



District of Columbia  
Office of the State Superintendent of Education

# 2019-2023 Strategic Plan



# DC has made significant progress

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DC has taken many steps to expand the access to and quality of public education.

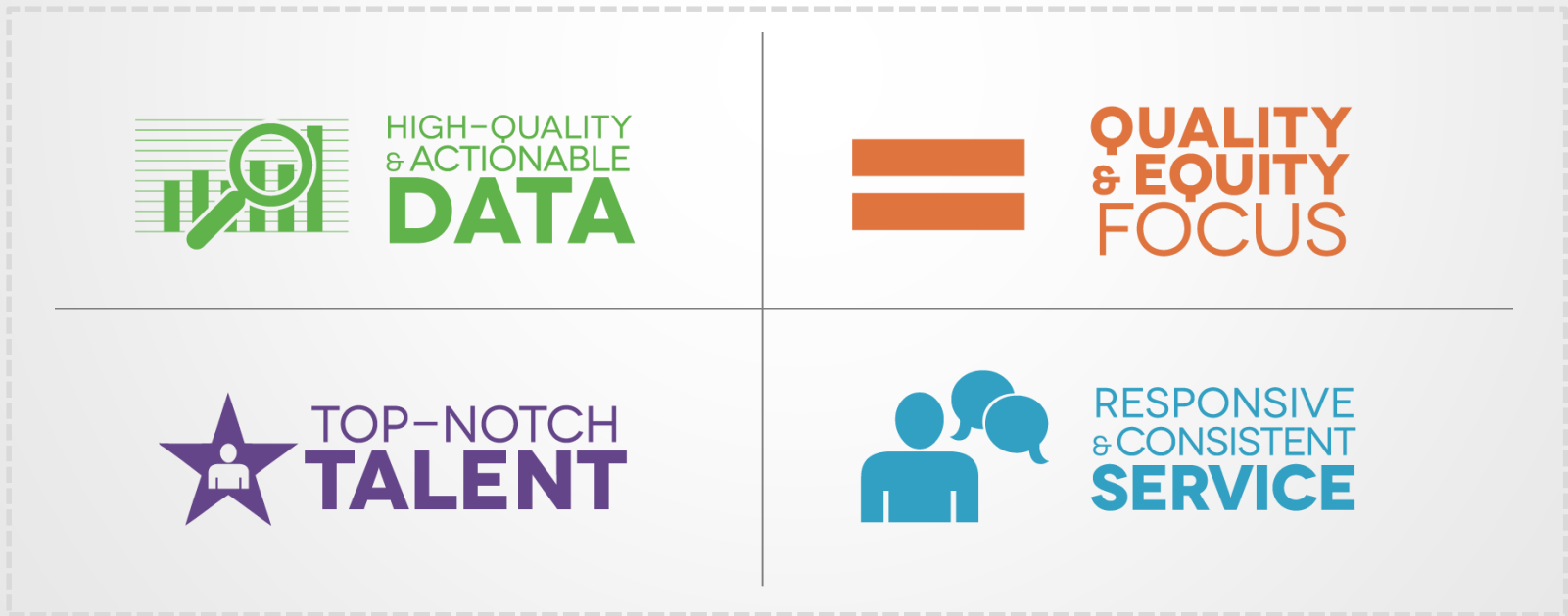


And yet, we continue to see persistent gaps in outcomes and are not yet preparing enough of our students for their long-term aspirations.

# In 2015, OSSE created a four-year strategic plan

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Our 2015-18 plan invested in improving foundational systems, operations, and partnerships and articulated OSSE's key role in supporting student achievement outcomes.



# OSSE has also made progress in the last four years

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## PROGRESS HIGHLIGHTS



HIGH-QUALITY  
& ACTIONABLE  
**DATA**

- Launched the DC School Report Card and STAR Framework to provide clear, consistent information across all public schools in DC.
- Released reports and analyses on student attendance, student discipline, and student health and well-being.



**QUALITY  
& EQUITY  
FOCUS**

- Launched Capital Quality, a redesigned quality rating and improvement system for child development centers and homes.
- Designed innovative Adult and Family Education grants to better support adult learners through integrated literacy and workforce training.



# OSSE has also made progress in the last four years (cont.)

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## PROGRESS HIGHLIGHTS



- Launched the Start of School campaign to transform how LEAs and schools experience the beginning of the school year with OSSE and prepare them to better support all students.
- Created on-site, individualized supports for early childhood educators and child development facilities to support them in meeting new credential requirements.



- Focused on recruitment and retention of Division of Student Transportation bus drivers and attendants, resulting in a decrease in unfilled positions (15% to 3%) and a historic collective bargaining agreement that included substantial wage increases.
- Improved our employee experience as evidenced by a 43 percent increase in the number of staff who say: “I would recommend OSSE as a great place to work.”

# There is more work to do and OSSE is ready to lead the way

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While great progress has been made in DC education, and OSSE has contributed to this progress by defining and improving our state education agency role, there's much more to do.



In a complicated system, our partners are eager for OSSE to:

- take a role in setting standards across programs and content areas,
- share more relevant and actionable data, and
- support convening and collaboration to position us all on the same path

in order to improve education across DC for our students and families.



OSSE is uniquely poised to make an impact across a diverse, growing city with many strengths and very real challenges.

**In response to all that we have heard and learned, we are setting forth a bold new vision and clearly defining our mission:**

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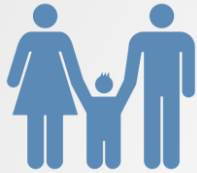


**VISION:** DC will close the achievement gap and ensure people of all ages and backgrounds are prepared to succeed in school and in life.



