

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2019



DESTINATION  
**2025**



SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOLS  
SCS  
Excellence since 1897

## Executive Summary

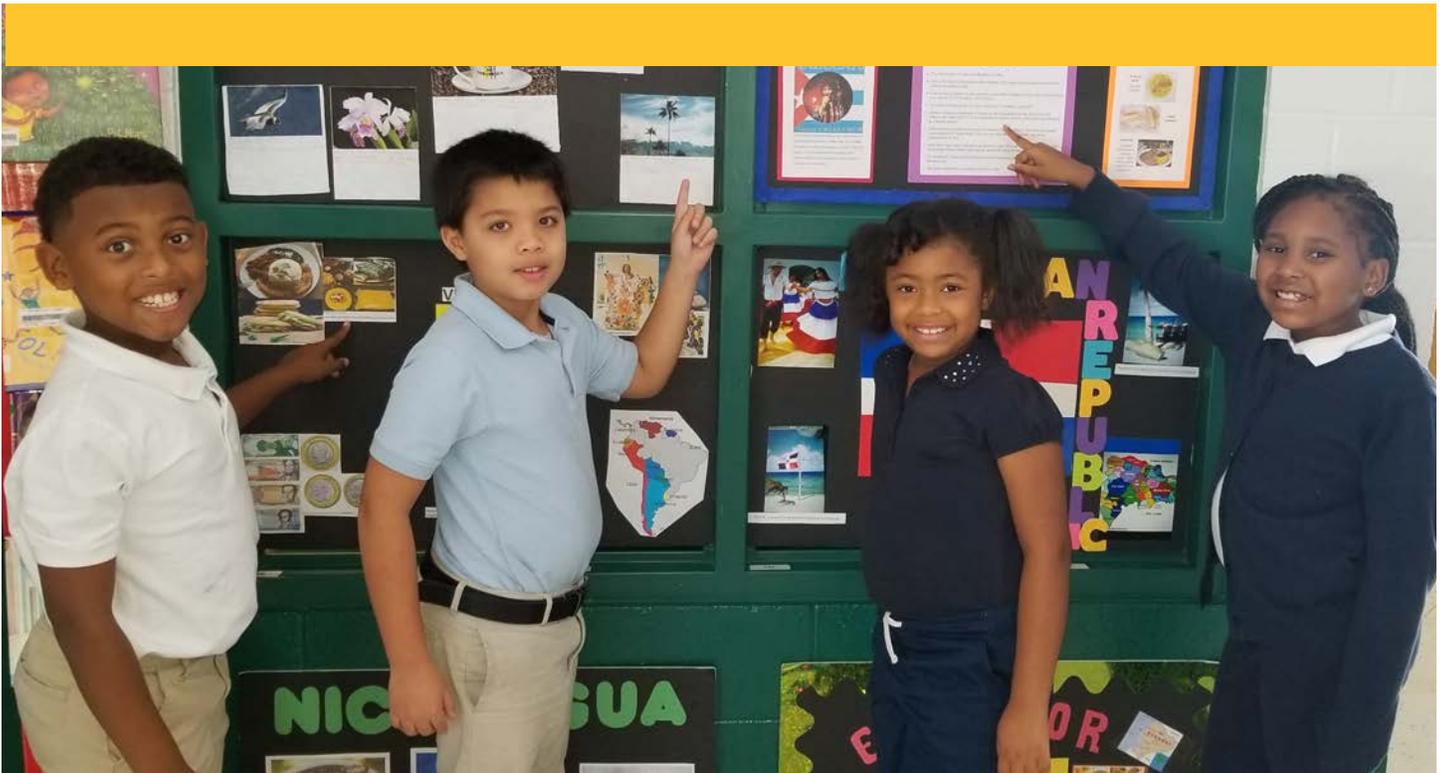
The 2018-19 school year marked the fifth year of Shelby County Schools' (SCS) Destination 2025 strategic plan as well as a momentous leadership change - the Board of Education's appointment of Dr. Joris Ray as the District's new superintendent in April 2019. Key SCS accomplishments since the last annual report include:

- Increasing the percentage of students who earned On Track or Mastered status in TNReady math subjects across all three grade bands from 2018 to 2019
- Improving English Learner proficiency in all three grade bands in both math and ELA from 2018 to 2019, which earned SCS an "Advancing" status with the State of Tennessee as well as the top student growth rating (Level 5 TVAAS) for this priority group
- Dramatically increasing the number of students who have earned industry certifications from 267 in 2018 to nearly 2,300 in 2019
- Reducing the number of schools on the State Priority list for being in the bottom five district-managed Priority schools receive iZone support for the first time

Although these accomplishments are significant, SCS has struggled to sustain momentum on many of its strategic priorities and goals as the District reaches the halfway point of Destination 2025. While SCS maintained roughly the same levels of performance in 2019 as in 2018 in many of the goals outlined in the summary table at the end of this section, we did not make large enough gains in most of these areas to meet the 2019 targets and therefore are off track to reach our 2025 goals. We also took a step back in third-grade reading proficiency, which is central to students' academic success for the rest of their K-12 educational experience.

With new leadership and a heightened focus on student equity and ensuring our graduates are truly ready for post-secondary and career opportunities, we believe that our ambitious strategic goals are still possible. Going forward, strategies to accelerate progress include providing holistic interventions that address students' academic and non-academic needs, increasing school and District staff capacity to enact data-driven instruction and continuous improvement processes, and tailoring some supports specifically for African American male students to close opportunity and achievement gaps. To make aggressive gains toward our goals, it will take deep commitment from every District leader, educator, and community partner and a laser focus on the most effective strategies that can make a difference for students.





**Annual Progress: 2019** – For a full list of Destination 2025 measures, refer to the **Appendix** of this report.

<b>Priority 1: Strengthen Early Literacy</b>	<b>2018 Actual</b>	<b>2019 Target</b>	<b>2019 Actual</b>	<b>Change Since 2018</b>	<b>Target-to-Actual</b>
By 2025, 90% of SCS third graders are proficient in English & Language Arts (ELA).	27.0%	38.6%	23.5%	-3.5 points	-15.1 points
<b>Priority 2: Improve Post-Secondary Readiness</b>	<b>2018 Actual</b>	<b>2019 Target</b>	<b>2019 Actual</b>	<b>Change Since 2018</b>	<b>Target-to-Actual</b>
By 2025, 90% of SCS students graduate on time.	79.1%	80.2%	79.3%	+0.2 points	-0.9 points
By 2025, 100% of college- or career-ready SCS graduates enroll in a post-secondary opportunity.	86.4% (CCR) 56.2% (All)	72.7%	TBD <sup>1</sup>	TBD	TBD
<b>Priority 3: Develop Teachers, Leaders &amp; Central Office to Drive Student Success</b>	<b>2018 Actual</b>	<b>2019 Target</b>	<b>2019 Actual</b>	<b>Change Since 2018</b>	<b>Target-to-Actual</b>
By 2025, 60% of students are proficient on TNReady assessments.	26.8% (3-8) 15.9% (HS)	37.8% (3-8) 31.5% (HS)	24.4% (3-8) 16.3% (HS)	-2.2 pts (3-8) +0.4 pts (HS)	-13.4 pts (3-8) -15.2 pts(HS)
<b>Priority 4: Expand High-Quality School Options</b>	<b>2018 Actual</b>	<b>2019 Target</b>	<b>2019 Actual</b>	<b>Change Since 2018</b>	<b>Target-to-Actual</b>
By 2025, SCS student market share increases by 5%.	63.2%	63.3%	65.1%	+1.9 points	+1.8 points
<b>Priority 5: Mobilize Family &amp; Community Partners</b>	<b>2018 Actual</b>	<b>2019 Target</b>	<b>2019 Actual</b>	<b>Change Since 2018</b>	<b>Target-to-Actual</b>
By 2025, community confidence in SCS increases to 90%.	80%	83%	82%	+2 points	-1 point

<sup>1</sup>Due to the timing of available data, the post-secondary enrollment rate reflects the percentage of all 2018 graduates who enrolled in a post-secondary opportunity during the past year and the percentage of college- and career-ready (CCR) 2018 graduates who enrolled as determined by Tennessee's Ready Graduates definition. The 2019 rate will be included in the 2020 annual report.



# Priority 1: Strengthen Early Literacy

## 2025 Goal:

90 percent of SCS third graders are reading on grade level.

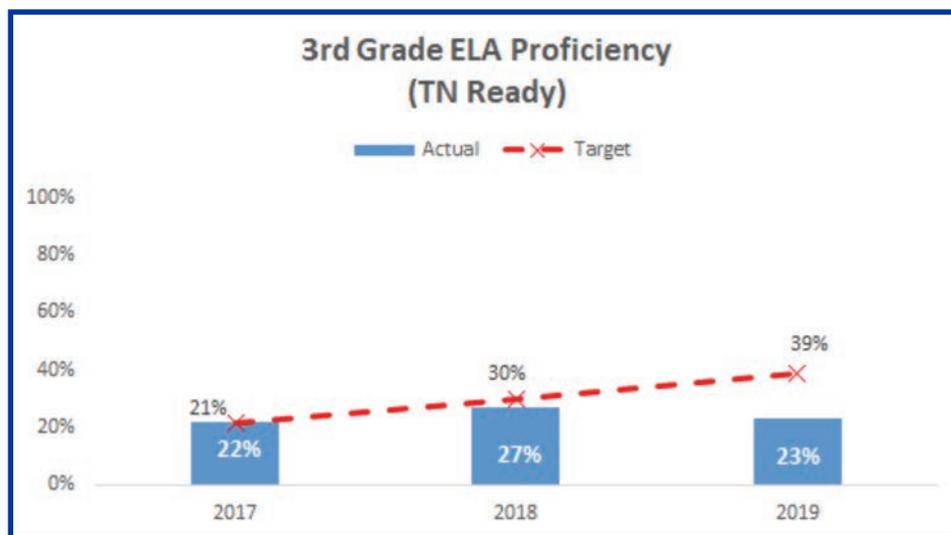
## 2019 Progress:

23.5 percent of third graders are proficient on the TNReady English Language Arts (ELA) assessment.



Third grade proficiency in English Language Arts (ELA) has fluctuated over time. In 2019, 23.5 percent of third grade students were proficient compared to 27.0 percent of students the prior year. Many of the District's largest priority student groups followed the same trend. African American student reading proficiency decreased from 25 percent in 2018 to 20 percent in 2019, and proficiency for economically disadvantaged students decreased from 20 percent to 18 percent over the same time period.

