

Annual Report on Curriculum, Instruction and Student Achievement 2012-2013

Assessing Student Achievement

There are a variety of tests that are used to evaluate the achievement of students as well as instructional programs in the Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools (BHM). Students are tested in order to determine instructional level, measure basic skills, evaluate student progress towards achieving state academic standards, and to evaluate program effectiveness.

Major statewide assessments completed during 2012-2013 included the *Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA)* and *Graduation Required Assessment for Diploma (GRAD)*. A small percentage of special education students were administered the *Modified MCA* or the *Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)* in place of the MCA. Students with limited English skills were also required to be assessed with the *Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ACCESS)* test. BHM also assessed students in math and reading with *Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)* tests. A small number of eighth grade students were administered the *EXPLORE* test from ACT and all juniors were administered the *PLAN* test from ACT. Many juniors and seniors also take ACT college entrance examinations throughout the year.

Tests Administered in BHM Schools

Measures of Academic Progress Tests (MAP)	Computerized math and reading tests, administered fall and spring, and are aligned with Minnesota standards. They identify students' instructional levels and are used by teachers in planning learning activities.
Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA)	Federal and state-mandated tests that assess student progress toward achieving MN standards in reading, math and science. Data are used for school and district accountability by the state. All MCA assessments will be MCA-III series this year.
Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)	Alternate assessments utilized by a small percentage of district special education students that take the place of MCA tests in math, reading and science.
Modified MCA (MOD)	Alternate assessments utilized by a small percentage of district special education students that take the place of MCA tests in math and reading.
Graduation Required Assessments for Diploma (GRAD)	State-mandated tests that measure whether a student has learned the essential skills needed to live and work in today's society. Students must pass GRAD tests in reading, math and written composition to be eligible to graduate from a Minnesota public school.
Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for ELLs (ACCESS)	The ACCESS test is a federally required language proficiency assessment given to Kindergarten through 12 th graders who have been identified as English Language Learners (ELLs). ACCESS is designed to assess progress in acquiring academic English language.
EXPLORE	This test from the <i>American College Testing</i> organization (ACT) is designed to help 8 th graders explore a broad range of options for their future. It prepares students for their high school coursework and for post-high school choices as well. It was administered to a small group of students in 2012-13 but will be taken by all 8 th graders during 2013-14.
PLAN	Administered in the fall of Grade 10, this test from ACT provides information about academic achievement, career planning, instructional support, and program evaluation.

BHM Test Schedule for 2013-2014

September 23 - October 15	Performance Series Testing (Grades 2-9)
October 14-15	PLAN Test (Grade 10)
October 22	EXPLORE Test (Grade 8)
November 6	GRAD Writing Retests (Grades 10-12)
February 3 - March 21	ACCESS Testing for English Learners
March 17 – May 9	MTAS (Alternate assessments in math, reading and science)
April 15	MCA Reading/Modified MCA (Grade 10: Segments 1 & 2) MCA Math/Modified MCA Math (Grade 11: Segments 1 & 2)
April 16	MCA Reading/Modified MCA Reading (Grade 10: Segments 3 & 4) MCA Math/Modified MCA Math (Grade 11: Segments 3 & 4)
April 22	MCA Reading/Modified MCA (Grades 3-8: Segments 1 & 2)
April 23	MCA Reading/Modified MCA (Grades 3-8: Segments 3 & 4)
April 24 – May 9	MCA Math/Modified MCA (Grades 3-8)
May 5-23	Performance Series Testing (Grades 2-9)
May 12 – 16	MCA Science Testing (Grades 5, 8 and biology students)

