



Author: John Anderson

## Key Findings

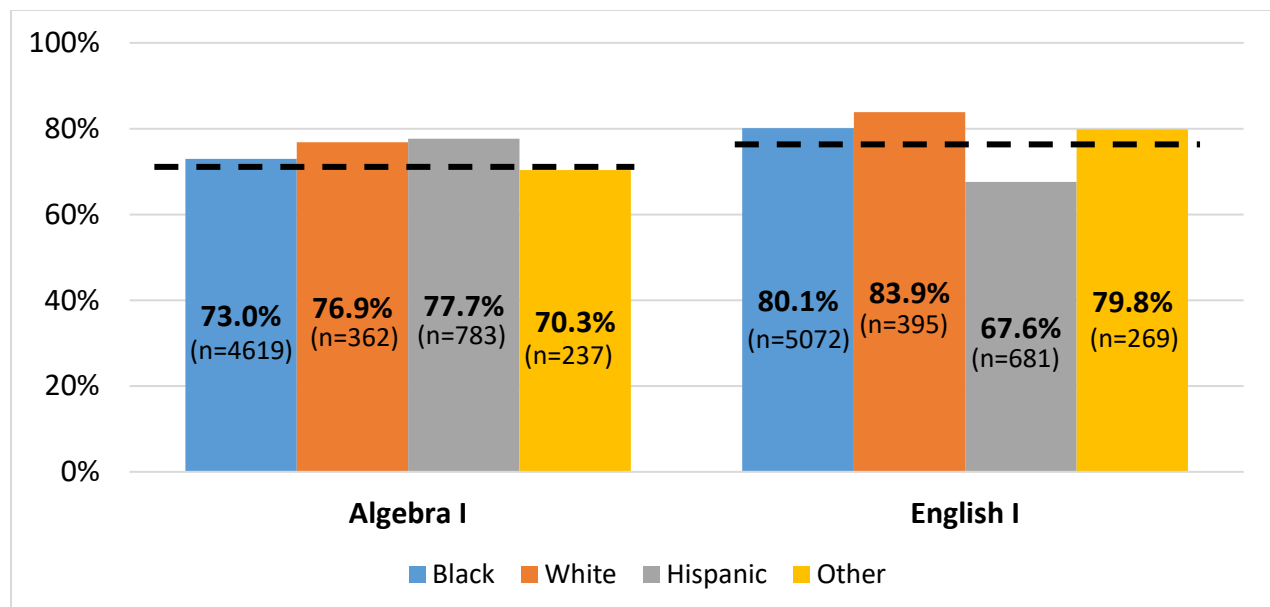
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the month of July are aligned with Priority 2 of Destination 2025 as it relates to improvements in post-secondary readiness. These indicators include the percentage of ninth graders completing Algebra I and English I on time, and the percent of ninth graders failing one or more core course. Examining final grades from the 2017-2018 school year, the following has been observed:

- 74.1% of students successfully completed Algebra I by 9<sup>th</sup> grade.
- 78.8% of ninth graders successfully completed English I.
- 23.0% of ninth graders failed one or more core courses.

## On-Time Algebra I and English I Completion

On-time course completion was calculated by taking the number of students with a passing grade in a core course and dividing by the total number of active ninth grade students in May 2018. For Algebra I, this also included students completing the course during their eighth-grade year. By race, Hispanic and White students had higher completion rates in Algebra I, while Black and White students had higher rates in English I. Hispanic students in English I had the largest gap (around 11.2%) in relation to the overall District average of 78.8%.

