

Summary of Senator Murkowski's NCLB Bill

Section 1: Short Title, "School Accountability Improvements Act"

Section 2: Highly Qualified Teachers in Small Schools

This section applies only to multi-subject middle and high school teachers in schools with 200 or fewer students. This section would also only apply to such teachers who teach in districts that have been designated by the State as having unique staffing or hiring challenges that require teachers to teach multiple core subjects and that have made a reasonable effort to recruit and retain such teachers that meet the original requirements of the "Highly Qualified Teacher" section of NCLB.

The bill would retain the current requirement that such teachers:

1. Are fully certified (not on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis); and
2. Hold at least a bachelor's degree;

The bill would change the current requirements for such teachers in the following ways:

1. Pass a rigorous State academic subject test in one (*not each*) of the core subject areas taught; or
2. Successfully complete an academic major or coursework equivalent to such a major, a graduate degree, or advanced certification or credentialing in one (*not each*) of the core subject areas taught;
3. Add a requirement for such teachers to demonstrate that they are highly effective at delivering instruction on a performance assessment developed or adopted by the State that assesses skills that are widely accepted as necessary for the effective delivery of instruction.

Section 3: Growth Models

This section would require the U.S. Department of Education to approve a State's application to use a growth model to satisfy the law's requirements for a single, statewide accountability system if:

1. The State's plan ensures that 100 percent of students in each subgroup meet or exceed the State's proficiency levels by the 20-13-14 School Year or are on track to do so no later than the student's final year in high school (not twelfth grade, as some students with disabilities stay in school until they are 22);
2. The growth model is based on a fully approved assessment system;
3. The growth model calculates growth either by individual students or by cohorts of students, and may use methodologies, such as confidence intervals and the State's approved minimum "n" designations, that will yield statistically reliable data;
4. The growth model includes all students;
5. In the case of a model that tracks individual students, that the State has the capacity to track and manage the data efficiently and effectively; and
6. The State shall calculate the number or percentage on students who are proficient by counting: a) the students who meet proficiency; and b) the students who are on track to be proficient by their final year in high school.

Section 4: School Choice and Supplemental Services

This section flips School Choice and Supplemental Education Services (tutoring), changes the requirement of which students must be included, and allows districts that are in Improvement Status to offer tutoring.

1. Districts identified for improvement shall offer tutoring to those students who are not proficient (*rather than all students*) in the first year after being so identified (rather than offering school choice) and
2. Districts that are still in Improvement Status at the end of the second year would be required to continue to offer tutoring as above and offer the option to transfer to another school in the district that is not in Improvement Status to those students who are not proficient (*rather than all students*); and
3. Provide technical assistance to schools that are In Need of Improvement.

Section 5: Calculating Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for Students with Disabilities and Students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

This section changes NCLB with regard to schools and school districts that did not meet AYP solely because they did not meet the Annual Measurable Objectives (proficiency targets set by the State) for the subgroups Students with Disabilities and/or LEP students.

1. The school shall only be required to develop or revise and implement a school improvement plan for those two subgroups; and
2. If a school or school district is identified for restructuring due to missing AYP for 6 years but can demonstrate to the State that it would have met AYP for in reading, writing, and math in those two subgroups through a growth model, then the school or school district will not be restructured.

Section 6: Native American Heritage Language Programs

This section allows schools to count students who are enrolled in an Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, or American Indian language program to count third graders for participation rate only and then meet AYP if such students are either proficient or on track to be proficient in grades 4-7. This will give the schools a chance to demonstrate that Native language program students are learning when the assessments are not in the language the students are learning in.

Section 7: Improving Effective Parental Involvement

This section amends Title II “Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High Quality Teachers and Principals” section on Subgrants to Eligible Partnership definition of Eligible Uses of Funds to allow, but not mandate, eligible partnerships grantees to:

1. develop parental engagement strategies as a key part of the ongoing school improvement plan
2. providing training to teachers, principals, and parents in skills that will enhance effective communication using:
 - a. research-based standards and methodologies of effective parental involvement programs; and
 - b. To the greatest extent possible, involve the members of the local and State parent teacher association or organization.

Section 8: Conforming Amendments