



# SCHOOL LEADERS' GUIDE TO THE 2006 CYCLE IV ACCOUNTABILITY AND ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS (AYP) REPORTS

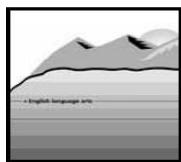
This brief guide explains key components of the accountability system that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has put in place to monitor the progress of our public schools towards meeting the goal of high achievement for all students. The information gleaned from this monitoring process is designed to help local and state education leaders determine what improvement strategies are succeeding – and when help is needed to ensure that all students have the opportunity to reach their potential.

The Massachusetts School and District Accountability System conforms to the accountability requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001. The Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determination process described in this document is part of the Commonwealth's system. For individual school and district Accountability and AYP reports and for further information, please visit the Massachusetts Department of Education Web site, at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/>.

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## Measuring Progress Toward Proficiency

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

The significant gains in student performance that have been achieved by Massachusetts schools 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. Elements of Massachusetts' school performance review system are designed to help those districts bring their students to even higher levels of achievement. But even in communities where most students are attaining English language arts (ELA) and mathematics proficiency, there are students 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 school 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, by 2014:** NCLB has established a legal requirement that we commit ourselves to the goal of helping every child achieve

proficiency in English language arts (ELA) (reading and writing) 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 have set a standard for proficiency that aims to ready our students for success not only in U.S. colleges and universities, but in the 21<sup>st</sup> century high-tech global economy as well.

Massachusetts, along with perhaps a half-dozen other states, has had a significant head start in meeting NCLB's ambitious goals because of our State's solid investments in standards-based reform that began in 1993. To meet NCLB's requirements, we adjusted our assessment and accountability policies and procedures in some areas. In recognition of our achievements over the past decade, the federal government has been flexible in working with us to meld NCLB requirements with essential components of the Massachusetts School and District Accountability System, which was established in 1999.

**Understanding a complex system:** The resulting system of school and district assessment and accountability processes and related terminology – MCAS, AYP, CPI, review cycles, Performance Ratings, Improvement Targets – is complex. This brief guide is intended to help you understand the Fall 2006 Cycle IV Accountability and AYP Reports for your district and its schools and answer most stakeholder questions about the accountability system. More materials are available on the Department's School & District Accountability Web site ([www.doe.mass.edu/sda/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sda/)). Districts and schools that enable their communities to view ratings, AYP, and other performance indicators as useful tools for the journey, not as extra burdens, will help their students climb the ELA and math "proficiency mountains" with a lighter step and a better sense of the path to the top.

## 2006 Cycle IV Accountability Reports

In October 2006 we will issue Cycle IV Accountability Reports, which include **Performance and Improvement Ratings** for all public schools and districts in the Commonwealth. Ratings are issued at the end of every two-year cycle, and are based on aggregate student performance on Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) English language arts and mathematics tests. Ratings are used to track schools' progress toward meeting the goal of all students achieving proficiency in English language arts and mathematics by the year 2014.

School and district Performance and Improvement Ratings are used to identify instances of low performance and of exemplary improvement. The school and district rating process, including Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determinations, is the first stage of Massachusetts' multi-tiered system of school and district accountability. The Department uses ratings and AYP determinations to guide the selection of schools and districts for further review by the Massachusetts Department of Education and the Office of Educational Quality and Accountability. Schools and districts that fail to meet State performance and improvement standards may be reviewed to determine under-performance and assess whether State intervention is needed to direct improvement efforts. Schools that demonstrate significant improvement may be selected for recognition and service in the exemplary schools/Commonwealth Compass Schools program.

Cycle IV ratings are based on MCAS English language arts (ELA) and mathematics test results for the 2004-05 and 2005-06 school years. In each subject, student performance data for the two years under review are combined, and separate ratings for ELA and mathematics are issued. Performance and Improvement calculations for ELA include students in grades 3, 4, 7, and 10; mathematics calculations include students in grades 4, 6, 8, and 10. The Composite Performance Index (CPI) is used to measure performance and improvement for the purposes of issuing both AYP determinations and Performance and Improvement Ratings. A school or district's CPI at the end of a cycle is used to establish its Performance Rating. To establish a school or district's Improvement Rating, the same end-of-cycle CPI is compared to the school or district's CPI in the previous cycle. Performance and Improvement Ratings are issued for schools and districts in the aggregate, not for student subgroups.

CPI scores range from 0 to 100, and correspond to one of the six Performance Rating categories listed below.

Performance Rating	CPI Range
<i>Very High</i>	90 - 100
<i>High</i>	80 - 89.9
<i>Moderate</i>	70 - 79.9
<i>Low</i>	60 - 69.9
<i>Very Low</i>	40 - 59.9
<i>Critically Low</i>	0 - 39.9

The five Improvement Rating categories are: *Above Target*; *On Target*; *Improved Below Target*; *No Change*; and *Declined*. Improvement Gain Targets are calculated by subtracting the baseline CPI from 100 and dividing the difference by the number of remaining cycles until 2014. For further details on Improvement calculations, please see the *Frequently Asked Questions* section of this document.

Cycle IV Accountability Reports include:

- Performance and Improvement Ratings based on aggregate student performance
- Aggregate AYP determinations for both years of the cycle under review
- Accountability Status, which is based on AYP history and current AYP determinations

These 'big picture' accountability findings provide the context for the year-by-year aggregate and subgroup AYP determinations that are published in school and district Adequate Yearly Progress reports. More details about AYP reports, CPIs, and baseline information can be found in subsequent sections of this guide.

## 2006 Cycle IV Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Determinations

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) established the years between 2002 and 2014 as the period within which all states are expected to enhance teaching and learning so that all students attain proficiency in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, as measured by standards-based State assessments. In Massachusetts, NCLB requirements have been met through enhancements to our state’s School and District Accountability System, which was adopted in 1999. We have divided the period from 1998 to 2014 into eight two-year cycles, and set intermediate performance targets for each cycle. To make AYP, districts, schools, and subgroups must meet these intermediate targets, or demonstrate improvement at a rate that puts them “on target” for all students to reach proficiency by 2014.

This year we are issuing Cycle IV end-of-cycle AYP determinations for each school and district. These determinations are based on:

- Participation and attendance/Competency Determination data from the 2005-06 school year;
- Performance or improvement findings based on combined MCAS data from 2004-05 (mid-cycle) and 2005-06 (end-of-cycle). Improvement is calculated in comparison to combined MCAS results from the baseline years, 2002-03 and 2003-04.

AYP determinations are made separately for English language arts (ELA) and for mathematics. For each subject there are multiple AYP determinations – for **students in the aggregate** and for **student subgroups**. 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 for student subgroups if the group consists of (1) forty students or more assessed in each year for which performance data is being analyzed, and (2) the number of subgroup 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 subgroup members is 200 or more.

To receive an affirmative 2006 Cycle IV AYP determination, schools and districts must meet a student participation requirement, an additional attendance or graduation requirement, and either the State’s Cycle IV performance target for that subject or the district, school, or subgroup’s own Cycle IV improvement target. See details below.

### How Are AYP Determinations Calculated?

$$A + (B \text{ or } C) + D = \text{AYP}$$

<b>A</b>	<b>Participation Rate:</b> 95% or greater participation in MCAS & MCAS-Alt
+	
<b>B</b>	<b>Performance:</b> 80.5 or greater Composite Performance Index in ELA 68.7 or greater Composite Performance Index in math
<b>or</b>	
<b>C</b>	<b>Improvement:</b> Meet or exceed Cycle IV Improvement Target (Specific to districts, schools, and subgroups)
+	
<b>D</b>	<b>Performance or Improvement on Additional Indicator:</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grades 1-8: 92% or higher attendance rate, or 1% improvement over 2005</li> <li>• High School: 70% or higher Competency Determination (CD) rate</li> </ul>

## Understanding the Composite Performance Index (CPI)

Student performance is a fundamental component in rendering Adequate Yearly Progress decisions. In Massachusetts, student performance is measured using the State's Composite Performance Index (CPI). The CPI is a 100-point index that combines the Proficiency Index, scores of students who participate in standard MCAS ELA and mathematics tests, with the MCAS-Alt Index, scores of those who take the MCAS-Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt). The CPI is a measure of the extent to which students are progressing toward proficiency (a CPI of 100) in ELA and mathematics. Composite Performance Indices are generated separately for English language arts and mathematics, and for all levels – state, district, school, and student subgroup.

