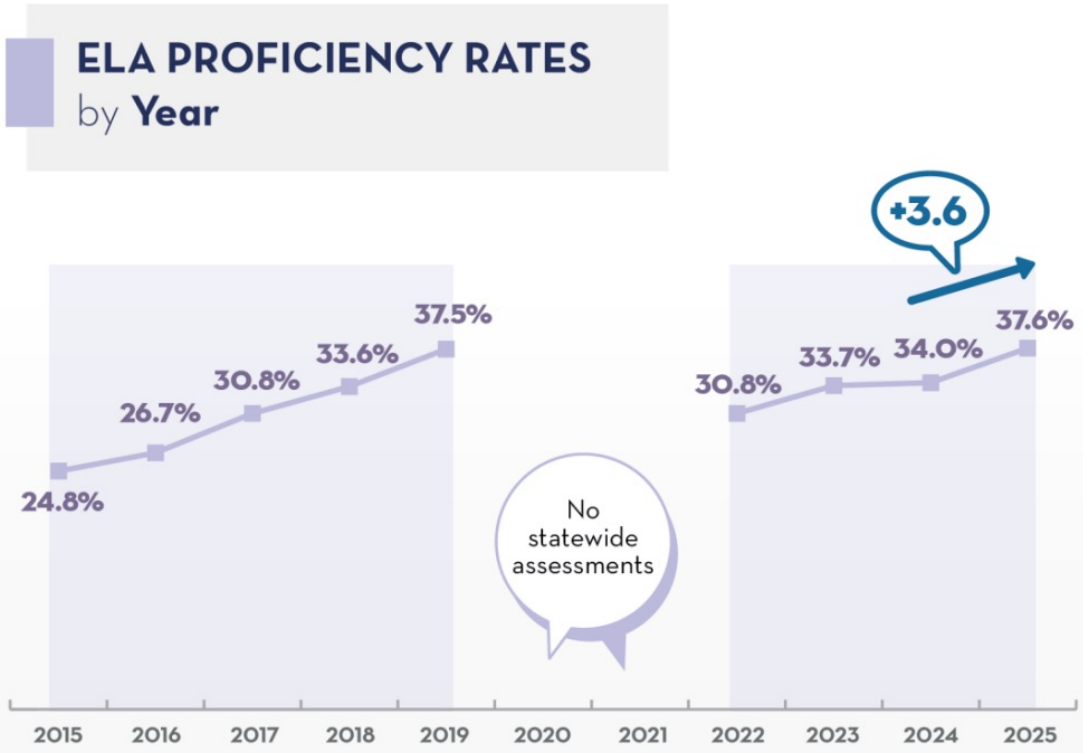
DC:
A NATIONAL MODEL FOR URBAN EDUCATION

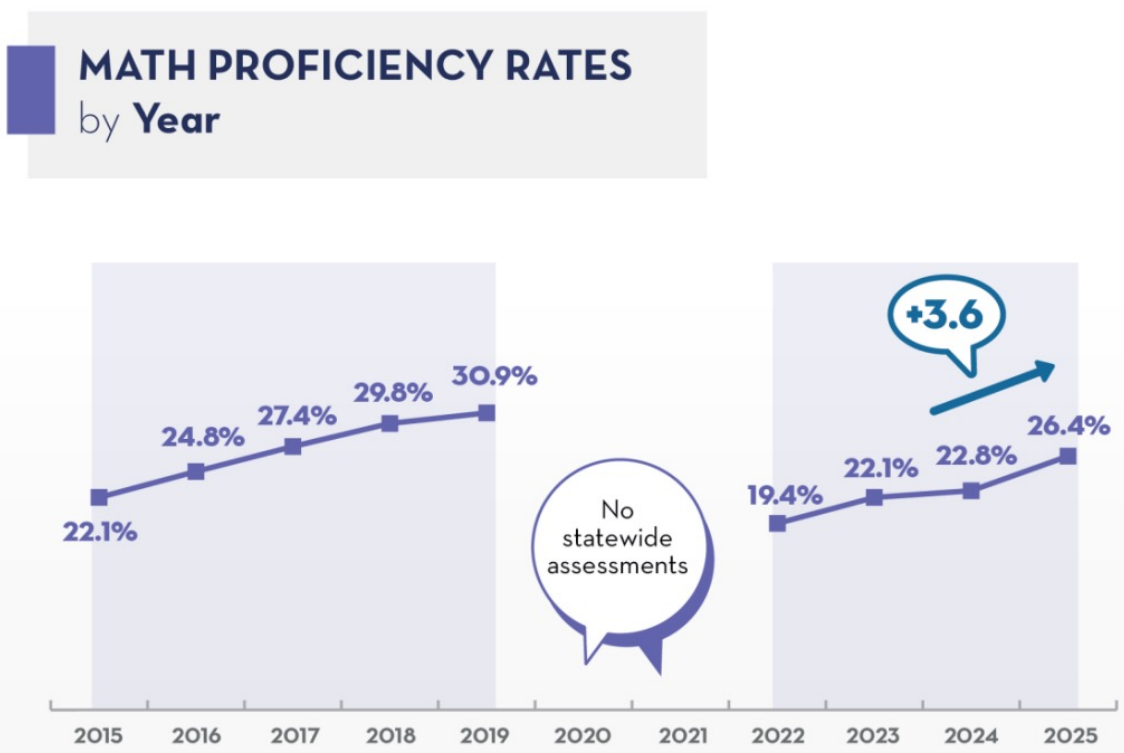
DME
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR FOR EDUCATION

