



Nancy S. Grasmick
State Superintendent of Schools

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January 14, 2010

Dr. Zollie Stevenson, Director
Office of Student Achievement and School Accountability
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
United States Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Room 3W230
Washington, D.C. 20202-6132

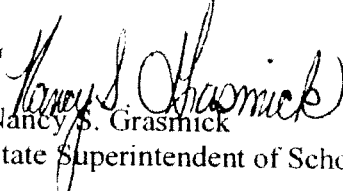
Dear Dr. Stevenson:

Maryland has reviewed the State's definition and calculation of Graduation Rate for Adequate Yearly Progress determinations for the 2009-2010 school year and is requesting approval to implement new growth targets as measures for schools that do not achieve the annual Graduation Rate statewide target for all schools. The rationale and plan for establishing new growth targets are described in the accompanying Excel template.

We look forward to the results of the peer review of the Maryland plan in February and are available at your convenience to answer questions concerning our submission. Dr. Ronald Peiffer, Deputy State Superintendent for Academic Policy, and Sandy Shepherd, Program Specialist in the Office of Academic Policy, are the point persons for this submission. Both may be reached at 410-767-0473.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this Maryland plan.

Sincerely,


Nancy S. Grasmick
State Superintendent of Schools

c: Victoria Hammer

Attachm Evidence the state must submit related to its graduation rate

State: Maryland

Directions: Fill out each applicable cell in this file, even if the information is available in the Accountability Workbook

Section 1. The graduation rate definition that the state will use to determine AYP based on school year 2009-10 assessment results. [34 C.F.R. § 200.19(b)(6)(i)(A)]

<p>A. Provide the actual formula that will be used.</p>	<p>NCES Leaver Rate: The percentage of students who received a Maryland high school diploma during the reported school year. This is a estimated cohort rate calculated by dividing the number of high school graduates by the sum of the dropouts for grades 9 through 12, respectively, in consecutive years, plus the number of high school graduates. This formula has been approved by USDE and is consistent with Maryland's Accountability Workbook. (http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/NR/rdonlyres/0146EDA2-5F91-47DD-9A84-16164BDEA25C/20170/Acct_workbk_revisd_052009.doc question 7.1 on page 44).</p>		
<p>B. Provide a description of the students who will be counted in the numerator and denominator for that formula.</p>	<p>Numerator: number of students achieving a regular high school diploma (excluding special education certificates, GED's) Denominator: number of students achieving a regular high school diploma (excluding special education certificates, GED's) plus sum of dropouts for grades 9 through 12 in consecutive years, plus number of high school graduates.</p>		
<p>C. Does the rate include only first-time 9th-graders? If Yes, how does the state ensure this? If No, what steps is the state taking to be able to do this and when will the state have that capacity?</p>	<p>Yes: <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Note: Maryland is implementing a Longitudinal Data System and has been collecting data and tracking students who entered grade 9 in 2007-08. State will first use this cohort graduation rate for AYP for 2011. See Section 2 for details.</p>
<p>D. Are the data lagged?</p>	<p>Yes: <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Note:</p>
<p>E. Are any students given extra time to attain a regular diploma (e.g., students with disabilities)? (See note 1E below.)</p>	<p>Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>No: <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Note: A student may remain in school if he/she is working to meet requirements for a high school diploma until age 21 (COMAR 13A.02.06.02B(4), COMAR 13A.02.06.03A(1), and subsection 7-101(a) of the Annotated Code of Maryland. http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/comar.aspx and http://michie.lexisnexis.com/maryland/lpext.dll?f=templates&fn=main-h.htm&cp</p>
<p>(1) If Yes, what students are given extra time and how long are they given?</p>	<p>A student may remain in school if he/she is working to meet requirements for a high school diploma until age 21 (COMAR 13A.02.06.02B(4), COMAR 13A.02.06.03A(1), and subsection 7-101(a) of the Annotated Code of Maryland.</p>		
<p>F. Confirm that only students attaining a regular diploma are counted as graduates.</p>	<p>Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>No: <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Note:</p>
<p>(1) How does the state define a "regular diploma"?</p>	<p>Maryland High School Diploma (no other diploma is granted), COMAR 13A.03.02.01-12</p>		
<p>(2) Does the state provide other types of diplomas or certificates? What are they? How are students who earn such alternate diplomas or certificates included in the graduation rate?</p>	<p>(2) No other diplomas are granted for students enrolled in regular high school programs. Special education students who receive certificates are not included in the calculation of graduation rate.</p>		
<p>(3) How are GED recipients included in the graduation rate? Can the rate be calculated for every school and district with a grade 12 that awards diplomas?</p>	<p>They are NOT included.</p>		
<p>Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>No: <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Note: http://mdreportcard.org/</p>	

