



The Communicator

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An official communication from the Superintendent's Office



Superintendent's Message

With the *No Child Left Behind* achievement targets for meeting Adequate Yearly Progress raised this year in mathematics by ten percentage points and reading proficiency by nine percentage points, the Allentown School District must increase its momentum in advancing student achievement even more. I want to thank the ASD Board of Directors, ASD professional and support staff, students, parents/guardians, and the community for providing the energy and team spirit required for ASD to meet the new achievement targets of *No Child Left Behind*. Specifically, 41.3 percent of the students overall are at proficient or advanced levels of performance in reading and 44.0 percent of the students overall are proficient or advanced in mathematics. All indicators point to a continued need for improvements, especially at the high school level. ASD must resolve its facility issues to address increasing enrollments, class size and academic program requirements. We need to continue standardizing curriculum and strengthening instructional practices in order to achieve the increasingly stringent requirements of *No Child Left Behind*. Please see www.pde.state.pa.us/pas/site

The expectation of *No Child Left Behind* is to raise the bar for all students. That means that the proficiency targets must be met for all students groups, including White, Black, Hispanic, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students on Individual Education Plans (IEP's) for Special Education. A school and the district must meet the AYP targets for each of these groups before it can meet AYP overall. Progress is being made in each of these student groups through the implementation of specialized programs and instructional strategies, but we must continue standardizing and strengthening curriculum in all content areas and ensure that we are providing the requisite resources and professional development. We are committed to strong accountability for results and it is with that premise that we are providing a thorough overview of our progress to the public. We encourage you to review the website of the Pennsylvania Department of Education and become thoroughly familiar with the ASD progress and areas that need to be addressed. We are committed to continuous improvement and will draw on the expertise of our District staff, our partners, external consultants, and distinguished educators identified by the Pennsylvania Department of Education to further advanced student achievement. Our students and their success are first and foremost.

Karen S. Angello, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools

PSSA/AYP Highlights

- **15 of 20 District Schools Meet AYP Target of 45% at Proficient or Advanced in Mathematics Performance**
- **All Elementary Schools Meet AYP in Mathematics**
- **District Exceeds Overall 2005 Reading Target of 54% at Proficient or Advanced In Six of 20 Schools**
- **Seven ASD Schools Meet AYP Requirements**
- **LEP (Limited English Proficient) Students Increase Reading Scores by 6 Points**
- **School Officials Acknowledge Increased Benchmarks Challenge District**

Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) scores for 2005 have been released from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and are posted on the PDE Web site www.pdenewsroom.state.pa.us. The District also is reporting here results towards meeting the benchmarks set forth by the implementation of the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) federal legislation enacted January 8, 2001.

Summary of 2001-2005 AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) Results - Mathematics

Allentown School District					
LEVEL	MATHEMATICS				
	PROFICIENT + ADVANCED				
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	---	35	35	35	45
District Grades 3-5	30.0	37.3	48.6	52.9	60.6
District Grades 6-8	23.0	29.7	30	35.4	42.8
District Grades 9-12	25.5	29.1	29.1	22.2	23.7
District Average	27.1	32.6	35.3	38.7	44.0

Dr. Angello summarized the gains made in mathematics achievement, “All elementary schools met AYP in mathematics; Central made AYP achievement through Safe Harbor. Grade 5 PSSA results reflect significant achievement in mathematics, especially with our Black students increasing from 46.5 percent at proficient or advanced to 57.9 percent and the Hispanic students reaching 55.1 percent or proficient or advanced from 44.1 percent in 2004. The elementary mathematics program was implemented in 2001, and the long-term impact is clearly benefiting the students. All four middle schools achieved substantial Grade 8 PSSA results. South Mountain Middle School’s gains resulted in making Safe Harbor. Raub and Trexler Middle Schools met the mathematics target overall but did not meet it with one subgroup. During the 2004-2005 school year, all four Title I middle schools received additional mathematics teachers as a direct recommendation from the middle school reform plan. This practice will continue to ensure more students move toward proficient levels of performance.”

“It is at the high school level that we face our greatest challenges,” Dr. Angello continued. “We are concerned with the level of performance in mathematics at the high school level. Improved mathematics curriculum and instruction are necessary. This is a priority in the new strategic plan introduced for 2005-2011. We will also fully utilize the professional development support to our teachers that is funded through a National Science Foundation grant.”

