

MISSISSIPPI STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Strategic Plan

Annual Progress Report 2024-25

Lance Evans, Ed.D.

State Superintendent of Education

mdek12.org



MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

January 15, 2026



VISION

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



MISSION

To provide leadership through the development of policy and accountability systems so that all students are prepared to compete in the global community



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

EVERY School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders

4



EVERY Community Effectively Uses a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes

5



EVERY School and District is Rated “C” or Higher

6



A photograph of graduates in blue gowns and caps sitting in rows of chairs at an outdoor ceremony. The graduates are looking forward, and the scene is captured in a side profile view. The background shows a brick building and some trees under a clear sky.

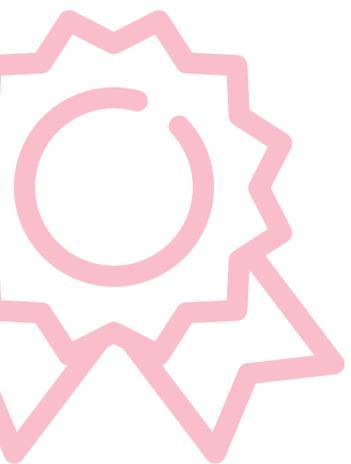
Strategic Plan Impact on Student Achievement

Public Education Progress

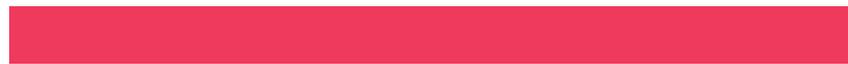
| | 2013 | 2024 |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|
| KIDS COUNT® Data Book National Ranking | 48th | 16th |
| 4th Grade Reading National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) | 49th | 9th |
| 4th Grade Math National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) | 50th | 16th |
| Graduation Rate | 75.5% | 89.2% |

Graduation rate for students with disabilities **more than doubled** from **22.5%** in 2013 to **65.2%** in 2024.

- Office of School and District Transformation
- Mississippi Superintendent Institute
- Mississippi REACH Remote Teaching Program
- Bridge-to-Career Course
- MECCA Talent Portal
- New [TeachMS.org](https://www.teachms.org) website
- Updated Accountability Model
- Launch of new MSIS



GOAL 1



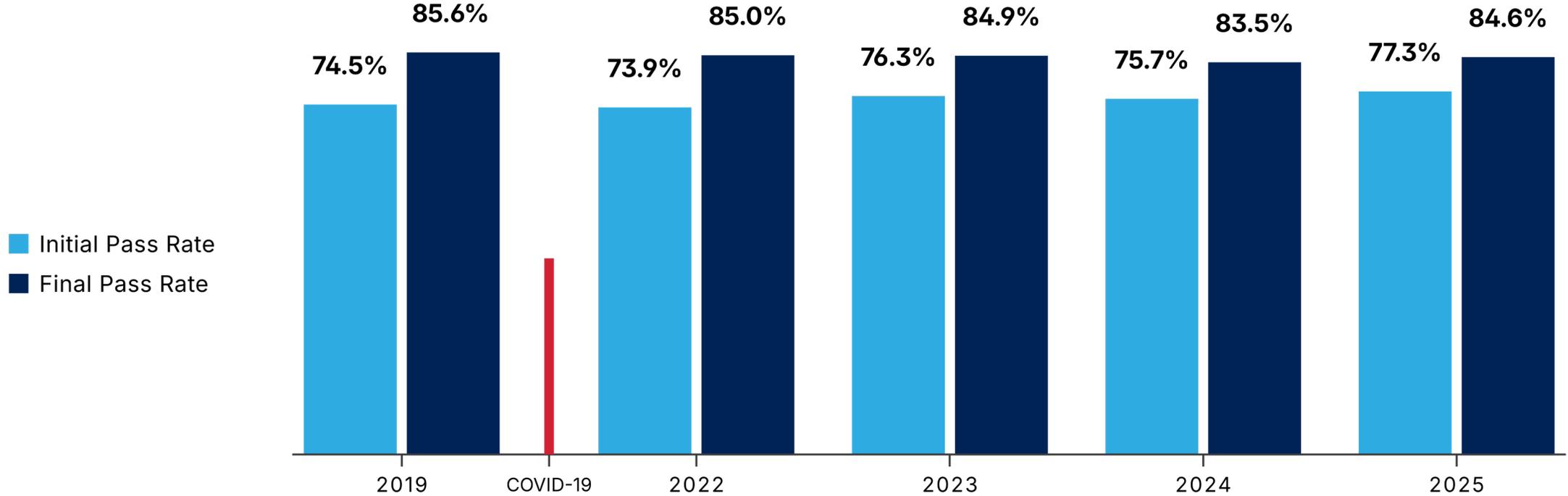
ALL Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas



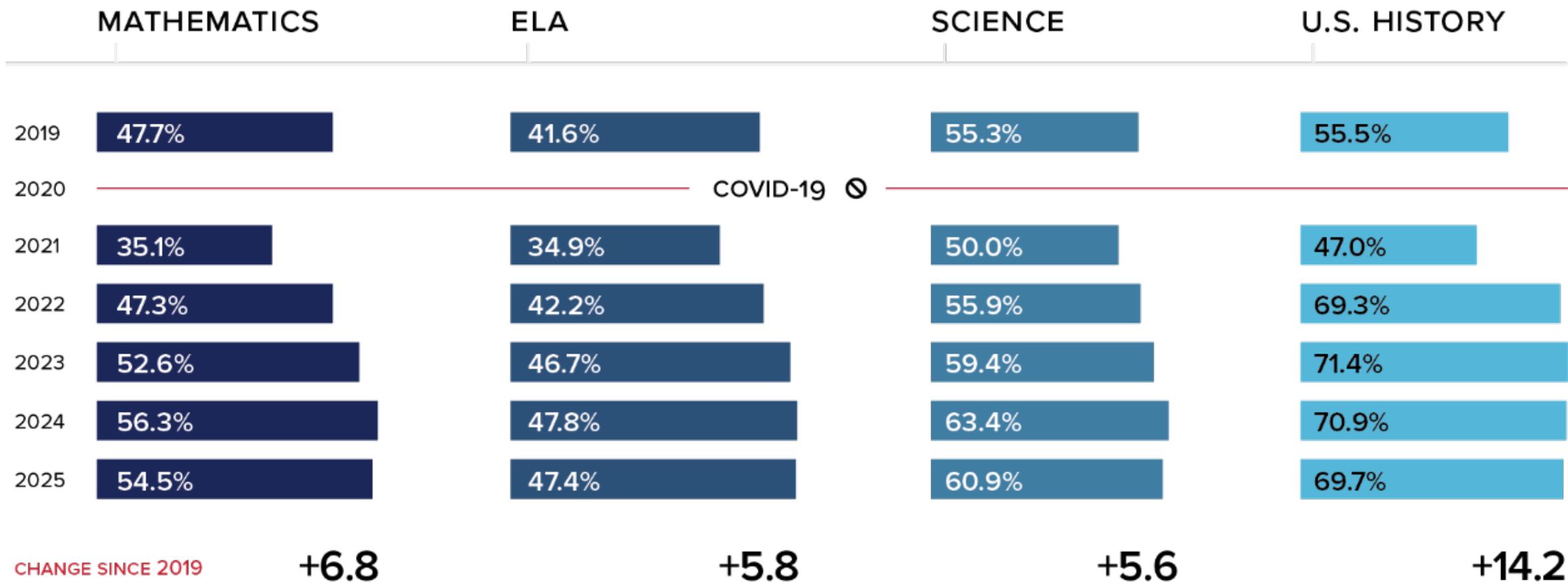
3rd Grade Reading Achievement

2019–2025

*No tests administered in 2020;
passing requirement waived in 2021.



Outcomes 2 & 3: Increase the percentage of students proficient (levels 4 and 5) and decrease percentage scoring at levels 1-3 on statewide assessments (grades 3-8 and high school composite) in each subgroup



Outcomes 2 & 3: Increase the percentage of students proficient (levels 4 and 5) and decrease percentage scoring at levels 1-3 on statewide assessments (grades 3-8 and high school composite) in each subgroup

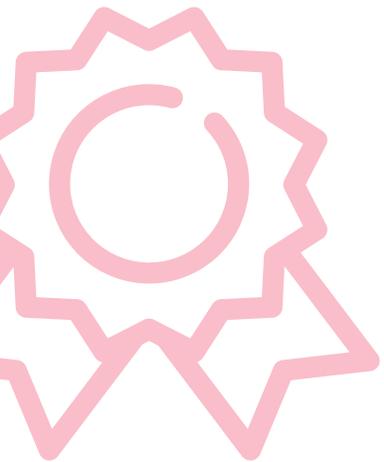
| Comparison of Grade-Level Results from 2023–24 and 2024–25 | | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| | Mathematics | | | English Language Arts (ELA) | | |
| Grade | 2023–24 Proficient or Advanced | 2024–25 Proficient or Advanced | Change | 2023–24 Proficient or Advanced | 2024–25 Proficient or Advanced | Change |
| Grade 3 | 53.3% | 53.3% | 0.0 | 57.7% | 49.3% | -8.4 |
| Grade 4 | 55.0% | 56.6% | +1.6 | 57.1% | 52.1% | -5.0 |
| Grade 5 | 53.7% | 48.3% | -5.4 | 51.7% | 55.9% | +4.2 |
| Grade 6 | 51.8% | 52.9% | +1.1 | 39.7% | 46.7% | +7.0 |
| Grade 7 | 57.3% | 55.5% | -1.8 | 40.9% | 37.4% | -3.5 |
| Grade 8 | 55.4% | 47.6% | -7.8 | 41.9% | 41.7% | -0.2 |
| English II | | | | 46.2% | 49.5% | +3.3 |
| Algebra I | 67.4% | 67.2% | -0.2 | | | |
| Overall | 56.3% | 54.5% | -1.8 | 47.8% | 47.4% | -0.40 |

From 2024 to 2025

- **English Language Arts growth increased** from 61.4% to 62.1% **(+0.7)**
- **Math growth decreased** from 73.6% to 67.9% **(-5.7)**

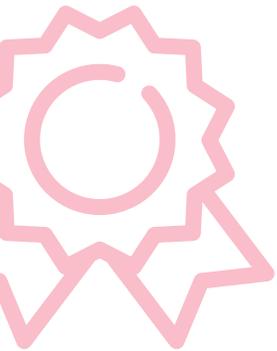
GOAL 1: Focus Areas

ALL Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas



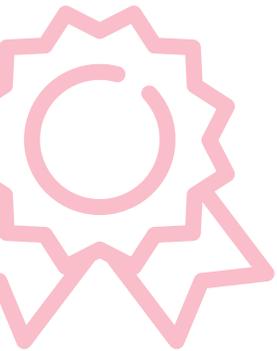
Literacy

- Increase **literacy coaching staff** from 57 to 81 in 2026-27 to build teacher capacity through modeling, co-teaching, observations, High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM), co-planning, and data analysis.
- Increase **IDEA State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) coaching staff** that provide literacy coaching for Special Education teachers.
- Offer educators additional **Level Two Mississippi Science of Reading courses** for English Learners (EL) and students with dyslexia .



