

Frequently Asked Questions:

2017-18 School Designations

Updated: August 22, 2018

In the coming weeks, the department will publicly release **district and school accountability designations** after approval by the State Board of Education during a special called meeting the **week of September 17**. Districts will receive these results **on embargo September 6**.

School designations for 2017-18 will include the following: Reward, Priority, Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI).

These designations are based on the state's school accountability model as approved in its Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan. The 2017-18 school designations include several modifications to this accountability model **as required by Public Chapter 881, Public Chapter 1026, and the U.S. Department of Education.**

Reward

1. *How are Reward schools determined?*

Schools that have an overall accountability score of greater than 3 are designated as Reward schools. The overall accountability score is based on performance of all students on each indicator (60 percent) and performance of historically underserved student groups on each indicator (40 percent). Reward schools demonstrate excellence in achievement and growth for all students, as well as all student groups.

2. *What is Reward exempt status?*

Schools are not eligible for Reward status if they have any student group that performs in the bottom 5 percent in the state for that group. Those schools are designated in the accountability file as "Reward exempt."

Priority

3. *How are Priority schools determined? Is 2017-18 data used in this determination?*

In April 2018, the Tennessee General Assembly passed [Public Chapter 881](#) and [Public Chapter 1026](#) prohibiting the use of 2017-18 student achievement data to label a school Priority.

Schools identified as **Priority** are schools that:

- a. Ranked in the bottom 5 percent of its pool based on data from 2015-16 and 2016-17 **AND**
 - b. Did **not** earn school-wide TVAAS composite levels of 4 or 5 in both 2015-16 and 2016-17 **or** 2016-17 and 2017-18
- OR**
- c. Has a graduation rate of less than 67 percent for the 2017-18 school year

Note that no school is identified as a Priority school using 2017-18 TNReady data. The Priority school calculation is based on a two-year success rate for high schools and a one-year success rate for K-8 schools that incorporates TCAP data from only the 2015-16 (high school only) and 2016-17 school years.

Additionally, schools that demonstrate high growth (represented by a TVAAS level 4 or 5) in 2016-17 and 2017-18 will not be identified as a Priority school.

Districts are required to notify school staff and parents of students attending schools identified for Priority. Additionally, districts must detail how parents can be involved in the school improvement planning process at their school.

4. How do schools exit Priority status?

Priority schools are identified at a minimum of every three years, but are eligible for yearly exit based on the following criteria:

- a. Exceed 15th percentile for most recent year's success rate
- b. Exceed 10th percentile for two most recent year's success rate
- c. Earn TVAAS 4 or 5 in all accountability content areas for two consecutive years

5. How will intervention tracks on the state's school improvement continuum be determined?

For the 2018-19 school year, all schools previously designated on the 2015 Priority school list will remain on the intervention track assigned to them based on their 2016-17 performance, and no schools will be assigned to the Achievement School District based on 2017-18 data. All schools newly named on the 2018 Priority List will be placed on the Delta track.

6. Will the charter schools that appear on the Priority List be subject to the automatic closure law?

Any charter school **not** authorized by the ASD that is identified on the 2018 Priority school list will be subject to revocation of their charter agreement by their authorizing LEA and shall be set to close at the end of the 2018-19 school year pursuant to the provisions of T.C.A. § 49-13-122.

Any charter school that is authorized by the ASD that is identified on the 2018 Priority school list and is identified on the 2021 Priority school list will be subject to revocation of their charter agreement, and shall set to close at the end of the 2021-22 school year pursuant to the provisions of T.C.A. § 49-13-122.

Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI)

7. What is the CSI designation?

The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) law requires the department to use data inclusive of 2017-18 to identify a bottom 5 percent of schools for “comprehensive support and improvement” (CSI).

