

Nebraska City Public Schools Title 1 School in Need of Improvement

Dear Parents:

Nebraska City Public Schools are dedicated to providing all students with the educational foundation necessary to be successful in school and out. 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) requires that adequate yearly progress (AYP) in Reading and Mathematics be measured annually for each school in Nebraska. AYP is based primarily on the results of the Nebraska state assessments (NeSA) given to students in grades 3 through 8 and grade 11. Schools must meet the state's academic proficiency benchmarks, as well as other indicators such as test participation and attendance/dropout rate, to ensure AYP growth status. These benchmarks increase on an incremental basis every three years. Based on preliminary results, Nebraska City Middle School will be in year four of not meeting the AYP requirements and year three of school improvement. The school is continually working diligently to meet the needs of all students and showing improvement. The final AYP decisions won't be available until October 2015, when the federal results are released to the public.

If a school doesn't make AYP for *two or more* consecutive years in the same content area (reading and mathematics) that school is identified as a school in need of improvement. In addition to measuring each school, NCLB also requires the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) to annually review the progress of each school district. For the 2014-2015 school year, AYP State Goals required that 100% of all students at all levels would be proficient in both Reading and Math. The Nebraska City Middle School was unable to meet state AYP goals of 100%.

Listed below are the Middle School Scores for both Reading and Math. They are compared to the state average:

2014-2015 NeSA State Accountability - Reading and Math Scores with State Comparisons

<i>Nebraska City Public Schools 2014-15</i>	<i>Grade 3</i>	<i>Grade 4</i>	<i>Grade 5</i>	<i>Grade 6</i>	<i>Grade 7</i>	<i>Grade 8</i>	<i>Grade 11</i>
Nebraska City Public Schools Reading	74%	80%	80%	78%	76%	79%	63%
State Average Reading	82%	81%	82%	80%	82%	79%	69%
Nebraska City Public Schools Math	74%	81%	74%	67%	77%	53%	68%
State Average Math	74%	78%	76%	72%	73%	78%	61%

Public School Choice: The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act requires each school identified for Title I School Improvement to offer Public School Choice to all students who attend the identified school. Our students do not have another choice of schools within our district and as a result our students do not qualify for Public School Choice.

Parent Notice: Parents are an integral part of ensuring the academic success of their children. We welcome your involvement at the Middle School. There are many ways to participate including offering your input to the School Improvement Team, volunteering, and attending parent conferences with your child's teacher(s). Other ways to support your child's success are to assure that your child is prepared, attends school each day, and has completed their homework. You are encouraged to contact your School Principal for further information to find out how you can become involved in school improvement efforts. Helping children become academically proficient is everyone's responsibility. The Nebraska City Public School District will continue to develop and implement its improvement plan to improve status. We look forward to working with parents and the community to help increase the academic achievement of our students. The Nebraska Department of Education website provides information and a letter from Nebraska's Education Commissioner discussing the Federal requirement.

Some of the steps the Middle School has already taken or plans to implement this year to address the problem(s) that placed your child's school in improvement status include the following:

- Math Consultants have provided guidance for Math instruction by working directly with individual Math teachers for changes in instruction / delivery. Class periods for Math have been increased to allow additional instruction time to cover and review material more adequately and add RtI. The math curriculum is being reviewed by the Math Department with supplemental math curriculum considerations being identified.
- Response to Intervention (RtI) is being increased at the Middle School. RtI uses high quality instruction; and evidence-based interventions to help those children that are not making benchmark in Reading and Math. A team

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has been established and the training for this team is provided through the Educational Service Unit. The schedule now includes the addition of an RtI math period at each grade level.

- Dr. Erica Lembke has worked with the staff on progress monitoring, with the identification process and the connections of data/RtI.
- A review and realignment of the ELA (English Language Arts) and the Math standards are being done to ensure that all standards are being addressed.
- Plan Book has been implemented to track the teaching of the standards by each teacher and provide data to show where specific standards need additional emphasis.
- Additional support through researched-based strategies for all students, but specifically with populations in the most need such as ELL and SPED are a focus.
- Working with staff one on one with a new emphasis on specific skill sets is being done this school year. This process includes observations, modeling, reviews of methods and implementation of new strategies through direct feedback.

Supplemental Educational Services:

Supplemental education services (TUTORING) are available for students that qualify for free/reduced lunch status.

The Middle School offers Free onsite tutorial services. Please contact Mr. Taylor if you wish to take advantage of tutoring for your child. Teachers may also refer students and may contact you. In addition, the [SES Providers List](#) of State approved providers is available at the Middle School or at the following link.

http://www.education.ne.gov/federalprograms/Title_1_Part_A_SIG.html

Technical Assistance:

- NWEA's MAP testing data & State NeSA data is being reviewed and analyzed to determine individual student academic performance in Reading and Math. Progress monitoring is being implemented this year.
- Professional Development using Marzano's Researched Based "Classroom Instruction that Works" with additional support from ESU 4 Staff Developers and the Marzano Academy provides focus on specific instructional strategies. Teachers are required to implement strategies that are included in their evaluation process. An additional team has been added for Middle School and is attending the Marzano Academy for this school year.
- Anita Archer – Explicit Instruction Training was provided to the staff during the opening two in-service days. Instructional strategies learned through this training are being implemented, with support given by ESU 4 staff developers, as they are scheduled to meet with teachers to help with goal setting and implementation.
- The building is piloting a 1:1 technology program using Chromebooks to enhance instruction, make better use of online support materials in our programs of instruction and move to change the curriculum delivery model.

Corrective Action Plan:

- Implementing new curriculum and curriculum supports – Online curriculum, Chromebook support, new research based strategies as presented by educational specialists providing in-service and training to staff.
- Restructuring the internal organization of the school – Additional time for Math, Progress monitoring and RtI.
- A committee has been assembled to develop an improvement plan that identifies areas of need because of this status and staff is putting programs/activities in place to help increase student achievement. This plan addresses each subgroup measured attain growth towards the goal. The plan includes strategies to promote increased parent involvement.

Publication of Actions:

Learn more about NCLB requirements and Title I by accessing the Nebraska Department of Education website at:

<http://www.education.ne.gov/>

<http://www.education.ne.gov/documents/SOSR.html>

Additional information about AYP can also be located on the website by building. Please check the website for final AYP results as they become available based on the 2014-2015 data.

Sincerely,

Craig Taylor, Middle School Principal
Teresa Fields, Director of Assessment