

Grade 3-10 TCAP results released

Holyoke School District's 2013 Transitional Colorado Assessment Program results for grades 3-10 showed consistent progress toward district goals and much to celebrate in the elementary school results.

The district met or exceeded the state average of proficient and advanced students on 12 of the 27 tests, up from nine tests one year ago and 10 tests in 2011. In addition, the proficient and advanced scores increased in 20 of the 27 tests compared to last year.

According to growth measures, the district exceeded the median growth percentile for the state in 12 of 21 measures, two more tests than last year and four more than two years ago.

"There is a great deal to celebrate this year as we look at the steady increases districtwide in both the proficient and advanced scores, as well as the growth scores," said Superintendent Bret Miles.

"This year also marked a significant achievement by Holyoke Elementary, bringing in the best scores in the last six years as a building. We are all so proud of the extra efforts from our teachers and principals in both buildings. Their work is making a difference," added Miles.

Holyoke Elementary exceeded the state average in all four reading tests, all four writing tests and three out of four math tests. "It is a result of hard work, dedication and focused efforts in all tested grades as well as the primary grades where so many of the key skills are first developed," said Miles.

Progress is consistent toward district goals; elementary data shows significant increase

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

Extra support from reading specialists, special education and the English as a Second Language department are also evident in the fact that every test in the elementary was better than the state average for unsatisfactory students.

In fact, there was not one unsatisfactory score in Holyoke Elementary on the writing test this last year, Miles noted.

Holyoke School District has set its own targets for student achievement, outlined by the Standard of Excellence team and included in the district's strategic plan, Destination 2016.

The goals of the district are clear—to have students achieving in the top 25 percent in the state. Each test has a target for proficient and advanced, which will equal the top quartile in the state. The 2016 goal for growth is to have each test at the 67th percentile.

Several tests met the mark set in Destination 2016, including 6th-grade reading, 3rd-grade writing, 5th-grade writing and 5th-grade math.

Several other tests are within one or two students of making that mark, such as 3rd-grade reading, 5th-grade reading, 6th-grade writing, 3rd-grade math and 10th-grade science.

In terms of growth scores, four tests also met the long-term goal this year: 5th- and 6th-grade writing and 5th- and 6th-grade math.

“The board and administration is interested in steady improvement over time, and this year we continue to see that instructional decisions in the classroom are making a difference,” said Miles.

Celebrations in this year's status results include:

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—12 of 27 tests beat the state average (9 in 2012 and 10 in 2011).

—20 of 27 tests are better proficient and advanced scores than last year (15 better 2011-12 and 16 better 2010-11).

—22 of 27 unsatisfactory scores improved from last year.

—7 of 27 tests have best P&A scores in the last seven years, and 8 of 21 in growth scores.

—4 tests beat the 2016 goal for P&A, and 4 tests beat the 2016 goal for growth.

—Every elementary test was better than state in unsatisfactory.

—11 out of 13 elementary tests beat the state average in P&A.

—8 of 9 tests in elementary exceed state average growth.

—3rd-grade math had 45 percent advanced scores.

—5th-grade math had 36 percent advanced.

—7th-grade writing has best score for P&A in seven years.

—2nd-highest score since 2007 and notable gain in 7th-grade reading P&A.

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—Large gain in 9th-grade writing in both P&A and in average growth.

Principals met with each of their teaching staff Wednesday, Aug. 14 to review 2013 TCAP results as well as other student achievement data. Each building began the process of adjusting building goals and improvement strategies based on the new data.

This has been an annual practice which results in the publishing of unified improvement plans on the department of education's website.

Reports from both teacher data sessions were positive, noting that the teachers balanced finding celebrations in the data and focusing on areas needing improvement.

Transitional Colorado Assessment Program was formerly known as CSAP (Colorado Student Assessment Program) from 1997 until last year.

The statewide mandatory assessment was renamed this year as the test began to transition into the newly adopted state standards. The 2014 tests will mark the end of TCAP for reading and math as the state will start its new test in 2015.

Results from TCAP come in two forms—status and growth. Status results for all TCAP tests are classified into one of four categories: advanced, proficient, partially proficient and unsatisfactory.

Typically, students who fall into the advanced or proficient categories are considered to be meeting the state standards.

Growth scores are calculated by taking all the students in the state who scored the same in one year, and then determining how the same are distributed the next year. Being at the 50th percentile is the state average.

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