

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Subject: 4th and 7th grade CSAP results**

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# **Douglas County CSAP scores among highest in state**

Douglas County's test scores on fourth- and seventh-grade reading and writing (proficient and above) for the Colorado State Assessment Program (CSAP) rank among the highest in the state and outpace state averages. "It's a credit to our teachers, especially those at the elementary level, who work so hard for student success in the essential skill areas of reading and writing," said Superintendent Rick O'Connell. "We are proud of the work all Douglas County teachers are doing in our classrooms and thankful for the supportive parents who play an important role in the success of these children."

Fourth graders scoring at the proficient level or above is up six percent in reading over last year and four percent in writing. These scores are 15 percentage points above the state average.

The first-year performance results of Douglas County's seventh graders in reading and writing scores will serve as a baseline for future improvement. Douglas County School District had 76 percent scoring proficient or above in reading and 60 percent proficient or above in writing, making seventh grade scores well above state averages - 20 points higher in both cases.

While pleased with the increase of fourth-grade students, who are proficient in both reading and writing, there are too many students still not reaching the proficient level, especially in writing. The improvement of student writing remains a primary goal in Douglas County. "We are in the process of training all district teachers to use a common assessment tool for writing," said Director of Assessment Elliott Asp. "This will allow better tracking of student progress and help us ensure our students are continuing to improve in these key areas."

Although we can celebrate the fact that scores increased, much work remains to be done. The district is committed to the academic achievement of all students and CSAP remains one important measure of success. "Continuous improvement is a core value in Douglas County School District and we will do what it takes to continue these positive trends," said O'Connell.

The district will expand its efforts to ensure all elementary teachers work together to increase reading and writing proficiency at fourth grade. The district views CSAP as a high-quality assessment, but would hope more information regarding strengths and weaknesses of individual students will be forthcoming from CSAP. "We will continue to advocate for more detailed results from the Colorado Department of Education," said Asp.

During the course of the next few weeks, parents of fifth- and eighth-graders will receive individual results from this reading and writing test. Each school will be analyzing its building results and working with teachers to address individual student needs. The district will continue in its effort to support schools in focusing on achievement and developing strategies for improvement.