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<p>H. Can the rate be disaggregated at the school and district level for calculating whether every relevant subgroup (students from each major racial and ethnic group, economically disadvantaged students, limited English proficient students, and students with disabilities) made AYP through Safe Harbor?</p> <p>I. If the rate is a longitudinal adjusted-cohort model, how does the state track emigrés, transfers, and deceased students? What guidance does it provide to its districts?</p>	<p>Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Note: http://mdreportcard.org/</p>
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Section 2. A description of the progress the state is making toward meeting the deadline for calculating and reporting the four-year graduation rate on report cards providing assessment results for the 2010-2011 school year. [34 C.F.R. § 200.19(b)(6)(i)(B)]

<p>A. When was the data tracking system fully operational? What was the first 9th-grade class to be included in the data tracking system?</p>	<p>Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Note: Longitudinal Data System is being implemented and will be used for the first time in 2011 to report cohort graduation rate for students who entered grade 9 in the 2007-08 school year.</p>
<p>B. Does the data tracking system contain information to identify each student by racial and ethnic group and by gender, as well as information to identify whether the student is a student with a disability, a limited English proficient student, an economically disadvantaged student, or a migrant student?</p> <p>C. What progress has the state made on the ten essential elements noted by the Data Quality Campaign? (Specify whether the state has completed each element below and, if not, what steps the state is taking to be able to complete the element and when the state will have that capacity.)</p>	<p>Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Note: Reference the 2008 Maryland Student Records System Manual, Sections B-2, B-3, C-2, and C-4 found at http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/NR/rdonlyres/FCB60C1D-6CC2-4270-BDAA-153D67247324/17625/2008_MD_Student_Records_Manual_808.pdf</p> <p>1. Governor's P-20 Plan, reference Section II Assurance (b): Improving Collection and Use of Data available at http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/grad2. 2008 Maryland Student Records System Manual, reference Sections C6-C12 found at http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/NR/rdonlyres/FCB60C1D-6CC2-4270-BDAA-153D67247324/17625/2008_MD_Student_Records_Manual_808.pdf; 3. Grant award link - http://nces.ed.gov/Programs/SLDS/state.asp?stateabbr=MD. These links are applicable to Sections C(1) - (8).</p>
<p>(1) Statewide student identifier</p>	<p>Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Note: Maryland implemented a statewide unique student identifier in the 2007-2008 school year and utilizes this unique identifier within our SLDS to link student level data across years, programs and assessments.</p>
<p>(2) Student-level enrollment data</p>	<p>Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Note: Maryland has captured student level enrollment, demographic and program participation data for two decades. We plan on linking these data in a newly defined data warehouse funded through an SLDS federal grant award received in June 2009.</p>
<p>(3) Student-level test data</p>	<p>Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Note: Maryland has captured student level enrollment, demographic and program participation data for two decades. We plan on linking these data in a newly defined data warehouse funded through an SLDS federal grant award received in June 2009.</p>

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	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>	Note:
(4) Information on untested students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Beginning in the 2007-2008 school year Maryland began capturing information on students not tested by grade and by subject and currently maintains these data in our legacy education data warehouse. We plan on linking these data in a newly defined data warehouse funded through an SLDS federal grant award received in June 2009.
(5) Statewide teacher identifier with a teacher-student match	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maryland will begin the assignment of a statewide unique teacher identifier to be assigned to all teachers employed by the Summer of 2010. The development work is currently under way with our technology vendor. Data capture of student scheduling and teacher assignments are planned along with the physical linking of teacher and student data as part of our outcomes associated with our SLDS federal grant request submitted in November 2009. See http://mlis.state.md.us/2009rs/chapters_noln/Ch_406_hb0587T.pdf
(6) Student-level course completion (transcript) data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maryland plans a standardized course code assignment across the state that aligns with the statewide curriculum as part of the outcomes associated with our SLDS federal grant award received in June 2009. The grant application milestones for this element are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop course codes, grades, scheduling data capture with teacher assignment; Dec 2010 and • Implement student-level transcript information; Aug 2011 Quarterly MS Project Reports posted on Http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/arra/sfsf2 showing the tasks completed, progress and timeline.
(7) Student-level SAT, ACT, and Advanced Placement exam data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maryland has the AP, SAT, PSAT and ACT individual student results and assigned statewide unique student identifiers and plans on linking these data in a newly defined data warehouse funded through an SLDS federal grant award received in June 2009.
(8) Student-level graduation and dropout data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maryland has captured student level exit, transfer, and dropout student level information for P12 students for over two decades. These data are planned to be linked in our newly defined data warehouse funded through an SLDS federal grant award received in June 2009. The continuation of our P12 students to post secondary institution information is planned in our SLDS federal grant request submitted in November 2009 to complete our P20 longitudinal data system. Maryland anticipates approval of the grant request in May 2010.

