



## NJDOE News

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### **Bolden Presents [Newark Annual Progress Report](#)**

Student achievement among Newark students as measured by state assessments rose in four of eight areas in 1999-2000. Marion Bolden, state district superintendent in Newark, announced accomplishments achieved by the district to the State Board of Education today as part of its annual progress report.

As a state-operated school district, Newark's efforts to improve education are guided by a strategic plan designed to correct the district's deficiencies and ultimately return it to local control. The plan contains goals for improvement in many areas; the annual report ensures that each year's progress is reported publicly.

"While some of the basic challenges may persist since it became a state-operated school district in the summer of 1995, what has changed noticeably in Newark is the commitment to address the issues through Marion Bolden's novel efforts," said Commissioner of Education David Hespe. "Under her leadership, progress can be documented in a number of areas."

"The 1999-2000 school year has presented many challenges for the Newark Public Schools," Bolden said. "We were able to shine at key moments during the year. Some of our brighter moments were the ground-breaking for the Malcolm X Shabazz Athletic Center, national certification for two of our teachers, an 18<sup>th</sup> consecutive state championship for our Science High School Debate Team and the selection of one our teachers for the Fulbright Memorial Fund Teachers' Program.

"While these successes are noteworthy, we will ask more of our staff and the school community this year, and in the years to come, as we move forward on behalf of all of our students in a climate of continuous improvement."

Student achievement as measured by state tests given to fourth, eighth and eleventh graders increased in four of eight areas. The greatest one-year gain was reported for fourth-grade students who took the Elementary School Proficiency Assessment (ESPA) math exam. In May 2000, 33.5 percent of the students who took the test scored in the advanced proficient or proficient levels; compared with 29.2 percent in the previous year.

Bolden pointed to other areas of progress in 1999-2000, including:

- Continuation of Project GRAD, a program which offers college scholarships to graduating seniors.
- Lengthening the school day and the school year and creating the Office of Extended School Day Programs to oversee programs serving approximately 10,000 students at 65 sites.

In addition, Bolden reported that Newark's average daily student attendance rates continue to exceed the state certification standard of 90 percent and are holding at their highest level in decades.

She also reported many health and safety facilities projects were completed at various schools. The projects included repairing roofs and windows, improving heating systems, and upgrading and maintaining fire alarms. In addition, the district submitted plans for major facilities projects, including new facilities to replace the Belmont Runyon Elementary School and Central and Science high schools.