Mass insight
education & research

Harrisburg School District District Diagnostic

December 2022

Part I: Overview & Key Context

Part II: Findings in Each Domain: Strengths and Growth Areas & Opportunities

Part III: Recommendations

Purpose of this Collaboration

The purpose of the collaboration between the Harrisburg School District and Mass Insight Education & Research is to identify district strengths and opportunities for growth in order to increase student achievement and equip leaders with information to support recovery planning.
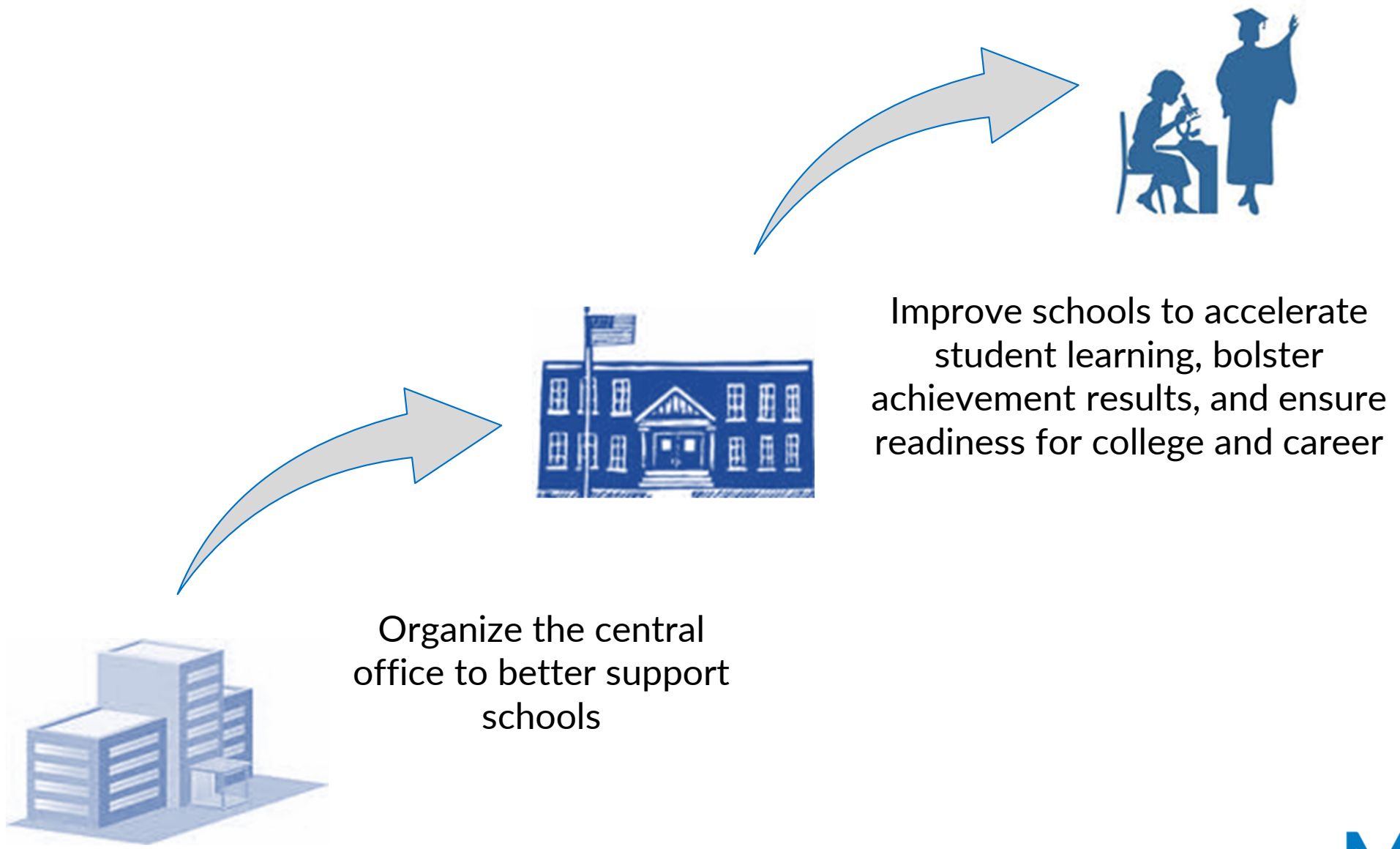
Objectives of the District Diagnostic

1 To gather information about the district's current status and to identify key strengths and areas of growth.

2 To prompt reflective conversations about the district's current performance relative to its desired state.

3 To identify opportunities to improve performance by providing recommendations designed to promote organizational effectiveness, and efficiency, while maintaining an unwavering focus on student achievement.

Core assumption: the district supports schools to support learning

Improve schools to accelerate student learning, bolster achievement results, and ensure readiness for college and career

Organize the central office to better support schools

Overview: process to create report

Step 1: Data Collection & School Visits

Mass Insight collected data from a variety of sources and engaged stakeholders to evaluate district systems and processes. This included performance data, HR data, existing reports and documents, feedback gathered in interviews and focus groups, and surveys collected from school staff, central office staff, students, and families. Mass Insight also conducted school visits at six schools to observe classrooms and common spaces.

Step 2: Review & Synthesis

Then, Mass Insight analyzed all information gathered by looking across evidence gathered in each of the ten elements in order to identify organizational strengths and areas for growth and improvement.

Step 3: Recommendations

Mass Insight developed recommendations based on diagnostic findings Recommendations are high-level and intended to inform conversation and a planning process.

Data Collection & School Visits

Data and Document Review

Includes assessment results, organizational charts, current and prior strategic plans and financial data.

Survey Results

Includes school leaders, school staff, students, and families. Surveys were available to students and families in English and Spanish.

Interviews and Focus Groups

Interviews with central office leadership, central office department directors and staff, school principals and assistant principals, union representatives, and school staff.

Classroom walk-throughs

Classroom walk-throughs in six schools: two elementary schools, two middle schools, and two high schools.

6 school visits

37 classroom visits

20 school staff voices represented across focus groups

22 interviews with central office administrators

465 school staff survey responses

1,292 student survey responses

106 family survey responses

Harrisburg School District Snapshot

6,471 Students	12 Schools
$111,292,203 SY 20-21 Budget	**458 Classroom** Teachers

1 @kreed@massinsight.org UPDATE
Krista Reed, 1/20/2023

SY 21-22 Student Population & Demographics

87.10%
Economically
Disadvantaged

16.50%
Special
Education

Race/Ethnicity
Asian   2.2%
Black   53.6%
Hispanic   37.6%
White   3.7%
Multiracial 2.8%

17%
English
Language
Learners

2   @kreed@massinsight.org UPDATE
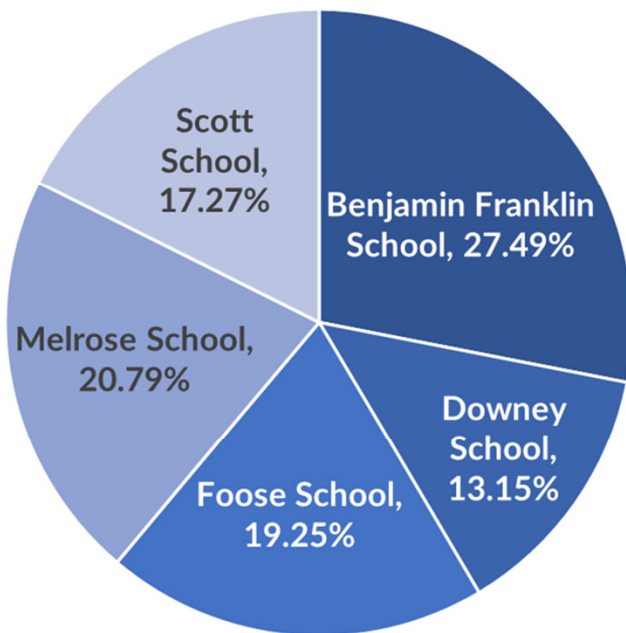   _Assigned to Krista Reed_
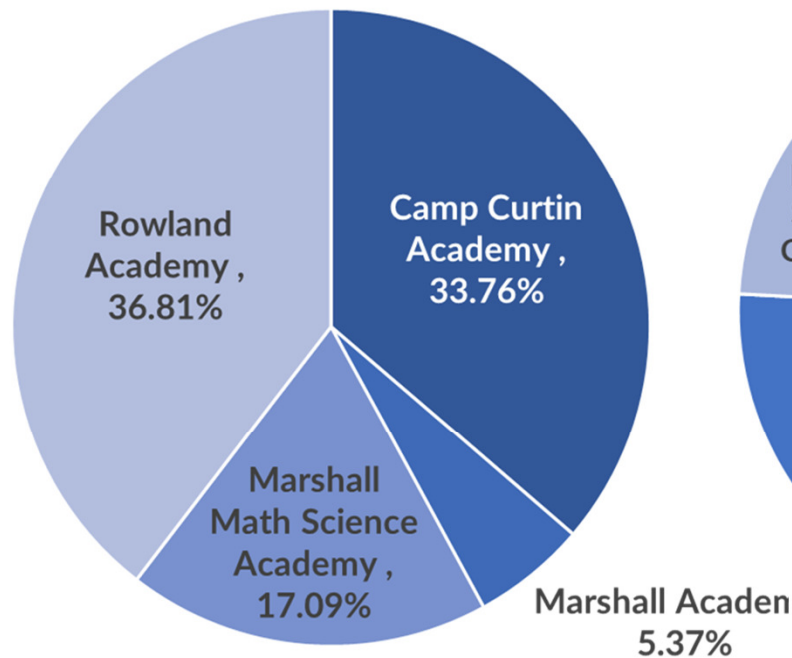   Krista Reed, 1/20/2023

Harrisburg School Enrollment

Benjamin Franklin School enrolls the largest percentage of elementary school enrollment. Rowland Academy has the largest percentage of middle school students. Harrisburg High School - John Harris Campus enrolls the largest percentage of high school students in the district.
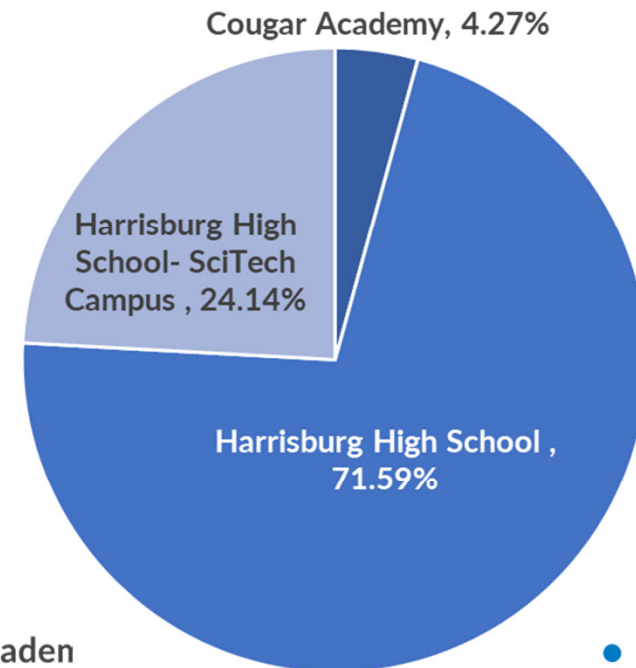
Elementary

Scott School, 17.27%
Benjamin Franklin School, 27.49%
Melrose School, 20.79%
Foose School, 19.25%
Downey School, 13.15%

Middle

Rowland Academy, 36.81%
Camp Curtin Academy, 33.76%
Marshall Math Science Academy, 17.09%
Marshall Acaden 5.37%

High

Cougar Academy, 4.27%
Harrisburg High School- SciTech Campus, 24.14%
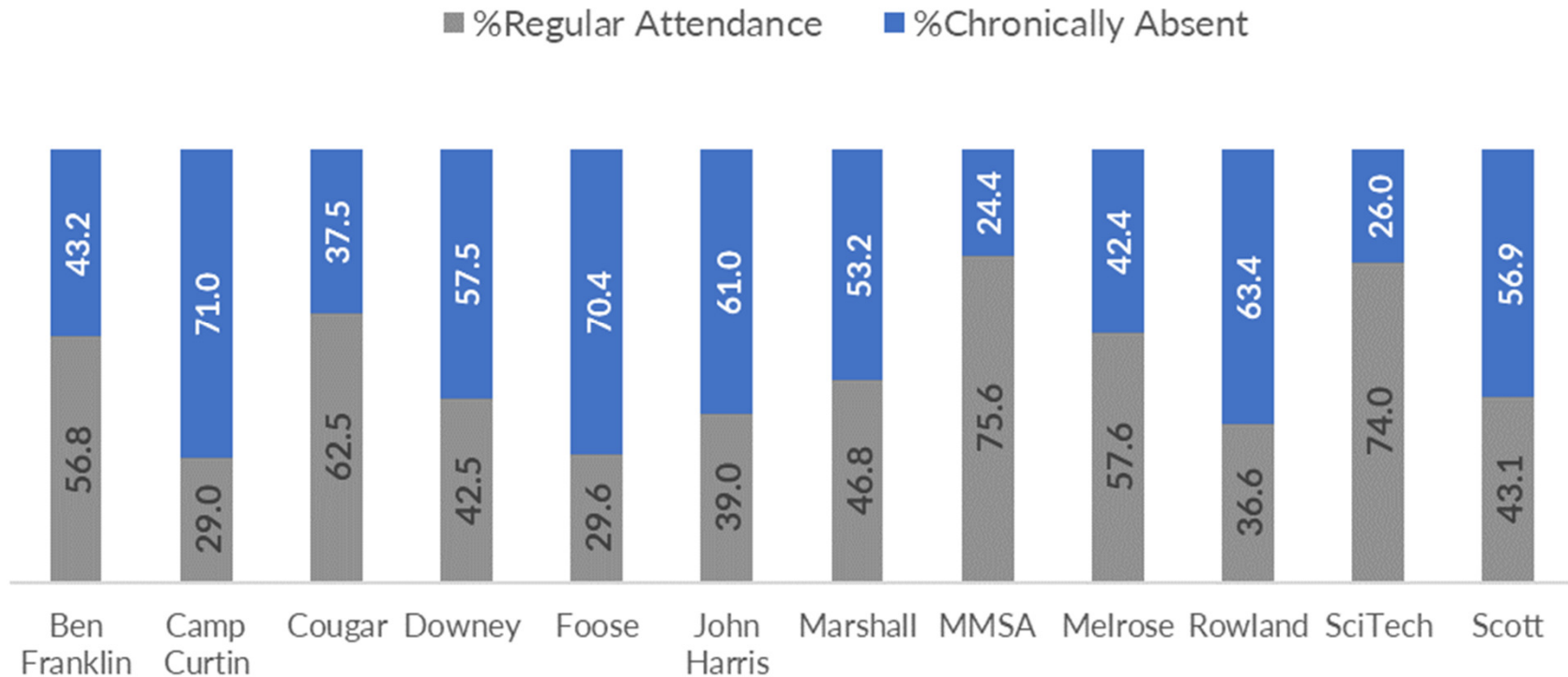Harrisburg High School, 71.59%

based on SY20-21
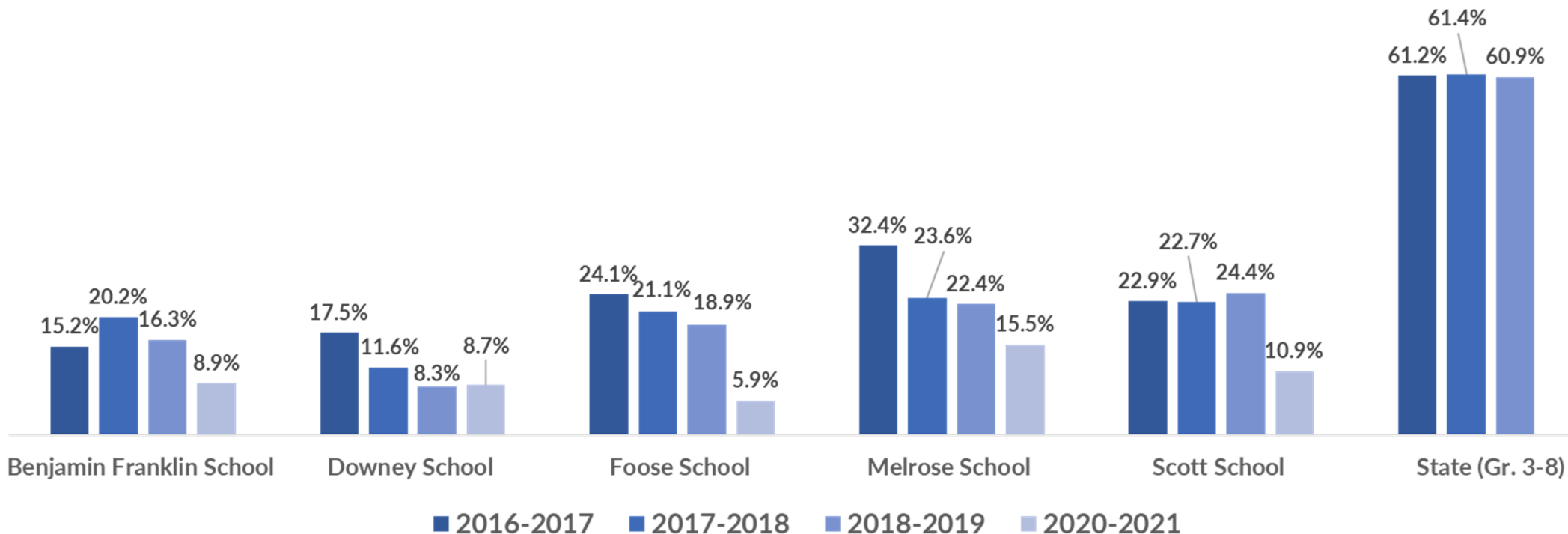
Student Attendance

Half of all Harrisburg schools have a less than 50% regular attendance rate. Regular attendance is the percentage of students attending school at least 90% of the scheduled school days. These six schools have a chronic absenteeism rate of over 50%.

