



Presentation for Education Committees

February 2026

What is “DOE?”

Secretary Joseph Graves

Deputy Secretary Laura Scheibe

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Finance and Management: Cody Stoeser

Data and Research: Joe Moran

Accreditation and Certification: Dr. Kathryn Blaha

Learning and Instruction: Shannon Malone

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Child and Adult Nutrition: Alan Haarstad

State Historical Society: Dr. Benjamin Jones

State Library: George Seamon

Engaging the Challenges

Student Achievement

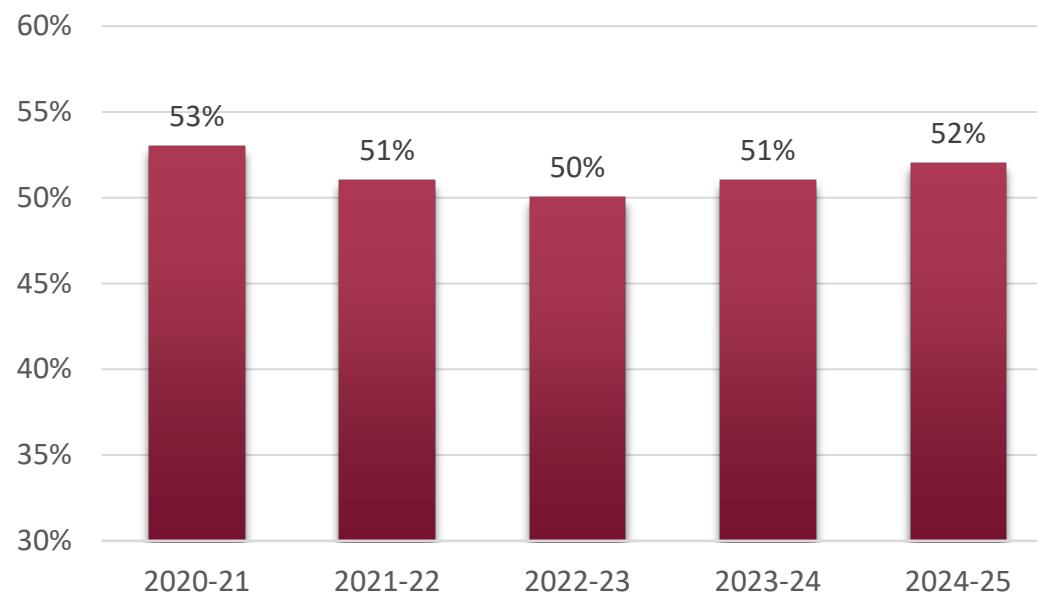
Teacher Recruitment and Retention

Implementing Social Studies Standards

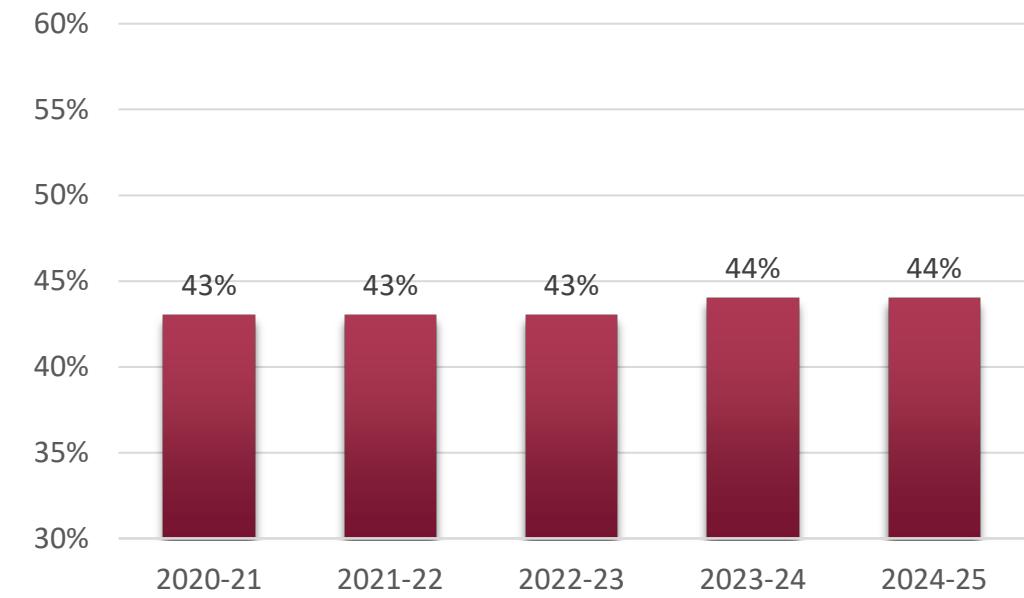


Student Achievement

English Language Arts % Proficient



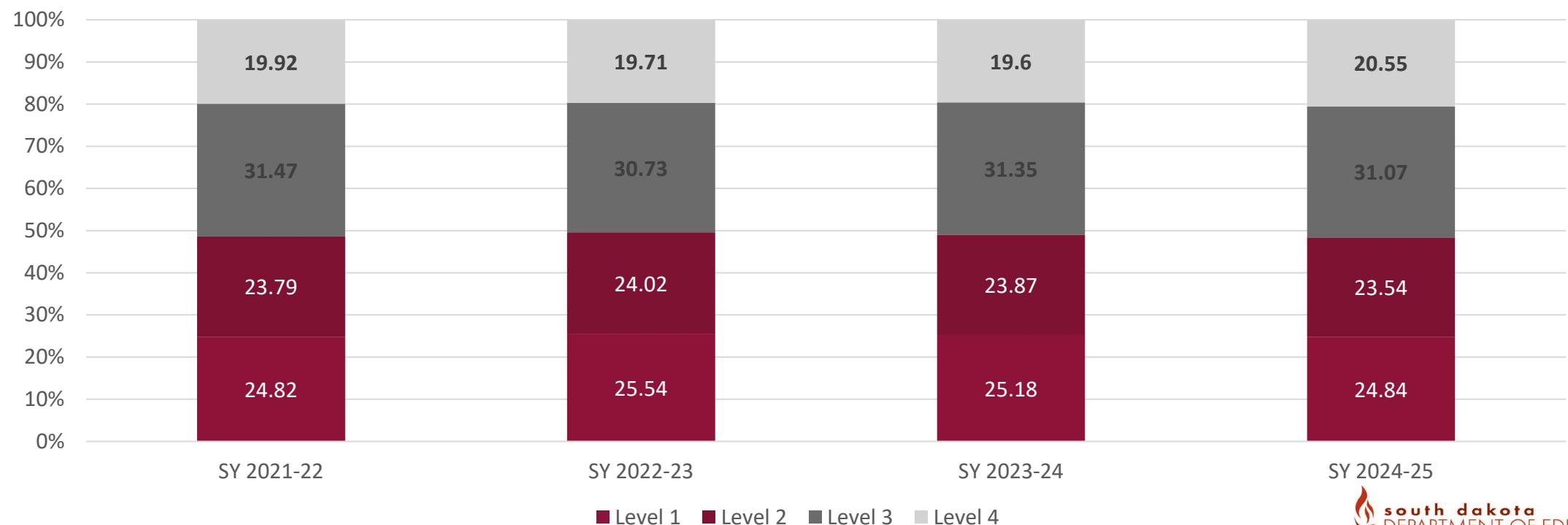
Math % Proficient



All tested grades.

