

**A Guide to No Child Left Behind
& Adequate Yearly Progress Analyses in Nevada**

2007

Nevada Department of Education

What is No Child Left Behind (NCLB)?

In January of 2001, President Bush signed into law the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The new version of this act is commonly referred to as No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

NCLB has four essential elements:

1. Accountability for results
2. Emphasis on doing what works based on scientific research
3. Expanded parental options
4. Expanded local control and flexibility

For more information on NCLB, visit the U.S. Department of Education's Parent Guide to No Child Left Behind (www.ed.gov).

What is Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)?

NCLB requires that states implement an accountability system for schools that evaluates whether schools are making Adequate Yearly Progress toward the goals of the legislation. In compliance with NCLB, Nevada AYP classifications are made annually and are based on the percentage of students tested (participation), the percentage of students who score at or above the proficient level on annual statewide tests (academic achievement), and another academic indicator (other indicator): school attendance or graduation rate.

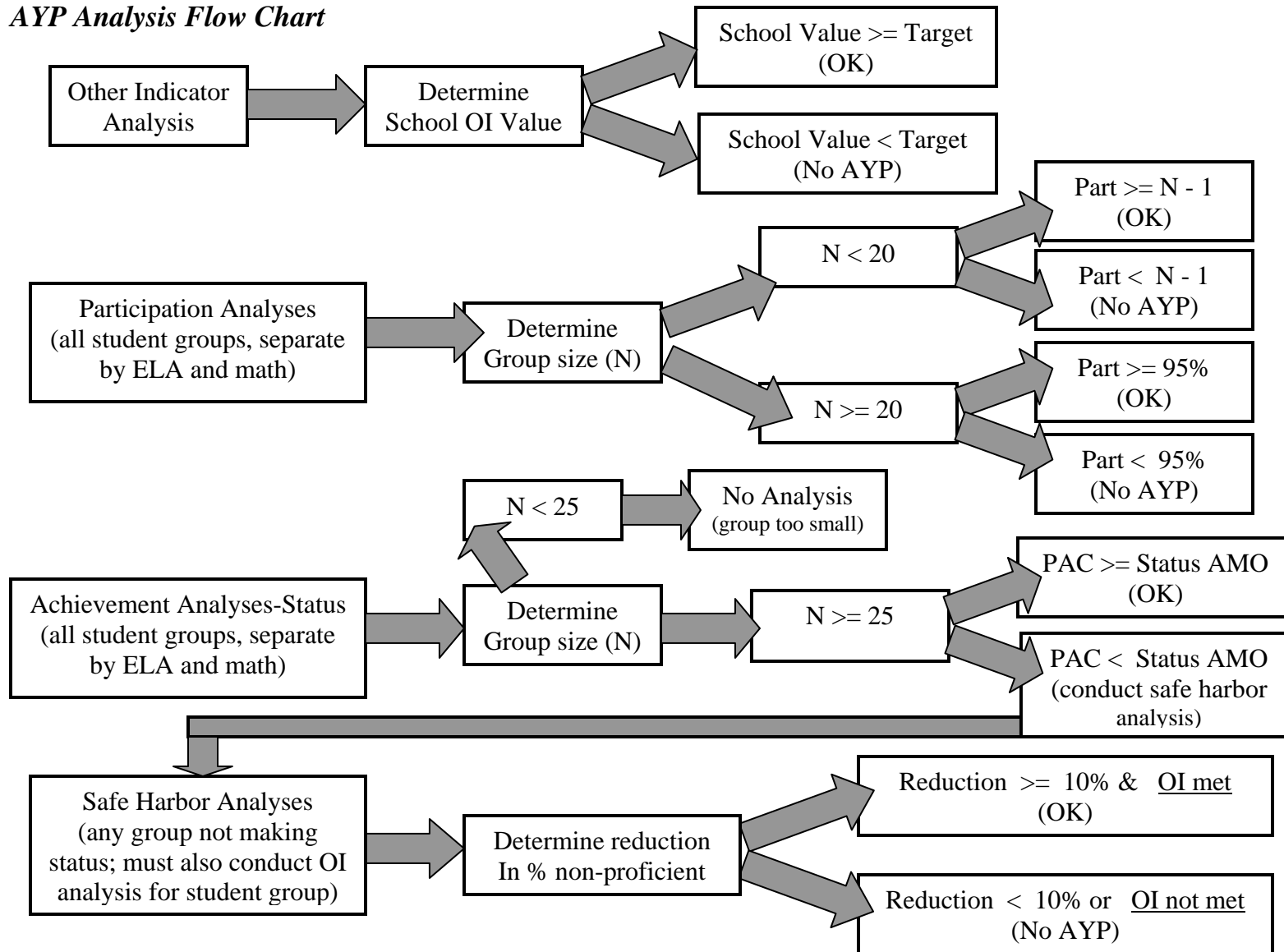
When determining if a school has demonstrated AYP, performance on the three indicators (participation, academic achievement, and another academic indicator) is disaggregated among nine student groups in the school. In the past, accountability systems have focused almost exclusively on the performance of the school as a whole. In contrast, under NCLB performance is evaluated for each identifiable student group in the school. In Nevada, student groups with at least 25 students are evaluated. The nine groups considered for AYP analyses are:

1. The Entire School
2. American Indians/ Alaskan Natives
3. Asians/ Pacific Islanders
4. Hispanics
5. Black/ African Americans
6. White/ Caucasians
7. Students with an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP)
8. Students of Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
9. Students receiving Free or Reduced Price Lunches (FRL)

If any one of the nine student groups does not meet the criteria for the three AYP indicators: 1) participation on math or English language arts tests or 2) academic achievement based on annual measurable objectives (AMOs) in math or English language arts tests or 3) another academic indicator for the school as a whole (i.e. average daily attendance or graduation rate), the school is classified as not making AYP. School classifications are made separately in three content areas:

English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and the other indicator. A flow chart outlining the process for making AYP classifications is included below.

AYP Analysis Flow Chart



As drawn in the AYP flow chart, participation (Part) and achievement analyses (PAC) are conducted for the entire school and for the eight other student groups in both English language arts and mathematics for a total of 36 comparisons. In addition to participation and achievement (status or PAC) comparisons, the school as a whole is evaluated on the other indicator (OI). If any one of these 37 comparisons is below the target level, the school is designated as not demonstrating Adequate Yearly Progress (No AYP). As described, there are two types of achievement comparisons that can be made including a status comparison and a Safe Harbor analysis. Status is the comparison of the percentage of proficient students to the status AMO. Safe Harbor is the comparison of the percent reduction of non-proficient students to the 10% Safe Harbor AMO. If the State status AMO is not met for a student group, a Safe Harbor comparison is made. If a school or student group must use the Safe Harbor analysis to demonstrate adequate achievement, the group is also judged using the other indicator.

What are Other Indicators?

NCLB requires that the performance of the school on other important academic indicators be considered in addition to test participation and performance. In Nevada, average student daily attendance (ADA) is utilized as the other indicator for elementary and middle schools. The target goal for ADA is 90%. Graduation rate, based on a ninth grade cohort of students, is utilized as the other indicator for high schools. The target goal for graduation rate is 50%. Schools can meet the other indicator criterion by meeting the target goal or by demonstrating improvement on the other indicator since last year.

Initially, only the school as a whole is evaluated on the other indicator. If a school's other indicator rate is below the target and improvement since last year has not been observed, the school is classified as not demonstrating adequate yearly progress. Other indicator performance on the other student groups is not considered unless a student group uses the Safe Harbor achievement comparison.

What are Participation Rates?

Participation rates indicate the percentage of students in the school as a whole and in the other student groups who took the state tests. Participation rates are evaluated to determine if at least 95% of the students participated. Schools or subgroups with less than 20 students must test at least all but one student to meet the participation criteria. The state department offers multiple opportunities for students to take an exam if they are absent on the scheduled date(s) of testing.

What are Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)?

Annual measurable objectives (AMO) are the state determined targets or criterion against which school performance is compared. For status comparisons, the AMO represents the percent of students that must score proficient or higher on the state criterion referenced tests (CRTs), writing tests, and high school proficiency exams. As required by NCLB, initial status AMO baselines were set in mathematics and English language arts (ELA) for elementary, middle, and high schools based on school performance in the 2001-2002 school year. AMOs must increase from the baseline level to 100% student proficiency by the 2013-2014 school year. AMOs can be

revised as significant changes to Nevada's assessment system occur, but the 2013-14 100% goal cannot.

School and group performance is represented as a PAC rate when compared to the annual measurable objective. PAC rates reflect the percentage of students scoring in the proficient range on state assessments. PAC is an acronym for **P**ercent **A**bove **C**ut: the percent of students scoring above the cut score which defines proficiency on state tests. PAC rates reflect only the performance of students who were continuously enrolled in the school from count day in Fall through the date(s) of testing. ELA PAC rates are derived from student performance on reading and writing tests. Math PAC rates are derived from student performance on mathematics tests.