**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.

# By 2023, we aim to reach the following ambitious goals to advance outcomes for DC students



Early Childhood

**1,500 more**  
vulnerable infants and  
toddlers access **quality care**

**4,100 more students**  
are in **high-quality**  
pre-K classrooms



Elementary and  
Secondary

**6,700 more students**  
meet or exceed expectations on state assessments while  
**CLOSING ACHIEVEMENT GAPS**



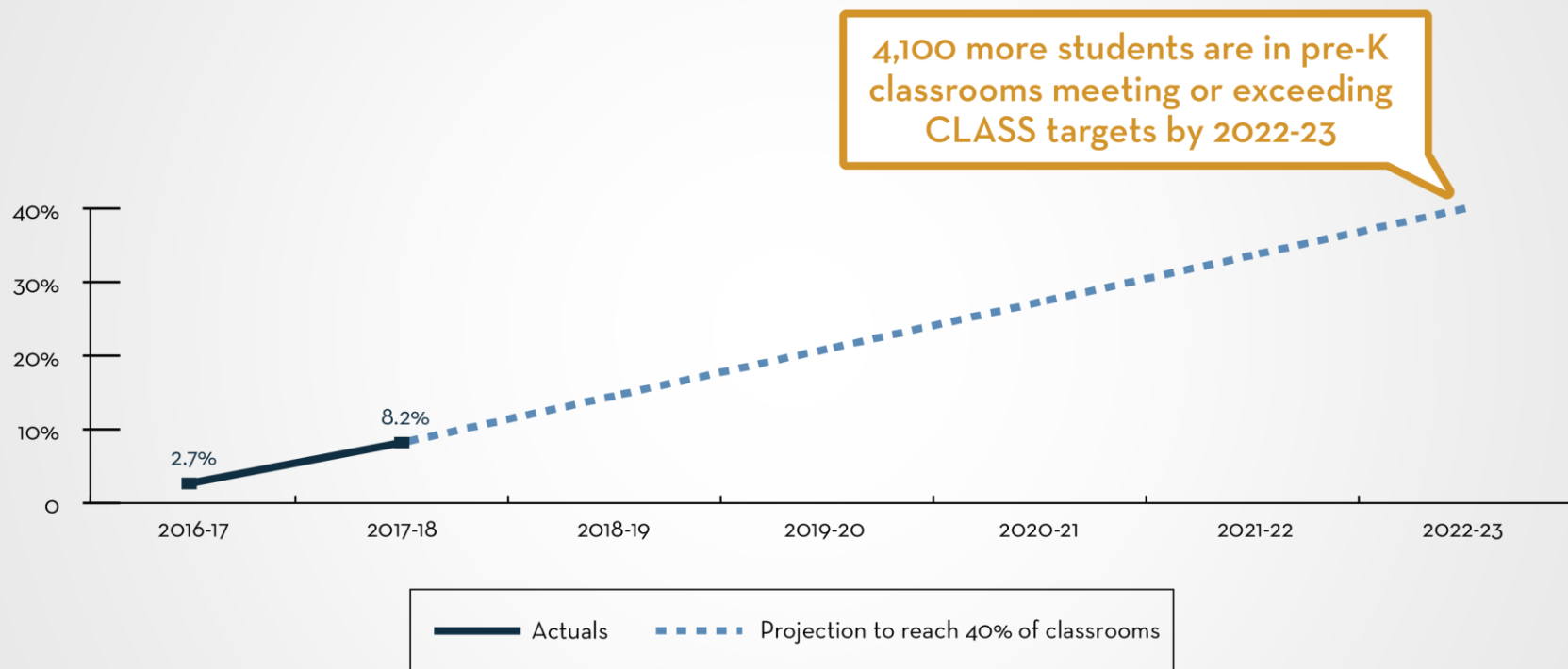
Postsecondary

**1,100 more students**  
enroll in higher education, on a path to complete a  
two- or four-year degree



# OSSE will support more pre-kindergarten classrooms to meet or exceed quality targets

Pre-K quality as measured by % of classrooms that meet or exceed CLASS targets for all domains

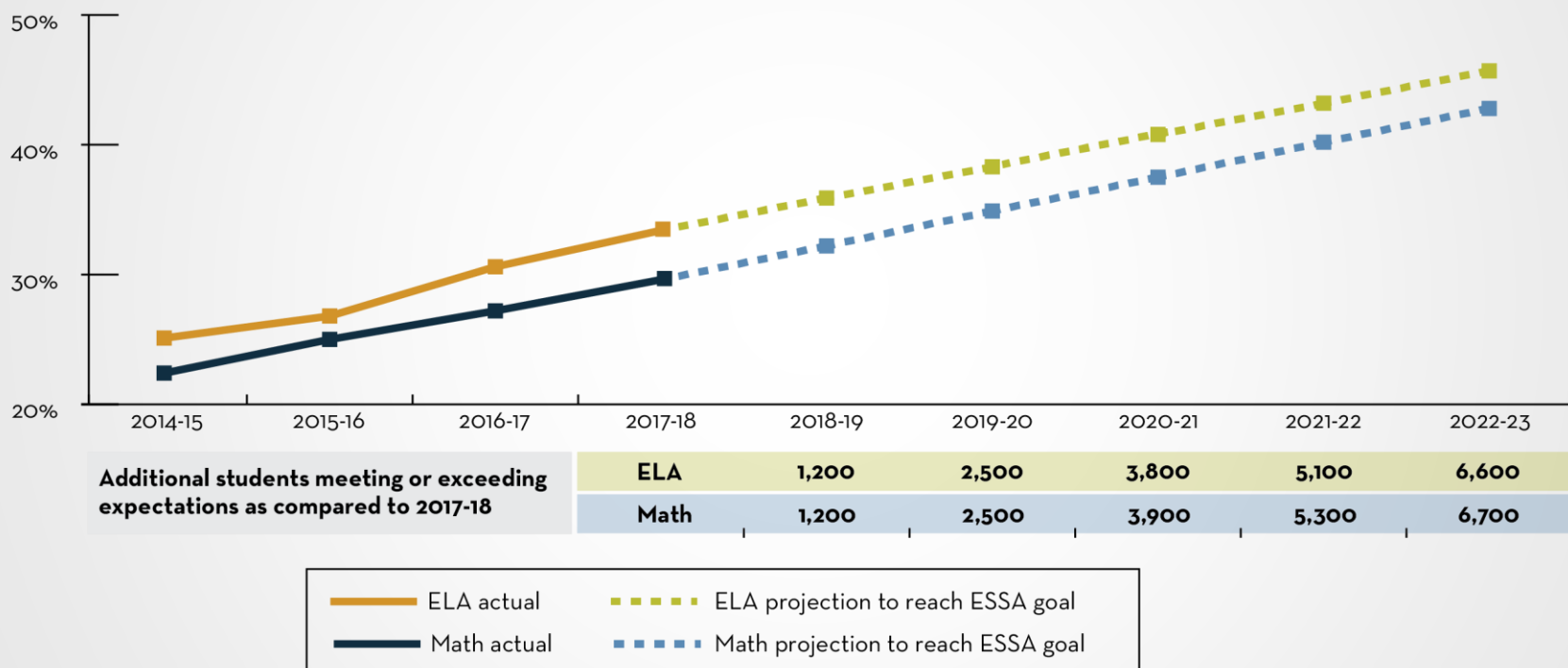


Note: The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is a research-based measure used to capture the quality of teacher-child interactions. The assessment includes three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support. The District implements CLASS in LEA and CBO pre-K classrooms.

