

Is Every Student Succeeding?

——Part One:——

Is Every Student Succeeding?
The State of Proficiency of Elementary Schools
in the State of Maryland



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B. L. Academic Services, LLC

www.blacademicservices.com

blacademicservices@gmail.com

ISBN: 978-1-7369237-3-3

Printed in the United States of America

Cover and Interior Design: 1106 Design, LLC

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Acknowledgements

I thank my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for helping me to write Part One of this project.

Special Thanks:

Mae Doris Johnson (1934–2006)

Data Entry Volunteers: Ms. Kathy A. Morris, MPA, and Mrs. Shannon Doran

Volunteer Proofreader: Mrs. Sharon E. Tarrant

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Dr. Tasheka L. Green

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Juanita Virgil



Preface

Is Every Student Succeeding? The question is meant to direct attention to the educational bill, Every Student Succeeds Act, signed into law by President Barack Obama in 2015. This initiative has **one aim**: to end the achievement gap. I believe the achievement gap can be overcome if a willingness, a determination, and a prioritization of needs are used to create a recipe to ensure that children at the elementary level master foundational skills in reading and mathematics.

For children to succeed, there needs to be a **willingness** to teach sound foundational concepts in reading and mathematics to EVERY student regardless of race, culture, or socioeconomic status.

For children to succeed, there needs to be a **determination** to teach students to MASTER reading and mathematics skills at the elementary level.

For children to succeed, there needs to be a **prioritization** to keep the main thing the main thing, which is to educate students. The mastery of reading and mathematics skills at the elementary level must be a priority in students' education.

Is Every Student Succeeding? has **two objectives**:

1. To examine the state of proficiency of public elementary schools by conducting a comparative data analysis of state-mandated assessment scores in reading and mathematics of 4th graders and comparing those scores to the National Assessment of Educational Progress reading and mathematics scores for 4th graders.
2. To examine the school improvement plans of school districts that have a high percentage of elementary schools not meeting proficiency in reading and mathematics for two or more years.

Is Every Student Succeeding? has **one goal**:

- To spotlight the need for students at the elementary level to master foundational skills in reading and mathematics.



Introduction

Part One of *Is Every Student Succeeding?* is a comparative analysis of the Maryland State Report Card results, the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP) Grade 4 results, and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Reading Average Scores for Fourth-Grade Public School Students in Maryland. The comparative analysis seeks to answer the question: Is every student succeeding? as it relates to the proficiency of elementary students in reading and mathematics.

Federal law requires states to annually assess the academic progress students in grades 3–8 and high school are making in subjects such as reading, mathematics, and science. As a result, Maryland mandates local education agencies, i.e., school districts, to administer its yearly assessment and provide reports that detail the gains, increases, and decreases in academic achievement levels in reading, mathematics, science, and social studies.

For this report, some key elements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, the No Child Left Behind, and the Every Student Succeeds Act are highlighted. A brief look at these educational acts was provided as these acts paved the way for the annual educational assessments locally and nationwide.



KEY ELEMENTS OF THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT OF 1965, THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT OF 2001, AND EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT OF 2015.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 was enacted to strengthen and improve the quality of education and educational opportunities in the nation's elementary and secondary schools. Local education agencies (LEAs) received financial assistance to educate children of low-income families. Financial assistance was provided to local education agencies to expand and improve educational programs and preschool programs.

The focus of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 was primarily centered on providing funding to State Education Agencies, which would then provide funding to local education agencies to improve the educational experience of low-income students.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 provided federal funding following the low-income factor. The low-income factor was based on:

- the number of children from the ages of five to seventeen years old in households with an annual income of less than the low-income factor.
- the number of children from the ages of five to seventeen years old in households with an annual income that was more than the low-income factor.

