



NJDOE News

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New Jersey 2004-05 *No Child Left Behind Act* AYP Report

With proficiency benchmarks increased for the first time in three years, 544 New Jersey schools – 22.7 percent of the state’s 2,398 public and charter schools – have been identified as “Schools In Need of Improvement” (SINI) under the federal *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)*.

The schools did not meet the mandated standards for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for at least two years in a row based on the preliminary analysis of their state test results. In 2003-04, 496 schools were identified as SINI.

“While New Jersey has supported the *NCLB’s* focus on student achievement and adult accountability as consistent with our own priorities, we continue to have serious problems with the federal law’s convoluted and confusing system of labeling schools and of calculating who is making progress and who is not,” said Commissioner of Education William L. Librera.

“The biggest reason that we have more schools on the New Jersey SINI list is that this year, under *NCLB*, the state was required to increase the percentages of students within each of ten subgroups at each school who must pass each test,” the Commissioner said. “*NCLB* mandates that by 2014, every student must achieve proficiency in language arts and math every year. In order to move towards that 100 percent goal, we have to raise the benchmark percentages every three years.

“What that boils down to with this confusing and imprecise process is that you can have schools that made real gains in the numbers of students who pass the test but still didn’t make AYP because the bar just got higher,” he said.

“Overall, the state of education is very strong here in New Jersey,” the Commissioner said. “We know that many schools caught up in this *NCLB* AYP situation are not ‘failing schools,’ and we think it is both unfortunate and grossly unfair that the federal government chooses to label them that way.”

Here are the increases in the percentages of students in each subgroup and each grade who must achieve proficiency on the state test in order for the school to achieve AYP:

Assessment	2003-04	2004-05
NJASK (3 rd and 4 th grade tests)		
Language Arts Literacy	68%	75%
Math	53%	62%
GEPA (8 th grade test)		
Language Arts Literacy	58%	66%
Math	39%	49%
HSPA (11 th grade test)		
Language Arts Literacy	73%	79%

Math	55%	64%
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How Schools Achieve AYP

AYP results are based on year-to-year comparisons of schools' scores in the HSPA (High School Proficiency Assessment), GEPA (Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment), NJASK3 and NJASK4 (New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge, Grades Three and Four) tests. The tests are administered in the spring. In the 2005-06 school year, as required by *NCLB*, New Jersey plans to add tests for the fifth, sixth and seventh grades.

In order to achieve AYP, a school's students must meet both the proficiency targets and a 95 percent participation rate in math and language arts for each test administered at the school and for each of ten subgroups: total grade population, students with disabilities, limited English proficient (LEP) students, economically disadvantaged students and white, Hispanic, African American, Asian/Pacific Islander and American Indian/Native American students.

In New Jersey, for participation calculations, if a subgroup in a grade level at a school contains fewer than 40 students, that subgroup's performance is not included in the AYP calculation. For proficiency calculations, the minimum subgroup count is 20, except for the students with disabilities subgroup, for which the count is 35.

The students in each subgroup with more than the minimum number must meet the proficiency and participation benchmarks in both content areas. If a school misses any one of the 40 indicators, it has not made AYP.

"We know many districts have made significant strides in improving teaching and learning and improving student achievement," said Assistant Commissioner for Student Services Isaac Bryant. "But given these *NCLB* rules, it is not uncommon for the performance of one or two students to affect the entire school's AYP status."

This year, DOE officials aggregated the data for the NJASK3 and NJASK4 tests when grades three and four were housed in the same school, treating the two grades as if they were one for calculation purposes.

"This increased the numbers of students in each subgroup and made it less likely that the performances of specific subgroups were dropped from the school's AYP calculation," explained Bryant. "However, the alternative was to require the school to meet a total of 80 indicators - 40 for each grade - if the test results were calculated separately. We also felt the first option provided a better overall picture of the school's performance."

In 2004-05, a total of 851 New Jersey schools - 34.5 percent of the schools in the state - did not make AYP based on their preliminary 2005 state assessment test results. In 2003-04, 585 schools did not meet AYP benchmarks.

Schools have the right to appeal their AYP designations to the DOE Office of Title I Program Planning.

The preliminary (or "Cycle I") analysis of the test data used to identify schools in this report does not include the scores on the alternate proficiency assessments (APAs) administered to students with the most serious disabilities. Those assessments will be hand-graded and the results will be folded into the Cycle II analysis for each school later this year.

In prior years, the AYP status of approximately five percent of the state's schools has been affected in some manner when the APA data has been included in the calculation.

"Early Warning" Status

If a school misses AYP in any one of the 40 indicators for any test calculation after having achieved AYP in prior years, it is placed on an "Early Warning" list. Early Warning schools face no *NCLB* sanctions. This is a category developed by New Jersey as a way to remind school officials that if they do not make AYP in the following year, they will be placed on the *NCLB* SINI list.

In 2004-05, 376 schools were placed on the Early Warning list. Forty seven schools were placed in Early Warning "Hold" status, which means that while they made AYP this year, they did not make it in the 2003-04 school year. Schools must make AYP two years in a row in order to be removed from either the Early Warning or SINI list.

This year, 161 schools were removed from either the Early Warning or SINI list after making AYP two years in a row.

