ESSA Designation Rules – Version 2.1

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires each state to determine a process for designation of schools most needing support. These supports fall into three categories:

- Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) – Lowest performing five percent of Title I schools, Any public high schools with graduation rate below 67%, or public schools with consistently underperforming student groups for 3 years.
- Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) – A public school with one or more consistently underperforming student groups
- Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) – Any public school with one or more student group(s) performing at or below the performance level of students in the lowest 5 percent of Title I schools (i.e. CSI schools).

The purpose of this document is to outline the business rules for identification of these schools.

Section 1: Indicators

ESSA Indicator:	Academic Achievement	Academic Progress	English Language Proficiency/ Progress	Graduation Rate	School Quality & Student Success
	Status	Growth, Improvement, Non-Proficiency	English Language Proficiency/Progress	4- and 7-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	Chronic Absenteeism, Science, Evidence-Based Analysis (EBA)

The ESSA school designations use the same indicators as those for AQuESTT classification (Excellent, Great, Goods, and Needs Improvement). For information relating to the calculation of the individual indicators, please see AQuESTT Classification Business Rules document at www.aquestt.com/resources

a. For Achievement (Status), NDE will combine percent proficient for math and ELA for each school, rank from highest to lowest, and select the requisite number of schools based on the designation type.

b. Similarly, the Progress Toward English Language Proficiency indicator will have data showing the percent of students progressing towards proficiency (both full and partial credit). These scores will be ranked, with the requisite number of schools moved to the next stage based on the designation type.

d. For high schools only, 4- and 7-year graduation will be combined as outlined in the AQuESTT Classification business rules. Schools will be ranked from highest to lowest, with the requisite number of schools moved to the next stage based on the designation type. Note: For CSI, schools with graduation rates below 67% are automatically selected.

e. Each of the Academic Progress indicators (Growth, Improvement, Non-Proficiency) have underlying raw data and calculations. These raw calculations will be ranked, with the requisite number of schools moved to the next stage based on the designation type.

f. In the final stage of the designation process, the three School Quality and Student Success Indicators are combined into a standardized score, detailed below. Schools are ranked based on this score, with the requisite number of schools moved to the next stage based on the designation type.

Weighting:
The order of stages in the decision process establishes the weight placed on each indicator and allows the state to prioritize and place much greater weight on the academic indicators in the first and second stages.

The first stage of indicators includes academic achievement in math, academic achievement in English language arts, and progress toward English language proficiency. These achievement and English language proficiency indicators are considered to have equal weight to one another and greater weight than subsequent indicators, as low performance on any of them causes a school to progress to the next stage of differentiation.

For elementary and middle schools, the second stage includes the three measures of academic progress. These other academic indicators are considered to have equal weight to one another and much greater weight than the subsequent indicator, as low performance on either of them causes a school to progress to the next stage of differentiation. For high schools, the second stage includes 4-year and 7-year graduation rate. Of the two, 4-year graduation rate is considered to carry greater weight (51%), while 7-year will be weighted 49%. Both graduation rate indicators are considered to have much greater weight than the subsequent indicator, as low performance on both of them causes a school to progress to the next stage of differentiation.

The third and final stage uses a combined score of Nebraska's three School Quality and Student Success Indicators: reduction in chronic absenteeism, science, and the Evidence Based Analysis. Since it comes last, this stage carries the least weight while still differentiating between schools that are already low on the academic indicators.

Combining the SQSS Indicators:
In the final stage of the designation process, the three School Quality and Student Success Indicators must be combined even though they employ different scales. As such, each of the

three indicators is standardized, and then NDE creates a final score from the sum of the three standardized scores. Standardized scores are calculated by first transforming values for each of the three indicators into z-scores as follows:

$$z = \frac{x - \mu}{\sigma}$$

Next, each z-score is transformed into a new standardized scale distribution with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10 as follows:

$$x = \mu + z\sigma$$

These new standardized scores for the Reduction in Chronic Absenteeism, Science, and EBA are then averaged and the totals are placed in rank order.

Section 2: Definitions/Clarifications

Title I: Those schools classified as either Title I Schoolwide or Targeted during the school year from which the Status data is derived.