According to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, a local education agency had to apply to a State Education Agency to receive funding. Upon approval, the State Education Agency could release funding to a local education agency based on the following criteria:

1. Payments were to be used for programs and projects which were designed to
 - a. “meet the special education needs of educationally deprived children in school attendance areas having a high concentration of children from low-income families; and



- b. which are sufficient in size, scope, and quality to give reasonable promise of substantial progress toward meeting those needs.”
2. Once the funds were received, the local education agency had to ensure that low-income children enrolled in private elementary and secondary schools received the following services: special education, dual enrollment, educational radio and television, and mobile educational services and equipment.
3. The local education agency had to adopt procedures and objective measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the educational programs in meeting the special education needs of low-income children.
4. The local education agency had to provide an annual report to the State Education Agency about the educational achievement of students who participated in the educational programs.
5. The local education agency had to adopt procedures for disseminating educational information to teachers and administrators based on educational research, demonstrations, and similar projects.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 was amended in 2001. The amendment came in the form of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. A bipartisan Congress passed the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001, and it was signed into law by President George W. Bush on January 8, 2002.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 ushered in the era of testing requirements to ensure that students in elementary and secondary schools were demonstrating annual academic achievement. Under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, the term “Adequate Yearly Progress” or “AYP” was born. To receive funding from NCLB, states were required to define AYP through measurable annual objectives for academic achievement and academic improvement. Under NCLB, states were required to administer annual assessments in mathematics and reading/language arts in grades 3–8. Elementary public schools or secondary public schools that failed to demonstrate AYP on the mathematics and reading/language arts assessments for two consecutive years were identified for school improvement.



The school(s) identified for school improvement (also referred to as Corrective Action) had to develop a two-year plan aimed at attaining the state's proficient level of academic achievement with the help of parents, school staff, the school district, and outside experts. Schools identified for school improvement or Corrective Action were required to provide a mentoring program for teachers. In addition:

- Students enrolled in the school identified for school improvement could transfer to another public school or public charter school in that school district not identified for school improvement. The school district was required to pay for the transportation.
- Students who remained at the school identified for school improvement were required to receive supplemental educational services.

Schools that failed to make AYP after being on Corrective Action for one year were required to:

- Continue to provide students enrolled in the school identified for Corrective Action the option to transfer to another public school or public charter school in that school district not identified for school improvement.
- Either reopen as a public charter school, replace the staff, replace the principal, have a private institution manage the school, or have the State Education Agency manage the school.

Key elements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001:

1. The bill required “each state to define AYP in a specified manner which includes separate measurable annual objectives for continuous and substantial improvement for the achievement of all public elementary school and secondary school students in the state, and for the achievement of specific groups” such as:
 - “Economically disadvantaged students”
 - “Students from major racial and ethnic groups”
 - “Students with disabilities”
 - “Students with limited English proficiency”
2. The bill “required states by the 2005–2006 school year, to conduct annual academic standards-based assessments in



mathematics and reading or language arts in grades 3 through 8” and “in science at three grade levels by the 2007–2008 school year.”

3. The bill required local education agencies that received funds to identify for school improvement any elementary school or secondary school that failed to make AYP for two consecutive years.
4. The bill required local education agencies to provide students enrolled in a school identified for school improvement with the option to transfer to another public or charter school in the school district that had not been identified for school improvement. The local education agency was required to pay for the transportation of students who exercised the option to transfer.
5. The bill required the local education agency to take the following actions for schools identified for school improvement that **failed to make AYP after the first full year of Corrective Action**:
 - Continue to provide technical assistance to the identified school(s).
 - Continue to provide the option to transfer to another public or charter school in the school district that had not been identified for school improvement.
 - Make available tutoring and other supplemental educational services to eligible low-income students enrolled in the identified school(s).
6. The bill required states to identify for improvement local education agencies that **failed to make AYP after the second full school year of Corrective Action**. The local education agencies had to then create an improvement plan. The bill required states to:
 - “Provide technical or other assistance to the identified local education agency to develop and implement their improvement plans and work with schools needing improvement; and
 - “Implement a system of corrective action for the local education agencies.”
7. The bill required states to continue to provide technical assistance to the identified local education agency and “to



take at least one of the following corrective actions” if the local education agency failed to make AYP after two school years of being identified for improvement:

- Defer program funds or reduce administrative funding.
- Institute and implement a new curriculum and provide professional development to relevant staff.
- Replace local education agency personnel “relevant to AYP failure.”
- Remove selected schools from the jurisdiction of the local education agency and “establish alternative arrangements” for the schools’ “public governance and supervision;” and
- Appoint “a receiver or trustee to administer LEA affairs in place of the superintendent and school board.”

Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015

President Barack Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act into law on December 10, 2015. The Every Student Succeeds Act amended the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and replaced the No Child Left Behind Act. The Every Student Succeeds Act provided more flexibility with Title I-A funding and replaced AYP standards.

