

Plainfield districts removed from listing

Schools no longer in need of improvement

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CENTRAL JERSEY — Plainfield and North Plainfield school districts were removed Wednesday from a list of districts in need of improvement after meeting annual progress measurements for two consecutive years, officials said.

In issuing a public accountability report under

the federal No Child Left Behind Act, the state Department of Education said the neighboring districts were among 20 statewide that met adequate yearly progress in all content areas and were taken off the list of districts identified as needing improvement.

Officials said 39 New Jersey school districts

were designated as being in need of improvement for 2008. No schools in the Courier News coverage area were on the list, which has shrunk from 63 school districts in 2005 to the 39 recorded in 2008, officials said.

According to state records, Plainfield in 2007-08 was listed as a district that had not met adequate

yearly progress standards for the four previous years and had been required to implement a corrective action plan, among other conditions. In 2007-08, North Plainfield had not met adequate yearly progress for the prior two years.

Plainfield Superintendent Steve Gallon III credited teachers and their interactions with students for shifting the district "out of the doldrums of needing improvements."

"Our children have shown a strong sense of resilience and are really able to succeed against many of the odds that are before them," he said.

Gallon also said local educators have used student-performance data to drive instruction, emphasized professional development and aligned curriculum with state standards.

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Although Gallon said the district's achievement should "send a strong message" to parents and the community that "Plainfield is turning the corner as a school district," he cautioned that there's still much to accomplish.

State records show that five of 13 public schools in Plainfield did not meet adequate yearly progress for 2008-09.

"Our work, although it's showing some positive signs, it's only just beginning," Gallon said.

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