

New Hampshire Department of Education



Instructions and Materials for the 2005-2006 School Improvement Progress Report

As required by NH RSA 193-H and Federal Law 107-110 for Schools in Need of Improvement

and

2006-2007 Corrective Action Plan and Request for Title I School Improvement Funds

July 2006

**Lyonel B. Tracy, Commissioner
New Hampshire Department of Education
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, NH 03301
www.ed.state.nh.us**

**Instructions and Materials for the Annual Progress Report
and
2006-07 Corrective Action Plan**

Statutory Requirement and Purpose

New Hampshire's school performance and accountability law (NH RSA 193-H) requires the development of a two-year improvement plan by any school or district officially designated as a school in need of improvement. At the end of the first year of the designation, the statute requires the Department to review the progress of each identified school or district and report the findings to the State Board of Education. The following citation from RSA 193-H:4 describes how this requirement shall be carried out:

"...On or before the one-year anniversary of being designated as a school or school district in need of improvement, the commissioner shall designate a progress review team to evaluate the implementation of the improvement plans and the progress towards state performance targets. The progress review team shall deliver a report to the state board. This report shall include evidence of satisfactory implementation and progress towards state performance targets or lack thereof, and recommendations regarding future actions pursuant to subparagraph II(b)".

The purpose of the progress report is therefore to provide the Department and State Board with:

- 1) *evidence of satisfactory implementation of the 2005-2006 strategies and activities as described in the approved improvement plan; and*
- 2) *evidence of progress for students scoring at novice/substantially below proficiency on tests administered through the NH state testing program.*

For Title I schools, this document serves an additional purpose, in that it contains instructions and forms for requesting 2006-2007 Title I School Improvement funds.

Report Timelines

Title I plans must be submitted 30 days prior to the start of the project. Submit completed reports to:

Kristine Braman
Title I Office
NH Department of Education
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, NH 03301
kbraman@ed.state.nh.us

Format for Submitting the Annual Progress Report and 2006-07 Corrective Action Plan

Please --

- Use the forms provided in this document to prepare your report
- Type all information requested (except for signatures), using a font size no smaller than size 10 font
- Number all pages, except for the cover page
- Spell out the name of a selected program or strategy once before using abbreviations or acronyms, to assist reviewers in understanding the plan.

Submit the completed plan in the following sequence:

SECTION I Cover Page

SECTION II Title I Corrective Action Assurances and Narrative

➤ **Part A: Corrective Action Assurances (to be signed by the superintendent)**

Check at least one of the corrective action options selected for implementation.

➤ **Part B: Narrative of Corrective Action**

In narrative form, address how the newly identified corrective action relates to the school plan and how the school will accomplish this during the 2006-2007 school year.

SECTION III 2005-06 Progress Report

➤ **Part A: Implementation of 2005-2006 Goals and Strategies**

Complete each section of this page for each goal stated in the approved school improvement plan. Duplicate the blank form provided in order to complete the data on each of your goals.

➤ **Part B: Evidence of Progress**

In narrative form, describe the evidence collected by the school improvement committee during the 2005-2006 school year that demonstrates the school's progress in implementing or establishing processes to follow and support each child's academic growth.

SECTION IV 2006-2007 Implementation Plan

➤ **Part A: Detail of Proposed Strategies for the 2006-07 School Year**

All schools are required to use the matrix provided to detail the strategies proposed for the 2006-07 school year. Title I schools are required to also complete the Professional Development and Equipment Justification Forms for any professional development or equipment requests.

➤ **Part B: Budget Narrative and OBM Form 1**

If applying for Title I school improvement funds, submit a detailed budget narrative and an OBM Form 1. Blank forms are available at your SAU office.

