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Media contacts at end of release

Analysis finds disparities with report card's new Prepared for Success measures

COLUMBUS — Results of Ohio's new Prepared for Success measures on public school district state report cards indicate significant disparities between economically disadvantaged students and their peers, according to an analysis just released.

Three statewide education management organizations — the Ohio School Boards Association, Buckeye Association of School Administrators and Ohio Association of School Business Officials — requested the analysis through the Ohio Education Policy Institute (OEPI). Dr. Howard Fleeter, OEPI consultant, prepared the analysis of the state's recently released report card data.

Fleeter found stark differences among school districts in the college and career readiness of their students as measured by new indicators on Ohio's report cards. Districts with a high percentage of students from low socioeconomic circumstances generally score much lower on the new Prepared for Success measures.

The 2014-2015 school year is the first to be subject to a variety of new school district report card measures. Aimed at a more comprehensive look at the way school districts serve students, the new data provides yet another reminder that more work is needed to close the gap between wealthy and poor students, according to Fleeter. The measures include performance and participation rates on SAT and ACT tests, the number of students taking Advanced Placement tests and college matriculation rates.

After grouping the state's school districts by decile according to the percentage of economically disadvantaged students, Fleeter's analysis shows there is a 23.5 point percentage gap between the average four-year graduation rate in districts with fewer than 10% economically disadvantaged students (97.4%) and districts with greater than 90% economically disadvantaged students (73.9%). Fleeter also found that ACT test participation increases steadily as the percentage of lower income students declines across 9 of the 10 deciles.

— more —

Analysis shows disparities 2/2/2/2/2

“A very clear pattern exists whereby the likelihood of receiving an honors diploma increases dramatically as the percentage of economically disadvantaged students declines,” Fleeter said.

The three education organizations requesting the analysis hope to use the results to petition lawmakers to take action. Spokespersons for the groups say the new report card data is just one more piece of evidence pointing to the need for innovative solutions that go beyond the classroom.

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