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CONTACT: Gentle Blythe, 415-241-6565

SF STUDENTS SHOW ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT GAINS

African-American and Latino Students Show Double-Digit Growth in Proficiency over Five Years

Students in Superintendent's Zone Schools Make Greatest Gains

August 31, 2012 (San Francisco) – San Francisco's standards-based test scores have improved in both English Language Arts (ELA) and Math. This continues an upward trend for SFUSD, which in the past five years has seen proficiency rates in ELA improve by 10 percentage points and Math (grades 2-7) by 8.2 percentage points. Over 37,000 students in grades 2-11 took the California Standards Test (CST) in the spring of 2012.

This year the district scores increased in both ELA (3.1 percentage points) and Math (1.6 percentage points). More than three-fifths (60.5 percent) of the district's students are now classified as 'proficient or above' in ELA, and more than two-thirds (67.6 percent) of students are 'proficient or above' in Math (grades 2-7) and 57 percent of students are 'proficient or above' in Math when grades two through seven and "end of course" (Algebra, Geometry, etc.) are combined.

The percent of students proficient in SFUSD is higher than the state in both ELA and Math.

"In spite of years of budget cuts, we have kept our focus on students' learning and it shows," said Board of Education President Norman Yee. "We continue to lead the way as one of California's top performing school districts."

When performance gains are disaggregated, almost all grades and major ethnic groups, as well as English Language learners and Special Education students, have shown the same positive trend in performance as the district, with increased or maintained rates of 'proficient or above' in both content areas.

African-American and Latino students show double-digit growth over five years

Since 2008 the district has narrowed the achievement gap between African-American and Latino students and their peers; the growth for the targeted groups has matched or exceeded the district in both content areas. The five-year proficiency growth in English

Language Arts for African-American students was 13 percentage points and 10 percentage points for Latinos. In Math, the performance growth rate of African Americans was 13 percentage points and 10 percentage points for Latinos. Also, the overall five year growth in proficiency rates for Samoans, a historically underserved group in San Francisco, was higher than the district in both content areas (ELA, 11 percentage points and Math, 11 percentage points).

“Our district has made closing the achievement gap our top priority and we have taken strategic and significant steps that are paying off,” said Superintendent Richard A. Carranza. “We are particularly proud that while we’ve accelerated the achievement of historically underserved students, we’ve continued to increase the achievement of all of our students. We have a long way to go but these test results are definitely cause for celebration. Our students and teachers and all those who support them can rest assured that their hard work is making a difference.”

Double and triple the rate of growth for Superintendent’s Zone

When compared to the district as a whole, schools in the Superintendent’s Zone showed double the rate of growth for ELA and three times the rate of growth for Math.

In 2008, the current Superintendent’s Zone schools had 19.4 percent of their students classified as ‘proficient’ in ELA. By contrast, in 2012, 35.5 percent of students were ‘proficient’ in ELA, a gain of 16.1 percentage points. Schools with federal School Improvement Grants (SIG) showed even greater improvement since 2008, with an 18.4 percentage point gain in ELA proficiency. For Math, Superintendent’s Zone students in grades two through seven showed a 23.7 percentage point gain, moving from 25.1 percent ‘proficient’ in 2008 to 48.8 percent ‘proficient’ in 2012. SIG schools in the Superintendent’s Zone had a 26.9 percentage point gain in Math since 2008.

“The rate of accelerated growth in the Zone demonstrates what is possible when you combine a clear vision and strategy, with the additional resources necessary, for serving our historically most underserved students,” said Guadalupe Guerrero, Deputy Superintendent for Instruction, Innovation and Social Justice. “Teachers in the Zone continue to work together to develop effective and engaging instructional practices. Principals, instructional coaches and school support teams provide strong leadership focused on continuous improvement. In addition, the adoption of a community-schools approach provides for enhanced student supports and aligned community partnerships. This combination of essential school supports is resulting in significantly improved outcomes for students.”

When the district formed the Superintendent’s Zone in 2010, it set out to ensure that these 14 historically low-performing schools had a clear instructional framework, on-the-job

professional learning and collaboration for teachers, strong use of ongoing student assessments, and coordinated support services for students and families. With the aid of SIG funding in 2011, SFUSD has been able to make even more significant investments in recruiting, selecting, and developing employees, including investing millions in professional development and coaching for teachers.

In 2010, Superintendent Carlos Garcia and then-Deputy Superintendent Richard A. Carranza created a Superintendent's Zone comprised of 14 schools located primarily in the Bayview and Mission neighborhoods to focus more resources on closing the achievement gap in some of the city's historically lowest-performing schools. Nine out of the 14 schools in the Superintendent's Zone received federal SIG funding in 2011, which they were eligible for given their identification as "persistently low achieving schools" (lowest 5 percent of schools statewide).

The schools in the Superintendent's Zone and SIG schools are (SIG schools are marked *): Bret Harte Elementary, Bryant Elementary*, Cesar Chavez Elementary*, Charles Drew Elementary, Everett Middle*, George Washington Carver Elementary*, Buena Vista Horace Mann K-8*, John Muir Elementary*, John O'Connell High*, Leonard Flynn Elementary, Malcolm X Elementary, Mission High*, Paul Revere K-8* and Thurgood Marshall High.

Gains in Algebra participation, Science and Social Studies proficiency

The district is committed to all students taking Algebra in grade 8. The percentage of grade 8 students taking the CST Algebra 1 test or higher has increased from 62 percent in 2009, 81 percent in 2010, 86 percent in 2011 and 95 percent in 2012. Almost half the students (49.5 percent) scored 'proficient or above' in CST Algebra 1 or higher in spring of 2012.

Approximately two-thirds of students scored 'proficient or above' on the CST Science test at grade 8 (65.1 percent). District students in grade 8, over five years (2008 – 2012) increased their proficiency by double digits (10 percentage points) in Science.

Across the district, over half of the grade 8 students (55.2 percent) taking History scored 'proficient or above.' Over five years, grade 8 students increased their proficiency rates by 9.2 percentage points.

"I congratulate the school district on their tremendous growth over the last year. A great city needs great schools and we will continue our partnership with the school district to make sure we are providing our young people with a world class education and the skills they will need to succeed," said Mayor Ed Lee.

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