

# INTRODUCTION

The No Child Left Behind Act is a large, complex statute. What does the law say about reading? What are the essential components of a reading program? What is scientifically based reading research?

What does the law say about annual proficiency tests? Who must be tested? In what subjects? Whose scores must be reported? What does the law say about accommodations? Who is exempt from annual proficiency tests?

What does the law say about accountability? School and school district report cards? What does the law say about schools in need of improvement? What are the sanctions for schools that do not improve? What does the law say about public school choice? Supplemental educational services and tutoring?

What are the requirements for highly qualified teachers? When do these requirements go into effect? How do the highly qualified teacher requirements affect special education teachers? English language teachers?

What are the educational requirements for paraprofessionals? Do all paraprofessionals have to meet these requirements? When do these requirements go into effect? How does the law limit the duties paraprofessionals may perform?

What does the law say about parental involvement? Parents' right to know the qualifications of their child's teachers? The parent's right to observe their child's classroom? Parental access to instructional material?

*Wrightslaw: No Child Left Behind* will help you find answers to your questions in the No Child Left Behind statute, regulations, and publications from the U. S. Department of Education.

## WHO SHOULD READ THIS BOOK?

If you are the parent of a child who attends school, you represent your child's interests. To effectively advocate for your child, you need to learn about your rights and responsibilities under the No Child Left Behind Act and how this law affects your child's education. You need to know what your child is entitled to.

If you work as a teacher, principal, pupil personnel specialist, or administrator, No Child Left Behind will have a profound impact on you and your job. You may have received inaccurate information and conflicting advice about this law. You need to know what the law actually says. If you are knowledgeable about the law, you will be able to meet the challenges of The No Child Left Behind Act.

If you are a teacher or principal, you may be interested to learn about mentoring, bonus pay, scholarships and fellowships for advanced certification, and other financial incentives. You will want to take advantage of training opportunities. You may be interested in the new teacher liability protections.

# 1 | A SHORT HISTORY OF THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT

---

In this chapter, you learn that the No Child Left Behind Act is the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. You will learn about several comprehensive studies and reports about educational quality that have been published, including *A Nation at Risk*, the *Nation's Report Card* and *Our Schools and Our Future: Are We Still at Risk?*

In the years since Congress enacted the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1965, the federal government has spent more than \$321 billion to help educate disadvantaged children. Forty years later, only 32 percent of fourth-graders can read skillfully at grade level. Many of the 68 percent who cannot read well are minority children and those who live in poverty.<sup>1</sup>

In 2001, Congress added benchmarks, measurements and sanctions to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and called it The No Child Left Behind Act. The President signed this bill into law on January 8, 2002.

## ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT (1965)

---

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) provided a comprehensive plan to address the inequality of educational opportunity for economically underprivileged children.

On April 11, 1965, when President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 into law, he said:

*“No law I have signed or will ever sign means more to the future of America.”*

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 included Title I programs of federal aid to disadvantaged children who live in poor urban and rural areas. The ESEA was the statutory basis on which early special education legislation was drafted. Because education is primarily a state and local responsibility, ESEA funds are intended to supplement state and local education expenditures.

Since 1965, Congress has amended the law several times. Each time Congress reauthorized the law, political leaders spoke to the potential impact of the law.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Why No Child Left Behind is Important to America* from the U. S. Department of Education.  
<http://www.ed.gov/nclb/overview/importance/edlite-index.html>

## 2 | LAW, REGULATIONS AND CASELAW

---

Congress enacted the No Child Left Behind Act during the first session of the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress. The President signed the statute into law on January 8, 2002. When Congress passes a bill and the President signs it, the statute becomes law immediately, unless it specifically states otherwise.

The authorization of any new law typically brings about a spate of interpretations and even more questions. Certainly, the No Child Left Behind Act will raise its fair share of questions. Self-styled experts may spread wrong interpretations, misinformation and deliberate dis-information. Do not rely on the opinions of others or advice you may find in articles or at training programs.

To find answers to your questions about The No Child Left Behind Act, you may want to do your own legal research. The intention of this book is to bridge the gap between the law itself and one's understanding of the legal language within it, in an accurate, objective manner and through direct reference to the law itself.