NCLB also defined for states the safe harbor AMO. If a school's, or one of its student groups, PAC rate is below the status AMO, the school can still make AYP if it reduces the percentage of non-proficient students by at least 10%. Therefore, a 10% reduction is the Safe Harbor AMO.

How did the state set AMOs for status comparisons?

AMOs were set based on a method specifically prescribed in the NCLB legislation. A description of how the baseline English language arts AMO for elementary schools is provided below.

First, the percent of students scoring above the cut score for proficiency (PAC) in ELA was determined for each elementary school in the state. Along with the PAC rate for each school, the number of students who contributed to calculating each school's PAC rate was determined. These "enrollment" figures were summed across all schools to determine the total number of elementary students in the state who took the English language arts test in 2001-2002.

Schools were then ordered from lowest PAC rate to highest. The enrollment for the schools was then cumulatively summed starting with the school with the lowest PAC rate added to the enrollment of the school with the next highest PAC rate up to the 20th percentile of enrollment. The PAC rate for the school which falls at the 20th percentile of the state test enrollment became the baseline English Language Arts AMO for elementary schools.

This same method was utilized for setting baseline ELA and mathematics status AMOs for elementary, middle, and high schools. Once baseline AMOs were set, states had to develop a schedule for increasing the AMOs to the 100% proficiency goal for the 2013-2014 school year. In Nevada, a staggered schedule of increases was used so that AMOs would remain as consistent as allowable during the first several years of implementation of the NCLB accountability system. The schedule of these increases is presented below.

As can be seen in the table, High School AMOs are considerably higher than elementary and middle school AMOs. This is because they reflect cumulative proficient rates through the 11th grade. Nevada's High School Proficiency Examinations (HSPE) are treated as end of high school exit tests. Students must pass these tests to earn a standard diploma. The tests are also used to measure school level performance for purposes of AYP. The federal government would only allow the state to use performance through grade 11 to establish school PAC rates.

Due to significant changes in the assessment system, adjustments to AMOs can be made. This table reflects the most recent changes and only presents AMOs for 2006-07 through 2013-14.

AYP Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) Schedule of Increases

	Elementary		Middle		High School	
	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
2006-07	39.6%	43.3%	39.6%	43.3%	77.9%	52.3%
2007-08	51.7%	54.6%	51.7%	54.6%	82.3%	61.8%
2008-09	51.7%	54.6%	51.7%	54.6%	82.3%	61.8%
2009-10	63.8%	65.9%	63.8%	65.9%	86.7%	71.3%
2010-11	63.8%	65.9%	63.8%	65.9%	86.7%	71.3%
2011-12	75.9%	77.2%	75.9%	77.2%	91.1%	80.8%
2012-13	88.0%	88.5%	88.0%	88.5%	95.5%	90.3%
2013-14	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

What is Safe Harbor?

If a school or a student group does not meet the AMO target goal, a Safe Harbor analysis is conducted to determine if the group has made substantial improvement. As noted, Safe Harbor analyses consider the percent reduction in non-proficient students a school or student group has made since the previous school year as well as group performance on the other indicator. If a school or a student group demonstrates a 10% reduction in the percentage of non proficient students and the group being evaluated meets the other indicator criteria, AYP criteria are considered as being met for that group.

What are Confidence Intervals?

Confidence intervals allow for more reliable decisions to be made when conducting AYP analyses. The confidence intervals used in AYP are similar to confidence intervals you may have noted when evaluating the results of political polls. Most political polls report a margin of error associated with sampling error. That is, most polls do not sample all Americans when reporting which candidates are favored. Because the results of such polls are based on a limited sample, a margin of error can be calculated. You usually see such polls reporting percentage rates such as $55\% \pm 3\%$. This means that the reported percentage (55%) could actually range between 52-58%.

Similarly, when AYP analyses are conducted, we are measuring performance from a sample of students. Each year the population in a school will change slightly - students move in and out of the school, some kids graduate from the school, other kids enter the school at the lowest grade level. Because the stakes in education have never been as high for schools as they are now, confidence intervals are utilized to better ensure that negative classifications are not made because of sampling errors.

