



RIPON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT 2017 Assessment Data Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Ripon, WI - Annual state assessments help all stakeholders – parents, teachers, districts, school boards – see a clear picture of how well schools in Wisconsin prepare students to be college and career ready. For students in Wisconsin, state assessments include the Wisconsin Forward Exam, the ACT, and Dynamic Learning Maps. Performance data from these assessments has recently been released from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and is available by searching the WISEdash public portal as part of the Wisconsin Student Assessment System (WSAS).

The Wisconsin Forward Exam tests elementary and middle school students in 17 areas including;

- Grades 3-8 in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics;
- Grades 4 and 8 in Science; and
- Grades 4, 8, and 10 in Social Studies.

In each of these areas, students in the Ripon Area School District (RASD) outperformed the state average. Among the RASD students who took the Forward assessment, 58.6 percent of students were proficient or advanced in English language arts compared to 44.4 percent at the state level. In mathematics, 52.9 percent of Ripon Area School District students were proficient or advanced compared to 42.8 percent statewide.

As an online assessment, the Forward Exam incorporates innovative and better ways for students to demonstrate what they know and can do by completing technology enhanced items. The Wisconsin Forward replaced the former Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam (WKCE) and the Badger Exam. Please note that Spring 2017 marks the second administration of the Forward Exam for Wisconsin students, so users visiting WISEdash should take caution when interpreting these results, as well as comparing them to Badger Exam and WKCE results from years past.

The ACT (American College Testing) Exam tests students in Grade 11 in ELA (English, Reading, and Writing), mathematics, and science. Overall results on the ACT show 46.8 percent of Ripon Area School District students achieved at the proficient or advanced performance levels in English language arts compared to 39.5 percent statewide. In mathematics, 44.6 percent were proficient or advanced compared to 35.7 percent of juniors statewide.

The ACT is the same college admissions exam taken by students nationwide. Wisconsin started requiring all 11th graders to take the ACT in 2015. By offering the ACT statewide, all grade 11 students, regardless of family circumstances, have the opportunity to participate in a college readiness assessment. Before the ACT was a required statewide assessment, only about 72% of WI graduates took the ACT. Evidence shows that when college readiness tests like ACT are given universally with fees paid for by the state or district, students who would not have taken the college readiness assessments may discover that they are “college material.” Caution should be taken when comparing ACT data results from prior years with results after the state requirement when into place.

Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) is an alternate assessment for students in grades 3-11 with severe cognitive Disabilities in ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies. DLM is an online assessment administered individually to students. It allows students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills as they relate to the Wisconsin Essential Elements.

These state assessments set high expectations for students to prepare them for college and career readiness. The cut scores of both the ACT and Forward exams are rigorous. Resources for interpreting the data can be found on the WISEdash public portal website. Educators will be using these results in conjunction with other data to drive school improvement. WSAS results are high profile, but only one of many data points that districts consider in a school improvement planning process.

Historically, RASD has consistently been among the top performing districts in the state. The results reflect the high quality instruction RASD provides for all students. Yet, administration and staff are committed to continuing to raise achievement scores and close any achievement gaps between groups of students in the district. Improving access to post-secondary readiness options is one way to close our achievement gap and address equity issues in Wisconsin.

Any comments or suggestions, please contact Chrissy Damm at (920) 748-4687.

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