



CAMDEN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
1033 CAMBRIDGE STREET, CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY 08105
856-966-2000 • www.camden.k12.nj.us

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 9, 2019

Contact: Dan Keashen / Alisha Brown

Phone: (856) 225-5431 / (856) 966-2000

Cell: (856) 816-1374 / (856) 448-5961

E-mail: dan.keashen@camdencounty.com / alishabrown@camden.k12.nj.us

Camden schools show improved test scores *Students throughout the district show gains in ELA, math*

(Camden, NJ) – For the fourth year in a row, students throughout the city of Camden, district and renaissance schools, improved their results on the New Jersey Standardized Learning Assessment. Camden students continue to do better each year, and the 2018-2019 school year’s results show improvements in both English Language Arts (ELA) and math.

District and renaissance schools improved from 4.3 percent in the 2014-15 school year to 15 percent proficient in math during the 2018-19 school year, and from 7 percent to 21 percent proficient in English language arts during the same period.

“We have made a concerted effort to improve upon our teachers’ training, the partnerships we utilize throughout the community, and the facilities in which we facilitate learning. These results are a clear indication that the dedication of our teachers, staff, and families is making a difference,” said Superintendent Katrina McCombs. “We know that there is still work to be done, but the continued incremental growth we are seeing from our students means that they are better prepared to succeed in and out of school than ever before. This is positive news as we look to close the gap between our students and the statewide average.”

Other key takeaways from last year’s tests include:

- All five district high schools saw an increase in ELA proficiency from last year, with an average proficiency increase of about 38 percent.
- Eight district elementary and family schools saw an increase in ELA proficiency as well, with an average proficiency increase of 37 percent.
- The percentage of high school students near proficiency increased in both ELA and math, from 27.3 percent to 32.1 percent, and 11.9 percent to 14.8 percent, respectively.
- Five renaissance schools saw an increase in math proficiency from last year. Also, six renaissance schools saw an increase in literacy proficiency of almost 29 percent of students in grades 3-8. Camden’s renaissance schools are operated by the networks KIPP, Uncommon, and Mastery.
- One renaissance network, Mastery Schools of Camden, saw significant gains from the prior

year, doubling its math proficiency from 9 to 18 percent and improving its ELA proficiency from 16 to 21 percent.

In addition to improved scores, district schools achieved greater participation rates than the previous year. High school participation increased significantly, with grades 3-8 participation already above 97 percent in 2017-2018. High school participation in ELA (85.9 percent) and math (87.8 percent) exams increased by 5.9 percent and 9.8 percent, respectively.

“The higher our participation rates, the better we can understand the students in our district. This year, we can say without question that our students are making significant strides in multiple subjects,” McCombs said. “As we continue to look at the school-specific data and talk with our teachers, our focus will be on identifying and remedying those areas where we still have the most room for growth.”

In the 2011-12 academic year, three Camden School District students were prepared for college from the entire student body. Since that time, the graduation rate has grown to almost 70%, the drop-out rate was cut in half and school suspensions were reduced by 53%. Furthermore, SAT participation has grown by 46% and the district has had more than \$360 million in school investments including a new traditional public Camden High School.

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