

# 2024 -2025 ANNUAL REPORT

*A YEAR IN REVIEW*



# ROCK HILL *Schools*

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## WOULD YOU, OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW, BE INTERESTED IN WORKING WITH US?

Check out our job board on our website to learn more about our open employment opportunities!



# A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Celebrating Progress, Focused on What's Next

As I step into the 2025-26 school year and my first year as Superintendent of Rock Hill Schools, I am deeply appreciative of the tremendous work that has taken place across our district prior to my arrival. The dedication of our educators, staff, students, and families has built a foundation for continued growth and success.

The 2024–2025 South Carolina School Report Card highlights that progress. From 2023–2024 to 2024–2025, Rock Hill Schools saw steady improvement across key measures:

Schools rated Good or Excellent overall increased by 10%.

Schools rated Good or Excellent in Academic Achievement grew by nearly 14%.

Schools rated Good or Excellent in Student Progress rose by 13%.

64% of our schools improved their overall scores.



I want to recognize and celebrate the educators, leaders, and support staff who have worked tirelessly to help our students succeed. I am fully committed to ensuring every school is supported and equipped for student success.

While we take pride in this progress, we also recognize there is more work ahead. Together, we will continue to focus on what matters most - ensuring that every student in Rock Hill Schools is supported, challenged, and inspired to achieve their fullest potential.

I am honored to lead this district forward and excited to build on the momentum already in place.

The future is bright for Rock Hill Schools.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah Elder".

**Dr. Deborah Elder**

Superintendent, Rock Hill Schools

## 2024 - 2025 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Our school board recognizes public support and open lines of communication are vital to a successful educational environment for students and employees. Citizens are encouraged to stay informed on the decisions which affect students and teachers, to let board members know opinions on important issues, and to attend board meetings whenever possible.



James Burns



Dr. Montrio Belton



Lacy Daniel



Melissa Harris



Jennifer Hutchinson



Helena Miller



Pete Nosal

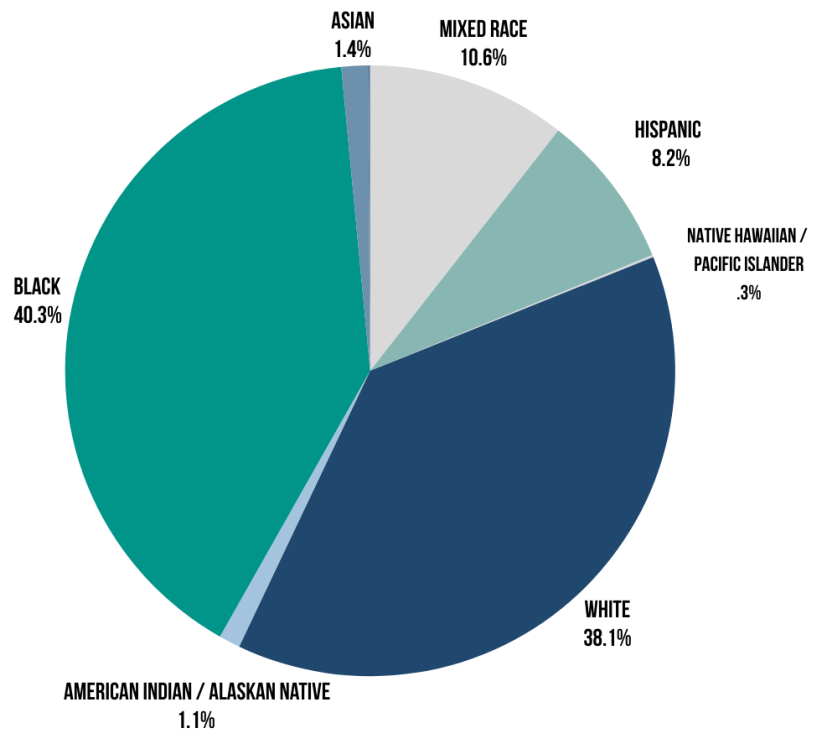
# ABOUT ROCK HILL SCHOOLS



## STUDENT ENROLLMENT: 15,859

Rock Hill Schools is the second largest school district in York County and one of the largest in South Carolina. We are home to 14 elementary schools, five middle schools, and three high schools.

