

**From:** Communications [<mailto:Communications@schools.nyc.gov>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, August 12, 2015 01:22 PM

**Subject:** NYC DOE - PRESS RELEASE - MAYOR AND CHANCELLOR ANNOUNCE CONTINUED GAINS FOR NYC STUDENTS ON STATE ENGLISH AND MATH EXAMS



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 12, 2015  
N-8, 2015-16

# MAYOR DE BLASIO AND CHANCELLOR FARIÑA ANNOUNCE CONTINUED GAINS FOR NYC STUDENTS ON STATE ENGLISH AND MATH EXAMS

*Gap between NYC and State on English exam shrinks to its smallest ever, NYC students post highest results among urban districts*

*Gains for struggling students: number of students at lowest proficiency level drops by 7,000 in English and 4,700 in math*

NEW YORK – Mayor Bill de Blasio and Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña today announced New York City’s students have continued to improve in the third year of the Common Core-aligned State English and math exams. A larger percentage of students scored proficient in both English and math in 2015 compared to 2014, reflecting progress as the City continues its shift to Common Core-aligned instruction. City students narrowed their historic achievement gap with their New York State peers to its smallest ever in English – less than a single percentage point. New York City also outperformed the state’s other “Big 5” urban school districts, demonstrating the effectiveness of its Mayoral Control system and strategies to raise achievement.

In 2015, 35.2 percent of students met proficiency standards in math, up from 34.2 percent last year, while 30.4 percent of students met the standards in English, up from 28.4 percent last year. Additionally, the number of students scoring at Level 1 (the lowest level of proficiency) across New York City has also decreased by 7,000 students in English and 4,700 in math, while the number of students performing at Level 4 (the highest level of proficiency) increased. New York City students improved across all ethnic groups.

In the past year, the City has enacted reforms to increase accountability, improve instruction and raise achievement – including requiring all superintendents to re-apply for their jobs, providing 80 minutes of high-quality professional development each week for all teachers, and investing in meeting the whole needs of high-needs students at the City’s 130 Community Schools including 94 Renewal Schools.

“This improvement represents painstaking work – student by student, classroom by classroom, and school by school. It’s steady progress, and we are going to continue building on it. We’ve set the highest standards anywhere in the nation, and the reforms we are undertaking are giving students, teachers and families the tools they need to succeed,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**.

“More New York City students are meeting the higher bar set by the Common Core standards, and that is a testament to the extensive work we’ve done to innovate and improve instruction across our schools,” said **Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña**. “I am confident that we’ll build on this progress moving forward,



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 12, 2015  
N-8, 2015-16

as we continue to focus on Common Core-aligned professional development and instructional practice, strengthen schools through our new school support structure, and drive improvement across the critical elements of the *Framework for Great Schools*. While this progress is meaningful, we still have a lot of work to do to achieve our ultimate goal of putting every student on the path to college, meaningful careers, and a lifetime of learning.”

### Overall Results by Grade:

| ELA        |                |             |             |            |             | Math       |                |             |             |             |             |
|------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Grade      | 2015 # Tested  | % 2014 L3+4 | % 2015 L3+4 | Pt. Diff   | % Diff      | Grade      | 2015 # Tested  | % 2014 L3+4 | % 2015 L3+4 | Pt. Diff    | % Diff      |
| 3          | 70,320         | 29.9        | 30.2        | <b>0.3</b> | <b>1.0</b>  | 3          | 71,651         | 38.6        | 38.5        | <b>-0.1</b> | <b>-0.3</b> |
| 4          | 69,695         | 31.1        | 31.3        | <b>0.2</b> | <b>0.5</b>  | 4          | 71,097         | 40.0        | 39.1        | <b>-0.9</b> | <b>-2.1</b> |
| 5          | 66,329         | 28.4        | 29.7        | <b>1.3</b> | <b>4.6</b>  | 5          | 67,240         | 38.7        | 40.9        | <b>2.2</b>  | <b>5.6</b>  |
| 6          | 65,048         | 25.3        | 30.0        | <b>4.8</b> | <b>18.8</b> | 6          | 65,876         | 33.8        | 35.5        | <b>1.7</b>  | <b>5.1</b>  |
| 7          | 65,635         | 26.8        | 28.2        | <b>1.4</b> | <b>5.2</b>  | 7          | 66,259         | 29.6        | 32.5        | <b>2.9</b>  | <b>9.8</b>  |
| 8          | 66,326         | 28.9        | 32.9        | <b>4.0</b> | <b>13.9</b> | 8          | 56,999         | 22.8        | 22.5        | <b>-0.3</b> | <b>-1.4</b> |
| <b>All</b> | <b>403,353</b> | <b>28.4</b> | <b>30.4</b> | <b>2.0</b> | <b>6.9</b>  | <b>All</b> | <b>399,122</b> | <b>34.2</b> | <b>35.2</b> | <b>1.0</b>  | <b>2.9</b>  |

NOTE: A change in State testing policy, starting in 2014, has driven a decrease in eighth grade proficiency rates. To reduce double testing, most students in accelerated math who took the Algebra Regents exam are exempt from taking the 8<sup>th</sup> grade State math assessment.

### Overall Results by Demographic:

| ELA                  |               |             |             |            |             | Math                 |               |             |             |            |            |
|----------------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Demographic Subgroup | 2015 # Tested | % 2014 L3+4 | % 2015 L3+4 | Pt. Diff   | % Diff      | Demographic Subgroup | 2015 # Tested | % 2014 L3+4 | % 2015 L3+4 | Pt. Diff   | % Diff     |
| Asian                | 66,271        | 49.5        | 52.5        | <b>3.0</b> | <b>6.1</b>  | Asian                | 64,960        | 66.6        | 67.4        | <b>0.8</b> | <b>1.2</b> |
| Black                | 99,727        | 18.1        | 19.0        | <b>1.0</b> | <b>5.3</b>  | Black                | 98,139        | 18.6        | 19.1        | <b>0.6</b> | <b>3.1</b> |
| Hispanic             | 165,200       | 18.3        | 19.8        | <b>1.6</b> | <b>8.6</b>  | Hispanic             | 166,248       | 23.1        | 23.7        | <b>0.5</b> | <b>2.4</b> |
| White                | 64,432        | 49.4        | 51.3        | <b>2.0</b> | <b>4.0</b>  | White                | 62,162        | 55.8        | 56.7        | <b>0.9</b> | <b>1.6</b> |
| ELL                  | 47,510        | 3.6         | 4.4         | <b>0.8</b> | <b>21.0</b> | ELL                  | 54,838        | 14.0        | 14.6        | <b>0.6</b> | <b>4.2</b> |



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 12, 2015  
N-8, 2015-16

|     |        |     |     |     |     |     |        |      |      |      |      |
|-----|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------|------|------|------|------|
| SWD | 86,577 | 6.7 | 6.9 | 0.3 | 3.8 | SWD | 85,600 | 11.4 | 11.3 | -0.1 | -0.6 |
|-----|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------|------|------|------|------|

### Overall Results by Level 1's:

| ELA   |               |                |                |          |        | Math  |               |                |                |          |        |
|-------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------|--------|-------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------|--------|
| Grade | 2015 # Tested | % 2014 Level 1 | % 2015 Level 1 | Pt. Diff | % Diff | Grade | 2015 # Tested | % 2014 Level 1 | % 2015 Level 1 | Pt. Diff | % Diff |
| 3     | 70,320        | 39.0           | 37.3           | -1.7     | -4.5   | 3     | 71,651        | 30.0           | 30.3           | 0.3      | 1.1    |
| 4     | 69,695        | 32.8           | 31.9           | -0.9     | -2.8   | 4     | 71,907        | 29.5           | 30.1           | 0.7      | 2.2    |
| 5     | 66,329        | 36.6           | 34.9           | -1.7     | -4.5   | 5     | 67,240        | 33.2           | 32.0           | -1.2     | -3.5   |
| 6     | 65,408        | 30.6           | 30.8           | 0.2      | 0.6    | 6     | 65,876        | 32.6           | 32.3           | -0.3     | -0.9   |
| 7     | 65,635        | 37.3           | 37.8           | 0.5      | 1.4    | 7     | 66,259        | 39.9           | 36.6           | -3.3     | -8.3   |
| 8     | 66,326        | 31.7           | 28.7           | -3.0     | -9.6   | 8     | 56,999        | 39.6           | 41.0           | 1.4      | 3.4    |
| All   | 403,353       | 34.7           | 33.6           | -1.1     | -3.2   | All   | 399,122       | 33.9           | 33.5           | -0.5     | -1.4   |

