

Accountability Initiative

Description. In return for increased autonomy, flexibility and resources, the DOE is holding schools accountable for improving the academic outcomes of all students. The DOE is also providing schools and families with an unprecedented amount of information about student achievement—and intensively training educators and parents to use this information to accelerate student learning.

Why Accountability? All children can learn and improve, and the DOE is holding everyone in the system responsible for making sure that they do. No longer will excuses be tolerated for the persistent failure of any student.

Rewards and Consequences.

Schools receive rewards for successfully helping students make progress—and face serious consequences for failure.

“A” schools with high quality scores are eligible for bonuses and to serve as demonstration sites for peers.

“A” and “B” schools with top quality scores receive generous extra funding for each student they accept from low-performing schools.

“C” schools don’t get rewards. Schools with three “Cs” in a row face the same penalties as “D” schools.

“D” and “F” schools face intervention and leadership change; if they don’t or can’t improve, they will close.

How Accountability Will Work. The DOE will enforce high standards, provide schools and families with new tools to track progress, and hold schools accountable for student outcomes:

✓ **Progress.** By September 2007, all schools will receive Progress Reports grading them A-F on attendance; parent, teacher, and student responses to surveys; and student performance and progress. The focus is on progress by all students at all levels, with additional credit for big gains by poor, minority, and high needs children.

✓ **Quality.** Starting this year, all schools receive an annual Quality Review. Education experts talk to parents, students, and staff; observe classrooms; and review how schools use data and set targets to improve learning for all students. A public report details each school’s strengths and weaknesses.

✓ **Tracking progress.** The DOE is giving schools new tools to understand and track each child’s progress throughout the year. Teachers use these Periodic Assessments to create action plans tailored the needs and talents of each student.

✓ **Information Technology.** A new data system (the *Achievement Reporting and Innovation System*) will give educators (2007-08) and parents (2008-09) on-time access to critical information on student progress from kindergarten through high school.

✓ **Intensive Training.** DOE will give schools intensive hands-on training in the use of the new accountability tools to accelerate student learning.

