

Anamosa Community School District

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DATE: September 17, 2015

TO: Strawberry Hill Elementary Parents

SUBJECT: Notice of Adequate Yearly Progress –
Corrective Action, School Choice Options and Supplemental Educational Service Options

Many of you are aware of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, which requires schools to assess students annually and to meet student achievement goals. If a school does not meet those assessment and achievement goals (termed “adequate yearly progress” or AYP) for two consecutive years, and if the school receives federal Title I funds, then it is placed on a federal “Schools in Need of Assistance (SINA)” list and subjected to federal sanctions. Schools or districts are cited if they a) don’t meet 95% participation rate for assessments, b) don’t meet student achievement goals, or c) don’t meet attendance rate for elementary and middle schools or graduation rate for high school.

I am writing to inform you that Strawberry Hill Elementary has been designated as a “School in Need of Assistance,” or SINA, under these federal guidelines because a portion of our students did not reach proficiency goals on their Iowa Assessment tests for three consecutive years. As a result, our district is required by law to offer your student school choice to transfer to another public school within the district that has not been designated as a school in need of assistance. As Anamosa Community School District has only one elementary school, there is no other school choice available. We also will be offering supplemental educational services, such as tutoring, to eligible students. A list of approved supplemental educational service providers is on the Iowa Department of Education website.

Please know that the SINA designation refers to federal criteria. We remain a fully accredited school in complete compliance with State of Iowa regulations.

WHY Strawberry Hill Elementary DIDN’T MAKE AYP:

Schools don’t make AYP when they don’t achieve one of the measures listed above. Strawberry Hill Elementary is listed because not enough students met their goals in the following areas:

- 3rd-4th grade, Reading-78.57% (100% was the state AYP goal)
- One or more subgroups did not meet their target

HOW Strawberry Hill Elementary WILL IMPROVE:

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 already has begun to identify areas for improvement. During the 2015-2016 school year for example:

- curriculum materials, which are aligned to Iowa Common Core Standards will continue to be implemented.
- 120-minute literacy blocks are being implemented at each grade level. These literacy blocks include interventions periods for students who have skill deficiencies in reading.
- the framework for literacy blocks includes time for students to read text at their reading level.
- teachers are being trained in Modules 1 and 2 of LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) which will deepen the understanding of literacy instruction.

Some student groups may require additional instructional interventions, pending a review of our current programs and services. In addition, the Iowa Department of Education and the Anamosa Community School District already have begun providing technical assistance to Strawberry Hill Elementary as required by the NCLB law.

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CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Schools that have missed AYP for three consecutive years are required to implement a corrective action from the following list of options:

- Replace the school staff who are relevant to the failure to make AYP
- Institute and fully implement a new curriculum, including professional development
- Significantly decrease management at the school
- Extend the school day or school year
- Restructure the internal organization of the school
- Appoint one or more outside experts to advise the school

Strawberry Hill Elementary has chosen the following corrective action: Institute and fully implement a new curriculum, including professional development.

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP:

Parent support is essential to help your student reach his or her highest academic success, but parents may need ideas about the best way to be involved. A few suggestions include:

- Communicate regularly with your child's teachers about overall goals for the year and your child's progress toward those goals.
- Make sure your child attends school regularly. Attendance is important at every grade level. When your child must be absent, please talk with the teacher to coordinate make-up work and assignments.
- Help your child with his or her homework. If you are unable to help, contact the school to request a tutor.
- Volunteer at the school. Every teacher needs volunteers to help in the classroom, or even with projects that can be done in your home. Other areas in the school, such as the office or cafeteria, also need volunteers.

HOW TO REQUEST SCHOOL CHOICE:

Our school is not able to offer school choice because there are no schools available for students to attend.

HOW TO REQUEST SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES:

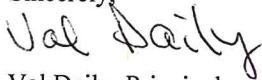
We will offer supplemental education services, such as tutoring before or after school, for eligible students. Research from the federal government has shown that students who participated in supplemental educational services made significant gains in student achievement, and students who participated in multiple years did even better. A list of approved service providers is attached. If you have questions about whether your student is eligible, or about which service might best meet the needs of your child, contact Principal, Val Daily at 319-462-3549. The district is not required to provide transportation to off-site supplemental educational service locations. Transportation to these sites will be the responsibility of the parent.

As parents, you can be assured your students continue to receive a high quality education at Strawberry Hill Elementary. The assessment results cited by NCLB are one useful measurement for us, but we also have many other indicators to demonstrate our students' achievement. You'll note that each class at Strawberry Hill Elementary has success stories. For instance, during the 14-15 school year:

- Kindergarteners scored class averages between 84% and 98% accuracy on end of unit tests in reading
- First grade students increased from 28% meeting reading benchmark scores in the fall to 54% meeting benchmark scores in the spring.
- Second grade students MAP Reading mean RIT increased 11.2 points from fall to spring.
- Third grade students MAP Reading mean RIT increased 7.1 points from fall to spring.
- Fourth grade students grew from 51% proficient in reading on the fall FAST benchmark to 67% proficient in the spring.
- All of our teachers are highly qualified.
- 24% of our teachers have advanced degrees.

We are very proud of our students and of the education they receive from the staff at Strawberry Hill. We also are committed to continuous improvement, and so will continue to seek new data and make any changes necessary to benefit student learning. We appreciate your ongoing support and assistance, and welcome your suggestions.

Sincerely,



Val Daily, Principal

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