

# Determining Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

*(Updated June 2005)*

## Introduction

AYP is defined as a series of performance targets that states, school districts, and schools must achieve each year to meet the requirements of No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

In each public school and LEA in North Carolina, the ten student subgroups are defined as:

1. School as a whole (all students)
2. American Indian
3. Asian
4. Black
5. Hispanic
6. Multi-racial
7. White
8. Economically Disadvantaged (Free and Reduced Lunch)
9. Limited English Proficient (LEP)
10. Students with Disabilities (SWD)

In order for elementary and middle schools (including grades in the 3 to 8 grade range) to make AYP, each student subgroup in tested grades must meet the following targets:

1. 95% participation rate in reading/language arts assessment
2. 95% participation rate in mathematics assessment
3. Meet or exceed the state's annual measurable objective (AMO) for proficiency in reading/language arts
4. Meet or exceed the state's annual measurable objective (AMO) for proficiency in mathematics
5. The school as a whole must show progress on the other academic indicator (OAI): attendance for schools in grades 3 to 8.

In order for an high school (grades range 9 to 12), to make AYP, each student subgroup must meet the following target:

1. 95% 10<sup>th</sup> grade participation rate in reading/language arts assessment
2. 95% 10<sup>th</sup> grade participation rate in mathematics assessment
3. Meet or exceed the State's annual measurable objective (AMO) for 10<sup>th</sup> grade proficiency in reading/language arts
4. Meet or exceed the State's annual measurable objective (AMO) for 10<sup>th</sup> grade proficiency in mathematics
5. The school as a whole must show progress on the other academic indicator (OAI), graduation rate, unless the high school does not graduate seniors, then it would then be attendance.

## Other Academic Indicators (OAI)

If a school contains a combination of elementary\middle and high school grade ranges, all available targets will be used for determining AYP status. Progress on the OAI is defined as at least 0.1 percentage point increase from one year to the next, up to a threshold of 90%. Any fluctuation above 90% will meet the requirement for progress.

For LEAs, all available targets are utilized; the OAI is graduation rate. If a school graduates seniors then graduation rate takes precedence over attendance.

A subgroup must have at least 40 students, with the exception of the school as a whole; where up to as few as 5 students will be utilized for OAI and 3 students for proficiency targets. For proficiency and attendance targets, only students in membership a full academic year (FAY) are considered. FAY is defined as 140 days in membership as of the first day of End-of-Grade (EOG) testing.

## Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO's)

In grades 3 through 8, for the 2004-05 through the 2006-07 school years, the AMO targets are:

- **76.7% proficiency in reading/language arts, and**
- **81.0% in mathematics.**

For grade 10, the AMOs were recalculated during the 2004-05 school year to reflect the inclusion of Algebra I, English I, and the Grade 10 Writing Assessment in the AYP computations. The new starting points for Grade 10, for 2004-05 through 2006-07 are:

- **35.4% in reading/language arts, and**
- **70.8% in mathematics.**

## Safe Harbor Provision

If a subgroup meets the 95% participation rate but does **not** meet the proficiency target, that subgroup can meet its proficiency target with a safe harbor provision, providing that:

- the subgroup has reduced the percent of students not proficient by 10% from the preceding year for the subject area; and
- the subgroup shows progress on the OAI.

A safe harbor data file will be provided to the LEA Test Coordinator by DPI. This file contains the previous years' proficiency results by subgroup, with all the AYP decision rules appropriately applied, i.e., 140 days in membership and 40 students in a subgroup. If a subgroup does not have the minimum numbers of students or scores required in the safe harbor (i.e., previous year's) file, then that subgroup's performance is determined using the current year's data, without using the safe harbor provision of NCLB. Safe harbor based on federal guidance is not a right.

## **Operational Procedures**

The Division of Accountability Services provides software for LEAs to calculate and check their AYP results. The results for schools will be released statewide by LEAs in mid-July 2005. These reports will include the numbers and percentages of AYP targets met by their schools. These results are subject to confirmation in August 2005 by DPI in the ABCs report submitted to the State Board of Education (SBE).

## **Considerations for AYP Calculations**

1. For schools with fewer than 40 students in the tested grades in the entire school in the current year, whatever data are available will be used to calculate AYP. The report will note “results based on less than 40 students, and should be interpreted with caution.”
2. For low population schools with a mix of grades elementary/middle and high school, rules are applied so that if one of the grade-ranges (elementary/middle or high school) has a lower population than the other, only the part with higher population will be taken into consideration for determining AYP. To determine which part to keep, add the number of students with FAY in math and reading and choose the targets for the grade-range with the highest sum.
3. For each AMO and OAI target, full precision is carried throughout intermediate calculations; the final result is rounded to the nearest tenth and status is based on the rounded result. For percent tested targets, the final result is rounded to the nearest whole number.
4. In K-2 schools, special education schools, hospital schools, and vocational and career centers, a school specific feeder pattern will be used to determine AYP.
  - For K-2, the elementary school that receives the largest percent of students from the K-2 school is used to determine AYP status.
  - For the special education schools, vocational / career schools, and hospital schools, at least half the feeding schools must make AYP for the receiving school to be designated as having made AYP.

