

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS: WHAT DRIVES US

We have great kids in Baltimore City with great potential. And they all deserve great schools. We are working to transform Baltimore City Public Schools into an entire system of great schools.

Our school communities must be responsible to our kids, and great schools happen when everyone in the school, the system and beyond takes that responsibility to heart. To be great, schools must have: great principals; great teachers in every classroom; instruction that reaches all kids, with their many different needs; the freedom to create a unique learning community; and involved parents and communities.

The challenge is simple—and huge. But together, City Schools and its families, communities and partners will create great school options for all children in Baltimore City.

CITY SCHOOLS—AT A GLANCE

2008-09 Student Enrollment: 82,266

This increase of 1,000 students over 2007-08 is the first annual increase in four decades. Though still preliminary, City Schools' enrollment will increase by about 1,000 students in 2009-10.

- 41,369 students in Pre-K-5
- 16,848 students in grades 6-8
- 24,049 students in grades 9-12

Student Demographics

- 88.4 percent African American; 7.8 percent White; 2.8 percent Latino; 0.7 percent Asian-Pacific Islander; 0.3 percent Other
- 74.6 percent low-income (based on Free or Reduced Price Meal eligibility)
- 2 percent English Language Learner

Schools and Programs in 2009-10: 201

- 56 elementary schools (with grades in Pre-K-5 range)
- 69 elementary/middle schools (with grades in Pre-K-8 range)
- 16 middle schools (with grades in 6-8 range)
- 32 high schools (with grades in 9-12 range)
- 12 middle/high schools (with grades in 6-12 range)
- 6 special education schools
- Of these, 27 are charter schools and 11 are Transformation Schools

Employees: 11,716

- 10,485 school-based, 1,231 non school-based

FY 2010 Budget: \$1.265 Billion

GOVERNANCE

City Schools has been governed by a city-state partnership since 1997. The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners has nine members, plus a nonvoting student member, and is jointly appointed by the mayor of Baltimore and Maryland's governor. The Board sets and oversees policy and regulations for the school system, and approves all major appointments. City Schools CEO Andrés A. Alonso reports to the Board.

CITY SCHOOLS HISTORIC FIRSTS AND NEAR-FIRSTS

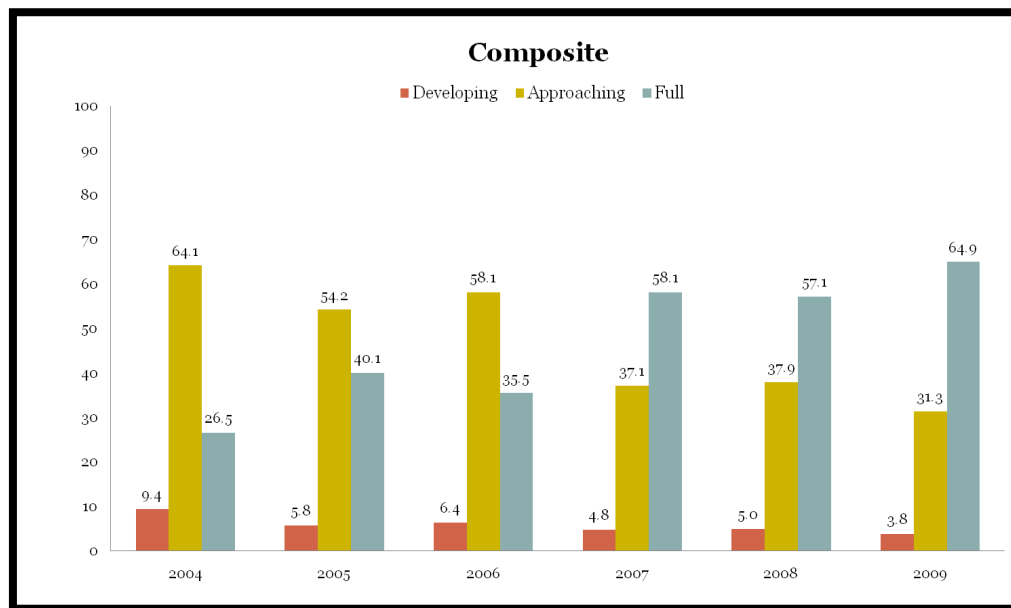
- First all-girl public high school in the United States: Western High School, 1844
- Third-oldest public high school in the United States: Baltimore City College, 1839
- Second-oldest historically African American public high school in the United States: Frederick Douglass High School, 1883
- Racial integration came to City Schools (Baltimore Polytechnic Institute, 1952) two years before *Brown v. Board of Education*

