

## CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

A comprehensive and articulated curriculum is provided for grades K-12 that meets the needs of all students. Graduates must complete a minimum of 26 credits throughout their high school career in the following areas: science (including Biology and Chemistry), mathematics (including an Algebra II proficiency), a foreign language (second level proficiency), technology (Word, Access, Excel, and PowerPoint), writing and public speaking, health/physical education, electives and the senior graduation project. All students must complete a graduation project that demonstrates competencies in oral communication, written communication, information gathering/research skills and technology utilization. This student-centered research begins in 9th grade and revolves around a student-selected area of study that could be correlated to one of four broad career clusters including Health and Human Services, Business and Information Technology, Engineering and Industrial, and Arts and Humanities. The goal is to provide students with skills necessary to conduct independent research while offering an avenue for creativity and demonstration of individual talents, and an opportunity for students to explore career paths.

For students who desire the challenge of a higher caliber program and who have demonstrated the ability and commitment to work independently and collaboratively, the District offers an Honors Academy to provide enrichment and advanced courses. Admission to the Honors Academy is selective and open only to students who have demonstrated a commitment to learning as evidenced by standardized tests, grades, work ethic, writing ability, and overall performance. Students selected into the Honors Academy are expected to do extensive reading, research and writing presentations. In addition to work done in class and directed by the faculty, students will work independently with the teacher serving as a facilitator for learning. An interview process takes place with interested students prior to admission to the Honors Academy so that an overall evaluation may be made.

In 11th and 12th grades, students are also given the opportunity to earn college credit by taking Advanced Placement classes. Students may earn over 30 college credits while attending high school. All students who elect to take these classes are required to take the Standardized AP Exam. South Fayette students have consistently scored higher than the national average on these tests.

Our curriculum also includes individualized programs for students who have demonstrated the need for additional resources. The needs of these students are met by special education specialists, guidance personnel, a school psychologist, paraeducators, and three nurses. A continuous program for gifted students is also available.

## NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND AND AYP

The No Child Left Behind Act charges America's schools to describe their success in terms of student accomplishment. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has outlined standards for what every child should know and learn for all grades. Each District is expected to make "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) toward meeting state standards. School districts and schools show adequate yearly progress according to several measurable indicators: Attendance (K-8) or Graduation Rate, Test Performance, and Test Participation.

In 2004-2005, for a District to make adequate yearly progress, at least 54% of the students must have scored at the proficient or advanced level in reading, and at least 45% of the students must have scored at the proficient or advanced level in math. In addition, at least 95% of the students in each group must have taken the test. *In South Fayette, all grades exceeded the levels set forth by the state and no schools in the District have been identified for school improvement. In addition, all schools in our District exceeded the required adequate yearly progress.*

# CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT

## PSSA ASSESSMENTS: LEADING THE WAY

Each year, students in selected grades take the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) exam to determine their performance in reading and math. Students are rated by scores which reflect levels of Advanced, Proficient, Basic and Below Basic. Test results for the students in grades 5, 8 and 11 are evaluated by the State and considered for AYP. Across all grade levels, South Fayette students far exceeded these requirements.

We often say that South Fayette students are second to none, and a look at the PSSA scores across our area and throughout the state shows the exemplary accomplishments of our students. South Fayette has built a highly respected reputation and is well known throughout the area for the quality education we offer to our students.

### FIFTH GRADE: NUMBER ONE IN THE STATE

At the 5th grade level, South Fayette students ranked first in Allegheny County in both reading and mathematics out of 42 districts. The students also ranked number one in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in math and third in reading out of 501 districts. And while these numbers garner much public attention, our 8th and 11th grade results also bring great pride to the District. Our 11th graders scored among the top 3% of students in Pennsylvania. These are impressive numbers, and testament to the hard work and dedication of the South Fayette students and staff. See the table (above, right) for specific rankings on all of our grade levels.

While the testing results of South Fayette's 3rd graders are not considered for the determination of AYP, they were reported in 2004-2005 for the first time. Beginning in 2005-2006, students in grades 4, 6 and 7 will take the PSSA exam, allowing the District to better follow the progress of our students over time.

