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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ORANGEBURG COUNTY SCHOOLS ACHIEVE MAJOR PROGRESS, WITH 70% OF SCHOOLS RATED AVERAGE OR ABOVE IN 2024 REPORT CARDS

ORANGEBURG, S.C. – The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) and the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC) released the 2024 S.C. School Report Cards today, and the gains of Orangeburg County School District (OCS D) students and educators are highlighted – including student performance information and other elements of school quality and effectiveness for the 2023-2024 school year.

The School Report Cards, based on South Carolina's education accountability system, are required for all elementary, middle, and high schools, which receive overall ratings based on a 100-point scale. The ratings follow terms outlined in state law: Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and Unsatisfactory. Schools also receive ratings on various indicators such as academic achievement, college and career readiness, and graduation rate.

"The school report card data shows that 70% of the schools in OCS D are rated average or above, and there are several OCS D schools that realized rating increases of two steps, with 10% of schools rated excellent" said Dr. Shawn D. Foster, Superintendent. In 2022 only 47% of OCS D schools were rated average or above. "These increases emphasize our academic strategies' positive impact on our students," he continued.

ACHIEVEMENT

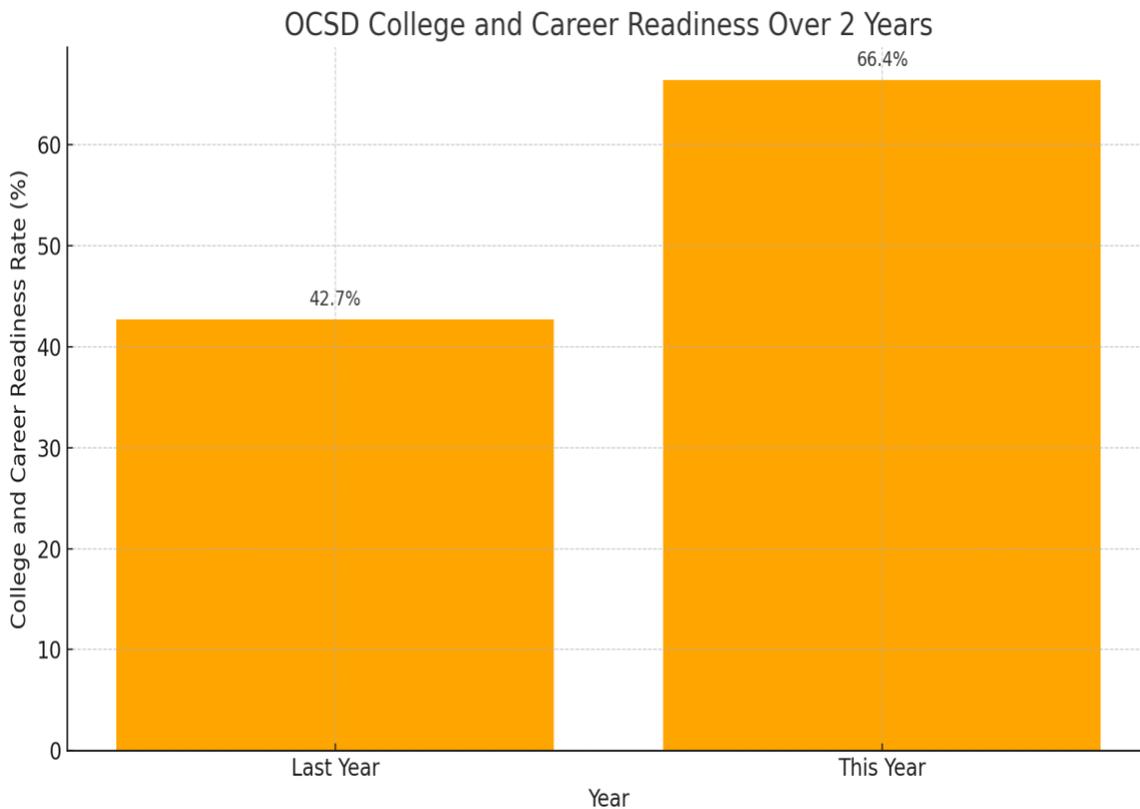
- SCREADY ELA Assessment
 - OCSD saw an increase of 1.5%, and the state had an increase of 0.2%
- SCREADY Math
 - OCSD grew by 2.9%, and the state grew by 1.9%.
- EOCEP English Assessment
 - OCSD had an increase of 3.1%.
- Algebra Assessment,
 - OCSD increased by 5.1, and the state by 6%.
- SCPASS Science Assessment
 - This assessment was not scored during the 2023-2024 school year.
- EOCEP Biology
 - OCSD increased by 7%, and the state increased by 7%.
- U.S. History
 - OCSD grew by 1.3%, and the state decreased by 0.6%