In this book, you will read the law. In the beginning, this is more difficult than having the law explained to you. As you read, the law will begin to fit together in your mind. When you learn how the law is organized, you can find sections or regulations that are relevant to your questions.

### STATUTES

---

Statutes are laws passed by federal, state and local legislatures. A statute is called an "Act." The original federal education statute was "The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965" (ESEA). When Congress amended the statute in 2001, they gave the law a new name, "The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001." The No Child Left Behind Act is Public Law 107-110 and is often cited as Pub. L. 107-110.

The full text of Public Law 107-110 is available on the **Wrightslaw NCLB CD-ROM**.

Congress first publishes laws in the *Statutes at Large* and then organizes laws by subject in the *United States Code (U.S.C)*. Thus, the No Child Left Behind Act is printed in both the *Statutes at Large* and in the *United States Code*. The numbering system used to categorize it in the *Statutes at Large* is different from the system used in the *United States Code*.

The *United States Code* has fifty subject classifications called Titles. For example, Title 20 is about education, Title 26 is the Internal Revenue Code, and Title 42 is about public health and welfare. In each title, laws are indexed and assigned section numbers. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 is cited as 20 U.S.C. § 6301 *et.seq.*

References to law are called legal citations. Legal citations are standardized formats that explain where you will find a particular statute, regulation, or case.

# 3 | AN OVERVIEW OF THE NCLB ACT

---

This chapter provides overview of the No Child Left Behind Act by Title. The Act is a massive statute, nearly 700 pages in length. Important information is not always be located where you expect to find it. For example, requirements about highly qualified teachers are in Title I, but the definition of “highly qualified teacher” is in Title IX.

The *Wrightslaw NCLB CD-ROM* that accompanies this book has the full text of Titles I through X with overviews and commentary, NCLB regulations, fact sheets, guidance publications from the U. S. Department of Education, and other NCLB resources.

The **Statement of Purpose** is the first and most important section in the No Child Left Behind Act:

The purpose of this title is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments. (20 U. S. C. § 6301)

The No Child Left Behind Act provides funding and grants, mandates accountability and results for grant recipients, and authorizes funds to supplement state and local education funding.

## CLOSING THE GAP

---

Nationally, there is a significant gap between the achievement test scores of children from low-income families, racial minorities, children with disabilities, English language learners, and the test scores of other children. No Child Left Behind seeks to close the achievement gap by holding states, local school districts, and schools accountable for improving the academic achievement of all children.

No Child Left Behind requires schools to teach all children to proficiency in reading, math and science by 2014. The key requirements of the law—annual proficiency tests in grades 3-8, highly qualified teachers in every classroom, research-based instruction, increased parental rights, public school choice, and state, district and school report cards—are strategies to accomplish this goal.

Schools and school districts are required to meet the educational needs of all children, including poor children, children with disabilities, English language learners, minority and migratory children, and other neglected groups of children, and to publicly report their progress in educating children every year. (20 U. S. C. § 6301)

Children will have access to effective, scientifically based instruction and challenging academic content. Children are to receive an enriched, accelerated educational program that includes additional services that increase quality instructional time. (20 U. S. C. § 6301)

No Child Left Behind covers all states, school districts, and schools that accept federal Title I grants. Title I grants provide funding for remedial education programs for poor and disadvantaged children in public schools, and in some private programs. States shall give priority to school districts that serve the lowest-achieving schools that demonstrate the greatest need and strongest commitment to improve. (20 U. S. C. § 6303)

# 4 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT NCLB

---

No Child Left Behind includes new responsibilities and requirements for states, school districts, and schools. The law also includes new rights and responsibilities for children who attend public schools that receive Title I funds and their parents. This chapter answers frequently asked questions about No Child Left Behind topics:

- Accountability
- Choice
- Doing What Works
- Reading
- Safe Schools
- Teachers
- Testing

## ACCOUNTABILITY

1. How do I know how my child is doing?
2. When will the states have to follow this new law?
3. My child has special needs. How does this bill help my child?
4. What are the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act for states and school districts to publish "report cards" on school performance?
5. How can I see these school report cards?
6. Will these tests measure the progress of the schools?
7. How will measuring "adequate yearly progress" help improve my school?
8. What if a school fails to improve?
9. Are there any rewards for schools or teachers that do well?

## PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE

10. Do the public school choice options include only schools in the same district, or might they include schools in neighboring school districts?
11. Will transportation be offered to pupils exercising public school choice options?
12. Which pupils will be eligible for public school choice?
13. How do I know if my child is eligible for supplemental services?
14. How can I find out what kind of extra help is available from the school?
15. Who will provide supplemental services?
16. Can community-based organizations participate in programs funded under No Child Left Behind?
17. If my child is in a charter school, do testing and accountability apply?
18. Does No Child Left Behind provide for the facility financing of charter schools?

# 5 NCLB FOR PARENTS

---

In this chapter, you learn about key provisions in No Child Left Behind for parents and children. These provisions include annual proficiency testing, school and school district report cards, public school choice and supplemental educational services, teaching children to read by the end of third grade, highly qualified teacher requirements, parents' right to know the qualifications of teachers, and parent involvement and empowerment. The chapter includes additional information for parents of children with disabilities, English language learners, and children who attend dangerous schools.

When No Child Left Behind was enacted in 2002, millions of children graduated from high school without the basic skills they need to make it in the real world. According to the *2002 Nation's Report Card*:

- Only 36 percent of 12<sup>th</sup> graders were proficient in reading
- Only 18 percent of 12<sup>th</sup> graders were proficient in science
- Only 17 percent of 12<sup>th</sup> graders were proficient in math
- Only 11 percent of 12<sup>th</sup> graders were proficient in U. S. history

No Child Left Behind requires schools to teach all children to proficiency in reading, math and science by 2014. The key requirements of the law—annual testing of reading, math and science, a highly qualified teacher in every classroom, research-based instruction, increased parental rights, and state, school district and school report cards—are strategies to accomplish this goal.

Parents are natural advocates for their children. Who is responsible for your child's welfare? You are. Who represents your child's interests? You do. No Child Left Behind gives you the power to make educational decisions for your child.

Do not be afraid to use your power. Use it wisely. A good education is the most important gift you can give to your child.

## HOW WILL NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND AFFECT PARENTS? \_\_\_\_\_

No Child Left Behind require schools to educate all children, including poor children, children with disabilities, migratory children and English language learners, minority children, and other neglected groups of children, and to publicly report their progress every year.

If your child attends a school that accepts Title I funds, you have more choices and options than parents of children who do not attend Title I schools. If your child attends a school that does not receive Title I funds, but is in a school district that does, you will receive information about whether your child's school is improving at the required rate. You will also be informed about what subgroups your school is teaching successfully.

# 6 | NCLB FOR TEACHERS, PRINCIPALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS

---

In this chapter, you learn about provisions in the No Child Left Behind Act that are of interest to teachers, principals and paraprofessionals. These provisions include highly qualified teacher requirements, new requirements for paraprofessionals, parents' right to know the qualifications of their children's teachers, training and professional development, recruitment and retention, and teacher liability protection.

According to the U. S. Department of Education:

- One-quarter of English teachers do not have a major or minor in English, literature, communications, or journalism
- One-third of life science teachers do not have a major or minor in biology or life science
- Fifty-six percent of physical science teachers do not have a major or minor in physics, chemistry, geology, or earth science
- More than half of history teachers do not have a major or minor in history
- Fifty-nine percent of math teachers do not have a major or minor in mathematics<sup>7</sup>
- More than four million students take physics, chemistry and history from teachers who are not prepared to teach these subjects<sup>8</sup>

No Child Left Behind calls for highly qualified teachers—teachers who demonstrate subject knowledge and skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and other basic subjects—to be in every classroom by the end of the 2005-06 school year.

## HOW WILL NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND AFFECT YOU? \_\_\_\_\_

No Child Left Behind will affect everyone employed by schools and school districts. You should expect changes as your school and school district focus on teaching all students to higher levels of proficiency. Your state and school district must report their present levels of performance to parents and the public every year. These performance levels must increase steadily until all students are being educated to proficiency by 2014. (20 U. S. C. § 6301)

---

<sup>7</sup> Richard M. Ingersall, "The Problem of Underqualified Teachers in American Schools," *Educational Researcher* 28, no. 2 (March 1999) is available as an Appendix to *Improving Teacher Quality State Grants – Title II, Part A* in the *Wrightslaw NCLB CD-ROM*.

