



NORTH CAROLINA NCLB News

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NCLB Impacts NC

KEY ADMINISTRATOR IN IMPLEMENTING NCLB RETIRES

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act was signed into federal law in 2002. Since that time, North Carolina schools, districts and the state have been measured against the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) indicator. The chart on page 3 shows some statistics related to the federal law and its impact in North Carolina. Title I schools are most affected, as they face sanctions for not making AYP two or more years in a row in the same subject (reading or mathematics).



Dr. Elsie Leak, associate superintendent of curriculum and instructional services in the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), will retire June 30, 2007 after a long, successful career in education as a classroom teacher at the elementary, middle, high school, and college levels and as a principal at the middle and high school levels. Originally from South Carolina, she came to North Carolina in 1983. She led the state's school improvement efforts and implementation of NCLB. In the interview below, she talks about that experience.

What was the greatest change that NCLB brought to North Carolina?

"Before the law, we published data. North Carolina has always been really good with that. But our ABCs looked at schools as a unit and I think that hid the poor performance of some students. NCLB increased the awareness of performance of various subgroups and made us more aware that we need to ensure that all children achieve."

Have we made progress in closing the achievement gap between different groups of students?

"Not as much as I would like to have seen. I'm extremely pleased with some of the things the Exceptional Children's department has done to accelerate the academic growth of students with disabilities, but I think North Carolina continues to struggle with our students across the spectrum who have economical disadvantages, our English language learners, and students with disabilities. I think we need new focus and direction. We must realize that if we keep doing it the way we've done it in the past, we will not reach all children. Change is hard and struggling schools and districts need assistance to make those changes."

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NCLB Impacts NC *Continued*

What is a key change you'd like to see in schools?

"Schools should look at their learning environments. School staffs need to be sure that all children feel that they are a part of the learning process and are seen as children who can learn. If you get the climate right where students have a sense of belonging, a sense of worthiness, a sense of 'I can do this' and they feel safe and secure, they naturally want to learn. Once that environment is in place, there should be good, solid instruction by teachers who are grounded in their content, can differentiate instruction and know how to manage classes with varying ability levels."

Can you describe more about this learning environment that you're talking about?

"In the past, people thought that if a classroom was quiet, the seats were in straight lines, the children were operating as individuals with no interaction, and the teacher was up front expending all the energy, that this was good instruction. Today, students are interacting with technological devices all the time and young people are just naturally high energy. In a good classroom, you'll see students engaged, interacting with each other and with the teacher. ... When a new concept is being introduced, you might see a teacher leading that lesson, but always engaging children and addressing the three modes of learning – auditory, visual, kinesthetic – throughout so that each child's manner of learning is addressed. Today, we must also integrate technology into the instructional process, and connect with students personally. When each child begins to feel success, more successes will come."

Teachers often say that NCLB has forced them to "teach to the test," negating some of the components you've described in an ideal learning environment. What do you think?

"I don't think we can actually teach to the test since we don't have the specific test items. I do think it is appropriate to teach the universe of content – the

NC Standard Course of Study from which the test items will be taken. Since our tests are aligned to the curriculum, teachers who focus on delivering the curriculum in the most creative and engaging way will ensure that they teach all students and will get the best student outcomes. If you teach well, students will be confident about what they know and they will perform. Yes, plan simulations so that students are given opportunities to become familiar with the testing process and procedures, but don't focus on the test. I would align my instruction with the *NC Standard Course of Study* and just make sure that I teach well. Be creative about how that curriculum is delivered, but don't focus on the test.

"I don't think tests are necessarily evil things. If you are going to be a legal driver, you take a test. But, if you keep it on students' radar screen too much, they get very anxious. We can elevate tests above learning and create unnecessary anxiety in students."

Do you think the results of one test should carry the high stakes that it does under NCLB?

"No. One assessment cannot tell the whole story. Assessment is a daily part of instruction. When a class is over, I should know whether little Johnny understood this lesson. And that doesn't mean that children are always writing answers on paper... When you're assessing all along, then you can remediate all along and children's deficits don't accumulate. You can also extend learning for those ready to move ahead. It's really difficult when children are in sequential courses like reading and math, and they pick up deficits. Remediation after a nine-week period or at the end of the school year, isn't the way to go. Ongoing classroom assessment is important and we've begun to dialogue about that here in terms of what we can do to help schools."

This passive learning classroom environment that you say isn't ideal – is that the way it was when you started teaching?

"Pretty much, but I was a science teacher so it was easier for me to break

the mold and engage students in activities that really nurtured their curiosity. For example, I would take students on a nature walk around the school... teaching science as well as helping them to develop observation and vocabulary skills. I always had a great time with students, but I also have a genuine love for children. Now that's not a prerequisite for teaching, but it should be."

What do you think it's going to take to close the achievement gap?

