

North Star Business Rules: Identifying for Support

Overview

Every year, the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) uses the North Star Excellence and Equity System (“North Star”) to evaluate schools and districts using a variety of indicators that prioritize schools and districts for support in accordance with the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Minnesota-specific World’s Best Workforce (WBWF) system. These indicators are calculated using several measurements, including:

- Assessments of academic standards mastery (the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment [MCA-III] and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills [MTAS-III])
- Assessments of English language acquisition (ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 and Alternate ACCESS)
- Graduation rates
- Consistent attendance (based on students who are not chronically absent)

The following sections describe how:

1. Districts, schools, and students are included in accountability calculations.
2. Academic achievement is calculated for accountability purposes.
3. Academic progress is calculated for accountability purposes.
4. Graduation is calculated for accountability purposes.
5. Progress toward English language proficiency (ELP) is calculated for accountability purposes.
6. Consistent attendance is calculated for accountability purposes.
7. These measurements are used to identify schools for support.

More information about the North Star system can be found on the [School and District Accountability](#) web page.

1. District, School, and Student Inclusion in North Star Calculations

When describing schools and identifying them for support or recognition, North Star is designed to emphasize district- and school-level data based on student-level data. In order to draw meaningful conclusions about district- and school-level outcomes, and to ensure resources are prioritized appropriately, certain rules are used to determine when districts, schools, and students are included in accountability calculations.

For these purposes, to be **included in accountability calculations** means that a district or school can be identified as eligible for support.

Defining and including districts

The state is divided into more than 500 districts. Each district must have at least one school. All public schools belong to a district, and all students are reported at a school within a district. In some cases, individual schools are counted as their own districts.

Districts can be classified into many different types. Among the most common types are independent districts (sometimes referred to as traditional school districts), intermediate districts, and charter schools. These three types of districts, along with state operated schools, cooperatives, and Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) schools, are included as districts in North Star.

Defining and including schools

Schools can also be classified into many different types. Elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, Area Learning Centers (ALCs), and most alternative programs are included in North Star accountability calculations.

Students in correctional facilities or care/treatment centers are only included in state-level calculations. Those schools are not evaluated by North Star, nor are they included in district-level calculations.

Grade Span Definitions

North Star distinguishes between elementary, middle, and high schools. For the purposes of this system:

- A **high school** is a school capable of having a graduation rate based on the grades it serves.
- A **middle school** is a non-high school that serves any grade higher than six, as reported by districts in the MDE-ORG system.
- An **elementary school** is a non-high school that serves no grades higher than six, as reported by districts in the MDE-ORG system.

If unsure about which grade span a school is considered to be in, ask the following questions:

- Can the school have a graduation rate? (Generally, does the school serve grade 12?)
 - If **yes**, the school is a **high school**.
 - If **no**, does the school serve any grade higher than six?
 - If **yes**, the school is a middle school.
 - If **no**, the school is an elementary school.

Defining students

The Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System (MARSS) tracks the enrollment and several characteristics (mostly demographic) of students in Minnesota public schools. These characteristics are tracked using different codes and indicators within MARSS.

Based on these characteristics, students are identified as belonging to specific groups. For accountability purposes, these groups include racial and ethnic groups, English Learner status, disability status, and economic status.

Minimum group size

For a student group to be included as a distinct group in a school or district's calculation, at least 20 students in the group must qualify for inclusion. This 20-student minimum is applied separately to each indicator, meaning that a student group can be included in some indicators but not others.

Racial and ethnic groups

The following seven racial and ethnic groups have been defined at the federal level and are tracked in MARSS:

- American Indian
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- Hispanic/Latino
- Black
- White
- Two or more races

English Learner (EL) status, recently arrived ELs, and the expanded EL Group

English learner status is also tracked in MARSS. When the English learner group meets the 20-student minimum for an indicator at a school or district, the group of students who are not English learners will also be used as a separate group, provided there are 20 or more students who are not English learners included in that indicator.

For example, if 25 English learners and 70 students who are not English learners can be included in the math achievement calculation at Gopherville Elementary School, both groups' math achievement rates will be used. By contrast, if 15 English learners and 45 students who are not English learners can be included in the math achievement calculation at Paul Bunyan High School, neither group's math achievement rate will be used because there were not enough English learners.

An English learner who is still in their first 12 months in school in the 50 states or the District of Columbia is expected to take the grade-appropriate MCA or MTAS test(s) during their first year of enrollment. However, that student's results will not be included in accountability calculations during that first year. During the student's second year of enrollment, their results will only be used to calculate academic progress. During and after the student's third year of enrollment, their results will be used to calculate academic achievement as well.

Additionally, students who were formerly English learners will be included in the English learner group for accountability purposes in the academic achievement and academic progress indicators for four years after they exit EL status.

Special education status

Special education status is also tracked in MARSS. When the group of students in special education meets the 20-student minimum for an indicator at a school or district, the group of students who are not in special education will also be used as a separate group, provided there are 20 or more students who are not in special

education included in that indicator. (This rule is the same as that for English learners and students who are not English learners.)

Additionally, students who were formerly in special education will be included in the group of students in special education for accountability purposes in the academic achievement and academic progress indicators for two years after they stop receiving special education services.

