

For Immediate Release

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Pennsylvania's Second Largest School District Makes AYP Twice in Three Years

PITTSBURGH, September 1, 2011 –Today Superintendent Linda S. Lane announced that the Pittsburgh Public Schools had made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for the second time in three years. Making AYP is a particularly challenging feat for large urban districts because of the greater number of targets that must be met. Today's announcement marks the second time the District has achieved AYP in the nine years school districts have been held accountable to do so since NCLB was signed into law January 2002. By achieving AYP the District moves into "Making Progress" status by meeting state and federal targets set under NCLB. "Making Progress" status means that the District met all targets on each of the three standards – high school graduation, test participation and academic performance.

At a special press conference held this afternoon Dr. Lane remarked, "Today is a good day in the Pittsburgh Public Schools. This is the second time the District has made AYP since the launch of our *Excellence for All* reform plan five years ago. Today's results show that the core strategies we have put into place are taking hold, and that more students are on track to Promise-Readiness. We are confident that our work to ensure an effective teacher in every classroom, every day is critical to the continued growth of our students." Lane continued, "This could not have been accomplished without the hard work of our students, teachers and principals at every level. We must also thank our families and community partners for their support and confidence as we have made difficult but the right decisions for children. "

In order for the District to make AYP at least one of the grade bands 3-5, 6-8, or 9-12 must meet all of the targets in Mathematics and at least one grade band must meet all of the Reading targets for all students and all subgroups. In 2011, the District had two grade spans (3-5 and 6-8) meet all 36 targets (in mathematics and one grade span (6-8) met all 18 targets in reading.

New Performance-Based Plan Rewards Teachers for District AYP Results

The historic collective bargaining agreement reached in 2010 between the District and the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers (PFT), and anchored around the goals set in the District's **Empowering Effective Teachers** plan, included opportunities for teachers to earn additional compensation based upon student achievement gains. Since the District achieved AYP approximately 1,400 teachers on the top step of the salary schedule will be eligible to receive up to \$1,000 in additional compensation.

In addition to being on the top salary step schedule before July 1st of the earning year, teachers must meet additional attendance and performance requirements. As a result of the District making AYP for the 2010-11 school year, the District anticipates awarding approximately \$1.4 million to eligible teachers.

"While we remain steadfast in our work to improve the sustainability of the District, we remain committed to the collaborative work we began with the PFT to increase the overall effectiveness of our educator workforce," said Superintendent Lane. "We know that this work will help us make real progress towards our goal of ensuring 80% of students graduate and complete a college or workforce certification. It pleases me to announce that as a result of today's achievement, many teachers across the District will be compensated for their hard work."

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32 Schools Make AYP

In 2011, 32 District schools made AYP as the reading target rose 9 points (63% to 72%) and the mathematics target rose 11 points (56% to 67%). Although nine fewer schools made AYP than the previous year, seven of the nine schools missed only one performance target causing them not to make AYP this year. The District has seen how a transition year for schools with changing student enrollment can still lead to significant progress for its students.

“Last year was a year of transition for many of our schools. School closures, feeder pattern reconfigurations and school choice resulted in a shift of enrollment for some of our schools. While a receiving school may experience a slight setback in their AYP status during a year where they are adjusting to changes in student enrollment, we often see individual student performance improve during that transition year,” said Superintendent Lane.

Making Progress Status

Since it made AYP, the District, previously in Corrective Action II, will now enter a probationary period called “Making Progress.” The District must meet state targets for a second consecutive year in order to be considered on track to meet the NCLB goal.

The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) measures individual student growth and determines the level to which school programs enable students to reach Pennsylvania proficiency standards in reading and math. PSSA scores are used to determine a district's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under NCLB. The law requires states to set targets for AYP based on student achievement data. In 2011 performance targets increased for NCLB requiring districts and schools to have at least 72% of its students score proficient or advanced in reading (compared with 63% in 2010) and at least 67% score proficient or advanced in mathematics (compared with 56% in 2010). States are required to increase student achievement targets for AYP to meet the NCLB goal of having 100% of all students *proficient* in reading and math by the 2013-14 school year. In addition to making AYP by meeting or exceeding targets, districts can make AYP through Confidence Interval, Safe Harbor, Safe Harbor Confidence Interval, or Growth Model.

For More Information

To view a video of today's press conference or for a complete listing of district-level PSSA results by grade level please use the link <http://www.pps.k12.pa.us/StudentAchievementResults> or visit the Pittsburgh Public Schools website at www.pps.k12.pa.us. You may also call the **Parent Hotline at 412-622-7920** or visit the Division of Communications, Room 204, Pittsburgh Public Schools Administration Building, 341 South Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213.

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