

# denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

## CSAP writing scores cause concern; DPS, Mapleton are bright spots

By Jeremy P. Meyer and Burt Hubbard  
*The Denver Post*  
 Posted: 08/10/2010 09:57:20 AM MDT

Updated: 08/10/2010 12:09:09 PM MDT

For the first time in at least five years, Colorado students are struggling more with writing than math, according to results from the 2010 Colorado Student Assessment Program released today.

Overall, CSAP scores in all four subject areas stagnated this year, with large gaps remaining between poor and affluent students, minorities and white students, and boys and girls.

And growth projections show more students this year are not on pace to become proficient in math or writing.

Students from third to 10th grade take CSAP every year — a federal requirement under the federal No Child Left Behind law and its goal of

getting all students proficient at reading and mathematics by 2014.

The CSAP exams —

### Extras

[Results: Examine updated CSAP results .](#)

[Results: CSAP year-over-year growth results .](#)

[Results: ACT test results .](#)

[Results: Look up schools and CSAP results by location .](#)

now in their 13th year — test proficiency in math, writing and reading. Students in fifth, eighth and 10th grade also are tested in science.

This year writing scores fell to 53 percent proficiency statewide from 55 percent in 2009 among all grades combined.

The composite writing scores are now lower than the math scores, which stayed the same as the 2009 results at 55 percent proficient and advanced.

Worse, the composite scores for science, which averaged about 47 percent statewide — also showed no change from 2009.

Reading scores remained unchanged for the third

Advertisement

**Own a new computer for just \$29.99\* per week!**

**And improve your credit score at the same time!**

**Give us a call today!**

**1-877-294-3988**

\*Prices start at \$29.99 but may vary by model.



Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

# denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

straight year at 68 percent proficient.

Still, the decline in writing is a concern for educators.

"Writing is hard for anybody," said Lisa Jones, principal of Paris Elementary in Aurora. "Most kids struggle. We haven't focused on that. Reading and math have been the focus."

However, Paris Elementary — with a large number of English language learners and 93 percent of students poor enough to be eligible for federal meals — showed improvement in writing in all three grades tested. But the school still remains significantly behind the state averages.

Among metro area school districts, Denver Public Schools and Mapleton showed significant gains in CSAP and in longitudinal growth, which measures how students improve year to year in each subject.

In composite CSAP scores, both districts improved 3 points in reading, 2 points in math and fell by 1 point in writing.

However, both districts still remain double digits below the state average in every subject area.

Yet, the growth is encouraging, said DPS Superintendent Tom Boasberg.

"We're seeing the fifth year in a row that we are beating the state in growth in every tested

subject," Boasberg said. "Our kids are gaining significantly faster than their peers across the state. But at the same time we are still behind and we have significant gaps."

This year, reading scores in Denver rose 3 points to 50 percent proficiency. Math scores increased 2 points to 39 percent proficiency.

DPS had a shining star in a small elementary school on the northwest side. Beach Court Elementary with 350 students, 96 percent of whom are eligible to receive federal meal benefits posted the top growth in the state.

Students were at the 86th percentile in growth in math, the 92nd percentile in reading and the 96th percentile in writing.

Also, the district's marquee middle school program, West Denver Prep charter school, had the highest growth among the state's middle schools.

Both the Federal Boulevard campus and the new Harvey Park campus showed growth that ranged in the 76th percentile to 95 percentile. The school just opened two more schools on Denver's west side.

"To have in our first year of replication to have the top two ranked middle schools in growth is a testament to our kids," Chris Gibbons, chief executive officer of West Denver Prep.

Aurora Public Schools also advanced, but not

Advertisement

SAVE 20%

ON CUSTOM WINDOW COVERINGS

Schedule Your *Free* In-Home Design Consultation



\*For showroom or in-home design consultation orders, this ad must be presented at the time of purchase. For online orders, enter offer code. Offer valid on 3 Day Blinds brand products only. Offer excludes ViewPoints™ window coverings, product upgrades, installation, sales tax, shipping and handling. Not valid on previous purchase or with any other offer or discount. One purchase per household during this promotion. Offer Code: TGBB Offer Expires: 5/31/10. AZ State Contractor's License ROC 130652, ROC 130653. CA State Contractor's License #659590. OR State Contractor's License #90559. WA State Contractor's License #THREEDBQ7OK7. © 2010 3 Day Blinds Corporation.



3DAYBLINDS™

YOU'LL LOVE THE TREATMENT

866-903-7703

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

# denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

quite as much as Denver and Mapleton.

On the opposite end, Adams 12, Douglas County, Westminster 50, and Commerce City had declines in math, writing and reading.

The gap between girls and boys in reading continued to widen statewide, with females scoring as much as 10 points better than males in some grades. Females increased the gap in eight of 10 grades. And gaps in writing remained in double digits in all grades but the third. In math, males had a slight edge.

In reading and writing, black and Hispanic students narrowed the gaps slightly with white and Asian students in just about all grades. But the gaps remained daunting.

There was not much of a change in the gaps in math between Hispanics and black students and their white and Asian peers.

Poor students generally closed the gap in most grades in reading and math, some by as many as 3 points. There was not much change in the gaps in writing, which remain huge.

*Jeremy P. Meyer: 303-954-1367 or  
jpmeyer@denverpost.com*

Advertisement

**Own a new computer for just \$29.99\* per week!**



**And improve your credit score at the same time!**

**Give us a call today!**

**1-877-294-3988**

\*Prices start at  
\$29.99 but  
may vary by model.

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™