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For Immediate Release

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Cobb Graduates Outperform their Peers On the ACT for the Tenth Consecutive Year

The Cobb County School District's recently-graduated Class of 2015 outperformed their peers across the state and nation on the ACT assessment of college readiness. The average composite score of 22.5 was three-tenths of a point higher than last year's score and 1.5 points higher than the state and national averages of 21.0. Ten of Cobb's 16 high schools posted average ACT composite scores higher than the state and national average.

The ACT assessment measures high school students' overall educational development and their readiness for the challenge of core college classes. Scores on the ACT range from 1 to 36. The ACT is comprised of 4 subject-area tests: English, mathematics, reading, and science. Cobb graduates continue to exceed state and national averages in all four subject areas. The district average ACT subject-area score for reading was 23.0. The average for English and science was 22.2, and for mathematics the average was 21.9.

The ACT college readiness benchmark indicates that a larger percentage of Cobb graduates are prepared for college-level work than their peers statewide. For College Algebra 13% more Cobb tested graduates are prepared for college-level work compared to their state peers. In all four subject areas, the percentage of Cobb tested graduates that are ready for college-level work is at least 10% higher than the state percentage. In English 74% of tested graduates from Cobb are ready for a college-level English composition course, which is a 2% improvement over last year. For all subject areas, the percentage of students ready for college-level coursework increased between 2% and 4%.

The increases in subject-area test scores on the ACT demonstrate a positive benefit of having highly effective and engaging teachers who have a solid background in their subject area. Under the leadership of Superintendent Chris Ragsdale, the Cobb County School District has implemented initiatives to support and develop teachers with these qualities. District teachers and staff are committed to preparing students for college and their future careers.

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An example is Walton High School, which posted the highest Cobb ACT Composite score. According to Walton Principal Judith McNeill, “I am very pleased with the overall performance of the Walton students. I attribute this to the rigorous academic programs in place at Walton and to the continued support of the Walton parents and community. Walton is preparing students for advanced careers and professions in the 21st century, and the faculty take this challenge very seriously. In addition to the ACT scores, we look forward to SAT and other national measures which continue to show that the work and dedication of Walton's teachers, students, and parents is exemplary when compared to our peers around the state and nation.”

ACT scores reflect the performance of almost 4,000 Cobb high-school seniors (55% of all 2015 graduating seniors) who took the ACT voluntarily in either their sophomore, junior, or senior years. A five-year comparison of composite and subject-area scores for the district can be found in Table 1. The percentage of Cobb graduates choosing to take the ACT over the last five years can be found in Table 2. Composite scores and the percentage of students taking the ACT for each Cobb high school can be found in Table 3.

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Highlights of ACT Scores for the Cobb County School District Released on August 26, 2015

- Cobb's scores exceeded those of the state and nation on all sections of the ACT (English, math, reading, and science) for the tenth consecutive year.
- 3,988 Cobb students in the Class of 2015 participated in the ACT during their junior or senior year of high school. Of these students, 74% demonstrated readiness for college level coursework in English, 51% in Math, 56% in Social Studies, and 47% in Science. Overall, 35% are college ready in all content areas.
- Students taking a more rigorous course of study in high school tend to have higher scores than those taking a minimum curricular sequence. Students taking physics in addition to biology and chemistry scored 2.5 points higher on the ACT Science test than those taking a general science instead of physics.
- Four high schools had composite scores higher than 24.0 points: Walton 26.4, Lassiter 25.1, Pope 24.4, and Wheeler 24.3.
- Ten high schools had composite scores higher than the national average of 21.0: Walton 26.4, Lassiter 25.1, Pope 24.4, Wheeler 24.3, Kennesaw Mountain 23.9, Harrison 23.1, Hillgrove 22.4, Allatoona 22.3, Kell 22.1, and North Cobb 21.4.

