

Independent School District #2903 – Ortonville

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Parent Notification Letter for Ortonville School District

October 4, 2011

Dear Parents or Guardian of student(s) attending Ortonville School:

The Federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act requires that all schools in the nation make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) toward achieving the goal of all students being proficient in reading and math. Ortonville School has been designated as a district in need of improvement due to not making AYP for two years.

Did our students meet the proficiency targets set by the state in reading and math?

The following table provides the proficiency, attendance and graduation results for all groups of students. The Ortonville School District did not make AYP in the areas identified with a **NO**:

Student Group	Math	Reading	Attendance	Graduation Rate
	Yes or No	Yes or No	Yes or No	Yes or No
All Students	YES	NO	Yes	Yes
American Indian	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Asian	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Black	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
ELL	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Free/Reduced Lunch	Yes	NO	Yes	Yes
Hispanic	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Special Education	NO	NO	Yes	Yes
White	Yes	NO	Yes	Yes

To review how our neighboring districts and other schools around the state are performing please refer to the Minnesota Department of Education's Website, School Report Cards.

<http://education.state.mn.us/ReportCard2005index.do>. If you have questions please contact (Jeff Taylor, Superintendent)

A district improvement team will be analyzing all available assessment information to pinpoint strengths and challenges that will be addressed through professional development and a review of the curriculum.

What does this mean for your child?

NCLB requires that districts provide school choice within the district. There is no school choice in our district as we only have the one school available.

Parental support is essential to the success of the Ortonville School. The school parent involvement plan will be updated. If you are interested in providing input on this plan or the school improvement plans, please call Jeff Taylor (320-839-6181).

Enclosed you will find a letter from, Brenda Cassellius, Commissioner of Education for the State of Minnesota. This letter may help you understand some of the issues pertaining to the federal No Child Left Behind Law (NCLB).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeff Taylor". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the word "Sincerely,".

Jeff Taylor, Superintendent
Ortonville School District #2903

Minnesota
Department
of **Education**

September 27, 2011

Dear Parent or Guardian,

I am writing today to share information regarding the federal No Child Left Behind Law (NCLB) and the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) designation your school has received as part of this law.

Parents and teachers have long expressed concern that NCLB unfairly labels schools based on a single test given once per year, and the percentage of students in the school who pass the test. We all know it takes far more than a single test to evaluate how well our students and schools are doing. What matters more is how students are growing and learning, not just over the course of the school year, but over the course of their academic career. All children should do better and better as time goes on – that's what makes a good school and a good education.

Unfortunately, NCLB does not measure schools this way. In addition to using one test score as the primary determination of a school's success or failure, it also compares the performance of one group of students to the performance of a totally different group of students the following year. This is not a fair, valid or accurate way of measuring how schools are really doing.

In the coming months, the Minnesota Department of Education will work with the U.S. Department of Education to provide relief from this law that will allow us to develop better accountability measures for Minnesota's schools. Relief from the most troublesome provisions of NCLB would be of tremendous benefit to our state. It would maintain a level of accountability to ensure all students are learning to a high standard and at a rate that prepares them for success in college or the workplace – and it would allow us to apply a more appropriate and realistic measure of gauging school effectiveness.

An AYP determination should not be seen as a red flag, but rather as an invitation to learn more about your child's school. The best way to measure your child's and your school's progress is to look not only at your child's test scores and other class work, but also by visiting with your teachers and principal, and by visiting and volunteering at your school. We also invite you to visit the Minnesota Department of Education website at <http://education.state.mn.us/mde/index.html> where you will find a great deal of information about all of Minnesota's schools.

We are hopeful Minnesota will soon be granted the regulatory flexibility to provide our state's children, parents and stakeholders with a school accountability system they deserve. In the meantime, please feel free to contact the Minnesota Department of Education if you have questions about AYP or NCLB. We will continue working with parents, teachers, administrators and the public to make sure our state and federal education policies work as well as possible for all of Minnesota's children.

Sincerely,

Brenda Cassellius
Brenda Cassellius, Ed. D.
Commissioner

education.state.mn.us

Ortonville School Telephone Broadcast Service

Dear Parent,

The Ortonville School has implemented The School Reach telephone broadcast system. This system allows school personnel to notify all households and parents by phone within minutes of an emergency or unplanned event that causes early dismissal, school cancellation or late start. The service may also be used from time to time to communicate general announcements or reminders.

When used, the service will simultaneously call all listed phone numbers in our parent contact list and will deliver a recorded message from school administration or personnel. The service will deliver the message to both live answer and answering machines. No answers and busies will be automatically retried twice in 15 minute intervals after the initial call.

Here is some specific information you should know.

- * Caller ID: The Call ID will display 320-839-6181, which is the main number for Ortonville School.
- * Live Answers: There is a short pause at the beginning of the message usually just a few seconds. Answer your phone as you normally would "Hello" and hold for the message. Inform all family members who may answer the phone of this process.
- * Answering Machines: The system will detect that your machine has answered and will play the recording to your machine. The maximum number of rings before hang up is 5. Make sure your machine answers after 4 rings or you may miss the message.
- * Morning & Day Calls: In the event a cancellation decision is made the night before, or in early morning hours, the broadcast message will be sent only to home phone numbers. In the event a cancellation decision is made mid-day, the broadcast message will be sent to home and cellular numbers. General announcements would be sent only to home numbers.
- * Message Repeat: At the end of the message you will be prompted to "press 1" to hear the message again. This is very effective when a child answers the phone and hands it to a parent, who can then "repeat" the message in its entirety.

How detection works:

1. The system detects and measures the voice energy when the phone is answered.
2. The system measures this energy in combination with the background noise and line impairments.
3. If the system determines that it is a "live" answer it will immediately start playing the message.
4. If the system determines that it is a machine, it will wait for 3 full seconds of silence before playing the message, with a maximum wait time of 20 seconds.
5. If the system cannot make a determination, it will default to answering machine, thus requiring three seconds of silence for the message to play. In this case, you may hear a prompt to "Press any key to hear the message immediately."

Some reasons for false detection:

1. Loud background noise, television, radio, general noisy environment.
2. Cordless phone that has static or other foreign noise.
3. Not saying hello or delaying saying hello.

What can be done to remedy this:

1. Do not say hello more than once. Saying hello more than once or loud background noise will reset the three-second counter.
2. If, after you answer, the message does not immediately play you can cover the mouthpiece of the phone to cut out all background noise. The message should then play after three seconds.

It is very important that you keep your contact information current and up to date with the school. We are planning on running a test of the system the evening of **Wednesday, October 12th**. If you have any questions or did not receive the call, contact the K-12 Office at 829-6181 Ext. 400.

Sincerely,

Jeff Taylor, Superintendent