
History of Accountability Adjustments

Timeline of State and Federal Requirements and Policy Decisions Affecting

Mississippi's A-F Accountability System, 2013-2026

Introduction

Mississippi's A-F school and district accountability system was established by state law in 2013 and has been refined over more than a decade in response to federal and state requirements, assessment transitions, and the ongoing goal of continuous improvement. The timeline below summarizes the key policy decisions and adjustments that have shaped the system from 2013 through 2026.

Timeline

2013-14: New Accountability System Established; Official and Unofficial Grades Reported

The 2013-14 school year marked the first year Mississippi assigned letter grades under a new accountability model designed to meet both state and federal reporting requirements under [Miss. Code Ann. § 37-17-6 \(Senate Bill 2396\)](#).

Key features of the model

- Student growth was given greater emphasis, particularly the progress of the lowest performing 25% of students.
- The method for calculating student growth changed. Rather than using a prediction equation, the new model awarded growth credit when a student's score improved from one proficiency level to the next or moved sufficiently within the lower proficiency levels.
- The prior high school "completion index", which awarded partial credit for GED completers and non-traditional diplomas, was eliminated per state statute. The federally approved four-year graduation rate replaced it.

Federal waiver

Because 2013-14 was the first year schools were expected to fully implement Mississippi's College- and Career-Readiness Standards (MCCRS), the U.S. Department of Education granted Mississippi a one-year waiver from performance classifications. Under



the waiver, a school could retain its 2012-13 letter grade if the 2013-14 grade was lower as a result of assessment results. Both the official grade and the unofficial grade without the federal waiver were reported publicly.

2014-15: Transition to PARCC Assessment; Official and Unofficial Grades Reported

Mississippi transitioned to the PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) assessment. Due to the disruption this transition created in year-over-year comparability, the U.S. Department of Education extended the federal waiver for an additional year to cover 2014-15 performance classifications. As in 2013-14, both the official grade and the unofficial grade without the waiver were reported publicly. The unofficial grade without the waiver was the same as or lower than the official grade.

2015-16: Transition to MAAP Assessment and New, Higher Standards

Mississippi transitioned from PARCC to the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP). Along with this transition, the Mississippi State Board of Education (SBE) established new, higher accountability standards. The College and Career Readiness (CCR) and Acceleration components were added to accountability grades for high schools and districts to measure how well schools and districts were preparing students for post-secondary success. The Acceleration component was phased in over three years.

2016-17: Updated Grade Cut Scores

The SBE established new cut scores for earning each letter grade to address complications arising from the growth measure calculations. These adjustments ensured the grading scale accurately reflected school performance.

2017-18: English Learner Progress Added; Growth Measure Refined

The SBE added progress toward English language proficiency for English Learners as a component of accountability grades. The growth measure was further refined to award 1.25 points for students who increased two proficiency levels or who remained at the Advanced level. New cut scores were established for high schools to address complications arising from growth measure changes.

2018-19: Adjustments for Non-Traditional High Schools

Accountability adjustments were made for non-traditional high schools, specifically those

serving students in grades below grade 9, to ensure letter grades accurately reflected the performance of schools with non-traditional grade configurations.

2019-20: No Assessments Due to COVID-19 Impact; Letter Grades Remain from 2018-19

Due to the impact of COVID-19 on school closures in the 2019-20 school year and a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education, the MDE had no assessment and accountability data to report for the 2019-20 school year. Schools and districts retained their grades from 2018-19.

2020-21: Accountability Component Data Reported; Letter Grades Remain from 2018-19

The MDE publicly reported the 2020-21 Assessment results and other accountability components, but schools and districts retained their letter grades from 2018-19 because growth could not be calculated because assessments were not administered in 2019-20.

2020-21: ACT WorkKeys Added to College and Career Readiness Measure

ACT WorkKeys, a series of workforce readiness assessments, was added to the College and Career Readiness (CCR) component of accountability grades for high schools and districts, expanding recognition of career-focused pathways alongside college preparation.

2022-23: Threshold Met to Reset Standards

[State law](#) requires accountability standards to be raised when 65% of schools or districts earn a grade of "B" or higher. That threshold was met in 2022-23, when 74% of schools and 71% of districts earned an A or B, up from 37% for both in 2016. This milestone triggered the two-year process for resetting accountability standards, which MDE undertook in collaboration with the Accountability Task Force, Technical Advisory Committee, and a special Standard Setting Task Force.

2023-24: Cap Applied to Points Per Component

Following a U.S. Department of Education audit, a cap on the number of points a school or district could earn per accountability component was applied. This adjustment brought Mississippi's system into alignment with federal requirements.

2025-26: Higher Standards Established; New Baseline Set

The Mississippi State Board of Education established [new, higher standards](#) for earning A-F grades beginning with the 2025-26 school year, completing the reset process initiated when the 2022-23 threshold was met. Because the new standards establish a new baseline, accountability grades for 2025-26 cannot be compared to grades from prior school years. The 2025-26 grades serve as the starting point from which future progress will be measured.

Additional changes effective in 2025-26:

- The College and Career Readiness and Acceleration components for high schools and districts were replaced by the new Mississippi Readiness Index, which awards points for performance on the ACT, SAT, ACT WorkKeys, and ASVAB; completion of Advanced Placement, dual credit/dual enrollment courses, and CTE programs; industry certifications; diploma endorsements; and on-time and five-year graduates.
- The U.S. History assessment was eliminated from accountability measures.
- Annual goals for the English Learner progress component were updated.

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