

2016-2017  
Annual Report



VESTAVIA HILLS  
CITY SCHOOLS



# TEACHING • LEARNING • SERVING • CELEBRATING

We had much to celebrate during the 2016-17 school year. Our focus remained on strategic plan implementation and our work toward targeted standards for continuous improvement, as well as the pursuit of a comprehensive facility renovation plan.

My charge at the start of the school year to our administrators, faculty, and staff was:

- to lead without limits or titles,
- to be empowered and to use our voices for good,
- to lead by listening,
- to be accessible,
- to take ownership, and
- to be accountable.

As an excerpt from Liz Huntley's spring 2016 speech to our community, I challenged our learning community to speak hope and confidence into our children and to not only champion for those who are unable to do so for themselves but also to teach children how to be self-advocates.

Our students, faculty, and staff continued to capture the best of our efforts to lead, serve, and celebrate *without limits*. We set out to go about our work with the same character and courage we want to inspire in the children we serve. Through the many, many accomplishments recognized in the pages of this document, it is evident that we indeed moved forward in defining ourselves as *a system distinguished by creating a safe and nurturing environment for students, providing opportunities for the courage to be creative, enjoying unparalleled community support, appreciating diversity, and opening multiple paths to a bold future for our students.*

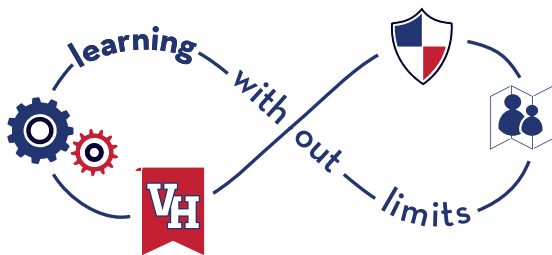
Sheila Phillips  
Superintendent



## WITHOUT LIMITS

## Strategic Plan Highlights 2016-17

- Offered global interactions with other cultures, nations, and students
- Collaborated in alignment of learning experiences, strategies, and assessments
- Improved employee evaluation system and digital capacity for hosting process
- Launched Teacher Leaders Program
- Increased collaboration with Help the Hills Coalition
- Shifted to student-centered, academically rigorous learning and teaching
- Expanded dual enrollment options
- Initiated AMSTI implementation
- Held district professional development with *Leaders of Their Own Learning* author Ron Berger
- Expanded technology by replacing teacher MacBooks, upgrading circuits, migrating to Google Mail, replacing interactive boards in classrooms and piloting digital portfolios
- Piloted world language learning opportunities at elementary and middle schools



## Vestavia Hills City Schools

- Elementary Teacher of the Year: **Deanna Bell**
- Secondary Teacher of the Year: **Brad Waguespack**
- Moody's S&P awarded VHCS strong credit ratings of Aaa and Aa, respectively
- Partnered with City of Vestavia Hills to purchase W.A. Berry High School campus for \$11 million
- Vestavia Hills High School ranked #11 in *U.S. News and World Report's* 2017 list of Best High Schools in Alabama
- VHCS Foundation awarded 15 grants totaling more than \$58,000 for professional development, instructional materials, and STEM learning opportunities
- PTO donated more than \$500,000 to fund projects in technology, arts, classroom enhancements, STEM learning, and facilities
- Held special election and renewed school *ad valorem* taxes
- Initiated comprehensive facilities plan
- Completed parking renovation at VHHS
- Completed baseball field renovation at VHHS
- Completed classroom addition and cafeteria expansion at VHECH
- Completed new kitchen/cafeteria at VHEE
- Completed renovation of classroom wing at VHEW
- Completed additions of new classrooms and lunchroom expansion at VHELP

## Vestavia Hills Elementary East

**T**he vision of Vestavia Hills Elementary East is that “Every VHEE student will learn to his/her potential in a safe environment, while experiencing happiness through social growth at school.” At East, we place an emphasis on safety, learning, and happiness because we believe that these tenets are key to our success as a school. In the 2016-17 school year, our teachers and staff worked tirelessly to deliver on this vision for our growing school. Each day the staff and faculty strive to help students grow academically in a secure and nurturing environment.

### THE VHEE MOTTO: THE GOLDEN RULE

“Treat others like you wish to be treated.”