<sup>8</sup> U. S. Department of Education, "The Facts about . . . Good Teachers," <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/methods/teachers/teachers.pdf>

# 7 | NCLB FOR ATTORNEYS AND ADVOCATES

---

This chapter is an overview of No Child Left Behind provisions that will be of interest to legal practitioners. These provisions include legal requirements about reading, reading instruction and reading assessments, highly qualified teachers, public school choice and supplemental educational services, educational programs for immigrant children and English language learners, report cards and notices to parents, privacy, and parental right to inspect instructional materials. Each section concludes with a list questions.

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) defines the standard of education that applies to all children who attend public schools. This standard expressly includes children with disabilities, limited English proficient children, migratory children, Indian children, neglected or delinquent children, homeless children, and young children in need of reading assistance.

The “Statement of Purpose” describes the intent of the law:

The purpose of this title is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments . . .

closing the achievement gap between high- and low-performing children, especially the achievement gaps between minority and nonminority students, and between disadvantaged children and their more advantaged peers . . .

holding schools, local educational agencies, and States accountable for improving the academic achievement of all students . . .” (20 U. S. C. § 6301)

The *Wrightslaw: No Child Left Behind CD-ROM* included with this book includes the *No Child Left Behind Deskbook* and guidance publications from the U. S. Department of Education about assessment, teacher quality, transfers from low-performing and unsafe schools, supplemental educational services from providers selected by parents, and other issues. These publications will help you master this complex statute and provide authority you can attach to legal briefs.

## READING, INSTRUCTION, RESEARCH, AND ASSESSMENTS

---

Too often, the attorney represents a child who has severely deficient reading skills. Research has found a high relationship between poor reading skills, learning disabilities, and juvenile delinquency. Sadly, schools often use reading programs that are not effective in teaching children with disabilities, English language learners, migratory children, Native American children, neglected children, delinquent children, and homeless children to read.

A primary focus of this law is the requirement that school districts and individual schools use effective, research-based reading remediation programs so all children are reading at grade level by the end of third grade.



# 8 NCLB FOR SCHOOL LEADERS AND ACADEMICS

---

In this chapter, you learn that the No Child Left Behind Act emphasizes accountability, assessment, parent options, better-trained teachers, and research-based teaching methods. You learn about accountability, adequate yearly progress, proficiency, parent options, supplemental services providers, equitable services to private school students and teachers, research based instruction, and data collection and analysis.

The law requires schools to teach all children to proficiency in reading, math and science by 2014. The key requirements of the law—annual proficiency testing in grades 3-8, highly qualified teachers in every classroom, research based instruction, increased parental rights, public school choice, and state, district and school report cards—are strategies to accomplish this goal.

NCLB applies differently to Title I schools than to schools that do not receive Title I grants. One way or another, this law covers all public schools in all states.

## ACCOUNTABILITY AND ASSESSMENTS

---

### *State Accountability*

States must set proficiency levels on their reading and math tests that indicate grade-level performance. These proficiency levels must reflect state academic standards.

States must also determine the percentage of students overall and the percentage of students in specific groups who are expected to reach proficiency each year. States set specific increments that they will meet between now and 2014. The goals will be raised each year so all students and all subgroups of students will be performing at grade level by 2014. (20 U. S. C. § 6311(b))

School districts and states must make steady Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) towards this goal. To measure progress, states must begin testing all students in grades 3 through 8 annually in reading and math during the 2005-2006 school year. They must begin testing students in grades 10 through 12 at least once in these subjects. By 2007-08, states must test students in science at least once during grades 3-8, grades 6-9, and grades 10-12. These test scores determine if your school is making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) towards the goal of proficiency for all children by the 2013-2014 deadline. (20 U. S. C. § 6311(c))

States that wish to avoid sanctions under the law must improve student test scores immediately. Clear communication between the governor's office, legislators, state department of education, the state board of education, and the state university system is essential to accomplishing this goal.

