

Education

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 that serves as a foundation for all future development and learning. Early and effective intervention for vulnerable young children yields improved long-term outcomes.¹

In 1986, Congress established Early Intervention (EI) services for infants and toddlers under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*. Part C of *IDEA* requires states to identify and provide appropriate EI services to children under age three who are developmentally delayed or have a diagnosed condition that is associated with a developmental delay. States may also choose to serve children who are at risk of experiencing a delay if early intervention services are not provided.²

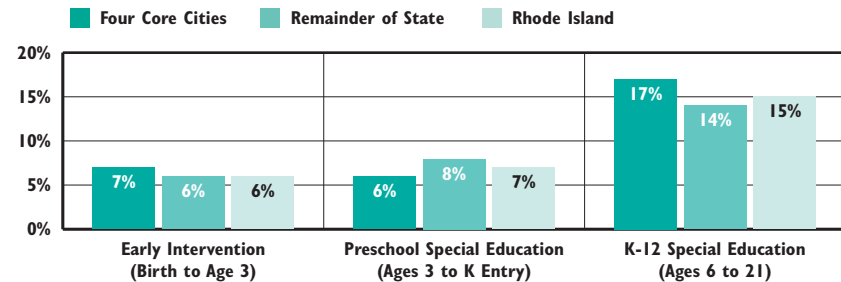
In Rhode Island, children are eligible for EI if they have a diagnosed medical disorder bearing relatively well-known expectancy for developmental delay (single established condition) or if they have a developmental delay in one or more areas of development (cognitive,

physical, communication, social-emotional, and adaptive). Current eligibility criteria allow children with significant circumstances (e.g., significant trauma/losses, history of abuse/neglect, family lacking basic resources, parental substance abuse, significant parental health/mental health issues, and intellectual disability of caretaker, among others) to qualify through informed clinical opinion if the circumstances impact child or family functioning.³

Approximately 15% of U.S. children ages three to 17 have developmental disabilities, with higher prevalence among children from low-income families and among boys. The percentage of children recognized with developmental disabilities has been increasing in recent years due to increased survival rates among preterm infants and children with birth defects/genetic disorders and improved awareness and diagnosis of many conditions.⁴

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that physicians use a standardized developmental screening tool during well-child visits to improve detection of developmental delays.⁵ Early childhood developmental screenings are required and covered for all children with RIte Care coverage through the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) mandate.⁶

Percentage of Children Receiving Special Education Services by Age, Rhode Island, June 2015



Source: Rhode Island KIDS COUNT calculations using Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services, June 30, 2015 Early Intervention enrollment, Census 2010, Summary File 1, Rhode Island Department of Education, June 30, 2015 Special Education Census, population of children ages 3-5 from KIDS NET, and Resident Average Daily Membership.

◆ As of June 30, 2015, there were 2,195 infants and toddlers receiving Early Intervention (EI) services, 6% of the population under age three. Nineteen percent of infants and toddlers receiving EI services were under age one, 31% were age one, and 50% were age two. Eighty-two percent were eligible under the developmental delay category and 18% were eligible under the single established condition category.⁷

◆ In Calendar Year 2015 in Rhode Island, 4,359 children received EI services, up from 4,339 in 2014.^{8,9} In 2015, 1,041 children were discharged from EI upon reaching age three. Of these, 64% were found eligible and 21% were found not eligible for preschool special education. Ten percent were in the process of eligibility determination and 5% left the program for other reasons.¹⁰

◆ Because maltreated infants and toddlers are six times more likely to have a developmental delay, federal legislation requires states to refer children under age three who have been a victim of child abuse or neglect to EI for an eligibility assessment.^{11,12} In 2015 in Rhode Island, there were 843 infants and toddlers under age three who were maltreated. Of these, 25% were referred to EI for an eligibility assessment, 34% were referred to First Connections for screening, 4% were already enrolled in EI, and 37% were not referred. Of the 445 DCYF-involved children referred to EI in 2015, 57% were found eligible, 13% were found not eligible, 20% were in the determination process, and 10% were not evaluated.^{13,14}

Children Enrolled in Early Intervention

Table 31. Infants and Toddlers Enrolled in Early Intervention (EI) by Eligibility Type, Rhode Island, 2015

CITY/TOWN	CALENDAR YEAR 2015 ENROLLMENT			JUNE 30, 2015 ENROLLMENT BY AGE OF CHILD				
	# OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 3	# OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN EI	% OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 3 ENROLLED IN EI	UNDER AGE 1	AGE 1	AGE 2	# OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 3 ENROLLED IN EI	% OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 3 ENROLLED IN EI
Barrington	366	36	10%	4	4	14	22	6%
Bristol	507	77	15%	6	16	18	40	8%
Burrillville	460	48	10%	4	12	15	31	7%
Central Falls	1,028	157	15%	20	19	57	96	9%
Charlestown	186	22	12%	2	2	5	9	5%
Coventry	940	119	13%	12	13	33	58	6%
Cranston	2,318	269	12%	24	38	67	129	6%
Cumberland	970	114	12%	8	26	30	64	7%
East Greenwich	299	52	17%	3	14	10	27	9%
East Providence	1,560	181	12%	23	37	42	102	7%
Exeter	166	23	14%	2	0	7	9	5%
Foster	113	17	15%	2	3	3	8	7%
Glocester	247	22	9%	0	3	9	12	5%
Hopkinton	258	28	11%	5	1	6	12	5%
Jamestown	85	13	15%	1	0	3	4	5%
Johnston	816	90	11%	5	11	20	36	4%
Lincoln	587	89	15%	6	17	19	42	7%
Little Compton	68	9	13%	2	2	1	5	7%
Middletown	502	80	16%	6	12	19	37	7%
Narragansett	271	24	9%	3	3	2	8	3%
New Shoreham	21	1	5%	0	0	0	0	0%
Newport	820	100	12%	15	14	21	50	6%
North Kingstown	728	118	16%	18	23	31	72	10%
North Providence	851	108	13%	13	12	33	58	7%
North Smithfield	290	52	18%	2	9	20	31	11%
Pawtucket	2,959	347	12%	25	58	85	168	6%
Portsmouth	429	45	10%	5	8	8	21	5%
Providence	7,609	1,074	14%	113	172	266	551	7%
Richmond	235	13	6%	1	1	3	5	2%
Scituate	193	35	18%	7	7	6	20	10%
Smithfield	402	46	11%	3	7	12	22	5%
South Kingstown	640	65	10%	5	7	22	34	5%
Tiverton	398	55	14%	7	8	19	34	9%
Warren	296	40	14%	4	9	10	23	8%
Warwick	2,322	315	14%	26	44	72	142	6%
West Greenwich	178	22	12%	2	0	4	6	3%
West Warwick	1,044	133	13%	11	13	21	45	4%
Westerly	726	63	9%	5	8	16	29	4%
Woonsocket	1,900	257	14%	24	45	64	133	7%
Four Core Cities	13,496	1,835	14%	182	294	472	948	7%
Remainder of State	20,292	2,524	12%	242	384	621	1,247	6%
Rhode Island	33,788	4,359	13%	424	678	1,093	2,195	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, Calendar Year 2015 and June 30, 2015 enrollment (point-in-time).

The denominator is the number of children under age three, according to Census 2010, Summary File 1.

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

References

- ^{1,2,11} Jones, L. (2009). *Early experiences matter: A guide to improved policies for infants and toddlers*. Washington, DC: Zero to Three.
- ³ *Rhode Island Early Intervention policies and procedures: Eligibility determination*. (2013). Cranston, RI: Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services.
- ⁴ Boyle, C. A., et al. (2011). Trends in the prevalence of developmental disabilities in U.S. children, 1997-2008. *Pediatrics*, 127(6), 1034-1042.
- ⁵ Council on Children with Disabilities, Section on Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics, Bright Futures Steering Committee and Medical Home Initiatives for Children with Special Needs Project Advisory Committee. (2006). Identifying infants and young children with developmental disorders in the medical home: An algorithm for developmental surveillance and screening. *Pediatrics*, 118(1), 405-420.
- ⁶ *Birth to 5: Watch me thrive! CMS efforts to ensure children receive developmental and behavioral screening*. (n.d.). Retrieved March 15, 2016, from www.medicaid.gov
- ^{7,8,10,14} Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services, 2015.
- ⁹ Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services, 2014.
- ¹² Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2013). *Addressing the needs of young children in child welfare: Part C- Early Intervention services*. Washington, DC: Children's Bureau.
- ¹³ Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families, 2015. DCYF also refers siblings and other potentially eligible non-victims to EI for evaluation, but these children are not included in these figures.

Children Enrolled in Early Head Start

DEFINITION

Children enrolled in Early Head Start is the number and percentage of children enrolled in a Rhode Island Early Head Start program.

SIGNIFICANCE

Established in 1994, Early Head Start is a comprehensive early childhood program serving low-income children birth to age three, pregnant women, and their families. Early Head Start programs serve children in families with incomes below the federal poverty level (\$20,160 for a family of three in 2016).^{1,2,3} 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, medical and dental referrals, and fostering the development of healthy family relationships.⁴

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.⁵ 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 to support child development and twice monthly group meetings. Children in center-based

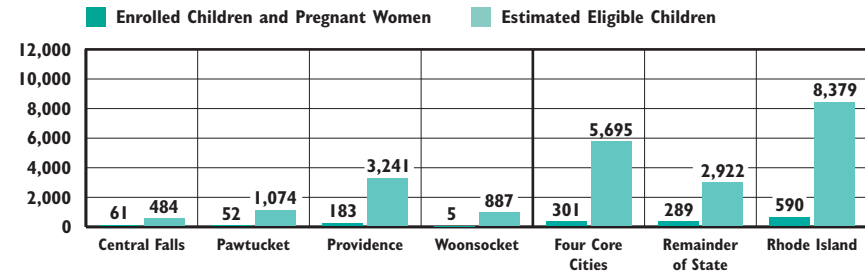
models attend a center-based early care and education program and families receive at least two home visits per year. Some provide a combination of home-based and center-based services.⁶

In Rhode Island in 2015, there were 629 federally-funded Early Head Start slots, of which 58% were home-based and 42% were center-based.⁷ An Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grant awarded in 2015 created 100 new center-based Early Head Start slots in Rhode Island. The federal grant incentivizes partnerships between Early Head Start programs and child care programs to increase the number of very low-income infants and toddlers enrolled.^{8,9}

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 and more opportunities for language and learning to their children, and are more likely to pursue education and job-training activities and to be employed.^{10,11} Children who enroll in preschool after Early Head Start have better outcomes in early reading skills.¹²

As of October 2015, 582 infants and toddlers and eight pregnant women were receiving Early Head Start services in Rhode Island and there were 257 eligible pregnant women or children on the waiting list.¹³

Access to Early Head Start for Low-Income Children and Pregnant Women, Rhode Island, 2015



Source: Rhode Island Early Head Start program enrollment data compiled by Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, October 2015. Estimated eligible children is the number of children under age three according to Census 2010 multiplied by the % of children under age six living in families with incomes below the federal poverty line (FPL) according to the Population Reference Bureau's analysis of 2010-2014 American Community Survey data.

- ◆ In 2015 in Rhode Island, federal funding enabled 590 children and pregnant women to participate in Early Head Start, 7% of the estimated eligible population. There were 301 children and pregnant women from the four core cities (5% of the estimated income-eligible population) and 289 children and pregnant women from the remainder of the state (10% of the estimated income-eligible population). The estimated percentage of the eligible population enrolled in Early Head Start for each core city is: Central Falls – 13%, Pawtucket – 5%, Providence – 6%, and Woonsocket – 1%.^{14,15}
- ◆ As of October 2015, 1% of Early Head Start clients were pregnant women, 24% were infants under age one, 38% were age one, 35% were age two, and 2% were age three.¹⁶
- ◆ Rhode Island Head Start programs serve significant numbers of children with high needs including: 67 infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities (12% of all children enrolled), 24 children who were in foster care, and 31 children who were homeless.¹⁷ Early Head Start programs are required to prioritize enrollment for children with special needs and to screen all enrolled children to identify developmental delays and disabilities.¹⁸
- ◆ As of October 2015, 31% of the children enrolled in Early Head Start were also participating in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP).¹⁹ Center-based Early Head Start programs are open six hours per day and do not cover the entire day.²⁰ CCAP is used to provide additional coverage for working parents.

Children Enrolled in Early Head Start

Table 32. Children Ages Birth to Three and Pregnant Women Enrolled in Early Head Start, Rhode Island, 2015

CITY/TOWN	ALL CHILDREN <AGE 3	% CHILDREN <AGE 6 IN POVERTY	ESTIMATED ELIGIBLE POPULATION <AGE 3 IN POVERTY	# OF PREGNANT WOMEN ENROLLED IN EARLY HEAD START	# OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN EARLY HEAD START	ESTIMATED % CHILDREN <AGE 3 ENROLLED IN EARLY HEAD START	ESTIMATED % ELIGIBLE POPULATION ENROLLED IN EARLY HEAD START
Barrington	366	1.3%	5	0	0	0%	0%
Bristol	507	5.6%	28	0	3	1%	11%
Burrillville	460	12.6%*	58	1	9	2%	17%
Central Falls	1,028	47.1%**	484	2	59	6%	13%
Charlestown	186	32.3%***	60	0	0	0%	0%
Coventry	940	25.9%**	243	0	14	1%	6%
Cranston	2,318	16.4%*	380	0	24	1%	6%
Cumberland	970	6.8%*	66	0	0	0%	0%
East Greenwich	299	13.4%**	40	0	1	0%	3%
East Providence	1,560	23.6%*	368	0	25	2%	7%
Exeter	166	NA	NA	0	0	0%	NA
Foster	113	13.8%***	16	0	1	1%	6%
Glocester	247	9.6%**	24	0	0	0%	0%
Hopkinton	258	14.5%***	37	0	0	0%	0%
Jamestown	85	7.9%***	7	0	0	0%	0%
Johnston	816	20.4%*	166	0	16	2%	10%
Lincoln	587	13.8%*	81	0	0	0%	0%
Little Compton	68	17.8%***	12	0	1	1%	8%
Middletown	502	13.3%*	67	0	10	2%	15%
Narragansett	271	9.7%*	26	0	0	0%	0%
New Shoreham	21	10.0%***	2	0	0	0%	0%
Newport	820	13.3%*	109	0	54	7%	50%
North Kingstown	728	20.0%**	146	0	0	0%	0%
North Providence	851	21.1%**	180	0	20	2%	11%
North Smithfield	290	3.6%*	10	0	4	1%	40%
Pawtucket	2,959	36.3%*	1,074	0	52	2%	5%
Portsmouth	429	4.0%*	17	0	0	0%	0%
Providence	7,609	42.6%*	3,241	4	179	2%	6%
Richmond	235	15.7%***	37	0	0	0%	0%
Scituate	193	9.4%**	18	0	0	0%	0%
Smithfield	402	NA	NA	0	4	1%	NA
South Kingstown	640	13.1%**	84	0	0	0%	0%
Tiverton	398	11.1%*	44	0	1	0%	2%
Warren	296	12.8%**	38	0	5	2%	13%
Warwick	2,322	8.7%	202	1	50	2%	25%
West Greenwich	178	NA	NA	0	2	1%	NA
West Warwick	1,044	24.1%**	252	0	43	4%	17%
Westerly	726	14.5%**	105	0	0	0%	0%
Woonsocket	1,900	46.7%*	887	0	5	0%	1%
Four Core Cities	13,496	42.2%	5,695	6	295	2%	5%
Remainder of State	20,292	14.4%	2,922	2	287	1%	10%
Rhode Island	33,788	24.8%	8,379	8	582	2%	7%

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Early Head Start Programs, children enrolled as of October 2015. Children enrolled are listed by residence of child, not location of the Head Start program.

The estimated number of children under age three in each community is from Census 2010, Summary File 1. Estimated eligible children is the number of children ages three and four according to Census 2010 multiplied by the % of children under age six living in families with incomes below the federal poverty line (FPL) according to the Population Reference Bureau's (PRB) analysis of 2010-2014 American Community Survey data. Estimated eligible children for the four core cities, remainder of state, and Rhode Island is calculated using PRB estimates for those groupings and is not a sum of estimates by community.

The American Community Survey is a sample survey, and therefore the number and percentage of children living in poverty are estimates. The reliability of these estimates varies by community.

* The Margin of Error around the percentage is greater than 5 but less than 10 percentage points.

** The Margin of Error around the percentage is greater than 10 but less than 15 percentage points.

*** The Margin of Error around the percentage is greater than or equal to 15 percentage points.

NA: American Community Survey estimate of % of children under age six in poverty is not available for this community.

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

References

^{1,6,10} Raikes, H. H., Chazan-Cohen, R., Love, J. M., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2010). Early Head Start impacts at age 3 and a description of the age 5 follow-up study. In A. J. Reynolds, A. J. Rolnick, M. M. Englund & J. A. Temple (Eds.), *Childhood programs and practices in the first decade of life*. (pp.99-118). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

² *Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007*, § 42 U.S.C. 9801, § 645 (2007).

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2016). Annual update of the HHS poverty guidelines. *Federal Register*, 81(15), 4036-4037.

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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 Children, Youth and Families 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

Research indicates that high-quality child care and early learning programs for infants, toddlers and preschoolers can have long-lasting positive effects on how children learn and develop.¹

Early and on-going enrollment in child care and early learning programs is common in the United States. Across the U.S., 42% of infants under the age of one and 73% of preschoolers between ages three and five regularly participate in a non-parental early care and education arrangement. Participation in early care and education varies by family income, with 63% of children ages birth to five living in households with incomes above poverty enrolled in child care or early learning programs, compared with 49% of those below poverty. Enrollment in center-based programs increases as children get older, with 28% of infants under age one participating in a center-based program while 78% of preschoolers

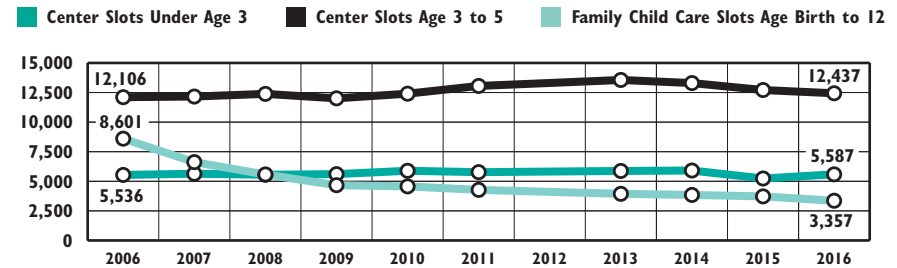
(children ages three to five) are enrolled in a center. Children with disabilities can have difficulty accessing child care and early learning programs despite a federal law requiring that community-based child care and preschool settings include children with disabilities.²

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 2010 and 2014, 72% of Rhode Island children under age six had all parents in the workforce, higher than the U.S. rate of 65%.⁴

The availability of high-quality child care and early learning programs depends on the stability of a skilled teaching workforce. However, there are systemic workforce challenges including low compensation, inadequate professional development opportunities, and high turnover.⁵ In addition, high-quality early care and education programs require well-designed, safe buildings that meet the needs of young children.⁶

Rhode Island's \$50 million Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, awarded in December 2011, is designed to increase the quality of early learning programs and strengthen the workforce statewide, with a focus on programs and staff serving low-income and disadvantaged children.⁷

Early Learning Program Capacity, Rhode Island, 2006-2016



Source: Options for Working Parents, slots in licensed child care centers and certified family child care homes, 2006. Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families, slots in licensed child care centers and family child care homes, 2007-2016. 2016 data are from the RI Early Care and Education Data System (ECEDS). Starting with the 2013 Factbook, data are collected as of January, instead of December.

◆ In January 2016, there were 351 more slots for infants and toddlers (children under age three) in licensed centers than in 2015, making up some of the loss in the previous year. There were 274 fewer slots for preschoolers (children ages three to five) in centers in 2016 than in 2015, continuing the downward trend since the 2013 peak.⁸

◆ In January 2016, there were 366 fewer slots in licensed family child care homes than in the previous year. The number of family child care slots is down 61% from a peak high of 8,601 in 2006 to 3,357 in 2016.⁹

◆ The majority of licensed child care programs in Rhode Island accept children participating in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). Seventy-four percent of licensed centers and 85% of licensed family child care homes accept CCAP certificates, which cover all or part of the cost of child care for low-income working families.¹⁰

◆ In addition to licensed programs operated by community-based agencies, businesses, and family child care providers, there are 53 traditional public schools in Rhode Island, one public charter school (Highlander), and one state-operated school (the RI School for the Deaf) that offer early learning programs for preschoolers.¹¹

Quality Child Care for Infants and Toddlers

◆ Infants and toddlers benefit from low child-to-provider ratios and small group sizes where they can form nurturing, responsive, and continuous relationships with adults.¹²

Licensed Capacity of Early Learning Programs

Table 33.

