

Urbana School District 116

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News Release

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Urbana School District #116 Releases 2008 AYP Results *Seven Out of Eight Schools Meet NCLB Standards*

Urbana School District #116 is releasing its 2008 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) results. All six elementary schools and Urbana High School met federally-mandated Adequate Yearly Progress benchmarks according to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. All students in grades 3-8 take the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) and 11th graders take the Prairie State Achievement Exam (PSAE) each spring as a way to measure student academic achievement under NCLB.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Don Owen says, "We are very pleased with the results on the state testing. It is clear that in many areas, our school improvement plans are showing positive results. It is important to recognize that these tests are just one indicator of student achievement, and we continually measure student learning and engagement through multiple measures. We continue to work hard to ensure all students are learning and succeeding."

Prairie Elementary School has made AYP for two years in a row, and now has been removed from all state and federal academic improvement lists. Compared to last year, Prairie Elementary's overall reading scores jumped 14.8%, African-American reading scores rose 18.9%, and Economically Disadvantaged students' reading scores rose 14.5%. Principal Yavonnda Smith says,

"As principal of Prairie Elementary School, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate the students and staff for their dedicated work in improving performance on state standardized tests. While the data reflects that we made improvements on formal testing, we are striving to reach excellence. We appreciate the continued support of staff, students, parents, and the community as we seek excellence for all students at Prairie Elementary School. We will continue to use a variety of assessment tools to support our school improvement plans, guide daily instruction, and improve ISAT scores."

Some of the most impressive gains were found at the elementary level in the Economically Disadvantaged subgroup. 73.2% of the Economically Disadvantaged students at Thomas Paine Elementary passed the reading test and 80.4% passed the math test. At Leal Elementary School 80.2% of the Economically Disadvantaged students passed the reading test. At King Elementary School 73% of the Economically

Disadvantaged Students passed the reading test, and 83.8% of those students passed the math test. Also at King, 82.3% of the African-American Students passed the reading test.

While Urbana Middle School showed encouraging trends in most areas regarding AYP, the special education subgroup missed making AYP in reading and math. African-American students at the middle school missed AYP on the math section of the test. School District and building administrators, teachers, and support staff will continue to implement intensive strategies to bring Urbana Middle School test scores up to meet AYP.

Urbana Middle School Principal Nancy Clinton says,

“While we recognize that our special education students need to improve in order to meet the AYP benchmark for NCLB, we are pleased that other indicators are showing some growth within this group. It will be our goal to achieve more significant growth within a school year. We will continue our current efforts and we will step up the use of extra support classes when the need exists for individual students. AT UMS, the overall population has been increasing their academic growth from year to year, and we are confident that with the additional supports in place, this trend will continue.”

District 116 Superintendent Dr. Preston Williams is pleased with the results of the standardized tests, however he notes that there is more work to be done saying, “We’re pleased as far as where we’re at, but we know we have a tremendous amount of work to do in order to reach that final goal of 100% (of students making AYP by 2014), which is a tremendous challenge.”

Media wishing to interview district personnel regarding the 2008 AYP results should contact Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Don Owen, at 384-3600.

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