

June , 2011

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are writing on behalf of the Hudson School District to inform you of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) status in the Hudson elementary schools. For the 2011-2012 school year, Hills Garrison School, Dr. H.O. Smith, and Nottingham West Elementary School have been identified by the New Hampshire Department of Education as 'Schools in Need of Improvement (SINI)'. Adequate Yearly Progress is determined annually by student performance on the NECAP assessment. This assessment is administered to all students in grades 3-8 and grade 11. To achieve the AYP designation, 95% of students in each reporting category or 'cohort' must participate in the assessment, and every cohort must score within the targeted growth identified by the Department of Education. There are several designated reporting categories. Among them are Educationally Disabled, Limited English Proficient, Economically Disadvantaged, Primary Race/Ethnicity designations, and Gender.

Based on the fall 2010 NECAP scores, Hudson Elementary school AYP status is as follows:

- Hills Garrison School – did not achieve AYP with identified educationally disabled students in reading & math and economically disadvantaged in math. SINI year 2 math; year 3 reading.
- Dr. HO Smith School –did not achieve AYP with identified educationally disabled students in reading & math, and the economically disadvantaged and non-or limited English speaking students in math. SINI year 2 math; year 3 reading.
- Nottingham West School – did not achieve AYP with identified educationally disabled students in reading & math, and economically disadvantaged in math. SINI year 2 math.

President Bush signed the education law called No Child Left Behind in January 2002. The long-range goal of NCLB is that every child will be proficient in reading and mathematics according to a state's academic standards. Schools that do not achieve the target goal in reading and math with each cohort for two consecutive years are labeled 'School in Need of Improvement' in the appropriate subject area(s).

Under the NCLB, all Title I schools identified as 'Schools in Need of Improvement' are required to provide public school choice under certain conditions. At this time, all elementary schools in Hudson are identified as 'Schools in Need of Improvement', so school choice is no longer available with this exception: students/ families who are presently attending Nottingham West under school choice may continue there, but parents must provide their own transportation.

Dr. HO Smith School and Hills Garrison School have not attained AYP in reading for three years. As a result they are considered to be schools that are in Corrective Action. "Corrective Action" requires the district to revamp curriculum and instruction. We have been actively working on revised curriculum for both language arts and mathematics and have begun rolling those changes out. It is important to realize that while the whole school is meeting the AYP index and has over the last four years, the law requires individual sub-groups to also meet the AYP standard. While most of our subgroups are capable of meeting the target set by the state, not all have that ability. For those groups that are

struggling with learning we are seeking alternative programming that provides them with the foundations to be successful. While they continue to make progress, their progress is not at the rate that the state would like to see. The district is committed to continuing improving all students' performance and will use a continuous review and revision process.

Comparative data for the state and the district on the 2010 NECAP:

Grade 3 Reading					
School	% students substantially below proficient	% students partially proficient	% students proficient	% students proficient with distinction	AYP status in reading
State of NH	6	14	63	17	no
Hills Garrison	6	10	46	38	no
H. O. Smith	3	28	59	11	no
Nottingham	11	16	63	10	no

Grade 4 Reading					
School	% students substantially below proficient	% students partially proficient	% students proficient	% students proficient with distinction	AYP status in reading
State of NH	7	16	52	25	no
Hills Garrison	5	14	47	33	no
H. O. Smith	3	26	54	17	no
Nottingham	5	21	57	17	no

Grade 5 Reading					
School	% students substantially below proficient	% students partially proficient	% students proficient	% students proficient with distinction	AYP status in reading
State of NH	6	16	57	21	no
Hills Garrison	2	12	53	33	no
H. O. Smith	0	23	65	11	no
Nottingham	9	23	55	13	no

Grade 3 Math					
School	% students substantially below proficient	% students partially proficient	% students proficient	% students proficient with distinction	AYP status in math
State of NH	8	16	48	28	no
Hills Garrison	4	17	37	43	no
H. O. Smith	7	18	51	24	no
Nottingham	13	18	53	17	no

Grade 4 Math					
School	% students substantially below proficient	% students partially proficient	% students proficient	% students proficient with distinction	AYP status in math
State of NH	9	17	48	26	no
Hills Garrison	5	14	47	33	no
H. O. Smith	8	22	49	21	no
Nottingham	8	22	50	20	no

Grade 5 Math					
School	% students substantially below proficient	% students partially proficient	% students proficient	% students proficient with distinction	AYP status in math
State of NH	12	15	50	23	no
Hills Garrison	13	11	54	22	no
H. O. Smith	22	16	49	13	no
Nottingham	15	18	45	22	no

Our schools are working with district and NH Department of Education representatives to identify key areas for improvement. Several improvement initiatives are currently underway to improve student achievement in reading and mathematics. The Hudson School District has adopted a core-reading program that features a balanced approach to literacy instruction and a systemic approach to intervention for struggling readers in grades K-5. We have implemented Professional Learning Communities across our schools, which allow staff important time for shared planning, collaboration and close analysis of student assessment data. We will continue that process. For the second year, we continued to work with a mathematics consultant, Mahesh Sharma. He will continue working in the elementary and middle schools for a third year to help us strengthen math instruction and student achievement. He has stressed the importance of learning facts and helping young children develop number sense. Also parents were invited to an informational evening session on mathematics provided by Greg Tang, an author and specialist in mathematics. In addition, we have just completed a 3 year contract with Fred Wolff, writing consultant who helped both students and staff with developing purposeful writing strategies and skills. The district will be working with a reading consultant to work with students and staff throughout the 2011-12 school year. Students continue to be tested at least twice a year with the implementation of NWEA testing. Students' scores are analyzed to see their gains and weaknesses in reading and mathematics. Finally, we have received training from the Department of Education in a software program designed to help us analyze and manage student assessment data in order to plan instruction. All of these key areas will factor in to our individual school improvement plans.

As a parent, you are a critical partner in school improvement. All of us working together will ensure the development of a successful plan to improve the quality of education we provide to all of our students. If you are interested in helping the improvement process, please call your child's school, send an email to the school, or stop by the office.

We look forward to working with you to provide the opportunities for success for all of our students. We anticipate that our detailed plan for improvement will be available in the school office by mid-September 2011. Please contact the school if you would like to review this document. As always, we appreciate your support and welcome your input.

Sincerely,