

# O'NEILL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Amy Shane, Superintendent

P.O. Box 230 – 410 E. Benton

O'Neill, NE 68763

Phone: (402) 336-3775 FAX: (402) 336-4890

Junior-Senior  
High School  
402-336-1544  
402-336-2812

Elementary  
School  
402-336-1400

High School  
Guidance  
Counselor  
402-336-2667

Activities  
Director  
Phone  
402-336-1415  
402-336-1105 fax

November 17, 2014

Dear Parents,

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) requires all states to create their own high academic standards for what a child should know and be able to do for all grades in reading/language arts and mathematics. Each school and district must improve each year until all students meet these standards. This yearly improvement in school performance is called Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

Our state department of education established a minimum percentage of students who must meet or exceed academic proficiency standards on required statewide tests. The elementary grades' goal for the 2013-14 school year was 100% for reading and 100% for math. The goal is that all students will meet or exceed these academic proficiency requirements by the 2013-2014 school year.

Information about how our school compared to schools in our District and other schools in the State is available on the State of the Schools Report on the Nebraska Department of Education website at <http://reportcard.education.ne.gov/>

NCLB also requires that our state department of education annually review the performance of each district that receives funds under Title I of the NCLB Act. If a school or district's academic performance in any group or sub-group is lower than the state's required level, the school or district will be identified as not making AYP. The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) website <http://www.education.ne.gov/> has student achievement data for reading and math. If any group or sub-group does not make AYP in the same subject for two consecutive years, they are designated as Needs Improvement.

During the 2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years, O'Neill Elementary School was identified as not making AYP in one or more subgroups in the area of:

- Reading

During the 2011-2012, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years, O'Neill Elementary School was identified as not making AYP in one or more subgroups in the area of:

- Math

O'Neill Elementary was classified as being in need of improvement.



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The 2014-2015 school year is the fourth year of the needs improvement cycle.

- Inform parents of what the school is doing to address the identified need - The school has implemented a scientifically-based reading curriculum and other interventions for students in need of additional strategies in order to master content. We also added additional staff development to teachers by adding an ERI reading coach, a full-time on staff reading coach, added 5 minutes to each school day, and a new elementary principal. He and the staff are mapping curriculum to ensure a strong link to the state standards. The staff is also being introduced to Marzano's Instructional strategies, which are research based to improve student performance. The school has also offered summer school to all students in grades K-6 and provides the Developing Eagles after-school and summer programs to their students.
- Submit a restructuring plan developed in cooperation with parents and staff, to the Nebraska Department of Education. Anyone interested in serving on the School Support Compact Team should contact Amy Shane at (402) 336-3775 by December 1, 2014.
- Reserve at least ten percent of their annual Title I allocation to provide professional development for teachers and administrators - The school continues to contract with ERI to provide professional development in the area of reading. It is sending four staff members and the principal to the Marzano Academy during the summer and fall of 2015.
- Inform parents of what they can do to become involved in their child's education - See ways to become involved listed below;
- Provide technical assistance to schools identified as Title I schools in School Improvement - Technical assistance is being provided by ERI and ESU #8 personnel; and
- Notify parents and patrons about a component called school choice - School choice refers to other public schools in the district. Parents/guardians would have the option of transferring their student to that other public school. Since there is no other public elementary school in O'Neill, this option is not available.
- This identification also requires O'Neill Elementary to provide Supplemental Educational Services (SES) to eligible students. Enclosed is a list of SES providers that have been approved by the State Department of Education that could provide tutoring services for your child. Parents who choose to have their children participate in SES are asked to contact O'Neill Public Schools at (402) 336-3775 by December 1<sup>st</sup> to enroll. A second enrollment window will be offered later in the school year. Once notice has been received, we will make enrollment arrangements as quickly as possible and will notify parents upon approval.



Here are some suggestions to help you work with your school and district to support improvements:

1. Learn more about the new NCLB requirements. Become aware of strategies to improve student academic achievement. Additional information and resources are available from the Nebraska State Department of Education (<http://www.education.ne.gov/>) and the US Department of Education (<http://www.ed.gov/>) websites.
2. Talk with school staff about our school's plan to help students meet state standards in reading and mathematics.
3. Support and reinforce your child's good study habits and review their homework and test results.
4. Visit your child's school and volunteer.

Our entire staff is working diligently to ensure that every child meets high academic standards in a safe and caring learning environment. We encourage you to contact our school or district office for further information on any of these requirements and to find out how you can become involved in the district's improvement efforts.

Sincerely,

Daniel Woodle  
Elementary Principal

Amy Shane  
Superintendent



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