No Questions Left Behind

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

2011

Minnesota Department of Education

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Introduction

The goal of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is to have every student achieve proficiency in reading, math and science by the year 2014. One of the cornerstones of the new law is that schools will no longer report achievement "on the average" for their students. Under NCLB, the state will hold schools and districts accountable for teaching all students, disaggregating the data by ethnic group, economic, English language learner and special education status.

Every year the state uses a process to assess the progress each school is making toward the goal of having every student proficient by 2014. Parents and students in Title I 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 (MDE) provides technical assistance to those schools to help them improve.

This Guide to Minnesota's Accountability Plan Under No Child Left Behind explains the fundamentals of the somewhat complicated system. The booklet uses Gopherville Elementary as an example to help parents, educators, legislators and taxpayers understand how NCLB will help 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 improve from their 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 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 250 students in grades K-5. Forty percent of their students are minorities, 24 percent are receiving free or reduced meals and 8 percent are special education.

Overall, 71 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.

No Child Left Behind was created to help a school like Gopherville close its achievement gap.

Participation

A requirement of NCLB is for schools to test at least 95% of all students across tested grades every year with state assessments in reading and mathematics. For the 2007-8 school year and beyond this means that schools are measured on the total number of students tested in grades 3-8, 10 (reading) and 11 (math).

Federal law allows schools to meet a three-year rolling average of 95% participation. This way, a few absent students in any given year will not cause a school to miss its 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 (Sp. Ed.)
- American Indian
- Limited English Proficient (LEP/ELL)
- Free & Reduced Price Lunch (F&R)

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 used for that cell.

In the 2010-11 school year, schools had eight full weeks to administer math tests online and three full weeks to administer the paper version of the reading and math tests.

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

In the 2010-11 school year, schools had eight full weeks to administer math tests online and three full weeks to administer the paper version of the reading and math tests.

Example: Participation

Gopherville Elementary had 50 third-graders, 38 fourth-graders and 46 fifth-graders enrolled during the first day of the reading test window. This means they had 134 students "across tested grades." The 134 students were members of the "All Students" cell.

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

Gopherville Elementary "All Students" participation rate for the current year is determined by dividing its 126 test participating students by its 134 students enrolled in tested grades.

126/134 = .94
.94 x 100 = 94%
94% 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 (94%) is used as part of a two-year or three-year weighted average. If the weighted average participation rate meets or exceeds 95%, the group will make its participation goal.

Number current year's test participants: 126
Number of last year's test participants: 128
Number of students who should have participated during the last two years: 267
The participation rate is then recalculated: (126+128)/267 = .9513
The two year average test participation rate is 95.13%

The 95.13% two-year weighted average is sufficient to make Adequate Yearly Progress on the participation indicator. If the two-year average participation rate had not met or exceeded 95% a 3rd year of data would have been added.

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 two weeks of the reading test window. For example, Gopherville has 76 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 X50 or above (where X designates a student's grade level) on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments II (MCA II) indicates proficiency.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments - Series II (MCA-II) Reading and Math and Series III (MCA-III) Math
In order to explain proficiency, it is helpful to understand the tests we use to measure proficiency for reading and math.

Results on the MCA-II Reading and Math and MCA-III Math are reported in four achievement levels-**D**oes not Meet Standard, **P**artially Meets Standards, **M**eets Standards and **E**xceeds Standards. (The levels are alternatively known as D, P, M and E.) These are generic descriptions that define achievement relative to the appropriate grade level.

DOES NOT MEET THE STANDARDS
Students at this level of math/reading succeed at few of the most fundamental skills of the Minnesota Academic Standards. Scores in the range of X01 through X39 represent this level of achievement.

PARTIALLY MEETS THE STANDARDS
Students at this level of math/reading have skills and understanding that partially meet the Minnesota Academic Standards. Scores in the range of X40 through X49 represent this level of achievement.

MEETS THE STANDARDS
Students at this level of math/reading have skills and understanding that meet the Minnesota Academic Standards. Scores in the range of X50 through approximately X59 represent this level of achievement.

