



# No Child Left Behind: Help for Students and Their Families



**“The No Child Left Behind Act understands that there needs to be flexibility and local control of schools.”**

—President George W. Bush

The **No Child Left Behind Act of 2001** helps to ensure that all children receive a high-quality education and holds schools responsible for making sure that all children are learning. The information below is consistent with this important law.

### **Benefits of No Child Left Behind for Parents and Children**

*No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* requires that parents receive certain information about their child’s education—for example, the child’s progress in reading, math and science, as well as the overall performance of the child’s school on state tests in these subjects. *NCLB* gives funding for early childhood learning; allows for more spending on each student, especially disadvantaged students; and, in some cases, provides the chance for children to attend better schools regardless of where they live. *NCLB* also requires that every class of “core” subjects have a highly qualified teacher and encourages schools to teach based on ideas and methods that have been scientifically shown to work.

**“We must—and we will—recognize and cherish our opportunity to improve the life of every single child, including the growing millions of those who are learning English as a second language.”**

—Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings



## **School Performance and Testing**

Just as student report cards explain how well your child is doing, districts must now make reports available explaining how well all of their students are doing on state-required tests. These report cards must also explain the qualifications of the teachers who work in the district's schools. If many students in a school continue to perform poorly on state tests over two years or longer, or are not making sufficient progress, *No Child Left Behind* requires, among other things, that the school take steps to improve or, in some cases, even requires that the school change how it operates.

Students' test results tell states and parents how well both schools and students are performing in important subject areas. As a parent, you must be given your child's test scores and those scores will be kept private. Also, if your child has a disability or can't speak English well, his or her teachers must make sure that your child is tested fairly.

## **No Child Left Behind and Reading**

Research shows that children who learn to read well in the early grades are more likely to be successful as they get older, and that those who start out behind in reading often stay behind. Reading well leads to success in other subjects and reduces the chance that a student will drop out of school. *NCLB* helps schools to offer reading programs that have been shown to be successful by focusing on, for example, hearing and speaking sounds, how letters make words, how to read quickly and understand what is read, and what certain words mean.

## **More Options, More Choices**

In addition to focusing on reading, *NCLB* ensures options for students who attend schools that need improvement as shown by their state tests. These schools must let parents know what their choices are for selecting another school for their child. Options like magnet schools and charter schools may be solutions for students who did not have success in their original school. Parents interested in such programs should find out about application processes, which often begin a year in advance.

## Better Teachers, Safer Schools, Extra Help

*NCLB* requires that our schools have highly qualified teachers for all core courses. You can ask how much education a teacher has had, as well as how much teaching experience. The law provides funds to schools that are trying to improve the quality of teachers they hire. *NCLB* also gives funds to states and school districts trying to prevent the illegal use of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs by students, as well as those trying to prevent violence. Lastly, parents should be aware that their child may be able to receive extra help in the form of tutoring or other after-school supplemental educational services if they attend a school that is “in need of improvement” for at least two years, as shown by how students perform on state tests, and if the child is eligible. Parents of an eligible student attending such a school must be told by the local school district about the availability of these services.

## Examples of Resources

U.S. Department of Education: [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov) or  
<http://www.ed.gov/espanol/bienvenidos/es/index.html?src=gu>  
or call 1-800-USA-LEARN

To locate a specific state education agency:  
<http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/Programs/EROD>

To locate a specific school: <http://nces.ed.gov/globallocator/>

*NCLB* and reading: [www.readingfirstsupport.us](http://www.readingfirstsupport.us)

*NCLB* and supplemental educational services:  
<http://www.ed.gov/nclb/choice/help/ses/index.html>



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