Schools identified for CSI include schools that:

- a. Ranked in the bottom 5 percent of its pool based on data from 2015-16, 2016-17, **and** 2017-18
- AND**
- b. Earned a one-year TVAAS score of 3 or less in 2016-17 and/or 2017-18
- OR**
- c. Had a graduation rate of less than 67% for the 2017-18 school year
- OR**
- d. All schools in the Achievement School District (ASD) are designated as CSI schools, because they are currently receiving the most intensive state intervention.

Note that the vast majority of schools identified for CSI are also identified as Priority.

Districts are required to notify school staff and parents of students attending schools identified for CSI. Additionally, districts must detail how parents can be involved in the school improvement planning process at their school.

Additional support through the Office of School Improvement will be provided to schools identified for CSI, including opportunities for additional funding through several school improvement grants. Schools identified for CSI are not subject to the intervention requirements outlined in T.C.A. § 49-1-602 or the requirements under T.C.A. § 49-13-122 but will meet all federal requirements and the supports explained in Tennessee’s ESSA plan.

8. How often will schools be identified for CSI?

The department is awaiting further feedback from the U.S. Department of Education that will inform this timeline.

9. How do schools exit CSI status?

Schools identified for CSI are eligible for yearly exit based on the same criteria as Priority schools. Those criteria are as follows:

- a. Exceed 15th percentile for most recent year’s success rate
- b. Exceed 10th percentile for two most recent year’s success rate
- c. Earn TVAAS 4 or 5 in all accountability content areas for two consecutive years

10. Will schools identified for CSI be placed on an intervention track on the state's school improvement continuum?

Yes, all schools designated as CSI will be placed on the Delta track. These schools will undergo a school improvement planning process and will be eligible for support through federal school improvement funds.

ASD schools are already in the most significant state intervention and will continue in accordance with state statute.

Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI)

11. What is the Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) designation?

The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) law requires the department to identify those schools with the lowest performance across student groups using 2017-18 data.

There are two pathways to identification for ATSI:

- a. Overall school accountability score of 1.0 or less **and** ranks in bottom 5 percent for at least one accountability subgroup (i.e., Black, Hispanic, or Native American; economically disadvantaged; English learners; students with disabilities),

OR

- b. Ranks in bottom 5 percent for two or more accountability subgroups or racial/ethnic groups

Districts are required to notify school staff and parents of students attending schools identified for ATSI. Additionally, districts must detail how parents can be involved in the school improvement planning process at their school.

Schools will be eligible for additional support by the department's Office of School Improvement and the Centers of Regional Excellence (CORE). Schools identified for CSI or Priority status are not eligible for ATSI. In addition, those schools identified for ATSI are not eligible to be identified for CSI or Priority status.

12. Are schools designated for ATSI the same as Focus schools?

There will not be a Focus school list based on 2017-18 data. The Focus school list will be identified based on 2018-19 data, and the methodology used to identify schools for ATSI will be a portion of the criteria for Focus school identification which will begin based on 2018-19 data for the 2019-20 school year.

13. What will happen to Focus schools named in 2014?

These schools are no longer identified as Focus schools. The department will release a new Focus list based on 2018-19 data for the 2019-20 school year using an updated methodology that meets the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act.

Available Supports

14. Will the department publish the lists of school designations?

School designations (i.e., Reward, Priority, CSI, ATSI) will not appear on the dashboard this year; however, the department will publish lists of Reward, Priority, CSI, and ATSI schools on the state's accountability website, as required by state and federal law.

15. What supports are available for schools identified as Priority, CSI, and ATSI?

The Office of School Improvement will provide guidance and support for schools identified as Priority, CSI, and ATSI to revise their 2018-19 school plans. Additionally, schools will be eligible for various state and federal school improvement grants. The Commissioner and Office of School Improvement will host the following webinars to provide additional information regarding supports for the 2018-19 school year:

- Schools identified for Priority and CSI: September 14 at 11:00 am CDT
- Schools identified for ATSI: September 14 at 12:00 pm CDT

Login information for these webinars will be shared via email with directors in the coming weeks.