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<p>(9) Ability to match student-level P-12 and higher education data</p>	<p>Yes:</p>	<p>No: X</p>	<p>Note: Work with higher education (Maryland Higher Education Commission, University System of Maryland, and State Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation) began in summer 2009. Maryland submitted a request for P-20 Workforce grant to USDE in November 2009 and is anticipating approval in May 2010. Maryland has collected and reported remedial coursework data for students attending Maryland postsecondary institutions for many years. Maryland's P20 system is planned and described in detail in our SLDS federal grant request submitted in November 2009 that will enhance the ability to communicate with postsecondary data systems and obtain data on student transitions to postsecondary. Maryland's P20 system is planned and described in detail in our SLDS federal grant request Section II submitted in November 2009 that will give us the ability to communicate with postsecondary data systems to obtain the data necessary to address preparation/alignment for student success in postsecondary education. P-20 Workforce Plan for Linking Student Data available at http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/grad.</p>
<p>(10) State data audit system</p>	<p>Yes: X</p>	<p>No:</p>	<p>Note: Maryland has a strong state data audit system for assessing data quality, validity and reliability for a decade. We continue to enhance our system and improve our processes. Quality assurance steps are performed against the data utilizing tools in two separate environments and cross checking the results to ensure they are consistent. Five years of trend data are analyzed to ensure the consistency and statistical validity of the data.</p>

Section 3. The state's graduation rate goal and annual targets beginning with the 2009-2010 school year. An explanation of how the state's graduation rate goal represents the rate the state expects all high schools in the state to meet and how the state's annual targets demonstrate continuous and substantial improvement from the prior year toward meeting or exceeding the state's goal. [34 C.F.R. § 200.19(b)(6)(i)(C) and (D)]

<p>A. What is the single, statewide goal for the graduation rate used in AYP determinations based on 2009-10 assessment results? (See note 3A below.)</p>	<p>90.0% is the goal for 2014. The annual target for 2010 is 85.5%. See Maryland's Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook page 44. Maryland will use an N of 30 for determining the grad rate for the all students group for 2010 and anticipates using an N of 30 for disaggregated subgroups in determining AYP based on assessments to be administered in 2011-2012.</p>
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B. Provide a rationale for the selection of the graduation rate goal and how it represents the rate the state expects all high schools in the state to meet.

Maryland has had graduation rate standards since 1991. The standards were set using a stakeholder engagement process and a modified Delphi process using actual graduation rate data. The same process as again in 2003 to ensure the standards were achievable. A graduation rate goal of 90% was set in 2003 based on a starting point of 81%. The rate holds schools to reasonable targets each year, while encouraging progress towards the 90% goal in 2014. The starting point was set by ranking all schools by graduation rate and counting student enrollment, beginning in the lowest ranking school, until the 20th percentile (20% of total students enrolled) was reached. The graduation rate for the school in which the 20th percentile in enrollment fell was the starting point for graduation rate. The graduation rate goal will be reset for 2011 based on 2010 and 2011 adjusted cohort data, again using actual data and the modified Delphi process.

C. What are the targets for high schools that do not meet the graduation rate goal?
 (See note 3C below.)

Schools that do not make the 2010 graduation rate will have two other possible ways to make the target for AYP. First, the graduation rates for the school for 2008, 2009, and 2010 will be averaged. If the average equals or exceeds the 2010 graduation rate target, the school will meet the 2010 target for graduation rate. Second, new growth target rules are established for 2010 for schools that do not make the graduation rate or meet the goal using the 3-year averaging. Growth targets, based on improvement from the prior year, will be set annually. A school's growth in 2010 will be measured against the school's graduation rate for 2009 to determine if the school is on a trajectory to meet the 90% target by 2014. The trajectory is determined mathematically according to the distance the 2010 graduation rate is from the 2014 goal divided by the number of years left to achieve the goal (four years). Schools are categorized into four equal quarters according to the gap to the goal. If the school falls short of the 2010 expected growth trajectory, then it does not meet the graduation rate target for that year. The growth rate target for schools in a quarter is the incremental change the highest performing school in the quarter needs to achieve annually to reach the State goal by 2014. All schools in a quarter have the same growth target. See <http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/grad>.

