



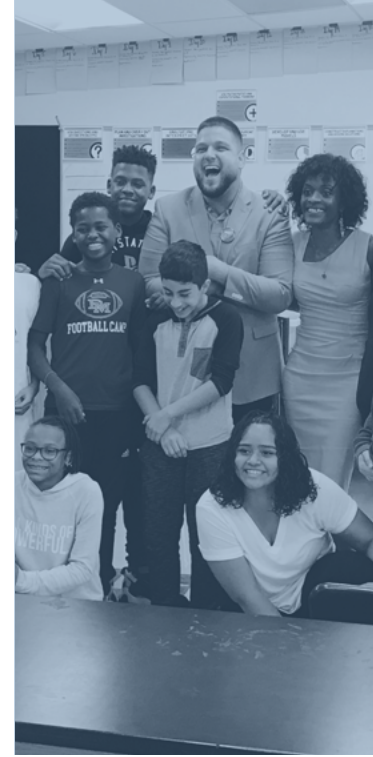
Office of the  
State Superintendent  
of Education

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# 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

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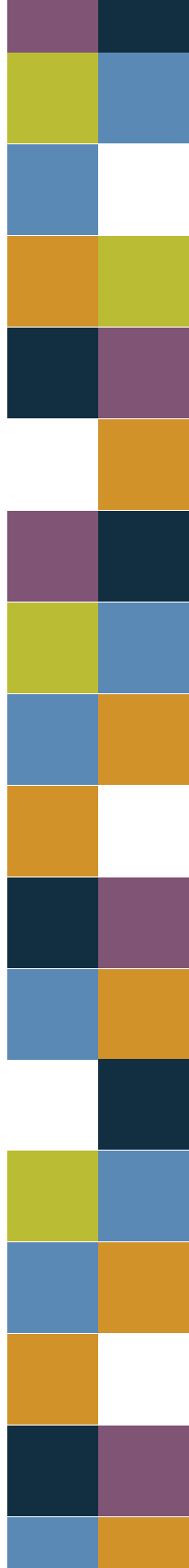


## MISSION

As DC's state education agency, OSSE works urgently and purposefully, in partnership with education and related systems, to sustain, accelerate and deepen progress for DC students.

## VISION

DC will close the achievement gap and ensure people of all ages and backgrounds are prepared to succeed in school and in life.



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## STRATEGIC PILLARS

OSSE is uniquely poised to make an impact across a diverse, growing city with many strengths and very real challenges. As we implement our five-year strategic plan, the following pillars form the foundation of our work as an agency.



### **SET HIGH EXPECTATIONS**

We set and maintain high standards for program quality and high expectations for learners to ensure our educational systems are driving toward excellence and equity.



### **SHARE AND USE ACTIONABLE DATA**

We collect and share reliable and actionable data to inform policy decisions, empower our partners to improve and build community understanding.



### **BUILD ECOSYSTEM CAPACITY**

We convene partners, provide targeted support and invest resources to improve quality, increase access and advance equity in education.



### **MAXIMIZE OSSE'S IMPACT**

Above and beyond our focus on all students, we bring specific focus to two areas:

- **Early Childhood**, to ensure that DC's significant investments are leveraged to maximize impact on long-term outcomes in school and in life, and
- **Special Education**, to catalyze progress and dramatically shift the trajectory of growth for students with disabilities.



### **CONTINUE COMMITMENT TO OUR TALENTED TEAM AND CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE**

Our foundation is our team at OSSE. We build and sustain a culture rooted in our core values of Focus on Students, Organizational Excellence, Determination, Partnership and Teamwork and Collaboration.



Dear DC Community,

At the beginning of 2019, I was honored to be reappointed by Mayor Muriel Bowser to another four-year term as State Superintendent. Since I took on this role, I have had the pleasure of working with a talented team devoted to our mission as we help shape the direction of our agency through our strategic plan. As DC's longest-serving State Superintendent, I believe this consistency in leadership has helped us move forward with purpose to ensure students of all ages and backgrounds are prepared to succeed in school and in life.

Over the years, we have worked hard to improve systems and supports through policy changes and other initiatives to sustain, accelerate and deepen progress for DC students, and in 2019, we were thrilled and heartened to receive long-awaited validation through several measures that clearly show we are headed in the right direction: DC remains the fastest improving state and urban school system in the country on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, also known as the Nation's Report Card; in fact, the progress our students have made both in scale and sustainability over time is unprecedented. Our statewide assessment scores showed four consecutive years of growth; more schools have earned the highest ratings on the DC School Report Card and STAR Framework and we now have schools earning 5-STAR ratings in every ward; student enrollment has increased for the 11th consecutive year meaning more families are choosing our schools; and in January, Education Week gave DC schools a solid B on its Quality Counts Chance-for-Success Index, with DC ranking seventh among states, a significant improvement from last year when we were ranked 27th nationwide. And in a Washington Post poll released in November, 92 percent of parents with a child attending a public school in the District rate their child's school as "excellent" or "good."