One bright spot in early literacy continues to be progress for English Learners. The English Learner TNReady proficiency rate for third-grade ELA doubled from six percent in 2018 to 12 percent in 2019, and English Learner success rates increased in all three grade bands in both math and ELA over the same period. These improvements for English Learners earned SCS "Advancing" status as well as the top student growth rating (Level 5 TVAAS) for this priority group.



## What's Working: Improving Early Literacy in Practice

**Pre-K Access and Quality** - During the 2018-19 school year, SCS' Head Start program provided Pre-K instruction to over 5,200 students. Formative assessment data (iStation) shows 84 percent of Pre-K students meeting literacy benchmarks by the end of the 2018-19 school year. The District continues to see evidence that Pre-K participation has longer-term positive effects on literacy. Forty-four percent of students entering kindergarten in 2018-19 who previously participated in Pre-K were considered kindergarten-ready on the fall 2018 MAP formative assessment compared to 35 percent of kindergartners who did not participate in SCS Pre-K. These outcomes are particularly important for economically disadvantaged students. In this group, 42 percent of students participating in Pre-K were kindergarten-ready compared to 26 percent of students who did not participate.<sup>1</sup> The District continues to partner with the Shelby County government, community partners and philanthropic organizations to expand Pre-K quality and seats available for students. The District's Department of Early Childhood has also partnered with the Real Men Read program to provide male role models to read culturally sensitive books to students in 20 schools.

**Alignment of ESL Curriculum with ELA Curriculum** - The District's work to support English Learners began with an alignment of ESL curriculum with the existing K-8 EL (formerly Expeditionary Learning) curriculum. Important elements of alignment included developing students' background knowledge of American cultural and historical knowledge, vocabulary development, and mini-lessons targeting necessary grammar to increase students' use and development of the English language. Providing additional opportunities within the curriculum for students to speak and write worked to improve WIDA ACCESS and TNReady scores alike. Aligning ESL with the curriculum provided to all students ensures English Learners are exposed to grade-level standards, ultimately mitigating any additional gaps students may acquire when they are not provided the opportunity to engage in these standards while learning the foundational elements of English.

**Superintendent's Summer Learning Academy** - Summer 2019 marked the third year of the Superintendent's Summer Learning Academy (SSLA) for Shelby County Schools. SSLA is a summer program designed to reduce student summer learning loss, or the loss of academic skills that occurs over the summer months when students are out of school. This year's SSLA was held at 40 school sites throughout the District for rising Kindergarten, elementary, and middle school students. SSLA is designed to be both educational and highly-engaging for participants. Students in the five-week program participated in daily reading and math lessons as well as supplemental activities that varied at different schools. Some activities included a bilingual theater program, sewing and design classes, cultural and character education, and STEM activities such as robotic rover programming. The 2019 SSLA also allowed opportunities for SCS and community partners to come together to support students over the summer. Partnerships included dance classes with the New Ballet Ensemble and a variety of field trips to city locations such as the Pink Palace, Junior Achievement's Biztown, the Agricenter, and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. SSLA further connected to the broader community with this year's theme, Celebrate Memphis, which was chosen to honor the city's bicentennial anniversary. Each school site hosted a culminating event attended by friends and family that showcased what the students learned about our great city.

**Ongoing Intervention and Support** - A key area in which our District strives to achieve excellence is in providing additional supports to students who struggle with grade-appropriate material. To do this, SCS offers a series of programs designed to address the needs of students struggling to master grade-level content. Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI2) is available to all grades and designed to support students who are performing one or more years below grade level in both reading and math. RTI2 provides schools with an instructional model that includes daily online and small-group intervention to our students on the specific content skills they need to catch up academically. Additionally, to support foundational literacy, SCS has identified and trained a Foundational Literacy Laureate in each elementary school to support teachers as they work to strengthen students' foundational skills that are essential to preparing them for reading comprehension. To provide additional support for our secondary learners, the District's Academics Office created a team of Senior Reading Advisors to work in middle and high schools with students who may still be struggling with foundational reading skills. This group of Advisors worked with a specialized reading curriculum to help students get a foothold in foundational literacy and enable them to perform better in their core classes. This program serves 29 schools and relies on

\*Sight words are words that occur frequently in text and may not be easy to "sound out" because the spelling and pronunciation do not match, as in the word "one."

innovative tactics from Advisors and school leaders to ensure high quality literacy instruction for our secondary students.

**Ongoing Literacy Support for Educators** - District instructional leaders conducted Foundational Skills classroom observations in over 270 early-grades classrooms in 48 elementary and K-8 schools. These observations showed that over 80 percent of our classrooms were implementing the elements of foundational literacy instruction with fidelity; however, it is the SCS goal to provide support for these critical content area teachers in every way that we can. This includes the distribution of newsletters with instructional tips to direct supports for the curriculum and explicit guidance on how teachers can use materials to enhance their classroom instruction. Observations and teacher feedback on foundational skills instruction has informed a combination of programs, resources and human capital decisions to ensure that our K-2 students are getting the fundamental literacy learning they need for a successful future. 2018-19 marked the first complete school year where the EL (formerly Expeditionary Learning) curriculum was implemented fully in K-8 classrooms after a pilot year in 2017-18. The EL curriculum embeds high quality texts in combination with robust classroom protocols that strengthen student content knowledge and make them better readers and thinkers. While the curriculum comes with shifts in practice, teachers and leaders worked tirelessly throughout the year to ensure implementation with fidelity, using the materials and resources as intended to help students get the most out of every lesson.





## What's Ahead

- **Third Grade Commitment:** In spring 2019, the SCS Board of Education revised its student promotion and retention policy to ensure that all students have received early literacy supports and demonstrate reading ability on grade level before they enter third grade. Beginning with 2019-20 kindergartners, schools will track indicators of student literacy progress and deploy additional intervention resources to grades K-2 so that students ultimately meet enough success criteria (such as passing report card grades and formative assessment results) to be promoted from second to third grade. As with RTI2, students will receive a combination of small group instruction led by a teacher or education assistant and computer-based support during a dedicated intervention block.
- **Training & Development for Literacy Support Staff:** The District will continue to build school capacity to strengthen early literacy in 2019-20 by providing new professional development opportunities to Foundational Literacy Laureates and Paraprofessionals supporting students in the K-2 continuum. A team of District Early Literacy Advisors are assigned to support the Foundational Literacy Laureates and K-2 teachers in all elementary and K-8 schools, and 20 Laureates and Advisors were selected to enroll in the Literacy Leadership and Coach certificate program at the University of Memphis to earn a Reading Specialist endorsement on their license. Paraprofessionals supporting second-grade students will also receive monthly professional learning sessions aligned to phonics skills in the District's Journeys curriculum centered around foundational reading skills.
- **Learning Resources for K-2 Teachers:** Beyond the above supports, District staff continue to build out a library of instructional resources such as Foundational Skills presentations, Decodable Reader lessons, and an exemplary Practices Video Library to help teachers deliver consistently high-quality foundational skills instruction in all K-2 classrooms.



## Priority 2: Improve Post-Secondary Readiness

### 2025 Goal:

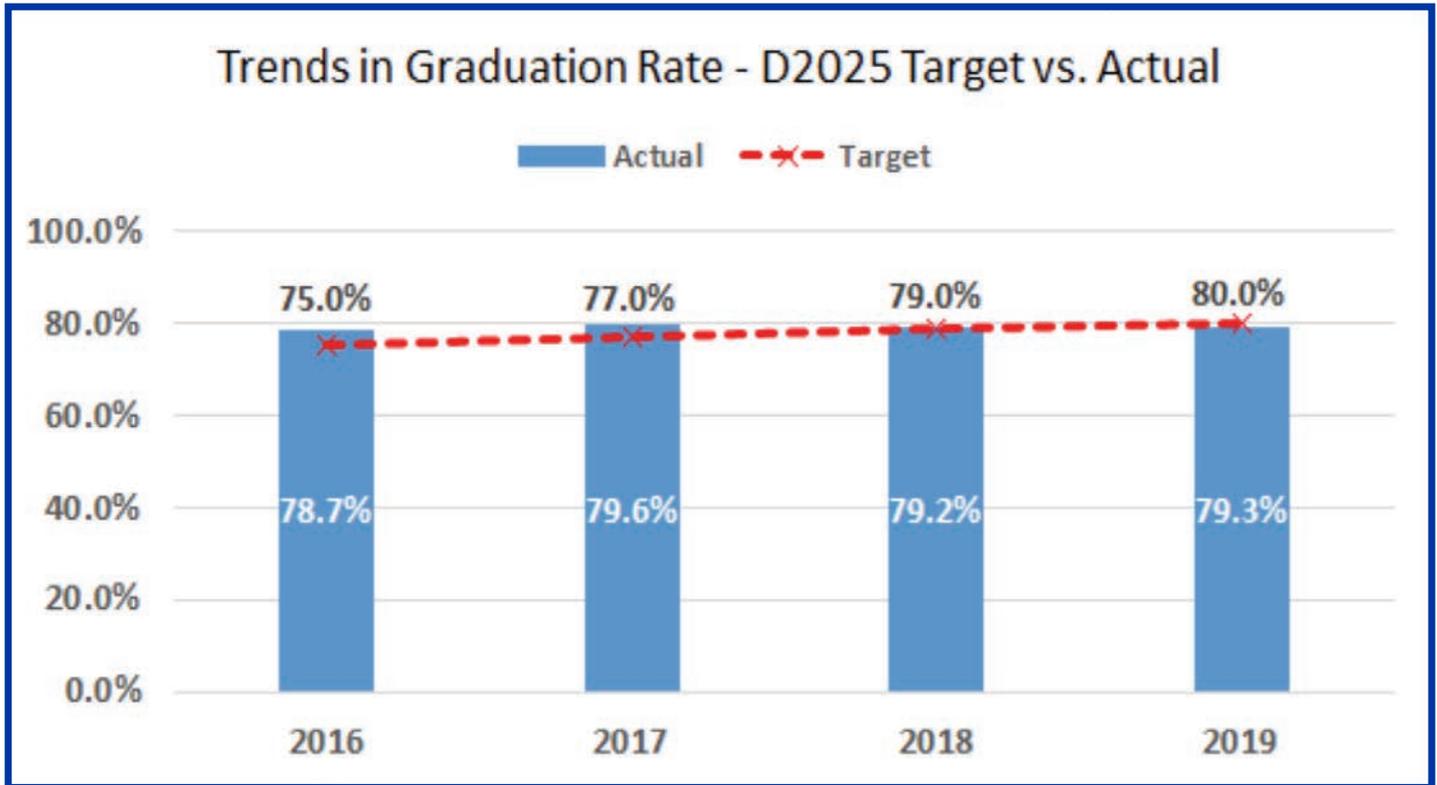
90 percent of SCS students graduate on time, and 100 percent of college- or career-ready graduates enroll in a post-secondary opportunity.

