



Destination 2025 Monthly: December 2017
Prepared by the Department of Research & Performance Management

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Key Findings

- Through the fourth 20-day period of the current school year, the student attendance rate (94.5%) is down slightly compared to the same time last year (95.2%).
- District overall attendance rates have stayed about the same over the past three years, whereas chronic absenteeism and suspensions rates have improved. The percentage of students who were chronically absent improved by 2.3 percentage points over the past three years, going from 20% in 2014–15 down to 17.7% in 2016–17. Likewise, suspension rates for both out-of-school suspensions and expulsions have improved year-over-year by 8.3 points starting from 36.4% in 2014–15 down to 28.7% in 2016–17.
- In 2016-17, 94.8% of students now in grades 10-12 had enough credit hours to be on track for graduation. 82.3% of those high school students had an attendance rate above 90%. Missing 10% or more instructional days placed students at a high risk of not graduating on time.
- From 2016-17 to 2017-18, SCS retained 93% of teachers who had five or more years' experience while teachers with one-year experience were retained at a rate of 76%. Newly hired teachers were retained at a rate of 67.7% from 2017 to 2018 fiscal year.

Overview

The three key performance indicators (KPIs) addressed in this report are aligned to Priorities 1, 2, and 3 of Destination 2025: strengthening early literacy, improving postsecondary readiness and developing teachers, leaders and Central Office to drive student success. This month's KPIs are:

- Priority 1, KPI 10: Student attendance and absentee rates
- Priority 2, KPI 9: Percentage of secondary students on track to graduation
- Priority 3, KPI 1: Teacher retention rates after 1, 2, 3, & 4 years of service

Year-to-Date Attendance

Through the fourth 20-day period that ended on December 8, 2017, the current SCS attendance rate is 94.5%, down 0.7 points from the same time in 2016-17. However, the District suspension rate has decreased from 10.4% to 9.8% in that same timeframe. Currently, 18% of students are considered chronically absent, meaning they have missed 10% or more school days that they have been actively enrolled this year. Another 14% of students are at risk because they have been absent 5 – 9% of the time. These absences can include excused, unexcused and suspension/expulsion absences.

2015-16	95.4	11.1	110,395
2016-17	95.2	10.4	108,211
2017-18	94.5	9.8	108,912
	Attendance Rate	Suspension Rate	YTD Enrollments



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It should be noted that absences are calculated differently in the new PowerSchool system than in the previous SMS system, which could have an effect on middle and high school attendance reporting. Whereas SMS determined student absences based on the total number of periods they were absent during a school day, PowerSchool determines absences based on whether the student is present or absent in their first-period class. Some schools may be over-reporting whole-day absences if they do not correct these records for students who check in late or are tardy to class. Our Student Information team is currently working with schools to determine if and where over-reporting has occurred in order to work with the schools on cleaning their attendance data.

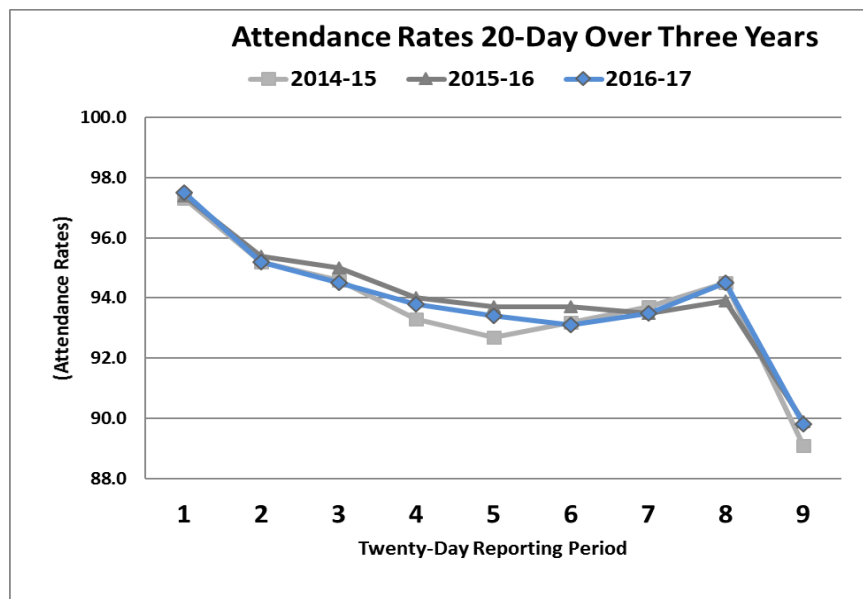
Historical Student Attendance, Chronic Absenteeism, and Suspension Rates

