

MISSISSIPPI SUCCEEDS

Superintendent's Annual Report

2024-25



MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Mississippi State Board of Education

The Mississippi State Board of Education's vision is to create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens. The Board sets policies and standards that advance public education in Mississippi.

MEMBERS

MATT MILLER, CHAIR

Southern Supreme Court District Representative

MIKE PRUITT

At-Large Representative

MATT MAYO, VICE-CHAIR

Central Supreme Court District Representative

BILLYE JEAN STROUD

Northern Supreme Court District Representative

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Teacher Representative

MARY WERNER

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Administrator Representative

CROSBY PARKER

Senior Student Representative

BILL JACOBS

At-Large Representative

MICHELLE XIE

Junior Student Representative

RONNIE MCGEHEE, PH.D.

At-Large Representative

LANCE EVANS, ED.D.

State Superintendent of Education

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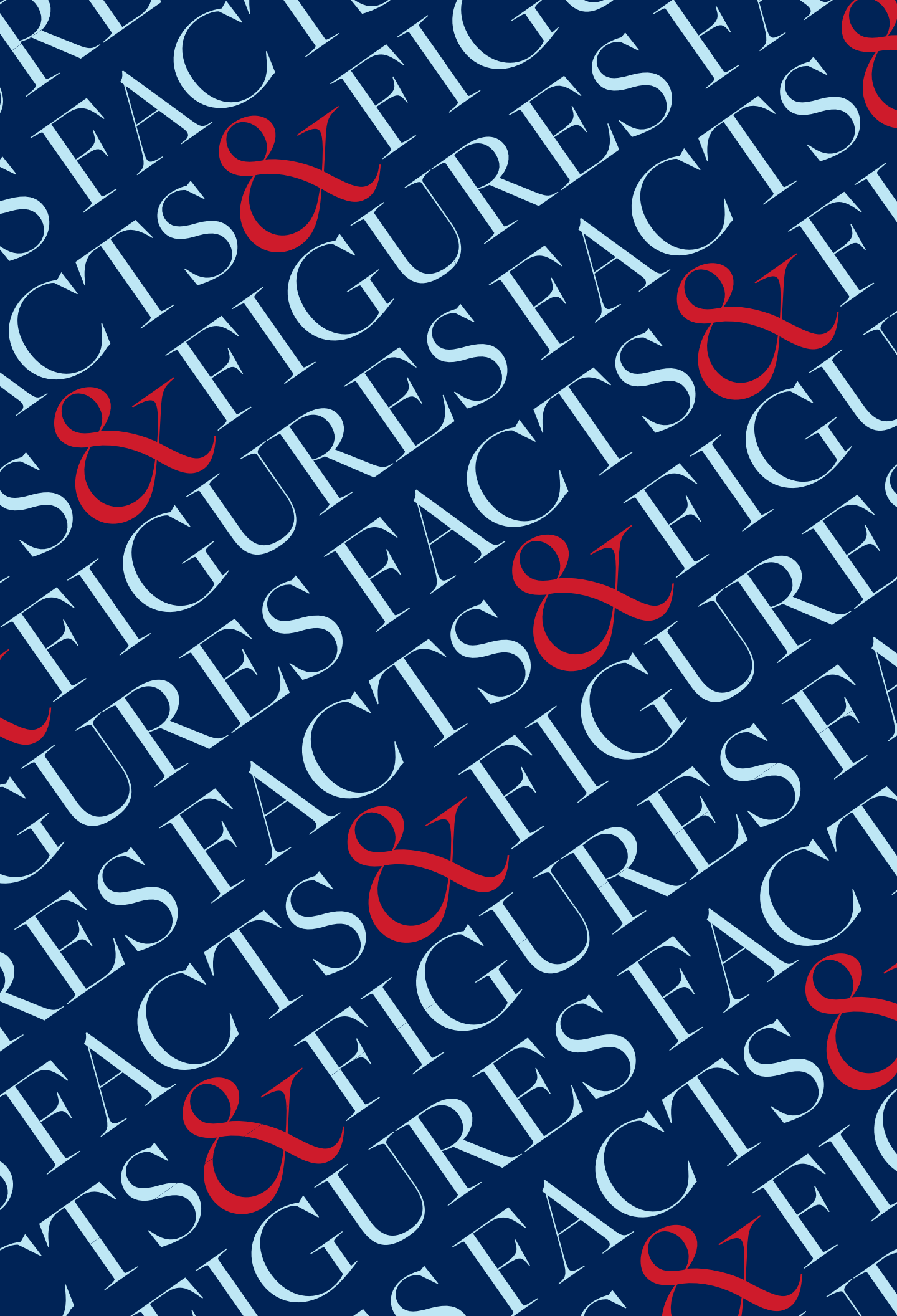
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View financial and other statistical data at mdek12.org/superintendent2025



FACTS & FIGURES

STUDENT ENROLLMENT

431,931

STUDENT DAILY
MEMBERSHIP

401,471

AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE

\$14,530

AVERAGE EXPENDITURE PER PUPIL
BASED ON AVERAGE NET
ENROLLMENT (ANE)

TEACHERS

32,540

CLASSROOM TEACHERS

\$54,975

AVERAGE TEACHER SALARY

DISTRICTS & SCHOOLS

141

SCHOOL DISTRICTS
(INCLUDING THREE STATE
SCHOOLS BUT NOT
CHARTER SCHOOLS)

84

COMBINED GRADES (K-12
ATTENDANCE CENTERS AND
HIGH SCHOOLS WITH GRADES
BELOW 9)

613

ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE
SCHOOLS

10

CHARTER SCHOOLS

151

TRADITIONAL HIGH SCHOOLS
(GRADES 9-12 ONLY)



FEATURE

From the State Superintendent of Education

Mississippi Public Education: A Year of Historic Progress and National Recognition

AS STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION, I am proud to present the Mississippi Department of Education's (MDE) 2024-25 Annual Report, which reflects a transformative time for Mississippi's public education system.

The 2024-25 school year was marked by national recognitions and innovations to strengthen Mississippi's education system for students, educators, families, and communities. The year also presented challenges that tested our resilience and reaffirmed our dedication to student success.

Here are the comprehensive highlights of the past year:

National Rankings

The state's education system reached a historic milestone, climbing to 16th in the nation – our highest ranking ever – in the 2025 KIDS COUNT® Data Book. This remarkable ascent from 48th in 2014 is a testament to sustained academic improvement across the state.

The 2024 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results affirm Mississippi's leadership in academic growth. Our 4th graders ranked No. 1 nationally for score gains in reading and math since 2013, while ranking No. 9 for reading scores and No. 16 for math scores for 2024.

In the past year, the state's strides in early learning have continued. According to the 2024 State of Preschool Yearbook from the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), Mississippi now ranks 31st in preschool enrollment for 4-year-olds, up from 35th the previous year. We remain one of only five states to meet all 10 NIEER benchmarks for preschool quality, ensuring our youngest learners receive a strong foundation for future success.

Statewide Academic Performance

The 2024-25 Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) results revealed a complex picture. While proficiency increased in select grades and subjects, the overall percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced declined slightly.

Nevertheless, we are encouraged by improved pass rates for the initial and final third-grade reading assessments and all four end-of-course high school exams. These gains reflect targeted instructional efforts, while the broader data signaled a need for renewed focus on literacy and math achievement across all grade levels.

Accountability grades for the 2024-25 school year show that 80.1% of schools and 87.2% of districts earned a grade of C or higher. This marks a decline from the previous year's all-time high, when 85.7% of schools and 93.9% of districts met that benchmark. These results underscore the importance of maintaining high expectations and providing robust support to schools and districts.

Innovative Programs

To support educational leadership, MDE launched the Mississippi Superintendent Institute (MSI), a 17-day intensive program designed in partnership with the National Center on Education and the Economy. MSI equips new and veteran superintendents with tools to lead thriving school systems and adapt best practices from top-performing sectors.

To address teacher shortages, the Mississippi REACH initiative is bringing certified educators into classrooms through live remote instruction, ensuring students receive high-quality teaching, especially in hard-to-staff schools. Unlike pandemic-era virtual learning, REACH

integrates seamlessly into the traditional school day, maintaining structure and engagement.

Investing in the Future of Teaching

Thanks to state legislative financial support, the Mississippi Teacher Residency (MTR) program continues to grow, with \$2.9 million in grants awarded to nine Institutions of Higher Education to support up to 236 aspiring teachers in elementary and special education. Additionally, our redesigned [TeachMS.org](https://teachms.org) website simplifies the path to becoming a teacher in Mississippi, making recruitment and licensure more accessible than ever.

Graduation Rate and Requirements

Mississippi's overall graduation rate remains strong at 89.2%. In a significant policy shift, the State Board of Education voted to eliminate the U.S. History statewide assessment as a graduation requirement beginning in the 2025–26 school year. While students will still be required to complete and pass the U.S. History course, this change reduces the number of state tests required for graduation.

This decision aims to alleviate testing burdens on students and educators while maintaining rigorous academic standards in U.S. History and other core high school subjects such as Algebra I, Biology, and English II. We will continue to monitor the impact

of this change to ensure it supports student learning and achievement.

Federal Funding Uncertainty and Recovery

Mississippi joined education stakeholders across the nation in navigating the potential loss of federal funds in March 2025, when the U.S. Department of Education (ED) rescinded its previously approved liquidation deadline for COVID-relief funds, placing \$137 million in federal support at risk. This decision created significant anxiety for MDE and districts relying on the funds to complete critical recovery projects.

After persistent advocacy, we were thrilled that the ED reinstated the original deadline of March 31, 2026, restoring access to these essential resources. I commend our district leaders for their perseverance and adaptability during this period of uncertainty. Their efforts ensured that pandemic-related initiatives could continue without disruption.

Looking Forward

As we move into 2026, the Mississippi State Board of Education and MDE will be implementing a new Strategic Plan for PreK–12 Education in Mississippi. The plan is being created with input from a broad set of stakeholders including students, educators, legislators, higher education representatives, business leaders, and education stakeholder groups.

The State Board and MDE have also engaged stakeholders to raise the bar for school and district accountability grades. Schools and districts will be assigned A–F grades in fall 2026 based on the higher standards, which will set a new baseline for measuring progress. Mississippi's public education system has made historic gains, and higher standards are needed to ensure continued excellence and equity across all schools.

Public education in Mississippi is on a trajectory of excellence, and our achievements are not just numbers. They represent changed lives, expanded opportunities for our graduates, and stronger communities. Together, we will continue to build a world-class education system that empowers every Mississippi child to succeed.



Lance Evans, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

STRATEGIC PLAN

MISSISSIPPI STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

THE MISSISSIPPI STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN SETS the roadmap for continually improving public education in Mississippi. The plan describes the objectives and strategies the Mississippi Department of Education employs to help local school districts achieve the Board's vision and goals. The Board's goals were created in 2014 and expanded in 2016.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

1. All Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas
2. Every Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career
3. Every Child Has Access to a High-Quality Early Childhood Program
4. Every School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders
5. Every Community Effectively Uses a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes
6. Every School and District is Rated C or Higher

The Mississippi State Board of Education and Mississippi Department of Education have been engaging with stakeholders since 2025 to develop a new Strategic Plan for PreK-12 Education in Mississippi starting in 2026.

Read the current Mississippi State Board of Education Strategic Plan:
mdek12.org/MBE



Goal 01

All Students
Proficient &
Showing Growth
in All Assessed
Areas





Mississippi Academic Assessment Program

THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STATEWIDE RESULTS from the 2024-25 Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) showed increased proficiency in some grades and content areas but a slight drop in overall proficient and advanced scores.

