



School Leader's Guide to the 2009 Adequate Yearly Progress Reports

This brief guide explains Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) – a key component of the accountability and assistance system the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has put in place to measure the extent to which districts, schools, and student groups demonstrate proficiency in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. AYP Reports, issued each year, show the progress schools and districts are making toward the goal of having all students reach proficiency by the year 2014, the principal goal of NCLB.

Inside

Introduction: Measuring Progress Toward Proficiency	2
Key Changes to 2009 AYP Determinations	3
How is AYP Calculated?	4
(A) Participation	4
(B) Performance	4
(C) Improvement	6
(D) Attendance (Grades 1-8)	7
(D) Graduation Rate (High Schools)	7
NCLB Accountability Status Determinations	7
Performance and Improvement Ratings	8
Interim Adjustment Regarding Certain Special Education Students and AYP Determinations	8
Frequently Asked Questions about 2009 AYP Reporting	9
2009 Appeal Deadline: Monday, October 5, 2009	14

Additional Resources

2009 Glossary of AYP Reporting Terms	www.doe.mass.edu/sda/ayp/2009/default.html
AYP Materials and Reports	www.doe.mass.edu/sda/ayp/
NCLB Accountability Status and Required Actions	www.doe.mass.edu/sda/ayp/2009/default.html
NCLB/Title I School Choice	www.doe.mass.edu/sda/choice.html
Supplemental Educational Services (SES)	www.doe.mass.edu/ses/
NCLB Information for Parents and Guardians	www.doe.mass.edu/nclb/parents.html
School and District Accountability and Assistance	www.doe.mass.edu/sda/
School and District Profiles	http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/
Graduation Rates	www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/reports/gradrates/
Student Assessment	www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/

Measuring Progress Toward Proficiency



Leading by Example Massachusetts is now past the mid-way point of an ambitious, two-decade endeavor to bring all public school students in the Commonwealth to high levels of achievement and opportunity. We are a national leader in this historic, expeditionary effort. With the passage of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in January 2002, the climb toward higher standards for student achievement has become an expedition in which we are joined by students, teachers, education leaders, and other stakeholders nationwide.

The significant gains in student performance that have been achieved by schools and districts since we began our education reform journey in 1993 are a tribute to the vision, ingenuity, and hard work of teachers and school leaders throughout the Commonwealth. We aspire to reach new heights of student achievement over the next decade. To do so, we must work together to help each other overcome daunting obstacles. Most of all, we need to hold fast to our dream and not give up on any of our students, no matter how arduous the climb.

In many communities, most students are well on their way to levels of academic proficiency that at the end of high school will afford them meaningful opportunities for higher education and employment—and we will help those districts bring their students to even higher levels of achievement. But even in communities where most students are attaining proficiency in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, there are some who are not achieving this essential standard. It is those students not yet on a path to high levels of attainment who are the focus of our current improvement efforts. And in some Massachusetts communities, many students are in need of concerted help to find and stay on that path.

To Proficiency, and Beyond NCLB has established a legal requirement that we commit ourselves to the goal of helping every child achieve proficiency in ELA and mathematics by 2014. The role of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is to measure the path our students are taking towards that goal. Under NCLB, each state is permitted to define what is meant by "proficiency." In Massachusetts, we set a standard for proficiency that aims to ready our students for success not only in U.S. colleges and universities, but also in the 21st century high-tech global economy as well.

Understanding a Complex System This brief guide is intended to help you, as an education leader, understand the 2009 AYP Reports. School systems that enable communities to view AYP as useful tools for the journey, not as extra burdens, will help students climb the "proficiency mountains" with a lighter step and a better sense of the path to the top.

Key Changes to 2009 AYP Determinations

Graduation Rate Targets In the Spring of 2009, Massachusetts received approval from the U.S. Department of Education to modify the graduation rate targets for Massachusetts public high schools and districts at the grade 9-12 grade span. In 2009, they will have to meet at least one of the following criteria:

- **A four-year graduation rate of 65 percent** applied to the 2008 graduation cohort, or
- **A five-year graduation rate of 70 percent** applied to the 2007 graduation cohort, or
- **A two percentage point increase in the four-year graduation rate** from the 2007 cohort to 2008 cohort.

How is AYP Calculated?

To make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in 2009, districts, schools, and student groups must meet a student participation requirement, an additional attendance or graduation requirement, and either the State’s 2009 performance target for that subject or the group’s own 2009 improvement target.

**Table 1 – How Are AYP Determinations Calculated?
A + (B or C) + D = Affirmative AYP Determination**

A	MCAS Participation Rate 95% or greater participation in Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) and MCAS-Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt) tests
+	
B	MCAS Performance 90.2 or greater Composite Performance Index (CPI) in English language arts (ELA); 84.3 or greater CPI in mathematics
OR	
C	MCAS Improvement* Meet or exceed 2009 improvement target (Specific to schools, districts and student groups)
+	
D	Additional Indicator <i>Grades 1-8:</i> 92% or higher attendance rate, or 1% improvement over 2008 <i>High Schools:</i> 4-year graduation rate of 65 percent applied to the 2008 graduation cohort, or 5-year graduation rate of 70 percent applied to the 2007 graduation cohort, or 2 percentage point increase in 4-year graduation rate from the 2007 cohort to 2008 cohort.

