
Annual Performance Goals and Objectives for Achievement and Achievement Gap Closure

The Background:

Under the No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly Progress model, Tennessee would potentially have identified 80 percent of all schools as high priority and many districts in need of improvement despite the schools and districts making academic progress. In February 2012, Tennessee obtained a waiver from certain provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). This year, the USED required Tennessee to renew this waiver, as the original 3-year term was expiring. On July 23, 2015, Tennessee's updated waiver application was approved for a four-year renewal term. Through this waiver renewal, Tennessee had the opportunity to create a new accountability system. The new accountability system has two overriding objectives: growth for all students every year and closing achievement gaps by ensuring faster growth for those students who are furthest behind. As described in the ESEA Flexibility Waiver, the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) will determine district performance through evaluating multiple metrics for both achievement and gap closure. The first year of the new TNReady assessments for English Language Arts and Math will set a new baseline for student performance. As such, during the 2015-16 school year, district accountability will be determined based on two pathways for achievement and gap closure: relative rank (compared to other districts) and TVAAS growth. The methodology the department is using to determine district accountability will accommodate the assessment transition and will not depend on setting performance targets based on historical TCAP achievement. The proposed performance goals and objectives are those approved by the USED in the ESEA renewal application.

The Recommendation:

The Department of Education recommends adoption of this item on final reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.