When determining if a school has met the status AMO or safe harbor AMO, the Nevada Department of Education uses the upper end of the confidence interval to make comparisons. This reduces the probability of falsely classifying schools as not demonstrating adequate yearly progress. An example will help to clarify this. Suppose a subgroup in the school had 28% of its

students score proficient or better. However, the status AMO for this comparison is 30%. Using confidence intervals, we may conclude with 95% certainty that the true performance of this group could be as high as 32% or as low as 24% (i.e. $\pm 4\%$). Using the upper end of the confidence interval only, the subgroup would meet AYP criteria as their observed performance corrected with the confidence interval (32%) is above the AMO target of 30%. A similar use of the confidence interval is applied to Safe Harbor analyses.

What is the Watch List?

The Watch List identifies schools which are in their first year of not having demonstrated Adequate Yearly Progress. Beyond being classified as not demonstrating AYP, schools are designated as being on watch for the any of the three AYP content areas (1-ELA, 2-mathematics, 3-other indicator) in which they did not meet the target goals. Schools can be placed on the Watch List for ELA or math because of a problem with participation or achievement or both, or schools can be placed on the Watch List for the other indicator by failing to meet the other indicator criteria.

What does In Need of Improvement (INOI) designation mean?

Schools which have not demonstrated Adequate Yearly Progress for two consecutive years in any of the three AYP content areas are designated as In Need of Improvement (INOI) (e.g. Failing to meet the ELA criteria in two consecutive years results in an INOI designation). To be removed from In Need of Improvement status, a school must demonstrate Adequate Yearly Progress for two consecutive years in the same content area where it had previously failed.

If a school receives Title I funding, certain consequences or sanctions for being identified as In Need of Improvement must be applied. Although non-Title I funded schools are judged using the same criteria as Title I funded schools are, the sanctions that are applied to non-Title I funded schools can be different.

When a Title I school is initially designated as In Need of Improvement, the school must offer the opportunity for students to attend another school in the district which demonstrated Adequate Yearly Progress in the previous academic year. School choice will be offered prior to the beginning of the next school year.

In the second year of INOI designation (not demonstrating AYP for three consecutive years in one or more areas), a Title I school must offer supplemental services such as tutoring, after-school programs, and summer school. Parents may also choose to obtain supplemental services from a list of State approved service providers. To see a list of supplemental service providers in Nevada, visit the Department website at www.doe.nv.gov.

If a Title I school remains In Need of Improvement for three years (not demonstrating AYP for four consecutive years), the school may be required to replace school staff, hire an outside expert to advise the school on how to improve, or adopt a new curriculum.

If a Title I School remains In Need of Improvement for four years (not demonstrating AYP for five consecutive years in one or more areas), the school district must create a plan to restructure the school. That restructuring plan is required to be implemented after the fifth year of In Need of Improvement status. If all these options are unsuccessful, the State Department of Education may take over management of the school.

Commonly Used Acronyms

ADA - Average Daily Attendance - Refers to the average percentage of students present in a school over the course of the year.

AMO - Annual Measurable Objective - Refers to the target goal which the school and all its subgroups must meet for AYP analyses.

AYP - Adequate Yearly Progress - An aspect of the federally mandated accountability system used to determine if schools are making progress toward narrowing the achievement gap, and in ensuring all students are proficient in the areas of mathematics and English language arts by the 2013-2014 school year.

CI - Confidence Interval - A statistical method for accounting for measurement error.

CRT - Criterion-Referenced Test - refers to reading, mathematics, and science tests in Nevada based on state standards.

ELA - English Language Arts - ELA assessments include testing in reading and writing.

FRL - Free or Reduced Price Lunch - Refers to students qualifying for free or reduced price lunches. Commonly used as a proxy for socio economic status (SES).

HSPE - High School Proficiency Examination - A high stakes test in Nevada which students must pass to obtain a standard high school diploma.

IEP - Individualized Education Plan - refers to students who receive special educational services due to a learning disability or cognitive deficit, and for whom Individual Education Plans are in place.

INOI - In Need of Improvement - refers to schools, districts, or states which have not demonstrated adequate yearly progress in the same area for two consecutive years or more.

LEA - Local Educational Agency - Commonly used to refer to a school district or educational organization which oversees the operation of schools.

LEP - Limited English Proficient - refers to students who are learning English as a second language and qualify for English language learner services. Also commonly referred to as English language learners (ELL).

NCLB - No Child Left Behind - The commonly used name to refer to House Referendum 1, the 2001 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

NDE - Nevada Department of Education

OI - Other Indicator - Refers to additional academic indicators used to evaluate schools. In Nevada, average student daily attendance for elementary and middle schools and graduation rates for high schools are used.

PAC - Percent Above Cut - Refers to the percentage of students scoring at the proficient level or higher.