

# South Delta School District Standard & Poor's Observations

## South Delta School District

106 Athletic Drive  
Rolling Fork, MS 39159  
(662)873-4302

### Quick Facts

Enrollment (2005)  
**1,348**

Number of Schools (2004)  
**3**

County  
**Sharkey**

Locale Type  
**Rural, Outside CBSA**

Achieved AYP for  
Reading in 2005?  
**Yes**

Achieved AYP for  
Math in 2005?  
**Yes**

Additional performance  
information for the following  
subject areas can be found on  
[www.SchoolMatters.com](http://www.SchoolMatters.com):

- English II
- English Language Arts
- Biology
- History

### About this Report

This report analyzes academic, financial, and demographic data for South Delta School District and compares its key performance indicators with state averages and trends. Additional comparisons can be made online at [www.SchoolMatters.com](http://www.SchoolMatters.com). The data analyzed for this report are for the academic years 1999-00 through 2004-05, though they may vary by indicator based on availability. Standard & Poor's has combined multiple data points to calculate a variety of unique ratios for this analysis; however, no one particular ratio should be misconstrued as an overall representation of the district's academic or financial performance. Instead, this report is intended to help the education community better understand the complex relationship between achievement, spending, and demographics, all of which contribute to the district's Return on Resources<sup>®</sup>.

### Summary Analysis

When compared to the state as a whole, the district produces exceptionally below average Reading and Math Proficiency (RaMP), with average core spending per student. Additional indicators of student performance, including scores and participation rates on college preparatory tests, are analyzed in detail in the body of this report, where available.

Where students with special needs are concerned, the district enrolls an exceptionally above average percentage of economically disadvantaged students, and a moderately below average proportion of students with disabilities. The district's proportional enrollment of English language learners is average.

Data Highlights		
	This District	State Average
<b>Student Performance (2005)</b>		
Reading and Math Proficiency (RaMP)	56.9%	76.2%
Reading Proficiency	59.3%	77.7%
Math Proficiency	54.6%	74.7%
<b>Spending (2003)</b>		
Core Spending (Per Student)	\$5,473	\$5,205
<b>Enrollment of Students with Special Needs</b>		
Economically Disadvantaged (2005)	99.8%	56.5%
English Language Learners (2005)	0.0%	0.7%
Students with Disabilities (2005)	10.5%	13.8%
<b>Community Profile (2005)</b>		
Median Household Income	\$34,943	\$52,733
Adults with a Bachelor's Degree	13.1%	18.4%
Single-parent Households with Children	24.8%	16.1%

Additional Mississippi Reports Available on [www.SchoolMatters.com](http://www.SchoolMatters.com):

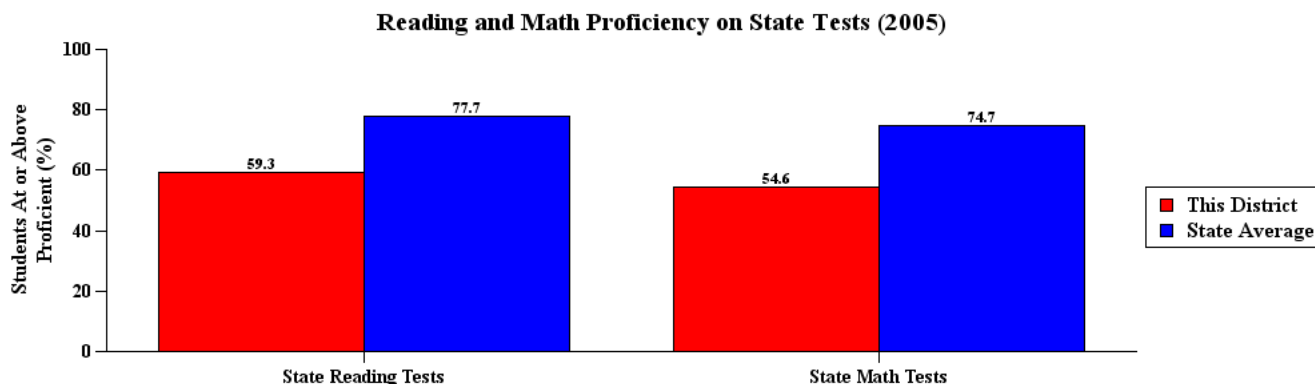
#### [Outperforming Districts](#)

More detailed information on data definitions and sources can be found using the [SchoolMatters glossary](#).

