

No Questions Left Behind

A Comprehensive
Guide to Minnesota's
Accountability Plan
Under the No Child
Left Behind Act



2005



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Introduction

The goal of NCLB is to have every student achieve proficiency in reading, math and science by the year 2014. One of the cornerstones of the law is that schools no longer report achievement “on the average” for their students. Under NCLB, the state holds schools and districts accountable for teaching all students, disaggregating the data by ethnic group, economic status, English language learners and special education.

Every year the state uses a NCLB-directed process to assess the progress each school is making toward the goal of having every student proficient by 2014. Parents and students in schools that are not making Adequate Yearly Progress are given options to improve their chances of receiving a quality education such as transferring to another school or receiving extra tutoring help. Meanwhile, the Minnesota Department of Education provides technical assistance to those schools to help them improve.

This *Comprehensive Guide to Minnesota’s Accountability Plan Under No Child Left Behind* explains the somewhat complicated system. The booklet uses Gopherville Elementary as an example to help parents, educators, legislators and taxpayers understand how No Child Left Behind will close the achievement gap in Minnesota’s public schools.

Performance Goals Drive Minnesota's NCLB Plan

Accountability, especially as it is reflected in student achievement, is at the core of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). Under NCLB, every state is required to create a plan that involves setting performance targets so that all students are academically proficient by the year 2013-14. The measure of state, district and school success will be the achievement of these targets.

Under NCLB, Minnesota agreed to adopt and report on five required performance goals as part of its plan.

- Performance goal #1 By 2013-2014, all students will reach **high standards**, at a minimum attaining proficiency or better in reading/language arts and mathematics.
- Performance goal #2 All **Limited English Proficient (LEP)** students will become proficient in English and reach high academic standards, at a minimum attaining proficiency or better in reading/language arts and mathematics.
- Performance goal #3 By 2005-2006, all students will be taught by **highly qualified teachers**.
- Performance goal #4 All students will be educated in learning environments that are **safe, drug-free** and conducive to learning.
- Performance goal #5 All students will **graduate from high school**.

Every state is required to create a plan that involves setting performance targets so that all students are proficient by the year 2013-2014.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) - Minnesota's Plan

The process by which schools, districts and the state's performance improves from its current level to the levels ultimately required by NCLB is called Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

Minnesota's AYP plan was created with the assistance of a stakeholder group which included representatives of Education Minnesota, the Minnesota School Boards Association, the Minnesota Association of School Administrators, School Principals, the Minnesota Parent Teacher Association, the Minnesota Rural Education Association, Charter Schools and state legislators, among others. The stakeholder group convened in early 2002 and continues to meet to review and amend Minnesota's plan.

AYP ratings are published for all public schools and districts in the state. AYP rated schools include:

- Elementary Schools
- Middle Schools
- High Schools
- Charter Schools
- State Approved Alternative Programs

The Minnesota AYP plan looks at four areas in determining whether a school has made adequate yearly progress: *Participation, Proficiency, Attendance and Graduation*.

Example:

Gopherville Elementary School

For the purposes of this guide, we will track a sample school (Gopherville Elementary) through the NCLB Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) process. Gopherville Elementary is located in a first ring suburb of Minneapolis and has 337 students in grades K-6. Forty percent of their students are minorities, 24 percent are receiving free or reduced meals and 8 percent are special education.

Overall, 81 percent of Gopherville's students scored proficient on last year's Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA), but when you peel back the layers, a large gap appears between the white students and the students of color. The achievement gap is also pronounced for students receiving free or reduced meals, the indicator used by schools to identify economically disadvantaged students.

Participation

A requirement for NCLB is for schools to test at least 95% of all students across tested grades every year with state assessments in reading and mathematics. When the term “across tested grades” is used it means that schools are measured on the total number of students in each grade being tested for each subject. The grades tested in 2004-05 were 3, 5, 7, 10 (reading) and 11 (math).

The US Department of Education now allows schools to use up to 3 years worth of data to meet the 95 percent participation rate. This way, a few absent students in any given year will not cause a school to miss their target.