"The total education community must believe that all children can and will learn if we give them adequate time and appropriate instruction. If we sincerely believe that, it drives our behavior. We begin to differentiate instruction. We begin to engage students and send all students the signal that, 'You are welcome at the educational table. You have something to offer.' Until we do that, we will continue to struggle. In the regional hearings for the (high school) core course of study, we sometimes heard, 'All these students can't do this.' If you believe that, then they won't because you won't change your behavior to help them to be able to do that. Some say, 'Well, you still need people to drive the garbage trucks or to do other menial tasks.' I say, let's educate them all. Don't worry about the trash trucks."

Dr. Leak has a pile of books she'd like to read when she retires and she's thought of writing a book based on the wonderful experiences she's had in her career. She will continue to contribute as an educator, working in her church's tutoring program that she helped to develop nine years ago. As part of that work, she sometimes tutors high school students in biology.

"I notice that the trend in public schools also plays out at my church," she says. "We've had anywhere from 30 to 60 plus youngsters in that program annually and it's heavily black male. Sometimes I think one of the things that I want to do is to go back to school and take some courses in how

NC NCLB FACTS

Number of NC schools in 2005-06	2,353
Number of NC schools making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) based on 2005-06 results ¹	1,043 (44.3% of total)
Number of NC Title I schools in 2005-06 ²	1,165 (49.5% of total)
Number of NC Title I schools making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) based on 2005-06 results	538 (46.2% of all Title I schools)
Number of NC schools in Title I School Improvement in 2005-06 ³	298 (25.6% of all Title I schools)
Number of NC Title I School Improvement Schools in Year 1 (public school choice) in 2005-06 ⁴	156
Number of NC Title I Schools in Year 1 in Reading	128
Number of NC Title I Schools in Year 1 in Mathematics	70
Number of NC Title I School Improvement Schools in Year 2 (public school choice, supplemental educational services [SES]) in 2005-06	70
Number of NC Title I School Improvement Schools in Year 3 (public school choice, SES, corrective action) in 2005-06	60
Number of NC Title I School Improvement Schools in Year 4 (public school choice, SES, devise restructuring plan) in 2005-06	10
Number of NC Title I School Improvement Schools in Year 5 (public school choice, SES, implement restructuring plan) in 2005-06	2
Number of NC students offered public school choice in 2005-06	86,345
Number of NC students transferring as a result of public school choice in 2005-06	4,053 (4.7% of those offered)
Number of NC students eligible for SES in 2005-06	33,153
Number of NC students receiving SES in 2005-06	6,546 (19.7% of those eligible)
Number of NC districts in Title I District Improvement ⁵	64
Number of NC Title I District Improvement districts in corrective action	21

¹ Access school's AYP status on the Web at <http://ayp.ncpublicschools.org/>. | ² Access Title I school listings on the Web at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/title1/schools/>.

³ For lists of schools in Title I School Improvement, access the Web at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/title1/>. | ⁴ Public school choice is the first year consequence for schools entering Title I School Improvement except for those participating in the SES Pilot Program. For more information on the pilot program, access the Web at: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/ses/facts/sesnews>. | ⁵ For lists of districts in Title I District Improvement, access the Web at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/district/lddi>.

to teach reading. I was a secondary-level trained teacher in the biological sciences and I was not taught how to teach children reading. I sincerely believe that if children don't get the basic skills, then, as they get older, it's easier for them to be the class-cutup to keep people from realizing that they don't know how to read. That's why I think that elementary and middle schools are so very, very important."

DR. LEAK'S REAUTHORIZATION IDEAS

"The legislation's overarching goal is good," says Dr. Leak. "However, a great deal of energy is spent dealing with the details instead of attending to student growth in academic performance."

- Change the "all or nothing approach" for AYP reporting. Categorize schools according to 90-100 percent meeting targets, 75-89 percent, etc., to help states prioritize assistance. Eliminate labeling schools. Report AYP as part of a growth model. "It's more beneficial to support and assist schools than it is to label them," Dr. Leak says.

- Extend the time Title I School Improvement schools are given to implement intervention. "Most change takes three to five years to see consistent, positive results," Dr. Leak says. "Don't give schools annual sanctions."
- Instead of labeling schools "persistently dangerous," focus on measures to make schools safe and secure.
- Re-examine the criteria used to determine Highly Qualified professionals.
- De-emphasize sanctions and monitoring.

NCDPI Plans Support Materials for August 2007 AYP Release

Below is a brief timeline regarding Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) release dates and parent notification templates that will be available for schools in Title I School Improvement.

May/June 2007 End-of-grade and end-of-year assessments are scanned. Many school districts determine choice schools and other procedures for schools in Title I School Improvement.

May 15, 2007 Parent notification templates will be posted on the Web at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/> for 2007-08 by this time.

June 30, 2007 Local school systems submit preliminary test data to DPI.

Late July 2007 Local school systems release preliminary AYP results. Districts must notify parents of their choice and other options.

August 15, 2007 DPI verifies test data with local school systems.

August 2007 NCLB Toolkit will be posted on the Web at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/> to use as a resource in communicating NCLB key points to school staffs and parents.

