

# A Parent's Guide to Understanding NCLB & PL 221

NCLB? PL 221? ISTEP? Standards? Accountability?

**First, some basic definitions:**

## **NCLB**

The abbreviation for No Child Left Behind, which refers to a federal law that affects all public schools in the United States.

## **PL 221**

Public Law 221, Indiana's accountability law that requires all Indiana schools to teach specific skills at each grade level.

## **Accredited**

An accredited school is one that has met the educational criteria for complying with all local, state, and national guidelines.

## **AYP**

Refers to Adequate Yearly Progress. AYP is the nationally established annual baseline for schools and will be raised each year.

## **Title I**

Formerly called Chapter One, Title I provides federal funding for schools to help students who are behind or at risk of falling behind academically. Funding is based on the number of low-income children in a school, generally determined by the number of students eligible for the free lunch program.



## **What does it all really mean?**

And—most importantly—how can I promote my child's education at home? The law ensures that all children are given an equal opportunity to a quality education.

The following chart is designed for parents to examine each part of the federal and state laws, as well as to learn the laws' impact on families. Requirements in education have a direct impact on all children. Schools recognize that all children are different and learn at different rates. Some children are in need of additional services and may qualify for special services to receive extra help in their education.

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

## 2009-2010 Differentiated Accountability Model

In July 2008, Indiana was chosen by the federal government to be one of six states to participate in the Differentiated Accountability pilot. The Pilot targets assistance to Title I schools in improvement status based on their level of need. This allows Indiana to distinguish between those schools in improvement that are just missing the mark and those that need significant reform. Differentiated accountability allows Indiana to vary the intensity and type of interventions to match the academic reasons that led to a school's identification for improvement.

### *Highlights of the Differentiated Accountability Model*

For schools that are identified for improvement – there are changes in required interventions, based on a formula to calculate the schools most in need.

Schools are placed into 2 categories:

**Comprehensive:** furthest from AYP targets, failing to make AYP in more cells

**Focused:** closer to meeting AYP targets, fewer cells missing AYP

Provides Title I school improvement dollars and more concentrated support to Comprehensive schools

Switches the order of School Choice and SES (Supplemental Educational Services/Free Tutoring) and reduces barriers to SES access

Changes student eligibility for Choice and SES. (SES available for non-proficient, poverty students. Choice available for non-proficient students.)

Eliminates “Other” option for Restructuring of Comprehensive Schools

For more detailed information and to see where your school falls on the Index Rating (Comprehensive or Focused) please log onto:

[http://www.doe.state.in.us/TitleI/differentiated\\_accountability.html](http://www.doe.state.in.us/TitleI/differentiated_accountability.html)

# 2009-2010 Accountability: Schools failing to meet AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress)

## Objectives

Year 1: Does not meet AYP = no consequence

Year 2: Does not meet AYP = School Improvement

5 Years (and beyond) of School Improvement:

1st Year:

-- school must use scientifically-based strategies for improvement

-- supplemental educational services (SES) made available for non-proficient, poverty students

2nd Year:

-- School Choice made available for non-proficient students

3rd Year and beyond: Corrective Actions & Restructuring Options based on Differentiated Accountability Model

For more information, go to [http://www.doe.state.in.us/TitleI/differentiated\\_accountability.html](http://www.doe.state.in.us/TitleI/differentiated_accountability.html)

Academic Goals  
(Standards)

