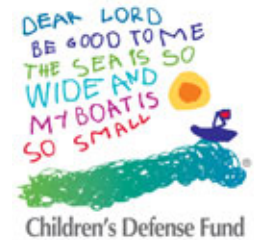


Children's Defense Fund

Glossary of Terms Frequently Used in Federal Education Discussions



March 2011

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP): AYP is the measure by which schools, districts and states are held accountable for student performance under Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). NCLB requires states to hold schools and districts accountable for making AYP toward all students reaching proficiency. A school or district that fails to make AYP for two consecutive years must be identified for improvement and can face specific consequences set out in the law. Additional sanctions are added if schools or districts identified for improvement continuously fail to make AYP for several more years.

Blueprint: President Obama's *A Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act* sets forth the Administration's vision for the education reforms needed to ensure that all children in the U.S. receive a high quality education.

Charter Schools: These are *public schools* most often established by a charter between a granting body, which sometimes is the state or local school board but may be a separate entity, and an outside group of parents and/or teachers, a non-profit organization or another organization which operate the schools free of most local and state educational regulations to achieve set goals. Like our other public schools, the quality of these public charter schools range from excellent to terrible. The charter entity in a community is often charged with monitoring the quality and effectiveness of the schools for accountability. Accountability is crucial for *all* public schools.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA): The Act, first authorized in 1965, is the principal federal law affecting K-12 education. In 2001, when it was last reauthorized, the name was changed to the No Child Left Behind Act. CDF seeks to change the name which infringes on our legal trademark Leave No Child Behind®.

Title I of ESEA. Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is targeted to reach the most disadvantaged students by providing financial assistance to local education agencies (LEAs) and schools with high numbers or high percentages of poor children to help ensure these children have the opportunity to meet academic standards. Title I-A, the largest part of Title I, was funded at \$14.49 billion in FY 2010. Other parts address student reading skills (B), education of migrant children (C), help for children who are neglected, delinquent or at risk (D), national assessment (E), effective comprehensive school reforms (F), advanced placement programs (G), school dropout prevention (H) and general provisions (I).

Comparability Requirement in Title I. The "comparability" requirement in Title I attempts to address funding inequities *between schools within a school district*. It requires that a district provide comparable state and local resources to its high poverty (Title I) schools and low poverty (non-Title I) schools. Once state and local resources are equalized, Title I funds can be used to provide *additional* resources for students in high poverty schools. However, a loophole in the comparability requirement allows districts to "demonstrate comparability" without actually equalizing expenditures. The comparability loophole must be fixed. CDF supports efforts to fix the loophole but believes that they must be accompanied by changes in the Title I formulas to address inequities *among states and school districts* to ensure that children in concentrated poverty truly benefit from Title I funds.

Title I Formulas. Title I-A of ESEA currently consists of four separate formulas to determine funding allocations to states and school districts. The current formulas together result in funding inequities *among states and school districts*. Despite Congressional efforts over the years to better target funds to children living in areas of concentrated poverty, CDF believes that additional changes are needed to ensure that children in concentrated poverty truly benefit from Title I.

Concentrated Poverty: Research shows that children and families living in neighborhoods with high concentrations of persistent, generational poverty may be intensely negatively affected by their surroundings: cognitive development often is severely delayed and verbal ability is reduced. When a significant number of children living for long periods in concentrated poverty are themselves concentrated in one school, that school faces enormous and unique challenges.

Local Education Agency (LEA): A LEA is a school district or a public board of education within a state that maintains administrative control of public elementary or secondary schools in the city, county, school district or other political subdivision in a state.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP): The National Center for Education Statistics conducts the NAEP, a nationally representative assessment of student performance across states in reading, mathematics, science, writing, U.S. history, geography, civics and the arts. The latest NAEP results are discouraging: more than 60 percent of students in grades four, eight and 12 cannot perform at grade level in reading or math. For minority students the results are much worse: 84 percent of Black and 79 percent of Latino students in these grades are unable to perform at grade level in reading or math.

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB): When the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was reauthorized in 2001 with overwhelming bipartisan support, the Bush Administration named the new law the No Child Left Behind Act – a play on the Children’s Defense Fund’s legal trademark Leave No Child Behind®.

State Education Agency (SEA): The SEA is primarily responsible for the state supervision of public elementary and secondary schools.