The 95% test participation requirement ensures that the test is delivered to a group that accurately represents the true abilities of the school’s students. Participation results are then reported for the following nine groups (cells):

- All Students
- White
- Black
- Hispanic
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Special Education
- American Indian
- Limited English Proficient (LEP)
- Free & Reduced Price Lunch

Within a school each group (cell) must have at least 40 students enrolled across tested grades in order to have the 95% average participation requirement apply to the cell. If the 95% target is not attained for any group with at least 40 students, the school will not make AYP. When any group has fewer than 40 students, the participation rate will not be applied for that cell.

Schools have three full weeks to administer the test to all students. So students absent on the “test day” have additional opportunities to take the test.

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Example: Participation

Gopherville Elementary had 50 third-graders and 46 fifth-graders enrolled during the first day of the reading test window. This means they had 96 students “across tested grades.” The 96 students were members of the “All Students” cell.

When it came time to take the tests, four third-grade students and three fifth-grade students were absent or were otherwise unable or unwilling to participate in the test. That means eighty-nine students participated in the tests.

Gopherville Elementary “All Students” participation rate for the current year is determined by dividing its 89 test participating students by its 96 students enrolled in tested grades.

$$89/96 = .93$$

$$.93 \times 100 = 93\%$$

93% is the current year participation rate for Gopherville Elementary’s “All Students” group. This rate is below the 95% participation goal. Because the group missed the goal its current year participation rate (93%) is used as part of a three-year weighted average. If the weighted average participation rate meets or exceeds 95%, the group will still make its participation goal.

Number of students who participated this year: 89

Number of students who participated last year: 94

Number of students who should have participated in the last two years: 192

The participation rate is then recalculated: $(89+94)/192 = .9531$

The average test participation rate 95.31%

If the school still didn’t meet the 95% target a 3rd year of data would have been added.

The 95.31% weighted average is sufficient to make Adequate Yearly Progress on the participation indicator.

Gopherville will have this exercise repeated for each of the nine groups in their school that have at least 40 students enrolled during the first day of the reading test window. For example, Gopherville has 58 White students across tested grades. The 95% participation rate would apply to this group at Gopherville.

But they have only 9 Hispanic students across tested grades so the participation rate would not be calculated for this group.

Proficiency

NCLB's goal is for students in tested grades to show progress so that 100 percent of students are proficient in reading and mathematics by 2013-14. A score of 1420 on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) indicates proficiency.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA)

In order to explain proficiency, it is helpful to understand the test Minnesota uses to measure proficiency for reading and math.

Results on the MCA are reported in five achievement levels: Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, Level 4 and Level 5.

These are generic descriptions that define achievement relative to the appropriate grade level.

- **Level 1** scores indicate that the student has significant gaps in the knowledge and skills necessary for satisfactory grade level work. This level corresponds to “below basic” level work for NCLB requirements.
- **Level 2** scores represent partial knowledge and skills required for successful grade level achievement. This level corresponds to a “basic” level of achievement for NCLB.
- **Level 3** scores represent state expectations for achievement of all students. Students who score at Level 3 are working successfully on grade-level material. This level corresponds to a “proficient” level of achievement for NCLB.
- **Level 4** scores represent successful work with challenging, above-grade-level material. This level corresponds to an “advanced” level of achievement for NCLB.
- **Level 5** scores represent superior, advanced academic performance, well beyond what is expected at the grade level. This level is beyond the “advanced” level described in NCLB.

***A score of 1420
on the Minnesota
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Assessment Implementation Schedule

In 2004-05, the state tested grades 3, 5, 7, 10 (reading) and 11 (math). Tests for grades 4, 6 and 8 will be added in 2005-06.

Grade	2004-05	2005-06
Grade 3	Reading/Math	Reading/Math
Grade 4		Reading/Math
Grade 5	Reading/Math	Reading/Math
Grade 6		Reading/Math
Grade 7	Reading/Math	Reading/Math
Grade 8		Reading/Math
Grade 10	Reading	Reading
Grade 11	Math	Math

Alternate Assessment for Special Education

Special education students have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and an IEP team. The IEP team determines the best instructional and assessment methods for each student.

Many special education students take the MCA. If the IEP team deems it necessary, however, special education students can take an alternate assessment. Alternate assessments are scored in the same (5 level) fashion as MCA. Schools may accumulate index points for students using the alternate assessment.

