Education

My school Alphabet

by Yerick Martinez

Abc
School helps me.

Def
School lets me Spend time with my friends

Ghi
but when it comes
the learning
Math, English, and science, I hate to try.

Jkl
I know how to read I know how to write I know how to spot the difference between wrong and right

mno
I starting to see what school is offering me

Pqr
I know school is hard, but if you keep trying you will get far

Stuvwx
School helps me be the best.

Y and z
After I finish with school it will all just
be a memory.

Children Enrolled in Early Intervention

DEFINITION

Children enrolled in Early Intervention is the number and percentage of children under age three who have an active Individual Family Service Plan through a Rhode Island Early Intervention provider.

SIGNIFICANCE

During the first few years of life, children develop the basic brain architecture and social-emotional health that serves as a foundation for all future development and learning. Infants and toddlers with developmental delays and disabilities and those who face significant family circumstances need extra help and should receive high-quality Early Intervention services to develop essential language, social-emotional, and motor skills to reduce the need for services when they are older.[1]

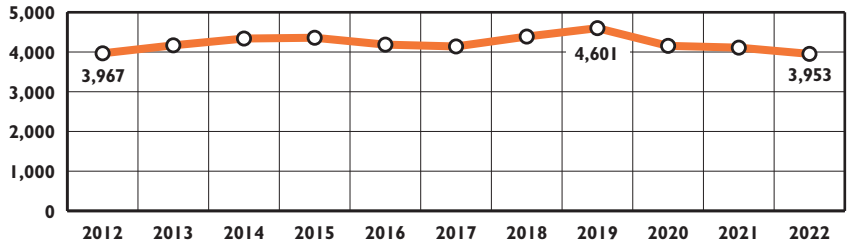
States are required to provide Early Intervention services to infants and toddlers with developmental delays and disabilities under Part C of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*. States may also choose to serve children who are at risk of falling behind without early supports.[2]

In Rhode Island, children under age three are eligible for Early Intervention if they have a "single established condition" known to lead to developmental delay (very low birth weight, Down Syndrome, etc.) or if they have a significant developmental delay in one or more areas of development (cognitive, physical, communication, social-emotional, and adaptive). Current eligibility criteria allow children with "significant circumstances" (significant trauma, history of neglect/abuse, parental substance abuse, significant parental health/mental health issues, etc.) to qualify through informed clinical opinion under the developmental delay category, if the circumstances impact child or family functioning.[3]

Approximately 17% of U.S. children ages three to 17 have developmental disabilities, with higher prevalence among children from low-income families and among boys. Nationally, less than a quarter of children with developmental delays and disabilities receive Early Intervention services before age three and most children with emotional, behavioral, and developmental conditions, do not receive services before age five.[4,5]

Early childhood developmental screenings are required and covered at pediatric health care visits for all children with RIte Care through the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) mandate. Routine developmental screening can identify children who may benefit from Early Intervention services.[6,7] In State Fiscal Year 2022, 62% of children under age three with RIte Care insurance had a developmental screening completed.[8]

Infants & Toddlers Receiving Early Intervention Services, Calendar Years 2012-2022, Rhode Island



Source: Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services. *For 2022, calendar year data was not available due to a data system upgrade, so state fiscal year data (July 2021 – June 2022) was used instead.

◆ **As of June 30, 2022, there were 1,921 infants and toddlers receiving Early Intervention (EI) services, 6% of the population under age three. The number of children enrolled was down 19% from 2,358 in June 2019.[9]**

◆ **The number of children receiving Early Intervention services in State Fiscal Year 2022 (3,953) was down 14% from 4,601 in Calendar Year 2019. In State Fiscal Year 2022, 1,994 children were discharged from EI. Of these, 281 (14%) met their developmental goals and no longer needed EI services, 815 (41%) turned age three and were transitioned to preschool special education, 209 (10%) turned age three and were determined not eligible for preschool special education, 155 (8%) turned age three and were in the process of eligibility determination for preschool special education, 446 (22%) were withdrawn when parents/guardian declined services or were unreachable, 85 (4%) were withdrawn when the family moved out of state, and three (<1%) died.[10]**

◆ **As of June 30, 2022, in Rhode Island, Early Intervention services for 1,082 children (56%) were paid for by public insurance (RIte Care and Medicaid), 827 children (43%) were paid for by private health insurance provider, and 12 children (1%) were uninsured with services covered by federal *IDEA Part C* funding.[11]**

◆ **Starting in November 2021, infants and toddlers referred to Early Intervention in Rhode Island have been placed on a statewide waiting list due to a staffing crisis in the program. From November 2022 to February 2023, the state transferred 1,171 infants and toddlers from the state waiting list to referral lists managed by Early Intervention agencies and removed 382 children when the family declined the referral or did not respond to outreach.[12,13,14,15]**

Table 32. **Infants and Toddlers Enrolled in Early Intervention (EI) by Eligibility Type, Rhode Island, 2022**

		STATE FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022 ENROLLMENT		JUNE 30, 2022 ENROLLMENT BY ELIGIBILITY				
CITY/TOWN	# OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 3	# OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN EI	% OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 3 ENROLLED IN EI	SINGLE ESTABLISHED CONDITION	MEASURED DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY	SIGNIFICANT CIRCUMSTANCES IMPACTING CHILD/FAMILY FUNCTION	# OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN EI	% OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 3 ENROLLED IN EI
Barrington	366	50	14%	8	2	11	21	6%
Bristol	507	51	10%	4	7	17	28	6%
Burrillville	460	52	11%	3	13	14	30	7%
Central Falls	1,028	120	12%	10	16	29	55	5%
Charlestown	186	19	10%	1	6	3	10	5%
Coventry	940	100	11%	9	16	29	54	6%
Cranston	2,318	258	11%	14	37	64	115	5%
Cumberland	970	131	14%	6	22	40	68	7%
East Greenwich	299	57	19%	5	7	14	26	9%
East Providence	1,560	148	9%	8	10	49	67	4%
Exeter	166	10	6%	0	2	3	5	3%
Foster	113	12	11%	1	0	2	3	3%
Glocester	247	24	10%	1	6	7	14	6%
Hopkinton	258	30	12%	0	3	7	10	4%
Jamestown	85	7	8%	1	0	3	4	5%
Johnston	816	122	15%	12	15	27	54	7%
Lincoln	587	70	12%	6	14	22	42	7%
Little Compton	68	3	4%	0	0	2	2	3%
Middletown	502	69	14%	6	10	11	27	5%
Narragansett	271	17	6%	3	1	10	14	5%
New Shoreham	21	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0%
Newport	820	84	10%	11	12	17	40	5%
North Kingstown	728	80	11%	9	13	22	44	6%
North Providence	851	108	13%	7	11	34	52	6%
North Smithfield	290	30	10%	4	4	8	16	6%
Pawtucket	2,959	319	11%	25	28	86	139	5%
Portsmouth	429	68	16%	6	6	22	34	8%
Providence	7,609	935	12%	96	98	262	456	6%
Richmond	235	15	6%	0	0	3	3	1%
Scituate	193	39	20%	1	7	8	16	8%
Smithfield	402	51	13%	3	9	18	30	7%
South Kingstown	640	79	12%	4	10	17	31	5%
Tiverton	398	44	11%	3	12	9	24	6%
Warren	296	25	8%	5	2	7	14	5%
Warwick	2,322	249	11%	23	34	63	120	5%
West Greenwich	178	29	16%	1	3	13	17	10%
West Warwick	1,044	137	13%	8	26	34	68	7%
Westerly	726	62	9%	13	3	11	27	4%
Woonsocket	1,900	249	13%	16	68	57	141	7%
Four Core Cities	*13,496*	*1,623*	*12%*	*147*	*210*	*434*	*791*	*6%*
Remainder of State	*20,292*	*2,330*	*11%*	*186*	*323*	*621*	*1,130*	*6%*
Rhode Island	*33,788*	*3,953*	*12%*	*333*	*533*	*1,055*	*1,921*	*6%*

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Center for Child and Family Health, Early Intervention enrollment, State Fiscal Year 2022 and June 30, 2022 enrollment (point-in-time). In previous factbooks, calendar year data has been reported, but data was not available for calendar year 2022 due to a data system upgrade so state fiscal year data was used instead. On June 30, 2022, there were 17 children who were eligible for Early Intervention under the developmental delay category but didn't have specific information about measured delay or significant circumstances. We count them in the "significant circumstances" category.

The denominator is the number of children under age three, according to Census 2010, Summary File 1. Census 2020 data on the number of children by age by city/town of residence will not be available until September 2023.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

References

[1,2] Ullrich, R., Cole, P., Gebhard, B., & Schmit, S. (2017). *Early Intervention: A critical support for infants, toddlers, and families.* Washington, DC: Zero to Three and CLASP.

[3] *Rhode Island Early Intervention certification standards policies and procedures: IV. Eligibility determination.* (2018). Cranston, RI: Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services.

[4] Zablotsky, B., et al., (2019). Prevalence and trends of developmental disabilities among children in the United States: 2009–2017. *Pediatrics, 144*(4): e20190811.

[5] Zubler, J. M., et al., (2022). Evidence-informed milestones for developmental surveillance tools. *Pediatrics, 149*(3): e2021052138.

[6] *Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment.* (n.d.). Retrieved February 10, 2023, from www.medicaid.gov

[7] Lipkin, P. H., Macias, M. M., & AAP Council on children with disabilities, section on developmental and behavioral pediatrics. (2020). Promoting optimal development: Identifying infants and young children with developmental disorders through developmental surveillance and screening. *Pediatrics, 145*(1): e20193449.

(continued on page 187)

Children Enrolled in Early Head Start

DEFINITION

Children enrolled in Early Head Start is the number and percentage of low-income infants and toddlers enrolled in a Rhode Island Early Head Start program.

SIGNIFICANCE

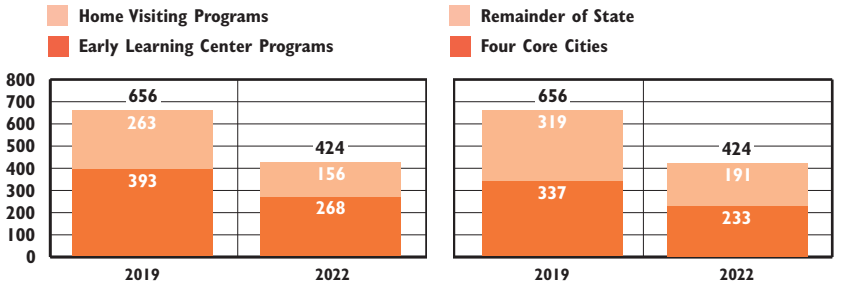
Early Head Start is an intensive, comprehensive early childhood program serving low-income children birth to age three, pregnant women, and their families. Early Head Start programs serve families with the greatest needs, including families living in or near poverty and families receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. The federally-funded Early Head Start program is designed to address the comprehensive needs of low-income infants and toddlers and pregnant women by providing high-quality early education, nutrition and mental health services, health and developmental screenings and referrals, and fostering the development of healthy family relationships.[1,2,3]

Pregnant women enrolled in Early Head Start are assessed for risks to a successful pregnancy. Individualized plans are developed to support prenatal health, promote healthy behaviors, and prepare for the baby's arrival. After the baby is born, families participate by enrolling in either a center-based or a home-based program. Home-based programs use weekly home visits and twice-monthly group meetings to support child development. Children in center-based models attend a center-based early care and education program and families receive at least two home visits per year. Some provide a combination of home-based and center-based services.[4,5]

Federal funding for Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships layers Early Head Start resources on top of the child care subsidy program to provide comprehensive and continuous services to low-income infants, toddlers, and their families.[6]

Early Head Start has been shown to produce significant cognitive, language, and social-emotional gains in participating children and more positive interactions with their parents. Early Head Start parents provide more emotional support, more opportunities for language development, read more to their children, are less likely to use physical discipline, and are more likely to create a stimulating environment at home. Early Head Start parents are less likely to experience depression and more likely to be self-sufficient with higher incomes. Children who enroll in high-quality preschool after Early Head Start have better outcomes at kindergarten entry.[7,8]

Early Head Start Enrollment, 2019 and 2022



Source: Rhode Island Early Head Start program reports to Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, October 2019 and 2022.

◆ **As of October 2022 in Rhode Island, there were 424 individuals (412 infants and toddlers and 12 pregnant women) enrolled in Early Head Start, down 35% from 656 individuals in 2019. An estimated 3% of the infants and toddlers in low-income families in Rhode Island were enrolled.[9,10]**

◆ **Of the 424 children and pregnant women enrolled in Early Head Start in 2022, 268 (63%) were participating in a home visiting program and 156 (37%) were enrolled in a licensed early learning center. Three percent of Early Head Start clients were pregnant women, 18% were infants under age one, 32% were age one, 43% were age two, and 4% were age three.[11]**

◆ **In 2022, Rhode Island Early Head Start programs served children with high needs including: 49 infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities (12% of all children enrolled), 11 children who were in foster care, and six children who were homeless. Early Head Start programs are required to enroll children with disabilities and to screen all enrolled children to identify developmental delays and disabilities.[12,13]**

◆ **As of October 2022, 22% of the children enrolled in Early Head Start were also participating in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) through the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership and to provide wrap-around hours for working parents.[14,15]**

Table 33.

Children Ages Birth to Three and Pregnant Women Enrolled in Early Head Start, Rhode Island, 2022

SCHOOL DISTRICT	# OF CHILDREN <AGE 3	% LOW-INCOME CHILDREN IN DISTRICT	ESTIMATED # LOW-INCOME CHILDREN <AGE 3	# ENROLLED IN HOME-BASED EARLY HEAD START	# ENROLLED IN CENTER-BASED EARLY HEAD START	# ENROLLED IN EARLY HEAD START	ESTIMATED % OF LOW-INCOME INFANTS AND TODDLERS ENROLLED IN EARLY HEAD START
Barrington	366	6%	23	0	0	0	0%
Bristol	507	29%	145	0	0	0	0%
Burrillville	460	32%	147	2	2	4	3%
Central Falls	1,028	96%	982	34	16	50	5%
Charlestown	186	17%	32	0	0	0	0%
Coventry	940	28%	267	3	0	3	1%
Cranston	2,318	39%	898	4	18	22	2%
Cumberland	970	18%	177	1	0	1	1%
East Greenwich	299	7%	21	0	3	3	14%
East Providence	1,560	47%	727	1	8	9	1%
Exeter	166	14%	23	0	0	0	0%
Foster	113	31%	35	0	0	0	0%
Glocester	247	13%	33	0	2	2	6%
Hopkinton	258	17%	45	2	0	2	4%
Jamestown	85	7%	6	0	0	0	0%
Johnston	816	43%	349	9	4	13	4%
Lincoln	587	25%	146	0	0	0	0%
Little Compton	68	12%	8	0	0	0	0%
Middletown	502	34%	170	1	2	3	2%
Narragansett	271	14%	37	0	0	0	0%
New Shoreham	21	12%	2	0	0	0	0%
Newport	820	63%	516	9	14	23	4%
North Kingstown	728	22%	157	2	1	3	2%
North Providence	851	40%	336	13	5	18	5%
North Smithfield	290	18%	52	0	1	1	2%
Pawtucket	2,959	61%	1,816	20	4	24	1%
Portsmouth	429	13%	58	0	1	1	2%
Providence	7,609	77%	5,885	120	28	148	3%
Richmond	235	17%	41	0	0	0	0%
Scituate	193	14%	26	0	0	0	0%
Smithfield	402	14%	57	0	1	1	2%
South Kingstown	640	17%	111	5	7	12	11%
Tiverton	398	22%	86	1	0	1	1%
Warren	296	29%	85	2	1	3	4%
Warwick	2,322	34%	800	31	16	47	6%
West Greenwich	178	14%	25	0	0	0	0%
West Warwick	1,044	51%	533	6	10	16	3%
Westerly	726	32%	231	2	1	3	1%
Woonsocket	1,900	77%	1,460	0	11	11	1%
Four Core Cities	*13,496*	*75%*	*10,139*	*174*	*59*	*233*	*2%*
Remainder of State	*20,292*	*29%*	*5,843*	*94*	*97*	*191*	*3%*
Rhode Island	*33,788*	*45%*	*15,269*	*268*	*156*	*424*	*3%*

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Early Head Start Programs, children enrolled as of October 2022. Children enrolled are listed by residence of child, not location of the Head Start program.

The estimated number of low-income children under age three is based on the number of children under age 3 according to Census 2010, Summary File 1 multiplied by the percentage of students who qualified for free or reduced-price lunch (at or below 185% of the federal poverty level) in each city or town's school district. Free and reduced-price lunch data are from Rhode Island Department of Education, 2022-2023 school year.

Due to changes in methodology, the percentage of children enrolled in Early Head Start should not be compared with previous Factbooks.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

References

[1] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Head Start Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center. (2020). *Early Head Start programs.* Retrieved March 30, 2023, from eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov

[2] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (n.d.). *Eligibility: Determining need and meeting expectations.* Retrieved March 30, 2023, from eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov

[3,7] Shaffner, M. & Cole, P. (2021). *Early Head Start: An essential support for pregnant women, infants, and toddlers.* Washington, DC: Zero to Three.

[4] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Head Start Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center. (2018). *Services to pregnant women and expectant families in Early Head Start.* Retrieved March 30, 2023, from eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov

[5] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Head Start Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center. (2018). *Early Head Start program options.* Retrieved March 30, 2023, from eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov

(continued on page 187)

Licensed Capacity of Early Learning Programs

DEFINITION

Licensed capacity of early learning programs is the number of child care and early learning programs and slots licensed by the Rhode Island Department of Human Services for children under age six. Licensed centers include child care programs, preschools, nursery schools, and center-based Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

SIGNIFICANCE

Nationally, more than half of children under age five regularly attend a child care or early learning program. Research shows that when children attend child care and early learning programs that are high-quality, there are lasting benefits including improved math, language, and social skills.[1]

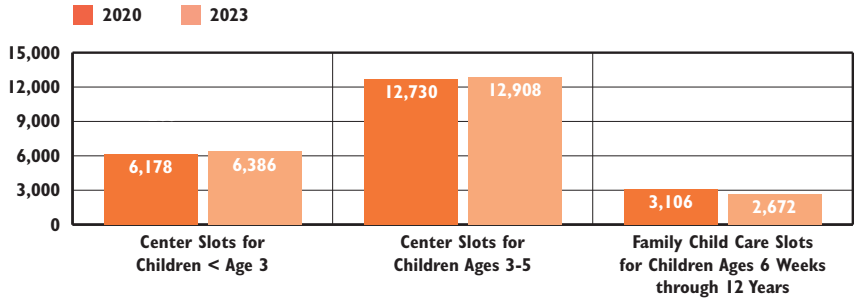
However, for many families, high-quality child care is not affordable or available. Nationally, 83% of parents report that finding quality, affordable child care in their area is a serious problem, and nearly three in four parents report that child care issues negatively impacted their career. Families that have infants and toddlers, parents of children with disabilities, immigrant families, and parents working nonstandard hours face limited options for licensed child care.[2]

Access to stable, affordable, quality child care is a basic need for many working families and is critical for Rhode Island's economy. When parents have difficulty finding and keeping child care, they are more likely to be absent from work and to leave their jobs.[3] Between 2017 and 2021, 74% of Rhode Island children under age six had all parents in the workforce, higher than the U.S. rate of 67%.[4]

Revenue from family fees and available public subsidies for child care are not adequate for most child care and early learning programs to pay competitive wages that are needed to attract and retain qualified and effective educators.[5] In 2021 in Rhode Island, the median wage was $13.26/hour for a child care educator and $14.08 for a preschool teacher.[6]

The federal *Child Care and Development Block Grant Act* requires states to establish and enforce clear health and safety standards for child care programs. States must conduct at least one unannounced inspection of all licensed providers each year and must maintain a public website with a searchable list of child care providers with information on the quality of each child care program and the findings from at least three years of licensing inspections. States must also publicly report data on serious injuries, substantiated child maltreatment, and deaths in child care programs.[7] In 2021, there were four children seriously injured, 12 children who were maltreated, and zero children who died in a licensed child care program in Rhode Island.[8]

Licensed Early Learning Program Capacity, Rhode Island, 2020 and 2023



Source: Rhode Island Department of Human Services, 2020 and 2023.

- **In January 2023, there were 6,386 slots for infants and toddlers (37% for infants less than 18 months and 63% for toddlers ages 18 months through 2 years) and 12,908 slots for preschoolers (ages 3 through 5) in licensed centers. The number of infant/toddler slots is up 3% and the number of preschool slots is up 1% since January 2020 (pre-pandemic).[9]**

- **In January 2023, there were 2,672 slots for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years in licensed family child care homes, down 14% since January 2020 (pre-pandemic).[10]**

- **The number of available spaces for children cannot be determined from licensed capacity data. Staffing shortages caused by low compensation in the child care and early learning field are common nationally, causing classroom closures and reduced operating capacity.[11]**

- **Nationally in October 2022, 67% of child care programs reported they were experiencing a staffing shortage. Among those, 45% reported they are serving fewer children and 37% reported a longer waiting list.[12]**

- **As of January 2023, 75% of licensed family child care providers and 69% of licensed early learning centers in Rhode Island accept children participating in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), which covers all or part of the cost of child care for eligible low-income families.[13]**

- **In addition to licensed programs operated by community-based agencies and family child care providers, there are 55 traditional public schools, one public charter school, and one state-operated school in Rhode Island that have preschool classrooms.[14]**

Licensed Capacity of Early Learning Programs

Table 34.

Capacity of Licensed Early Learning Programs, Rhode Island, January 2023

CITY/TOWN	# OF LICENSED CENTERS	# OF CENTER SLOTS FOR INFANTS < AGE 18 MONTHS	# OF CENTER SLOTS FOR TODDLERS AGES 18 MONTHS THROUGH < AGE 3	# OF CENTER SLOTS FOR CHILDREN AGES 3-5	# OF LICENSED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES	# OF LICENSED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME SLOTS*	TOTAL LICENSED EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM SLOTS
Barrington	10	58	95	391	5	32	576
Bristol	4	29	32	68	4	24	153
Burrillville	4	21	26	86	1	6	139
Central Falls	3	31	47	209	13	87	374
Charlestown	4	8	6	92	0	0	106
Coventry	7	52	87	233	3	20	392
Cranston	27	245	288	1,139	45	303	1,975
Cumberland	6	24	55	306	9	76	461
East Greenwich	14	170	297	599	0	0	1,066
East Providence	16	39	118	548	1	6	711
Exeter	2	12	12	52	0	0	76
Foster	1	8	11	18	0	0	37
Glocester	4	32	43	100	0	0	175
Hopkinton	3	0	0	63	1	8	71
Jamestown	1	8	22	34	1	8	72
Johnston	20	201	257	545	9	65	1,068
Lincoln	5	48	87	206	6	36	377
Little Compton	1	0	0	20	0	0	20
Middletown	11	91	137	407	1	6	641
Narragansett	2	0	12	60	1	6	78
New Shoreham	1	0	10	12	0	0	22
Newport	3	14	41	145	1	8	208
North Kingstown	7	41	66	326	3	16	449
North Providence	9	38	71	265	7	46	420
North Smithfield	1	0	8	30	4	40	78
Pawtucket	15	125	292	743	24	160	1,320
Portsmouth	5	32	55	151	1	12	250
Providence	52	250	530	2,289	228	1,531	4,600
Richmond	0	0	0	0	1	12	12
Scituate	2	24	59	127	0	0	210
Smithfield	9	125	218	503	1	8	854
South Kingstown	13	101	172	390	4	30	693
Tiverton	4	24	36	142	1	8	210
Warren	5	32	48	201	1	6	287
Warwick	22	330	517	1,171	5	34	2,052
West Greenwich	3	16	30	89	0	0	135
West Warwick	5	50	97	269	4	26	442
Westerly	7	42	61	282	1	6	391
Woonsocket	12	24	98	597	6	46	765
Four Core Cities	*82*	*430*	*967*	*3,838*	*271*	*1,824*	*7,059*
Remainder of State	*238*	*1,915*	*3,074*	*9,070*	*121*	*848*	*14,907*
Rhode Island	*320*	*2,345*	*4,041*	*12,908*	*392*	*2,672*	*21,966*

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Human Services, number of licensed child care center slots and programs for children under age six and number of licensed family child care homes and slots, January 2023.

Licensed centers include child care programs, preschools, nursery schools, and center-based Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

*Licensed family child care slots are for children ages six weeks to 12 years old.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

References

[1,5] Donoghue, E. A. & AAP Council on Early Childhood. (2017). Quality early education and child care from birth to kindergarten. *Pediatrics, 140*(2): e20171488.

[2] Malik. R., et al. (2018). *America's child care deserts in 2018.* Washington, DC: Center for American Progress.

[3] Schochet, L. (2019). *The child care crisis is keeping women out of the workforce.* Washington, DC: Center for American Progress. Retrieved March 25, 2021, from www.americanprogress.org

[4] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021. Table DP03.

[6] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2022). *May 2021 State occupational employment and wage estimates, Rhode Island.* Retrieved April 2, 2022, from www.bls.gov

[7] Matthews, H., Schulman, K., Vogtman, J., Johnson-Staub, C., & Blank, H. (2017). *Implementing the Child Care and Development Block Grant Reauthorization: A Guide for States.* Washington, DC: Center for Law and Social Policy & National Women's Law Center.

[8] Rhode Island Department of Human Services. (2022). *Office of child care: Aggregated data report (2021).* Retrieved April 2, 2023, from www.dhs.ri.gov

[9,10,13] Rhode Island Department of Human Services, child care licensing data, January 2020 and January 2023.

(continued on page 187)

Children Receiving Child Care Subsidies

DEFINITION

Children receiving child care subsidies is the number of children receiving child care that is either fully or partially paid for with a child care subsidy through the Rhode Island Department of Human Services' Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). Child care subsidies can be used for care in a licensed child care center, a licensed family child care home, or by a license-exempt provider (family, friend, or neighbor).

SIGNIFICANCE

Families rely on child care to enable them to work and to provide the early education experiences needed to prepare their children for school. Yet the high cost of child care puts quality care out of reach for many low-income families. State child care subsidy programs help low-income families access child care.[1]

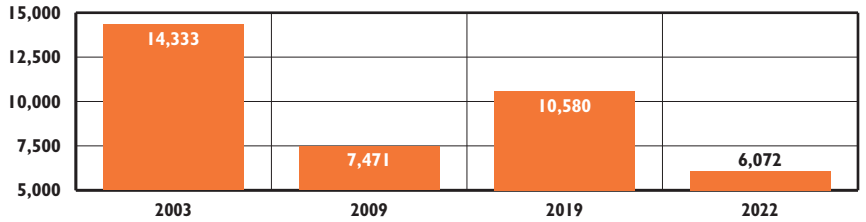
Child care is the biggest living expense in most family budgets. In Rhode Island, nine out of 10 families cannot afford the average cost of child care for one infant.[2] A 2019 Rhode Island study of families with children under age six found that affordable child care was consistently reported as the greatest family need.[3] Using the federal child care affordability guideline (no more than 7% of family income should be spent on child care), a Rhode Island family would need to earn at least $167,000 to afford the average annual cost for one preschooler at a licensed center in 2021.[4,5]

Subsidy payment rates for child care providers should meet or exceed the federal benchmark established to ensure low-income families have equal access to the child care market and to promote access to quality care. Inadequate payment rates make it difficult for families to find a program that will accept a subsidy and prevent child care programs from offering competitive wages to recruit and retain qualified early educators.[6] Nationally, funding for state child care subsidy programs is so low that less than 20% of federally income-eligible children and families actually receive assistance. A 2021 report from the U.S. Treasury identifies several market failures that make the current child care system "unworkable" for most families.[7]

Child care educators, almost all of whom are women, and are disproportionally Women of Color, are responsible for the safety, health, learning, and development of our youngest children yet make very low wages and many are not able to meet their basic needs.[8] At least 15 states fund wage supplements designed to improve qualifications and retention of child care teachers.[9]

In Rhode Island in 2021, the median hourly wage was $13.26 for a child care educator and $14.08 for a preschool educator, in the same range or lower than fast food workers.[10]

Child Care Subsidies, Rhode Island, Selected Years 2003, 2009, 2019, 2022



Source: Rhode Island Department of Human Services, December 2003 - December 2022.

