Pulaski School Board gets lesson on state assessment results, changes

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COMMONWEALTH JOURNAL

SOMERSET — For now, Pulaski County Schools are doing reasonably well when it comes to state student assessments. With changes on the horizon for the future, hopes are to do even better in 2027.

Jenny Blankenship, who serves as assessment coordinator for the Pulaski County School System, gave a presentation on the district's results for the 2025-26 statewide testing at the November meeting of the Pulaski County Board of Education on Tuesday.

Kentucky uses this to indicate a school's performance overall or in certain areas. The five color-coded levels area: Blue for Very High, Green for High, Yellow for Medium, Orange for Low and Red for Very Low. Each district receives an overall score for three school levels (elementary, middle school and high school), as well as scores for each individual school in districts that have more than one school.

Blankenship informed the board that all three levels were in the "green" category, or high-performing. She also noted that the schools have been taking the same assessment for five years, and compared the results this year to the previous four years. For elementary and middle schools, they maintained green status over the entire period; high schools were blue last year, but dropped just a level to green this time.

"We're very proud of the work that's been done consistently in Pulaski County Schools for five years because we have been green or higher consistently with this system," she said.

In particular, on the subject of middle school reading performance, Blankenship said the previous year saw a jump to 63% of middle school students at the "Proficient" or "Distinguished" level, the two best possible, and they were able to maintain that for this most recent round of assessments. Moreover, students with disabilities at that level jumped from 17% to 21% in reading, "which is the highest is has been since we've had this accountability system."

One area to pay attention to, on the other hand, is in math regarding middle school students with disabilities, where the state overall has a higher average than Pulaski County Schools, which is "very rare," she said; "We typically outperform the state in most everything, but that has been consistent since 2022-23, so ... something to work on."

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Jenny Blankenship (left), district assessment coordinator for Pulaski County Schools, gave a presentation to the Pulaski County Board of Education Tuesday on the 25-26 state assessment results. | CHRISTOPHER HARRIS

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