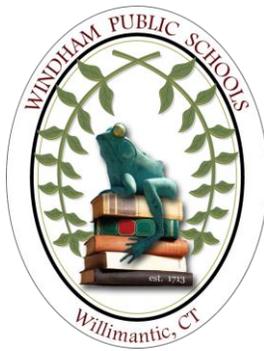


Dr. Patricia Garcia, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools
355 High Street, Unit B
Willimantic, CT 06226
(860) 465-2310
pGarcia@windham.k12.ct.us



Margaret Chatey
Public Information Officer
355 High Street, Unit B
Willimantic, CT 06226
(860) 465-2105
mChatey@windham.k12.ct.us

PRESS RELEASE

Media Contact: Margaret Chatey
mChatey@windham.k12.ct.us
(860) 465-2105 Office
(860) 771-1224 Cell

Windham Schools Exhibit Steady Growth on State's SBAC: Make Progress on Closing the Achievement Gap

Windham, CT September 11, 2019 The Connecticut Department of Education released the results of the Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) scores for students in grades 3 through 8 this week, and Windham Schools showed some marked improvement in both English Language Arts (ELA) and Math.

In ELA in grade 3, Windham students improved by 8.4% in the number of students meeting or exceeding grade-level achievement standards compared to the previous year. Among grade 6 students, 5.7% more students met Levels 3 and 4 on the assessments. Level 3 is defined as meeting the achievement at the grade level and Level 4 is defined as exceeding the achievement of the grade level standards.

Windham Schools saw an overall increase of 2.7% of students meeting competency standards in comparison to 2017-18, reflecting an 8.5% overall increase in the four years since 2014-15 when this statewide assessment was implemented.

In Math, the district has shown an even more dramatic improvement. This year's 2.6% district-wide improvement in achievement in grades K-8 continues a trend marking an overall 13.2% increase since 2014-15. Year over year increases were 6.2% improvement in grade 3, 5.7% improvement in grade 6, and 6.9% more students in grade 8 achieving or exceeding grade level in Math. Windham is outpacing the statewide progress in Math. According to a release published by the State of Connecticut on September 9, statewide proficiency in Mathematics has increased 9.2 percentage points since the state began administering the assessments.

"We are very proud of the progress our students and staff have made in these key grades in both ELA and Math," says Superintendent of Schools Patricia Garcia. "District-wide we have made a tremendous investment sharing best instructional practices with our teaching staff, and deploying our resources to provide students the one-on-one help they need to improve in every subject.

-MORE-

“Our investment in the American Reading Company (ARC) program in grades 1-3, for example, has delivered students culturally relevant and engaging reading materials. We know that when students are reading at grade level by grade 3 they are off and running to continued academic success. I sincerely believe the ARC program was a contributing factor to this success when coupled with the intense focus of our teachers on students’ individual needs,” she adds. “I also want to recognize the hard work our instructional teams have invested to provide students what they need learn.”

“We are also focusing on areas where the SBAC scores indicated we are not making the progress we need to be, specifically in grade 4 and 7 Math and Grade 7 ELA where we saw slight decreases compared to 2017-18. Our Principals and instructional coaches will be closely analyzing individual students’ strengths and areas needing improvement so we can address those specific skills they are missing,” says Dr. Garcia.

According to the Department of Education’s press announcement, “High needs students reflect their highest achievement in 2018-19 and are improving at a rate that is faster than the state as a whole. When evaluated separately, students from low income families, English learners, and students with disabilities are also showing improvements.”

Approximately 28% of Windham’s 3,300 students are considered English Language Learners, and this type of standardized testing can be challenging when a student is not familiar with the “Academic English” language. Nevertheless, the district continues efforts to build the capacity of teachers to address second language learning developments as part of its commitment to equity in education.

“It is important to our educational professionals across the district that our students receive equitable access to education. We want to provide each student what they need to be academically successful in preparing for college and career. With this improvement in scores, we are encouraged by the changes we have implemented,” says Dr. Garcia. “Windham students have closed the achievement gap with their peers in Connecticut by one-fourth in Math and by one third in ELA since the state began SBAC testing. We need to continue to improve our growth rates to significantly reduce and ultimately eliminate the achievement gap,” she adds.

The complete results for the state, districts and schools, and student groups are available on the public EdSight portal at <http://edsight.ct.gov>.

###