### 2019 Progress:

79 percent of students graduated on time in 2019, and 86 percent of 2018 Ready Graduates enrolled in a post-secondary opportunity.



In 2019, 79.3 percent of SCS students graduated on time compared to 79.2 percent of students in 2018. Although the graduation rate remained flat from 2018 to 2019, 62 percent of SCS high schools earned a graduation rate of at least 80 percent, meaning they are on track to meet the 90 percent goal by 2025. Additionally, 33 percent of SCS high schools have already achieved a graduation rate of 90 percent this year, and 54 percent improved their graduation rate from 2018 to 2019.

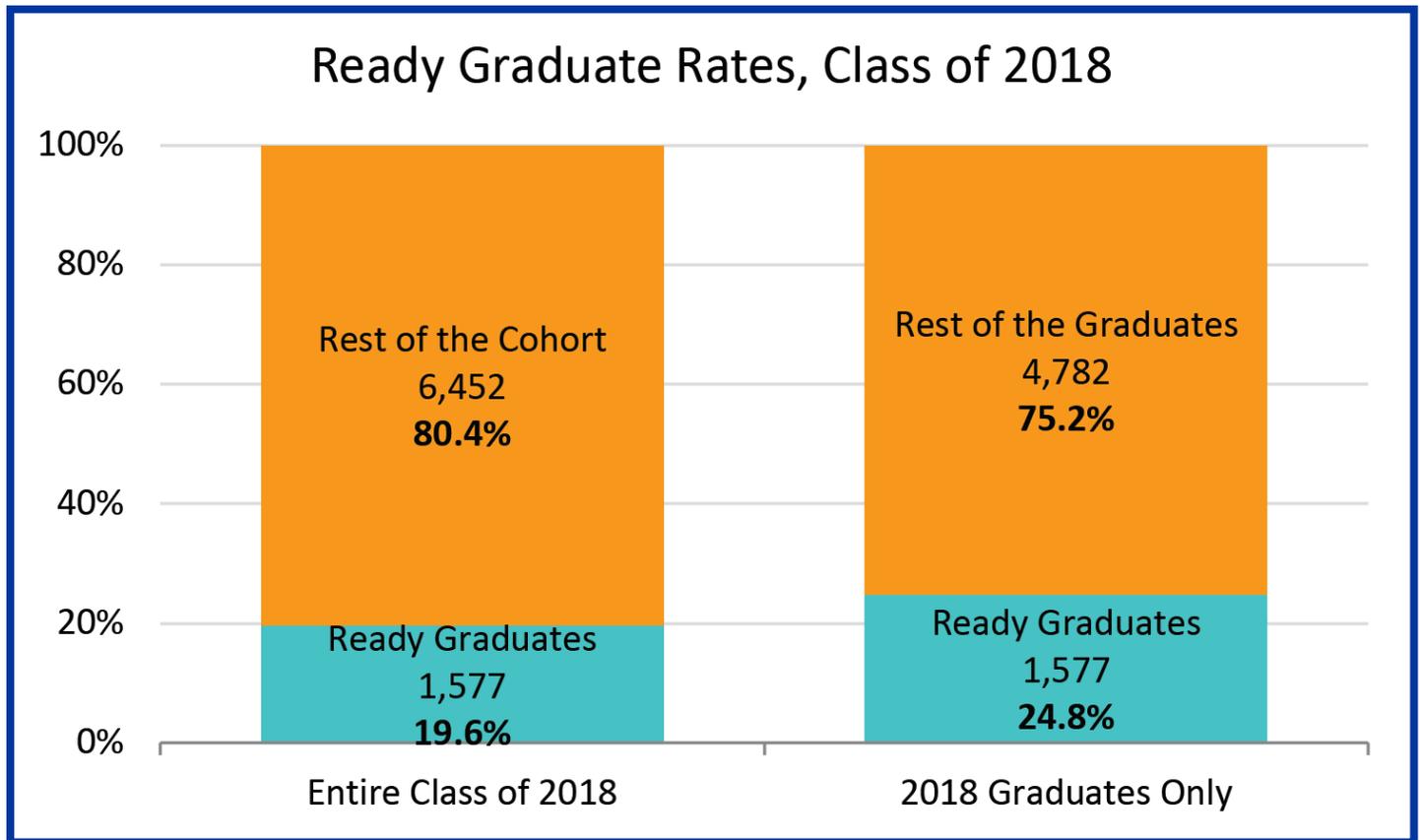


Starting with 2018 graduates, the Tennessee Department of Education has issued a new definition of college- and career-readiness for which all Districts and high schools are now accountable. A major focus is student participation in early post-secondary opportunities (EPSOs) that include Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Dual Enrollment (DE), and Statewide Dual Credit (SDC) courses. Students who meet one of the following criteria by the time they finish high school are considered “Ready Graduates”:

- Earn a composite score of 21 or higher on the ACT; OR
- Complete four early post-secondary opportunities (EPSOs); OR
- Complete two EPSOs + earn an industry certification; OR
- Complete two EPSOs + earn a score of military readiness on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) Armed Forces Qualifying Test (AFQT)

While we will continue to track the measures and goals we have previously used to approximate college- and career-readiness (such as 60 percent proficiency across all TNReady subjects and 20 percent industry certification completion among seniors by 2025), we will now use the State’s Ready Graduates definition as our official measure for 80 percent college- and career-readiness by 2025. This rate is calculated by dividing the number of Ready Graduates by the total number of

students in the cohort including non-graduates. However, the chart below also shows the Ready Graduate rate among just those students who graduated on time. As the chart shows, the District has a lot of ground to cover to reach its goal of 80 percent college- and career-readiness over the next few years. Ready Graduates comprised only one fifth (19.6 percent) of the entire 2018 cohort and one quarter (24.8 percent) of the 2018 graduates.



The post-secondary enrollment rate for 2019 graduates is not available yet, but 56.2 percent of all 2018 graduates have enrolled in a post-secondary school. One of the District’s key strategies to improving post-secondary enrollment is to encourage students to take advantage of financial aid opportunities that lower the barriers to entry including the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the TN-Promise scholarship. The TN-Promise scholarship allows students to enroll in two-year post-secondary programs for free, and in 2018-19, 93 percent of students completed the application (excluding ineligible students in SCS operated high schools). Additionally, 86.5 percent of SCS students completed the FAFSA by April 2019, which will enable them to apply for federal financial aid and state funds, such as the Hope Scholarship.

Given the State’s new Ready Graduates measure, SCS can now truly report on progress toward its goal that 100 percent of college- or career-ready graduates enroll in a post-secondary opportunity by 2025. The following chart presents the class of 2018’s post-secondary enrollment rates for all graduates and Ready Graduates. The Ready Graduates’ college-going rate of 86.4 percent means that an average increase of less than two percentage points per year is all it will take for the District to reach its goal of 100 percent by 2025.

## What's Working: Improving Post-Secondary Readiness in Practice



**CCTE Certifications/Improving Career-Readiness** - In today's career landscape, preparing students for success after graduation isn't a one-size-fit-all model, and the Division of College & Career Readiness aims to give student a variety of career advancement opportunities within and beyond post-secondary education. During the 2018-19 school year, CCTE students continued to make substantial increases in the number of industry certifications earned. Nearly 2,300 students earned a total of 2,345 state-promoted industry certifications, a dramatic increase over the 350 certifications students earned in 2017-18. The CCTE team also increased the amount of middle school programming so that students gain earlier awareness in CCTE programs of study that will be available to them in high school. CCTE's partnership with the Chamber of Commerce established a platform to create over 70 additional connections with local businesses, which resulted in 24 jobs for recently graduated seniors, 26 externship experiences, over 350 internship opportunities, and donations of automobiles to Cordova High & Germantown High and welding equipment to Bolton High & Southwest Career & Technical Center.

**EPSOs/Advanced Coursework** - The Division of Optional Schools and Advanced Academics (OSAA) is working to increase participation in advanced coursework, which includes EPSOs (Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Dual Enrollment, and Statewide Dual Credit courses) as well as Honors and Pre-AP courses that help prepare students for the rigors of EPSOs. A major focus area for OSAA is increasing the enrollment of traditionally underrepresented students in advanced courses. One way to accomplish this is to increase the number of advanced course offerings throughout the District. To that end, 2018-19 saw a dramatic expansion in the number of SDC courses offered to 237 course sections serving 5,400 students compared to just a handful of SDC courses in previous years. This major expansion entailed training 124 teachers last year to deliver the expected rigor and content of the SDC program. OSAA aims to increase its SDC teacher support in the current school year.

Beyond expanding EPSO offerings, it is equally important to ensure that students are equipped to handle the higher performance expectations by the time they enroll in an EPSO. Expanding and strengthening Honors and Pre-AP offerings in middle and early high school, along with other enrichment opportunities in earlier grades, helps create a pipeline of students who will be ready to succeed in EPSOs by the time they are juniors or seniors. An example of this work is at Central High, one of 100 schools nationwide selected to participate in College Board's school-wide Pre-AP pilot program. Central High is also piloting a new partnership with Baptist School of Nursing to expand advanced course offerings in preparation for health science fields. Another school engaged in this work is Whitehaven Elementary, which was selected to participate in the Smithsonian Science Education Center and Shell Oil Company's STEM Education Summit.

**Targeted Support for High School Students** - In order to work toward our Destination 2025 graduation and post-secondary enrollment goals, SCS offers a variety of supports for students needing to get back on track to reach these educational milestones. Project Graduation and the Newcomer International Center (NIC) are designed to help students who have fallen behind on graduation requirements. Project Graduation is an intervention program that affords students the opportunity to recover failing grades by demonstrating mastery on needed skills and standards in order to earn credits needed for on-time graduation. Project Graduation allows high school students to extend their school day by attending classes in the evening while still having the benefit of teacher-led instruction. Last year, Project Graduation served 1,864 students - a 12.2 percent increase from the previous year. More than 500 seniors have graduated on time with their cohort over the past two years based on support from Project Graduation. The Newcomer International Center (NIC) serves newly-arrived immigrant students ages 14 to 17 years old with limited formal education. NIC seeks to break language and cultural barriers to promote equitable academic access and help students attain a composite score of 2 (Emerging) or higher on the on WIDA ACCESS assessment within two years. Fifty-nine percent of all NIC students who took the WIDA ACCESS scored at or above the Emerging level, and 89 percent of second-year students scored at or above the Emerging level. Once students meet this benchmark, they are eligible to return to their neighborhood school or enroll at The Excel Center, which provides those who are 18 and older the support needed to earn their high school diploma and begin post-secondary education or enter the workforce. In the 2018-19 academic year, NIC met its enrollment cap of 90 students, and served a total of 106 students throughout the year. Additionally, students who completed two years of the program earned 13 to 14 credits toward graduation.

