

Strategy Update

February 2026

One District. One Goal. Every Child.

Accelerate Early Learning

Joanne Wyckoff, Director of Early Learning

Dr. Shavaun Mincey, Senior Literacy Officer & Executive Director of Elementary Curriculum & Instruction

One District. One Goal. Every Child.

A COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS

GETTING BACK TO BASICS

Our Strength is Our Team

Atlanta's students will have effective and engaged teachers, leaders, and staff.

- Increase concentration of highly-effective teachers and leaders
- Prioritize engagement and retention for staff
- Grow and promote strong teachers, leaders, and staff

Our Responsibility Is Shared

Atlanta's students will have supportive families, communities, and partners.

- Build meaningful partnerships
- Expand Atlanta Partners for Education (APFE) impact
- Increase access and engagement for families and communities

Our System Is Efficient & Effective

Atlanta's students will have the schools and resources they need to succeed.

- Maximize facility usage for the student and community good
- Leverage data to drive strategic financial investments
- Implement sustainability initiatives

We Are Strengthening Our Instructional Core

Atlanta's students will have high-quality instruction, materials, and targeted support.

- Implement high-quality, relevant, and engaging instructional materials and professional learning in all core content areas
- Target resources towards subgroups (eg. exceptional education, English learners, economically-disadvantaged)
- Accelerate early learning

We Are Caring For Every Child

Atlanta's students will have trusted, supportive adults meeting their unique needs.

- Expand strategies that reduce chronic absenteeism and disproportionate discipline
- Implement systematic culture and climate strategies
- Increase student access to trusted and reliable adults (eg. mentors, coaches, counselors)

We Are Sparking Student Curiosity

Atlanta's students will have access to explore and expand their passions and interests.

- Promote robust arts, athletics, world language, and enrichment offerings
- Expand access to high-interest and workforce-ready offerings (e.g. career programs and pathways, advanced coursework)
- Explore specialized and innovative school models (eg. School of the Arts)



Focus Area: We Are Strengthening Our Instructional Core

Objective: Accelerate early learning

Leading Indicators

Baseline (2025-26): TBD

Family Engagement

Increase % of participating families and providers reporting understanding and confidence in supporting early learning development as measured by post-engagement surveys.

High Quality Instruction

10-15% point increase in students performing “demonstrating and above” on the Kindergarten Readiness Inventory (KRI), measured three times a year

Enrollment Optimization

100% of district PK4 classrooms operate at or above 95% capacity

Key Performance Indicators

Baseline (2025)

Early Learning Access (PK3)* 0%

Then number of APS Pre-K 3 seats provided by the district or partners divided by the number of live births for the current Pre-K cohort

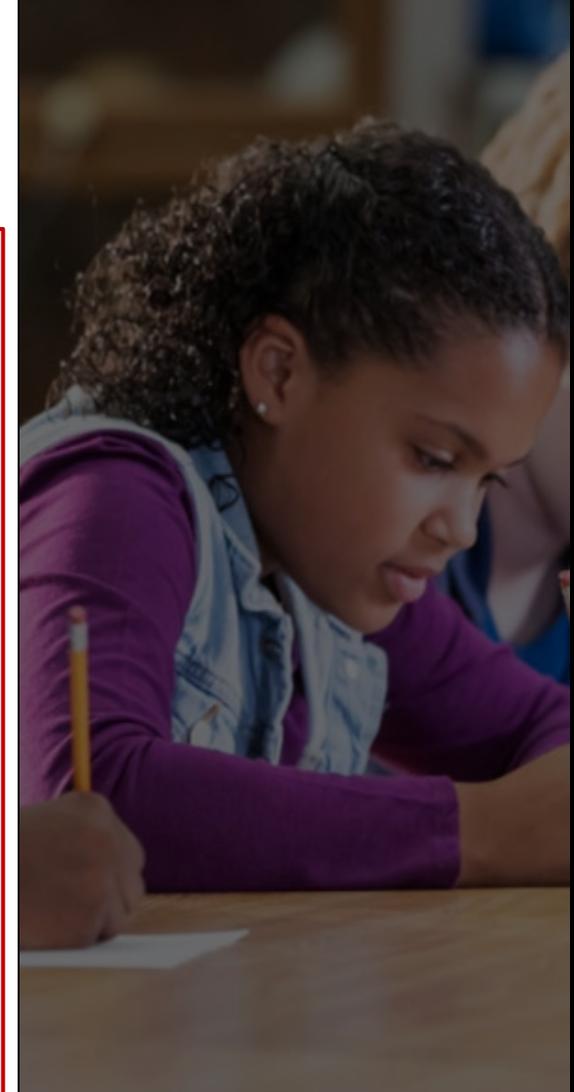
Early Learning Access (PK4)* 28%

Then number of APS Pre-K 4 seats provided by the district or partners divided by the number of live births for the current Pre-K cohort

