

FROM
THE OFFICE
OF THE
SUPERINTENDENT



October 28, 2022

Dear Parents and Guardians:

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) has released state assessment results for the 2021-22 school year. These results include how our students performed on the end-of-grade (EOG) and end-of-course (EOC) tests students take each spring and how much growth students demonstrated through those scores, as well as other accountability measures.

It is important to know testing results are just one metric of student success, and we must keep the whole child in mind and their hard work throughout the year. It is also important to know that NCDPI is re-evaluating the school performance evaluation system this year, including how school grades are assigned, because it does not accurately reflect the hard work and effort of our students, teachers and staff. Based on the state test results, Gillespie Park Elementary school received an F grade and did not meet expected growth.

We know that the pandemic has affected student academic performance at nearly all schools and every grade level across the state and nationally. According to researchers, we also know it will take time and diligence to recoup those learning losses that have erased decades of academic progress nationwide.

We want you to know we are taking a close look at our results to determine the next steps to improve academic outcomes for our students. Some of those steps will be building on what we do well. Our school district has a lot to celebrate. Below are a few highlights from the 2021-2022 school year:

- Every student group in K-3 grades had double-digit percentage point increases in reading proficiency from the beginning of the year to the end of the year on the early literacy assessment.
- In math in grades 3-8, GCS is recovering at a faster rate than the State and other large districts.
- Students in grades 3-8 saw an 8.2% increase in math proficiency.
- High School students taking EOC assessments saw proficiency increases in Math 3 (11.6%), Math 1 (10.6%) and Biology (5.1%).
- The 2021-2022 graduation rate is the highest graduation rate in GCS history at 91.8%, higher than the State and all other large districts in North Carolina.

While there is a lot to celebrate, we cannot slow down now. There are 50.8% of Guilford County schools (not including 16 schools with smaller or special programs) that have been identified as low-performing schools as defined by G.S. 115C-105.37.

We have seen progress at the school and district levels and will build on that success in the coming year as we finalize and implement the linked preliminary improvement plan that the

712 N. Eugene Street | Greensboro, NC 27401 | P 336.370.8100

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Board of Education will consider on November 15. To access the plan, go to www.gcsnc.com and look for the link called Preliminary Improvement Plan under Quick Links on our home page. There you will find a link to share your feedback on the plan (which can also be found [here](#)). A hard copy will be made available upon request.

We thank you for working with your child to help reinforce the skills they are learning in the classroom and for your continued support of our school. Together we can help our students reach their full potential.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Whitney Oakley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Whitney Oakley, Ed.D.
Superintendent