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TO: Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools
DATE: August 24, 2010
SUBJECT: 2010 Maryland School Assessment Science Results

PURPOSE:

To provide Board members with a summary and overview of the statewide results of the Maryland School Assessment in Science, which were administered in spring 2010.

BACKGROUND:

The 2010 administration of the Maryland School Assessment in science included all students in grades 5 and 8. The results of the assessments were required to be reported under No Child Left Behind (NCLB) beginning with the 2007-2008 school year, but are **not** included in the calculations determining Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). This year's results serve as the third year for the science assessments. The results are being analyzed diagnostically and will be used to inform instruction in science.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Beginning in 2005, Maryland like many other states began development of a State assessment in science under the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The curriculum was revised to identify specific content to be included in instruction and state assessments grade-by-grade for students in grades three through eight. Federal law also required the implementation of an assessment at each of the levels (elementary, middle and high). The state instructional frameworks cover content at each of the three grade bands (kindergarten through grade 2, grades 3, 4 and 5, and grades 6 through 8). The assessments administered in Grade 5 and 8 covered those grade bands. The requirement for a high school science test is met through the use of the biology High School Assessment.

The Maryland School Assessments in science include selected response (multiple choice) items and items requiring students to produce a written response—some requiring short one- or two-sentence responses, some requiring longer responses. The assessments were designed to be administered on-line with an option for paper and pencil administration. The method of administration is dependent upon school system capacity to test students on-line, as well as school choice and student needs. This year, 58 percent of the administrations were on-line, with ten school systems testing more than 85 percent of their Grade 5 students on-line and twelve school systems testing more than 85 percent of their Grade 8 students on-line. Students take the exact same forms of the tests whether on paper or on-line.

The assessments were administered in the end of April and beginning of May and results were returned to local school systems in August. Local school systems have been notified of the school and system results for the MSA science, as well as individual student scores.



The 2010 assessments are important because they provide the third year of data for science in grades 5 and 8 under the auspices of the new curriculum and assessments. Scores show improvement both at the elementary level and at the middle school. Results of the assessments appear in the table and will be discussed in more detail at the Board meeting, along with how the results will be used to inform science instruction in the future.

MSA Science 2009 and 2010 Proficient/Advanced by Subgroup

	Grade 5			Grade 8		
	2010 % Prof/Adv.	2009 % Prof. Adv.	Growth	2010 % Prof/Adv.	2009 % Prof. Adv.	Growth
All Students	65.9	63.7	+2.2	67.7	65.3	+2.4
American Indian	66.7	69.9	-3.2	72.7	61.7	+11.0
Asian	82.6	81.5	+1.1	87.2	85.8	+1.4
African American	48.1	44.7	+3.4	48.0	44.4	+3.6
White	81.7	79.9	+1.8	83.8	82.5	+1.3
Hispanic	50.5	49.0	+1.5	52.8	50.1	+2.7
FARMS	46.9	42.7	+4.2	46.9	42.7	+4.2
ELL	25.4	28.5	-3.1	19.8	20.6	-0.8
Special Education	35.9	34.6	+1.3	30.8	30.1	+0.7

ACTION:

For information only.

NSG:law