Proficiency Index

Now that we understand the MCA and alternate assessments, it will be easier to understand the concept of proficiency. Proficiency is determined by the use of an AYP index rate in each tested subject.

The index rate gives schools credit for improving the test scores of their students. Students scoring in MCA or alternate assessment level 3 or higher generate one full index point. Students scoring in MCA or alternative assessment level 2 generate a half index point. Students scoring in Level 1 generate no index points. Index rates will be published each year for schools.

Minnesota's Proficiency Index Target

Under NCLB, Minnesota was required to adopt starting points from which to measure increases in academic proficiency. Minnesota's starting points for its grade 3, 5, 7, 10 and 11 tests are indicated in the 2003 and 2004 columns on the next page.

NCLB requires states to increase their proportion of proficient students at a rate that will allow all students (100%) to be proficient by the school year 2013-14. In order to comply with this requirement, Minnesota has adopted the following index rate targets or "Annual Measurable Objectives" for 2005 and beyond:

**For more information on NCLB, see the MDE Web site at:
http://education.state.mn.us/mde/Accountability_Programs/No_Child_Left_Behind_Programs/index.html**

Annual Measurable Objectives Expressed in Index Points

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Read-03	62.8	62.8	66.5	70.2	74.0	77.7	81.4	85.1	88.8	92.6	96.3	100
Read-05	69.9	69.9	72.9	75.9	78.9	81.9	85.0	88.0	91.0	94.0	97.0	100
Read-07		75.4	77.8	80.3	82.8	85.2	87.7	90.1	92.6	95.1	97.5	100
Read-10		80.3	82.3	84.3	86.2	88.2	90.2	92.1	94.1	96.1	98.0	100
Math-03	66.2	66.2	69.6	73.0	76.3	79.7	83.1	86.5	89.9	93.2	96.6	100
Math-05	65.4	65.4	68.9	72.3	75.8	79.2	82.7	86.2	89.6	93.1	96.5	100
Math-07		73.4	76.1	78.7	81.4	84.1	86.7	89.4	92.0	94.7	97.3	100
Math-11		74.1	76.7	79.3	81.9	84.5	87.1	89.6	92.2	94.8	97.4	100

NCLB requires schools to meet or exceed the state’s index targets each year in order to make AYP.

Student Group Proficiency Targets

The state’s index targets are set as indicated on the chart above. MDE uses the state’s index targets to generate index targets for schools’ student subgroups. When all of a school’s measured student groups meet their proficiency index targets the school makes AYP in the proficiency measure.

Step 1: Determining Cell Size For A Student Group

Only students who are enrolled in a given school for a “full academic year” are included in that school’s proficiency calculation. Being present for a full academic year means that a student is enrolled on October 1st and during the first day of the testing window.

Schools must have at least 20 full academic year students across tested grades in a cell (with the exception of special education and LEP students) in order for the proficiency requirement to apply to the cell. Because of their vast range of abilities, special education and LEP students must have at least 40 students in the cell before the proficiency requirement is applied. If a student group (cell) has less than 20 students it is measured only in extraordinary circumstances.

Step 2: Setting the Index Target For A Student Group

Student group index targets (their required number of index points) are based on the total number of “full academic year” students assessed in each grade within a school.

For example, the index target for the “All Student” group in a K-6 school is calculated on the basis of the assessments of grade three and five full academic year students. Index targets in K-12 schools are calculated using data from all grades tested in the school (3,5,7,10,11).

Example: School Index Target

Gopherville Elementary’s index target for reading for the “All Students” group (89 full academic year students that tested) is determined as follows:

Unadjusted Index Target Calculation

First, multiply the number of full academic year students tested in each grade by the statewide target number from the chart on page 9. Then add the grade 3 and grade 5 numbers together.

Grade 3: 46 students x 66.5 (state reading index target) = 3059.5

Grade 5: 43 students x 72.9 (state reading index target) = 3134.7

Total 6193.7

Next divide the total (6193.7) by the number of full academic year students tested (89) to get your answer (69.59)

69.59 is the unadjusted index target for the “All Student” group in reading at Gopherville Elementary School.