Kindergarten Readiness* 46.1%

% of students scoring 'Demonstrating' or 'Exceeding' on all ELA domains in Spring GKIDS 2.0

** Currently reviewing KPI's for alignment and prioritization*



Every Child Deserves a Strong Start

“The first five years have so much to do with how the next 80 turn out.” — Bill Gates

Preparing children early ensures stronger outcomes in K-12 and beyond.



**Strong Family
Engagement**



**High-Quality
Educational
Experiences**



**Lottery
Prioritization**



Thank You to Our Partners

**Alliance
Theatre**



 **Fernbank**
MUSEUM | 3D THEATER | FOREST



Rollins Center
for Language & Literacy
A Program of the Atlanta Speech School



UNITED WAY
Greater Atlanta





Focus Area: We Are Strengthening Our Instructional Core

Objective: Accelerate Early Learning

Strategies

1

Strengthen the collaboration with families and early learning providers to ensure high-quality support for early childhood development.

2

Provide high-quality curriculum, coaching, and instructional support to ensure all PK classrooms intentionally build the skills for students to show academic progress on the Kindergarten Readiness Inventory.

3

Identify underserved neighborhoods and strategically increase PK4 enrollment to ensure all PreK classrooms are operating at full capacity.



1

Strengthen the collaboration with families and early learning providers to ensure high-quality support for early learning development.

Current Partnerships & Actions

- Monthly In-Person Events- Families are provided with hands-on guidance and resources to support the development of literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills. Average attendance: 50+ parents.
- Monthly Virtual Parent Engagements- Head Start Parents receive information and guidance on essential community resources that support family well-being. Average attendance: Approximately 30 parents.
- Transition Support- Families are supported with resources and strategies to ensure seamless transitions from day care to Pre-K and from Pre-K to Kindergarten.



1

Strengthen the collaboration with families and early learning providers to ensure high-quality support for early learning development.

Next Steps

- Deepen our impact in the Douglass & Washington feeder patterns by leveraging Instructional Support Specialists, Family Support Specialists and the Transition Specialist.
- Continue to serve providers and cultivate a collaborative and mentorship relationship.
- Connect the Early Learning Advisory Council members with child care providers and “adopt a family” in an effort to support them through early learning developmental experiences.



2

Provide high-quality curriculum, coaching, and instructional support to ensure all PK classrooms intentionally build the skills for students to show academic progress on the Kindergarten Readiness Inventory.

Current Partnerships & Actions

- Curriculum: Frog Street
- Heggerty: 15 Classroom Pilot, currently
- Teacher Support: Coached by Specialists
- Kindergarten Readiness Inventory (KRI) aligned with GKIDS
- Daily Schedule that allows for small group and whole group instruction
- Ongoing Student Assessment Tool: Work Sampling Online (WSO)
- District Wide Professional Development
- Ready to Grow: For Educators



Looking Back: KRI SY25

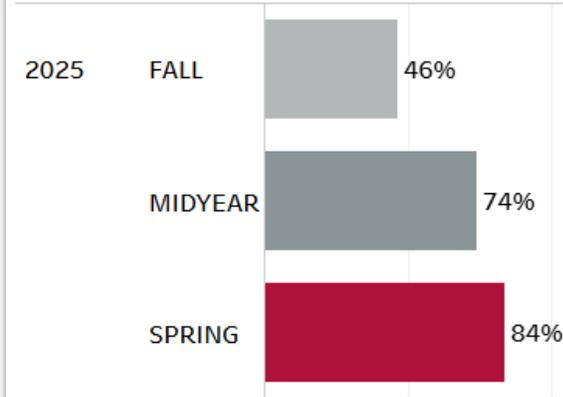
PreK Data shows Growth in ALL Domains

- **From fall to spring, students demonstrate significant growth across all domains**, with the largest gains in early literacy and phonological awareness; skills that begin lower but respond strongly to intentional Pre-K instruction.
- **Mathematics remains a consistent strength**, with students entering Pre-K with foundational skills and reaching near-universal mastery in key areas such as shapes and 1–1 correspondence by spring.