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Pre-K/Kindergarten Students Readier Than Ever to Learn. The percentage of City Schools students starting kindergarten “fully ready” to learn has more than doubled in the last five years and, thanks to a big jump in 2008-09, is now closing in on the state average.

- In fall 2009, 64.9 percent of kindergarteners arrived at school with the necessary skills and behaviors to success-fully meet kindergarten expectations, according to the 2009 Maryland Model for School Readiness report—up from 57.1 percent last year, and up from 26.5 percent in 2003—an increase of 145 percent in five years. Statewide, 73 percent of kindergartners started the current 2008-09 school year fully ready for school.
- City Schools attributes this progress to its aggressive expansion of Pre-K programs in schools: 71 percent of kindergartners who were enrolled in City Schools Pre-K programs prior to entering kindergarten in 2008-09 met the state’s “full readiness” measure.

Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) 2004-2009

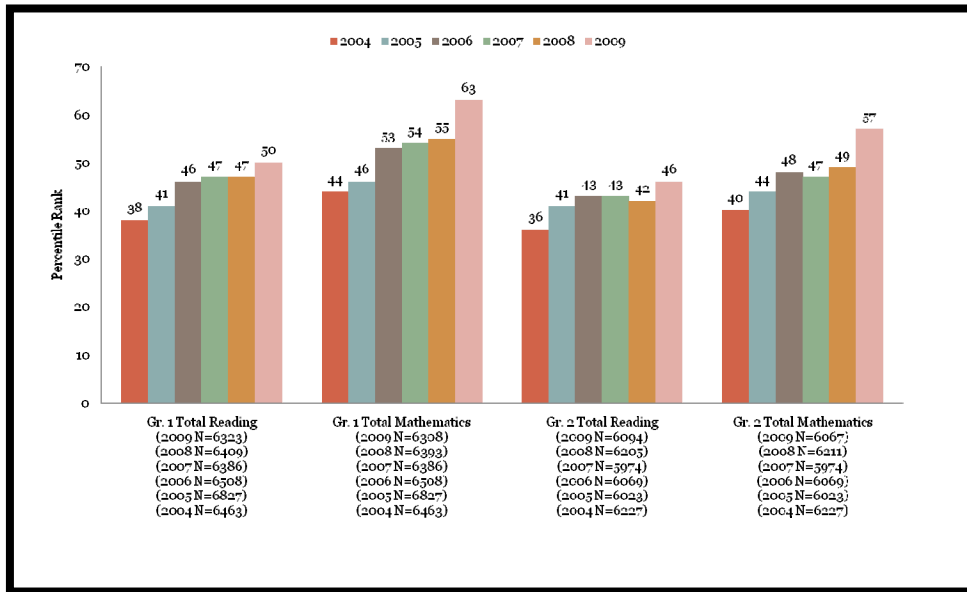


1st-2nd Grade Students Exceed National Average on 2009 Stanford 10 Test. Students made substantial gains on the Stanford Achievement Test 10 in 2009 and achieved their highest scores ever on the standardized test City Schools uses to measure reading and math skills in the 1st and 2nd grades.

