



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Wednesday, December 12, 2012

OSSE Contact: Ayan Islam (202) 316-1841; ayan.islam@dc.gov

DC CAS HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION SCORES RELEASED

District First in the Nation to Administer Standardized Health Exam

WASHINGTON, DC – District of Columbia students were evaluated for baseline proficiency in health and physical education content knowledge on the 2012 District of Columbia Comprehensive Assessment System (DC CAS) and answered an average of 62% of the questions correctly, according to statewide results released today by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). Washington, D.C. is the first state in the country to administer a statewide standardized health education assessment.

The test measured student's knowledge in health-related categories including nutrition, wellness, safety skills, disease prevention, physical education and healthy decision making. Over 11,000 students from 5th Grade, 8th Grade and High School enrolled in health courses across 179 District schools were selected to take the inaugural exam in April 2012, during the regularly scheduled DC CAS testing period. Scores are statewide and represent both District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and District public charter schools.

"Engaging students in health-based learning is an area our agency is committed to addressing every single day," said State Superintendent Hosanna Mahaley Jones, noting that Washington, D.C. has ranked first nationally in childhood summer nutrition for eight consecutive years and is also ranked first in providing breakfasts to low income children.

"Given the importance of wellness and physical education, the 2012 DC CAS findings allow us to establish the baseline indicators, subject and skill-specific instruction needed to align student's knowledge at all ages to the standards required of them to live safe and healthy lifestyles."

Citing the D.C. Healthy Schools Act of 2010 as one of the most ambitious health and nutrition initiatives in the country, Superintendent Mahaley Jones also praised Deputy Superintendent Dr. Sandra Schlicker and the OSSE Division of Wellness and Nutrition Services for their role in working with the Health Education Assessment Project (HEAP) of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) to ensure the DC CAS assessment items were aligned to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education's health and physical education standards.

"Research shows that healthier students perform better academically. DC continues to be cutting edge by placing emphasis on student health, understanding that good health is critical to the success of our students and the future generation of leaders in our city," added Dr. Schlicker, who also serves as a member of District of Columbia Mayor Vincent Gray's Healthy Youth and Schools Commission that advises the Mayor and the Council on health, wellness and nutrition issues concerning youth and schools in the District.



Superintendent Mahaley Jones also cited the creation of the statewide task force comprised of representatives from DCPS, PCS, Friends of Choice in Urban Schools (FOCUS), Student Support Center, D.C. State Board of Education, D.C. Department of Health, D.C. Council Committee on Health, Metro TeenAIDS, George Washington University, and American University to examine best practices in grade-level health and physical education. The state task force is another example of the collaborative efforts aimed to raise the level of student health awareness and proficiency in the District of Columbia.

The inaugural DC CAS Health And Physical Education results will be presented at the D.C. Council’s Committee of the Whole and the Committee on the Environment, Public Works and Transportation hearing for “The Implementation of the Healthy Schools Act of 2010” and “The District’s Environmental Literacy Plan” on Thursday, December 13, 2012 at 11:00 a.m.

The percentage of the questions answered correctly in the 2012 DC CAS Health and Physical Education, including percentage breakdowns by grade and category, are listed in the table below:

	Communication and Emotional Health	Safety Skills	Human Body and Personal Health	Disease Prevention	Nutrition	Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs	Healthy Decision Making	Physical Education
5 th Grade	77%	66%	44% ¹	66% ¹	70%	52%	59%	63%
8 th Grade	76%	68%	58% ¹	70%	50%	64%	70%	51%

	Human Growth and Development	Safety Skills	Sexuality and Reproduction	Disease Prevention	Nutrition	Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs	Locate Health Information and Assistance	Physical Education
High School	67%	78%	75% ¹	60%	62%	72%	46%	52%

¹ Includes items which parents may opt students out of.

###

For more information about OSSE, go to: www.osse.dc.gov; [www.twitter.com/OSSEDC](https://twitter.com/OSSEDC); www.facebook.com/OSSEDC

