

June, 2009

Dear Parents:

Our school district is dedicated to providing its students the education they need to prepare them to graduate from high school and enter their adult lives. Our school is committed to maintaining a high quality education for our students, and we are working hard to provide continuous support to our teachers and our students as they work toward achieving the high academic standards we have set for them.

What is Adequate Yearly Progress?

Federal law, under the *No Child Left Behind Act*, requires increased accountability for schools to reach high standards for all students in reading and mathematics. Each year, as part of the requirements for the *No Child Left Behind Act*, the state releases Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) reports for each school building in the state of North Dakota. These reports measure our students' performance in terms of the percentage of students who are at or above state-defined academic standards in reading and mathematics as measured by the North Dakota State Assessment. The reports are called Adequate Yearly Progress reports (otherwise known as AYP reports), and the school is required to share these reports with its parents.

How is AYP determined?

The *No Child Left Behind Act* requires states to set proficiency standards (or goals) for schools. The state uses these proficiency standards to indicate if schools are making AYP. The state looks at the percentage of the school's students who are meeting or above each standard. There are actually four specific criteria that the state reviews to determine if a school has made AYP. These four criteria include:

1. Whether the percentage of students taking the North Dakota State Assessment (in both the composite and each subgroup) meet the state's annual AYP goals in the proficient and advanced proficient areas in reading and math.
2. Whether 95% of the students in the school, as well as in each subgroup, took the state assessment.
3. Whether the school has met the secondary indicator for participation rates
 - Elementary/Middle Schools – student attendance rates
 - High Schools – student graduation rates
4. Whether the school's achievement and participation rates have passed the test for statistical reliability.

Did our school make AYP?

As indicated on the bottom of the enclosed school AYP report, you will find that our school made AYP. The actual percentage increase from last year to this was quite substantial. In math our scores jumped from 54.52 percent proficient to 75.14 for an increase of almost 40%! The scores in English moved from 65 to 84.39 for an increase of over 30%.

What is our school doing to improve its AYP status?

Improving the educational achievement of our students has always been a priority. We are constantly working to implement research-based methods of teaching and assessment that will present our students with a quality educational program that provides them with the skills and background they need to succeed upon graduation from our school. Currently, our school is undertaking the following improvement measures:

- *Differentiated instruction in English core classes*
- *Disaggregating the state assessment in order to formulate data on areas to improve instruction*
- *Closely monitoring IEP's for students with special needs to adequately accommodate them during the testing process*
- *After school tutoring*
- *Afternoon writing labs to assist students in the writing process*
- *Friday "Math Days" for all students to work on standards*

What does this mean for parents?

In order to reach the high academic goals for student proficiency set in the *No Child Left Behind Act*, our school needs your participation. Supporting the school and becoming involved in your child's education is key to his/her academic progress. We would like to enlist your participation in our improvement planning and initiatives. We would certainly welcome any ideas you have to further our work to attain high academic standards for all students at our school. Please contact the school at 572-0967 to become involved.

Sincerely,

Chris Kittleson
Principal
Williston High School
"Go Coyotes"