

# ESEA Flexibility

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## The New Accountability System

- Arkansas's accountability system designed by Arkansas stakeholders
- Maintains focus on most at risk student populations – will continue to report disaggregated data
- Focused on performance and growth for all students

State assessments remain the standard by which school and district performance is measured, however we'll now be looking at that data in three different ways— student achievement, student growth and graduation rate at high schools.

Each school and school district is assigned AMOs (Annual Measurable Objectives) based on student growth, student performance and graduation rate. By looking at the data in different ways, schools gain clarity regarding the areas in which Improvement efforts should be focused.

The state will identify low performing schools based on student achievement and the achievement gap and provide those schools with technical assistance to help implement improvement plans. These are *Needs Improvement **Priority*** and *Needs Improvement **Focus***.

The Arkansas plan is one of shared responsibility in which the state provides leadership and direction to school districts, which then give leadership and direction to the schools, which are then responsible for building the capacity of the school staff to meet the needs of all learners. In this way, effective interventions can occur at all levels to ensure improved student learning.

The new system also provides an opportunity to recognize schools for high performance and high levels of improvement and to reward those schools for their efforts. These schools are designated as "Exemplary".

The schools in the middle are designated as **Achieving** or **Needs Improvement**. Please don't think of a school designated as Needs Improvement as a failing school. It is not. It means the school missed its targets. It means school leaders and teachers need to look at the data to find out which students are not making gains and why.

This is a new accountability system and the old school improvement labels—year 1, 2, 3 and on—no longer apply. The system is transparent and provides schools and parents the information they need to help students succeed.

This Flexibility will be in place through the 2012-13 and 2013-14 school years. If Congress fails to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act before the Flexibility expires, states may be given the opportunity for an extension of its plan.