Student Group: For the purposes of federal accountability, student group means students who have identified as:
- English Learners
- Economically Disadvantaged
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Latinx/Hispanic
- Two or More Races
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Students with Disabilities

N-size: In order to be considered for TSI or ATSI, a school must have had at least 10 students in the student group having a valid NSCAS or NSCAS-ACT score for math or English language arts.

Section 3: Designation Filters
***Comprehensive Support and Improvement***
AQuESTT places schools into 4 classifications: Excellent, Great, Good, and Needs Improvement. Schools will then be designated for Comprehensive Support and Improvement if they meet any one of the three criteria below:
- the school is in the lowest 5 percent of overall performance of Title I schools*, or
- the school has a 4-year cohort graduation rate of less than 67%, or

- the school has consistently underperforming student groups, or has maintained identification as an Additional Targeted Support school for three years

*Since AQuESTT classification, by design, does not allow for the ranking of schools, the lowest 5 percent of Title I schools will be identified using all indicators in the AQuESTT system. All Title I schools will be determined using the system below:
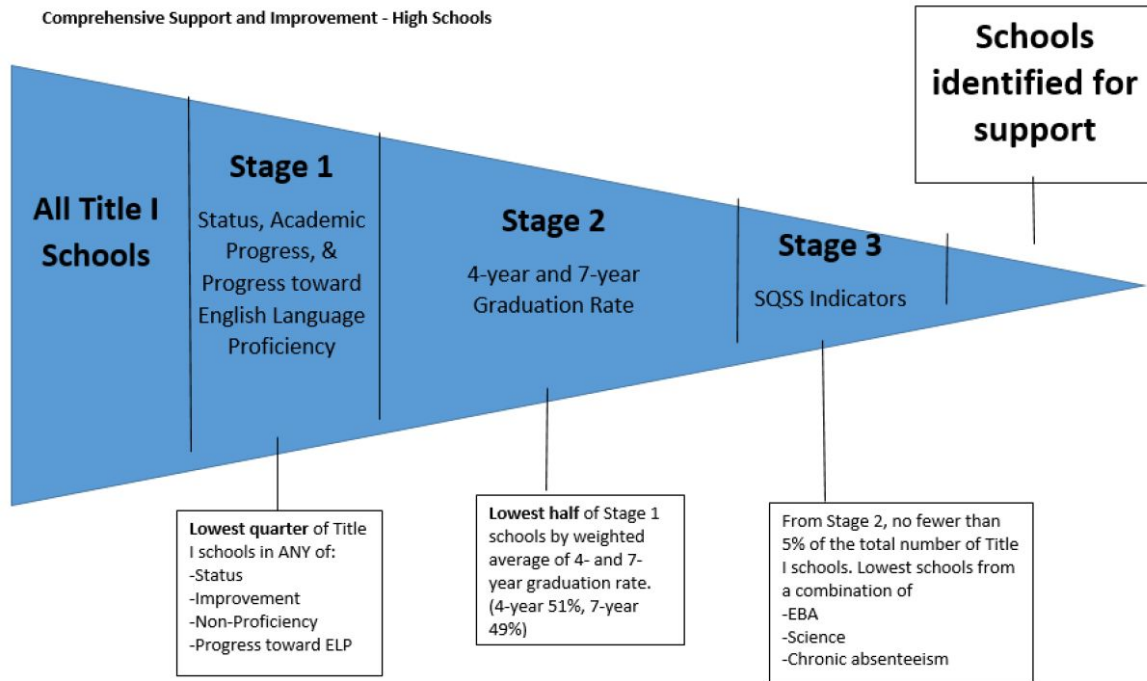

