



ATLANTA  
PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS

# ATLANTA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL SYSTEM

Popular Annual Financial Report for the Fiscal  
Year Ended June 30, 2018 Atlanta, Georgia



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February 20, 2019

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

We are pleased to present the Atlanta Public Schools Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2018. This report is designed to make the financial operations of our school district more understandable in a printed format.

The PAFR summarizes the financial activities and operating results reported in the district's audited Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). The PAFR is unaudited and presented on a non-GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) basis, which primarily deals with full disclosure and segregated funds. The statements presented on pages two and three are the district-wide financial statements. These statements incorporate all of the district's financial activities into two statements. For more detailed financial information, a copy of the CAFR and PAFR is available at <http://www.atlanta.k12.ga.us/Page/72>

The PAFR should help community members understand how their tax dollars are being utilized to educate our students. Questions and comments regarding this report are encouraged and may be directed to the Finance Department at (404) 802-2400.

Respectfully,



Lisa Bracken  
Chief Financial Officer



## Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting

The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) has given an award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting to Atlanta Independent School System for its Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2018. The Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting is a prestigious national award recognizing conformance with the highest standards for preparation of state and local government popular reports.



Government Finance Officers Association

### Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting

Presented to

**Atlanta Independent School System**

**Georgia**

For its Annual  
Financial Report  
for the Fiscal Year Ended

**June 30, 2017**

*Christopher P. Morrell*

Executive Director/CEO

In order to receive an Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting, a government unit must publish a PAFR, whose contents conform to program standards of creativity, presentation, understandability and reader appeal.

An Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting is valid for a period of one year only. We believe our current report continues to conform to the PAFR requirements, and we are submitting it to GFOA.

Atlanta Independent School System Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports for the years ended 2012-2018, from which the information on pages three through nine has been drawn, were awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by GFOA. The Certificate is the highest form of recognition for excellence in state and local government financial reporting.

In order to be awarded the Certificate of Achievement, a government unit must publish an easily readable and efficiently organized comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR), whose contents conform to program standards. The CAFR must satisfy both generally accepted accounting principles and applicable legal requirements.

A Certificate of Achievement is valid for a period of one year only. We believe our CAFR continues to conform to the Certificate of Achievement program requirements and we are submitting our CAFR for the current year to the GFOA.





2018

# FINANCIAL

SECTION



## Summarized Financial Reports

Readers of the Financial Position Statement (Benefits over Detriments) and Financial Activity Statement (Resources over Services) should keep in mind that the numbers in both reports are taken from the district's CAFR, but are presented in a non-GAAP format.

Governmental-type activities consist of programs and services that include instruction, pupil services, improvement of instruction, educational media, federal grant administration, general administration, school administration, business services, maintenance/operation of facilities, student transportation, central support and capital construction.

The following financial highlights present district-wide financial information for governmental activities.

### Financial Highlights

Please note that the fiscal year 2017 net position was restated due to the implementation of GASB 75 for OPEB. (See CAFR note O.)

#### Benefits over Detriments:

- ◆ Total net worth for the district increased from \$122.80 million in restated fiscal year 2017 to \$163.58 million in fiscal year 2018, an increase of approximately \$40.78 million, or 33.2% due to an increase in tax revenues. An increase in net worth reflects the differences between changes in assets (benefits) and changes in liabilities (detriments). (See page 4.)



#### Resources over Services:

- ◆ Total resources in fiscal year 2018 exceeded the total cost of services by \$40.78 million. (See page 4.)
- ◆ Total resources increased from \$919.48 million in fiscal year 2017 to \$944.98 million in fiscal year 2018, an increase of approximately \$25.5 million, or 2.8%. This change was due mainly to an increase in property and SPLOST taxes.
- ◆ Total services decreased approximately by \$6.86 million, or .08% from \$911.06 million in fiscal year 2017 to \$904.20 million in fiscal year 2018. This decrease was primarily due to paying off long-term debt in full.

## Benefits over Detriments (District-Wide)

The Financial Position Statement reports the benefits (assets) available to provide services and the detriments (liabilities) for which the district is obligated to pay in the future (shown in millions). The difference between benefits and detriments equals the net worth of the district.



A glossary of the financial terminology is provided on page 10.

	<b>2018</b>	<b>Restated 2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Financial Benefits</b>			
Current and other assets	\$ 279.23	\$ 226.90	\$ 225.41
Net capital assets and net pension asset	1,374.69	1,407.00	1,423.45
<b>Total benefits</b>	<b>\$ 1,653.92</b>	<b>\$ 1,633.90</b>	<b>\$ 1,648.86</b>
Deferred outflows of resources	\$ 165.13	\$ 235.83	\$ 121.30
<b>Financial Detriments</b>			
Long-term debt outstanding	\$ 1,491.74	\$ 1,638.42	\$ 1,069.04
Other liabilities	84.06	82.76	94.65
<b>Total detriments</b>	<b>\$ 1,575.80</b>	<b>\$ 1,721.18</b>	<b>\$ 1,163.69</b>
Deferred inflows of resources	\$ 79.68	\$ 25.75	\$ 58.28
<b>Net position</b>			
Net investment in capital assets	\$ 1,294.40	\$ 1,328.25	\$ 1,331.10
Restricted for debt services	3.14	3.44	3.11
Restricted for capital projects	106.15	44.46	18.13
Restricted for school nutrition program	10.39	9.22	9.08
Restricted for state and local programs	1.96	1.06	1.61
Unrestricted	(1,252.46)	(1,263.63)	(814.84)
<b>Total net position</b>	<b>\$ 163.58</b>	<b>\$ 122.80</b>	<b>\$ 548.19</b>

\*Amounts shown in millions

## Resources over Services (District-Wide)

The Financial Activity Statement provides summary of the resources (revenues) and services (expenses) of the district (shown in millions).



