

For Immediate Release
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Alabama A-F Report Card Data Released for Selma City Schools

Selma, Alabama-The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) released the A-F Report Card data on Thursday, December 14, 2023, for the 22-23 school year. The Selma City School (SCS) District scored a 67/D on the A-F Report Card. That is a decrease from 72/C previously scored. Efforts have already begun for improvement in every school, classroom, and office. This recent letter grade reflects last year's performance of elementary and middle schools and the 21-22 graduation and college and career readiness (CCR) rates for high schools.

Dr. Zickeyous Byrd, Superintendent of Selma City Schools, says, "The letter grade change was not impacted by the district's academic achievement and the graduation rate indicators. They basically remained the same."

When asked what caused the decline? Dr. Byrd says, "The significant decreases in **academic growth, college & career readiness**, and an **increase in chronic absenteeism** negatively impacted our overall score the most.

"Our efforts to improve, the district's graduation rate has already increased from 73.87% to 77.67%, and our college and career readiness data has increased from 57.99% to 76.21%," says Dr. Byrd. "These improvements will be reflected in next year's report card data (because the current data is one year in the arrears and will contribute to our overall improvement)."

Poverty, crime, and trauma are major factors that impact the school district. Dr. Byrd says, "In January 2023, our community experienced some catastrophic events a few months prior to testing. Our students, families, and employees lost their homes, entire neighborhoods were destroyed, and we even had to relocate an entire school." The Meadowview and Sophia P. Kingston communities were particularly affected by the displacement of many of our families.

Meadowview is one of our higher-performing schools. Last year, the SCS officials predicted the results would not be favorable because so many of our families were displaced, and we tested a large number of special education students, which created an additional testing subgroup.

Also, the district was plagued with unimaginable violence and shootings that took the life of one of our elementary scholars and injured many more around the community. In addition, we suffered the loss of a high school scholar.

We do not highlight these issues as excuses. Instead, we highlight the fact that our employees and students remained dedicated despite the trauma and losses that still impact many homes in the community today.

In a recent communication to employees, Dr. Byrd thanked them for their tireless efforts in the face of insurmountable circumstances and encouraged them to continue working hard to improve. He congratulated three schools: Payne Elementary, Sophia P. Kingston Elementary, and Saints Virtual Academy for their exceptional achievement and increased report card scores and growth. He explained, "The priorities for Selma City Schools to address these deficiencies are as follows: 1. We must reduce **chronic absenteeism** and follow attendance procedures. 2.) We must improve **academic growth** through intentional daily tiered intervention. 3.) We must improve our **college & career readiness** rates through intentional scheduling."

Moving forward, Selma City Schools will be targeting these specific areas to be more strategic in our approach to improve on behalf of our scholars and ultimately improve our Alabama A-F Report Card Score for the 2023-2024 school year. Furthermore, the schools are asking for parents to help them improve. According to Byrd, "The most important thing parents can do is ensure that their child attends school each day and that they understand how important their education is to their bright and successful future. The best is yet to come."