In Massachusetts, the MCAS-Alternate Assessment 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. While the majority of students with disabilities take standard paper and pencil MCAS tests, either with or without accommodations, local educators should take great care in determining whether the standard MCAS or the MCAS-Alt is the right test for an individual student's needs.

### How is the Composite Performance Index Calculated?

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

1. *(Table 1a, p.5)* the number of students who took **standard MCAS tests** who performed at each of the five proficiency levels set out in Table 1a and multiplying the number at each level times the proficiency index points associated with that level;
2. *(Table 1a, p.5)* 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 2a and multiplying the number at each level times the proficiency index points assigned to that level; and
3. *(Table 1b, p.5)* the number of students with significant cognitive impairments who demonstrated performance at each of the five MCAS-Alt levels shown in Table 2b and multiplying the number at each level times the MCAS-Alt index points associated with that level.
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 (using standard MCAS tests and the MCAS-Alt.)

The result is a number between 0 and 100, which constitutes the district, school, or subgroup's CPI for that subject and student group.

## Understanding Cycle IV Baseline Information

In order to gauge progress toward the goal of proficiency for all students, a performance baseline figure is established for each district, school, and subgroup. The performance baselines used to calculate ratings and AYP determinations for both years of Cycle IV are derived from student performance and participation data for the 2002-03 and 2003-04 school years. A school or district's Cycle IV baseline Composite Performance Index (CPI) for ELA or mathematics is equivalent to its Cycle III CPI.

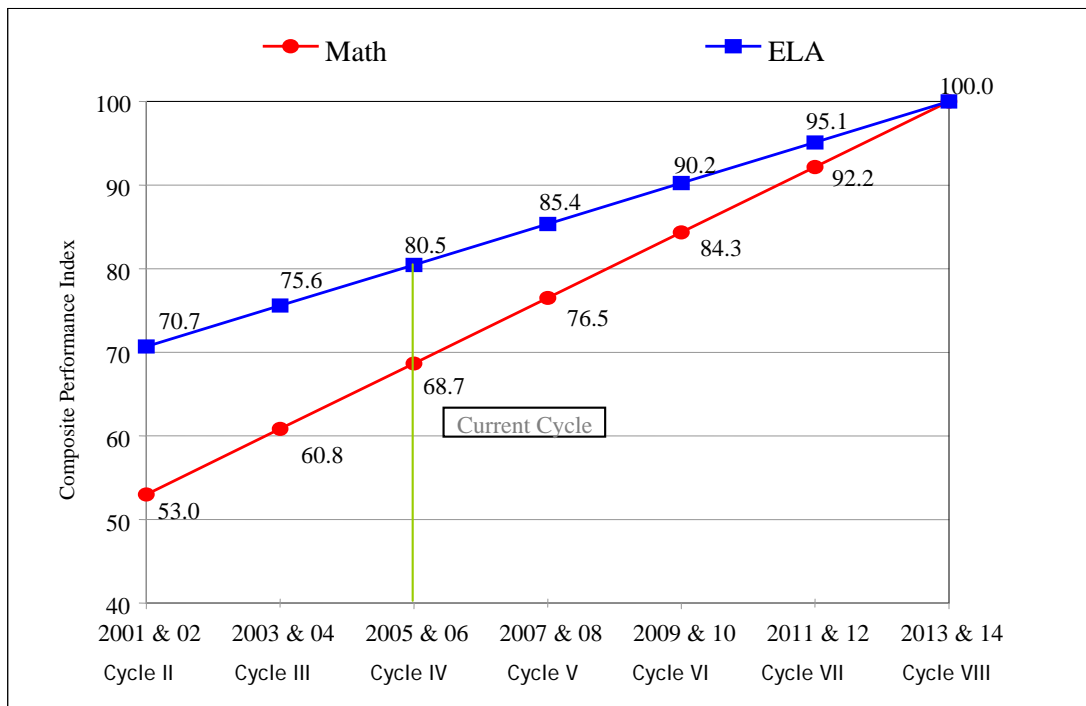
Table 1a. Proficiency Index Points

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		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 – 208	Warning/Failing – Low	0

