

## 2020-2021 School Report Card Results for Russell County Schools

The 2020-2021 school year was certainly like no other. Students, educators, families and the community at-large were impacted from the effects of COVID-19. The short-term closure for most educational institutions across the country in the spring of 2020 crept in to the coming school year with episodes of virtual, hybrid (consisting of virtual and in-person learning) and in-person learning.

Even with the heroic efforts by teachers, staff and school leaders who developed on-line lessons, remote teaching plans and strategies for meeting students' basic needs, challenges were profound. Rural and high poverty school districts faced especially stark challenges early in the pandemic maintaining instruction and regular check-ins between teachers and students in a virtual setting.

Russell County Schools were fortunate to utilize Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds to purchase iPads for Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade students and Chromebooks for 2<sup>nd</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. However, with the many obstacles of the pandemic, production and shipping delays prevented many students from having access to devices for several weeks into the school year.

COVID-19 affected most aspects of education, including the annual statewide assessment. As a result, the process for student test taking was changed and the results for the 2020-2021 test look very different from previous school years. The 2021 test scores cannot be used to compare student achievement, but can still be used as a "temperature check" to better track and address COVID-19 school recovery.

Kentucky received official approval by the U.S. Department of Education from federal accountability for the 2020-2021 school year. School/district performance was based on the students who actually tested, not the typical 100 - day students as in year's past. Federal classifications for identifying Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI), Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) was also waived.

Kentucky students took the Kentucky Summative Assessment (KSA) in the spring of 2021. Previously, these tests were called Kentucky Performance Rating for Educational Progress (K-PREP). KSA was administered in grades 3 through 8, 10 and 11 to Kentucky Public School Students. KSA provides content area assessments, including reading and mathematics (grades 3 through 8 and 10), science (grades 4, 7, 11) and writing (grades 5, 8, 11). Students in grades 5, 8 and 11 also took social studies as a field test, but the state will not share any results.

These assessments are Kentucky's measure of student proficiency and progress on the state content standards. These standards establish goals for what all students should know and be able to do in each grade. For the first time, the KSA was given on-line with only a small percentage of students taking it on paper.

When considering a child's, school's and district's performance, it is important to consider the learning contexts and experiences during the past school year as students/schools faced unprecedented challenges due to COVID-19. The annual KSA provides critical information about student learning, but no single assessment should ever be the sole factor in making an educational decision. When combined

with grades, classroom activities, unit quizzes and tests along with district-level assessments, a more complete picture toward academic success can be formed.

### SPOTLIGHT on SCHOOLS of RUSSELL COUNTY

All Kentucky public school juniors participate in the ACT, which tests students in English, mathematics, reading and science. The ACT is scored on a scale of 1 to 36. Caution should be used when interpreting trends since 2019 due to the impact COVID-19 had on instruction. However, for 2020-2021, Russell County students scored in close proximity, although still below the state average, to other students across the state. Russell County High School (RCHS) will be implementing a comprehensive *ACT Action Plan* to increase student achievement.

Students	English	Mathematics	Reading	Science	Composite	Total Tested
Russell County	16.6	17.2	17.8	17.8	17.5	177
State	17.1	17.7	18.5	18.3	18.0	42,078

Furthermore, Russell County juniors remained competitive with others in the state who met College Post-Secondary Education (CPE) Benchmarks for College-Level Readiness.

2020-2021	English	Mathematics	Reading
Russell County	39.5	31.1	40.7
State	42.3	29.9	39.3

There was a slight decrease in the overall graduation rate across the state of Kentucky, as well as, for Russell County. Although the graduation rate dropped for Russell County from 97% in 2020, to 94.3% in 2021, this percentage is still above the 90% reported for the state.

The participation rate for Russell County High School students in KAS testing areas were 59% (state averages were 76.4% and 75.9% respectively) in reading and math and 53.6% (state was 73.3% and 72.4% respectively) in Science and Writing. Despite the lower participation rate, the proficient/distinguished percentages were higher than the state averages in reading, math and science.

Subject	Novice/Apprentice		Proficient/Distinguished	
	RCHS	State	RCHS	State
Reading	57.9	62.1	42.1	37.9
Mathematics	67.8	69.7	32.2	30.3
Science	68.5	73.5	31.4	26.5
Writing On-Demand	52.4	42.8	47.6	57.2

Russell County Middle School (RCMS) had slightly lower participation rates than other middle school students across the state. The KAS testing areas in reading and math for Russell County were 81.3% compared to 84.1% and 83.9% for the state. Science had a 79.9% participation rate while writing on-demand had a 78.3% participation rate compared to 83.6% and 82.2% statewide. Even though the participation rate was not as high overall as the state, Russell County Middle School is proud of the

performance levels for their students. The novice/apprentice performance levels are lower than the state in reading, mathematics and writing on-demand. Furthermore, the proficient/distinguished performance levels in these same three areas are higher than the state. Writing On-Demand, specifically, rated almost 10% lower in novice/apprentice than the state and nearly 10% higher in proficient/distinguished.

