



Grow without Limits

SUCCESS SNAPSHOTS

Celebrating large, urban school districts that exemplify the resilience, determination, and innovation required to overcome unprecedented challenges

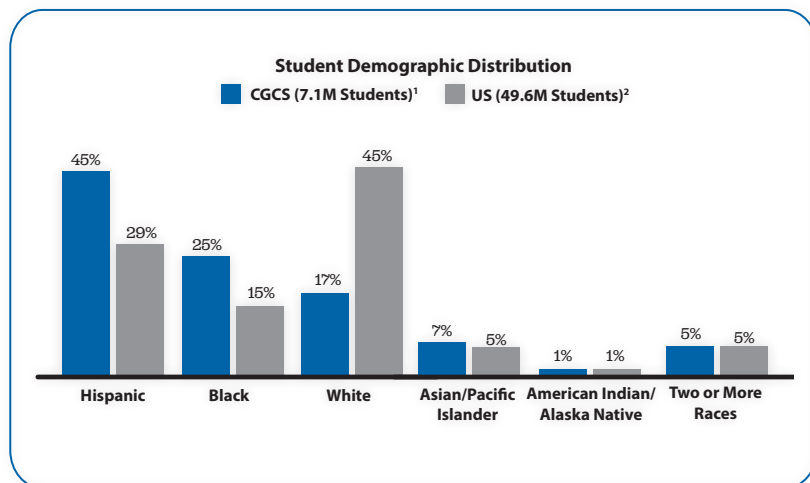


Birmingham • Charleston • Cincinnati • Detroit • Jackson • Memphis-Shelby • Portland • Palm Beach



Celebrating the Remarkable Growth Trajectory of Eight Large, Urban Districts

More than seven million students are enrolled in the 81 districts that compose the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS), representing roughly 14 percent of Grades Pre-K–12 enrollment nationwide.



These highly diverse districts engage boldly with even the toughest of challenges. Research shows a disproportionate representation of Hispanic, Black, Alaskan/Native American, and Asian/Pacific Islander students attending high-poverty and mid-high-poverty schools.³ Achievement gaps between poor and non-poor districts in most states have deepened since the pandemic.⁴

Despite these statistics, great progress is being made in CGCS districts, with many schools showing impressive gains year over year. Numerous CGCS member districts were recognized in Education Scorecard's May 2026 findings⁴ for strong subject-specific gains, including Birmingham City Schools and Cincinnati Public Schools for gains in both reading and math, Detroit Public Schools Community District for reading, and Charleston County School District for math.⁵

Curriculum Associates is deeply invested in the sustained growth and achievement of these highly diverse districts, not only because of their significant role in shaping our nation's education landscape but also because CGCS students represent such a large percentage of our *i-Ready* user base:

- Approximately 45 percent of Grades K–8 students in CGCS member districts are enrolled in *i-Ready*.
- CGCS students account for about 20 percent of the *i-Ready* user base.

With the following success snapshots, we are proud to celebrate some of the CGCS districts that exemplify the resilience, determination, and innovation required to overcome the odds.

¹Council of the Great City Schools, "Fact Sheet," cgcs.org/about-cgcs/fact-sheet (accessed September 2026).

²National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics, Table 203.65, fall 2022*, nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d23/tables/dt23_203.65.asp.

³National Center for Education Statistics. (n.d.). *Public school students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch*. National Center for Education Statistics.

⁴<https://educationcorecard.org/>

⁵Council of the Great City Schools, "New Study Shows Urban School Students are Making Academic Progress," press release, May 13, 2026, cgcs.org/resources/newsroom/press-releases/2026-press-releases/new-study-shows-urban-school-students-are-making-academic-progress, citing the Education Scorecard (Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University and the Educational Opportunity Project at Stanford University).

Our team is dedicated to ensuring educators have the tools to support meaningful growth for their students. We are inspired by stories like these, and it is our profound privilege to serve all our partner districts in improving student outcomes every day.

—Kelly Sia, CEO

Look inside to learn more about success in:

- Birmingham City Schools (AL): Achievement in 2023 Exceeds Pre-Pandemic Mathematics Proficiency
- Charleston County School District (SC): High Expectations Yield Historic Growth in Mathematics and ELA
- Cincinnati Public Schools (OH): Top Ranked for Mathematics Achievement among Ohio's Largest Districts
- Detroit Public Schools (MI): Achievement in Reading Recovery Is Record Setting
- Jackson Public Schools (MS): ELA and Mathematics Proficiency Up across Every Grades 3–8
- Memphis-Shelby County Schools (TN): Substantial Gains in Mathematics and ELA Proficiency
- Portland Public Schools (OR): Historic Growth in Math Is Outpacing the State by Double Digits
- Palm Beach: School District of Palm Beach County (FL): 10th largest US School District Regains Their A Rating

SUCCESS SNAPSHOT

Birmingham Leads Alabama in Mathematics Recovery

Achievement Up Half a Grade-Level Equivalent in One Year

A recent study¹ of 8,000 school districts across 30 states found that Alabama is the only state where students' average mathematics proficiency exceeds pre-pandemic levels. BCS is ranked first in the state for mathematics recovery.

To overcome pandemic-related learning loss, Superintendent Mark Sullivan credits a comprehensive districtwide initiative to increase engagement and growth, including "layering the supports"² available to BCS via state and federal funding. The district is leaning into best practices, enrolling students in enrichment sessions, implementing wraparound services, seeking additional funding, and partnering with community organizations—including local universities whose undergrads provide high-intensity tutoring to BCS students.