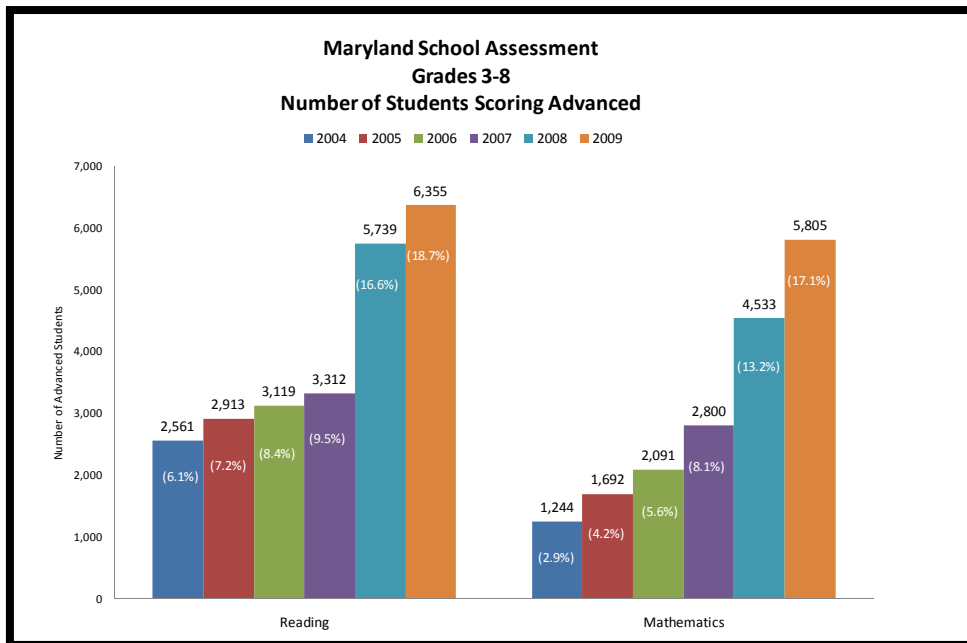
- Students exceeded the national average in math—with 1st- and 2nd-graders outscoring 63 percent and 57 percent of their peers—and for the first time reached the national average in reading.
- Continued gains among students with disabilities on both portions of the test show a closing of the historic achievement gap between special education and general education students over the

last two years: in 1st-grade reading, 2nd-grade reading and 2nd-grade math, the gap has shrunk by approximately half since 2007, and in 1st-grade math it has shrunk by nearly one-third.

