

New Bedford Public Schools Accountability Data Shows Continued Progress

Two schools become Level 1 schools
Pulaski and Taylor named Commendation Schools
Improvement continues across the district
All three middle schools gaining ground

Highlights:

- New Bedford Public Schools has three Level 1 schools, the first time since 2012 that two schools in New Bedford became Level 1.
- Two schools that achieved Level 1 status, Casimir Pulaski and William H. Taylor, were named Commendation Schools.
- Across the district, 16 schools showed improvement as they increased in their percentile rankings for student growth.
- Keith, Roosevelt and Normandin middle schools all moved out of their past ranking in the 5th percentile.
- Rankings are based on the performance of other schools with the same grade spans across Massachusetts.

New Bedford Public Schools showed continued progress and as part of that improvement, the district now has three schools – Pulaski, Swift and Taylor – designated as Level 1, the state's highest accountability level. Pulaski and Taylor made major gains and rose in levels, while seven schools showed strong progress, and six showed moderate progress, a total of 16 schools improving in state percentile rankings

While the state ranks schools by accountability levels, 1 to 5, with Level 1 as its highest accountability level, all schools are also ranked by percentile. Percentile rankings

show where schools are compared to other schools in their grade spans across the state based on student achievement and growth as measured by indicators including standardized test scores (e.g., a school in the 45th percentile is ranked higher than 45% of other schools with its grade spans in Massachusetts). Some schools may be designated in a higher percentile but also in a lower accountability level; this means that while they may be performing more strongly than they had been, they did not meet all goals that would move them into a higher accountability level.

Level 1 Schools: Pulaski, Taylor, and Swift

Casimir Pulaski School shifted significantly from a Level 3 school to a Level 1 school; William H. Taylor School moved from Level 2 into Level 1; and Jireh Swift School remained a Level 1 school. To increase in level as Pulaski and Taylor did, students must demonstrate growth by meeting goals set at the school level, including performance on standardized assessments; this ranking is also based on performance over four years.

Commendation Schools

Pulaski and Taylor were named Commendation Schools, the first New Bedford schools to receive this status since 2010. Commendation Schools are a select group of Level 1 schools recognized by the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. In New Bedford's case, Taylor was recognized for its high progress and Pulaski was recognized for high progress and for narrowing the proficiency gap for all students in all areas.

All Three Middle Schools Improve Percentile Rankings

The city's middle schools, all three of which were ranked in the 5th percentile statewide in 2014, have improved in their percentile rankings and have all moved out of the bottom 5th percent:

Progress Across the District

With the 16 New Bedford schools that increased their percentile ranking, approximately 8,330 students attending these schools are now outperforming more of their academic peers from across the state than they had been in 2014.

Schools whose percentile rankings increased include: Elizabeth Carter Brooks School; Sgt. William H. Carney Academy; James B. Congdon School; John B. DeValles School; Alfred J. Gomes School; John Hannigan School; Ellen R. Hathaway School; Keith Middle School; Abraham Lincoln School; Normandin Middle School; Casimir Pulaski School; Thomas R. Rodman School; Roosevelt Middle School; Jireh Swift School; William H. Taylor School; and Betsey B. Winslow School.

The Sgt. William H. Carney Academy increased to the 50th percentile, previously remaining consistently stagnant in the 42nd and 43rd percentiles for years; Carney has now attained the highest percentile in the district.

School districts who took the PARCC assessment this year were subject to a 'held harmless' clause from the DESE, meaning that schools whose percentiles dropped would not be considered for being moved down by accountability levels.

NEW BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS: PERCENTILE RANKINGS 2014-2015

Big Gains	School	2014	2015	Progress
Level 1	Pulaski (3)	15	35	↑ 2
Level 1	Taylor (2)	25	47	↑ 2
Level 1	Swift (1)	32	35	↑ 3
Strong Progress				
	Brooks	5	14	↑ 9
	Carney	42	50	↑
	Rodman	10	18	↑ 8
	Winslow	22	26	↑ 4
	Keith	5	10	↑ 5
	Normandin	5	9	↑ 4
	Roosevelt	5	11	↑ ↑
Moderate Progress				
	Gomes	1	2	↑ 1
	Congdon	22	24	↑ 2
	DeValles	5	6	↑ 1
	Hannigan	5	7	↑ 2
	Hathaway	3	4	↑ 1
	Lincoln	8	10	↑ 2
Concerns				
	Ashley (2)	24	17	↓ 7
	Campbell (2)	29	23	↓ 6
	Pacheco (2)	40	17	↑ 23
	Hayden McFadden (4)	1	1	—
	Parker (5)	18	8	↓ 10
	NBHS (4)	2	2	—

“The news of the state’s accountability report affirms the

work that staff and students across our district are doing,” said Dr. Durkin. “These improved rankings are our stories of success – at our three Level 1 schools, a rise in percentile rank at all three middle schools, strong growth at four elementary schools and increases at six other elementary schools. Like the results of our PARCC assessment, these rankings show that our students can succeed and that we are building an excellent school system for all kids in New Bedford.”

“We remain concerned about Level 4 school Hayden-McFadden as it is in year four of the transformation school improvement model, and we will be carefully reviewing how we are working there so that we can reset the conditions that will lead to much stronger, accelerated progress,” she added. “New Bedford High School, in its first year of turnaround, is moving ahead in ensuring the supports in place are being utilized to their fullest extent. John Avery Parker School has adjusted the models for how staff is serving students and is on the right track toward progress for every Parker scholar.”

“These results reflect real progress in our schools. Much work remains, but it’s clear that the administration and teachers are moving the New Bedford Public Schools in the right direction,” said Mayor Jon Mitchell.