Key elements of the Every Student Succeeds Act include:

1. The bill maintained the requirement “for a state to administer student assessments in reading, mathematics, and science, according to an established testing schedule.”
2. The bill required “a state to establish long-term goals for all students and individual subgroups based on:
 - academic achievement as measured by proficiency on required state assessments,” and
 - high school graduation rates.
3. The bill replaced AYP standards and instead required states to “annually measure all students and individual subgroups” according to:
 - academic achievement based on state assessments.
 - high school graduation rates.



- “a measure of student growth or another valid and reliable statewide indicator for schools that are not high schools.”
 - “progress in achieving English proficiency by English learners.”
 - “at least one additional valid and reliable statewide indicator that allows for meaningful differentiation in school performance.”
4. The bill required a state “to develop a methodology for identifying low-performing schools for support and improvement” according to:
 - “the lowest-performing 5% of schools receiving Title 1-A funds.”
 - “high schools failing to graduate at least one-third of students.”
 - “schools that have been required to implement additional targeted support but have not improved within a specified time frame.”
 5. The bill required local education agencies to “develop a plan to improve outcomes.”
 6. The bill required “schools with a consistently underperforming subgroup must develop and implement targeted support and improvement plans.”
 7. The bill required the state to take more rigorous action against schools that continually failed to improve.



THE MARYLAND STATE SCHOOL REPORT CARD

The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 requires states to administer annual student assessments in reading, mathematics, and science in grades 3–8, and once in high school. The bill also requires states to assess English learners' English proficiency progress. The bill requires student growth to be measured based on academic achievement on state assessments, high school graduation rates, and progress in English proficiency by English learners. The state of Maryland administers the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP). The MCAP is comprised of assessments in English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics, and science. These assessments measure students' mastery of Maryland content standards. Maryland also requires local education agencies to administer a social studies assessment in grade 8, alternate assessments to accommodate students with disabilities, and the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment to determine students' readiness for kindergarten.

The Maryland Accountability System provides information about how schools are performing based on students' progress on the MCAP assessments. The Maryland Accountability System uses the Maryland State School Report Card and the local education agency's School Report Card to disseminate information to the public, parents, educators, students, and stakeholders on how students are progressing across the state and at the local level. The Maryland Accountability System is the metric that identifies whether a school needs improvement.

The measurement of student progress is based on the following indicators:

- Academic Achievement (percentage of students performing at or above proficient on the English Language Arts and mathematics assessments),
- Academic Progress (which includes academic growth and credit for completion of a well-rounded curriculum)
- Progress in achieving English Language Proficiency, and
- School Quality and Student Success.

The focus of this report is the Academic Achievement Indicator. The Academic Achievement Indicator is the percentage of students performing at or above proficient on the MCAP reading and





mathematics assessments. According to the Maryland Report Card User Guide, proficient means a student “has the expected knowledge, skills, and practices to demonstrate a command of grade-level academic standards.” Of particular interest are the *Earned Points* section, the *Annual Target* section, and the *Improvement* section. The *Earned Points* section shows the total number of points earned out of the *Total Earned Points*. The *Annual Target* section indicates whether a school met its target for that year. The *Improvement* section indicates if a school improved from the previous year. The *Improvement* section monitors progress over time. Interestingly, a school might not meet its Annual Target but still improve.

The Maryland State School Report Card displays the following sections:

- How did elementary schools do overall?
- How did middle schools do overall?
- How did high schools do overall?
- Percent Proficient
- Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate

This report will examine the Maryland State School Report Card for the following school years: **2017–2018, 2018–2019, 2021–2022, 2022–2023, and 2023–2024**. This report will also examine the following sections of the Maryland State School Report Card:

1. How did elementary schools do overall?

This section shows the indicators for Academic Achievement, Academic Progress, Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency, and School Quality and Student Success. *This report will examine the Academic Achievement indicator for elementary students.*

2. Percent Proficient

This section shows the percentage of students in elementary, middle, and high school who are proficient in Math and English Language Arts, the Annual Target status, and the Improvement status. *This report will examine the Percent Proficient for elementary students.*

MARYLAND STATE SCHOOL REPORT CARD

• 2017–2018 •

How did elementary schools do overall?

