



2021 - 2022
Report to Our
Community



**Forward,
Together!**

OMAH A+ Public
Schools





Working Through Challenges Together to Meet Student Needs

To Our Omaha Public Schools Community,

As our Annual Report goes to print, we finished celebrating more than 2,500 young adults from our school district who are ready to achieve and lead in life after graduation. The Portrait of an Omaha Public Schools Graduate guides our work to prepare all students for success. It focuses teaching and learning across subjects to cultivate:

Every student.
Every day.
Prepared for success.

- collaborators
- innovators
- communicators
- resilient achievers
- critical thinkers
- civic and global contributors

Celebrating our seniors, one student learned to savor victory and graciously accept loss through building a Quiz Bowl program. A fellow graduate spoke about their earliest years learning English, and how Omaha Public Schools laid the foundation for her plans to pursue a medical degree. OPS' Virtual School offered an all-star gymnast the flexibility she needed to excel academically and athletically. One student arrived in our district with so many credits to earn, the finish line seemed impossibly far off – but his resiliency and our staff's support mean college is ahead this fall. These are just a few examples of wonderful children throughout the Omaha Public Schools. We know our students achieve success and excellence in many ways, every day of the year.



Following another summer program to address unfinished teaching and learning from the pandemic, we are thrilled to open four new schools: Forest Station Elementary, Pine Elementary, Buena Vista High and Westview High. We thank the voters who approved our 2018 Bond Program and made these exceptional spaces possible.



Through the most challenging times, the dedication of our students, staff and families is exceptional. That collective commitment allowed us to responsibly navigate our third school year disrupted by the pandemic. A heartfelt “thank you” to everyone who played a role in that effort. In addition to investing in our current staff, Omaha Public Schools leads the nation in developing future talent. There are staffing headwinds for every school district and every professional field, but we are committed to high-quality in-person learning in the year ahead. We invite you to join our student-centered team by visiting www.ops.org/careers. I cannot think of a more rewarding way to invest one's professional talents.



Cordially yours,

Cheryl Logan, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Omaha Public Schools
logancomm@ops.org

MISSION:
Omaha Public Schools
prepares all students for
success in college,
career and life.

Board of Education



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Strategic Plan of Action

Powered by Foresight

One month after its launch in early 2020, Omaha Public Schools Strategic Plan of Action Powered by Foresight moved forward despite the global COVID-19 pandemic. As staff reviews data, our administration recommended updates to the Strategic Plan of Action goals in spring 2022. The changes align better with where we are and where we want to go as a district. Some goals have already been met, while others have shifted due to the impact of the pandemic. Our priorities remain the same as we work together to provide opportunities for all our children.

PRIORITY 1

Academics

Omaha Public Schools students are prepared to meet post-secondary expectations. The Portrait of a Graduate outlines the expectations for all Omaha Public Schools graduates. To that end, the academic strategic priority will focus our work on early literacy, program redesign and establishing a high-quality portfolio of school programs.

PRIORITY 2

Staff

Omaha Public Schools has highly qualified and effective staff in every division. Recruiting and maintaining a highly qualified, developed staff is the most essential component of a successful school district.

PRIORITY 3

Financial Accountability

Omaha Public Schools demonstrates financial accountability tied to student outcomes. School district budgets across the U.S. are challenged daily to be funded, and many districts are unable to fund their highest priorities. Omaha Public Schools understands the challenges of developing and adhering to an approved budget and recognizes the need to be accountable to the funding provided and supported by the community it serves.

PRIORITY 4

Ethic of Care

Omaha Public Schools demonstrates an ethic of care for students and staff. Fostering a caring, inclusive culture assures all feel value, support and joy. Everyone benefits as a result of students, staff and the community being served with care.



ESSER in Action

Omaha Public Schools students, staff and families continue to benefit from the Elementary and Secondary Emergency Relief fund (ESSER), which was created to support school communities during and post-pandemic. Our district is working hard to use this funding in areas that will provide the most significant impact.

In 2021, we introduced Next Level Learning, our enhanced summer school program to support academic recovery and learning acceleration. In 2022, more than 13,500 students benefitted from Next Level Learning at 34 sites districtwide.

Our district took steps early to allocate ESSER funding for enhancements to the programming aligned with differentiated student needs and a high-quality curriculum. Aside from core subjects, students who participated in Next Level Learning did everything from flying drones to performing in musicals.

Next Level Learning sessions offered a camp-like experience with science, nature, sports and art themes. The summer programming was designed to improve student outcomes. It was also about enrichment and joy for students.

“[Students] are so inquisitive. They’re so curious. They just have bright eyes, and they want to know everything,” said Lillian Nero, a Next Level Learning student intern who recently graduated from North High.

