



## **Bibb County School District**

**Department of Communications / Community & School Affairs**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **GaDOE RELEASES 2020-21 MILESTONES DATA**

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**NOTE: The news media and public should exercise caution in making year-to-year comparisons using the state-level data, due to changes in students' learning environments and differences in participation. In general, year-to-year comparisons should not be made using school- and district-level data.**

(MACON, GA) – Georgia Milestones test scores were released today for the Bibb County School District and the state. These scores should be interpreted in context due to the COVID-19 pandemic and differences in participation.

The Georgia Department of Education is encouraging educators, parents and communities to remember the Georgia Milestones tests were designed to measure the performance of students in a typical educational environment, so results should be interpreted in the context of the pandemic and associated learning disruptions, along with varying access to instruction. The scores were released along with participation data because some students did not participate in testing last year due to the pandemic.

Bibb's participation rates for 2020-21 varied greatly from an average year. During a typical school year, about 95 percent of Bibb's students participate in Georgia Milestones, but Bibb's participation rate in Georgia Milestones testing during the 2020-21 school year ranged from about 27 percent to 77 percent, depending on the subject and grade level. This was largely due to conditions created by the pandemic, including a large number of Bibb students opting to participate in remote learning in the spring when Georgia Milestones were administered. Guidance issued by State School Superintendent Richard Woods made clear, in line with federal guidance, that school districts could encourage but should not require virtual students to come into the building solely for the purpose of taking Georgia Milestones if they were uncomfortable doing so due to the pandemic.

"For the students who took the Georgia Milestones last year, I am thankful. Their participation was above and beyond what many expected from students last year. I believe they will find the reports and scores useful as they assess their individual learning needs," Bibb Superintendent Dr. Curtis Jones said. "Many mention 'learning loss,' but I prefer to talk about the learning acceleration. For the students who took part in last year's Milestones, they will have another data point to help them accelerate their learning this school year."

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*Vision: Each student will demonstrate strength of character and will be college or career ready.*

*Mission: The Bibb County School District develops a highly trained staff and an engaged community dedicated to educating each student for a 21st century global society.*

SUBJECT/COURSE	2021 PARTICIPATION RATE
Elementary ELA	77%
Elementary Mathematics	76.4%
Elementary Science (5 <sup>th</sup> grade only)	73.8%
Middle School ELA	59.4%
Middle School Mathematics	59.4%
Middle School Science	53%
Middle School Social Studies	53%
High School American Literature	28%
High School Algebra I	37%
High School U.S. History	27%
High School Biology	31%
High School Physical Science (8 <sup>th</sup> grade only)	64%

Bibb’s high school participation and test score averages also may have been influenced by a change in how the test score impacted student grade averages for the 2020-21 school year. On December 21, 2020, the State Board of Education voted unanimously to approve Woods’ recommendation of a .01% course grade weight for Georgia Milestones End-of-Course (EOC) exams for the 2020-21 school year. During regularly scheduled academic years, the EOC tests have a weight of 20 percent.

With the participation rate considered, Bibb students tested in 2020-21 did not perform as well overall as students in 2018-19, the last year in which students took the Georgia Milestones while receiving in-person instruction. (The Georgia Milestones were not administered in 2019-20.) This decline supports the Bibb County School District’s efforts to maintain in-person instruction for as long as safely possible during the 2021-22 school year in order to best support students in becoming college or career ready and reaching their highest academic potential.

Additionally, while Georgia Milestones test scores provide information on students’ performance, they are not the only way Bibb measures student learning. Throughout the school year, Bibb will use unit assessments to monitor academic performance and assist students immediately when gaps are discovered. Bibb also will conduct new assessments this year to determine whether students may need additional support in the areas of social and emotional wellness, factors that could contribute to a student’s academic performance.

Students take Georgia Milestones End of Grade (EOG) tests in grades 3-8 and End of Course (EOC) tests in identified high school courses. The Georgia Milestones assessment system meets the federal requirement that states test students in math and ELA in grades 3-8 and once in high school, and in science once per grade band (3-5, 6-8, 9-12).

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