



# NEWS

OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

341 S. Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Superintendent Anthony Hamlet Releases 2019 Student Achievement Results**

*District-wide Gains Seen on Majority of PSSA Exams While Subgroup Performance Varies Across Exams*

PITTSBURGH September 3, 2019 - Pittsburgh Public Schools students achieved District-wide gains on 8 of 14 exams in the 2019 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), according to results released this evening by Superintendent Anthony Hamlet. Additional gains were realized in all major subgroups of students, including African Americans, English Language Learners, and students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).

Overall, the percentage of students scoring proficient and advanced in English Language Arts (ELA) increased on 4 of 6 testing points, 2 of 6 in Mathematics, and on both exams in Science. Following two years of steady performance, District performance on the Keystone Exam declined on all three tests.

“We are pleased with the steady progress we are seeing in student performance on the PSSA, and encouraged to see that the hard work of our teachers, administrators, staff, and students is bearing fruit,” said Dr. Hamlet. “While we would have preferred to see a third year of positive results on the Keystone Exams, we intend to drill down into the reason behind the decline and address contributing factors — something we are better able to do with the introduction this year of the new MAP Growth system, which will help us pinpoint these gaps and provide greater differentiated support to students.”

The Northwest Evaluation Association’s Measures of Academic Progress system, nicknamed MAP Growth, offers more data from fewer assessments to create a more precise evaluation of student progress and provide the data and supports that teachers need to make instructional decisions. Through Map Growth, the District will receive valuable data on student performance on Pennsylvania state standards, eligible content, Lexiles, and K-2 foundational skills. Additionally, MAP Growth will help identify students who may require additional diagnostic assessments and interventions.

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### 2019 District-Level PSSA Results

The PSSA measures individual student performance and determines the level to which school programs enable students to reach Pennsylvania proficiency standards in ELA and Mathematics in Grades 3-8 and Science in Grades 4 and 8.

Overall, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on the **ELA PSSA** increased from 46.2 percent in 2018 to 47.3 percent in 2019. Grade level ELA results include:

- 3rd-grade student performance declined 5.2 points to 50.9 % from 56.1% in 2018.
- 4th-grade student performance increased 7.7 points to 53.3% from 45.6% in 2018.
- 5th-grade student performance increased 3.1 points to 45.5% from 42.4% in 2018.
- 6th-grade student performance increased 3.4 points to 46.3% from 42.9% in 2018.
- 7th-grade student performance increased 1.1 points to 45.9% from 44.8% in 2018.
- 8th-grade student performance decreased 2.9 points to 42.0% from 44.9% in 2018.

Overall, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced in **PSSA Mathematics** remained steady at 28.7% in 2019 from 28.8% in 2018. Grade level Mathematics results include:

- 3rd-grade student performance declined 0.1 points to 44.3 % from 44.7% in 2018.
- 4th-grade student performance increased 2.3 points to 33.6% from 31.3% in 2018.
- 5th-grade student performance decreased 1.5 points to 27.8% from 29.3% in 2018.
- 6th-grade student performance decreased 3.0 points to 22.1% from 25.1% in 2018.
- 7th-grade student performance increased 3.5 points to 24.3% from 20.8% in 2018.
- 8th-grade student performance decreased 0.8 points to 19.5% from 20.3% in 2018.

The District saw overall gains in **Science** proficiency from 46.2% in 2018 to 49.8% in 2019.

- Grade 4, proficiency levels in Science increased 3.5 points to 62.8% from 59.3% in 2018.
- Grade 8 proficiency in Science also increased 4.5 points to 36.5% from 33% in 2018.

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### Subgroup Student Achievement

The District has made the elimination of racial disparities in academic achievement one of four desired outcomes of its strategic plan. The percent of African American students scoring proficient or advanced increased on 8 of 14 exams in 2019. The percent of English Language Learners (ELL) students scoring proficient or advanced increased on 11 of 14 exams in 2019, while all major subgroups (Race, IEP and ELL) achieved gains on both Science exams, Grade 4 and 6 ELA exams, and Grade 4 in Mathematics.

### 2019 Keystone Exam Results

Keystone Exams are end-of-course exams aligned to the Pennsylvania Core Standards that measure student learning in Algebra 1, Literature and Biology. Students take these exams after completing the corresponding course. Although students may take the Keystone Exams at various times throughout their high school career, results for State accountability purposes are attributed to the school when the student reaches 11th Grade.

Following two years of steady performance, overall District performance on the Keystone Exams declined on all three exams. Results include:

- Keystone Literature accountability results show a decrease from 61.8 percent in 2018 to 58.2 percent in 2019.
- Algebra 1 accountability results declined from 49.6 percent in 2018 to 47.6 percent in 2019.
- Biology results dropped from 41.9 percent in 2018 to 39.3 percent in 2019.

Subgroup performance on the 2019 Keystone exams varied, with English Language Learners and White students seeing gains in Literature performance, while students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) achieved gains in Biology. African American student performance declined on all three exams.

This evening's full presentation is available on the Board's section of the website at <https://www.pghschools.org>.

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