



**S T O - R O X**

S C H O O L D I S T R I C T

Fran Serenka  
Superintendent of Schools

600 Russellwood Avenue  
McKees Rocks, PA 15136

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

DATE: August 10, 2009

Dear Sto-Rox Middle School Parents/Guardians,

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 Sto-Rox 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 Sto-Rox Middle School made remarkable progress in Reading and Mathematics proficiency on 20 of the 21 targets.

Sto-Rox Middle School met 95% of AYP targets in 2009. Below are raw data highlights of reading and mathematics achievements:

**Reading**

- In Grade 6 the percentage of students scoring at proficient or advanced increased from 35% in 2008 to 42% in 2009.
- In Grade 8 the percentage of students scoring at proficient or advanced increased from 38% in 2008 to 59% in 2009.

**Mathematics**

- In Grade 6 the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced increased from 50% in 2008 to 55% in 2009.
- In Grade 7 the percentage of students scoring at proficient or advanced increased from 49% in 2008 to 63% in 2009.
- In Grade 8 the percentage of students scoring at proficient or advanced increased from 37% in 2008 to 64% in 2009.

However, based on the performance of some subgroups, Sto-Rox Middle School has been identified in School Improvement II by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). Sto-Rox Middle School PSSA results

indicate that the school did not meet the state's academic achievement targets for the SECOND year in a row, based on **2008-2009** PSSA results.

### School Status Summary Report

School Status Summary						
Year	AYP Status	Mathematics		Reading		Attendance
		Part	Perf	Part	Perf	
<b>2008-2009</b>	School Improvement II	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<b>2007-2008</b>	School Improvement I	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes

Reading Proficient/Adv	State Target
All Students 43%	<b>63%</b>
White 51.5%	
Black 34%	
Econ. Disadvantaged 59.8%	

Math Proficient/Adv	State Target
All Students 60%	<b>56%</b>
White 65%	
Black 23%	
Econ. Disadvantaged 59.8%	

Please review the attachment for an explanation of school improvement and more information on how the Sto-Rox School District compares to other Pennsylvania schools.

### See Additional NCLB Information Letter Enclosed

#### Action Plan for Improving Student Achievement

As a result of an in depth needs assessment, Sto-Rox Middle School has identified the following areas as key strategies for instructional improvement:

- Reading
- Writing
- Mathematics

The Sto-Rox Middle School will continue to use the Getting Results framework for school improvement planning. This tool will focus on four high-leverage practices: Quality Teaching, Quality Leadership, Artful Use of Infrastructure, and Continuous Learning Ethnic. The planning sequence will include: data, design, delivery, development of people and documentation.

As outlined in our school improvement plan, the Sto-Rox School District and the Pennsylvania Department of Education will be offering Sto-Rox Middle School assistance to implement these strategies by leading in the design and rollout of strategies, tools, and programs used to build capacity. Field –based Assistance will come from the Allegheny Intermediate Unit and PaTTAN; while customized direct assistance will be provided by PDE.

#### Explanation of School Choice Option

According to NCLB, Sto-Rox Middle School must offer students the choice to transfer to another school in the district not in School Improvement however **Sto-Rox School District 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 the Sto-Rox Middle 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 Dr. Janell Logue-Belden @ 412-771-3213 Ext. 2000. In addition, Sto-Rox Middle School, will have its annual meeting at a date to be determined in the early fall to revise our school parent involvement policy and parent compact and to review parent rights under Title I.

The many successes at Sto-Rox Middle School 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,

*Dr. Janell Logue-Belden*

PRINCIPAL

Enclosures: Additional NCLB Information



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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 Sto-Rox School District 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 gain of 15.2 percentage points compared to a statewide gain of 2% percentage points.
- At Grade 8 the District had a gain of 27.2 percentage points compared to a statewide gain of 3% percentage points.
- At Grade 11 the District had a gain of -4% percentage points compared to a statewide gain of 0% percentage points.

#### Mathematics

- At Grade 5 the District had a gain of 50.2 percentage points compared to a statewide gain of 2% percentage points.
- At Grade 8 the District had a gain of 43.7 percentage points compared to a statewide gain of 2% percentage points.
- At Grade 11 the District had a gain of 3.6 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.