We are also proud of our amazing, high-quality programs including the Applied Technology Center, Adult Education, and Alternative Programs. Additionally, our district offers a robust amount of program options including language immersion, arts integration, career and technical education, and Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM) learning. These programs offer families choices to fit their student's educational needs and nurture their talents, interests, and unique genius. The strength of Rock Hill Schools emanates from the expertise of our people. Success stories range from the classrooms of IB programs, to the preparation of students for real-world careers, to reaching students of all abilities.



94.7%

ATTENDANCE RATE

83.3%

GRADUATION RATE

# 2024-2025 FINANCIALS

## TOTAL REVENUE

**\$ 303,692,402**



FEDERAL SOURCES  
**\$ 21,352,210**



STATE SOURCES  
**\$ 141,727,516**



LOCAL SOURCES  
**\$ 140,556,476**



INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVENUE  
**\$ 56,200**

## TOTAL EXPENDITURES

**\$ 305,112,627**



INSTRUCTION  
**\$ 137,230,877**



SUPPORT SERVICES  
**\$ 127,526,414**



COMMUNITY SERVICES  
**\$ 174,769**



INTERGOVERNMENTAL  
**\$ 1,239,824**



CAPITAL OUTLAY  
**\$ 22,466,177**



DEBT SERVICE  
**\$ 16,474,566**

## BUDGET PROCESS

The 2024–2025 budget process focused on maintaining our commitment to both educational excellence and fiscal responsibility for the Rock Hill Schools community. In June 2024, the Board of Trustees approved a balanced General Fund budget totaling approximately \$239.3 million for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

# CONNECTING TO OUR COMMUNITY



## RECOGNITION HIGHLIGHT: ROCK HILL SCHOOLS NAMED A TOP 10 EMPLOYER BY FORBES

Rock Hill Schools is proud to be recognized by Forbes as one of America's Best Employers in South Carolina for 2024, ranking among the Top 10 employers in the state. This prestigious honor reflects our district's ongoing commitment to fostering a positive, inclusive, and supportive work environment where every employee feels valued and empowered to make a difference.

From investing in professional growth to prioritizing staff well-being, this recognition affirms what we know to be true: Rock Hill Schools is not just a great place to learn, but also a great place to work.

## FEATURE HIGHLIGHT: ROCK HILL SCHOOLS IN NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE

Rock Hill Schools is honored to be featured in Newsweek Magazine's Education Series, recognizing our district's commitment to empowering students and adults through leadership, career readiness, and community connection. The feature showcases how our Leader in Me initiative cultivates confident, capable leaders at every level, students, educators, and families alike. It also highlights our district's innovative focus on career readiness, ensuring every student graduates prepared for success in college, career, and life. This national recognition reflects the strength of our community partnerships and shared dedication to helping all learners grow, lead, and thrive.



## PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHT: SLAM DUNK WITH SECOND GRADE

Rock Hill Schools teamed up with Winthrop University for an exciting literacy and athletics partnership, Slam Dunk with Second Grade! Winthrop basketball players visited every second-grade classroom to read "Little Shaq" by Shaquille O'Neal and help students gear up for game day.

The collaboration with Winthrop Athletics and Winthrop Women's Basketball added a fun and inspiring twist to reading, motivating students to dive even deeper into books. The celebration culminated with more than 1,000 second graders filling the stands at Winthrop Coliseum, cheering on the Eagles and celebrating the joy of reading. A big thank-you to Winthrop Athletics for hosting this unforgettable event, a true slam dunk for literacy and community spirit!



# EXCELLENT EMPLOYEES

## RECRUITMENT AND ONBOARDING

Recruiting high-quality educators remains a top priority for the Human Resources and Talent Development Department. This year, Rock Hill Schools expanded its recruitment efforts by launching two new pathways into the teaching profession: the Grow Your Own Residency with Clemson University and the CarolinaCAP Residency with the University of South Carolina. Both programs provide pre-service teachers with opportunities to learn from highly skilled educators while gaining authentic experience in a supportive school environment.



## EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

The Well-Being Team prioritized highlighting employee resources that support work-life balance. Many of these resources are embedded within existing benefits that employees may not be aware of, such as the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The EAP utilization rate increased to 8.48% and continues to grow steadily. The Insurance and Benefits team also implemented the BenefitHub discount program, offering employees savings on retail, travel, and wellness purchases. In addition, with a renewed focus on workplace safety, we successfully reduced workers' compensation incidents by 30%! We continue to show our appreciation through employee recognition events, as well as by providing opportunities for professional and personal growth, such as our Home Buyer Workshops and the Retirement Planning for Your Future seminar.

## SHARING LOVE WITH NEW TEACHERS

In February 2025, Induction teachers participated in the second annual "Share the Love" event, held during New Teacher Institute (NTI) meetings organized by grade level, elementary, middle, and high school. During these sessions, teachers from across the district engaged in meaningful collaboration, exchanging best practices and strategies on a range of topics, including instructional techniques, student engagement, technology integration, and classroom organization.



## EDUCATOR SERVICES



EDUCATORS COMPLETED FORMAL EVALUATIONS



MENTORS SERVED NOVICE TEACHERS



CLASSROOM EDUCATORS SERVED ON EVALUATION TEAMS



EDUCATORS RENEWED PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATES

# 2024 - 2025 POINTS OF PRIDE



- The College Board awarded students at Northwestern, South Pointe, and Rock Hill High national recognition.
- Students from Northwestern, South Pointe, and Rock Hill High earned awards for their academic achievements as Advanced Placement Scholars, International Baccalaureate Diploma recipients, and Dual Credit seniors.
- South Pointe graduate Garrett Brown was the 2023 AAAA Boys Cross Country State Champion.
- Rock Hill High graduate Isaiah Palmer was the South Carolina High School League 5A Pole Vault State Champion.
- Applied Technology Center students passed state and national certifications.
- Students from Northwestern, South Pointe, and Rock Hill High were awarded the Seal of Biliteracy which recognizes students' advanced proficiency in both English and one additional world language.

## GRADUATION BY THE NUMBERS

142

HIGHEST HONOR

80

HONOR GRADUATES

5

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE  
DIPLOMA CANDIDATES

18

ACADEMIC HONOR CERTIFICATES FOR  
SUPERIOR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

73

ADVANCED PLACEMENT SCHOLARS

21

ADVANCED PLACEMENT SCHOLAR CANDIDATES

MORE THAN **\$30 MILLION** AWARDED  
IN COMBINED SCHOLARSHIPS



# STATE & NATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

STATEWIDE TESTING REFLECTS A STRATEGIC FOCUS ON STUDENT GROWTH

Number  
of  
Schools

2024 - 2025 SC School Report Card				
Excellent Overall Rating	Good Overall Rating	Average Overall Rating	Below Average Overall Rating	Unsatisfactory Overall Rating
1	8	10	3	0

**SCHOOLS WITH GOOD/EXCELLENT OVERALL RATING:**

**INCREASED 10%**  
**9 OF 22 SCHOOLS**

**SCHOOLS WITH GOOD/EXCELLENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT:**

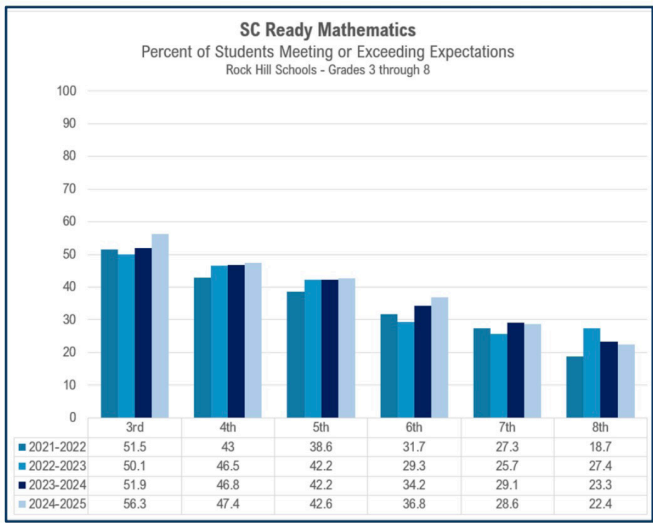
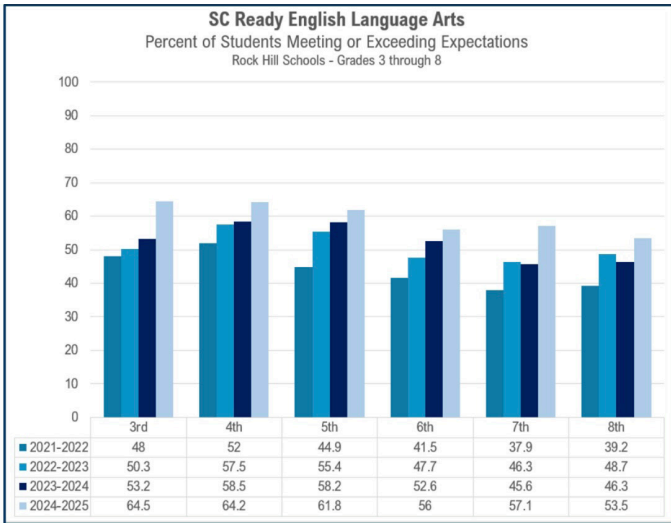
**INCREASED 14%**  
**9 OF 22 SCHOOLS**

**SCHOOLS WITH GOOD/EXCELLENT STUDENT PROGRESS:**

**INCREASED 13%**  
**7 OF 19 SCHOOLS**

**SCHOOLS WITH INCREASED OVERALL SCORES:**

**INCREASED 64%**  
**14 OF 22 SCHOOLS**

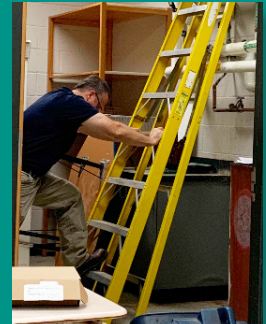


# OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS



## OPTIMIZING AIR & WATER FLOW

As part of ongoing efforts to improve the health and comfort of students and staff, several key upgrades were made to enhance air and water quality in our schools. At Saluda Trail Middle School, aging HVAC units in the front office area were replaced with more efficient models to ensure better air circulation and temperature control.



In addition, old water heaters in the kitchens at Sullivan Middle and Northwestern High were replaced with state-of-the-art, tank-less Rinnai water heaters. These new units offer improved water and heating efficiency, contributing to a more sustainable and reliable system.