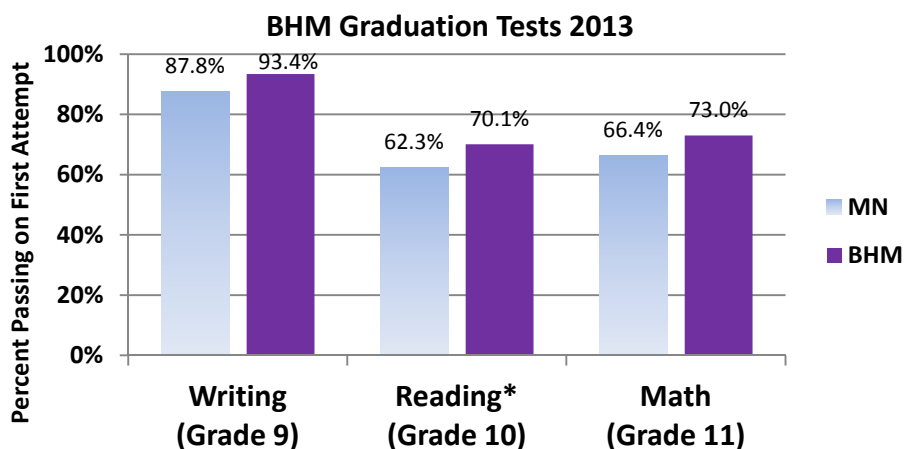


- Please plan family vacations with these dates in mind. Federal legislation requires 95% of district students to participate in the MCAs because the results are used in determining adequate yearly progress towards *No Child Left Behind* as well as Minnesota's *Multiple Measurement Ratings*.
- High school GRAD retests in reading (Grades 11-12) and math (Grade 12) are offered every other month with testing scheduled from the first Tuesday through Wednesday of the following week.

Minnesota GRAD Tests

All students in Minnesota schools are required to demonstrate basic competencies in reading, math and written composition in order to be eligible for a Minnesota public high school diploma. These assessments provide a safety net assuring that all Minnesota students graduate with the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics.

High school students are required to pass the *Graduation Required Assessment for Diploma (GRAD)* test of written composition administered at Grade 9, and either be proficient on the *Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs)* in reading and mathematics, or attain a scale score of 50 (approximately 75% percent correct) on GRAD tests.



* Indicates percent "proficient" on MCA-III reading test

BHM students continued to perform on MN graduation tests at a rate higher than the state of MN. Student achievement on these three assessments included:

- 93.4% of BHM Grade 9 students passed the GRAD written composition assessment administered last April compared to 87.8% of Minnesota students. 2012-13 was the last time this assessment will be administered. Legislation passed in the spring of 2013 discontinued the Writing GRAD for students graduating in 2017 and after.
- 70.1% of BHM Grade 10 students were proficient on the MCA-III reading assessment, compared to 62.3% of Minnesota students. While in prior years there has been a GRAD component embedded within the Grade 10 MCA-II reading assessment, there was none with the implementation of the MCA-III reading test administered for the first time in 2012-13. As a result, this is the percentage of students scoring in the "proficient" range on the MCA-III reading assessment. If students were not proficient, they will be required to pass a GRAD retest.
- 73.0% of BHM Grade 11 students passed the GRAD math requirement when first administered last spring, compared to 66.4% of Minnesota students. This is the highest percentage of BHM students that have ever passed this test on their first attempt. 2012-13 was the last year that the GRAD will be embedded in the MCA spring test. In 2014 students will need to score in the proficient range on the MCA-III math test to be administered for the first time this spring, or pass a GRAD retest.

If students are not proficient on an MCA or do not pass a GRAD test the first time they are administered, there are multiple opportunities to take them again. Students who do not pass GRAD tests in math or reading have opportunities to retest every other month, and there are two or three opportunities to retest in written composition during the year.

A variety of remedial opportunities are available for students who have not yet passed GRAD tests. Staff will contact parents of students who have not yet passed one or more of these tests during the year to discuss remediation options. Remediation may include basic courses at the high school, summer school courses, after-school clinics or special education services for eligible students.

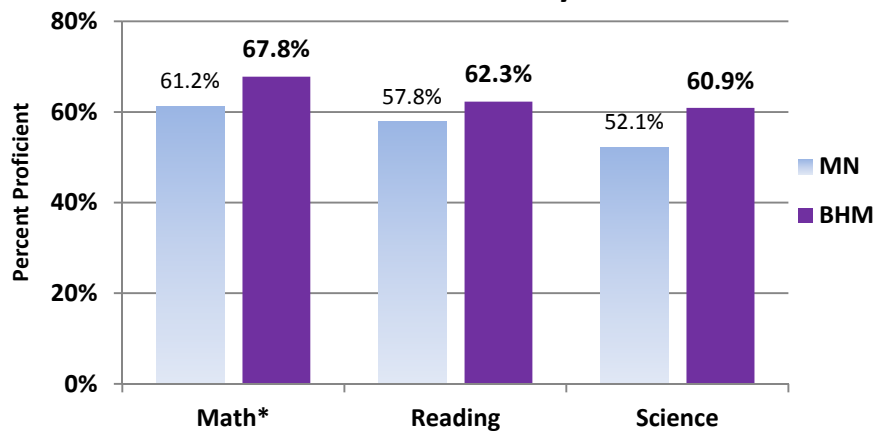
This spring legislation passed that changed state graduation test requirements and the BHM Board of Education will revisit local requirements during the 2013-14 school year.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs)