**Value #1: Kindness · Value #2: Responsibility · Value #3: Honesty · Value #4: Service**

- Donated 11,000 food items during East’s Caring and Sharing Week
  - Raised \$1,256 for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society
  - Established a Lego Lab MakerSpace cart for enhanced student learning
- 
- Teacher of the Year 2016-17: **Deanna Bell**
  - **Mark Richardson** named Outstanding Administrator by Alabama Music Educators Association 2017
  - **Cathy Wall** received Crystal Apple Teacher of the Month Award
  - **Leah Ayers** named to the Alabama School Librarian Association Board



## Vestavia Hills Elementary Liberty Park

**A**t Vestavia Hills Elementary Liberty Park, our vision is for every individual to reach his or her full potential. We intend for every child to achieve success; we desire for every success to be valued. For us, these are more than just words on a page; they represent the heart and soul of a school family that has helped countless children to learn and grow into confident, happy, and successful individuals. The 2016-17 school year gave us an opportunity to grow in many ways, both in our facilities and in the learning opportunities given to our students. Ultimately, we feel our greatest achievement is the strength of our instructional programs guided by committed and talented teachers.



### THE LIBERTY PARK PROMISE

**Do your best...even when no one is watching.  
Be nice to yourself and others...everyone is important.  
Show respect...be thankful for all things.  
Listen to others...and they will listen to you.  
Use self-control...you are responsible for you.  
Be a friend...to have a friend.**

- Tech Club competed at E3 STEM Challenge at the University of Montevallo
- Raised more than \$21,000 for American Heart Association during Jump Rope for Heart
- Hosted inaugural STEM Night program for parents and students
- Completed major construction projects, including new classroom wing and lunchroom expansion

• Teacher of the Year 2016-17: **Nancy Reynolds**



## Vestavia Hills Elementary West

**A**t Vestavia Hills Elementary West, we follow the “West Way.” We believe that we are to model courtesy, respect, and responsibility for our students. Our students, in turn, model it for one another. The faculty and staff at West honor these values in our work each day. Through their dedication to teaching and learning and the superior performance of our students, 2016-17 was truly an exceptional year. Advancements in learning, service, and leadership resulted in our school receiving the National Blue Ribbon School Award. We celebrate our accomplishments with gratitude to all of our students, faculty, staff, and community.

### **COURTESY • RESPECT • RESPONSIBILITY** **The West Way Is the Best Way**

- National Blue Ribbon School 2016-U.S. Department of Education
- 2nd and 3rd grade Math League teams earned highest scores in Alabama; 2nd grade team won the Math League regional competition
- Over 250 students participated in the Kids Mercedes Marathon
- Raised more than \$10,000 in the Juvenile Diabetes Walk; selected as a model school by the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation
- Donated over 7,400 cans of food for local families
- West Girls on the Run team collected items for the Greater Birmingham Humane Society

- Teacher of the Year 2016-17: **Donna Dahl**



## Vestavia Hills Elementary Cahaba Heights

Vestavia Hills Elementary Cahaba Heights is a neighborhood school grounded in a tradition of excellence. Throughout the 2016-17 school year, we worked to facilitate learning opportunities to develop the potential of each child. Our students achieved much through our commitment to staff development, a culture of praise and student recognition, and numerous local events and philanthropic causes. In addition, we expanded the learning opportunities of our students through the completion of several major construction projects on our growing campus.

### THE VHECH PROMISE

**As a person of character, I promise to promote excellence, respect myself and others, offer compassion, make wise choices, include everyone, strive to meet goals, and encourage success.**

- Completed multi-million dollar construction project, including a new gymnasium and lunchroom expansion
  - Instituted Rebel Rallies to recognize student growth in leadership, learning, and service
  - Established 4th and 5th grade student leadership teams
  - Raised more than \$34,000 for school improvements during Fun Run
  - Raised more than \$14,000 for American Heart Association during Jump Rope for Heart
  - Collected more than 1,000 food items during CANuary food drive
- 
- Teacher of the Year 2016-17: **Katie Hicks**



## Vestavia Hills Elementary Central

One of our goals at Vestavia Hills Elementary Central is for all teachers and students to take responsibility and ownership of their learning in order to reach greater heights. We encourage our students to be accountable to themselves and to one another for continuous growth. Our faculty and staff share that responsibility with the students by providing the best classroom environments and learning strategies possible. In the 2016-17 school year, our students, teachers, and families demonstrated their commitment to this goal through our many collective accomplishments.

