

Understanding Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)



While Virginia is committed to raising the achievement of all students and is implementing the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the commonwealth will continue its advocacy of rational policies that support best practices in teaching, learning, and assessment.

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NCLB in Brief

- ★ The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) requires annual testing to measure student progress in reading and mathematics.
- ★ NCLB requires all students to be proficient in reading and mathematics by 2013-14.
- ★ NCLB requires schools, school divisions, and states to meet annual objectives for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for student performance on statewide tests in reading and mathematics.
- ★ NCLB requires the identification of states, schools, and school divisions making and not making AYP.

Key Point:

For a school, school division or the commonwealth to make AYP, it must meet or exceed 29 benchmarks for participation in statewide testing, achievement in reading and mathematics, and attendance or science (elementary and middle schools) or graduation (high schools). Missing a single benchmark may result in a school or school division not making AYP.

What's New in 2005

The U.S. Department of Education (USED) has approved several changes in the commonwealth's NCLB implementation plan. Virginia's schools and school divisions also face new challenges as the commonwealth enters its fourth year of implementing NCLB.

School Divisions in Improvement

USED has approved a significant change in how Virginia identifies school divisions in need of improvement and subject to sanctions under NCLB. A school division now will move into improvement status only if it fails to make AYP in the same subject area across all grade spans for two consecutive years. Grade levels are defined as elementary (grades 3-5), middle (grade 6-8), and high school (grades 9-12). School divisions in improvement must develop improvement plans to raise the achievement of all students containing components specified in NCLB. School divisions that move into the third year of improvement are subject to corrective action by the state. The law allows states to defer corrective action if a school division makes AYP or if its failure to make AYP is the result of "exceptional or uncontrollable circumstances."

Restructuring Planning for Title I Schools

School divisions must initiate restructuring plans for Title I schools that move into year four of improvement status despite the implementation of a corrective action to raise achievement during the third year of school improvement status. Restructuring may include reopening the school as a charter school, replacing staff relevant to the school's failure to make progress, or turning the management of the school over to a private educational management company with a demonstrated record of effectiveness. Restructuring plans would be implemented if a Title I school fails again to make AYP in the same subject area during 2005-2006 and moves into year five of improvement status.

Revised Small "N"

Virginia will now use either 50 or 1 percent of the enrolled student population, whichever is greater, as the "minimum n" for calculating AYP and applying the 95 percent participation rate requirement at the state, division, and school levels with a cap of 200 students.

Graduation Rate

Students with disabilities who earn Standard or Advanced Studies Diplomas as specified by their Individualized Education Program (IEP) and limited English proficient (LEP) students who earn Standard or Advanced Studies Diplomas in accordance with their school-based LEP teams will be counted as graduating on time, even if the time exceeds 4 years.

Revised Annual Measurable Objectives

On June 22, 2005, the Board of Education revised the commonwealth's annual measurable objectives (AMOs) in reading and mathematics. The revised AMOs provide for increasingly higher levels of achievement while setting reasonable goals for increased achievement for all student subgroups.

Students with Disabilities

USED has approved Virginia's use of a proxy equal to two percent of the tested population to represent the number of students with disabilities who demonstrate proficiency on modified reading and mathematics assessments during 2004-2005. The proxy percentage will be added to the pass rates of students with disabilities for schools and divisions that otherwise would not make AYP solely because of the achievement of disabled students. The proxy also will be applied as allowed at the state level.

USED also has approved a one-year extension of Virginia's 1.13 percent cap at the division and state levels on the percentage of students who may be counted as proficient based on alternate assessments for students with disabilities.

Expedited Retakes

Students who pass expedited retakes of SOL tests in reading and mathematics will now be counted as proficient when calculating AYP. An expedited retake is a test taken during the same academic year by a student who, on his first attempt, scored within 25 points of passing or has exceptional or mitigating circumstances.