Nero was part of the Omaha Public Schools paid student internship program, one of several opportunities developed in recent years to help build a pipeline of future educators. Student interns, like Nero, assisted with literacy. They received training in specific reading interventions and tutored elementary school students. ESSER funds helped support the internship program and a pay increase to \$40 an hour for Next Level Learning teachers.

Recognizing the greater demands on current staff, the Omaha Public Schools Board of Education also approved an amendment to our ESSER fund plan that would provide eligible staff (all full-time staff and part-time staff working more than 20 hours weekly) with a one-time stipend in both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years. At the time of this publication, the stipend was awaiting final approval from federal authorities.

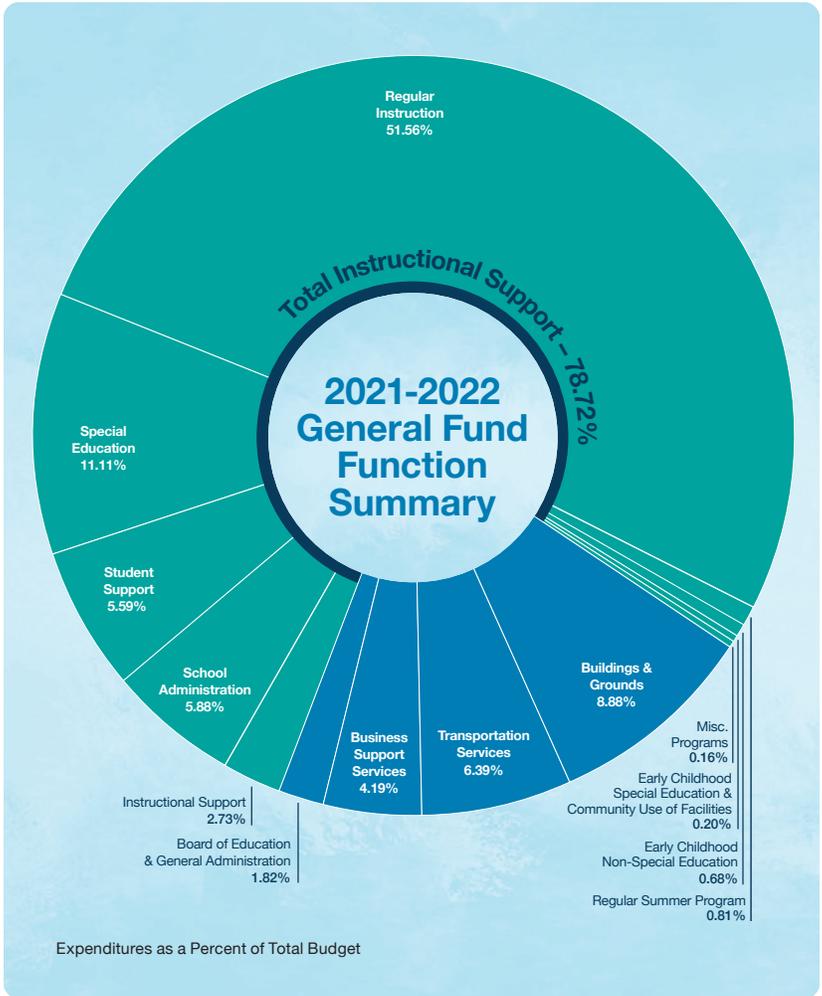
In 2020, we became a 1-to-1 technology district. Our district provided internet-connected iPads to more than 53,000 students in less than two months with the help of ESSER funding. We will continue using ESSER funds to provide LTE access to keep students connected outside the classroom. We are also beginning to integrate Apple TVs into classrooms to enhance learning by making it easier for students and teachers to share content directly from their devices.

During this time, students also need additional mental health and behavioral support. ESSER funds allowed our district to partner with Project Harmony to provide staff with training and strategies they can use in the classroom to support social and emotional learning.

Developing the first version of our ESSER fund plan, more than 70 community engagement sessions gathered wide-ranging input from district students, staff, families and taxpayers in 2021.

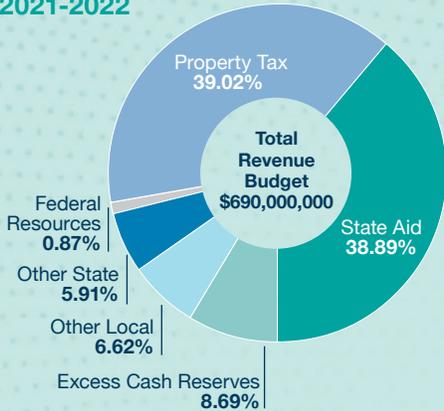
Families and community members can learn more about how our district is using ESSER funds at www.ops.org.

