



Vestavia Hills City Schools

2020–21 Annual Report ♦ Celebrating 50 Years

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





Message from the Superintendent

The 2020-21 school year was an affirmation of the outstanding school system we have in Vestavia Hills. It marked the 50th anniversary of the inception of Vestavia Hills City Schools. And while there were many challenges brought about because of the COVID-19 pandemic, our focus remained on providing every student the opportunity to learn without limits. The experience reminded us of two important truths in life: There will always be challenges, and there will always be limitations to confronting those challenges. These did not discourage us; rather, they motivated us to stay on mission!

In our goal of giving students profound learning experiences, VHCS adapted to the critical importance of technology in the daily school routine. Staff and students relied daily on virtual platforms for teaching and learning. Because of our commitment to provide access to robust technology, we were able to offer students the same classes as we did before the pandemic. Secondary students also had new opportunities to take advanced courses and expanded career and technical offerings.

VHCS remained committed to confronting the challenges students face by prioritizing a safe and nurturing learning environment. Each school in the system focused on emphasizing core values that contribute to the growth of character. Students and staff engaged in genuine conversation and reflection around the value that diversity adds to our community. And, we continued to learn and adapt in how we best support students' mental health.

Throughout its 50-year history, VHCS has benefited from the unparalleled support of the community. This year was no different. Parents were engaged in the school experience in ways never before imagined. Our PTOs found incredibly creative ways to support schools. The Vestavia Hills City Schools Foundation made a generous commitment to equipping teachers in providing safe learning experiences. And the City, Chamber of Commerce, and service clubs continued their outstanding, perpetual support.

Success should more often be measured by progress toward, rather than completely accomplishing, a goal. Throughout the year, the VHCS family chose to persevere and remain vigilant in pursuit of our mission. While the work was imperfect, the effort and results were extraordinary. This Annual Report includes many examples of that effort which I believe will bolster confidence in our commitment to strive for excellence no matter the limitations that life brings.

Todd Freeman, Ed.D.
Superintendent



Our Beliefs

Each person deserves to be safe.

Diversity strengthens community.

All people have the right to learn without limits.

Succeeding is an intentional pursuit.

Trusting relationships are the essence of a strong community.

All people deserve respect.

Every person has the responsibility to be a good steward of resources.

Community service is a civic duty.

Every voice deserves to be heard.

Society is strengthened by educated people.

A person's uniqueness is a gift.

Work ethic builds character.

Every person has value.

Leading positive change is the mark of a thriving community.

Faith is vital to one's life.

Transparency inspires trust.

Every person is responsible for his/her actions.

Health and wellness are vital to quality of life.





Teachers of the Year

- **Kim Polson** - Vestavia Hills Elementary
Cahaba Heights
- **Stacey Anderson** - Vestavia Hills Elementary
Dolly Ridge
- **Kim Conn** - Vestavia Hills Elementary
Liberty Park
- **Mandy Smith** - Vestavia Hills Elementary West
- **Amy Cook** - Liberty Park Middle School
- **Madison Escue** - Louis Pizitz Middle School
- **Ben Osborne** - Vestavia Hills High School
Freshman Campus
- **Heather Hurt** - Vestavia Hills Elementary East
(Elementary Teacher of the Year)
- **Jerell Horton** - Vestavia Hills High School
(Secondary Teacher of the Year)



Our School System

- Offered traditional and remote instruction to all students throughout 2020-21 academic year; more than 1,300 students participated full-time in remote learning
- Every student in all grades received a Chromebook to use for learning in person and at home for the entire school year
- All schools participated in professional learning on character education and appreciation of diversity through partnership with Hope Institute
- Created plans to expand Career and Technical Education offerings to include Entrepreneurship on the high school level
- Tripled dual enrollment course offerings through partnership with Jefferson State Community College
- Received “Best Communities in Music Education” award from NAMM Foundation fourth consecutive year
- PTO provided more than half a million dollars in contributions to all schools
- VHCS Foundation donated \$130,000 to support learning initiatives during COVID-19 pandemic





VH Elementary Cahaba Heights

- Established new core values focused on empathy, kindness, grit, responsibility, integrity, and service
- Established a parent-teacher book club which studied *Eight Habits of the Heart for Communities and Families* by Clifton Taulbert
- Male teachers and staff established monthly character lunch group for boys to discuss positive character traits and habits
- Held virtual Heights Heroes 5K to provide support for school and community during pandemic
- Raised more than \$17,000 to American Heart Association and donated more than 850 food items to local food bank during January food drive

VH Elementary Dolly Ridge

- Selected as the only elementary school in America to send a payload into space aboard a United Launch Alliance rocket in Colorado
- Completed construction of new multipurpose field and outdoor eating areas
- Established core values focused on empathy and student responsibility
- Students recognized for STEAM learning skills as Alabama Center for Architecture Dream Architects
- Donated 60 boxes of food to other area schools through Santa's Workshop drive





