

Is Your Child's School Making "Adequate Yearly Progress" (AYP)?

Rules of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).



No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires the government to measure the performance of public schools and school districts. Parents have a right to know this information. NCLB forces schools to improve.

What is "adequate yearly progress" (AYP)?

- AYP is how our state measures the performance of public schools and school districts.
- AYP is measured at the end every school year.
- AYP is based on the following four standards. Every public school and district must meet all of these standards in every year.
- On every AYP standard, schools must score high enough for each student group. The groups are based on race, ethnicity, gender, disability, migrant status, English proficiency, and poverty status. If any group fails to meet a standard, then the entire school does not make AYP.
 1. *Student Achievement.* Are enough students passing the state standardized tests (the PSSA)?
 2. *PSSA Participation.* Are enough students taking the PSSA?
 3. *School Attendance.* Are enough students attending school every day?
 4. *Graduation Rate.* Are enough students graduating from high school?

State AYP Standards that Schools Must Meet for Each School Year:

School Year	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14
Passing Rate on Reading PSSA	45%	45%	54%	54%	54%	63%	63%	63%	72%	81%	91%	100%
Passing Rate on Math PSSA	35%	35%	45%	45%	45%	56%	56%	56%	67%	78%	89%	100%
Participation Rate - PSSA	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
School Attendance	95%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%
Graduation Rate	95%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%

NOTES: (1) The PSSA passing rate increases over time so all students will pass by 2114. (2) On June 3, 2004, the federal government allowed our state to lower the standards for school attendance and graduation rates.

EXCEPTIONS: Schools and districts can miss the required percentage and still make AYP for a standard if they show: (a) less than 40 students took the PSSA; (b) 10% improvement in PSSA passing rate; (c) three-year average PSSA participation rate of 95%; (d) any improvement in attendance; (e) any improvement in graduation rate. Schools can also use a "confidence interval" to round up a number to make the required percentage. Finally, schools can appeal their results to the state and be awarded AYP status based on special circumstances.

Education Law Center/Penna. School Reform Network – ELC/PSRN

Offices in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh

215-238-6970 www.elc-pa.org 412-391-5225

ELC/PSRN works with many parents and groups. Please call us for assistance with individual school problems or more general problems with the education system. We look forward to speaking with your group. If your child's rights are violated under any law, ask for legal assistance. ELC operates a HelpLine at the numbers above. The ELC website (www.elc-pa.org) contains fact sheets and information about other organizations and sources of help.

What happens if a school or a district does not make AYP?

Public Information. Schools must tell parents about the AYP results for each school year. Every school and district must issue a report card explaining the AYP results.

Help for Students. When a school does not make AYP, it must help the students who are falling behind. Schools can give tutoring to students, training to their teachers, and support for their parents.

Mandatory School Reform. When a public school does not make AYP, it must change the way it educates students. School reforms must become stronger over time when student performance does not improve. The government will force schools to improve if they do not change fast enough.

Parent Involvement. Schools must involve parents in making plans for school reform.

Outside Assistance. The district and the state must give technical assistance to support school reform.

What are the stages of school reform based on AYP results?

Making AYP. Schools make AYP when they: (1) meet the requirements for every standard and every student group; and (2) meet these requirements for two consecutive years. NCLB does not require these schools to change or improve. Many schools use one of the exceptions listed at the bottom of Page One. Without these exceptions, many schools would not make AYP.

Warning. Schools receive a “Warning” after the **first year** of not making AYP. Schools must make a plan to improve. Schools can include almost anything they want in this initial plan, because the state will not require specific items.

School Improvement I. Schools enter this stage after not making AYP for a **second consecutive year**. Schools must: (1) make a plan to improve; (2) let students transfer to a better school; and (3) provide training to help teachers improve student achievement.

School Improvement II. Schools enter this stage after not making AYP for a **third consecutive year**. Schools must make a plan to improve, allow student transfers, and train the teachers. In addition, schools must give extra tutoring to struggling students. Tutoring may come from private companies.

Corrective Action I. Schools enter this stage after not making AYP for a **fourth consecutive year**. Schools must make a plan to improve, allow student transfers, train the teachers, and give extra tutoring. In addition, schools must make major changes in curriculum, teaching, administration, school structure, and parent involvement.

Corrective Action II. Schools enter this stage after not making AYP for a **fifth consecutive year**. Schools must do everything from Corrective Action I. In addition, schools must make a plan for “Restructuring”. Parents must be involved in making decisions about the Restructuring plans.

Restructuring. Schools enter this stage after not making AYP for a **sixth consecutive year**. Schools must do everything from Corrective Action I. In addition, schools must implement the plans for Restructuring that were developed in the prior year. Restructuring means taking extreme action such as firing teachers and administrators, becoming a charter school, or being run by a private company.