These projections assume linear growth based on 23 and 70 classrooms meeting or exceeding CLASS targets in 2016-17 and 2017-18, respectively, and an average of 13 students in these classrooms over time.

# OSSE will improve performance of all students while closing achievement gaps

Student performance as measured by % of students who meet or exceed expectations in English language arts and math

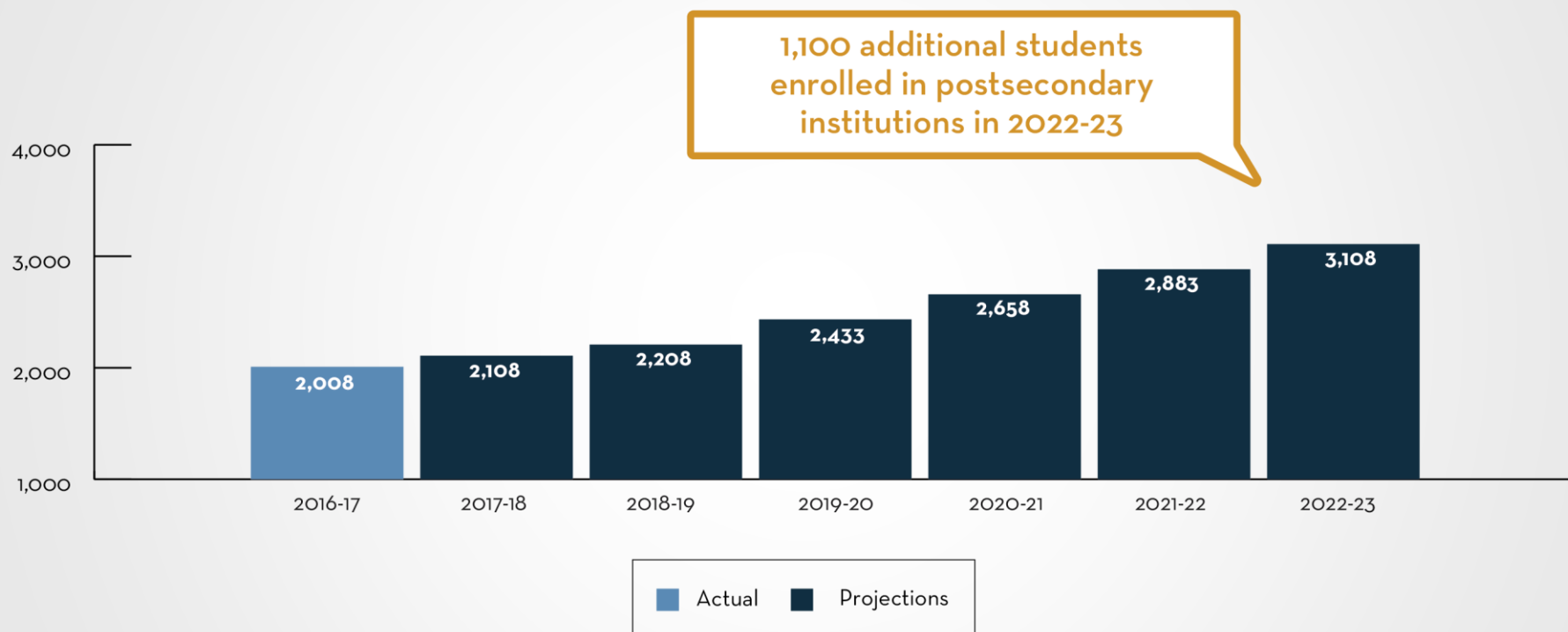


Note: PARCC and MSAA are DC's statewide assessments in English language arts (ELA) and math given in grades 3-8 and high school.

These projections assume: (1) linear growth to reach Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) goal of 85% proficiency by 2038-39; (2) 2.3% annual student enrollment growth (calculated from average annual student enrollment growth from 2014-15 to 2017-18); and (3) rounding to nearest hundred students. See appendix for grade and subject-level graphs.

# OSSE will support enrollment of more DC students in postsecondary institutions

Postsecondary enrollment within six months of high school graduation



Note: 2016-17 baseline data is based on the annual Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR) calculation and enrollment data from the National Student Clearinghouse. Projected growth from 2017-18 to 2022-23 reflects all public school students who graduate from high school in that given year who enroll in postsecondary education.

Postsecondary enrollment is one of several postsecondary metrics that OSSE recognizes as a key indicator. Desired outcome for this metric is college completion.

# Over the next five years, the following pillars will 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**



# By setting high expectations, we can enable strong conditions for learning across DC

## What we know and what we heard

- DC's education landscape is fragmented – in a small geographic area, 91,000 students attend 67 LEAs.
- OSSE is responsible for setting program standards and providing oversight in early childhood, K-12, and higher education.
- *“OSSE’s role as a State education agency is to...distribute funding, manage regulatory requirements, and enforce standards.”* – DC Education Stakeholder

## Highlights of our work to build from

- **School Transparency and Reporting (STAR) Framework:** Set standards for what all schools need to drive toward and provide common data for improvement efforts across DC.
- **Special education monitoring and technical assistance:** Communicate high program standards and improved overall compliance in key areas through our professional development, monitoring, and technical assistance.
- **Child development facility licensing regulations:** Establish and monitor regulations that set foundational expectations for health and safety and raise the bar for quality care and learning in our child development centers and homes.

## Select priorities to drive this pillar forward

- **Develop, implement, and monitor grants to not only meet federal and local requirements but also to maximize impact and improve student outcomes.** Ensure high program standards and measures of equity are incorporated across grant requirements and in reporting outcomes.
- **Ensure that early childhood care is safe and effective.** Support continuous improvement and effective operations for child development facilities through quality initiatives, grants, and streamlining our processes and supports.



