

# THE RESULTS OF THE 2006-2007 HIGH SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS IN BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Overview

The High School Assessments (HSAs) are comprised of four end-of-course exams, one each in Algebra/Data Analysis, Biology, Government, and English II. The HSAs serve as the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) measurement component of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) and as a central component of Maryland's graduation requirements.

The AYP performance for first-time high school test takers throughout Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) continues to improve. In 2006-2007, 64.3% of the first-time test takers scored proficient or advanced on the Algebra/Data Analysis HSA, 25.7 percentage points above the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) and 69.6% of the first-time test takers scored proficient/advanced on the English II exam, 17.4 percentage points above English II AMO. During the same year, 87.5% of the high schools made AYP in reading, 95.8% made AYP in mathematics, and 100% of schools made AYP in the target area of graduation rate. In addition, four high schools in BCPS exited School Improvement by making AYP for the second consecutive year: Chesapeake High, Owings Mills High, Parkville High, and Randallstown High.

In terms of meeting graduation requirements, 2007 was a significant year for the HSA program. Beginning with students who entered Grade 9 in the fall of 2005, students must pass all four assessments as a graduation requirement. By the end of the 2006-2007 school year, 7,953 diploma-bound students were enrolled in the Class of 2009. Of these students, 63.7% met the HSA graduation requirement by passing all four assessments or by reaching the minimum on each exam and meeting the combined score option. By the end of Grade 10, 73.0% of diploma-bound students in the graduating Class of 2009 passed the Algebra/Data Analysis HSA, 78.5% passed Government, 67.0% passed English II, and 69.9% passed the Biology HSA.

### Introduction

The HSAs are comprised of four end-of-course exams, one each in Algebra/Data Analysis, Biology, Government, and English II. The High School Assessments serve as the AYP measurement component of NCLB and as a central component of Maryland's graduation requirements.

First, to ensure that all students receive a high quality education and meet the requirements of NCLB, all schools and school systems in Maryland and across the nation must demonstrate AYP in reading and mathematics. The Algebra/Data Analysis and the English II HSA exams serve as the method by which the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) tracks school and school system academic progress and makes NCLB accountability decisions.

Second, the Algebra/Data Analysis, Biology, Government, and English II exams also serve as a main component of Maryland's graduation requirements. Currently, there are two different

graduation requirements for students regarding the HSAs. Students who entered Grade 9 before 2005 (current Grade 12 students) are required to take all four high school assessments. Students who entered Grade 9 in 2005 (current Grade 11 students) and all subsequent incoming high school students are required to take and pass all four HSAs to meet graduation requirements or meet the combined score option. In addition to passing the assessments, students also must earn state-specified credits, fulfill service-learning and attendance requirements, and complete any additional local school system requirements to receive a Maryland high school diploma. Students who must pass the HSAs in order to earn a Maryland high school diploma have several options for fulfilling this requirement:

1. Pass all four HSAs by earning the passing scale score or higher.
2. Fail one or more HSAs on a first attempt, receive academic remediation provided by the school, and pass the HSAs on a subsequent attempt.
3. Earn a minimum score on each test and earn a combined score of 1602 or above. The minimum score for each test is lower than the passing scores. The minimum score and passing score for each HSA is presented in Table 1 below.
4. Earn passing scores on state-approved substitute tests and substitute one or more of those scores for passing scores on the HSAs.

As Table 1 illustrates, the scale score needed to pass the Algebra/Data Analysis and the English II HSA graduation requirement is the same scale score needed to score proficient for the AYP accountability measures.

Table 1: Passing Scores for the Maryland High School Assessments

HSA	Minimum Scale Score	Passing Scale Score for Graduation Requirement	Proficient Scale Score for AYP	Advanced Scale Score for AYP
Algebra/Data Analysis	402	412	412	450
Biology	391	400		
English II	386	396	396	429
Government	387	394		
Total Combined Score Option		1602		

MSDE recognizes that there will be some students who will struggle on the HSAs, even after they take the exams several times and take advantage of academic remediation. The proposed Bridge Plan for Academic Validation would provide another way for students to meet the HSA graduation requirement and earn a high school diploma while meeting the same standards as those students passing the High School Assessments. In this proposed plan, students who fail to meet the minimum score on any one HSA at least twice would be eligible to meet additional local and state criteria such as minimum GPA, satisfactory attendance, passing grades in all HSA subjects, and participation in academic remediation. Students meeting the eligibility criteria would be permitted to complete a senior project that demonstrates the content and skills of each HSA they failed to pass.

