



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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October 12, 2016

Dr. Geoffrey W. Zoeller, Superintendent
Mrs. Dimitria Leakas, Board of Education President
300 Rochelle Avenue
Rochelle Park, NJ 07662

Dear Dr. Zoeller, Mrs. Leakas, and Members of the Board of Education:

On behalf of the New Jersey Department of Education and the Regional Achievement Center, it is my pleasure to report that Midland School No. 1 has demonstrated consistent progress over the last several years. The primary focus of Regional Achievement Center (RAC) intervention has been to promote student growth, and Rochelle Park has outperformed most categorized schools in the region in recent years. The table below demonstrates several of the growth metrics that the RAC monitors.

SGP Total (average of SGP ELA & Math)	SGP ELA	SGP ELA %ile	SGP Math	SGP Math %ile	ELA SGP Δ (difference from 2012-13 to 2014-15)	Math SGP Δ (difference from 2012-13 to 2014-15)	Overall SGP Δ (Average of ELA & Math change)
61.8	61.5	84.0	62	88.0	4.5	27.0	15.8

The SGP totals above (from 2014-15, the most recent year publicly available) show high growth in both ELA and Math, which ranks Rochelle Park in the top 15 percent of all schools in the state in terms of student growth. These growth scores represent a significant increase in SGP over time, particularly in mathematics instruction. During our visits to Rochelle Park, we have noted improved instructional practice in recent years and a greater emphasis on student learning outcomes from administration.

Rochelle Park was originally identified for Focus School status because of an achievement gap that existed between higher and lower performing subgroups. The two lowest subgroups at the time of identification were students with disabilities (lowest) and economically disadvantaged students

(second lowest). As the table below shows, these subgroups have made progress consistent with the school as a whole and particularly good progress in mathematics.

SGP ELA Lowest Subgroup 2014-15	SGP ELA Lowest Subgroup Δ change from 2012-13 to 2014-15	SGP Math Lowest Subgroup 2014-15	SGP Math Lowest Subgroup Δ change from 2012-13 to 2014-15	SGP ELA 2nd Lowest Subgroup 2014-15	SGP ELA 2nd Lowest Subgroup Δ change from 2012-13 to 2014-15	SGP Math 2nd Lowest Subgroup 2014-15	SGP Math 2nd Lowest Subgroup Δ change from 2012-13 to 2014-15	SGP Subgroup ELA (average of lowest & 2nd lowest)	SGP Subgroup Math (average of lowest & 2nd lowest)
46.0	0.5	59.0	32.5	67.0	25.0	65.0	28.5	56.5	62.0

Achievement gap has historically been calculated with proficiency scores, and in this area there continues to be a gap between higher and lower performing subgroups. The first table below shows ELA proficiency and achievement gap and the second shows Math proficiency and achievement gap. Please note that I have included 2015-16 PARCC scores from the preliminary reports which may change slightly due to data cleaning. SGP scores for 2015-16 are not yet available.

PARCC ELA 2014-2015 % Met or Exceeded	PARCC ELA 2015-2016 (Preliminary data)	PARCC ELA 2-Year Avg.	ELA Highest 2015-2016 (Preliminary data / highest of all subgroups)	ELA Avg Two Lowest 2015-2016 (Preliminary data)
59.8	57.8	58.8	71.4	29.4

PARCC Math 2014-2015 % Met or Exceeded	PARCC Math 2015-2016 (Preliminary data)	PARCC MATH 2-Year Avg.	Math Highest 2015-2016 (Preliminary data / highest of all subgroups)	Math Avg Two Lowest 2015-2016 (Preliminary data)
47.2	47.8	47.5	69.0	28.4

As the tables demonstrate, a gap still exists between the highest and lowest subgroups in both ELA and mathematics. While the preliminary data suggests a smaller gap than when Midland School was initially identified, we do not yet know whether this gap places Rochelle Park in the five percent of schools with the largest achievement gaps.

During the four years of intervention provided by the RAC, we have always found Rochelle Park to be eager to improve and welcoming to the RAC. School Improvement Plan (SIP) goals have generally been met, and all goals and action steps were achieved last year. We are pleased with the direction of the school and have appreciated the efforts of Mr. Cannici and his staff to improve the quality of teaching and learning in Rochelle Park.

As part of the transition to ESSA, we currently project that interventions associated with the NCLB waiver will sunset at the end of this school year. It had originally been our intention to identify some RAC schools for status exit last winter, but the timing of the transition to ESSA, federal requirements, and the timing of data availability did not allow us to exit any schools from status last year.

With the transition to ESSA, “priority” schools will be designated “comprehensive support” and “focus” schools will be identified for “targeted support.” It is our current understanding that a new categorized school list will be developed this winter and will be announced late winter or early spring. The criteria for identification have not been finalized, so unfortunately I am unable to project whether or not Rochelle Park will be identified with any degree of certainty. It seems likely, however, that ESSA interventions from the NJDOE are likely to shift primarily to schools in need of comprehensive support. As soon as more information is available regarding the identification criteria and support plans, I will share it with Rochelle Park’s school and district administration.

It should be noted that RAC intervention in Rochelle Park is limited to support, professional development, and strategic planning assistance as requested. We value the partnership that we have established with Mr. Cannici and his staff and look forward to working with Midland School this school year. Should you have any additional questions regarding RAC support in Rochelle Park, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely yours,



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