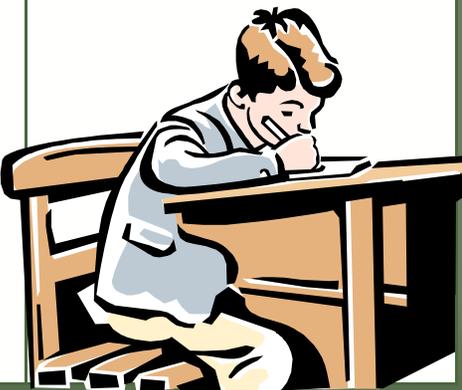
Teacher  
Qualifications

NCLB (No Child Left Behind)	PL 221 (Public Law 221)	What it means to parents	Where to find more information
<p>All schools in the United States must maintain a list of the academic goals for each grade level.</p> 	<p>Indiana schools have education goals at every grade level (K-12) for reading, writing, math, science, and social studies.</p>	<p>Every year parents should have access to the "Indiana Academic Standards," which outline specific goals for core subject areas by grade level.</p> 	<p>Parents can request a copy of the academic goals from their child's school. They can also be found online at: <a href="http://www.indianastandards.org">www.indianastandards.org</a>. The site also provides additional information that parents might find helpful.</p>
<p>All teachers must have a degree in the area they teach and be licensed in the area and grade level that they teach. Teachers who fulfill these requirements are considered "highly qualified."</p>	<p>Core subject area teachers must be Highly Qualified. Highly Qualified Teachers must pass rigorous state testing (known as PRAXIS) or have 100 points on the HOUSSE assessment (High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation).</p>	<p>Parents have the right to ask for information about their child's teacher(s), including information about: "completion of state requirements for licensure and certification; emergency or other provisional status; educational background;" and the qualifications of the teachers' aides.</p>	<p>Information about highly qualified teachers is available at: <a href="http://www.ed.gov/teachers/nclbguide/improve-quality.html">www.ed.gov/teachers/nclbguide/improve-quality.html</a> and <a href="http://www.doe.state.in.us/hqgt/">www.doe.state.in.us/hqgt/</a>.</p>
<p>Paraprofessionals (teachers' aides) must have attended at least two years of college or pass state testing. They may not teach except under the supervision of a highly qualified teacher.</p>	<p>Indiana requires testing for paraprofessionals who do not have at least two years of college. Indiana uses the Educational Testing Service (ETS) ParaPro Assessment for paraprofessionals.</p>		<p>Information about the ETS ParaPro Assessment can be found at: <a href="http://www.ets.org/parapro">www.ets.org/parapro</a>.</p>



a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

*Student Assessment (Testing)*

<p><b>NCLB (No Child Left Behind)</b></p>	<p><b>PL 221 (Public Law 221)</b></p>	<p><b>What it means to parents</b></p>	<p><b>Where to find more information</b></p>
<p>Every school must provide tests on a yearly basis to check for student knowledge and educational progress.</p> <p>The state must administer the math and language arts/reading assessments in all grades 3-8 and at least once in grades 10-12.</p> <p>Beginning in the 2007-2008 school year, the state must administer science achievement tests at least once in grades 3-5, 6-9 and 10-12.</p>	<p>Indiana currently uses the Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress (ISTEP+) to test students in grades 3-10 in math and language arts/reading.</p> <p>Indiana will fully implement science testing by 2007-2008.</p> 	<p>Schools must inform parents of the changes in testing through a variety of ways, such as newsletters, parent meetings, and public announcements.</p> <p>Parents may request a meeting with the school at any time for an explanation of the testing process and any general changes in the format, such as the addition of science assessments.</p> <p>The achievement tests must be approved by each state's department of education and must meet federal guidelines.</p>	<p>The Department of Education hosts an ISTEP+ information site at: <a href="http://doe.state.in.us/istep">http://doe.state.in.us/istep</a>.</p> <p>The site includes test results, ISTEP+ guides, and sample tests from previous years.</p> 
<p>Every child in grades 3-10 will be tested. The test results will show how well children are learning. Every school must publish its progress.</p> <p>In order to see if a certain group is falling behind, the information will be separated into categories ("disaggregated") by economic background, race and ethnicity, English proficiency, and disability.</p> <p>95% of all students in each category must participate in the statewide testing program.</p>	<p>Indiana has adopted "report cards" for each school as a way of telling parents how well the school is meeting the requirements of NCLB.</p> 	<p>Categorizing and publishing information will allow parents to know if groups of students are falling behind even if the school as a whole is meeting the requirements of NCLB.</p> <p>Changes in test procedures will occur in order to meet revised legal requirements. For example, students with limited English proficiency are now required to take the test.</p>	<p>Information on specific schools and corporations is available at: <a href="http://doe.state.in.us/asap/data.html">http://doe.state.in.us/asap/data.html</a>.</p> <p>Check out our "ASAP Guide" at: <a href="http://www.fscp.org/index.asp?p=63">www.fscp.org/index.asp?p=63</a>.</p> 