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

LAST MONTH, WE ANNOUNCED ANOTHER STRONG YEAR OF LEARNING

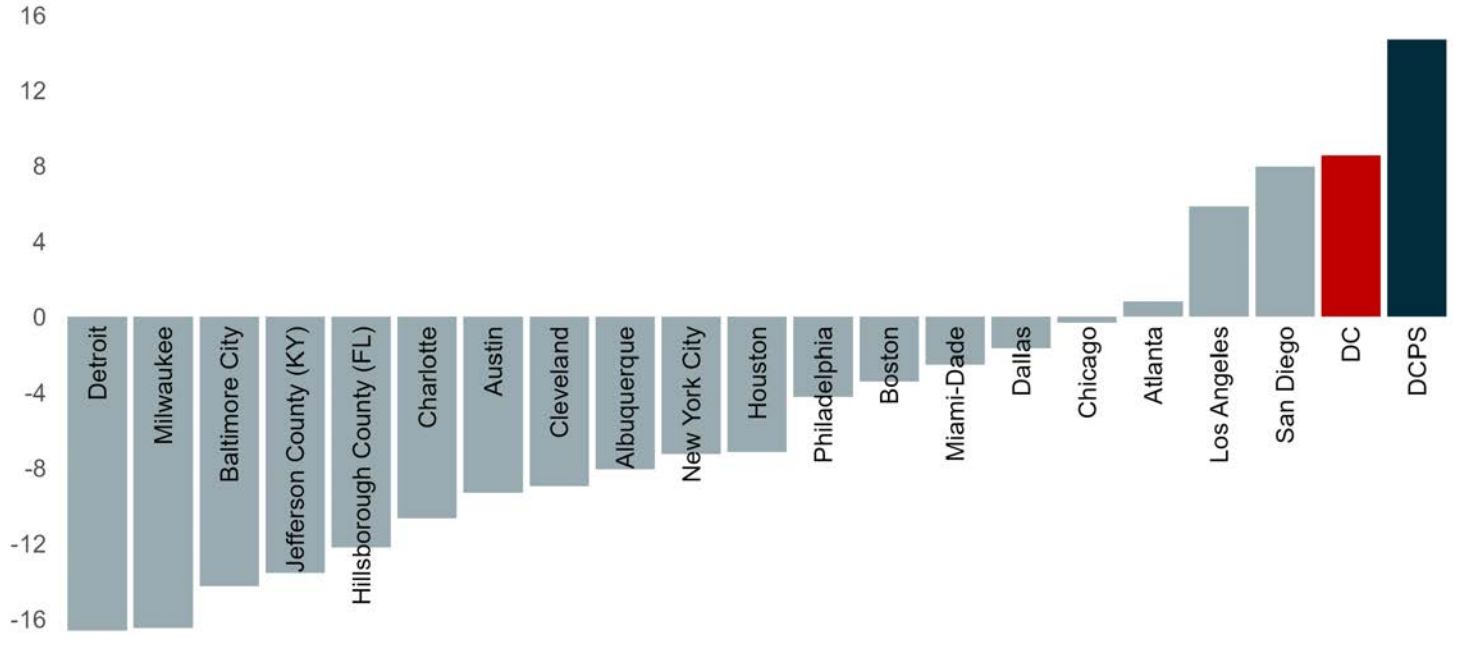
Statewide Assessment Results





AS THE FASTEST IMPROVING URBAN SCHOOL SYSTEM, DC HAS BECOME A MODEL FOR URBAN EDUCATION

DCPS and DC Outpaced Similar School Districts in 4th Grade Reading Growth Between 2011 and 2024



U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2011 and 2024 Reading Assessments.

THE NATION'S REPORT CARD

NAEP RESULTS

2011 vs. 2024

While the national average fell, DC improved or stayed steady across all grades and tested subject areas.

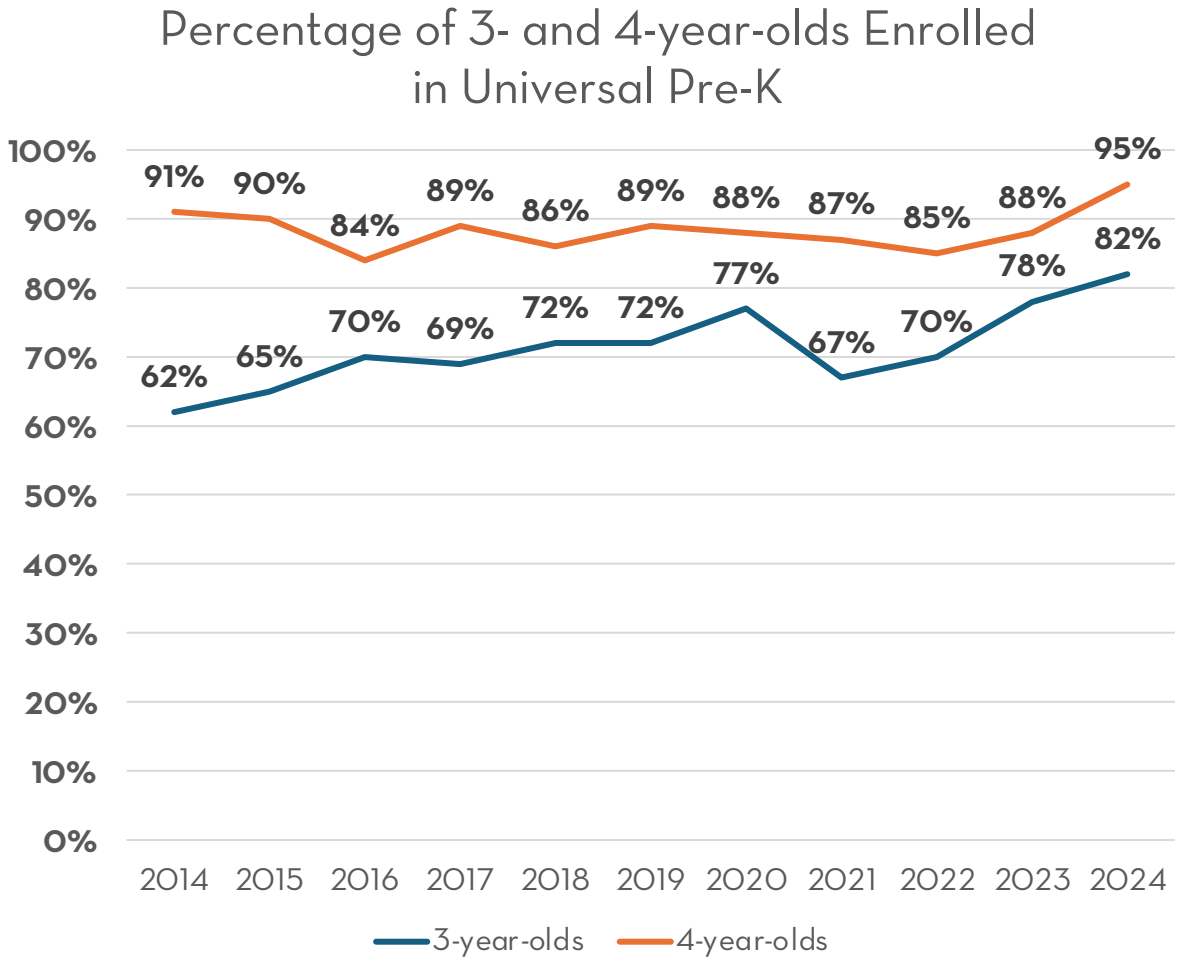
MATH

	District of Columbia	National average
4th grade	↑ 9 POINTS	↓ -3 POINTS
8th grade	no change	↓ -10 POINTS