While attendance rates have stayed about the same over three years, other key indicators showed improvements in absenteeism and suspensions. Chronic absenteeism improved by 2.3 percentage points over the past three years, going from 20% in 2014–15 down to 17.7% in 2016–17. Chronic absenteeism is defined as the percentage of students missing 10% or more instructional days. Suspension rates improved by 8.3 points from 36.4% in 2014–15 to 28.7% in 2016–17.

District-Level Three-Year Attendance, Suspension, and Chronic Absence Rates			
School Year	Attendance Rate	Chronic Absence Rate	Suspension Rate
2016-17	93.9	17.7	28.1
2015-16	94.1	19.0	30.8
2014-15	93.9	20.0	36.4

Student Attendance by 20-Day Reporting Periods

Student attendance tends to decline after the first twenty days of school. The largest decreases in attendance rates occurred from the first to second 20-day period and from the eighth to the ninth 20-day period at the end of the school year.

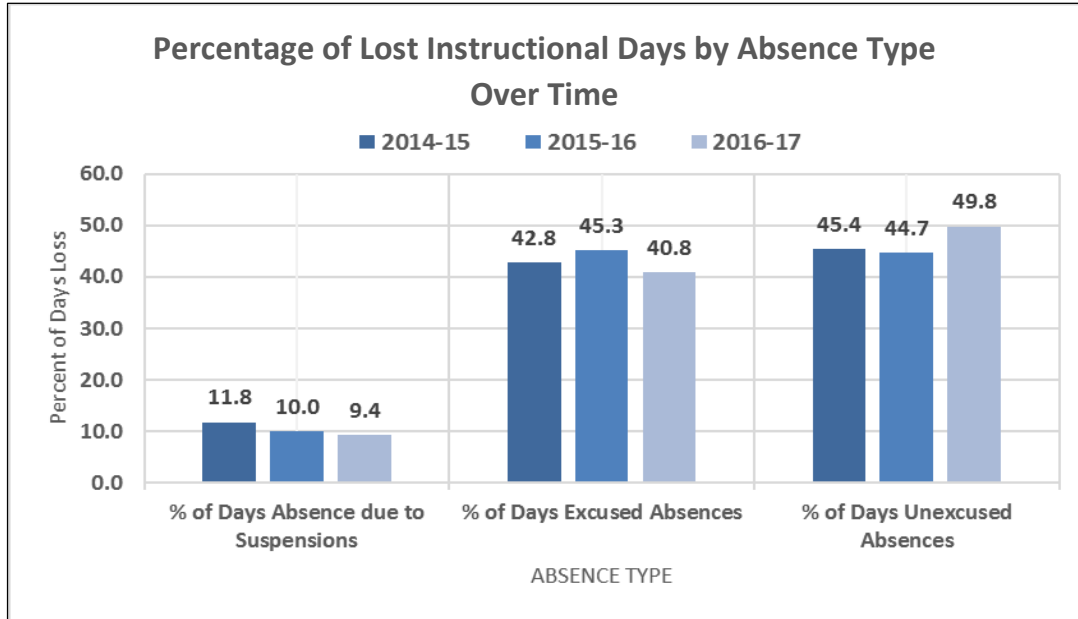




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Lost Instructional Days by Absence Type

The percentage of instructional days lost due to suspensions and excused absences improved year-over-year, whereas the percentage of unexcused absences increased by 4.4 percentage points starting from 45.4% in 2015-16 and moving up to 49.8% in 2016-17. Because of the increase in the percentage of unexcused absences, school leaders need continuous support from both District administrators and local government to help improve student attendance to successfully reach Destination 2025 goals.



Secondary Students on Track to Graduate

At the end of 2016-17, 94.8% of students who are now in grades 10-12 had enough credit hours to be on track for graduation, even though 16.6% of students in this group were chronically absent. Missing 10% or more instructional days places these students at greater risk of not graduating on time.

Percentage of Students by Credit Hours on Track and Absence Category (N=17,978) Excluding 9th Graders			
Absence Category	Credit Hours On Track		Grand Total
	No	Yes	
Satisfactory	2.3%	57.3%	59.6%
At Risk	0.9%	21.8%	22.7%
Chronically Absent	1.3%	15.3%	16.6%
NA	0.8%	0.3%	1.0%
Grand Total	5.3%	94.7%	100.0%

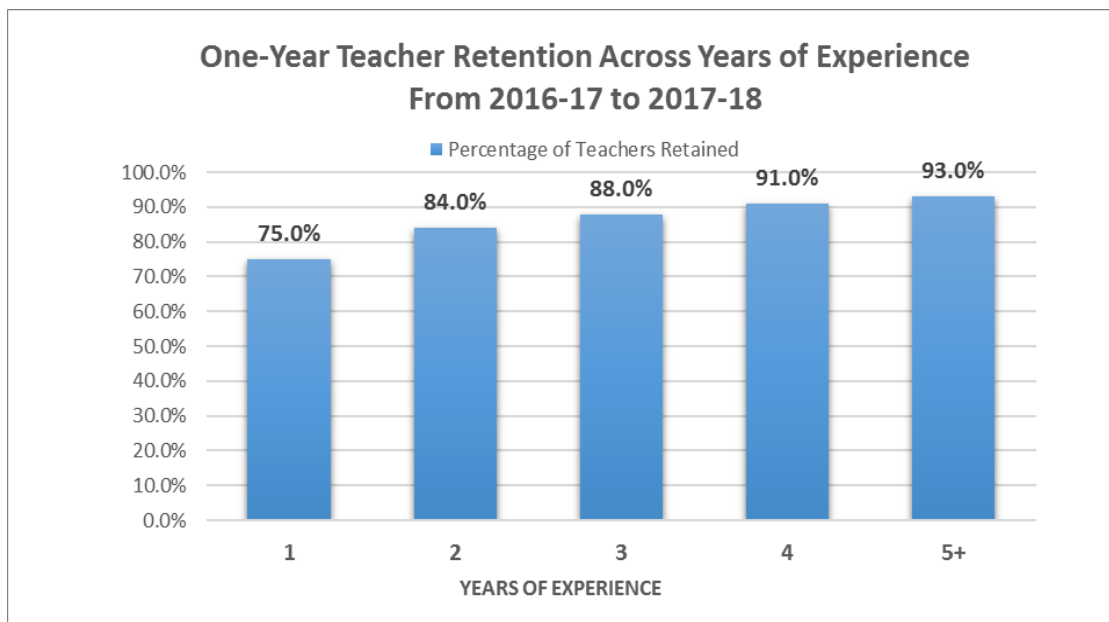


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2016-17 High School Students Missing 0.01 to 5 or More Credits Excluding 9th Grades					
Credits Behind	Satisfactory	At Risk	Chronically Absent	NA	Grand Total
0.01 to 1.00	60	27	60	6	153
1.01 to 2.00	66	24	36	6	132
2.01 to 3.00	49	21	31	13	114
3.01 to 4.00	56	28	20	18	122
4.01 to 5.00	55	23	33	43	154
> Than 5.00	130	34	57	56	277
Grand Total	416	157	237	142	952