Making Progress. This stage includes schools that make AYP for the first time. However, schools stay at the same stage of school reform, until they make AYP for two consecutive years. For example, a school in School Improvement II will stay at this stage for one year after Making Progress. The school must continue making a plan to improve, allowing student transfers, training the teachers, and giving extra tutoring.

Websites for additional information about AYP:

- About AYP in Pa. -- http://www.paayp.com/about_ayp.html
- About NCLB accountability system in Pa. -- <http://www.pde.state.pa.us/pas/site/default.asp>
- AYP resources from U.S. Dept. of Educ. -- <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/accountability/ayp/edpicks.jhtml?src=az>

Questions parents can ask about AYP and school performance:

1. *Information.* Are schools telling parents and the community about the AYP results in each year? Are we satisfied with the AYP report cards issued by schools and the district? How can our schools do a better job in sharing this information with the public?
2. *School Reform.* In what stage of school reform is our school? Is it making AYP? Has it received a Warning? Is it in School Improvement, Corrective Action, or Restructuring? Is it Making Progress? Is our school taking the actions required for each stage?
3. *AYP Exceptions.* Did our school use any of the AYP exceptions listed at the bottom of Page One? If so, this means that the school would not make AYP without using the exceptions. Should we ask the school to make changes to address its weak areas, even though the school officially made AYP?
4. *Extra Help for Schools.* What extra help are the district and the state giving to our schools, such as school improvement teams, new funding, updated curriculum and technology, or training for teachers?
5. *Teacher Quality.* How many teachers are not qualified, inexperienced, or teaching out of their field? Are schools telling parents when their children are being taught by teachers who are not “highly qualified”? Are schools giving extra help to teachers, such as training, mentoring, and supervision?
6. *Achievement Gaps.* What is the real achievement of the different student groups in our school, based on race, ethnicity, gender, disability, migrant status, English proficiency, and poverty status? Does our school have an achievement gap, where some student groups are doing better than others? Why is this happening? What can we do to stop leaving behind some of our students?
7. *Students Falling Behind.* Even if our school made AYP, are we truly satisfied with how all students are doing? What percent of students do not have proficient PSSA scores? What is the school doing to help these students? Does the school have after-school or remedial programs? Are students with disabilities and English language learners getting the special services they deserve?
8. *Parent Involvement in Classrooms.* Is our school encouraging parents to get involved in their children’s classrooms? Is it possible to meet with teachers and schedule a time to observe the classroom? Are teachers sending home frequent progress reports? Are teachers asking parents to help make academic improvement plans for each student, based on the PSSA results?
9. *Parent Involvement in Reforms.* Is our school getting parents involved in making school reform plans? Does our school have a Parent Involvement Plan and Budget? Does our school hold meetings where parents can learn about and help to develop these things?
10. *Transfers.* Is the district following the transfer rules for students in schools not making AYP? Is the principal helping parents to file NCLB transfer applications? Is the district giving parents enough choices for good schools to consider for transfers? Are transfer applications being improperly denied?
11. *Tutoring.* Is the district following the tutoring rules for students in schools not making AYP? Is the principal helping parents to file NCLB tutoring applications? Is the district giving parents enough choices for good tutoring providers? Are the tutors coordinating their work with teachers in school?

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Checklist

DOES MY CHILD'S SCHOOL MEET ALL OF THE AYP STANDARDS FOR THIS YEAR?

- YES, if all student groups (white, African American, Latino, disabled, low-income, etc.) in the school meet all of the following minimum standards. (See Page One for details.)

1. Student Achievement (PSSA scores); AND
2. PSSA Participation; AND
3. School Attendance; AND
4. Graduation Rate

- YES, if the school successfully uses one of the exceptions described at the bottom of Page One. The exceptions include showing improvement, rounding up, and winning an appeal.

- NO, if the school fails to meet any standard for any student group or if the school cannot use an exception.

IS MY CHILD'S SCHOOL "PASSING" UNDER NCLB?

- YES, if the school has met all of the AYP standards for two consecutive years. The school is not required to make school improvement plans or to offer tutoring or transfers.
- NO, if the school has only met the AYP standards for one year.

MY CHILD IS IN A "FAILING" SCHOOL UNDER NCLB.
WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? (See Page Two for details.)

- A school must move to the next stage of school reform, after each year it fails to make AYP.
- The school must take all of the actions required for its current stage of school reform – Warning; School Improvement I or II; Corrective Action I or II; or Restructuring.
- A Making Progress school must continue taking all of the actions required in the prior year, until it passes for one more year. If the school fails again, it moves to the next stage of school reform.

GET INVOLVED TODAY. YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

- Read the ELC fact sheets "What is the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001?" and "How can you use NCLB to fight for local school reform?"
- See other ELC fact sheets about NCLB and many other education issues. Visit our website or call our offices.
- Ask your school for a copy of its AYP report card. Ask the principal to explain the scores for each student group. Are any students falling behind? How many?