Math

- Provide **math instructional coaching support in grades 2-6** to build teacher capacity through professional learning, modeling, co-teaching, co-planning, data analysis, and other instructional focuses.
- **Strengthen instructional leadership** through administrator training on the **Mathematics Instructional Observation Protocol (MIOP)**, which helps leaders conduct meaningful classroom observations, provide actionable feedback, and align professional learning with coaching decisions.



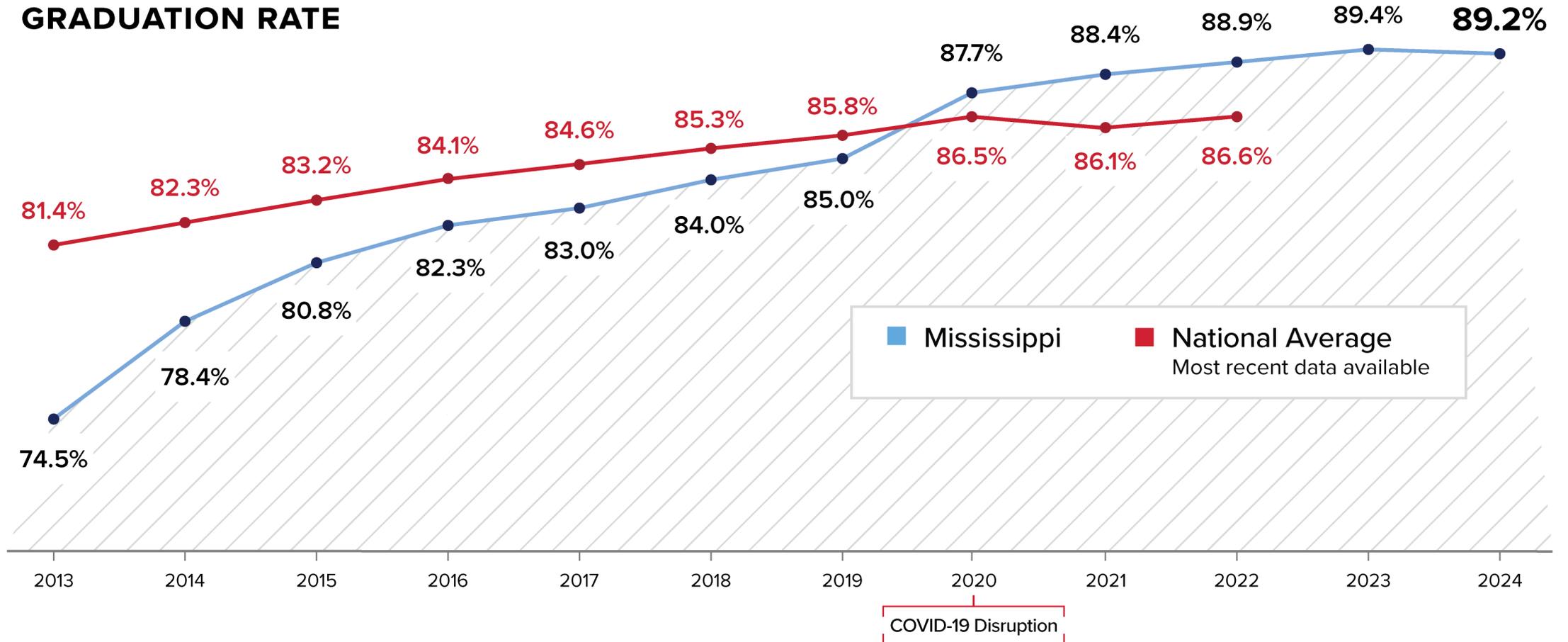
GOAL 2

EVERY Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career



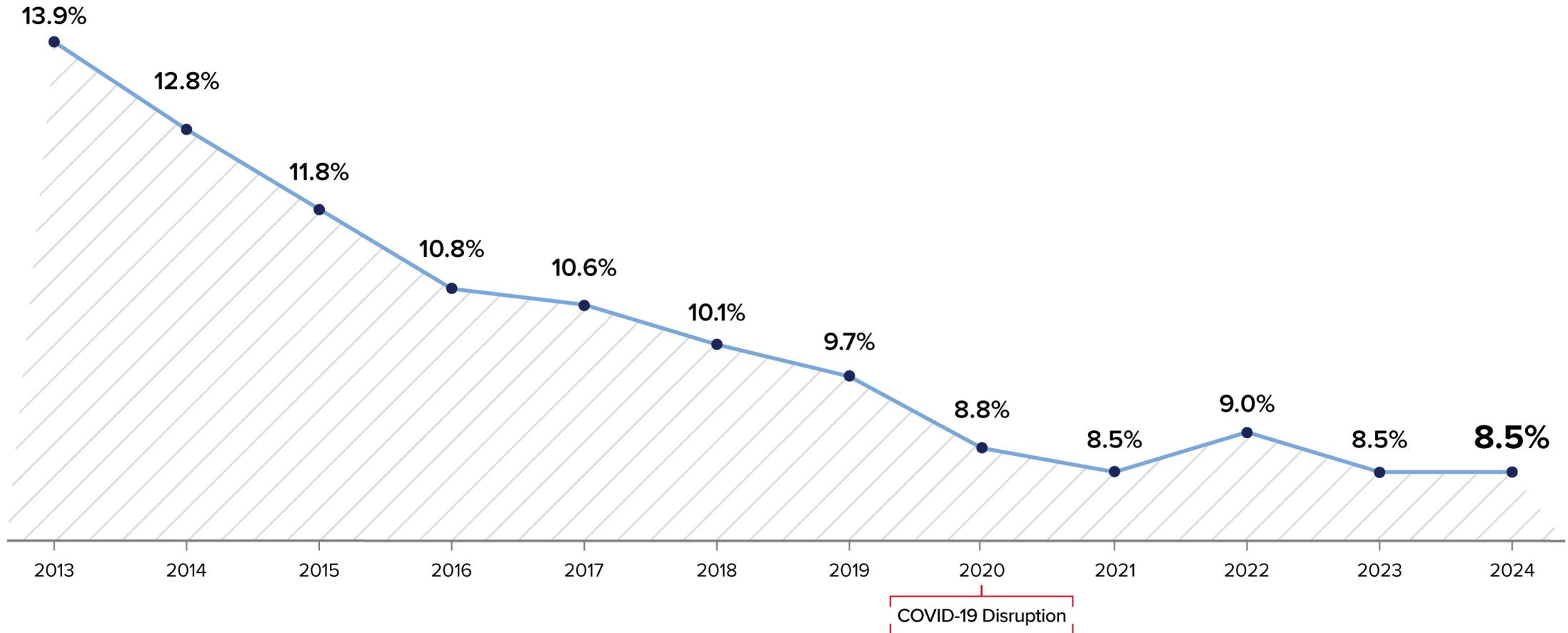
Outcome 1: Increase the percentage of students graduating from high school ready for college or career in each subgroup

GRADUATION RATE



Graduation rate for students with disabilities more than doubled from 22.5% in 2013 to 65.2% in 2024.

DROPOUT RATE



ACT

Percent Meeting ACT Benchmarks

| ACADEMIC AREA | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | Change from 2024 |
|--------------------------------|---------|---------|------------------|
| English Composition | 39.2% | 39.0% | -0.2% |
| Algebra | 16.3% | 17.8% | +1.5% |
| Social Science | 27.0% | 25.1% | -1.9% |
| Biology | 16.1% | 15.2% | -0.9% |
| Met All 4 ACT Benchmark Scores | 8.8% | 9.5% | +0.7% |

Scores

2025 11TH GRADE

17.5

AVERAGE SCORE

2025 GRADUATING CLASS

17.4

AVERAGE SCORE

18.5

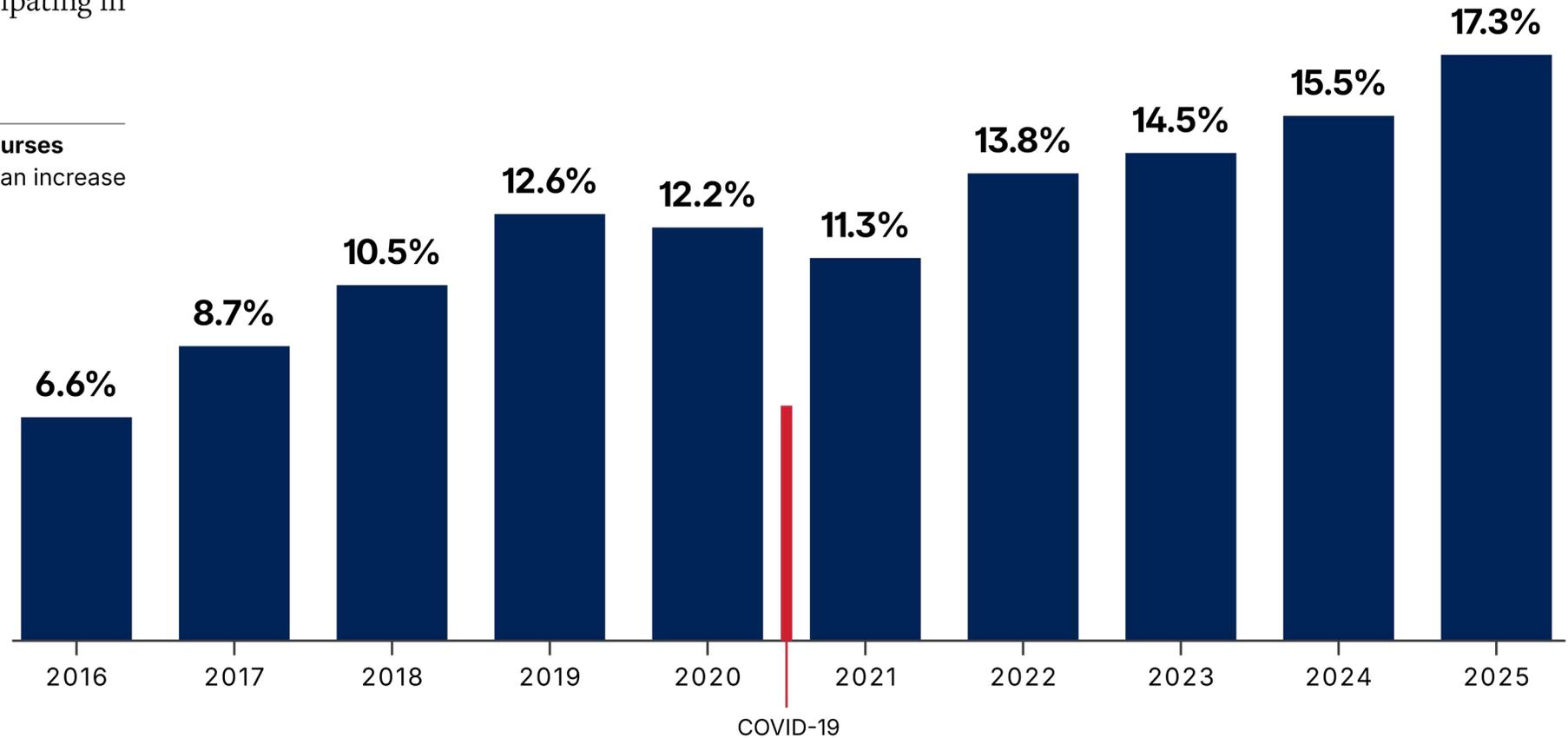
SUPER SCORE

Dual Credit Enrollment

Percentage of students participating in and passing dual credit

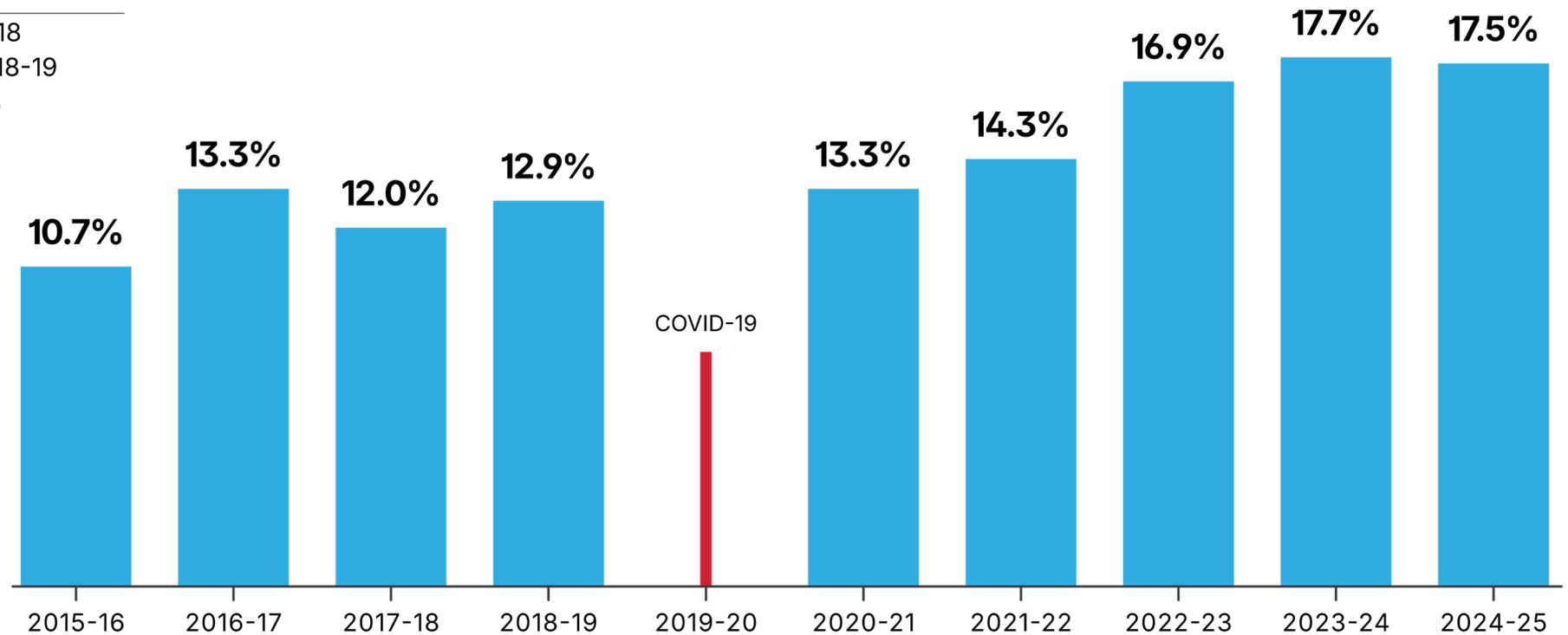
2016–2025

96.3% of students passed their courses and earned college credit in 2025, an increase from 95.3% in 2024



Percentage of Students Participating in AP, IB and AICE

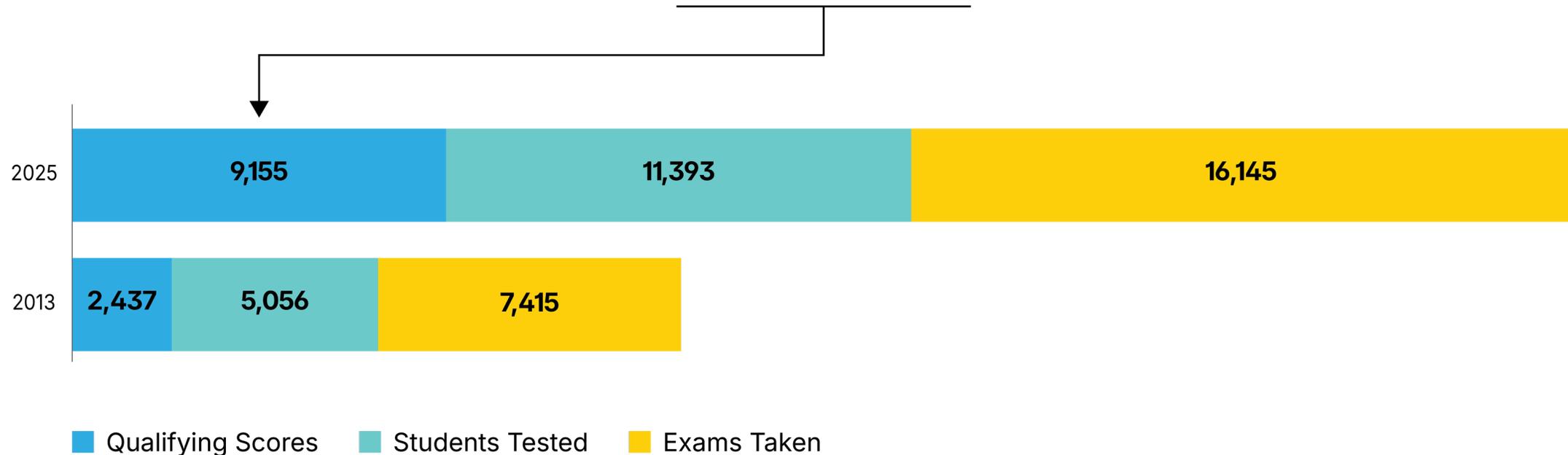
- IB data added starting in 2017-18
- AICE data added starting in 2018-19
- **2025 course pass rate: 93.6%**