As we visit schools across the city celebrating students, educators and school leaders on this incredible progress, we also keep in mind the work that lies ahead, particularly as we aim to close achievement gaps for our vulnerable student populations. With our new, five-year strategic plan, launched in 2019, we intend to build on our successes and address our challenges with a renewed sense of purpose as we work to improve student outcomes and collaborate with our partners to create a world-class education system in the District of Columbia.

It is an honor to present to you our 2019 Annual Report, which includes highlights from the past year. As you browse this report, we hope you will see the important strides we have made in connecting our work to the pillars of our strategic plan guided by our mission. I want to thank every staff member, parent, student, educator, school leader, advocate and community member for your partnership, feedback and trust, and look forward to working with you and serving you as we embark on the second year of our strategic plan.

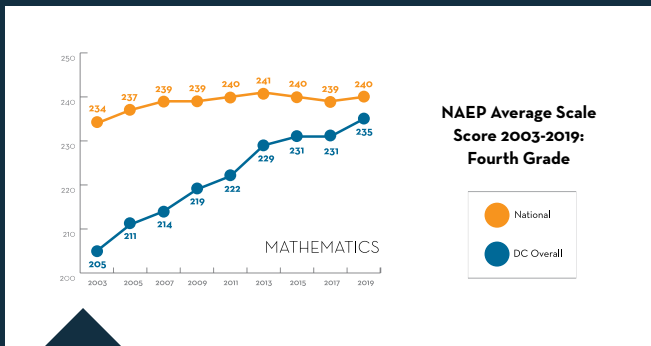
Onward!

Hanseul Kang

State Superintendent of Education

# 2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

We shared exciting news in fall 2019 that illustrates the progress we have made over more than a decade: DC continues to be the fastest-improving state on the Nation's Report Card. In fact, the progress our students have made over time is unprecedented. Results from the DC School Report Card showed more schools earned the highest marks, and many others made significant improvements on the STAR Framework. We are proud to say DC now has a school earning a 5-STAR rating in every ward. As assessment results and school quality improve, so does enrollment, with 2019 marking 11 consecutive years of growth statewide and DC Public Schools reaching an important enrollment milestone. We are truly excited by these results and improvements, and we are proud of our students and educators for the hard work these results represent. The progress we saw in 2019 underscores our commitment to setting high standards for program quality and high expectations for learners to ensure our education systems continue to drive us – as a school district and an agency – toward excellence and equity in the years to come.

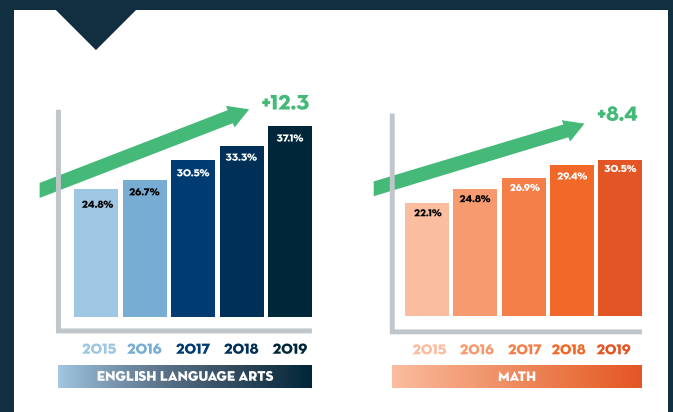


## DC'S ANNUAL MATH AND READING RESULTS

Thousands more DC students are meeting the high standards we've set for them. In 2019, the District of Columbia marked its fourth consecutive year of improved results on statewide annual assessments in math and English language arts (ELA), with increases of 12.3 percentage points in ELA and 8.4 percentage points in math since 2015. Results show increases in both DC Public Schools and public charter schools with score increases across almost all grades and subjects. All major student groups saw improvements in 2019, including students who are at-risk, students with disabilities, English learners and African-American and Hispanic/Latino students.

