

# NEWS

Connecticut Department of Education

Dr. Mark K. McQuillan  
Commissioner



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## State Department of Education Reports on 'Adequate Yearly Progress' of Connecticut Schools and Districts under NCLB

Reading is the Issue in Elementary and Middle Schools; Math is the Challenge in High Schools

(HARTFORD, CONN.) – About 60 percent of Connecticut's schools met this year's higher performance standards required under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. The results are based on student performance in reading and mathematics on the 2008 Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT). More than 280,000 students participated in the assessments.

"A total of 408 schools did not meet the NCLB standard —Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)—this year; that is about 40 percent of our schools and about 100 more schools than last year, said state education Commissioner Mark K. McQuillan in announcing the findings. Under NCLB, the required percentages of students achieving at or above proficient levels increased this year from about 7 in 10 students to roughly 8 in 10. The standards will again rise in 2010 to require that about 9 in 10 students meet the proficiency standards in math and reading, and rise again to 100 percent of students by 2013-14.

The Commissioner said, "Teaching reading skills to students in elementary and middle schools is a real and growing challenge; this year's data show that the vast majority of schools that did not make AYP did so in the categories of 'reading' or 'reading and math.' The Department is focusing on ways to improve early reading instruction in our districts. Restoring the Early Reading Success grants and our continuing work that was begun at last year's reading summit are important pieces of the puzzle.

"At the high school level," Commissioner McQuillan pointed out, "mathematics is the greater issue. One third of the high schools that did not make AYP did so because of their math scores. This is one reason why we are proposing a greater emphasis on math and science in our high school reform proposals which we plan to send to the General Assembly this January."

This is the third year that Connecticut tested public school students in Grades 3-8 as required by federal law to determine "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) in elementary and middle schools. The Grade 10 CAPT is used to determine AYP in high schools. In addition to assessing more students, schools had to meet higher standards that increased in 2008 as required by law:

- **Mathematics:** The CMT math standard increased from 74 percent of students scoring at or above proficient to 82 percent, CAPT increased from 69 percent to 80 percent;
- **Reading:** CMT Reading increased from 68 percent proficient to 79 percent, CAPT Reading increased from 72 percent proficient to 81 percent proficient;
- **Test Participation:** 95 percent of students enrolled in the tested grades must participate in CMT and CAPT Testing;
- **Other:** 70 percent must be at or above the basic performance in **writing** on CMT, and 70 percent of high school students must **graduate**.

Under these standards, for a school to achieve adequate yearly progress, standards must be met by the whole school and by each subgroup of 40 or more students, including white, black, Hispanic, American Indian and Asian students; students with disabilities; English language learners; and economically disadvantaged students. If a school or subgroup does not achieve AYP in the same content area for two consecutive years, the school is identified as “in need of improvement.”

**AYP Status for 2008**

- Of 805 elementary and middle schools, **349** did not make AYP – an increase of 84 over last year’s 265.
- Of Connecticut’s 182 public high schools, **59** did not make AYP – 9 more than last year.
- Of the state’s 171 school districts, **44** did not make AYP – 12 more than last year.

“We are working directly with 15 of Connecticut’s largest districts -- identified under state accountability legislation – to help them turn around schools that have been struggling for years. It is very difficult to overcome the effects of poverty with limited school resources, but it is essential that we employ effective strategies that help close the gaps in student performance,” said Commissioner McQuillan.

**In Need of Improvement Elementary and Middle (CMT)**

- **There are 239 elementary and middle schools identified as “in need of improvement”;** (see attached list of all schools). *Note: Of these schools, 45 made AYP this year, so they are on “hold” pending next year’s AYP determination; if they make AYP next year, they will be removed from “needs improvement.”*
- **Of the 239 elementary and middle schools in need of improvement:**
  - 66 are in Year 1
  - 53 are in Year 2
  - 22 are in Year 3
  - 37 are in Year 4
  - 53 are in Year 6
  - 4 are in Year 7
  - 4 are in Year 8
- **A total of 120 elementary and middle schools are in “corrective action”** (see attached list for schools that have been “in need of improvement” for three or more years).

