Beaufort County’s public schools continue to make progress on a number of academic measures, including seven straight years of improved high school graduation rates. District schools, students and teachers have earned numerous state and national honors in both academics and athletics.

The district has created “schools of choice” in all buildings, meaning that parents can apply to send their children to other schools in the district, regardless of where they live. In addition, our Connect2Learn program has put a mobile computer in the hands of every student in grades K-12.

This report provides highlights of some of the district’s key academic improvements and challenges, as well as snapshots of how taxpayer dollars are being saved and effectively monitored.
Our Academics

On-Time Graduation Rate

- **2014**: 80%
- **2018**: 86%

The percentage of the district’s high school seniors graduating “on time” in four years improved for a seventh consecutive year, from 84.1 percent in 2017 to **86 percent** in 2018. That represents a dramatic improvement from 80 percent five years ago.

Advanced Placement Exams

- **2014**: 54%
- **2018**: 57%

Fifty-seven percent of high school students taking Advanced Placement courses scored high enough to qualify for college credit in 2018, a significant improvement from 54 percent five years ago.

Achievement Gaps

Like other school districts across South Carolina and the nation, Beaufort County has “achievement gaps” between affluent and less-affluent students, between minority and nonminority students, and between students whose primary language is English and students whose primary language is not English. District- and school-level initiatives are focused on reducing these gaps.

Athletes’ Academic Performance

For the 2017-18 academic year, **97 percent** of high school and middle school student athletes maintained their academic eligibility to participate in interscholastic sports under the district’s 2.0 minimum grade point average requirement. The average GPA district-wide for middle school athletes was **3.59**. For high school athletes, it was **3.86**.

College Scholarship Totals

- **2013 - 14**: $27.8 Million
- **2014 - 15**: $30.0 Million
- **2015 - 16**: $30.9 Million
- **2016 - 17**: $40.7 Million
- **2017 - 18**: $42.8 Million

Free College Tuition

The Building a Better Beaufort Scholarship, dubbed B³, pays up to two years of tuition costs at the Technical College of the Lowcountry for qualified local high school graduates. B³ is a partnership among the district, TCL and Know2 Beaufort County.

“Ready to Work” Exams

- **2013 - 14**: 83%

Eighty-three percent of the district’s **11th-graders scored high enough** on the statewide administration of “Ready to Work” exams to qualify for certificates they can use to apply for jobs anywhere in the nation. BCSD students outperformed their peers for the highest-level certificates.
Our Growing District

CATE Expansion

We are expanding Career and Technology Education (CATE) courses designed to prepare students for high-paying jobs and industry certifications in rapidly emerging fields. High-tech facilities are open at Battery Creek and May River high schools.

Many Instructional Choices

All of the district’s schools are “schools of choice,” meaning that parents can apply to send their children to any academic program at any school in the district, regardless of where they live. Families can indicate their preference for school assignments based on participation in available instruction options that include Advanced Math, Engineering and Science Academies (AMES), Montessori, arts infusion, early college and leadership programs. For the 2018-19 school year, more than 2,000 children were approved for enrollment in programs outside their zoned attendance areas.

Expanded Prekindergarten Programs

The district has added 260 full-day prekindergarten slots, which has allowed schools to reduce or even eliminate waiting lists of at-risk children who need focused attention before they start classes. The district earned the Champions for Children Award from the Institute of Child Success for its efforts to improve early childhood education.

High-Tech Learning for All Students

The district’s Connect2Learn program has put a mobile computer in the hands of every student in grades K-12. Students can take their computers home to continue their learning outside of school, giving them access to programs, files and schoolwork.

Increasing Support From Volunteers

Community support for our schools has never been stronger. Even after the district dramatically intensified its security screening process for school volunteers, the overall number of volunteers increased by 500% in the last five years – from 1,300 to more than 7,800.
Our Savings

High Credit Rating, Low Interest Rates

Moody’s Investor’s Service has assigned the school district a Aa1 rating, the second-highest among South Carolina’s 82 districts. The district’s high rating means taxpayers pay lower interest rates on school bonds.

Staffing, Taxes and Cost of Living

School-level staffing is based on a standardized formula that responds to increasing enrollment. Additional staff may also be assigned to schools that serve disproportionate numbers of students with disabilities or students from high-poverty families.

District Office Staff vs. Total Staff

![Graph showing District Office Staff (176) vs. All Other Positions (2,719)]

Energy Use

![Graph comparing 2009 and 2018 energy use]

**How We Did It:** Occupancy sensors in hallways, more efficient and longer-lasting light fixtures.

New solar panels at the district office generated more than 280,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity in their first three months of operation. Solar panels also generate electricity at two high schools.

Saving Tax Dollars

For the 19th straight year, the school district earned an exemplary annual financial review from an independent outside auditing firm. The firm found no weaknesses or deficiencies in the district’s internal financial controls, and there were no findings of noncompliance with state or federal laws.
Our Students

2009

19,779 Total Students

White 44%  
Hispanic 19%  
Other 4%

2018

22,345 Total Students

White 40%  
Hispanic 28%  
Other 6%

13% Increase in Students

2009

4,190 ESOL

Hispanic 15%  
Black 37%  
White 46%

2018

4,892 ESOL

Hispanic 26%  
Black 27%  
White 41%

17% Increase in ESOL Students

Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Meals

2014 2018

58% 56%

Homeless Students

2014 2018

210 308

Where the Money Goes

Instruction & Instructional Support 74.7%

Facilities Maintenance 7.8%

District Support 6.2% (including Board of Education)

Utilities 2.9%

Technology 2.4%

Transportation 2.8%

Charter School 2.4%

Academy of Career Excellence .8%

SC Department of Education InSight Data
How You Can Help

Schools offer many opportunities for parents, citizens and businesses to take active roles. Mentoring programs allow community volunteers to work one on one with at-risk students. Businesses and professional organizations can build strong relationships with individual schools. Community members are encouraged to share their professional knowledge and life experiences with students.

For information, call 843-322-2306.