Advanced Placement

PARTICIPATION & ACHIEVEMENT

Rate of exams with a qualifying score reached an **all-time high of 56.7%**

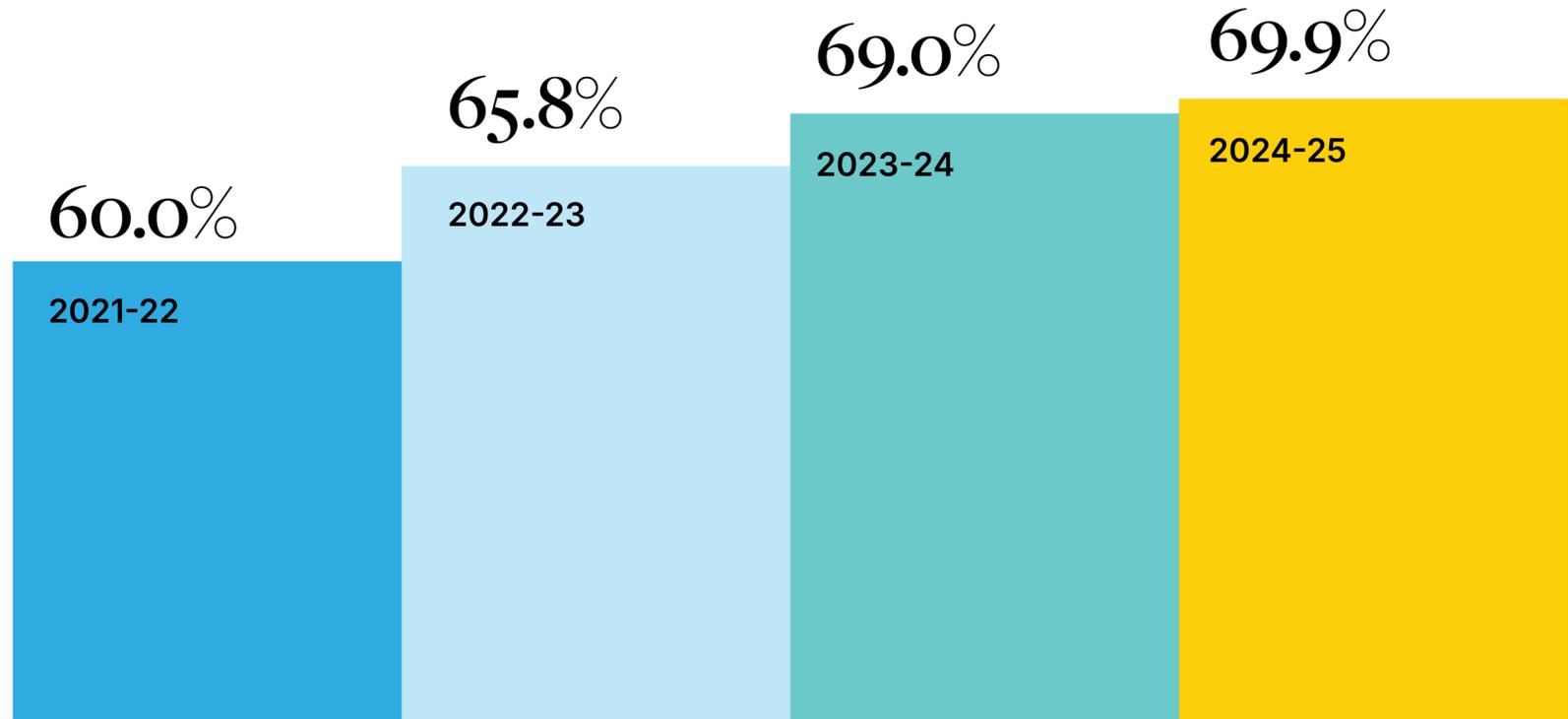


ACT WorkKeys

Percentage of students earning silver or above National Career Readiness Certificate based on ACT WorkKeys scores

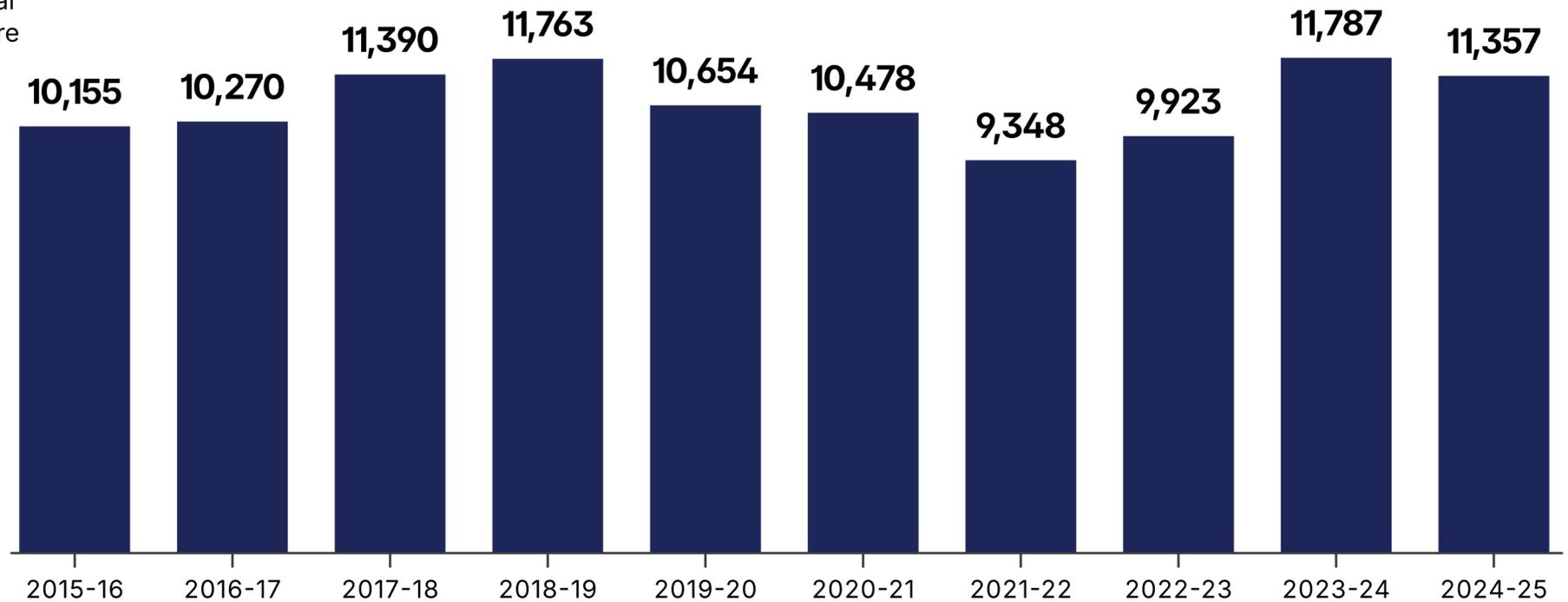
State funds provided for ACT WorkKeys testing started in 2021-22

25,917 students in 2024-25 earned a National Career Readiness Certificate



Career & Technical Education Concentrators

Students who take at least two courses in the same Career and Technical Education (CTE) field of study are concentrators.



GOAL 2: Focus Areas

EVERY Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career



Career Readiness

- Support schools in implementing the **Bridge-to-Career course**, providing second-semester seniors an alternative pathway to meet graduation requirements while preparing for workforce entry.
- **Integrate career awareness** within High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) to help students connect learning to real-world careers.
- Implement a comprehensive **K–12 Workforce Development Plan**.
- Design and launch a **statewide workforce and career pathways dashboard**.



Advanced Coursework

- Guide districts using the *Procedures Manual for Mississippi Dual Enrollment and Accelerated Programs* to ensure students earn high-value postsecondary credits aligned to their future pathways.
- Expand statewide access to Advanced Placement (AP) courses.
- Build stakeholder understanding of the benefits and impact of participation in accelerated programs such as postsecondary credit options and BigFuture.



Attendance

- Enhance early identification processes and attendance monitoring practices
- Ensure consistent implementation of attendance statutes statewide
- Support student engagement in school through mentoring, targeted interventions, and community partnerships

