

SAMPLE LETTER FOR SCHOOLS ENTERING TITLE I SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND NOT ABLE TO OFFER CHOICE

NOTE TO SCHOOL AND DISTRICT PERSONNEL: (DO NOT PRINT THIS PAGE AND BRACKETED, ITALICIZED AREAS OF NOTATION THROUGHOUT THE ATTACHED TEMPLATE LETTER WHERE SCHOOL-SPECIFIC INFORMATION NEEDS TO BE INSERTED. PRINT ON LEA LETTERHEAD WITH LOCAL SIGNATURE.)

This template is for schools that are under the obligation to offer public school choice, but no such choice is available. Districts must still notify parents at the school that the school is in Title I School Improvement. Note that lack of capacity IS NOT an acceptable reason to deny students the opportunity to transfer. Acceptable reasons are: all schools in the district are identified or the identified school is the only one in the district serving those grade levels or the schools are so remote from one another that choice is impractical.

WHAT THE PARENT LETTER NEEDS TO INCLUDE:

According to federal requirements, the parent letter for Title I School Improvement schools must include: a) an explanation of what the identification means and how the school compares in terms of academic achievement to other schools; b) the reasons for the identification; c) reference to what the identified school is doing to improve; d) reference to what the district or state is doing to help the school address achievement problems; e) an explanation of how parents can get involved; f) an explanation of the parents' option to transfer their child(ren) to another public school; g) an explanation of why school choice options may have been limited; and h) information about the choice schools, their quality and performance.

School Letterhead

[Date]

Dear [School] Parent or Guardian:

I am writing to let you know that, according to 2010-11 student test results, [School] is a Title I School Improvement school for 2011-12 under the federal *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) law. [School] did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two years in a row in [reading and/or math] and must offer transfer options, if possible. However, because [all schools in the district are identified or the identified school is the only one in the district serving those grade levels or the schools are so remote from one another that choice is not practical], no transfer option is available.

[School] receives federal Title I funds designed to help students who are not achieving at grade level in high-poverty schools. As a Title I school, [School] must make AYP or face consequences. Our school is in Level [insert level or levels of improvement (if in improvement for math and reading)]. Statewide, a total of 95 schools were identified as being in improvement. [List number] of schools in our district made AYP. In South Dakota, 572 made AYP for 2010-11.

The many successes at [School] cannot be measured by tests alone and we appreciate your past and continued support. I am pleased that our school has [list accolades or school accomplishments].

However, we are concerned about the academic progress of all of our students. We've identified the following instructional strategies in which to focus, with district and state assistance: [List strategies. The school must provide an explanation of how it is addressing student achievement challenges in these parent letters and to the public as well. Section 1116(b)(6); 200.38.]

We welcome your involvement at [School]. There are many ways to participate including becoming a member of the [Parent Teacher Association or Organization], offering your input to the School Improvement Team, volunteering, attending parent conferences with your child's teacher(s), making sure that your child is prepared and attends school each day, and monitoring your child's homework and class grades.

[School] will have its annual meeting to develop our Title I parent involvement policy and to review other information on [date, time, place]. The Title I district-wide parent involvement policy will be reviewed this fall and you may want to be a part of that review process.

If you have questions about this information, please feel free to call [contact name and phone number]. Please continue to work with us to make sure that we achieve success for every student.

Sincerely,

Principal

cc: Superintendent
Title I Director