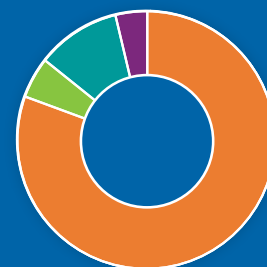
ENROLLMENT
20K

STUDENTS
WITH DISABILITIES
14%



Birmingham
City Schools
(BCS)

Grades Pre-K–12 Breakdown



Black
Hispanic/Latino
White
Other

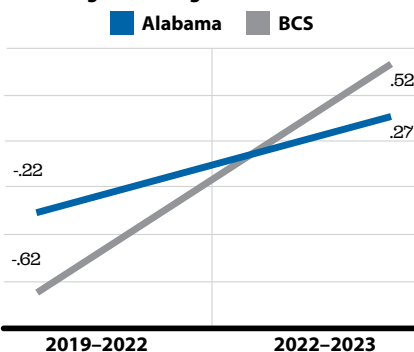
4

Years Partnering
with Curriculum
Associates

87%

Students Who
Are Economically
Disadvantaged

Change in Average Mathematics Score⁴



For Genita Matthews, principal of Huffman Middle School, it's all about "Changing the Mindset to Mastery . . . We believe in having weekly math [professional learning communities] to meet the teachers' needs so the teachers can meet the students' needs," she said. "Teachers used to work alone.

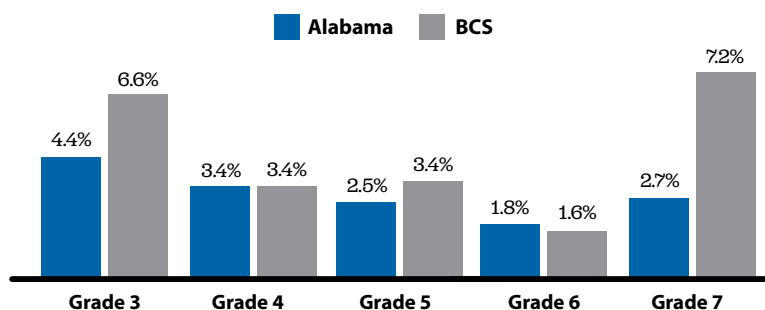
Now they work as a group, along with the instructional coach and the administrators. This is an exciting meeting to get all math teachers and administrators to ask questions and share their strategies."

Across Grades 3–8, the number of BCS students scoring on track (L4) or mastered (L5) on the Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP) in mathematics grew by four percentage points from 2022 to 2023. Growth in Grades 3 and 7 was especially impressive at 6.6 and 7.2 percentage points, respectively.

Curriculum Associates and the *i-Ready* team are proud to partner with and support BCS' success.

BCS ranks first in Alabama and seventh among other large, urban districts studied nationally for mathematics recovery.³

Change in Percentage Proficient (L4/L5) from 2022 to 2023 ACAP for Mathematics⁵



¹Fahle, E., Kane T. J., Reardon, S. F., & Staiger, D. O. (2024). *Education Recovery Scorecard: The first year of pandemic recovery: A district-level analysis*. Center for Education Policy Research, Harvard University. The Educational Opportunity Project at Stanford University.

²WBRC News. (2024). Birmingham City Schools pandemic recovery.

³Education Recovery Scorecard. (2024). *Academic recovery for school districts in 30 states*. Education Recovery Scorecard.

⁴<https://edopportunity.org/recovery>

⁵<https://www.alabamaachieves.org/reports-data>

High Expectations Yield Historic Growth in Charleston County

Sustained Gains in Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA) Proficiency Exceed State and National Results

In the second-largest school system in South Carolina, students have again made historic gains on the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Assessments (SC READY), continuing a multiyear trend.¹

According to Superintendent Anita Huggins' September 2025 report, CCSD is leaning into "learner-driven, evidence-based decision making." This strategy includes tactics such as reviewing student work in the established professional learning communities, maximizing data-driven instruction, leveraging a student success dashboard for progress monitoring, and increasing access to tutoring, among other practices.²

The responsive weighted student funding model³ allocates additional resources to schools based on their numbers of pupils in poverty, students with disabilities, and Multilingual Learners, laying the critical foundation to support each school's sustained achievement.

"The goal here is really to serve children and to make sure [our] most vulnerable learners have the resources that they need to be successful."⁴

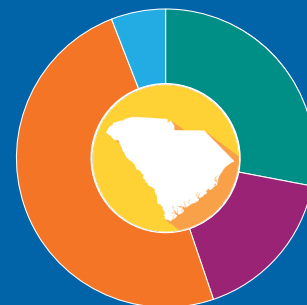
—Superintendent Huggins

These efforts are yielding impressive results. CCSD ranks first in growth among Council of the Great City Schools members included in a February 2025 national analysis.