This process is repeated for every one of the nine student groups that make cell size in the reading assessment.

Next - The unadjusted index target is adjusted by statistical margin of error (a confidence interval) in order to generate index targets for student groups within each school.

Step 3: Figuring a Confidence Interval

Student groups' previously unadjusted index targets are then adjusted using a "confidence interval." A confidence interval is similar to a statistical margin of error. A confidence interval is used to correct for potential measurement error and to help ensure that all decisions (AYP proficiency calculations) are statistically defensible. Every student group that makes cell size must meet their adjusted index targets in order for a given school to make AYP for proficiency. (As the unadjusted index target is not seen by schools, the adjusted index target is simply known as the index target in common parlance.)

The AYP system requires a valid decision about whether a group has really failed to meet its target. Proficiency results just below the target for small groups are much more likely to be simply chance variations than are results a long way below the target for a large group. NCLB requires that even students in small schools be measured. Small schools are more vulnerable to measurement error. Using confidence intervals is a way to make the decisions fairer – to place large and small groups (i.e. sample sizes) on more equal footing.

Schools with more groups making the minimum cell size have more groups subject to proficiency calculations. Thus they have more chances for data error because the state is performing more calculations with their data.

Because this is the case, Minnesota uses a sliding confidence interval in its AYP system.

The base confidence interval approved by the federal Department of Education for AYP purposes is at a confidence level of .95. The target is adjusted so that for each group, if the real result was at the target, there is only one chance in twenty that a chance variation would see an observed index this far below target.

The results of a .95 confidence interval being applied to a group's unadjusted target index is seen on the next page.

Index targets are modified by a confidence interval that lends greater statistical validity to AYP proficiency ratings.

**For more information on NCLB, see the MDE Web site at:
http://education.state.mn.us/mde/Accountability_Programs/No_Child_Left_Behind_Programs/index.html**

Example: Confidence Interval

After Gopherville Elementary School's "All Student" group's unadjusted index targets are calculated, they are adjusted using a confidence interval. A confidence interval is an adjustment used to correct for measurement error and to ensure that all information is statistically valid. (As the unadjusted index target is not seen by schools the adjusted index target is simply known as the index target in common parlance.) A school's index targets are the rates that a school's groups must meet to make AYP for proficiency.

The confidence interval for student groups within a given school expands based on two factors:

1. The size of the group (how many full academic year students tested).
2. The number of groups in the school that meet the minimum cell size.

Every school has 18 possible groups that could meet the minimum cell size (9 subgroups for reading, 9 subgroups for math). The confidence interval formula allows for a larger variance from the unadjusted target for schools that have many subgroups meeting the cell size requirements.

The confidence interval is between 95% and 99% for Minnesota schools depending on the number of eligible subgroups in a school.

We'll use Gopherville Elementary's unadjusted target index of 69.59. In this example, we'll say they have 7 cells eligible based on the minimum cell size.

The confidence interval formula uses the number of students and the number of measured cells to determine the confidence interval adjusted index rate of 62.51. The confidence interval index rate is lower because the formula allows for a "margin of error" and takes away the likelihood that variations in proficiency are based on chance.

This confidence interval adjustment keeps the system fair for schools with large and small groups of students.

Step 4: Using Test Scores to Determine a School's Proficiency Index Rate

Thus far the AYP calculation has made a preliminary measure of the number of full academic year students in each group within a school. In groups with 20 or more tested full academic year students (40 or more for Special Ed and LEP) the AYP calculation has determined a proficiency index target. Index targets are automatically adjusted for group size and school diversity using a confidence interval.

The AYP calculation's next step is to compare the adjusted index target for each of the school's measured groups with their respective index rates (the number of half and full index points generated by full academic year students testing in levels 2 and 3 and higher).

The following explanations show how school groups' index rates are calculated and compared with their respective index targets.

Example: School Proficiency Index

During the 2004-05 school year, students were tested in grades 3, 5, 7, 10 and 11. Gopherville Elementary had 50 third and 46 fifth-grade students enrolled on test day. Seven students (4 in third grade and 3 in fifth grade) were not enrolled in the school on October 1st so they are not included in this calculation.

Eighty-nine students across both grades were present for the academic year and tested.

