



Elizabeth Celania-Fagen, Ed.D.  
 Superintendent

July 28, 2009

Dear Tucson Unified School District Parent:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that Tucson Unified School District has been identified for Title I LEA (Local Education Agency) Improvement. The reason for this identification is that, under the Federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) and the state's accountability system, our LEA did not meet "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) for two consecutive years in the same indicator and across all grade-spans.

AYP is a measure that all states use to determine if schools and districts are meeting the high expectations described in NCLB. The goal, under this system, is that 100% of our students will meet or exceed the Arizona Academic Standards by the 2013-2014 school year. In order to meet that goal, schools and districts must meet certain objectives each year.

Recently, we received a report on AYP for all schools and districts in Arizona. The report reviews each indicator and gives a simple yes or no grade, based on the percent of students that are meeting or exceeding the Arizona Academic Standards on the AIMS test. In addition, schools and LEA's must meet the additional indicators of percent tested, and either an attendance rate or graduation rate percentage. The first table below shows the AYP determination that our LEA received. The second table provides a comparison of students' reading and math proficiency levels in our LEA and in the State as required by NCLB.

District AYP Determination	Met Percent Tested?	N
	Met Test Objectives Reading or Math?	N
	Met 90% Attendance Rate?	Y
	Met Graduation Rate?	Y
	Made AYP?	N

Grade	My District	My District	Arizona Schools	
	% Proficient in Math	% Proficient in Reading	% Proficient in Math	% Proficient in Reading
3	67	68	72.9	71.6
4	70	70	74.3	72.1
5	67	72	72	73.5
6	54	62	68.1	70.2
7	64	65	73.3	72.7
8	54	61	63.2	69.3
10	69	72	70	74.6

A similar determination was made for all schools within Tucson Unified School District. Once the schools' AYP determinations were calculated, all of the data was then combined to determine the LEA's AYP. The LEA's AYP determination includes students that moved from one school to another within the LEA, whereas the school determination does not include these mobile students.

Another item to mention is that the data is calculated for all students as well as subgroups of students (i.e., racial and ethnic groups, English language learners, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged students). If one of these groups does not meet an indicator across all grade spans, then the LEA will not have made AYP. (NOTE: Only groups larger than 40 are counted.)

You, as a parent, are a very important part of the educational process. In addition to the assistance and nurturing you give to your child, you can participate in upgrading the quality of education within Tucson Unified School District. Your efforts will help your child's school and LEA to make AYP. You may want to get involved by:

- *Reviewing your child's homework and test results;*
- *Supporting and reinforcing your child's good study habits;*
- *Becoming a member of your school's site council;*
- *Attending board meetings and giving input at appropriate times;*
- *Serving on a school or LEA committee; and*
- *Coming to parent-school meetings on student achievement;*

For more information about AYP, please see the attached Frequently Asked Questions page or visit ADE's website at [www.ade.az.gov/azlearnss](http://www.ade.az.gov/azlearnss) and go to the NCLB link. You can also call our Title I office, at 225-6290, to find out how we are addressing AYP concerns, and to inquire as to how you can become involved to increase academic achievement at each of our schools.

Sincerely,  
Elizabeth Celandia-Fagen, Ed.D.  
Tucson Unified School District Superintendent

## 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.