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from

Anne Arundel County Public Schools

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ANNAPOLIS HIGH SCHOOL EXITS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS AS ALL 12 OF COUNTY'S COMPREHENSIVE HIGH SCHOOLS MEET AYP TARGETS FOR SECOND STRAIGHT YEAR

Just 30 months removed from a radical restructuring in which all staff members had to reapply for their jobs, Annapolis High School has met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) targets for the second consecutive year, removing the school from the Maryland State Department of Education's School Improvement Process.

"I have never been more proud of a group of people in my life than I am of this school community," Annapolis High School Principal Don Lilley said. "This is a journey that has been made possible by a committed and selfless staff, a dedicated group of students and parents, and the passionate partnership of community and business groups. We have not finished our journey, but today is a significant milestone for us as we continue to make our school a showcase for the state."

The news was equally good throughout the county. For the second straight year, all 12 comprehensive high schools met AYP targets set forth by the state as part of federal *No Child Left Behind* legislation, according to data released today by MSDE.

The announcement means that 104 of the county's 110 comprehensive schools (95 percent) met AYP targets in the 2008-2009 school year. That's four more schools than in 2007-2008, when 100 of 109 schools (92 percent) met AYP targets, and seven more than in 2006-2007, when 97 of 109 schools (89 percent) attained the mark.

"Today's results show that we are continuing to make significant strides

-more-

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toward helping every student not only achieve, but excel,” schools Superintendent Dr. Kevin M. Maxwell said. “This is not a case of more schools meeting a standard that remains static. The standards rise about six to nine percentage points each year, and our schools are doing the work necessary to climb above that bar. That is a tremendous credit to everyone involved in the education of our children.”

At the high school level, Meade Evening High School and Phoenix Annapolis did not meet AYP targets. A high school’s AYP status is based on its performance on the English 2 and Algebra I 2009 High School Assessments (HSAs), the school’s participation rate in the assessments, and its graduation rate. In order for a school to make Adequate Yearly Progress, it must meet Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) for reading and mathematics in nine student groups. These groups are all students, each of five racial/ethnic groups, and students receiving special education services, Limited English Proficiency services, and Free and Reduced Meals services (FARMS). For the 2008-2009 school year, the AMO was 65.8 percent in English, and 56.1 percent in Algebra. In 2014, 100 percent of students attending public high schools will be expected to pass both HSAs.

Schools that do not make AYP for two consecutive years are part of the state’s School Improvement Process. Last year, the United States Department of Education (USDE) selected Maryland as one of six states to implement a Differentiated Accountability Pilot, which has four categories (Focus Developing, Focus Priority, Comprehensive Developing, and Comprehensive Priority) that will allow the state and school systems to distinguish between schools that need substantial help and those which are closer to meeting achievement targets. The program will allow school systems to better direct resources and interventions to the specific needs of schools and to take a more aggressive approach with schools that must make substantial improvement.

Schools that do not make AYP in a single year are placed in the Local Attention category, and receive additional instructional and data analysis assistance from the school system. Such schools are removed from this category if they make AYP in the following year. Meade Evening High School missed the graduation rate target and is in Local Attention. Phoenix Annapolis missed the graduation rate and attendance targets as well as the English targets for all students, African-American students, special education students, and students receiving free and reduced meals. It also missed the Algebra target for African American students. The school is in the Focus Priority category.

More information on the AYP process can be found www.mdreportcard.org.