■ %Regular Attendance ■ %Chronically Absent

School	%Regular Attendance	%Chronically Absent
Ben Franklin	56.8	43.2
Camp Curtin	29.0	71.0
Cougar	62.5	37.5
Downey	42.5	57.5
Foose	29.6	70.4
John Harris	39.0	61.0
Marshall	46.8	53.2
MMSA	75.6	24.4
Melrose	57.6	42.4
Rowland	36.6	63.4
SciTech	74.0	26.0
Scott	43.1	56.9

Elementary English Language Arts PSSA Performance

There has been a decrease in the percentage of students who are advanced or proficient on the English Language Arts (ELA) PSSA. In three out of five elementary schools, less than 10% of students met the ELA standard in 2021.
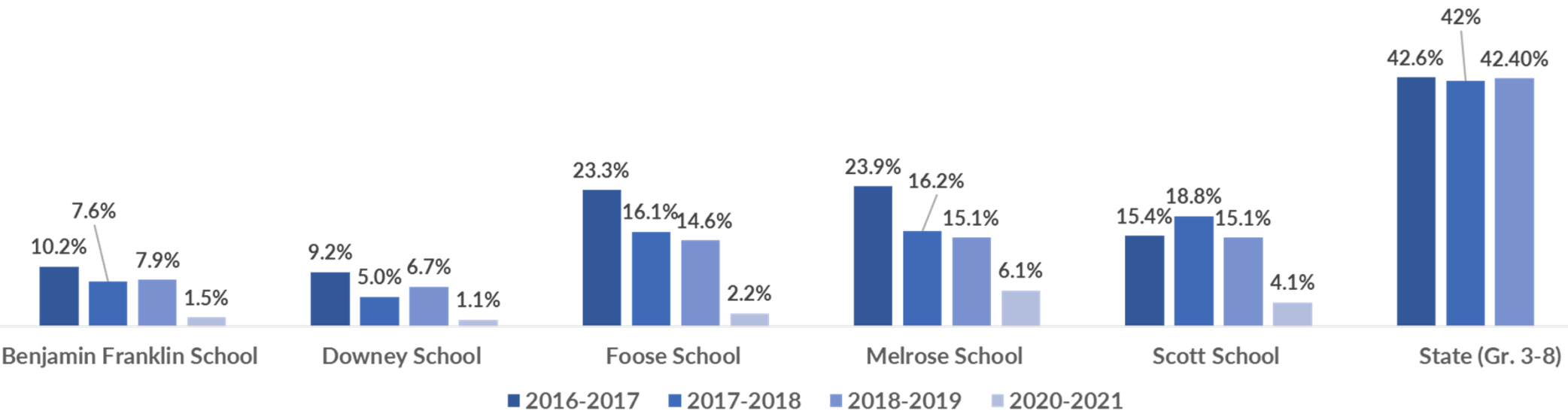
English Language Arts

Benjamin Franklin School: 15.2%, 20.2%, 16.3%, 8.9%
Downey School: 17.5%, 11.6%, 8.3%, 8.7%
Foose School: 24.1%, 21.1%, 18.9%, 5.9%
Melrose School: 32.4%, 23.6%, 22.4%, 15.5%
Scott School: 22.9%, 22.7%, 24.4%, 10.9%
State (Gr. 3-8): 61.2%, 61.4%, 60.9%

Legend: ■ 2016-2017 ■ 2017-2018 ■ 2018-2019 ■ 2020-2021

Elementary Mathematics PSSA Performance

There has been a decrease in the percentage of students who are advanced or proficient on the Mathematics PSSA. In all elementary schools, less than 10% of students met the Mathematics standard in 2021.
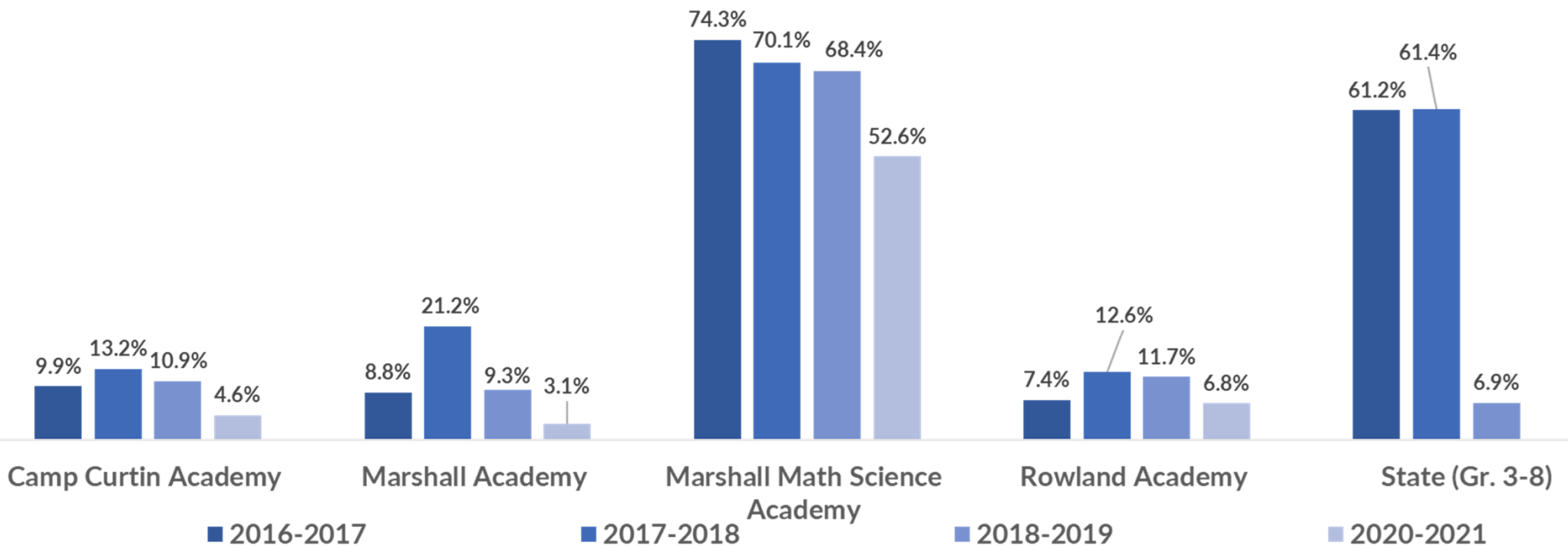
Mathematics

Benjamin Franklin School: 10.2%, 7.6%, 7.9%, 1.5%
Downey School: 9.2%, 5.0%, 6.7%, 1.1%
Foose School: 23.3%, 16.1%, 14.6%, 2.2%
Melrose School: 23.9%, 16.2%, 15.1%, 6.1%
Scott School: 15.4%, 18.8%, 15.1%, 4.1%
State (Gr. 3-8): 42.6%, 42%, 42.40%

■ 2016-2017 ■ 2017-2018 ■ 2018-2019 ■ 2020-2021

Middle School English Language Arts PSSA Performance

There are performance gaps among middle school students who are advanced or proficient on the English Language Arts (ELA) PSSA. Marshall Math and Science Academy has the largest percentage of students who are advanced or proficient.

English Language Arts

Camp Curtin Academy: 9.9%, 13.2%, 10.9%, 4.6%
Marshall Academy: 8.8%, 21.2%, 9.3%, 3.1%
Marshall Math Science Academy: 74.3%, 70.1%, 68.4%, 52.6%
Rowland Academy: 7.4%, 12.6%, 11.7%, 6.8%
State (Gr. 3-8): 61.2%, 61.4%, 6.9%

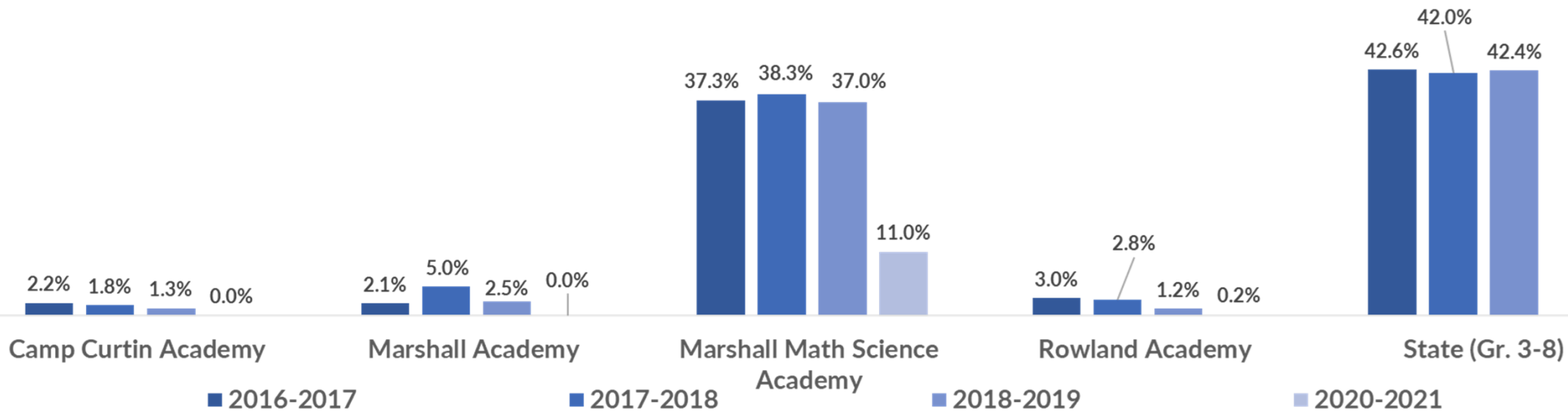■ 2016-2017   ■ 2017-2018   ■ 2018-2019   ■ 2020-2021
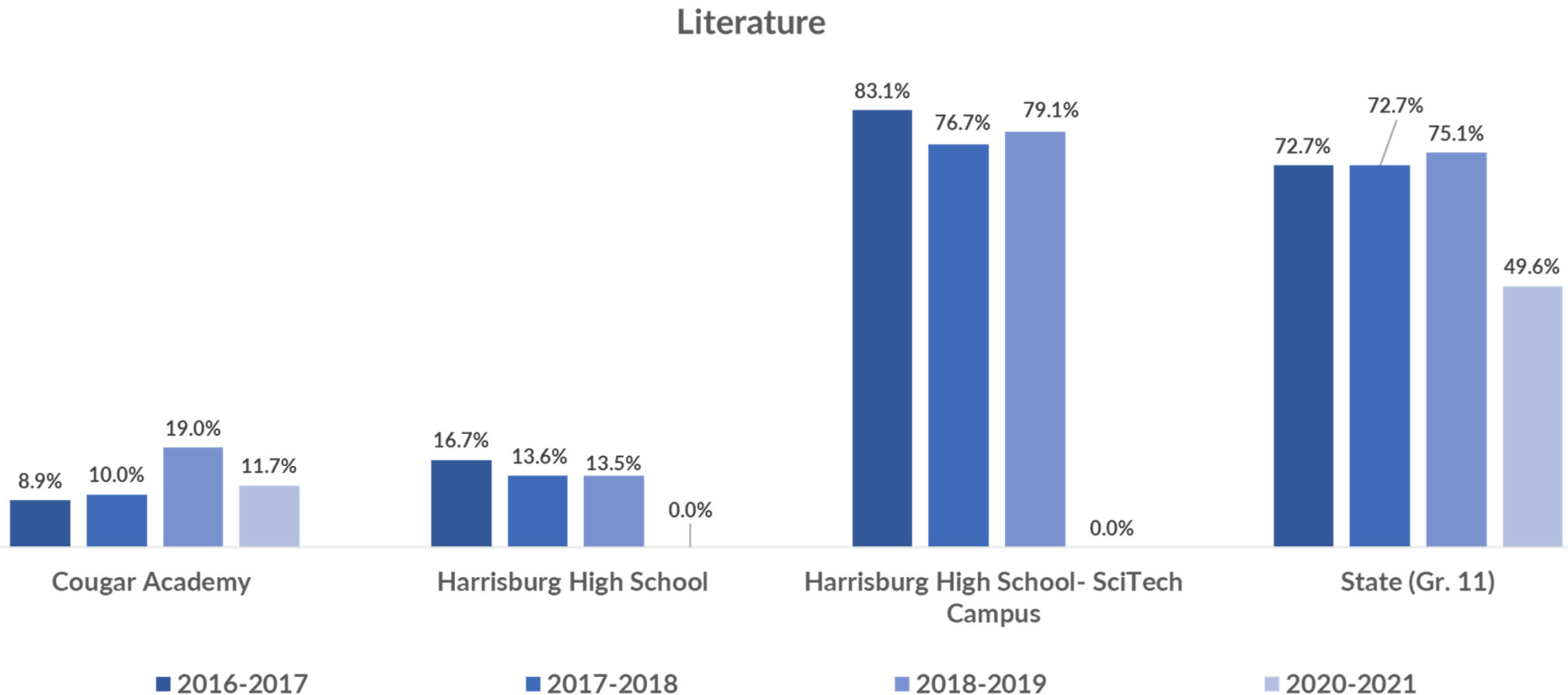
Middle School Mathematics PSSA Performance

There are performance gaps among middle school students who are advanced or proficient on the Mathematics PSSA. Marshall Math and Science Academy has the largest percentage of students who are advanced or proficient.

