

October 14, 2010

Dear Parent:

At Navajo Public Schools, we are committed to setting high goals so that every student can succeed. Recently the reports for federal and state requirements were released. These standards are complicated, so we want to make sure that all parents better understand how they work. This letter will tell you:

Oklahoma uses the Academic Performance Index (API) for school and district accountability; pieces of the API are used to measure Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), which is a federal requirement mandated by No Child Left Behind (NCLB);

- How Navajo School is doing in meeting those requirements;
- The challenges of AYP; and
- What steps we are taking to help all our students achieve.

#### 1. **State and Federal Requirements**

As you may know, all schools must now meet rigorous state and federal accountability requirements:

**State:** Our state's requirements are called Academic Performance Index (API). The seven indicators are divided into three components as follows:

- Oklahoma School Testing Program: Reading/language arts and math results from all state-mandated tests
- School Completion: Includes school attendance, dropout, and graduation rates
- Academic Excellence: ACT scores and percent of students participating, Advanced Placement (AP) credit, and college remediation rates in reading and math

**Federal:** The Federal requirements called Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), under NCLB focus on four indicators of educational success, including:

- Math Achievement
- Reading/language arts Achievement
- Student participation in testing
- Student attendance rates or graduation rates, as applicable

For each indicator, a specific statewide performance target was established. According to NCLB regulations, AYP is an "all-or-nothing" determination; in other words, school and districts must meet all targets for all measurable student groups in order to meet AYP. Regarding testing, eleven specific student groups are required to meet the statewide performance targets:

- All Student
- Regular Students
- Major Racial/Ethnic Groups:
  - Black
  - American Indian
  - Hispanic

- Asian/Pacific Islander
- White
- Other
- Economically Disadvantaged Students
- English language learners (ELL)
- Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP)

## 2. HOW OUR SCHOOL DID THIS YEAR

Navajo Public Schools exceeded the state benchmarks in ten of the eleven student groups. The Academic Performance Score for the Navajo District was 1273 on a scale from 0-1500. Navajo Elementary had an API of 1274, Navajo Junior High had an API of 1277 and Navajo High School had an API of 1221. Considering that the State Performance Targets for the 2009-10 school term are 1074 for the Math API and 1060 for the Reading API, you will note that Navajo students scored extremely well and Navajo's students, teachers, and patrons are to be complimented on their achievements. Please recognize that this year the State Performance Targets increased considerably and it becomes more difficult for any school to meet all benchmarks for API and AYP. These benchmarks continue to increase through 2014. We must continue to be diligent in our efforts to improve on our educational performance.

## 3. WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES OF AYP?

- **Every group counts separately under AYP.** To make AYP, schools must make sure that every single group of students--including students who have learning disabilities or who do not speak fluent English--meets the same AYP goals. That is a very tough challenge. If even one group does not meet the goals, our school cannot make AYP.
- **AYP gives all or nothing results.** Under NCLB a school either makes AYP or it does not. There is no in between. It is as if the only two grades are "pass" and "fail". Even schools with a very high API score, may still need improvement in specific student groups (e.g. race, IEP, ELL, or economically disadvantaged students).

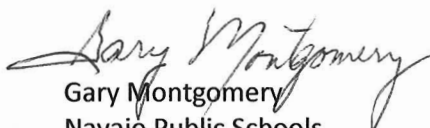
## 4. HOW WE ARE HELPING OUR STUDENTS ACHIEVE

We are working even harder to help all Navajo students achieve. Following are some of the initiatives we are undertaking this year:

- Professional Development
- Encore Classes in our Junior High and High School
- After-school tutoring in our elementary school

Please call if you have more questions about how we can help your student achieve.

Yours truly,

  
 Gary Montgomery  
 Navajo Public Schools  
 Superintendent