The percentages of students scoring proficient or advanced in 2024-25 are 54.5% in math, 47.4% in English Language Arts, 60.9% in science, and 69.7% in U.S. History.

COMPARISON OF GRADE LEVEL RESULTS

SCORING PROFICIENT OR ADVANCED

MATHEMATICS

GRADE	2023-24	2024-25	CHANGE
Grade 3	53.3%	53.3%	0.0
Grade 4	55.0%	56.6%	+1.6
Grade 5	53.7%	48.3%	-5.4
Grade 6	51.8%	52.9%	+1.1
Grade 7	57.3%	55.5%	-1.8
Grade 8	55.4%	47.6%	-7.8
Algebra I	67.4%	67.2%	-0.2
Overall	56.3%	54.5%	-1.8

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

GRADE	2023-24	2024-25	CHANGE
Grade 3	57.7%	49.3%	-8.4
Grade 4	57.1%	52.1%	-5.0
Grade 5	51.7%	55.9%	+4.2
Grade 6	39.7%	46.7%	+7.0
Grade 7	40.9%	37.4%	-3.5
Grade 8	41.9%	41.7%	-0.2
English II	46.2%	49.5%	+3.3
Overall	47.8%	47.4%	-0.4

SCIENCE

GRADE	2023-24	2024-25	CHANGE
Grade 5	71.2%	66.3%	-4.9
Grade 8	59.1%	54.7%	-4.4
Biology	60.5%	62.0%	+1.5
Overall	63.4%	60.9%	-2.5

U.S. HISTORY

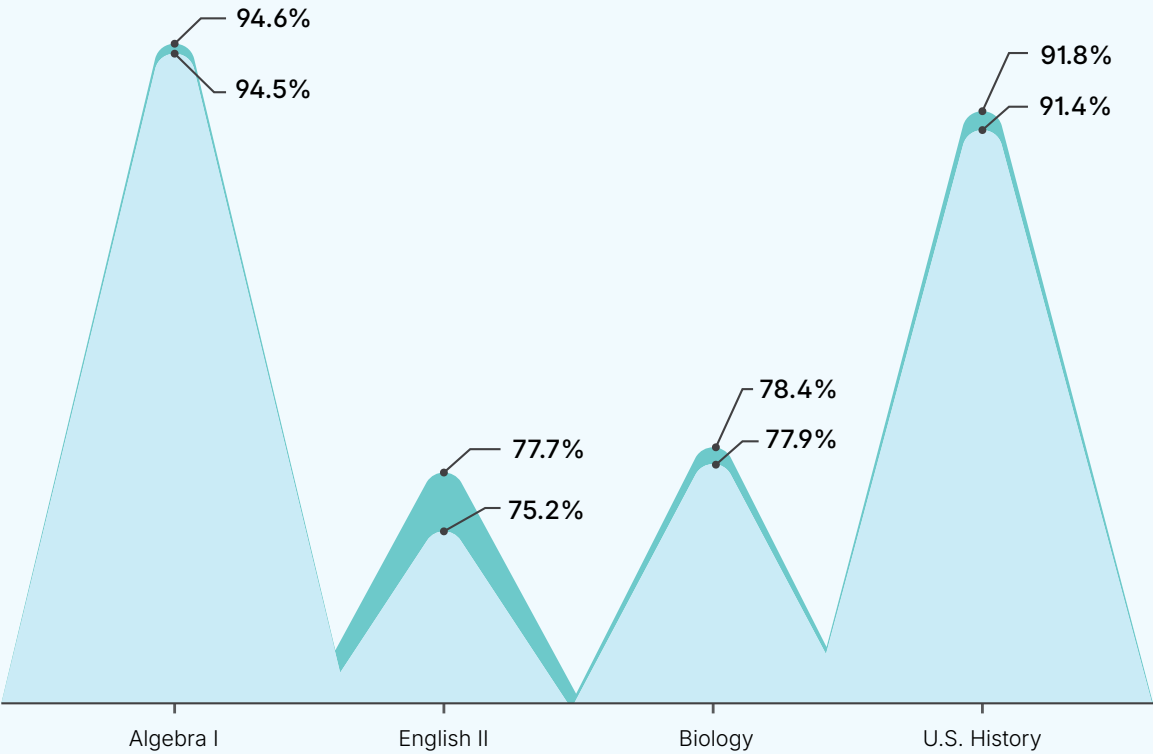
GRADE	2023-24	2024-25	CHANGE
U.S. History	70.9%	69.7%	-1.2
Overall	70.9%	69.7%	-1.2

Assessment Pass Rates

MAAP assessments have five levels. Students scoring at Levels 4 and 5 are considered proficient or advanced in the subject. Students scoring at Level 3 demonstrate a general mastery of the knowledge and skills required, and they are approaching expectations for that grade or course. Level 3 is the passing score for the third-grade reading assessment and the four high school assessments required for graduation. In 2024-25, the overall pass rates for all of these assessments increased over the previous year.

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS PASSING
REQUIRED ASSESSMENTS

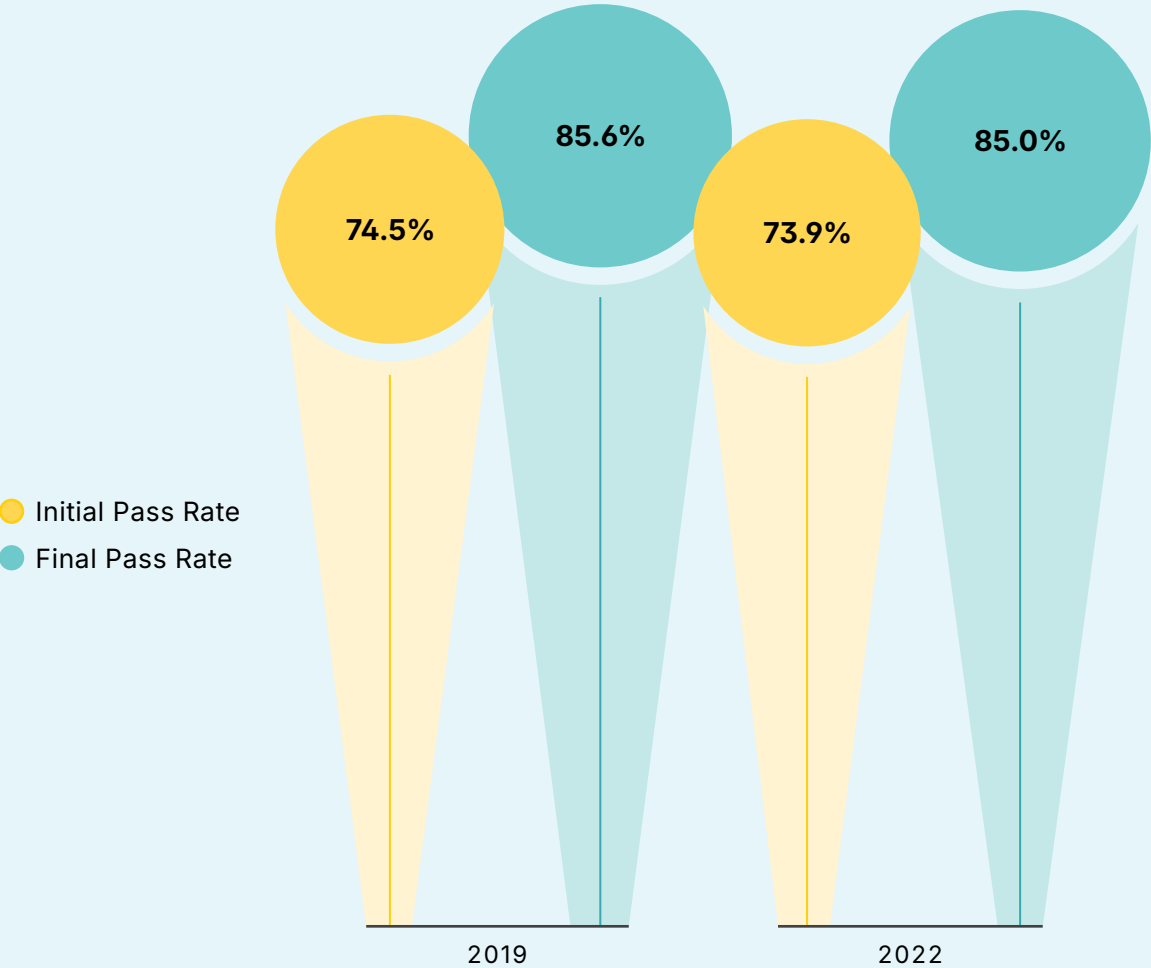
2023-24 2024-25



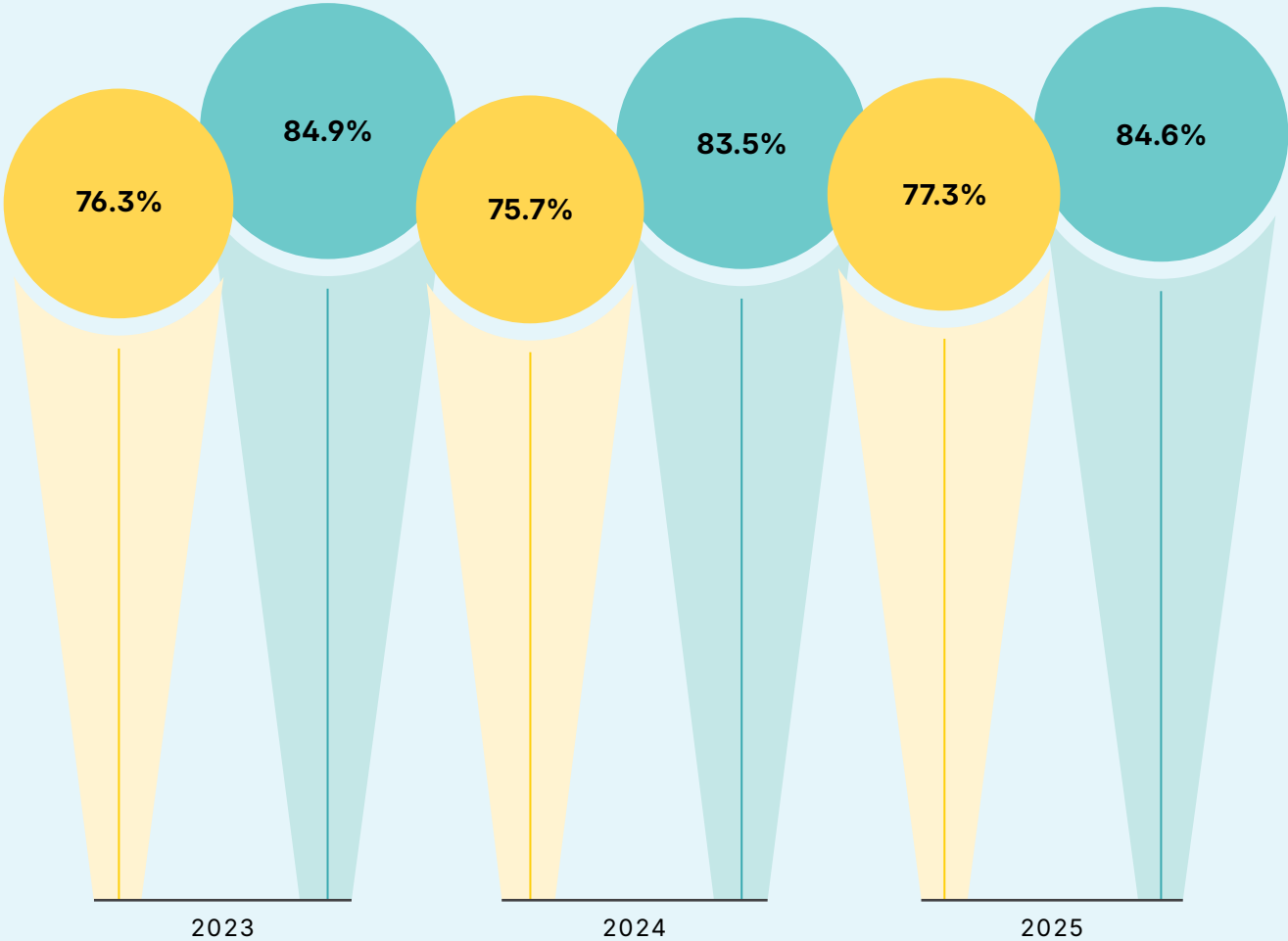
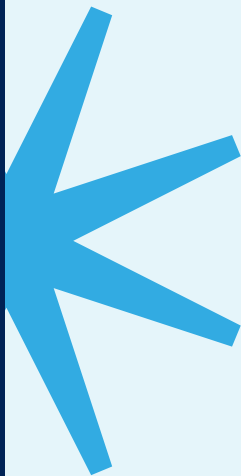
Third-Grade Reading Results

THE LITERACY BASED PROMOTION ACT (LBPA) was enacted in 2013 to improve the reading skills of K-3 students enrolled in public schools so that every student completing the third grade is able to read at or above grade level.

