



Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center

“Building Better Futures for Virginia’s Children”

PEATC is Virginia’s parent information and resource center promoting research-based parent involvement practices and strengthening partnerships between parents, schools and communities. This fact sheet is to help parents and others understand some of the terms and acronyms used when discussing No Child Left Behind and school improvement efforts.

Important Words to Know

Adequate Yearly Progress

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is the minimum level of improvement that the states, school districts, and schools must achieve each year. (US Department of Education)

Cut Scores

This term is used to describe the amount of questions a student must get right on their Standard of Learning (SOL’s) tests to pass or fail in that subject. The Virginia Department of Education list these scores online at:

<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Assessment/SOLPASS.pdf>

Core Academic Subjects

Core Academic subjects are English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civic and government, economics, art, history and geography. (US Department of Education)

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (EASA)

This act was originally signed into law in 1965 under President Lyndon B. Johnson. It was enacted to improve education opportunities specifically as they related to minority and disadvantaged students.

“Highly Qualified” Teacher

A Highly Qualified teacher is defined as one who has obtained full state teacher certification or has passed the state teacher licensing examination and holds a license to teach in the state; holds a minimum of a bachelor’s degree; and has demonstrated subject area competence in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches. The Virginia Department of Education has teacher qualification information searchable online at <https://p1pe.doe.virginia.gov/tinfo/> (NCLB)

Our Services are free. More questions? Call or email us today!

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Limited English Proficient Students

Limited English Proficiency is a term used to describe students who are not yet fluent in English. NCLB allows Virginia a 2 year grace period in requiring that LEP students take the Standards of Learning (SOLs.) After that, students must take the same SOLs that students in their grade take.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

NCLB is a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). ESEA was reauthorized to close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, and choice, so that no child is left behind.

Parent-School Compact

Title I requires each school that receives Title I funds to develop, jointly with parents, a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, school staff, and students will share responsibility for ensuring improved student achievement. The compact must also outline how schools and parents will work together to help Title I students achieve the high content and performance standards set by the state for all student

Parental Information and Resource Center (PIRC)

Parent Information and Resource Centers (PIRCs) help implement successful and effective parental involvement policies, programs, and activities that lead to improvements in student academic achievement and that strengthen partnerships among parents, teachers, principals, administrators, and other school personnel in meeting the education needs of children. (Guide to US Education Programs)

School Choice

When used in the context of NCLB, after a school does not meet AYP for 2 years, the school is listed as "needing improvement" and must offer the option of transferring to a school that is not listed as a "needs improvement" school and offer parents the opportunity to obtain supplemental services for their child.

School Improvement Plan

This written school improvement plan for each school includes strategies for improving student performance taking into account the annual performance goals for the school set by the State Board of Education; how and when improvements will be implemented; use of state funds; requests for waivers, etc. Each school improvement plan must be approved by the local board and may be in effect for no more than three years. The plans may be amended as often as necessary or appropriate.

School Report Card

When used in the context of NCLB, the school report card provides information on student achievement, accreditation, safety, and attendance for the state as a whole and for individual schools. The Virginia Department of Education has every school report card on line at <https://p1pe.doe.virginia.gov/reportcard/>

School-wide Programs

School-wide programs use Title I money to support comprehensive school improvement efforts and help all students, particularly low-achieving and at-risk students, meet state standards at particular schools.



To qualify as a Title I school-wide program, at least 40 percent of a school's students must be considered low-income. (Waivers can sometimes change the percentage.) School-wide programs can provide Title I services and support to all of the children in the school, regardless of Income level. School-wide programs have more flexibility than targeted assistance programs when using Title I funds. For example, schools operating school-wide programs can combine Title I funds with other federal, state, and local funding to finance a more comprehensive approach to improving student achievement. (PEN)

Standards of Learning (SOL)

The Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools describe the commonwealth's expectations for student learning and achievement in grades K-12 in English, mathematics, science, history/social science, technology, the fine arts, foreign language, health and physical education, and driver education.

Standards of Learning Tests

The SOL tests are given to student's to measure their achievement in core subjects. Virginia's Department of Education has previously released test online at <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Assessment/releasedtests.html>

Supplemental Education Services

Students from low-income families who are attending schools that have been identified as failing for 3 years will be eligible to receive outside tutoring or academic assistance. Parents can choose the appropriate services for their child from a list of approved providers. The school district will purchase the services.

Targeted Assistance Programs

Targeted assistance programs operated at schools not eligible for, or those choosing not to run, a school-wide Title I program. Using Title I money, they provide services only to eligible children identified as having the greatest educational need. School staff determines which services and activities will be provided to which student. Non-Title I students are not eligible to receive Title I services in a TAP school. (PEN)

Title I

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act provides federal funding for school to help students who are behind academically or at risk of falling behind. Funding is based on the number of low-income children in a school, generally those eligible for the free lunch program. Title I is intended to supplement, not replace state and district funds. Schools receiving Title I monies are supposed to involve parents in deciding how these funds are spent and in reviewing progress. Title I used to be called Chapter I (NCEA)