



VESTAVIA HILLS
CITY SCHOOLS

2017-2018 **ANNUAL REPORT**

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

The 2017-18 school year will be defined as one of the most significant in the history of Vestavia Hills City Schools. The mission of providing opportunities for students to learn without limits has been at the core of the work in our school system. Whether we see the changing face of school facilities or visit a classroom, it is evident that we continue to “grow” in our march toward excellence.

As our student body has grown significantly over the past few years, a capital plan has been in place to provide excellent facilities. Our Board of Education purchased Gresham Elementary School as part of its plan to implement K-5 elementary schools throughout the system beginning with the 2019-20 school year. Construction has dominated the landscape on several campuses this year. Projects were completed at Vestavia Hills Elementary East and Vestavia Hills Elementary Liberty Park. Other projects continue at Vestavia Hills Elementary West and Vestavia Hills Elementary Cahaba Heights.

Our students have continued to grow in their commitment to excellence in service learning, academics, and extracurricular events. Philanthropy was commonplace in our schools including projects to support needs of local, state, national, and international organizations. This year was a record year for scholarships offered to seniors at Vestavia Hills High School. Our academic, arts, and athletic teams competed successfully in state, national, and international competitions.

Teachers in Vestavia Hills have grown as professionals and leaders in the system. Many teachers have led professional development sessions, participated in a Teacher Leaders cohort, or completed advanced degrees and National Board Certifications. A number of teachers earned state and national recognition for their commitment to excellence.

Our system has continued to grow its reputation as one where every school provides exceptional opportunities for students. We welcomed another National Blue Ribbon School to the impressive list of those that have received it in the past.

The coming school year will build on a theme of growth. Construction will include preparing new middle school and elementary school facilities. Our system will complete its five-year accreditation process and gear up for a new strategic plan, both of which will serve to grow our capacity to reach our mission.

Vestavia Hills City Schools is a wonderful place to prepare our children for a future without limits. I look forward with much anticipation to seeing continued growth toward excellence!

Dr. Todd Freeman
Superintendent



Special thanks to Emmie Arendall, Emily Featherston/*Vestavia Voice*, Patty Green, Adam Ricks, and the VHHS Band photographers for select photos contributed to this report.

OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM

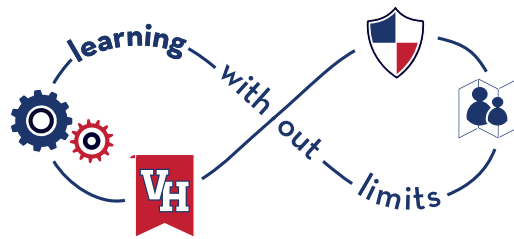


- Developed school restructuring plan for fall 2019 to include opening of ninth grade center, relocation of Pizitz Middle School to Berry campus site, and implementation of K-5 elementary school model throughout district
- Purchased Gresham Elementary School campus to be used as new Vestavia Hills Elementary Dolly Ridge (K-5) campus in fall 2019
- Completed construction projects at Vestavia Hills Elementary Cahaba Heights, Vestavia Hills Elementary Liberty Park, Vestavia Hills Elementary East, and Vestavia Hills Elementary West
- Began new phases of construction at Vestavia Hills Elementary Cahaba Heights, Vestavia Hills Elementary West, and the Berry campus site
- Named to 2018 list of Best Communities for Music Education by National Association of Music Merchants
- Vestavia Hills High School ranked #6 in *U.S. News and World Report* 2018 list of Best High Schools in Alabama
- Named to College Board's AP Honor Roll for increasing access to, and proficiency in, Advanced Placement courses
- Received Excellence in Communications Award for Best Annual Report from Alabama School Public Relations Association
- Completed inaugural Teacher Leaders cohort, providing leadership development opportunity to 30 VHCS teachers
- VHCS Foundation awarded 16 grants totaling more than \$72,000 for professional development, instructional materials, and STEM learning opportunities
- PTO donated more than \$417,000 across all schools to fund projects in technology, arts, classroom enhancements, and facilities

OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM

Strategic Plan

- Provided more creative opportunities for student learning through implementation of AMSTI science curriculum
- Shifted to a more academically rigorous, student-centered model of teaching and learning through student-led conferences and increased parent education meetings
- Embedded cultural studies in K-12 curriculum with Life Skills Training and addition of new student clubs and support teams
- Offered intercultural learning experiences and global teacher professional learning opportunities
- Provided students with opportunities for differentiated learning through alignment of learning experiences and addition of the CRAFT Pathway
- Invested in community relationships through public forums, partnerships with local businesses, and involvement with Help the Hills Coalition



VHCS Teachers of the Year

- VHECH: **Juleigh Green**
VHEC: **Amy McDonald**
VHEE: **Catherine Bentley**
(Elementary Teacher of the Year)
VHELP: **Molly Hagood**
VHEW: **Carla Johnson**
LPMS: **Leigh Mathews**
PMS: **Leah Seng**
VHHS: **Laura Buder**
(Secondary Teacher of the Year)

VESTAVIA HILLS ELEMENTARY CAHABA HEIGHTS

2017-18 FACTS

Principal
Dr. Alicia Hunsberger

Enrollment
466

Faculty & Staff
74



The Courage to Be Creative

At VHECH, our students are constantly pushing us to think outside the box. We love their ideas. Students are encouraged to share their talents with an authentic community in our school. Creativity comes in a variety of forms, whether from our students, teachers, staff, or parents.

- Alicia Hunsberger, Principal

- Opened new VHECH gym in July 2017 and began construction on new library, art room, classrooms, playground, and additional parking
- Created the inaugural VHECH Robotics Team for fifth graders, which placed 2nd and 3rd among 26 elementary schools at the University of Alabama Robotics Competition
- Created the first VHECH Engineering Team for fourth graders and sent team to E3 Engineering Competition at the University of Montevallo
- Provided dozens of students with opportunities to participate in VHECH Leadership Teams
- Held the inaugural Heights' Heroes 5K, raising more than \$40,000 for VHECH PTO
- Raised more than \$18,000 for the American Heart Association through Jump Rope for Heart and Hoops for Heart
- Designated as an Alabama Bicentennial School and received grant to celebrate Alabama's 200th birthday in 2019
- Raised hundreds of dollars in funds and supplies for hurricane relief, local food banks, and the homeless community
- Partnered with New Merkel House to begin weekly Lunch Bunch sessions with senior citizens and fifth graders

VESTAVIA HILLS ELEMENTARY CENTRAL

2017-18 FACTS

Principal
Marian Humphries

Enrollment
786

Faculty & Staff
110



Multiple Paths to a Bold Future

Every learner is different. At VHEC, we encourage students to be leaders of their own learning by making choices that enhance their creativity and ownership along the pathway to success. Our learning focuses on engaging, challenging, and intriguing students to pursue their own interests and goals.

- Marian Humphries, Principal

- Created a virtual reality classroom for immersive learning and worldwide adventures
- Heather Hurt awarded 2018 Excellence in Teaching Award for cross-curricular instruction from the University of Alabama
- Kelly Bagby awarded special recognition from the University of Alabama for Excellence in Teaching Special Education
- Awarded a \$20,000 grant for *The Leader in Me* initiative
- VHEC Robotics Team placed 1st and 4th at the University of Alabama Robotics Competition
- VHEC Engineering Team placed in the E3 Engineering Competition at the University of Montevallo
- Raised more than \$74,000 in the Central Games annual fundraiser for technology and classroom enhancements
- Raised thousands of dollars in funds and supplies for local philanthropic causes and the Alabama Cancer Society



VESTAVIA HILLS ELEMENTARY EAST

2017-18 FACTS

Principal
Dr. Mark Richardson

Enrollment
802

Faculty & Staff
103



A Safe and Nurturing Environment

East's vision statement says that "every student will learn to his/her potential in a safe environment, while experiencing happiness through social growth at school."

We believe that we have not succeeded unless our children are safe, learning, and happy.

