

For Immediate Release

Berkeley Unified School District Shows Gains on the API and AYP

Berkeley, CA – August 31, 2011 - The California Department of Education released the 2011 Accountability Progress Report today. This annual report contains two sections: 1) the **state** Academic Performance Index (API) measuring year-to-year growth in academic achievement that a school or local educational agency (LEA) has made, and 2) the **federal** Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) measuring how well a school meets minimum performance targets.

Academic Performance Index (API) - Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) had an overall growth of 5 points on the Academic Performance Index (API). BUSD saw overall API increases of 31 points for English Learners, and 11 points for Socio-Economically Disadvantaged students as a result of targeted instruction to increase background knowledge and academic vocabulary.

82% of BUSD's elementary schools (9 of 11) have exceeded the statewide API target of 800 or above. These schools have shown significant increases on the API, an average 6-point gain. 100% of BUSD Middle Schools have now exceeded the API target with an average 21 point gain.

“The API gains demonstrate a steady improvement in our efforts to raise the achievement of students of all groups of students and close differences between them. We are pleased with the continued progress in our K-8 Schools and that for the first time in six years testing enough students in High School to receive an API. Our High School is engaged in studying the data and examining our instructional program through the WASC Accreditation Process. We look forward to future improvements in high school performance just as we have seen recently in our Elementary and Middle Schools,” said Bill Huyett, BUSD Superintendent.

A more in-depth review of the data indicates that three of the BUSD elementary schools made gains exceeding an average of 20 points on the API in one year that includes meeting the state's growth targets for school wide and for all significant subgroups of students. Specifically, Jefferson Elementary School's API score jumped 24 points to reach 918, placing it in the top 20% of all Alameda County schools in terms of achievement. Rosa Parks Elementary School's API score was up 28 points reaching an API score of 825 which far surpassed the target of 800 and scores for their Socio-Economically Disadvantaged (SED) students increased by 56 points, leading the county in growth.

We are especially proud of our Middle School achievement. Willard Middle School's API score increased 30 points school wide. At Willard, the subgroups of African-American, Hispanic/Latino and Socio-economically disadvantaged showed an average growth of 25 points. King Middle School increased by 22 points on their API score and Longfellow increased by 10 API points school wide.

In High School, this is the first year since 2002 that Berkeley High School has had an API based on increased participation rates. With participation rates of over 95%, the API of 713 serves as a baseline from which to set targets. Looking solely at the Elementary and Middle Schools, the District made an average 9 point gain on the API. Due to the increase in the number of students taking the test at the high school, the measurement of growth at the high-school was not possible.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) - The statewide Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) targets increased from last year by 11% for English Language Arts and by 10.9% for Mathematics. The targets become more difficult to reach as more students must score proficient or advanced on the tests from the previous year. NCLB mandates that all students perform at the proficient level or above on statewide assessments in English-language arts and mathematics by 2014. California's Annual Measurable Objectives, or AMOs, are the minimum percentages of students who are required to meet or exceed the proficient level on the statewide assessments used for AYP. Tests used to determine the AMOs vary by level. Elementary and Middle School AMOs use the California Standards Tests (CSTs), California Modified Assessment (CMA), and the California Alternative Performance Assessment (CAPA). High School AMOs are determined by the performance of 10th graders on the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). In 2011, the district wide AMOs are 67% proficient or higher in ELA and 67.3% in Math. For K-8 schools, the rate is 67.6% in ELA, and 68.5% in Math. At the high school level, the AMOs are 66.7% in ELA and 66.1% in Math.

Even with the significant increase in the percentage of students who must reach proficient or advanced on the test, there were five schools that have met or exceeded all components of their AYP targets. They are: Jefferson, Malcolm X and Rosa Parks Elementary Schools as well as King and Willard Middle Schools. At BUSD we look further at the increase in percentage at proficient and advanced and we have seen that increase overall and by students in the subgroups of African-American, Hispanic / Latino, English Learner and Socio-Economically Disadvantaged. In English Language Arts, seven schools met their AYP targets and eight schools showed an overall increased AYP for ELA. In Mathematics, ten schools met the AYP target and eleven made growth. The AYP reports also indicate an overall BUSD increase of percentage meeting target by 2.7% in ELA and 2.3% for Mathematics. In addition, BUSD showed gains for African-American students by 4.3 in ELA and 2.3 in Mathematics; for the Hispanic / Latino subgroup by 2.8 in ELA and 0.7 in Mathematics. The most significant gains were for our English Learners and Socio-Economically Disadvantaged (SED) Students. In English Language Arts, our English Learners made an 8% gain and our SED students made a 6.7% gain. In Math, our English Learners made a 5.4% gain and SED students made a 6.1% gain. Because of the significant gains made over time, BUSD made Adequate Yearly Progress through "Safe Harbor" for these two subgroups.

"We want to acknowledge that our schools are working hard to accelerate learning of all of our students. These AYP results provide BUSD with an opportunity to reflect on our school improvement efforts as teachers, administrators and support staff will continue to move the District forward in a positive direction to ensure our students are learning," said Neil Smith, Assistant Superintendent.

The BUSD Board of Education, the District leadership, individual school site leadership teams and staff will continue to work collaboratively to conduct a thorough analysis of test results. Additional efforts in working with learning communities to develop action plans designed to provide direction in improving schools and educational program is a priority for the Superintendent and the Board of Education.

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