

VESTAVIA HILLS CITY SCHOOLS



2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Vestavia Hills City Schools has completed another exciting chapter in its rich tradition. The aspiration for high performance has been evident from the birth of our school system in 1970 and continues today.

While revising the goals in our new strategic plan this spring, we reflected on the defining moments of our system that were integral to its success. A look back at the history of our school system is to see one that grew through many changes and maintained its stellar reputation. Today, Vestavia Hills traverses from the Sybil Temple, through Cahaba Heights, and to the farthest reaches of Liberty Park. As unique as each part of our city is, there is something special that unites all of us.

For the past year, our central office leadership team has been studying organizations that are perpetually high performers in their respective fields. Each has its own distinct strategy based on what their customers want. All of them, however, share the common ingredient of having a vibrant and healthy culture. Employees love to be a part of this type of organization, and their customers know it.

The effective confluence of strategy and culture is the recipe for long-term success in any organization. Management guru Peter Drucker distinguished between the two, however, when he said, “Culture eats strategy for breakfast.” He recognized that both were essential to success, but the results of a good strategy are short-lived if the culture is unhealthy.

After having spent a full year as superintendent in this wonderful system, it is obvious to me that the binding agent in our community is the culture of excellence in each of our schools. No matter which classroom or school I visit, the pleasing aroma of this culture is unmistakable. I have experienced it by observing the commitment of our employees and have seen it through the unyielding dedication of parents and the community.

Ours is a culture that seeks to provide every child we serve the opportunity to learn without limits. It is a culture that will not give up until this mission is achieved. And it is a culture that embraces a rich tradition and the desire to reach even greater heights. That is something we can all celebrate together!

Dr. Todd Freeman
Superintendent



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OUR MISSION

The mission of Vestavia Hills City Schools is to ensure each student learns without limits by pursuing knowledge and igniting curiosity about the world through a system distinguished by:

- ▶ A safe and nurturing environment
- ▶ The courage to be creative
- ▶ Unparalleled community support
- ▶ Appreciation of diversity
- ▶ Multiple paths to a bold future

OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM

- Named to NAMM Foundation list of Best Communities for Music Education for second consecutive year
- Partnered with KultureCity to begin construction of sensory rooms at all schools
- Received Alabama School Public Relations Association awards for Best Annual Report and Best Special Event
- Earned full, five-year renewal of school system accreditation from AdvancED
- PTO contributed more than \$450,000 in donations and support to all 8 schools
- Vestavia Hills City Schools Foundation donated more than \$110,000 in grants for professional learning programs, technology enhancements, and school leadership initiatives
- Partnered with Help the Hills Coalition to provide parents with resources addressing substance abuse and legislative support for youth wellness
- Hosted inaugural English Learner Parent Night to provide families with VHCS learning and support resources

VHCS TEACHERS OF THE YEAR

Mary Busbee, VHHS,
Secondary Teacher of the Year

Heather Parrish, VHELP,
Elementary Teacher of the Year

Leah Seng, Pizitz

Lisa Williams, LPMS

Maggie Widman, VHEW

Kate Donaldson, VHEC

Kayla Underhill, VHECH

Shannon Kirby, VHEE *(not pictured)*



TEACHERS EARNING LOCAL, STATE, AND NATIONAL AWARDS

Jeremy Andrews, VHECH - Alabama Elementary Physical Education Teacher of the Year