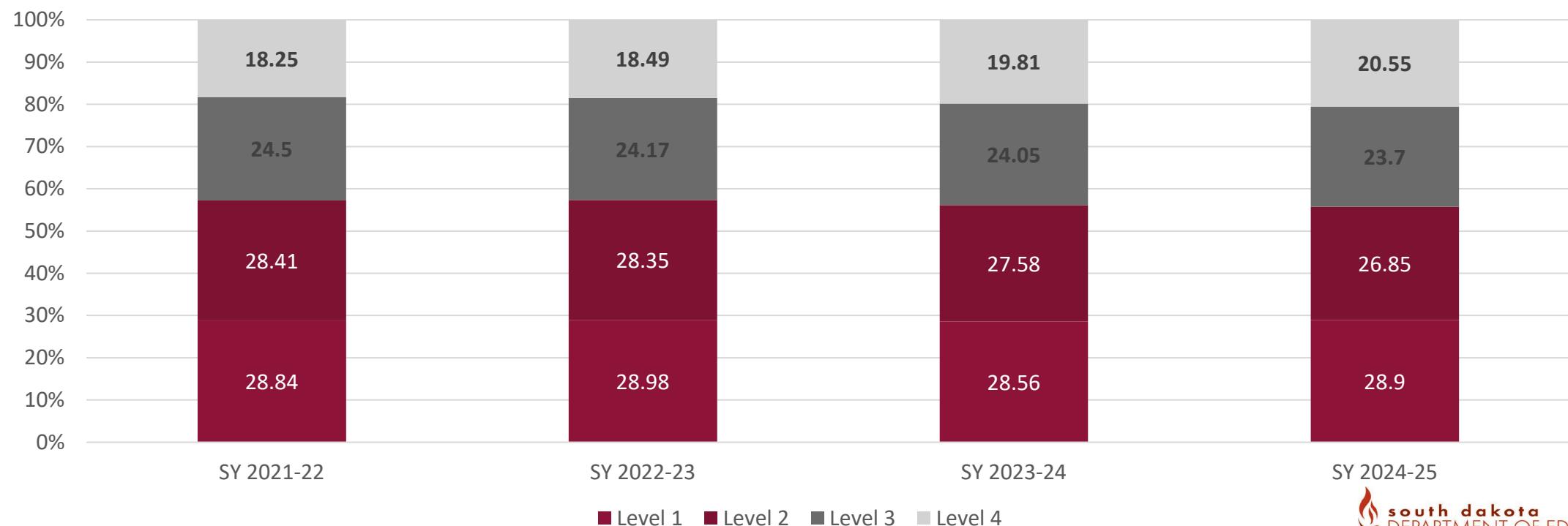
Student Achievement

% of Students Proficient in English Language Arts – All Grades



Student Achievement

% of Students Proficient in Math – All Grades



NAEP Data

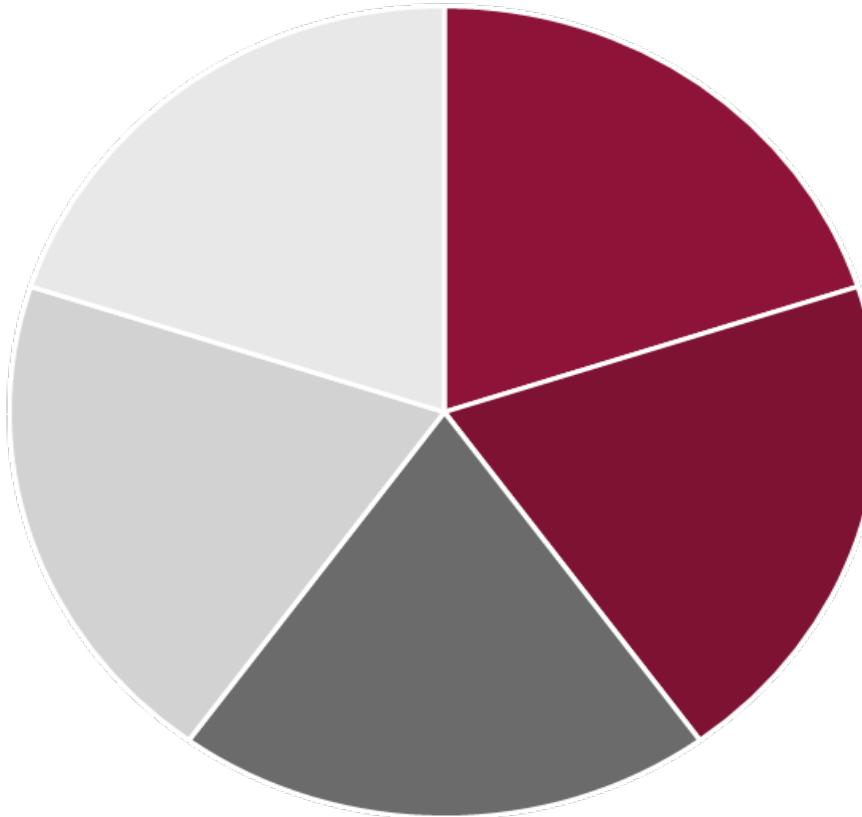
South Dakota National NAEP Standing

	ELA Rank	Math Rank
4 th Grade	28th	17 th
8 th Grade	14th	6th

Literacy

Science of Reading:
Research-based
pedagogy for teaching
reading focused on the
“Big 5”

The Big 5



- Phonemic Awareness
- Phonics
- Vocabulary
- Fluency
- Comprehension

Literacy

\$6 million appropriation in 2024



Train all elementary teachers across the state

Literacy blueprint courses designed
together with universities

Creating coaching model for local
implementation

Literacy

\$54 million federal grant



Improve literacy outcomes for preK-12 students



95% of funds sub-granted to public school districts for local use to:

implement literacy improvement plans

improve literacy instruction in alignment with SOR

Literacy

Other Efforts

- April 2025: Board of Education Standards approved new English Language Arts Standards which integrate SOR principles.
 - Accreditation reviews will focus on compliance with SOR expectations.
- June 2025 and 2026 Literacy Summits
- Studies Weekly reading integration
- Social studies (nonfiction) classroom book sets

Mathematics

Under Construction

- There is no “Science of Math”
- Content standards under consideration by Board of Education Standards that clarify and simplify the language
- SPDG – State Personnel Development Grant
 - \$3.5 million 5-year federal grant to support professional development to improve student outcomes in mathematics, with a focus on students with disabilities and those performing below grade level
 - Focus on K-5 PD on math instruction, explicit instruction, peer coaching
 - Partner with Northern State University and Dr. Monte Meyerink
 - Previous SPDG lead to (success of) SD Literacy Initiative

Other Programming to Engage Students



Jobs for America's Graduates

- 99% graduation rate
- 99% retention rate
- 88% positive outcomes
- SD students, on average, face 11 barriers to success