To help more students prepare for post-secondary coursework, SCS continues to partner with the State Department of Education to offer Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Support

(SAILS) to seniors who have not yet achieved a minimum ACT Math sub-score of 19. SAILS provides these students with a blended curriculum to help them master foundational standards and reduces the likelihood they will need remedial math coursework once they enter college. In the 2018-19 school year, 950 students participated in the program and 817 (86 percent) completed all modules. Once students successfully complete the SAILS modules, they have fulfilled the requirement for college remedial math and are then eligible to take math courses for college credit. Of the 817 completers, 108 completed the curriculum in the first semester and were able to enroll in Dual Enrollment Statistics in the second semester. Eighty-four of these students passed with a grade of "C" or better, a 77.8 percent passing rate for course participants.



**ACT Prep** - In order to help more students reach the Ready Graduate milestone of earning an ACT score of 21 or better, SCS developed a concerted plan to increase exam preparation opportunities. To address this, SCS' Academics Office released the ACT Playbook, a series of strategies and initiatives from formative assessments to student performance incentives to help schools boost ACT outcomes for students. This playbook was designed with input from a broad team that included teachers, school leaders and District

administrators and includes accompanying instructional resources to ensure that schools in the 2019-20 school year will have access to high-quality prep materials. Additionally, Academics mandated that all high schools provide ACT Prep courses in English and Math to assist students who have not yet earned a score of 21 or higher on the ACT. All ninth graders were also provided the opportunity to take the PSAT exam to help students, teachers and leaders learn where students may need support as they move toward taking the ACT in eleventh grade. The District's goal is to raise the average ACT composite to 21 by the year 2025.

**Using Predictive Data to Support Graduation and Post-Secondary Enrollment** - Launched in July 2018, SCS' BrightBytes platform uses predictive analytics to identify students exhibiting traits that place them at risk for not graduating on time or enrolling in a post-secondary institution. The BrightBytes predictive model is based on over 30 academic, attendance and behavior measures and adapts over time based on SCS-specific graduation and post-secondary enrollment trends. The 2018-19 school year focused on building awareness of these data resources and supporting schools on how to coordinate interventions and supports for students at risk for falling behind. By the end of the school year, more than half of all school personnel used BrightBytes, and 240 trainings were delivered to schools and District teams. SCS ended the 2018-19 school year with 29 percent of first- through twelfth-grade students exhibiting low levels of risk, while 18 percent were classified as high risk of not graduating on time.

## What's Ahead

- **CLUE Expansion:** Equitable access to rigorous content throughout students' K-12 career is central to improving high school and post-secondary outcomes. To help accomplish this, SCS will now provide universal screening to identify students eligible for CLUE enrichment at all SCS elementary and middle schools using the Illuminate/FastBridge assessments rather than teacher referral, which can lead to implicit bias in student selection and lower overall participation in gifted/talented programs.<sup>ii</sup> The District will evaluate CLUE student demographics before and after the implementation to determine whether the universal screening process leads to more equitable access to enrichment programs.
- **ACT Resources:** In 2019-20, all ninth graders will have the opportunity to take the PSAT so that students have earlier exposure to college exam content and so educators can diagnose where students need to provide academic support in order to reach ACT score milestones later in high school. Tenth graders will also participate in the Mastery Prep TruScore practice ACT, and ninth and tenth graders will be able to attend quarterly ACT workshops.
- **Expanded BrightBytes Intervention Tracking:** While schools already have the ability to track interventions at risk for not graduating on time in BrightBytes, all counselors, behavior specialists, social workers and mental health teams will also start tracking the key behavior and socioemotional learning supports they provide to students in 2019-20. School staff are also strongly encouraged to capture their Tier 1 classroom supports related to student behavior and parent contacts so that educators and support staff can improve coordination and communication related to Response to Intervention for Behavior, or RTI-B.
- **African American Male Empowerment:** Historical national and local trends show that African American male students experience notable disparities in graduation and post-secondary attainment compared to many other student groups.<sup>iii</sup> New SCS initiatives to improve these outcomes include the Band of Brothers mentoring program and career-planning initiatives for middle and high school students. Band of Brothers offers tutoring to increase literacy as well as mentoring to champion the work of successful African American men, while the career-planning initiatives will provide targeted employment opportunities, internships and externships local businesses and corporations during the summer and later in high school.
- **Ongoing CTE Expansion:** CTE will continue to strengthen our vertical articulation opportunities that link K-12 and post-secondary education to the workforce with the goal of completing 3,500 student industry certifications in 2019-20. By aligning the three stages of learning—secondary, post-secondary, and the workplace—students are on target to earn 750 dual-enrollment hours that can be used toward post-secondary attainment requirements. CTE is dedicated to increasing partnership commitments from National Manufacturing Day to the SCS/FedEx FXL Academy to the Mid-South Minority Business Continuum's 2G Academy to help bridge the gap between education and career.



## Priority 3: Develop Teachers, Leaders and Central Office to Drive Student Success

### 2025 Goal:

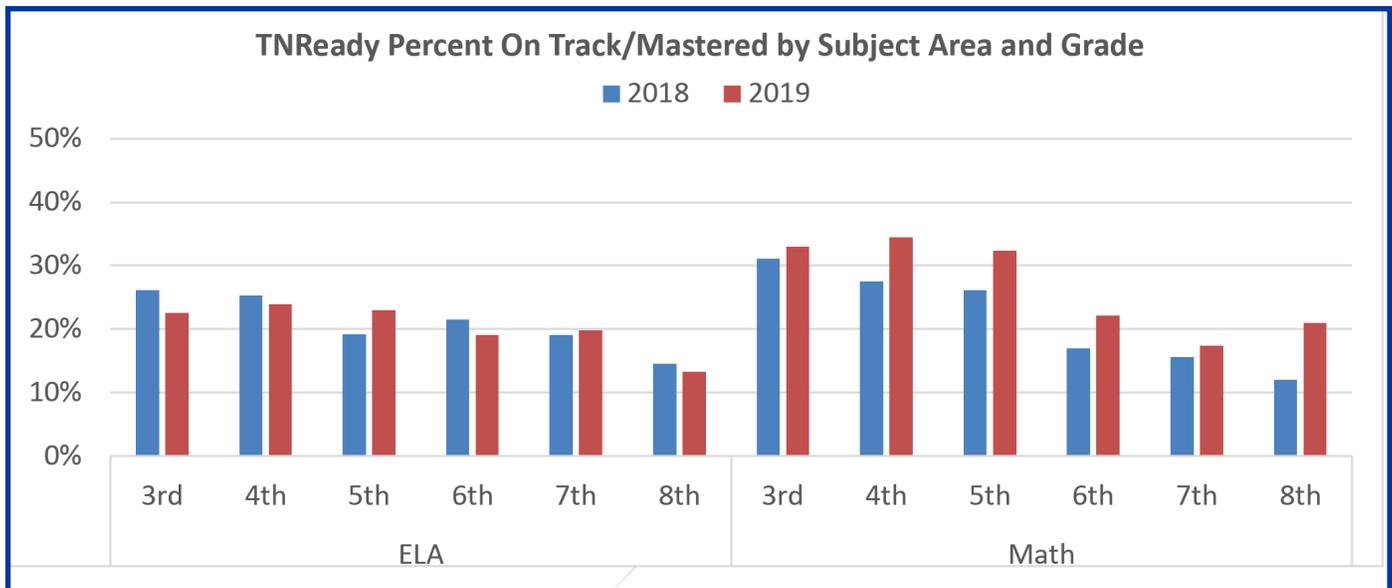
60 percent of students are proficient on the TNReady assessment.

### 2019 Progress:

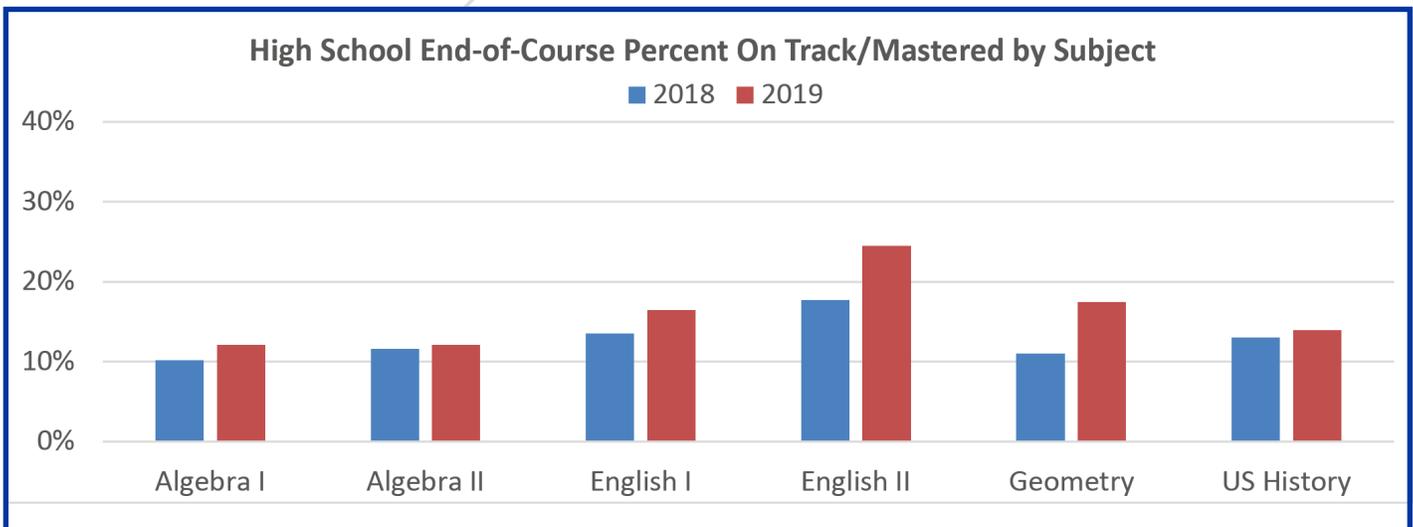
SCS schools earned a 16.3 percent exam success rate in high school End of Course subjects in 2019. Schools earned a 24.4 percent exam proficiency rate in TNReady 3-8 subjects.



The percentage of students scoring On Track or Mastered on 2018-19 TNReady assessments decreased for most K-8 grades in ELA. At the same time, fifth and seventh grade ELA and all grades in math saw increases over the previous school year.



