

**Berkeley, August 17, 2011**

**Press Release #1**

**STAR Results - Berkeley Unified School District Continues to Show Progress**

The preliminary California Standards Test (CST) data posted August 15, 2011 on the [California Department of Education Website](#) as part of the Standardized Testing And Reporting (STAR) program shows more Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) students at Proficient and Advanced in its elementary and middle schools and growth in participation rates for high school students. BUSD also saw proficiency level increases for three significant subgroups of students: African-American, Hispanic/Latino and Socio-Economically Disadvantaged, where there has been targeted instruction and services to close the achievement gap.

Berkeley Unified School District students increased their overall proficiency rate (scoring at Proficient or Advanced) on the CST in English Language Arts (ELA). Initial data shows that student proficiency rates in ELA increased by 2% in elementary school and by 5% for middle school. In Grades 9-11, over 100 more students took the English Language Arts CST than in 2010. While the number of students taking the CST Test increased in 2011, the percentage of high-school students scoring at Proficient and Advanced decreased.

In Mathematics, BUSD students improved proficiency on the Grades 2-7 Math CST, Middle School Algebra and High School Geometry Tests. There were 4% more students scoring Proficient or above in Grades 2-7; 2% more students scoring at proficiency in middle school Algebra and 5% more high-school students scoring at proficient or advanced in Geometry. "The data shows that our schools are on the right path and we are encouraged by the steady improvement our students are making. I am pleased that we continue to see higher proficiency at the K-8 level and the new evidence suggests we are closing the achievement gap. I commend the valiant efforts of our principals, teachers, and staff and the hard work of our students and parents," said William Huyett, Berkeley's Superintendent.

Berkeley Unified School District has set strategic instructional goals, two of which include CST as a measurable outcome: strong readers by grade 3 and proficiency in Algebra by grade 8. Initial results show that 5% more students are scoring Proficient or Advanced on the ELA CST in Grades 2 and 3. Three percent more students in grade 8 scored at Proficient or Advanced in Algebra. More information on the progress made with individual subgroups of students will be available as the new data is disaggregated.

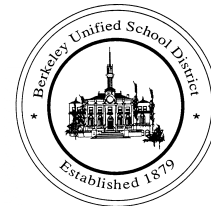
A thorough analysis of the CST test results and other useful student assessment data is taking place at the district and school site levels. "These initial results provide BUSD with an opportunity to reflect on our school improvement efforts to accelerate learning. Our schools will continue to refine the action plans they have in place that are designed to provide direction in improving schools and the educational program, especially in high school," said Neil Smith, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services.

School sites are mailing individual student results home this week and they should arrive home on or before August 31. Parents can direct any questions regarding their child's scores to the appropriate teacher at school.

More information about the progress BUSD Schools are making will become available after the final public release of the 2011 California Department of Education Accountability Progress Reports on August 31st. This annual report will contain two sections: 1) the **state** Academic Performance Index (API) measuring year-to-year growth, and 2) the **federal** Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) measuring how well a school meets minimum performance targets.

**For Further Information on State / Federal / District Accountability and/or Graduation/Dropout Rates, Contact:**

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**Berkeley, August 17, 2011**

**Press Release #2**

**Berkeley High School Graduation and Dropout Rates Fare Better Than the County and State Overall and for Subgroups**

According to new statewide [Graduation and Dropout](#) data released by the California Department of Education, Berkeley Unified had an 81.1% graduation rate as compared to the 74.4% statewide and 74.7% countywide graduation rates. About 18% of California high school students dropped out in 2010. In Berkeley, however, that number is closer to 16% – falling in the lower half of dropout rates in the county. The dropout rate for Alameda County was reported at over 19 percent.

The Graduation and Dropout rates were, for the first time, based on four-year cohort information collected about individual students using the state's California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS). This new rate from 2009-10 will serve as a baseline year and cannot be compared to prior years.

The graduation rates for Berkeley's African-American and Hispanic/Latino students are much better than the rate for the county or the state. However, there is still a gap that persists between African-American and Hispanic/Latino students and their White and Asian peers both in graduation and dropout rates. "While we are doing better than the state and county in terms of graduation and dropout rates, there are still far too many students missing out. Now, more than ever, our students need to be in school and get a high school diploma," said William Huyett, Berkeley's Superintendent.

Berkeley's African-American students in the 09-10 cohort had a graduation rate of 75.7% (a rate higher than both the state and county overall) and a 20% dropout rate. In Alameda County, the graduation rate for African Americans was 55.3% and the dropout rate was 35.1%. For the State of California, the graduation rate for African Americans was 59% and the dropout rate was 30.1%.

The graduation rate for the BUSD Latino/Hispanic cohort was 83.3% and dropout rate was 13.9%. As was the case for BUSD's African-American cohort, the graduation rate was higher than both the state and county overall, but in the case of Hispanic/Latino students, the graduation rate was also higher than the overall BUSD graduation rate. Continuing this trend, the Hispanic/Latino dropout rate for Berkeley was lower than rates for the state, county, and BUSD as a whole. In Alameda County graduation rate for Hispanic/Latino students of any race was 65.1% and the dropout rate was 27%. Statewide, the graduation rate for the same group of students was 67.7% and the dropout rate was 22.1%.

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