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## Vermont Agency of Education Releases 2018 Smarter Balanced Assessment Results

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BARRE, Vt. – The Vermont Agency of Education announced results from the Smarter Balanced Assessment Program. These assessments are administered annually in the spring to students in grades three through nine. They are designed to measure students’ mastery of the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics.

“It’s good to see that Vermont students continue to perform well on the Smarter Balanced tests,” said Vermont Secretary of Education Dan French. “We are coming to the end of the No Child Left Behind Act era of standards-based accountability school reform. I am hopeful that our efforts to personalize learning for students and to create more flexible and relevant pathways throughout our education system will translate into greater levels of achievement across the entire system, and better serve the personal learning aspirations of students and their families.”

The English Language Arts section of the assessment program includes sections on Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking, and Research/Inquiry. The results from each section are combined to form a broad English Language Arts score. The 2018 results are generally positive, with student performance improving in percent proficient and by scale score in almost all grades compared to 2017 scores. In particular, students in grades four and eight showed notable gains of more than five scale points. This was the first year that ninth grade students took the assessments, so no comparisons can be made to last year.

2018 Smarter Balanced English Language Arts Results	Scale Scores			Total Proficient and Above	
	Proficient Score	State Average	Change from 2017	State Average	Change from 2017
Grade 3	2432	2428	↑ 3	50%	↑ 1
Grade 4	2473	2473	↑ 7	53%	↑4
Grade 5	2502	2507	↓ 1	55%	=
Grade 6	2531	2532	↑ 1	53%	↑ 1
Grade 7	2552	2559	↑ 4	57%	↑ 2
Grade 8	2567	2576	↑ 6	57%	↑ 2
Grade 9	2571	2578	***	55%	***

The Mathematics assessment includes tasks and questions that address Communicating Reasoning, Problem Solving and Modeling/Data Analysis, and Concepts and Procedures. In this assessment, results were not as uniform as those reported for English Language Arts. In grades four, six and eight, the percent of students performing in the proficient range increased;

students in grades four and six also increased their average scale scores. The percent proficient in grades three, five and seven did not change, and scale score performance in both grades three and five decreased by one point as compared to 2017 results. Except for grade 3, the percentage of students scoring proficient or above in mathematics was lower than in English Language Arts by as many as 15 percentage points. In grade nine, only 35% of students scored in the proficient range. That score is 20 percentage points less than the percentage of grade nine students with proficient scores in English Language Arts. This was the first year that students in grade nine took the assessments, so no comparisons can be made to last year.

2018 Smarter Balanced Math Results	Scale Scores			Total Proficient and Above	
	Proficient Score	State Average	Change from 2017	State Average	Change from 2017
Grade 3	2436	2436	↓ 1	52%	=
Grade 4	2485	2478	↑ 2	49%	↑ 2
Grade 5	2528	2504	↓ 1	42%	=
Grade 6	2552	2522	↑ 3	41%	↑ 2
Grade 7	2567	2541	=	44%	=
Grade 8	2586	2558	↑ 3	42%	↑ 1
Grade 9	2601	2543	***	35%	***

“The Smarter Balanced Assessment Program is only one of the many tools we use to evaluate the quality of the education our students are receiving,” said State Assessment Director Michael Hock, “but it is really the only one that assesses student’s academic proficiency against a common set of standards adopted by our State Board of Education.”

Unfortunately, school and SU/SD level results are not yet publicly available. School systems have access to their results for planning and instructional purposes. However, superintendents have been directed to maintain the privacy of this data as it contains student information that has not yet been validated for public release. These results will be available when the Annual Snapshot, an interactive data visualization platform, launches in December.

As part of its response to the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the agency’s accountability system now includes scores from a new grouping of students. Known as “Historically Marginalized Students,” this reporting group combines all student groups historically underserved by educational institutions. The group includes racial/ethnic groups, students with disabilities, English learners and students in poverty – groups that are generally too small to report separately.

2018 Smarter Balanced Results- Historically Marginalized Status						
Grade	ELA Scale Scores			Math Scale Scores		
	Historically Marginalized	Not Historically Marginalized	Difference	Historically Marginalized	Not Historically Marginalized	Difference
Grade 3	2397	2462	65	2408	2468	60
Grade 4	2439	2514	75	2449	2511	62
Grade 5	2469	2545	76	2470	2538	69
Grade 6	2493	2571	77	2483	2560	77
Grade 7	2519	2597	78	2501	2579	78
Grade 8	2533	2615	82	2509	2602	93
Grade 9	2525	2620	96	2487	2587	100

Deputy Secretary Heather Bouchey noted, “The state can be quite proud of student achievement overall, yet we cannot overlook the performance discrepancies between students who have historically been marginalized and those who enjoy greater privilege. The agency looks forward to assisting schools in best leveraging their resources in order to address persistent equity gaps.”

A [spreadsheet of all 2018 Smarter Balanced results](#) is available on the agency’s website.

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