

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

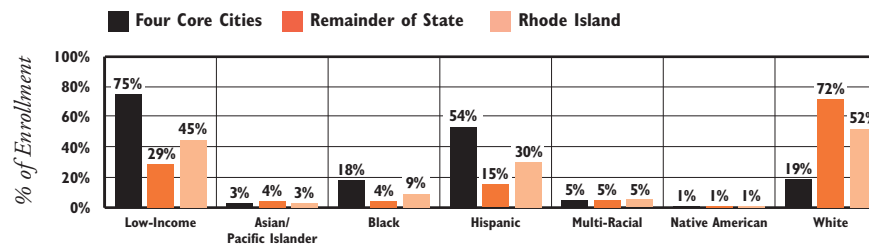
As of October 1, 2022, there were 58,966 students in grades K-5; 30,833 in grades 6-8; and 44,533 in grades 9-12. There were 3,120 children enrolled in preschool classrooms in Rhode Island public schools.⁵ During the 2022-2023 school year, 2,364 children were enrolled in RI Pre-K (294 of whom were also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



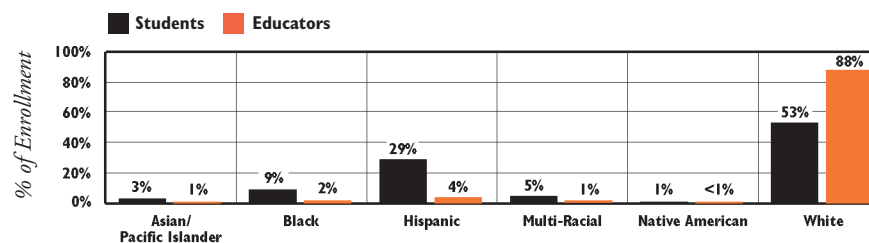
Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, October 1, 2022.

◆ 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

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

SCHOOL DISTRICT	ENROLLMENT BY GRADE LEVEL*				ENROLLMENT BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS							TOTAL ENROLLMENT
	PRE-SCHOOL	ELEMEN-TARY	MIDDLE	HIGH	% LOW-INCOME [^]	% ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER ⁺	% BLACK	% HISPANIC ^{**}	% MULTI-RACIAL	% NATIVE AMERICAN	% WHITE	
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)