The LBPA requires third-graders to achieve a passing score of Level 3 or higher on the reading portion of the state's English Language Arts (ELA) assessment to qualify to be promoted to fourth grade. Students receive three opportunities to pass the assessment.



In 2024-25, a record high 77.3% of third-graders passed on the first attempt. The final overall pass rate of 84.6% was an increase over last year's final results.



Goal 02

Every Student
Graduates from
High School and is
Ready for College
& Career





Graduation & Dropout Rates

MISSISSIPPI HIGH SCHOOL students achieved a graduation rate of 89.2% in 2023-24 and a statewide dropout rate of 8.5%. Rates are based on students who entered ninth grade for the first time during the 2020-21 school year.

Among students with disabilities, the 2023-24 graduation rate is 65.2%, and the dropout rate is 20%.

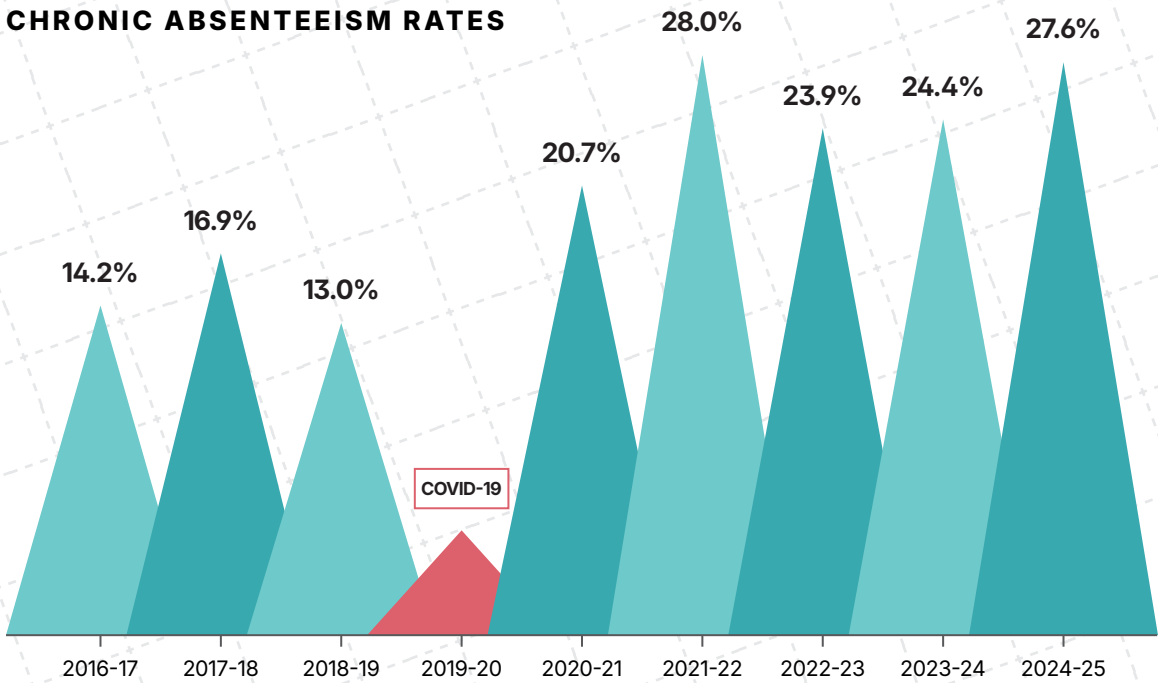
Compared to 2022-23, the statewide dropout rate stayed the same while the graduation rate decreased slightly by 0.2 percentage points. Among students with disabilities, the graduation rate decreased by 4.8 percentage points, and the dropout rate increased by 2.3 percentage points.

The graduation rate among students with disabilities has more than tripled from 22.5% in 2013.

GRADUATION RATE ▲
89.2%

DROPOUT RATE ▼
8.5%

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM RATES



Chronic Absenteeism

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM IS DEFINED AS missing 10% (18 days) of the school year for any reason, which includes excused and unexcused absences and suspensions. This averages to just two days a month.

Mississippi's chronic absenteeism rate was 27.6% in 2024-25, which was an increase from 24.4% in 2023-24. In Mississippi and nationally, chronic absenteeism rates spiked during the pandemic and have not returned to pre-pandemic levels.

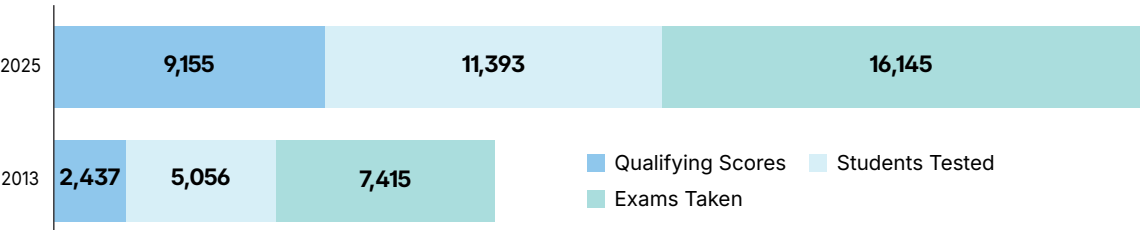
Chronic absenteeism rates declined in elementary and middle school from 2023-24 to 2024-25 but increased from 30% to 39% in high school. This suggests excessive absences among high school students have driven the statewide rise in chronic absenteeism. The data also show variation across districts, with some communities experiencing higher rates than others.

To support local school districts' efforts to reduce chronic absenteeism, the MDE has continued its attendance awareness campaign called *Every School Day Counts - Attend to Achieve*. The campaign highlights the benefits of regular school attendance and emphasizes ways to prevent students from being chronically absent.

Advanced Placement

DURING THE 2024-25 SCHOOL YEAR, 11,393 MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC SCHOOL students took 16,145 Advanced Placement (AP) exams, with a record high of 9,155 exams earning a qualifying score. The rate of exams achieving a qualifying score reached an all-time high of 56.7%.

Compared to 2023-24, the numbers mark an 8.4% decrease in students taking AP exams, an 8.8% decrease in tests taken and an 18.4% increase in passing scores on exams. **Since 2013, the overall number of Mississippi students taking AP courses and passing AP exams has more than doubled.**



MDE launches Advanced Placement courses in Cybersecurity, Networking and Business with Personal Finance

MDE announced in August 2025 that it is participating in the College Board’s innovative AP Career Kickstart™ courses, including an AP Cybersecurity and AP Networking pilot in three Mississippi high schools starting in fall 2025. MDE will also offer AP Business with Personal Finance statewide starting in the 2026-27 school year. Participation and proficiency in these courses will allow students to earn college credit and employer-endorsed credentials.

The College Board invited Mississippi schools in 2024 to apply to participate in the pilot program for the two AP Career Kickstart™ courses. The selected schools include Brandon High School

and Richland High School in the Rankin County School District and Harrison Central High School in the Harrison County School District. The schools took part in summer institutes and will receive ongoing support during the 2025-26 school year. This implementation will provide a model for other schools when AP Cybersecurity and AP Networking become available statewide in 2026-27.

ACT

THE MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE PROVIDES FUNDING FOR ALL PUBLIC-SCHOOL students to take the ACT at no cost in their junior year of high school. The test measures college-readiness at a critical time in high school when there is still time to provide interventions to improve ACT performance. Mississippi is one of 16 states that administers the ACT to all high school juniors. The ACT now provides superscores, which are generated when students take the ACT multiple times and the student’s best scores from each of the four tested ACT subjects are combined.

2025 11TH GRADE

17.5

AVERAGE SCORE

2025 GRADUATING CLASS

17.4

AVERAGE SCORE

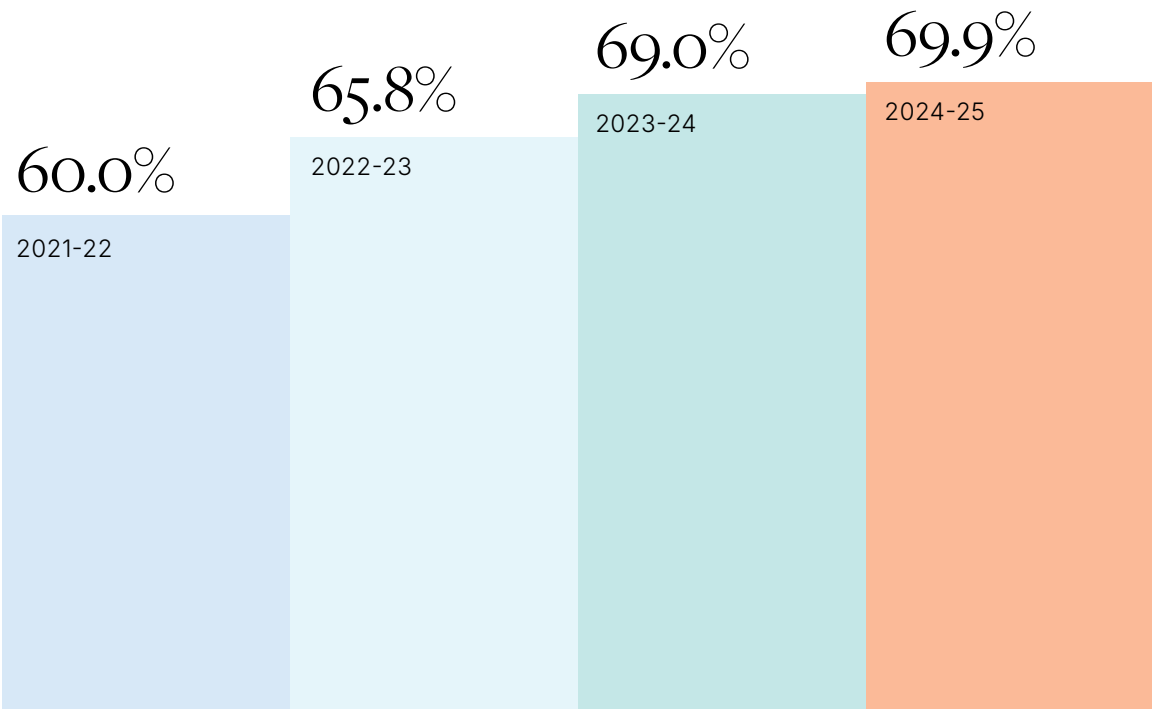
18.5

SUPERSCORE

ACT WorkKeys

Since the 2021-22 school year, the ACT National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), based on ACT WorkKeys scores, has been an option to use instead of ACT results as the state’s accountability measure that evaluates how schools and districts prepare students for college and the workforce. Since that time, the percentage of students scoring a silver or above NCRC has steadily increased.