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments were administered in math, reading and science. Reading MCA-IIIs were administered at grades 3-8 and 10, math MCA-IIIs at Grades 3-8 and MCA-II at Grade 11, and science MCA-IIIs at Grades 5, 8 and once in high school during the year students take biology. The purpose of these assessments is to evaluate student progress towards achieving state academic standards and determine adequate yearly progress as mandated by Minnesota's plan for *No Child Left Behind* legislation.

When compared to 2012, scores across the state were lower in reading and math, and slightly higher in science. The lower scores in math and reading does not indicate a decline in achievement, but rather occurred because of a change in the administration in math, and a newer more rigorous reading test based on new standards. BHM students continued to score above state averages at all grades and subjects. In reading, 62.3% of BHM students were judged "proficient" (grade-level) compared to 57.8% of Minnesota students. In math, 67.8% of BHM students scored at proficient levels in math compared to 61.2% for the state. In science, 60.9% of BHM students were proficient in science compared to 52.1% for the state.

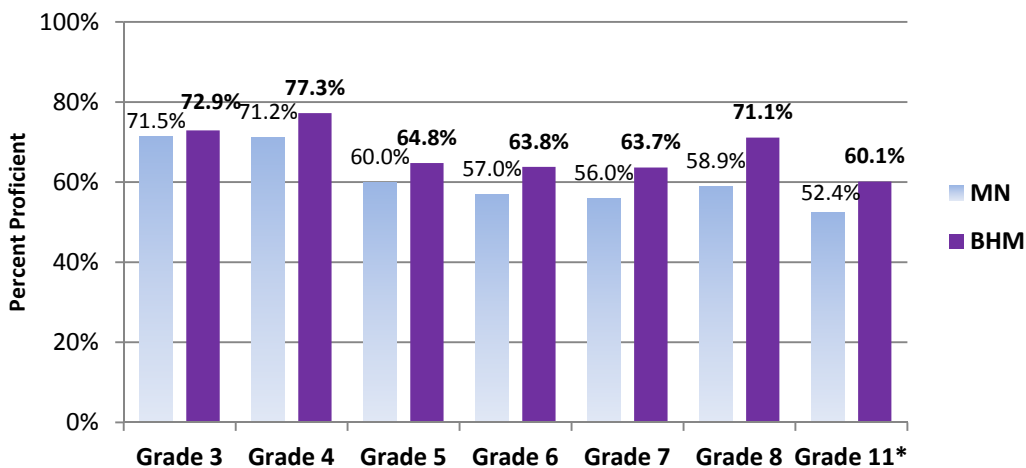
BHM MCA Proficiency 2013



* Includes MCA-III at Grades 3-8 and MCA-II at Grade 11

The MCA-III math test was administered to all students in Grades 3-8. A significant change occurred in the administration of this test between 2012 and 2013. In 2012, students in these grades were allowed to take the math test up to three times with the highest score considered "official." Federal guidelines prevented this in 2013 with one "official" test administered in the spring. As a result, the percentage of students scoring in the proficient level declined statewide from 62.1% in 2012 to 61.2% in 2013.