Capacity of Licensed Early Learning Programs, Rhode Island, January 2016

CITY/TOWN	# OF LICENSED CENTERS	# OF CENTER SLOTS FOR CHILDREN <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	8	129	296	5	34	459
Bristol	5	59	108	4	24	191
Burrillville	3	19	87	2	14	120
Central Falls	4	78	187	20	127	392
Charlestown	4	14	72	1	6	92
Coventry	7	156	179	2	16	351
Cranston	31	454	1,171	47	324	1,949
Cumberland	7	124	315	8	67	506
East Greenwich	12	344	652	0	0	996
East Providence	16	144	536	6	40	720
Exeter	2	34	38	1	8	80
Foster	1	17	25	0	0	42
Glocester	3	55	82	0	0	137
Hopkinton	2	0	44	3	24	68
Jamestown	1	31	33	1	8	72
Johnston	19	374	447	10	65	886
Lincoln	5	102	160	3	20	282
Little Compton	1	0	18	0	0	18
Middletown	9	143	389	3	18	550
Narragansett	2	12	20	0	0	32
New Shoreham	1	13	26	0	0	39
Newport	4	63	195	1	8	266
North Kingstown	7	107	307	3	28	442
North Providence	10	146	194	9	63	403
North Smithfield	1	67	91	4	36	194
Pawtucket	19	330	818	37	237	1,385
Portsmouth	5	93	134	1	6	233
Providence	48	762	1,944	291	1,917	4,587
Richmond	0	0	0	4	35	35
Scituate	1	11	36	5	40	87
Smithfield	9	291	563	0	0	854
South Kingstown	12	185	371	5	38	564
Tiverton	3	24	113	1	6	143
Warren	5	74	224	1	8	306
Warwick	27	740	1,360	10	75	2,175
West Greenwich	2	6	48	0	0	54
West Warwick	5	168	316	2	14	498
Westerly	7	124	329	1	5	458
Woonsocket	9	94	509	6	46	649
Four Core Cities	80	1,264	3,458	354	2,327	7,013
Remainder of State	237	4,323	8,979	143	1,030	14,302
Rhode Island	317	5,587	12,437	497	3,357	21,315

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families, number of licensed child care center slots and programs for children under age six and number of licensed family child care homes and slots, from RI Early Care and Education Data System (ECEDS), January 2016. Only full-day and morning slots are counted for center-based care.

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

*Family child care slots are for children ages birth to 12 years old.

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

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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 child care center, family child care home, or by a relative or an in-home caregiver.

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, working families access child care.¹

In Rhode Island, the average cost of full-time child care for an infant in a child care center consumes 49% of the median single-parent income and is more than the average tuition and fees at public colleges. The average annual cost of child care for two children (an infant and a preschooler) in Rhode Island is more than twice the state's median annual rent and is slightly higher than the average annualized mortgage.² Using the federal affordability guideline that families should spend no more than 10% of their gross income on child care, a Rhode Island family would need to earn

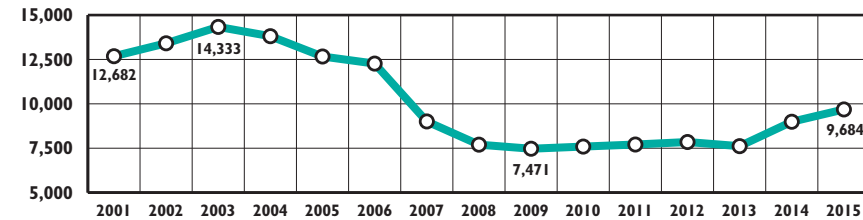
approximately \$101,000 annually to afford the average yearly cost for a three-year-old at a licensed center (\$10,172).^{3,4}

Child care subsidies increase the likelihood that low-income parents are able to work, are employed full-time, and are able to maintain employment over longer periods of time. Parental employment improves the economic security of a family and is associated with improved social and emotional well-being of children.⁵

Child care subsidies increase the likelihood that families use licensed child care, and research has shown that licensed child care is generally higher quality than unlicensed care.⁶ Subsidies can also help low-income families access higher-quality child care programs that support children's development and learning. Low provider reimbursement rates often restrict access to high-quality child care.⁷

As of January 2016, 10% of children participating in the Rhode Island Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) ages birth through 12 were enrolled in a program with a high-quality BrightStars rating (four or five stars). Preschool-age children were more likely to be enrolled in a high-quality program than infants and toddlers.⁸ The majority of states in the U.S. use a tiered provider reimbursement rate system with higher payments going to higher quality child care programs in order to incentivize and support quality.⁹

Child Care Subsidies, Rhode Island, 2001-2015



Source: Rhode Island Department of Human Services, December 2001–December 2015.

◆ In December 2015, there were 9,684 child care subsidies in Rhode Island, an increase of 8% from 8,991 in December 2014, but down 32% from the 2003 peak.¹⁰ In December 2015 in Rhode Island, 78% of child care subsidies were for care in a licensed child care center, 21% were for care by a licensed family child care home or group family child care home, and 1% were for care by a license-exempt relative, friend, or neighbor.¹¹

◆ As of 2015, families with incomes under 180% FPL (\$36,162 for a family of three) who work a minimum of 20 hours per week are eligible for CCAP. Families may continue to participate until their income reaches 225% FPL (\$45,203 for a family of three) as part of a pilot set to expire on September 30, 2016 unless it is extended or made permanent. Families in Rhode Island Works and some other low-income families may also be eligible for CCAP to support education and employment activities.¹²

◆ In December 2015, 84% of all child care subsidies in Rhode Island were used by low-income working families not receiving cash assistance, 8% by families in the Rhode Island Works Program, and 8% for children in the care of the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families.¹³

Average Annual Cost for Full-Time Child Care, Rhode Island, 2015

PROGRAM TYPE	COST PER CHILD
Child Care Center (infant care)	\$12,091
Child Care Center (preschool care)	\$10,172
Family Child Care Home (preschool care)	\$8,655
School-Age Center-Based Program (child age 6-12)	\$7,775

Source: Rhode Island KIDS COUNT analysis of average weekly rates from Bodah, M. M. (2015). *Statewide survey of childcare rates in Rhode Island*. Kingston, RI: University of Rhode Island.

Children Receiving Child Care Subsidies

Table 34.

Child Care Subsidies, Rhode Island, December 2015

CITY/TOWN	SUBSIDY USE BY CHILD RESIDENCE			SUBSIDY USE BY PROGRAM LOCATION			
	ENROLLED IN RI WORKS	NOT ENROLLED IN RI WORKS	TOTAL CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES	UNDER AGE 3	AGES 3-5	AGES 6-12	TOTAL CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES
Barrington	4	15	19	10	11	13	34
Bristol	1	50	51	15	13	14	42
Burrillville	3	43	46	2	7	26	35
Central Falls	30	392	422	98	142	164	404
Charlestown	0	17	17	5	5	2	12
Coventry	9	129	138	41	54	64	159
Cranston	58	503	561	158	226	172	556
Cumberland	8	101	109	26	43	32	101
East Greenwich	4	13	17	20	30	13	63
East Providence	17	304	321	73	142	167	382
Exeter	0	23	23	5	6	6	17
Foster	2	14	16	5	2	0	7
Glocester	1	16	17	16	17	0	33
Hopkinton	0	16	16	2	1	2	5
Jamestown	0	3	3	3	6	1	10
Johnston	9	143	152	114	119	78	311
Lincoln	5	104	109	33	59	88	180
Little Compton	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Middletown	6	69	75	19	42	15	76
Narragansett	0	34	34	0	3	9	12
New Shoreham	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newport	52	219	271	66	109	101	276
North Kingstown	2	141	143	70	64	48	182
North Providence	8	196	204	41	66	84	191
North Smithfield	2	34	36	18	28	13	59
Pawtucket	48	1,057	1,105	249	390	478	1,117
Portsmouth	1	22	23	12	16	5	33
Providence	405	3,013	3,418	794	1,142	1,457	3,393
Richmond	2	11	13	16	19	19	54
Scituate	0	13	13	2	3	3	8
Smithfield	1	43	44	1	2	0	3
South Kingstown	1	48	49	45	70	35	150
Tiverton	3	27	30	4	11	5	20
Warren	1	48	49	14	30	26	70
Warwick	35	368	403	191	252	210	653
West Greenwich	1	9	10	4	8	1	13
West Warwick	19	275	294	76	87	87	250
Westerly	1	94	95	37	44	35	116
Woonsocket	54	610	664	87	218	310	615
DCYF	NA	NA	820	NA	NA	NA	NA
Out-Of-State	0	0	0	16	23	3	42
Four Core Cities	537	5,072	5,609	1,228	1,892	2,409	5,529
Remainder of State	256	3,146	3,402	1,144	1,595	1,374	4,113
Rhode Island	793	8,218	9,831	2,388	3,510	3,786	9,684

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Human Services, InRhodes Database, December 2015.

RI Works is Rhode Island's cash assistance program (formerly known as the Family Independence Program).

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 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 location of the program. Total subsidy use numbers by child residence and total subsidy use numbers by program location do not match because children may be enrolled in more than one program and the InRhodes database is a live system and reports run on different days can have slight variation.

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 three weeks of average school vacation tuition and 10 weeks of average summer vacation tuition.

References

¹⁰ Schulman, K. & Blank, H. (2015). *Building blocks: State child care assistance policies 2015*. Washington, DC: National Women's Law Center.

² *Parents and the high price of child care: 2015 report*. (2015). Arlington, VA: Child Care Aware of America.

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (1998). Child Care and Development Fund: Final rule. *Federal Register*, 63(142). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.

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Early Learning Programs Participating in BrightStars

DEFINITION

Early learning programs participating in BrightStars is the percentage of licensed early learning centers and family child care homes in Rhode Island that are participating in BrightStars, Rhode Island's Quality Rating and Improvement System for child care and early learning programs.

SIGNIFICANCE

Research on early care and education reveals a strong relationship between program quality and children's developing skills and well-being. Children who attend high-quality programs score higher on tests of language and cognitive skills and demonstrate stronger social and emotional development than children who attend low-quality programs.^{1,2,3} Programs across the U.S. and in Rhode Island vary markedly in quality and can range from rich learning experiences to mediocre, custodial care.^{4,5,6}

High-quality early care and education is characterized by smaller numbers of children in a classroom or group, fewer children per adult, skilled staff, a language-rich environment with stimulating curricula, warm, nurturing and dependable relationships between staff and children, and a safe environment.⁷ The development and retention of a highly qualified and appropriately compensated workforce

for early childhood programs is critical to improve program quality.⁸

Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) are becoming an increasingly common strategy used by states to measure, improve, and incentivize program quality. QRIS incorporate five components: (1) quality standards with incremental steps for programs, (2) a process to assess program quality, (3) strategies to support quality improvement, (4) financial incentives for programs, and (5) a system to share program quality information with parents and the public. Studies have shown that, over time, state QRIS can improve the quality of care available.^{9,10} Many states provide financial incentives to encourage and support achievement of quality standards. Incentives include offering tiered child care subsidy payments with higher rates for higher quality care and providing program improvement grants.¹¹

Launched in 2009, BrightStars conducts program quality assessments using research based standards for licensed centers (including child care, preschool and Head Start), family child care homes, and public schools. Programs participating in BrightStars receive a star rating and develop a quality improvement plan across six quality domains.¹² As of October 2014, all programs serving children participating in the Child Care Assistance Program are required to have a BrightStars rating.¹³

BrightStars Quality Ratings for Licensed Early Learning Programs and Public Schools Serving Preschoolers, Rhode Island, January 2016

	CENTERS & PRESCHOOLS	PUBLIC SCHOOLS	FAMILY CHILD CARE
Unrated	18% (57)	40% (22)	13% (67)
1 Star	31% (99)	15% (8)	59% (293)
2 Stars	20% (64)	27% (15)	24% (121)
3 Stars	14% (43)	5% (3)	1% (7)
4 Stars	12% (39)	13% (7)	2% (8)
5 Stars	5% (15)	0% (0)	<1% (1)
TOTAL	317	55	497

Source: Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children and the RI Early Care and Education Data System (ECEDS), January 2016.

◆ As of January 2016, there were 690 licensed early care and education programs with an active BrightStars quality rating, up from 669 in January 2015 and more than three times as many as were rated in January 2014. Fifty-four (17%) licensed early learning centers had met the benchmarks for a high-quality rating of four or five stars (one more center than in January 2015). Nine (2%) family child care homes had received a high-quality rating of four or five stars (one more home than in 2015).¹⁴

◆ As of January 2016, there were 33 public schools with a BrightStars quality rating (60% of the 55 public schools serving preschoolers in the state). Seven (13%) had a high-quality rating (two more schools than in 2015).¹⁵

◆ Of the 110 early learning programs that applied for a BrightStars rating increase or renewal in 2015, 59% received a star level increase of one or more levels, 35% maintained their star level, and 6% dropped one or more star levels.¹⁶

◆ The Rhode Island Department of Education awards Comprehensive Early Childhood Education approval to preschool classrooms that meet state-defined quality benchmarks. As of January 2016, there were 17 preschool classrooms in 12 licensed centers (seven fewer classrooms in 4 fewer centers than in 2015) and one public school classroom that met approval standards (one more than in 2015).¹⁷

◆ Rhode Island's \$50 million federal Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, which will end in December 2016, is focused on increasing participation in BrightStars and providing intensive support to programs to meet high-quality benchmarks.¹⁸

Early Learning Programs Participating in BrightStars

Table 35.

Licensed Early Learning Programs Participating in the BrightStars Quality Rating and Improvement System, Rhode Island, January 2016

CITY/TOWN	CHILD CARE CENTERS AND PRESCHOOLS					FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES				
	LICENSED PROGRAMS	PROGRAMS WITH A BRIGHTSTARS QUALITY RATING	PROGRAMS WITH A HIGH-QUALITY RATING	% IN BRIGHTSTARS	% WITH HIGH-QUALITY RATING	LICENSED PROGRAMS	PROGRAMS WITH A BRIGHTSTARS QUALITY RATING	PROGRAMS WITH A HIGH-QUALITY RATING	% IN BRIGHTSTARS	% WITH HIGH-QUALITY RATING
Barrington	8	4	1	50%	13%	5	2	0	40%	0%
Bristol	5	4	0	80%	0%	4	1	0	25%	0%
Burrillville	3	3	1	100%	33%	2	1	0	50%	0%
Central Falls	4	3	1	75%	25%	20	20	0	100%	0%
Charlestown	4	4	2	100%	50%	1	1	0	100%	0%
Coventry	7	7	1	100%	14%	2	2	0	100%	0%
Cranston	31	21	2	68%	6%	47	41	0	87%	0%
Cumberland	7	5	2	71%	29%	8	2	0	25%	0%
East Greenwich	12	11	2	92%	17%	0	NA	NA	NA	NA
East Providence	16	12	3	75%	19%	6	4	0	67%	0%
Exeter	2	2	0	100%	0%	1	1	1	100%	100%
Foster	1	1	0	100%	0%	0	NA	NA	NA	NA
Glocester	3	3	0	100%	0%	0	NA	NA	NA	NA
Hopkinton	2	2	0	100%	0%	3	3	1	100%	33%
Jamestown	1	1	0	100%	0%	1	0	0	0%	0%
Johnston	19	18	2	95%	11%	10	8	0	80%	0%
Lincoln	5	4	1	80%	20%	3	1	0	33%	0%
Little Compton	1	0	0	0%	0%	0	NA	NA	NA	NA
Middletown	9	7	2	78%	22%	3	1	0	33%	0%
Narragansett	2	1	0	50%	0%	0	NA	NA	NA	NA
New Shoreham	1	1	1	100%	100%	0	NA	NA	NA	NA
Newport	4	4	1	100%	25%	1	0	0	0%	0%
North Kingstown	7	7	1	100%	14%	3	3	0	100%	0%
North Providence	10	7	1	70%	10%	9	5	0	56%	0%
North Smithfield	1	1	0	100%	0%	4	2	2	50%	50%
Pawtucket	19	17	2	89%	11%	37	34	0	92%	0%
Portsmouth	5	3	0	60%	0%	1	0	0	0%	0%
Providence	48	40	15	83%	31%	291	278	5	96%	2%
Richmond	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	4	0	0	0%	0%
Scituate	1	1	0	100%	0%	5	3	0	60%	0%
Smithfield	9	7	1	78%	11%	0	NA	NA	NA	NA
South Kingstown	12	8	3	67%	25%	5	4	0	80%	0%
Tiverton	3	2	0	67%	0%	1	1	0	100%	0%
Warren	5	3	0	60%	0%	1	1	0	100%	0%
Warwick	27	24	4	89%	15%	10	3	0	30%	0%
West Greenwich	2	2	0	100%	0%	0	NA	NA	NA	NA
West Warwick	5	5	0	100%	0%	2	1	0	50%	0%
Westerly	7	6	0	86%	0%	1	1	0	100%	0%
Woonsocket	9	9	5	100%	56%	6	6	0	100%	0%
Four Core Cities	80	69	23	86%	29%	354	338	5	95%	1%
Remainder of State	237	191	31	81%	13%	143	92	4	64%	3%
Rhode Island	317	260	54	82%	17%	497	430	9	87%	2%

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 Children, Youth and Families, January 2016. Data on BrightStars quality ratings are from the Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children, January 2016. Data matched through the RI Early Care and Education Data System (ECEDS).

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

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

References

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Children Enrolled in Head Start

DEFINITION

Children enrolled in Head Start is the percentage of eligible children enrolled in a Rhode Island Head Start preschool program.

SIGNIFICANCE

Head Start is a federally-funded comprehensive early childhood program for the lowest income preschool children and their families. It is designed to address a wide variety of needs during the two years before kindergarten so that low-income children can begin school on a more equal footing with their economically advantaged peers.¹ Head Start programs deliver early education, medical and dental screenings and referrals, nutrition services, mental health services, family engagement activities, and social service referrals for the whole family.²

Family income is strongly correlated with children's cognitive, language, and literacy skills at school entry. Before kindergarten entry, children in the highest socio-economic group have cognitive test scores that are 60% higher than the average scores of children in the lowest socio-economic group. Children in families with incomes below the federal poverty threshold are typically 18 months behind their peers at age four.³

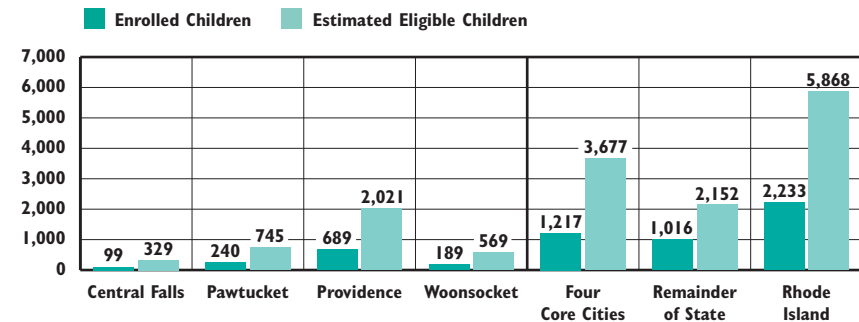
On average, Head Start centers are higher quality than most other early care and education programs available

to low-income parents.⁴ Head Start also has been found to be more effective than many other early learning programs.⁵ Children who participate in Head Start show improvements in language and literacy skills. However, those improvements may no longer be discernible at the end of third grade. Researchers suggest that early elementary "fade out" may be related to other low-income children "catching up" in the early grades or stagnation associated with attending low-quality elementary schools.^{6,7,8,9}

Lasting impacts for children who were in Head Start have been found in reduced grade retention and special education placement and increased high school graduation and college enrollment. Head Start participation is also associated with reduced arrests, child mortality, and childhood obesity.¹⁰

As of October 2015, there were 2,233 children enrolled in Head Start and 368 eligible children on the waiting list.¹¹ Rhode Island Head Start programs served significant numbers of children with high needs including 240 preschool children with developmental delays or disabilities (11% of all children enrolled), 48 children who were in foster care, and 70 children who were homeless. Fifteen percent of children enrolled in Rhode Island Head Start programs were also participating in the Child Care Assistance Program.¹²

Access to Head Start for Children in Poverty, Rhode Island, 2015

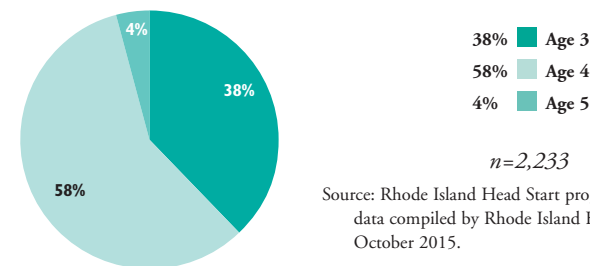


Source: Rhode Island Head Start program enrollment data compiled by Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, October 2015. Estimated eligible children is the number of children ages three and four according to Census 2010 multiplied by the % of children under age six living in families with incomes below the federal poverty line (FPL) according to the Population Reference Bureau's analysis of 2010-2014 American Community Survey data.

◆ **Head Start is not funded at a level to serve all eligible children and all Rhode Island Head Start programs maintain active waiting lists of eligible children. In October 2015, Rhode Island Head Start programs served 2,233 children, 38% of the estimated 5,868 income-eligible three- and four-year old children and 9% of all children ages three and four.**^{13,14}

◆ **In the four core cities, 33% of the estimated eligible children were enrolled in Head Start, compared with 47% in the remainder of the state. The estimated percentage of eligible children enrolled in Head Start for each core city is: Central Falls – 30%, Pawtucket – 32%, Providence – 34%, and Woonsocket – 33%.**^{15,16}

Children Enrolled in Head Start by Age, Rhode Island, 2015



Source: Rhode Island Head Start program enrollment data compiled by Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, October 2015.

Children Enrolled in Head Start

Table 36.