# STUDENT PERFORMANCE

## How do the district's reading and math proficiency rates on state tests compare?

The district's 2005 reading proficiency is 59.3%, which is exceptionally below the state average of 77.7%. The district's 2005 math proficiency is 54.6%, which is exceptionally below the state average of 74.7%.



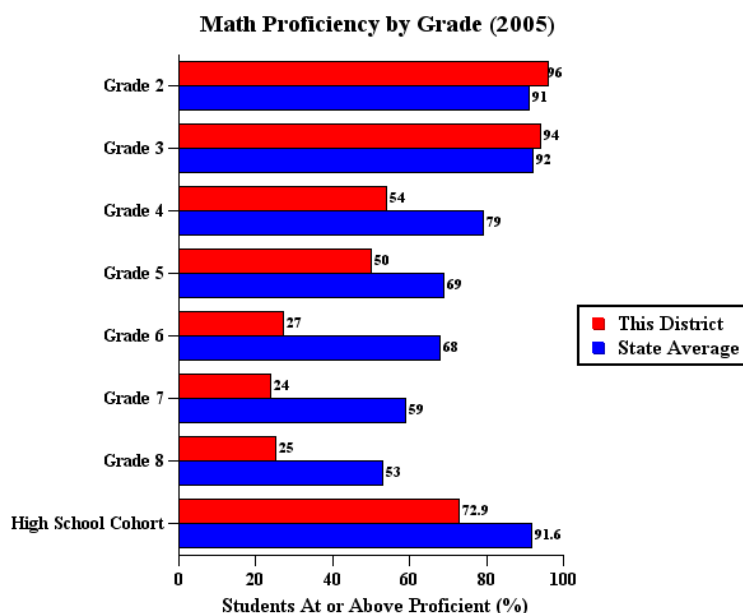
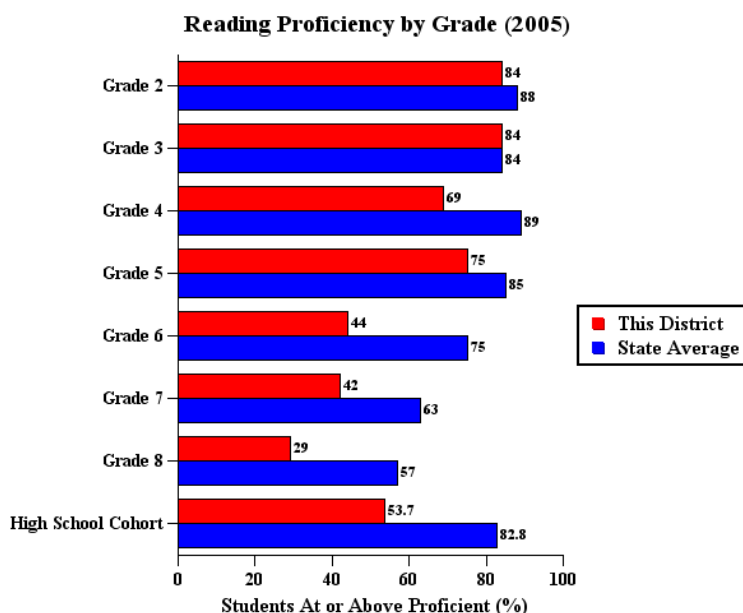
## How has the district's performance on state reading and math tests changed over time?

The goal of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) is that 100% of students will demonstrate proficiency on all state reading and math tests, across all tested grade levels, by 2014. In 2005, the district's overall Reading and Math Proficiency (RaMP) was 56.9%, which has increased by an average of 4.9 percentage points per year from 2002. The district will need to increase overall proficiency by an average of 4.8 percentage points per year between 2005 and 2014 to meet the goal of 100% proficiency in reading and math combined.

