

CLIFTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL FOUR
194 West Second Street
CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY 07011
(973) 470-2370

Mr. Richard Tardalo
Superintendent

Ms. Theresa Evans
Principal

August 31, 2011

Dear Parent/Guardian,

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 *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (SEA)* requires that adequate yearly progress (AYP) in language arts literacy and mathematics be measured annually for each school in New Jersey. The purpose of this letter is to inform you about this law and its impact on School #4 for the 2011-12 school year.

The law requires districts to teach to grade-level standards, use the most effective methods and strategies for teaching students, and assess student progress each year. A school's progress is determined upon the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced proficient on statewide assessments. The state benchmark is 79% of all students and student subgroups, including special education and ESL youngsters, for language arts and 83% of all students and student subgroups, including those in special education and ESL programs, for mathematics. Schools that did not make so-called adequate yearly progress (AYP) on state tests in even one of 40 separate categories for two consecutive years are identified as "in need of improvement" by the New Jersey Department of Education..

By federal law, performance of the following subgroups is reported:

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|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| *The school as a whole | *White |
| *African-American | *Other |
| *Asian/Pacific Islander | *Economically Disadvantaged |
| *Hispanic | *Students with Disabilities |
| *Native American/American Indian | *Limited English Proficient |

Included in the AYP calculation is student participation. At least 95 percent of the total school population and each subgroup must take the state assessments. Additionally, ESEA allows for a "safe harbor" provision so that schools are not penalized for a particular group's performance being below the goal, provided sufficient progress is made.

School # 4 has made improvements in the testing results of its students. The school made increases in several state testing categories. School #4 made adequate yearly progress in 37 of 40 (92.5%) required categories in 2011. Because the school did not make adequate yearly progress in every ESEA category, required by federal law, the school has been designated as being in need of improvement and will offer supplemental educational services to income eligible students.

Supplemental services, such as tutoring, attempt to help students who meet federal economic eligibility guidelines to increase their level of academic achievement and meet state standards. A list of supplemental service providers will be sent directly to parents of eligible students in September.

As a federal Title I school, School #4 must fulfill specific federal requirements such as creating a school improvement committee and developing a Unified Plan for improvement. We are looking at ways to strengthen instructional and support programs for students. Parents and community members are invited and encouraged to be a part of this process. Some of the steps we have already taken to address the problem(s) that placed your child's school in improvement status include improvements to the lesson planning process, pacing charts, and after school, summer and Saturday academic programs. 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 me at 973-470-2382. Building and maintaining a high-quality school is a job for the entire community.

I am very optimistic about the academic programs provided for students at School #4. I look forward to working closely with our parents and our community to generate greater educational outcomes for our students. 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. We welcome your ideas and involvement as we work toward improving our school.

Sincerely,

Theresa Evans

Theresa Evans

Principal