

August 11, 2009

Dear Parent/Guardian:

In January 2002, the U.S. Congress passed a federal education law called No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The federal law requires states to set specific student achievement goals that all schools must meet each year. Achievement goals for Connecticut students are based on the Grade 3-8 Connecticut Mastery Test. For an elementary or middle school to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) for the 2008-09 school year the law requires:

- 95 percent of students who attend the school in Grades 3-8 take the test;
- 79 percent score proficient or above in reading;
- 82 percent score proficient or above in math; and
- 70 percent score basic or above in writing or the percentage at or above basic improves from previous year.

If an elementary or middle school has not made AYP for two or more consecutive years, it is identified as “in need of improvement.”

Our school has been identified as “in need of improvement” Year 2 because:

- fewer than 79 percent of our **special education** students scored proficient or above in reading; and fewer than 82 percent of our **special education** students scored proficient or above in math.

For the 2009 CMT, identified special education students in Connecticut participated in the Modified Assessment System (MAS) pilot testing in mathematics and reading. Unfortunately, a decision by the Federal Government was made after the testing was completed to consider these scores invalid in Connecticut for each subgroup’s AYP calculation. Clearly, this impacted our results and would lead me to believe that because these scores were not included, we were identified in the subgroup “special education”.

That aside, I feel that it is extremely important to point out that our CMT results in the subgroup “Whole School” which includes **all** the students at G. H. Robertson Intermediate School were very impressive and exceeded the State results in all areas by a considerable margin. I’m thrilled that we had scores in mathematics, writing and science in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile as well as reading scores in the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile. Our NCLB School

Report, which you will receive at a later date, will show how GHR compares to other schools in our state.

Normally, as a result of this identification, parents/guardians would be able to apply to have their children transferred to another school in the district that serves children in Grades 3-5 and is not identified as “in need of improvement.” Because no other school in our district has the same grade levels, we are directed to consult with surrounding towns. However, currently there are not any surrounding districts that have made their schools available to us. We are now required to develop a waiting list of parents who wish to request a transfer, should this option become available. Please contact me directly if you want to have your child placed on the waiting list.

If you do not transfer your child to another school, your child may be eligible to receive supplemental educational services (SES). SES is free tutoring that is available to **low income** students from schools that are identified as “in need of improvement” under NCLB. These services are offered by state approved providers and occur outside of the regular school day. If you would like your child to be considered for free tutoring during the 2009-10 school year, please contact me as soon as possible. If you have questions about Public School Choice or SES, please contact me at 742-7341 or [dpetrone@coventryct.org](mailto:dpetrone@coventryct.org).

Please know that we are working extremely hard to ensure that all students meet the NCLB academic goals in the future. We have developed a rigorous school improvement plan, and we are being provided high quality training. The Connecticut State Department of Education will support our district’s improvement process through a comprehensive professional development program that will involve and engage all faculty and staff at the G. H. Robertson Intermediate School.

We encourage you to provide input as we strive to help all of our students succeed now and in the future. To find out about ways you can get involved with our school, or if you have any questions, please contact me at 860-742-7341.

Thank you for all that you do to support your child’s education. It continues to be our privilege working with you and your children.

Sincerely,

David Petrone  
Principal