



Understanding No Child Left Behind

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Notes



Parental Notification Requirements Under NCLB

The No Child Left Behind Act requires notices and information be given to parents under several circumstances. All required information must be given in a “uniform and understandable format, and to the extent practicable, in a language that the parents can understand.” If the school has a school-wide Title I program, required notices must be sent to parents of all students. If the school has a Title I Targeted Assistance Program, public school choice must be offered to all parents, but all other Title I notices go ONLY to parents of students in T.A.P. *if* priority is given to eligible students in greatest need. If services are not based on greatest need, notices go to all parents. The notices listed below, listed in alphabetical order, are in addition to the required annual district report card. Requirements for the state and district report cards are listed separately at the end.

Achievement Level of Student

Schools receiving Title I funds must provide each parent information on the achievement level of their child on each of the state academic assessments as soon as is practicably possible after the test is taken.

Homeless Children

To be eligible for federal funds for programs assisting the education of homeless children, a district must provide written notice to the parents of each child enrolled in a separate school for homeless children of the choice of schools that homeless children are eligible to attend. They should also be notified that no homeless child is required to attend a separate school, and that homeless children must be provided transportation services, educational services and meals. The notice must also include contact information for the local liaison for homeless children and the state coordinator for education of homeless children.

Limited English Proficiency

If a school district uses federal funds to provide a language instruction education program for children with limited English proficiency, they must, no later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year, give parents of each student identified for participation or participating in that program the following information:

- Why the student is in the program
- The student’s level of English proficiency and how that level was determined
- The status of the student’s academic achievement
- Methods of instruction in the program in which their child is placed and those of other available programs
- How the program will meet the educational needs of their child
- How the program will help their child learn English and meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation
- The specific exit requirements for the program
- In the case of a child with a disability, how the program meets the child’s IEP objectives
- Information about parental rights

If a child is not identified as limited English proficient prior to the beginning of the school year, the district must notify parents within the first two weeks of the student being placed in the program.

Military Recruiters

Districts receiving federal education funds must notify parents of high school students that they have a right to request that their child’s name, address, and telephone number not be released to a military recruiter without their prior consent. Districts must comply with any such request.



Parent Involvement Policy

A district receiving Title I funds and schools served under Title I must jointly develop with and distribute to parents of children participating in Title I programs a written parental involvement policy. If a school or district has a parental involvement policy that applies to all parents, it may amend the policy to meet the requirements under NCLB. Schools must:

- Hold at least one annual meeting for Title I parents to inform about the parental involvement policy, their rights under Title I, and how they can be involved in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs in the school
- Offer a flexible number of meetings
- Involve parents in an ongoing manner in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs
- Provide Title I parents with information about the programs, a description and explanation of the curriculum, forms of academic assessment
- If requested, opportunities for regular meetings to discuss the education of their children

In addition, schools must develop a school-parent compact that outlines the responsibilities of each party for improved student achievement. All parents of Title 1 students are required to sign compacts. The purpose is to design a plan for the teachers and parents to support the academic success of the student. It should also enhance communication between school and home. The compacts must include:

- How the school will provide quality curriculum and instruction to enable students to meet state standards
- Areas of parental responsibility, such as monitoring attendance, overseeing homework completion, monitoring television watching, volunteering in the classroom, and participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of the child and positive use of extracurricular time.
- Opportunities for communication, such as parent/teacher conferences, at which time the compact will be discussed relative to the child's achievement; frequent progress reports; reasonable access to staff; and opportunities to volunteer and participate in the classroom.

Public School Choice

School districts receiving Title I funds must offer public school choice under either of three circumstances:

- To students enrolled in schools not making adequate yearly progress for two or more years
- To students enrolled in schools "persistently dangerous"
- To a student who has been the victim of a violent crime in or on public school grounds

Choice cannot be to a school in need of improvement or that is persistently dangerous. A choice of more than one school must be offered. The notice of choice must include information on the receiving schools' academic performance.

When a school is designated by the state as being persistently dangerous, parents must be notified within 10 days of their right to request a transfer. The written notice must also indicate whether the child is entitled to transportation. The transfer must be completed within 30 days. See State Board rule 160-4-8-.16 for Georgia's definitions and rules for the unsafe school option.

Right to Access Assessment Data

A district must make reasonable efforts to inform parents and the public about their right to access to all assessment data (except personally identifiable information), questions and current assessment instruments. Districts, schools, and students may voluntarily participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Parents of children selected to participate in any NAEP assessment must be informed before the assessment is administered that their child may be excused from participation for any reason, is not required to finish any assessment and is not required to answer any test question.