Mathematics

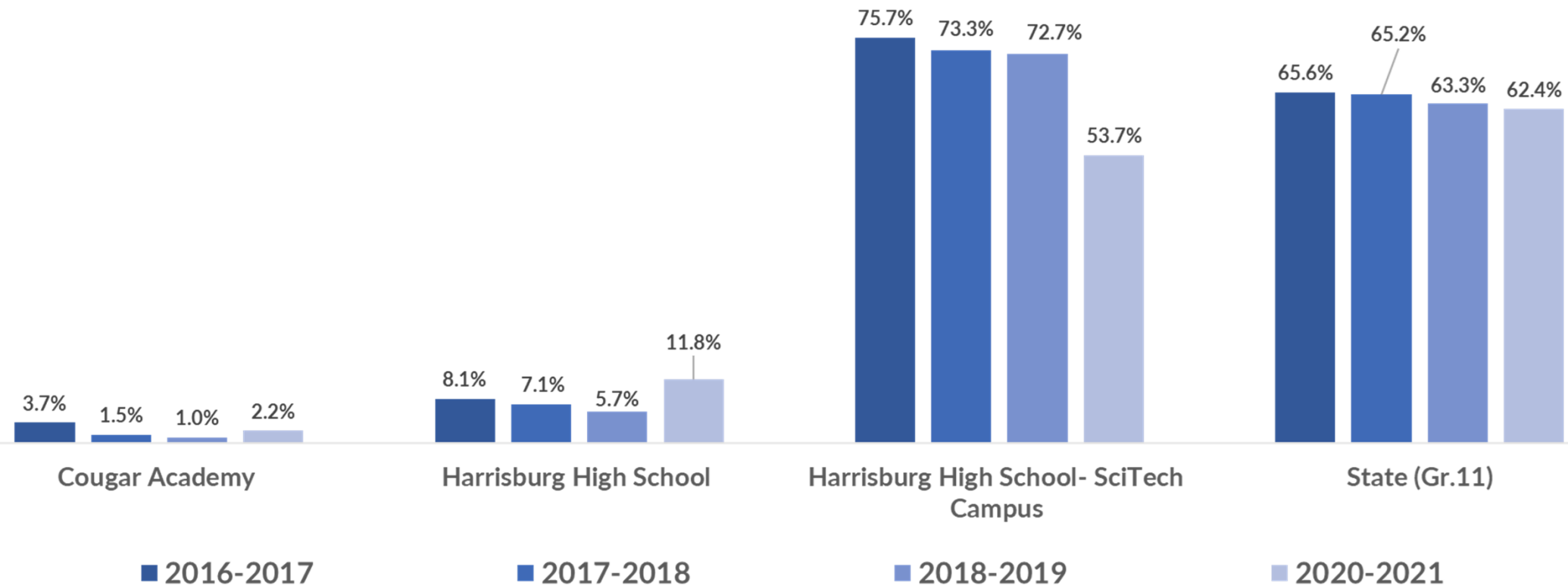| School	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2020-2021
Camp Curtin Academy	2.2%	1.8%	1.3%	0.0%
Marshall Academy	2.1%	5.0%	2.5%	0.0%
Marshall Math Science Academy	37.3%	38.3%	37.0%	11.0%
Rowland Academy	3.0%	2.8%	1.2%	0.2%
State (Gr. 3-8)	42.6%	42.0%	42.4%	

High School Keystone Performance

There are gaps among high schools in Keystone literature performance. Harrisburg High School SciTech Campus has comparable rates of advanced or proficient student performance as those at the state level.

Literature

|	Cougar Academy	Harrisburg High School	Harrisburg High School- SciTech Campus	State (Gr. 11)
2016-2017	8.9%	16.7%	83.1%	72.7%
2017-2018	10.0%	13.6%	76.7%	72.7%
2018-2019	19.0%	13.5%	79.1%	75.1%
2020-2021	11.7%	0.0%	0.0%	49.6%

High School Keystone Performance

There are gaps in performance on the math Keystone. Cougar Academy and Harrisburg High School have about 10% of students who are either advanced or proficient.

Mathematics

	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2020-2021
Cougar Academy	3.7%	1.5%	1.0%	2.2%
Harrisburg High School	8.1%	7.1%	5.7%	11.8%
Harrisburg High School- SciTech Campus	75.7%	73.3%	72.7%	53.7%
State (Gr.11)	65.6%	65.2%	63.3%	62.4%

PA Academic Growth Scores in 2021-22
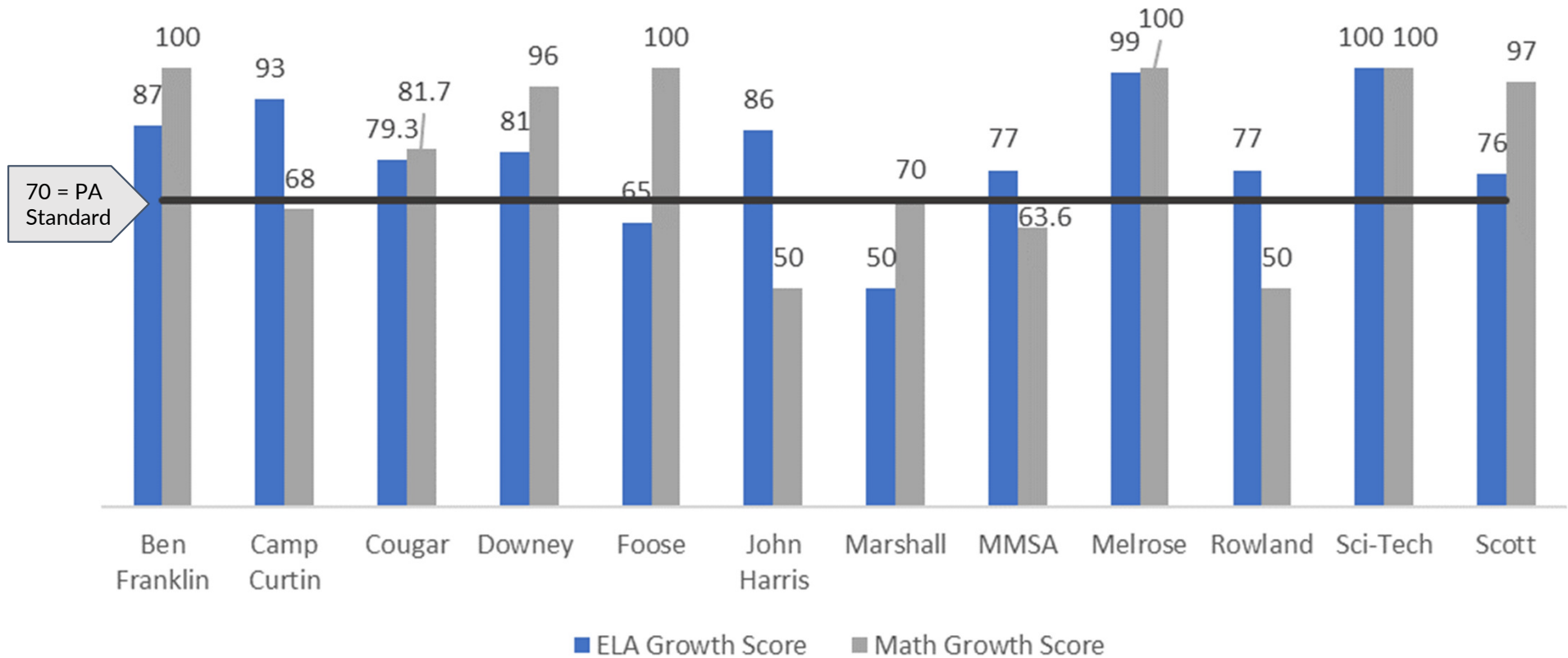
*10 of 12 schools had a PA Academic Growth Score of 70 or greater in ELA.
*7 of 12 schools had a PA Academic Growth Score of 70 or better in Math.

Though several schools did not make the interim goal for achievement in ELA and Math, some schools met or exceeded the standard demonstrating growth as indicated by PVAAS results for the 2021-22 school year.
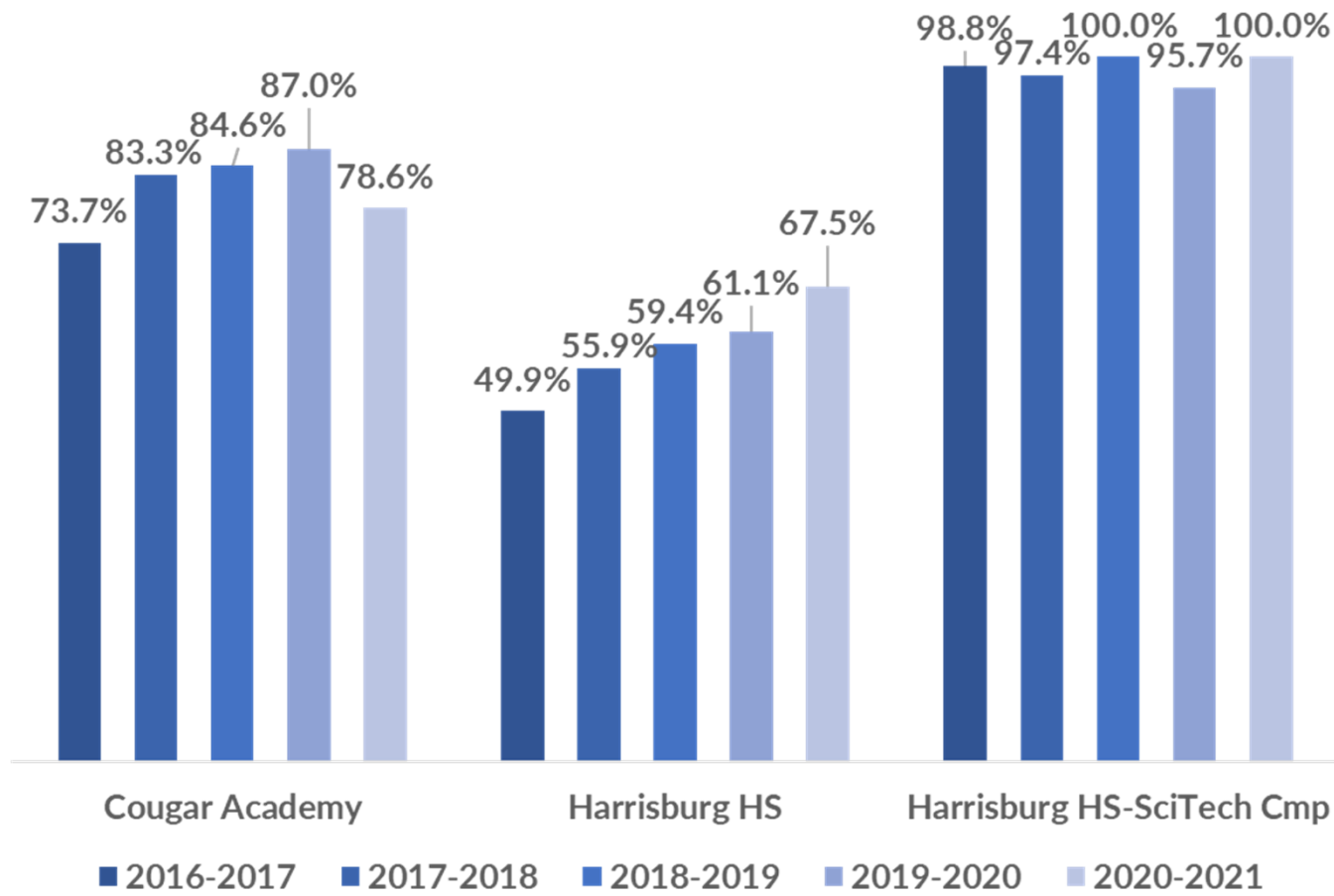
4-Year Graduation Rates

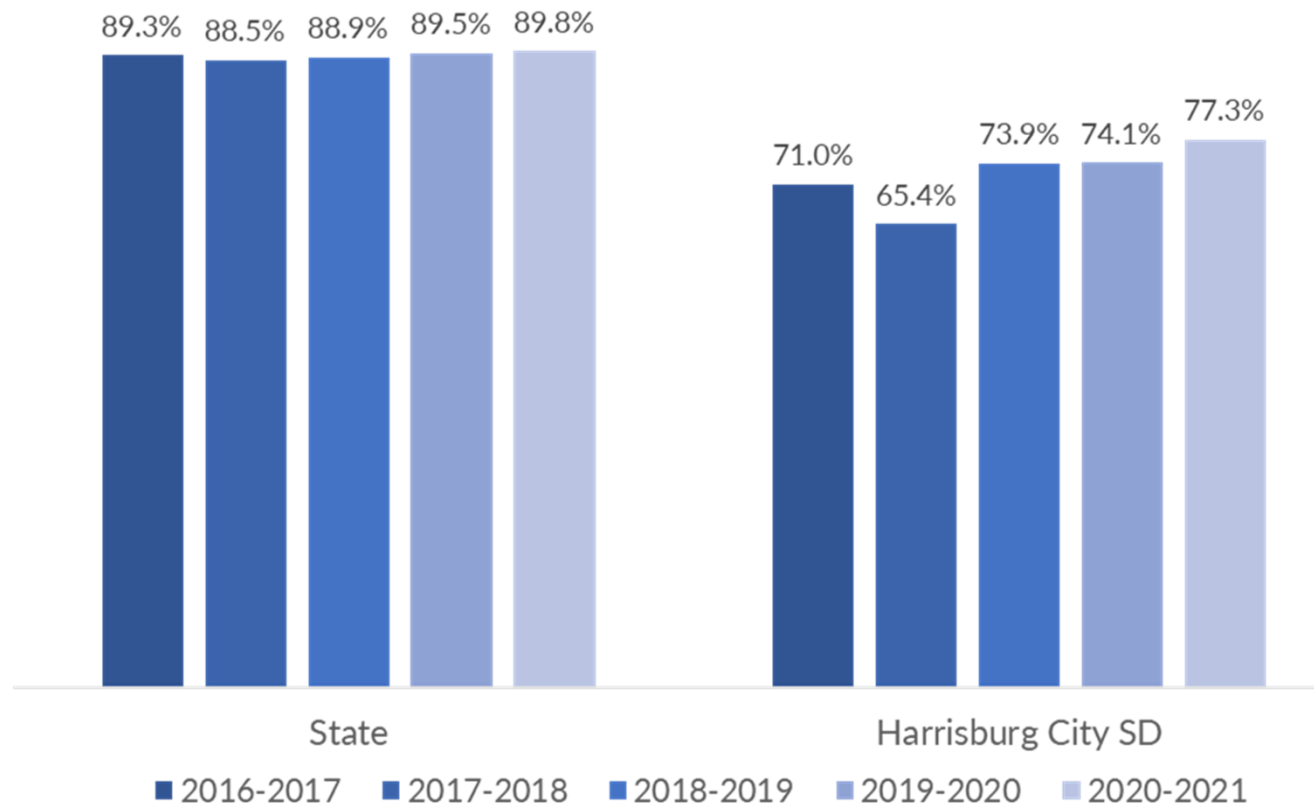Harrisburg City SD has an average 4-year graduation rate of 74% compared to the state at 84%.
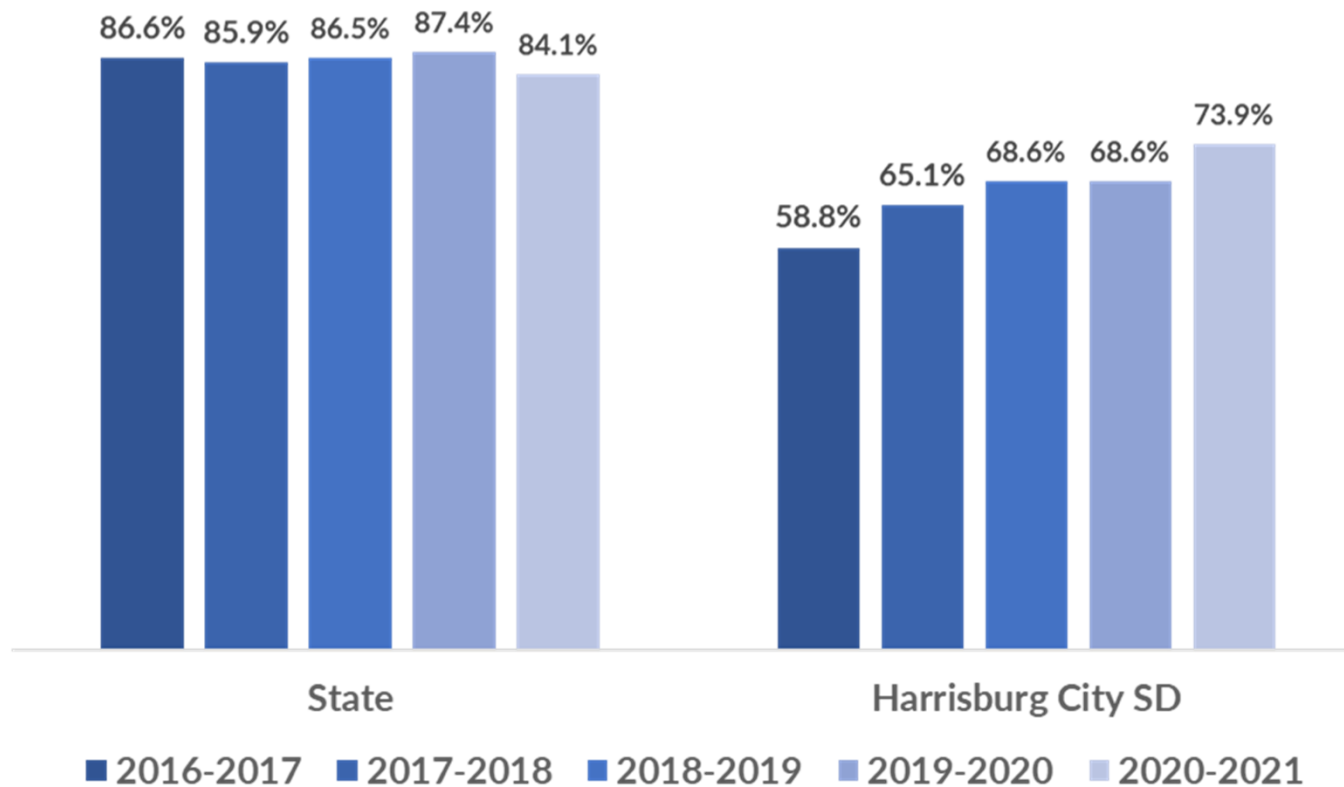
4-Year Graduation Rates