# By sharing and using actionable data, we measure our progress and set a foundation for improvements in learning

## What we heard and what we know

- OSSE owns and manages DC's cross-sector education data and systems, including enrollment, assessment, graduation, and demographic data.
- *"OSSE has done a good job of being data-driven and focusing on what it hears from LEAs."* – DC Education Stakeholder
- *"OSSE could play [a role] in aggregating more data that could help the city strategically."* – DC Education Stakeholder

## Highlights of our work to build from

- **DC School Report Card:** Publish clear and consistent information about all public schools in DC in a way that families can easily access and use.
- **PARCC data:** Share PARCC results in multiple formats, including parent-friendly individual student score reports, user-friendly public websites, more detailed downloadable data files, and detailed reports for LEAs.
- **LEA data dashboards:** Share data tools with LEAs to support improvement of practice. For example, share information before the start of school on students with disabilities and English learners, support middle and high schools in the 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade transition, and provide ongoing data about chronic absenteeism and truancy.

## Select priorities to drive this pillar forward

- **Increase access to and use of data.** Develop internal and external data portals and visualizations to promote the use of OSSE-collected data and provide training for schools in the use of data.
- **Design and implement new data systems.** Ensure data systems for Early Childhood and Special Education data allow OSSE and partners to coordinate services and make strategic decisions that improve the life opportunities of District residents.





# By building ecosystem capacity, we can support more equitable learning and higher quality

## What we heard and what we know

- As both a state education agency and city agency, OSSE has unique proximity and access to key partners in the city that are also committed to supporting the lives of students and families.
- *“OSSE has a birds-eye view over so many things...it is the only agency that gets to see the lifecycle of kids from child development to postsecondary.”* – DC Education Stakeholder
- *“OSSE has an opportunity to be a body that works across sectors, like [through] the state report card.”* – DC Education Stakeholder

## Highlights of our work to build from

- **Strategic grant making:** Leverage grants to incentivize and support targeted programmatic aims. For example, OSSE designed Adult and Family Education grants to integrate literacy and workforce training to help adults attain meaningful work. OSSE also refined Nutrition Education and Physical Activity grants to recruit community-based organizations with interest and capacity to support high-need schools.

## Select priorities to drive this pillar forward

- **Facilitate smooth educational transitions.** Support transitions from 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade, from high school to postsecondary enrollment, and from postsecondary enrollment to postsecondary completion through a variety of strategies, including expanding the Dual Enrollment Consortium.
- **Coordinate to bring focus to mental health.** Support partners, including the Department of Health, LEAs, the Coordinating Council on School Mental Health, and community-based mental health organizations to ensure 100% of schools have high-quality multi-tiered mental health systems and supports.
- **Strengthen OSSE’s service to our partners.** Continue to improve providing responsive and consistent service, such as increasing resources for enrollment and residency and providing transparent and timely grants planning tools.



# Early childhood is an area OSSE is uniquely positioned to improve conditions citywide

## High-potential impact

- National research reveals **strong reduction in achievement gaps** after implementing high-quality universal pre-kindergarten programs. Growth in achievement is particularly **strong for Black, Hispanic, and low-income students**.
- **DC is #1 in the nation for preschool access**, with 69% of 3-year-olds and 89% of 4-year-olds enrolled in publicly funded pre-K programs, **so our ability to influence positive change in early childhood is high**.
- *“OSSE’s role is to support providers and make sure quality care is nailed down.”*  
– DC Education Stakeholder

## Complex, mixed-delivery system

- There are **858 pre-K classrooms** across DCPS, charters, and community-based organizations.
- OSSE licenses **476 child development facilities**, 247 of which accept child care subsidy vouchers to support low-income families.
- There is need and an opportunity to **ensure families can access** information about child care and pre-K options available in the District.
- There is **limited insight into kindergarten to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade instruction and outcomes across the District**. There is a gap in a statewide view of achievement between pre-K4 and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

## Opportunity to maximize investments

- **DC has invested significantly in early childhood education**. OSSE oversees or administers much of this work through publicly funded pre-kindergarten, child care subsidy and tax credits for families, and quality improvement supports for child development facilities.
- There is opportunity to **further leverage investments** to maximize outcomes for children through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade by:
  - Improving the quality of care for infants and toddlers,
  - Helping more vulnerable families access quality care,
  - Improving the transitions between early childhood settings and early grades, and
  - Improving the quality of instruction in the early grades.



# By maximizing our impact in early childhood, we can improve citywide conditions

## Highlights of our work to build from

- **Capital Quality:** Implement redesigned quality rating and improvement system for child development facilities based on research-based assessments and align subsidy rates to the Capital Quality designation.
- **My Child Care DC:** Provide families with a one-stop-shop to access comprehensive information about all of the city's licensed child development providers to help them make more informed decisions about care.

## Select priorities to drive this pillar forward

- **Provide a robust set of quality supports to help providers improve the quality of care and learning.** Expand the impact of the Quality Improvement Network, a comprehensive system of supports for infant and toddler providers and families, and engage providers in the new Capital Quality continuous improvement process.
- **Strengthen communication and outreach with parents and families.** Promote the use of My Child Care DC and the Capital Quality designations to help ensure families, especially those from low-income backgrounds, have more equitable access to high-quality care and learning.



# Special education is a high-need and highly complex area where catalytic leadership is needed

## High-need student population

- **Deep gaps in outcomes persist** on state assessments between students with disabilities and their peers, with only 6% of students with disabilities meeting or exceeding expectations on PARCC in 2017-18.
- Despite being on par with national averages for Black and Hispanic students on NAEP, DC **significantly under-performs the national average** for students with disabilities.
- Students with disabilities make up **16% of the total student population** in DC and have a wide range of physical, mental, and emotional needs.