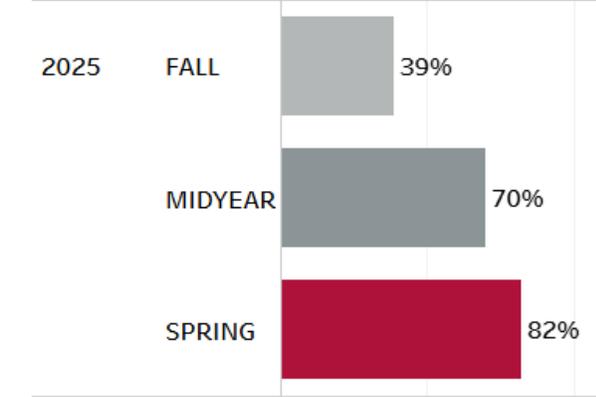
Kindergarten Readiness Inventory (KRI) Results - District Results Demonstrating and Above (Demonstrating+Exceeding)



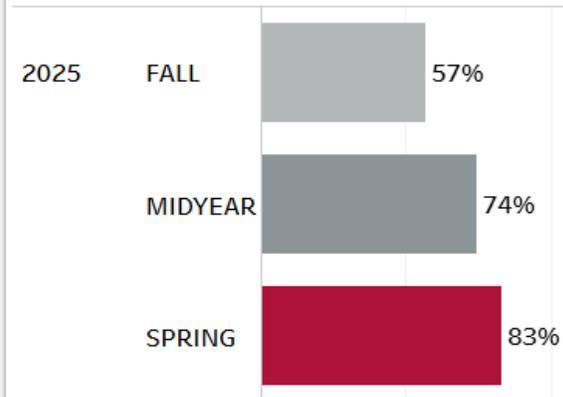
Alphabet Knowledge and Phonics



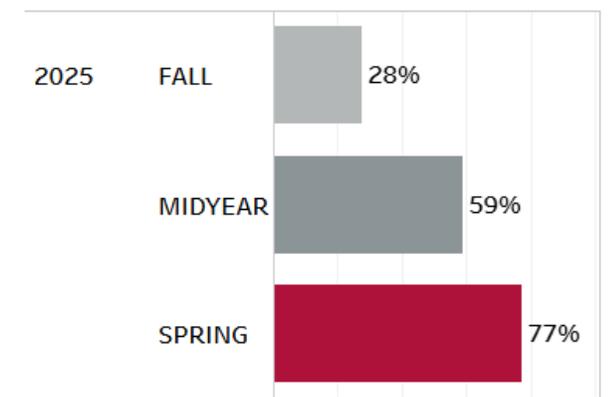
Phonological Awareness



Mathematics



