



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Elliot Krieger, Communications - (401) 222-8471; Angela Teixeira, (401) 222-4690
Embargo until: May 27, 2009 - 10 a.m.

School Classifications: 81% of Schools Met All Annual Targets

PROVIDENCE – More than four of every five schools (241 out of 297 schools, or 81%) met all of the 2008-09 targets set by the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), an 8-point improvement over last year, when 73 percent of the schools met their targets.

The annual school-performance classifications, based on results of the 2008-09 state tests in mathematics, reading, and writing as well as the 2007-08 attendance and four-year graduation rates, were released today (May 27, 2009) by Gov. Donald L. Carcieri in a news conference at the DelSesto Middle School.

The classifications released today show that 157 elementary schools, 51 middle schools, and 33 high schools (56%) met all of their targets.

“Our schools are moving in the right direction. In fact, 85 percent of our elementary schools and 94 percent of our middle schools met all of their performance targets this year,” said Governor Carcieri. “I commend our educators and our students for their great accomplishment. We have a lot of work still to do, however. We know we must continue to focus strategically upon two areas – our high schools and our urban schools – to ensure the success of all students.”

“We are pleased to see that our schools are making significant progress, particularly the urban middle schools,” said Robert G. Flanders, Jr., Esq., Chairman of the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education. “Last year, the Regents revised and expanded the Rhode Island high-school regulations so as to require more support for literacy and numeracy and increased personalized instruction at the middle-school level. This focus on middle-school education is producing positive results, here at the DelSesto Middle School and across the state.”

Still, significant gaps separate the urban schools from others in the state, with only 54 percent of the schools (43 schools) in the urban districts (Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, Woonsocket) meeting all targets; 91 percent of the schools (198 schools) in the rest of the state did so.

“Though many urban schools are making progress – last year only 40 percent met their targets and this year 54 percent did so – we must continue improve education in our urban districts,” said Peter McWalters, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. “With our statewide standards in English and mathematics, our new Professional Teaching Standards, and our recent investments in improving mathematics and science instruction, we have laid the groundwork for continued school improvement. Though many challenges lie ahead, we must still work together to bring all students to proficiency.”

-more-

Telephone 401-222-4600 **Fax** 401-222-6178 **TTY** 800-745-5555 **Voice** 800-745-6575

The Board of Regents does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, sex, sexual orientation, race, religion, national origin, or disability

Among the 56 schools (19%) that missed one or more of their annual targets, 12 schools (4%) missed targets for the first time and are classified as “Caution” schools. Those that have missed targets for multiple years (44 schools; 15%) are classified as making “insufficient progress,” and they may face sanctions, including implementing of a corrective action plan or restructuring by the state.

Among those schools that met all of their annual targets, 16 schools (from 7 districts plus one charter school) were honored as Regents’ Commended Schools. These schools have achieved exceptionally high performance in English and mathematics for two years, made significant progress for two years, or significantly closed achievement gaps that separate the various student groups.

The Governor also released the 2009 classifications of school districts, which showed that 8 districts did not meet their annual targets and are in “intervention status.” The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) works directly with those districts to implement improvement or corrective-action plans.

There were 8 schools that had previously been identified for school improvement and have now made all of their targets for two consecutive years and are removed from intervention status. They are:

Esek Hopkins Middle School, Providence
 DelSesto Middle School (formerly Springfield Middle School I), Providence
 Harris School, Woonsocket
 Lincoln Senior High School, Lincoln
 Mt. Hope High School, Bristol Warren
 Samuel Slater Junior High School, Pawtucket
 Smithfield Senior High School, Smithfield
 Webster Avenue School, Providence

Similarly, 2 districts – Middletown and Newport – that had been identified for improvement have now made all of their targets for two consecutive years and have been removed from intervention status.

Under provisions of NCLB, the state sets annual targets for each school level (elementary, middle, high school) in English (reading and writing) and mathematics, attendance (elementary and middle schools), and graduation rate. The target scores for the state tests, which are based on how many students achieve proficiency or improve at other scoring levels, rise in equal increments until they reach 100 (100-percent proficiency) in 2014.

Schools must meet the targets for their level on a schoolwide basis as well as for each of eight student groups: Asian, Black, Hispanic, Native American, White, students in poverty, students with disabilities, and English-language learners. Schools are not required to meet the targets for student groups, however, unless they have 45 students in that group in all tested grades or (for high schools) over three years of testing.

Supplementary materials posted on the RIDE Web site, www.ride.ri.gov, includes:

- The complete lists of school and district classifications and of Regents’ Commended Schools as well as individual report cards for each school and district and a brochure explaining the school-performance classifications (see “RIDE Report Cards 2009” under <http://www.ride.ri.gov/ride/reportCards.aspx>)
- The RIDE Accountability System Technical Bulletin Workbook, which provides technical information about the classification system: http://www.ride.ri.gov/assessment/DOCS/Accountability/7.2008_AccountabilitySystem_TechBulletin.pdf