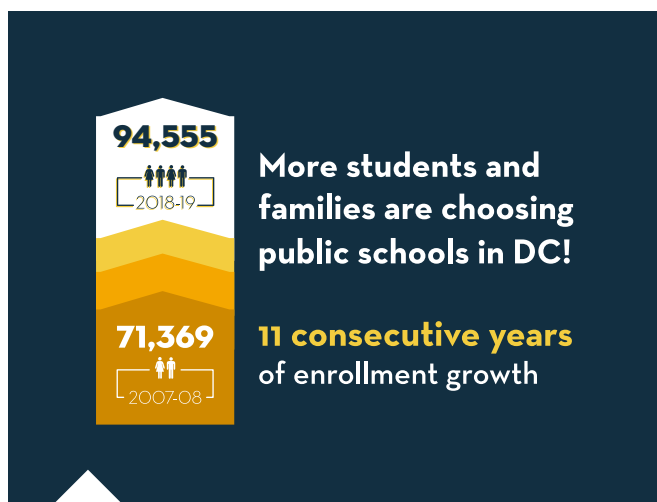
## NATION'S REPORT CARD

The District of Columbia remains the fastest improving state and urban school system in the country on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as the Nation's Report Card. While the nation overall slipped behind or stayed flat in 2019, DC's students have continued to improve - closing gaps between student groups in DC, and with their peers nationally. This is significant considering DC was far behind the rest of the nation more than a decade ago. Today, DC has surged ahead of five states in fourth-grade reading and ahead of six states and tied with a seventh in fourth-grade math. Other results that made national headlines in 2019: DC was one of only two states to show significant gains in three subject/grade assessments, and DC was the only state that showed statistically significant gains in eighth-grade reading, while 31 states showed a statistical decline.



## DC SCHOOL REPORT CARD AND STAR FRAMEWORK

Schools across the District showed encouraging improvements on the STAR Framework in the second year of the DC School Report Card, with 76 public schools earning 4- or 5-STAR Ratings, the highest possible rating - up from 56 schools in 2018. In 2019, more than a quarter of all schools across the city improved by one or more STAR Rating(s) compared to 2018. And nearly 30 percent of schools in Wards 7 and 8 improve by one or more STAR Rating(s). We are proud to say every ward in the District now has a school earning a 5-STAR Rating.



## ENROLLMENT

The number of students enrolled in public schools in Washington, DC increased for the 11th consecutive year in 2019, reaching 94,555, a 1.7 percent increase over 2018, with DC Public Schools exceeding 50,000 students for the first time since 2006. Enrollment at DCPS increased from 49,056 students in 2018 to 51,037 students in 2019, a 4 percent gain over the prior school year. Enrollment at DC's public charter schools decreased from 43,960 students in 2018 to 43,518 students in 2019, a 1 percent decrease over the prior school year.

## ADVANCED PLACEMENT

Advanced Placement (AP) programming provides students access to rigorous college preparatory coursework while they are in high school. We are proud to say that in DC, more students are taking and passing AP exams. We experienced the largest three- and five-year increases of public high school graduates scoring a 3 or higher on an AP exam than any state in the nation, according to the College Board. In 2019, more than half of high school graduates took an AP exam, up from 38 percent 10 years earlier, and the number of high school students who scored a 3 or higher on an AP exam more than tripled. Taking AP courses demonstrates to college admission officers that students have sought the most rigorous curriculum available to them, and most four-year colleges and universities in the United States grant credit, advanced placement or both on the basis of successful AP Exam scores.

## DC'S ADULT LEARNERS EXCEL

In 2019, DC's adult learners exceeded OSSE's measurable skill gains performance target by 6.8 percentage points with 49.8 percent of adult learners enrolled in an Adult and Family Education program funded by OSSE making gains. This means 529 adult learners moved up at least one educational functioning level, earned a state diploma or entered postsecondary education and training in the same year. These historic gains mark the successful transition to an integrated education and training model of adult education for OSSE-funded programs.



## SET HIGH EXPECTATIONS

With the belief that all students can learn at the highest levels regardless of background or where they live, we set high expectations for our students and the programs that serve them. Each year, more of our young learners across the city prove they can meet the high standards we've set for them – and thrive. In 2019, we continued to set a high bar for all learners and hold ourselves accountable for driving results. In 2019, we updated our Early Learning Standards to clearly show the developmental progression from infants and toddlers to kindergarten expectations. We released our Career and Technical Education (CTE) State Plan to improve and expand options for students in CTE programs throughout the city. And we launched a working group that conducted a groundbreaking landscape analysis of students with disabilities in our schools to better understand and meet their needs, so they, too, can benefit from the progress we are making as a school system.

### EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS

We believe, and research supports, that high-quality early care and educational experiences for young children can improve the odds of success in nearly every aspect of life, from better social and working relationships to higher earnings and better health outcomes. To ensure that children birth through age 5 in the District of Columbia have the kinds of rich and robust early experiences that prepare them for success in school and for lifelong learning, we updated and began implementing our DC Early Learning Standards in 2019. The updated standards include a research-based, developmentally appropriate approach to the continuum of learning and development expected of all children birth through age 5 and suggested practices to support children's developmental trajectory as they advance. Aligned with the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics, Next Generation Science Standards and the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five, the updated DC Early Learning Standards ensure that all children receive the same standards-based instruction and appropriate learning experiences regardless of the program in which they are enrolled.



