

# Turnaround Schools Fact Sheet



Turnaround schools have consistently low overall performance based on the Accountability Index or consistently low graduation rates. These schools require intensive intervention and support. In Connecticut’s approved [Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\) plan](#), Turnaround schools are also referred to as “Comprehensive Support and Improvement” (CSI) schools.

## How are Turnaround schools identified?

In general, Turnaround schools are identified every three years using data from the three most recent years. Turnaround schools are identified for different reasons.

### Identification based on Accountability Index

When evaluating schools based on overall performance (i.e., the Accountability Index), all schools are divided into two groups:

- Elementary/Middle: highest grade is Grade 8 or below;
- High School: highest grade is between 9 and 12.

Any school with a three-year weighted average of the Accountability Index that is in the bottom 5 percent of schools in their comparison group (elementary/middle and high school) is identified as a Turnaround school. The weighted average is used instead of a regular average because the total possible points a school could earn can vary from year to year.

### Identification based on graduation rate

Any high school with a six-year adjusted cohort graduation rate below 70 percent for all students for each of the three most recent cohorts is identified as a Turnaround school.

### Schools that transition from ATSI status to Turnaround

A subset of Focus schools has one or more Turnaround student groups. These student groups are referred to as “Additional Targeted Support and Improvement” (ATSI) groups. If a Focus school’s ATSI group does not exit within four years, the school will become a Turnaround school. This group of schools transitioning to Turnaround status falls outside the typical three-year identification cycle for Turnaround schools.

## What school category is assigned to Turnaround schools?

As required under Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-223e, Connecticut has a five-category school classification system. Newly identified Turnaround schools are placed in Category 4 with two exceptions. If a new Turnaround school was previously a Focus school for three or more years, this newly identified Turnaround school will be placed in Category 5. Also, Focus schools with ATSI student groups that transition to Turnaround are assigned

to Category 5. Turnaround schools that do not meet exit criteria within four years of identification are moved from Category 4 to Category 5.

## How do Turnaround schools exit?

To exit, a Turnaround school identified based on the Accountability Index must no longer meet the reason for their identification in two consecutive years after identification. This means that for two consecutive years the school's three-year weighted average of the Accountability Index must exceed the three-year weighted average of the Accountability Index for the bottom 5 percent of schools in their comparison group.

A Turnaround school identified based on graduation rate, must earn a six-year graduation rate of at least 70 percent for all students for two consecutive years following identification.

Focus schools with ATSI student groups that transition to Turnaround status are held to the Turnaround school Accountability Index exit standard. In all cases, schools must show substantial improvement and continued progress to exit.

## What supports does a Turnaround school receive?

Turnaround schools receive a coordinated set of supports designed to strengthen leadership, instruction, school climate, and the systems that sustain improvement over time. Each school partners closely with the CSDE Turnaround Office and has access to a CSDE Cross-Divisional Team (CDT) that brings expertise from across the agency. Throughout the year, schools engage in structured reviews, including the annual Needs Assessment, to examine evidence, identify patterns in student outcomes, and monitor progress toward priorities.

Schools also receive guidance and facilitation to implement 90-Day Improvement Cycles, ensuring that teams have a clear process for planning, monitoring, and reflecting on the effectiveness of their strategies. As part of this partnership, CSDE provides access to evidence-based practice guides aligned to the Talent, Academics, Culture & Climate, and Operations domains, as well as support with required components of ESSA such as the Resource Allocation Review.

CSDE works closely with school and district teams to review instructional quality, strengthen climate practices, and track student performance throughout the year. Turnaround schools also receive prioritized access to professional learning, technical assistance, and state resources, including opportunities to apply for School Improvement Grants (SIG) when available.

For detailed information about school identification, see [Using Accountability Results to Guide Improvement](#).