Table 1b. 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 no submitted	0

State Performance Targets 2001 - 2014



## Interim Adjustment Regarding Certain Special Education Students and AYP Determinations

In May 2005, the U.S. Department of Education (USED) granted states additional flexibility in their treatment of the special education student population for accountability purposes. Currently, up to 1% of the student population assessed using the MCAS-Alt may be included in AYP determinations using the Alternate Index. The new policy allows states to develop modified achievement standards and assessments for an additional 2% of the student population. USED has not yet released long-term policy guidance around this issue, but we have been able to provide some short-term flexibility for the 2005 Mid-Cycle and 2006 Cycle IV Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determinations. A summary of our USED-approved plan for providing this flexibility in Cycle IV follows.

We establish a 2% “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.

After generating preliminary AYP determinations, we identify the schools and districts statewide that did not make AYP in English language arts, mathematics, or both subjects for their special education subgroup only. 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 2% “proxy group”. 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 for English language arts and mathematics separately. AYP reports, as required by USED, display the original CPI calculated from all assessment results. If changed under the secondary analysis, the modified AYP determinations for the Special Education subgroup are indicated by a notation to alert readers of the basis for the modified determination.

## Understanding Accountability Status Determinations

In accordance with NCLB, a school or district that fails to make AYP for two or more consecutive years in the same subject area, for students in the aggregate or subgroups, is identified for improvement, corrective action or restructuring status. A school or district that has made AYP for the past two years has a positive “No Status” determination. To exit an accountability status, the school or district must make AYP in the identified area for two consecutive years.

The consequences under NCLB for schools and districts identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring status are summarized in the School & District Accountability Status charts located at the end of this guide, and detailed in the Department’s ‘School & District Accountability Status and Required Actions’ document accessible from <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sda/ayp/cycleIV/>.

## Revised Method for Determining District Accountability Status

In the summer of 2006 we received approval from the U.S. Department of Education (USED) for a revision to our approach to identifying districts for improvement or corrective action status under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Under our revised method, which has also been adopted by the majority of states, we will identify a district for improvement or corrective action only if the district fails to make AYP in the same subject area (English language arts/reading or mathematics) for each of the elementary, middle, and high school grade-spans for students in the aggregate or any subgroup for two consecutive years.

To date, district AYP and accountability status determinations in English language arts/reading and mathematics have been based on MCAS and attendance data for all district students, combined across grade levels. Beginning with 2006 AYP reporting, we will issue district-level AYP determinations separately for three grade-spans – grades 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12 – for students in the aggregate and student subgroups. District accountability status determinations will be driven by the new grade-span AYP determinations. We will continue to publish district-level AYP determinations based on all grades combined for informational and planning purposes only.

- In 2006, we will newly identify a district for improvement if the district had a negative AYP determination in 2005 and in 2006 fails to make AYP in the same subject (English language arts or math) for one or more student groups (students in the aggregate or any subgroup) in all grade-spans.
- In subsequent years, we will identify a district for improvement if it fails to make AYP in the same subject area and all grade-spans, for students in the aggregate or any subgroup, for two consecutive years.

The change in methodology will not be applied retroactively to district accountability status or AYP determinations. A district previously identified for improvement remains identified for improvement until the district makes AYP for at least one grade-span in the identified subject (English language arts/reading or math) for two consecutive years. School-level AYP determinations for English language arts/reading and math continue to be based on all grades assessed in the school. The revised methodology does not apply to Massachusetts districts that consist of a single school; single-school districts in Massachusetts continue to receive AYP determinations based on all grades assessed.

