Exiting Priority School Status

In addition to meetings conducted with the Title I Committee of Practitioners (COP), NCDPI met with its SIG Advisory Council on January 11, 2012. The council consists of local SIG coordinators, school principals, and central office staff. Based on inputs from the SIG Advisory Council, the COP, and other advisory groups, it was determined that NCDPI will maintain the list of Priority Schools for a three-year period. Maintaining Priority status for the full three-year period will ensure 1) sufficient time for the LEA to fully implement interventions aligned to turnaround principles; 2) sufficient SEA support for sustaining efforts of SIG models when SIG funds are no longer available; and 3) sufficient time for the State to monitor and support the implementation of interventions to increase the likelihood that interventions result in sustained student achievement for all student subgroups. At the end of the three-year cycle, a new list of Priority Schools will be developed.

As the State transitions to new assessments, lack of progress will be defined as a minimum proficiency standard/graduation rate based on a review of statewide results.

In order to exit Priority status, Priority Schools must demonstrate sufficient progress based on the following criteria:

- Make progress toward meeting proficiency standards by meeting a minimum proficiency standard/graduation rate of 60%;
- Make progress toward meeting "all AMOs" defined as meeting at least 90% of the achievement Annual Measurable Objectives in the "all students" subgroup (including the other academic indicator) and the AMOs in all other subgroups; and
- Meet the 95% participation rate rule for all subgroups.

Priority Schools that do not demonstrate sufficient progress will remain on the Priority School list for another cycle.

After the State transitions to new assessments in the 2012-13 school year, the State will conduct analyses of the assessment scores in reading, English/language arts and science in order to establish a minimum threshold that links/equates to the current expectation of a minimum standard of 60% proficiency. The expectation is that the new assessments will have more rigorous performance standards than the current assessments.

Priority Schools also will be subject to the same escalating consequences described on pages 51-52 if they fail to achieve 95% participation for any subgroup. These consequences will be implemented with the new accountability model starting in the 2012-13 school year.

For schools that do not demonstrate progress and continue to be identified as Priority Schools according to the applied methodology, NCDPI may provide school improvement services directly or arrange for their provision through other entities such as school support teams or educational service agencies. This option may be particularly useful if an LEA lacks the capacity to implement the required turnaround principles. Additionally, LEA funds may be coordinated with oversight from the SEA to ensure that the implementation of the required turnaround principles occurs in a manner that encourages rapid student achievement. SEA efforts toward both monitoring and support will be increased to provide monthly guidance to the LEA/Priority School.