



CLEVELAND PLAN PROGRESS REPORT 2023



Using our Strong Foundation to Drive Transformation

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Justin Bibb Mayor - City of Cleveland

Following a year of leadership changes across our city, we are heading into 2024 with a new group of energized visionaries to guide our community into a new phase. That includes Dr. Warren Morgan as CEO of Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD), Andrew McRae serving as Breakthrough Charter Schools' new CEO and other new leaders emerging in education throughout the city.

There is no question that the September 2023 report card did not meet the standards we hope to achieve for our students. The overall graduation rate has yet to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, nor has college enrollment for CMSD students within a year of graduation. Unfortunately, fewer students engage in college-level coursework while still in high school, and fewer Cleveland students graduate from college. This is the year our community must reignite the commitment to work together in support of high-quality learning for all of Cleveland's kids. We must do better for our students and for our city.

Despite the challenges we face, there are some bright spots to consider. Enrollment in high-quality preschool programs made a significant jump this year and is rebounding toward pre-pandemic levels. Innovative retention programs at area universities like Cleveland State University are showing strong outcomes with more students moving on to their second year of college. Our own Cleveland READS initiative to boost engagement with reading was also a tremendous success. In partnership with Cleveland Public Library, Clevelanders read 1.5 million books during the yearlong campaign for a cumulative total of more than 10 million minutes of reading time. This is an incredible start to community wide efforts to address our low literacy rates.

During his first State of the Schools address, Dr. Morgan set ambitious core measures for CMSD to meet over the next five years. These include 65 percent of K-8 students achieving proficiency in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math and 55 percent of high school students achieving proficiency in ELA and Math. Dr. Morgan also called for 90 percent of high school graduates to be enrolled in college, enlist in services to protect our country, or employed. Dr. Morgan and CMSD's goals are important milestones on the journey to making CMSD a system of high-quality schools.

We can achieve these goals and more if we work together to support our scholars and educators. We know that our students in Cleveland can achieve great things, and our success in improving the educational outcomes for our students is paramount to our city's future progress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Justin M. Bibb".

Justin M. Bibb
Mayor, City of Cleveland
Chair, Cleveland Transformation Alliance Board of Directors



Meghann Marnecheck
Executive Director,
Cleveland Transformation Alliance

Reflecting on my last four years as the Cleveland Transformation Alliance (CTA) executive director, I am struck by the recent leadership changes we have witnessed. During this time, CTA has helped to transition the first change in the Mayor’s Office since the inception of Cleveland’s Plan for Transforming Schools, and most recently, a new CEO at the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) and Breakthrough Public Schools.

With these changes, CTA is noting the opportunity to consider our work and impact. The 2022 Cleveland Plan Progress Report was a more comprehensive review noting the 10th anniversary of the Cleveland Plan. This 2023 report is a more abbreviated version. The members of CTA’s Board of Directors and staff will review this report before the next publication to ensure that we share needed and wanted information and that it is in a helpful format for our community. More to come.

The data you will see reflected in the following pages demonstrates a community still working to recover from the devastating impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on all levels of education, from early childhood to K-12 and post-secondary. The early signs of recovery that we do see give hope for our future outcomes and are a testament to the dedicated educators who enter classrooms and work for the well-being of our students each day. Their innovative approaches and tireless work to move the needle are beginning to show some hopeful indicators. Enrollment in high-quality early childhood programs is up. Enrollment in our public schools, both CMSD and partnering charters, is stable. And students in post-secondary education returning for their second year are at an all-time high.

Still, we know that there is much work to be done, not the least of which is to improve the overall high school graduation rate. As a community, we must recognize the importance of getting enrollment in high-quality early childhood education back up to pre-pandemic levels; we must work to ensure that our students are prepared to enter post-secondary education, a career, or the military, and if the student chooses post-secondary education that they persist through to graduation.

We cannot rely on our school alone to do this work. As stated in the refreshed Cleveland Plan, responsibility for its implementation rests with the full community. Recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic is no different. Our students, our children, deserve and expect nothing less.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Meghann Marnecheck".