➤ **Part C: Parent Notification Letter**

APPENDICES

- **APPENDIX A: Title I School Improvement Funding Information**
- **APPENDIX B: Section 1116: Academic Assessment and Local Educational Agency and School Improvement**
- **APPENDIX C: Public School Choice Requirements, Guidance, and Sample Letters**



Cover Page

Annual Progress Report

As required by NH RSA 193-H and Federal Law 107-110 for Schools in Need of Improvement

and

School Corrective Action Plan for 2006-07

SAU#: _____

District Name: _____

School Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **Zip:** _____

Principal: _____

Tel: _____ **Fax:** _____ **E-mail:** _____

Contact person if different from Principal:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **Zip:** _____

Tel: _____ **Fax:** _____ **E-mail:** _____

Title I Corrective Action Assurances

The Superintendent of Schools assures the Commissioner of Education that the _____ school continues to implement **at least one of the following corrective actions** as part of their corrective action plan for the 2006-2007 school year:

(check all that apply)

- replaced the school staff who are relevant to the failure to make AYP;
- instituted and fully implemented a new curriculum, including providing appropriated professional development for all relevant staff, that is based on scientifically based research and offers substantial promise of improving educational achievement for low-achieving students and enabling the school to make AYP;
- significantly decreased management authority at the school level;
- appointed an outside expert to advise the school on its progress toward making AYP;
- extended the school year or school day for the school
- restructured the internal organizational structure of the school.

In addition, the Superintendent assures that:

- the LEA shall publish and disseminate information regarding the corrective action the LEA takes at a school –
 - to the public and to the parents of each student enrolled in the school;
 - in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language that the parents can understand; and
 - through, such means as the Internet, the media, and public agencies.

Title I Corrective Action Assurances (continued)**In addition, the Superintendent assures that:**

- the identified school or identified district will spend not less than 10 percent of their Title I allocation for each year they are in school improvement status for the purpose of providing to the identified school's or identified district's teachers and principal(s) high-quality professional development that
 - directly addresses the academic achievement problem that caused the school or district to be identified for school improvement;
 - helps teachers and paraprofessionals meet the high-quality standards defined in section 1119 of Title I; and
 - is provided in a manner that affords staff with an increased opportunity for participating in that professional development;
- the identified school or identified district will establish annual, measurable objectives for continuous and substantial progress by each group of students enrolled;
- the identified school or identified district will incorporate, as appropriate, activities before school, after school, during the summer, and during any extension of the school year; and will
- the identified school or identified district will adopt policies and practices concerning the core academic subjects that have the greatest likelihood of ensuring that all groups of students in the school or district will meet the State's proficiency levels of achievement on the State's academic assessment.
- all parents receive a notification letter explaining the school's AYP status for the 2006-2007 school year and if applicable public school choice options. (Provide copy with this document.)
- Supplemental Educational Services (SES) will be provided for 2006-2007 school year.
- the LEA will provide technical assistance to the identified school in meeting the goals and objectives described in the school improvement plan.

Superintendent of Schools

Date

Narrative of Corrective Action

Instructions: Provide a narrative which addresses how the school will implement the newly identified corrective action during the 2006-2007 school year.

Include in the description –

- how the LEA is supporting this school to implement the corrective action;
- who will be involved;
- at what capacity; and
- a timeline of events.

2005-06 School Improvement Progress Report Implementation of 2005-2006 Strategies

Instructions: For each school improvement goal listed in your approved improvement plan, provide a status report of the strategies and activities implemented during 2005-2006 that were designed to help the school meet that goal.

Please use the form provided on the next page to submit your responses. Complete one form for each school improvement goal.

AYP Area of Focus

List the area(s) and the sub group(s) in which the school did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and was identified for school improvement:



Improvement Goal

State the improvement goal:



Implementation of Approved Strategies

First, list the strategies implemented during 2005-2006 school year to accomplish this goal:

Next, select a descriptor that best describes the status of the strategies at the end of 2005-2006 (Select one)

- Completed as planned, with no changes to the strategies and activities described in the approved school improvement plan
- Completed as planned, with changes/refinements to certain strategies and activities
- Progressing as planned, with no changes to strategies and activities
- Progressing, with changes/refinements to certain strategies and activities
- Beginning stages of implementation
- No strategies or activities implemented



Implementation of Approved Strategies - Narrative Response

Describe in narrative form the progress made during 2005-2006 in implementing the strategies listed above. Include in your response a description of any key factors that resulted in a modification of the activities as they were described in your approved improvement plan, to assist the progress review team in understanding the current status of the school's efforts towards this improvement goal.

