

**Florida Department of Education  
No Child Left Behind Update**

***Action taken by DOE to date:***

- Communicated with USDE regarding Florida's plan on No Child Left Behind (NCLB), specifically regarding flexibility and school choice plan
- Met with Governor and Big 7 Superintendents to discuss NCLB
- Presented on NCLB at Florida Association of District School Superintendents meeting
- Held 5 Regional Workshops and armed school districts with tools to communicate with parents
- One of first states to may AYP data available on schoolresults.org
- Sent 5 memos to Superintendents
- Sent a teacher email on Highly Qualified Teacher requirement
- Sent 3 memos to District Coordinators
- Provided talking points to School Districts, State Board Members, Congressional Delegation, and Legislators on how NCLB and A+ work together
- Provided interviews to Education Week and Washington Post on why Florida will not lower standards and how A+ coupled with NCLB can drive achievement

***Timeline of Communication with School Districts and Teachers:***

- April 29            Conference call with Undersecretary Hickock regarding choice options (briefing attached)
- April 21-27        Regional Technical Assistance Meetings held in Orlando, Tampa, Ft. Lauderdale, Panhandle, and Jacksonville  
(Districts received a tool kit including: fact sheets on school choice and SES to be distributed to parents, sample parent letters, a power point presentation to use before parent groups, sample provider agreements, checklists, and other helpful documents.)
- April 20            Memo from Chancellor Warford to Superintendents  
Re: 2004-05 Preliminary No Child Left Behind/Title I Allocations and Related Information  
(Included outline of requirements for schools and districts identified for improvement and overview of current school choice options in Florida)
- April 19            Governor Bush, Commissioner Horne, John Winn and Chancellor Warford met with Big 7 Superintendents
- April 7             Memo from Commissioner Horne and Chancellor Warford to Superintendents  
Re: Florida's Use of Federal Flexibility for Adequate Yearly Progress

(Informed Superintendents that Florida will: (a) classify as LEP students who have exited programs English proficiency programs within 2 years and (b) use two year average participation rates.)

- April 7      Memo to District Assessment Coordinators from Christy Hovanetz  
Re: Implementing 1% Cap for Alternate Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities
- March 30      Memo from Chancellor Warford to Superintendents  
Re: Public School Choice and Supplemental Educational Services for Title I Schools Regional Meetings (Included schedule, registration form, and agenda)
- March 26      Letter from John Winn to Secretary Paige  
Re: Amended Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook for 03-04  
(Requested a group size of 30 across the board for purposes of AYP calculations effective this school year – amends school size from 11 to 30.)
- March 26      Memo from Chancellor Warford and Mary Laura Openshaw  
Re: Reading Endorsement  
(Informed districts that as long as a teacher is experienced and certified in elementary education K-6 or 1-6, a reading endorsement is no longer a requirement for 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers to teach reading to 6<sup>th</sup> grade middle school classes)
- March 24      Chancellor Warford presents at FADSS Spring Meeting  
Re: NCLB  
(Presentation included overview of Florida recommendations, a timeline for school districts, choice provisions, what districts can do to prepare in terms of transportation, communication with schools and parents, supplemental education services, and partnering with districts that already have public school choice in place.)
- March 19      Email from Chancellor Warford to Teachers  
Re: Flexibility on Highly Qualified Teachers requirement under NCLB
- March 15      USDE announces Flexibility on Highly Qualified Teachers
- March 2      USDE announces Availability of Waiver on 1% Cap for Alternate Assessment for Students With Disabilities
- February 24      Memo from Commissioner Horne and Chancellor Warford to Superintendents

Re: Federal Changes to Adequate Yearly Progress Calculations for Limited English Proficient Students  
(Provided fact sheet on changes, promised technical assistance once DOE conducts analysis of proposed changes, provided contact information for district input, copy sent to Accountability, Assessment, and ESOL coordinators in every district.)

February 20 USDE announces Flexibility on Limited English Proficient Students

***Briefing for April 29 Conference Call with Undersecretary Hickock***

The public school accountability system created by Florida's A+ Education Plan is producing the greatest student achievement gains in the nation. By setting high expectations, refusing to lower standards and adopting a "No Excuses" attitude, Florida has been one of the USDOE's strongest partners in the implementation of NCLB.

Given that Florida already has an extensive school choice program in place that provides the widest array of public school choice options in the nation, Florida will also lead the way in providing "**meaningful choice options**" to the parents of our lowest performing students in response to the NCLB/School Choice requirements for Florida schools not making AYP for two consecutive years.

Consistent with the intent and requirements of public school choice with transportation to all students attending Title I schools identified as "in need of improvement" for not making AYP for two consecutive years, Florida will require all school districts to:

- 1) Identify all Title I schools as "in need of improvement" who have not met AYP for two consecutive years.
- 2) Prioritize the students, by school, to identify the lowest performing students as identified by scoring Level 1 on the reading or math portion of the FCAT.
- 3) Conduct a self-assessment of the district's choice plan and additional choice options provided under Florida law to ensure that all students who scored Level 1 on the FCAT in reading or math and who attend Title I schools "in need of improvement" have meaningful choice that include more than one option.
  - a) If it is determined that not all of the above students, have meaningful school choice options, then the district must:
    - i) Review/revise their choice plan to provide such options.
    - ii) Expend an amount equal to 20% of their Title I, Part A allocation or a lesser amount, if needed) to create intensive programs as quality choice options within the existing schools.
    - iii) Expend an amount equal to 5% of their Title I Part A allocation to offer supplemental educational services.
    - iv) Expend an amount equal to 15% of their Title I Part A allocation (or a lesser amount, if needed) to provide choice with transportation.
- 4) Submit the completed self-assessment to the Department of Education within the prescribed timelines.

In short, Florida intends to allow our LEAs the option to implement the school choice requirements of NCLB through the vehicle of Florida's existing and extensive choice system. In providing our LEA's the full flexibility allowed under law to modify their existing school choice and controlled open-enrollment plans we eliminate the potential conflict faced by those LEA's operating under court-ordered desegregation plans, make for a smoother implementation process and reduce potential conflict created by, what might otherwise prove to be, significant disruption of schools in our state.