



# Did You Know...?

# # 17

## Demystifying Public School Choice

*How do children qualify for Public School Choice? Does my child have to meet certain criteria to receive Public School Choice? These and other questions have arisen since the implementation of Public School Choice as part of the No Child Left Behind Requirements. Here are some answers for commonly asked questions.*

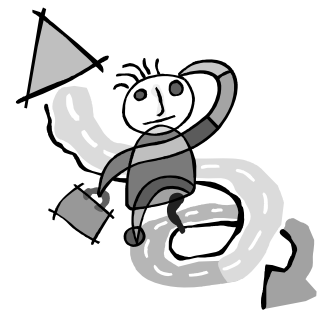
1. *Can my child change schools from a low performing to a high performing school?*

Yes. In order for a child to receive Public School Choice, the child must be enrolled in a failing school for 2 years, and have public school choice offered to the child before the beginning of the 3rd school year usually in August. A school that has not made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is required to offer Public School Choice to all qualifying students.

2. *When are children eligible to receive Public School Choice services?*

Students are eligible to receive Public School Choice as long as they meet the following criteria.

- The School must be a Title 1 school and must be required to offer Public School Choice.
- Students meeting the criteria for free and reduced lunch and academic need are offered services.
- The district must have schools that can be offered as a suitable choice to parents. (Some districts have only one school for each grade level.)



3. *What does a parent receive if the total school population is eligible for free lunch?*

Public School Choice is offered in order of lowest income and academic need.

4. *I have a student who receives Special Education Services. Is my child eligible to receive Public School Choice? Are there any special criteria for students with disabilities?*

Yes your child may receive public school choice providing he or she meets the same eligibility criteria as any other student. Children, who receive special education services, can receive Public School Choice in alignment with their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

5. *Who pays for transportation regarding Public School Choice?*

The district of the school that is classified as a school in need of improvement and is required to offer Public School Choice must pay for the transportation to a school that is passing AYP.

6. *Do parents have to be notified that Public School Choice is to be offered?*

Yes. Schools and school districts are required to provide annual notices to parents of eligible children about the availability of Public School Choice.

7. *What if my child is an English Language Learner (ELL)? Can he/she receive Public School Choice?*

Yes, children who are ELL learners are eligible to receive Public School Choice as long as they meet the eligibility criteria.

***Which comes first Supplemental Educational Services or Public School Choice?***

Before families can understand which comes first, they need to find out their school's rating by the Public Education Department. Visit this web site: [www.ped.state.us/](http://www.ped.state.us/) (go to the left hand side look for *school report cards and find your child's school*).

Based on the school's rating, the following timeline is used:

Year 1 – AYP is not met – The school develops and files an Educational Plan for Student Success (EPSS) with the Public Education Department

Year 2 – AYP is not met – The school must offer Public School Choice

Year 3 – AYP is not met- Public School Choice and Supplemental Services are offered. A family may choose either Public School choice or Supplemental Educational Services.

*This is the process in New Mexico as the New Mexico Public Education Department has chosen a more rigorous standard than required by federal law.*

8. *What action can parents take if their child is eligible Public School Choice, but their school or district does not offer it?*

Districts receiving Title I funds must offer Public School Choice to eligible students at no cost to families. If eligible students are not being offered these services, parents are encouraged to contact their school principal or Title 1 Director and if needed the New Mexico Public Education Department:

NM Public Education Department  
300 Don Gaspar  
Santa Fe, NM 87501-2786  
505-827-1421

For more information, please see **Did You Know #3** (NCLB-Public School Choice).

*“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.*