Teacher Retention Rates

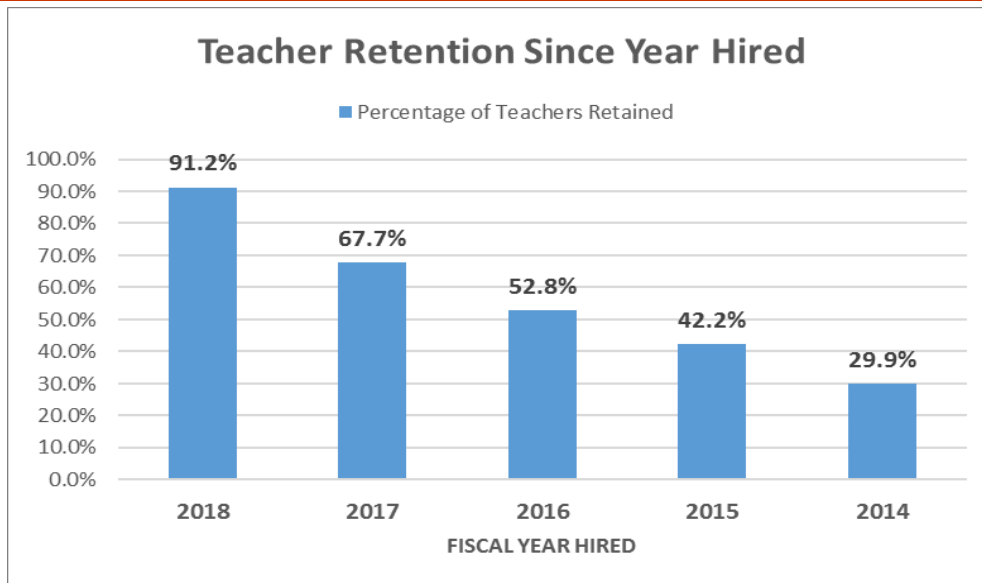
One way to measure the District's success in cultivating teacher talent is to look at teacher retention across years of experience. The graph below shows the one-year retention rate from 2016-17 to 2017-18 for SCS teachers by years of experience. We tend to lose a notably higher percentage of teachers in their first year than those who remain for 2 years or more.



In terms of retention across multiple years, the next graph shows overall retention rates through 2017-18 for all teachers hired in a given fiscal year. SCS has retained 91% of teachers who were hired during the current 2018 fiscal year as of December. As expected, the overall retention rate from the time a teacher was hired to the current fiscal year declines as more time passes. SCS has retained 30% of all teachers hired during the 2014 fiscal year. The remaining teachers now have five years of experience teaching in SCS.



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Conclusion & Recommendations

Based on these findings, attendance monitoring and intervention should begin in September when absences start to increase. Attendance data in PowerSchool and Tableau should be used daily and every twenty-day reporting period to examine trends and identify interventions in order to meet the District's proposed attendance and chronic absenteeism goals. Student attendance and grades data should also be used to monitor and improve secondary students on track to graduation. SCS has made several online dashboards and reports available to schools and district leaders to track this information regularly and intervene with students based on need.

Given heightened competition for teacher talent across school systems in Shelby County, SCS continues to strengthen its recruitment and retention strategies for top educators. SCS has renewed focus on retaining its best educators by overhauling the District's compensation system going into the 2017-18 school year. The District has allocated an additional \$12 million for teacher pay in three areas: higher maximum salaries, annual performance based raises and additional supplemental bonuses and stipends. Teachers who earn an evaluation score of Level 4 or 5 will be eligible for additional pay by teaching in hard-to-staff subjects, such as Special Education and secondary math and science; earning secondary degrees in their primary teaching subject or educational practice; and for relocating to SCS from surrounding school systems and communities. More information about the different aspects of the new teacher compensation plan can be found at <http://www.scsk12.org/investing/>.