

# 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 educational attainment and success have been well-documented throughout the country and continue to impact students well into their adult lives. Research has shown that there are three clusters of factors that impact 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).<sup>1</sup>

On October 1, 2009, there were 145,118 students enrolled in Rhode Island public schools in grades pre-K through 12, a decrease of 7% from 156,632 on October 1, 1999. Of the 145,118 Rhode Island public school students in October 2009, one-third (47,333) were attending schools in the six core cities (communities with 15% or greater child poverty rates according to the 2000 U.S. Census), almost two-thirds (93,690) were attending schools in the remaining districts, and the remaining 4,095 attended charter

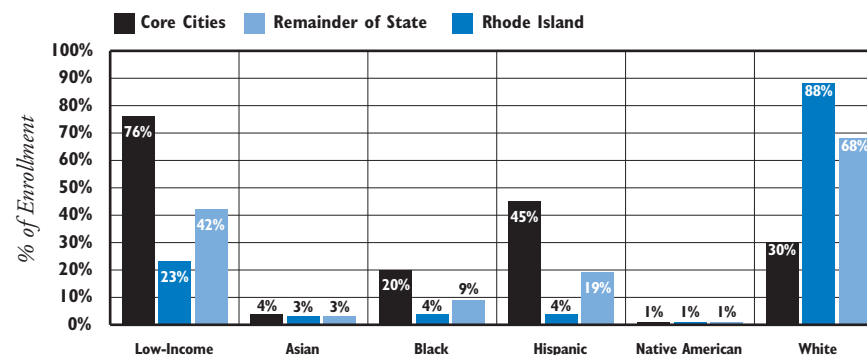
schools, state-operated schools or the Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program (UCAP). There were an additional 21,007 students in Rhode Island attending private and parochial schools and 1,135 students were home-schooled.<sup>2</sup>

In October 2009, there were 62,724 students in grades K-5, 33,351 in grades 6-8 and 46,934 in grades 9-12. There were 2,109 children ages 3-5 enrolled in preschool special education classrooms through Rhode Island public school districts.<sup>3</sup>

Rhode Island public school students are racially and ethnically diverse. In October 2009, 68% of Rhode Island public school students were non-Hispanic White, 19% were Hispanic, 9% were Black, 3% were Asian and 1% were Native American. Rhode Island students are also economically diverse. In October 2009, 42% of students in Rhode Island were low-income (students who qualified for the free or reduced-price lunch program).<sup>4</sup>

Rhode Island schools also are diverse in terms of students with disabilities and students who are English Language Learners. In the 2008-2009 school year, 17% (24,302) of Rhode Island public school students were receiving special education services and 5% (7,152) were receiving English as a second language (ESL) or bilingual education services.<sup>5</sup>

Rhode Island Public School Enrollment by Demographic Groups, 2009



Source: Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, October 1, 2009.

◆ The core city school districts have more minority and low-income students enrolled than other school districts in Rhode Island. Thirty percent of students enrolled in the core cities were White, compared with 88% in the remainder of the state, and 76% of students enrolled in the core cities were low-income compared with 23% in the remainder of the state.<sup>6</sup>

## Student Engagement in School

◆ Student engagement is an important factor in student success. Recent national research has shown that student engagement is strongly related to the extent of positive parent-child interaction, high family expectations for student achievement, involvement in school activities (such as sports, lessons or clubs) and students' school experiences (such as suspensions and participation in gifted classes). Female students of all ages were significantly more likely to be engaged in school than their male peers.<sup>7</sup>

◆ Parental education levels, urban-suburban district type and family income did not have a significant impact on student engagement in school. However, minority students were less likely to be engaged in school than their White peers, even after controlling for factors such as parental education and family income. This indicates that different strategies may be needed to engage minority students than White students.<sup>8</sup>

# Public School Enrollment and Demographics

Table 31. Rhode Island Public School Enrollment by Grade and Demographic Groups, October 1, 2009