NOTE: A group can also make AYP for improvement by reducing the percentage of non-proficient students by 10% from 2008 to 2009 (NCLB's safe harbor provision).

AYP determinations are made separately for ELA and for mathematics. For each subject there are multiple AYP determinations — for students in the aggregate and for student groups. Student groups for whom AYP determinations are made include students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, economically disadvantaged students (eligible for free/reduced price school lunch), and

African American/Black, Hispanic, Asian, White, and Native American students. Students are counted in each student group to which they belong; as such, one student can be represented in multiple groups.

AYP determinations are calculated in the aggregate if there are at least 20 students. AYP determinations are calculated for student groups if the group consists of (1) 40 students or more assessed in each year for which performance data is being analyzed and (2) the number of group members is at least 5% of the number of students whose assessment results are included in the school or district's aggregate AYP calculation, or (3) the number of group members is 200 or more.

(A) Participation Participation rates represent the number of students who participated in 2009 MCAS ELA or mathematics tests, or who participated in the MCAS-Alt, divided by the number of students enrolled on the dates MCAS and MCAS-Alt tests are administered. The minimum participation rate required for a student group to make AYP is 95%.

(B) Performance Student performance on academic assessments is a fundamental component in rendering decisions about AYP. Massachusetts uses the Composite Performance Index (CPI), a 100-point index that assigns 100, 75, 50, 25, or 0 points to each student participating in MCAS and MCAS-Alt tests¹ based on their performance. The total points assigned to each student are added together and the sum is divided by the total number of students assessed. The result is a number between 0 and 100, which constitutes a district, school or group's CPI for that subject and student group. The CPI is a measure of the extent to which students are progressing toward proficiency (a CPI of 100) in ELA and mathematics. CPIs are generated separately for ELA and mathematics, and at all levels – state, district, school, and student group.

A school or district's CPI is calculated by combining points generated by students who take the standard MCAS tests (the "proficiency index") with points generated by students who take the MCAS-Alt (the "MCAS-Alt Index"). The CPI is calculated by determining, in each subject for each student group, the following:

1. **(Table 2)** The number of students who took standard MCAS tests who performed at each of the five proficiency levels set out in Table 2 and multiplying the number at each level times the proficiency index points associated with that level;
2. **(Table 2)** The number of students who participated in the MCAS-Alt for reasons other than significant cognitive impairments who demonstrated performance equivalent to each of the five proficiency levels set out in Table 2 and multiplying the number at each level times the proficiency index points assigned to that level; and
3. **(Table 3)** The number of students with significant cognitive impairments who demonstrated performance at each of the five MCAS-Alt levels shown in Table 3 and multiplying the number at each level times the MCAS-Alt index points associated with that level.

¹ While the majority of students with disabilities take standard paper and pencil MCAS tests, either with or without accommodations, the MCAS-Alt is used to assess the attainment of students who, by reason of severe and complex disabilities, are not able to participate in the standard MCAS testing program. The MCAS-Alt is a portfolio review of student work and other student data, designed to measure knowledge of the key concepts and skills outlined in the learning standards of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

4. **(Table 4)** The point totals from steps one, two and three above are added together and the sum is divided by the total number of students assessed, as shown in the sample CPI calculation in Table 4. The result is a number between 0 and 100, which constitutes the district, school, or group’s CPI for that subject and student group.

Table 2 – Proficiency Index Points

For students taking standard MCAS tests and for MCAS-Alt participants who do not have significant cognitive impairments

MCAS Scaled Score or MCAS-Alt Equivalent	Performance Level	Points Awarded
240 – 280	Proficient and Advanced	100
230 – 238	Needs Improvement – High	75
220 – 228	Needs Improvement – Low	50
210 – 218	Warning/Failing – High	25
200 – 209	Warning/Failing – Low	0

Table 3 – MCAS-Alt Index Points

For students with significant cognitive impairments taking MCAS-Alt (up to 1% of all assessed students)

MCAS-Alt Score	Points Awarded
Progressing	100
Emerging	75
Awareness	50
Portfolio Incomplete	25
Portfolio not Submitted	0