◆ **In December 2022, there were 6,072 child care subsidies in Rhode Island, a historic low and down 43% from 2019 (pre-pandemic) and 58% from the 2003 peak. In 2022, 77% of child care subsidies were for care in a licensed child care center, 23% for care by a licensed family child care home, and less than 1% for care by a license-exempt provider.[11]**

◆ **As of December 2022, 22% of children participating in CCAP were enrolled in programs with high-quality BrightStars ratings (four or five stars), up from 16% in 2019 and 10% in December 2018. Preschool-age children were more likely to be enrolled in a high-quality program (27%) than infants and toddlers (21%) or school-age children (19%).[12]**

◆ **In December 2022, more than half (52%) of subsidies were used by families with incomes at or below the federal poverty level (FPL) and only 3% were used by families with incomes over 200% FPL. Three out of four (75%) child care subsidies were used by low-income working families not receiving cash assistance and 17% were used by families receiving cash assistance. Another 9% of child care subsidies were used for children involved in the child welfare system.[13]**

Average Annual Cost for Full-Time Child Care, Rhode Island, 2021

PROGRAM TYPE	COST PER CHILD
Child Care Center (infant care)	$13,780
Child Care Center (preschool care)	$11,700
Family Child Care Home (preschool care)	$9,750
School-Age Center-Based Program (child age 6-12)	$8,684

Source: Rhode Island KIDS COUNT analysis of average weekly rates from Public Consulting Group. (2021). *Rhode Island Department of Human Services (DHS) 2021 Child care market rate survey report.* Retrieved April 2, 2022, from www.dhs.ri.gov

Table 35.

Child Care Subsidies, Rhode Island, December 2022

CITY/TOWN	SUBSIDY USE BY CHILD RESIDENCE* UNDER AGE 3	AGES 3-5	AGES 6-12+	TOTAL CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES	SUBSIDY USE BY PROGRAM LOCATION CENTER	FAMILY CHILD CARE	LICENSE EXEMPT	TOTAL CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES
Barrington	2	10	9	21	28	0	0	28
Bristol	5	5	7	17	15	0	0	15
Burrillville	7	8	14	29	34	0	0	34
Central Falls	51	67	95	213	151	65	0	216
Charlestown	3	1	1	5	3	0	0	3
Coventry	18	41	28	87	88	0	1	89
Cranston	95	128	154	377	365	172	0	537
Cumberland	13	27	40	80	111	7	0	118
East Greenwich	4	5	5	14	52	0	0	52
East Providence	48	84	89	221	238	7	0	245
Exeter	1	1	0	2	3	0	0	3
Foster	0	0	1	1	3	0	0	3
Glocester	1	4	1	6	16	0	0	16
Hopkinton	2	1	0	3	3	0	0	3
Jamestown	1	1	0	2	1	0	0	1
Johnston	31	36	32	99	225	36	0	261
Lincoln	14	20	30	64	59	6	0	65
Little Compton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Middletown	12	23	19	54	101	0	0	101
Narragansett	6	3	2	11	1	0	0	1
New Shoreham	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newport	27	47	76	150	118	0	7	125
North Kingstown	13	20	22	55	39	0	0	39
North Providence	22	37	21	80	90	4	0	94
North Smithfield	2	7	7	16	27	0	0	27
Pawtucket	155	238	239	632	561	54	0	615
Portsmouth	1	3	1	5	7	0	0	7
Providence	531	699	879	2,109	1,119	1,013	0	2,132
Richmond	5	4	2	11	1	0	0	1
Scituate	3	1	2	6	2	0	0	2
Smithfield	8	12	8	28	28	0	0	28
South Kingstown	6	16	8	30	57	9	0	66
Tiverton	2	5	5	12	10	3	0	13
Warren	9	7	11	27	29	1	0	30
Warwick	62	92	108	262	416	11	0	427
West Greenwich	4	1	0	5	4	0	0	4
West Warwick	55	76	79	210	190	2	0	192
Westerly	9	14	15	38	48	0	0	48
Woonsocket	91	172	217	480	412	12	0	424
DCYF	*193*	*218*	*102*	*513*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*
Undetermined Address	*1*	*1*	*4*	*6*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*
Out-Of-State	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*7*	*0*	*0*	*7*
Four Core Cities	*828*	*1,176*	*1,430*	*3,434*	*2,243*	*1,144*	*0*	*3,387*
Remainder of State	*491*	*740*	*797*	*2,028*	*2,412*	*258*	*8*	*2,678*
Rhode Island	*1,513*	*2,135*	*2,333*	*5,981*	*4,662*	*1,402*	*8*	*6,072*

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Human Services, December 2022.

DCYF is the number of children in the care of the Department of Children, Youth and Families who are receiving child care subsidies.

Out-of-State is subsidies used by Rhode Island resident children who attend child care located outside of Rhode Island; they are included in the total count for Rhode Island.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

NA=Not applicable

Subsidy data by age of child are reported by the child's residence. Subsidy use by program type is reported by location of the program.

*Total subsidy use by program location does not match total subsidy use by child residence, because children may be enrolled in more than one program.

The average annual cost for full-time child care was determined by multiplying the average weekly tuition rate by 52 weeks (for infants and preschoolers). For school-age children, the annual cost was determined by multiplying the average weekly tuition for before and after school care by 39 weeks and adding 13 weeks of average school vacation/summer camp tuition.

References

[1,6] Schulman, K. (2022). *At the crossroads: State child care assistance policies 2021.* Washington, DC: National Women's Law Center.

[2] Economic Policy Institute. (2020). *Child care costs in the United States, Rhode Island.* Retrieved April 2, 2022, from www.epi.org

[3] Abt Associates. (2019). *Rhode Island PDG B-5 family needs assessment final report.* Retrieved February 8, 2021, from www.kids.ri.gov

[4] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2016). Child Care and Development Fund Program: Final rule. *Federal Register, 81*(190), 67438-67595.

(continued on page 187)

High-Quality Early Learning Programs

DEFINITION

High-quality early learning programs is the percentage of licensed early learning centers, family child care homes, and public schools with preschool classrooms that have a high-quality rating from BrightStars, Rhode Island's Quality Rating and Improvement System for child care and early learning programs.

SIGNIFICANCE

Decades of research show that high-quality early care and education programs can improve children's cognitive and social-emotional development, enabling them to perform better in school. Programs across the U.S. and in Rhode Island vary markedly in quality and can range from rich learning experiences that promote children's development to lower quality settings that can lead to developmental setbacks and contribute to children's behavior problems.[1,2]

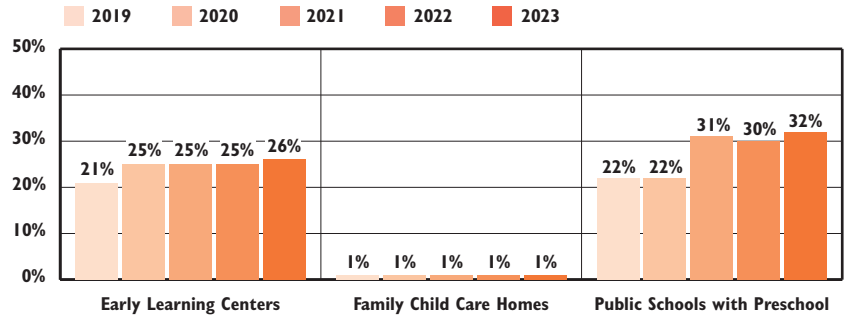
Research has shown that parents strongly prefer high-quality programs and particularly value teachers' educational achievement, however many families cannot afford the cost of higher quality programs and/or don't have enough information about which programs meet recommended quality standards.[3]

High-quality early care and education programs have qualified educators and low staff turnover, strong staff-child ratios, small class/group sizes, and research-based health, safety, nutrition, and curriculum practices. Consistent caring, supportive, and educational interactions between early childhood educators and children are the critical ingredient to support children's learning and development. The development and retention of a highly qualified and appropriately compensated workforce for early childhood programs is critical to improve program quality.[4,5,6,7]

Most states use Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) to document and improve the quality of early learning and child care programs. QRIS measure program quality indicators (e.g., staff qualifications, learning environment, and staff-child interactions) and create an index rating. QRIS ratings are shared with parents and often connected to financial incentives and supports (e.g., enhanced reimbursement rates or quality bonuses).[8,9]

BrightStars is Rhode Island's QRIS and conducts program quality assessments for early care and education centers, family child care homes, and public schools. Programs participating in BrightStars receive a star rating and support to set and achieve quality improvement goals. All programs serving children participating in the Child Care Assistance Program and in RI Pre-K are required to have a BrightStars rating. Star ratings are posted on a public website to inform family decision making when selecting a program.[10,11]

Percentage of Licensed Early Learning Centers, Family Child Care Programs, and Public Schools with a High-Quality BrightStars Rating (4 or 5 Stars), Rhode Island, 2019-2023



Source: RI Association for the Education of Young Children, Rhode Island Department of Human Services, Rhode Island Department of Education, and RI Early Care and Education Data System (ECEDS), January 2019 – January 2023.

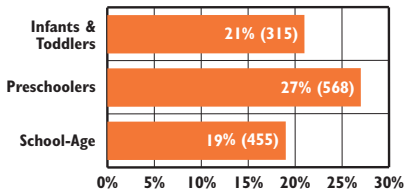
- **As of January 2023, 261 (82%) licensed child care centers, 326 (83%) licensed family child care homes, and 27 (47%) public schools with preschool classrooms had a BrightStars rating. Eighty-four (26%) licensed early learning centers, four (1%) licensed family child care homes, and 18 (32%) public schools had met the benchmarks for a high-quality rating of four or five stars.[12]**

- **Since 2019, the percentage of early learning centers with a high-quality rating has grown from 21% to 26% and the percentage of public schools serving preschoolers that have a high-quality rating has increased from 22% to 32%.[13]**

- **Early learning centers and public schools in the core cities are more likely to have a high-quality BrightStars rating than those in the remainder of the state (37% vs. 23% for licensed centers and 33% vs. 30% for public schools).[14]**

- **A 2016 evaluation of BrightStars found that the star levels effectively differentiate quality, and five of the 10 standards are linked to improved child outcomes, specifically improved social competence and math skills. The study also found that 70% of child care center and preschool directors had a positive or extremely positive impression of BrightStars.[15]**

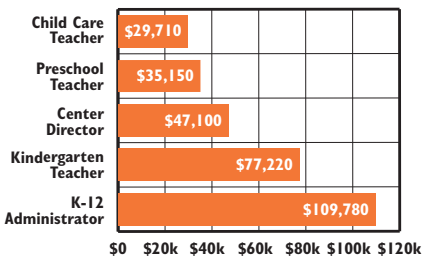
CCAP Children Enrolled in High-Quality Programs (4 or 5 Stars) by Age, December 2022



Source: Rhode Island Rhode Island Department of Human Services, December 2022.

◆ **Preschool-age children enrolled in the RI Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) are more likely to be enrolled in a high-quality program (27%) than infants and toddlers (21%) or school-age children (19%).**[16]

Average Annual Salary, Rhode Island, 2021



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2022). *May 2021 State occupational employment and wage estimates, Rhode Island.* Retrieved April 2, 2022, from www.bls.gov

◆ **Early childhood teachers and program directors in Rhode Island earn significantly lower wages than kindergarten teachers and K-12 school administrators.**[17]

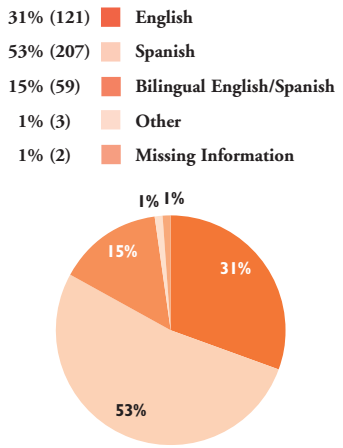
Table 36.

Licensed Child Care Centers and Preschools Participating in the BrightStars Quality Rating and Improvement System, Rhode Island, January 2023

CITY/TOWN	LICENSED PROGRAMS	PROGRAMS THAT ACCEPT CCAP	NO RATING	1 STAR	2 STARS	3 STARS	HIGH-QUALITY 4 STARS	HIGH-QUALITY 5 STARS	% IN BRIGHTSTARS	% WITH HIGH-QUALITY RATING
Barrington	10	3	5	3	1	0	1	0	50%	10%
Bristol	4	3	1	3	0	0	0	0	75%	0%
Burrillville	4	2	1	2	0	0	0	1	75%	25%
Central Falls	3	3	0	0	0	2	1	0	100%	33%
Charlestown	4	3	0	1	0	0	0	3	100%	75%
Coventry	7	7	0	1	2	1	2	1	100%	43%
Cranston	27	18	5	8	7	4	2	1	81%	11%
Cumberland	6	4	2	1	1	0	2	0	67%	33%
East Greenwich	14	7	5	1	3	2	2	1	64%	21%
East Providence	16	10	3	4	5	0	3	1	81%	25%
Exeter	2	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	100%	50%
Foster	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	100%	0%
Glocester	4	3	1	0	2	0	0	1	75%	25%
Hopkinton	3	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	100%	0%
Jamestown	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	100%	0%
Johnston	20	17	2	6	9	1	2	0	90%	10%
Lincoln	5	5	0	1	3	0	0	1	100%	20%
Little Compton	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Middletown	11	5	4	3	0	1	3	0	64%	27%
Narragansett	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	50%	0%
New Shoreham	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Newport	3	2	1	0	1	0	1	0	67%	33%
North Kingstown	7	5	1	0	2	1	3	0	86%	43%
North Providence	9	6	1	3	2	0	1	2	89%	33%
North Smithfield	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Pawtucket	15	10	0	7	2	2	3	1	100%	27%
Portsmouth	5	2	4	1	0	0	0	0	20%	0%
Providence	52	37	8	9	12	6	10	7	85%	33%
Richmond	0	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Scituate	2	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	100%	0%
Smithfield	9	6	1	3	3	1	1	0	89%	11%
South Kingstown	13	8	4	2	1	2	3	1	69%	31%
Tiverton	4	2	1	1	1	0	1	0	75%	25%
Warren	5	2	2	1	0	0	2	0	60%	40%
Warwick	22	18	0	5	6	4	7	0	100%	32%
West Greenwich	3	2	0	1	2	0	0	0	100%	0%
West Warwick	5	4	1	0	1	2	0	1	80%	20%
Westerly	7	5	2	0	2	0	3	0	71%	43%
Woonsocket	12	12	0	2	1	1	3	5	100%	67%
Four Core Cities	*82*	*62*	*8*	*18*	*15*	*11*	*17*	*13*	*90%*	*37%*
Remainder of State	*238*	*157*	*51*	*53*	*59*	*21*	*40*	*14*	*79%*	*23%*
Rhode Island	*320*	*219*	*59*	*71*	*74*	*32*	*57*	*27*	*82%*	*26%*

High-Quality Early Learning Programs

Licensed Family Child Care Programs by Preferred Language, Rhode Island, 2023



n=392

Source: Rhode Island Department of Human Services, Licensed family child care providers, 2023.

◆ In 2023, Of the 392 licensed family child care providers in Rhode Island, 31% spoke English, 53% spoke Spanish, 15% were bilingual in Spanish and English, 1% spoke another language (Portuguese or Creole), and 1% had missing information.[18]

◆ As of December 2022, of the 1,589 children in the CCAP program with reported Hispanic ethnicity, 35% were enrolled in family child care, 65% were enrolled in a center, and less than 1% were enrolled in license-exempt care.[19]

Table 37.

Licensed Family Child Care Homes Participating in the BrightStars Quality Rating and Improvement System, Rhode Island, January 2023

CITY/TOWN	LICENSED PROGRAMS	PROGRAMS THAT ACCEPT CCAP	NO RATING	1 STAR	2 STARS	3 STARS	HIGH-QUALITY 4 STARS	HIGH-QUALITY 5 STARS	% IN BRIGHTSTARS	% WITH HIGH-QUALITY RATING
Barrington	5	1	3	2	0	0	0	0	40%	0%
Bristol	4	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	50%	0%
Burrillville	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	100%	0%
Central Falls	13	13	0	11	2	0	0	0	100%	0%
Charlestown	0	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Coventry	3	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	33%	0%
Cranston	45	34	6	24	15	0	0	0	87%	0%
Cumberland	9	3	6	3	0	0	0	0	33%	0%
East Greenwich	0	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
East Providence	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	100%	0%
Exeter	0	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Foster	0	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Glocester	0	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Hopkinton	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	100%	0%
Jamestown	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Johnston	9	8	1	6	2	0	0	0	89%	0%
Lincoln	6	1	3	3	0	0	0	0	50%	0%
Little Compton	0	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Middletown	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	100%	0%
Narragansett	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
New Shoreham	0	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Newport	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
North Kingstown	3	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	33%	0%
North Providence	7	6	0	7	0	0	0	0	100%	0%
North Smithfield	4	1	2	1	0	0	1	0	50%	25%
Pawtucket	24	21	1	14	8	1	0	0	96%	0%
Portsmouth	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Providence	228	189	27	118	76	4	2	1	88%	1%
Richmond	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	100%	0%
Scituate	0	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Smithfield	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
South Kingstown	4	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	50%	0%
Tiverton	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	100%	0%
Warren	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	100%	0%
Warwick	5	1	3	2	0	0	0	0	40%	0%
West Greenwich	0	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
West Warwick	4	2	0	4	0	0	0	0	100%	0%
Westerly	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	100%	0%
Woonsocket	6	5	1	4	1	0	0	0	83%	0%
Four Core Cities	*271*	*228*	*29*	*147*	*87*	*5*	*2*	*1*	*89%*	*1%*
Remainder of State	*121*	*66*	*37*	*65*	*18*	*0*	*1*	*0*	*69%*	*1%*
Rhode Island	*392*	*294*	*66*	*212*	*105*	*5*	*3*	*1*	*83%*	*1%*

Table 38.

Public Schools with Preschool Classrooms Participating in the BrightStars Quality Rating and Improvement System, Rhode Island, January 2023

DISTRICT	SCHOOLS WITH PRESCHOOL CLASSROOMS	NO RATING	1 STAR	2 STARS	3 STARS	HIGH-QUALITY 4 STARS	HIGH-QUALITY 5 STARS	% IN BRIGHTSTARS	% WITH HIGH-QUALITY RATING
Barrington	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Bristol Warren	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Burrillville	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Central Falls	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	50%	50%
Chariho	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Coventry	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	100%	100%
Cranston	5	2	0	0	0	2	1	60%	60%
Cumberland	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
East Greenwich	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	100%	0%
East Providence	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	100%	100%
Exeter-West Greenwich	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	100%	100%
Foster	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Glocester	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Jamestown	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	100%	100%
Johnston	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	100%	100%
Lincoln	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	100%	0%
Little Compton	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Middletown	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Narragansett	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
New Shoreham	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Newport	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	100%	0%
North Kingstown	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	100%	100%
North Providence	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	100%	0%
North Smithfield	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Pawtucket	4	1	1	0	0	0	2	75%	50%
Portsmouth	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	100%	100%
Providence	7	1	0	3	1	1	1	86%	29%
Scituate	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Smithfield	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
South Kingstown	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Tiverton	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Warwick	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
West Warwick	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Westerly	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	100%	100%
Woonsocket	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Charter Schools	*1*	*1*	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0%*	*0%*
RI School for the Deaf	*1*	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0*	*1*	*0*	*100%*	*100%*
Four Core Cities	*15*	*5*	*1*	*3*	*1*	*2*	*3*	*67%*	*33%*
Remainder of State	*40*	*24*	*0*	*3*	*1*	*8*	*4*	*40%*	*30%*
Rhode Island	*57*	*30*	*1*	*6*	*2*	*11*	*7*	*47%*	*32%*

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Data on the number of licensed early learning programs and family child care homes are from the Rhode Island Department of Human Services, January 2023. Data on public schools are from the Rhode Island Department of Education, January 2023. Data on BrightStars quality ratings are from the Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children, January 2023.

High-quality rating means a BrightStars rating of four or five stars.

NA=Not applicable.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

References

[1,4] Donoghue, E. A. & AAP Council on Early Childhood. (2017). Quality early education and child care from birth to kindergarten. *Pediatrics, 140*(2): e20171488.

[2,3] Gordon, J., Herbst, C. M., & Tekin, E. (2018). *Who's minding the kids?: Experimental evidence on the demand for child care quality.* Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

[5,9] Pianta, R., Downer, J., & Hamre, B. (2016). Quality in early education classrooms: Definitions, gaps, and systems. *The Future of Children, 26*(2), 119-137.

[6] Phillips, D., Austin, L. J. E., & Whitebook, M. (2016). The early care and education workforce. *The Future of Children, 26*(2), 139-158.

[7,8] Workman, S. & Ullrich, R. (2017). *Quality 101: Identifying the core components of a high-quality early childhood program.* Washington, DC: Center for American Progress.

[10] Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children. (n.d.). *BrightStars RI: Connecting quality child care FAQ's.* Retrieved April 2, 2023, from www.brightstars.org

[11] *Request for proposals: Rhode Island Pre-K Programs 2020-2021.* Retrieved March 1, 2020, from www.ride.ri.gov

(continued on page 187)

Children Enrolled in Head Start or RI Pre-K

DEFINITION

Children enrolled in Head Start or RI Pre-K is the percentage of low-income children and all children ages three and four enrolled in a Rhode Island Head Start or RI Pre-K preschool program. Head Start is managed by the federal government and RI Pre-K is managed by the Rhode Island Department of Education.

SIGNIFICANCE

Learning disparities appear early and grow over time without access to enriching early learning experiences. Participation in high-quality early learning programs from birth through kindergarten entry, including high-quality preschool, helps to ensure children enter school with the skills needed to succeed. Without government funding, children from low-income families, and Black and Latino children would have less access to high-quality preschool compared to higher-income and white families.[1,2]

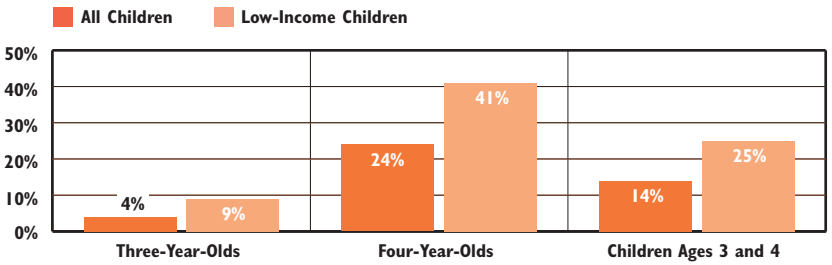
Decades of research have shown that high-quality preschool programs help children gain academic and social-emotional skills prior to school entry and can produce positive outcomes that last well into the school years, including reduced need for special education services and improved high school graduation rates. Sustaining these positive outcomes requires additional investments and high-quality learning in the early grades and beyond.[3,4]

Head Start is a federally-funded comprehensive early childhood program for preschool children ages three through five who are low-income and/or have high needs. Head Start programs deliver early education; dental, medical, and mental health support; nutrition services, and developmental screenings. Families receive wraparound support and have opportunities to be involved with decision making, participate in classes, and volunteer in the program.[5,6]

State-funded Pre-K programs are growing across the U.S. As of 2021, 44 states and Washington, DC operated state Pre-K programs, serving 29% of four-year-olds and 5% of three-year-olds across the U.S.[7] The RI Pre-K program was launched in 2009 and serves children who are selected through a state-managed lottery. RI Pre-K is delivered by public schools, Head Start agencies, and child care programs that meet the same quality standards. *The Rhode Island Prekindergarten Education Act* establishes a state goal to provide access to publicly-funded, high-quality Pre-K for all three- and four-year-olds by building on existing early childhood education infrastructure in communities.[8,9]

Head Start and RI Pre-K are an important part of a strong statewide early learning system that starts at birth and continues through third grade, including high-quality child care and nurturing early elementary classrooms.[10]

Percentage of Children Ages 3 and 4 Enrolled in Head Start and/or RI Pre-K, Rhode Island, 2022-2023



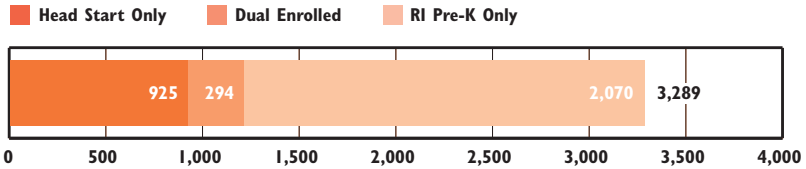
Source: Rhode Island KIDS COUNT calculations using October 2022 enrollment in Head Start and RI Pre-K as numerator and Census 2010 population of children ages 3 and 4 as denominator with low-income population estimated using the % of children receiving free or reduced-price lunch.

◆ **As of October 2022, there were 3,289 children ages three and four enrolled in Head Start, RI Pre-K, or both during the two years before kindergarten, reaching approximately 14% of all children and 25% of low-income children.[11]**

◆ **Of the total, 925 children were enrolled in Head Start only, 2,070 children were enrolled in RI Pre-K only, and 294 were dually enrolled in both Head Start and RI Pre-K with braided funding.[12]**

◆ **In the four core cities, approximately 26% of low-income children and 22% of all children ages three and four, were enrolled in either Head Start, RI Pre-K, or both, while in the remainder of the state, enrollment for low-income children and all children was approximately 22% and 9%, respectively.[13]**

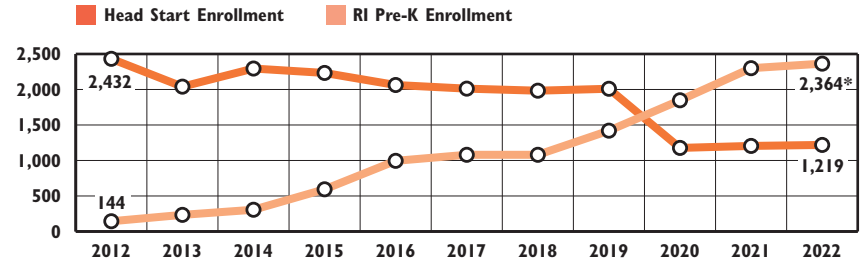
Number of Children Ages 3 and 4 Enrolled in Head Start, RI Pre-K, or Both, Rhode Island, 2022



Source: Rhode Island Head Start programs and Rhode Island Department of Education, October 2022 enrollment.

Children Enrolled in Head Start or RI Pre-K

Head Start and RI Pre-K Enrollment, 2012-2022



Sources: Head Start program reports to Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, 2012-2022. RI Pre-K enrollment for 2012 to 2014 from National Institute for Early Education Research, *The State of Preschool 2013, 2014, 2015.* RI Pre-K enrollment for 2015 to 2022 from Rhode Island Department of Education. *Some children are dually enrolled in Head Start and RI Pre-K -- 140 in 2019, 176 in 2020, 253 in 2021, and 294 in 2022.