STUDENTS SCORING SILVER or ABOVE

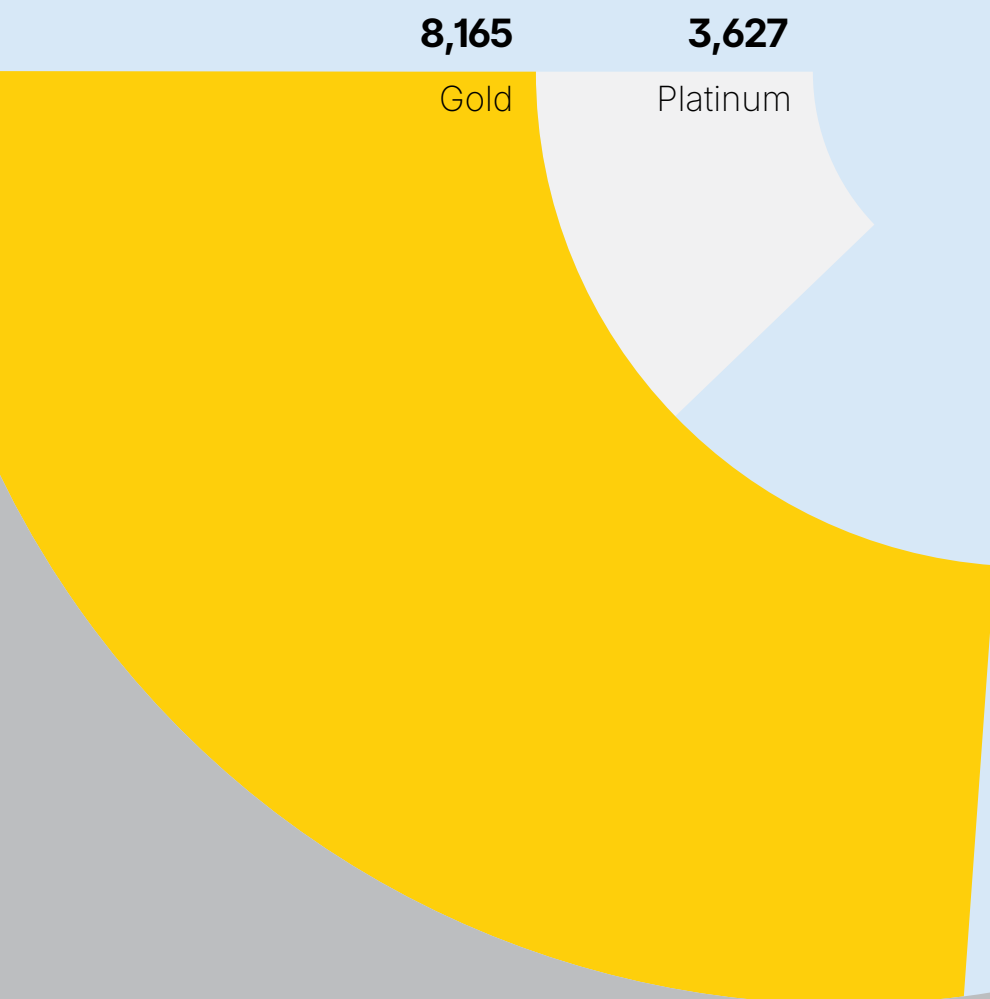


ACT NATIONAL CAREER READINESS

25,917 students earned ACT National Career Readiness Certificates in 2024-25 for their performance on the ACT WorkKeys

14,125

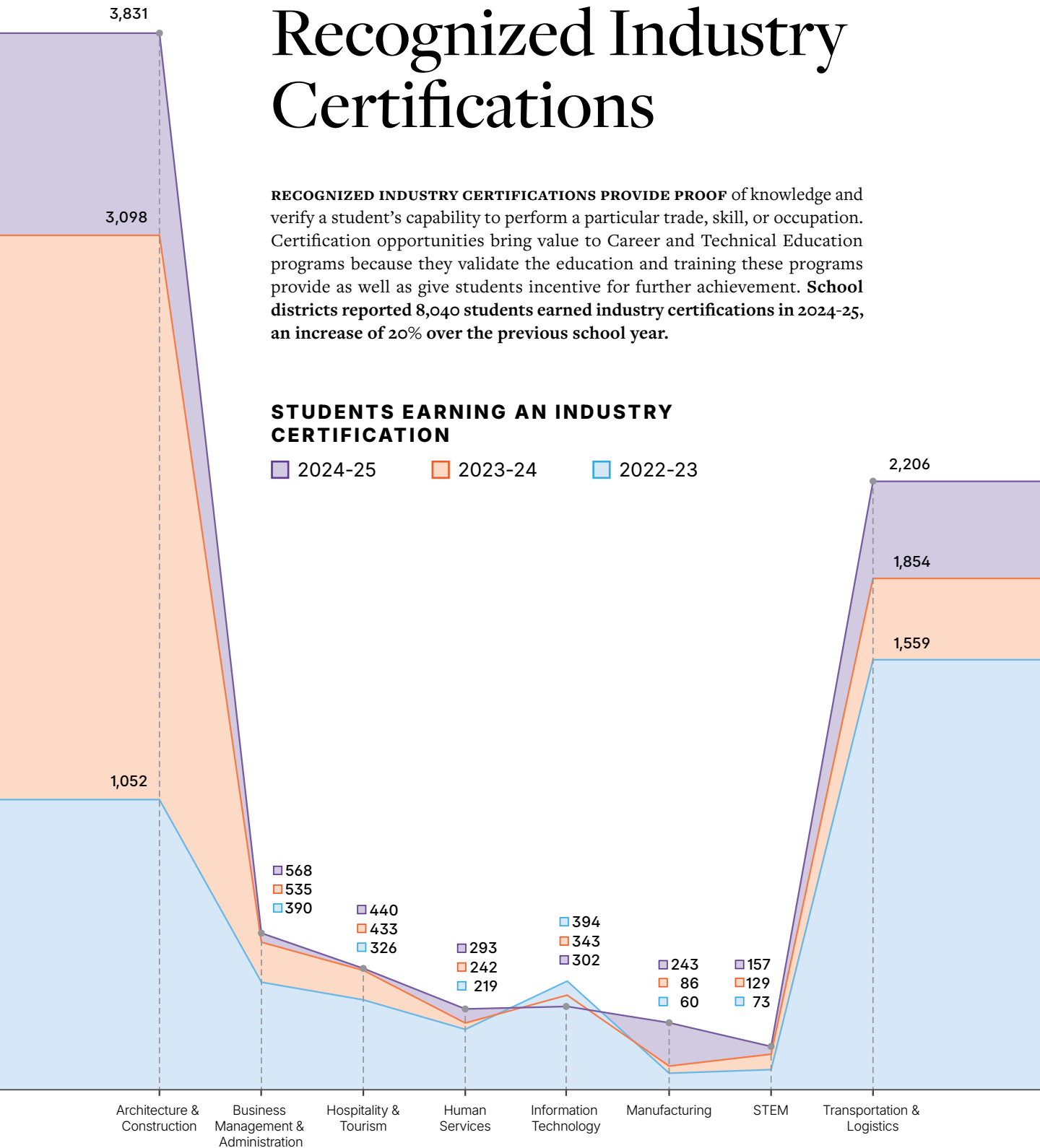
Silver

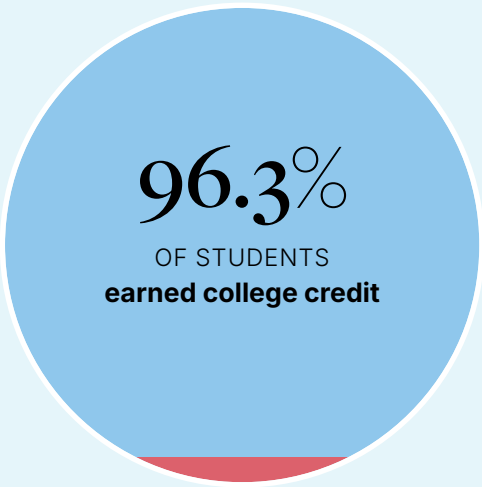


Recognized Industry Certifications

RECOGNIZED INDUSTRY CERTIFICATIONS PROVIDE PROOF of knowledge and verify a student's capability to perform a particular trade, skill, or occupation. Certification opportunities bring value to Career and Technical Education programs because they validate the education and training these programs provide as well as give students incentive for further achievement. **School districts reported 8,040 students earned industry certifications in 2024-25, an increase of 20% over the previous school year.**

STUDENTS EARNING AN INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION





Dual Credit & Dual Enrollment

DUAL CREDIT AND DUAL ENROLLMENT COURSES enable students to take college courses while in high school and receive college credit.

The percentage of students participating in dual credit courses more than doubled from 6.6% in 2016 to 17.3% in 2025. 96.3% of students passed their courses and earned college credit in 2025.

Career & Technical Education

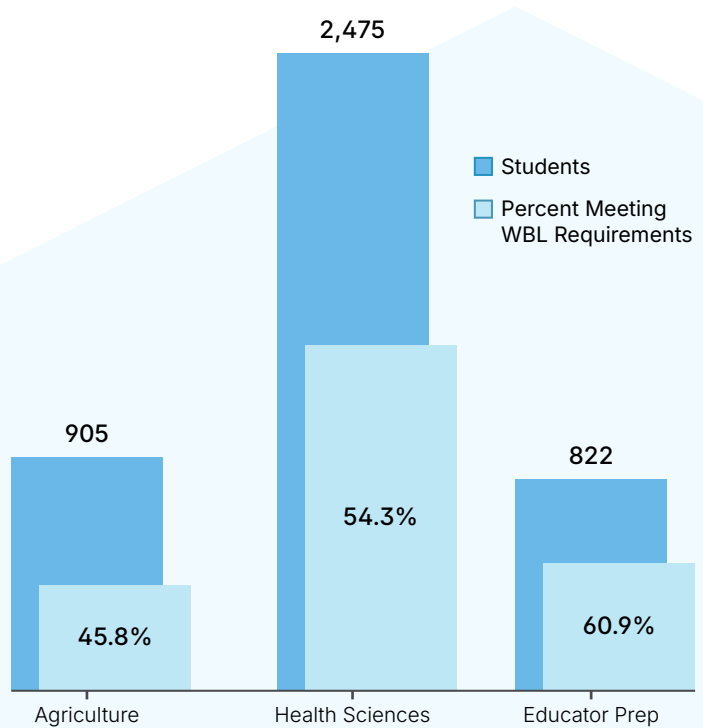
CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) COURSES HELP students develop marketable job skills and earn national industry certifications needed to achieve their career goals. Students who take at least two CTE courses in the same field of study are CTE concentrators.

CTE completers have the state’s highest average graduation rate. In 2024-25, 99.6% of CTE concentrators graduated from high school.

Work-based Learning Internships

The federal Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) requires states to annually report on performance indicators for all CTE pathways. Pathways using Work-based Learning (WBL) as a quality indicator are called embedded WBL experiences, or Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) for the agriculture, food and natural resources pathway.

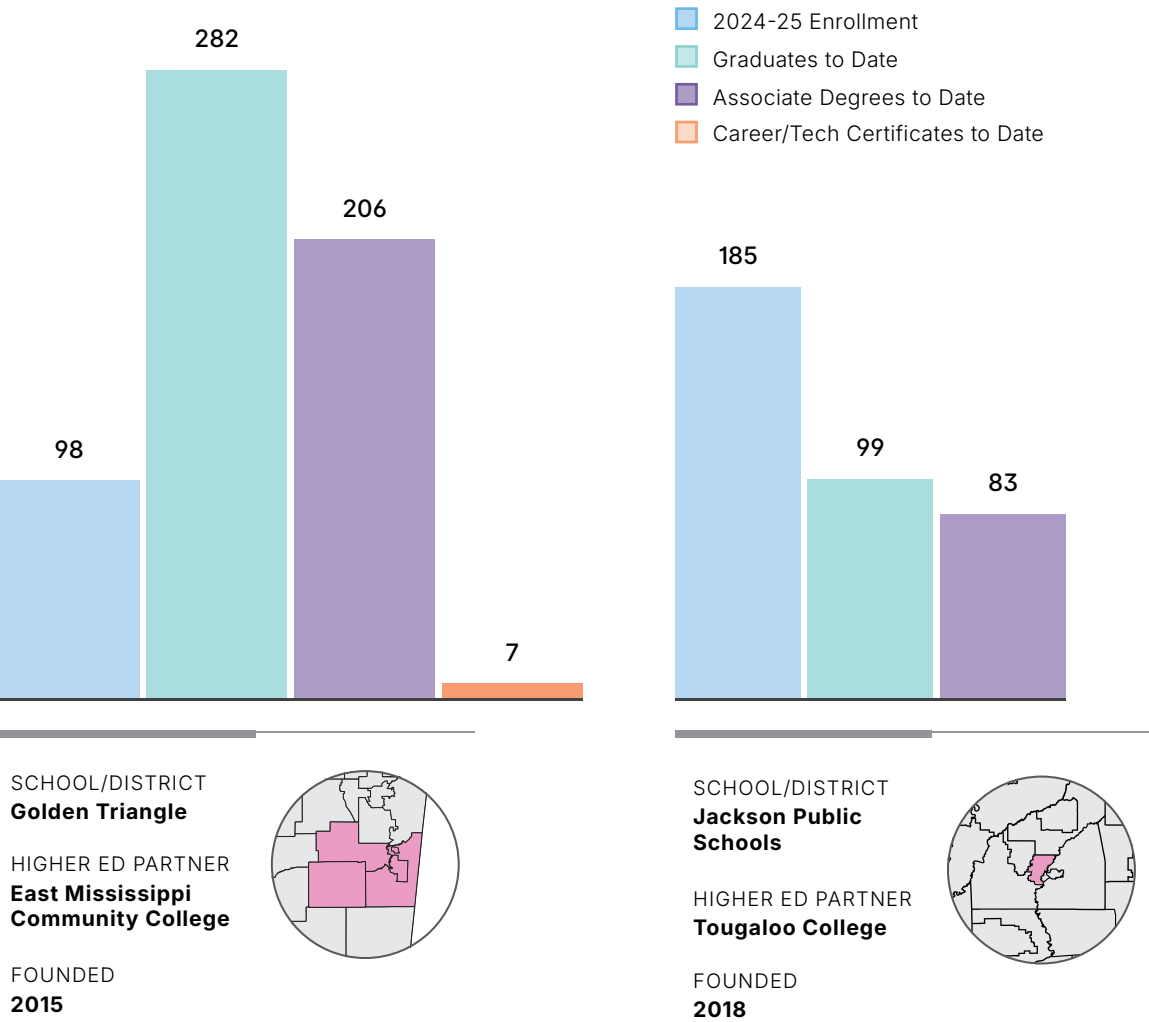
Perkins V defines WBL as sustained interactions with industry professionals in real or simulated workplace settings, fostering hands-on engagement with career-specific tasks aligned to curriculum. The MDE has chosen Agriculture, Health Sciences and Educator Prep as focus areas for embedded WBL experiences.



Early College High Schools

EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOLS ARE SMALL SCHOOLS located on a partnering college campus that serve as a bridge from secondary to post-secondary education for students who traditionally might not have the highest expectation of continuing their education after high school. Underrepresented students who participate in early college high school see many benefits, including:

- Successful completion of high school
- College credits earned, potentially resulting in an associate degree
- Enrollment in college directly after high school



707

TOTAL ENROLLMENT
2024-25

991

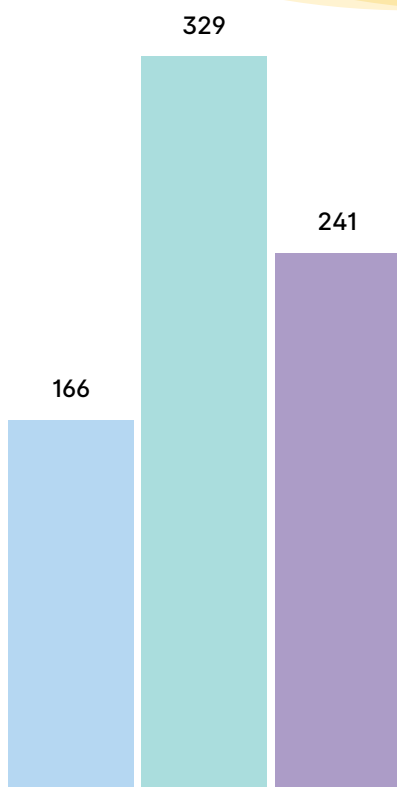
TOTAL GRADUATES
TO DATE

783

TOTAL ASSOCIATE
DEGREES TO DATE

7

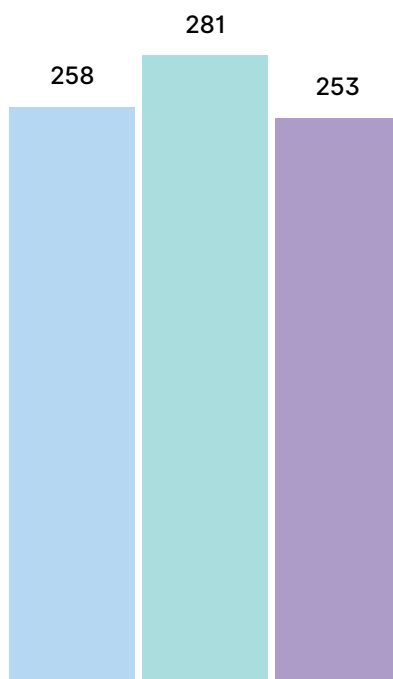
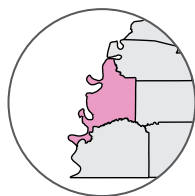
TOTAL CAREER/TECH
CERT. TO DATE



SCHOOL/DISTRICT
Natchez-Adams

HIGHER ED PARTNER
**Copiah-Lincoln
Community College**

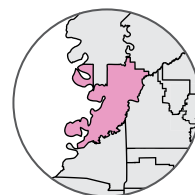
FOUNDED
2016



SCHOOL/DISTRICT
**River City
(Vicksburg-Warren)**

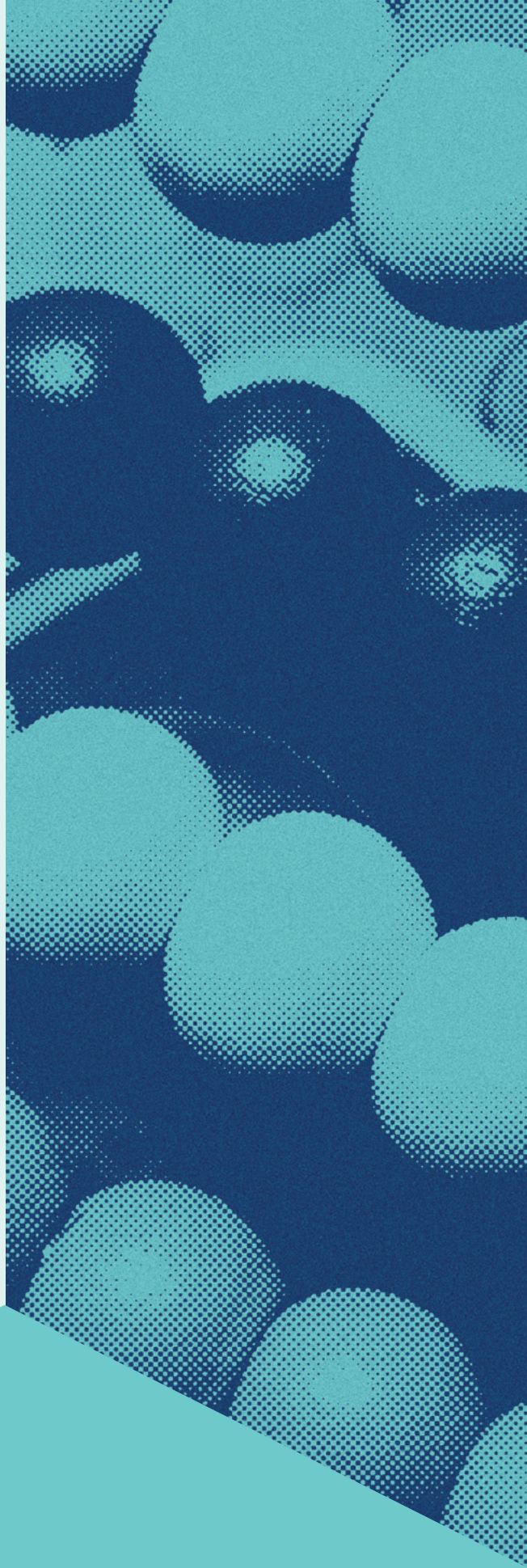
HIGHER ED PARTNER
**Hinds Community
College**

