



Illinois State Board of Education

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Rod Blagojevich
Governor

Jesse H. Ruiz
Chairman

Dr. Randy J. Dunn
State Superintendent of Education

September 14, 2005

Dear Parent:

In accordance with the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB), states must provide notification to parents of students in districts that are identified for improvement because the district did not make adequate yearly progress. (See 20 U.S.C. § 6316 (c) (6)) This communication acts as the notification to meet this federal requirement.

The Illinois State Board of Education has asked your superintendent to distribute this letter and the 2005 AYP Status Report data to you. The data identifies why the district did not make adequate yearly progress (AYP). Under NCLB and state law, for a district to make AYP:

- (i) it must achieve at least a 95% participation rate in state assessments for all students and for each subgroup in both reading and mathematics (Can average back one or two years to get to 95%).
- (ii) it must reach targets (47.5% in 2005) for the overall group for percent meeting and exceeding standards in reading and mathematics and reach targets for subgroups (47.5% in 2005) through a one way hypothesis test using a 95 percent confidence interval or meet Safe Harbor requirements. Safe harbor is an alternative method to meet subgroup minimum targets.
- (iii) it must reach targets for the other indicators. Elementary school districts must have an attendance rate of at least 89%. High school districts must have a graduation rate of 67% or higher. Unit districts must meet both the attendance and graduation rate targets.

If a district does not make AYP for two consecutive years in the same subject area, it is deemed to be in "improvement status" and certain state and federal sanctions apply. Two consecutive years of meeting AYP criteria are required for a district to be removed from "improvement status."

While AYP is an important measure of student learning, it is important to remember that a district that does not make AYP should never be considered a "failing" district. Teaching and learning is an ongoing process that changes constantly to meet the unique needs of students and communities. One of the most important goals of NCLB is to identify areas in each district and school where improvement is needed.

At the State Board, we feel it is important for educators, parents, and communities to work together to address those areas of need. Parents can assist districts in the improvement process by participating in improvement planning with the district and participating with local school improvement planning. If you are interested in helping your district in the improvement process, please contact your local school principal or superintendent.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Donna J. Zullow".

Division Administrator
Accountability Division