

Brandywine Heights Area School District

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Notice of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), Public School Choice PLEASE READ: Important Information Affecting Your Child

August 25, 2009

Dear Brandywine Heights Middle School Parent or Guardian,

We would like to make you aware of the choices and resources available to you based on the progress of your child's school under the guidelines of No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

What are the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)?
The PSSA is an annual exam given to Pennsylvania students at various grade levels to measure their academic progress. The state uses the PSSA to determine whether Brandywine Heights Area School District and each of our schools are making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). AYP is determined by how successful districts and schools are in meeting state goals for attendance, graduation rates, test participation and academic progress.

To make AYP, a school must meet the state goals for the student body as a whole as well for each subgroup of students. A subgroup consists of 40 or more students in a school in the following categories: ethnicity, socio-economic status, Individual Education Plan (IEP) – Special Education, and English Language Learner (ELL) status. The number of subgroups that a school has determines the number of “targets” that it must meet to make AYP. For the prior 2008-09 school year, students at the Brandywine Heights Area School District made remarkable progress in Reading and Mathematics proficiency by meeting 39 of the 39 targets.

The Brandywine Heights Middle School is making progress toward achieving Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and met 100% of AYP targets (17 out of 17 targets) in 2009. The Middle School AYP status is “Making Progress: in School Improvement II”. Two successive years of making AYP will result in being removed from School Improvement II status. “Making Progress” means that the school met AYP for the first of two years.

According to the 2007-08 PSSA data 31.3% of Pennsylvania schools did not make AYP and 16% of schools in Berks County did not make AYP. The Brandywine Heights Middle School did not meet the AYP status in the 2007-08 school year based on the performance of two subgroups. The subgroups were Individual Education Plan (IEP) – Special Education students in the areas of Mathematics and Reading as well as the Economically Disadvantaged subgroup in the area of Reading.

The below table compares Brandywine Heights Middle School students to statewide data for students in the same 5-8 grade span for the 2007-08 school year.

2007-08 PSSA Performance Results for Targeted Subgroups

Students in grades 5-8	READING % of Students Proficient and Above		MATH % of Students Proficient and Above	
	BHMS	State	BHMS	State
All Students 5-8	74.9 %	69.25 %	77.4%	71.5%
IEP students 5-8	34.5 % SH	29%	37.1%	32.75%
Economically Disadvantaged 5-8	64%	50.75%	50.7%	54.5%

SH = Safe Harbor: Schools or subgroups that do not achieve performance thresholds can still meet AYP by meeting the Safe Harbor requirements. To make Safe Harbor, a school or subgroup must reduce its percentage of students who performed below proficient in the previous year by at least 10%.

Action Plan for Improving Student Achievement

We are very proud of the continued success of our Middle School students. According to the Brandywine Heights Middle School PSSA results, all students, especially the targeted IEP Reading and Math students, will remain the focus for academic improvement in the Middle School during the 2009-10 school year.

As a result of an in-depth needs assessment during the 2008-09 school year, the Brandywine Heights Middle School identified the following areas as key strategies for instructional improvement. The following strategies will remain the key focus in the school to ensure they attain AYP status:

- Reduce class size in sixth grade.
- Provide Title I Reading Specialist for needs diagnosis and targeted instruction.
- Organize progress monitoring of all students.
- Use flexible scheduling to accommodate movement of students to address needs.

Explanation of School Choice Option

According to NCLB, Brandywine Heights Middle School must offer students the choice to transfer to another school in the district not in School Improvement however Brandywine Heights Middle School does not have another school building available to offer the choice to transfer.

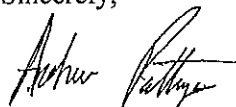
How parents and Families Can Help Improve Student Achievement

Parent support is essential to the success of Brandywine Heights Middle School. Communicating with your child's teachers, making sure your child attends school regularly, helping your child with homework, monitoring your child's television time, volunteering in the classroom, and participating in school decision-making are important.

The district-wide parent involvement policy will be updated this fall. If you are interested in providing input for this policy, please call Andrew Potteiger at 610-682-5113. In addition, Brandywine Heights Middle School will have its annual meeting to revise our school parent involvement policy and parent compact and to review parent rights under Title I. Letters to announce the meeting will be sent home with students in the beginning of the school year.

The many successes at Brandywine Heights Middle School cannot be measured in one test and we appreciate your continued support. We must admit, however, that if ALL of our students are not doing well, we are not as good as we can be. That is our challenge, our goal and our commitment. Thank you for your efforts as we work together to ensure a thorough and meaningful education for your children.

Sincerely,



Andrew M. Potteiger
Director of Curriculum & Instruction



Kathy A. Johnson, Ed.D.
Middle School Principal

cc: Martin D. Handler, Ed.D.

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