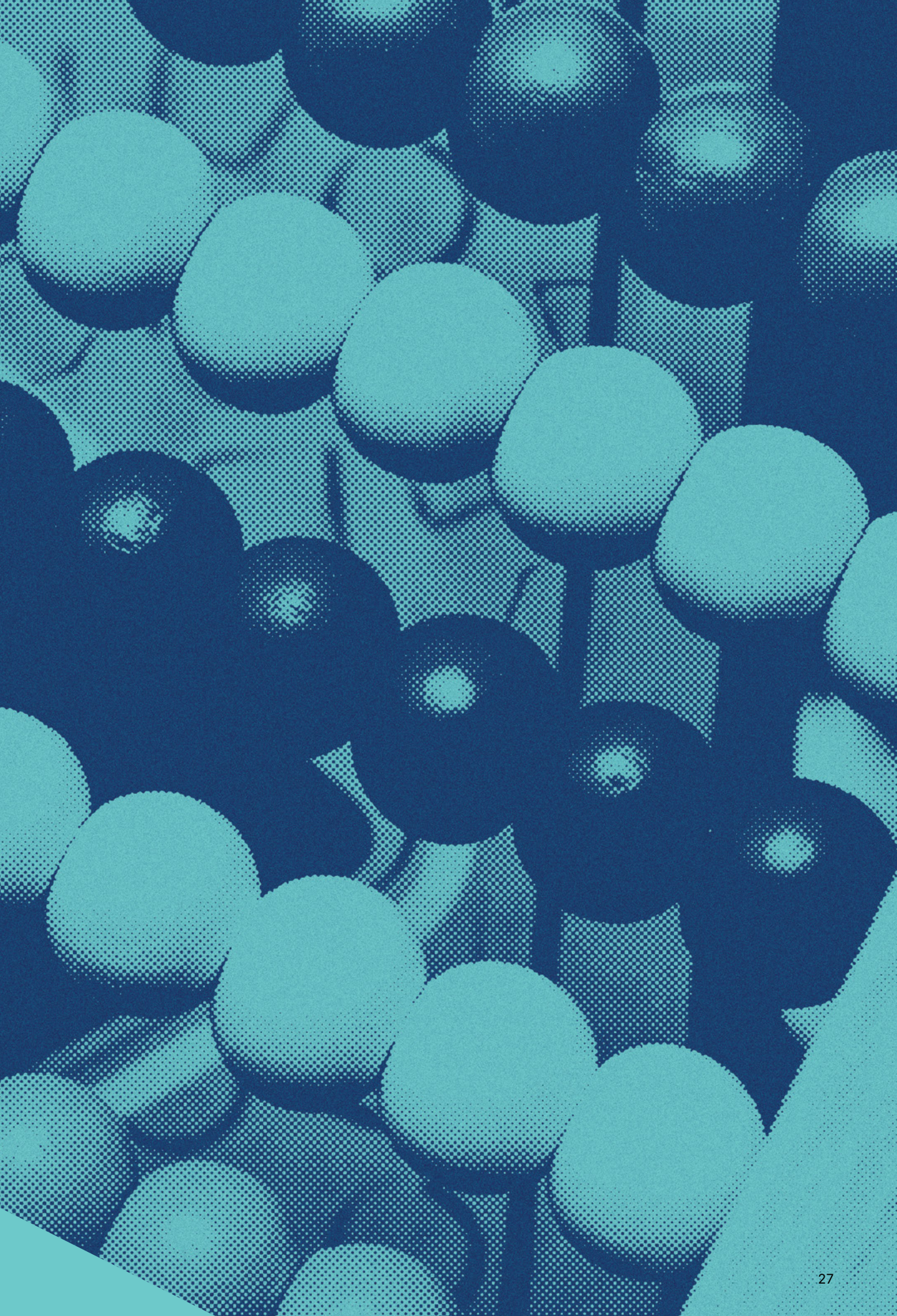
FOUNDED
2016



Goal 03

Every Child
has Access to a
High-Quality
Early Childhood
Program

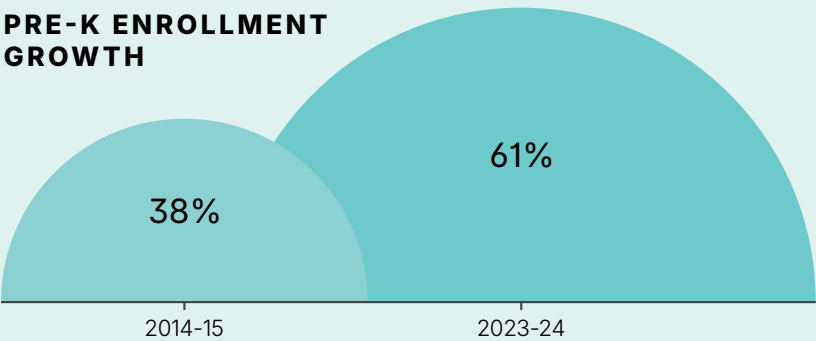




Growth of Public Pre-K

PUBLIC PRE-K IN MISSISSIPPI includes local, state and federally funded programs. State funds have expanded access to public pre-K over the past decade. According to the 2024 *National Institute of Early Education Research State of Preschool Yearbook*, the percentage of 4-year-olds enrolled in pre-K in 2023-24 was **61%**. This is an increase from **38%** in 2014-15.

PRE-K ENROLLMENT GROWTH



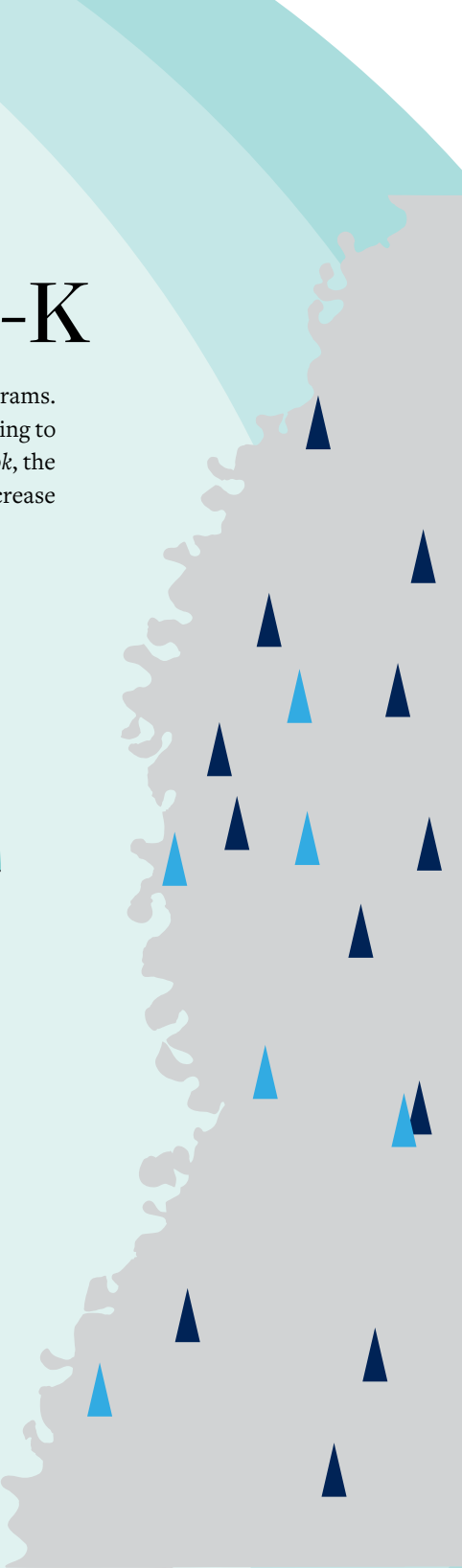
Early Learning Collaboratives

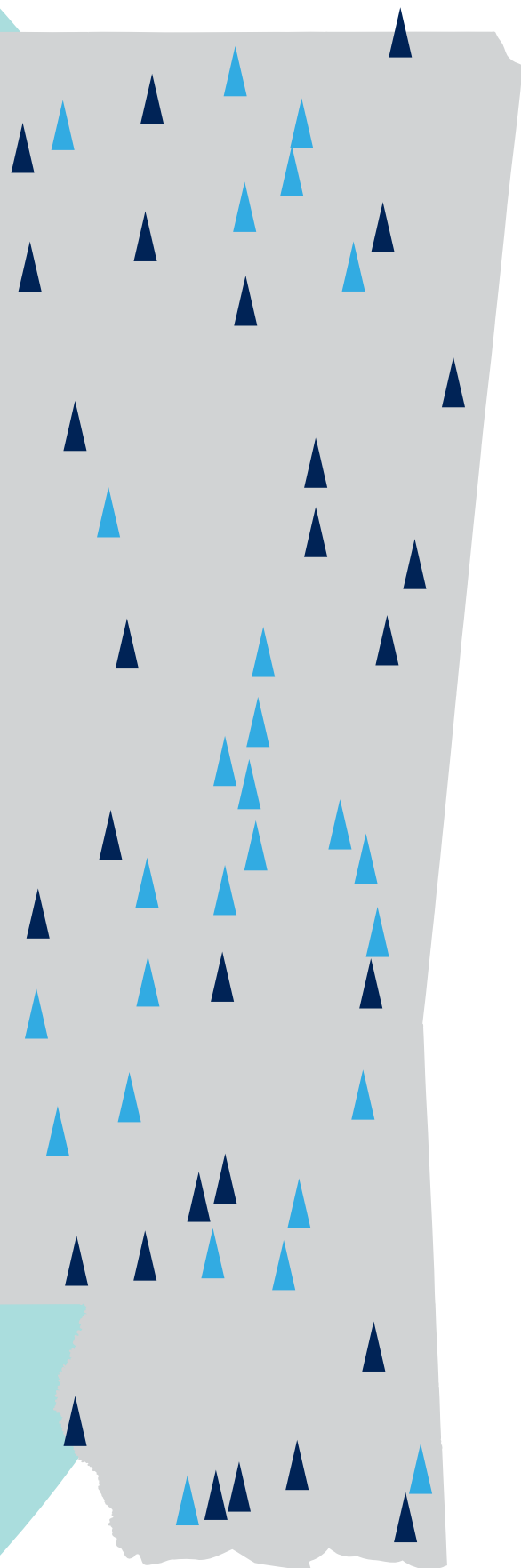
MISSISSIPPI STARTED BUILDING ITS FIRST publicly funded early childhood education infrastructure in 2013 after the passage of the Early Learning Collaborative Act. The law initially provided \$3 million to establish 11 Early Learning Collaboratives (ELCS) in underserved areas throughout the state. Based on their success, the Legislature increased funding in subsequent years. **Appropriations for ELCS have steadily increased since the 2014-15 school year to a cumulative total of \$160 million.**

ELCs provide high-quality early childhood education pre-K programs to 4-year-old students through partnerships among school districts, Head Start agencies, childcare centers and non-profit organizations. There are now 40 ELCs. The total number of 4-year-olds served in ELCs since the 2014-15 school year is more than 37,000.

State Invested Pre-K Programs

DURING THE 2022 LEGISLATIVE SESSION, the Mississippi Legislature appropriated \$20 million in new state funding to provide grants to public schools not participating in an ELC. The number of State Invested Pre-K (SIP) programs rose to 33 as of June 2025. The SIPs expand MDE’s offering of high-quality pre-K programs and have the capacity to serve 2,120 4-year-old children in 106 classrooms. Just like the ELCs, SIP programs meet all National Institute for Early Education Research quality standards. Grants funded classrooms in 24 districts through June 2025.





▲ 40 EARLY LEARNING COLLABORATIVES

Biloxi	Long Beach
Brookhaven	Lowndes County
Clarke County	Marion County
Cleveland	McComb
Coahoma County	Monroe
Corinth-Alcorn-Prentiss	Noxubee County
George County	Pass Christian
Greenwood-Leflore	Pascagoula-Gautier
Grenada	Petal
Hattiesburg	Picayune
Hollandale	Pontotoc
Holly Springs	Rankin County
Holmes County	Scott County
Jackson-Hinds	Senatobia
Jefferson County	South Panola
Kosciusko	Starkville-Oktibbeha
Lamar County	Tallahatchie County
Lee County	West Jasper
Lafayette-Oxford	West Point
Leland	Yazoo City

▲ 33 STATE-INVESTED PRE-K PROGRAMS

Bay St. Louis-Waveland	Newton County
Benton County	Newton Municipal
Covington County	Perry County
Enterprise	Philadelphia
Forrest County	Richton
Forest Municipal	Simpson County
Humphreys County	Smith County
Jefferson Davis County	South Tippah
Lauderdale County	Sunflower County
Louisville	Tate County
Meridian Public	Tupelo
Midtown Public Charter	Union City
School (Jackson)	Union County
Moss Point	Vicksburg-Warren
Natchez-Adams	Wayne County
Neshoba County	Western Line
New Albany	Winona-Montgomery

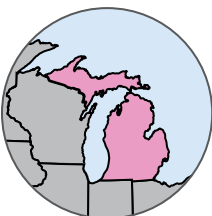
National Model

THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR EARLY Education Research (NIEER) first recognized Mississippi for its ELC program in 2015 as one of only a handful of states that meets all 10 of its quality standards. In subsequent years, NIEER continued to name Mississippi among the top states in the nation for quality pre-K. Today, Mississippi remains one of only five states that meets all of NIEER's quality standards for pre-K.

