

Parental Notification Letter about Choice and Supplemental Educational Services in Year 5+ of Program Improvement

July 28, 2015

To the Parents/Guardians of Students at Mills Middle School:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that our school will continue to be identified as a Program Improvement ("PI") school under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. It will remain a PI Year 5+ school.

What is PI?

NCLB requires the state and district to review annually the academic progress of federally funded Title I schools and to identify schools in need of improvement. These schools are identified as PI schools after two consecutive years of not making adequate yearly progress (AYP). California determines AYP by considering the following measures:

- The percentage of students scoring at the "proficient" or "advanced" level on the California Standards Test (STAR tests) for English-language arts and mathematics, which were replaced this year with the Smarter Balanced Field Testing.
- The percentage of students participating in those tests;
- California's own accountability measurement of progress, the Academic Performance Index (API).

Why is our school identified as PI?

The reason our school continues in PI is because it must make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two consecutive years in order to exit PI. This has not happened yet and Mills will not meet the two year requirement this year.

The school's Accountability Progress Reports may be obtained from the school or on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ay>.

Public school choice: What right does a parent have to request a transfer to a school that is not in Program Improvement?

All parents/guardians of students attending a PI school have the right to request a transfer of their child(ren) to a non-PI district school with district-paid transportation.

For parents who select this option, the district will provide transportation to the non-PI school for as long as the home school continues to be identified as a PI school. If the home school exits PI by making AYP for two consecutive years, the student can remain at the school; however, transportation will no longer be district-paid. If the demand for choice exceeds funds available, priority will be given to lowest achieving, low-income students.

Name of School	Growth API Scores * 2013	English-language arts Percent Proficient or above** (Middle school target = 89%)	Mathematics Percent Proficient or above ** (Middle school target = 89.1%)
Mills Middle School	769	48.9%	44.1%
Mitchell Middle School	764	49%	41.4%

*800 on the API = Meeting the state proficiency target for schools on the Academic Performance Index

** Percentage targets vary by grade level span.

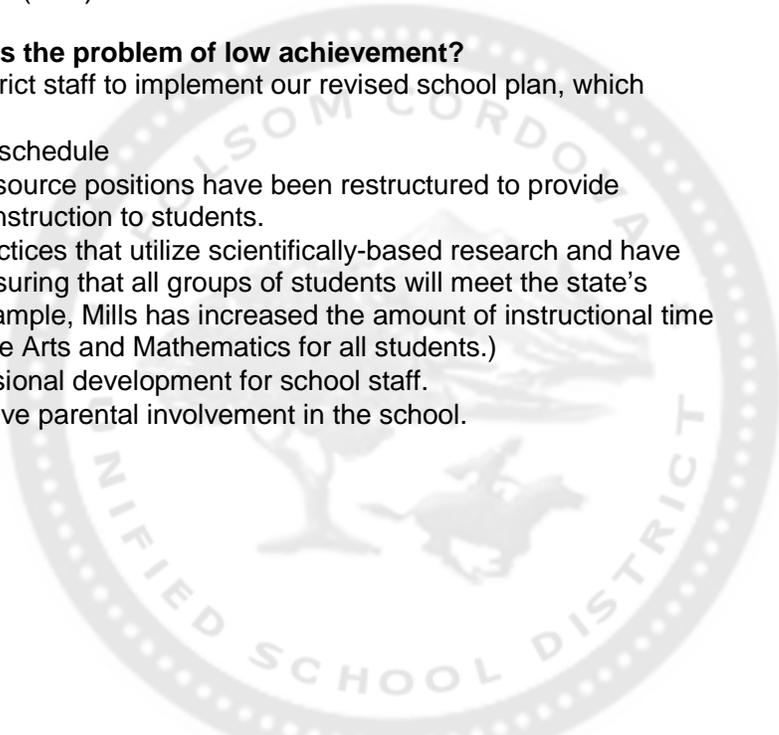
For more information please contact Elena Cabrera, Director of Categorical Programs and Grants at (916) 294-9000, extension 104630. You may also go to the District's Web site at www.fcusd.org.

To apply for a public school choice transfer from a PI school, please complete the attached application form and return it to the Mills school office **after July 28, 2015 and before August 14, 2015**. If you need assistance or have questions, please contact Elena Cabrera at (916) 294-9000 x 104630.

What will the school do to address the problem of low achievement?

We are working closely with the district staff to implement our revised school plan, which includes:

- Eight period day – continue schedule
- Title I teachers and other resource positions have been restructured to provide additional periods of direct instruction to students.
- 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 targets (for example, Mills has increased the amount of instructional time devoted to English Language Arts and Mathematics for all students.)
- Ongoing high quality professional development for school staff.
- Strategies to promote effective parental involvement in the school.



What are the district and state doing to support schools in Year 5+ Program Improvement?

Our district is working closely with the CDE to improve curriculum, instruction, and student performance. The CDE provides information, special help, and access to resources for PI schools. PI schools will receive district and/or state technical assistance in:

- A District/School Leadership Team has been formed to support Mills' improvement plan
- Two additional teaching positions have been provided to support the new eight period day schedule.
- Analyzing various data reports for revising the school plan
- Strengthening core academic instruction and increasing interventions
- Developing learning opportunities for those students whose performance was not proficient.
- Collaborating with parents to increase student academic achievement

How can parents become involved?

Research shows that strong parental involvement leads to student success at school. Parents interested in partnering with the school are encouraged to contact the school for additional information regarding:

- Parental involvement policies
- School-parent compact
- Ongoing parent/community meetings
- Advisory committee/school site council meetings
- Parent volunteer opportunities

The school will keep you updated and informed about opportunities to discuss plans for your 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 and/or visit the school.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elena Cabrera".

Elena Cabrera
Director of Categorical Programs & Grants