Children Enrolled in Head Start, Rhode Island, 2015

CITY/TOWN	ALL CHILDREN AGES 3 & 4	% CHILDREN <AGE 6 IN POVERTY	ESTIMATED ELIGIBLE CHILDREN AGES 3 & 4 IN POVERTY	# OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN HEAD START	ESTIMATED % OF CHILDREN AGES 3 & 4 ENROLLED IN HEAD START	ESTIMATED % OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN ENROLLED IN HEAD START
Barrington	369	1.3%	5	3	1%	60%
Bristol	401	5.6%	22	13	3%	59%
Burrillville	321	12.6%*	40	16	5%	40%
Central Falls	699	47.1%**	329	99	14%	30%
Charlestown	153	32.3%***	49	7	5%	14%
Coventry	734	25.9%**	190	55	7%	29%
Cranston	1,684	16.4%*	276	182	11%	66%
Cumberland	810	6.8%*	55	10	1%	18%
East Greenwich	277	13.4%**	37	1	0%	3%
East Providence	982	23.6%*	232	86	9%	37%
Exeter	105	NA	NA	3	3%	NA
Foster	99	13.8%***	14	0	0%	0%
Glocester	191	9.6%**	18	2	1%	11%
Hopkinton	167	14.5%***	24	5	3%	21%
Jamestown	102	7.9%***	8	0	0%	0%
Johnston	528	20.4%*	108	44	8%	41%
Lincoln	412	13.8%*	57	0	0%	0%
Little Compton	49	17.8%***	9	1	2%	11%
Middletown	431	13.3%*	57	34	8%	60%
Narragansett	210	9.7%*	20	7	3%	35%
New Shoreham	15	10.0%***	22	0	0%	0%
Newport	514	13.3%*	68	74	14%	109%
North Kingstown	593	20.0%**	119	33	6%	28%
North Providence	575	21.1%**	121	60	10%	50%
North Smithfield	218	3.6%*	8	5	2%	63%
Pawtucket	2,053	36.3%*	745	240	12%	32%
Portsmouth	359	4.0%*	14	8	2%	57%
Providence	4,743	42.6%*	2,021	689	15%	34%
Richmond	190	15.7%***	30	5	3%	17%
Scituate	197	9.4%**	19	4	2%	21%
Smithfield	343	NA	NA	4	1%	NA
South Kingstown	504	13.1%**	66	13	3%	20%
Tiverton	287	11.1%*	32	15	5%	47%
Warren	240	12.8%**	31	25	10%	81%
Warwick	1,579	8.7%	137	124	8%	91%
West Greenwich	115	NA	NA	0	0%	NA
West Warwick	703	24.1%**	169	108	15%	64%
Westerly	490	14.5%**	71	69	14%	97%
Woonsocket	1,218	46.7%*	569	189	16%	33%
Four Core Cities	8,713	42.2%	3,677	1,217	14%	33%
Remainder of State	14,947	14.4%	2,152	1,016	7%	47%
Rhode Island	23,660	24.8%	5,868	2,233	9%	38%

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Head Start Programs, all children enrolled (ages three to five) as of October 2015. Children enrolled are listed by residence of child, not location of the Head Start program.

The estimated number of children ages three and four in each community is from Census 2010, Summary File 1. Estimated eligible children is the number of children ages three and four according to Census 2010 multiplied by the % of children under age six living in families with incomes below the federal poverty line (FPL) according to the Population Reference Bureau's (PRB) analysis of 2010-2014 American Community Survey data. Estimated eligible children for the four core cities, remainder of state, and Rhode Island is calculated using PRB estimates for those groupings and is not a sum of estimates by community.

The American Community Survey is a sample survey, and therefore the number and percentage of children living in poverty are estimates. The reliability of these estimates varies by community.

* The Margin of Error around the percentage is greater than 5 but less than 10 percentage points.

** The Margin of Error around the percentage is greater than 10 but less than 15 percentage points.

*** The Margin of Error around the percentage is greater than or equal to 15 percentage points.

NA: American Community Survey estimate of % of children under age six in poverty is not available for this community.

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

References

^{1,46} Resnick, G. (2010). Project Head Start: Quality and links to child outcomes. In A. J. Reynolds, A. J. Rolnick, M. M. Englund, & J. A. Temple (Eds.), *Childhood programs and practices in the first decade of life: A human capital integration*. (121-153). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

² Schmit, S. (2013). *Head Start participants, programs, families and staff in 2012*. Washington, DC: Center for Law and Social Policy.

(continued on page 182)

Children Enrolled in State Pre-K

DEFINITION

Children enrolled in State Pre-K is the number and percentage of children enrolled in the State Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) program managed by the Rhode Island Department of Education. The State Pre-K program is operated by child care programs, Head Start programs, and public schools.

SIGNIFICANCE

State-funded Pre-K programs for children ages three and four are available in 40 states, with 29% of four-year-olds and 4% of three-year-olds enrolled nationwide. Eight states and the District of Columbia have more than half of their four-year-olds enrolled in State Pre-K.¹ States have increased investments in Pre-K, recognizing that children who attend high-quality preschool make substantive developmental, academic, language, and social gains that can persist well into later school years, and are less likely to be retained a grade or enrolled in special education.^{2,3,4} In states without large public Pre-K programs, children of high-income and highly educated families are much more likely to be enrolled in preschool than children from low- and moderate-income families.⁵

High-quality preschool programs show strong economic returns, with benefits to children and the public far exceeding the original investment. Small class sizes, low child-teacher ratios, and

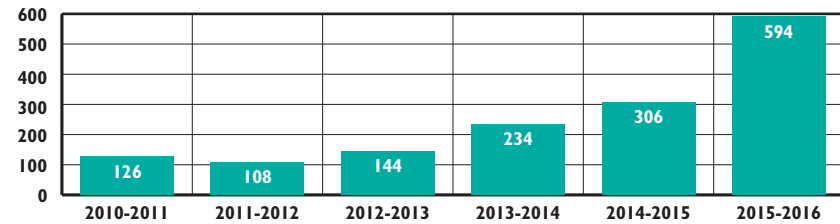
teachers who are well-educated, well-paid, emotionally supportive, and use curricula effectively produce the biggest gains for children.^{6,7,8}

In 2008, the General Assembly passed *The Rhode Island Prekindergarten Education Act*, acknowledging the need to adequately prepare all children to succeed in school by providing access to publicly-funded, high quality Pre-K and requiring the Rhode Island Department of Education to plan for the development of a State Pre-K program that meets high-quality standards, builds on the existing early childhood education infrastructure, and serves children ages three and four.⁹

Rhode Island began offering the State Pre-K program for four-year-olds in the 2009-2010 school year. The state's program is one of only five in the U.S. to meet all recommended quality benchmarks.¹⁰ Rhode Island's State Pre-K program has been found to improve children's language and math skills and close the achievement gap between low-income children and their more affluent peers by three-quarters.¹¹

State Pre-K is an important part of a strong state early learning system that starts at birth and continues through third grade, including nurturing, language-rich environments in child care, Head Start, full-day kindergarten, and the early elementary grades.¹²

Rhode Island State Pre-K Funded Slots, 2010-2011 through 2015-2016



Sources: National Institute for Early Education Research, *The State of Preschool 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013*. Rhode Island Department of Education, State Pre-K programs 2013-2014 through 2015-2016.

- ◆ As of the 2015-2016 school year, there are 33 State Pre-K classrooms in Rhode Island with a total of 594 children enrolled. Twenty-five percent of children enrolled in State Pre-K speak a language other than English at home and 12% have a developmental delay or disability.¹³
- ◆ Of the 33 State Pre-K classrooms, 52% (17) are operated by a Head Start agency, 39% (13) by a child care center/preschool, and 9% (3) by a public school district.¹⁴
- ◆ State Pre-K funds are targeted to communities with a high proportion of low-income families, using the percentage of children participating in the local school district's free and reduced-price lunch program as a guideline. Children are selected to participate in State Pre-K through a lottery, with children from low-income families prioritized for enrollment based on the proportion of low-income children in the local school district.¹⁵
- ◆ In the 2015-2016 school year, 417 (70%) of the children enrolled in State Pre-K are low-income.¹⁶ This is approximately 8% of the population of low-income four-year olds under 200% FPL statewide.¹⁷ Including the 1,391 low-income four-year-olds enrolled in Head Start in Rhode Island, approximately 33% of the state's low-income four-year-olds are enrolled in a public preschool program (State Pre-K or Head Start).¹⁸

State Pre-K Expansion

- ◆ With 5% of all four-year-olds enrolled, Rhode Island ranks near the bottom of the 40 states for access to State Pre-K.^{19,20} Expansion of the State Pre-K program is included in Rhode Island's education funding formula.²¹ In 2014, Rhode Island was awarded a federal Preschool Development Grant that will accelerate expansion.²²

Children Enrolled in State Pre-K

Table 37.

Children Enrolled in State Pre-K, Rhode Island, 2015-2016

CITY/TOWN	# OF CHILDREN AGE 4	% CHILDREN <AGE 6 IN LOW-INCOME FAMILIES	ESTIMATED # OF LOW-INCOME CHILDREN AGE 4	# LOW-INCOME CHILDREN ENROLLED IN STATE PRE-K	% LOW-INCOME CHILDREN AGE 4 ENROLLED IN STATE PRE-K	# CHILDREN ENROLLED IN STATE PRE-K	% CHILDREN AGE 4 ENROLLED IN STATE PRE-K
Barrington	199	5.2%*	10	0	0%	0	0%
Bristol	206	22.5%**	46	0	0%	0	0%
Burrillville	173	19.7%**	34	0	0%	0	0%
Central Falls	345	80.8%**	279	48	17%	54	16%
Charlestown	81	53.5%***	43	0	0%	0	0%
Coventry	366	33.9%**	124	0	0%	0	0%
Cranston	862	34.3%*	296	16	5%	36	4%
Cumberland	426	22.9%*	98	0	0%	0	0%
East Greenwich	158	22.6%**	36	0	0%	0	0%
East Providence	469	48.4%*	227	9	4%	18	4%
Exeter	55	NA	NA	0	0%	0	0%
Foster	53	27.2%***	14	0	0%	0	0%
Glocester	106	9.6%**	10	0	0%	0	0%
Hopkinton	87	31.6%***	27	0	0%	0	0%
Jamestown	50	7.9%***	4	0	0%	0	0%
Johnston	278	48.6%**	135	0	0%	0	0%
Lincoln	211	32.3%**	68	0	0%	0	0%
Little Compton	28	24.3%***	7	0	0%	0	0%
Middletown	226	30.3%*	68	0	0%	0	0%
Narragansett	117	16.1%**	19	0	0%	0	0%
New Shoreham	7	30%***	2	0	0%	0	0%
Newport	232	33.1%**	77	33	43%	54	23%
North Kingstown	318	28.2%**	90	0	0%	0	0%
North Providence	282	32.1%**	91	0	0%	0	0%
North Smithfield	108	20.7%***	22	0	0%	0	0%
Pawtucket	1,006	58.5%*	589	28	5%	36	4%
Portsmouth	196	24.4%***	48	0	0%	0	0%
Providence	2,382	70.0%*	1,667	165	10%	198	8%
Richmond	102	21.4%***	22	0	0%	0	0%
Scituate	94	15.6%***	15	0	0%	0	0%
Smithfield	169	10.4%*	18	0	0%	0	0%
South Kingstown	273	27.6%**	75	0	0%	0	0%
Tiverton	143	29.5%***	42	0	0%	0	0%
Warren	127	47.1%***	60	0	0%	0	0%
Warwick	850	24.4%*	207	21	10%	54	6%
West Greenwich	53	6.9%**	4	0	0%	0	0%
West Warwick	354	53.7%**	190	27	14%	54	15%
Westerly	244	34.1%***	83	0	0%	0	0%
Woonsocket	584	73.3%*	428	70	16%	90	15%
Four Core Cities	4,317	68.9%	2,974	311	10%	378	9%
Remainder of State	7,703	31.0%	2,388	106	4%	216	3%
Rhode Island	12,020	45.2%	5,433	417	8%	594	5%

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

The number children enrolled in State Pre-K is from the Rhode Island Department of Education, October 2015.

The number of children age four in each community is from Census 2010, Summary File 1.

Estimated number of low-income children age four is the number of children age four according to Census 2010 multiplied by the % of children under age six living in families with incomes below 200% of the federal poverty line (FPL) according to the Population Reference Bureau's analysis of 2010-2014 American Community Survey data. Estimated eligible children for the four core cities, remainder of state, and Rhode Island is calculated using PRB estimates for those groupings and is not a sum of estimates by community.

The American Community Survey is a sample survey, and therefore the number and percentage of children living in poverty are estimates. The reliability of these estimates varies by community.

* The Margin of Error around the percentage is greater than 5 but less than 10 percentage points.

** The Margin of Error around the percentage is greater than 10 but less than 15 percentage points.

*** The Margin of Error around the percentage is greater than or equal to 15 percentage points.

NA: American Community Survey estimate of % of children under age six in poverty is not available for this community.

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

References

^{1,10,20,22} Barnett, W. S., Carolan, M. E., Squires, J. H., Brown, K. C., & Horowitz, M. (2015). *The state of preschool 2014: State preschool yearbook*. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research, Rutgers Graduate School of Education.

^{2,6} Epstein, D. J. & Barnett, W. S. (2012). Early education in the United States: Programs and access. In R. C. Pianta, W. S. Barnett, L. M. Justice & S. M. Sheridan (Eds.), *Handbook of early childhood education*. (pp. 3-21). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

(continued on page 182)

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

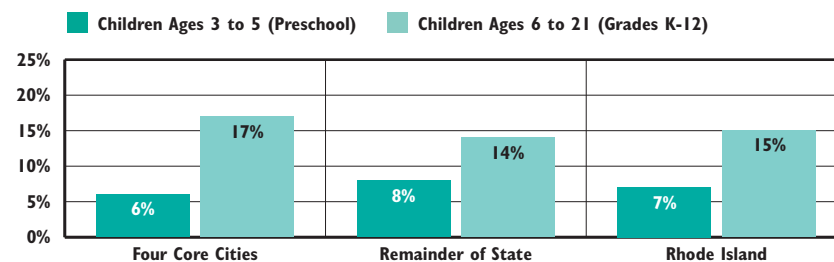
Preschool special education is an important component of the early care and education system, providing access to early learning opportunities for hundreds of thousands of preschool-age children across the U.S.¹ The federal *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* specifies that, beginning at age three, children are eligible for special education through their local school district if they have a specific disability or a developmental delay in one or more of the following areas: physical, cognitive, communication, social/emotional, or adaptive.² Children under age three are eligible for special education services through Early Intervention providers.³

Developmental delays are identified when a child does not reach developmental milestones at the same time as other children his or her age. Some young children with developmental delays are eventually diagnosed with a disability while others catch up to their peers when therapy or intervention is provided.^{4,5}

In Rhode Island, children are eligible for special education services under the “developmental delay” category up to age eight.⁶ As of June 2015, 41% of children in preschool special education in Rhode Island qualified under the developmental delay category, 49% had an identified speech/language disability, 6% were diagnosed with autism, and 5% had another diagnosed disability.⁷

Under *IDEA*, states are required to identify, locate, and evaluate all children ages birth to 21 with disabilities in the state.⁸ Early childhood developmental screening is often the first step in identifying children who may have a disability or developmental delay and could benefit from intervention. Regular screening during the early stages of life, followed by evaluation and diagnostic assessment for children who appear to have special needs, helps children gain early access to needed services in order to prevent the occurrence of more severe problems.⁹ In Rhode Island, school districts work to screen every child ages three through five every year through the Child Outreach screening program. Screenings are conducted in the child’s dominant language.¹⁰ In the 2014-2015 school year in Rhode Island, districts completed developmental screenings for 14% of three-year-olds, 38% of four-year-olds, and 50% of five-year-olds.¹¹

Special Education Participation Rate, Children Ages 3 to 5 and 6 to 21, Rhode Island, June 2015



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, June 2015 Special Education Census. Denominator for children ages three to five is the number of children ages three to five residing in each district. Denominator for children ages six to 21 is the resident average daily membership (RADM) from RIDE. RADM only includes children receiving public education services so it is not comparable to the preschool special education denominator.

- ◆ Approximately 15% of children ages three to 17 have a developmental disability. Children in low-income families are more likely to have a developmental disability than children in higher-income families.¹²
- ◆ In June 2015 there were 2,972 children ages three to five receiving preschool special education services, 7% of all preschool-age children in the state. Children in the four core cities are less likely to be receiving preschool special education services (6%) than children in the remainder of the state (8%). Twenty-eight percent of the students receiving preschool special education services were eligible for free or reduced price lunch, less than the state’s overall rate of 47%.¹³
- ◆ In June 2015 in Rhode Island, 47% of preschool-age children received special education services within an inclusive early childhood classroom along with their typically developing peers, while 17% were enrolled in a separate special education class, school, or residential facility. Other children were not enrolled in an early childhood classroom, receiving services through “walk-in” visits to a service provider (25%) or at home (1%). Another 10% were enrolled in a regular early childhood classroom but did not receive their special education services in that class.¹⁴
- ◆ In June 2015, children in the four core cities were less likely to receive preschool special education services in an inclusive early childhood setting (41%) than children in the remainder of the state (50%).¹⁵ Inclusion in high-quality early learning programs benefits children with and without disabilities.¹⁶

Children Receiving Preschool Special Education Services

Table 38.

Children Ages 3 to 5 Receiving Special Education Services, Rhode Island, 2015

SCHOOL DISTRICT	# OF CHILDREN AGES 3-5	DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING RATES			PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION BY SETTING				
		% 3-YEAR-OLDS SCREENED	% 4-YEAR-OLDS SCREENED	% 5-YEAR-OLDS SCREENED	INCLUSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASS	% IN INCLUSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASS	OTHER SETTING	TOTAL # RECEIVING SERVICES	% RECEIVING SERVICES
Barrington	557	37%	65%	88%	10	21%	37	47	8%
Bristol Warren	897	18%	43%	49%	43	61%	27	70	8%
Burrillville	485	7%	43%	59%	39	66%	20	59	12%
Central Falls	1,164	33%	51%	72%	36	42%	49	85	7%
Chariho	682	23%	58%	64%	23	32%	49	72	11%
Coventry	1,000	14%	39%	56%	62	62%	38	100	10%
Cranston	2,673	11%	40%	63%	49	31%	110	159	6%
Cumberland	1,194	8%	41%	46%	50	56%	40	90	8%
East Greenwich	567	6%	38%	37%	*	19%	25	31	5%
East Providence	1,677	11%	35%	51%	40	30%	95	135	8%
Exeter-West Greenwich	368	24%	59%	74%	11	31%	24	35	10%
Foster	104	14%	39%	50%	*	55%	*	11	11%
Glocester	229	14%	39%	50%	11	44%	14	25	11%
Jamestown	146	36%	47%	58%	*	64%	*	11	8%
Johnston	935	23%	40%	62%	35	40%	52	87	9%
Lincoln	720	19%	53%	62%	74	80%	19	93	13%
Little Compton	89	13%	32%	59%	0	NA	0	0	0%
Middletown	847	12%	25%	36%	44	80%	11	55	6%
Narragansett	247	37%	63%	74%	25	86%	*	29	12%
New Shoreham	36	0%	40%	50%	*	100%	0	*	8%
Newport	1,145	12%	32%	31%	48	72%	19	67	6%
North Kingstown	851	27%	67%	78%	37	60%	25	62	7%
North Providence	1,080	14%	34%	58%	44	51%	43	87	8%
North Smithfield	343	25%	54%	62%	15	44%	19	34	10%
Pawtucket	3,457	10%	31%	50%	62	33%	126	188	5%
Portsmouth	577	11%	27%	50%	21	55%	17	38	7%
Providence	9,217	11%	32%	33%	227	48%	250	477	5%
Scituate	259	14%	39%	50%	13	46%	15	28	11%
Smithfield	479	29%	65%	69%	25	52%	23	48	10%
South Kingstown	787	25%	60%	77%	31	56%	24	55	7%
Tiverton	466	11%	27%	48%	21	58%	15	36	8%
Warwick	2,613	10%	28%	48%	83	44%	107	190	7%
West Warwick	1,195	12%	46%	65%	46	39%	73	119	10%
Westerly	765	36%	68%	68%	57	80%	14	71	9%
Woonsocket	2,020	12%	21%	43%	73	34%	143	216	11%
Charter Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	12	92%	*	13	NA
RI School for the Deaf	NA	NA	NA	NA	0	0%	*	*	NA
Four Core Cities	15,858	12%	31%	40%	398	41%	568	966	6%
Remainder of State	24,013	16%	42%	57%	979	50%	968	1,947	8%
Rhode Island	39,871	14%	38%	50%	1,389	47%	1,538	2,927	7%

Sources of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), June 2015 Special Education Census.

*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 2014-2015 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 previous Factbooks.

2014-2015 Child Outreach screening data is from the RIDE Office of Student, Community, and Academic Supports. Foster, Glocester, and Scituate school districts collaborate to conduct Child Outreach screenings. Separate rates are not available for each of these districts so the same combined rate is used for all three districts.

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

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

References

¹ Epstein, D. J. & Barnett, W. S. (2012). Early education in the United States: Programs and access. In R. C. Pianta, W. S. Barnett, L. M. Justice., & S. M. Sheridan, (Eds.), *Handbook of early childhood education* (pp. 3-21). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

^{2,4,6} Danaher, J. (2011). *NECTAC notes: Eligibility policies and practices for young children under Part B of IDEA*. Chapel Hill, NC: National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center.

(continued on page 183)

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 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, 2015, there were 142,014 students enrolled in Rhode Island public schools in preschool through grade 12, a decrease of 6% from 151,619 on October 1, 2006.

Of the 142,014 Rhode Island public school students in October 2015, 29% (41,454) were attending schools in the four core cities (communities with the highest child poverty rates), 65% (92,402) were attending schools in the remaining districts, and the remaining 8,158 attended charter schools, state-operated schools, or the Urban

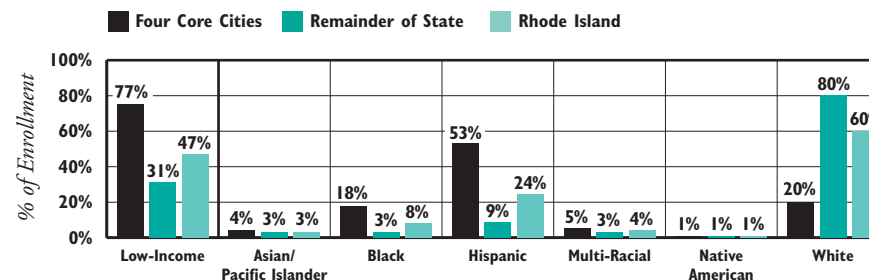
Collaborative Accelerated Project (UCAP). There were an additional 13,495 Rhode Island students attending private and parochial schools (including out-of-state schools) and 1,693 students were home-schooled.²

In October 2015, there were 63,884 students in grades K-5, 32,809 in grades 6-8, and 42,871 in grades 9-12. There were 2,450 children enrolled in preschool in Rhode Island public schools.³ The Rhode Island State Pre-K program served 594 children in 2015-2016, including 54 in three public school classrooms and the remainder in community-based centers.⁴

In October 2015, 60% of Rhode Island public school students were non-Hispanic White, 24% were Hispanic, 8% were Black, 3% were Asian/Pacific Islander, 4% were Multi-Racial, and 1% were Native American. In October 2015, 47% of students in Rhode Island were low-income (students who were eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program).⁵

Rhode Island schools are also diverse in terms of students with disabilities and students who are English Language Learners. During the 2014-2015 school year, 15% of Rhode Island public school students were receiving special education services and 7% were receiving English as a Second Language (ESL) or bilingual education services.⁶

Rhode Island Public School Enrollment by Low-Income Status, Race and Ethnicity, October 1, 2015



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, October 1, 2015.

