



No Child Left Behind

September 2009

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* is a federal law designed to improve education for all children. It covers all states, school districts, and schools that accept Title I federal grants. *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) applies differently to Title I schools than to schools that do not receive Title I grants. Nevertheless, one way or another, this law covers all public schools in all states. This education reform act holds schools accountable for results, gives schools more flexibility in local control of the use of federal funds, gives parents greater choices, and promotes teaching methods that work.

The NCLB Act is made up of four key principles:

1. stronger accountability for schools
2. greater flexibility for states, school districts, and schools in the use of federal funds
3. more choices for parents of children attending schools funded by Title I
4. emphasis on teacher quality and teaching methods that are proven to work

Source: [No Child Left Behind: A Desktop Reference](#)

What does “accountability” mean?

Starting with the 2002-2003 school year, state test results will be reported to the public in order to hold schools accountable for improving the academic achievement of every student. School districts must prepare annual reports for parents and the public on the academic achievement of all schools combined and of each individual school in a district.

How will the state and school districts publicize this academic achievement information?

The state and the school districts will notify the public of the state’s schools’ academic achievement in report card form. These school report cards must be published widely through public means (newspapers, radio, television and/or the Internet).

What information will be included in the report card?

- ✓ Student academic achievement on statewide tests disaggregated (broken down) by subgroup.
- ✓ A comparison of students at basic, proficient and advanced levels of academic achievement.
- ✓ High school graduation rates as well as dropout rates.
- ✓ Number and names of schools identified as “high priority”.
- ✓ Professional qualifications of teachers.
- ✓ Percentage of students not tested.

- ✓ How students performed on the state test compared to other students in the school district and the state as a whole.

How will Wyoming schools measure the progress of public schools?

Wyoming will use data from the PAWS to determine schools’ progress from year to year. Adequate yearly progress (AYP) is an individual state’s measure of yearly progress toward achieving state academic standards. Schools must reduce the percentage of students who score at the basic or below basic level, and increase the percentage of students who score at the proficient or advanced level in order to reach adequate yearly progress. (See “Education Extras: Adequate Yearly Progress” fact sheet for more detailed information on AYP.)

What does “flexibility in the use of federal funds” mean?

No Child Left Behind gives schools more flexibility in how they spend taxpayer dollars. That means principals and administrators will spend less time filling out forms and less time dealing with federal red tape. It also means they will have more time to spend focusing on student progress.

In what other ways does “flexibility” affect schools?

- For the first time, most local school districts in America will have the freedom to transfer up to 50 percent of the federal dollars they receive among several education programs without separate approval.
- All 50 states will also have the freedom to transfer up to 50 percent of the non-Title I state activity funds they receive from the federal government among an assortment of Elementary and Secondary School Education programs without advance approval.
- Local school officials serving rural schools and districts will have more flexibility and a greater say in how federal funds are used in their schools.

What does “more choices for parents” mean?

NCLB creates meaningful options for parents whose children are in schools that are receiving Title I funds, and makes these options available immediately:

- **Public School Choice:** Parents with children in schools identified as “in need of improvement” would be allowed to transfer their child to a better-performing public or charter school immediately after a school is identified as not making adequate yearly progress for two consecutive years.
- **Supplemental Services:** Federal Title I funds can be used to provide supplemental educational services—including tutoring, after-school services, and summer school programs—for children in schools which have been identified as in need of improvement.
- **Charter Schools:** Federal support for charter schools is expanded by giving parents, educators, and interested community leaders greater opportunities to create new charter schools.

Parents of children who attend a school that does not receive Title I funds will simply know whether their child’s school is improving at the required rate.

What does “emphasis on teacher quality and methods that are proven to work” mean?

By 2005, every classroom in every public school in the state should have a highly qualified teacher. This means the teacher holds at least a bachelor’s degree and has passed a state test of subject knowledge.

- ✓ Elementary school teachers must demonstrate knowledge of teaching math and reading.
- ✓ Teachers in higher grades must demonstrate knowledge of the subject they teach, or have majored in that subject.
- ✓ Other teachers have until 2005-2006 to obtain at least a bachelor’s degree, licensure, and/or certification.

The term “highly qualified” includes para-professionals who work with students. New paraprofessionals who assist in Title I programs must have completed two years of college or pass a test. The test will assess their ability to support teachers in reading, writing, and math instruction. Paraprofessionals already employed in a district have until 2006 to meet these requirements.

Parents of children who attend Title I schools are entitled to know if their child’s teacher is certified and qualified to teach particular subjects and grades. Parents are also entitled to information regarding the teacher’s college degree and major.

Schools are also required to provide information to parents about the qualifications of any paraprofessionals who may work with their child.

To ensure that every classroom has a highly qualified teacher, districts are using innovative programs to address immediate and long-term needs, including alternative recruitment strategies, new approaches to professional development, financial incentive programs, and partnerships with local universities.

Sources: [What to Know & Where to Go: A Parents’ Guide to No Child Left Behind](#)

Wrightslaw: www.wrightslaw.com

Log on to the *No Child Left Behind* website at www.ed.gov/nclb

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