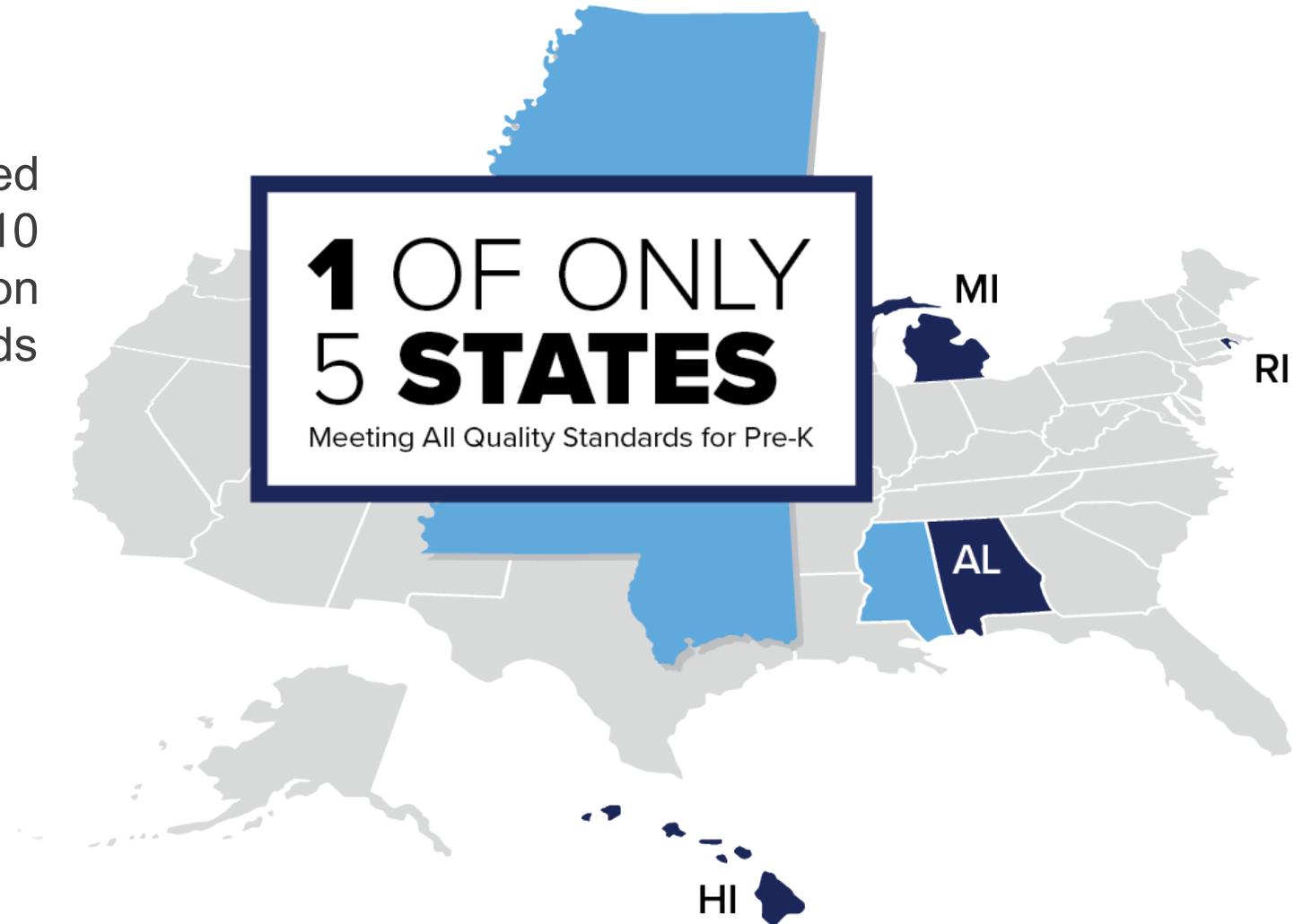


GOAL 3

EVERY Child Has Access to a High-Quality
Early Childhood Program



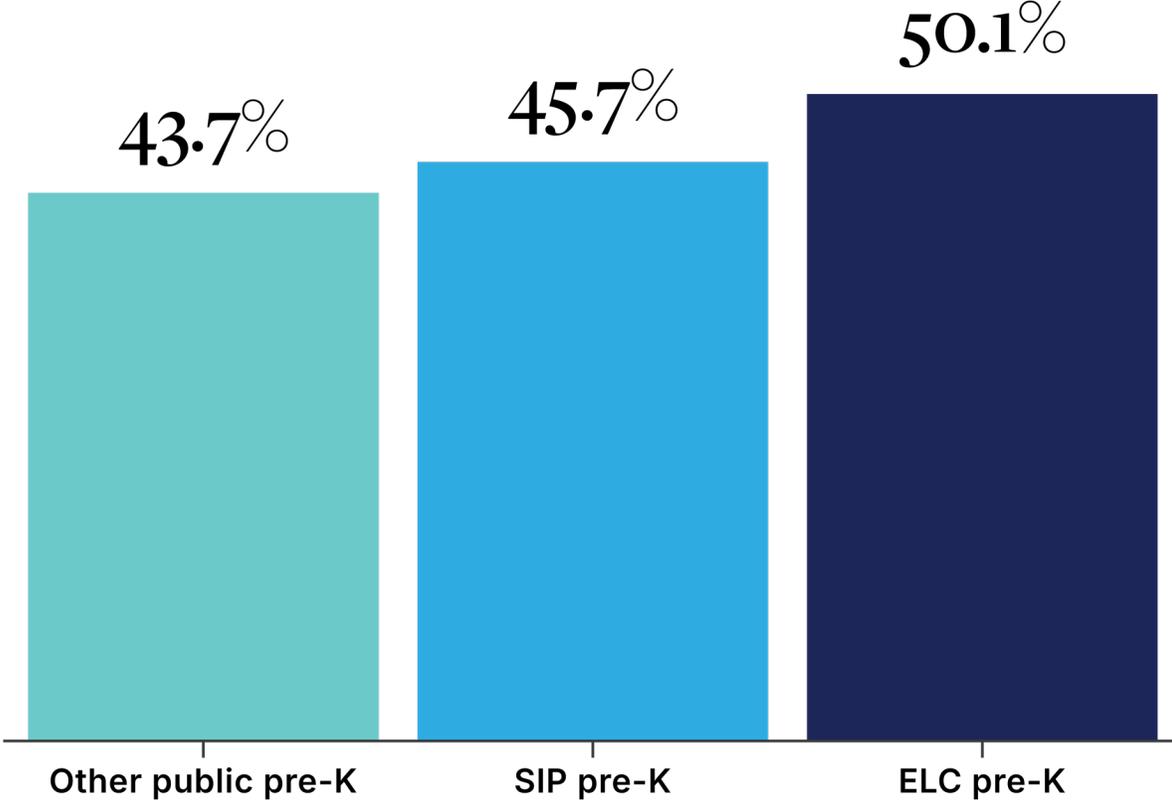
- **Early Learning Collaboratives** consistently earn Mississippi national recognition for being named one of only five states meeting all 10 National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) quality standards for pre-K.
- NIEER tracks state-funded preschool access, resources and quality.



ELC & SIP Performance

Early Learning Collaborative (ELC) and State-Invested Pre-K (SIP) students outperform students in other public pre-K programs

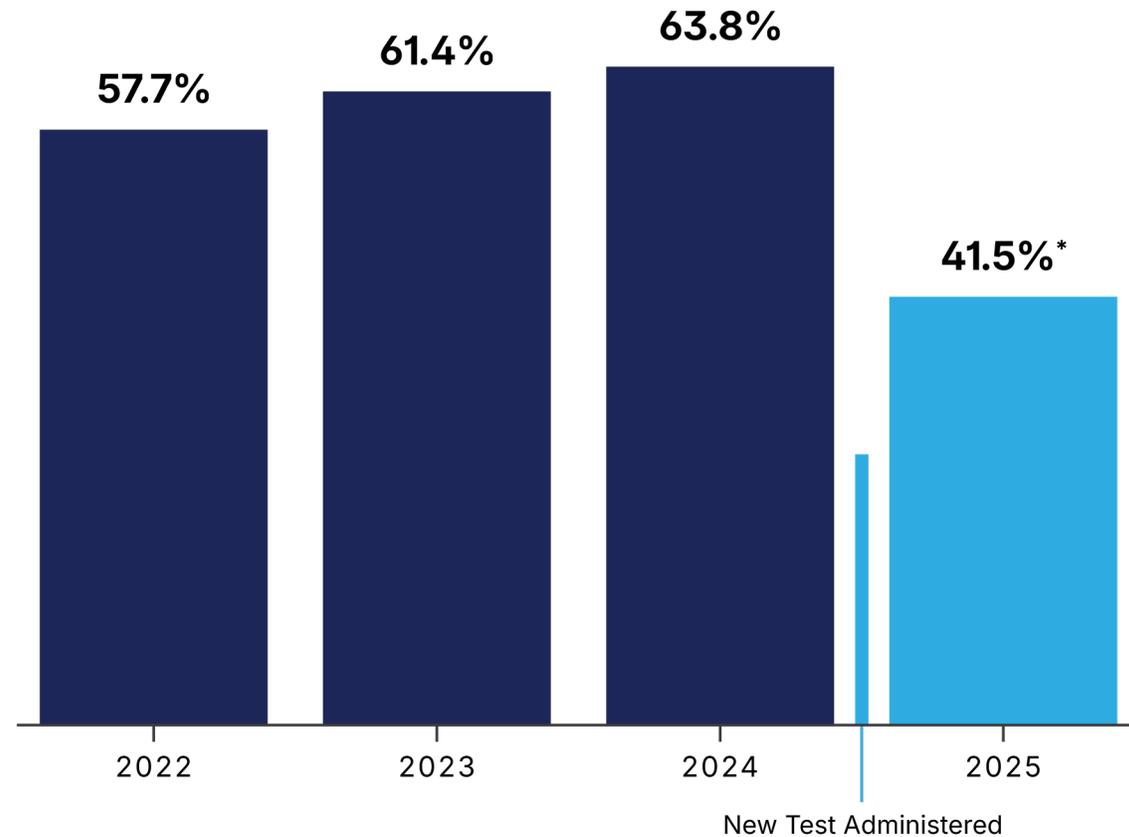
MDE implemented a new test in 2024-25; therefore, readiness results cannot be compared to data from previous years.



Kindergartners Reaching End-of-Year Target Score

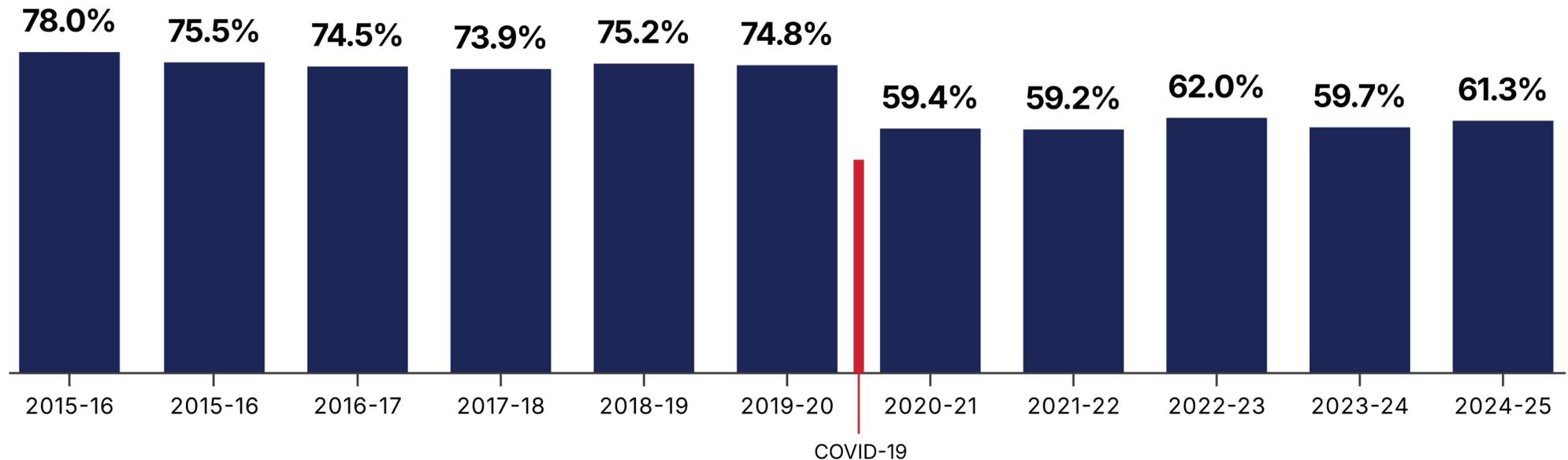
2022-2025

*Rate cannot be compared to previous years because new test was administered in 2025



Percentage of Children with Disabilities in General Education Early Childhood Programs

