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## **SDE releases preliminary results for fall Idaho Reading Indicator**

(BOISE) – Preliminary statewide results for Idaho’s early reading test show 49.6 percent of the state’s students in kindergarten through third grade are reading at grade level, with another 26 percent reading near grade level.

After schools were forced to transition to online learning last spring, the Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) was not administered statewide, so this fall’s results provide the first statewide look at how the pandemic may have impacted student learning. The fall assessment measures students’ five foundational reading skills – alphabetic knowledge, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, comprehension and fluency – at the beginning of each school year.

Students’ IRI results are reported in three categories: At, near or below grade level. The breakdown for preliminary fall 2020 results by grade is:

- Kindergarten: 43.5 percent at grade level, 29.1 percent near and 27.4 percent below
- First grade: 41.7 percent at grade level, 30.2 percent near and 28.1 percent below
- Second grade: 54.3 percent at grade level, 21.9 percent near and 23.8 percent below
- Third grade: 58.2 percent at grade level, 23 percent near and 18.8 percent below

“These results are most meaningful to teachers, allowing them to identify where individual students need help, tailor instruction to strengthen key skills, and monitor their progress throughout the year,” Superintendent of Public Instruction Sherri Ybarra said. “We look forward to next spring, when we can track students’ growth this school year.”

More than 86,000 students across the state took the fall IRI between Aug. 10 and Oct. 9. Ninety percent of the tests were administered in schools, while 10 percent were taken by students remotely.

Results released today are preliminary. Final results, expected to be published in November, will provide a more complete picture.

“My assessment and accountability team will be analyzing the results at school and district levels and will determine how specific groups of students, such as English language learners and students with disabilities, are performing,” Superintendent Ybarra said.

The State Department of Education also tracks cohorts of IRI students as they move from one grade to the next. More than 59,000 students who took this fall's test in first, second or third grade also took the IRI in fall 2019. Comparing preliminary fall 2020 results to final 2019 results shows a small decline in grade-level performance for two out of the three cohorts of students:

- 42.2 percent of this year's returning first-graders performed at grade level, slightly down from 43.2 percent in kindergarten. An additional 30.3 percent scored near grade level (30.4 percent in kindergarten.)
- Of returning second-graders, 55.1 percent performed at grade level, up from 49.8 percent in first grade. The percentage scoring near grade level was 21.9 percent this fall, down from 29.2 percent the previous year.
- 58.9 percent of returning third-graders performed at grade level, down from 63.5 percent as second-graders. An additional 23.1 percent scored near grade level, up from 20.2 percent as second-graders.

Idaho schools will develop an individualized reading intervention plan for every student who is not at grade level as measured on the IRI. The intervention plan is a collaborative effort working in concert with parents to identify students' individual needs and strengthen their skills. Districts can monitor student progress throughout the year, until the spring IRI is administered in May.

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**Attached:** Graphics showing preliminary 2020 Fall IRI results overall and by grade; and comparison of 2019 final results in the previous grade with the same cohorts' preliminary results this fall.