Some highlights in mathematics achievement are as follows:

- District percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced has risen 16.9 percentage points since 2001, with the elementary level doubling its achievement in five years from 30 to 60.6 percent at proficient or advanced.
- All elementary schools met or exceeded their overall mathematics target in 2005.
- 15 of 20 schools exceeded the increased 2005 overall mathematics AYP target of 45% proficient or advanced.
- The elementary subgroups of White, Black, Latino/Hispanics, Limited English Proficient (LEP) and Economically Disadvantaged have over 50 percent of the students at proficient or advanced.
- At the elementary level, the special education subgroup made Safe Harbor in mathematics.

Summary of 2001-2005 AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) Results - Reading

Allentown School District

LEVEL	READING				
	PROFICIENT + ADVANCED				
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	---	45	45	45	54
District Grades 3-5	33.9	37.9	41.8	45.9	43.5
District Grades 6-8	39.2	39.9	39.9	45.5	40.2
District Grades 9-12	41.5	38.1	43.1	39.6	39.8
District Average	36.5	38.7	40.7	44.2	41.3

“Knowing that proficiency in reading is the foundation for success for all students, ASD continues to move forward with literacy initiatives that began with the Empowerment Plan in 2001, and have evolved since that time. These initiatives build on the premise that standards-based, focused instruction over extended periods of time will contribute to improved student achievement,” commented Dr. Angello.

During the 2003-2004 school year, the ASD board approved the purchase and implementation of a new district-wide elementary literacy program. During the first year of implementation, elementary literacy coaches and classroom teachers began working to provide consistent, sequential instruction with the new materials that supported standards-based instruction. As the implementation enters its second year, ASD professionals will focus on the continuous improvement of student achievement through instructional practices that address literacy skills and strategies. Additional professional development will be provided district-wide to strengthen the implementation of this program.

Focused instruction in literacy is also moving forward in the middle schools, where students performing below the proficient level receive supplemental reading instruction, as recommended in the middle school reform initiative. Middle school teachers investigated best practices in adolescent literacy. These research-based strategies strengthen literacy skills in the content areas and help to improve and enhance comprehension. The ASD Board of Directors adopted a district-wide sixth grade reading program that will be implemented this 2005-2006 school year, assuring more consistency in providing standards-based instruction.

In addition, ASD is strengthening and expanding its programs for English language learners, emphasizing consistent instruction in speaking, listening, reading, and writing English as a second language for ASD students who speak a total of 30 different languages. The CALLA (Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach) and SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observational Protocol) will be continued. These instructional strategies, coupled with the special instructional materials for Limited English Proficient students, appeared to influence the ten percentage point gains in reading achievement.

Some highlights in reading achievement are as follows:

- 41.3 percent of all tested students were proficient or advanced in reading, 12.7 percent short of meeting the state AYP target of 54%.
- Elementary LEP (limited English proficient) students met AYP standards through Safe Harbor using a focused second-language program, with 25 percent of the LEP students proficient or advanced.
- Six ASD schools have already exceeded the 2005 reading target of 54% proficient or advanced.

Participation, Graduation, and Attendance Rates

- Attendance: 100% of elementary and middle schools met the 2005 attendance target of 90 percent.
- Participation: All schools but one met the 2005 participation target (participation in taking the PSSA tests) of 95 percent. William Allen High School did not meet the target with one subgroup missing the target by less than a percentage point.
- Graduation Rate: The District graduation rate of the two high schools made growth toward 80 percent. William Allen High School met the 2005 target with 60.32 percent in 2005 over 56.10 percent in 2004. Dieruff did not meet the graduation target with 64.43 percent in 2005 vs. 66.73 percent in 2004.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Glossary

It should be noted that 15 ASD schools met or exceeded the AYP mathematics target of 45 percent in proficient or advanced levels of performance, and six ASD schools reached or exceeded the AYP reading target of 54 percent in proficient or advanced levels of performance.

There are several categories by which Pennsylvania schools are monitored and labeled as a requirement in of the federal legislation *No Child Left Behind*. The designated categories indicating level of performance of schools and districts are as follow:

Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP): The school/district has met the achievement, participation and attendance and/or graduation benchmarks.

Warning: The school/district has not met AYP for one year. Schools in this category will move into School Improvement I if they do not meet AYP the next year.

Making Progress: The school/district was identified in a prior year in either Warning, School Improvement or Corrective action but has met AYP for one year. It will need to meet the targets two years in a row to be counted as making AYP.

Safe Harbor Designation: Safe Harbor recognizes progress. Schools or sub-groups that do not achieve the 45% and 54% performance thresholds can still achieve AYP by meeting the Safe Harbor requirements by reducing percentage of non-proficient students by ten percent or more over the previous year.

All of the categories listed below must offer greater levels of assistance to the school and ensure there is an improvement team that implements a comprehensive improvement plan.

School Improvement I: has not met AYP for two years. Schools in this category must offer school choice and the district must provide technical assistance in helping it meet its benchmarks.

School Improvement Year II: has not met AYP for three years. Schools in this category must offer school choice and supplemental educational services (tutoring).

Corrective Action Year I: has not met AYP for four years. At this point significant changes in leadership, curriculum, professional development or other strategies may be warranted. Schools in this category must offer school choice and supplemental educational services (tutoring).

Corrective Action Year II: has not met AYP for five years. At this point the school might be reconstituted, privatized or chartered. Schools in this category must offer school choice and supplemental educational services (tutoring).

Allentown School District Progress, Per School

Schools in maroon met AYP for all criteria in reading, mathematics, participation and attendance/graduation rates.

Central Elementary (School Improvement II) — made Safe Harbor in mathematics this year with a five-fold increase over 2001 scores. 13.6% are proficient or advanced in reading and 24.1 are proficient or advanced in mathematics, substantial progress since 2000.

<i>PSSA PROFICIENCY + ADVANCED SCORES: CENTRAL ELEMENTARY</i>					
TARGET SCORE	----	35	35	35	45
Mathematics	5.5	12.9	17.8	18.1	24.1
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	----	45	45	45	54
Reading	9.7	17.7	17.0	18.9	13.6

Cleveland Elementary (Warning)—as a feeder school with no fifth grade, the fifth grade scores are equal to the District average for Grade 5 in mathematics and reading.

<i>PSSA PROFICIENCY + ADVANCED SCORES: CLEVELAND ELEMENTARY</i>					
TARGET SCORE	----	35	35	35	45
Mathematics	8.6			53.0	60.6
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	----	45	45	45	54
Reading	6.9			45.9	43.5

Hiram Dodd Elementary (Made AYP)—met AYP targets three years in a row, doubling mathematics achievement in four years.

<i>PSSA PROFICIENCY + ADVANCED SCORES: DODD ELEMENTARY</i>					
TARGET SCORE	----	35	35	35	45
Mathematics	41.0	48.2	71.1	76.2	81
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	----	45	45	45	54
Reading	52.4	56.4	66.3	69.7	67

Jackson Elementary (Warning)—met AYP targets two years in a row, but decreased in reading from 46.2 percent to 35.1 percent in 2005.

<i>PSSA PROFICIENCY + ADVANCED SCORES: JACKSON ELEMENTARY</i>					
TARGET SCORE	----	35	35	35	45
Mathematics	45.9	41.2	54.1	53.8	53.4
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	----	45	45	45	54
Reading	38.8	32.2	47.5	46.2	35.1

Jefferson Elementary (School Improvement II)—joins many of ASD's other elementary schools in vast improvement in some areas. Mathematics increased by 24 percentage points in two years.

<i>PSSA PROFICIENCY + ADVANCED SCORES: JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY</i>					
TARGET SCORE	----	35	35	35	45
Mathematics	28.7	30.3	31.9	48.1	55.9
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	----	45	45	45	54

Reading	32.8	30.3	27.9	46.2	37.2
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Lehigh Parkway Elementary (Made AYP)—met AYP targets three years in a row, continuously surpassing all targets. 93.1% of the students at Lehigh Parkway Elementary School were at proficient or advanced levels of performance in mathematics.

<i>PSSA PROFICIENCY + ADVANCED SCORES: LEHIGH PARKWAY ELEMENTARY</i>					
TARGET SCORE	----	35	35	35	45
Mathematics	44.0	55.4	85.7	100.0	93.1
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	----	45	45	45	54
Reading	44.0	52.1	80.0	89.3	75.9

McKinley Elementary (Making Progress)—has exceeded its AYP target in mathematics three years in a row. 55.3% of students met the 2005 reading target, an increase of 27.6 percentage points in one year.

<i>PSSA PROFICIENCY + ADVANCED SCORES: MCKINLEY ELEMENTARY</i>					
TARGET SCORE	----	35	35	35	45
Mathematics	16.0	26.7	47.8	44.6	52.6
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	----	45	45	45	54
Reading	16.0	31.1	32.6	27.7	55.3

Mosser Elementary (Corrective Action I)—exceeded the mathematics target of 45 percent by 15.6 percentage points; 31.4 percent of the students are proficient or advanced in reading.