◆ **In October 2022, there were 1,219 children enrolled in Head Start, down 39% from 2019 and down 50% from 2012. Of these, 294 (24%) were dually enrolled in RI Pre-K.[14]**

◆ **Of the 1,219 children enrolled in Head Start, 497 (41%) were age three and 722 (59%) were age four at the start of the school year. Eighty-two percent of children enrolled in Head Start were enrolled in a classroom that operated for at least six hours per day.[15]**

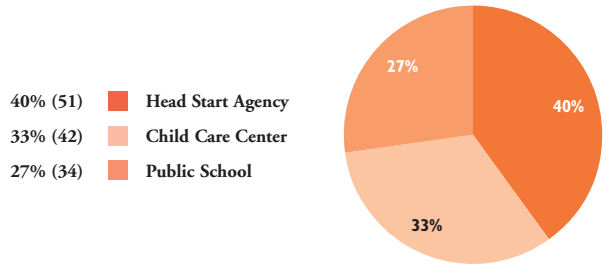
◆ **Inability to hire and retain qualified Head Start teachers due to noncompetitive wages caused the closure of 30 Head Start classrooms as well as reduced enrollment in 14 Head Start classrooms in the 2022-2023 school year, despite a waiting list of 237 eligible children.[16]**

◆ **Nationally, 20% of Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms are closed and there is an estimated waiting list of over 100,000 children. Inadequate compensation for Head Start teachers is the primary reason for the closures and wait lists.[17]**

◆ **In October 2022, there were 2,364 children enrolled in RI Pre-K, up 66% from 2019. Of these, 294 (12%) were dually enrolled in Head Start.[18] Of the 2,364 children enrolled in RI Pre-K, almost all were age four at the start of the school year. Less than 1% were age 3, all of whom were dually enrolled in Head Start.[19]**

◆ **Of the 2,364 children enrolled in RI Pre-K, 1,781 (75%) were low-income and 583 (25%) were higher-income.[20]**

RI Pre-K Classrooms by Setting, Rhode Island, 2022



n = 127

Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, October 2022.

◆ **As of the 2022-2023 school year, there were 127 RI Pre-K classrooms with 51 (40%) operated by Head Start agencies, 42 (33%) operated by child care centers, and 34 (27%) operated by public schools.[21]**

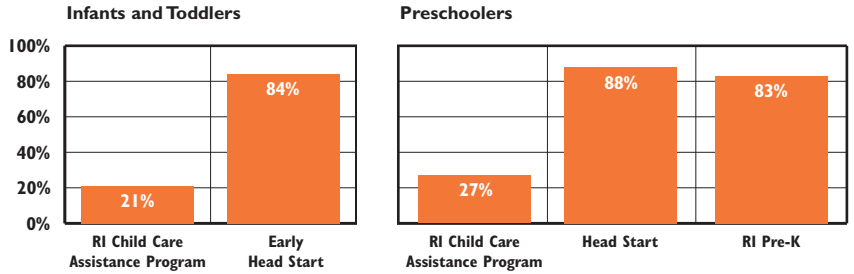
◆ **Children are selected to participate in RI Pre-K through a lottery, with outreach to recruit children from low-income and moderate-income families, children who are differently abled, children who are Multilingual Learners, children who are involved with the child welfare system, and children who are experiencing homelessness.[22]**

◆ **Decades of research has shown that Head Start improves children's academic, cognitive, language, and social-emotional skills and health including reduced childhood obesity and improved immunization rates. Head Start children are more likely to graduate from high school, attend college, and receive a postsecondary degree, license or certification.[23,24]**

◆ **A 2012 evaluation of RI Pre-K found that it improves children's language and math skills and closes the achievement gap between low-income children and higher-income children by three-quarters.[25]**

Children Enrolled in Head Start or RI Pre-K

Enrollment in Programs with a High-Quality BrightStars Rating by Funding Source, Rhode Island, 2022



Sources: Rhode Island Head Start Programs, 2022. Rhode Island Department of Education, 2022. Rhode Island Department of Human Services, 2022.

◆ Across the U.S., Head Start centers are typically higher quality than many other early care and education programs.[26]

◆ Rhode Island Head Start programs score above the national average and significantly above research-based thresholds for emotional support and classroom organization and meet the research-based threshold for instructional support based on classroom observations of teacher-child interactions.[27]

◆ In 2021, Rhode Island was one of only five states with a Pre-K program that met all 10 recommended quality benchmarks, including teachers who have a bachelor's degree with specialized training in early childhood education and program monitoring that includes annual classroom observations.[28]

◆ As of 2022, 88% of children enrolled in Head Start and 83% of children enrolled in RI Pre-K were in a program that had achieved a high-quality BrightStars rating of four or five stars. In comparison, only 27% of preschool-age children in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) were enrolled in a program that had achieved a high-quality BrightStars rating.[29,30,31]

◆ As of 2022, 84% of infants and toddlers enrolled in Early Head Start were in a program that had achieved a high-quality BrightStars rating of four or five stars. In comparison, only 21% of infants and toddlers in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) were enrolled in a program that had achieved a high-quality BrightStars rating.[32,33]

Children with High Needs

◆ Of the 1,219 children enrolled in Head Start as of October 2022, 115 (9%) children enrolled in Head Start had developmental delays or disabilities and received special education services through their local school districts. Also, in October 2022, 27 (2%) were in foster care and 24 (2%) were homeless.[34]

◆ In 2020-2021, Head Start programs in Rhode Island were serving 37% of Black children, 44% of Hispanic children, and 40% of white children who lived in poverty.[35]

◆ In 2020-2021, 31% of children enrolled in Head Start programs in Rhode Island spoke a language other than English at home, with 24% speaking Spanish.[36]

◆ Of the 2,364 children enrolled in RI Pre-K in October 2022, 283 (12%) children in RI Pre-K had a developmental delay or disability and received special education services through their local school districts. Also, in October 2022, 43 (2%) were in foster care and 21 (1%) were homeless.[37]

◆ Of the 2,364 children enrolled in RI Pre-K in October 2022, 82 (3%) were Asian/Pacific Islander, 384 (16%) were Black, 792 (34%) were Hispanic/Latino, 382 (16%) were Multiracial, 9 (less than 1%) were Native American, and 715 (30%) were white.[38]

Public Preschool Contributes to a Strong, Equitable Birth to Five System

◆ Including Head Start, child care centers, and family child care homes in public preschool expansion and leveraging the national Head Start model and expanding Head Start and Early Head Start programs to serve more families would help build an equitable birth to five system.

◆ Increasing investments to sustain, expand, and improve programs for infants and toddlers as preschool expands is vital to a strong birth to five system.

◆ States should provide equitable and competitive compensation to early childhood educators serving children from birth through age five, regardless of setting.[39]

Table 39.

Children Enrolled in Head Start and/or RI Pre-K, Rhode Island, 2022

SCHOOL DISTRICT	# CHILDREN AGES 3 AND 4	% LOW-INCOME CHILDREN	ESTIMATED # LOW-INCOME CHILDREN AGES 3 AND 4	AGE 3		AGE 4				ESTIMATED % OF LOW-INCOME CHILDREN AGE 3 OR 4 IN HEAD START OR RI PRE-K	ESTIMATED % OF ALL CHILDREN AGE 3 OR 4 IN HEAD START OR RI PRE-K
				ENROLLED IN HEAD START ONLY	DUAL ENROLLED IN RI PRE-K & HEAD START	ENROLLED IN HEAD START ONLY	DUAL ENROLLED IN RI PRE-K & & HEAD START	ENROLLED IN RI PRE-K ONLY LOW-INCOME	ENROLLED IN RI PRE-K ONLY HIGHER-INCOME		
Barrington	369	6%	23	0	0	0	1	2	0	13%	1%
Bristol	401	29%	115	5	0	0	3	8	3	14%	5%
Burrillville	321	32%	102	4	0	6	0	0	0	10%	3%
Central Falls	699	96%	668	6	0	21	0	136	14	24%	25%
Charlestown	153	17%	27	1	0	0	1	1	0	11%	2%
Coventry	734	28%	208	9	0	1	16	26	32	25%	11%
Cranston	1,684	39%	652	45	0	26	35	90	99	30%	18%
Cumberland	810	18%	148	1	0	5	0	3	0	6%	1%
East Greenwich	277	7%	20	0	0	0	0	2	0	10%	1%
East Providence	982	47%	457	19	0	12	3	112	100	32%	25%
Exeter	105	14%	15	2	1	1	1	0	0	34%	5%
Foster	99	31%	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Glocester	191	13%	25	1	0	2	0	0	0	12%	2%
Hopkinton	167	17%	29	3	0	0	1	0	0	14%	2%
Jamestown	102	7%	7	0	0	0	0	1	0	15%	1%
Johnston	528	43%	226	9	0	15	0	15	14	17%	10%
Lincoln	412	25%	103	2	0	2	0	8	5	12%	4%
Little Compton	49	12%	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Middletown	431	34%	146	6	0	4	10	10	6	21%	8%
Narragansett	210	14%	28	0	0	0	0	2	0	7%	1%
New Shoreham	15	12%	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Newport	514	63%	324	23	0	10	9	20	4	19%	13%
North Kingstown	593	22%	128	4	0	7	1	4	9	12%	4%
North Providence	575	40%	227	11	1	9	12	9	3	18%	8%
North Smithfield	218	18%	39	0	0	1	0	2	0	8%	1%
Pawtucket	2,053	61%	1,260	30	0	64	9	106	53	17%	13%
Portsmouth	359	13%	48	1	0	3	0	3	0	14%	2%
Providence	4,743	77%	3,669	155	1	179	20	660	105	28%	24%
Richmond	190	17%	33	1	0	3	0	0	0	12%	2%
Scituate	197	14%	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Smithfield	343	14%	49	3	0	5	0	2	0	21%	3%
South Kingstown	504	17%	87	2	5	4	8	0	0	22%	4%
Tiverton	287	22%	62	7	0	4	0	0	0	18%	4%
Warren	240	29%	69	9	0	2	14	10	6	51%	17%
Warwick	1,579	34%	544	16	0	4	45	44	52	20%	10%
West Greenwich	115	14%	16	1	0	0	1	0	0	12%	2%
West Warwick	703	51%	359	24	0	7	40	16	16	24%	15%
Westerly	490	32%	156	11	2	2	8	4	4	17%	6%
Woonsocket	1,218	77%	936	76	0	29	56	181	58	37%	33%
Four Core Cities	*8,713*	*75%*	*6,546*	*267*	*1*	*293*	*85*	*1,083*	*230*	*26%*	*22%*
Remainder of State	*14,947*	*29%*	*4,304*	*220*	*9*	*135*	*209*	*394*	*353*	*22%*	*9%*
Rhode Island	*23,660*	*45%*	*10,692*	*487*	*10*	*428*	*294*	*1,477*	*583*	*25%*	*14%*

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Head Start Programs, children enrolled as of October 2022, by child residence. Rhode Island Department of Education, children enrolled in RI Pre-K as of October 2022, by child residence.

The estimated number of children age four is from Census 2010, Summary File 1. The percentage of low-income four-year-olds is estimated using the percentage of students who qualified for free or reduced-price lunch (at or below 185% of the federal poverty level) in the local public school district with regional school district data used for all communities in the region.

The city/town table was redesigned in 2023 to include children ages three and four. Percentages should not be compared with prior Factbooks.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

References

[1,3] *A matter of equity: Preschool education in America.* (2015). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

[2,4] Meloy, B., Gardner, M., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2019). *Untangling the evidence on preschool effectiveness: Insights for policymakers.* Washington, DC: Learning Policy Institute.

[5,27,35,36] Friedman-Krauss, A. H., Barnett, W. S., & Duer, J. K. (2022). *The state(s) of Head Start and Early Head Start: Looking at equity.* New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.

[6] National Head Start Association. (2023). *Rhode Island 2023 Head Start and Early Head Start profile.* Retrieved April 2, 2023, from www.nhsa.org

[7,28] Friedman-Kraus, A. H., et al. (2022). *The state of preschool 2021: State preschool yearbook.* New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.

[8] *Rhode Island Prekindergarten Education Act*, Rhode Island General Laws, 16-87.

[9,22] *Request for proposal (RFP) – Bid# 7535368: Evaluate quality of Rhode Island Pre-Kindergarten Program.* (2013). Providence, RI: State of Rhode Island Department of Administration, Division of Purchases.

(continued on page 187)

Children Receiving Preschool Special Education Services

DEFINITION

Children receiving preschool special education services is the percentage of children ages three to five who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and are receiving special education services in Rhode Island.

SIGNIFICANCE

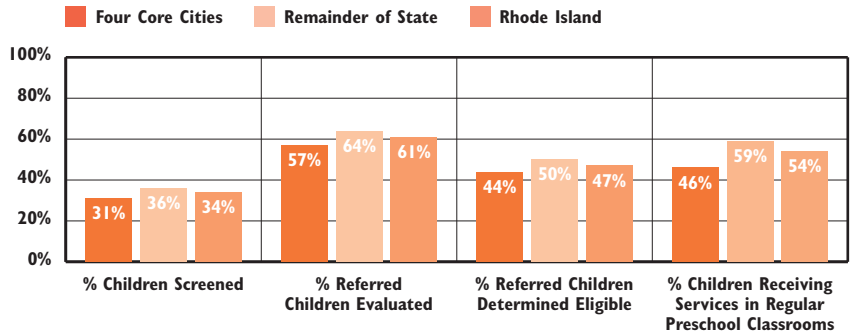
Preschool special education is an important component of the early care and education system, providing specially-designed instruction so each child can meet learning standards. The federal *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* specifies that children ages three to five with disabilities, including developmental delays, have the same right to a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment as school-age children with disabilities.[1]

Developmental delays are identified when a child does not reach milestones at the same time as other children their age. Some young children with developmental delays are eventually diagnosed with a disability while others catch up to their peers when provided with high-quality educational opportunities, therapies, or interventions.[2,3] Routine developmental screening during the early stages of life, followed by evaluation and diagnostic assessment, helps children gain access to needed services to promote positive outcomes and prevent ongoing educational challenges.[4]

In Rhode Island, school districts work to screen every child ages three through five every year through the Child Outreach screening program.[5] During the 2021-2022 school year in Rhode Island, districts completed developmental screenings for only 34% of children ages three to five, up from 23% the previous year but down from 39% pre-pandemic. Preschool-age children in the four core cities were less likely to receive a developmental screening (31%) than children in the remainder of the state (36%). Of the children who were referred for evaluation based on positive screens in 2021-2022, 61% were evaluated and 47% were determined eligible for special education. Children in the four core cities were less likely to be evaluated (57%) or determined eligible (44%) than children in the remainder of the state (64% and 50% respectively).[6,7]

Approximately 17% of U.S. children ages three to 17 have a developmental disability, with higher prevalence among low-income children, children with low birthweight, and boys.[8] Under *IDEA*, each state sets its own criteria to determine the magnitude of a delay needed to qualify for special education services.[9]

Preschool Special Education Screening, Eligibility, and Inclusion Rates, Rhode Island, June 2022



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, 2021-2022 Child Outreach data and June 2022 Special Education Census. Percent children determined eligible is of those children referred for evaluation from Child Outreach screening.

◆ **In June 2022, there were 2,920 children ages three to five receiving preschool special education services (8% of all preschool children), up from 2,597 in 2021 but down from 3,156 in 2019 (pre-pandemic). Children in the four core cities were just as likely to receive preschool special education services (8%) as children in the remainder of the state (8%).[10,11]**

◆ **Preschool children with disabilities who attend high-quality preschool with typically developing children and receive special education services in inclusive settings have improved outcomes.[12] In June 2022 in Rhode Island, 54% of preschool-age children received special education services within an inclusive early childhood classroom. Children in the four core cities were less likely to receive preschool special education services in an inclusive early childhood setting (46%) than children in the remainder of the state (59%).[13]**

◆ **More than four in 10 children receiving preschool special education services in Rhode Island receive services outside of inclusive preschool programs, with 13% enrolled in a separate special education preschool class or school, 22% receiving services through "walk-in" visits to a service provider, 10% enrolled in a preschool setting but receiving special education services in another location, and <1% in a home or hospital.[14]**

◆ **In June 2022, 47% (1,375) of the 2,920 children receiving preschool special education services in Rhode Island qualified under the developmental delay category, 43% (1,258) had an identified speech/language disability, 6% (176) were diagnosed with autism, and 4% (111) had another diagnosed disability.[15]**

Children Receiving Preschool Special Education Services

Table 40. **Children Ages 3 to 5 Receiving Special Education Services, Rhode Island, 2022**

SCHOOL DISTRICT	# OF CHILDREN AGES 3-5	DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING EVALUATION, AND ELIGIBILITY, 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR				PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION BY SETTING JUNE 2022				
		% POPULATION SCREENED	# REFERRED FOR EVALUATION	# EVALUATED	# DETERMINED ELIGIBLE	% IN INCLUSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASS	% IN SELF-CONTAINED SETTING	% IN OTHER SETTING	TOTAL # RECEIVING SERVICES	% RECEIVING SERVICES
Barrington+	630	46%	10	7	7	62%	0%	38%	45	7%
Bristol Warren+	714	23%	48	26	17	64%	4%	32%	50	7%
Burrillville	452	37%	18	17	16	60%	2%	37%	43	10%
Central Falls+	1,045	38%	82	67	47	64%	17%	19%	139	13%
Chariho	666	51%	33	31	25	37%	1%	62%	90	14%
Coventry+	1,058	38%	27	19	18	49%	1%	50%	98	9%
Cranston+	2,635	31%	77	33	20	49%	8%	43%	186	7%
Cumberland	1,312	31%	40	24	16	64%	13%	23%	109	8%
East Greenwich+	604	40%	11	10	8	100%	0%	0%	38	6%
East Providence+	1,460	29%	51	19	16	81%	9%	10%	105	7%
Exeter-West Greenwich	386	42%	8	7	6	46%	0%	54%	28	7%
Foster	102	NA	NA	NA	NA	73%	0%	27%	11	11%
Glocester	238	NA	NA	NA	NA	29%	0%	71%	28	12%
Jamestown	126	62%	7	6	4	60%	0%	40%	*	4%
Johnston+	894	35%	26	21	20	74%	0%	26%	89	10%
Lincoln	720	48%	64	45	40	80%	3%	18%	80	11%
Little Compton	66	35%	8	7	6	50%	0%	50%	*	3%
Middletown	813	23%	38	18	16	46%	8%	46%	37	5%
Narragansett	192	48%	3	2	2	88%	0%	12%	26	14%
New Shoreham	26	44%	0	0	0	NA	NA	NA	0	0%
Newport+	1,029	33%	36	21	14	53%	11%	36%	47	5%
North Kingstown	863	56%	33	27	21	65%	0%	35%	68	8%
North Providence+	1,003	35%	42	25	18	48%	14%	38%	73	7%
North Smithfield	345	43%	8	7	5	43%	0%	57%	28	8%
Pawtucket+	2,997	30%	179	97	64	28%	50%	22%	215	7%
Portsmouth	591	34%	24	15	9	53%	0%	48%	40	7%
Providence+	7,746	30%	587	297	240	44%	15%	41%	529	7%
Scituate	270	NA	NA	NA	NA	40%	0%	60%	25	9%
Smithfield	546	57%	27	15	7	71%	0%	29%	45	8%
South Kingstown+	620	56%	20	17	15	62%	0%	38%	42	7%
Tiverton	420	30%	34	14	10	58%	15%	27%	26	6%
Warwick	2,264	24%	53	31	27	43%	39%	17%	180	8%
West Warwick+	1,034	34%	56	39	34	53%	28%	19%	120	12%
Westerly+	589	50%	39	32	21	82%	0%	18%	68	12%
Woonsocket+	1,914	32%	122	96	76	60%	3%	37%	196	10%
Charter Schools+	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*100%*	*0%*	*0%*	*	*NA*
RI School for the Deaf	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*0%*	*100%*	*0%*	*	*NA*
Four Core Cities	*13,702*	*31%*	*970*	*557*	*427*	*46%*	*20%*	*34%*	*1,079*	*8%*
Remainder of State	*22,668*	*36%*	*861*	*553*	*431*	*59%*	*9%*	*32%*	*1,832*	*8%*
Rhode Island	*36,370*	*34%*	*1,831*	*1,110*	*858*	*54%*	*13%*	*33%*	*2,920*	*8%*

Sources of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), June 2022 Special Education Census. Beginning in 2020, the early childhood special education census data was adjusted to exclude children age five on June 30 who were enrolled in kindergarten and they were included in the K-12 special education census.

2021-2022 Developmental screening, referral, evaluation, and eligibility data is from the RIDE Office of Student, Community, and Academic Supports. Foster, Glocester, and Scituate school districts collaborate as the Northwest Region to conduct screenings, evaluations, and eligibility determinations and data is not available separately for these districts. The Northwest Region screeded 35% of their population, referred 20 children for evaluations, completed evaluations for 18 children, and determined 13 children eligible for preschool special education services in 2021-2022.

+ Districts implementing Itinerant Early Childhood Special Education, delivering services in community-based early childhood classrooms.

*Fewer than 10 students are in this category. Actual numbers are not shown to protect student confidentiality. These students are still counted in district totals and in the four core cities, remainder of the state, and state totals.

The denominator is the number of children ages three to five residing in each district during the 2021-2022 school year from the Rhode Island Department of Health's KIDSNET database shared with RIDE.

Due to changes in the denominator, screening rates and percentage receiving preschool special education services should not be compared with data in Factbooks published before 2016.

Inclusive early childhood class means children receive the majority of their special education services in a regular early childhood education class at a public school, a Head Start program, or a community-based child care program or preschool. Data include children who are district-placed and who are parentally-placed.

Charter school is Highlander Charter School.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

References

[1,3,9,12] Hebbeler, K. & Spiker, D. (2016). Supporting young children with disabilities. *The Future of Children, 26*(2), 185-205.

(continued on page 188)

Public School Enrollment and Demographics

DEFINITION

Public school enrollment and demographics is the total number of students enrolled in Rhode Island public schools on October 1.

SIGNIFICANCE

Education is a lifetime process that begins at birth and continues throughout a child's life into adulthood. Racial, ethnic, and income gaps in opportunities to obtain a high-quality education have been well-documented throughout the country. Research has shown that there are three clusters of factors that have an impact on student achievement: school factors, factors related to connections between home and school, and factors that exist before and beyond school (including health, nutrition, and non-school academic supports).[1]

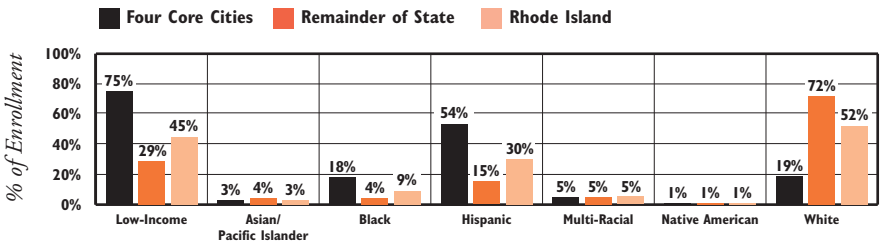
On October 1, 2022, there were 137,452 students enrolled in Rhode Island public schools in preschool through grade 12, a decrease of 4% from 142,481 on October 1, 2012. Of these students, 27% (37,067) were attending schools in the four core cities (communities with the highest child poverty rates), 63% (87,166) were attending schools in the remaining districts, and 10% (13,219) attended charter schools, state-operated schools, or the Urban Collaborative Accelerated Project (UCAP).[2,3] There were an additional 14,994 Rhode Island students attending private and parochial schools (including out-of-state schools), and 2,039 students were home-schooled.[4]

As of October 1, 2022, there were 58,966 students in grades K-5; 30,833 in grades 6-8; and 44,533 in grades 9-12. There were 3,120 children enrolled in preschool classrooms in Rhode Island public schools.[5] During the 2022-2023 school year, 2,364 children were enrolled in RI Pre-K (294 of whom were also dually enrolled in Head Start) in 34 public school classrooms and 93 community-based center classrooms.[6]

In October 2022, 52% of Rhode Island public school students were white, 29% were Hispanic, 9% were Black, 5% were Multi-Racial, 3% were Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1% were Native American. In March 2023, 45% of public school students in Rhode Island were low-income (students who were eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program).[7]

Rhode Island schools are also diverse in terms of students with disabilities and students who are Multilingual Learners/English Learners. During the 2021-2022 school year, 16% of Rhode Island public school students were receiving special education services and 12% were Multilingual Learners/English Learners.[8,9]

Rhode Island Public School Enrollment by Low-Income Status, Race and Ethnicity, October 1, 2022

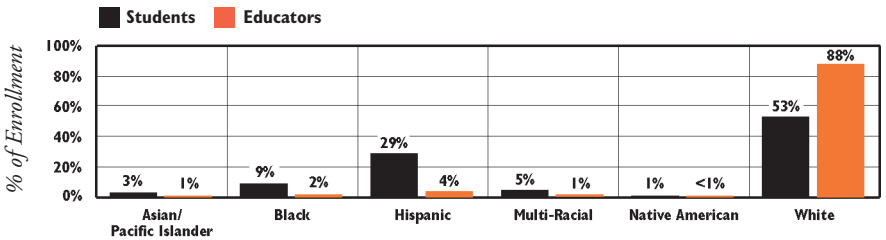


Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, October 1, 2022.

◆ **On October 1, 2022, 81% of students enrolled in the four core cities were Students of Color, compared with 28% in the remainder of state, and 75% of students enrolled in the four core cities were low-income, compared with 29% in the remainder of the state.[10]**

Rhode Island Educator Demographics

Rhode Island Public School Student Enrollment and Educator Demographics by Race and Ethnicity, October 1, 2021



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, State Report Card, 2021-2022 school year. Hispanic educators may be included in any race category. Educator percentages based on the total number of educators that reported race/ethnicity.

◆ **Educators of Color benefit all students, especially Students of Color. Students of Color demonstrate long-term academic achievement including higher reading and math test scores, decreased likelihood of dropping out of high school, increased likelihood of going to college, and increased social and emotional development in classes with Teachers of Color.[11]**

◆ **In October 2021, 88% (12,473) of Rhode Island public school educators identified as white, 4% (568) as Hispanic, 2% (309) as Black, 1% (136) as Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% (144) as Multi-Racial, and less than 1% (27) as Native American.[12]**

Table 41. **Rhode Island Public School Enrollment by Grade and Demographic Groups, October 1, 2022**

	ENROLLMENT BY GRADE LEVEL*				ENROLLMENT BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS							
SCHOOL DISTRICT	PRE-SCHOOL	ELEMENTARY	MIDDLE	HIGH	% LOW-INCOME^	% ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER+	% BLACK	% HISPANIC**	% MULTI-RACIAL	% NATIVE AMERICAN	% WHITE	TOTAL ENROLLMENT
Barrington	45	1,415	796	1,149	6%	8%	2%	6%	6%	<1%	78%	3,405
Bristol Warren	61	1,255	653	919	29%	1%	1%	7%	6%	<1%	84%	2,888
Burrillville	47	860	488	675	32%	1%	1%	6%	3%	0%	89%	2,070
Central Falls	192	1,006	557	841	96%	1%	17%	49%	3%	9%	21%	2,596
Chariho	98	1,236	666	1,102	17%	1%	1%	4%	4%	1%	89%	3,102
Coventry	129	1,814	983	1,341	28%	2%	2%	7%	3%	<1%	86%	4,267
Cranston	145	4,228	2,344	3,508	39%	9%	5%	34%	6%	1%	45%	10,225
Cumberland	127	2,109	1,072	1,476	18%	5%	4%	14%	4%	<1%	73%	4,784
East Greenwich	46	1,123	628	746	7%	8%	1%	7%	5%	<1%	78%	2,543
East Providence	236	2,136	1,162	1,738	47%	2%	11%	15%	10%	1%	61%	5,272
Exeter-West Greenwich	69	644	368	469	14%	2%	1%	5%	2%	<1%	90%	1,550
Foster	22	199	0	0	31%	0%	0%	5%	1%	0%	94%	221
Foster-Glocester	0	0	427	932	13%	1%	1%	5%	3%	<1%	91%	1,359
Glocester	6	571	0	0	13%	0%	1%	4%	4%	0%	91%	577
Jamestown	24	254	137	3	7%	1%	0%	1%	4%	0%	94%	418
Johnston	122	1,416	769	837	43%	4%	6%	29%	2%	<1%	59%	3,144
Lincoln	87	1,425	780	989	25%	4%	6%	10%	4%	<1%	76%	3,281
Little Compton	10	118	72	1	12%	0%	0%	1%	3%	0%	94%	201
Middletown	26	882	472	591	34%	5%	5%	15%	8%	<1%	66%	1,971
Narragansett	64	351	229	484	14%	1%	1%	4%	6%	<1%	87%	1,128
New Shoreham	0	64	32	35	12%	0%	1%	21%	2%	0%	76%	131
Newport	32	809	415	650	63%	2%	11%	38%	13%	3%	34%	1,906
North Kingstown	97	1,520	812	1,413	22%	2%	2%	8%	6%	1%	81%	3,842
North Providence	78	1,501	815	1,122	40%	4%	14%	27%	6%	<1%	49%	3,516
North Smithfield	27	674	382	535	18%	2%	2%	11%	4%	<1%	82%	1,618
Pawtucket	290	3,636	1,919	2,211	61%	1%	29%	34%	7%	1%	28%	8,056
Portsmouth	31	883	461	808	13%	2%	2%	7%	5%	<1%	84%	2,183
Providence	406	8,796	4,580	6,943	77%	4%	15%	68%	4%	1%	8%	20,725
Scituate	18	537	265	374	14%	1%	1%	3%	1%	0%	95%	1,194
Smithfield	52	1,044	540	779	14%	2%	2%	9%	4%	<1%	83%	2,415
South Kingstown	61	1,044	602	802	17%	2%	2%	7%	6%	2%	81%	2,509
Tiverton	32	732	386	484	22%	2%	2%	5%	4%	<1%	87%	1,634
Warwick	190	3,535	1,844	2,436	34%	4%	3%	15%	6%	<1%	72%	8,005
West Warwick	73	1,556	818	1,064	51%	3%	5%	20%	5%	1%	66%	3,511
Westerly	60	958	539	739	32%	2%	1%	9%	7%	1%	79%	2,296
Woonsocket	86	2,651	1,219	1,734	77%	5%	12%	32%	7%	<1%	44%	5,690
Charter Schools	*24*	*5,955*	*2,459*	*2,884*	*69%*	*2%*	*17%*	*61%*	*4%*	*1%*	*16%*	*11,322*
State-Operated Schools	*7*	*29*	*11*	*1,719*	*61%*	*2%*	*19%*	*50%*	*3%*	*1%*	*26%*	*1,766*
UCAP	*0*	*0*	*131*	*0*	*68%*	*1%*	*19%*	*63%*	*4%*	*0%*	*14%*	*131*
Four Core Cities	*974*	*16,089*	*8,275*	*11,729*	*75%*	*3%*	*18%*	*54%*	*5%*	*1%*	*19%*	*37,067*
Remainder of State	*2,115*	*36,893*	*19,957*	*28,201*	*29%*	*4%*	*4%*	*15%*	*5%*	*1%*	*72%*	*87,166*
Rhode Island	*3,120*	*58,966*	*30,833*	*44,533*	*45%*	*3%*	*9%*	*29%*	*5%*	*1%*	*52%*	*137,452*

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education, Public School Enrollment in preschool through grade 12 as of October 1, 2022.

^Rhode Island Department of Education, March 14, 2023.

*Preschool includes students enrolled in half-day or full-day preschool through the public school district (primarily preschool special education classrooms). As of October 1, 2022, the RI Pre-K program served 2,364 children in 127 classrooms, 40% operated by Head Start agencies, 33% operated by child care programs, and 27% operated by public schools. Elementary includes students in kindergarten through 5th grade, middle includes 6th through 8th grades, and high includes 9th through 12th grades.

Children are counted as low-income if they are eligible for a Free or Reduced-Price Lunch Program.

+Data for Asian and Pacific Islander students is not disaggregated by ethnic group. National research shows large academic disparities across Asian ethnic groups.

State-operated schools include Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center, William M. Davies Jr. Career & Technical High School, DCYF, and the Rhode Island School for the Deaf.

Charter Schools include: Achievement First Rhode Island, Beacon Charter High School for the Arts, Blackstone Academy, Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy, Charette High School, The Compass School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, Excel Academy Rhode Island, The Greene School, Highlander Charter School, Hope Academy, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, The Learning Community, Nuestro Mundo Public Charter School, Providence Preparatory Charter School, RISE Prep Mayoral Academy, Rhode Island Nurses Institute Middle College, Segue Institute for Learning, Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy, SouthSide Elementary Charter School, Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts, The Village Green Virtual Public Charter School, and YouthBuild Preparatory Academy.

UCAP is the Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

(Continued with references on page 188)

Children Enrolled in Kindergarten

DEFINITION

Children enrolled in kindergarten compiles selected data about children enrolled in public kindergarten in Rhode Island.

SIGNIFICANCE

As of 2016-2017, every public school district in Rhode Island is required to offer full-day kindergarten.[1] Children benefit academically from participating in full-day kindergarten.[2]

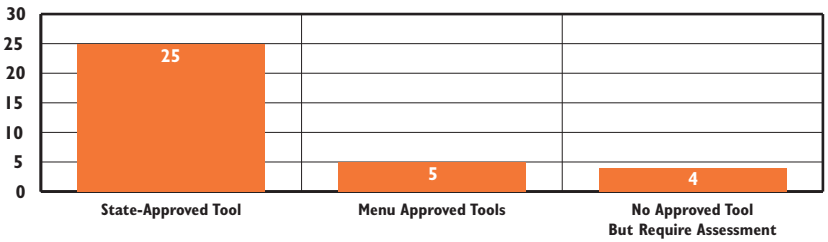
The transition to kindergarten is an important point in a child's educational experience, marking either the start of their formal education or the transition between preschool, which is not universally available or guaranteed as part of most states' public education systems, to the early elementary grades. During kindergarten and the early elementary grades, families establish patterns of engagement with their child's school and children learn important social-emotional, literacy, and math skills that establish a foundation for future learning.[3,4]

As of October 2020, approximately 50% of four-year-olds and 30% of three-year-olds in the U.S. participated in private or public preschool before kindergarten.[5] Children from higher-income families are more likely to be enrolled in preschool than children from lower-income families. There is strong evidence that high-quality preschool immediately improves children's language, literacy, and math skills. Preschool participation is also associated with longer-term positive outcomes such as reduced grade retention and need for special education, improved high school graduation rates, and reduced criminal activity.[6]

High-quality and developmentally appropriate instruction in kindergarten and the early elementary grades helps sustain the positive impacts of preschool and addresses knowledge and skill deficits among children who have not had high-quality early learning opportunities.[7]

Kindergarten and early elementary grade teachers need specialized training in child development, reading instruction, the foundations of math, social-emotional skill building, how to incorporate play and hands-on learning into classroom instruction, and working with diverse groups of children and families. Strategies that support high-quality early grade instruction include requiring pre-K-Grade 3 teaching certificates, incorporating early childhood education training into elementary principal certification, and aligning quality improvement efforts from early childhood through third grade.[8]

States Requiring Kindergarten Entry Assessments, 2021



Source: Yun, C., Melnick, H., & Wechsler, M. (2021). *High-quality early childhood assessment: Learning from states' use of kindergarten entry assessments.* Washington, DC: Learning Policy Institute.

◆ **Kindergarten entry assessments are an organized way to learn what children know and are able to do across all domains of development when they enter kindergarten. The information is used to improve the transition to kindergarten, guide instruction for individual children, and inform policymakers about early learning needs. These assessments should not be used for high-stakes decisions, such as delaying children's entry into kindergarten.[9,10]**

◆ **As of August 2021, 34 states require an assessment to track skills and knowledge at kindergarten entry. Rhode Island has not yet implemented a statewide tool.[11]**

◆ **Kindergarten teachers can share information about children's strengths and challenges gathered through kindergarten entry assessments to engage parents as partners in the education process.[12]**

Public School Kindergarten Enrollment

◆ **On October 1, 2022, there were 9,432 children enrolled in public kindergarten in Rhode Island, an increase of 5% from the 8,948 children enrolled in 2020, but still lower than pre-pandemic numbers (10,038 in 2019). National reports indicate that kindergarten enrollment dropped in 2020 due to school disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.[13,14,15]**

◆ **There were 8,375 kindergarteners in traditional public schools (up 4% from 2020), 1,046 in public charter schools (up 17% from 2020), and 11 in a state-operated school (Rhode Island School for the Deaf). All were enrolled in full-day classrooms.[16,17]**

Young Multilingual Learners/English Learners

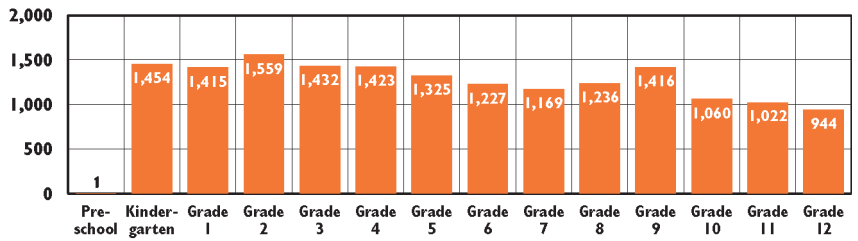
◆ Language learning is most effective and efficient during the early childhood years, between birth and age eight. Infants and young children learn new languages faster and with more competence than older children and adults.[18]

◆ Being bilingual or multilingual has several advantages, including expanded economic and social opportunities and higher-level executive function skills (cognitive flexibility and inhibitory control) that contribute to academic success. Being bilingual or multilingual also may help delay or prevent the onset of cognitive problems associated with aging.[19]

◆ Both bilingual and multilingual education and English immersion programs can effectively promote English language acquisition and proficiency. Bilingual dual education has the added advantage of supporting the development of a child's native language, encouraging fluency in both languages.[20]

◆ In Rhode Island, students in kindergarten through fourth grade are more likely to be a Multilingual Learner/English Learner (MLL/EL) than older students. In 2021-2022, 5,860 children in grades K-3 (15% of all children in grades K-3 in Rhode Island) were MLL/ELs. Only one child in a public school preschool classroom in Rhode Island (less than 1% of the 3,120 children enrolled in public school preschool classrooms) was identified as an MLL/EL. Of the 1,454 kindergarteners who were MLL/ELs, 39% were enrolled in the Providence Public Schools, 19% were in one of the other three core city public school districts, and 21% were in a public charter school.[21]

Multilingual Learners/English Learners by Grade Level, Rhode Island, 2020-2021 School Year



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, 2021-2022.

Kindergartners and School Suspensions

◆ Children who are suspended early in their school years are more likely to be suspended again in future years. Students who are suspended are almost ten times more likely to experience academic failure, have negative attitudes toward school, drop out of high school, and become incarcerated.[22]

◆ Early suspensions are more likely when teachers believe the resources and supports available to them are inadequate to meet the needs of children with challenging behaviors. Large class sizes, inadequate child-teacher ratios, and lack of school resources to help teachers manage challenging behaviors are associated with increased suspensions. Early childhood mental health consultation is an intervention that works with teachers and families to reduce children's challenging behaviors, improve child-adult relationships, and prevent early suspensions.[23]

◆ In 2021-2022 in Rhode Island, there were 65 kindergartners who were suspended at least one day, 35% of whom had a developmental delay or disability. Kindergartners experienced 121 disciplinary actions, with 109 out-of-school suspensions and 12 in-school suspensions. These students were suspended for a total of 134 days.[24]

◆ Compared to the 2019-2020 school year, the number of kindergartners who were suspended in 2021-2022 remained essentially unchanged (66 kindergarteners in 2019-2020), but the number of suspensions increased by 11% and the number of days kindergartners were suspended decreased by 6%.[25,26]

◆ As of 2018, approximately 16 states and Washington D.C. limit the use of suspension in the early grades.[27]

References

[1] Rhode Island General Law 16-99-3.

[2,3] Auck, A., & Atchison, B. (2016). *50-state comparison: K-3 quality.* Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States.

[4,8] Atchison, B., Diffey, L., & Workman, E. (2016). *K-3 policymakers' guide to action: Making the early years count.* Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States.

[5] U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, School enrollment supplement, Table 2-1, October 2020.

[6,7] Yoshikawa, H., Weiland, C., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2016). When does preschool matter? *The Future of Children, 26*(2), 21-35.

(continued on page 188)

Out-of-School Time

DEFINITION

Out-of-school time is the number of children participating in organized after-school programs. This indicator presents data on the number of licensed after-school child care programs and slots for children ages six and older as well as available data on children served by after-school programs that do not require state licensing.

SIGNIFICANCE

Organized programs for school-age children offered during the hours and days when school is not in session have become increasingly popular over the past 50 years. Growth has been driven by the expansion of mothers' labor force participation, concerns over negative consequences associated with children being home alone, passage of the *1990 Child Care Development and Block Grant Act* which provided the first major funding stream for out-of-school time programs, and federal funding for 21st Century Community Learning Centers, which began in 1998. Out-of-school time programs can contribute significantly to children's development and learning.[1]

High-quality, organized after-school and summer programs improve the supervision and safety of youth, promote positive social skills, and, with sufficient dosage, improve student achievement. Quality out-of-school time programs provide engaging activities that are intentionally designed to promote youth development and are taught by trained, dedicated instructors who work effectively with youth. Youth who participate consistently can show improved competence, caring, and connections.[2,3]

Most children and youth in Rhode Island have working parents. Between 2017 and 2021, 78% of Rhode Island children ages six to 17 had all parents in the workforce, higher than the U.S. rate of 72%.[4]

School hours only cover 20% of the time children and youth have available for learning, forming friendships, developing and practicing skills, and exploring interests. What children do during out-of-school time matters for success in school and life. Yet, there are not enough affordable, high-quality, out-of-school time programs to meet the needs of families and youth. Increased federal, state, and local investments are needed to expand access to high-quality programs and to build and sustain an effective out-of-school time workforce.[5,6]

During the COVID-19 pandemic, out-of-school time programs served as meal sites, connected families with community resources, and provided remote enrichment programs to children.[7]

Students Served by 21st Century Community Learning Centers by Grade Span, Rhode Island, 2021-2022 School Year

SCHOOL DISTRICT	GRADES PK-3	GRADES 4-5	GRADES 6-8	GRADES 9-12	TOTAL
Cranston	159	71	116	0	346
East Providence	61	32	124	0	217
Newport	118	84	140	153	495
Pawtucket	518	303	6	0	827
Providence	210	154	509	399	1,272
West Warwick	46	19	0	0	65
Woonsocket	237	120	132	204	693
Charter Schools	*134*	*81*	*68*	*103*	*386*
State-Operated Schools	*0*	*0*	*0*	*11*	*11*
UCAP	*NA*	*NA*	*74*	*0*	*74*
Rhode Island	*1,483*	*864*	*1,169*	*870*	*4,386*

Source: RI Department of Education, Office of Student, Community and Academic Supports, 2021-2022 school year. Data are not unduplicated as students can be served by more than one grantee. Beginning in 2021-2022, data includes only students who participated in 21st Century CLC programs for at least 15 hours. UCAP is the Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program.

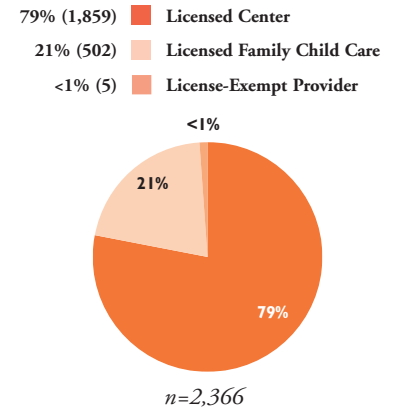
◆ **In the 2021-2022 school year in Rhode Island, 21st Century Community Learning Center grantees served 4,386 children and youth. Of these, 34% were in grades PK-3, 20% were in grades 4-5, 27% were in grades 6-8, and 20% were in grades 9-12.[8]**

◆ **During the summer of 2021, 1,573 Rhode Island children entering grades Pre-K through 12 participated in 21st Century Community Learning Center programs; 576 (37%) entering grades PK-3, 352 (22%) entering grades 4-5, 326 (21%) entering grades 6-8, and 319 (20%) entering grades 9-12.[9]**

◆ **United Way of Rhode Island funds summer learning programs for children and youth entering first grade through 12th grade. During the summer of 2022, 590 children/youth participated (442 (75%) were ages 6 through 12 and 148 (25%) were ages 13 through 18).[10]**

◆ **Nationwide, data on the 21st Century Community Learning Center program show that 75% of students served are Children of Color, 66% of children/youth participate in the Free or Reduced Price Lunch Program, and 13% of children/youth are Multilingual Learners. Programs typically operate for 13.8 hours per week and 32 weeks per year, and the average annual cost per regular attendee is $1,495.[11]**

School-Age Child Care Subsidies by Type of Setting, Rhode Island, 2022



n=2,366

Source: Rhode Island Department of Human Services, December 2022.

◆ **In January 2023 in Rhode Island, there were 11,681 slots for school-age children in licensed centers. Of these, 68% were in independently licensed school-age programs and 32% were in licensed early childhood centers. In addition, there were 392 family child care homes licensed to serve school-age children.[12]**

◆ **In January 2023 in Rhode Island, of the 95 independently licensed school-age programs, 80 (84%) were participating in BrightStars, Rhode Island's Quality Rating and Improvement System. Of the 95 licensed programs, 16% had no rating, 23% had a one- star, 21% had a two- star, 25% had a three-star, 12% had a four-star, and 3% had a five-star rating.[13]**

Table 42. **Licensed School-Age Child Care Center Slots for Children Ages Six to 12, Rhode Island, January 2023**

CITY/TOWN	NUMBER OF CHILDREN AGES 6 TO 12	SCHOOL-AGE SLOTS IN EARLY LEARNING CENTERS	SCHOOL-AGE SLOTS IN INDEPENDENT PROGRAMS	TOTAL NUMBER OF SLOTS
Barrington	2,038	83	138	221
Bristol	1,421	0	150	150
Burrillville	1,456	0	247	247
Central Falls	2,045	138	0	138
Charlestown	616	0	0	0
Coventry	3,142	122	89	211
Cranston	6,331	377	383	760
Cumberland	2,976	0	803	803
East Greenwich	1,482	105	80	185
East Providence	3,395	105	588	693
Exeter	480	0	125	125
Foster	369	26	0	26
Glocester	809	38	0	38
Hopkinton	741	0	0	0
Jamestown	429	0	0	0
Johnston	2,119	168	0	168
Lincoln	1,900	52	545	597
Little Compton	299	0	26	26
Middletown	1,442	0	132	132
Narragansett	856	40	180	220
New Shoreham	73	0	0	0
Newport	1,399	70	78	148
North Kingstown	2,581	71	100	171
North Providence	2,073	37	360	397
North Smithfield	1,002	0	130	130
Pawtucket	6,015	291	616	907
Portsmouth	1,622	34	0	34
Providence	15,342	1,141	1,574	2,715
Richmond	777	0	52	52
Scituate	935	66	0	66
Smithfield	1,445	59	37	96
South Kingstown	2,199	69	50	119
Tiverton	1,201	36	75	111
Warren	770	26	60	86
Warwick	6,195	217	760	977
West Greenwich	624	0	0	0
West Warwick	2,155	154	123	277
Westerly	1,850	72	40	112
Woonsocket	3,653	110	433	543
Four Core Cities	*27,055*	*1,680*	*2,623*	*4,303*
Remainder of State	*59,202*	*2,027*	*5,351*	*7,378*
Rhode Island	*86,257*	*3,707*	*7,974*	*11,681*

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Number of children ages six to 12 years is from the U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1.

Rhode Island Department of Human Services, number of licensed child care center slots and programs for school-age children, January 2023. These numbers do not include licensed family child care home slots or community programs for youth that are exempt from licensing.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

References

[1] Mahoney, J. L., Parente, M. E., & Zigler, E. F. (2009). Afterschool programs in America: Origins, growth, popularity, and politics. *Journal of Youth Development, 4*(3).

[2] McCombs, J., Whitaker, A., & Yoo, P. (2017). *The value of out-of-school time programs.* Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

[3] Smith, E. P., Witherspoon, D. P., & Osgood, D. W. (2017). Positive youth development among diverse racial-ethnic children: Quality afterschool contexts as developmental assets. *Child Development, 88*(4), 1063-1078.

[4] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021. Table DP03.

[5] *State of out of school learning programs in Rhode Island 2019.* Providence, RI: Rhode Island Afterschool Network. Retrieved April 20, 2022, from www.uwri.org

[6] Mahoney, J. L., Parente, M. E., & Zigler, E. F. (2010). After-school program participation and children's development. In J. Meece & J. S. Eccles (Eds.), *Handbook of research on schools, schooling, and human development* (pp. 379-397). New York, NY: Routledge.

[7,11] Afterschool Alliance. (2022). *21st Century Community Learning Centers: Inspiring learning, supporting families, earning results.* Retrieved April 2, 2023, from www.afterschoolalliance.org

[8,9] Rhode Island Department of Education, Office of Student, Community and Academic Supports, 21st Century Community Learning Center enrollment 2021-2022.

(continued on page 188)

Multilingual Learners/English Learners

DEFINITION

Multilingual Learners/English Learners is the percentage of all public-school children (preschool through grade 12) who are receiving Multilingual Learner/English Learner services in Rhode Island public schools.

SIGNIFICANCE

The population of Multilingual Learner/English Learner (MLL/EL) students in the U.S. has been growing over the last two decades. MLL/EL students must acquire English language proficiency while acquiring content area knowledge in a second language.[1,2] Nationally and in Rhode Island, MLL/EL students have lower rates of math and reading achievement than non-MLL/EL students.[3,4]

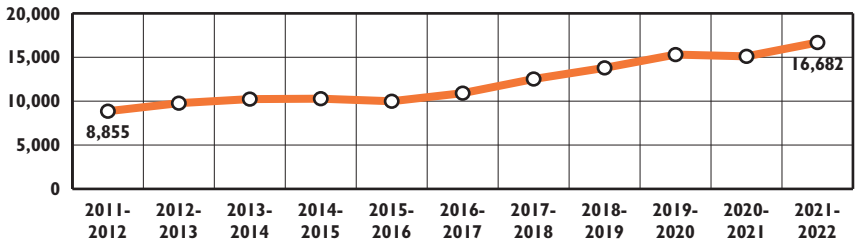
Nationally, the majority of MLL/EL students are born in the U.S., are racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse, and have at least one immigrant parent. MLL/EL students are more likely to live in low-income households and are more likely to attend high-poverty schools and have limited access to services needed to improve English proficiency.[5] They may also experience discrimination, stigma, and stress related to different cultural expectations and English language proficiency status.[6,7] Students in families with limited English proficiency also have a harder time accessing health care and other social services.[8]

In the 2021-2022 school year in Rhode Island, MLL/EL students were 12% (16,682) of total students, and 35% (5,861) of all MLL/EL students in Rhode Island were in grades preschool to grade three. Of all MLL/EL students, 76% were enrolled in free or reduced-price lunch programs, and 66% lived in the four core cities.[9,10] MLL/EL students spoke 111 different languages. The majority (81%) spoke Spanish, 5% spoke a creole language, 2% spoke Portuguese, 1% spoke Arabic, 1% spoke Chinese, and 9% spoke other or multiple languages.[11]

Dual language programs can improve English reading proficiency, decrease dropout rates, increase the likelihood of going to college, and improve economic outcomes for MLL/EL students.[12] During the 2021-2022 school year, bilingual and two-way/dual language programs were offered in the Central Falls, Pawtucket, and Providence school districts and at the Rhode Island School for the Deaf and International Charter School.[13]

In 2016, the Rhode Island General Assembly established a pilot categorical program to provide additional support for the costs associated with educating MLL/EL students.[14] In 2017, the Rhode Island General Assembly made this categorical fund permanent. This fund is designed to support high-quality, research-based services.[15]

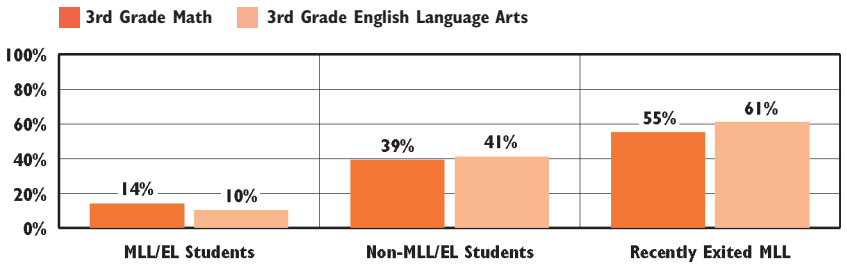
Multilingual Learners/English Learners, Rhode Island, 2011-2012 Through 2021–2022 School Years



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, 2011-2012 through 2021-2022 school years.

◆ **The number of MLL/EL students in Rhode Island has nearly doubled (increased by 88%) from the 2011-2012 to 2021-2022 school years.[16]**

Multilingual/English Learners Meeting Expectations in Math and English Language Arts, Rhode Island, 2022



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, *Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS)*, October 2022.

◆ **In Rhode Island, MLL/EL students who have not attended U.S. schools for at least 12 months are exempt from the English language arts assessment, but not from the math assessment, and are required to take both assessments in future years, regardless of their level of English proficiency.[17]**

◆ **Successful MLL/EL programs have highly-qualified and culturally competent teachers.[18] In October 2022, 3% (361) of Rhode Island public school teachers and instructional coordinators held an active Bilingual, Dual Language, or English to Speakers of Other Languages certification.[19]**

Table 43.

Multilingual/English Learner Students, Rhode Island, 2021-2022

SCHOOL DISTRICT	TOTAL # OF STUDENTS	NUMBER OF MULTILINGUAL LEARNER/ENGLISH LEARNER STUDENTS				% OF TOTAL DISTRICT
		ELEMENTARY (GRADES PRE-K-5)	MIDDLE (GRADES 6-8)	HIGH (GRADES 9-12)	TOTAL # OF MLL/EL STUDENTS	
Barrington	3,366	56	*	11	76	2%
Bristol Warren	2,909	35	14	11	60	2%
Burrillville	2,099	*	*	*	11	1%
Central Falls	2,690	540	294	413	1,247	46%
Chariho	3,128	12	*	*	14	<1%
Coventry	4,280	16	*	*	28	1%
Cranston	10,253	537	212	228	977	10%
Cumberland	4,676	134	26	27	188	4%
East Greenwich	2,534	16	*	*	27	1%
East Providence	4,951	127	52	70	249	5%
Exeter-West Greenwich	1,521	*	*	*	12	1%
Foster	215	0	NA	NA	0	0%
Foster-Glocester	1,381	NA	0	0	0	0%
Glocester	560	0	NA	NA	0	0%
Jamestown	435	*	*	0	*	1%
Johnston	3,063	146	52	40	238	8%
Lincoln	3,239	30	17	16	63	2%
Little Compton	198	0	0	0	0	0%
Middletown	2,042	121	30	39	191	9%
Narragansett	1,212	*	*	0	*	<1%
New Shoreham	129	*	*	*	16	12%
Newport	1,963	166	56	116	339	17%
North Kingstown	3,845	47	17	20	84	2%
North Providence	3,458	185	71	54	310	9%
North Smithfield	1,592	16	*	*	21	1%
Pawtucket	8,099	705	341	395	1,441	18%
Portsmouth	2,218	12	*	*	19	1%
Providence	21,774	3,576	1,797	2,230	7,603	35%
Scituate	1,190	*	0	*	*	<1%
Smithfield	2,405	13	*	*	25	1%
South Kingstown	2,589	26	*	*	41	2%
Tiverton	1,666	*	*	*	*	<1%
Warwick	8,099	123	34	36	193	2%
West Warwick	3,502	46	29	25	100	3%
Westerly	2,345	46	11	13	70	3%
Woonsocket	5,606	387	174	225	786	14%
Charter Schools	*10,519*	*1,459*	*326*	*297*	*2,082*	*20%*
State-Operated Schools	*1,821*	*	*	*126*	*135*	*7%*
UCAP	*127*	*NA*	*18*	*NA*	*18*	*14%*
Four Core Cities	*38,169*	*5,208*	*2,606*	*3,264*	*11,078*	*29%*
Remainder of State	*87,062*	*1,938*	*676*	*754*	*3,369*	*4%*
Rhode Island	*137,697*	*8,608*	*3,632*	*4,442*	*16,682*	*12%*

Sources of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department Education, 2021-2022 school year. Total number of Multilingual Learner/English Learner students is the number of students in each district who were actively enrolled in English Learner programs in the 2021-2022 school year. Students who are not yet fully English proficient but have exited ESL or bilingual education programs to regular education are not included in these numbers.

