



**For Immediate Release**  
August 27, 2008

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## **Virginia Students Meet or Exceed All NCLB Objectives 74 Percent of Schools Also Meet Higher AYP Benchmarks**

Virginia and 74 percent of the commonwealth’s public schools met or exceeded all No Child Left Behind (NCLB) objectives during the 2007-2008 school year as student achievement increased on Standards of Learning and other statewide tests in reading, mathematics and other subjects.

It was the third time in the last four years that the commonwealth made what the federal law describes as “adequate yearly progress,” or AYP, toward 100 percent proficiency in reading and mathematics for all students. The commonwealth made AYP despite higher benchmarks in reading and mathematics, the two subjects that are the primary focus of the federal law.

“The challenge of AYP grows every year but so does the determination of Virginia educators to help all children meet the commonwealth’s high expectations for learning and achievement,” said Superintendent of Public Instruction Billy K. Cannaday Jr. “This emphasis on rigor and accountability will continue as we face the challenges ahead.”

The 2007-2008 benchmarks for achievement in reading and mathematics were each four points higher than during the previous school year. For a school, school division or the state to have made AYP, at least 77 percent of students overall and students in all AYP subgroups (white, black, Hispanic, limited English proficient (LEP), students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged) must have demonstrated proficiency on statewide assessments in reading, and 75 percent must have passed state tests in mathematics.

Despite the higher AYP hurdles, 1,355, or 74 percent, of the commonwealth’s 1,837 public schools met or exceeded all objectives in reading, mathematics and other indicators of academic progress, which was the same percentage as in 2006-2007.

**Adequate Yearly Progress for Virginia Public Schools**

|                       | <b>Made AYP</b> | <b>Did Not Make AYP</b> | <b>To Be Determined</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| <b>School Results</b> | 1,355<br>(74%)  | 479<br>(26%)            | 3<br>(<1%)              | 1,837        |

“This year’s AYP results are another encouraging milestone on the journey to excellence but there are still schools where children are not meeting Virginia’s minimum standards for proficiency and competence,” Board of Education President Mark E. Emblidge said. “Raising achievement in these schools will remain the focus of the board as we enter the new school year.”

Of the 479 schools that did not make AYP during 2007-2008, 180 met all but one of the federal law’s 29 annual measurable objectives for participation in statewide testing and achievement in  
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reading, mathematics and other subjects. The AYP status of three schools with small enrollment remains to be determined.

The schools that made AYP based on achievement during 2007-2008 include 208 schools that did not make AYP during the previous year based on 2006-2007 tests. Of the schools that made AYP based on 2006-2007 achievement, 1,126 also made AYP based on tests administered during 2007-2008, while 221 did not.

### School Divisions Making AYP

Fifty-four of Virginia's 132 school divisions made AYP during 2007-2008, compared with 59 during the previous year. Of the 78 school divisions that did not make AYP, 23 met all but one of the 29 objectives for achievement and participation in testing.

#### Adequate Yearly Progress for Virginia School Divisions

|                         | Made AYP    | Did Not Make AYP | To Be Determined | Total |
|-------------------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|-------|
| <b>Division Results</b> | 54<br>(41%) | 78<br>(59%)      | 0<br>(0%)        | 132   |

In 26 school divisions, all schools made AYP. These divisions are Alleghany County, Bath County, Buena Vista, Colonial Beach, Covington, Falls Church, Galax, Goochland County, Halifax County, Hanover County, Highland County, Lexington, Madison County, Manassas Park, Martinsville, Mecklenburg County, Norton, Patrick County, Radford, Roanoke County, Rockingham County, Scott County, Surry County, Tazewell County, West Point, and Wise County.

Of these divisions, 17 also made AYP at the division level. These divisions are Alleghany County, Bath County, Galax, Goochland County, Halifax County, Hanover County, Lexington, Manassas Park, Mecklenburg County, Norton, Patrick County, Radford, Roanoke County, Rockingham County, Scott County, West Point, and Wise County.