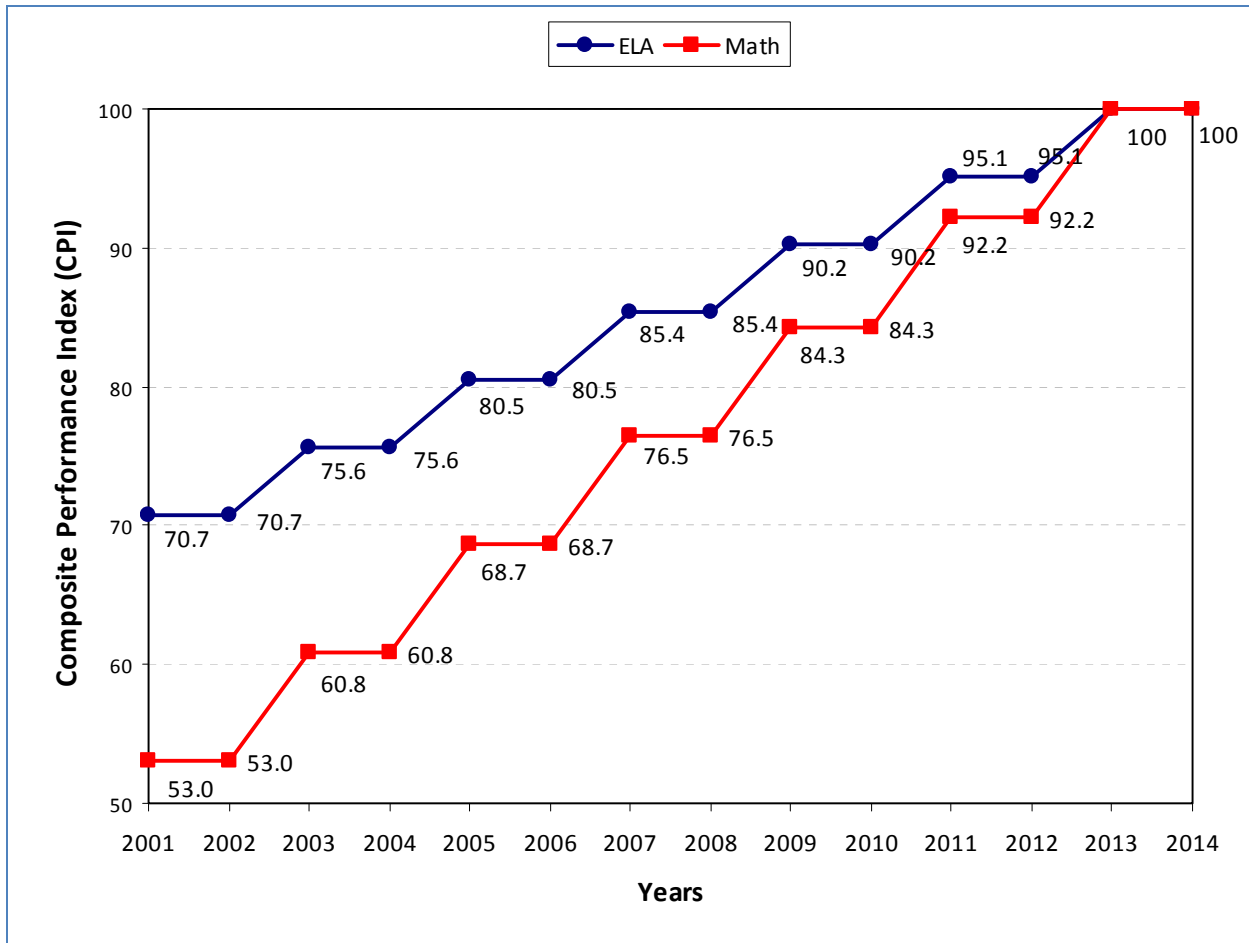
Table 4 – Sample Composite Performance Index (CPI) Calculation

N = 90 Students

MCAS Performance Level <i>MCAS-Alt Performance Level</i>		Points Per Student	# Of Students	Points
Proficient and Advanced	<i>Progressing</i>	100	10	1000
Needs Improvement – High	<i>Emerging</i>	75	20	1500
Needs Improvement – Low	<i>Awareness</i>	50	40	2000
Warning/Failing – High	<i>Portfolio Incomplete</i>	25	15	375
Warning/Failing – Low	<i>Portfolio not Submitted</i>	0	5	0
Totals	—	—	90	4,875
4,875 ÷ 90 = 54.2 CPI				

In order to make AYP for performance in 2009, districts, schools and student groups are required to meet or exceed the State’s 2009 performance targets for ELA (90.2) and mathematics (84.3), respectively.

State Performance Targets for ELA and Mathematics, 2001-2014



(C) Improvement In addition to demonstrating performance relative to fixed targets, schools, districts, and student groups may also demonstrate AYP by meeting improvement targets that measure student performance relative to their own baselines. To make AYP for improvement, districts, schools and student groups have to demonstrate sufficient gain from 2008 to 2009 to remain on target toward reaching a CPI of 100 by 2014 in ELA and mathematics, respectively.

A baseline CPI is established for each district, school, and student group, which represents the performance of students, tested in grades 3-8 and 10 in 2008. Baseline CPIs are established separately for ELA and for mathematics.

An improvement target for a given subject is calculated by subtracting the district, school, or group’s 2008 (baseline) CPI from 100 (the ultimate CPI goal), and dividing the difference by the number of remaining years until the year 2014, including the current year. For 2009 that number is 6.

2009 Improvement Target Calculation

$$\frac{100 - 2008 \text{ CPI}}{\text{Number of remaining years until the year 2014 (6)}}$$

Improvement targets include an “error band” surrounding the target number, also called the “on target range.” As a consequence, schools, districts, and groups have the opportunity to meet their improvement targets even if their CPI falls below the target number. Error bands vary between 1.0 and 4.5, depending on the size of the group measured and whether that group is at the school or district level. Error bands are applied to a group's gain target, not its CPI.

