



south dakota
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Learning. Leadership. Service.

700 Governors Drive
Pierre, SD 57501-2291

T 605.773.3134
F 605.773.6139
www.doe.sd.gov

South Dakota's Definition of Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools

South Dakota developed its list of Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) schools using the following definitions. In developing its PLA list, the state identified two groups of schools. The first group consists of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring as listed in the state's NCLB Report Card for 2010. These schools include elementary, middle, and high schools. Elementary schools are defined in ARSD 24:43:01:01 (38) as a school consisting of any combination of grades from kindergarten through eighth grade. ARSD 24:43:01:01 (41) defines a secondary school as one consisting of any combination of three or more consecutive grades, including ninth grade through twelfth grade. Secondary schools that are eligible for, but do not receive Title I Part A funds were the second group of schools identified. School eligibility for Title I services has been determined by each district through its chosen ranking procedure as documented in its consolidated application for the 2010-2011 school year.

South Dakota considered two factors, proficiency and lack of progress, in identifying its list of PLA schools. The two factors, proficiency and lack of progress, were weighted equally; added to the list are any Title I high schools that have a graduation rate less than 60 percent over a three year period. Secondary and elementary schools were also weighted equally. South Dakota has chosen not to expand its list to identify additional schools as eligible for School Improvement Grant (SIG) funds.

Proficiency

Proficiency was determined based on academic achievement of the "all students" group on the DSTEP for 2010. Academic achievement and lack of progress were based solely on results from the Dakota State Test of Educational Progress (DSTEP) reading and math assessments including the alternate, DSTEP-A. Proficiency includes any student who is proficient or advanced. The "all students" group included all students who took the test who met the state's definition of full academic year as per its approved accountability workbook. Reading and math results were combined to develop a single percentage score for each school. The numerator was determined by calculating the total number of proficient and advanced students in the "all students" group in reading and in math for each school in 2010. The total number of proficient students in reading and mathematics were added together. The denominator was determined by calculating the total number of students in the "all students" group in the school who took the DSTEP reading and mathematics assessments in 2010 who met the state's criteria for full academic year. The total number of students tested in reading and math were added together. The numerator was divided by the denominator to determine the percent proficient in reading and mathematics, combined, in

the school. This score was used to rank each set of schools from highest to lowest in terms of proficiency of the “all students” group on the DSTEP reading and mathematics assessments combined.

Lack of Progress

Lack of progress was determined to identify schools that are lowest achieving over multiple years. South Dakota computed lack of progress over three years. In order to look at lack of progress, the steps described to determine proficiency as described above were repeated for the DSTEP assessment results for each school. Rankings for three years were added together for a total ranking. This total combined ranking score was utilized to rank each set of schools from highest to lowest in terms of lack of progress.

Tier I

To determine the 5% or 5 lowest achieving schools within this group of Title I schools, proficiency and lack of progress were calculated for each school. Proficiency and lack of progress were added together and rank ordered highest to lowest. The schools were chosen from the bottom 5% or 5 of that ranking. These schools were identified as Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) for this tier. Added to the list would be any Title I high schools that have a graduation rate less than 60 percent over a three year period.

Tier II

Tier II schools are secondary schools eligible, but not receiving, Title I funds. School eligibility for Title I services was determined by each district for the school year. To determine the lowest achieving 5 % or 5 schools within this group of schools, proficiency and lack of progress were calculated for each school. Proficiency and lack of progress were added together and rank ordered highest to lowest. The schools were chosen from the bottom 5% or 5 of that ranking. These schools were identified as Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) for this tier. At this point, schools with less than ten students tested (consistent with the state’s minimum “n” of 10 as per waiver 2) were excluded from the full list to protect personally identifiable information for individual students in these small schools. The schools at the bottom of that proficiency ranking were noted. Added to the list would be any eligible, but not participating, Title I high schools that have a graduation rate less than 60 percent over a three year period.

Tier III

Five percent or 5 Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring were identified as Tier I schools. The remaining are listed as Tier III schools. In addition, the state included in its list of Tier III schools any schools excluded from the pool of schools from which it identified the persistently lowest achieving schools in accordance with the n-size waiver. Also included in the Tier III list are Tier III schools receiving FY 2009 grants. These schools may only apply for FY 2010 funds if applying for one of the intervention models, in which case the FY 2009 grant will be rescinded.