



## NEW ACCOUNTABILITY FAQs

### General:

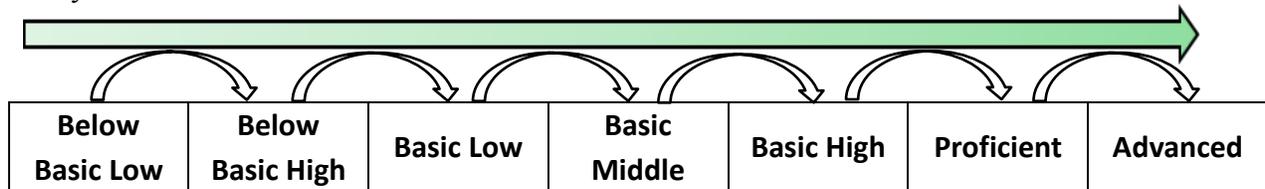
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- 1. Will this presentation be available after the webinar?** Yes, the webinar presentation has been sent out to the representative at each LEA who received the initial webinar invitation.
- 2. When will School Index Scores, classifications, and targets be published?** Scores will be published on 8-28, 2012.
- 3. What if I am still unclear about what these classifications mean for my LEA or school?** OSSE is dedicated to clarifying any questions that still remain about the waiver. You may email [Jeffrey.noel@dc.gov](mailto:Jeffrey.noel@dc.gov) or call 202-412-6571 with your questions. The entire approved ESEA Flexibility Request is also published on the OSSE website at <http://osse.dc.gov/release/district-columbia-receives-esea-waiver-approval-us-department-education>

### Index Scores:

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- 4. Are the Index Values produced for each individual student?** Yes, for every “Full Academic Year” student.
- 5. Is the School Index Score composed of Math and ELA combined or just one subject?** The School Index Score includes students’ Math and ELA Index Values.
- 6. Will we receive our Subgroup Index Scores or are we expected to calculate?** OSSE will provide each school their School Index Scores, Subgroup Subject Index Scores for all subgroups, and student-level index values. The purpose of walking through each step of the model is to be 100% transparent about how classifications are determined and to enable LEAs interested in replicating the process the knowledge needed to do so.
- 7. Will the new mixed race reporting subgroup also be a subgroup that can be considered for Focus school classifications?** Yes.
- 8. Can you explain what the growth means?** Growth means that a student advanced to a higher proficiency level on the DC CAS from the prior year’s assessment to the current year’s assessment.





9. **How do you calculate Index Values for students that do not have any prior test scores, such as the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders?** For students with no prior DC CAS scores, at this point there is no way to determine their growth. Therefore, only students who score Proficient or Advanced (and meet all the business rules) receive points on Index chart. The point assignment for students with no prior score is shown on the Index Score Value matrix.

Minimum N = 25		Current Score						
		Below Basic		Basic			Proficient	Advanced
Level	Group	Low	High	Low	Middle	High	All	All
No Prior Score		0	0	0	0	0	100	110

10. **How do you calculate the School Index Score when there a different number of students took the Math and ELA assessments?** This scenario is accounted for in the way that the School Index Score is calculated. If a different number of students took the math DC CAS than the ELA DC CAS, both and numerator and the denominator are impacted.

$$\text{School Index Score} = \frac{\text{Sum of all Math and ELA index values at the school}}{(\# \text{ students who took the Math DC CAS}) + (\# \text{ students who took the ELA DC CAS})}$$

**Targets:**

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11. **Am I correct that there will be no more "AYP"?** That is correct.
12. **What do you mean by releasing targets?** When we say, “we will release targets” we mean that schools will receive their Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs). The proficiency AMOs are set with the goal of reducing the number of students at the school who are not proficient by half within six years. AMOs will initially be set at the school level based on school year 2010-11 performance and will vary from school to school.
13. **Are there separate targets for elementary and secondary schools?** No. The elementary and secondary distinctions have been eliminated. As the majority of 5th graders in DCPS were classified as elementary and the majority of 5th graders in public charter schools were classified as secondary, this was not a worthwhile distinction.



- 14. What if a school has fewer than 25 Special Education students, but has more than 40 students overall, the school’s special education population would be excluded in the accountability model, but the overall School Index Score would still be calculated and including in accountability reporting?** In the above example and in all cases where the school, subgroups, and students meet the business rules, their performance will be included in the accountability reporting.