SCHOOL DISTRICT	ENROLLMENT BY GRADE LEVEL*				ENROLLMENT BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS						TOTAL ENROLLMENT
	PRE-SCHOOL	ELEMEN-TARY	MIDDLE	HIGH	% LOW-INCOME	% ASIAN	% BLACK	% HISPANIC	% NATIVE AMERICAN	% WHITE	
Barrington	26	1,486	782	1,140	4%	4%	1%	1%	<1%	94%	3,434
Bristol Warren	70	1,505	822	1,140	31%	1%	3%	2%	<1%	93%	3,537
Burrillville	42	1,126	523	822	29%	1%	1%	2%	1%	95%	2,513
Central Falls	74	1,312	668	808	76%	<1%	15%	72%	<1%	12%	2,862
Chariho	45	1,483	827	1,219	20%	1%	2%	2%	2%	93%	3,574
Coventry	121	2,246	1,230	1,804	22%	1%	2%	2%	<1%	96%	5,401
Cranston	59	4,710	2,441	3,564	32%	8%	5%	10%	1%	76%	10,774
Cumberland	94	2,169	1,182	1,580	20%	2%	4%	6%	<1%	88%	5,025
East Greenwich	51	968	605	769	7%	7%	1%	3%	1%	88%	2,393
East Providence	65	2,437	1,294	1,944	41%	2%	14%	4%	1%	79%	5,740
Exeter-West Greenwich	23	781	475	627	13%	1%	1%	2%	1%	95%	1,906
Foster	0	257	0	0	6%	2%	0%	1%	<1%	97%	257
Foster-Glocester	0	0	552	831	14%	1%	1%	1%	<1%	97%	1,383
Glocester	11	585	0	0	18%	1%	1%	1%	0%	98%	596
Jamestown	36	293	152	6	5%	2%	1%	1%	<1%	95%	487
Johnston	45	1,389	820	946	37%	3%	4%	9%	<1%	83%	3,200
Lincoln	84	1,354	890	1,027	22%	3%	2%	4%	<1%	91%	3,355
Little Compton	0	212	105	0	3%	3%	0%	1%	0%	96%	317
Middletown	25	1,101	557	678	26%	5%	8%	6%	1%	81%	2,361
Narragansett	54	581	346	486	14%	1%	2%	2%	2%	93%	1,467
New Shoreham	0	60	40	26	12%	1%	0%	8%	0%	91%	126
Newport	35	951	481	639	57%	2%	27%	18%	2%	50%	2,106
North Kingstown	57	1,703	1,024	1,672	18%	1%	2%	2%	1%	94%	4,456
North Providence	54	1,365	789	1,081	27%	3%	8%	13%	<1%	76%	3,289
North Smithfield	45	769	445	570	13%	1%	1%	2%	0%	95%	1,829
Pawtucket	61	4,218	2,109	2,450	75%	2%	25%	29%	1%	42%	8,838
Portsmouth	52	1,127	651	1,029	11%	2%	3%	1%	<1%	93%	2,859
Providence	311	10,871	5,064	7,601	85%	6%	22%	60%	1%	12%	23,847
Scituate	11	673	432	540	12%	1%	<1%	1%	<1%	98%	1,656
Smithfield	46	1,015	634	813	14%	1%	2%	2%	<1%	95%	2,508
South Kingstown	96	1,470	876	1,139	16%	2%	3%	3%	4%	88%	3,581
Tiverton	20	839	451	656	21%	1%	1%	1%	<1%	97%	1,966
Warwick	179	4,367	2,541	3,420	29%	3%	3%	4%	<1%	90%	10,507
West Warwick	83	1,622	788	1,101	45%	2%	4%	10%	1%	82%	3,594
Westerly	77	1,323	755	1,038	31%	4%	3%	3%	2%	88%	3,193
Woonsocket	52	2,789	1,451	1,794	68%	7%	10%	25%	1%	58%	6,086
Charter Schools	0	1,546	393	392	61%	3%	16%	47%	1%	32%	2,331
State-Operated Schools	5	21	20	1,582	63%	1%	19%	35%	1%	43%	1,628
UCAP	0	0	136	0	86%	3%	24%	65%	2%	7%	136
Core Cities	616	21,763	10,561	14,393	76%	4%	20%	45%	1%	30%	47,333
Remainder of State	1,488	39,394	22,241	30,567	23%	3%	4%	4%	1%	88%	93,690
Rhode Island	2,109	62,724	33,351	46,934	42%	3%	9%	19%	1%	68%	145,118

## Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Public School Enrollment in preschool through grade 12, October 1, 2009.

\*Preschool includes students enrolled in half-day or full-day preschool through the public school district, primarily preschool special education classrooms.

\*Elementary includes kindergarten through 5th grade, middle includes 6th through 8th grades and high includes 9th through 12th grades.

State-operated schools include: The MET School, DCYF, Davies Career and Tech and the Rhode Island School for the Deaf. Charter Schools include: Segue Institute for Learning, Democracy Prep Blackstone Valley Academy, Highlander, Paul Cuffee Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, International Charter School, Blackstone Academy, The Compass School, Beacon Charter School, and The Learning Community.

UCAP is the Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program.

Core cities are Central Falls, Newport, Pawtucket, Providence, West Warwick and Woonsocket.

## References

- <sup>1</sup> Barton, P. E. & Coley, R. J. (2009). *Parsing the achievement gap II*. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.
- <sup>2,3,4,6</sup> Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, October 1, 2009 and October 1, 1999.
- <sup>5</sup> Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2008-2009 school year.
- <sup>7,8</sup> Dye, J. L. & Johnson, T. (2009). A child's day: 2006 (Selected indicators of child well-being). *Current Population Reports P70-118*. Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau.