

FROM  
THE OFFICE  
OF THE  
PRINCIPAL



October 9, 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian:

I hope the school year has started successfully for all of you. As a parent/guardian of a student at Bessemer Elementary, I am writing this letter to let you know that Bessemer, has been designated as a Comprehensive Support & Improvement Low-Performing (CSI-LP) school by the North Carolina State Board of Education. As stated in ESSA Section 1111(c)(4)(D)(i), North Carolina had to identify schools for comprehensive support and improvement. CSI-LP schools in North Carolina are those found in the lowest-performing 5 percent of all schools receiving Title I funding. 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 CSI-LP school, Bessemer 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
- Standard-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 Bessemer this year:

- **PERFORMANCE COMPOSITE.** By June 2021, Bessemer Elementary will increase the overall school performance composite from 34.5% to a minimum of 35.9%. The Reading composite will increase from 32.2% to 37% overall, 24.4% to 31.7% in 3rd Grade, 37.8% to 39.8% in 4th Grade, and 34.6% to 39.6% in 5th Grade. The Math composite will increase from 31.8% to 33.8% overall, 29.3% to 31.3% in 3rd Grade, 29.3% to 31.3% in 4th Grade, and 37% to 39% in 5th Grade. The Science composite will increase from 49.4% to 52%.

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 of the strategies Bessemer will be implementing:

- Grade level PLCs will work collaboratively together through a well-sequenced backward mapping process using district curriculum materials to design gradual release, differentiated lesson plans.
- Every teacher will receive regular, timely and effective feedback from an instructional coach as well as support in improving their instructional and managerial practices.
- Teachers will collect exit-tickets and other formative data to drive instruction, including iStation and SchoolPace.

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 Felicia Champ at 336-375-2585 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 por [bessemer.gcsnc.com](http://bessemer.gcsnc.com).
- Volunteer.
- Join Bessemer's Parent Advisory Council.

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:

- Graduation requirements: [www.ncpublicschools.org/gradrequirements/](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/gradrequirements/)
- K-12 standards in academic subjects: [www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/)
- State student achievement test results: [www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/](http://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:

- Four instructional coaches on our team,
- Been the recipient of the Innovative Partnership Grant
- Added STEM to our specials
- Established a Parent Advisory Council, and
- Added a Youth Development Coordinator position to work with students.

If you have questions about the content of this letter, please contact Felicia Champ at [champf@gcsnc.com](mailto:champf@gcsnc.com) or 336-375-2585.

Sincerely,



Dr. Chelsea Smith  
Principal  
Bessemer Elementary