Economic status

When the group of students eligible for free or reduced price lunch meets the 20-student minimum for an indicator at a school or district, the group of students who are not eligible for free or reduced price lunch will also be used as a separate group, provided there are 20 or more students who are not eligible for free or reduced price lunch included in that indicator. (This rule is the same as that for English learners and students who are not English learners.)

Including students

Each indicator includes students with certain characteristics which differ based on the indicator. The following table summarizes which characteristics are relevant to each indicator, and each characteristic is then defined in the text that follows. If a cell in the table reports, “Yes,” then that characteristic is relevant to that indicator. If a cell in the table reports, “No,” then that characteristic is not relevant to that indicator.

Relevant Student Inclusion Characteristics for Each Indicator

Indicator	Half an Academic Year	December 15	Accountability Window	Recently Arrived ELs	Former ELs Included in EL Group	Former Special Education Included in Special Education Group
Academic Achievement (Grades 3-8, 10, and 11)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Included in Year 3	Yes	Yes
Academic Progress (Grades 4-8)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Included in Year 2	Yes	Yes
Progress Toward English Language Proficiency (Grades 1-12)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Graduation Rate	See, “Dropout Rule”	No	No	No	No	No
Consistent Attendance (Grades 1-12)	Yes	No	No	No	No	No

Half an academic year

A student is considered to be enrolled for half an academic year if their MARSS record shows them enrolled for 50% of the days in the school's year. ESSA requires this definition to ensure that schools are being held accountable for students they had a significant opportunity to serve.

December 15

For test-based measurements, the half an academic year standard is supplemented with the requirement that the student be enrolled at the school between December 15 and the beginning of the accountability window for the test. (The combination of half an academic year and December 15 replaces the October 1 standard used in the previous accountability system.)

Additionally, if a student experiences a significant gap in enrollment – defined as 21 or more calendar days not enrolled at the school as reported in MARSS – between December 15 and the first day of the accountability window for the test, the student is not included in the calculation of that indicator.

Dropout rule

If a student drops out after less than half an academic year at a high school, they will be counted as a dropout in the graduation rate of whichever high school they have attended for the most time. Note that this only applies to students who drop out, and not to students who have graduated, are continuing, or whose status is unknown.

Example: Joey Student was enrolled at New Albion High School for all of ninth grade, transferred to Gopherville High School in April of tenth grade, and dropped out in May. Joey would count as a dropout in New Albion High School's graduation rate.

Accountability window

Each test has a two-week accountability window which typically occurs in the middle of the larger assessment window. The accountability window for the MCA and MTAS is typically the middle two weeks of April, and the accountability window for ACCESS and Alt-ACCESS is typically during the first two full weeks of February.

For test-based measurements, a student must have been enrolled at a school during the accountability window to be included in the school's accountability calculations. Note that the student does not need to take the test during the accountability window; they only need to be enrolled at the school. Testing can happen at any time during the larger assessment window.

Recently arrived ELs

An English Learner who is still in their first 12 months in school in the 50 states or the District of Columbia is expected to take the grade-appropriate MCA or MTAS test(s) during their first year of enrollment. However, that student's results will not be included in accountability calculations during that first year. During the student's second year of enrollment, their results will only be used to calculate academic progress. During and after the student's third year of enrollment, their results will be used to calculate academic achievement as well.

Former EL included in EL group

For some indicators, students who were formerly English learners continue to be included in the EL group for four years after exiting EL status.

Former special education included in special education group

For some indicators, students who were formerly in special education continue to be included in the special education group for two years after exiting special education.

Foreign exchange

Foreign exchange students are not included in accountability calculations.

Dual enrollment

For all test-based indicators – academic achievement, academic progress, and progress toward English language proficiency – and for consistent attendance, a student who is enrolled in multiple schools will be counted at all schools for which they meet the relevant inclusion criteria (e.g. half an academic year, etc.). When summarizing these students at the district or state levels, they will only be included once.

For graduation, a student will only appear in one school’s graduation rate.

2. Calculating Academic Achievement

Under ESSA in Minnesota, academic achievement includes two separate indicators: math achievement and reading achievement. Each will be calculated using an achievement rate based on students’ achievement levels on the MCA or MTAS test.

Relevant student characteristics

The following table describes which student characteristics are relevant to determining which students are included in Academic Achievement calculations. For more information, see “Including students” in “District, School, and Student Inclusion in Accountability Calculations.”

Relevant Student Inclusion Characteristics for Academic Achievement

Indicator	Half an Academic Year	December 15	Accountability Window	Recently Arrived ELs	Former EL Included in EL Group	Former Special Education Included in Special Education Group
Academic Achievement (Grades 3-8, 10, and 11)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Included in Year 3	Yes	Yes

Unless stated otherwise, all other references to “student” in this section refer to a student who meets the relevant characteristics for inclusion.

Achievement levels

On the MCA or MTAS, a student’s scale score will place them in one of four achievement levels:

- Exceeds standards
- Meets standards
- Partially meets standards
- Does not meet standards

More information about achievement levels, including documents describing what each level looks like for key math and reading standards, can be found on the [Achievement Level Descriptors](#) page of the MDE website.

