

No Child Left Behind Act

Kansas and No Child Left Behind

- ◆ Signed into law Jan. 8, 2002
- ◆ Tremendous impact
- ◆ Closing achievement gaps
- ◆ Holding schools accountable for all students
- ◆ Highly qualified teachers

NCLB is based on

- ◆ Greater local school accountability and control
- ◆ Rewards for success and sanctions for not meeting standards
- ◆ Flexibility in resource allocation
- ◆ Parent communication, participation and school choice

The achievement gap

Beginning in the 2002-2003 school year, the state must include a “closing the achievement gap” component in its measurement of student growth.

NCLB is the next step

All students proficient or better in reading and mathematics (according to state standards) by 2013-2014

Broad effects of NCLB in Kansas

- ◆ Focuses assessment data on subgroup performances
- ◆ Increases reporting of disaggregated data results and progress toward closing the achievement gap
- ◆ Raises standards for teacher and paraprofessional quality
- ◆ Opens more options for parents – supplemental services, information and school choice

NCLB expands testing

- ◆ Annual reading and mathematics tests for grades 3-8 and grades 10-12
- ◆ Biennial NAEP sample testing in reading and math in grades 4-8
- ◆ Science testing required by 2007-2008

- ◆ LEP students must be tested annually

Adequate Yearly Progress targets

- ◆ The school as a whole
- ◆ White Asian/Pacific Islander
- ◆ Black Native American
- ◆ Hispanic Multiracial
- ◆ Limited English Proficient
- ◆ Students with disabilities
- ◆ Economically disadvantaged

How AYP is determined

- ◆ All subgroups meet or exceed AYP targets for the year, OR
- ◆ The percentage of students not scoring proficient in a subgroup is reduced by at least 10 percent in a year, AND the subgroup makes progress on the other AYP indicator

The achievement gap

- ◆ Starting points were determined by AVERAGE scores
- ◆ Many student subgroups at many schools score below this average

Highly qualified teachers

- ◆ By June 30, 2006, all core subject area teachers will meet NCLB’s definition of highly qualified
- ◆ Teachers must meet the requirements for full certification and have demonstrated competency in each of the subjects that they teach
- ◆ Newly-hired teachers working in Title I funded programs teaching in core academic areas must already meet NCLB’s definition of highly qualified
- ◆ Lateral entry teachers must meet the same qualifications in three years
- ◆ No provisional, emergency or temporary licenses
- ◆ Not-new teachers in core subject areas must meet the definition of highly qualified by June 30, 2006

New standards for instructional paraprofessionals

- ◆ Designed to ensure they have the skills needed to help in reading, writing, math and/or readiness for schooling instruction
- ◆ Requirements vary depending on school (Title I or not), position held and hire date
- ◆ High school degree
- ◆ Associate’s degree and/or two years of higher education
- ◆ Formal assessment of instructional abilities including staff development component
- ◆ Work under direct supervision of a highly qualified teacher
- ◆ Exceptions: paras who perform translation, parent involvement or only non-instructional duties

Parent knowledge, involvement and choices

- ◆ NCLB calls for states and districts to provide annual report cards on school performance and teacher quality to parents and the public
- ◆ Title I school parents have extensive rights to notification, information and involvement opportunities

Local, district, state report cards

- ◆ School basics
- ◆ Aggregated scores and AYP information
- ◆ Disaggregated scores by subgroups
- ◆ Percentage of students not tested
- ◆ Score comparisons to state objectives
- ◆ Two-year trend data
- ◆ Graduation/attendance rates
- ◆ Status of all districts including those identified for school improvement
- ◆ Teacher qualifications/credentials

Frequently asked questions

Parents

Q. What will it mean if my school fails to make AYP in No Child Left Behind?

A. Your school may not have made AYP because one or more of its subgroups did not meet its growth goal. The school will likely work even harder with this subgroup in the coming year to help more students become proficient.

Q. How can we ensure that some children are not seen as a deterrent to the overall achievement of their school under NCLB?

A. This is an excellent question for your school improvement team and parent-teacher association board members to discuss. Parents whose children are in other subgroups may have similar concerns. The principal often guides the climate of the school, so you will want to share this concern with him or her.

Q. My child is a straight-A student, yet I've heard that the targeted proficiency level for her school is going to be somewhere in the 60-70 percent range under NCLB. Where is the challenge for my child? How is this setting high expectations?

A. Target goals are the same for all subgroups at all schools across the state according to grade level. The NCLB accountability models ensure that each student will be challenged to meet his/her full potential. Even students at the advanced level of proficiency, the highest of the five achievement levels established by the state, can continue to grow academically within that range and will be expected to do so as part of their school's growth calculation.

Q. What is a Title I school and what does it have to do with this new federal law?

A. A Title I school is a school that receives Title I funds. There are two types of Title I schools – schoolwide programs (SWP) and targeted assistance schools (TAS). Usually, schoolwide programs are in schools that have at least 40 percent of their children on free or reduced lunch and go through a one-year planning process. Schoolwide programs have flexibility in using their Title I funds, in conjunction with other funds in the school, to upgrade the operation of the entire school. Targeted schools use Title I funds to focus on helping the students most at risk of academic failure on state assessments.

Title I is the cornerstone of the No Child Left Behind Act and is the largest federal education program. Title I began with the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. The purpose of Title I is to provide resources for high poverty schools so that these schools can provide supplemental services to students at risk of not being successful on state assessments in reading and mathematics. Many of the major requirements in NCLB are found in Title I – Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), teacher and paraprofessional requirements, accountability, sanctions for schools designated for improvement, standards and assessments, annual state report cards, professional development and parent involvement.

