

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

7/28/10

Dear Columbia Borough Jr. Sr. High School 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). Since the data for the 2010 PSSA assessments has not been formally released to any of the school districts in Pennsylvania, we have included the 2009 data below. The 2010 data will be available on the Columbia Borough School District website (www.columbia.k12.pa.us) when it is released to the school district.

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 Columbia Borough 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.

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 Columbia Borough School District made progress in Reading and Mathematics proficiency **on 17 of the 18 targets.**

Columbia Borough Jr. Sr. High School met **94% of AYP targets in 2009.** Below are highlights of reading and mathematics achievements:

Reading

- In Grades 7,8,and11 the percentage of students scoring at proficient or advanced increased from 60.5% in 2008 to 61% in 2009.

Mathematics

- In Grades 7, 8, and11 the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced decreased from 59.3% in 2008 to 57.1% in 2009.

However, based on the performance of some subgroups, Columbia Borough Jr.Sr. High School has been identified in Corrective Action II by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). Columbia Jr.Sr. High School's PSSA results indicate that the school did not meet one of the state's academic achievement targets based on 2008-09 PSSA results. The following target was not met:

<u>Reading</u>	<u>Proficient/Adv</u>	<u>State Target</u>
IEP Students	19.6%	63%

Action Plan for Improving Student Achievement

As a result of an in-depth needs assessment, Columbia Borough Jr.Sr. High School has identified the following areas as key strategies for instructional improvement for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school year:

- Professional Development will focus on content literacy and class room management.
- The Literacy coach will support the use of effective instructional strategies into the classroom.
- Reading and writing strategies will be incorporated across all content areas.
- Professional Development in-services will focus on reading comprehension strategies.

- Professional Development for Co-teaching will focus on classes with inclusion.
- The District-wide Mentor Program will again be in operation.
- The Technology curriculum integration specialist will support the use of effective technology in the classroom.
- Curriculum Leaders will be responsible for their content areas and grade levels.

As outlined in our school improvement plan, the school district and the Pennsylvania Department of Education will be offering Columbia Borough Jr.Sr. High School assistance to implement these strategies by continuing the Educational Assistance Program, EAP, which is a tutoring grant.

Explanation of School Choice Option

According to NCLB, Columbia Borough Jr. Sr. High School must offer students the choice to transfer to another school in the district that is not in School Improvement. However, Columbia Borough Jr.Sr. High School 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 Columbia Jr. Sr. High School. 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 Virginia Babic at (717) 684-7500. In addition, Columbia Borough Jr. Sr. High School 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 October 13, 2010, at 6:30 p.m.in the Columbia Jr. Sr. High School Library.

The many successes at Columbia Borough Jr.Sr. High School cannot be measured in one test, and we appreciate your continued support. We are very proud of the following successes:

- INCREASE IN OUR GRADUATION RATE FROM ('07) 79.65 TO ('08) 81.48
- INCREASE IN OUR OVERALL READING SCORES FROM 60.5% TO 61%
- A MERIT SCHOLARSHIP FINALIST IN THE 2009 GRADUATING CLASS
- EXEMPLARY TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT INCLUDING CLASSROOMS FOR THE FUTURE (CFF) GRANT DURING THE 2008-09 SCHOOL YEAR
- BUILDING CONSTRUCTION PROJECT ADDING 8 NEW CLASSROOMS, NEW LIBRARY, LARGE GROUP INSTRUCTION ROOM, AIR CONDITIONING AND MORE TO PROVIDE THE BEST LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR STUDENTS
- SUCCESSFUL DISTRICT-WIDE MENTOR PROGRAM
- IMPLEMENTATION OF A MORE RIGOROUS GRADUATION PROJECT

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,

Virginia Babic