

# **School Progress Index (SPI) Tutorial**

## **What is the School Progress Index?**

### **4. What is Maryland's new accountability system?**

Maryland has a new accountability system that improves upon the former AYP status model and takes into account additional indicators of progress. No Child Left Behind focused on strengthening schools through a continuum of sanctions known as the School Improvement Process. That system is no longer part of Maryland's accountability system, nor is its measuring system known as Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). It has been replaced by the Maryland School Progress Index, which has high expectations for all schools, but focuses particular attention on the State's lowest-performing schools. The new accountability plan includes a number of improvements designed to fuel continued progress:

### **Maryland School Progress Index**

The School Progress Index (SPI) incorporates information about the achievement and gap issues in all schools, growth in elementary and middle schools, and college- and career-readiness in high schools. These Indicators are combined so a lower value on one component can be balanced by a higher value on another component. Consequently, while the SPI tells you a lot about a school's progress, it is important to look at the same time at all of the components that go into the SPI and the progress over time. The overall SPI score, along with success in meeting the targets for the Indicators, demonstrates a school's progress.

### **New Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)/Targets**

Each school will be measured against itself, rather than against other schools. Annual Measurable Objectives or AMOs continue to be our targets but have been set so that by 2017 each school is expected to reduce its percentage of non-proficient students for each subgroup and at the "All Students" level by 50 percent. AMOs will be calculated for the student population in each school as well as for special service and racial subgroups. The targets rise each year until 2017.

### **Recognition and Support: Boosting the Lowest-Performing Schools –**

While the school improvement process is gone, the commitment to improving Maryland's lowest performing schools and slowest progressing schools is still strong. Gone are the categories of "School Improvement," under which schools were sanctioned for not making progress. Maryland's plan now focuses special attention on those schools with the most difficulty, but the requirement for restructuring and other sanctions is no longer part of the equation.

In response to Federal requirements, Maryland's new program gives special attention to the lowest achieving 5 percent of schools in the State (Priority Schools) and schools with a significant gap between the all students group and the lowest-performing subgroup(s) (Focus Schools). Local leaders will choose from a menu of strategies designed to meet the specific needs, strengthen achievement of those schools, and reduce the achievement gaps. The new accountability plan will recognize Title I schools achieving the highest performance and those making high progress. Maryland is committed to helping all schools that are not meeting their targets. Approaching Target Schools, those Title I schools that are not Priority or Focus schools but are missing some AMOs, will receive support from the Title I office. Non-Title I schools that are missing multiple targets will work with their Local Education Agency (LEA) on a number of successful school improvement models.