

2022-23

State of D.C. Schools



D.C. POLICY CENTER

Education Policy Initiative

Challenges to pandemic recovery in a new normal

State of D.C. Schools is an annual systemwide overview of public education in the District of Columbia. In many ways, school year 2022-23 marked the first normal year of in-person school since the pandemic. This report examines the recovery efforts in public schools in the District, paying close attention to learning outcomes and attendance.

The full report is available online at <https://www.dcpolicycenter.org/publications/state-of-dc-schools-2022-23/>.

Enrollment grew for the first time since the pandemic began.

Total enrollment increased by 2% in PK-Grade 12

+ 4%	Pre-Kindergarten (PK) students
+/- 0%	Elementary school students
+ 1%	Middle school students
+ 5%	High school students
= 88,528	Total students in PK-12

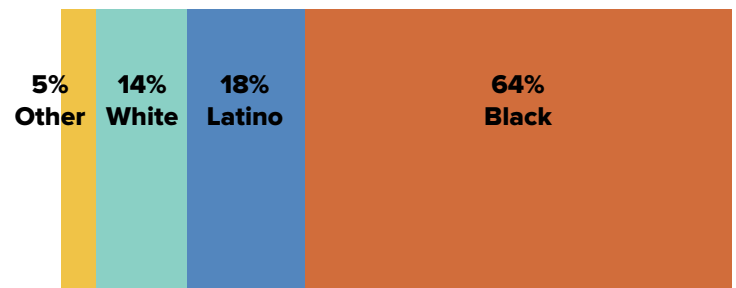
PK and elementary enrollment is still lower than pre-pandemic, with implications for smaller future cohorts.

Teacher retention returned to pre-pandemic levels.

- ➔ After peaking at **81%** during the pandemic, teacher retention in the same role at the same school was back to pre-pandemic levels at **70%**.
- ➔ **3%** of teaching positions were vacant in fall 2022, down from **6%** in the previous year and back to pre-pandemic levels.
- ➔ The number of teachers in D.C.'s public schools for PK-Grade 12 rose to **8,732**, marking a **7%** increase over the **8,151** teachers in school year 2021-22.

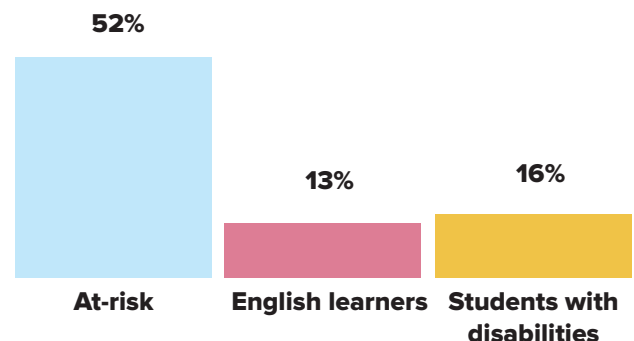
Student demographics

RACE & ETHNICITY



SPECIAL POPULATIONS

In school year 2022-23, the number of students designated at-risk for academic failure increased by **3 percentage points** over school year 2021-22.

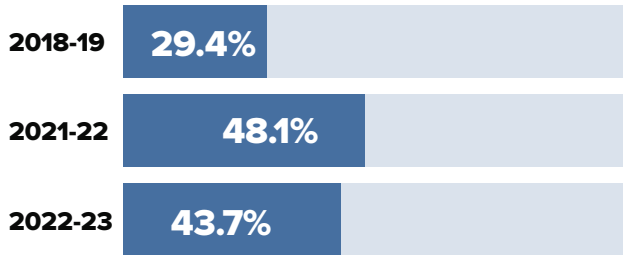


Students are designated at-risk if they experience homelessness, are in the foster care system, qualify for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or are at least one year older than the expected age for their high school grade.