September 2007 The DPI presents AYP results to the State Board of Education for final approval.

Revised NCLB parent notification templates will be posted on the Web at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/> no later than May 15. Below is a menu of parent notification templates and their corresponding Web site address.

Parent notification templates for schools in Year 1 of sanctions, available at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/schoolchoice/materials/>, will include:

- Public School Choice Flyer
- Sample Letter for Title I Schools Not Making AYP and Offering Public School Choice
- Sample Letter for Title I Schools Making AYP and Offering Public School Choice
- Sample Letter for Title I Schools Not Making AYP and Offering Public School Choice and Supplemental Educational Services (SES)
- Sample Request for Transfer Form

Parent notification templates for schools in Year 2 of sanctions, available at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/ses/materials/>, will include:

- Sample Letter for Title I Schools Offering SES as Part of 7-District SES Pilot
- Sample Letter for Title I Schools Not Making AYP and Offering Public School Choice and SES
- Sample Postcard for Title I Schools Offering SES
- SES Student Enrollment Forms
- SES Flyer
- Questions for Families to Ask SES Providers

Parent notification templates for schools in Year 3 of sanctions, available at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/corrective/>, will include:

- Sample Letter for Title I Schools Not Making AYP and in Corrective Action
- Sample Letter for Title I Schools Making AYP and in Corrective Action

Parent notification templates to help Title I schools comply with providing Highly Qualified information, available at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/highly/>, will include:

- Sample Letter Informing Parents of Their Right to Request Information
- Sample Letter Informing Parents That Their Child Is Being Taught for Four or More Weeks by a Teacher Who Is Not Highly Qualified

Calculate SES Caps Accurately

Calculate the student cap for Supplemental Educational Services (SES), the maximum amount that can be spent per student and counted toward the 20 percent set aside, accurately. First, take the Title I, Part A dollars amount and subtract any delinquent dollars you receive. Then, take the difference and divide by the census poverty count. This count is updated annually and can be found at: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/fbs/allotments/planning/federal/planningallotment.xls>.

Dr. Norwood Testifies Before House Committee

In April, NC State Board of Education Member and Vice-Chair Jane Norwood testified before the US House Education Committee on dropout prevention policies, strategies to improve high school graduation rates, and the current status of high school reforms. She testified on behalf of the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) in the latest of a series of NCLB congressional hearings.

Dr. Norwood explained to the committee that the overarching NCLB goals of 100 percent student proficiency and closing the achievement gap could not be achieved without effective high school reforms.

Dr. Norwood's written testimony and that of the other hearing witnesses are on the Web at <http://edlabor.house.gov/hearings/fc042307.shtml>.

Parent Notifications Are Important Under NCLB

Below is a list of key Title I, Part A parental notice requirements adapted from Appendix B of Parental Involvement: Title I, Part A, Non-Regulatory Guidance, April 23, 2004. Access the Web at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/parents/> to download this version of the chart or <http://www.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/parentinvguid.doc> to download the original version by the US Department of Education.

KEY TITLE 1 PART A PARENTAL NOTICE REQUIREMENTS*	WHEN	BY WHOM		
		SEAs	LEAs	Schools
Provide parents, schools and the public with annual report cards that include aggregate and disaggregated information, graduation rates, performance of LEAs, teacher qualifications, and other required information. <i>[Section 1111(h)(1) and (2), ESEA.]</i> Guidance, B-5 (SEA) and C-7 (LEA). <i>NC compliance method: NC School Report Cards</i>	Annually	✗	✗	
Provide parents, teachers and principals of students in all schools with individual student assessment reports that are interpretive, descriptive, and diagnostic outlining specific academic needs and including information on the student's achievement on academic assessments aligned with State academic achievement standards). <i>[Section 1111(b)(3)(C)(xii), ESEA.]</i> <i>NC compliance method: State accountability program</i>	As soon as practicable after the assessment is given	✗		
Publicly report each LEA's progress review and each school's progress review . <i>[Section 1116(a)(1)(C), (c)(1)(B) and (c)(6), ESEA.]</i> Guidance, B-7 (SEA) and C-20 (LEA) <i>NC compliance method: NC School Report Cards, AYP and ABCs reporting</i>	Annually	✗	✗	
Notify parents of children enrolled in schools in LEAs identified for improvement . <i>[Section 1116(c)(1) and (6), ESEA.]</i> Guidance, B-8. <i>NC compliance method: Parent letters</i>	Promptly upon identification	✗		
Give parents of children enrolled in schools in LEAs identified for corrective action and the public information on corrective actions being taken. <i>[Section 1116(c)(10)(E), ESEA.]</i> Guidance, B-9. <i>NC compliance method: Parent letters</i>	Promptly following identification	✗		
Provide parents of students at Title I School Improvement schools with an explanation of what the identification means, how the schools compare to others, reasons for the identification, the LEA's and school's response, how parents can become involved, applicable options and services, and other information. <i>[Section 1116(b)(6), 7(E), and 8(C), ESEA, and 34 CFR 200.37(5).]</i> Guidance, C-21, C-22, and C-23. <i>NC compliance method: Parent letters</i>	Promptly following identification		✗	
Provide notice to parents of the availability of supplemental educational services , the identity of the providers, a description of the services, and other information for Title I School Improvement Schools that must offer supplemental educational services. <i>[Section 1116(e)(2), ESEA.]</i> <i>NC compliance method: Parent letters, flyers, publicity events</i>	Annually (at a minimum)		✗	
Provide notice to teachers and parents of schools entering the planning for restructuring phase of Title I School Improvement and provide an opportunity to comment and participate). <i>[Section 1116(b)(8)(C), ESEA.]</i> Guidance, C-27. <i>NC compliance method: Letters</i>	Promptly following identification		✗	
Notify parents of Title I, Part A children of district-level and school-level written parental involvement policy and the opportunity for involvement). <i>[Section 1118(a)(2) and (b)(1), ESEA.]</i> Guidance, C-3 and C-4 (LEA), and D-1 (school). <i>NC compliance method: Parent letters</i>	Determined by LEA		✗ (LEA policy)	✗ (school policy)

