

Press Release
East Hartford Students Show Improvement on State and National Tests

For Immediate Release (East Hartford, Monday, September 9, 2019) -- In the spring of 2019, East Hartford Public Schools administered four high stakes assessments to its students: the Smarter Balanced, the SAT, and two tests that allow students to earn college level credit—Advanced Placement (AP) and the International Baccalaureate (IB) exams. The district saw notable gains in each one, with the greatest overall improvements in the elementary level for the Smarter Balanced Assessment, which measures the students’ abilities in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics, and at the high school on the Advanced Placement (AP) exams. A summary of the students’ achievement results is included below.

District Data: Smarter Balanced Assessment

The Smarter Balanced Assessment is administered to all students enrolled in grades 3-8. District-wide, 36% of East Hartford students met or exceeded the target in English Language Arts (ELA) while 23% met or exceeded the target for mathematics. This year, the greatest increases were seen at the elementary level which improved by 4% points in both ELA and mathematics. The percentage of elementary students meeting the benchmark for mathematics improved from 23% to 27%, while the percentage in ELA increased from 34% to 38%. Over the past four years (2016-2019), East Hartford Public Schools is in the top 20% of all Connecticut districts for growth in ELA, improving its results by an average of 4.6% points. East Hartford Public Schools is committed to developing schools that are the *Pride of our Community*. Upon review of the data for these four tests, Board Chair Bryan Hall commented, “In East Hartford, one of our core institutional values is *Results Matter*. As a Board, we have made a committed effort to make sure that we are talking about our work always in the light of outcomes. The progress we are seeing in East Hartford that continues on a steady trajectory is a result of that shared mindset. I am proud of what we have accomplished but even more about what we will achieve next.” Superintendent Nathan Quesnel added, “A huge thanks to our faculty and teachers who continue to work hard to help our kids improve and grow. I am so proud of our team for their committed belief that when we keep our expectations high—our kids achieve. While there remains significant work to be done, we are on the right path, and I look forward to continued progress as we continue to write the narrative of East Hartford Public Schools.”

The table below shows how East Hartford Public Schools’ Smarter Balanced results from SY 2018-19 compare to the state average as well as that of the state’s nine other Opportunity Districts.

	East Hartford Public Schools	Opportunity Districts	State of CT
% Met or Exceeded Achievement Level Target—English Language Arts	36%	31.4%	55.7%
% Met or Exceeded Achievement Level Target – Mathematics	23%	22.6%	48.1%

District Highlights: Smarter Balanced Assessment, Spring 2019 Results

- Over the past four years (2016-2019), East Hartford Public Schools is in the top 20% of all Connecticut districts for growth in ELA, improving its results by an average of 4.6% points and is in the top 42% of all districts for growth in mathematics, improving its results by an average of 5.2% points.
- From SY 2018 to SY 2019, the elementary level saw a 4% point increase in student performance on both the Smarter Balanced ELA and Math tests.
- On the Smarter Balanced Assessment for ELA, East Hartford Public Schools showed the most growth at the elementary level with gains in grade 3 (1% point), grade 4 (8% points), and grade 5 (4% points).

- On the Smarter Balanced assessment for mathematics, East Hartford Public Schools saw significant increases in the following grade levels: grade 4 (8% points) and grade 5 (6% points).
- Over the last five years, 2015-2019, East Hartford Public Schools has shown significant increases in its performance on the Smarter Balanced assessment with scores improving by 7.5% points in ELA and by 7% points in mathematics.

Within the next week, families will receive the individual score reports for the Smarter Balanced assessment in the mail. These provide specific information about each student’s strengths as well as areas in need of improvement. A detailed parent guide titled, “Preparing your Child for Success” is available electronically through the Connecticut State Department of Education. This guide includes what your child was expected to learn last year and what he/she will learn this year. It also includes tips and websites for parents to support learning at home.