In 2020-21, Harrisburg HS SciTech Campus had the highest 4-year graduation rate at 100%.
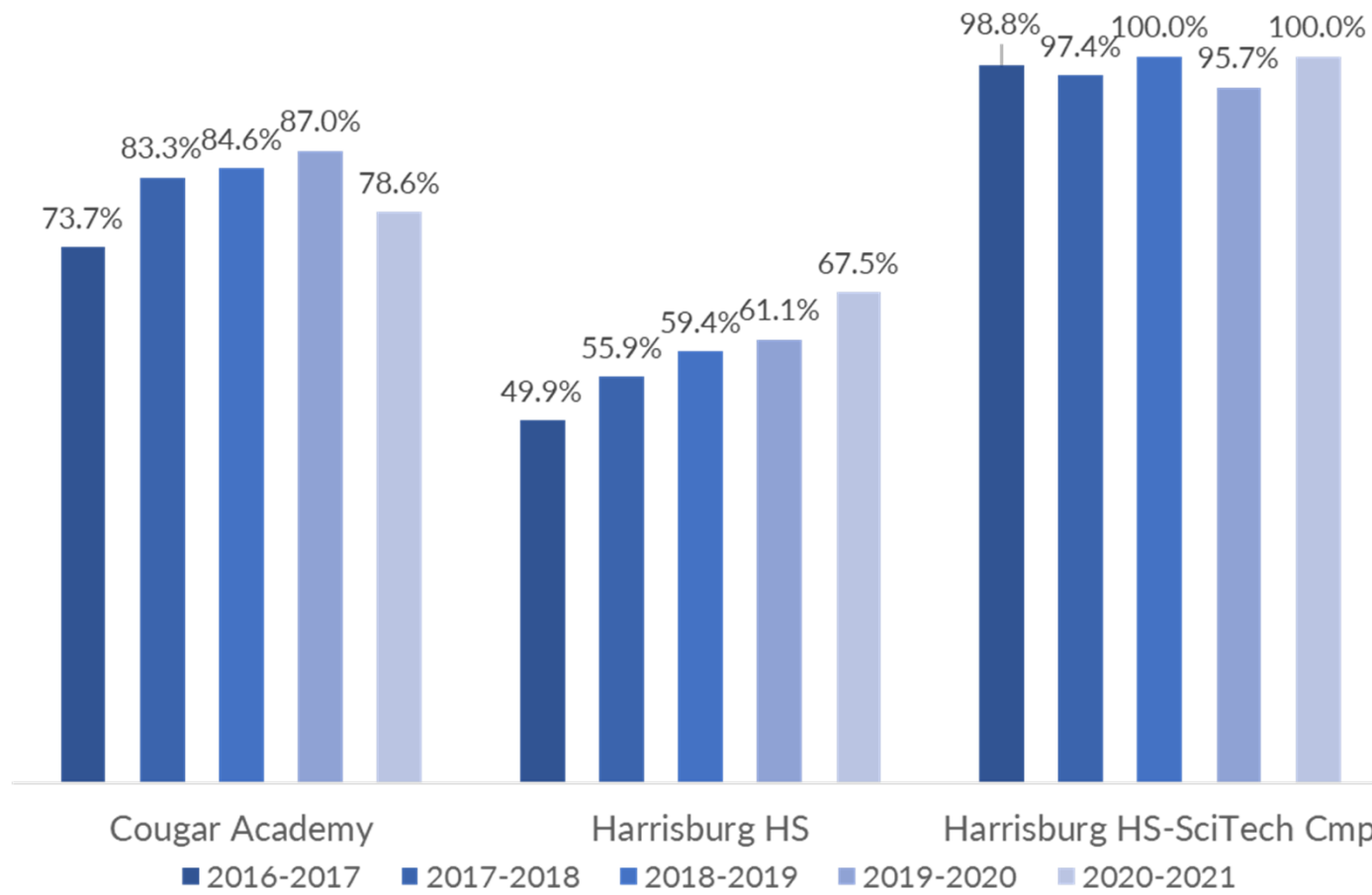
5-Year Graduation Rates

The Harrisburg School District has an average 5-year graduation rate of 77.3% compared to the state rate of 89.8%.

5-Year Graduation Rates

Harrisburg HS SciTech Campus has the highest 5-year graduation rate at 100%.

Contextualizing Harrisburg Graduation Rates

District Graduation Rates

- In 2020-21, Harrisburg SD's 4-year cohort graduation rate ranked better than 3% of districts in the state. This is a slight improvement from 2015-16, when it ranked better than 2% of districts in the state.

- Of 500 public school districts in the state of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg is one of 17 districts with 4-year cohort graduation rates below 75%.

Harrisburg High School Graduation Rates

- In 2020- 21, Harrisburg HS' 4-year cohort graduation rate ranked better than 5% of high schools in the state.

- Of 592 public high schools in the state, Harrisburg HS is one of 37 that had a 4-year cohort graduation rate below 70%.

SciTech Campus Graduation Rates

- In 2020-21, SciTech Campus was one of 11 schools with a 100% 4-year cohort graduation rate.

- In the last five years, SciTech Campus' 4-year cohort graduation rate ranked better than 96% of schools in the state.

Part I: Overview & Key Context

Part II: Findings in Each Domain: Strengths and Growth Areas & Opportunities

Part III: Recommendations

Organization of Findings by Domain

- Mass Insight's findings are organized into ten elements, which are further described on the following slide.

- Findings are based on information gathered from school visits, survey data, focus groups and interviews, and a review of data and documents.

- Each element's findings–identified by name and element number at the top of the slide–contains the following:

  - a **Progress** slide, which provides a summary of strengths and evidence of improvement since the 2019 district diagnostic,

  - several **Evidence** slides, which provide key information from stakeholders, data, or documents that informed the findings, and

  - an **Opportunity** slide, which identifies continued areas of need and opportunities to improve.

District Diagnostic Elements

1 **Vision, strategy, and culture:** Clear vision, strategy and manageable set of priorities for the district that recognize the local environment (*e.g. regulations, statues, contracts, funding, politics, governance*) and district's capacity for change while promoting a culture of excellence and high expectations for all.

2 **Organizational clarity and collaboration:** Clear central office structures, processes, and policies that work together to support school and student success.

3 **Focus on the instruction:** Curriculum, materials, tools and supports that help school leaders, teachers and other school staff constantly improve and refine standards-based instructional practice.

4 **School management**: Policies, structures, and systems that create the conditions needed for school success, maintain accountability for results, and enable effective school leaders.

5 **Central services and operations:** Effective delivery of services to schools, allowing school-based educators to focus on teaching and learning.

6 **Finance:** Alignment of financial resources with district needs and priorities.

7 **Talent Management:** Systems and processes to recruit, place, develop, and retain talented staff.

8 **Stakeholder engagement and communications:** Intentional systems and processes to maintain open lines of communication with staff, family and community stakeholders.

9 **Data:** Data is available and informs decision-making at all levels of the district and in schools.

10 **Focus on equity:** Policies, structures, systems, and resources ensure equitable, high quality education for all students, including students with exceptional needs.

Progress: Vision, Strategy, and Culture

Clear vision, strategy and manageable set of priorities for the district that recognize the local environment (e.g. regulations, statues, contracts, funding, politics, governance) and district's capacity for change while promoting a culture of excellence and high expectations for all.

Strengths

- The district's mission, vision, shared values, and core beliefs are student-centered, inclusive, and reflective of a community that strives to provide a high-quality educational experience to all students.

- The district is making concerted efforts to exit receivership.

- The recovery plan reflects data-informed priorities to address the district's improvement areas of academics, administration and governance, operations, financial management, revenue, and workforce.

- Many new district-level staff have been hired to replace MCIU staff and are creating systems, structures, and processes that support the district and further recovery plan priorities.

- District leadership conveyed a culture of support, particularly for new staff, at the beginning of the 2022-23 school year.

Evidence of Improvement

- Board members are receiving training by the receiver about their governance roles.

- New central office leaders are developing personal and collective leadership.

- New central office leaders are also developing trust and collaborating to create systems, structures, and processes to support district operations.

While a majority of staff are aware of the district's vision, less than half feel a clear plan is in place to bring that vision to life.

Evidence: Vision, Strategy, and Culture
What staff shared about district priorities…

"We have all these great ideas, and we try to do all of these things all at the same time, and it… gets everything bogged down… I think we need to focus."

"There are a lot of goals that we have been notified of, but there are not clear ways we are going to get there. There is a lot of talk but no action."

"It's hard to maintain sight on the vision because there are so many paths to go down."

"We are not focused on student achievement."

"The district is going after too many things at once."

"First steps are taken, great ideas shared, but then everything stops. There is no accountability or real push to follow through."

"There are too many different mandates from different aspects of leadership that at times contradict each other, forcing staff to choose which to follow."

"We have a recovery plan, but no one talks about the internal steps to achieve it."

"The vision and what's being done are different things right now."

"Leaders should lead by example and clearly state and support the vision of the district. Leadership still seems to be fractured and leading their own agenda."

District priorities for improvement are clearly laid out in the Recovery Plan and drive toward exiting receivership; however the steps, process, and those responsible for ensuring its implementation and impact are unclear even to district staff who should be leading key priorities.

Evidence: Vision, Strategy, and Culture

What staff shared about the district's current culture...

The district has a strong culture of excellence and high expectations for all.

Agree, 7%	Somewhat agree, 23%	Somewhat disagree, 30%	Disagree, 40%

Words and phrases used to describe the current district culture include:

- "Progressing"
- "Going backwards"
- "Uncomfortable"
- "More focused on instruction now"

- "Divided based on positions"
- "Toxic"
- "Distrustful"
- "Disjointed"
- "Compliance-based"

The current district culture is strained, compounded by staff turnover, negative past experiences, and a perceived lack of district leadership investment in relationships and school-based needs.

Evidence: Vision, Strategy, and Culture
What staff shared about the district's current culture...

"Staff does not feel supported; only attacked. Staff is doing all they can possibly do as educators, yet are being asked to do more than is humanly possible."

"We still have a lot of work to do with rebuilding the culture in Harrisburg. Support is give to few. [The] District seems reactive instead of proactive."

"Our morale is low because it seems like no one cares."

"We need to start doing what we say we're gonna do in a timely manner."

"Harrisburg SD needs to have high expectations for our students to be successful. We need to set the bar high. Excellence needs to be our culture."

"There's so much transition and so much change that I don't even know that I can say we have a cohesive culture."

School and team or department cultures were more positively described than the overall district culture. Leadership transitions and past issues in the district were named as contributing factors to the current district culture, as were tensions and mistrust between the district, community, and city.

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Opportunity: Vision, Strategy, and Culture
Comparison to the 2019 District Diagnostic Findings

Areas of Need and Opportunities to Improve

- The receiver and chief recovery officer are monitoring the recovery plan implementation, yet the cabinet is not actively monitoring recovery plan implementation or impact.

- It is unclear to district-and school-level staff what the district's priorities are and how they are working collectively to drive priorities forward.

- The lack of clear district-wide priorities results in reactionary responses, which leaders describe as focusing on fires.

- While new district-level staff are now in place, many systems, structures, and processes are still under development.

- The district's shared values and core beliefs are not currently experienced by stakeholders, driving district priorities, or positively impacting the district's culture.

- There are examples of some intentional efforts to build relationships between the central office and other stakeholders, yet many stakeholder describe the current district culture as distrustful and toxic.

Progress: Organizational Clarity and Collaboration

Clear central office structures, processes, and policies that work together to support school and student success.

Strengths

- New central office leaders are in place, replacing most MCIU staff. New leaders are developing systems, structures, and processes to support greater district function and organization.

- Leadership structures–such as the cabinet, Act 141 committee, and school board–are functioning.

- A weekly bulletin goes out from the Office of Academics to school leaders with district department information.

Evidence of Improvement

- Department leadership positions are filled with qualified and engaged leaders committed to creating structures, systems, and process.

- There are structures that support and examples of cross-department collaboration.

- There are efforts to provide key information and clarity in district communications to school leaders.

Central office staffing is organized to support school and student success.

Agree, 1%

| Somewhat agree, 33% | Somewhat disagree, 33% | Disagree, 22% |
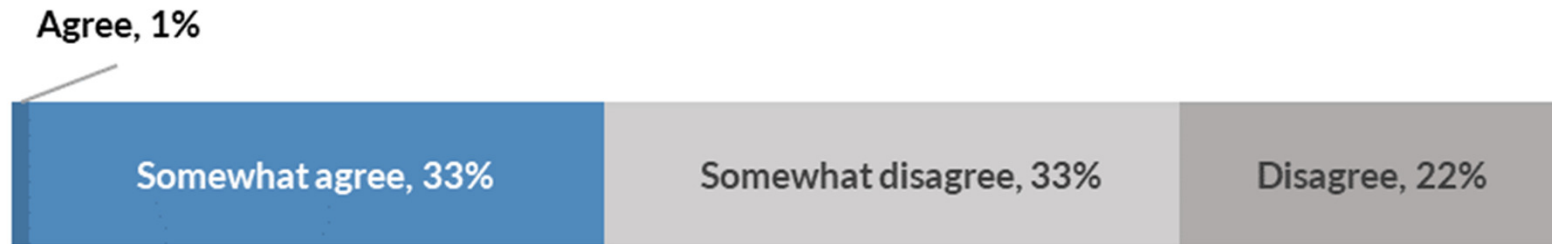
Recent district leadership hires are qualified and well equipped to support the district's forward movement in developing structures, processes, and policies that work together to support schools and student success.

Without a current central office organizational chart and the recent release of a staff directory, district and school staff are not only unclear about their roles and responsibilities, but also who to contact to address needs. Staff describe the current district organizational structure as "muddy" and "jumbled."

The lack of organizational structure has created unclear roles, responsibilities, and support for staff at all levels.

Evidence: Organizational Clarity and Collaboration

What district staff shared about central office communication, collaboration, and decision making...

- District staff feel internal communication is "disjointed," particularly around decisions and ownership of priorities so people are aware of their responsibilities.

- The district has contracted a communications consultant from the MCIU to support the development of a communications plan and high-level district communications.

- District staff noted the critical need for district communication to be right the first time, given the district's location in the state capital, as well as community desire for transparency.

- Many district leaders described a mutual "team philosophy" that supports departmental collaboration. And others recognized the need for greater collaboration and transparency.

- Communication and collaboration efforts have not yet resulted in a clear decision-making process. There is broad agreement that issues or problems are brought to the cabinet by members and discussions about the pros, cons, and consequences of decisions take place. Many mentioned that decisions often happen in isolation, and decisions are not always relayed through clear and consistent modes or structures.

