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**Tri-county region sees declines in key reading, math test results**  
*Too many students continue to not reach grade-level expectations*

North Charleston, S.C. – Newly released year-end test results for the tri-county region show year-over-year declines in reading proficiency for third and eighth grade, both pivotal years in a child’s academic career.

Third grade math proficiency also declined, but increased at the eighth-grade level. Despite the eighth-grade math increase, too many students continue to fall short of grade-level expectations.

[Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative](#) closely tracks third and eighth grade test results in particular because those years are important indicators of later success. Third grade results can predict a child’s likelihood to graduate from high school, while eighth grade results are directly tied to college and career readiness.

Only 48 percent of tri-county third graders met or exceeded grade-level reading standards on the SC READY test at the end of the 2016-2017 school year, an 8 percent decline from the prior year. On the math assessment, 57 percent of third graders met or exceeded standards, a 2 percent year-over-year decrease.

At the eighth-grade level, 45 percent of tri-county students met or exceeded reading standards versus 51 percent the prior year. Math results in eighth grade showed a modest 7 percent year-over-year proficiency increase; however, a significant percentage of students, 60 percent, scored as “not proficient.”

“While these test results are but one indicator of student progress, they are very consistent with all of the other data we see at the regional and district level,” TCCC CEO John C. Read said. “It is apparent that the public education system our community provides and to which our kids are entitled is not getting the job done, especially for our most vulnerable children.”

When broken down by race and poverty levels, the SC READY test results show substantial disparity gaps continue to exist among tri-county students.

For instance, in third-grade math, 72 percent of White students met or exceeded expectations while only 43 percent of Hispanic students and 37 percent of Black students did the same. Similarly, in eighth-grade reading, 60 percent of White students met or exceeded expectations while just 36 percent of Hispanic students and 24 percent of Black students did the same.

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Test results for students living in poverty were also lower than for those living above the poverty line. For third-grade reading, as an example, 69 percent of students not living in poverty met or exceeded expectations while only 32 percent of those living in poverty did the same. In eighth-grade math, 56 percent of students above the line met or exceeded expectations while 23 percent of those living in poverty did the same.

The S.C. Department of Education released state, district and school level data for end-of-year tests from the 2016-2017 school year earlier this week. Tri-county data include results from Berkeley County School District, Charleston County School District, Dorchester School District 2 and Dorchester County School District 4.

Test results were based on the SC READY exam, which was given to all S.C. students in 3rd through 8th grades. The test is intended to measure overall student performance and college-and-career ready standards in core content areas.

### About the Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative

The Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative (TCCC) is a community-wide movement in Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester counties, South Carolina focused on improving the quality of life of its citizens and its workforce through education. Using data and focused community collaboration across a continuum from “cradle-to-career,” TCCC serves as a catalyst for widespread systemic change, with the ultimate goal of increased student success and economic prosperity for all.

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