



[Home](#)
[About MCIC](#)
[Research & Maps](#)
[Facts OnLine](#)
[Hot Topics](#)
[Subscribers](#)
[Support MCIC](#)

Print Download Email

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) at Schools in the Metropolitan Chicago Region: Are Children Being Left Behind?

School achievement at the elementary and secondary level is crucial for children's future success in higher education and the workplace. All children deserve an education that provides them with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed.

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, a federally mandated education policy signed into law by President Bush, has filtered through our educational system with the promise of preparing disadvantaged students for academic achievement and countering educational inequities. NCLB requires that all states establish a timeline to ensure Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) toward the goal that 100% of students overall and in all designated subgroups are proficient in language arts and math by 2014. If a school or school district has at least forty students in a particular subgroup (White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, Multiracial, Limited English Proficiency, Individualized Education Program, or Low Income), it is accountable for the progress of students in that subgroup toward 100% proficiency.

NCLB includes clearly defined accountability standards, requiring states to measure and improve performance for all subgroups at each school. To ensure the statistical validity of these measures, schools must test at least 95% of each subgroup in order to demonstrate AYP. Attendance rates in elementary and middle schools or graduation rate in high schools are included in the assessment of AYP as an additional measure.

Each state sets its own standards for yearly progress. If a school does not make AYP for two years in a row, that school is placed in "School Improvement" and must develop an improvement plan and offer parents school choice (the option of placing their child at another school). A school failing to make AYP for the third year must continue to offer school choice and Supplemental Educational Services (SES). In the fourth year, schools not making AYP are placed in "Corrective Action" and are required to choose remediation tactics outlined by federal law. Further failures to make AYP result in implementation of corrective measures or a restructuring of the school.

To demonstrate the local effects of NCLB and AYP, MCIC has compiled data that shows where the schools in the metropolitan Chicago region stand in the program. Maps of [the six-county area, school achievement by district](#) and [Chicago](#) show schools' overall achievement of AYP for the 2003-2004 school year, the most recent data available.

There are some clear geographic patterns: The majority of schools not making AYP are in Chicago, most of which are located on the South and West sides. Chicago schools represent 52% of non-performing AYP schools in the region, though they represent only 30% of the total number of reporting schools. However, it is important to note that there are schools not making AYP in each of the six counties in the metropolitan Chicago region.

The table below shows the performance of students in schools in each of the six counties and the City of Chicago. Overall, 60.6% of schools in the six-county area make AYP, ranging from 31.8% in Chicago to 84.1% in DuPage County.

| | Schools Reporting AYP | Percent Making AYP |
|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Chicago | 550 | 31.8% |
| Suburban COOK | 586 | 71.5% |
| DUPAGE | 232 | 84.1% |
| KANE | 144 | 62.5% |

| | | |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| LAKE | 175 | 72.0% |
| MCHENRY | 69 | 79.7% |
| WILL | 76 | 67.1% |
| TOTAL | 1832 | 60.6% |

View a table of [school achievement of AYP by Chicago community area](#). Further analysis shows the percentage of [schools by county making AYP](#) for reading and math for each subgroup.

Some of the findings related to AYP and subgroup progress include:

- Whites and Asians had the highest proficiency levels; in over 95% of schools in each county, whites and Asians made AYP in math and reading.
- The gaps between the counties and Chicago were quite small for white and Asian subgroups.
- Generally, there was more variation among counties in the percent of various subgroups making AYP in reading than in math.
 - The largest discrepancies in achievement by county were among schools serving LEP students (Limited English Proficiency).
 - Will and McHenry Counties had the lowest percentage of schools making AYP for LEP students (0% and 33% for Reading and 33% and 67% for math for Will and McHenry Counties respectively).
- There was also a significant difference among counties in the percentage of schools making AYP in math for learning-disabled students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP).
 - In Lake County two-thirds of schools made AYP in math for students with learning disabilities, while in Cook and DuPage Counties less than 30% of schools made AYP for this subgroup. Lake County also did well in students with disabilities making AYP in reading with 52.3% of IEP students making AYP, the highest percentage among the six counties.
- Low income students seemed to have particular trouble making AYP in reading in Kane County, where only 43% of schools made AYP for this subgroup.
 - The percent of schools where low-income students made AYP in math in Kane County (77.6%) was above the average for all the counties (67.5%).
 - Cook County had the lowest percentage of schools making AYP in math for low-income students, with 65.4% of schools making AYP for this subgroup.

View a table showing the performance in achieving AYP of [subgroups by Chicago community areas](#).

These findings illustrate some of the challenges in interpreting AYP data and some weaknesses in the model. While it is important for schools and communities to ensure that all students gain the proficiency in math and reading they need to succeed, the current formula "punishes" diverse schools, giving them far more ways to fail than more homogeneous schools. If any subgroup (White, Black Hispanic, Asian, Native American, Multiracial, Limited English Proficiency, Individualized Education Program, or Low Income) fails to make AYP, then the entire school fails to make AYP. There is a statistically significant negative correlation between the number of subgroups included in AYP calculations for a school and whether that school makes AYP.

These findings also illustrate the ongoing "urbanization" of the suburbs as they become more racially, ethnically, linguistically, and economically diverse. Though there were relatively few schools in DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will Counties with at least forty black students (9%), 29% of schools in suburban Cook County had at least forty black students. There were at least forty Hispanic students in 42.7% of Chicago schools, but the county with the highest percentage of schools with at least forty Hispanic students was Kane County, with 46.5%; Will County had 28.9%. Kane County also had the highest percentage of schools (28.5%) with at least forty LEP students. While over 95% of Chicago schools had at least forty low-income students, 46.9% of Kane County schools, 45.9% of suburban Cook County schools, and 36.0% of Lake County schools faced this same challenge. As the population in the six county area changes, so will the subgroup populations of the schools, making AYP

achievement even more challenging for many suburban schools.

In addition, the standardized tests used to calculate AYP capture point-in-time proficiency for student populations at specific grade levels; they do not measure the progress that schools achieve with the same students over time. Also, socio-demographic factors that are out of schools' control, such as poverty and parental involvement, can have significant impacts on the percent of students meeting or exceeding standards. Finally, NCLB requires the standards to rise until 2014, when 100% of students are expected to be proficient. By that time, almost all schools will have failed to make AYP.

The usefulness of AYP as a measure of school performance is likely to decline as fewer and fewer schools are able to meet the standards set by NCLB. Still, AYP provides a window into the basic proficiencies of students in local schools and is useful as an indicator of community-level disparities that impact the performance of students in different subgroups.

Review of AYP school data for your community might suggest areas for intervention and community support. If you are interested in a more in-depth analysis of the relationship between school achievement and community change, please contact Melissa Kraus Schwarz at MCIC at (312) 580-6437 or mkraus@mcic.org.

MCIC (Metro Chicago Information Center)
17 N. State Street, Suite 1600
Chicago, IL 60602-3294
T: 312.580.2878 F: 312.580.2879
info@mcic.org