Awarding achievement rate points

A student with a score at the “exceeds standards” or “meets standards” level is awarded one point. A student with a score at the “partially meets standards” or “does not meet standards” level, or who does not have a valid score, receives no points. A student may not have a valid score as a result of not participating in the test or taking actions that violate testing procedures (such as using a prohibited device).

Medical excuse exception

Students identified in the TestWES system (used to record information about student testing) as having a medical excuse for not testing are not expected to have a valid score. They are removed from the calculation.

Calculating the achievement rate for a student group

For each student group with at least 20 students, the number of points awarded to students in the group is divided by the number of students in the group and multiplied by 100.

Example:

There are 50 Hispanic students included in Gopherville Middle School’s math achievement. Of these, 10 scored at the “exceeds standards” level and 20 scored at the “meets standards” level; these 30 students each generate one point. Another 20 students scored at the “partially meets standards” or the “does not meet standards” level, or did not have a valid score. These 20 students each generate no points.

30 points (for the 30 “exceeds” and “meets” students)
+ 0 points (for the “partially meets” and “does not meet” students, and students without a valid score) =
30 points total.

$30 \text{ points} / 50 \text{ students} = 0.60$

$0.60 * 100 = 60$

Therefore, Gopherville Middle School’s math achievement rate for Hispanic students would be 60 percent.

Calculating the achievement rate for a school or district

A school or district’s achievement rate for a subject is the average of student group achievement rates for that subject.

Example:

Five groups at Gopherville Middle School are included for math achievement.

Gopherville Middle School Math Achievement

Group	Math Achievement Rate
All Students	62
Hispanic	60
White	63
Free or Reduced Price Lunch	57
Not Free or Reduced Price Lunch	63
Average	$(62+60+63+57+63)/5 = 61$

Therefore, Gopherville Middle School’s overall math achievement for accountability purposes is 61.

3. Calculating Academic Progress

Under ESSA in Minnesota, academic progress includes two separate indicators: math progress and reading progress. Each will be calculated based on the change in students’ achievement levels on the MCA or MTAS test.

Relevant student characteristics

The following table describes which student characteristics are relevant to determining which students are included in academic progress calculations. For more information, see “Including students” in “District, School, and Student Inclusion in Accountability Calculations.”

Relevant Student Inclusion Characteristics for Academic Progress

Indicator	Half an Academic Year	December 15	Accountability Window	Recently Arrived ELs	Former EL Included in EL Group	Former Special Education Included in Special Education Group
Academic Progress (Grades 3-8)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Included in Year 2	Yes	Yes

Unless stated otherwise, all other references to “student” in this section refer to a student who meets the relevant characteristics for inclusion.

Achievement levels

On the MCA and MTAS, a student’s scale score will place them in one of four achievement levels:

- Exceeds standards
- Meets standards
- Partially meets standards
- Does not meet standards

More information about achievement levels, including documents describing what each level looks like for key math and reading standards, can be found on the [Achievement Level Descriptors](#) page of the MDE website.

Awarding academic progress points

A student’s achievement level from the current year is compared to the most recent achievement level on record for the student. The following table, which is called a transition matrix, is used to determine how many points the student receives:

Academic Progress Transition Matrix

Current Year → Most Recent Prior Year ↓	Does Not Meet Standards	Partially Meets Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards
Exceeds Standards	0	0	0	3
Meets Standards	0	0	2	5
Partially Meets Standards	0	2	6	9
Does Not Meet Standards	0	8	12	15

Calculating the progress score for a student group

For each student group with at least 20 students, the number of points awarded to students in the group is divided by the number of students with both a current year record and a prior record (i.e., those who could be evaluated using the transition matrix).

Example:

There are 50 Hispanic students included in Gopherville Middle School’s math progress. They are distributed and receive points as follows:

Hispanic Student Math Progress Distribution

Current Year → Most Recent Prior Year ↓	Does Not Meet Standards	Partially Meets Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards
Exceeds Standards			2 students <u>* 0 points each</u> 0 points	9 students <u>* 3 points each</u> 27 points
Meets Standards		1 student <u>* 0 points each</u> 0 points	14 students <u>* 2 points each</u> 28 points	1 student <u>* 5 points each</u> 5 points
Partially Meets Standards	1 student <u>* 0 points each</u> 0 points	6 students <u>* 2 points each</u> 12 points	3 students <u>* 6 points each</u> 18 points	
Does Not Meet Standards	9 students <u>* 0 points each</u> 0 points	3 students <u>* 8 points each</u> 24 points	1 students <u>* 12 points each</u> 12 points	

24 points (for the students who moved from “Does Not Meet” to “Partially Meets”)

12 points (for the students who remained in “Partially Meets”)

12 points (for the student who moved from “Does Not Meet” to “Meets”)

18 points (for the students who moved from “Partially Meets” to “Meets”)

28 points (for the students who remained in “Meets”)

5 points (for the student who moved from “Meets” to “Exceeds”)

27 points (for the students who remained in “Exceeds”)

0 points (for the students who moved backward or who remained in “Does Not Meets”)

+ 0 points (for the “Partially Meets” and “Does Not Meet” students, and students without a valid score)

112 points.

112 points / 50 students = 2.2

Therefore, Gopherville Middle School’s Math Progress score for Hispanic students would be 2.2.

Calculating the progress score for a school or district

A school or district’s progress score for a subject is the average of student group progress scores for that subject.

Example:

Five groups at Gopherville Middle School met the 20-student minimum for math progress.

Gopherville Middle School Math Progress

Group	Math Achievement Rate
All Students	2.1
Hispanic	2.2
White	1.9
Free or Reduced Price Lunch	2.4
Not Free or Reduced Price Lunch	2.0
Average	$(2.1 + 2.2 + 1.9 + 2.4 + 2.0)/5 = 2.1$

Therefore, Gopherville Middle School’s overall math progress score is 2.1.

4. Calculating Graduation

Under ESSA in Minnesota, Graduation includes two separate indicators: four-year graduation rate and seven-year graduation rate. Each will be calculated using a federally required adjusted cohort rate known as the exclusion-adjusted cohort graduation indicator (EACGI) methodology.

Relevant student characteristics

The following table describes which student characteristics are relevant to determining which students are included in academic achievement calculations. For more information, see “Including students” in “District, School, and Student Inclusion in Accountability Calculations.”

Relevant Student Inclusion Characteristics for Graduation

Indicator	Half an Academic Year	December 15	Accountability Window	Recently Arrived ELs	Expanded EL Included in EL Group	Expanded Special Education Included in Special Education Group
Graduation Rate	See, "Dropout Rule"	No	No	No	No	No

For the purposes of calculating graduation, any student who has ever been in a special population (English learners, students with disabilities, and/or students eligible for free or reduced price lunch) during or after grade nine will be counted in that population. For example, if a student was identified as eligible for free or reduced price lunch (FRP) during grades 10 and 11, they would be included in the FRP group in the school's graduation rate.

Unless stated otherwise, all other references to "student" in this section refer to a student who meets the relevant characteristics for inclusion.

Cohorts

At the beginning of grade 9, each student is placed in a graduation cohort at their school expected to graduate at the end of four school years, and which is tracked for seven years. For example, a student in grade nine in the fall of the 2018-19 school year is expected to graduate from grade 12 by the end of the 2021-22 school year. That same student would be included in the 2024-25 seven-year rate.

When a student transfers from one Minnesota public high school to another, they transfer to their new school's cohort (and out of their previous school's cohort). When a student enters the Minnesota public school system after grade nine, they are placed in the graduation cohort of whichever grade they enter. For example, a student who enters the Minnesota public school system in grade 10 in the 2019-20 school year is expected to graduate from grade 12 by the end of the 2021-22 school year and is included in the 2024-25 seven-year rate. If a student leaves the Minnesota public school system, is incarcerated, or dies, they are removed from the graduation cohort.

End status

For the purposes of this calculation, a student can have one of four end status types:

- Graduate
- Dropout
- Continuing education into following year ("Continuing")
- Ending status unknown ("Unknown")

A student’s end status is based on the most recent end code reported in MARSS. A complete list of end codes and their corresponding end status can be found in the *Graduation Rate Functional Requirements*. Unless the dropout rule applies, a student will be counted at the last school to report an end code for them.

Summer graduates

Minnesota includes students who graduate during the summer in the graduation rate of whichever school they ended up graduating from.

For example, a student is marked as continuing by Gopherville High School at the end of the 2021-22 school year, but goes on to graduate from the Gopherville ALC that summer. That student is counted as a graduate in the Gopherville ALC’s four-year rate, and they are removed from the cohort at Gopherville High School (meaning their continuing record longer applies to Gopherville High School).

Calculating the graduation rate for a student group

For each student group with at least 20 students at the school, the graduation rate is the number of graduates divided by the total number of graduates, dropouts, continuing students, and unknown students.

Example:

There are 40 Hispanic students in Gopherville High School’s four-year graduation rate cohort. Of these, 36 graduated, one dropped out, two are continuing, and one is unknown. (Two additional students transferred out of Minnesota public schools, so they are not included in this calculation.)

$$36 \text{ graduates} / 40 \text{ students} = 90\%$$

Therefore, Gopherville High School’s four-year graduation rate for Hispanic students would be 90 percent.

Calculating the graduation rate for a school or district

A school or district’s graduation rate for a timespan (four-year or seven-year) is the average of student group graduation rates for that timespan.

Example:

Five groups at Gopherville High School are included for four-year graduation rate.

Gopherville High School Overall Four-Year Graduation Rate

Group	Four-Year Graduation Rate
All Students	91%
Hispanic	90%
White	92%

Group	Four-Year Graduation Rate
Free or Reduced Price Lunch	84%
Not Free or Reduced Price Lunch	94%
Average	$(91 + 90 + 92 + 84 + 94)/5 = 90$

Therefore, Gopherville High School’s overall four-year graduation rate for accountability purposes is 90.

5. Progress Toward English Language Proficiency

Under ESSA in Minnesota, progress toward English language proficiency will be calculated using a path-to-proficiency index based on students’ growth on the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 or Alternate ACCESS for ELLs (Alt-ACCESS) tests.

Relevant student characteristics

The following table describes which student characteristics are relevant to determining which students are included in progress toward English language proficiency calculations. For more information, see “Including students” in “District, School, and Student Inclusion in Accountability Calculations.”