MCA Mathematics Proficiency 2013

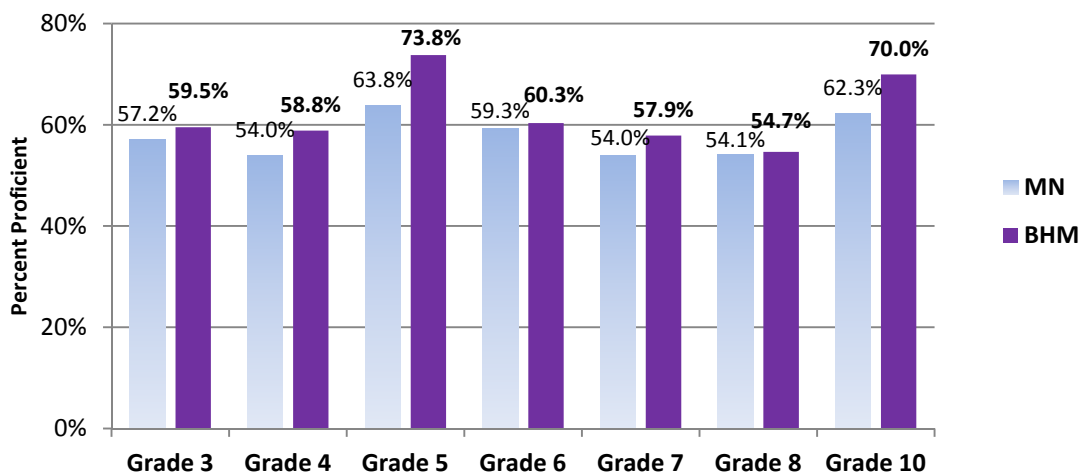


At Grades 3-8 in BHM there was a similar decline when compared to 2012. 67.8% of BHM students scored in the proficient range in 2013, compared to 69.8% in 2012. Only BHM students at Grade 7 saw proficiency levels increase from 59.9% in 2012 to 63.7% in 2013. BHM students in Grade 4 had the highest overall proficiency levels with 77.3% of students scoring in the proficient range.

When compared to the rest of Minnesota, BHM generally scored well above state averages. All grade levels scored above state averages with 4 of 6 grades having proficiency levels more than 6% higher than the rest of the state. Scores for students at Grade 8 were 12.2% higher than the Minnesota average. Math achievement at Grades 7 and 8 places them in the top 25% of Minnesota districts on the MCA-III.

At Grade 11, the MCA-II math test is administered. This test is based on older 2004 Minnesota standards (this changes in 2014 when the MCA-III math test will be administered for the first time). Grade 11 was the only grade with increases in proficiency across the board statewide. The percentage of Minnesota students scoring in the proficient range increased from 42.5% in 2012 to 52.4% in 2013. BHM Grade 11 students saw a dramatic increase with proficiency levels rising from 45.6% in 2012 to 60.1% in 2013. BHM juniors ranked in the top 20% of Minnesota districts in math in 2013.

MCA-III Reading Proficiency 2013



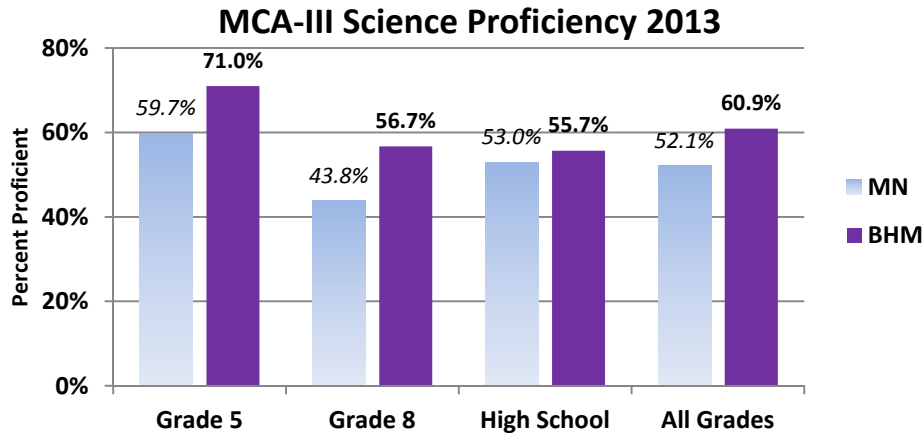
The state Department of Education rolled out a revised and more rigorous MCA-III reading test in 2013 based on tougher standards and, consequently, scores across the state declined when compared to 2012. The new Minnesota standards, that include the *Common Core* standards, reflect additional text complexity as well as making connections between two passages. Since the two tests are based on different standards, it is inappropriate to compare current scores from previous years. It's not comparing apples to apples. Lower scores do not mean lower student achievement. In 2013, 57.8% of state students scored in the proficient range.

While proficiency levels are lower than desired, BHM students scored above the state average with 62.3% of students identified as proficient in reading. As in previous years, proficiency rates in reading are above state averages at all grades in the district. BHM students at Grades 5 and 10 ranked in the top 25% of Minnesota districts in reading proficiency.