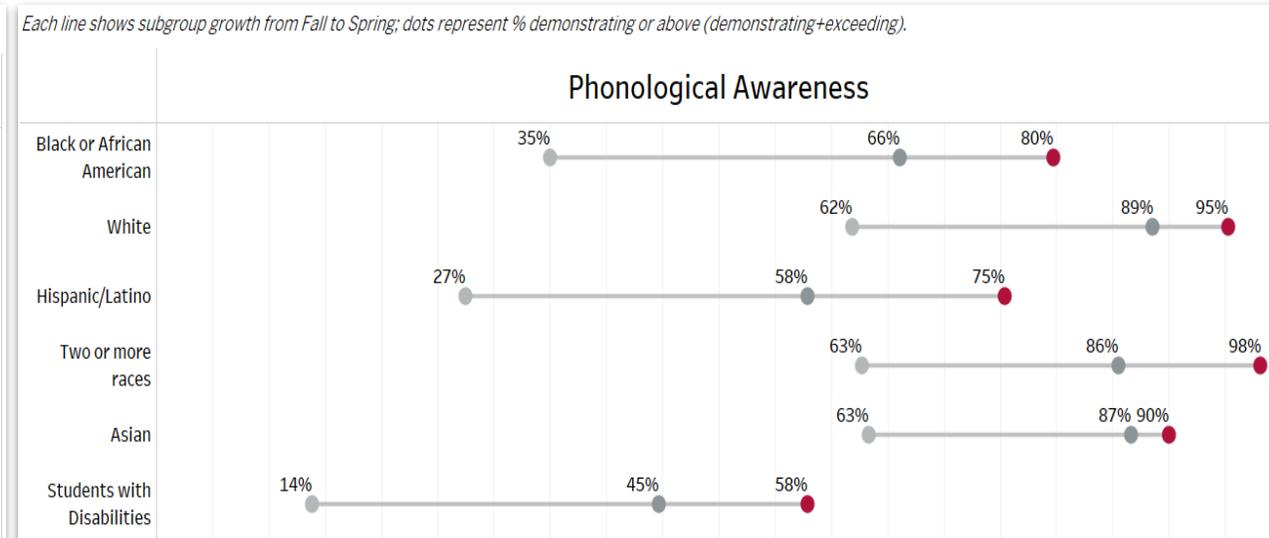
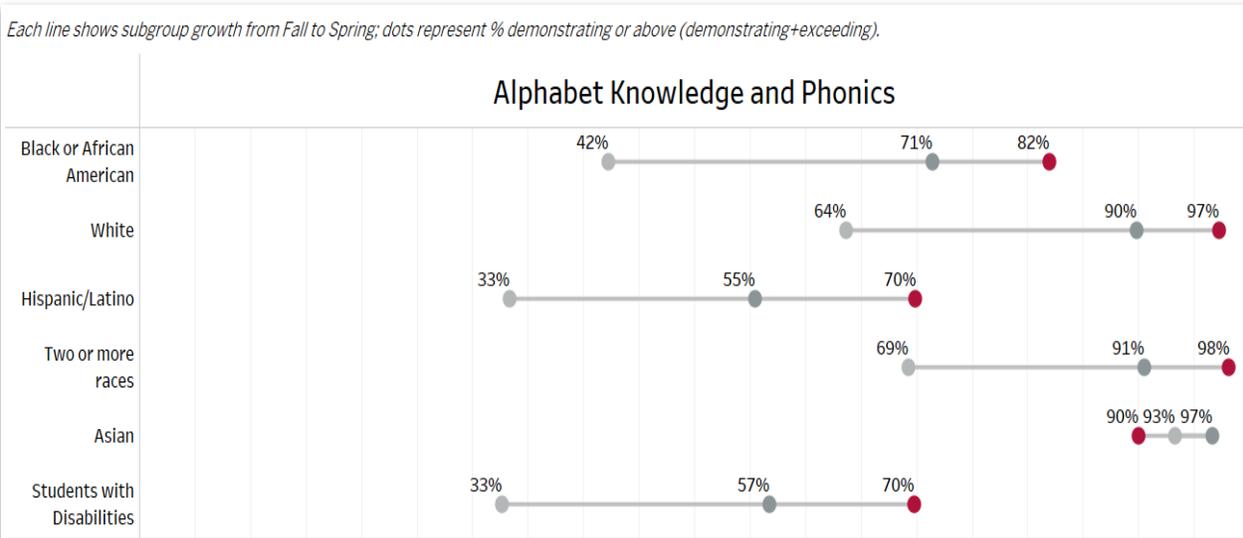
Print and Word / Name Writing



KRI Subgroup Growth - Fall to Spring

SY25

- PreK student subgroups by race demonstrate growth from fall to spring with 70% to 98% in Alphabet Knowledge, Phonics, and Phonological Awareness.



