

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** District Superintendents  
Federal Programs Directors  
Report Card/Accountability Coordinators

**FROM:** Kimberly E. Mack  
Director, Office of Leadership Effectiveness

**DATE:** January 28, 2025

**RE:** School Improvement Designations

The information contained in this memo is to provide clarity around School Improvement Designations and recent updates to [the Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\) Plan](#) that impact identification and exit criteria for designated schools. Each district will be notified of current designations for identified schools in their district in a separate communication.

### **Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) Definition**

CSI schools are Title I schools performing in the bottom 5% of their grade span (elementary, middle, or high). Additionally, any high school (Title I or non-Title I) with a graduation rate lower than 70% is identified as a CSI Low Graduation Rate school. CSI status is a three-year identification. The next identification of school improvement designations is scheduled to be in Fall 2025.

### **CSI Identification Methodology**

Title I schools are separated by grade span and ranked using the numerator overall (weighted point index) from the school report card. The bottom 5% are identified as CSI and any high school not meeting the graduation rate is included. CSI schools identified in the previous cycle that do not meet the exit criteria are classified as CSI schools that did not exit. CSI schools that were previously identified and, subsequently, reidentified are designated as reidentified CSI schools. Additionally, Title I ATSI schools that fail to exit ATSI status after two consecutive cycles for the same subgroup are converted to CSI schools.

### **CSI Exit Criteria**

Identified CSI schools must complete one cycle (three years) in CSI status after initial identification. Schools that have completed a minimum of one cycle that do not exit at the next reidentification of CSI schools may exit mid-cycle if they meet the exit criteria. There are three types of CSI schools: Title I CSI Schools identified for whole-school low

performance; High schools (Title I or non-Title I) identified for low graduation rate; and ATSI schools that are converted due to failure to exit status after two consecutive cycles for the same subgroup.

CSI Category	Exit after 1 <sup>st</sup> Cycle	Exiting mid-cycle
Title I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weighted point index is above the bottom 5% of Title I schools (school is not reidentified for CSI), <b>AND</b></li> <li>Percent of meets/exceeds in ELA <b>OR</b> Math increased from original year of identification.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weighted point index is above the bottom 5% of Title I schools in the most recent identification year after initial identification, <b>AND</b></li> <li>Percent of meets/exceeds in ELA <b>OR</b> Math increased from original year of identification.</li> </ul>
High School – Low Graduation Rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graduation rate is 70% or greater.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graduation rate is 70% or greater.</li> </ul>
ATSI Converted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weighted point index of the identified subgroup is above the bottom 5% of Title I schools, <b>AND</b></li> <li>Percent of meets/exceeds of the identified subgroup in ELA <b>OR</b> Math increased from original year of CSI identification.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weighted point index of the identified subgroup is above the bottom 5% of Title I schools in the most recent identification year after initial identification, <b>AND</b></li> <li>Percent of meets/exceeds of the identified subgroup in ELA <b>OR</b> Math increased from original year of CSI identification.</li> </ul>

### Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) Definition

ATSI Schools have subgroups identified as performing at or below the bottom 5% of Title I schools. ATSI school subgroups identified in the previous cycle that did not meet exit criteria were designated as not exited ATSI schools. ATSI schools that were previously identified and, subsequently, reidentified are designated as reidentified ATSI schools. **Title I ATSI schools that do not exit status after two consecutive cycles with the same subgroup(s) will be identified as CSI (ATSI Converted) schools.** The next identification of ATSI schools is scheduled to be in Fall 2025.

### ATSI Identification Methodology

Subgroup performance for all schools is separated by grade span. Overall subgroup performance that is at or below the bottom 5% are identified as ATSI subgroups.

### ATSI Exit Criteria

Identified ATSI schools must complete one cycle (three years) in ATSI status after initial identification. Schools that have completed a minimum of one cycle that do not exit at the next reidentification of ATSI schools may exit mid-cycle if they meet the exit criteria.

ATSI	Exit after 1 <sup>st</sup> Cycle	Exiting mid-cycle
Title I and Non-Title I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Weighted point index of the identified subgroup is above the bottom 5% of Title I schools (subgroup is not reidentified for ATSI), <b>AND</b></li><li>Percent of meets/exceeds of identified subgroup in ELA <b>OR</b> Math increased from original year of identification.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Weighted point index of identified subgroup is above the bottom 5% of Title I schools in the most recent identification year after initial identification, <b>AND</b></li><li>Percent of meets/exceeds of identified subgroup in ELA <b>OR</b> Math increased from original year of identification.</li></ul>

### Priority School Definition

Priority schools are any schools performing in the bottom 10% of their grade span (elementary, middle, high). Priority status is a three-year identification. Priority schools will not be designated in 2025. The bottom 10% of schools will continue to be calculated annually to determine subgroup performance for Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI).

### TSI – Consistently Underperforming Subgroup (TSI\_CUS) Definition

TSI\_CUS schools have one or more subgroups performing at or below the bottom 10% of schools for three consecutive years are designated.

### TSI\_CUS Identification Methodology

Data from 2023-24, 2022-23, and 2021-22 were used to determine TSI\_CUS schools. Subgroup performance for all schools is compared to the bottom 10% to determine consistently underperforming subgroups.

### TSI\_CUS Exit Criteria

TSI\_CUS Schools are identified annually.

In addition to school improvement designations required by the state’s ESSA Consolidated Plan, school and district improvement designations are provided in accordance with S.C. Code Ann. §59-18-1625.

**Underperforming School**

Underperforming Schools are identified as any school with a Below Average or Unsatisfactory overall report card rating. Underperforming Schools will be identified annually.

**Chronically Underperforming School**

Chronically Underperforming Schools are identified as any school with an Unsatisfactory overall report card rating for three consecutive years. Data from 2023-24, 2022-23, and 2021-22 were used to designate Chronically Underperforming Schools.

**Underperforming District**

An Underperforming District has 65% or more schools with Below Average or Unsatisfactory overall report card ratings. Underperforming Districts will be identified annually. The State Superintendent of Education may seek a state-of-education emergency declaration for a district that is chronically underperforming (S.C. Ann. Code §59-18-1640 (4)).

The Office of Leadership Effectiveness will send updated designation information to districts annually. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact me ([kemack@ed.sc.gov](mailto:kemack@ed.sc.gov)) or Yvonne Cranford ([yacranford@ed.sc.gov](mailto:yacranford@ed.sc.gov)).