

September 1, 2007

Dear Parents:

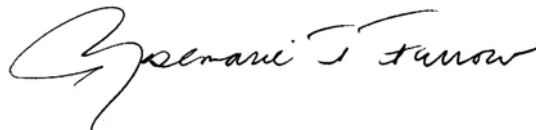
The Washington Township Public School District is dedicated to ensuring the success of all of our students. While we have always held high expectations for our students, the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)* has set new academic standards for all students.

Recently, the New Jersey Department of Education released its preliminary report on the “adequate yearly progress” (AYP) that all schools in New Jersey have made toward achieving the requirements of NCLB. Under NCLB, by the year 2014 all schools must demonstrate that 100 percent of the students in specific grade levels have achieved proficiency in language arts and mathematics.

The report gives a simple yes or no grade, based solely on student performance on a single state standardized test, the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA). Under *No Child Left Behind*, achieving “adequate yearly progress” is an all-or-nothing proposition. As schools across the nation strive to meet the rigorous standards of NCLB, many quality schools have not made AYP, both in our state and nationwide. That does not mean that these schools were unsuccessful.

We are firmly committed to achieving our goal of success for every student. For more information about AYP and what we’re doing to improve student performance, see the attached “Question and Answer” section.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rosemarie T. Farrow". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Rosemarie T. Farrow
Principal

AYP: Questions & Answers

1. WHAT IS AYP?

Under the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* the United States Department of Education requires all districts and schools to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). To make AYP, each school must achieve 40 assessment targets plus an attendance rate target. The 40 assessment targets include 4 areas of test *performance* and *participation* (2 each in language arts and math), measured across 10 subgroups of students, divided into categories such as race, economic disadvantage, English language proficiency, and disability.

- To meet the 2006-2007 performance targets in language arts, 75% of students must achieve scores that are “proficient” or better in language arts on our statewide assessments
- To meet the 2006-2007 mathematics performance targets, 64% of students must score proficient or better in the math portion of the statewide assessment.
- To meet the participation targets, 95% of students must take each portion of the assessment.
- In addition, schools must also meet a 90% target attendance rate.

Each of the performance and participation standards must be met by all students, measured as a whole, and by each subgroup. If just one subgroup misses any one of the required targets, the entire school doesn't make AYP

2. DID OUR SCHOOL MAKE AYP?

Based on the state's preliminary report, Washington Township High School achieved 39 of the 41 required targets. However, because 1 subgroup(s) missed one or more of the required targets, our school did not make AYP. Despite the difficulties which our some of our special education students experienced on the Spring 2007 High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA), it is important to note in a more global sense that our students have demonstrated high levels of achievement in Language Arts Literacy and Mathematics portion of the HSPA, scoring well above the State-established performance benchmarks. For example, 99.1 % of our general education students demonstrated proficiency in Language Arts Literacy while 91.2% of our general education students demonstrated proficiency in Mathematics.

3. WHY DID OUR SCHOOL NOT MAKE AYP?

Although Washington Township High School met most of the AYP benchmarks, some of our special needs students with specific learning difficulties did not attain the mathematics and language arts literacy goals.

4. WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT MAKING AYP?

Because Washington Township High School failed to achieve the AYP benchmark in Special Education Mathematics and Language Arts Literacy for two consecutive years, our school is considered to be “*in need of improvement.*” However, because our school does not receive federal Title I funding, we are exempt from any sanctions associated with *No Child Left Behind* legislation. Nonetheless, our school is required to take steps to improve student achievement and fulfill the academic standards set by the federal government.

5. WHAT IS OUR SCHOOL DOING TO IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND MAKE AYP?

The Washington Township High School staff is committed to achieving the goals of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. Currently teachers and building administrators are developing and implementing a comprehensive plan that includes:

- Identifying and addressing the specific needs of our low performing students
- Expanding the knowledge base and skill set of teachers through in-district and out-of-district workshops and training opportunities
- Integrating HSPA Prep strategies and activities into daily instruction
- Offering after-school and summer HSPA Academies

- Revising assessments to align them with the HSPA to familiarize students with the test's format
- Incorporating supplemental materials to reinforce Core Content Standards.
- Increasing the instruction time in Mathematics for our special needs students with specific learning difficulties.

6. WHAT IS OUR DISTRICT DOING TO HELP OUR SCHOOL MAKE AYP?

The district is helping our school by:

- Providing information on effective curriculum and instructional strategies
- Analyzing student performance data to guide decisions
- Increasing professional development for our teachers
- Utilizing available grant funds to provide increased training, materials, and technology for our teaching staff
- Maintaining memberships and formal affiliations with professional agencies and organizations to access current research, professional development opportunities, materials and technology
- Supporting advanced education for teachers and administrators
- Phasing-in the implementation of a new standards-based mathematics
- Offering parent-child workshops on literacy and math

7. HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED IN HELPING OUR SCHOOL IMPROVE STUDENT PERFORMANCE?

As a parent or guardian, you can help our school improve students' performance on state tests by:

- Attending school sponsored parent meetings relating to student achievement
- Supporting and reinforcing your child's good study habits
- Reviewing your child's homework and test results
- Setting goals with your child for continued academic improvement
- Becoming an active participant in the Washington Township High School Parent Advisory/School Improvement Plan Committee and School Health and Safety Committee.
- Keeping open communication with Washington Township High School administrators and teachers when questions arise and /or to provide feedback and suggestions