Gopherville Elementary school's "All Students" reading test scores were as follows:

28 third grade students and
31 fifth grade students
score at or above 1420 on the MCA (Levels 3, 4 or 5).

12 third grade students and
8 fifth grade students
score at level 2 on the MCA (Level 2).

6 third grade students and
4 fifth grade students
score at level 1 on the MCA (Level 1).

So to calculate their index:

Number of students gaining 1 point: $59 = 59$ pts
Number of students gaining .5 points $20 = 10$ pts
Number of students gaining 0 points: $10 = 0$ pts
Total 69 pts

The school's total number of index points generated was 69 ($59+10+0$).

The greatest number of index points the school's students might have generated (if they had all tested as proficient) is 89.

Thus, the school generated an actual index rate of $69/89 \times 100$ or 77.52.

Step 5: Did the School Make the Proficiency Target?

Now the AYP calculation can compare the student group's actual proficiency index with their adjusted index targets to determine whether or not each group or cell made AYP for reading.

Example: Did We Make AYP?

Gopherville Elementary School's student test scores for the "All Students" subgroup generated an index rate of 77.52.

Their adjusted index target (after application of the confidence interval) was 62.51.

Gopherville's "All Students" group index rate is equal to or greater than their index target. Thus, they made their AYP proficiency target for this group.

The proficiency calculation is executed and reported for each group and each academic subject (reading and math).

Thus far, Gopherville Elementary School has fulfilled the 95% participation rate requirement and achieved a proficiency index rate that surpasses its adjusted target. In order to make AYP, the school needs to have an acceptable rate on one additional indicator. For Minnesota elementary and middle schools the additional indicator is attendance. For high schools, it is graduation rate.

Another Chance to Make AYP - Safe Harbor

If a school had a group (cell) of students whose MCA scores did not meet the target, the school has another chance to make AYP. This additional chance is referred to as "safe harbor."

If the school can reduce the number of non-proficient students in the low scoring group by 10% compared to the previous year, the group and school could still make AYP, provided that group also meets the AYP target for either the attendance or graduation rate. Attendance and graduation rates are only disaggregated for use with the safe harbor calculation.

Example: Safe Harbor

For the safe harbor example, we'll use Gopherville's free and reduced price group. In 2004-2005, Gopherville's free and reduced price reading test scores for students enrolled for the full academic year were as follows:

4 third grade student and
2 fifth grade students score at or above 1420 on the MCA.

5 third grade students and
2 fifth grade students score at level 2A on the MCA.

6 third grade students and
4 fifth grade students score at level 1 on the MCA.

So to calculate their index:

Number of students gaining 1 point: 6 = 6 pts

Number of students gaining .5 points 7 = 3.5 pts

Number of students gaining 0 points: 10 = 0 pts

Total 9.5 pts

The school's total number of index points generated was 9.5 (6+3.5+0). The greatest number of index points the school's students might have generated (if they had all tested as proficient) is 23.

Thus, the school generated an actual index rate of $9.5/23 \times 100$ or 41.30.

Gopherville Elementary School's adjusted index target for this group is 54.14. Their student test scores generated an index rate of 41.30. So, they will not make AYP for their free and reduced price group unless it qualifies for safe harbor.

Gopherville's students generated a proficiency index rate of 41.30 out of a possible 100. Put another way, their non-proficiency rate is 58.70 ($100.00 - 41.30 = 58.70$). If they can show they reduced their non-proficient index rate by 10% from last year, they can make safe harbor for this group.

Gopherville Elementary School's free and reduced non-proficient index rate for the 2003-2004 school year was 80. A 10% decrease in this number represents 8 percent.

Thus, if the school's 2004-2005 index rate is 28 (last year's proficient rate + the 10 percent reduction in non proficient students) or higher the school can make safe harbor. As the schools 2004-2005 index rate of 41.30 is equal or greater than the needed index rate of 28, the school's group will make safe harbor (provided its attendance data is adequate).

If one of Gopherville Elementary's student groups had failed to make its proficiency target and failed to make safe harbor based on growth over last year's test scores, then the student group has one last series of AYP calculations performed.