Academic Achievement: Out of a possible 20 points, elementary schools in the state of Maryland earned 10.1 points. The annual target *was not met*. The **improvement** status was not provided.

Percent Proficient (Elementary Students):

Math: 40.6%—The **annual target** *was met*. **Improvement status** *was not provided*.

English: 42.2%—The **annual target** *was met*. **Improvement status** *was not provided*.

• 2018–2019 •

How did elementary schools do overall?

Academic Achievement: Out of a possible 20 points, elementary schools in the state of Maryland **earned 10.2 points**. The **annual target** *was not met*. **Improvement** *was met*.

Percent Proficient (Elementary Students):

Math: 40.4%—The **annual target** *was not met*. **Improvement** *was met*.

English: 43.7%—The **annual target** *was met*. **Improvement** *was met*.

• 2021–2022 •

How did elementary schools do overall?

Academic Achievement: Out of a possible 20 points, elementary schools in the state of Maryland earned **9.3 points**. The **annual target** *was not met*. **Improvement** *was not met*.

Percent Proficient (Elementary Students):

Math: 30.5%—The **annual target** *was not met*. **Improvement** *was not met*.

English: 44.9%—The **annual target** *was met*. **Improvement** *was met*.



• 2022–2023 •

How did elementary schools do overall?

Academic Achievement: Out of a possible 20 points, elementary schools in the state of Maryland earned 9.7 points. The **annual target was not met. Improvement was met.**

Percent Proficient (Elementary Students):

Math: 34.1%—The **annual target was not met. Improvement was met.**

English: 46.7%—The **annual target was met. Improvement was met.**

• 2023–2024 •

How did elementary schools do overall?

Academic Achievement: Out of a possible 20 points, elementary schools in the state of Maryland earned 9.8 points. The **annual target was not met. Improvement was met.**

Percent Proficient (Elementary Students):

Math: 34.8%—The **annual target was not met. Improvement was met.**

English: 47.2%—The **annual target was met. Improvement was met.**



MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (MCAP)

Maryland State Results

The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 requires states to administer annual student assessments in reading, mathematics, and science in grades 3–8, and once in high school. The bill also requires states to assess the progress in English proficiency by English learners. The bill requires student growth to be measured based on academic achievement on state assessments, high school graduation rates, and progress in English proficiency by English learners. The state of Maryland administers the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP). The MCAP is comprised of assessments in English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics, and science. These assessments measure students' mastery of Maryland content standards.

The Maryland State MCAP results show the state's **Percent Proficient** status as well as the **Performance Levels**. The **Percent Proficient** status shows the percentage of students who have demonstrated proficiency on the assessment. The **Performance Levels** describe how well students demonstrate proficiency in the tested subject area. The MCAP Performance Levels have undergone some changes in recent years. For example, the MCAP Spring 2019 ELA/Math Score Report Interpretation Guide lists **five** MCAP Performance Levels to include:

- Level 5: Exceeded Expectations
- Level 4: Met Expectations
- Level 3: Approached Expectations
- Level 2: Partially Met Expectations
- Level 1: Did Not Yet Meet Expectations

The MCAP Spring 2021–2022, 2023, and 2024 ELA/Math Score Report Interpretation Guide, lists **four** MCAP Performance Levels to include:

- Level 4: Distinguished Learner
- Level 3: Proficient Learner
- Level 2: Developing Learner
- Level 1: Beginning Learner



For each Performance Level, there is a Performance Level Descriptor which, according to the MCAP Score Report Interpretation Guide, describes “the knowledge, skills, and practices which students should know and be able to demonstrate at each performance level in each content area.”

For this report, the Maryland State MCAP English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics results for Grade 4 elementary students during the 2019, 2022, 2023, and 2024 school years will be examined.

