

EdMatters

Academic Performance Data Released: I-SS Celebrates Highest Graduation Rate to Date



Victoria Furry, first grade teacher at Celeste Henkel Elementary, meets with her students to explain their assignment.

The results for the 2024-2025 school year show that Iredell-Statesville Schools has taken some positive steps in improving student achievement, with 20 of 35 schools meeting or exceeding year-to-year academic growth expectations. A total of 24 schools increased their overall growth score. This news was confirmed with the verification and release of district and school academic performance data by the North Carolina State Board of Education and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction on Wednesday, September 3, 2025.



Iredell-Statesville Schools increased their graduation rate from 86.5% to 91.1% which is above the state average of 87.7%. This graduation rate is a monumental celebration as it is the highest graduation rate the district has displayed for over 10 years. While each school's efforts contributed to this achievement, several schools made significant gains worth mentioning. Lakeshore Middle School moved from not meeting growth expectations to exceeding growth expectations with a growth index of 2.13 and increased its school letter grade to a C. The Brawley School met growth expectations and also shifted its school letter grade from a B to an A. Continuing their status, both Harmony Elementary School and North Iredell High School exceeded academic growth for the second year in a row. The Collaborative College of Technology and Leadership has exceeded growth expectations for



four consecutive years.

The success of our schools can be attributed to a collaborative effort.

"Our school administrators and teachers should feel extremely proud of the work they have accomplished," explained I-SS Superintendent Dr. Jeff James. "We work to prepare our students—our future—for life outside of the classroom while being funded among the lowest in our state."

In addition to the collaboration with our staff, parents, and community, there have been a series of improvements adopted last year to refocus and realign with the district's strategic goals. Those included the shift of basing all secondary content coaches at a school, the refinement of professional learning communities, the completion of the AP Academy, which gives rising school administrators intense leadership development courses to prepare them for the next level, and reducing the number of ISS (in-school suspension) and OSS (out-of-school suspension) days to keep students in the classroom receiving instructional support.

Through a partnership with the Successful Practice Network, Dr. Bill Daggett and his team have helped our administration create a strong focus on DOK (Depth of Knowledge) and brain-based learning. The additional alignment of DOK across each curriculum department—including CTE (Career and Technical Education) and IB (International Baccalaureate)—helped create a unified understanding for the 2024-2025 school year. The on-going focus by the Curriculum & Instruction Division to continue to focus on the science of reading continues the efforts of continued implementation with fidelity to LETRS at the elementary level and Lexia ASPIRE at the secondary level.

Additional celebrations:

Iredell-Statesville Schools made gains in End-of-Grade and End-of-Course Tests. NC Math 3 made the highest gain going from 53.6% proficiency in 2023-2024 to 61.3% proficiency in 2024-2025. Sixth-grade math made notable gains to 57% proficiency, up 5% proficiency from the year before at 52%. Fourth-grade reading made a 5.3% proficiency gain going from 51.7% in 2023-2024 to 57% proficiency for the 2024-2025 school year.

Seven schools moved from not meeting growth expectations in 2023-2024 to meeting growth expectations in 2024-2025.

- Cool Spring Elementary School
- East Iredell Elementary School
- Lakeshore Middle School
- South Iredell High School
- Statesville High School
- The Brawley School
- West Iredell Middle School

Eight schools in Iredell-Statesville increased their Letter Grade.

- Agriculture and Science Early College moved from a B to an A.
- Harmony Elementary School moved from a C to a B.
- Lakeshore Middle School moved from a D to a C.
- South Iredell High School moved from a C to a B.
- The Brawley School moved from a B to an A.
- Third Creek Elementary School moved from an F to a D.
- West Iredell High School moved from a D to a C.
- Woodland Heights Middle School moved from a C to a B.



Dr. James clarified, "In North Carolina, the school letter grades only measure two components—academic proficiency and academic growth, but as a school system we do so much more for our students. That's one of the reasons we use customer feedback to analyze the service our families are receiving."

According to the 2024-25 I-SS Parent Climate Survey, 82% of parents would give their school a letter grade of an A or a B. This is a trade-off of the accountability model with our customer feedback.

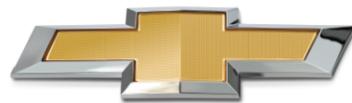
"It's important to use both pieces of data to drive the direction of our district and to make the biggest impact in the classroom," added Dr. James.

While we are celebrating the 2024-2025 data, district leaders are putting additional processes and instructional strategies in place to address some of the challenges. A new Closing the Gap taskforce was created as a way to partner with the community to make strides towards academic proficiency. In addition to this partnership, a Unified PTO was also developed for several schools to join their efforts together to make a larger impact of parental involvement. The district will continue on-going efforts to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers at all grade and subject levels.

We Proudly Support the Iredell-Statesville Schools!



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