

### School Improvement/District Improvement Questions and Answers

### **School Improvement:**

What are the district's annual requirements for School Improvement under the *No Child Left Behind Act* (P.L. 107-110)?

Before the beginning of each school year, every district must annually identify any of its district schools failing to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two or more consecutive years. (ODE provides summary and historical data to make these determinations.) These schools are placed into School Improvement (SI) status. Following are the required consequences and necessary actions based on years of SI status. These requirements apply to all Title I-funded schools in SI status. Schools that are not Title I-funded do not have to meet requirements for offering Public School Choice (PSC) and Supplemental Educational Services (SES) and for 10 percent set asides for professional development, but must meet all other listed requirements.

**School Improvement Year 1 (after AYP not met 2 consecutive years):** The district must ensure that the identified school implements the following:

- Offer Public School Choice to all students (giving priority to the lowest achieving children from low-income families if there are inadequate resources to serve all children);
  - O Districts not having PSC options shall, to the extent practicable, establish a cooperative agreement with other school districts in the area for a transfer. Citation: No Child Left Behind, Title I, Part A, Section (b)(10)(D);
  - O Districts may offer Supplemental Educational Services (SES) as an alternative to Public School Choice for schools in SI Year 1 if either (a) there are no qualified schools available to which to transfer, or (b) the parents choose to decline the transfer school assigned for their child.
- Develop a school improvement plan to cover a three-year period. (See section "What are the School Improvement Plan requirements?" for plan requirements.)
  - o The plan must be developed within three months of being put into SI status;
  - It should be created using the web-based Planning Tool and must be consistent with the district's CCIP plan. The Planning Tool identifies the required components of the improvement plan in conformance with House Bill 3 and No Child Left Behind. All improvement plans will be reviewed by a member of the Office of Field Relations. Citations: HB3 and NCLB, Title I, Part A, Sec. 1116 (c) (7) and the State Accountability System.
- Spend not less than 10% of the building's Title I funds on professional development;
- Promptly notify parents (in a language they can understand) and explain:
  - o What the identification means;
  - How the school compares in terms of academic achievement to other schools in the district and the state;
  - o Reasons for the identification and what the school, district and state are doing to address the problem of low achievement;
  - o How the parents can become involved in addressing the academic issues that caused the school to be identified for school improvement;
  - o An explanation of the parent's options to transfer the child.



**School Improvement Year 2 (after AYP not met 3 consecutive years):** The district must ensure that any identified school implements the following:

- Offer Public School Choice:
- Make Supplemental Educational Services available to students from low-income families (giving priority to the lowest achieving children from this group if there are inadequate resources).
- Continue to implement the school improvement plan;
- Spend not less than 10% of the building's Title I funds on professional development;
- Promptly notify parents (in a language they can understand) and explain:
  - o What the identification means;
  - o How the school compares in terms of academic achievement to other schools in the district and the state;
  - Reasons for the identification and what the school, the district and the State are doing to address the problem of low achievement;
  - o How the parents can become involved in addressing the academic issues that caused the school to be identified for school improvement;
  - o Parent's options to transfer the child or obtain Supplemental Educational Service.

**School Improvement Year 3 (after AYP not met 4 consecutive years):** The school is now considered to be in year 1 of Corrective Action. The district must publish and disseminate information regarding corrective actions to the public and to parents of each student enrolled in the corrective action school. The district must ensure that the identified school implements the following:

- Offer Public School Choice;
- Make Supplemental Educational Services available;
- Spend not less than 10% of the building's Title I funds on professional development;
- Promptly notify parents (in a language they can understand) and explain:
  - o What the identification means:
  - How the school compares in terms of academic achievement to other schools in the district and the state;
  - o Reasons for the identification and what the school and the district are doing to address the problem of low achievement;
  - How the parents can become involved in addressing the academic issues that caused the school to be identified for school improvement;
  - o Parent's options to transfer the child or obtain Supplemental Educational Services.
- Take corrective action by taking at least one of the following measures:
  - o Replace school staff relevant to the failure;
  - o Institute and implement a new research-based and professionally-developed curriculum;
  - o Significantly decrease management authority at the school level;
  - o Appoint an outside expert to advise the school in its progress;
  - o Extend the school year or school day for the school;
  - o Restructure the internal organizational structure of the school.

