



Ted Strickland, Governor  
Deborah S. Delisle, Superintendent of Public Instruction

Dear Parent,

The State of Ohio is sending you this letter because the Ohio Department of Education has identified the school district your child attends, Niles City School District, as needing "District Improvement." The *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) that President Bush signed into law in January 2002 requires Ohio to identify districts that have not made sufficient progress in one or more areas for at least two years in a row as needing District Improvement. School districts across Ohio like Niles City School District are highly committed to making sure that all students succeed. Students, teachers, administrators, and other staff work hard to meet the requirements of NCLB. However, school districts sometimes need improvement. This year, Niles City School District has been identified for Year Four of District Improvement.

Sufficient progress is defined by both state law and NCLB. There are four components that measure academic growth in districts. This growth is called "Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)." The components that determine whether a district meets AYP are:

1. Reading (both test scores and the participation rate are counted);
2. Mathematics (both test scores and the participation rate are counted);
3. Attendance Rate; and
4. Graduation Rate.

State and Federal laws set goals for these four components. A district must meet every single goal in order to meet AYP. The participation rate goal on all state tests is 95%. The goal for attendance rate is 93%, and the goal for graduation rate is 73.6%. District goals for reading and mathematics are combinations of the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> grade goals. For each grade, test, and student group, a certain percentage of students must reach grade-level proficiency for the district to meet AYP.

The ten student groups that must meet their goals for a district to meet AYP are: All Students; American Indian or Alaska Native Students; Asian or Pacific Islander Students; Black, Non-Hispanic Students; Hispanic Students; Multi-Racial Students; White, Non-Hispanic Students; Students with Disabilities; Limited English Proficient Students; and Economically Disadvantaged Students. If any group does not meet AYP in reading or mathematics, or if the All Students group does not meet AYP in reading, mathematics, attendance rate, or graduation rate, then the entire district will not meet AYP. To enter District Improvement, a district has to miss AYP in the same component for two consecutive years. To exit District Improvement, a district has to meet AYP for two consecutive years in the component that it originally missed, and not be in improvement for any other component. If a district in improvement meets its AYP goals for one year, it will go into "Delay." If it meets its AYP goals the next year, it will exit District Improvement. However, if it does not meet its AYP goals the next year, it will move into the next year of District Improvement.

These are Niles City School District's AYP results for the past three school years:

| School Year | AYP Component Results |             |                 |                 |
|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|             | Reading               | Mathematics | Attendance Rate | Graduation Rate |
| 2006-2007   | Not Met               | Not Met     | Met             | Met             |
| 2007-2008   | Not Met               | Not Met     | Met             | Met             |
| 2008-2009   | Met                   | Met         | Met             | Met             |

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This table shows that Niles City School District met its goals last year in four of the four AYP components, and did not meet its goals in zero of the components. Based on this pattern of results, Niles City School District has been identified for Year Four of District Improvement for the 2009-2010 school year. However, Niles City School District's Improvement status is in Delay because it met AYP last year. Being in Delay means that the district is still in District Improvement, but it has met its federal goals for one year and has not moved forward in its number of years in District Improvement. If it meets all of its federal goals during the 2009-2010 school year, Niles City School District will no longer be identified for District Improvement.

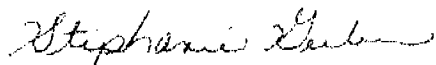
Improving the academic issues that caused a district to go into District Improvement requires parent involvement. Parents can work with districts in many ways to help increase academic achievement, no matter how old their children are. Ideas for helping improve your child's academic performance include allowing for plenty of study time at home, teaching the importance of education to your child, making sure your child gets to school on time and every day, being aware of extra resources that can help your child (for example, tutoring or after-school programs), talking with your child's school and district about ideas for improvement, being familiar with the District Improvement Plan that addresses the problems causing the district to be in District Improvement, and taking part in the district's improvement strategies.

NCLB describes what the State and the district must do when a district is in District Improvement. The State is required to provide this notice to parents, explaining why the district is in improvement and giving ideas for how parents can help. The State also provides the support and technical assistance that districts request to help them meet their academic achievement goals. The State must prioritize all districts in District Improvement so that districts needing the most help improving academic achievement will receive it. For example, a district having trouble with reading and mathematics test scores would likely need more technical assistance than a district having trouble with attendance rate. Finally, because Niles City School District is in Year Four of District Improvement, the State also needs to take "Corrective Action" by working with the district to apply specific consequences that NCLB requires (see Section 1116(c)(10)(C)).

The district must develop or revise a District Improvement Plan no more than three months after it is identified for District Improvement. It must consult with parents, school staff, and other appropriate people when creating its plan. You can find information about the District Improvement Plan and its requirements on the Ohio Department of Education's Web site at <https://ccip.ode.state.oh.us/documentlibrary/ViewDocument.aspx?DocumentKey=813>, on the United States Department of Education's Web site at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/schoolimprovementguid.pdf>, or by calling ODE's Office of Federal Programs at 614-466-4161.

Please review the reasons that Niles City School District is in improvement. We encourage you to help your district in those areas to make sure that all students in your community get an education that brings them success.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Gerber  
Director  
Office of Federal Programs