## Fragmented and complex system

- In addition to the range of needs, students have **varying types of services and levels of accommodation**, requiring different staffing and learning environments.
- Students of all types of disabilities and levels of need are **spread across LEAs of varying sizes and capacities**; 79% of LEAs enroll fewer than 100 students with disabilities.
- *“OSSE could help facilitate LEAs cooperating to build specialized programs to efficiently use city resources, especially around special education services.”* – DC Education Stakeholder

## Opportunity for leadership

- The federal and local policy and regulatory framework for special education is complicated and LEAs and schools need **support in understanding and implementing requirements**.
- Given the fragmented landscape, OSSE is positioned to **convene LEAs and partners to address issues of scale and specialization** to better serve student needs.
- OSSE can also **leverage grant funds** to both spark innovation and provide new or different supports.



# By providing catalytic leadership, we can improve outcomes in special education

## Highlights of our work to build from

- **Special Education Enhancement Fund:** Provide grant funds to help the capacity of LEAs to serve students with disabilities.
- **Timely evaluation and delivery of special education services:** Identify and reduce barriers to evaluating and providing services to students with disabilities in a timely manner, especially at the start of the school year.

## Select priorities to drive this pillar forward

- **Supporting students with disabilities to arrive to school ready to learn.** Ensure more than 94% of students transported by OSSE's Division of Student Transportation arrive to school at least 20 minutes prior to the start of the school day.
- **Deepen teacher instructional practices.** Support teachers of students with disabilities and English learners through targeted engagement with our Division of Teaching and Learning.



# Our talented team committed to excellence will enable success toward our goals and pillars

## What we heard and what we know

- In 2018, only 62% of respondents to the OSSE staff survey had regular opportunities to collaborate with other divisions.
- *“OSSE has managed to hire and keep strong talent.”*  
– DC Education Stakeholder
- *“We need to continue to invest in our people.”*  
– OSSE Staff Member

## Highlights of our work to build from

- **Manager development:** Pilot manager coaching program and peer community of practice for 15 staff.
- **Models of cross-agency collaboration:** Launch improved intranet that now includes a Grants Hub with tools and resources for the more than 80 OSSE staff members who work on the \$165 million in grants OSSE awards annually.

## Select priorities to drive this pillar forward

- **Embed and expand supports that help managers more effectively support their teams.** Expand training offerings for managers (e.g., general management training, leave and benefit management, recruitment), through communities of practice and a Manager Hub with consolidated tools and resources for managers.
- **Continue to expand opportunities for development and growth.** Expand 360° feedback process to all staff. Provide training opportunities for staff on high-impact activities, such as project management, and create mechanisms for peer learning and sharing.