Charleston County
School District (CCSD)
Charleston, SC

51,329 Grades Pre-K-12



White Black Hispanic
Asian Other

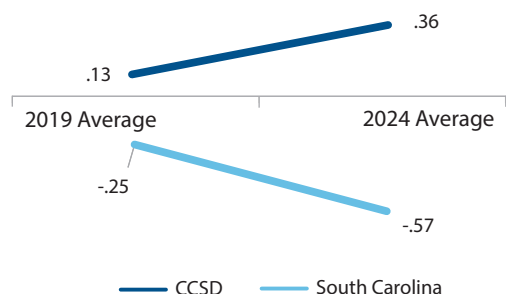
10.8%
Students with
Disabilities

11.4%
Multilingual
Learners

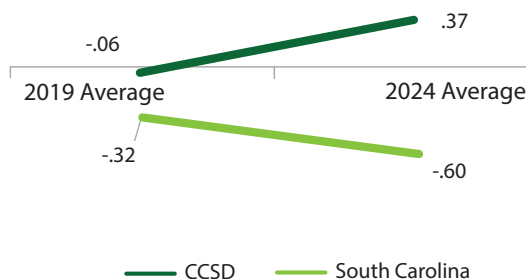
46.5% Pupils in Poverty

Four Years Partnering with
Curriculum Associates
(Primarily Grades K-5)

Average Reading Scores and Trends in Scores in Grade-Level Equivalents Relative to the 2019 Average



Average Mathematics Scores and Trends in Scores in Grade-Level Equivalents Relative to the 2019 Average



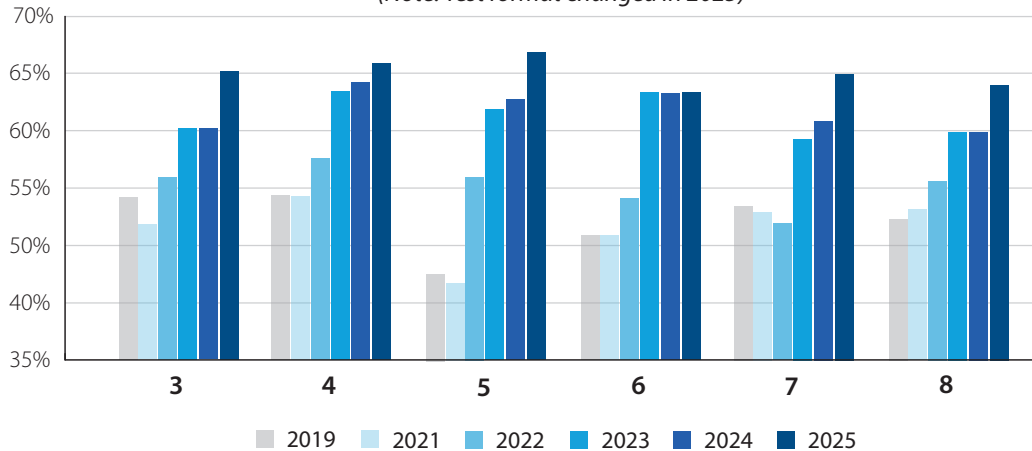
The Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University and The Educational Opportunity Project at Stanford University released the [Education Recovery Scorecard](#) in February 2025. This analysis of test scores from approximately 11,000 school districts across 43 states shows that CCSD is outpacing state and national averages in mathematics and reading. The district's gains of .36 in reading and .37 in mathematics mean that, on average, **CCSD students learned about one-third of a grade level more in these subjects than the national average** during the same period.

Spring 2025 SC READY Results Highlight CCSD's Accelerated Progress

Proficiency gains are also highly visible in the district's state summative assessment results. From spring 2019 to spring 2025, there was a 15.6 percentage point increase in SC READY scores in ELA, with 65 percent of CCSD students across Grades 3–8 scoring proficient or above in 2025.⁵

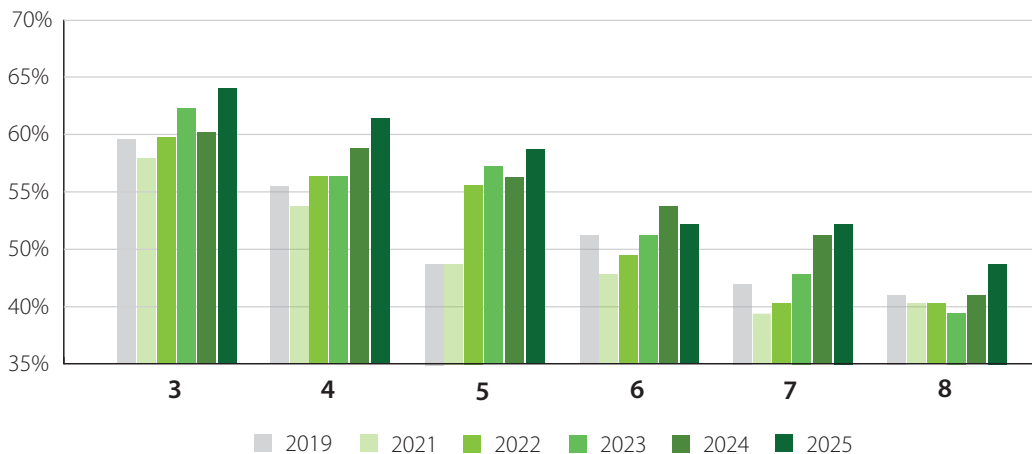
Percentage CCSD Students Scoring Meets or Exceeds, by Grade, on SC READY for **ELA**: 2019 through 2025

(Note: Test format changed in 2025)



In that same time frame, nearly 54 percent of CCSD students across Grades 3–8 scored proficient or above on the SC READY in Mathematics, a 5.4 percentage point increase from pre-pandemic (2019) levels.⁵

Percentage CCSD Students Scoring Meets or Exceeds, by Grade, on SC READY for **Mathematics**: 2019 through 2025



Curriculum Associates and the *i-Ready* team are proud to partner with and advance CCSD's vision of "a high-performance culture [that supports] delivery of education excellence to each and every student."