Stanford 10: National Percentile Rank Results

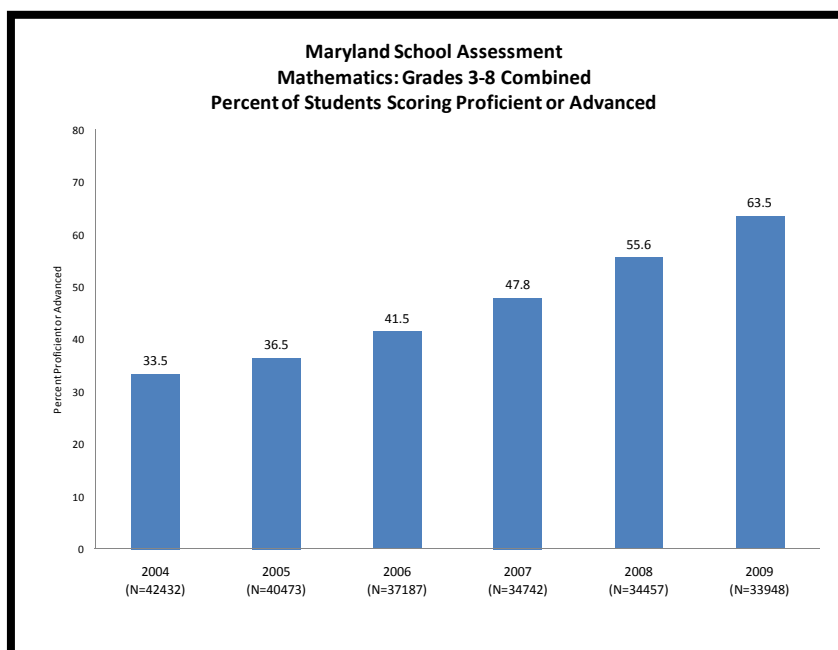
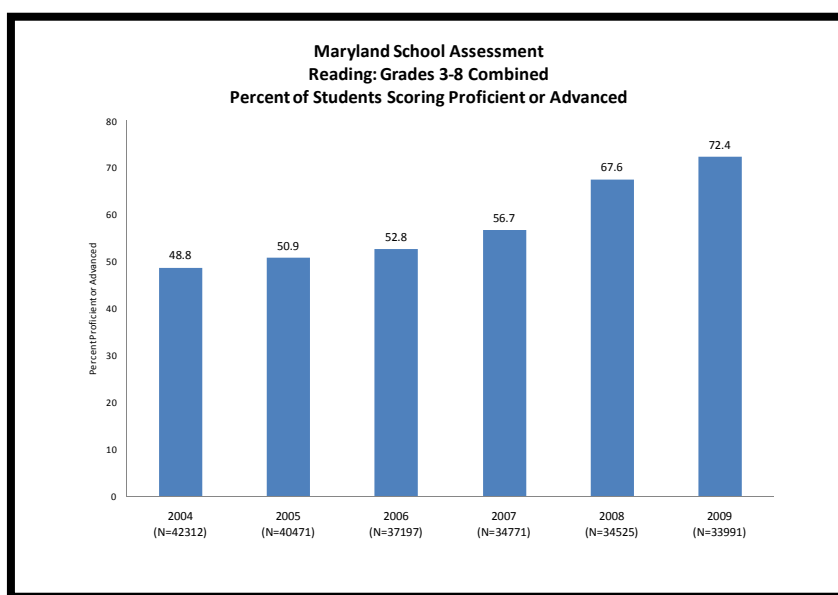


3rd-8th Grade Students Post Second Straight Year of Gains. In 2008-09, elementary and middle school students posted strong gains in Maryland School Assessment (MSA) scores for the second straight year, with particularly large increases in the number of students not just meeting, but *exceeding* state standards.

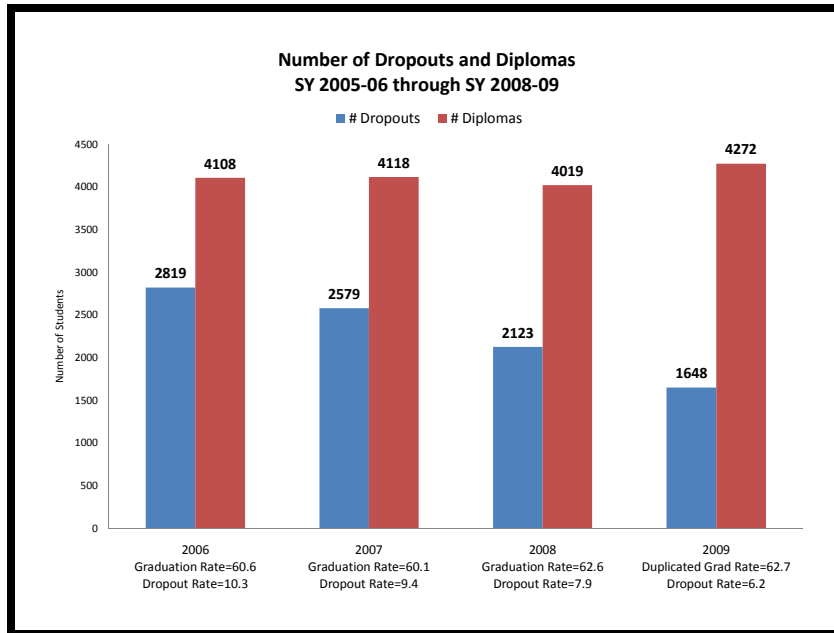


- Scores were up across all grades and student groups in 2008-09, building on record gains of 2007-08; overall reading and math scores are both up nearly 16 percentage points over two years.

