

# WPSD Showing Academic Gains Coming out of the Pandemic

*The Colorado Department of Education's (CDE) District and School Performance Framework rates Woodland Park School District*

WOODLAND PARK, COLORADO, UNITED STATES, March 11, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Colorado Department of Education's](https://www.cde.state.co.us/) (CDE) District and School Performance Framework rated Woodland Park School District (WPSD) as "Green", the 5th highest of six overall district accreditation ratings, according to Tina Cassens, Executive Director of Student Success.

Cassens presented the latest state-wide assessment results at the March 9th Woodland Park School District board meeting.

"CDE assesses performance based on both student achievement and student growth on annual state assessments," she said. "Also, post-secondary readiness factors at the high school level; graduation rates, dropout rates, average scores on the SAT, and matriculation into a college or career certificate."

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*Dr. Mathew Neal, WPSD Superintendent*

Overall ratings are assigned by CDE in colors.

Within these key performance indicators, schools and districts earn points and ratings based on various metrics, including data for all students. English language learners, free/reduced-price lunch eligible, minority students, and students with disabilities are also part of the assessment.



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Cassens listed these positive achievement trends from the performance framework:

□ Overall, District Performance Framework scores meet expectations for English Language Arts and Evidence-Based Reading/Writing.

□ Middle school scores trend above the State. A key factor was meeting the unique needs of students eligible for free and reduced lunch.

“We still have areas of growth with student achievement,” she said. “Pandemic effect at the elementary level and achievement for students with disabilities; however, scores show incredible gains across all score bands for kindergarten through 3rd grade.”

As far as current benchmark math and reading scores, the District did very well. “Gains across all math score bands for 2nd and 3rd grade was achieved,” Cassens said. “We saw a consistent upward trend in middle school and high school math scores, as well,” Cassens added. “We need to dig deeper into current 7th-grade scores based on the CDE results,” Cassens said.

Cassens noted, “Our students are achieving higher, so we need to teach higher. As students enter middle school, we face a new dilemma with holding high expectations for students already above benchmark.”

“Given the reductions in state assessments over the past two years, along with disruptions to learning due to the pandemic, analysis of current district benchmark testing plays a critical role in evaluating student achievement,” Dr. Mathew Neal, Superintendent of Schools, said.

“We saw a positive gap in reading scores as the Freshman transition,” Cassens said. Current academic initiatives addressing student achievement and growth include:

□ Identifying and increasing targeted interventions for students performing below expectations.

□ Shifting the Preschool program to a more comprehensive model (WPSD Early Childhood Center).

□ Implementing a newly adopted K-5 Literacy program, Into Reading.

□ Reviewing K-5 Math curriculum.

□ Holding high expectations for middle and high school students already meeting benchmark expectations.

□ Enhancing Post-Secondary Readiness Programming district-wide, including:

□ Launching elementary and middle school self and career exploration programming,

□ Building a dedicated Career and College Readiness Center at the High School,

□ Increasing family programming on supporting post-secondary readiness.

“I am very proud of the students, teachers, and staff for the gains made and consistently upward

trends. We are clearly on the right path to build upon our academic foundation and establish higher expectations for our students, which includes a district culture where students are accountable and responsible for their own learning,” Neal said.

“Going ‘Green’ is a notable achievement. Attention to our students’ academic programs through the learning experience within the District is important for the successful development of young people in our society. We can use the CDE findings as a benchmark clearly, but the goal should be higher,” said Re-2 Board of Education President David Rusterholtz. “Our hats are off to the students, teachers, and staff that made this achievement possible.”

Historically, WPSD rates as a “green” accredited school by the CDE. However, in response to disruptions created by the pandemic, Colorado partially paused the performance frameworks for two school years (2020-21 and 2021-22), essentially holding schools and districts at 2019-20 levels. This pause created the need for District to examine internal assessment data to gauge student achievement and growth.

Cassens provided the Board of Education with an overview of historical and current data trends, noting post-pandemic scores show a strong upward trend of exceeding State standards at the middle school level and closing the achievement gap at the High School level.

To date, legislation or state board rules have not yet been passed to alter accountability for the 2022-23 school year.

Please go to the District website for the [overall results](#) to include rating categories and comparisons to neighboring schools.

About the Woodland Park School District Re-2: A Place of Becoming. Mission: Together, we embrace a culture where all learners are empowered to pursue intellectual, personal, and collective excellence. Woodland Park School District Re-2, 155 Panther Way, Woodland Park, CO 80863. Phone: (719) 686-2000. [Learn more](#) at <http://wpsdk12.org>

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