

Veterans Memorial Elementary School
103 Hendrickson Avenue
Brick, NJ 08724

October 7, 2011

Ms. Susan McNamara
Principal

Assistant:
Colleen Kerr

Dear Parents and/or Guardians,

The Brick Township Public Schools are dedicated to providing all students with the educational foundation necessary to succeed in school and in life. To ensure your child's success, we have set high standards that are reflected in what is taught in our classrooms. The *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) requires that adequate yearly progress (AYP) in language arts literacy and mathematics be measured annually for each school in New Jersey.

AYP is based primarily on the results of the New Jersey state assessments (NJASK3, NJ ASK 4, NJ ASK 5, NJ ASK 6, NJ ASK 7, NJASK 8) given to students in grades 3-8. Schools must meet the state's academic proficiency benchmarks, as well as other indicators such as test participation and for elementary and middle schools, attendance rate, to make AYP. These benchmarks increase on an incremental basis every three years.

In the spring of 2008, the state of New Jersey introduced newly designed assessments for students in grades 5, 6, 7, and 8. These assessments, in both language arts literacy and mathematics, added additional rigor and better alignment to the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. In the spring of 2011, students in Brick Township Public Schools participated in NJASK State Assessments.

Schools that did not make AYP for one year (Year 1) receive an Early Warning designation to alert them that students did not meet at least one on the AYP indicators. If a school does not make AYP for *two or more* consecutive years in the same content area (language arts literacy and mathematics), it is identified as a school in need of improvement and certain sanctions must be applied.

In the Brick Township Public School district, the following schools are identified as schools in need of improvement for the 2010-2011 school year. They are identified for improvement as follows:

Veterans Memorial Elementary School

Year 2: Language Arts Literacy

Total Population

African-American Subgroup

Sanction: School Choice- more information to be distributed to VMES families

Lake Riviera Middle School

Year 3: Hold Language Arts Literacy – Safe Harbor

Student subgroups did not achieve AYP; however, among all students, there was a 10% decrease in the total number of partially proficient students.

Sanction: Supplemental Educational Services (SES) for economically disadvantaged students

All schools in need of improvement that receive federal Title I funds must assemble a school improvement committee to develop a school improvement plan that identifies areas of need, programs, and activities to help increase student achievement. All schools in need of improvement must involve parents and the community for input as the Title I Unified Plan is developed. As a parent, you are encouraged to contact you child's school

principal to provide input to the school improvement plan and see how you can become involved in helping the school address its achievement issues.

Some of the steps we have already taken or plan to implement this year to address the problem(s) that placed your child's school in improvement status include the following:

- Summer "Jump Start" Program
- Creation of a Title I Parent Resource Tab on the District's website
- Continuous Review and Revision of the Basic Skills Program
- Implementation of New Strategies and National Common Core Standards
- Ongoing Professional Development for Teachers
- New Technology
- Increased Parental Involvement
- Continuation of Academic Coaches Language Arts and Mathematics
- Achieve 3000 / Kid Biz!
- S.T.R.I.V.E.

The State of New Jersey is also active in helping the school and district achieve its academic goals by sponsoring trainings, school support teams (CAPA), and guidance.

The staff of the Brick Township Public Schools wants to continue serving your child, and we will use every resource available to help our students achieve. An important part of this effort involves parental involvement and support. The district and each school must develop and implement a parental involvement policy. We encourage you to become involved in this and other initiatives at your child's school by contacting Ms. Susan McNamara at 732.785.3050 or smcnamara@brickschools.org. The entire community is responsible for building and maintaining a high-quality school.

We will continue to communicate with you throughout the 2011-2012 school year regarding our school improvement efforts. We hope you will join us in supporting our students and teachers as we work toward reaching our goals for this school year.

Educationally yours,

Mr. Walter Hrycenko
Superintendent