⁵Source

Note: These data represent all students tested. Results will differ slightly from the South Carolina Report Card results (typically higher) due to continuous enrollment, Multilingual Learner initial US entry data, etc.



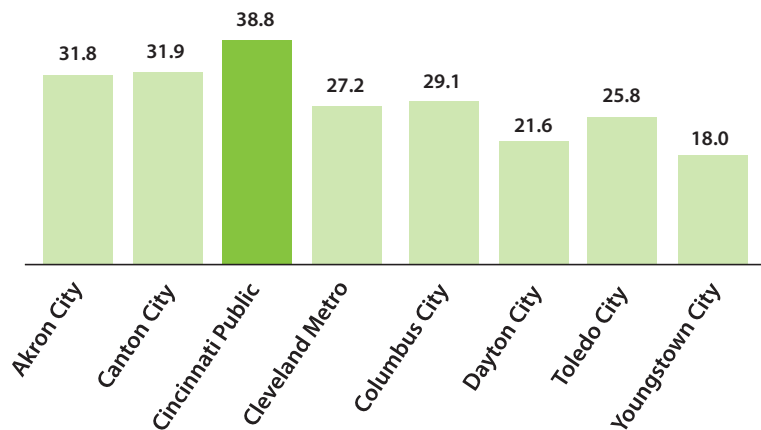
Read success stories from other districts in South Carolina and across the US in our Case Studies library!



Cincinnati Strengthens Math, Sustains Growth

Through aligned instruction and actionable insights, CPS educators are driving measurable math gains.

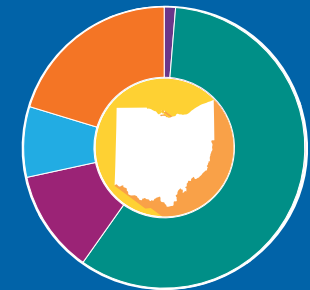
Percentage of Grades 3–8 Students Scoring Proficient or Above on the Ohio State Test (OST) in Mathematics, Spring 2025



CPS had the highest mathematics OST proficiency rate among the [Ohio 8 Coalition](#) of school districts. This graph compares the percentage of students across Grades 3–8 scoring L3/proficient, L4/accomplished, or L5/advanced on the spring 2025 OST. [Source: Ohio Education Data Center](#)

Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS) Cincinnati, OH

34,390 Grades Pre-K–12 Students



Asian Black Hispanic
Other White

91.5%

Students with
Socioeconomic
Disadvantages

A Districtwide Commitment to Excellence

The second-largest school district in Ohio, CPS is demonstrating what sustained, systemwide improvement looks like in action. With a clear strategic plan and educator leadership, the district has built a coherent instructional approach that is producing measurable, multiyear gains in achievement.

According to the [2024–2025 Impact Report](#), CPS' Performance, Redesign, Sustainability, and Growth plan advances academic outcomes, modernizes school models, ensures fiscal stability, and supports sustainable enrollment through aligned instruction, educator capacity building, and coordinated family and community engagement.

Now in phase 2, this plan is translating into consistent academic progress, including improvement across 80 percent of state-tested subjects with more students demonstrating proficiency. CPS is ranked first in achievement among the Ohio 8 urban school districts.

Superintendent Shauna Murphy [praised](#) students, staff, and families, noting the district raised its graduation rate to 85.7% and earned three stars in readiness, with more students prepared for college, careers, the workforce, and military service.

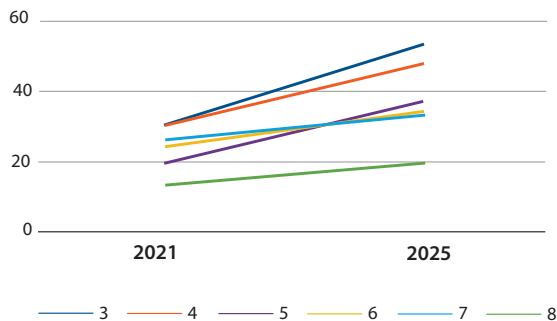
"At Cincinnati Public Schools, we are focused on strengthening math outcomes through aligned instruction and data-informed teaching. By equipping our educators with actionable insights and effective tools, we are seeing measurable growth in math proficiency and helping students develop the skills they need to succeed in school and beyond."

—Dr. Alesia Smith, Deputy Superintendent

Mathematics Growth across Grade Levels and Student Populations

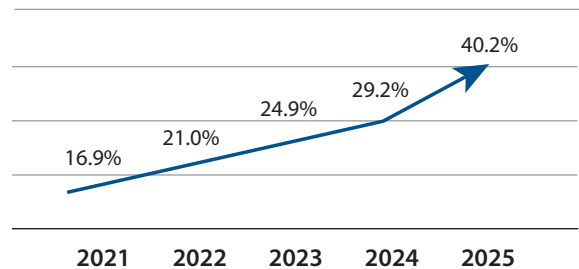
CPS' comprehensive approach is accelerating progress across grades and student groups. This steady upward trend in mathematics proficiency reflects deliberate district action, strengthening Tier 1 instruction while ensuring students receive timely, targeted support.

