

News Release: PGCPs CEO Highlights Achievements, Action Plan in 'State of the Education System' Address

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UPPER MARLBORO, MD – Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) Chief Executive Officer Dr. Kevin M. Maxwell highlighted the system's progress in "moving towards greatness" Thursday as he challenged business leaders and residents to play a more active role.

Hosted by the Greater Prince George's Business Roundtable, the "State of the Education System" address offered an overview of three years of steady progress despite recent challenges.

"For many, the past several months would have been enough reason to get off the road. ...But that's not who we are. That's not who I am," said Dr. Maxwell. "Prince George's County Public Schools will not be defined by crisis. We will not quit."

Dr. Maxwell went on to discuss the school system's "roadmaps" to greatness – the Student Safety Task Force recommendations and The Promise of PGCPS strategic plan.

But that's not all, he said.

"As many of you know from your own experiences, reforming an organizational culture requires holding people accountable," said Dr. Maxwell. "We will not protect an adult's job at the expense of a child's well-being. We will keep moving past challenges towards greatness."

Among the highlights:

Graduation rates – Prince George's County's high school graduation rate is at an all-time high of approximately 79 percent, five percentage points higher than 2013. Nearly every student in the graduating class at the Academy of Health Sciences received both a high school diploma and an associate's degree on the same day. The school's graduation rate is 100 percent for two years in a row. Three additional high schools – DuVal, Eleanor Roosevelt and Frederick Douglass – boast graduation rates of 90 percent. The three schools with the highest rate increases across the state came from Prince George's County.

Learning assessments – Results on state exams continue to trend upwards. At almost every grade level, African American students in Prince George's County Public Schools outperform their peers across the state, especially in reading comprehension. Middle school students who come from families with low income are ranked in the top eight statewide in English language arts.

Results are also encouraging for pre-kindergarten students across all racial, ethnic and economic backgrounds, including students with limited English proficiency and those with special needs. “We believe this is the result of our investment in full-day prekindergarten. We started with eight full-day pre-kindergarten sites four years ago; and now we have 50,” said Dr. Maxwell.

Staff awards and recognitions – Buck Lodge Middle School science teacher Elizabeth Lazaro received President Obama’s Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, which carries with it a \$10,000 award from the National Science Foundation. Oxon Hill High School Principal Dr. Jean-Paul Cadet is a Washington Principal Ambassador Fellow at the U.S. Department of Education, selected by Secretary John B. King.

Community investments and partnerships – The school system’s nationally-recognized career academies have received investments of \$7 million from the U.S. Department of Labor and from regional organizations, such as Venture Philanthropy Partners’ \$15 million Ready for Work initiative. Major donors include Kaiser Permanente Mid-Atlantic Region (\$1 million) and the Washington Redskins Charitable Foundation (\$300,000).

To read Dr. Maxwell’s prepared remarks, **click here** (<http://www1.pgcps.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=234326>). To view the video presentation from the event, **click here** (https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=lsv61Hbox_4).

The school system will hold a "State of the Schools" event for families and community members later this fall.

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Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS), one of the nation's 20th largest school districts, has 201 schools and centers, more than 133,000 students and nearly 20,000 employees. The school system serves a diverse student population from urban, suburban and rural communities located in the Washington, DC suburbs. PGCPS is nationally recognized for college and career-readiness programs that provide students with unique learning opportunities, including dual enrollment and language immersion.

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