

## Administrative Offices

VanHoose Education Center  
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May 8, 2015

Mrs. Mary Gwen Wheeler  
Executive Director  
55,000 Degrees  
325 W. Main Street, Suite 1110  
Louisville, KY 40202-4251

Dear Mrs. Wheeler:

The best way to predict the future is to help shape it, and we commend the collective efforts of Louisville, business, civic, community and education leaders to shape our city's future by dramatically increasing our citizens' education attainment to 55,000. In March 2011, JCPS committed to the 55,000 initiative and now that we are halfway to 2020 we took the opportunity to assess our progress and renew our commitment. JCPS has already set strong primary outcomes, but we decided to increase the percentage for students graduating from 90% to 93% and to streamline the leading indicators since they factor into the primary outcomes.

On May 26, 2015, driven by the district's vision that all students graduate prepared to reach their full potential and contribute to our society throughout life, the Jefferson County Board of Education approved the following primary outcomes that we submitted as our commitment to the 55,000 Degrees initiative. By 2020, the Jefferson County Public Schools commit to:

#### Revised PRIMARY OUTCOMES:

- Increase the percentage of students graduating to 93%
- Increase the percentage of graduates going to college to 85%
- Increase the percentage of graduates that are college or career ready to 90%
- Decrease the percentage of high school freshmen that are retained to 6%
- Substantially improve all of these outcomes for African-American students

\*See attached documentation for annual targets for each outcome.

**Graduates:** "Four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate" defined as the number of students who graduate in four years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who entered high school four years earlier adjusting for transfers in and out, émigrés and deceased students.

**College ready:** Graduates who met the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) System-wide Benchmarks for Reading (20), English (18), and Mathematics (19) on any administration of the ACT. Including students who passed a college placement test (Compass or KYOTE).

**Career ready:** Graduates who met benchmarks for Career Ready Academic (ASVAB or ACT WorkKeys) and Career Ready Technical (KOSSA or received an Industry-Recognized Career Certificate).

**Freshman retention:** "True Freshman" defined as an 8th grade student successfully promoted to the 9th grade the following year, then the same 9th grade student successfully promoted to the 10th grade the following year.

**College going:** Students enrolled in college at any time during the first year after high school, reported by the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC).

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#### Initial PRIMARY OUTCOMES:

- Increase the percentage of students graduating to 90%
- Increase the percentage of graduates going to college to 85%
- Increase the percentage of GED recipients going to college to 40%

#### Initial Leading Indicators:

- Decrease the percentage of high school freshmen that are retained to 6%
- Decrease the annual dropout rate to 3%
- Increase the average ACT score to 21
- Increase the percentage of graduates that are college or career ready to 90%

Sincerely,

Donna M. Hargens, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

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