



# **HOUSTON COUNTY SCHOOLS**

## *AYP and School Choice*

### *Frequently Asked Questions: AYP and School Choice for Houston County Schools*

- **How is it determined if a school is making Adequate Yearly Progress?**

Federal and state determinations of AYP are made based on three requirements:

1. Each subgroup of students (ethnic categories, disability, limited English proficiency, and socioeconomic status) must meet or exceed the state's annual measurable objectives regarding the percentage of students scoring proficient on the state assessments (CRCT and GHSGT);
2. Each subgroup must have at least a 95% participation rate on state assessments; and
3. Each school must show progress on another academic indicator such as attendance or graduation rate.

- **The majority of students at my child's school seem to be meeting or exceeding expectations on the CRCT, yet the school has been assigned "Needs Improvement" status. Why is my child's school on the list?**

The majority of students at a school may be meeting or exceeding expectations on the CRCT.

However, if even one of its 10 subgroups does not make AYP over a two-year period, the school would be assigned Needs Improvement (NI) status.

- **How do I know if my child's school has been identified as a "Needs Improvement" (NI) school, and where can I get additional information?**

Each summer, the Georgia Department of Education provides local school systems with information about the schools that did not make AYP. The Houston County Board of Education notifies parents of students who attend these schools. Elementary and middle schools are assigned NI status based on results of the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT), the tests given to measure students' grade-level mastery of Georgia's curriculum. At the high school level, results from the Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHSGT) determine NI status.

- **If my child attends a school that has been designated as "Needs Improvement," how do I transfer my child to another school? Are there eligibility requirements?**

All students enrolled in schools identified as NI are eligible to transfer to another school that is not in NI status. Parents may choose from a list of schools the district will provide. However, priority in the choice of schools is given to the lowest-achieving children from low-income families. Parents must provide the transportation to the new school. Parents of students from Title I schools are reimbursed for transportation costs.

Parents of all students attending a school designated as NI are notified by letter. The parent or guardian then must complete the "choice out of zone form" on the letter and return it to the principal of the child's current school to request a transfer to a choice school.

- **If I do not want to send my child to any of the schools listed as choices on the school system's list, can I choose another school in the system?**

The school system determines which schools to place on the choice list. System officials consider such things as the number of students already served at a school and the performance of that school itself. As NCLB requires, Houston County offers more than one school choice to eligible students. The intent is to provide parents the wisest possible choice for transfers within the law's requirements and the system's ability to manage its significant shortage of classrooms.

- **What should parents consider when they are given the option of school choice?**  
 The decision should be based on what parents believe is best for their child. If the child is happy, and doing well academically at the current school, parents would be wise to take that into consideration. Parent support and involvement in an NI school can help the school improve academic achievement. On the other hand, if the parent believes that a transfer to a choice school would benefit the child more, then he/she should proceed with requesting a transfer.
- **Does the school system provide transportation for students who transfer under this choice option?**  
 Houston County does not provide school bus service to choice schools, but it does reimburse the parent for transporting the student if the student is transferring from a Title I school. The rate is set by the state accounting office. Reimbursement will cover round trip, from the child's home to the choice school. Each month, the student's attendance will be verified and the mileage computed. Reimbursement checks will automatically be sent out to parents.
- **When do I have to make the decision whether or not to move my child? Can I change my mind after the school year has started?**  
 The decision to transfer a child to a choice school should be made by the deadline set by the county, which is included in the notification letter concerning school choice. If during the school year, the parent decides that the child should return to the home school, the child may be re-enrolled in the home school at any time. Reimbursement for travel will be discontinued.
- **If I opt for CHOICE and move my child to another school, do I have to reapply for a transfer each year?**  
 The child may remain in the choice school through the highest grade in that school. The student will need to reapply each year by completing a "Request to Remain" so that the county can continue the reimbursement payments. A parent will not be reimbursed for transportation if the child's original school moves off the NI list but the parent chooses to keep the child at the choice school.
- **If my child transfers under the school choice option, then his original school is removed from the Needs Improvement list, can she stay at her new school?**  
 Yes. However, a parent will not be reimbursed for transportation to the choice school after the child's original school regains "good standing" as determined by making adequate yearly progress two years in a row.

If you have questions or concerns about AYP or School Choice, contact Elaine Dawsey, Director of Federal Programs, at (478) 988-6396 or Carla Cainion, District Parent Involvement Coordinator, at (478) 988-6128.



# **HOUSTON COUNTY SCHOOLS**

## *Supplemental Educational Services*

### *Frequently Asked Questions: Supplemental Educational Services for Houston County Schools*

- **Who is eligible for services?**

All students from low-income families (recipients of free and reduced priced meals) who attend a school in their second year of school improvement or on corrective action are eligible for services. However, the district may not have enough money to serve all eligible students in which case the district will give priority to students who are the lowest-performing.
- **Who are the tutors?**

The Georgia Department of Education has a list of approved tutoring providers for this area from which to choose. The approved providers' list is available at participating schools, upon request from the school district, or on the web at <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/ReportingFW.aspx?PageReq=112&CountyId=676&FY=2007>
- **Where is the tutoring?**

It varies by provider. Tutoring may take place in your home, at the student's school, a local community center or business, library, church, neighboring school or college. Many providers will offer "hands on" tutoring by trained instructors. Others may offer Internet-based instruction that students can access through a computer at home, in a school or a community center. Make sure you and your student are comfortable with the location.
- **How much is tutoring?**

Tutoring is free for eligible students and will be paid for by the school district. The school district will spend a maximum per pupil allocation on each student for tutoring services.
- **When is tutoring?**

Tutoring services are provided outside of the school day. It depends on the tutoring provider but services may be offered either before school, after school, on the weekends, or during the summer.

- **How often and how long will my child receive tutoring?**  
 This can vary, from everyday to a few times a week. The provider will determine the number of sessions and how long those sessions will continue.
- **How do students get to tutoring?**  
 Parents are responsible for getting their child to and from tutoring services unless the provider offers transportation.
- **Why should I consider additional assistance for my child?**  
 To ensure that students increase their academic achievement, particularly in reading, language arts, and math.
- **What will my child study?**  
 Students will receive extra help in the areas in which they struggle academically. The school and the SES provider will assist parent(s)/legal guardian(s) in identifying the academic needs and establish goals for each student.
- **How will I know what my child is doing during the tutoring session?**  
 Tutoring providers are required to submit progress reports throughout the program to inform parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of each child's progress.
- **How do I choose the right SES provider for my child?**  
 First, identify the areas that are causing your child to struggle in reading and math. Not all providers offer services in both reading and math. Review the list of approved providers, the services they offer, the style of delivery (i.e., online, one-on-one, group) and the location of services if transportation is an issue. Choose a tutoring provider that has a program that you believe will work for you and your child. If you need assistance in selecting a provider, the district contact person can assist you in the process.
- **What if tutoring does not help my child?**  
 A parent may contact the district to discuss concerns and request a different provider if their child is not having success.

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