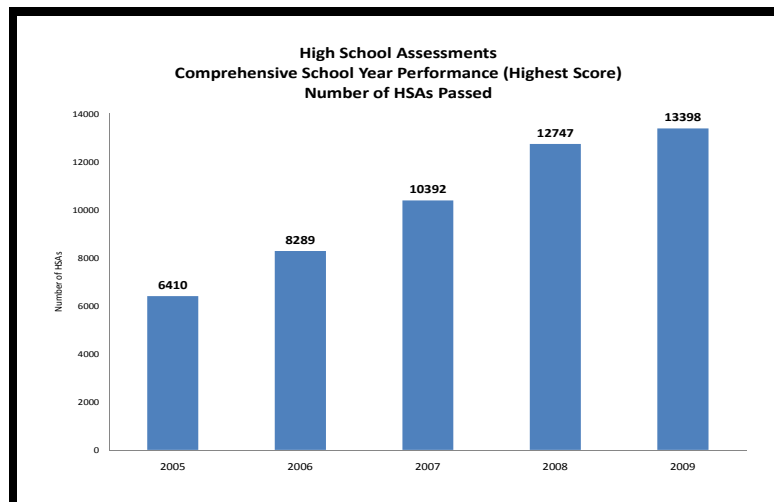
- The number of students exceeding the state standard on the reading portion of the test increased by 92 percent over the last two years, and the number of students exceeding the state standard in mathematics increased by 107 percent during the same period.
- This year's MSA results show special education students advancing at an even greater rate than general education students.
- All of City Schools' racial and ethnic subgroups where there have been historic achievement gaps—African American, Latino and American Indian students—also posted gains in 2008-09, continuing to narrow the gaps. The achievement gap between Limited English Proficient students and native English speaking students also narrowed.
- The largest MSA gains this year in both reading and math are in the middle grades, where student performance in City Schools has traditionally lagged most. The largest one-year increase in the percent of students who scored advanced on the reading MSA was in 8th grade—6.5 percentage points—and in math the percent of students scoring advanced in the last two years has more than doubled in the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades.



High School Dropout Rate Falls as Numbers of Graduates, HSA Tests Passed Rise. Nearly 1,000 fewer students dropped out of school in the last two years than in 2006-07, resulting in the school system’s lowest dropout rate on record. And last year, the first year that students in Maryland were required to meet the High School Assessment (HSA) requirement in order to graduate, 253 more students received diplomas.



- City Schools’ dropout rate for 2008-09, 6.2 percent, is down from 7.9 percent in 2007-08 and 9.7 percent in 2006-07, a two-year decline of 36 percent and the lowest dropout rate on record for City Schools since the state began tracking it in 1996. Last year, 475 fewer students dropped out and chose to stay in school; in the last two years, 931 students have made that choice.
- City Schools’ official graduation rate for 2008-09, 62.7 percent, represents a slight increase from 62.6 percent in 2007-08, and remains the school system’s highest graduation rate since the state began recording it in 1996. Because the rate does not account for students who may have dropped out and come back and graduated, the Maryland State Department of Education also recognized a second, “truer” graduation rate of 66.6 percent for City Schools, reflecting the increase in the number of students who received high school diplomas.



- The students who took HSA tests passed 5 percent more tests in 2008-09 than in 2007-08: they passed 7 percent more Algebra tests, nearly 12 percent more English tests and 23 percent more Biology tests. At the same time, students passed 15 percent fewer Government tests.
- Among students with disabilities the increase in the number of tests passed was greater: students passed 503 more tests in 2008-09 than in 2007-08, an increase of 120 percent. City Schools also saw large gains in the number of HSA tests passed among African American and low-income students, further narrowing historic achievement gaps.