- Mark Richardson, Principal

- Angela Hollis named 2017-18 Gifted Specialist of the Year by the Alabama Association for Gifted Children
- Completed construction of new kitchen and cafeteria in fall 2017
- Second grade Continental Math League Team won regional title in 2017-18 international competition
- Hosted inaugural Careers on Wheels Day designed by school counselors
- Raised more than \$12,500 for Kids' Mercedes Marathon, Jump Rope for Heart, and Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Walk
- Donated more than 11,000 food items to local food banks during Caring and Sharing Week
- Raised more than \$2,000 for hurricane relief



VESTAVIA HILLS ELEMENTARY LIBERTY PARK

2017-18 FACTS

Principal
Dr. Ty Arendall

Enrollment
643

Faculty & Staff
101



Unparalleled Community Support

Schools are the focus of the entire Liberty Park community, and the support we receive from our residents is phenomenal. Our families give their time and resources so generously that students are able to give back to the community and even support other local communities in need. The community support is what makes Liberty Park and all of Vestavia Hills such a unique place to live and learn.

- Ty Arendall, Principal

- Named a National Blue Ribbon School (for academic excellence) in September by U.S. Department of Education
- Completed construction and held grand opening on new 14-classroom wing and professional development suite
- Received \$10,000 grant to participate in *The Leader in Me* initiative
- 100 percent of students in grades 3-5 achieved ACT Aspire math proficiency
- Raised more than \$80,000 during "Candy Castle Climb" fall PTO fundraiser
- Launched inaugural Orff Ensemble led by music teacher Melissa McIntyre
- Hosted second annual Curriculum Night showcasing student leadership



VESTAVIA HILLS ELEMENTARY WEST

2017-18 FACTS

Principal
Kim Hauser

Enrollment
762

Faculty & Staff
108



Unparalleled Community Support

The West community is so supportive because they have a genuine love for this school and our children. We have amazing support from PTO, local churches and organizations, and even anonymous parents who just want to help. It allows our teachers to focus on teaching because they know they'll have all the support they need.

- Kim Hauser, Principal

- Designated as an Alabama Bicentennial School and received grant to celebrate Alabama's 200th birthday in 2019
- Hosted Samford University cohort on school citizenship and highlighted the impact of the West Way
- Implemented new Student Ambassadors at West (SAW) Program comprised of 50 third graders who helped with recycling, library support, peer reading, and visitor information
- Girls on the Run team collected donations for YWCA
- Collected more than 8,000 food items for a local food bank
- Raised more than \$8,200 for Juvenile Diabetes Research Fund
- Raised more than \$2,500 for hurricane relief



LIBERTY PARK MIDDLE SCHOOL

2017-18 FACTS

Principal
Tonya Rozell

Enrollment
498

Faculty & Staff
74



The Courage to Be Creative

For LPM teachers, it means encouraging them to think differently about designing engaging instruction and opportunities for learning. For LPM students, it means offering a wide range of options to explore their talents and to learn from their successes as well as their failures.

- Tonya Rozell, Principal

- Hosted former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice during 2018 International Day ceremonies
- Haley Frandsen earned special recognition in 2018 Excellence in Teaching Awards from the University of Alabama
- Keri Howard and Tre' Munger received Volunteer of the Year Awards from Leukemia and Lymphoma Society
- Competition Cheerleading Team won first place (junior non-building category) at AHSAA state championship and placed higher than any other junior high team from Alabama at UCA Nationals
- Implemented Lancer Opportunities period for all students, including opportunities to participate in Scholar's Bowl, Math Team, Digital Photography, Jazz Band, Robotics, and many more
- Launched LPM weather balloon for study of atmospheric science with support from meteorologist Scott Martin
- Lancer Helpers raised \$4,000 for Leukemia and Lymphoma Society through Penny War and school t-shirt sales



LOUIS PIZITZ MIDDLE SCHOOL

2017-18 FACTS

Principal
Meredith Hanson

Enrollment
1,170

Faculty & Staff
129



Appreciation of Diversity

At Pizitz, our Pirate Creed teaches students the importance of character, excellence, and family. We believe that no matter what students look like, where they're from, or what their personal beliefs are, we all stand together as Pirates. For teachers and staff, it means being there for **every** student, **every** day.

