



Nancy S. Grasmick
State Superintendent of Schools

200 West Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • 410-767-0100 • 410-333-6442 TTY/TDD • MarylandPublicSchools.org

TO: Members of the Maryland State Board of Education
FROM: Nancy S. Grasmick *Nancy*
DATE: June 28, 2011
SUBJECT: Maryland School Assessment Scores and Adequate Yearly Progress Release

**The following confidential information is provided for your personal information.
The data are embargoed until release on Wednesday, June 29, 2011.**

At the State Board of Education meeting next month, you will receive a complete briefing on the 2011 Maryland School Assessment (MSA) results and the results of elementary and middle school Adequate Yearly Progress. The briefing will include state level results by level and subject (reading and mathematics) and disaggregated by special services. To meet federal guidelines, the results will be released to the public on June 28, 2011.

This confidential memorandum provides you with highlights of the 2011 results for your information only. The presentation at July's meeting will give you more details and will provide an opportunity to ask questions about the results.

Summary of Maryland School Assessment (MSA) Results

I wanted to review for you some of the key findings in the 2011 results. You will notice that as we have been discussing for a while now, the race codes have changed and therefore we have lost our achievement gap data for our "old" racial groups.

We are very gratified by the performance of our students in all of the reported grades, three through eight. The strong improvements we have seen since 2003, the first year of the assessment, have continued into 2011, although with scores in so many LEAs already very high, improvements are now less dramatic than in the early days of the program. We are still seeing dramatic improvements in the percentages of students scoring in the advanced level. Several important facts emerged from this year's results:

The Results

- **LEAS continue to show progress despite previous achievement of high scores.** Although most of the school systems have had high scores for the past several years, it is exciting to see that they continue to improve. Nineteen of the LEAs showed improvement in their elementary reading and middle school mathematics performance. Seventeen improved in middle school reading, and 14 improved in elementary school mathematics.
- **Scores stabilize and show progress.** Since 2003, Maryland students have made great improvements in performance on the MSAs. They have improved 26 points in elementary reading and 26.3 points in elementary math. Improvement in middle school is at 23.6 points in reading and 34 points in mathematics. As many school systems have already reached and are maintaining high scores, it is less likely the state will continue to see significant gains in scores. Therefore, while scores were generally improved this year in both content areas and levels (elementary and middle) the gains are smaller than had been seen in the earlier years of the MSA program.
- **The percentages of students scoring advanced have improved significantly.** In 2011, 40 percent of the total proficient and advanced scores in elementary reading were advanced, 42 percent of elementary mathematics and 41 percent of middle school mathematics were advanced. Almost 53 percent of all proficient/advanced scores in middle school reading were advanced scores. These data reveal an area of improvement normally hidden when we discuss only the percentage of proficient and advanced scores.
- **Services groups improving.** Students receiving FARMs services continued to close gaps with their non-FARMs peers at the elementary level in both content areas. Students with limited English skills (ELL) made progress on their achievement gaps in elementary reading and mathematics as well as middle school reading. Students receiving Special Education services saw some closing of their gaps in elementary reading as well as middle school reading and mathematics. All three of these groups still require significant improvement in order to meet MSA targets.

Note: 2011 marks the first year that Maryland has implemented the new federal race codes for accountability. This requirement has resulted in significant changes in student assignment to racial groups, and invalidates achievement gap trends they we have reported since 2003. New official trends will begin with 2011. However, our current assessment results still reveal that some racial groups underperform and this must continue to be addressed in our schools.

Data Tables

Though you will receive a more complete briefing at the State Board meeting, below are some data tables to provide an orientation to this year's MSA results.

Since 2003, state MSA scores have been steadily rising to levels where it is increasingly difficult to show significant improvement. With high percentages of students scoring

proficient or better on the assessments, the increments of improvement are now smaller than in the past when there was more opportunity for larger gains. Twenty-two school systems already have achieved scores at or above 80% in elementary reading and mathematics, 19 in middle school reading and 10 in middle school math. While significant state improvements are now dependent on the lower performing local school systems making significant progress, and on all systems making significant progress with the most challenging populations of students, it is gratifying to see improvements even in those high performing LEAs. Many of these students attend schools in the lower performing school systems.

The 2011 MSA results show continued evidence of continuing high performance combined with anticipated minor stabilization of results in elementary mathematics.

	2011 % Proficient	2010 % Proficient	2003% Proficient	2009- 2011 Growth	2003- 2011 Growth
Elementary					
Reading	88.0	86.9	62.0	+1.1	+26.0
Mathematics	86.3	86.5	60.0	-0.2	+26.3
Middle					
Reading	83.5	82.8	59.9	+0.7	+23.6
Mathematics	73.7	72.6	39.6	+1.1	+34.0

Subgroup Performance

The next table provides 2011 percent proficient data for all subgroups as well as improvement in the performance of the services subgroups since 2010. When compared to elementary reading and mathematics, and middle school reading, the data show a drop off in performance in middle school mathematics across subgroups. The good news is that overall performance continues to improve.

Reading: In elementary reading, all services subgroup scores improved. ELL students made the most progress, picking up 4.7 points. However in middle school, the ELL group lost 3.9 points, adding to their gap. FARMS and Special Education groups showed some improvement.

Mathematics: In elementary mathematics, last year's significant gains from all three services groups were not repeated; instead there was a slight decline in special education performance and a stable performance from FARMS and ELL. In middle school scores show similar patterns with FARMS and Special Education groups continued their positive progress from 2010 by posting 1.6 and 1.7 (respectively) points growth. The ELL group's performance remained stable.

MSA 2011 Percent Proficient by Subgroup, Including Growth from 2010

Group	Elementary Reading		Middle Reading		Elementary Mathematics		Middle Mathematics	
	% Prof.	Growth	% Prof.	Growth	% Prof.	Growth	% Prof.	Growth
Hispanic	86.4	N/A	78.7	N/A	83.4	N/A	66.9	N/A
Amer. Indian	83.7	N/A	80.2	N/A	83.9	N/A	71.5	N/A
Asian	95.6	N/A	93.5	N/A	95.9	N/A	92.5	N/A
African American	79.5	N/A	73.5	N/A	76.5	N/A	57.7	N/A
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	87.9	N/A	86.2	N/A	88.0	N/A	74.7	N/A
White	93.9	N/A	91.2	N/A	93.3	N/A	85.6	N/A
Two or More Races	91.5	N/A	89.8	N/A	89.9	N/A	80.9	N/A
FARMS	80.3	+1.7	72.4	+1.1	77.9	-0.4	58.5	+1.6
ELL	78.3	+4.7	43.5	-3.9	76.2	+0.4	44.0	-0.2
Special Education	68.6	+1.2	54.6	+0.9	60.6	-1.4	42.5	+1.7

Summary of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Results

I also wanted to brief you on the 2011 results of elementary and middle school Adequate Yearly Progress. Each year, according to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, Maryland must calculate Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for each school.

Annual targets. The goal of NCLB was to have every student proficient in reading and mathematics by 2014, and targets were set back in 2003 in order to “pace” schools to meet that target. Each year the target (referred to as the Annual Measureable Objective, or AMO) increases to ensure schools progress toward meeting the 2014 goal. Therefore the closer we come to 2014, the harder it becomes for a school to meet these targets for all subgroups. This year, with the new race codes, two additional subgroups have been added to that list. Schools not meeting the AMO target for all subgroups in any given year are designated as having “not met” the Adequate Yearly Progress requirement.

Our AYP data continue to reveal the increasing difficulty of meeting the increasing AMOs for all subgroups. More schools are struggling, and they are missing AYP by more subgroups than in earlier years. This spring, USDE predicted that 80 percent of schools would not meet AYP this year.

We are celebrating that four elementary and middle schools exited School Improvement in 2011. However, this year there was another increase in the numbers of schools not meeting AYP. Just under fifty-six percent of elementary and middle schools met AYP in

2011, down from 70 percent in 2010, but still ahead of USDE's prediction of 20 percent. There are currently 251 schools in School Improvement, an increase of 76 from 2010. We were pleased to see that 104 (57 percent) of the 184 schools that did not meet AYP in 2010 for the first time did meet AYP in 2011, keeping them from entering School Improvement. This indicates that the local attention category that allows time for local intervention is still an effective option to assist schools that are beginning to show signs of difficulty meeting the targets. Two-hundred fifty-eight schools entered the local attention category in 2011 because they missed AYP for the first time. This was an increase of 76 from last year. These 181 schools can avoid School Improvement if they make AYP in 2012.

Many schools are struggling with their special education subgroup. Of the 133 schools that missed AYP because of only one subgroup, 87 (65 percent) failed to make AYP solely because of their special education subgroup. This accounts for 17 percent of all of the schools not meeting the AYP standard.

A more detailed discussion of the MSA and AYP results will take place at the Board Meeting. MSDE staff is engaged in ongoing analyses as we add high school and system-level AYP data to complete our AYP picture for 2011.

Public release. As per past practice, detailed statewide, system, and local school MSA and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) data will be posted Wednesday, June 29, at noon on the Maryland State Department of Education's report card Web site, www.mdreportcard.org.

Also administered in 2011, but not reported at the August meeting are required science assessments at grades 5 and 8. Results of those assessments will be released later this year.

ACTION:

For information only

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