Figure 1. Algebra I & English I On-Time Completion by Race

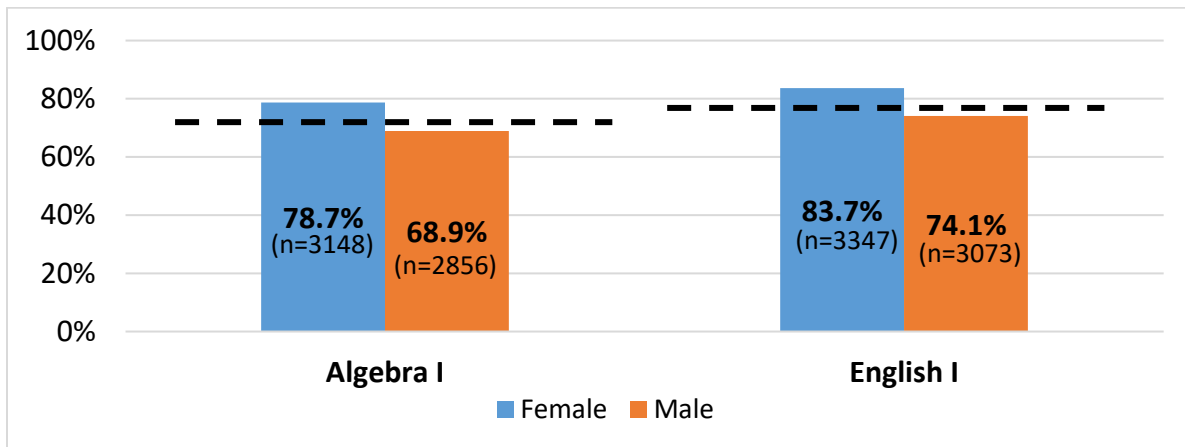




**Destination 2025 Monthly: June 2017**  
**Prepared by the Department of Research & Performance Management**

In both Algebra I and English I, female students outperformed their male peers and the overall District average. For each subject, female students outperformed male students by at least 9 percentage points.

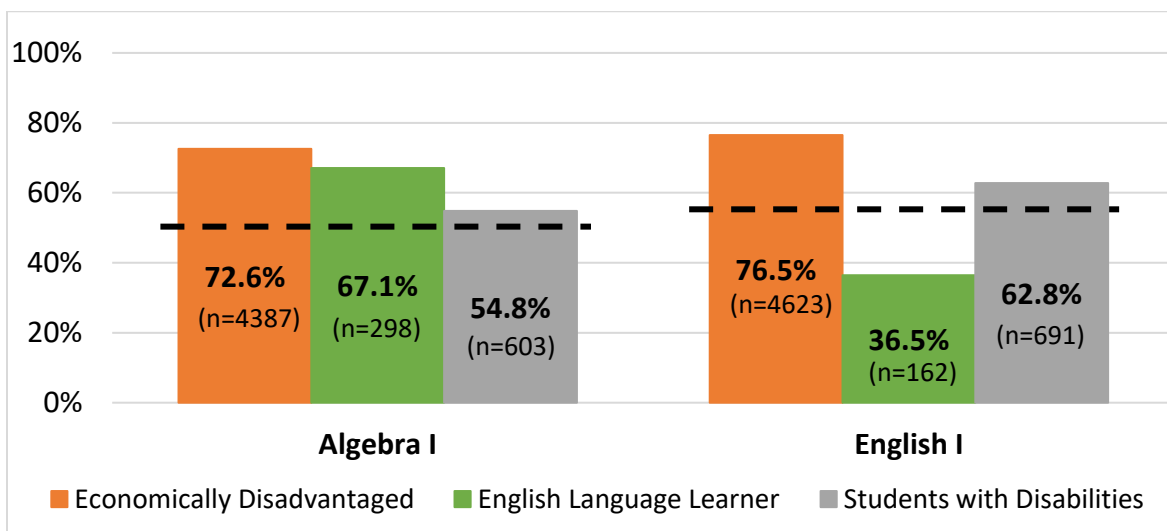
**Figure 2: Algebra I & English I On-Time Completion by Gender**



Looking at students falling within certain key demographic groups, such as Economically Disadvantaged, English Language Learner, and Students with Disabilities – all fell below the District average on core course completion.