(1) Do the targets vary by school or subgroup?
 If Yes, how?
 What criteria were used to set the differing targets?

Yes: X

No:

Not:

Growth targets, based on improvement from the prior year, will be set annually. A school's growth in 2010 will be measured against the school's graduation rate for 2009 to determine if the school is on a trajectory to meet the 90% target by 2014. The trajectory is determined mathematically according to the distance the 2010 graduation rate is from the 2014 goal divided by the number of years left to achieve the goal (four years). Schools are categorized into four groups according to the gap to the goal. If the school falls short of the 2010 expected growth trajectory, then it does not meet the graduation rate target for that year. For 2010, targets do not vary by subgroup.

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(2) Provide examples for high schools with varying graduation rates and how the targets will apply.

Maryland's graduation rate (GR) plan was developed by the MSDE with educator input and reviewed by the State Board of Education and local superintendents. Utilizing the plan and applying it to Maryland's three examples cited in Section 4A, Smithsburg Sr. High School — grad rate 97.92 (90%ile); Loch Raven High School — grad rate 88.01 (50%ile); Wicomico County Evening High School — grad rate 23.53 (10%ile), would incur the following: Since Smithsburg Sr. High school's graduation rate (97.92%) met the graduation target for 2009-10 of 85.5%, they would not be affected by Maryland's plan. Loch Raven High School with a graduation rate of 88.01% also met the 2009-10 target of 85.5% and would not be affected by Maryland's plan. Wicomico County Evening High School with a graduation rate of 23.53% did NOT meet the 2009-10 graduation rate target and would be affected by Maryland's plan assuming they did not meet the target using three year averaging. Under Maryland's plan, IF the 2009 graduation rate of schools not attaining the grad rate annual target ranged from 5.5% to 85.5%, the difference would be divided into four equal quarters: 5.5% to 25.49%, 25.5% to 45.49%, 45.5% to 65.49%, and 65.5% to 85.49%. The growth target for schools in each quarter is the incremental change needed by the highest performing school in each quarter to achieve the 2014 State graduation goal. Using this example, Wicomico County Evening HS would fall in the lowest (4th) quarter of schools with grad rates of 5.5% to 25.49%. The highest performing school in the same quarter needs to make 12.90 points to be on a trajectory to achieve the 2014 State graduation goal. Therefore, in this example, Wicomico County Evening HS would need to improve the school's grad rate by a minimum of 12.90 points to make the growth target for grad rate for the 2009-2010 school year. The graduation growth target for schools in each quarter would be recalculated annually. Recalculating annually will provide incentive for schools struggling to meet the AYP graduation rate target.

D. Provide a rationale for the selection of the annual targets and how they demonstrate continuous and substantial improvement from the prior year toward meeting or exceeding the state's goal.

Growth targets, based on improvement from the prior year, will be set annually. A school's growth in 2010 will be measured against the school's graduation rate for 2009 to determine if the school is on a trajectory to meet the 90% target by 2014. The trajectory is determined mathematically according to the distance the 2010 graduation rate is from the 2014 goal divided by the number of years left to achieve the goal (four years). Schools are categorized into four groups according to the gap to the goal. If the school falls short of the 2010 expected growth trajectory, then it does not meet the graduation rate target for that year. This process was reviewed with the Maryland State Board of Education and with local school system superintendents. The process sets realistic but highly challenging targets each year and allows for recalculations based on the existing gap.

Section 4. The graduation rate for the most recent school year of the high school at the 10th percentile, the 50th percentile, and the 90th percentile in the state, ranked in terms of graduation rate. [34 C.F.R. § 200.19(b)(6)(i)(E)]

A. Provide the name and the graduation rate for the high school at the 10th percentile, the 50th percentile, and the 90th percentile in the state, ranked in terms of graduation rate. (See note 4A below.)

