

# Minnesota's No Child Left Behind Waiver *EXPLAINED*



Under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, many Minnesota schools have been mislabeled as failures – even schools that perform at high levels.

With Minnesota's approved waiver, a new accountability system will provide a better, fairer way to measure how our schools are doing. Even more important, it will allow the Minnesota Department of Education to partner with school districts, teachers and parents on research-based local solutions with schools that are identified as most in need of additional help.

## GOAL

*Reduce the achievement gap  
by 50 percent in six (6) years*

Minnesota Department of

Education

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## Four Measures of School Performance

- ✓ Did the school meet its target for Adequate Yearly Progress?
- ✓ Did each student grow and by how much?
- ✓ Did all subgroups grow and how fast was that growth?
- ✓ Did graduation rates improve for all students?

## Three School Designations

- **Reward Schools.** Top 15 percent of schools on the four performance measures. Reward Schools will be publicly recognized for their great work.
- **Priority Schools.** Bottom 5 percent of schools on the four measures. These schools will work directly with the state to develop and implement a turnaround plan that will dramatically change the way the school operates.
- **Focus Schools.** Ten percent of schools with greatest contribution to state gaps. Focus schools will work with their districts, utilizing technical assistance from MDE, to develop and implement an improvement plan that will directly address the specific needs of low-performing student subgroups.

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