*a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z*

*Assessment for Students  
with Accommodations*

*Limited English  
Proficiency*

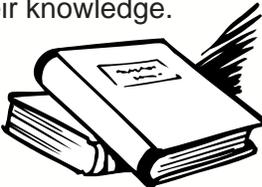
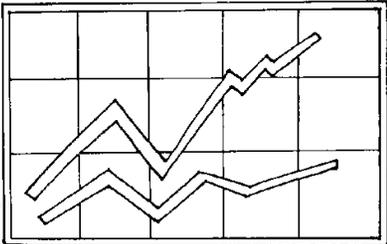
NCLB (No Child Left Behind)	PL 221 (Public Law 221)	What it means to parents	Where to find more information
<p>All testing must accommodate students with disabilities. A separate assessment will be offered for students with severe cognitive disabilities who are unable to participate in regular state tests.</p> <p>Within each school corporation, no more than 1% of the student population can score “proficient” or higher than proficient on the alternate assessment. This rule makes sure that students are assessed at the highest level possible and expectations remain high. The 1% may be waived in certain situations, such as special facility schools for children with disabilities.</p> 	<p>Most students with disabilities are required to participate in the ISTEP+ testing, with accommodations if necessary. Accommodations may include extended testing time and testing in a different location. Accommodations do not include shortened versions of the test, reduced number of possible responses, or simplified directions.</p> <p>If it is determined that ISTEP+ is not an appropriate test for a student, an alternate test called the Indiana Standards Tool for Alternate Reporting (ISTAR) may be used. ISTAR is the only alternate assessment recognized by the state.</p> <p>ISTAR scores are based on the teacher’s observations, work samples, portfolios, and other indicators of the student’s performance.</p>	<p>Test accommodations or alternate tests for a student with special needs are decided at the student’s annual case review (ACR). The Case Conference Committee (CCC) must include the parent, the current teacher, a school administrator, and in some cases, the student. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in the development of their child’s individualized education program (IEP).</p> <p>Schools must inform parents of alternate testing or of any accommodations that will be provided. Parents may inform schools of any additional needs that their children may have during the testing process.</p> <p>Since ISTAR was created to measure the progress of students who are unable to take the ISTEP+, it has been designed to use information from the child’s teacher.</p>	<p>Special education information from the Indiana Department of Education is online at: <a href="http://doe.state.in.us/exceptional/speced/">http://doe.state.in.us/exceptional/speced/</a>.</p> <p>Information about the ISTAR assessment is available at: <a href="https://ican.doe.state.in.us/ISTAR/istargettingstarted.php">https://ican.doe.state.in.us/ISTAR/istargettingstarted.php</a>.</p> <p>For more information about the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA): “A Parent’s Guide to Understanding IDEA 2004” will be available in January 2008. Please contact us at The Indiana Partnerships Center (1.866.391.1039, toll free) to request a free copy.</p> 
<p>The state must require each school district to assess the English proficiency of all students with limited English proficiency (LEP).</p>	<p>All LEP students must be included in the ISTEP+ academic assessment. LEP students in their first year of enrollment in U.S. schools are required to take the math and science assessments but may be exempt from the English portion, per the determination of the school.</p>	<p>Parents will be informed of the tests used to assess limited English proficient students in all content areas.</p>	

*a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z*



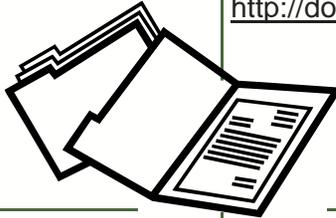
*Assessment for Students with Limited English Proficiency*

*Accountability*

NCLB (No Child Left Behind)	PL 221 (Public Law 221)	What it means to parents	Where to find more information
<p>Limited English proficient (LEP) students must be tested in ways that fairly and accurately assess their knowledge.</p> 	<p>First year LEP students may participate in either the English/ language arts ISTEP+ assessment or the LAS Links English proficiency assessment to meet this requirement.</p>	<p>ISTEP+ accommodations are made on an individual basis, taking into consideration the student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP). Parents may request an appointment with a school official for additional information or explanation.</p>	<p>The Indiana Department of Education's Language Minority and Migrant Programs can be found online at: <a href="http://www.doe.state.in.us/lmmp/">http://www.doe.state.in.us/lmmp/</a>.</p>
<p>LEP students must take the language arts portion of the annual test in the English language if they have attended school in the United States for at least three consecutive years. In Indiana, all academic assessments are available only in English.</p>	<p>The LAS Links English proficiency Assessment establishes a student's level (1-5) of English fluency. For example: Level 1 is Beginner. Level 4 is Advanced. Level 5 is Fluent.</p> 	<p>All LEP students must participate in both ISTEP+ and LAS Links assessments. Level 1-4 LEP students may qualify for accommodations, such as longer time to take the test or the use of an approved bilingual dictionary.</p>	<p>The Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students (OELA) administers this aspect of the NCLB Act and is online at: <a href="http://ed.gov/about/offices/list/OELA/index.html">http://ed.gov/about/offices/list/OELA/index.html</a>.</p> <p>Please contact your child's instructor for more information on your child's options.</p>
<p>Student progress will be tracked separately in English and math and by demographics (race/ethnicity, economic background, level of English proficiency and disabilities).</p>	<p>Scores are averaged across subject and grade level.</p> 	<p>All state scores are publicly announced and are typically published in the local newspaper.</p> 	<p>As noted, Indiana schools will report their test scores online: <a href="http://doe.state.in.us/asap/data.html">http://doe.state.in.us/asap/data.html</a>.</p>
<p>Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is required to increase if a school is to remain in good standing.</p> <p>AYP applies to all public schools, not just Title I schools.</p>	<p>Continued improvement is expected until 90% of all students pass the ISTEP+.</p>	<p>All standardized group test scores (such as ISTEP+ scores) and each high school's graduation rate must be reported to the public.</p>	<p>The Indianapolis Star also publishes an education special report when the ISTEP+ scores are released. When they are published, these reports are available online at: <a href="http://www.indystar.com/">http://www.indystar.com/</a>.</p>

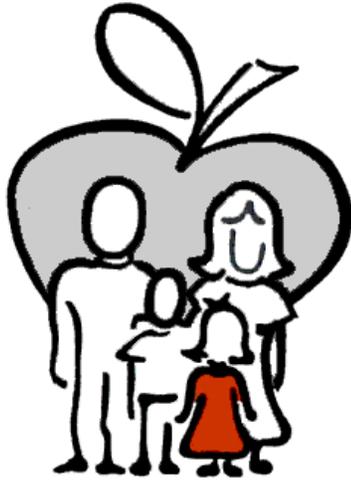
*a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z*



