

**FREEDOM MIDDLE SCHOOL
NOTIFICATION OF CHOICE**

August 2009

Dear Parent/Guardian:

In January 2002 the US Congress passed a new federal education law called No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). NCLB requires the state, school districts, and schools to meet specific achievement targets in reading and math. This includes the following groups of students: major ethnic groups, students with disabilities, limited English proficient students, and low-income students. Collectively, these targets are known as Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

Although the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) placed Freedom Middle School on improvement status for failing to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) on its Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) for the demographic group of "Students with Disabilities" in 2008 for reading and 2009 in reading and math, our scores from this Spring's ISAT demonstrate that we have made significant gains in all areas 69.9% in reading and 76.4% in math! We are so proud of our students and know that our school improvement plan is working. The School Report Card is available online at the District 100 website <http://www.bsd100.org/> or here at Freedom. We would like to invite parents to serve on our school improvement planning team. We would also like to involve parents in addressing the academic issues that caused Freedom to be identified for school improvement. We need parent volunteers to work with grade level teams. We are excited about a new program for parent mentoring in which you may participate.

Freedom's School Improvement Plan includes several interventions that we will make this year to continue to improve student achievement. The first is the transition to a co-teaching model for our students with disabilities which allows that population to receive instruction while in the least restrictive environment. The second is to increase teacher knowledge of reading strategies through the adoption of a new text and monthly in-service meetings, study groups on reading strategies through monthly in-service meetings, and a book study on reading strategies conducted through the System of Support. The third intervention is the addition of technology through "Smartboards." The fourth is to utilize reading and math intervention classes to provide additional instruction. Finally, our new school counselor will have opportunities to work with students on an individual basis where necessary, to coach students using strategies geared towards improving performance in the classroom.

According to NCLB you should have the option to transfer your child to Heritage Middle School, but since Heritage did not make AYP it cannot accept students. We have written neighboring districts to see if they will accept our Middle School students. District 100, according to Board Transportation Policies, may provide transportation. If you would like to exercise your option to transfer your child to a neighboring district, we are asking you to request a transfer form from me, Principal, Mr. James Calabrese. Students will be transferred when space is available. Priority will be given to the lowest achieving children from low income. The "Request to Transfer" form must be requested and completed within 30 days to allow us to make the proper provisions. Failure to complete a transfer form within the 30 days will mean that you wish your child to remain at Freedom.

While we offer you this option, you should know that our test scores from this past year were excellent and that we would like to have your child remain at Freedom. Your continued support and belief that our school can help all the students' meet high standards is important to us.

Sincerely,
James Calabrese
Principal Freedom Middle School