The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) requires all public schools and school districts to demonstrate adequate yearly progress (AYP) by meeting set standards in reading and mathematics performance and participation, as well as in student attendance and high school graduation rates. Failure to meet AYP for two consecutive years triggers Title I School Improvement Program requirements, which are implemented in a series of five stages. Each successive improvement stage carries more stringent requirements. In 2008-09, the Dallas Independent School District as a whole and 30 schools were in the Title I School Improvement Program.

Program Description

AYP standards for 2008-2009 included student passing rates of 67% in reading and 58% in mathematics for all students tested in grades 3-8 and 10, as well as the following student subgroups: African-American, Hispanic, white, economically disadvantaged, limited English proficient (LEP), and special education. Other AYP indicators include testing participation, attendance (elementary and middle schools), and graduation (high schools).

Campuses that do not meet AYP for the same indicator for two or more consecutive years are subject to Title I school improvement requirements, such as offering school choice and supplemental education services. Title I requires districts and campuses to implement these improvement provisions in progressive stages, based on the number of years a campus does not meet AYP for the same indicator. Improvement campuses must draft a revised campus improvement plan that includes measurable goals. They also must receive technical assistance and institute a program of professional development. They also must offer students the opportunity to transfer to a higher performing campus in the district.

In 2008-2009, the district had 29 secondary schools and 1 elementary campus on Title I improvement stages. Six schools were in Stage 1 improvement, and three were in Stage 2. In addition, seven campuses were in Stage 3, eight in Stage 4, and six in Stage 5.

Stage 5 schools were B. Adams, Adamson, Pinkston, Carter, Samuell, and Spruce high schools. The campuses restructured as schools-within-schools career pathway programs for 2008-2009. Stage 5 schools are required by law to restructure. The Stage 4 campuses were Smith, Molina, Roosevelt, Sunset, and N. Dallas high schools, and Hood, Long, and Storey middle schools. Stage 3 schools consisted of Jefferson, Kimball, South Oak Cliff and Seagoville high schools, as well as Comstock, Hill, and Hulcy middle schools. Cary Middle School, and Lincoln and Wilson high schools were in Stage 2. The Stage 1 schools were Hillcrest and White high schools; Stockard, Seagoville, and Browne middle schools; and Central Elementary.

Implementation

NCLB requires improvement schools to complete a campus improvement plan that includes measurable goals and outlines a program of professional development that addresses the areas in which the school missed AYP. Improvement schools also must receive technical assistance and offer students the opportunity to transfer to higher-performing schools in the district. Campuses at Stage 2 and higher, in addition to these requirements, must offer supplemental educational services (SES).

A review of the Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs) for the 30 improvement schools found that these documents function more as compliance documents than blueprints for school improvement.

Title I School Improvement Program campuses are required to offer students the opportunity to transfer to better-performing district campuses. Overall, 442 students transferred to other campuses. Skyline High School was the most popular destination for high
school transfers, while Greiner and Atwell were the most popular choices for middle school transfers.

**Supplemental Services**

_NCLB_ school improvement rules require that schools at Stage 2 and higher provide Supplemental Educational Services (SES), which includes tutoring and other services provided outside the regular school day. In 2008-2009, 8,497 students (about 38% of the eligible total) in 24 campuses enrolled in SES. However, SES data indicated that a smaller number of students, 5,106, actually participated in tutoring.

**Survey Results**

The school improvement evaluation team administered surveys to teachers and ninth grade students in the improvement schools. Student survey results found that most students believe they try hard in school, but that fewer students helped others succeed academically. Most students believe they manage their time well, but many conceded that they don’t always set aside time for homework and study. Most students saw a connection between doing well in high school and success in college or the work force.

Most teachers felt commitment to the campuses at which they taught, and most gave their principals high marks for instructional leadership. In addition, most teachers saw the curriculum as consistent and coordinated, but saw a lack of coherence and continuity in many school programs.

**Outcomes**

A new feature of the AYP system was a new measure that projects future test performance. Texas received federal approval in January 2009 to use the Texas Projection Measure, or TPM, as a growth model for AYP. The TPM takes current performance and, using a statistical model, predicts whether a student will pass at the next high-stakes grading level (grades 5, 8, and 11, as defined by state law). Beginning in 2009, schools could meet AYP under the traditional standards or under TPM.

Nearly half of the Title I School Improvement Program campuses (14 of 30) met AYP, according to preliminary results released in July 2009 by the Texas Education Agency. Nearly all of the campuses that missed AYP did so in mathematics, indicating that mathematics performance continues to be an issue of concern.

Only three schools missed AYP for high school graduation rates, a marked improvement over last year, when many Dallas ISD high schools and the district overall missed AYP on this measure. One campus, Stockard Middle School, met AYP for a second consecutive year, enabling it to exit from Title I school improvement status.

TPM benefited some improvement campuses, which would have missed AYP without the new measure.

In addition to the campuses, the district missed AYP for reading and mathematics performance by special education students because it exceeded a cap on the number of students who can be counted as academically proficient through alternative assessments. This was the second consecutive year the district exceeded the cap, placing it on Stage 1 for this measure. The district was on Stage 1 in 2008-09 because of high school graduation. The district must meet AYP in 2010 for graduation, and for special education in 2010 and 2011 to exit from Title I improvement status.

Figure 2 below displays passing rates (without TPM) in reading and mathematics for Title I School Improvement Program campuses.

![TAKS Passing Rates](image.png)

**Recommendation**

**Focus on Continued Improvement as AYP Standards Rise** – Preliminary achievement results show that the Title I School Improvement Campuses made marked improvements in reading and mathematics, as well as graduation rates. While the new Texas Projection Measure worked to the benefit of many campuses, others met the AYP standard without the benefit of this new measure. It is recommended that the district step up its efforts even further, especially in mathematics. Continued improvement will be necessary, in light of higher AYP standards that take effect in 2009-2010. The passing standards rise to 73% in reading and 67% in mathematics.

For more information, see EA09-189-2, available at [www.dallasisd.org/inside_disd/depts/evalacct/](http://www.dallasisd.org/inside_disd/depts/evalacct/), or contact Shane Hall at 972-925-6473.