



Teaching in the languages of our community: English, español, Português

Memo

To: ICS Community
From: Julie Nora, Director
Re: Release of NECAP scores
Date: February 2, 2010

On February 3rd, 2010 Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) will publically released the results of the October, 2009 administration of the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) in reading and math. (This was a pilot year for writing so those results were not released). The results are very positive for ICS, reaffirming that we are continuing to meet our goals of academic achievement, bilingualism, and cross-cultural competency.

Academic Achievement

ICS showed strong academic achievement on the most recent NECAP assessments. Once again there was overall improvement for ICS in both tested content areas—math and reading—significant improvement in reading, and especially high levels of proficiency in some classes/grades at ICS.

Specifically,

- Overall, 67% of all ICS students who were in grades 3, 4, and 5 who attended ICS last year demonstrated proficiency in reading (an increase of 18% from 2008-2009). This compares to 73% statewide.
- Overall, 56% of all ICS students demonstrated proficiency in math (an increase in 4% from 2008-2009). This compares to 61% statewide.
- 78% of ICS's 5th graders were proficient in reading, compared to 72% of the state's 5th graders.

While these results are very positive, it is important not just to look at overall performance, but also to look at the performance of sub groups of students, *the purpose* of this testing under No Child Left Behind. The demographics of the students at ICS differs significantly from that of the state, particularly in terms of the percentage of students that are Limited English Proficient (LEP)—51% of ICS students are LEP compared to 6% of the students throughout the state.

Consistently, ICS LEP and Hispanic students performed better than the state's LEP and Hispanic students:

- 67% of ICS's Hispanic 5th graders were proficient in reading, compared to 55% of the state's Hispanic students.
- 34% of ICS's LEP 5th grade students are proficient in reading, compared to 31% of the state's LEP population.
- 57% of ICS's Hispanic 5th grade students were proficient in math compared to 37% of the state's Hispanic students.
- 39% of ICS's 5th grade LEP students were proficient in math, compared to 18% of the state's 5th grade LEP students.
- 56% of ICS's, 4th grade Hispanic students were proficient in reading, compared to 48% of the state's 4th grade Hispanic students.
- 45% of ICS's 4th grade, LEP students were proficient in reading compared to 22% of the state's 4th grade LEP students.
- 52% of ICS's 4th grade Hispanic students were proficient in math, compared to 40% of the state's 4th grade Hispanic students
- 41% of ICS's of ICS's 4th grade LEP students were proficient in math, compared to 18% of the state's 4th grade LEP students

- 58% of ICS's 3rd grade LEP students were proficient in math, compared to 29% of the state's 3rd grade LEP students.
- 55% of ICS's 3rd grade Hispanic students were proficient in math, compared to 37% of the state's 3rd grade Hispanic students.
- 52% of ICS's 3rd grade, LEP students were proficient in math, compared to 21% of the state's 3rd grade, LEP students.

These results parallel what we know from research, that dual language is the best model for English language learners and facilitates academic achievement of all students. The superior performance of the subgroups of LEP and Hispanic students demonstrates the impact of dual language for these two subgroups of students. The performance of all students underscores the benefit of bilingual education for all students. The performances of LEP and Hispanic students at ICS is particularly relevant due to the poor performance of these two subgroups in Rhode Island and nationally.

Becoming Bilingual

In addition to promoting academic achievement, a dual language program has the goal of all students developing proficiency in their native language and in a second language. As the only public school in Rhode Island dedicated entirely to dual language, ICS is committed to continuing to promote bilingualism *and* academic achievement.

Cross-Cultural Competencies and a Community of Learners

Lastly, dual language education aims to help students gain strong cross-cultural competencies. We are proud that in addition to constantly striving to help our students become academically proficient, we are continuing to formalize ways for our students to gain an understanding of themselves, their histories and their cultures and to be a part of a community of learners. The implementation of a new social studies curriculum and our commitment to creating a caring school community through Responsive Classroom and PBIS are illustrative of our goals beyond NECAP, as we prepare global citizens.

The mission of the International Charter School to integrate the diverse languages and cultures of the communities it serves by teaching all students in two languages-in Spanish and English or in Portuguese and English-and helping children develop an appreciation of other cultures. Children learn to work collaboratively from their multiple experiences and backgrounds, striving towards high standards of academic achievement. Everyone is part of a community of learners, engaging in inquiry about the world, themselves, and others.

We will continue to analyze the results of the NECAP and other assessments to identify needed areas of improvement in teaching and learning, parent involvement, curricula, and other elements of our program so that all students can reach their potential. At the same time, the results affirm our program and we remain committed to our mission.

And congratulations to our entire community on all of the work you do everyday to help our students become global citizens.