The additional calculations combine the group's proficiency data for this year with as many as two previous years' test scores to create a two or three year rolling average proficiency measure. Thus, if a group's proficiency scores exceeded their target last year, that high performance could ameliorate this year's below target performance. If the two or three year rolling average proficiency measure results in an average proficiency index that meets or exceeds this year's proficiency target the group will make AYP in its proficiency measure.

Additionally, any two or three year rolling average proficiency rates that fail to meet the proficiency target are compared against the preceding year's proficiency data to see if the averaged data displayed a 10% reduction in the number of non-proficient students over the previous period. Any group's averaged data displaying such a reduction in non-proficient students would be eligible to make safe harbor.

Attendance Overview

To make adequate yearly progress for attendance, elementary schools and middle schools must have an average daily attendance rate of 90% or show acceptable growth (at least 1/10 of one percent above the previous year) towards 90%.

Attendance figures for AYP purposes are calculated for the "all students" group only; they are not broken down into other groups or cells (unless used for safe harbor). Schools whose "all students" group do not meet the 90% target for attendance rates may still make adequate yearly progress if they show growth from the previous year.

Average daily attendance (ADA) is the number of days that a school's enrolled students actually attend school divided by the number of days in the school year. Average daily membership (ADM) is the number of days that students were reported as enrolled by the school divided by the number of days in the school year.

AYP attendance rates are calculated by dividing a school's ADA by its ADM and multiplying the result by one hundred.

Example: Attendance

Gopherville Elementary has 337 students enrolled in grades K-6. Forty-two of the students are enrolled in Kindergarten and are not included in this calculation.

That leaves 295 students enrolled in grades 1-6.

The school's students attended school an average of 278 days during the school's 295 day instructional calendar. The average daily attendance (ADA) of these students is 278/295. The average daily membership (ADM) of these students is 1 (the school claimed the students' enrollment for the entire school year). Thus, the school has an NCLB attendance rate of 94.23.

$$278/295 \text{ over } 1 \times 100 = 94.23$$

Having fulfilled the 95% participation requirement, having achieved a proficiency index rate that surpasses its target and, having generated an attendance rate that is above 90%, Gopherville Elementary School has made AYP.

Graduation

Elementary schools, middle schools and high schools all need to have acceptable rates of student test participation, proficiency and one other indicator. Elementary and middle schools have attendance as their other indicator. Federal law requires the graduation rate be the other indicator that is used in determining high school AYP.

To make adequate yearly progress for graduation, high schools must have an average graduation rate of 80% or show acceptable growth (1/10 of one percent above the previous year) towards 80%.

Graduation figures for AYP purposes are only calculated for the "all students" category, they are not broken down into other groups (unless used for safe harbor). Schools that do not meet the 80% target for graduation rates may still make adequate yearly progress if they show growth from the previous year.

High schools must have an average graduation rate of 80% or show acceptable growth towards 80%. The graduation rate is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Total Grads 2004}}{\text{Dropouts across four years} \\ (\text{grade 9 in 2001} + \text{grade 10 in 2002} + \\ \text{grade 11 in 2003} + \text{grade 12 in 2004}) + \text{2004 Grads}}$$

When a School Does Not Make AYP

An AYP status is reported annually for all schools and districts. Only schools that accept Title 1 funds may have additional consequences.

Stages of Consequences

MDE determines a Title 1 school's stage based on that school's history of making or not making adequate yearly progress in the same subject area.

A school that makes AYP is in no stage at all.

A school that does not make AYP for one year is in Stage 0.

A school that does not make AYP for two consecutive years in the same subject area is in Stage 1.

There are two possible results the year after a school is in Stage 1. Either:

- the school makes AYP in that subject area and remains in Stage 1 for a second year; or
- the school does not make AYP in that subject area and moves to Stage 2.

It gets a bit trickier for the next year, because there are two possible outcomes for each of the two options listed above.

- If the school made AYP in that subject area and remained in Stage 1 for a second year, then there are two possible outcomes for the following year:
 - the school makes AYP in that subject area and now is back in no stage at all – or colloquially, is free and clear of any AYP designation for that subject area; or
 - the school does not make AYP and moves to Stage 2.
- If the school did not make AYP in that subject area and moved to Stage 2 in the previous year, then there are two possible outcomes for the following year:
 - the school makes AYP in that subject area and remains in Stage 2 for a second year; or
 - the school does not make AYP and moves to Stage 3.

