Exiting from Additional Targeted Support (ATS) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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Additional Targeted Support (ATS) – Identification

What is Additional Targeted Support (ATS)?

The federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, requires states to identify schools for three categories of support: Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI), Additional Targeted Support (ATS), and Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI). Additional Targeted Support is provided for schools with student subgroups performing in the bottom 5% overall.

How are schools identified for Additional Targeted Support (ATS)?

Each state has its own federally approved school accountability system as part of ESSA. The Michigan School Index is Michigan's system. Based on the Michigan School Index results, schools are identified for Additional Targeted Support every six years. A school is identified for ATS if they have **both**:

- One or more student subgroups performing in the bottom 5% overall.
- **AND** One or more student subgroups consistently underperforming across components (bottom 25% for each component applicable to that student subgroup in Michigan's School Index system).

ATS - Exit Criteria

How often are schools eligible to exit from ATS?

ATS exits occur every six years, with an option for early exit from ATS after three years.

- 2024-25 will be the only opportunity for the 2022 ATS cohort to exit early from ATS status.
- 2027-28 will be the final opportunity for the 2022 ATS cohort to exit from ATS status.

What criteria must schools meet to exit from ATS?

To exit ATS (after either three years or six years), schools must meet the following criteria:

- The student group(s) previously identified for ATS have an overall subgroup index above the bottom 5% threshold
- *AND* the student group(s) previously identified for ATS improved proficiency (by at least 0.01) in both math and ELA for each of the last two years of the ATS cohort cycle

To exit ATS ***early*** (after three years), the following additional criteria must be met:

- ALL student group(s) have an overall subgroup index above the bottom 5% threshold
- *AND* the school has an overall school index above the bottom 5% threshold
- *AND* the school has a 4-year graduation rate above 67%, if applicable
- *AND* the school did not opt-out of exiting ATS early.

What happens if schools do not exit ATS?

In Fall 2025, schools in the 2022 ATS cohort not exiting ***early*** from ATS will remain in the ATS cohort through Fall 2028 and continue to receive corresponding funding and supports.

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In Fall 2028, schools in the 2022 ATS cohort not exiting ATS at the end of the ATS cohort will be identified for the more intensive support category of Comprehensive Support and improvement (CSI).

For early exit from ATS, can schools exit if they are meeting CSI identification criteria?

No, schools cannot early exit ATS if they are meeting Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) identification criteria.

For early exit from ATS, can schools exit with any subgroup still in the bottom 5%?

No, schools cannot exit ATS early if they have any subgroup performing in the bottom 5%. This is true regardless of whether the subgroup was originally part of the ATS identification.

For example:

1. A school was identified for ATS due to its white subgroup having performance in the bottom 5%
2. At early exit from ATS, the school's white subgroup is no longer in the bottom 5%. However, now the schools economically disadvantaged subgroup is in the bottom 5%.
3. The school is not allowed to early exit from ATS and must remain in the ATS cohort through Fall 2028. This is because the school's issues with low subgroup performance have not been resolved and only shifted between subgroups.

Why is there an option to exit early from ATS?

The ATS cohort cycle is six years. While many schools need the full six years to address the identified student group's needs, some do not. MDE wanted to offer those schools able to more quickly achieve consistent improvement for the identified student group(s) an opportunity to exit ATS on an earlier schedule.

Why do schools have the option to opt-out of exiting from ATS early?

Exiting from ATS impacts the funding and supports that are available to the school. MDE wants to ensure that districts and schools have the choice to remain identified for ATS and continue to receive funding and support through the full six years of the ATS cohort cycle if it is in the best interest of their students and local context.

What happens if a school exits early from ATS but is identified for ATS in the next cycle?

The school would enter a new six-year ATS cohort, the same as all other schools identified for ATS in that cycle.

ATS – Impact of Early Exit from ATS on Funding & Supports

How will exiting ATS early impact the funding and support that the district receives from MDE and ISDs?

Districts with schools that exit ATS early will remain eligible to receive Regional Assistance Grant (RAG) funding and supports through September 30th of the fiscal year in which the school exits ATS identification status. For example, districts with schools that exit ATS early in 2025 will remain eligible to receive RAG funding and supports through September 30th of the 2026 fiscal year.

Partnership districts receive 21h funds based on the needs assessment and goals identified in the partnership agreement for schools identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI). A school exiting ATS status within a partnership district would not lead to a reduction in 21h funding for that district.

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ATS - Early Exit Notification and Opt-Out Process

How do schools know if they are eligible to exit early from ATS status?

Districts with schools ***potentially eligible*** to exit early from ATS will be notified by MDE. Final decisions for early exit from ATS will not happen until Fall 2025 and will depend on whether the school meets all applicable exit criteria based on the School Index.

What is the platform and process schools must use to opt-out of early exit from ATS?

Districts will use the Grant Electronic Monitoring System (GEMS) platform to submit their opt-out decision. Please see the document GEMS User Help Guide for ATS Early Exit for instructions on how to complete this task. This document is also posted at www.mi.gov/mde-supports under the Additional Target Support (ATS) tab.

How can schools verify their opt-out decision has been successfully received in GEMS/MARS?

Upon submission of opt-out decision(s) for applicable school(s), GEMS users will receive an onscreen notice indicating successful submission as well as an email confirmation. Steps are also included in the GEMS User Help Guide for ATS Early Exit to verify opt-out decision submissions.

When is the window for districts and schools to submit opt-out decision(s) in GEMS/MARS?

The window for districts and schools to submit a decision to opt-out of exiting ATS early in GEMS/MARS will open the date that the district receives the letter of notification for potential eligibility and remain open through Friday, August 29, 2025, at 5:00 pm.

What happens if a school does not submit a decision to opt-out of exiting ATS early in GEMS/MARS?

Any school that does not submit their preference to opt-out of exiting ATS early by the deadline of August 29, 2025, and meets the criteria for early exit from ATS based on the School Index, will automatically exit ATS status in fall 2025.

When will a district know if a school successfully exited ATS early?

Once 2025 School Index results become available for preview on MI School Data in November, authorized MI School Data users for schools in the 2022 ATS cohort will be able to view their updated identification status. School Index reports for 2025 on MI School Data will not directly state that a school has been exited early from ATS, rather the "Support Category" tile that indicates support status will simply be updated to reflect the school's 2025 cohort identification status. For example, if the school successfully exited ATS early, the "Support Category" tile will indicate a new identification status, such as "Universal Support". If the school did not exit ATS early, the "Support Category" tile will continue to indicate ATS, and the school will continue in the ATS cohort through fall of 2028. Formal notification memos will be sent to districts following public release of 2025 School Index reports.

Will there be any webinars for ATS early exit?

There was an informational webinar hosted by MDE for ATS early exit eligible schools held on May 15, 2025 from 1:00 – 1:30PM. The webinar was recorded and captioned. You can view and listen to the webinar at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qHR_u5Tetv0.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Who should I contact if I have questions related to ATS identification and exit criteria?

For questions related to ATS identification and exit criteria, please contact mde-accountability@michigan.gov .

Who should I contact if I have questions related to ATS funding and support?

For questions related to your ATS funding and supports, please contact mde-oes@michigan.gov .

Who should I contact if I have questions about how to report my school's ATS early exit preference in GEMS?

For assistance with reporting your school's ATS early exit preference in GEMS, please contact mde-gems@michigan.gov.