> **District staff report an increase in staff collaboration, and an ongoing need to clarify and improve decision making processes and resulting communication.**
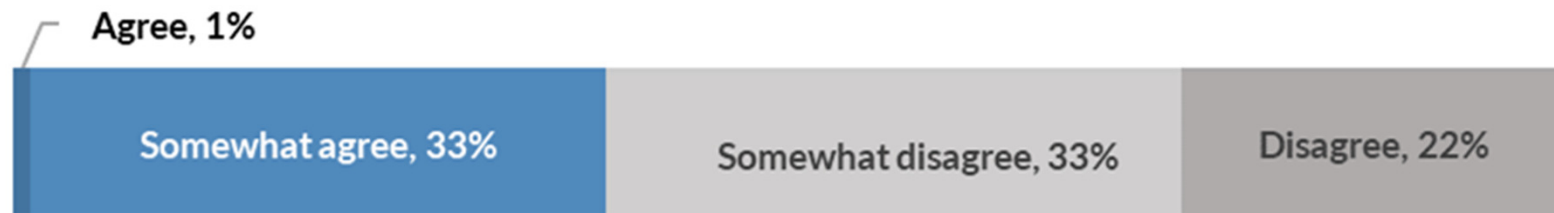
Evidence: Organizational Clarity and Collaboration

What school leaders shared about central office collaboration and communication...

Principal supervisors understand the strengths and challenges of the schools they supervise.

Agree, 39%	Somewhat agree, 28%	Somewhat disagree, 22%	Disagree, 11%

District departments effectively communicate.

Agree, 1%

Somewhat agree, 33%	Somewhat disagree, 33%	Disagree, 22%

School leader responses vary greatly about the extent to which they receive effective communication that keeps them informed. Similarly, school leader perceptions about district department communication and collaboration does not show consistency in the organization and support from the central office.

Areas of Need and Opportunities to Improve

- The organizational structure of the central office is unclear. How decisions are made in the central office, as well as roles and responsibilities, remain unclear for district and school staff.

- There is a lack of clear and timely communication from the central office to staff and families.

- School staff perceive a lack of partnership or relationships with the central office and feel the district has reverted to a top-down approach that is not collaborative.

- Structures, processes, and polices do not yet streamline the focus of district or school staff on student success.

- There is a continued need for greater collaboration and communication among central office departments, particularly in support of school and student success.

Progress: Focus on Instruction

Curriculum, materials, tools and supports that help school leaders, teachers and other school staff constantly improve and refine standards-based instructional practice.

Strengths

- There are strong academic performance tasks in the Amended Recovery Plan.

- The district has implemented initiatives to address student mental health needs.

- The district has adopted the Station Rotation instructional delivery model.

Evidence of Improvement

- The district has an instructional vision.

- The district has adopted and has a plan for implementing the Station Rotation Instructional Model.

- There are some curricular resources.

- All schools have a reading specialist, math interventionist, and an instructional coach.

- There is an opportunity to better understand and replicate effective instructional practices throughout the district that are leading to positive student outcomes and growth.

Evidence: **Focus on Instruction**
From classroom observations...

Mass Insight conducted classroom walkthroughs of six schools and 37 classrooms.

- Observations of classroom materials, resources, and practices indicate that some classroom environments reflected, affirmed, and/or honored student identities and made connections to students' cultural schema.

- In 57% of observed classrooms, there was evidence of positive student-teacher interactions, such as teachers providing individualized support, showing connections with students, and genuine interest in teaching the material and providing feedback to students.

- During observations, students were learning and working:

  - independently in 36% of classrooms, primarily on laptops,

  - as a whole group in 42% of classrooms, and

  - in small groups in 22% of classrooms.

- The learning objective was presented to students in 70% of classrooms..

- During Mi classroom observations, in 97% of the classes visited, the standards aligned to the lessons being taught were not posted or visible in the classroom on the board.

- In many middle and high school classrooms, students used cell phones during class to watch movies or other non-learning related activities, as well as other off-task behavior.

What school staff shared about current instructional conditions...

3

Central office and schools work together to improve and refine standards-based instructional practice.

Agree, 10%	Somewhat agree, 39%	Somewhat disagree, 22%	Disagree, 21%	N/A, 8%

- Non-certified teachers are entering the district with minimal or no background knowledge in the field of education. There is a growing need for instructional support and PD.

- All principals are not able to provide the adequate instructional support for staff and teachers due to competing priorities, such as behavior.

"Academics are not the primary focus at our school."

"Principals need to grow more as instructional leaders"

School staff desire more instructional support from school leaders and/or instructional support staff.

Based on the K-12 Academic Programming 2021-22 school year:

- The K-2 science curriculum has random resources, and the 9-12 science curriculum is inconsistent across the district

- The K-8 social studies curriculum was updated in the 2008-09 school year, and the 9-12 social studies curriculum was updated in the 2017-18 school year.

- The ELA curriculum was also updated, and includes a district-written curriculum for grades 9-12

- The 6-8 math curriculum (Eureka Math) was updated in the 2020-21 school year, and 9-12 curriculum (enVision) was updated in the 2021-22 school year.

The district has adopted a Station Rotation Instructional Model to be rolled in all buildings this and next school year. Each school will have a Station Rotation Implementation Team consisting of administrators, instructional coaches, and teacher leaders, all of whom will receive training to implement the modalities.

The district is utilizing the following diagnostic assessments: Acadience Learning, STAR Math, STAR Reading, and CDT.

The district is utilizing the following benchmark assessments: Acadience Learning, STAR Math, STAR Reading, Imagine Math, Imagine Galileo, iLit Grade, and WIDA Model.

> **The district has elected to adopt the Station Rotation Instructional Model with a gradual roll-out over the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years. There are plans to update the curricular resources with a particular focus on Social Studies. In addition the district Assessment Map will remain in place with certain assessments fulfilling both Diagnostic and Benchmark functions.**

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Evidence: Focus on Instruction

Staff responses about access to curricular resources...

The district provides sufficient, aligned, standards-based curricular resources to schools.

Agree, 12%	Somewhat agree, 38%	Somewhat disagree, 26%	Disagree, 18%	N/A, 5%
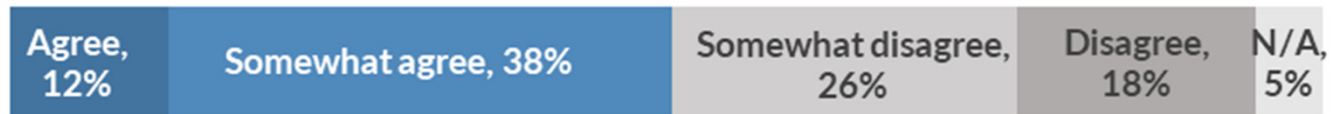
"We have classrooms that do not have the CORE instructional materials to teach the classroom assigned. It is mid-November."

"There is too much time spent on mandated, online resources and non-curriculum related activities that prevent the effective use of curricular materials"

"Don't have all the resources to teach properly."

"We do not have consistent access to materials."

Consistent access to Tier 1 curricular resources that are aligned and standards-based is an ongoing issue for some staff and schools in the district.

Areas of Need and Opportunities to Improve

- Some principals do not have the opportunity to be instructional leaders due to staff turnover and the instructional and management support new teachers need.

- Tier 1 instruction is not yet a first line of intervention.

- Some professional learning is not targeted, especially for teachers that are non-certified.

- There was observed cell phone use by students in schools and classrooms resulting in loss of time on task and learning.

- There is no universal use of standards-aligned curriculum. Some schools indicate that they do not have a solid curriculum and materials to support instruction.

- The district has not yet operationalized its instructional vision and clearly conveyed to staff their roles and responsibilities in bringing it to life.

- Observations indicate that there are more individualized computer-based learning activities as compared to whole group and/or small group instruction and facilitation.

Progress: School Management

Policies, structures, and systems that create the conditions needed for school success, maintain accountability for results, and enable effective school leaders.

Strengths	Evidence of Improvement

Strengths

- The superintendent has made himself available and accessible to school leaders.

- Some school leaders indicate they are able to focus on instructional improvement at their schools.

- School improvement plans allow schools to address their individual and site-specific student needs.

Evidence of Improvement

- Principals report having increased access to the superintendent.

- There is an expressed desire to have district staff visit schools to see and understand what is happening in schools.

- Some principals report an increased focus on providing instructional support to their staff.

- School improvement plans have goals devoted to school specific needs.

Evidence: School Management

School leader survey responses about their development and support...

The district has a school management structure that supports the needs of each individual school.

Somewhat agree, 33%	Somewhat disagree, 33%	Disagree, 33%

The district has a school support structure that develops school leaders.

Somewhat agree, 44%	Somewhat disagree, 33%	Disagree, 22%

Principal supervisors understand the strengths and challenges of the schools they supervise.

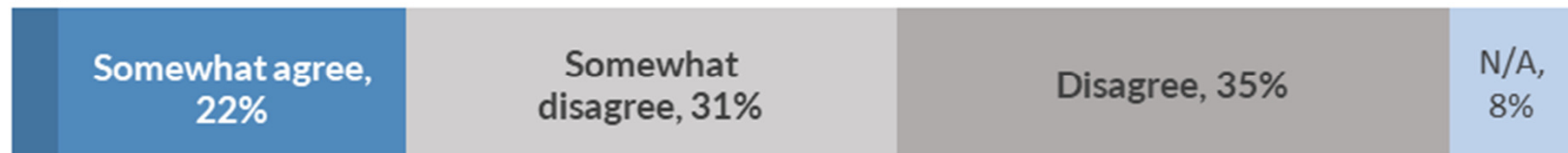| Agree, 39%	Somewhat agree, 28%	Somewhat disagree, 22%	Disagree, 11%

School leaders' perceptions indicate that their professional developmental needs and school support needs are not currently being met.

The district has a school management structure that supports the needs of each individual school.

Agree, 3%

| Somewhat agree, 22% | Somewhat disagree, 31% | Disagree, 35% | N/A, 8% |

The district has a school support structure that develops school leaders.

| Somewhat agree, 48% | Somewhat disagree, 29% | Disagree, 24% |

School staff perceptions of school management structures' ability to meet the needs of their schools demonstrate a gap by a substantial margin.

School leader responses about their development and support...

"I appreciate that I can call the superintendent if I need something and he picks up the phone...I've been in situations before where when you need someone in that moment... [and] nobody is there. He always picks up the phone, and I find that very reassuring."

"When teachers are saying that they're struggling and they're burned out, their principals are advocating for our teachers. But we get a lot of "suck it up buttercup" kind of thing."

"Sometimes I need your support as a principal and sometimes I need it as an employee too.

"...when there's a really, really big decision, it's shared at the monthly principals' meeting."

When asked "Who's responsible for coordinating your support or managing your evaluation?" one leader responded "It would be the office of academics and the superintendent who does my evaluation, both those people or either. I'm not sure."

"There is very limited support from Central Office as a whole to buildings. There are some very approachable and supportive members of central office. Another issue is knowing who to contact about what.

School leaders, as a whole, appreciate access to the superintendent, but demonstrate a strong desire for more communication and coordinated support from Central Office.

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Evidence: School Management

What school leaders are saying about their capacity to be their school's instructional leader...

"I am the instructional leader in my school without question."

"I am able to be more of an instructional leader than many of my colleagues."

"We turned over [10+] teachers. That cannot continue to happen. It's putting a strain on everyone [and] everything."

"... this year we've had a real struggle because so many of our teachers are coming from non-traditional backgrounds. many of them don't have a lot of teaching experience. So... I feel a high level of need prohibits me from providing everything everyone needs."

While leaders' perceptions of their own performance vary widely, many see themselves as the instructional leaders of their schools and also acknowledge their efforts are often hampered by staffing support issues.

Evidence: School Management

What school staff shared about the engagement of district leaders with schools...

"In an ideal world I would like for them (central office staff) to come here, see what's going on with our teachers, then go from there."

"Central office should be required to spend time in all levels of the district so they can truly understand what is happening."

"You can't make decisions decisions about buildings when you're not in the building."

"Central office should have a strong presence in the schools for real issues, and they do not."

"I can name maybe one person downtown who can speak to me about my school improvement goal."

"When is the last time any board member or central office staff came to a school unannounced?"

School-level staff perceive a lack of meaningful presence from central office staff.

Evidence: School Management
School improvement plans to create conditions for school improvement...

Almost all school improvement plans include data-based plans addressing students' academic performance and include specific professional development goals to grow staff that enables them to achieve anticipated outcomes.

Almost every school improvement plan addresses school-specific needs about student engagement either through systems to directly address student behaviors, persistent attendance issues, or improving school culture through partnerships or community engagement.

School improvement plans address the root causes of low performance.

Agree, 6%	Somewhat agree, 39%	Somewhat disagree, 28%	Disagree, 22%	N/A, 6%

> **Despite their demonstrated capacity to create the conditions for driving school success, half of school leaders do not believe that school improvement plans address the root causes of low performance.**

Opportunity: School Management
Comparison to the 2019 District Diagnostic Findings

> ### Areas of Need and Opportunities to Improve

- There is need for a consistent principal supervision and support structure for school leaders.

- There is not a clear structure or ongoing process for who and how school leaders are intentionally developed, supervised, and coached.

- School leaders continue to be moved between schools, disrupting school cultures and leadership roles.

- Unfilled instructional and support positions and a high number of emergency certified staff are diverting school leaders' attention and capacity from ensuring effective and rigorous instruction.

- District-level priorities and decision making processes remain unclear to school leaders.

Progress: Central Services and Operations

Effective delivery of services to schools, allowing school-based educators to focus on teaching and learning.

Strengths

- The district has hired strong and capable leaders for the departments in central office.

- Department leaders are currently taking steps to improve systems and supports provided to schools.

Evidence of Improvement

- Central office departments and teams are led by leaders with experience in the district or experience in the roles elsewhere and shared a commitment to support district improvement.
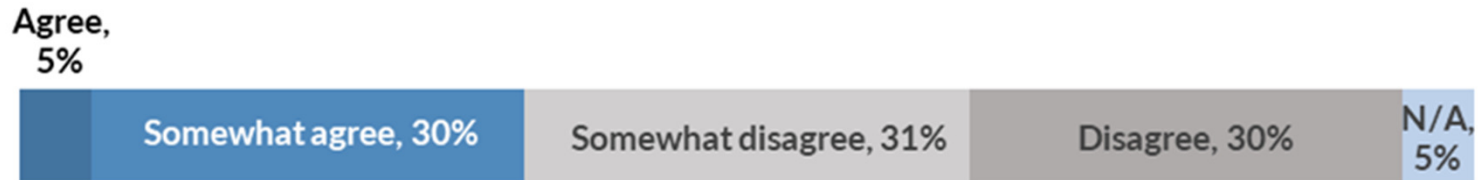
Evidence: Central Services and Operations

Staff survey responses about central office service, support, and operations...

Overall, how would you characterize the supports and services provided by the district's central office?

Excellent, 1%

| Good, 23% | Fair, 49% | Poor, 26% |
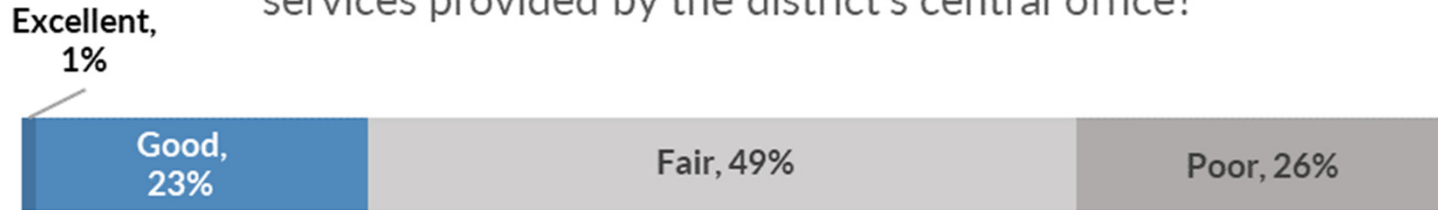
Services and operations allow school-based educators to focus on teaching and learning.

Agree, 5%

| Somewhat agree, 30% | Somewhat disagree, 31% | Disagree, 30% | N/A, 5% |

School-based staff can easily access appropriate central office staff with questions and concerns.

| Agree, 9% | Somewhat agree, 39% | Somewhat disagree, 23% | Disagree, 26% | N/A, 3% |

Staff's perceptions of the supports provided by the central office show a gap in expectations and services received.

