

TO: Parents/Guardians of Students in **Golden Door Charter School**

FROM: **Brian Stiles Chief Academic Officer**

SUBJECT: District In Need of Improvement (DINI) Status

DATE: September 27, 2011

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) requires all states to create their own high academic standards for what a child should know and be able to do in language arts literacy and mathematics. Each *school* must achieve the state's proficiency standards each year until **all** students meet these standards in 2014. The measure of the annual targets is called Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). If a school does not meet its AYP targets for two consecutive years in the same content area, it is designated as a "School In Need of Improvement."

In addition to measuring each school, NCLB also requires the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) to annually review the performance of each school *district*. For school year 2009-2010, the **Golden Door Charter School** was identified by the NJDOE as a "district in need of improvement." A district is identified for improvement if it meets this criterion:

- Does not make AYP in all grade spans within the district elementary (grades 3-5), middle school (grades 6-8), and high school (grade 11)—for two consecutive years in either content area.

As a Title I district in need of improvement, **Golden Door Charter School** must do the following:

- Consult with parents and school staff when developing (or revising) a District Improvement Plan. This plan explains how the district will use Title I and other funds to improve its schools in need of improvement;
- Reserve at least 10 percent of its annual Title I allocation to provide high-quality professional development for teachers and administrators to improve classroom teaching; and
- Continue to provide technical assistance to schools identified as Title I schools in need of improvement.

To be removed from district improvement status, the district must meet the grade span achievement standards, that is, make AYP in at least one grade span for two consecutive years in both content areas.

Parents are an integral part of ensuring the academic success of their children. Here are some suggestions to help you work with your school and the district to support improvements:

- Learn more about NCLB requirements and Title I by accessing the NJDOE Web site at www.nj.gov/education/title1.
- Become aware of strategies to improve student academic achievement. The United States Department of Education (USDE) Web site offers many helpful publications for parents at www.ed.gov/index.jhtml.
- Talk with district staff about the District Improvement Plan to help students meet the state standards in language arts literacy and mathematics.
- If you are income eligible and have a student who attends a Title I school in need of improvement, ask about the school choice option to transfer your child to a high-performing public school in the district. The USDE guidance on school choice is available at: www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/schoolchoiceguid.doc.
- If you are a parent of an eligible student who attends a Title I school in need of improvement, ask about supplemental educational services (SES) that may be available for your child. The SES offers extra academic services provided to eligible students outside of the regular school day. The USDE guidance on SES is available at: www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/suppsvcsguid.doc.
- Visit your child's school and volunteer.

You are encouraged to contact your school principal at **201-795-4400** for further information on any of these requirements and to find out how you can become involved in school improvement efforts.

Helping children become academically proficient is everyone's responsibility. The **Golden Door Charter School** will be developing and implementing its improvement plan to bring the district out of improvement status. We look forward to working with parents and the community to help increase the academic achievement of our students.