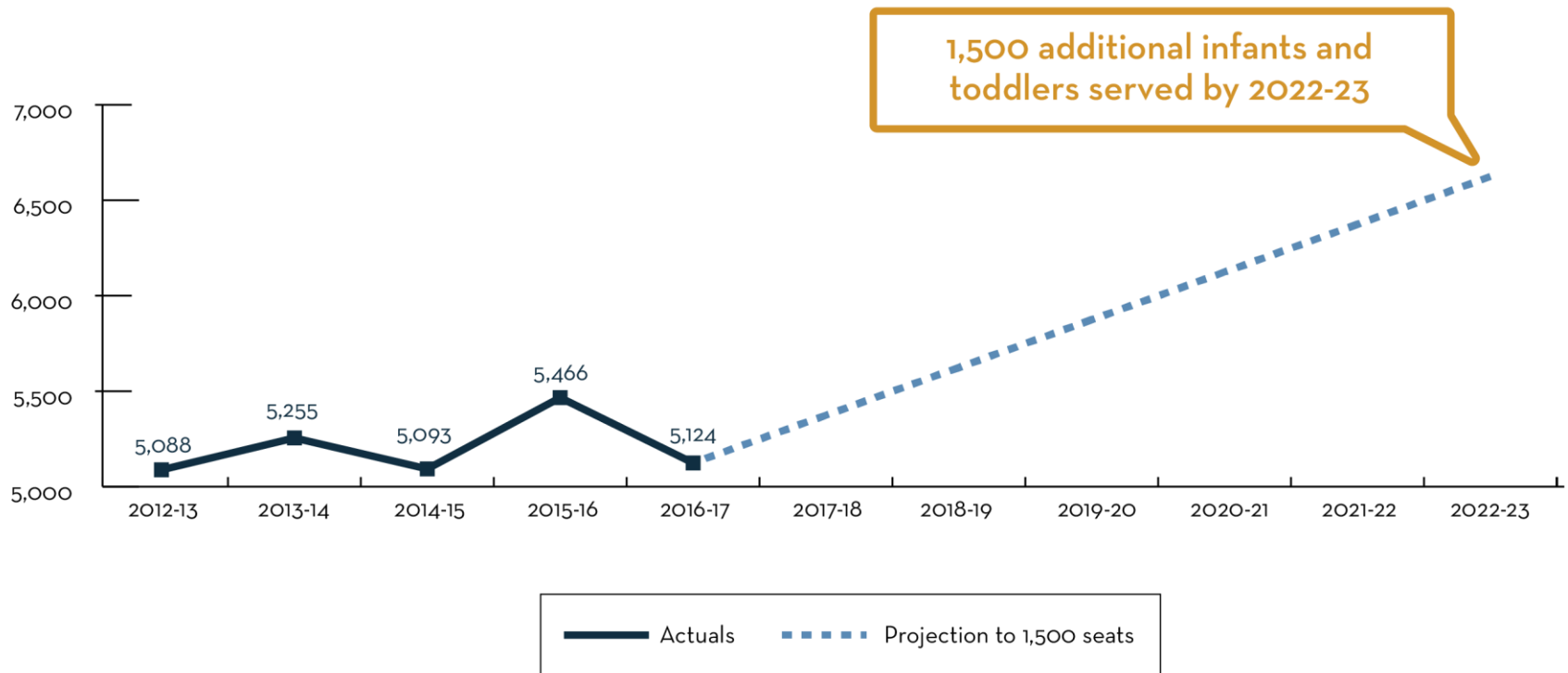




# Appendix I: Agencywide Goals

# OSSE will provide quality seats to more infants and toddlers in need

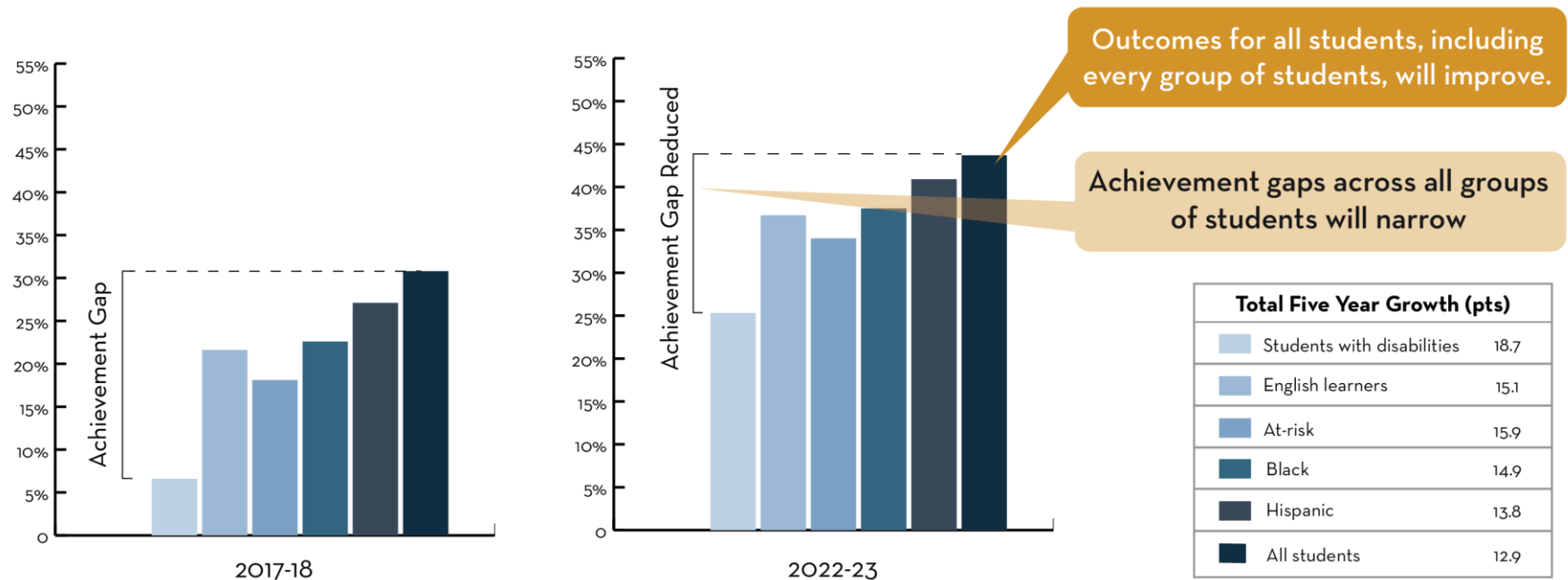
Infant and toddler subsidy enrollment, 2012-2023



Note: Metric above is a near-term proxy to estimate enrollment of vulnerable infant and toddler population in quality and high-quality care; metric and target to be updated summer of 2019 to reflect quality considerations.

# OSSE will improve performance of all students while closing achievement gaps

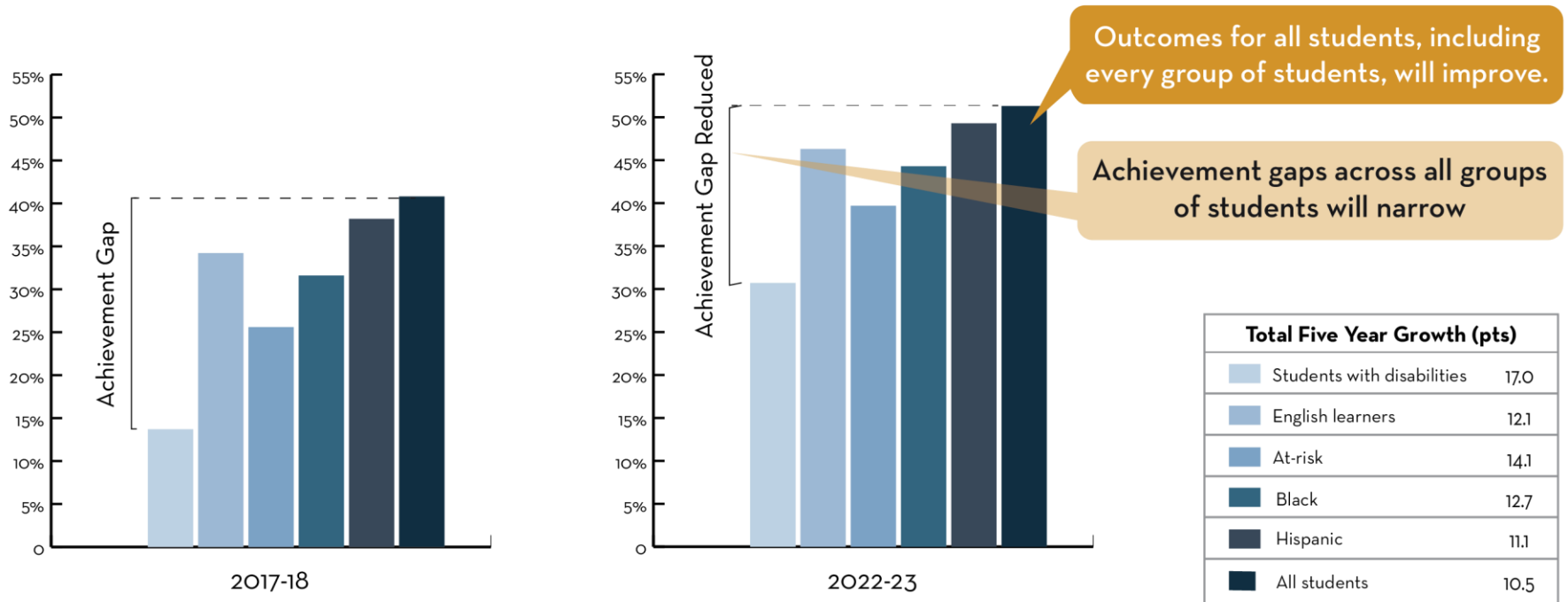
Percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations in **grade 3 English language arts**



Note: State assessments include PARCC and MSAA. Target assumes projection to reach ESSA goal, with linear growth starting in 2017-18 to achieve 85% proficiency for all students by 2038-39. See appendix for additional grade and subject-level graphs.

