



REL#09-130
For Immediate Release
September 15, 2009

CONTACT: Pam Slater
PHONE: 916-319-0818
E-MAIL: pslater@cde.ca.gov

**State Schools Chief Jack O'Connell Releases
2008-09 Accountability Progress Report**

SACRAMENTO – State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell today released California's 2008-09 Accountability Progress Report (APR), which provides results from the state accountability system: the Academic Performance Index (API), as well as the federal accountability system: Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and Program Improvement (PI). Both the API and AYP are based upon statewide assessment results from the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program and from the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE).

“Our accountability report confirms that most California schools are continuing to make solid gains in academic achievement,” O'Connell said. “For the seventh year in a row schools at every level have made real progress toward the statewide API target of 800, and almost half of our elementary schools have met or exceeded this goal. The API results also show a slight narrowing of the achievement gap that historically has left Hispanic or Latino and African American students trailing behind their peers who are white or Asian. I am delighted to see this trend of progress continue.”

Forty-two percent of all California schools are now at or above the overall statewide target API of 800, up six percentage points from the year before. This includes 48 percent of elementary schools, 36 percent of middle schools, and 21 percent of high schools. (See Table 1.)

The 2009 API report shows that all student subgroups statewide demonstrated improvement between 11 and 15 points. African American, Hispanic or Latino, and socioeconomically disadvantaged students increased their API this year by 15 points, while the API of white students increased by 14 percentage points and the statewide increase for all students was 14 points. Despite this slight narrowing between subgroups, white, and Asian students continue to have significantly higher API scores, a
More...more...

major indicator of the achievement gaps that persist in California schools. (See Table 2.) For API point growth by student groups statewide at the elementary school, middle school, and high school levels, see Tables 3, 4, and 5.)

The API is a numeric index that ranges from a low of 200 to a high of 1000 with a statewide target of 800. School and subgroup targets are set at 5 percent of the difference between the school or subgroup's Base API score and the statewide target of 800, with a minimum target of 5 points. All numerically significant subgroups at a school must meet their growth targets for a school to meet its API growth target. These subgroups include racial/ethnic subgroups, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, English learners, and students with disabilities.

The state API and federal AYP results report progress in different ways. The state API is an index model that measures year-to-year improvement and provides incentives to educators to focus on students at all performance levels. Schools receive more API points for moving students up from of the lowest performance levels. In contrast, the federal AYP system focuses solely on whether or not students are scoring at the proficient level or above on state assessments.

“In contrast to the state’s API system, which recognizes improvement across all performance levels, the federal accountability system reflects only the number of students that have reached proficiency on California’s rigorous standards,” O’Connell said. “Under the federal system, the percentage of students who must meet proficiency has increased significantly this year. Many schools, while still making real academic gains, have fallen short on the federal measure.

“We learn different things from the state and federal measures; however, the two systems of accountability can often send conflicting messages to educators and parents. While we can never abandon the goal of proficiency for all students, I continue to support efforts to create a single accountability system for California that combines the best of the state and federal systems in order to reduce confusion and still push schools to help all students improve. I am hopeful that the Obama administration will be a partner in this effort through the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, known currently as No Child Left Behind.”

In 2009, the AYP targets for the percentage of students expected to score at the proficient level or above on state assessments increased about 11 percentage points across the board from 2008. The AYP targets will continue to rise each year to meet the current federal requirements of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. (See Table 6 for schools and Table 9 for LEAs.)

Fewer schools and LEAs made AYP than in 2008. Fifty-one percent of schools made AYP in 2009, a slight decline of one percentage point from 2008. There was a similar decrease in the percentage of local educational agencies (LEAs) making AYP, which fell from 41 percent in 2008 to 38 percent in 2009. (See Table 7 for schools and Table 10 for LEAs.)

Twenty-nine percent of middle schools made AYP in 2009, as compared to 61 percent of elementary schools. The data also show a sharp decline in the percentage of high schools that made AYP from 2008 to 2009, falling from 49 percent in 2008 to 37 percent in 2009. The decline was even more precipitous for high schools that received Title I funds. Only 30 percent of these high schools met their AYP targets in 2009, a decline of 14 percentage points from 2008. There was also a parallel decline in the percentage of high school districts that made AYP, from 35 percent in 2008 to 25 percent in 2009. Altogether, nearly half of middle and high schools missed both their 2009 API and AYP targets. (See Tables 7 and 8 for schools and Table 10 for LEAs.)

“Some of the stagnation we are seeing at the high school level may be due to the fact that curriculum at the high school level becomes much more rigorous,” O’Connell, said. “However, we can’t afford not to adequately prepare students for success in life after high school. We must remain focused on finding ways to improve achievement at the high school level.”

Under NCLB, each state defines what it considers to be a proficient level of performance for students in English-language arts (ELA) and mathematics. California is widely recognized for having some of the most rigorous content and achievement standards in the nation. LEAs, schools, and subgroups must meet annual measurable objectives in both content areas to make AYP. For elementary and middle schools, AYP is based on the California Standards Tests (CSTs), the California Modified Assessment (CMA) in grades three through five, and the California Alternate Performance

Assessment (CAPA) in ELA and mathematics. At the high school level, AYP is based on the tenth grade census administration of the CAHSEE in ELA and mathematics.

Schools, school districts, and county offices of education that receive federal Title I funds and do not make AYP criteria for two consecutive years are subject to identification for Program Improvement (PI). For the 2009-10 school year, 675 schools were newly identified for PI — two and one-half times the number newly identified in 2008-09. Fifty-four schools exited from PI after making AYP for two consecutive years. (See Table 8.) Schools in PI are subject to a five-year timeline of intervention activities. For example, schools in Year 2 of PI must offer supplemental education services (e.g., tutoring) to eligible students.

NCLB also requires states to identify LEAs for PI. In California, LEAs include school districts, county offices of education, and statewide benefit charters. In 2009-10, 57 LEAs were newly identified for PI, one exited, leaving a total of 298 LEAs in PI. This represents 31.8 percent of the total number of LEAs receiving Title I funds. (See Table 12.)

Schools and LEAs have an opportunity to review their data and make corrections. API, AYP, and PI reports will be updated in November 2009, and again in February 2010. All reports and data files are available through the APR Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ar/index.asp>.

#

Attachments: Tables 1 – 12 and Summary