* Fewer than 10 students are in this category. Actual numbers are not shown to protect student confidentiality. These students are still counted in district totals and in the four core cities, remainder of the state, and state totals.

NA indicates that the school district does not serve students at that grade level.

The "% of Total District" is based on the total number of Multilingual Learners/English Learners divided by the "Total # of Students," which is the average daily membership in the districts of instruction.

Charter schools include: Achievement First Rhode Island, Beacon Charter High School for the Arts, Blackstone Academy, Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy, Paul Cuffee Charter School, The Greene School, Highlander Charter School, Hope Academy, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, The Learning Community, Nuestro Mundo Public Charter School, Providence Preparatory Charter School, Rhode Island Nurses Institute Middle College Charter School, RISE Prep Mayoral Academy, Segue Institute for Learning, Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy, SouthSide Charter School, Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts, and The Village Green Virtual Public Charter School. State-operated schools include William M. Davies Jr. Career & Technical High School, DCYF Schools, Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center, and Rhode Island School for the Deaf. UCAP is the Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

References

[1] McFarland, J., et al. (2018). *The condition of education 2018 (NCES 2018-144).* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved February 13, 2022, from https://nces.ed.gov

(continued on page 188)

K-12 Students Receiving Special Education Services

DEFINITION

K-12 students receiving special education services is the percentage of students in grades K-12 who received special education services in Rhode Island public schools or who were placed in private special education programs by their district of residence.

SIGNIFICANCE

Early and accurately targeted special education services help students with developmental delays and disabilities improve their academic outcomes and prevent grade retention.[1] Approximately 17% of U.S. children ages three to 17 have a developmental delay or disability. Children in low-income families, children with non-college-educated mothers, children with rural residences, children with low birthweight, and boys are more likely to have a delay or disability.[2]

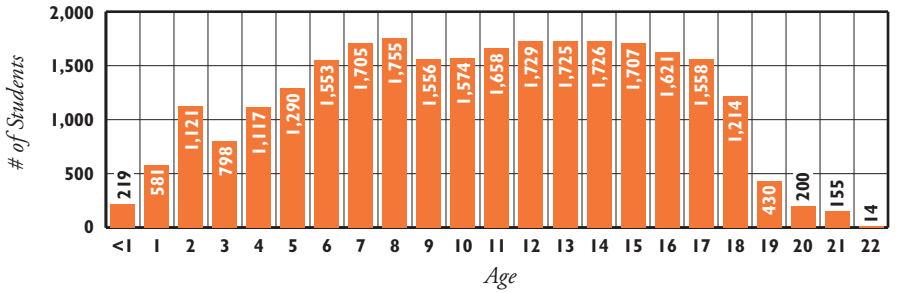
The federal *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* guarantees a free appropriate public education to every child with a disability. Prior to passage of the original 1975 federal law, many children with disabilities were excluded from public school. Since passage, outcomes for children with disabilities have steadily improved. More students with disabilities are being educated in neighborhood schools, included in general education classrooms, reaching proficiency standards, graduating from high school, enrolling in postsecondary education programs, and becoming employed as adults.[3] Concerns remain that not all children who could benefit from services are identified, that Children of Color are less likely to receive special education services than their white peers, and that special education funding is not adequate.[4]

Despite improvements in high school graduation rates and postsecondary school enrollment, students with disabilities are still less likely to graduate from high school and more likely to be suspended than students without disabilities.[5,6] Nationally, 65% to 75% of juvenile justice-involved youth under age 18 have mental, emotional, behavioral, and/or physical health problems and 33% qualify for special education.[7]

In Rhode Island, students with disabilities are much less likely to meet or exceed expectations on the *Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS)*. In 2022, only 10% of third graders with a disability met or exceeded expectations in ELA and 12% in math, compared with 42% in ELA and 40% in math for students without special education needs.[8]

In Rhode Island, the four-year graduation rate for the class of 2022 was 66% for students receiving special education services, compared to 87% for students not receiving these services. Some students enrolled in special education may take additional time to graduate.[9]

Students Ages Birth to 22 Receiving Early Intervention and Special Education Services, Rhode Island, June 2022



Source: Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Center for Child and Family Health, Early Intervention enrollment, June 30, 2022. Rhode Island Department of Education, Office of Diverse Learners, Special Education Census, June 30, 2022. Includes parentally-placed students.

◆ **As of June 2022, there were 22,165 students in grades K-12 (16% of all kindergarten through grade 12 students) receiving special education services through Rhode Island public schools. Thirty-six percent of these students had a learning disability, 19% had a health impairment, 12% had a speech/language disorder, 11% had an autism spectrum disorder, 8% had a developmental delay, 7% had an emotional disturbance, 4% had an intellectual disability, and 3% had other disabilities.[10]**

◆ **Students in core city school districts were more likely to be receiving special education services (18%) than those enrolled in the remainder of the state (16%), public charter schools (13%) or state-operated public schools (13%).[11]**

◆ **As of June 2022, 72% of students ages six to 22 receiving special education services in Rhode Island were in their regular classroom for 80% of the day or more, 21% were in their regular classroom for less than 80% of the day, 5% were in a separate school, 2% were parentally placed in a private school, and <1% were in a residential facility, a correctional facility, were home-bound, or were hospitalized.[12]**

◆ **Of students ages six to 22 receiving special education services in June 2022, 66% were boys, 34% girls, <1% identified as another gender, and 2% were Asian, 10% Black, 29% Hispanic, 1% Native American, <1% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 6% Two or more races, and 52% white. The majority were low-income (55% receiving free or reduced-price lunch) and 13% were Multilingual Learners/English Learners.[13]**

Table 44.

K-12 Students Receiving Special Education Services by Primary Disability, Rhode Island, 2022

SCHOOL DISTRICT	TOTAL # OF STUDENTS	AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER	DEVELOP-MENTAL DELAY	EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE	HEALTH IMPAIRMENT	INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY	LEARNING DISABILITY	SPEECH/ LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT	OTHER	TOTAL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES	% STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION
Barrington	3,342	55	*	51	93	*	105	43	15	380	11%
Bristol Warren	2,890	53	16	22	70	16	175	116	*	479	17%
Burrillville	2,073	43	20	17	49	18	162	30	*	348	17%
Central Falls	2,556	42	83	13	75	28	200	25	18	484	19%
Chariho	3,080	63	44	21	84	*	165	36	16	437	14%
Coventry	4,224	96	42	61	142	40	219	76	15	691	16%
Cranston	10,163	209	76	94	368	47	591	119	36	1,540	15%
Cumberland	4,605	123	40	42	60	26	239	95	52	677	15%
East Greenwich	2,503	50	37	*	77	13	85	29	*	299	12%
East Providence	4,902	117	82	89	203	39	301	101	20	952	19%
Exeter-West Greenwich	1,484	35	15	*	38	*	59	17	*	180	12%
Foster	208	*	0	0	*	0	*	11	*	29	14%
Foster-Glocester	1,381	16	0	*	26	*	52	*	*	118	9%
Glocester	557	*	*	*	12	0	14	34	*	77	14%
Jamestown	425	*	*	*	23	*	24	12	0	82	19%
Johnston	2,963	69	57	20	117	26	216	45	24	574	19%
Lincoln	3,192	85	36	43	78	12	186	53	12	505	16%
Little Compton	193	*	*	0	11	*	18	*	0	41	21%
Middletown	2,031	39	42	39	82	18	109	37	14	380	19%
Narragansett	1,134	15	*	*	33	*	66	19	*	156	14%
New Shoreham	129	*	*	*	*	0	*	*	0	21	16%
Newport	1,944	52	20	31	24	28	147	23	11	336	17%
North Kingstown	3,794	54	34	31	90	*	165	92	14	488	13%
North Providence	3,417	82	44	45	80	26	237	94	21	629	18%
North Smithfield	1,575	23	24	14	32	*	104	27	*	236	15%
Pawtucket	7,972	145	161	73	296	47	629	127	30	1,508	19%
Portsmouth	2,204	37	19	21	83	*	89	54	13	324	15%
Providence	21,438	284	310	226	608	189	1,314	435	109	3,475	16%
Scituate	1,183	15	*	*	29	*	66	29	*	159	13%
Smithfield	2,347	58	20	14	65	*	123	31	11	330	14%
South Kingstown	2,559	48	13	16	97	16	110	36	11	347	14%
Tiverton	1,648	38	27	24	55	13	96	26	*	287	17%
Warwick	7,970	184	173	85	277	55	474	123	33	1,404	18%
West Warwick	3,466	90	74	76	141	35	223	70	12	721	21%
Westerly	2,305	48	57	26	85	*	90	44	17	376	16%
Woonsocket	5,573	165	114	130	343	79	415	176	28	1,450	26%
Charter Schools	*10,495*	*79*	*110*	*57*	*258*	*25*	*567*	*266*	*19*	*1,381*	*13%*
State-Operated Schools	*1,810*	*	*	*22*	*47*	*	*67*	*11*	*70*	*227*	*13%*
UCAP	*127*	*0*	*0*	*	*	*0*	*13*	*0*	*	*21*	*17%*
Department of Corrections	*NA*	*0*	*0*	*	*	*0*	*	*0*	*0*	*16*	*NA*
Four Core Cities	*37,539*	*636*	*668*	*442*	*1,322*	*343*	*2,558*	*763*	*185*	*6,917*	*18%*
Remainder of State	*85,891*	*1,821*	*1,050*	*917*	*2,637*	*514*	*4,722*	*1,532*	*410*	*13,603*	*16%*
Rhode Island	*135,862*	*2,544*	*1,829*	*1,450*	*4,272*	*883*	*7,930*	*2,572*	*685*	*22,165*	*16%*

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), Office for Diverse Learners, Special Education Census June 30, 2022. Data do not include parentally-placed students. The denominator (number of students) is the "resident average daily membership" (RADM) for grades K-12 in the 2021-2022 school year provided by RIDE.

Due to changes in methodology, *K-12 Students Receiving Special Education Services* in this Factbook cannot be compared with Factbooks prior to 2015. Data about preschool students receiving special education services can be found in the *Children Receiving Preschool Special Education Services* indicator.

* Fewer than 10 students are in this category. Actual numbers are not shown to protect student confidentiality. These students are still counted in district totals and in the four core cities, remainder of the state, and state totals.

NA indicates that no data are available.

Totals of students and percentages of students receiving special education may not sum due to rounding.

The category "other" includes students who are visually impaired, hearing impaired, deaf/blind, multi-handicapped, orthopedically impaired, and/or have traumatic brain injury.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

Charter schools include Achievement First Providence Mayoral Academy, Beacon Charter High School for the Arts, Blackstone Academy, Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy, Charette High School, Highlander Charter School, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, Learning Community, Nuestro Mundo Public Charter School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, Providence Preparatory Charter School, Rhode Island Nurses Institute Middle College Charter School, RISE Prep Mayoral Academy, Segue Institute for Learning, Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy, SouthSide Elementary Charter School, The Compass School, The Greene School, The Hope Academy, Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts, and Village Green Virtual Charter School.

(continued with References on page 189)

Student Mobility

DEFINITION

Student mobility is the number of students who enrolled in school after September 30 or withdrew from school before June 1 divided by the total enrollment for that school district.

SIGNIFICANCE

Student mobility is associated with lower academic performance, behavior difficulties, lower levels of school engagement, and increased risk of dropping out of high school. Changing schools can disrupt learning, negatively impact a student's achievement, and cause social upheaval for children. Student mobility also can lead to less active parent involvement in their children's schools.[1,2]

Students who change schools frequently are more likely to have lower math and reading skills, more likely to repeat a grade, more likely to be suspended, and less likely to graduate from high school than their non-mobile peers.[3,4]

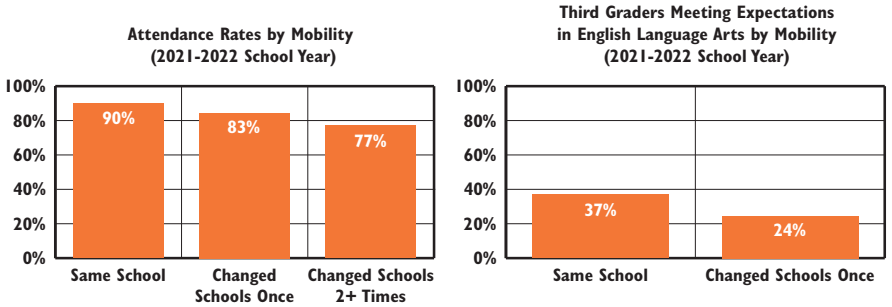
Regardless of income status and ethnicity, mobility can negatively affect student achievement. However, low-income children and Children of Color are more likely to be mobile and experience greater negative impacts on their academic achievement than higher-income and white students. Students receiving special education services also are likely to be negatively impacted by changing schools.[5,6,7]

High mobility rates in schools can negatively impact all students because teachers must slow curriculum progress, repeat lessons, and adjust to changing classroom dynamics and student needs. Within-year moves are particularly disruptive for students, teachers, and schools.[8,9]

Families may move their children to a different school because they are dissatisfied with the school, concerned about their child's safety, or moving due to changes in family circumstances. Changes in family circumstances can be either positive or negative, including eviction or foreclosure, divorce or marriage, job loss or job changes, death in the family, or a desire to improve quality of life. Mobile students who are low-income and Students of Color are more likely to change schools due to negative life events than mobile students who are higher-income and white.[10,11]

Between 2017 and 2021 in Rhode Island, 9% of children ages five to 17 changed residence at least once during the previous year, 73% of whom moved within Rhode Island and 27% of whom moved from another state or abroad.[12] Nationally and in Rhode Island, people with incomes below the poverty line are more likely to move than higher-income residents. Between 2017 and 2021, 18% of Rhode Islanders living below the poverty line moved, compared with 9% of higher-income residents.[13]

School Mobility and Education Outcomes in Rhode Island



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, 2021-2022 school year.

◆ **Rhode Island students who change schools mid-year are absent more often than students who do not change schools. Rhode Island students who did not change schools had a 90% attendance rate, compared with 83% for those who changed schools once and 77% for those who changed schools two or more times during the 2021-2022 school year.[14]**

◆ **Children who change schools mid-year also perform worse on standardized tests than children who have not experienced school mobility. During the 2021-2022 school year in Rhode Island, 37% of third-grade children who did not experience mobility met expectations in reading/writing on the *Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS)* state assessment, compared with 24% of students who moved once.[15]**

◆ **School districts with high mobility rates can reduce the negative effects of mobility on students by providing immediate and comprehensive screening of entering students to ensure that students are properly placed. Districts also can identify other districts where students most frequently transfer to and from and align their curricula, programs, and policies to reduce learning disruption.[16]**

◆ **One-third of children in foster care will experience five or more school changes before they turn age 18, and such changes often result in lost academic progress. The federal *Every Student Succeeds Act* includes provisions to give children in foster care more educational stability by allowing students to stay in their school of origin if it is in their best interest and providing transportation to that school.[17]**

Student Mobility and Stability Rates

- Mobility rates are calculated by adding all children who enrolled after September 30 to all those who withdrew before June 1 and dividing the total by the total enrollment for that school district.[18]

- Stability rates measure the number of children who attended the same school the entire school year in a school district. The stability rate is calculated by dividing the number of children enrolled the whole year at the same school in the school district by the total enrollment for that school district. The stability rate for the four core cities was 81% in the 2021-2022 school year, compared with a stability rate of 91% in the remainder of the state.[19]

- Total enrollment for each district is cumulative over the course of the school year.[20]

- The overall Rhode Island student mobility rate was 13% in the 2021-2022 school year. The four core cities had a higher mobility rate (20%) than districts in the remainder of the state (10%).[21]

- During the 2021-2022 school year, Rhode Island elementary schools (12%) and middle schools (12%) had lower mobility rates than high schools (16%).[22]

Table 45. **Student Mobility and Stability Rates by District, Rhode Island, 2021-2022 School Year**

SCHOOL DISTRICT	CUMULATIVE ENROLLMENT FOR 2021-2022	# ENROLLED THE WHOLE YEAR	# ENROLLED AFTER SEPT. 30	# EXITED BEFORE JUNE 1	STABILITY RATE	MOBILITY RATE
Barrington	3,403	3,286	58	62	97%	4%
Bristol Warren	3,022	2,787	101	143	92%	8%
Burrillville	2,163	2,000	77	90	92%	8%
Central Falls	2,923	2,272	312	356	78%	23%
Chariho	3,301	2,900	159	251	88%	12%
Coventry	4,470	4,045	174	273	90%	10%
Cranston	10,861	9,609	593	725	88%	12%
Cumberland	4,877	4,421	198	274	91%	10%
East Greenwich	2,554	2,455	52	49	96%	4%
East Providence	5,118	4,694	192	247	92%	9%
Exeter-West Greenwich	1,538	1,441	44	53	94%	6%
Foster	212	204	*	*	96%	4%
Foster-Glocester	1,430	1,357	23	51	95%	5%
Glocester	578	540	24	16	93%	7%
Jamestown	444	407	18	22	92%	9%
Johnston	3,114	2,834	142	147	91%	9%
Lincoln	3,308	3,085	101	127	93%	7%
Little Compton	209	190	*	14	91%	10%
Middletown	2,178	1,896	115	174	87%	13%
Narragansett	1,167	1,091	31	49	93%	7%
New Shoreham	134	126	*	*	94%	7%
Newport	2,141	1,769	185	217	83%	19%
North Kingstown	3,947	3,665	122	170	93%	7%
North Providence	3,605	3,240	189	184	90%	10%
North Smithfield	1,644	1,527	56	68	93%	8%
Pawtucket	8,875	7,202	843	894	81%	20%
Portsmouth	2,319	2,127	89	108	92%	8%
Providence	23,886	19,456	2,503	2,263	81%	20%
Scituate	1,220	1,156	28	36	95%	5%
Smithfield	2,408	2,295	59	59	95%	5%
South Kingstown	2,668	2,481	85	112	93%	7%
Tiverton	1,717	1,590	64	71	93%	8%
Warwick	8,538	7,542	407	636	88%	12%
West Warwick	3,844	3,215	290	379	84%	17%
Westerly	2,415	2,200	103	130	91%	10%
Woonsocket	6,200	5,136	442	676	83%	18%
Charter Schools	*10,995*	*10,113*	*395*	*515*	*92%*	*8%*
State-Operated Schools	*1,991*	*1,703*	*133*	*204*	*86%*	*17%*
UCAP	*157*	*101*	*43*	*16*	*64%*	*38%*
Four Core Cities	*41,884*	*34,066*	*4,100*	*4,189*	*81%*	*20%*
Remainder of State	*90,547*	*82,175*	*3,791*	*4,948*	*91%*	*10%*
Rhode Island	*145,574*	*128,158*	*8,462*	*9,872*	*88%*	*13%*

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education, 2021-2022 school year.

*Fewer than 10 students are in this category. Actual numbers are not shown to protect student confidentiality. These students are still counted in district totals and in the four core cities, remainder of the state, and state totals.

Charter schools include: Achievement First Rhode Island, Beacon Charter High School for the Arts, Blackstone Academy, Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy, The Charette Charter School, The Compass School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, The Greene School, Highlander Charter School, The Hope Academy, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, The Learning Community, Nuestro Mundo Public Charter School, Providence Preparatory Charter School, RISE Prep Mayoral Academy, Rhode Island Nurses Institute Middle College Charter School, Segue Institute for Learning, Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy, SouthSide Elementary Charter School, Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts, and Village Green Virtual Public Charter School.

State-operated schools include William M. Davies Career & Technical High School, DCYF Schools, Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical High School, and the Rhode Island School for the Deaf.

UCAP is the Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

References

[1,3] Herbers, J. E., Reynolds, A. J., & Chen, C. (2013). School mobility and developmental outcomes in young adulthood. *Development and Psychopathology, 25*(2), 501–515.

[2,4,5,8] Scherrer, J. (2013). The negative effects of student mobility: Mobility as a predictor, mobility as a mediator. *International Journal of Education Policy & Leadership, 8*(1), 1-14.

[6] Rumberger, R. W. (2015). *Student mobility: Causes, consequences, and solutions.* Boulder, CO: National Education Policy Center.

(continued on page 189)

Third-Grade Reading Skills

DEFINITION

Third-grade reading skills is the percentage of third-grade students who met expectations in English language arts on the *Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS)* test.

SIGNIFICANCE

Educators and researchers have long recognized the importance of achieving reading proficiency by the end of third grade, when children begin to shift from learning to read to reading to learn. Students who do not successfully reach this milestone struggle in the later grades and are four times more likely to drop out of high school than their proficient peers.[1] Interventions for students who struggle with reading are more successful when implemented early. When intervention is delayed until after third grade, most children never catch up to their grade level peers. Successful reading supports are culturally relevant, as well as fun.[2,3,4]

Literacy begins long before children encounter school instruction in writing and reading. Physical and social-emotional health, family supports, literacy-rich home environments (including telling stories and reading aloud) and parents who provide early cognitive development activities (including speaking to young children frequently) contribute to literacy development, reading achievement, and success in school.[5,6]

High-quality preschool and Pre-K programs can boost language and literacy skills and have the greatest impact on children living in low-income families.[7] Programs targeting the development of social-emotional and behavioral skills improve children's school readiness and academic achievement. Children who participate in high-quality Pre-K programs score higher on future reading and math assessments, are more likely to become proficient readers in the primary grades, and have higher graduation rates.[8,9]

Policymakers can increase third-grade reading proficiency by increasing access to high-quality child care, Pre-K, and Head Start; providing parents with supports to create enriched language and literacy opportunities beginning at birth; expanding access to high-quality summer learning programs; and addressing chronic early absence.[10,11]

4th-Grade *NAEP* Reading Proficiency

	2011	2022
RI	35%	34%
US	32%	32%
National Rank*		*14th*
New England Rank**		*4th*

**1st is best; 50th is worst*
***1st is best; 6th is worst*

Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT Data Center, datacenter.kidscount.org

The *National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)* measures proficiency nationally and across states every other year for grades 4 and 8.

Third Graders Meeting Expectations on the *RICAS* English Language Arts Assessment, Rhode Island, 2022

SUBGROUP	
Female Students	39%
Male Students	34%
Multilingual Learners/English Learners	10%
Non-English Learners	41%
Students Receiving Special Education Services	10%
Students Not Receiving Special Education Services	42%
Low-Income Students	20%
Higher-Income Students	51%
Asian Students+	52%
Black Students	22%
Hispanic Students	19%
Native American Students	12%
White Students	48%
Homeless Students	10%
Students in Foster Care	17%
ALL STUDENTS	*37%*

Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, *Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS)*, 2021-2022. Low-income status is determined by eligibility for the free or reduced-price lunch program. +Data for Asian students is not disaggregated by ethnic group. National research shows large academic disparities across Asian ethnic groups.

◆ **In Rhode Island in 2022, 37% of third graders met expectations on the *Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS)*, English language arts assessment. Twenty percent of low-income third graders met expectations, compared with 51% of higher-income third graders. There were also large disparities by race and ethnicity as well as by language status and disability status. Ten percent of third graders who were identified as homeless met expectations in English language arts, compared to 37% of third graders who were not identified as homeless.[12]**

◆ **In 2022, 17% of third graders who were in foster care met expectations in English language arts compared to 37% of students who were not in foster care.[13]**

◆ **In the U.S., 75% of teachers working with early readers used some methods not backed by research to teach reading. Evidence-based instructional techniques can help children acquire proficiency in reading.[14]**

COVID-19 and Grade-Level Reading

- School closures and the combination of distance learning and hybrid models resulted in lost instruction time, especially among low-income students, Multilingual Learners, students with disabilities, and Black and Latino students.[15,16,17]

- Assessments and early-warning systems can help identify students most at risk for learning loss.[18]

- *The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)* of 2021 provided funding to states and school districts to reopen schools safely, maximize in-person instruction, and address the impact of the pandemic on students, families, and educators. At least 20% of funds must be for evidence-based interventions that respond to students' social, emotional, and academic needs and address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Students of Color, students from low-income families, students with disabilities, Multilingual Learners, students experiencing homelessness, and students in foster care.[19]

- It is critical for students to continue to be instructed in grade level content that is scaffolded with supports. Using materials below grade level can reinforce low expectations and exacerbate disparities in grade level reading.[20]

Table 46.

Third-Grade Reading Skills, Rhode Island, 2021 & 2022

SCHOOL DISTRICT	# OF THIRD GRADERS TESTED 2022	% MEETING EXPECTATIONS 2021	% MEETING EXPECTATIONS 2022
Barrington	236	69%	69%
Bristol Warren	214	58%	49%
Burrillville	148	30%	30%
Central Falls	153	14%	7%
Chariho	206	59%	54%
Coventry	290	57%	40%
Cranston	731	39%	41%
Cumberland	345	62%	57%
East Greenwich	174	76%	64%
East Providence	325	39%	40%
Exeter-West Greenwich	103	50%	47%
Foster	29	50%	28%
Glocester	94	73%	65%
Jamestown	55	82%	76%
Johnston	232	38%	35%
Lincoln	224	49%	53%
Little Compton	19	78%	74%
Middletown	137	48%	39%
Narragansett	60	71%	75%
New Shoreham	10	45%	40%
Newport	116	27%	21%
North Kingstown	260	65%	57%
North Providence	225	36%	28%
North Smithfield	106	53%	56%
Pawtucket	609	25%	26%
Portsmouth	159	54%	56%
Providence	1,611	19%	16%
Scituate	87	59%	61%
Smithfield	164	67%	53%
South Kingstown	199	60%	49%
Tiverton	107	62%	59%
Warwick	578	46%	38%
West Warwick	251	26%	22%
Westerly	156	42%	46%
Woonsocket	405	16%	19%
Charter Schools	*840*	*36%*	*29%*
Four Core Cities	*2,778*	*19%*	*18%*
Remainder of State	*6,043*	*51%*	*46%*
Rhode Island	*9,661*	*40%*	*37%*

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), *Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS)*, 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years and are rounded to the nearest percentage point.

The *RICAS* test was not administered in 2020 due to COVID-19.

Due to the adoption of a new assessment tool by RIDE in 2018, Third-Grade Reading Skills cannot be compared with Factbooks prior to 2018.

% meeting expectations are the third-grade students who met or exceeded expectations for their grade on the English language arts section of the *RICAS*. Only students who actually took the test are counted in the denominator for the district and school proficiency rates. Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) may participate in alternate assessments instead. Multilingual Learners/English Learners in the U.S. less than one year are exempt from the English language arts assessment.

In Rhode Island in 2022, 99% of students were tested. Response rates vary by district.

2022 *RICAS* data for independent charter schools include Achievement First Rhode Island, Blackstone Valley Prep, The Compass School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, Highlander Charter School, The Hope Academy, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, The Learning Community, RISE Prep Mayoral Academy, Segue Institute for Learning, and SouthSide Charter School. Charter schools included in total differ by year, depending on the schools serving that grade level on the year of the test. Charter schools are not included in the four core cities and remainder of state calculations.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

Data is not reported for The Rhode Island School for the Deaf because the number of students tested was less than 10. These students are still counted in the remainder of the state and state totals.