Trend by Tested Grade: Percentage of CPS Students Scoring Proficient or Above (L3–L5) on the OST in Mathematics



From spring 2021 to spring 2025, CPS achieved proficiency gains of 5.8 (Grade 8) to 23.2 (Grade 3) percentage points. This indicates strengthening foundational understanding in the elementary grades and continued momentum into middle school mathematics. [Source](#)

Percentage of CPS Grades 3–8 Students with Economic Disadvantages Scoring Proficient or Above (L3–L5) on the OST in Mathematics



The growth among Grades 3–8 students who are economically disadvantaged—up more than 20 percentage points over five years—underscores how aligned curriculum, strong Tier 1 instruction, and responsive intervention can expand access to grade-level mathematics. [Source: Ohio Education Data Center](#)

The Work behind the Results

Cincinnati's progress reflects a districtwide focus on coherence, clarity, and educator empowerment.

Strengthening Tier 1 Mathematics Instruction

The evidence-based [i-Ready Classroom Mathematics](#) is a cornerstone of the district's drive to strengthen Tier 1 instruction and expand resources to support educators. The high-quality curriculum is aligned to grade-level standards and helps teachers deliver rigorous math instruction in every classroom.

Investing in Educator Capacity

Professional learning, instructional reviews, and collaborative planning structures ensure teachers are supported in delivering consistent, high-impact mathematics instruction across schools.

Using Data to Inform Action

To complement other metrics, CPS leverages actionable [i-Ready assessment](#) data to identify unfinished learning and respond in real time, ensuring instructional coherence and transparency.

By tightly aligning assessment and instruction, CPS ensures that data informs—not interrupts—teaching and learning.

Outpacing Recovery Trends

Independent analysis from the [Education Recovery Scorecard](#) shows CPS improving in math from 2022 to 2024 by +0.78 grade-level equivalents, far outpacing the +0.17 statewide in Ohio and +0.21 among similar Ohio districts. This reinforces that the district's gains reflect meaningful acceleration, not simply incremental recovery.

Building on Momentum

CPS' five-year math trajectory demonstrates sustained overall growth, strong gains in foundational grades, accelerating progress for economically disadvantaged students, and districtwide coherence in curriculum, instruction, and data use. The district is building a durable mathematics framework that supports today's learners and prepares them for long-term success.

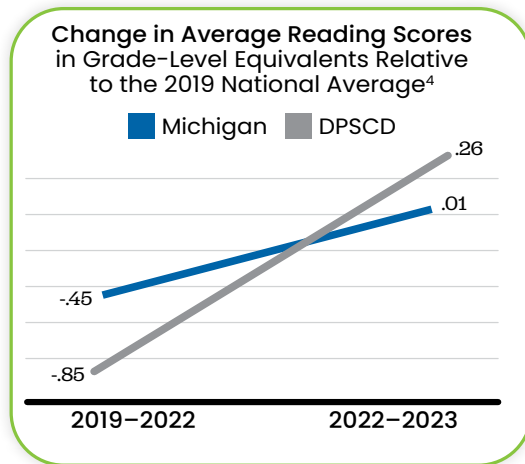
SUCCESS SNAPSHOT

Record-Setting Reading Recovery in Michigan's Largest School District

DPSCD Outpaces the State in Proficiency Gains¹

Recent research² on 8,000 districts across 30 states found that DPSCD outperformed 82 percent of the large, urban school districts³ included in the study. This ranking is even more impressive given that Michigan is one of the states where the achievement gap between poor and non-poor students is widening the most.

With the average student making up a quarter of a grade level in reading, DPSCD's post-pandemic recovery in Grades 3–8 significantly outpaces state performance gains.⁴



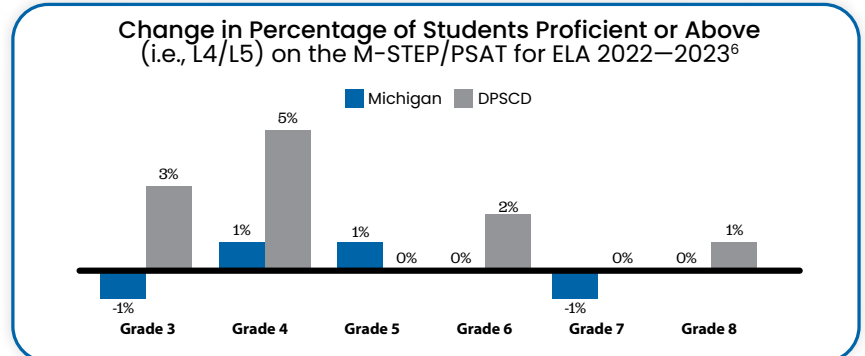
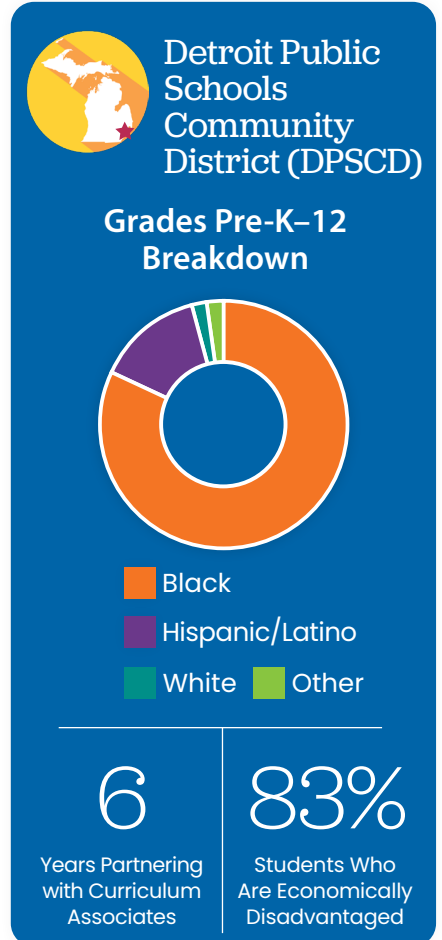
In proficiency improvement, Detroit is ahead of the state on the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP) English Language Arts (ELA)/PSAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) for Grades 3, 4, and 6–8, and by two percent overall.¹

