

REGIONAL ISSUE BRIEF

Senator Walter Rand Institute for Public Affairs

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South Jersey PARCC Results for the 2014-2015 School Year

This year, the New Jersey Department of Education has replaced the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK) with a test from the Partnership for Assessment and Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). The change has been met with great criticism, especially at the high school level where it is now being used to determine college readiness. Our municipal infographics focus on the results of the PARCC test for fourth and eighth graders across all eight of our focal South Jersey counties. Since the 2014-2015 school year was the first year that the PARCC test was given, this report does not focus on comparisons between years. As a result, this analysis demonstrates how school districts in South Jersey performed relative to their counterparts in North and Central Jersey. These rankings were calculated using the Mean Scale Score variable. Charter schools were eliminated from this analysis.

Of the 568 districts listed for 4th Grade English and Language Arts PARCC tests, the highest five ranking South Jersey districts were Lavallette Boro in Ocean County (#13), Chesterfield Township in Burlington County (#54), Point Pleasant Beach Boro in Ocean County (#61), Bayhead Boro in Ocean County (#65) and Haddonfield Boro in Camden County (#75). The five lowest ranking South Jersey districts were Fairfield Township in Cumberland County (#552), Bridgeton City in Cumberland County (#553), Wildwood City in Cape May County (#554), Downe Township in Cumberland County (#555), and Camden City in Camden County (#556). Districts ranked 558 to 568 had missing values.

Of the 568 districts listed for 4th Grade Math PARCC tests, the highest five ranking South Jersey districts were Logan Township in Gloucester County (#49), Haddonfield Boro in Camden County (#58), Chesterfield Township in Burlington County (#61), Riverton in Burlington County (#68), and Linwood City in Atlantic County (#71). The five lowest ranking South Jersey districts were Salem City in Salem County (#544), Downe Township in Cumberland County (#548), Wildwood City in Cape May County (#550), Fairfield Township in Cumberland County (#554), and Camden City in Camden County (#556). Districts ranked 558 to 568 had missing values.

Of the 512 districts listed for 8th Grade English and Language Arts PARCC tests, the highest five ranking South Jersey districts were Linwood City in Atlantic County (#6), Bayhead Boro in Ocean County (#23), Margate City in Atlantic County (#51), Haddonfield Boro in Camden County (#54), and Woodstown-Piles Grove Regional in Salem County (#72). The five lowest ranking South Jersey districts are Lakehurst Boro in Ocean County (#494), Pleasantville City in Atlantic County (#498), Paulsboro Boro in Gloucester County (#499), Camden City in Camden County (#501), and Penns Grove – Carneys Point Regional in Salem County (#502). Districts ranked 503 to 512 had missing values.

Of the 507 districts listed for 8th Grade Math PARCC tests, the highest five ranking South Jersey districts were Riverton in Burlington County (#5), North Wildwood City in Cape May County (#6), Weymouth Township in Atlantic County (#21), Linwood City in Atlantic County (#32), and Gloucester City in Camden County (#35). The five lowest ranking South Jersey districts were Middle Township in Cape May County (#459), Penns Grove – Carneys Point Regional in Salem County (#460), Woodland Township in Burlington County (#463), Paulsboro Boro in Gloucester County, (#464) and Camden City in Camden County (#465). Districts ranked 469 to 507 had missing values.

Overall, the results were not surprising. Districts in wealthy areas like Haddonfield Boro in Camden County and Chesterfield Township in Burlington County were consistently ranked near the top while districts in poor areas like Camden City in Camden County and Penns Grove–Carneys Point Regional in Salem County were consistently ranked at the bottom. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that South Jersey districts performed best on the 8th Grade exams with three municipalities placing in the top ten statewide for either test—Linwood City in Atlantic County, Riverton in Burlington County, and North Wildwood City in Cape May County. In contrast, no municipalities ranked in the top ten statewide for either 4th grade test and only two ranked in the top 50—Lavallette Boro in Ocean County and Logan Township in Gloucester County. These results suggest the need for further investigation into the quality of elementary education in South Jersey school districts.