(D) Attendance (Grades 1-8) The attendance rate required to make AYP in 2009 is 92%, or improvement of at least 1% from 2008. Determinations are made for groups of six or more students. The 2009 attendance rate is calculated by dividing the total number of days a student attended school by the total number of days the student is enrolled in 2008-09 as shown below:

Attendance Rate Calculation	
Total # days of student attendance	/

Total # days student enrolled	

Attendance and enrollment data are derived from Student Information Management System (SIMS) end-of-year reports.

The attendance rules for 2009 are as follows:

- Only the amount of time a student spends at the school in which they are enrolled on October 1, 2008 factors into school-level attendance calculations. Students are not counted towards multiple schools.
- Students are included in district attendance rate calculations for any time spent in any reported district. District attendance calculations also include students who are out-placed in public collaborative or private alternative schools/programs at public expense.

(D) Graduation Rate (High Schools) In 2009, Massachusetts public high schools and districts at the grade 9-12 grade span will have to meet at least one of the following criteria:

- **A four-year graduation rate of 65 percent** applied to the 2008 graduation cohort, or
- **A five-year graduation rate of 70 percent** applied to the 2007 graduation cohort, or
- **A two percentage point increase in the four-year graduation rate** from the 2007 cohort to 2008 cohort.

NCLB Accountability Status Determinations

A school's No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Accountability Status refers to the category to which they are assigned, based on two or more years of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) data, to define the required course of action that must be taken to improve performance. Accountability status designations include *No Status*, *Improvement*, *Corrective Action* and *Restructuring*. Schools that make AYP in a subject for all student groups for two or more consecutive years are assigned to the positive *No Status* category.

2009 AYP and accountability status determinations for schools serving grades 1-8 are based on four factors: participation, performance or improvement, and an additional indicator, attendance. For high schools, the additional indicator is the graduation rate.

School AYP determinations are based on all grades assessed. District AYP determinations are issued separately for three grade spans – grades 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12 – for students in the aggregate and student groups in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. District accountability status determinations are driven by these grade span AYP determinations. A district is newly identified for improvement if it fails to make AYP in the same subject area and all grade spans, for students in the aggregate or any group, for two consecutive years. A district is assigned to the positive *No Status* category if it makes AYP in the same subject area for at least one grade span for two consecutive years. (This does not apply to Massachusetts’s districts that consist of a single school; single-school districts receive AYP determinations based on all grades assessed.)

Performance and Improvement Ratings

School and district Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) reports show performance and improvement ratings based on aggregate student performance on Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) English language arts (ELA) and mathematics tests. These ratings are descriptive terms which describe the progress schools and districts are making toward meeting the goal of all students achieving proficiency in those subjects by the year 2014. School leaders may use these ratings to communicate “big picture” accountability findings to parents, community members, and other stakeholders.

Performance Ratings A school or district’s aggregate Composite Performance Index (CPI) is used each year to establish its performance rating. The six performance rating categories and corresponding CPI ranges are: *Very High* (90 – 100), *High* (80 – 89.9), *Moderate* (70 – 79.9), *Low* (60 – 69.9), *Very Low* (40 – 59.9), and *Critically Low* (0 – 39.9).

Improvement Ratings Improvement ratings correspond to the amount of aggregate CPI gain a school or district achieved in 2009 as compared to 2008. The improvement that a school or district is expected to make from one year to the next is expressed not as a single numeric target, but as a target range. This range incorporates an “error band” that surrounds the target number, also called the “on target range.” The size of the target range varies depending on the size and score distribution of the particular group being measured. The standard target range is plus or minus 2.5 CPI points, but may be as large as plus or minus 4.5 CPI points for groups smaller than 100. The five improvement rating categories are: *Above Target* (improved above target range), *On Target* (improved within target range), *Improved Below Target* (improved above 2008 CPI (the baseline) but below the target range), *No Change* (gain was equivalent to baseline plus or minus the target range), and *Declined* (gain was below baseline and below the target range).

Interim Adjustment Regarding Certain Special Education Students and AYP Determinations

In May 2005, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) granted states additional flexibility in their treatment of the special education student population for accountability purposes. Formerly, up to one percent of the student population assessed using the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt) was included in Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determinations using the Alternate Index. The policy allows states to develop modified achievement standards for an additional two percent of the student population. A summary of our ED-approved plan for providing flexibility for the 2005-2009 AYP reporting years follows:

1. We establish a two percent “proxy group” of student MCAS results to be awarded 100 index points, using Student Information Management System (SIMS) and performance data for the review year to determine those students who we deem to be candidates for modified achievement standards. We use student disability type, level of need, and assessment performance data to identify these candidates from among students with disabilities who took the standard form of the MCAS test.
2. After generating preliminary AYP determinations, we identify the schools and districts statewide that did not make AYP in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, or both subjects for their Special Education group only.
3. We then perform a secondary analysis for those schools and districts, assigning 100 index points to those students with disabilities in their assessment group, if any, who were included in the two percent “proxy group”.
4. We re-run the AYP determinations for those schools/districts using the index points assigned for “proxy group” students with disabilities. If, as a result of this secondary analysis, a school or district meets or surpasses its AYP performance targets, the school or district is considered to have made AYP for the year of review.

The process is completed separately for ELA and mathematics. AYP reports display the original CPI calculated from all assessment results as required by ED. If changed under the secondary analysis, the modified AYP determinations for the Special Education group are indicated by a notation to alert readers of the basis for the modified determination.

Frequently Asked Questions about 2009 AYP Reporting

Where can I get definitions of the various terms shown on my AYP Report? Online Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Reports link to a glossary with brief definitions of the terms included in the report and to a webpage containing this guide and other informational materials.

What is the difference between the “summary” and “detail” sections of my school and district AYP reports? To enhance the user-friendliness of the reports, we publish AYP Reports in two layers— summary and detail. The summary layer displays overall findings. The detail layer displays more discrete data, including information about the number of students included in AYP determinations for each group and baseline and gain target data.

	(A) Participation			
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	Enrolled	Assessed	%	Met Target (95%)
Aggregate	222	219	99	Yes
Lim. English Proficient	40	38	95	Yes
Special Education	32	24	75	No

How is participation calculated?

A required component of AYP calculations, participation rates indicate the number of students who participated in Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) and MCAS-Alternate

Assessment (MCAS-Alt) tests divided by the number of students enrolled on the date the tests were administered. Students with limited English proficiency (LEP) enrolled in U.S. schools for the first time are not required to take ELA tests; however, they are included in school and district participation rates based on their participation in the Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment (MEPA). Students absent during testing, including those with a medical excuse, are counted against school and district participation rates as non-participants. A student is neither a participant nor a non-participant (i.e., excluded from both the numerator and the denominator in participation rate calculations) if **all** of the following statements are true: (1) The student transferred during the testing window (between the first day of ELA testing and the last day of testing for mathematics or science); (2) The student missed at least one entire session of the test in question; and (3) The student was not medically excused or absent for the test in question.

	(B) Performance		
MATHEMATICS	N	2009 CPI	Met Target (84.3)
Low Income	97	74.4	No
Afr. Amer./Black	72	87.1	Yes
Asian or Pacif. Isl.	38	-	-

What do my “N” figures represent? As shown on detailed school and district AYP reports, the “N” figure displays the number of students whose assessment results were included in the 2009 Composite Performance Index (CPI) calculation. At the school level, this number includes only those students enrolled on or before October 1, 2008. District AYP results reflected the

performance of all students who took MCAS/MCAS-Alt tests while enrolled in the district, regardless of when they enrolled, including students in out-of-district placements (i.e., those who attend a non-public school at public expense). The MCAS results of all LEP students in their first year of U.S. schooling are excluded from performance and improvement calculations in ELA and mathematics tests, as are students who did not complete testing.

Where do the data for my “N” figures come from? N figures are based on demographic and enrollment information provided through Student Information Management System (SIMS) data provided to the Department by schools and districts, with one exception: The LEP group also includes students who, according to SIMS, were formerly LEP in one of the two prior school years.

How is the 2009 CPI calculated? The CPI is a 100-point index that assigns 100, 75, 50, 25, or 0 points to each student participating in MCAS/MCAS-Alt tests based on their performance. The total points assigned to each student are added together and the sum is divided by the total number of students assessed. The result is a number between 0 and 100, which constitutes a district, school, or

group’s CPI for that subject and student group. The 2009 CPI displayed in AYP reports is based on the scores of all students in the district or school taking MCAS tests in grades 3-8 and 10 in spring 2009.

What are the 2009 state performance targets for ELA and mathematics? To make AYP, districts, schools, and student groups must meet either the state performance target or their own improvement target for ELA and for mathematics, respectively. These targets increase every two years. For 2009, the state performance target for ELA is a CPI of 90.2 points; for mathematics, 84.3. A “Yes” is displayed in the Performance Met Target column for each reportable group whose 2009 CPI met or exceeded the state performance target for that subject.

	(B) Performance			(C) Improvement			
MATHEMATICS	N	2009 CPI	Met Target (84.3)	2008 CPI (Baseline)	Gain Target	On Target Range	Met Target
Hispanic	110	88.7	Yes	75.5	4.1	77.1 - 82.1	Yes
Native American	40	78.2	No	68.1	5.3	70.9 - 75.9	Yes
White	97	74.1	No	73.4	4.4	75.3 - 80.3	No

How is the Improvement Gain Target calculated?

A district, school or group’s 2008 CPI is equivalent to its 2009 Baseline, and is based on the ELA and

mathematics performance, respectively, of students tested in grades 3-8 and 10 in 2008. As displayed on detailed school and district AYP reports, the Gain Target represents the amount of improvement, measured in CPI points, that a district, school or group is expected to make between 2008 and 2009 in order to make AYP. Gain targets are calculated by subtracting the 2008 CPI (Baseline) from 100 (the ultimate CPI goal), and dividing the difference by the number of years (6) between 2008 and 2014. Gain targets are specific to each district, school and group.

What does the On Target Range represent? The improvement that a school or district is expected to make from one year to the next is expressed not as a single numeric target, but as a target range. This range includes an “error band” surrounding the target number, also called the “on target range.” The size of the target range varies depending on the size and score distribution of the particular group being measured. Consequently, a district, school, or student group may meet its target even though its CPI is below the target number. The standard target range is 2.5, but may be as large as 4.5 for groups smaller than 100. The target range is only applied to a group’s improvement target, not its performance target. As shown on detailed school and district AYP reports, the On Target Range displays the minimum and maximum CPI scores required for a district, school or student group to remain on target toward NCLB’s goal of 100% proficiency by the year 2014, taking into consideration the error band surrounding each group's gain target. The smaller number in the On Target Range represents the gain target minus the error band, while the larger number in the On Target Range represents the gain target plus the error band.

My school’s AYP report does not include Improvement data. Why is that? For a new school or school that did not have performance data for 20 or more students in 2008, the school’s current performance CPI is used to render AYP determinations for the aggregate and for student groups.

How is the attendance rate calculated? Attendance is the additional AYP indicator for schools serving grades 1-8. The attendance rate required to make AYP in 2009 was 92%, or improvement of at least 1% from 2008, and determinations were made for groups of six or more students. The 2009 attendance rate is calculated by dividing the total number of days students attended school by the total

number of days students were enrolled in SY2008-09. Only the amount of time a student spent at the school in which they were enrolled on October 1, 2008 factored into school-level attendance calculations. Students were not counted towards multiple schools. Students were included in district attendance rate calculations for any time spent in any reported district. District attendance calculations also included students who were out-placed in public collaborative or private alternative schools/programs at public expense.

	(D) Grad Rate			
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	2008 (4yr)	Change (4yr)	2007 (5yr)	Met Target
Aggregate	62	2	67	Yes
Afr. Amer./Black	65	5	68	Yes
Asian or Pacifc. Isl.	70	1	69	Yes
Hispanic	69	1	80	Yes

How are the graduation rates calculated?

Graduation rates are calculated by dividing the number of students in a cohort who graduated in four years or less by of the total number of students in the cohort (the

number of first-time entering 9th graders four years earlier, excluding transfers out and including transfers in). In 2009, Massachusetts public high schools and districts at the grade 9-12 grade span will have to meet at least one of the following criteria:

- **A four-year graduation rate of 65 percent** applied to the 2008 graduation cohort, or
- **A five-year graduation rate of 70 percent** applied to the 2007 graduation cohort, or
- **A two percentage point increase in the four-year graduation rate** from the 2007 cohort to 2008 cohort.

Additional information on the graduation rate, including a list of frequently asked questions, is available at www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/reports/gradrates/.

Are there any differences between the graduation rate data published by the Department last winter and the graduation rate data used to generate the 2009 AYP determinations?

The graduation rate data published in winter 2009 and 2008 AYP determinations are nearly identical, with two exceptions: students reported as members of the Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic or Pacific Islander group in the winter rate are included in rates for the AYP group they were reported as belonging to prior to the availability of these new racial/ethnic reporting categories. Students with no prior race/ethnicity data are included at the aggregate level only in school and district AYP reports.

Why do 2009 AYP Reports show graduation rates for the 2007 and 2008 cohorts?

Using data for prior cohorts allows us to use a data set that has been thoroughly reviewed by district and Department staff. We will not have complete graduation rate data for the 2009 graduation cohort until late fall 2009, after the October SIMS reporting period and the 2009 cohort data review period have closed.

My school’s AYP report shows a CPI and improvement information for a group but doesn’t say whether it met the target or made AYP. Why is this?

Subgroups with fewer than 40 students assessed in 2009 do not qualify for AYP determinations. To qualify, a group must also constitute at least 5% of the total number of students assessed in the school or district. However, all

groups larger than 200 qualify. For informational purposes we publish CPI data for subgroups with 20 or more students.

The figures displayed on my district AYP report for each grade span (3-5, 6-8, 9-12) do not match the figures on my school AYP report(s). Why is this? District AYP determinations are inclusive of all students in the district, including those who are placed in private settings and educational collaboratives for the purpose of receiving special education or other services. In some cases, a student group at the school level may not qualify for AYP determinations because it did not meet the minimum group size requirements (See above). Data for these students, however, are included in district AYP determinations in the aggregate and any groups to which the students belong. Likewise, students are included in district attendance rate calculations for any time spent in any reported district. Moreover, district AYP performance calculations include all students enrolled in the district during the testing window, while school AYP performance calculations only include students enrolled in the school as of October 1, 2008 and tested in the same school during the testing window (the period between the March and June SIMS submissions).

The early childhood school in my district received an AYP determination, even though it does not serve any grades tested in MCAS. Why is this? In accordance with NCLB, the Department renders AYP determinations for schools serving grades 1 and/or 2. SIMS allows the Department to follow graduates of these early childhood schools and apply results from their grade 3 Reading and Mathematics tests to their former schools. 2009 AYP determinations for early childhood schools are based on the spring 2009 MCAS scores of grade 3 students who were enrolled in the early childhood school in grade 1 as of October 2006 or grade 2 as of October 2007, whichever was the highest grade served at the school. 2009 AYP attendance calculations are based on the school's 2008-09 SIMS data for grades 1 and/or 2.

What students are included in my LEP group? In addition to LEP students, the LEP group includes students who, according to district SIMS reports from the past two years (going back to October 2006), have progressed to a point where they can perform ordinary classroom work in English ("formerly LEP").

Is there a limit on the number of students who can take the MCAS-Alt? In accordance with NCLB, alternate standards may be used to measure the performance/progress of significantly cognitively impaired students. MCAS-Alt is the instrument Massachusetts uses to assess the attainment of students who, by reason of severe and complex disabilities, are not able to participate in standard MCAS testing. NCLB currently permits one percent of the total number of students assessed statewide and in each school district to be considered proficient using alternate standards. We routinely issue waivers, however, for districts in which more than one percent of students are significantly cognitively impaired.

What if the attendance of my school or district's medically-fragile students' adversely affects our overall attendance rate? We recognize that students with medical conditions or disabilities that result in long-term or frequent absences can impact attendance rates. When such cases lead to identification of a school or district for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, the determination may be appealed (see below). When appealing an AYP determination based on medical absences, be prepared to provide documentation from the concerned students' doctors, in addition to attendance data and documentation of home-or hospital-based tutoring that was provided.

How do I report a discrepancy in my preliminary data? Districts have a window for reporting AYP data discrepancies (August 17-21) via an online reporting tool linked from preliminary AYP data in the Security Portal. The following types of discrepancies are reportable through the tool: (A) 2009 Preliminary AYP Report Shell Discrepancies, such as apparent factual errors or mistakes in display or calculation of 2009 preliminary AYP data; and (B) closed schools, such as a school that was closed during SY2008-09 and therefore should not receive an AYP report in 2009. We will repair discrepancies resulting from our own processing errors, and we will review requests for corrections of discrepancies resulting from certain school- or district-based errors. Please note that the reporting window for high school graduation rate-related discrepancies for the 2008 cohort closed in winter 2009; further corrections to these data will not be accepted. Similarly, corrections to data submitted by districts in 2008-09 SIMS collections will not be accepted. **All MCAS-related discrepancies must be reported via www.mcasservicecenter.com during the MCAS Discrepancy Window (August 10-19, 2009).**

Beginning with the 2007-08 school year, NCLB has required states to give science tests. Is science included in AYP determinations? 2009 AYP determinations are only based on student achievement in ELA and mathematics, participation in these MCAS subject area tests, and performance or improvement on the additional academic indicator (attendance or graduation rate).

The attendance rate for my school or district has been adversely affected by the H1N1 virus. How will that impact AYP determinations? On May 20, 2009 Commissioner Chester pledged to offer flexibility to school districts impacted by the H1N1 virus regarding MCAS testing, 180-day school year requirements, and AYP calculations. We will contact districts with schools that did not make AYP only for attendance (and notified either the Commissioner or the Office of Data Collection that they had been adversely affected by H1N1) to notify them of the appeal option described below.

Can I appeal an AYP determination? Beyond the correction of data discrepancies, there is a process established for appealing AYP determinations **when those findings lead to the identification of a school or district for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring.** A letter detailing the appeal can only be submitted by the district superintendent or charter school leader, and should be e-mailed to AYP@doe.mass.edu. Since being posted in late August, the 2009 AYP data have been subjected to extensive external and internal review. As such, the Department has set **Monday, October 5, 2009** as the deadline for submitting 2009 AYP appeals.

What are the consequences for schools or districts that do not make AYP? The consequences for not making AYP vary depending on the circumstances, including the number of years the school or district has not made AYP and whether it receives federal Title I funds. See our guidance entitled *2009-10 School & District Accountability Status and Required Actions* for more specific information: www.doe.mass.edu/sda/ayp/2009/.

Where can I find more information about NCLB Requirements and the Massachusetts School and District Accountability and Assistance System? Information about NCLB is can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/nclb/>. Information about the accountability system and assistance system, as well as AYP determinations can be found at www.doe.mass.edu/sda/.

