



# Presentation for Education Committees

February 2026

# What is “DOE?”

**Secretary Joseph Graves**

**Deputy Secretary Laura Scheibe**

**Legal Counsel Amanda LaCroix**

**Finance and Management: Cody Stoesser**

**Data and Research: Joe Moran**

**Accreditation and Certification: Dr. Kathryn Blaha**

**Learning and Instruction: Shannon Malone**

**Special Education and Early Learning: Linda Turner**

**College, Career, and Student Success: Shana Davis**

**Child and Adult Nutrition: Alan Haarstad**

**State Historical Society: Dr. Benjamin Jones**

**State Library: George Seamon**



# Engaging the Challenges

Student Achievement

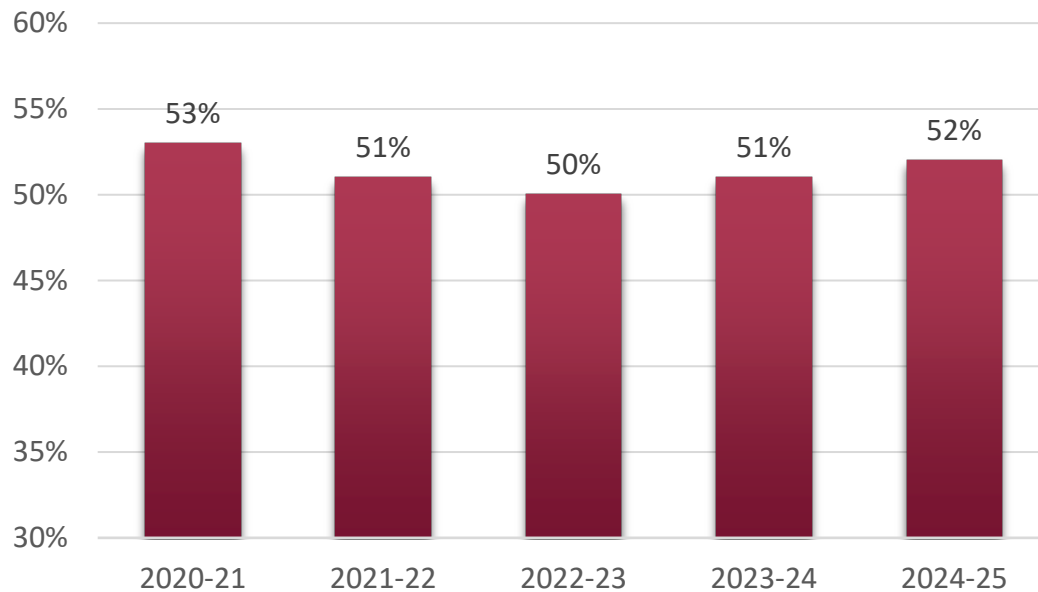
Teacher Recruitment and Retention

Implementing Social Studies Standards

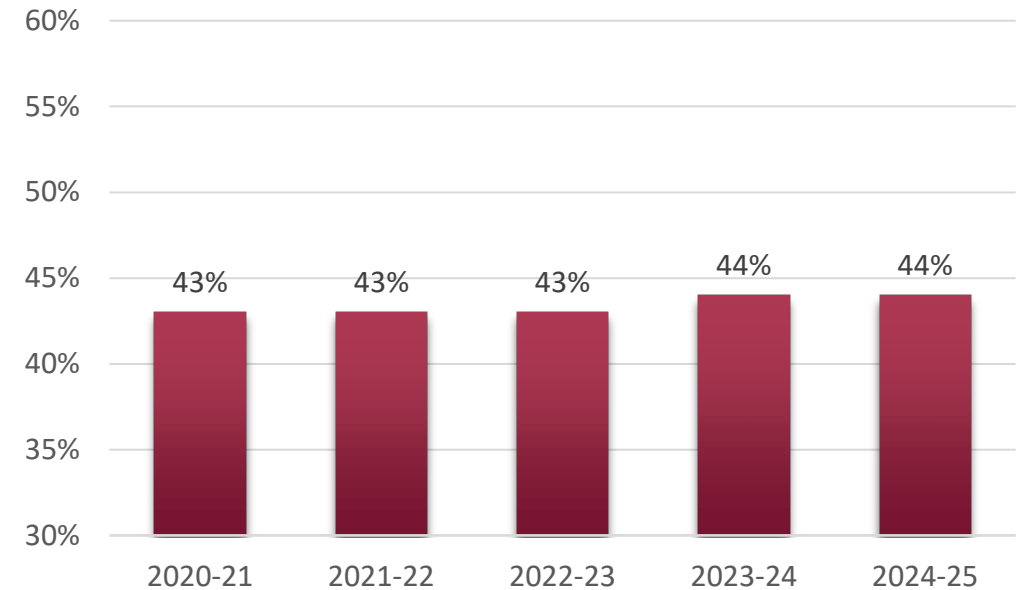


# Student Achievement

## English Language Arts % Proficient



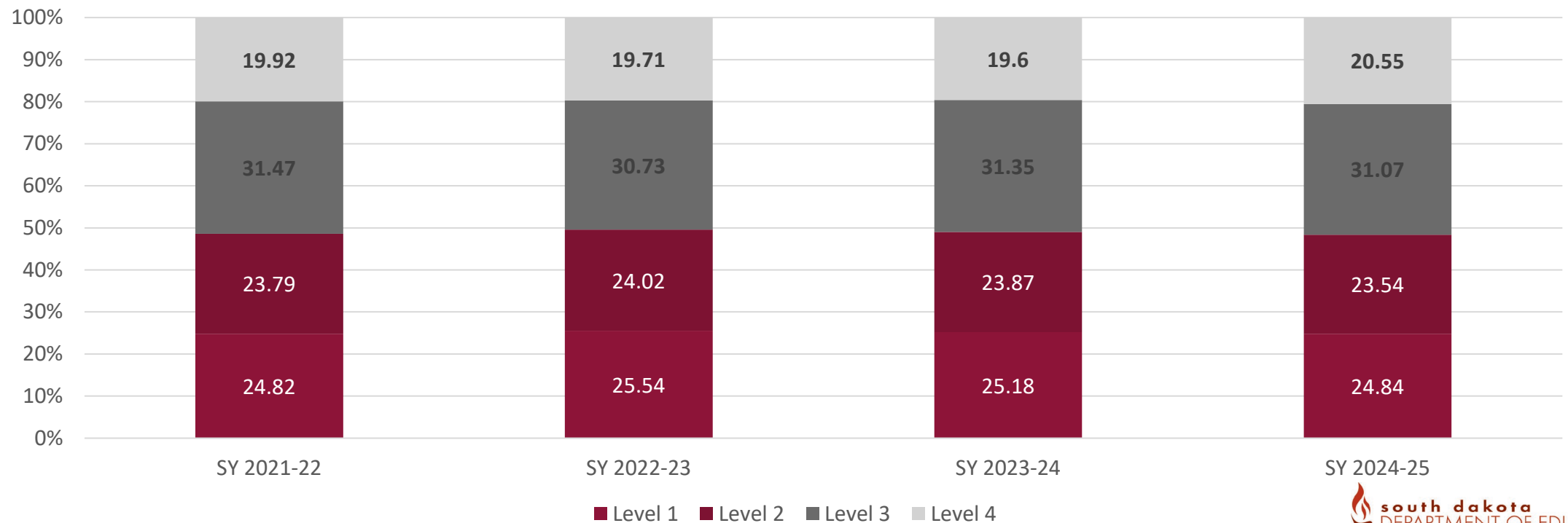
## Math % Proficient



*All tested grades.*

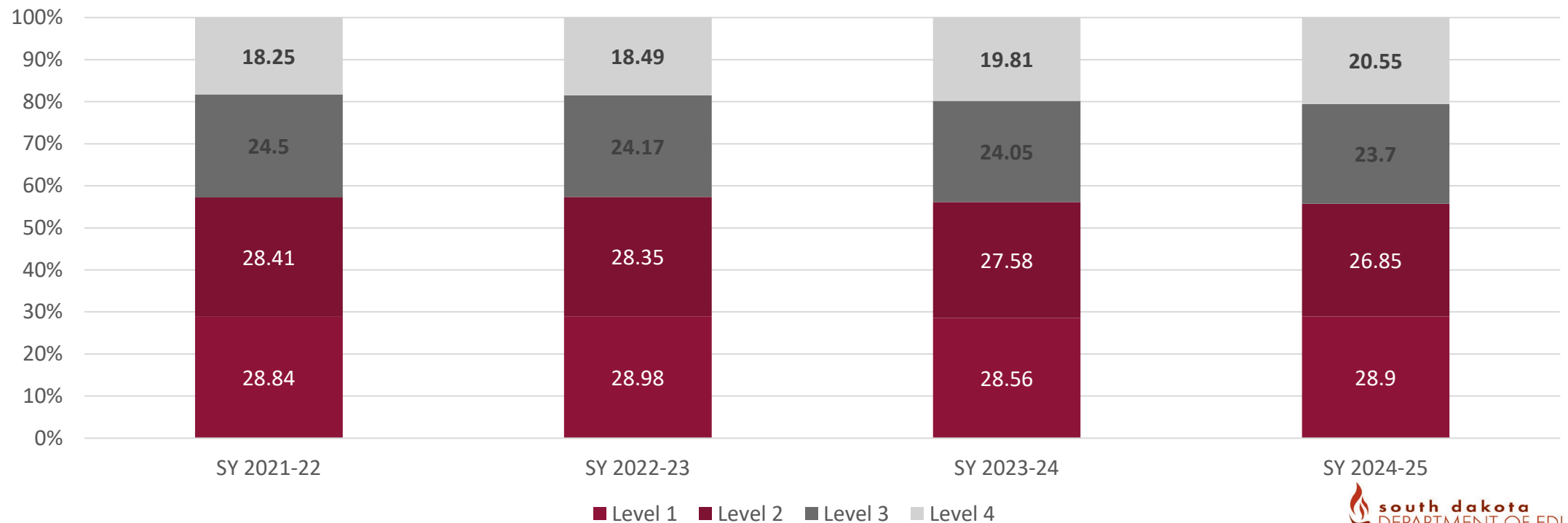
# Student Achievement

% of Students Proficient in English Language Arts – All Grades