States need to evaluate where they stand, where they need to be, how they will get there, and identify problems that stand in the way. Without a thorough knowledge of this law and honest examination of the education issues in your state, you are likely to waste valuable time. This will result in expensive corrections in later years.

# 9 HOW TO OBTAIN INFORMATION AND REQUEST ACTION

---

In this chapter, you learn how to write effective letters to obtain information and request action. You will learn strategies to ensure that your letters accomplish their purpose. As you read this chapter, refer to the sample letters in Chapter 11. You can adapt these letters to your circumstances.

## WHY YOU WRITE LETTERS

---

You write letters to:

- Obtain information
- Request action
- Report a problem or file a complaint

You also use letters to build relationships, identify and solve problems, clarify decisions that are made or not made, and motivate people to take action. When you write a letter, be guided by your purpose. What do you want your letter to accomplish? Focus on one issue or two issues at most. Do not use one letter to accomplish several purposes. Long letters about several issues are confusing.

### ***To Request Information***

Most requests for information are straightforward. For example, you may write letters to:

- Request information about the qualifications of a child's teachers
- Request research about a child's reading program
- Request scientifically-based reading research about a child's reading program
- Request information about your school or school district report card
- Request school district's Reading First Application

### ***To Request Action***

When you write a letter to request action, your reader may be resistant. If you expect resistance, provide information that supports your request. For example, you may write letters to:

- Request that your child not be retained
- Request that your school board comply with NCLB
- Request that your state develop a comprehensive list of supplemental education service providers

# 10 | HOW TO REPORT A PROBLEM OR FILE A COMPLAINT

---

In this chapter, you learn how to write a persuasive complaint letter, use facts to present your case, and make a good first impression.

The No Child Left Behind Act does not include a formal complaint procedure. When you “file a complaint,” you are alerting an individual who may have the power to fix a problem. The Secretary of the U. S. Department of Education appointed Regional Representatives for different regions in the country. These Regional Representatives are responsible for helping states comply with the law and for monitoring compliance in their region.

Regional Representatives are concerned with actions that indicate global problems with NCLB compliance. Before you “file a complaint” with your Regional Representative, make sure you have valid grounds for the complaint, you are familiar with the law, and you have a paper trail that shows deliberate non-compliance with the law.

Before you decide to file a complaint, you should answer these questions.

- Did you read the Guidance publications about this topic?
- Did you read your state accountability plan? Did the U. S. Department of Education approve the procedure you want to express concerns about?
- Did you express concerns to your school district or state department of education. Did you create a paper trail?
- Do you want to report a concern or request action?
- Should you express your concern to your state department of education? Should you express your concern to the Secretary’s Regional Representative?

Suppose you are responsible for compiling assessment data for your state. You discovered problems with the accountability database. This may be an appropriate issue for your Regional Representative.

Suppose your school district did not test your child on the annual academic testing. If the school district did not report that your child was tested, there was no violation. If you have reason to believe the district reported false information, you may want to write a letter to your Regional Representative to advise her of the situation.

Remember, accountability follows money. Your state received Title I funds and allocated the funds to eligible school districts. Your state is responsible for ensuring that school districts comply with No Child Left Behind.

State and federal education authorities travel and may be away from the office for several days. If you call, expect to be referred to voicemail. Leave a short message about the problem, your name, phone number, and good times to contact you.

# 11 | SAMPLE LETTERS

---

This chapter includes fifteen sample letters about No Child Left Behind issues. The authors include parents, an attorney, a school board member, a retired teacher, and members of the Armed Forces.

Several letters focus on how to obtain information about a school or school district, including Title I status, reading research, state and school district report cards, and parental involvement policies.

A parent writes to object to the school's plan to retain her child. A retired teacher wants to learn how she can become a "Supplemental Service Provider." A school board member asks the state department of education for a suitable list of supplemental service providers. An individual in the Armed Forces expresses interest in becoming a teacher through the "Troops-to-Teachers" program. Two letters express different perspectives about access to student information by military recruiters.

In some cases, the purpose of the letter is not to request specific information, but to document that information is not readily available to the public, as required by NCLB. One letter will document the problem. A follow-up letter may be evidence of inaction and the failure to comply with the No Child Left Behind Act.

