



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 22, 2023

Harford County Public Schools Celebrates Positive Progress in Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program Results

Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) is pleased to announce the release of the 2022-2023 Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP) results, showcasing encouraging advancements in student performance. The MCAP assessments measure a student's mastery of grade-level standards in English/Language Arts, mathematics, and science. The district acknowledges the significance of these outcomes while underscoring the need for more time and data to establish a comprehensive comparison, as the MCAP underwent substantial changes just two years ago.

The recently unveiled MCAP results reflect the dedicated efforts of students, educators, parents, and the community at large. The district acknowledges the positive strides made in student performance across various subject areas, indicative of the ongoing commitment to enhancing education quality within Harford County Public Schools.

HCPS saw the largest gains in English/Language Arts. HCPS increased its rank compared to all public school systems in Maryland in grades 3, 5, 6, and 7. In the 2021-22 school year, HCPS ranked tenth place in Maryland in English/Language Arts and increased the rank to ninth place for the 2022-23 school year. In mathematics, HCPS held the ninth-place rank across all Maryland schools.

In grades three through five, 55.1% of students earned a proficient score in English/Language Arts compared to the state's rate of 46.2%. In mathematics, grades three through five students achieved a proficiency rate of 40.3% compared to the state at 33.3%.

In grades six through eight, HCPS saw the largest gains in English/Language Arts. Middle school proficiency increased from 45.5% in 2022 to 54% in 2023. HCPS outscored the state performance of 47.4%. In mathematics, 15% of middle school students taking middle school mathematics courses were proficient compared to the state's performance of 14.5%. Many HCPS middle school students take high school mathematics courses including Algebra I and Geometry. These students do not take the grade level mathematics assessments but instead take the Algebra I or Geometry assessment.

At the high school level, tenth-grade student achievement increased on the English 10 assessment from 56.9% in 2022 to 59.1% in 2023. HCPS outscored the state performance of 53.5%. Algebra I assessment performance continues to be a challenge across the state. HCPS performance in Algebra I for middle and high school students increased from 14.1% in 2022 to 17.7% in 2023. Maryland students earned a proficiency rate of 17.2% in 2023.

In science, students in grades five and eight are assessed. Fifth-grade performance increased from 33.5% in 2022 to 40.4% in 2023. Eighth-grade scores decreased from 42.9% in 2022 to 32.8% in

2023. This performance aligns with the state's decline in performance as well from 35% in 2022 to 26% in 2023.

Over the past few years, Harford County Public Schools has proactively embraced changes in curriculum, teaching methodologies, and student support systems to ensure a dynamic and effective learning environment. The improvements in the MCAP scores are a testament to the collaborative approach adopted by the district to empower students for success in a rapidly evolving educational landscape.

However, it is important to acknowledge that the MCAP itself has undergone significant changes in the past two years. The modifications in testing formats, content, and evaluation criteria make it essential to consider these factors when interpreting the current results. The district urges stakeholders to exercise caution while drawing direct comparisons with prior assessment outcomes, recognizing the need for additional data to establish a reliable baseline for measurement. The state's former assessments, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) assessments were administered from 2014 until 2019. State assessments were not given in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-pandemic.

Dr. Sean Bulson, Superintendent of Harford County Public Schools, commented, "We are pleased to witness the progress reflected in this year's MCAP results. Our students and educators have demonstrated unwavering dedication, and these outcomes validate their hard work. At the same time, while it's encouraging to see growth in nearly all areas, we cannot afford to be satisfied while we still have many students not meeting expectations. We will continue to review the data closely and will rely on the success of the schools who showed the greatest gains in achievement this year to expand those gains throughout the entire school system."

Students who were assessed last year will be receiving individual scores during the week of October 9. The reports will be provided by their school and will include the student's overall scale score and proficiency level as well as indicate their strengths and areas of improvement. Parent interpretation guides are available at <https://support.mdassessments.com/reporting/>.

Harford County Public Schools remains committed to transparency and collaboration. The district will continue to engage with parents, educators, and community members to ensure a well-rounded understanding of the MCAP results and their implications. As the MCAP evolves and additional data becomes available, Harford County Public Schools is poised to provide a more comprehensive and accurate assessment of its educational progress.

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