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Notice of Adequate Yearly Progress, Public School Choice Please Read: Important Information Affecting Your Child

July 29, 2011

Dear Parent or Guardian,

We would like to make you aware of the choices and resources available to you based on the progress of your child's school under the guidelines of No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

What are the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)?

The PSSA is an annual exam given to Pennsylvania students at various grade levels to measure their academic progress. The state uses the PSSA to determine whether East Stroudsburg Area School District and each of our schools are making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). AYP is determined by how successful districts and schools are in meeting state goals for attendance, graduation rates, test participation and academic progress.

To make AYP, a school must meet the state goals for the student body as a whole as well for each subgroup of students. A subgroup consists of 40 or more students in a school in the following categories: ethnicity, socio-economic status, Individual Education Plan (IEP) – Special Education, and English Language Learner (ELL) status. The number of subgroups that a school has determines the number of "targets" that it must meet to make AYP. **The District met AYP in 2011, making AYP for four (4) consecutive years.** Benchmarks increased dramatically this year from 56% to 67% in Math and from 63% to 72% in Reading.

We are proud to announce that Bushkill Elementary School met 25 out of 25 or 100% of AYP targets in 2011. Below are highlights of Reading and Mathematics achievements:

Reading

- In Grades 3-5, the percentage of students scoring at proficient or advanced increased from **52.5% in 2002 to 62.7% in 2009 to 68.3% in 2010 to 76.2% in 2011.** *The State Target was 72% and the District 2011 Proficiency in Grades 3-5 was 73%.*

Mathematics

- In Grades 3-5, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced increased from **28% in 2002 to 70.3% in 2009 to 78% in 2010 to 79.3% in 2011.** *The State Target was 67% and the District 2011 Proficiency in Grades 3-5 was 81.8%*

Although **Bushkill Elementary School made AYP in 2011**, based on the performance of the IEP Subgroup in Reading, Bushkill Elementary School was identified in 2010 as School Improvement II by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). As a result, Bushkill Elementary School must make AYP for two consecutive years before the school can exit School Improvement. Based on 2011 PSSA data, Bushkill's AYP status is currently **MAKING PROGRESS IN SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT II**. We are extremely proud of the improvements in the IEP Subgroup in Reading and Math as indicated below.

<u>Reading</u>	<u>2010 Proficient/Advanced</u>	<u>2011 Proficient/Advanced</u>	<u>State Target</u>	<u>District 2011</u>	<u>Increase</u>
IEP	17.7%	44.6%	72%	35.2%	26.9%

<u>Math</u>	<u>2010 Proficient/Advanced</u>	<u>2011 Proficient/Advanced</u>	<u>State Target</u>	<u>District 2011</u>	<u>Increase</u>
IEP	54.8%	67.9%	67%	57.1%	13.1%

Please review the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) attachment for an explanation of school improvement and more information on how the East Stroudsburg Area School District compares to other Pennsylvania schools.

Action Plan for Improving Student Achievement

As a result of an in-depth needs assessment, **Bushkill Elementary School** has identified the following areas as key strategies for instructional improvement:

- Continue to implement the revised grade-level schedules to accommodate common Math and Communication Arts blocks at each grade level as well as a 35-minute daily Intervention/Enrichment period. This will permit Bushkill Elementary School to utilize fully all resources across grade levels.
- Continue to use all school personnel during the Intervention/Enrichment period to provide additional targeted research-based interventions for specific student needs in Math and Reading. During this time, Bushkill Elementary School will also be providing additional enrichment for students.
- Continue to provide guided math and reading during portions of Math and Communication Arts. Groups will reflect specific student levels, needs, and continued review of concepts introduced.
- Monitor attendance closely to provide consistency of instruction.
- Continue to refine the Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtII) learning initiative
- Continue Supplemental Educational Services for qualifying students
- Continue the Positive School-wide Behavior Support Program
- Hold regularly-scheduled Student Intervention Response and Instructional Planning team meetings to identify specific student learning needs, plan appropriate targeted interventions using research-based programs and explicit, systematic and multi-sensory instruction; progress monitor regularly; and adjust instruction as needed
- Collaborate to ensure students with individualized educational plans have access to a rigorous, standards-based on-grade level general education core curriculum
- Continue to provide professional development for staff on effective, research-based practice, inclusionary practices, and data-driven instructional planning.

As outlined in our school improvement plan, the school district and the Pennsylvania Department of Education will be offering Bushkill Elementary School assistance to implement these strategies by providing professional development for staff, providing instructional coaches to support the classroom teachers and ensuring that instructional resources are readily accessible.