KEY TITLE 1 PART A PARENTAL NOTICE REQUIREMENTS*	WHEN	BY WHOM		
		SEAs	LEAs	Schools
Inform parents of Title I, Part A students that they may request, and the LEA then will provide, certain information on the professional qualifications of the student’s classroom teachers and paraprofessionals providing services to the child. <i>[Section 1111(h)(6)(A), ESEA.]</i> Guidance, C-6. <i>NC compliance method: Parent letters and follow-up information</i>	Annually, at beginning of school year		✘	
Inform parents when/if their child has been assigned, or taught for 4 or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified . <i>[Section 1111(h)(6)(B)(ii), ESEA.]</i> Guidance, D-3. <i>NC compliance method: Parent letters and follow-up information</i>	Timely		✘	✘
Invite parents to a meeting to inform them about the school’s participation in Title I, Part A programs and explain the requirements and their right to be involved. <i>[Section 1118(c)(1) and (2), ESEA.]</i> Guidance, D-5. <i>NC compliance method: Parent letters and follow-up information</i>	Annually			✘
Provide parents of participating children specific information about Title I, Part A programs , and opportunity to request regular meetings). <i>[Section 1118(c)(4), ESEA.]</i> Guidance, D-6. <i>NC compliance method: Parent letters</i>	Timely			✘
Inform parents of limited English proficient children of how they can be involved in their children’s education and be active participants in their child’s education, including notice of opportunities for and holding regular meetings. <i>[Section 1112(g)(4), ESEA]</i> Guidance, C-9. <i>NC compliance method: Parent letters and follow-up information</i>	Regular (meetings)		✘	
Inform parents of limited English proficient children identified for participation or participating in a Title I, Part A-funded language instruction educational program under Title III of the ESEA, of: reasons for the identification, level of English proficiency, methods of instruction, how the program will help the child, and other information . LEAs inform parents of a child with a disability how the language instruction educational program meets the objectives of the child’s individualized educational program (IEP). <i>[Section 1112(g)(1)(A) and (3), ESEA.]</i> Guidance, C-9 and C-10. <i>NC compliance method: Parent contact</i>	Annually, within 30 days after the beginning of the school year for children previously identified or within the first 2 weeks of a child’s being placed in the language instruction program		✘	
Limited English proficient students - insufficient language instruction educational programs (eligible entity using Title I, Part A funds for a language instruction educational program under Title III of the ESEA provides separate notice to parents of a child identified for participation in, or participating in, the program to inform them that the program has not made progress on the annual measurable achievement objectives). <i>[Section 1112(g)(1)(B), ESEA.]</i> <i>NC compliance method: Parent contact</i>	Not later than 30 days after the failure occurs		✘	
Inform parents of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities that their child’s achievement will be based on alternate achievement standards. The SEA must also ensure that parents are informed of the actual achievement levels of these students, particularly in the case of an LEA that exceeds the 1% cap on counting proficient scores for AYP). <i>[Section 1111(b)(3), ESEA, and 34 CFR Section 200.6(a)(2)(iii)(A)(2), 200.13(c)(4)(v)]</i> <i>NC compliance method: Parent contact</i>	Determined by SEA	✘		

* This table includes key Title I, Part A statutory and regulatory requirements for notice or information given or disseminated to parents of students participating in Title I, Part A programs. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list, and does not include consultation, collaboration, technical assistance, training, or other types of requirements. Except where otherwise indicated, the terms “LEAs” and “schools” refer to local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools with programs funded under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

Two Schools Receive Title I Distinguished Schools' Recognition



A.B. Combs teacher Lynsay Stappenbeck works with student Seven Watkins.