# Student Achievement

% of Students Proficient in Math – All Grades





# NAEP Data

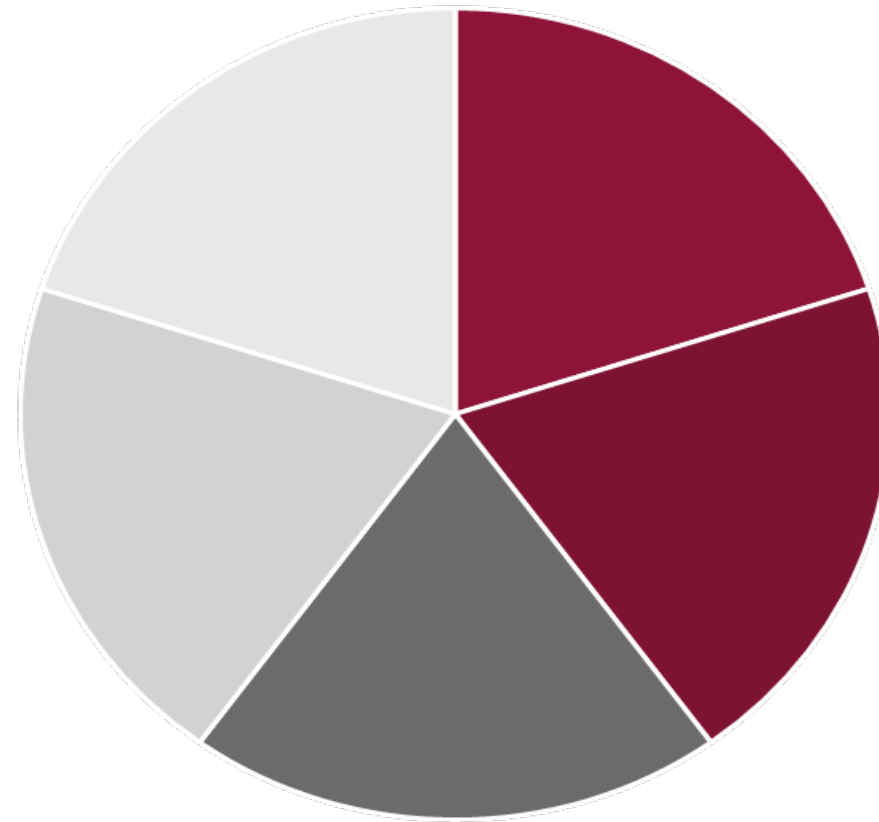
## South Dakota National NAEP Standing

	ELA Rank	Math Rank
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	28th	17 <sup>th</sup>
8 <sup>th</sup> 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

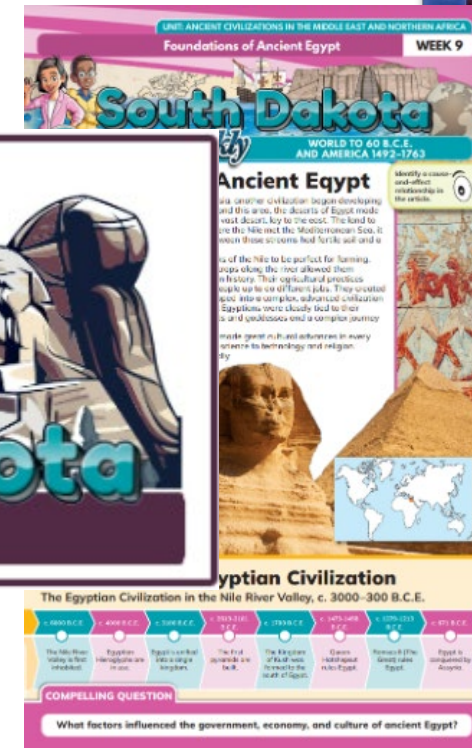




# Implementing Social Studies Standards

## 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](http://doe.sd.gov)



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