



School Improvement, Corrective Action and Restructuring

1. Which schools are subject to the sanctions in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)?

Title I schools that have been identified for school improvement, corrective action or restructuring are subject to the sanctions.

2. How are schools identified for school improvement?

The determination is based on whether a school has made adequate yearly progress (AYP) as defined in the state accountability plan, as well as any other indicators specified in the district plan. The district informs the school whether it has made AYP. A school that does not make AYP for two consecutive years must be identified for school improvement.

3. According to federal law, are non-Title I schools that fail to make AYP subject to sanctions?

No.

4. Does the school have any input about whether it should be designated for school improvement?

Before the district makes the designation public, the district must turn the data over to the school for review. If the principal or a majority of parents believes that an error has been made, the principal must provide supporting evidence to the district. The district must make a final determination within 30 days.

5. What must the district do once a school is identified for school improvement?

The district must publicize the identification to parents and the public in an easy-to-understand format, and preferably in a language they can comprehend. The district must provide public school choice to students by the first day of the school year following identification. The district must also provide technical assistance to the school. Once the school has developed an improvement plan, the district must coordinate a peer review process, assist the school in revising the plan and approve it within 45 days of receipt.

6. What kind of technical assistance must be provided to a school identified for improvement?

Technical assistance includes helping analyze data, identifying areas needing attention at the school, implementing a parental involvement program, providing professional development, identifying and implementing scientifically based instructional strategies and methods, writing an improvement plan, and budgeting. In addition, technical assistance can be provided by the district, the state, higher education institutions in compliance with Title II reporting requirements, nonprofits, and for-profits with a track record of experience helping schools.

7. What must the school do once it is identified for school improvement?

Within three months, the school must develop or revise a two-year plan to improve the

school with the input of staff, parents, the district and outside experts. The plan must address how the school will improve academics, involve parents, use 10 percent of its Title I funds for professional development, notify parents, institute a teacher mentoring program and incorporate activities outside the regular school day. The plan must incorporate strategies based on scientifically based research and may involve implementing a comprehensive school reform model. The plan must also specify the school, district and state roles in the school improvement process. Once the district approves the plan, the school must implement the plan. Implementation must occur on the first day of the school year following identification.

8. How does public school choice work?

The district must give students at a school identified for school improvement the option to transfer to another higher-performing public school within the district, including a public charter school. Priority must be given to the lowest-achieving students from low-income families.

9. What happens if a school fails to make AYP for three consecutive years?

If a school fails to make AYP after the first full school year under school improvement, the district must continue to provide public school choice and technical assistance. In addition, the district must provide supplemental educational services (SES) to low-income students who choose to remain in the school. If the school makes adequately yearly progress for two consecutive years, the school improvement designation is removed. Students who have chosen to go to another school can continue to do so until they finish the top grade in that school.

10. What is SES?

SES is additional academic instruction designed to increase the academic achievement of students in low-performing schools. These services must contribute to a student's progress toward achieving proficiency on the state test, and must be consistent with local and state standards. SES may take place before and after school, on the weekends or in the summer. According to federal law, the state is required to publish a list of approved SES providers from which parents may choose.

11. What happens if a school fails to make AYP for four consecutive years?

If a school fails to make AYP for four consecutive years, the school is designated for corrective action.

12. What happens to a school designated for corrective action?

For schools that are in corrective action, the district must continue to offer technical assistance, public school choice and SES. In addition, the district must do *at least one* of the following:

- Replace school staff relevant to the failure to make AYP;
- Fully implement a new curriculum with professional development;
- Significantly decrease management authority at the school level;
- Appoint an outside expert to advise; or
- Extend the school day or school year.

13. What happens if a school does not make AYP for five consecutive years?

If after one year of corrective action a school fails to make AYP, the school moves into restructuring. The district must continue to provide technical assistance, public school

choice and SES. The district must prepare a plan and make arrangements to change the school governance. It must notify teachers and parents, and allow them to participate in the plan's formulation and comment before action is taken. The new governance must be in place no later than one year after being identified for restructuring.

14. What are the options for restructuring?

The district must do *one* of the following:

- Reopen the school as a public charter school;
- Replace all or most of the school staff;
- Enter into a contract with a private management company;
- Turn the operation of the school over to the state; or
- Implement any other major governance restructuring that makes fundamental reforms.