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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

October 6, 2022

# PCSD Boasts Third-Highest Graduation Rate Among Large School Systems in Georgia

## *District Graduates More Than 90 Percent in 2022*

The Paulding County School District’s graduation rate has topped 90 percent, an increase of 1.1 percentage points over 2021, according to data released today by the Georgia Department of Education. The school district’s five high schools achieved an average graduation rate of 90.4 percent, which was well above the state graduation rate of 84.1 percent and increased the margin over the state’s rate from 5.6 percentage points last year to 6.3 percentage points this year.

Impressively, of the 16 school districts in Georgia with a graduation class of more than 2,000, the Paulding County School District’s graduation rate ranked 3rd highest. Of the 24 school districts in Georgia with more than 1,000 graduates, the Paulding County School District’s graduation rate ranked 6th highest. These rankings are a remarkable achievement for a low-wealth school district because while PCSD’s graduation rate ranks third among the 16 largest school systems, the district’s local revenue per pupil ranks 15<sup>th</sup> among the same group.

Georgia Department of Education 2022 Four-Year Graduation Rate Districts with Graduating Class More Than 2,000				
	System Name	Graduation Class Size	Total Graduated	Graduation Rate
1	Forsyth County	4070	3922	96.4
2	Cherokee County	3165	2921	92.3
3	Paulding County	2423	2191	90.4
4	Columbia County	2096	1894	90.4
5	Houston County	2149	1923	89.5
6	Fulton County	7598	6782	89.3
7	Douglas County	2126	1876	88.2
8	Savannah-Chatham County	2265	1984	87.6
9	Cobb County	9091	7942	87.4
10	Henry County	3746	3250	86.8
11	Hall County	2138	1840	86.1
12	Atlanta Public Schools	3203	2691	84.0
13	Gwinnett County	14621	12157	83.2
14	Clayton County	3924	3127	79.7
15	DeKalb County	6900	5257	76.2
16	Richmond County	2103	1507	71.7

Following the academic challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, including a balance of virtual and in-person instruction across the district over the last two years, the graduation rate performance is a strong indicator that Paulding County students have emerged strong and have resumed their upward performance trend. Prior to the pandemic, PCSD's graduation rate had improved for six consecutive years, and in the last 10 years has jumped more than 15 percentage points.

"These results show that throughout the pandemic our teachers stayed focused on student learning, and our students were incredibly resilient" said Superintendent Steve Barnette. "We weren't surprised to see a slight performance dip last year, but this year we were really hopeful that the interventions we implemented would start showing their effects, and it seems that they have. Our graduation rate has climbed back above 90 percent, which is outstanding and on par with where we were pre-pandemic."

Mr. Barnette also noted that the most important aspect of a student graduating is the quality of education that student received. "As I say every year, what's more important than the number of graduates we have is what a diploma means to the student who earns one. We need to continue to ensure that a PCSD diploma means that a student is directly prepared for future success."

Two of the district's five high schools, North Paulding High School and South Paulding High School, posted their highest graduation rates in school history at 95.0 and 91.0 percent, respectively. Additionally, East Paulding High School, Hiram High School, and Paulding County High School increased their graduation rates an average of 3.4 percent over the past five years, and their combined average tops the state by 4.1 percent.

According to the school district's Curriculum Department, the significant increase in graduation rates over the last 10 years can be attributed to the implementation of consistent block schedules at all high schools, as well as the more recent implementation of comprehensive literacy initiatives that are having a measurable effect on student achievement in all 33 district schools. The school district also implemented a range of academic mitigations during the pandemic to help reduce learning loss.

Georgia calculates the graduation rate using a formula known as the adjusted cohort rate, which is required by the U.S. Department of Education. The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate defines the cohort based on when a student first becomes a freshman; it is calculated using the number of students who graduate within four years and includes adjustments for student transfers.

