

# UNIONTOWN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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August 29, 2016

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

On August 20, 2013, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) received waivers from ten requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, as amended by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) of 2001. However, ESEA/NCLB still requires that parents or guardians who have children attending a Title I school be notified of the school's academic achievement as well as the school's designation under Pennsylvania's ESEA Flexibility Waiver. This letter is intended to provide additional information concerning the options available to your child under the Pennsylvania's ESEA Flexibility Waiver and to help you understand what the waiver will mean for you and your child.

Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, PDE no longer used Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) to determine a school's designation. Instead, in accordance with the ESEA Flexibility Waiver, PDE uses four Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) to designate the Title I school as Reward-High Achievement, Reward-High Progress, Focus, or Priority schools. The four AMOs include: measuring test participation rate; graduation/attendance rate; closing the achievement gap for all students; and closing the achievement gap for the historically underperforming students. In addition, all public schools in the state now receive a School Performance Profile score based on 100 points. This score will be considered the school's academic performance score, and while not the criteria for determination of Reward, Focus, or Priority status, it details student performance through scoring of multiple measures that define achievement. The School Performance Profile also includes supports to permit schools to access materials and resources to improve in defined areas related to achievement.

Despite the progress made by our students, Lafayette Elementary has been designated as a Focus School for the 2016-2017 school year. The designation was based on test data from 2012-2013 school year and our school will keep this designation until reevaluated by the Department of Education.

Focus Schools are 10 percent of the lowest Title I schools based on the highest achievement gap for the Historically Low Performing students' AMO. The aggregate achievement gap is determined by the combined Mathematics/Reading PSSA scores and/or the Algebra 1/Literature Keystone Exam scores. They can also be a Title I high school with a graduation rate less than 60 percent; or have a test participation rate below 95 percent and are not identified as a Priority School.

As a Focus School, we will work collaboratively with parents/guardians, our community and our school district office to develop a school turnaround plan which will implement interventions to respond to the specific needs of improving the performance of our low-performing student subgroups. We have reading and math interventions developed by our reading and math coaches with assistance from retired teachers, a positive behavior support program utilizing CHAMPS, and an emphasis on the importance of parent/guardian involvement.

An important part of the success plan for Lafayette Elementary is parent participation and support in developing activities to improve student achievement. We hope that, as a parent/guardian, you will become involved in our school improvement initiatives as we continue to monitor student achievement and set high expectations. There are several parent and family activities that are planned for the upcoming year, such as, Meet the Teacher Night and many more. If you are interested in participating in developing our school improvement initiatives, contact me at 724-438-3581.

Thank you for all that you do to support your child's education.

**Sincerely, Ms. Tracey Kuchar, Principal**