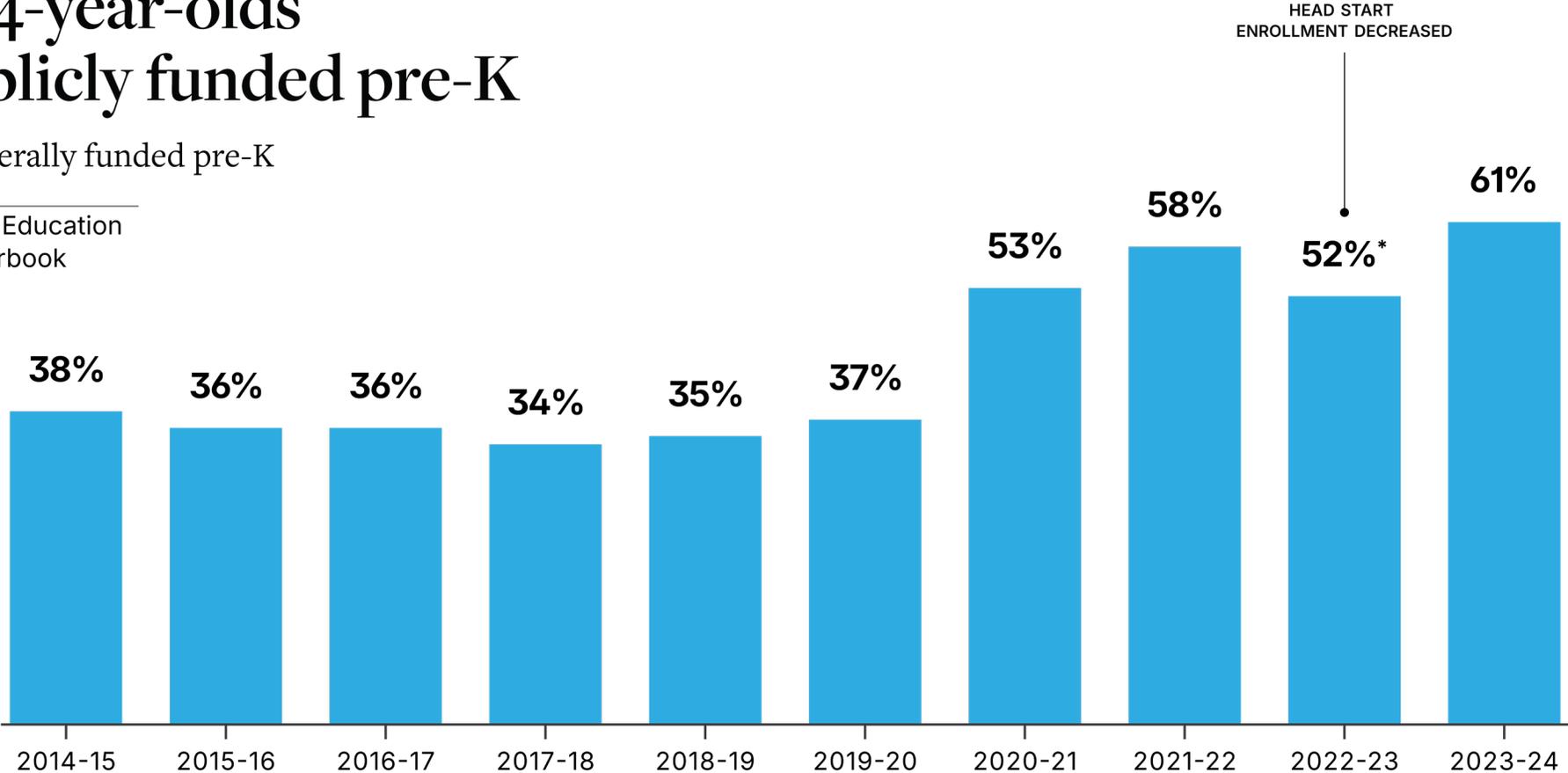
Fewer children were evaluated for special education services in 2020-21 and 2021-22 because of COVID-19 disruptions



Percentage of 4-year-olds enrolled in publicly funded pre-K

Includes local, state and federally funded pre-K

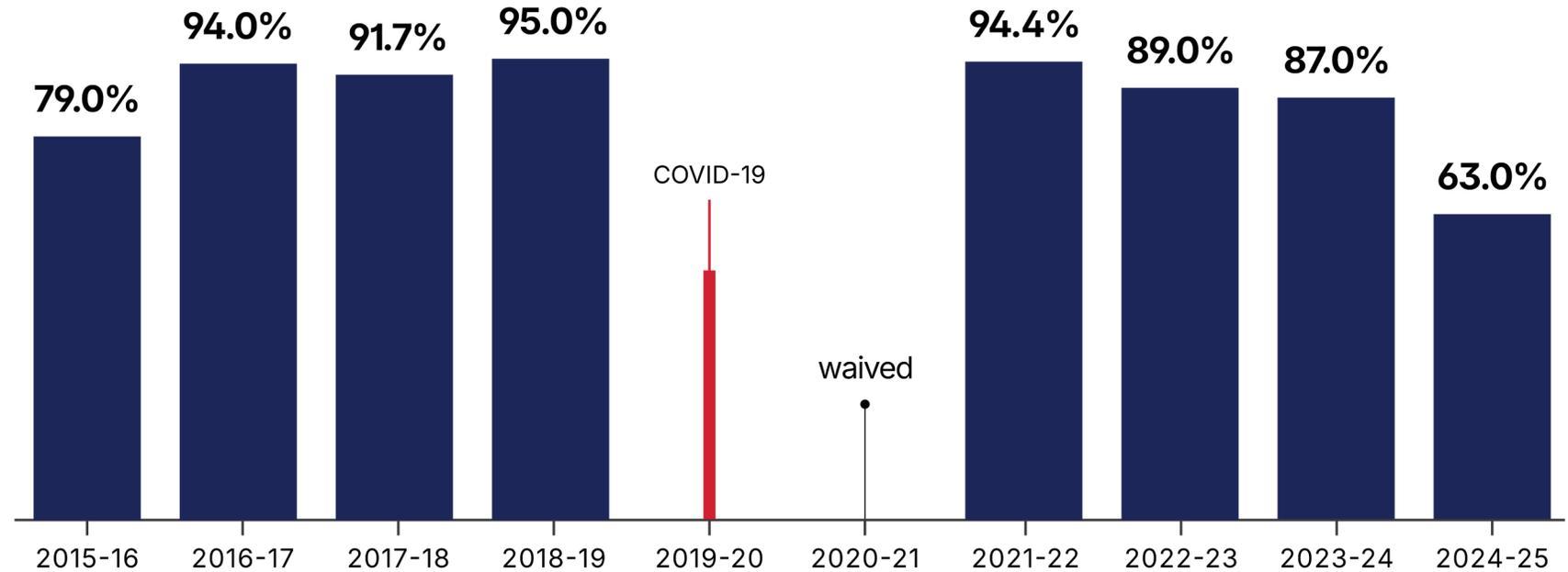
SOURCE: National Institute of Early Education
Research State of Preschool Yearbook
(data lags one year)



Outcome 5: Increase the percentage of Early Learning Collaborative sites meeting required rate of readiness

It takes time for new programs to achieve their readiness rate

Early Learning Collaboratives grew from
11 TO **40**
PROGRAMS IN 2015-16 PROGRAMS IN 2024-25



GOAL 3: Focus Areas

EVERY Child Has Access to a High-Quality
Early Childhood Program



- **Coach and train early learning providers** how to use Mississippi Beginnings curriculum with fidelity to help children become kindergarten ready and be successful on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment.
- Use Child Care Development Block Grant Funds to support MDE's blended pre-K grant program to **increase the number of students with disabilities in general education pre-K programs.**



GOAL 4

EVERY School Has Effective Teachers
and Leaders



Revised outcomes set in September 2025 to mirror current Legislative Budget Office Performance Measures

| OUTCOME | 2022-2023 | 2023-2024 | REVISED OUTCOME | 2025-2026 |
|--|---------------------------------------|-----------|--|-----------|
| 1 Increase the percentage of districts reporting Professional Growth System (PGS) ratings for teachers and leaders | 99% | 100% | Not applicable | 100% |
| 2 Increase the percentage of teacher candidates passing licensure exams on the first attempt* | COVID-19 licensure testing suspension | | Not applicable | 70.7% |
| 3 Increase the percentage of licensed, diverse teachers and leaders | 31.9% | 33.2% | Reduce the proportion of inexperienced and non-certified teachers in schools | 34.0% |
| 4 Reduce the percentage of inexperienced teachers in schools that are both High Poverty and High Minority | 34.9% | 34.2% | | |
| 5 Reduce the percentage of non-certified teachers in schools that are both High Poverty and High Minority | 3.1% | 3.2% | | |

*Lag year data

Licensure Call Center

- **27,000 calls** facilitated this year
- **2-minute** average call wait time

MECCA Licensure Portal

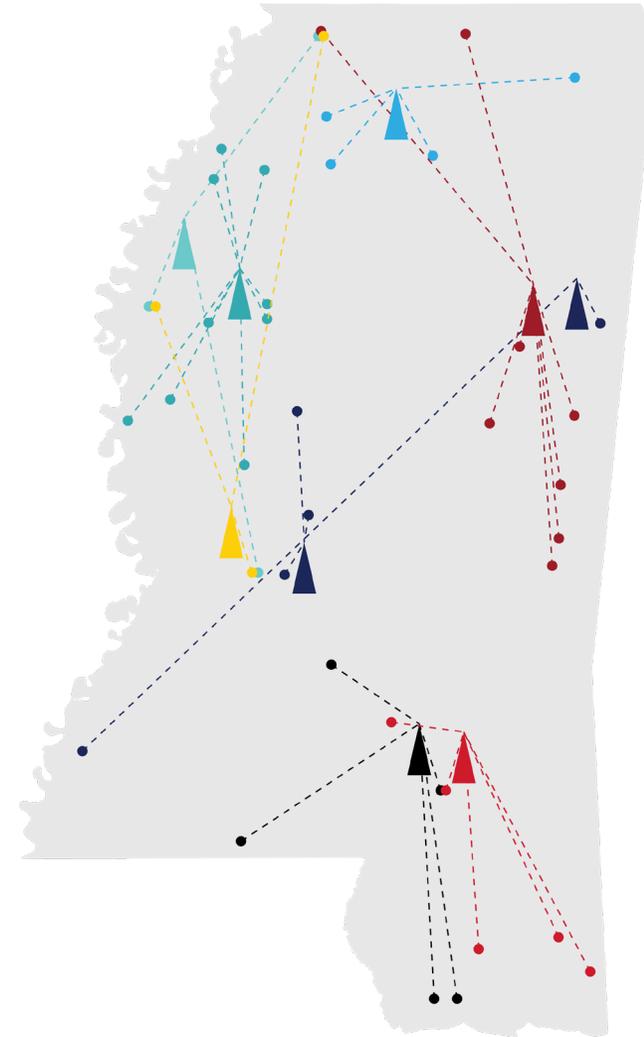
- Supported **85,300 registered users**
- Staff reviewed **85,998 licensure applications**
- Processed **15,000 licenses** through automation
- Staff maintained **2-day average processing time** for licensure applications