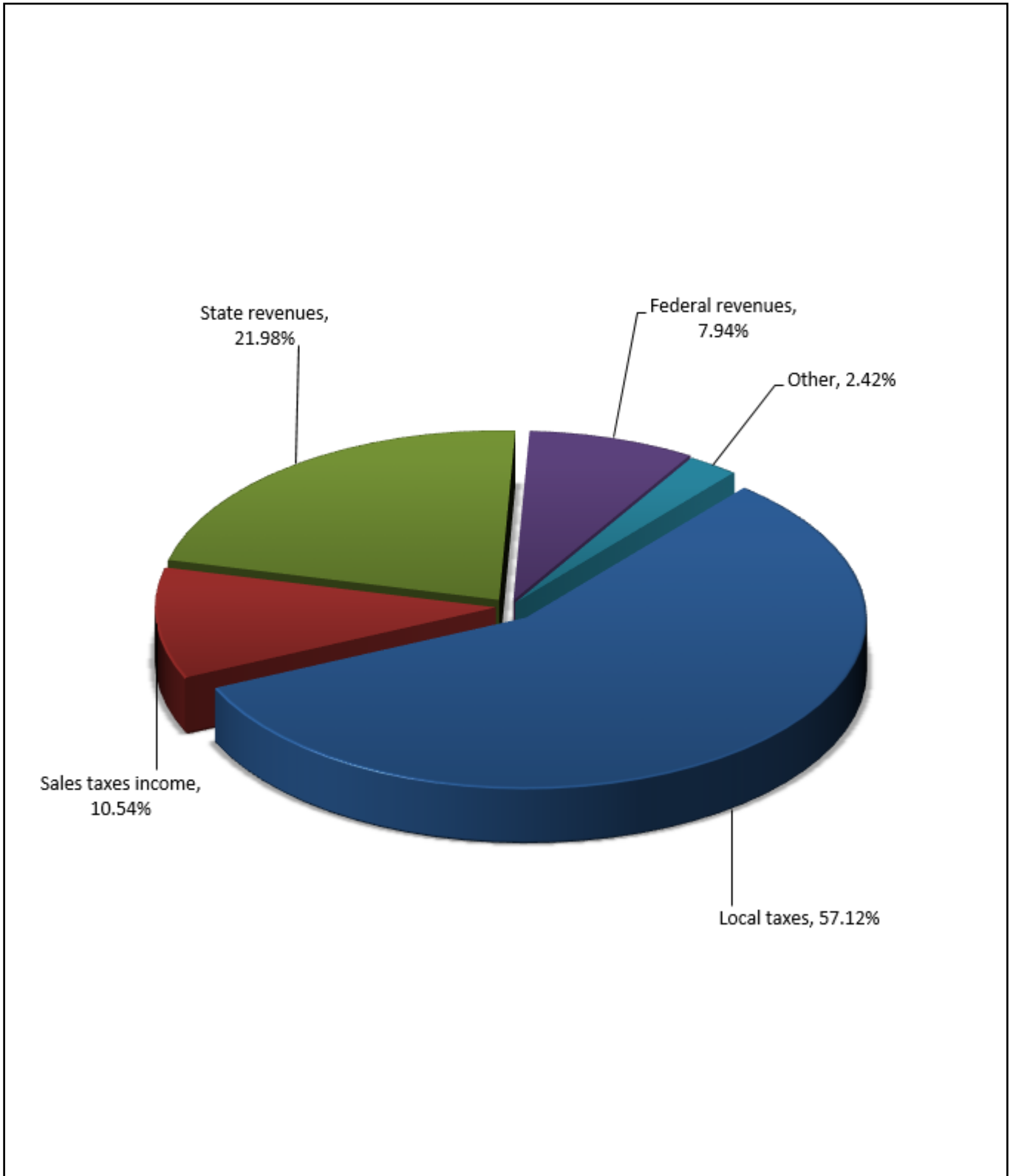
A glossary of financial terminology is provided on page 10.

	2018	Restated	2017	2016
<b>Resources Taken In</b>				
Local taxes	\$ 539.77	\$	514.98	\$ 510.05
Sales taxes income	99.59		93.79	93.79
State revenues	207.70		202.95	192.45
Federal revenues	75.01		86.27	88.56
Investment income	1.63		1.17	0.61
Facility rental fees	1.25		1.26	1.20
Tuition charges	0.02		0.01	0.02
Charges for services	4.65		4.98	4.95
Other	15.36		13.16	13.70
Gains on the sale of capital assets	-		0.91	0.18
<b>Total Revenues &amp; Resources</b>	<b>\$ 944.98</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>919.48</b>	<b>\$ 905.51</b>
<b>Services Provided</b>				
Instruction	\$ 548.54	\$	538.60	\$ 509.81
Support services:				
Pupil services	53.70		52.33	35.21
Improvement of instructional services	49.95		49.46	39.68
Educational media	7.62		8.79	12.13
Federal grant administration	2.00		2.24	1.67
General administration	12.36		11.23	13.46
School administration	38.90		43.65	41.75
Business administration	7.86		9.68	9.45
Maintenance and operations	97.95		105.89	102.34
Student transportation	31.62		34.41	31.92
Central support	20.98		18.92	20.52
Food services	27.02		30.47	28.55
Other support services	1.00		0.98	3.80
Interest expense	4.70		4.41	5.00
<b>Total Expenses &amp; Service</b>	<b>\$ 904.20</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>911.06</b>	<b>\$ 855.29</b>
<b>Revenues &amp; Resources Over(Under)</b>				
<b>Expenses &amp; Services</b>	<b>40.78</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>8.42</b>	<b>\$ 50.22</b>

