



TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF

**EDUCATION**

## **School Accountability**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Summer 2014**

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## **General Methodology**

### **1. How are Reward, Priority, and Focus schools defined?**

**Reward schools** are the top five percent of Tennessee schools for performance as measured by a one year success rate and the top five percent of Tennessee schools for progress based on a one-year TVAAS school composite. The Reward school methodology is addressed in questions 20-26.

**Focus schools** are comprised of 10 percent of Tennessee schools identified through one of three pathways:

- 1.) High schools with a three year average graduation rate of less than 60 percent for the “All Students” group that are not already Priority.
- 2.) Any school with a Focus success rate of less than 10 percent for any subgroup.
- 3.) Schools that have the largest gaps in each of the four gap subgroups and comparison groups – Black/Hispanic/Native American vs. All Students, Economically Disadvantaged vs. Non-Economically Disadvantaged, English Language Learners vs. Non-English Language Learners, Students with Disabilities vs. Non-Students with Disabilities

The Focus school methodology is addressed in questions 27-38.

**Priority schools** are those schools in the bottom 5 percent of performance measured by a three year success rate. The Priority methodology is addressed in questions 17-19.

### **2. How often are school determinations made?**

Reward schools are named every year. Priority and Focus school designations are made every three years.

### **3. When were Reward, Priority and Focus schools last identified?**

Reward, Priority, and Focus lists were first identified in summer 2012, as part of Tennessee’s approved ESEA Flexibility waiver. Reward schools are named each year, and so have been previously identified in 2012 and 2013. Priority and Focus designations last for three years, so the 2012 Priority and Focus schools will remain in that status through the 2014-15 school year. The new set of Priority and Focus schools are being identified in summer 2014 to allow for a one-year planning period before beginning their interventions in 2015-16.

### **4. Can only Title I schools be identified as Reward, Priority, or Focus?**

No. All schools are eligible for Reward, Priority and Focus designations. Under our approved ESEA Flexibility waiver, five percent of all schools are identified as Priority, including five percent of Title I schools, and 10 percent of all schools are identified as Focus, including 10 percent of Title I schools.

### **5. May a school have more than one designation for school accountability?**

No. Schools may only have one determination in a given identification cycle. Determinations are made in the following order: Priority, Focus, and then Reward. However, in years where Focus and Priority are not newly identified, a school previously named as Focus or Priority may also be identified as Reward.

**6. How many schools are identified for Priority, Reward, and Focus?**

The number of schools identified for Priority, Reward, and Focus are dependent on the number of eligible schools that may receive a determination in each of the pools, 3-8 and 3-12. Pools are explained in question 13. Question 1 outlines the percentage of schools that are selected from the pools for Priority, Reward, and Focus schools.

**7. If a school is identified as Reward, Priority, or Focus, what interventions are put in place?**

As outlined in the state’s ESEA Flexibility Waiver, if a school is identified as Priority, the school will face one of four types of interventions:

- 1.) Eligible for management by the Achievement School District (ASD).
- 2.) Enter an LEA-run Innovation Zone that affords schools flexibilities similar to those provided by the Achievement School District (ASD) that an LEA has applied to create and has been approved by the state department of education.
- 3.) Apply and be approved by the state department of education to adopt one of four SIG turnaround models.
- 4.) Undergo LEA-led school improvement planning processes, subject to direct Achievement School District (ASD) intervention in the absence of improved interventions.

If a school is identified as Focus, the Centers for Regional Excellence (CORE) will provide direct support and technical assistance to ensure that each LEA identifies and responds to the needs of its Focus school and their students, particularly for the highest need subgroups.

If a school is identified as Reward, schools are publicly recognized, and may participate in opportunities to share best practices with other schools.

**8. How does a school exit Focus school or Priority school status?**

Schools may exit Priority status when after three years, a school is not identified in the next Priority list or a school passes its achievement AMOs two years in a row. Schools may exit Focus status when after three years, a school is not identified in the next Focus list or a school passes its gap closure AMOs two years in a row.

**9. How many years of data must a school have in order to be named Priority, Focus, or Reward?**

A school needs at least two years of data to receive a school accountability determination. Question 12 refers to including subjects in the success rate calculation based on the number of valid tests.

**10. What subjects are included in success rate calculations?**

In the 3-8 pool, success rates include math, reading/language arts, and science. In the 3-12 pool, math, reading/language arts, and science are included as well as the End of Course subjects, Algebra I, Algebra II, Biology I, English I, English II, and English III. Graduation rate is also included in the 3-12 pool.

**11. How are success rates calculated?**

The 3-8 pool success rate is calculated as follows:

$$3-8 \text{ Success Rate} = \frac{\# \text{ Proficient or Advanced (math + RLA + science)}}{\# \text{ Valid Tests (math + RLA + science)}}$$

The 3-12 pool success rate is calculated as follows:

$$3-12 \text{ Success Rate} = \frac{\# \text{ Proficient or Advanced (math + RLA + science + Algebra I + Algebra II + English I + English II + English III + Biology I + Graduates<sup>1</sup>)}}{\# \text{ Valid Tests (math + RLA + science + Algebra I + Algebra II + English I + English II + English III + Biology I + Graduation Cohort)}}$$

**12. How many valid tests must a school have in a subject in order to be included in the success rate?**

In order for a subject to be included in the success rate calculation, there must be 30 or more tests within a subject and within a year. The table below shows three years of data for Algebra I and Algebra II for School A.

**School A – Math Valid Test Counts**

	<b>Algebra I</b>	<b>Algebra II</b>
<b>2014</b>	<b>35</b>	25
<b>2013</b>	28	20
<b>2012</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>

**Note:** If the count is bolded, the records are included, if it is not bolded, the records are not included in the success rate calculation. Furthermore, the school needs two years of data by having 30 students in any subjects.

The table below shows three years of data for Algebra I and Algebra II for School B.

**School B – Math Valid Test Counts**

	<b>Algebra I</b>	<b>Algebra II</b>
<b>2014</b>	<b>32</b>	25
<b>2013</b>	25	<b>30</b>
<b>2012</b>	28	28

**Note:** If the count is bolded, the records are included, if it is not bolded, the records are not included in the success rate calculation. Further, this constitutes two years of data as well even though the two years of data are not in the same subject. The 2014 Algebra I records would go into the success rate for School B as well as the 2013 Algebra II records.

**13. Schools are assigned to pools for the purposes of school accountability. How are schools assigned to pools?**

Schools are assigned to either the 3-8 pool or the 3-12 or high school pool. The 3-8 pool includes schools with valid tests in any grades in 3 through 8, but not any valid tests grades in the End of Course subjects.

<sup>1</sup> Graduation Rate data lags by one year. The Focus and Priority school methodologies use three years of data. For these success rate calculations, graduation rates are used for the graduating classes of 2012-13, 2011-12, and 2010-11.

The high school pool includes any schools with valid tests in grades 9 through 12 or in the End-of-Course subjects. The table below shows examples of assigning schools to pools based on the number of valid tests.

	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E
3-8 math	250	0	145	100	<i>25</i>
3-8 reading	255	0	150	95	<i>20</i>
3-8 science	245	0	140	90	<i>15</i>
Algebra I	0	150	<i>25</i>	35	0
Algebra II	0	125	0	30	0
English I	0	150	0	35	0
English II	0	125	0	<i>25</i>	0
English III	0	120	0	30	0
Biology I	0	100	0	<i>25</i>	0
Graduation Rate	0	115	0	<i>20</i>	0
<b>Pool Assignment</b>	<b>3-8 pool</b>	<b>3-12 pool</b>	<b>3-8 pool</b>	<b>3-12 pool</b>	<b>Not included in a pool</b>
<b>Reasoning</b>	School A has no valid tests in any of the EOC or grades 9-12 subjects.	School B has no valid tests in any of the 3-8 grades and subjects	School C has valid tests in Algebra I**, but does not have 30 valid test records (refer to question 12). All the other records are in grades 3-8.	School D has 30 valid records in Algebra I, II, and English III with records in 3-8 subjects.	School E does not have enough valid records in any subjects

\*Remember that subjects where the number of valid tests is less than 30 are not included. Those have been italicized and shaded red for emphasis in the table. See question 12 for more information.