#### STANDARDS

Serve as guidelines that describe children's development across the birth to 5 age range



#### INDICATORS

Show children's progress in gaining concepts, knowledge and skills within each standard



#### EXAMPLES

Describe what the standard looks like at a certain age or development level



#### SUPPORTIVE PRACTICES

Suggest ways teachers can help children learn the skills involved



## CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION STATE PLAN

To better position students to compete for and succeed in an evolving regional workforce, we have aligned career and technical education programs to give students rich learning experiences in some of the most high-demand, high-growth careers in the DC area. Our new Career and Technical Education State Plan, which was developed in 2019 and will go into effect this year, sets a bold vision for college and career programs across the District and expands opportunities for students exploring and developing skills in a range of programs. We engaged hundreds of stakeholders to develop a plan that will offer 42 comprehensive programs of study, 107 industry-validated course-level standards to ensure appropriate task training, a rapid expansion of work-based learning opportunities for students and Industry Recognized Credentials and/or college credit for each program of study. We will also create and expand Industry Advisory Boards across all 16 career sectors in the city in collaboration with DC Career Academy Network (DC CAN), the Workforce Investment Council (WIC) and the Department of Employment Services (DOES). Through the new state plan, we aim to increase the number of CTE participants by at least 15 percent, increase graduation rates and assessment results for CTE students and expand access to internships and apprenticeships, by 2023, among other goals. This four-year roadmap for CTE programs, funding and accountability in Washington, DC, introduces a biennial Comprehensive Needs Assessment to evaluate program quality and outcomes and includes State Determined Performance Levels to optimize outcomes for students. We are excited to fully implement this plan in collaboration with business, industry and education stakeholders to develop high-quality programming in schools across the District.



**85 to 90 percent of students with disabilities can perform at grade level when provided with appropriate services and supports.**

National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO)

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES CITYWIDE AGENDA

Guided by a vision of closing the achievement gap and ensuring people of all ages and backgrounds are prepared to succeed in school and in life, we set out in 2019 to develop a citywide agenda to better support and change outcomes for one of our most vulnerable and historically underserved student groups. Through our comprehensive, groundbreaking [report](http://bit.ly/SWDLandscapeAnalysis) (<http://bit.ly/SWDLandscapeAnalysis>), *Students with Disabilities in the District of Columbia: A Landscape Analysis*, we shared initial recommendations for action. Those recommendations were supported by the findings of four rounds of data analysis across the multiple special education data sets, looking back as far as two decades; focus groups with special education teachers and leaders across multiple local education agencies (LEAs); interviews with key stakeholders; and research of promising practices from other state education agencies. With an understanding of the potential leading indicators for closing the achievement gap for our students with disabilities, we believe we have a unique role in driving positive outcomes for these students by celebrating and highlighting best practices throughout the District; spurring innovation through grants designed to address barriers students face in receiving a quality education; providing information and resources to families so they can advocate for their children; improving data systems; and expanding supports for educators and leaders.

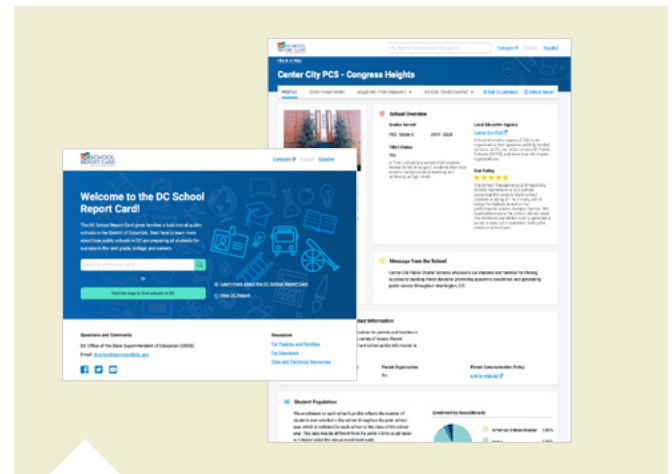


## SHARE AND USE ACTIONABLE DATA

One of OSSE's most important responsibilities as DC's state education agency is to collect and share reliable and actionable data to inform policy decisions, empower educators to improve and build community understanding. Each year, we issue reports that cover topics including Attendance, Discipline, Student Mobility, the State of Pre-K in DC, Enrollment, High School Graduation Rates and Health and Wellness. For the first time in 2019, we released two additional reports – the DC Teacher Workforce Report and Students with Disabilities in the District of Columbia: A Landscape Analysis – which highlight important areas of focus for our agency and our education system.