Table 1. Five-year (2011–2015) Comparison of ACT Scores for the CCSD (Test Scale: 1 – 36)

A. Composite Scores

Year	National	Georgia	Cobb
2015	21.0	21.0	22.5
2014	21.0	20.8	22.2
2013	20.9	20.7	22.1
2012	21.1	20.7	22.2
2011	21.1	20.6	22.4

B. English Scores

Year	National	Georgia	Cobb
2015	20.4	20.6	22.2
2014	20.3	20.3	21.8
2013	20.2	20.2	21.8
2012	20.5	20.1	21.8
2011	20.6	20.1	22.1

C. Math Scores

Year	National	Georgia	Cobb
2015	20.8	20.5	21.9
2014	20.9	20.5	21.8
2013	20.9	20.3	21.7
2012	21.1	20.6	22.0
2011	21.1	20.7	22.5

D. Reading Scores

Year	National	Georgia	Cobb
2015	21.4	21.6	23.0
2014	21.3	21.4	22.7
2013	21.1	21.2	22.6
2012	21.3	21.0	22.6
2011	21.3	20.8	22.6

E. Science Scores

Year	National	Georgia	Cobb
2015	20.9	20.9	22.2
2014	20.8	20.7	21.9
2013	20.7	20.5	21.8
2012	20.9	20.5	21.9
2011	20.9	20.3	21.9

Table 2. Five-year (2011–2015) Comparison of the Percent of Graduates Taking the ACT in CCSD

	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
National	1,623,112		1,666,017		1,799,243		1,845,787		1,924,436	
Georgia	42,929	(47%)	47,169	(52%)	48,505	(51%)	50,697	(53%)	54,653	(58%)
Cobb	3,249	(45%)	3,571	(51%)	3,651	(50%)	3,663	(51%)	3,988	(55%)

Note: District percentages are based on the number of graduates each year.

Table 3. Three-year (2013–2015) Comparison of the Number of Students Taking the ACT and the Composite ACT Scores at Each High School in CCSD (Test Scale: 1–36)

Area/School	Number of Students Tested*			Percentage Tested**			Composite Score		
	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015
National	1,799,243	1,845,787	1,924,436	–	–	–	20.9	21.0	21.0
Georgia	48,505	50,697	54,653	51.0%	53.0%	58.0%	20.7	20.8	21.0
Cobb	3,651	3,663	3,988	50.1%	50.9%	55.1%	22.1	22.2	22.5
Allatoona	191	188	205	47.5%	52.7%	47.3%	22.1	21.6	22.3
Campbell	200	205	213	43.4%	43.7%	45.1%	19.6	19.8	19.7
Harrison	276	294	272	57.1%	60.2%	60.9%	23.1	23.3	23.1
Hillgrove	297	306	346	60.5%	60.1%	65.5%	21.4	21.8	22.4
Kell	188	207	219	54.7%	63.3%	62.4%	22.0	21.5	22.1
Kennesaw Mtn.	245	223	293	53.3%	49.6%	59.4%	23.1	23.7	23.9
Lassiter	311	298	314	68.8%	62.6%	67.7%	24.3	24.7	25.1
McEachern	216	219	239	45.4%	45.0%	51.6%	18.6	19.1	19.5
North Cobb	289	323	384	51.7%	56.8%	63.2%	20.7	20.8	21.4
Osborne	90	94	97	25.5%	25.5%	27.7%	17.3	17.0	16.7
Pebblebrook	194	181	162	52.3%	46.8%	42.6%	18.2	18.1	18.7
Pope	268	242	285	64.1%	65.2%	69.0%	25.2	24.8	24.4
South Cobb	172	152	172	41.0%	36.5%	41.5%	18.6	19.2	18.7
Sprayberry	167	155	189	40.4%	38.6%	49.3%	20.6	20.3	20.9
Walton	384	417	411	65.6%	62.3%	67.8%	25.8	25.7	26.4
Wheeler	159	159	186	40.2%	36.8%	44.0%	24.6	24.5	24.3

*Students attending alternative district schools are included in the district total and district averages, but those schools are not listed in the table to protect individual student’s privacy. As a result, district totals may be higher than total of all schools in the table.

**Percentages based on the number of graduates. National percentages were not available at the time of this release.