



NJDOE News

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New Jersey Department of Education Submits to US DOE Preliminary Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook Under Federal No Child Left Behind Act

The New Jersey Department of Education today submitted to federal education officials the state's preliminary Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook describing its planned compliance with the one-year-old No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act.

The preliminary plan, which was due to the U.S. Department of Education today, provides detailed information on New Jersey's planned implementation of the critical elements required for approval of the state's single accountability system. States that fail to meet deadlines risk losing federal education money.

Gloria Hancock, the department's Chief of Staff who is overseeing the department-wide implementation of NCLB, said New Jersey will ensure that the single accountability system is designed to measure student academic performance in all schools so that no child is left behind.

The preliminary plan was framed by four over-arching goals:

1. Put students first;
2. Design an inclusive system, one that includes all students, schools and districts and is fair and equitable in that all are held to the same criteria;
3. Build on our existing systems by incorporating rigorous academic achievements standards and using data to drive decision-making;
4. Provide a coherent process of engagement to solicit input from key stakeholders.

Federal requirements mandated 10 required elements for the single accountability system. The preliminary plan addressed them in a series of critical elements. The state's plan:

- Described how all the public schools will be held to the same standards when measuring yearly progress. For example, if one subgroup fails to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), then the school would fail to meet AYP.
- Described how each student as reflected in the disaggregated subgroup academic performance is measured. The required federal formula for setting starting points were applied to the state assessment system. When the starting points were applied, the annual measurable objectives were raised incrementally until the 100 percent proficiency goal is reached by 2014.

The starting points for the 2002-03 school year are:

Grade 4: Language arts literacy (LAL) 68%, math 53%

Grade 8 - LAL 58%, Math 39%;

Grade 11 -LAL 73%, MATH 55%

- Defined adequate yearly progress. AYP is defined as the proportion of all students and their respective subgroups meeting or exceeding the new state standard annually until 2014 when 100% proficiency is achieved in LAL and math.
- Described identification/timely notification of schools in need of improvement.
- Included assessment in grades 3-8.
- Described a system of rewards and sanctions regarding AYP.
- Described the process for AYP determinations that are valid and reliable.

"While the proposed starting points for calculating whether a school has demonstrated adequate yearly progress and annual state objectives are lower than the current 75 percent and 85 percent standard pass rates for a

school, the assessment system required as a result of NCLB now includes students with disabilities and limited English proficient students, two subgroups that were previously not included," Ms. Hancock said.

Ms. Hancock said that the scores that each student must attain on each of the three statewide assessments in order to demonstrate proficiency has not been lowered. The standard for student proficiency remains that same.

Following a review of the preliminary plan by the US DOE, the state will enter phase three in which a peer review process begins where federal monitors visit the state. This process entails negotiations and exchanges with New Jersey education officials.