#### **Classification and Implications:**

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- 15. How many of the items in the Priority schools category have to be true for a school to be classified in that category?** Meeting any one of the items on this list means that your school will be categorized as Priority. *Example: If School X has a School Index Score of 18, but is not a School Improvement Grant School, has a graduation rate of 80%, has a participation rate of 98%, and has not been identified as a Priority school in the past, School X will still be classified as a Priority school.*

- 16. If you are a priority or focus school but are not Title 1 what consequences are there?** The new accountability system does not require LEAs with schools classified as Priority or Focus to reserve Title I funds. However, LEAs may impose their own sanctions to ensure student and school needs are met. OSSE will continue to provide support to all schools as it normally does through guidance, technical assistance, and training.

- 17. Must Priority schools “reserve 20% Title I Funds”?** No. The reservation of Title I funds is required by the LEA if the LEA misses the same AMO for two consecutive years or has schools identified as Focus or Priority. These funds must be reserved for interventions designed to raise student achievement and detailed in the intervention plan submitted to OSSE.

#### **Cutscores:**

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- 18. Are the cutscores based the same as DC CAS? Yes**

- 19. How are cutscores determined?** The cutscores are determined through the Standard setting process that includes OSSE and the DC CAS vendor. “Standard setting is the methodology used to define levels of achievement or proficiency and the cutscores corresponding to those levels. A cutscore is simply the score that serves to classify the students whose score is below the cutscore into one level and the students whose score is at or above the cutscore into the next and higher level” (Bejar, 2008).<sup>1</sup> To learn more, go to the link in the reference below. Subdivisions of a Proficiency Level Descriptor (e.g. low below basic) are done by dividing the range of the PLD into equal parts.



- 20. Did OSSE conduct standard setting for these new cutscore ranges?** No because the subdivision are describing what portion of the range for the PLD a student is in rather than acting as a new description of skills.
- 21. How were these cutoffs determined?** Cutoffs were determined through the Standard Setting Process.
- 22. Do the cutscores change each year?** The scaled scores are constant in almost all circumstances. The scaled scores for DC CAS reading and math have been in effect and not changed since the test was first given. The standard setting process (Described above) determines how many correct answers (raw score) translate into a given scale score. This translation changes annually as new questions are introduced at higher or lower difficulty levels to ensure that the difficulty of the test and the meaning of a scale score stay consistent over time. This process is known as equating.

**Other:**

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- 23. How does ALL this work with the PCSB's PMF scores?** These scores are independent of PCSB's PMF scores. However, the same DC CAS data underlies many of the points in the PMF system.
- 24. Is there any collaboration with the PCSB on Cut Scores and Index Scores?** The development of the accountability system is the result of input from all educational stakeholders in DC. The cut scores for proficiency levels are determined by DC teachers from DCPS and public charter schools. The DC CAS technical advisory board (national assessment experts) and the assessment vendor provide guidance on the equating process and mechanisms for measuring growth.

**Parents Right To Know:**

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- 25. Does this flexibility affect the parental involvement requirements under ESEA section 1118?** No. This flexibility does not waive the parental involvement requirements of ESEA section 1118. For example, LEAs and schools will still be required to have written parent involvement policies; provide materials and training for parents to work with their children to improve academic achievement; and educate teachers, principals, and other staff on how to reach out to parents as partners in the education of their children.
- 26. What is the role of parents and the broader community in implementing ESEA flexibility?** An LEA with one or more priority schools must seek input from families and the community in selecting the meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles that will be implemented in these schools. Additionally, an LEA's interventions in priority schools must include ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.



**27. What accountability materials must parents receive?** Under ESEA flexibility, parents will continue to receive information on their children’s progress in meeting State academic achievement standards as well as their school’s success in helping all students meet those standards. Parents will know whether their children’s schools are succeeding, by being identified as reward schools, or falling short, by being identified as priority or focus schools. When schools fall short, parents can be assured that school leaders will adopt strategies focused on school needs and targeted towards the students most at risk.

**28. Do the other “parents right to know” requirements related to the highly qualified status of teachers still apply?** Yes. The ESEA flexibility did not allow states to waiver those requirements.

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<sup>i</sup> Bejar, Isaac. (October, 2008). Standard setting: What is it? Why is it important?. *Educational Testing Service, No 7*. Retrieved from [http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/RD\\_Connections7.pdf](http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/RD_Connections7.pdf)