Relevant Student Inclusion Characteristics for Progress Toward English Language Proficiency

Indicator	Half an Academic Year	December 15	Accountability Window	Recently Arrived ELs	Expanded EL Included in EL Group	Expanded Special Education Included in Special Education Group
Progress Toward English Language Proficiency (Grades 1-12)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

This indicator only applies to current English Learners, and it does not disaggregate the indicator by the other groups used in accountability calculations.

Unless stated otherwise, all other references to “student” in this section refer to a student who meets the relevant characteristics for inclusion.

ACCESS scores

This indicator uses changes in a student’s ACCESS composite scale score to calculate progress.

A student’s composite scale score is used to determine their proficiency level, which the calculation uses when determining the timeline in which a student is expected to reach proficiency on the ACCESS test.

Setting timelines

Because English learners can enter Minnesota schools at any grade and at any level of English language development, there is no single timeline that can be applied to all students. Instead, a student’s timeline to achieve proficiency is set based on their ACCESS proficiency level in their first year as an English learner. Their proficiency level is categorized as one of: Beginning (proficiency levels from 1.0 to 2.4), Intermediate (proficiency levels from 2.5 to 4.4), or Advanced (proficiency levels of 4.5 and higher).

A student’s grade is also taken into account when setting their timeline. The timelines for students at each level and grade are as follows. These timelines are based on available historical data for students in Minnesota.

Timelines for Students at the Beginning Level (Proficiency Levels 1.0-2.4)

Grade First Identified	Number of Years to Reach Proficiency
Kindergarten	7
1-8	6
9-12	7

Timelines for Students at the Intermediate Level (Proficiency Levels 2.5-4.4)

Grade First Identified	Number of Years to Reach Proficiency
Kindergarten	7
1-3	5
4-8	6
9-12	7

Timelines for Students at the Advanced Level (Proficiency Levels 4.5 and Higher)

Grade First Identified	Number of Years to Reach Proficiency
Kindergarten	3
1-12	2

These timelines include the student’s first year as an EL. For example, a student identified as advanced in kindergarten is expected to reach proficiency by their ACCESS test in grade two, and a student identified as intermediate in grade three is expected to reach proficiency by their ACCESS test in grade seven.

Students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE)

Students with limited or interrupted or formal education (SLIFE) at the beginning or intermediate levels are given an additional year to achieve proficiency. For example, a SLIFE in grade seven with an intermediate proficiency level would be expected to achieve proficiency in seven years rather than six years. SLIFE at the Advanced level do not receive the additional year.

For more information on SLIFE, consult [the SLIFE page](#) of the MDE website.

Setting targets on the path to proficiency

The composite proficiency level required to be considered proficient on the ACCESS test is 4.5 (there are [additional domain-specific requirements](#), but they are not reflected in this calculation). Once a student's timeline has been set, the year in which they are expected to achieve proficiency can be determined. For example, a beginning student in grade one has six years to achieve proficiency (including grade one), and is therefore expected to have a composite proficiency level of 4.5 by grade six.

Next, a path to that proficiency level is charted along the timeline. Because English learners tend to grow faster at lower proficiency levels and slower at higher proficiency levels, the path expects more growth in the earlier years (when the student's proficiency level is lower) and slower growth in the later years (when the student's proficiency level is higher).

These paths and targets can be found in the technical specifications for this indicator.

Updating targets

If a student exceeds their target for the year, their remaining targets increase along the rest of their timeline. For example, if a student with six years left in their timeline exceeds their target for the year, in the following year, their most recent score would be treated as the starting score on the timeline for students with five years to reach proficiency. Their remaining targets would be increased appropriately.

Similarly, if a student misses their target for the year, their remaining targets decrease.

Calculating the score for a student

Each proficiency level represents a range of scale scores, depending on the grade in which the student is taking the test. The student's target change in scale score will be the change from their previous year's scale score to the lowest scale score for their target proficiency level.

A student receives 0 points if any of the following is true:

- The student does not have a valid score for the year.
- The student is past their timeline to reach proficiency and is not yet proficient.
- The student's composite scale score is lower than or equal to the previous year's.

If a student reaches or surpasses their target for the year, they receive 100 points. Students who are past their timeline to reach proficiency receive 100 points in the year they achieve proficiency.

If a student does not reach their target for the year, they receive index points equal to 100 multiplied by:

$$\frac{\text{Actual Change in Scale Score}}{\text{Target Change in Scale Score}}$$

For example, a student at Gopherville Middle School received a composite scale score of 220 last year. This year, their target is 260, and they score 250. The actual change in their scale score was 30 scale score points, and their target change was 40 scale score points. Their individual progress toward English language proficiency score for the year would be $(30/40) * 100 = 75$ index points.

Calculating index points for the Alt-ACCESS test

Students who take the Alt-ACCESS test receive a composite proficiency level of A1, A2, A3, P1, or P2. When a student's previous proficiency level was A1 or A2, they receive 100 index points for increasing their proficiency level (e.g. from A1 to A2 or from A2 to A3) and 0 index points if their proficiency level stays the same or decreases. When a student's previous proficiency level was A3, P1, or P2, they receive 100 index points for maintaining or increasing their proficiency level and 0 index points if their proficiency level decreases.

