



## **K12 Inc. statement on the National Education Policy Center report**

January 6, 2012

The National Education Policy Center's latest report uses the federal Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) standard to compare online public schools with brick-and-mortar schools. However, there is widespread agreement from educators and policymakers that AYP is not a reliable measure.

The U.S. Secretary of Education recently said the AYP standards under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) are broken and unfairly label schools as "failing." Many states are requesting waivers from NCLB. There is a growing consensus to do away with AYP and improve the method used to measure and assess schools.

Under AYP, if a school misses even one target in one subgroup of students, the entire school fails to make AYP. It is more difficult for large schools with diverse student populations to make AYP compared to small schools with fewer students and fewer grades. Also, AYP does not distinguish first-year transfer students from students that have been educated in the same school for multiple years.

AYP does not measure or reward student academic growth – a practice that educators believe is a better way to assess school performance. For example, despite missing AYP, the Ohio Virtual Academy – a statewide online public school operated by K12 – was rated an Effective School in 2011 by the state in large part because the school exceeded its value-added academic growth targets.

To measure academic growth, K12 uses the independent Scantron Performance Series assessment, a norm referenced test that students take in the fall and spring to measure academic gains in one year and over time. The [results](#) are promising and demonstrate that, in most categories, students are making positive academic gains that exceed the Scantron national norm group.