Under the Common Core standards, students are required to think critically, read more difficult passages and books, and spend more time writing. In English, students must consider all sides of an argument and support their claims with strong evidence. In math, students are asked to apply their skills in scenarios that are more closely connected to the problems they'll face in college and careers. This year's gains affirm the efforts of New York City teachers to integrate the Common Core standards into their instruction, as well as the Department of Education's continuing efforts to guide and support principals and teachers.

Among more than 400,000 students in grades 3-8, less than two percent "opted out" of either the English or math State exam. 1.4 percent of students opted out of the English exam, while 1.8 percent of students opted out of the math exam.

"These improvements reflect New York City's continued efforts to provide a quality education for our children," said **NYC Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**. "Academic success takes many forms, and these test scores are a positive indicator of the hard work and progress taking place in our classrooms. I thank Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Fariña for their staunch commitment to improving and innovating New York City's education system to help every student rise and meet their potential."

"The signs of success we're starting to see with the Common Core-aligned curriculum have much to do with the dedication of our school leaders, the skill of our teachers and the hard work of our children," said **Ernest Logan, president of the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators**. "If implemented wisely and with consistent care, these educational standards will continue to place New York City students on



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 12, 2015  
N-8, 2015-16

the path to success.”

“Our schools are moving in the right direction,” said **NYC Council Education Committee Chairperson Daniel Dromm**. “I am encouraged by these improvements and look forward to further gains as recent reforms implemented by Chancellor Fariña are built upon.”

“These numbers show that careful attention, professional leadership, and the accountability of Mayoral Control are delivering results for our kids,” said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**. “I look forward to working with Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Fariña to build on this progress.”

“This year’s test results and low opt-out rate show that Common Core in New York City is working,” said **William C. Rudin, Chairman of the Association for a Better New York**. “ABNY applauds the Mayor and the Chancellor for their leadership in implementing the higher standards to prepare our children for success in the 21st century. The future of New York City as a global capital of innovation and culture depends on providing our kids with the skills they need to create and achieve big dreams.”

The City is committed to raising student achievement through a range of initiatives to improve instruction and better meet the needs of 1.1 million students and their families, starting with Pre-K for All which – for the first time this fall – will provide a free, full-day, high-quality seat for every four-year old in the City. In pre-K, the City’s youngest learners gain critical skills that prepare them for kindergarten and beyond.

In addition to this expansion of early childhood education, the Department of Education has streamlined its structure to align support and supervision for schools, bring experienced staff closer to schools, help build schools’ capacity to improve student achievement, and hold all schools accountable. New, geographically-based Borough Field Support Centers opened earlier this summer, and will provide school communities with a wide range of services and supports and provide teacher training, as well as deepen partnerships and increase collaboration between schools.

The City and Department of Education have also invested in fundamentally changing the direction of our 94 most challenged schools, as well as 36 other schools with high-needs populations. By the beginning of the 2015-16 school year, each of these 130 schools will have been transformed into a Community School that offers mental health, physical well-being, or other vital supports to better support the social, emotional, physical and academic needs of students and overcome issues that impede learning. Each of the 94 Renewal Schools are also offering extended learning time; and receiving support from academic intervention teams deployed to overhaul curriculum, and groups of experienced principals and assistant principals to strengthen leadership.

Along with these reforms, this Administration has introduced a number of innovative and collaborative programs including Showcase Schools and is expanding the Middle School Quality Initiative (MSQI). Showcase Schools and the Middle School Quality Initiative are innovative programs that bolster collaboration among schools. Both MSQI and Showcase Schools saw gains in both math and English. To support improved instruction, the DOE has also released new data tools – the *School Performance Data Explorer* for all grades and the *Progress to Graduation Tracker* for high schools – that provide current



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 12, 2015  
N-8, 2015-16

metrics of all students to help schools tailor early interventions and supports to students that need them most.