EXCEEDS THE STANDARDS
Students at this level of math/reading have skills and understanding that exceed the skills of the Minnesota Academic Standards. Scores in the range of approximately X60 through X99 represent this level of achievement.

A score of X50 on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments-Series II (MCA II) indicates proficiency.

Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)

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-II Reading and Math and MCA-III Math. If the IEP team deems it necessary, however, special education students can take Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS), an alternative assessment developed by the department.

During the 2010-11 school year, special education students with an IEP who did not qualify to take the MTAS but had persistently failed to reach proficiency could take the MCA-Modified exam (MCA-MOD), an alternative assessment developed by the department.

MTAS and the MCA-MOD were scored in the same (4 level) fashion as the MCA II. Schools may accumulate index points (see below) for students using either alternate test.

Proficiency Index

Now that we understand the MCA-II, MCA-III and the alternative tests, 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 gives schools credit for improving the test scores of their students. Students scoring at or above MEETS THE STANDARDS on the MCA II Reading and Math, MCA-III Math, MTAS or MCA-MOD" (level M or E) generate one full index point. Students scoring at or above PARTIALLY MEETS THE STANDARDS on the MCA III, MTAS or MOD (level P) generate a half index point. Students scoring at DOES NOT MEET STANDARDS (level D) do not generate index points. Index Rates will be published each year for schools.

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

Minnesota's Proficiency Index Target
Minnesota's starting points for its grades 3-8 and 10 reading and 11 math are indicated in the 2006 and 2007 column. A new math test was administered for grades 3-8 math in 2011 and those reset targets are shown in the 2011 column.

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 2006 and beyond:

Annual Index Targets
Annual measurable objectives expressed as index point targets or proportion proficient through 2013-14 for grades 3-8, 10, and 11 are shown in the chart below.

Math-Statewide Targets expressed as Proportion Proficient

Grade	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
3	0.7895	0.7895	0.8196	0.8496	0.8797	.6975	.7983	.8992	1.0000
4	0.6964	0.6964	0.7398	0.7831	0.8265	.6538	.7692	.8846	1.0000
5	0.5979	0.5979	0.6553	0.7128	0.7702	.5559	.7039	.8520	1.0000
6	0.5989	0.5989	0.6562	0.7135	0.7708	.5280	.6853	.8427	1.0000
7	0.5880	0.5880	0.6469	0.7057	0.7646	.5754	.7169	.8585	1.0000
8	0.5839	0.5839	0.6433	0.7028	0.7622	.5699	.7133	.8566	1.0000
11	0.2813	0.2813	0.3840	0.4866	0.5893	0.6920	0.7947	0.8973	1.0000

Reading Grade	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
3	72.22	72.22	76.19	80.16	84.13	88.09	92.06	96.03	100.00
4	69.48	69.48	73.84	78.20	82.56	86.92	91.28	95.64	100.00
5	71.93	71.93	75.94	79.95	83.96	87.97	91.98	95.99	100.00
6	70.27	70.27	74.52	78.76	83.01	87.26	91.51	95.75	100.00
7	65.63	65.63	70.54	75.45	80.36	85.27	90.18	95.09	100.00
8	64.04	64.04	69.18	74.31	79.45	84.59	89.73	94.86	100.00
10	64.77	64.77	69.80	74.84	79.87	84.90	89.93	94.97	100.00

NCLB requires schools to meet or exceed the state's Index Targets each year in order to make Adequate Yearly Progress (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 in the same school on October 1st and during the day of the test.

Schools must have at least 20 full academic year students across tested grades in a cell in order for the proficiency requirement to apply to that given cell.

If a student group (cell) has less than 20 students, it is generally not measured. Only in extraordinary circumstances are student groups with fewer than 20 students measured.

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 in each group within a school.

For example, the Index Target for the "All Student" group in a K-5 schools will be calculated on the basis of the assessments of grade three, four and five full academic year students. Index Targets in K-12 schools will be calculated using data from all grades tested in the school (3-8,10 and 11).

