

FROM
THE OFFICE
OF THE
PRINCIPAL



November 25, 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian:

I hope the school year has started successfully for all of you. As a parent/guardian of a student in Gillespie Park Elementary, I am writing this letter to let you know that Gillespie Park Elementary, has been designated as a Targeted Support & Improvement Additional Targeted Support (TSI-AT) school by the North Carolina State Board of Education. As stated in ESSA Section 1111(d)(2), North Carolina had to identify schools for targeted support and improvement. TSI-AT schools in North Carolina are those that have a subgroup that is under-performing. The intent of this opportunity is to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction.

As a TSI-AT school, Gillespie Park Elementary is required to develop a comprehensive plan that specifically addresses how the school will improve student achievement. The plan will also include how our district will support us and monitor the progress of our school. The comprehensive plan will address the following areas:

- Classroom Management
- Standards-aligned Instruction
- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- Instructional Leadership
- Recruitment & Retention of Effective Teachers
- Support for Grade-to-Grade Transitions
- Implementation of a Tiered Instructional System
- Data-Driven Decision Making
- Student Support Services
- Family and Community Engagement

We have set the following goals for Gillespie Park Elementary School this year:

- By June 2020, our total school composite will increase from a School Performance Grade of 40 to 43 as report on our 2020 School Report Card.
- By June 2020, we will increase third grade reading scores on the end of grade test from 34.2% proficient to 38.8% proficient as reported on the Reading section of the EOG.
- By June 2020, Gillespie Park will decrease our chronic absence by 10% from 42.1 students to 37.9 students as reported in Tableau.

Our students need to experience higher achievement levels, but it will require hard work on the part of staff, students and families. Here are some strategies Gillespie Park Elementary School will be implementing:

- A Master Schedule that includes a 45-minute intervention schedule daily in Kindergarten through Second Grade and a 30-minute intervention daily in grade three through five.
- Zearn, an online personalized learning tool for math that aligns to the Eureka curriculum;
- A Tier III Interventionist position responsible for rendering Tier III intervention to students in reading and math across all grades K-5.
- A social emotional whole school comprehensive guidance program to include small group counseling, peer mediation and restorative practices.

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Parent engagement is at the heart of our school improvement efforts. Here are some ways we can work together:

- Make sure that both you and your student are aware of academic expectations set for your student this school year. A list of learning objectives in student-friendly language is available from your student's teacher(s).
- Call *Principal Lei Washington at Gillespie Park Elementary School at 336-370-8640* if you have questions or concerns about your student or to set up an appointment to meet with a school staff member who will be working with your student.
- Make sure that your student is prepared and attends school each day.
- Monitor your student's homework.
- Monitor the progress your student is making and attend meetings with your student's teacher(s).
- Keep track of our website and social media sites:
Gillespie Park's Website - https://www.gcsnc.com/gillespie_park_elementary .
Facebook- <https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Elementary-School/Gillespie-Park-Elementary-School-876025299159328/>
Twitter- <https://twitter.com/gillespieparkes?lang=en>
Instagram- <https://www.instagram.com/explore/locations/830252526/gillespie-park-elementary/?hl=en>
- Volunteer.
- Join the *Parent Teacher Association*

Sounds like a lot but preparing our students so that they can succeed is not easy and is a group effort. Here are some resources available to help:

- Student Service Department-Contact Ms. Whitney McDonald for assistance with community resources at-336-370-8640 ext. 4122 or mcdonaw2@gcsnc.com
- Graduation requirements: www.ncpublicschools.org/gradrequirements/
- K-12 standards in academic subjects: www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/
- State student achievement test results: www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/
- N.C. School Report Cards: <https://ncreportcards.ondemand.sas.com/src>

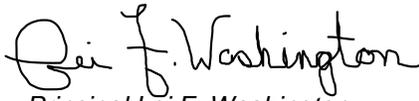
We're excited about this school year and are working to make it a success for your student.

Already, we have:

- Dropped our chronic absences from 2018-2019 to 2019-2020 from 18.6% to 17.06%;
- Launched a male mentorship program with Man2Man and NC A & T State University;
- Increased our math benchmark scores in third through fifth grades;
- Implemented Class Dojo schoolwide and launched quarterly
- Launched the weekly Park Scholars Celebration for high achieving students.

If you have questions about the content of this letter, please contact Principal Lei Washington at washinl@gcsnc.com or 336-370-8640.

Sincerely,


Principal Lei F. Washington