For high school End-of-Course (EOC) exams, progress from the previous year showed small to moderate growth in all subjects. The District's largest proficiency gains were in English II and Geometry, which also have the highest absolute proficiency rates among high school subjects.



## What's Working: Developing Teachers, Leaders and Central Office in Practice



**School Capacity Building** - Building teacher expertise is intellectually demanding, professional work - it takes study, practice and critical feedback to develop into an expert teacher.<sup>iv</sup> To grow teacher expertise, we have to build the capacity of both teachers and leaders, driving change by creating and developing a shared vision of what excellent instruction looks like at the District, school and classroom level. Teachers deserve both materials and professional learning experiences that address the decisions they are making with their students with guidance on how to meet the needs of their unique learners. In Shelby County, we are committed to providing teachers and leaders with research-based, practical, and relevant professional learning experiences across content areas. To meet our ambitious Destination 2025 goals, the Department of PD and Support has developed this approach to District professional development: 1) Build teacher capacity by ensuring teachers understand the purpose and structure of our curriculum standards and how to plan effectively and implement standards-aligned curriculum; and 2) Build Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) capacity by setting a clear vision of what standards-aligned instruction looks like and how to use student and teacher data to build responsive cycles of professional learning.



Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs) are designed to encourage collective leadership among teachers and school administrators. The ILT is typically comprised of the principal, assistant principals, and teacher leaders representing different grade levels and content areas. ILTs meet at least twice a month to analyze data, discuss instructional trends, and plan professional development opportunities for teachers. The ILTs regularly utilize Instructional Practice Guides (IPG) that serve as an observation rubric for classroom instruction aligned to the SCS curriculum. Trends from this observation data then inform professional development activities during each quarterly Cycle of Professional Learning, or CPL. The purpose of the CPL is to create professional learning opportunities for teachers that build on their expertise and emphasize practicing new skills, receiving feedback, observing colleagues, and participating in peer discussion. As a result of this work, SCS was recognized in July 2019 by Education Resource Strategies for intentionally investing in being a learning school system from the classroom to collaborative planning meetings to work with Instructional Leadership Teams supported by central office.

**School Leadership Pipelines and Professional Development** – In 2018-19, SCS’ Office of Leadership offered many professional learning options for current school leaders as well as those who aspire to lead schools in our District. Current principals, assistant principals, and PLC Coaches participated in four Leadership Development Weeks throughout the school year comprised of learning sessions on leading people, the power of teams, school climate and culture, instructional coaching and support. In June 2019, the SCS Leadership Conglomeration helped to bring closure to the learning themes for the year and provided a platform for 600 daily participants on average to engage in professional development workshops of their choice based on individual needs and preferences. In terms of support for aspiring school leaders, 16 Assistant Principal Fellows participated in the immersive learning of the Leadership Pipeline Program to complete ongoing training and hands-on experiences in schools needed to become an effective principal. Fellows applied their learning to their own practice in their school buildings, received feedback from fellow team members, and spent time working with mentor principals who modeled best practices. The Office of Leadership also conducted a new principal boot camp to extend aspiring leaders’ learning from the year and ensure they were equipped to begin leading schools at the start of the next school year.

**Teacher Hiring, Recruitment and Retention** – The SCS Department of Human Resources has implemented a new recruitment plan that offers varied strategies to secure strong teachers in our classrooms. Recent innovations include using competitive hiring practices such as online marketing, targeted partnerships with teacher pipelines and grassroots hiring events. The District hosted four recruitment events throughout the summer that yielded more than 200 new hires and also partnered with programs such as Teach for America, Memphis Teacher Residency and University of Memphis’ River City Partnership. As a result, SCS recruited a larger teacher pool, initiated planning processes for budgeting and staffing earlier than in previous years and ultimately reduced teacher vacancies from over 500 in May to 120 in August 2019. Human Resources also launched the Aspiring Teachers Program to support unlicensed professionals (e.g., permit teachers, educational assistants and substitute teachers) in qualifying for teacher licenses. The Aspiring Teachers Program offers five tiers of support to improve participants’ chances of success passing the Praxis exam needed to attain licensure. The Praxis Support Program is offered online and face-to-face to strengthen aspiring teachers’ knowledge in content areas that align with the highest needs for SCS. In addition, a cohort of Aspiring Teachers was selected to participate in a job-embedded teacher residency program in collaboration with the Relay Graduate School of Education.

In addition to these recruitment and staffing strategies, SCS utilizes a stipend system to retain top performing teachers and increase competitiveness to recruit strong new candidates. Recruitment stipends for new hires and retention stipends for current teachers are designed to attract strong candidates in the District's hard-to-staff subjects, especially high school math, high school science and special education. Moreover, Superintendent Joris Ray implemented a three-percent pay raise for all teacher types and ensured that there were no insurance plan premium increases for all employees to remain competitive with other school districts. SCS also offers bonuses for veteran performers, top performers, candidates relocating from other geographic areas, stay pay, and also extended day pay for educators who work an extra hour in turnaround schools.

**Socioemotional Learning & ACEs Training** - Last spring, the SCS Board of Education passed a resolution that the District would "develop a plan to become a trauma-responsive District that builds and maintains supportive learning environments for all students" in response to local data on the prevalence of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in Shelby County. ACEs are often traumatic experiences that can have a life-long impact on many aspects of development including behavior and learning. As a first step in becoming a trauma-responsive District, all SCS staff were required to participate in ACEs awareness training. Second, 30 schools were selected to participate in a pilot program to become the District's first group of trauma-informed schools. Teachers and staff at these schools participated in extensive training on ACEs, Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), Restorative Practices, and Creating Safe Spaces, among other topics. Ultimately, the purpose of the Board's resolution is for staff to understand the impact of ACEs when working with students, especially with regard to discipline. Instead of immediately opting for an exclusionary disciplinary action (e.g., suspension or expulsion) for a student infraction, schools are working to use progressive discipline practices where students can reflect on and make amends for negative behavior, such as providing some kind of community service for the good of the school. As a trauma-informed mindset grows throughout the District, there should be fewer instances of exclusionary discipline and increased use of progressive discipline to keep students engaged and present during instruction.

## What's Ahead

- **Flex Days and Content Cadres:** The 2019-20 school calendar reflects significant District commitment to professional learning with a combination of full- and half-day professional learning opportunities to ensure teachers have dedicated time within their day to gain the knowledge and skills they need to improve student outcomes. For a portion of this time, educators participate in "Content Cadre" professional learning paths based on their grade band, expertise, experience and content area. These include the Exploring Path for brand-new teachers, the Progressing Path for teachers building fluency in the curriculum, the Advancing Path for teachers to make more nuanced instructional decisions to support the curriculum, and the Sustaining Path for teachers to reflect on their practices and extend engagement and collaboration opportunities with students.
- **Continuous Improvement Curriculum:** In 2019-20, the Continuous Improvement team is implementing a new training curriculum focused on building the knowledge and technical capacity of school and Central Office staff related to data-driven instruction. These offerings include sessions to help schools plan out year-long processes, roles and



scheduling structures needed to execute data-driven instruction consistently, build a strong culture of data use based on a continuous improvement mindset and use root cause analysis and action planning to respond effectively to the data.

- Scaling Up Restorative Practices:** So that SCS can realize the Board’s goal to become a trauma-informed District, we will increase the number of schools receiving training on trauma-informed practices in 2019-20 and establish reset rooms in 30 schools where there have been a disproportionate number of students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged or African American male students receiving suspensions. Reset rooms provide students a safe place to go to work through their emotions when dealing with an incident that has the potential to escalate, and they receive support from a trained reset assistant. After students regain control and perspective - or after they are emotionally reset - they rejoin their classroom.
- African American Male Empowerment:** The District’s African American Male Empowerment (AAME) extends beyond student-focused supports to ensure that educators have the tools to promote equitable practices in the classroom. In 2019-20, SCS will establish an Equity Institute to train educators to recognize and work to eliminate patterns of implicit bias, social inequality, and internalized oppression that can lead to negative outcomes for marginalized student groups. SCS will also launch a campaign to recruit more African American male teachers, especially in elementary grades, to improve representation and visibility in our teacher pipeline.



## Priority 4: Expanding High Quality School Options

### 2025 Goal:

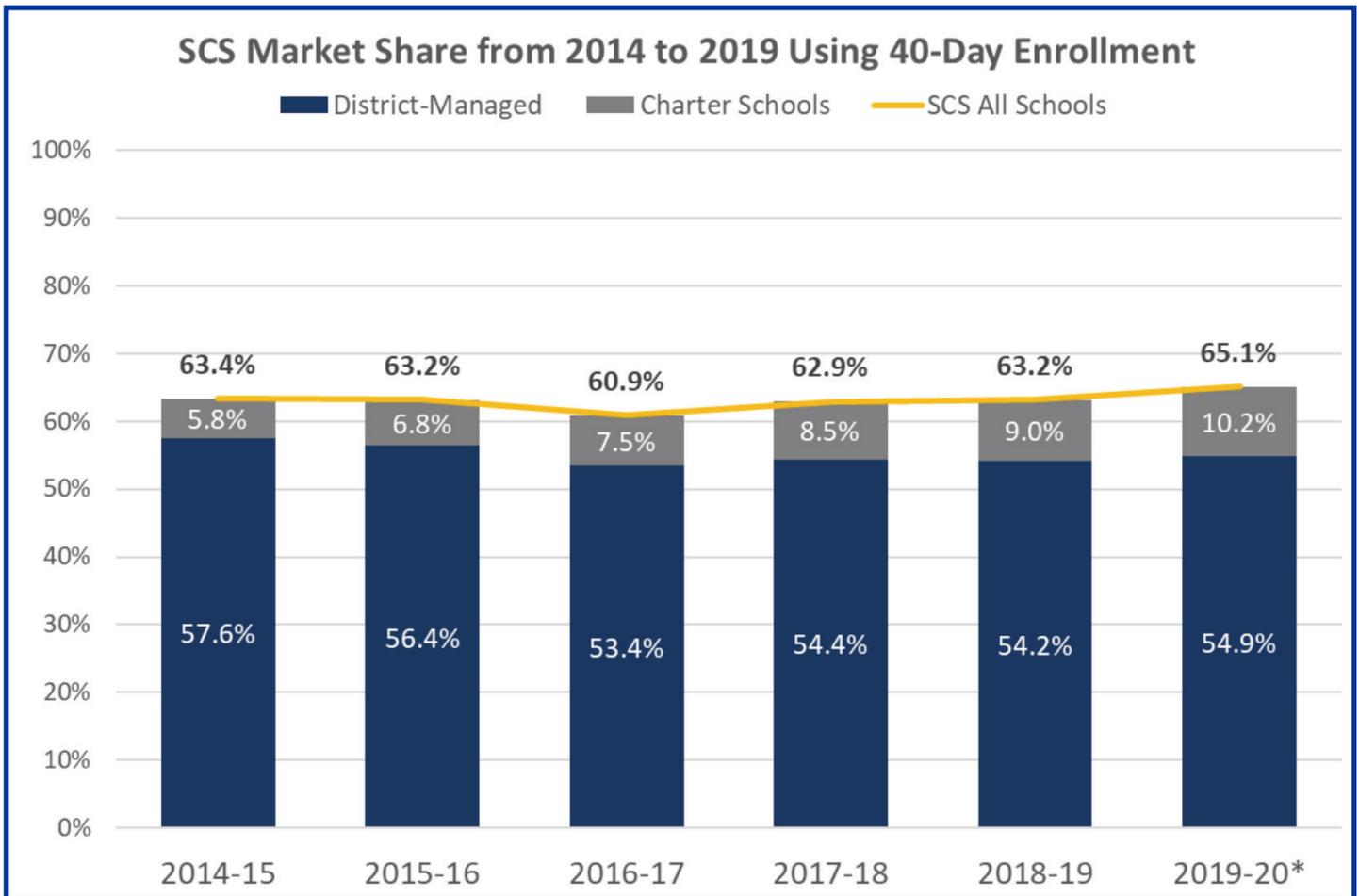
SCS student market share increases by 5 percentage points.

