



Pushing “Big Rocks” to Ensure Student Success

August 27, 2009

Dear Parents & Friends of North Kansas City Schools,

North Kansas City Schools, like all public school districts, is accountable for the achievement of our students, and we embrace that responsibility. The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* created a “stair step” scale for student achievement expectations. Each year the percentage goals for “proficient” grow proportionally greater. For the most part, we are meeting those expectations. However, I want you to know that we are not satisfied with our results.

As you review the 2009 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) results for student performance in communication arts and mathematics, know that we have a plan to accelerate achievement for all learners. The knowledge and skills to accomplish what needs to be done already exist in every school across the District. The key to improvement is in each building’s school improvement plan. We are not seeking to rationalize our current student data, but rather to provide solutions for student success.

The solutions will come from three, “big rock” initiatives in place in our schools:

- 1) Mastery Learning in every classroom to ensure that ALL students “master” the grade and course level expectations
- 2) Professional Learning Communities to collectively and collaboratively create, monitor and ensure achievement
- 3) Serving ALL our children and purposefully constructing student learning experiences that reflect an understanding of our students and their cultures

The first step in this improvement process is to know the data and own the problem. At the beginning of the year, I asked every employee to join me in accepting responsibility for our students’ successes and our students’ failures. I ask you to join me, as well. Together, we will push these “rocks” to ensure our students achieve their potential.

Educationally yours,

Todd E. White, Ed.D.
Superintendent

P.S. For *No Child Left Behind* information, please go to: <http://www.nkcsd.k12.mo.us/nclb.shtml>