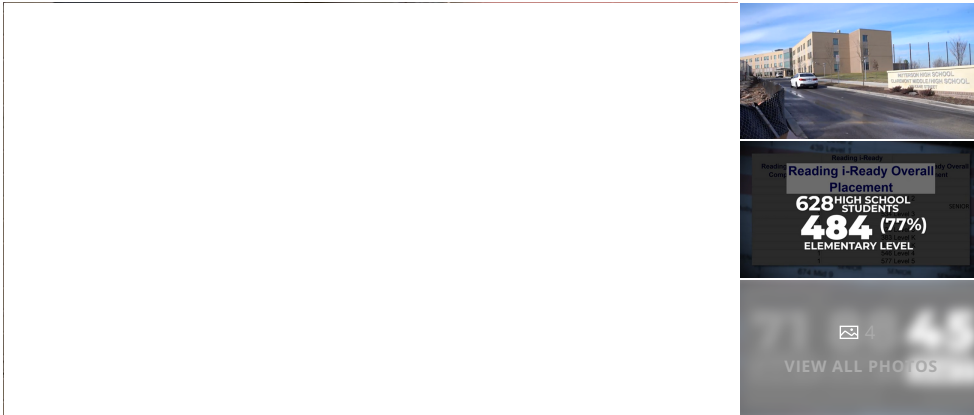


## 77% tested at Baltimore high school read at elementary level, some at kindergarten level

by CHRIS PAPST | WBFF Staff  
Mon, January 31st 2022, 10:30 PM EST



77% of students tested at Patterson High school read at an elementary school level. (WBFF)

BALTIMORE (WBFF) — A Baltimore City teacher came forward with devastating information that showed 77% of students tested at one high school are reading at an elementary school level.

The teacher works at Patterson High School, one of the largest high schools in Baltimore with a 61% graduation rate and a nearly \$12 million budget. We agreed not to identify this source who fears retribution for giving Project Baltimore the results of iReady assessments.

**“Our children deserve better. They really do,” the Patterson High School teacher told Project Baltimore. “As a whole, the system has failed them.”**



Patterson High School, one of the largest high schools in Baltimore with a 61 percent graduation rate and a nearly \$12 million budget (WBFF)

iReady assessments are given in Baltimore City Schools to help determine at which grade level a student is performing in math and reading. The scores are not made public. If the media requests them, the district will redact most of the results. But Project Baltimore obtained the results for all of the students tested at Patterson High School.

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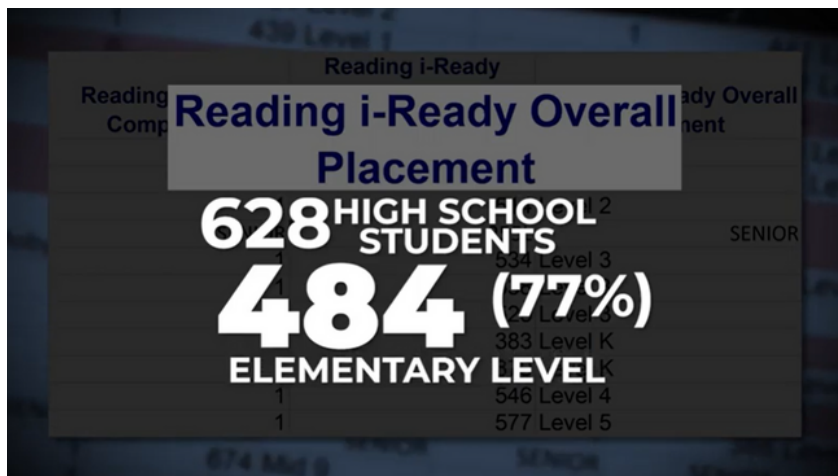
In reading, 628 Patterson High School students took the test. Out of those students, 484 of them, or 77%, tested at an elementary school reading level. That includes 71 high school students who were reading at a kindergarten level and 88 students reading at a first-grade level. Another 45 are reading at a second-grade level. Just 12 students tested at Patterson High School, were reading at grade level, which comes out to just 1.9%.

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Project Baltimore asked how a student who reads at an elementary school level could reach high school.

"They're pushed through," replied the teacher. "They're not ready for the workforce. They're not ready for further education."

When asked if it's social promotion, the teacher replied, "Yes."



In reading, 628 Patterson High School students took the test. Out of those students, 484 of them, or 77 percent, tested at an elementary school reading level (WBFF)

Baltimore City Schools has a "one fail" policy, which states, "students cannot be retained a second time prior to ninth grade." That means students go to the next grade no matter how little work is completed. North Avenue has pointed to studies showing students learn better with grade-level peers saying, "multiple retentions should be a last resort for students."