◆ In October 2015, 20% of students enrolled in the four core cities were White, compared with 80% in the remainder of the state, and 77% of students enrolled in the four core cities were low-income compared with 31% in the remainder of the state.⁷

The Changing Makeup of Rhode Island Public Schools

◆ On October 1, 2015, almost one-half (47%) of Rhode Island public school students were low-income (eligible for free or reduced price lunch), up from 33% in 2006.⁸

◆ Over the past decade, Rhode Island schools have become more diverse. On October 1, 2015, 60% of students enrolled in Rhode Island public schools were non-Hispanic White, a decrease from 69% on October 1, 2006. On October 1, 2015, 24% of students enrolled in Rhode Island public schools were Hispanic, an increase from 18% on October 1, 2006.⁹ Hispanic students continue to be concentrated in minority schools. During the 2011-2012 school year, 40% of Latino students were enrolled in Rhode Island public schools with 90-100% minority students, while 24% of Latino students were enrolled in majority White (over 50%) schools.¹⁰

◆ On October 1, 2015, 7,316 (5%) Rhode Island public school students were enrolled in charter schools, including district charter schools, up from 2,812 (2%) on October 1, 2006.¹¹ Part of the increase in charter school enrollment is due to a moratorium on charter schools put in place by the 2004 General Assembly that was lifted in 2008.¹²

Public School Enrollment and Demographics

Table 39. Rhode Island Public School Enrollment by Grade and Demographic Groups, October 1, 2015

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**	% NATIVE AMERICAN	% MULTI-RACIAL	% WHITE	
Barrington	24	1,416	843	1,045	6%	6%	1%	3%	<1%	3%	87%	3,328
Bristol Warren	44	1,588	764	932	33%	2%	2%	1%	1%	4%	91%	3,328
Burrillville	44	990	596	753	30%	1%	1%	3%	<1%	2%	93%	2,383
Central Falls	165	1,368	457	667	81%	1%	12%	72%	1%	4%	10%	2,657
Chariho	83	1,258	752	1,144	20%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	92%	3,237
Coventry	136	1,957	1,143	1,514	33%	1%	1%	4%	<1%	2%	92%	4,750
Cranston	84	4,549	2,527	3,281	45%	8%	5%	25%	1%	4%	58%	10,441
Cumberland	90	1,989	1,141	1,332	24%	3%	3%	10%	<1%	2%	82%	4,552
East Greenwich	47	1,025	638	745	6%	5%	1%	5%	<1%	4%	85%	2,455
East Providence	90	2,475	1,167	1,550	54%	6%	9%	4%	1%	7%	73%	5,282
Exeter-West Greenwich	57	633	423	525	13%	1%	1%	3%	0%	<1%	94%	1,638
Foster	0	277	0	0	22%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	98%	277
Foster-Glocester	0	0	470	685	18%	1%	<1%	1%	<1%	1%	96%	1,155
Glocester	4	541	0	0	13%	1%	1%	<1%	<1%	1%	97%	545
Jamestown	23	306	162	5	9%	2%	1%	<1%	0%	3%	93%	496
Johnston	77	1,470	783	887	48%	3%	4%	17%	<1%	1%	75%	3,217
Lincoln	97	1,257	762	896	26%	2%	3%	6%	<1%	1%	88%	3,012
Little Compton	0	141	102	0	14%	1%	<1%	1%	0%	1%	97%	243
Middletown	20	1,059	544	664	28%	4%	6%	12%	<1%	7%	71%	2,287
Narragansett	51	550	300	420	19%	1%	1%	2%	1%	5%	89%	1,321
New Shoreham	0	44	33	36	16%	3%	0%	12%	0%	2%	84%	113
Newport	59	1,028	471	615	64%	2%	16%	25%	2%	12%	43%	2,173
North Kingstown	82	1,540	971	1,424	22%	2%	1%	4%	1%	3%	88%	4,017
North Providence	93	1,587	878	1,004	40%	3%	10%	20%	<1%	3%	63%	3,562
North Smithfield	37	721	459	512	18%	2%	1%	6%	<1%	2%	88%	1,729
Pawtucket	110	4,734	2,142	2,036	76%	1%	26%	31%	1%	6%	35%	9,022
Portsmouth	26	974	579	901	14%	2%	2%	4%	<1%	2%	90%	2,480
Providence	275	11,512	5,418	6,662	79%	5%	17%	64%	1%	4%	9%	23,867
Scituate	11	551	341	463	19%	1%	1%	1%	0%	<1%	97%	1,366
Smithfield	47	1,048	550	745	14%	2%	1%	5%	<1%	3%	89%	2,390
South Kingstown	110	1,331	796	1,012	22%	2%	2%	4%	3%	4%	84%	3,249
Tiverton	26	829	434	554	31%	1%	2%	1%	<1%	2%	94%	1,843
Warwick	193	3,965	2,146	2,836	33%	3%	2%	9%	<1%	3%	82%	9,140
West Warwick	62	1,662	742	1,019	49%	2%	5%	13%	1%	2%	77%	3,485
Westerly	92	1,282	662	872	35%	3%	1%	7%	2%	6%	81%	2,908
Woonsocket	64	2,992	1,312	1,540	72%	6%	10%	32%	<1%	5%	46%	5,908
Charter Schools	23	3,215	1,164	1,868	73%	2%	14%	54%	1%	4%	25%	6,270
State-Operated Schools	4	20	18	1,705	63%	1%	14%	41%	1%	6%	37%	1,747
UCAP	0	0	119	22	81%	2%	16%	72%	1%	6%	3%	141
Four Core Cities	614	20,606	9,329	10,905	77%	4%	18%	53%	1%	5%	20%	41,454
Remainder of State	1,809	40,043	22,179	28,371	31%	3%	3%	9%	1%	3%	80%	92,402
Rhode Island	2,450	63,884	32,809	42,871	47%	3%	8%	24%	1%	4%	60%	142,014

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education, Public School Enrollment in preschool through grade 12 as of October 1, 2015.

*Preschool includes students enrolled in half-day or full-day preschool through the public school district (primarily preschool special education classrooms). The Rhode Island State Pre-K program serves 594 children in 2014-2015, including 54 in three public school classrooms and the remainder in community-based centers.

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

**Hispanic students can be of any race.

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

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, The Compass School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, The Greene School, Highlander Charter School, Hope Academy, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, The Learning Community, RISE Prep Mayoral Academy, Rhode Island Nurses Institute Middle College, Segue Institute for Learning, Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy, South Side 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 enrolled in state-operated schools, charter schools, and UCAP are not counted in totals for the four core cities or for the remainder of the state, but they are included in the Rhode Island state totals.

References

¹ Barton, P. E. & Coley, R. J. (2009). *Parsing the achievement gap II*. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.

(continued on page 183)

Children Enrolled in Full-Day Kindergarten

DEFINITION

Children enrolled in full-day kindergarten is the percentage of public school children enrolled in full-day kindergarten programs on October 1. Children enrolled in private kindergarten programs or in half-day kindergarten programs that offer after-school child care are not included.

SIGNIFICANCE

Children benefit academically from participating in full-day kindergarten. Children in full-day kindergarten make significant gains in early reading, math, and social skills when compared with children in half-day kindergarten. Full-day kindergarten can reduce grade retention and remediation rates. One study found that participation in full-day, high-quality kindergarten can close the achievement gap between the highest and lowest performing students by nearly one-third in reading and one-fourth in math.^{1,2} Full-day kindergarten benefits all students, but it has a particularly strong impact for disadvantaged children.³

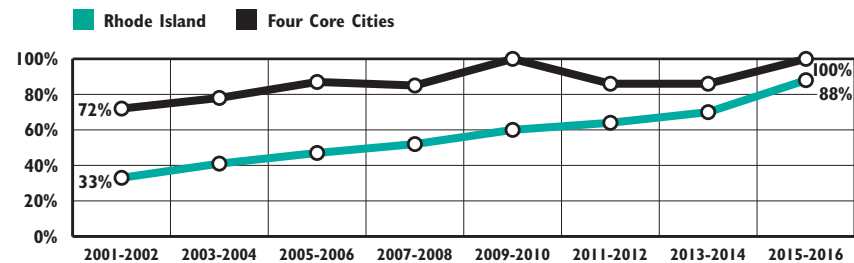
With an estimated 75% of four-year-olds in the U.S. enrolled in some type of preschool program, kindergarten no longer serves as the entry-point to formal, full-day school for most young children.⁴ Also, teachers in full-day kindergarten programs have

more time to provide meaningful learning opportunities that encourage cognitive, physical, and social-emotional development.^{5,6}

Nationally, enrollment in full-day kindergarten has been increasing steadily over the past 30 years. In 1979, 25% of U.S. kindergartners were in full-day programs, compared with 81% in 2014.^{7,8} Enrollment in high-quality kindergarten is associated with immediate academic gains and long-term improved outcomes, including attending college, owning a house, and earning more as an adult.⁹ High-quality kindergarten can also improve social and emotional skills. Kindergartners with strong social and emotional skills are more likely to be successful as adults—including having better high school and college completion rates, improved employment stability, and reduced criminal activity.^{10,11}

In the 2015-2016 school year, 88% of the Rhode Island children who attended public kindergarten were in a full-day program, with 100% of students in the four core cities and 81% of students in the remainder of the state attending full-day kindergarten.¹²

Children in Full-Day Public Kindergarten Programs, Rhode Island, 2001-2002 through 2015-2016 School Years



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, kindergarten enrollment October 1, 2001–October 1, 2015.

- ◆ In the 2015-2016 school year, 88% of Rhode Island kindergartners statewide and 100% of kindergartners in the four core cities were in full-day kindergarten. As of the 2015-2016 school year, 31 of the 35 elementary school districts and all of the public charter elementary schools in Rhode Island offer universal access to full-day kindergarten programs.¹³
- ◆ Three school districts are operating universal full-day kindergarten for the first time in the 2015-2016 school year (Johnston, North Kingstown, and Tiverton).
- ◆ As of the 2015-2016 school year, there are only four districts in Rhode Island that do not offer full-day kindergarten for all students: Coventry, Cranston, East Greenwich, and Warwick. Cranston, East Greenwich, and Warwick expanded enrollment in full-day kindergarten classrooms, but do not yet have universal access.¹⁴ State legislation enacted in 2015 requires all districts to implement full-day kindergarten by August 2016.¹⁵

Kindergarten Entry Profile

- ◆ Kindergarten Entry Assessments are an organized way to learn what children know and are able to do across all domains of development. The information is used to improve the transition to kindergarten, guide instruction for individual children, and inform policymakers.^{16,17} Rhode Island is working with several other states and national experts to develop a new, comprehensive Kindergarten Entry Profile that incorporates best practices for young children. The new tool is being piloted in several districts in Rhode Island in the 2015-2016 school year.¹⁸

Children Enrolled in Full-Day Kindergarten

Table 40. Children Enrolled in Full-Day Kindergarten Programs, Rhode Island, 2014-2015 and 2015-2016

SCHOOL DISTRICT	2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR			2015-2016 SCHOOL YEAR		
	TOTAL CHILDREN IN K PROGRAMS	CHILDREN IN FULL-DAY K	% OF CHILDREN IN FULL-DAY K	TOTAL CHILDREN IN K PROGRAMS	CHILDREN IN FULL-DAY K	% OF CHILDREN IN FULL-DAY K
Barrington	170	170	100%	183	183	100%
Bristol Warren	253	253	100%	244	244	100%
Burrillville	145	145	100%	146	146	100%
Central Falls	222	222	100%	197	197	100%
Chariho	188	188	100%	173	173	100%
Coventry	292	1	<1%	256	0	0%
Cranston	598	3	<1%	623	93	15%
Cumberland	317	317	100%	285	285	100%
East Greenwich	140	34	24%	124	41	33%
East Providence	386	386	100%	411	411	100%
Exeter-West Greenwich	101	101	100%	112	112	100%
Foster	31	31	100%	39	39	100%
Glocester	82	82	100%	82	82	100%
Jamestown	46	46	100%	44	44	100%
Johnston	231	4	2%	220	220	100%
Lincoln	191	191	100%	199	199	100%
Little Compton	22	22	100%	17	17	100%
Middletown	174	174	100%	187	187	100%
Narragansett	75	75	100%	74	74	100%
New Shoreham	8	8	100%	9	9	100%
Newport	195	195	100%	181	181	100%
North Kingstown	205	64	31%	217	217	100%
North Providence	249	249	100%	245	245	100%
North Smithfield	112	112	100%	104	104	100%
Pawtucket	764	764	100%	719	719	100%
Portsmouth	148	148	100%	153	153	100%
Providence	1,838	1,838	100%	1,767	1,767	100%
Scituate	69	69	100%	73	73	100%
Smithfield	120	120	100%	157	157	100%
South Kingstown	203	203	100%	197	197	100%
Tiverton	108	0	0%	142	142	100%
Warwick	581	162	28%	607	322	53%
West Warwick	295	295	100%	273	273	100%
Westerly	217	217	100%	190	190	100%
Woonsocket	523	523	100%	476	476	100%
Charter Schools	583	583	100%	769	769	100%
State-Operated Schools	3	3	100%	2	2	100%
Four Core Cities	3,347	3,347	100%	3,159	3,159	100%
Remainder of State	5,952	4,065	68%	5,967	4,813	81%
Rhode Island	9,885	7,998	81%	9,897	8,743	88%

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education, October 1, 2014 and October 1, 2015.

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

Charter schools included in this indicator are Achievement First Rhode Island, Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy, Highlander Charter School, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, Paul Cuffee Charter School, RISE Prep Mayoral Academy, Southside Elementary Charter School, The Compass School, The Hope Academy, and The Learning Community. The state-operated school is the Rhode Island School for the Deaf.

References

- ¹⁵ Kauerz, K. (2010). *PreK-3rd: Putting full-day kindergarten in the middle*. Washington, DC: Foundation for Child Development.
- ²⁶ Strategies for Children. (2013). *Investing in full-day kindergarten is essential*. Retrieved January 9, 2015, from www.strategiesforchildren.org
- ³ Gibbs, C. R. (2014). *Experimental evidence on early intervention: The impact of full-day kindergarten*. University of Virginia Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy Faculty Working Paper. Retrieved December 15, 2014, from www.batten.virginia.edu
- ⁴ Barnett, W. S., Carolan, M. E., Fitzgerald, J., & Squires, J. H. (2011). *The state of preschool 2011: State preschool yearbook*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University, National Institute for Early Education Research.
- ⁷ Kauerz, K. (2005). *Full-day kindergarten: A study of state policies in the United States*. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States.
- ⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2014. Table 3: Nursery and primary school enrollment of people 3 to 6 years old, by control of school, attendance status, age, race, Hispanic origin, mother's labor force status and education, and family income: October 2014.
- ⁹ Chetty, R., et al. (2010). \$320,000 kindergarten teachers. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 92(3), 22-25.

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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 school-age child care, 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 promote academic and social skills, provide opportunities for children and youth to develop positive relationships with peers and adult mentors, increase children's

safety, and reduce the likelihood that youth engage in inappropriate activities. Children who participate in organized after-school programs and extracurricular activities benefit socially, emotionally and academically. Children who are from low-income families and those in need of social and academic supports are most likely to benefit.^{2,3}

In most communities there are not enough high-quality, affordable after-school and summer programs to serve all the children who could benefit from them. Resources are needed both to improve the quality of current programs and to expand access.⁴ In Rhode Island, the Providence After School Alliance and the Rhode Island After School Plus Alliance act as intermediaries to address access issues and support program quality improvement through the use of the Rhode Island Program Quality Assessment (RIPQA) tool.⁵

Between 2010 and 2014, 77% of Rhode Island children ages six to 17 had all parents in the workforce, higher than the U.S. rate of 71%.⁶ Nationally, 56% of children ages five to 14 with employed mothers stay with a relative during the hours when they are not in school, while 19% regularly participate in enrichment activities, 7% are in a child care center, 7% are in home-based child care, and 14% regularly stay at home by themselves.⁷

Students Served by 21st Century Community Learning Centers by Grade Span, Rhode Island, 2014-2015

SCHOOL DISTRICT	GRADES PK-5	GRADES 6-8	GRADES 9-12	TOTAL
Central Falls	285	250	303	838
Cranston	150	162	7	319
East Providence	159	0	0	159
Newport	725	226	252	1,203
North Kingstown	257	474	8	739
Pawtucket	1,516	426	340	2,282
Providence	926	1,704	1,329	3,959
West Warwick	87	172	2	261
Woonsocket	512	425	943	1,880
<i>Charter Schools</i>	<i>508</i>	<i>255</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>764</i>
<i>The MET</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>256</i>	<i>256</i>
<i>UCAP</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>199</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>223</i>
<i>Four Core Cities</i>	<i>3,239</i>	<i>2,805</i>	<i>2,915</i>	<i>8,959</i>
<i>Remainder of the State</i>	<i>1,378</i>	<i>1,034</i>	<i>269</i>	<i>2,681</i>
<i>Rhode Island</i>	<i>5,125</i>	<i>4,293</i>	<i>3,465</i>	<i>12,883</i>

Source: RI Department of Education, Office of Student, Community and Academic Supports, Summer 2014 and 2014-2015 school year. Students participating in summer programs are reported in the grade level they are entering in the fall. Data are not unduplicated as students can be served by more than one grantee and in more than one community. Charter schools are: Highlander Charter School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, and The Learning Community. UCAP is the Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program.

Summer Learning Loss

◆ **Low-income elementary school students lose up to two months of reading skills over the summer while their higher-income peers make slight gains. Over time, this summer learning loss widens the reading achievement gap that was already present between low-income and higher-income students at kindergarten entry so that low-income students are almost three grade levels behind in reading skills by the end of fifth grade.^{8,9}**

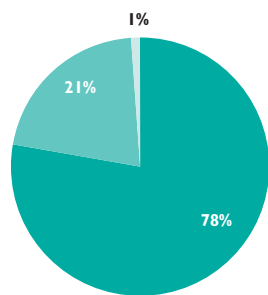
◆ **During the summer of 2014, 3,193 Rhode Island children entering grades Pre-K through 12 participated in 21st Century Community Learning Center programs in 45 schools, and over 1,600 Rhode Island children in kindergarten through grade 12 participated in 17 Hasbro Summer Learning Initiative programs.^{10,11} Students who participated in these two summer learning programs had improved reading and math skills and fewer unexcused absences and disciplinary incidents.^{12,13}**

Table 41. Licensed School-Age Child Care for Children Ages Six to 12 Rhode Island, January 2016

CITY/TOWN	NUMBER OF CHILDREN AGES 6 TO 12	NUMBER OF LICENSED PROGRAMS		TOTAL NUMBER OF SLOTS
		OPERATED AS PART OF AN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER	OPERATED INDEPENDENTLY	
Barrington	2,038	3	1	197
Bristol	1,421	1	3	156
Burrillville	1,456	0	2	175
Central Falls	2,045	2	0	191
Charlestown	616	0	1	60
Coventry	3,142	4	2	278
Cranston	6,331	14	5	698
Cumberland	2,976	0	8	659
East Greenwich	1,482	3	1	142
East Providence	3,395	4	6	573
Exeter	480	0	1	100
Foster	369	1	0	18
Glocester	809	1	0	24
Hopkinton	741	0	1	52
Jamestown	429	0	1	50
Johnston	2,119	8	0	183
Lincoln	1,900	1	6	441
Little Compton	299	0	1	26
Middletown	1,442	0	4	124
Narragansett	856	0	1	60
New Shoreham	73	0	0	0
Newport	1,399	2	2	303
North Kingstown	2,581	4	3	246
North Providence	2,073	1	4	359
North Smithfield	1,002	1	1	172
Pawtucket	6,015	7	3	723
Portsmouth	1,622	2	0	74
Providence	15,342	16	23	3,341
Richmond	777	0	2	88
Scituate	935	1	0	26
Smithfield	1,445	5	1	206
South Kingstown	2,199	1	1	119
Tiverton	1,201	1	1	111
Warren	770	1	1	102
Warwick	6,195	7	6	757
West Greenwich	624	0	0	0
West Warwick	2,155	2	3	283
Westerly	1,850	2	1	131
Woonsocket	3,653	3	7	575
Four Core Cities	27,055	28	33	4,830
Remainder of State	59,202	70	70	6,993
Rhode Island	86,257	98	103	11,823

School-Age Child Care Subsidies by Type of Setting, Rhode Island, 2015

78% Licensed Center (2,969)
 21% Licensed Family Child Care (791)
 1% License-Exempt Provider (26)



n=3,786

Source: Rhode Island Department of Human Services, InRhodes Database, December 2015.