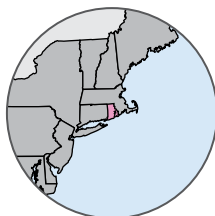
NIEER Quality Standards

1. Use of early learning standards
2. Curriculum supports
3. Teacher degree
4. Teacher specialized training
5. Assistant teacher degree
6. Staff professional development
7. Maximum class size
8. Staff-child ratio
9. Screenings and referrals
10. Continuous quality improvement system

1 of ONLY **FIVE STATES**



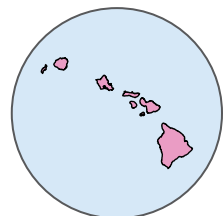
Michigan



Rhode Island



Alabama



Hawaii

Early Learning Collaborative

Growth & Support

Mississippi’s investment in Early Learning Collaboratives increased from **\$3 million in 2013 to \$29 million in 2025**. Individuals or corporations who donate to ELCS are eligible to receive a 1:1 state tax credit for the donated amount up to \$1 million.

FUNDING & ENROLLMENT

SCHOOL YEAR	STATE FUNDING	STUDENTS	SITES	CALENDAR YEAR	1:1 TAX CREDIT
2013-14*	\$3M	–	–	–	–
2014-15	\$3M	1,700	11	2014	\$276,850
2015-16	\$3M	1,000	11	2015	\$812,686
2016-17	\$4M	2,000	14	2016	\$1.6M
2017-18	\$4M	3,000	18	2017	\$2.7M
2018-19	\$6.5M	3,000	18	2018	\$3.8M
2019-20	\$6.7M	3,000	18	2019	\$3.3M
2020-21	\$7.8M	3,000	18	2020	\$5.6M
2021-22	\$16M	6,000	30	2021	\$3.9M
2022-23	\$24M	9,120	37	2022	\$5.2M
2023-24	\$24M	9,120	40	2023	\$3.9M
2024-25	\$29M	7,793*	40	2024	\$4.8M

*Reduction in amount of students for 2024-25 due to increase of per child rate from \$2,500 to \$3,500 to adjust for inflation and rising cost to implement high-quality environments in classrooms.



Mississippi Beginnings: Pre-K

MDE continued to pilot an open-source curriculum for 4-year-old pre-K classrooms, including public, private, childcare, home care and Head Start. The Mississippi Beginnings: Pre-K curriculum is intended to support any preschool teacher in providing rich, play-based, intentional developmentally appropriate instruction. The curriculum has been implemented in 338 classrooms in 37 Early Learning Collaboratives and 122 classrooms in 28 State-Invested Pre-K sites. Additional resources and professional learning have been offered to teachers.

The Mississippi Beginnings: Pre-K curriculum is organized in six thematic units that each have five weeks of content. Information for each week includes instructions about learning centers, materials needed, read-aloud activities, songs, word play, letters, family activities to do at home, and a weekly lesson plan. Pre-K teachers can access materials and training online to learn about the curriculum and how to implement it in the classroom: mdek12.org/EC/Mississippi-Beginnings-Curriculum

Goal 04

Every School
Has Effective
Teachers
& Leaders





Professional Development

Building the capacity of educators is a major part of MDE’s strategy to improve student achievement. MDE’s professional development team offers in-person and virtual training, online Canvas courses and self-directed professional development on demand in the areas of mathematics, science and special education.

SESSIONS AND PARTICIPANTS

Trainings and courses

- 559 Trainings
- 35 Canvas courses
- 83 Districts served

Participant engagement

- 25,908 On-demand training views
- 11,060 Participants
- 157 Statewide trainings

Coaching Model

MDE’s coaching model has proven to be an effective method of transforming Mississippi schools and improving student achievement. Developed around transformational coaching, it is a powerful, comprehensive and systematic way to plan and organize coaching support.

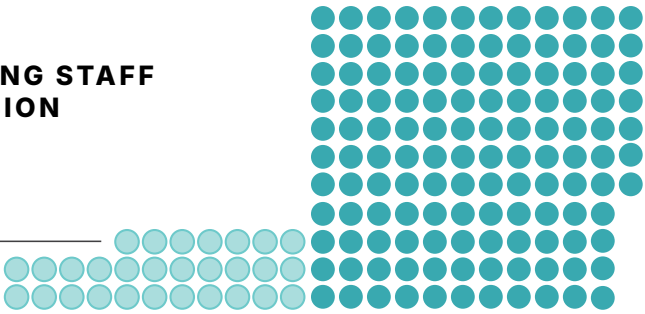
MDE Coaches:

- Build educators’ instructional capacity across the curriculum
- Promote school-wide culture for learning that includes all stakeholders
- Enhance and refine instruction and interventions
- Target instructional coaching using the gradual release model

MDE’s coaching staff has expanded from 29 literacy coaches in 2013-14 to a team of 128 coaches and coordinators in 2024-25 supporting teachers and school leaders in the areas of literacy, early childhood education, special education, school improvement, and mathematics.

COACHING STAFF EXPANSION

29
2013-14



128
2024-25

Statewide Support *that creates* Local Impact

Literacy

- Coaches and coordinators: 45
- Districts served: 42
- Schools served: 68
- Coach Academy graduates: 11

Mathematics

- Coaches and coordinators: 28
- Districts served: 83
- Schools served: 87

Special Education

- Coaches and coordinators: 8
- Districts served: 16
- Schools served: 16

Early Childhood

- Coaches: 38
- Classrooms served: 528

School Improvement

- Coaches: 9
- Schools served: 36
- Districts served: 25

Math Coaching Academy

MDE launched the Mathematics Coaching Academy in July 2025 with intensive professional development for 24 educators in districts across the state. Using MDE’s coaching model and math initiatives, this dedicated group of educators kicked off transforming math instruction and supporting teacher growth across the state.

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Literacy Coach Academy of Mississippi

The Literacy Coach Academy of Mississippi (LCAM) is a professional development program that provides educators who serve or will serve in a coaching role in any school district to the same onboarding coach training as MDE literacy coaches. The LCAM is a free, year-long learning program that prepares K-5 school- and district-based literacy coaches to support teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators in the implementation of literacy best practices grounded in the Science of Reading. In June 2025, **the second cohort of 11 educators completed the LCAM and received their certificates of completion.**

Mississippi Educator Career Continuum Archive System

MDE COMPLETED ITS DEVELOPMENT OF THE Mississippi Educator Career Continuum Archive (MECCA) System educator workforce information system that manages licensure and other information about the careers of Mississippi educators from recruitment through retirement.

MECCA performs four functions:

- 1. Educator Preparation, Licensure, and Misconduct Evaluations (launched January 2023)
- 2. Professional Growth System Observation and Development (launched February 2024)
- 3. Educator Talent (launched April 2025)
- 4. Accreditation (projected launch February 2026)

Since its launch in January 2023, MECCA has supported over **83,125 registered users**, with staff reviewing **85,998 licensure applications**, and the system **automatically processing 21,685 licenses** through September 2025. The Professional Growth System portal has collected **73,311 final summative observations**, with more than **10,500 observations** completed directly within MECCA.

MECCA includes an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) component, which allows callers to quickly check the status of their licensure applications. Along with the IVR system, MDE's expanded Licensure Call Center staff has maintained an average call wait time of just under two minutes while handling over **24,155 calls January through September 2025**.

Mississippi Teacher Residency & Performance-Based Licensure Programs

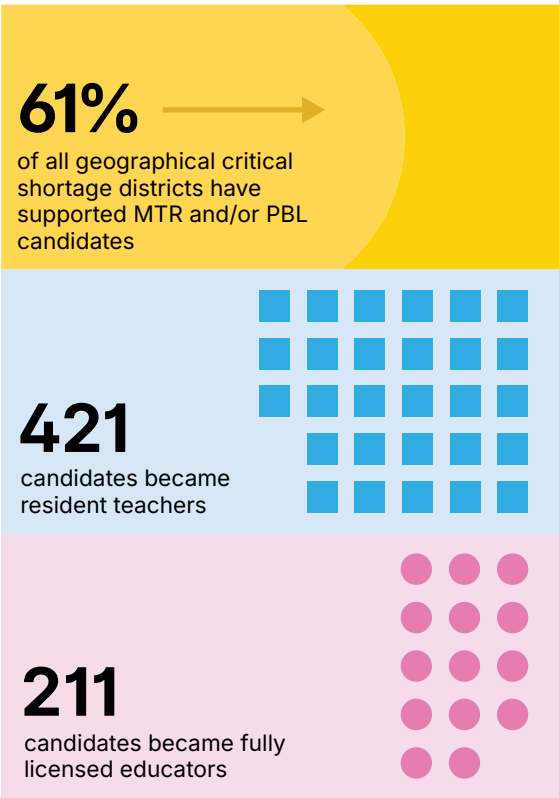
MDE LAUNCHED THE Mississippi Teacher Residency (MTR) and Performance-Based Licensure (PBL) programs with support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in 2019. MTR began as a fully funded preparation program for candidates pursuing a graduate degree in elementary and special education. PBL is a nationally unprecedented initiative to study performance-based alternatives to current licensure testing requirements. MDE expanded the MTR program in 2021 by awarding over \$9.8 million in federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds to five Mississippi universities.

In 2023, the State Board of Education approved PBL as a licensure pathway based on the results of a three-year pilot study.

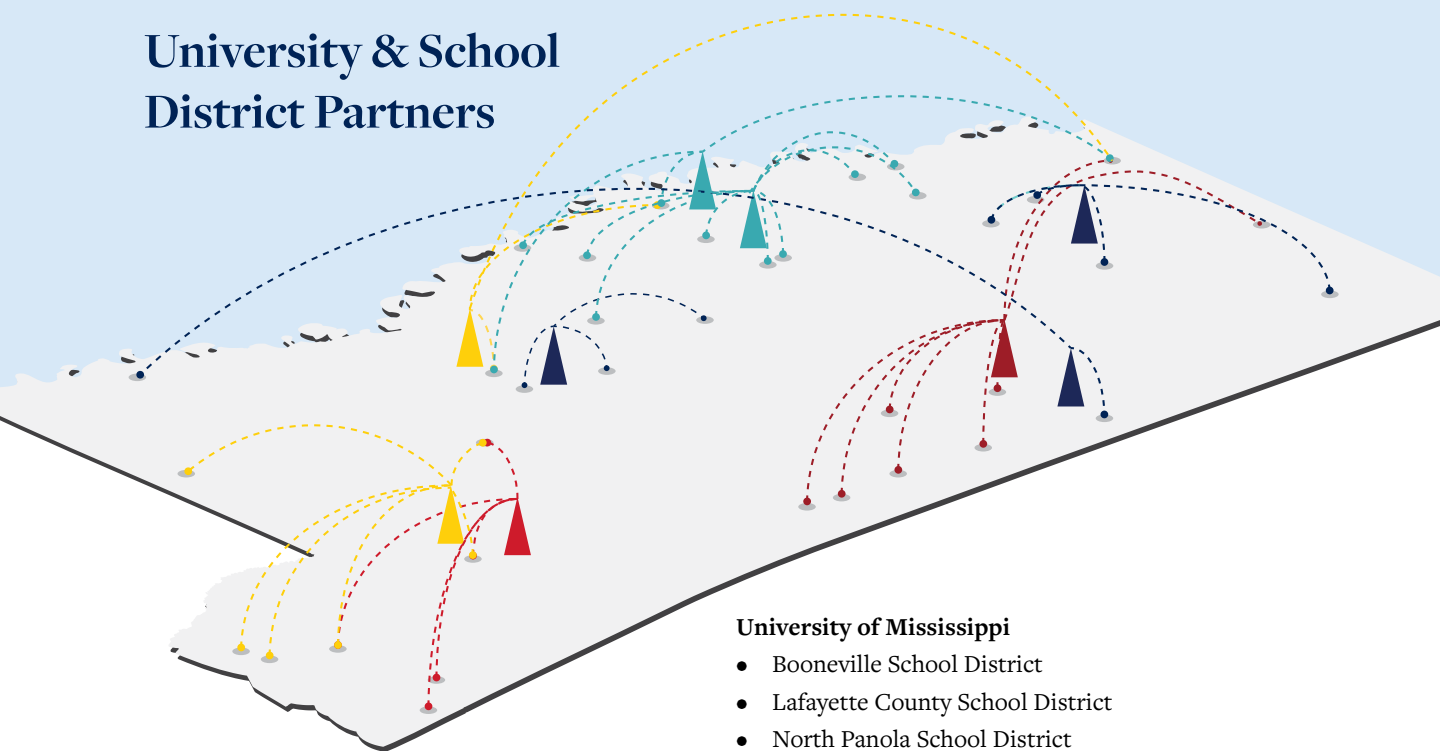
The Mississippi Legislature appropriated funds in July 2025 to continue the MTR program after federal relief funds ended. To date, MDE has awarded \$2.9 million in state grants to nine Institutions of Higher Education to support candidates pursuing either an initial license or supplemental endorsement in elementary education or special education.