## Results for the 2006-2007 High School Assessments

### Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

The cornerstone of Maryland's accountability system is AYP. It is the method by which Maryland tracks academic progress and makes accountability decisions. Schools and school systems must show that students are making AYP at the high school level in reading (English II), mathematics (Algebra/Data Analysis), and in graduation rate. In addition to student achievement in the aggregate, AYP must be made among the following student groups: racial/ethnic groups (African American, American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and White), students with limited English proficiency, students receiving special education services, and economically disadvantaged students.

At the high school level, only the scores of first-time test takers are used in the AYP calculations. The scores of students taking the Algebra/Data Analysis HSA in middle school will count toward the high school's AYP the year that student enters Grade 9.

To make AYP, the percentage of first-time test takers scoring proficient or advanced on each exam must meet or exceed the AMO determined by MSDE. In 2006-2007, 64.3% of the BCPS first-time test takers scored proficient or advanced on the Algebra/Data Analysis HSA, 25.7 percentage points above the AMO and 69.6% of first-time test takers scored proficient or advanced on the English II exam, 17.4 percentage points above English II AMO. Every year the target or AMO increases by 6.59 percentage points in Algebra/Data Analysis and 5.19 percentage points in English II until it reaches 100% in 2014. For schools to continue to make AYP, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced must increase at such a rate to meet or exceed the AMO. As part of the NCLB accountability program, a high school failing to make AYP for two consecutive years is identified by the State as a school in improvement.

The AYP performance of first-time test takers throughout BCPS has improved in almost all subgroups from 2004-2005 to 2006-2007. The trend performance of first-time test takers is presented in Figures 1 and 2. Over this three-year period, most subgroups have realized improvement in both English II and Algebra/Data Analysis. .

Figure 1: AYP Trend Performance of First-time Test takers on the English II HSA

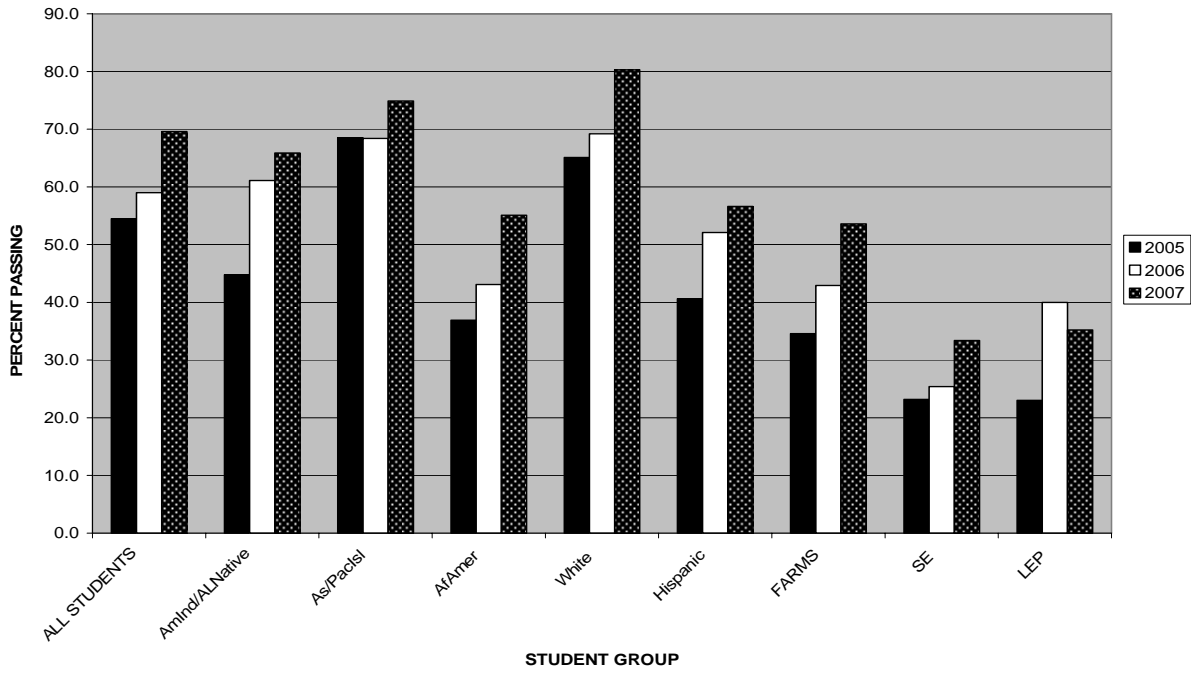
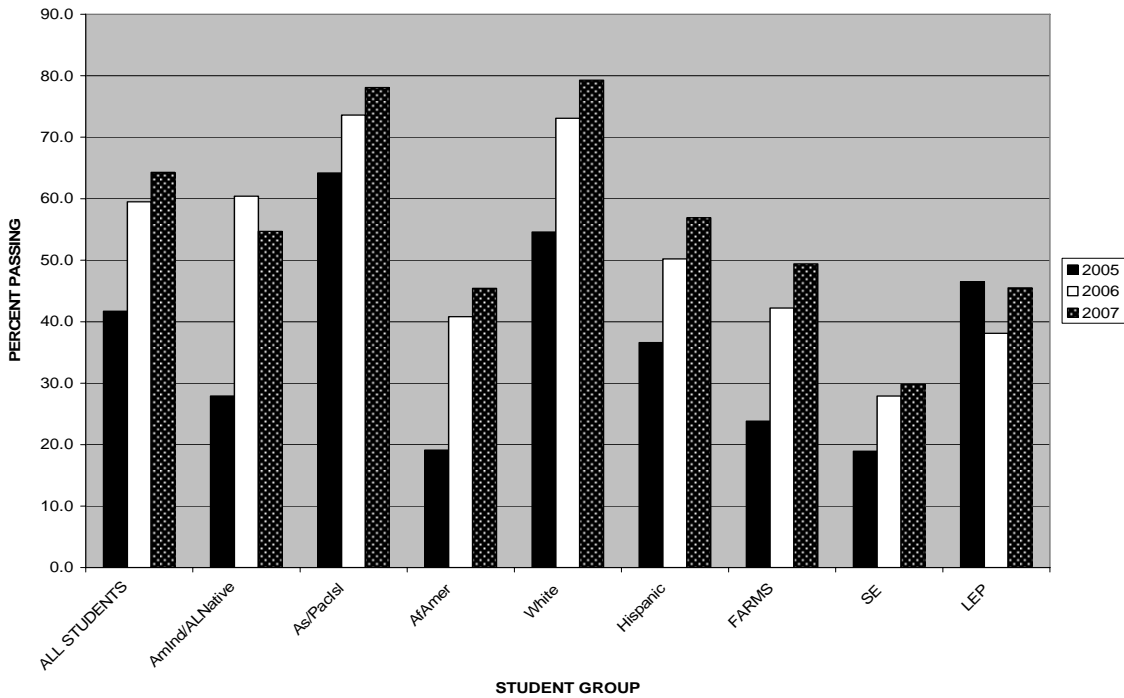


Figure 2: AYP Trend Performance of First-time Test takers on the Algebra/Data Analysis HSA



Source Data: MSDE

In 2006-2007, 87.5% of high schools made AYP in reading, 95.8% made AYP in mathematics, and 100% of schools made AYP in the target area of graduation rate. As illustrated in Table 2, the three year trend concerning the percentage of high schools making AYP in reading and mathematics are presented. Overall, all but three high schools met AYP in 2006-2007. Dundalk High and Lansdowne High both did not make AYP in one subgroup. Woodlawn High also missed making AYP in 2007 in the target areas of reading and mathematics.