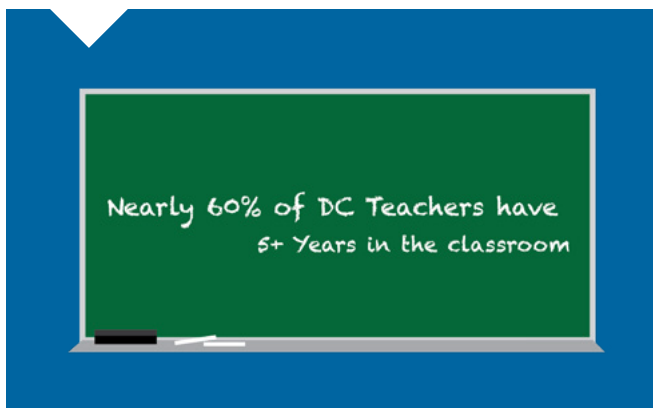
### DC TEACHER WORKFORCE REPORT

In October 2019, OSSE and TNTP released a foundational [report](http://bit.ly/DCTeacherWorkforceReport) (<http://bit.ly/DCTeacherWorkforceReport>) on the teacher workforce in the District of Columbia, sharing comprehensive information about teacher diversity, experience, supply and demand and retention in DC. The report is a wide-ranging look at the teacher workforce statewide using data collected from nearly 7,000 teachers working across 50 public and charter local education agencies (LEAs) in 229 schools that served 89 percent of all students in the District of Columbia in the 2018-19 school year. This report shares data on DC's teacher workforce so that organizations across the city can prioritize issues, policies and supports that will help schools recruit, develop and retain effective teachers. Every student deserves to have a great teacher in the classroom, and with this report, we are excited to continue the conversation about how we can continue to strengthen and support the teacher workforce in the District.



### DC SCHOOL REPORT CARD AND STAR FRAMEWORK

Through the launch of the DC School Report Card and STAR Framework, we backed up our commitment to provide our families, school leaders and partners with high-quality and actionable data. In its second year, the DC Report Card and STAR Framework offer a wealth of data that helps us celebrate successes, identify areas for growth and shape policy by giving the DC school community a common set of facts to compare and evaluate schools. This transparency has also been incredibly valuable to our families as they decide which schools are best for their children, and what they can do to help improve outcomes in their school communities. In 2019, more than 62,000 people logged on to [DCSchoolReportCard.org](http://DCSchoolReportCard.org) to browse more than 150 data points per school, including information about academic programs, extracurricular activities, parent/family organizations and more.





## DC ALL-STAR SCHOOL TOUR

In February 2019, we completed our first-ever DC All-STAR School Tour, and in November 2019, we launched our second tour. The DC All-STAR School Tour gives us a chance to highlight schools that have made incredible progress in improving outcomes for our most vulnerable students, as seen on the DC School Report Card, further learn what they have done to drive results for students and hear what we can do to support them. We visited 20 schools; spoke to hundreds of students, teachers, school leaders and support staff during roundtable discussions and classroom visits; and presented each school with a DC All-STAR School banner to celebrate the progress they have made. We walked away with a better understanding of what's working for these schools and shared what we learned with the community through Lessons from the [DC All-STAR School Tour report](http://bit.ly/allstartourreport) (<http://bit.ly/allstartourreport>) published in March 2019. The report offers important insights and takeaways as well as a guide to taking your own All-STAR School Tour on the DC School Report Card website.





## BUILD ECOSYSTEM CAPACITY

To facilitate an exchange of ideas aimed at addressing the District’s most pressing concerns to improve student outcomes, we brought together thousands of partners in 2019 through large-scale summits, conferences and convenings, advisory councils and gatherings. Through these convenings, we ensured our diverse stakeholders – from early care educators and advocates for students experiencing homelessness, to award-winning teachers, counselors and educators who work with specific student populations – had a chance to network, collaborate, learn and have their voices heard as we work together for the success of our students.

### **SUPERINTENDENT’S TEACHER ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Because the teacher voice is so critical to the success of our students, we assembled the first-ever Superintendent’s Teacher Advisory Council in 2019 to ensure that agency policies are informed by a classroom perspective. The 15-member council, composed of DC teacher leaders from DC Public Schools and our public charter schools, works alongside State Superintendent Hanseul Kang and provides her and her team insight, feedback and advice on issues that impact classrooms and schools across the city.



### **SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH EXPANSION**

In 2019, DC responded to requests from teachers and school leaders about the need for greater behavioral and mental health supports in schools by making and building on substantial investments in student behavioral health. In fiscal year 2019, OSSE received a five-year, \$8.8 million dollar federal grant for Project Advancing Wellness and Resilience Education (AWARE). This federal grant builds upon significant local investment in school behavioral health through the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH). With this funding, OSSE and DBH will be able to support LEAs to expand and sustain mental and behavioral health services for students, educators and families. In FY19, OSSE and DBH began training and technical assistance with three large LEAs – DCPS, KIPP and Friendship Public Charter Schools focused on mental health screening for students and trauma-informed training for staff.

## RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN DC

In an effort to keep youth in school and out of prison, maintain safe learning environments and provide opportunities for our students to be active and accountable members of their community, we have partnered with Restorative DC, a project of SchoolTalk Inc., to offer monthly trainings and an on-going Community of Practice on Restorative Justice. Each session goes over an array of skill-building that addresses both proactive community-building strategies as well as restorative discipline practices. In 2019, Restorative DC expanded whole-school implementation support to 16 schools, providing extensive support that occurs in phases over three to five years and providing supplemental technical assistance to 24 schools in 10 LEAs. Through intensive, trauma-informed, collaborative, customized, onsite, and locally based technical support, we aim to lower incidents of conflict and harm, reduce the use of suspensions and expulsions, increase school performance and center the school community around relationships, inclusivity and accountability.



## CONVENING EDUCATORS, COMMUNITY PARTNERS TO ADVANCE STUDENT OUTCOMES

OSSE plays a critical role in convening educators and the community year-round to discuss issues and ideas, and work together toward a common goal of improving outcomes for DC students. In December, nearly 3,000 early child care educators and stakeholders throughout the District, and 120 presenters and 80 exhibitors attended the 2019 DC Early Childhood Summit: Brighter Futures Start Here, our first-ever large-scale summit for early care educators, focused on learning, networking, personal growth and self-care. In November, we served as the host agency for the 2019 National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth Conference, an event that drew more than 1,500 school-based and central office staff, counselors, advocates, community service providers and other stakeholders from across the nation. In 2019, we held our first-ever school climate conference in May and followed up in December with a second conference. Both convenings drew hundreds of educators and stakeholders from throughout the District and featured inspirational speakers and workshops. In June, we convened more than 300 DC teachers, school leaders and service providers in pre-K-12 dual language programs and English learner programs for Empowering Success through Language Learning, a two-day conference intended to push the education field forward in supporting cultural and linguistic diversity in schools.





Above and beyond our focus on all students, we bring specific focus to two areas: Early Childhood, to ensure that DC's significant investments are leveraged to maximize impact on long-term outcomes in school and in life, and Special Education, to catalyze progress and dramatically shift the trajectory of growth for students with disabilities.

### SPECIAL EDUCATION

In our 2019-2023 strategic plan, we committed to helping accelerate academic outcomes for students with disabilities, and in 2019 we took an important first step toward developing a shared, citywide agenda to honor that commitment by establishing a Students With Disabilities Working Group to conduct analysis and develop initial recommendations. Using the framework of our strategic plan pillars as a guide, we released the [Students with Disabilities in the District of Columbia: A Landscape Analysis](http://bit.ly/SWDLandscapeAnalysis) (<http://bit.ly/SWDLandscapeAnalysis>) in October 2019. The landscape analysis drew from in-depth data analysis, focus groups and interviews as well as online research, and examined our current population, where they live and attend school, their current outcomes, their rates of identification and exit and key barriers hindering their progress. The analysis, available to the public on OSSE's website, also includes lessons learned from other states, national benchmarks and comparisons to other states and urban districts and initial recommendations for what we as the state education agency can do to address any barriers our students with disabilities encounter. In addition to the landscape analysis, we oversee an extensive set of resources, programs and policies to support students with disabilities across the District and have identified the core levers within our strategic plan – Set High Expectations, Share and Use Actionable Data, Build Ecosystem Capacity

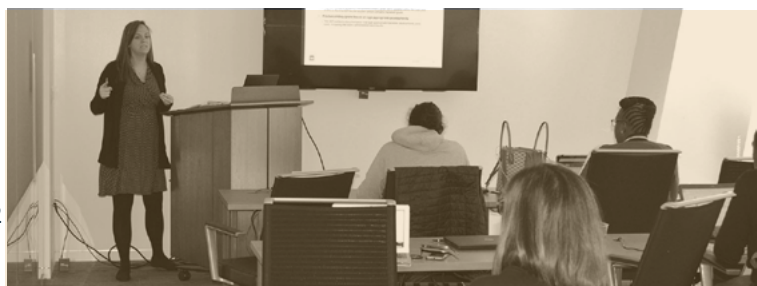


More than half of students with disabilities spend **80 percent of their time in general education classrooms.**

Changing outcomes for students with disabilities will take a coordinated, citywide effort



– we can use to help accelerate outcomes for students with disabilities and close gaps in performance with other student groups locally and nationally. We know this must be a collective effort to succeed, so we are taking the findings from the landscape analysis to a broad set of stakeholders to gather feedback, inform recommendations for OSSE and ultimately develop a citywide agenda for the systemic changes needed to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.