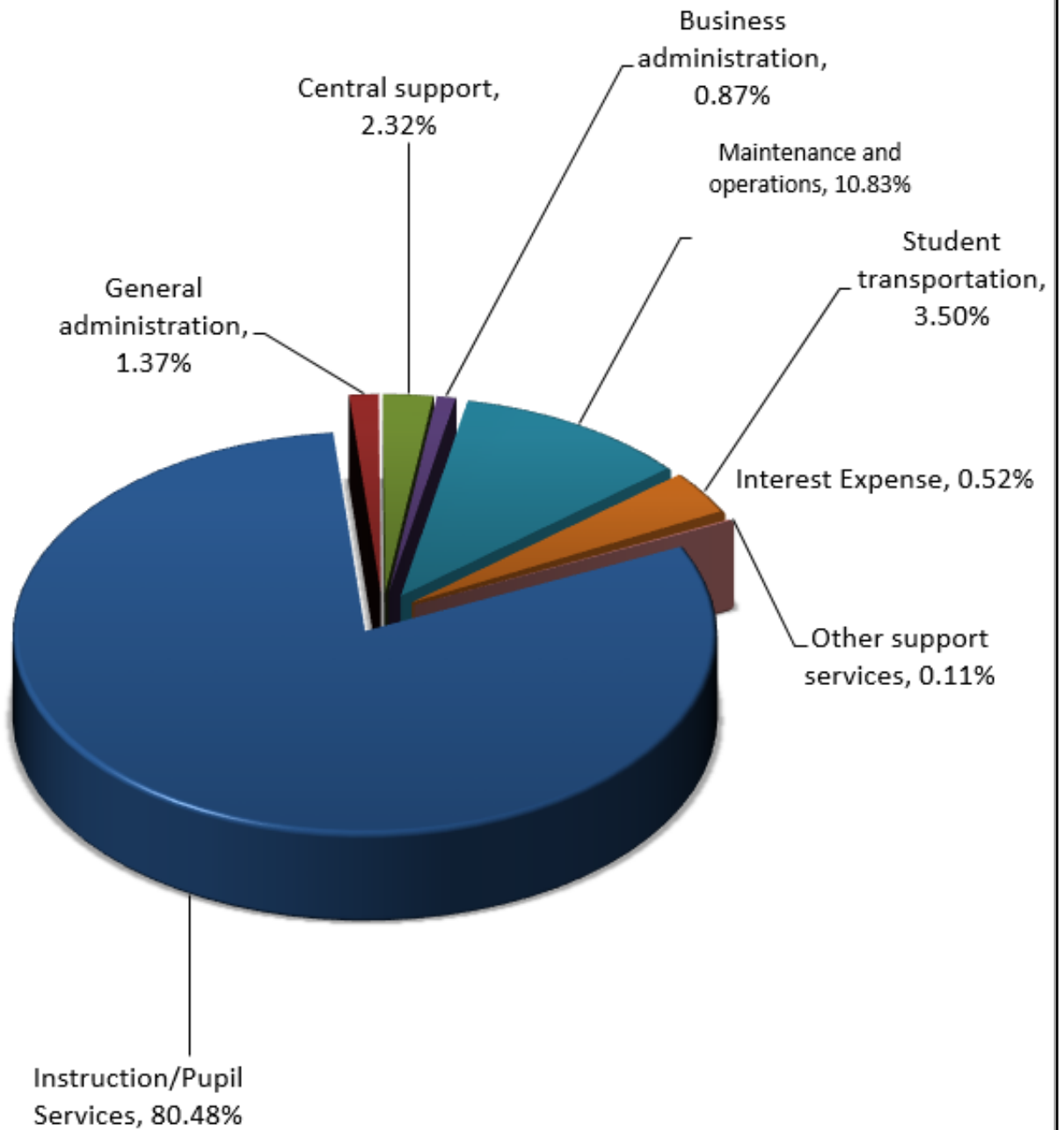
\*Amounts shown in millions



## Our Resources: **Where Does the Money Come From?**



Our Services: **Where Does the Money Go?**

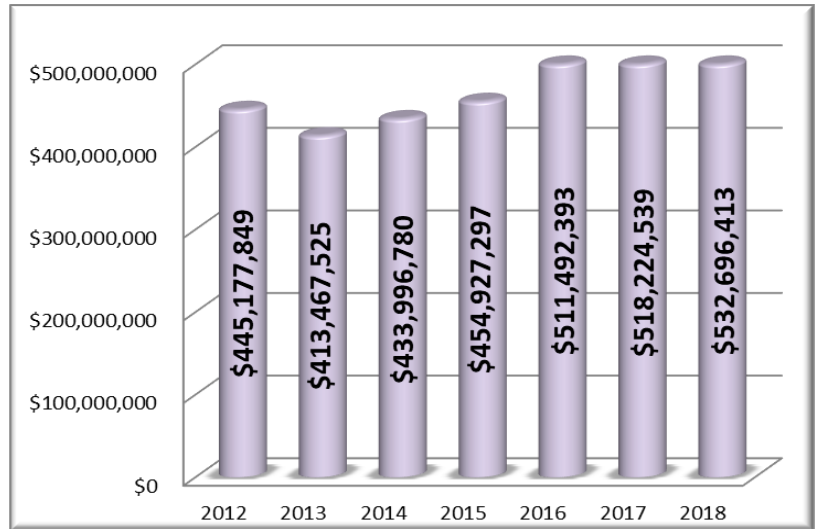


## SOURCES OF FUNDING: Where Does the Money Come From?

### (Governmental Funds Only)

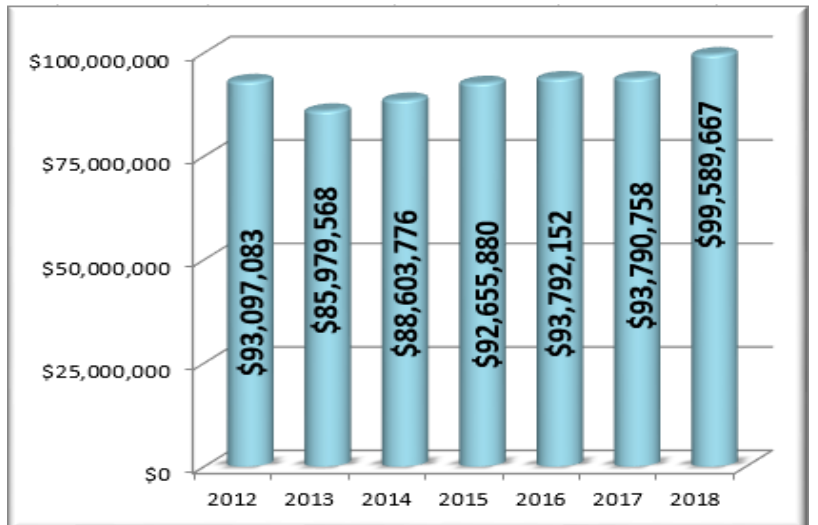
#### Local Taxes:

The Atlanta Public Schools (APS) district is financed through a combination of local, state and federal sources. During fiscal year 2018, Atlanta Public Schools resources totaled \$944.98 million. APS received 57.12% of its revenue from local taxes. Property taxes provide a majority of the local revenue to operate and maintain our schools. The graph to the right represents the amount of local taxes recognized by the District.



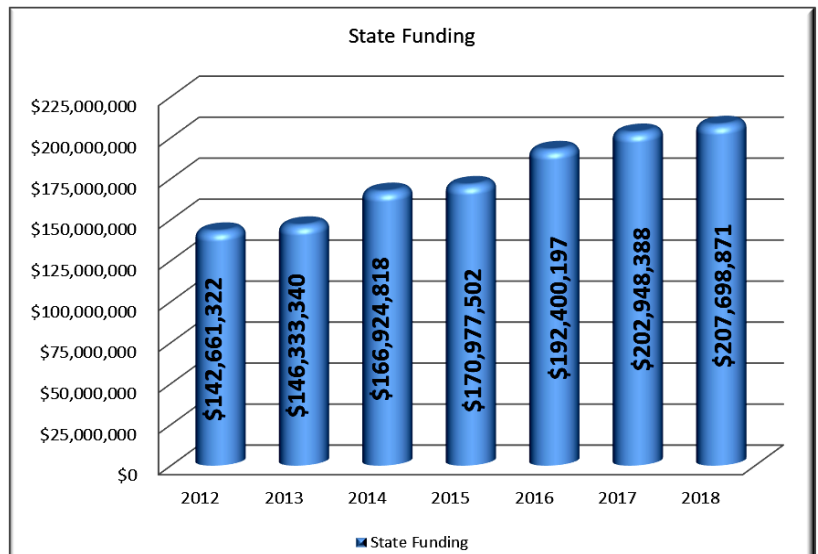
#### SPLOST (Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax):

On May 24, 2016, the SPLOST V referendum was approved. It is estimated that SPLOST V will generate approximately \$525 million for APS that will fund numerous Capital Improvement projects and liquidate debt for the Certificates of Participation issued in 2011.



#### State Funding:

The chart to the right displays the District's Governmental Funds received from the State of Georgia. Funds received from the state are to ensure that all children in the state receive a quality basic educational experience.

