TO: Illinois State Board of Education

FROM: Robert E. Schiller, Superintendent
         Lynne Haeffele Curry, Director

Agenda Topic: Discussion Item:
No Child Left Behind
Adequate Yearly Progress Preview

Materials: Final Regulations governing Adequate Yearly Progress
within State Accountability Systems

Staff Contact(s): Connie Wise

Purpose of Agenda Item

• To familiarize the Board with the issues surrounding Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).
• To present for adoption the recommendation of the Assessment and Accountability Task Force regarding AYP intermediate goals.

Expected Outcome(s) of Agenda Item

• The Board will adopt the Task Force recommendation.
• In January, the Board will be prepared to receive additional recommendations regarding AYP criteria.

Background Information

With the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, states must establish a definition of adequate yearly progress (AYP) that each district and school is expected to meet. States must specify annual objectives to measure progress of schools and districts to ensure that all groups of students—including low-income students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, students with disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency—meet or exceed state standards for reading and mathematics by 2014.

States must set intermediate goals that provide for annual adequate yearly progress targets, with the first increase to occur no later than 2004-05. In order to meet AYP requirements, schools must test at least 95% of students in each subgroup listed above.
Final rules for AYP became available in late November. Staff will present the various aspects of the law and the rules and outlining the policy decisions for which the Superintendent will provide recommendations in January. Staff will also present the Task Force recommendation for AYP intermediate goals.

**Analysis and Implications for Policy, Budget, Legislative Action and Communications**

**Policy Implications**

Policy decisions for the State fall into the following categories:

- **Setting starting points for reading and mathematics progress.** The methodology states must use is very prescriptive in the federal law and rules. States will use 2002 reading and mathematics test data as the basis for calculating the starting percentage of meets + exceeds scores for the entire state, from which progress calculations will be made in future years.

- **Setting intermediate goals.** States must set “intermediate goals” along a specific timeline leading from the starting points for reading and mathematics (described above) to 100% of scores meeting or exceeding standards by 2014. States can use a “smooth” series of targets, setting yearly steps of equal size that will bring all groups to the required 100% meets + exceeds scores by 2014. Alternatively, states can set longer increments (2-3 years) with higher steps, giving schools some latitude for smaller gains some years, larger gains in other years. The Assessment and Accountability Task force formulated a recommendation in this regard, which will be described in the oral presentation for this Board item.

- **Establishing annual measurable objectives.** States must identify for each year a minimum percentage of students that must meet or exceed the standards and that will ensure progress on the timeline described above. These will coincide with the intermediate goals described above.

- **Adopting other academic indicators.** States must use graduation rate for high schools as a secondary factor in determining adequate yearly progress. This particularly applies to schools who may not have made the required academic progress, but did increase or maintain their graduation rate. States must select another academic indicator for elementary and middle schools from the following list of options:
  - Additional state or local assessments
  - Grade-to-grade retention rates
  - Attendance rates
  - Percentages of students completing gifted and talented, advanced placement and college preparatory courses

  *The Task Force is currently considering a recommendation to use the state writing assessment as the additional elementary/middle school indicator.*
• **Establishing a minimum group size.** As mentioned earlier, each subgroup of students must show progress toward 100% meeting + exceeding standards. However, very small groups of students create special problems. First, for small groups, it may be possible to identify individual students’ performance, raising privacy issues. Second, the smaller the group, the larger annual fluctuations in scores can be as the result of just a few students’ scores. Conversely, if the minimum group size is set very high, it could be possible for schools to not count significant numbers of students in their adequate yearly progress calculations. This would contradict the intent of the law, to “leave no child behind.” The Superintendent and staff are reviewing various statistical methods that can minimize the effects of annual fluctuations, yet account for relatively small groups of students.

**Budget Implications**

Schools that fail to meet AYP requirements are subject to federal sanctions and are eligible for state improvement assistance. The System of Support requires staff time to (a) help districts with data analysis and to develop performance agreements, (b) provide on-site assistance from highly qualified experts and (c) provide ongoing technical assistance from ISBE. The Superintendent has merged the former Program Support Division with the System of Support Division to better coordinate ISBE technical assistance regarding the allocation of state and federal grant funds to school improvement planning. State funding must be identified in the FY04 budget to continue this assistance.

**Legislative Action**

As a part of a spring 2003 general vehicle bill to address NCLB requirements, ISBE anticipates including any relevant modifications to the School Code and the related underlying rules to include new adequate yearly progress definitions.

**Communication**

The new AYP criteria will require clear explanatory information for school districts well in advance of their use.

**Superintendent’s Recommendation**

The Superintendent will recommend specific Board action in January 2003.

**Next Steps**

Finalize the recommendations of the Assessment and Accountability Task Force and the staff regarding AYP in preparation for January’s Board meeting.