<b>NCLB (No Child Left Behind)</b>	<b>PL 221 (Public Law 221)</b>	<b>What it means to parents</b>	<b>Where to find more information</b>
<p>Test scores from standardized group tests and high school graduation rates are the primary indicators of a school's success rate.</p> 	<p>Indiana schools will be required to meet AYP. Additionally, the state is requesting the use of alternative documentation as secondary indicators of the quality of education. Indiana schools report test scores and graduation rates annually. All reports are made public.</p>	<p>Parents may request a copy of the report from their child's school or from central administration.</p> 	<p>The Indiana Department of Education includes this information on their website, <a href="http://doe.state.in.us">http://doe.state.in.us</a>.</p>
<p>Title I schools that do not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two consecutive years will be required to create a plan for improvement. School improvement plans consider the current state of the school, where it needs to be, and the steps it will take to get there. Plans must address the achievement problem that caused the school to be identified for improvement.</p>	<p>All Indiana schools develop improvement plans and designate a committee for each school improvement category. Each committee develops a plan with specific goals for its specified category. Examples of school categories are attendance, instruction, evaluation, and school climate.</p>	<p>Parents must be notified by the school if the school fails to meet AYP requirements two years in a row.</p> <p>Parents may request to serve on a committee that assists with the development of a school plan.</p>	<p>Information about Indiana's school improvement plans is available at: <a href="http://doe.state.in.us/asap/sip.html">http://doe.state.in.us/asap/sip.html</a>.</p> 
<p>Title I schools in their second year of school improvement (not making AYP for 3 consecutive years) will provide school choice or "supplemental services." Supplemental services (free tutoring) must be offered to the lowest achievers and economically disadvantaged. These schools will continue to receive technical assistance. See page 8 for a more detailed School Improvement Timeline.</p>	<p>Transfers within the same district or remediation services will be offered to students attending a school that fails to meet AYP for two consecutive years.</p> 	<p>Parents may elect to transfer their child to another school within the district (transportation will be provided). However, should the child's original school begin to meet AYP, the school will no longer be responsible for the child's transportation to the new school.</p> <p>Schools are required to notify parents which students are eligible for supplemental services. Parents may choose the group that provides their child's remediation from a state-approved list. Parents do not pay for supplemental educational services.</p> <p>"The Parent's Guide to Supplemental Services" is available at: <a href="http://www.ed.gov/nclb.choice/help/ses/index.html">http://www.ed.gov/nclb.choice/help/ses/index.html</a>.</p>	

Family Involvement in Education

School Safety

NCLB (No Child Left Behind)	PL 221 (Public Law 221)	What it means to parents	Where to find more information
<p>School districts will receive federal funds only if they implement activities, programs, and procedures for involving parents in the education of their children. These activities, programs, and procedures must be planned with the “meaningful consultation” of parents.</p> <p>Districts receiving Title I money above \$500,000 <i>must</i> designate at least 1% for parent involvement. Most of that 1% must be targeted for school-based partnership programs.</p>	<p>PL 221 includes strategies for parent involvement as part of the statewide school reform.</p> 	<p>Schools should conduct activities such as: workshops on attendance, family literacy, homework tips, etc.</p> <p>Communication from schools to parents should be in parent-friendly language.</p> <p>Parents should have volunteer opportunities within the school.</p> <p>Parents can be part of the school’s decision-making processes and teams.</p>	<p>The Indiana Department of Education published a School-Parent-Community Partnerships Resource Guide, available online at: <a href="http://doe.state.in.us/publications/pdf_other/SFCPnarrative.pdf">http://doe.state.in.us/publications/pdf_other/SFCPnarrative.pdf</a>.</p> <p>Also see the publication <u>No Child Left Behind: What’s in It for Parents</u>, by Anne T. Henderson, available in English and Spanish at: <a href="http://www.centerforparentleadership.org/publications.html">www.centerforparentleadership.org/publications.html</a>.</p>
<p>A student who is a victim of a violent crime at school or attends a “persistently dangerous” school may transfer to a “safe” school within the corporation.</p> 	<p>Indiana was the first state to require school corporations to study available resources, including law enforcement and emergency response units, in order to lead comprehensive safety planning activities. Indiana’s safety plan addresses emergency situations and school-related crimes.</p>	<p>Indiana defines a “persistently dangerous” school as one in which, for 3 consecutive years, more than 2% of the student body has been expelled for a violent crime (as defined by IC-5-2-6.1-8) or possessing a firearm, deadly weapon, or destructive device. <i>Victims of violent crime may transfer regardless of the school’s safety designation.</i></p> <p>Indiana meets the requirements of NCLB in providing transfers. Parents must be notified of transfer procedures within 30 days of the school’s designation as “persistently dangerous.”</p>	<p>Indiana’s Policy Under The Unsafe School Choice Option: <a href="http://doe.state.in.us/esea/pdf/uscofinalv2.pdf">http://doe.state.in.us/esea/pdf/uscofinalv2.pdf</a>.</p> <p>Information about Indiana’s Checklist for a Safe and Secure School Environment is available at: <a href="http://www.doe.state.in.us/issa/safeschools/checklistpdf.html">http://www.doe.state.in.us/issa/safeschools/checklistpdf.html</a>.</p> <p>“The Facts about School Safety” (NCLB) is at: <a href="http://www.ed.gov/nclb/freedom/safety/keepingkids.html">http://www.ed.gov/nclb/freedom/safety/keepingkids.html</a>.</p> 

