



# Did You Know...?

# #13

## What No Child Left Behind Says About Accountability

*Parents Reaching Out connects with families, schools and communities in New Mexico. We offer information from many reliable sources. We thank the Parent Education Network, a project of Parents Helping Parents of Wyoming, Inc. for permitting us to share their Education Extras materials in this information series.*

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) applies differently to Title I schools than to schools that do not receive Title I grants. Nevertheless, one way or another, this law covers all public schools in all states. This education reform act holds schools accountable for results, gives schools more flexibility in local control of the use of federal funds, gives parents greater choices, and promotes teaching methods that work.

### What does "accountability" mean?

NCLB requires that state test results be reported to the public in order to hold schools accountable for improving the academic achievement of every student. School districts must prepare annual reports for parents and the public on the academic achievement of all schools combined and of each individual school in a district.

### How will the state and school districts publicize this academic achievement information?

The state and the school districts will notify the public of the state's schools' academic achievement in report card form. These school report cards must be published widely through public means (newspapers, radio, television and/or the Internet).

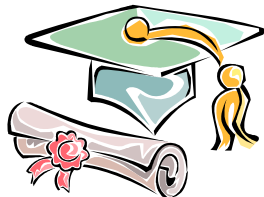


### What information will be included in the report card?

- Student academic achievement on statewide tests disaggregated (broken down) by subgroup.
- A comparison of students at basic, proficient and advanced academic achievement levels.
- High school graduation rates as well as dropout rates.
- Number and names of the schools that were identified as being "in need of improvement".
- Teacher qualifications.
- Percentage of students not tested.
- How students performed on the state test compared to students other schools in the school district and the state as a whole.

## What does "flexibility in the use of federal funds" mean?

No Child Left Behind gives schools more flexibility in how they spend taxpayer dollars. That means principals and administrators will spend less time filling out forms and less time dealing with federal red tape. It also means they will have more time to spend focusing on student progress.



## In what other ways does "flexibility" affect schools?

- For the first time, most local school districts in America will have the freedom to transfer up to 50 percent of the federal dollars they receive among several education programs without separate approval.
- All 50 states will also have the freedom to transfer up to 50 percent of the non-Title I state activity funds received from the federal government among an assortment of Elementary and Secondary School Education programs without advance approval.
- Local school officials serving rural schools and districts will have more flexibility and a greater say in how federal funds are used in their schools.

## What does "more choices for parents" mean?

NCLB creates meaningful options for parents whose children are in schools that are receiving Title I funds, and makes these options available immediately:

*Public School Choice:* Parents with children in schools identified as "in need of improvement" would be allowed to transfer their child to a better-performing public or charter school immediately after a school is identified as not making adequate yearly progress for two consecutive years.

*Supplemental Educational Services:* Federal Title I funds can be used to provide supplemental educational services-including tutoring, after-school services, and summer school programs-for children in schools which have been identified as "in need of improvement".

*Charter Schools:* Federal support for charter schools is expanded by giving parents, educators, and interested community leaders greater opportunities to create new charter schools.

To ensure that every classroom has a highly qualified teacher, districts are using innovative programs to address immediate and long-term needs, including alternative recruitment strategies, new approaches to professional development, financial incentive programs, and partnerships with local universities and other school districts.

*"Did You Know...?" fact sheets are developed by Parents Reaching Out in collaboration with the New Mexico Public Education Department under a grant from the US Department of Education Office of Innovation and Improvement. Views expressed do not necessarily represent the policy of the US Department of Education and should not be assumed to be an endorsement by the Federal Government.*