# OSSE will improve performance of all students while closing achievement gaps (cont.)

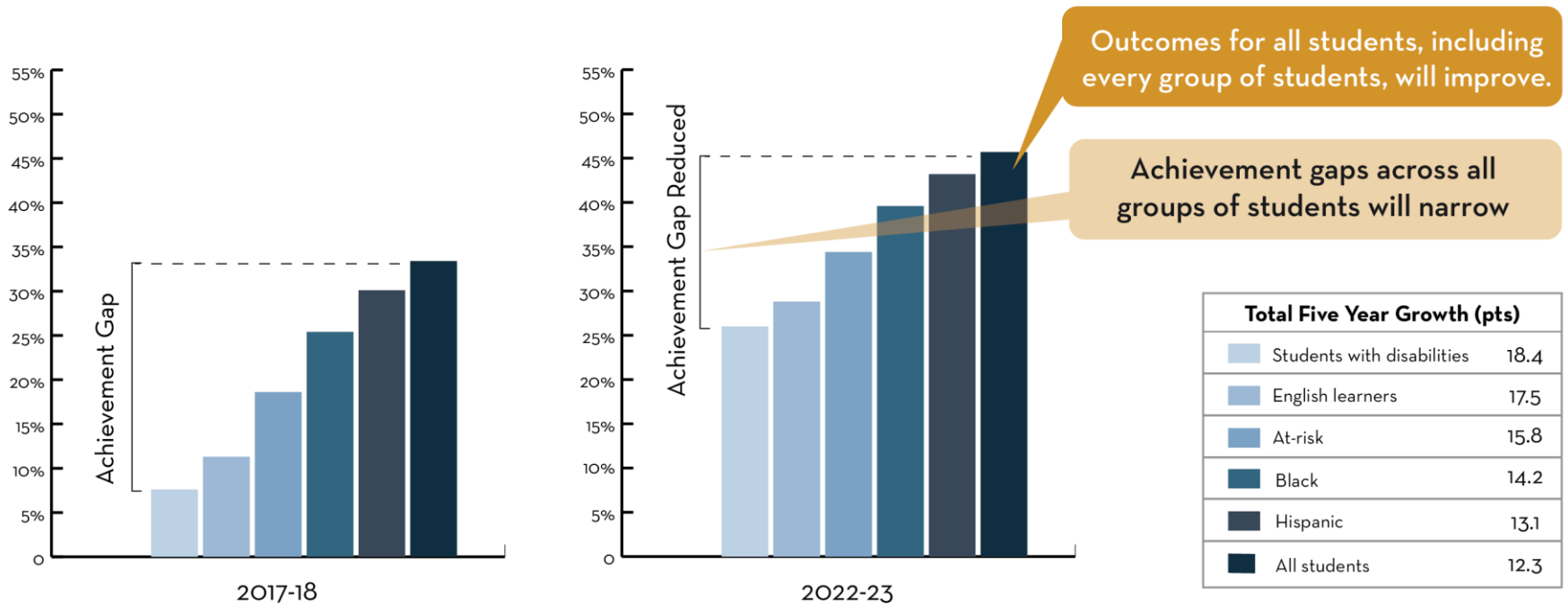
Percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations in **grade 3 math**



Note: State assessments include PARCC and MSAA. Target assumes projection to reach ESSA goal, with linear growth starting in 2017-18 to achieve 85% proficiency for all students by 2038-39.

# OSSE will improve performance of all students while closing achievement gaps (cont.)

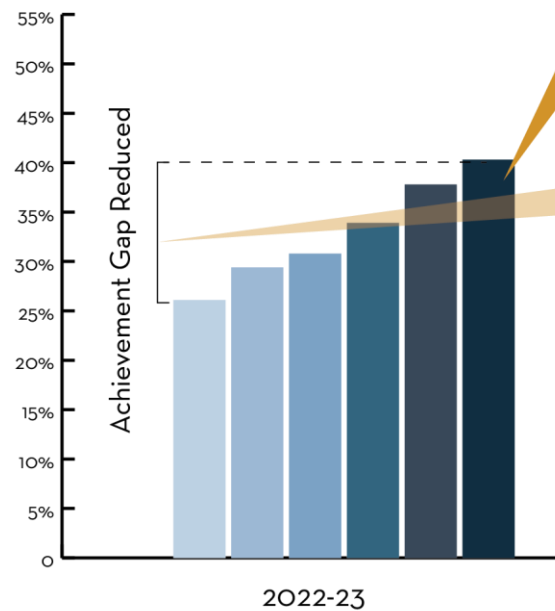
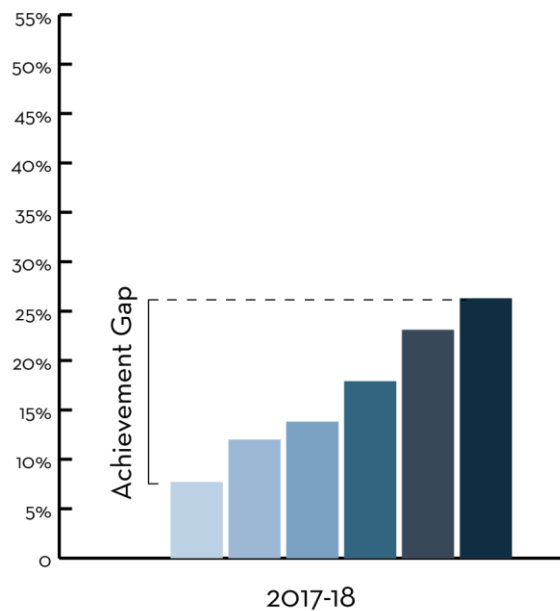
Percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations in **grade 8 English language arts**



Note: State assessments include PARCC and MSAA. Target assumes projection to reach ESSA goal, with linear growth starting in 2017-18 to achieve 85% proficiency for all students by 2038-39.

