



Contra Costa County Office of Education

77 Santa Barbara Road, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523 • (925) 942-3388
Karen Sakata, Superintendent of Schools

February 2016

Dear Parents/Guardians of Students in Golden Gate Community School.

This is to inform you that Golden Gate Community School advanced to Year 5 Program Improvement (PI) under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, as amended. The ESEA requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to annually review the student academic progress of federally funded Title I schools and to identify schools in need of improvement. These schools were identified as PI schools after two reporting cycles of not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

Why is our school remaining in PI?

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) invited states to apply for a one-year waiver that would allow PI determinations to be made using **only** the participation rate, attendance rate, and graduation rate for the 2014–15 school year. California applied for the waiver and the ED has approved this waiver request.

As a result, Title I funded schools and local educational agencies (LEAs) will:

- Be identified for PI if they miss AYP in the same content area for two AYP reporting cycles, or miss the same additional indicator for two AYP reporting cycles.
- Advance in PI if they miss the participation rate or the additional indicator (attendance rate for transitional kindergarten through grade eight schools and graduation rate for high schools).

Our school advanced in PI because it:

Did not meet the testing participation rate in the 2014-15 school year.

To learn how **Golden Gate Community** compares academically to other schools in the district and State, visit the California Department of Education website: www.cde.gov/reports.asp or refer to the School Accountability Report Card (SARC) available in your school office or at <http://www.cccoe.k12.ca.us/stsvcs/sarcs.html>

Public school choice: What right does a parent/guardian have to request a transfer to a school that is not in PI?

- Although you have the right to request a transfer of your child to a non-PI school in the county, a non-PI school is currently not available at your child's grade level within the county, and unfortunately, neighboring districts are not accepting students for transfer from our district. Therefore, we are offering **free after-school tutoring** services for those students who need additional help at your child's school. Please contact Sheila Shaw if you are interested in tutoring services for your child.

What are the county and school doing to improve student achievement?

The Contra Costa County Office of Education is working closely with Golden Gate Community School to improve curriculum, instruction, and student performance at the school. Listed below are some of the steps that have been taken or that will be taken to assist the school.

- Strategies, policies, and practices that utilize scientifically-based research and have the greatest likelihood of ensuring that all groups of students will meet the state's achievement standards
- High quality professional development for school staff that will lead to removing the school from PI status
- Strategies to promote effective parental involvement in the school

What is the state doing to help our school improve student achievement?

The CDE provides information, special help, and access to resources for PI schools. PI schools will receive technical assistance in:

- Analyzing various data reports for revising the school plan
- Strengthening core academic instruction
- Collaborating with parents/guardians to increase student academic achievement

Contra Costa County Office of Education is working with the state and others to help Golden Gate Community School improve student performance. Listed here are some of the restructuring interventions that already are under way or that will be in place by the beginning of the second semester of this school year.

- Teachers will attend workshops to help them make better use of the instructional materials for all core subjects.
- The school will implement a new curriculum that is aligned to state standards in ELA and mathematics.
- The school hired a new principal.
- Extended the school day.

How can parent/guardians help their school and LEA improve?

Research shows that strong parental involvement leads to student success at school. Here are some suggestions to help you work with your school and county to support improvements:

- Learn more about the ESEA requirements and become aware of strategies to improve student academic achievement. Additional information and resources are available at the following Web sites:



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- The CDE Title I, Part A Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/sw/t1/titleparta.asp>
 - The CDE Program Improvement Status Determinations Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ay/tidetermine.asp>
 - The ED Web site at <http://www.ed.gov> and <http://www2.ed.gov/parents/landing.jhtml>
- Request and receive information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's teacher(s).
 - Attend the School Site Council meetings to revise the school plan. The school plan should address the issues that caused the school to be identified for PI.
 - Visit your child's school. You may also participate in voluntary activities to assist your school.

We will keep you updated and informed about opportunities to discuss plans for our school. If you have questions, need additional information on how you can get involved in our school improvement efforts, or would like to discuss the school's instructional program and PI status, please feel free to call me and/or visit the school.

If you have any additional questions on any of the information contained within this letter, please contact me at 925-942-5306

Sincerely,

Lynn Mackey

Senior Director, Educational Services
Contra Costa County Office of Education