Table 2: Number and Percentage of Schools Making Adequate Yearly Progress in Reading and Mathematics

Schools	2005			2006			2007		
	N	Schools Making AYP		N	Schools Making AYP		N	Schools Making AYP	
		#	%		#	%		#	%
Reading	24	14	58.3	24	22	91.7	24	21	87.5
Mathematics	24	8	33.3	24	23	95.8	24	23	95.8

“N” represents the total number of schools.

### School Improvement

As part of the NCLB accountability program, high schools that do not make AYP in the same subject for two or more consecutive years are identified for school improvement. Same subject is defined as reading, mathematics, or the other academic indicator such as graduation rate.

A school is held at the previous year's school improvement status if it achieves all the targets in the subject for which it was identified for school improvement. A school exits school improvement when it achieves all the targets (i.e., makes Adequate Yearly Progress) for two consecutive years.

Table 3 outlines the five consecutive steps in the school improvement process. Schools requiring local attention are shown for contextual purposes only. There is no state requirement for schools requiring local attention.

Table 3: Steps of School Improvement

Failure to achieve target in subject area for the first-time	Local Attention
Failure to achieve a target in the same subject area	School Improvement Year 1
Failure to achieve a target in the same subject area after one year in improvement	School Improvement Year 2
Failure to achieve a target in the same subject area after two years in improvement	Corrective Action
Failure to achieve a target in the same subject area after a full year in corrective action	Restructuring Planning
Failure to achieve a target in the same subject area after a full year in restructuring planning	Restructuring Implementation

In 2006-2007, four high schools in BCPS exited school improvement by making AYP for the second consecutive year: Chesapeake, Owings Mills, Parkville, and Randallstown high schools. In 2006-2007, Milford Mill Academy met AYP and remained at the Corrective Action stage. Upon meeting AYP for a second consecutive year in 2007-2008, Milford Mill Academy would exit school improvement status. Dundalk High and Woodlawn High both missed meeting AYP and are in the levels of Corrective Action and Restructuring Planning, respectively.

## High School Assessment Graduation Requirement Results

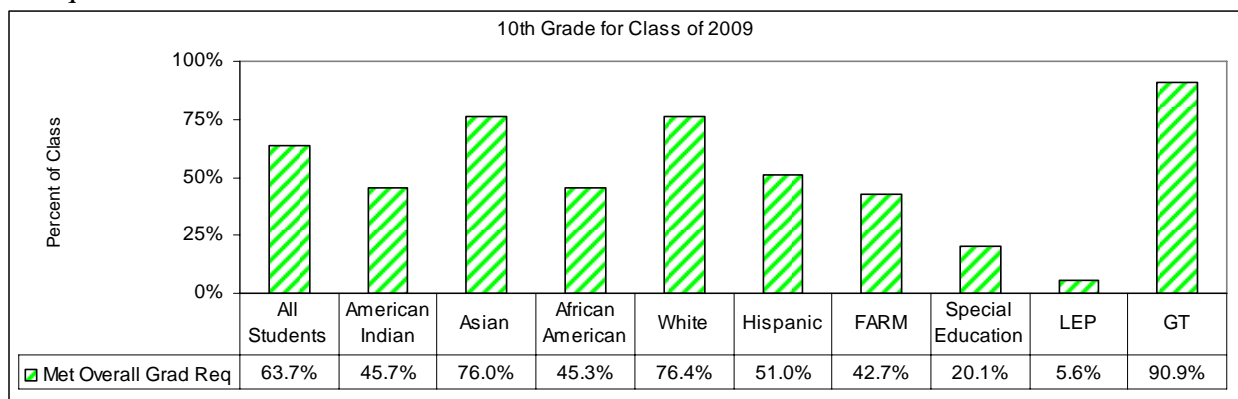
### System Level Results

In addition to serving as the method by which Maryland tracks academic progress and makes accountability decisions, the Algebra/Data Analysis and English II exams also serve as a central component of Maryland's graduation requirements. Starting with the graduating Class of 2009, in order to fulfill the HSA graduation requirement, all students who entered 9th grade in or after 2005 must now take and pass all four exam, one each in Algebra/Data Analysis, Biology, Government, and English II or meet a combined score option. In addition to passing all four assessments, students must also earn state-specified credits, fulfill the state's service-learning and attendance requirements, and complete any additional local school system requirements to receive a Maryland high school diploma.