### THE VHEC MOTTO

**We do the right thing,  
because it's the right thing to do.**

- Started Continental Math League
  - Established a STEM lab
  - VHEC Robotics Club ranked first in The University of Alabama Robotics Competition
  - Student ranked nationally in the Continental Math League Pythagorean Division
  - 4th grade students won the Dream Architecture Contest sponsored by the American Institute of Architects
  - Launched VHEC Coffee Club to provide exceptional education students an opportunity to participate in a service learning project
  - 5th grade student won the Alabama Arbor Day State Art Competition
  - Raised more than \$70,000 in The Central Games Fundraiser for technology and classroom enhancements
  - Raised more than \$3,000 for A-Team Ministries and the Alabama Cancer Society
  - Collected and donated thousands of school supplies to serve children of local ministries
- 
- Teacher of the Year 2016-17: **Kim Jaggard**
  - **Rachel Knain** and **Michelle Coxwell** accepted to Educators Space Camp at U.S. Space and Rocket Center





## Liberty Park Middle School

Liberty Park Middle School's mission is to discover and cultivate the unique gifts of the young adults in our care. In our school community, we are committed to fostering innovative and creative educational experiences for all. The 2016-17 school year ushered in many unique experiences for students. Throughout the year, our faculty and students explored new avenues for learning, leadership, and service. It is all part of our belief that we should strive to be a school where students will serve with honor, respect, and loyalty.



### Lancers serve with honor, respect, and loyalty...Live Like a Lancer!

- Hosted Leading by Learning Tours for PTO and City of Vestavia Hills leaders
  - Competition cheer team won second state championship
  - Students published *A Lancer's Life*, the first edition of the school newspaper
  - Hosted Holocaust survivor and author Marion Blumenthal Lazan
  - Five students placed as semifinalists in the Alabama Letters about Literature Contest
  - Choirs received Superior ratings at state assessments
  - Competition cheerleading team finished in the Top 10 at UCA Nationals
  - Raised more than \$5,600 in Leukemia and Lymphoma Society Penny Wars, finishing as one of the top fundraising schools in the LLS Alabama/Florida Gulf Coast chapter
- 
- Teacher of the Year 2016-17: **Lindsay Corley**



## Louis Pizitz Middle School

**A**t Louis Pizitz Middle School, the guiding principle of faculty, staff, administrators, and students is The Pirate Creed. The Pirate Creed calls us to lead where others follow through the values of character, excellence, and family. In the 2016-17 school year, our students led academically on unparalleled levels, earning numerous awards and accolades for the school. We achieved excellence through nationally recognized choral and band programs, prize-winning art achievements, and faculty members who continued to develop their own learning alongside our students. As Pizitz Pirates, we are proud of where we have been and where we are going.

### **THE PIRATE CREED** Character · Excellence · Family *Where Pirates Lead, Others Follow*



- Barthel Metro South All-Sports Trophy 2016-17
- Math Team winners of the Muscle Shoals Math Tournament
- Stargazers Robotics Team winners of Excellence and Design Awards
- Jazz Band and Percussion Ensemble performed at Alabama Music Educators' Association Conference
- German students experienced immersive language learning at the Concordia Language Village
- Students received honorable mention in the Alabama State Superintendent's Art Exhibit
- Jazz Band and Symphonic Band placed first in OrlandoFest band competition; Symphonic Band named Grand Champion
- Boys' Indoor Track and Field Team earned its fourth consecutive state championship
- Girls' Cross Country and Boys' Outdoor Track and Field Teams earned Metro South Championships
- Nine students wrote and published novels through their language arts classes
- Drama club presented the musical *Fame*
- Sarvagna Velidandla won first place in the 2017 Alabama State Scholastic Chess Tournament
- Jason DiRusso represented Alabama at the National Geography Bee in Washington, DC



- Teacher of the Year 2016-17:  
**Diane McAliley**
- **Hope Levio** selected to write the History of Math test for the 2017 Mu Alpha Theta National Math Convention
- **Jason Williams** named Metro South Girls Cross Country Coach of the Year 2016-17
- **Kathy Rogers** named a Duolingo Education Ambassador
- **Larry Gibson** selected as the Alabama Art Educator of the Year 2016-17

## Vestavia Hills High School

**A**t Vestavia Hills High School, our desire is for students to become responsible and compassionate shapers of society. We pride ourselves in living out the “Rebel Edge” in all we do. Through rigorous and varied curriculum, community service, and character development, we work to foster personal growth. The 2016-17 school year stood as a testament to the hard work and dedication of the students, parents, and teachers. Students participated in more early college learning options, raised more money for philanthropic causes, and earned more postsecondary scholarship offers than ever before. Through the diligence of our students, faculty, and staff, we sustained our tradition of excellence and set the bar high for the next generation of Vestavia Hills High School Rebels.

