

St. Stephens Elementary School

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August 3, 2009

Dear St Stephens Elementary School Parent or Guardian:

As a parent at St Stephens Elementary School, you have options for your child in the 2009-10 school year that require careful consideration. Please read this notice, taking special note of deadline dates and contact names and phone numbers you can access for additional information.

According to 2008-09 student test results, St Stephens Elementary School did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law for three years in math. St Stephens Elementary School must offer public school choice to all parents of students enrolled at the school. Also, the school system must offer free tutoring services to students receiving free or reduced-price lunch. (Eligible families may transfer to another school or receive free tutoring services, but not both.)

St Stephens Elementary School receives federal Title I funds designed to help students who are not achieving at grade level in high-poverty schools. As a Title I school, St Stephens Elementary School must make AYP or face consequences. 82% of schools in our district made AYP for 2008-09.

Your child's options for the 2009-10 school year are to:

- 1. Remain at St Stephens Elementary School; or**
- 2. Enroll in another school, designated by the district, with transportation provided; or**
- 3. Remain at St Stephens Elementary School and, if eligible, receive free tutoring services.**

More information on each of these options is below.

1. Remain at St Stephens Elementary School

Staff members at St Stephens Elementary School have a relationship with your child and want to continue serving your child through [grade]. If you want your child to remain at St Stephens Elementary School, you do not need to take additional action.

The many successes at St Stephens Elementary School cannot be measured in one test and we appreciate your past and continued support. Although we did not meet all of our target goals we were able to meet 26 of 27. I am also pleased that our students showed growth in reading and math in most grade levels.

However, we are concerned about the academic progress of all of our students. We have identified the following instructional strategies in which to focus, with district and state assistance: Our staff will spend much time over the next year reviewing research-based instructional strategies, training on proven teaching practices, monitoring individual student success, and ensuring that our efforts are directly aligned with the state and federal expectations

of your child. We will accomplish this through the implementation of Responsiveness to Instruction, additional support for our ELL students through bi-lingual software, the addition of an instructional coach to our staff, parent meetings and workshops, as well as celebrations of the cultural diversity of our student population

We welcome your involvement at St Stephens Elementary School. There are many ways to participate including becoming a member of the Teacher Parent Association , offering your input to the School Improvement Team, volunteering, attending parent conferences with your child's teacher(s), making sure that your child is prepared and attends school each day, and monitoring your child's homework and class grades.

St Stephens Elementary School will have its annual meeting to develop our Title I parent involvement policy and to review other information on September 24, 2009 at 6:30 in the cafeteria. The Title I district-wide parent involvement policy will be reviewed this fall and all parents are invited to be a part of that review process.

2. Enroll in another designated school

You may request a transfer for your child to attend one of the following designated schools:

(1) Startown Elementary School or (2) Maiden Elementary School. More information on these schools is enclosed and is on the Web at www.ncreportcards.org/src/. The district selected your transfer options and based that decision on both schools made AYP will all students.

Please complete and return a "Request for a School Transfer" form (enclosed) for each child requesting a transfer by August 12 and return-

- By mail Catawba County Schools; PO Box 1010; Newton, NC 28658
- Or bring by Catawba County Schools; 10 East 25th Street; Newton, NC 28658
- Or email to bpiekarski@catawbасchools.net

The district will respond to your request by August 19 with written notice regarding your child's school assignment and transportation availability. You then will have an opportunity to communicate whether you accept the approved choice or want your child to remain at St Stephens Elementary School. If a requested transfer is approved, your child will be allowed to attend the choice school through the sixth grade.

If you are the parent of an exceptional child, please call Juli White at 828-464-8333 ext. 242 for the available public school choices that best meet the needs of your child. (Educational records are confidential and access is limited to school officials having a genuine need to know.)

3. Remain at St Stephens Elementary School and receive free tutoring services

The free tutoring program for students who receive free or reduced-price lunch and choose not to transfer from St Stephens Elementary School will be offered afterschool tutoring programs by several providers.

After the list of approved tutoring programs are available, a brief description of tutoring providers and their services will be sent to all parents and posted on the school and system website. St Stephens Elementary School will host a parent meeting in September to provide information and answer questions that you may have about the free tutoring services.

If you have questions about any of these options, please call Barbara Piekarski 828-464-8333 ext. 245 or Leslie Barnette 828-464-8333 ext. 278. In addition, more information about public school choice and free tutoring services, also known as supplemental educational services, can be found on the Web at www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb.

We are looking forward to a year of educational success and continuous improvement for all of our students. Thank you for continuing to work with us to make sure our schools are places where every student can achieve success.

Sincerely,

Donna W. Sigmon
Principal