Budget



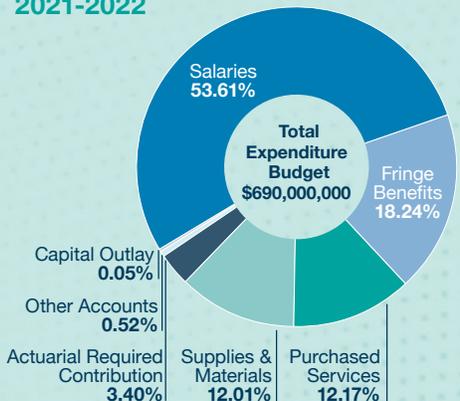
Where Does the Money Come From?

2021-2022



Where Does the Money Go?

2021-2022



General Fund Budget

2017-2018 to 2021-2022

Budget Year	Allowable Budget	Adopted Budget	Unused Budget Authority
2017-2018	636,837,202	608,843,809	27,993,393
2018-2019	636,185,573	617,090,766	19,094,807
2019-2020	680,218,611	621,000,000	59,218,611
2020-2021	692,572,835	666,000,000	26,572,835
2021-2022	691,240,528	690,000,000	1,240,528

Allowable Budget: The amount to which the General Fund budget may increase in accordance with state statutes.

Adopted Budget: The General Fund budget of expenditures adopted by the Board of Education following receipt of public comments and Board discussion.

Unused Budget Authority: The excess of Allowable Budget over the Adopted Budget.

College & Career Academies and Pathways Launches August 2022

Omaha Public Schools enhanced programming expands access and elevates expectations for all students.



Soon, they will be making critical decisions for local and global businesses, leading medical breakthroughs, on the front lines of skilled trades and shaping our society in many ways. Right now, they are students at Omaha Public Schools with expanded access to opportunities that will prepare them for success.

Our district's College & Career Academies and Pathways provides an evolution of programming several years in the making. Born from our Strategic Plan of Action, the enhanced programming builds on what has been working well and where we can grow. It ensures students gain real-world college and career experience while maintaining the foundation of core classes and access to advanced academics, fine arts and electives.

“While some students have already benefitted from existing programs like Benson High’s Health Professions Academy or Burke High’s Air and Space Academy, expanding access reflects our commitment to every student, every day, prepared for success,” said Cheryl Logan, Ed.D., Omaha Public Schools superintendent.



The Freshman Academy began at our high schools in fall 2021 to help first-year high school students explore careers and focus on skills for success in high school and beyond. The Board of Education approved the proposal for the College & Career Academies and Pathways soon afterward. College & Career Academies and Pathways will be implemented beginning in fall 2022.

Students in both academies and pathways take their core classes (English, math, social studies and science) along with career-focused courses and electives. Student choices are what determine the differences in the high school experience.



Academies

Academies are small learning communities with a career focus. Groups of students with similar career interests take classes together. Career-focused classes proceed from one to the next in a series.

Pathways

Pathways are a series of four or more classes focused on a group of related careers or clusters. Students in a pathway take classes with a wide range of other students across career interests.

“Students get to see and visualize what their future might be, and they are given a direct path that will help them attain it,” said Susan Christopherson, Omaha Public Schools chief academic officer. “They’ll have more freedom to find their strengths and interests, and they can learn how to use those to move forward to college, the military, the workforce, whatever they decide to pursue.”

Every program includes opportunities for students to access advanced academics and learn transferrable skills aligned with the Omaha Public Schools Portrait of a Graduate.



More information about the programming is available on our College & Career Academies and Pathways website, www.ops.org/ccap.

Omaha Public Schools Offers Diverse Education Opportunities

Omaha Public Schools is proud to offer diverse educational opportunities for students that include college and career academy and pathway programs, the Omaha Public Schools Career Center, International Baccalaureate and more. Each school is unique, and they all make us #OPSProud.

Omaha Public Schools offers nearly 40 unique programs of study – those offerings will expand with the implementation of College & Career Academies and Pathways in fall 2022.

Omaha Public Schools offers more Advanced Placement (AP) courses than any other district in the state.

Students at the Omaha Public Schools Career Center earned 828 industry-recognized certifications during the 2021-22 school year.

The Omaha Public Schools Career Center also connected students with more than 20 workplace learning experiences in 2021-22, including internships and employment.

Omaha Public Schools offers dual language programs at 10 schools to students in grades K-12.

Over the past five years, Omaha Public Schools students have earned more than 65,647 college credits while in high school.

New High School Student Assignment Plan Begins in August 2022



With five new schools preparing to open and improvements happening at schools across our district, this is an exciting time in our community. Throughout the 2018 Bond Program, the Student Assignment Plan committee has been planning for these changes and proactively communicating to ensure our families and staff are aware of how they may be impacted.

“It has been a huge undertaking and one we take very seriously,” said Casey Hughes, Omaha Public Schools director of data and analytics and team lead of the Student Assignment Plan committee. “We have spent years working to make these updates as efficient and equitable as possible for all our students.”



October 2019

The Omaha Public Schools Board of Education approved changes to elementary and middle school boundaries in October 2019. These boundary changes will occur at the elementary level in fall 2022 as Forest Station Elementary and Pine Elementary open and at the middle level in fall 2023 as Bluestem Middle opens.

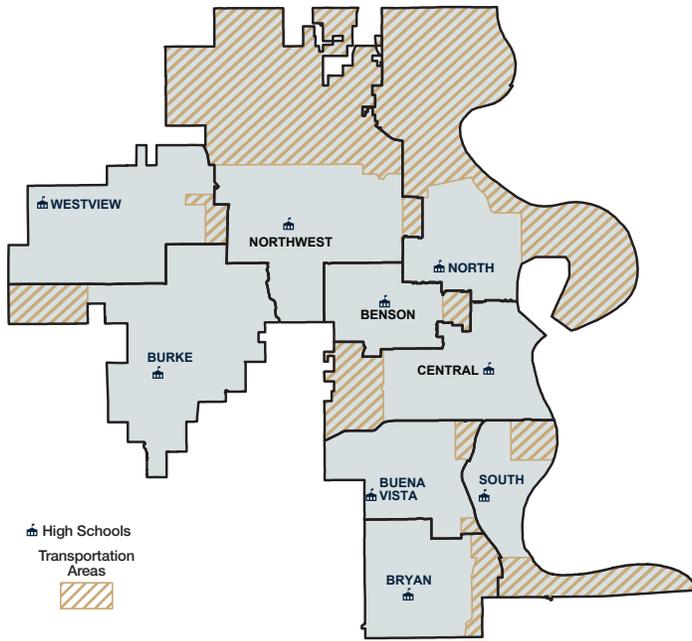


March 2021

In March 2021, the Omaha Public Schools Board of Education approved the updated High School Student Assignment Plan. These changes will go into effect in fall 2022 as Westview High and Buena Vista High open. These schools will initially open with 9th and 10th grades, adding 11th grade in 2023 and 12th grade in 2024.

Since planning began, our district has remained committed to ongoing communication with families and staff. Since 2019, Omaha Public Schools has contacted families impacted by the opening of new schools, boundary changes, Student Assignment Plan adjustments and transportation eligibility by direct mail, emails and personal calls to help plan for the changes.

“Our focus is to make sure all impacted families have the information they need to feel comfortable as these changes take place,” said Anne MacFarland, Ed.D., executive director of student and community services and team lead of the Student Assignment Plan committee.



Neighborhood transportation is for eligible students who attend their home (neighborhood) high school.

The plan increases transportation eligibility at all high schools.

Instead of using distance, the plan uses streets to identify transportation areas in each high school boundary.

Each transportation area identified is an area that is generally located farthest away from the school.

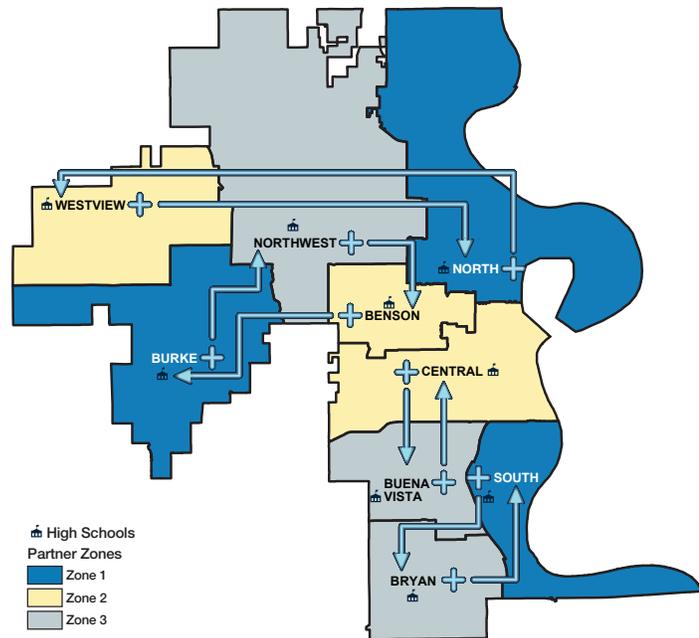
Non-neighborhood transportation is for students who attend a school other than their home (neighborhood) high school.

The plan creates three partner zones. Each zone includes three high schools.

In addition, each individual high school also has a “plus one” school.

Students have priority placement and may be eligible for transportation at other schools in their partner zone and their home school’s “plus one” school.

All three partner zones offer students access to diverse programming at high schools across the district.



	Zone 1			Zone 2			Zone 3		
Neighborhood School	Burke	North	South	Central	Benson	Westview	Northwest	Bryan	Buena Vista
Eligible for Transportation to These Schools	North	Burke	Burke	Benson	Central	Central	Bryan	Northwest	Northwest
	South	South	North	Westview	Westview	Benson	Buena Vista	Buena Vista	Bryan
	+ Northwest	+ Westview	+ Bryan	+ Buena Vista	+ Burke	+ North	+ Benson	+ South	+ Central

More information about our Student Assignment Plan is available on our website at www.ops.org/sap.



