

QUARTERLY ASCERTAINMENTS / COMMUNITY ISSUES

STATION: WVAQ—August, 2023

SUBJECT: Academic Progress Reported on Monongalia County Schools.

DISCUSSION:

With the start of the school season set for later this month, outside of absences, Monongalia County Schools appear to be heading in the right direction according to state academic standards.

Numbers released as part of the West Virginia Academic Balanced Scorecard showed that schools in the elementary, middle, and high school levels all showed positive progressions in academic achievement ahead of the 2023-24 school year. According to scores released by the State Department of Education (DOE), Monongalia County Schools showed improved proficiency in ELA (English) and math across all grade levels by the end of the 2022-23 school year, with some steps needed to reach state standards.

"It's one thing we look at to see the progress of Mon County and see how the schools are doing," said Monongalia County Board of Education (BOE) President Ron Lytle on the release of the numbers. "We can take that into account as we work on developing programs and ways to assist people in the classroom," he said.

Areas where Monongalia County Schools stood out in comparison to state averages were primarily in academic scores. According to state DOE statistics released as part of the scorecard (an average score of 80 was considered proficient), each of the elementary, middle, and high school grade levels reached some level of standard proficiency (school system average of 62.9 in ELA, 61.4 in math), with the high school level math scores reaching above non-acceptable levels in 2022-23 (51). Elementary-grade math scores reached standard levels (67), which was considered a pleasant surprise, though the number of absences by students across all grade levels was considered an expected negative by the board.

"The positive is definitely our elementary math scores, I was really happy about that," said Lytle. "The negative is that I didn't really like the fact that we have so many absences and chronic absenteeism," he said.

Based on the numbers accounted for in the West Virginia balanced scorecard, each grade level is considered below state standards in regards to absences (anything above 20 percent), with an average of 23.4 percent of county students considered chronically absent (missing ten percent or more school days). To address absenteeism in Monongalia County Schools, Lytle expects the Board of Education to consider several options with both parents and administrators to combat a statewide issue. Though nothing was formerly proposed Tuesday, Monongalia County Schools have made attempts to address chronic absenteeism on an individual basis, which has included incentive programs from schools in all grade levels, which are expected to be discussed as part of a broad approach to bringing absences to state standards.

DATE: August 6th, 2023

TIME / DURATION: 2:11

GUESTS: Monongalia County School Board President Ron Lytle.

MEDIA INTEREST: Talk of the Town – WAJR, Dominion Post, WVAQ, WKKW, WBOY, WDTV, facebook, twitter

YEAR: 2023

QUARTER: 3rd