You can use these letters as templates and tailor them to your circumstances.

## SAMPLE LETTERS

- #1. Sample Letter to Request Information about Teachers' Qualifications
- #2. Sample Letter to Request Research about a Reading Program
- #3. Sample Letter to Request Reading First Application
- #4. Sample Letter Objecting to Retention of Child with a Disability
- #5. Sample Letter from Attorney Using NCLB to Request Reading Research and File
- #6. Sample Complaint Letter to USDOE Regarding SEA and LEA Failure to Provide Information about Report Cards
- #7. Sample Complaint letter to USDOE Regarding SEA and LEA Failure to Provide Information about Title I Schools

# 12 | TABLE OF STATUTES

This Table of Statutes is a complete list of the United States Code sections cross-referenced with No Child Left Behind Act.

For example, the first entry is the United States Code at 20 U. S. C. Section (§) 6301. The citation is 20 U. S. C. § 6301 and is also Section 1001 of the No Child Left Behind Act. A few code sections are in Title 25 and are identified as 25 U. S. C. §.

20 United States Code Sections & Description	NCLB §§
<b>TITLE I: Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged</b>	
§ 6301 Statement of Purpose	1001
§ 6302 Authorization of appropriations	1002
§ 6303 School improvement	1003
§ 6304 State administration	1004
<b>Part A, Basic Program Requirements</b>	
<b>Subpart 1 - Basic Program Requirements</b>	
§ 6311 State plans	1111
§ 6312 Local educational agency plans	1112
§ 6313 Eligible school attendance areas	1113
§ 6314 Schoolwide programs	1114
§ 6315 Targeted assistance schools	1115
§ 6316 Academic assessment and local educational agency and school improvement	1116
§ 6317 School support and recognition	1117
§ 6318 Parental involvement	1118
§ 6319 Qualifications for teachers and paraprofessionals	1119
§ 6320 Participation of children enrolled in private schools	1120
§ 6321 Fiscal requirements	1120A
§ 6322 Coordination requirements	1120B
<b>Subpart 2 – Allocations</b>	
§ 6331 Grants for the outlying areas and the Secretary of the Interior	1121
§ 6332 Allocations to States	1122
§ 6333 Basic grants to local educational agencies	1123
§ 6334 Concentration grants to local educational agencies	1124a
§ 6335 Targeted grants to local educational agencies	1125
§ 6336 Adequacy of funding of targeted grants to local educational agencies in fiscal years after fiscal year 2001	112AA

# 13 | Title I: No Child Left Behind

---

## TITLE I: IMPROVING THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF THE DISADVANTAGED

➔ **OVERVIEW OF TITLE I:** The first four code sections of Title I set the stage for the No Child Left Behind Act.

- 20 U. S. C. § 6301. Statement of Purpose.
- 20 U. S. C. § 6302. Authorization of appropriations.
- 20 U. S. C. § 6303. School improvement
- 20 U. S. C. § 6304. State administration.

Title I has nine Parts:

- Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies
- Part B: Student Reading Skills Improvement Grants
- Part C: Education of Migratory Children
- Part D: Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth who are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-risk
- Part E: National Assessment of Title I
- Part F: Comprehensive School Reform
- Part G: Advanced Placement Programs
- Part H: School Dropout Prevention
- Part I: General Provisions

### 20 U. S. C. § 6301. Statement of Purpose.

➔ **OVERVIEW:** The Statement of Purpose is the most important statute in No Child Left Behind because it describes the overall purpose of the law: “that all children will have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to receive a high-quality education” and reach “at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments.”

Section 6301 lists twelve steps to accomplish these purposes. The law seeks to close the gap between low and high achieving students by holding states, local school districts, and schools accountable for improving the academic achievement of all students. The law requires schools to meet the educational needs of poor children, children with disabilities, children with limited English proficiency, minority and migratory children, and other neglected groups of children, and to publicly report their progress in educating these children every year.

If you are confused about a statute in No Child Left Behind, re-read this Statement of Purpose to see how a particular statute fits into the overall purpose of No Child Left Behind.

The purpose of this title is to ensure that **all children** have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a **high-quality education** and reach, **at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments**. This purpose can be accomplished by —