The Mayor and Chancellor have also focused on engaging parents as meaningful partners in their child's education. For the first time, starting in the 2014-15 school year, schools set aside 40 minutes each week for parent engagement. Additionally, the City invested in a "Raise Your Hand" campaign to increase participation in the 2015 Community and Citywide Education Council Elections, resulting in 1,290 parents applying for a CEC seat, up from 729 in 2013, as well as a 60% increase in the number of parent voters.

As New York City schools continue their transition to the Common Core standards, the State and City continue to focus on improving student learning and meeting the whole needs of every child, not just "teaching to the test." The State English and math exams are one of many measures to assess the academic progress and critical thinking skills of our students.

The Department of Education continues to partner with schools and families to ensure that all students are getting the best education possible. Parents can learn more about the new tests at NYSED's EngageNY website. Starting this afternoon, families can view their child's test results on their NYC Schools account – a parent-friendly platform for viewing a student's records on any Internet-ready device, including mobile phones. Parents who have not already registered for an account at their child's school and would like to view their child's results before the start of the school year can visit their school if a summer program is in session or the office of their community superintendent. Interpretation services will be provided. A full list of the superintendents and their office addresses is available [here](#).

"While the students' test results show slight improvement, we must recognize that we still have a long way to go," said **State Senator and Ranking Member of the Higher Education Committee Toby Ann Stavisky**. "The transition to Common Core was not easy, because of the difficulty of the test. As a former public high school teacher, I know first-hand the importance of supporting our students, so that our children can achieve the very high standards we have set for them. I am confident that with the continued partnership of Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Carmen Fariña, together with adequate funding, the children will continue to improve their basic skills."

"I am pleased to see that New York City students continue to improve their test scores in English and Math, and I am especially encouraged that New York City is narrowing the achievement gap with the State. We must work to ensure that the future of this City is made up of the most well-prepared individuals to succeed and thrive in any competitive economic environment," said **State Senator Jose Peralta**.

"I want to commend Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña and Mayor de Blasio for their leadership and the continued gains we're witnessing with our city students. Although we have a lot more improvement that needs to be done, these results are a reflection of the inclusive management and added accountability within the re-activated school district throughout our city. Likewise, these marks clearly demonstrate that under Mayor de Blasio's guidance, the Mayoral Control system and its strategies continue to set new benchmarks and proficiency standards that will never be compromised or abandoned," said **Assemblyman Walter T. Mosley**.

"Education is very important for our children. I am very glad to see we are making such great



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 12, 2015  
N-8, 2015-16

progress,” said **Council Member Karen Koslowitz**.

“Step by step, improvement is happening and that is positive. We know that test scores are just one measure of a child's educational experience, and we shouldn't lose sight of that focus,” said **Council Member Helen Rosenthal**.

“The progress and success of our school system is a testament to the value of a New York City public education,” said **Council Member I. Daneek Miller**. “When resources are equitably distributed, it is clear that our students are up to the task. We applaud the Mayor and Chancellor for their continued commitment to communities and investment in schools.”

“These results show just how effective Mayoral Control can be. New York City leads the states urban centers when it comes to education and that is in no small part due to the leadership of Chancellor Carmen Fariña and Mayor Bill de Blasio. Though we have more to achieve, these results show that the path forward is clear,” said **Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez**.

“This year's improved test scores are an incredible accomplishment for our students and our city. By working to ensure that all students in our schools receive the same level of quality education, we are helping guarantee that they will also receive the same enriching opportunities when they graduate, regardless of the neighborhood they are from,” said **Council Member Mathieu Eugene**. “I commend Mayor Bill de Blasio and Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña for making education a priority.”

“I commend our students and educators for this marked improvement and the hard work it took to get there,” said **Council Member Vanessa Gibson**. “New York City is proud to be home to one of the most diverse student bodies in the nation and I am extremely pleased that Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña and the DOE have been able to find a curriculum that allows all of our students to succeed and improve. I commend Mayor de Blasio for his steadfast commitment to our children and I am confident that his leadership and this administration's dedication to an overall cultural shift within our schools will yield tremendous results for our young people going forward.”

