



A CONTINUAL INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO ARE PROFICIENT

In Spring 2011, Spring Lake Park School District students in grades 3-11 participated in the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA-II) in reading, math, and science. These assessments measure how our students are doing in comparison to the Minnesota state standards. Now that we have received the results and as we review the data, we are pleased to see a continual increase—over the past five years—in the number of our students who are proficient. There is still work to do, of course, and we are continually reviewing the data to see where further improvements can be made throughout the system.

The federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act requires that all schools in the nation make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) toward achieving the goal of all students being proficient in reading and math. The MCA-II assessment is also used to measure where we are with the NCLB Act. As is the case with a vast majority of school districts, Spring Lake Park Schools is a district in corrective action due to not making AYP in every school, grade, and every student sub-category. Most schools did not.

WHAT DOES THIS REALLY MEAN?

Spring Lake Park Schools did make proficiency in thirty-three out of thirty-six student groups, while in only three areas --Hispanic math, Special Education math and Free Reduced math-- we did not. This shows significant improvement, as we have gone from eight student sub-groups not meeting proficiency in 2008 to three areas this school year.

A MORE COMPREHENSIVE EXPLANATION

Not making AYP for a school district is determined by combining the results of academic achievement measures in reading/language arts and mathematics, student participation rates in these assessments, graduation rates, and for elementary and middle schools, their attendance rates. Many times student groups tested are not large enough to meet the minimum group size at an individual school level. However, when all of the data is compiled into one report at the district level the number will, in many cases, reach or surpass the minimum group size at the district level, and thus, possibly identify the district as not making adequate yearly progress even though no individual school in the district has been identified.

District and school leadership teams have been analyzing MCA-II and all other available assessment information to identify both strengths and challenges. These are being addressed through the following actions:

- Each school having a continuous improvement plan that results in ongoing review of student learning data, with actions taken based on this data following each review.
- School leadership teams reviewing progress towards their priorities and projects consistently, updating their plans every 90 days, and immediately taking actions based on these updates
- Involving over 100 teacher leaders and principals in professional learning and planning this year that specifically address continuous improvement and professional development planning based on the review of their student data.
- Embedded learning within the school day for teams and individual teachers that allows them to look at individual student data, diagnose student needs, and plan for instruction.
- Continuous Improvement Coaches working with teams and individual teachers to continuously improve their work, and to continuously improve student learning

We encourage you to be involved in improving the quality of education at our school district. Talk with your child's teacher about how you can support your child's education and others in the district.

If you have any questions about this information, or assessments in general, please do not hesitate to contact your child's principal: Jerelyne Nemanich, Assessment Coordinator (763-795-6739); or myself.

Sincerely,

Denise Waalen
Director of Educational Services

DISTRICT SERVICES CENTER

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