Comprehensive Support and Improvement - Elementary and Middle Schools
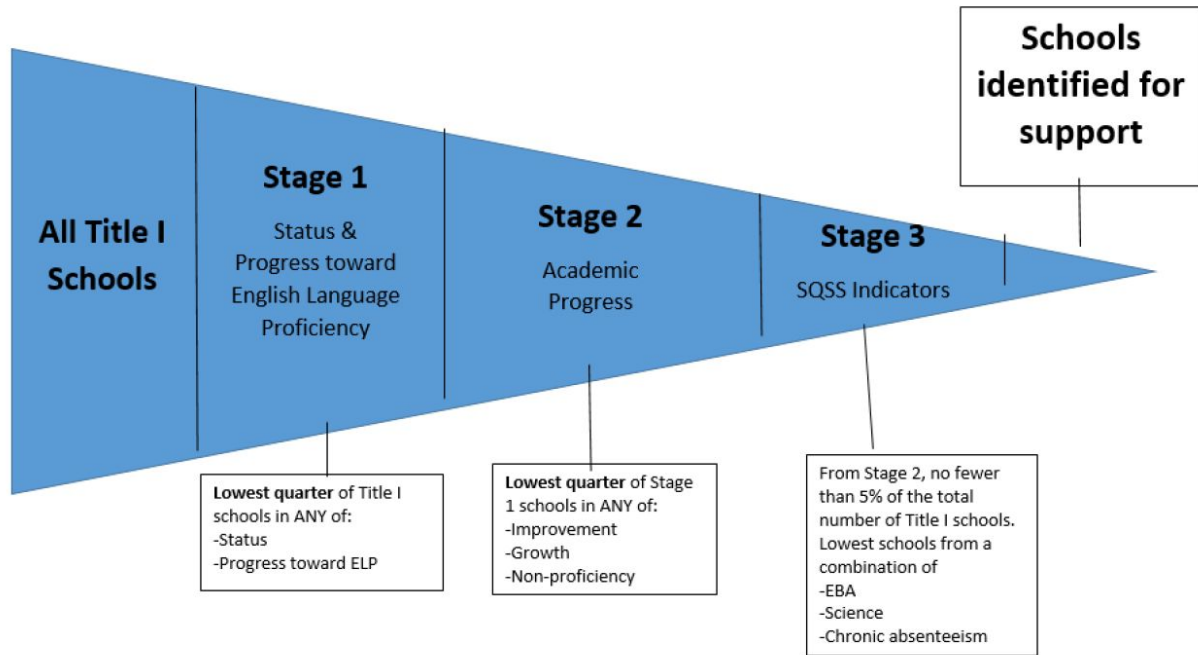
Cut Points for Indicators (2017-18 Data)
These cut points represent the scores of the lowest quarter for each indicator.

Status	39.29
Progress toward ELP	43.42
Improvement	-0.054775
Growth	63.89
Non-Proficiency	5.606961
SQSS	-0.48

Comprehensive Support and Improvement - High Schools

Cut Points for Indicators (2017-18 Data)
These cut points represent the scores of the lowest quarter for each indicator.

Status	28.57
Improvement	-0.132128
Non-Proficiency	6.045295
Progress toward ELP	25.24
Combined Graduation Rate	87.20
SQSS	-1.21

Exit Criteria for CSI Schools

Nebraska will designate schools for comprehensive support and improvement every three years. In order to exit CSI designation:

    a. a school must not be reidentified for CSI, **AND**

    b. must not fall below the 25th percentile of Title I schools in any indicator in Stage 1, **AND**

    c. must have shown improvement on all indicators which led to its initial identification.

Additional Targeted Support

Schools that have student groups that would, on their own, be identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement will be identified for Additional Targeted Support.

The process by which schools will be identified for Additional Targeted Support will be identified through the following method:

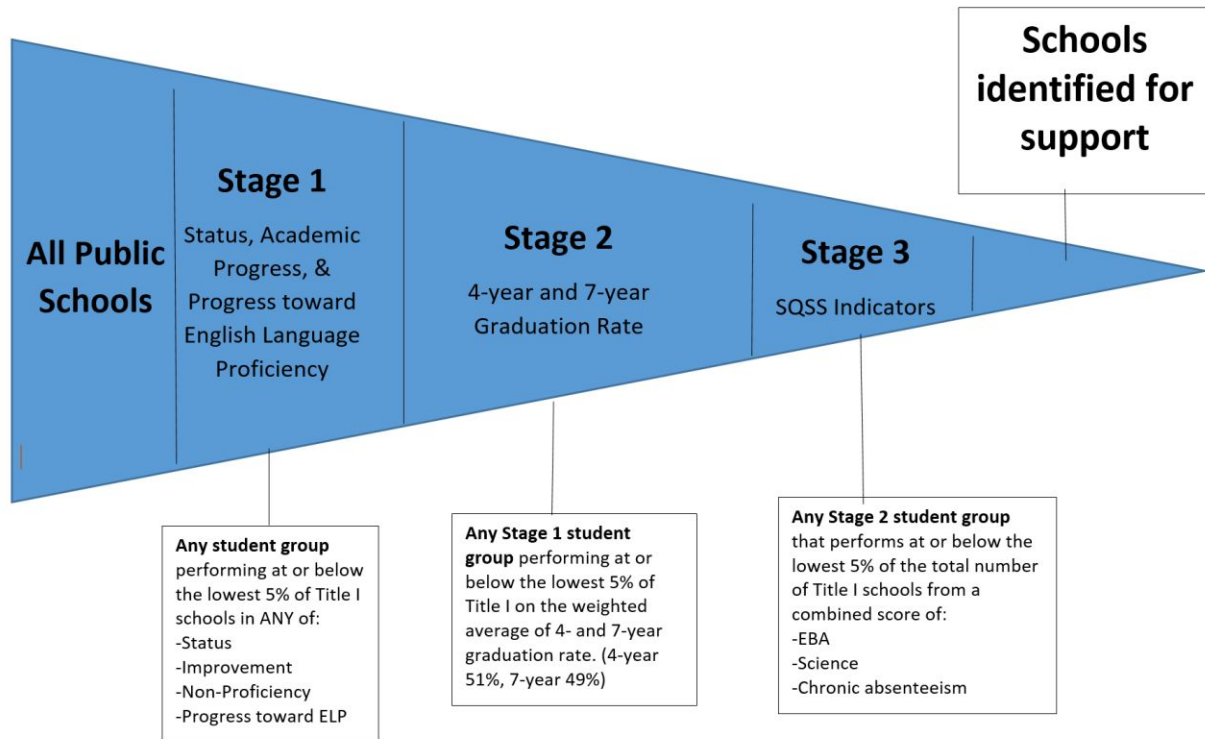**Additional Targeted Support and Improvement - Elementary and Middle Schools**
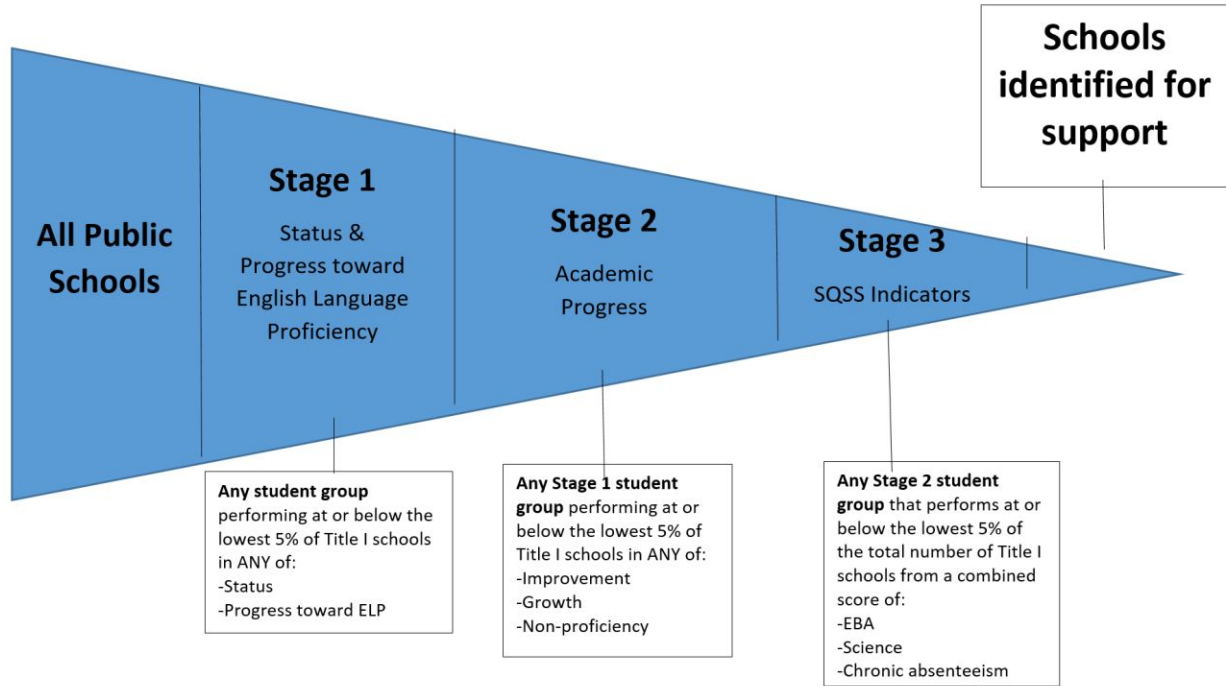
Cut Points for Indicators (2017-18 Data)
These cut points represent the average indicator score of the Elementary and Middle schools that were designated as CSI in the year they were designated.

