



What Does “No Child Left Behind” Mean for my Child?

Understanding Standards, School Improvement, School Choice, and Supplemental Educational Services

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is a federal education reform plan. It was signed into law by President Bush in January, 2002. It affects every public K-12 school in the country. The primary goal of NCLB is to improve the academic achievement of all children. This handout will focus on 4 areas of NCLB. These areas are: Standards, School Improvement, School Choice, and Supplemental Educational Services (SES).

STANDARDS

NCLB requires States to set academic standards for different grade levels. These standards indicate what students should know and be able to do at each grade level. The State must then determine whether students are achieving these standards. This is accomplished by testing. NCLB requires that by the 2005-2006 school-year, students must be tested in reading and math in grades 3-8 and at least once between grades 9-12. By 2007-2008, students must also be tested in science at three grade levels. Each year after testing the percentage of students who are “proficient” (on grade level) is determined for each school. This information is provided to parents in a report card on the school.

States and school districts are required to publish report cards on school performance for every school each year. These report cards must include information on the total percentage of students that were found to be “proficient” in the subjects tested. It must also include information on the percentage of students proficient for different groups. These groups include boys/girls, low income students, minority groups, and students with disabilities. Parents should contact their child’s school to get a copy of their school’s report card (if they do not receive one). The following website also provides information on the percentage of students who are proficient in the subjects tested for each state, school district, and individual school:

<http://www.SchoolMatters.com>. This website also provides information on the percentage of economically disadvantaged students and whether the school qualifies for **Title I** funding. Title I provides federal funding for schools that have a high percentage of students from low-income families. This funding is to help students who are behind academically or at risk of falling behind.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

NCLB requires that 100% of students be proficient (on grade level) in reading and math by 2014. This requires that each state determine how much progress is necessary each year in order to reach this goal. Therefore for each school year between now and 2014, the Arkansas Department of Education will set a percentage of students expected to be “proficient.” This percentage will increase each year until it reaches 100% in 2014. Schools who achieve that year’s percentage are considered to be making **Adequate Yearly Progress** (or AYP). After not making AYP for two consecutive years a school must develop a School Improvement Plan that indicates how they will improve.



Center for Effective Parenting



There are additional consequences for **Title I Schools** that consistently do not make AYP. If a Title I school fails to meet AYP for two consecutive years, the school is identified as being in **Year 1 of School Improvement**. Year 1 identification requires the school to develop a School Improvement Plan that offers **public school choice**. That is, parents are given a choice to send their children to another public school.

If a Title I school continues to fail to meet AYP the following year, the school is moved into **Year 2 of School Improvement**. Year 2 status requires a school to continue offering school choice but must now also offer **supplemental educational services**. These are extra services such as tutoring.

A Title I school that continues to be unsuccessful in meeting AYP for four years is moved into **Year 3 of school improvement**. At this point, the school is placed in **corrective action**. Corrective action can involve many actions. Actions include replacement of staff, new curriculum, longer school day, longer school year, and to restructure school organization.

A Title I school that does not meet AYP for five consecutive years is in **restructuring**. At this point, possible actions include reopening as a public charter school, replacing all or most of staff, contracting with a management company, or having the State takeover operation of school.

[See the chart at the end of this handout for help in understanding what happens in the different years of School Improvement.]

PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE

When a Title I school is in Year 1 (or later) of School Improvement status, parents can request that their children be transferred to another school within the same district. The new school cannot be in School Improvement status. School districts must tell parents how and when to apply for the transfer.

Since the number of transfer slots available at other schools in the district may be limited, transferring to another school is not guaranteed. Children from low income families who are most in need academically will be prioritized for available transfer slots. The school district must provide transportation to the new school. However, if the old school starts making AYP they no longer have to provide transportation to the new school. Children can remain at the new school if they wish.

SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES (SES)

When a Title I school reaches Year 2 of School Improvement it must also provide financial support for Supplemental Educational Services (SES). SES are services such as tutoring that are provided to students outside of regular school hours. These services must be provided by a provider that is approved by the State. This is to help insure that they use methods that are effective and that they base their instruction on state standards. You may get a list of approved SES providers from your school or the Arkansas Department of Education website. Parents must make the request for these services for their child. Families must provide the necessary transportation for their child to receive these services.

Priority for these supplemental educational services is given to children from low-income families who are most in need academically.



Understanding School Improvement Consequences for Title I Schools that do not make annual yearly progress

Years of Not Making AYP*	School Improvement Status	Public School Choice	School Improvement Plan	Supplemental Educational Services (SES)	Possible Actions
2	Year 1 of School Improvement	Yes	Yes	No	
3	Year 2 of School Improvement	Yes	Yes	Yes	
4	Year 3 of School Improvement Corrective Action	Yes	Yes	Yes	One or more of the following: - New curriculum - Decrease local school control - Extend school day or school year - Appoint outside expert - Internally reorganize
5	Year 4 of School Improvement Restructuring	Yes	Yes	Yes	Local School is required to develop a plan which may include the following changes: Reopen as charter school Replace Principal and Staff Contract for Private Management State Takeover Other School Governance

***AYP is the minimum amount of academic progress as defined by the State Department of Education.**