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## 78 MPS, 6 suburban schools fail to meet academic goals

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More than 80 public schools in the metro Milwaukee area, including six in the suburbs, missed academic goals set by the state under the federal No Child Left Behind Act in the 2009-'10 school year, according to information released today.

Milwaukee Public Schools had 78 of the schools that missed the so-called "adequate yearly progress" requirement of the federal law. Schools that miss that requirement for two or more years are identified for improvement and, in the case of schools that receive federal funds for low-income students, are subject to an escalating series of sanctions.

MPS also was one of four school districts in the state that failed to meet the target. The other three were Green Bay, Madison and Racine.

In addition, three of the six suburban schools that missed that requirement were in the West Allis-West Milwaukee School District. Only one suburban school - Menomonee Falls High School - has missed that requirement for more than a year.

The high school, which is now in its second year of being identified for improvement, will have to devote some of its federal dollars to provide tutoring for students.

In addition to Menomonee Falls High School, suburban schools that missed the state-set goals were Brown Deer Middle School, Waukesha's Central Middle School and West Allis-West Milwaukee's Frank Lloyd Wright Intermediate School, Nathan Hale High School and West Milwaukee Intermediate School.

Schools can miss AYP in a variety of ways. Among them are failing to meet proficiency goals on the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations' reading and math tests at the individual grade levels tests - from third through eighth and 10th grades - and by having certain subgroups of students miss those proficiency goals.

According to the information released by the state Department of Public Instruction, all of the suburban schools that failed to make the AYP standard did so because of the performance by their students with disabilities.

In MPS, schools that missed AYP included popular sites such as Reagan College Preparatory High School, La Escuela Fratney and Wedgewood Park International School.

Overall, 145 schools in the state missed the AYP standard and 89 were identified for improvement. A list of schools that missed AYP or are identified for improvement can be found at:

<http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/sifi/default.asp>.

"These reports, based off a snapshot-in-time assessment, present one view of a school's progress and areas that need improvement," state schools Superintendent Tony Evers said in a news release.

He said that some of the schools that miss AYP still have strengths. "I urge parents and community members to consider a fuller picture of school achievement than what Wisconsin must do to fulfill NCLB requirements," Evers said.

Generally, for schools to meet the AYP target they need:

- Seventy-four percent of students to score proficient or above on reading and 58% of students to be proficient in math;
- Ninety-five percent of eligible students to take the WKCE reading and math tests;
- A high school graduation rate of at least 85% or an improvement in the graduation rate, or an attendance rate of 85% or growth over the previous year.

The state's proficiency goals are set to increase in the 2010-'11 school year on the way to a 100% proficiency goal set by the federal law for the 2013-'14 school year.

Menomonee Falls School District officials expressed some frustration with the law, which they said will force them to spend money designated for low-income students for tutoring of students who are not economically disadvantaged. They also said that their high school has been unfairly targeted by the law because it is larger than other schools and has more students with disabilities than other districts.

Kathy Myles, director of teaching, learning and assessment for the Menomonee Falls district, said the law also doesn't examine the strides a school or district has made in improving the performance of its students with disabilities, which include students with severe learning problems. "A better question for me for a district is 'Are the students making adequate gains for growth,'&ensp" she said.

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