- Meredith Hanson, Principal



- Raised more than \$8,000 in partnership with Neverthirst to drill a clean-water well in Africa named in honor of former library aide Sandy Waldrop
- Engaged in year-long water related learning experiences and service projects within science, English language arts, history, and world languages courses
- Kim Bain awarded 2018 Outstanding Music Educator Award from the Alabama Music Educators' Association
- Symphonic Band performed in February at the College Band Director's Regional Conference at the University of South Florida
- Choir performed in Washington, D.C. at the Capitol and other national landmarks
- "Team Invictus" robotics team attended VEX World Robotics Championship after being named Alabama's best middle school robotics team at state competition
- Implemented Pirate Opportunities period for all students to participate in extracurricular learning activities
- Launched high-altitude weather balloon with the support of WeatherBrains meteorologist Bill Murray
- Donated 150 student-made bowls to the Empty Bowl Project through Magic City Harvest



VESTAVIA HILLS HIGH SCHOOL

2017-18 FACTS

Principal
Dr. Tyler Burgess

Enrollment
2,012

Faculty & Staff
243



The Courage to Be Creative

We are constantly looking at the paths students can take to success and what we can do to meet their interests and needs. From offering programs that focus on work-based skills to adding new AP courses and college-level coursework, our focus is enabling students to be successful Rebels now and beyond high school.

- Tyler Burgess, Principal

- Michael Sinnott named Presidential Distinguished Teacher by U.S. Department of Education
- Jamie Stephenson named Alabama Theatre Teacher of the Year at Trumbauer Festival
- Dr. Timarie Fisk named Secondary Art Teacher of the Year by Alabama Art Education Association
- Jessica Sutherland earned special recognition in 2018 Excellence in Teaching Awards from the University of Alabama
- We the People Team won district and state championship for 14th consecutive year
- Speech and Debate Team won state championship
- All three math teams won state championships as well as tournaments in other states; also placed first in the nation in two competitions
- VHHS marching band performed in Dublin, Ireland for St. Patrick's Day Parade
- Honor Choir, Men's Choir, Women's Ensemble, and Just Singin' placed first in their divisions at National Peanut Festival choral competition
- Raised more than \$250,000 for cancer research benefiting the Children's of Alabama Oncology Department and the American Cancer Society
- Raised more than \$56,000 for the Bell Center during Fall Charity Drive
- Collected more than 20,000 food items during annual canned food drive
- Habitat for Humanity funded and built its 13th house
- Donated hundreds of test prep materials, children's books, and historic magazines to Birmingham-area schools and libraries
- Youth Leadership students honored with Blackboard Catalyst Award for creating the first high school student life mobile app in America
- 16 of 24 athletic teams qualified for state playoffs
- Girls' soccer and cheerleading teams won state championships
- Boys' bowling, boys' indoor track, boys' tennis, girls' tennis, and boys' soccer were runners-up in state finals
- Multiple student-athletes won individual athletic state championships
- 16 student-athletes signed to play sports on collegiate level

