

OPENING THE BOX OF AYP

an outline of how a school's AYP status is determined

Available on the Web at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/news/>.

How is **Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)** determined? That's a question being asked by many parents as more of the state's schools become designated for **Title I School Improvement**. The answer is complex, but below is a brief outline of the process. (For more detail regarding terms in brown type, please see the glossary.)

1. Students take **end-of-course** and **end-of-grade assessments**.
Reading and **math** assessments for grades 3-8 determine if elementary and middle schools make AYP. Algebra I and a combination of the English I end-of-course assessments and the Grade 10 Writing Assessments determine AYP in math and reading/language arts at the high school level. **Alternate assessments** are available for a small percentage of students for all of these assessments.
2. LEAs calculate and check their AYP results using software provided by the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services. LEAs issue preliminary reports.
3. LEAs send data files and reports including the numbers and percentages of AYP targets met by their schools to NCDPI.
4. Accountability Services checks the data.
 - a. Accountability Services looks at assessment results in each subject for the school as a whole and for each **student group** at the school with 40 or more students in the federally-designated categories who meet the full **academic year** requirement. The federally-designated student group categories are: School as a Whole, White, Black, Hispanic, Native American, Asian, Multiracial, **Economically Disadvantaged Students**, **Limited English Proficient Students** and **Students With Disabilities**.
 - b. Accountability Services looks at each student group's performance at a school as it relates to the 95 percent **participation rate** target goal. If the school or any of its groups has less than 95 percent participation, then the school doesn't make AYP.
 - c. Accountability Services looks at each student group's performance at a school as it relates to a set **proficiency target** goal in each subject. (See chart.) For instance, at least 77.2 percent of each student group at an elementary or middle school had to score proficient on the end-of-grade math assessment in order for the whole school to make AYP in 2008.
 - d. If a student group at the school doesn't meet a proficiency target goal, Accountability Services looks at that student group's performance in more detail. If the student group meets the 95 percent participation rate, has reduced the percent

NC PROFICIENCY TARGET GOALS CHART (Revised October 2008)

YEAR	GRADES 3-8 (%)		GRADES 10 (%)	
	Reading	Mathematics	Reading/ Language Arts	Mathematics
2007-08	43.2	77.2	38.5	68.4
2008-09	43.2	77.2	38.5	68.4
2009-10	43.2	77.2	38.5	68.4
2010-11	71.6	88.6	69.3	84.2
2011-12	71.6	88.6	69.3	84.2
2012-13	71.6	88.6	69.3	84.2
2013-14	100	100	100	100

of students not proficient by at least 10 percent from the previous year for that subject area, and if the student group shows the designated amount of progress regarding **attendance** (grades 3-8) or the four-year cohort **graduation rate** (high school), that student group is considered as meeting its proficiency target goal with the **safe harbor** provision.

An example of how this works is if 28 percent of a high school's Students With Disabilities scored proficient (72 percent not proficient) in reading/language arts in 2008 when the target goal was 38.5 percent. Initially, this student group appears to have not made AYP. However, if only 20 percent were proficient (80 percent not proficient) in 2007, representing a 10 percent improvement for 2008 ($0.10 \times 80 = 8$; $80 - 8 = 72$), the group makes AYP even though it is still falling short of the 38.5 percent target goal. "Met w/ SH" is indicated on the AYP data tables when the target goal is met with safe harbor.

- e. If a student group at the school doesn't meet the proficiency target goal and doesn't meet the safe harbor criteria, Accountability Services looks at that student group's performance and applies a 95 percent **confidence interval**, similar to a margin of error applied to polling data, to the percent of students scoring proficient.

For instance, suppose 75 percent of an elementary school's White students scored proficient in math in 2008 when the target goal was 77.2 percent. Initially, this student group appears to have not made AYP. However, the percent proficient plus the margin for error is 78.9 percent, which

exceeds the target. “Met w/ CI” is indicated on the AYP data tables when the target goal is met using the confidence interval.

- f. If a student group at the school doesn't meet the proficiency target goal, doesn't meet safe harbor criteria and still doesn't meet the target goal after the confidence interval has been applied, the **AYP growth standard** may be applied.

An AYP growth standard is applied to student groups that don't initially meet proficiency target goals. Nonproficient students who are on track toward meeting the proficiency standards within four years of entering a tested grade in North Carolina, or by the end of 10th grade, can be counted as proficient. The AYP growth standard outlines predetermined incremental progress that students must demonstrate in order to be counted as “on track” and, therefore, proficient. If the percentage of nonproficient students on the set proficiency growth pathway and percentage of proficient students combine to meet the proficiency target goal, the group is considered to have met its target goal. “Met w/ growth” is indicated on the AYP data tables when the target goal is met by applying the AYP growth standard.

- 5. As mentioned in 4d, each school's data are examined to determine if the school met attendance or cohort graduation rate requirements. These factors are known as the Other Academic Indicator. Schools (as a whole, not student groups except when applying the safe harbor provision) must show progress on the **Other Academic Indicator** in order to make AYP. Progress is considered to be at least a .1 percentage point increase up to the 80 percent threshold for the cohort graduation rate and 90 percent for the attendance rate. Any fluctuations above the thresholds meet the requirement for progress.

In summary, a school and each student group in the school must meet these target goals:

- 95 percent participation rate in reading/language arts assessment;
- 95 percent participation rate in math assessment;
- Proficiency target goal in reading/language arts;
- Proficiency target goal in math; and
- Progress on the Other Academic Indicator for the school as a whole.

LOOKING AT AYP REPORTS

The process described for determining AYP at a school is reflected in a school's AYP report, such as the ones posted on the Web at <http://ayp.ncpublicschools.org/>.

As shown in the adapted chart on the next page, the school's name, whether it made AYP, how many target goals it had and met are listed at the top of the report. This is a sample school from 2006-07 using 2007 target goals since 2008 reading target goals had not be set at presstime. This sample elementary/middle

school has 17 target goals: eight each for reading and math and one more for the Other Academic Indicator (OAI). Highlighted portions of the charts show:

1. Percent tested for **All students**
2. Percent meeting proficiency target goal for **All students**
3. Percent tested for **Black students**
4. Percent meeting proficiency target goal for **Black students**
5. Percent tested for **White students**
6. Percent meeting proficiency target goal for **White students**
7. Percent tested for Economically Disadvantaged (Free/Reduced Price Lunch) students
8. Percent meeting proficiency target goal for Economically Disadvantaged (Free/Reduced Price Lunch) students

The school has eight target goals in reading and eight target goals in math for a total of 16 target goals. In addition, the school must show progress on the OAI, which is the attendance rate since this is an elementary/middle school example. The OAI, seen in the chart below, makes the 17th target goal. The sample school did not make AYP because it missed one of its 17 targets.

On the charts, “Insuf Data” is abbreviated for “insufficient data” meaning that the student group was smaller than 40 in number. At this sample school, there were no American Indians and the number of test scores for Asian, Hispanic, Multi-Racial, Limited English Proficiency, and Students With Disabilities was not enough to calculate at the school level as individual student groups. However, these students' test scores were included in the “All Students” AYP calculations at the school and may be included in their groups' AYP calculations at the district level, if the number is 40 or above.

On the charts, “Met” indicates that 95 percent tested target goal was met or that the target goal percent proficient was met. The target goal line indicates the percent proficiency that must be met that year. “Not Met” indicates that one of the target goals was not met. In this sample, 58.2 percent of Economically Disadvantaged (Free/Reduced Price Lunch) students scored proficient or above in reading, but the goal was 76.7 percent. That represents a missed target goal.

Notice that for the “All Students” group to make AYP in reading, the confidence interval (CI) was applied. In math, the “All Students” group, Black students, and Economically Disadvantaged (Free/Reduced Price Lunch) students made AYP through application of the safe harbor provision, meaning that their scores improved at least 10 percent from the previous year.

Other Academic Indicator – Attendance

Target Goal	At least 0.1% improvement or greater than or equal to 90.0%
Attendance	95.9%
Met Target Goal?	Met

LEA: 000 School District Name
 School: 000 School Name
 Grade Range: K-08

School Did Not Make Adequate Yearly Progress
 School Met 16 (or 94.1%) Out of 17 Target Goals
 Detailed school web reports are available at <http://ayp.ncpublicschools.org/>.

