

12010 Hambright Road
Huntersville, North Carolina 28078

November 21, 2023

Dear Parent/Guardian:

I hope the school year has started successfully for all of you. As a parent/guardian of a student in J.M. Alexander Middle School, I am writing this letter to let you know that J.M. Alexander Middle School has been designated as a Targeted Support & Improvement Additional Targeted Support (TSI-AT) school by the North Carolina State Board of Education. ESSA Section 1111(d)(2) stated that 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 underperforming. This opportunity intends to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction.

As a TSI-AT school, J.M. Alexander Middle School 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 our school's progress. 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 J.M. Alexander Middle School this year:

- We will increase our Student with Disabilities (SWD) and Multi-language Learners (ML) subgroup(s) performance grade from a F to a D or higher in 2023-24.
- The percentage of 8th-grade students who score at the College and Career (CCR) level -- a 4 or 5 -- on the Grade 8 Mathematics EOG will increase from .4% in SY2021-22 to 14.2% in SY2022-23 and 28% in SY2023-24.

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 J.M. Alexander Middle School will be implementing:

- JMA will use the Mastery Connect assessments and other assessment types to address students' needs by implementing data protocols.
- JMA will implement the following evidence-based interventions: targeted small group instruction during ATL Block and planning and implementing PACE strategies for ML learners to increase the performance of the SWD and ML subgroups.
- JMA will use MTSS / Branching Minds data to create intervention plans for students to improve student learning.
- JMA will host a fall and spring curriculum night in an effort to better engage with parents and communicate curriculum expectations.

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 Pam Brandon, 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.
- Volunteer.
- Join the PTSA.

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/
- 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 students. Already, we have:

- Implemented strategic small group instruction in reading and math.
- Increased parental involvement and engagement.

If you have questions about the content of this letter, please contact Gwen Love at gwenr.love@cms.k12.nc.us.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kristen Lanier