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Idaho students' ISAT scores back on the rise for 2022

(BOISE) – The latest statewide results for the Idaho Standards Achievement Test show students' scores in English language arts are back at pre-pandemic levels, while results in mathematics are markedly better than last year's and come close to 2019 scores.

“This is great news and reinforces our faith in Idaho educators, who have worked hard to reverse pandemic learning loss and get students back on the path to success,” Superintendent of Public Instruction Sherri Ybarra said.

“The onset of COVID-19 in spring 2020 disrupted the ISAT along with all Idaho school operations, so we weren't surprised when last year's results declined from pre-pandemic 2019 rather than continuing the gradual upward trend of previous years,” Superintendent Ybarra said. “But we also aren't surprised that this year shows student achievement is on the rebound.”

The Idaho Standards Achievement Test is administered each spring (except in 2020) to all public school students in grades 3 through 8 and 10, gauging their proficiency in ELA/literacy and math. Scores are sorted into four categories: below basic, basic, proficient and advanced.

More than 169,000 students took the ISAT this past spring, up from about 163,000 in 2021. Results show:

- Overall, 54.8 percent of students scored as proficient or better in ELA/ literacy: 31.4 percent were assessed as proficient, and 23.4 percent scored in the highest category, advanced. That advanced tally is 1.2 percentage points higher than in pre-pandemic 2019 and 1.8 percentage points higher than in 2021, when 32.5 percent scored as proficient.
- In math, 41.9 percent of students scored as proficient or better: 19.5 percent were advanced and 22.4 percent proficient, up from 17.7 percent and 21.9 percent in 2021. But the most recent scores still fell short of 2019 levels: 20.7 percent advanced and 23.7 percent proficient.

- Proficiency rates varied by student grade level, demographic group and subject area, and the superintendent’s Department of Assessment and Accountability is analyzing the results to help explain the patterns.
- Two student groups showed particularly notable improvements from 2021 to 2022. Students from military families increased their math proficiency rate by 6.3 percentage points, nearly tripling the statewide improvement of 2.3 percentage points. And while almost all subgroups dropped their proficiency rates between 2019 and 2021, students from military families increased their ELA proficiency rate by 5.9 percent, with a cumulative increase of 8.8 percent during the three years ending this past spring. Students from foster families also improved their ELA/literacy proficiency rate by 5.3 percentage points from 2021 to 2022, while the statewide improvement was 0.7 percentage points.

“Proficiency is only one measure of achievement, and it is important to remember that results from different years reflect separate cohorts of students,” Superintendent Ybarra said. “Still, these latest ISAT results are significant, and encouraging.”

This year for the first time, students in grades 5, 8 and 11 took the newly developed science ISAT. A “field test” was administered in 2021 to check the test’s functions and help design its final form, but no results were reported.

A total of 70,029 students took the new science assessment, and 40.8 percent of students scored as either proficient or advanced. The results cannot be used to gauge student progress because there are no previous results for comparison.

Statewide, district and school-level results are available on the [Assessment Results web page](#), along with results for grade levels and demographic groups.

“Districts and schools throughout Idaho remain committed to identifying and supplying what their students need to achieve their dreams, and I’m confident our students’ performance in math and ELA will continue to improve,” Superintendent Ybarra said.

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Attachments: Graphics showing statewide ISAT proficiency percentages for 2019 - 2022, plus an Excel file showing state, district and school-level results, including grade-level and demographic data.