Safe and Drug-Free School Programs

A district receiving safe and drug-free program funds must inform and involve parents in violence and drug prevention efforts. The district must make reasonable efforts to inform parents of the content of safe and drug-free school programs and activities other than classroom instruction. If a parent objects in writing, the district must withdraw the student from the program or activity.

School Identified for Improvement or Corrective Action

School districts receiving Title I funds must promptly notify parents of each student enrolled in a school identified for improvement, corrective action or restructuring that the school has been so identified. The notification must include the following:

- An explanation of what the identification means
- How the school compares in terms of academic achievement with other schools in the district and state
- The reason(s) for the identification
- What the school is doing to address low achievement
- What the district and state will do to help the school
- How the parents can become involved in addressing the school's academic issues
- An explanation of the parents' option to transfer their child to another public school or to obtain supplemental educational services for the student

If a school is subject to restructuring, the district must promptly notify the teachers and parents and provide them an opportunity to comment before any action is taken and to participate in developing any restructuring plan.

Supplemental Educational Services

If a school fails to make adequate yearly progress according to the state plan, the district must make supplemental services available to eligible students in the school. The district must provide annual notice to parents of the availability of these services, the identity of the approved providers, a brief description of the services, qualifications and demonstrated effectiveness of each provider.

Teacher Qualifications

At the beginning of each school year, all school districts receiving Title I funds must inform parents of all students attending schools receiving Title I funds that they may request information regarding the qualifications of the student's classroom teachers and paraprofessionals. The district must provide the information upon request in a timely manner. Parents may request the following information:

- Whether the teacher has met state qualifications and has a license for the grade level and the subject area (s)he teaches
- Whether the teacher has an emergency or provisional license
- What the teacher's undergraduate major was, any graduate certification or degree held by the teacher including the field of discipline of the certification or degree
- Whether the child is being taught by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications

Parents must be notified in a timely manner if a student has been assigned or has been taught for four or more weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified. "Highly qualified" is defined in this law as teachers having, at a minimum, a bachelor's degree, certified in the subjects and/or grades they teach, licensed to teach in the state, demonstrate subject knowledge and teaching skills, and not teaching with an emergency, temporary, or provisional license. "Highly qualified paraprofessionals" must have at least two years of college, an AA degree or higher, or must demonstrate a knowledge of instruction through a formal assessment.



Third Party Surveys

District must develop and adopt policies regarding the rights of parents to inspect third party surveys before they are distributed to students and take measures to protect student privacy when surveys ask for certain sensitive information; parental right to inspect any instructional materials; administration of physical examinations or screening of all students; collection, disclosure or use of personal information from students for the purpose of marketing or selling that information; and the parental right to inspect any instrument used to collect personal information.

Voluntary School Choice Program

If a district receives a federal grant to fund a voluntary school choice program, it must promptly notify parents of students in the area to be served by the program of the program's availability and a clear explanation of how the program will work.

Annual State Report Card

The purpose of the report card is to inform parents and the community. Report cards influence public opinion and can influence policy and funding decisions. It is important that the public and media understand the information presented and its implications. The Report Card must include:

1. Information on student achievement at each proficiency level on the state academic assessments. The information must be aggregated and disaggregated by student gender, student migrant status, economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, students with disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency. Disaggregation is not required when the results would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student or when the number of students in the category is so small the results would be statistically unreliable.
2. Information that compares the actual achievement levels of each group of students to the state's annual measurable objectives for each group of students on each of the academic assessments.
3. The percentage of students not tested. This must be disaggregated by subgroups.
4. The most recent two-year trend in student achievement in each subject area and for each grade level for which assessments are required.
5. Aggregate information on state indicators used to determine the adequate yearly progress.
6. Graduation rates for secondary students.
7. The performance of the district towards reaching adequate yearly progress (AYP), including the number and names of each school identified for school improvement.
8. The professional qualifications of teachers in the district, the percentage of such teachers teaching with emergency or provisional credentials, and the percentage of classes not taught by highly qualified teachers, in the aggregate and disaggregated by high poverty (top quartile of poverty) compared to low poverty schools (Bottom quartile of poverty).
9. Other data that the state has determined will best provide parents, students, and other members of the public with information regarding the progress of each of the state's public schools.

