DATE: October 20, 2013

TO: Washington Intermediate School Parents

Subject: Notice of Adequate Yearly Progress and School Choice Options

Many of you are aware of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, which requires schools to assess students annually and to meet student achievement goals. If a school does not meet those assessment and achievement goals (termed “adequate yearly progress” or AYP) for two consecutive years, and if the school receives federal Title I funds, then it is placed on a federal “Schools in Need of Assistance (SINA)” list and subjected to federal sanctions. Schools or district are cited if they a) don’t meet 95% participation rate for assessments, b) don’t meet student achievement goals, or c) don’t meet attendance rate for elementary and middle schools or graduation rate for high school.

I am writing to inform you that Washington School has been designated as a “School in Need of Assistance,” or SINA, under these federal guidelines because a portion of our students did not reach proficiency goals on their reading and math tests for two or more consecutive years in 2011 and before. As a result, our district is required by law to offer your student the opportunity for school choice within the district. The Red Oak district does not have another school for you to choose.

Please know that the SINA designation refers to federal criteria. We remain a fully accredited school in complete compliance with State of Iowa regulations.

**Why Washington Intermediate Didn’t Make AYP in 2011 and before:**

Schools don’t make AYP when they don’t achieve one of the measures listed above: a) 95% participation rate for assessments, b) student achievement goals, or c) 95% attendance rate for elementary and middle schools or90% graduation rate for high school. Washington Intermediate School is listed because not enough students met their goals in the following areas:

* One or more subgroups did not meet their target in reading and/or math.
* For the 2012 school year, Washington did make AYP which has put us on a Delayed Status for reading

Under the NCLB Law, only schools receiving federal Title I funding must offer school choice options, if available.

**How Washington Intermediate School Will Improve:**

Although we have many indicators that show Washington Intermediate is offering a top-quality education, we know that continuous improvement is important to ensure all of our students are reaching their highest potential. Using data about the students and their achievement, our staff has begun to identify areas for improvement. For example:

* Using Making Meaning literacy program
* Using formative tests to monitor student progress
* Professional Learning Communities who continually share student data and provide interventions for students who do not understand
* Working with the Area Education Agency to learn best practice in teaching strategies

Some student groups may require additional instructional interventions pending a review of our current programs and services. In addition, the Iowa Department of Education and Red Oak Community School District already have begun providing technical assistance to Washington Intermediate School as required by the NCLB law.

**How Parents Can Help:**

Parent support is essential to help your student reach his or her highest academic success, but parents may need ideas about the best way to be involved. A few suggestions include:

* Communicate regularly with your child’s teachers about overall goals for the year and your child’s progress toward those goals.
* Make sure your child attends school regularly. Attendance is important at every grade level. When your child must be absent, please talk with the teacher to coordinate make-up work and assignments.
* Help your child with his or her homework. If you are unable to help, contact the school and visit with the teacher.
* Have your child read out loud to you and ask them questions about what they read.
* Volunteer at the school. Contact your child’s teacher or the office to volunteer.

**How to Request A School Choice:**

Unfortunately, our schools are not able to provide school choices because there are no schools available for student to attend. We do however provide small group tutoring on early out Wednesdays where students can get help. To request this option, please contact your child’s teacher or the main office so we know your student will be staying.

**HOW TO REQUEST SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES:**

We will offer supplemental education services, such as tutoring before or after school, for eligible students. Research from the federal government has shown that students who participated in supplemental educational services made significant gains in student achievement, and students who participated in multiple years did even better. A list of approved service providers is attached. If you have questions about whether your student is eligible, or about which service might best meet the needs of your child, contact Barbara Sims, Principal at 712-623-6630. The district is not required to provide transportation to off-site supplemental educational service locations. Transportation to these sites will be the responsibility of the parent.

**As parents, you can be assured your students continue to receive a high quality education at Washington Intermediate School.** The assessment results cited by NCLB are one useful measurement for us, but we also have many other indicators to demonstrate that our students’ achievement. Each class at Washington Intermediate School has a number of success stories. For example:

* Washington School had a 97% attendance rate in the 2012-2013 school year
* Both 4th and 5th grade students improved reading and math scores on Iowa Assessments to meet our AYP Goals and achieve a delayed status for SINA.
* 77% of the teachers at Washington Intermediate School have reading endorsements above and beyond an elementary teaching endorsement

We are proud of our students and of the education they receive from the staff at Washington Intermediate School. We also are committed to continuous improvement, and so will continue to seek new data and make any changes necessary to benefit student learning. We appreciate and depend on your ongoing support and assistance and welcome your suggestions.

Sincerely,

Barbara Sims, Principal Washington Intermediate School