Meghann Marnecheck
Executive Director,
Cleveland Transformation Alliance

The Cleveland Transformation Alliance

In early spring 2021, **Cleveland Transformation Alliance** began a reflection process in preparation for the 10th anniversary of the original **Cleveland Plan for Transforming Schools**. In collaboration with a broad mix of community stakeholders — parents and families, civic leaders, and education advocates — the **Refreshed Cleveland Plan for Transforming Schools** was published in October 2021, emphasizing the need for educational equity and joyful learning as central tenants of a commitment to transforming Cleveland’s public education landscape.

Using the concept of a *building foundation*, the **Refreshed Cleveland Plan** updated the four original goals of the **Cleveland Plan**, adding a fifth pillar to embed *educational equity as a priority* for all public district and public charter schools in the city.

The Cleveland Transformation Alliance is the fourth pillar, charged with ensuring that the community continues to prioritize the goals of the **Cleveland Plan**, that the community is progressing toward those goals, and that the information is being reported to the community equitably and purposefully.



Early Learning

As previously reported, COVID had a significantly negative impact on Cleveland’s early learning system. As the following indicates, we are beginning to see positive signs of recovery but have a long way to go to stabilize the system.

Early learning in the **Cleveland Plan** is spearheaded by **PRE4CLE**, a collective impact initiative created to support the rapid expansion of high-quality preschool opportunities in Cleveland. PRE4CLE is led by the **Cleveland Early Childhood Compact**, a public-private leadership body that includes the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, Cuyahoga County Office of Early Childhood/Invest in Children, the City of Cleveland, Starting Point, Cleveland’s high-quality preschool providers, and a broad set of community partners committed to working together to expand access to high-quality preschool programs and strengthen kindergarten readiness in Cleveland.



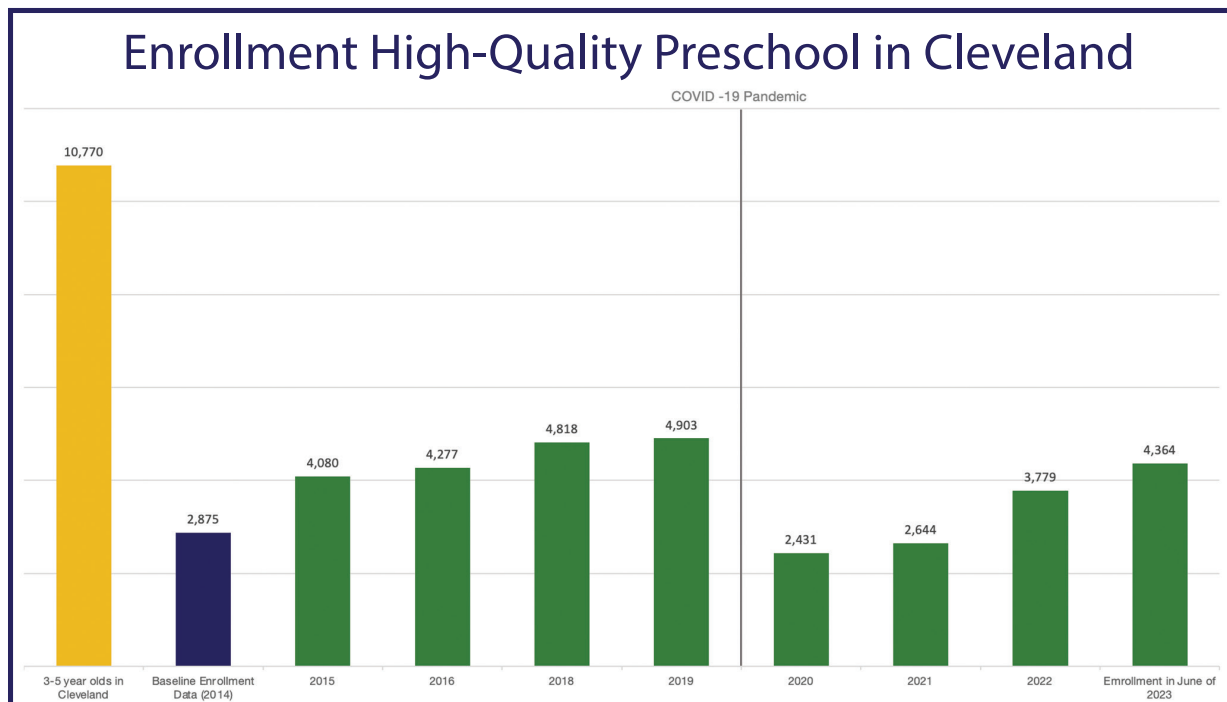
Since 2020, Cleveland has seen a steady rise in enrollment in high-quality preschool, and as of June 2023 has now seen an almost full rebound from pre-pandemic levels, with approximately 43 percent of preschoolers enrolled according to data provided by **Starting Point**.