Deanna Bell, VHEE - 2019 Grammy Music Educator Award National Semifinalist

Mary Busbee, VHHS - Alabama Outstanding Biology Teacher of the Year

Julie Corley, VHECH - Alabama School Nurse of the Year

Heather Hurt, VHEC - 2018 Milken Educator Award and \$25,000 Grant Recipient

Brigid Meadow, VHHS - National High School Girls' Soccer Coach of the Year

Randy Pettway, VHEC - CBS 42 "One Class at a Time" Grant Recipient

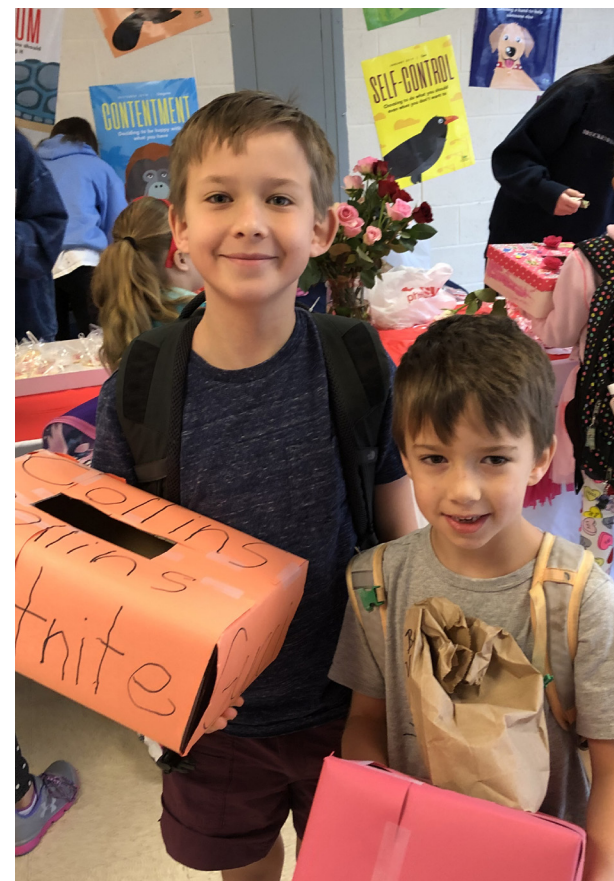
Celia Stewart, VHECH - Alabama Lifetime Achievement Award for Gifted Education

Bindi Visram, VHEC - WZZK Terrific Teacher Award Recipient

Stanley Woodall, VHHS - Alabama Mathematics Teacher of the Year

VESTAVIA HILLS ELEMENTARY CAHABA HEIGHTS

- Launched Safe and Happy Heights to support positive student decisions and a healthy school culture, earning national recognition from Character.org
- Completed a multi-phase construction project with new learning spaces for students and adults, a new media center, and a new art classroom
- Named an Alabama Bicentennial School and completed an AL200 community project in conjunction with the Cahaba River Society
- Earned first place in state elementary robotics competition
- Formed a Diversity Team to celebrate school diversity and emphasize positive character



“Learning without limits’ means together we are learning, questioning, experiencing, and growing every day. It means students and teachers build a classroom culture where students can investigate, problem solve, and explore the world around them. Their inquiry and curiosity is celebrated here, and I could not be more proud of our learning community.”
— Alicia Hunsberger, Principal



VESTAVIA HILLS ELEMENTARY CENTRAL

- Became a *Leader in Me* school to boost youth leadership development and social-emotional learning
- Continental Math League fifth grade team won first place in regional competition
- Engineering Club won first place in Downhill Dash event and second place in Rescue Apparatus event at the University of Montevallo E3 Engineering Competition
- Raised \$1,000 for Beauregard, Alabama tornado relief efforts
- Held “Celebrate Central” open house to commemorate 31-year school history and honor current and former teachers and staff

“When I reflect on the past year, the closing of Central, and the changes in store for the school system, I think about the tireless work of our teachers and staff who made it a banner year for the school. We continued maintaining excellence in all things and making sure every child was prepared for their future, no matter where they’ll be next year. That selfless love for our students is at the heart of ‘learning without limits.’”

— Marian Humphries, Principal





VESTAVIA HILLS ELEMENTARY EAST

- Launched the Friendship Initiative to increase positive student connections and provide every student with opportunities to create new relationships
- Raised \$6,000 during the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation's annual One Walk event
- Donated two truckloads of supplies for residents of Mexico Beach, Florida affected by Hurricane Michael
- Hosted a College and Career Readiness Week led by school counselors to help students develop perseverance and critical thinking skills
- Held a Schoolwide Enrichment Festival with an emphasis on rocketry, culminating with rocket launches for each class



“For East, ‘learning without limits’ means providing varied, engaging learning experiences for children and removing as many barriers to learning as possible. It affects everything we do from the work we give students to the support we provide them in each classroom. When students can work in an engaging, happy environment with lots of connections, it helps break down limits to learning.”

— Mark Richardson, Principal

VESTAVIA HILLS ELEMENTARY LIBERTY PARK

- Became a *Leader in Me* school to boost youth leadership development and social-emotional learning in all grades
- Raised \$15,000 to support the American Heart Association through annual Jump Rope for Heart event
- Donated funds and items to A-Team Ministries, King's Home, and homeless shelters in the greater Birmingham area
- Hosted Leadership Night, providing fourth graders opportunity to design, compose music, and write script for school show highlighting principles of Stephen Covey's *Leader in Me* program
- Implemented positive behavioral support system for students throughout the school, including rewards for students and classrooms demonstrating healthy character traits



“Learning without limits’ means we collectively believe and make a way for all students to pursue knowledge without restriction or preconceived notions. Our desire is for all of our students to grow in all areas, but also to foster growth in each child’s uniqueness. Through authentic engagement, our students can discover strengths and gifts they otherwise wouldn’t have known they had.”