Explanation of School Choice Option

According to NCLB, **Bushkill Elementary School** must offer students the choice to transfer to another school in the district not in School Improvement. Please know that the staff at Bushkill Elementary School has a relationship with your child and wants to continue serving your child all the way through fifth grade. However, if you feel your child will be better served in another school in the district, you may request a transfer for your child to one of the following schools: *East Stroudsburg Elementary School, J. M. Hill Elementary School, Middle Smithfield Elementary School, Resica Elementary School and Smithfield Elementary School*. If you are the parent of an exceptional child or a child with limited English proficiency, please call Mrs. Irene Duggins at 570-424-8500 x1301 for the available public school choices that best meet the needs of your child. (Educational records are confidential and access is limited to school officials having a genuine need to know.) Please note; however, that if your child is enrolled in a district-run, self-contained, specialized program based on an IEP, we are not able to offer school choice to your child as there is only one program to meet these specific needs.

Please note that if you opted for school choice during the 2009-2010 and/or 2010-2011 school years, you may continue to exercise that option until Bushkill exits from School Improvement. You should have received a letter asking you to indicate if you want your child to return to Bushkill or remain in the school of your choice for the 2011-2012 school year. Transportation to one of these schools will be provided by the school district for as long as **Bushkill Elementary School** remains in Title I School Improvement. (Bushkill Elementary School must make AYP for two consecutive years to exit School Improvement.) If a requested transfer is approved, your child will be permitted to attend the choice school until he or she completes the 5th grade; however the district will not pay transportation costs once the school exits school improvement.

If you would like to request that your child be transferred to one of these other schools, please complete the “Request for School Transfer” form enclosed for each child and return the form to East Stroudsburg Area School District, Attention: Curriculum Office at 50 Vine Street, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301 by Friday, August 12, 2011. The district will respond to your request by August 19, 2011, with written notice regarding your child’s school assignment and transportation availability. You then will have an opportunity to communicate whether you accept the approved choice or want your child to remain at Bushkill Elementary School. If you do not complete this form and return it by the end of the day August 12, 2011, we shall assume that your child will remain at Bushkill Elementary School unless we hear from you otherwise.

How parents and Families Can Help Improve Student Achievement

Parent support is essential to the success of **Bushkill Elementary School**. Communicating with your child’s teachers, making sure your child attends school regularly, helping your child with homework, monitoring your child’s television time, volunteering in the classroom, and participating in school decision-making are important.

The district-wide parent involvement policy will be updated this fall. If you are interested in providing input for this policy, please call Mrs. Irene Duggins at 570-424-8500 x1301 or Mrs. Annelle Prefontaine at 570-424-8500 x1140. In addition, Bushkill Elementary School will have its annual meeting to revise our school parent involvement policy and parent compact and to review parent rights under Title I. Initial District and individual school meetings will be scheduled in early fall of 2011. Parents of eligible students will be notified of specific dates, times, and places for these meetings, as well as all other Title I Parent Meetings held throughout the 2011-2012 school year.

The many successes at Bushkill Elementary School cannot be measured in one test, and we appreciate your continued support. Although Bushkill is still considered as Making Progress in School Improvement II, we are extremely proud of the students’ progress, as evidenced by a **7.9% increase in overall achievement in Reading** and a **1.3% increase in overall achievement in Math this year**. Furthermore, the **IEP subgroup made a 26.9% increase in Reading** and a **13.1% increase in Math**. As a whole, Bushkill Elementary School students have made steady progress during the past eight years as evidenced by an increase of **27.3% improvement in Reading and a 51.3% improvement in Math**. This has been possible with the diligent effort of staff and parents. Bushkill Elementary School encourages parents and community to partner with a dedicated staff to provide the necessary supports for our students to achieve success. We will continue to offer a Homework Club to provide after-school support for students. We also encourage parents to participate in Family Literacy Nights, Community Technology Night, and specialized parent workshops. Instructional resources are also available on our website at www.esasd.net, along with subscriptions to programs, such as, Kids College and Compass Learning. You received a flyer about Compass Learning in your child’s end-of-year report card. In addition, please encourage your child to participate in the summer reading initiative.

Although we are very proud of Bushkill’s progress, we must admit; however, that if **ALL** of our students are not doing well, we are not as good as we can be. That is our challenge, our goal and our commitment. Please continue to work with us to make sure that we achieve success for every student. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Mr. Richard Carty (richard-carty@esasd.net) at 570-588-4400 or Mrs. Irene Duggins (irene-duggins@esasd.net) or 570-424-8500. Ext. 1301 .

Sincerely,

Richard Carty
Principal

Irene Duggins
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

encs: Additional NCLB Information
Choice Selection Form