Additionally, kindergarten readiness has started to rebound from the impact of the pandemic, with 19.3 percent of children entering kindergarten in CMSD fully prepared in the fall of 2022, as measured by **Ohio’s Kindergarten Readiness Assessment**, compared to 15.6 the year prior. This number remains lower than the pre-pandemic level of 23.3 percent of children reaching kindergarten readiness.



Early Learning



COVID-19 Recovery Snapshot

The COVID pandemic exposed the fragility of the early learning system nationwide. In Cleveland, the early learning system has continued to rebound post covid, with enrollment numbers fully rebounding to pre-pandemic levels. However, Kindergarten Readiness Assessment results show that children have been negatively affected by the long-term implications of the pandemic, with language and development scores lagging. Workforce development has also continued to be a pain point post-pandemic, with wages remaining stagnant for the child care sector despite wages in almost every other sector climbing.

School Enrollment

The **Cleveland Plan** portfolio schools includes all CMSD schools and charter schools that have applied to be part of the Cleveland Plan and have demonstrated a commitment to collaboration and high quality education. Since 2012 the number of participating charter schools has increased from 7 to 17.*

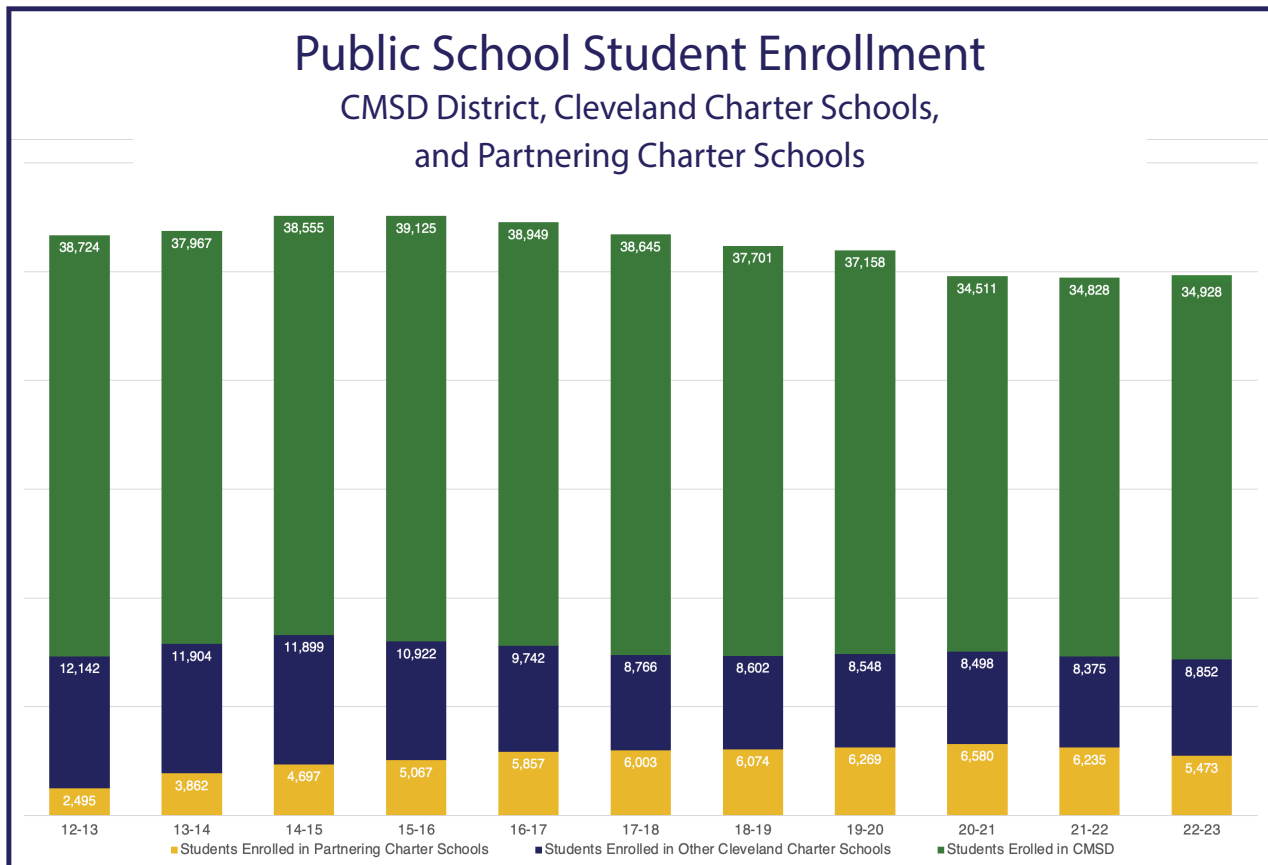
The number of students enrolled in Cleveland public schools slightly increased following the launch of the Cleveland Plan. However, overall enrollment began to decline in 2019-20 due in part to a decline on school age children and families living in Cleveland; the first years of COVID accelerated this trend. However, in the past two years overall enrollment has stabilized.

