

IOWA SCHOOLS IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE (SINA): SIX-YEAR TREND

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Background—The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) requires states to identify schools and districts as needing improvement if they miss Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two years. Trends of the Schools in Need of Assistance (SINA) list over the past six years is provided in the tables, with results discussed within the context of factors contributing to the identification.

Focus—The purpose of this project was to build a historical record of schools and districts placed on the SINA list, in accordance with NCLB. Such a record provides a tool to monitor trends in the number of schools and districts not meeting AYP requirements for two or more years. A secondary purpose was to build a timeline of significant events in lowa's AYP history, which will establish a context for interpreting the historical trend.

Methodology—Data used to build the trend were gathered from the lowa Department of Education's (DE) *The State Report Card for No Child Left Behind* for six years, 2003 through 2008. Data were also extracted from internal DE files to identify schools and districts that were removed from SINA status after having met AYP for two years. Finally, a 2005 internal study of the AYP decision process was used to remove schools inadvertently placed on the 2005 SINA list after the lowa alternate assessment results were omitted from the AYP decision process.

Results—Beginning with 12 schools on the SINA list in 2003, the number of schools placed on the SINA list has steadily increased, from 66 schools in 2004, to 136 schools in 2008. Significant milestones in Iowa's AYP history include:

- 2005 This was the year in which the first intermediate goal was to be achieved. This was the initial step up in proficiency targets for lowa schools. Forty-one schools were placed on the SINA list for the first time. Including those removed as a result of the internal validation study, the net change was 28 more schools on the SINA list in 2005 than in 2004.
- **2006** This was the first year that students in grades 3, 5, 6, and 7 were to be included in AYP decisions along with grades 4, 8, and 11. For this year, Iowa was required by the United States Department of Education to combine grades

to make a single AYP determination for each site. Thus, Iowa adopted a Proficiency Index model currently being used by Mississippi and Alabama. During this year, 20 schools were added to the SINA list for the first time, while 15 schools were removed, for a net change of five schools.

- 2007 Iowa Growth Model used for the first time.
- 2008 This was the year in which the achievement targets "stepped up" as a second intermediate goal. Like in 2005, an intermediate goal increase raises an achievement target about 6 percent (on average). This required each grade at each site to improve their percent of proficient students about 6 percent in each content area. In 2008, 18 new schools were added to the SINA list, and three schools were removed, for a net addition of 15 schools.

Table 1—Schools In Need of Assistance (SINA) List

Year	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
# Schools ON	12	66	94	99	121	136
# Schools NEW	12	54	41	20	28	18
# Schools Removed			13	15	6	3
NET Change		+54	+28	+5	+22	+15
Total # Schools	1,500	1,491	1,532	1,494	1,491	1,477
% Schools ON	0.80	4.43	6.14	6.63	8.12	9.21

Source: Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Planning, Research, Development and Evaluation Services.

Table 2—Districts In Need of Assistance (DINA) List

Year	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
# Districts ON	0	9	14	15	12	13
# Districts NEW		9	5	1	0	1
# Districts Removed			0	0	3	2
NET Change		9	+5	+1	-3	+1
Total # Districts		370	367	365	365	364
% Districts ON		2.43	3.81	4.11	3.29	3.57

Source: Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Planning, Research, Development and Evaluation Services.

The lowa Growth Model—lowa received approval from the United States Department of Education to incorporate student achievement growth into AYP decisions for 2007 and 2008. In order to achieve Adequate Yearly Growth (AYG), a student would need to improve from a lower non-proficient achievement level to a higher non-proficient achievement level (there are three levels). Students who met AYG were included with other proficient students for AYP determinations

At the school level, about the same number of schools had a subgroup that met AYP using the growth model for both 2007 and 2008. However, about only one-half of the schools in 2008 met AYP due to growth compared to 2007. At the district level, about the same number of districts had a subgroup that met AYP using the growth model for both 2007 and 2008. However, in 2007, 77 districts met AYP, in part due to use of the growth model, whereas in 2008, only nine districts met AYP, in part due to use of the growth model.

Table 3—Growth Model Results

	Schools	Districts	
2006-2007			
Total number with at least one group	139	78	
Met AYP Math	79	50	
Met AYP Reading	87	65	
Number meeting AYP	128 (38 both)	77 (38 both)	
2007-2008			
Total number with at least one group	142	83	
Met AYP Math	36	5	
Met AYP Reading	33	4	
Number meeting AYP	65 (4 both)	9	

Source: Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Planning, Research, Development and Evaluation Services.

Summary—The number of lowa schools on the SINA list has steadily increased from 2003 to 2008. Much of the increase in the number of identified schools can be attributed to increasing intermediate goals in 2005 and 2008, requiring most elementary and middle schools to improve the number of proficient students 2.5 times in 2005 compared to 2004 and 2.8 times in 2008 compared to 2004.

Use of the Iowa Growth Model helped a significant number of schools meet AYP. Had the growth model not been in effect, about five times the number of SINA schools each year would have missed AYP, with a large proportion of those schools likely being identified as SINA schools.

The future of AYP in Iowa will see an increasing number of schools and districts on the SINA list, largely due to the increasing achievement targets required by NCLB. Larger districts and schools that have more subgroups that count toward AYP decisions will be a significant part of this upward direction. Trends like those reflected in Table 1 and Table 2 are predicted to continue, followed by a steep increase in numbers on the lists, due to rapidly increasing achievement targets. The implication of this information is that districts and schools need to pay attention to ALL subgroups of lower achieving students, not just those that are historically disadvantaged.