The 2006-2007 school year was an important period for the HSA program. This was the first year the majority of students in the graduating Class of 2009 participated in the administration all four assessments thus, the first year the data for the graduating Class of 2009 could be presented.

By the end of the 2006-2007 school year, 7,953 diploma-bound students were enrolled in the Class of 2009. Of these students, 63.7% met the HSA graduation requirement by passing all four assessments or by reaching the minimum on each exam and meeting the combined option score. Figure 3 illustrates the percent of diploma-bound students enrolled in BCPS graduating Class of 2009 who met the HSA graduation requirement by the end of their Grade10.

Figure 3: Percent of Students in the Class of 2009 Meeting the Overall HSA Graduation Requirement



In addition to analyzing the percentage of students who met the overall HSA graduation requirement, analysis of the percentage of students passing each assessment is also significant. By the end of Grade 10, 73.0% of diploma-bound students in the graduating Class of 2009 passed the Algebra/Data Analysis HSA, 78.5% passed Government HSA, 67.0% passed English II HSA, and 69.9% passed the Biology HSA.

Table 4 provides HSA pass rates for the BCPS graduating Class of 2009, a total of 7,953 diploma-bound students. This table includes the percentage of students who passed each of the four high school assessments out of the total number of diploma-bound students enrolled at the end of Grade 10.

Table 4: Disaggregated Pass Rates for the Class of 2009 at the End of Grade 10

Student Group	% Passing			
	Algebra/Data Analysis	English II	Biology	Government
All Students	73.0	67.0	69.9	78.5
American Indian	56.5	50.0	60.9	67.4
Asian	83.6	76.3	81.9	87.5
African American	56.1	52.0	51.2	66.1
Hispanic	64.4	51.4	55.8	68.8
White	84.4	77.7	82.7	87.0
FARM	56.3	47.6	50.8	63.9
Special Education	32.6	21.5	30.2	41.0
LEP	31.5	3.7	16.7	31.5

Table 5 provides HSA pass rates for the graduating Class of 2010. At the end of Grade 9, a total of 9,191 diploma-bound students were enrolled in the graduating Class of 2010. This table includes the percentage of diploma-bound students who passed each assessment out of the total number of diploma-bound students enrolled at the end of Grade 9. While the majority of students take the Algebra/Data Analysis and the Government courses and end-of-year exams prior to the end of Grade 9, only about half of these students have taken the Biology exam by the end of Grade 9. Thus, the percentage of students passing Biology is expected to be lower than Algebra/Data Analysis and Government. As the English II HSA is considered to be an end-of-course examination that is administered at the end of Grade 10, no data are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Disaggregated Pass Rates for the Class of 2010 at the End of Grade 9

	% Passing		
	Algebra/Data Analysis	Biology	Government
All Students	63.9	40.2	65.5
American Indian	50.0	20.0	54.0
Asian	77.7	58.7	80.3
African American	46.2	21.6	50.5
Hispanic	52.8	24.0	54.3
White	77.0	53.8	76.5
FARM	46.6	21.2	48.7
Special Education	19.8	6.1	24.5
LEP	72.2	48.1	75.3

### School Level Results

By the end of the 2006-2007 school year, the percentage of diploma-bound students completing the HSA graduation requirement varied greatly from school to school; ranging from a high of 98.5% completing the requirement at Eastern Technical High to lows of 21.2% at Milford Mill Academy and 31.3% at Woodlawn High. It is important to note, unlike other high schools, the majority of students at Milford Mill Academy take the biology course and end-of-year exam during their 11<sup>th</sup> grade year, not in their 10<sup>th</sup> grade year. As a result, by the end of Grade 10 many students enrolled at Milford Mill Academy have not had the opportunity to take all four assessments; therefore, the percentage of students completing the HSA graduation requirement is not comparable to other BCPS schools.