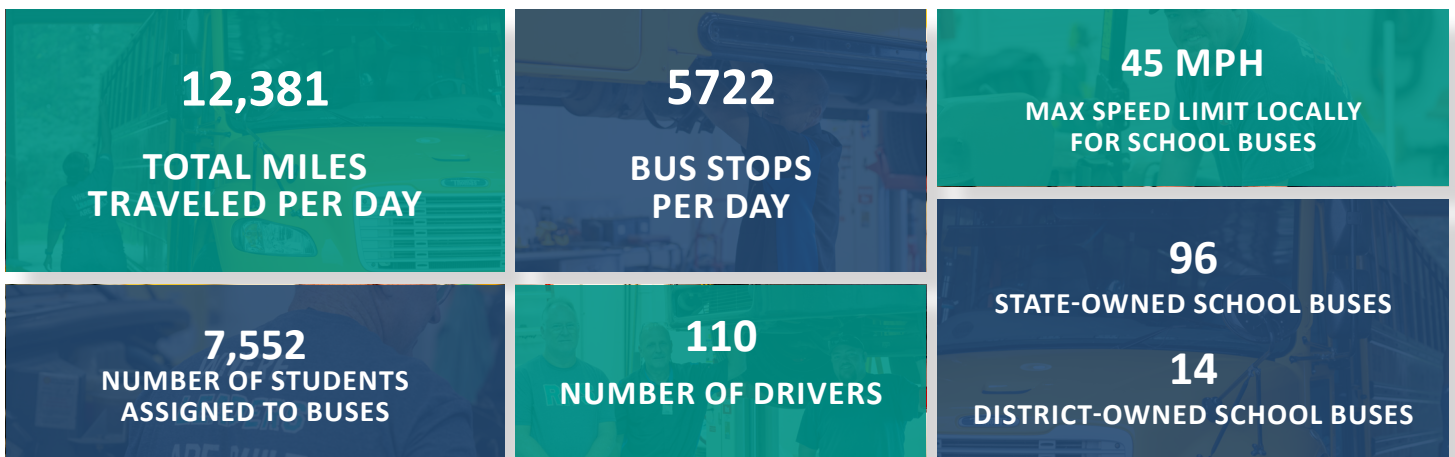
## CONCRETE SOLUTIONS

As part of our ongoing commitment to maintaining safe and accessible school environments, several concrete repair and upgrade projects were completed across the district. Including:

- An ADA-compliant ramp at Northwestern High
- Walkway updates in front of Old Pointe Elementary
- An updated main driveway at Rawlinson Road Middle
- A concrete ramp at Rock Hill High's baseball field

These updates contribute to a safer, more functional environment for students, staff, and the community.

## TRANSPORTATION: OUR FLEET



# HEALTH AND SAFETY

## FOOD SERVICES

All 24 schools offered free a nutritious breakfast and lunch daily during the 2024-2025 school year free of charge. All meals served met nutritional standards established by federal (United States Department of Agriculture) and state (South Carolina Department of Education) regulations.

771,302  
Breakfasts Served

All 24

schools offered free meals for all students thanks to the USDA's Community Eligibility Provision.

1,654,002  
Lunch Meals Served

## SAFETY & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The purpose of the Safety and Emergency Management Department is to provide a safe and secure environment for students, staff, district property, and other key stakeholders.

Rock Hill Schools prioritizes safety for students, staff, and visitors through employee training and partnerships with local first responders. Our key safety measures include:

- Over 2,100 cameras throughout the district
- Single-point entrance systems in schools
- Access controlled doors
- Random safety screenings with K9
- School Safety Audits by South Carolina School Board Insurance Trust (SCSBIT)

3

### Campus Security Associates

Each high school has a Campus Security Associate (CSA) whose primary role is to act as a buffer between students, staff, and law enforcement.

23

### Safety Security Officers

Full-time private armed security officers patrol elementary schools, ensuring safety and collaborating with staff.

A Safety Response Team (SRT) of four to five officers conducts safety assessments & weekly random safety screenings at each middle and high school.

17

### School Resource Officers (SRO)

In addition to standard police training, SROs in Rock Hill Schools receive specialized training for effective interactions with students, staff, and administration.



## CUSTODIAL SOLUTIONS

Custodial services play a crucial role in maintaining the health, safety, and overall learning environment within our school buildings. These services encompass a wide range of responsibilities aimed at keeping the educational facilities clean, organized, and conducive to student and staff well-being.

Our custodians keep 2.7M square feet of district facilities shining each and every day. That's **1,190** total classrooms!

## ENERGY & SUSTAINABILITY

Our total cost for all energy and public utilities was 14.5 percent (\$69,3467) **UNDER** budget during the 2024-2025 school year.



# STUDENT SERVICES

The Student Services department ensures equitable access to education by addressing learning barriers.

Key responsibilities include managing attendance, discipline, enrollment, and compliance with FERPA.