A.B. COMBS ELEMENTARY

- Wake County Schools
- 767 students
- K-5
- Title I School
- Made AYP
(met 29 of 29 targets for 2006)
- School of Distinction
- 19% Black
- 13% Hispanic
- 52% White
- 40% Economically Disadvantaged
- 16% Students With Disabilities



Eastover Central's advanced drama class performed a play based on "Cinderella" this year.

EASTOVER CENTRAL

- Cumberland County Schools
- 369 students
- PK-5
- Title I School
- Made AYP
(met 17 of 17 targets for 2006)
- Honor School of Excellence
- 25% Black
- 67% White
- 40% Economically Disadvantaged

Eastover-Central Elementary (Cumberland County Schools) and A.B. Combs Elementary (Wake County Schools) were recently recognized as Title I Distinguished Schools for 2007. Eastover-Central Elementary was nominated for Category 1, High Student Performance, and A.B. Combs Elementary was nominated for Category 2, Closing the Achievement Gap.

"Eastover-Central Elementary and A.B. Combs Elementary are to be congratulated for not only improving student performance but also for citizenship and character of their students," said NCDPI Student Support Services Director Lynn Warren. "As North Carolina Title I Distinguished Schools, they represent the best in the efforts of educators to promote student success."

Student-by student, objective-by-objective plans to individualize students' educational experiences contribute to Eastover-Central Elementary's continued academic success. School administrators also encourage a work environment that supports teachers, who have on average 24 years of classroom experience. The school has an active and energetic PTA that works with the principal and teachers to help ensure the academic and financial success of the school.

"It is truly an honor to be named a Title I Distinguished School for North Carolina," Eastover-Central Elementary Principal Ronald Parker said. "Receiving this award is a testament to the hard work of our entire school system, our school community, our teachers, parents and students. We have found that not all students learn the same way. It's important that we meet the needs of students on an individual basis."

A.B. Combs Elementary is the embodiment of cultural and developmental diversity with large special education and non-English speaking populations. The school embraces diversity as an opportunity and is narrowing the achievement gap for all

groups of students. Staff attribute Combs students' academic success to its commitment that all children can and will learn.

"I give all the credit to our success to teachers and parents who work tirelessly to make a difference in the lives of our students," A.B. Combs Elementary Principal Muriel Summers said. "We truly value the relationships we have with one another and understand its power when it comes to making a difference in the life of a child."

Other schools receiving 2007 recognition at the state level for high student performance were: Gardners Elementary (Wilson County), Riverside Elementary (Avery County), and Sunny View Elementary (Polk County). Other schools recognized for closing the achievement gap were: Lyle Creek Elementary (Catawba County), Boone Trail Elementary (Harnett County), and Rocky River Elementary (Cabarrus County Schools).

The Title I Distinguished Schools Recognition Program showcases top schools that are organizing successful academic programs for the state's neediest students. Nominees were pre-selected at the state level with one candidate being selected from each region for each category. For Category 1, High Student Performance, selection criteria included student achievement scores for three consecutive years, AYP status, and a poverty percentage of 40 or greater. For Category 2, Closing the Achievement Gap, selection criteria was based on schools with the most student subgroups where all subgroups made AYP and showed the most progress in significantly closing the achievement gap.

Dr. Weatherly Wins Professional Advocate Award

Dr. Larry Weatherly, superintendent for Richmond County Schools, received the Sandra Wells Peterson Outstanding Professional Advocate Award for 2007 for his commitment to serving homeless people at North Carolina's Conference on Homelessness in April, sponsored by the North Carolina Interagency Council for Coordinating Homeless Programs.

"Dr. Weatherly has shown exemplary leadership in the community," said Evonne Moore, lead social worker for Richmond County Schools, who nominated him for the award. Dr. Weatherly was recognized for his work with the homeless families in the school system. He has worked in Richmond County Schools in various positions since 1974 and as superintendent since 1999. He is retiring this year.

In her nomination, Moore wrote that Dr. Weatherly had worked throughout his career to: keep families intact, create an expeditious process for the district to serve free meals to all eligible children, and ensure that homeless children had equal access to the same free public education, including a public preschool education.

"Dr. Weatherly and the City of Rockingham maintain a very cooperative relationship," said Gene McLaurin, mayor of Rockingham. "Both organizations work closely with the Housing Authority to serve homeless families and to be sure aid reaches those most in need."

"Dr. Weatherly has been a tireless advocate for the homeless children of Richmond County," said Dr. Robert Beck, associate superintendent, Richmond County Schools. "He has made the enforcement of the McKinney-Vento Act a priority of his administration. He has stressed the importance of this Act to his top administrators on a regular basis since the Act's inception. He has made every effort to make sure that these children receive the full benefits of a free and appropriate education in our school district."

Weatherly said he was honored with the award, but gave credit to the other people involved. "I commend Evonne Moore," he said. "I feel very honored to receive this award, but I want to recognize those who do the work."

Other contributions cited in Dr. Weatherly's nomination included his work to:

- ensure that schools not separate homeless students from the mainstream school environment on the basis of their homelessness;



Presenting the Sandra Wells Peterson Award are, from left: Tony Troop, state school-based child and family support team coordinator; Evonne Moore, lead social worker, Richmond County Schools; and far right, Carmen Hooker-Odom, NC secretary of Health and Human Services. Award recipient Dr. Larry Weatherly, superintendent of Richmond County Schools, stands third from the left.

- reduce school barriers for homeless students/parents by addressing transportation issues, immunization requirements, lack of school records, help with school uniforms, and developing a support network;
- develop a district protocol manual addressing the needs of homeless students;
- ensure an accurate homeless point in time count throughout the district;
- volunteer at the local homeless shelter;
- serve as a member of the local Housing Authority Weed and Seed Committee;
- help families displaced by Hurricane Katrina in the district; and
- set up a moving service for homeless families including use of local storage facilities.

"Dr. Weatherly is retiring as our superintendent this year after 42 years of service," Moore wrote. "I truly believe that his legacy and passion for this special population will continue in the hearts of all of our staff and faculty and in me."

Dawn J. Lewis of Richmond County Schools contributed to this story.

NC School Report Cards Reflect New Cohort Rate

NC School Report Cards were updated April 9 to reflect the addition of the four-year cohort graduation rate, reported for the first time to the State Board of Education in February. Sixty-eight percent of first-time high school ninth graders in 2002-03 graduated in four years or less.

The four-year cohort graduation rate, an NCLB requirement, reflects the percentage of first-time ninth graders who graduate from high school four years later. For 2005-06 only, the on-time graduation rate, the percentage of regular diploma graduates graduating in four years or less, is reported to establish a trendline as required by NCLB. In 2007 and beyond, only the cohort rate will be reported.

The graduation rate (on-time rate for 2005-06 and cohort rate for 2006-07 and beyond) serves as the "Other Academic Indicator" for high schools or any school that graduates seniors. Schools need to show progress in order to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Progress for the on-time graduation rate was at least a .1 percentage point increase up to the 90 percent threshold. Any fluctuation above 90 percent met the requirement for progress. The State Board may request that the US Department of Education allow North Carolina to adjust the 90 percent threshold to a lower percentage, after reviewing 2006-07 results. The NC Compliance Commission has suggested a threshold of 80 percent. Each subgroup

must meet the threshold. Results for 2005-06 show four-year cohort rates for student subgroups.

FOUR-YEAR COHORT GRADUATION RATES BY STUDENT SUBGROUP	
All Students	68.1 percent
Female	72.4 percent
Male	63.9 percent
Asian	74.1 percent
Black	60.0 percent
Hispanic	51.8 percent
Multi-Racial	65.2 percent
Native American	51.1 percent
White	73.6 percent
Economically Disadvantaged	55.3 percent
Limited English Proficient	54.6 percent
Students with Disabilities	49.9 percent

Groups Promote Reauthorization Changes

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law is up for renewal in Congress this year and lawmakers, educators, and the public have pushed for changes. Most experts seem to agree, however, that legislation will not move before the August recess. At this newsletter's presstime, the NC State Board of Education was formulating NCLB reauthorization recommendations. This information will be posted on the Web at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/> and included in the newsletter's August edition. Key debate areas regarding NCLB's reauthorization center around helping schools improve versus sanctioning them, increasing federal investments along with student performance targets, and flexibility versus consistency regarding states' curricula, assessments and definitions of academic proficiency and related accountability models. Teacher quality, students with disabilities and English language learners are issues in the reauthorization. Notable recommendations regarding NCLB reauthorization made to date and their respective Web site addresses include:

- American Federation of Teachers at <http://www.aft.org/topics/nclb/about.htm>

- Commission on No Child Left Behind at www.nclbcomission.org
- Education Trust at www.edtrust.org
- National Association of Federal Education Program Administrators at <http://www.nafepa.org/printables/2007-position-paper.pdf>
- National Association of State Title I Directors at <http://www.titlei.org/documents/finalnclbpaper61003.pdf>
- National Conference of State Legislatures at <http://www.ncsl.org/programs/pubs/summaries/013153-sum.htm>
- National Education Association at <http://www.nea.org/esea/posagendaexecsum.html>
- National Governors Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Association of State Boards of Education at <http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0704NCLBSTATEMENT.PDF>
- United States Department of Education at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/nclb/buildingonresults.pdf>