See Methodology Section for more information.

(References are on page 189)

Eighth-Grade Reading Skills

DEFINITION

Eighth-grade reading skills is the percentage of eighth-grade students who met expectations for reading in English language arts on the *Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS)* test.

SIGNIFICANCE

Strong reading skills are essential for a student's academic success.[1] Reading skills also are a powerful indicator of a student's ability to contribute to, participate in, and succeed in the workforce and the community.[2] Literacy demands change and intensify quickly in grades four through 12, as students are expected to comprehend, synthesize, and analyze increasingly complex texts across academic disciplines. Even after mastering basic literacy skills, adolescents need ongoing support and instruction to develop advanced literacy skills required to succeed in middle and high school, such as applying critical thinking skills and drawing conclusions based on evidence.[3]

Reading difficulties can persist over time with long-term consequences for youth. Adolescents who struggle to read are more likely to drop out of high school, to have lower wages, and to rely on public assistance than their peers with higher levels of literacy.[4] These problems are exacerbated for Multilingual Learners/English Learners and low-income students, who are more likely to have low English literacy skills.[5]

Nationally, there has been limited progress in improving literacy skills among middle school students.[6] Students who are struggling with reading may have distinct difficulties and require different interventions to address them.[7] Pervasive low levels of adolescent literacy are best addressed in the classroom through instructional changes, and not through supplementary programs.[8]

Intensive individualized instruction can help improve adolescent literacy among struggling readers.[9] Successful adolescent literacy programs include ongoing teacher support and training in literacy strategy, incorporating culturally relevant literacy instruction in content area classes, explicit instruction in reading comprehension, collaborative learning, and using student assessments effectively.[10,11]

8th-Grade *NAEP* Reading Proficiency

	2011	2022
RI	33%	31%
US	32%	29%
National Rank*	*28th*	*16th*
New England Rank**	*6th*	*5th*

**1st is best; 50th is worst*
***1st is best; 6th is worst*

Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT Data Center, datacenter.kidscount.org

The *National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)* measures proficiency nationally and across states every other year for grades four and eight.

Eighth Graders Meeting Expectations on the *RICAS* English Language Arts Assessment, Rhode Island, 2022

SUBGROUP	2022
Female Students	35%
Male Students	23%
*Multilingual Learners	<5%
Non-English Learners	33%
*Students Receiving Special Education Services	<5%
Students Not Receiving Special Education Services	33%
Low-Income Students	14%
Higher-Income Students	41%
Asian Students+	43%
Black Students	15%
Hispanic Students	16%
Native American Students	7%
White Students	38%
Homeless Students	16%
Students in Foster Care	8%
ALL STUDENTS	*29%*

Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, *Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS)*, 2021-2022. Low-income status is determined by eligibility for the free or reduced-price lunch program. *Data is reported as <5% when greater than 95% of students do not meet expectations. +Data for Asian students is not disaggregated by ethnic group. National research shows large academic disparities across Asian ethnic groups.

◆ **In Rhode Island in 2022, 14% of low-income eighth graders met expectations in English language arts on the *Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS)*, compared with 41% of higher-income eighth graders. There were also large disparities by race and ethnicity.[12]**

◆ **Less than 5% of Multilingual Learners and students receiving special education services met expectations in English language arts.[13]**

◆ **In 2022, 8% of eighth graders who were in foster care met expectations in English language arts compared to 29% of students who were not in foster care. Sixteen percent of students identified as homeless met expectations in English language arts.[14]**

Table 47.

Eighth-Grade Reading Skills, Rhode Island, 2021 & 2022

SCHOOL DISTRICT	# EIGHTH GRADERS TESTED 2022	% MEETING EXPECTATIONS IN 2021	% MEETING EXPECTATIONS IN 2022
Barrington	275	70%	71%
Bristol Warren	233	34%	43%
Burrillville	166	26%	24%
Central Falls	197	6%	5%
Chariho	245	36%	34%
Coventry	315	33%	25%
Cranston	809	28%	30%
Cumberland	337	49%	49%
East Greenwich	184	50%	71%
East Providence	377	20%	20%
Exeter-West Greenwich	120	41%	45%
Foster-Glocester	149	33%	40%
Jamestown	47	59%	51%
Johnston	250	24%	34%
Lincoln	255	40%	49%
Little Compton	23	52%	57%
Middletown	131	23%	39%
Narragansett	78	32%	40%
New Shoreham	10	*	20%
Newport	125	17%	15%
North Kingstown	271	51%	51%
North Providence	274	41%	43%
North Smithfield	131	56%	52%
Pawtucket	688	13%	17%
Portsmouth	171	43%	46%
Providence	1,705	12%	13%
Scituate	84	46%	42%
Smithfield	187	40%	36%
South Kingstown	190	48%	40%
Tiverton	128	45%	23%
Warwick	651	21%	21%
West Warwick	249	14%	17%
Westerly	188	34%	51%
Woonsocket	364	13%	12%
Charter Schools	*659*	*24%*	*19%*
Urban Collaborative	*77*	*5%*	*<5%*
Four Core Cities	*2,954*	*12%*	*13%*
Remainder of State	*6,584*	*37%*	*37%*
Rhode Island	*10,274*	*29%*	*29%*

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), *Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS)*,2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years and are rounded to the nearest percentage point.

Due to the adoption of a new assessment tool by RIDE in 2018, Eighth-Grade Reading Skills cannot be compared with Factbooks prior to 2018.

% meeting expectations are the eighth-grade students who met or exceeded expectations for their grade on the English language arts section of the *RICAS*. Only students who actually took the test are counted in the denominator for the district and school proficiency rates. Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) may participate in alternate assessments. Multilingual Learners/English Learners in the U.S. for less than one year are exempt from the English language arts assessment.

2022 *RICAS* data for independent charter schools include: Achievement First Rhode Island, Beacon Charter School for the Arts, Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy, The Compass School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, Highlander Charter School, The Learning Community, Segue Institute for Learning, and Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts. Charter schools included in total differ by year, depending on the schools serving that grade level on the year of the test. UCAP is the Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program. Four core cities and remainder of state calculations do not include charter schools or UCAP.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

Data is not reported for DCYF schools or The Rhode Island School for the Deaf because the number of students tested was less than 10. These students are still counted in the remainder of the state and state totals.

*Data was not reported for New Shoreham in 2021 because the number of students tested was less than 10. These students are still counted in the remainder of the state and state totals.

See Methodology Section for more information.

(References are on page 189)

Math Skills

DEFINITION

Math skills is the percentage of third- and eighth-grade students who met expectations for math on the *Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS)* test.

SIGNIFICANCE

Students must rely on math to perform everyday activities, advance their education, and navigate today's technological world. Strong math skills predict higher college attendance and success rates and increase students' employability.[1,2] Improving education in the STEM disciplines (science, technology, engineering, and math) can spur national innovation and competitiveness and ensure that we have qualified workers for the growing STEM industries.[3]

State, national, and international assessments show that U.S. students fare well with straight-forward computational procedures but tend to have a limited understanding of basic mathematical concepts, resulting in recent federal actions to increase the level of rigor, depth, and coherency of the mathematics content taught nationwide.[4,5] After two decades of improvement, math performance in the U.S. leveled off and has now begun to decline.[6]

Poverty and low parental education levels can impact student performance on math assessments. Disparities in math proficiency related to race and family income persist in the U.S and worsen as students advance in grade level.[7] Opportunities for advanced math instruction are especially important for low-income children, who may be exposed to less complex math concepts.[8]

Achieving math proficiency for all students requires that improvements be made in curriculum, instructional materials, assessments, classroom practice, teacher preparation, and professional development. These are particularly important as Rhode Island continues to implement new, more rigorous math standards.[9,10] Teachers should expose all students to challenging and culturally relevant math concepts and curriculum and provide additional support to struggling students.[11]

The *National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)* measures proficiency in math and other subjects nationally and across states every other year.[12] In 2022, 34% of Rhode Island fourth graders and 35% of U.S. fourth graders performed at or above the Proficient level in math on the *NAEP*, and 24% of Rhode Island eighth graders and 26% of U.S. eighth graders performed at or above the Proficient level in math on the *NAEP*.[13,14] Between 2011 and 2022, Rhode Island saw decreases in fourth- and eighth-grade math proficiency as measured by the *NAEP* math tests with the biggest declines from 2019 to 2022, during the COVID-19 pandemic.[15,16]

Third- & Eighth-Grade Students Meeting Expectations on the *RICAS* Math Assessment, Rhode Island, 2022

SUBGROUP	THIRD GRADE	EIGHTH GRADE
Female Students	33%	20%
Male Students	37%	22%
*Multilingual Learners/English Learners	14%	<5%
Non-English Learners	39%	24%
*Students Receiving Special Education Services	12%	<5%
Students Not Receiving Special Education Services	40%	24%
Low-Income Students	18%	8%
Higher-Income Students	50%	31%
Asian Students+	56%	37%
Black Students	23%	7%
Hispanic/Latino Students	18%	9%
Native American Students	14%	6%
White Students	46%	29%
*Homeless Students	11%	<5%
Students in Foster Care	9%	6%
ALL STUDENTS	*35%*	*21%*

Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, *Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS)*, 2021-2022. Low-income status is determined by eligibility for the free or reduced-price lunch program. *Data is reported as <5% when more than 95% of students did not meet expectations. +Data for Asian students is not disaggregated by ethnic group. National research shows large academic disparities across Asian ethnic groups.

◆ **During the COVID-19 pandemic, the percentage of Rhode Island students meeting expectations in math for third graders declined from 36% in 2019 to 25% in 2021 and then increased to 35% in 2022, while for eighth graders it declined from 24% in 2019 to 16% in 2021 and then increased to 21% in 2022.[17,18,19]**

◆ **In Rhode Island in the 2021-2022 school year, 18% of low-income third graders met expectations in math, compared with 50% of higher-income third graders. There also were large gaps by race and ethnicity, with 56% of Asian and 46% of white third graders meeting expectations, compared with 23% of Black, 18% of Hispanic, and 14% of Native American students. This large gap is also seen in eighth-grade results, with 37% of Asian and 29% of white eighth graders meeting expectations, compared with 7% of Black, 9% of Hispanic, and 6% Native American students.[20]**

◆ **In 2022, 9% of third graders in foster care met expectations in math and 6% of eighth graders who were in foster care met expectations in math.[21]**

Table 48.

Third & Eighth Grade Students Meeting Expectations in Math, Rhode Island, 2021-2022

SCHOOL DISTRICT	# OF THIRD GRADERS TESTED	% OF THIRD GRADERS MEETING EXPECTATIONS	# OF EIGHTH GRADERS TESTED	% OF EIGHTH GRADERS MEETING EXPECTATIONS
Barrington	240	71%	277	60%
Bristol Warren	213	42%	233	33%
Burrillville	149	37%	164	7%
Central Falls	160	6%	189	<5%
Chariho	207	52%	246	38%
Coventry	292	48%	316	25%
Cranston	733	30%	816	13%
Cumberland	345	64%	339	44%
East Greenwich	174	62%	182	65%
East Providence	325	40%	376	10%
Exeter-West Greenwich	104	51%	121	28%
Foster	29	21%	NA	NA
Foster-Glocester	NA	NA	147	27%
Glocester	94	62%	NA	NA
Jamestown	55	73%	47	55%
Johnston	233	33%	247	17%
Lincoln	223	53%	254	47%
Little Compton	19	79%	23	30%
Middletown	141	36%	142	35%
Narragansett	61	77%	73	44%
New Shoreham	10	20%	10	20%
Newport	119	20%	127	<5%
North Kingstown	260	60%	269	40%
North Providence	229	23%	279	27%
North Smithfield	108	56%	132	44%
Pawtucket	618	29%	698	7%
Portsmouth	162	48%	171	40%
Providence	1,644	17%	1,697	6%
Scituate	88	63%	84	30%
Smithfield	164	49%	188	39%
South Kingstown	198	48%	190	26%
Tiverton	107	66%	127	25%
Warwick	580	30%	648	12%
West Warwick	254	6%	246	13%
Westerly	156	35%	190	27%
Woonsocket	417	17%	366	6%
Charter Schools	*845*	*31%*	*652*	*16%*
UCAP	*NA*	*NA*	*77*	*<5%*
Four Core Cities	*2,839*	*19%*	*2,950*	*6%*
Remainder of State	*6,075*	*43%*	*6,595*	*28%*
Rhode Island	*9,759*	*35%*	*10,274*	*21%*

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), *Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS)*, 2021-2022 and is rounded to the nearest percentage point.

Due to the adoption of a new assessment tool by RIDE in 2018, *Math Skills* cannot be compared with Factbooks prior to 2019. Due to low participation rates, *Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS)*, 2020-2021 math scores cannot be compared to previous years.

% meeting expectations are students who met or exceeded expectations on the math section of the *RICAS*. Only students who actually took the test are counted in the denominator for the district and school proficiency rates. All students are expected to participate in the *RICAS* assessment. Students with significant disabilities may be eligible to participate in alternate assessments.

Data is reported as <5% when greater than 95% of students did not meet expectations in this category. Actual numbers are not shown to protect student confidentiality. These students are still counted in district totals and four core cities, remainder of the state, and state totals.

RICAS data for independent charter schools include Achievement First, Beacon Charter School, Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy, The Compass School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, Highlander Charter School, The Hope Academy, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, The Learning Community, RISE Prep Mayoral Academy, Segue Institute for Learning, SouthSide Charter School, and Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

Charter schools and the Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program (UCAP) are not included in the four core cities and the remainder of state calculations.

NA indicates that the school district does not serve students at that grade level.

(Continued with references on page 189)

Schools Identified for Intervention

DEFINITION

Schools identified for intervention is the percentage of Rhode Island public schools that are identified as in need of "Comprehensive Support and Improvement" by the Rhode Island Department of Education.

SIGNIFICANCE

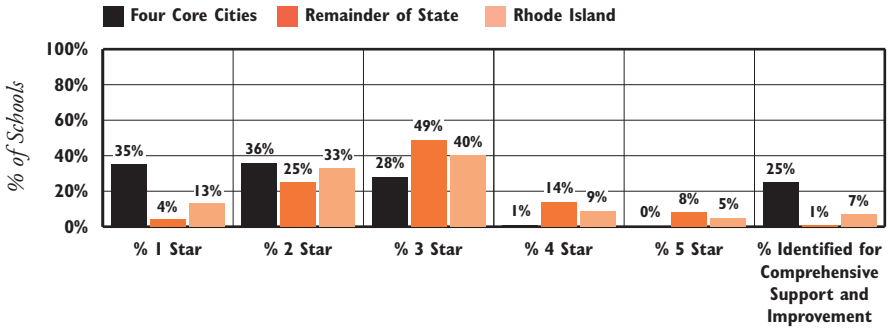
Research on school improvement efforts shows that schools can be improved through comprehensive, whole-school reforms. Critical elements of successful school improvement efforts include targeting resources to support the lowest performing schools, giving building leaders more autonomy around spending and hiring, using data-based decision making, developing ways to spread best practices, and engaging the whole community in improvement efforts.[1]

The U.S. Department of Education approved Rhode Island's new accountability system under the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* in 2018.[2] The system is structured to promote collective responsibility for continuous improvement at all levels of education through measurements that differentiate school performance; a school classification system; and state, district, and school report cards.[3]

The accountability system uses a five-star rating system to summarize overall school performance determined by a broad range of performance indicators.[4] These indicators include achievement in English language arts and math, student growth, graduation rate, English language proficiency, percentage of students exceeding expectations, student and teacher chronic absenteeism, and suspensions.[5] In 2019, Rhode Island accountability ratings included new indicators including high school graduates' proficiency in English language arts and math and the percentage of graduating high school students who have earned college credits or industry credentials.[6]

Schools with five-star ratings have strong performance in all the indicators and no low-performing student subgroups. Schools with one-star ratings are low performing schools in multiple indicators.[7] The lowest performing 5% of all schools receiving Title I funds, high schools that do not graduate at least two-thirds of their students, and schools with the lowest scores on academic indicators are identified as in need of comprehensive support and improvement.[8] These schools will receive additional support and oversight from the state. Schools identified as in need of Additional Targeted Support and Improvement have one or more student subgroups performing at the lowest levels in the state.[9]

Rhode Island School Performance Classifications, 2021-2022 School Year



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, School, and District Report Cards, 2021-2022 school year.

◆ **The U.S. Department of Education waived Rhode Island's accountability system for the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result there were no new star ratings for either of these school years.[10]**

◆ **In the 2021-2022 school year, 7% of schools in Rhode Island were identified as in need of Comprehensive Support and Improvement, and 17 of these 21 schools were located in the four core cities.[11]**

◆ **An additional 162 schools were identified as needing Additional Targeted Support and Improvement. Of these 162 schools, 118 had one or more student subgroups who performed at the lowest levels in the state.[12] Of these schools, 88% were identified because of the need for improvement for students with disabilities.[13]**

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) School Accountability Plans

◆ ***ESSA* requires states to include a measure of "school quality or student success," such as student engagement, chronic absence, school climate and safety, access to advanced coursework, or college and career readiness in their new accountability systems.[14,15]**

◆ **Strong *ESSA* accountability frameworks have an easy-to-understand rating system, incorporate student growth as well as proficiency, include academic measures inclusive of more than reading and math, incorporate the performance of student subgroups, include measures of college and career readiness, and include a measure of year-over-year growth.[16,17]**

Table 49.

Schools Identified for Intervention, 2021-2022 School Year

SCHOOL DISTRICT	TOTAL # OF SCHOOLS	# OF 5-STAR RATED SCHOOLS	# OF 4-STAR RATED SCHOOLS	# OF 3-STAR RATED SCHOOLS	# OF 2-STAR RATED SCHOOLS	# OF 1-STAR RATED SCHOOLS	# IDENTIFIED FOR ADDITIONAL TARGETED SUPPORT AND IMPROVEMENT	% IDENTIFIED FOR ADDITIONAL TARGETED SUPPORT AND IMPROVEMENT	# IDENTIFIED FOR COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT AND IMPROVEMENT	% IDENTIFIED FOR COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT AND IMPROVEMENT
Barrington	6	6	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0%
Bristol Warren	6	0	3	3	0	0	4	67%	0	0%
Burrillville	4	0	0	3	1	0	2	50%	0	0%
Central Falls	5	0	0	1	0	4	5	100%	2	40%
Chariho	7	0	2	4	0	1	3	43%	1	14%
Coventry	7	1	0	6	0	0	5	71%	0	0%
Cranston	22	0	0	10	11	1	12	55%	0	0%
Cumberland	8	1	3	2	2	0	1	13%	0	0%
East Greenwich	4	1	2	1	0	0	1	25%	0	0%
East Providence	10	0	0	6	2	2	7	70%	0	0%
Exeter-West Greenwich	3	0	1	2	0	0	1	33%	0	0%
Foster	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0%	0	0%
Foster-Glocester	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0%	0	0%
Glocester	2	1	0	1	0	0	1	50%	0	0%
Jamestown	2	0	1	1	0	0	1	50%	0	0%
Johnston	6	0	0	3	3	0	4	67%	0	0%
Lincoln	6	1	1	3	1	0	2	33%	0	0%
Little Compton	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0%	0	0%
Middletown	5	0	0	4	1	0	2	40%	0	0%
Narragansett	3	0	1	2	0	0	1	33%	0	0%
New Shoreham	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0%	0	0%
Newport	3	0	0	0	3	0	3	100%	0	0%
North Kingstown	8	1	3	2	2	0	4	50%	0	0%
North Providence	8	0	0	1	6	1	4	50%	0	0%
North Smithfield	3	0	0	3	0	0	2	67%	0	0%
Pawtucket	16	0	0	9	5	2	12	75%	1	6%
Portsmouth	4	0	2	2	0	0	0	0%	0	0%
Providence	39	0	1	7	14	17	33	85%	13	33%
Scituate	5	1	0	4	0	0	0	0%	0	0%
Smithfield	5	0	3	1	1	0	3	60%	0	0%
South Kingstown	7	1	1	4	1	0	1	14%	0	0%
Tiverton	5	0	1	3	1	0	1	20%	0	0%
Warwick	17	0	1	9	6	1	12	71%	0	0%
West Warwick	5	0	0	1	3	1	4	80%	0	0%
Westerly	5	0	0	4	1	0	0	0%	0	0%
Woonsocket	9	0	0	2	6	1	9	100%	1	11%
Charter Schools	*34*	*0*	*1*	*8*	*20*	*5*	*19*	*56%*	*2*	*6%*
State-Operated Schools	*4*	*0*	*0*	*0*	*3*	*1*	*2*	*50%*	*0*	*0%*
UCAP	*1*	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0*	*1*	*1*	*100%*	*1*	*100%*
Four Core Cities	*69*	*0*	*1*	*19*	*25*	*24*	*59*	*86%*	*17*	*25%*
Remainder of State	*181*	*14*	*25*	*89*	*46*	*7*	*81*	*45%*	*1*	*1%*
Rhode Island	*289*	*14*	*27*	*116*	*94*	*38*	*162*	*56%*	*21*	*7%*

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education, 2021-2022 school year.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

Charter schools that are classified include Achievement First Rhode island, Beacon Charter High School for the Arts, Blackstone Academy Charter, Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy, Charette Charter School, The Compass School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, Founders Academy, The Greene School, Highlander Charter School, The Hope Academy, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, The Learning Community Charter School, Nuestro Mundo Public Charter School, Providence Preparatory Charter, RISE Prep Mayoral Academy, Rhode Island Nurses Institute Middle College Charter School, Segue Institute for Learning, Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy, SouthSide Elementary Charter School, Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts, and Village Green Virtual Charter School.

State-operated schools that are classified include the William M. Davies Jr. Career & Technical High School, DCYF, Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center, and the Rhode Island School for the Deaf.

UCAP is the Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program.

Early Learning Centers, Pre-K programs and preschools are not rated and therefore not included in this table.

See the Methodology Section for more information.

References

[1] Straus, C., & Miller, T. (2016). *Strategies to improve low-performing schools under the Every Student Succeeds Act: How 3 districts found success using evidence-based practices.* Washington, DC: Center for American Progress.

[2] U.S. Department of Education, Press Office. (2018). *Secretary DeVos approves Idaho, Mississippi and Rhode Island's ESSA state plans* [Press Release].

[3,5,7,8] Rhode Island Department of Education. (2018). *Rhode Island's Every Student Succeeds Act state plan.*

(continued on page 190)

Chronic Early Absence

DEFINITION

Chronic early absence is the percentage of children in kindergarten through third grade (K-3) who were enrolled for at least 90 days and missed 18 days or more of school, including excused and unexcused absences (10% or more of the school year for a 180-day school year).

SIGNIFICANCE

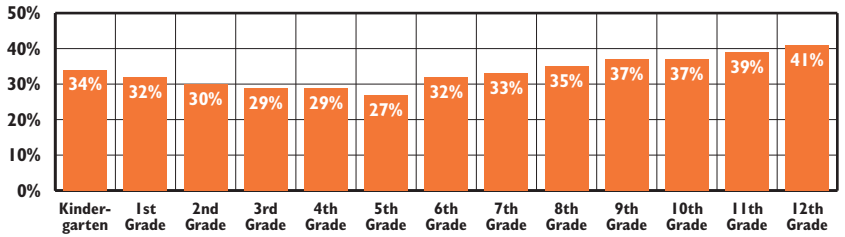
Students who are absent from school miss opportunities to learn and develop the important academic and social-emotional skills and approaches to learning that are part of the K-3 experience and critical for ongoing school success. Children who are chronically absent in kindergarten show lower assessment scores in math, reading, and general knowledge in first grade. Chronic absence in kindergarten appears to be especially detrimental for children living in poverty and Latino children who are less likely to have the resources to make up for lost time in the classroom.[1,2] In Rhode Island, children who are chronically absent in kindergarten have lower scores on assessments as far out as the seventh grade and are more than twice as likely to be retained.[3]

Nationally in the 2017-2018 school year, 12% of all elementary school students were chronically absent.[4] In the early grades, children from families living in poverty are much more likely to be chronically absent than higher-income children. In the U.S., one in five (21%) poor kindergartners was chronically absent, compared to less than one in 10 (8%) of their higher-income peers.[5] The rate of chronic absence is twice as high for students experiencing homelessness as it is for the general student population.[6] Chronic absenteeism can affect the reading and math outcomes of all students in a class, not just those who are absent, because teachers may backtrack or slow the learning pace to review lessons for students who have missed school.[7]

Young children are chronically absent from school for a variety of reasons. Asthma is a leading cause of school absenteeism, accounting for one-third of all absences, but other physical and behavioral health issues, including dental and vision problems, food insecurity, anxiety, and/or depression can also result in chronic absence.[8,9]

While illness is a leading factor in chronic early absence, chronic absenteeism also can result from poor quality education, ambivalence about or alienation from school, and chaotic school environments, including high rates of teacher turnover or absenteeism, disruptive classrooms, and/or bullying. Unreliable or insufficient transportation, violence at and around school, multiple foster care placements, lack of clean or affordable clothes, and lack of safe and affordable housing are other factors that can lead to chronic absence.[10,11,12]

Chronic Absence Rates in Rhode Island by Grade, 2021-2022 School Year



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, 2021-2022 school year.

◆ **Chronic absence rates are high in kindergarten and first grade and then decline before increasing again in middle and high school. During the 2021-2022 school year, 34% of Rhode Island kindergarten students, 32% of first graders, 30% of second graders, and 29% of third graders were chronically absent (i.e., absent 18 days or more). Thirty-one percent of all Rhode Island children in grades K-3 were chronically absent.[13]**

◆ **Averages for school-wide attendance can mask significant numbers of chronically absent individual students.[14] During the 2021-2022 school year, the average daily attendance rate for K-3 students in Rhode Island's four core cities was 88%, but 47% of students were chronically absent.[15]**

Reducing Student Chronic Absence

◆ **Schools, districts, and community partners can nurture a culture of attendance by increasing the feelings of belonging and connection for all students and families, raising awareness about the problem of chronic absence, encouraging parents to send their children to school every day in the early grades, developing a community response that involves mentoring outside of school, and recognizing and rewarding good attendance.[16,17,18]**

◆ **States can also incorporate chronic absence measures into early warning and accountability systems and school improvement efforts and can allocate resources to tracking chronic absence data and addressing barriers to attendance.[19,20]**

Table 50. **Chronic Early Absence Rates, Grades K-3, Rhode Island, 2021-2022 School Year**

SCHOOL DISTRICT	K-3 STUDENTS ENROLLED LESS THAN 90 DAYS	K-3 STUDENTS ENROLLED 90 DAYS OR MORE	K-3 ATTENDANCE RATE	% OF K-3 STUDENTS ABSENT 0-5 DAYS	% OF K-3 STUDENTS ABSENT 6-11 DAYS	% OF K-3 STUDENTS ABSENT 12-17 DAYS	% OF K-3 STUDENTS ABSENT 18+ DAYS
Barrington	19	919	95%	32%	38%	19%	10%
Bristol Warren	41	820	92%	19%	32%	21%	27%
Burrillville	29	576	94%	28%	35%	22%	15%
Central Falls	91	736	90%	18%	25%	20%	37%
Chariho	41	843	92%	17%	33%	26%	24%
Coventry	44	1,182	93%	27%	35%	20%	19%
Cranston	170	2,823	93%	30%	31%	19%	20%
Cumberland	86	1,344	95%	41%	35%	14%	10%
East Greenwich	13	712	94%	30%	39%	19%	12%
East Providence	85	1,377	94%	32%	33%	20%	16%
Exeter-West Greenwich	19	413	93%	21%	34%	21%	25%
Foster	*	136	95%	35%	38%	16%	11%
Glocester	16	379	94%	35%	37%	16%	11%
Jamestown	*	179	95%	39%	37%	15%	10%
Johnston	54	931	93%	25%	36%	20%	18%
Lincoln	38	945	93%	27%	32%	20%	21%
Little Compton	11	73	94%	29%	37%	20%	14%
Middletown	57	606	93%	27%	31%	20%	22%
Narragansett	11	235	95%	34%	34%	22%	10%
New Shoreham	*	46	91%	2%	21%	40%	36%
Newport	55	562	90%	16%	24%	22%	38%
North Kingstown	38	1,017	94%	33%	34%	17%	16%
North Providence	64	969	91%	20%	27%	22%	31%
North Smithfield	13	415	94%	29%	36%	21%	15%
Pawtucket	273	2,411	90%	22%	25%	21%	33%
Portsmouth	38	578	96%	47%	37%	12%	4%
Providence	720	6,047	87%	14%	21%	18%	48%
Scituate	*	359	94%	31%	33%	22%	15%
Smithfield	19	671	94%	26%	41%	19%	14%
South Kingstown	39	705	93%	24%	35%	24%	18%
Tiverton	19	489	93%	26%	30%	25%	19%
Warwick	202	2,356	90%	12%	24%	25%	39%
West Warwick	85	1,087	87%	9%	17%	23%	51%
Westerly	43	633	93%	22%	33%	23%	23%
Woonsocket	195	1,770	88%	17%	23%	18%	41%
Charter Schools	*148*	*3,710*	*90%*	*12%*	*23%*	*22%*	*43%*
RI School for the Deaf	*	*20*	*87%*	*10%*	*10%*	*19%*	*62%*
Four Core Cities	*1,279*	*10,964*	*88%*	*16%*	*22%*	*19%*	*43%*
Remainder of State	*1,366*	*24,462*	*93%*	*26%*	*32%*	*20%*	*22%*
Rhode Island	*2,794*	*39,156*	*91%*	*22%*	*28%*	*20%*	*30%*

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education, 2021-2022 school year.

