



McKEESPORT AREA School District

Notice of Adequate Yearly Progress, Public School Choice Please Read: Important Information Affecting Your Child

Aug 10, 2011

Dear Centennial Elementary School Parent or Guardian,

We would like to make you aware of the choices and resources available to you based on the progress of your child's school under the guidelines of No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

What are the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)?

The PSSA is an annual exam given to Pennsylvania students at various grade levels to measure their academic progress. The state uses the PSSA to determine whether McKeesport Area School District and each of our schools are making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). AYP is determined by how successful districts and schools are in meeting state goals for attendance, graduation rates, test participation and academic progress.

To make AYP, a school must meet the state goals for the student body as a whole as well for each subgroup of students. A subgroup consists of 40 or more students in a school in the following categories: ethnicity, socio-economic status, Individual Education Plan (IEP) – Special Education, and English Language Learner (ELL) status. The number of subgroups that a school has determines the number of "targets" that it must meet to make AYP. For the prior 2010-11 school year, students at the McKeesport Area School District made remarkable progress in Reading and Mathematics proficiency on 15 of the 20 targets.

Centennial Elementary students met 75% of AYP targets in 2010-11. Below are highlights of reading and mathematics achievements:

Reading

- In the 3rd and 5th grades, 70.4% of the students scored proficient or advanced on the Growth Model for 2010 - 2011.

Mathematics

- In the 3rd and 5th grades, 81.7% of the students scored proficient or advanced on the Growth Model for 2010 - 2011.

However, based on the performance of some subgroups, Centennial Elementary School has been identified in AYP STATUS by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). Centennial Elementary students' PSSA results indicate that the school did not meet the state's academic achievement targets for the second year in a row, based on **2010-11** PSSA results. In the area of **Mathematics**, all of the student subgroups met the state target except for the IEP subgroup. In **Reading**, the white subgroup met the state target; however the other subgroups (Black, IEP, Economically Disadvantaged, and All Subgroups) fell short of their Targets.

<u>Math</u>	<u>Proficient/Adv</u>	<u>State Target</u>
IEP Group	39.0 %	67%

<u>Reading</u>	<u>Proficient/Adv</u>	<u>State Target</u>
Black	38.6%	72%
IEP	14.6%	72%
Economically Disadvantaged	50.0%	72%
All Subgroup	47.1%	72%

Please review the attachment for an explanation of school improvement and more information on how the McKeesport Area School District compares to other Pennsylvania schools.

Action Plan for Improving Student Achievement

As a result of an in depth needs assessment, Centennial Elementary School has identified the following areas as key strategies for instructional improvement:

- The implementation of Waterford, an on-line interactive tutorial for early learners in math and reading
- The implementation of Success Maker, an on-line interactive tutorial for students in math and reading
- The implementation of Fast Forward, an intensive computer-based program that address thinking and auditory processing to enhance language and reading skills for struggling learners.

Explanation of School Choice Option

According to NCLB, Centennial Elementary School must offer students the choice to transfer to another school in the district not in School Improvement. **However, due to the closure of Cornell Intermediate and the reassignment of district students within the McKeesport Area School District, school choice is not an available option.** In lieu of school choice, the school district will make available additional opportunities for tutoring beyond the regular school day for all interested students.

How parents and Families Can Help Improve Student Achievement

Parent support is essential to the success of Centennial Elementary students. Communicating with your child's teachers, making sure your child attends school regularly, helping your child with homework, monitoring your child's television time, volunteering in the classroom, and participating in school decision-making are important.

The district-wide parent involvement policy will be updated this school year. If you are interested in providing input for this policy, please call Mrs. Betsy Hochstein at (412) 664-3750. In addition, Centennial Elementary School will have its annual meeting to revise our school parent involvement policy and parent compact and to review parent rights under Title I. This meeting is currently scheduled for Thursday, September 14, 2011 from 6:00P.M. to 7:30 P.M. Some of the parent involvement activities offered include: Meet the Teacher Night, regular PTO Meetings, and Family Literacy Night. Parents and guardians are welcomed and encouraged to visit the school and speak with the principal and their child's teacher at any time.

The many successes at Centennial Elementary School cannot be measured in one test and we appreciate your continued support. Our school has had the ability to celebrate past success: continued improvement on the PSSA, although not meeting all target areas, Professional Development programs to enhance the learning environment, and quality research-based math and reading programs.

We must admit, however, that if ALL of our students are not doing well, we are not as good as we can be. That is our challenge, our goal and our commitment. Please continue to work with us to make sure that we achieve success for every student.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Stacie Fitzpatrick
PRINCIPAL

Enclosures: Additional NCLB Information

ADDITIONAL NCLB INFORMATION

Explanation of School Improvement

Any school that fails to meet state targets or Adequate yearly Progress (AYP) for one year is considered in Warning and is not identified for School Improvement. However, when the school fails to meet targets for two years in a row the school must be identified as a school in need of improvement and given the designation of School Improvement I. For each successive year that a school does not make AYP, the school advances to another level of school improvement. For example, a school that is in School Improvement I that fails to make AYP will be identified as School Improvement II. A school that fails to make AYP for the fourth year is listed in Corrective Action I and for the fifth year, Corrective Action II.

If a school makes AYP at any point after being identified in School Improvement, the school will not advance to the next level. The status is defined as Making Progress and still considered in School Improvement at the same level as the previous year. If the school makes AYP for the second consecutive year the building is no longer in school improvement. On the other hand if the school misses AYP after a year of Making Progress the school proceeds to the next designated level of School Improvement.

Comparison of McKeesport Area School District with other schools in Pennsylvania

The Pennsylvania Department of Education tracked statewide gains in student achievement between **2008-09** and **2009-2010** in reading and mathematics for the following subjects and grades:

**comparison data for 2011 not available at this time*

Reading

- At Grade 3-5 the District had a gain of -1 percentage points compared to a statewide gain of .1 percentage points.
- At Grade 6-8 the District had a gain of 5.7 percentage points compared to a statewide gain of 2.2 percentage points.
- At Grade 11 the District had a gain of -2.8 percentage points compared to a statewide gain of .4 percentage points.

Mathematics

- At Grade 3-5 the District had a gain of -1.5 percentage points compared to a statewide gain of 1 percentage points.
- At Grade 6-8 the District had a gain of 4.7 percentage points compared to a statewide gain of .8 percentage points.
- At Grade 11 the District had a gain of 9.9 percentage points compared to a statewide gain of -.3 percentage points.

What are Supplemental Educational Services?

Supplemental Educational Services (SES) are extra academic services available in schools identified for School Improvement II or Corrective Action. Free tutoring is offered after school or on Saturday to help eligible students to improve in reading, mathematics and science.

How Parents and Families Can Help Improve Student Achievement

Your support is not only essential to your child's success, but to the success of the school as well. Under NCLB, parents are to be involved in the school improvement process and to help write the school's School Plan. This is the plan to help raise the student achievement of all children in the school. Parents also have the right to help create or update the school's parent involvement policy and the home-school compact. You can contribute to your child's academic success by ensuring that your child attends school regularly, comes prepared to learn and completes all homework. Please plan to attend the Title I and Parent School Community Council meetings to obtain more information about school improvement activities and parent engagement opportunities at your child's school.