



BROKEN ARROW PUBLIC SCHOOLS

EST. 1904

December 15, 2011

Dear Parent,

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) federal law requires all students to meet annual academic performance goals. The Oklahoma Core Curriculum Test (OCCT) is the test given to students in grades 3-8, and the End-of-Instruction Tests, (EOI) are given to secondary students enrolled in Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, English II, English III, U.S. History and Biology. The results of these tests, combined with test participation, attendance and graduation rates, and Advanced Placement course participation are used by the State Department Education to determine if schools and districts make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

By 2013-2014, NCLB requires all students to score at the satisfactory or advanced level. If one or more demographic groups in a district do not score at the satisfactory or advanced level, the district is identified as not making AYP. Districts that do not meet AYP for two consecutive years are placed on the Needs Improvement List and run the risk of losing accreditation. This year, 227 schools in Oklahoma are on the Needs Improvement List. In addition to these student targets, the NCLB law also requires districts to annually notify parents about their child's academic progress and the overall academic progress of the school they attend. That is the purpose of this letter.

Despite positive gains in nearly every subject area, Broken Arrow Public Schools has two schools that have been placed on the Needs Improvement list for reading: Oliver Middle School and Centennial Middle School. Haskell Middle School was on the Needs Improvement List last year for one particular category, and this year they gained nearly 400 points in that area and made AYP. However, once a school is on the Needs Improvement List, it remains on that list for two years. So while Haskell Middle School did make AYP, they remain on the Needs Improvement List again this year. In addition to these three schools, the district has also found itself on the Needs Improvement List for not making AYP in two demographic groups for reading.

While these results are not what we had hoped, I am happy to say we are already addressing any weak areas identified by these tests. Prior to the release of these results, Broken Arrow Public Schools had already begun implementation of research-based literacy initiatives. For example, Literacy First is a reading instruction process now used in all elementary and middle schools that allows teachers to identify specific areas of need in each student. The district also introduced Reading Recovery this year. Reading Recovery is a data-based, intensive reading intervention process that catches first grade students and brings them on-level with their peers before learning gaps occur. Broken Arrow is one of only two schools in the state to offer this program. Finally, we are also currently exploring research-based reading intervention and enrichment for middle and high school students that will help every student reach the highest reading achievement.

As a district, we want every child to maximize his or her progress each school year. We are committed to that effort and want open lines of communication with all parents. The results of the state tests are posted on our website at www.baschools.org, and I invite you to read through those results to better understand the process. Thank you for partnering with us in providing all students a quality education, because it will take all of us working together to make sure that every student succeeds.

Sincerely,



Jarod Mendenhall, Ed. D.
Superintendent