<i>PSSA PROFICIENCY + ADVANCED SCORES: MOSSER ELEMENTARY</i>					
TARGET SCORE	----	35	35	35	45
Mathematics	23.0	22.0	51.8	48.5	60.6
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	----	45	45	45	54
Reading	21.3	23.7	33.7	33.9	31.4

Muhlenberg Elementary (Made AYP)—met AYP targets three years in a row, continuously surpassing all targets.

<i>PSSA PROFICIENCY + ADVANCED SCORES: MUHLENBERG ELEMENTARY</i>					
TARGET SCORE	----	35	35	35	45
Mathematics	58.5	81.3	79.1	86.9	86.1
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	----	45	45	45	54
Reading	68.4	79.2	75.0	84.8	78.6

Ritter Elementary (Warning)—met AYP targets in reading and mathematics three years in a row; however not all subgroups reached AYP targets in 2005.

<i>PSSA PROFICIENCY + ADVANCED SCORES: RITTER ELEMENTARY</i>					
TARGET SCORE	----	35	35	35	45
Mathematics	30.7	59.0	67.5	77.0	74.6
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	----	45	45	45	54
Reading	52.3	56.1	62.8	61.8	57.2

Roosevelt Elementary (Making Progress)—met its AYP target in mathematics three years in a row. 60 percent of the students were at proficient or advanced in mathematics in 2005, exceeding the state target. The school doubled its reading score in four years and gained 45 points in mathematics.

<i>PSSA PROFICIENCY + ADVANCED SCORES: ROOSEVELT ELEMENTARY</i>					
TARGET SCORE	----	35	35	35	45
Mathematics	15.0	34.2	44.4	55.1	60
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	----	45	45	45	54
Reading	20.5	34.7	36.1	32.9	41.2

Sheridan Elementary (School Improvement II)—exceeded the AYP goal by 18.4 percentage points in mathematics but remains flat in reading at 32.5 percent of students are proficient or advanced in reading.

<i>PSSA PROFICIENCY + ADVANCED SCORES: SHERIDAN ELEMENTARY</i>					
TARGET SCORE	----	35	35	35	45
Mathematics	40.4	44.3	43.0	41.9	60.3
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	----	45	45	45	54
Reading	34.7	43.6	37.5	34.6	32.5

Union Terrace Elementary (Made AYP)—upgraded from “Making Progress” last year, meeting its AYP target for two years in a row, and increasing almost 31 percentage points from 2002-2005 in mathematics and 21.4 percentage points in reading.

<i>PSSA PROFICIENCY + ADVANCED SCORES: UNION TERRACE ELEMENTARY</i>					
TARGET SCORE	----	35	35	35	45
Mathematics	41.9	38.5	45.4	64.3	69.7
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	----	45	45	45	54
Reading	54.3	38.5	45.4	61.2	59.9

Washington Elementary (Making Progress)—exceeded the mathematics target by an impressive 27.1 percentage points and has increased reading by 14 percentage points, making AYP through Safe Harbor.

<i>PSSA PROFICIENCY + ADVANCED SCORES: WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY</i>					
TARGET SCORE	----	35	35	35	45
Mathematics	14.9	26.3	49.5	45.4	72.5
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	----	45	45	45	54
Reading	17.9	27.5	39.1	33.9	48

Harrison-Morton Middle (School Improvement II)—has made significant progress on PSSA scores in mathematics over two years, but missed AYP targets this year.

<i>PSSA PROFICIENCY + ADVANCED SCORES: HARRISON MORTON MIDDLE</i>					
TARGET SCORE	----	35	35	35	45
Mathematics	23.6	20.5	24.2	36.2	40.2
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	----	45	45	45	54
Reading	39.2	31.9	37.8	44.6	37.5

Raub Middle School (School Improvement II)—43.3 percent of the students at proficient or advanced levels of performance in reading and 49.4 percent in mathematics.

<i>PSSA PROFICIENCY + ADVANCED SCORES: RAUB MIDDLE</i>					
TARGET SCORE	----	35	35	35	45
Mathematics	24.0	28.0	35.0	51.8	49.4
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	----	45	45	45	54
Reading	35.9	38.9	42.0	50.6	43.3

South Mountain Middle (School Improvement II)—39.3 percent are proficient or advanced in reading, and 41.6 percent are proficient or advanced in mathematics, with Safe Harbor status achieved in math.

