

## **HIGHLAND COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5**

Serving the Communities of Alhambra, Grantfork, Highland, New Douglas, and Pierron

**MICHAEL L. SUTTON**  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS



**LYNNE S. NEWTON**  
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT - INSTRUCTION  
**TIMOTHY C. BAIR**  
BUSINESS MANAGER

Dear Parents of Highland CUSD No. 5 Students:

In accordance with the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB), states must provide notification to parents of students in districts that are identified for improvement because the district did not make adequate yearly progress. This communication acts as the notification to meet this federal requirement.

The Illinois State Board of Education has asked me to distribute this letter and data to you. The data identifies why the district did not make adequate yearly progress (AYP). Under NCLB and state law, for a district to make AYP:

1. 70% of the district's students (as a whole, and for certain subgroups) must exceed the state's targets in math and reading on state assessments;
2. 95% of the district's students (as a whole and for certain subgroups) must participate in state assessments for mathematics and reading; and
3. the district's students (as a whole, and for certain subgroups) must meet a 90% attendance rate for grade schools and a 78% graduation rate for high school.

In the case of Highland CUSD No. 5, our subgroup of special education students did not make AYP in reading. Even though these students all have a disability, the NCLB law says they must meet state standards.

If a district does not make AYP for two consecutive years, it is deemed to be in "improvement status" and certain state and federal sanctions apply. Two consecutive years of meeting AYP criteria are required for a district to be removed from "improvement status."

While AYP is an important measure of student learning, it is important to remember that a district that does not make AYP should never be considered a "failing" district. Teaching and learning is an ongoing process that changes constantly to meet the unique needs of students and communities. One of the most important goals of NCLB is to identify areas in each district and school where improvement is needed.

The State Board feels it is important for educators, parents, and communities to work together to address those areas of need. Parents can assist districts in the improvement process by participating in improvement planning with the district and participating with local school improvement planning. If you are interested in helping our district in the improvement process, please contact your local school principal or the superintendent.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael S. Sutton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

Michael S. Sutton  
Superintendent