“A good education involves the active and equal participation of parents, teachers and students. The more involved each of these support structures are in a student's education, the better chance of success. These new statistics show a concerted effort on behalf of New York City schools to ensure our kids are reaching their potential, and we must continue on this path to a quality education for all,” said **Council Member Peter Koo**.

“We have an obligation to our children to provide them with a quality education,” said **Council Member Rory I. Lancman**. “The increase in proficiency announced today shows that, as a city, we are heading in the right direction.”

“We are pleased to see continued progress in the test scores for NYC public school students, across all grades, races, ethnicities and for English Language Learners. This progress shows that many of the reforms put in place over the past few years are making a difference. We look forward to continuing to work with Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Fariña to build on this success through strengthening and expanding the



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 12, 2015  
N-8, 2015-16

early childhood education and after-school systems, the growth of community schools, the expansion of school-based health and mental health services, the implementation of universal school lunch and breakfast in the classroom to ensure school children are well-nourished, and the expansion of summer programs that combat summer learning loss,” said **Stephanie Gendell, Associate Executive Director for Policy and Government Relations, Citizens’ Committee for Children.**

“I’m very pleased with the gains in test scores. Though, we have a long way to go, I commend the Mayor and the Chancellor on their efforts to improve the education of our children,” said **Rev. Herbert Daughtry, Presiding Minister, House of the Lord Churches.**

“As someone who scaled the walls of poverty because of the quality public education I received and as a citizen of this city committed to public education, I am inspired by these test scores. I encourage the Mayor, Chancellor and all others to continue to reach for higher heights on behalf of our students,” said **Rev. Fred Davie, Executive Vice President, Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York.**

“Improving the outcomes of our students within the public school system is key and I applaud our efforts. We must continue to advocate for resources that best equip our children for success. Part of our aim is to provide an equal playing field for all students,” said **Rev. Que English, Co-Chair of the NYC Clergy Roundtable and Senior Pastor at Bronx Christian Fellowship.**

“It is encouraging and inspiring to see the improvement in scores for our public school students. Today’s report highlights the importance of allocating resources to our public school children. I encourage the Mayor and Chancellor to continue to put NYC public students first,” said **Reverend Michael Walrond, Senior Pastor at First Corinthian Baptist Church and Chair of the Mayor’s Clergy Advisory Council.**

“Settlement houses and other community based organizations have worked closely with the de Blasio administration to ramp up their partnership with public schools by offering expanded services such as community schools, mental health services, after-school and early childhood education,” said **Nancy Wackstein, Executive Director, United Neighborhood Houses.** “We are thrilled to learn that State testing offers evidence that the improvements made in education are already making a positive impact for students. We look forward to continuing to work with the City to ensure every child has the tools and support the need to succeed.”

“As a product of the NYC public schools and a parent of 3 current students I am proud to hear about the progress that our children are making under the leadership of Chancellor Fariña and Mayor de Blasio. Our children are the future of our city and their success is our collective success. We all win when we prioritize education,” said **Linda Sarsour, Executive Director, Arab American Association of New York.**

“This is wonderful news and it shows the change in approach is working. As the partnership between parents and school gets stronger, our schools should continue to improve,” said **Morris Altman, President of Community Education Council, District 25.**

“The Coalition for Educational Justice has pushed for years to have robust resources for students and families and supports for teachers, and in order to produce academic improvements. The results on this



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 12, 2015  
N-8, 2015-16

year's state exam are further proof that when you provide school communities with these things you will get student growth. The cities commitment and investment in both community schools, teacher support, and interschool school collaboration is beginning to paying off. While parents across the city know the state exam doesn't paint a full or complete picture of student success, we are pleased to see gains. While this is a good start there is still more work to be done," said **Natasha Capers, Coordinator for the Coalition for Educational Justice**.

More information is available at  
<http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/data/TestResults/ELAandMathTestResults>.

###

Contact: Chancellor's Press Office (212) 374-5141