◆ In January 2016 in Rhode Island, there were 11,823 school-age child care slots in 201 licensed centers. Seventy percent of the slots were in an independently licensed program serving only school-age children and 30% were in a licensed early childhood center.¹⁴

◆ In January 2016 in Rhode Island, there were 90 independent school-age child care programs participating in BrightStars, Rhode Island's Quality Rating and Improvement System (87% of licensed independent school-age child care programs). Nine programs had a high-quality rating of four or five stars.¹⁵

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 Children, Youth and Families. Number of licensed school-age child care programs and slots for children ages six to 12 as of January 2016. These numbers do not include licensed family child care home slots, informal child care arrangements, or community programs for youth ages six and older that do not require licensing by the state. Licensed school-age child care programs also provide services to five-year-old children who are enrolled in kindergarten.

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

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English Language Learners

DEFINITION

English Language Learners is the percentage of all public school children (preschool through grade 12) who are receiving English as a Second Language services or bilingual education services in Rhode Island public schools.

SIGNIFICANCE

English Language Learner (ELL) students are the fastest growing student population in the U.S.¹ Nationally and in Rhode Island, there are large achievement gaps between ELL and non-ELL students, with ELL students having lower rates of math and reading achievement than non-ELL students.² Many children of immigrants face challenges to succeeding in school, including poverty, limited access to health care, and low parental education levels, which may contribute to these achievement gaps.³

ELL students enter school without the English skills necessary for full participation in and access to the education system. They face diverse challenges based on their home language, immigration status, academic background, and socioeconomic status.^{4,5} Successful ELL programs use ongoing assessments of student progress, have highly qualified teachers trained to teach ELL students, and address students' learning, language, and cultural needs.^{6,7,8}

Additionally, ELL students and children in immigrant families are more

likely to attend schools that are under-resourced, urban, large, serve high proportions of minority students, and are located in high-poverty communities.^{9,10}

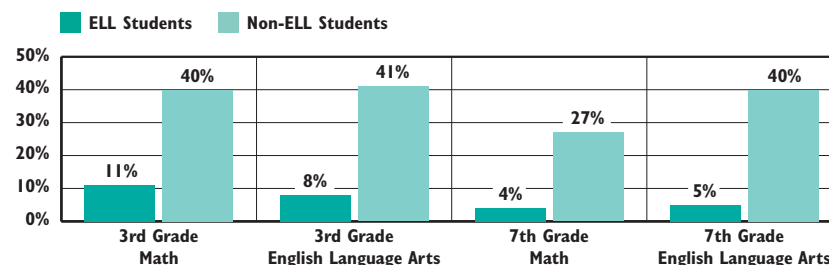
In the 2014-2015 school year in Rhode Island, ELL students were 7% of total students (10,281). Of these, 87% were enrolled in free or reduced-price lunch programs and 75% lived in the four core cities.¹¹

Children of immigrants believe that school prepares them to get ahead and most hope to go to college. Schools that foster relationships and offer personalized instruction by effective teachers can help ELL students succeed.^{12,13}

In the 2014-2015 school year, ELL students in Rhode Island public schools spoke 90 different languages. The majority (79%) spoke Spanish, 6% spoke Asian languages, 5% spoke Creole, 2% spoke Portuguese, 2% spoke Arabic, and 6% spoke other or multiple languages.¹⁴

Bilingual education in the early grades can significantly improve English reading proficiency and support long-term academic and economic outcomes.^{15,16} During the 2014-2015 school year, 13% percent of ELL students were enrolled in a bilingual program, and 87% were enrolled in an English as a Second Language (ESL) program with bilingual programs offered in the Central Falls and Providence school districts and at the International Charter School.¹⁷

Current English Language Learners Meeting Expectations in Math and English Language Arts, Rhode Island, 2015



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, *Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)*, October 2015.

◆ In 2015, 8% of third-grade ELL students met or exceeded expectations on the *Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)* English language arts assessment, compared to 41% of non-ELL students.¹⁸

◆ In 2015, 4% of seventh-grade ELL students met or exceeded expectations on the *Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)* math assessment, compared to 27% of non-ELL students.¹⁹

Early English Language Learning

◆ As of September 1, 2015, there were 4,970 Rhode Island children under age five who were born to a mother who did not speak English.²⁰ In the 2014-2015 school year, 49% of all ELL students in Rhode Island were in grades preschool to grade three.²¹

◆ For young children growing up in homes where English is not the first language, the quality, type, and amount of early childhood education can help boost English language development and kindergarten readiness of ELL students.²² A consistent approach to language development, common curriculum, and aligned assessment from preschool to third grade can help young ELL students gain English skills and reading proficiency and set the stage for future academic success.²³

◆ In the 2015-2016 school year, kindergarten-immersion bilingual programs were added in the South Kingstown and Pawtucket school districts.²⁴

Table 42.

English Language Learner Students, Rhode Island, 2014-2015

SCHOOL DISTRICT	TOTAL # OF STUDENTS	NUMBER OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER STUDENTS			TOTAL # OF ELL STUDENTS	% OF TOTAL DISTRICT
		ELEMENTARY (GRADES PRE-K-5)	MIDDLE (GRADES 6-8)	HIGH (GRADES 9-12)		
Barrington	3,271	31	*	*	37	1%
Bristol Warren	3,322	60	20	0	80	2%
Burrillville	2,350	*	*	*	*	<1%
Central Falls	2,720	336	113	154	603	22%
Charlho	3,283	*	0	*	*	<1%
Coventry	4,649	*	*	*	12	<1%
Cranston	10,067	378	97	84	559	6%
Cumberland	4,503	93	16	*	118	3%
East Greenwich	2,355	10	*	0	11	<1%
East Providence	5,217	132	33	21	186	4%
Exeter-West Greenwich	1,619	*	*	*	12	1%
Foster	282	0	0	0	0	0%
Foster-Glocester	1,110	0	0	0	0	0%
Glocester	524	0	0	0	0	0%
Jamestown	488	*	*	0	*	1%
Johnston	3,030	100	21	10	131	4%
Lincoln	3,019	17	*	*	25	1%
Little Compton	250	0	0	0	0	0%
Middletown	2,279	57	28	17	102	4%
Narragansett	1,316	*	*	*	*	<1%
New Shoreham	116	*	*	*	10	9%
Newport	2,052	61	15	30	106	5%
North Kingstown	3,957	39	*	10	57	1%
North Providence	3,516	45	14	*	66	2%
North Smithfield	1,750	*	*	*	*	<1%
Pawtucket	9,011	465	144	170	779	9%
Portsmouth	2,549	*	*	*	11	<1%
Providence	24,040	3,549	1,072	1,163	5,784	24%
Scituate	1,373	0	0	0	0	0%
Smithfield	2,368	*	0	*	10	<1%
South Kingstown	3,275	23	*	*	29	1%
Tiverton	1,765	*	0	*	*	<1%
Warwick	8,953	78	17	12	107	1%
West Warwick	3,395	51	12	12	75	2%
Westerly	3,018	44	*	*	53	2%
Woonsocket	5,996	333	106	119	558	9%
<i>Charter Schools</i>	<i>5,397</i>	<i>533</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>687</i>	<i>13%</i>
<i>State-Operated Schools</i>	<i>1,764</i>	<i>*</i>	<i>*</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>2%</i>
<i>UCAP</i>	<i>137</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0%</i>
<i>Four Core Cities</i>	<i>41,767</i>	<i>4,683</i>	<i>1,435</i>	<i>1,606</i>	<i>7,724</i>	<i>18%</i>
<i>Remainder of State</i>	<i>91,021</i>	<i>1,275</i>	<i>309</i>	<i>248</i>	<i>1,832</i>	<i>2%</i>
<i>Rhode Island</i>	<i>140,086</i>	<i>6,494</i>	<i>1,842</i>	<i>1,945</i>	<i>10,281</i>	<i>7%</i>

Sources of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department Education, 2014-2015 school year. Total number of English Language Learner students is the number of students in each district who were actively enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) or bilingual education programs in the 2014-2015 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.

Due to a change in methodology, the percentage of English Language Learner students by district cannot be compared with percentages before the 2004 Factbook. The “% of Total District” is based on the total number of English Language Learners divided by the “Total # of Students,” which is the average daily membership in the districts of instruction.

Charter schools with ELL students are Achievement First Rhode Island, Beacon Charter High School for the Arts, Blackstone Academy, Blackstone Valley Prep, The Compass School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, The Greene School, Highlander Charter School, Hope Academy, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, The Learning Community, Rhode Island Nurses Institute Middle College, Segue Institute for Learning, Sheila C. “Skip” Nowell Leadership Academy, South Side Elementary Charter School, Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts, and The Village Green Virtual Public Charter School. State-operated schools with ELL students are William M. Davies Career & Technical High School, DCYF Schools, 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 Calderón, M., Slavin, R., & Sánchez, M. (2011). Effective instruction for English learners. *The Future of Children*, 21(1), 103-119.

(continued on page 183)

K-12 Students Receiving Special Education Services

DEFINITION

K-12 students receiving special education services is the percentage of students ages six to 21 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 achievement and prevent grade retention.¹ Approximately 15% of children ages three to 17 have a developmental delay or disability. Children in low-income families are more likely to have a delay or disability than children in higher-income families.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 post-secondary education programs, and becoming employed as

adults.³ In recent years, more children are receiving special education services earlier (in grades K-3).⁴

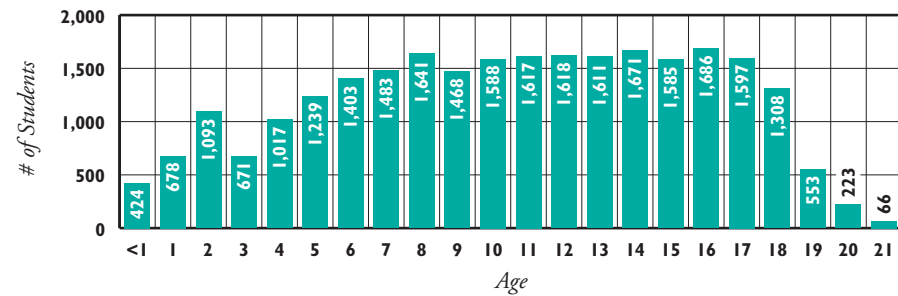
Despite this progress, children with developmental delays and disabilities (approximately 13% of the U.S. public school population) are still less likely to reach academic proficiency targets, graduate from high school, or attend college than students without disabilities. They are also more likely to be suspended from school.^{5,6}

The federal *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* requires states to continue reporting the performance of students with disabilities on standardized assessments to inform accountability and action plans.⁷

In 2015 in Rhode Island, 10% of students receiving special education services met expectations on the third-grade English language arts section and 12% on the third grade math section of the *Partnership for Assessment for College and Careers (PARCC)* assessment, compared with 42% and 41% respectively of students without special education needs.⁸

In Rhode Island, the four-year graduation rate for the class of 2015 was 68% for students receiving special education services, compared to 88% for students not receiving these services. Some students enrolled in special education may take additional time to graduate.⁹

Students Ages Birth to 21 Receiving Early Intervention and Special Education Services, Rhode Island, June 2015



Source: Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Center for Child and Family Health, Early Intervention enrollment, June 30, 2015. Rhode Island Department of Education, Office of Diverse Learners, Special Education Census, June 30, 2015. Includes parentally-placed students.

◆ As of June 2015, there were 20,800 students ages six to 21 (15% of all kindergarten through grade 12 students) receiving special education services through Rhode Island public schools. Thirty-eight percent of these students had a learning disability, 17% had a health impairment, 13% had a speech/language disorder, 10% had an autism spectrum disorder, 9% had an emotional disturbance, 6% had a developmental delay, 4% had an intellectual disability, and 3% had other disabilities.¹⁰

◆ As of June 2015, 73% of students ages six to 21 receiving special education services in Rhode Island were in a regular class for 80% of the day or more, 21% were in a regular class for less than 80% of the day, 5% were in a separate school, and 1% were in a residential facility, a correctional facility, were home-bound, or were hospitalized.¹¹ Over the past two decades, the percentage of special education students ages six to 21 who spent most of the day (80% or more of time) in general education classrooms nearly doubled nationwide.¹²

◆ Of students receiving special education services in June 2015, 68% were boys, 59% were low-income (receiving free or reduced-price lunch), 42% identified as Hispanic or a racial/ethnic category other than White, and 8% were English Language Learners.¹³

K-12 Students Receiving Special Education Services

Table 43.

Students Ages 6 through 21 Receiving Special Education Services by Primary Disability, Rhode Island, 2015

SCHOOL DISTRICT	TOTAL # OF STUDENTS	AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER	DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY	EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE	HEALTH IMPAIRMENT	LEARNING DISABILITY	INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY	SPEECH/LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT	OTHER	TOTAL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES	% STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION
Barrington	3,258	53	10	42	52	110	11	66	18	362	11%
Bristol Warren	3,296	58	22	18	39	109	18	81	*	353	11%
Burrillville	2,324	45	16	22	47	114	14	63	*	329	14%
Central Falls	2,622	27	19	35	81	269	25	63	16	535	20%
Chariho	3,256	48	29	13	55	124	12	27	13	321	10%
Coventry	4,588	54	39	51	108	305	25	36	26	644	14%
Cranston	10,032	177	66	102	318	497	37	77	30	1,304	13%
Cumberland	4,460	72	21	42	113	211	26	119	28	632	14%
East Greenwich	2,331	47	27	13	50	57	10	38	15	257	11%
East Providence	5,158	89	42	81	145	281	33	80	24	775	15%
Exeter-West Greenwich	1,596	30	*	*	26	43	*	55	*	187	12%
Foster	282	*	0	0	*	*	*	18	*	33	12%
Foster-Glocester	1,110	14	0	*	23	44	*	*	*	108	10%
Glocester	522	*	*	*	10	*	*	21	*	46	9%
Jamestown	475	11	*	*	16	17	*	*	*	62	13%
Johnston	2,973	65	37	31	129	279	14	45	15	615	21%
Lincoln	2,973	44	35	34	73	135	13	73	13	420	14%
Little Compton	250	*	*	0	*	17	*	*	*	35	14%
Middletown	2,266	36	*	40	63	118	22	53	12	351	15%
Narragansett	1,287	23	14	22	46	83	*	31	*	231	18%
New Shoreham	116	*	*	0	11	0	*	*	*	24	21%
Newport	2,024	28	15	28	39	144	24	49	11	338	17%
North Kingstown	3,898	52	52	42	56	148	17	93	13	473	12%
North Providence	3,470	56	63	48	102	208	14	81	22	594	17%
North Smithfield	1,731	24	*	18	43	85	11	45	*	238	14%
Pawtucket	8,937	131	106	90	184	558	57	189	30	1,345	15%
Portsmouth	2,529	44	*	47	98	126	*	25	13	367	15%
Providence	23,768	211	259	390	418	1,533	177	660	101	3,749	16%
Scituate	1,366	19	*	*	27	58	*	41	*	161	12%
Smithfield	2,336	36	17	13	30	103	12	25	*	242	10%
South Kingstown	3,205	55	28	33	84	85	18	67	21	391	12%
Tiverton	1,745	45	*	24	35	113	11	34	13	280	16%
Warwick	8,836	219	85	124	313	585	40	120	46	1,532	17%
West Warwick	3,356	80	49	79	68	189	26	43	12	546	16%
Westerly	2,918	46	33	39	99	123	15	53	23	431	15%
Woonsocket	5,973	125	103	102	288	388	74	187	36	1,303	22%
Charter Schools	5,385	43	35	55	137	366	*	128	*	777	14%
State-Operated Schools	1,762	15	0	71	63	129	*	0	61	341	19%
UCAP	137	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	20	15%
Department of Corrections	NA	0	0	20	8	20	0	0	0	48	NA
Four Core Cities	41,300	494	487	617	971	2,748	333	1,099	183	6,932	17%
Remainder of State	89,967	1,582	750	1,029	2,329	4,523	458	1,577	434	12,632	14%
Rhode Island	138,551	2,134	1,272	1,792	3,508	7,806	799	2,804	685	20,800	15%

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), Office for Diverse Learners, Special Education Census June 30, 2015. 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 2014-2015 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 blind/visually impaired, deaf, deaf/blind, hearing impaired, multi-handicapped, orthopedically impaired, and those with traumatic brain injury.

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

Independent charter schools reported for this indicator are Achievement First Providence Mayoral Academy, Beacon Charter High School for the Arts, Blackstone Academy, Blackstone Valley Prep, The Compass School, The Greene School, Highlander Charter School, International Charter School, The Hope Academy, Kingston Hill Academy, The Learning Community, Rhode Island Nurses Institute Middle College Charter School, Segue Institute for Learning, Sheila "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy, Southside Elementary Charter School, Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts, and The Village Green Virtual Charter School.

State-operated schools are William M. Davies 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.

References are on page 183.

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, social and psychological difficulties, lower levels of school engagement, and increased risk of dropping out of high school.¹ Changing schools disrupts learning, can result in children missing critical conceptual knowledge and skills, and can cause social upheaval for children. Student mobility also can lead to less active parent involvement in their children's schools.^{2,3}

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.^{4,5}

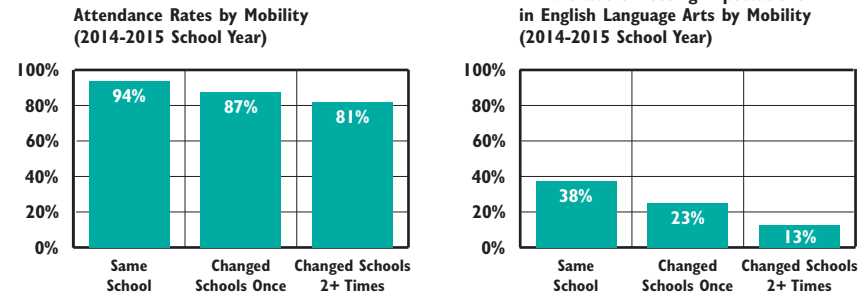
Low-income and minority children are more likely to be mobile than higher-income and White students. School mobility has a greater negative impact on the academic achievement of low-income students than it does on higher-income students. Students receiving special education services also are likely to be negatively impacted by changing schools.⁶

High mobility rates 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.^{7,8}

Families may move their children to a different school because they are dissatisfied with the school, concerned about their child's safety, or because they are moving due to changes in family circumstances.⁹ Changes in family circumstances can be either positive or negative factors, 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 in low-income and Black families are more likely to change schools due to family reasons than mobile students in higher-income and White families.^{10,11}

Between 2010 and 2014 in Rhode Island, 11% of children ages five to 17 changed residence at least once during the previous year, 82% of whom moved within Rhode Island and 18% 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 2010 and 2014, 24% of low-income Rhode Islanders moved, compared with 10% of higher-income residents.¹³

School Mobility and Education Outcomes in Rhode Island



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, 2014-2015 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 94% attendance rate, compared with 87% for those who changed schools once and 81% for those who changed schools two or more times during the 2014-2015 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 2014-2015 school year in Rhode Island, 38% of third-grade children who did not experience mobility met expectations in reading/writing on the *Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)* state assessment, compared with 23% of students who moved once and 13% of students who moved two or more times.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 those districts where students most frequently transfer to and from and align their curricula, programs, and policies to reduce disruption of learning.¹⁶
- ◆ Schools can help reduce the negative effects of mobility, but broader social policies may be needed to reduce student mobility. Increasing the availability of housing vouchers and access to public benefits, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and WIC, could help low-income families maintain their housing and reduce school mobility.^{17,18}

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.¹⁹

◆ 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 total enrollment for that district. The stability rate for the four core cities was 79% in the 2014-2015 school year, compared with a stability rate of 91% in the remainder of the state.²⁰

◆ Total enrollment for each district is cumulative over the course of the school year.²¹

◆ The overall Rhode Island student mobility rate was 14% in the 2014-2015 school year. The four core cities had a higher mobility rate (22%) than districts in the remainder of the state (10%).²²

◆ During the 2014-2015 school year, Rhode Island high schools had higher mobility rates (16%) than elementary schools (14%) and middle schools (11%).²³

Table 44. Student Mobility and Stability Rates by District, Rhode Island, 2014-2015 School Year

SCHOOL DISTRICT	CUMULATIVE ENROLLMENT FOR 2014-2015	# ENROLLED THE WHOLE YEAR	# ENROLLED AFTER SEPT. 30	# EXITED BEFORE JUNE 1	STABILITY RATE	MOBILITY RATE
Barrington	3,376	3,238	74	68	96%	4%
Bristol Warren	3,522	3,238	116	184	92%	9%
Burrillville	2,416	2,348	68	0	97%	3%
Central Falls	3,200	2,417	453	422	76%	27%
Charlho	3,531	3,150	190	219	89%	12%
Coventry	5,060	4,710	159	215	93%	7%
Cranston	11,111	9,943	551	673	89%	11%
Cumberland	4,769	4,408	180	196	92%	8%
East Greenwich	2,506	2,372	87	49	95%	5%
East Providence	5,637	5,055	255	348	90%	11%
Exeter-West Greenwich	1,721	1,591	67	77	92%	8%
Foster	288	276	*	*	96%	4%
Foster-Glocester	1,145	1,089	16	40	95%	5%
Glocester	544	512	*	27	94%	6%
Jamestown	525	483	22	21	92%	8%
Johnston	3,351	3,021	177	168	90%	10%
Lincoln	3,217	2,959	140	122	92%	8%
Little Compton	258	244	*	10	95%	5%
Middletown	2,471	2,124	162	212	86%	15%
Narragansett	1,401	1,300	57	48	93%	7%
New Shoreham	121	113	*	*	93%	7%
Newport	2,322	1,887	230	233	81%	20%
North Kingstown	4,300	3,965	158	196	92%	8%
North Providence	3,841	3,357	240	278	87%	13%
North Smithfield	1,882	1,703	97	113	90%	11%
Pawtucket	10,096	8,415	811	1,002	83%	18%
Portsmouth	2,691	2,452	114	135	91%	9%
Providence	28,086	22,088	2,802	3,778	79%	23%
Scituate	1,472	1,382	48	45	94%	6%
Smithfield	2,475	2,333	92	64	94%	6%
South Kingstown	3,486	3,205	136	171	92%	9%
Tiverton	1,942	1,784	68	99	92%	9%
Warwick	9,841	8,788	492	617	89%	11%
West Warwick	3,795	3,213	299	337	85%	17%
Westerly	3,174	2,899	137	158	91%	9%
Woonsocket	6,900	5,461	624	920	79%	22%
Charter Schools	5,658	5,267	122	279	93%	7%
State-Operated Schools	2,109	1,627	272	331	77%	29%
UCAP	149	131	*	10	88%	13%
Four Core Cities	48,282	38,381	4,690	6,122	79%	22%
Remainder of State	98,191	89,142	4,449	5,135	91%	10%
Rhode Island	154,389	134,548	9,541	11,877	87%	14%

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education, 2014-2015 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 Compass School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, The Greene School, Highlander Charter School, Hope Academy, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, The Learning Community, Rhode Island Nurses Institute Middle College, Segue Institute for Learning, Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy, South Side Elementary Charter School, Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts, and The Village Green Virtual Public Charter School. State-operated schools include DCYF Schools, Metropolitan Regional Career & Technical High School, William M. Davies Career & 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

- ^{1,5,9} Reynolds, A. J., Chen, C., & Herbers, J. E. (2009). *School mobility and educational success: A research synthesis and evidence on prevention*. Paper presented at the National Research Council Workshop on the Impact of Mobility and Change on the Lives of Young Children, Schools and Neighborhoods, Washington, DC.
- ^{2,4,6,7,10} Burkam, D. T., Lee, V. E., & Dwyer, J. (2009). *School mobility in the early elementary grades: Frequency and impact from nationally-representative data*. Paper presented at the National Research Council Workshop on the Impact of Mobility and Change on the Lives of Young Children, Schools and Neighborhoods, Washington, DC.
- ^{3,8,11} Turner, M. A. & Berube, A. (2009). *Vibrant neighborhoods, successful schools: What the federal government can do to foster both*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.

(continued on page 184)

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 *Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers* (PARCC) 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 read proficiently by then struggle in the later grades and are four times more likely to drop out of high school than their proficient peers.¹

Literacy begins long before children encounter formal school instruction in writing and reading. Supportive, literacy-rich home learning environments (including reading and telling stories to children) and parents who provide early cognitive development activities contribute to advanced literacy development, reading achievement, and success in school.^{2,3}

High-quality preschool and pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) programs can boost language and literacy skills, and have the greatest impact on children living in or near poverty.⁴ 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.^{5,6}

Students that have the most difficulty reading beyond third grade often need intensive interventions in order to read proficiently. While interventions implemented before third grade have high rates of success, interventions after third grade are much less effective. Once they fall behind, most children never catch up to their grade-level peers.^{7,8}

Policymakers can increase third-grade reading proficiency by increasing access to high-quality early care and education programs (including Pre-K and full-day kindergarten), supporting programs that engage parents as partners in their children's early language and literacy development, and encouraging cross-agency partnerships.⁹

4th-Grade NAEP Reading Proficiency		
	2005	2015
RI	30%	40%
US	30%	35%
National Rank*		9th
New England Rank**		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 4 and 8.

Third Graders Meeting Expectations on the PARCC English Language Arts Assessment, by Student Subgroups, 2015

Male Students	33%
Female Students	43%
English Language Learners	8%
Non-English Language Learners	41%
Students With Disabilities	10%
Students Without Disabilities	42%
Low-Income Students	21%
Higher-Income Students	53%
White Students	48%
Asian Students	47%
Black Students	22%
Hispanic Students	18%
Native American Students	17%
ALL STUDENTS	37%

Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, *Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)*, 2015. Low-income status is determined by eligibility for the free or reduced-price lunch program.

◆ In 2015, 37% of Rhode Island third graders met expectations on the *Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)* English language arts assessment.¹⁰

◆ In Rhode Island in 2015, 21% of low-income third graders met expectations, compared with 53% of higher-income third graders.¹¹

Statewide Assessments of Reading and English Language Arts

◆ The *New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP)* was Rhode Island's statewide assessment system from 2005 to 2013. Starting in the 2014-2015 school year, Rhode Island began using a new statewide assessment, the *Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)*.¹²

◆ The *PARCC* is aligned to the *Common Core State Standards* in English language arts/literacy and assesses students' ability to read and comprehend complex texts, use different sources to compare and synthesize ideas, and write effectively.^{13,14}

Third-Grade Reading Skills

Table 45. Third Graders Meeting Expectations in English Language Arts, Rhode Island, 2015

SCHOOL DISTRICT	# OF THIRD GRADERS ENROLLED	# OF THIRD GRADERS TESTED	% OF THIRD GRADERS TESTED	# OF THIRD GRADERS MEETING EXPECTATIONS	% OF THIRD GRADERS MEETING EXPECTATIONS
Barrington	255	251	98%	158	63%
Bristol Warren	302	284	94%	123	43%
Burrillville	173	137	79%	44	32%
Central Falls	211	201	95%	26	13%
Chariho	232	224	97%	132	59%
Coventry	352	344	98%	158	46%
Cranston	811	776	96%	405	52%
Cumberland	328	317	97%	159	50%
East Greenwich	171	168	98%	96	57%
East Providence	407	387	95%	161	42%
Exeter-West Greenwich	110	93	85%	38	41%
Foster	43	42	98%	15	36%
Glocester	100	98	98%	46	47%
Jamestown	57	55	96%	33	60%
Johnston	245	238	97%	116	49%
Lincoln	214	206	96%	115	56%
Little Compton	25	22	88%	14	64%
Middletown	201	188	94%	87	46%
Narragansett	102	99	97%	60	61%
New Shoreham	6	4	67%	*	*
Newport	151	142	94%	52	37%
North Kingstown	285	270	95%	161	60%
North Providence	271	263	97%	72	27%
North Smithfield	116	107	92%	31	29%
Pawtucket	774	742	96%	166	22%
Portsmouth	162	150	93%	80	53%
Providence	1,977	1,888	95%	264	14%
Scituate	92	87	95%	43	49%
Smithfield	172	145	84%	64	44%
South Kingstown	241	233	97%	187	80%
Tiverton	145	118	81%	78	66%
Warwick	682	653	96%	243	37%
West Warwick	253	241	95%	55	23%
Westerly	224	210	94%	83	40%
Woonsocket	488	457	94%	109	24%
Charter Schools	418	413	99%	165	40%
Four Core Cities	3,450	3,288	95%	565	17%
Remainder of State	6,946	6,557	94%	3,110	47%
Rhode Island	10,814	10,258	95%	3,840	37%

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), *Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)*, 2015.

Due to the adoption of a new assessment tool by RIDE in 2015, Third-Grade Reading Skills cannot be compared with prior Factbooks.

% meeting expectations are the third-grade students who met or exceeded expectations for their grade on the English language arts section of the *PARCC*. 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. English Language Learners in the U.S. less than one year are exempt from the English language arts assessment.

2015 *PARCC* data for independent charter schools include Blackstone Valley Prep, The Compass School, The Paul Cuffee Charter School, Highlander Charter School, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, and The Learning Community. 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.

* 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 four core cities, remainder of state, and state totals.

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

See Methodology Section for more information.

References

¹⁸ Hernandez, D. J. (2012). *Double jeopardy: How third-grade reading skills and poverty influence high school graduation*. Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

²⁶ Fiester, L. (2013). *Early warning confirmed: A research update on third-grade reading*. Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

(continued on page 184)

Seventh-Grade Reading Skills

DEFINITION

Seventh-grade reading skills is the percentage of seventh-grade students who met expectations in English language arts on the *Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)* test.

SIGNIFICANCE

Strong reading skills are essential for a student's academic success in high school and college.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 intensify dramatically 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 are poor readers 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 English Language Learners and low-income

students, who are more likely to have low literacy skills.⁵

There has been limited progress in improving literacy skills among secondary students.⁶ When literacy-specific instruction is used as remedial support for struggling adolescent students, the programs typically serve only a small proportion of students who need assistance.⁷ These supplementary programs are generally insufficient for dealing with the pervasive low levels of adolescent literacy in many schools and communities.⁸

Intensive individualized instruction can help improve adolescent literacy among struggling readers.⁹ Successful adolescent literacy programs include comprehensive professional development for teachers and principals in literacy instruction strategies, incorporating literacy instruction in content area classes, providing opportunities for student discussion, and using student assessments effectively.^{10,11}

8th-Grade NAEP Reading Proficiency		
	2005	2015
RI	29%	35%
US	29%	33%
National Rank*	25th	
New England Rank**	6th	

*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.

Seventh Graders Meeting Expectations on the PARCC English Language Arts Assessment, by Student Subgroups, 2015

Male Students	31%
Female Students	47%
English Language Learners	5%
Non-English Language Learners	40%
Students With Disabilities	6%
Students Without Disabilities	44%
Low-Income Students	22%
Higher-Income Students	53%
White Students	48%
Asian Students	46%
Black Students	18%
Hispanic Students	20%
Native American Students	25%
ALL STUDENTS	39%

Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, *Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)*, 2015. Low-income status is determined by eligibility for the free or reduced-price lunch program.

◆ In 2015, 39% of Rhode Island seventh graders met expectations on the *Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)* English language arts assessment.¹²

◆ In Rhode Island in 2015, 22% of low-income seventh graders met expectations in English language arts, compared with 53% of higher-income seventh graders.¹³

Statewide Assessments of Reading and English Language Arts

◆ The *NECAP* was Rhode Island's statewide assessment system from 2005 to 2013. Starting in the 2014-2015 school year, Rhode Island began using a new statewide assessment, the *Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)*.¹⁴

◆ The *PARCC* is aligned to the *Common Core State Standards* in English language arts/literacy and assesses students' ability to read and comprehend complex texts, use different sources to compare and synthesize ideas, and write effectively.¹⁵

Seventh-Grade Reading Skills

Table 46. Seventh Graders Meeting Expectations in English Language Arts, Rhode Island, 2015

SCHOOL DISTRICT	# OF SEVENTH GRADERS ENROLLED	# OF SEVENTH GRADERS TESTED	% OF SEVENTH GRADERS TESTED	# OF SEVENTH GRADERS MEETING EXPECTATIONS	% OF SEVENTH GRADERS MEETING EXPECTATIONS
Barrington	293	287	98%	216	75%
Bristol Warren	234	215	92%	91	42%
Burrillville	213	65	31%	18	28%
Central Falls	152	133	88%	9	7%
Chariho	250	236	94%	163	69%
Coventry	396	377	95%	133	35%
Cranston	857	802	94%	395	49%
Cumberland	375	361	96%	160	44%
East Greenwich	188	185	98%	149	81%
East Providence	373	311	83%	92	30%
Exeter-West Greenwich	134	127	95%	73	57%
Foster-Glocester	144	137	95%	65	47%
Jamestown	53	49	92%	32	65%
Johnston	265	257	97%	130	51%
Lincoln	254	239	94%	123	51%
Little Compton	37	33	89%	20	61%
Middletown	171	154	90%	65	42%
Narragansett	85	81	95%	50	62%
New Shoreham	11	9	82%	*	*
Newport	154	144	94%	53	37%
North Kingstown	349	298	85%	200	67%
North Providence	281	244	87%	87	36%
North Smithfield	154	129	84%	66	51%
Pawtucket	657	628	96%	105	17%
Portsmouth	211	188	89%	101	54%
Providence	1,793	1,602	89%	297	19%
Scituate	115	53	46%	14	26%
Smithfield	202	188	93%	97	52%
South Kingstown	263	252	96%	146	58%
Tiverton	160	130	81%	62	48%
Warwick	703	619	88%	191	31%
West Warwick	238	215	90%	78	36%
Westerly	214	197	92%	64	32%
Woonsocket	432	383	89%	55	14%
<i>Charter Schools</i>	<i>372</i>	<i>370</i>	<i>99%</i>	<i>124</i>	<i>34%</i>
<i>UCAP</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>97%</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>5%</i>
<i>Four Core Cities</i>	<i>3,034</i>	<i>2,746</i>	<i>91%</i>	<i>466</i>	<i>17%</i>
<i>Remainder of State</i>	<i>7,398</i>	<i>6,588</i>	<i>89%</i>	<i>3,142</i>	<i>48%</i>
<i>Rhode Island</i>	<i>10,843</i>	<i>9,742</i>	<i>90%</i>	<i>3,734</i>	<i>38%</i>

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), *Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)*, 2015.

Due to the adoption of a new assessment tool by RIDE in 2015, Seventh-Grade Reading Skills cannot be compared with prior Factbooks.

% meeting expectations are the seventh-grade students who met or exceeded expectations for their grade on the English language arts section of the *PARCC*. 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. English Language Learners in the U.S. less than one year are exempt from the English language arts assessment.

2015 *PARCC* data for independent charter schools include: 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.

*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 four core cities, remainder of state, and state totals.

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

See Methodology Section for more information.

References

- ^{1,6,10} Hervey, S. (2013). *Adolescent readers in middle school*. New York, NY: Generation Ready.
- ²⁴ Salinger, T. (2011). *Addressing the "crisis" in adolescent literacy*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Smaller Learning Communities Program.

(continued on page 184)

Math Skills

DEFINITION

Math skills is the percentage of third-, fourth-, fifth-, sixth-, and seventh-grade students who met expectations for math on the *Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)* 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.¹² 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 when asked to perform straight-forward computational procedures but they tend to have a limited understanding of basic mathematical concepts needed to solve simple problems. After two decades of improvement, performance in math in the U.S. has begun to level off.^{4,5,6}

Family risk factors such as poverty and low parental education levels are associated with low student achievement in math. Disparities in math

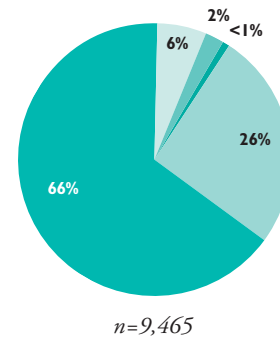
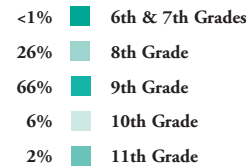
achievement related to race and family income persist in the U.S.⁷ Opportunities for high-quality math instruction are especially important for low-income children. Low-income children demonstrate lower levels of math skills before entering school and the gaps continue and even widen throughout their time in school.⁸

Achieving math proficiency for all students requires that improvements be made in curriculum, instructional materials, assessments, classroom practice, teacher preparation, and professional development.^{9,10} Early warning and intervention systems that identify students struggling with math can provide personalized and timely academic support.¹¹

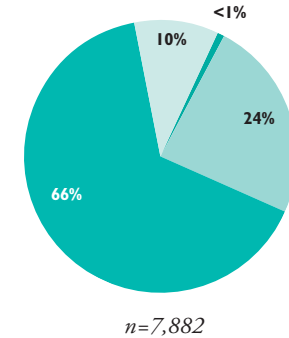
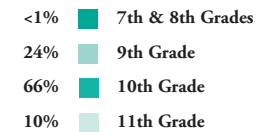
The *National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)* measures proficiency in math and other subjects nationally and across states every other year.¹² In 2015, 80% of Rhode Island fourth graders and 81% of U.S. fourth graders performed at or above the Basic level in math on the *NAEP*, and 72% of Rhode Island eighth graders and 70% of U.S. eighth graders performed at or above the Basic level in math on the *NAEP*.^{13,14} Rhode Island is one of only eight states that saw decreases in both fourth- and eighth-grade math achievement between 2013 and 2015 as measured by the *NAEP* math tests.¹⁵

Algebra and Geometry PARCC Test Takers by Grade, Rhode Island, 2015

Algebra PARCC, 2015



Geometry PARCC, 2015



Source: RIDE, *Rhode Island's PARCC Results for Students in Grade 3 through 8 and High School, 2015*.

- ◆ Rhode Island administers the math *PARCC* to students annually in grades three through eight and gives course-based assessments to students who have completed algebra and geometry, in whichever grade those courses are completed.^{16,17}
- ◆ More than one-quarter (26%) of eighth graders took the algebra assessment rather than the standard math assessment, so the eighth grade math results do not reflect the overall performance of Rhode Island's eighth graders.¹⁸

Statewide Assessments of Math

- ◆ Starting in the 2014-2015 school year, Rhode Island began using a new statewide assessment, the *Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)*, which is aligned to the *Common Core State Standards* in math and assesses students' ability to demonstrate mathematical reasoning and apply mathematical concepts to solve complex, real-world problems.^{19,20}

Table 47.

Third- Fourth-, Fifth-, Sixth-, & Seventh-Grade Students Meeting Expectations in Math, Rhode Island, 2015

SCHOOL DISTRICT	% OF STUDENTS MEETING EXPECTATIONS				
	THIRD GRADE	FOURTH GRADE	FIFTH GRADE	SIXTH GRADE	SEVENTH GRADE
Barrington	67%	47%	65%	49%	60%
Bristol Warren	46%	35%	34%	40%	34%
Burrillville	28%	21%	18%	16%	24%
Central Falls	12%	7%	4%	6%	1%
Charlho	49%	56%	39%	37%	43%
Coventry	42%	29%	37%	24%	28%
Cranston	39%	24%	25%	29%	22%
Cumberland	62%	43%	53%	32%	34%
East Greenwich	58%	44%	49%	55%	70%
East Providence	39%	22%	29%	21%	16%
Exeter-West Greenwich	61%	38%	43%	43%	48%
Foster	43%	26%	32%	NA	NA
Glocester	55%	48%	61%	NA	NA
Foster-Glocester	NA	NA	NA	34%	37%
Jamestown	55%	52%	47%	55%	59%
Johnston	31%	39%	30%	20%	16%
Lincoln	54%	36%	41%	24%	30%
Little Compton	55%	40%	46%	36%	55%
Middletown	49%	34%	30%	48%	33%
Narragansett	58%	42%	41%	51%	50%
New Shoreham	*	*	*	25%	*
Newport	34%	22%	21%	27%	22%
North Kingstown	56%	44%	45%	47%	51%
North Providence	34%	29%	15%	12%	14%
North Smithfield	41%	48%	32%	26%	34%
Pawtucket	25%	14%	21%	14%	11%
Portsmouth	59%	39%	30%	40%	53%
Providence	14%	11%	9%	10%	8%
Scituate	45%	45%	47%	30%	32%
Smithfield	50%	36%	30%	24%	43%
South Kingstown	74%	70%	43%	58%	47%
Tiverton	55%	31%	28%	38%	48%
Warwick	35%	25%	26%	34%	21%
West Warwick	23%	14%	19%	22%	25%
Westerly	41%	32%	11%	27%	24%
Woonsocket	21%	11%	18%	10%	7%
Charter Schools	46%	31%	27%	21%	20%
State-Operated Schools	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
UCAP	NA	NA	NA	NA	0%
Four Core Cities	17%	12%	13%	11%	8%
Remainder of State	46%	34%	33%	33%	33%
Rhode Island	36%	27%	27%	26%	25%

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education, *Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)*, Spring 2015.

Due to the adoption of a new assessment tool by the Rhode Island Department of Education in the 2014-2015 school year, Math Skills in this Factbook cannot be compared with previous Factbooks.

The number of students who met or exceeded expectations received a score of four or five on the math section of the *PARCC* assessment, respectively. Only students who actually took the test are counted in district or school denominators. All enrolled students are eligible unless their Individualized Education Program (IEP) specifically exempts them or unless they are beginning English Language Learners.

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

2015 *PARCC* data for independent charter schools include Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy, Highlander Charter School, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, The Learning Community, Paul Cuffee Charter School, The Compass School, Segue Institute for Learning, and Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts.

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

NA indicates that the school district does not serve students at that grade level and * indicates that the number of students was too small to report.

References

^{1,5,7} Child Trends. (2013). *Mathematics proficiency*. Retrieved February 23, 2015, from www.childtrendsdatabank.org

² RI DataHub. (n.d.). *Data story: Math preparation and postsecondary success*. Retrieved March 3, 2016, from ridatahub.org

³ Federal Coordination in STEM Education Task Force. (2012). *Coordinating federal science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education investments: Progress report*. Washington, DC: Committee on STEM Education, National Science and Technology Council. Retrieved March 3, 2016, from www.whitehouse.gov

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Schools Identified for Intervention

DEFINITION

Schools identified for intervention is the percentage of Rhode Island public schools that are classified as “Focus” or “Priority” and identified for intervention by the Rhode Island Department of Education.

SIGNIFICANCE

Since its passage in 2001, the federal *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)* has focused on closing achievement gaps and improving public schools. In 2012, Rhode Island replaced its former system of classifying schools with a new accountability system that identifies each school’s strengths and weaknesses and focuses on outcomes for student subgroups so Rhode Island can provide the support and interventions schools need to improve student achievement and close achievement gaps.¹ This accountability system classifies schools based on proficiency in English language arts and math, success in closing the achievement gap, growth at the elementary and middle school levels, and graduation rates at the high school level.²

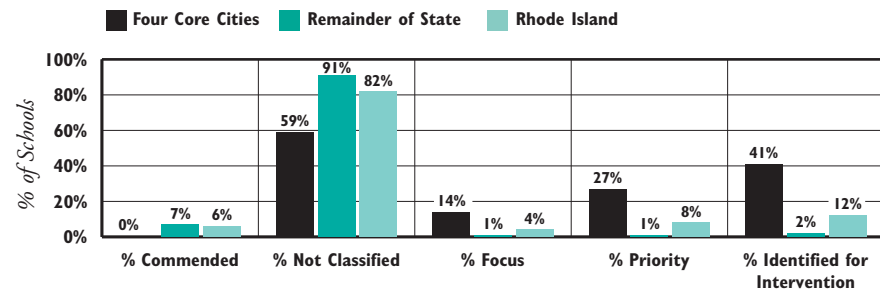
Because the 2014-2015 school year was the first year that the *Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)* was administered, it is a transition year for the state’s school classification system. Schools previously identified as “Focus” or “Priority,” the two lowest classifications, retain that

classification. Schools are classified as “Commended” if they have high levels of achievement, are narrowing achievement gaps within their schools, and have at least a 95% participation rate on both the English language arts and math *PARCC* assessments. All other schools received no classification for the 2014-2015 school year.³

The recent authorization of the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* makes some changes to how states must design their school accountability systems going forward. States may now consider assessments other than standardized tests, such as portfolios or projects, when making school accountability decisions and must include a measure of “school quality or student success,” such as student engagement, access to advanced coursework, or college and career readiness, in their accountability systems.^{4,5,6}

Research on school improvement efforts shows that schools can be improved through comprehensive, whole-school reforms. Critical elements of successful school turnaround efforts include identifying and supporting strong teachers and building leaders, using data-based decision making, setting high expectations for all students, providing wrap-around services to support the social, emotional, and behavior needs of students, and creating a positive and collaborative school culture.⁷

Rhode Island School Performance Classifications, 2014-2015 School Year



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, 2014-2015 school year. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

◆ In Rhode Island in the 2014-2015 school year, 17 schools (6%) were classified as “Commended,” 11 schools (4%) were classified as “Focus,” and 21 schools (8%) schools were classified as “Priority.” Because the 2014-2015 school year was the first year for *PARCC* assessments, only “Commended,” “Focus,” and “Priority” schools are classified this year. All other schools receive no school classification this year. Schools designated as “Priority” or “Focus” schools (12% of schools in Rhode Island in 2014-2015) were identified for intervention, and 27 of these 32 schools were located in the four core cities.^{8,9}

Interventions Designed to Improve Schools

- ◆ In Rhode Island, intervention in low-achieving schools has led to improvements in school climate and student achievement. The Rhode Island Department of Education works with districts and schools to design, implement, and monitor plans focused on improving instruction and student achievement that schools can sustain over time.¹⁰
- ◆ Once identified as a “Priority” or “Focus” school requiring intervention, the school and state begin a multi-year intervention plan that begins with diagnostic evaluation and the development of comprehensive strategies for intervention.¹¹
- ◆ All public schools in Rhode Island, regardless of classification, are included in the accountability system and are expected to strive for continued improvement.^{12,13}

Schools Identified for Intervention

Table 48.

Schools Identified for Intervention, 2014-2015 School Year

SCHOOL DISTRICT	TOTAL # OF SCHOOLS	# COMMENDED	# NOT CLASSIFIED	# FOCUS	# PRIORITY	# SUBJECT TO STATE INTERVENTION	% SUBJECT TO STATE INTERVENTION
Barrington	6	2	4	0	0	0	0%
Bristol Warren	6	1	5	0	0	0	0%
Burrillville	4	0	4	0	0	0	0%
Central Falls	4	0	1	1	2	3	75%
Chariho	6	1	5	0	0	0	0%
Coventry	7	0	7	0	0	0	0%
Cranston	23	2	20	1	0	1	4%
Cumberland	8	0	8	0	0	0	0%
East Greenwich	6	1	5	0	0	0	0%
East Providence	11	0	9	0	2	2	18%
Exeter-West Greenwich	3	0	3	0	0	0	0%
Foster	1	0	1	0	0	0	0%
Foster-Glocester	2	0	2	0	0	0	0%
Glocester	2	0	2	0	0	0	0%
Jamestown	2	1	1	0	0	0	0%
Johnston	6	1	5	0	0	0	0%
Lincoln	6	1	5	0	0	0	0%
Little Compton	1	0	1	0	0	0	0%
Middletown	5	0	5	0	0	0	0%
Narragansett	3	0	3	0	0	0	0%
New Shoreham	1	0	1	0	0	0	0%
Newport	2	0	2	0	0	0	0%
North Kingstown	8	0	8	0	0	0	0%
North Providence	9	0	9	0	0	0	0%
North Smithfield	4	0	4	0	0	0	0%
Pawtucket	16	0	14	0	2	2	13%
Portsmouth	4	0	4	0	0	0	0%
Providence	37	0	15	8	14	22	59%
Scituate	5	0	5	0	0	0	0%
Smithfield	6	0	6	0	0	0	0%
South Kingstown	7	3	4	0	0	0	0%
Tiverton	5	1	4	0	0	0	0%
Warwick	22	0	22	0	0	0	0%
West Warwick	5	0	5	0	0	0	0%
Westerly	6	0	6	0	0	0	0%
Woonsocket	9	0	9	0	0	0	0%
<i>Charter Schools</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>7%</i>
<i>State-Operated Schools</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>25%</i>
<i>UCAP</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0%</i>
<i>Four Core Cities</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>41%</i>
<i>Remainder of State</i>	<i>192</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>175</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2%</i>
<i>Rhode Island</i>	<i>277</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>228</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>12%</i>

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education, 2014-2015 school year.

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

Charter schools that are classified include Beacon Charter High School for the Arts, Blackstone Academy Charter School, Blackstone Valley Prep, The Compass School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, The Greene School, Highlander Charter School, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, The Learning Community, Rhode Island Nurses Institute Middle College Charter School, Segue Institute for Learning, and Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts.

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

The only newly classified schools this year are Commended Schools. Schools previously in the lowest two classifications – Focus and Priority Schools – retain that classification for this year. All other schools receive no school classification this year. Schools listed as “not classified” in this table were not Commended, Focus, or Priority schools or were not classified in 2013-2014 because they did not have sufficient years of data or had new school designations.

References

- ¹ *Rhode Island school and district accountability system ESEA flexibility under NCLB.* (2012). Providence, RI: Rhode Island Department of Education.
- ² *Rhode Island accountability process revisions for school years 2015 and 2016.* (2015). Providence, RI: Rhode Island Department of Education.
- ³ Rhode Island Department of Education. (2016). *Seventeen schools honored as R.I. commended schools* [Press release.]. Retrieved February 16, 2016, from www.ride.ri.gov
- ⁴ *Fact Sheet: Congress acts to fix No Child Left Behind.* (2015). Washington, DC: Office of the Press Secretary, The White House.

(continued on page 184)

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 positive relationships within the school community. During the early elementary school years, children develop important skills and approaches to learning that are critical for ongoing school success. Through their experiences in K-3 classrooms, children build academic, social-emotional and study skills.^{1,2} Children who are chronically absent in kindergarten show lower levels of achievement in math, reading, and general knowledge in first grade. Chronic absence in kindergarten appears to be especially detrimental for poor and Hispanic children.³ In Rhode Island, children who are chronically absent in kindergarten have lower levels of achievement as far out as the seventh grade and are more than twice as likely to be retained.⁴

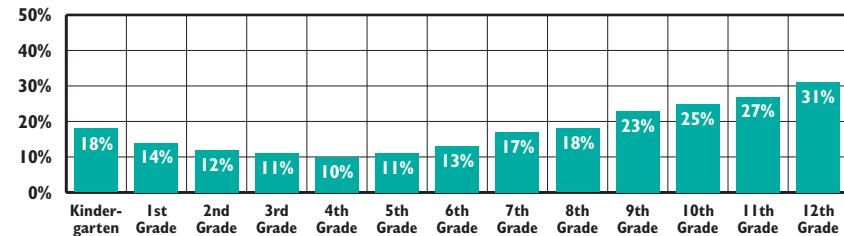
Chronic early absence affects one out of ten children in the U.S. during their first two years of school.⁵ Children from poor families are much more likely to

have high rates of chronic absenteeism in the early grades than higher-income children. In the U.S., one in five (21%) poor kindergartners were chronically absent, compared to less than one in 10 (8%) of their higher-income peers.⁶ Children who are homeless or formerly homeless experience poor educational outcomes related to student absenteeism and mobility.⁷ Unaddressed health and behavioral health issues, including asthma, can result in increased absenteeism.⁸

Chronic early absence is most often a result of a combination of school, family, and community factors.⁹ While illness is a leading factor in chronic early absence, poverty, teenage parenting, single parenting, low maternal education levels, unemployment, poor maternal health, public assistance enrollment, and household food insecurity all can affect school attendance. Rates of chronic absence rise significantly when three or more of these risk factors are present.^{10,11}

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, disruptive classrooms and/or bullying.¹² 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 factors that can lead to chronic absence.¹³

Chronic Absence Rates in Rhode Island by Grade, 2014-2015 School Year



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, 2014-2015 school year.

- ◆ **Chronic absence rates are high in kindergarten and then decline before increasing again in middle and high school.** During the 2014-2015 school year, 18% of Rhode Island kindergarten students, 14% of first graders, 12% of second graders, and 11% of third graders were chronically absent (i.e., absent 18 days or more).¹⁴
- ◆ **During the 2014-2015 school year, 14% of Rhode Island children in grades K-3 were chronically absent, and an additional 16% missed 12 to 17 days of school.**¹⁵ Chronic absenteeism can affect the reading and math outcomes of all students in a class because teachers may backtrack or slow the learning pace to review lessons for students who have missed school.¹⁶
- ◆ **Averages for school-wide attendance can mask significant numbers of chronically absent individual students.**¹⁷ During the 2014-2015 school year, the average daily attendance rate for K-3 students in Rhode Island's four core cities was 93%, but 23% of students were chronically absent.¹⁸
- ◆ **Most schools monitor average daily attendance or unexcused absences, but few actively track chronic absenteeism.** Rhode Island is one of the few states that makes school-level data on chronic absence available on a state website.¹⁹
- ◆ **Schools, districts, and the state can nurture a culture of attendance by raising awareness among school and community personnel about the problem of chronic absence, using positive messaging to encourage parents to send their children to school on time and every day in the early grades, providing frequent reports on student absenteeism and identifying and intervening with students with troubling absenteeism patterns.**^{20,21}

Table 49.

Chronic Early Absence Rates, Grades K-3, Rhode Island, 2014-2015 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	20	877	96%	46%	40%	11%	3%
Bristol Warren	57	1,072	95%	38%	38%	14%	10%
Burrillville	14	640	95%	40%	37%	16%	8%
Central Falls	165	918	93%	33%	29%	20%	18%
Chariho	35	896	96%	48%	36%	11%	4%
Coventry	54	1,306	96%	45%	37%	12%	6%
Cranston	226	2,973	94%	33%	37%	17%	13%
Cumberland	73	1,302	96%	51%	37%	8%	4%
East Greenwich	20	634	96%	46%	41%	10%	4%
East Providence	116	1,674	95%	42%	32%	16%	11%
Exeter-West Greenwich	27	393	96%	40%	41%	15%	5%
Foster	*	171	96%	52%	33%	11%	4%
Glocester	13	341	98%	80%	15%	4%	1%
Jamestown	15	208	95%	41%	36%	15%	8%
Johnston	55	988	93%	26%	32%	22%	20%
Lincoln	45	819	96%	46%	33%	12%	8%
Little Compton	*	90	95%	36%	44%	14%	6%
Middletown	52	715	95%	38%	38%	16%	8%
Narragansett	12	352	96%	45%	37%	13%	6%
New Shoreham	*	24	92%	17%	21%	46%	17%
Newport	57	705	95%	35%	35%	19%	11%
North Kingstown	65	1,007	96%	45%	36%	13%	7%
North Providence	81	1,060	95%	41%	32%	15%	12%
North Smithfield	33	479	96%	46%	39%	11%	4%
Pawtucket	431	3,218	95%	39%	32%	16%	13%
Portsmouth	46	624	96%	45%	39%	11%	5%
Providence	1,347	7,913	92%	28%	27%	18%	26%
Scituate	21	333	94%	35%	34%	13%	18%
Smithfield	24	663	96%	50%	39%	9%	2%
South Kingstown	46	873	96%	45%	40%	11%	4%
Tiverton	36	519	96%	41%	35%	18%	6%
Warwick	186	2,573	95%	37%	35%	17%	11%
West Warwick	128	1,140	94%	36%	34%	19%	11%
Westerly	53	875	95%	41%	34%	15%	9%
Woonsocket	341	2,136	91%	23%	25%	20%	32%
<i>Charter Schools</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>2,033</i>	<i>96%</i>	<i>52%</i>	<i>30%</i>	<i>12%</i>	<i>6%</i>
<i>Rhode Island School for the Deaf</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>92%</i>	<i>31%</i>	<i>31%</i>	<i>8%</i>	<i>31%</i>
<i>Four Core Cities</i>	<i>2,284</i>	<i>14,185</i>	<i>93%</i>	<i>30%</i>	<i>28%</i>	<i>18%</i>	<i>23%</i>
<i>Remainder of State</i>	<i>1,619</i>	<i>26,326</i>	<i>95%</i>	<i>41%</i>	<i>36%</i>	<i>14%</i>	<i>9%</i>
<i>Rhode Island</i>	<i>3,947</i>	<i>42,557</i>	<i>94%</i>	<i>38%</i>	<i>33%</i>	<i>16%</i>	<i>14%</i>

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education, 2014-2015 school year.

Attendance rates are calculated by dividing the state-calculated "average days of attendance" by the "average days of 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 3,947 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, and South Side 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.

^{2,3,5,9,11,12,20} 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.

⁴ RI DataHUB. (n.d.). *Chronic absenteeism among kindergarten students*. Retrieved February 10, 2016, from <http://ridatahub.org>

(continued on page 184)

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 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

Family and economic factors connected to student absenteeism include poverty, 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. School factors contributing to chronic absence include school climate,

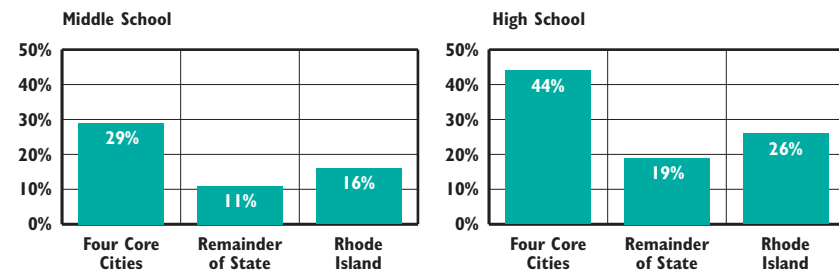
discipline policies, and concerns about bullying and unsafe situations.^{4,5,6}

Student-reported reasons for not attending school include repeated suspensions, disruptive learning environments, irrelevant or unchallenging courses, poor achievement, concerns for safety, difficulty with peer and adult relationships, conflicts between school and work, family responsibilities, and negative perceptions of school.^{7,8}

The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) defines truancy as ten or more unexcused absences in a school year.⁹ During the 2014-2015 school year in Rhode Island, 22% of middle school students and 31% of high school students were considered truant by RIDE.¹⁰ Truant students in Rhode Island may be referred to the Family Court's Truancy Calendar, a community and school-based intervention program.¹¹

One-third (33%) of Rhode Island's low-income middle and high school students were chronically absent in 2014-2015, compared with 12% of higher-income students. Middle and high school students receiving special education services (30%) were more likely than their peers not receiving these services (21%) to be chronically absent. Almost three-quarters (71%) of absences by middle and high school students were unexcused absences.¹²

Chronic Absence Rate by District Type, Middle and High School, 2014-2015 School Year



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, 2014-2015 school year.

- ◆ The chronic absence rate among middle (29%) and high (44%) school students in the four core cities is more than twice as high as the rates among middle (11%) and high (19%) school students in the remainder of the state.¹³
- ◆ One of the most effective strategies for increasing student achievement, high school graduation rates, college access and completion, and for closing achievement gaps between higher income and lower income students, would be to increase the number of low-income students who attend school regularly.¹⁴

Reducing Chronic Absence

- ◆ Schools and districts together with community agencies can improve student attendance by developing systems that provide frequent reports on student absenteeism and reasons for the absenteeism, problem solving to address reasons for absenteeism, building and sustaining relationships with students and their families, developing a community response that involves adults who interact with students outside of school, recognizing and rewarding good attendance, and committing to learning what works and expanding effective programs and halting efforts that are not working.¹⁵
- ◆ States can reduce chronic absence by raising awareness about the problem; producing chronic absence reports with data available by district, grade, and subgroup; making chronic absence rates and strategies for improving them a key part of accountability systems and district and school improvement plans; and allocating resources to address barriers to attendance.¹⁶

Chronic Absence, Middle School and High School

Table 50.

**Chronic Absence and Attendance Rates, Middle and High School,
Rhode Island, 2014-2015 School Year**

SCHOOL DISTRICT	MIDDLE SCHOOL					HIGH SCHOOL				
	# 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	13	826	96%	10%	4%	32	1,062	96%	11%	5%
Bristol Warren	32	773	95%	17%	12%	74	937	92%	19%	20%
Burrillville	*	622	95%	16%	10%	*	716	94%	16%	14%
Central Falls	50	437	91%	20%	33%	182	728	85%	14%	48%
Chariho	42	756	96%	9%	4%	113	1,145	94%	14%	14%
Coventry	21	1,152	96%	14%	6%	91	1,540	94%	12%	14%
Cranston	116	2,560	93%	17%	19%	241	3,175	88%	15%	40%
Cumberland	35	1,128	96%	10%	6%	64	1,301	94%	14%	14%
East Greenwich	*	626	97%	10%	2%	26	726	98%	5%	2%
East Providence	49	1,165	93%	18%	19%	86	1,524	92%	16%	27%
Exeter-West Greenwich	*	421	96%	12%	7%	31	540	95%	14%	18%
Foster-Glocester	17	467	92%	23%	15%	17	644	93%	19%	17%
Jamestown	*	147	96%	13%	9%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Johnston	25	755	93%	21%	23%	55	874	92%	17%	24%
Lincoln	24	768	95%	13%	11%	46	916	92%	15%	23%
Little Compton	*	102	94%	24%	8%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Middletown	43	527	95%	14%	9%	57	669	95%	12%	11%
Narragansett	21	296	96%	13%	8%	20	425	94%	14%	16%
New Shoreham	*	37	95%	16%	14%	*	35	94%	23%	17%
Newport	34	445	94%	17%	13%	110	578	89%	18%	32%
North Kingstown	29	964	96%	13%	7%	80	1,429	95%	10%	10%
North Providence	55	837	96%	11%	10%	105	997	92%	18%	30%
North Smithfield	18	445	96%	13%	4%	48	535	95%	15%	10%
Pawtucket	171	2,028	94%	15%	18%	280	2,072	90%	14%	34%
Portsmouth	19	596	96%	14%	9%	47	935	95%	13%	11%
Providence	893	5,400	91%	17%	30%	1,354	6,446	86%	16%	45%
Scituate	12	352	95%	13%	12%	20	467	94%	16%	12%
Smithfield	13	585	96%	10%	5%	26	718	95%	12%	10%
South Kingstown	14	775	96%	10%	5%	68	1,035	94%	11%	11%
Tiverton	19	433	95%	10%	10%	34	558	93%	19%	19%
Warwick	98	2,188	95%	16%	12%	216	2,818	92%	16%	24%
West Warwick	55	765	94%	13%	15%	117	968	92%	12%	22%
Westerly	22	655	95%	16%	9%	60	931	94%	17%	15%
Woonsocket	208	1,328	89%	18%	38%	218	1,545	85%	14%	51%
<i>Charter Schools</i>	33	1,085	96%	15%	7%	144	1,624	89%	14%	28%
<i>State-Operated Schools</i>	28	11	94%	18%	0%	325	1,717	91%	21%	32%
<i>UCAP</i>	11	125	89%	17%	38%	*	11	86%	36%	36%
<i>Four Core Cities</i>	1,322	9,193	91%	17%	29%	2,034	10,791	86%	15%	44%
<i>Remainder of State</i>	859	22,168	95%	14%	11%	1,888	28,203	93%	14%	19%
<i>Rhode Island</i>	2,253	32,582	94%	15%	16%	4,393	42,346	91%	15%	26%

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education, 2014-2015 school year.

Attendance rates are calculated by dividing the state-calculated "average days of attendance" by the "average days of 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 2,253 Rhode Island middle school students and 4,393 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 attend high school in North Kingstown.

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

State-operated schools include The Rhode Island Training School operated by DCYF, Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center, Rhode Island School for the Deaf, and William M. Davies Jr. Career & Technical High School. UCAP is the Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program.

*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.

References are on page 185.

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, out-of-school suspensions, and removal to an Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) by school personnel.

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, out-of-school suspension is a widely used disciplinary technique, both nationally and in Rhode Island. Suspensions are used for minor offenses, such as attendance infractions, 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. In fact, being suspended even once in ninth grade is associated with a twofold increase in the likelihood of dropping out.^{5,6}

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, appropriate, and limited use of suspensions.⁷

During the 2014-2015 school year in Rhode Island, 26,677 disciplinary actions were attributed to 10,449 students. In Rhode Island during the 2014-2015 school year, 7% of the student population was suspended at least once. The total number of disciplinary actions is about two and a half times the number of students disciplined because some students were disciplined multiple times.⁸

Of all disciplinary actions during the 2014-2015 school year, 9% (2,515) involved elementary school students (pre-kindergarten through 5th grade), 39% (10,506) involved middle school students (6th-8th grades), and 51% (13,656) involved high school students (9th-12th grades). Kindergartners received 203 disciplinary actions, including 187 out-of-school suspensions.⁹

Out-of-School Suspensions by Infraction, Rhode Island, 2014-2015

TYPE OF INFRACTION*	#	%	TYPE OF INFRACTION	#	%
Insubordination/Disrespect	3,758	29%	Alcohol/Drug/Tobacco Offenses	581	4%
Disorderly Conduct	3,038	23%	Arson/Larceny/Robbery/Vandalism	332	3%
Fighting	1,685	13%	Electronic Devices/Technology	297	2%
Assault of Student or Teacher	1,029	8%	Weapon Possession	156	1%
Obscene/Abusive Language	988	8%	Attendance Offenses	0	0%
Harassment/Intimidation/Threat	985	8%	Other Offenses	125	1%
<i>Total</i>			<i>12,974</i>		

Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, 2014-2015 school year. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.
*Harassment offenses include hazing and hate crimes. Assault offenses include sexual assault.

◆ Since the 2009-2010 school year, the number of out-of-school suspensions in Rhode Island has decreased by 47%. During the 2014-2015 school year, out-of-school suspensions accounted for just under one half (49%) of disciplinary actions. More than one-half of out-of-school suspensions were for non-violent offenses, such as insubordination or disrespect (29%) and disorderly conduct (23%).^{10,11}

Disparities in School Discipline by Special Education Status and Race/Ethnicity, Rhode Island, 2014-2015

	% OF STUDENTS ENROLLED	% OF SUSPENSIONS
Students With Disabilities	15%	30%
White Students	61%	44%
Asian Students	3%	1%
Black Students	8%	14%
Hispanic Students	24%	35%
Native American Students	1%	2%

Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, 2014-2015 school year. Detailed data by district is available at www.ride.ri.gov

◆ In Rhode Island and nationally, Black and Hispanic 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.^{12,13,14}

◆ Schools must comply with special requirements about the discipline of students with disabilities that are included in state and federal laws, including the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*.¹⁵

Table 51.

Disciplinary Actions, Rhode Island School Districts, 2014-2015

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	3,271	14	49	1	63	2
Bristol Warren	3,322	578	475	14	1,053	32
Burrillville	2,350	29	155	7	184	8
Central Falls	2,720	384	89	3	473	17
Chariho	3,283	458	211	6	669	20
Coventry	4,649	651	150	3	801	17
Cranston	10,067	1,402	1,209	12	2,611	26
Cumberland	4,503	72	278	6	350	8
East Greenwich	2,355	21	21	1	42	2
East Providence	5,217	0	508	10	508	10
Exeter-West Greenwich	1,619	*	99	6	103	6
Foster	282	*	*	1	*	1
Foster-Glocester	1,110	256	112	10	368	33
Glocester	524	0	0	0	0	0
Jamestown	488	*	*	1	11	2
Johnston	3,030	84	70	2	154	5
Lincoln	3,019	*	209	7	210	7
Little Compton	250	*	0	0	*	1
Middletown	2,279	408	109	5	517	23
Narragansett	1,316	71	93	7	164	12
New Shoreham	116	*	*	1	*	3
Newport	2,052	23	342	17	365	18
North Kingstown	3,957	278	76	2	354	9
North Providence	3,516	872	730	21	1,602	46
North Smithfield	1,750	0	57	3	57	3
Pawtucket	9,011	131	905	10	1,036	11
Portsmouth	2,549	228	124	5	352	14
Providence	24,040	1,410	4,520	19	5,930	25
Scituate	1,373	35	*	0	36	3
Smithfield	2,368	89	94	4	183	8
South Kingstown	3,275	505	124	4	629	19
Tiverton	1,765	0	105	6	105	6
Warwick	8,953	600	534	6	1,134	13
West Warwick	3,395	189	241	7	431	13
Westerly	3,018	47	239	8	286	9
Woonsocket	5,996	4,396	764	13	5,160	86
<i>Charter Schools</i>	<i>5,397</i>	<i>166</i>	<i>248</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>414</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>State-Operated Schools</i>	<i>1,764</i>	<i>287</i>	<i>*</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>292</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>UCAP</i>	<i>137</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Four Core Cities</i>	<i>41,767</i>	<i>6,321</i>	<i>6,278</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>12,599</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Remainder of State</i>	<i>91,019</i>	<i>6,928</i>	<i>6,423</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>13,352</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Rhode Island</i>	<i>140,084</i>	<i>13,702</i>	<i>12,974</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>26,677</i>	<i>19</i>

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education, 2014-2015 school year.

The out-of-school suspensions 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.

*Only one removal to an Interim Alternative Education Setting (IAES) by school personnel was reported because new guidance from the Rhode Island Department of Education defined in-school suspensions more broadly than in the past. Removals are counted in district, four core city, remainder of state, and Rhode Island totals.

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

Charter schools include: Achievement First Rhode Island, Beacon Charter High School for the Arts, Blackstone Academy, Blackstone Valley Prep, The Compass School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, The Greene School, Highlander Charter School, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, The Learning Community, Rhode Island Nurses Institute Middle College Charter School, 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.

References are on page 185.

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 requirement for college and most employment. In Rhode Island, adults without high school diplomas are more likely to be unemployed and have lower median incomes than adults with high school degrees.^{1,2} In 2014, 12% of Rhode Island children lived in households headed by a non-high school graduate, lower than the national average of 14%.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 off-track, so academic supports can be put in place to help students get “on track” for graduation.⁵ Supports during the transition from middle to high school have been found to be particularly

important to preventing dropping out.^{6,7}

Adopting student-centered learning practices at the high school level can increase achievement and engagement for students from a variety of backgrounds. These practices encourage deeper engagement with school by personalizing learning to a student’s interests, allowing students to take ownership over their work and continue learning outside of the classroom, and pacing learning to match the student’s mastery of the content.⁸

In order to graduate, Rhode Island students must complete at least 20 courses in core subject areas, two performance-based assessments, and starting with the Class of 2021, reach a minimum achievement level on the state assessment in content areas designated by the Board of Education. The Rhode Island Secondary School Regulations and high school graduation requirements are currently under revision.⁹

High School Graduation Rates	
2013-2014	
RI	81%
US	82%
National Rank*	34th
New England Rank**	6th

*1st is best; 49th is worst

**1st is best; 6th is worst

Source: National Center for Education Statistics. (2015). Table 1. Retrieved February 26, 2016, from www.nces.ed.gov

Rhode Island Four-Year High School Graduation and Dropout Rates, by Student Subgroup, Class of 2015

	COHORT SIZE	DROPOUT RATE	% COMPLETED GED	% OF STUDENTS STILL IN SCHOOL	FOUR-YEAR GRADUATION RATE
Female Students	5,341	5%	1%	7%	86%
Male Students	5,564	8%	2%	10%	80%
English Language Learners	1,240	11%	<1%	12%	77%
Students With Disabilities	2,553	12%	2%	19%	68%
Students Without Disabilities	8,352	5%	1%	6%	88%
Low-Income Students	6,276	10%	2%	12%	76%
Higher-Income Students	4,629	2%	1%	4%	93%
White Students	6,889	5%	2%	7%	87%
Asian Students	366	6%	1%	5%	89%
Black Students	891	8%	2%	13%	77%
Hispanic Students	2,341	10%	1%	13%	76%
Native American	82	20%	1%	15%	65%
ALL STUDENTS	10,905	7%	2%	9%	83%

Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, Class of 2015. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

◆ The Rhode Island four-year graduation rate for the Class of 2015 was 83%, up from 70% for the Class of 2007 (the first class for which the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) began calculating graduation rates using a cohort formula).¹⁰

◆ Poverty is associated with the likelihood of dropping out.¹¹ Almost one in eight students in Rhode Island’s four core cities drop out of high school (12% drop out rate) compared to about one in 20 students in the remainder of the state (5% drop out rate).¹²

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 11,425 Rhode Island students who enrolled in ninth grade in 2009, 9,150 (80.1%) graduated in four years in 2013, 435 (3.8%) graduated in five years in 2014, and 57 (<1%) graduated in six years in 2015.¹³

◆ Of the 435 students who graduated in five years in 2014, 45% were students with disabilities. Of the 57 students who graduated in six years in 2015, 65% were students with disabilities.¹⁴

High School Graduation Rate

Table 52.

High School Graduation Rates, Rhode Island, Class of 2015

SCHOOL DISTRICT	FOUR-YEAR COHORT RATES				
	# OF STUDENTS IN COHORT	DROPOUT RATE	% COMPLETED GED	% STILL IN SCHOOL	FOUR-YEAR GRADUATION RATE
Barrington	284	2%	<1%	2%	95%
Bristol Warren	248	4%	<1%	10%	86%
Burrillville	183	4%	4%	3%	89%
Central Falls	224	5%	3%	11%	81%
Chariho	317	3%	2%	4%	90%
Coventry	377	4%	<1%	5%	91%
Cranston	826	4%	2%	9%	85%
Cumberland	360	4%	0%	8%	88%
East Greenwich	195	2%	1%	4%	94%
East Providence	390	6%	2%	9%	82%
Exeter-West Greenwich	142	5%	4%	8%	83%
Foster-Glocester	161	2%	1%	6%	92%
Johnston	199	8%	1%	7%	84%
Lincoln	264	4%	<1%	3%	93%
Middletown	186	8%	4%	6%	82%
Narragansett	121	4%	1%	2%	93%
Newport	142	15%	1%	6%	79%
New Shoreham	13	0%	0%	15%	85%
North Kingstown	340	4%	3%	4%	89%
North Providence	244	<1%	1%	4%	95%
North Smithfield	148	3%	0%	9%	89%
Pawtucket	535	10%	2%	8%	81%
Portsmouth	221	2%	0%	2%	96%
Providence	1,649	11%	1%	13%	75%
Scituate	118	2%	0%	4%	94%
Smithfield	160	3%	0%	2%	96%
South Kingstown	243	5%	<1%	6%	88%
Tiverton	134	2%	2%	2%	93%
Warwick	738	8%	4%	8%	81%
West Warwick	239	7%	0%	8%	85%
Westerly	244	3%	1%	5%	91%
Woonsocket	456	20%	2%	16%	63%
<i>Beacon Charter High School for the Arts</i>	56	2%	2%	5%	91%
<i>Blackstone Academy</i>	40	3%	0%	15%	83%
<i>The Greene School</i>	34	0%	0%	24%	76%
<i>William M. Davies Jr. Career & Technical High School</i>	205	4%	<1%	8%	87%
<i>Paul Cuffee Charter School</i>	63	2%	0%	5%	94%
<i>Rhode Island School for the Deaf</i>	16	19%	0%	81%	0%
<i>DCYF Schools</i>	59	17%	39%	34%	10%
<i>Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center</i>	216	3%	<1%	7%	90%
<i>Four Core Cities</i>	2,864	12%	1%	12%	75%
<i>Remainder of State</i>	7,237	5%	1%	6%	88%
<i>Rhode Island</i>	10,905	7%	2%	9%	83%

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education, Class of 2015.

The 2015 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 2011-2012 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.

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

Students from Little Compton attend high school in Portsmouth, and students from Jamestown attend high school in North Kingstown. DCYF includes students attending DCYF alternative schools.

Rhode Island Nurses Institute Middle College and the Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy are not reported separately because these students generally complete their course of study in more than four years. These 115 students are, however, included in the state total.

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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

By 2020, 71% of jobs in Rhode Island will require post-secondary education beyond high school.¹ Between 2010 and 2014 in Rhode Island, adults with high school diplomas were almost three times more likely to be unemployed as those with bachelor's degrees or higher.² During that same period, the median annual income for adults with high school diplomas was \$30,757, compared to \$52,493 for adults with bachelor's degrees.³

Many students, low-income students in particular, 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 (including AP courses), take college entrance exams, complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), get adequate counseling to

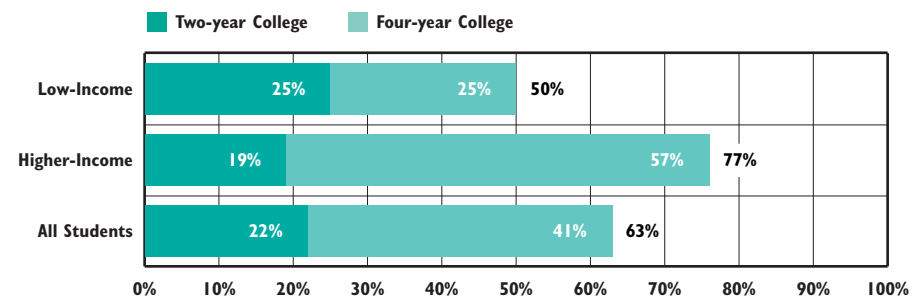
enroll in college and access financial aid, and that financial aid is targeted strategically to those students with the greatest needs.⁴

Students who participate in upper-level honors and Advanced Placement (AP) courses are likely to attend and succeed in college.⁵ During the 2014-2015 school year, 4,675 Rhode Island public school students took an AP course exam, 7% more than the previous year.⁶

Among students in the Class of 2015, 59% took the SAT exam. Average SAT scores for Rhode Island public school students were 480 in critical reading, 481 in math, and 468 in writing.⁷ Students with scores of 500 or better in each section are more likely to enroll in and succeed in college.⁸

Seniors who have completed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (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.⁹ Among Rhode Island seniors due to graduate in 2015, 55% completed a FAFSA by June 2015.¹⁰

Immediate College Enrollment by District Type and Type of College, Class of 2014, Rhode Island



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, Class of 2014. Percentages may not sum exactly due to rounding.

◆ Sixty-three percent of Rhode Island students who graduated from high school in the Class of 2014 immediately enrolled in college. However, there are large gaps in college access, particularly four-year college enrollment, between low- and higher-income students. Among Rhode Island students who graduated from high school in 2014, 25% of low-income students immediately enrolled in a four-year college, compared to 57% of higher-income students.¹¹

◆ Low-income and first-generation college students are more likely to go to college when they attend high schools with strong college-going cultures, in which teachers encourage students to attend college, help them with the application process, and make sure that students are academically prepared. High schools that offer rigorous coursework, set high expectations for students, offer dual enrollment in college classes, and increase access to financial aid counseling can improve their students' enrollment and completion rates.^{12,13,14}

◆ Many students who enroll in college do not complete their degree. Improving college access and success 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, aligning the K-12 education system with college and career expectations, simplifying the college admission process, making college affordable, and providing student support programs that increase college completion rates.¹⁵ State policies that reward colleges for meeting performance goals, transform remediation practices, encourage full-time college attendance, help students balance work and school, and support on-time graduation could further increase college completion rates.¹⁶

Table 53.

College Preparation and Access, Rhode Island

SCHOOL DISTRICT	TOTAL 12TH GRADE ENROLLMENT OCT. 2014	4-YEAR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE, 2015	% OF 12TH GRADERS WHO FILLED OUT THE FAFSA, 2015	AVERAGE SAT SCORE IN CRITICAL READING, 2015	AVERAGE SAT SCORE IN MATH, 2015	AVERAGE SAT SCORE IN WRITING, 2015	% OF 12TH GRADERS TAKING THE SATS, 2015
Barrington	299	95%	62%	573	588	562	87%
Bristol Warren	226	86%	58%	537	527	542	48%
Burrillville	190	89%	49%	494	503	483	49%
Central Falls	226	81%	45%	365	398	357	46%
Chariho	298	90%	56%	514	499	501	57%
Coventry	399	91%	56%	473	481	459	59%
Cranston	838	85%	51%	477	475	466	50%
Cumberland	355	88%	61%	496	508	482	76%
East Greenwich	202	94%	50%	568	572	556	79%
East Providence	381	82%	56%	468	468	446	52%
Exeter-West Greenwich	140	83%	51%	525	512	509	64%
Foster-Glocester	161	92%	61%	499	493	483	64%
Johnston	206	84%	49%	460	450	449	55%
Lincoln	262	93%	63%	521	527	508	69%
Middletown	173	82%	53%	509	531	494	65%
Narragansett	125	93%	66%	527	543	522	74%
New Shoreham	13	85%	54%	517	492	489	77%
Newport	122	79%	58%	468	460	460	65%
North Kingstown	360	89%	59%	543	540	525	70%
North Providence	252	95%	55%	468	460	463	55%
North Smithfield	143	89%	62%	523	539	511	69%
Pawtucket	503	81%	47%	405	406	395	61%
Portsmouth	233	96%	65%	536	538	526	74%
Providence	1,435	75%	60%	407	406	394	68%
Scituate	116	94%	63%	540	534	522	74%
Smithfield	167	96%	65%	494	504	480	69%
South Kingstown	261	88%	56%	551	572	543	70%
Tiverton	133	93%	58%	467	464	450	48%
Warwick	718	81%	49%	502	484	487	46%
West Warwick	202	85%	52%	473	458	464	54%
Westerly	271	91%	51%	502	517	487	56%
Woonsocket	394	63%	45%	449	448	431	38%
<i>Beacon Charter High School for the Arts</i>	53	91%	75%	459	426	454	66%
<i>Blackstone Academy</i>	39	83%	82%	408	430	409	97%
<i>Paul Cuffee Charter School</i>	61	94%	62%	380	394	375	84%
<i>Sheila "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy</i>	32	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
<i>The Greene School</i>	30	76%	67%	550	478	515	77%
<i>RI Nurses Institute Middle College</i>	100	NA	11%	408	388	406	47%
<i>William M. Davies Jr. Career & Technical High School</i>	205	87%	52%	443	455	426	47%
<i>DCYF Schools</i>	17	10%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
<i>Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center</i>	222	90%	56%	463	443	435	5%
<i>RI School for the Deaf</i>	14	0%	NA	NA	NA	NA	7%
<i>Four Core Cities</i>	2,558	75%	54%	NA	NA	NA	60%
<i>Remainder of State</i>	7,247	88%	56%	NA	NA	NA	61%
<i>Rhode Island</i>	10,578	83%	55%	480	481	468	59%

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

12th grade enrollment data (October 1, 2014) and high school graduation rates are from the Rhode Island Department of Education.

The high school graduation rate is the number of students who graduate in four years or fewer divided by the total number of students who started 9th grade in 2011-2012, adjusted for transfers in and transfers out.

% of 12th graders who filled out the FAFSA is from U.S. Department of Education, Federal Student Aid. (2015). *FAFSA completion by high school*. Retrieved March 6, 2016, from studentaid.ed.gov.

SAT scores and number of students taking the SAT are from the College Board. % of 12th graders taking the SAT is calculated using data from the College Board in combination with 12th grade enrollment data from the Rhode Island Department of Education.

High school graduation rate and % of 12th graders taking the SAT include all district students, including students who are placed out of district, so district high school graduation rate and SAT participation data may differ from data reported by high school even in districts with only one high school.

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.

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

Students from Little Compton attend high school in Portsmouth and students from Jamestown attend high school in North Kingstown. DCYF includes students attending DCYF alternative schools.

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(continued on page 185)

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 jobless are included.

SIGNIFICANCE

School and work help teens acquire the skills, knowledge, experience, and supports they need to become productive adults.¹ Teens 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, teen mothers, and teens with disabilities have the highest rates of disconnection from both school and work.²

Disconnected youth are more likely to live in poverty, suffer from substance abuse and mental health problems, have low educational attainment, become teen parents, engage in violent activity, lack health insurance, experience difficulties maintaining employment, and earn low wages.^{3,4,5}

Meaningful family support, adult mentoring, out-of-school programs, job training, and school-to-career programs lessen the likelihood of teens becoming disconnected from school and work.^{6,7,8} Research shows that youth who are consistently connected to work and school have similar annual earnings regardless of whether they are Hispanic, White, or Black.⁹

Between 2010 and 2014, an estimated 3,879 (6%) 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, 56% were males and 44% were females. Fifty-six percent of these youth were high school graduates and 44% had not graduated from high school.¹⁰

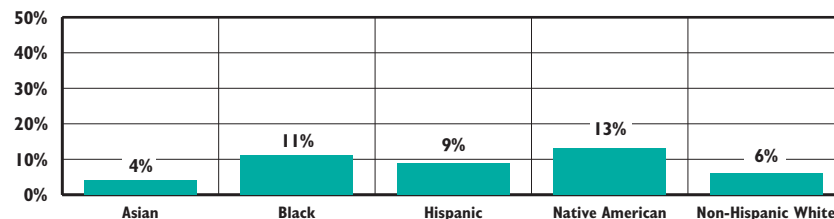
Teens Not in School and Not Working	
	2014
RI	7%
US	7%
National Rank*	20th
New England Rank**	6th

*1st is best; 49th 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, 2014



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

◆ Minority youth (with the exception of Asian youth) are more likely to be disconnected from school and work than White youth.¹¹ In 2014 among youth ages 16 to 19 in the U.S., 13% 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

◆ In the Providence-Warwick metro area in 2013, 27.2% of Latino youth ages 16 to 24 were disconnected, compared with 16.3% in the U.S.; 9.2% of White youth in this age group were disconnected, compared with 11.3% in the U.S.¹³

◆ The economic recession had a negative impact on the job market for youth and young adults. In 2015, there were almost 10.2 million youth ages 16-29 in the U.S. who were neither working nor enrolled in school.¹⁴

Compulsory School Attendance

◆ In 2011, Rhode Island raised its compulsory school attendance requirement from age 16 to 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 guidance counselor, school principal, and at least one parent or guardian. Alternative learning plans must be approved by the district superintendent.¹⁵

◆ As of 2015, 24 states have set compulsory attendance to age 18, 11 states required attendance to age 17, and the remaining 15 states required school attendance to age 16.¹⁶

Connecting Youth to School and Work

- ◆ Education has a positive impact on the likelihood of finding and maintaining employment. Between 2010 and 2014, the unemployment rate for Rhode Island adults ages 25 to 64 with a bachelor's degree or higher was 4%, compared with 16% for those with less than a high school diploma.¹⁷
- ◆ Successful strategies to connect youth to work and school must be comprehensive, including attention to community engagement in schools, early identification of youth at risk of dropping out of school, targeted workforce development programs, and multiple pathways to high school graduation and employment.^{18,19}
- ◆ Programs and alternative schools that enable students to earn college credits while working towards their high school degrees can improve high school graduation rates and better prepare students for college completion and high-skill careers.²⁰

Youth Work Experience

- ◆ Work experience during the teen years increases academic performance, employability, and wages into early adulthood.²¹
- ◆ Public and private investment in summer work programs helps keep adolescents attached to constructive youth development activities and can help prevent youth violence.²²
- ◆ Expanding work experience opportunities, internships, and job shadowing programs can help more youth in Rhode Island successfully transition into the workforce. These types of programs can help to motivate students, teach them critical skills, connect them with mentors and positive adult role models, as well as help them to make informed decisions about vocational training, colleges, and careers. Many internship programs allow youth to receive school credit and/or earn money, while gaining important workplace experience.^{23,24}

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