Status	22.30
Progress toward ELP	48.08
Improvement	0.035055
Growth	63.51
Non-Proficiency	0.054833
SQSS	-0.69

Additional Targeted Support - High Schools

Cut Points for Indicators (2017-18 Data)

These cut points represent the average indicator score of the High schools that were designated as CSI in the year they were designated (except for those High Schools that were designated CSI automatically due to their graduation rates).

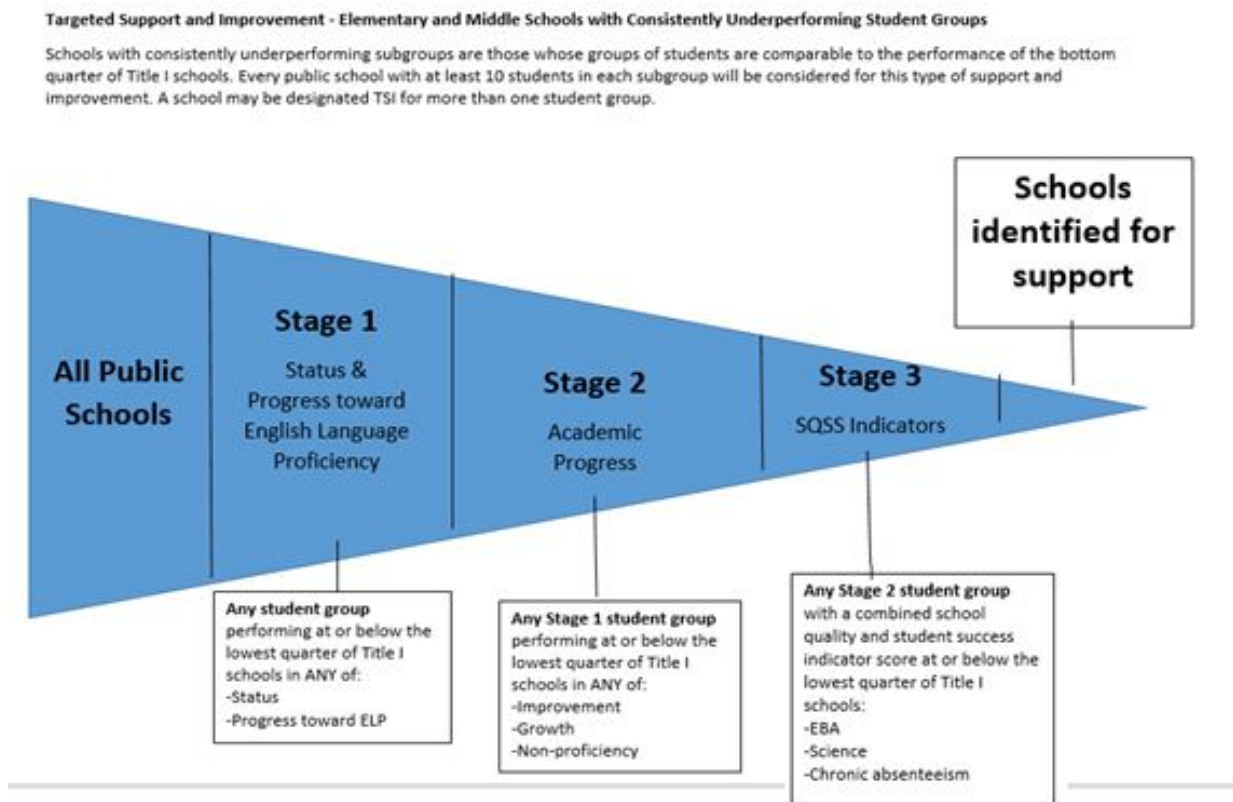|	
Status	18.13
Improvement	0.080818
Non-Proficiency	-4.244497
Progress toward ELP	41.09
Combined Graduation Rate	81.72
SQSS	-1.80

Schools maintaining Additional Targeted Support identification for three years will be classified as a Comprehensive Support and Improvement school in the subsequent cycle (3rd consecutive year as ATSI).

