

Walton County School District  
Increases Student Achievement As Measured By State Testing,  
**Now Ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> in the State**

June 30, 2022

On Thursday, the Florida Department of Education released results from all state testing for the 2021-2022 school year. These results are based on Florida Standards Assessments (FSA), Florida Comprehensive Assessment Tests (FCAT), and End of Course exams (EOC). FSA tests are the subjects of English/Language Arts (grades 3-10) and Math (grades 3-8). FCAT tests are the subjects of Science (grade 5 and 8), and EOC tests are in the subjects of Algebra I, Geometry, Biology, Civics, and US History.

During the 2020-2021 school year, Walton County ranked 6<sup>th</sup> of 67 Florida counties in overall proficiency levels on state tests. With test results released today, Walton County now ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> of 67 counties in overall proficiency levels for the 2021-2022 school year. The only two counties scoring higher than Walton are St. Johns and Nassau, which are located on the east coast of Florida.

In an unprecedented year, Walton scored in the top 10 in 20 of the 21 tested items. The results are as follows:

- 10<sup>th</sup> in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade ELA
- 9<sup>th</sup> in Civics and 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade ELA
- 8<sup>th</sup> in 8<sup>th</sup> grade Science
- 7<sup>th</sup> in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Math and 5<sup>th</sup> grade Science
- 6<sup>th</sup> in 5<sup>th</sup> grade ELA and 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade Math
- 5<sup>th</sup> in 4<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade ELA
- 3<sup>rd</sup> in Geometry, US History, and 10<sup>th</sup> grade ELA
- 2<sup>nd</sup> in Algebra I and Biology

The one component below the top 10 in ranking was 7<sup>th</sup> grade Math, however in that specific area, Walton showed the greatest improvement from a 24<sup>th</sup> ranking in 2020-2021 to a 14<sup>th</sup> ranking in 2021-2022.

***“Preparing the Whole Child for a Life of Success”***

Walton County Schools scored above the state average in all areas of testing. The state average in ELA is 52% proficient; Walton is 60%, 8% higher. The state average in Math is 55%, with Algebra I and Geometry at 49%. Walton is at 64% proficient in Math, 9% higher; 73% in Algebra I, 24% higher; and 69% in Geometry, 20% higher. The state average in 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade Science is 48%; Walton is 58% (10% higher) in 5<sup>th</sup> grade and 57% (9% higher) in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. In Biology, the state average is 61%; Walton is 78%, 17% higher. In Civics, the state average is 69%; Walton is 76%, 7% higher. In US History, the state average is 65%; Walton is 78%, 13% higher.

Superintendent A. Russell Hughes was left speechless by the test results. With his voice full of emotion, he finally states, “We have a vision to be #1 – to be the best school district in the state of Florida, and I’m sure some thought we were crazy or would never get to that goal. But every year, we continue moving forward. It really is awe inspiring! I am amazed over and over again by our faculty and staff and their love of students and the value they have for education.” Superintendent Hughes continued, “But, in that same voice, let me also say this – results don’t just happen by chance! In Walton County, we are intentional, we are purposeful, and we never give up – not on students, not on ourselves, and not on our goals – no matter the circumstances. We are EPIC, and we are moving 4wRd; I am overjoyed!”

Deputy Superintendent Jennifer Hawthorne echoed the Superintendent’s sentiments and provided additional data. “When the Superintendent shared his vision in 2016, #1 sounded daunting. But everyone went to work – moving our students from 8<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> and now 3<sup>rd</sup>! It truly is what vision is all about. Everyone in Walton County is behind the Superintendent’s vision, and as you can see, the vision is becoming reality for our students – the most important part of our work.”

Over the course of the next few days, the Walton County School District will enter state test scores into their district data system, FOCUS. Once that is complete, parents will be able to see student scores by logging into their child’s FOCUS account. Schools will be receiving the scores as well, as well as school grades in the coming months.

For more information on the Walton County School District, please visit <https://www.walton.k12.fl.us/>.