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SUPERINTENDENT

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Cobb Students Excel on Writing Portion Of Graduation Test, Top State & Metro Averages

Ninety-eight percent of Cobb County 11th graders met or exceeded standards on the 2010 Georgia High School Writing Test. Once again, Cobb students' average scale score of 228 is higher than average scale scores for metropolitan Atlanta and Georgia (See Table I). These results were a strong improvement from 2009, when 94 percent of Cobb 11th graders met or exceeded standards and the average scale score was 224.

The scale used to measure achievement ranges from 100 to 350, with a score of 200 as "meets expectations," and 250 as "exceeds expectations." Administered in September to 6,227 students, the writing test requires students to write a persuasive paper on an assigned topic in a limited time window. The assessment is the part of the Georgia High School Graduation Test, a requirement for all students pursuing a high school diploma.

Cobb's population of Students with Disabilities (SWD) and English Language Learners (ELL) also performed well on the writing test. In Cobb, 90 percent of Students with Disabilities met or exceeded standards, compared to just 74 percent statewide (see Table III). Eighty-three percent of ELL students tested in the district met or exceeded expectations, compared to 79 percent statewide.

Individual schools across the district fared well on the writing test. At least ninety percent of students met or exceeded expectations at all of the district's 17 high schools. Eleven district high schools – Allatoona, Harrison, Hillgrove, Kell, Kennesaw Mountain, Lassiter, North Cobb, Pope Sprayberry, Walton and Wheeler – led the others with 98 percent or more of students scoring at or above expectations (see Table I).

A passing score on the High School Graduation Test is one requirement for all students pursuing a high school diploma. The writing portion of the test was administered in September to Cobb County 11th grade students who were required to write a persuasive paper on an assigned topic. The GHSWT is two hours in length, with 100 minutes of student writing time.

The GPS domains, or broad themes, covered by the writing test include *Ideas, Organization, Style, and Convention*. The *Ideas* domain measures the degree to which the writer establishes a controlling idea and elaborates the main points with examples, illustrations, facts or details. In the *Organization* domain, students are assessed on their ability to arrange ideas in a clear order consistent with the persuasive genre. *Style* points are

awarded based on the writer's ability to control language and engage the reader. The *Conventions* domain measures the degree to which the writer demonstrates control of sentence formation, usage, and mechanics. Test scores are ranked on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest. In each domain, Cobb 11th graders scored higher than their peers across the state (see Table II). Three of Cobb's high schools had domain scores that were consistently higher than averages for the district, metro area and state (see Table II).

In March, high school juniors will be tested on language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science portions of the Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHSGT). Students will have multiple opportunities to retake any portion(s) of the test they fail before graduation.

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Cobb County School District
2010 Georgia High School Graduation Writing Test Results
Grade 11 First Time Test Takers

TABLE I

	# Tested	Scale Score	% Meets + Exceeds
Georgia	95,661	224	95
Metro Area Districts	35,265	226	96
Cobb	6,277	228	98
SCHOOL RESULTS			
Allatoona	329	229	99
Campbell	349	228	96
Harrison	525	229	99
Hillgrove	394	231	99
Kell	321	226	99
Kennesaw Mountain	365	230	98
Lassiter	435	236	99
McEachern	454	220	96
North Cobb	468	226	98
Oakwood	18	218	94
Osborne	299	215	91
Pebblebrook	263	222	96
Pope	398	237	99
South Cobb	358	220	97
Sprayberry	312	227	99
Walton	614	235	99
Wheeler	365	227	98

* Percentage of students may not equal 100 due to rounding

tfc - Too few To count

** Data Not Available

Cobb County School District
2010 Georgia High School Graduation Writing Test
Domain Results for 11th Grade First Time Test Takers

TABLE II

	Ideas (2)	Organization (1)	Style (1)	Conventions (1)
Georgia	3	3.2	3.3	3.2
Metro Area Districts	3	3.3	3.4	3.3
Cobb	3	3.3	3.5	3.4
SCHOOL RESULTS				
Allatoona	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.4
Campbell	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.3
Harrison	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.4
Hillgrove	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.5
Kell	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.4
Kennesaw Mountain	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5
Lassiter	3.6	3.6	3.8	3.7
McEachern	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.1
North Cobb	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.3
Oakwood	3.2	2.9	3.0	3.0
Osborne	2.9	2.9	3.0	2.8
Pebblebrook	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.1
Pope	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.7
South Cobb	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.1
Sprayberry	3.3	3.3	3.5	3.4
Walton	3.5	3.5	3.7	3.6
Wheeler	3.3	3.3	3.5	3.4

Domains are weighted differently and range from 1 (low) to 5 (high). Weights are in parentheses.

Cobb County School District
2010 Georgia High School Graduation Writing Test Results
Special Populations

TABLE III

	Regular Ed		Special Ed		ELL	
	Mean SS	% Meet / Exceed	Mean SS	% Meet / Exceed	Mean SS	% Meet / Exceed
Georgia	NA**	97	NA**	74	NA**	79
Cobb	229	99	214	90	209	83
SCHOOL RESULTS						
Allatoona	229	99	223	100	NA**	NA**
Campbell	230	97	210	86	208	93
Harrison	230	100	215	94	NA**	NA**
Hillgrove	231	98	220	94	NA**	NA**
Kell	227	99	215	90	NA**	NA**
Kennesaw Mountain	231	98	220	100	NA**	NA**
Lassiter	238	100	220	97	NA**	NA**
McEachern	220	96	215	94	NA**	NA**
North Cobb	227	98	213	88	NA**	NA**
Oakwood	218	94	NA**	NA**	NA**	NA**
Osborne	216	94	205	75	210	90
Pebblebrook	223	98	204	69	NA**	NA**
Pope	239	100	221	91	NA**	NA**
South Cobb	221	98	210	83	213	91
Sprayberry	228	98	216	100	NA**	NA**
Walton	236	100	216	97	NA**	NA**
Wheeler	228	97	219	100	212	88

Mean SS: Scale score based on 100-350 scale
tfc: too few to count
NA** not reported