

**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY**

**Board Agenda Item**

**TITLE:** Report on the Results of the 2005 Maryland High School Assessments

**DATE:** November 10, 2005

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**OVERVIEW:**

Results of the 2005 Maryland High School Assessments (HSA) for middle and high schools have been finalized. In every content area, more than 74 percent of HCPSS students passed the test—an accomplishment that few systems in the state could match. The 2005 passing rate for each content area follows:

- Algebra 74.3%
- Biology 76.7%
- English II 76.7%
- Government 82.1%

This marked a transition year for the HSA program. Up to this point, students have only been required to take the HSA, not to pass the test. Beginning with students who entered Grade 9 in the fall of 2005, students are now required to pass the assessment as a graduation requirement. Therefore, in spring 2005 HCPSS had 2,004 middle school students taking the algebra HSA who had to pass the assessment. Nearly 97 percent of them passed the test, which meets our local standard of 95 percent of students passing the HSA on their first attempt.

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**FUTURE DIRECTION:**

As the state’s accountability system changes to incorporate the new English II HSA and the Algebra HSA for both individual and school accountability, assuring that every HCPSS student is prepared to pass the HSA continues to be a priority. We continue to implement strategies that have proved to be highly effective in improving achievement, and are working collaboratively across departments and schools to use continuous improvement processes to guide systemic improvement. Targeted professional development and targeted staffing will be used to support schools in making sure that every student group meets with success on these high stakes assessments.

**Submitted by:**

**Approval/Concurrence:**

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## Introduction

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The Maryland High School Assessments (HSA) are end-of-course tests in algebra, biology, English, and government. Currently, there are two different graduation requirements for students regarding the HSA. Students who are currently in Grades 10, 11, and 12 have only to take the HSA; whereas, students who entered Grade 9 this year are required to take and pass the HSA to meet their graduation requirement.

This year, a new English II HSA was introduced. The English II HSA replaced the English I HSA, given in Grade 9, and the Grade 10 Maryland School Assessment reading test. This test is given at the completion of Grade 10 English and will be used as the reading accountability measure for high schools under *No Child Left Behind* and as a graduation requirement for individual students.

With the standards set for the new English II test, the Maryland State Department of Education has released a summary of the scores needed to pass the HSA tests or to accrue a composite score that meets or exceeds the state standard by combining scores above the minimum score on all four HSA tests. The minimum score and passing score for each HSA is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Cut Scores for the Maryland High School Assessments

| <b>High School Assessment</b> |                            |                            |                               |                             |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Content</b>                | <b>Minimum Scale Score</b> | <b>Passing Scale Score</b> | <b>Proficient Scale Score</b> | <b>Advanced Scale Score</b> |
| Algebra                       | 402                        | 412                        | 412                           | 450                         |
| Biology                       | 391                        | 400                        |                               |                             |
| English II                    | 386                        | 396                        | 396                           | 429                         |
| Government                    | 387                        | 394                        |                               |                             |
| Total Combined Score Option   |                            | <b>1602</b>                |                               |                             |

## Results and Trend Performance for the HSA

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The performance of students throughout the HCPSS on the 2005 HSA improved over the last three years. However, we have not yet met the rigorous target of having 95 percent of students pass the assessment on their first attempt. The 2005 overall pass rate for the HSA in each content area is as follows:

- Algebra 74.3%
- Biology 76.7%
- English II 76.7%
- Government 82.1%

It is anticipated that as passing the HSA becomes a requirement for students, there will be an increase in the passing rates. Tables 2 through 5 summarize the countywide trend performance of all HCPSS students and student groups. (Note that since the English II is a new test, there are no trend data available.) The attachments include 2005 results for all students and student groups in each high school.

Table 2: Countywide Trend Percent of Students Passing Algebra HSA

| Group             | 2003 Algebra       |                 | 2004 Algebra       |                 | 2005 Algebra       |                 |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|
|                   | Number of Students | Percent Passing | Number of Students | Percent Passing | Number of Students | Percent Passing |
| All Students      | 4768               | 69.5%           | 4425               | 74.1%           | 4332               | 74.3%           |
| Males             | 2507               | 67.7%           | 2324               | 72.5%           | 2251               | 73.3%           |
| Females           | 2256               | 71.5%           | 2101               | 75.9%           | 2081               | 75.3%           |
| Asian             | 527                | 81.0%           | 549                | 85.9%           | 534                | 88.6%           |
| African American  | 908                | 42.8%           | 889                | 49.2%           | 945                | 44.6%           |
| White             | 3163               | 76.4%           | 2794               | 81.1%           | 2650               | 83.8%           |
| Hispanic          | 151                | 45.7%           | 153                | 50.3%           | 179                | 50.8%           |
| American Indian   | 5                  | 80.0%           | 9                  | 88.8%           | 14                 | 42.9%           |
| Not Reported      | 9                  | 66.7%           | 31                 | 64.5%           | 10                 | 60.0%           |
| ELL               | 146                | 47.9%           | 127                | 37.8%           | 110                | 41.8%           |
| FARMS             | 429                | 39.6%           | 474                | 43.0%           | 452                | 40.7%           |
| Special Education | 422                | 31.0%           | 435                | 29.2%           | 377                | 27.3%           |