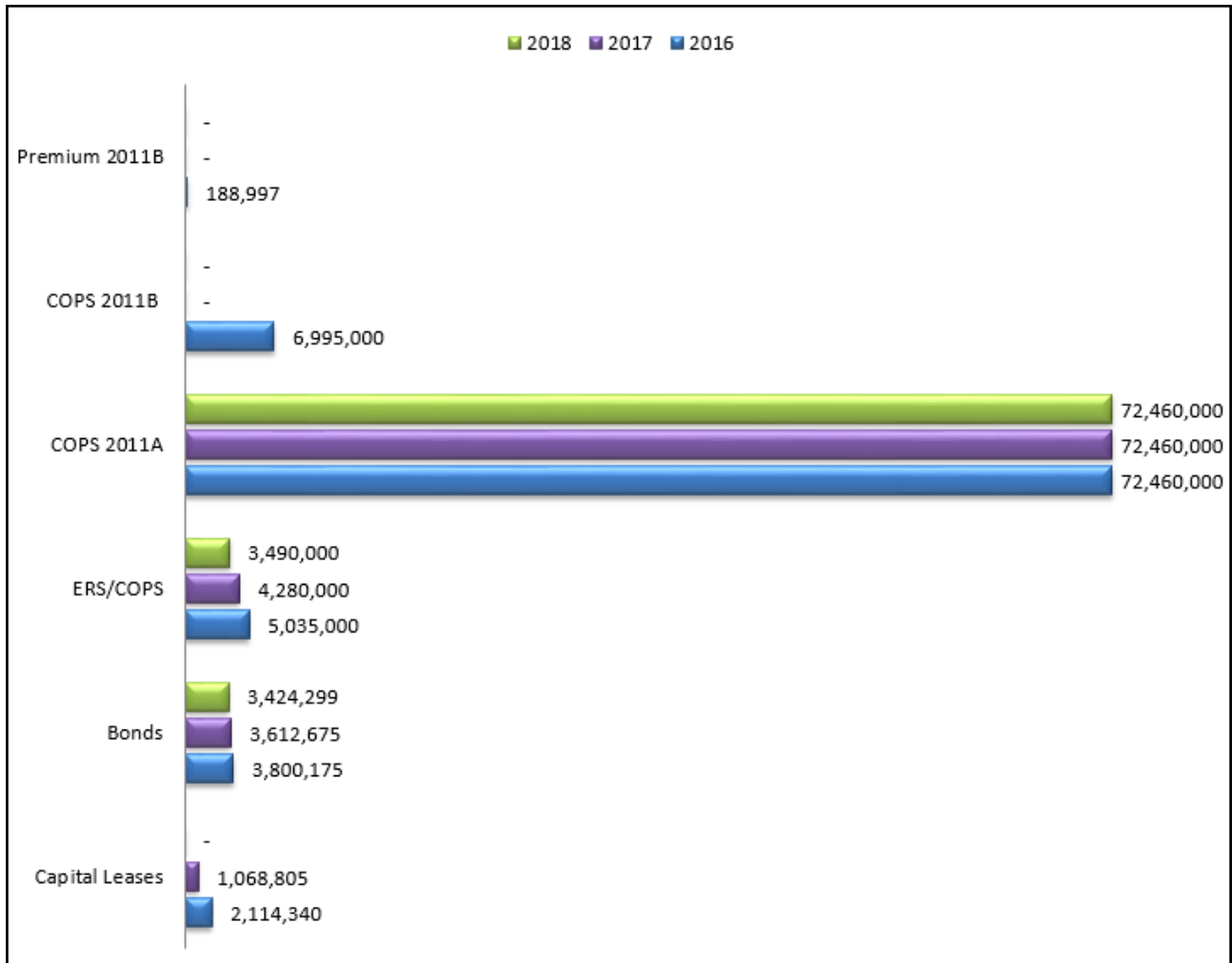




## Outstanding Debt at Year End: **What We Owe?**

The chart below captures the district's long-term debt obligations. Over the years, the City of Atlanta has issued various general obligation bonds and general obligation refunding bonds on behalf of APS. In October 2006, Education Resource Services (ERS) issued certificates of participation (COPS) on behalf of the school system to finance renovations and improvements to the Instructional Service Center. COPS is different from a general obligation bond because in COPS, only the building associated with the project is pledged as collateral, not the full taxing authority of the government. In June 2011, ERS issued COPS to finance the construction and renovation of North Atlanta High School.

<b>Outstanding Debt</b>	2018	2017	2016
Long-term debt			
Capital leases	\$ -	\$ 1,068,805	\$ 2,114,340
Intergovernmental agreement- City of Atlanta	3,424,299	3,612,675	3,800,175
ERS, Inc. (COPS, Series 2006/2007)	3,490,000	4,280,000	5,035,000
ERS, Inc. (COPS, Series 2011A)	72,460,000	72,460,000	72,460,000
ERS, Inc. (COPS, Series 2011B)	-	-	6,995,000
Unamortized premium 2011B	-	-	188,997
<b>Total long-term debt</b>	<b>\$79,374,299</b>	<b>\$ 81,421,480</b>	<b>\$ 90,593,512</b>



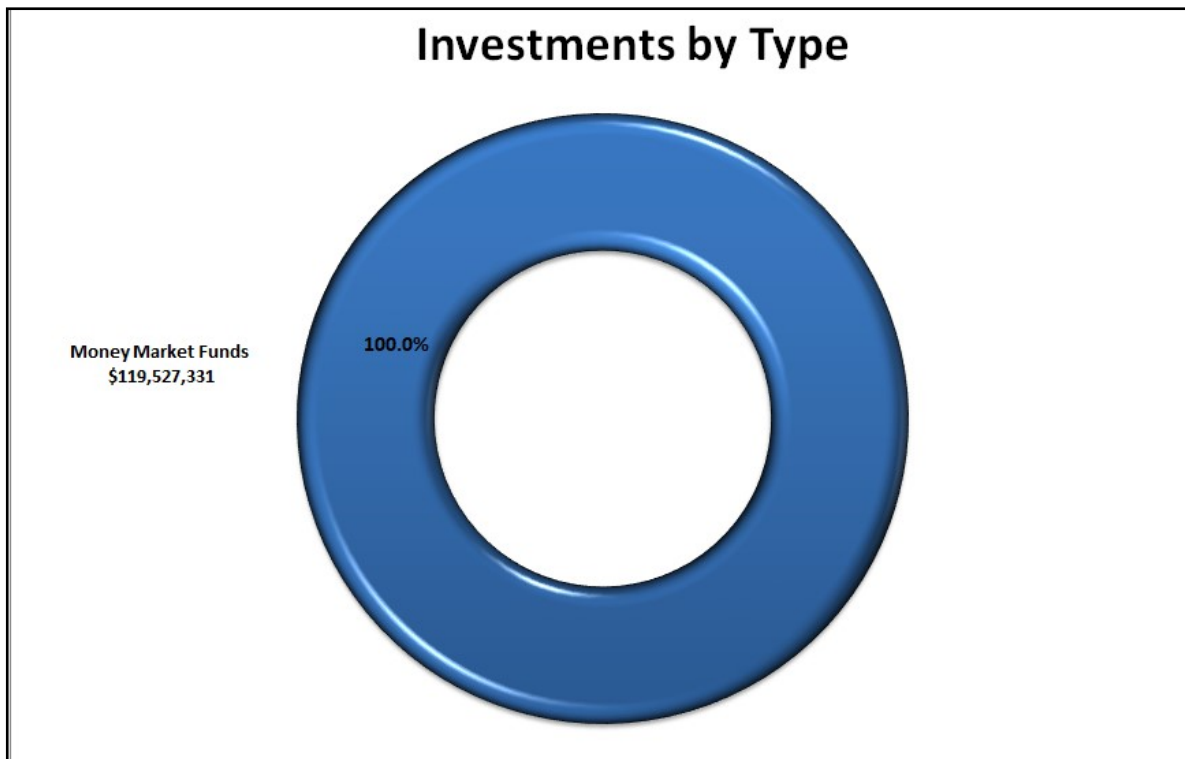
## Investments: How Safe is our Money?

Investors who purchase municipal bonds use debt ratings as an indicator of the financial stability of an organization and consequently the safety and security of the debt sold by that organization. In general, higher credit ratings often result in lower borrowing costs via reduced interest rates paid on municipal bonds. Strong ratings also promote a wider market by attracting more buyers of municipal bonds.

There are three major rating agencies that assign ratings to municipal debt Standard & Poor's, Moody's Investors Services and Fitch Ratings .

As of June 30, 2018, APS' GA Fund 1 investments were rated AAaf and Aa2 by Standard and Poor's and Moody's Investor Service, respectively.

Credit Risk	Moody's	Fitch	S&P
<b>Investment grade</b>			
Highest grade credit	Aaa	AAA	AAA
Very high grade credit	AA1, Aa2, Aa3	AA+, AA, AA-	AA+, AA, AA-
High grade credit	A1, A2, A3	A+, A, A-	A+, A, A-
Good credit grade	Baa1, Baa2, Baa3, Baa4	BBB+, BBB, BBB-	BBB+, BBB, BBB-
Speculative grade credit	Ba1, Ba2, Ba3	BB+, BB, BB-	BB+, BB, BB-
Very speculative credit	B1, B2, B3	B+, B, B-	B+, B, B-
Substantial risks - In default	Caa1, Caa2, Caa3, Ca	CCC, CC, C, RD, D	CCC+, CCC, CCC-, CC, C, D



As of June 30, 2018, the district had \$119,527,331 in investments. Investments subject to credit quality risk are reflected below.

