

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, 2021, there were 138,566 students enrolled in Rhode Island public schools in preschool through grade 12, a decrease of 3% from 142,854 on October 1, 2011. Of these students, 28% (38,148) were attending schools in the four core cities (communities with the highest child poverty rates), 63% (87,927) were attending schools in the remaining districts, and 9% (12,491) attended charter schools, state-operated schools, or the Urban Collaborative Accelerated

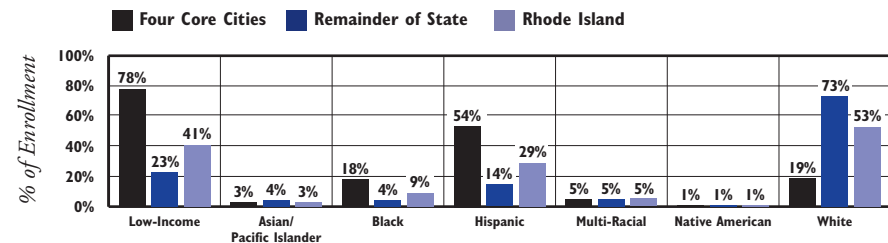
Project (UCAP).² There were an additional 16,270 Rhode Island students attending private and parochial schools (including out-of-state schools), and 3,174 students were home-schooled.³

As of October 1, 2021, there were 59,197 students in grades K-5; 31,478 in grades 6-8; and 45,057 in grades 9-12. There were 2,834 children receiving preschool services in Rhode Island public schools.⁴ During the 2021-2022 school year, 2,300 children were enrolled in RI Pre-K in 34 public school classrooms and 93 community-based center classrooms.⁵

In October 2021, 53% 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 October 2021, 41% of public school students in Rhode Island were low-income (students who were eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program).⁶

Rhode Island schools are also diverse in terms of students with disabilities and students who are Multilingual Learners/English Learners. As of October 1, 2021, 16% of Rhode Island public school students were receiving special education services and 11% were Multilingual Learners/English Learners.⁷

Rhode Island Public School Enrollment by Low-Income Status, Race and Ethnicity, October 1, 2021

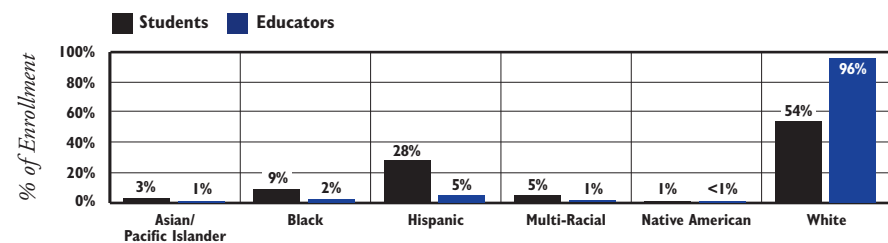


Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, October 1, 2021.

◆ On October 1, 2021, 81% of students enrolled in the four core cities were Students of Color, compared with 27% in the remainder of state, and 78% of students enrolled in the four core cities were low-income, compared with 23% in the remainder of the state.⁸

Rhode Island Educator Demographics

Rhode Island Public School Student Enrollment and Educator Demographics by Race and Ethnicity, October 1, 2020



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, State Report Card, 2020-2021 school year. Hispanic educators may be included in any race category. Educator percentages based on the total number of educators who 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.⁹

◆ In October 2020, 96% (12,281) of Rhode Island public school educators identified as white, 5% (514) as Hispanic, 2% (292) as Black, 1% (134) as Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% (116) as Multi-Racial, and less than 1% (30) as Native American.¹⁰

Public School Enrollment and Demographics

Table 42. Rhode Island Public School Enrollment by Grade and Demographic Groups, October 1, 2021