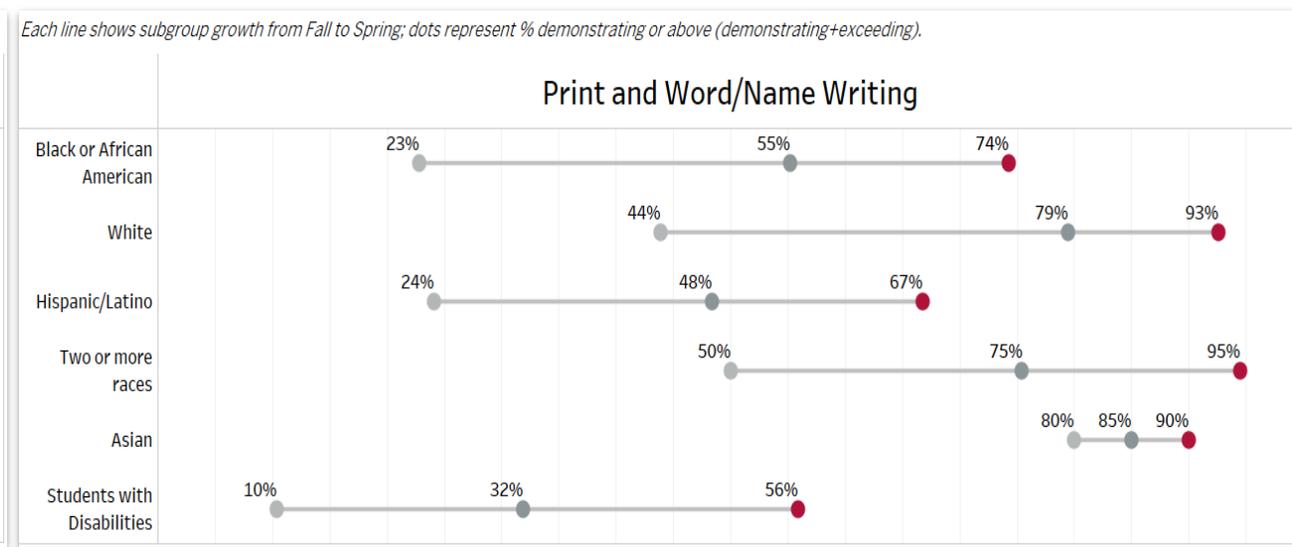
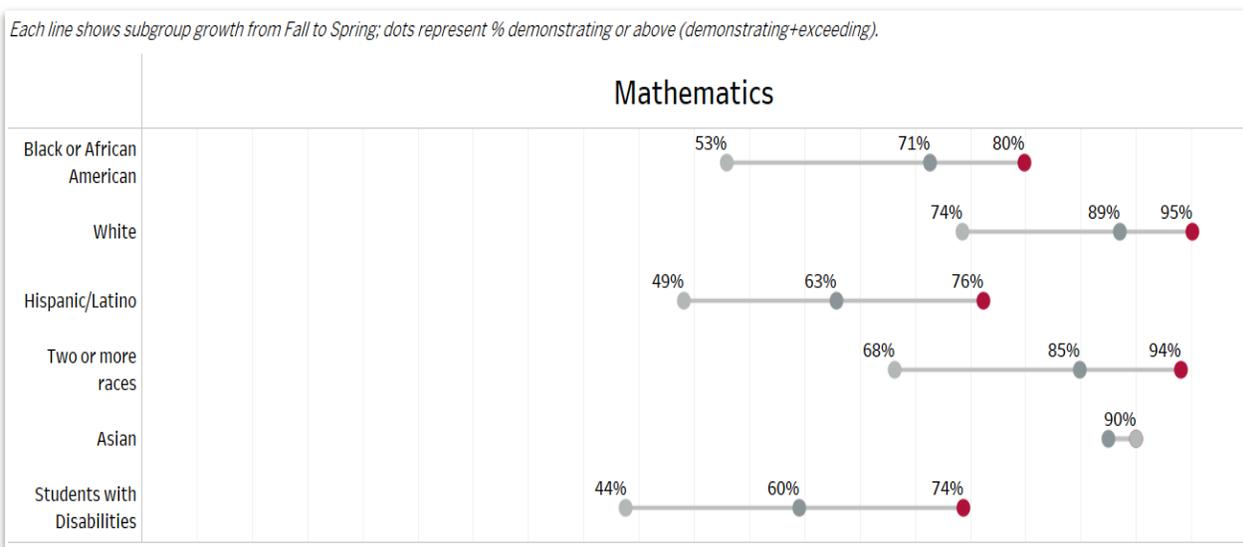
■ FALL
■ MIDYEAR
■ SPRING



KRI Subgroup Growth - Fall to Spring

SY25

- PreK student subgroups by race demonstrate growth from fall to spring with 70% to 94% in Mathematics and Print, Word/Name Writing.



