

Accreditation

Legislation passed in 1999 and 2000 established the framework for a new system of district and school level accountability. The most recent policies and standards for the accreditation system are published in *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards 2006*. That document (in Microsoft Word format) can be accessed on-line at www.mde.k12.ms.us/accred/MPSAS.doc.

District Accreditation

Every school district is assigned an annual accreditation status based on compliance with the process standards in *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards 2006*. There are four accreditation statuses.

- Accredited is assigned to a district that complies with 100% of the process standards.
- Advised is assigned to a district that has process standards deficiencies. The district is required to develop a corrective action plan to address the deficiencies
- Probation is assigned to a district that was assigned an Advised status the previous school year and has not taken corrective actions or has not removed the process standards deficiencies that resulted in the Advised status. The district is required to develop a corrective action plan to address the deficiencies.
- Withdrawn is assigned to a district that has previously been assigned a Probation status and still does not comply with its corrective action plan. Currently there are no districts in withdrawn status.

Status	Number of Districts	Percentage
Accredited	148	97%
Advised	2	~1%
Probation	2	~1%
Withdrawn	0	

School Level Accountability

The major focus of school level accountability is a system that rewards schools based on student performance and provides intensive assistance to schools not meeting accountability standards. The school level accountability system was implemented for the first time in Fall 2003.

Data from the statewide assessment programs play a major role within the school level accountability system. The strength of the new assessment system is the emphasis on criterion-referenced tests designed to directly measure what is being taught. The following summarizes the new school level accountability system.

- Schools are assigned a school performance classification based on achievement and growth as defined below.

Achievement: How well students in the school scored on selected measures at the end of the school year. Schools will be held accountable only for students that have been enrolled in the school for a full academic year.

Growth: The degree to which a school composite score meets or exceeds an expected value. The performance expectation for the school will be based only on students for which the school is held accountable.

- The achievement and growth measures used in the model depend on the grade level configuration at the school. Many different grade level configurations exist in Mississippi schools.
- Measures of achievement and/or growth include
 - Mississippi Curriculum Test (reading, language, mathematics – grades 3-8)
 - Subject Area Tests (Algebra I and Biology I were included in 2003, English II and U.S. History from 1877 were added in 2004)

2006 School Performance Classifications		
Classification	# Schools	% Schools
Level 5 Superior-Performing	228	27%
Level 4 Exemplary	226	27%
Level 3 Successful	308	37%
Level 2 Under-Performing	70	8%
Level 1 Low-Performing	3	<1%

The No Child Left Behind Act

In compliance with the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, an Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) component was added to the statewide accountability system. AYP under NCLB applies to schools and school districts and was implemented for the first time in Fall 2003.

2006 Adequate Yearly Progress – District Level	
AYP Variable	Number of Districts Meeting AYP (%)
Reading/Language Arts	81 (57% of 141)
Mathematics	76 (54% of 141)
Other Academic Indicators	138 (98% of 141)

Notes: 70 districts (50% of 141) met AYP in all three areas (reading/language arts, mathematics, and other academic indicators).

2006 Adequate Yearly Progress – School Level	
AYP Variable	Number of Schools Meeting AYP (%)
Reading/Language Arts	748 (88% of 850)
Mathematics	734 (87% of 845)
Other Academic Indicators	843 (99% of 850)

Notes: 709 schools (83% of 850) met AYP in all three areas (reading/language arts, mathematics, and other academic indicators).

Information concerning Mississippi's 2006 Achievement, Growth, and AYP models can be accessed at the Mississippi Assessment and Accountability Reporting System (MAARS: <http://orsap.mde.k12.ms.us:8080/MAARS>).