Investments subject to credit quality risk are reflected here:

Issuer	Investment Type	Amount	Percent	Quality Rating by Agency	
				S&P	Moody's
US MONEY MARKET- Georgia Fund 1	Money Market Funds	\$ 119,527,331	100.00%	AAaf	Aa2
		<b>\$ 119,527,331</b>	<b>100.00%</b>		

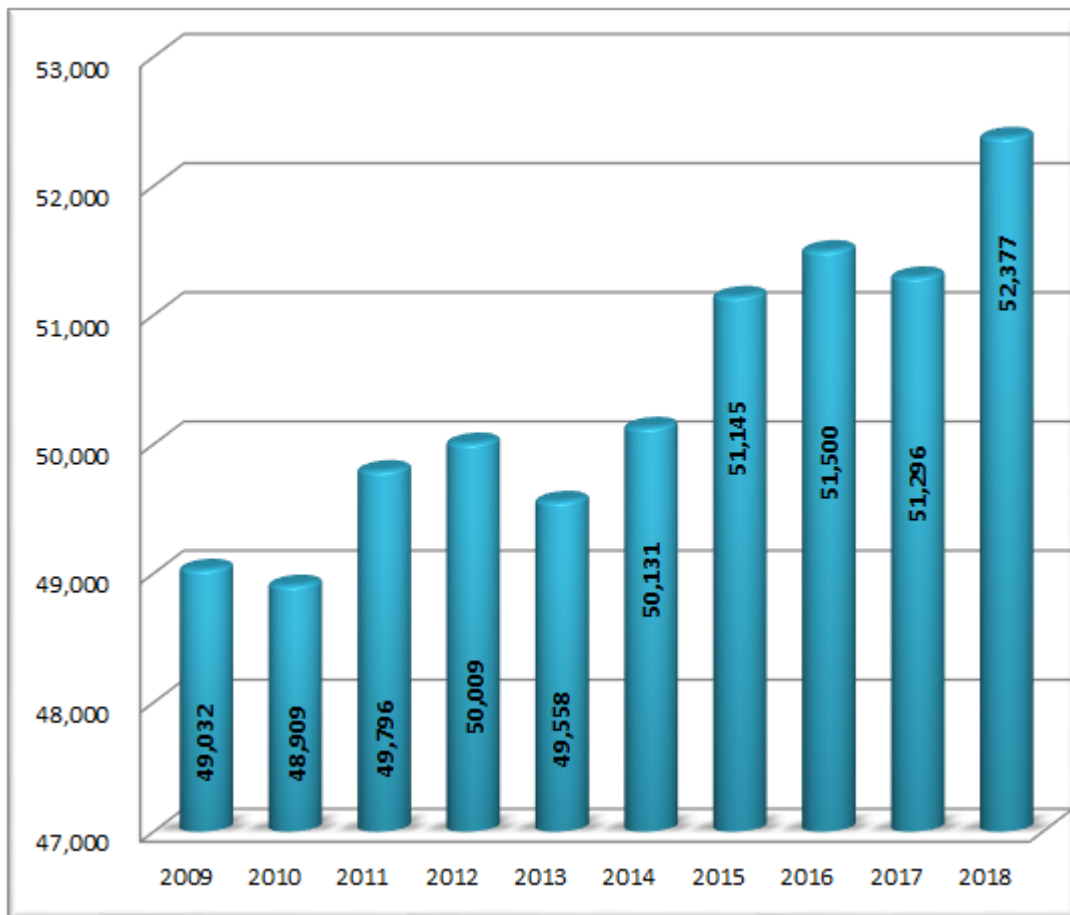
## Student Enrollment

Student enrollment (including charter schools) in the district has increased over the last 10 years due in part to demographic changes. Those changes led to school closings in some cases and new schools or expansions in other areas. These changes constitute a high mobility rate for students in our district. Nearly one-third of APS students relocated within and outside the district during the shifts.



About 2,356 seniors graduated from APS high schools in 2018, earning more than \$143 million in college scholarships. Large numbers of APS students continue to earn awards for academic achievement on the state and national levels.

The district's budget provides funding for academic and special services that support our diverse student enrollment. APS students represent several ethnic, economic and special needs groups.



Source: GA Department of Education, Enrollment by Grade report, based on the October count of each fiscal year. CAFR Statistical Schedule 21



## Glossary of Financial Terminology

**INSTRUCTION** is the largest expenditure category and relates directly to the classroom instruction of children, including teacher salaries.

**PUPIL SERVICES** comprise all guidance, counseling, testing, attendance, social work, and health services.

**IMPROVEMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES** consists of activities designed primarily for assisting instructional staff in planning, developing and evaluating the process of providing challenging learning experiences for students.

**EDUCATIONAL MEDIA SERVICES** costs are concerned with directing, managing, and operating educational media centers; included are school libraries and educational television.

**FEDERAL GRANT ADMINISTRATION** consists of activities concerned with the demands of the Federal Programs Grant Management.

**GENERAL & SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION** costs represent the Atlanta Board of Education's operation of the District. Also included in this area are administrative support personnel, deputy, associate, or assistant superintendent, principals, assistant principals, and clerical staff.

**BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION** expenditures include business services such as budgeting and reporting, accounting, payroll, accounts payable, auditing, warehousing, purchasing, and office support.

**MAINTENANCE AND PLANT OPERATION** expenditures relate to the safe and efficient environment of the school, including building maintenance, energy, grounds and custodial services.

**STUDENT TRANSPORTATION** expenditures relate to providing transportation to students who live in the APS district.

**CENTRAL SUPPORT** costs include personnel services, information technology maintenance staff and computer network maintenance contracts, and risk management.

**OTHER SUPPORT & NUTRITION** includes the preparation and serving of regular and incidental meals or snacks in connection with school activities.

**CAPITAL ASSETS** are assets used in operations with an initial useful life extending beyond one reporting period.

**CAPITAL OUTLAYS** includes acquisitions of land and buildings, renovating buildings, and construction of buildings.

**DEBT SERVICE** includes payments of principal and interest on capital leases and long-term debt.

**NET INVESTMENT IN CAPITAL ASSETS:** Total capital assets, less accumulated depreciation, less debt directly related to capital assets (i.e. bond issues or donations for capital assets).

**RESTRICTED:** Resources where use is restricted externally for specific purposes.

**UNRESTRICTED:** Assets with no external restriction as to use or purpose. They can be employed for any purpose designated by the governing board.

**CERTIFICATES OF PARTICIPATION (COPS):** Tax-exempt bonds that are issued by state entities usually secured with revenue from an equipment or facility lease.

**COLLEGE AND CAREER READY PERFORMANCE INDEX (CCRPI):** A comprehensive school improvement, accountability, and communication platform for all educational stakeholders that will promote college and career readiness for all Georgia public schools students.

# About APS





Dear Students and Families of Atlanta Public Schools,

Welcome to our 2018-2019 school year! All of us in Atlanta Public Schools (APS) are so excited to continue the work of preparing our students to graduate ready for college and career. With your support and engagement, we are making great progress on our Journey of Transformation and on our path toward becoming a high-performing school district where students love to learn, educators inspire, families engage and the community trusts the system.