MECCA Professional Growth System (PGS) Portal

- Collected over **73,300 final observations**
- More than **10,500 observations completed in the system**, providing teachers real-time access to feedback and resources to support their growth

Mississippi Teacher Residency (MTR)

- **Legislature appropriated funds in July 2025 to continue the MTR** after federal relief funds ended.
- MDE awarded **\$2.9 million to nine Institutions of Higher Education** to support students pursuing either an initial license or supplemental endorsement in elementary or special education and **will seek level funding for the 2026-27 school year.**



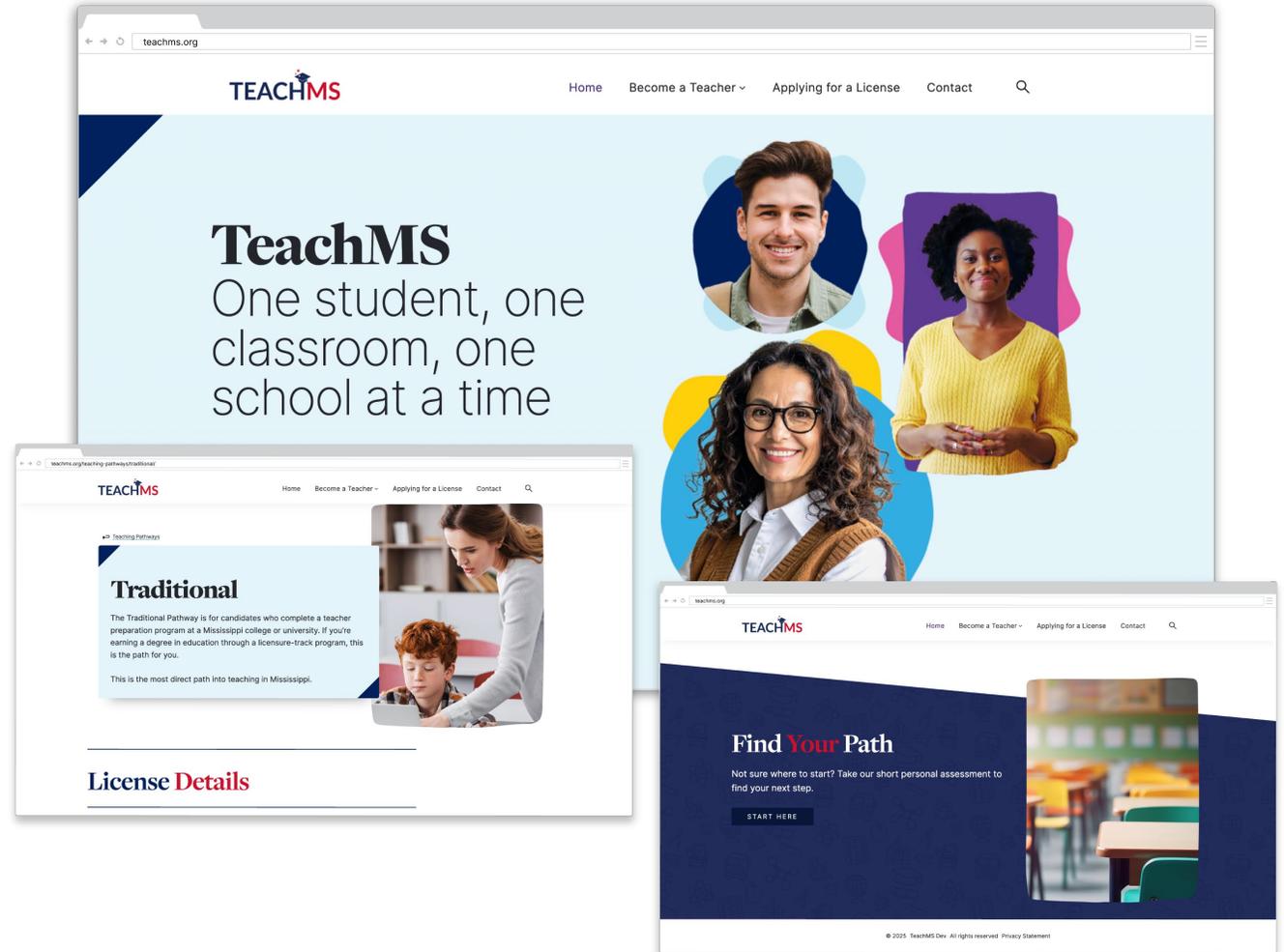


- Launched **Mississippi Superintendent Institute** (MSI) in partnership with the National Center for Education and the Economy (NCEE).
- Through funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and in partnership with Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs), administrators now have access to MDE-approved **Orientation to School Leadership** trainings with the hope for receiving state funding to continue them next year.

Redesigned the [TeachMS.org](https://teachms.org) website, which stands out as a nationally unprecedented tool for teacher recruitment and licensure.

| Performance | 2024 | 2025 |
|--------------------|-------|--------|
| Active users | 594 | 6,523 |
| Sessions | 688 | 8,664 |
| Search impressions | 9,340 | 28,200 |

Teaching Pathway Quiz had **5,220 views**, with **engagement rate of 96%**.



GOAL 4: Focus Areas

EVERY School Has Effective Teachers
and Leaders



Teaching and Leading

- Seek State Board of Education (SBE) approval* to **revise the Mississippi Administrator PGS standards** following collaboration with districts and universities
- Advance the **Leading Education Achievement in Districts and Schools (Mississippi LEADS) initiative** to ensure an effective leadership development continuum
- **Continue a comprehensive policy review** of current *Guidelines for Mississippi Educator Licensure K-12* with a focus on key shortage areas
- Support **funding for the Mississippi Teacher Residency (MTR)** to ensure high-quality clinical preparation and content knowledge in elementary and special education
- **Advertise [TeachMS.org](https://www.teachms.org)** to make teacher recruitment and licensure more accessible



*Item on 1/15/26 State Board agenda

School and District Transformation

- Implement a formal alignment structure between the Office of School and District Transformation and the Office of Academic Education to **ensure coordinated academic, leadership, and operational supports for districts.**
- **Refine the leadership coaching model** to align directly with district improvement priorities and academic outcomes.



Remote Synchronous Teaching and Learning (Mississippi REACH)

- Provide real-time, teacher-led virtual instruction aligned to Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards.
- Deliver structured virtual learning supported by pacing guides, progress monitoring, and targeted academic interventions.
- Require daily live instructional engagement with attendance tracking and clear participation expectations.
- Expand equitable access to high-quality instruction for students in rural and underserved communities across Mississippi.



GOAL 5

EVERY Community Effectively Uses a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes



| New outcomes set in Nov. 2021 | | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 |
|-------------------------------|---|---------|---------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Outcome 1: | Modernize the Mississippi Student Information System (MSIS) - Percentage Development since March 2022 | 30% | 45% | 75% | 95% | 98% |
| Outcome 2: | Increase capacity of MDE to manage, secure and use data [Number of MDE staff attendees at OTSS training sessions] | 2,000 | 2,000 | 9,081 attendees at 123 trainings | 7,870 attendees at 57 trainings | 10,422 attendees at 73 trainings |
| Outcome 3: | Increase capacity of districts to provide a rigorous, engaging and secure digital learning experience [Cumulative number of completed Amplified IT District Audits] | 47 | * | 73 audits* | 53 audits | Program Ended in 2023-24 |
| Outcome 3: | Increase capacity of districts to provide a rigorous, engaging and secure digital learning experience [Cumulative number of Google Admin Certifications earned by district personnel through Amplified IT] | 92 | 92 | 133 | 94 | Program Ended in 2023-24 |

* Revised to reflect districts that completed both parts of Amplified IT's two-part audit.

GOAL 5: Focus Areas

EVERY Community Effectively Uses a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes



- **Mississippi Student Information System (MSIS) Modernization:** Increase available data, data access, and dashboards and implement upgrades based on user feedback.
- **Cybersecurity:** Continue to strengthen data security and privacy through policy, risk assessment and remediation, collaboration with state agency partners, and staff training.
- **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** Establish AI instructional support plan and explore AI integration with MDE systems to increase productivity and automation.



