

Notice to Parents Regarding “School Improvement”

August 2018

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Annually, we are required to publish our standing with regard to Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), which is the measure by which schools are held accountable for student performance under the Every Student Succeeds Act.

The Agency of Education submitted the [Vermont State Plan](#) for federal review on April 3, 2017. The plan describes a revised accountability system for the state. As a result of the transition from Vermont’s old accountability system to the proposed new accountability system, Vermont will not have new accountability determinations for 2017-2018.

Implementation of a new accountability system would begin from the time of the plan’s approval. 2017-18 was a transition year, where performance measure data would be reported to schools without being used as a part of an accountability determination. 2018-2019 assessment data will be used to make accountability determinations in late 2019. As we transition into a new accountability system, schools are to continue implementing their current improvement plans, while anticipating that these plans will likely evolve in response to determinations and the continuous improvement framework within the new system.

These determinations include only the prior year’s status and any changes to that status were made solely based on the results of student scores on the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Program (SBAC). The NECAP is a standardized assessment given to all Vermont elementary school students in grade 4 to measure Science proficiency. The SBAC is administered to all Vermont students in grades three through eight and once in high school to measure student proficiency in the areas of Reading, Writing, Science and Mathematics.

NCLB required an overly simplistic assessment of school quality. It has also failed to provide school systems with the means to improve student performance. In Vermont, we know there is nothing more important than fostering our children’s excitement about learning and continuously improving teaching, so that every child benefits from rich and equitable opportunities to learn. While we find flaws with the policy, we support the intent behind NCLB for greater equity, and specifically, to ensure that every child in every classroom is receiving the specialized instruction and support she or he needs to learn and thrive. We also know we can do better. With our small classes and schools, our dedicated educators and our comparatively well-resourced schools, we are well positioned to close the gap in opportunities that lies under our observed achievement gaps.

We are committed to continuous school improvement, and to supporting all of our students in their effort to succeed. Every day, we strive to create better learning opportunities for our students. This year, we will continue to collaborate with the Lamoille North Supervisory Union and the Agency of Education to implement a continuous improvement plan for our JES.

We will be reviewing all of our programs as a part of a more comprehensive review of our school's academic experiences and student supports. As we identify opportunities for parent and family participation in the development and implementation of our improvement plans, we will invite you to join us in the work as appropriate. We hope that you will continue to support our school in these efforts, and we value your involvement.

We will also continue the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) work where our teachers meet regularly to review student performance data and plan their curriculum accordingly. At these meetings, teachers regularly adapt their instruction and interventions based on current student data. The PLC approach has led to direct improvements in student learning as measured by our local assessments.

There is an abundance of information available to any parent or community member who is interested in knowing more about the accountability system in general and the performance of Johnson Elementary School students in particular. If you would like to know more about this topic or become involved in ongoing school planning efforts related to improving student achievement, please contact me at 888-6728 or dmanning@jesvt.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David K Manning".

David Manning
Principal