

Thomaston Public Schools

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Thomaston Public Schools Share Smarter Balanced Baseline Results

Thomaston Public Schools Share Smarter Balanced Baseline Results and Plans for the Upcoming School Year

Thomaston, CT- Across the state, students in grades three through eight and grade eleven took part in the Smarter Balanced assessment in the spring of 2015. Students were tested in Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics and their scores were reported in four areas of knowledge and skills for English Language Arts/Literacy (Reading, Writing, Listening and Research/Inquiry) and three areas of knowledge and skills in Mathematics (Concepts and Procedures, Problem Solving and Modeling and Data Analysis and Communicating Reasoning) all aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards. These claims were measured in performance categories of below, at/near or above standard.

At the district level, Thomaston students performed well in Writing. Approximately eight-two percent of students in grades three through eleven can produce effective and well-grounded writing for a range of purposes and audiences at a level that is at/near or above standard. In addition to the strong scores in Writing, students also did very well in the area of Listening, demonstrating that they can employ effective speaking and listening skills for a range of purposes and audiences. In this Language Arts/Literacy category, students performed in the eighty-four percent range for students achieving at/near or above standard.

In addition to the positive performance of Language/Literacy at the district level, there are positive outcomes for student achievement in Mathematics. Thomaston students performed well in the area of problem solving and modeling and data analysis. This category of the testing required students to prove that they can solve a range of complex well-posed problems in pure and applied mathematics, making productive use of knowledge and problem solving strategies. Additionally, students were tested on whether they can analyze complex, real-world scenarios and can construct and use mathematical models to interpret and solve problems. In this category, seventy-four percent of students scored at/near or above the standard.

In addition to looking at the scores from a district and school level perspective, Thomaston can be compared to similar districts in the District Reference Group E. This group is a cohort of thirty four districts in Connecticut which are similar in socio-economic status, indicators of need and enrollment. In English Language Arts, students in Thomaston ranked ninth out of thirty four districts in the DRG. In Mathematics, students ranked twenty first out of thirty four districts in the DRG.

“Our focus this year has been and will be a dedication to rolling out new curriculum in Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics directly aligned with the Connecticut Common Core Standards,” stated DiCorpo. “With support from Education Connection as a part of a grant for district math coaching received from the State of Connecticut, we will work to improve upon the areas of instructional practice in Mathematics that can yield more positive results. For example, in

Mathematics, our instructional focus will be on Concepts and Procedures in grades K-12 and Communicating Reasoning K-5, two areas that showed a need to examine our practices. In Language Arts through the assistance of SERC, teachers will be provided coaching in implementing the new Language Arts/Literacy curriculum, with an eye on strengthening close reading, a technique used to improve reading instruction,” stated DiCorpo.

“As a district we will continue to work collaboratively and collectively towards continuous improvement. The Smarter Balance baseline results are just one of many measures the district uses to measure the impact on our curriculum and current instructional practices,” stated DiCorpo. “New curriculum written during the summer include local measures from which to gauge our work. What we learned from Smarter Balanced data are the areas that we have collective strength and areas that can impact our growth,” stated DiCorpo.

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For more information, press only:

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