Attendance rates are calculated by dividing the state-calculated "average daily attendance" by the "average daily membership."

Chronic absence rates are based on attendance patterns for students who were enrolled in a district for at least 90 days. A total of 2,794 Rhode Island students in grades K-3 were not included in this analysis because they were only enrolled for a short period. The Rhode Island Department of Education excludes these students so that chronic absence issues can be examined separate from student mobility issues. It is likely that more students were excluded from districts with higher student mobility rates.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

Charter schools include Achievement First Rhode Island, Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy, The Compass School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, Highlander Charter School, Hope Academy, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, The Learning Community, RISE Prep Mayoral Academy, and SouthSide Elementary Charter School.

*Fewer than 10 students are in this category. Actual numbers are not shown to protect student confidentiality. These students are still counted in district totals and in the four core cities, remainder of the state, and state totals.

References

[1] Romero, M., & Lee, Y. (2008). *The influence of maternal and family risk on chronic absenteeism in early schooling.* New York, NY: Columbia University, Mailman School of Public Health, National Center for Children in Poverty.

[2,11] Chang, H. N., & Romero, M. (2008). *Present, engaged, and accounted for: The critical importance of addressing chronic absence in the early grades.* New York, NY: Columbia University, Mailman School of Public Health, National Center for Children in Poverty.

(continued on page 190)

Chronic Absence, Middle School and High School

DEFINITION

Chronic absence, middle school and high school is the percentage of children in middle and high school who were enrolled for at least 90 days and missed 18 days or more of school, including excused and unexcused absences (10% or more of the school year for a 180-day school year).

SIGNIFICANCE

Students who are frequently absent from school miss critical academic and social learning opportunities and are at risk of disengagement from school, academic failure, and dropping out.[1] Studies in large cities have shown strong relationships between chronic absence in middle and high school and the likelihood of dropping out.[2] Chronic absence in the sixth grade is one of three early warning signs that a student is likely to drop out of high school, and by ninth grade, a student's attendance is a better predictor of dropout risk than eighth-grade achievement test scores.[3]

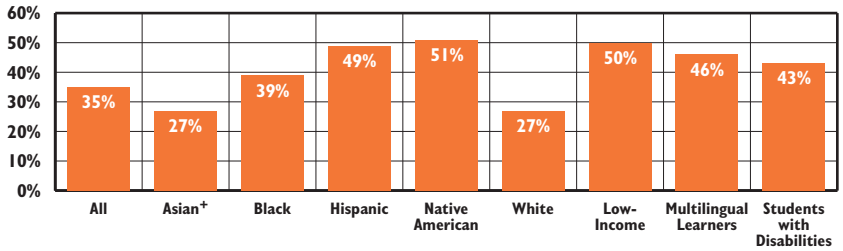
Students miss school for a variety of reasons, including physical and mental health conditions, substance abuse, lack of access to health care, unstable housing, child welfare or juvenile justice involvement, work or family responsibilities, and lack of affordable or reliable transportation. Students may also stay away from school to avoid bullying, harassment, disciplinary actions due to tardiness, or embarrassment associated with lack of clean or appropriate clothing or literacy or other academic problems.[4,5,6]

A national survey of students found that the most common reasons students report being chronically absent are health-related reasons, transportation barriers, personal stress, preferring activities outside of school, and perceiving that school has little value (i.e., is boring, their parents do not care if they miss school, or a belief that school will not help them reach future goals).[7]

The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) defines truancy as ten or more unexcused absences in a school year. During the 2021-2022 school year in Rhode Island, 48% of middle school students and 43% of high school students were considered truant by RIDE.[8] Truant students in Rhode Island may be referred to the Family Court's Truancy Calendar, a community and school-based intervention program.[9]

Forty-nine percent of Rhode Island's low-income middle and high school students were chronically absent in 2021-2022, compared with 24% of higher-income students. Middle and high school students receiving special education services (43%) were more likely than their peers not receiving these services (35%) to be chronically absent. Seventy six percent of absences by middle and high school students were unexcused absences.[10]

K-12 Chronic Absence Rates in Rhode Island by Student Subgroup, 2021-2022 School Year*



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, 2021-2022 school year. *The definition of absence may differ from prior years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. +Data for Asian students is not disaggregated by ethnic group. National research shows large academic disparities across Asian ethnic groups.

◆ **In Rhode Island during the 2021-2022 school year, Native American (51%), Hispanic (49%), and Black (39%) K-12 students had higher rates of chronic absence than Asian (27%) and white (27%) students. Rates were also higher for Multilingual Learners (46%), low-income students (50%), and students with disabilities (43%) than for all students (35%).[11]**

◆ **Groups with the highest levels of chronic absence were also hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. Partnering with students, families, and community partners can help schools re-engage chronically absent students and address lost learning opportunities.[12]**

Teacher Chronic Absence

◆ **Teacher chronic absenteeism is the percentage of teachers who missed 10% or more of school days out of their days employed by a school, excluding days missed due to professional development, field trips, off-campus activities with students, pre-approved leaves, absences on non-school days and half days. Rhode Island was the first state to include teacher absenteeism as part of its school accountability system.[13]**

◆ **Teacher absence is associated with lower student achievement and high financial costs for schools. Job-related stress, illness, and negative school culture contribute to teacher chronic absence.[14]**

◆ **During the 2021-2022 school year in Rhode Island, 13.3% of teachers were chronically absent.[15]**

Chronic Absence, Middle School and High School

Table 51.

Chronic Absence and Attendance Rates, Middle and High School, Rhode Island, 2021-2022 School Year**

	MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6-8)					HIGH SCHOOL (GRADES 9-12)				
SCHOOL DISTRICT	# ENROLLED LESS THAN 90 DAYS	# ENROLLED 90 DAYS OR MORE	ATTENDANCE RATE	% ABSENT 12-17 DAYS	% ABSENT 18+ DAYS	# ENROLLED LESS THAN 90 DAYS	# ENROLLED 90 DAYS OR MORE	ATTENDANCE RATE	% ABSENT 12-17 DAYS	% ABSENT 18+ DAYS
Barrington	21	803	95%	17%	9%	19	1,124	95%	16%	10%
Bristol Warren	32	688	90%	22%	35%	39	942	89%	15%	32%
Burrillville	24	504	92%	25%	23%	35	672	92%	20%	22%
Central Falls	75	760	88%	19%	47%	136	863	82%	14%	56%
Chariho	27	923	91%	27%	29%	141	1,109	90%	21%	29%
Coventry	44	980	93%	16%	21%	146	1,405	90%	19%	27%
Cranston	147	2,351	93%	18%	19%	348	3,462	92%	14%	24%
Cumberland	49	1,051	95%	13%	13%	125	1,480	91%	18%	27%
East Greenwich	*	612	94%	15%	16%	17	788	94%	18%	16%
East Providence	42	1,152	92%	18%	28%	63	1,629	86%	16%	42%
Exeter-West Greenwich	*	240	92%	23%	28%	18	469	92%	17%	26%
Foster-Glocester	16	444	95%	15%	13%	28	942	92%	18%	23%
Jamestown	11	192	96%	10%	5%	NA	NA	NA	0%	0%
Johnston	32	789	91%	19%	31%	49	769	89%	21%	42%
Lincoln	25	803	93%	15%	20%	33	995	92%	12%	24%
Little Compton	*	70	94%	13%	16%	NA	NA	NA	0%	0%
Middletown	28	461	82%	12%	50%	44	643	88%	23%	40%
Narragansett	*	317	94%	19%	13%	10	512	92%	23%	27%
New Shoreham	*	30	89%	33%	40%	*	34	91%	29%	35%
Newport	60	558	89%	20%	40%	81	663	87%	15%	45%
North Kingstown	32	827	94%	11%	16%	81	1,459	93%	13%	17%
North Providence	40	810	92%	18%	31%	79	1,122	90%	18%	33%
North Smithfield	14	517	94%	20%	15%	33	531	93%	17%	18%
Pawtucket	218	1,966	90%	17%	34%	345	2,229	84%	14%	46%
Portsmouth	29	643	95%	17%	8%	34	826	92%	16%	21%
Providence	610	5,191	85%	16%	54%	919	6,973	76%	11%	64%
Scituate	10	256	94%	20%	12%	14	388	93%	21%	18%
Smithfield	17	543	93%	22%	20%	25	785	93%	18%	22%
South Kingstown	27	791	93%	19%	18%	42	863	92%	19%	22%
Tiverton	14	515	92%	19%	26%	29	514	91%	21%	27%
Warwick	100	1,887	88%	21%	45%	244	2,458	85%	17%	50%
West Warwick	95	1,077	88%	20%	46%	177	1,026	87%	17%	41%
Westerly	37	733	93%	21%	20%	33	759	94%	17%	17%
Woonsocket	150	1,283	85%	16%	55%	197	1,686	80%	14%	59%
Charter Schools	*94*	*2,670*	*89%*	*20%*	*35%*	*238*	*2702*	*89%*	*11%*	*65%*
State-Operated Schools	*20*	*11*	*93%*	*20%*	*35%*	*179*	*1,754*	*89%*	*18%*	*43%*
UCAP	*33*	*124*	*73%*	*10%*	*83%*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*
Four Core Cities	*1,053*	*9,200*	*86%*	*17%*	*49%*	*2,702*	*238*	*79%*	*12%*	*59%*
Remainder of State	*990*	*21,576*	*96%*	*18%*	*25%*	*885*	*39,886*	*91%*	*18%*	*25%*
Rhode Island	*2,190*	*33,581*	*90%*	*18%*	*33%*	*4,004*	*44,580*	*87%*	*16%*	*38%*

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education, 2021-2022 school year.

Attendance rates are calculated by dividing the state-calculated "average daily attendance" by the "average daily membership."

Chronic absence rates are based on attendance patterns for students who were enrolled in a district for at least 90 days. A total of 2,190 Rhode Island middle school students and 4,004 high school students were not included in this analysis because they were only enrolled for a short period. The Rhode Island Department of Education excludes these students so that chronic absence issues can be examined separately from student mobility issues. It is likely that more students were excluded from districts with higher student mobility rates.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

Little Compton students attend high school in Portsmouth, and Jamestown students can choose to attend high school in Narragansett or North Kingstown.

Charter middle schools include Achievement First Rhode Island, Beacon Charter School for the Arts, Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy, The Compass School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, Highlander Charter School, Hope Academy, The Learning Community, Segue Institute for Learning, and Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts. Charter high schools include Beacon Charter High School for the Arts, Blackstone Academy, Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy, Charette Charter School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, The Greene School, Highlander Charter School, Rhode Island Nurses Institute Middle College Charter School, Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy, Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts, and the Village Green Virtual Public Charter School.

*Fewer than 10 students are in this category. Actual numbers are not shown to protect student confidentiality. These students are still counted in district totals and in the four core cities, remainder of the state, and state totals.

(continued with references on page 190)

Suspensions

DEFINITION

Suspensions is the number of disciplinary actions per 100 students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade in Rhode Island public schools. Students can receive more than one disciplinary action during the school year. Disciplinary actions include in-school suspensions and out-of-school suspensions.

SIGNIFICANCE

Effective school disciplinary practices promote a safe and respectful school climate, support learning, and address the causes of student misbehavior. Punitive disciplinary practices, including "zero tolerance" policies, are largely ineffective and even counterproductive.[1,2] Despite this evidence, suspension is a widely used disciplinary technique, both nationally and in Rhode Island. Suspensions are used for minor offenses, such as use of electronics, and for more serious offenses, such as weapon possession.[3,4]

Suspension usually does not deter students from misbehaving and may actually reinforce negative behavior patterns. Suspended students are more likely than their peers to experience academic failure, juvenile justice system involvement, disengagement from school, isolation from teachers and peers, and dropping out of school. Being suspended even once in ninth grade is associated with a twofold increase in the likelihood of dropping out.[5,6] Suspended students are also at greater risk of criminal victimization, criminal activity, and incarceration as adults.[7]

Schools and districts can improve school climate and discipline by developing and enforcing disciplinary policies that set high expectations for student behavior; providing clear, appropriate, and consistent consequences for misbehavior; encouraging the use of alternative disciplinary approaches, such as restorative justice; and ensuring the equitable, developmentally appropriate, and limited use of suspensions.[8]

In Rhode Island and nationally, Black, Hispanic, Multiracial, and Native American students are more likely to be suspended than their white peers despite the fact that there is no evidence that these students have more serious patterns of rule breaking. In Rhode Island and nationally, boys and students with disabilities also are more likely to be suspended than their peers.[9,10,11]

Of all disciplinary actions during the 2021-2022 school year, 7% (1,358) involved elementary school students (kindergarten-5th grade), 42% (7,648) involved middle school students (6th-8th grades), and 50% (9,225) involved high school students (9th-12th grades). For elementary school students, 76% of disciplinary actions were out-of-school suspensions. Kindergarteners received 121 disciplinary actions, including 109 out-of-school suspensions.[12]

Out-of-School Suspensions by Infraction, Rhode Island, 2021-2022

TYPE OF INFRACTION*	#	%	TYPE OF INFRACTION	#	%
Fighting	2,048	22%	Obscene/Abusive Language	426	4%
Insubordination/Disrespect	1,641	17%	Weapon Possession	278	3%
Disorderly Conduct	1,370	14%	Arson/Larceny/Robbery/Vandalism	235	2%
Assault of Student or Teacher	1,259	13%	Electronic Devices/Technology	127	1%
Alcohol/Drug/Tobacco Offenses	1,231	13%	Other Offenses	79	1%
Harassment/Intimidation/Threat	817	9%	Attendance Offenses	0	0%
			Total	*9,511*	

Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, 2021-2022 school year.

**Harassment offenses include hazing and hate crimes. Assault offenses include sexual assault.*

◆ **In 2016, the Rhode Island General Assembly passed a law that restricts the use of out-of-school suspensions to situations when a child's behavior poses a demonstrable threat that cannot be dealt with by other means.[13] During the 2021-2022 school year, the number of out-of-school suspensions was back up to close to the 2018-2019 number (9,981) after declines during the COVID-19 pandemic when many students were distance learning and not in school buildings. More than half (54%) of out-of-school suspensions were for non-violent offenses.[14,15]**

Disparities in School Discipline by Special Education Status and Race/Ethnicity, Rhode Island, 2021-2022

	% OF STUDENTS ENROLLED	% OF SUSPENSIONS
Students Receiving Special Education Services	16%	30%
Asian/Pacific Islander Students[+]	3%	1%
Black Students	9%	12%
Hispanic Students	29%	32%
Multiracial Students	5%	8%
Native American Students	1%	1%
White Students	53%	45%

Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, 2021-2022 school year. % suspensions includes in-school and out-of-school suspensions. [+]Data for Asian and Pacific Islander students is not disaggregated by ethnic group. [+]National research shows large academic disparities across Asian ethnic groups. Detailed data by district is available at www.ride.ri.gov

◆ **During the 2020-2021 school year, Rhode Island students receiving special education services represented 16% of the student population but represented 30% of suspensions. Historically, Students of Color are more likely to be suspended than their white peers.[16]**

Table 52.

Disciplinary Actions, Rhode Island School Districts, 2021-2022

SCHOOL DISTRICT	TOTAL # OF STUDENTS ENROLLED	TOTAL # OF STUDENTS SUSPENDED IN-SCHOOL	TOTAL # OF STUDENTS SUSPENDED OUT-OF-SCHOOL	OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS PER 100 STUDENTS	TOTAL DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS	ACTIONS PER 100 STUDENTS
Barrington	3,366	24	*	<1	25	1
Bristol Warren	2,909	331	242	8	573	20
Burrillville	2,099	28	180	9	208	10
Central Falls	2,690	*	223	8	224	8
Chariho	3,128	83	67	2	150	5
Coventry	4,280	913	225	5	1,138	27
Cranston	10,253	620	642	6	1,262	12
Cumberland	4,676	449	205	4	654	14
East Greenwich	2,534	39	21	1	60	2
East Providence	4,951	*	564	11	566	11
Exeter-West Greenwich	1,521	16	23	2	39	3
Foster	215	0	*	2	*	2
Foster-Glocester	1,381	144	46	3	190	14
Glocester	560	*	0	0	*	<1
Jamestown	435	*	0	0	*	<1
Johnston	3,063	130	159	5	289	9
Lincoln	3,239	*	150	5	151	5
Little Compton	198	*	*	3	*	4
Middletown	2,042	160	84	4	244	12
Narragansett	1,212	76	73	6	149	12
New Shoreham	129	*	*	1	*	3
Newport	1,963	0	275	14	275	14
North Kingstown	3,845	305	160	4	465	12
North Providence	3,458	898	240	7	1,138	33
North Smithfield	1,592	67	122	8	189	12
Pawtucket	8,099	*	767	9	776	10
Portsmouth	2,218	29	41	2	70	3
Providence	21,774	153	1,790	8	1,943	9
Scituate	1,190	*	18	2	27	2
Smithfield	2,405	88	91	4	179	7
South Kingstown	2,589	128	94	4	222	9
Tiverton	1,666	20	114	7	134	8
Warwick	8,099	475	568	7	1,043	13
West Warwick	3,502	509	390	11	899	26
Westerly	2,345	76	147	6	223	10
Woonsocket	5,606	2,760	1,064	19	3,824	68
Charter Schools	*10,519*	*167*	*576*	*5*	*743*	*7*
State-Operated Schools	*1,821*	*	*122*	*7*	*124*	*7*
UCAP	*127*	*0*	*16*	*13*	*16*	*13*
Four Core Cities	*38,169*	*2,923*	*3,844*	*10*	*6,767*	*18*
Remainder of State	*87,062*	*5,628*	*4,964*	*3*	*10,592*	*12*
Rhode Island	*137,697*	*8,720*	*9,511*	*7*	*18,231*	*13*

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education, 2021-2022 school year.

The out-of-school suspension rate per 100 students is the total number of out-of-school suspensions for the school district at all grade levels (Pre-K through 12th grade), multiplied by 100, and divided by the student enrollment ("average daily membership").

The disciplinary actions rate per 100 students is the total disciplinary actions for the school district at all grade levels (Pre-K through 12th grade), multiplied by 100, and divided by the student enrollment ("average daily membership").

Schools and districts only report suspensions of one day or longer. If an incident involves more than one infraction, schools and districts are asked to code the incident as the most serious type of infraction (e.g., violent offenses involving weapons and offenses involving drugs and alcohol are considered more serious than other offenses). The type of infraction resulting in disciplinary action varies according to school district policy. The type of disciplinary action used for each type of infraction also varies according to school district policy.

*Fewer than 10 students are in this category. Actual numbers are not shown to protect student confidentiality. These numbers are still counted in district totals and in the four core cities, remainder of the state, and state total.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

Charter schools reporting suspensions include Achievement First Rhode Island, Beacon Charter High School for the Arts, Blackstone Academy, Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy, Charette Charter School, The Compass School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, The Greene School, Highlander Charter School, Hope Academy, Kingston Hill Academy, The Learning Community, Nuestro Mundo Public Charter School, Providence Prep Mayoral Academy, Rhode Island Nurses Institute Middle College Charter School, RISE Prep Mayoral Academy, Segue Institute for Learning, Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts, and The Village Green Virtual Public Charter School. State-operated schools reporting suspensions include William M. Davies Jr. Career & Technical High School and Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center. UCAP is the Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program.

(References are on page 191)

High School Graduation Rate

DEFINITION

High school graduation rate is the percentage of students who graduate from high school within four years of entering, calculated by dividing the number of students who graduate in four years or fewer by the total number of first-time entering ninth graders (adjusted for transfers in and transfers out during the four years).

SIGNIFICANCE

High school graduation is the minimum requisite for college and most employment. In Rhode Island, adults without high school diplomas are more likely to be unemployed and have lower incomes than adults with high school degrees.[1,2] In 2021, 12% of Rhode Island children lived in households headed by a non-high school graduate, similar to the national average of 11%.[3]

Children who attend high-quality preschool programs and read at grade level in elementary school are more likely to graduate from high school than their peers.[4] Early warning and intervention systems use early predictors of dropping out, such as poor attendance, behavior problems, and course failure in math and reading, to identify students who are at risk, so supports can be put in place to help students get "on track" for graduation.[5]

Adopting student-centered learning practices at the high school level can increase achievement and engagement for all students. These practices encourage deeper engagement by personalizing learning, allowing students to take ownership over their work, and pacing learning to match the student's mastery of the content.[6] Providing students with high-quality postsecondary and workforce engagement opportunities can also increase high school graduation rates and college and career readiness.[7]

In order to graduate, Rhode Island students must demonstrate proficiency in English language arts, math, science, social studies, the arts, and technology, complete at least 20 courses, and complete one performance-based assessment. Students can earn Council designations, including a Seal of Biliteracy, Commissioner's Seal, and Pathway Endorsements. In 2022, Rhode Island adopted new graduation requirements which will require students beginning with the Class of 2024 to demonstrate proficiency in financial literacy and beginning with the Class of 2028 to also demonstrate proficiency in world languages, lab sciences, college preparation coursework, civics, and computer science.[8]

Rhode Island Four-Year High School Graduation and Dropout Rates, by Student Subgroup, Class of 2022

	COHORT SIZE	DROPOUT RATE	% COMPLETED GED	% OF STUDENTS STILL IN SCHOOL	FOUR-YEAR GRADUATION RATE
Female Students	5,405	7%	1%	5%	87%
Male Students	5,906	12%	1%	7%	80%
Multilingual/English Learners	1,216	24%	<1%	9%	68%
Students Receiving Special Education Services	1,794	14%	2%	18%	66%
Students Not Receiving Special Education Services	9,527	9%	1%	4%	87%
Low-Income Students	5,992	14%	1%	8%	76%
Higher-Income Students	5,329	4%	1%	3%	92%
Students in Foster Care	66	29%	3%	17%	52%
Homeless Students	207	24%	2%	10%	64%
Asian Students+	336	2%	0%	5%	92%
Black Students	1,055	12%	<1%	8%	80%
Hispanic Students	3,151	14%	1%	8%	77%
Native American	99	27%	0%	4%	69%
White Students	6,220	7%	1%	4%	87%
ALL STUDENTS	*11,321*	*10%*	*1%*	*6%*	*83%*

Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, Class of 2022. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.
+Data for Asian students is not disaggregated by ethnic group. National research shows large academic disparities across Asian ethnic groups.

◆ **The Rhode Island four-year graduation rate for the Class of 2022 was 83%, up from 77% for the Class of 2012. The lowest graduation rates were among Multilingual Learners, students receiving special education services, students in foster care, students experiencing homelessness, low-income students, and Hispanic and Native American students.[9,10]**

Rhode Island Five- and Six-Year High School Graduation Rates

◆ **Rhode Island calculates five- and six-year graduation rates to recognize that graduation is an accomplishment regardless of the time it takes. Of the 11,344 Rhode Island students who enrolled in ninth grade in the Fall of 2016, 9,529 (84%) graduated in four years in 2020, 227 (2%) graduated in five years in 2021, and 50 (<1%) graduated in six years in 2022. Of the 234 students who graduated in five years in 2021, 100 (43%) were students receiving special education services and 57 (24%) were Multilingual Learners.[11]**

Table 53.

High School Graduation Rates, Rhode Island, Class of 2022

SCHOOL DISTRICT	FOUR-YEAR COHORT RATES # OF STUDENTS IN COHORT	DROPOUT RATE	% COMPLETED GED	% STILL IN SCHOOL	FOUR-YEAR GRADUATION RATE
Barrington	239	<1%	<1%	3%	96%
Bristol Warren	222	7%	0%	4%	89%
Burrillville	162	8%	1%	4%	87%
Central Falls	236	31%	0%	10%	59%
Chariho	282	6%	2%	5%	87%
Coventry	371	9%	1%	3%	86%
Cranston	925	8%	<1%	8%	84%
Cumberland	361	4%	1%	4%	91%
East Greenwich	205	1%	0%	2%	96%
East Providence	375	9%	1%	7%	83%
Exeter-West Greenwich	125	2%	0%	6%	92%
Foster-Glocester	234	5%	1%	2%	93%
Johnston	182	9%	3%	10%	77%
Lincoln	256	7%	2%	1%	90%
Middletown	175	7%	0%	4%	89%
Narragansett	129	5%	2%	1%	92%
Newport	180	14%	3%	3%	80%
North Kingstown	382	4%	4%	2%	90%
North Providence	299	8%	3%	3%	86%
North Smithfield	138	2%	1%	6%	91%
Pawtucket	559	19%	1%	11%	69%
Portsmouth	214	4%	1%	1%	94%
Providence	1,859	14%	<1%	7%	78%
Scituate	92	3%	1%	3%	92%
Smithfield	184	2%	1%	3%	95%
South Kingstown	237	3%	1%	4%	92%
Tiverton	123	2%	1%	3%	94%
Warwick	651	10%	2%	5%	82%
West Warwick	224	10%	1%	4%	84%
Westerly	193	3%	5%	3%	90%
Woonsocket	435	27%	1%	9%	64%
Beacon Charter School	*58*	*10%*	*3%*	*5%*	*81%*
Blackstone Academy	*83*	*0%*	*1%*	*10%*	*89%*
Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy	*79*	*1%*	*0%*	*3%*	*96%*
Charette Charter School	*42*	*2%*	*0%*	*14%*	*83%*
Paul Cuffee Charter School	*71*	*3%*	*1%*	*11%*	*85%*
The Greene School	*45*	*0%*	*0%*	*2%*	*98%*
Highlander Charter School	*56*	*9%*	*2%*	*23%*	*66%*
RI Nurses Institute Middle College	*51*	*10%*	*2%*	*8%*	*80%*
Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy	*60*	*45%*	*0%*	*32%*	*23%*
Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts	*25*	*0%*	*0%*	*0%*	*100%*
Village Green Virtual Public Charter School	*57*	*0%*	*0%*	*2%*	*98%*
William M.Davies Jr. Career & Technical High School	*198*	*7%*	*1%*	*6%*	*86%*
Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center	*224*	*4%*	*0%*	*1%*	*95%*
Four Core Cities	*3,089*	*18%*	*18%*	*0%*	*73%*
Remainder of State	*8,231*	*6%*	*1%*	*5%*	*87%*
Rhode Island	*11,320*	*10%*	*1%*	*6%*	*83%*

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education, Class of 2022.

