

**“COMMITTED TO HIGH PERFORMANCE”**

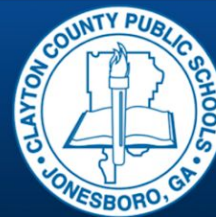
# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **CCPS Releases 2020 SAT Results; Six Schools Report Improvement**

*Scores at Elite Scholars Academy and Stilwell School of the Arts Exceed State and Nation*

**JONESBORO** - Clayton County Public Schools (CCPS) students who took the SAT at Charles Drew High School, Elite Scholars Academy, Forest Park High School, Jonesboro High School, Lovejoy High School, and M.E. Stilwell School of the Arts in 2020, outperformed their district counterparts who took the test in 2019, improving each school's composite score on the standardized test. The results were released Monday, September 21, by the College Board and the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE).

Elite Scholars Academy led the district with a composite score of 1078. The 2020 score, which was higher than national and Georgia scores, represents a 3-point increase over the 2019 composite. A composite score is made up of the average student performance on the Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (ERW) portion and the Math portion of the test. Stilwell School of the Arts equaled the state average and exceeded the national average with 1043. Their score was four points higher than the school's 2019 total.

The largest increase was reported for Lovejoy High School where test-takers demonstrated a 21-point increase in their composite score. Next highest improvement was reported for Jonesboro High School which showed a 15-point upward bounce. Two other CCPS High schools showed improvement in their overall composite scores. Students taking the SAT in 2020 at Forest Park High increased their performance on the test, moving the school's average to 924, a nine-point increase over 2019. In 2020, Charles Drew High School students scored a composite average of 925, representing a two-point improvement.

The composite scores earned on the SAT by the 1,636 participating students from Clayton County Public Schools during the 2019-2020 school year reflected a two-point decrease over scores posted in 2018-2019. As a district, CCPS scored a composite average of 943.

For a look at 2020 SAT scores, please click the following link: [SAT Scores](#)

“It takes a certain level of courage to accept the challenge of taking the SAT, and I commend all 1,600-plus students at each of our twelve high schools who took the standardized test during the 2019-2020 school year,” said Dr. Morcease J. Beasley, CCPS Superintendent/CEO. “I congratulate the six high schools, and the participating students and teachers, who demonstrated growth in 2020, with special praise directed to the test-takers at Elite Scholars and Stilwell for meeting or exceeding state and national average composite scores.”

“The results reflected in the 2020 SAT data, show that we must intensify our efforts to prepare our students to meet the rigor of attending college and/or building a career after graduating from our campuses,” Dr. Beasley said. “We are continuing and adapting our commitment to cultivating and advancing a culture of high performance in these unusual circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.”

“It is our desire and our mission to ensure that all CCPS students have the opportunity to build a future in a changing global marketplace that could be fulfilling and prosperous,” he added. “To accomplish this, we must continue to expose students to the courses and assessments that will open pathways to this possibility by expanding or increasing student participation in such standardized assessments as the SAT.”

“An increase in SAT participation will be through our efforts to expand access through SAT School Day and our efforts to increase student awareness of what are the expectations needed for a career - post secondary schooling with our technical and academic colleges and institutions,” said Dr. Beasley. “Even though we did see a drop in SAT mean scores, seeing an increase in students taking these tests shows that our message is getting out to our students. “

“Our students must have the support and involvement of parents, guardians, relatives, friends, neighbors, everyone ... to not only graduate, but graduate with the ability, the skills and the knowledge to be exceptional. I challenge our village to raise Clayton’s children of all ages to the greatness that they deserve,” Dr. Beasley said.

Students are encouraged to take the SAT several times because the student wants to use his/her two highest scores. This means that a student may take the SAT multiple times to increase his/her overall score.

“To continue to give students more access, CCPS has implemented and will continue to utilize SAT School Day with all of our high schools,” said Ms. Kristie Heath, CCPS Advanced Learning, Gifted, & Intervention Coordinator. “In March eleventh grade students are able to take the SAT during the school day at their local high school. Students who participate in this initiative will have put in 10 or more hours on Khan Academy to prepare for the test and may also participate in afterschool support with their high school.”

“The increase in the number of students participating, along with the subsequent slight decrease in the average score on each exam, is due to the increased access and the removal of barriers to post secondary higher education opportunities for students,” offered Dr. Alicia Dunn, CCPS Director of Counseling, Enrollment and Post-Secondary Readiness. “The new opportunities were not possible without meeting admissions requirements for colleges/universities, inclusive of taking the SAT entrance exam.” We anticipate that this should level out within the next year or two as our students are continuously exposed to academic rigor, along with supports, in their respective learning environments,” she added.

“While we can hand a diploma to a graduating senior, that is not enough. We must work to prepare our students to be successful regardless of their post-secondary destination. We must have high academic expectations and support students so that they can achieve the success they deserve and that we should expect of them,” Dr. Beasley added. “Through our Advanced Learning for All initiative, we will continue to provide access to problem-based learning even as we ramp up academic rigor across all grade levels and increase the number of students taking Advanced Placement courses and participating in Dual Enrollment programs.”

“To ensure our students continue to experience gains on college and career-ready assessments, we will continue to expose our students to learning experiences that are rigorous and relevant and that foster meaningful relationships,” added Dr. Ebony Lee, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment. “We will continue to ensure our students are required to think at higher levels, engage in problem-solving, and read and write using more complex texts and learning tasks. These are the essential skills for post-high school readiness. The combination of strategies listed below have been and will continue to be crucial to the success of our high school students as we create a college-going culture wherein students are prepared for all post-secondary options:

- Ensuring our students are socially and emotionally well and feel apart of the learning environment
- Igniting more student choice and voice by ensuring students’ learning is relevant to their community, their culture, and the world at-large
- Implementing programs such as the International Baccalaureate curriculum and Cambridge Assessment International, to build a foundation that will lead to a better performance in the classroom and on standardized tests
- Using our online learning tools and effective instruction to address skill-deficits in reading and mathematics to ensure students possess the skills to access learning across the academy program
- Advancing Learning for all students with 6th-graders taking accelerated math and 9th-graders taking Advanced Placement and/or Dual Enrollment options
- Monitoring the progress of 9<sup>th</sup>-graders using early-warning systems to ensure successful completion of all credits
- Ensuring timely Credit Recovery, so students remain on track for on-time graduation
- Offering Grade 8 to Grade 9 Transition Activities and Summer Bridge Programs
- Enrolling students in a Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) Pathway of interest; 95 percent of students enrolled in a CTAE Pathway graduate
- Providing Wrap-Around support for students identified as in need of such support (e.g., Communities In Schools, etc.)
- Supporting High School Principals in leading faculty conversations and efforts to reverse high failure rates of select courses while increasing content mastery
- Connecting every student to a caring adult through positive relationships
- Identifying and addressing attendance issues in a timely manner
- Mitigating the impact of the district’s high mobility rate (31%) on academic and graduation outcomes by working with governments and the courts
- Using Alternative School to assist with students who are 16 or older and enrolled in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade or continue to experience a lack of success in traditional or regular environments

### **About Clayton County Public Schools**

Clayton County Public Schools (CCPS) is fully accredited by AdvancED – Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement. The district offers a focused world-class program based on a challenging curriculum which is taught from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. Serving over 55,000 students, Clayton County Public Schools is ranked among the 100 largest school districts in the U.S. and is the fifth largest school system in Georgia.

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