

Annual School Report Cards (Title I, Section 1111)

Getting Information to Parents

No Child Left Behind requires states, and school districts to produce and disseminate information about student achievement, teacher quality and other school indicators to parents annually. Though this new requirement doesn't by itself change what happens in schools, it does provide parents with information they need to compare schools and demand improvement. Organized parents can also seek to expand the types of data that districts include in individual school report cards.



MAJOR PROVISIONS OF THE LAW

No Child Left Behind requires all states and school districts to produce annual report cards beginning in the 2002-2003 school year (Section 1111, (h) (2)). Reports must be provided – to the extent practicable – in a language that parents can understand. And, reports must be provided to all parents, and must be made available through additional means such as posting on the Internet or distribution through the media or other public agencies.

Individual School Report Cards, prepared for all schools in a district, must include:

- student achievement data, based on state assessments. This information must also be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, disability status, migrant status, English proficiency, and economically disadvantaged;
- a way to compare actual achievement of each group to the state's annual objectives;
- the percentage of students not tested – disaggregated as above;
- 2-year trend in achievement by subject area and grade level;
- aggregate information on any *other* indicators used by the state to determine Adequate Yearly Progress;
- graduation rate – defined as the "percentage of students who graduate from secondary school with a regular diploma in the standard number of years;"

- whether the school has been identified for "School Improvement" and how long it has been so identified;
- professional qualifications of teachers in the school;
- the percentage of teachers teaching with emergency or provisional credentials, and;
- the percentage of classes not taught by highly qualified teachers, in the aggregate, and disaggregated by high-poverty (top quartile) compared to low-poverty (bottom quartile) schools.

A district may include any additional information they choose to include, regardless of whether that information is included in the state report card.

Parent Right-to-Know

Also under the new law (Section 1111, (h) (6)), all school districts must notify parents at all Title I schools that they may request, and *will be provided* the following information on the teachers in their school:

- whether the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status;
- the baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher;
- the field of discipline of the certification or degree;
- whether their child is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.

In addition, schools must notify parents in a "timely" fashion if their child has been assigned to, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not "highly qualified."

Again, this notification must be provided – wherever possible – in a language the parent can understand.

NO CHILD Left Behind continued

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QUESTIONS TO ASK LOCALLY

- Have parents at individual Title I schools been notified that they have the right to ask, and receive information about their child's teachers' qualifications?
- When parents seek that information, has it been provided?
- Has the school sent notices out alerting parents to under-qualified teachers or substitutes teaching in a child's classroom for more than 4 consecutive weeks?
- What information will the district include in its annual report cards?
- When and how will report cards be disseminated to parents?



ORGANIZING OPPORTUNITIES

While producing data on school climate doesn't directly change what goes on in schools, seeing a wide range of data, and being able to compare school indicators among a variety of schools in a district can provide organized parents with ideas for campaigns. Community groups might consider:

- an effort to make sure that their school district is complying with the new report card provisions by developing and disseminating school report cards, and notifying parents that teacher quality data is available;

- a campaign to get the school district to expand its school report cards to include additional information. Districts could opt to collect and include data on the use of suspensions, class size, availability of advanced placement courses and the demographics of their make-up, the demographics of the teaching staff, school resources, overcrowding and other information.



RESOURCES

Individual School Report Cards: Empowering Parents and Communities to Hold Schools Accountable. The Center for Community Change, April 2001. Available through the Center at 1000 Wisconsin Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20007 or on the web at www.communitychange.org.

Monitoring School Quality: An Indicators Report, by Daniel P. Mayer, John E. Mullens, and Mary T. Moore. Education Statistics Quarterly. Available on the web at: http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2001/quarterly/spring/q4_4.html. December 2000.

The full text of the **No Child Left Behind Act** is available at: <http://www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA02/>

In addition, the Department of Education has developed a **Desktop Reference** to NCLB that can be useful. The Reference is available in PDF format at: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/reference.html>