**2005-06 School Improvement Progress Report
Implementation of 2005-2006 Strategies**

DUPLICATE THIS FORM AS NEEDED – COMPLETE ONE FORM FOR EACH IMPROVEMENT GOAL

AYP Area of Focus

List the area(s) and the sub group(s) in which the school did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and was identified for school improvement:



Improvement Goal

State the improvement goal:



Implementation of Approved Strategies

First, list the strategies implemented during 2005-2006 school year to accomplish this goal:

Next, select a descriptor that best describes the status of the strategies at the end of 2005-2006 (Select one)

- Completed as planned, with no changes to the strategies and activities described in the approved school improvement plan*
- Completed as planned, with changes/refinements to certain strategies and activities*
- Progressing as planned, with no changes to strategies and activities*
- Progressing, with changes/refinements to certain strategies and activities*
- Beginning stages of implementation*
- No strategies or activities implemented*



Implementation of Approved Strategies - Narrative Response

2005-06 School Improvement Progress Report Evidence of Progress

Instructions: *Please respond in narrative form to the following reflective questions to inform the Department of the school's efforts to follow and support the academic growth of each child:*

Use of state and/or local assessment:

- If the school uses school-wide or district-wide assessments, what is administered and with what frequency? If not, where in the planning process is the school in establishing a school-wide or district-wide local assessment program?
- Please describe how classroom teachers are supported, through professional development or other efforts, to use the results from local or state assessments to identify and provide support to students performing below proficiency.
- What evidence is available to demonstrate that the school-wide improvement effort is helping to transform classroom practice in the school?
- Where there is greatest evidence of improvement, which factors were most influential in generating change?
- Where improvement is less evident, what factors impeded change?
- Based on the outcomes from the 2005-06 school year, what refinements to the SINI plan are proposed for 2006-07?

Proposed Corrective Action Strategies and Activities for the 2006-07 School Year

Instructions: Use the matrix below to provide a detailed description and timeline of the strategies and activities to be implemented during 2006-2007.

Duplicate this page as needed. Complete one form for each approved improvement goal.

Goal					<p style="text-align: center;"><i>This strategy relates to: check all that apply</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Addresses teaching and learning needs of all students <input type="checkbox"/> Addresses needs of low-achieving students <input type="checkbox"/> Scientifically Based Research <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development <input type="checkbox"/> Internal or External Technical Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Extended-Time Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Parent and Community Involvement <input type="checkbox"/> Connects to school's Title I Targeted Assistance School (TAS) or Schoolwide (SW) Plan 		
Strategy #							
Objectives Please write objectives as responses to the italicized guiding questions	What <u>school practices/programs</u> will be improved/enhanced through this strategy?						
	OBJECTIVE:						
	How will <u>student learning</u> be improved/enhanced through this strategy?						
	OBJECTIVE:						
Activities <i>What actions will occur? What steps will staff take? Provide sufficient detail so that the reader will understand the purpose of each strategy and how it will be implemented during the 2006-07 school year.</i>	Resources <i>What are the existing and new resources that will be used to accomplish the activity?</i>	Timeline <i>When will this activity begin and end?</i>	Who is responsible? Who is involved? <i>Who will take primary responsibility/ leadership? Who else needs to be involved?</i>	Monitoring implementation <i>What evidence will be gathered to document implementation of the activity?</i>	Requesting Title I SINI Funds <i>Include amount if applicable</i>	Status of Activity <i>Insert date when completed</i>	

Title I Professional Development Justification Form
(Title I schools must complete this form for any professional development requests)

Professional Development Activity	Date(s) Include # of hours Time of day/week	Audience Who is involved? Number, Role, Grade Levels	Contracted Services Name, title, contracted time, hourly/daily rate	Staff Compensation Stipends, substitutes Include rate of pay	Supplies and Materials Include number and costs per unit.	Other Costs Refreshments, room rental, etc.

Title I Equipment Justification Form
(Title I schools must complete this form for any equipment requests)

ITEM(S)		Number to be purchased
APPROXIMATE COST PER ITEM Include per child or per teacher information		Total Costs
LOCATION Where will the equipment be used?		
PURPOSE Detail all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + How will it support the program? + Who will use it? + How many students/staff will use it? 		
REASONABLENESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Justify the need ; and + Explain how it is not otherwise available through the district. 		
STORAGE For Targeted Assistance Schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Where will it be kept when not being used by Title I students. + How will you assure that the equipment purchased with Title I funds is not used more than 10% for non-Title I services? (See note below regarding flexibility.) 		
Inventory and Tracking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Name(s): 	Identify the person responsible for: Entering equipment on Title I Equipment Inventory Report Tracking equipment if moved from above location Signing equipment in and out if equipment is approved for student use Storing equipment over the summer	

* Note: This 10% flexibility is only allowed if it does not interfere with the use by Title I students and does not lessen the life of the product.

Title I Budget Narrative for 2006-2007 Activities

Instructions: Use this form to provide sufficient detail regarding proposed expenditures of Title I school improvement funds. The requested budget should not exceed **\$25,000** per school. Categories and amounts should correspond to information provided on your attached OBM Form 1.

Account Category	Budget Detail	
	Narrative	Total Costs
Salaries and Benefits <i>Include name and title of employee if possible. Include wages by hour/week etc. Detail benefits.</i>		
Contracted Services <i>Include name and title, contracted time, hourly/daily compensation and activities to be delivered.</i>		
Supplies and Materials <i>Detail your purchases. Explain the connection between what you wish to purchase and the activities in your plan.</i>		
Books <i>Detail your purchases. Explain the connection between what you wish to purchase and the activities in your plan.</i>		
Equipment <i>Each item must be listed separately along with a justification of why you need it to support your plan.</i>		
Professional Development Activities <i>Summarize your activities including the number of days, people involved and associated costs.</i>		
Travel <i>Summarize your activities including the number of days, people involved and associated costs.</i>		
Administration <i>Include other costs associated with supporting plan implementation.</i>		
Indirect Costs		

Title I Parent Notification Requirements

Instructions: Before completing this section, refer to Appendix C for detailed guidance for fulfilling public school choice requirements.

- (a) Describe the process the school will use to provide parents of each student enrolled in the school with timely written notice regarding the school's identification as a school in need of improvement. The description must demonstrate the use of dissemination strategies that make such information accessible to all parents, and to the extent practicable, is provided in a language that parents can understand.
- (b) Attach a copy of the parent notification letter to this page.
- (c) If applicable, describe the process the school has developed for parents in the event they wish to request a transfer of their child to another school within the district that is not identified for improvement. If public school choice is not applicable to your school, state "not applicable."

APPENDIX A

TITLE I SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT FUNDING

Purpose of the Funds:

As part of this Revision of your original School Improvement Plan, Title I schools can apply for additional funds to support the implementation of their improvement plan activities. Funds are designed to be available to support the improvement plan and not just to expand on or augment the existing Title I program unless such changes have been identified within the improvement plan. Schools are charged to identify those activities which will have the greatest likelihood of improving the quality of the instruction for those students not meeting the State's academic standards. Requests for funds will be evaluated using these parameters.

Timeframe to Apply:

Funds will be available beginning July 18, 2006 and ending on June 30, 2007. To access funds, an OBM (Office of Business Management) Form 1 must accompany this annual progress report. The project start date may be no earlier than the date the school's application has been received by the NHDOE. All activities for which you are requesting funds must occur within the approved project period.

Amount of Funds Available:

An amount not to exceed \$25,000 may be requested by a Title I school for implementation of approved activities during the above-noted project period.

Review Process:

Your improvement plan will be reviewed by a team of reviewers selected by the NH Department of Education. As part of this review, the team will make recommendations to the Title I Office as to the impact and reasonableness of the use of funds. The Title I Office will provide feedback on the request for funds and will process the Form 1 after the district has submitted any necessary revisions. A reviewer's checklist will be sent to all schools as soon as it is completed.

Use of Funds:

As noted above, the use of the funds must be directly connected to the school's improvement plan activities. Acceptable uses of these funds include:

- providing ongoing professional development and its associated costs,
- supporting parent involvement,
- purchasing supplies and materials if they are closely associated/needed to support a staff development activity or changes in instructional programming.
- providing expanded learning opportunities for students to reach high standards

The amount and use of funds requested must meet the test of appropriateness and reasonableness. Of course, Title I funds cannot supplant what the district must provide as part of their basic educational program.

APPENDIX B

SECTION 1116: ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT AND LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

SEC 1116 (b) (7): CORRECTIVE ACTION

Definition:

The term “corrective action” means action, consistent with State law, that –

- (1) substantially and directly responds to –
 - a. the consistent academic failure of a school that caused the local educational agency to take such action; and
 - b. any underlying staffing, curriculum, or other problems in the school; and
- (2) is designed to increase substantially the likelihood that each group of students enrolled in the school identified for corrective action will meet or exceed the State’s proficient levels of achievement on the State assessment.

Role of the LEA:

In the case of any school served by the LEA under this part that fails to make AYP by the end of the 2nd full year after identification – the LEA shall:

- (1) continue to provide all students enrolled in the school with the option to transfer to another public school;
- (2) continue to provide technical assistance while instituting a corrective action;
- (3) continue to make supplemental educational services available to children who remain in the school; and
- (4) identify the school for corrective action and take at least one of the following corrective actions:
 - a. replace the school staff who are relevant to the failure to make AYP;
 - b. institute and fully implement a new curriculum, including providing appropriated professional development for all relevant staff, that is based on scientifically based research and offers substantial promise of improving educational achievement for low-achieving students and enabling the school to make AYP;
 - c. significantly decrease management authority at the school level;
 - d. appoint an outside expert to advise the school on its progress toward making AYP;
 - e. extend the school year or school day for the school
 - f. restructure the internal organizational structure of the school.

Publication and Dissemination

The LEA shall publish and disseminate information regarding the corrective action the LEA takes at a school –

- (1) to the public and to the parents of each student enrolled in the school
- (2) in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language that the parents can understand; and
- (3) through, such means as the Internet, the media, and public agencies.

APPENDIX C PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE



Lyonel B. Tracy
Commissioner of Education
Tel. 603-271-3144

Mary S. Heath
Deputy Commissioner
Tel. 603-271-7301

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, N.H. 03301
FAX 603-271-1953
Citizens Services Line 1-800-339-9900

July, 2006

TO: Superintendents of Schools
Title I, Part A Program Managers

FROM: Dorothy R. Fair
Title I State Coordinator

**RE: Submitting Parent/Guardian Letter on Public School Choice and
Supplemental Educational Services to the NH Department of Education**

Under the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 (NCLB)*, each Title I school identified as "In Need of Improvement" is required to provide Public School Choice within their district's boundaries. These schools must send notification to parents/guardians of their rights to transfer their child to a school that has not been identified as a school in need of improvement.

Non-Regulatory Guidance from the US Department of Education requires each school to provide a copy of the Public School Choice notification letter to the NH Department of Education for review. The letter must have the actual date that the letter was sent to parents/guardians and contain the required informational elements. See Attachment A for a list of the requirements.

To provide further guidance, I have also included:

- Attachment B: a sample parent notification letter;
- Attachment C: a checklist for you to use to determine that your letter includes all the required elements; and
- Attachment D: more information on school choice which includes the link to the NCLB Public School Choice Non-Regulatory Guidance.

Please note that in addition to mailing notices directly to parents/guardians, the LEA is encouraged to provide information about choice options through a broader means, including newspapers, posters and the Internet.

Copies of Public School Choice letters must be sent no later than **November 1, 2006**, to:

Dorothy R. Fair
New Hampshire Department of Education
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, NH 03301

If you have any questions regarding Public School Choice, please contact me at (603) 271-3301 or at dfair@ed.state.nh.us.

APPENDIX C

Attachment A: Public School Choice Requirements

Public School Choice

The NCLB law requires LEAs to provide the opportunity to transfer to another public school to students enrolled in schools that administer Title I programs and that have been identified for improvement. The district must provide an explanation of the choice option to all parents of students enrolled in Title I schools that have been identified for school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The information must be provided to parents/guardians before the first day of school. This notification must be in a comprehensive, easy-to-understand format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

At a minimum, this notification must include the following:

1. How the school compares academically to other schools in the LEA and the State;
2. Why the school has been identified;
3. What the school is doing to address the achievement problem;
4. What the LEA and SEA are doing to help the school to address the achievement problem;
5. How parents can be involved in addressing the achievement problem; and
6. Parents' option to transfer their child to another school, and if applicable, obtain SES. The explanation of parent options must include at a minimum:
 - Inform parents that their child is eligible to attend another public school due to the identification of the current school as in need of improvement;
 - Identify each public school that the parent can select; and
 - Include information on the academic achievement of the schools that the parent may select [34 CFR 200.37(b)(4)].

