



Orange Unified School District  
Special Programs Department  
1401 N. Handy Street  
Orange, CA 92867

September 2011

To the Parents/Guardians of students at Portola Middle School:

The Purpose of this letter is to inform you that Portola continues to be identified as a Program Improvement (PI) school, under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. Portola Middle School will continue as a Year 5 - Program Improvement School for the 2010-2011 school year.

**What is PI?** NCLB requires the State and district to annually review the academic progress of federally funded Title I schools, and to identify schools in need of improvement. These schools are identified as PI schools after two consecutive years of not making adequate yearly progress (AYP). California determines AYP by considering the following three measures for Middle schools:

- The percentage of students scoring at the “proficient” or “advanced” level on the California Standards Tests for English language arts and mathematics.
- The percentage of students participating in those tests.
- Growth on California’s measure of progress, the Academic Performance Index (API).

**Why was Portola identified as PI?** This year the State’s targets for all students becoming proficient by the year 2014 have significantly increased by 10.8% in English-Language Arts and by 10.5% in mathematics. The school made 11 of its 17 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) criteria targets. (The school’s Accountability Progress Report may be obtained from the California Department of Education at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ar> or the Orange Unified School District’s web site at <http://www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/ayp/>).

**Parental right to request a transfer to a non-PI school.** As a requirement of Program Improvement, the Orange Unified School District offered the parents the choice to apply for a transfer to another non-Program Improvement School last spring. If you would like more information about transfers, please contact the school office.

**The availability of Supplemental Educational Services (SES) for your child.** Students who attend Portola School, and are low-income, are eligible for free SES. These services are classes or tutoring, which occur outside of the regular school day, with educational providers approved by the State Board of Education. If the number of eligible students who apply for SES exceeds the financial resources available, the lowest achieving students from low-income families will receive SES first. Please contact the school or visit the OUSD Website, at [www.orangeusd.org](http://www.orangeusd.org), or for more information regarding how to apply for free tutoring services offered through the SES program.

**How will Portola address the problem of low achievement?** The Portola staff is working closely with the district staff to revise the school plan. The plan includes the use of scientific research-based strategies, which support all groups of students meeting the State’s achievement targets, provides high quality staff development to school staff, and promotes effective parental involvement.



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**District and State support for schools in PI Year 5(Restructuring).** Our district is working with the California Department of Education to improve curriculum, instruction, and student performance. A school in PI Year 5 must implement their restructuring plan for alternative governance, which they developed in PI Year 4. The plan outlined how Portola would restructure their governance and staffing to include redefining the leadership roles of all stakeholders and building a system of instructional leadership to support all students.

**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 compacts, parent/community meetings, parent advisory committees and parent volunteer opportunities.

If you have any questions or need further information about Program Improvement, please call Portola at 714-997-6361.

Sincerely,

Debbie Backstrom  
Principal, Portola Middle  
Orange Unified School District