

FAQ: Comprehensive Support and Improvement

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1. How did my school get identified for this level of support?

Schools with the CSI designation are identified in one of three ways:

- a. Schools that are providing Targeted or Schoolwide Title I services are the only schools eligible for CSI designations. This designation identifies the lowest 5% of Title I schools (approximately 30 schools or more), using a filter-like method across the following indicators:
 - Performance on NSCAS Growth English Language Arts & Math, or the ACT
 - Growth and non-proficiency reduction
 - Progress toward English language proficiency (for schools that serve at least 10 English learners per school)
 - Chronic absenteeism (students who miss one-tenth of their time at that school)
 - Science status (grades 5, 8, and 3rd year cohort in HS)
- b. Any public high school with a graduation rate below 67% will automatically be identified for comprehensive support and improvement.
- c. Any public schools with consistently underperforming student groups for a state determined period of time (ATSI). The timeframe may vary based on a school's cohort - it can be 3 or 4 years.

2. What does the Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) designation mean for my school?

As a school identified for CSI support, you are part of a cohort of schools with similar opportunities for growth and improvement. As a CSI school you will:

- receive additional resources including technical and guided assistance for improvement from the NDE.
- complete a comprehensive needs assessment to help you identify the greatest needs for growth and assets to leverage.
- submit a plan for improvement to the NDE that outlines steps for implementation and resources needed to implement the plan.
- be eligible for federal funding to support improvement efforts.

3. What kinds of support can my school receive if we are identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement?

Previous school improvement efforts legislated from the federal level were very prescriptive and overly punitive. CSI is different. Schools and districts have autonomy to direct and lead for improvement. Schools must choose

“evidence-based” interventions, those that have been proven to improve outcomes for students. The NDE will provide workshops for all CSI schools to work together to build their plans and interventions and choose these interventions. Schools can work closely with their ESUs to obtain professional development, coaching, and other school improvement services.

4. Will this require my school submitting a new plan? If so, what kinds of support will my school receive in developing my new plan?

Yes. Federal law requires all CSI schools to complete a needs assessment and identify resource inequities when developing their improvement plans. However, it is critical for the work of this improvement plan to be connected to other improvement efforts within the district including the school’s continuous improvement plan, MTSS plan, and others. The NDE will be providing CSI workshops for all schools identified, and work to connect these plans to create cohesion and coherence.

5. How will the plans be monitored and assessed?

The NDE will conduct regular check-ins with CSI schools, and monitor progress towards meeting goals outlined in the school’s improvement plan. Additionally, the NDE will facilitate regular CSI cohort check-ins wherein schools can share common celebrations, concerns, and next steps in learning and improving together.

6. What will support for my school look like?

Schools are at the helm with their support, with partners from their local district, and NDE and ESUs by their sides. Schools, in partnership with the NDE, get to identify the supports necessary, together. This could include additional staff, intensive professional learning opportunities, development of social-emotional learning or student health supports, instructional coaching, and more. The CSI process is over the course of three years, and includes continued development during that time. The support should be tied to the findings from the accountability data review, needs assessment, and work currently underway.

7. Does financial support come with this designation?

Yes. As part of Nebraska’s Every Student Succeeds Act Plan, the NDE reserved 7% of the state’s Title I funding for improvement efforts. This totals approximately \$5 million to serve schools in need of improvement. The Support for Improvement (SFI) plan for CSI schools is a required plan and also serves as a funding application. After CSI schools submit a plan for improvement, they *may* receive funds to implement their plan.

8. What is the anticipated timeline for when my school should expect to receive support?

Schools can expect designation notification in the fall. School and district leaders will then receive instructions to access and complete a comprehensive needs assessment. Once this needs assessment is completed, the NDE will gather schools regionally to bridge the needs assessment to a plan of action – aligned with other district/state plans. Further information regarding plan submission, award notification of funds, and support plan will be provided in the fall.

9. How much time will my school get to exit this level of support?

The NDE sets the timeline for schools to exit status in the state’s ESSA plan. Normally, a CSI school has three years to exit status, and cannot exit until that three year window has expired. However, the NDE took advantage of flexibilities provided by the US Department of Education in 2021, and extended the cohort identified in 2022 to four years, with each school able to exit any subsequent year. See below for a breakdown of each cohort.

