N O V E M B E R 1 8 , 2 0 1 3

# Office of Curriculum & Instruction

MISSION STATEMENT

*"The mission of the Verona Public Schools, the center of an engaged and supportive community, is to empower students to achieve their potential as active learners and productive citizens through rigorous curricula and meaningful, enriching experiences."*

## Verona's Focus on NJ ASK is Positive!

In the spring of 2013, Verona Public School students in grades 3-8 were given the annual NJ ASK (New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge) to test their knowledge of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS) or the recently adopted New Jersey Common Core State Standards (NJCCSS). Please note that this was the first time the NJCCSS were tested on the NJ ASK. In grades 3, 4, 7, and 8, Verona's NJ ASK English Language Arts (ELA) **Partial Proficient (%PP)** [1] scores *(see chart #1)* were lower than our District Factor Group I [2] (DFG I) schools such as New Providence, Caldwell, Berkeley Heights, Cedar Grove, and Glen Ridge! The community of Verona has made reducing the %PP gap a priority and the results are remarkable! Moreover, there is a direct correlation with improvement in %PP scores and ELA scaled means (see chart #2). Verona's scaled mean in grades 3, 4, 7, and 8 is greater than the DFG I mean. This "means" that a grade seven student in Verona averaged a 229.5 (out of 300) and a grade seven student in our peer group (DFG I) averaged a score of 227.2 (out of 300).

**Chart#1: 2013 ELA NJASK 3-8 Partial Proficient Scores**

| Grade | Verona %PP | DFG I %PP | Difference %PP |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 15.8% | 17.2% | -1.4% |
| 4 | 20.0% | 21.4% | -1.4% |
| 5 | 20.8% | 20.4% | 0.4% |
| 6 | 19.4% | 16.0% | 3.4% |
| 7 | 9.9% | 15.4% | -5.5% |
| 8 | 6.4% | 6.5% | -0.1% |

**Chart #2: 2013 ELA NJASK 3-8 Scaled Means**

| Grade | Verona Mean | DFG I Mean | Difference Mean |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 215.7 | 215.7 | 0.0 |
| 4 | 220.6 | 219.0 | 1.6 |
| 5 | 216.6 | 219.4 | -2.8 |
| 6 | 217.5 | 219.3 | -1.8 |
| 7 | 229.5 | 227.2 | 2.3 |
| 8 | 231.2 | 231.1 | 0.1 |

Additionally, the difference between Verona's **Advanced Proficient (%AP)** scores (see chart #2) and our DFG I Peers continues to narrow; for grades 4, 5, 6, and 7 it is around 1% or less. Our 8th grade scores actually surpassed the DFG I mean (22.3% vs. 21.0%)!

**Chart #3: 2013 ELA NJASK 3-8 Advanced Proficient Scores**

| Grade | Verona %AP | DFG I %AP | Difference %AP |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 4.4% | 8.1% | -3.7% |
| 4 | 15.7% | 16.4% | -0.7% |
| 5 | 16.1% | 16.6% | -0.5% |
| 6 | 7.9% | 9.0% | -1.1% |
| 7 | 23.3% | 24.5% | -1.2% |
| 8 | 22.3% | 21.0% | 1.3% |

We are pleased to announce that our **Mathematics Partial Proficient (%PP)** scores *(see chart #4)* in grades 5, 6, 7, and 8 are below our DFG I peer average! In grade 3, the difference between the two is 0.2%. Again, as a district we focused on our %PP scores are have seen continual improvement.

**Chart #4: 2013 Math NJASK 3-8 Partial Proficient Scores**

| Grades | Verona PP% | DFG I PP% | Difference PP% |
|---|---|---|---|
| **3** | 9.5% | 9.3% | 0.2% |
| **4** | 13.7% | 9.0% | 4.7% |
| **5** | 6.7% | 8.3% | -1.6% |
| **6** | 8.5% | 9.7% | -1.2% |
| **7** | 18.6% | 18.9% | -0.3% |
| **8** | 13.3% | 15.1% | -1.8% |

Taking a look at our **Mathematics Advanced Proficient (%AP)** scores, we are continuing to improve as a school district. Overall, our Advanced Proficient Scores are the highest they have ever been collectively! Chart #5 shows the last four years of Verona Advanced Proficient Scores in grades 3 through 8.

**Chart #5: 2010-2013 Math NJASK 3-8 Advanced Proficient Scores**

| Verona | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Grade 3** | 40.2% | 42.3% | 48.3% | 48.1% |
| **Grade 4** | 39.0% | 26.0% | 31.8% | 39.8% |
| **Grade 5** | 47.5% | 45.0% | 53.2% | 57.2% |
| **Grade 6** | 25.7% | 38.9% | 46.2% | 41.8% |
| **Grade 7** | 30.6% | 25.2% | 33.5% | 37.8% |
| **Grade 8** | 36.4% | 39.9% | 28.7% | 42.4% |
| ***Average*** | ***36.6%*** | ***36.2%*** | ***40.3%*** | ***44.4%*** |

We are enriching our curriculum annually; administrators and teachers are working together to develop and refine their units; teachers, students, and parents are communicating effectively; and our Board of Education is supportive and committed to improvement. Cumulatively, this leads to positive growth and encouraging results.

[1] *Please note that Partial Proficient scores range between 100 and 199, Proficient scores are from 200 to 249, and Advanced Proficient Scores are 250 to 300.*

*2 DFG is an indicator of socioeconomic status in each district. Factors considered are percent of adult residents who failed to complete high school, who attended college, occupational status of adult household members, population density, median family income, unemployment, and percent of residents below the poverty level. There are 105 DFG I districts in NJ.*