

July 21, 2011

Newton County School System Announces Preliminary AYP Results

NCSS Bests Prediction on Schools "Not" Making AYP

Additional Schools Projected to Make AYP After CRCT/GHSGT Retests

As Reported Previously, NCSS Improves in 28 of 37 Cases (76% Improvement Over Prior 09-10) across All Grade Levels and Subjects Tested by CRCTs and GHSGTs

Newton County School System (NCSS) has received from the Georgia Department of Education the district's preliminary report on Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for the 2010-2011 school year. Administrators are currently reviewing that information. Twelve of the twenty-three schools included in the report made AYP in 2010-2011. Although ten schools (excluding the charter school) did not make AYP, the district overcame predictions that 19 would not make AYP under the increased 2010-2011 NCLB standards. (U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, has predicted that 83 percent of U.S. public schools would not earn AYP in 2010-2011.) Newton County School System did not make AYP in the preliminary 2010-2011 AYP results.

It is important to note that these are **NOT** the final 2010-2011 AYP results as students who did not pass the reading or math portion of the Georgia Criterion Referenced Competency Tests (GCRCT) or the Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHSGT), were offered the opportunity to retest and that data is not included in the preliminary AYP reports. The Georgia Department of Education will update AYP results later this fall to account for the results on these retests. Once those results are determined, it is estimated that more schools in Newton County will make AYP for the last 2010-2011 school year.

"When last school year began, based on past performance (in 2009-10) and required higher passing percentages under No Child Left Behind (in 2010-11), we were faced with a stark prediction of 19 schools not making AYP," said NCSS Superintendent Gary Mathews. "As things stand now, we have bested that prediction by far and stand to do even better when retest data are included in the final results. Our students enjoyed higher passing rates in 28 of 37 instances in 2010-2011, inclusive of all grades and subjects tested by CRCTs and the GHSGTs. That's a 76 percent improvement over 2009-2010, despite ever-increasing passing standards under NCLB. Every year the bar is raised."

AYP designation is a reflection of the individual schools' performance in several criteria: percentage of students taking the test; the percentage of students meeting standards in reading/language arts and mathematics; and for elementary and middle school students, the percentage of student attendance. For high schools, the second indicator is graduation rate.

In addition to looking at the total school performance in these criteria, the performance of several subgroups is also analyzed. These subgroups include students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, and limited English proficiency. A school that fails to achieve the criteria in any one of the three areas (test participation, academic achievement, and attendance/graduation) for any subgroup is classified as not meeting AYP. Should any of the subgroups fail to meet the standards, the school is also classified as not meeting AYP—even if the school as a whole meets the criteria.

Despite overall student populations at Alcovy, Cousins, Ficquett, Live Oak, Livingston, Middle Ridge, and Oak Hill meeting the standards for AYP, the schools did not make AYP based on the performance of one or more subgroups. For four of the schools not making AYP—Alcovy, Cousins, Middle Ridge, and Oak

Hill—it was the academic performance of students with disabilities, not the student population as a whole, which resulted in the school’s negative AYP designation. For Live Oak, it was the academic performance of the black subgroup and for Livingston, the black and economically disadvantaged subgroups that resulted in the school’s AYP designation. Ficquett Elementary did not meet AYP due to performance of the black, economically disadvantaged, and students with disabilities subgroups.

Below is a breakdown for each school that did not make AYP in 2010-2011:

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Ficquett

Ficquett Elementary School did not meet AYP because both the black and economically disadvantaged students subgroups did not meet standards in math and the students with disabilities subgroup did not meet standards in English language arts. This marked the third consecutive year that Ficquett did not make AYP. Ficquett is an estimated one student away from making AYP once final results are released by GaDOE in late August/early September. The school was closed at the end of the 2010-2011 school year.

Live Oak

Live Oak Elementary School did not make AYP because of the performance of the black students subgroup in math; however, district estimates are that Live Oak will make AYP once final results are known later this fall inclusive of retests. The school made AYP the year before; therefore, it is NOT on the Needs Improvement List.

Livingston

Livingston Elementary School did not make AYP due to the performance of both the black and economically disadvantaged students subgroups in math. Livingston made AYP the previous school year; therefore, the school is NOT on the Needs Improvement List. District estimates are that Livingston will make AYP once final results are known later this fall.

Middle Ridge

Middle Ridge Elementary School did not make AYP because the students with disabilities subgroup did not meet standards in English language arts; however, district estimates are that the school will make AYP once final results are released later this fall. Middle Ridge must continue to offer school choice and as a result, students zoned for Middle Ridge will have the option of attending Fairview or Livingston. Letters explaining the options have been mailed to parents.

Oak Hill

Oak Hill did not make AYP due to the performance of the students with disabilities subgroup in math. The school made AYP the previous year; therefore, it is NOT on the Needs Improvement List.

West Newton

West Newton Elementary School did not make AYP school-wide in math. Two subgroups, black and economically disadvantaged students also did not meet standards in math. The school made AYP in 2009-2010; therefore, it is NOT on the Needs Improvement List.

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Cousins

Although Cousins Middle is the only school in NCSS to show improvement at every grade level and in every subject in 2010-2011, the school did not make AYP because the students with disabilities subgroup did not meet standards in math and English language arts. Cousins is only one or two students away from making AYP based on district estimates. Because Cousins made AYP the previous year, it is NOT on the Needs Improvement List.

