



NJDOE News

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Department of Education Releases Adequate Yearly Progress Data

The New Jersey Department of Education today released the annual Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) report, part of the federal No Child Left Behind legislation that aims to have all students achieving at grade level by 2014. Based primarily on the results of the New Jersey state assessments given to students in grades 3 through 8 and grade 11, AYP is a complicated measuring tool with many components. Should a school fail any of the components, it cannot pass AYP standards.

The federal *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) requires states to establish standards for accountability for all schools and districts. The foundation for the accountability system is based on a state's academic content standards, which define what students should know and be able to do, and tests which measure whether students have mastered these standards.

For the 2009/2010 school year, the data shows 209 additional schools did not meet AYP standards for two years in a row, bringing the total number of Schools in Need of Improvement to 657. The report also shows 18 more school districts are now in Districts in Need of Improvement status, bringing the total number to 57 of the state's 627 districts.

"Like a 'check engine' light in a car, the AYP data indicates that something in a school district may not be working properly," Acting Commissioner Hendricks said. "It could mean that only one small group of students in a school did not meet standards. Or it could be the first evidence of a systemic problem requiring sweeping change. Though these results are part of a broader picture, the Department takes this indicator very seriously and will work with the local leadership in these districts to examine the data, flag any underlying issues, and take action wherever it is appropriate to ensure our children are being properly served."

The Department is meeting with teachers and administrators from hundreds of schools to help them understand the AYP results.

"The report provides an early warning signal about student learning in New Jersey's school districts and, whatever the reason, demands the attention of stakeholders at all levels to explore how our schools can do better," added Acting Commissioner Hendricks. "If your school is on the list of those that did not make Adequate Yearly Progress, I would encourage you to contact your local school to find out more about the specific challenges and reasons for having fallen short of this marker. Just as the Department will continue to do, we encourage parents, taxpayers, students and administrators to work together to understand and assist in addressing the problems that are highlighted as a result of this report."

School and district accountability documents are posted here:

<http://www.nj.gov/education/title1/accountability/ayp/1011/>

For background of what AYP means and how it is part of the No Child Left Behind, visit:

<http://www.nj.gov/education/title1/accountability/ayp/1011/understanding.pdf>