### 2019 Progress:

65.1 percent of school-aged children in Shelby County are enrolled in SCS. 2



Shelby County Schools' student market share is currently estimated to be 65.1 percent based on Pre-K-12 enrollment counts on the 40th day of the 2019-20 school year and the most recent U.S. Census estimates of the county-wide school-age population.<sup>2</sup> This means that roughly two thirds of all school-aged children in Shelby County are enrolled in our District. Based on the best-available population estimates, SCS' market share improved by two percentage points, although this calculation may fluctuate as the Census' school-age population estimates are revised. The overall student enrollment count increased by roughly 1,500 students from 2018-19 to 2019-20 while the county-wide school-age population estimates declined during the same reporting period. Most of SCS' growth in student enrollment is due to an increase in the charter school student population while student enrollment in District-managed schools remained fairly steady.



<sup>2</sup>American Community Survey 5-year estimates are subject to change after the date of publication, which means market share is an approximation based on the best available data at a given time. The 2018-19 market share percentage was updated with the 5-year estimates date from 2017. \*2018 ACS 5-year estimates were not available at the time of this report for the 2019-20 school year, so Annual population estimates were used to calculate the 2019-20 market share. This data was captured on 9/27/2019.

In 2019, 25 schools made the State's Reward schools list because they were in the top 25 percent of all Tennessee public schools for student growth and/or achievement on the most recent TN-Ready assessment, down from 37 schools the previous year. Three of SCS' Reward schools are charters, and 22 are District-managed. The number of Priority schools also decreased from 27 in 2018 to 21 in 2019, meaning fewer students are enrolled in schools in the bottom 5 percent State-wide for TNReady achievement. Currently, four Priority schools are charter or contract-managed, and 14 schools are District-managed. An additional three schools that were part of the DuBois charter management organization closed at the end of 2018-19, bringing the number of active Priority schools down to 18.

## What's Working: Expanding High-Quality Options in Practice



**Addressing Student Need: School Turnaround Investments** - Shelby County Schools continues to be a leader in turnaround work state-wide and nationally. The number of schools on the Priority list has declined for two years, and three schools exited the Priority list in 2019 for making large academic gains - Robert R. Church Elementary, Dunbar Elementary and Getwell Elementary. For the first time in SCS history, all District-managed Priority schools are now part of the Innovation Zone (iZone), meaning students and educators receive additional resources, flexibility and extended instructional time to accelerate student learning. In 2019, two iZone schools that were formerly in the bottom five percent for achievement made Tennessee's Reward school list - A. B. Hill Elementary and Lucie E. Campbell Elementary. Four iZone schools earned the highest student growth rating possible (Level 5) based on TNReady results.

The Empowerment Zone (E-Zone) is another set of schools receiving targeted investments and flexibility with instructional methods to improve achievement and prevent schools from becoming part of the State Priority list. The mission of the E-Zone is to provide all students with great first teaching through objective-driven instruction, rigorous tasks on the table, and instructional time management that is evident in the curriculum taught at each school. E-Zone schools utilize curricula that is vertically aligned and designed to improve reading, writing, problem-solving, and critical-thinking skills and emphasize standards-based, student-centered instruction. As a result of E-Zone efforts, two schools in this portfolio made the Reward list in 2019 – Holmes Road Elementary and Robert R. Church Elementary, the latter of which also exited the State’s Priority list. Three E-Zone schools earned the highest student growth rating (Level 5) based on TNReady results.

**Strengthening Charter School Partnerships** – As of 2019-20, SCS has authorized 56 active charter schools serving more than 17,000 students - over 15 percent of all students in the District. Nine charter schools earned the highest student growth rating (Level 5) on the most recent TNReady assessment, and three schools in this portfolio also made the State Reward List. In order to keep improving the quality of Shelby County’s charter school options, the Board of Education recently revised its Charter Schools Board Policy, #1011.<sup>y</sup> The policy now requires current charter organizations to maintain strong performance on academic, financial and operation scorecards for three consecutive years before they can apply to establish additional schools and permits the Board to revoke charters for schools that receive a rating below expectations on the School Performance Scorecard (SPS) for three consecutive years. Under the new policy, the Board can also evaluate applications for new charter schools based on their proposed location and/or proposed academic programs and deny applications in geographic areas that are already considered oversaturated with unfilled seats or applications that do not meet the current academic needs of students. SCS will also create a Charter Partnership Council to foster collaboration between District offices and charter schools on topics, such as improving ongoing monitoring of charter school performance and sharing key services and resources.

**Expansion of CTE Offerings/Pathways** – The Division of College, Career, and Technical Education (CCTE) offers a diverse array of programs to give students the necessary skills and credentials to excel. Phase I of the CCTE redesign focused on Advanced Manufacturing, Architecture & Construction, Health Science, Information Technology, STEM, and Transportation, which resulted in a 48 percent increase in the number of students enrolled in these areas. Two state-of-the-art training facilities were opened at Overton High and Whitehaven High. The Overton High facility features a computer science lab, audio-visual production studio, and fashion design lab. At the Whitehaven High facility, students are able to train for HVAC, Plumbing, Aviation, and Small Engine Repair. In the coming years, CCTE course offerings by school will continue to grow with a focus in high-skill, high-wage and high-demand areas by providing students with intellectually-demanding, real-world curricula that includes the integration of academic, technical, and employability skills.

**Expansion of Advanced Coursework and Optional Offerings** - The Division of Optional Schools and Advanced Academics (OSAA) has worked to increase the number and variety of advanced academic options available to students across the District. SCS offers Optional programs within some schools and for the entire school in other cases, each with a specialized learning focus. In 2018-19, 46 District-managed schools (28 percent) had an Optional program. The same year, 44 SCS high schools (92 percent of District-managed, 89 percent of charters) offered advanced course opportunities consisting of Honors (85 percent), Advanced Placement / International Baccalaureate (65 percent), Dual Enrollment (67 percent), or Statewide Dual Credit (50 percent) classes. In addition, 30 middle schools (70 percent of District-managed, 25 percent of charters) offered Honors courses, providing students with early exposure to advanced coursework to help them prepare for the challenging work of early post-secondary opportunities (EPSOs) in high school.

**Promoting Equity: Student-Based Budgeting** - The District has employed student-based budgeting (SBB), a funding model that shifts budget decisions and management from the central office to school leadership teams. SBB empowers schools and communities to decide what is best for their students by basing resource allocations on the student population through school-level budget planning. SBB helps address inequities in academic resources by providing schools with funding based on financial weights for different student educational needs (e.g., gifted, mobility, low academic performance) and by creating a model that allow funding to follow the students when transfers occur. With increased transparency for students, parents and community partners, educators have more flexibility to make budget decisions at their respective schools, yielding improved support tailored to students' needs. In the 2019 fiscal year, SBB expanded its initial cohort of six schools and added a second cohort of four middle schools. These schools received targeted support from the central office, enabling all four schools to qualify for increased funding autonomy in the 2020 fiscal year.





## What's Next

- **Continuous Improvement Zone:** SCS' iZone schools have had a strong track record of improving student achievement and reducing the number of District schools on the Priority list. In order to make way for new Priority schools to receive iZone support and sustain the gains that have already been made, SCS has established a Continuous Improvement Zone consisting of 12 former iZone schools. These schools will receive intensive coaching on data-driven, standards-based instruction and continuous improvement practices to build upon the academic gains they have previously achieved.
- **Digital School Pilot:** In 2019-20, SCS is launching a Digital School pilot in nine high schools that will provide each student with their own device as a necessary foundation for a blended learning instructional model. Done well, blended learning opens up possibilities for students, allowing them to access rich standards-aligned materials while still benefiting from instruction with real teachers who help students build connections, understand the content they're engaging with, and tailor instruction to meet individual students' needs. As part of the pilot, teachers will engage in a series of targeted professional development sessions to prepare them for this shift in teaching and learning.
- **ALPHAS:** ALPHAS is a middle school enrichment program designed to provide highly engaging, enriched academic activities on a monthly basis for approximately 2,000 students scoring in the 65th percentile or higher on the TNReady assessment. The program will help our students gain a deeper understanding of more rigorous and exciting aspects of mathematics and language arts content. This cohort of students will also collaboratively engage on social and civic issues that are embedded in specified literacy and mathematics content.
- **Extending Student-Based Budgeting and Planning:** In 2019-20, a cross-functional team of leaders from the Office of Academics, and the Departments of Finance, Human Resources, and Strategy & Performance Management will work to strengthen the annual school-level strategic planning process for a pilot set of schools. While all District schools receive a student-based budget allocation and have some flexibility over how to use their budgetary resources, the pilot schools will receive more hands-on support to analyze student and teacher data trends, assess key needs and devise a more innovative budget to meet those needs. Additionally, the Department of Finance and Office of Academics will identify new schools that qualify for increased funding autonomy.



## Priority 5: Mobilize Family & Community Partners

### 2025 Goal:

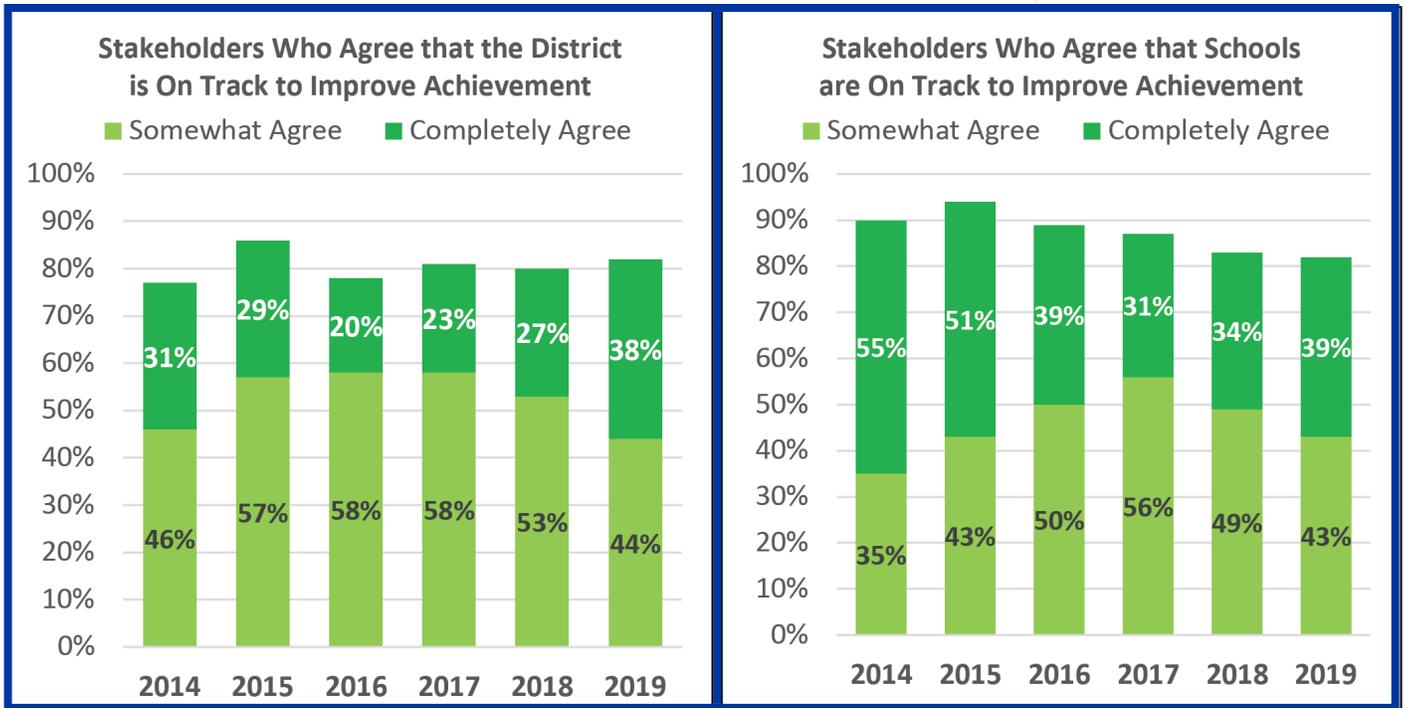
Community confidence in SCS increases to 90 percent.

### 2019 Progress:

82 percent of surveyed staff and community stakeholders agree that the Superintendent and central office are on track to improve student achievement.



Based on SCS' most recent annual survey to parents, community members, and District staff, 82 percent of stakeholders are confident in the District's efforts to improve student achievement. The percentage of stakeholders who completely agree that the District is on track grew from 27 percent in 2018 to 38 percent in 2019. Confidence in SCS schools themselves remains relatively high and stable, with 82 percent of stakeholders agreeing that the schools are on track to improve student achievement in 2019 compared to 83 percent in 2018. The percentage of stakeholders who completely agree that schools are on track grew from 34 percent in 2018 to 39 percent in 2019.



The 2017-2019 surveys also asked SCS parents for their level of agreement on whether their child(ren)'s schools are on track to improve student achievement. In all three years, a higher percentage of parents are very confident that their child(ren)'s schools are on track (56 percent in 2019) versus SCS schools in general (39 percent in 2019).<sup>3</sup> While community confidence in the District and in schools has plateaued in recent years, the percentage of those who completely agree that SCS is on track has grown. As the District continues to make progress toward Destination 2025's vision for college-and career-readiness, community confidence and support remain key.

<sup>3</sup>For the first time in the confidence survey, parents were able to rate each school if they had children at more than one school. This change may have contributed to the large increase (44 percent in 2018 to 56 percent in 2019) in parents' confidence in their children's schools and to the larger gap between parents' confidence in their own children's schools compared to all SCS schools. The gap was 10 percent in 2018 versus 17 percent in 2019.

## What's Working: Mobilizing Partners in Practice



**Expanding Media Reach and Strengthening SCS Identity** - By creating strong mass communication channels, we are able to deliver timely news and reliable information to our all of our stakeholders. Social media continues to be the District's information source with the highest engagement. We added nearly 9,000 new followers in 2018-19, topping 108,000 total across Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. The District has made noteworthy strides in reaching the Latino community, with a 36-percent increase in followers on the SCSenEspanol Twitter page and 1,300 likes on the Spanish Facebook page, which launched in September 2018. The Voice of SCS also experienced significant increases, with a 13-percent jump in listenership (72,000+ listeners per month) and over 370 school, District and Board videos produced. SCS formed 20+ marketing partnerships with local businesses and organizations in 2018-19 as a key strategy to help amplify our messages and reach more people including eight partners in the Latino community. Marketing partners share relevant content with our target audiences and align to various District initiatives in exchange for the same opportunity within SCS' communications.

The Communications Department launched the Public Relations Organizer (PRO) program in schools and central office in 2018-19 to help strengthen the SCS brand and increase District-wide capacity for marketing SCS and sharing good news. The program focused on branding best practices, social media skills, graphic design and school marketing. Collectively, approximately 200 school PROs completed training, representing 95 percent of schools. Of those, 120 were "certified" PROs, meaning they attended three or more trainings. Nearly 50 central office departments also attended PRO training in 2018-19. Overall, 100 percent of PROs said the trainings were helpful and the lessons were useful. The program earned the Golden Achievement Award from the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA), the organization's highest honor for internal communications programs.

SCS is 901- SCS launched the “SCS is 901” identity campaign in August 2018, beginning with the “Welcome Home 901” back-to-school campaign. The first phase of the campaign focused on brand recognition and the SCS is 901 Pledge, designed to build a base of engaged supporters who will share our message, become involved with the District and advocate for our students. The District’s 901 School Choice Showcase took place in fall 2018 and resulted in over 5,000 people attending and more than 1,000 taking the SCS is 901 Pledge. The first series of 901 feature stories premiered at the “SCS is 901 BIG Event” at Overton Park in the spring as part of Memphis’ Bicentennial celebration. Approximately 1,500 people attended the event, and the stories were featured in a two-week social media ad campaign encouraging citizens to take the SCS is 901 Pledge. During the first year of the campaign, 10 feature stories reached 5,800+ people and had 274,000 engagements on social media. Over 3,600 people have taken the SCS Pledge, and there have been nearly 20,000 uses of the unifying #SCSis901 hashtag.

**SCS Student Affairs and Voices of D2025** - In 2017-18, SCS launched the Voices of Destination 2025 campaign to raise student awareness around the key priorities District strategies with our most important group of stakeholders: our students. A focus group of student ambassadors of the class of 2025 convened to discuss the Destination 2025 Academic Plan to promote student voice in our District’s decision-making process. Now under the full guidance of the Department of Student Affairs, the cohort of student ambassadors will continue to provide insight on all aspects of our work. In 2018-19, the newly formed Department of Student Affairs worked to cultivate community partnerships that address student interests and encourage student engagement in school and in their communities. One example is the development of a student voice panel that students served on along with Memphis City and Shelby County law enforcement, the President and CEO of Boys and Girls Club of Memphis, and Student Congress representatives. Other partnerships that mobilized SCS students’ voices include SCS working with the City of Memphis Youth Council on various initiatives and supporting nearly 200 students with the Tennessee PTA’s Storm the Hill in collaboration with the Shelby County Delegation of Senators and State Representatives.

The Department of Student Affairs also built partnerships with community organizations and businesses to address students’ academic needs and career interests. They collaborated with the Freshman Success Network, which includes nine SCS-managed high schools, to work with ninth-grade students on their academic progress in order to prevent dropout, increase graduation rates, and improve post-secondary readiness. Student Affairs held a Career Expo where 92 SCS students had the opportunity to connect with local businesses to explore various career paths. Student Affairs also initiated a partnership with FedEx and hosted a Student Affairs/FedEx Cares Scholarship Expo for SCS students and their families and had over 70 students sign up for FedEx employment opportunities. Through these experiences, students learned how to be advocates for themselves and engaged members of their communities.

**SCS Parent Welcome Center** - SCS wants all customers including employees, students, parents and community partners to have confidence in the District as a service provider. In the summer of 2018, the SCS Parent Welcome Center administered a customer service survey to capture baseline data, and approximately 1,500 parents with children in over 160 SCS schools participated. When asked to provide feedback on their service experience at their child's school the previous year, about two-thirds of the parents reported that school staff had been welcoming and were knowledgeable in assisting them or finding someone who could assist them. However, just over

half of participating parents thought that school staff had adequately addressed their needs or concerns.

To cultivate a cohesive District-wide culture that focuses on students and families, the SCS Parent Welcome Center and Customer Service Office developed Customer Service WORKS framework and provided professional development to support the implementation of consistent practices. The guidelines established support an enhanced focus on service in five areas represented by the acronym WORKS: Welcoming Environment, Orderly Environment, Respectful and Responsive Communication, Knowledgeable Staff, and Sensitive and Sincere Interaction. In 2018-19, approximately 1,100 SCS employees were trained on WORKS, including over 200 school leaders, 300 school clerical staff and 200 central office staff. The Parent Welcome Center staff also provided informational materials to help schools and parents learn how to get support or answers to questions. In 2018-19 school year, the Parent Welcome Center provided support to 142,725 constituents via telephone, email, and walk-ins. Cultivating a more family-friendly culture in schools and District offices will build confidence in SCS and increase parent involvement in schools.