Economically Disadvantaged or ED students, had completion rates very similar to the overall rates of the District. ED students comprise around 74% of the ninth-grade student population. Students with Disabilities had completion rates in Algebra I and English I at around 55% and 63%, respectively. The biggest gap between the District average and a key demographic subgroup is present in English I for English Language Learner (ELL) students. ELL students had a completion rate over 40 percentage points lower than the District average.

**Figure 3: Algebra I & English I On-Time Completion by Demographic Group**



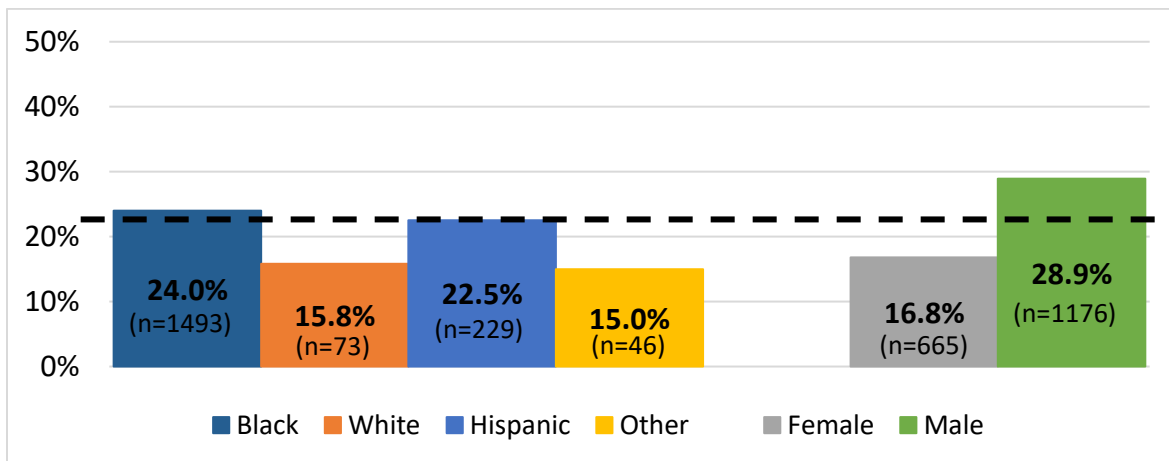


### Core Course Failures

Core Courses are identified as those courses a student needs to graduate. In addition to English I and Algebra I, for ninth-graders, this includes: Algebra II, Geometry I, Biology I, US Government, US History/Geography, and World History/Geography. Failure rates are calculated by the number of students with at least one failure in these courses over the total number of students enrolled in those courses. Overall, SCS students had a core course failure rate of 23.0% for the 2017-2018 school year. Of the core course failing grades, 1,626 were below 60. By comparison, 2016-2017 core courses had 949 failing grades below 60.

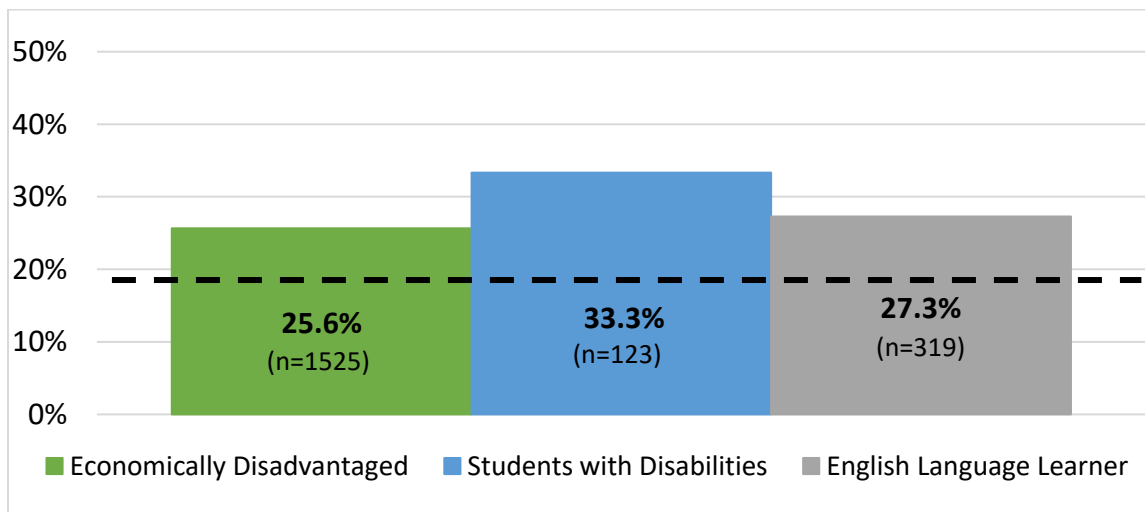
Breaking the failure rate down by race, Black and Hispanic students had higher course failure rates among their peers. Black students exceeded the District average by 1 percentage point. Additionally, when looking at gender, male students exceeded the district average by nearly 6 percentage points.

