



TPSD Above State Average In Reading, Math Assessments

TUPELO, Miss. — Based on numbers released by the Mississippi Department of Education on Thursday, the Tupelo Public School District out-performed the state average with the 3rd-grade reading assessment standards required under the Literacy-Based Promotion Act (LBPA).

For the 2018-19 academic year, 90.8 percent of the students passed the ELA MAAP standards. For the state, the number was 85.6 percent.

The LBPA requires 3rd graders to pass a reading assessment to qualify for promotion to the 4th grade, unless the student meets one of the good cause exemptions specified in the law. Exemptions apply to certain students with disabilities, students learning English or students who have been previously retained.

“This past year, Mississippi increased the 3rd-grade gate passing score from a Level 2 to a Level 3,” said Amy Ferguson, the district’s elementary curriculum director. “With 90.8 percent of our students passing the gate with levels three or higher, we are pleased with our results. We will continue to strive to increase the reading proficiency rates of all our students.”

Five levels make up the MAAP requirements, with students scoring at levels four and five considered proficient or advanced. By 2025, the state is wanting at least 70 percent of all students to be proficient in both ELA and mathematics (TPSD was 89.6 last year).

“We’re feeling really good,” TPSD superintendent Rob Picou said. “The numbers look strong. A lot of our teachers and students have invested a lot of time to get us where we are.”

For TPSD, its greatest reading level achievement was four at 41.7 percent.

“Once the reading standard was increased, students proved they could meet, and exceed, the higher expectation,” said Dr. Carey Wright, state superintendent of education. “In 3rd grade, students begin to make the transition from learning to read to reading to learn. They need strong reading skills to perform well in every subject and to progress throughout school.”