Bond Program Moves Forward with Completion of New Schools and Building Improvements

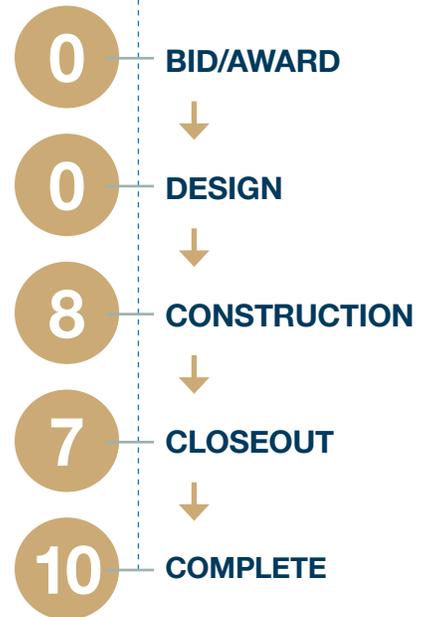
The spotlight continues to shine on new and improved learning spaces throughout Omaha Public Schools as our 2018 Bond Program moves closer to completion. The 2021-22 school year included improvements to existing buildings, like lighting, heating and cooling upgrades and other renovations.

“We’re putting in a lot of work to make these schools more efficient and effective learning spaces,” said Brad Boganowski, Omaha Public Schools construction supervisor.

With the completion of four new schools in 2022, the \$409.9 million bond program moved forward this year within budget and on schedule. A fifth new school opens in August 2023.

“It’s really about the people. It’s about the children who will go to school here, the staff who will serve here, and the parents, caregivers and families who will be here,” said Cheryl Logan, Ed.D., Omaha Public Schools superintendent.

Opening celebrations provided an inside look at bond program benefits for students, staff and the community.



“Our community showed their faith in us by giving us the bond to build outstanding educational environments for our kids, and we gave back to our community,” said Charles Wakefield, Omaha Public Schools chief operating officer. “We invested more than \$40 million in small and local businesses.”

More than 5,600 students participated in projects related to designing and constructing our new and existing facilities. A complete list of 2018 Bond Program projects is available on the Omaha Public Schools website.



Total contract amounts: \$400,431,267

Total expenditure amounts: \$343,316,709

97.09% of Program

83.24% of Program

Economic Inclusion

The Omaha Public Schools Bond Economic Inclusion (EI) Program focuses on ensuring that Small and Emerging Businesses have opportunities to participate in bond projects. EI is applied to all bond spending, excluding land acquisition and builders' risk insurance.