The 2022 four-year cohort graduation rate is the number of students who graduate in four years or fewer divided by the total number of students in the cohort. The cohort is calculated as the number of first-time entering ninth graders in 2018-2019 adjusted for transfers in and transfers out during the course of the four years. The cohort dropout rate is calculated the same way as the graduation rate, but the numerator is the number of students who drop out or whose status is unknown at the end of four years. Separate rates are calculated for the percentage of students who are retained in high school and therefore are taking more than four years to graduate and for the percentage of students who received their GED within four years instead of graduating with a traditional diploma.

Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

Students from Little Compton attend high school in Portsmouth, and Jamestown students can choose to attend high school in Narragansett or North Kingstown.

Rhode Island School for the Deaf, DCYF, and New Shoreham are not reported because there are fewer than 10 students in this cohort. These students are included in the state total.

References

[1] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021. Table S2301.

[2] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021. Table S2001

[3] The Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT Data Center, datacenter.kidscount.org

[4] Fiester, L. (2013). *Early warning confirmed: a research update on third-grade reading.* Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

[5,7] DePaoli, J. L., Balfanz, R., Bridgeland, J., Atwell, M., & Ingram, E. S. (2017). *Building a grad nation: Progress and challenge in raising high school graduation rates.*

(continued on page 191)

College Preparation and Access

DEFINITION

College preparation and access is the percentage of Rhode Island high school seniors who graduate and go on to college (i.e., enroll in a two-year or four-year college) immediately or within six months of graduation.

SIGNIFICANCE

Between 2021 and 2031, jobs requiring a postsecondary degree or certificate are projected to grow faster than jobs requiring less education.[1] Between 2017 and 2021 in Rhode Island, adults with high school diplomas were three times as likely to be unemployed as those with bachelor's degrees or higher, and the median annual income for adults with high school diplomas was $38,638, compared to $60,216 for adults with bachelor's degrees.[2,3]

Many students, especially low-income students, face barriers to college enrollment and success, such as insufficient academic preparation, difficulty navigating the application and financial aid processes, and the high cost of college. States can help address these barriers and improve college access by ensuring that all students have access to advanced coursework; take college entrance exams; complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); get adequate counseling and target financial aid strategically to students with the greatest needs.[4]

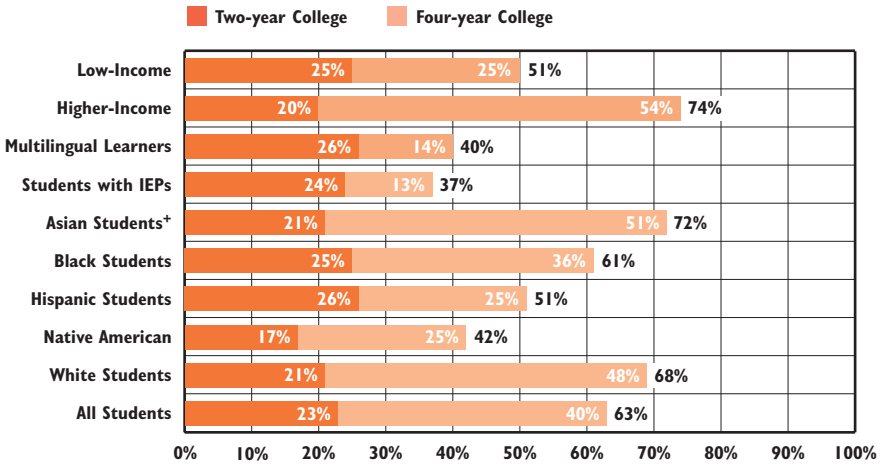
Students who participate in AP courses or dual or concurrent enrollment courses are likely to attend and succeed in college.[5,6] In Rhode Island, in the 2020-2021 school year, 11% of high school students took an AP test and 49% passed the exam. In the Class of 2021, 33% of students took a dual or concurrent enrollment course and 94% earned college credits.[7]

Rhode Island covers the cost for all public high school students to take the SAT during the school day in eleventh grade as a key strategy to increase college access.[8] In 2022, 92% of 11th graders completed the SAT. Statewide, 47% of 11th graders met expectations in English language arts and 25% met expectations in math.[9]

Seniors who have completed a FAFSA by May and been accepted to a four-year college are 50% more likely to enroll than students who have not completed their FAFSA.[10] During the 2022-2023 cycle, Rhode Island ranked twelfth in the U.S. for the number of high school seniors completing the FAFSA.[11]

Rhode Island's *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* state plan includes a Post-Secondary Success Indicator that measures the percentage of students that graduate with a career and technical education industry-approved credential, college credits through dual or concurrent enrollment, successful completion of AP tests, the Seal of Biliteracy and/or the Pathway Endorsement.[12]

Immediate College Enrollment by Family Income, Race, Ethnicity, and Type of College, Class of 2022, Rhode Island



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, Class of 2022. Percentages may not sum exactly due to rounding. +Data for Asian students is not disaggregated by ethnic group. National research shows large academic disparities across Asian ethnic groups.

◆ **After increasing when the Rhode Island Promise Scholarship was made available, the college enrollment rate declined during the COVID-19 pandemic from 67% for the Class of 2019 to 61% for the Class of 2020 to 63% for the Class of 2022. There continue to be large gaps in college access, particularly four-year college enrollment, between low- and higher-income students as well as by language status and disability.[13]**

◆ **School counselors have an important role to play in setting students on a path to postsecondary success. In particular, Black students identify their school counselor as the person who had the most influence on their thinking about college.[14] Rhode Island has 414 students for every school counselor, far above the recommended ratio of 250 to one.[15]**

◆ **For states, improving college access will require improvements at all points in the early education to college education system, including increasing access to high-quality preschool, implementing research-driven dropout prevention programs, improving the quality of the K-12 education system and aligning it with college admission requirements and career expectations, simplifying the college admission process, and making college affordable.[16]**

Table 54.

College Preparation and Access, Rhode Island

SCHOOL DISTRICT	TOTAL GRADE 12 ENROLLMENT OCT. 2021	% OF GRADE 12 STUDENTS PLANNING TO ATTEND COLLEGE, 2022	% OF STUDENTS WHO FILLED OUT THE FAFSA, 2022	% OF GRADE 11 STUDENTS TAKING THE SAT DURING THE SCHOOL DAY, 2022	% OF SAT TAKERS PROFICIENT IN ELA, 2022	% OF SAT TAKERS PROFICIENT IN MATH, 2022
Barrington	249	18%	63%	97%	84%	68%
Bristol Warren	250	26%	53%	95%	72%	28%
Burrillville	171	54%	51%	94%	49%	27%
Central Falls	217	24%	28%	79%	10%	<5%
Chariho	251	61%	65%	98%	63%	36%
Coventry	352	62%	59%	95%	47%	26%
Cranston	981	44%	55%	98%	44%	19%
Cumberland	371	51%	66%	98%	57%	38%
East Greenwich	218	70%	63%	97%	85%	63%
East Providence	337	45%	49%	92%	35%	13%
Exeter-West Greenwich	133	14%	57%	98%	73%	42%
Foster-Glocester	230	23%	67%	96%	58%	26%
Johnston	178	47%	53%	97%	44%	21%
Lincoln	250	39%	68%	96%	65%	44%
Middletown	190	46%	49%	98%	60%	32%
Narragansett	138	35%	59%	92%	69%	43%
New Shoreham	NA	78%	89%	NA	NA	NA
Newport	180	26%	48%	94%	37%	17%
North Kingstown	383	52%	65%	95%	74%	56%
North Providence	297	26%	55%	98%	48%	29%
North Smithfield	152	57%	59%	97%	69%	37%
Pawtucket	634	36%	36%	83%	22%	7%
Portsmouth	223	47%	67%	92%	75%	56%
Providence	1,688	36%	53%	87%	29%	13%
Scituate	91	58%	63%	99%	62%	35%
Smithfield	181	51%	76%	97%	62%	36%
South Kingstown	237	32%	65%	87%	75%	54%
Tiverton	134	52%	57%	93%	61%	37%
Warwick	632	49%	49%	92%	50%	21%
West Warwick	216	33%	50%	83%	44%	21%
Westerly	208	11%	60%	100%	58%	35%
Woonsocket	394	54%	31%	85%	23%	6%
Beacon Charter High School	*59*	*34%*	*46%*	*96%*	*49%*	*9%*
Blackstone Academy	*79*	*77%*	*80%*	*84%*	*24%*	*8%*
Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy	*92*	*37%*	*71%*	*95%*	*49%*	*25%*
Charette Charter School	*42*	*19%*	*79%*	*88%*	*8%*	*<5%*
Paul Cuffee Charter School	*64*	*52%*	*72%*	*90%*	*23%*	*8%*
The Greene School	*49*	*67%*	*71%*	*98%*	*36%*	*15%*
Highlander Charter School	*68*	*25%*	*46%*	*97%*	*23%*	*9%*
RI Nurses Institute Middle College	*49*	*61%*	*80%*	*98%*	*31%*	*10%*
Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy	*39*	*56%*	*49%*	*72%*	*8%*	*<5%*
Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts	*24*	*63%*	*88%*	*100%*	*28%*	*<5%*
Village Green Virtual Public Charter School	*55*	*64%*	*100%*	*96%*	*29%*	*8%*
William M. Davies Jr. Career & Technical Center	*189*	*38%*	*60%*	*98%*	*51%*	*12%*
DCYF	*14*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*
Metropolitian Regional Career and Technical Center	*233*	*65%*	*55%*	*97%*	*28%*	*7%*
RI School for the Deaf	*11*	*36%*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*
Four Core Cities	*2,933*	*38%*	*45%*	*85%*	*25%*	*10%*
Remainder of State	*7,244*	*43%*	*58%*	*95%*	*57%*	*33%*
Rhode Island	*11,244*	*42%*	*55%*	*92%*	*47%*	*25%*

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Total 12th grade enrollment is from the Rhode Island Department of Education as of October 1, 2021.

% of 12th grade students planning to attend college is from the 2021-2022 administration of *Survey Works!*, based on responses to the question, "What do you think you will do after you finish high school?" and includes students who responded that they planned to go to a community college, two-year college, or four-year college. The data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education.

The number of 12th graders completing the FAFSA is from U.S. Department of Education, Federal Student Aid, Rhode Island school-level data from the 2022-2023 cycle through June 2022. Retrieved April 2, 2023, from studentaid.ed.gov. The percentage of 12th graders completing the FAFSA is calculated by dividing the number of students completing applications into the number of 12th graders enrolled on October 1, 2021.

% of SAT takers proficient in ELA and math and % of 11th graders taking the SAT is from the Rhode Island Department of Education. % of students taking the SAT varied by district and may have impacted district results. Take caution when comparing between districts.

NA indicates that data are not available either because data were not collected or reported or because the number of students was too small to report. These students are included in the remainder of the state and state totals as appropriate.

Little Compton students attend high school in Portsmouth, and Jamestown students can choose to attend high school in Narragansett or North Kingstown.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

References

[1] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2023). *Employment, wages, and projected change in employment by typical entry-level education.* Retrieved April 3, 2023, from www.bls.gov

[2] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021. Table S2301.

(continued on page 191)

College Enrollment and Completion

DEFINITION

College enrollment and completion is the percentage of Rhode Island public high school students who enroll in a two- or four-year college and earn a college diploma (an associate degree or bachelor's degree) within six years of enrollment.[1]

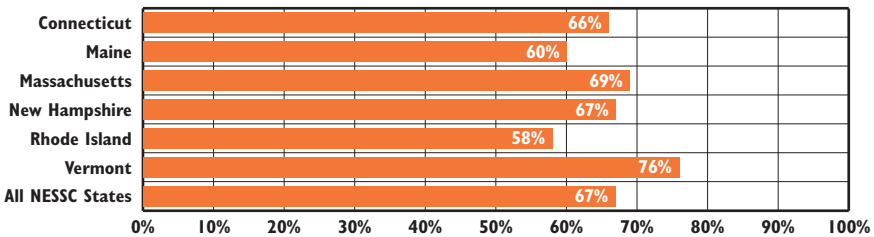
SIGNIFICANCE

Between 2021 and 2031, jobs requiring a postsecondary degree or certificate are projected to grow faster than jobs requiring less education, yet only 37% of Rhode Island adults ages 25 and 64 have a bachelor's degree or higher.[2,3] Between 2017 and 2021 in Rhode Island, 6.5% of adults with a high school diploma were unemployed, compared to 3.1% with a bachelor's degree or higher.[4] During that same period, the median annual income for adults with a high school diploma was $38,638, compared to $60,216 for adults with a bachelor's degree.[5] Students who complete college are more likely to be employed and have higher incomes. While college enrollment rates for low- income students have doubled in recent decades, there are still large gaps in the percentage of students who enroll in and complete college and the types of college students attend. In the U.S., almost half of all low- income students first enroll in a community college, many of which have low completion rates. Low-income students are also more likely to delay going to college and to have breaks in enrollment, both of which lower their chances of completing their college degrees.[6,7] There are also barriers to attainment for Students of Color. Addressing racial disparities can improve college completion outcomes.[8,9]

Low-income students and Students of Color often arrive at college with academic potential but less academic preparation and social capital than other students. They can benefit from a wide range of supports, including comprehensive assessment and placement, summer transition programs, peer-mentored and peer-facilitated programs that offer tutoring and other academic support, learning communities that allow a group of students to enroll in two or more classes together so they can establish peer relationships that support their success, personal and career counseling, mentoring, and/or referrals to social services.[10,11,12]

Improving college access and completion will require states to make improvements at all points in the early education to college system, including increasing access to high-quality preschool, implementing research-driven early intervention and dropout prevention programs, aligning the K-12 education system with college demands, making college affordable, and providing student support programs.[13,14,15,16]

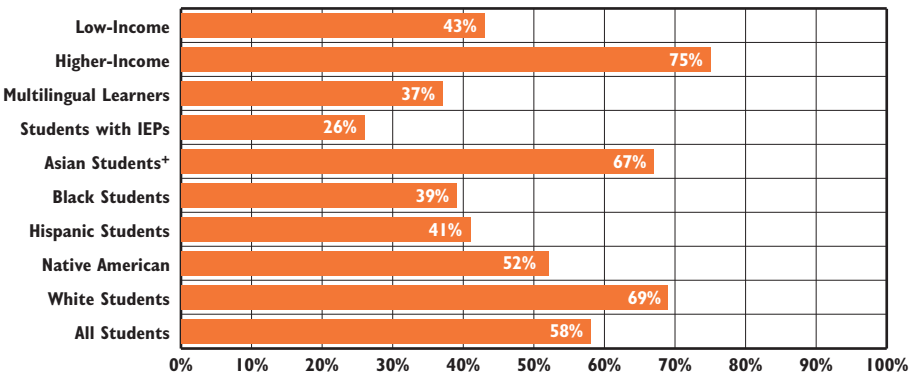
College Completion, New England Secondary School Consortium States (NESSC), 2015 Cohort



Source: New England Secondary School Consortium. (2022). *Common Data Project: 2022 annual report, school year 2020-2021.* Retrieved April 6, 2023, from www. greatschoolspartnership.org

◆ **Fifty-eight percent of Rhode Island public high school graduates who enrolled in a two- or four-year college in 2015 earned a college diploma within six years.[17]**

Six-Year College Completion by Student Subgroup, Rhode Island, 2015 Cohort



Source: New England Secondary School Consortium. (2022). *Common Data Project: 2022 annual report, school year 2020-2021.* Retrieved April 6, 2023, from www.greatschoolspartnership.org. +Data for Asian students is not disaggregated by ethnic group. National research shows large academic disparities across Asian ethnic groups.

◆ **In Rhode Island, there are large gaps in college completion between low-income and higher-income students, with 43% of low-income students completing college within six years, compared to 75% of higher-income students. There are also large disparities by race and ethnicity, language status, and disability.[18]**

Table 55.

College Enrollment and Completion, Rhode Island

SCHOOL DISTRICT	# OF STUDENTS WHO GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL IN 2022	# OF 2022 HS GRADUATES WHO ENROLLED IN COLLEGE WITHIN 6 MONTHS	% OF 2022 HS GRADUATES WHO ENROLLED IN COLLEGE WITHIN 6 MONTHS	# OF STUDENTS WHO ENROLLED IN COLLEGE IN 2021	# OF 2021 COLLEGE ENROLLEES WHO PERSISTED (ENROLLED FOR A THIRD SEMESTER)	% OF 2021 COLLEGE ENROLLEES WHO PERSISTED (ENROLLED FOR A THIRD SEMESTER)
Barrington	228	186	82%	269	239	89%
Bristol Warren	205	136	66%	157	124	79%
Burrillville	144	92	64%	121	97	80%
Central Falls	150	69	46%	74	45	61%
Chariho	248	156	63%	187	152	81%
Coventry	327	210	64%	276	229	83%
Cranston	789	535	68%	588	440	75%
Cumberland	343	265	77%	277	242	87%
East Greenwich	201	166	83%	144	132	92%
East Providence	323	162	50%	222	162	73%
Exeter-West Greenwich	122	81	66%	100	91	91%
Foster-Glocester	220	135	61%	118	93	79%
Johnston	144	101	70%	168	124	74%
Lincoln	234	179	76%	184	148	80%
Middletown	159	102	64%	128	101	79%
Narragansett	121	90	74%	76	57	75%
New Shoreham	10	*	80%	*	*	100%
Newport	151	76	50%	76	46	61%
North Kingstown	346	283	82%	296	262	89%
North Providence	261	168	64%	208	155	75%
North Smithfield	132	95	72%	105	87	83%
Pawtucket	402	207	51%	245	150	61%
Portsmouth	203	152	75%	205	177	86%
Providence	1,566	770	49%	981	643	66%
Scituate	85	63	74%	86	74	86%
Smithfield	176	149	85%	161	131	81%
South Kingstown	227	176	78%	187	149	80%
Tiverton	120	79	66%	102	81	79%
Warwick	556	349	63%	428	323	75%
West Warwick	196	116	59%	143	88	62%
Westerly	177	109	62%	137	109	80%
Woonsocket	295	95	32%	148	94	64%
Beacon Charter High School	*51*	*29*	*57%*	*40*	*29*	*73%*
Blackstone Academy	*74*	*56*	*76%*	*61*	*45*	*74%*
Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy	*80*	*61*	*76%*	*66*	*49*	*74%*
Charette Charter School	*38*	*21*	*55%*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*
Paul Cuffee Charter School	*64*	*44*	*69%*	*43*	*34*	*79%*
The Greene School	*45*	*32*	*71%*	*24*	*19*	*79%*
Highlander Charter School	*48*	*28*	*58%*	*19*	*15*	*79%*
RI Nurses Institute Middle College	*44*	*39*	*89%*	*39*	*26*	*67%*
Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy	*32*	*14*	*44%*	*15*	*	*33%*
Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts	*25*	*15*	*60%*	*22*	*14*	*64%*
Village Green Virtual Public Charter School	*62*	*33*	*53%*	*37*	*25*	*68%*
William M. Davies Jr. Career & Technical High School	*175*	*92*	*53%*	*89*	*53*	*60%*
Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center	*220*	*113*	*51%*	*115*	*67*	*58%*
Four Core Cities	*2,413*	*1,141*	*47%*	*1,448*	*932*	*64%*
Remainder of State	*6,448*	*4,419*	*69%*	*5,159*	*4,120*	*80%*
Rhode Island	*9,819*	*6,137*	*63%*	*7,177*	*5,433*	*76%*

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

of students who graduated from high school in 2022, # of 2022 high school graduates who enrolled in college within six months, # of students who enrolled in college in 2021, and # of 2021 college enrollees who persisted (were enrolled for a third semester) are all from Rhode Island Department of Education. The # of 2021 college enrollees who persisted may include students enrolled directly after high school or afterwards. Percentages may not sum exactly due to rounding.

Four core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

Students from Little Compton attend high school in Portsmouth, and Jamestown students can choose to attend high school in Narragansett or North Kingstown.

DCYF and Rhode Island School for the Deaf are not reported because there are fewer than 10 students in these cohorts.

* Fewer than 10 students are in this category. Actual numbers are not shown to protect student confidentiality. These numbers are still counted in remainder of state and Rhode Island totals.

NA Schools did not have students graduating in this year.

References

[1,17,18] New England Secondary School Consortium. (2022). *Common Data Project: 2022 annual report, school year 2020-2021.* Retrieved April 6, 2023, from www.newenglandssc.org

[2] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2023). *Employment, wages, and projected change in employment by typical entry-level education.* Retrieved April 3, 2023, from www.bls.gov

[3] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021. Table B23006.

[4] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021. Table S2301.

[5] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021. Table B20004.

(continued on page 191)

Teens Not in School and Not Working

DEFINITION

Teens not in school and not working is the percentage of teens ages 16 to 19 who are not enrolled in school, not in the Armed Forces, and not employed. Teens who are recent high school graduates and who are unemployed and teens who have dropped out of high school and are unemployed are included.

SIGNIFICANCE

School and work help teens acquire the skills, knowledge, experience, and supports they need to become productive adults. Youth who drop out of school and do not become a part of the workforce are at risk of experiencing negative outcomes as they transition from adolescence to adulthood. Teens in low-income families, teens who drop out of school, young mothers, and youth with disabilities have high rates of disconnection from both school and work.[1,2]

Disconnected youth are more likely to live in intergenerational poverty, experience poor physical and mental health, have a disability, be involved with the child welfare system, experience difficulties finding and maintaining employment, earn low wages, and need public benefits to make ends meet. Young people disconnected from both work and school are disproportionately People of Color and face institutional racism as an entrenched barrier to success.[3,4,5]

Programs that offer work-based learning opportunities; provide meaningful, early, paid work experiences; and incorporate adult mentoring with youth development opportunities address the root causes of inequity and decrease the likelihood of youth disconnection.[6,7] There is a real cost to youth disconnection—the disconnection of youth ages 16 to 24 results in over $93 billion in lost earnings, tax revenues, and government spending annually and over $1 trillion over their lifetimes.[8,9]

Between 2017 and 2021, an estimated 2,728 (4.3%) youth ages 16 to 19 in Rhode Island were not in school and not working. Of the youth who were not in school and not working, 60% were male and 40% were female. Sixty-nine percent of these youth were high school graduates, and 31% had not graduated from high school.[10]

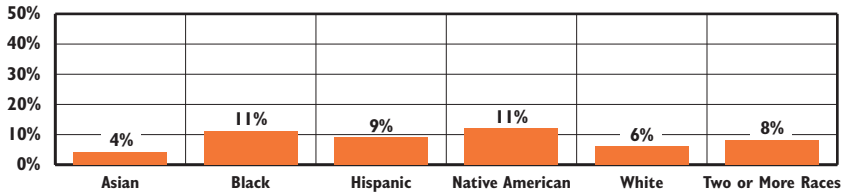
Teens Not in School and Not Working

	2021
RI	3%
US	7%
National Rank*	*1st*
New England Rank**	*1st*

**1st is best; 50th is worst*
***1st is best; 6th is worst*

Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT Data Center, datacenter.kidscount.org

Percentage of U.S. Youth Ages 16 to 19, Not in School and Not Working, by Race and Ethnicity, 2021



Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT Data Center, datacenter.kidscount.org

◆ **In the U.S., Youth of Color (with the exception of Asian youth) are more likely to be disconnected from school and work than white youth.[11] In 2021 among U.S. youth ages 16 to 19, 12% of Native American youth, 11% of Black youth, and 9% of Hispanic youth were not in school and not working, compared to 6% of white youth and 4% of Asian youth.[12]**

◆ **While Rhode Island has a low overall youth disconnection rate, there are striking racial and ethnic disparities. In 2021, 6% of Latino youth ages 16 to 19 in Rhode Island were not in school and not working, about triple the white rate of 2%.[13]**

◆ **Nationally, the disconnection of youth ages 16 to 24 declined in recent years, from the Great Recession high of 14.7% in 2010, to 10.7% in 2019. While youth unemployment declined in the latter half of 2020, after an earlier spike due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is estimated that youth disconnection rates may be considerably higher than in the years after the Great Recession.[14]**

Compulsory School Attendance

◆ **Rhode Island requires school attendance until age 18. Rhode Island students over age 16 may obtain a waiver from the attendance requirement if they have an alternative learning plan for obtaining a diploma. Plans can include independent study, private instruction, community service, or online coursework and must be developed in consultation with the student, school counselor, school principal, and at least one parent or guardian. Alternative learning plans must be approved by the district superintendent.[15]**

◆ **As of 2020, one state has compulsory attendance to age 19, 24 states (including Rhode Island) have compulsory attendance to age 18, eight states to age 17, and 17 states to age 16.[16]**

Connecting Youth to School and Work

◆ **Education has a positive impact on the likelihood of finding and maintaining employment. Between 2017 and 2021, the unemployment rate for Rhode Island adults ages 25 to 64 with a bachelor's degree or higher was 3.1%, compared with 6.5% for high school graduates and 10.4% for those with less than a high school diploma.[17]**

◆ **Successful strategies to prevent youth disconnection must be comprehensive and equitable and include high-quality child care and public schooling, a focus on healthy youth development, equity-based opportunities and recruitment, and multiple pathways to employment. Given the effects of the pandemic on young adults, national service opportunities should be explored as a strategy for increasing youth connection while meeting community needs.[18,19,20]**

◆ **Programs and schools that enable students to acquire work-based skills and/or college credits while working toward their high school degrees can improve high school graduation rates and better prepare students for college completion and careers.[21]**

Youth Work Experience

◆ **Work experience during the teen years improves youth mental health, well-being, and school attendance and increases productivity, employability, and wages into adulthood.[22]**

◆ **Summer work programs may increase college aspirations and preparation for future employment and help reduce youth violence and crime.[23]**

◆ **Expanding work-based learning opportunities can help more youth in Rhode Island successfully transition into college and careers. These types of programs can help to motivate students, teach them critical skills, connect them with mentors and positive adult role models, and help them to make informed decisions about their future. Many work-based learning programs (e.g., internships) allow youth to receive school credit and/or earn money while gaining important workplace experience.[24]**

References

[1,4,6] Burd-Sharps, S & Lewis, K. (2018). *More than a million reasons for hope: Youth disconnection in America today.* Brooklyn, NY: Measure of America.

[2,5] Fernandes-Alcantara, A. L. (2020). *Vulnerable youth: Background and policies.* Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service.

[3,19] Lewis, K. (2020). *A decade undone: Youth disconnection in the age of coronavirus.* Brooklyn, NY: Measure of America.

[7,8,18,22] *More than just pocket money: Why the surge in youth unemployment should concern us all.* (2020). Washington, DC: Urban Alliance.

[9] Opportunity Nation. (n.d.) *Youth disconnection.* Retrieved March 23, 2023, from www.opportunitynation.org

[10] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021. Table B14005.

[11,14] Lewis, K. (2021). *A decade undone: 2021 update.* Brooklyn, NY: Measure of America.

[12,13] The Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT Data Center, datacenter.kidscount.org

[15] Rhode Island General Law 16-19-1.

[16] Education Commission of the States. (2020). *50-state comparison: Free and compulsory school age requirements.*

[17] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021. Table S2301.

[20] Ross, M & Bateman, N. (2020). *National service can connect America's young people to opportunity and community—and promote work of real social value.*

[21] Jerald, C., Campbell, N. & Roth, E. (2017). *High schools of the future: How states can accelerate high school redesign.*

[23] Li, Y., Jackson-Spieker, K., Modestino, A.S., Kessler, J.B., & Heller, S.B. (2022). *The promise of summer youth employment programs: Lessons from randomized evaluations.*

[24] *Workforce Guidance.* (2018). Cranston, RI: Governor's Workforce Board.