■ FALL
■ MIDYEAR
■ SPRING



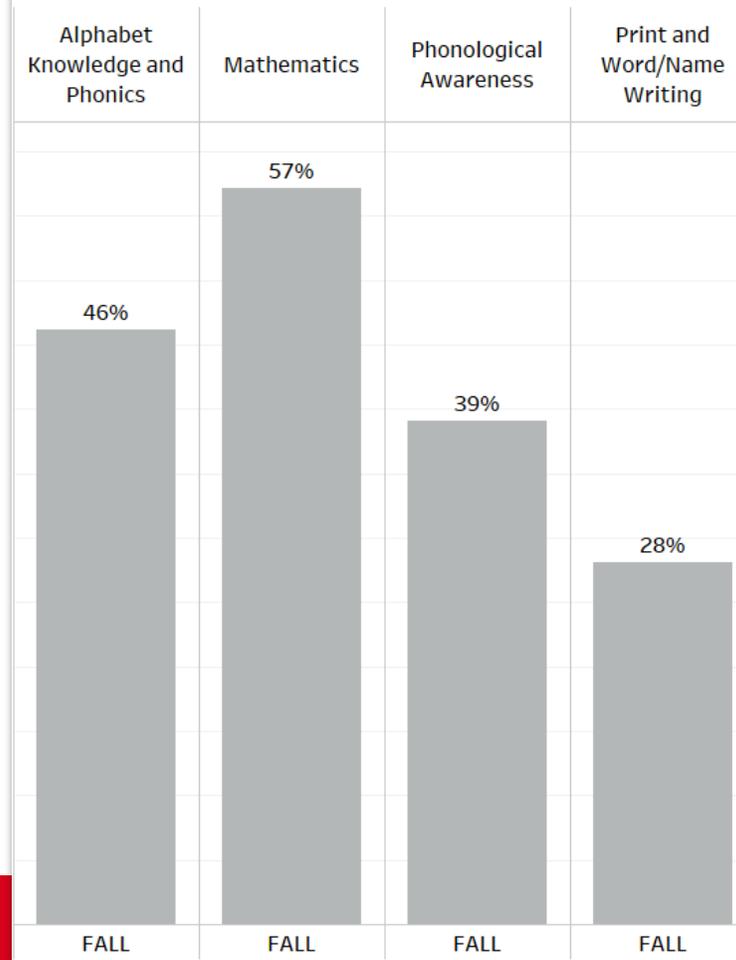
SY26 Fall KRI Baseline: Beginning of the year data shows Mathematics as a strength and a need to focus on Phonological Awareness

- **Glows:** Mathematics is the strongest area of readiness at entry, with **57%** of Pre-K students demonstrating and above, and nearly half showing readiness in alphabet knowledge.
- **Grows:** Phonological awareness and print/writing skills show the greatest opportunity for growth (**39%** and **28%** respectively), reinforcing the importance of intentional instruction across the Pre-K year.

Kindergarten Readiness Inventory (KRI) 2026 Results

District Results

Demonstrating and above (Demonstrating+Exceeding)



2

Provide high-quality curriculum, coaching, and instructional support to ensure all PK classrooms intentionally build the skills for students to show academic progress on the Kindergarten Readiness Inventory.

Next Steps

- Full Heggerty Roll Out: All Pre-K Classrooms 26-27SY
- PreK teachers to enroll and complete Cox Campus course offerings
- Continue Alliance Theatre Partnership
- Facilitate specialized professional development for school principals to enhance their support of Pre-K programs.
 - Pilot Pre-K Principal Retreat (Summer '26)



2

PreK Teacher and Assistant Teacher Testimonials

PreK Bright Spot

Ms. Melody Billups
PreK Teacher



Ms. Reva Holsey
Teacher Assistant



3

Identify underserved neighborhoods and strategically **increase PK4 enrollment** to ensure all PreK classrooms are operating at full capacity.

Current Partnerships & Actions

- The United Way and GEEARS supports APS in identification and recruitment efforts
- Greenbriar Mall: Leveraged community events to drive enrollment, resulting in successful family recruitment led by the APS OEL Enrollment Administrator.
- Collaborative Recruitment: Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS) ambassadors
- Family Support Embedded Enrollment
 - Targeted Outreach
 - Documentation Assistance
 - Family Needs Assessment and Resource Connection

Grassroots Outreach

- Direct Engagement: Deploying staff and ambassadors as "walking advertisements"
- Business Partnerships: Leveraging high-traffic local businesses and grocery stores for strategic signage and flyer distribution.