COVID-19 Recovery Snapshot

Breakthrough Public Schools is committed to supporting student success from Kindergarten through Career. The Beyond Breakthrough Alumni Success Network was established in 2021 to empower every Breakthrough graduate to earn financial freedom, personal fulfillment, and a life of impact and opportunity. The program, driven by a commitment to further education and career attainment, focuses on building a supportive network of alumni through mentoring high school and postsecondary students as they pursue their goals, providing unique career exploration programming for 7th – 12th graders, and delivering ongoing opportunities for BPS alumni to hone their college and career readiness.



School Enrollment

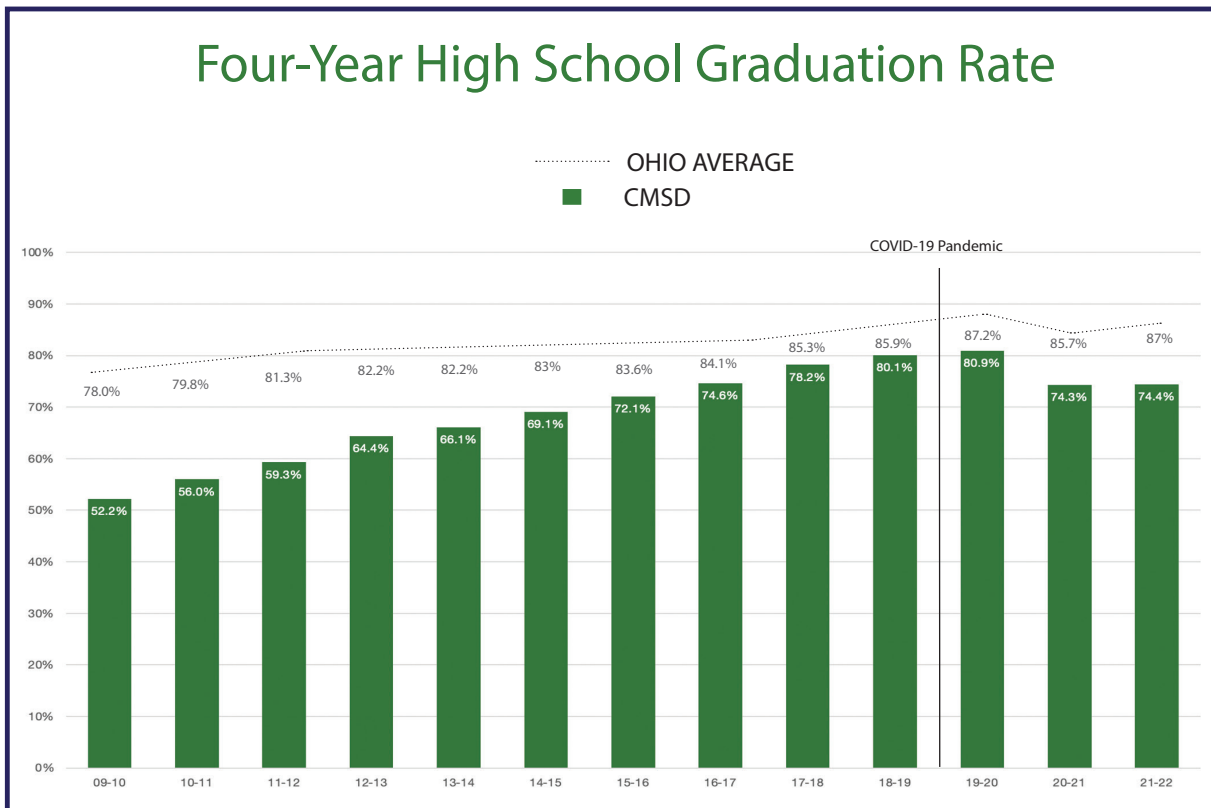


*The following is a list of CMSD partnering charter schools during the 2022–2023 school year that have demonstrated a commitment to *quality education standards* set forth by the **Charter Review Protocol** established to monitor the growth and quality of charter schools within the boundaries of the Cleveland school district:

- *Citizens Academy Southeast*
- *Citizens Leadership Academy*
- *Cleveland College Preparatory School*
- *Hope Academy Northwest Campus (DBA Northwest School of the Arts)*
- *Horizon Science Academy Cleveland*
- *The Intergenerational School*
- *Lakeshore Intergenerational School*
- *Menlo Park Academy*
- *Near West Intergenerational School*
- *Northeast Ohio College Preparatory School*
- *Stepstone Academy*
- *Village Preparatory School Cliffs*
- *Village Preparatory School Willard*
- *Village Preparatory School Woodland Hill*
- *Wings Academy*

Graduation Rate

One of the most dramatic impacts of implementing the **Cleveland Plan** has been the increase in high school graduation rates for CMSD students. When the Plan was adopted in 2011, the graduation rate was only 52 percent. By 2021, the graduate rate had increased to 80.9 percent, an extraordinary gain of 28.7 percentage points in just ten years. As was the case nationally, CMSD's graduation rate declined significantly during and after the COVID-19 pandemic to 74.2 percent for 20-21 and 74.4 percent for 2021-22.



New CMSD CEO, Dr. Warren Morgan has established an aggressive target to have 90% of high school graduates enrolled in college, employed, or enlisted. Dr. Morgan plans to achieve this goal within the next five-years.

COVID-19 Recovery Snapshot

The **Cleveland Browns Foundation** launched [Stay in the Game! Attendance Network](#) in 2019 in partnership with the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce and Harvard's Proving Ground. The Network currently represents more than 51 districts, including CMSD, impacting more than 260,000 students.