Other Programming to Engage Students

Career and Technical Education

- 96% graduation rate for CTE concentrators
- 90% employed, in college, in the military, or otherwise productively engaged within 3-6 months after high school
- 46% engaged in work-based learning for high school credit



Other Programming to Engage Students

Seal of Biliteracy

- Voluntary recognition program for students who have mastered one or more languages alongside English proficiency.
- Begun during the 2024-25SY
- Since inception, students have earned:
 - more than 675 Silver Seals
 - nearly 200 Gold Seals

- Spanish
- German
- French
- Chinese
- Japanese
- Lakota



Addressing the Teacher Shortage

2024 Teacher Compensation Legislation

- Set a minimum salary for teachers at \$45,000 for FY 2025; thereafter, minimum salary of previous year increased by percentage change in state finance formula adopted by the Legislature
- Average teacher compensation for a district must keep pace with state aid formula increases approved by the Legislature each year (within 97%)
- Data indicates a positive trendline: teacher vacancies in July 2025 down previous July's. With 143 vacancies that month, that represents:
 - 26% fewer vacancies than July 2021
 - 46% fewer than July 2022
 - 44% fewer than July 2023
 - 29% fewer than July 2024

Addressing the Teacher Shortage

Other Strategies



- **Teacher Apprenticeship Pathway:** 3 cohorts; +70 graduates thus far.
- **Student Teacher Permits:** schools are allowed to pay student teachers and in some cases, hire qualifying student-teachers as teachers of record
- **Grants to Support Student-Teachers:** HB 1092 from the 2025 Session provided \$500,000 for grants to schools to support qualifying student-teachers
- **State Mentoring Program:** Participants stay in the profession at a 15% greater rate than those who do not participate.
- **Career and Technical Education** exposes students to experiences and skills to prepare for a future career as an educator.
- **Educators Rising** is a student leadership organization that allows students to explore and grow toward a career in education.

Addressing the Teacher Shortage

Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports

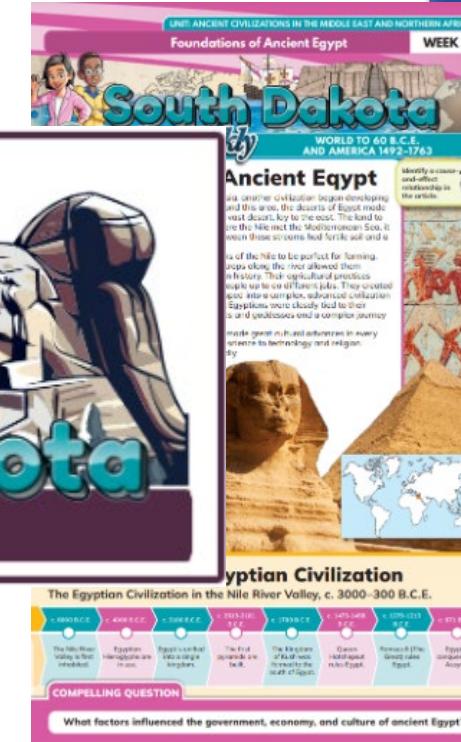
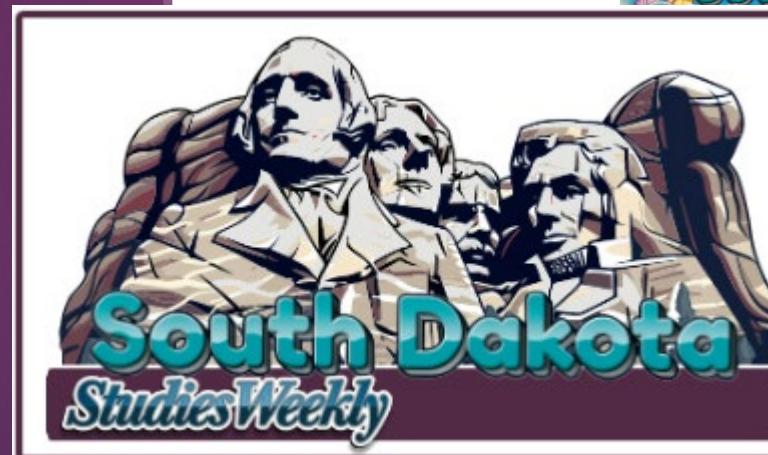
- Proactive, preventive framework that supports positive student behavior
- Using data to match evidence-based interventions and behavioral strategies to student need
- Tiered levels of support and interventions for learners



Implementing Social Studies Standards

Studies Weekly

- Free curriculum aligned to standards
- Implemented in all public schools
- Virtual and paper options



Implementing Social Studies Standards

Capital Connections: A Legislative Experience for Social Studies Educators

- Feb. 5-6, 2026
- Nearly 50 secondary teachers
- Experience legislative session
- Sessions with Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches:
 - Supreme Court Justice
 - Panel of Legislators
 - Cabinet Officers

Implementing Social Studies Standards

South Dakota Sturdy

- “Grit” or resilience for students grades 4-6
- Exemplifies internal locus of control through lives of historical people with SD attachments
- Uses state standards in Social Studies, English Language Arts, School Counseling, and Science
- Lesson plans are complete and free for use in SD classrooms

For the Future



The Longitudinal Data System



Spearheaded by Department of Education, Division of Data and Research



Partners: Board of Regents, Board of Technical Education



P-20 education data



Data to assess effectiveness, drive decisions

DOE Bills

- **SB 8:** Allow schools to administer epinephrine using a nasal spray
- **HB 1003:** Amend provisions pertaining to background checks for school employees
- **HB 1017:** Permit a school board to require certain students to receive instruction in alternative settings
- **HB 1018:** Amend the reversion date for moneys appropriated to improve and renovate the Cultural Heritage Center

Contact Information



Department of Education



doe.sd.gov



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