Reading and Math Proficiency on State Tests - Trend				
	2002	2003	2004	2005
Reading and Math Proficiency (RaMP)	42.2%	63.1%	54.0%	56.9%
Reading Proficiency	40.6%	70.0%	55.5%	59.3%
Math Proficiency	43.7%	54.1%	52.4%	54.6%

## Does Reading and Math Proficiency (RaMP) vary across tested grades?

It is also helpful to disaggregate district-wide proficiency rates by tested grade to identify achievement gaps across grade levels. The following figures show reading and math proficiency rates for each tested grade.



## How do the district's high school completion and college preparation test results compare?

The accompanying table compares the district's high school completion and college preparation indicators with those of the state, and nation where appropriate. Collectively, these indicators provide a picture of the district's comparative college readiness.

Included in the table is a nationally standardized graduation rate, known as the Cumulative Promotion Index (CPI). Using a method developed by Christopher B. Swanson, a national expert on graduation rates, Standard & Poor's has calculated the CPI values for every district in the country to estimate the probability that their students will graduate within four years. For some districts, CPI values may not be calculated due to data availability or reliability.

High School Completion and College Preparation Indicators			
	This District	State Average	National Average
<b>High School Completion</b>			
Cumulative Promotion Index (CPI) (2002)	40.1%	60.6%	68.7%
<b>College Preparation and Intentions (2004) *</b>			
ACT - Average Score	15.6	18.7	20.9
ACT - Participation Rate	68.7%	70.1%	40.0%
SAT ** Reasoning Test - Average Score	n.a.	1103	1026
SAT Reasoning Test - Participation Rate	n.a.	2.1%	48.0%
PSAT/NMSQT *** - Average Score	n.a.	143	n.a.
PSAT/NMSQT - Participation Rate	n.a.	15.6%	n.a.
AP **** - Scores 3 or Above	n.a.	41.0%	n.a.
AP - Participation Rate	n.a.	5.9%	n.a.

\*Source: SAT, AP, and PSAT/NMSQT data are derived from data provided by The College Board. Copyright 2004 by The College Board. All rights reserved.

ACT data provided by ACT, Inc. ACT is an independent, not-for-profit organization that provides assessment, research, information, and program management services in the broad areas of educational planning, career planning, and workforce development.

\*\*SAT is a registered trademark of the College Board. Used with permission.

\*\*\*PSAT/NMSQT is a registered trademark of the College Board and the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. Used with permission.

\*\*\*\*AP is a registered trademark of the College Board. Used with permission.

More detailed information concerning this district's Student Performance can be found on [www.SchoolMatters.com](http://www.SchoolMatters.com).

# REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES

## How much revenue does the district receive from different sources?

The district received \$7,069 per student in the 2002-03 school year in total revenue, which is comparable to the state average. Total revenue is often significantly greater than operating expenditures, as it may include funding for non-operating activities such as capital projects and debt service. The distribution of revenue by source is shown in the following figure.

Revenue Distribution by Source (2003)



## How much does the district spend?

The district's operating expenditures of \$6,254 per student are moderately above the state average of \$5,816. The district's operating expenditures have increased by an average of 5.8% per year during the period observed, compared to the state average, which has increased by 5.2% per year. Operating expenditures include the spending functions shown in the following table, which compares the district's spending and average annual change over a four-year period with the state average.

Per Student Operating Expenditures				
	This District		State Average	
	2003	Average Change	2003	Average Change
Operating Expenditures	\$6,254	5.8%	\$5,816	5.2%
Instruction	\$3,551	5.2%	\$3,462	4.5%
Instructional Staff Support	\$312	-4.2%	\$260	8.5%
Pupil Support	\$181	5.5%	\$251	7.0%
General Administration	\$350	18.0%	\$192	8.0%
School Administration	\$271	6.1%	\$324	5.2%
Operations and Maintenance	\$629	15.6%	\$578	6.7%
Student Transportation	\$320	3.5%	\$249	7.3%
Food Services	\$461	3.3%	\$360	3.6%
Enterprise Operations	\$0	n.a.	\$1	-7.8%
Other Expenditures	\$179	6.9%	\$138	7.5%

Note: For some functions with very small dollar amounts, even small changes may result in very large percentage changes. While accurate, these should not be perceived as material.

