



## **We Raise New Jersey Comments on State Assessment Score Release**

**Trenton, NJ** (September 4, 2019) – Members of the We Raise New Jersey coalition have released the following statement about today’s presentation on 2019 state assessment results by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) at the State Board meeting.

We Raise New Jersey is pleased to see student academic gains in several areas in the most recent state assessment results. Since 2015, the number of our tenth-grade students performing on grade level in English Language Arts has grown by 22 percentage points, while Algebra II proficiency has grown by 11 points. Students have made these impressive gains on our challenging state exams, which test critical thinking and other real-world skills aligned with our rigorous state standards.

We also congratulate the [new group of Lighthouse Districts recently recognized by the NJDOE](#) for their outstanding gains in student growth on state assessment performance over time. These districts show how committed educators, families, and students can meet high expectations, truly lighting the way for other leaders by sharing strategies and interventions that help all students achieve.

Our coalition is committed to supporting a public education system that provides every student with the opportunity to succeed in college, career, and life on whatever pathway they choose. Assessments offer one important way to measure how students are doing along that pathway. For example, we believe that the fluctuations seen in some scores shared today, such as small drops from previous years in third and fourth grade reading and Algebra I, point to the need to continue supporting our educators with data about student progress. The Lighthouse Districts demonstrate how assessment data, among other measures, help to illuminate strengths and weaknesses in the academic progress of individual students, schools, and districts and show where more support is needed.

As state leaders contemplate the future of New Jersey’s assessment system, we must build upon what is working with the current system, maintain high standards for all, and ensure educators, families, and the public have access to timely, transparent data about the achievement of all student groups. We must consider changes to the system thoughtfully, soliciting input from all stakeholders and taking adequate time for discussing, testing, and implementing anything new. Our students deserve no less.

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**About We Raise New Jersey:** WRNJ advocates for the high-quality education every student deserves to be prepared for success in college, career, and community by harnessing the collective strength of New Jersey’s influential education, business, and civic organizations. Coalition members include: New Jersey PTA, JerseyCAN, New Jersey Chamber of Commerce, African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey, New Jersey Council of County Colleges, New Jersey Business & Industry Association, and the New Jersey Charter Schools

Association. For more information, visit <http://www.werajen.org/>, and follow [@WeRaiseNJ](https://www.facebook.com/WeRaiseNJ/) and <https://www.facebook.com/WeRaiseNJ/>.