Superintendent Dr. Nikolai Vitti credits the recovery in both reading and mathematics to the academic reform that began prior to the pandemic. “We are one of the leading larger urban school districts in the country in recovering from the pandemic. That’s not only in eliminating learning loss but showing improvement in at and above-grade level performance . . . this means that the

reform that we started before the pandemic helped us reduce some of the learning loss that was expected . . . allowing us to turn the corner and move ahead. Despite concentration of poverty, we are showing more improvement than suburban districts, than the state average, and other large, urban school districts.”⁵

Curriculum Associates and the *i-Ready* team are proud to partner with and support DPSCD's success.

With the average student making up a quarter of a grade level in reading, DPSCD's post-pandemic recovery in Grades 3–8 significantly outpaces state performance gains.⁴



¹DPSCD Outpaces State, County, City Charter School Improvement on 2023 State Assessments.

²Fahle, E., Kane, T. J., Reardon, S. F., & Staiger, D. O. (2024). *Education recovery scorecard—the first year of pandemic recovery: A district-level analysis*.

³Members of the Council of the Great City Schools

⁴<https://edopportunity.org/recovery>

⁵<https://www.detroitk12.org/boardmeeting>

⁶<https://www.michigan.gov/mde>

SUCCESS SNAPSHOT

Jackson Outpaces Large, Urban Districts in Academic Recovery

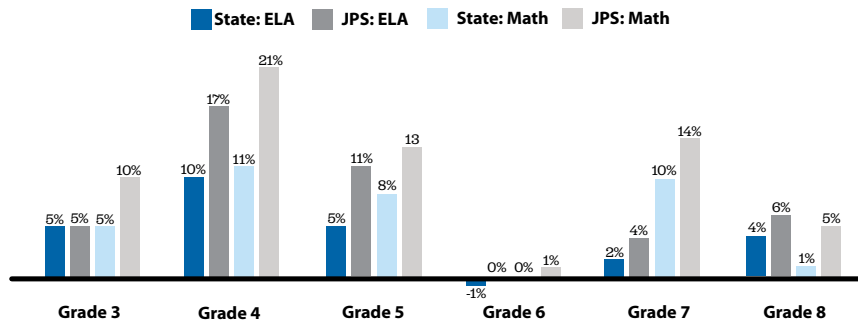
English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Proficiency Up across Every Grade¹

JPS ranks first in mathematics growth and second in reading growth among 44 large, urban school districts, according to a recent national study¹ of 8,000 school districts across 30 states.

Within Mississippi, JPS is leading the state in ELA proficiency recovery in Grades 4–8, and by three percentage points overall. In mathematics, the district's students are ahead of the state average in Grades 3–8, and by five percentage points overall.

ENROLLMENT
18K

Percentage Point **Increase** on MAAP for ELA and Mathematics³
Spring 2022 to Spring 2023

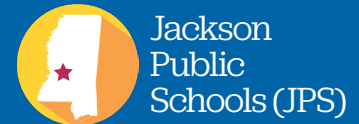


From 2022 to 2023, JPS improved by more than half a grade level in reading and a full grade level in mathematics—outstanding results that imply the average student learned well over 150 percent of the typical learning in the academic year during this period.¹

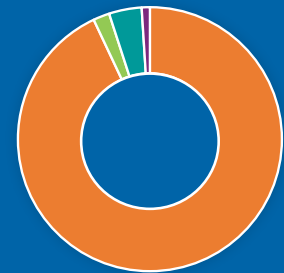
"This achievement is a testament to the dedication and hard work of our students, educators, and the entire JPS community," said Superintendent Dr. Errick L. Greene. "We are steadfast in our commitment to ensure ongoing progress in student achievement by enhancing teacher effectiveness through data-driven strategies and professional development opportunities."²

Curriculum Associates and the *i-Ready* team are honored to partner with and support JPS' success.

Over the last academic year, the average JPS student learned well over 150 percent of the typical learning in reading and mathematics.



Grades Pre-K–12 Breakdown

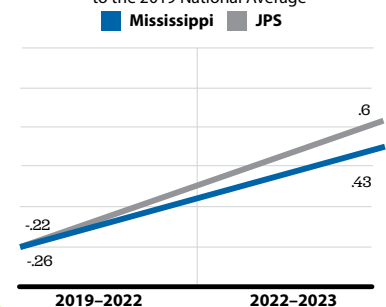


Black
Hispanic/Latino
White
Other

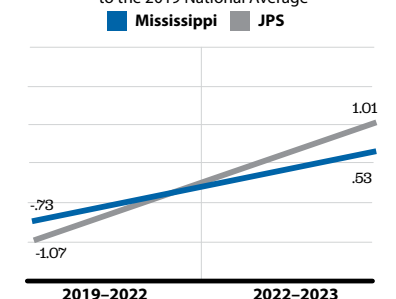
5+
Years Partnering
with Curriculum
Associates

94%
Students Who
Are Economically
Disadvantaged

Change in Average Reading Scores, Grades 3–8
in Grade-Level Equivalents Relative
to the 2019 National Average¹



Change in Average Mathematics Scores, Grades 3–8
in Grade-Level Equivalents Relative
to the 2019 National Average¹



¹Fahle, E., Kane T. J., Reardon, S. F., & Staiger, D. O. (2024). *Education Recovery Scorecard: The first year of pandemic recovery: A district-level analysis*. Center for Education Policy Research, Harvard University, The Educational Opportunity Project at Stanford University.