READING

	District of Columbia	National average
4th grade	↑ 9 POINTS	↓ -6 POINTS
8th grade	↑ 9 POINTS	↓ -7 POINTS

OUR PROGRESS STARTS WITH OUR YOUNGEST LEARNERS: DC LEADS THE NATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND UNIVERSAL PRE-K

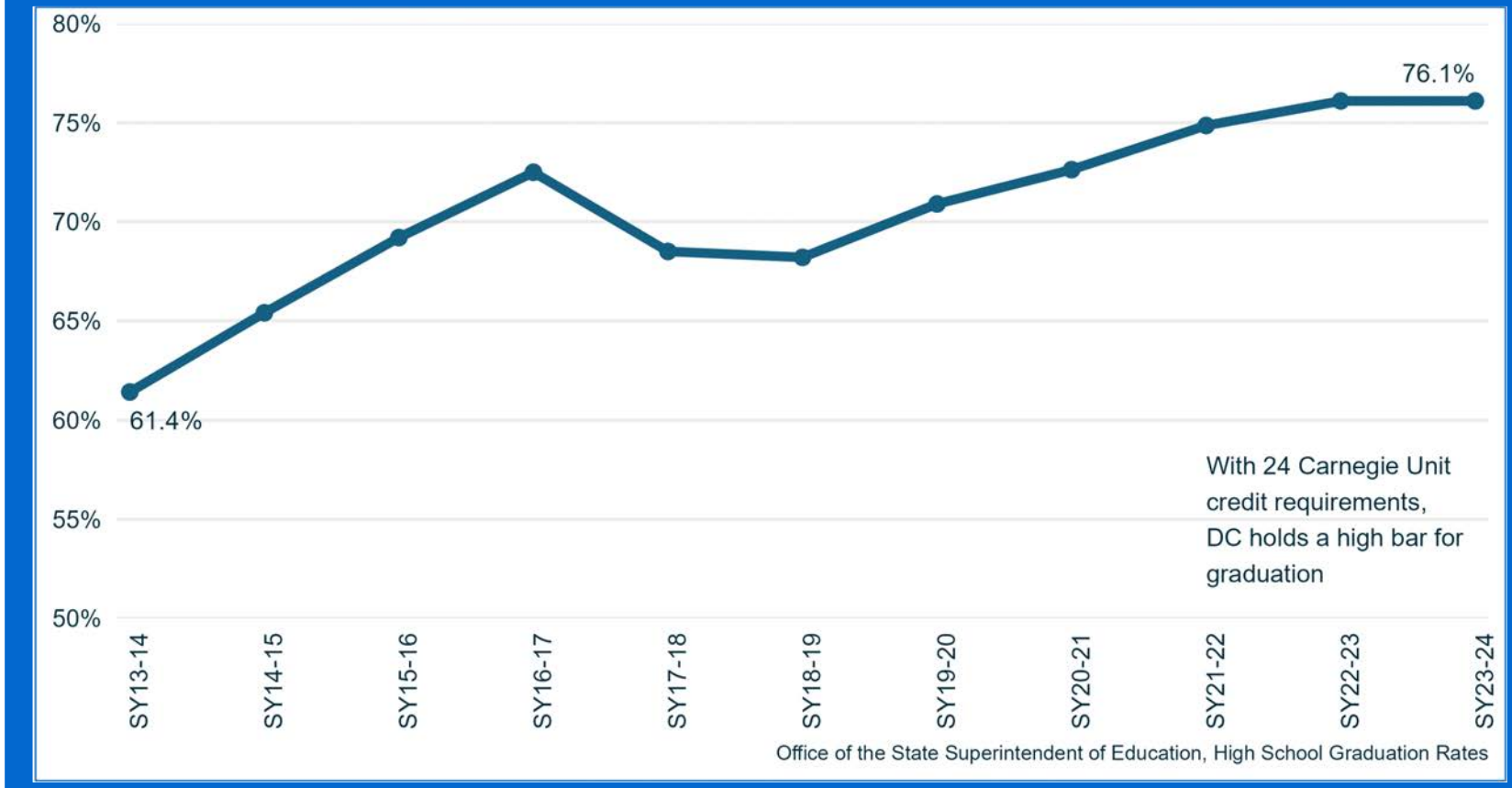


DC has high **free, full-day Pre-K access**, serving more than **13,200** young learners: **95%** of 4-year-olds and **82%** of 3-year-olds.

DC's childcare and Pre-K investments support our **children and workforce**.