# OSSE will improve performance of all students while closing achievement gaps (cont.)

Percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations in **grade 8 math**



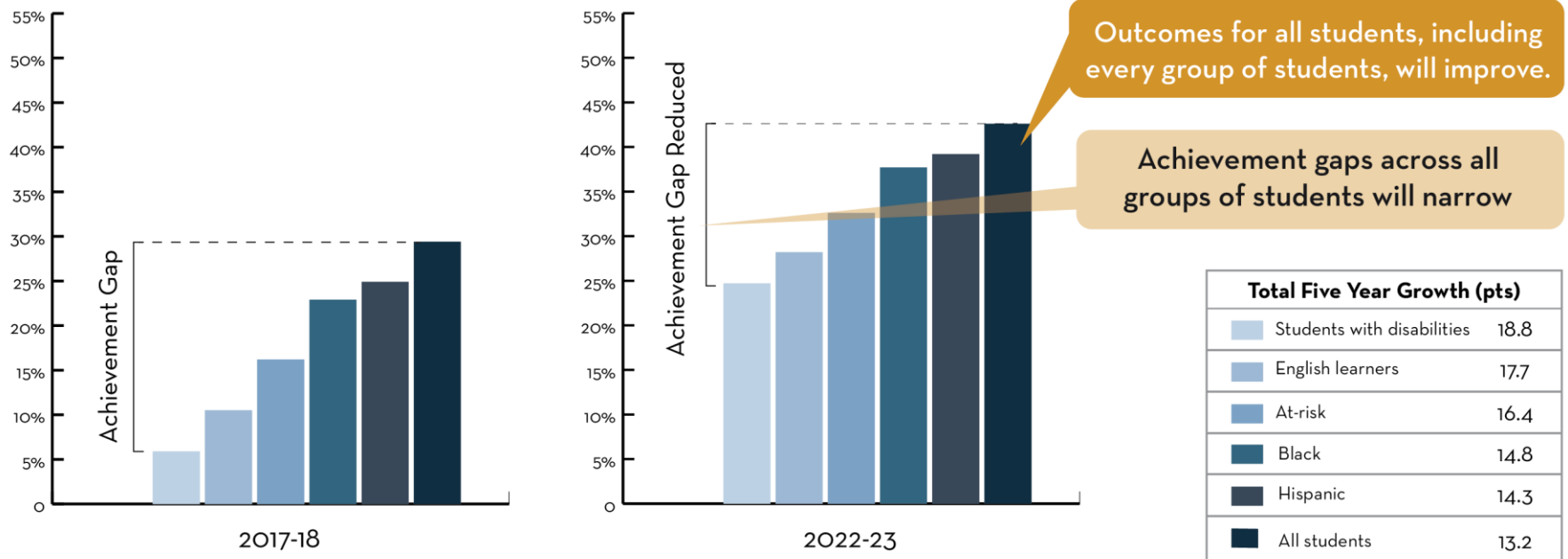
Total Five Year Growth (pts)	
Students with disabilities	18.4
English learners	17.4
At-risk	17.0
Black	16.0
Hispanic	14.7
All students	14.0

Note: State assessments include PARCC and MSAA. Target assumes projection to reach ESSA goal, with linear growth starting in 2017-18 to achieve 85% proficiency for all students by 2038-39.



# OSSE will improve performance of all students while closing achievement gaps (cont.)

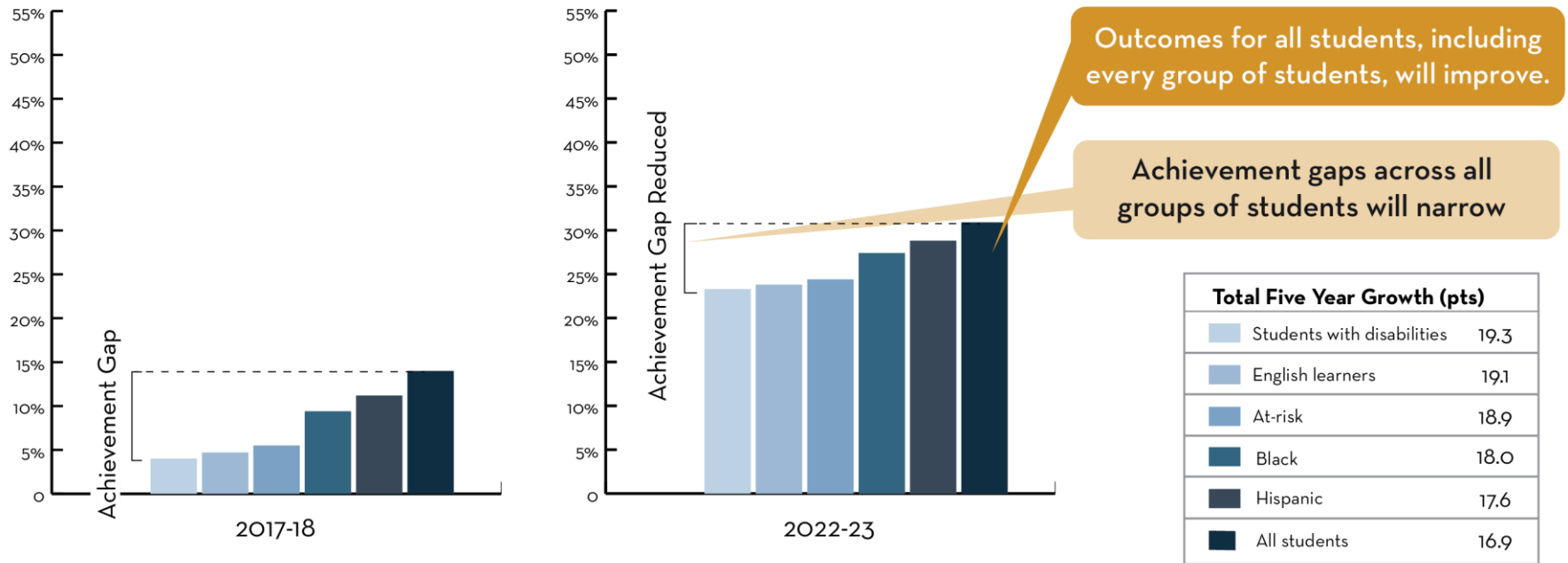
Percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations in high school English language arts



Note: State assessments include PARCC and MSAA. Target assumes projection to reach ESSA goal, with linear growth starting in 2017-18 to achieve 85% proficiency for all students by 2038-39.

# OSSE will improve performance of all students while closing achievement gaps (cont.)

Percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations in **high school math**



Note: State assessments include PARCC and MSAA. Target assumes projection to reach ESSA goal, with linear growth starting in 2017-18 to achieve 85% proficiency for all students by 2038-39.