

**ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**School Choice**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Why is my student being offered the option of moving to another school?**

The federal education law, *No Child Left Behind*, requires Title I schools that have not made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two consecutive years to offer at least two other options to parents and to provide transportation for students to the selected school.

**What is a Title I school?**

A Title I school is a school located in a neighborhood where at least 53% of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch programs. Title I schools receive extra funding from the federal government to assist students.

**What is “Adequate Yearly Progress” or AYP?**

AYP is a determination of school achievement reported as part of No Child Left Behind, a national education law. Alaska’s AYP calculations are based on certain factors:

- Percentage of students meeting or exceeding state standards in language arts and math
- Testing participation rate – all schools, districts and student groups must have at least 95 percent of their students take the designated state tests
- Percentage of students meeting the "other academic indicator" of attendance rate for elementary and middle schools and graduation rate for high schools

**Does a school not making AYP mean the school is failing?**

Absolutely not. AYP is an extremely narrow measure of school progress and achievement and takes into account only one testing period to determine the progress of a school. Additionally, all groups in the school are held to the same standard, including students with disabilities and students just learning English. If only one group misses a state-identified target, the entire school does not make AYP. This designation merely means that the school has one or more areas in which to improve. It does not mean that the school is failing, but it does provide you with a piece of information about the school.

**Can I choose to keep my student at the neighborhood school?**

Yes. Your school is working hard in partnership with parents to make sure that each and every child receives an excellent education.

**If I choose to transfer my student to one of the two district-selected schools, how will transportation work?**

The district will provide transportation to students in Title I schools in improvement status. At least one bus stop will be at the neighborhood school. If the neighborhood school is a walking school, it will be the only bus stop. In some other cases, stops will be established in neighborhoods. If you choose to transfer your student, you will be notified by the ASD Transportation Office as to where and what time your child would meet the bus. We cannot finalize this information until after the August 26<sup>th</sup> deadline so we can see where students who apply actually live.

**Will the receiving school have all the same programs my current school has?**

Not necessarily. Title I schools receive extra funding and often have more staff in the areas of Bilingual Education and Indian Education. Also, though Title I schools have breakfast programs, not all receiving schools do. Several Title I schools also have 21<sup>st</sup> Century after school programs for students. That is not true of all schools. For specific information on the programs offered at each school, please see the “Information on School Choice” sheet provided at your neighborhood school, at the District’s information desk at 4600 Debarr, or on our Web site at [www.asdk12.org/NCLB](http://www.asdk12.org/NCLB).

**If I apply for transfer to one of the two receiving schools, is my student guaranteed a transfer to that school?**

Seats may be limited if the number of requests exceeds health and safety limits for the school. The law requires that priority go to the lowest achieving, low-income students. In that situation, if your student were not eligible for your first choice school, you would be contacted and given the option of the other school if it had seats remaining.

**If many students choose to transfer, will there be enough teachers at the new school?**

Yes. Schools will be staffed based on the actual number of students it receives.

**If I choose to transfer my student, what happens next?**

You would need to fill out a “School Choice Application.” You can find these applications at your neighborhood school, the District administration building information desk at 4600 Debarr Road, or on our Web site at [www.asdk12.org](http://www.asdk12.org). **Applications are due August 26<sup>th</sup>.** Shortly after the deadline, you will be contacted about the outcome of the application and the bus stop information for your child. You would also need to go to the new school to register your child and fill out zone exemption paperwork. This will also be a nice opportunity to meet staff at your child’s new school.

**What happens if my neighborhood school makes AYP for two years in a row and drops off the “school improvement” list?**

Even if your neighborhood school makes AYP for two years and no longer has to offer choice, your student may continue at the receiving school until the student completes the highest grade offered at that school. However, once the neighborhood school is no longer in improvement status, the requirement for the District to provide transportation ends, and you would be required to transport your child to school if you chose to remain at the new school.

**What happens if I move out of the boundaries for my current neighborhood school?**

Your student would still be able to attend the new school, but the district would no longer have to provide transportation.

**What happens with parents who move into our school boundaries after the application deadline?**

If seats are available at the receiving school, these parents would also be offered the option to transfer their student until September 20<sup>th</sup>, at which point staffing for our schools is complete based on student numbers.