As we close out the first semester, I’d like to pause and reflect on how well we are delivering on the promises contained in the Fayette County Public Schools Portrait of a Graduate. Our pledge to families and community is that students who graduate from our schools will receive more than just a high school diploma. When you choose our schools, you choose an experience for your child designed to equip them to excel in whatever future they can imagine for themselves.

Early in the first semester, national headlines sounded an alarm about declining ACT scores in the United States, saying that average ACT math scores for 2018 graduates had dropped to the lowest level in more than 20 years, at 20.5.

Bucking that national trend, math scores for the FCPS Class of 2018 hit a five year high of 20.9. In fact, Fayette County's seniors outpaced the nation in all areas - significantly besting national and state averages in English, math, reading and science. Their average overall score was 21.2, well above the national average of 20.8, or the state average of 20.2.

Those results are particularly impressive given the fact that Kentucky is one of only 17 states across the nation where all students take the ACT. In most states, only students who are planning to go to college take the ACT, but here in the Commonwealth 100 percent of students take the exam. Our graduates had higher composite ACT scores than their peers in all 17 states where 100 percent of students are tested, including our neighbors in Ohio and Tennessee.
Across the nation, less than 0.2 percent of the roughly 2 million test takers earned a "perfect" composite score of 36 on the ACT. In FCPS, 16 students earned a perfect score - three times the national rate.

Members of the Class of 2018 were admitted to 309 colleges and universities, including all 10 of the nation's best colleges as rated by U.S. News and World Report and all eight Ivy League schools. Collectively, the Class of 2018 earned more than $103.7 million in scholarship offers, up from roughly $90 million in 2017.

Our 2018 graduates also included 70 Governor's Scholars, 40 Governor's School for the Arts participants, and nine Governor's School for Entrepreneurs participants. The Class of 2018 also included 25 graduates who earned the International Spanish Academy diploma, 29 graduates who earned the International Baccalaureate Medallion and 87 students who earned the Seal of Biliteracy.

Stellar academic achievement is a tradition for the Fayette County Public Schools and as your servant superintendent, I am committed to building on past accomplishments.

Consider this: our outstanding Class of 2018 had 36 National Merit Semi-Finalists. Already this year, our Class of 2019 has 51! Just think what the second semester will bring.

Peace and joy to your family as we head into this special time of year. I hope that our winter break gives you a chance to enjoy time making special memories with your loved ones and that you have an opportunity to read together. Please enjoy our annual winter video inviting everyone to join the "book party everywhere."

Your Partner,

Manny Caulk
Fayette County Public Schools Superintendent

**FCPS Has an App for That!**

You can get all the latest information, right on your phone! Download the FREE FCPS KY app from the app store or Google Play. When you open it, say yes to push notifications and select the schools you want to follow.

Being in-the-know has never been easier!

Kudos!
We are proud of the students and staff across the district who do incredible things each day. Take a look at some of the accolades earned this semester and follow FCPS on social media to see achievements like these each day.

**Kentucky's 2018 School Social Worker of the Year** is from Harrison Elementary

National PTA designates Veterans Park Elementary and Southern Middle as **Schools of Excellence**

Bryan Station High School student receives national **2018 Outstanding Senior Award** from the American Association of Teachers of French

**2019 National Merit semifinalists** include 51 seniors in FCPS

Lafayette's marching band secures **20th state championship**

FCPS employee wins American Translators Association **2018 School Outreach Program Award**

Edythe J. Hayes Middle School teacher receives **2018 Kentucky History Award**

Cassidy Elementary teacher is a finalist for the **Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching**

SCAPA team collects $10,000 national prize in **Lexus Eco Challenge**

**Kentucky's 2018 Outstanding Elementary Science Teacher** is from Sandersville Elementary

Lafayette student earns Kentucky's **2018 'Yes I Can' Award** in academics

Paul Laurence Dunbar High School has **Kentucky's 2018 School Psychologist of the Year**

Leestown Middle School's pre-engineering program received a **Program Excellence Award** from the state chapter of International Technology and Engineering Educators Association

See even more kudos [here](#), and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) to see more kudos each month!

**Safety Updates**

Thanks to the tremendous support of our community, Fayette County Public Schools is investing $13.5 million this year to implement the Comprehensive 10-Point Safety Investment Plan, which was developed based on recommendations from a community panel comprised of students, families, first responders, school and district employees. Initiatives address school climate and culture, social emotional learning, planning, prevention, training,
communication, physical and mental well-being, as well as facility upgrades.

You can stay abreast of these efforts by:

- Reviewing **monthly updates** shared with the Fayette County Board of Education.
- Monitoring progress with our **online status tracker**.
- Reading this **update** from the superintendent.

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**HAPPY WINTER BREAK**

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Winter break is upon us! Fayette County Public Schools will be closed beginning Thursday, December 20, 2018. Schools will reopen on Thursday, January 3, 2019. We wish each of you a wonderful holiday break and hope you are able to spend time making memories with loved ones!

Check out Superintendent Caulk's annual Winter Break **video**

**What Happens When Winter Weather Arrives?**

When winter weather hits, FCPS may close school, delay the start of school or dismiss early as the situation requires. The safety of our students is always our top priority. Learn more about our wintry weather response options **here**.