

## **Third-grade CSAP the highest ever**

*Impressive 86 percent of Douglas County School District students are proficient or advanced readers*

The daily hard work and efforts of students and staff in Douglas County School District is certainly paying off. Third graders performed better than they ever have on the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) reading exam, according to newly released results by the Colorado Department of Education.

A full 86 percent of the students scored at or above proficient, which is well above the state average of 74 percent and a three-percentage point increase over last year. This caps a five-year gradual increase from 81 to 86 percent of students scoring at proficient or above.

Another piece of good news are those students are moving up and out of the unsatisfactory and partially proficient categories in significant numbers.

“We are very pleased overall,” said Director of Assessment Nancee Sprigg. “Even some of our highest performing schools saw increases this year, which is tough to accomplish.”

The district had four schools—two neighborhood elementary schools and two charter schools—that had more than 95 percent of their students at or above proficient, which is a phenomenal number to achieve.

Some schools with literacy specialists, who are dedicated to improving reading and writing in the early grades, also had tremendous growth this year, according to Sprigg. Castle Rock Elementary, Sand Creek Elementary, Sedalia Elementary and South Elementary all saw double-digit percentage gains in their performance.

The Assessment Department now has the task of looking carefully at the numbers to learn the stories and find out the strategies of how schools achieved this improvement. “What’s the story behind the numbers?” Sprigg asked.

The department will also be looking at why a few schools slipped back in their performance on this measure, realizing that a few ups and downs are inevitable with so many schools.

“Douglas County’s instructional focus and culture of caring for every child is showing through,” said Superintendent Rick O’Connell. “Our systematic approach to improvement is now paying dividends. We have so many great teachers and principals in this district to thank directly for their dedication and commitment to student success.”

For a complete list of school-by-school scores, visit the Douglas County School District Web site at [www.dcsd.k12.co.us](http://www.dcsd.k12.co.us).