

August 2014

Dear Parent or Guardian:

In March 2014, the U.S. Department of Education declined to renew the State of Washington's conditional Elementary and Secondary Education Act Flexibility Waiver for schools receiving Title I, Part A funds. The impact of this decision is that all school districts in the State of Washington are now subject to the punitive and regressive requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind act (NCLB).

After careful deliberation and with strong support from 28 school districts in the Puget Sound Educational Service District, we are sending you this letter to notify you that our districts and schools did not meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as required by NCLB. For our schools to meet AYP this year, 100 percent of all students – regardless of special needs, English language mastery, or other life-impacting circumstances – must meet proficiency standards.

As educators, we are fully committed to each and every student reaching his or her full potential and are proud of the significant academic progress our students are making. While not all students have reached proficiency, our use of targeted resources to assist struggling students and schools has made a significant difference.

By reverting back to NCLB, we are now required to set aside approximately 20 percent of Title I funds we receive from the federal government. The money is reserved for the district to either transfer students to a school that meets the federal requirements or pay for private tutoring. In addition, parents whose children attend schools that don't meet federal standards and receive federal Title I funding receive this notice that their child's school is failing to meet those guidelines.

The label of "failing" schools is regressive and punitive, as nearly every Washington school will not meet the NCLB Requirements. Some of our state's and districts' most successful and highly recognized schools are now being labeled "failing" by an antiquated law that most educators and elected officials – as well as the U.S. Department of Education – acknowledge isn't working.

Our bottom line: Your child's school district is effectively addressing the needs of all students. Our outstanding progress is due to the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders through high-quality instruction, effective leadership, and collaborative partnerships. On behalf of the school districts in our region, we appreciate your support of our students, staff and schools.

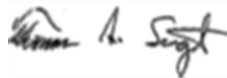
Sincerely,



John P. Welch
Superintendent



Dr. Kip Herren, Superintendent
Auburn School District



Thomas Seigel, Superintendent
Bethel School District



Dr. J. Tim Mills, Superintendent
Bellevue School District



Debbie LeBeau, Superintendent
Clover Park School District

Krestin Bahr, Superintendent
Eatonville School District

Mike Nelson, Superintendent
Enumclaw School District

Sally McClean, Superintendent
Federal Way School District

John McCrossin, Superintendent
Fife School District

Dr. Frank Hewins, Superintendent
Franklin Pierce School District

Dr. Susan Enfield, Superintendent
Highline School District

Ron Thiele, Superintendent
Issaquah School District

Dr. Edward Lee Vargas, Superintendent
Kent School District

Dr. Traci Pierce, Superintendent
Lake Washington School District

Larry Francois, Superintendent
Northshore School District

Michelle Curry, Superintendent
Orting School District

Chuck Cuzzetto, Superintendent
Peninsula School District

Dr. Timothy Yeomans, Superintendent
Puyallup School District

Dr. Merri Rieger, Superintendent
Renton School District

Dr. Anthony L. Smith, Superintendent
Riverview School District

Rebecca Miner, Superintendent
Shoreline School District

Joel Aune, Superintendent
Snoqualmie Valley School District

Kathi Weight, Superintendent
Steilacoom School District

Dr. Sara Johnson, Superintendent
Sumner School District

Carla Santorno, Superintendent
Tacoma School District

Rob Morrow, Superintendent
Tahoma School District

Dr. Nancy Coogan, Superintendent
Tukwila School District

Michael Soltman, Superintendent
Vashon Island School District

Janel Keating, Superintendent
White River School District