**Family and Community Engagement** - Preparing students to succeed is a shared responsibility that requires strategic partnerships between schools and the community. The Department of Family and Community Engagement (FACE) serves as the liaison for individuals, families, businesses, and community organizations to support SCS by creating partnerships that promote better student outcomes on our journey to Destination 2025. FACE provides services that strengthen the home-to-school connection and helps schools build the capacity of our families to participate actively in their child's education as partners. In 2018-19, FACE developed a Parent Institute to teach parent-to-child school work support strategies, piloted Family Academic School Teams (FAST) in 12 schools to engage families with student academic data and provide resources to help students succeed, and expanded its bilingual engagement program, Families Connect/Familias Conectando, to six schools to foster strong connections between schools and parents. Community partnerships with schools range from donating time and expertise to sending tutors or mentors to volunteer in the classroom to donating money or materials to specific programs. In 2018-19, FACE worked with school leadership teams and mobilized at least one external community partnership in 100 percent of schools identified on the State's priority list. They also re-launched the Adopt-A-School Partnerships luncheon to engage with and recognize significant adopter contributions to schools, such as volunteers and resources. FACE improved the volunteer experience by updating the online management system to streamline the sign-up process and add new security measures to vet volunteers before they enter schools. In 2018-19, SCS increased the total number of school volunteers to 5,067 and had 672 total school adopters.

**Seeding Success** - Seeding Success serves as a community-wide coordinating partner between the District and various external community organizations working toward the same K-12 goals. In 2018-19, Seeding Success' partnership with Shelby County Schools continued to grow with the pursuit funding opportunities that align with shared goals that support students and their families. The major highlights of Seeding Success' work in 2019 include:

- Executed a contract with the City of Memphis and Shelby County for \$11 million to fund the continuation of 70 Pre-K classrooms formerly supported by the Federal Pre-K Development Grant and county funding;

- Secured our community's largest Pay for Success Investment ever to support Pre-K;
- Launched the second year of a Gates Foundation-supported Network for School Improvement with 15 SCS middle and high schools; Year 1 results showed a significant increase in school capacity to keep students on-track for graduation;
- Launched a Community Schools prototype funded by the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative with three SCS schools - Riverview K-8, Dunbar Elementary, and Belle Forest Community Schools.
- Partnered with the Women's Foundation of Greater Memphis on the Evidence to Success grant to survey Booker T. Washington High School students on health and behavior risk and protective factors and implement effective programs.
- Launched an Education/Housing Partnership planning process with support from Enterprise Technical Assistance Services to be launched early 2020



## What's Ahead

- **SCS is 901:** In 2019-20, the Communications Department will build on the “SCS is 901” campaign to expand the base of engaged supporters and align all major District initiatives for year-round storytelling. In addition, Communications will introduce a new 901 external newsletter built around the SCS Pledge categories to share more good news, provide more opportunities to be involved with SCS and more ways to advocate for our students and educators. One such opportunity includes the development of new Spanish Hub on the SCS website, giving Latino families easy access to the information they need most. In Spring 2020, Communications will release an Economic Impact Study conducted with the University of Memphis designed to demonstrate our essential connection to the future success of the 901 area and build the case for more local support.
- **Partnerships to Engage Students:** To further empower students to be informed advocates for themselves and their communities, Student Affairs will continue cultivating community partnerships that encourage student engagement and address student interests. Some of the new partnerships include collaboration with the National Dropout Prevention Center; the S.O. What Literacy, Life Skills, and Character Education Partnership; the National Association of Community and Restorative Justice; and social emotional learning community partnerships.
- **Expanded Focus on Customer Service:** The District will extend its efforts to cultivate a more welcoming culture in schools and offices by expanding the Customer Service WORKS training, incorporating these expectations into new employee orientation and requiring all current employees to complete online training. SCS will also implement a monthly Five Star Service Award to recognize schools that model exemplary customer service practices. To hold ourselves accountable for fostering a District-wide culture that focuses on students and families, SCS will administer a quarterly parent survey to get feedback on parents’ service experiences at schools and report the results out by Board Member District.
- **Empowering Families to Support Education:** In 2019-20, FACE will continue building the capacity of school staff to engage with parents on how to support their children’s education and providing holistic supports for students and families through District, school and community partnerships. Family Academic School Teams (FAST) will expand from 12 to 18 schools in 2019-20 to engage families with student data and provide targeted resources to help students succeed academically. FACE will also promote mutual communication between school and home so that parents receive information about their child’s progress and resources available to support learning. Another strategic focus by FACE in 2019-20 is engaging the community around multicultural programming that addresses cultural awareness, learning, and multiethnic communication for schools, families, and students.





## Closing

During 2018-19, our most promising work has resulted in gains in math proficiency across all grade bands, English Learner academic progress, and a substantially larger number of students earning industry certifications that will lead to better post-secondary and employment opportunities after graduation. In terms of Destination 2025 priorities, our most significant progress has been in expanding high-quality school options by increasing student market share and decreasing the number of schools falling into the bottom five percent of student achievement across Tennessee. Yet we still have much work ahead to advance early literacy outcomes in particular and make new gains in on-time graduation and overall student achievement.

At the halfway point of our ten-year strategic plan and with new leadership in place, SCS must seize this opportunity to build upon strategies with the greatest potential to improve teaching, learning and student well-being inside and outside the classroom.

In 2019-20, key strategies to support our Destination 2025 goals include:

- Enacting a balanced system of supports and accountability to ensure all students meet early literacy milestones through the Third Grade Commitment
- Ensuring equitable student access to rigorous academic instruction in everyday classroom instruction and through enrichment opportunities such as CLUE, early post-secondary opportunities (EPSOs), and the ALPHAs middle school enrichment program
- Building school and central staff capacity to implement socioemotional learning strategies such as behavior-based Response to Intervention (RTI-B) and become a trauma-informed District that supports the whole child
- Providing targeted support and addressing implicit bias aligned to Superintendent Ray's African American Male Empowerment
- Strengthening community confidence through our SCS is 901 campaign and two-way engagement between staff and families to work together toward students' success

We cannot reach our 80/90/100 percent goals without continued support and alignment with our many community partners, public leaders, educators, students and families. To learn more about how you can support student outcomes and pledge your commitment, go to our SCS is 901 campaign at <http://www.scsk12.org/901/>.

## End Notes

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# Appendix

Metric	2018 Actual	2019 Target	2019 Actual	Target Met?	Actual-to-Target Difference	2020 Target
<b>Priority 1: Strengthen Early Literacy</b>						
<b>Grade 3 ELA Proficiency</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>No</b>	-16 points	<b>47%</b>
MAP - Kindergarten RLA (above 50th percentile)	41%	56%	41%	No	-15 points	TBD
MAP - Grade 1 Math (above 50th percentile)	49%	61%	49%	No	-12 points	TBD
MAP - Grade 1 RLA (above 50th percentile)	48%	60%	47%	No	-13 points	TBD
MAP - Grade 2 Math (above 50th percentile)	40%	61%	38%	No	-23 points	TBD
MAP - Grade 2 RLA (above 50th percentile)	40%	55%	40%	No	-15 points	TBD
<b>Priority 2: Improve Post-Secondary Readiness</b>						
<b>High School Graduation Rate</b>	<b>79.1%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>79.3%</b>	No	-0.7 points	<b>82%</b>
<b>Post-Secondary Enrollment Rate</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>TBD</b>	No	-13 points	<b>77%</b>
Professional Certification Rate	2%	7%	TBD		TBD	12%
FAFSA Completion Rate	86%	74%	86.5%	Yes	+13 points	79%
TN Promise Eligibility Rate	57%	25%	93%	Yes	+68 points	25%
High School Dropout Rate	17%	16%	TBD		TBD	6%
9th Graders on Track (EWS-low/medium risk)	85%	86%	81%	No	-5 points	87%
10th Graders on Track (EWS-low/medium risk)	84%	85%	81%	No	-4 points	86%
11th Graders on Track (EWS-low/medium risk)	85%	86%	77%	No	-9 points	87%
12th Graders on Track (EWS-low/medium risk)	85%	86%	83%	No	-3 points	87%
District-Wide Attendance Rate	94.3%	94.5%	93.6%	No	-0.9 points	95%
8th Grade Course Failure Rate	7%	14%	8%	Yes	-6 points	14%
9th Grade Course Failure Rate	9%	19%	17%	Yes	-2 points	18%
<b>Priority 3: Develop Teachers, Leaders &amp; Central Office to Drive Student Results</b>						
<b>Grade 3 - 8 Total Exam Proficiency Rate</b>	<b>26.8%</b>	<b>37.8%</b>	<b>23.7%</b>	<b>No</b>	-14.1 points	<b>44.5%</b>
<b>Grade 9 - 12 Total Exam Proficiency Rate</b>	<b>15.9%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>15.6%</b>	<b>No</b>	-16.4 points	<b>36.3%</b>
Level 4/5 Teachers Retained	TBD	95%	TBD		TBD	95%
Level 4/5 Principals Retained	TBD	92%	TBD		TBD	93%
Grades 3 - 8 RLA Proficiency	21.6%	30.1%	20.5%	No	-9.6 points	40.1%
Grades 3 - 8 Math Proficiency	22.5%	30.6%	27.1%	No	-3.5 points	40.4%
Grades 3 - 8 Social Studies Proficiency	N/A	TBD	23.1%	N/A	TBD	TBD
English I Proficiency	13.4%	31.3%	16.4%	No	-14.9 points	40.9%
English II Proficiency	17.7%	36.7%	24.4%	No	-12.3 points	44.4%
Algebra I Proficiency	10.1%	24.5%	12.1%	No	-12.4 points	36.4%
Algebra II Proficiency	11.5%	27.0%	12.1%	No	-14.9 points	38.0%
Geometry Proficiency	10.8%	25.7%	17.5%	No	-8.2 points	37.1%
U.S. History Proficiency	12.9%	30.1%	13.9%	No	-16.2 points	40.0%
<b>Priority 4: Expand High-Quality School Options</b>						
<b>SCS Student Market Share</b>	<b>63.2%</b>	<b>63.3%</b>	<b>65.1%</b>	<b>Yes</b>	+1.8 points	<b>63.7%</b>
iZone Schools in Reward Status	17%	25%	8%	No	-17 points	25%
Schools in Priority Status	12%	18%	11%	Yes	-7 points	16%
Schools in Reward Status	17%	25%	13%	No	-12 points	27%
Schools Improving Instructional Culture	36%	50%	34%	No	-15 points	50%
<b>Priority 5: Mobilize Family &amp; Community Partners</b>						
<b>% Community Confidence in SCS</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>No</b>	-1 point	<b>84%</b>
Priority Schools with External Partnerships	100%	84%	100%	Yes	+16 points	87%
% Increase in District Volunteers	42%	45%	69%	Yes	+24 points	54%

"TBD" indicates that data will be available later in the 2019-20 school year.

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## Notes

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## Notes



## Board of Education

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