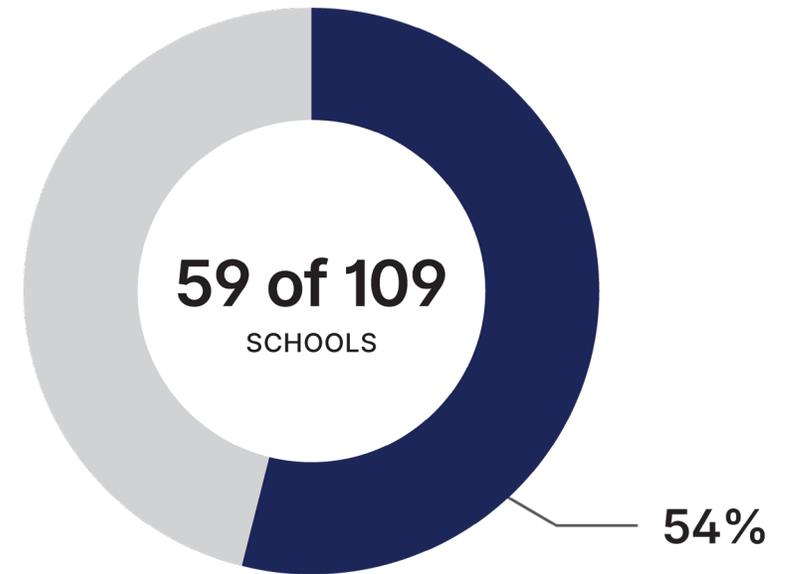
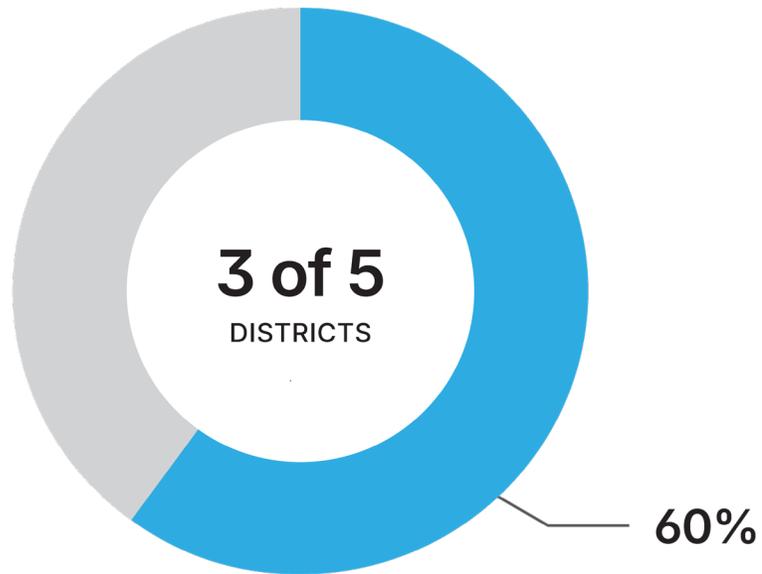
GOAL 6

EVERY School and District is
Rated “C” or Higher



District & School Improvements

Percentage of districts and schools rated D or F in 2024 that improved their grade or accountability score in 2025



Accountability Data for the Districts of Transformation

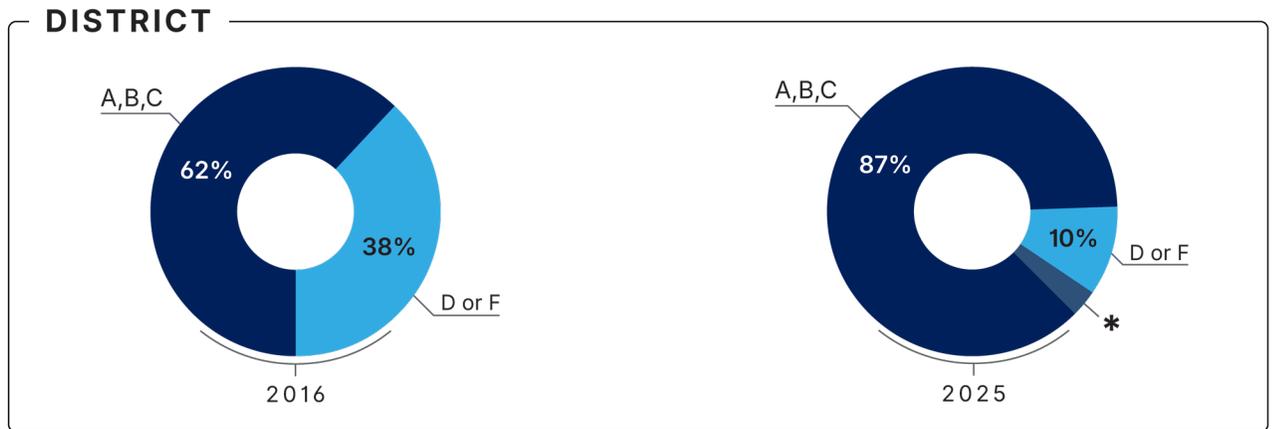
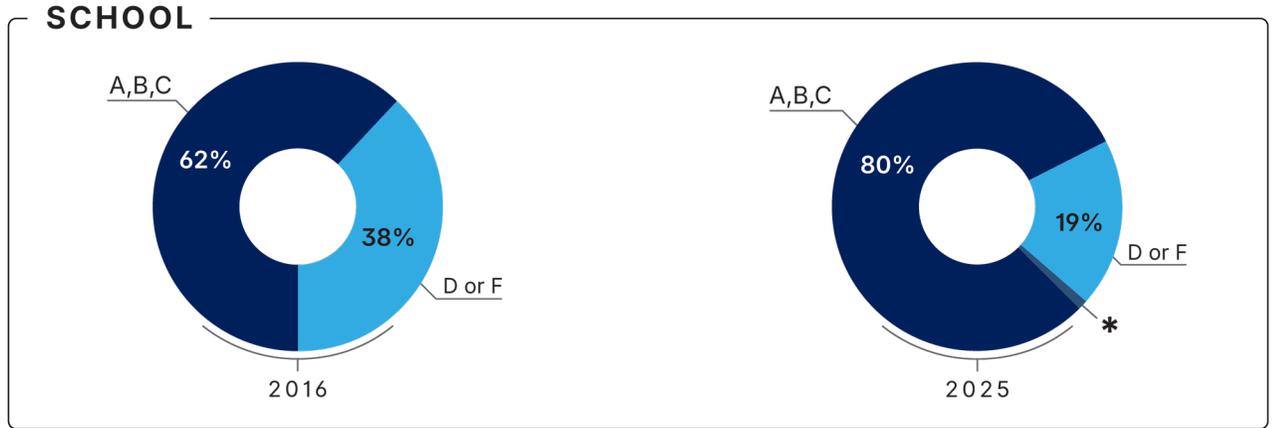
| DISTRICT | GRADE AT TAKEOVER | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 |
|----------------------------|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Holmes County Consolidated | F (2021) | C | C | B | C |
| Humphreys County | F (2019) | F | D | C | D |
| Yazoo City | F (2019) | F | F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

School & District Grade Improvements

2016 vs. 2025

STATE BOARD GOAL

Every School and District is Rated “C” or Higher



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

GOAL 6: Focus Areas

EVERY School and District is
Rated “C” or Higher



- **Strengthen interim superintendent leadership accountability** through a revised superintendent evaluation framework focused on performance, capacity-building, and improved outcomes in Districts of Transformation.
- **Create a strategic plan for each of the Districts of Transformation** focusing on three priority areas each year for sustainability.
- Implement a standardized **Two-Year District Improvement Plan for low-performing districts** focused on leadership capacity, instructional systems, and sustainability.





Accountability Updates



MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

- **U.S. History: State assessment no longer required** for graduation (accountability points moved to Readiness Index)
- **Readiness Index: Combines and expands** Acceleration and College and Career Readiness components to award accountability points for advanced courses, industry certifications, ACT/ACT WorkKeys/**SAT/ASVAB performance, diploma endorsements, and on-time and five-year graduates (new measures)**
- **English Learner Progress: New measure** will establish measures of performance based on the outcome of a multi-year, multi-state study of English learner progress



High Schools & Districts

1,000 possible points

| READING (English Language Arts) | MATH | SCIENCE | ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS | GRADUATION IN 4 YEARS | READINESS INDEX |
|---|---|--------------------------|------------------------------------|---|---|
| 95 pts. Proficiency | 95 pts. Proficiency | 47.5 pts. Proficiency | 50 pts. Progress to Proficiency | 190 pts. 4-year cohort graduation rate | 47.5 pts. Acceleration (advanced courses) |
| 95 pts. Growth All Students | 95 pts. Growth All Students | | | | 47.5 pts. Assessment (ACT/SAT/WorkKeys/ASVAB) |
| 95 pts. Growth Lowest 25% of Students | 95 pts. Growth Lowest 25% of Students | | | | 47.5 pts. Achievement (diploma endorsements, on-time & 5-yr graduates) |

- State law* requires standards to be increased when 75% of students are proficient and/or **when 65% of schools or districts earn a “B” or higher grade**
- Schools and districts met this target in 2023
- Standards were reset to determine qualifications for A-F grades **starting in 2025-26**
- Schools and districts will receive **grades based on the higher standards in fall 2026**
- **Grades for 2025-26 will set a new baseline for measuring school and district performance**
- **2025-26 grades cannot be compared to grades for previous years**

**Miss. Code Ann. Section 37-17-6(5)(c)*

Grading Scale (minimum points required to earn grade)

| Grade | Elementary and Middle Schools | High Schools | Districts |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| A | 457 | 769 | 694 |
| B | 402 | 689 | 642 |
| C | 352 | 627 | 572 |
| D | 277 | 567 | 519 |
| F | 0 | 0 | 0 |

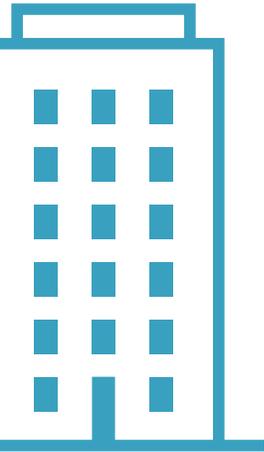


Partnerships

To Advance Strategic Plan



- Applied Engineering Management (AEM)
- Attendance Works
- CEEDER at the University of Florida
- Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)
- Education Commission of the States
- Foundation for Excellence in Education (ExcellinEd)
- National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE)
- Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast Governing Board (REL-Southeast)
- Gulf Comprehensive Center (Gulf CC)
- Southern Regional Education Board (SREB)
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation



- Accelerate MS
- Education Achievement Council (EAC)
- Head Start Association
- MS Association of Educators (MAE)
- MS Association of School Administrators (MASA)
- MS Association of School Superintendents (MASS)
- MS Community College Board
- MS Economic Council (MEC)
- MS Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL)
- MS Professional Educators (MPE)
- MS Public Broadcasting (MPB)
- MS State University Research and Curriculum Unit (RCU)
- Regional Service Education Agencies (RESA)
- State Early Childhood Advisory Council (SECAC)
- State Longitudinal Data System Governing Board (SLDS)
- State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB)
- The Phil Hardin Foundation

Mississippi State Board of Education

Strategic Plan Annual Status Report 2024-25

View additional data and outcomes in 2024-25 Superintendent's Annual Report:
mdek12.org/publicreporting/reports



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