College Prep Expanding. College Board 2008-09 Advanced Placement (AP) and Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) results reflect an expansion of, and greater student access to, college preparation opportunities in City Schools. The growth was strongest among African American students and at more traditional, former neighborhood high schools.

The number of AP courses offered in City Schools' high schools grew by nearly 28 percent in 2008-09. Enrollment in AP courses was up 21 percent; the number of students who took AP placement exams was up 16 percent; and students scored at the college mastery level on 321 tests, up from 289 in 2007-08.

City Schools' SAT participation also grew, exceeding growth at the state and national levels, and state and national participation rates overall. A total of 3,390 high school graduates took the SATs, an increase of 7 percent over 2007-08, and 22 of 34 high schools reported increases in test-takers. SAT participation was up nationally by less than 1 percent, and down nearly 1 percent at the state level. At 79 percent, City Schools' participation rate is significantly higher than both the state and national averages for SAT participation, which were 69 percent and 46 percent, respectively, in 2008-09.

City Schools Exits "Corrective Action." As a result of the growth in City Schools' MSA scores across grades, subjects and student groups in 2008-09, the elementary grades made state standards for progress for the second consecutive year this year, and the school system will exit state Corrective Action. Until 2007-08, City Schools had never made Adequately Yearly Progress goals for any grade band. City Schools has been in School Improvement since the inception of NCLB in 2002. Prior to NCLB, Maryland was ahead of the accountability curve and had its own state accountability system, the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program, widely known as MSPAP. For the duration of MSPAP, City Schools was "reconstitution eligible" and also in Corrective Action.

Measuring City Schools' Performance on a National Level. In 2008-09, City Schools began participating in an assessment of urban school districts that offers the truest picture yet of student achievement in Baltimore City, and a true comparison of City Schools with other comparable districts. City Schools is now one of 19 urban school districts that are authorized by the U.S. Congress to have large-scale participation in the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), the gold standard for assessment in the country. City Schools' participation in the assessment affords it first-time access to a broad set of data about its students and schools, and thrusts it into a community of school districts that are leading the nation in systemic reform and accountability.

City Schools Compete on the State, Regional, National Stage.

- Western High School was named a 2009 National Blue Ribbon School in September 2009, bringing to six the number of Baltimore City public schools that hold the honor: Western, Baltimore School for the Arts, Patapsco Elementary School, Baltimore City College, George Washington Elementary School and Cecil Elementary School.
- Baltimore City College's senior policy debate team finished third at the prestigious Wake Forest University National Earlybird tournament in September 2009, the highest finish of a Maryland debate team in national competition in more than 10 years.

- Pimlico Elementary/Middle School won the middle school division at the Maryland State Scholastic Chess Championships in spring 2009.
- City Schools 2009 state basketball champions: Heritage High School's and Doris M. Johnson High School's Lake Clifton Lakers won the Class 3A boys state title; Baltimore City College won the Class 2A boys and Class 2A girls state titles; and the Digital Harbor High School/National Academy Foundation High School Rams won the Class 1A boys and Class 1A girls state titles.
- Of the 1,000 Gates Millennium Scholars awards the United Negro College Fund made to students from low-income families across the country in 2009, four went to City Schools students—from Baltimore Polytechnic Institute, Mergenthaler Vocational-Technical High School, Baltimore City College and Doris M. Johnson High School.
- City Schools had a semi-finalist, two finalists and a winner in the 2009 National Merit Scholarship and National Achievement Scholarship programs—from the Baltimore School for the Arts and Baltimore Polytechnic Institute.

