



Dear Hellgate Elementary Community Members:

As required by the Department of Education and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), an assessment report card of student achievement on the Smarter Balanced (SBAC) assessment has been placed on the Montana Office of Public Instruction's website for each school and school district in order to ensure transparency of school performance to families and community members. There is also, on the OPI website, a Montana state student assessment report card that displays aggregate data on student achievement on the SBAC assessment. Links to the assessment report cards can be found on the Hellgate Elementary website. Additional information for families and community members can also be found on the OPI website on the [Report Card Information for Families page](#).

This document represents a review of local (Hellgate Elementary) student assessment data.

## Area of Recognition...

Hellgate Elementary has never embraced the decision to use the Smarter Balanced assessment instrument as the indicator of whether or not the district's enrolled students are academically successful or not. In fact, the district supports the belief that the Smarter Balanced assessment is more of an endurance assessment as opposed to an academic assessment instrument. With that stated, Hellgate Elementary does comply with the state mandate to administer the Smarter Balanced assessment each spring to its enrolled third through eighth grade students. In looking at the data from the 2018/2019 school year, there are areas that the school district is proud to share:

On a district level, looking at aggregate assessment scores, Hellgate Elementary student assessment scores, at every grade level involved in the SBAC assessment, were higher than the Montana average for student assessment scores in reading and mathematics.

## Language Arts: See Attached PDF Document entitled "2019 SBAC ELA Comparisons: Percent Proficient"

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

- **Montana ELA Percent Proficient: 48 percent of all Montana 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students were proficient in Reading/Language Arts**
- **Hellgate Elementary Percent Proficient: 68 percent of Hellgate Elementary 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students were proficient in Reading/Language Arts**

### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

- **Montana ELA Percent Proficient: 47 percent of all Montana 4<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in Reading/Language Arts**
- **Hellgate Elementary Percent Proficient: 52 percent of Hellgate Elementary 4<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in Reading/Language Arts**

## 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

- **Montana ELA Percent Proficient: 53 percent of all Montana 5<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in Reading/Language Arts**
- **Hellgate Elementary Percent Proficient: 62 percent of Hellgate Elementary 5<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in Reading/Language Arts**

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

- **Montana ELA Percent Proficient: 51 percent of all Montana 6<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in Reading/Language Arts**
- **Hellgate Elementary Percent Proficient: 59 percent of Hellgate Elementary 6<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in Reading/Language Arts**

## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

- **Montana ELA Percent Proficient: 52 percent of all Montana 7<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in Reading/Language Arts**
- **Hellgate Elementary Percent Proficient: 62 percent of Hellgate Elementary 7<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in Reading/Language Arts**

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

- **Montana ELA Percent Proficient: 48 percent of all Montana 8<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in Reading/Language Arts**
- **Hellgate Elementary Percent Proficient: 51 percent of Hellgate Elementary 8<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in Reading/Language Arts**

**Mathematics: See Attached PDF Document entitled “2019 SBAC Math Comparisons: Percent Proficient”**

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

- **Montana Percent Proficient: 48 percent of all Montana 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students were proficient in Mathematics**
- **Hellgate Elementary Percent Proficient: 63 percent of Hellgate Elementary 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students were proficient in Mathematics**

## 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

- **Montana Percent Proficient: 45 percent of all Montana 4<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in Mathematics**
- **Hellgate Elementary Percent Proficient: 50 percent of Hellgate Elementary 4<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in Mathematics**

## 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

- **Montana Percent Proficient: 40 percent of all Montana 5<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in Mathematics**
- **Hellgate Elementary Percent Proficient: 54 percent of Hellgate Elementary 5<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in Mathematics**

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

- **Montana Percent Proficient: 39 percent of all Montana 6<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in Mathematics**
- **Hellgate Elementary Percent Proficient: 49 percent of Hellgate Elementary 6<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in Mathematics**

## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

- **Montana Percent Proficient: 41 percent of all Montana 7<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in Mathematics**
- **Hellgate Elementary Percent Proficient: 52 percent of Hellgate Elementary 7<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in Mathematics**

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

- **Montana Percent Proficient: 36 percent of all Montana 8<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in Mathematics**
- **Hellgate Elementary Percent Proficient: 43 percent of Hellgate Elementary 8<sup>th</sup> grade students were proficient in Mathematics**

## Area of Concern...

While the school district is certainly happy that its student assessment scores were higher than the state average, there are still troubling indicators contained within each grade level's student assessment data. The main areas of concern are achievement gap disparities between inconsistent enrollee students vs. consistent student enrollee students; special education students vs. non-special education students; and, English language learner students vs. non-English Language learner students. For clarification purposes, by local school district definition, an inconsistent student enrollee is a student who has not been enrolled in the school district for three consecutive years or longer.

Conventional wisdom would suggest that students who have been inconsistent student enrollees, those students not benefiting from the curriculum/instructional consistency found within the Hellgate Elementary education program, that has both horizontal and vertical alignment, as well as special education students, and English language learner students should have a significantly higher number of students falling within the non-proficient category on the SBAC assessment.

