

Turnaround Office Glossary of Terms

Accountability Index: The total percentage of possible points earned by a district or school on all applicable indicators in the Next Generation Accountability System. Each indicator is allotted a maximum of possible points. Based on the results achieved on an indicator, the school earns points on a sliding scale toward that indicator. The total points earned divided by the total possible points that could have been earned on all applicable indicators is the Accountability Index.

Alliance Districts: Alliance Districts are school districts with among the lowest Accountability Index measures in the state or those previously designated as Alliance Districts for the fiscal years ending June 30, 2013-June 30, 2017. The Alliance District program was initiated in 2012-13 in accordance with Connecticut General Statute (C.G.S.) Section 10-262u. C.G.S. Section 262u allocated additional Educational Cost Sharing grants to Alliance Districts, conditional upon a number of requirements including an improvement plan, expected district progress relative to the plan, subsequent annual amendments made in the context of the district's needs and strategies to improve student outcomes. There are currently 33 Alliance Districts.

Charter Schools: The term charter school refers to the state-issued governing document or charter that grants a non-profit board of directors the conditional authority to operate a school independently of any local or regional board of education. Per C.G.S. Sections 10-66bb, there are two types of charter schools: a *local charter school* is a public school or part of a public school that is converted into a charter school and is approved and by the local or regional board of education of the school district in which it is located and by the State Board of Education, and funded by the local or regional board of education; a *state charter school* is a new public school approved by the State Board of Education and funded by the state. As of July 2020, there is 1 local charter school and 20 state charter schools.

Commissioner's Network: The Commissioner's Network, established by C.G.S. Section 10-223h, is a commitment between local stakeholders and the CSDE to dramatically improve student achievement in up to 25 schools. Each year, schools classified as category four or category five are invited to apply to join the Network. Schools are accepted into the Network for a minimum of three years. The Connecticut State Board of Education may allow schools to continue in the Network for an additional year, not to exceed two additional years. Network schools remain part of their local school districts, but the districts and the CSDE secure school-level flexibility and autonomy for the schools in exchange for heightened accountability.

Cross Divisional Teams: CSDE staff from the Academic, Performance, Talent, Student Supports, and Turnaround Offices who work closely with Connecticut's Opportunity Districts. These Education Consultants attend Opportunity District monitoring meetings and provide technical assistance and support to these districts as they implement their three district-specific focus areas for improvement.

ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act): Signed into law on December 10, 2015, ESSA is the federal legislation that governs elementary and secondary education in America. ESSA reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and replaced *No Child Left Behind*.

ESSA Milestones/Targets: Connecticut's approved plan for ESSA established a 13-year time frame (2017-18 to 2029-2030) for the attainment of long-term goals for all schools in Connecticut. These goals are a subset of those in Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System. Alliance Districts, Charter Schools, Commissioner's Network Schools, and School Improvement Grant Schools use these targets to develop goals for their plans.

Focus Schools: Schools with consistently lagging academic achievement, growth or graduation rates for students with high needs (students with disabilities, English learners, and students from low-income families). Focus schools are those in the bottom 10 percent of schools statewide based on the average

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percentage of growth target achieved by students with high needs in ELA or mathematics in each of the prior three years (those schools who take the Smarter Balanced Assessment). For high schools only, Focus schools are those in the bottom 10 percent of all schools statewide based on the performance index for students with high needs in ELA or mathematics in each of the prior three years; or have a six-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for students with high needs that is less than 70 percent in each of the three most recent cohorts. The identification of Focus schools occurs every year.

Next Generation Accountability System: A broad set of 12 indicators that help tell the story of how well a school is preparing its students for success in college, careers and life. The system moves beyond test scores and graduation rates and instead provides a more holistic, multifactor perspective of district and school performance and incorporates student growth over time.

Opportunity Districts: Opportunity Districts, formerly known as Education Reform Districts, are a subset of Connecticut's Alliance Districts. Opportunity Districts are the 10 lowest performing districts in the state based on the Accountability Index. These districts currently are Bridgeport, Derby, East Hartford, East Haven, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Norwich, and Waterbury.

Priority School Districts: Per C.G.S. Section 10-266, the Priority School District Program assists designated school districts in improving student achievement and enhancing educational opportunities, including early reading intervention programs, summer school, and extended school hours. Districts are identified based on a combination of factors including population, need, and achievement.

School Categories: As required under C.G.S. Section 10-223e, Connecticut has implemented a five category school classification system. All schools are placed into one of five categories:

Category 1 Schools: Based on Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System, these schools have an Accountability Index between 85-100*.

Category 2 Schools: Based on Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System, these schools have an Accountability Index between 70-84.99*.

Category 3 Schools: Based on Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System, these schools have an Accountability Index between 0-69.9.

Category 4 Schools: Any school identified as Turnaround or Focus that was in category 1, 2, or 3 in the prior year or has maintained Turnaround or Focus status for 2 years or fewer.

Category 5 Schools: Any school identified as a Turnaround School that was in category 4 or 5 in the prior year or has maintained Focus status at least three years.

*Schools that would otherwise have been placed in Category 1 or Category 2 status based on the Accountability Index, but have an outlier achievement gap, or graduation rate gap, or a participation rate less than 95% are dropped one category.

School Improvement Grant (SIG): School Improvement Grants (SIGs), authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), are federal grants to state educational agencies (SEAs) that SEAs use to make subgrants to local educational agencies (LEAs) that demonstrate the greatest need for the funds and the strongest commitment to use the funds to provide adequate resources in order to substantially raise the achievement of students in their lowest-performing schools.

Turnaround Schools: Schools with low overall performance as measured by Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System. Turnaround schools have a three-year weighted average of the Accountability Index that is in the bottom 5 percent of all schools statewide or they have a six-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for all students that is less than 70 percent in each of the three most recent cohorts. The identification of Turnaround schools occurs every three years.