# How likely is a failing school to close?

In order to determine how this may occur first we must determine what constitutes a failing school. A failing school defined by the state of Alabama

* Is in the bottom 6% of public Alabama School for year based on the state’s standardized assessment in math and reading.
* Students are tested in reading and math in grades 3-8 with the Aspire Assessment
* Students are tested in reading and math in the 10th grade with the Aspire Assessment and the Alabama Alternate Assessment.
* Is designated as failing by the State Superintendent of Education

Once a school is selected and finally titled as failing the students receive a few options.

* Students may remain and continue enrolled in the failing school
* Students can request to transfer to a non-failing school in their same district
* If available, the student may receive transportation assistance
* Students can request to transfer to a non-failing school outside their district with permission from outside district
* The students’ family is solely responsible for all transportation needs
* Students can request to transfer to any non-failing, nonpublic Alabama School that is willing to accept them

Many of these options to students in failing schools are simply unrealistic. There are a number of barriers created by the schools themselves to keep these students out.

* Desegregation Laws
* There is current debate on whether these laws should continue to be taken into consideration.
* Zoned schools based on living arrangements
* After all, the students leaving theses schools do not typically contribute financially to these schools.
* Crowded Schools
* A good number of non-failing schools in Alabama are already filled to capacity and therefore can no longer accept transfers whether from a failing school or not.
* Number of Nearby Schools
* The higher the number of schools available for the student to attend the more options a students’ family may have in deciding where to educate the child.

Do students act on these options available to them?

* These numbers are reported biennially. In 2016 only 2.2% of students were able to successfully transfer from a failing school. The number of applicants denied goes unreported.

These circumstances that discourage transfers matter because they result in many of the students in failing schools to remain in those schools. This results in lower quality of education for them. They are then condemned to that lower quality of education until something or someone greater than them acts on the issue. So how likely is a failing school to close ultimately depends on a number of factors surrounding the school.

* How long has the school been failing?
* How many other schools are available to the students?
* Population
* Per Capita Income
* School Districts Budget
* Legislations Recently Passed