

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is the No Child Left Behind Act?

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) is a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and was signed into law by President Bush on Jan. 8, 2002. NCLB is the central federal law for elementary and secondary education. The ESEA, which was first enacted in 1965, encompasses Title I, the federal government's primary aid program for disadvantaged students.

2. What is Adequate Yearly Progress?

Adequate yearly progress (AYP) is the measure by which schools, districts, and states are held accountable for student performance under Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB).

Here is how AYP works. NCLB requires states to use a single accountability system for all public schools to determine whether students as a whole, as well as subgroups of students (i.e., racial and ethnic groups, English language learners, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged students) are making progress toward meeting state academic standards. The law also requires that all students reach a "proficient" level of achievement, as measured by their performance on state tests, by the spring of 2014. In Arizona, students that meet or exceed the standards on the AIMS test are considered "proficient." Along the way, schools, districts, and states must demonstrate that all of their students are making continuous and consistent progress toward meeting that goal in public elementary and secondary schools (not just those schools receiving Title I funds). This interim progress is what is known as adequate yearly progress (AYP) toward the goal of all students reaching academic standards.

According to the law, states have the flexibility to define this yearly progress, but it must include the following elements:

- **Met Percent Tested?** To make AYP, at least 95 percent of students in each of the four subgroups, as well as 95 percent of students in schools and districts as a whole, must take the AIMS test.
- **Met Test Objectives?** To make AYP, the percent of students as a whole, as well as in each of the four subgroups, must meet or exceed the annual measurable objectives set for that year for each subject and grade.
- **Met Attendance Rate?** To make AYP, districts and elementary schools must have an attendance rate of at least 90% over the first 100 days of the academic year *or* make at least a 1% gain from the previous year.
- **Met Graduation Rate?** To make AYP, districts and high schools must have a four-year graduation rate of 70.5% and above *or* make at least a 1% gain from the previous year.

3. What is District (LEA) Improvement?

LEA Improvement is an identification given to a Title I LEA if they fail to make AYP for two consecutive years in the same indicator *and* across all grade spans. Please note: the assessed subjects are mathematics and reading. Each subject is assessed separately; however, each subject requirement includes meeting the required percent tested in the subject *and* meeting the subject AMO. Failing to meet either percent tested or AMO within a subject results in the subject indicator not being met.

NCLB specifies a number of consequences for those districts that are identified for improvement. The first step is to notify parents of students who attend a school in a district in need of improvement and provide assistance to the district identified. Additional sanctions are added if a district identified for improvement continues to fail to make AYP for several years.