2018 Phase 2 Bond Program Goal **15%**

Commitments \$40,543,273

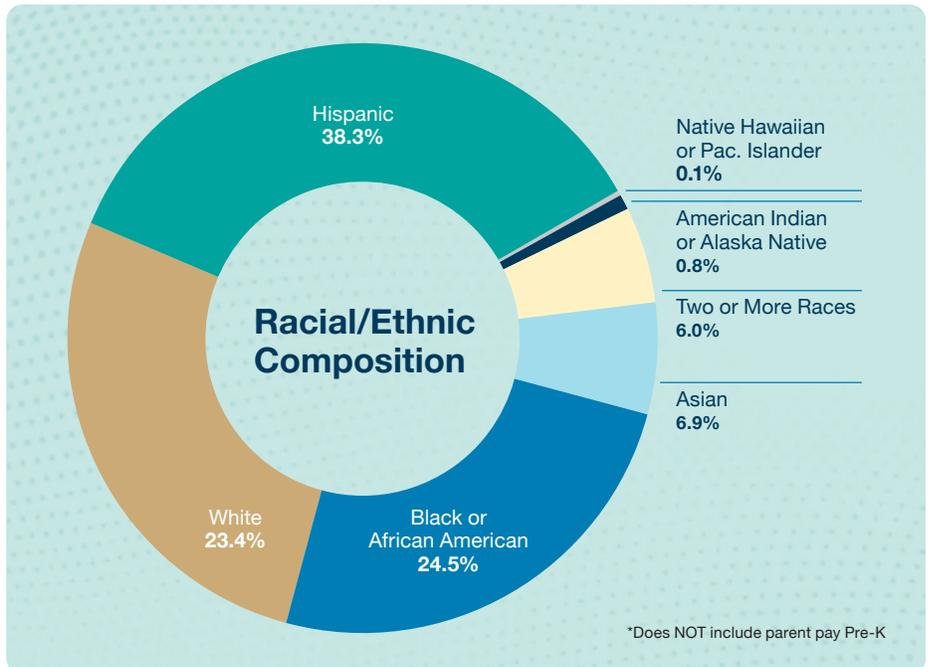
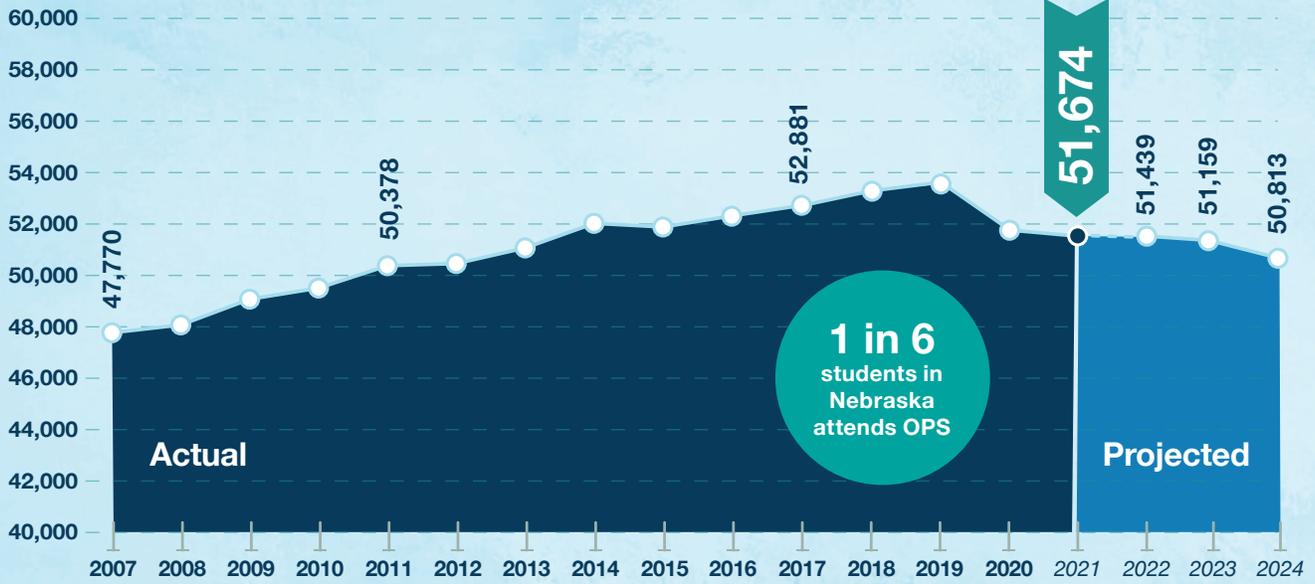
Expenditures To Date \$33,785,309