BHM continues to monitor the curriculum resources and instructional practices for reading through the district's continuous improvement process. Adjustments are still in progress for alignment of curriculum to these new, more rigorous state standards.

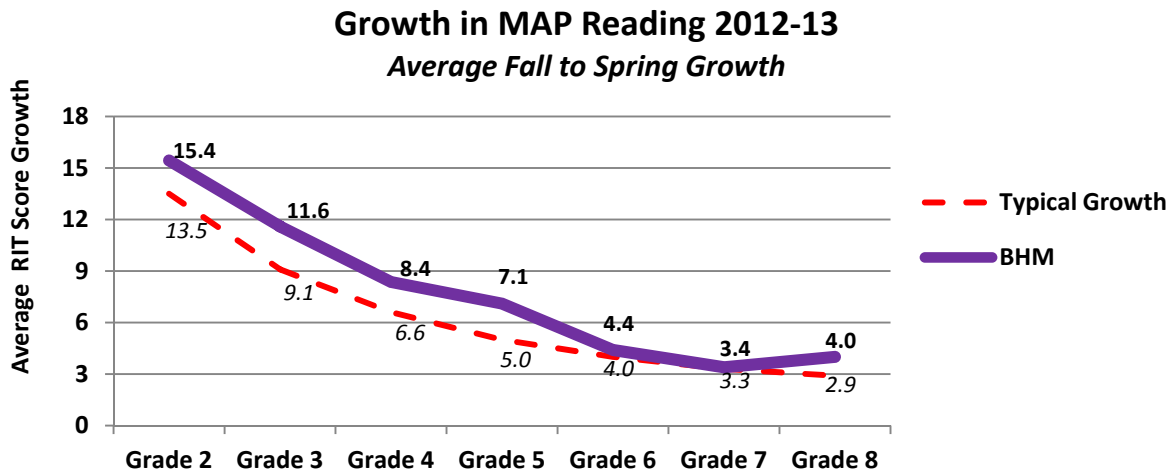
The MCA-III science test is administered to all students at Grades 5 and 8 and to high school students during the year they take biology. While science scores statewide increased very slightly from 2012 to 2013, they declined slightly for BHM students. 52.1% of Minnesota students scored in the proficient range in 2013, compared to 50.5% in 2012. While BHM students continued to score above the state at all grade levels, district proficiency declined from 61.8% in 2012 to 60.9% in 2013. Overall, proficiency rates in the district were 8.8% higher than the state average. While scores were slightly lower at Grades 5 and 8, both grades had proficiency rates more than 12% higher than the state. Proficiency in the district was highest in the district at Grade 5 where 71% of students scored in the proficient range. The only grade

where district scores increased was at the high school level. None of these changes in achievement are statistically significant.



Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)

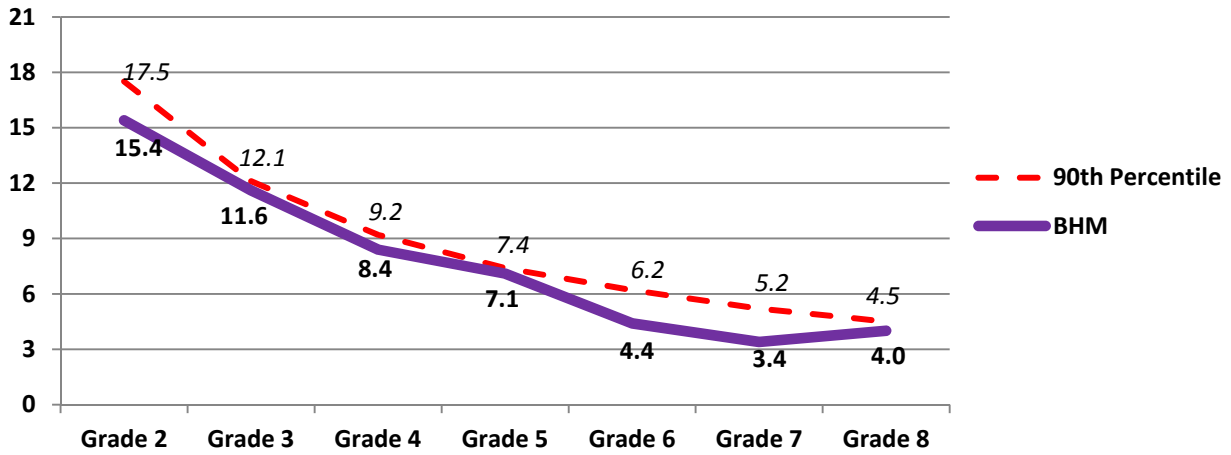
Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests from Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) were administered at Grades 2-8, and selected high school students. Information from these tests was used to identify each student’s individual instructional level in reading and math. MAP tests are administered during the fall and spring providing teachers with detailed information on what reading and math skills students are ready to learn. Fall test scores are used to establish a target growth goal and the spring test determines if the goal has been achieved.