“We are pleased with the progress our students have made, but we know there is always room for improvement. Each year, we strive to build on these gains, and we are taking the necessary steps to ensure continued academic growth for all students,” said Dr. Bernard E. Frost, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.

COLLEGE AND CAREER READY

OCSD made significant strides in college and career readiness this year. The district's overall rate increased from 42.7% last year to 66.4% this year, a remarkable growth compared to the state's increase from 64.7% to 71.5%. This improvement reflects the district's commitment to preparing students for success beyond high school.

Additionally, 100% of OCSD's seven high schools are rated average or above for college and career readiness. Of these, 5 schools are rated Excellent, while 2 schools are rated Average.



GRADUATION RATE

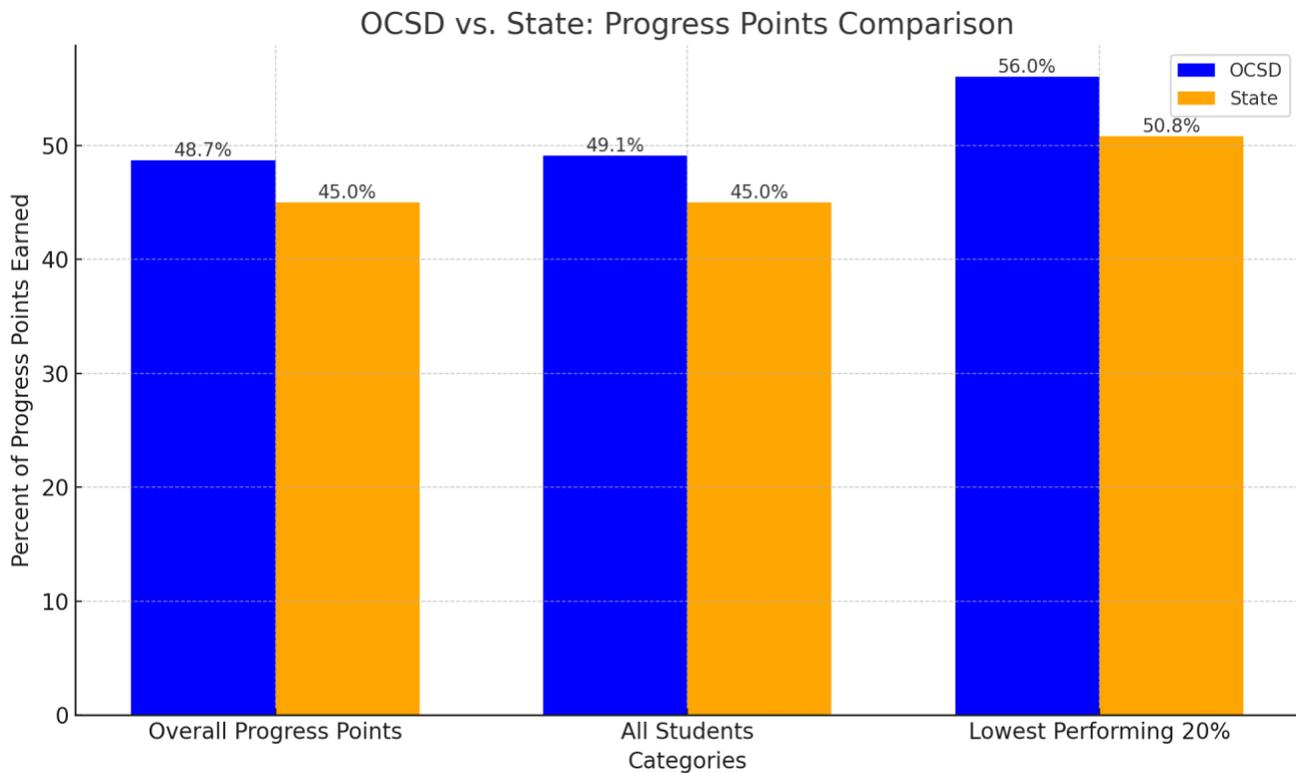
The OCSD's graduation rate increased by 1.7% to 79.3%. The state's graduation rate has increased to 85.4% from 83.8%. In the state of South Carolina, all public schools and the schools in Orangeburg County are no different - they serve all children and provide them with the opportunity to receive a high-quality education to prepare them to pursue opportunities after high school. As a result of educating students and meeting them where they are, we know that some students we serve will not attain a high school diploma. As such, high schools in OCSD will continue to aim for 100%, knowing that challenges exist. In this year's cohort, the maximum graduation rate that the district could receive for students who qualified for a diploma was 92.0%. Keep in mind that the size of a school can dramatically impact graduation rates. A small school that loses or gains students will have a different impact than a larger one.