AYP proficiency statistics are reported for the LEA and the State, in addition to the school. With AYP calculations, proficiency data for the LEAs are based on different data than the proficiency statistics for the schools. You cannot, therefore, combine the school-based AYP proficiency statistics (e.g. by using a weighted average) in order to compute the AYP proficiency statistics for the LEA.

For example, there is a federal requirement to count students who have been in the LEA for at least 140 days (full academic year), even though they may not have been in a single

school within that LEA for 140 days. This means some students would be counted for AYP proficiency at the LEA level but not at the school level.

### **Changes to AYP rules implemented in 2003-04**

The State Board of Education (SBE) and the U.S. Department of Education (USED) approved changes in the process for determining AYP for the 2003-04 accountability year that included:

1. The addition of a new ABCs recognition category, *Honor Schools of Excellence*, to denote schools that made expected or high growth and met AYP.
2. Allowing a process for medical exclusions from testing for students with serious medical conditions.
3. Averaging participation rates for the last two or three years, depending on how many years of data were available, whenever a school did not meet the 95% participation standard for the current year.
4. Special analysis of AYP for targeted assistance schools (TAS). The first analysis used all students in the school. If the TAS did not meet AYP, then the results for Title I served students were analyzed; if AYP was still not met, then the results for students eligible for Title I were analyzed. (These additional analyses were contingent upon the LEA “tagging” the appropriate students for the analyses.) Unless the TAS met the minimum number of 40 students being served or eligible to be served then the results were based on all students in the school. If the school provided services in only one subject area, then the LEA determined if the results for AYP for each subject were based on only the served students, only the eligible students or all of the students in the school.  
The OAI could be calculated on any of the options unless safe harbor needed to be invoked. In that case, the same criterion was used for comparison purposes (only those served or only those eligible). If this was not possible, then the OAI was based on all students in the school. Results from all students in the TAS are to be used for making AYP decisions at the LEA and State levels. For schools without tested grades, AYP could be determined by back-mapping or forward-mapping students.
5. Applying a 95% confidence interval to the percentages of students scoring proficient in reading and/or mathematics to determine if subgroups met the AMO.
6. Requiring a Title I school not making AYP to miss targets in the same subject (e.g., reading) for two successive years before entering Title I School Improvement.
7. Placing a 1.0 percent cap on the percentage of students held to alternate achievement standards and deemed proficient (through the NCAAP, and NCAAAI administered at least three years or more below students’ assigned grade levels) at the district and State levels.
8. Not requiring LEP students (who score below Intermediate High on the reading section of the language proficiency test) in their first year in U.S. schools to be assessed on the reading End-of-Grade tests, High School Comprehensive Test in Reading, or the NC Alternate Assessment Academic Inventory (NCAAAI) for reading. (Schools were to use the language proficiency test for determining the

- 95% participation; mathematics results were not used in determining AYP or ABCs performance composite scores for LEP students who scored below Intermediate High.) Students previously identified as LEP who exited LEP identification during the last two years were included in the AYP calculations only if the subgroup already met the minimum number of 40 students.
9. Setting the minimum N count used in determining the AYP status of LEAs at 40 or 1% of the tested students, whichever is greater. (Operationally, the LEA is treated as a school, for the grades 3 to 8 targets, the minimum N is the maximum of 1% of tested students in grades 3 to 8 and 40. For the high school targets, the minimum N is the maximum of 1% of the tested 10<sup>th</sup> grade students and 40.)
  10. Providing that an LEA could enter Improvement Status only if the LEA did not make AYP in the same subject area in both the 3-8 and high school grade spans for two consecutive years.
  11. Allowing site visits by a School Improvement team to make AYP designations for schools with two (2) or fewer students meeting the FAY requirements.

### **Changes implemented in 2004-05**

The State Board of Education and the U.S. Department of Education approved changes in the process for determining AYP for the 2004-05 accountability year that included:

1. Using Algebra I and a combination of English I and the Grade 10 Writing Assessment to determine AYP in mathematics and language arts at grade 10. New starting points for Grade 10 are:
  - a. **35.4%** proficiency in reading/language arts
  - b. **70.8%** in mathematics.
2. Providing that an LEA could enter Improvement Status only if the LEA did not make AYP in the same subject area in each of three grade spans: elementary, middle, and high school, for two consecutive years.
3. Allowing the LEA two weeks to appeal its LEA Improvement Status and authorizing the State Superintendent to make a final determination for the LEA.