

## Sample Letter Notifying Parents of Focus School Status

Dear Parent or Guardian:

This letter is to notify you that your child's school, (NAME), has been named a Title I Focus School in Wisconsin. You may have read about changes at the state and national levels in how schools are evaluated and supported. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and the federal government continue to work to construct the best possible process for identifying needed improvements and support for individual schools and districts.

As part of these ongoing changes at the state and national levels, the DPI has informed the (NAME of SCHOOL DISTRICT) that they will be implementing a new measure called Focus Schools.

Many schools in Wisconsin, including (NAME OF THIS SCHOOL), have been identified as Focus Schools. The designation is based, in part, on levels of:

- Student achievement
- Student growth
- Closing achievement gaps within the individual school
- On-track graduation and post-secondary readiness.

To meet federal requirements, DPI is also examining how well smaller groups of students are learning. This results in more schools being named Focus Schools statewide.

Beginning in 2012, Wisconsin students must also meet higher, nationally-based standards to be classified as proficient or advanced in reading and math on state tests. As a result, fewer students are scoring at proficient or advanced levels, adding to the number of Focus Schools statewide. While the staff at (SCHOOL NAME) is working hard to improve student learning, we know that our school is showing improvement and growth in specific areas.

(Insert a brief paragraph on how a program or initiative benefits student learning.)

One of our goals this year, as a Title I Focus School, is to engage families and the community in student learning to help all children succeed. You may be hearing about a process our school will be using to improve student achievement, called Response to Intervention or "RtI." RtI has proven successful in many Wisconsin schools. It provides additional instruction -- or interventions -- to students who need help with math, reading, or behavior, based on their individual needs. Families also play an important role in RtI, helping to develop learning goals and plans for their child. You can learn more about Title I Focus Schools by visiting the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction website at: [http://focus-schools.dpi.wi.gov/focus\\_home](http://focus-schools.dpi.wi.gov/focus_home).

Please let me know if you have any questions about our school's efforts to improve or how parents can support those efforts. You can learn more about how to become involved in our school at (insert URL for school website or contact information for appropriate person).

Thank you for all you do to support your child's learning and (NAME) School.

Sincerely,

(Name of Principal)

(Contact Information for Principal)