



# Presentation for Education Committees

January 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

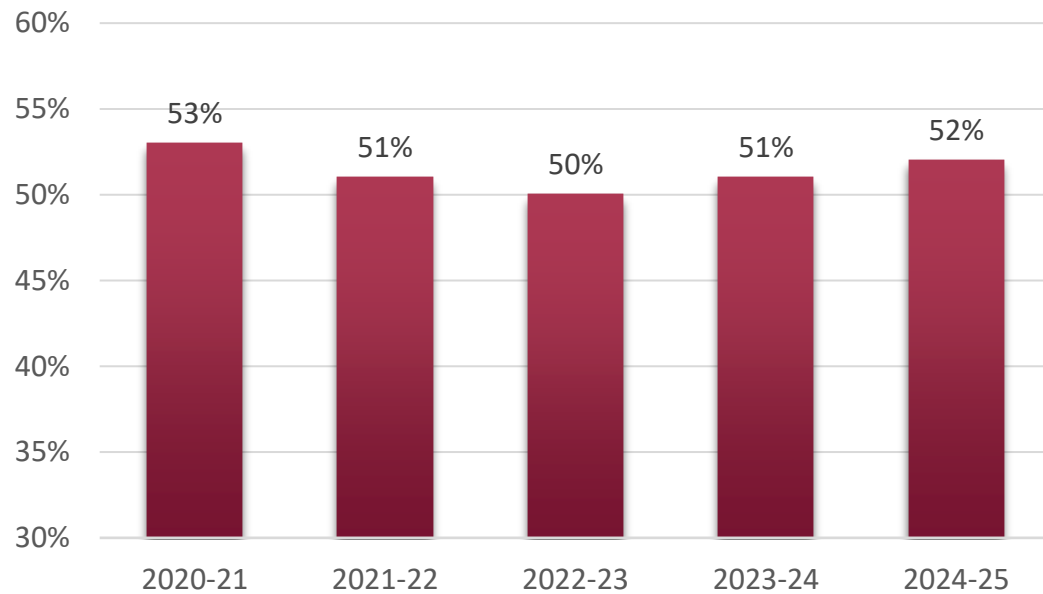
Teacher Recruitment and Retention

Implementing Social Studies Standards

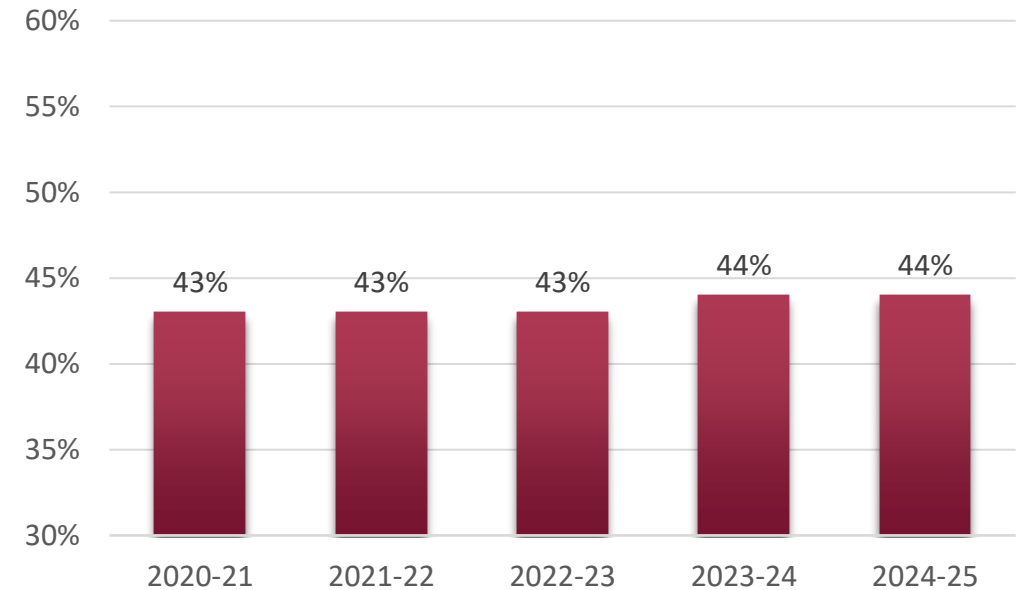


# Student Achievement

## English Language Arts % Proficient



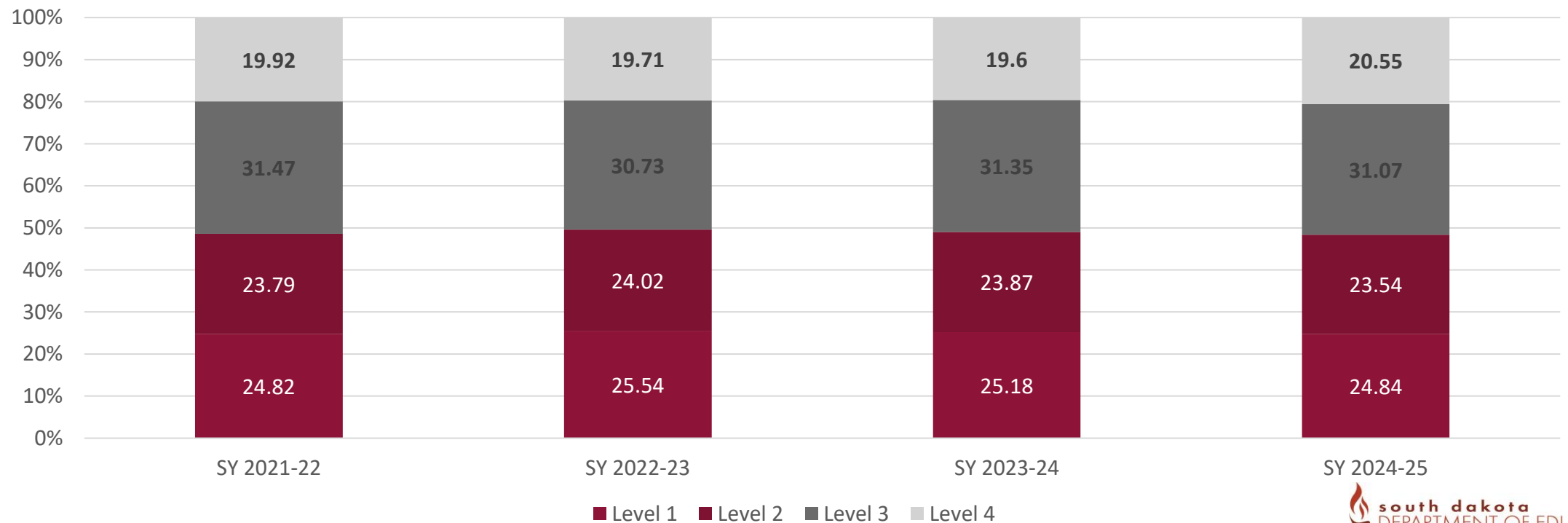
## Math % Proficient



*All tested grades.*

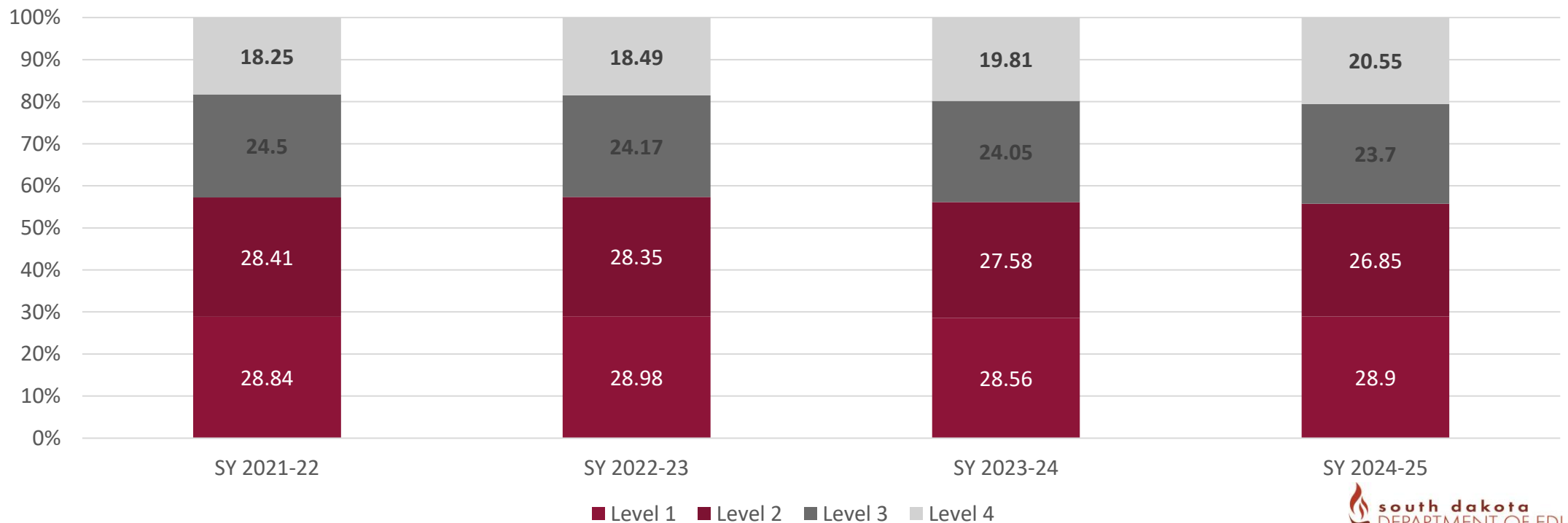
# Student Achievement

% of Students Proficient in English Language Arts – All Grades



