



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Dr. Tom W. Kimbrell, Commissioner

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2012 Arkansas School ESEA Accountability Reports Released

LITTLE ROCK—The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) today officially released the 2012 school ESEA accountability reports for the first time under standards of the state’s new accountability system.

The new system measures student performance on state assessments looking at the data in three different ways—student achievement, student growth and graduation rate at high schools. The system maintains a focus on helping students achieve proficiency in both literacy and math, but also gives credit for improving performance along the way.

Each school and school district is assigned Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs). Those AMOs were set from the 2011 assessment results as required by the U.S. Department of Education.

Each school is held accountable for every student. The school’s AMOs or targets are individualized and apply only to that particular school and its students. Each school has a target for performance and a target for growth. High schools have targets for graduation rate. The school can meet the target for performance, or the target for growth or the target for graduation rate and be considered achieving.

Each school is unique in its student population. Schools no longer compete with those in their district or with those across the state or chase a state level target.

School classifications include Exemplary, Achieving, Needs Improvement, Needs Improvement Focus or Needs Improvement Priority. These new classifications replace labels formerly used under No Child Left Behind.

When a school misses its targets, that does not mean it is a failing school. It means those school leaders and teachers look at the data to find out which students are not making their gains. It means they develop teaching and learning strategies to help each student achieve.

“We have to forget what the old system’s labels meant,” said Education Commissioner

Dr. Tom Kimbrell. “Needs Improvement should not be associated with school level improvement status of old. It simply means the school missed one or more targets. Under the new system, schools do not progress in year one, two, three, or go deeper into school improvement.”

The new accountability system will provide communities clear understanding of how their schools and districts are performing upon full implementation of the rigorous Common Core Standards in 2014-15.

“We need to look at every idea and be more creative in boosting student achievement,” Kimbrell said. “We believe as we continue to work with districts in this transition period to improve education, we will see improvements for students in our state.”

To view the complete 2012 accountability results for schools visit <http://www.arkansased.org/divisions/communications/pressroom>.

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