## EARLY CHILDHOOD

One of the clearest differentiators for us in the success we saw on national and local assessments in 2019 is the collective commitment we have made to quality early childhood education. With Universal Pre-K since 2008, DC has led the nation in providing full-day, publicly funded pre-K and is currently working to expand access to and improve the quality of infant and toddler programs. Mayor Bowser challenged us to create 1,000 new slots for infants and toddlers across our city, and we are proud to say we exceeded that goal. In FY19, we significantly increased child care subsidy rates to better support our providers who serve our most vulnerable children. We took important steps to support our early childhood educators by making online coursework for the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential available at no cost to the entire early childhood workforce and helped provide scholarships and supportive cohort models so that educators can earn their CDA credential, associate degree or bachelor's degree. We launched the Quality Improvement Network (QIN) in 2015 and expanded the program with the support of local and federal funding, to work hand in hand with child care providers to improve the quality of care for infants and toddlers. We added an in-house evaluation team to Strong Start through a partnership with DC Health and expanded community playgroups through a DC Public Library partnership. And, last year, DC was one of just seven states to receive a top award amount Pre-School Development Grant, of \$10.6 million. We are extremely proud of how far we've come. Through the investments we've made and the partnerships we've formed, we have built an early childhood education system that is making a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable children and families.

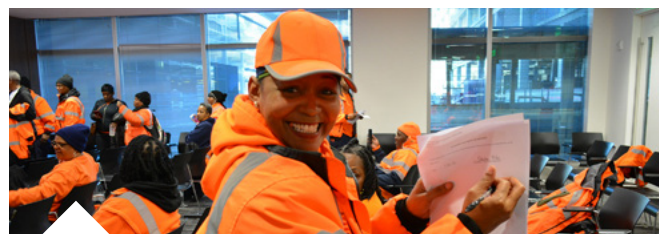




In order to accomplish all we have in the first year of our 2019-2023 strategic plan, we have relied on the hard work of hundreds of talented and skilled professionals dedicated to our mission of working urgently and purposefully, in partnership with education and related systems, to sustain, accelerate and deepen progress for DC students. Our team proudly believes in building and sustaining a culture rooted in our core values, and in 2019, we celebrated our team, our agency and the work we've done together since 2007, when OSSE was created, at A Decade of OSSE.

93% of staff believe OSSE is moving in the right direction

Annual Staff Survey



### STRENGTHENING A CULTURE OF FEEDBACK

In 2019, we launched our first-ever 360-degree employee feedback survey. We collected more than 3,700 employee data points which will allow agency managers to support employees' identified strengths and areas for improvement. Additionally, the OSSE Manager Coaching Program encouraged reflection on areas of growth and provided tools through individual and peer coaching. Managers across all 11 OSSE divisions have completed the program, receiving 300+ hours of individual coaching and 180+ hours of group workshops.

### DIVISION OF STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

OSSE's Division of Student Transportation provides transportation services to more than 3,000 students with disabilities. In 2019, OSSE brought more than 1,000 of its bus drivers and attendants to pay parity with similar roles across DC and benefits, such as holiday pay and administrative closing pay and incentives for improved service, such as premiums for safe driving and on-time arrivals. The contract also compensates OSSE DOT drivers and attendants for the additional endorsements required to transport and work with students with disabilities. In a separate action, we converted 200 drivers and attendants from part-time to full-time positions, which also offers benefits consistent with other District employees or drivers in similar positions.



## DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION AT OSSE

We are at a pivotal point as an agency and as a city in which conversations around diversity, equity and inclusion are not only important to have but are absolutely essential, particularly as they relate to our work in education. In 2019, we created our first Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Working Group to be the driving force for promoting and supporting a more inclusive and equitable culture at OSSE, generating and vetting ideas within this group, sharing information back to our divisions and collaborating with interested people from across the agency to make OSSE one of the most diverse, inclusive and equitable workplaces in the District.



## TAKE YOUR CHILD TO WORK

Because children and families are at the center of almost everything we do, we hosted almost 70 children for our first-ever agency-wide Take Your Child to Work Day. Kids at OSSE learned about professional attire, created “Kid-In” employee profiles, made and ate healthy snacks, did yoga, toured the building on scavenger hunts, tried an engineering challenge with blocks, visited an OSSE school bus and much more.



## CAFTRITZ AWARDS

In June 2019, My School DC won the Team Innovation Award at the 18th Annual Cafritz Awards Gala. The Team Innovation Award honors the achievements of work units, groups or teams that develop and implement an ongoing customer-focused initiative that drives innovation in the public sector and produces measurable and sustainable results. The award came with a \$15,000 cash prize and a trophy.



## OSSE PRIDE

For the first time ever as an agency, OSSE staff marched together in the DC Capital Pride Parade in June 2019. More than 60 OSSE staff members donned Pride t-shirts designed by OSSE communications and held posters decorated by colleagues throughout the agency, as they marched behind an OSSE banner, exemplifying and amplifying our agency’s work around diversity, equity and inclusion.