Now, more than ever, we need your continued engagement in ensuring the success of our students and of APS. I can't stress enough how much we appreciate and need our APS families and community stakeholders to continue to work with us on our journey.

As part of helping you ensure that our students are prepared and ready to learn throughout the year, I'm excited to provide you with our 2018- 2019 Back-to-School Guide. This year's guide includes important information about the district, key dates, financial and educational data, a comprehensive listing of district contact information, including school addresses and phone numbers, and our 2018-2019 school calendar.



Something new that you'll see in this year's guide is information about our strategy for inclement weather days.

Our 2017-2018 school year brought with it an unprecedented number of inclement weather days that led to early dismissals or closures. APS has always had set protocols in place to plan in advance and during real-time weather impacts, and our priority in these situations continues to be on the safety of our students and staff.

To ensure you are always receiving the most current information from us this school year, I encourage you to log in to the campus portal for parents and update your preferences for emergency notifications, which include robo-calls, text messages and e-mails at [www.atlantapublicschools.us/PPP](http://www.atlantapublicschools.us/PPP).

As always, APS is focused on developing the whole child by incorporating social emotional learning skills into the mix and equipping our kids with the "Smarts and Hearts," as they become the adults and future leaders of our communities.

I love hearing from you and look forward to seeing you in our schools throughout the year. Remember, we are your partner in helping all students in APS succeed.

Welcome back, and let's make it a great school year!

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Meria J. Carstarphen.

**Meria J. Carstarphen, Ed.D.**

Superintendent, Atlanta Public Schools

**Twitter:** @CarstarphenMJ | **Blog:** ATLSuper.com





2018-2022

ATLANTA BOARD OF EDUCATION

bold leadership | student focused, community driven

District Representative Schools



Leslie Grant  
District 1

**Elementary Schools:** Barack & Michelle Obama Academy, Benteen, Dobbs, Hope-Hill, Mary Lin, Parkside, Slater, Thomasville Heights

**Middle Schools:** King, Price

**High Schools:** Carver, Carver Early College, Grady, Jackson

**Charter Schools:** Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School (K-8), KIPP Vision Academy (K-8) The Kindezi School - Old Fourth Ward (K-8) Wesley International Academy (K-8)



Byron D. Amos  
District 2

**Elementary Schools:** Dunbar, Finch, Hollis Innovation Academy (K-8), Jones, Stanton

**Middle Schools:** Brown

**High Schools:** Douglass, North Metro, Washington

**Charter Schools:** Centennial Academy (K-8), KIPP Strive Academy (K-8), KIPP WAYS Academy (K-8), KIPP Atlanta Collegiate (9-12)



Michelle D. Olympiadis  
District 3

**Elementary Schools:** Burgess-Peterson Academy, Morningside, Springdale Park, Toomer

**Middle Schools:** Inman

**High Schools:** Adult Literacy Program, Alonzo Crim Open Campus, Grady, West End Academy

**Charter Schools:** Drew Charter (K-12)

**Residential Flexible Learning Program:** Hillside Conant (Grades 2-12)



Nancy M. Meister  
District 4

**Elementary Schools:** Brandon, Brandon Primary, E. Rivers, Garden Hills, Jackson, Jackson Primary, Smith, Smith Primary

**Middle Schools:** Sutton

**High Schools:** North Atlanta

**Charter Schools:** Atlanta Classical Academy (K-8)



Erika Y. Mitchell  
District 5

**Elementary Schools:** Beecher Hills, Bolton Academy, Boyd, Fain, Peyton Forest, Scott, Towns, Tuskegee Airmen Global Academy, Usher-Collier, West Manor, Woodson Park Academy

**Middle Schools:** Harper-Archer, John Lewis Invictus Academy, Young

**High Schools:** Mays

**Single Gender Schools:** B.E.S.T. Academy (6-12), Coretta Scott King Young Women's Leadership Academy (6-12)

**Charter Schools:** Kindezi West (K-8), Westside Atlanta Charter (K-6)



Eshè P. Collins, Vice Chair  
District 6

**Elementary Schools:** Cascade, Cleveland Avenue, Continental Colony, Deerwood Academy, Fickett, Heritage Academy, Humphries, Hutchinson, Kimberly, Kindezi at Gideons, Perkerson

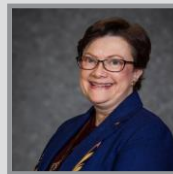
**Middle Schools:** Bunche, Forrest Hill Academy, Long, Sylvan Hills

**High Schools:** Forrest Hill Academy, South Atlanta, Therrell

At-Large Members



Kandis Wood Jackson  
At-Large, Seat 7  
Districts 1 & 2



Cynthia Briscoe Brown  
At-Large, Seat 8  
Districts 3 & 4



Jason Esteves, Chair  
At-Large, Seat 9  
Districts 5 & 6



## Our Mission

With a caring culture of trust and collaboration, every student will graduate ready for college and career.

## Our Vision

A high-performing school district where students love to learn, educators inspire, families engage and the community trusts the system.



ATLANTA  
 PUBLIC  
 SCHOOLS





## Demographic and Economic Information

This table presents demographic and economic information to assist users in understanding the socioeconomic environment within which the School System operates. This information is from City of Atlanta.

### Atlanta Independent School System Demographic Statistics from City of Atlanta Last Ten Fiscal Years

<b>Fiscal Year Ended</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Personal Income (thousands of dollars)</b>	<b>Per Capita Personal Income <sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Median Age</b>	<b>Unemployment Rate</b>
June 30, 2008	477,300	206,232	39,889	32.0	6.2%
June 30, 2009	480,700	198,067	37,793	34.0	9.9%
June 30, 2010	422,753	198,872	37,493	33.3	10.3%
June 30, 2011	432,092	214,002	39,826	33.0	9.9%
June 30, 2012	444,002	222,204	40,738	32.2	8.8%
June 30, 2013	448,312	228,134	41,307	33.2	7.8%
June 30, 2014	456,143	228,134	41,307	33.4	6.8%
June 30, 2015	463,878	244,065	43,472	33.3	5.1%
June 30, 2016	472,522	257,510	45,092	33.0	4.6%
June 30, 2017	486,290	274,129	47,348	36.4	3.8%

**Sources: Statistical section of the City of Atlanta, Georgia 2018 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2018.**

**Statistical Data from the City of Atlanta is one year in arrears.**

**1 Per Capita Personal Income is the average income earned per person in the City of Atlanta.**

# 2018 CCRPI Results

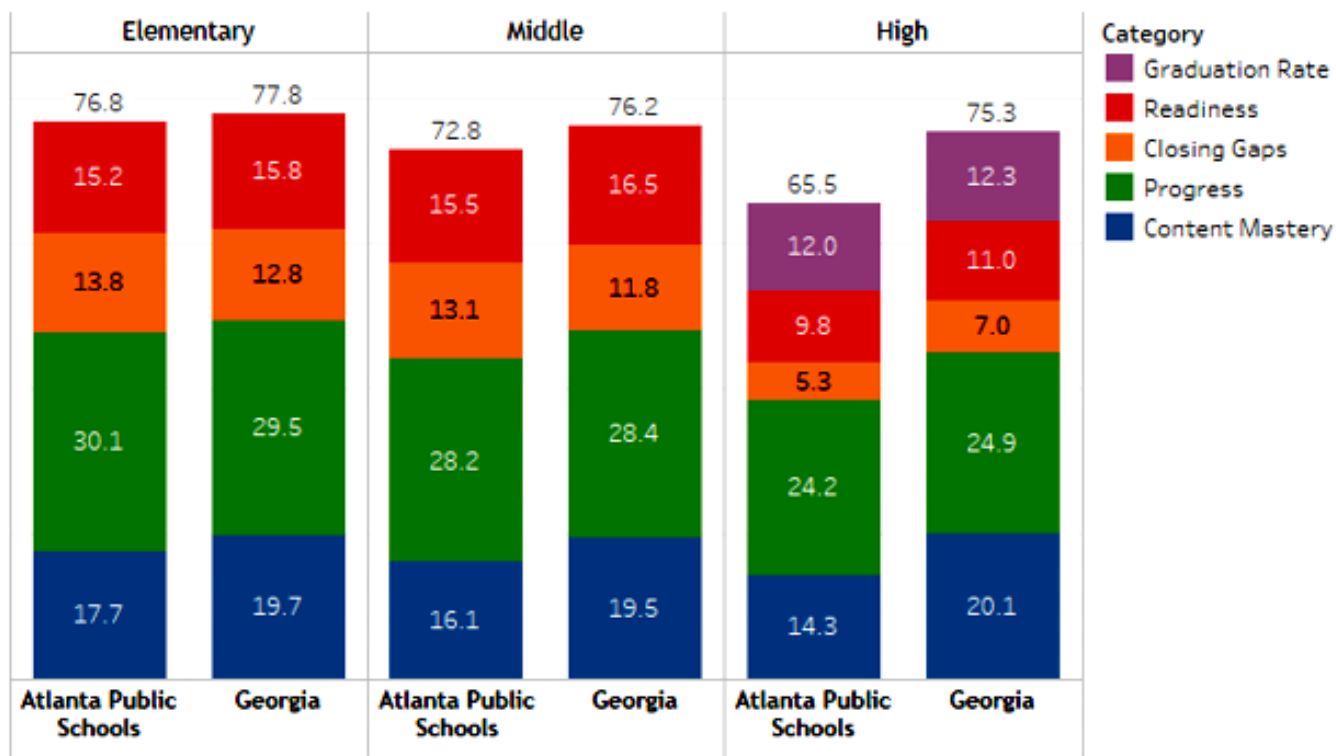
Posted on [October 29, 2018](#) by [APS Insights](#)

The Georgia Department of Education released 2018 CCRPI scores today. The CCRPI is a formula of mostly test scores and test score growth that rates schools on a 0-100 scale.

This year's scores are not directly comparable to the previous year's scores because the formula has changed. So, to better understand school CCRPI performance over time, the visual below shows each the state percentile rank of each school's CCRPI score.

That means with this year's analysis, we won't be discussing CCRPI point gains or schools showing improvements in their CCRPI scores because we don't have anything with which to compare that data. This year's results establish a new baseline for all schools across the state.

## 2018 District and State Grade Level CCRPI Scores with Components



# (March 28, 2018, SunTrust Brings 'HOPE Inside' to Atlanta Public Schools)

## **Program provides financial empowerment to more than 5,000 local teachers and employees**

SunTrust Banks, Inc. (NYSE: STI), a pioneer in offering HOPE Inside in its branches announced today plans to expand the HOPE Inside program to Atlanta Public Schools (APS) teachers and employees. HOPE Inside is an award-winning financial empowerment model provided by global for-purpose organization Operation HOPE. This sponsorship is part of the company's onUp movement to advance financial confidence across America.

Traditionally, HOPE Inside installs Operation HOPE financial well-being coaches in bank branches, government offices, grocery stores, and other community locations to provide financial dignity counseling, including credit and money management, homeownership preparedness and small business development programs, all offered at no cost to the client. HOPE Inside the Workplace is a segment of the HOPE Inside model that is offered as an employee wellness benefit at organizations.

Through this new partnership with APS, an Operation HOPE financial well-being coach will have an office on site at the District's central office, the Center for Learning and Leadership (CLL) Building, located at 130 Trinity Avenue, SW, in downtown Atlanta. The financial well-being coach will be available to meet with APS employees every day of the week—either in the office at the CLL, or at the employee's work site. SunTrust currently sponsors financial well-being coaches in 17 HOPE Inside branch locations throughout Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, North Carolina, Alabama, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. The APS partnership will now bring this programming to more than 5,000 teachers and employees, who serve students across Atlanta. The HOPE Inside network now stands at 100 locations across the country, with more than 450 new locations scheduled to open within the next 18 months. This is tied to the goal of 1,000 operational locations by 2020. Locally, HOPE Inside the Workplace is currently offered to employees of the Atlanta Police Department, also through sponsorship by SunTrust, and Hyatt Hotels.

"Throughout our more than five year partnership with Operation HOPE, we have helped nearly 18,000 clients move from financial stress to confidence," said Jenna Kelly, SunTrust Georgia Division CEO. "Our purpose of Lighting the Way to Financial Well-Being across America aligns well with Operation HOPE's mission of financial empowerment. SunTrust looks forward to continuing our shared commitment through this natural extension with Atlanta Public Schools."

"This commitment by SunTrust, our valued strategic partner, will contribute to the financial wellness of thousands of our local teachers and administrators," said John Hope Bryant, founder, chairman and CEO of Operation HOPE. "Personal financial stress is the most common cause of stress in the workplace—we are grateful for the partnership, and commend Atlanta Public Schools leadership for taking this step to empower employees."

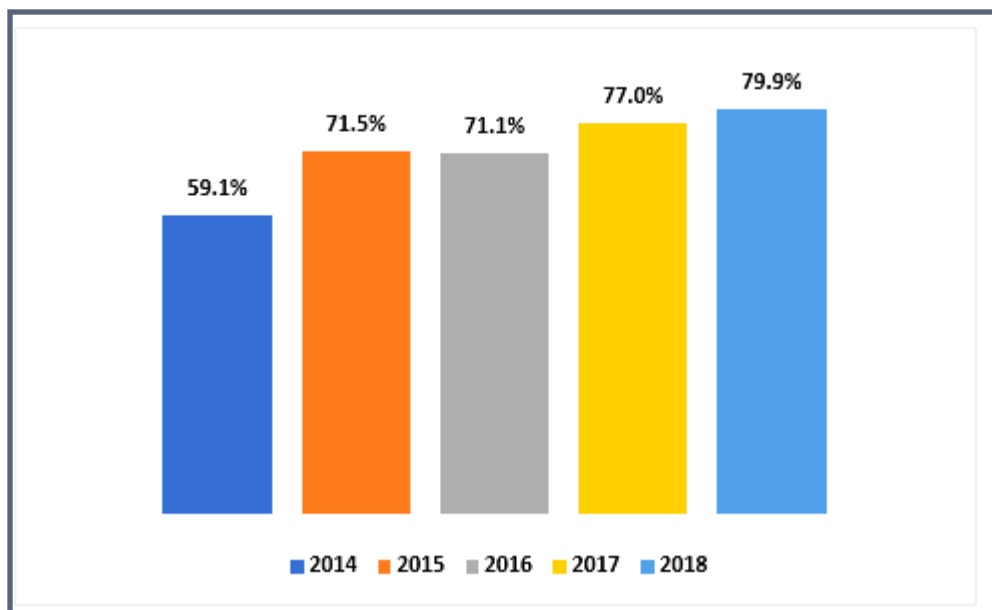
"We are grateful to Operation HOPE and SunTrust for bringing the HOPE Inside program to Atlanta Public Schools (APS)," said Dr. Meria J. Carstarphen, Superintendent of Atlanta Public Schools. "Having this program at APS means that our employees have access to professional financial counselors who can provide them with sound economic advice. HOPE Inside is an empowering program for our staff, and we are so excited to be part of it."