Table 6 illustrates the 2007 High School Assessment graduation requirement results for each of the 24 high schools. Table 6 includes the number of diploma-bound students enrolled at the end of Grade 10 and the number and percent of the enrolled students completing the HSA graduation requirement by passing all four assessments or by reaching the minimum on each exam and meeting the combined score option score. For comparison purposes Table 7 illustrates the percentage of students receiving free or reduced meals and the mobility rates for high schools listed in Table 6.

Table 6: High School Assessment Graduation Requirement Results for BCPS High Schools

School	# of Diploma-bound Students Enrolled at the End of Grade 10	# of students completing HSA graduation requirement	% of students completing HSA graduation requirement
<b>BCPS System</b>	<b>7,953</b>	<b>5,068</b>	<b>63.7%</b>
Carver Center for Arts and Technology	176	157	89.2%
Catonsville High	443	317	71.6%
Chesapeake High	251	101	40.2%
Dulaney High School	460	402	87.4%
Dundalk High School	269	123	45.7%
Eastern Technical High	344	339	98.5%
Franklin High	367	265	72.2%
Hereford High	332	297	89.5%
Kenwood High	443	207	46.7%
Lansdowne High	282	141	50.0%
Loch Raven High	269	214	79.6%
Milford Mill Academy*	363	77	21.2%
New Town High	237	115	48.5%
Overlea High	303	108	35.6%
Owings Mills High	238	152	63.9%
Parkville High	449	269	59.9%
Patapsco High School and Center for the Arts	407	276	67.8%
Perry Hall High	487	401	82.3%
Pikesville High	279	188	67.4%
Randallstown High	311	127	40.8%
Sparrows Point High	197	132	67.0%
Towson High School	339	292	86.1%
Western School of Technology	251	235	93.6%
Woodlawn High	393	123	31.3%

\* The majority of students at Milford Mill Academy take the biology course and end-of-year exam during their 11<sup>th</sup> grade year, not in their 10<sup>th</sup> grade year like other high schools; therefore the percentage of students completing the HSA graduation requirement is not comparable to other BCPS schools.

Table 7: High School Demographic Data

School	% FARM	Mobility	
		Entrants	Withdrawals
<b>Baltimore County Schools</b>	<b>26.6%</b>	<b>16.4%</b>	<b>15.7%</b>
Carver Center for Arts & Technology	11.5%	0.7%	3.8%
Catonsville High	16.2%	6.3%	8.0%
Chesapeake High	44.6%	22.7%	29.8%
Dulaney High	9.1%	4.8%	5.8%
Dundalk High	48.5%	20.1%	25.0%
Eastern Technical High School	15.4%	0.5%	2.5%
Franklin High	17.0%	8.5%	9.5%
Hereford High	3.3%	3.9%	3.5%
Kenwood High IB and Sports Science	35.9%	14.9%	20.5%
Lansdowne High & Academy of Finance	39.1%	15.6%	17.6%
Loch Raven High	14.5%	6.6%	11.0%
Milford Mill Academy	37.3%	18.4%	17.2%
New Town High	28.9%	19.5%	20.0%
Overlea High & Academy of Finance	39.6%	19.2%	21.2%
Owings Mills High	32.6%	16.7%	12.7%
Parkville High & Center for Math/Science	32.6%	9.8%	11.6%
Patapsco High & Center for Arts	31.9%	8.6%	11.4%
Perry Hall High	13.3%	6.8%	7.6%
Pikesville High	18.6%	8.8%	11.7%
Randallstown High	39.4%	20.9%	14.7%
Sparrows Point High	20.2%	8.0%	12.4%
Towson High Law & Public Policy	11.3%	6.6%	7.2%
Western School of Technology & Env. Science	21.3%	0.6%	3.6%
Woodlawn High Center for Pre-Eng. Res.	42.2%	26.8%	25.1%

### Targeted Cohort Schools

The 2006-2007 school year was the first year the majority of students in Maryland completed taking all four assessments. Hence, this is the first year the pass rates for the graduating Class of 2009 could be calculated and presented. Since this was the first year that local school systems were required to calculate and submit the results of HSA graduation requirement data, MSDE, was unable to provide local school systems with the graduation requirement results of other school systems in Maryland. In addition, MSDE was also unable to set a standard for measuring adequate progress toward meeting the HSA graduation requirement.