\*\*Remember that students who take high school EOC tests prior to 9<sup>th</sup> grade are included in grades 3-8. See question 14 for further clarification.

**14. How does school accountability treat students that take End of Course exams prior to 9<sup>th</sup> grade?**

If any student takes an EOC test prior to 9<sup>th</sup> grade, the subject is changed to a 3-8 Achievement subject. The table below summarizes how subjects are changed in these instances.

Student takes one of the following EOCs prior to 9 <sup>th</sup> grade:	Change subject of student record to:
Algebra I	3-8 math
Algebra II	
English I	3-8 reading
English II	

<b>English III</b>	
<b>Biology I</b>	<b>3-8 science</b>

Note that these conversions occur before schools are assigned to pools as outlined in question 13; therefore, in schools where students take Algebra I in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, these records are included as 3-8 math rather than Algebra I. If the school has no additional end-of-course records, then the school would be in the 3-8 pool.

**15. How is graduation rate included in the success rate calculation?**

The graduation rate has a one-year lag for the purposes of both district and school accountability. For Reward school success rates, only one year of graduation rate data is used; Reward schools identified in 2014 will include the graduation rate for 2012-13 or the cohort that entered 9<sup>th</sup> grade in 2009. Priority and Focus school success rates use graduation rates from the past three years. Priority and Focus schools identified in 2014 have success rates that use the graduation rates from cohort 2007, 2008, and 2008 or the graduating classes of 2010-11, 2011-12, and 2012-13 respectively.

**16. In what cases are schools excluded from a pool or not eligible for a school accountability determination?**

<b>Special Cases</b>	<b>Is the school in the pool?</b>	<b>Is the school eligible for a school determination?</b>
Schools with only graduation data	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Schools with only one year of data	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Schools that have closed as of July 1 <sup>st</sup> of the current year	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Career and Technical Schools	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>
Adult High Schools	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>
Department of Children's Services Tennessee School for the Deaf West Tennessee School for the Deaf Tennessee School for the Blind	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>
Alternative Schools <sup>2</sup>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>
Special Education Schools <sup>3</sup>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>

<sup>2</sup> Student scores at alternative schools are remanded to their home districts and schools.

<sup>3</sup> **Updated August 12, 2014: Special Education schools will be included in the pool of all schools, but are not eligible to receive a determination.**

## **Priority School Methodology**

### **17. How are Priority schools identified?**

Broadly, when identifying Priority schools, the following steps are taken. For a more detailed methodology, please refer to the document entitled 2014 School Accountability Methodology located on the Accountability Application.

**Step 1:** Schools are identified in a pool – grades 3-8 or grades 3-12. Refer to question 13.

**Step 2:** Schools in certain cases are excluded. Refer to question 16.

**Step 3:** Calculate success rates. Refer to question 11.

**Step 4:** Order success rates of Title I schools from least to greatest for the 3-8 pool and 3-12 pool separately.

**Step 5:** Select 5 percent of schools from the distribution of success rates from Title I schools for both the 3-8 pool and the 3-12 pool.

**Step 6:** Order the success rates of the remaining Title I schools after step 5 with the success rates of all schools from least to greatest for both the 3-8 pool and 3-12 pool.

**Step 7:** Identify the lowest success rates that would allow for the selection of five percent of all schools in the state to be selected Priority schools.

### **18. How does the state ensure that Priority schools are five percent of Title I schools and five percent of all schools?**

The Priority methodology will be applied first to Title I schools until the five percent of Title I schools have been identified. The remaining Title I schools are combined with all schools remaining in the state. The Priority methodology will then be applied to these schools until we reach 5 percent of all schools in the state.

### **19. Priority schools were identified in 2012. What has changed about the Priority methodology since 2012?**

There have been no changes to the Priority school methodology. For more details on the methodology, please see question 17.

## Reward Schools Methodology

### 20. How are Reward performance schools identified?

Broadly, when identifying Reward performance schools, the following steps are taken. For a more detailed methodology, please refer to the document entitled 2014 School Accountability Methodology located on the Accountability Application.

**Step 1:** Schools are identified in a pool – Grade 3-8 or Grades 3-12. Pools are defined in question 13.

**Step 2:** Identify the number of schools that should be identified as Reward performance; this should make up 5 percent of all schools in the 3-8 pool or the 3-12 pool.

