



# Press Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **HARFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMANCE**

*Achievement improvements on SAT and AP; baseline scores set for PARCC assessments*

Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) high school students continue to meet the rigorous standards set forth by the state as evident through a variety of measures and assessments. HCPS students are outperforming the state and nation on the SAT® exam. In addition, HCPS outscored the nation on the Advanced Placement (AP) exams. State data for AP exams has not yet been released.

"Our student performance at the high school level continues to rise on SAT and AP exams. We value and applaud these results, and note that our educators are using multiple assessment measures to evaluate the progress of each individual student," said HCPS Superintendent of Schools Barbara P. Canavan.

### **HCPS SAT and AP Results**

SAT participation continues to increase concurrently with increased performance. In 2015, 64 percent of graduates participated in the SAT, up from 61 percent of graduates the year prior. All three areas of the SAT saw an increase in the mean scores: critical reading increased from 511 in 2014 to 513 in 2015, writing increased from 486 in 2014 to 492 in 2015, and mathematics increased from 521 in 2014 to 528 in 2015.

With a focus on rigor at every level, Harford County continues to experience the trend in increased participation and performance in AP courses and exams. HCPS had nearly a seven percent increase in AP course enrollment during the 2014-15 school year, with 3,434 students taking at least one AP course last year and a combined course enrollment of 6,347. Last year in Harford County, 3,878 AP exams were administered. Approximately 60 percent of the students taking an AP exam scored a 3, 4, or 5.

### **HCPS High School PARCC Results**

Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) data for high school students in each district across the state was released today on [Maryland Report Card](#). These assessment scores now set a new baseline for data gathered to determine if high school students are on track to graduate ready for college or careers. HCPS students who were enrolled in Algebra I, Algebra II, or English 10 last year participated in the first full implementation of PARCC and scored higher than the State average.

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PARCC exams are the first assessments aligned to Maryland's College and Career Ready Standards, which set a higher bar for student learning. PARCC results cannot be compared with the previously administered High School Assessments (HSA), which the State used for a decade, because this is both a new and different assessment. The assessments go beyond the fill-in-the-blank and multiple-choice models of standardized tests by emphasizing the need for students to demonstrate critical thinking, problem solving, and clear writing.

More than 56 percent of HCPS high school students who participated in the PARCC English 10 assessment are meeting or exceeding the college and career expectations as compared to the state's average of 40 percent. Nearly 47 percent of HCPS secondary students are meeting or exceeding the Algebra I college and career expectations on the PARCC assessments administered last spring, compared to the state's average of 31 percent. Twenty-eight percent of HCPS high school students are meeting or exceeding the Algebra II expectations, compared to the state's average of 20 percent.

[PARCC resources](#) for parents and guardians are available on the school system's website, [hcps.org](http://hcps.org), by clicking the 'Maryland College & Career-Ready Standards and Common Core' button on the left-hand side of the homepage. Schools have also posted links to more information on their individual Edline pages. A districtwide call was made to HCPS households last month directing parents/guardians to the online resources.

Elementary and middle school data will be released later in December, along with individual student reports for all students. Further information regarding the individual student reports can be located at [www.understandthescore.org](http://www.understandthescore.org).

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