AYP: Annual Measurable Objectives for Reading and Language Arts

2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Starting Point 60.7	61.0	61.0	Int. Goal 65.0	69.0	73.0	Int. Goal 77.0	81.0	85.0	Int. Goal 89.0	93.0	97.0	Goal 100%

This table shows Virginia's annual measurable objectives for reading and language arts. For a school or school division to have made AYP during 2004-2005 at least 65 percent of students overall and students in each subgroup must have demonstrated proficiency on Standards of Learning (SOL) tests and other approved assessments in reading and language arts.

AYP: Annual Measurable Objectives for Mathematics

2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Starting Point 58.4	59.0	59.0	Int. Goal 63.0	67.0	71.0	Int. Goal 75.0	79.0	83.0	Int. Goal 87.0	91.0	95.0	Goal 100%

This table shows Virginia's annual measurable objectives for mathematics. For a school or school division to have made AYP during 2004-2005 at least 63 percent of students overall and students in each subgroup must have demonstrated proficiency on SOL tests and other approved assessments in mathematics.

Keep in Mind

- ★ A school that does not achieve AYP is not necessarily a “failing” school. A more balanced and accurate assessment of a school’s overall performance can be determined by comparing the number of annual measurable objectives (AMOs) that a school met with the total number of AMOs.
- ★ Virginia is a national leader in implementing high academic standards and measures to hold schools accountable for achievement through objective testing.

AYP in Depth

AYP applies to all students and to these subgroups:

- ★ Students with disabilities
- ★ LEP students
- ★ Economically disadvantaged students
- ★ Major racial/ethnic groups (white, African-American, and Hispanic)

AYP Participation

NCLB requires a minimum of 95 percent participation of all students and all subgroups of students, in the statewide assessment program at the school, division, and state levels. If participation overall or in one or more subgroups is below 95 percent, a school or school division is not considered to have made AYP, regardless of the percentage of students who demonstrate proficiency. Virginia uses up to three years of achievement data in calculating AYP to compensate for expected year-to-year fluctuations in achievement.

Other Academic Indicators Required Under NCLB

In addition to meeting annual measurable objectives in reading and mathematics, Virginia schools and school divisions must meet annual objectives for attendance or science (elementary and middle schools) and graduation (high schools), or show improvement. School divisions must decide prior to the beginning of the school year whether to use attendance or achievement in science as another academic indicator for elementary and middle schools.

Safe Harbor - Another Way to Make AYP

A school or school division may also make AYP if at least 95 percent of all students and subgroups of students participate in statewide assessments and the failure rate of students overall and/or students in the subgroup or subgroups that did not reach the annual measurable objectives in reading and mathematics is reduced by at least 10 percent. Schools and school divisions also must meet the annual measurable objective or show improvement on the designated other academic indicator to make AYP through safe harbor.

Achievement in science will serve as the other academic indicator for high schools making AYP through safe harbor until 2005-2006, when the commonwealth expects to have the ability to generate disaggregated graduation data. Elementary and middle schools may choose either science achievement or attendance as the other academic indicator.

LEP Students

Limited English Proficient (LEP) students in their first year of enrollment in a U.S. public school are counted as participating in Virginia’s assessment system but their reading and mathematics scores are not used to calculate AYP. LEP students are counted in the LEP subgroup for two years after they have been reclassified as non-LEP.

Title I Schools

A Title I school is a school that receives federal funds to help children in high poverty areas who are behind academically or at risk of falling behind. Title I funding is based on the number of low-income children in a school, generally those eligible for free lunch or reduced-fee lunch programs.

Title I School Improvement - Year One

Title I Schools that do not make AYP for two consecutive years in the same subject area are identified for improvement and must notify parents of their status prior to the beginning of the school year. These schools must offer students the opportunity to transfer to a school within the division that is not identified for improvement. Lowest-achieving students receive priority in the awarding of transfers. Schools in year one of improvement also must develop and implement a two-year school improvement plan.