# (September 19, 2018) APS' 2018 Grad Rate is Highest Ever at 79.9% (Up 2.9 percentage points)!

Atlanta Public Schools (APS) has achieved its highest graduation rate to date at 79.9 percent, according to 2018 graduation data released today by the Georgia Department of Education. This represents a 2.9 percentage point gain over 2017. Since 2014, the District's rate has increased by 20.8 percentage points from 59.1 percent in 2014 to 79.9 percent in 2018. Further, the results show that APS cut the gap with the state in half from 3.6 percentage points in 2017 to 1.7 percentage points in 2018. The state's 2018 graduation rate is 81.6 percent.

APS Graduation Rate Over the Past Five Years



The number of on-time graduates hit a new high at 2,438, which is 82 more graduates than the previous year. In addition, notable gains were achieved by students with disabilities, up 5.0 percentage points to 60.5 percent, and African-American students, up 3.7 percentage points to 78.2 percent. The graduation rate for white students remains high at 95.4 percent, although there was a slight decline (-0.5) compared to last year. The graduation rate for Hispanic students is 73.0 percent, a decrease of 4.6 percentage points from 2017.

“We continue to be encouraged by the steady increase in our District’s graduation rate,” said APS Superintendent Meria J. Carstarphen. “These increases not only speak to the academic achievements of our students, but also to the positive impact of the work happening in our schools by our staff and the investments we continue to make in our transformation strategy. Every child matters and while we celebrate the gains, we know there’s still work to be done to ensure that every student graduates prepared to succeed in college and career.”

Since 2014, APS has worked aggressively to keep more students on the path to graduation by offering alternative approaches to earning and recovering credits, improving data tracking, and transcript auditing processes. Of the 17 schools receiving 2018 graduation rates, eight achieved percentage point gains when compared to 2017, with the highest at B.E.S.T. Academy (11.1) followed by Maynard H. Jackson High School (7.9). Other schools attaining gains include South Atlanta High School (6.9), Therrell High School (6.7), Washington High School (6.2), Grady High School (3.6), Douglass High School (0.8), and Mays High School (0.2).

In addition, six schools had graduation rates greater than 90 percent: Drew Secondary (98.7%), Coretta Scott King Young Women’s Leadership Academy (93.5%), North Atlanta High School (92.5%), Grady High School (92.0%), Carver Early College (91.8%), and KIPP Collegiate (90.2%).

“So much of our students’ academic success is tied to social emotional learning, where students learn to set goals, overcome obstacles, and develop healthy, supportive relationships,” Carstarphen added. “This means since 2014, we have worked to make schools more welcoming environments for students by investing in whole child learning so that students acquire the critical skills needed for success in college, career and life.”

For more information on APS’ 2018 graduation data, visit <https://apsinsights.org/blog>.

# (October 1, 2018 Delta Reading Buddies Return to APS)

When the red shirts arrive, students are bound to leave with a smile. That's right, the Delta Reading Buddies program has returned to Dobbs and Hutchinson elementary schools.

In an effort to increase engagement and student reading achievement, more than 150 Delta Airlines employees are volunteering their time twice monthly to read to their APS buddies throughout the school year.

Delta employee Emmakate Young is a Grady High School, Inman Middle School and Morningside Elementary School alumna. Her mom is a former APS kindergarten teacher, and her nieces are current APS students. Volunteering with the Delta Reading Buddies program is personal for her.



Emmakate Young is a proud APS alumna and Delta Reading Buddies volunteer.

"It feels amazing," said Young. "I feel so blessed to have gotten to go to APS. I know that it's still really important to give back and so the fact that Delta affords this opportunity to give back and that APS opens its doors to allow us to come (and I'm also an avid reader), is just wonderful. I jumped at the chance. I'm really impressed by the program."

Hutchinson Principal Dr. Shuanta Broadway says it's a remarkable partnership that her students look forward to each month; it's especially special for those students who don't have someone who reads to them outside of the classroom.

"We have a mantra at Delta that no one better connects the world, and we believe [through] our partnership with Atlanta Public Schools, particularly Dobbs and Hutchinson, we're better connecting the world through literacy, through the love of learning. We're so excited to be in our second year in our partnership," said LaSandra Boykins, Delta Airlines community affairs project manager.

In addition to a commitment of time, Delta has donated hundreds of free books and ample resources. Last year, Delta committed to a five-year partnership with Atlanta Public Schools. In its first year, Delta employees donated \$350,000. This summer, The Delta Air Lines Foundation announced a \$300,000 donation to support literacy efforts at Atlanta schools.

With the additional resources, Hutchinson Elementary was able to hire two new instructional coaches.

"We know we need to take care of our community, take care of those students, those scholars that are in our backyard," Boykins said. "Our partnership with the South Atlanta Cluster was strategic. These are not only our future customers but our future leaders."



# (November, 19, 2018)APS Partners with Atlanta Fulton County Public Library System to Offer Free Library Passes

The Atlanta Public Schools and the Atlanta – Fulton County Public Library System (AFPLS) have partnered to offer APS students broader access to the Fulton County Public Library.

The CLASS Pass @ APS (Connecting Libraries and Schools for Success) allows all 52,000 APS students seamless access to a variety of free resources such as books, movies, courses, tutoring, music, an expansive digital library, job resources and GED resources.

Students can now login using their student ID number and lunch code. APS employees can login using their Lawson number and temporary password “changeme.”



Instructors will also have access to instructional resources that support the Units of Study taught in grades K-12. AFPLS will help to bridge the home-school connection that parents may need to feel empowered to gather resources and books that support classroom learning. This partnership also helps parents and students have books for pleasure reading at home by waiving fines for overdue books.

This partnership will benefit Atlanta Public Schools’ students and families by providing resources and decreasing monetary barriers that traditionally reduce community usage. The intentional collaboration between APS and AFPLS provides the instructional bridge for our parents to gather instructional resources curated by the public and district librarians specifically for APS families available throughout the city.

We are proud to partner with the Atlanta – Fulton County Public Library System to offer our students easier access to books in hopes to inspire a greater connection to reading as well as improve literacy!





# Keeping You Informed

**Bookmark your way to APS to get the latest news straight from the source.**

**APS District Web site:** Visit [www.atlantapublicschools.us](http://www.atlantapublicschools.us).

**School Web sites:** Learn about school events and easily access your faculty and staff.

**Talk Up APS:** This continually updated blog serves as a digital newsletter with the latest news, links to media coverage, photo galleries, videos and more. Visit [www.TalkUpAPS.com](http://www.TalkUpAPS.com).

## Television and Radio

*WPBA TV30, WABE FM90.1 Radio and Cable Channel 22 are broadcast services of Atlanta Public Schools.*

**WPBA 30:** View award-winning, educational programming.

**APS 22:** Comcast subscribers in Atlanta can access this station for around-the-clock educational programming.

**WABE:** Atlanta's National Public Radio (NPR) affiliate offers 24-hours of news, music and community affairs.

## Social Media

**Facebook:** Follow Atlanta Public Schools Visit: [www.facebook.com/](http://www.facebook.com/)

[atlantapublicschool.us](http://atlantapublicschool.us)

**Twitter:** Visit [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com), [@apsupdate](https://twitter.com/apsupdate) and click "follow."

**Instagram:** Visit [www.instagram.com](http://www.instagram.com) Follow [@apsupdate](https://www.instagram.com/apsupdate) click "follow."