Example: School Index Target

Gopherville Elementary's Index Target for reading for the "All Students" group (123 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 8. Then add the grade 3, 4 and grade 5 numbers together.

Grade 3: 41 students x 76.19 (state reading index target) = 3123.79
Grade 4: 41 students x 73.84 (state reading index target) = 3027.44
Grade 5: 41 students x 75.94 (state reading index target) = 3113.54
Total 9264.77

Next divide the total (9264.77) by the number of full academic year students tested (123) to get your answer (75.32)

The unadjusted index target is 75.32 for the "All Student" group in reading at Gopherville Elementary School. This process is repeated for every one of the nine student groups that makes 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 a 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.

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

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

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

Example: Confidence Interval

After Gopherville Elementary School's "All Student" group's unadjusted Index Target is calculated, it is 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 Index Target of 75.32. 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 CI Adjusted Index Target of 69.58. The CI Index Target is lower because the formula allows for a "margin of error" and takes away the likelihood that variations in proficiency are based on chance.

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

Thus far, the AYP calculation has made a 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 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 P, M and E).

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

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

Example: School Proficiency Index

During the 2007-08 school year, students were tested in grades 3-8,10 and 11. Gopherville Elementary had 42 third, 42 fourth and 42 fifth-grade students enrolled on test day. Three students (1 in third, 1 in fourth and 1 in 5th grade) were not enrolled in the school on October 1st so they are not included in this calculation. One hundred and twenty-three students across these grades were present for the academic year and tested.

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

25 third grade students achieved levels MEETS or EXCEEDS THE STANDARDS (score 350 or above) on their MCA II;
26 fourth grade students achieve levels MEETS or EXCEEDS THE STANDARDS (score 450 or above) on their MCA II and
25 fifth grade students achieve levels MEETS or EXCEEDS THE STANDARDS (score 550 or above) on their MCA II.

9 third grade students achieve level PARTIALLY MEETS THE STANDARDS (score between 340 and 350) on their MCA II;
4 fourth grade students achieve level PARTIALLY MEETS THE STANDARDS (score between 440 and 450) on their MCA II and
9 fifth grade students achieve level PARTIALLY MEETS THE STANDARDS (score between 540 and 550) on their MCA II.

7 third grade students, 11 fourth grade students and 7 fifth grade students achieved level DOES NOT MEET THE STANDARDS (score between X00 and X40) on their MCA II.

So to calculate their index:

Number of students gaining 1 point: 76=76 pts
Number of students gaining .5 points: 22 =11 pts
Number of students gaining 0 points: 35 =0 pts
Total 87 pts

The school's total number of index points generated was 87 (76+11+0).

The greatest number of index points the school's students might have generated (if they had all tested as proficient) is 123.

Thus, the school generated an actual index rate of 87/123 x 100 or 70.73.

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 Index Target for the "All Students" subgroup is 75.32. Their CI adjusted Index Target (after application of the confidence interval) was 69.58.

Gopherville's "All Students" group's actual Index Rate (70.73) is equal to or greater than their CI adjusted Index Target. Thus, they made their AYP proficiency target for this group.

The proficiency calculation is executed and reported for each measured 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 assessment 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 rate 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 lunch group. In 2006-2007, 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 achieve the MEETS or EXCEEDS THE STANDARDS level (score at or above 350 and 550 respectively) on their MCA II.

5 fourth grade students and 2 fifth grade students achieve PARTIALLY MEETS THE STANDARDS (score at or above 340 and 540 respectively) on their MCA II.

6 third grade students; 5 fourth grade students and 6 fifth grade students achieve at DOES NOT MEET THE STANDARDS level 1 (score below 340 and 540 respectively) on their MCAs.

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: 17= 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 30.

Thus, the school generated an actual index rate of 9.5/30 x 100 or 31.66.

Gopherville Elementary School's adjusted Index Target for this group is 63.30. Their student test scores generated an index rate of 31.66. 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 31.66 out of a possible 100. (Put another way, their non-proficiency rate is 68.34.)

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 lunch non-proficient index rate for the 2006-2007 school year was 68.34. A 10% decrease in this number represents 6.8 index points.