The district should also include an explanation of why the choices made available to parents may have been limited. Districts may limit the choices to those schools that have met AYP requirements that are in the same geographic area as the school that did not meet AYP requirements.

A district may provide additional information on the schools to which the student may transfer, such as a description of any special academic programs or facilities, the availability of before- or after-school programs, and the professional qualifications of teachers. Such additional information should be presented in an unbiased manner that does not seek to dissuade parents from exercising their opportunity to choose a new school. In addition to mailing notices directly to parents, the LEA must provide information about choice options through broader means, including newspapers, posters, and the Internet.

APPENDIX C
Attachment B: Sample Parent Public School Choice Letter

Dear Parents/Guardians of _____ School:

I am writing to inform you that _____ School has been identified by the New Hampshire Department of Education as a “School in Need of Improvement” in the area of _____. This notice will also describe the school choice option parents/guardians have for their children and our plans for improved performance for all children.

In January of 2002 President Bush signed a new education law called *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB). The long-range goal of NCLB is that every child will be proficient in reading and mathematics according to a state’s academic standards. The _____ School has not made the state target goal in _____ for two consecutive years, which is why we have been identified as a School in Need of Improvement.

Under the *No Child Left Behind Act* each Title I school identified as a “School in Need of Improvement” is required to provide public school choice. For the _____ school year, you may choose from the following two schools: _____ and _____. _____ School has also been identified as a “School in Need of Improvement” and therefore is not an option.

If you would like to transfer your child to one of the two choice option schools, please let me know by submitting the attached form. The deadline for receiving this is _____. (Note to LEAs: 30 day window is recommended.) NCLB has a mandated a method for schools to use to determine how to prioritize which students can exercise school choice if we have more students requesting a transfer than we are capable of handling.

Comparative data across the district on the _____ test for the _____ grade level(s) is:

School Name	Percent of Students Substantially Below Proficient	Percent of Students Partially Proficient	Percent of Students Proficient	Percent of Students Proficient with Distinction	AYP Status In _____
Able					
Baker					
Charlie					
Davis					

Currently the school is involved in _____ initiative(s). Our school is working closely with district and NH Department of Education representatives to be able to identify key areas for improvement.

As a parent you are also a critical partner in school improvement. All of us working together will ensure the development of a successful improvement plan and improve the quality of the education we provide for all of our students. If you are interested in helping in the improvement process, please let me know by calling the school, sending me an email or dropping into the office by _____(insert date).

I look forward to working with you to provide opportunities for success for each of our students. We anticipate that our detailed plan for improvement will be available in the school office by _____. Please contact the school if you would like us to mail you a copy.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX C

Attachment C: Checklist of Requirements for Parental Notification for Choice

Content Review: All Choice parental notification letters will be reviewed by the Title I Office to determine if the following information has been included:

- Why the school has been identified;**
- How the school compares academically to other schools in the LEA and the State;**
- What other choice options exist within the district or if the district so chooses outside of the district. Be sure to include comparative data for these schools so that parents can make an informed decision;**
- What the school is doing to address the achievement issues. (In Year 1 of school improvement this may include a description of the improvement planning process.);**
- How the parents can be involved in addressing the achievement problem; and**
- What the LEA and the State Department of Education is doing to support the school.**
- Time frame for parents to make decision was included and sufficient**

APPENDIX C

Attachment D: Key Facts about Public School Choice Requirements

Citations: *The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) - Section 1116 (b)(6)*
Public School Choice Non-Regulatory Guidance (2-6-2004)