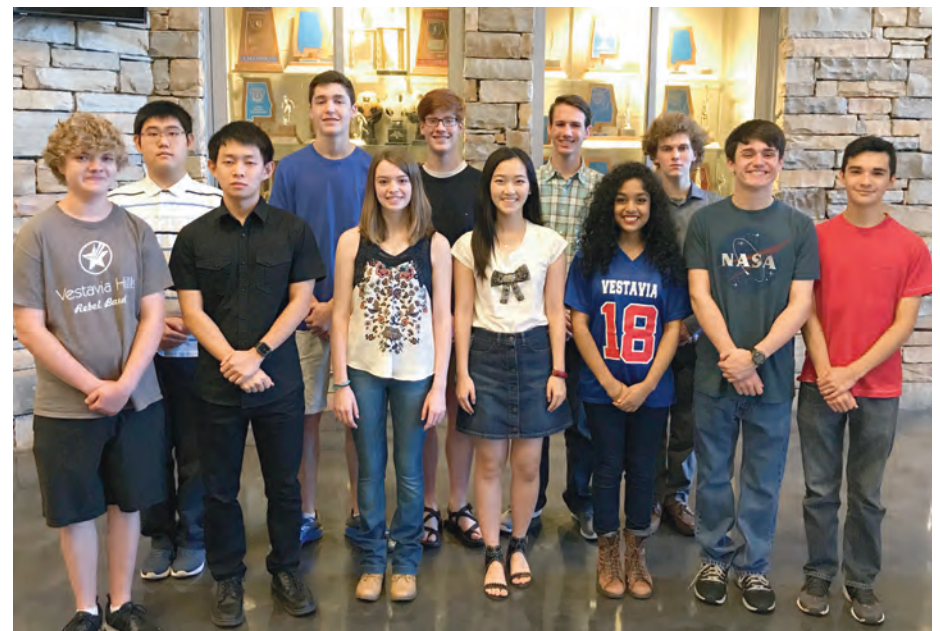






- 222 of 509 seniors graduated with Advanced Academic Honors endorsement
- 91% of graduates entered college; students enrolled in 84 colleges in 25 states
- 59% of graduates offered scholarships, totaling \$32 million (school record)

\$32+
MILLION
Scholarships Offered



13 NATIONAL MERIT
COMMENDED
STUDENTS

12 NATIONAL
MERIT
FINALISTS

IN 2018
424
TOTAL STUDENTS TOOK
AP EXAMS

75%
SCORED
3 or HIGHER

ADVANCED PLACEMENT EXAMS

IN 2018
1,159 AP exams administered

Alabama Average: 43%
Total number of AP subjects: 25
New AP course: AP Seminar

IN 2017
402 students taking AP exams
1,009 AP exams administered
83% scored 3 or higher

IN 2016
359 students taking AP exams
928 AP exams administered
78% scored 3 or higher

WHO WE ARE



2017-18 ENROLLMENT

STUDENTS: 7,192

17-18 **7192**

16-17 **7083**

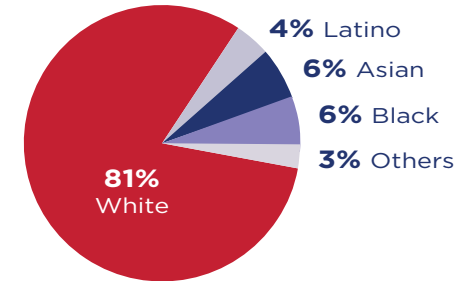
15-16 **7014**

>95%
AVERAGE
DAILY ATTENDANCE



Pre-K: 39 students
English Language services: 134 students
Extended Day Program: 705 students
Free and Reduced Lunch: 8.6%

Ethnicity

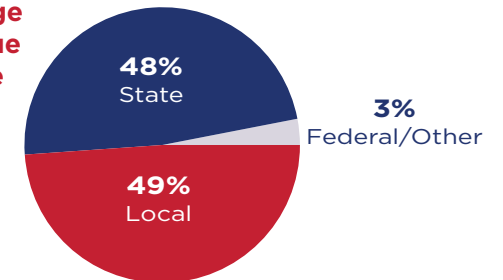


FINANCE

2017-18 BUDGET: \$79.7 million

Cost of one month's operations: \$5.7 million
Ad valorem taxes: 52.05 mills
Per-pupil expenditure: \$10,727

Percentage of Revenue by Source

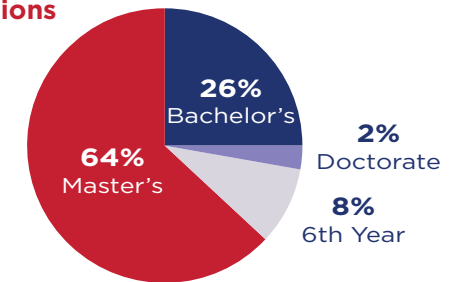


FACULTY/STAFF

TOTAL EMPLOYEES 2017-18: 873
Certified/licensed employees: 569
Non-certified employees: 304

73 NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFIED TEACHERS

Employees' Educational Qualifications





Vestavia Hills Board of Education

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

Vestavia Hills Elementary East Grades K-3

2109 Tyson Drive, 35216
(205) 402-5200

Vestavia Hills Elementary West Grades K-3

1965 Merryvale Road, 35216
(205) 402-5151

Vestavia Hills Elementary Central Grades 4-5

1289 Montgomery Highway, 35216
(205) 402-5300

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

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