ABOUT THE REPORT

State of D.C. Schools aggregates data points from a wide variety of sources, to give parents, caregivers, policymakers, and stakeholders access to a broad array of information in a single, easy-to-understand report.

WHAT MAKES D.C. SCHOOLS UNIQUE?

These key attributes make D.C.’s traditional public and public charter schools unique:

MAYORAL CONTROL, which was established over public schools in 2007

HIGH PER-PUPIL FUNDING, foundation level set at $10,980 in 2020

A HIGH DEGREE OF SCHOOL CHOICE, with 71% of pre-kindergarten through grade 12 students attending a school other than their in-boundary school.

29% attend their in-boundary neighborhood public school

45% enroll in public charter schools

26% attend a DCPS school other than their neighborhood school

AT-RISK STUDENTS, ENGLISH LEARNERS, AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The share of at-risk students at DCPS and public charter schools is down, while the share of English learners and students with disabilities has increased since 2014-15.

English learners have better than average attendance patterns.

Among at-risk students, chronic absenteeism persists: 44% of at-risk students missed at least 10% of school in the last year.

From 2014-15 to 2018-19, graduation rates for students with disabilities increased by 7%.

D.C. SCHOOLS HAVE MADE PROGRESS

There are several reasons to be optimistic about D.C.’s public schools’ ability to meet student needs:

PARENTS INCREASINGLY CHOOSE D.C.’S PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Between school year 2014-15 and 2018-19, enrollment in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 increased by 2% per year, faster than the school-age population.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE IS ON THE RISE

Performance on the PARCC assessment has been on the rise since 2014-15: by 12 percentage points in English Language Arts and 9 percentage points in Math.

D.C. HAS OUTPACED OTHER CITIES IN IMPROVING PERFORMANCE

From 2003-2019, D.C.’s rank on the national assessment has moved from last or almost last to middle-of-the-pack or better among participating cities.

### Wards 7 & 8: Students & Schools

Ward 8 offers the **greatest number of schools**, and has the **highest number of students** living in the Ward.

Neighborhoods in Wards 7 and 8 have the **highest numbers of at-risk students**. Over the past five years, the number of at-risk students in both of these wards has increased, while the number of at-risk students elsewhere in the city has largely decreased.

In the common lottery, students living in Wards 7 and 8 have higher match rates than the average student: 73 percent and 77 percent, respectively.

The schools with the highest overall rating of 4 or 5 on the D.C. School Report Card are not equally distributed across the city. **Wards 7 and 8 have lower shares of these high-performing schools** than other wards.

High school students living in Wards 7 and 8 generally have the longest **commutes**: they live a median of 3.3 miles away from their school.

### While D.C.’s Schools Have Made Significant Progress, Important Gaps Remain

- **Racial and ethnic diversity remains low across the city.** In nearly half of DCPS and public charter schools, at least 90% of the student body is Black. While white students make up 12% of enrollment, 13 schools have a majority-white student body.

- **Graduation rates** have fallen back toward 2014-15 levels, after a peak in 2016-17.

- In 2017-18, **56% of all high school graduates continued to postsecondary education** within six months of graduation.

- **Many students miss many days of school:** 29% of students missed 10 percent or more of the school year.

- **Suspensions remain higher** among at-risk students, students with disabilities, and Black students. At-risk and Black students are also nine times likelier than their white peers to be suspended.

- **Achievement gaps persist** of at least 48 percentage points between the highest-scoring group (white students) and other groups on the PARCC state assessment.