

August 17, 2015

Dear Monte Cristo Families,

Thank you for your ongoing partnership in educating your children! As you may know, Monte Cristo has been working hard to meet the federally mandated improvement goals based upon the annual state tests. The purpose of this letter is to inform you that our school has been identified as a school in Step 4 of School Improvement under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001.

What is School Improvement?

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

- The percentage of students scoring at the “proficient” or “advanced” level on the Washington Standards Tests for English-language arts and mathematics.
- The percentage of students participating in those tests.
- The graduation rate for high schools/unexcused absence rate for elementary and middle schools.

Why is our school identified as a School in Improvement Step 4?

The reason our school is in improvement is because we did not achieve AYP in 2015. The AYP area(s) that caused the identification are

- Reading/English-language Arts
- Mathematics

However, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) was granted a waiver from the United States Department of Education that allows OSPI to keep a school in the step of improvement that the school was assigned in 2014–15, if student test scores are the only reason the school would have moved into Step 1 of improvement or moved up a step of improvement. Therefore Monte Cristo will remain in Step 4 because of this waiver.

The school’s 2014–2015 AYP report may be obtained from the school or on OSPI’s State Report Card webpage at <http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/summary.aspx>.

Public School Choice (PSC): What right does a parent have to request a transfer to a school that is not in a step of improvement?

All parents/guardians of students attending a school that has been identified in a step of improvement have the right to request a transfer for their child(ren) to another school within the district (referred to as a “choice school”) that has not been identified as a school in a step of improvement. There are not schools available as a “choice school” in the Granite Falls School

District or in the school districts surrounding Granite Falls and therefore this option is not available for Monte Cristo.

Supplemental Educational Services: How does a parent obtain a provider for their child(ren)?

Students from low-income families who attend a Title I, Part A school identified in Step 2, 3, 4, or 5 whose parents did not select a PSC option, are eligible for free Supplemental Educational Services (SES). These services are classes or tutoring which occur outside the regular school day with educational providers approved by OSPI.

There are many benefits to your child(ren) receiving free tutoring.

- He/she receives specific help in reading/English-language arts, mathematics, and/or science.
- The tutoring is provided beyond the regular school day.
- The tutoring is delivered in a one-to-one setting or in small groups.
- A student learning plan will address his/her specific academic needs.
- You, as the parent/guardian, will be consulted in developing your child’s learning plan.

If there is not enough funding for every child requesting services, eligible students with the greatest academic need will receive first priority. Parents of students on free and reduced lunch will receive more information about this opportunity during the second week of school.

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

We are working closely with the district staff to revise our school improvement plan to include:

- 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.
- High quality professional development for school staff that will lead to removing the school from school improvement status.
- Strategies to promote effective parental involvement in the school.

What are the district and state doing to support schools in Improvement?

Our district is working closely with the school to improve curriculum, instruction, and student performance. The district provides information, special help, and access to resources for schools identified in Step 2, 3, or 4 of improvement. Schools identified in Step 2, 3, or 4 of improvement will receive district technical assistance in:

- Analyzing various data reports for revising the school plan
- Strengthening core academic instruction
- 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

We will keep you updated and informed about opportunities to discuss plans for our 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 school improvement status, please feel free to call me and/or visit the school.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Heidi Thaut