Annual School District Report Cards

Local school districts that receive Title I funds are required to prepare and disseminate an annual district report card. The report card requirement began with the 2002-3 school year. It must be provided to all schools in the district. Additionally, it must be disseminated to all parents of students attending those schools in an "understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language that the parents can understand." The report card must be made widely available through public means, such as posting on the internet, distribution to the media, and distribution through public agencies.



Data required for the district report cards includes:

1. For the district, and by individual school, information on student achievement at each proficiency level on the state academic assessments. The information must be aggregated and disaggregated by student gender, student migrant status, economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, students with disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency. Disaggregation is not required when the results would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student or when the number of students in the category is so small the results would be statistically unreliable.
2. Student achievement at the basic, proficient, and advanced levels on state assessments.
3. The number and percentage of schools identified for school improvement and how long the schools have been so identified.
4. Information that demonstrates how district students in the aggregate achieved on the state assessments as compared to the state as a whole.
5. For each school, information that shows how the school's students achieved on the statewide academic assessments and other indicators of adequate yearly progress compared to other students in the district and the state as a whole.
6. For each school, whether the school has been identified for school improvement.
7. The percentage of students who were not tested, disaggregated by subgroup.
8. For secondary schools, graduation rates.
9. The professional qualifications of district teachers in the aggregate and by school. Professional qualifications include the percentage of such teachers teaching with provisional or emergency credentials, and the percentage of classes not taught by highly qualified teachers, in the aggregate and disaggregated by high poverty (top quartile of poverty) compared to low poverty (bottom quartile of poverty).



Highly Qualified Teachers under NCLB

Title II-A of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) focuses on teacher and paraprofessional quality in order to improve student achievement. NCLB established rigorous goals to ensure that all teachers were highly qualified by the end of the 2005-2006 school year.

What is the Definition of Highly Qualified?

To be considered a highly qualified teacher, a teacher must:

- be certified to teach by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC), and
- teach in the fields of certification or have a major in the subjects taught or, in the case of a veteran teacher, successfully complete the High Object State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE) offered by the PSC for the subjects taught.

By the fall of 2003, all newly hired teachers in programs funded by Title 1 must be highly qualified. By the end of the 2005-2006 school year, all teachers of core academic subjects must be highly qualified.

Paraprofessionals who work in Title 1 programs and were hired after January 8, 2002 must:

- have completed at least 2 years of study in an institute of higher education, or
- have obtained an associate's or higher degree, or
- have demonstrated through a state or local assessment knowledge of and ability to assist in the instruction of reading, writing, and mathematics.

Paraprofessionals who worked in Title 1 programs prior to January 8, 2002 must meet these requirements by January 8, 2006.

How is Georgia Doing?

Approximately ninety-seven percent of Georgia teachers in twelve core subject areas (Arts, Civics and Government, Economics, Elementary Instruction, English, Language Arts, Foreign Languages, Geography, History, Mathematics; Reading, and Science) meet the state and federal criteria for highly qualified. Individual school data may be found at www.GeorgiaEducation.org.

Parental Notification Requirements

NCLB requires that at the beginning of each school year, all school districts must notify parents of students that they may request information regarding the qualifications of their student's teachers and paraprofessionals. This information must be provided "to the extent practicable" in a language that parents can understand. Parents may request the following information:

- Whether the teacher has met state qualifications and has a license for the grade level and the subject taught;
- Whether the teacher has an emergency or provisional license;
- What the teacher's undergraduate major was, and any graduate certification or degree held by the teacher including the field of discipline of the certification or degree; and
- Whether the student is being taught by paraprofessionals and if so, their qualifications.



Parents must also be notified in a timely manner if a student has been assigned or has been taught for four or more weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified.

Questions to Ask at the District Level (from the National PTA: www.pta.org)

- Do higher-income schools in the district have more highly qualified teachers than low-income schools?
- Is there a school district plan to help teachers who are not highly qualified become so, and to recruit more highly qualified teachers into the school district?
- Do the professional development opportunities provided to your teachers include instruction on how to work effectively with parents?

Questions to Ask at the Local School Level (from the National PTA: www.pta.org)

- What are the qualifications of the teachers at your school?
- How many teachers in your schools do not meet the definition of highly qualified?
- How many teachers in your school are not teaching in their field?



Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

The federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires that states establish performance goals for all schools, districts, and the state to ensure that all students reach 100% proficiency on state assessments by 2014. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) refers to the intermediate yearly goals that each state must establish. Test scores will be analyzed yearly to determine if a school, district and the state are reaching the intermediate goals, or in other words, making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

Does No Child Left Behind (NCLB) apply to all schools?

