

**North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
Dr. Wayne G. Sanstead, State Superintendent
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North Dakota Definition of Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools

Descriptor (d)(1): Provide the definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools” (consistent with the requirements for defining this term set forth in the Definitions section of the NFR) that the State uses to identify such schools.

The NDDPI provides assurance that it has defined “persistently lowest-achieving schools” and that the NDDPI uses this definition to identify such schools for the purposes of public reporting.

The NDDPI has defined persistently lowest-achieving schools as specified in the *Guidance on School Improvement Grants Under Section 1003(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965*, dated December 18, 2009.

The NDDPI identifies “persistently lowest-achieving schools” as follows:

- (a) Any Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that –
 - (i) Is among the lowest-achieving five percent (or five) of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring in the State, whichever number of schools is greater; or
 - (ii) Is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 C.F.R. §200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years;

And

- (b) Any secondary school that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I funds that –
 - (i) Is among the lowest-achieving five percent of secondary schools or the lowest-achieving five secondary schools in the State that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds, whichever number of schools is greater; or
 - (ii) Is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 C.F.R. §200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years.

A school that falls within the definition of (a) above is a “Tier I” school and a school that falls within the definition of (b) above is a “Tier II” school for purposes of using State Improvement Grant funds under ESEA section 1003(g). The NDDPI provides assurance that it will identify persistently lowest-achieving schools on an annual basis.

To identify the persistently lowest-achieving schools in the State, the NDDPI provides assurance that it takes into consideration both: (a) the academic achievement of the “all students” group in a school in

terms of proficiency on the State's assessments under ESEA Section 1111(b)(3) in reading/language arts and mathematics combined; and (b) the school's lack of progress on those assessments over a number of years in the "all students" group. The "all students" group is understood to include all students who participate in the North Dakota State Assessment in all applicable grades (grades 3-8 and 11) and among all subgroups, including ethnicity, limited English proficiency, economic disadvantage, and special education.

The NDDPI provides assurance that it uses the North Dakota State Assessment (NDSA) in reading/language arts and mathematics required under Section 1111(b)(3) in the determination of persistently lowest-achieving schools statewide. The NDSA is understood to include the State's general assessments, including its alternate assessments based on alternate and modified achievement standards. The NDDPI applies the definition of proficiency defined through the State's approved academic achievement standards setting process.

For the purpose of determining Tier I schools, the NDDPI generated a ranking of our schools currently identified for improvement using a composite reading/mathematics score for a three-year period (2007-08, 2008-09, and 2009-10). Lack of progress is defined as those schools not making AYP specific to the "all students" group. In addition, the NDDPI reviewed its graduation rates for a three-year period (2007-08, 2008-09, and 2009-10) and added to Tier I any high school with a graduation rate less than 60 percent for three consecutive years. The data showing the ranking of our Tier I schools can be accessed at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/Legislative/sig/index.shtm> on the NDDPI website.

For the purpose of determining Tier II schools, the NDDPI generated a ranking our North Dakota high schools that are eligible for, but not receiving, Title I funds using a composite reading/mathematics score for a three-year period (2007-08, 2008-09, and 2009-10). Lack of progress is defined as those schools not making AYP specific to the "all students" group. In addition, the NDDPI reviewed its graduation rates for a three-year period (2007-08, 2008-09, and 2009-10) and added to Tier II any high school with a graduation rate less than 60 percent for three consecutive years. The data showing the ranking of our Tier II schools can be accessed at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/Legislative/sig/index.shtm> on the NDDPI website.

The list of North Dakota schools identified for Tier I and Tier II can be accessed at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/Legislative/sig/index.shtm> on the NDDPI website.

The NDDPI provides assurance that it defines a secondary school as specified within North Dakota Century Code and further assures that a secondary school does not include any education beyond grade 12. A secondary school is understood to be eligible to receive Title I funds under ESEA Section 1113(a) or 1113(b). The NDDPI will follow its approved ranking protocols to determine which secondary schools are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I, Part A funds.

The NDDPI provides assurance that it conducts the identification of persistently lowest-achieving schools in a manner consistent with the multi-step guidance provided by ED.

The NDDPI provides assurance that it publicly posts this information on the State's SFSF website and on the NDDPI Title I website.