



Supplemental Services Q & A



When are children eligible for school choice?

Children are eligible for school choice when the Title I school they attend has not made adequate yearly progress in improving student achievement - as defined by the state - for two consecutive years or longer and is identified as needing improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. Any child attending such a school must be offered the option of transferring to a public school in the district - including a public charter school - not identified for school improvement, unless such an option is prohibited by state law. *No Child Left Behind* requires that priority in providing school choice be given to the lowest achieving children from low-income families. As of the 2002-03 school year, school choice is available to students enrolled in schools that have been identified as needing improvement under the *ESEA* as the statute existed prior to the enactment of *No Child Left Behind*.

In addition, children are eligible for school choice when they attend any "persistently dangerous school," as defined by the individual state. Any child who has been the victim of a violent crime on the grounds of his or her school is also eligible for school choice.

How do parents know if their child is eligible for school choice?

Under *No Child Left Behind*, school districts are required to notify parents if their child is eligible for school choice because his or her school has been identified as needing improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. They must notify parents no later than the first day of the school year following the year for which their school has been identified for improvement.

States are required to ensure that school choice is offered as an option to parents in the event their child is attending a school that is "persistently dangerous" or has been the victim of a violent crime while on school grounds.

What action can parents take if their school or district does not offer school choice to their child who is eligible?

Schools and districts receiving Title I funds must provide choice for eligible students as described above. If they do not, parents are encouraged to contact their state department of education.

Do public school options include only schools in the same district?

There may be situations where children in Title I schools have school options outside their own district. For instance, a school district may choose to enter into a cooperative agreement with another district that would allow their students to transfer into the other district's schools. In fact, the law requires that a district try "to the extent practicable" to establish such an agreement in the event that all of its schools have been identified as needing improvement, corrective action, or restructuring.

Is transportation available for children who choose to attend another school?

Subject to a funding cap established in the statute, districts must provide transportation for all students who exercise their school choice option under Title I. They must give priority to the lowest-achieving children from low-income families.

What are supplemental educational services?

Supplemental educational services are additional academic instruction designed to increase the academic achievement of students in schools that have not met state targets for increasing student achievement (adequate yearly progress) for three or more years. These services may include tutoring and after-school services. They may be offered through public- or private-sector providers that are approved by the state, such as public schools, public charter schools, local education agencies, educational service agencies and faith-based organizations. Private-sector providers may be either nonprofit or for-profit entities. States must maintain a list of approved providers across the state organized by the school district or districts they serve, from which parents may select. States must also promote maximum participation by supplemental educational services providers to ensure that parents have as many choices as possible.

When are children eligible to receive supplemental educational services?

Students from low-income families who remain in Title I schools that fail to meet state standards for at least three years are eligible to receive supplemental educational services.

Are parents notified about supplemental educational services?

Yes. Local education agencies are required to provide annual notice to parents of eligible children about the availability of services and information on the approved providers.

Can parents choose providers for supplemental educational services?

Yes, parents of eligible children can choose from the list of state-approved providers. Most states have approved a diverse list of providers, as mentioned above. Upon request, the local education agency will help parents determine which provider would best fit their child's needs. When parents have made their selection, the local education agency must then contract with that provider to deliver the services.

What action can parents take if their child is eligible for tutoring or other supplemental educational services, but their school or district does not offer them?

Districts receiving Title I funds must offer free tutoring and other extra help to eligible students, as described above. If eligible students are not being offered these services, parents are encouraged to contact their state department of education.

How are providers of supplemental educational services held accountable?

States must develop and apply objective criteria for evaluating providers and monitor the quality of services that they offer. In addition, supplemental services providers must give to parents, as well as to the school, information on their children's progress.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of the Secretary, Office of Public Affairs, *No Child Left Behind: A Parents Guide*, Washington, D.C., 2003.