Indian Creek

Indian Creek Middle School has made AYP for two consecutive years and is now off the Needs Improvement List. Indian Creek Students who previously exercised ESEA Public School Choice and are attending Clements, Cousins, Liberty and/or Veterans Memorial Middle School can remain at the Choice School through the highest grade offered at that school; however, Newton County School System will no longer provide bus transportation. Those students may opt out of choice and return to Indian Creek by completing an Opt-Out form and returning it to the Department of Federal Programs by July 29. Forms are available online at www.newtoncountyschools.org.

Clements

Clements Middle School did not make AYP because the overall student population as well as the black, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged students subgroups did not meet performance standards in math and the students with disabilities subgroup did not meet performance standards in English language arts. The school is NOT on the Needs Improvement List.

HIGH SCHOOLS

Alcovy

Alcovy High School did not make AYP due to the performance of the students with disabilities subgroup in math and English language arts. The school made AYP the previous year and as a result, is NOT on the Needs Improvement List.

Newton

Newton High School did not make AYP due to the performance of the students with disabilities subgroup in math as well as the second indicator—high school graduation rate. In addition, Newton High as a whole did not make the second indicator—graduation rate. Because the school has not made AYP the past two years, Newton High must offer supplemental services for students. However, in 2010-2011, despite Newton High School's AYP status, Newton students made significant gains in language arts, science, and social studies in 2010-11.

CHARTER SCHOOL

Although Challenge Charter Academy (CCA) is an independent charter school governed by a separate board of directors, the Georgia Department of Education does include the school's scores in the district's AYP report. Challenge Charter Academy did not make AYP in either middle or high school. For middle school, the academy did not meet performance standards in math in both the overall student population and the economically disadvantaged students subgroups. At the high school level, the overall student population did not meet performance standards in math or the second indicator, graduation rate. The school is NOT on the Needs Improvement List.

SYSTEM

As this is the second consecutive year Newton County School System did not make AYP, the district is now required to develop a system improvement plan, inclusive of substantially increased expenditures in professional development. As of last year, NCSS has implemented an intense plan of staff development for instructional personnel revolving around the use of classroom strategies based on the research findings of Robert Marzano reported in "Classroom Instruction That Works." Additionally, NCSS is providing intense staff development on building the background knowledge of students through vocabulary development in the four core subjects in grades kindergarten through twelve, based on Robert Marzano's research findings reported in "Building Background Knowledge for Academic Achievement." The district is also preparing teachers to leverage technology in classroom lessons, taking advantage of this student-oriented tool. Finally, each school is in the process of further establishing Professional Learning Communities which find teachers planning instruction and using common assessments to judge student progress and guide teacher adjustments in instruction.

The chart below shows how NCLB-required passing standards have increased over the past three school years. Schools and all of their subgroups must meet these passing rates in order for the school to make AYP. If one subgroup does not meet the passing rate, the entire school is listed as not making AYP.

NCLB Required Passing Standards (Annual Measurable Objective)

Year	CRCT Math	CRCT Reading & English Language Arts (Combined)	GHSGT Math	GHSGT English Language Arts
2009-2010	67.6%	73.3%	74.9%	87.7%
2010-2011	75.7%	80%	76%	90.8%
2011-2012	83.8%	86.7%	84%	93.9%

Links to the system and school AYP reports are available on the Newton County School System website at the following page:

<http://www.newtoncountyschools.org/about/ayp.asp>

For more information, contact Ms. Sherri Davis-Viniard, Director of Public Relations for Newton County Schools at 770-784-2908.

SCHOOL	NCLB Status (2009-2010)	NCLB Status (2010-2011)	Consequence
<u>ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS</u>			
East Newton Elementary	Made AYP	Made AYP	N/A
Ficquett Elementary	Did Not Make AYP (Needs Improvement)	Did Not Make AYP (Needs Improvement)	N/A as School has been closed.
Heard-Mixon Elementary	Made AYP	Made AYP	N/A
Livingston Elementary	Made AYP	Did Not Make AYP	N/A
Live Oak Elementary	Made AYP	Did Not Make AYP	N/A
Mansfield Elementary	Made AYP	Made AYP	N/A
Middle Ridge Elementary	Did Not Make AYP (Needs Improvement)	Did Not Make AYP (Needs Improvement)	Choice & Supplemental Services
Oak Hill Elementary	Made AYP	Did Not Make AYP	N/A
Palmer-Stone Elementary	Made AYP	Made AYP	N/A
Porterdale Elementary	Did Not Make AYP	Made AYP	N/A
Rocky Plains Elementary	Made AYP	Made AYP	N/A
South Salem Elementary	Made AYP	Made AYP	N/A
West Newton Elementary	Made AYP	Did Not Make AYP	N/A
<u>MIDDLE SCHOOLS</u>			
Clements Theme/Clements	Made AYP	Did Not Make AYP	N/A
Cousins Middle	Made AYP	Did Not Make AYP	N/A
Indian Creek Middle	Made AYP (Needs Improvement)	Made AYP	Off Needs Improvement
Liberty Middle	Did Not Make AYP	Made AYP	N/A
Veterans Memorial Middle	Did Not Make AYP	Made AYP	N/A
<u>HIGH SCHOOLS</u>			
Alcovy High	Made AYP	Did Not Make AYP	N/A
Eastside High	Made AYP	Made AYP	N/A
Newton High	Did Not Make AYP	Did Not Make AYP	Supplemental Services
<u>THEME SCHOOLS</u>			
Fairview Theme	Made AYP	Made AYP	N/A
<u>CHARTER SCHOOL</u>			
Challenge Charter Academy	Made AYP	Did Not Make AYP	N/A