### Achievement Gaps Narrow in Mathematics

The overall pass rate in mathematics last year was 84 percent, compared with 80 percent during 2006-2007. Other mathematics results are as follows:

- Black students increased their overall achievement by five points to 73 percent, compared with 68 percent during 2006-2007.
- The pass rate for Hispanic students increased four points to 75 percent.
- Eighty-eight percent of white students passed compared with 85 percent the previous year.
- The achievement of LEP students increased five points to 75 percent.
- The pass rate for economically disadvantaged students increased six points to 73 percent.
- The achievement of students with disabilities increased with 65 percent passing, compared with 58 percent the previous year.

African-American and Hispanic students continued to narrow achievement gaps with white students in mathematics. During the last three years, the gaps have narrowed by four points for black students and two points for Hispanic students even though the achievement of white students increased by seven points.

Middle school students contributed to the four-point increase in overall mathematics achievement by making significant gains in performance on rigorous, grade-level assessments introduced two years ago. Results by middle school students on mathematics tests include:

- Sixth-grade students increased their achievement by eight points to 68 percent, compared with 60 percent during 2006-2007.

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- Seventh graders improved their performance by nine points to 65 percent.
- Eighth-grade students increased their achievement by six points to 83 percent.

“Curriculum specialists, classroom teachers and Virginia Department of Education staff have collaborated to develop new tools and strategies to equip students with the problem-solving and computational skills needed to be successful on these challenging tests,” said Chief Deputy Superintendent Patricia I. Wright. “The gains in achievement during 2007-2008 bode well for the future as our schools work toward the goal of increasing the number of children prepared for algebra by the eighth grade.”

### **Higher Achievement and Shrinking Gaps in Reading**

Overall achievement in reading increased by two points with 87 percent of Virginia students passing state tests in the subject during 2007-2008 compared with 85 percent during 2006-2007. Results of reading assessments include:

- Black students achieved a 78-percent overall pass rate, compared with 76 percent during the previous year.
- Hispanic students achieved an 81-percent pass rate, a nine-point increase over performance during 2006-2007.
- White students achieved a 91-percent pass rate, a one-point improvement over their previous performance.
- The achievement of LEP students increased 12 points with 79 percent passing state tests.
- The performance of economically disadvantaged children increased four points to 77 percent.
- Sixty-seven percent of students with disabilities passed in reading, a five-point improvement compared with achievement in 2006-2007.

During the last three years, the achievement gap between black and white students in reading has narrowed by three points, despite a two-point increase in reading for white students. Hispanic students also have narrowed the achievement gap with white students by three points during the last three years.

### **Science Achievement Steady**

Eighty-eight percent of Virginia students passed tests in science, the same level of achievement as during the previous year. In addition:

- Black students achieved a 79-percent pass rate in 2007-2008, compared with 77 percent during 2006-2007.
- The percentage of Hispanic students demonstrating proficiency was unchanged at 78 percent.
- Ninety-four percent of white students passed, which is a one-point increase over the previous year.
- LEP students achieved a pass rate of 74 percent, one point higher than the previous year.
- Economically disadvantaged students increased their pass rate by one point to 78 percent.
- The achievement of students with disabilities increased two points to 69 percent.

### **History/Social Science Achievement Increases**

Eighty-eight percent of Virginia students taking tests in history and social science passed compared with 86 percent during 2006-2007. Other history and social science results include:

- Black students achieved a 79-percent pass rate compared with 77 percent during 2006-2007.
- The percentage of Hispanic test takers demonstrating proficiency also increased two points to 79 percent.

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- The achievement of white students improved by two points to 92 percent.
- LEP students increased their pass rate three points to 77 percent.
- Seventy-seven percent of economically disadvantaged students passed, which is a three-point increase over the previous year.
- The achievement of students with disabilities increased four points to 70 percent.