### ATTENDANCE AND GRADUATION

Under the No Child Left Behind Legislation, the state has set forth the goal of a 90% attendance rate by 2014 in grades K-8. In 2004-2005, South Fayette's attendance rate for those grades was 95.24%. The Act also looks closely at the graduation rate, which is defined by the number of students who entered 9th grade and graduated with a regular diploma. The state's goal is 80% by 2014 and in 2005 South Fayette's graduation rate was 95.74%.

2004-2005  
SOUTH FAYETTE STUDENT SCORES  
STATE AND COUNTY RANKING

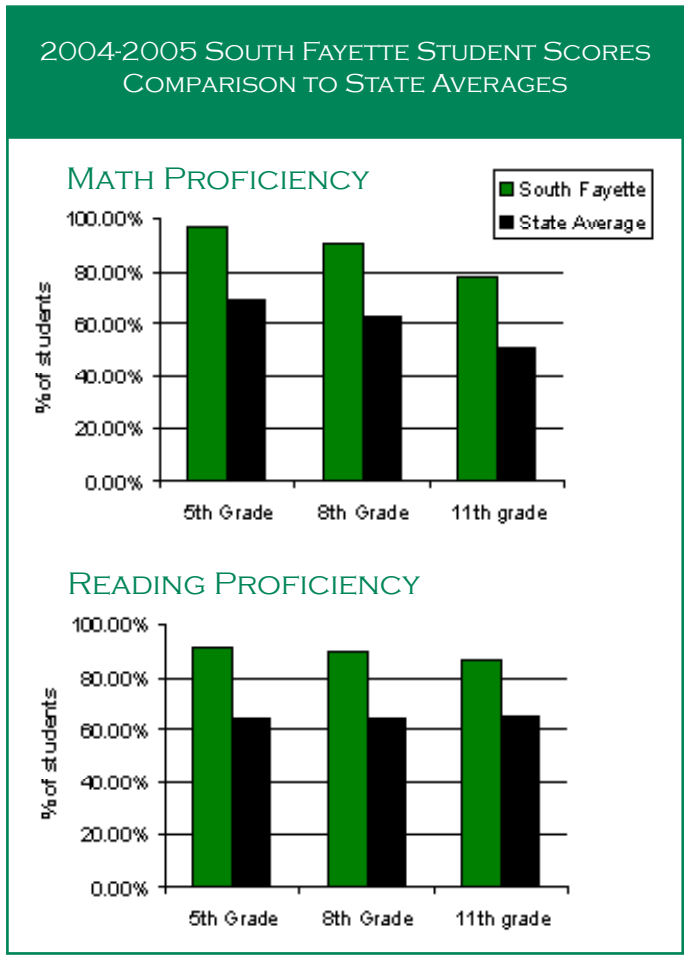
**PSSA - COUNTY RANKING**  
Among 42 Districts in Allegheny County

	Math	Reading
<b>5th Grade</b>	★ 1	★ 1
<b>8th Grade</b>	★ 2	★ 2
<b>11th Grade</b>	★ 8	★ 7

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**PSSA - STATE RANKING**  
Among 501 Districts in Pennsylvania

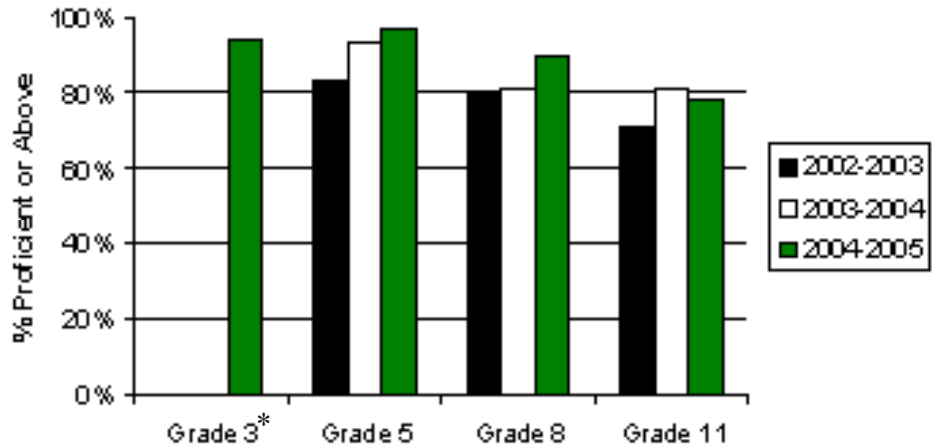
	Math	Reading
<b>5th Grade</b>	★ 1	★ 3
<b>8th Grade</b>	★ 4	★ 7
<b>11th Grade</b>	★ 15	★ 16