<i>PSSA PROFICIENCY + ADVANCED SCORES: SOUTH MOUNTAIN MIDDLE</i>					
TARGET SCORE	----	35	35	35	45
Mathematics	28.7	32.7	30.8	29.9	41.6
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	----	45	45	45	54
Reading	38.7	41.1	40.7	43.9	39.3

Trexler Middle (School Improvement II)—41.7 percent of the students at proficient or advanced levels of performance. 44.5 percent of the students are proficient or advanced in mathematics, just .5 percentage points below the state target.

<i>PSSA PROFICIENCY + ADVANCED SCORES: TREXLER MIDDLE</i>					
TARGET SCORE	----	35	35	35	45
Mathematics	16.8	34.9	28.6	30.5	44.5
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	----	45	45	45	54
Reading	32.8	43.5	39.6	45.5	41.7

Louis E. Dieruff High (School Improvement II)—lack of progress in mathematics and reading will continue to be addressed at Dieruff. 100 percent of Dieruff students participated in testing. Because there is no Title I funding provided to Dieruff, school choice and SES tutoring services are not offered. There are District tutoring programs offered.

<i>PSSA PROFICIENCY + ADVANCED SCORES: DIERUFF HIGH</i>					
TARGET SCORE	----	35	35	35	45
Mathematics	27.7	31.5	29.5	25.0	21.2
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	----	45	45	45	54
Reading	40.8	41.4	43.4	42.9	40.6

William Allen High (School Improvement II)—lack of progress in mathematics and reading will continue to be addressed at Allen. William Allen achieved progress toward increasing its graduation rate this year. Because there is no Title I funding provided to Allen, school choice and SES tutoring services are not required to be offered. There are District tutoring programs offered.

<i>PSSA PROFICIENCY + ADVANCED SCORES: WILLIAM ALLEN HIGH</i>					
TARGET SCORE	----	35	35	35	45
Mathematics	24.3	27.5	28.1	26.2	26.4
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TARGET SCORE	----	45	45	45	54
Reading	42.0	35.7	41.0	40.9	41.7

Making Progress in Proficiency

Dr. Angello summarized, “Our focus on improvement of instructional practices is a key priority for us,” stated Superintendent Angello. “The elementary mathematics program is a good example of new practices that are making a difference. This program has been implemented for four years and is now impacting sustained improvement in achievement. The implementation of a district-wide elementary reading program last school year was a critical step in ensuring a consistent literacy program. We are most fortunate to have received a state grant, Project 720, that brings with it very structured, accountable steps in advancing student achievement at the two high schools. We must commit even more to our high schools to ensure that all students are successful and remain in school. The new strategic plan addresses our current concerns. I cannot stress enough the importance of consistent instructional practices and a concern for every student to have the support needed to reach real gains in learning.”

“Community partnerships will continue to be important to the success of students in the Allentown School District,” Dr. Angello continued. “We have many situations that challenge us and our students. The plans are in place, now the resources must be identified for further accomplishment. We must continue to work with our partners for it is clear there is strong commitment of our parents, business partners, and elected officials. The ASD Board of Directors is very goal focused, and will also not only work with us to achieve our goals but expect accountability for taking sufficient steps to reach these goals. If we continue build on the strong partnerships we have, we can take significant steps to move the district forward at a faster pace.”

“The Board will continue to maintain clear focus on its goals and ensure that those goals are driving continuous improvement in student achievement,” stated Jeff Glazier, ASD School Board President.

About ASD

Serving approximately 17,600 students in 22 early childhood, elementary, middle and high schools located throughout the City of Allentown, PA, Allentown School District is the fourth largest school district out of 501 Commonwealth districts. About 73 percent of the students are members of minority groups and 69 percent qualified for free or reduced lunch in 2004-2005. 16.9 percent of students today have limited English proficiency (LEP) and are enrolled in ESOL programs; 22.6 percent of the LEP students are in elementary schools. One in four students changes school locations throughout the year. The District continues to implement a standardized, district-wide instructional calendar with consistent teaching practices from school to school to assist students who move within and without the District on a frequent basis. Allentown School District employs approximately 1,218 teachers and 2,000 employees overall. www.allentownsd.org 484-765-4000.

Working Together for Instructional Change.

To contribute to *The Communicator*, please contact Nidia Whiteman at 484.765.4235 or info@allentownsd.org