

# BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Parent/Guardian:

For the 2009–2010 school year, your child is registered at Loch Raven Technical Academy, which has been identified, based on 2009 Maryland State Assessment (MSA) data, by the Maryland State Department of Education for school improvement Corrective Action. In an effort to help you understand what that means, the following questions and answers have been provided:

## **Why has Loch Raven Technical Academy been identified for school improvement?**

Under the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)*, schools must meet specific achievement targets in attendance, reading, and math. These annual improvement targets demonstrate if a school has made “Adequate Yearly Progress” (AYP). MSA results indicate that Loch Raven Technical Academy did not make AYP for a fourth year and it has been identified for school improvement.

## **How does Loch Raven Technical Academy compare to other schools in our county and state?**

MSA results indicate that Loch Raven Technical Academy did not meet AYP in the areas of **reading** and/ **mathematics**. The chart below compares the percentage of students who scored advanced, proficient, and basic on the 2009 MSA for Loch Raven Technical Academy with the average scores for Baltimore County and schools across the state.

### **2008 MSA READING**

GRADES	Loch Raven Technical Academy			BALTIMORE COUNTY			MARYLAND SCHOOLS		
	Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Advanced	Proficient	Basic
6	27.1	44.8	28.1	36.6	45.2	18.2	40.2	43.3	16.6
7	18.9	59.1	22.0	42.1	38.8	19.2	43.7	38.1	18.3
8	25.6	49.3	25.1	37.8	44.3	17.9	36.9	43.3	21.7

### **2008 MSA MATHEMATICS**

GRADES	Loch Raven Technical Academy			BALTIMORE COUNTY			MARYLAND SCHOOLS		
	Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Advanced	Proficient	Basic
6	14.6	43.8	41.7	22.1	50.1	27.8	29.0	47.0	24.0
7	4.3	54.9	40.9	19.8	53.3	26.9	23.0	49.0	28.0
8	8.7	41.7	56.8	25.6	40.2	34.2	28.6	37.1	34.2

In order to make AYP in 2009, Loch Raven Technical Academy needed 3 more students in the FARMS subgroup and 14 more students in the Special Education subgroup to score proficient in reading. In mathematics, we needed 17 more students in the All Students group, 29 more students in the African American subgroup, 24 more students in the FARMS subgroup; and, 23 more students in

the Special Education subgroup to score proficient in order to make AYP. (Since the same student may be included in more than one subgroup; and, we must make AYP in each/all subgroups, Loch Raven Technical Academy needed 29 more students to score proficient in order to have the school achieve AYP in 2009.)

While AYP was not met in 2009, Loch Raven Academy's MSA scores continue to reflect growth. In 2009, the percent of students scoring proficient or advanced increased in all subgroups except the Hispanic subgroup. ( In 2009, 7 out of the 10 students in the Hispanic subgroup were proficient or advanced in reading - 83.3%, compared to 10 out of 12 in 2008 - 88.9%; 5 out of 10 were proficient or advanced in math - 58.3% in 2009, compared to 7 out of 12 in 2008 - 88.9%.) While the percentage in this subgroup declined, the percentage of proficient was higher than the 2008 AMO for both reading (75.9%) and mathematics (64.3%).

Other subgroups showed gains in the percentage proficient and advanced in both reading and mathematics. All subgroups of students taking the MSA, except for the Hispanic subgroup, showed gains in the percentage proficient and advanced in 2009 when compared with MSA 2008 results. The increases for subgroups in 2009, over 2008 scores, ranged from 4% to 33%.

### **What does it mean to be a school in Corrective Action of school improvement?**

As a school in Corrective Action of school improvement, Loch Raven Technical Academy must evaluate its curriculum, instructional time, staffing, and administrative needs and make the necessary changes to ensure that the issues that caused the school to not meet achievement targets are addressed in the school improvement plan for the upcoming year.

### **What is the Loch Raven Technical Academy staff doing to improve student achievement?**

The School Improvement Team at Loch Raven Technical Academy is continuously analyzing school data to determine how to improve performance in **reading and mathematics**. Loch Raven Technical Academy staff will be consistently monitoring and evaluating student performance.

During the 2009-2010 school year Loch Raven Technical Academy will be implementing the following strategies to improve student achievement:

### ***Student Achievement in Mathematics and Reading***

- Continuously monitor instruction to ensure that the state and county curriculum for each class is taught.
- Differentiating instruction and providing assistance, as needed, to address individual student and class achievement, as evidenced by daily, benchmark, and short cycle assessments.
- Using frequent, and varied, classroom assessments that align in both content and format with the MSA.
- Incorporating strategies based on scientifically based research that will strengthen the core curriculum and address the specific needs of students.
- Providing professional development to ensure understanding and application of differentiated instruction, the components of rigorous instruction and effective student engagement, updates on the state curriculum; and, research-based teaching and learning strategies.
- Providing time within the teacher schedule for Interdisciplinary, and Disciplinary teaching teams to meet in order to maintain a focus on student learning and proficiency; and, a systematic response to student achievement that ensures support for every student.
- Providing explicit instruction in vocabulary, syntax, and figurative language within reading and English language arts classes.

- Teaching specific strategies (e.g. listing, free writing, clustering, webbing, etc.) in English language arts and the SOLVE strategy in all content area classes in order to generate improved written responses.
- Providing schedules for students who meet the selection criteria that include *Language!* which focuses on phonetic and phonemic awareness, word recognition/spelling, vocabulary, grammar/usage, comprehension, and speaking/writing.
- Using a co-teaching model in selected language arts and mathematics classes to ensure improved instructional delivery and access to curriculum for students with disabilities.
- Providing schedules (for students who meet the selection criteria) that include Algebraic Foundations, Algebraic Thinking, and Algebra with Assistance in order to increase levels of student achievement in mathematics processes and concepts.
- Providing extended learning activities, including after-school coach classes, lunch time support sessions; and, a daily math/reading session for the purposes of re-teaching and reinforcing skills and thinking processes for students who require academic supports in order to be successful.
- Communicating, and collaborating, frequently with all stakeholders about student achievement through SIT Meetings, PTSA Meetings, Parent Information Nights, Newsletters, Connect-Ed Messages, Teacher Websites, and the Parent Contact Log in order to increase student achievement.

**What is Baltimore County Public Schools doing to increase student achievement?**

The *Blueprint for Progress*, a framework for improving student achievement, provides clear direction for everyone involved in education in Baltimore County. The *Blueprint for Progress* is built on a foundation of clear standards, quality instruction, and individual accountability. In addition, all students in BCPS receive instruction based on concepts in the Voluntary State Curriculum. Baltimore County Public Schools provides professional development to assist teachers to develop the talents of students and provide each student access to a rigorous education. Additionally, Loch Raven Technical Academy receives technical assistance from its area office in the development and implementation of its school improvement plan.

**What can parents/guardians do to help Loch Raven Technical Academy increase student achievement?**

Parents/guardians can assist the efforts of the school by making sure their children come to school on time every day, ready to learn. In addition, parents can check that all homework assignments and school projects are completed on time. Parents are encouraged to participate in parent education activities, attend all parent-teacher conferences, and learn more about how to help their children at home and at school. Parents should tell teachers they want to hear from them as soon as problems - occur so that they can work together to find solutions. A list of parent support services is available on the district's Web site: [www.bcps.org](http://www.bcps.org)

Sincerely,

Linda Wilson  
Principal

C: Area Office  
Department of Research, Accountability, and Assessment