Data reporting as of June 2022

Students by the Numbers

Number of Students

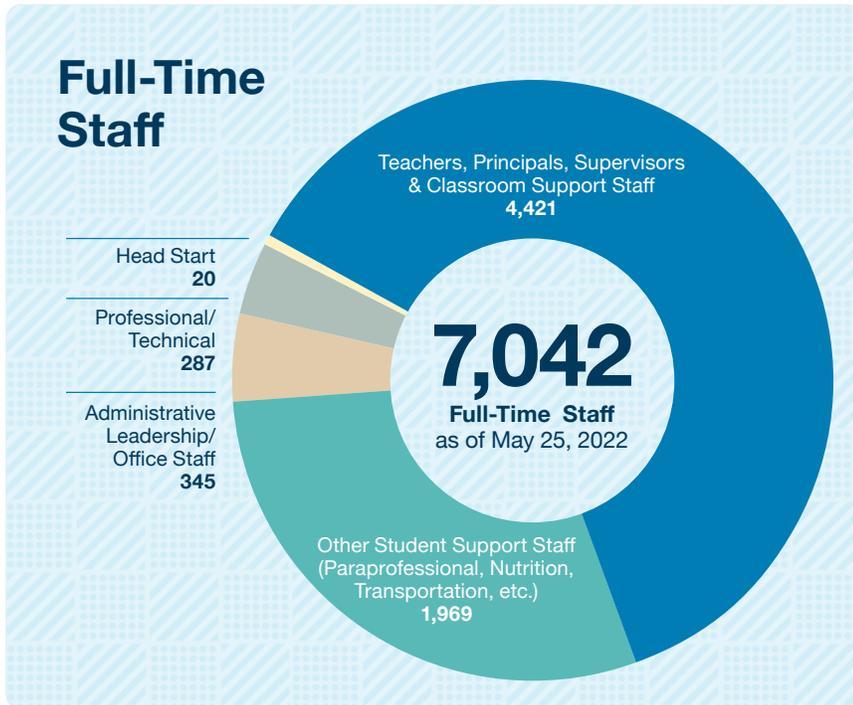
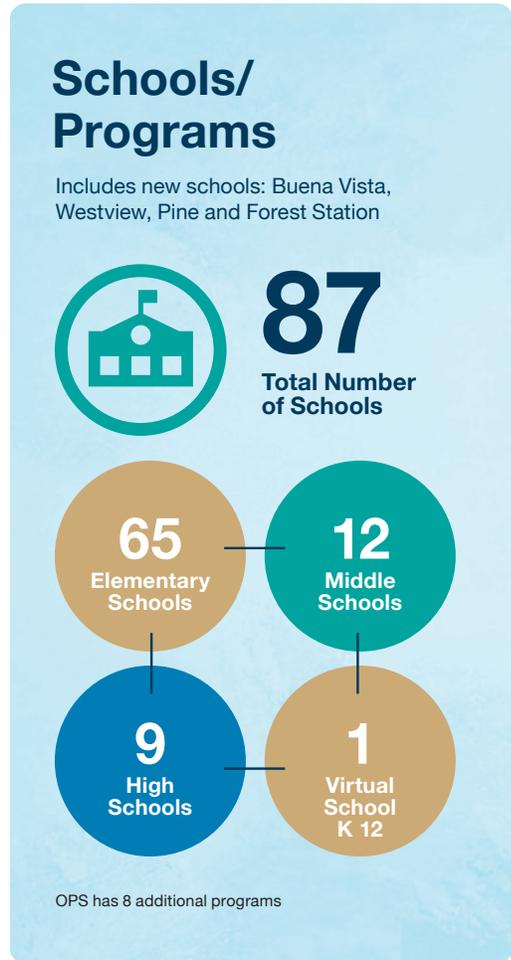
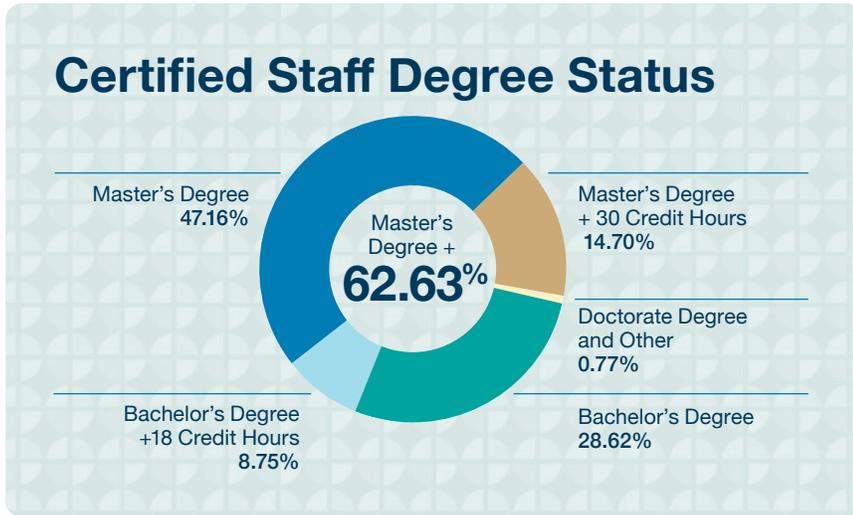


Number of EL Students
19,071*

*Number of current students who have been provided English Learner (EL) services throughout their time at OPS. Not all students are currently receiving services.

OPS is the most diverse school district in the state, serving students who speak 108 languages

Staff by the Numbers



OPS is always hiring highly-qualified staff. Check out open positions at www.ops.org.

#OPSProud Awards Snapshot



Students

Omaha Public Schools students earned more than **\$69.9 million in scholarships!**

North High's **Anne Rogers** was among 22 Nebraskans in the class of 2022 to achieve a **top score on the ACT.**

Marrs Middle's **Cameron Barona** was selected for the highly-competitive **8th Grade All-State Band.** She also **performed at Carnegie Hall** in New York as part of the Honors Performance series.

Bryan High's **Don Hannon** placed first in vocal performance in the City of Omaha's 4th Annual **Martin Luther King, Jr. Living the Dream** competition.

Central High's **Jaylen Lloyd** won first place in the 100m dash, long jump and triple jump at the **NSAA State Track & Field championship.** Central High's **Andrew Brown** placed first in the state in the 300m hurdle.

Buffett Middle's **Hamduol Erdimi** placed first at the district-level **Scrapps Spelling Bee**, then competed in the Midwest event.

Burke High's theater program won the **Outstanding Musical Theater Production Award** from the Nebraska High School Theater Academy for their production of Disney's **Freaky Friday.**

North High's **Tyler Stewart** and **Tyson Terry** each won their weight class at the **Nebraska State Wrestling Championship.**

McMillan Middle's 7th and 8th-grade Academic Pentathlon teams scored highest among all states in their region, continuing a more than 10-year tradition of national representation at the **United States Academic Pentathlon.**

Nearly 90 students from Omaha Public Schools class of 2022 earned the **Nebraska Department of Education Seal of Biliteracy.**

Staff

Buffett Middle teacher **Lee Perez** was named the **2022 Nebraska Teacher of the Year.**

Bancroft Elementary teacher **Leah Litz** earned a place among the **Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching** recipients.

