

# UNDERSTANDING THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT

*What it Means for  
D.C. Charter School Families*

## WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

For detailed information about the No Child Left Behind Act, and public charter school performance, call the following offices or visit the websites:

**D.C. Public Charter School Board**

202/328-2660  
<http://www.dcpubliccharter.com/community/int/GeneralInfo/nclb.htm>

**Department of Education – No Child Left Behind website**

<http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml?src=fb>

**D.C. State Education Agency**

202/442-5405

**D.C. Board of Education Public Charter School Office**

202/442-5195  
[http://www.dcboccharters.org/charter\\_schools.htm](http://www.dcboccharters.org/charter_schools.htm)

## WHAT QUESTIONS SHOULD I ASK MY CHILD'S PRINCIPAL ABOUT THE SCHOOL'S PERFORMANCE?

Here are some questions to start with:

- Does the school have highly qualified teachers in the major subject areas?
- Did the school make Adequate Yearly Progress?
- If not, what is the school's improvement plan?
- Where can I find a copy of the school's NCLB Report Card?
- What other measures does the school use to determine its achievement?

## HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD AND OUR SCHOOL SUCCEED?

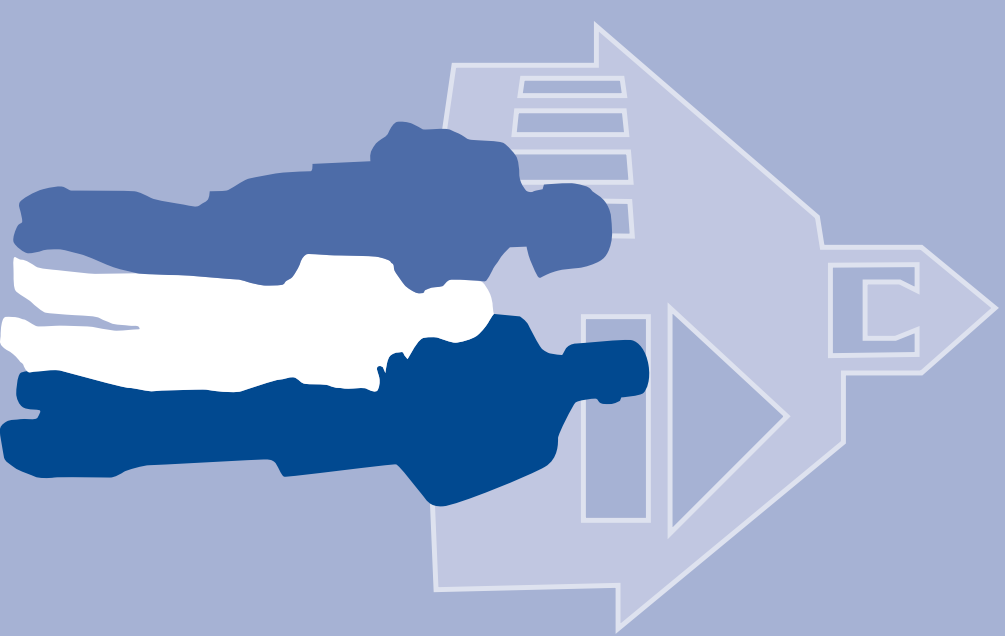
Parental involvement plays a big role in the success of students and schools. Here are a few things you can do:

- Make sure your child comes to school on time and attends every day.
- Make sure your child comes to school well-rested and ready to learn.
- Visit your child's classroom and school as often as you can.
- Attend scheduled meetings and events at the school.
- Make sure your child spends time everyday studying what he/she is learning in school.
- Ask teachers how you can support your child's efforts.

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## WHAT IS THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT?

In January 2002, President Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which requires that all schools receiving Title I (federal) funds:

- ensure that all students in grades 3-11 test at grade level in reading and math by the school year 2013-2014;
- make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) towards that goal, each year leading up to 2013;
- take corrective actions if the school does not make Adequate Yearly Progress; and,
- ensure that teachers meet NCLB's "highly qualified" requirements.

The law's intention is to make it no longer acceptable for some students to fail, even if most succeed.

## HOW DOES THE LAW APPLY TO PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS?

**Public charter schools must meet the same standards as the traditional public schools.**

Because charter schools are schools of choice, parents may choose to transfer their child to another public school (charter or neighborhood) for any reason.

## WHAT IS ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS?

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is the amount of academic progress all students in a school must make each year. In D.C. the State Education Agency determines what percentage of students in a school must perform at their grade level in reading and math. The goal is that *all* students will be performing at grade level by the school year 2013-2014.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF MY CHILD'S SCHOOL DOESN'T MAKE ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS?

Public charter schools that do not make AYP two years in a row are "Identified for Improvement." They are then required to:

- offer all students the option to transfer to another public school (charter or traditional) that has not been identified for improvement by the first day of school; and,
- develop a School Improvement Plan.

In the third year, if there are no spaces in schools that made AYP, your child's school must offer supplemental services to their students. Priority must be given to their low-income students.

## HOW DO I DETERMINE IF MY CHILD MADE ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS?

Parents can do the following:

- Review the standardized test report that was sent home at the end of the school year; students scoring at the 40th percentile or better made the minimum expected progress.
- Ask a teacher, counselor or principal to explain the report.

## WHAT IF MY CHILD NEEDS MORE HELP?

Most charter schools are offering special skill development programs to help students who are performing below grade level. Ask your child's teacher or counselor to identify the right program for your child. Or ask the principal to help identify services that are offered outside of the school.