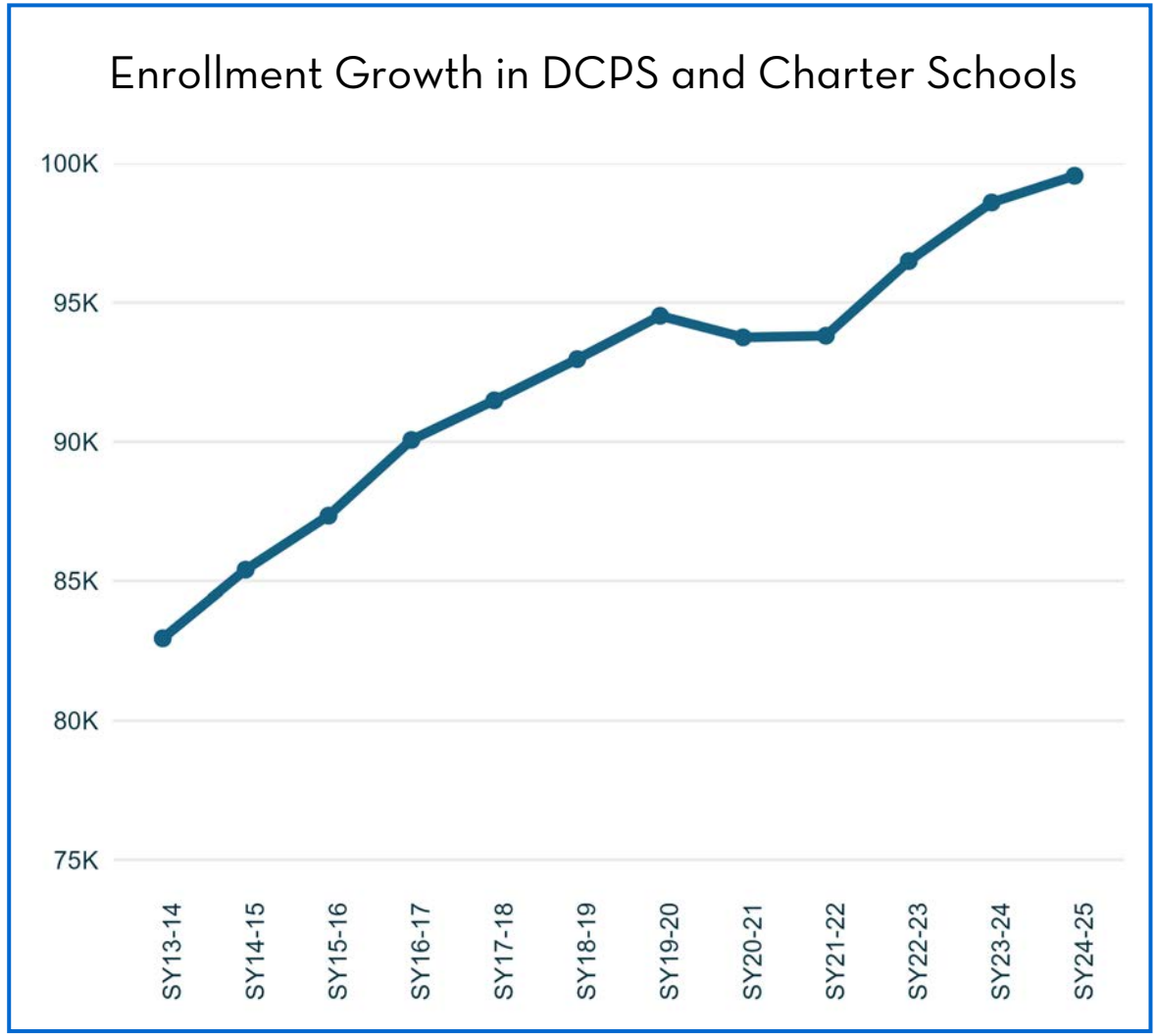
GRADUATION RATES

Graduation Rates Grew Almost 15 Points Since SY13-14



Office of the State Superintendent of Education, High School Graduation Rates

HISTORIC ENROLLMENT GROWTH TELLS OUR STORY OF PROGRESS AND SUCCESS: UNLIKE MANY OTHER JURISDICTIONS, MORE DC FAMILIES ARE CHOOSING OUR SCHOOLS EACH YEAR



Unlike the surrounding 4 counties in MD and VA, **DC's public school enrollment now surpasses** pre-pandemic enrollment.

DCPS' enrollment growth was in the **top third of school districts in the country** between SY 19-20 and SY 23-24. DCPS' absolute growth was in the **top 5% of school districts** in the same period.

DC'S PARENT SATISFACTION WITH THEIR CHILDREN'S SCHOOLS AND COLLEGE AND CAREER PREPARATION IS WELL ABOVE THE NATIONAL AVERAGE

In 50CAN's "The State of Educational Opportunity in America" survey:

DC ranked top of the nation in parental satisfaction, with

86%

of families reporting sufficient school choice options and

75%

reporting they would make that choice no matter where they live.

53%

of DC's parents reported being "very satisfied" with their child's school, 8 points above the national average.

Overall,

87%

of parents were at least "somewhat satisfied."

Compared to other states, DC was in the highest state tier across all questions in all five dimensions of the survey.

THIS REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENT IS THE DIRECT RESULT OF TWO DECADES OF MAYORAL CONTROL WITH COUNCIL OVERSIGHT AND DEEP, TARGETED INVESTMENTS

2007

Mayoral control and Council oversight established through the Public Education Reform Amendment Act

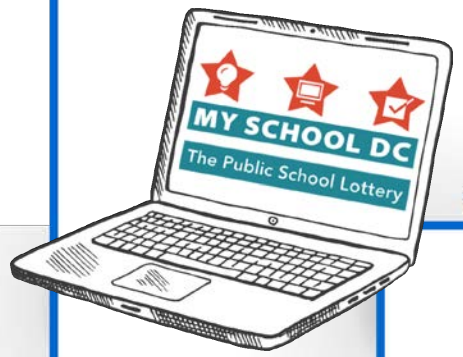
2009

Universal Pre-K established through the Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion Act

IMPACT evaluation system implemented at DCPS

2013

My School DC launched



2017

Out of School Time Office established

2021

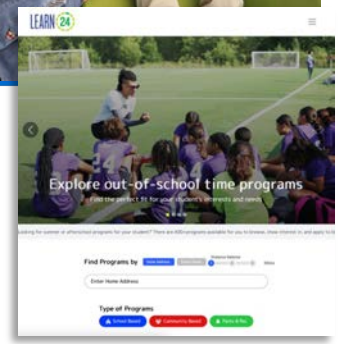
Strategic investments during the pandemic, including **High Impact Tutoring, Safe Passage, and the first Advanced Technical Center**