Omaha Public Schools social work supervisor **Stephanie Hoelsing** was selected as the School Social Work Association of Nebraska's **2022 School Social Worker of the Year.**

Bryan High teacher **Carmen Lazo** was recognized as the **2021 Teacher of the Year by the Nebraska Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese.**

King Science Middle teacher **Katie Rice** received the **Leadership Development Award from the National Council of Teachers of English.**

Central High teacher **Sara Cowan** won the Country Music Association's **2022 Music Teachers of Excellence Award.**

Gomez Heritage Elementary Assistant Principal **Mariana Cruz** received the **Educational Trailblazer Award from Women of Color Nebraska.**

Benson High received the **Values Driven Award of Excellence** for its commitment to student success from the global non-profit organization, Cognia.

South High dual-language math teacher **Oscar Castillo** was named the **UNO Department of Teacher Education's Outstanding Graduate Student.**

Central High teacher **Rod Mullen** earned **History Nebraska's Excellence in Teaching Award.**



College and Career Ready Standards and Nebraska State Accountability Test Scores

In 2014, the Department of Education began revising standards to reflect College and Career Ready Standards. The Nebraska College and Career Ready Standards are a rigorous set of standards that aim to prepare all students to graduate from high school and be able to complete credit-bearing, first-year, postsecondary courses without a need for remediation. The standards reflect a new definition of “meeting expectations” at each grade level.

The state sets standards. Then, each district has one year to align their standards with the state standards. The Nebraska Department of Education follows a standards revision timeline for all content areas.

The standards are measured on state tests for elementary and middle school students. All juniors in Nebraska take

the ACT, which is used as the high school state test. Some students take the Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System (NSCAS). Similar to the ACT, the NSCAS is a statewide test that helps prepare students for success in postsecondary education, career and life. The NSCAS includes several measures that help inform educators and families as they support students.

Although testing usually takes place annually, the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted the regular school year calendar. The Nebraska Department of Education canceled the NSCAS assessment for the 2019-2020 school year which included the general, alternate and ACT tests.

2020-2021 NSCAS Results

Below is the percent proficient. Science scores for 2020-2021 are unavailable due to field testing.

ELEMENTARY

English Language Arts **28.8%**
Math **19.9%**

MIDDLE SCHOOL

English Language Arts **27.3%**
Math **20.1%**

What is Omaha Public Schools doing to prepare ALL students for the ACT?

Omaha Public Schools provides a guaranteed and viable curriculum for students along with rigorous instruction. ACT standards are aligned and addressed within the A+ Curriculum Guides for all content areas. The PreACT is given to Omaha Public Schools students in the fall of their sophomore year to prepare students for the ACT. Advisement teachers and school counselors also review PreACT and ACT results then meet with students to help them set goals based on their scores.

2020-2021 ACT Results

STATE ASSESSMENT

Average score for ALL students

English Language Arts **13.1**
Math **14.5**
Science **14.4**

This score reflects all grade 11 students who took the ACT state assessment. The individual student scores may be reported to post-secondary educational institutions based on ACT guidelines.

GRADUATING CLASS REPORT

Composite Score **16.9**

The score includes the most recent score for 2021 graduates who took the ACT as sophomores, juniors or seniors either as the state assessment or on a national test day. These students earned a score that ACT allows to be reported to postsecondary educational institutions.

During spring 2021, students participated in the Phase I NSCAS Growth Pilot, which was a shorter version of previous NSCAS assessments. Results from spring 2021 should not be directly compared to previous versions.

Although remote students were invited to test in spring 2021, not all students participated in spring 2021 NSCAS testing.



Stay Connected with OPS

Families, please ensure your phone number and email address are current with your child's school to receive important updates about school and district happenings.

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Administrative Department Numbers

Information Center.....	531-299-0220	Nutrition Services.....	531-299-0230
District Communications.....	531-299-0221	Omaha Public Schools Foundation...	531-299-0250
EL Department	531-299-0259	Student and Community Services.....	531-299-0314
Help Desk	531-299-0300	Student Placement.....	531-299-0302
Human Resources.....	531-299-0240	Student Transportation	531-299-0140



www.ops.org

3215 Cuming St.
Omaha, NE 68131

Omaha Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy), marital status, sexual orientation, disability, age, genetic information, gender identity, gender expression, citizenship status, veteran status, political affiliation or economic status in its programs, activities and employment and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following individual has been designated to accept allegations regarding non-discrimination policies: Superintendent of Schools, 3215 Cuming Street, Omaha, NE 68131 (531-299-9822). The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Director for the Office of Equity and Diversity, 3215 Cuming St, Omaha, NE 68131 (531-299-0307).