As a subset of the district's operating expenditures, its "core" spending of \$5,473 per student is comparable to the state average. Core spending is comprised of the district's spending on core operating activities, including instruction, instructional support, pupil support, administration, operations and maintenance, and excludes activities that may lack comparability with other school systems, such as student transportation and food services. Core spending is used to calculate the district's Return on Spending Index, which is examined later in this report.

## How much of the net increase in operating expenditures has been allocated to instruction?

During the period observed, the district's operating spending has increased by \$928 per student. At the same time, the district's allocation of operating spending toward instruction has increased by \$478 per student (or 51.5% of the net change in operating spending). Across the state, operating spending has increased by an average of \$790, of which \$409 (or 51.8% of the total) has gone toward instruction. In some districts, allocations may exceed 100%, due to re-allocations of existing spending from other operating functions.

More detailed information concerning this district's revenue and expenditures can be found on [www.SchoolMatters.com](http://www.SchoolMatters.com).

## DEMOGRAPHICS AND COMMUNITY

### How many students have special needs that may place their academic performance at risk?

The percentage of students with economically disadvantaged backgrounds, disabilities, and limited English proficiency (if available) is displayed in the following table.

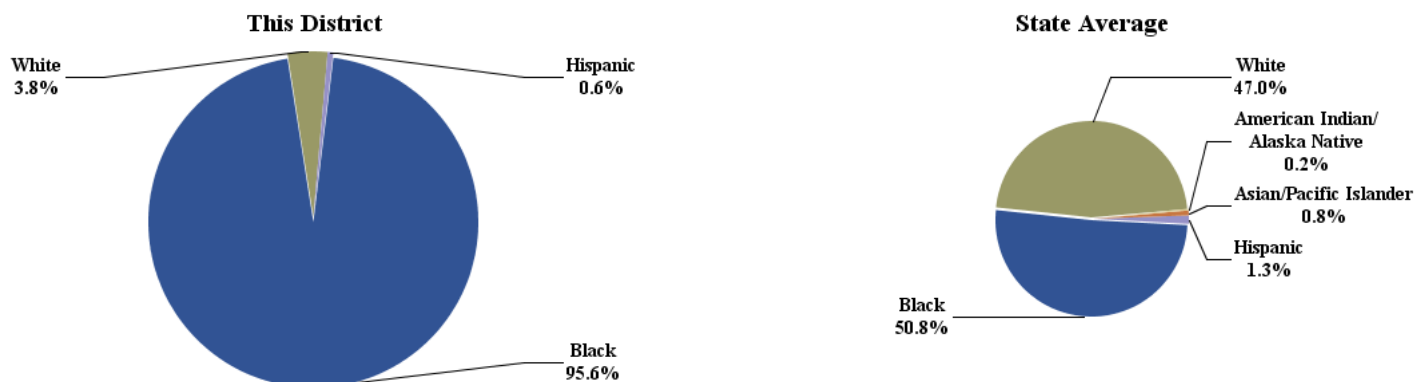
Enrollment of Students with Special Needs		
	This District	State Average
Economically Disadvantaged (2005)	99.8%	56.5%
English Language Learners (2005)	0.0%	0.7%
Students with Disabilities (2005)	10.5%	13.8%

Standard & Poor's has created the Students with Special Needs Index to reflect each district's overall concentration of students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged backgrounds, and/or limited English proficiency. The index represents the district's cumulative enrollment of students with these special needs and is expressed as a ratio to the highest possible cumulative enrollments based on nationwide analysis; the higher the index value, the greater the concentration of students with special needs. This district's Students with Special Needs Index is 54.8. This is well above the state average of 39.2.

### What is the enrollment distribution of racial and ethnic groups?

The enrollment breakdown by race/ethnicity provides a snapshot of students enrolled in the district compared with the state average. This demographic data provides contextual information when evaluating any disparities in achievement between racial or ethnic groups.