While it is true the number is higher for the inconsistent enrollee students, special education students, and the English language learner students, than it is for the consistent enrollee students, the non-special

education students, and the non-English language learner students, the difference in actual student numbers is not significant. This is alarming and creates an immediate need for district instructional delivery assessment reflection as to why students who have been consistent student enrollees, many since kindergarten, without documented learning difficulties, are still falling into the non-proficient category on the SBAC assessment. The data, which the most recent SBAC assessment has provided the school district, is cause for concern and warrants an aggressive response from the school district.

## **Language Arts: See Attached PDF Document entitled “2019 SBAC ELA Non-Proficient Student Indicators”**

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Grade - English/Language Arts**

- **Hellgate Elementary Enrollee Students: 32% of all Hellgate Elementary 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students (49 students) were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC ELA assessment. 56% (27 students) of those students listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC ELA assessment are categorize (by local school district definition) as inconsistent enrollee students, special education students, and/or limited English language learners.**

However, that leaves 44% (22 students) of Hellgate Elementary 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students who were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC ELA assessment to be considered as consistent enrollee students, non-special education students, and/or non-limited English language learners.

### **4<sup>th</sup> Grade - English/Language Arts**

- **Hellgate Elementary Enrollee Students: 48% of all Hellgate Elementary 4<sup>th</sup> grade students (80 students) were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC ELA assessment. 55% (44 students) of those students listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC ELA assessment are categorize (by local school district definition) as inconsistent enrollee students, special education students, and/or limited English language learners.**

However, that leaves 45% (36 students) of Hellgate Elementary 4<sup>th</sup> grade students who were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC ELA assessment to be considered as consistent enrollee students, non-special education students, and/or non-limited English language learners.

### **5<sup>th</sup> Grade - English/Language Arts**

- **Hellgate Elementary Enrollee Students: 38% of all Hellgate Elementary 5<sup>th</sup> grade students (69 students) were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC ELA assessment. 52% (36) of those students listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC ELA assessment are categorize (by local school district definition) as inconsistent enrollee students, special education students, and/or limited English language learners.**

However, that leaves 48% (33 students) of Hellgate Elementary 5<sup>th</sup> grade students who were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC ELA assessment to be considered as consistent enrollee students, non-special education students, and/or non-limited English language learners.

## **6<sup>th</sup> Grade - English/Language Arts**

- **Hellgate Elementary Enrollee Students: 41% of all Hellgate Elementary 6<sup>th</sup> grade students (64 students) were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC ELA assessment. 53% (34) of those students listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC ELA assessment are categorize (by local school district definition) as inconsistent enrollee students, special education students, and/or limited English language learners.**

However, that leaves 47% (30 students) of Hellgate Elementary 6<sup>th</sup> grade students who were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC ELA assessment to be considered as consistent enrollee students, non-special education students, and/or non-limited English language learners.

## **7<sup>th</sup> Grade - English/Language Arts**

- **Hellgate Elementary Enrollee Students: 38% of all Hellgate Elementary 7<sup>th</sup> grade students (67 students) were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC ELA assessment. 52% (35) of those students listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC ELA assessment are categorize (by local school district definition) as inconsistent enrollee students, special education students, and/or limited English language learners.**

However, that leaves 48% (32 students) of Hellgate Elementary 7<sup>th</sup> grade students who were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC ELA assessment to be considered as consistent enrollee students, non-special education students, and/or non-limited English language learners.

## **8<sup>th</sup> Grade - English/Language Arts**

- **Hellgate Elementary Enrollee Students: 49% of all Hellgate Elementary 8<sup>th</sup> grade students (78 students) were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC ELA assessment. 55% (43) of those students listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC ELA assessment are categorize (by local school district definition) as inconsistent enrollee students, special education students, and/or limited English language learners.**

However, that leaves 45% (35 students) of Hellgate Elementary 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC ELA assessment to be considered as consistent enrollee students, non-special education students, and/or non-limited English language learners.

**Mathematics: See Attached PDF Document entitled “2019 SBAC Mathematics Non-Proficient Student Indicators”**

## **3<sup>rd</sup> Grade - Mathematics**

- **Hellgate Elementary Enrollee Students: 37% of all Hellgate Elementary 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students (57 students) were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC Mathematics assessment. 53% (30 students) of those students listed as non-proficient on the 2019**

SBAC Mathematics assessment are categorize (by local school district definition) as inconsistent enrollee students, special education students, and/or limited English language learners.

However, that leaves 47% (27 students) of Hellgate Elementary 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students who were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC Mathematics assessment to be considered as consistent enrollee students, non-special education students, and/or non-limited English language learners.

