



October 23, 2015

Press Release

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The South Carolina Department of Education Has Released Results of Standardized Testing for 2014-15 School Year.

The South Carolina Department of Education has just released the results of standardized testing for the 2014-15 school year. Testing scores are lower than standardized test scores from recent years, yet this is not a direct indication of a decline in student performance.

Students in 2014-15 were tested on new and revised standards and these new tests were structured to assess standards with far greater rigor than previous tests.

The attached sample of questions from a 5th grade practice test clearly shows how advanced and difficult these tests were for ten and eleven year-old children. An answer key is included.

New York and Kentucky made this transition in previous years. They experienced declines similar to South Carolina's newest standardized testing scores. Other states, including California, are reporting the same phenomenon. Results of declining California test results were reported in the Los Angeles Times as seen here: <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-new-test-results-20150908-story.html>.

South Carolina schools' decline is unique in several respects, however. Only four states (Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and New Mexico) have a higher child poverty rate than South Carolina and poverty is by far a greater predictor of academic struggle.

These new test scores should in no measure be interpreted as an indication that South Carolina schools are failing. In fact, South Carolina students who are not poor are reading better than or equal to their peers in 15 other states, as revealed in this study published by The National Center for Education: <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/statecomparisons/withinyear.aspx?usrSelections=0%2cRED%2c4%2c0%2cwin%2c0%2c0>.

If anything, these new standardized test results underscore it is time for South Carolina to further invest in the future of our children and our state through our public education system, we need a responsible accountability system with realistic and attainable goals.

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