



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**State test results show continued strong gains
for Albany's public schools in 2007-08**

ALBANY, N.Y. – City School District of Albany elementary and middle-school students made significant gains in academic achievement this school year, according to math and English language arts test data the New York State Department of Education released Monday.

There were gains at all grade levels district-wide in both subject areas. Most notably, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding proficiency in math increased by double digits in grades 3, 7 and 8, and in ELA in grades 3 and 5.

Overall in grades 3-8, 14 percent more students achieved Level 3 or Level 4 in ELA in 2007-08, while 21 percent more students achieved the two highest levels in math.

“We are pleased to see this continued evidence of strong improvement in all of our schools as we remain focused on our mission to educate and nurture all students to be responsible citizens, critical thinkers and life-long learners,” said Superintendent Eva C. Joseph, Ed.D.

“Our students’ gains are a testimony to their ability to succeed and to the dedication of our talented teachers, administrators and staff. We recognize there is much work to be done to continue to raise the level of achievement district-wide, but we are gratified to see progress in nearly every area during the 2007-08 school year.”

Dr. Joseph pointed to several ongoing professional development initiatives as key factors in the improving test results.

The district is in the third year of its partnership with the National Urban Alliance for Effective Education, and the second year of full implementation. A second consecutive year of strong gains on state tests is evidence that the NUA partnership, which employs research-based teaching strategies proven in districts nationwide to raise achievement levels, is a sound investment in the future of Albany’s children and teachers, Dr. Joseph said.

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Dr. Joseph also pointed to district-based initiatives such as literacy coaches, new in 2007-08, and math coaches, in the third year, with providing additional support for teachers. The establishment of data teams in each elementary school in 2007-08 also has helped teachers better identify and address individual student deficiencies on an ongoing basis.

State test results released Monday showed that these initiatives, among others, are paying off for all students in Albany's public schools. Students achieved dramatic gains at a number of schools, as measured by the performance index (PI), a state formula that takes into account the number of students scoring at each of the four proficiency levels.

In ELA, PI gains of note included:

- +46 – Albany School of Humanities (ASH), grade 3
- +28 – Sheridan Preparatory Academy, grade 5
- +26 – Eagle Point Elementary School, grade 3
- +26 – Schuyler Achievement Academy, grade 5
- +25 – New Scotland Elementary School (School 19), grade 3
- +23 – Arbor Hill Elementary School, grade 3
- +23 – North Albany Academy, grade 5
- +23 – Thomas O'Brien Academy of Science and Technology (TOAST), grade 5

In math:

- +35 – Hackett Middle School, grade 8
- +33 – Arbor Hill Elementary School, grade 3
- +31 – Delaware Community School, grade 3
- +28 – ASH, grade 3
- +28 – Myers Middle School, grade 7
- +28 – North Albany Academy, grade 7
- +27 – Myers Middle School, grade 8
- +25 – Philip Livingston Magnet Academy, grade 8

Measured over two years, the increase in student achievement at the middle-school level has been even more significant. For example:

In ELA:

- +51 – Myers Middle School, grade 6
- +43 – Philip Livingston Magnet Academy, grade 6
- +32 – Hackett Middle School, grade 6
- +27 – Hackett Middle School, grade 7
- +26 – Myers Middle School, grade 7

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- +26 – North Albany Academy, grade 7
- +25 – Philip Livingston Magnet Academy, grade 7
- +26 – Myers Middle School, grade 8
- +19 – North Albany Academy, grade 6

In math:

- +58 – North Albany Academy, grade 7
- +49 – Myers Middle School, grade 6
- +48 – Philip Livingston Magnet Academy, grades 6
- +48 – Philip Livingston Magnet Academy, grade 7
- +45 – Myers Middle School, grade 8
- +36 – Myers Middle School, grade 7
- +30 – North Albany Academy, grade 6
- +29 – Philip Livingston Magnet Academy, grade 8

At Philip Livingston Magnet Academy, which was designated earlier this year as a School Under Registration Review, the one- and two-year gains in student achievement at all grade levels have been pronounced.

In math, Livingston's PI increased by 46 points over two years and 32 points over last year. In ELA, Livingston improved 18 points over two years and 9 points over last year.

Livingston's SURR designation came after it narrowly missed its state performance target for math in 2006-07 despite strong gains. In 2007-08, Livingston's gains continued and the school surpassed its math performance target by 11 points. SURR schools must meet or exceed performance targets for two consecutive years before the state will remove the designation.

The district will continue its work to improve student success at Livingston and district-wide in 2008-09, Dr. Joseph said.

The City School District of Albany serves approximately 8,600 students in 18 elementary, middle and high schools. In addition to neighborhood schools, the district includes several magnet schools and programs, as well as other innovative academic opportunities for students. The district is more than halfway through its comprehensive facilities project to newly build and/or renovate nearly all of its elementary and middle schools. The goal of the facilities project is to provide schools with the resources necessary to help students succeed in the 21st century.