

October 24, 2012

To the Parents/Guardians:

Placerville School District has a history of high academic achievement. The staff is focused on and committed to meeting the academic and social needs of every student as evidenced by the continual improvement of our students on the STAR assessments. In fact, all three schools have exceeded the state target of 800 on the Academic Performance Index. Markham Middle School has an API of 837, Schnell Elementary School has an API of 841 and Sierra Elementary School has an API of 905. This is something that we as a District and you as parents should be very proud of.

Yet, while Placerville School District continues to surpass *state* expectations, the *federal* accountability system requires approximately 79% of all students and various “significant subgroups” to be at the proficient or advanced level to achieve “Adequate Yearly Progress” (AYP) in 2012 (under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001). Unfortunately, even though none of the Title 1 schools in the District are being identified as Program Improvement Year 1 the District is receiving that label. For this reason, we are required to inform parents that our District has been identified as being in Year 1 of Program Improvement.

What is Program Improvement?

Federal law requires the state of California and our district to annually review the academic progress of the schools that receive federal Title I funds and to identify any of our schools in need of improvement. These schools are identified as “Program Improvement” (PI) schools after two consecutive years of not meeting the federal measure of adequate yearly progress (AYP). California determines AYP by considering the following four measures:

- The percentage of students scoring at the “proficient” or “advanced” level on the California Standards Tests for English-language arts and mathematics
- The percentage of students participating in those tests
- California’s own accountability measurement of progress, the Academic Performance Index (API)

Why is our District identified as Program Improvement?

The reason for the program improvement identification is due to the fact that our District did not meet the Federal achievement goal of percentage of students scoring at the “proficient” or “advanced” level on the California Standards Test for English Language Arts for two consecutive years (2010-2011 and 2011-2012).

Further information regarding Placerville School District’s Accountability Progress Reports may be obtained from the school or on the California Department of Education web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ay/>.

What will our District do to move out of program improvement?

Already school and district staffs are working closely together to revise our LEA plan to include:

- Research-based and research proven instructional strategies and practices that have the greatest likelihood of ensuring that all students will meet the state's achievement standards
- High quality professional development for school staff
- Strategies to increase parental involvement in our school

What are the district, schools and County Office of Education doing to support Placerville in the first year of the program improvement process?

Our district is working closely with the El Dorado County Office of Education to examine and improve curriculum, instruction, and student performance. Our County Office of Education, along with the State Department of Education, will provide information, special help, and access to resources. We will also receive technical assistance in:

- Analyzing various data reports for revising the school plan
- Strengthening core academic instruction
- Strengthening our collaboration with parents to increase student academic achievement

How can you become involved?

We know that strong parental involvement leads to student success at school. We want you to get involved and partner with us. Contact us for additional information regarding:

- Parental involvement policies
- School-parent compact
- The Parent Clubs at Markham, Sierra and Schnell schools
- The Site Council at Markham, Sierra and Schnell Schools
- Parent volunteer opportunities

We will keep you updated and informed about opportunities to discuss plans for our school. If you have questions, need additional information on how you can get involved in our school improvement efforts, or would like to discuss the school's instructional program and Program Improvement status, please feel free to call and/or visit your school.

Sincerely,

Eric Bonniksen
Superintendent