Calculating the score for a school or district

A school or district's progress toward English language proficiency index is the average of student index points.

Example:

25 students at Gopherville Middle School are English Learners. The sum of their index points is 2075, so the average of their individual index points ($2075/25$) is 83.

Therefore, Gopherville Middle School's Progress Toward English Language Proficiency index for the school overall would be 83.

6. Calculating Consistent Attendance

Under ESSA in Minnesota, consistent attendance is calculated based on the percentage of students who are **not** chronically absent.

Relevant student characteristics

The following table describes which student characteristics are relevant to determining which students are included in consistent attendance calculations. For more information, see "Including students" in "District, School, and Student Inclusion in Accountability Calculations."

Relevant Student Inclusion Characteristics for Consistent Attendance

Indicator	Half an Academic Year	December 15	Accountability Window	Recently Arrived ELs	Expanded EL Included in EL Group	Expanded Special Education Included in Special Education Group
Consistent Attendance (Grades 1-12)	Yes	No	No	No	No	No

Unless stated otherwise, all other references to “student” in this section refer to a student who meets the relevant characteristics for inclusion.

Calculating consistent attendance

The consistent attendance rate for a group refers to all students who are not chronically absent. These are the students whose ADA divided by ADM is higher than 0.90, meaning they attended more than 90 percent of the time. Conversely, students who attend 90 percent or less of the time – in other words, students who are absent 10 percent or more of the time – are considered chronically absent.

For example, of the 50 Hispanic students at Gopherville Middle School, 48 consistently attended. The consistent attendance rate for Hispanic students at Gopherville Middle School would therefore be 48/50, or 96 percent.

Calculating consistent attendance for a school or district

A school or district’s overall consistent attendance is the average of student group consistent attendance rates.

Example:

Five groups at Gopherville Middle School are included for consistent attendance.

Gopherville Middle School Overall Consistent Attendance

Group	Consistent Attendance Rate
All Students	98%
Hispanic	96%
White	99%
Free or Reduced Price Lunch	94%
Not Free or Reduced Price Lunch	98%
Average	$(98 + 96 + 99 + 94 + 98)/5 = 97$

Therefore, Gopherville Middle School’s overall consistent attendance would be 97.

7. Identifying Schools and Districts for Support

Under ESSA, Minnesota identifies schools for two main categories of support, with multiple ways to be identified for each category. Another group of schools receives support from MDE.

The first major category of support is comprehensive support. Schools identified for comprehensive support receive ongoing onsite assistance from the Regional Centers of Excellence. The two types of schools identified for comprehensive support are:

- Any public high school (regardless of Title I status) with a four-year graduation rate below 67 percent overall or for any student group.
- The lowest 5 percent of Title I schools, using a three-stage decision process.

The second major category of support is targeted support. Schools identified for targeted support primarily receive support from their districts. The Regional Centers of Excellence also offer training and networking opportunities organized around key topics for these schools. The two types of schools identified for targeted support are:

- Schools where student groups perform below performance thresholds for at least one indicator in each stage of the three-stage decision process, when either:
 - The group's average over the last three years was below performance thresholds.
 - The group was below performance thresholds in each of the last three years.
- Title I schools with overall performance below performance thresholds in Stage 1 and 2.

Finally, Title I schools with overall performance below performance thresholds in Stage 1 are eligible for support from MDE.

At the district level, the three-stage decision process identifies the lowest 10 percent of traditional districts and the lowest 10 percent of charter schools. These districts – along with any other districts the commissioner identifies using additional information – receive support from cross-functional teams that coordinate support from multiple divisions of MDE as well as the Regional Centers of Excellence.

Timelines for Identification

Identifications begin in the 2018-19 school year using the years of data identified in the following table. Subsequent identifications will use whatever data is available from the three most recent years. A three-year average of data will be used, except for schools identified for targeted support because a student group was below performance thresholds in each of the last three years.

Years Used to Identify Schools for Support in 2018

Indicator	Years Used
Academic Achievement	2018, 2017, and 2016

Indicator	Years Used
Progress Toward English Language Proficiency	2018*
Academic Progress	2018, 2017, and 2016
Graduation	2017, 2016, and 2015
Consistent Attendance	2017, 2016, and 2015

** Only one year of progress toward English language proficiency data is available for the 2018 identifications.*

Most identifications are made on a three-year cycle, meaning the next round of identification for those categories will occur before the 2022-23 school year.

Identification of schools with a student group below performance thresholds in each of the three previous years will occur annually.

Comprehensive support: Graduation rates

High schools where the four-year graduation rate for the school overall, or for any student group at the school, is lower than 67 percent are identified for comprehensive support once every three years, beginning in 2018.

Any school can be identified for this category, whether or not it is a Title I school. Each student group in the school with 20 or more students included in the four-year graduation cohort in each of the last three years is used to evaluate schools. When identifying these schools, the three years of four-year graduation rate data is averaged together for each group, with each year carrying equal weight.

Comprehensive support: The lowest 5 percent of Title I schools

For the purposes of this document, “Title I schools” refers to any school receiving Title I, Part A funding. This describes nearly half of the public schools in Minnesota.