Enrollment of Racial/Ethnic Groups (2005)



### What other demographic characteristics describe the student body and local community?

The community and home environment in which children are raised play a crucial role in each student's educational growth, academic achievement, and personal development. With this in mind, community demographic indicators are provided below.

Community Profile (2005)		
	This District	State Average
Median Household Income	\$34,943	\$52,733
Adults with a High School Diploma	62.2%	74.5%
Adults with a Bachelor's Degree	13.1%	18.4%
Single-parent Households with Children	24.8%	16.1%

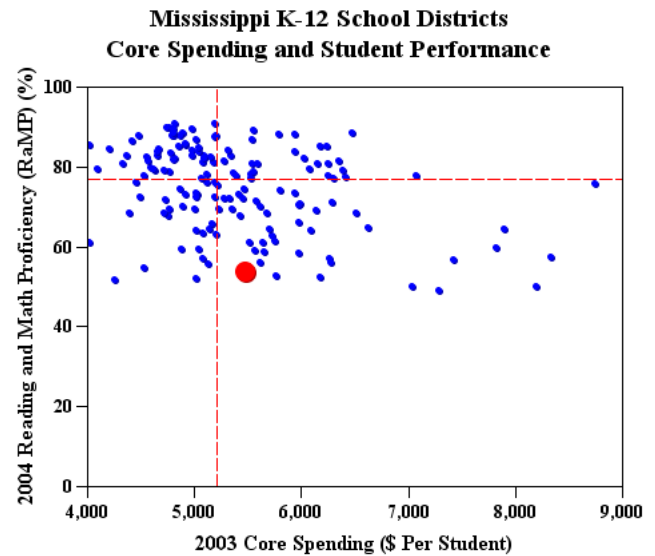
More detailed information concerning this district's learning environment and community can be found on [www.SchoolMatters.com](http://www.SchoolMatters.com).

# RETURN ON RESOURCES<sup>®</sup> IN DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

## How does the district's academic achievement compare with its spending level?

The accompanying scatterplot shows the relationship between Reading and Math Proficiency (RaMP) and core spending per student. Each dot represents one of the state's school districts, while the enlarged red dot shows this particular district's position. It reflects a 2004 RaMP of 54.0% (which is exceptionally below the state average of 76.9% represented by the dotted horizontal line), and a 2003 core spending of \$5,473 per student (which is comparable to the state average of \$5,205 represented by the vertical dotted line). For the purposes of comparison, student proficiency rates are plotted against previous year core spending levels, using the most recent available data.

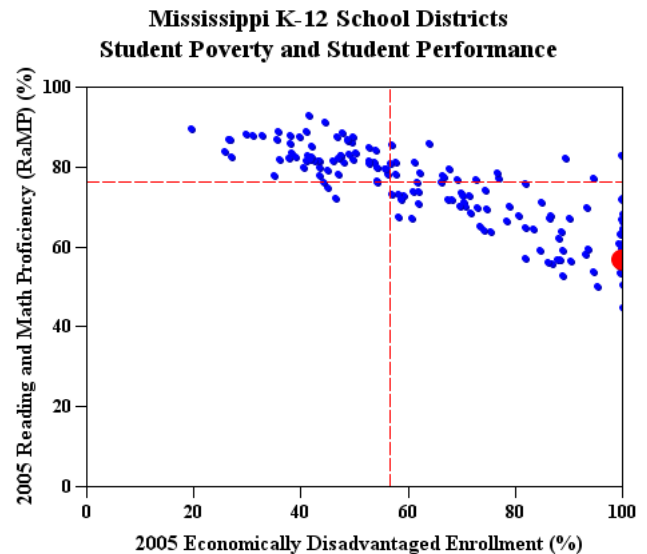
The scatterplot shows a considerable range of performance at any given spending level; in fact, the pattern reveals that above-average spending is neither a guarantee, nor a prerequisite, of above-average performance in many districts. This does not mean that "money doesn't matter," or that additional resources couldn't be used to leverage higher achievement. It simply means that spending, by itself, does not determine performance. Many factors, both within and outside a school district's control, affect spending and performance, including the socio-economic characteristics of students and the communities where they live and learn. Any analysis of the relationship between spending and achievement should include an analysis of local demographics and the level of student "need" faced by the school district.