Title I School Improvement - Year Two

A Title I school identified for improvement that does not make AYP for a third consecutive year in the same subject area enters the second year of improvement. A school in its second year of improvement must notify parents of its status and continue to offer public school choice. A school in its second year of improvement must also offer supplemental educational services to low-achieving students. Low-income students receive priority for supplemental educational services.

A Title I school in its first year of improvement that makes AYP remains in first year improvement status. A school identified for improvement exits improvement status by making AYP for two consecutive years.

Title I School Improvement - Year Three

School divisions must take corrective action to raise achievement in Title I schools in the third year of school improvement status. These schools must continue to offer public school choice and supplemental services and school divisions must take at least one of the following corrective actions:

- ★ Replace school staff deemed relevant to the failure to make AYP
- ★ Implement a new curriculum shown by research as effective in raising achievement
- ★ Decrease the authority of school-level management
- ★ Appoint an outside expert to advise the school on the implementation plan developed during the first year of school improvement
- ★ Extend the school year or school day
- ★ Restructure the internal organization of the school

A Title I school in its second year of improvement that makes AYP remains in second-year improvement status.

Title I School Improvement - Year Four

School divisions must initiate restructuring plans for Title I schools that move into year four of school improvement status. Title I schools in year four of improvement status also must continue to offer public school choice and supplemental services. Restructuring plans for Title I schools may include:

- ★ Reopening the school as a charter school

- ★ Replacing staff relevant to the school's failure to make progress
- ★ Turning the management of the school over to a private educational management company with a demonstrated record of effectiveness

Restructuring plans would be implemented if a Title I school fails again to make AYP in the same subject area during 2005-2006 and moves into year five of improvement status.

Non-Title I Schools

Non-Title I schools are not subject to sanctions under NCLB. Non-Title I schools in Virginia that do not make AYP for three or more consecutive years must continue to analyze data and implement corrective actions as specified by the school division.

School Divisions in Improvement

School divisions that do not make AYP in the same subject area across all grade spans for two consecutive years must develop and implement improvement plans within three months of identification. NCLB requires that school division improvement plans include:

- ★ Scientifically based strategies and best practices for raising student achievement
- ★ Professional development for faculty and instructional staff
- ★ Specific achievement goals for subgroups not making AYP
- ★ Identification of impediments to higher achievement by low-performing students
- ★ Strategies to promote parental involvement
- ★ Student learning activities, as appropriate, before school, after school, or during the summer
- ★ Fiscal responsibilities of the school division and the technical assistance needed

School divisions identified for improvement at the beginning of 2005-2006 must implement plans "expeditiously" during the 2005-2006 school year. School divisions that implemented improvement plans at the beginning of 2004-2005 must make AYP by the end of 2005-2006 to avoid corrective action. In Virginia, potential corrective actions include deferring programmatic funds or reducing administrative funds.

Keeping AYP in Context

- ★ For a school or school division to make AYP, it must meet or exceed 29 separate benchmarks. Missing a single benchmark may result in a school or school division not making AYP.
- ★ Under the current method of calculating AYP, it is possible that high-performing schools may be identified as not making AYP.
- ★ AYP is about holding schools, divisions, and states accountable for progress toward an eventual goal.
- ★ Virginia has been holding schools accountable through the SOL program since 1998.

The Board of Education believes it is appropriate for an accountability system to reward schools that provide effective remediation for students. The U.S. Department of Education has taken a small step toward this common-sense approach by allowing Virginia to count as proficient students who pass expedited retakes of SOL tests in reading and mathematics.

NCLB Communications Resources

CCSSO Resources on NCLB: Communications
http://ccsso.org/federal_programs/NCLB/2896.cfm

Virginia Dept. of Education NCLB Web site
<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/nclb>

U.S. Dept. of Education NCLB Web site
<http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml>

Terminology

Achievement Gap -

Differences in academic performance among student groups

AYP -

“Adequate Yearly Progress” (AYP) represents the minimum level of improvement that schools and school divisions must achieve each year as determined by NCLB.

Alignment -

The correlation between Virginia’s Standards of Learning (SOL), what is taught in the classroom, and what appears on the SOL tests. Curriculum alignment ensures that students are taught the material subject to testing.

Alternative Assessments -

Tests that may be substituted for SOL tests

AMOs -

“Annual Measurable Objectives” (AMOs) are the minimum required percentages of students determined to be proficient in each content area.

Assessment -

Another word for “test”

Corrective Action Plan -

The plan outlining the methods to improve teaching, administration, or curriculum that a school or school division classified as “in

improvement” undertakes to improve student achievement.

Disaggregated Data -

Test results sorted by groups of students. Groups include students who are economically disadvantaged, from racial and ethnic groups, have special education needs, or have limited English proficiency. Disaggregated data allows parents and educators to see more than just the average score for a student’s school - it also shows how each student group is performing.

ESEA -

“Elementary and Secondary Education Act” (ESEA) is the primary federal law affecting K-12 education. Congress reauthorizes it every six years. The most recent authorization is also referred to as the NCLB Act, approved by Congress in 2001 and signed into law by President George W. Bush in January 2002.

Highly qualified -

Refers to a teacher who has obtained full state teacher certification and has demonstrated subject matter competency. All teachers of federal core academic subjects hired after the first day of the 2002-2003 school year and teaching in a program supported with Title I, Part A, funds must be “highly qualified.” All teachers of core academic subjects are to be highly qualified by the end of the 2005-2006 school year.

Inclusion -

The practice of placing students with disabilities in regular classrooms.

In Improvement -

If Title I schools or school divisions do not make AYP in the same subject area for two years in a row in the same subject area, they are considered to be “in improvement.”

Instruction -

The methods teachers use to instruct students. These methods include lecture, discussion, hands-on activity, exercise, experiment, role-playing, small group work, and writing assessment.

LEA -

“Local Education Agency” (LEA) is the term used by the federal education law to describe a local school division.

LEP -

“Limited English Proficient” (LEP) refers to students for whom English is a second language and who are not reading or writing English at their grade level.

NCLB -

“No Child Left Behind Act of 2001” (NCLB), signed into law by President Bush in 2002

Parental involvement -

The participation of parents in regular, two-way, meaningful communication involving students’ academic learning and other school activities. The involvement includes ensuring that parents play an integral role in their child’s learning; that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child’s education at school; that parents are full partners in their child’s education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees. Parental involvement is one of the components of NCLB.

Public School Choice -

See “Transfer Option”

Safe Harbor -

A provision of NCLB intended for schools and school divisions that are making progress in student achievement but not yet meeting target goals for AYP.

SEA -

“State Education Agency” (SEA) refers to the Virginia Board of Education and other state education agencies, which under federal law are primarily responsible for the supervision of a state’s public elementary and secondary schools.

SIP -

“School Improvement Plan” (SIP) outlines the improvement strategies and steps that a school will utilize to raise student achievement. This could involve new programs, more student assistance, new curricula, and/or teacher training.

Scientifically Based Research -

Research that involves the application of rigorous, systemic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge regarding the effectiveness of educational activities and programs.

Supplemental Services -

Students in a Title I school identified as needing improvement for two consecutive years are eligible to receive outside tutoring. Parents can choose the appropriate services for their child from a list of state-approved providers. The school division must pay for the services using Title I funds.

SOL -

The Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools (SOL) describe the commonwealth’s expectations for student learning and achievement in grades K-12 in English, mathematics, science, history/ social science, technology, the fine arts, foreign language, health and physical education, and driver education.

Title I -

Federal-funding program designed to help low-income children who are behind academically or at risk of falling behind. Title I funding is based on the number of low-income children in a school, generally those eligible for free lunch or reduced-fee lunch programs.

Transfer Option -

Also referred to as “Public School Choice.” Students in Title I schools identified as needing improvement have to provide the option for students to transfer within the division to a school that has made AYP. The school division is required to provide transportation to those students.