

2019



Cleveland
Transformation
Alliance

Quality Schools for All Children



Report to the Community on the Impact of
Cleveland's Plan for Transforming Schools

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Dear Residents of Greater Cleveland

In 2012, a broad coalition of civic leaders came together to create Cleveland's Plan for Transforming Schools. Today, we remain committed to and engaged in our work. This shared commitment is represented by the Cleveland Transformation Alliance's ongoing efforts to create and support a better future for children throughout the City of Cleveland. As we look ahead, we welcome our new Executive Director, Meghann Marnecheck, who will lead the Transformation Alliance into its future.

In this sixth report assessing the impact of the Cleveland Plan, it is evident our community is making substantial strides for Cleveland children, preschool through 12th grade. There is an increase in the availability of and enrollment in high-quality preschool, leading to increased kindergarten readiness.

The Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) and its partnering charter schools are helping put more students from kindergarten to third grade on the path to reading success, and students are scoring better on state tests in reading and math.

CMSD continues to increase its graduation rate - up 26 percentage points from 2010. It is the largest gain among Ohio's eight urban school districts. Our community is also closing the achievement gap for our African American and Hispanic students, who are now graduating at a rate higher than that of their peers statewide. As more students are graduating, we must ensure we are increasing access to post-secondary education and removing barriers for students to persist.

This year's launch of Say Yes to Education in Cleveland represents the logical next step in our work to remove barriers to student success. Although we have made significant progress, there is still much work to be done to improve Cleveland schools.



Frank G. Jackson
Mayor, City of Cleveland
Chair, Board of Directors, Cleveland Transformation Alliance

Meet Meghann Marnecheck, our New Executive Director

Six years into the development of *Cleveland's Plan for Transforming Schools*, it is clear our community is making a difference for Cleveland's children. I am honored to join our community in that effort as the new Executive Director of the Cleveland Transformation Alliance. Thank you to Mayor Frank Jackson, the Transformation Alliance's Board of Directors, and community partners for making my transition seamless.

I believe the path to a successful community starts with quality education for all children. I am incredibly humbled and honored to have the opportunity to shape that path for our region's future leaders with the Transformation Alliance. Before joining the Transformation Alliance, I worked on education policy at the Ohio Statehouse, was Chief of Staff for the City of Parma, and most recently led the diversification and attraction of new funds into the Cuyahoga County Public Library system. As an education policy advocate, dedicated nonprofit leader, and most importantly, a person who thrives on information and experience, I am looking forward to leading the Transformation Alliance into its future.

The early successes of the Cleveland Plan and the introduction of Say Yes to Education into our community creates an exciting opportunity to carve a complimentary strategic direction for the Transformation Alliance. I believe we can build on our engagement efforts with families to become the go-to resource for information about school quality options for families and deepen our relationships with our community partners to support the fantastic work they do in our neighborhoods every day. I believe we can leverage our partnership with leaders at both district and charter schools to attract and recruit the best education models for our city. I want to make sure the Transformation Alliance and each of Cleveland's students are considered in local and statewide policy decisions. I will work tirelessly to improve and elevate our work while increasing and diversifying our support base.

Cleveland's commitment to the transformation of education for our children is unwavering. The dedication to the implementation, monitoring of progress, and continuous improvement of the Cleveland Plan by so many stakeholders and partners across our community is inspiring. I am both privileged and grateful to join our community in this work and look forward to working with each of our partners who are moving the needle for Cleveland's children.

Sincerely,

Meghann Marnecheck
Executive Director, Cleveland Transformation Alliance



In 2012, a group of civic, education, philanthropic, and business leaders developed *Cleveland's Plan for Transforming Schools*, which envisions a performance-based portfolio of district and charter schools that work in partnership to support dramatic achievement gains for every child. Created through House Bill 525, the enabling legislation for the Cleveland Plan, the Cleveland Transformation Alliance is a public-private partnership that ensures fidelity to the Cleveland Plan, assesses the quality of all public schools in Cleveland, monitors the growth and quality of the charter sector, and communicates to families about quality school choices.

This report gives the Cleveland community and other stakeholders a snapshot of trend data in the following categories: enrollment, early childhood education, K-12 education, and college and career readiness. These data show the Cleveland Plan is making tremendous strides in closing the gaps between Cleveland's students and their peers statewide, demonstrating gains on key indicators from preschool through 12th grade.

The Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) is one of the fastest improving school districts in Ohio on kindergarten through third-grade literacy, performance index, and graduation rates. The increase in the availability of and enrollment in high-quality preschool has yielded significant gains in kindergarten readiness for Cleveland's youngest children. The percentage of students meeting requirements for promotion to fourth grade continues to increase for district and charter schools in Cleveland, with CMSD's partnering charter schools showing the largest gains. Overall, Cleveland students' performance on state tests increased in 2019, with CMSD showing the largest overall gains. CMSD improved on the state's measure of academic growth for the third year in a row. CMSD's four-year graduation rate reached a record high of 78.2 percent, ranking the district in the top one percent for growth statewide.

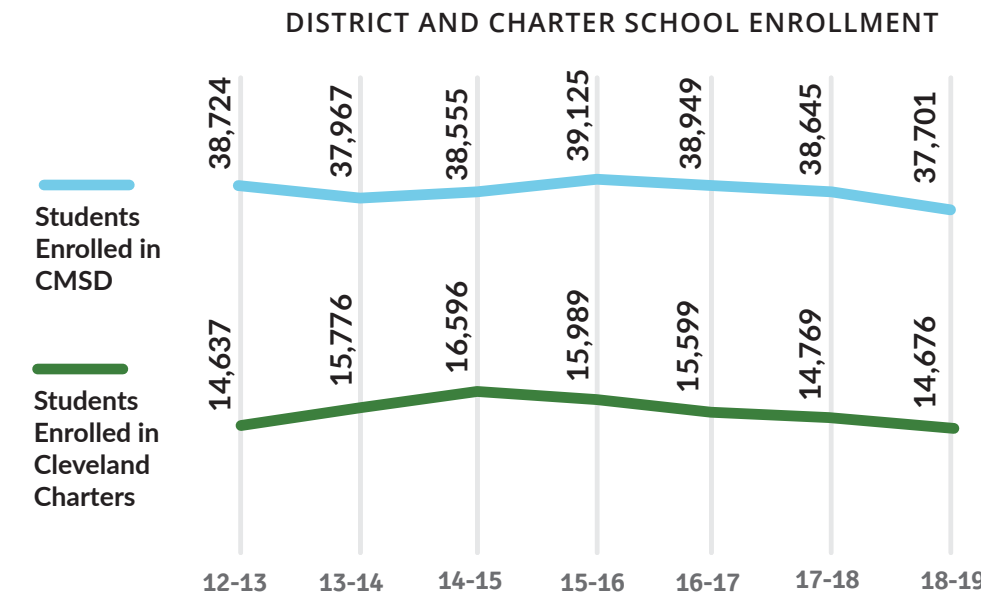
Updating the Cleveland Plan is critical to remaining relevant in the changing education landscape and necessary to ensure all Cleveland children attend quality schools. The Transformation Alliance convened its stakeholders to consider how best to revise the goals and strategies outlined in the Cleveland Plan. This discussion is ongoing, and the Transformation Alliance and its Board of Directors are committed to completing this work in 2020.



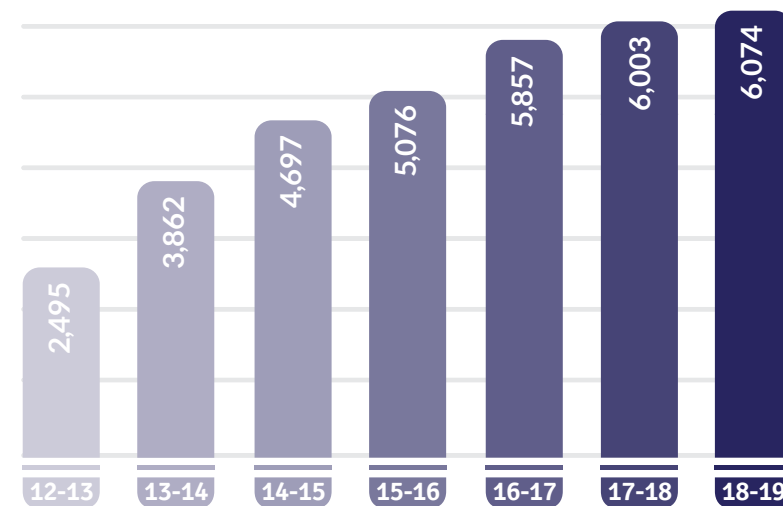
DISTRICT SCHOOLS

During the past seven years, the number of school-aged children in Cleveland has declined more than 20 percentage points, affecting overall enrollment in both district and charter schools.

In the 2018-19 school year, enrollment for the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) was 37,701, a difference of 944 students from 2017-18.



ENROLLMENT IN PARTNERING CHARTER SCHOOLS¹



CHARTER SCHOOLS

Although enrollment in CMSD's partnering charters continues to increase, enrollment in Cleveland charters overall is decreasing, mirroring a statewide trend. The number of charter schools operating in the district peaked at 67 during the 2013-14 school year; by last year, that number had dropped to 56. Together, a decreasing population, increased accountability for charters, consolidation, school closures, and lower attendance at online schools contribute to this decline.

In 2018, the Transformation Alliance proposed revised criteria for the creation of partnerships between CMSD and charter schools. CMSD adopted this criteria, which are intended to hold partnering charters to high standards of practice under the Cleveland Plan.²

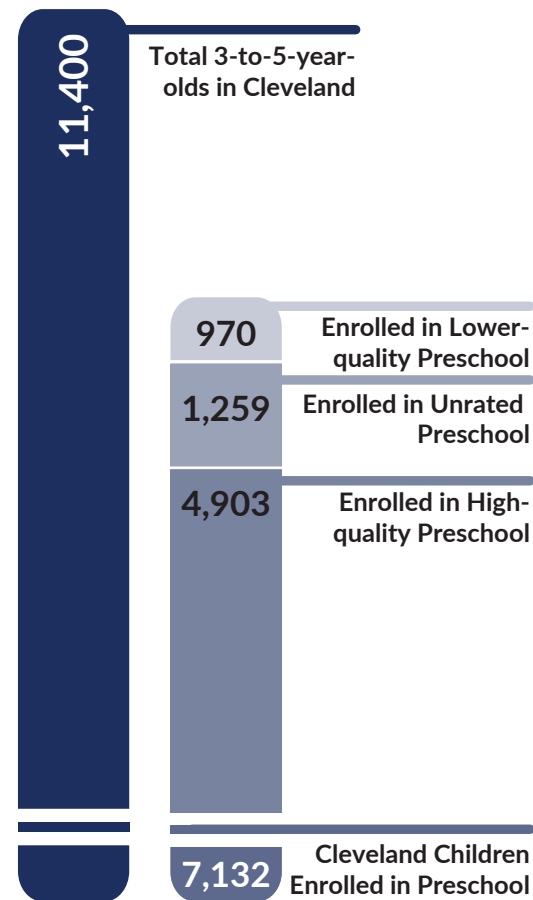
¹ The term *partnering* includes the 11 schools sponsored by CMSD and the eight schools that had signed formal partnership agreements with the district during the 2018-19 school year.

² To see the new criteria for partnering charters, visit <https://mycyleschool.org/charter-partnership/>.

PRE4CLE is Cleveland's plan to ensure all three- and four-year-old children have access to a high-quality preschool by increasing the number of high-quality preschools in Cleveland, helping preschool providers improve their quality rating, and connecting families to quality preschool programs. Since its launch in 2014, PRE4CLE has increased the availability of high-quality preschool seats by 65 percent, and increased enrollment in high-quality preschool programs by 72 percent. This work has yielded significant gains in language and literacy and school readiness on the Ohio Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA).¹



PRESCHOOL BY THE NUMBERS

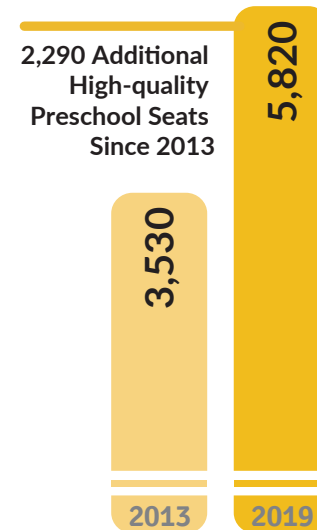


Forty-three percent of all preschool-aged children in Cleveland are enrolled in high-quality preschool, representing a 72 percent increase since PRE4CLE's baseline year of 2013. High-quality preschools include those rated 3, 4, or 5 stars on Ohio's Step Up To Quality 5-star rating system. The state has a goal to rate all preschools by 2020, and to have all preschools receive a high-quality rating by 2025.

¹ For more information on the Ohio Kindergarten Readiness Assessment and PRE4CLE's benchmarks, visit PRE4CLE.org.

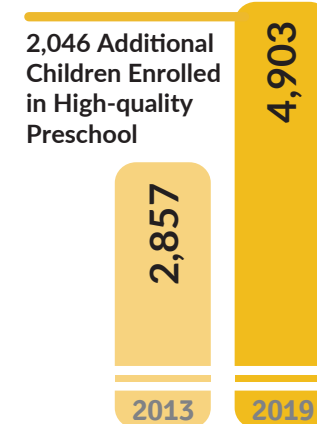
EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM LEVEL BENCHMARKS

AVAILABILITY



Since June 2013, the number of high-quality preschool seats available in Cleveland increased by 2,290. In the last year, our community increased the number of highly rated preschool programs by 32 percent, surpassing PRE4CLE's June 2020 benchmark of 20 percent, a year early.

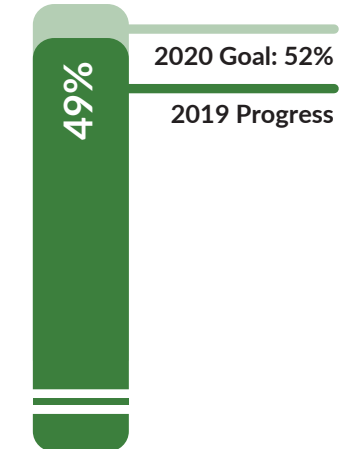
ENROLLMENT



Forty-three percent of preschool-aged children in Cleveland are enrolled in high-quality preschool as of June 2018, falling just shy of PRE4CLE's 2019 goal to have 45 percent enrolled. PRE4CLE's 2020 goal is to reach 50 percent enrollment in high-quality preschool.

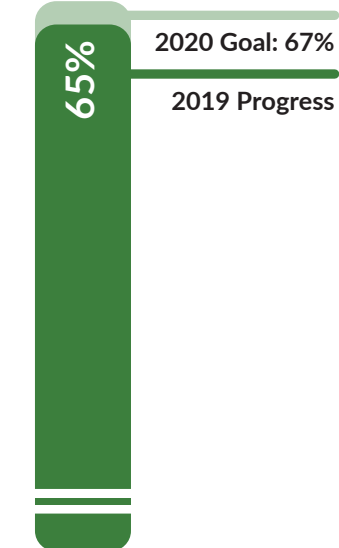
CHILD LEVEL BENCHMARKS

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY



Forty-nine percent of children who attend a PRE4CLE preschool are on track in the language and literacy subscale of the KRA, falling just shy of PRE4CLE's 2018 goal of 50 percent, but still on track to meet the 2020 goal of 52 percent.¹

KINDERGARTEN READINESS



Sixty-five percent of children who attend a PRE4CLE preschool are demonstrating or approaching kindergarten readiness, with 29 percent demonstrating readiness. Our community is on track to meet PRE4CLE's new goal of 67 percent for 2020.

¹ PRE4CLE preschools have received a 3-, 4-, or 5-star rating in Ohio's Step Up To Quality rating system and meet additional quality standards, including smaller class sizes and teacher education levels. For more information on PRE4CLE's requirements, visit PRE4CLE.org/Providers.

Overall, Cleveland's district and charter schools show upward trends in the Third Grade Reading Guarantee for the second year in a row. Although Cleveland Metropolitan School District's (CMSD) average scores remain lower than its partnering charters, CMSD made significant gains in both Performance Index and Value-Added scores in 2019, with its schools outpacing the growth experienced by all charter schools within CMSD's boundaries. In addition to local comparisons, these gains demonstrate Cleveland's schools are closing the gap between its students and their peers statewide in many areas.

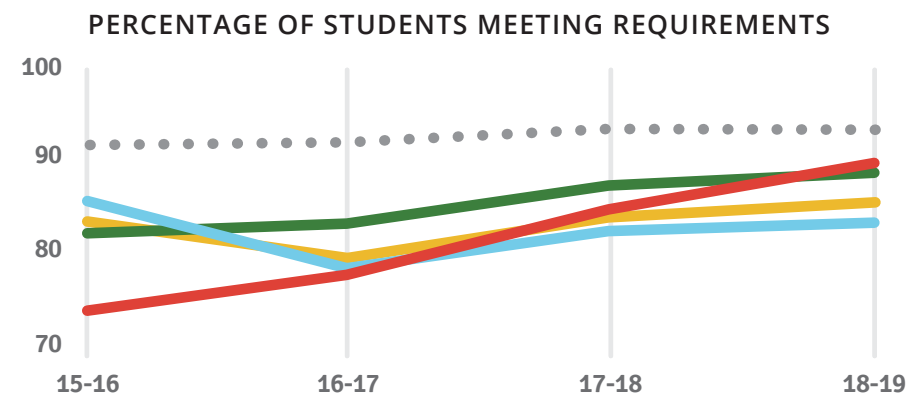
Four years of data (2016-19) are reported for Third Grade Reading Guarantee, Performance Index, and Value-Added because the state tests behind these indicators changed yearly from 2013 to 2016, limiting the relevance of earlier results on the overall trends.



THIRD GRADE READING GUARANTEE

Ohio's Third Grade Reading Guarantee assesses how well schools keep students on the path to reading success by identifying students who are behind in reading and tracking promotion to fourth grade.

As other urban districts statewide show decline, the averages for students attending CMSD schools, Cleveland charters overall, and CMSD's partnering charter schools have steadily increased since 2017.



Cleveland's schools continue to show progress, even as the state raises its standard for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee each year.

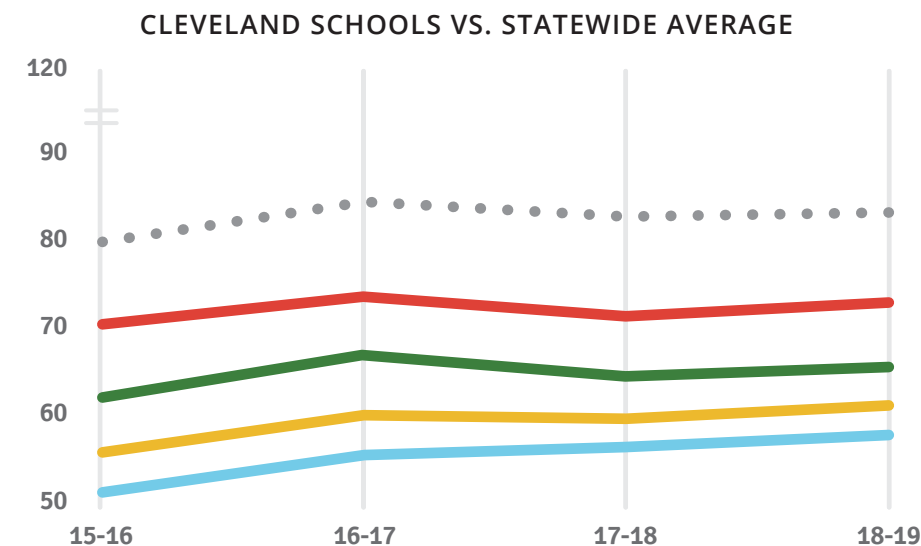
LEGEND

•••• All Ohio district and charter schools

PERFORMANCE INDEX

Ohio's Performance Index measures how students perform on state tests. Schools receive more points for higher student scores, with 120 total points possible.

CMSD's score increased 6.5 points since 2016, positioning CMSD's progress in the top 4 percent of districts showing improvement statewide. Scores for Cleveland charters and CMSD's partnering charters increased in 2019, and remain higher than the district average.