SAMPLE FROM 2006-2007

Reading Grades 3-8	All Students	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multi-Racial	White	Free/Reduced Price Lunch	Limited English Proficiency	Students with Disabilities
Percent Tested	100%	*	*	100%	*	*	100%	100%	*	*
Met 95% Target Goal?	Met	No Data	Insuf Data	Met	Insuf Data	Insuf Data	Met	Met	Insuf Data	Insuf Data
Target Goal Percent Proficient (At or Above Grade Level)	76.7%	76.7%	76.7%	76.7%	76.7%	76.7%	76.7%	76.7%	76.7%	76.7%
Percent Proficient (At or Above Grade Level)	74.8%	*	*	77.1%	*	*	93.1%	58.2%	*	*
Met AYP Proficiency Goal?	Met w/CI	No Data	Insuf Data	Met	No Data	Insuf Data	Met	Not met	Insuf Data	Insuf Data
OAI Attendance %	95.9%	*	*	95.3%	*	*	96.3%	95.1%	*	*
OAI Attendance Met?	Met	No Data	Insuf Data	Met	No Data	Insuf Data	Met	Met	Insuf Data	Insuf Data

Math Grades 3-8	All Students	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multi-Racial	White	Free/Reduced Price Lunch	Limited English Proficiency	Students with Disabilities
Percent Tested	100%	*	*	100%	*	*	100%	100%	*	*
Met 95% Target Goal?	Met	No Data	Insuf Data	Met	Insuf Data	Insuf Data	Met	Met	Insuf Data	Insuf Data
Target Goal Percent Proficient (At or Above Grade Level)	65.8%	65.8%	65.8%	65.8%	65.8%	65.8%	65.8%	65.8%	65.8%	65.8%
Percent Proficient (At or Above Grade Level)	61.2%	*	*	40.8%	*	*	86.1%	38.8%	*	*
Met AYP Proficiency Goal?	Met w/SH	No Data	Insuf Data	Met w/SH	No Data	Insuf Data	Met	Met w/SH	Insuf Data	Insuf Data
OAI Attendance %	95.9%	*	*	95.3%	*	*	96.3%	95.1%	*	*
OAI Attendance Met?	Met	No Data	Insuf Data	Met	No Data	Insuf Data	Met	Met	Insuf Data	Insuf Data

*not calculated due to insufficient data (less than 40 students in the subgroup)

GLOSSARY

Academic year is a period of 140 days for accountability purposes. Students who have attended a North Carolina school for 140 days prior to the first day of Spring testing are considered to have attended for the full academic year and that school is held accountable for the student's academic achievement scores. A student must attend a school 140 days by the first day of Spring testing to be included in Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) calculations at the school level. Students who are part of groups smaller than 40 or who attend a school fewer than 140 days contribute to AYP calculations at the district level. State law requires that schools offer 180 days of instruction.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) measures the yearly progress of different groups of students at the school, district, and state levels against yearly target goals in reading/language arts and math. All public schools, in North Carolina and throughout the country, must measure and report AYP as outlined in NCLB. AYP is the minimum level of progress in reading/language arts and math proficiency made by students in a year. If a school misses even one target goal, it does not make AYP. Title I schools and districts are especially affected if they do not make AYP.

Alternate assessments provide accessibility to tests as indicated by a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Alternate assessments are ways, other than standard test administration, to assess students

academically. Alternate assessments are used for some students with disabilities and some English language learners.

Assessment is another word for test. The term assessment is sometimes used to encompass not only standard test administration, but state-designed alternate assessments by which some students are assessed.

Attendance rate is the Other Academic Indicator determining if an elementary or middle school makes Adequate Yearly Progress. Schools must show that they are improving their attendance rates. Any progress of .1 percent or more or any percentage at or above 90 percent is considered as improving.

AYP growth standard is applied to student groups that don't initially meet target goals. Nonproficient students who are on track toward meeting the proficiency standards can be counted as proficient if they make predetermined incremental progress toward proficiency. If the percentage of nonproficient students on the set proficiency growth pathway and percentage of proficient students combine to meet the proficiency target goal, the group is considered to have met its target goal.

Confidence interval under NCLB, refers to the margin of error applied to Adequate Yearly Progress calculations in North Carolina.

GLOSSARY (continued)

Economically disadvantaged students, in North Carolina, are defined as those eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

End-of-course (EOC) tests are North Carolina's state-developed standardized tests designed to assess the competencies defined by the North Carolina Standard Course of Study at the high school level. Ten end-of-course tests are mandated: Algebra I, Algebra II, Biology, Chemistry, Civics and Economics, English I, Geometry, Physical Science, Physics, and U.S. History. Only Algebra I and English I are used in determining Adequate Yearly Progress, in addition to the Grade 10 Writing Assessment.

End-of-grade (EOG) tests are North Carolina's state-developed standardized tests in reading and math designed to assess the competencies defined by the North Carolina Standard Course of Study in grades 3-8.