Prepare for a Successful SES Monitoring Visit

Contributed By Lisa Huber, SES Consultant, NCDPI

1. Document and organize your Supplemental Educational Services (SES) materials as you go. Include:
 - Parent notification of available services for each school in each language. (*Does your notification contain clear signup procedures and descriptions of the providers?*)
 - Documentation of how multiple forums were used to notify parents about the availability of SES.
 - A written process that explains the procedures that will be used to rank order the students if the demand for services exceeds the 20 percent set aside.
 - Signed contracts with the SES providers working in the district.
 - Enrollment forms that include a signed release of information for parents.
 - Documentation of contacts with provider, i.e., emails, phone logs, certified letter receipts, training sessions.
 - Financial documentation of set aside and payments to providers.
2. Send parent notifications in a **timely** manner.
3. Date all notifications.
4. Initially, SES must be offered to **all** eligible children regardless of grade level or academic achievement.
5. Calculate approximately how many children your budget will support. (See related story on page 4.)
6. Involve principals in the process. SES should not be thought of as a separate service operating within the school building. Providers, teachers and principals must work together to build relationships to help the students. (Schools are not allowed to require providers to hire tutors with specific education requirements.)
7. Train school personnel about the use and purpose of the Learning Plan Agreement.
8. Verify that the IEP and the Learning Plan Agreement are consistent for exceptional children.
9. Begin delivery of SES on time.
10. Ask questions if you do not understand.
Contact Lisa Huber: office 252.355.3883;
mobile 252.714.0930 or lhuber@dpi.state.nc.us.

Districts Must Show Comparability

By Dr. Phyllis Dunham, Education Program Administrator, Office of Curriculum and Instructional Services

Comparability is a mandated fiscal requirement that encourages comparable distribution of funds. The law requires that an LEA (local education agency) demonstrate that it allocates state and local funds among all of its schools appropriately. When an LEA receives Title I, Part A funds, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires that the services provided with state and local funds in Title I schools are comparable to those provided in schools that do not receive Title I funds. Also, the law requires comparability to be monitored every two years by the state education agency (SEA), but because Title I, Part A funds are awarded on a yearly basis, an LEA must be able to prove that it provides comparable services on a yearly basis [Section 1120A(c) (1)(A)]. The Title I director and finance officer are responsible for determining comparability within an LEA.

An LEA may use several alternatives to demonstrate compliance with the comparability requirement. First, according to Section 1120A(c)(2)(A), an LEA may file a letter of written assurance with the state education agency (SEA), confirming that it has developed and put into action the following:

- A salary schedule for the LEA;
- A policy to ensure equivalence among schools in teachers, administrators and other staff; and
- A policy to ensure equivalence among schools in the provision of curriculum materials and instructional supplies.

Or, in place of written assurance, an LEA may demonstrate comparability by:

- Comparing student/instructional staff ratios (must use full-time equivalencies on the same date for each);
- Comparing expenditures per pupil; or

- Developing a resource allocation plan based on student characteristics such as poverty, limited English proficiency, disability, etc.

The method an LEA uses to demonstrate comparability must be uniformly applied across all schools within the LEA. Supporting documentation of staffing and/or budget data used to compute comparability must be maintained for at least three years at the central office.

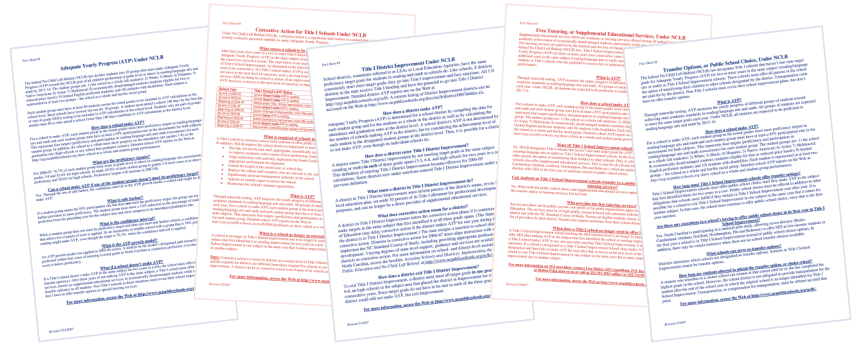
When determining compliance for comparability, an LEA may exclude state and local funds spent for bilingual education for limited English proficient children and the excess costs of providing services to children with disabilities as determined by the LEA.

An LEA must develop procedures for complying with the comparability requirements and implement these

...Continued on Page 12

Use This Chart!

A new chart (below) describing consequences for Title I School Improvement schools is available for downloading from the Web at several sites, including <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/abcayp/overview/ayp>. The new chart is the only one in current circulation including all the accountability changes since the law's inception. In addition, one-page fact sheets on key NCLB topics are now available and can be downloaded from: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/parents/> as well as other related NCLB Web sites.



TITLE I SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT UNDER NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND (NCLB)

After...	then...	and implements...
1 year of not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in mathematics or reading/language arts,	the school addresses challenge areas,	no sanctions under NCLB.
2 consecutive years of not making AYP in the same subject,	the school enters Year 1 of Title I Improvement at the beginning of the next school year	school choice and receives technical assistance.
3 years of not making AYP in the same subject,	the school enters Year 2 of Title I Improvement at the beginning of the next school year	school choice, supplemental educational services and receives technical assistance.
4 years of not making AYP in the same subject,	the school enters Year 3 of Title I Improvement at the beginning of the next school year	school choice, supplemental educational services, corrective action and receives technical assistance.
5 years of not making AYP in the same subject,	the school enters Year 4 of Title I Improvement at the beginning of the next school year	school choice, supplemental educational services, devises a plan for restructuring and receives technical assistance.
6 years of not making AYP in the same subject,	the school enters Year 5 of Title I Improvement at the beginning of the next school year	school choice, supplemental educational services, restructuring and receives technical assistance.