District Data: The SAT

On the SAT, the grade 11 students receive scores in two areas: Evidence Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) and Math. The total score range for the SAT is 400-1600. The College Board has established a College and Career Readiness Benchmark for the two sections of the SAT. “Meeting the benchmark” means that students are on track for success beyond high school. The target benchmark for Evidence Based Reading and Writing is 480, while the target for Math is 530. The College Board predicts that students who meet or exceed these benchmarks would earn a grade of a C or better in a first-semester college course. District-wide, 39% of the students met the target for Evidenced Based Reading and Writing while 21% met the target for Mathematics. Results from the spring of 2019 showed an increase of 3% points in the percentage of students who met the benchmark for the SAT Math score. This improvement exceeded the average increase as reported by the State of Connecticut (1%).

East Hartford Public Schools offers a variety of programs to help students to prepare for this high-stakes test. East Hartford High School (EHHS) enrolls all of its grade 11 students in a course during the school day and, starting in grade 9, teachers at both The CT IB Academy (CIBA) and EHHS weave practice questions into their daily instruction. Students are administered the PSAT, or “practice” SAT, each year leading up to the grade 11 assessment and their scores are reviewed with them by both their math and their English teacher. Based on each student’s individual PSAT score, skill practice is assigned and monitored through class and homework assignments through the SAT’s official online practice website.

The table below shows how East Hartford Public Schools’ SAT results from 2018-19 compared to the state average as well as that of the state’s nine other Opportunity Districts.

	East Hartford Public Schools		Opportunity Districts		State of CT	
% Met or Exceeded Benchmark–SAT EBRW	39%	461	29%	435	62%	515
% Met or Exceeded Benchmark–SAT Math	21%	446	15%	424	41%	501

District Highlights: The SAT, Spring 2019 Results

- The CT IB Academy (CIBA) exceeded the state average for both Evidence Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) and for Math with 84% of the students meeting or exceeding the benchmark for SAT EBRW and 51% performing at one of these two levels in SAT Math.
- East Hartford Public Schools is outperforming Connecticut’s nine other “Opportunity Districts” in SAT Math and EBRW, both with respect to the percentage of students meeting the benchmark and in the SAT scale score.
- East Hartford Public Schools has improved the percentage of students who met or exceeded the College and Career benchmark on SAT Math from SY 2018 to SY 19 by 3% points, or from 18% to 21%.

Families whose child took the SAT and/or an AP exam can access their child’s score report by logging into The College Board website (<https://www.collegeboard.org>) using his/her personal account information.

District Data: Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) Exams

Students who are enrolled in East Hartford Public Schools have the opportunity to take one of two assessments, Advanced Placement (AP) or the International Baccalaureate (IB), both of which allow them to earn college-level credit. This spring at East Hartford High School (EHHS), many students took the opportunity to enroll in an AP course, giving them the ability to earn college credit so that they can save money on tuition costs and/or graduate early from college. In May 2019, 244 students took a total of 440 AP tests, and 62% of them earned a score of 3 or higher. This is a 7% point increase from last year's result and is a significant benefit to students because nearly all U.S. colleges and universities grant credit for AP exam scores in this range. According to the College Board, research shows that students who take AP courses are more likely to enroll in college, stay matriculated, do well in their classes, and graduate on time. More than 3,800 U.S. and international colleges and universities received AP scores from students in 2017.

At the Connecticut IB Academy (CIBA), the IB Diploma is awarded to candidates who pass exams in six specific subject areas, in addition to completing other IB-related requirements. It is respected by top colleges and universities because it represents a rigorous course of study and has been closely linked to success beyond high school. Other benefits students who earn the IB Diploma enjoy include earning college credits and achieving advanced academic standing. This year at CIBA, 90% of the Class of 2019 graduated as IB Diploma candidates; 10 of them earned the prestigious IB Diploma.

District Highlights: Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB), Spring 2019 Results

- In the last five years, EHHS has increased the total number of students enrolled in its AP program, while at the same time, increasing the percentage of students earning a score of 3+ from 47% to 62%.
- In 2019, East Hartford students had the most success on the AP Calculus BC exam. All (100%) of the students enrolled earned a score that would qualify them for college-level credit. Students enrolled in the AP Spanish course also performed very well; 93% of those students earned a score of 3 or higher.

For additional details or questions about the results of the Smarter Balanced Assessment, the SAT or the AP or IB exams, please feel free to contact the Office of the Superintendent at (860) 622-5107.