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"These numbers aren't lying," the teacher told Project Baltimore. "We truly need the families to see these numbers and to understand what it is."

Project Baltimore, over the years, has interviewed parents, teachers and community activists who all say children are being pushed through the school system without getting the education they need.

*"It's killing the lives of thousands of black kids," Carl Stokes, a former Baltimore City councilmember and charter school operator, told Project Baltimore in April 2021.*

These iReady scores, which the public never sees, appear to validate what some already know — that many high school students, including 77% of those tested at Patterson, read at elementary school levels.

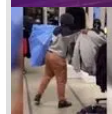
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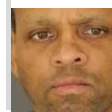
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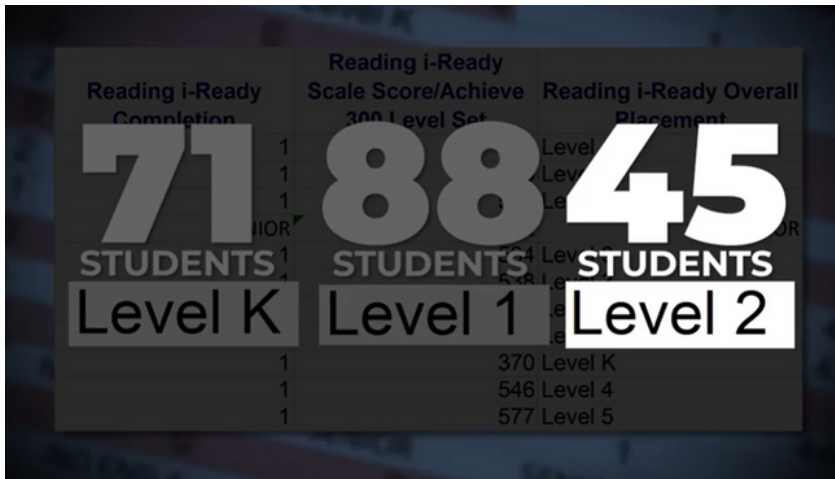


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71 high school students who were reading at a kindergarten level and 88 students reading at a first-grade level. Another 45 are reading at a second-grade level (WBFF)

“We got smart and bright kids. I mean, these kids aren't failing because they can't do it. They're failing because they know they can, that's the difference,” Marvin Lee, a former Baltimore City schools teacher told Project Baltimore, in October 2020.

North Avenue declined an interview, but said in a statement: “iReady scores do not provide a complete or final picture of student performance.” The district said this was the first in-person checkpoint following “18-months of disruption caused by the pandemic.” The statement went on to say, “Over 40% of participating students were classified as English language learners and did not receive the accommodations they would receive on state-required assessments.”

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“It's heartbreaking. It's heartbreaking to see a child that, when you talk to them outside of the classroom setting, of what are your dreams? And they have these amazing dreams and hopes for the future. But then you realize that with the skills that they have, with the level that they're at, they're going to have to work a thousand times harder to achieve,” the teacher told Project Baltimore. “Our children need a future.”

[Baltimore City Schools Statement](#) by [Chris Berinato](#) on Scribd

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As we previously stated to WBFF-TV, i-Ready scores do not provide a complete or final picture of student performance. City Schools uses i-Ready to provide checkpoints on student progress during the school year. **This was the first in-person checkpoint for students at Patterson High School after 18 months of disruption caused by the pandemic. For some students, their last in-person experience was in middle school during their seventh-grade year.**

Not all students at Patterson High participated in the i-Ready diagnostic on September 9-10, 2021- as many as 616 of the school's 1,045 students took either the math or reading assessment. The diagnostic was given 6.5 days of school after the school year started on 8/31/2021.

Over 40% of participating students were classified as English language learners and did not receive the accommodations they would receive on state-required assessments such as the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP). This means they took the test in English despite not having a full command of the language.

- o Note: English Learners are exempt from the ELA state assessment during their first year in the country. Students are assessed on i-Ready without accommodations to provide teachers with a complete understanding of their students' strengths and areas where additional supports are needed. This means they took the English diagnostic without additional support to aid them in their limited language proficiency.

**The Patterson High leadership team uses diagnostic data like this to address the student performance captured in the checkpoint, including:**

- Allocating \$70,000 to purchase READ 180, a research-based reading intervention program targeting 9th-grade students reading at a 6th-grade level or below.
- Creating 11 sections of Strategic Reading classes.
- Using the Achieve 3000 intervention tool three times weekly to target reading fluency and reading stamina for the first 15 minutes of class. The frequency of this intervention will increase to five times a week in the second semester.
- Providing students with software that allows them to work on their proficiency at home.

--André Riley, APR, Executive Director of Communications, Baltimore City Public Schools

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