The graph above shows that BHM students demonstrated more growth, on average, in reading during the school year than what is typical in the NWEA national sample at all grades. Essentially this means district students are demonstrating more growth in reading, on average, than NWEA’s norm group. Above average growth was greatest at Grade 3.

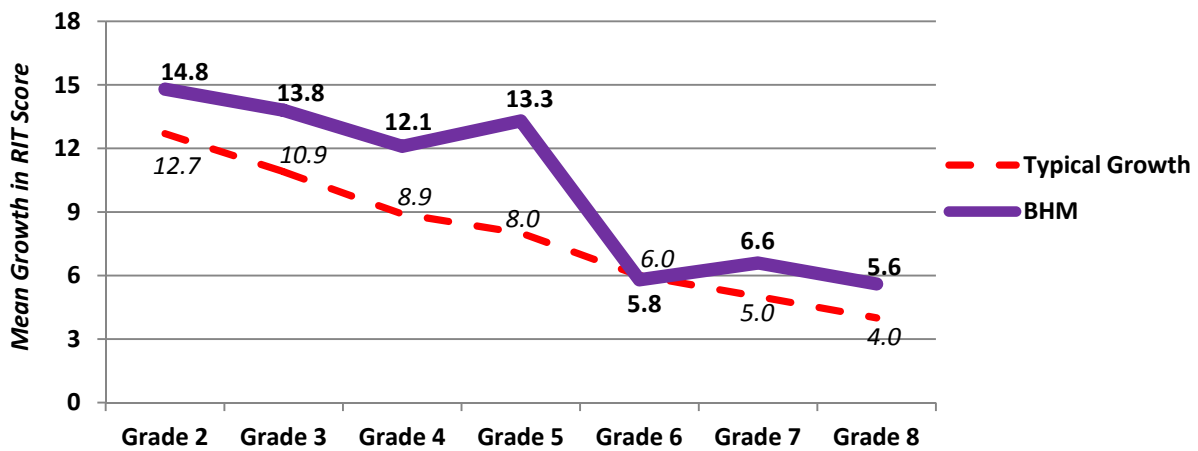
One of the district’s goals for 2012-13 was for all grades to show growth in mathematics equal to that of the 90th percentile of schools nationwide. This was setting the bar high. The graph on the next page shows that while BHM students did not reach the 90th percentile in reading growth at any grade, students came close at Grade 5.

MAP Reading Growth Compared to 90th Percentile Nationwide



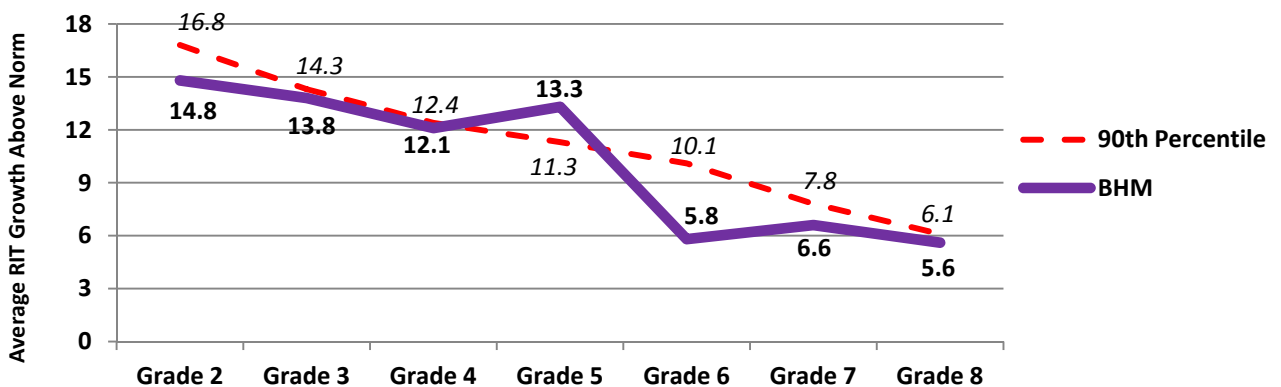
The graph below shows that BHM students also demonstrated more growth, on average, in mathematics at seven of eight grades than the NWEA norm group. Students at Grade 5 showed the greatest growth above national norms, and only Grade 6 was slightly below the norm.