Free and/or reduced price lunch (FRL) is a federal government program allowing children who qualify, based on their parent's or guardian's financial status, to receive either free or reduced price lunch. FRL eligibility determines which students are economically disadvantaged in North Carolina.

Graduation rate reflects the percentage of ninth graders who graduated from high school four years later. The four-year cohort graduation rate is the Other Academic Indicator for a high school, or school that graduates seniors. These schools must show that they are improving their four-year cohort graduation rates in order to make Adequate Yearly Progress. Any progression of .1 percent or more or any percentage at or above 80 percent is considered improving.

Limited English Proficient students are students whose first language is not English and who need language assistance to participate fully in the regular curriculum. Limited English Proficient students are one of the 10 NCLB-defined student groups.

Mathematics is one of two academic subjects (in addition to reading/language arts) used to determine Adequate Yearly Progress for schools based on student assessment results. For students in grades 3-8, the end-of-grade math assessment is used to determine school performance. For high schools, student assessment results in Algebra I determine Adequate Yearly Progress calculations.

Other Academic Indicator (OAI) in North Carolina, is the attendance rate in elementary and middle schools, and the four-year cohort graduation rate in high schools or any school that graduates seniors. Under NCLB, schools must show progress on the Other Academic Indicator in order to make Adequate Yearly Progress. For schools that have both elementary/middle grades and high school grades, the Other Academic Indicator is the graduation rate if the school graduates seniors and attendance rate if the school does not. There are special conditions that may apply when either of the grade spans has fewer than 40 students.

Participation rate under NCLB, is the rate of student participation in taking state assessments. Schools must test at least 95 percent of students in each NCLB-defined student group in each subject (reading/language arts and math). If a school or any of its student groups has less than an average of 95 percent participation in reading/language arts or math assessments, then the school doesn't make Adequate Yearly Progress. Participation rates for the past two or three years are averaged, depending upon how many years of data are available, whenever a school or group does not meet the 95 percent tested standard initially.

Proficient/proficiency are terms referring to student work that meets the achievement standard set by North Carolina's State Board of Education for that grade level. Grade-level (Levels III and IV) on EOGs and EOCs is considered proficient.

Proficiency targets are target goals representing the percentage of students in each student group that must score at grade-level (proficiency) or above in reading/language arts and math assessments. Each student group has the same proficiency target goal. If even one student group does not meet the proficiency target goal, the school does not make Adequate Yearly Progress. Proficiency target goals are increased every three years (in 2007-08, 2010-11 and finally in 2013-14) toward the NCLB goal of all students scoring proficient by the end of the 2013-14 school year.

Reading/language arts is one of two academic subjects (in addition to math) used to determine Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for schools based on student assessment results. For students in grades 3-8, the end-of-grade reading assessment is used to determine school performance. For high schools, a combination of the English I end-of-course assessments and the Grade 10 writing assessments is used to determine AYP.

Safe harbor is a special provision that allows for consideration of a school's significant year-to-year improvement, even if it misses the proficiency target. If a student group doesn't meet the target goal in a given year, the group (and as a result, the school) can still make Adequate Yearly Progress if it reduces the percent of students below proficient by at least 10 percent from the previous year and the group shows progress on the Other Academic Indicator.

Student groups, or student subgroups are groups of students whose achievement is measured annually to determine if Adequate Yearly Progress has been made in reading and math. NCLB-defined student groups are: 1) the School as a Whole; 2) White; 3) Black; 4) Hispanic; 5) Native American; 6) Asian; 7) Multiracial; 8) economically disadvantaged students; 9) Limited English Proficient students; and 10) students with disabilities.

Students with disabilities are students with physical, mental or behavioral handicaps. These students, comprising about 14 percent of the student population in North Carolina, require the assistance of special educators and a specially tailored education program to achieve their potential.

Target goals are measurements a school or district must meet in order to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). For a school to make AYP, each student group in the tested grades must meet proficiency targets in reading/language arts and math and each student group must have at least a 95 percent participation rate in the assessments for both subjects. This represents four targets (proficiency and participation in reading/language arts and math assessments) for each student group. In addition, the school as a whole must show progress on the Other Academic Indicator (attendance rate or the four-year cohort graduation rate).

Title I School Improvement is the status a Title I school enters after not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two consecutive years in the same subject (reading/language arts or mathematics). A Title I school exits Improvement after two consecutive years of making AYP in the subject that identified it for Improvement. It is possible for a school to exit Improvement for one subject, while entering into or remaining in Improvement based on the other subject.