



INDIANA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

TO: Mt. Tabor Elementary School
FROM: Timothy Schultz, Hearing Officer, Indiana State Board of Education
RE: Appeal by Mt. Tabor Elementary School of its 2015-16 Letter Grade
DATE: March 8, 2017

Finding: Mt. Tabor Elementary School's appeal of its 2015-16 category placement of an "F" grade should be denied.

I. Facts

Mt. Tabor Elementary School ("Mt. Tabor"), part of the New Albany Floyd County School Corporation, received a letter grade of "F" for the 2015-16 school year. Mt. Tabor appealed the "F" grade due to concerns regarding the long-term absence of two educators, with the resulting impact on students entitling the school to an improved category placement of a "D."

II. Argument and Analysis

Mt. Tabor contends that its appeal should be affirmed due to the unforeseen extended absence of two educators that impacted a number of grade 4 students at the school. During the educators' absence, long-term substitutes fulfilled the educators' education duties. However, Mt. Tabor continued to experience personnel issues as at least one of the long-term substitutes accepted a full-term position at another school, requiring Mt. Tabor to locate and hire another long-term substitute. Mt. Tabor argues that the personnel disruptions that it experience created a disadvantage to its grade 4 students.

Although unforeseen employment issues can prove a challenge for school administrators, such challenges do not relieve a school from its responsibility to educate students. Further, the argument that the drop in student scores was due solely to the absence of the permanent educator is impossible to ascertain in this case. Therefore, there is insufficient evidence to support Mt. Tabor's argument.

For the foregoing reasons, I find that Mt. Tabor's request for a "D" grade for the 2015-16 should be denied.