

GOVERNOR PATRICK ANNOUNCES STRONG MCAS IMPROVEMENT

Tenth graders scoring Proficient or Higher has nearly doubled since 2001; African American & Latino Students Also Make Great Gains



(Photo credit: Matt Bennett/Governor's Office). [View additional photos.](#)

REVERE -- Tuesday, September 7, 2010 -- Governor Deval Patrick was joined today by state education and local officials to announce that the number of tenth graders who scored Proficient or Higher on the English Language Arts (ELA) and Math MCAS exams has nearly doubled since the first year the state's graduation requirement was enforced. In addition, MCAS results showed that for the first time ever, more than half of all seventh and eighth graders statewide scored Proficient or Higher in Math.

According to 2010 MCAS results released at the Beachmont Veteran's Memorial School in Revere, more than 48,200 students in the class of 2012 scored Proficient or Higher on their first try, nearly twice the number of tenth graders who did so in 2001, when the state's Competency Determination requirement was first implemented for the class of 2003. Additionally, the percentage of third graders reading and doing math proficiently increased by six points in ELA and five points in math.

"I am very proud of the hard work and achievement of our students and teachers," said Governor Patrick. "The gains exhibited at all grades demonstrate that when we focus efforts on early literacy and providing

schools with the tools they need, all students will improve and progress will be made in closing achievement gaps."

"Our students and our schools continue to prove that high standards and high expectations combined with the right resources for all students creates a winning formula for success," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray. "Congratulations to students, educators and parents for their hard work and persistence."

Since last year, African American students have narrowed the achievement gap with white students slightly in ELA at grades 3, 5 and 7, and in Math at grades 3, 7, 8 and 10. Hispanic/Latino students have narrowed the gap with white students in ELA at grades 3, 5, 6, 7 and 10, and in Math at grades 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 10.

Statewide, the percent of third grade students scoring Proficient or Higher increased by six percentage points in Reading (from 57 percent in 2009 to 63 percent in 2010) and by five percentage points in Math (from 60 percent to 65 percent). Highlighting that progress were seven point gains made by African American students in both subjects, and a six point gain by Hispanic/Latino students in ELA and a seven point gain in Math.

The class of 2012 is the third required to pass the Science, Technology and Engineering (STE) exam in addition to ELA and math to meet the state's graduation requirement. Eighty-six percent of students in the class of 2012 met the testing requirement in all three subjects on their first attempt, higher than the first attempt rates for the classes of 2010 (80 percent) and 2011 (83 percent).

"Our students and their teachers continue to rise to the challenge and achieve at higher levels," said Education Secretary Paul Reville. "We will continue to increase our expectations for student performance and our support for teachers to ensure all students access high quality instruction."

"I am pleased to see that our students, particularly at grade 3 and in middle school, continue to make strong improvements in ELA and Math," said Education Commissioner Mitchell Chester. "But our work is not finished, and closing gaps in achievement remains a top priority. We are committed to providing schools with the resources and supports they need to ensure that every child receives a world-class education and that every classroom is led by a highly skilled, effective teacher.

Students at grades 6 and 7 made two- to four-point gains in both subjects, while eighth graders improved by three points in Math. Statewide, 53 percent of grade 7 students scored Proficient or Higher in Math in 2010, up from 49 percent last year. At grade 8, 51 percent of students scored Proficient or Higher in Math, up from 48 percent.

Ninety-three percent of this year's senior class (class of 2011) have met the minimum testing requirement by scoring Needs Improvement or Higher in ELA, Math and STE by the end of eleventh grade. Of this total, achievement gaps persist among student groups: just 54 percent of limited English proficient students and 73 percent of special education students in this year's senior class have scored Needs Improvement or Higher on all three tests.

Statewide results include:

- Students made two- to six-point gains in the percent scoring Proficient or Higher in ELA in grades 3, 6, and 7, one- to five-points gains in Math at grades 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8; and one- to four-point gains in STE at grades 5, 8 and high school.
- The percent of third grade students scoring Proficient or Higher increased by six percentage points in ELA (from 57 percent in 2009 to 63 percent in 2010) and by five percentage points in Math (from 60 percent to 65 percent). Highlighting that progress were seven point gains made by African American students in both subjects, and a six point gain by Hispanic/Latino students in ELA and a seven point gain in Math.
- Students at grades 6 and 7 also made two- to four-point gains in both subjects, while eighth graders improved by three points in Math. Statewide, 53 percent of grade 7 students scored Proficient or Higher in Math in 2010, up from 49 percent last year. At grade 8, 51 percent of students scored Proficient or Higher in Math, up from 48 percent.
- Students from most subgroups in the class of 2012 made gains in the percent who earned a passing score of 220 or higher on all three grade 10 tests (ELA, Math, STE) after their first attempt: 70 percent of African American students, up from 66 percent; 66 percent of Hispanic/Latino students, up from 62 percent; 91 percent of white students, up from 90 percent; 58 percent of students with disabilities, up from 55 percent; 37 percent of limited English proficient students, up from 35 percent; and 72 percent of low income students, up from 68 percent.

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) was first administered in 1998 as a key part of the state's landmark Education Reform Act of 1993. Students in the graduating class of 2003 were the first required to pass the ELA and Math exams to earn a high school diploma. The STE exam was added to the graduation requirement beginning with the class of 2010.

District and school results from the 2010 MCAS results are still being compiled and will be released publicly later this month. For more information on the MCAS exam or to view the full statewide report, visit www.doe.mass.edu/mcas.