"Although OCSD prides itself on serving the whole child and meeting them where they are – we also wanted to explain to our community that although there was a decrease in graduation rate, we remained unequivocally committed to meeting every child where they are and supporting their educational needs – unique to them," said Dr. Shawn D. Foster.

STUDENT PROGRESS

Regarding student progress, OCSD earned a higher percentage of progress points than the state in several of the areas measured. The district saw a higher overall percentage of

progress points earned compared to the state. The district earned 48.7% compared to 45% for the state. When examining the percent of progress points earned in the "All Students" category, the district earned 49.1% of points compared to 45.0% for the state. When examining the growth for the 'Lowest Performing 20% of Students' category the district earned 56.% of points compared to 50.8% earned by the state.



SCHOOL CLIMATE

Regarding school climate, OCSD realized some commendable gains - and increased in most areas compared to last year.

- Overall perceptions of school climate in the district **increased** from 6.19 to 6.56.
- Teacher perceptions of instructional focus in the district **increased** from 7.43 to 7.70
- Teacher perceptions of working conditions in the district **increased** from 7.43 to 7.99.
- Teacher perceptions of safety in the district **increased** from 7.45 to 7.82.
- Student perceptions of social-physical environment **increased** from 3.04 to 3.33.
- Both the district and the state **increased** student perceptions of safety. The district **increased** from 5.60 to 5.97,
- Finally, overall perceptions of the school climate in the district **increased** from 6.19 compared to 6.56.

"The climate of any school or school district is vitally important," said Dr. Shawn D. Foster. "It is important to me as superintendent to be aware of how our educators and students are feeling, and in turn, making modifications as necessary to ensure they are in quality environments conducive to teaching and learning," he continued. He further shared, "I am proud to know that as it relates to the school climate survey, 98.5% of teachers completed the survey compared to 91.4% for the state this year." 95.6% of students in grades 3-12 completed the survey, compared to 89.5% for the state.

NEXT STEPS

OCS D plans to implement strategies to support student's academic improvement strategically. To that end, OCS D introduced a new universal screener this year – iReady. Chosen by teachers and administrators because of its instructional focus, iReady allows teachers to diagnose student needs and provide strategies and tools to assist students. One example is the scaffolding report that will enable teachers to bridge the gap between a student's actual performance and grade-level performance. Also, in mathematics, a prerequisite report tells a teacher which prerequisite skills a student has not mastered for the standard and provides resources for the teacher to assist the student. Additionally, the program generates a learning path for each student and assigns them computer assisted lessons to address their needs.

Dr. Foster said, "We know what the data shows, but we also know what the data does not show. In OCS D, we educate the whole child while supporting the whole family. Therefore, we understand the challenges and opportunities our students encounter, and we are laser-focused on meeting them where they are and growing them to where they should be," he concluded.

The Report Cards, available at www.screportcards.com, highlight student performance information and other elements of school quality and effectiveness for the 2023-2024 school year.

Orangeburg County School District

The mission of Orangeburg County School District, the catalyst of innovation and excellence, is to ensure all students discover and develop their person, purpose, and platform through high-quality educational experiences distinguished by a culture of collaboration, equity, and inclusion; a creative learning environment with inspiring opportunities; a commitment to nurture the academic, physical, social and emotional well-being of all. Visit us online at ocsdsc.org

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