

Williston School District #1
PO Box 1407
Williston, ND 58802-1407

October 2004

North Dakota Schools, including the Williston Public Schools, are making great progress in the field of education. On State tests, more students are at grade level than ever before. In national comparisons, we have consistently tested equal to or above most other states. The Williston Public Schools have repeatedly shown that they can and will rise to higher standards.

Today, we face that challenge. Under the new No Child Left Behind legislation, schools must meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the State achievement tests. In 2002-03, the district schools of Hagan and Williston Junior High did not meet adequate yearly progress (AYP). Under the No Child Left Behind legislation, all or nearly all students must be at or near grade level in order to make AYP. In these two schools, the small sub group of "Students with Disabilities" did not test at or near grade level.

In 2003-04, those schools were successful in meeting adequate yearly progress. However, the Williston High School did not make adequate yearly progress. The overwhelming majority of students at Williston High School are at or near grade level; however, the small subgroup "Students with Disabilities" once again did not test out at or near grade level.

Since this is the second year of a school within the district not meeting AYP, the entire District now is categorized as not making AYP. We must re-evaluate our educational plan and focus on ways to close that achievement gap. As we progress ahead on this plan, we will focus on low areas of achievement for all of our students, not just the sub-groups. We will be providing a plan for the Board of Education of the Williston Public Schools to review at an upcoming school board meeting. The public is encouraged to provide any suggestions for educational improvements in this plan to their school Principal or the Superintendent and to attend any Board meetings.

Our school staff and administration will be working on plans to strengthen instructional and support programs for all of our students as a result of the AYP measures. We are required to submit a plan of improvement to the State Title One Office in Bismarck outlining our plan of improvement by November of this year. We are required to take away 10% of this year's allocation of Title One monies and put them into staff improvement. Our plan must focus on all staff improvement and is somewhat restrictive. Immediately, we are concentrating on making improvements in the manner in which our State standardized achievement tests are administered to all children. The importance and ramifications of these tests must be stressed to all students. Provisions will be made for students with disabilities so that appropriate and proper modifications can be made during their testing periods. In addition, tests for all students will be administered over a period of several days so that test taking is a less stressful environment.

Parents may access the school district profiles on the Department of Public Instruction website and review the various reports available at:
<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/dpi/reports/profile/index.shtm>.

We look forward to meeting the needs of all children in the Williston Public Schools with an even more effective educational process, and accept the challenge of No Child Left Behind in a most proactive manner.