2024

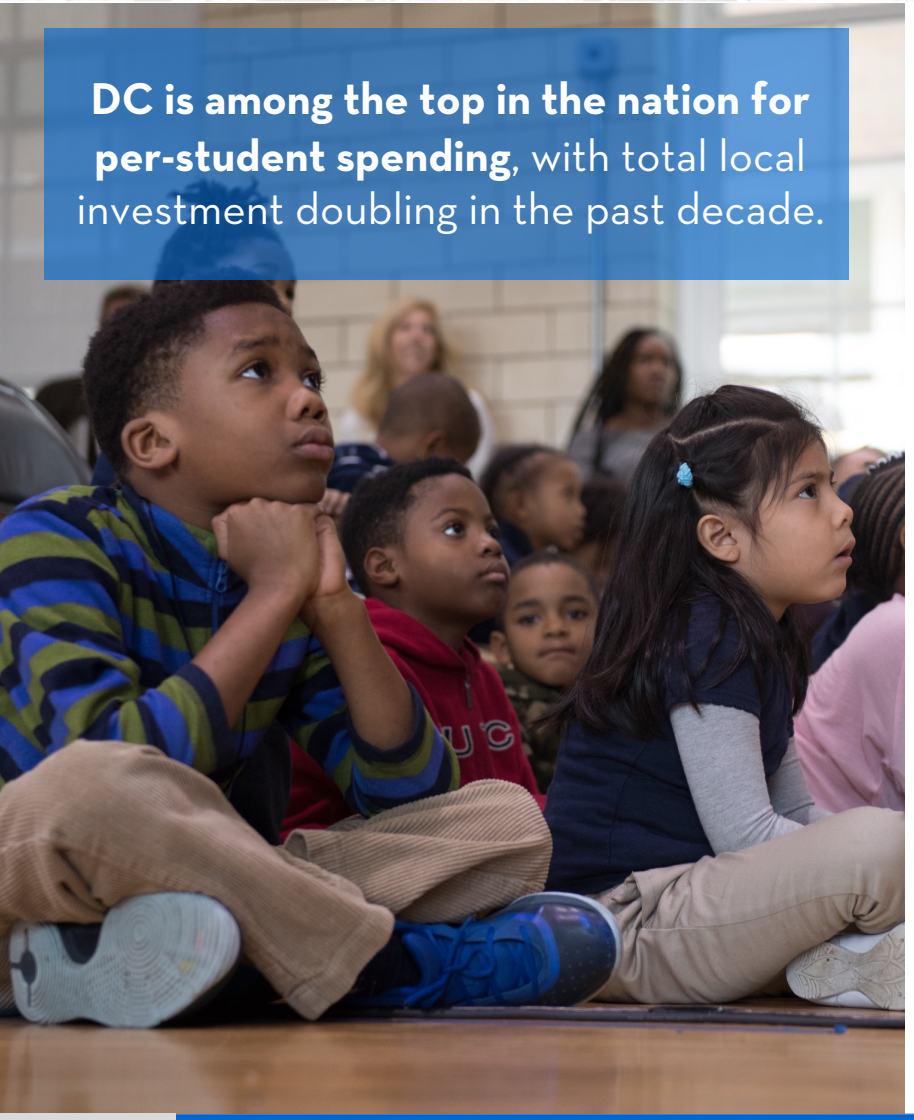
Historic **Washington Teachers Union** contract approved

2025

My Out of School Time DC (MOST-DC) portal established to expand afterschool access

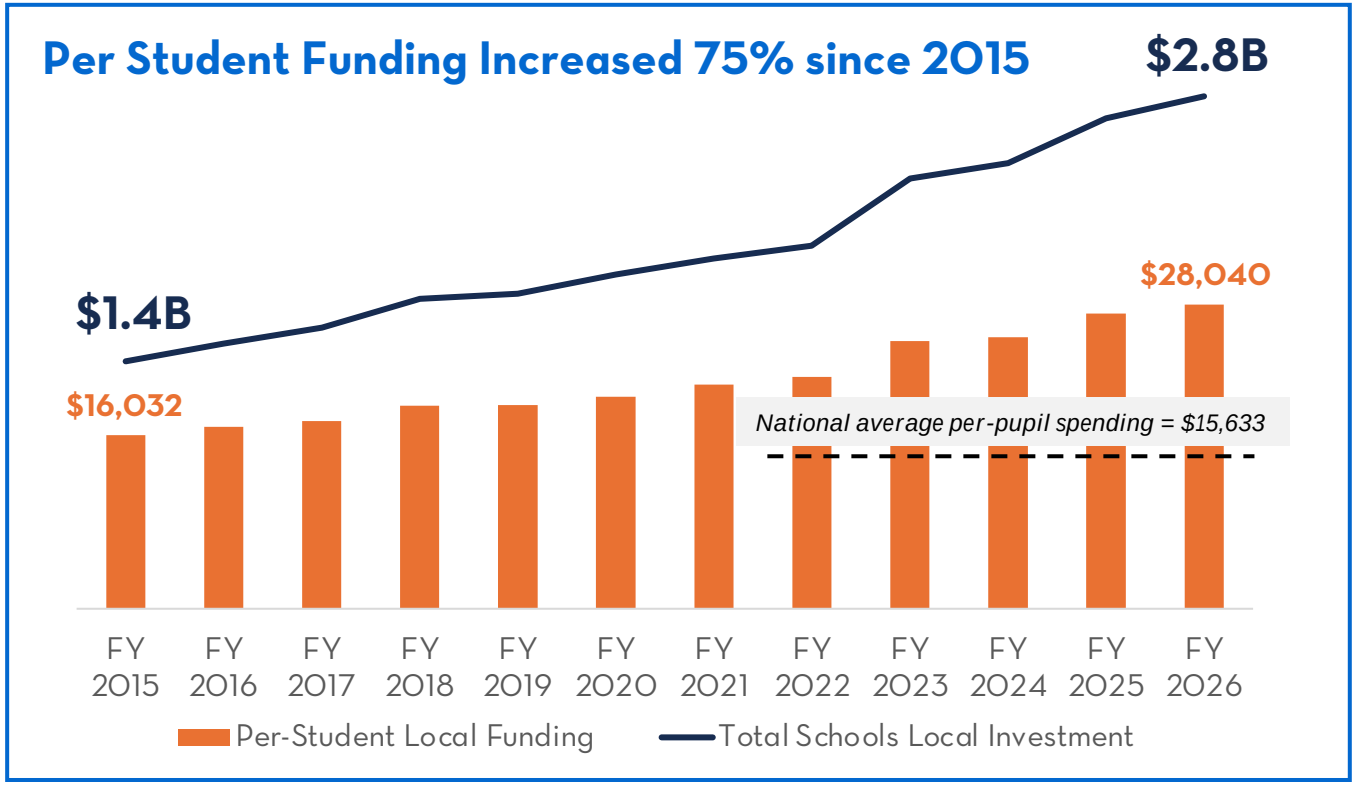


OUR PROGRESS IS POWERED BY SUSTAINED, HISTORIC INVESTMENTS WITH ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR STUDENTS BASED ON NEED



DC is among the top in the nation for per-student spending, with total local investment doubling in the past decade.

Per Student Funding Increased 75% since 2015



DC has a nationally recognized **student-based funding formula**, with higher funding weights **based on student need**.

DC has **state-of-the-art facilities**, with 48 DCPS school modernizations and 151 renovations and modernizations since 2015, totaling **more than $3 billion**.