Table 5 – School Accountability Status: 2009-10 Academic Year²

2008 Status (in ELA or math; aggregate or subgroups)	2008 AYP	2009 AYP	2009 Status	Required Action(s) for Identified Schools
RESTRUCTURING – YR 2+	NO	NO	RESTRUCTURING – YR 2+	CHOICE / SES / RES
RESTRUCTURING – YR 2+	NO	YES	RESTRUCTURING – YR 2+	CHOICE / SES / RES
RESTRUCTURING – YR 1	NO	NO	RESTRUCTURING – YR 2+	CHOICE / SES / RES
RESTRUCTURING – YR 1	YES	NO	RESTRUCTURING – YR 2+	CHOICE / SES / RES
RESTRUCTURING – YR 1	NO	YES	RESTRUCTURING – YR 1	CHOICE / SES / RES PLAN
RESTRUCTURING – YR 1	YES	YES	NO STATUS	NONE
CORRECTIVE ACTION	NO	NO	RESTRUCTURING – YR 1	CHOICE / SES / RES PLAN
CORRECTIVE ACTION	YES	NO	RESTRUCTURING – YR 1	CHOICE / SES / RES PLAN
CORRECTIVE ACTION	NO	YES	CORRECTIVE ACTION	PLAN / CHOICE / SES / CA
CORRECTIVE ACTION	YES	YES	NO STATUS	NONE
IMPROVEMENT – YR 2+	NO	NO	CORRECTIVE ACTION	PLAN / CHOICE / SES / CA
IMPROVEMENT – YR 2+	YES	NO	CORRECTIVE ACTION	PLAN / CHOICE / SES / CA
IMPROVEMENT – YR 2+	NO	YES	IMPROVEMENT – YR 2+	PLAN / PD / CHOICE / SES
IMPROVEMENT – YR 2+	YES	YES	NO STATUS	NONE
IMPROVEMENT – YR 1	NO	NO	IMPROVEMENT – YR 2+	PLAN / PD / CHOICE / SES
IMPROVEMENT – YR 1	YES	NO	IMPROVEMENT – YR 2+	PLAN / PD / CHOICE / SES
IMPROVEMENT – YR 1	NO	YES	IMPROVEMENT – YR1	PLAN / PD / CHOICE
IMPROVEMENT – YR 1	YES	YES	NO STATUS	NONE
NO STATUS	NO	NO	IMPROVEMENT – YR1	PLAN / PD / CHOICE
NO STATUS	YES	NO	NO STATUS	NONE
NO STATUS	NO	YES	NO STATUS	NONE
NO STATUS	YES	YES	NO STATUS	NONE

Action	Description	Occurs When
PLAN	Improvement Planning	School does not make AYP for two consecutive years, thus entering Improvement status
PD	Professional Development	School does not make AYP for two consecutive years, thus entering Improvement status
CHOICE	Public School Choice	School does not make AYP for two consecutive years, thus entering Improvement status
SES	Supplemental Educational Services	School is in Improvement status for two or more years
CA	Corrective Action	School is in Improvement status for three or more years
RES PLAN	Planning for Restructuring	School is in Corrective Action status for two years
RES	Restructuring	School is in Corrective Action status for three or more years

² The consequences described herein apply to all Massachusetts public schools receiving federal Title I funds. Title I and non-Title I schools identified for improvement are required to develop or revise plans to improve student performance. For non-Title I schools in corrective action status, districts must take at least one corrective action to improve student performance. For non-Title I schools in restructuring status, districts must make fundamental changes in the school to improve student performance.

Table 6 – District Accountability Status: 2009-10 Academic Year³

2008 Status (in ELA or math)	2008 AYP (ELA or math; all grade spans)	2009 AYP (ELA or math; all grade spans)	2009 Status	Required Action(s) for Identified Districts
CORRECTIVE ACTION	NO	YES	CORRECTIVE ACTION	CA
CORRECTIVE ACTION	YES	YES	NO STATUS	NONE
IMPROVEMENT – YR 2+	YES	NO	CORRECTIVE ACTION	CA
IMPROVEMENT – YR 2+	YES	YES	NO STATUS	NONE
IMPROVEMENT – YR 2+	NO	NO	CORRECTIVE ACTION	CA
IMPROVEMENT – YR 2+	NO	YES	IMPROVEMENT – YR 2+	PLAN / PD
IMPROVEMENT – YR 1	NO	NO	IMPROVEMENT – YR 2+	PLAN / PD
IMPROVEMENT – YR 1	YES	NO	IMPROVEMENT – YR 2+	PLAN / PD
IMPROVEMENT – YR 1	NO	YES	IMPROVEMENT – YR1	PLAN / PD
IMPROVEMENT – YR 1	YES	YES	NO STATUS	NONE
NO STATUS	NO	NO	IMPROVEMENT – YR1	PLAN / PD
NO STATUS	YES	NO	NO STATUS	NONE
NO STATUS	NO	YES	NO STATUS	NONE
NO STATUS	YES	YES	NO STATUS	NONE

Action	Description	Occurs When
PLAN	Improvement Planning	District does not make AYP for two consecutive years, thus entering Improvement status
PD	Professional Development	District does not make AYP for two consecutive years, thus entering Improvement status
CA	Corrective Action	District is in Improvement status for three or more years

Corrective Actions for Districts

In accordance with the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), when a State identifies a district for Corrective Action the State must: (1) continue to ensure that the district is provided with technical assistance; and (2) take at least one of the following corrective actions, as consistent with State law:

- Defer programmatic funds or reduce administrative funds;
- Institute and fully implement a new curriculum based on State and local content and academic achievement standards that includes appropriate, scientifically research-based professional development for all relevant staff;
- Replace district personnel who are relevant to the inability of the district to make adequate progress;
- Remove individual schools from the jurisdiction of the district and arrange for their public governance and supervision;
- Appoint a receiver or trustee to administer the affairs of the district in place of the superintendent and school board; and/or
- Abolish or restructure the district.

³ The professional development consequences described herein apply to all Massachusetts public school districts receiving federal Title I funds. Improvement planning and corrective action consequences apply to all Massachusetts public school districts.