

School Board Meeting:

September 9, 2013

Subject:

2013 MCA Results

Presenter:

Pam Miller

SUGGESTED SCHOOL BOARD ACTION:

A report will be presented at Monday's Board workshop. No action needed.

DESCRIPTION:

The Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose (BHM) students participated in the *Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments* in reading and math in April 2013. Students in grades 3-8, and 10 are tested in reading, and students in grades 3-8, and 11 are tested in math. District participation in the *MCA* is required under *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)*.

A summary of the 2013 MCA results is outlined in the following table:

MCA Proficiency Levels 2012-2013

		Reading*		Math**		Science***	
		2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	
All Grades	MN	57.8%	62.1%	61.2%	50.5%	52.1%	
	BHM	62.3%	69.8%	67.8%	61.8%	60.9%	
Grade 3	MN	57.2%	75.5%	71.5%			
	BHM	59.5%	82.1%	72.9%			
Grade 4	MN	54.0%	73.3%	71.2%			
	BHM	58.8%	78.9%	77.3%			
Grade 5	MN	63.8%	62.3%	60.0%	57.7%	57.9%	
	BHM	73.8%	77.1%	64.8%	72.4%	71.0%	
Grade 6	MN	59.3%	59.8%	57.0%			
	BHM	60.3%	69.5%	63.8%			
Grade 7	MN	54.0%	58.6%	56.0%			
	BHM	57.9%	59.9%	63.7%			
Grade 8	MN	54.1%	62.0%	58.9%	41.9%	43.8%	
	BHM	54.7%	73.5%	71.1%	56.9%	56.7%	
Grade 10	MN	62.3%			51.7%	53.0%	
	BHM	70.0%			55.3%	55.7%	
Grade 11	MN		42.5%	52.4%			
	BHM		45.6%	60.1%			

* The MCA-III reading test was administered for the first time in 2013 and comparing scores to the previous MCA-II is inappropriate

- ** The MCA-III math test administered at Grades 3-8 is based on 2007 standards and Grade 11 MCA-II is based on 2003 standards
- *** The high school MCA-III science test is administered during the year students take biology – for most students this is during Grade 10

MCA Talking Points 2013

The following talking points were developed based on an analysis of this year's results:

Results from the 2013 Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) shows scores across the state are lower in reading and math, and slightly higher in science. BHM students continued to score above state averages at all grades and subjects.

Math

- In 2012 students in Grades 3-8 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" (grade-level) level declined statewide from 62.1% in 2012 to 61.2% in 2013.
- BHM students showed a similar decline. 67.8% of BHM students were proficient 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 MN districts.
- Grade 11 where the MCA-II math test was still administered 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.

Reading

- The 2013 MCA-III reading test is based on tougher standards and consequently scores across the state declined. 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 simply 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.

Science

- While science scores statewide increased slightly from 2012 to 2013, they were small declines for BHM. 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 BHM was 8.8% higher than the MN 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 71.0% 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.

Future Plans

- There continues to be a persistent disparity in achievement between students of color, students in poverty and their white counterparts. BHM is committed to reducing this achievement gap as a part of each school's site improvement plans. All BHM schools are developing site plans where staff identify instructional strategies to raise proficiency, increase growth and reduce the achievement gap of its students.
- While the MCAs are an important measuring stick, they don't carry the weight they once did. Under NCLB math and reading proficiency rates were used to identify schools as "failures" and forced to improve. Since 2012 MN is using a new accountability system for schools known as the *Multiple Measurement Ratings* (MMR). These scores show how individual schools are doing in growth toward proficiency and progress in closing achievement gaps. Results for 2012-13 will be released in October.
- While MCA scores are a valuable piece of data that our district uses, student progress cannot be gauged exclusively by these scores. BHM uses other standardized assessments and classroom assessments to identify student strengths and weaknesses. The *Measures of Academic Progress* assessments were previously used at Grades 2-8 with the *Performance Series* slated to be used in 2013-14. Scores from these varied assessments are used in planning changes in curriculum and instruction.