

PRESS RELEASE

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City Schools' Youngest Students Remain Competitive on Stanford 10

Despite Dip from 2010, Students Still Outperform Half Their National Peers, Show Growth over Time

(Baltimore, MD)—Baltimore City Public Schools released 2011 standardized test results for its 1st- and 2nd-grade students today, and for the second straight year, the district's youngest learners came in right at—and in some cases well above—the 50th percentile, outperforming more than half their peers nationally in both reading and math.

City Schools' 2011 Stanford Achievement Test 10 results represent a dip in scores from 2010 across both subjects and grades, but they continue a trend of students being competitive on the test, one of many that school districts across the country choose to measure the achievement of their early elementary students. This year's results reinforce the growth-over-time trend City Schools has established across all grades, subjects and student subgroups in the last four years; the 2011 Stanford 10 scores show solid growth since 2007, when the transformation of the district began. And this year's results confirm pre-k as a key factor in sustained achievement throughout the early elementary grades.

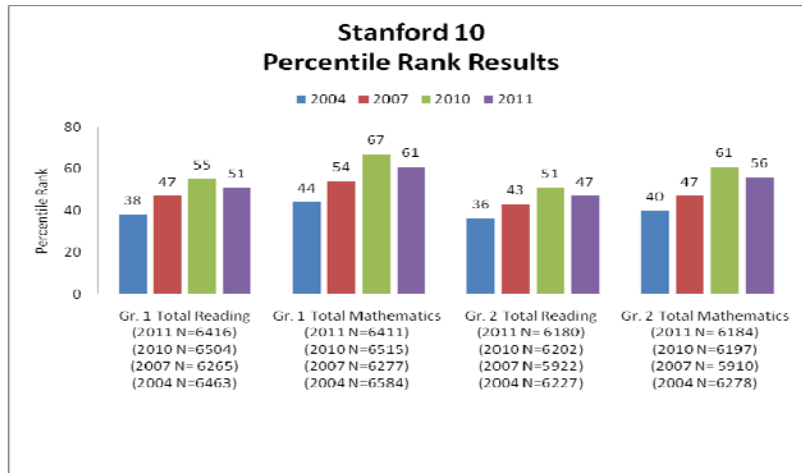
"All test scores have to be a call to action, they have to inform how we work to improve our children's education, and with this year's dip, the 2011 Stanford 10 scores are especially so," said City Schools CEO Andrés A. Alonso. "But this year's scores also show our kids continuing to outperform half their national peers and make important progress. The growth over time is real and we will continue to build on it. Because of recent changes at the district level we will start to see changes not just in student achievement, but in the quality of teaching taking place in the classroom. And until all students are reaching their potential, the urgency around this work will only continue to intensify."

"Any decline in student achievement is a setback because our students deserve better. But as the latest Stanford data show, we are moving forward in the right direction. And we will not let up until all of our students get the foundation for school success that they need," said Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners Chair Neil E. Duke.

Maryland school districts choose the test they use to measure student achievement in the 1st and 2nd grades. City Schools uses the Stanford 10, a nationally "normed" test that shows how students in a given school district perform compared to a national sample group. The test measures 1st- and 2nd-grade skills in reading and math but is not tied to federal accountability standards for student achievement, which don't kick in until the 3rd grade, when in Maryland students begin taking the Maryland School Assessment, or MSA.

City Schools administers the Stanford 10 each spring to all 1st- and 2nd-grade students. In 2011, City Schools students

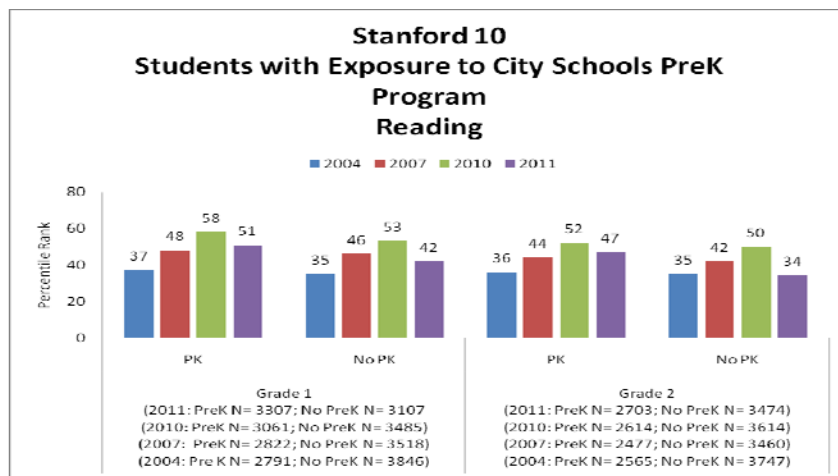
- scored higher in 1st-grade reading than 51 percent of the students in the national sample group—down from 55 percent in 2010, but up from 47 percent in 2007 and 38 percent in 2004;
- scored higher than 61 percent of the sample group in 1st-grade math—down from 67 percent in 2010, but up from 54 percent in 2007 and 44 percent in 2004;
- outscored 47 percent of the sample group in 2nd-grade reading—down from 51 percent in 2010, but up from 43 percent in 2007 and 36 percent in 2004; and
- outscored 56 percent of the sample group in 2nd grade math—down from 61 percent in 2010, but up from 47 percent in 2007 and 40 percent in 2004.



On the Stanford 10, small changes in performance spur large changes in percentile rankings. City Schools’ 2011 results show declines of four to six percentile points from 2010 to 2011. But because of how percentile ranks are calculated, these dips reflect minor shifts in student performance from one year to the next. For example, City Schools’ 2nd-grade students answered, on average, 1.9 fewer questions correctly on the reading test in 2011 than in 2010—70 out of 100 compared to 71.9 out of 100—resulting in a national percentile rank of 47 this year versus 51 last year.

But beyond the one-year snapshot of the 2011 Stanford 10 is a solid trend line of growth over time. Of the 113 schools that issued the test to 1st-grade students in both 2007 and 2011, 70 (62 percent) ranked higher in reading in 2011 than in 2007, and 73 ranked higher this year in math. Across the board, 2011 percentile ranks are up markedly from 2007—and even more from 2004.

Finally, this year’s Stanford 10 results reflect City Schools’ commitment to pre-k as a foundation for k-12 success. From 2009 to 2010 the district increased its number of pre-k seats by 15 percent and enrollment from 2009 to 2011 is up 22 percent (from 3,999 to 4,784) as a result. And for the eighth straight year, the 2011 Stanford 10 results clearly show the benefit of pre-k on students’ early education. Every year from 2004 to 2011, 1st-grade students who went to pre-k scored higher on in both reading and math than students without pre-k—and year after year, these pre-k students have retained their edge into the 2nd grade.



“The effect of pre-k is unmistakable, and we will continue to make sure all of our pre-k seats are full. But even more important to making sure our students stay on a growth path moving forward is the fact that in 2011-12 we will start to move beyond student test scores being our main measure of achievement. We have built systems for gauging the effectiveness of instruction in the classroom and leadership at the school level, and we will begin to roll these out this coming year. We are more committed than ever to moving our students forward, and we now have the tools to do that. As I’ve said many times: no excuses—period.”