

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 30, 2011 8:00 AM\*

Contact: Charlene Briner: 651-582-1145

## Minnesota Department of Education Releases AYP Data

Roseville, MN – As required under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law and state statute, the Minnesota Department of Education released adequate yearly progress (AYP) data for schools today. Minnesota sought a temporary waiver from certain provisions of NCLB on August16, but to date the United States Department of Education has not acted on the waiver request. They instead have laid out a process by which states can apply for a waiver from NCLB mandates beginning in November, and for which Minnesota Commissioner Brenda Cassellius said Minnesota would apply.

"Minnesota is directed by state law to release AYP data this year - however we are hopeful that positive changes in how we measure, support, and report school improvement are on the way," said Commissioner Cassellius. "Labeling schools as "failures" or imposing one-size-fits-all mandates is a flawed way to address the unique challenges facing some of our schools."

Federal law states that schools that do not meet AYP must face the same consequences as they did in previous years under NCLB. If Minnesota is granted a waiver, relief from those mandates may come as soon as this school year.

"As we put together our waiver package, we aim to put Minnesota's stamp of excellence and our own common sense approach on efforts to reform education," said Cassellius. "That means continuing to implement our rigorous standards that prepare all students for college and career, designing more meaningful accountability systems to measure student growth, supporting and rewarding schools making good progress, and partnering with local school districts that know best how to support the children they serve."

Prior to the release of AYP data, Commissioner Cassellius provided an optional letter to parents that school districts could choose to send with their mandated AYP letters. This letter is intended to provide information about AYP, Minnesota's waiver request and what an AYP designation may mean for the school their son or daughter attends.

We believe the Department must play a leadership role in helping parents and the public understand the challenges of the current law, and its inability to give us a full and accurate picture of the quality of education students are receiving, "said Cassellius. "We also believe it is important for parents to know the Department of Education is taking an active role in seeking changes to ensure that our state and federal education policies work for all of Minnesota's children."

Read the Commissioner letter.

View the AYP Data files on the Minnesota Department of Education website.

###