



# Monroe Township Public School

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## Williamstown Middle School Schools in Need of Improvement

Dear Parents/Guardians of Students attending Williamstown Middle School:

We are 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. The *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)* reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* requires that adequate yearly progress (AYP) in language arts literacy and mathematics be measured annually for each school in New Jersey.

AYP for the middle and high schools is based primarily on the results of the New Jersey state assessments. The NJ ASK is given to grades 5 through 8 and the HSPA is given to students in grade 11. (Those high school students who do not achieve proficient scores in the grade 11 test can retake it in grade 12.) Schools must meet the state's academic proficiency benchmarks, as well as other indicators such as test participation and attendance or drop-out rate, to make AYP. These benchmarks increase on an incremental basis every three years.

Schools that do not make AYP for one year (Year 1) receive an Early Warning designation to alert them that students did not meet at least one of the AYP indicators. If a school does not make AYP for *two or more* consecutive years in the same content area (language arts literacy and mathematics) it is identified as a school in need of improvement and certain sanctions must be applied.

The following school in our district has not made AYP and has been identified for improvement as follows: Williamstown Middle School is currently in Year 2 for not meeting AYP standards in Grades 6-8 and Year 3 for Grade 5. Also available is how our school compares academically in language arts literacy and mathematics to other middle and high schools in our district and the state. <http://education.state.nj.us/rc/>

The school improvement requirements that apply to your child's school are checked off below. For more information about these sanctions, please see the attached information sheet.

**X Year 3 – Supplemental Educational Services:** Our district is unable to provide the choice option; supplemental educational services (SES) would be available to income-eligible students, if the school was a Title I school.

All schools in need of improvement that receive federal Title I funds must assemble a school improvement committee to develop an annual school improvement plan (Title I Unified Plan) that identifies areas of need and programs and activities to help increase student achievement. All schools must involve parents and the community for input as the Title I Unified Plan is developed. As a parent, you are encouraged to contact your child's school principal to provide input to the school improvement plan and see how you can become involved in helping the school address its achievement issues.

Some of the steps we have already taken or plan to implement this year to address the problem(s) that placed your child's school in improvement status include the following: offering summer enrichment programs to eligible students, extended instructional blocks in LAL and mathematics, and Compass Learning Odyssey Online programming for afterschool instructional support. The state is also active in helping the school and district achieve its academic goals by sponsoring trainings, school support teams (CAPA), and guidance.

We want to continue serving your child, and we'll use all the resources available to help our students achieve. An important part of this effort involves parental involvement and support. The district and each school must develop and implement a parental involvement policy. We encourage you to become involved in this and other initiatives at your child's school by contacting your building principal, Mr. Paul Deal at Williamstown High School, because building and maintaining a high-quality school is a job for the entire community.

We will continue to communicate with you throughout the year regarding the school improvement efforts underway and hope you will join us in supporting our students and teachers as we work toward reaching our goals for next year.

Sincerely,  
Charles M. Earling  
Superintendent of Schools

## School Improvement Checklist for Williamstown Middle School

- Year 2 – School Choice:** Under NCLB, schools that did not make AYP for two consecutive years must offer students the opportunity to transfer to a high-performing school within the district if capacity is available. Your child may transfer to one of the following schools [LIST SCHOOLS]. Attached is an information sheet on the academic record, programs, and other features of these choice schools. The school district has certain obligations to provide or pay for transportation to the choice school. If you would like your child to be considered for transfer during the [SCHOOL YEAR] school year, please notify the school principal in writing by [DATE] so we can begin arrangements for these services. You will be contacted to discuss the specifics of your request. If you wish your child to remain at his/her current school, no action on your part is required.
- Year 2 – Supplemental Educational Services:** Our district is unable to provide the choice option due to the following reasons: one high school in district. In lieu of school choice, supplemental educational services (SES) are offered to income-eligible students, if it is a Title I school.
- Years 2 & 3 – Supplemental Educational Services:** These services, such as tutoring, are offered over and above those ordinarily provided in the regular classroom during the normal school day and after-school program. *Students must be income-eligible to receive SES.* Parents will be notified separately if their child is eligible. SES providers must be state-approved and posted on the New Jersey Department of Education Web site at <http://www.nj.gov/education/title1/program/ss/providers/apprv-1011/>. If you exercise this option and *your child is eligible*, the school must pay for these services, up to a threshold, using Title I funds. You will receive a list of local providers describing the services, qualifications, and evidence of effectiveness for each provider. Upon request, your child's teacher or principal will assist you in selecting an appropriate provider. (School choice must also be offered in Year 3.)
- Year 4 – Corrective Action:** In addition to school choice and SES, as noted above, corrective action schools must also update their school improvement plans and describe the steps they will take to improve their students' performance. These include 1) providing scientifically based professional development; 2) instituting a new scientifically based curriculum; 3) extending the school day/year; 4) replacing school staff; 5) decreasing management authority at the school; 6) restructuring the internal organization of the school; or 7) seeking advice from outside experts. You are encouraged to become involved with your school in this process.

Schools in corrective action must also participate in a comprehensive school review process called Collaborative Assessment and Planning for Achievement (CAPA). During the CAPA review, teams of educators, including those from outside of the district, will examine all aspects of the school's operations. The team will issue an extensive report summarizing its findings and recommendations. These recommendations are then included in the school's improvement plan.

Your child's school was identified for corrective action for the following reasons: [LIST REASONS]

## Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Fact Sheet

This chart identifies the level of proficiency a school must achieve based on the annual state assessments.

Subject	Percent of Students Proficient		
	Middle School Grade 5	Middle School Grades 6-8	High School
Language Arts Literacy (Reading/Writing)	59%	72%	85%
Mathematics	66%	61%	74%

AYP is calculated for the total school population and for subgroups with students who have been enrolled in the school for the full academic year. The subgroups are as follows:

- Total Population
- Students with Disabilities
- Limited English Proficient
- White
- African-American
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- American Indian/Native American
- Hispanic
- Other
- Economically Disadvantaged

NCLB allows for a “safe harbor” provision so that schools are not penalized for a particular student group’s performance being below the goal, providing sufficient progress is made. For example, if a student group did not make a performance indicator but improved its performance by decreasing the number of students not proficient by at least 10 percent over the previous year, that student group would make AYP by qualifying for the safe harbor provision.