

November 18, 2019

Executive Summary

Achievement Report Overview

In accordance with New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) guidelines, all public school districts participate in administering the New Jersey State Learning Assessments--NJSLA (formerly known as PARCC). The Hopewell Valley Regional School District's [5-Year NJSLA/PARCC Achievement and Growth Report](#) is intended to provide a vehicle to report student academic performance on the NJSLA. The NJSLA measures student progress toward New Jersey Student Learning Standards in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science. State guidelines require that this information be shared with school community annually.

Target Audience

This executive summary is intended for the Hopewell Valley Regional School District Board of Education and the communities it serves. This report is intended to accompany the following companion slide deck presentation [5-Year NJSLA/PARCC Achievement and Growth Report](#).

Purpose of Report

This executive summary will provide an overview of the five year performance of students on the NJSLA/PARCC assessments in grades 3 through 10 in English Language Arts and Mathematics. At the time this report was published the 2019 Science scores had not been posted by the NJDOE. This overview will provide a summary of where students have met or surpassed grade level learning objects. The summary will also include specific areas where there are opportunities for growth and curricular implications.

Successes and Opportunities

In accordance with the Hopewell Valley School District's mission statement and policies regarding Equity in Education Programs and Services (N.J.A.C. 6:4-1 et seq., 2018):

The District is committed to identifying and removing institutional barriers, and creating access and opportunities to foster the success of our students. "Achieving equity" means students' identities will not predict nor predetermine their success in school.

Educational equity is based on the principles of fairness and justice in allocating resources, opportunity, and treatment to foster success for each student.

Educational equity promotes equality of educational opportunities and reduces the disparity of results between diverse groups of students. Equity strategies are intentional, systematic and focused on the core of the teaching and learning process.

To achieve access for all students, The Hopewell Valley Regional School District, via this policy, will:

1. Systematically use district and individual school level data, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, national origin, language, special education, sex, socioeconomic status and mobility to inform district decision making.
2. Annually review and revise curricula to ensure that it is written in a manner that addresses issues of equity in our classroom and provides a balanced, bias-free presentation of content.
3. Review policies and practices to ensure that access to classes is not limited solely by achievement-based criteria, but also considers student motivation and interest in the subject matter.
4. Work to raise the achievement of all students and narrow any achievement gaps between disaggregated student groups (i.e students who share similar characteristics).
5. Work to identify and eliminate disparities and/or systemic barriers that may exist which predict or predetermine a student’s achievement in all aspects of education and its administration.

To fulfill the obligations of the district toward both our mission and aforementioned policies, the Department of Curriculum and Instruction utilizes student performance data on high stakes assessments such as the NJSLA in addition to other district measures (e.g. benchmark assessments, AP, SAT, and ACT exam data) to determine how best to meet the curricular and professional development needs and to ensure the academic success of all of our learners.

- a) Successes-- After a review of the district’s English Language Arts scores on the PARCC/NJSLA over the past five years (e.g. from 2014-15 to 2018-19), the district is to be commended for the following areas:

District Performance in ELA: Students in grades 3 through grade 10 continue to outperform students in the state of New Jersey. In the 2018-19 school year 77% of students in the district either meet or exceeded expectations on the NJSLA English Language Arts Assessment.

District Performance in Mathematics: Hopewell students also outperformed their peers in the state of New Jersey in mathematics. The district has seen significant growth in performance on the grades 7 and 8 NJSLA Math exams. In regard to the achievement gap, the district also saw an increase in student performance of students who identify as “Black not Hispanic” at Timberlane Middle School (53% meeting or exceeding expectations, up from 33%). It must be noted that this increase reflects a small population of the total test sample.

Additionally, the district saw a small improvement in Central High School students in Algebra I and Geometry, though students who take these assessments at Central High school still lag behind the Algebra and Geometry students at Timberlane Middle School. Student performance remained constant in Algebra I (Timberlane Middle School), Geometry (Timberlane Middle School), and Geometry (Central High School).

- b) Opportunities for growth--As indicated by this assessment data, the district needs to pay attention to and seek to improve in the following areas:

Student Participation: After a review of the district's English Language Arts and Mathematics scores on the PARCC/NJSLA over the past five years (e.g. from 2014-15 to 2018-19) we have noted a slight decrease in the numbers of students taking the NJSLA--2,016 slightly down from 2,052. There may be a number of contributing variables to this decrease (enrollment, test refusals, student exemptions from the assessments, and NJDOE changes in graduation requirements), it is important that we have as many eligible students as possible participate in these test administrations as the data the district receives does inform our work with teachers and students.

District Performance in ELA: As a district, the following subgroups continue to lag behind the academic performance of their peers on the NJSLA ELA. The following groups continue to lag behind other subgroups:

- Students receiving Free or Reduced Lunch (47% meeting or exceeding expectations)
- 504 students (77% meeting or exceeding expectations)
- LEP students (17 % meeting or exceeding expectations)
- Special Education students (45% meeting or exceeding)
- General Education students meet or exceeded expectations at 85% in ELA.

The district saw a decrease in overall student performance in grades 3 and grade 6 in English Language Arts.

District Performance in Mathematics: As a district, the following subgroups continue to lag behind the academic performance of their peers on the NJSLA MATH. The following groups continue to lag behind other subgroups:

- Students receiving Free or Reduced Lunch (24% meeting or exceeding expectations)
- 504 students (56% Meeting or exceeding expectations)
- LEP students (23% meeting or exceeding expectations)
- Special Education students (33% meeting or exceeding)
- General Education students meet or exceeded expectations at 71% in mathematics.

The district saw a decrease in overall student performance in grades 3, 4, and 6 in mathematics.

Conclusions, Recommendations and Suggestions

Overall, students in Hopewell in grades 3 through grade 10 continue to perform well on the New Jersey Students Learning Assessments, outpacing student performance in the state in English Language Arts and Mathematics. It is to be noted that the district has made strides in student performance in mathematics in grades 7 and grade 8. This validates the district's work to align to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in mathematics.

While there are areas where the district needs to continue to examine curricular alignment and how we support students in specific subgroups who consistently lag behind their peers (Students who are eligible for Free and Reduced lunch, Black, Hispanic, 504, Special Education, LEP, and differences in gender performance in mathematics and language arts), the district has made some small steps toward improvement in some of these areas. There is still work to be done to close the achievement gap between these groups. It is recommended that the districts continues to examine how newly adopted curriculum needs to be adjusted and what pedagogical approaches need to be improved to reach all students.