### **Writing Achievement Remains High**

Students achieved an overall pass rate in writing of 89 percent, which was unchanged from the previous year. Other writing assessment results are as follows:

- The pass rate for black students was unchanged at 82 percent.
- Eighty-three percent of Hispanic students passed, which is a one-point increase from 2006-2007.
- The performance of white students was unchanged at 92 percent.
- The percentage of LEP students passing was unchanged at 78 percent.
- The percentage of economically disadvantaged students passing slipped one point to 79 percent.
- Sixty-one percent of students with disabilities passed, which is the same percentage as the previous year.

### **Title I Schools No Longer Sanctioned**

Twelve Title I schools made AYP for a second consecutive year, and in doing so, exited school-improvement status. These schools are Aberdeen Elementary, Cesar Tarrant Elementary and Jane H. Bryan Elementary in Hampton; Axton Elementary and Mount Olivet Elementary in Henry County; Kenbridge Elementary in Lunenburg County; Southside Elementary in Pittsylvania County; G.H. Reid Elementary and Martin Luther King Jr. Middle in Richmond; Garden City Elementary and Lincoln Terrance Elementary in Roanoke; and Jackson Memorial Elementary in Wythe County.

Schools receiving federal funding under Title I of NCLB provide educational services to low-income children and are the focus of most of the law's accountability provisions. Under the law, Title I schools that do not make AYP in the same subject area for two or more consecutive years are identified for improvement. School-improvement sanctions increase in severity if a school fails to make AYP in the same subject area for additional consecutive years. A Title I school escapes federal sanctions by making AYP for two consecutive years.

Seventy-three percent, or 521, of the commonwealth's 710 Title I schools made AYP. The AYP status of two Title I schools remains to be determined. In other Title I actions:

- Fifty-four schools entered or remained in "year one" of improvement based on achievement in 2007-2008 and must offer students the option of transferring to a higher-performing public school for the 2008-2009 school year.
- Twelve entered or remained in "year two" of improvement status and — in addition to offering transfers — must also provide supplemental educational services or tutoring free-of-charge to children who request these services.
- Sixteen schools entered or remained in "year three" of improvement status. These schools must offer transfers and tutoring, and take at least one of several corrective actions specified in the law to raise student achievement.
- Four schools — Randolph Elementary in Arlington County, Essex Intermediate in Essex County, Prince Edward Middle in Prince Edward County and Thomas C. Boushall Middle in Richmond — entered or remained in "year four" of improvement status. School divisions must develop alternative governance plans for these schools while offering transfers and tutoring and continuing to implement corrective action.

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Seven Title I schools are required to implement or continue implementing restructuring or alternative governance plans because of repeated failure to make AYP. The schools now in their fifth year in improvement are Hoffman-Boston Elementary in Arlington County; Tappahannock Elementary in Essex County; Peabody Middle and J.E.B. Stuart Elementary in Petersburg; and Elkhardt Middle in Richmond. Chandler Middle in Richmond is now in its sixth year in improvement; and Vernon Johns Junior High in Petersburg is in its seventh year in improvement. These schools must take or continue implementing one of the following actions:

- Reopen as a charter school;
- Replace all or most of the school staff relevant to the school's failure to make AYP;
- Turn the management of the school over to a private educational management company or another entity with a demonstrated record of success; or
- Any other major restructuring of school governance.

Eight school divisions participating in a U.S. Department of Education-approved pilot program are allowed to offer supplemental services rather than transfers during the first year of improvement status. These school divisions are Albemarle County, Alexandria, Fairfax County, Fauquier County, Hampton, Henrico County, Richmond and Williamsburg-James City County.

AYP ratings and student achievement data for all Virginia public schools and school divisions are available in the [Virginia School Report Card](#) section of the Virginia Department of Education Web site.

State school accreditation ratings, which also are based on student achievement on statewide assessments, will be released by the Virginia Department of Education in September.

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