Evidence: Central Services and Operations

Staff responses about central office service, support, and operations...

"We need to see district admin in classrooms working with kids more."

Central administration is full of people who are capable of turning this district around. They "talk the talk" but nothing has changed."

"No trust in any words that come from central office: too many lies and hollow words, no follow through."

"We are reminded quite often of the 'chain of command.' It is my impression that we should not approach central staff with concerns."

"Central office does not support staff. Some members look for fault and ridicule or attack."

These staff comments highlight a strong desire for alignment between messaging from the central office and demonstrated follow-through.

Evidence: Central Services and Operations
Staff responses about the customer service orientation of the central office...

Staff reflections about school facilities:

"We had multiple broken toilets and paper towel dispensers and it takes ages for anything to get fixed."

"At my building, we have custodial issues that resulted in teachers having medical reactions, and they are still happening."

Without students feeling safe they will be unable to learn... along with building conditions such as heat, restroom facilities and rodent control."

Staff reflections about the payroll system:

"We have a new payroll department person who is doing extremely well, the actual system itself sucks."

I have been trying to rectify an issue with my paycheck since the start of the school year and I haven't gotten a response."

"We just got an email three days before payday that the date has changed. This is not proactive communication. This is delayed communication."

Staff perceive gaps in expectations and services delivered by the central office

Evidence: Central Services and Operations
Student responses about the current state of their learning environments...

In student responses to the question, "What could be done at your school to make you feel safer, included, supported, or like you belong?", many responses centered on building conditions:

"Cleanliness of the hallways"

"Y'all let them steal the soap dispensers"

"Cleaning the floors"

"Better lunch and stronger doors (several students highlighted doors that don't lock)"

"This school is mad disgusting"

"Better walls and ceilings"

"Kill all these roaches"

"Close bathroom doors"

"Cleaning up classes"

Students' responses demonstrate a direct link between the gaps in the services provided by the central office and the impact on student perceptions of their safety and the welcomeness of their school environment.

Opportunity: Central Services and Operations
Comparison to the 2019 District Diagnostic Findings

Areas of Need and Opportunities to Improve

- The combined vendor/staff facilities management structure is not meeting schools' needs.

- Payroll accuracy continues to be an issue undermining staffing retention.

- A customer service orientation of the support services from central office has not yet been established with the schools they support and it is impacting students and staff.

Progress: Finance

Alignment of financial resources with district needs and priorities.

Strengths

- Staff perception of the district's financial stability has improved as a result of beginning to implement a budget process. School leaders and department heads are engaged as stakeholders in the budget process. As a result, most leaders within the district agree that the district engages in sound fiscal management and that schools have the financial resources they need to be successful.

- The district has sought to attract more non-certified staff by negotiating increased salaries.

- The district's plan for the use of ESSER 3 funds addresses data-informed student needs related to birth-to-kindergarten support and school readiness.

Evidence of Improvement

- Budget processes now exist, and leaders are engaged as stakeholders in the budget process.

- Leaders report clarity, understanding, and aligned reports about the district's budget.

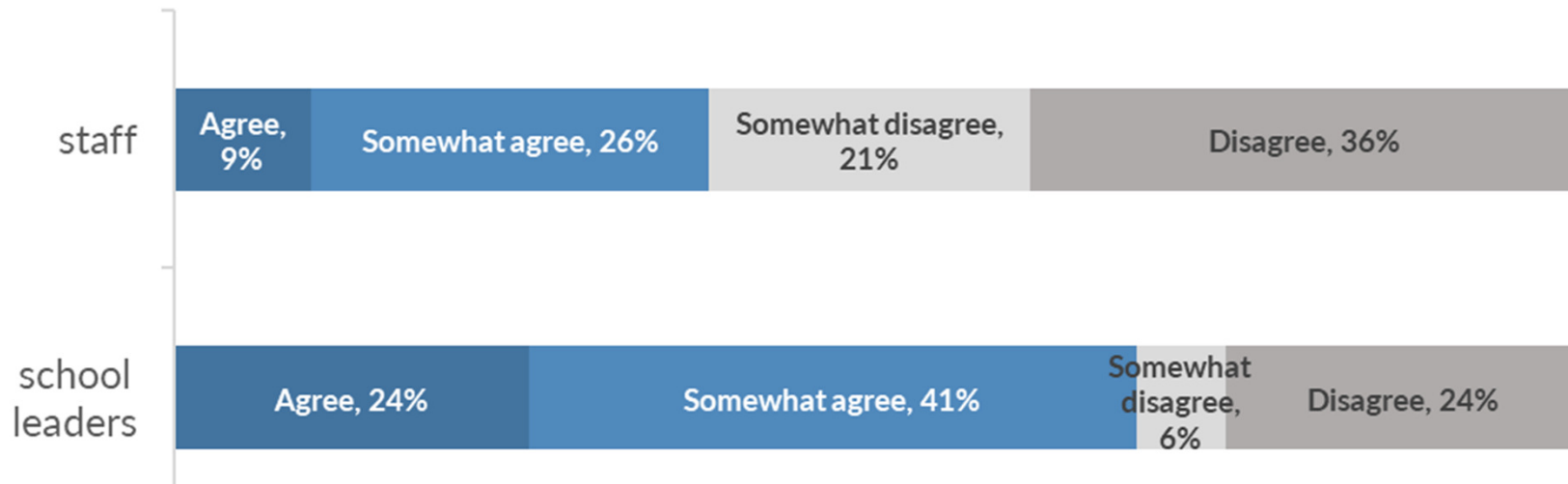- The district's budget deficit is temporarily eased by ESSER funds.

The district engages in sound fiscal management.

| Agree, 10% | Somewhat agree, 50% | Somewhat disagree, 10% | Disagree, 20% | N/A, 10% |

Schools have the financial resources they need to be successful.

staff

| Agree, 9% | Somewhat agree, 26% | Somewhat disagree, 21% | Disagree, 36% |

school leaders

| Agree, 24% | Somewhat agree, 41% | Somewhat disagree, 6% | Disagree, 24% |

> Most leaders within the district agree that the district engages in sound fiscal management and that schools have the financial resources they need to be successful, whereas school staff are less likely to agree that schools have the financial resources they need.

Evidence: **Finance**
Perceptions about control of financial resources...

School leaders have sufficient control over financial resources to meet school needs.

Agree, 24%	Somewhat agree, 41%	Somewhat disagree, 6%	Disagree, 24%	N/A, 6%

"Now we have a process for pre-approvals for our grant funded budget items." - school leader

"It's a struggle to get items we need to be successful within the classroom." - teacher

"The challenges to finances is the hoops you have to jump through to accomplish spending money." - school leader

"There was no defined process." - district leader

65% of school leaders agree that they have sufficient control over the the financial resources needed to meet their schools needs. Recently adopted budget processes may contribute to leader perceptions about control as many survey comments from leaders indicate a lag between the identification of a need and the availability of funds to address it.

Evidence: Finance

Staff perceptions about the alignment of finances and district priorities…

Financial resources are aligned to district priorities.

Agree, 10%	Somewhat agree, 30%	Somewhat disagree, 30%	Disagree, 10%	N/A, 20%

"How would I know this?" - school staff

"We are not told how much money we are given as a school or what it is spent on." - school staff

"We are told there is no money."- school staff

"I cannot get basic supplies for my classroom. I don't have access to paper towels, tissues, hand sanitizer, pencils, etc." - school staff

"Seems to be needs at schools that are not resolved or supported." - school staff
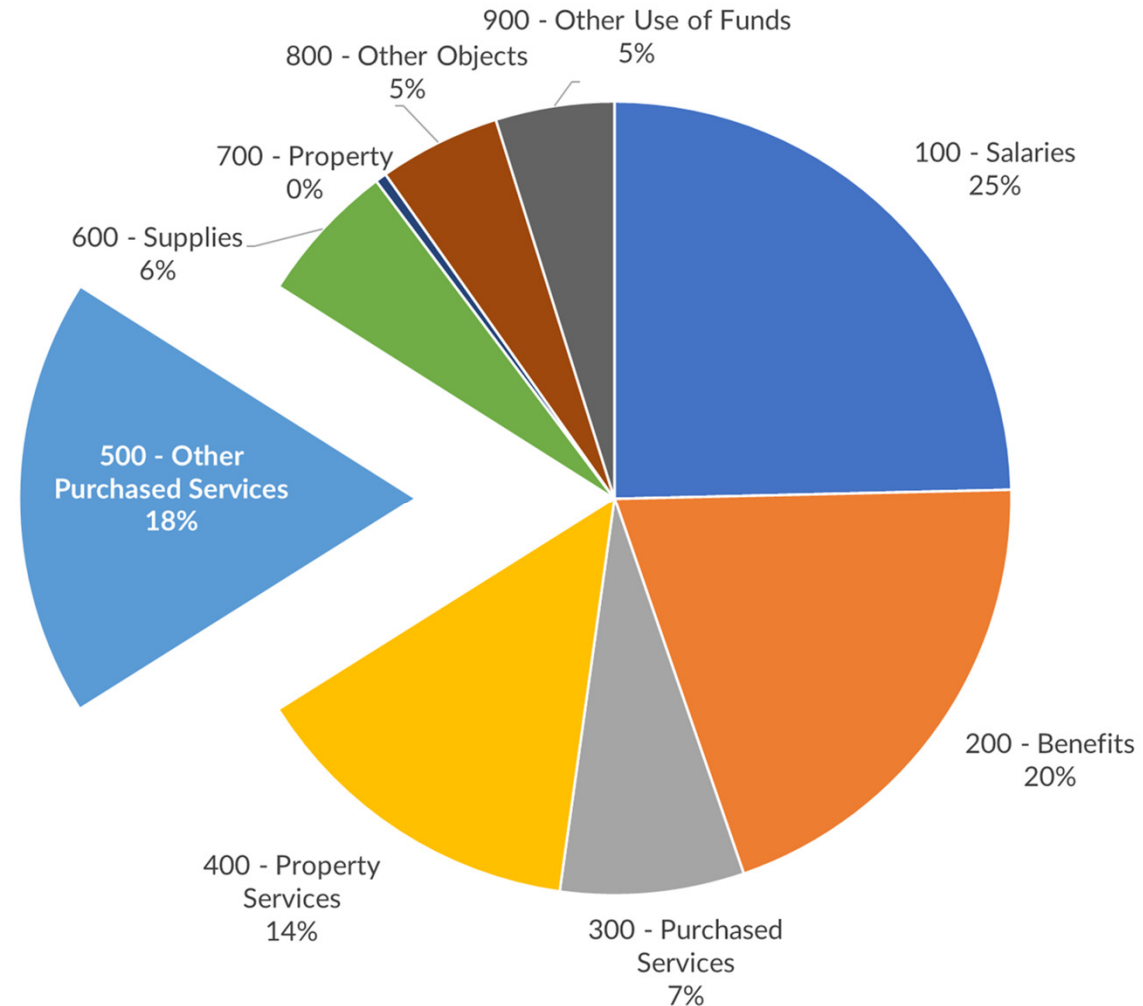
60% of staff either disagree or do not know whether financial resources are aligned to the district's priorities. Staff comments reveal a common perception that schools lack the ability to address basic needs and a lack of awareness around district and school budgets.

Expenditures by Object, Source: General Fund Final Budget 2022-2023 and Line Item Budget

Total 22-23 Final Budget = $220 Million

- Charter school tuition accounts for $21.8M or 10% of the district's expenditures.

- $5M is spent on Contracted Carriers

- $3.7M is spent on tuition paid to Voc-Techs

- $3.3M is spent on payments to special schools LEAs

900 - Other Use of Funds 5%
800 - Other Objects 5%
700 - Property 0%
600 - Supplies 6%
500 - Other Purchased Services 18%
400 - Property Services 14%
300 - Purchased Services 7%
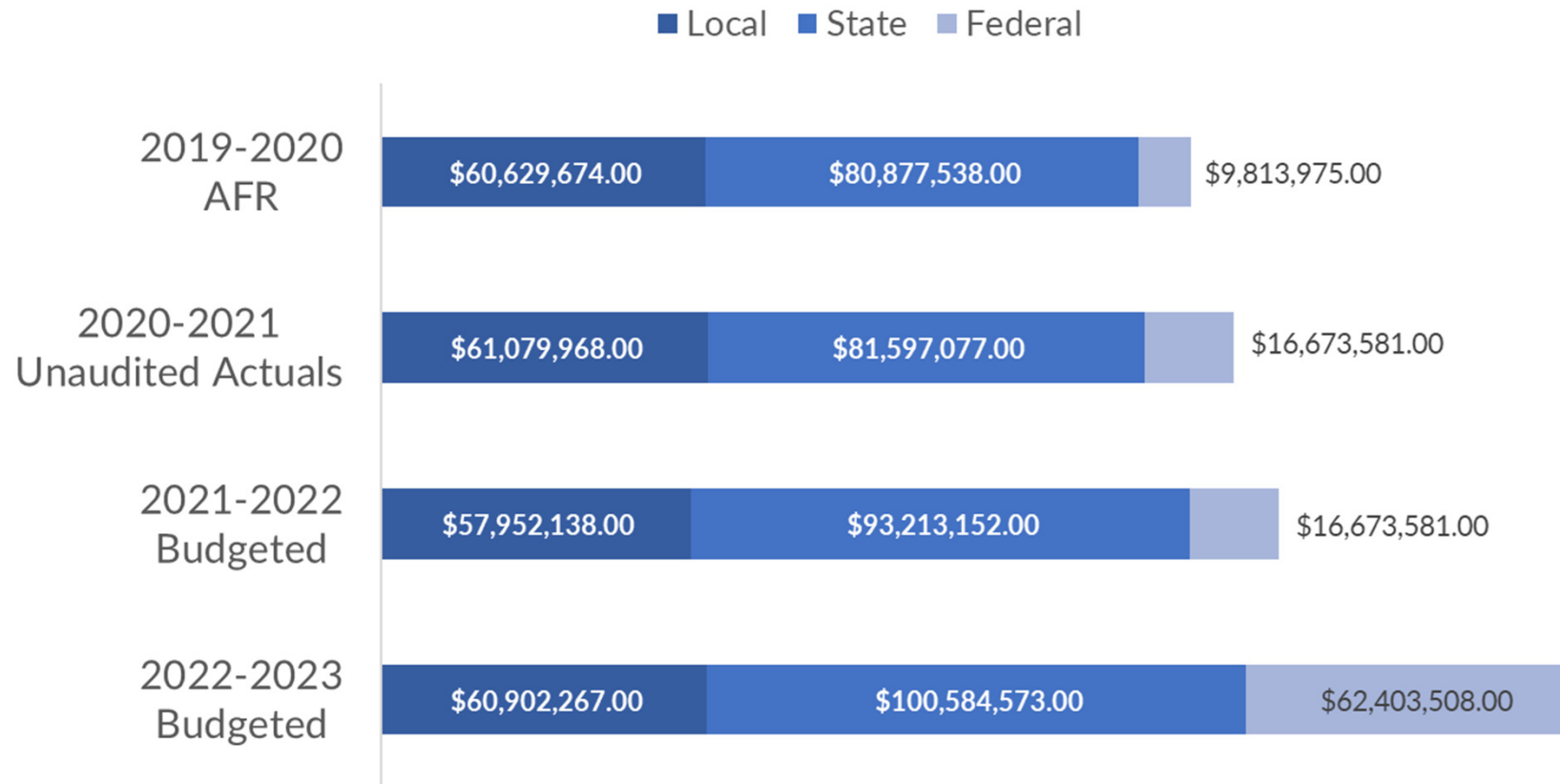200 - Benefits 20%
100 - Salaries 25%

45% of the district's budget is spent on personnel costs, another 18% is Other Purchased Services (which includes transportation, charter school tuition and out of district placements) and another 10% is spent on debt service payments. This leaves 25% of the budget for discretionary spending.

Evidence: Finance
Federal, state, and local revenue for the past four years...