Learn more about the nation's first performance-based licensure pathway: mdek12.org/OEL/Performance-Based-Licensure

SINCE THE INCEPTION OF MTR & PBL



University & School District Partners



Delta State University

- Clinton Public School District
- DeSoto County School District
- West Bolivar Consolidated School District

Jackson State University

- Canton Public School District
- Holmes County Consolidated School District
- Jackson Public School District

Mississippi College

- Clinton Public School District
- DeSoto County School District
- West Bolivar Consolidated School District

Mississippi University for Women

- Columbus Municipal School District
- Natchez-Adams School District

Mississippi Valley State University

- Clarksdale Municipal School District
- Coahoma County School District
- Greenwood-Leflore Consolidated School District
- Hollandale School District
- Leflore Legacy Academy
- Sunflower County Consolidated School District
- Quitman County School District
- Western Line School District
- Yazoo City Municipal School District

University of Mississippi

- Booneville School District
- Lafayette County School District
- North Panola School District
- South Panola School District

University of Southern Mississippi

- Bay St. Louis-Waveland School District
- Harrison County School District
- Hattiesburg Public Schools
- Pass Christian Public School District
- Simpson County School District
- South Pike School District

William Carey University

- Covington County School District
- Harrison County School District
- Hattiesburg Public Schools
- Jackson County School District
- Moss Point School District

Mississippi State University

- Benton County School District
- DeSoto County School District
- Kemper County School District
- Lauderdale County School District
- Louisville Municipal School District
- Meridian Public School District
- Noxubee County School District
- Starkville Oktibbeha Consolidated School District

Goal 05

Every Community
Effectively Using a
World-Class Data
System to Improve
Student Outcomes



Mississippi Student Information System

MDE’S MISSISSIPPI STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (MSIS) provides for the electronic collection, management, and reporting of financial data and data about students, teachers, administrators, school board members, and support staff.

Some of the key reports produced throughout the year include the Chronic Absenteeism Report, the Literacy-Based Promotion Act Report and the Annual Achievement Gap report.

The Mississippi Succeeds Report Card website (msrc.mdek12.org) is a vast collection of information on schools and districts compiled through MSIS and other sources. The website allows users to view and compare schools, districts, achievement of student subgroups, proficiency of content areas, student growth, teacher data, preschool and postsecondary enrollment, per pupil expenditures, and more.



Goal 06

Every School
& District is Rated
C or Higher



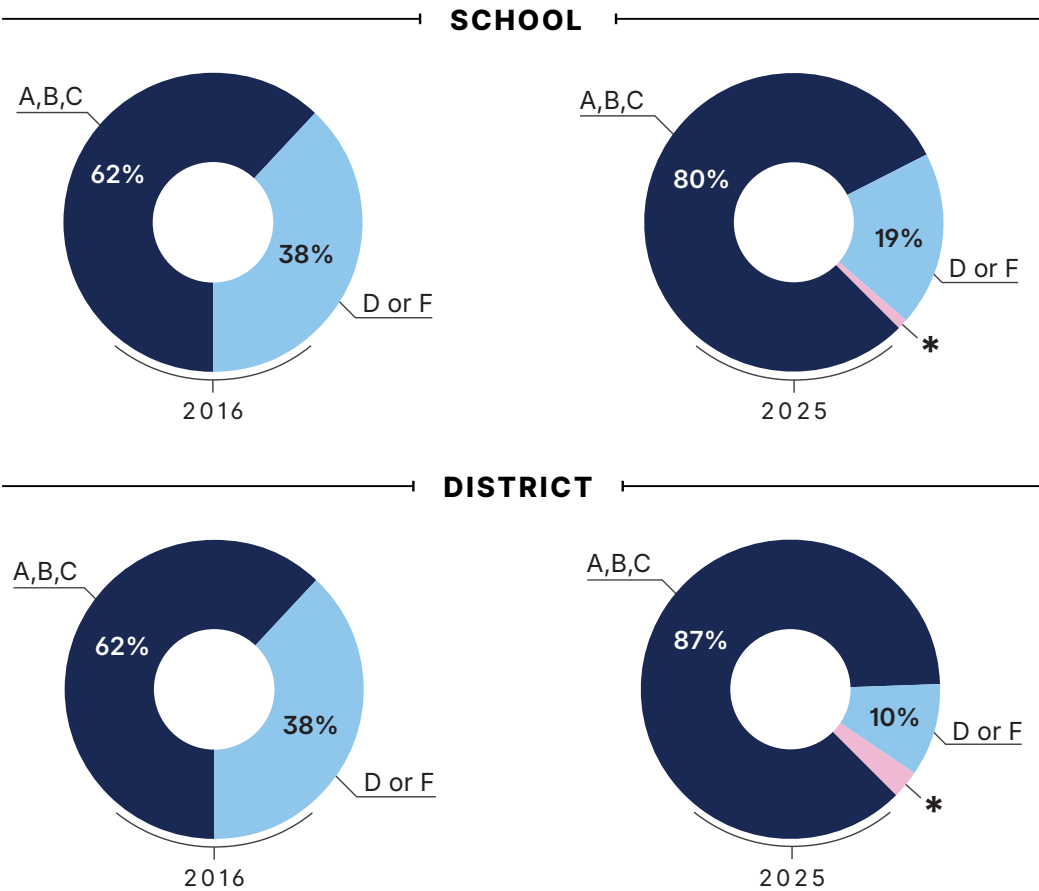


2024-25 School & District Grades

Mississippi school and district accountability A–F grades for 2024-25 showed **80.1% of schools and 87.2% of districts earned a grade of C or higher**. In 2016, when the Mississippi State Board of Education set a goal that all schools and districts be rated C or higher, the percentage of schools and districts meeting this goal were both 62%.

State law requires standards to be raised when 65% of schools or districts are rated B or higher. Therefore, new accountability standards will be implemented in the 2025-26 school year that will raise the bar for achievement and put a stronger focus on graduation outcomes and workforce readiness at the high school and district levels.

Accountability grades help teachers, school leaders, parents and communities know how well their local schools and districts are serving their students. The calculation of district and school grades relies heavily on the amount of progress students make in English Language Arts and Mathematics from one year to the next, particularly the lowest performing 25% of students.



*Three charter schools too new to be graded. One district and high school will receive grade after locally selected performance data is available.

2024-25 Accountability Grade Highlights

	INCREASED A LETTER GRADE	IMPROVED READING & MATH PROFICIENCY LEVELS
DISTRICTS	8.3%	20.9%
ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOLS	13.9%	17.9%
HIGH SCHOOLS	12.6%	42.0%

Office of School & District Transformation

MDE’s Office of School and District Transformation exists to serve as the liaison between MDE and school districts under state control due to poor academic performance or a state of emergency by providing a clear course of transformation. The work includes establishing high expectations for all students, using data to track student progress and performance, and reflecting frequently on the effectiveness of the school/district transformation process.

MDE’s Office of School and District Transformation was created in the 2024-25 school year. Under Mississippi Code § 37-17-6.1, passed in HB 1696 (2024), the Mississippi Achievement School District (MASD) dissolved effective July 1, 2025.

The two districts that were previously consolidated into the MASD — Yazoo City School District and Humphreys County School District — were separated and reestablished as individual Districts of Transformation.

MDE created an evaluation system for interim superintendents appointed by the State Board of Education to lead Districts of Transformation. In addition to the usual roles and responsibilities of a district superintendent, the interim superintendents also act as the policy making body and report to the State Board. This evaluation system addresses this additional responsibility.

The office has also created a two-year system of support for districts that are rated F. This process encompasses many of the supports that have been implemented in districts. This process implements the support and plan of action more timely and lays out a timeline.

All four state-led districts have experienced improvement under state leadership but received lower accountability grades in 2024-25.

ACCOUNTABILITY DATA FOR THE DISTRICTS OF TRANSFORMATION

DISTRICT	GRADE (AT TAKEOVER)	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Holmes County Consolidated	F (2021)	C	C	B	C
Humphreys County	F (2019)	F	D	C	D
Yazoo City	F (2019)	F	F	C	F
Noxubee County	F (2018)	D	C	C	D

School Improvement Activity

The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires each state to identify schools for support and improvement. Those schools are classified as Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI); Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI); and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI).

2024-25 School improvement support:

- Leadership coaching support for 32 CSI schools
- 23 focused professional learning engagements for identified schools addressing data, stakeholder engagement, fiscal and program monitoring, instructional leadership practices, and school improvement requirements
- Two district and school team interviews with failing and/or CSI schools to examine staffing, achievement, and funding
- Instructional support facilitator provided support for four CSI schools with a students with disabilities subgroup
- Annual convening for identified schools

\$16M

\$16,063,101 AWARDED in Title I school improvement funds to support interventions



MDE Establishes Mississippi Blue Ribbon Schools program

MDE established the Mississippi Blue Ribbon School program in 2025, following the termination of the U.S. Department of Education's former National Blue Ribbon Schools Program. This state-level program will continue the annual recognition of the state's highest-performing schools.

The Mississippi Blue Ribbon School designation uses the same criteria for selection as the national program and carries the same level of prestige. The recognition highlights schools that excel in academic performance and/or make significant strides in closing achievement gaps among different student groups.

MDE created a Blue Ribbon flag and plaque for each school to display. Schools are recognized in both or either of two performance categories:

- Exemplary High Performing Schools: These schools are among the top performers in the state as measured by state assessments.
- Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing Schools: These schools excel in narrowing achievement gaps between different student groups and the overall student body.

The MDE selected three schools in 2025 as the state's inaugural Mississippi Blue Ribbon Schools:

Exemplary High Performing Schools

- Beach Elementary School, Pascagoula-Gautier School District
- Ocean Springs High School, Ocean Springs School District

Exemplary High-Performing School and Exemplary Achievement Gap-Closing School

- Bayou View Elementary School, Gulfport School District

Mississippi Rankings

Mississippi's public school system was ranked 16th nationally in the 2025 Annie E. Casey Foundation's KIDS COUNT® Data Book. This was the state's highest-ever educational ranking and a major improvement from 48th in 2014.

Results and rankings from the 2024 National Assessment of Educational Progress – Grade 4 Reading Achievement report were also notable.

Among Grade 4, Mississippi was ranked:

No. 1

FOR READING AND
MATH GAINS SINCE 2013

No. 9

FOR READING SCORES IN 2024
Up from No. 49 in 2013

No. 16

FOR MATH SCORES IN 2024
Up from No. 50 in 2013





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