— Abbie Freeman, 2019-20 Principal



VESTAVIA HILLS ELEMENTARY WEST

- Completed construction project including new kitchen and cafeteria addition
- Named an Alabama Bicentennial School and held “Celebrate Alabama” week with visits to classrooms from community leaders and state and national legislators
- Raised more than \$8,000 for Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation
- Donated more than 2,000 food items to local shelters during canned food drive
- Hosted Family Math Night, giving students opportunity to demonstrate to their parents how they learn math through hands-on activities

“At West, ‘learning without limits’ means everyone is included. We work to instill in students the virtues of courtesy, respect, and responsibility, because we believe those ideals help students to see the value in teamwork and collaboration. We want our teachers to embody these values, too, because they are helping each child to become a person of character and a learner for life.”
— Kim Hauser, Principal



LIBERTY PARK MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Named a National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education in Exemplary High Performing category
- Placed five students in top 10% nationally at Math Olympiad National Math Competition
- Bass Fishing Team won state junior division championship in Weiss Lake Tournament
- Symphonic Band and Boys Choir invited to perform at Alabama Music Educator Association State Conference
- Donated more than \$8,000 to Leukemia and Lymphoma Society through annual fundraisers



“It’s easy to think ‘learning without limits’ is just about academics, but at Liberty Park Middle, we apply that mission no matter what class, competition, or performance our students are involved in. We apply it in our hiring practices, the professional development teachers receive, and the support we give to all students regardless of their ability. For us, ‘learning without limits’ means learning in all things we do.”

— Tonya Rozell, Principal



LOUIS PIZITZ MIDDLE SCHOOL

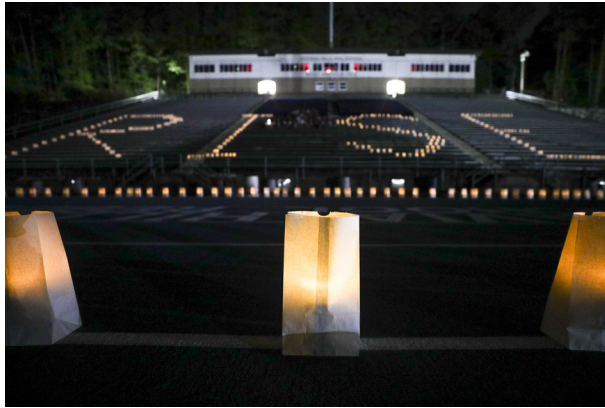
- Raised more than \$5,000 for Children's of Alabama through year-long school philanthropy projects
- Donated more than 3,000 food items to benefit Bread of Life Food Pantry at Thanksgiving
- "Team Imperium" Robotics Team won design award at state competition and qualified to compete at VEX Worlds
- Implemented learning with 3D printers, giving eighth graders the opportunity to create digitally designed artwork
- Jazz Band honored with Bands of Distinction Award from Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame



"When we talk about a mission of 'learning without limits' at Pizitz, it starts with having a faculty that understands there's much more to learn than what they are teaching in their classrooms right now. Our teachers have the freedom to go out and learn more themselves so that there are no limitations for the students. That way, when students come to us asking for new learning opportunities, there's nothing holding us back."
— Meredith Hanson,
2018-19 Principal

VESTAVIA HILLS HIGH SCHOOL

- We the People Team won district and state competitions for the 15th consecutive year, and won Southeast region at nationals
- All three math teams won state competition and had top individual scorers in each category
- Three students placed first in competition at state HOSA conference
- Honor Choir, Show Choir, Just Singin', Men's Choir, AcaFellas, Chanteurs, Ensemble, and Voces Aurea all received superior ratings at assessments
- Just Singin' became the first high school group from Alabama to be invited to sing at the American Choral Directors' Association National Conference in Kansas City
- Rebel Marching Band and all three concert bands received superior ratings at state assessments
- History Bee and Bowl Team won state championship
- Inaugural RISE event raised more than \$250,000 for UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center and was named to Top 10 Most Spirited Community Service Projects in America by Varsity Brands
- Raised \$45,000 for Vestavia Hills Parks and Recreation Foundation's Miracle League Field Project at Wald Park
- Donated more than 26,000 food items to local shelters during fall canned food drive
- Continued expansion of health science pathway, providing students hands-on learning from renowned Birmingham-area physicians and practitioners



“Learning without limits’ has two meanings at VHHS. For one, it impacts the opportunities we provide students. If there’s an opportunity for learning in a subject area we don’t yet offer, then we’re going to think creatively about how to make it happen. Second, it means supporting our students at all levels of the learning process. Whether a student is highly achieved or needs more help to reach their goals, we’re going to work continuously to make sure all of our Rebels are successful for life.”