**Step 3:** Exempt<sup>4</sup> schools based on the exemption rules. Refer to questions 22-25.

**Step 4:** Calculate success rates for the 3-8 pool and 3-12 pool. Refer to question Q11.

**Step 5:** Sort schools from greatest to least by success rate in each pool.

**Step 6:** Identify the number of schools that equal the top 5 percent of schools with the highest success rate.

### 21. How are Reward progress schools identified?

Broadly, when identifying Reward progress schools, the following steps are taken. For a more detailed methodology, please refer to the document entitled 2014 School Accountability Methodology located on the Accountability Application.

**Step 1:** Schools are identified in a pool – grades 3-8 or grades 3-12. Refer to question 13 for information regarding pools.

**Step 2:** Identify the number of schools that should be identified as Reward progress schools; this should make up 5 percent of all schools in the 3-8 pool or the 3-12 pool.

**Step 3:** Exempt schools based on the exemption rules. Refer to questions 23-25.

**Step 4:** Sort remaining schools from greatest to least using the one-year composite TVAAS growth index, identify those schools that should be identified as Reward progress.

**Step 5:** Identify the number of schools that equal the top five percent of schools in the state with the highest success rate.

### 22. For a school to be identified as Reward progress, the five percent of schools with the highest one-year TVAAS composite index scores are identified. Generally, what is included in the one-year TVAAS index?

One-year school-level TVAAS composites are scores that assess growth at the school level for the 2013-14 school year. All 4-8 TCAP subjects and all End of Course subjects for which a school has the required number of students are included. K-2 assessment results for a participating school are not included in the one-year TVAAS composite used in Reward school determinations.

### 23. What are exemptions? What does it mean for a school on the Reward school list?

When a school is exempt from Reward school status, it means that they **may not** receive the status of being named a Reward school for either progress or performance even if their success rate and/or one-year TVAAS school composite falls within the range to identify the school as Reward.

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<sup>4</sup> Exempt means that the school is not eligible for Reward school status.

**24. Schools are exempt from Reward status for having significant gaps. There are two rules used to determine if a school is exempt. What are those rules?**

Schools will be exempt from Reward school status when meeting **BOTH** of the following exemptions for the **SAME** subgroup.

**\*\*State Gap Exemption:** An exemption that tests whether a school’s three year success rate gaps are greater than the three-year state success rate gap for **any** of the following subgroups: Black/Hispanic/Native American, Economically Disadvantaged, English Language Learners, and Students with Disabilities. The example below shows a school that would meet this exemption and not meet this exemption. Refer to question 29 for how gaps are calculated.

School	Gap Data	Outcome
School X Elementary *Valid tests in grades 3-5 *Assigned to the 3-8 pool	<b>Three-year School Gap for Economically Disadvantaged:</b> 6.3 percent  <b>Three-year State Gap for 3-8 Pool for Economically Disadvantaged:</b> 5.2 percent	Because the school’s three-year gap for the ED subgroup is greater than the state gap for the ED subgroup for its pool, then the school <b>would have met the State Gap Exemption.</b>
School Y Middle School *Valid Tests in grades 6-9 *Assigned to 3-12 pool	<b>Three-year School Gap for English Language Learners:</b> 8.2 percent  <b>Three-year State Gap for 3-12 Pool for English Language Learners:</b> 9.3 percent	The school’s three-year gap for English Language Learner subgroup is less than the state gap for English Language Learners for its pool, then the school <b>would not have met the State Gap Exemption.</b>

**Widen Exemption:** An exemption that tests whether a school’s one-year gap for the current year is greater than the one-year gap for the previous year for any subgroup-Black/Hispanic/Native American, Economically Disadvantaged, Students with Disabilities, and English Language Learners. The example that follows shows a school that would be exempt and not be exempt. In the case of negative gaps, the exemption is applied slightly different; refer to question 26 for more details on handling negative gaps.

School	Focus Gap Data	Outcome
School A Elementary	2013 Gap for Students with Disabilities: 13.4 percent 2012 Gap for Students with Disabilities: 14.4 percent	Because the school’s one-year gap for the students with disabilities subgroup is smaller from 2012 to 2013, this school <b>would not have met the widen exemption.</b>
School B Middle School	2013 Focus Gap for Students with Disabilities: 6.3 percent 2012 Focus Gap for Students with Disabilities: 5.2 percent	Because the school’s one-year gap for students with disabilities subgroup is larger from 2012 to 2013, the school <b>would have met the widen exemption.</b>

**25. How are the two exemption rules applied to exempt schools?**

Schools will be exempt from Reward school status when meeting **BOTH** of the following gap exemptions for the **SAME** subgroup. The table below shows two cases where a school may meet or not meet the state gap exemption or the widen exemption. The exemptions are explained in question 24. For School 1, the school met the state gap exemption and the widen exemption for Black/Hispanic/Native American, so it would be exempt from Reward status. School 1 may not be identified as a Reward school. For School 2, no subgroup meets both exemptions, so the school would not be exempt from Reward status. School 2 may be identified as a Reward school.

Subgroup	Is the school's gap larger than state gap?	Did the school's gap widen from the previous year?	Can the school be identified as a Reward School?
<b>School # 1</b>			
Black/Hispanic/Native American	Yes	Yes	No
Economically Disadvantaged	No	No	
English Language Learners	No	No	
Students with Disabilities	Yes	No	
<b>School # 2</b>			
Black/Hispanic/Native American	Yes	No	Yes
Economically Disadvantaged	No	No	
English Language Learners	No	Yes	
Students with Disabilities	Yes	No	

**26. Under the Reward gap exemption outlined in question 24, schools where achievement gaps have widened are excluded from Reward school status. How are negative gaps treated in the Reward school methodology?**

A negative gap is when the historically underperforming subgroup out performs its comparison group, for example, if the economically disadvantaged subgroup outperforms the non-economically disadvantaged subgroup.

The table below shows how negative gaps are handled.

<b>Handling negative gaps in Reward Exemptions</b>		
<b>IF prior year gap is:</b>	<b>AND current year gap is:</b>	<b>THEN</b>
Less than or equal to zero ( $\leq 0$ )	Less than or equal to zero ( $\leq 0$ )	Doesn't meet Focus widen exemption (may be eligible for Reward)
Less than or equal to zero ( $\leq 0$ )	Equal to zero ( $= 0$ )	Doesn't meet Focus widen exemption (may be eligible for Reward)
Less than or equal to zero ( $\leq 0$ )	Greater than zero ( $> 0$ )	Meets widen exemption (may not be Reward depending on whether the school meets the State Gap Exemption for the same subgroup).

### Focus Schools

#### **27. What changes have been made to the Focus school methodology since the first Focus schools were named in 2012?**

1. The Focus success rate now includes science and Biology I across grade levels. This means that the Focus success rate now uses the same formula as the Priority and Reward success rates.
2. The Focus school methodology no longer combines gaps for the four subgroups and their comparison groups using a weighted gap methodology. Gaps are now calculated simply by taking the difference in success rates between the historically underperforming subgroup and its comparison group.
3. An equal proportion of schools are selected from each of the four subgroups and comparison groups – BHN vs. All Students, SWD vs. Non-SWD, ED vs. Non-ED, ELL vs. Non-ELL.
4. Subgroups with success rates less than 10 percent are automatically identified as Focus schools in 2014; this was 5 percent in 2012. Tennessee's original, approved ESEA Flexibility waiver stated that we would be making this change with the 2014 identification.

#### **28. Why did Tennessee request an amendment for the identification of Focus schools? Were school districts notified of the amendment request?**

In 2012, Tennessee identified its first list of Focus schools. At that time, the state used a weighted gap index to identify Focus schools with the largest within school gaps. The weighted gap index combined the gap size across the four subgroups – Black/Hispanic/native American, Economically Disadvantaged, English Language Learners, and Students with Disabilities by weighting the gap size by the number of students in the subgroup. Schools with the largest weighted gap index were identified as Focus schools.

