

## 2015 Priority Schools

In 2012, Arkansas received approval from the United States Department of Education (USDE) for flexibility from some requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The state was required to identify a number of lowest-performing schools over a three year period equal to at least five percent of the state's Title I schools. Arkansas had 803 Title I schools in 2011, requiring at least 40 Title I schools be identified as Priority. Schools that were not Title I, but had the same achievement levels as the Title I Priority schools, were also identified. Additionally, schools are Priority if they are Tier 1 or Tier 2 schools using SIG funds for a school intervention model. An extension of the Arkansas Flexibility was approved by USDE on July 27, 2015. Arkansas was required to provide an updated list of priority schools to ensure that interventions are being implemented in the lowest-performing schools. The following explains how the new Priority schools were calculated:

- Non-mobile tests were used (students were continuously enrolled at the same school from October 1 through the day of the test).
- Math and Literacy performance is ranked for 2012, 2013, and 2014.
- Schools were sorted from highest to lowest based on the percentage of students proficient in mathematics in 2014. Each school was assigned a rank based on this order with 1 representing the best.
- Schools were sorted from highest to lowest for the percentage of students proficient in literacy in 2014. Each school was assigned a rank based on this order with 1 representing the best.
- An overall rank for 2014 academic achievement was obtained by summing the ranks for math and literacy.
- 3-year progress ranking was obtained by summing the 2012, 2013 and 2014 overall rank values.
- Final combined rank score was obtained by creating a weighted sum that included overall rank for performance in 2014 and the overall 3-year progress rank. Three-year progress was weighted 1.0 and 2014 performance was weighted .80, thus giving slightly more credit to schools that may have been low performing, but demonstrated progress during the three years.
- For example
  - Three year total rank = 2014 math rank (988) + 2014 literacy rank (1008) + 2013 math rank (996) + 2013 literacy rank (1000) + 2012 math rank (981) + 2012 literacy rank (964) = 5937.
  - Weighted Rank Value (WRV) = 7534 = 3 Year Total Rank (5937) + .80 \* 2014 Total Rank (1996).
  - Newly identified Priority Schools in 2015 had a Weighted Rank Value greater than 7533 (lowest 5%).

The schools that have been identified as Priority Schools can be found in a searchable Excel spreadsheet at [2015 Priority Schools](#).