**School Improvement Year 4 (after AYP not met 5 consecutive years):** The district must ensure that the identified school implements the following:

- Offer Public School Choice;
- Offer Supplemental Educational Services;
- Spend not less than 10% of the building's Title I funds on professional development;
- Promptly notify parents (in a language they can understand) and explain:



- What the identification means:
- o How the school compares in terms of academic achievement to other schools in the district and the State;
- Reasons for the identification and what the school and the district are doing to address the problem of low achievement;
- O How the parents can become involved in addressing the academic issues that caused the school to be identified for school improvement;
- o Parent's options to transfer the child or obtain Supplemental Educational Services.
- Prepare a restructuring plan, to take effect within a year, to do one or more of the following:
  - o Reopen the school as a public charter school;
  - o Replace all or most of the staff (which may include the principal) who are relevant to the failure to make adequate yearly progress;
  - o Enter into a contract with an entity, such as a private management company, with a demonstrated record of effectiveness to operate the public school;
  - ODE. Turn the operation of the school over to the ODE, if permitted by State law and agreeable to ODE.
  - O Any other major restructuring of the school's governance arrangement that makes fundamental reforms, such as significant changes in the school's staffing and governance, to improve student academic achievement in the schools and that has substantial promise of enabling the school to make adequate yearly progress.
  - o **NOTE:** Rural districts of less than 600 students in average daily attendance and all of whose schools have a School Locale Code of 7 or 8, as determined by the Secretary of Education, may request assistance from the Secretary for purposes of implementing this portion of the law.

**School Improvement Year 5 (after AYP not met 6 consecutive years):** The district must ensure that the identified school implements the following:

- Offer Public School Choice;
- Offer Supplemental Educational Services:
- Spend not less than 10% of the building's Title I funds on professional development;
- Promptly notify parents (in a language they can understand) and explain:
  - o What the identification means;
  - How the school compares in terms of academic achievement to other schools in the district and the state;
  - o Reasons for the identification and what the school and the district are doing to address the problem of low achievement;
  - How the parents can become involved in addressing the academic issues that caused the school to be identified for school improvement;
  - o Parent's options to transfer the child or obtain Supplemental Educational Services.
- Implement the restructuring plan developed in SI Year 4: (Note that implementing a restructuring plan does not change the SI status of the school.)

Citation: NCLB, Title I, Part A, Sec. 1116

### What happens if a school meets AYP after getting into School Improvement status?

If a school meets AYP while it is in SI Year N, the school will remain in SI Year N for one more year and will be required to continue or repeat the activities required under SI Year N. The designation for this state is "SI Year N Delay". For example, if a school meets AYP while in SI Year 2, it will be in SI Year 2 Delay beginning the following year, during which it must continue/repeat the requirements of SI Year 2.



#### How does a school get out of School Improvement status?

To get out of SI status, a school must meet AYP for two consecutive years. After the first year of meeting AYP, the school will be put in SI Delay status. If a school then meets AYP while it is in an SI Delay state, it will get out of School Improvement status the following school year. In general, if a school meets AYP while in SI Year N Delay state, it will get out of School Improvement status the following year. If, on the other hand, the school fails to meet AYP while in SI Year N Delay, it will advance to SI Year N+1 the following school year. In the above example, if a school in SI Year 2 Delay made AYP again for a second consecutive year, it will get out of SI for the following school year. If it fails to meet AYP the second year, it will advance to SI Year 3 the following school year.

## What happens if School Improvement status and/or AYP results differ across subjects, e.g., reading vs. math?

At the building level, AYP is measured separately for three components: reading, math, and either graduation rate (if it is a high school) or attendance rate (if it is not a high school). Overall AYP is met only if all three AYP components are met. If one or more of the AYP components is not met, then overall AYP is not met. Similarly, SI status is maintained separately from year to year for each of the three components, and overall SI status is always the worst case SI status of each of the three components. To get into the SI state, a school must fail to meet AYP in at least one of the same components two years in a row. To get out of SI completely, a school must meet AYP in the worst case component two years in a row, *and* must not be in SI status in any other component. If a school gets out of SI in the worst case component, but remains in SI in one or both of the other components, its SI state will be the remaining worst case component. Thus, it is possible, for example, for a school to get out of SI Year 3 in reading, but move into SI Year 1 in math.

