



Title III accountability policies and outcomes for K-12: annual measurable achievement objectives for English language learner students in Southeast Region states





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Summary

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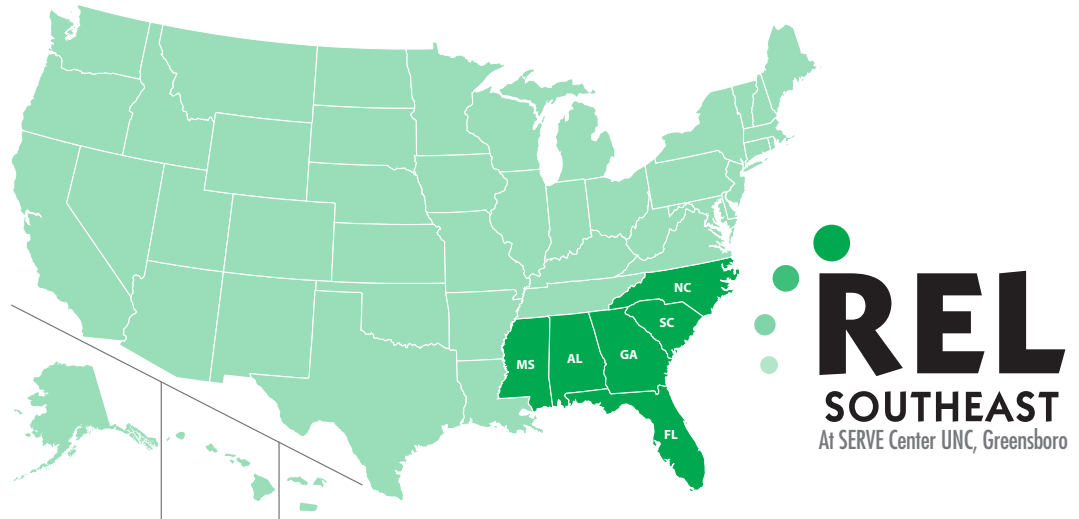
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Issues & Answers is an ongoing series of reports from short-term Fast Response Projects conducted by the regional educational laboratories on current education issues of importance at local, state, and regional levels. Fast Response Project topics change to reflect new issues, as identified through lab outreach and requests for assistance from policymakers and educators at state and local levels and from communities, businesses, parents, families, and youth. All Issues & Answers reports meet Institute of Education Sciences standards for scientifically valid research.

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Title III accountability policies and outcomes for K–12: annual measurable achievement objectives for English language learner students in Southeast Region states

This report overviews key elements of the Title III annual measurable achievement objectives (AMAO) in the Southeast Region states for 2007/08: number and type of Title III subgrantees, English language proficiency assessments used, and state and subgrantee performance in meeting AMAO accountability targets.

This report details Title III accountability policies and outcomes for K–12 English language learner (ELL) students for school year 2007/08 in the six Southeast Region states (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina) under the Title III annual measurable achievement objectives (AMAO) provision of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. The AMAO provision of Title III is an accountability mechanism designed specifically for ELL students. It applies to states and their subgrantees (educational entities, usually districts that serve ELL students) that receive federal Title III funds to improve programs and education outcomes for ELL students. Title III formula grants are disbursed to all U.S. states and territories.

The three AMAOs are:

- AMAO 1: The number or percentage of students served by Title III demonstrating progress in English language proficiency.
- AMAO 2: The number or percentage of students served by Title III that attain full English language proficiency.
- AMAO 3: Whether the ELL student subgroup made adequate yearly progress in academic achievement, as required by Title I of NCLB.

States can define the details of their AMAOs and set their annual targets through school year 2013/14. Each year they must report whether the state as a whole met its AMAO targets and how many of its subgrantees did so.

This report responds to state education agency requests for information on Title III AMAO policies in the Southeast Region and is intended to help state education agency staff as they revise and implement their required accountability policies for monitoring the

achievement of students not yet fluent in English.

This study is driven by five research questions:

- How many and what type of Title III subgrantees did each state have in 2007/08?
- What English language proficiency assessments did each state use?
- How did each state define AMAO 1, and what accountability determinations did each state report?
- How did each state define AMAO 2, and what accountability determinations did each state report?
- How did each state define AMAO 3, and what accountability determinations did each state report?

The report is based on publicly available documents.

Key findings include:

- All six states had district subgrantees. In two states, all the subgrantees were districts. In four states, some subgrantees were consortia (groups of districts that joined together to pool their funds). In one state, one subgrantee was a charter school.
- The six states used five different English language proficiency assessments. Two states used Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ACCESS for ELLs); the other four states each used

a different assessment. All the tests assessed students in the domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing; one state also assessed comprehension. The assessments varied by the types of composite scores (combined domain scores) reported and by the overall fluency levels reported (how they divided the continuum of language acquisition from no English proficiency to fluency).

- All six states' AMAO 1 definitions entailed measuring the annual change in English language proficiency assessment scores (comparing 2007/08 with 2006/07). There were three differences in these definitions. For calculations, states either grouped all students together or grouped them into cohorts established according to varying criteria. States differed in the assessment scores they used and the level of increase required to constitute progress. States set different targets for the percentage of students that had to show progress in order for the state and subgrantees to meet AMAO 1. All states but Mississippi, and varying numbers of subgrantees within each state, reported meeting AMAO 1.
- All six states' AMAO 2 definitions involved comparing 2007/08 assessment scores with those required to meet the state's definition of proficiency. There were three differences in these definitions. For calculations, states either grouped all students together or grouped them into cohorts established according to varying criteria. States differed in the assessment scores they used and the score required to constitute proficiency. States set different targets for the percentage of students

that had to reach proficiency in order for the state and subgrantees to meet AMAO 2. All six states, and varying numbers of subgrantees within each state, reported meeting AMAO 2.

- All six states' AMAO 3 definitions were based on the state's definition of adequate yearly progress as established for Title I. The state achievement tests and targets for assessing adequate yearly progress were those used for the student population as a whole, including the ELL student subgroup; each state had its own tests and targets. To trigger a Title I determination of adequate yearly progress for the ELL student subgroup, the number of ELL students in a district had to meet each state's established minimum. The number of subgrantees in the states that met this

requirement varied. Of the six states' subgrantees receiving such determinations, the number that met AMAO 3 varied.

Five states did not report AMAO 3 results for districts that did not receive adequate yearly progress determinations; one state reported these districts as meeting AMAO 3 by default.

Given these variations in the numbers and types of subgrantees across states, the English language proficiency assessments they used, how AMAOs were defined, and the targets they set, the 2007/08 AMAO 1, 2, and 3 determinations reported different indicators across states. Common interpretations of the results, and thus comparisons among states, are not possible.

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