



201 Baptist Road
Durham, NC 27704

October 15, 2024

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Legislation (G.S. §115C-83.15) passed during the 2013 long session of the North Carolina General Assembly provides parents with an additional measure of school performance in the form of School Performance Grades. Beginning with the 2013–14 school year, the annual North Carolina School Report Cards display a letter grade of A, B, C, D, or F for each school in the state.

The School Performance Grades are based 80 percent on our school's achievement score (student proficiency) and 20 percent on students' academic growth. At Neal Middle School, our achievement score for the 2023-2024 school year is based on how well our students performed on Math 6-8, ELA 6-8, 8th grade Science, Math I and Access testing for English language learners. The purpose of this letter is to inform you that Neal Middle School has been designated as a low performing school by the North Carolina State Board of Education. As defined in G.S. 115C-105.37: "The State Board of Education shall identify low-performing schools on an annual basis. Low-performing schools are those that earn an overall school performance grade of D or F and a school growth score of "met expected growth" or "not met expected growth" as defined by G.S. 115C-83.15."

Neal Middle School received a School Performance Grade of D (last year was an F) and a growth designation of met growth for the 2023–2024 school year. Although we are committed to improving this score, it is important to remember that just as no one single score or grade tells the whole story of a student, neither does it tell you everything about the performance of a school or the opportunities that our school provides. We have partnerships with NC State, Duke as well as NCCU. We also have been recognized in the past 3 years as a Magnet School of Excellence twice and as a School of Distinction once.

As a low performing school, we are required to develop an improvement plan that specifically addresses how the school will improve both the school performance grade and school growth score. The plan will also include how the superintendent and other central office administrators in the district will work with us and monitor the progress of our school.

One of our top priorities for 2024–2025 is to improve our School Performance Grade. There are a number of key programs we have in place to help improve student performance. These include:

- Unpacking Standards, Common Assessments, Effective Planning and Instructional Practices- HITS & On-going Data Analysis
- Monitoring and Analyzing Subgroup Data - EC, EL & AIG Students
- Daily Intervention, Enrichment & Tutoring
- Beginning Week 2 (Quarters 1-4) Intervention & Enrichment
- Monitoring and Analyzing Subgroup Data - Bubble, EC, EL & AIG Students MTSS - Tier II and Tier III Progress Monitoring
- Cultivate meaning and authentic community engagement. Parent/Guardian Surveys - Given to parents/guardians annually to collect feedback on preferred methods of communication and needs
- SIT Family and Community Indicator Team (consisting of staff and parents)- Focuses on strengthening family engagement efforts by offering parent consistent streamlined communication that is pervasive throughout the school (Talking Points is used schoolwide, Principal message via phone/email every Friday and Weekly messages posted on Canvas to inform students & families of learning targets.

We hope you will closely follow your student's academic progress and work with his or her teacher(s) to help ensure they stay on track academically. Working together as a team, we can improve not only how well our students are performing individually, but how our school is performing as a whole. There is nothing more important to administrators and teachers at Neal Middle School than ensuring students are ready for the next step in their academic careers. I look forward to working with

you to make sure your student is on track for success.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding our School Performance Grade and how we plan to improve, please don't hesitate to contact Principal Covington at 919-560-3955 or via email at Terrence_Covington@dpsnc.net.

The preliminary plan will be presented to the Board of Education on October 24, 2024. The final plan will be approved by the Board of Education on November 12, 2024. Please submit any input or suggestions in writing to the principal by Friday, November 8, 2024.

Sincerely,

Terrence Covington - Principal