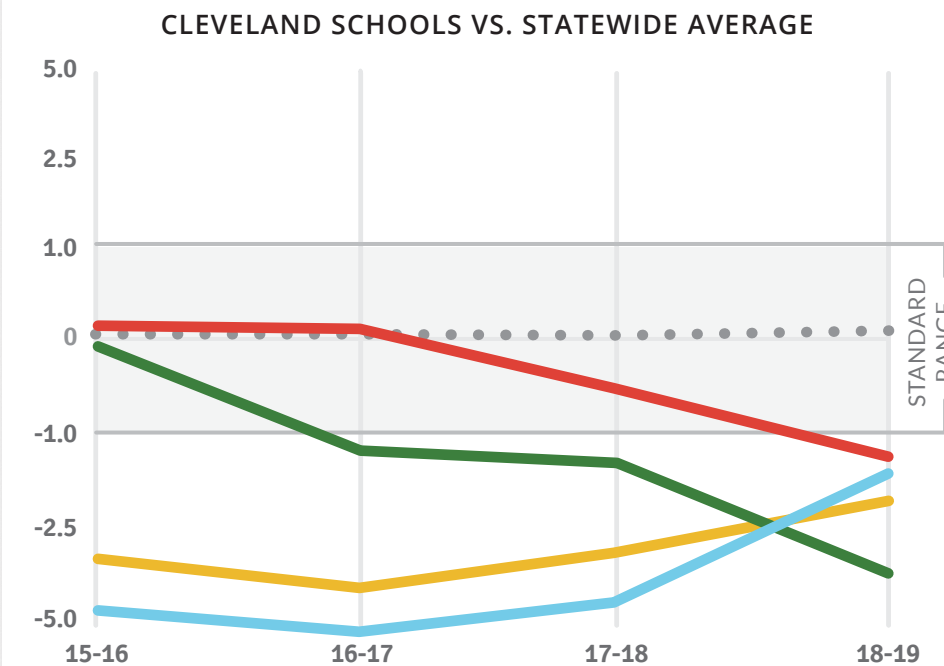
— All district and charter schools within CMSD's boundaries

— Cleveland Metropolitan School District Schools

VALUE-ADDED

Ohio's Value-Added student growth measure calculates how much academic progress students make from year to year. Scores ranging from -1.0 to +1.0 represent a year of academic growth. Scores less than -1.0 represent less than a year of growth; scores more than +1.0 demonstrate more than a year's growth.

CMSD made meaningful gains in student-growth in 2019, dramatically decreasing the gap for its students. Cleveland charters overall continue to decline, though CMSD's partnering charters remain slightly higher than the district average.



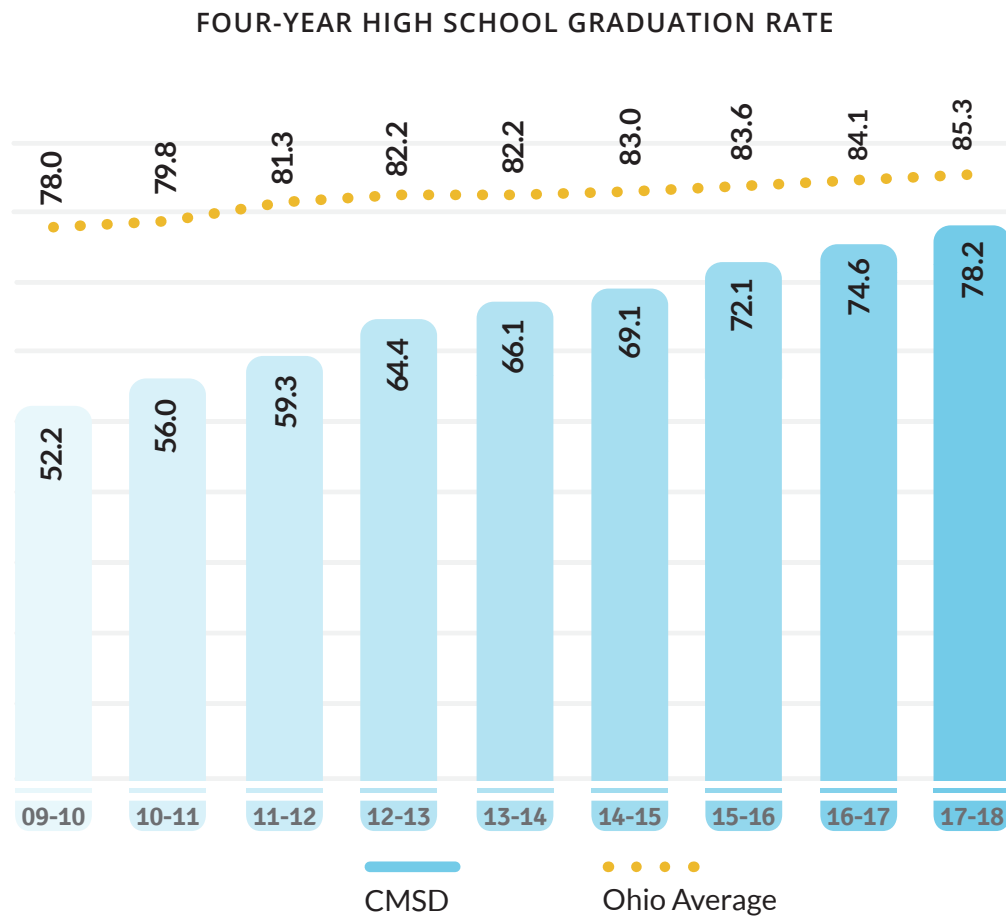
— Charter schools within CMSD's boundaries

— CMSD's partnering charters

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

The state reported four-year graduation data for 28 CMSD high schools, ranging from 55.2 percent to 100 percent for the 2017-18 school year. With the largest gain among Ohio's eight urban school districts, CMSD has increased its graduation rate by 26 percentage points since 2010.