Exit Criteria for ATSI
Schools identified for ATSI can exit this status by successfully implementing its TSI plan such that all identified low-performing subgroups show sufficient growth and no longer meet the criteria for identification for two consecutive years.

Targeted Support and Improvement
Nebraska's accountability system, AQuESTT, does not currently differentiate student groups from the overall student population. The Nebraska Department of Education plans to use all accountability indicators to identify schools for Targeted Support. Schools will be identified for TSI using the below filter system:

Targeted Support and Improvement - Elementary and Middle Schools with Consistently Underperforming Student Groups

Schools with consistently underperforming subgroups are those whose groups of students are comparable to the performance of the bottom quarter of Title I schools. Every public school with at least 10 students in each subgroup will be considered for this type of support and improvement. A school may be designated TSI for more than one student group.

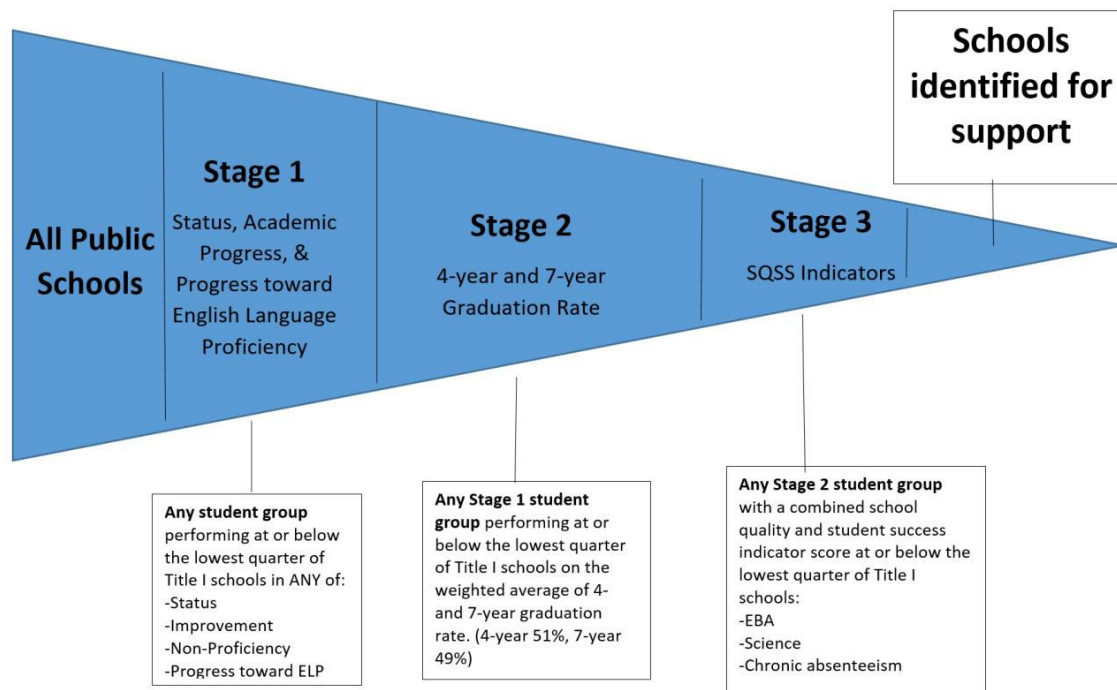Cut Points for Indicators (2018-19 Data)
These cut points represent the scores of the lowest quarter of Title I Elementary and Middle Schools in the 2018-19 data year. Title I schools are those that are Title I Schoolwide or

Targeted in the school year from which the Status indicator data is derived. The lowest quarter is determined for each indicator separately in order to set that indicator's target score.

Status	39.62
Progress toward ELP	42.86
Improvement	-0.012963
Growth	63.31
Non-Proficiency	-4.196994
SQSS	-0.35

Targeted Support and Improvement - High Schools with Consistently Underperforming Student Groups

Cut Points for Indicators (2018-19 Data)
These cut points represent the scores of the lowest quarter of Title I High Schools in the 2018-19 data year.

Status	25.62
Improvement	-0.038861
Non-Proficiency	-4.411765
Progress toward ELP	32.26
Combined Graduation Rate	80.86
SQSS	-1.52