

## What Does AYP of the “No Child Left Behind” Law Really Mean?

With the recent headlines regarding LPS and test scores, as president of the Lincoln Education Association, I want to assure the reader that students have worked hard and educators have spent long, arduous hours to insure that every child has progressed every year since the inception of the No Child Left Behind federal law was implemented. To cite the *Journal Star*, “86 percent of the LPS students in grades third through sixth scored above the national average in reading, compared with 68 percent of students statewide.” Those words deserve their own headline.

Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) is the system established in federal law to monitor progress toward the goal in No Child Left Behind that 100% of the nation’s public school students will be proficient on rigorous state standards in reading and math by the year 2014. Yes, 100%! Rather than reporting that schools are failing, I want to say that LPS schools are doing better than ever. Reporting “failure” does not serve students who have been working diligently to boost their achievement or the educators who put in countless hours beyond the school work day to insure that students are learning.

To the letter of the law and before, the Lincoln Public Schools has developed strong, rigorous standards in reading and math. The Lincoln Public Schools and the educators of this district could have lowered standards so that more students would be proficient on AYP. But they did not. The expectations set for LPS students by educators and the district have always been high. Students have continued to make progress. From 2002 to 2008, third grade reading scores have gone from 52% to 62% proficiency, while math scores have gone from 68% to 78%. From 2004 to 2008 on the college entrance exam ACT, the LPS high school average went from 22.7 to 23.3, while the state average went from 21.7 to 22.7. Educators and students are reaching the high standards and are still reaching higher.

What does it mean if a school does not meet AYP or is labeled a “failure”? It can mean that if just one area out of a possible 36 areas is not met, then the school is declared a “failure.” The areas include the four areas of reading performance, reading participation, mathematics performance and mathematics participation for each of nine diverse subgroups (special education, free and reduced lunch, Hispanic, Black, English Language Learners, White, Asian or Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaska Native, All students.)

If for example, 81% of a special education group of thirty students does not meet proficiency in reading or if 95% of the students do not participate in the testing, then the school does not meet AYP. Because of the special needs of some children, a grade level test may not even be administered to a child. Therefore, the participation rate may not be at 95% for that group and the school would have to report that AYP has not been met—again a “failure.”

To reiterate, a school will be declared “not meeting AYP” by not meeting just one area out of the 36. Scores can be high in all other areas, yet, the school has not met AYP, and is deemed a “failure.”

The accountability behind No Child Left Behind has helped the education profession focus its efforts to insure that all students are proficient in reading and mathematics. Great educators understand that reading and mathematics are tools for students to use to further their education. The educators of the Lincoln Public Schools should be complimented for the work they are doing with diverse groups of students with not only the rigorous expectations of reading and mathematics but also for developing great human beings to be contributors, not burdens, to society.

Students and educators striving to reach these high standards should all be commended.

~~~ *Arlene Rea*, LEA President

*LEAdvocate*

*Issue # 9*

*January 26, 2009*

Arlene Rea, President

[arlene.rea@nsea.org](mailto:arlene.rea@nsea.org)

Dan Studer, UniServ Director & Editor

[dan.studer@nsea.org](mailto:dan.studer@nsea.org)

## COPING WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE: Part Six



If you have a **SUPERAGREEABLE** in your life, you might prefer to replace them with a **CLAM** (discussed in a previous issue). Then again, maybe not! This article has been revised from information from Robert M. Branson from the homepages of [wmich.edu](http://wmich.edu).

**SUPER AGREEABLES** have a strong need to be liked and accepted. Because it is a useful method for gaining acceptance, they try to make others feel liked and approved of as often as possible. They are difficult people with whom to deal when their needs to give and receive friendship conflict with reality. Rather than risk losing friendship or approval, **SUPER AGREEABLES** will eagerly commit themselves to actions on which they cannot or will not follow through.

### So how do you cope with SUPER AGREEABLES?

1. Work hard to surface the underlying facts and issues that prevent them from taking action.

2. Let them know you value them as people by:

- ✚ saying so directly.
- ✚ asking or commenting about their family, hobbies, clothes. Do this only if you mean it, at least a little.
- ✚ encourage them to be open and talk about those things that might interfere with your good relationship.

4. Ask them to talk about any aspect of your work, relationships, or self that is not as good as it could be.

5. Be ready to compromise and negotiate with the **SUPER AGREEABLES** in your life if open conflict appears to be inevitable.

6. Listen to a **SUPER AGREEABLE'S** humor. There may be hidden messages in those quips or teasing remarks that they make.

*Personally, I couldn't agree with these ideas more, they always work for me; come on, give it a try, it's simply wonderful and bound to be such a great success, I just know it...*

