

## SCCPSS Update: We Are Rising

In the memoir, “Tell Them We Are Rising”, the late Ruth Wright Hayre shares her story of changing 116 lives for the better, by providing them with the educational support and guidance needed for them to succeed. The odds were stacked against these students, and very few people believed in their potential success. But that success was seen and recognized when Hayre shared their individual stories of achievements, which sent the community the message that these students were indeed “rising”.

The Savannah –Chatham County Public School System is rising. Gains are being reached as we continue to strive to prepare **all** students for productive futures.

The state’s final Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) report by the Georgia Department of Education, which was released on October 1, revealed 100% of our 31 elementary schools have met AYP requirements under the federal No Child Left Behind Act. This means each one of these schools has met goals in three categories- test participation, academic achievement, and attendance. The final numbers show an increase from 74.5% to 85.4% of SCCPSS schools meeting the AYP requirements, an increase of over 10%. **We are rising...**

SCCPSS has seen a significant increase in students meeting or exceeding CRCT standards in mathematics, and this applies to students in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. From 2008 to 2009, SCCPSS 3<sup>rd</sup> graders increased their scores by 10 points. SCCPSS 5<sup>th</sup> grade students saw an increase of 12 points, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students saw a 6 point increase in their overall math scores. **We are rising...**

Statistics also show these grade levels saw a significant improvement in meeting or exceeding CRCT standards in science. In three years, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade scores increased by 14 points and 5<sup>th</sup> grade scores increased by 11 points. **We are rising...**

Area high schools also saw marked improvements in overall test scores. The district met the GHSGT (Georgia High School Graduation Test) Math requirements for all subgroups, with 71% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders passing all GHSGT content areas on the first attempt- up from 68% last year. **We are rising...**

The SCCPSS final graduation rate increased in one year from 63.9% to 72.2%, an increase of over 8%. The numbers show (from 2008 to 2009) more students of each subgroup within this district are receiving their diplomas. Graduation is up among: African American students (59.9% to 70.2%), Hispanic students (59.5% to 71.6%), White students (71.3% to 76.4%), and economically disadvantaged students (55.6% to 69.1%). **We are rising...**

Not surprisingly, as more and more SCCPSS students are graduating, the district is also seeing the dropout rate decrease. In 2008-09, 295 students dropped out of school. In 2006-07, there were 534 students who dropped out of school. **We are rising...**

The 2008-09 year shows out-of-school suspensions at 15.6%, a decrease from 19.8% of suspended students from the previous year. **We are rising...**

SCCPSS has also seen a decrease in a number of truant students. A truant student is considered to be a student with 5 or more unexcused absences. In 2006-07, the data revealed 26.2% of students considered to be truant. Three years later, those numbers are down to 14.6%. **We are rising...**

Overall, the data shows our school system **IS** rising. SCCPSS is making gains in the right direction, and realize these small victories will lead to big success. However, our journey to becoming a “second to none” school system continues. There is still more room for improvement. Our guiding mission is to ignite a passion for learning and teaching at high levels, and it is up to all of us in the Savannah-Chatham County community to bear our own personal responsibility for ensuring our school system improves, and not just improves, but excels.

**We Are Rising!**