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COLLABORATIVE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Third grade reading, math proficiency rates show modest increases across tri-county region

Racial disparity gaps remain

North Charleston, SC – Year-end test results released this week by the S.C. Department of Education show year-over-year increases in third grade reading and math and eighth grade math proficiencies across the tri-county region. Eighth grade reading proficiency levels declined slightly from 2016-2017 to 2017-2018.

At the third-grade level, 50.8 percent of tri-county students met or exceeded grade-level reading standards on the 2017-2018 SC READY test, a 6.5 percent increase from third grade results the prior year. On the math assessment, 57.1 percent of third graders met or exceeded standards, a less than 1 percent year-over-year increase.

At the eighth-grade level, 43.7 percent of tri-county students met or exceeded grade-level reading standards, a 3.7 percent decline from the 2016-2017 school year. On the math assessment, 40.3 percent of eighth graders met or exceeded standards, a 1.8 percent year-over-year increase.

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, and eighth grade results are directly tied to college and career readiness.

“While year-end assessments and year-over-year comparisons have limited value over the short term in determining progress, these third-grade proficiency scores are encouraging,” TCCC CEO John C. Read said. “If, over the longer term, a pattern of moderate gains in proficiency can be sustained, especially in the early grades, education attainment will almost certainly increase.”

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

In third-grade reading, for instance, 68.2 percent of White students met or exceed expectations, while only 32.2 percent of Hispanic students and 27.6 percent of Black students did the same. Similarly, in eighth-grade math, 56.3 percent of White students met or exceeded expectations, while just 28.1 percent of Hispanic students and 16.6 percent of Black students did the same.

~ more ~

www.TriCountyCradleToCareer.org

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“The disparity in results that separate students on the basis of color appears to have worsened somewhat across the region, an indication that public education is not yet serving these children well,” Read said. “Student growth measures, however, are far more useful in determining progress than these year-end scores.”

The S.C. Department of Education released state, district and school-level data for end-of-year tests from the 2017-2018 school year. Tri-county data include results from Berkeley County School District, Charleston County School District, Dorchester School District Two and Dorchester School District Four.

Test results were based on the SC READY assessments, which were given to all S.C. students in third through eighth grades. The tests are intended to measure overall student performance and college-and-career ready standards in core content areas.

About Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative

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 success and economic prosperity for all.

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