

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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March 30, 2004

Dear Parent or Guardian:

On January 8, 2002, President Bush signed the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* into law. The law calls for sweeping changes in public education. Among these is a new federal requirement that all states and school districts in receipt of Title I assistance must, by 2003, issue annual "report cards" to parents. The purpose of the report card is to give parents information about their child's school in terms of academic achievement and the professional qualifications of its teachers. Attached is our school's first "report card." The information contained is divided into three parts: Teacher Qualifications (2004), MCAS Results (2003), and School Performance Ratings (2003).

The teacher qualification section provides information about the qualifications of the teachers on our faculty. The information is divided into two parts: (1) the percentage of teachers who are certified or licensed to teach in Massachusetts and (2) the percentage of classes taught by teachers who are highly qualified in core academic areas such as mathematics, science, reading, history, English language arts, etc. Both pieces of information are intended to help you understand the backgrounds and preparation of the teachers who are working with your child(ren). No Child Left Behind requires that all teachers be highly qualified by the end of the 2005-2006 school year.

No Child Left Behind requires that test results for reading and mathematics be reported annually. The included test information summarizes how we did on the last round of MCAS examinations. The data is broken down by grade level, subject area, and the performances of different subgroups, or learning populations in the school such as limited English proficient students or students with disabilities. This information is similar to what you received about your child's MCAS scores in November. Now this data has been added together to provide a snapshot of how the students in our schools have performed as a whole.

The school performance ratings provide information about how well our school is doing relative to others in the district and to its performance in past years. The "Proficiency Index" (PI) scores for Mathematics and English Language Arts are part of Massachusetts' School Performance Rating system. This system has been set up to comply with the accountability provisions of No Child Left Behind which require, among other things, that each school make adequate yearly progress (AYP) toward meeting a national goal of all students being "proficient" in mathematics and English by the year 2013-2014. It is important to recognize that differences in cohort performance may impact a yearly performance index from time to time. The Proficiency scores and AYP ratings in the student achievement data are meant to signal whether or not our school is on target to meet this goal. As you can see, our school's performance shows that we have made AYP for mathematics/reading for five consecutive years.

In closing, please know that we are prepared to help you further should you have more questions about what this report card means.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathleen F. Donovan".

Kathleen F. Donovan
Superintendent of Schools