

# Achievement Gap

With focused resources and thoughtful strategies, the District can close the achievement gap.

THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP STARTS EARLY AND PERSISTS AS STUDENTS AGE

When children in low-income families do not have the supports they need early in life, they start behind and struggle to catch up:



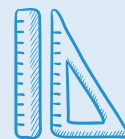
**By AGE 3**  
hear 30 million fewer words



**KINDERGARTEN**  
less academic readiness



**3rd GRADE**  
lower reading proficiency

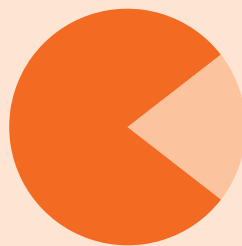


**8th GRADE**  
lower math test scores



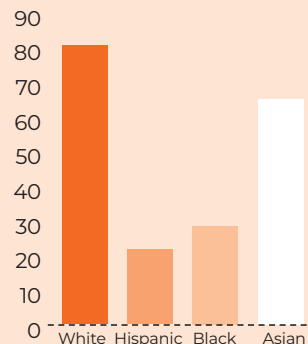
**HIGH SCHOOL**  
less likely to graduate

STUDENTS OF COLOR AND STUDENTS WITH FEWER RESOURCES ARE LESS SUPPORTED AND MORE LIKELY TO LAG BEHIND



**ONLY 21%**  
of economically disadvantaged students are proficient in reading on the PARCC

Percent Proficient in Reading

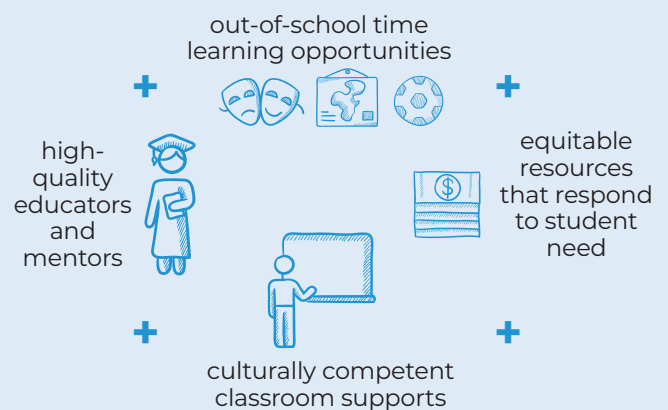


Black and Hispanic children are 3 and 4 times less likely, respectively, to be proficient in reading

STUDENTS NEED INTERVENTIONS & RESOURCES THAT ARE TAILORED TO THEIR NEEDS

Students designated as at-risk can benefit most from out-of-school time opportunities:

In DC, almost half of all students (48,000) are designated as “at-risk”



# QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES

## Achievement Gap

With focused resources and thoughtful strategies, the District can close the achievement gap.

1. From your perspective, what is the most important education issue facing DC students and their families today?
2. Regular school attendance is necessary for academic success. However, many DC students face persistent barriers to attending school consistently. What policies and programs would you prioritize to support student attendance?
3. Black and Hispanic children are 3 and 4 times less likely, respectively, to be proficient in reading than their white peers. What steps can the District take to reduce the achievement gap in DC schools?
4. Like the achievement gap, the enrichment gap—the gap in access to afterschool and summer programs—is widening in the District. How will you ensure that all DC children, regardless of their race, zip code, or family income, have access to enriching out-of-school opportunities? Where and how would you decide to invest?
5. Nearly 50% (48,000) of all DC public and public charter students have an at-risk designation<sup>1</sup>, meaning they need additional support to succeed in school. And, over 12,000 children attending DC public and public charter schools have individual education plans (IEPs). What efforts would you champion to ensure that children from all backgrounds succeed in school?

<sup>1</sup> As defined by OSSE, an at-risk designation refers to a student who possesses one of the following characteristics: