

**Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2010**  
**Approved by the Commission on School Accreditation June 7, 2012**  
**Approved by the State Board of Education June 15, 2012**

**3.0 PERFORMANCE CLASSIFICATION POLICY**

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The State Board of Education, acting through the Commission on School Accreditation, is required to establish and implement a process for accountability at the individual public school level and district level. Individual schools and districts are held accountable for student growth and performance and receive an annual School Performance Classification and District Performance Classification. (See Glossary for definitions of an attendance center and school.)

When the district establishes a new school and/or the district reconfigures the specific grades or students assigned to an existing school(s) within the district, the student achievement data used to assign school performance classifications will follow the guidelines established in the School Performance Standards and School Performance Model.

**3.1 ASSIGNMENT OF PERFORMANCE CLASSIFICATIONS**

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***3.1.1 School Performance Classification***

Information concerning school performance is reported to the Commission on an annual basis, and annual performance classifications will be assigned in the fall of each school year. Each public school that has both achievement and growth data will be assigned an annual performance classification. In addition, the Graduation Rate and the High School Completion Index (HSCI) will be included in determining the performance classification of schools with any grade configuration of 9-12. Available assessment data will be reported for those schools that do not have both achievement and growth data, but a school performance classification will not be assigned. An alternative school will not be assigned a school performance classification. (See State Board Policy 901 and 902 and the Glossary for definition of alternative school.)

***3.1.2 District Performance Classification***

Information concerning district performance is reported to the Commission on an annual basis, and annual performance classifications will be assigned in the fall of each school year. Each public school district will be assigned an annual performance classification based on achievement, growth, and graduation rate or High School Completion Index. A district performance level is assigned based on the performance of all students in the district (i.e., the district will be treated as one K-12 school).

***3.1.3 Internal Review of Preliminary Accountability Results***

If the school district has reason to believe the results of the state or federal accountability system applied to a district or school are incorrect due to a calculation or data error or other substantive reasons, the school district may submit written evidence to the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Educational Accountability to support the position of the school district. All requests must be submitted in writing based on the timeline published each year by the Office of Accreditation. The Office of

Accreditation will review these requests and present them to an Internal Review Committee for consideration. The Internal Review Committee will consist of, at minimum, one (1) external chairperson and four (4) Mississippi Department of Education Representatives.

### **3.2 PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

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Performance (output or product) standards address selected components of the statewide testing program and other outcome measures related to the performance of a school. (See Performance Standards pages 34-41.) The State Board of Education may also take into account such factors as graduation rates, dropout rates, completion rates, the extent to which the school or district employs qualified teachers in every classroom, and any other factors deemed appropriate by the State Board of Education.

### **3.3 PERFORMANCE CLASSIFICATIONS**

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The performance classification assigned to a school or district will be determined by (a) the percentage of students who are performing at criterion levels (minimum, basic, proficient, and advanced) and (b) the degree to which student performance has improved over time (based on an expected growth value for the school). The results from the Achievement Model and the Growth Model are combined to assign performance classification as follows:

**Star School**  
**High Performing**  
**Successful**  
**Academic Watch**  
**Low-Performing School**  
**At-Risk of Failing**  
**Failing**

**(See State Accountability Rating System, page 25 and Performance Classification Model, Page 26)**

A school will not receive a school performance classification if the test data have been invalidated, and the school performance classification will be noted as Test Data Invalidated. (See Appendix F)

### **3.4 SCHOOLS AT-RISK**

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Following an analysis of school data each year, the Mississippi Department of Education shall identify those schools that are deficient in educating students and are in need of improvement in accordance with Section 37-18-3, *Mississippi Code of 1972*, as amended. This analysis shall indicate individual school performance in two areas: (a) meeting its assigned yearly growth expectation and (b) percentage of the students in the school that are proficient.

### ***3.4.1 Designation***

A school shall be identified as a School At-Risk and in need of assistance if the school:

- (a) Does not meet its growth expectation and has a percentage of students functioning below grade level, as designated by the State Board of Education;
- (b) Is designated as a Failing School; or
- (c) Is designated as At-Risk of Failing or Low Performing for two (2) consecutive years.

### ***3.4.2 Notification***

Within fifteen (15) days after a School At-Risk has been identified, written notice shall be sent by the State Board of Education by certified mail to the school principal, the superintendent, and the chairperson of the local board of education.

### ***3.4.3 Evaluation Teams and Evaluation Report***

Within fifteen (15) days after notification, the State Board of Education shall assign an evaluation team to the school, subject to the availability of funding. The evaluation team shall be independent of the school being evaluated and may include employees of the State Department of Education. The team may include retired educators who have met certain standards and have completed all necessary training.

The evaluation team shall analyze the School At-Risk's data to determine probable areas of weakness before conducting an on-site audit. After completing the evaluation of the School At-Risk, the team shall prepare and adopt its school evaluation report, which shall be submitted to the State Superintendent of Education for approval within ninety (90) calendar days. The evaluation report shall identify any personnel who were found by the evaluation team to be in need of improvement and need to participate in a professional development plan.

Following the State Superintendent's approval of the report, a representative of the State Superintendent and the evaluation team leader shall present the report to the principal of the School At-Risk, the school district superintendent, and school board members of the local school district. Following this presentation, the evaluation report shall be presented to the community served by the School At-Risk at an advertised public meeting.

### ***3.4.4 School Improvement Plan***

Based on the findings of the evaluation report and the results of the public meeting, the Mississippi Department of Education and evaluation team leader shall assist the school principal and other local school officials in the development of a school improvement action plan.

The school improvement action plan shall be developed and approved by the principal of the School At-Risk, the superintendent of the local school district, the local school

board, and a majority of the teachers of the school. If the plan is not approved, the State Board of Education may approve and implement the plan in the school.

The State Department of Education shall provide technical assistance and shall assist in identifying funding to the School At-Risk in the implementation of the school improvement action plan, including the implementation of any recommended professional development plan, and the department may contract with the Institutions of Higher Learning to provide such technical assistance. The assistance team shall collaborate with school and school district employees in the implementation and monitoring of the school improvement action plan and the State Department of Education shall ensure that a report is issued monthly to the local school board and the local community-based advisory council.

A school district that has been designated as failing as defined by the State Board of Education or a district and/or a school designated below the successful level, shall establish a community-based pre-kindergarten through higher education (P-16) council comprised of a broad spectrum of the community, including economic developers, elected officials, civic leaders, business leaders, faith-based leaders, social services, nonprofit organizations, school attendance officers, law enforcement officials, health department officials, day care providers, librarians, parents and others with the knowledge and resources that can be leveraged to build strong communities. The State Board of Education shall develop procedures for appointments to the council, which shall not be appointed solely by the school board. The council will serve as a community-led group that is inclusive, accountable, and required to publicly report progress to the community as a whole.

#### ***3.4.5 Professional Development Plan for Educators***

As part of the school improvement action plan for a School At-Risk, a professional development plan shall be prepared for those school administrators, teachers, or other employees who are identified by the evaluation team as needing improvement.