²Jackson Public Schools. (2024). *JPS celebrates improved performance for the second consecutive year*. Jackson Public Schools.

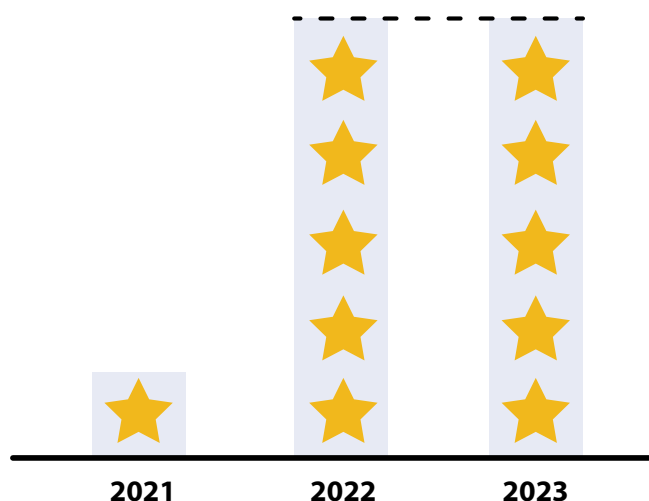
³<http://mdek12.org/OPR/Reporting>

SUCCESS SNAPSHOT

Achieving Level 5 Growth against the Odds

“Curriculum Associates helped us shift our mindset and create a monumental impact across the district.”—Dr. Amy Maples

Two Consecutive Years of Five-Star Growth



As Reported by the Tennessee
Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS)

How Tennessee’s Largest District Turned Things Around

Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS) sought a singular instructional vision across its 222 schools. Inconsistencies made transitions challenging for this high-mobility population, and many students fell behind. After seeing success using *i-Ready* with Tier 3 instruction, MSCS practiced collective efficacy and implemented a districtwide initiative in 2021 to expand Tier 1 supplemental support with *i-Ready*, *Ready Reading*, and *Ready Mathematics*. The approach and the support from *i-Ready Partners* provided the differentiated, high-quality, grade-level instruction to all students alongside, and in service to, the core curriculum. This proved to be the turning point in both impact on growth and a positive learning culture. MSCS received a Level 5 rating for tremendous student growth—the highest distinction available based on TVAAS composite scores.

ENROLLMENT

102K

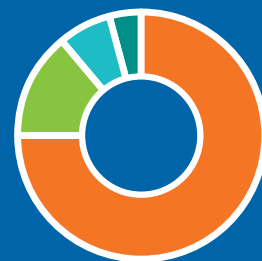
ECONOMICALLY
DISADVANTAGED

57%



Memphis-
Shelby
County
Schools

Grades Pre-K–12



Black

Hispanic/Latino

White

Other

Partner Since

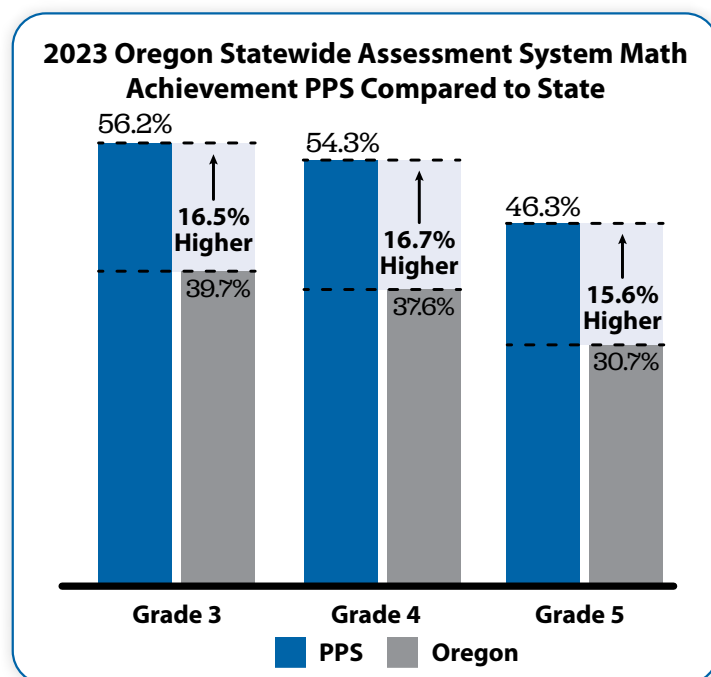
2013

“We came together as a team, concentrated on key instructional practices and collective efficacy, and celebrated successes along the way.”