Q. How do I find out if my school is a Title I school?

A. Adams, Frances Willard, IXL, Jefferson and Roosevelt Elementary Schools are Title I schools.

Frequently asked questions, cont.

Business People and Community Members

Q. So much is at stake with student assessments. How can we make sure our students take testing seriously?

A. Some decisions are best made locally, and this is one of them. Principals are offering incentives to students and classes, and involving teachers in getting students to take tests seriously.

Q. What does a school have to do to “make” AYP? Who decided this?

A. The federal No Child Left Behind Act requires schools to meet goals for the school as a whole and subgroups of students such that all students in each group will be proficient by 2013-2014. States are required to set incremental reading and mathematics target goals based on 2001-2002 test data and what it will take to get to 100 percent proficiency by 2013-2014.

Federal law requires additional academic indicators that are not assessment-based to be used in determining AYP. For Kansas schools, the indicators are graduation rate and attendance rate for a school that has a 12th grade and graduates seniors. If a school does not graduate seniors, then the attendance rate will be used as an indicator.

Q. What happens to schools that do not “make” AYP?

A. In Title I schools, there are specific sanctions described in the federal act. Title I schools not making AYP in either math or reading for two consecutive years are identified for Title I School Improvement. Schools in Title I School Improvement for the first year must provide students with the option of transferring to another public school in the district that did make AYP. In the second year of Title I School Improvement, schools must continue to offer public school choice

as well as provide supplemental education services to eligible students. The sanctions for schools not making Adequate Yearly Progress increase in severity each year. Restructuring, the most severe of the sanctions, only occurs if schools fail to make AYP for six consecutive years.

Q. I keep hearing about all the federal dollars being poured into our schools, but the principal at my son’s school says there are no new federal dollars. How can this be? Do the sanctions still hold?

A. In many cases, because of the way funds are distributed in local districts, schools are not aware of the source of the funds they receive. In the Arkansas City school district, federal dollars pay salaries for several regular education classroom teachers.

Other factors, including changes in the numbers of students or teachers, can affect the size of school budgets so it may be that your school is receiving additional federal funds within an overall downsized budget. The sanctions and other requirements of NCLB do apply.

Q. Is school choice a part of NCLB?

A. Students attending Title I schools are eligible to transfer to another school if their school has been identified as being in school improvement for two or more consecutive years. Parents of eligible students in these schools also may choose to obtain supplemental educational services for their children, rather than transferring them to another school.

Children in schools that have been identified as “persistently dangerous” or who have been the victim of a violent crime on school property also have the option of transferring to a different school.

Words and terms to know

Accountability system: Each state sets academic standards for what every child should know and learn. Academic achievement is measured for every child, every year. The results of these annual tests are reported to the public.

Achievement gap: Differences in academic performance groups are often identified racially, ethnically and by income levels. In the U.S., white students tend to outperform students of color; and wealthier students often do better than poorer ones.

AYP: This is short for Adequate Yearly Progress. It refers to an individual state's measure of yearly progress toward achieving state academic standards. AYP is the minimum level of improvement that states, school districts and schools must achieve each year.

Assessment: Another word for "test." Under NCLB, tests are aligned with academic standards. Beginning in the 2002-03 school year, schools must administer tests in each of three grade spans: grades 3-5, grades 6-9, and grades 10-12 in all schools. Beginning in the 2005-06 school year, tests must be administered every year in grades 3-8 in math and reading. Beginning in the 2007-08 school year, science achievement must also be tested.

At-Risk: A term applied to stu-

dents who have not been adequately served by social service or educational systems and who are at risk of educational failure due to lack of services, negative life events, or physical or mental challenges, among others.

Corrective Action: When a school or district does not make adequate yearly progress, the state will place it under a Corrective Action Plan. The plan will include resources to improve teaching, administration or curriculum. If a school continues to be identified as in need of improvement, then the state has increased authority to make any necessary, additional changes to ensure improvement.

ESEA: This is short for Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which was first enacted in 1965, and is the principal federal law affecting K-12 education. NCLB is the most recent reauthorization of ESEA.

LEA: A Local Education Agency is a public board of education or other public authority within a state which maintains administrative control of public elementary or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district or other political subdivision of a state.

Limited English proficient: This refers to students for whom English is a second language and who are not at (LEP) grade level in reading and writ-

ing English.

NAEP: This is short for National Assessment of Educational Progress. An independent benchmark, NAEP is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what American students know and can do in various subject areas. Since 1969, NAEP assessments have been conducted in reading, mathematics, science, writing, U.S. history, geography, civics and the arts.

Parent involvement: This is the participation of parents in regular, two-way, meaningful communication involving students' academic learning and other school activities. The involvement includes ensuring that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning; that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education; that parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child.

Proficiency: This is mastery or the ability to do something at grade level.

Public school choice: Students who are not limited to a neighborhood school may apply to any district school, including specialized, alternative and charter schools. School choice without "public" often is used to describe vouchers and privatization.

Title I: The first section of the ESEA, Title I refers to programs aimed at America's most disadvantaged students. Title I, Part A provides assistance to improve the teaching and learning of children in high-poverty schools to enable those children to meet challenging State academic content and performance standards.

The material for this special No Child Left Behind supplement has been compiled by Kristen Martinez, USD 470 Director of Public Relations, from the following sources: No Child Left Behind, www.nochildleftbehind.org; National School Public Relations Association, www.nspr.org; North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, www.ncrel.org; North Carolina Public School System, www.ncpublicschools.org; National Coalition of Education Activists and the U.S. Department of Education.