



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NEWS

Valerie A. Woodruff
Secretary

Ron Gough
Public Information Officer

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Contact: Ron Gough
(302) 739-1475
Pager 247-7726

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RELEASES REVISED SCHOOL AND SCHOOL DISTRICT ACCOUNTABILITY RATINGS

---Delaware first state to release modified ratings in Mid-Atlantic region---

(Dover, DE) At a press conference held this morning at the Delaware Department of Education, Secretary of Education Valerie A. Woodruff announced school and school district accountability ratings for more than 170 public schools and 19 school districts under Delaware's recently revised accountability system.

As a result of the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act of 2001, Delaware was required to modify its existing accountability system to meet the requirements of the far-reaching federal law. According to NCLB, all states are required to conduct an annual assessment of all students in grades 3-8 and one high school grade. The results of the annual assessment are then used as the primary means to determine school and school district accountability ratings.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is designed to measure academic performance of not only all students in a particular school but of subgroups within the student population. One of the key changes to Delaware's existing system, and for all states across the country, is that all 100% of all students must be proficient in English/Language Arts (Reading and Writing) and mathematics by the 2013-2014 school year. The federal formula for determining AYP is based upon all students and required subgroups of students meeting proficiency at an established annual target. That target will continually increase towards the 2013-2014 school year when 100% of students across the U.S. must be proficient. Including all students, the subgroups are: American Indian; Asian American; African American; Hispanic; White; Low Income; Special Education; and Limited English Proficient. By applying the federal formula, Delaware's target this year for English Language Arts is at 57%. Students must meet the standard. In mathematics, the target has been calculated at 33%.

Additionally, a fixed target of 95% of students must participate in the Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP) each spring in ELA and math in each school or AYP will not have been attained. Lastly, an elementary or middle school and school districts must maintain or show progress in another

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target called “Other Indicator” in the area of Science and Social Studies. For high schools and school districts, the graduation rate is the “Other Indicator.”

A school or school district is classified as “Under School Improvement” if it does not make AYP in the same content area (percent proficient or participation rate) for two consecutive years, or the school or school district does not maintain or show progress on the “Other Indicator” for two consecutive years. A school or district can be moved out of “Under School Improvement” if all targets are met for two consecutive years in the same content area or “Other Indicator” that placed the school or district “Under School Improvement” and the school or district must not fall below targets in the other content area or “Other Indicator” target for two consecutive years.

Under Delaware’s revised accountability system, schools and districts are classified in one of five categories:

- **Superior** means that the school or district has met AYP, is not under improvement and has met additional, rigorous state criteria.
- **Commendable** indicates that AYP has been met while the school or district is not “Under Improvement.”
- **Academic Review** means AYP is not met for one year while the school or district is not “Under Improvement.”
- **Academic Progress** means AYP is met for one year while the school or district is “Under Improvement”
- **Academic Watch** means AYP is not met for two or more years. The school or school district goes into or remains in “Under Improvement.”

Consequences for schools not meeting AYP differ depending on whether the school is a non-Title 1 school or a Title 1 (receives federal funding for low income students) school.

Title 1 School:

- **1 year** = No consequences
- **2 years** = Under School Improvement (USI) – begin Choice option for Title I schools
- **3 years** = Remain Under School Improvement – begin supplemental services option for low-income students in Title I schools
- **4 years** = Corrective Action – select one or more NCLB corrective action options
- **5 years** = Restructuring Plan – select one or more NCLB restructuring options
- **6 years** = Restructuring Implementation

Non-Title 1 School:

- **1 year** = No consequences
- **2 years** = Under School Improvement (USI)
- **3 years** = Remain Under School Improvement – begin prioritization of extra time services for subgroups not meeting target
- **4 years** = Corrective Action – select one or more corrective action options
- **5 years** = Restructuring Plan – select one or more restructuring options
- **6 years** = Restructuring Implementation

Today’s announcement by Secretary Woodruff identifies that two school districts – Caesar

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Rodney and Smyrna – have been rated “Superior” while the remaining 17 school districts have been rated as “Academic Review.” In the individual school ratings, 61 schools have been rated “Superior;” 12 are rated “Commendable;” 86 are rated “Academic Review;” and 12 schools (all Title 1) are rated “Academic Watch.”

The 12 schools rated “Academic Watch” are now required to offer choice options to parents. According to NCLB, school districts must notify parents that they can choose their children to other schools **within** the district that are not under improvement providing there is another elementary, middle or high school within that district. The districts must send letters to parents explaining the choice options available to them.

Four of the schools under “Academic Watch” must also offer supplemental services to their low income students. This includes extra time programs, tutoring and other academic services designed to improve student achievement.

Secretary Woodruff stated that the ratings applied to the schools and school districts do not totally reflect what is being accomplished in Delaware’s public schools. “Delaware has been engaged in education reform for the past 12 years. During that time, we have seen our students meet tougher, higher standards and achieve greater academic success. We have seen a steady increase in our reading, writing and math scores at our early grades; we have seen increases in our SAT9 scores.” Added Secretary Woodruff, “Our NAEP scores in reading and writing are among the best in the country. I am proud of the diligent, hard work of all of our educators and what they continue to do to provide a quality education for all students.”

“NCLB requires all schools and districts to meet many targets. Not meeting just one of 20 targets or just one of 35 targets means that the school doesn’t meet Adequate Yearly Progress and is rated as ‘Academic Review,’” said Secretary Woodruff. “The important thing to do is look at the total picture of what a school or district is doing. Did not meeting one target cause the rating? Or were several targets the cause?”

On Friday, August 15th, online school profiles will be available for viewing on DOE’s website. The profiles will identify each school’s accountability rating as well as show what targets were and were not met. “Parents can also look at school profiles to view student achievement data, staff information and a school’s demographics,” said Secretary Woodruff. “The profiles also provide a reader with school climate information, staff data and program information, as well. It is a powerful tool that parents can use to get a better understanding of their children’s academic environment.”

To view your school or school district profile, go to:

www.doe.state.de.us

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