Fortunately, schools do not have to keep track of their stage status themselves. MDE reports to each school the school's status before the beginning of the school year.

Stage 0: Not making AYP for the first time

Stage 1: Public School Choice

- Notify Parents
- Technical Assistance
- School Improvement Plan
- Public School Choice

Stage 2: Supplemental Services

- Notify Parents
- Technical Assistance
- School Improvement Plan
- Public School Choice
- Supplemental Services

Stage 3: Corrective Action

- Notify Parents
- Technical Assistance
- School Improvement Plan
- Public School Choice
- Supplemental Services
- Corrective Action

Stage 4: Plan for Restructuring

- Notify Parents
- Technical Assistance
- School Improvement Plan
- Public School Choice
- Supplemental Services
- Plan for Restructuring

Stage 5: Restructuring

- Notify Parents
- Technical Assistance
- School Improvement Plan
- Public School Choice
- Supplemental Services
- Restructuring

Consequences

A school is subject to consequences when it misses AYP for two consecutive years.

Federally mandated consequences extend only to schools that accept Title I funds.

Consequences include:

- Notifying parents of the school's status;
- Writing and implementing a school improvement plan;
- Setting aside up to 20% of Title 1 funds for school choice and supplemental services; and
- Setting aside 10% of some school level Title 1 funds for professional development.

Parent Notification

Schools in Stage 1 or higher must notify parents.

Notification for schools in Stage 1 must include:

- the reason(s) for the school's identification;
- how the achievement of the school compares to other schools in the district;
- what the school is doing to address problems of low achievement;
- what assistance the district is providing the school;
- how parents can be involved in addressing the issues;
- what resources are available to assist parents; and
- an explanation of parents' option to transfer children to another public school (school choice).

Notification for schools in Stage 2 must include all of the above, plus:

- an explanation of the right to enroll children in a tutoring program (supplemental services).

Federally mandated consequences extend only to schools that accept Title I funds.

Creating and Implementing a School Improvement Plan

Schools in Stage 1 or higher must create and implement a school improvement plan. Because NCLB requires experts in school reform to work with schools, MDE recruits and trains a cadre of external providers – individuals “external” to a school district to assist schools in the development and implementation of a school improvement plan.

School improvement plans consist of:

- a needs analysis;
- goals for the school year; and
- strategies to achieve those goals.

Each school can write for a school improvement grant to help fund the creation and implementation of its school improvement plan.

Parents with children in a school in Stage 1 or higher should inform themselves by requesting a copy of the school improvement plan and asking about the progress the school is making to meet its goals.

School Choice

Parents with children in schools in Stage 1 and higher have the option of transferring their child out of the identified school to another non-identified school within the district.

The district must:

- set aside up to 20% of the amount of Title I funds (or a lesser amount depending on parent demand) to pay for costs of transporting students to a non-identified school;
- inform parents about available choices;
- describe the selection process, giving priority to the lowest achieving children from low-income families;
- notify parents of the results of school selections and transportation availability;
- determine method and route of transportation; and
- transport students to the newly selected schools.

Supplemental Educational Services

Parents with children in schools in Stage 2 and higher continue to have the option of transferring their child out of the identified school to another non-identified school within the district. Parents also have the option to secure tutoring (supplemental education services) for their children.

The district must:

- set aside up to 20% of the amount of the Title I allocation (or a lesser amount depending on parent demand) to pay for costs of transporting students to a non-identified school and to pay for supplemental education services;
- offer supplemental education services to low-income families, giving priority to the lowest achieving students; and
- allow parents to choose which supplemental education service provider is right for their children.

Supplemental education service providers may be a for-profit or not-for-profit entity. Each provider demonstrates to the state that it provides high-quality services and has a record of improving student achievement. A list of approved providers is maintained on the MDE Web site.

Funding Supplemental Education Services

Districts must set aside an amount up to 20% of the district's total Title I allocation for choice and supplemental education services. Districts may use all or part of their Title I allocation to meet the set aside requirements; districts can also use local funds to meet the set aside requirement.