The following table displays AYP History and Accountability Status for a sample district. The 2006 AYP determinations indicate whether the district made AYP for each of the three grade-spans, for students in the aggregate and subgroups. This district is identified for improvement in mathematics because it failed to make AYP in 2005, based on data for all students combined, and in 2006 for all three grade-spans.

Sample District – Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) History							Accountability Status
			2003	2004	2005	2006	
ELA	Grades 3-5	Aggregate	-	-	-	Yes	No Status
		All Subgroups	-	-	-	No	
	Grades 6-8	Aggregate	-	-	-	Yes	
		All Subgroups	-	-	-	No	
	Grades 9-12	Aggregate	-	-	-	Yes	
		All Subgroups	-	-	-	Yes	
	All Grades Combined	Aggregate	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
		All subgroups	Yes	Yes	No	No	
MATH	Grades 3-5	Aggregate	-	-	-	Yes	Identified for Improvement
		All Subgroups	-	-	-	No	
	Grades 6-8	Aggregate	-	-	-	Yes	
		All Subgroups	-	-	-	No	
	Grades 9-12	Aggregate	-	-	-	Yes	
		All Subgroups	-	-	-	No	
	All Grades Combined	Aggregate	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	
		All subgroups	No	Yes	No	No	

## Frequently Asked Questions about AYP Reporting

### **Where can I get more information on the various terms used in my 2006 AYP Report?**

Each online AYP Report links to a glossary of AYP terms, which has brief definitions of the terms included in the report.

### **How is Participation calculated?**

Participation rates represent the number of students who participated in all 2006 MCAS English language arts/Reading or mathematics tests (# assessed) divided by the number of students who were enrolled (# enrolled) on the dates MCAS tests were administered. As a matter of federal law, the required participation rate to make AYP is 95%. Certain clarifications apply: (1) Limited English Proficient (LEP) students in their first year of U.S. schooling are treated as participants in ELA/Reading tests as long as they have participated in Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessments (MEPA); (2) students who transferred out and did not complete the entire test (those with a performance level of Incomplete) are neither in the numerator nor the denominator; (3) students who participated in MCAS-Alt are treated as participants, as long as a portfolio was submitted; (4) students who were absent from testing – those with performance levels of ABS (Absent) or MED (Medically-Excused Absence) – are not considered participants.

### **How is the Performance “N” calculated?**

The Performance N represents the number of students included in Performance calculations. For these end-of-cycle AYP reports, this includes students assessed using tests that were administered in both spring of 2005 and spring of 2006. As a result, the Performance N is generally larger than the number in the participation column. At the school level, only students who were assessed and enrolled in the school on October 1 of the same school year are included. N figures for subgroups are based on demographic and enrollment information provided through the Student Information Management System (SIMS), with one exception. The LEP subgroup also includes students who are formerly Limited English Proficient (FLEP), according to SIMS, in one of the two prior school years. LEP students in their first year of U.S. schooling are excluded from Performance and Improvement calculations, as are students who did not complete testing.

### **How is the Performance Composite Performance Index (CPI) calculated?**

The Performance CPI for a given year is calculated by assigning Proficiency Index or Alternative Index points to each student included, summing the total number of index points, then dividing by the number of students included. Further details regarding the assignment of index points can be found on pages 4 and 5 of this guide. 2006 Performance and Improvement calculations are based on MCAS results from grade-level and subject-area tests that were given in both the 2004-05 and 2005-06 school years (ELA/reading grades 3, 4, 7, 10; mathematics grades 4, 6, 8, 10).

### **How is the baseline Composite Performance Index (CPI) calculated?**

The baseline CPI for a given cycle is calculated based on the ELA/Reading and mathematics performance, respectively, of students tested over the previous 2-year cycle. Therefore, the baseline CPI for Cycle IV includes the performance of students tested in grades 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 10 in the spring of 2003 and spring of 2004. The Cycle IV baseline is equivalent to the 2004 End-of-Cycle III Performance CPI. Performance data are linked to demographic and enrollment data from SIMS.