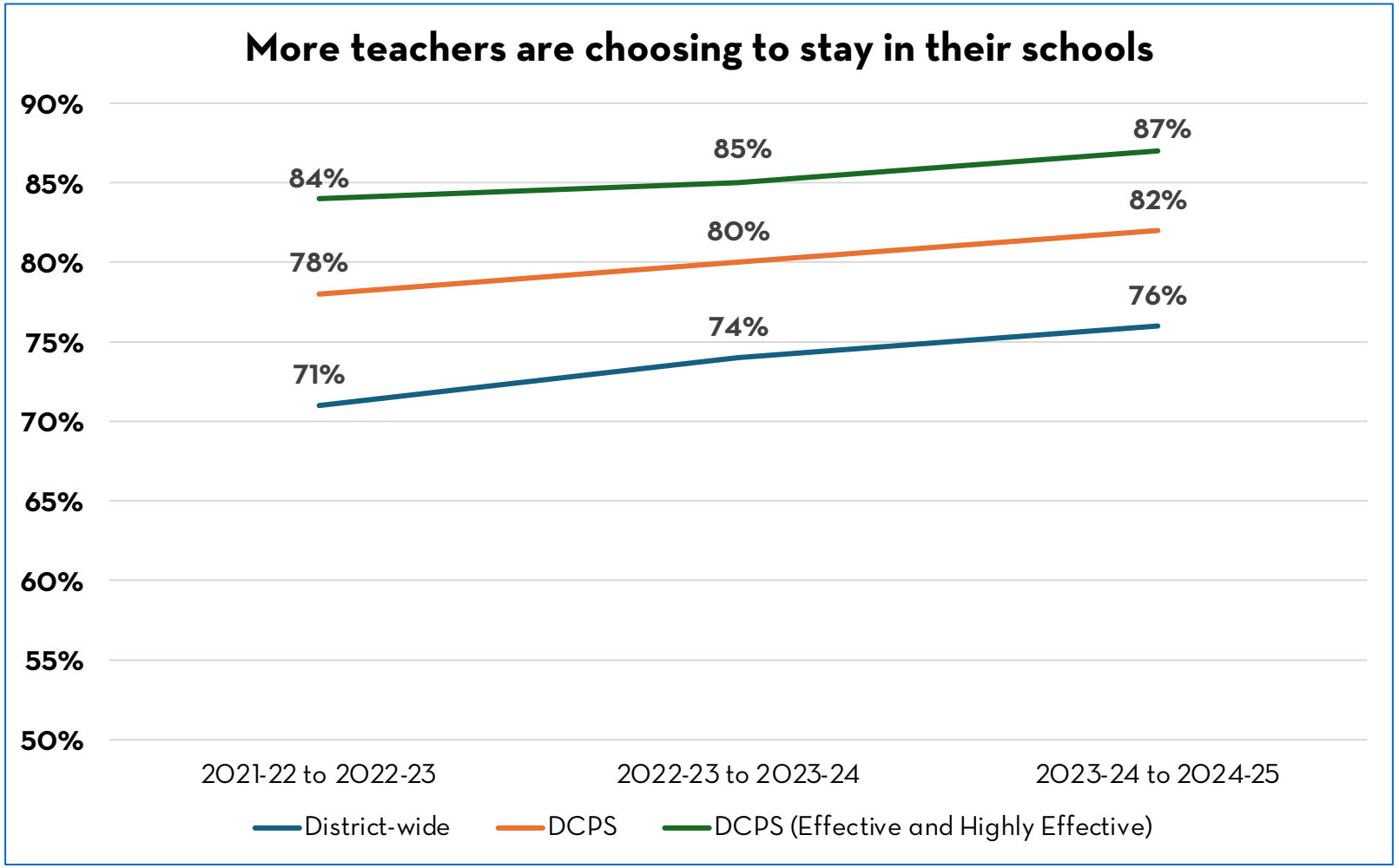
EDUCATORS ARE AT THE HEART OF OUR SUCCESS: DC OFFERS TOP TEACHER PAY, ATTRACTING AND RETAINING TALENT

DC offers nationally competitive salaries

- The starting DCPS educator salary is **$63,373** (#1 across states).
- Average DCPS educator salary is **$109,802** (not including benefits or bonuses).
- Charter teachers receive comparable pay.