This process was overly complex for districts. In many instances, when looking to develop improvement plans and implement strategies for intervention, districts could not identify which subgroup needed the most attention. As a result, Tennessee submitted amendments to the Focus school methodology that identifies Focus schools based on the largest gaps for each of the subgroups. Districts and schools will know very clearly why a school was identified as a Focus school. This change in methodology was shared

with school districts in the April 15, 2014 Director’s Update and was posted on the TDOE website prior to submission to the U.S. Department of Education as an amendment to Tennessee’s waiver. The U.S. Department of Education approved the amendment on July 23, 2014.

### **29. How are Focus gaps calculated?**

Focus gaps are calculated by taking the difference in success rates as outlined in Question 11 for each of the following subgroups and their comparison groups:

- Black/Hispanic/Native American vs. All Students
- Students with Disabilities vs. Non-Students with Disabilities
- English Language Learners vs. Non- English Language Learners
- Economically Disadvantaged vs. Non-Economically Disadvantaged

**Focus Gap for Black/Hispanic/Native American = All Students Success Rate – Black/Hispanic/Native American Success Rate**

### **30. What are the three pathways for a school to be named as a Focus school?**

**Graduation Rate Pathway:** Any school with a three-year average graduation rate less than 60 percent will be identified as a Focus school.

**Subgroup Pathway:** Any school with a three year success rate for any subgroups that is below 10 percent will be identified as a Focus school. The subgroups are listed in question 32.

**Gap Pathway:** Using up to three years of data, schools will be identified as Focus schools if they have the largest subgroup gap(s) in the State. Question 33 lists the subgroup/comparison groups used for the gap pathway.

### **31. What schools are excluded from being named Focus schools?**

There are two cases for which schools may not be named as Focus schools. First, a school that has been identified as Priority cannot also be a Focus school. Second, a school with only one year of data will have reported success rates but will not be identified as Focus.

### **32. What subgroups are used for the Focus school subgroup pathway?**

Schools with a success rate less than 10 percent for any of the following subgroups are identified as Focus schools: All Students, African American/Black, Asian, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Native American, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Students with Disabilities, and English Language Learners.

### **33. What gap groups are used for the Focus school gap pathway?**

Schools with the largest gaps in the following gap groups are identified as Focus schools:

- Black/Hispanic/Native American vs. All Students
- Economically Disadvantaged vs. Non-Economically Disadvantaged
- English Language Learners vs. Non-English Language Learners
- Students with Disabilities vs. Non-students with Disabilities

### **34. What are the steps for how schools are selected as Focus schools using the gap pathway?**

Broadly, when identifying Focus schools, the following steps are taken. For a more detailed methodology, please refer to the document entitled 2014 School Accountability Methodology located on the Accountability Application.

**Step 1:** Schools are identified in a pool – grades 3-8 or grades 3-12. Refer to question 13.

**Step 2:** Schools in certain cases are excluded. Refer to question 16.

**Step 3:** Calculate success rates. Refer to question 11.

**Step 4:** Identify Focus schools based on the Graduation Rate Pathway. Refer to question 30.

**Step 5:** Identify Focus schools based on the Subgroup Pathway. Refer to question 30.

**Step 6:** Exclude<sup>5</sup> schools that meet Focus safe harbors. Refer to question 35.

**Step 7:** Calculate gaps. Refer to question 29.

**Step 8:** Sort gaps from greatest to least in each of the four subgroups and comparison groups for each pool for Title I schools.

**Step 9:** Identify 10 percent of Title I schools so that an equal proportion of schools are selected from each subgroup/comparison group.

**Step 10:** Identify the remaining number of schools so that an equal proportion of schools are selected from each subgroup/comparison group so that 10 percent of all schools are selected in the state.

### **35. What safe harbors are in place that would keep a school from being identified as a Focus school through the gap pathway?**

**Performance Safe Harbor:** If the one year success rate for every eligible subgroup within a school is at or above the one-year State success rate of the “All students” group, then the school cannot be identified as Focus.

**Growth Safe Harbor:** If a school’s success rate for a particular subgroup has increased more between the current year and the previous year than the State success rate for the corresponding subgroup **AND** the change in the success rate is greater than 0, then the school cannot be selected as Focus for that particular subgroup via the gap pathway.

**Gap Index Safe Harbor:** If all eligible subgroups have reduced their one-year success rate gap by 6.25 percent or more from the previous to the current year then the school cannot be identified as Focus.