The red dashed lines represent state averages.  
This district is highlighted by the red dot.

## How well does the district perform in light of student need?

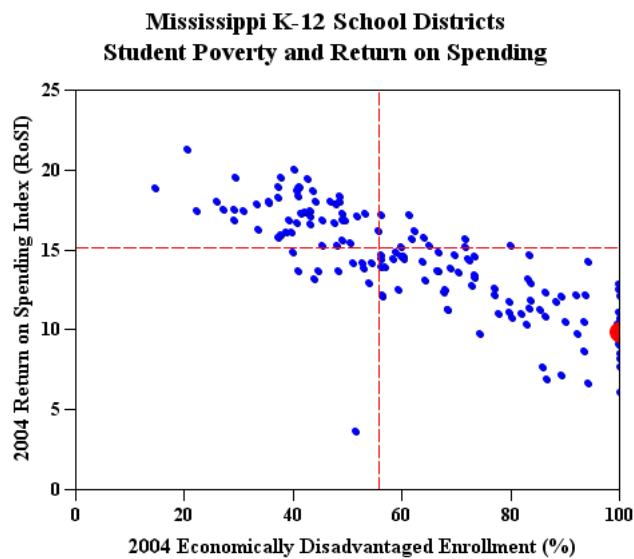
The accompanying scatterplot shows the relationship between district-wide Reading and Math Proficiency (RaMP) and the percentage of economically disadvantaged students in districts across the state. Each dot represents one of Mississippi's school districts. The overall pattern of the dots shows that the higher a school district's proportional enrollment of economically disadvantaged students, the lower its RaMP tends to be. The position of this particular school district is depicted by the enlarged red dot in the scatterplot. It reflects the district's 2005 RaMP of 56.9% (which is exceptionally below the state average of 76.2% that is represented by the horizontal dotted line), and its percent of economically disadvantaged students in 2005, which is 99.8% (which is exceptionally above the state average of 56.5% that is represented by the vertical dotted line). For the purposes of comparison, student proficiency rates and student poverty rates from the same year are plotted against one another, using the most recent available data. The scatterplot reveals that, while there is a significant correlation between poverty and performance, there is still a significant range of performance at almost any enrollment of disadvantaged students.



The red dashed lines represent state averages.  
This district is highlighted by the red dot.

An assessment would be incomplete without an analysis of the relationship between the district's academic performance and its spending decisions. To support this analysis, Standard & Poor's has created the Return on Spending Index (RoSI), which represents the average Reading and Math Proficiency (RaMP) achieved for every thousand dollars of core spending per student. The Return on Spending Index can be correlated with student poverty in much the same way as RaMP in the preceding figure, as illustrated in the following scatterplot.

The accompanying scatterplot reflects the district's 2004 RoSI of 9.9 (which is exceptionally below the state average of 15.1 that is represented by the horizontal dotted line), and its percent of economically disadvantaged students in 2004, which is 99.9% (which is exceptionally above the state average of 55.7% that is represented by the vertical dotted line). For the purposes of comparison, RoSI values and student poverty rates from the same year are plotted against one another, using the most recent available data. RoSI values are calculated using core spending data from the year preceding reading and math proficiency rate data. This scatterplot reveals that, while there is a significant correlation between poverty and returns on spending, there is a significant range of returns at almost any enrollment of disadvantaged students.



The red dashed lines represent state averages. This district is highlighted by the red dot.

### What is the district's Return on Spending Index (RoSI) in demographic context?

The spending component of the RoSI can be adjusted to reflect geographic differences in the purchasing power of the dollar that exists across the state that are due to variations in the cost of living and labor markets. The spending component can also be adjusted to reflect estimates of the proportionally higher resources many school districts use to educate students with special needs (students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged backgrounds, and limited English proficiency). When these estimates are used to adjust the district's core spending, the district's RoSI becomes 14.2, which is exceptionally below the state average of 20.8.