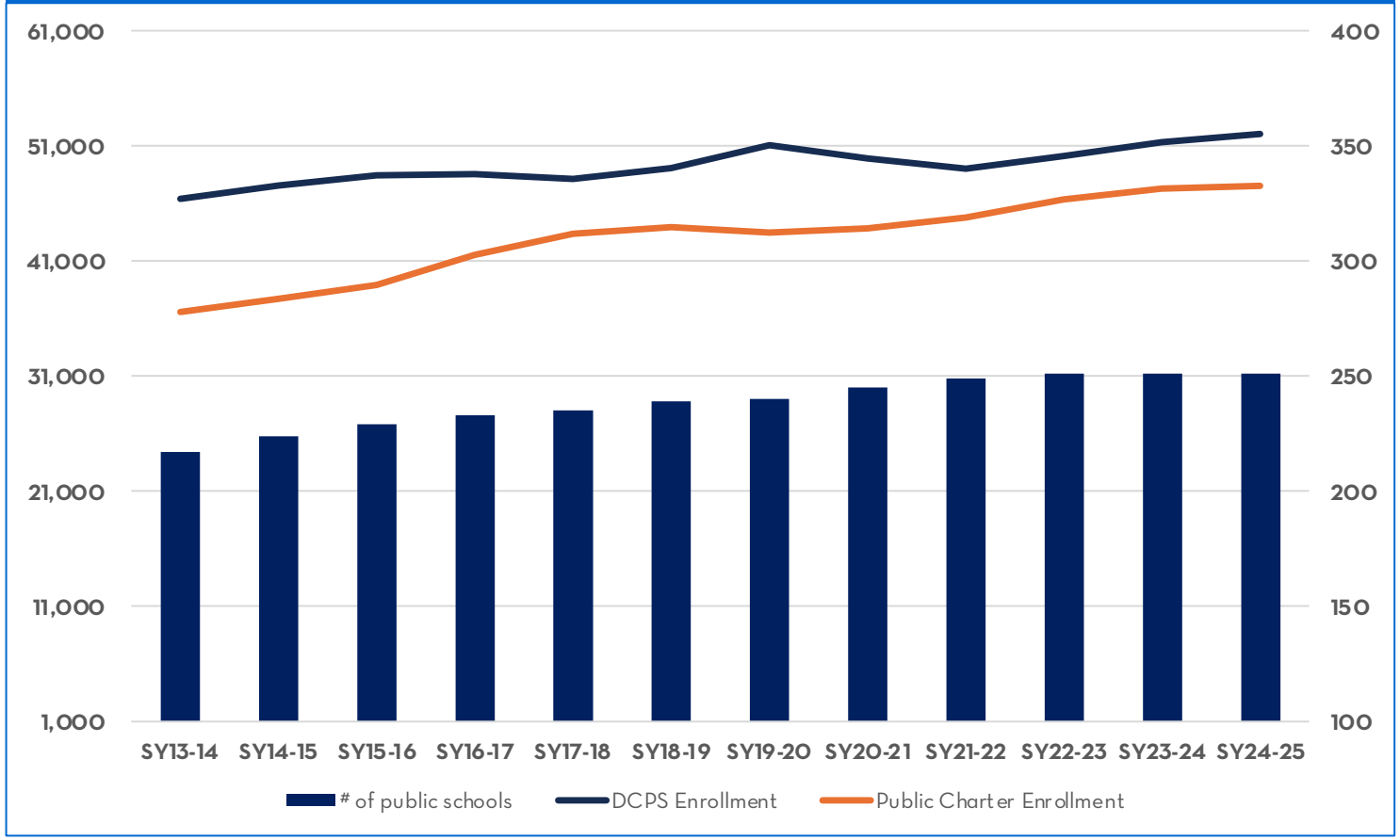
DC has strong teacher recruitment

In SY 24-25, DC started with a 2% vacancy rate for public school teachers.

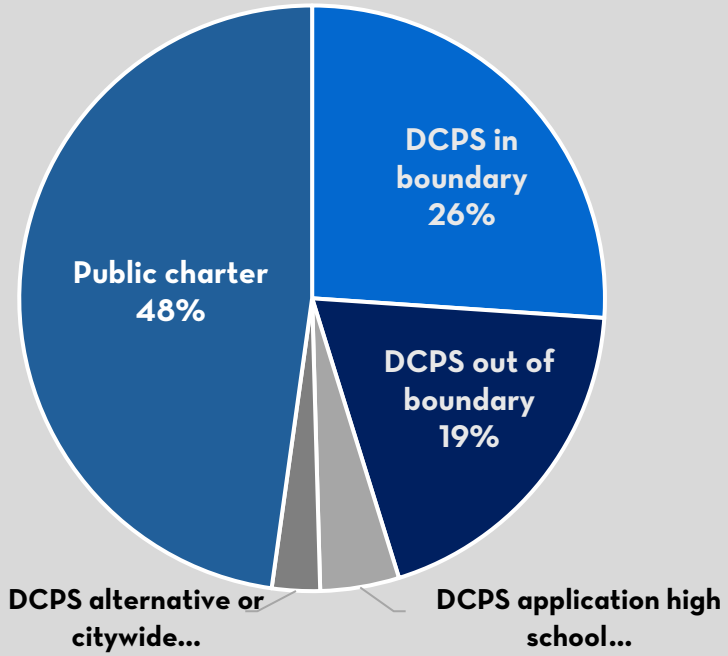


A DIVERSE SYSTEM OF CHOICE DRIVES RESULTS: OUR FAMILIES HAVE STRONG NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS AND ATTRACTIVE CHARTER AND CITYWIDE OPTIONS

DCPS and public charter enrollment and the number of schools have steadily climbed over time



Consequently, families are making a wide variety of public school choices



OUR WORK ISN'T DONE: LAUNCHING THIS SCHOOL YEAR WITH A FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

We are strengthening neighborhood schools and the charter sector by investing in what works across three core pillars:

ACCELERATING LEARNING

Attendance

Literacy

Math

STUDENT SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

Out of School Time Programming

Safe Passage

School-Based Mental Health

PATHWAYS

Career and Technical Education and Advanced Technical Centers

Internships & Apprenticeships

Education Through Employment Data System

WE HAVE MADE PROGRESS SINCE THE PANDEMIC, BUT INCREASING ATTENDANCE REMAINS A TOP PRIORITY, WITH A GOAL TO REDUCE CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM BY 50% FROM SY 21-22

Overall chronic absenteeism is **down 21.7%** **since SY21-22**

Profound (30%+) chronic absenteeism is **down 42.7%** **since SY21-22**

We are making **programmatic investments that are proven** to reduce absenteeism, such as High-Impact Tutoring

Our new **truancy pilot** offers case management and services to students at 10 schools through a **whole-of-government** approach

We are continuing investments in evidence-based and effective **EveryDay Labs attendance nudge technology**

Impact from EveryDay Labs

Reduction in chronic absenteeism	6.3%
Total days recovered over year-long implementation	20,385

Cost per absence prevented	
EveryDay Labs[2]	$19
Mentoring[3]	$400
Tutoring[4]	$1000

WE ARE DOUBLING DOWN ON OUR LITERACY AND MATH INVESTMENTS

Literacy

- Establishing the **Early Literacy Task Force**
- Training **more than 750 teachers through OSSE and over 600 teachers through DCPS** on the science of reading
- Training over 14,000 educators annually on **dyslexia**
- Developing materials like the **Structured Literacy Walkthrough Tool and High-Quality Instructional Materials Rubric and Guidance**
- Creating science of reading modules focused on **adolescent literacy**
- Providing **High-Impact Tutoring (HIT)** to more than 3,500 students in SY 2024-25

Math

- Establishing the **Math Task Force**
- Providing **HIT** to more than 3,000 students in SY 2024-25
- Publishing **turnkey resources** to support DC LEAs in selecting high-quality math instructional materials and ensuring that all math classrooms are evidence based
- Providing grants to LEAs to adopt and train staff on **high-quality math instructional materials**
- Establishing **Math Bootcamps** for more than 400 elementary and secondary educators

LEARNING DOESN'T STOP WHEN THE BELL RINGS, AND NEITHER DOES OUR COMMITMENT TO STUDENTS

The Out of School Time (OST) Office reaches **over 15,000 students annually**.

- OST is expanding grants in priority areas; for example, 16 of the 20 neighborhoods with the highest rates of violent crime have 10 or more OST funded programs.

The **My Out of School Time (MOST) portal** provides a one-stop-shop for families for after school and recreation.

Over **12,790 youth** participated in paid summer internships through the **Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program** at 730 host sites.

DOES' **Career Ready Early Scholars Program (CRESP)** served over 500 scholars ages 9-13 this summer, offering exciting career exploration in healthcare, entrepreneurship, cybersecurity, AI/robotics, and STEM.

DPR offered **summer camps at 54 locations** with **8,400+** enrollments and 3,100+ individual campers across all 8 wards, including 540+ tweens in "**boost camps**".