VH Elementary East

- Adopted the East Eagle as new school touchstone to embody core values of empathy, acceptance, grit, love, and excellence
- Donated more than \$2,500 to VHHS RISE program through East Eagle T-shirt fundraiser
- Recognized among state's top performing schools in Alabama Legislative School Performance Recognition Program
- Fifth Grade Ambassadors organized school-wide donation of thousands of personal hygiene items for Jimmie Hale Mission and Jessie's Place in Birmingham
- Received \$5,000 award from Alabama Legislative School Performance Recognition Program to purchase updated school technology



VH Elementary Liberty Park

- Created new VHELPer student leadership program, beginning with student-led Safety Patrol team and Tour Guide team
- Raised more than \$50,000 for upcoming construction of outdoor learning space, and revitalized Liberty Loop Nature Trail for student use
- Launched new Unsung Hero Award to recognize vital role of school support staff
- Donated more than \$12,500 to American Heart Association, hundreds of books to support a Birmingham-area school library, and hundreds of jackets to support Truckload of Warmth
- Refined school's core values to emphasize respect, empathy, bravery, excellence, legacy, and service



VH Elementary West

- Named a National School of Character and a State School of Character by Character.org
- Updated school's "West Way" core values to reflect principles of kindness, respect, and responsibility
- Held "Maskerade" service learning project to make and donate facemasks and letters of support to healthcare workers and community helpers
- Donated 10,000 food items to local food bank during canned food drive
- Organized donation drive of food, blankets, and toys for pets at Greater Birmingham Humane Society





VH Liberty Park Middle School

- Raised more than \$9,000 for Ronald McDonald House through school's inaugural Color Fun Walk/Run
- All math teams placed first in Muscle Shoals tournament and several other state competitions
- Band and choral programs held school's first virtual holiday performances
- 7th grade English students collaborated internationally with a class in Taiwan on writing and illustration of an e-book
- 8th grade boys' basketball team won school's first Metro South Championship

VH Louis Pizitz Middle School

- Celebrated completion of new 200,000-square-foot campus on Columbiana Road
- Donated \$1,400 to students in Fultondale and Center Point communities for tornado relief
- All math teams finished in first place in every local tournament and in the Alabama-Louisiana-Mississippi math contest; four students qualified for Math League National Championship
- Won All Metro South Championship Award as top athletics program in the conference, including Metro South Championships in 8th grade girls' basketball, boys' cross country, and boys' outdoor track
- Pizitz Majorettes won state championship; boys' cross country and track and field teams won Metro South championships





VH High School & Freshman Campus

- 12 National Merit Finalists, 1 National Merit Semifinalist, 5 National Merit Commended Students
- 72% of seniors offered more than \$41 million in scholarships, a school record
- We the People team won state championship for the 17th consecutive year and won the Unit 5 Award at national competition
- 17 seniors became first VHHS students to graduate with "AP with WE" service learning recognition from College Board
- Math team won Alabama Statewide Mathematics Competition and two national competitions
- VHHS freshman geometry team won state championship
- Vestavia Hills Singers show choir earned Grand Champion honors in three competitions
- RISE raised more than \$136,000 for O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center at UAB
- Freshman Campus students donated more than 3,000 food items to local food bank during canned food drive
- Counseling Department awarded RAMP (Recognized ASCA Model Program) designation by American School Counselor Association

1Rebel Athletics

- 18 teams qualified for postseason play
- Boys' outdoor track, wrestling, and golf teams won state championships
- 13 students won individual state championships in cross country, indoor and outdoor track, diving, and wrestling
- 19 seniors received inaugural "More than 1Rebel" award in recognition of their participation in multiple VHHS sports
- At least 22 students continuing their athletic careers on collegiate level



Excellence in Vestavia Hills

229

seniors graduated with Advanced Academic with Honors diploma

712

students took

88%

of seniors entering at least **78** colleges in **25** states

1,507

AP exams, and

72% of seniors offered scholarships totaling **\$41+** million (school record)

66%

scored a 3 or higher

2020-21 Enrollment Data

7,014

students with a

96.8%

average daily attendance

1,046

Gifted Students

628

English Learner Students

9.36%

Free and Reduced Lunch

370

Extended Day Program Students

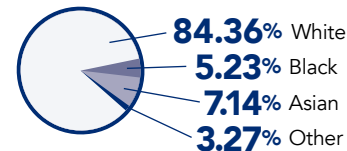
Our students hail from

38

countries and speak

39

languages



2020-21 Financial Data

\$90.2

million - Fiscal Year 2021 Budget

\$6.6

million - Cost of one month's operations

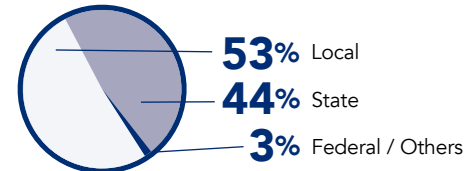
52.05

mills - Ad valorem taxes

\$12,598

Per-pupil expenditure

2021 Funding Sources



Faculty & Staff

937

Total Employees

69

National Board Certified Teachers

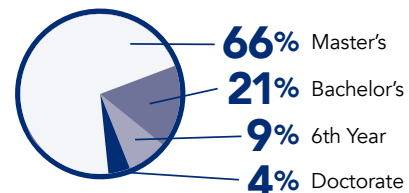
610

Certified / Licensed

327

Classified / Staff

Faculty Educational Qualifications





Vestavia Hills City Schools

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