**Figure 4: Core Course Failure by Race & Gender**



Looking at the failure rate among demographic subgroups groups, all three had rates exceeding the District average. The highest percentage of failure rates occurred among Students with Disabilities.

**Figure 5: Core Course Failure by Demographics**

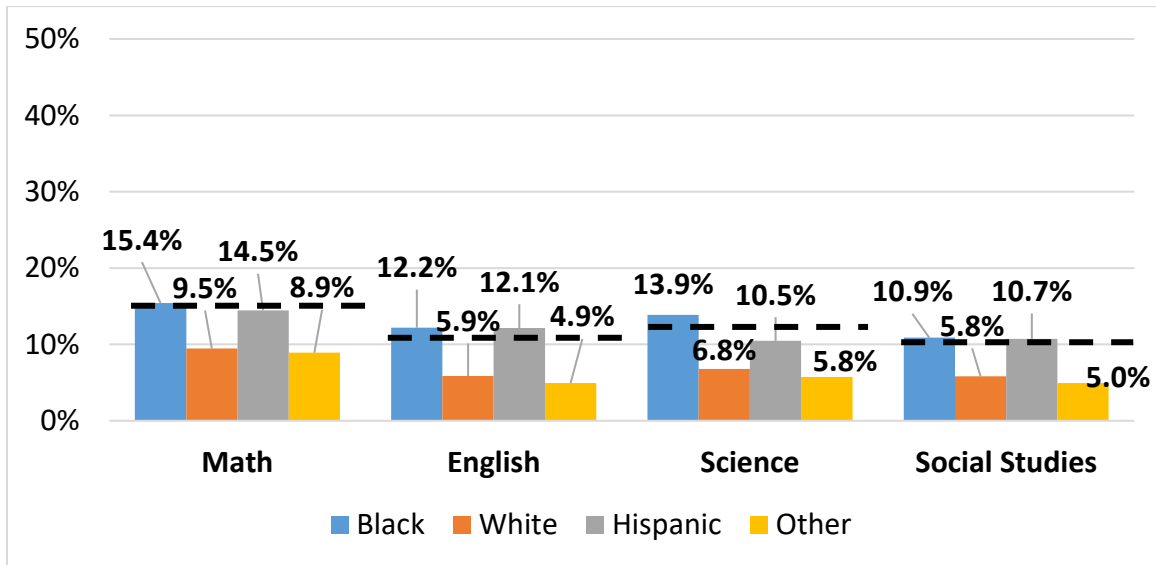




**Destination 2025 Monthly: June 2017**  
**Prepared by the Department of Research & Performance Management**

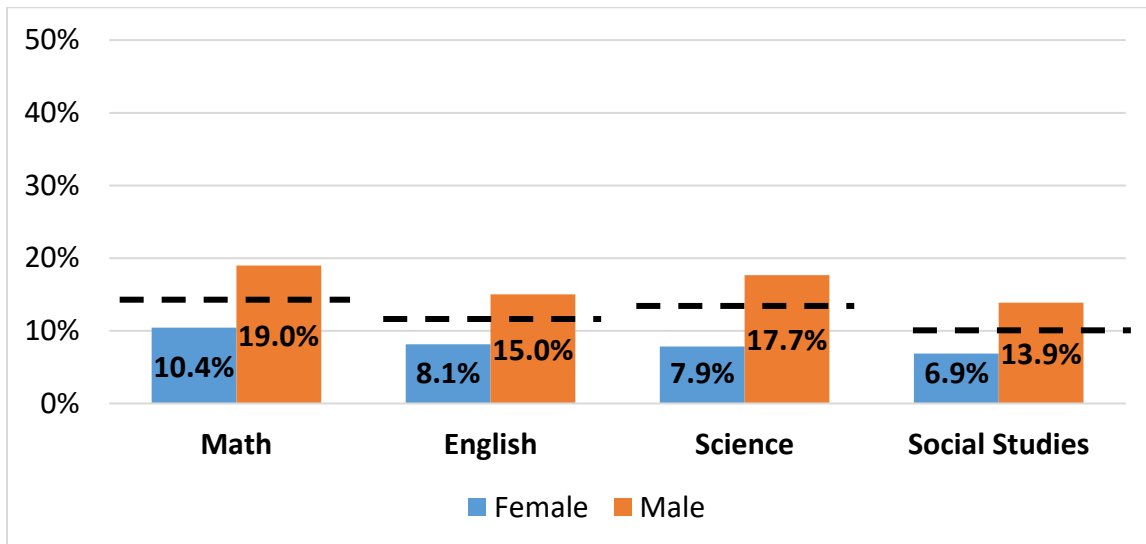
By race and subject area, failure rates remained fairly consistent. Math displayed the highest failure rates for all four racial groups. Black and Hispanic students showed the highest failure rates within each subject area.

**Figure 6: Core Course Failures by Subject & Race**



Looking at subject area breakdowns by gender, male students consistently showed higher failure rates than female students. Similar to the breakdown by race, Math had the highest failure rate for both males and females. By contrast, students in Social Studies courses had the lowest failure rates.