Smithsburg Sr. High School — grad rate 97.92 (90%ile); Loch Raven High School — grad rate 88.01 (50%ile); Wicomico County Evening High School — grad rate 23.53 (10%ile)

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Section 5. If the state is proposing to use an extended-year adjusted-cohort graduation rate or rates in AYP determinations based on assessments administered in 2009-10, a description of how it will use that rate with its four-year adjusted-cohort graduation rate to determine whether its schools and LEAs have made AYP. [34 C.F.R. § 200.19(b)(6)(i)(F)]

	Yes:	No: X	Note:
<p>A. Does the state propose to use more than one extended-year adjusted-cohort rate in AYP determinations? How many extended-year adjusted-cohort graduation rates does the state propose to use? Describe each one (e.g., a five-year and a six-year rate).</p>		X	
<p>B. For each proposed extended-year adjusted cohort rate:</p>			
<p>(1) Provide the actual formula that will be used.</p>			
<p>(2) Confirm that the rate conforms to the regulatory requirement for an adjusted-cohort graduation rate (i.e., does the state track émigrés, transfers, and deceased students, including those who enter or leave the school during the extended year or years? What guidance does it provide to its districts on how to do this?).</p>			
<p>(3) Provide a description of the students who will be in the numerator and denominator for that formula.</p>			
<p>(4) Are the data lagged?</p>			
<p>C. Submit evidence that the state's data system can support the extended-year graduation rates requested (i.e., that the longitudinal system has collected data for the required number of years to produce graduation rates for five years or more, if applicable).</p>			
<p>D. Confirm that only students receiving a regular diploma are counted as graduates.</p>			
<p>(1) Does the state provide other types of diplomas or certificates? What are they? How are students who receive such alternate diplomas or certificates included in the graduation rate?</p>			
<p>(2) How are GED recipients included in the graduation rate?</p>			
<p>E. Can the rate be calculated for every school and district with a grade 12 that awards diplomas?</p>			They are Not included
<p>F. Can the rate be disaggregated at the school and district level for calculating whether every relevant subgroup made AYP via Safe Harbor?</p>			
<p>G. Confirm that the extended-year rate or rates use the same goal as the four-year rate.</p>			
<p>H. Do the targets for the extended-year rate or rates differ from the four-year graduation rate? If so:</p>			
<p>(1) Do the targets vary by school or subgroup? If so, how?</p>			
<p>What criteria were used to set the differing targets?</p>			

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<p>(2) Provide examples for high schools with varying graduation rates and how the targets will apply.</p>	
<p>(3) Provide a rationale for the selection of the annual targets and how they demonstrate continuous and substantial improvement from the prior year toward meeting or exceeding the state's goal.</p>	
<p>1. How will the state use the extended graduation rate (or rates) in AYP determinations?</p>	
<p>(1) Provide an example of how a school might calculate whether it was making adequate yearly progress using the four-year and extended-year adjusted-cohort graduation rates.</p>	

Notes:

- 1E.** Cohort reassignment is not permitted in the four-year adjusted-cohort graduation rate (but may be incorporated in the transitional graduation rate). When the state is using an adjusted-cohort rate, it may instead elect to calculate an extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate or rates.
- 3A.** This is the ultimate goal. It does not increase over time. It does not vary for any school. It should be the rate the state expects all high schools in the state to meet.
- 3C.** These targets may vary by school and district and over time. If the targets do vary, the state must clearly explain how the targets will be applied and the rules that will be used to determine whether the school or district is making adequate yearly progress.
- 4A.** These data should represent the most recently available data (optimally, graduates for the class of 2009) using the rate described in 1A above.

**Proposed Procedures for Calculating Graduation Rate
for Adequate Yearly Progress**

January 12, 2010

**Approved by Maryland State Board of Education December 2009
for submission to USDE**

Graduation Rate Calculations for Adequate Yearly Progress

Maryland's *Consolidated State Accountability Plan* outlines the assessments and the technical aspects of the State's accountability system that fulfill the federal requirements for No Child Left Behind. Annually, states are permitted to request adjustments to their *Consolidated State Accountability Plans* as they revise policies and procedures to comply with changing regulations issued by the United States Department of Education (USDE).

Final approval from USDE is required before state modifications can be instituted. The changes for 2010 (outlined below) focus mainly on changes in Graduation Rate and the calculation of the Graduation Rate for the purposes of determining and reporting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). These changes are necessary to allow Maryland to maintain its fully approved status with the U.S. Department of Education.

Maryland's request includes:

- Changes that will be effective for the 2010 results
- Plans for those changes that will be applied for the 2011 results as the State transitions to the four-year Graduation Rate using the longitudinal data system, and
- The plan that will be implemented for 2012 and subsequent years.