The state reports graduation data for brick-and-mortar charter schools. Comparable data for three Cleveland charter high schools show that charters are also helping to close the gap between Cleveland's kids and their peers statewide. On average, these schools increased their graduation rates by eight percentage points in the last year.



CMSD has closed the gap between its students and the state average by 18.7 percentage points since 2010.

CLOSING THE GRADUATION GAP

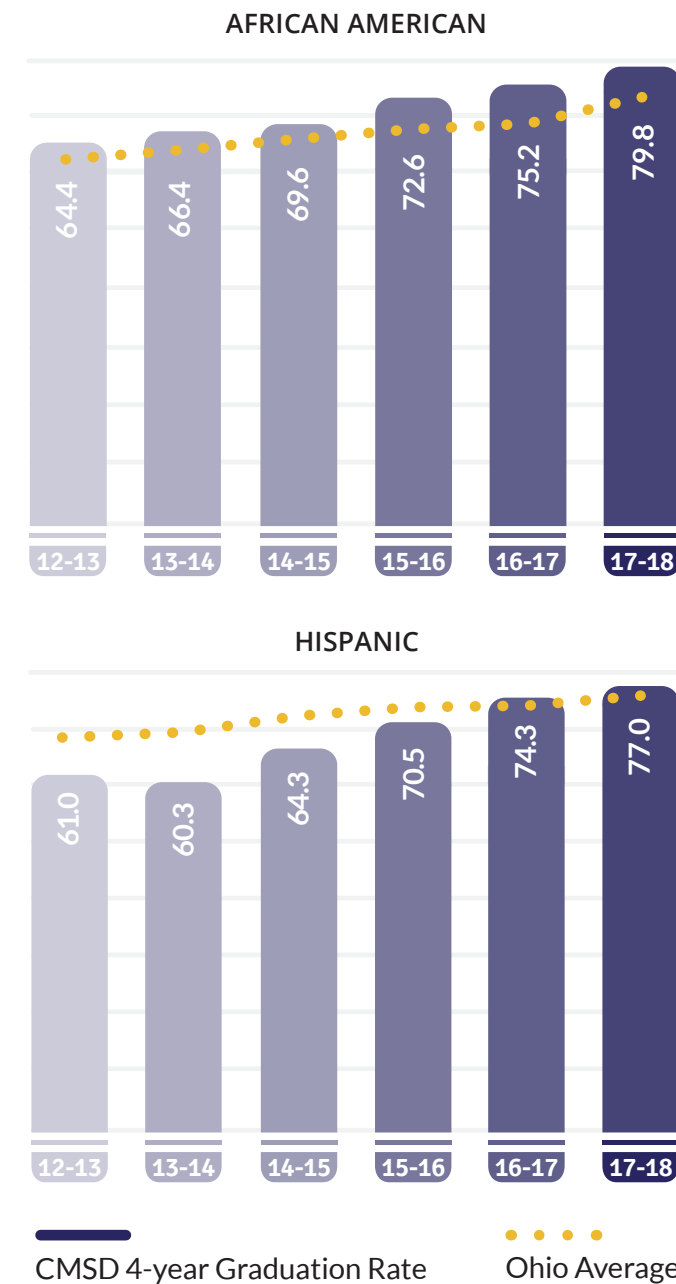
CMSD is making significant strides in closing the graduation gap for its African American and Hispanic students, who together make up 80.4 percent of the district's student population. CMSD's graduation rate for African American students surpassed the statewide average in 2012-13, and has continued to increase. CMSD's graduation rate for Hispanic students surpassed the statewide average in 2016-17, and also continues to rise.



In 2017-18, almost 80 percent (79.8%) of African American students in CMSD were graduating within four-years, more than six percentage points higher than their peers statewide (73.8%).

On average a child of color has a greater chance of graduating high school from CMSD than their peers statewide.

In 2017-18, 77 percent of Hispanic students in CMSD were graduating within four-years, slightly higher than their peers statewide (76.1%).