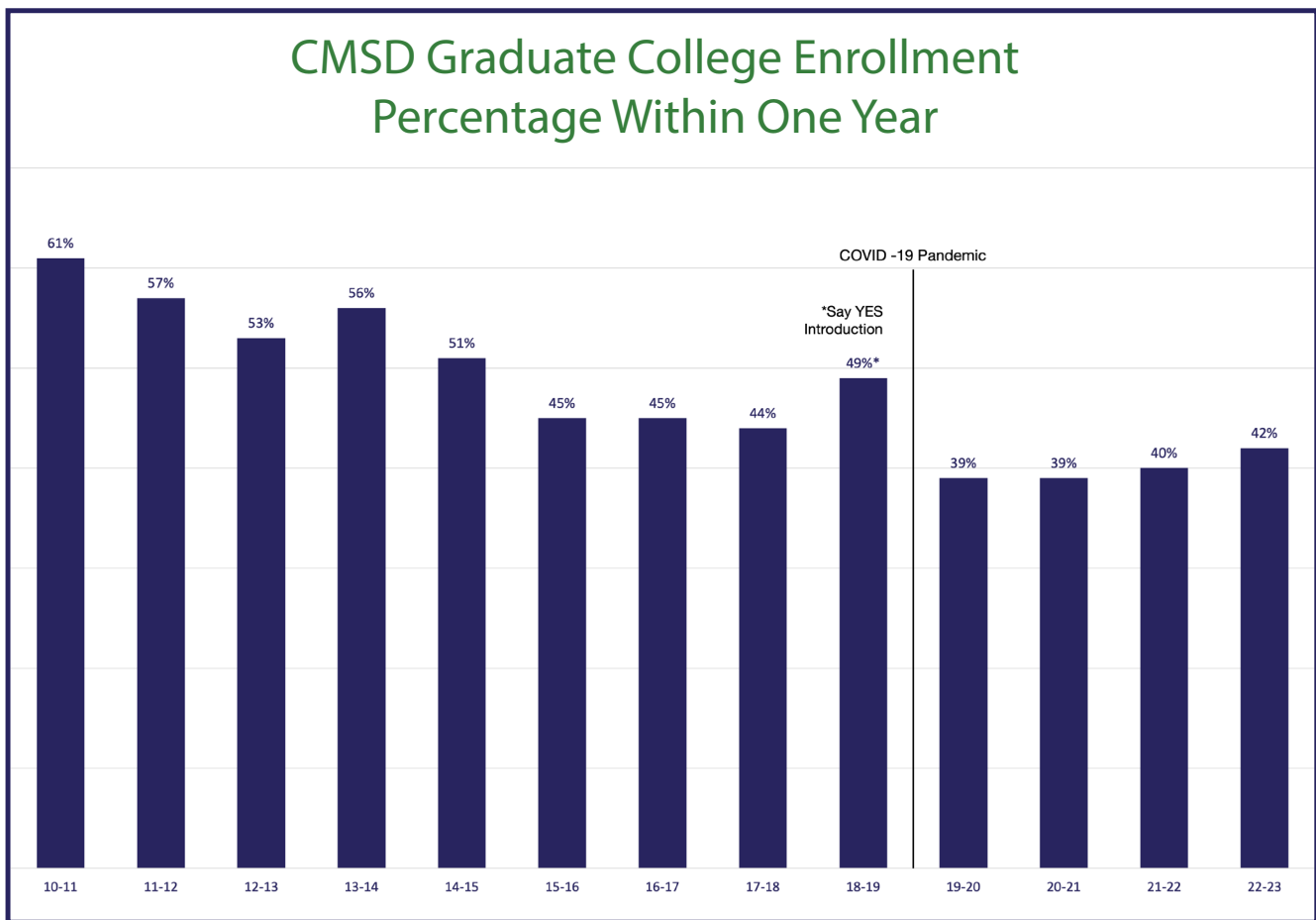
Districts in the Stay in the Game! Attendance Network had lower chronic absence rates for the 2022-23 school year than the statewide rates. Consistent school attendance has broad benefits, including engaged learning, improved mental health, and positive impacts on families and communities. When all those involved – from schools, families, students, and communities – come together, they can help keep kids in the game for future success.

