



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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ATTENTION!
Districts in Need of Improvement
2011-2012 Designation

October 11, 2011

To: { Superintendent }
{ School District }

From: Barbara Gantwerk, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Programs and Operations

Subject: Districts in Need of Improvement

The federal *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* mandates extensive education requirements as part of an accountability system that measures schools and districts for academic achievement. Schools and districts not meeting the standards are identified for improvement. Districts and schools that receive Title I funds must comply with a complex set of sanctions defined by the United States Department of Education (USDE).

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) is required to follow the ESEA regulations to identify *districts in need of improvement (DINI)*. This designation is based on the 2011 preliminary adequate yearly progress (AYP) calculations determined for your schools. An analysis of district-wide AYP calculations indicates that your district is designated a “district in need of improvement.” The profile for your district is attached.

To allow your district time to study the district AYP data, notify staff and parents of the designation, and prepare your response to the press in case of inquiries, the NJDOE will post the list of districts in need of improvement to the NJDOE web site on or about **November 14, 2011**. The following documents are already posted on the NJDOE web site at <http://www.nj.gov/education/title1/accountability/ayp/1112/> to provide information and resources and actions regarding Districts in Need of Improvement (DINI):

- The *Districts In Need of Improvement - Addendum* provides detailed information about the criterion used to identify districts. It also summarizes actions for Title I DINI districts to take.

- The *2011-2012 District in Need of Improvement Appeal Form* may be submitted if you believe the district's improvement designation is in error for statistical or other substantive reasons. Districts must submit their appeals to the NJDOE no later than October 28, 2011. Along with the Appeal Form, include a detailed explanation of why you believe the status is in error, and provide corrected data/information with the source to refute the designation.
- The *District Improvement Continuum Chart* will help you understand the steps the district must take. Most immediately, the district must notify all parents of the district's improvement designation.
- The *Districts in Need of Improvement Sample Parent Letter* provides districts with sample language to notify parents.

All of these documents are posted on the NJDOE website at:

<http://www.nj.gov/education/title1/accountability/ayp/1112/>. Additionally, the NJDOE will contact districts in need of improvement that receive Title I funds about technical assistance sessions on the development of their required DINI plan.

The provisions of the ESEA are intricate and complex. We appreciate your continued dedication to meeting the requirements of this federal legislation. If you need any additional information about ESEA or Title I, or assistance in complying with the provisions for designated districts, please contact the Office of Title I via email at titleone@doe.state.nj.us or phone at 609-943-4283.

As you may have heard, the USDE has released its ESEA Flexibility Waivers guidance. While the NJDOE intends to pursue these waivers, there is no waiver in place at this time. Therefore, all current requirements remain in effect.

BG\KC\S:\Single Accountability System\2011-2012\DINI\CSA letter DINI 2011_PAGE 2R.doc

Attachment

c: Christopher Cerf
Andrew Smarick
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Senior Staff
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Executive County Superintendent