Verona Public Schools, Office of the Superintendent

121 Fairview Avenue Verona, New Jersey 07044
PHONE 973-571-2029 FAX 973-571-6779
Steven A. Forte sforte@veronaschools.org *Cheryl Nardino*
Superintendent of Schools *Business Administrator/Board Secretary*
www.veronaschools.org

Press Release
April 2, 2013
NJDOE Report Card Data

Important information regarding the new state school report cards

The NJ Department of Education has released the new school report cards for the 2012-13 school year. The data in the report is based on the 2011-2012 school year which has been previously discussed at our public meetings and reported on by the local media. We would like to highlight some areas in which the report needs further explanation. Below are some of the important points as they relate to the new school report card as well as excerpts taken directly from the NJDOE report card interpretation guide.

- Data time frame- The student performance data indicated in this report is from the 2011-2012 school year. We have already spent a significant amount of time last spring and summer analyzing this data to make decisions regarding modifications for curriculum and instruction.
- Advanced Placement- While we have not met the state target of 75% for percentage of AP test scores three and above in English, Math, Social Studies, or Science, we have significantly increased our percentage to 72% over the past several years. We have earned national recognition on the AP Honor Roll for increasing both our participation rate and the level of performance for the 2011-12 school year.
- College and Career Readiness- one of the state's measures of college and career readiness is the percentage of 10th & 11th graders who take the PSAT in a given year. Our percentage for last year is reported as 37%. However, 100% of our 10th graders were administered a free version of the PSAT through Kaplan. If they were included in the total percentage, our percent of 10th & 11th graders who were administered a form of the PSAT would be 87%. For the 2012-13 school year 55.6% of our students in grades 10 and 11 have taken the PSAT not including the students who took the free Kaplan test.
- Graduation rate- the rules on this have changed for all districts.

    - Special education students, some of whom attend school outside the district, are counted in the total if they do not graduate in four years. This is true for students whose individualized education plan requires an extended high school experience.
    - Students who drop out prior to their senior year are counted.
    - Students who move and do not enroll in a new school are counted.
- Comparison groups- we feel strongly that these factors make up a much more meaningful comparison group:
    - Configuration- K-12 districts are difficult to compare to K-8 or 9-12.
    - Size- we use the range of 1800-3500 students which makes much more sense than comparing a district with 200 students to a district with 2500.
    - Demographics- similar demographics (education, wealth, transience, etc.) must be considered to make valid comparisons.

Some notes from the NJ Department of Education's school report card interpretive guide:

> "…results on the HSPA exam are significantly skewed as statewide proficiency rates top 93% in language arts and 83% in math, making both peer group comparisons and statewide rankings less meaningful for those schools with very high proficiency rates." All of the schools in our peer group have proficiency rates in the high 90's, making the comparison much less meaningful.

Important Links:

Updated NJ Department of Education School Report Cards:
http://education.state.nj.us/directory/school.php?district=5370&source=01

NJ Department of Education Press Release from April 10, 2013
http://www.state.nj.us/education/news/2013/0410pr.htm

NJ Department of Education State Report Card Interpretive Guide:
http://education.state.nj.us/pr/NJSchoolPerformanceInterpretiveGuide.pdf