Growth in MAP Mathematics 2012-13 Average Fall to Spring Growth



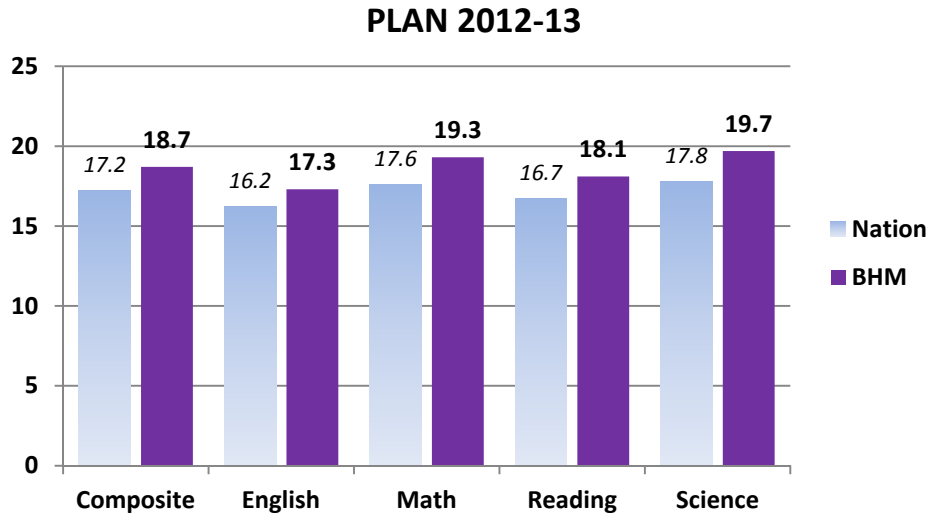
Another one of the district's goals was for all grades to show growth in mathematics equal to that of the 90th percentile of districts participating in MAP testing nationwide. The graph below shows that BHM students reached the 90th percentile in mathematics growth at Grade 5 and came close at several other grades.

