

July 30, 2011

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Sylvania School has a tradition of positive education experiences for its students. This is evidenced in Sylvania's overall growth in reading and math and the numerous school awards earned by academic and non-academic teams. Sylvania School students' achievement scores are in the middle to high range when compared to neighboring schools with similar grade configuration. We are required by the U.S. Department of Education to notify our parents of our school's improvement status *at least* fourteen days before the first day of school for this 2011—2012 school year.

Adequate yearly progress, based upon last year's test scores, was evaluated for 1383 public schools, including 932 Title I schools. Statewide, 227 schools have been identified for School Improvement. Of those, 140 are Title I schools, compared to 68 last year. These schools must offer School Choice, if a higher performing school of choice is available. Our school met goals in 19 areas, but did not achieve adequate yearly progress in Reading and Math within the Special Education subgroup according to the state accountability plan that is aligned with the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. Sylvania School has been identified for school improvement.

In light of this identification, the school will take the following steps to improve its status. The faculty and staff will work to strengthen classroom strategies related to raising student achievement and will introduce activities to involve parents in the school improvement process. The school will continue to implement strategic teaching strategies and a tiered instructional program in Reading and Math that will ensure that all students are placed in the most appropriate instructional and intervention program matched to the students' individual needs. Sylvania School will also implement *Language!* in grades 4-12, a comprehensive research based literacy curriculum for struggling students and a new math curriculum in grades K-5 and various math interventions in grades K-12.

We encourage you to become involved in helping your child to be successful in school. Examples of how you may be more involved include asking about homework assignments, reading to your child every day, attending back-to-school nights to meet teachers, and volunteering when possible.

This letter also serves as a notification to parents that all students at the school, because of *School Improvement* status, are eligible to transfer to a school that is not identified for school improvement. In this district, eligible schools to which students may transfer and their academic achievement are listed in the chart below. For additional information, please examine the attached school report cards.

If your child attends:	He/she may choose to transfer to:	Record of Achievement of Choice Schools
Sylvania School (Grades K-12)	Valley Head High School (Grades K-12)	Made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Reading/Math for 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011.
	Henagar Jr. High School (Grades K-8)	Made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Reading/Math for 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011.

If you choose the transfer option, your child will be transported to the choice school free of charge as long as the former school is designated as a *School Improvement* school. If the district budget isn't enough to allow the district to transport every student whose parents request a transfer, federal law requires that the district give priority for transportation to the lowest achieving students from low-income families. These students also have a priority to get the first choice of receiving schools. The district determines income based on eligibility for free or reduced-price school lunches and student achievement based on the *Alabama Reading and Mathematics Test*.

You can find more information about your transfer options by going to the district's website at www.dekalbk12.org. Please complete the enclosed form and return to Sylvania School by September 2, 2011. The Federal Programs Office of our district will notify you when the choice option will take effect and when your child may start attending the choice school.

The U.S. Department of Education is also allowing our school to offer students an option of remaining at our school and taking advantage of free tutoring sessions called Supplemental Educational Services or SES. If you decide that your child ***will remain*** at Sylvania School and take part in the free tutoring, it will help our school increase our academic scores in reading, language arts, and mathematics. Tutoring sessions will be provided before/after school, and will be in addition to refocusing and strengthening the instruction that students receive during the school day. **SES is NOT homework help.** This year, all students in our school are eligible to receive the tutoring. If for some reason the demand for services is too great and exceeds the available money set aside in the school district, first priority for the free tutoring will be given to low-income, low-achieving students. All parents will be invited to an **SES (Free Tutoring) Provider Fair** at **Sylvania School's Library on Monday, September 19th at 5:30 pm** where the companies that provide the free tutoring will meet, along with school district representatives, with all interested parents. If you are not able to attend on that day, you may select from the enclosed list, or if you need help choosing a SES company, a district representative will be happy to assist you.

As a concerned parent, you will want to work with the SES tutors and the school in a learning partnership: by encouraging your student to attend the tutoring sessions and by keeping up the tutoring progress. If you choose free tutoring instead of a School Choice transfer, we ask that you fill out the SES Selection Form that came with this letter and return it to Sylvania School by September 30, 2011.

Please contact the local board of education at (256) 638-6921 or the school at (256) 638-2030 if you have questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

Jason Mayfield
Federal Programs Coordinator

Enclosures: 1. *(Receiving Schools)* Annual Accountability Results (One-Page Summaries)
 2. School Choice Request Form
 3. Supplementary Education Application Form (also available online at www.dekalbk12.org)
 4. SES Provider List (also available online at www.dekalbk12.org)