

Sample Letter to Parents: Schools in Need of Improvement

September 2003

Dear Parent:

As you know, our school district is dedicated to providing all students with the educational foundation necessary to succeed in school and in life. To ensure your child's success, we have set high standards that are reflected in what is taught in our classrooms. While holding high expectations for our students is not new, the way our school and student achievement is measured and reported will be different under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act.

No Child Left Behind was signed into law on January 8, 2002, by President George Bush. It represents the federal government's largest expansion and involvement in K-12 education. Two of the most prominent and highly publicized components of this new federal legislation include provisions of limited "school choice" and "supplemental education services" for students attending schools that have been identified as needing improvement for not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two or more years in a row. Adequate Yearly Progress is based on results of New Jersey standardized tests.

The following schools in our district have been identified as needing improvement: [*list schools*]

Under No Child Left Behind, students at the following schools, [*list schools*], may apply for transfer to designated schools within [*name of school district*] that have made AYP. If you exercise the option of transferring your child to schools making AYP within [*name of district*] and your child is eligible, the school district has certain obligations to provide or pay for transportation to the new school.

Students at schools identified as needing improvement for a third consecutive year may be eligible to receive tutoring or supplemental education services. Students at the following schools are eligible for these services: [*list schools*]. These services are over and above those ordinarily provided in the regular classroom during the regular school day. Parents interested in this provision must choose a state-approved provider; contact the New Jersey Department of Education for a list or visit its Web site at <http://www.nj.gov/cgi-bin/education/grants/ssp.pl?string=r&maxhits=10000>. If you exercise this option and your child is eligible, the school must pay for these services using Title I funds.

If you would like your child to be considered for [*transfer/supplemental services*] during the 2003-04 school year, please notify the school principal in writing as soon as possible so we can begin arrangements for the coming school year. You will be contacted to further discuss the specifics of your request. If you wish for your child to remain at his/her current school, no action on your part is required.

We want to continue serving your child, and we'll use all the resources available to us to help our students achieve. Building and maintaining a high-quality school is a goal for our entire community, job for the entire community, and we need your help to achieve it.

As we strive to help our students succeed, we encourage you to provide your support and input. To become involved with your school, contact [*name*] and [*contact information*].

Sincerely,

[*Superintendent's signature*]

