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Dover School District Student Performance – How Do We Measure Up?

Dover Assessment School Board Report

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I - Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is to inform the Dover School Board and the Dover public on the assessment results of our students over the last few years. In the past, reports to the Board have focused solely on the NECAP results. However, to look at the NECAP scores in isolation only gives a snapshot of how our students are scoring in relationship to themselves and to the state on this one particular assessment. This indeed is important information and information we take very seriously. A great deal of time is spent by the district and each school analyzing results for strengths and weaknesses, and subsequently adjusting instruction and programming appropriately. However, a comprehensive picture of the performance of our students is not complete without looking at the results of national assessments that our students participate in comparing their performance to that of their peers on a state level, on the New England level and on the national level. The assessments that provide this information in addition to the NECAP are: The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT), and the Advanced Placement Exams (AP.) This report provides comparative information on each of these assessments and should provide the public a clearer picture of the success of our Dover students.

II - NECAP 2012 Results

The New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) is the result of collaboration among the states of Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont. NH, Vermont and RI came together to create an assessment that was first administered in October of 2005. Maine is the fourth state participating in NECAP, joining the consortium in 2009.

PURPOSE OF THE NEW ENGLAND COMMON ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

The purpose of the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) is to build a set of tests for grades 3 through 8 and 11 to meet the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The purposes of the tests are to provide:

- (A) data on student achievement in reading/English language arts and mathematics to meet the requirements of NCLB
- (B) information to support program evaluation and improvement
- (C) information regarding student and school performance to both parents and the public.

NECAP consists of reading and mathematics assessments for grades 3 through 8 and 11, writing assessments for grades 5, 8, and 11. Tests include multiple-choice, short-answer, constructed-response, and extended-response items.

Our Results

Through the fall 2012 NECAP results, Dover continues to show improvement with district elementary/middle school results in Reading, scoring above the target index score of 91.0 with a score of 92.9. We continue to just about meet the target index score with district elementary /middle school results in Math, scoring just a tiny bit below the index score of 88 with a score of 87.9. DHS struggled somewhat this year, scoring slightly behind the target index score of 89 with a score of 85.1 in Reading. Math also fell short, falling behind the target index score of 72 with a score of 65.4.

The subgroups that continue to have difficulty meeting the index scores, the Educational Disability and Economically Disadvantaged cohorts, are making progress at the elementary /middle school levels in Reading! We attribute this to our continued work on revising DGR to meet their needs and the implementation of interventions/RTI at these levels. We expect this growth to continue, especially with the implementation of Dover's Growing Writers next year at k-8. We are working hard to best determine how to fit math interventions into our schedules so that children can benefit from targeted math instruction as well. We are also extremely confident that Math in Focus will increase our scores in the next few years as children come up to speed with the difficulty of the program.

We clearly have more work to do at all grade levels, but especially at the high school level. The development of competencies for English Language Arts and Math are a good starting place and they have been developed in both subject areas. However, we need to put a plan in place that provides students with re-teaching, intervention and credit recovery when they do not meet the competencies. We need to provide PD to teachers to help them in the implementation of the competencies. We are still not where we need to be in this process. The new Master Plan does allow for groups of high school teachers to focus on these areas as inquiry topics. As the new Master Plan fully reaches its potential, teachers will begin to find resolutions to some of these issues with the support of the district and PD.

It may be worth taking a closer look at the three charts that compare Barrington, Dover and Nottingham student performance on the NECAP.

III-Dover NECAP in comparison to NH and New England

We have seen some of our shortfalls as a district by looking at our district NECAP reports. It's important to look at them in a broader context and see how we compare to the state averages and to the other 3 states taking the assessment. An undeniable observation from

looking at the data is that in most instances we are either at the state average or above it. In addition, NH leads the other 3 states in all scoring. Therefore as a whole group, Dover students are outscoring students from Maine Vermont and Rhode Island. The exception to this is at the high school level. Dover has a great deal of work to with its high school students on the NECAP.

IV-NH NAEP in comparison to New England and USA

Purpose of NAEP

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the largest continuing and nationally representative assessment of what American students know and can do in core subjects. NAEP is a congressionally mandated project administered by the U.S. Department of Education. The National Assessment Governing Board sets policy for NAEP and is responsible for developing the framework and test specifications. The Governing Board is a bipartisan group whose members include governors, state legislators, local and state school officials, educators, business representatives, and members of the general public. Congress created the 26-member Governing Board in 1988.

NAEP results are designed to provide data on student achievement in various subjects, and are released as The Nation's Report Card. There are no results for individual students, classrooms, or schools, but rather are released as a state report card. Assessments are given most frequently in mathematics and reading to 4th and 8th graders. A 12th grade pilot occurred in 2009 in which Dover participated.

NAEP Results

NH 4th and 8th grade NAEP scores are consistently high when compared to both the New England states and all 50 states. The one year for which we have 12th grade data, our students scored way above the national public average.

V - SAT

Purpose of the SAT

The SAT is a standardized test for college admissions in the United States. The SAT is owned, published, and developed by the College Board, a nonprofit organization in the United States. The test is intended to assess a student's readiness for college. It was first introduced in 1926,

and its name and scoring have changed several times. It was first called the Scholastic Aptitude Test, then the Scholastic Assessment Test, but now SAT does not stand for anything, hence it is an empty acronym.

SAT Results

In 2012, Dover students scored slightly below the NH state average on their SAT's on the Verbal assessment, scoring a 500 compared to the 516 state average. However Dover scored above the national average score of 492. In math, Dover again scored a little below the NH state average of 525, scoring a 511. Dover scored very close to the national average of 514. Again, it's important to remember that these scores include students from Dover, Barrington and Nottingham.

New Hampshire, in comparison to the nation, is doing very well. When looking at the scores of those states that have at least 60% of their students taking SAT's, NH's scores rank No.1. When looking at the scores of just the New England states, NH's scores rank no. 1 in critical reading, and no.2 in math and writing. Dover students, although slightly below the NH state average, are keeping up with their New England and national peers.

VI – AP

Purpose of AP

The Advanced Placement (AP) is a program in the United States created by the College Board offering college-level curriculum and examinations to high school students. American colleges often grant placement and course credit to students who obtain high scores (3,4 or 5) on the examinations. The AP curriculum for the various subjects is created for the College Board by a panel of experts and college-level educators in each subject. For a high school course to have the AP designation, the course must be audited by the College Board to ascertain it satisfies the AP curriculum. If the course is approved the school may use the AP designation and the course will be publicly listed on the AP Ledger. Dover High School offers Advanced Placement courses in Literature, Language and Composition, Biology, Calculus, Chemistry, Statistics and U.S. History.

AP Results

Over the past 3 years, 102 DHS students on average have been enrolled in AP courses. 87% of these students taking have scored a 3 or better on the exam, giving them college credit for their efforts.

Again, NH as a state, does very well on the AP exams when ranked with New England peers. NH always scores near the top of the pack. Dover students are very much contributing to this success.

VII -Concluding Remarks

Dover Students as a whole group, as shown on our NECAP Reports over the past few years, are performing fairly consistently at or above the NH state average. The state of NH is consistently scoring at the highest level of those states taking the NECAP assessment. Our NH NAEP, our Dover and NH SAT scores, and our Dover and NH AP scores show NH as being one of the higher ranking states in New England and in the country. We by no means as a district feel that we have no work to do. Just the opposite! We are well aware of areas in which we need to improve and are working hard to improve our performance in those areas. But, we are also proud of our students for the levels of performance they have accomplished. And we will continue to work hard to bring those levels of performance to an even higher level.