Yes. Every school is assessed to determine if it is making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), and AYP must be a part of the state accountability plan. All schools must be subject to sanctions for not making AYP; however, only Title 1 schools are subject to the federal sanctions detailed in NCLB. Georgia law details the sanctions that will apply to all schools (including Title 1 schools). In July 2004, the state Board of Education passed the statewide accountability plan. The awards and consequences are in board rule 160-7-01-.04. Board rules can be found at the Georgia Department of Education website (www.doe.k12.ga.us).

Which assessments are used for AYP?

The calculation for AYP uses results of the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCTs), the Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHS GT), and the Georgia Alternative Assessment (GAA) in reading/English/language arts and mathematics. Science was included beginning with the 2007-2008 school year.. Although all students are tested, only students enrolled continuously in the same school since the October FTE count are used for school AYP performance determination. (The FTE count is a Georgia Department of Education report detailing student enrollment as of a specific date.)

Which students are included in AYP?

The AYP definition requires that performance goals be established for all students and for each of the following subgroups of students:

- Race/ethnicity (American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian/ Pacific Islander, Black, Hispanic, Multiracial, and White),
- Disability,
- Limited English proficiency (LEP), and
- Socioeconomic status

Georgia has elected to use the same performance goals for all subgroups. A subgroup must have at least 40 students for its results to count towards the AYP determination.

How does a school meet AYP?

To meet AYP, a school must meet these 3 requirements:

1. All students and each subgroup (at or above the minimum number of 40 students) must have 95% participation on the assessments.
2. All students and each subgroup (at or above the minimum number of 40 students) present for the full academic year (October FTE count through the testing date) must meet or exceed the performance goals.
3. Each school must show progress on an additional academic indicator. Secondary schools are required to show progress on graduation rates. School districts select the elementary/middle school indicator from a Georgia DOE list of valid indicators. The indicator selected for 2007-2008 must remain in place at least 3 years.

**What are the requirements to meet the participation goal?**

In order to meet the participation requirement 95% of all students attending at the time of the assessment must participate. Schools may elect to use a two or three year average and may omit students who miss the testing window due to a medical emergency.

What are the requirements to meet the performance goal?

The performance goal is determined based on the results of the students enrolled since the October FTE count.

The 2009-2010 AYP performance goals for grades 3-8 are:

- CRCT Reading and English/language arts combined – 73.3% Meets or Exceeds Standards
- CRCT Mathematics – 65.6% Meets or Exceeds Standards

The 2009-2010 AYP performance goals for grade 11 are:

- GHSGT English/language arts – 87.7% Pass or Pass Plus
- Enhanced GHSGT Mathematics – 74.9% Pass or Pass Plus

These percentages apply to all students, and to each subgroup having more than 40 students or 10% of students enrolled in AYP grades, whichever is greater. The AYP performance goals rises annually to 100% proficiency in 2013-2014.

If the performance goal is not met, can AYP still be met?

If a group fails to meet the performance goals, the group may still be able to make AYP by using the confidence interval, multi-year averaging, or safe harbor methods. The confidence interval method is a statistical test that minimizes the chance that the group didn't make AYP due to chance. Multi-year averaging uses the current year and the two previous years. If the three year average is equal to or greater than the performance goal, the group makes AYP.

The safe harbor provision requires that a group have a 10% reduction in the number of students in the "Does Not Meet" category of the CRCT or the "Fails" category of the GHSGT. The group must also show progress in the additional academic indicator.

Are there consequences for not meeting AYP?

If a school fails to make AYP for two or more consecutive years in the same subject, it is placed on the Needs Improvement list and must offer students the opportunity to transfer to a higher performing school within the district. Transportation must be provided for students transferring from Title 1 schools. For non-Title 1 schools, facility capacity may be considered when determining school choice options, and priority shall be given to low-achieving students. Capacity may not be used to deny choice options for Title 1 schools.

If a school fails to make AYP for three or more consecutive years, low-performing students in the school are eligible for tutoring or supplemental educational services with either the school or an outside provider. School districts now have the flexibility to provide tutoring before choice.

Federal law defines the consequences for Title 1 schools; Georgia law and State Board of Education rules define the consequences applicable to non-Title 1 schools. Consequences for schools and systems not meeting AYP can be found on the Georgia Department of Education website (www.doe.k12.ga.us).