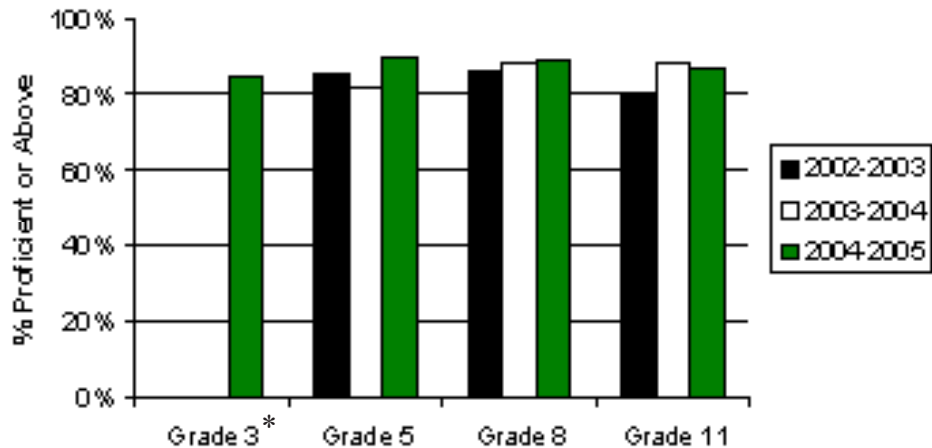
AYP data courtesy of [www.grownetwork.com](http://www.grownetwork.com).

## PSSA RESULTS BY GRADE LEVEL: A COMPARISON ACROSS THE YEARS

### PSSA MATH



### PSSA READING



\* Historical data is not available for 3rd grade. 2004-2005 is the first reporting year for this data.

### USING THESE TOOLS TO HELP US “GROW”

South Fayette parents received an individualized report specific to their child’s performance on the PSSA exam. Parents are also encouraged to access “The Grow Network” or [www.grownetwork.com](http://www.grownetwork.com) – a website that provides additional customized reports for parents, teachers, and administrators and offers guidance on what those test results mean.

The Grow Network segments the information into specific categories and also offers targeted educational materials that parents can use at home with their children. At South Fayette, students are offered individual tutoring to help them improve their skills. Students are selected for tutoring based on their daily classroom work, a proficiency level of basic or below on the standardized test, and a recommendation from a teacher. Tutoring offers a remediation of skills in the areas of math and reading needed for performance at the proficient level.

## A CLOSER LOOK AT THE DATA

The state further examines the PSSA data by grouping the students according to various demographic criteria. These categories include: white, black, Latino/Hispanic, Individual Educational Plan (IEP), economically disadvantaged, male, and female. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires that each district provides data to the community for any group consisting of 10 or more students.

In the charts (below, right), you will note the numbers in parentheses ( ) following the group name indicate the total number of students in that group. If fewer than 10 students are in a particular group, no test results are reported.

The NCLB targets for districts and schools apply not only to students as a grade level, but also to identified sub-groups. Failure of any one sub-group to meet the NCLB targets will result in a school not meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP.)

NCLB's 2004-05 targets for student proficiency were increased from the 2003-04 levels of 35% in math and 45% in reading. The 2004-05 targets will remain in place through the 2007-08 school year. The proficiency targets will gradually increase until 2014 when 100% of students are expected to be proficient or advanced in reading and math.

While the performance of any group consisting of less than 40 students is not considered significant by the Commonwealth, South Fayette uses these statistics to further evaluate our classroom needs. These results, combined with our regular and recurring assessments of our students' performances, helps teachers and administrators to shape the curriculum for the coming years and to close the achievement gaps between these student groups.