Thus, if the school's 2007-2008 index rate is 38.46 (31.66 + 6.8) or higher the school can make safe harbor. As the schools 2007-2008 index rate of 41.66 (e.g.) is equal or greater than the needed index rate of 38.46, the school's group will make safe harbor (provided its attendance rate 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 would have an additional series of AYP calculations performed for them.

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 rate 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.

2% Proxy

Minnesota will implement an additional type of federal flexibility in its 2008 AYP calculation. The basis for the new flexibility is the federal government's belief that 2% of the nation's students are neither appropriately assessed with a general education assessment nor appropriately assessed with the alternative assessment for the most significantly cognitively disabled.

While the federal government recognizes the needs of this 2% of students, it also recognizes that most states are not yet in possession of an appropriate assessment for these students.

Given this conundrum, the federal government is allowing Minnesota (and states like it) to impute a rate of proficiency upon special education students under the following circumstances:

When a school or district has failed to make AYP proficiency target solely due to its performance in the Special Education subgroup, the AYP calculation will: 1) re-compute the subgroup's proficiency target without use of a confidence interval; 2) add 14* points to the subgroup's proficiency index rate; 3) compare the proficiency target under step 1 with the amended proficiency rate under step 2; 4) If the amended proficiency index rate in step 2 exceeds the index target under step 1, the special education subgroup's AYP proficiency status will be changed to "making AYP."

* The exact number of points will be determined when the 2008 AYP calculation is run. A 14-point bump to the proficiency rate is a reasonable estimate. The exact size of the rate increase is a function of the number of special education students assessed as a proportion of all students enrolled in tested grades.

Federal regulations stipulate that this additional flexibility should be added as the last step in a state's AYP calculation. Thus, no Safe Harbor or other adjustments are made following the addition of this imputed proxy.

Attendance Overview

To make adequate yearly progress for attendance, elementary schools and middle schools must have an average 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 250 students enrolled in grades K-5. Thirty-two of the students are enrolled in kindergarten and are not included in this calculation.

That leaves 218 students enrolled in grades 1-5.

The school's students attended school an average of 170 days during the school's 185 day instructional calendar. The average daily attendance (ADA) of these students is 170/185. The average daily membership (ADM) of these student is 1 (the school claimed the students' enrollment for the entire school year). Thus, the school has an NCLB attendance rate of 91.89.

170/185 over 1 x 100 = 91.89

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 used in determining high school AYP.

To make adequate yearly progress for graduation, high schools must have an average graduation rate of 85% or show acceptable growth (two ** percent above the previous year) towards 85%.

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 85% or show acceptable growth towards 85%. The graduation rate is calculated as follows:

Total Grads 2010
÷
Dropouts across four years
(Grade 9 in 2007 + grade 10 in 2008 +
grade 11 in 2009 + grade 12 in 2010)
+
2010 Grads

To make adequate yearly progress for graduation, high schools must have an average graduation rate of 85 percent or show acceptable growth towards 85 percent.

When a School Does Not Make AYP

An AYP status is reported annually for all schools and districts

In Need of Improvement Stages

MDE determines a Title I 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 2 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 and 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 status themselves. MDE reports to each school the school's status before the beginning of the school year.

Title I Schools

In Need of Improvement Stage 0: Not making AYP for the first time

Stage 1: School choice
- Notify parents
- School improvement plan and implementation
- Parents can opt to move children to another school in the district

Stage 2: Supplemental Services
All of the above, plus
- Tutoring services for students most at-risk

Stage 3: Corrective Action
All of the above, plus
- Further measures determined by the district

Stage 4: Plan for Restructuring
All of the above, plus
- District determines restructuring plan

Stage 5: Restructuring
All of the above, plus
- Implementation of district restructuring plan

In Need of Improvement Stages

A Title I school is subject to improvement when any group within the school misses AYP for two consecutive years in the same area.

In Need of Improvement Stages extend only to schools that accept Title I funds.

In need of improvement stages extend only to schools that accept Title I funds.

