

Priority Schools Guide

As part of Oklahoma’s ESEA flexibility waiver, the Department is required to annually identify, based on the most recent data available, the lowest-performing schools in Oklahoma as “Priority” schools. The U.S. Department of Education requires that the number of Priority Schools must be at least five percent of the total number of Title I schools in Oklahoma. To satisfy this requirement, schools that satisfy any of the following criteria will be identified as Priority schools:

1. The school receives an overall grade of ‘F’ on the [A – F report card](#).
2. The school has a graduation rate below 60.0% for three consecutive years (High Schools only).¹
3. The school has a graduation rate at or below 50.0% in the most recently reported school year (High Schools only)
4. The school is the recipient of a School Improvement Grant (SIG).
5. The school has been named a C³ Partnership School by the Office of School Turnaround.

The final criterion is used only if the number of Priority schools identified by the previous criteria does not equal at least 5% of the total number of Title I schools in Oklahoma:

6. The school’s overall performance on federally required reading and math assessments (i.e., Reading and Math in grades 3 through 8, Algebra I, and English II) is at or below the priority cut score for that year (see **Appendix A** for details on how the priority cut score is calculated).

¹ If the total number of these schools exceeds 25% of the Priority School identifications (e.g., out of 100 priority schools, more than 25 meet this criterion), the schools with the lowest graduation rate average for these three years will be identified as Priority Schools. The remainder of the schools will instead be identified as focus schools.

Appendix A

The priority cut score is calculated by ranking the performance of Title I schools on their federally required reading and math assessments (i.e., Reading and Math in grades 3 through 8, Algebra I, and English II).

Points are assigned to each assessment with a valid score based on the following scale (only Full Academic Year students are included):

- Advanced = 4 points
- Proficient = 3 points
- Limited Knowledge = 2 points
- Unsatisfactory = 1 point.²

The schools are then ranked according to their average performance level point value. A school must have at least 10 exams in reading and/or math to be included in the ranking. Schools are ranked separately according to their grade span (i.e., PK – 8 school, Elementary School, Middle School, and High School). The priority cut score for each grade span will be the score that marks the bottom 5% of schools within each ranking.

For more information or questions about the identification of Priority schools, please contact:

The Office of Accountability

(405) 522 – 5169

accountability@sde.ok.gov

For more information about what happens to a school identified as a Priority school, please visit <http://www.ok.gov/sde/priority-schools> or contact:

The Office of School Turnaround

(405) 522 - 0140

² Federal guidelines limit the number of OAAP tests that can count as proficient or advanced for accountability purposes to 1% of the total number of students tested within a district. Any exams over this limit must be counted as “Limited Knowledge.”