— Tyler Burgess, Principal

REBEL ATHLETICS

- 18 teams qualified for postseason play
- Boys' Bowling, Boys' Tennis, Girls' Soccer, and Rebelette Dance teams won state championships
- Junior Varsity Cheerleaders won national championship in UCA Gameday Division
- Five seniors won individual state championships in their respective sports (wrestling, golf, and tennis)
- Girls' Soccer team finished the year ranked first in MaxPreps and *USA Today* national rankings
- 19 seniors signed to play sports on the collegiate level



EXCELLENCE IN VESTAVIA HILLS

222 seniors graduated with **Advanced Academic Honors** diploma



93%

GRADUATES ENTERING COLLEGE

- ▶ 74 colleges
- ▶ 21 states

11 NATIONAL MERIT FINALISTS



67%

SENIORS OFFERED SCHOLARSHIPS

\$33

MILLION SCHOLARSHIPS OFFERED

ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) EXAMS - 2018

441

STUDENTS TOOK

1,128

AP EXAMS

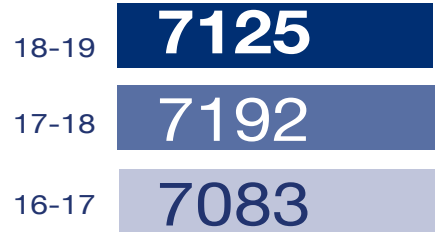
80%

SCORED

3↑

ENROLLMENT DATA

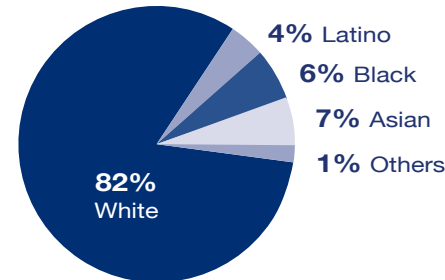
STUDENTS:



>96%
AVERAGE
 DAILY ATTENDANCE

English Learner Students:	619
Gifted Students:	1,446
Extended Day Program Students:	670
Free and Reduced Lunch:	7.82%

ETHNICITY



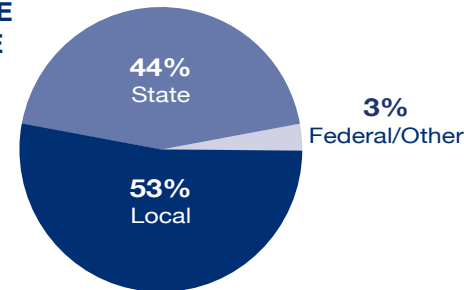
**OUR STUDENTS
 ARE FROM
 36 COUNTRIES
 & SPEAK
 41 LANGUAGES**



FINANCE

Fiscal Year 2019 Budget:	\$110 million
Cost of one month's operations:	\$5.9 million
Ad valorem taxes:	52.05 mills
Per-pupil expenditure:	\$11,323

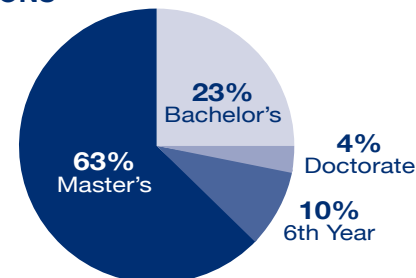
PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE BY SOURCE



FACULTY/STAFF

TOTAL EMPLOYEES 2018-19:	877
Certified/licensed:	581
Classified/staff:	296

EMPLOYEES' EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS



**70 NATIONAL BOARD
 CERTIFIED TEACHERS**





VESTAVIA HILLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

1204 Montgomery Highway, 35216
(205) 402-5100
<http://vestavia.k12.al.us>

VESTAVIA HILLS ELEMENTARY EAST Grades K-5

2109 Tyson Drive, 35216
(205) 402-5200

VESTAVIA HILLS ELEMENTARY WEST Grades K-5

1965 Merryvale Road, 35216
(205) 402-5151

VESTAVIA HILLS ELEMENTARY DOLLY RIDGE Grades K-5

2650 Gresham Drive, 35243
(205) 402-5325

VESTAVIA HILLS ELEMENTARY CAHABA HEIGHTS Grades K-5

4401 Dolly Ridge Road, 35243
(205) 402-5480

VESTAVIA HILLS ELEMENTARY LIBERTY PARK Grades K-5

17051 Liberty Parkway, 35242
(205) 402-5400

LOUIS PIZITZ MIDDLE SCHOOL Grades 6-8

2020 Pizitz Drive, 35216
(205) 402-5350

LIBERTY PARK MIDDLE SCHOOL Grades 6-8

17035 Liberty Parkway, 35242
(205) 402-5450

VESTAVIA HILLS HIGH SCHOOL Grades 9-12

2235 Lime Rock Road, 35216
(205) 402-5250

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