NOTES: Title I schools enter Improvement after two consecutive years of not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the same subject (reading/language arts or mathematics). Title I schools exit Improvement after two consecutive years of making AYP in the subject that identified them for Improvement. If a school makes AYP in the identifying subject in any one year after entering Improvement, it does not move to the next level of sanctions in the next school year. For every year a school in Improvement does not make AYP in the identifying subject, it moves to the next level of sanctions. It is possible for a school to exit Improvement for one subject, while entering into or remaining in Improvement based on the other subject.

Comparability *Continued*

procedures annually. These procedures should be in writing and at a minimum, include:

- The LEA's timeline for demonstrating comparability,
- Identification of the office responsible for making comparability calculations,
- The measure and process used to determine whether schools are comparable,
- Performing the calculations necessary every year to demonstrate that all of its Title I schools are in fact comparable and make adjustments if any are not,
- How and when the LEA makes adjustments in schools that are not comparable,
- Source documentation to support the calculations and documentation to demonstrate that any needed adjustments to staff assignments were made.

A suggested timeline for determining comparability among schools in a district is available on the Web in the comparability handbook at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/school_improvement/comped/presentations/comparabilityhandbook.pdf. Questions about comparability should be directed to Dr. Phyllis Dunham at 919.807.3972.

USED Announces 2 Percent Flexibility in Assessing Students with Disabilities

In April, the US Department of Education (USED) announced new NCLB regulations allowing states to test certain students with disabilities using an alternate assessment based on modified, academic achievement standards. Modified academic achievement standards are standards that are aligned with grade-level content and are expectations of student performance that have been adjusted to reflect reduced breadth or depth of grade level content.

The new regulations provide flexibility to be used for up to 2 percent of students with disabilities, those who are capable of achieving high standards but may not reach grade level in the same timeframe as their peers. This is in addition to 2003-04 regulatory changes USED made when setting a 1 percent cap on the percentage of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities within a school district who could be held to alternate achievement standards and deemed proficient through alternate assessments.

The percentage caps don't limit the number of students whose scores may be measured against alternate standards. But the caps do limit the number of Level III and IV scores

that may be used to determine Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Scores measured against alternative standards that exceed set percentages are considered as nonproficient, unless an exception has been approved.

North Carolina has developed NCEXTEND2, an alternate assessment based on modified achievement standards, to be used for certain students with disabilities (those within the most recent 2 percent ruling). Students with significant cognitive disabilities (1 percent cap) accessing the *NC Standard Course of Study* through extended content standards or essences began using NCEXTEND1 this year.

Non-regulatory guidance on the most recent regulations regarding modified academic achievement standards can be accessed on the Web at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/nclb/twopercent.doc>. For more information on NCLB and testing students with disabilities in North Carolina, access the Web at: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/policies/tswd/> and <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/abcayp/overview/ayp#16>.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

Mapping the Road to School Improvement, Asheville | June 19

Contact: Yvette Richardson | 919-807-3962 | yrichardson@dpi.state.nc.us
Rosemary Smith | 828-756-7242 | rsmith@dpi.state.nc.us

Mapping the Road to School Improvement, Greensboro | June 20

Contact: Lori Bruce | 919-843-1359 | lori_bruce@dpi.state.nc.us
Juanita Morrison | 919-807-3963 | jhmorris@dpi.state.nc.us

Mapping the Road to School Improvement, Rocky Mount | June 21

Contact: Barbara Hardison | 252-789-4907 | bhardison@dpi.state.nc.us
Rhonda Muhammad | 919-807-3960 | rmuhammad@dpi.state.nc.us

Mapping the Road to School Improvement, Robeson County | June 22

Contact: Donna Brown | 919-807-3959 | dbrown@dpi.state.nc.us
George Hancock | 910-521-5614 | ghancock@dpi.state.nc.us

New Title I Directors Workshop, Sheraton Imperial, Durham | August 2-3

Contact: Donna Brown | 919-807-3959 | dbrown@dpi.state.nc.us

COMING UP IN THE AUGUST EDITION

- Candid answers to NCLB-related questions that parents ask
- A parent-friendly glossary of NCLB-related terms
- State Board of Education's position on NCLB's reauthorization
- Using teacher-friendly technology in the classroom
- *The Schools Attuned Program from All Kinds of Minds* ©
- Excerpts from the new NC NCLB Toolkit
- ... and more!

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Inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination issues should be directed to: Dr. Elsie C. Leak, Associate Superintendent, Office of Curriculum and Instructional Services :: 6307 Mail Service Center :: Raleigh, NC 27699-6307 :: Telephone 919-807-3761 :: Fax 919-807-3767 :: www.ncpublicschools.org