

# Stratford Road Elementary School

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Alison Clark  
*Principal*

Gregory Scesney  
*Assistant Principal*

February 2, 2012

Dear Parents and Guardians of Stratford Road Students:

At Stratford Road, we are dedicated to providing students with a solid educational foundation for success in school and in life. We want all of our students to meet proficiency standards and to support them if they do not. As you know, all students are obligated to meet federal and state standards as measured by New York State student assessment results. The federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires that student performance in English Language Arts and mathematics be measured each year. NCLB requires targets for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) to be reached for the whole school and for each of the various sub groups including Students with Disabilities.

We were informed by the New York State Education Department that Stratford Road did not meet AYP in English Language Arts for Students with Disabilities. In an effort to provide quality instruction as efficiently and cost effectively as possible, our district decided some years ago to house all of our self-contained special education students in one elementary building, Stratford Road. In so doing, we achieved an economy of scale and a richer program than would be possible with a few special education students scattered in each elementary building. While we still believe that this is the best way to address the needs of these students, the advent of NCLB with its statistical reporting requirement of AYP (see enclosed fact sheet) weighs the performance of all district special education classes against the progress of the school. It, therefore, ironically presents a false picture of the quality of Stratford Road's academic program and causes unnecessary alarm to parents. Since all students who are in special classes for grades 1-4 attend Stratford Road, this is a district concern. If we separate the scores of the students in our special programs, the results of the Stratford Road students are comparable to those of students in other elementary schools. Stratford Road students exceeded all other progress requirements.

NCLB requires schools that do not make AYP for even a single group to develop a School Quality Review Report which must be submitted to the Board of Education and to the New York State Education Department. A team of teachers led by the principal has been working with the entire school staff and with district and state officials toward achieving AYP for all student sub groups. We are increasing our efforts to ensure that our special education students have the best preparation possible for the New York State assessments. We do need to have some perspective, however, and remind ourselves that student accomplishment is more than scores on State tests in English Language Arts and math. Our district provides both an academic program and services far beyond what the law requires.

We have discussed our notification of being a school in need of improvement at PTA meetings. This letter and the attached document serve as official notice to all parents. The purpose of elementary education is to provide a foundation upon which children can build in upper grades. To ensure your child's success, we will continue to set high standards for all our students using the best practices, strategies, and research-based programs. We continue to have every confidence in the academic program and the excellent work of a dedicated staff.

We trust this letter allays any concerns you may have had. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

*Alison Clark*

Alison Clark  
Principal

*Gerard W. Dempsey, Jr.*

Gerard W. Dempsey, Jr.  
Superintendent of Schools

## Information About Adequate Yearly Progress

### **1. No Child Left Behind Act**

The federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires that student progress be measured in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics, and that Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) be reached. Districts and schools are assigned a designation on their performance on New York State assessments as to whether or not they made AYP. For the first time since the enactment of NCLB, many districts and schools have been identified or have had a significant increase in their number of schools being identified. 102 schools were identified for the first time last year, while newly identified schools this year increased to 847.

### **2. School in Need of Improvement**

Schools that do not make AYP for one year receive a designation to alert them that a group of students did not meet at least one of the AYP indicators. If a school does not make AYP for two or more consecutive years in the same content area (ELA or mathematics), it is identified as a school in need of improvement. We were recently informed by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) that Stratford Road Elementary School has been designated as a School in Need of Improvement (SINI) Year One in ELA for the Students with Disabilities subgroup as they did not make AYP. We exceeded the AYP requirements in all areas except for students with disabilities which was the category in which most of the new schools were identified.

### **3. Assessment Results**

Stratford Road's 2010-2011 ELA scores are comparable to our schools across the district. It is important to remember that the final published scores include all of the children in grades 3 and 4 regardless of their type of educational setting. In order to equally compare Stratford Road's results to the three other elementary schools, we separate the data by recalculating the scores without our special classes. The chart below shows our scores compared to the District, County, and State. Stratford Road exceeded the County and State, as well as the district average, when equally comparing our school to those in our district.

Grade		Passing- Levels 3 and 4
3	Stratford Road School- published scores	73%
	Stratford Road School- without special classes	78%
	Plainview-Old Bethpage District	74%
	Nassau County	71%
	New York State	56%
4	Stratford Road School- published scores	77%
	Stratford Road School- without special classes	79%
	Plainview-Old Bethpage District	79%
	Nassau County	73%
	New York State	57%

We will continue to strengthen our curriculum and focus on using the most effective teaching techniques and programs possible to ensure student success. Some of the steps we have already taken or plan to implement this year to address our SINI status involve the following:

- Create a School Quality Review Team and subsequent School Quality Review Report including recommendations for achievement.
- Continue recruitment of highly-qualified teachers to staff our classrooms.
- Increase data analysis to drive instruction.
- Provide additional professional development for general education and special education teachers that focus on curriculum and instructional strategies.
- Support the collaboration between each classroom teacher and a reading teacher to enhance guided reading instruction through push-in and pull-out lessons.
- Develop a partnership with a consultant from the NYSED Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Support Center.

#### **4. Title I**

Because Stratford Road School is a Title I school, there are specific requirements for parent and public notification. This letter serves as meeting the parent notification requirement. NYSED's Parent and Student Resources website, <http://usny.nysed.gov/parents/>, contains a range of information, including a link to the NYS School Report Card page. At this time, the 2010-2011 School Report Cards are not available; however, when they are, we will post them on our website.

#### **5. Supplemental Educational Services**

Through NCLB, some students in schools identified for school improvement are eligible for Supplemental Educational Services (SES). SES are tutoring or other remedial services offered by a New York State-approved service provider after school or on weekends at no cost to you. If your child is free- or reduced-lunch eligible, you will have the option to select from a list of State-approved providers. Specific information regarding SES programs will be provided to the parents of eligible students in a separate notification.