—Dr. Amy Maples,
Executive Director, MSCS

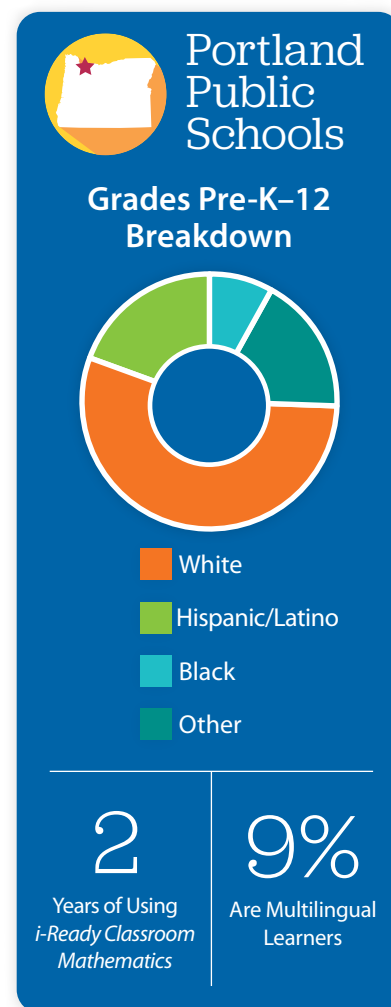
Portland, OR Sees Historic Math Growth

“We’re outpacing the state by double digits.”—Dr. Renard Adams



ENROLLMENT
49K

ECONOMICALLY
DISADVANTAGED
23%



How Portland Public Schools (PPS) Outpaced National Trends

1. They developed a **unified vision** of what high-quality teaching and learning should look like every day for every student in every classroom.
2. PPS adopted ***i-Ready Classroom Mathematics*** in 2021–2022.
“We held steady in math with some improvements when everybody else declined,” said Dr. Renard Adams, chief of research, assessment, and accountability. “The only thing we had changed was our curriculum.”
3. The district doubled down on *i-Ready* Professional Learning and **capacity building** in the 2022–2023 school year.

“We are just so honored to partner with Portland Public Schools,” said Linda DuBois, vice president at Curriculum Associates and longtime Portland community member. “I love sharing stories like this. It shows what can happen with a sustained commitment to a great plan.”

Read more about the instructional strategies that worked well for PPS!



SUCCESS SNAPSHOT

Unified Vision and Partnership Yield Stellar Growth in Grades K–5 Reading and Mathematics in SDPBC

The 10th largest US school district leverages *i-Ready* as part of a comprehensive plan to regain their A rating and help students achieve academic mastery.

The southeast Florida county of Palm Beach is home to 1.5 million people over a 2,300-square-mile area. Geographically, socioeconomically, and culturally diverse, Palm Beach is one of the fastest-growing counties in the Sunshine State.

In SDPBC's complex learning community, students, teachers, and local leaders from a broad array of backgrounds and experiences share a vision for success that includes helping every child access grade-level learning.

Through uncommonly deep partnership, targeted best practices, and proven tools, educators are helping students across all grade levels and demographic groups reach their potential in mathematics and reading.

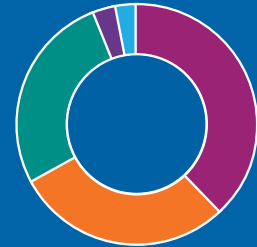


School District
of Palm Beach
County (SDPBC)
Florida

Grades Pre-K–12 Breakdown¹

189,000+ Students

13,000 Teachers



White Black Hispanic
Asian Other

45%

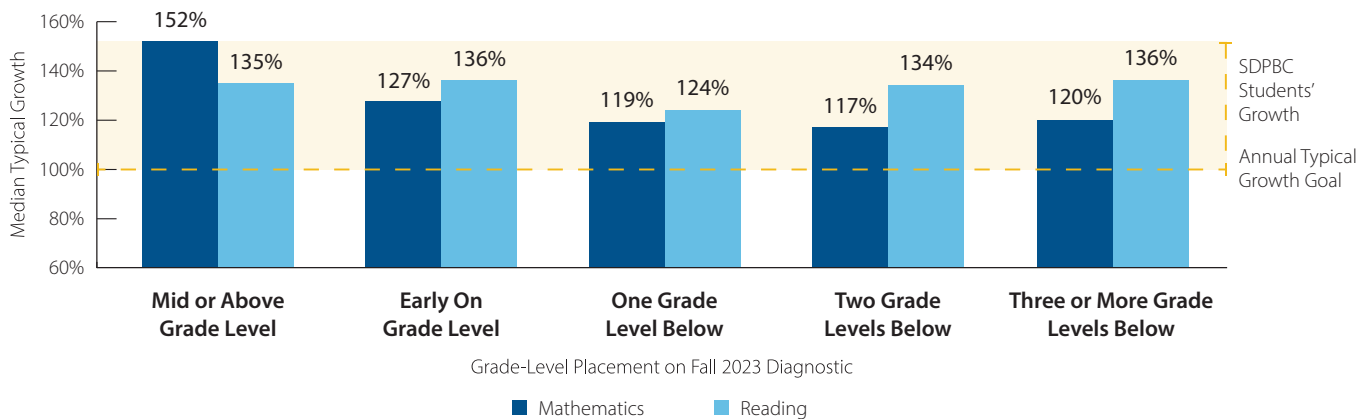
Students with
Socioeconomic
Disadvantages

14%

English
Learners

Median Percentage of Typical Growth Achieved by Baseline Placement Level

2023–2024 School Year: All Grades K–5



Across every grade and baseline placement level, SDPBC students exceeded their Typical Growth goal for the 2023–2024 school year. Typical Growth provides insight into how a student is growing compared to average student growth at the same grade and baseline placement level. Students at different starting points may grow at different rates, and those who are behind need to grow more to reach proficiency. Exceeding Annual Typical Growth brings students closer to grade-level proficiency or beyond.

¹[USNews.com](https://www.usnews.com)



Always Growing. Always Improving.

We are committed to delivering programs,
service, and support that make classrooms
better places for students and teachers.