

SOUTHWEST HIGH SCHOOL

Understanding our Designation under the North Star Accountability System

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

The **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)** is the most recent re-authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, signed into law by President Barack Obama in 2015. ESSA requires states to develop a data-driven system for holding schools and districts accountable for providing a fair, equitable, and high-quality education to all students. Under ESSA, Minnesota established the **North Star Excellence and Equity System** to ensure *all schools are working well for all students*.

North Star Excellence and Equity System

The goal of this new system is to make sure schools are meeting the needs of each student they serve. With this system, some schools are being identified for support and improvement because they can use assistance in closing achievement gaps and improving academic outcomes for all students. Schools are being identified for support and improvement for the first time this school year, and the designation will last for three years.

Our School's Designation

Under the North Star accountability system, our school has been identified for: Comprehensive support and improvement.

We have been identified for this level of support and improvement because the average four-year graduation rate for the classes of 2015, 2016, and 2017 was below 67% for the following student groups:

- Students who receive special education services

Our School's Recognition

Under the North Star accountability system, our school is also being recognized because our Southwest School-within-a-School site is in the top 5% of schools for our overall four-year graduation rate and specifically for students who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

Support & Improvement Process

Schools identified for support and improvement under North Star need to notify families and then engage families and school community stakeholders in:

- Completing a comprehensive needs assessment looking at the reasons why our school was identified
- Developing an improvement plan addressing the root causes behind low student achievement or gaps, which must include at least one strategy backed by rigorous research showing its effectiveness
- Implementing and monitoring the improvement plan once it goes into effect

Family & Community Engagement

We need our staff, families, and community members involved in our needs assessment and improvement plan development process. We invite you to get involved as we work to ensure all students are achieving high levels of success at our school. If you'd like to get involved, please reach out to us by calling 612.668.3030.