The requested changes in Maryland's *Consolidated State Accountability Plan*, when approved by USDE, will help us gauge the progress of our schools and school systems and be compliant with the non-regulatory guidance issued by USDE in December 2008.

Specifically, the requests are as follows:

2010 Graduation Rate Results

The Graduation Rate for 2010 will continue to be based on the same National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) calculation formula that Maryland has used since NCLB requirements were first implemented. This rate is also known as the Leaver Rate.

The 2010 Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) will remain at 85.50% of students graduating-- the same graduation rate target used in 2008 and 2009, per federal rules in place at the time.

The 2008 Federal non-regulatory guidance requires states to meet new growth target rules for schools, LEA's, and the State beginning with the 2010 results. The growth target provides a way for schools, LEA's and the State to achieve annual AYP calculation requirements for Graduation Rate based on improvement from the prior year. Federal regulations require that growth targets "reflect continuous and substantial improvement from the prior year toward meeting or exceeding the State's Graduation Rate goal." Growth targets will be set annually.

Maryland's previous single growth target will be replaced with new 2010 growth targets based on the distance between the school's or school system's 2009 Graduation Rate and the 2014 goal of 90%.

The determination of whether or not a school or school system achieves the annual Graduation Rate target for AYP will be made based on the following three questions:

1. **Did the school achieve the annual target?**

If the school achieves the annual graduation rate target in 2010 (85.5%), then it is determined that the AYP graduation target is met for the year. If the school falls short of the annual target (85.5%) in 2010, then proceed to the second question.

2. **Did the average of the graduation rates for 2008, 2009, and 2010 equal or exceed the 2010 graduation rate target?**

If the average meets or exceeds the annual target (85.5%), then it is determined that the AYP graduation target is met for the year. *(This second step has been inserted in the determination because federal rules recognize that variations in graduation rate can occur across years, with a desire to "smooth" those variations from year to year.)*

If the three-year average graduation rate falls short of the annual target (85.5%), then proceed to the third question.

3. **Did the school's graduation rate improve from 2009 to 2010 at a rate that puts it on the right trajectory to achieve the 2014 goal of 90% graduation rate?**

If the school is determined to be on course to meet the 90% goal, then it is determined that the AYP graduation rate target is met for the year. *(The trajectory is determined mathematically according to the distance the 2010 graduation rate is from the 2014 goal divided by the number of years left to achieve the goal (four years). Schools are categorized into four groups according to the gap to the goal to simplify calculations.)*

If the school falls short of the 2010 expected growth target, then it is determined that the school does not meet the AYP graduation target for that year.

The AYP Graduation Rate growth rate targets for 2010 will be transitional as Maryland moves toward 2011 when the state will have the ability with four years of data to produce a cohort Graduation Rate using the longitudinal data system.

2011 Graduation Rate Results

Accountability. For 2011, Maryland expects that the Graduation Rate will include 2011 four-year graduates and three-year graduates from 2010 who entered grade nine in the 2007-08 school year, the same cohort. In addition, Maryland will report and use a combined and weighted four-year/five-year Graduation Rate for accountability which will include students who graduated in five years. Since data from 2010 will not be comparable, it will not be possible to calculate a one-year gain for growth.

A review and articulation process will be used to set standards for 2011—the Graduation Rate goal – for schools, LEA's, and the State.

Maryland will establish 2012 growth targets for subgroups based on the 2011 results, enabling subgroups to meet AYP for Graduation Rate, beginning in 2012, by demonstrating at least a specified level of improvement over the previous year. The state will also continue to calculate and publish results using the Leaver Rate because of the historical trend data it will provide. (It is

likely that USDE will provide some additional guidance prior to 2011 that will necessitate updating State plans for AYP determinations prior to that point.)

2012 Graduation Rate Results

Accountability. For results in 2012 and subsequent years for accountability, Maryland expects to use a weighted Graduation Rate that will include the percentage of students who graduate from secondary school with a regular diploma at the end of four years, three-year graduates who were part of the same cohort entering grade nine, and five-year graduates. The state also expects to use disaggregated Graduation Rates in the calculation of AYP for schools, LEA's, and the State as required by USDE. Growth targets for subgroups, based on the 2011 results, will enable subgroups to meet AYP for Graduation Rate by demonstrating at least a specified level of improvement over the previous year.

Reporting. Maryland will report the Leaver Rate, the Four-Year Rate, and the Extended Five-Year Rate, all in aggregated and disaggregated form. MSDE is prepared to make technical adjustments to the 2012 plan for submission to USDE for approval in advance of the summer of 2012.