



Dolores School District RE-4A

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Education Column

I would like to provide some clarity to last week's article titled, "Scores drop at Dolores schools". The chart posted in the middle of the article titled, "Dolores TCAP Scores" is inaccurate. These data points are student growth scores, not achievement scores. Student growth data is reported for students in grades 4th through 10th and measures the amount of academic growth our students have gained from year to year. Growth scores of 50th percentile, or higher are in the targeted range and are cause for celebration. These scores represent student populations whose learning, when measured using state standards, has exceeded expectations for the year based on the average scores of all the students in Colorado. Student growth data is important, but can be difficult to digest. Typically, we discuss and celebrate achievement scores.

On our District Website at www.doloresschools.org you can view achievement scores from the past several years. This data is also found on the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) website at www.cde.state.co.us under "School View". Here are some highlights:

Dolores Elementary School

Reading Achievement

- Fifth grade exceeded the state average for proficient and advanced in reading.
- Third grade and fifth grade increased the percentage of students scoring advanced in reading with third grade exceeding the state average for the percentage of students scoring advanced.
- Third grade and fifth grade had fewer students scoring partially proficient than the state.

Writing Achievement

- The fourth and fifth grades met the state average for the percentage of students scoring proficient and advanced. Fifth grade exceeded the state average.
- The fourth grade improved their writing scores over the previous year.
- Both cohort groups (3rd to 4th and 4th to 5th) increased the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced over the previous year.
- Fifth grade exceeded the percentage of students scoring advanced.

Math Achievement

- Fifth grade exceeded the state average in the percentage of students scoring proficient and advanced.

Math Growth

- Fourth grade increased the percentage of students categorized as improving over the previous year.

Science

- The fifth grade exceeded the state average in the percentage of students scoring proficient and advanced.

Dolores Middle & High School

Student achievement has increased on more than half of the content area tests in the Secondary: 7th grade writing, 7th grade math, 8th grade reading, 8th grade writing, 8th grade math, 8th grade science, 10th grade reading, 10th grade math, and 10th grade science.

Students beat the State average in 11 of 17 tested areas

Students have outpaced the state in all categories:

- Overall growth
- Catch-up & Keep-Up
- Graduation rates
- Drop-out rates & Completion rates
- Dropout rate, only 1%

(This information, Dolores Performance Frameworks, can be found on our website)

I hope that this information and explanation will help to clarify Dolores Student TCAP data and the misleading newspaper article. The teachers, principals and I dig deeply into this data every fall, before the first day of school and weekly during Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to assess our students' strengths and needs. We also assess our curriculum and instructional strategies using this data and other data such as the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA), which is given three times per year. All of this data helps us to make informed educational decisions that continually improve the high quality learning environments here in our Dolores Schools.

If you ever have any questions about TCAP data, please ask the professional teachers, principals, or myself.

Respectfully,



Superintendent, Dolores School District