EXPANDING OPTIONS

City Schools is continually creating new and better school options for students, so that no matter where students live, they can attend a school that meets their interests and needs. Many elementary and middle schools are zoned geographically, though increasingly, they are becoming schools of choice. Charter schools and Transformation Schools (combined middle-high schools with a theme and college and/or career prep focus), for example, have lottery admissions. All high schools are citywide schools.

- In 2008-09, 97 percent of all 8th-graders chose their high school for 2009-10.
- In 2009-10, City Schools opened six new Transformation Schools (combined middle-high schools, three of which target over-age and under-credited students), two new charter schools and one contract school.
- City Schools launched *Expanding Great Options*, an initiative to expand and relocate those school programs that are working for students and to close those that aren't. With approval of the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners, it closed and relocated nine schools in 2009-10.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Reaching More Students Early On. City Schools is expanding Pre-K. In 2008-09 it served 4,200 students; with federal stimulus money it received for 2009-10, it created 600 additional seats this year.

Collaborative Planning. City Schools implemented a collaborative planning period in every school in 2008-09, in collaboration with the Baltimore Teachers Union.

Bringing Great Kids Back. Through its *Great Kids Come Back* initiative, City Schools reached out to and re-enrolled 271 students in 2008-09 who had dropped out of school. The school system continues to make reducing dropouts a major priority and has a similar effort underway for the 2009-10 school year. As of Oct. 1, 2009, it had brought back 76 students.

Better, Healthier Meals for All. City Schools has expanded its breakfast program with better, more appealing breakfast options for all students, resulting in a 44 percent increase in student participation in school breakfast in 2008-09. In 2009-10, City Schools implemented Meatless Mondays, becoming one of the first major school systems in the country to offer students a weekly vegetarian lunch option.

Great Kids Farm. City Schools is developing a self-sustaining organic farm where students have the opportunity to learn and experience the entire field-to-fork process of growing, distributing and cooking healthy, nutritious food—and to do so in a sustainable way by using practices that are

ecologically sound and protect the environment. The farm has agreements to sell produce under the Great Kids Farm label to local restaurants and at farmers markets.

BUILDING HUMAN CAPITAL

New School Leadership. City Schools hired 42 new principals for 2009-10. Of these, 10 came out of New Leaders for New Schools, a national nonprofit that recruits, trains and supports outstanding school leaders for urban public school districts.

Teach For America Corps. (TFA). City Schools currently has 243 first- and second-year TFA corps members in its schools, up from 163 corps members in 2008-09. The number is expected to increase to 318 in 2010-11. As part of this growth, the number of students TFA teachers teach will have increased by more than 50 percent in two years, from 28,290 in 2008-09 to 43,332 in 2010-11.

Baltimore City Teaching Residency (BCTR). City Schools currently has 784 highly qualified eligible BCTR residents in its schools, teaching more than 16,000 students daily. The BCTR program will recruit an additional 175-200 resident teachers for 2010-11, with more than 60 percent of them assigned to hardest to staff areas, including early childhood and special education.

Highly Qualified Teachers. As of May 2009, 68 percent of all 2008-09 classes were taught by highly qualified teachers, an increase of more than 17 percentage points over 2007-08, and 26.8 percentage points since 2003-04.

BUDGET & FINANCE

FY 2010 Budget. City Schools' operating budget for FY 2010 is \$1.265 billion. Most of City Schools' FY 2010 revenue, 66 percent, comes from the state; 17 percent comes from Baltimore City; 12 percent comes from the federal government—plus another 3 percent in federal stimulus funds; and 2 percent comes from a variety of sources, including investment income and tuition from non-resident families whose children attend City Schools. As in years past, the bulk of this money funds City Schools employees: 53 percent will go toward salaries and wages and 15 percent will cover employee fringe benefits; 14 percent will cover contracted services, including cleaning, transportation and recruitment of highly qualified teachers; and the balance will pay for utilities, equipment, materials, debt service and various, other expenses and charges.