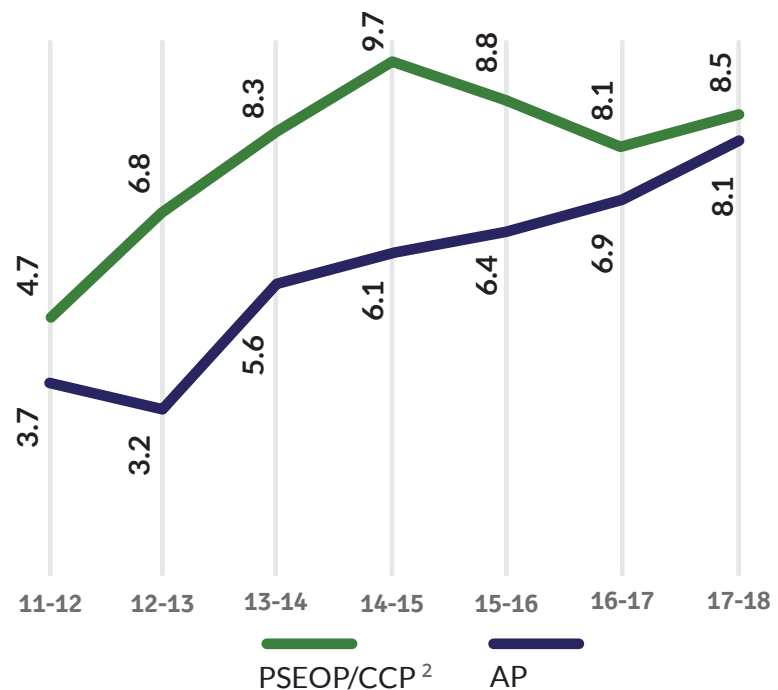


In 2011, Mayor Frank Jackson convened the Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland to lead the work to increase college readiness, access, and persistence for Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) students. The data in this section, drawn from the Higher Education Compact's 2018 report to the community, describes the overall progress in each of these three areas.¹ While these data show some progress in college readiness, there are troubling declines in many of the college access and persistence goals and indicators for CMSD students.



READINESS

PERCENTAGE OF CMSD STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN COLLEGE-LEVEL COURSES

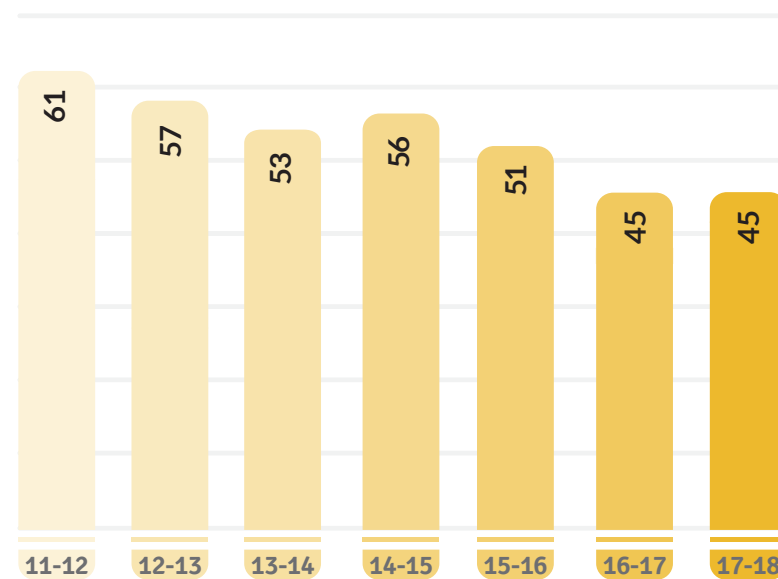


Some college readiness indicators show improvement for CMSD students, while others remain relatively flat. The number of students taking Advanced Placement (AP) courses has steadily increased since 2011-12. The percentage of students participating in College Credit Plus (CCP), formerly known as the Post Secondary Enrollment Options Program (PSEOP), rose to 8.5 percent, only slightly under the state's average rate of 8.6. Most students are on track to graduate, however, the number of times students take the ACT and the percentage of students completing at least one college application have remained stagnant during the past three years.

¹ More detail can be found in the Higher Education Compact's 2018 report to the community at <http://highereducationcompact.org/>.
² College Credit Plus (CCP) replaced the Post Secondary Enrollment Options Program (PSEOP) in 2015 and is open to 7th and 8th graders, in addition to high school students.

ACCESS

CMSD GRADUATE COLLEGE ENROLLMENT PERCENTAGE WITHIN ONE YEAR

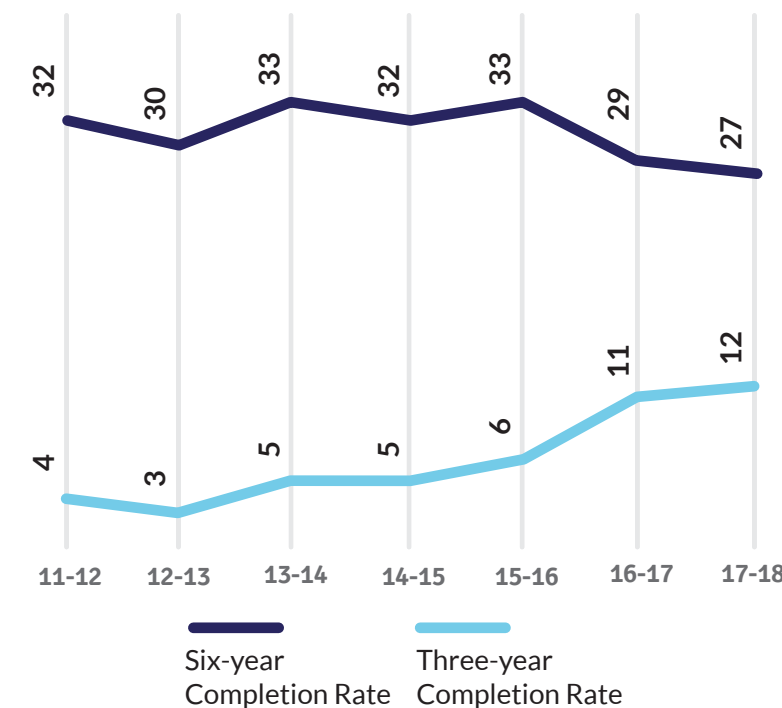


College access continues to be a struggle. Since 2011, the college enrollment rate declined 16 percentage points to 45 percent among the class of 2017, and remains at 45 percent for the class of 2018. Though college enrollment trends are down nationally, high tuition rates, coupled with a reduction of grant aid for students statewide, have created greater barriers to access for Cleveland students. The state's recent increase in funding for the Ohio College Opportunity Grant and the introduction of Say Yes to Education scholarships, described in more detail on page 12 of this report, will hopefully increase affordability and access to higher education.¹