Results of being identified as In Need of Improvement include:

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

* Due to a waiver granted by the U.S. Department of Education for the 2011-12 school year, schools in Stage 1 can choose to provide SES and count SES spending toward its mandated financial set-aside.

Creating and Implementing a School Improvement Plan

Schools in Stage 1 or higher must create and implement a school improvement plan. MDE contracts with the statewide regional educational service cooperatives to provide technical assistance for the development and implementation of a school improvement plan. Primarily, a school improvement plan will consist of a needs analysis, goals for the school year and strategies to achieve those goals. NCLB requires 10 specific elements for school improvement plans. Therefore, school improvement plans must include strategies to:

1. Directly address the reason for identification
2. Ensure all students are proficient in core academic subjects by 2013-14
3. Increase teacher and principal participation in high-quality professional development
4. Specify how the 10% Title I set aside for professional development will improve the AYP status
5. Establish annual measurable objectives for continuous and substantial progress to achieve proficiency
6. Describe the process of written parent notification of AYP status
7. Specify responsibility of the school, the district and state educational agency, including the technical assistance provided by the district
8. Include parent involvement strategies
9. Incorporate extended day and extended school year activities as appropriate
10. Incorporate a teacher mentoring program

Parents with children in a school in Stage 1 or higher can request a copy of the improvement plan from the school and ask 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 website.

If a school fails for three or more years to make AYP, children from low income families who attend identified Title I schools may be eligible to receive additional academic services or tutoring.

* Due to a waiver granted by the U.S. Department of Education for the 2011-12 school year, schools in Stage 1 can choose to provide SES and count SES spending toward its mandated financial set-aside.

Funding Supplemental Services
Districts must set aside an amount equal to 20% of the district's total Title I allocation for choice and supplemental services. Districts may use all or part of their Title I allocation to meet the set-aside requirements, including any additional accountability funds the district receives, or districts can use local funds to meet the set-aside requirement.

Districts may also use other federal funds, or use the Title VI Flexibility Provision to help pay for services. Districts must determine a 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
The Minnesota Department of Education has developed recommendations on how corrective action and restructuring will look in Minnesota.

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.

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

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

Consider a district with just two schools. Each school has 15 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 20 and both schools are below 20 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 20 and the two schools together, totaling 30 LEP students in tested grades, exceed 20.

In Need of Improvement for districts

Districts which do not make AYP **two or three 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;
- Limit the percent of money that the district moves between NCLB programs.

Districts which do not make AYP **four 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;
- Move no funds between NCLB programs.

These districts must set aside a fixed amount of funds to help with the district improvement plan. MDE contracts with the statewide regional educational service cooperatives to provide technical assistance for the development and implementation of district improvement plan. Primarily, a district improvement plan will consist of a needs analysis, goals for the school year and strategies to achieve those goals. NCLB requires eight specific elements for district improvement plans.

Therefore, district improvement plans must include strategies to:

1. Incorporate strategies based on scientifically-based research to strengthen core academic subjects
2. Ensure all students are proficient in core academic subjects by 2013-14
3. Ensure the professional development needs of instructional staff are met by providing opportunities to participate in high-quality professional development
4. Establish annual measurable objectives for continuous and substantial progress to achieve proficiency
5. Address the teaching and learning needs in the district
6. Outline the responsibility of the schools, the district and the state educational agency, including the technical assistance provided by the district
7. Include parent involvement strategies, and
8. Incorporate extended day and extended school year activities as appropriate.

Assessments; 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.

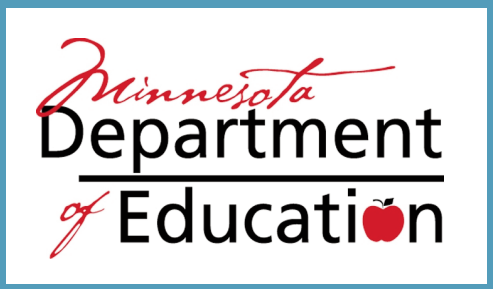
Improvement Plans

If the district does not meet the AMAO targets for one year, the district must notify parents of ELL 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 ESL program with direction from MDE.

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



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