Sanctions for Schools that Do Not Make AYP Two or More Years in a Row

SINI schools that receive federal Title I funds and that do not make AYP two years in a row face sanctions that increase in severity each year that AYP is not made. The sanctions include parental notification, intra-district school choice, the use of 20 percent of their federal money to provide tutoring and other assistance to struggling students, corrective action plans and technical assistance from the district and the state.

Most Serious - Year 5 Status

Facing the most serious sanctions are the 71 schools at which the students now have not made AYP for the fifth year in a row. Administrators at those schools must now begin planning for restructuring and implement the plan in the 2006-07 school year if they continue to miss their AYP targets next year.

Under *NCLB* rules, restructuring requires the imposition of an alternative governance system for the school. This could involve replacing all or most of the school staff deemed relevant to the school's inability to make progress; entering into a contract with a private management company to operate the school as a public school; significant state intervention; re-opening the school as a charter school or other major operational changes.

DOE officials are already working with the 71 Year 5 schools to help them create a blueprint for change and identify their responsibilities and options under *NCLB* rules. Most of the schools have been visited by DOE CAPA (Collaborative Assessment and Planning for Achievement) teams, which help identify obstacles to student achievement and develop customized solutions to each school's problems.

Year 2 Status

Eighty-six schools were notified that they did not achieve AYP two years in a row in the same content area and were placed in the Year 2 "School Choice" status. Any of these schools that receive Title I funding must offer parents intra-district school choice at another school within the district that did achieve AYP.

If choice is not available in the district - either because there is only one school at that grade level in the district or because the other schools at the grade level are already at capacity - the school may offer supplemental educational services, such as tutoring.

"The good news in this area is that 56 schools that were in School Choice status last year made AYP this year and were placed in Year 2 'Hold' status," said Assistant Commissioner Bryant. "If they continue their good work and achieve AYP again next year, they will be removed from the *NCLB* school improvement list entirely."

An additional 25 schools remain in Year 2 status because the content area in which they missed AYP this year was different from the content area in which they missed it in 2003-04, or because they made AYP at one grade level but did not make it at another.

Year 3 Status

Missing AYP for three years in a row were 271 schools which are now in the third level of AYP sanctions, "Supplemental Educational Services." If they receive Title I funding, they are required to offer parents in-district choice, if feasible, and supplemental educational services, such as tutoring, using 20 percent of the Title I money they receive. They must also complete a school improvement plan.

"We're also seeing signs of improvement among individual schools at this level," Bryant said. "Eleven schools in Year 3 status in 2003-04 made AYP this year and are in Year 3 Hold; if they make AYP next year, they are off the list. That happened to seven schools that were in Year 3 Hold last year and made AYP this year."

Nineteen schools that were in Year 3 hold last year made AYP for two years in a row on one test, but because they did not make it on another test, their status changed to Year 3 or Early Warning status, or remained in Year 3 Hold.

Year 4 Status

Eight schools received notice that they had not achieved AYP in the same content area for the fourth consecutive year and are now placed in *NCLB* Year 4 "Corrective Action" status. Any of those schools which receive federal Title I funding must allot 20 percent of their Title I funds for parental options, such as intra-district school choice, if feasible, and supplemental educational services, such as tutoring; complete a school improvement plan and undergo a comprehensive review; and take other corrective actions.

Twenty-four schools in Year 4 status last year made AYP in 2004-05 and are in Year 4 Hold status. If they make AYP again next year in the same content area, they could be off the list. Three schools in Year 4 status last year remain there, either because they did not make AYP on a different test, or because they did not make AYP in a different content area.

For complete information about the DOE's *NCLB* accountability efforts, please click here:

<http://www.nj.gov/njded/title1/accountability/profiles/05/>.

Additional links are as follows:

- List of 2005-06 Schools in Need of Improvement and their status:
http://www.nj.gov/njded/title1/accountability/profiles/05/0808ayp_a1.pdf

- List of all schools identified and their status: http://www.nj.gov/njded/title1/accountability/profiles/05/0808ayp_a2.pdf
- List of schools identified as in Early Warning status: http://www.nj.gov/njded/title1/accountability/profiles/05/0808ayp_a3.pdf
- List of schools that did not make AYP, number of indicators they made: http://www.nj.gov/njded/title1/accountability/profiles/05/0808ayp_a4.pdf
- Individual school profiles: <http://www.nj.gov/njded/title1/accountability/profiles/05/profiles.shtml>
- Status graph for elementary schools: http://www.nj.gov/njded/title1/accountability/profiles/05/0808ayp_a7.pdf
- Status graph for GEPA schools: http://www.nj.gov/njded/title1/accountability/profiles/05/0808ayp_a5.pdf
- Status graph for High Schools: http://www.nj.gov/njded/title1/accountability/profiles/05/0808ayp_a6.pdf

NOTE TO REPORTERS: Attached also is a link to a list of all New Jersey school districts that received Title I funding last year. The link is provided as a guide to assist in story development. The list of schools receiving Title I funding for the 2005-06 school year will not be available until October. In addition, in some school districts, only some of the schools are eligible for Title I funds. Reporters are encouraged to check with local school districts to determine which of their schools are eligible to receive Title I funds.

<http://www.nj.gov/njded/grants/entitlement/nclb/nclbfy2005alloc.pdf>