Legend: ■ Local ■ State ■ Federal

Year	Local	State	Federal
2019-2020 AFR	$60,629,674.00	$80,877,538.00	$9,813,975.00
2020-2021 Unaudited Actuals	$61,079,968.00	$81,597,077.00	$16,673,581.00
2021-2022 Budgeted	$57,952,138.00	$93,213,152.00	$16,673,581.00
2022-2023 Budgeted	$60,902,267.00	$100,584,573.00	$62,403,508.00

The District has benefitted from increases in state funding over the last few years; however, these are not guaranteed funds and can be hard to predict. The district received nearly $80 million in ESSER funding across the three rounds. These one-time funds expire in September 2024 and the District will need to determine how to balance its budget in light of this.

Areas of Need and Opportunities to Improve

- While it is true that majority of the district's budget is allocated to support regular and special education instruction, it is unclear to what extent the district budget currently supports the district's priorities as outlined in the Recovery Plan.

- There is still an opportunity to develop budgetary systems to provide clarity and transparency around financial management between central office, school staff, and other stakeholders. This also includes clarity around roles and responsibilities in the area of finance and ways to collaborate across departments.

- Without ESSER funds, the district faces a structural budget deficit. It is unclear to what extent the district is considering the impact of widespread revenue changes on future budgets without over-reliance on tax increases.

- The district has not yet addressed the underlying reasons for charter enrollment in order to successfully recapture expenditures lost to charter tuition. The opportunity for charter school recapture relies on understanding the reasons families choose to leave the district.

Progress: Talent Management

Systems and processes to recruit, place, develop, and retain talented staff.

Strengths

- Efforts to bring in instructional staff (non-certified staff) and support their onboarding/development process are helping staffing shortcomings.

- Plans to support an earlier recruitment/hiring process moving forward are in place.

Evidence of Improvement

- A system for building a pipeline for staff through local partnerships is present.

- The district's onboarding process for new teachers persists and still incorporates human resource policies and processes.

- The district uses the Applitrack system for managing open positions and applicant tracking.

Evidence: Talent Management
Recruitment efforts...

- HSD has ongoing partnerships with local universities including Wilson College, Messiah University and Shippensburg University to aid in new teacher recruitment.

- Efforts to boost recruitment efforts in 2022 included a radio and social media campaign, the spreading of job postings to local and national third party recruitment websites, leveraging local partnerships and engaging the community of retirees from HSD to fill open positions.

- According to a provided recruitment schedule, there are plans to build on last year's recruitment efforts to include Howard University, Penn State, and university consortia in Philadelphia, Pittsburg, and Millersville.

- The Human Resources Department plans to start the recruitment and hiring process earlier in the spring to secure staff earlier and to be more competitive with other local districts.

Partnerships among local and select national universities show potential in building recruitment pipelines that may be able to meet future staffing needs

Evidence: Talent Management
Current staff vacancies…

As of December 2022, there are 162 vacancies (FTEs) across the district, including:

- 22 central office-based staff, including nine school psychologists
- 36 classroom teachers
- 11 behavior specialists
- 9 special education instructors and instructional aides
- 5 school counselors
- 4 school-level administrators (principals, assistant and associate principals)
- 4 ESL teachers
- The remaining positions include school-level support positions like reading specialists, school nurses, speech therapists and instructional coaches.

While staffing needs are dispersed across all schools and all levels, the schools currently with the most staffing vacancies are:

- Camp Curtin with 25 open positions
- John Harris with 23 open positions
- Ben Franklin with 22 open positions
- Rowland with 20 positions (CSI school)

Staff vacancies in the schools and central office impact systems and outcomes throughout the district but most importantly, the student learning experience.

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Evidence: Talent Management
District salary competitiveness...

Average Salaries for Teachers with 5-10 Years of Experience: Harrisburg v. Surrounding Districts

Years	Central Dauphin	Derry Township	Halifax Area	Lower Dauphin	Middletown Area	Millersburg Area	Steelton-Highspire	Susquehanna	Upper Dauphin	Harrisburg	Rank	Distance to Best Average	
												$ diff	% diff
10	67k	68k	56k	64k	62k	56k	46k	69k	51k	57k	**6th**	11,795	15%
5	58k	60k	49k	54k	54k	49k	46k	63k	47k	54k	**4th**	8,396	16%
new	51k	54k	47k	49k	51k	43k	42k	58k	44k	49k	**5th**	8,818	18%

Among 10 school districts in the area, Harrisburg Ranks 5th highest among new teachers, 4th for teachers with 5 years exp. and 6th for teachers with 10 yrs.

Teachers in this band of experience deciding to move to the highest paying district among these 10 in the area, would make on average 15- 18% more than if they'd stayed in Harrisburg.

Source: https://americansforfairtreatment.org/resources-and-data/collective-bargaining-agreements/

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Evidence: Talent Management
Current instructional staff licensures...

All of the current instructional staff employed in the Harrisburg School district are licensed.

- Of the 557 staff employed by the district, 32 are emergency certified.

- When combined with the 36 vacant teaching positions, a total of 68, or 12% of the schools classrooms are missing a traditionally certified teacher.

One school's review of SIP goals calls out the slowed pace of professional development in response to providing additional support to new teachers for effectively managing the "day to day responsibilities, classroom environment, and lesson planning."

"We're hiring teachers with finance degrees to come and teach math that are not coming traditionally trained. And so there's a need for principals to grow even more as instructional leaders."

"New teachers take everything we are able to give them as far as support and they run with it. It's just tiring."

Staffing and recruitment issues are taking a toll on schools and their leaders when it comes to supporting new emergency certified teachers.

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The district and schools work to retain talented staff.

| Agree, 9% | Somewhat agree, 39% | Somewhat disagree, 23% | Disagree, 26% | N/A, 3% |

"Think you have to return your teachers. There are teachers leaving and getting $10,000 just to go to a neighboring district, and it's not that the behaviors are going to be so much better. They just may have better systems in place."

"We support teachers their first year and then they're left to handle things on their own. We do not do enough to retain teachers and make them feel supported."

"The district offers new hires and substitutes great rates of pay, but makes no effort to put the teachers that took a pay cut, and a pay freese years ago, at the salary they deserve. It's a slap in the face to see new hires and substitutes making the starting pay they do."

Perceived inconsistent retention strategies are leaving gaps in which experienced teachers are finding reasons to leave the district.

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Evidence: Talent Management
Staff reflections about professional development structures and offerings...

Professional development structures include:

- Non-instructional school staff are developed in "role alike" meeting that happen at least biweekly.

- Teachers are developed in PLCs, school-based, and district-provided professional development.

- District-provided professional development also includes mentors and support for non-traditionally certified and emergency-certified instructors.

- Professional development structures for principals are limited.

> "I'm seeing that we have a lot of the same teachers serving as a mentor, like one teacher serving as a mentor for like, four or five people. But that puts a lot of additional work on them to help these new staff members. I don't know if it's maybe as effective as it could be"

> "I really think there should be an onboarding process for new administrators in the buildings."

> "We need a mentoring program for new principals. Each should have a mentor or coach."

> "There is no time to prepare for conferences because we are constantly in PD for Station Rotation. It is ridiculous to me the amount of time that gets wasted on beating a dead horse."

The professional development offered by the district and schools leaves principals and school staff wanting more, especially in the variety of offerings.

Opportunity: Talent Management
Comparison to the 2019 District Diagnostic Findings

Areas of Need and Opportunities to Improve

- Onboarding and management supports for new principals and assistant principals are not present.

- Limited partnerships with local colleges and universities to attract and hire new staff hampers recruitment efforts.

- A reactive recruitment and retention strategy and a lower salary schedule than surrounding districts negatively impacts recruitment and hiring success.

- There is no evidence that the district is prioritizing the recruitment or hiring of teachers of color or Spanish-speaking staff.

- Issues with payroll and lower payscale when compared to surrounding districts undermines staff recruitment and retention efforts.

- District-sponsored instructional professional development is not meeting the needs of schools with high numbers of non-veteran staff nor sufficiently differentiated to meet the needs of veteran staff.

Intentional systems and processes to maintain open lines of communication with staff, family and community stakeholders.

Strengths

- The Recovery Plan addresses communication by acknowledging that the district has struggled in the past to communicate important operational and academic information and data to its internal and external stakeholders.

- The district has invested in the creation and staffing of a family engagement coordinator and family engagement specialists at all schools.

- The district leverages multiple systems and modes of accessible communication to effectively disseminate information to stakeholders.

- Families who completed the survey indicated that they feel comfortable and respected in their interactions with schools and central office.

Evidence of Improvement

- The majority of staff agree that the district fosters frequent and meaningful engagement opportunities for stakeholders which addresses families' expressed interest in more frequent engagement with the district.

- In the past, most parents indicated that word-of-mouth was the primary means of communication with schools and the district. The district now utilizes a variety of methods to reach families and stakeholders.

- A majority of staff agree that there is a "system to communicate with district stakeholders."
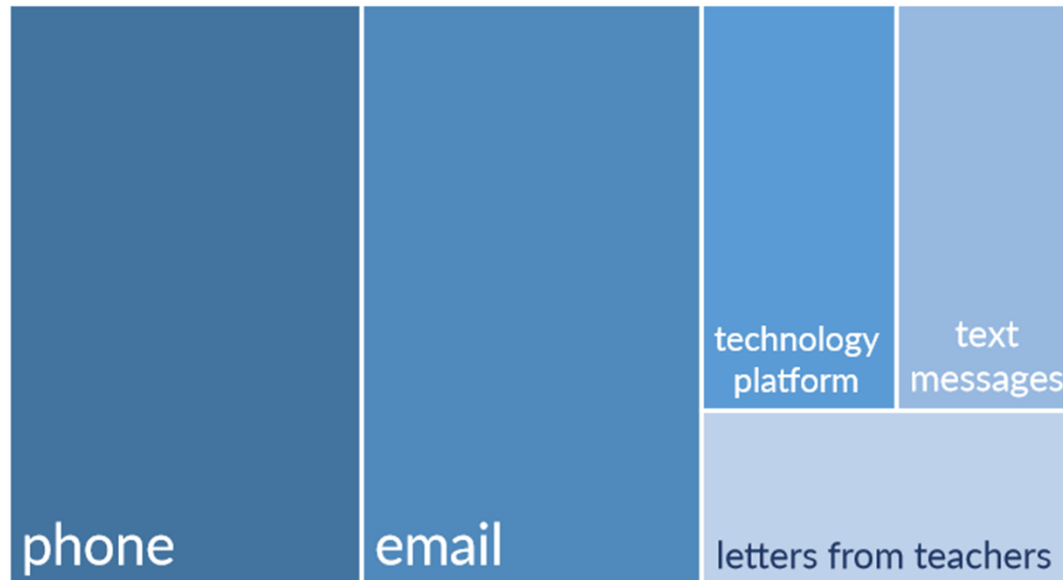
Evidence: **Stakeholder Engagement and Communications**
Family survey responses about district communication...

District and school communication is accessible to me.

| Agree, 60% | Somewhat agree, 22% | Somewhat disagree, 6% | Disagree, 11% |

How does the district communicate with you?

phone | email | technology platform | text messages
letters from teachers

> **The district uses a variety of tools and methods to communicate and make information accessible to stakeholders.**

Family survey responses about interactions with the district and schools…

Interactions with the district and my child(ren)'s school(s) are respectful of my family's cultures, races/ethnicities, and other aspects of our identities.

Somewhat disagree, 5%

| Agree, 68% | Somewhat agree, 22% | Disagree, 5% |

I feel comfortable reaching out to my child(ren)'s school(s).

Somewhat disagree, 3%

| Agree, 65% | Somewhat agree, 21% | Disagree, 11% |

I am aware of the district's strategic priorities to improve schools and the student learning experience.

| Agree, 35% | Somewhat agree, 31% | Somewhat disagree, 13% | Disagree, 21% |

While the majority of families indicate that they feel comfortable reaching out to their child(ren)'s school(s) and that the interactions they have are respectful of their family's identities, more than one third of respondents remain unaware of the district's priorities.

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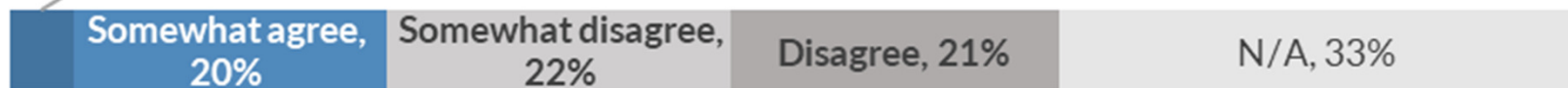# Evidence: Stakeholder Engagement and Communications
Staff survey responses about district communication with families...

The district fosters frequent and meaningful engagement opportunities for community members.

| Agree, 11% | Somewhat agree, 36% | Somewhat disagree, 25% | Disagree, 17% | N/A, 9% |

Stakeholder perspectives inform district decisions.

Agree, 4%

| Somewhat agree, 20% | Somewhat disagree, 22% | Disagree, 21% | N/A, 33% |

While nearly half (47%) of staff agreed that "the district fosters frequent and meaningful engagement opportunities," only 25% of staff agreed that "stakeholder perspectives inform district decision making."
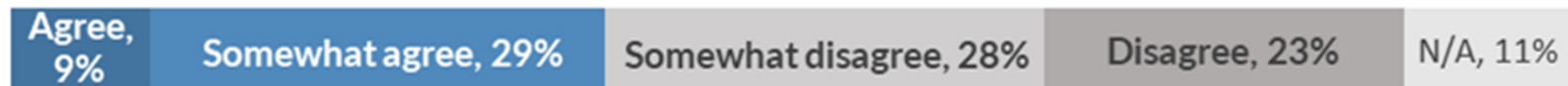
Evidence: Stakeholder Engagement and Communications
**Staff survey responses about communication...**

There is a system to communicate with district
stakeholders (staff, families, community).

| Agree, 19% | Somewhat agree, 46% | Somewhat disagree, 13% | Disagree, 15% |

Communication modes reach all stakeholders.

| Agree, 9% | Somewhat agree, 29% | Somewhat disagree, 28% | Disagree, 23% | N/A, 11% |

Central office communicates effectively with school staff to keep them fully
informed on matters affecting them.

| Agree, 7% | Somewhat agree, 34% | Somewhat disagree, 23% | Disagree, 34% |
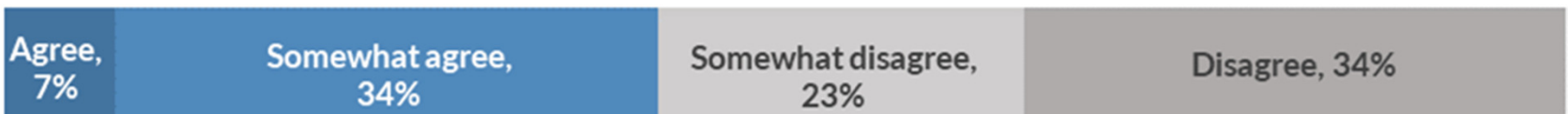
While a majority of staff agree that there are communication systems in place, only 38%
agree that communication reaches all stakeholders and 41% agree that central office
communicates effectively with school staff. Many comments about communication
indicated staff are not notified of important information in a timely manner.

Opportunity: Stakeholder Engagement and Communications
Comparison to the 2019 District Diagnostic Findings

> ## Areas of Need and Opportunities to Improve

- The district is not yet communicating with stakeholders about district and school priorities or progress made on Recovery Plan key action items.

- District leaders need to find ways to communicate the ways in which stakeholder input informed their decision making - including feedback from staff, families, students, and community members.

- There is an opportunity to improve the timeliness and effectiveness of central office's communication to staff.

Progress: **Data**

Data is available and informs decision-making at all levels of the district and in schools.

Strengths

- There is evidence that investments in data systems and training have occurred, including the adoption of SWIS, Data Wise trainings, and the establishment of a data dashboard on the district website.

- Staff at all levels indicate that a wide range of data is collected about students' academic performance, including but not limited to PSSA data, STAR data, attendance data, Imagine Math and IXL.

Evidence of Improvement

- Training around data-informed decision-making (Data Wise) has occurred and some schools report utilizing it regularly.

- Most school based staff agree that they have access to adequate data to inform school-based decision making.