3

Number of PreK Students by Feeder Pattern



54
Carver



85
Mays



86
Washington



92
Midtown



92
South Atlanta



105
Therrell



111
Douglass



187
Jackson



213
North Atlanta

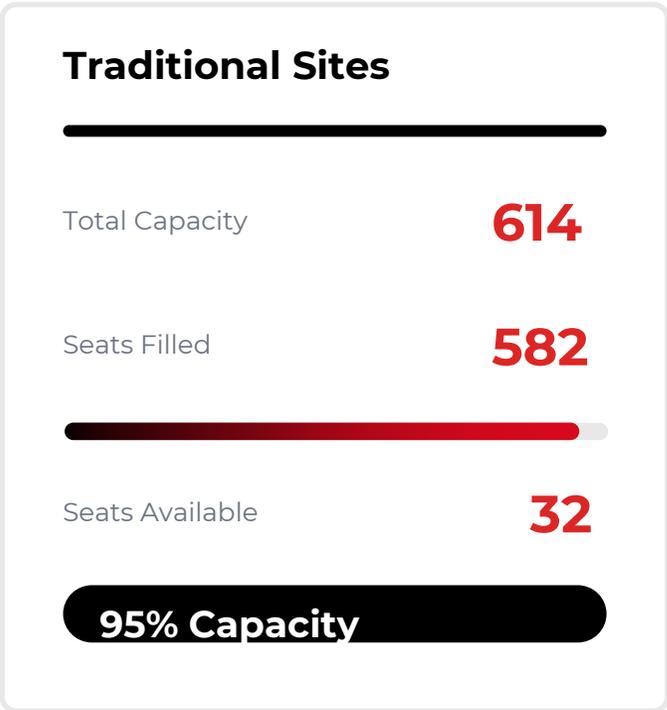
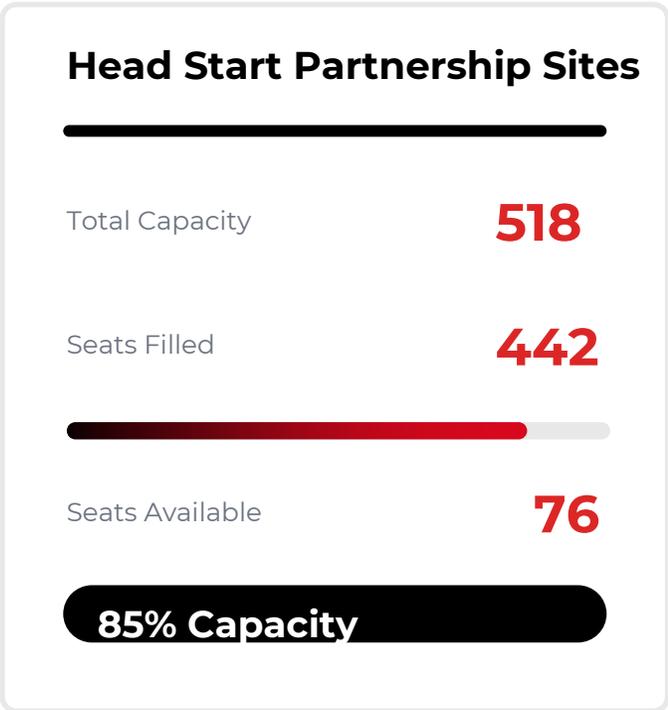
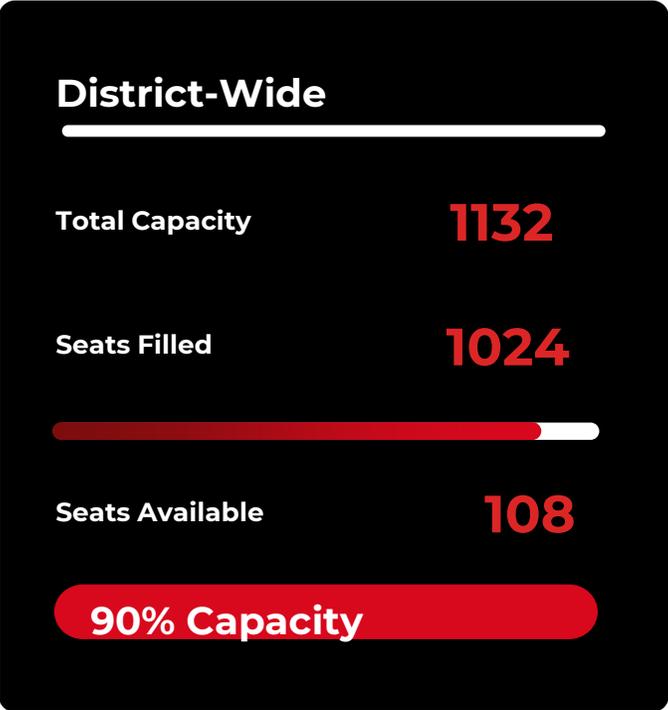


