

Muhlenberg Elementary Center

Kutztown Road & Sharp Avenue
Laureldale, Pennsylvania 19605
Phone 610-921-8028

Notice of Adequate Yearly Progress Please Read: Important Information Affecting Your Child

July 24, 2009

Dear Muhlenberg Elementary Center 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 Muhlenberg 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.

We are pleased to announce that Muhlenberg Elementary Center met 100% of AYP targets in 2009.

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 2008-2009 school year, students at the Muhlenberg Elementary Center made remarkable progress and in Reading and Mathematics proficiency on 21 of the 21 targets.

However, because we did not make the AYP targets for the 2007-2008 school year we are considered in School Improvement but are Making Progress. If MEC makes AYP for the second consecutive year the building is no longer in school improvement. On the other hand if we miss AYP after a year of Making Progress the school proceeds to the next designated level of School Improvement.

Below are highlights of reading and mathematics achievements:

Reading

- In Grades 3 and 4 the percentage of students scoring at proficient or advanced increased from 63.3% in 2008 to 72.9 % in 2009.

Mathematics

- In Grades 3 and 4 the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced increased from 77.4% in 2008 to 84.3% in 2009.

Please review the attachment for an explanation of school improvement and more information on how the Muhlenberg compares to other Pennsylvania schools.

Action Plan for Improving Student Achievement

We have many indicators that show Muhlenberg Elementary Center is offering a top-quality education and we know that continuous improvement is important to ensure all of our students are reaching their highest potential. Using data about the students and their achievement, our staff identified areas for improvement. As outlined in our School Improvement Plan, the school district and the Pennsylvania Department of Education will be offering Muhlenberg Elementary Center assistance to implement these strategies.

As a result of an in depth needs assessment, Muhlenberg Elementary Center has identified the following areas as key strategies for instructional improvement:

- Implement phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, and comprehension strategies grounded in scientifically based research that will strengthen the core reading curriculum;
- Provide targeted interventions to students;
- Progress monitor students' achievement for intervention grouping;
- Provide ongoing professional development for differentiated small group instruction.

Explanation of School Choice Option

According to NCLB, Muhlenberg Elementary Center must offer students the choice to transfer to another school in the district not in School Improvement however Muhlenberg Elementary Center 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 Muhlenberg Elementary Center. 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 610-921-8028. In addition, Muhlenberg Elementary Center will have its annual meeting to revise our school parent involvement policy and parent compact and to review parent rights under Title I. This meeting is currently scheduled for September 15 or 16 at 7:00 p.m. in the LGI. The many successes at MEC 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. Please continue to work with us to make sure that we achieve success for every student.

Sincerely,

Barbara L. Moyer
Principal
Muhlenberg Elementary Center

Enclosures: Additional NCLB Information
Choice Selection Form

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ADDITIONAL NCLB INFORMATION

Explanation of School Improvement

Any school that fails to meet state targets or Adequate yearly Progress (AYP) for one year is considered in Warning and is not identified for School Improvement. However, when the school fails to meet targets for two years in a row the school must be identified as a school in need of improvement and given the designation of School Improvement I. For each successive year that a school does not make AYP, the school advances to another level of school improvement. For example, a school that is in School Improvement I that fails to make AYP will be identified as School Improvement II. A school that fails to make AYP for the fourth year is listed in Corrective Action I and for the fifth year, Corrective Action II.

If a school makes AYP at any point after being identified in School Improvement, the school will not advance to the next level. The status is defined as Making Progress and still considered in School Improvement at the same level as the previous year. If the school makes AYP for the second consecutive year the building is no longer in school improvement. On the other hand if the school misses AYP after a year of Making Progress the school proceeds to the next designated level of School Improvement.

Comparison of Muhlenberg Elementary Center with other schools in Pennsylvania

The Pennsylvania Department of Education tracked statewide gains in student achievement between 2002 and 2008 in reading and mathematics for the following subjects and grades:

Reading

- At Grade 5 the District had a decrease of 16 percentage points compared to a statewide gain of 2 percentage points.
- At Grade 8 the District had a gain of 4 percentage points compared to a statewide gain of 3 percentage points.
- At Grade 11 the District had a gain of 5 percentage points compared to a statewide gain of 0 percentage points.

Mathematics

- At Grade 5 the District had a decrease of 10 percentage points compared to a statewide gain of 2 percentage points.
- At Grade 8 the District had a gain of 2 percentage points compared to a statewide gain of 3 percentage points.
- At Grade 11 the District had a gain of 3 percentage points compared to a statewide gain of 3 percentage points.

What are Supplemental Educational Services?

Supplemental Educational Services (SES) are extra academic services available in schools identified for School Improvement II or Corrective Action. Free tutoring is offered after school or on Saturday to help eligible students to improve in reading, mathematics and science.

How Parents and Families Can Help Improve Student Achievement

Your support is not only essential to your child's success, but to the success of the school as well. Under NCLB, parents are to be involved in the school improvement process and to help write the school's School Plan. This is the plan to help raise the student achievement of all children in the school. Parents also have the right to help create or update the school's parent involvement policy and the home-school compact. You can contribute to your child's academic success by ensuring that your child attends school regularly, comes prepared to learn and completes all homework. Please plan to attend the Title I and Parent School Community Council meetings to obtain more information about school improvement activities and parent engagement opportunities at your child's school.