**Figure 7: Core Course Failures by Subject & Gender**

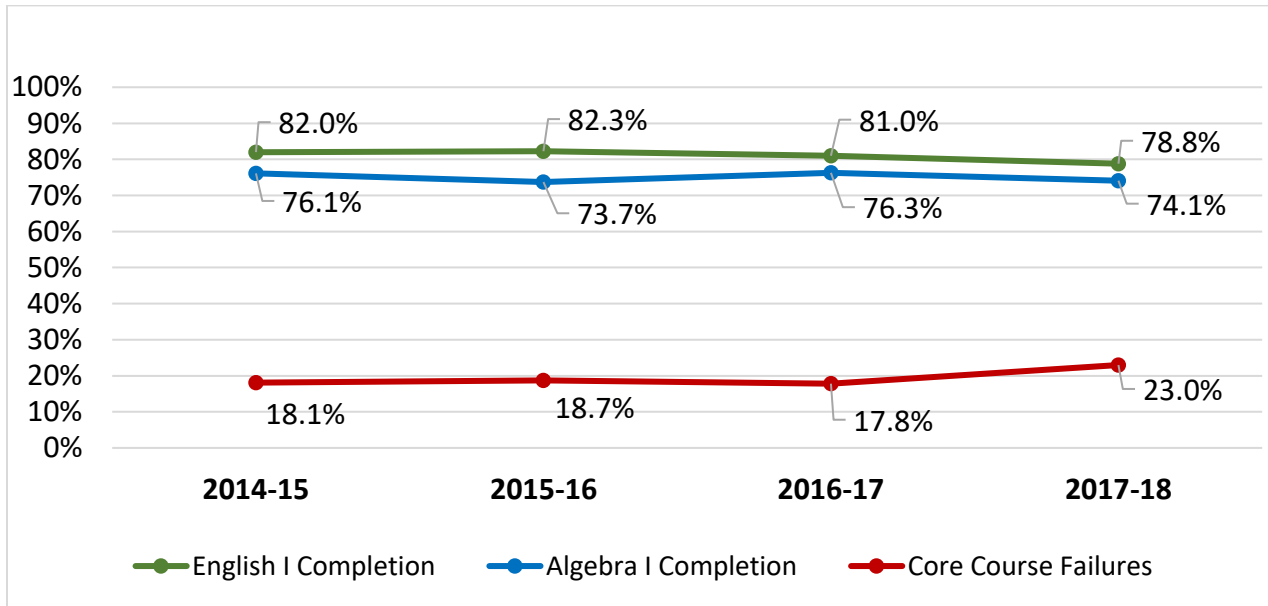




**Destination 2025 Monthly: June 2017**  
**Prepared by the Department of Research & Performance Management**

Examining the trend of ninth grade performance over the last four years, the rate of course completion in both English I and Algebra I has remained steady, fluctuating within a range of around four percentage points. However, core course failures did see an increase of around 5% from the previous year.

**Figure 8: Trends in Ninth Grade Performance**



**Recommendations**

The following recommendations were put forward going into the 2017-2018 school year. Included is any progress made since then.

| 2017 District Recommendations   | Progress Since Then  |
|---|--|
| Continue to support educators in implementing new curricula through instructional coaching and lesson planning support. | Through-out the year, teachers were provided job-embedded training via Instructional Content Advisors. Zone-level professional development, and District-level professional development.   |
| Utilize online interventions such as Grad Point and Grade Results for student grade and credit recovery.                | During the 2018-19 SY, counselors will be trained on the enrollment and registration processes involved with Grade Results. By utilizing the Grade Results process, principals will have a viable solution to capture those students that have failed a course during the quarter, semester, or year. Grade Results will also be our primary platform for both grade and course recovery in order to ensure continuity with assessments and assignments. |



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

| 2017 District Recommendations   | Progress Since Then   |
|---|---|
| Continue strengthening our high school math teacher talent pool given national teacher shortages. | We increased volume of candidates for hard to staff and elementary positions. Principal ambassadors participated in recruitment events. A social media marketing campaign was implemented. Stipends were offered for eligible hard-to-staff positions. A dedicated math recruiter was utilized.   |
