



November 4, 2024

Dear Parent/Guardian:

I am writing this letter to notify you that Zebulon Gifted & Talented Magnet Middle School: Center for Advanced Studies and STEM has been designated as both a North Carolina Low-Performing school and a federally identified Targeted Support & Improvement Additional Targeted Support (TSI-AT) school by the North Carolina State Board of Education.

As defined in G.S. 115C-105.37: "The State Board of Education shall identify low-performing schools on an annual basis. Low-performing schools are those that earn an overall school performance grade of D or F and a school growth score of "met expected growth" or "not met expected growth" as defined by G.S. 115C-83.15." Legislation (G.S. §115C-83.15) passed during the 2013 long North Carolina General Assembly session provides parents with an additional measure of school performance in the form of School Performance Grades.

School Performance Grades are based on 80 percent of our school's achievement score (student proficiency) and 20 percent of students' academic growth. At Zebulon Gifted & Talented Magnet Middle School: Center for Advanced Studies and STEM, our achievement score for the 2023-2024 school year was based on how well our students performed on: **Grades 6–8 Mathematics, Grades 6–8 English Language Arts/Reading, Grades 8 Science, NC Math 1.** Zebulon Gifted & Talented Magnet Middle School: Center for Advanced Studies and STEM received a School Performance Grade of **letter D** and a growth designation of **Met Growth** for the 2023–2024 school year. While students met growth overall, our proficiency score will need to increase.

In addition, per the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Section 1111(d)(2), schools receive the federal identification of TSI-AT in North Carolina by having one or more of the following subgroups receive a subgroup performance grade score at or below the lowest 5% of schools across the state during the 2023-2024 academic year; and being identified as a consistently underperforming subgroup for the previous year. Subgroup performance scores are provided

for the following subgroups of students: (1) Students with Disabilities, (2) Economically Disadvantaged, (3) Black, (4) White, (5) Hispanic, (6) Asian-Pacific Islander, (7) Multi-racial, and (8) English Learners. Our identified subgroup for this designation is Students with Disabilities.

As a dually designated TSI-AT and NC low-performing school, Zebulon Gifted & Talented Magnet Middle School: Center for Advanced Studies and STEM is required to develop a comprehensive improvement plan that specifically addresses how the school will improve student achievement. Our comprehensive improvement plan will address the following areas:

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

We have set the following goals for Zebulon Gifted & Talented Magnet Middle School: Center for Advanced Studies and STEM this year:

- By June 2025, the percentage of overall student proficiency will meet or exceed 50% proficient as measured by End of Grade/End of Course State assessments and will meet or exceed growth for all subgroups as measured by EVAAS data for all subjects.

Here are some strategies that Zebulon Gifted & Talented Magnet Middle School: Center for Advanced Studies and STEM will be implementing to improve student outcomes:

- Strengthen core instruction while focusing on power standards and Lever 1
- Use small group sessions to provide focused attention and address individual student learning needs.
- Facilitate professional learning for content support
- Collaborate with parents to streamline home and school academic support
- Use data from assessments to inform instructional planning and identify areas where students need additional support.

Parent engagement is at the heart of our school improvement efforts. Here are some ways you can help:

- Ensure that both you and your child know the academic expectations set for your child this school year. A list of learning objectives in student-friendly language is available from your student's teacher(s).
- Call Zebulon Gifted & Talented Magnet Middle School: Center for Advanced Studies and STEM 919-404-3630 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 child.
- Make sure that your child is prepared and attends school each day.
- Monitor your child's homework through PowerSchool and Canvas.
- Monitor the progress your child is making and attend meetings with your child's teacher(s).
- Keep track of our website and social media sites.

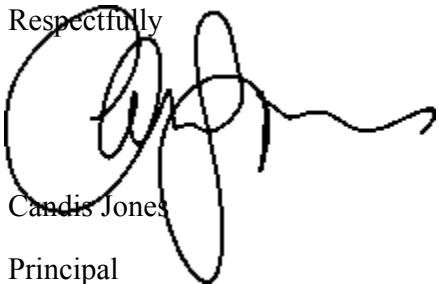
Additionally, listed below are a few resources available to help:

- 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://www.dpi.nc.gov/data-reports/school-report-cards>

We are committed to improving student performance. It is important to remember that just as no one single score or grade tells the whole story of a student, neither does it tell you everything about the performance of a school or the opportunities that our school provides. The intent of receiving these designations is to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction. We're excited about this school year and are working to make it a success for your child.

If you have questions about the content of this letter, please contact Candis Jones at cjones14@wcpss.net

Respectfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Candis Jones', written over the printed name.

Candis Jones

Principal