This category of schools will be broken into elementary, middle and high schools. Identifying the lowest 5 percent of each in 2018 means identifying:

- Approximately 34 elementary schools
- Approximately seven middle schools
- Approximately six high schools

These numbers may change in the future based on changes in the number of schools receiving Title I, Part A funding.

For each indicator, each school will receive an overall average based on the average performance of its separate student groups (as described in the previous sections).

The most recent three years of available data for the school will be averaged together, with each year weighted equally. If the school has no data for an indicator (often because the population was smaller than 20 students) in one of the most recent three years, the remaining two years will be averaged together. If the school only has data for an indicator in one of the most recent three years, that one year’s data will be used.

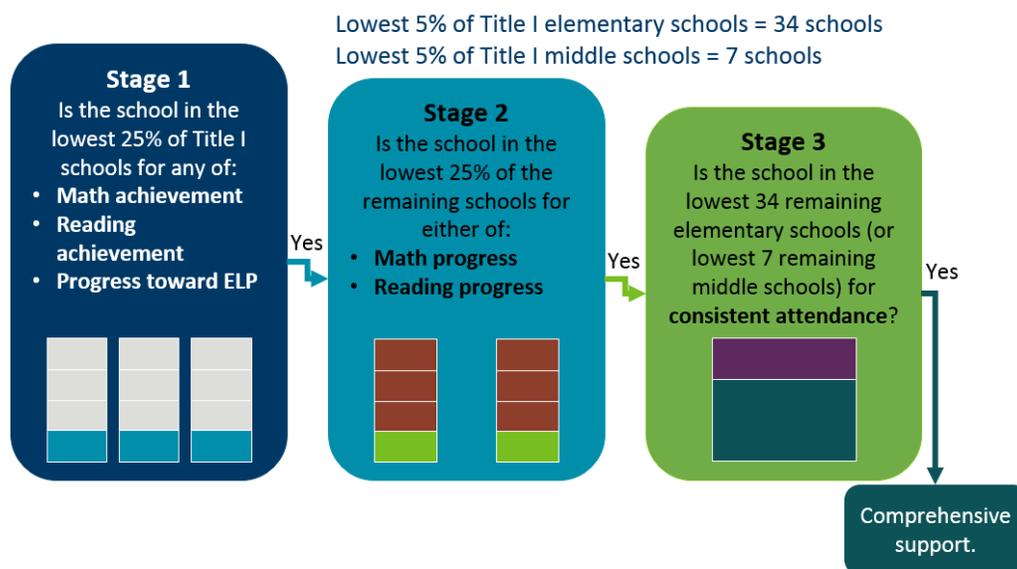
Elementary and middle schools will be identified based on three stages.

Stage 1: The lowest quarter of Title I schools in any of math achievement, reading achievement, and progress toward English language proficiency. (In other words, if a school is in the bottom quarter of any of those indicators, it moves to Stage 2.)

Stage 2: The lowest quarter of Stage 1 schools in either math progress or reading progress. (In other words, if a school is one of those identified in Stage 1 and is in the bottom quarter of either indicator among the other schools identified in Stage 1, it moves to Stage 3.)

Stage 3: The target number (five percent of all Title I elementary schools and five percent of all Title I middle schools) of Stage 2 schools with the lowest consistent attendance.

The process can be visualized as follows for elementary and middle schools:



High schools will also be identified based on three stages.

Stage 1: The lowest quarter of Title I schools in any of math achievement, reading achievement, and progress toward English language proficiency.

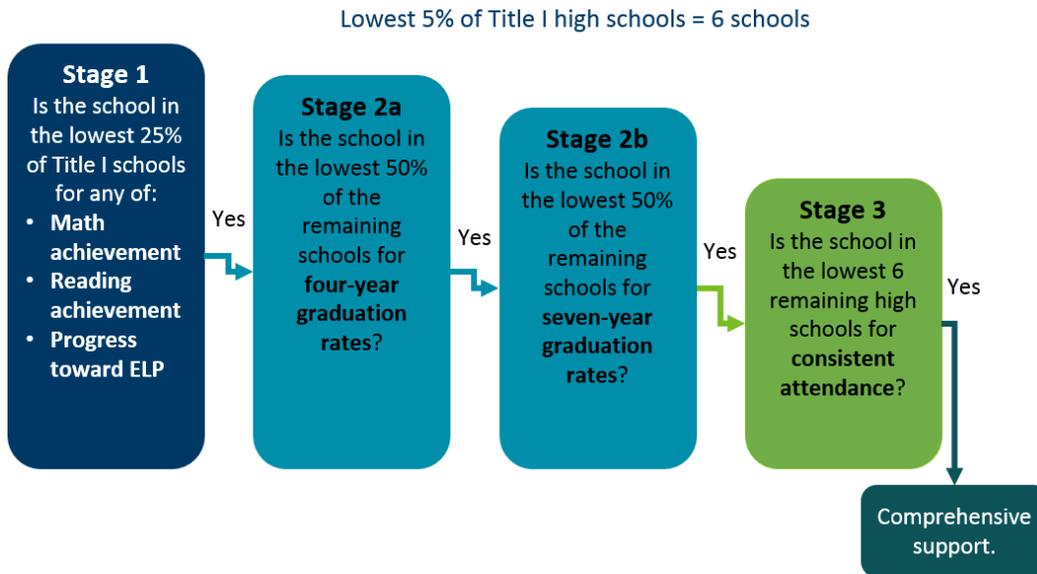
Stage 2:

2a: The lowest half of Stage 1 schools in four-year graduation rate.

