

Are We There Yet?

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I am sure we have all experienced that question sometime in our lives, whether we are taking a trip with the family or evaluating the progress towards a goal – personal or professional. We always want to know how we are doing. It is human nature to evaluate and check our status, regardless of the event in which we are involved. Where are we and where are we headed has always been questions that are important to answer. It is essential for us to make sure our efforts are fruitful and the amount of time invested is showing dividends. Time is an important commodity.

I share this introduction with you because it holds true as it relates to our results from the state – the ACT/MME assessment, which have finally been made available to the schools. We anticipate that the state will make them available for public viewing in the near future.

Are we there yet? In regards to the high school scores on the ACT/MME, the answer is no, and, to be very honest, no school will ever reach the 100% level on all aspects of this assessment. Shooting for that attainment is unrealistic for any school, including ours. However, we should focus on making progress towards the improvement of our scores. That being said, we did!

Congratulations to the class of 2008. They surpassed their predecessors and have set a new benchmark for the future classes to use as an achievement guide. We at Reed City High School use these assessment results for the evaluation of curriculum, teaching strategies, course offerings, and testing center accommodations. They give us the opportunity to make necessary adjustments to improve the way that we do business. If used correctly, they are meaningful tools of evaluation.

The test scores show that the class of 2008 surpassed the state averages in four of the six assessments tested: Reading, Science, Social Studies and English Language Arts. The areas we scored slightly below the state average were in Mathematics and Writing. This is significant progress for Reed City High School. (Please refer to the chart below)

Michigan Merit Exam Scores Spring 2007 in Percentages

School District	Math	Reading	Science	SS	Writing	ELA
Reed City HS	44	71	63	87	39	54
State Average	46	60	56	83	40	51
AYP Targets 2007	44	na	na	na	na	52

Are we where we would like to be in regards to test results? No! But to have this type of gain shows the adjustments and new approaches in addressing the ACT/MME have shown to be appropriate and positive. The high school has taken a very serious approach to the meaning of the ACT as a local, regional, and state evaluation tool. We have made it important to students and faculty alike. Making a test a priority has had a positive impact on the test takers, and the scores they received show they approached it with more seriousness.

Are we there yet? The answer will be no for quite some time, but the focus needs to be on the path that is being used and the progress that is being shown. We can take a lot of pride on the advancement we have made and be happy to have small celebrations along the way as we continue to focus on the process.

In closing, there needs to be a special thanks to all those who made this test taking cycle one of accomplishment. We appreciate the support from the superintendent's office, the board of education, the test supervisors and proctors, the transportation and maintenance department, our faculty, and, most importantly, our test takers. We made significant gains, and that is a tribute to everyone.