ATLANTA
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

Current Enrollment Data

90% of all available Pre K seats are filled

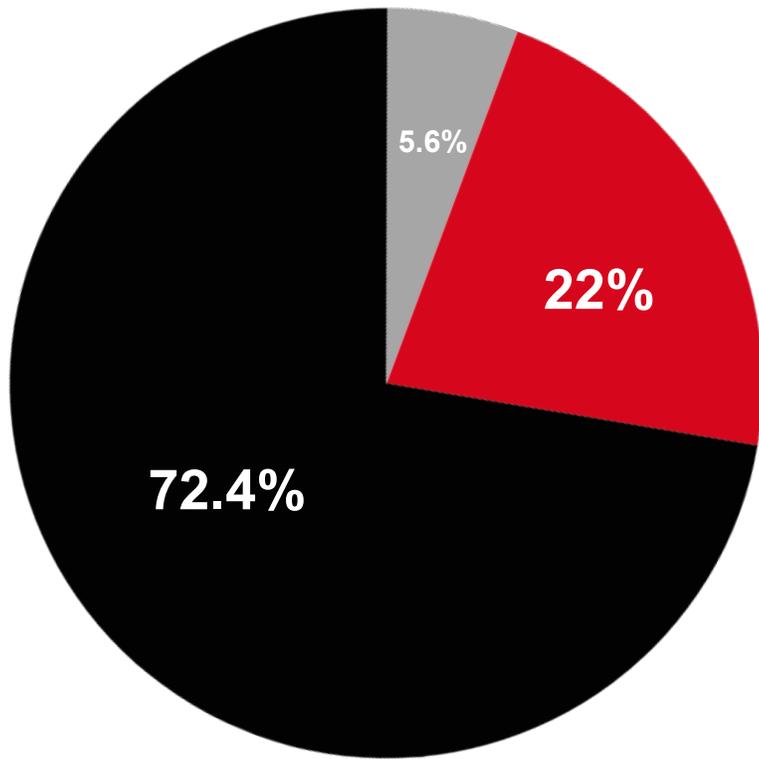
The Office of Early Learning provides high-quality instruction to approximately **1,132 students**. Our program footprint spans **57 classrooms** within **38 elementary schools** throughout the district. This expansive reach ensures broad, equitable access to early childhood education throughout the district. Currently, our program is operating at **90% capacity**, reflecting both strong community demand and high engagement with our educational offerings.



Enrollment Data

72% of Pre K students are enrolled in their zoned schools

2025-2026 Pre-K Lottery Results



72.4%

Seats offered to in-zone families via the lottery.

5.6%

Seats offered to employees that reside out of zone via the lottery.

22%

Seats offered to out-of-zone families via the lottery.

APS Pre-K at a Glance

Breakdown of APS Sites, Seats, and Vacancies

Feeder Pattern	# of APS PK Sites	# of APS PK Seats	# of APS PK Vacancies
Carver	3	60	6
Douglass	4	120	9
Jackson	5	198	11
Mays	4	120	35
Midtown	4	98	6
N. Atlanta	6	218	5
S. Atlanta	5	100	8
Therrell	4	120	15
Washington	3	98	12
TOTAL	38	1132	107

Schools with 6+ Vacancies		
Mays	Peyton Forest	16
	Miles	10
	Cascade	9
Washington	Hollis Innovation	8*
Therrell	Continental Colony	15
Douglass	Harper Archer	8
Midtown	Hope Hill	6*

**Inclusion seats available*

As of 2/2/2026

Early Learning Across the City

Breakdown of Providers, Capacity, and GA PK4 Seats

Feeder Pattern	# of Licensed Providers	Max Licensed Capacity	# of GA PK4 Seats
Carver	21	1,771	140
Douglass	22	2,024	100
Jackson	36	4,475	321
Mays	17	1,766	200
Midtown	45	7,719	465
N. Atlanta	30	5,049	181
S. Atlanta	11	1,284	140
Therrell	16	1,348	20
Washington	14	1,651	331
TOTAL	212	27,087	1,898

- South Atlanta and Therrell have the least licensed providers and capacity.
- Midtown, Jackson, and North Atlanta have the most providers and capacity.
- Note: According to PAACT, there is a need for more up-to-date data.

As of 9/2025

3

Identify underserved neighborhoods and strategically increase PK4 enrollment to ensure all PreK classrooms are operating at full capacity.

Next Steps

Maintain Operational Continuity

- Standardized Process: Sustain current successful recruitment protocols.
- Strengthen Partnerships: Continue strategic collaboration with GEEARS.
- Ongoing Outreach: Maintain consistent community engagement and visibility.

Deepen Community Impact

- Closure Support: Provide dedicated transition resources for families impacted by school closures.
- Shelter Presence: Increase onsite engagement at homeless shelters to reach vulnerable students.

Drive Strategic Growth

- Leadership Alignment: Partner with school leaders to localize recruitment efforts.
- Summer Early Learning Fair: Launch a summer event to connect providers, families, and resources.



Questions & Answers

Appendix

One District. One Goal. Every Child.

As a resource, please find the PAACT Landscape Analysis (September 2025) here:

