



CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

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JACK O'CONNELL

State Superintendent of
Public Instruction

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August 26, 2004

Dear County and District Superintendents, and Direct-funded Charter School Principals:

**IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS
TITLE I, PART A, PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT: REQUIREMENTS FOR LOCAL
EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES WITH PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT SCHOOLS**

Under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, the state educational agency (SEA) and local educational agency (LEA) must identify for corrective action and restructuring any Program Improvement (PI) school that for two years or more has not made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). This letter and attachments provide specific information regarding the federal requirements for PI schools advancing to Years 3, 4, and 5 in 2004-05.

On January 7, 2004, the United States Department of Education (USDE) issued a guidance document for PI LEAs and schools titled *LEA and School Improvement Non-Regulatory Guidance*. This guidance can be found on the USDE Web site at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/schoolimprovementguid.pdf>. Attachment A reflects the latest information from the guidance and provides a year-by-year overview of the requirements.

On August 31, 2004, the results of the 2004 AYP determination will be posted on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov>. On September 1, 2004, schools and districts must begin implementing the statutory requirements under NCLB.

Federal Guidance for Years 1 and 2

The requirements for providing school choice (which begins in Year 1 of PI) and supplemental educational services (which begins in Year 2) are addressed at length in non-regulatory guidance documents issued by the USDE. These documents, which can be accessed on the USDE Web site, include the *Public School Choice Non-Regulatory Guidance* (<http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/schoolchoiceguid.pdf>) and the *Supplemental Educational Services Non-Regulatory Guidance* (<http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/suppsvcsguid.pdf>). While technically these guidelines are non-regulatory, our experience leads us to believe that the USDE will expect them to be implemented.

Assistance for LEAs with PI Schools

NCLB requires each state to reserve a portion of the state's Title I, Part A allocation to carry out the state's responsibilities under PI, including creating and maintaining a statewide system of support to provide technical assistance to PI schools and their LEAs. In California, this system consists of the Regional System of District and School Support (RSDSS), part of the county offices of education; the federally funded Comprehensive Assistance Centers (CAC); and the CDE.

Upon identification, LEAs with schools identified for PI may seek technical assistance from the CAC and RSDSS. The CAC and RSDSS provide school support teams for PI schools, assist with brokering and coordinating regional programs and services, consult with the various NCLB stakeholders, and provide professional development services across NCLB initiatives. Contact information for the CAC and RSDSS is available on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/sw/t1/technicalassist.asp>.

In addition, there are a number of other organizations that have provided school intervention and support as part of the state's accountability system through the School Assistance and Intervention Team (SAIT) process. The CAC and RSDSS services are aligned with the SAIT process. The SAIT provider organizations are listed on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/lp/iu/saitproviders.asp>.

NCLB also requires each state to reserve a portion of the state's Title I, Part A allocation to provide funding to LEAs and schools in PI to support local improvement efforts. There is a bill currently on the Governor's desk for signature (Assembly Bill 2066, Steinberg) that would provide additional resources to qualifying LEAs. The CDE continues to work with the State Legislature and a variety of education organizations and interest groups to determine how best to allocate and utilize these resources to support local improvement efforts. Additional information on these and other resources for LEAs and schools in PI is forthcoming.

Contact Information

Questions about Program Improvement should be addressed to Anne Just, Manager, Title I Policy and Partnerships Office, at (916) 319-0854 or by e-mail at pi@cde.ca.gov. Questions about technical assistance for LEAs with PI schools should be addressed to Gordon Jackson, Manager, District and School Program Coordination Office, at (916) 319-0599.

Sincerely,

Original Signed

JACK O'CONNELL

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Attachments