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Evidence: Data

Staff survey responses about data availability…

My school has adequate data to make informed decisions.

| Agree, 25% | Somewhat agree, 42% | Somewhat disagree, 16% | Disagree, 9% | N/A, 8% |

District information systems are up to date, accurate, and accessible.

| Agree, 17% | Somewhat agree, 41% | Somewhat disagree, 19% | Disagree, 15% | N/A, 8% |

67% of staff agree that their school has adequate data to make informed decisions. 58% of staff agree that "district information systems are up to date, accurate, and accessible."

100% of the comments about specific data systems with problems were about E-school

> "While our district focuses on data, we do not have the time and/or resources on how we can implement what we learn from the data in our planning and instruction." - school staff member

> "The data is skewed." - school staff member

> "We have a lot of data- but it is not all of it is usable or good data" - school staff member

> "We have not had sufficient planning time to discuss data." - school staff member

Staff indicated a variety of issues with data at the school and district level, including needing more time to analyze data to inform instruction, more reliable data, and data systems that work as intended. .

Evidence: Data

Staff survey responses about data informed decision-making...

My school uses disaggregated data to inform decision making.

| Agree, 19% | Somewhat agree, 31% | Somewhat disagree, 13% | Disagree, 6% | N/A, 31% |

Central office uses disaggregated data to inform decision making.

| Agree, 8% | Somewhat agree, 29% | Somewhat disagree, 13% | Disagree, 9% | N/A, 40% |

While 50% of staff agree that their school uses disaggregated data to inform decision-making, only 37% of staff agree that "central office uses disaggregated data to inform decision making." Many staff selected N/A for this question which may indicate that they are unsure about whether their schools or central office use disaggregated data.
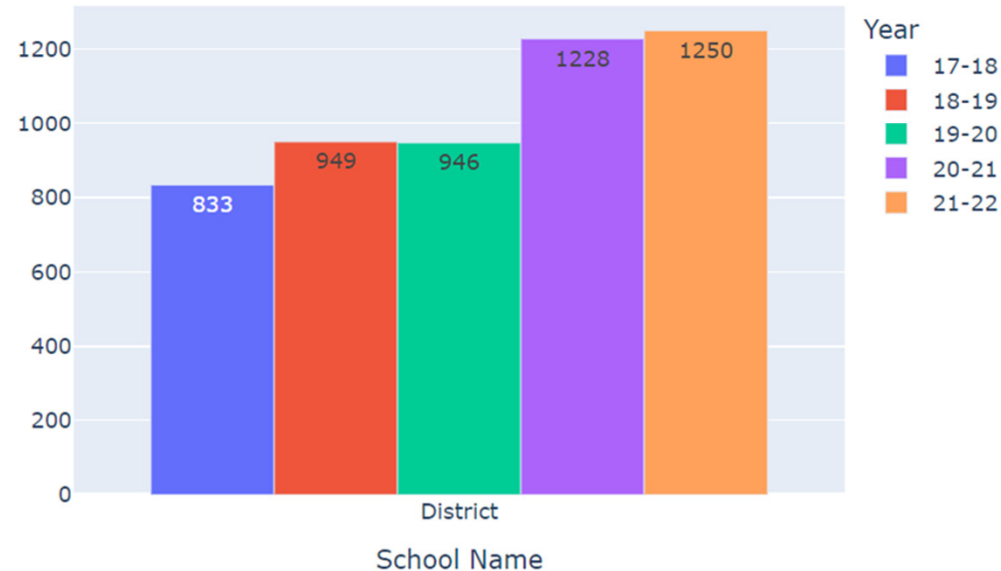
Evidence: Data

The district's website contains a public facing data dashboard…

Enrollment by School
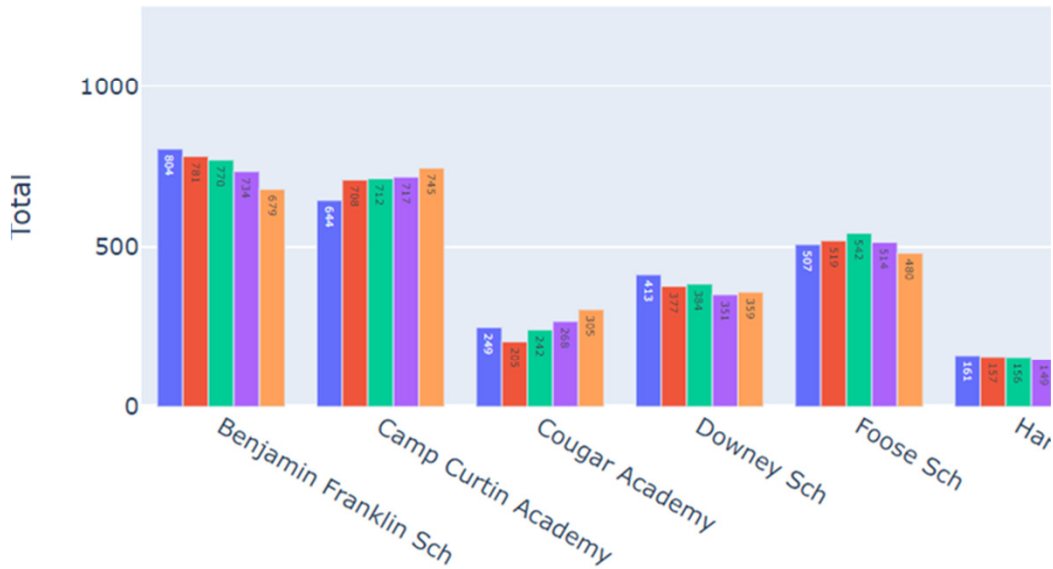
Charter School Enrollment

The district's data dashboard does not explicitly align to the Recovery Plan, nor is it able to be consistently disaggregated by school and subgroup. Some data are disaggregated by school while other data represents district averages or totals. Subgroup performance on PSSA and graduation rate data is not currently viewable at the school or subgroup level.

Opportunity: Data
Comparison to the 2019 District Diagnostic Findings

<table>
<tr><td>Areas of Need and Opportunities to Improve</td></tr>
</table>

- While school and district leaders have access to a variety of tools and data sources and may use it to inform decisions, there is not yet district-wide agreement that disaggregated data is used in decision-making. It is unclear the extent to which Data Wise practices continue to be used throughout the district.

- School staff may have access to data, but they do not yet have the time to effectively leverage it to inform their instruction.

- There are concerns about the functionality of some data systems (such as E-school) and about the accuracy of some data including graduation pathway and attendance data.

Progress: Focus on Equity

Policies, structures, systems, and resources ensure equitable, high quality education for all students, including students with exceptional needs.

Strengths

- English language development (ELD) teachers use data to inform student instruction and goals.

- English language learner goals are included in the MTSS framework.

- On the student survey, 54% of students agree or somewhat agree that they participate in extracurricular activities, and many named a desire for additional extracurricular activities..

- The Special Education Manual was recently updated in November, 2022, with all policies and procedures relevant to how the district will fulfill its obligation to students under the IDEA 2004 and PA Chapter 14 & 16 (gifted) regulations.

Evidence of Improvement

- The district now has a Director of Special Education and a Supervisor of ESL.

- The district has made investments in mental health supports for students.

- The district has an SEL curriculum.

- Harrisburg Virtual Learning Academy and Cougar Academy provide alternative learning settings and approaches.

Evidence: Focus on Equity

Staff responses about the impact of staffing shortages on students with special needs...

"We do not do enough for our gifted and talented students. A district this size should be offering a wealth of AP classes."

"30 paras; Can't serve 1:1 or PCAs as stated in the IEPs."

"Lack of staff; have positions and budget. Can't find people."

"When I was a SPED teacher, I wrote my own curriculum."

"Down to half of the SPED staff."

46.1% agree that there are high quality options for students in need of alternative educational approaches.

- 0% agree that the district provides high quality education for students with exceptional needs
- 46.1% agree that there are high quality options for students in need of alternative educational approaches

There are concerns amongst leadership and staff about having sufficient resources and staff to accommodate all students receiving special education services.

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Evidence: Focus on Equity
Students with disabilities' PSSA data...

Percent of Students with Disabilities Scoring Advanced or Proficient on 2021-22 PSSA		
School	**ELA**	**Math**
Benjamin Franklin	4%	10%
Camp Curtin	2%	1%
Cougar Academy	7%	4%
Downey	Insufficient sample	Insufficient sample
Foose	6%	9%
Harrisburg HS	11%	Insufficient sample
SciTech HS	Insufficient sample	Insufficient sample
Marshall Academy	0%	3%
Marshall MSA	Insufficient sample	Insufficient sample
Melrose	10%	15%
Rowland	9%	9%
Scott	Insufficient sample	Insufficient sample

As evidenced by the PA Future Ready Index, students receiving special education on average have low proficiency rates on standardized tests that are as low as zero percent in ELA and/or Math at some schools.

Percent of English Language Learners Scoring Advanced or Proficient on 2021-22 PSSA		
School	**ELA**	**Math**
Benjamin Franklin	9%	10%
Camp Curtin	8%	0.8%
Cougar Academy	17%	0%
Downey	3%	0%
Foose	0%	0%
Harrisburg HS	3%	Insufficient sample
SciTech HS	Insufficient sample	Insufficient sample
Marshall Academy	10%	0%
Marshall MSA	58%	8%
Melrose	16%	16%
Rowland	7%	3%
Scott	14%	4%

As evidenced by the PA Future Ready Index, English language learners on average have low proficiency rates on standardized tests that are as low as zero percent in ELA and/or Math at some schools.

Evidence: Focus on Equity
Observations and staff reflections about classroom learning environments...

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In 10 of the 37 classrooms observed, greater than 75% of the students exhibited off task behavior, such as cell phone use, excessive talking, not working on assignments, and walking around the classroom.

"It is easier for central office to go after instructional practices of teachers than it is to provide guidance around the challenging behaviors teachers are facing." - Staff

"They will not put their cell phones away. Why are we not enforcing the cell phone policy? They are on their cell phones all day every day." -Staff

"Instruction is undermined daily by poor behaviors in and out of classrooms with no plan or solution in sight to mitigate the numerous distractions." - Staff

"Teachers need more support to deal with student behaviors so they can actually teach." - Staff

"Student behavior prohibits all learning!" - Staff

"No more fights and get extra security." - Student

"Help to reduce the violence in school and keep us safe from fights that occur in this school." - Student

Classroom observations and staff and student surveys indicate many classrooms and buildings face behavior issues and effective classroom management strategies.

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School safety data indicators...

District	Enrollment	Total Incidents	Incidents per 100 students	Fighting Infractions	Simple Assault on Students	Aggravated Assault on Students	Simple Assault on Staff	Aggravated Assault on Staff
Harrisburg	6,492	497	7.66	154	94	3	31	1

For reports of violent incidents, in the 2021 - 22 SY, Harrisburg ranked 1 out of 17 in Dauphin County (Source: Future Ready PA Index). In comparison to other school districts in Dauphin County, Harrisburg has a large number of incidents of violence overall, as well as per category type. (Source: PA Safe Schools Report).

On the student survey, when asked about what could be done to make them feel safer, included and like they belong in school, some students stated:

● "If people weren't fighting all day long and yelling in the hallways."
● "Have security guards around the schools halls."
● "There are many things I think can be done to better the campus, but the most important is to have security guards."

Likewise, school staff survey responses indicate 28% agree or somewhat agree with the statement "Schools are Safe," while 72% disagree or somewhat disagree.

Staff and student surveys revealed that there are concerns about safety in schools.

Areas of Need and Opportunities to Improve

- There are currently four ESL staff vacancies and over 20 special education staff vacancies.

- The district needs additional supports and course options for students in gifted education.

- There was a significant amount of off-task behavior observed in elementary, middle, and high school classrooms, which impacts students' access to high-quality educational experiences.

- There are behavior concerns at all levels in the district.

- There are building safety concerns, as well as physical safety concerns for students and staff.

- There is a need for better curriculum and additional support for SPED and ELL students.

Part I: Overview & Key Context

Part II: Findings in Each Domain: Strengths and Growth Areas & Opportunities

Part III: Recommendations

Assumptions regarding recommendations:

- Recommendations are intended to identify potential strategic priorities for the district. They do not address every shortcoming identified in the diagnostic but attempt to build on the district's identified strengths and progress and address its most critical challenges.

- We advise that the district not attempt to implement all of the recommendations at once; instead we suggest that a manageable (3-5) subset of priorities aligned to the Recovery Plan should be selected for each school year and clearly conveyed to all stakeholders.

- District leadership teams–such as the cabinet, Act 141 committee, and school board– should monitor the implementation and impact of annual priorities and hold district leaders accountable for implementation and impact.

1. Implement the Recovery Plan

The Recovery Plan is legally binding and clearly indicates what the district must do to exit receivership. To support the district's next steps to move toward exiting receivership, district leaders must create a plan grounded in Recovery Plan outcomes and the three improvement areas of academic achievement, financial management, and student stability.

- Develop a 2-3 year comprehensive plan of district priorities aligned with the Recovery Plan and data-informed district needs. Assign owners, action steps, timelines, accountability structures, and implementation and impact outcomes. Align school improvement plans to the comprehensive plan in consideration of school-based data.

- Share the action plan priorities with stakeholders.

- Establish progress monitoring practices and protocols to regularly examine plan implementation and impact.

- Share implementation and impact progress with stakeholders on an ongoing basis.

2. Reground the district's purpose on students' educational success and rebuild relationships with staff and the community to support student success.

The district's tagline of "Empowering Academic Achievers and Lifelong Learners" reflects the purpose of an educational system and ideally focuses all decisions and ongoing efforts to ensure all students have access to a high-quality and empowering educational experience while in the Harrisburg School District, while also preparing them for post-graduation success.

To do so in the current district climate will require intentional relationship building, clear and consistent communication, engagement opportunities, and transparency by the district, particularly with school staff and families.

Additionally, by engaging and leveraging students throughout the process will further demonstrate the district's priorities and commitment to their educational success.

3. Recruit, develop, and retain instructional and support staff.

To ensure student access, opportunity, and success, the district must recruit, develop, and retain instructional and support staff. Three key areas of opportunity emerged from findings that can support the district with these efforts:

A) central office services and support,

B) classroom and school cultures, and

C) salary and benefits for instructional and support staff.

Given the current dire need to hire and retain instructional staff, each of these sub-recommendations is further described on the following three slides.

3A. Improve central office functions, services, and client orientation.

- Ensure key district systems and services–particularly payroll, principal supervision and support, and access to instructional resources and robust, standards-aligned curricula–are available to all staff at all schools.

  - Consider creating an online resource bank of standards-aligned unit and lesson plans for core content areas K-12.

  - Develop and implement ongoing professional development opportunities for school leaders (principals and assistant principals) either through or in alignment with the Office of Academics.

- Clarify (and update when needed) the roles and responsibilities of district leaders so school staff, families/guardians, and community members know who to contact.

- Establish, implement, and seek feedback on a set of client orientation and communication expectations for central office departments and staff.

3B. Understand then support the development of safe, positive, and welcoming classroom and school cultures.

There is a need to first understand classroom cultures and other factors contributing to the current behavior and management issues that are impacting student learning environments throughout the district. The district then needs to support schools to address those root causes of classroom culture to ensure all students are ready to learn in conducive learning environments, which will likely entail:

- strong, grade-level appropriate, school-based behavior approach (e.g. PBIS, restorative practices) and the necessary resources–including materials and training–for staff to effectively implement the approaches; and

- a structured and intensive mentoring program for new and emergency certified staff focused on instructional and classroom management practices, including ongoing coaching and feedback.

3C. Creatively and urgently address staffing shortages.

With the current instructional staffing shortage of 162 positions, it is imperative to creatively and urgently bring in new staff and ensure current staff remain in the district. Some creative considerations include:

- ways to support staff stress, social-emotional, and mental health needs, such as ensuring staff have the resources they need to provide student instruction, community partnerships, and limiting meetings;

- bonuses for current staff who are supporting over 30 students or for those who are taking on additional responsibilities because of staffing shortages;

- a salary study to determine how, within financial and budgetary constraints, the district can become more competitive with neighboring districts and thus support staff attraction and retention; and

- strategic partnerships with national organizations that can support the district in rapidly filling or supporting staff needs. Potential partner organizations include Teach for America, Communities in Schools, the National Teacher Residency Center, and City Year.