

# Kindergarteners, Pre-K students make significant gains on statewide assessment

## Staff Report

The results of Mississippi's statewide assessment of learning in pre-K and kindergarten show the majority of the state's youngest students continue to make significant gains during the academic year.

Kindergarteners take a Kindergarten Readiness Assessment in the fall and spring of each school year. In fall 2018, 36.9% of students scored kindergarten ready. When kindergarteners were retested in the spring of 2019, 65.6% of students met the end-of-year target score.

"Mississippi kindergarten teachers are continuing to do an outstanding job helping students build the foundational literacy skills they need to be successful in their education," said Dr. Carey Wright, state superintendent of education. "Reading instruction must remain a major focus through the 3rd grade so that all children complete elementary school with strong reading skills."

Every district in the state showed progress among their kindergarten classes, though student achievement varied. Average scores among schools ranged from 603 to 808. The target end-of-year score for kindergarten is 681. This score categorizes students as transitional

readers. Students scoring at this level are beginning to read unfamiliar words and easy reader material but are not yet independent readers.

Progress in kindergarten remained steady from 2016-17 to 2018-19, with more than 65% of kindergarteners meeting the end-of-year target score each year.

For Holmes County's young readers, 206 students tested averaging a scale score of 671, up 200 from last fall at 471.

The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment evaluates skills such as the ability to recognize letters and match letters to their sounds and a student's recognition that print flows from left to right. The exam produces reports for parents and teachers that detail each child's early reading skills. Teacher reports also include diagnostic information and instructional plans for every student.

Pre-K students in the state's Early Learning Collaboratives (ELCs) and other public pre-K classes for 4-year-olds also maintained gains on the Pre-Kindergarten Readiness Assessment.

Among ELC students, 76.9% met the end-of-year target score, compared to 69.4% of students in other public pre-K classrooms, which include a variety of

class configurations, including Title I, self-contained special education, and other school district pre-K programs.

The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) first recognized Mississippi for its ELC program in 2015 as one of only five states that meet all 10 of its quality standards. In subsequent years, NIEER continued to recognize Mississippi as one of only seven states that meet all or most quality standards for pre-K.

The success of the ELC program helped the MDE secure a \$6 million grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to expand its effort to develop an early childhood education infrastructure in Mississippi. The grant supports a team of early childhood coaches who help teachers statewide in a variety of pre-K settings to implement developmentally appropriate practices in their classrooms.

"Research consistently shows that high quality early childhood education is one of the most powerful ways to make a positive difference for children throughout their education and life," Wright said.

View assessment results: <https://www.mdek12.org/OPR/Reporting/Assessment/2018-19>

# NASA invests \$45M in US small businesses for space tech development

American businesses will help NASA land astronauts on the Moon in five years and establish a sustainable presence there, as part of the agency's larger Moon to Mars exploration approach. NASA has selected 363 proposals from small businesses and research institutions across 41 states to help advance the types of capabilities needed for those future missions, as well as to support the agency in other areas.

The 363 selections have an estimated value of more than \$45 million and are part of NASA's Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs.

They include seven SBIR projects and two STTR projects tied to Stennis Space Center.

"We are excited about the entrepreneurial, innovative ideas that these small businesses are bringing to the table," said Jim Reuter, associate administrator for NASA's Space Technology Mission Directorate (STMD). "The technologies show great promise in helping NASA achieve its objectives across all mission areas, including our efforts to send American astronauts to the Moon, and

then on to Mars, while also providing a long-term boost to the American economy."

Nearly a hundred of the selected companies will be first-time recipients of a NASA SBIR or STTR contract. More than 20 percent of the businesses are from underrepresented communities, including minority and women-owned businesses.

The selected proposals will support aeronautics, human space exploration and operations, science, and space technology. The selections cover research and development for a variety of applications, such as:

- An intelligent rover wheel with integrated sensing and perception subsystems to improve mobility on the Moon and planetary bodies. The technology could also be used on Earth for autonomous tractors and other off-road vehicles.

- A laser-based mass spectrometer that could be used to search for life on other planets. The technology could also be used for habitat air monitoring and terrain mapping.

- A light-weight, deployable solar panel that leverages recent advancements in thin film solar cell technology. It rolls into a compact cylinder for storage, as op-

posed to conventional rigid solar panels that require mechanical hinges.

- Technology that enables autonomous and safe operations of unmanned aircraft systems over long periods of time in cluttered, complex environments.

- A technique to generate crater maps faster and at higher resolutions than the best manual identification efforts. This could help NASA efficiently map surface features of the Moon and Mars.

- A simulation to screen, test and validate commercial off-the-shelf hardware that could be used for high-performance computing systems. The technology could help mission managers more efficiently select onboard electronics.

The seven SBIR proposals managed by Stennis Space Center are:

- "Highly Compatible, Additively Manufactured LOX Injectors," developed by ASRC Federal Astronautics, LLC in Huntsville, Alabama.

- "Cryogenic Cam Butterfly Valve," developed by C-Suite Services, LLC in Metairie, Louisiana.

- "A Modular Sensor Suite for Propulsion Testing," developed by En'Urga, Inc. in West Lafayette, Indiana.

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Mississippi Delta Community College hosted the Northwest District 4-H Project Achievement Day on their campus, July 11. A typical July day on the campus would be suffocatingly hot, but 4-H'ers and staff were spared this with intermittent breezes that made the day seem cool (at times).

Fun and success would describe Holmes County 4-H'ers experience at this year's Northwest District 4-H Project Achievement Day. Fun was had enjoying the talent and modeling exhibitions, as well as, the dance and sports activities. Success came as the individuals in the group excelled at visual presentations and judging contests. Orin Howell's Cloverleaf exhibit entitled "Lambs 101" won its division. Jordan Brooks won with his Meat Goat Visual Presentation. And, the Dairy Product Judging Team placed 1st again with Lawson Nichols winning the coveted High Individual in the contest.

If you wonder, "what exactly is Dairy Products

Judging?" These youth taste samples of milk, cheddar cheese, cottage cheese, and ice cream for quality irregularities in each category grouping and score each sample according to the tastes that they discern. Cottage cheese is usually the separating factor in putting a team together. (Not many youth want to taste it in the first place.) But, once that obstacle is conquered they rather enjoy judging the ice cream. Holmes County has fielded winning teams in this contest numerous times. (Maybe that says, we love our ice cream and will do what we have to do to get to the 4 samples of ice cream that come at the end of the contest.)

Davian Powell spent Monday through Thursday, July 15 through 18, representing Holmes County 4-H on MS 4-H's Coop Leadership Tour. Approximately 50 4-H'ers participated learning about cooperative businesses, forming their own, and touring some of the Mississippi's oldest and most successful Coop's.

Davian was on the media team and as a part of that was interviewed for a television feature. Davian continues to take advantage of opportunities as have been presented him, to learn new and different things in Agriculture and 4-H, and bring home newly developed leadership skills.

Jordan Brooks spent last weekend (July 13) showing his goats at the Union County Fair in New Albany. Jordan won his age division of goat showmanship and enjoyed helping his little sister, Skylar, participate in the Pee Wee class. He, also, placed second in a couple of his weight division classes.

Upcoming, Tredell Meeks and Sinatra Clayton are preparing to represent Holmes Co. and Mississippi 4-H in Perry, Georgia, at the Southeastern 4-H Regional Horse Show. Both Sinatra and Tredell are now veterans of this competition having placed first and third respectively in last year's Roping competition. Kudo's to these guys for their skill and hard work in achieving this success and may God bless you in your travels to and at this year's event. The regional show will be July 31- August 4.

## POTENTIAL POLL WORKERS TRAINING

All Poll Workers Training will be held at 6:30 P.M. nightly for the Democratic and Republican Primary Election. It is mandatory you attend a training if you want to be considered a potential poll worker.

Due to the preliminary work required by the Circuit Clerk and the Executive Committees, no make-up training will be offered.

### REMEMBER:

- If you are not a registered voter, you cannot work as a POLL WORKER.
- If you are campaigning for a candidate, you cannot be employed as a Poll Worker.

### Wednesday, July 17, 2019

- Beat 1 Acona
- Beat 1 Lexington
- Beat 3 Coxburg
- Beat 3 Ebenezer
- Beat 3 Goodman
- Beat 3 Pickens

### Thursday, July 18, 2019

- Beat 4 Lexington
- Beat 4 Thornton
- Beat 4 Walden Chapel
- Beat 5 Cruger
- Beat 5 Tchula
- Beat 5 Lexington

### Friday, July 19, 2019

- Beat 2 Durant
- Beat 2 Sub-Durant
- Beat 2 West
- Beat 1 Durant

### Friday, July 26, 2019

### ENCODERS ONLY (Mandatory Attendance)

To become more knowledgeable, you may attend a workshop for the Regular Poll workers & Encoders. All training sessions will be at the Circuit Court Complex located at 22549 Depot Street next door to the Lexington Multi-Purpose Bldg. formerly known as the Old National Guard Armory.

Submitted by Earline Wright-Hart, Circuit Clerk  
If questions, please call 662/834-5028.