PANDEMIC RECOVERY

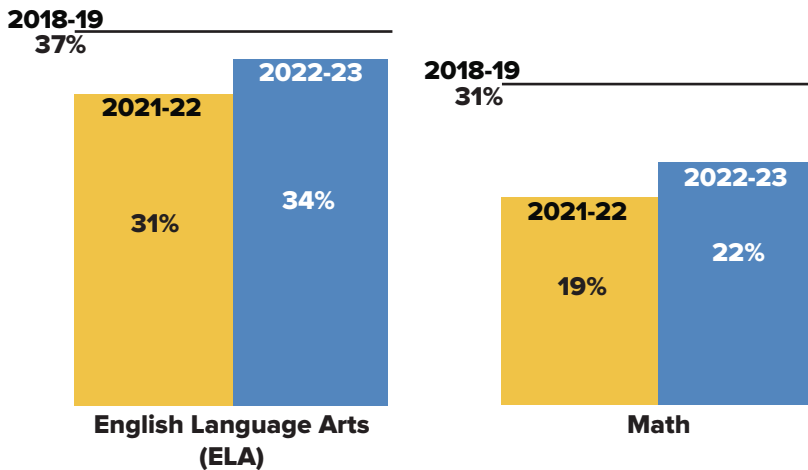
44% of students were chronically absent.

While the share of students missing 10% or more of the school year decreased from school year 2021-22 by about **4 percentage points**, chronic absenteeism is still **14 percentage points** higher than pre-pandemic numbers.



ELA and math outcomes were higher than school year 2021-22.

The number of students meeting or exceeding expectations increased **3 percentage points** for both English Language Arts (ELA) and math between the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years. While promising, these outcomes still fall short of pre-pandemic levels.



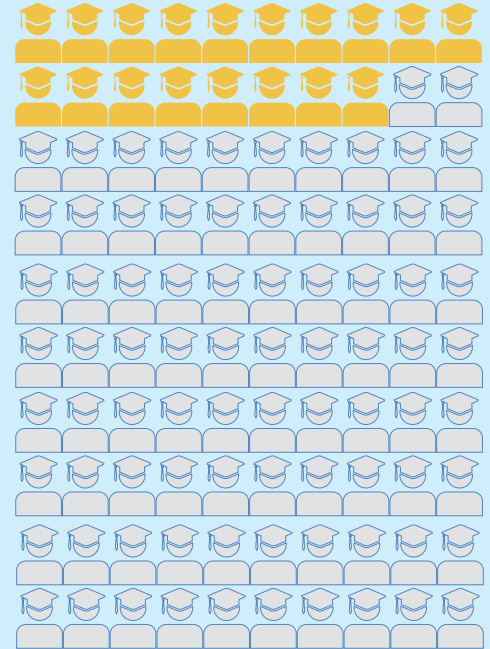
6% of students received at least one out-of-school suspension.

- ➔ Despite new restrictions limiting the reasons for and durations of out-of-school suspensions, the suspension rate returned to pre-pandemic levels.
- ➔ The rate of in-school suspensions increased slightly to **1.7%** of students.

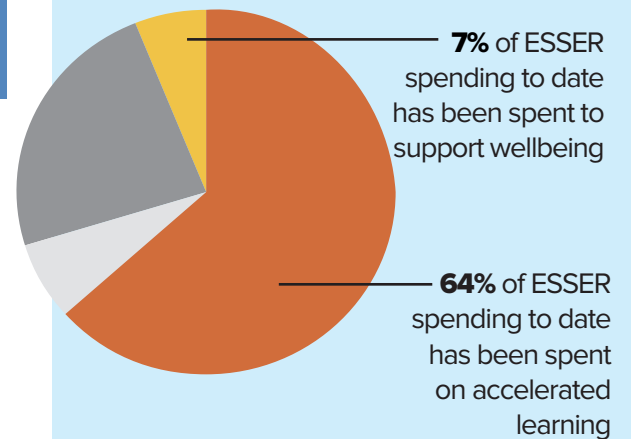
Despite high absenteeism, graduation rates climbed.

In school year 2022-23, the high school graduation rate was **76%**, an **8 percentage point** increase over pre-pandemic levels. ✓

Of every **100** ninth graders in D.C.'s 2011-12 cohort, **18** completed a postsecondary degree within **6** years of high school graduation. ✓



Schools are heavily invested in improving academic outcomes.



As \$175 million in remaining ESSER funds expire in September 2024, schools may face a fiscal cliff, forcing them to make difficult financial decisions.