## **4<sup>th</sup> Grade - Mathematics**

- **Hellgate Elementary Enrollee Students: 50% of all Hellgate Elementary 4<sup>th</sup> grade students (84 students) were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC MATHEMATICS assessment. 57% (48 students) of those students listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC MATHEMATICS assessment are categorize (by local school district definition) as inconsistent enrollee students, special education students, and/or limited English language learners.**

However, that leaves 43% (36 students) of Hellgate Elementary 4<sup>th</sup> grade students who were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC MATHEMATICS assessment to be considered as consistent enrollee students, non-special education students, and/or non-limited English language learners.

## **5<sup>th</sup> Grade - Mathematics**

- **Hellgate Elementary Enrollee Students: 46% of all Hellgate Elementary 5<sup>th</sup> grade students (83 students) were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC MATHEMATICS assessment. 57% (47 students) of those students listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC MATHEMATICS assessment are categorize (by local school district definition) as inconsistent enrollee students, special education students, and/or limited English language learners.**

However, that leaves 43% (36 students) of Hellgate Elementary 5<sup>th</sup> grade students who were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC MATHEMATICS assessment to be considered as consistent enrollee students, non-special education students, and/or non-limited English language learners.

## **6<sup>th</sup> Grade - Mathematics**

- **Hellgate Elementary Enrollee Students: 51% of all Hellgate Elementary 6<sup>th</sup> grade students (80 students) were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC MATHEMATICS assessment. 60% (48 students) of those students listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC MATHEMATICS assessment are categorize (by local school district definition) as inconsistent enrollee students, special education students, and/or limited English language learners.**

However, that leaves 40% (32 students) of Hellgate Elementary 6<sup>th</sup> grade students who were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC MATHEMATICS assessment to be considered as

consistent enrollee students, non-special education students, and/or non-limited English language learners.

## **7<sup>th</sup> Grade - English/Mathematics**

- **Hellgate Elementary Enrollee Students: 48% of all Hellgate Elementary 7<sup>th</sup> grade students (85 students) were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC MATHEMATICS assessment. 54% (46 students) of those students listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC MATHEMATICS assessment are categorize (by local school district definition) as inconsistent enrollee students, special education students, and/or limited English language learners.**

However, that leaves 46% (39 students) of Hellgate Elementary 7<sup>th</sup> grade students who were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC MATHEMATICS assessment to be considered as consistent enrollee students, non-special education students, and/or non-limited English language learners.

## **8<sup>th</sup> Grade - English/Mathematics**

- **Hellgate Elementary Enrollee Students: 57% of all Hellgate Elementary 8<sup>th</sup> grade students (89 students) were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC MATHEMATICS assessment. 64% (57 students) of those students listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC MATHEMATICS assessment are categorize (by local school district definition) as inconsistent enrollee students, special education students, and/or limited English language learners.**

However, that leaves 36% (32 students) of Hellgate Elementary 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who were listed as non-proficient on the 2019 SBAC MATHEMATICS assessment to be considered as consistent enrollee students, non-special education students, and/or non-limited English language learners.

## **Conclusion...**

Though on a district level, looking at aggregate assessment scores, Hellgate Elementary student assessment scores were higher than the Montana average for student assessment scores in reading and mathematics, the student assessment results were not where the school district wants the scores to be. In short, the student SBAC assessment results, at all grade levels, were and are unacceptable in a school district like Hellgate Elementary. Across all grade levels involved in the SBAC assessment process, there is room for student achievement improvement. There is no reason why Hellgate Elementary students cannot be more than seven points higher than the state assessment test score average in mathematics; more than nine points higher than the state assessment average in reading. Nor, is there any acceptable reason for 30% to over 50% of enrolled students, in any grade level, to be below proficiency status on the Smarter Balanced (SBAC) Assessment.

The school district recognizes that many of the local students participating in the SBAC assessment are recent enrollees (inconsistent student enrollee), or special education students, or English language learner students, and/or students coming from difficult socio-economic and as such, their respective assessment scores, more often than not, are lower than for those students that have been enrolled in the school district for multiple years or have the benefit of coming from more affluent economic backgrounds.

But, the school district will not use that reality as an excuse for its students not to perform on the SBAC assessment to an acceptable level based on local school district expectations. As educators, we simply must do better. Hellgate Elementary recognizes its responsibility to provide all students with a quality educational experience. Moreover, the school district must embrace its newest students and its “at-risk” students in the same fashion it embraces all other students and demand that teachers and administrators reach into their individual educational and leadership toolkits to maximize opportunities for all students to be successful.

To that end, Hellgate Elementary, in partnership with its school district stakeholders, pledges to (1) continue believing that equality of educational opportunity is a fundamental right for all children; (2) continue demonstrating the moral and political will to do the right thing by children, and (3) consistently working to understand both the science of teaching (grade level instructional material pedagogy) as well as the art of teaching (making positive connection with students and parents). The school district’s efforts in these areas will continue to be the non-negotiable core beliefs of the school district as it works to increase student achievement on the SBAC assessment as well increase student achievement in all academic program areas.

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