¹ The Ohio College Opportunity Grant (OCOG) increased by \$47 million statewide in 2019. For more information on OCOG, visit ohiohighered.org.
² The Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland measures overall college persistence through how many students graduate a two-year college within three-years, and a four-year college within six-years of enrollment.

PERSISTENCE

PERCENTAGE OF CMSD STUDENTS GRADUATING FROM TWO- AND FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES²



Most indicators of college persistence continue to decline, with only 27 percent of CMSD's class of 2012 completing four-year degrees at Higher Education Compact institutions within six years (by 2018). The first- to second-year retention rate decreased from 57 percent among CMSD's class of 2016 to 50 percent among the class of 2017, representing just a one percentage point increase from the baseline class of 2011. The percentage of students earning an associate's degree from Compact two-year institutions within three years increased to 12 percent for the class of 2018, a 10 percentage point gain from the class of 2009.

In January 2019, Cleveland became a chapter of Say Yes to Education, a national nonprofit that supports communities working to ensure all children have the opportunity to succeed in postsecondary education.¹ By removing barriers to student success along the continuum of preschool through postsecondary education and career readiness, our community believes Say Yes Cleveland is the logical next step in making progress toward the goals of the Cleveland Plan.

Say Yes Cleveland provides tuition scholarships to eligible students who reside in the City of Cleveland and graduate from the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) and its partnering charter high schools. The first scholarships were awarded this fall to the 2019 graduating class of CMSD. In addition, Say Yes Cleveland provides support services to CMSD and partnering charter students from preschool through 12th grade, starting in 16 schools this year, and rolling out to every CMSD school within four years. Services will include afterschool and summer programming, legal services, mental health services, and a Family Support Specialist in each school to connect students and their families to needed assistance.

Civic leaders, including the Say Yes convening partners – the city of Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, CMSD, the Cleveland Foundation, College Now Greater Cleveland, and the United Way of Greater Cleveland – believe that the initiative will spark continued improvements in postsecondary readiness and lead to an increase in postsecondary educational attainment rates among our high school graduates. Over \$90 million has been raised toward a \$125 million goal to support tuition scholarships for the next 25 years.

Say Yes focuses on Cleveland’s long-term future and is perfectly aligned to the Cleveland Plan. It is a catalyst for transforming postsecondary education access and persistence outcomes for Cleveland’s students.

¹ For more information on Say Yes to Education Cleveland, including details about progress, scholarship guidelines, and eligibility for students, visit <https://sayyescleveland.org/>.



The positive gains *Cleveland’s Plan for Transforming Schools* is making for Cleveland’s children are evident. The gap between Cleveland’s students and their peers statewide in promotion to fourth grade, state test performance, academic growth, and high school graduation is decreasing. In many areas, these trends have stabilized, demonstrating continued improvement over multiple academic years.

CMSD is among the fastest improving districts statewide in kindergarten through third-grade literacy, student test scores, and graduation rates. Where Cleveland once ranked last in many categories among its peer Ohio urban districts, it is now the only urban district to see an increase in kindergarten through third-grade literacy statewide. It also has the second largest gain in student test scores in reading and math in third through 12th grade, and it is in the top one percent for growth statewide in its four-year graduation rate.

Reflecting on the original collaborative intent of the Cleveland Plan, partnering charter schools have also contributed meaningfully to improving educational outcomes for Cleveland’s children. CMSD’s partnering charters showed improvement in the Third Grade Reading Guarantee for the fourth year in a row, and in the most recent year, scores for student test performance increased.

As a community, we must build on the positive momentum to ensure every child in Cleveland has both access to quality education and the support needed to be successful. While we are seeing steady progress from preschool through 12th grade, we cannot ignore the declines in enrollment, persistence, and graduation from college for CMSD graduates.

The lasting commitment of stakeholders to the success of Cleveland’s children is unique, as few cities can point to the level of sustained support for quality education. The successes we’ve seen from the Cleveland Plan, our community’s collective commitment to measuring data and reporting progress on student success, and Cleveland’s reputation for strong civic leadership and philanthropy, contributed to Cleveland being named a Say Yes to Education chapter in January 2019. Say Yes Cleveland has already begun to remove barriers to student success along the continuum of preschool through postsecondary education and career readiness by providing tuition scholarships and support services for Cleveland’s children. We are confident that our 2020 commitment to revisiting the goals of the Cleveland Plan and updating them to account for progress made and changes in the educational landscape, along with the recent launch of Say Yes Cleveland, will continue to accelerate the pace of positive change in our city’s public schools, both district and charter.

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For more information on the Cleveland Transformation Alliance and
Cleveland's Plan for Transforming Schools visit myCLEschool.org.

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