The department also tackles truancy, supports students under the McKinney-Vento Act and in foster care, and provides mental health services. It collaborates with families and community agencies to promote academic success, inclusivity, and positive student engagement.



## DEAN OF STUDENTS

Deans of Students play a vital role in fostering positive, supportive school climates by proactively addressing and mitigating student behavior concerns. They work collaboratively with teachers to strengthen classroom management practices, providing coaching on how to create structured, engaging, and inclusive learning environments that naturally minimize behavioral issues. Deans also assist teachers in developing and applying effective de-escalation strategies to maintain calm and productive classrooms when challenges arise.

In addition to their coaching and leadership responsibilities, Deans of Students work closely with students both individually and in small groups to address underlying behavioral issues, teach self-regulation and problem-solving skills, reinforce positive conduct, build social-emotional skills, promote accountability, and support positive behavioral change. They play a key role within the school's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), contributing to data-based decision-making, implementing tiered interventions, and monitoring progress to ensure that behavioral supports are aligned. Through their collaboration with staff, students, and families, Deans of Students help maintain safe, respectful, and engaging school environments where every student can thrive.

## FAMILY OUTREACH

Rock Hill Schools Family Outreach Associates play a vital role in ensuring that every student—particularly those from the most vulnerable circumstances—has equitable access to education and support. They serve as the essential link between families, schools, and community agencies, working to identify and assist students experiencing homelessness under the McKinney-Vento Act, as well as those in foster care. Their work focuses on removing barriers to enrollment, attendance, and academic success by addressing issues such as housing instability, lack of documentation, and unmet basic needs.

Through strong collaboration with school administrators, counselors, and community partners, Family

## ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Regular school attendance is essential to student success, as it directly impacts academic achievement, social development, and long-term outcomes. Students who attend school consistently are more likely to perform well academically, build positive relationships with peers and teachers, and stay on track for graduation. Chronic absenteeism and truancy, on the other hand, often lead to learning gaps, lower achievement, and increased dropout risk.

Through the district's Attendance Department, specific goals have been established at each school to improve daily attendance and reduce truancy. Schools are implementing targeted strategies, including early identification of attendance concerns, family outreach, and collaboration with community partners, to remove barriers that prevent students from attending regularly. These coordinated efforts are ensuring that every student has the opportunity to fully engage in their education and reach their highest potential.



Arbor Day in South Carolina! Our students at Ebenezer Avenue Elementary School got a hands-on tree planting experience!



A storm knocked down one of the trees at the back of the school. Fourth graders replanted a pecan tree that will hopefully last for generations.



We are beyond proud that our Elementary Honors Choir had the honor of performing at the South Carolina Music Educators Association (SCMEA)! They made history as the FIRST EVER elementary choir to be invited to perform at this prestigious event.



Winthrop Athletics put on an awesome game for us as a part of our Slam Dunk for Second Grade event!



The event inspired our students to read like their favorite players. What a great treat to reward their literary journeys.



Happy Bus Driver Appreciation Week to our incredible Rock Hill Schools drivers! They keep our students safe on the road, and we are grateful for their dedication and service.



We have a lot to celebrate on Fridays! Thanks to The Foundation for Rock Hill Schools, we're giving away \$100 gift cards EVERY FRIDAY to celebrate teacher attendance!

# ROCK HILL Schools

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803.981.1000 | WWW.ROCKHILLSCHOOLS.COM

## THANK YOU DONORS FOR SUPPORTING ROCK HILL

- 100% RHS
- A & K Paint Company
- Community Partnership Foundation
- Dollar General Foundation
- Elevation Church
- Heart 2 Heart Foundation
- Pak's Taekwondo
- Publix
- Second Harvest Food Bank
- Sterling Lodge #355 Elks Club



**THE FOUNDATION**  
ROCK HILL SCHOOLS

**\$484,283**

TOTAL DONATED FROM THE  
FOUNDATION IN 2024-2025

The Foundation For Rock Hill Schools engages the community in collaborative efforts that strengthen, support, and advance public education in Rock Hill Schools.