Maryland State MCAP Results

2019 Grade 4 English Language Arts Percent Proficient: 43.6%

Performance Levels:

- Level 5 (Exceeded Expectations) 11.4%
- Level 4 (Distinguished Learner) 32.2%
- Level 3 (Proficient Learner) 24%
- Level 2 (Developing Learner) 17.5%
- Level 1 (Beginning Learner) 14.9%

**Note: PL 4 and PL 5 were combined to achieve 43.6%*

2019 Grade 4 Mathematics Percent Proficient: 39.4%

Performance Levels:

- Level 5 (Exceeded Expectations) 5.4%
- Level 4 (Distinguished Learner) 34.0%
- Level 3 (Proficient Learner) 25.4%
- Level 2 (Developing Learner) 20.1%
- Level 1 (Beginning Learner) 15.0%

**Note: PL 4 and PL 5 were combined to achieve 39.4%*



Maryland State MCAP Results

2022 Grade 4 English Language Arts Percent Proficient: 46.3%

Performance Levels

- Level 4 (Distinguished Learner) 5.6%
- Level 3 (Proficient Learner) 40.7%
- Level 2 (Developing Learner) 40.9%
- Level 1 (Beginning Learner) 12.8%

**Note: PL 3 and PL 4 were combined to achieve 46.3% **

2022 Grade 4 Mathematics Percent Proficient: 28.2%

Performance Levels

- Level 4 (Distinguished Learner) 3.8%
- Level 3 (Proficient Learner) 24.4%
- Level 2 (Developing Learner) 44.8%
- Level 1 (Beginning Learner) 27.0%

**Note: PL 3 and PL 4 were combined to achieve 28.2%*

Maryland State MCAP Results

2023 Grade 4 English Language Arts Percent Proficient: 48.7%

Performance Levels

- Level 4 (Distinguished Learner) 7.3%
- Level 3 (Proficient Learner) 41.3%
- Level 2 (Developing Learner) 40.1%
- Level 1 (Beginning Learner) 11.2%

**Note: PL 3 and PL 4 were combined to achieve 48.7% **



2023 Grade 4 Mathematics
Percent Proficient: 32.2%

Performance Levels

- Level 4 (Distinguished Learner) 3.4%
- Level 3 (Proficient Learner) 28.9%
- Level 2 (Developing Learner) 43.4%
- Level 1 (Beginning Learner) 24.4%

**Note: PL 3 and PL 4 were combined to achieve 32.2% **

Maryland State MCAP Results

2024 Grade 4 English Language Arts
Percent Proficient: 49.3%

Performance Levels

- Level 4 (Distinguished Learner) 5.9%
- Level 3 (Proficient Learner) 43.4%
- Level 2 (Developing Learner) 38.7%
- Level 1 (Beginning Learner) 12.0%

**Note: PL 3 and PL 4 were combined to achieve the 49.3% **

2024 Grade 4 Mathematics
Percent Proficient: 32.8%

Performance Levels

- Level 4 (Distinguished Learner) 4.0%
- Level 3 (Proficient Learner) 28.8%
- Level 2 (Developing Learner) 44.3%
- Level 1 (Beginning Learner) 22.9%

Note: PL 3 and PL 4 were combined to achieve the 32.8%



NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is known as the Nation's Report Card. The NAEP assesses the progress of students in grades 4, 8, and 12 in reading and math every two years and provides data as to what students should know and be able to do. Other subject matter, including Science, U.S. History, Civics, and Geography, are assessed every few years. The NAEP provides information as to what students should know and be able to do based on achievement levels, such as Advanced, Proficient, and Basic Scale Scores.

The National Assessment Governing Board Achievement Levels Procedures Manual (June 2020) defines NAEP achievement levels as follows:

- **NAEP Basic:** This level denotes partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for performance at the NAEP Proficient level.
- **NAEP Proficient:** This level represents solid academic performance for each NAEP assessment. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including subject-matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real-world situations, and analytical skills appropriate to the subject matter.
- **NAEP Advanced:** This level signifies superior performance beyond NAEP Proficient.

According to the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Scale Scores represent how students performed on each assessment.

This report will examine the National Assessment of Educational Progress for Grade 4 reading results for 2013, 2015, 2019, and 2022. These years will be examined to:

1. Highlight Maryland's performance on the NAEP Grade 4 reading assessment.
2. Reveal the decline in Maryland's NAEP Grade 4 reading scale scores over time.
3. Compare NAEP Grade 4 2019 and 2022 reading results to Maryland State MCAP 2019 and 2022 Grade 4 English Language Arts results.



***Note:** *There are no mathematics scale scores for fourth-grade public school students in Maryland for 2013, 2015, 2019, and 2022, as Maryland may not have participated in the NAEP assessment for those years or may not have met the minimum participation guideline for those years.*

NAEP Reading Average Scores for Fourth-Grade Public School Students in Maryland.

Assessment Year	Scale Score	Achievement Level
2013	232	NAEP Basic
2015	223	NAEP Basic
2017	225	NAEP Basic
2019	220	NAEP Basic
2022	212	NAEP Basic



CONCLUSIONS

Results of the Maryland State School Report Card from 2017–2018 to 2023–2024 reveal:

Academic Achievement

- Out of a possible 20 points, the earned points of elementary schools in the state of Maryland decreased from 10.1 points in 2017–2018 (the annual target was not met) to 9.8 points in 2023–2024 (the annual target was not met).

Percent Proficient:

- **English:** Percent Proficient increased from 42% in 2017–2018 (annual target was met) to 47.2% in 2023–2024 (annual target was met).
- **Mathematics:** Percent Proficient decreased from 40.6% in 2017–2018 (annual target was met) to 34.8% in 2023–2024 (annual target was not met).

Results of the Maryland State MCAP results for Grade 4 English Language Arts from 2019–2024 reveal:

- Percent Proficient increased from 43.6% in 2019 to 49.3% in 2024.
- Level 2 Developing Learner increased from 17.5% in 2019 to 38.7% in 2024.
- Level 1 Beginning Learner decreased from 14.9% in 2019 to 12.0% in 2024.

Results of the Maryland State MCAP results for Grade 4 mathematics from 2019–2024 reveal:

- Percent Proficient decreased from 39.4% in 2019 to 32.8% in 2024.
- Level 2 Developing Learner increased from 20.1% in 2019 to 44.3% in 2024.
- Level 1 Beginning Learner increased from 15.0% in 2019 to 22.9% in 2024.

Results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading average scores for 4th-grade public school students in Maryland reveal:



1. Scale scores decreased from 232 in 2013 to 212 in 2022.
2. Achievement levels have remained at NAEP Basic for the years 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, and 2022.

The Every Student Succeeds Act requires states to develop a plan for identifying low-performing schools for support and improvement according to the lowest-performing 5% of schools receiving Title 1-A funds. Schools are identified for improvement under Maryland's Comprehensive Support Improvement (CSI). Once identified, schools receive State and local support for improvement. The CSI schools are identified every three years.

Additionally, The Every Student Succeeds Act requires targeted support and improvement plans to be implemented for schools with consistently underperforming subgroups and to take more rigorous action against schools that continually fail to improve. The Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) Schools consist of schools that meet the requirement of having at least one student subgroup performing as low as the lowest performing 5% of Title 1 schools. The ATSI schools are identified every three years.

Part Two of *Is Every Student Succeeding?* will analyze Maryland's 2022–2023 Comprehensive Support Improvement (CSI) and Maryland's 2022–2023 Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) plans to follow up on the progress schools identified for CSI intervention are making and to follow up on the progress schools identified for ATSI intervention are making. Specifically, the school districts with the largest number of schools identified for ATSI intervention in 2022–2023 will be examined. These schools include Prince George's County (with 52 schools identified for ATSI), Baltimore County (with 49 schools identified for ATSI), and Montgomery County (with 30 schools identified for ATSI). ■



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Biography

Dr. Belinda L. Spears is a wife, mother, stepmother, mother-in-law, grandmother, sister, auntie, an educator, business owner, and an author. She has taught at the elementary school level, middle school level, high school level, as well as adult basic education. Dr. Spears is the author of *Watch Me Practice Grade 1 Math Workbook*, *Watch Me Practice Grade 2 Math Workbook*, and *Watch Me Practice Grade 3 Math Workbook*. She is an advocate for preparing children at the elementary level to master foundational skills in mathematics, reading, and writing. Dr. Spears founded B. L. Academic Services, LLC, to provide academic support for struggling students in mathematics, reading, and writing. Dr. Spears is also the owner of *Watch Me Practice Series™*, which is dedicated to creating academic resources to support the academic progress of students at the elementary level in the areas of mathematics, reading, and writing. Dr. Spears' *Is Every Student Succeeding?* initiative examines the academic achievement progress of students in elementary public schools. Part One of *Is Every Student Succeeding?* examines the state of proficiency of elementary schools in the state of Maryland.

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