

PARCC test results show improvements for GMCS

Written by By Cody Begaye Sun Correspondent
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District comes in at top of state for overall student proficiency growth

Back in August, Gallup-McKinley County Schools received the results for the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Career tests. Despite 10 schools out of 35 schools earned a 3.0 and above, the detailed results show great improvements, according to GMCS District Assistant Superintendent Gerald Horacek.

Horacek said the 2017-18 PARCC results showed 600 more students proficient in English Language Arts and mathematics than last year, and 804 more students were proficient in both categories than in 2016.

According to the New Mexico Public Education Department website, ELA and mathematics serve as accountability measures for state school districts and charter schools.

Horacek said GMCS is top in the state when it comes to overall proficiency growth because GMCS students more than doubled the state average of growth.

This district came in at No. 3 in New Mexico for mathematics proficiency growth over the past three years, and it experienced an increase in schools that rose in school grade points — the number rose to 17 from last year's nine.

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Horacek said that number includes a mix of schools in Gallup and across McKinley County, including Catherine Miller Elementary, Ramah Elementary, Twin Lakes Elementary, Tohatchi Middle School, Miyamura High School and Gallup High School.

Schools that rose 10 points or more include Stagecoach Elementary, Thoreau Middle School, Twin Lakes Elementary and Roosevelt Elementary.

In addition, this year, 10 schools in the district rose one letter grade or more compared to last year's four.

When asked what lead to these improvements, Horacek said the district worked to align its curriculum with their interim assessments.

"It helps teachers understand what to teach, and they determine how they're going to teach it," he said.

To this end, he said, the district provides professional development for teachers and principals to improve student performance as well as after-school tutoring at all 34 schools in the district.

The after-school tutoring sessions cost around \$860,000, which includes bus transportation and summer sessions, Horacek said.

The district emphasizes student performance success, he said, by investing resources and time into improving student achievement.

"We're helping our students become college and career ready, and that's important," Horacek said.

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According to Horacek, the current structures will remain in place to help students build on this level of success, and the district's goal will continue to be meeting the needs of the faculty, students and parents.

"We strive to do what's best for their children," Horacek said. "Expectations are high that we support our children."

Out of 35 schools, 10 schools earned a 3.0 or higher during the 2017-18 PARCC testing season.

Crownpoint Middle, Del Norte Elementary, Gallup Middle, Jefferson Elementary, Miyamura High School, Red Rock Elementary, Stagecoach Elementary and Tse' Yi' Gai High School received a "B" grade for their students' collective performance on the mandated test.

Middle College High, a charter school losing its charter with the district, received an "A" grade, along with Ramah Elementary School.

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