## OSSE GIVES BACK

In August 2019, our staff donated more than 60 backpacks and enough notebooks, pencils, pens, binders, crayons and supplies to fill them as part of the DC Department of Human Services’ 2019 Book Bag & Swag Drive for the first day of school. Just a few months later, in recognition of National Homeless Awareness Month in November, our Homeless Education Program shared facts about homelessness, promoted organizations that support youth and families experiencing homelessness and hosted a warm clothing drive, collecting donations of socks, gloves, hats, coats and other warm clothing items from OSSE staff to help support DC residents living in short-term family housing units.

# CELEBRATING STUDENTS, TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS

We believe in celebrating our students and teachers every chance we get and spotlighting the programs our agency offers to support their success. In 2019, we introduced the world to a bright and talented young man participating in our Summer Bridge Program for students experiencing homelessness. We sent high-achieving prospective first-generation college students to some of the most coveted institutions in the nation through our OSSE Scholars Program. We relaunched an innovative partnership under a new name and scope that matched school gardens with community gardeners to ensure school gardens remain viable throughout the summer. And we celebrated our outstanding teachers and school leaders through post-card campaigns, galas and our favorite: Surprise school visits for our DC Teacher of the Year.



## HOMELESS EDUCATION PROGRAM

In summer 2019, the Washington Post and The Today Show spotlighted Dajon Duvall, student-athlete and recent graduate from Richard Wright Public Charter School for Journalism and Media Arts, and aspiring documentarian who attended American University's Discover the World of Communications program through OSSE's Summer Bridge Program for students who have experienced homelessness. The two pieces gave us an opportunity to show the world the outstanding work we do in supporting our students experiencing homelessness.

## GROWING HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Each year in October, the Division of Health and Wellness celebrates the health of students in schools throughout the District during Growing Healthy Schools Month and hosts a celebration in November to recognize students and educators who coordinated activities throughout October centered around five themes: from the Healthy Schools Act: Farm to School; School Gardens; Nutrition; Physical Activity; and Education and Environmental Literacy. During a November celebration at OSSE headquarters, the Division of Health and Wellness presented 41 awards to students, educators and schools, including: 26 Growing Healthy Schools Month participation awards to schools; six Growing Healthy Schools Month Supporter awards to organizations that supported OSSE throughout the month; four Farm to School Champion Awards to educators; four Gilda Allen Best School Garden Awards to students; and one Brain Boost award to a student.



## OSSE SCHOLARS

In 2019, we sent 42 high-achieving students to 13 of the most highly-selective colleges and universities in the country as part of the OSSE Scholars Summer Enrichment Program. In its eighth year, the program is open to academically motivated 10th and 11th-graders who have a desire to attend post-secondary education but may need some additional support to get there.



## 2020 DC TEACHER OF THE YEAR

In October 2019, Justin Lopez-Cardoze, a seventh-grade science teacher at Capital City Public Charter School, became our first-ever Latinx DC Teacher of the Year. Justin has a passion for working within his profession to institute district-wide restorative justice practices as a way to address disproportionality in suspension rates among students of color. He also hopes to close the achievement gap by advocating for culturally relevant curricula and approaches to teaching that engage students of color and promote their academic achievement, cultural competency and sociopolitical consciousness. In November 2019, Justin announced that he would use \$5,000 of his \$7,500 DC Teacher of the Year award money to fund a scholarship called the Capital City Public Charter School LoCa STEM Scholarship. The \$5,000, plus additional funds Justin is raising, will go to a Capital City Public Charter School high school student in the class of 2020 who has an interest in a STEM career and plans to attend college in the 2020-21 school year.

## PRESIDENTIAL AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN MATH AND SCIENCE TEACHING

In October, the White House recognized four DC educators with Presidential Awards for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching, the highest recognition that a kindergarten through 12th-grade science, technology, engineering, mathematics and/or computer science teacher may receive for outstanding teaching in the United States. Up to 108 teachers are recognized each year.

## DC EDUCATOR AWARDS

At the Fifth Annual DC Educators of the Year Award Ceremony held at Gallaudet University's Kellogg Conference Hotel on the eve of National Teacher Appreciation Week, we celebrated our 2019 DC Teacher of the Year and finalists; the 2018 DC History Teacher of the Year; the 2018 Milken Educator Award winner; the 2018 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching finalists; the 2016 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching winners; and the 2018 National Blue Ribbon Schools award winners.

## NATIONAL HISTORY TEACHER OF THE YEAR

DC officially had the best history teacher in America in 2019. Alysha Butler, a social studies teacher at McKinley Technology High School, was named National History Teacher of the Year by the Gilda Lehrman Institute of American History. State Superintendent Hanseul Kang got a chance to meet her in her classroom in October and present her with a giant \$2,500 check for her much-deserved achievement.

## TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK

We shared our love for educators across the District throughout Teacher Appreciation Week by mailing 400 thank you notes penned by staff throughout the agency and visiting 10 schools in all eight wards to surprise teachers with breakfast treats and our thanks for their work.






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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