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	43	1,400	804	1,130	4%	7%	2%	5%	6%	<1%	80%	3,377	
Bristol Warren	35	1,266	690	950	22%	1%	2%	7%	5%	<1%	84%	2,941	
Burrillville	50	891	507	680	27%	1%	1%	6%	3%	<1%	90%	2,128	
Central Falls	186	1,079	606	830	82%	1%	18%	52%	3%	9%	16%	2,701	
Chariho	86	1,288	692	1,134	17%	1%	1%	4%	5%	1%	89%	3,200	
Coventry	141	1,834	987	1,430	16%	2%	2%	7%	3%	<1%	87%	4,392	
Cranston	134	4,284	2,338	3,502	33%	9%	5%	33%	6%	1%	47%	10,258	
Cumberland	114	2,057	1,054	1,499	13%	5%	3%	14%	4%	<1%	74%	4,724	
East Greenwich	58	1,097	609	788	5%	8%	1%	7%	5%	<1%	80%	2,552	
East Providence	209	2,111	1,128	1,605	28%	2%	11%	14%	10%	1%	63%	5,053	
Exeter-West Greenwich	74	662	363	473	12%	2%	2%	4%	2%	<1%	91%	1,572	
Foster	12	209	0	0	26%	0%	<1%	4%	1%	0%	95%	221	
Foster-Glocester	0	0	444	952	11%	1%	1%	4%	3%	<1%	92%	1,396	
Glocester	5	532	0	0	9%	0%	<1%	3%	3%	0%	93%	537	
Jamestown	19	276	146	3	4%	1%	<1%	<1%	5%	<1%	93%	444	
Johnston	117	1,394	783	773	39%	3%	6%	26%	1%	<1%	63%	3,067	
Lincoln	85	1,395	801	971	24%	4%	6%	9%	3%	<1%	78%	3,252	
Little Compton	8	129	71	1	10%	0%	<1%	<1%	3%	0%	96%	209	
Middletown	18	931	467	657	26%	5%	6%	15%	8%	1%	65%	2,073	
Narragansett	76	384	242	504	11%	2%	1%	4%	6%	1%	87%	1,206	
New Shoreham	0	66	29	34	4%	0%	1%	21%	2%	0%	77%	129	
Newport	31	855	432	657	64%	2%	11%	36%	13%	2%	35%	1,975	
North Kingstown	100	1,494	837	1,483	15%	2%	2%	7%	5%	<1%	83%	3,914	
North Providence	76	1,440	814	1,134	38%	4%	14%	25%	6%	<1%	51%	3,464	
North Smithfield	30	643	395	546	11%	1%	1%	10%	4%	0%	83%	1,614	
Pawtucket	173	3,659	2,006	2,289	70%	1%	30%	30%	7%	1%	32%	8,127	
Portsmouth	24	898	487	838	9%	2%	2%	6%	4%	<1%	85%	2,247	
Providence	395	9,173	5,059	7,029	82%	4%	15%	68%	4%	1%	8%	21,656	
Scituate	14	536	257	389	10%	1%	1%	3%	1%	0%	94%	1,196	
Smithfield	50	1,009	541	792	7%	1%	1%	8%	4%	<1%	85%	2,392	
South Kingstown	38	1,070	625	875	13%	2%	2%	6%	6%	2%	82%	2,608	
Tiverton	27	753	378	520	17%	2%	2%	4%	3%	<1%	88%	1,678	
Warwick	172	3,602	1,897	2,497	27%	4%	3%	14%	6%	<1%	73%	8,168	
West Warwick	59	1,623	819	1,061	46%	2%	5%	18%	5%	1%	68%	3,562	
Westerly	73	969	570	766	30%	2%	1%	9%	7%	1%	79%	2,738	
Woonsocket	67	2,592	1,280	1,725	73%	5%	11%	35%	6%	1%	42%	5,664	
Charter Schools	24	5,570	2,192	2,751	50%	2%	17%	59%	3%	1%	18%	10,537	
State-Operated Schools	11	26	20	1,789	56%	2%	18%	50%	3%	<1%	27%	1,846	
UCAP	0	0	108	0	35%	1%	16%	68%	3%	0%	13%	108	
Four Core Cities	821	16,503	8,951	11,873	78%	3%	18%	54%	5%	1%	19%	38,148	
Remainder of State	1,978	37,098	20,207	28,644	23%	4%	4%	14%	5%	1%	73%	87,927	
Rhode Island	2,834	59,197	31,478	45,057	41%	3%	9%	29%	5%	1%	53%	138,566	

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education, Public School Enrollment in preschool through grade 12 as of October 1, 2021.

*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, 2021, the RI Pre-K program served XX children in XX classrooms, XX% operated by Head Start agencies, XX% operated by child care programs, and XX% 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, 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, and The Village Green Virtual Public Charter School.

UCAP is the Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program.

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

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

(Continued with references on page 188)