### How is the Improvement Gain Target calculated?

The Improvement Gain Target indicates the amount of gain necessary for a group to remain on target toward reaching a CPI of 100 by 2014. The Improvement Gain Target for a given subject is calculated by subtracting the district, school, or subgroup's baseline CPI from 100 (the ultimate CPI goal), and dividing the difference by the number of remaining cycles until the year 2014, including the current cycle. For Cycle IV (2004-05 and 2005-06), that number is 5; for Cycle V (2006-07 and 2007-08), it will be 4.

$$\frac{100 \text{ (Goal)} - \text{baseline Composite Performance Index}}{\# \text{ of remaining cycles until 2014}}$$

Improvement targets are set for ELA and mathematics separately. At mid-cycle, the Improvement Gain Target is 2/3 of the end-of-cycle target.

### My school's 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 the baseline years (the 2002-03 and 2003-04 school years), the school's current Performance CPI is used to make AYP determinations for the aggregate and subgroups.

### What is the Improvement calculation error band?

The improvement that a school or district is expected to make from one cycle to another is expressed not as a single numeric target, but as a target range. This range includes an "error band" that surrounds the target number. The size of the error band 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 error band for Cycle IV is 2.5, but may be as large as 4.5 for groups smaller than 100. The error band is only applied to a group's Improvement Target, not its Performance Target.

### How is the Attendance rate calculated?

Attendance and enrollment data are taken directly from the Student Information Management System (SIMS). The Attendance rate is calculated by dividing the total number of days a student attended school by the total number of days the student was enrolled. Students are included in district-level Attendance rates if they attended any school in the district for any portion of the school year. As a result, it is possible for a student to be included in multiple districts statewide. However, students are only included in the calculation for a school if they were enrolled in that school on October 1. Students are not counted toward multiple schools and only the amount of time a student spent at the school in which they were enrolled on October 1 factors into the calculation. Therefore, all students in a district are counted towards the district AYP attendance rate, but not all of the students contribute to the Attendance rate of a particular school because a student might not have been enrolled in that district on October 1. Typically, full membership is 180 days, although some schools have longer school years. The Attendance rate required to make AYP in 2006 is 92%, or improvement of at least 1% from the previous year. Determinations are made for groups of six or more students. District attendance calculations include students who are out-placed in private alternative schools/programs.

### How is the Competency Determination (CD) rate calculated?

A Competency Determination, or CD, is awarded to high school students who pass both the ELA and mathematics sections of the grade 10 MCAS (including students who pass the grade 10 MCAS retest or successfully submit a grade 10 MCAS performance appeal). The CD rate is the number of students who have received a CD, divided by the total number of students enrolled in the school in grade 12 as of October 1 of that school year. The calculations do not include transferred, deceased, or foreign exchange students. Students outplaced in private special education settings are included in CD rate calculations for the sending district.

**My school has a CPI and an Improvement score for a subgroup but doesn't say whether I met the target or made AYP. Why is this?**

Under our State's revised accountability plan approved in the summer of 2004 by the US Department of Education, subgroups with fewer than 40 students assessed in 2005 and 2006 do not qualify for AYP determinations. To qualify, a subgroup 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 as a subgroup.

**My district is Identified for Improvement, but none of the schools in my district are. Why is this?**

District AYP determinations are issued based on data for 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 such students, however, are included in district-level AYP determinations for the aggregate and any subgroups to which the students belong.

**What students are included in my Limited English Proficiency subgroup?**

LEP students for whom the 2005-06 school year was their first year in U.S. schools were not required to take MCAS tests in English language arts/Reading, but they are counted in Participation calculations as if they had participated. First-year LEP students are required to participate in MCAS mathematics tests, however their scores are not included in CPI calculations, regardless of their scores on the test.

In February 2004, the US Department of Education allowed states to expand the definition of the LEP subgroup to include students who, in the past two years, have progressed to a point where they can perform ordinary classroom work in English. Any student who was identified as LEP in district SIMS reports going back to October 2002 has been added to a new category entitled LEP/formerly LEP (L/FLEP).