# Student Achievement

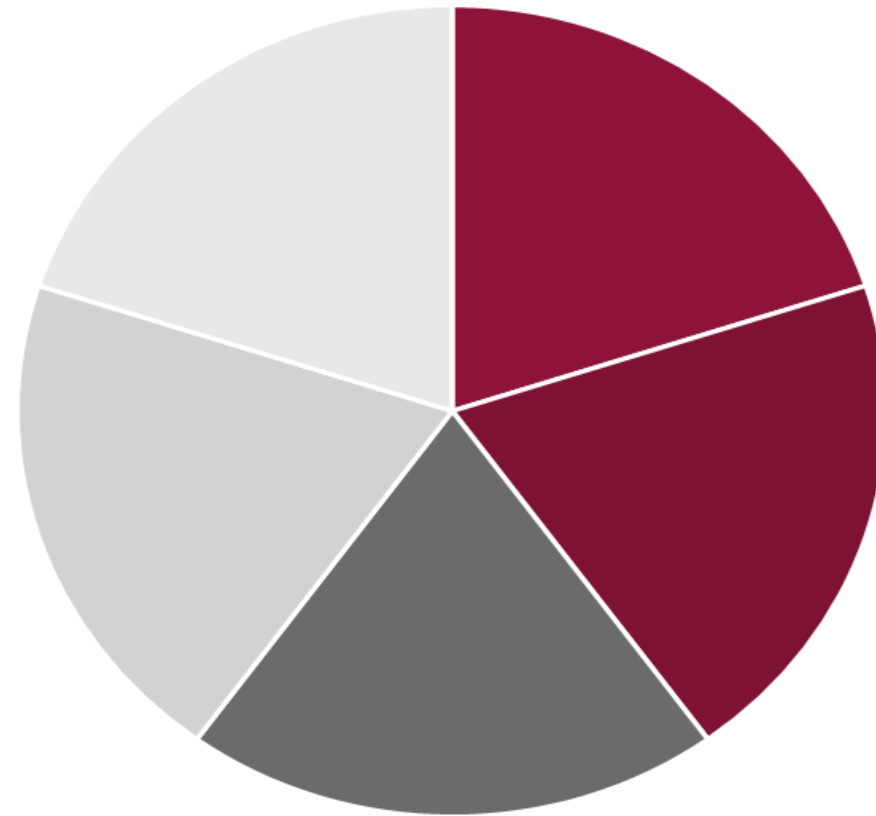
## % of Students Proficient in Math – All Grades



# 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

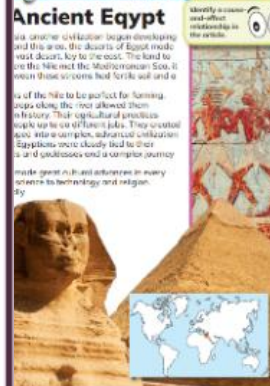
- Proactive, preventive framework that supports positive student behavior
- Using data to match evidence-based interventions and behavioral strategies to student need
- Tiered levels of support and interventions for learners



# Implementing Social Studies Standards

## Studies Weekly

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



## Human Features

Use man-made features to describe a place. These are called human features. They are the result of people's choices, and actions. They occur where people interact with the physical environment. Bridges, factories, buildings, parks are human features. Landmarks are well-known human features. They are things like famous buildings, bridges, towers, and walls. They are often used to help people find locations. This information can be used to give directions.

# 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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