MAP Math Growth Compared to 90th Percentile Nationwide



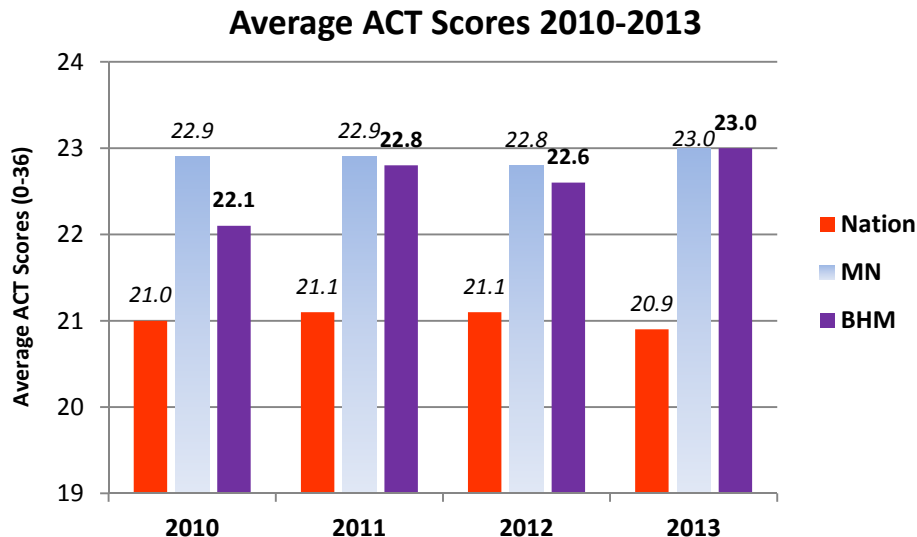
Grade 10 PLAN Test

The PLAN test is given to all BHM students in the fall of Grade 10. The PLAN, administered by the *American College Testing* organization, is a predictor of success on the ACT college entrance exam and focuses on both career preparation and improving academic achievement. PLAN test results are reported by a scale score ranging from 1 to 32. The chart below shows how the score performance of BHM Grade 10 students compares with that of Grade 10 students nationwide. When comparing means, differences of 0.5 or greater are likely to be statistically significant. BHM students scored significantly higher than their national peers in all areas.



The ACT Test

The *American College Test (ACT)* is taken voluntarily by students in their junior or senior years as an entrance exam for post-secondary schools. Minnesota's 2013 average ACT composite score was 22.8 on a 0 to 36 point scale. Minnesota was the highest in the nation among the 28 states in which more than half the college-bound students took the test in 2013. Minnesota has led the nation in average composite ACT scores for eight consecutive years. BHM students saw their average on the ACT increase from 2012, now equaling the Minnesota average and continuing well above national norms. The BHM average score of 23.0 is the highest score in recent history.



BHM Student Achievement Goals for 2013-14

Each year the School Board develops goals designed to impact instruction and student achievement within the district. The following are the three goals for 2013-14:

District Goal #1: (Proficiency)

Demonstrate a 4% increase in the overall percentage of students meeting proficiency standards on the MCA in math, and demonstrate a 4% increase in the overall percentage of students meeting proficiency standards on the MCA in reading.

Supporting Data (evidence of need):

A 4% increase was chosen as the district goal as this would represent a statistically significant increase in math and reading proficiency levels. Previous results and targets for 2012-13 are found below.

Students demonstrating proficiency: **Math** **Reading**

Actual results 2012-13	67.8%	62.3%
Target results 2013-2014	71.8%	66.3%

District Goal #2: (Academic Growth)

- A. Demonstrate average growth measured by Performance Series at all grade levels in both reading and math above the national norms as established by Scantron for fall to spring growth.***
- B. Demonstrate positive z-score growth at all grade levels in both reading and math as measured by the MMR data which indicates students are making higher than anticipated growth.***

Supporting Data (evidence of need):

In an effort to encourage the growth of all students in math and reading, BHM has adopted a dual district goal that the average student growth will be higher than anticipated both on the Performance Series local assessment, and the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments in math and reading.

District Goal #3: (Achievement Gap Reduction)

All Achievement Gap Reduction (AGR) z-Scores for each subgroup will be reported as a negative number, therefore indicating BHM students in all subgroups are making strides towards reducing the achievement gap. These numbers will be reported through the Multiple Measures Rating (MMR) based on the MCA data in reading and math.

Supporting Data (evidence of need):

Recently released Minnesota Multiple Ratings (MMR) indicates that BHM is making strides towards reducing the achievement gap. However, not all subgroups registered a negative number indicating a reduction in their achievement gap. Our goal is for all subgroups to demonstrate greater growth than the average student thus reducing the achievement gap.

District/Community Teaching & Learning Council 2013-2014 Membership

The BHM Schools' District/Community Teaching & Learning Council meets monthly from October-May from 7:00-8:30 a.m. the first Friday of each month. Its purpose is to provide teachers, parents and community representatives an avenue for input to the school district on teaching and learning topics. Both parent and community representatives serve on the D/CTLC to represent all ages of students, as well as the communities of Buffalo, Hanover, and Montrose.

1. **Pam Miller** Director, Teaching & Learning
2. **Joy Kieffer** Director of SpEd Services
3. **Don Metzler** Elementary Principal
4. **Matt Lubben** Secondary Principal
5. **Becca Young** English Learner Teacher
6. **Bev Koopman** Elementary Teacher
7. **Sue Lee** School Board Member
8. **Melissa Brings** School Board Member
9. **Phil Giddings** Parent
10. **Anne Hill** Parent
11. **Angela Miller** Parent
12. **Tom Stanforth** Parent
13. **Beth Davis-Salonek** Parent
14. **Joy Westerdahl** Community Member
15. **Jamen Wikler** Community Member
16. **Elyse Phillips** Community Member