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January 15, 2010

Dear Keene School District Parent:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that Keene School District has been identified as a district in need of improvement (DINI) in the following area: *Math Economically Disadvantaged*. State and federal school and district accountability laws require the New Hampshire Department of Education to identify for improvement districts not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two consecutive years in the same content area in each level existing within the district (elementary/middle and /or high school). The economically disadvantaged subgroup did not make adequate yearly progress for two consecutive years in the area of math.

AYP is a measure that all states use to determine if schools and districts are meeting the high expectations for student performance set forth in state and federal accountability law. Areas in which AYP is calculated include the rate of student participation in the annual state assessment, the extent to which students in general and students in specific group are meeting the state performance targets for reading and mathematics, and the district's attendance and graduation rates.

Based on a review of the district's performance data in these areas for the 2007-2009, our district was identified for improvement. The district's current AYP status is "meets AYP requirements" for the whole district. The district's AYP reports are available on the New Hampshire Department of Education website at [www.ed.state.nh.us](http://www.ed.state.nh.us)

District AYP Determination		Elem./ Middle	High School
	Met Participation Goal	Yes	Yes
	Met Mathematics Goal	Yes	Yes
	Met Reading Goal	Yes	Yes
	Met Attendance Rate	Yes	Yes
	Met Graduation Rate		Yes
	<b>Made AYP</b>	No	No

The district's AYP report measures student performance for all students in the grades tested as a group, as well as subgroups of students (i.e. racial and ethnic groups, English language learners, students with educational disabilities, and economically disadvantaged students). If even one of these groups does not meet its goal, or performance target, then the district will not have made AYP. (NOTE: Only groups equal to or larger than 11 are counted.) *(continued on back)*

As a district identified for improvement, our district must develop an improvement plan in consultation with school staff and parents. As a parent, you are a critical partner in school and district improvement. Please keep informed about all school and district improvement initiatives. Earlier this school year, the District In Need of Improvement (DINI) team analyzed data about trends in past performance, and reviewed testing configurations and environments prior to last October's testing. Changes were suggested to optimize assessment environments and encourage all students to take these assessments seriously. The results of those NECAP tests will be released later this month.

Additionally, the district coordinated with the three Keene schools identified as schools in need of improvement (Keene High, Keene Middle, and Symonds Elementary), and has published updates on the district website, available at [http://www.sau29.org/documents/KSD\\_Improvement\\_Plans.pdf](http://www.sau29.org/documents/KSD_Improvement_Plans.pdf). To offer your support and to get involved please speak to your building principal to find out what opportunities are available.

The District In Need of Improvement Plan has three main goals:

- Goal 1: Ensure implementation of curriculum through best instructional practices, curriculum planning, and prioritization of essential standards (core knowledge).
- Goal 2: Adopt Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and school-level data teams.
- Goal 3: Adopt an intervention model that is responsive to the unique culture of each grade span (elementary, middle, and high school).

The DINI plan details some action items that will occur over the next two years to address these goals and will provide progress reports and updates on the Keene School District website, through Keene School Board meetings, and through timely correspondence home to parents.

Specific action items to be implemented to meet these three goals include:

- Three committees are being formed to develop action plans with timelines, deliverables, and other details to ensure successful implementation of the three goals above.
- The planning of a Curriculum Summit during the summer of 2010 to link NHDOE frameworks with math curricula currently in use. This will allow a prioritization of standards and time for teachers to work in grade-level cohorts to prioritize concepts in: numbers and operations, geometry and measurement, data, probability and statistics, and functions and algebra.
- Coordinate Title I American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds with our District in Need of Improvement (DINI) plan to ensure that professional development, books, software, and materials purchased meet the three goals listed above.
- Support the Keene School District representatives that participate in the SAU 29 Professional Development Committee with their goal of bringing Professional Learning Communities into practice.
- Continue to train teachers and administrators how to gather and respond to student and building-level assessment data.
- Research and decide upon grade-span appropriate intervention strategies to provide students who experience difficulty with new material additional support.

As we coordinate and implement our improvement strategies, we will collaborate with the New Hampshire Department of Education. We are proud of our ongoing partnerships within our community to improve student achievement. Together, we will work to provide opportunities for success for each student in our district.