| Monitor the District's revised grading policy to ensure consistent implementation.                | Schools were provided updated and specific guidance on the District 's grading policy. Principals were given specific action steps to take should grade revisions be required (in cases such as completed make-up work, grade repair, and credit recovery.) We are also working with Policy, teachers, and school leaders as part of a grading task-force to refine the grading policies to ensure grades reflect what students have learned. |

| 2018 District Recommendations  |
|--|
| 1. The Office of Academics will develop a set of systems and processes for ILDs to assist principals during each grading period to identify at-risk students and create intervention steps.  |
| 2. The Office of Academics has established a partnership with "Freshman On-track". The program will have eight targeted high schools in its first year and is designed to help administrative teams create site-based early warning systems. The program was developed by the University of Chicago and has been utilized by urban systems around the country to help at-risk 9th graders.             |
| 3. The Office of Academics has also established a partnership with "Seeding Success", a Gates sponsored nonprofit, to assist an additional ten high schools by developing site-based early-warning systems for at-risk 9th graders.  |
| 4. The Office of Academic and Performance Management have established a set of variables to be tracked inside the new Bright Bytes platform to create an Early Warning System (EWS) that will assist principals with early detection.  |
| 5. Counselors that have identified 9th graders with failing grades or credits will be able to utilize the "Grade Results" platform through Memphis Virtual Schools for grade repair and credit recovery. "Grade Results" will assist principals with an intervention for students that were not successful in the 2017-18 year and help to decrease the number of "over-age for grade" (OAG) students. |