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r r t u v w x y z

This document is the product of:

## ***The Indiana Partnerships Center***

**(The Indiana Center for Family,  
School, and Community Partnerships)**

Acknowledgement and appreciation are extended to  
Lauren Harvey, Lee Ann Kwiatkowski, Dara Lopez, Jeff Zaring, and Nancy Zemaitis,  
from the Indiana Department of Education, and Loui Lord Nelson, Consultant, for  
outlining the NCLB laws in comparison to PL 221.



**The Indiana Partnerships Center (The Indiana Center for Family, School, and Community Partnerships-FSCP)** is a non-profit organization that seeks to improve education in Indiana by forming strong and lasting family-school-community partnerships, and to empower parents so that they may become more involved in the educational lives of their children.



The Indiana Partnerships Center is Indiana's Parent Information and Resource Center, funded, in part, by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement.

Contact information:

921 E. 86th Street, Suite 108  
Indianapolis, IN 46240  
(317) 205-2595,  
for Spanish, ext. 107 & 109  
Toll Free: 1-866-391-1039  
Fax: (317) 205-9790  
Email: [info@fscp.org](mailto:info@fscp.org)  
Online: [www.fscp.org](http://www.fscp.org)

***Still looking for more information? Don't forget the following sources:***

- **No Child Left Behind Act** ([www.nclb.gov](http://www.nclb.gov))
  - Subscribe to the NCLB newsletter, "The Achiever," at ([www.ed.gov/news/newsletters/achiever/subscribe.html](http://www.ed.gov/news/newsletters/achiever/subscribe.html))
  - NCLB parent resource center ([www.ed.gov/parents/landing.html](http://www.ed.gov/parents/landing.html))
- **Indiana Public Law 221** ([www.doe.state.in.us/pl221/welcome.html](http://www.doe.state.in.us/pl221/welcome.html))
- **Indiana Department of Education** (<http://doe.state.in.us>)
- **Education Commission of States' No Child Left Behind Database** (<http://nclb.ecs.org/nclb/>)
- **National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)**, administered by the National Center for Education (<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/parents/>)
- **"Parents Left Behind: A study of state, federal and school district implementation of NCLB,"** ([www.acorn.org/index.php?id=403](http://www.acorn.org/index.php?id=403))

The websites listed in this brochure were last verified on June 25, 2007.

This document is the product of:

***The Indiana Partnerships Center***  
**(The Indiana Center for Family,  
School, and Community Partnerships)**

Acknowledgement and appreciation are extended to  
Lauren Harvey, Lee Ann Kwiatkowski, Dara Lopez, Jeff  
Zaring, and Nancy Zemaitis, from the Indiana Department  
of Education, and Loui Lord Nelson, Consultant,  
for outlining the NCLB laws in comparison to PL 221.