Note that meeting the performance safe harbor and the gap index safe harbor will keep a school from being identified as a Focus school broadly; however, the growth safe harbor will keep the school from being identified as a Focus school only for the particular subgroup for which it met the growth safe harbor. For example, if School A had one of the largest gaps in the state for Students with Disabilities but met the growth safe harbor for Students with Disabilities vs. Non-Students with Disabilities, it would not be identified as a Focus school for Students with Disabilities. Yet, if School A still had one of the largest gaps for Black/Hispanic/Native American vs. All Students in the state and did not meet the Growth Safe Harbor for Black/Hispanic/Native American or the Performance or Gap Index safe harbor, the school is still identified as a Focus school for Black/Hispanic/ Native American vs. All Students.

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<sup>5</sup> Exclude means that the school cannot be named as a Focus school.

**Subgroup Median Safe Harbor:** For each eligible subgroup (all subgroups listed in the subgroup pathway test), and each pool, the median success rate is determined using the one year success rate. Then for every eligible subgroup, the success rate is compared to the statewide, school pool median for that subgroup. If every subgroup are at or above the statewide median success rate, then the school is safe harbored and **cannot** be identified as Focus via the Gap Pathway.

**36. Can schools be identified for more than one subgroup?**

Yes. Schools may be identified as a Focus school for more than one subgroup; however, the school only counts once to make up the 10 percent of Title I schools and 10 percent of all schools requirement.

**37. Why not just rank all gap sizes for all gaps and then identify the required number?**

By taking this approach, it is likely that there would be subgroups for which Focus schools were not identified. The department believes that schools should be identified for each of the four subgroups so particular subgroups are not ignored; therefore, an equal percentage across the subgroups will be chosen.

**38. How are subgroups eligible for identification in the subgroup pathway?**

Generally, data for the subgroup is included in the success rate for subjects that have at least 30 valid tests. Furthermore, the subgroup must have at least two years of data. The two years of data may be comprised of any subject combination. The only way that a subgroup is not eligible for identification is if the subgroup never has 30 valid tests in any subjects for at least two years. See the examples below.

**Example 1:** School A is in the 3-8 pool. The table below shows the school’s count of valid tests for the past three years for Students with Disabilities.

	<b>3-8 Math</b>	<b>3-8 Reading</b>	<b>3-8 Science</b>
2014	<b>35</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>30</b>
2013	28	25	25
2012	<b>30</b>	20	20

- The SWD subgroup would be eligible for Focus identification because there are at least two years of data – 2014 and 2012.
- No data from 2013 would be included in the success rate calculation.
- The testing records in bold are included in the success rate calculation. The testing records that are not bolded and shaded are not included in the success rate calculation.

**Example 2:** School B is in the 3-12 pool. The table below shows the school’s count of valid tests for the past three years for Students with Disabilities.

	<b>Algebra I</b>	<b>Algebra II</b>	<b>English I</b>	<b>English II</b>	<b>English III</b>	<b>Biology I</b>	<b>Graduation Rate</b>
2014	<b>30</b>	25	<b>32</b>	28	<b>32</b>	27	<b>30</b>
2013	<b>35</b>	20	<b>35</b>	25	<b>30</b>	25	25
2012	<b>40</b>	28	<b>40</b>	<b>30</b>	28	23	22

- The SWD subgroup would be eligible for Focus identification because there are at least two years of data – 2014, 2013, 2012.
- No data from Algebra II or Biology I would be included in the success rate calculation.
- The testing records in bold are included in the success rate calculation. The testing records that are not bolded and shaded are not included in the success rate calculation.

**Example 3:** School C is in the 3-8 pool. The table shows the school’s count of valid tests for the past three years for Hispanic students.

	<b>3-8 Math</b>	<b>3-8 Reading</b>	<b>3-8 Science</b>
2014	10	7	8
2013	8	5	6
2012	8	3	4

- The Hispanic subgroup would not be eligible for Focus identification because there is never a year of data with at least 30 valid tests.
- No data from any subject would be included in the success rate calculation for the Hispanic subgroup
- No testing records are bolded. All counts are shaded. No subject in any year is included.