

AYP Q&A – Einstein Elementary

What is AYP?

In January 2002, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), (otherwise known as the No Child Left Behind Act) was signed into federal law. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is the primary measurement used to monitor year-to-year student achievement on a state’s standardized test - in our case, the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), in reading and mathematics.

How is AYP determined?

AYP is determined based upon whether or not a required percentage of students have met standard on the WASL. The determination is made not only on the test scores of all students in the school. Each of eight subgroups of students must also meet the standard. Those subgroups are five major racial/ethnic groups, students with disabilities, English Language Learners and low-income students. In addition, elementary schools are judged on unexcused absence rates. **If the percentage of students in any one subgroup does not meet the NCLB requirement in one subject, then the school does not make AYP.** In addition, enough students have to take the test for the results to be considered valid.

What happens if AYP is not met?

If a school receives Title I funds and does not meet AYP targets for two or more years in a row, there are specific consequences built into the law. Einstein has entered Step one Improvement and must:

- Notify parents of their status;
- Receive technical assistance to improve performance;
- Develop or revise the school improvement plan;
- Offer parents the opportunity to transfer their student(s) to another public school within the district (Public School Choice) which has not been identified for school improvement; and
- Pay for transportation if transfer is requested.

Do many schools end up “In Improvement”?

Last year, the percentage of students required to meet the standard increased, so it was harder for schools to make AYP. Also, the minimum number of students required for a subgroup to be counted for AYP was reduced to 30 for all subgroups (down from 40 in the past). That meant that more subgroups were included in this review. A total of 1,073 schools statewide were in some level of Improvement in 2009, compared with 618 in 2008.

What does AYP status mean for our school?

A school should not be judged solely on their AYP status. AYP status should not be equated with other labels, like “good” or “bad.” For example, one high school in a neighboring district ranked in the top 50 in the country by Newsweek magazine went into Improvement Step 4 this year. This designation is based on a one-time snapshot of how students performed on a given assessment. It’s important for parents to look at all the available evidence of how a school is doing, including other test scores and how students perform when they go on to the next level of schooling. One good resource is the Office

for the Superintendent of Public Instruction's school report card web site,
<http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us>.

How does the offer work to transfer students to another school?

All Einstein parents received the letter and form that allows them to indicate interest in transferring their student(s) to another public school in the district that is not "In Improvement." The district will determine how many students are involved in possible transfers at each grade. It will look at what space is available in neighboring elementary schools that are not in improvement. It will try to honor parent requests to transfer students to their first choice school. If, however, there are more requests than spaces available in a specific grade at a specific school, the district will determine a fair way, such as a lottery, which students will go to that school and which ones will have to go to one or more alternate schools. Remember that students can always return to Einstein, their neighborhood school.