DOES offers a wide range of school-year youth programs, including the **High School Internship Program, Marion Barry Youth Leadership Institute, and DC Youth Entrepreneurship Program**.

DOES offers **apprenticeships** to 80+ young people, doubling enrollment since 2022, as well as **pre-apprenticeships** (50+).

DPR offers **free out of school time programs**, including:

- Afternoon Access (25 locations),
- Enrichment Zone (10 locations),
- Supreme Teens (27 locations),
- Young Ladies on the Rise (17 locations), and
- Young Men Future Leaders (17 locations)

STUDENTS ARE SAFEST IN SCHOOL, AND WE WANT TO MAKE SURE THEY ARE SAFE ON THEIR COMMUTES

Safe Passage:

- 200 – 225 Safe Passage Ambassadors are being deployed on 120+ routes across 12 identified priority areas by the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice (DMPSJ).

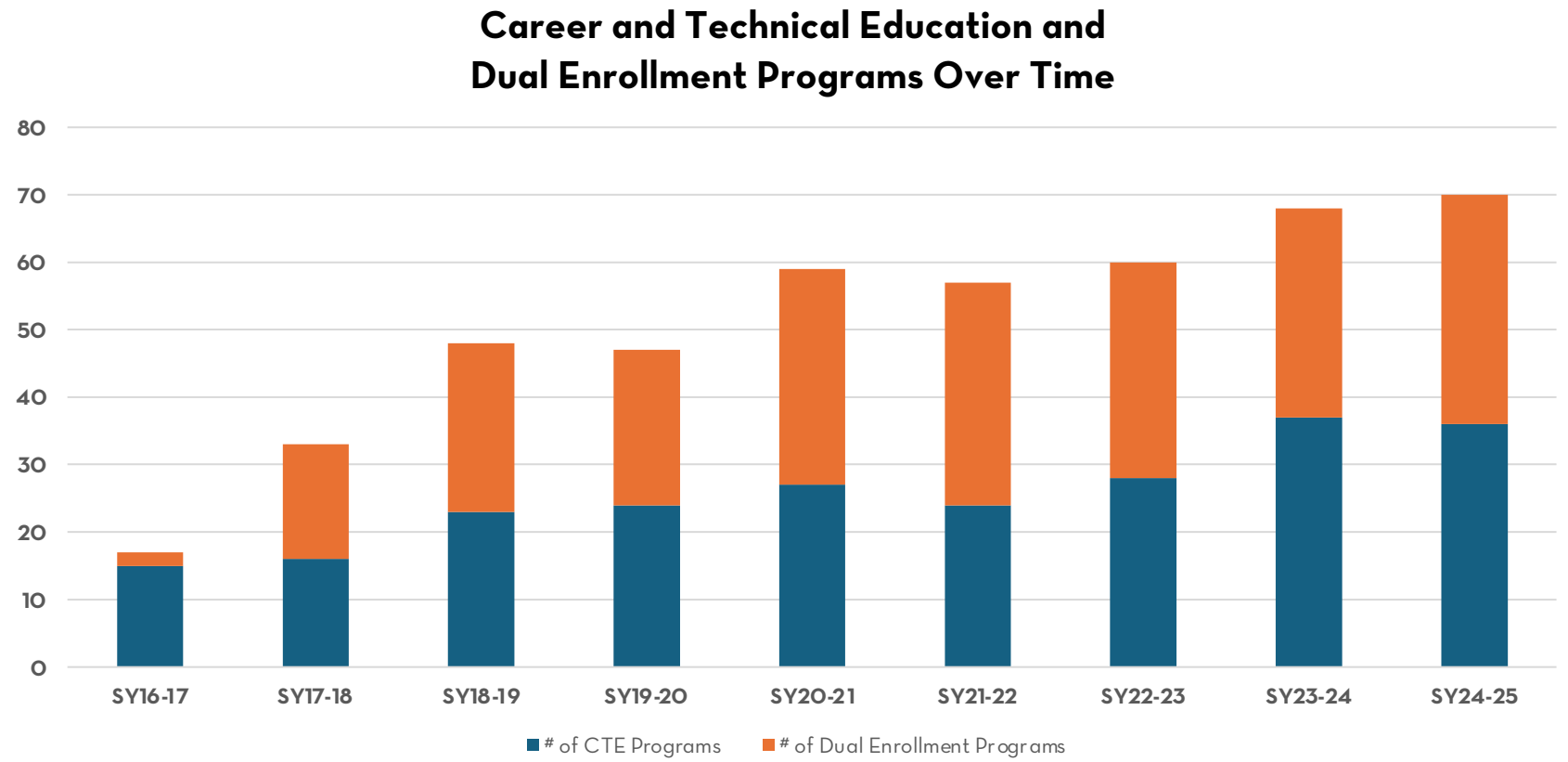
DC School Connect:

- Since the 2021-22 school year, DC School Connect has provided safe trips to school to hundreds of students living in Wards 7 and 8.

Safety Squads:

- Present in all DCPS schools and composed of principals, assistant principals, school logistics personnel, student support personnel, contract security, and other school-based staff.

REIMAGINING HIGH SCHOOL TO PREPARE EVERY STUDENT FOR FULFILLING, FAMILY-SUSTAINING CAREERS



The citywide **Advanced Technical Centers** offer pathways to careers in health care and cybersecurity with free college credit and paid work experience.

WE ARE PARTNERING WITH OUR CHARTER SECTOR AND ITS AUTHORIZER TO REIGNITE THE PROMISE OF THE SECTOR FOR OUR NEXT CHAPTER OF GROWTH

We are focused on:

QUALITY

The sector continually improves quality by supporting LEAs to be successful and closing low-performing schools.

INNOVATION

PCSB approves new schools and expansions that meet unmet community needs and introduces innovative models that attract and keep families in the District.

TRANSPARENCY

Families have clear information about their schools delivered in a timely manner so they can make informed choices, and LEAs know expectations to meet goals.

CITYWIDE SUPPORTS FOR ALL FAMILIES

Special Education Hub: Support for IEPs and 504 plans

Meals & Nutrition Assistance: Breakfast, lunch, and snacks

Out-of-School-Time Programs: Register via the MOST Portal

Transportation Help: WMATA's Better Bus Network + Kids Ride Freeand

Back-to-School Supplies: Where and how to get support

Learn more & get support: backtoschool.dc.gov

Scan the QR code for Mayor Bowser's 2025-2026 Back to School Guide.