College & Career Readiness

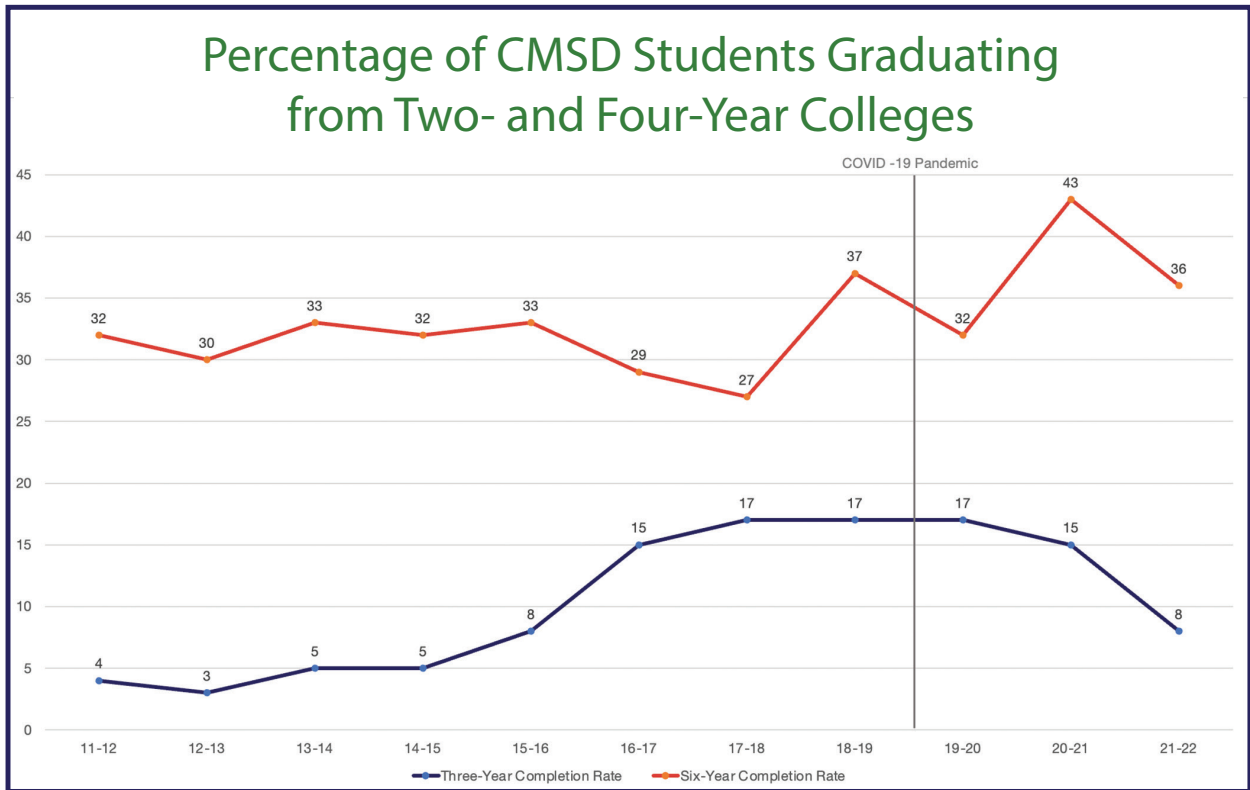
The post-COVID data related to post-secondary enrollment, first year persistence and completion is mixed but guardedly encouraging.

Post-Secondary Enrollment Rates are Up Since 2020

As previously reported, we saw a significant increase in CMSD post-secondary enrollment in the first year of Say Yes scholarships from 44 percent in 2019 to 49 percent in 2020. Unfortunately, immediately after COVID enrollment dropped to 39 percent. Over the past three years, enrollment has increased to 42 percent, still seven percentage points below the 2020 level.



Post-secondary graduation is trending downward. The six-year graduation rate hit an all-time high in 2020-2021, however is back on the decline. The three-year graduation rate from two-year institutions has not recovered since the pandemic, and had remained stagnant since 2017-2018. Please see the chart on page 10 for reference.



* Data reflected in this box is connected to a cohort of students that graduated high school three to six years prior to the reporting year.

COVID-19 Recovery Snapshot

Persistence Rates are Up -

It is important to note that first-year retention has reached an all-time high at *61 percent* for the Class of 2021, demonstrating strong support for students from our higher education partners and perseverance from our CMSD graduates.



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*Denotes Cleveland Progress Plan Committee Members

For more information on the Cleveland Transformation Alliance and Cleveland's Plan for Transforming Schools visit myCLEschool.org.
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**Cleveland
Transformation
Alliance**

Quality Schools for All Children