

*Dear Parent or Guardian,*

*From freshman year to graduation day, our students work and study hard to be successful in their academic and extracurricular endeavors. We are proud of their accomplishments. Along the way teachers, counselors, administrators, and other support personnel prepare these young adults for life after high school, whether that involves post-high school education, the military, or the world of work.*

*Every spring the District must administer the Prairie State Achievement Exam (PSAE) to juniors as part of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The state and federal governments use the results of this test to gauge the overall progress of students in the district, state, and nation. The test is not easy. It is based on educational standards at the junior and senior level, and the “passing” score continues to rise, making it increasingly difficult for schools and districts to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The target score for Spring 2006 was 47.5%, and for Spring 2007, 55%. The law also specifies that certain subgroups, as well as the total junior class, must meet AYP. These subgroups include the following: White, Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American, Multiracial/Ethnic, Limited English Proficient, Students with IEP’s and Economically Disadvantaged. Because some of our subgroups did not meet AYP for the past two years, we must notify parents that the District is now in “improvement status.”*

*Please note that teachers and administrators in all of the schools and at the central administration office are working diligently towards addressing this problem. Eisenhower, Richards and Shepard High Schools have developed School Improvement Plans that have been approved by the state. Furthermore, we have a District Improvement Plan with goals and strategies that are aligned with the schools’ plans. Our own local assessments show student improvement in reading and writing from one year to the next, and we will continue to provide the best possible educational program for all of our students. We are optimistic that our students will continue to improve.*

*Finally, the law required that the Illinois State Board of Education also provide notification to parents of students in districts needing improvement. Posted on our website are the report cards for all of our schools and the district. Follow the link under Parents & Students.*

*If you have any questions about any of the information I have just shared with you or if you are interested in serving on a school or district improvement committee, please contact your student’s principal or me.*

*Sincerely,*

*Dr. John Byrne  
Superintendent of Schools*