Reasons for failing AYP among elementary and middle schools (in number of schools):

Whole school math and reading achievement	171
Whole school math achievement	5
Whole school reading achievement	79
Subgroup math and reading achievement	66
Subgroup math achievement	1
Subgroup reading achievement	27

**CMT Schools removed from In Need of Improvement Status:**

<b>Danbury School District</b>	<b>Morris Street School</b>
<b>Norwalk School District</b>	<b>Brookside Elementary School</b>
<b>Norwalk School District</b>	<b>Kendall Elementary School</b>
<b>Stratford School District</b>	<b>David Wooster Middle School</b>
<b>Waterbury School District</b>	<b>Margaret M. Generali Elementary School</b>

### In Need of Improvement High School (CAPT)

- **There are 44 high schools identified as “in need of improvement”;** (see attached list). *Note: Of these schools, six made AYP this year, so they are on “hold” pending next year’s AYP determination; if they make AYP next year, they will be removed from “needs improvement.”*
- **Of the 44 high schools in need of improvement:**
  - 4 are in Year 1
  - 6 are in Year 2
  - 8 are in Year 3
  - 4 are in Year 4
  - 19 are in Year 5
  - 3 are in Year 6

A total of 34 high schools are in “corrective action”

### **No high schools were removed from Improvement Status**

Reasons for not making AYP among high schools (in number of schools):

Whole school math and reading achievement	28
Whole school math achievement	14
Whole school reading achievement	4
Subgroup math and reading achievement	8
Subgroup math achievement	4
Subgroup reading achievement	1

### In Need of Improvement District Level

- **There are 21 districts identified as “in need of improvement”;** (see attached list). *Note: Six of these districts made AYP this year, so they are on “hold” pending next year’s AYP determination; if they make AYP next year they will be removed from “needs improvement.”*

#### **Districts that are on “hold” are:**

**Ansonia School District**  
**Connecticut Technical High School System**  
**Manchester School District**  
**Middletown School District**  
**Naugatuck School District**  
**Windham School District**

Of the 21 districts in need of improvement:

- 1 is in Year 1
- 1 is in Year 2
- 0 is in Year 3
- 5 are in Year 4
- 14 are in Year 5

A total of 19 are in “corrective action”

#### **Districts removed from improvement status:**

**Groton School District**  
**Stratford School District**

Reasons for not meeting AYP standard among districts (in number of districts):

Whole District math and reading achievement	18
Whole District math achievement	0
Whole District reading achievement	3
Subgroup math and reading achievement	21
Subgroup math achievement	0
Subgroup reading achievement	2

Of the 283 schools identified as “in need of improvement,” 177 were Title I schools in the 2007-08 school year. Title I schools are identified by the district based on poverty, educational need and the availability of funds.

All schools in Year 1 of school improvement must implement a school improvement plan:

- **Schools in Year 1** of school improvement must develop a two-year school improvement plan in consultation with parents and school district staff members within 90 days of identification. The plan must target the school’s areas of academic deficiency.
- **Title I schools in Year 1** of school improvement, in addition to creating a school improvement plan, must also provide the opportunity for students in the school to transfer to another public school within the district that has not been identified as “in need of improvement.”

Title I schools that are identified as “in need of improvement” face the following additional sanctions:

- **Schools in Year 2** of school improvement must continue to implement the Year 1 sanctions, but must also begin to offer supplemental educational services.
- **Schools in Year 3** of school improvement must continue to implement the Year 1 and Year 2 sanctions, but must also take corrective action measures such as instituting a new curriculum or appointing an outside expert to advise the school.
- **Schools in Year 4** of school improvement must continue corrective action, but must also begin planning for restructuring.
- **Schools in Year 5** of school improvement must implement the restructuring plan they developed during the course of the last year. The restructuring plan must reflect major reforms, such as significant changes in staffing, leadership, structure and governance.
- **Schools in Year 6** must continue with all prior sanctions, as well continue to implement the restructuring plan.

Results also indicate that no schools were identified as failing to make adequate yearly progress solely for not reaching 95 percent participation, either by the whole school or by any subgroup.

### **New Accountability Legislation Requires State Department of Education Intervention**

In response to state legislation enacted in 2007 — Section 32 of P.A. 07-3 of the June Special Session, An Act Implementing the Provisions of the Budget Concerning Education consistent with the Connecticut State Board of Education’s Five Year Comprehensive Plan for Education 2006-2011 — the Department has reorganized its administrative structure **to work directly with districts that have been identified as “in need of improvement.”**

The reorganization established a Bureau of Accountability, Compliance and Monitoring and a Bureau of School and District Improvement. These bureaus are working with all districts to provide data on student and district outcomes, processes to analyze data, methods of developing improvement activities, and training through the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI). Fifteen districts are underway or are undergoing district status assessments that will assist with strategically aligning school and district improvement efforts to training, technical assistance and leadership coaching. Each district has or will present its school improvement and district improvement plans to the Commissioner and State Board of Education for review and comment. Department teams have been assigned to work in each of the identified districts to assist in implementation of the plans and to provide technical assistance.

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Editor’s note: More detailed information about schools that did not make AYP is available at [www.state.ct.us/sde](http://www.state.ct.us/sde)