Subject	Novice/Apprentice		Proficient/Distinguished	
	RCMS	State	RCMS	State
Reading	52.9	56	47.1	44
Mathematics	71.2	72	28.8	27.8
Science	79.7	79.2	20.3	20.9
Writing On-Demand	39.6	49.1	60.5	50.9

Collectively, the three elementary schools was relatively even with the state in participation rates in reading and mathematics with Russell County reporting 89% and the state coming in at 88.9%. Russell Springs Elementary had suppressed participation rates and performance levels in writing on-demand while Jamestown Elementary had suppressed data in science. The remaining two elementary schools had a combined 94.5% participation while the state had 88.9% and a 90.35% in writing on-demand while the state set at 87.8%.

Performance levels among the elementary schools were diverse compared to the state. The novice/apprentice in reading was above the state level for Jamestown Elementary School (JES) and Salem Elementary School (SES) while Russell Springs Elementary was slightly below. The proficient/distinguished was also slightly below the state for JES and SES while RSES was slightly above. In mathematics, JES and RSES were higher in novice/apprentice than the state while SES was considerably lower. SES was higher in proficient/distinguished than the state while JES and RSES were lower. Science scores for both RSES and SES, in particular, reflected lower in novice/apprentice and both RSES and SES were higher in proficient/distinguished than the state while JES had suppressed data. In writing on-demand, JES had higher and SES had lower novice/apprentice than the state, while the proficient/distinguished for JES was lower and SES was higher. The scores for RSES were suppressed.

Subject	Novice/Apprentice				Proficient/Distinguished			
	JES	RSES	SES	State	JES	RSES	SES	State
Reading	65.4	59.6	61.4	60.6	34.6	40.4	38.6	39.5
Mathematics	75.6	74.8	60.9	68.6	24.4	25.2	39.3	31.4
Science	*	71.6	51	75	*	28.4	49	25.1
Writing On-Demand	68.7	*	53.2	60.2	31.4	*	46.8	39.8

\*Suppressed data occurs when student performance levels were not represented in each level of novice, apprentice, proficient and distinguished.

**KINDERGARTEN READINESS, ENGLISH LEARNERS and  
QUALITY of SCHOOL CLIMATE and SAFETY SURVEY**

Kentucky’s Common Kindergarten Entry Screener, the BRIGANCE Early Childhood Kindergarten Screen III, provides a quick and accurate assessment of a child’s development in five areas: Academic/Cognitive, Language Development, Physical Development, Self-Help and Social-Emotional Development. 97% of students participated in the screening. 68.3% were kindergarten ready compared to the state’s 46.8%. 79.8% performed average/above average in language development while the state average was 74% and 81.6% performed average/above average in the social emotional area with the state average being 77.1%.

English Language Learners take an ACCESS test to examine English Proficiency in comprehension, listening, literacy, oral, reading, speaking and writing. During the 2020-2021 school year, six Russell County students reached attainment.

All participating students in tested grades completed the Quality of School Climate and Safety Survey. One form was given to grades 3 through 5 and another form given to grades 6 through high school. An Opportunity to Learn survey was added for the 2020-2021 school year, which contains seven survey items on each form. The survey was designed to capture students’ perceptions of their educational circumstances during this time.

The results from the Opportunity to Learn survey show evidence that despite the unfortunate circumstances created by COVID-19, most students viewed their virtual learning as a positive experience. Due to the extraordinary efforts of Kentucky’s teachers and district staff, overall, Kentucky’s students felt supported throughout the school year.

Elementary, middle and high school survey items reflected positive results, as well as areas for growth, from students.

<b>Elementary Survey Item</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Adults from my school care about me.	98% Strongly Agree/Agree
I feel safe in my classes.	95.5% Strongly Agree/Agree
My schoolwork helped me learn new things this year.	94.5% Strongly Agree/Agree
Students being mean or hurtful to others on-line.	46.5% Strongly Disagree/Disagree
All students are treated the same if they break the school rules.	34.3% Strongly Disagree/Disagree

<b>Middle School Survey Item</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
My school is a caring place.	93.8% Strongly Agree/Agree
If a student is bullied in school, there is a safe way to report it to an adult.	93.7% Strongly Agree/Agree
If I have a problem, there is an adult from school I can talk to.	91.5% Strongly Agree/Agree
I feel comfortable stating my opinion in class if others disagree.	34.3% Strongly Disagree/Disagree
School rules are fair.	27.7% Strongly Disagree/Disagree

<b>High School Survey Item</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
My teachers expect me to do my best all the time.	93.3% Strongly Agree/Agree

Adults from my school handle safety concerns quickly.	92% Strongly Agree/Agree
Adults at school work hard to make students safe.	91% Strongly Agree/Agree
Consequences of breaking school rules are the same for all students.	37.9% Strongly Disagree/Disagree
I feel comfortable stating my opinion in class if others disagree.	29.7% Strongly Disagree/Disagree

In summary, due to COVID-19, students faced learning disruptions, changes in the opportunities to learn, lower participation rates and shortened assessment in 2021. Because of these challenges, one cannot make direct comparisons of assessment data from prior years. However, the data provides a point-in-time “temperature check” that allows districts to better track and address student recovery. The results will be combined with locally formative measures and experiences in the classroom to help educators better understand the needs of their students.

\*For more information, go to the Kentucky Department of Education website <https://education.ky.gov/Pages/default.aspx> and select School Report Card.