Districts may also use other federal funds, or use NCLB's flexibility provision to help pay for services.

Districts determine the per-pupil amount for each student and must spend either that amount or the actual costs of the supplemental service (if lower).

If sufficient funds are not available to serve all eligible students, the district must prioritize the qualified participating students most in need academically.

Corrective Action and Restructuring

Schools that reach Corrective Action and Restructuring work closely with district administration to choose a course of action for continuous improvement. Districts must determine for each school in Corrective Action and Restructuring what will be required of the schools and which of the provisions outlined in NCLB will be implemented. Provisions range from reducing the autonomy of the principal to replacing curriculum and/or staff.

AYP at the District Level

Like individual schools, the school district also receives an AYP status each year.

The district status is calculated just like the school status, except that unlike schools, districts need to meet AYP targets for graduation and attendance, not just one or the other.

Because districts are generally composed of multiple schools (charter schools are the exception), districts generally have more students across tested grades and therefore are more likely to have more subgroups of students meet the minimum cell size. Therefore, a district might be identified as not making AYP, even though none of the district's schools are identified (see below).

How can a district not make AYP when all of its schools do?

Consider a district with just two schools. Each school has 30 LEP students in the tested grades. Now suppose that in both schools the scores of the LEP students do not meet the state targets.

Are the schools identified, based on this subgroup, as not making AYP? No – because the minimum cell size for the LEP subgroup is 40 and both schools are below 40 LEP students in tested grades.

Is the district identified, based on this subgroup, as not making AYP? Yes – because the minimum cell size for the LEP subgroup is 40 and the two schools together, totaling 60 LEP students in tested grades, exceeds 40.

Consequences for Districts

Districts that accept Title 1 funds and do not make AYP **two years in a row** are identified as in need of improvement.

These districts must:

- Develop a district improvement plan;
- Set aside and spend 10% of the district's Title I allocation on professional development; and
- Limit the percent of funds that the district moves between NCLB programs.

Districts have the option of requesting a small amount of funds from MDE to hire an outside expert to assist with the district improvement plan.

Districts which do not make AYP **three years in a row** are identified as in corrective action.

These districts must:

- Develop a district improvement plan;
- Set aside and spend 10% of the district's Title I allocation on professional development; and
- Not move funds between NCLB programs.

These districts must set aside a fixed amount of funds to hire an outside expert to help with the district improvement plan.

**For more information on NCLB, see the MDE Web site at:
http://education.state.mn.us/mde/Accountability_Programs/No_Child_Left_Behind_Programs/index.html**

Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO)

Title III, a component of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, supplements the resources of local school districts to provide quality education to students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and immigrant students. Districts that receive these funds – and not all do – must meet annual state targets or take corrective action. The annual targets are called Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO).

AMAO Measure:

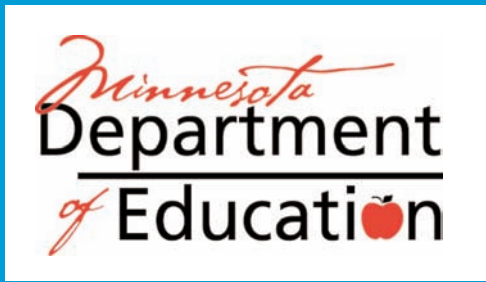
- **English ability** as measured by two tests, the Tests of Emerging Academic English (TEAE) and MNSOLOM; including:
 - District gains in the percent of occurrences of progress. Progress means any individual's test score that is higher than a test score of that same individual, recorded in the same district, in the previous year.
 - District gains in the percent of students becoming proficient. Proficiency means scoring proficient in all tests measuring English ability in reading, writing, speaking and listening.
- **Content achievement** as measured on the MCA; including:
 - Gains in the percent of students scoring proficient in Reading and Mathematics. These indicators are exactly the same as the district level AYP results for the LEP subgroup.

Consequences

If the district does not meet the AMAO targets for one year, the district must notify parents of students with limited English proficiency within 30 days of notification from the state.

If the district does not meet the AMAO targets for two consecutive years, the district must notify parents and create an improvement plan.

If the district does not meet the AMAO targets for four consecutive years, the district must notify parents and modify the program with for these students direction from MDE.



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