



## Harford County Public Schools

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Harford elementary/middle scores remain high**

*Harford students show continuous improvement on state tests; Edgewood Middle achieves AYP*

Harford County Public School students continue to perform well on the Maryland School Assessments (MSA) taken by third through eighth graders in reading and math, despite the increasingly rigorous targets. According to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) data released today regarding the 2010 MSAs, nearly 75 percent of all Harford elementary and middle schools combined made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). In addition, previously underperforming sub-groups are making great strides, and in many cases narrowing the achievement gap. Student proficiency rates in both reading and math remain high.

All students in a school and each sub-group of students, as defined by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, must meet the annual measurable objectives (AMO) for both reading and math in order for the school to achieve AYP. In addition, elementary and middle schools must meet the AMO for attendance rates. Student sub-group areas, as defined by NCLB, include students with disabilities, students who are Limited English Proficient, students in poverty and students categorized by race/ethnicity.

Moving toward the 2014 goal of 100 percent proficiency, the performance target established by MSDE is increasing rapidly each year. Harford County schools are making progress toward this goal. In 2010, among the 32 elementary schools, reading proficiency rates for the total population rose to more than 90 percent in 20 schools, and mathematics proficiency rates for the total population exceeded 90 percent in 21 schools. Of the nine middle schools, reading proficiency remained stable with five schools reaching 90 percent.

"Our teachers are focused on continuing to increase student achievement across the board, and we will remain working tirelessly toward the goal of 100 percent proficiency," said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Robert M. Tomback. "I'm particularly proud of the strides we have made in narrowing the achievement gap for students, especially our special education and low socio-economic students. Our students should be commended for responding to and, in many cases, exceeding the high expectations set for them."

Edgewood Middle School (EMS) was among the schools with the most impressive improvement. For the second consecutive year, EMS met AYP in every sub-group area exiting them from the School Improvement List. This year, previously underperforming subgroups, including African-American students, students in poverty, and special education students, all experienced gains at Edgewood Middle.

In reading, the percent of EMS students in the aggregate achieving proficient or advanced reached an all-time high of more than 81 percent this year, an increase of more than five percent compared to 2009. In mathematics, proficiency rates for all students in the aggregate improved, rising from 63.3 percent in 2009 to 69.6 percent in 2010, while African-Americans improved by four percentage points, students in poverty improved eight percentage points, and special education students increased by 17 percentage points. Overall, EMS realized significant improvement in all sub-group areas in both reading and math earning AYP status.

Edgewood Middle School Principal Dr. Lawrence Rudolph, having completed his second year providing leadership to the school, credits the dedication and determination of his students and staff for achieving these results.

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### MSA Results for Harford County Public Schools

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“Edgewood Middle School is a premiere school in Harford County committed to empowering students as learners, leaders, and innovators,” said Dr. Rudolph on behalf of the EMS administrative team. “This achievement is one of many indications that EMS is continually working hard to align instruction, high expectations, and engagement of all stakeholders to achieve at high levels. Our students and teachers have proven that they are competent and able to be successful in the academic arena. We are very proud of our accomplishments over the last two years, and will continue to do what is best for all kids.”

This year, of the middle schools on the 2009 Schools in Improvement List, in addition to Edgewood Middle, Fallston and North Harford middle schools also achieved AYP. Fallston Middle exited the list this year; however, North Harford will need to make AYP again in 2011 in order to be removed from the list. Reaching more than 93 percent in reading and 85 percent in math, Southampton Middle continues to meet and exceed the AMOs, achieving AYP again this year for the eighth consecutive year. While realizing significant gains but failing to meet the AMO, the remaining middle schools will focus on improving the achievement of all sub-groups.

At the elementary level, nearly 85 percent of schools made AYP. Edgewood Elementary, a school where students in poverty comprise 65 percent of the population, realized the most significant improvement in reading proficiency with an increase of more than 11 percent from the previous year. The elementary schools that failed to achieve AYP were Magnolia, William Paca/Old Post Road, Bakerfield, Hickory, and North Harford.

Each of the five elementary schools that failed to achieve AYP realized improvement in many sub-group areas, however. Most notably, William Paca/Old Post Road achieved a 10.7 percent increase in math proficiency by the African-American sub-group. Bakerfield Elementary also realized a 10 percent increase in the students of poverty sub-group area in reading. Achieving 100 percent proficiency in two sub-group areas in reading and two in math, Hickory Elementary continues to make significant progress, failing to meet the mark only in the special education sub-group. Magnolia Elementary increased its special education reading proficiency by 14.8 percent and special education math by more than four percent. North Harford Elementary also achieved 100 percent proficiency in seven sub-group areas, four in reading and three in math.

As part of the NCLB legislation, two Title I elementary schools which failed to achieve AYP for the second consecutive year will now offer transfer options to students. William Paca/Old Post Road and Magnolia elementary schools will both hold informational meetings for parents to discuss transfer options. William Paca/Old Post Road will hold an information meeting at the school on August 2<sup>nd</sup> and Magnolia will hold its meeting at school on August 3<sup>rd</sup>. Both meetings will begin at 6:30 p.m.

To support the schools that have entered the Schools in Improvement List, energies will be focused on helping teachers reach each child. Best practices will be shared among schools focused on a goal of continuous improvement for all students in Harford County schools.

For more information regarding Harford County and State MSA and AYP data, visit the Maryland Report Card website at [www.MDReportCard.org](http://www.MDReportCard.org).