Return on Resources <sup>®</sup> (2004)		
	This District	State Average
Return on Spending Index (RoSI)	9.9	15.1
RoSI - Adjusted for Student Needs	14.3	20.5
RoSI - Adjusted for Geographic Costs	9.8	15.3
RoSI - Adjusted for Student Needs and Geographic Costs	14.2	20.8

The district operates in an era of standards-based education, when all students eligible to be tested are expected to demonstrate academic proficiency in reading and math regardless of race, socio-economic status, gender, limited English proficiency, or disability. As a result, the district will need to increase its overall Reading and Math Proficiency (RaMP) by 43.1 percentage points between 2005 and 2014 to meet the state and federal goal of 100% proficiency. On the one hand, the district may be able to leverage higher achievement with higher spending. On the other hand, it may be able to leverage higher performance by increasing the rate of return on its current spending. This might be done by benchmarking higher performing school districts' "best practices" in curriculum, instruction, assessment, resource management and other operations. The Benchmarking Guide and Better Performers search tool on [www.SchoolMatters.com](http://www.SchoolMatters.com) are available to help districts identify potential benchmarking partners for the purpose of studying their most promising practices.

More detailed information concerning this district's Return on Resources<sup>®</sup> can be found on [www.SchoolMatters.com](http://www.SchoolMatters.com).

# IMPORTANT DATA ISSUES

## Data Timing

This report is based on Standard & Poor's independent analysis of the most recent data that was available and accessible at the time this report was produced. This report uses data for the school years from 1999-00 through 2004-05. The years of data are displayed throughout the report and SchoolMatters website as ending years, not school years (e.g., 2004-05 is displayed as 2005). As a result, Standard & Poor's analytical findings do not capture information that is more recent and should not be interpreted as necessarily reflecting this school district's current circumstances or performance.

## Data Content

Any serious analysis of school districts must consider numerous factors related to educational performance and the need for resources. Standard & Poor's assembles hundreds of data points for each school, school district, and state. It should be noted that there are many important aspects of schooling that are difficult to measure or are not well documented. While these factors should be considered when a community or its leaders are determining the overall value and return of its schools, such factors fall outside Standard & Poor's analytical framework because they are not readily or uniformly available, and because their criteria vary from one community to another. SchoolMatters is not intended to be an all-encompassing "final word" on school district performance, but rather one means of school evaluation to be considered together with other measures, including those of a more qualitative nature.

## Data Sources

Standard & Poor's analysis is based on data from a variety of sources that provide measures of a school district's academic, financial, operational, and economic profile. Student performance data on state reading and math tests, as well as other subjects where available, have been obtained directly from the state or downloaded if made publicly available. In addition, for some states, school environment data, including student enrollment characteristics and financial data, have been obtained from the state. For the remainder of states, financial and school environment data have been obtained from the National Center for Education Statistics through their Common Core of Data (CCD) surveys of fiscal and non-fiscal data for all public schools and school districts. Other sources include The College Board, ACT, Inc., and Global Insight, a third-party aggregator of Census community demographic data. It is important to note that the most recently available data from the CCD is considered preliminary and subject to revision. More detailed information on data definitions and sources can be found using the [SchoolMatters glossary](#).

## Data Quality

In the course of its analysis, Standard & Poor's identifies data inconsistencies and omissions and raises such issues with the sources of those data. Where able, Standard & Poor's has enhanced the integrity of the data by correcting errors, anomalies, and misclassifications.

## Comparative Analytical Methodology

Standard & Poor's uses a series of benchmark comparisons in SchoolMatters to provide insight into variations between the data for each school district and corresponding comparison group averages, as well as trends over time. For this report, school district data are compared to state averages using descriptive terms based on a statistical analysis of the ranges for each data point among the state's school districts. More information about Standard & Poor's comparative analytical framework and methodology can be found on [www.SchoolMatters.com](http://www.SchoolMatters.com) in the [News and Publications](#) section.

The following seven terms are used in SchoolMatters district reports to describe the relationship between a school district's data and all other districts across the state.

- exceptionally above average
- well above average
- moderately above average
- average
- moderately below average
- well below average
- exceptionally below average



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This report is produced as part of the National Education Data Partnership (NEDP), which is generously funded by The Broad Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

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