



UNCLASSIFIED

April 27, 2023

SUBJECT: Pandemic Related Test Scores Decline in Schools, Domestic Schools vs. Overseas Schools.

**Summary:** While there was a significant decline in global test scores due to the pandemic, the Office of Overseas Schools (A/OPR/OS) assisted schools have fared much better than other international schools and domestic public schools in standardized assessments.

**Domestic Schools' Test Scores Decline:** Throughout 2022, [headlines declared precipitous declines](#) in [American student](#) test scores attributed to pandemic disruptions from online learning and school closures. Learning losses have seen several drops in percentage points across the United States, though there is substantial variability across geographic and socio-economic status. The pandemic has [highlighted inequality](#). While the lowest performing domestic schools saw the greatest learning losses, the top percentile of test takers only saw a modest decline in learning losses. There is evidence that all test scores at domestic schools are recovering from the pandemic.

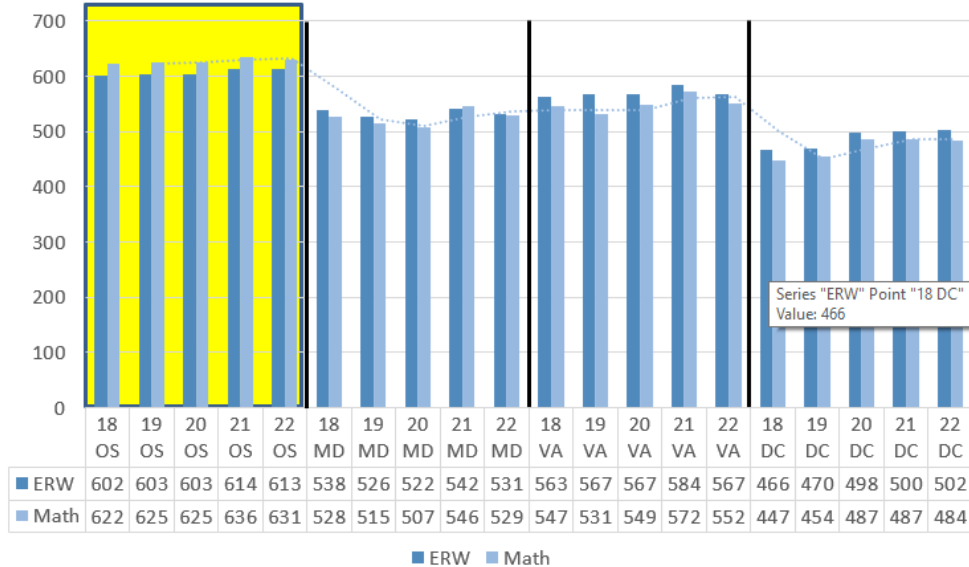
**Overseas Schools' Test Scores:** International schools where United States Government (USG) affiliated students are enrolled, tend to reflect a similar pattern to high performing domestic schools. Correspondingly, there has been only a slight decline in test scores in assisted schools. When compared with schools in DC, Maryland, and Virginia, SAT scores over the past five years have shown the strongest and most consistent performance in assisted schools (See Tab 1). While there have been a few point drops between 2021 and 2022, there has been an overall increase in SAT scores, in both English Reading and Writing (ERW) and Math, since 2018 in assisted schools.

**Tab 1.**

# Assisted School Performance

## SAT Scores

Assisted Overseas Schools vs. American Domestic Schools  
in National Capital Region (Maryland, Virginia, & Washington, DC)



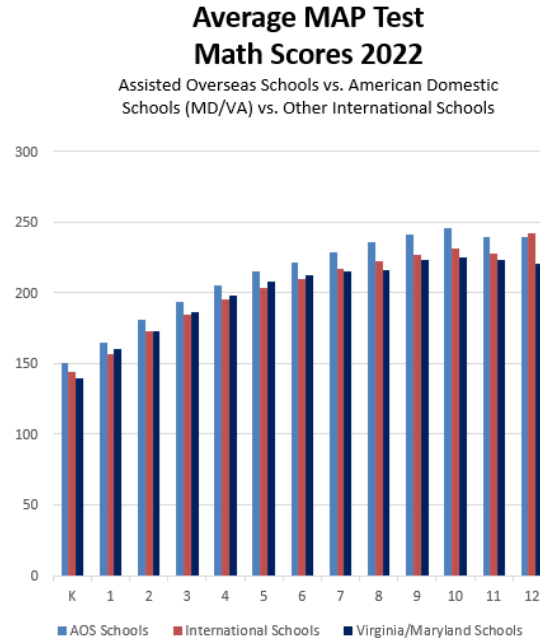
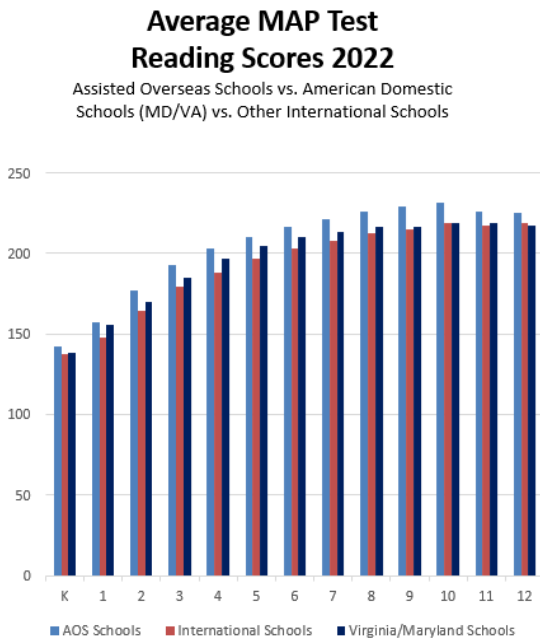
\*Comparison between these four areas provide a useful gage for USG employees in understanding international school under a single domestic umbrella familiar to them. American public schools vary across the country.

U.S. Department of State

**All Grade Assisted Schools' Test Scores:** Within assisted schools there has been a slight drop in test scores when comparing Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) from the fall of 2019 to the fall of 2022. Still, when compared to schools in the DC area and other international schools, A/OPR/OS assisted schools consistently performed better at all grade levels in Math and Reading in 2020, as well as 2022 (See Tab 2).

**Tab 2.**

# Assisted School Performance



U.S. Department of State

**A/OPR/OS Actions:** A/OPR/OS has offered an annual summer curriculum development program, American Education Reaches Out (Project AERO), for the past two decades. Since the pandemic, Project AERO has incorporated accelerated learning to make up for learning loss gaps. Project AERO promotes and supports a Standards-Based Learning System (SBLS), a system in which instruction, assessment, grading, and reporting are based on how well students demonstrate their understanding and mastery of the knowledge and skills they are expected to learn during their schooling.

A/OPR/OS has also noted that pandemic changes have impacted other programs to support USG students at assisted schools such as special needs programs and social emotional learning. A/OPR/OS will leverage our strategic priorities and grant monies to help ensure that all children within the assisted school network can regain any ground they may have lost during these unprecedented times.