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Harford graduation rate remains high Joppatowne/North Harford/Fallston Class of 2009 realize big gains

Harford County Public Schools earned a graduation rate of 86.95 for the Class of 2009, according to data released by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) during its Board meeting on Monday, September 21. Harford exceeded the Annual Measurable Objective, or AMO, of 85.5 for 2009 graduation rate, achieving Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as a system in that academic area.

To meet AYP in Maryland, all students within a school, as well as eight student subgroups within that school (African American, Asian, White, and Hispanic students, those students receiving free and reduced price meals, students with limited English proficiency, and students receiving special education services) must reach the AMO in both reading and math, and on other criteria. Graduation rate is the “other” academic measure for AYP for high schools.

Graduation rate is calculated by dividing the number of high school graduates by the sum of the drop outs for grades nine through 12, plus the number of high school graduates.

North Harford High School achieved the largest improvement with a 2009 graduation rate of 93 percent, up nearly four percentage points from the previous year. Joppatowne and Fallston High schools also achieved significant gains and met AYP in the graduation rate academic measure.

In addition to graduation rate, the Maryland Report Card also reports a drop-out rate for each high school. The drop-out rate reflects the number of students in a graduating class who, at any time between grades nine and 12, leave school for any reason before graduation or completion of an approved educational program and are not known to enroll in another school or state-approved program during the school year. Harford County’s drop-out rate for 2009 was 2.32 percent, which represents a decline of 0.60 percent compared to 2008 and the lowest rate reported since 1993. Statewide, the drop-out rate reported for 2009 was 2.6 percent.

“Harford County continues to make progress in getting more students to graduate on time with a meaningful diploma, however there is more work to be done,” said Superintendent Robert M. Tomback. “Our goal is to reach every child, every day, and give each student every opportunity to graduate ready to succeed.”

Three high schools failed to meet the AMO for graduation rate: Aberdeen High, Edgewood High and the Alternative Education Center, while the remaining schools met or exceeded the objective for 2009. Focused interventions have been implemented at not only the high schools where graduation rate is an issue, but all the high school to ensure that every child graduates.

Individual high school scores, system-level AYP, and state-level AYP data are now available on the MSDE report card website (www.MDReportCard.org).