
Annual Measurable Objectives

The Background:

Under the No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly Progress model, Tennessee would potentially have identified 80 percent of all schools as high priority and many districts in need of improvement despite the schools and districts making academic progress. In February 2012, Tennessee obtained a waiver from certain provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Through this waiver, Tennessee had the opportunity to create a new accountability system. The new accountability system has two overriding objectives: growth for all students every year and closing achievement gaps by ensuring faster growth for those students who are furthest behind.

New state performance goals or “annual measurable objectives” (AMOs) provide rigorous but realistic college-and career-readiness goals and a new basis for Tennessee’s accountability system. The new accountability system has two overriding objectives: growth for all students every year and closing achievement gaps by ensuring faster growth for those students who are furthest behind. These AMOs will also serve to measure the state’s progress in implementing the ambitious reforms of Tennessee’s First to the Top Act.

As described in the ESEA Waiver, the Tennessee Department of Education will approve Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) at the LEA level that allow the state to achieve state level goals. LEAs will then be able to set school-level AMOs in the form of achievement and gap closure targets.

The methodology the department has used to establish targets for the 2013-14 school year allows for the state and districts to annually set targets based upon the previous year’s achievement levels. Each year, state and district achievement goals will be set to reduce the percentage of students scoring basic or below basic on state administered assessments by half over the following eight years. The state and districts will also set goals to reduce achievement gaps between the following groups by half over eight years: economically disadvantaged (ED) and non-economically disadvantaged, English language learners (ELL) and non-English learners, students with disabilities (SWD) and non-students with disabilities, and racial/ethnic subgroups and all students.

The Recommendation:

The Department of Education recommends adoption of this item on final reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.