Table 3: Countywide Trend Percent of Students Passing Biology HSA

| Group             | 2003 Biology       |                 | 2004 Biology       |                 | 2005 Biology       |                 |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|
|                   | Number of Students | Percent Passing | Number of Students | Percent Passing | Number of Students | Percent Passing |
| All Students      | 3578               | 73.4%           | 3733               | 79.5%           | 3802               | 76.7%           |
| Males             | 1844               | 71.4%           | 1845               | 77.0%           | 1970               | 74.5%           |
| Females           | 1728               | 75.6%           | 1888               | 82.0%           | 1832               | 79.1%           |
| Asian             | 438                | 80.8%           | 478                | 84.7%           | 526                | 83.1%           |
| African American  | 610                | 51.3%           | 670                | 57.3%           | 671                | 56.2%           |
| White             | 2397               | 78.6%           | 2447               | 85.2%           | 2479               | 82.1%           |
| Hispanic          | 112                | 56.3%           | 123                | 68.2%           | 116                | 50.9%           |
| American Indian   | 9                  | 55.6%           | 6                  | 83.3%           | <5                 | NA              |
| Not Reported      | 6                  | 83.3%           | 9                  | 88.8%           | 6                  | 83.3%           |
| ELL               | 93                 | 37.6%           | 70                 | 37.1%           | 73                 | 35.6%           |
| FARMS             | 268                | 32.8%           | 302                | 45.3%           | 314                | 48.4%           |
| Special Education | 314                | 33.8%           | 293                | 38.5%           | 291                | 32.0%           |

Table 4: Countywide Trend Percent of Students Passing Government HSA

| Group             | 2003 Government    |                 | 2004 Government    |                 | 2005 Government    |                 |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|
|                   | Number of Students | Percent Passing | Number of Students | Percent Passing | Number of Students | Percent Passing |
| All Students      | 3665               | 78.6%           | 3813               | 83.2%           | 3801               | 82.1%           |
| Males             | 1910               | 74.3%           | 1888               | 80.3%           | 1953               | 80.5%           |
| Females           | 1747               | 83.5%           | 1925               | 86.1%           | 1848               | 83.8%           |
| Asian             | 421                | 83.4%           | 491                | 87.3%           | 528                | 84.5%           |
| African American  | 629                | 59.6%           | 666                | 68.4%           | 710                | 65.8%           |
| White             | 2487               | 83.6%           | 2491               | 87.3%           | 2436               | 86.8%           |
| Hispanic          | 107                | 60.7%           | 145                | 68.2%           | 115                | 71.3%           |
| American Indian   | 7                  | 57.1%           | 7                  | 57.1%           | 5                  | 80.0%           |
| Not Reported      | 6                  | 66.7%           | 13                 | 69.2%           | 7                  | 85.7%           |
| ELL               | 69                 | 40.6%           | 90                 | 46.6%           | 70                 | 38.6%           |
| FARMS             | 259                | 44.8%           | 302                | 52.3%           | 329                | 57.1%           |
| Special Education | 304                | 36.2%           | 286                | 39.8%           | 308                | 41.9%           |

Table 5: Countywide Percent of Students Passing the 2005 English II HSA

| Group             | Number of Students | Percent Passing |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| All Students      | 3742               | 76.7%           |
| Males             | 1918               | 71.4%           |
| Females           | 1824               | 82.3%           |
| Asian             | 499                | 77.6%           |
| African American  | 708                | 56.5%           |
| White             | 2406               | 83.1%           |
| Hispanic          | 114                | 64.0%           |
| American Indian   | 5                  | 60.0%           |
| Not Reported      | 10                 | 90.0%           |
| ELL               | 60                 | 20.0%           |
| FARMS             | 327                | 44.3%           |
| Special Education | 297                | 33.1%           |

### AYP Decisions for High Schools for 2005

With the new English II HSA counting as the reading component of the NCLB accountability standards, the release of English II scores were accompanied by preliminary Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) decisions for high schools. High schools are deemed to have met AYP if they had 95 percent of their

students in all groups participate in testing, achieved the AMOs (or scored within the confidence interval or received Safe Harbor status) for all students and every student group in both reading (English II) and mathematics (Geometry), and met the target for graduation rate. Schools who do not meet AYP for two years enter the MSDE improvement process. Schools are allowed to appeal AYP decisions if they have reason to believe the results are inaccurate due to reporting errors.

Based on the AYP preliminary results for high schools, there were no schools entering the state's improvement process. However, one high school did not meet AYP for special education students in mathematics. This school is now considered to be on system watch; however, an appeal will be filed for this school and final AYP determinations will be available once the appeal has been processed.

Additionally, Cedar Lane Special Center did not meet AYP for attendance. An appeal has already been filed for this school, but no decision has been communicated by MSDE regarding this appeal.

## **SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS**

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The performance of HCPSS students on the HSA continues to be among the highest in the state. Assuring that every HCPSS student is prepared to pass the HSA continues to be a priority. We continue to implement strategies that have proved to be highly effective in improving achievement, and are working collaboratively across departments and schools to use a continuous improvement process to guide systemic improvement. Targeted professional development and targeted staffing will be used to support schools in making sure that every student group meets with success on these high stakes assessments. Our schools are closely monitoring the performance of individual students on local assessments and the MSA in previous grades to ensure that every student receives the necessary support to be successful on the HSA.

There will also be a change to the state's accountability system for 2006. Another HSA, algebra, will be used for both individual and school accountability. Algebra will become the mathematics measure used for the NCLB accountability requirement for high schools. The geometry test that was previously used has been discontinued.

More information from the MSDE is also expected regarding the Modified HSA, for students with Individualized Education Plans. This is part of a revision to NCLB that will be incorporated into the state's accountability system in 2006-2007. Also, a state task force is examining the possibility of a comparable HSA for students who have difficulty demonstrating their understanding on traditional pencil and paper tests. More information about both of these assessments will be shared as it becomes available.