After analyzing the HSA pass rates of the 24 high schools, BCPS identified any school with a pass rate of 55% or less (on one or more of the four high school assessments) as a *Targeted Cohort School*. In total, nine high schools were identified as HSA *Targeted Cohort Schools*: Chesapeake High, Dundalk High, Kenwood High, Lansdowne High, Milford Mill Academy, New Town High, Overlea High, Randallstown High, and Woodlawn High. Table 8 shows the pass rates for each of the *Targeted Cohort Schools*.

Table 8: HSA Pass Rates for the *Targeted Cohort Schools* for the Class of 2009 at the End of Grade 10

	% Passing			
	Algebra/Data Analysis	English II	Biology	Government
Chesapeake High	49.8	48.2	49.0	61.8
Dundalk High	61.3	45.7	53.5	63.9
Kenwood High	56.9	48.8	59.1	64.6
Lansdowne High	57.1	53.9	57.1	65.6
Milford Mill Academy	50.4	44.9	24.0 *	53.2
New Town High	62.4	56.5	51.1	70.5
Overlea High	57.1	42.2	44.9	59.7
Randallstown High	46.3	49.2	44.4	57.6
Woodlawn High	36.9	34.4	43.0	59.0

\* The majority of students at Milford Mill Academy take the biology course and end-of-year exam during their 11<sup>th</sup> grade year; therefore the percentage of students completing the HSA graduation requirement is not comparable to other BCPS schools.

## Conclusions

After analyzing student achievement data from the BCPS data warehouse and MSDE reports, it is clear that the school district has made significant progress in ensuring that all students will reach high academic standards. It is important to note that as BCPS student demographics continue to change, with increases in the number of limited English proficient (LEP) students and students who qualify for free and reduced-price meals (FARM), overall student achievement continues to improve. Opportunities for growth still exist for certain student subgroups, such as special education, limited English proficiency, and FARM. Addressing differences in performance by subgroup through consistent implementation of the *Blueprint for Progress* and the accompanying Master Plan is vital to ensuring the success of *all* students.

While the overall system data indicate that much progress has been made, comprehensive data analysis points to the following opportunities for growth:

- Continue to increase course rigor and improve the achievement of students in middle and high schools to ensure students' success on high school assessments.
- Improve the consistency and fidelity of the delivery of curriculum aligned with the Voluntary State Curriculum and the Core Learning Goals to ensure students' success on MSA and HSA.

- Maintain focus on providing acceleration programs that will move all students to proficient/advanced in reading/language arts and mathematics on MSA and HSA.
- Address the needs of schools identified for school improvement.
- Target the schools with a pass rate of less than 55% on one or more HSAs for additional support to make sure that every student meets with success on these assessments.

To address the identified opportunities for growth, BCPS continues to be focused on improving the instructional program to ensure that all students meet the high standards necessary to be successful in college or in the workforce. System priorities to support the required adjustments include the following:

- Eliminating low-level courses and increasing the rigor of the instructional program.
- Expanding prekindergarten access to eligible students.
- Expanding kindergarten special education inclusion programs.
- Supporting Education That is Multicultural strategies including implementing the Style to Content Learning Preferences Inventory.
- Providing professional development to address students' cultural and linguistic diversity.
- Supporting and expanding AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) and other high school strategies/programs to provide more opportunities for students to become college-ready.
- Increasing parent and community involvement.
- Refining special education programs including full implementation of a web-based IEP system and a focus on collaboration among special and general educators.
- Phasing-in certified ELL teachers to replace ELL tutors.
- Supporting programs to assist teachers and paraprofessionals to become highly qualified.
- Providing alternative and intervention programs to address acceleration, transition, or other student needs.