

BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairperson and Members
Boston School Committee

FROM: John P. McDonough
Interim Superintendent

DATE: October 1, 2014

SUBJECT: 2014 MCAS and Accountability Results

On Friday, September 19, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education officially released the 2014 MCAS results and accountability determinations. Given our focus on early literacy, we are seeing signs of promise in the BPS. Our 3rd grade English Language Arts MCAS proficiency scores are rising by four points in scores released today after three consecutive years of decline. In Mathematics, 3rd grade proficiency levels jumped by six points, surpassing the 50 percent mark for the first time ever and reaching 53 percent. This is the first time that a majority of BPS third graders scored “proficient or advanced” in mathematics as measured by the MCAS, with a 17-point jump since 2008 – when just one-third of 3rd grade students were proficient or advanced.

BPS students are also outpacing the state in MCAS score growth across nearly every grade. English Language Learners and students with disabilities are also sustaining high levels of academic growth, a trend that began last year and is holding relatively steady today. In English Language Arts, BPS students exceeded or equaled statewide growth trends in all but grades 5 and 10, and over a seven-year period have exceeded or equaled statewide trends in every grade. In Math, BPS students outperformed statewide growth trends in 3rd, 4th, 8th and 10th grade, and have outperformed the state over seven years in grades 3, 4, 6 and 7.

At the same time, we still have significant work to do in many areas. Proficiency gaps persist in all grades. While achievement gaps in 3rd grade for African-American and white peers has declined by 8 points in the last year, in the majority of grades achievement gaps across racial and ethnic groups for both proficiency and growth are largely unchanged.

Tonight, Dr. Kamal Chavda will share the 2014 MCAS results. He will also share an update on the status of our schools within the state accountability system. Dr. Chavda will be available to answer any questions that you may have at that time. Thank you.