2b: The lowest half of Stage 2a schools in seven-year graduation rate.

Stage 3: The target number (five percent of all Title I high schools) of Stage 2b schools with the lowest consistent attendance.

The process can be visualized as follows:



Schools missing indicators in Stage 2

If a school is missing all of the indicators in Stage 2, it moves directly to the next stage. For example, a small elementary school that moved from Stage 1 to Stage 2, but which has fewer than 20 students with two or more years of MCA or MTAS results, would not be able to receive math or reading progress scores. In that case, the school would move directly to Stage 3 and be compared to all other schools in Stage 3 on consistent attendance.

Performance thresholds used for targeted support

Performance thresholds are central to the identification of schools for targeted support. A performance threshold is the level of performance to which schools and student groups are compared.

Performance thresholds for each indicator are set when Title I schools are ranked on indicators at each of the three stages of identifying the lowest 5 percent of Title I schools for comprehensive support.

For example, all Title I elementary schools are ranked on their math achievement in Stage 1. The lowest 25 percent move to Stage 2. Whenever schools are ranked like this, there is always one school that defines exactly where the lowest 25 percent is. That level of performance becomes the performance threshold for the indicator.

We set performance thresholds using the lowest 25 percent of every indicator during the comprehensive support identification process, with the exception of graduation rates and consistent attendance. For both four-year and seven-year graduation rates, we use the lowest 50 percent to set the performance thresholds, again based on how schools performed when identifying schools for comprehensive support. For consistent

attendance, the performance threshold is set based on the lowest 25 percent of schools that advance to Stage 3 when identifying the lowest 5 percent of Title I schools for that grade span.

Targeted support: Group three-year average below performance thresholds

At least one student group in these schools is considered to be performing similarly to the lowest 5 percent of Title I schools. Any school can be identified for this category, whether or not it is a Title I school. To be evaluated for this category, a student group must have been included in at least one Stage 1 indicator in the most recent year.

For each indicator, each student group in the school with 20 or more included students is used to evaluate schools. All available data from the most recent three years for that student group are averaged together, with each year weighted equally. If the student group has no data for an indicator (often because the population was smaller than 20 students) in one of the two remaining years (that is, the two years that aren't the most recent year), whatever data is available is averaged together. If the school or a student group only has data for an indicator in the most recent year, that one year's data will be used.

Each included student group will then be compared to the performance threshold for each indicator. When a student group at an elementary or middle school is below at least one indicator in each stage, the school is identified for targeted support. For high schools, the student group must be below the performance threshold for at least one indicator in Stage 1, both the four-year and seven-year graduation rate thresholds in Stage 2, and the performance threshold for consistent attendance in Stage 3.

Note that a school will only be identified if the **same** student group is identified in Stages 1, 2 and 3.

If a Title I school is identified this way for the same group twice in a row (for example, in 2018 and again in 2021), the school will become eligible for comprehensive support from the Regional Centers of Excellence.

Student groups missing indicators in Stage 2

If a student group is missing all of the indicators in Stage 2, it moves directly to the next stage.

Targeted support: Group below thresholds in each of the last three years

Any school can be identified for this category, whether or not it is a Title I school. For each indicator, each student group in the school with 20 or more included students for a given indicator will be used to evaluate schools.

Student groups will be compared against the performance thresholds for each indicator. When a group at an elementary or middle school is below performance thresholds for the same indicator in each of the last three years, for at least one indicator in each stage, the school is identified for targeted support. For high schools, the student group must be below the performance threshold for at least one indicator in Stage 1, both the four-year and seven-year graduation rate thresholds in Stage 2, and the performance threshold for consistent attendance in Stage 3.

Because this identification happens every year, it’s a good way to keep an eye on how student group performance is changing – or staying the same – over time.

Student groups missing indicators in Stage 2

If a student group is missing all of the indicators in Stage 2 in a given year, it moves directly to the next stage.

Targeted support: Title I schools below performance thresholds in Stages 1 and 2

If a Title I school’s overall performance (the average of all included student groups) is below performance thresholds for at least one indicator in both Stages 1 and 2, but the school is not identified for comprehensive support based on its consistent attendance in Stage 3, the school is identified for targeted support.

Support from MDE: Title I schools below performance thresholds in Stage 1

If a Title I school’s overall performance is below performance thresholds for any indicator in Stage 1 and the school is not otherwise identified for support, the school is eligible for support from MDE.

Identifying districts for support

The lowest 10 percent of traditional districts and the lowest 10 percent of charter schools are identified using the three-stage process. The commissioner can also use additional information to identify other districts for support. Districts identified for support receive ongoing assistance from cross-functional teams that include multiple divisions of the Minnesota Department of Education as well as representatives from the Regional Centers of Excellence.

The process can be visualized as follows:

