

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 27, 2013

Harford Elementary and Middle Schools Continue to Progress on State Tests Through Transition

Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) students in grades three through eight continue to make progress toward Maryland School Assessment (MSA) targets in both reading and mathematics, according to data released today by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

In elementary reading and mathematics, 91 percent and 89 percent of students scored proficient, respectively. In middle school reading and mathematics, 88 percent and 80 percent of students scored proficient, respectively. In 2013, 25 of the 42 elementary and middle schools received at least a 90 percent proficiency rate overall in reading, and 19 schools received at least a 90 percent proficiency rate overall in mathematics. In addition, all but two elementary and middle schools achieved their annual measureable objectives (AMOs), or state-established proficiency targets, for attendance rates.

This year, 19 of the 42 elementary and middle schools did not meet the AMOs in reading and/or mathematics in one or more subgroups, falling short by just one or two students in most cases. The focus remains on providing support and intervention for those schools in need.

“Historic curriculum transitions and accountability benchmarks have been implemented across Maryland and the nation. In light of these factors, HCPS is committed to ensuring that each child is afforded every opportunity to be successful,” said HCPS Interim Superintendent of Schools Barbara P. Canavan. “All of our teachers, school administrators and central office staff are working in sync to analyze school data. They are charged with knowing and understanding our student population and developing programs to meet the individual needs of each child.”

In 2012, Maryland was granted flexibility regarding the Federal No Child Left Behind law. The Maryland accountability plan focuses on student growth, on-time graduation rates, and college and career readiness for all students. While the assessments remain unchanged, the AMOs are calculated differently to reflect school-specific data based on 2011 performance. Rather than focusing on all students achieving 100 percent proficiency by 2014, the new plan set a trajectory for steady increased student proficiency by 2017. The 2011 MSA data set a new baseline, and the AMOs incrementally rise each year based on each school’s individual baseline. AMOs were calculated for the student population in each school, as well as for special service and racial subgroups.

HCPS began implementing the Common Core State Standards last school year, and the transition will be complete in the 2013-14 school year. During the month of July, more than 1,300 HCPS teachers and administrators participated in the Shifts in Education Summer Conference where they attended sessions on professional learning with content supervisors, teacher facilitators and their colleagues on a variety of topics. In addition to Common Core State Standards, other workshop topics included Accountability and Assessment, Disciplinary Literacy, Universal Design for Learning, Teacher Evaluation Process, Charlotte Danielson’s Framework for Teaching, and Student Learning Objectives.

For more information regarding Maryland’s new accountability program, [click here](#). Harford County and Maryland MSA data is available on the Maryland Report Card website at www.MDReportCard.org.

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