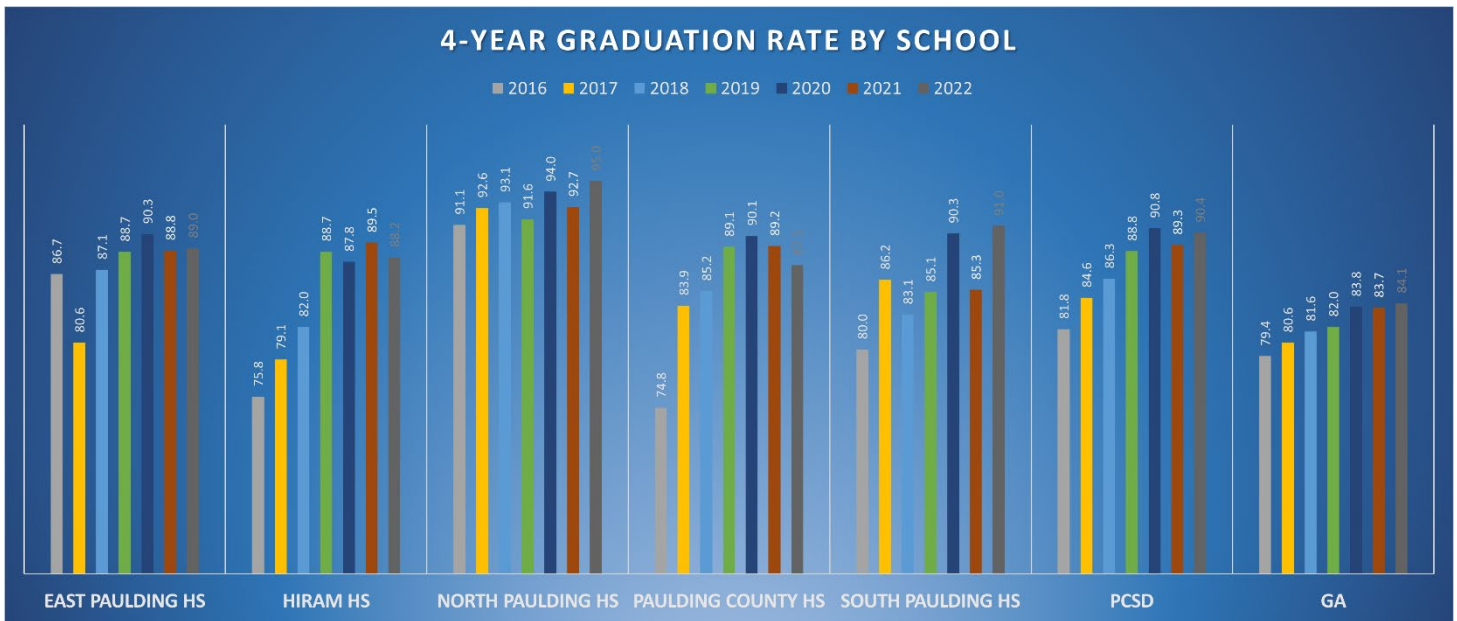
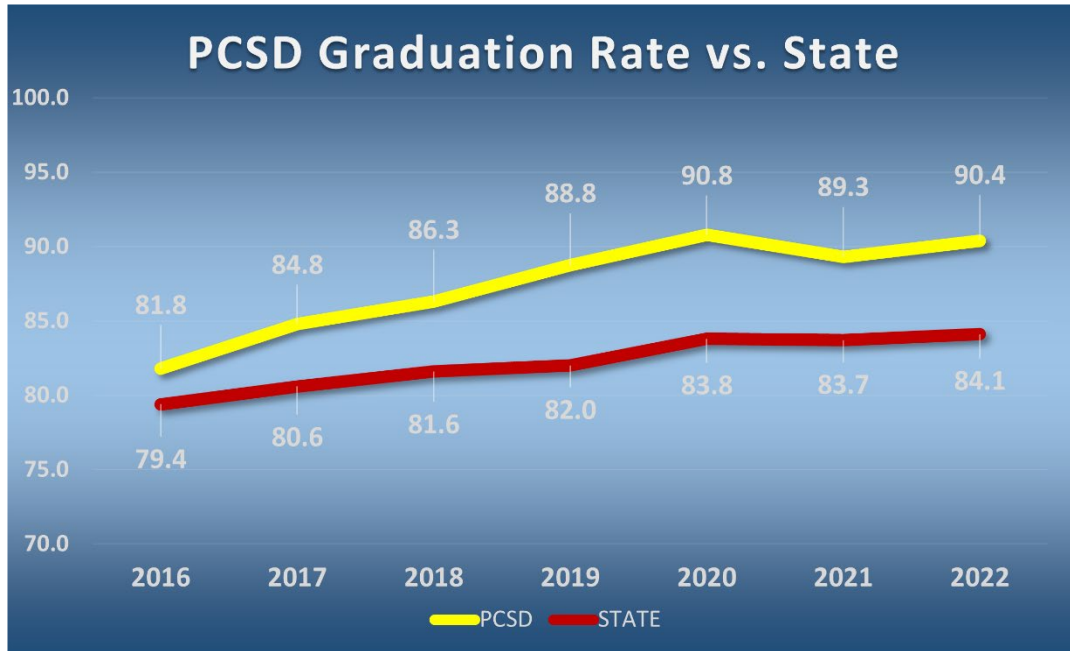
The state measures both a four-year and a five-year graduation rate as part of each school district's CCRPI (College and Career Ready Performance Index) calculation. PCSD's five-year graduation rate for 2022 is 91.2 percent.

The Paulding County School District graduation rate has topped the state average for the past 12 years.

The GA Department of Education statewide press release with links to data tables can be found here:

<https://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/communications/Pages/PressReleaseDetails.aspx?PressView=default&pid=996>.

*(The charts on next page summarize PCSD data)*



	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>East Paulding HS</b>	91.1	86.7	80.6	87.1	88.7	90.3	88.8	89.0
<b>Hiram HS</b>	78.9	75.8	79.1	82.0	88.7	87.8	89.5	88.2
<b>North Paulding HS</b>	92.1	91.1	92.6	93.1	91.6	94.0	92.7	95.0
<b>Paulding County HS</b>	69.3	74.8	83.9	85.2	89.1	90.1	89.2	87.5
<b>South Paulding HS</b>	81.1	80.0	86.2	83.1	85.1	90.3	85.3	91.0
<b>PCSD</b>	79.8	81.8	84.6	86.3	88.8	90.8	89.3	90.4
<b>GA</b>	78.9	79.4	80.6	81.6	82.0	83.8	83.7	84.1