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August 19, 2011

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Under the federal *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)* of 2001, each state is required to assess all school districts/local education agencies (LEA's) to determine if each district/LEA has made adequate yearly progress (AYP) toward meeting the academic testing standards and additional measures set by the state. AYP decisions are based on the results of state testing in communication arts and math and the district's/LEAs attendance rate and graduation rate. If the district/LEA has not made AYP for two consecutive years in any one of the four areas, it is considered "in need of improvement."

Based on the results of the 2010 – 2011 academic testing in communication arts and math and the district's LEA's attendance rate and graduation rate, Gordon Parks School District did not make adequate yearly progress for the following reasons:

1. Gordon Parks School District did not achieve adequate yearly progress in Communication Arts or Mathematics. Although the scores almost doubled, there was not enough growth to qualify under the state's growth model.

2. Gordon Parks Elementary School met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for the overall school population under the Safe Harbor provision by reducing the percent of students who are not proficient in Communication Arts from 85.7% to 78.8% and by reducing the percent of students who are not proficient in Math from 89.5% to 79.8%. In order to make AYP, the school must also meet requirements for the subgroup of black students and the subgroup of students who qualify for free and reduced lunch. The school met AYP requirements for the latter subgroup of students under the Safe Harbor provision. Although the school reduced the percentage of black students who were not proficient by 3.6% in Communication Arts and by 4.6% in Math, these reductions were not enough to meet the AYP Safe Harbor provisions.

Because this is the third year of this designation, the district/LEA is considered to be in Level 3 of District/LEA Improvement, Corrective Action. We will evaluate and update the plan for the improvement that has been developed. One important component of this plan is parent involvement in the implementation of the plan. The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will review the districts/LEA's progress toward meeting the goals and objectives of the plan and may impose additional sanctions.

You can also help by increasing your understanding of the assessment, understanding the importance of good attendance and graduating from school, visiting schools and becoming a volunteer, and engaging in reading and math strategies at home.

Information about *No Child Left Behind* and what parents can do to improve student achievement can be found at: <http://www.ed.gov/parents/landing.jhtml>.

Sincerely,

Lynne Beachner, Ph.D.