



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Wednesday, August 11, 2010

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Despite AYP identification, majority of District 197 students rise to the challenge
District plans additional interventions and instructional strategies to ensure success for all

(Mendota Heights, Minn.) --- Despite ever increasing targets school districts must meet, District 197 continues to make improvements and meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) targets for the majority of student groups this year. According to data released today by the Minnesota Department of Education, District 197 was identified as a district not making overall AYP as part of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, but it did meet targets in 49 of 54 categories.

NCLB requires that schools and districts be graded in four areas each year – test proficiency, test participation, attendance and graduation rates – with the overarching goal of all students being 100 percent proficient in both reading and math by 2014. In order to achieve this goal, the target scores established by the Minnesota Department of Education increases every year.

District 197 AYP Results for 2010						
Student Group	Test Participation		Test Proficiency		Attendance	Graduation Rate
	Math	Reading	Math	Reading		
All Students	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES
American Indian	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Asian	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Black	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Hispanic	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
White	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
English Language Learners	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES
Special Education	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Free/Reduced-Price Lunch	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES

“While officially our district did not meet all AYP requirements, we continue to make great strides in improving achievement for all students,” said Superintendent Jay Haugen. Haugen explained that two years ago, the district was identified as not making AYP in eight categories, this year it was only five. “And we intend to continue working on instructional strategies to improve student achievement even more.”

Over the last year, the district implemented new district goals and measures to ensure each child has the opportunity to be successful, and staff also dug deeper into all available student data to pinpoint strengths and challenges to be addressed through professional development and a review of the curriculum.

“The district is in a good position to address the 2010 AYP identifications and make changes to how we teach each and every student,” Haugen said.

Building Level Results

Henry Sibley High School met AYP requirements this year and last, as well as four of the district's five elementary schools: Mendota, Somerset, Pilot Knob, and Garlough Environmental Magnet School. Moreland elementary faced challenges achieving AYP in reading and math proficiency for their Hispanic students as well as students in poverty. Under NCLB, the school will be offering free "supplemental educational services" (tutoring) for qualifying students this fall.

"While we did not make AYP this year, the majority of Moreland students continue to meet their academic growth targets and the school made some good improvements, especially in third grade reading, over last year's scores," said Moreland Principal Peter Otterson. "We plan to look at additional strategies we can employ that ensure that all Moreland students have the opportunity to succeed, and continue to offer a variety of after school programs to provide extra time and attention for students who need it."

At the middle-school level, moderate improvements were seen in various AYP identification areas. At Friendly Hills, special education students and students in poverty met proficiency requirements in reading this year, whereas both were below their targets in 2009. Heritage showed widespread improvements in test proficiency levels, particularly in math, with improvement in four areas over last year.

Haugen noted that while schools or a district may be identified as not meeting AYP in only one or two student groups, it is important that blame is not placed on students.

"All of our students have the ability and desire to be successful, and it is the job of all of us to help them," he said. "I encourage everyone to be involved in improving the quality of education in our schools. Together we can ensure each student has the opportunity to grow and achieve, and to realize their potential."

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