### UNITY · PHILANTHROPY · EXCELLENCE You Play 1Rebel, You Play Us All

- We the People team won the state competition and finished 8th in the nation
  - Raised more than \$280,000 during Relay for Life
  - SGA raised more than \$50,000 for Unless U during fall philanthropy drive
  - Sent two students to the USA Math Olympiad
  - First Seals of Biliteracy awarded to 36 students in World Languages department
  - Scholars Bowl team won district division
  - Collected more than 22,000 food items during SGA canned food drive
  - Senior College Bus Tours for seniors to tour school
  - Math Team won tournaments at University of Georgia, Columbus State, and LSU, and two students qualified for the USA Math Olympiad
  - Speech and Debate Team named 2017 state champions, won the district tournament, and five students qualified for National Forensic Tournament
  - Habitat for Humanity built 12th house and raised \$22,000
  - Josh Stevens named 7A Bryant-Jordan Achievement Award winner
  - Wrestling team won state championships in Duals and Traditional
  - Boys Bowling, Boys Golf, and Girls Soccer teams were state championship runners-up
  - JV Boys' Cross Country Team won first place at the Jesse Owens Invitational
  - Competition cheerleading team placed fourth at UCA Nationals
  - Boys' Basketball Team won regional championship and played in state semifinals
  - James Edwards, individual state wrestling champion; Walter Thomas, shot put state champion; and James Sweeney, 3200m state champion
  - Added 14 new classes at VHHS
- 
- Teacher of the Year 2016-17: **Brad Waguespack**
  - **Peter Braasch** inducted into AHSAA Hall of Fame
  - **Amy Maddox** named Alabama History Teacher of the Year
  - **Todd Taylor** received 2016 Edyth May Sliffe Award for Distinguished Mathematics Teaching in Middle and High School
  - **Tyler Burgess** named Administrator of the Year by the Alabama World Languages Association
  - **Brigid Littleton** named 2016 NFHS Section 3 Coach of the Year
  - **Patrick Davis** named ASWA 7A Basketball Coach of the Year
  - **Laura Buder** named Alabama World Language Teacher of the Year and received the Germany Embassy Teacher of Excellence Award from American Association of Teachers of German
  - **Deana Goodwine** named Southern Business Education Association Secondary Teacher of the Year



**\$31+**  
**MILLION**  
 Scholarships Offered



**7** NATIONAL  
 MERIT COMMENDED  
 STUDENTS

**17** NATIONAL  
 MERIT  
 SCHOLARS

## CLASS OF 2017

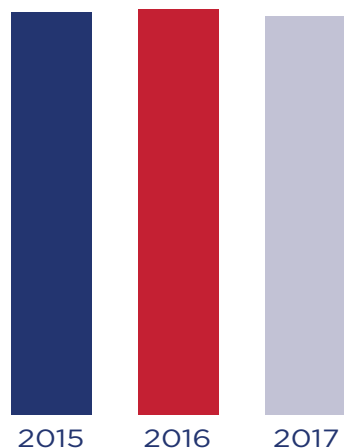
Graduation Rate:	<b>95%</b>
Graduates accepted by at least one of their top three college choices:	<b>98%</b>
Graduates who were offered scholarships:	<b>67%</b>
Graduates who took a college course before graduation:	<b>53%</b>
Students who took dual enrollment courses:	<b>112</b>
Seniors who scored a 30 or higher on the ACT:	<b>26%</b>



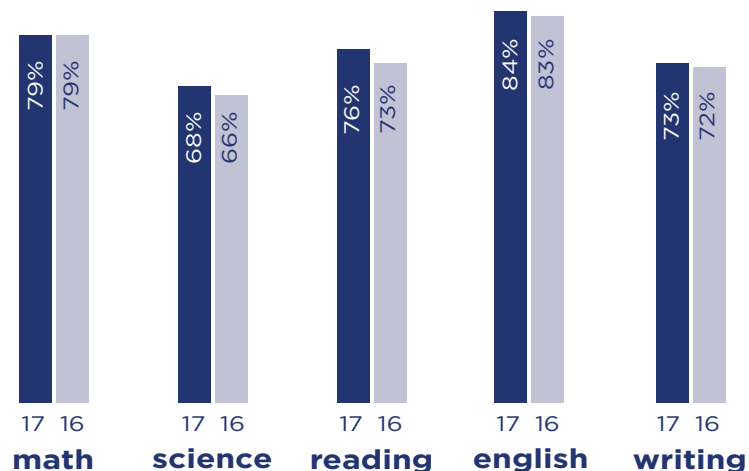
# TEST SCORES

## ACT Composite

2015 average: 25.3  
 2016 average: 25.5  
 2017 average: 24.8



## ACT Aspire Subject Proficiency



## ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) EXAMS

**IN 2017:**

**466**

**STUDENTS TOOK**

**1,007**

**AP EXAMS**

**83%**

**SCORED**

**3 OR HIGHER**

**24** TOTAL NUMBER OF AP SUBJECTS

**IN 2016:**

**359** STUDENTS TOOK

**928** AP EXAMS

**78%** SCORED 3 OR HIGHER

**IN 2015:**

**316** STUDENTS TOOK

**859** AP EXAMS

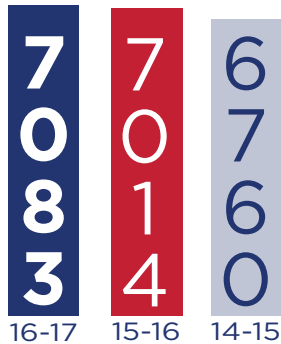
**87%** SCORED 3 OR HIGHER

# WHO WE ARE

## 2016-17 ENROLLMENT

**STUDENTS: 7,083**

VHECH:	421
VHEC:	795
VHEE:	824
VHELP:	633
VHEW:	789
LPMS:	484
PMS:	1,114
VHHS:	2,023



## FINANCE

**2016-17 BUDGET: \$89.4 million**

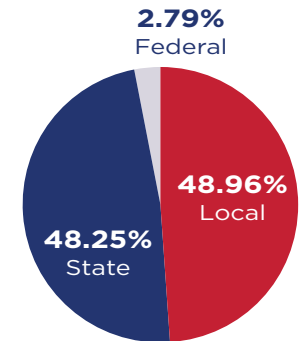
Cost of one month's operations: \$5,780,862  
 Months of Operating Balance on hand: 4.54

*Ad Valorem* taxes: 52.05 mills

Per-pupil expenditure: \$ 10,727  
 State average: \$ 9,213

Total district debt: \$ 77,094,433  
 Debt per student: \$ 11,108

## Percentage of Revenue by Source



**95.9% AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE**

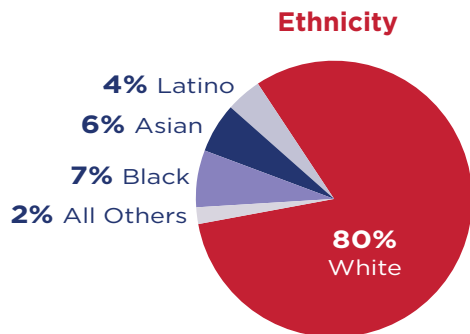
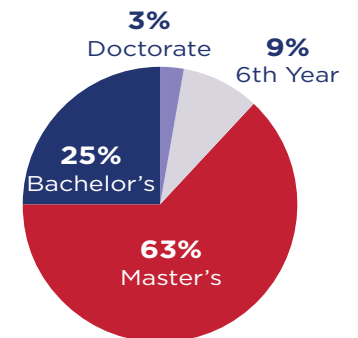
Pre-K students:	59
Students receiving English Language services:	113
Students in Extended Day Program:	671

Free and Reduced Lunch: 10.7%

## FACULTY/STAFF

**TOTAL EMPLOYEES 2016-17: 928**  
 Certified/licensed employees: 616  
 Non-certified employees: 312

## Employee's Educational Qualifications



**13 AVERAGE YEARS OF FACULTY EXPERIENCE**



# WITHOUT LIMITS

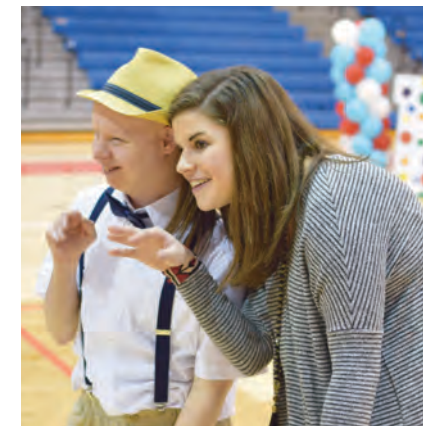
It is the bar we set for ourselves  
at Vestavia Hills City Schools.

We challenge our teachers to **TEACH** without  
limits and our students to **LEARN** without limits.

Each one of us in our district no matter our title  
is called to **SERVE** and **LEAD** without limits.

At the culmination of each year, we reflect  
on the year's accomplishments  
to **CELEBRATE** without limits.

The titles, awards, and accolades are possible  
because of the dedication our faculties and  
staffs bring to our students everyday  
without limits.





VESTAVIA HILLS  
CITY SCHOOLS

### **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