



311 South East Street
Kingsland, GA 31548

Telephone: (912) 729-5687
Fax: (912) 729-1489

Dr. William C. Hardin, Superintendent

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Dr. Rebecca Gillette, (912) 729-5687, rgillette@camden.k12.ga.us

Georgia Milestones Assessment Results Show Progress and Opportunity for Camden County Schools

The Georgia Department of Education recently released student scores from the 2014-15 administration of the Georgia Milestones Assessment System which includes End of Grade (EOG) tests in grades 3-8 and End of Course (EOC) tests in grades 9-12. Results from this first year of Georgia Milestones reveal areas of accomplishment and opportunities for growth. As expected, due to the more rigorous standards assessed by Georgia Milestones, statewide scores were lower than teachers and parents are accustomed to receiving. Camden County's students' scores were, once again, higher than the state average in most areas.

In response to state and nationwide demands to improve student achievement and better prepare Georgia's students to compete and succeed in the 21st century workforce, Georgia Milestones replaced the CRCT during the 2014-2015 school year. Results from this year's Georgia Milestones and the CRCT from prior years are not comparable. Georgia Milestones is a more demanding test that requires students to respond to open ended items in ELA and Math and includes a writing component at every grade level.

Georgia Milestones assesses student learning using four levels of performance, compared to the three used by the CRCT. The four levels are Beginning Learner, Developing Learner, Proficient Learner and Distinguished Learner. These levels shift the focus away from the pass/fail designation of "Meet" and "Does Not Meet" used with the CRCT, to one that is more descriptive of student progress and gives parents and teachers a more accurate picture of student understanding.

A recent release of statewide Georgia Milestones results which included "all" students who participated in testing revealed, in most academic areas, less than 10% of students performed at the Distinguished Learner Level while nearly 60% of students achieved a Beginning or Developing Learner designation. State and local data will be revised later to include only students enrolled in GA schools for 65% or more of the instructional year known as Full Academic Year (FAY) students. When FAY is applied to the data, changes at the state and local levels may occur.

Camden County's students outperformed their peers across the state. In Camden, 11% more students performed at the *Distinguished*, *Proficient* and *Developing* Learner Levels in elementary mathematics, science, and social studies when compared to the State. In elementary English Language Arts (ELA) 6% more Camden students achieved these levels than the state average. Middle school students in Camden County also performed better than their peers across the state with 7% more students performing at the *Distinguished*, *Proficient* and *Developing* Learner levels in mathematics, science and social studies. In ELA, 3% more of Camden's 6th through 8th grade students achieved these levels when compared to the state.

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Georgia Milestones individual student assessment reports will be distributed soon. Parents are encouraged to contact their child’s teacher to discuss the assessment results and current level of performance if they have questions. Performance at the *Beginning* and *Developing* Learner levels may be more common than in the past since the standards for performance have increased significantly. When compared to their peers, students and teachers in Camden continue to distinguish themselves, even under these more rigorous assessments. We remain confident our students are being well prepared for the college or career of their choosing after graduation.

None of Camden County Schools have been identified as Priority Schools or Focus Schools, which are designations based on student achievement on statewide assessments. Reward Schools, which are identified annually, have not been announced by the State.

Parents, students and community stakeholders can learn more about the Georgia Milestones assessment results for Camden County Schools and for the state by visiting www.camden.k12.ga.us.