- Cohort 1 (identified in 2019) - eligible to exit 2022
- Cohort 2 (identified in 2022) - eligible to exit every year through 2026
 - As mentioned above, this is the only cohort to have 4 years to exit and is eligible to exit every year.
- Cohort 3 (identified in 2023) - eligible to exit 2026

This [timeline](#) provides a visual representation of the overlapping nature of the accountability cohorts.

10. What is the exit criteria for the CSI designation?

Below is the exit criteria for the CSI designation, based on the cohort. This information can also be found on the [2023 ESSA Designation Rules](#).

Note: If a school changes its Title I status while a CSI school, the school is still under consideration for CSI, and the exit criteria applies.

Cohort 1: Identified in Fall 2018, (using 2017-2018 school year data)

- Exit Criteria:
 - a. Not re-identified for CSI, AND
 - b. Not in lowest 10% of Title I across Stage 1: Status and/or ELP indicator, AND
 - c. Made significant progress across all indicators
- CSI schools in this cohort that do not meet exit criteria are required to engage in more rigorous options as outlined by the NDE.

Cohort 2: Identified in Fall 2022 (using 2021-22 school year data)

- Exit Criteria:
 - a. Not re-identified for CSI, AND
 - b. Not in lowest 10% of Title I across the first filter (Status & ELPA), AND

- c. Made significant progress across all indicators
- Schools identified in this cohort will first be eligible for exit in Fall 2023 and are eligible to exit every year through Fall 2026. CSI schools in this cohort that do not meet exit criteria by Fall 2026 are required to engage in more rigorous options as outlined by the NDE.

Cohort 3: Identified in Fall 2023 (using 2022-23 school year data).

- Exit Criteria:
 - a. Not re-identified for CSI, AND
 - b. Not in lowest 10% of Title I across the first filter (Status & ELPA), AND
 - c. Made significant progress across all indicators
- Schools identified in this cohort will be eligible for exit in Fall 2026. CSI schools in this cohort that do not meet exit criteria are required to engage in more rigorous options as outlined by the NDE.

Across all cohorts, *Significant Progress* is defined as a positive change in performance across each indicator compared to the year in which the school was identified.

For high schools identified for CSI for low graduation rate

- Exit Criteria:
 - a. Have a graduation rate above 67 percent AND
 - b. Have two consecutive years of graduation rate improvement.
 - c.

11. What if my school is a CSI-ATSI school, what support is available and what is the exit criteria?

For schools that do not exit ATSI and become CSI-ATSI schools

- These schools will be eligible to receive federal funds to support implementation of improvement plans, informed by a comprehensive needs assessment, data review of all indicators, and stakeholder engagement. Additional information will be provided by NDE staff.
- Exit Criteria:
 - Not be re-identified for ATSI for the same student group
 - Make sufficient growth in Stage 1: Status and/or ELPA indicator
- *Sufficient Growth* is defined yearly by analyzing progress made in Stage 1 by each designated student group in a school for the current accountability year and compared to the initial year identified.

12. What should we expect if my school is unable to exit this level of support?

A school that does not exit CSI after three years (four years for schools identified in 2022) must pursue a more rigorous option, and can expect the following three choices made in conjunction with the NDE:

- Significant revision to the improvement plan
- A completely new improvement plan
- An alternative administrative structure

13. Our school is not a Title I school. What does this mean for us?

Schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement by definition are Title I schools. Only schools providing Title I services can be identified for CSI. However, there are two exceptions – *any public high school* with a graduation rate below 67% is automatically identified for CSI, and like mentioned in question 2, any public school with an ATSI designation for a determined amount of time, will become CSI.

14. How do we explain this to our teachers, families, and school community?

Our school accountability system is about identifying the specific supports for each school. Some schools need more support to improve than others. A school identified for comprehensive support and improvement is a Title I school that typically serves a significant proportion of economically disadvantaged students. The goal of this process is to focus resources for improvement and get schools the tools needed to improve. You can also find some communication resources for schools and families at <https://aquestt.com/resources/>.