**Is there a limit on the number of students who can take the MCAS-Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt)?**

In accordance with the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), alternate standards may be used to measure the performance/progress of significantly cognitively impaired students. The MCAS-Alt is the tool 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 1% of the total number of students assessed statewide and in each school district to be considered proficient using alternate standards. The Department routinely issues waivers, however, for districts in which more than 1% of students are significantly cognitively impaired.

**What if my school or district's medically-fragile students' attendance adversely affects the overall Attendance rate?**

The Department recognizes that students with medical conditions or disabilities that result in long-term or frequent absences can adversely affect a school or district's Attendance rate. 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, schools and districts should 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.

**Can I appeal my school or district AYP determinations?**

The window for reporting 2006 MCAS & AYP data discrepancies is open through September 8, 2006. The Department will repair discrepancies in student or aggregate data resulting from our own processing errors, and will review requests for corrections of discrepancies resulting from certain school- or district-based errors. Details regarding MCAS & AYP discrepancy reporting are posted online at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sda/ayp/cycleIV/>.

Beyond the correction of data discrepancies, there is a process established for appealing AYP determinations when those determinations lead to identification of a school or district for Improvement, Corrective Action, or Restructuring. If after reviewing the student files and accountability data posted to the Department's Security Portal and [www.mcasservicecenter.com](http://www.mcasservicecenter.com) you are certain that special circumstances warrant a reconsideration of one or more AYP determinations, your school or district has the option of filing an appeal. A letter detailing the appeal can only be submitted by the district superintendent or charter school leader, and should be e-mailed to [ATA@doe.mass.edu](mailto:ATA@doe.mass.edu). Any supporting documentation should also be submitted at this time. After filing the appeal, the superintendent may designate additional people to whom questions about the appeal should be directed.

**What are the consequences for schools or districts that do not make Adequate Yearly Progress in the aggregate or in particular subgroups?**

The consequences for not making AYP vary depending on the circumstances. See the tables on the final pages of this guide for explanatory details. The MADOE document 'School & District Accountability Status and Required Actions' provides additional information, and can be accessed from <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sda/ayp/cycleIV/>.

**Where can I find more information about the Massachusetts School and District Accountability System?**

Check the Department of Education's Accountability Web site at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sda/>. Information specific to Cycle IV can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sda/ayp/cycleIV/>.

# School Accountability Status: 2006-07 Academic Year<sup>1</sup>

2005 Status (in ELA or math; aggregate or subgroups)	2005 AYP	2006 AYP	2006 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 <sup>2</sup>	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

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> See MADOE document ‘School and District Accountability Status and Required Actions, 2006-07’ for detailed description of required actions: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sda/ayp/cycleIV/>.

### District Accountability Status: 2006-07 Academic Year<sup>3</sup>

2005 Status (in ELA or math)	2005 AYP (ELA or math; all grades)	2006 AYP (ELA or math; all grade-spans)	2006 Status	Required Action(s) for Identified Districts
CORRECTIVE ACTION	NO	YES	CORRECTIVE ACTION	<i>NOT APPLICABLE FOR 2006-07 ACADEMIC YEAR</i>
CORRECTIVE ACTION	YES	YES	NO STATUS	
IMPROVEMENT – YR 2+	YES	NO	CORRECTIVE ACTION	
IMPROVEMENT – YR 2+	YES	YES	NO STATUS	
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 <sup>4</sup>	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
<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defer programmatic funds or reduce administrative funds;</li> <li>• 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;</li> <li>• Replace district personnel who are relevant to the inability of the district to make adequate progress;</li> <li>• Remove individual schools from the jurisdiction of the district and arrange for their public governance and supervision;</li> <li>• Appoint a receiver or trustee to administer the affairs of the district in place of the superintendent and school board; and/or</li> <li>• Abolish or restructure the district.</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> See MADOE document ‘School and District Accountability Status and Required Actions, 2006-07’ for detailed description of required actions: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sda/ayp/cycleIV/>.