1. Public school choice is a critical component of *NCLB* because it offers a student enrolled in a Title I school that is in need of improvement an opportunity to attend another public school, even as his or her original school is undergoing improvement.
2. Students must be given the option to transfer to other public schools, which may be charter schools, within the LEA. The choices made available to students may not include schools identified for improvement (or corrective action or restructuring) under Title I or identified by the State as persistently dangerous.
3. If more than one school that meets the requirements is available, the LEA must offer more than one choice to eligible students. LEAs should strive to provide a full menu of choices to students and parents, and must take into account parents' preferences among the choices offered [34 C.F.R. Section 200(a)(4)(ii)].
4. An LEA may not use lack of capacity to deny students the option to transfer but may take capacity into consideration in deciding which choices to make available to eligible students [34 C.F.R. 200.44(d)].
5. LEAs receiving funds under Title I are required to make choice available to all students in qualifying schools. Students who are enrolled in Title I schools are eligible to transfer to another school if their school has been identified as in: (1) school improvement; (2) corrective action; or (3) restructuring.
6. A quality public school choice plan should embody the following principles:
 - Choice is an important opportunity for parents and children.
 - Choice is an important component of the overall district educational improvement plan.
 - An overriding goal is to provide students with access to quality instruction.
 - Communication with parents is timely and thorough.
 - Information on choices is provided to parents and students in a format that is easy to understand.
 - Real choice means giving parents more than one option from which to choose.
7. The choice to attend another public school is available to all students enrolled in schools that are in their first year of school improvement status and for subsequent years that the school remains identified for improvement. Supplemental educational services are available to eligible students who are enrolled in a school in its second year of improvement and for subsequent years. When both options are available, parents have the choice of which option they would prefer for their child.

8. An LEA must make choice available for students not later than the first day of the school year following the school year in which the LEA administered the assessments that resulted in the school being identified as in need of school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring [*Section 1116(b)(1)(E)*]. If possible, an LEA should notify parents about their available choices well before the beginning of the school year in which those choices will be available.
9. An LEA must offer choice to all students in an eligible Title I school until the school is no longer identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, i.e., until the school makes AYP for two consecutive years.
10. All students enrolled in Title I schools identified for school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring are eligible to transfer to another public school (which may be a charter school) that is not in school improvement.
11. The LEA must give *all* students in a school identified for improvement the opportunity to transfer to another public school. In implementing this option to transfer, however, there may be circumstances in which the LEA needs to give priority to the lowest-achieving children from low-income families [*Section 1116(b)(1)(E)(ii)*]. For example, if not all students can attend their first choice of schools, an LEA would give first priority in assigning spaces to the low-achieving low-income students. Similarly, if an LEA does not have sufficient funding to provide transportation to all students who wish to transfer, it would apply this priority in determining which students can receive transportation.
12. An LEA must provide an explanation of the choice option to all parents of students enrolled in Title I schools that have been identified for school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. This notification must be in a comprehensive, easy-to-understand format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand. At a minimum, this notification must:
 - Inform parents that their child is eligible to attend another public school due to the identification of the current school as in need of improvement;
 - Identify each public school, which may include charter schools, that the parent can select;
 - Include information on the academic achievement of the schools that the parent may select [*34 C.F.R. 200.37(b)(4)*].
13. The LEA should also include an explanation of why the choices made available to parents may have been limited.
14. An LEA may provide additional information on the schools to which the student may transfer, such as a description of any special academic programs or facilities, the availability of before- or after-school programs, and the professional qualifications of teachers. Such additional information should be presented in an unbiased manner that

does not seek to dissuade parents from exercising their opportunity to choose a new school.

15. In addition to mailing notices directly to parents, the LEA must provide information about choice options through broader means, including newspapers, posters, and the Internet.
16. District officials should urge parents to consult a variety of sources for information about the schools that are available to accept transfer students. These sources of information might include other parents, the local media, school visits and information available on school performance report cards. Parents should match the strengths of a particular school with the needs of their child, so that the child will be able to receive appropriate instruction geared toward improving his or her academic achievement.
17. An LEA might set different timelines for parents to make their decisions on choice, depending on the circumstances in the LEA and its schools. For example, the LEA might permit parents to exercise choice at various times during the school year (e.g., in the spring of the prior school year, at the beginning of the school year, and at the beginning of the second semester). Alternatively, the LEA may establish a “window” during which parents must exercise their choice option. Whatever the case, the LEA must set a reasonable deadline by which parents must apply and ensure that the parents have sufficient time and information to make an informed decision about selecting a school. The LEA should work with parents to ensure that they have ample information and time to take advantage of the opportunity to choose a different public school for their child.
18. Parents must be notified that their child’s school is identified for improvement even if there are no schools to which students can transfer.

To access the complete guidance on public school choice – click on the following link:

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/schoolchoiceguid.doc>