Funding Students and Schools Fairly. In FY 2009, City Schools implemented Fair Student Funding to change how it funds schools. Schools now receive funding based on the number of students they have, with extra dollars depending on those students' needs—and they have the discretion to spend those funds. (In 2008-09, principals went from controlling 3 percent of their budgets to 70 percent under Fair Student Funding; in 2009-10, their budget control increased to 81 percent.) In exchange for this increased flexibility, schools are now held responsible for student achievement. Under Fair Student Funding: 1) Schools have the authority to make decisions about how to spend money and whom to hire. 2) Families and communities are engaged in schools' budget decision-making processes. 3) City Schools' central office is leaner and designed to guide and support schools.

Average Per-Pupil Cost. Schools receive a base amount per student, plus additional dollars according to different weights for categories such as academic need. All of these school-based dollars divided by all eligible students will result in an anticipated average per-pupil amount of \$9,452 for FY 2010. When *all* General and Special Funds that go to schools are tallied and divided by all eligible students, that average per-pupil amount increases to \$13,646 in FY 2010.

A Leaner, More Responsive Central Office. As part of both the FY 2009 and FY 2010 budgets and Fair Student Funding, City Schools cut its central office by 489 positions, moved talent and resources to schools, and shifted the central office's role to focus on guiding and supporting schools, and holding them accountable for student achievement. On July 1, 2009, City Schools launched School Support Networks, its new central office system for providing support and services to schools.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Strengthening Entire School Communities. City Schools is working with parents, volunteers and partner organizations to strengthen entire school communities—networks of support that can meet all of a child's needs. Some highlights:

- From its launch in April 2009 to August, more than 400 parents and just as many children took part in City Schools' Family Institute, a collection of workshops designed to strengthen families and linkages between the home, schools and communities. Workshops are ongoing.
- City Schools' cable Education Channel 77 broadcasts 13 original hours of programming each week, including student-produced news, on-the-scene reporting and public affairs programs.
- More than 1,250 people formally expressed interest in volunteering during 2008-09.
- In June 2009, City Schools expanded the Parent Portal on its web site to include a *Learning at Home* section, designed to help families know what their children are learning in school, and how they can support and continue that learning at home.
- In 2008-09, parents and community members provided advisory input on the budget priorities of all 143 schools that receive funding through the traditional budget process (charter and contract schools have a different process), and on the selection of 32 new principals.
- Under the Community Support for Schools initiative, 22 community-based organizations are partnering with 85 schools to increase Free and Reduced Price Meals participation, organized parent group participation, parent climate survey returns and Parent Portal registration.

MAKING THE NATIONAL RADAR

On *BusinessWeek's* 2009 list of America's Best High Schools, Digital Harbor High School ranked No. 1 among Maryland high schools serving large percentages of low-income students.

Five of City Schools' high schools made *U.S. News & World Report's* annual America's Best High Schools list in December 2008: Baltimore City College and Baltimore Polytechnic Institute both won silver medals, and Baltimore Freedom Academy, Paul Laurence Dunbar High School and Western High School won bronze. This was Baltimore Freedom Academy's first year on the list.

In October, 2009, the National School Boards Association's Council of Urban Boards of Education awarded the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners its Progressive Leadership Award. The Board was honored for its efforts to improve governance of City Schools, particularly in the area of policy as it relates to increased parent and community involvement.

In September City Schools was awarded the Johns Hopkins University Center for a Livable Future's 2009 Organizational Award for "visionary leadership in local food procurement and food education" during a ceremony at Great Kids Farm, City Schools' organic farm and education center in Catonsville.

Western High School Principal Eleanor Matthews will receive the Terrel H. Bell award for Outstanding School Leadership at the U. S. Department of Education's 2009 Blue Ribbon Schools Awards Ceremony in November.

The artwork of 12 City Schools communities is on display at the Walters Art Museum this fall, as part of its nationally renowned exhibit, *Heroes: Mortals and Myths in Ancient Greece*.