

PRESS RELEASE

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KCPS Students Make Academic Gains in 2019 State Annual Performance Report

KCPS working with DESE to review results, including science data

Kansas City, December 11, 2019: The final data is in and students in Kansas City Public Schools continue to make significant gains in their academic growth, according to the 2019 Annual Progress Report (APR) data released by Missouri's Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

While DESE has determined that KCPS will remain in provisional accreditation status, Superintendent Mark Bedell reaffirmed that "we have much to celebrate." Dr. Bedell shared with the KCPS Board of Education in 2016 that it would be a minimum of four years to attain full accreditation.

"We are still on track," Dr. Bedell said. "We are adhering to our Strategic Plan with a level of sustainability through our district scorecard and accountability systems."

KCPS students posted impressive growth in English Language Arts (ELA) and math that exceeded state expectations this year. KCPS produced overall improvements in ELA and math this year compared to 2018, while statewide results declined in both academic areas.

This is also the first year KCPS students earned points in Science – the first year since 2014. And an increase in the graduation rate was also a highlight in the data.

Opportunities for improvement are already being addressed by KCPS in academics, career and college readiness, attendance and graduation rates.

"As a school district, we've been working very hard over the last couple of years to help our students rise from one level to the next in terms of academic growth," Superintendent Mark Bedell said. "These results demonstrate how the academic structure that we've put in place is paying dividends. I am very proud of all our students, families and staff."

Public school officials in Missouri were given access to the full 2019 Annual Performance Report in late November. That data included Science results. KCPS accountability experts reviewed the data for accuracy – looking at our percentage of points earned. Unlike previous years, DESE opted to not automatically provide APR scores in each category for school districts in the state this year. Instead, KCPS requested our calculation.



This is our calculation from DESE:

Standard	Points Possible	Points Earned	
S1: Academic Achievement	48	28	
S2: Subgroup Achievement	12	9	
S3: College and Career Readiness	30	24	
S4: Attendance	10	0	
S5: Graduation	30	24	
Total	130	85	65.4 %

APR points are accumulated for achievement and improvement in each category. School districts are expected to get at least 70 percent of the possible points in order to be considered at a “full accreditation” level. State accreditation status is then ultimately determined by a vote of the Missouri State Board of Education, which considers APR and DESE recommendations when making this decision.

After losing provisional accreditation in 2011, KCPS earned that status back from the state school board in 2014. Since then, the school system has been steadily gaining ground under the leadership of Dr. Bedell.

Dr. Bedell has made it clear that full accreditation is one mark of progress but not the ultimate goal.

“KCPS needs to become a world-class public education system that produces graduates who are prepared to succeed in the modern global economy, achieve their dreams and contribute to their communities,” Dr. Bedell said. “We’ve got a lot of hard work to do to get there.”

Staff are already making changes across KCPS in order to improve results in academics, college and career readiness, attendance and graduation rates. Significant upgrades have been made to classroom technology and the training needed to use the tools effectively. More Advanced Placement classes are being offered and workforce development programs are being expanded at the high schools. KCPS has also intensified efforts to increase attendance rates through special celebrations and awareness campaigns.

KCPS knows that our student attendance challenges continue to be an area of improvement for us. If we would have received six points for attendance, then we would have reached the full accreditation mark this year. We want to be upfront about our attendance challenge and acknowledge that we need support in helping our students be at school.

“Schools need support from our stakeholders if we’re going to achieve our goals as an educational system,” Dr. Bedell said. “One of the most valuable things our community members can do is to help us make sure that every student is at school and in class on time, every day.”