### What are the School Improvement Plan requirements?

If the school building is identified for improvement, it must develop a three-year improvement plan within three months. The district is responsible for approving the improvement plan.

A district that identifies a school for improvement must ensure the school receives technical assistance as the school develops and implements its improvement plan.

The three-year plan must:

- Incorporate strategies based on scientific research;
- Use policies and practices in the core subjects that will ensure that all groups of students are successful;
- Spend not less than 10% of the Title I building allocation on professional development;
- Specify how the funds will be used to remove the school from SI status;
- Establish annual measurable objectives:
- Provide notification to parents of SI status;
- Specify responsibilities of school, district, ODE, including technical assistance needed;
- Include strategies to promote effective parental involvement;
- Incorporate extended learning opportunities that the school will offer;
- Incorporate a teacher mentoring program.

Citation: NCLB, Title I, Part A, (b)(3)(A)



# What process must districts use if the school principal or a majority of parents disagree with the proposed School Improvement designation?

If the principal of a school proposed for identification believes, or a majority of the parents of the students enrolled in the school believe, that the proposed identification is in error for statistical or other substantive reasons, the principal may provide supporting evidence to the district, which shall consider that evidence before making a final determination. The district must make a final determination within 30 days of the time the data are first made available to the district. Citation: NCLB, Title I, Part A, Section 1116

### **District Improvement:**

What are the state's annual requirements for School Improvement under the *No Child Left Behind Act* (P.L. 107-110)?

State House Bill 3 and the federal *No Child Left Behind Act* require that districts failing to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) for two consecutive years be identified for district improvement status. This process will take place in the summer and be completed prior to the beginning of the school year. The State must make available – to parents of students in all schools served by a district identified for improvement – the results of the review and indicate how parents can participate in upgrading the quality of the district. The district will need to review and revise, if appropriate, their improvement plan based on the identified needs. Districts receiving Title I funds must budget 10% of their Title I allocation for professional development. If applicable, districts may include the building 10% professional development. Citations: HB3 and NCLB, Title I, Part A, Sec 1116

District Improvement (DI) Status: School districts are evaluated for AYP and possible District Improvement (DI) status in much the same ways as schools are evaluated for AYP and possible School Improvement (SI) status. The district is treated much the same as one large school containing all the students in the district. The main differences are threefold: (a) districts have four AYP and SI status components instead of three: reading, math, graduation rate, and attendance rate, and (b) the consequences and requirements of DI status are somewhat different from the consequences and requirements of SI status, and (c) districts may, in some cases, avoid moving into DI status if they meet the grade level banding rule (see <a href="http://ccip.ode.state.oh.us/ccip/documentview.asp?docid=570">http://ccip.ode.state.oh.us/ccip/documentview.asp?docid=570</a> for details of the grade level banding rule). Other rules for districts are virtually identical to those of school AYP and SI status, including: (a) meeting AYP after getting into DI status (i.e., a Delay state), (b) getting out of DI status (two consecutive years of meeting AYP), and (c) determining AYP and DI status separately for each component.

**District Improvement Year 1 (after AYP not met 2 consecutive years):** The district must develop a three-year district improvement plan within three months of being put in DI status. The plan is created by amending the district's CCIP plan using the web-based Planning Tool. The Planning Tool identifies the required components of the improvement plan in conformance with HB3 and No Child Left Behind. All improvement plans will be reviewed by a member of the Office of Field Relations. Citations: HB3 and NCLB, Title I, Part A, Sec. 1116 (c) (7) and the State Accountability System. The improvement plan must, as a minimum:

- Incorporate scientifically based research strategies;
- Identify actions for improving the academic achievement of participating children;



- Address the professional development needs of the instructional staff and committing not less than 10% of the district's Title I allocation for professional development for each fiscal year. If applicable, districts may include the building 10% professional development:
- Specify measurable achievement goals for each of the subgroups identified in disaggregated data;
- Address the fundamental teaching and learning needs in the schools and the specific academic problems of law achieving students;
- Incorporate, as appropriate, activities before school, after school, during the summer, and during an extension of the school year;
- Specify the responsibilities of the district and the State including technical assistance to be provided;
- Identify strategies to promote effective parental involvement in the school.

Citation: NCLB, Title I, Part A, Section 1116

**District Improvement Year 2 (after AYP not met 3 consecutive years):** The requirements of DI Year 2 are to continue the actions and advance the improvement plan developed in DI Year 1.

**District Improvement Year 3 (after AYP not met 4 consecutive years):** The district is identified for Corrective Action. Corrective Action must substantially and directly respond to the consistent academic failure that caused the State to take action and to any underlying staffing, curricular, or other problems in the district. Corrective Action must be designed to meet the goal of having all students served achieve at the proficient and advanced student academic achievement levels. It must include at least one of the following:

- Deferring programmatic funds or reducing administrative funds;
- Instituting and fully implementing a new curriculum that is based on State and local academic content and achievement standards. This includes providing appropriate professional development based on scientifically based research for all relevant staff that offers substantial promise of improving educational achievement for low-achieving students.
- Replacing the district personnel who are relevant to the failure to make adequate yearly progress;
- Removing particular schools from the jurisdiction of the local district and establishing alternative arrangements for public governance and supervision of the schools;
- Appointing, through ODE, a receiver or trustee to administer the affairs of the district in place of the superintendent and school board;
- Abolishing or restructuring the district;
- Authorizing students to transfer from a school operated by the district to a higher-performing public school operated by another district in accordance with subsections (b) (1)(E) and (F) of NCLB, Title I, Part A, of and providing to the students transportation (or the costs of transportation) to school consistent with subsection (b)(9) of NCLB, Title I, Part A, in conjunction with carrying out not less than one additional action described above.

Citation: NCLB, Title I, Part A, Sec 1116

**District Improvement Year 4 (after AYP not met 5 consecutive years):** The district must continue the actions of and advance the corrective action plan started in DI Year 3.

### What process must the State follow in identifying districts for improvement or corrective action?

In identifying a district for improvement status or corrective action, the State must provide the district with an opportunity to review the data, including the academic assessments data on which the predetermination is made. A district may provide supporting documentation if it believes the data are in error. The State must consider any evidence presented but must make a final determination within 30 days



of the time the data are first made available to the district. When a district is identified for improvement and/or corrective action, the State must promptly provide to the parents (in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand) of each student enrolled in a school served by the district identified for improvement, the results of the review, the reasons for that identification and indicate how parents can participate in upgrading the quality of the district. Citations: NCLB, Title I, Part A, Section 1116 and 34 CFR Part 200.51

### What technical assistance is available to help districts/schools improve?

Districts should work with the regional managers assigned by the Ohio Department of Education, the Office of Field Relations, their regional Educational Services Center, and the Regional Professional Development Center. In addition, the Ohio Department of Education is in the process of defining a new system of district/school supports. To be involved and informed about the process, see: <a href="http://www.ode.state.oh.us/oreds/">http://www.ode.state.oh.us/oreds/</a>

# What additional financial assistance is available to support districts/schools identified for improvement?

- Schools identified for school improvement and eligible for funding may receive up to \$50,000 annually for three years by submitting their district approved building level plan using the Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP) planning tool. Funding eligibility is determined by three factors: low achievement, % low-income, and commitment. Funds are currently available through Title I School Improvement (Title I schools only) and Comprehensive School Reform.
- Many of the requirements of No Child Left Behind can be supported with funds available through
  their CCIP plan and application by redirecting federal funds to the priority goals and strategies.
  Districts/schools will need to make choices related to the findings from their review of scientifically
  based research. Keys to making good choices are developing a needs assessment based on data,
  identifying goals and performance based on the needs assessment and employing strategies based on
  the research and directed toward meeting the stated goals.

## What additional guidance is available related to School/District Improvement, Public School Choice, and Supplemental Educational Services?

- USDOE NCLB resources and guidance: <a href="http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml">http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml</a>
- USDOE guidance on Public School Choice: http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/schoolchoiceguid.doc
- USDOE guidance on Supplemental Educational Services: http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/suppsvcsguid.doc
- USDOE guidance on School Improvement: <a href="http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/schoolimprovementguid.pdf">http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/schoolimprovementguid.pdf</a>
- ODE resources and guidance: http://www.ode.state.oh.us/esea/Superintendent/Web Docs/Accountability Ohio.asp