



# State of New Jersey

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November 3, 2008

TO: Chief School Administrators  
Charter School Lead Persons

FROM: Lucille E. Davy   
Commissioner

SUBJECT: *No Child Left Behind* Accountability Workbook Amendment – Resetting of Annual Measurable Objectives for AYP

Due to administration of new state assessments for grades 5 through 8 this spring, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) submitted an accountability workbook amendment to the US Department of Education (USDE) on October 17, 2008 requesting changes to New Jersey’s adequate yearly progress (AYP) targets and to the procedure used for the Safe Harbor calculation for elementary and middle school grade spans. Included was a request to recalculate our AYP targets to accurately reflect the academic performance and growth of our students relative to the requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)*. We needed to develop a system that would have more appropriate targets while at the same time recognizing the progress that has been made by so many of New Jersey’s schools.

The USDE has been working with us to address this matter and has just approved this amendment. The approved proposal may be viewed on-line at <http://www.nj.gov/education/title1/accountability/>

The recalculation of our AYP targets was dictated by section 1111 of *NCLB*. The following chart shows the revised targets for the elementary and middle grades. (Please note that high school targets have not changed since there was no change to the HSPA.)

### Language Arts Literacy Targets

| School Years | Elementary: Grades 3-5 |            | Middle: Grades 6-8 |            |
|--------------|------------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
|              | Original Target        | New Target | Original Target    | New Target |
| 2008-2010    | 82                     | 73         | 76                 | 72         |
| 2011-2013    | 91                     | 86         | 87                 | 86         |
| 2014         | 100                    | 100        | 100                | 100        |

**Mathematics Targets**

|              | Elementary: Grades 3-5 |            | Middle: Grades 6-8 |            |
|--------------|------------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
| School Years | Original Target        | New Target | Original Target    | New Target |
| 2008-2010    | 73                     | 69         | 62                 | 61         |
| 2011-2013    | 85                     | 84         | 79                 | 80         |
| 2014         | 100                    | 100        | 100                | 100        |

We know that New Jersey schools continue to work diligently to reach the AYP requirements and we approached the task of resetting the targets carefully to ensure that schools were acknowledged for their progress in improving student achievement. Because we are comparing two entirely different tests and levels of rigor, we identified a statistically sound process to compare the 2007 test results and the 2008 test results. This process allows us to identify those schools that have made significant progress for AYP determinations using the Safe Harbor provisions of NCLB.

NJDOE has now calculated the 2008 AYP results using the new targets and the new interim Safe Harbor calculation for schools with elementary and middle grade spans. In a separate notification, you are being advised how to access the AYP results for your schools on a secure NJDOE web site. These individual school results are embargoed to allow for a 30-day appeal period and will be made available to the public and the media on or about December 3, 2008.

A review of the statewide results shows that of the 2210 New Jersey elementary, middle and high schools in which tests were administered, 70.8% (1564) made AYP. While this is a slight decrease in the number of schools that made AYP from last year, many schools have demonstrated progress in increasing the performance of their students.

You should also note that the USDE approved several other amendments to New Jersey's accountability workbook previously which may have impacted the AYP results in your district this year. These changes included:

1. A uniform proficiency "n" of 30 for total students and all student subgroups
2. AYP Restart
3. Participation Averaging
4. High School Banking

More information about the spring amendments is outlined in my July 14, 2008 memo which can be accessed at:  
<http://www.nj.gov/education/title1/accountability/workbook/071408amend.pdf>

I thank you for your continued efforts to make certain that we have high expectations for all of our students as we work to ensure that they all reach high levels of achievement.

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c: Members, State Board of Education  
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