standard deviation for the weighted percent of points of all schools in the comparison group including the school of interest, (4) compute the z-score⁷ for the school, and (5) transform the z-score into a percentile. Schools can receive one of three comparison school ratings: below average, about average, and above average. Below average refers to schools that fall into the bottom third of comparison schools (i.e., a percentile ≤ 33.33), about average represents schools that fall into the middle third of comparison schools (i.e., a percentile > 33.33 and ≤ 66.66), and above average denotes schools that fall into the top third of comparison schools (i.e., a percentile ≥ 66.66). Table 2 shows the comparison school rating for a fictitious elementary school: Jackie Robinson Elementary School.

Table 2. Example Comparison Group and Weighted Percent of Points.

School Name	Comparison School Index	Weighted Percent of Points
Sacagawea Elementary School	-1.404	72.5
Eleanor Roosevelt Elementary School	-1.400	93.3
Babe Didrikson Elementary School	-1.387	56.7
Margaret Mead Elementary School	-1.352	80.0
Roberto Clemente Elementary School	-1.341	45.0
Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School	-1.340	70.0
Marie Curie Elementary School	-1.329	57.5
Rosa Parks Elementary School	-1.300	85.0
Marcus Whitman Elementary School	-1.294	80.0
Susan B. Anthony Elementary School	-1.292	75.0
George Washington Elementary School	-1.282	75.0
Jackie Robinson Elementary School	-1.282	67.5
Jason Lee Elementary School	-1.281	69.9
Ronald Reagan Elementary School	-1.280	90.0
Meriwether Lewis Elementary School	-1.275	99.2
Harriet Tubman Elementary School	-1.271	87.5
Abraham Lincoln Elementary School	-1.266	80.0
Clara Barton Elementary School	-1.241	75.0
John Adams Elementary School	-1.240	80.0
Hank Aaron Elementary School	-1.231	78.8
Helen Keller Elementary School	-1.226	81.3
William Clark Elementary School	-1.216	85.0
Louisa May Alcott Elementary School	-1.214	100.0

The mean and standard deviation of the weighted percent of points for Jackie Robinson Elementary School and its comparison group are 76.75 and 12.73. Jackie Robinson Elementary School's z-score and percentile are -0.73 and 23.38 which results in a comparison school rating of below average.

Like-School Averages

The school report card also displays the like-school average for several indicators including school achievement (i.e., mathematics, reading, science, and writing), freshman on-track to graduate, SAT participation, graduation, completion, dropout, and participation in post-secondary education. The

⁷ The z-score represents the number of standard deviations a value is above or below the mean.

procedure that ODE uses to produce a like-school average for each indicator is to calculate a pooled numerator, denominator, and rate where the pooled rate represents the like-school average. For example, the like-school average for reading achievement is the total number of students in the comparison schools who meet or exceed standards in reading divided by the total number of reading tests in the comparison schools.