

# 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.<sup>1</sup> Approximately 15% of U.S. children ages three to 17 have a developmental delay or disability. Boys and children in low-income families are more likely to have a delay or disability than girls or children in higher-income families.<sup>2</sup>

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

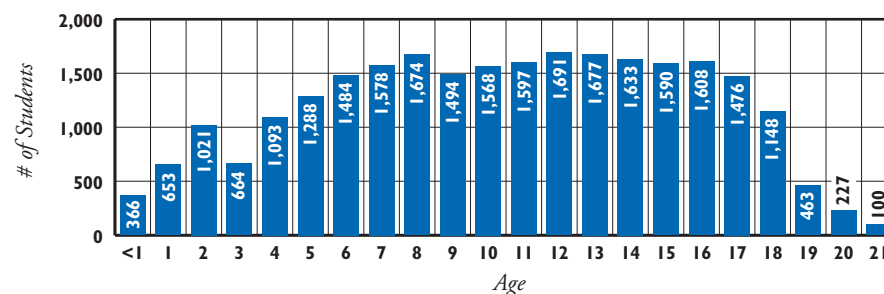
Although progress has been made in improving high school graduation rates and post-secondary school enrollment, students with disabilities are still less likely to graduate from high school and more likely to be suspended than students without disabilities.<sup>5,6</sup>

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

In 2017 in Rhode Island, 16% of students receiving special education services met expectations on the third grade English language arts section and 20% on the third grade math section of the *Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)* assessment, compared with 45% and 49% of students without special education needs, respectively.<sup>8</sup>

In Rhode Island, the four-year graduation rate for the class of 2017 was 63% 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.<sup>9</sup>

Students Ages Birth to 21 Receiving Early Intervention and Special Education Services, Rhode Island, June 2017



Source: Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Center for Child and Family Health, Early Intervention enrollment, June 30, 2017. Rhode Island Department of Education, Office of Diverse Learners, Special Education Census, June 30, 2017. Includes parentally-placed students.

◆ As of June 2017, there were 21,008 students ages six to 21 (15% of all kindergarten through grade 12 students) receiving special education services through Rhode Island public schools. Thirty-seven percent of these students had a learning disability, 18% had a health impairment, 13% had a speech/language disorder, 11% had an autism spectrum disorder, 8% had an emotional disturbance, 6% had a developmental delay, 4% had an intellectual disability, and 3% had other disabilities.<sup>10</sup>

◆ As of June 2017, 71% of students ages six to 21 receiving special education services in Rhode Island were in their regular classroom for 80% of the day or more, 22% were in their regular classroom 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.<sup>11</sup> Since 1990-1991, the percentage of students ages six to 21 receiving special education services in the U.S. who spent most of the day (80% or more of time) in general education classrooms has nearly doubled.<sup>12</sup>

◆ Of Rhode Island students receiving special education services in 2016-2017, 68% were boys and 32% were girls; 48% were low-income (receiving free or reduced-price lunch); 56% were White, 27% were Hispanic, 9% were Black, 4% were Two or more races, 2% were Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1% were Native American; and 8% were English learners.<sup>13</sup>

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Table 44.

Students Ages 6 through 21 Receiving Special Education Services by Primary Disability, Rhode Island, 2017

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	3,337	62	13	38	62	109	13	71	17	385	12%
Bristol Warren	3,172	57	13	13	45	136	17	89	*	379	12%
Burrillville	2,310	46	15	25	40	122	13	38	10	309	13%
Central Falls	2,641	31	49	30	86	256	24	51	20	547	21%
Chariho	3,229	62	27	10	72	126	15	39	14	365	11%
Coventry	4,652	63	36	58	114	242	29	50	24	616	13%
Cranston	10,340	195	65	110	353	517	51	104	35	1,430	14%
Cumberland	4,558	87	43	55	81	202	32	133	29	662	15%
East Greenwich	2,484	57	34	15	58	71	13	33	13	294	12%
East Providence	5,208	86	50	79	157	292	38	73	28	803	15%
Exeter-West Greenwich	1,628	35	*	*	33	38	*	57	*	189	12%
Foster	265	*	0	*	*	*	0	24	*	42	16%
Foster-Glocester	1,160	18	0	*	25	36	10	*	*	100	9%
Glocester	551	0	*	0	*	*	*	29	*	50	9%
Jamestown	474	14	*	*	22	24	*	*	0	78	16%
Johnston	3,165	58	41	29	119	244	18	36	18	563	18%
Lincoln	2,979	49	33	34	81	159	*	58	16	438	15%
Little Compton	245	*	0	*	*	13	*	*	*	30	12%
Middletown	2,185	40	15	40	75	101	27	46	10	354	16%
Narragansett	1,302	18	15	17	43	89	*	25	*	221	17%
New Shoreham	115	*	*	*	*	0	0	*	0	21	18%
Newport	2,143	31	24	33	53	177	22	44	20	404	19%
North Kingstown	3,972	62	34	40	52	155	19	89	19	470	12%
North Providence	3,471	60	49	32	104	235	23	79	19	601	17%
North Smithfield	1,690	21	*	12	35	91	10	40	*	221	13%
Pawtucket	8,953	118	96	81	196	549	65	188	28	1,321	15%
Portsmouth	2,454	37	17	27	89	88	*	32	13	311	13%
Providence	24,092	231	268	323	507	1,418	171	614	108	3,640	15%
Scituate	1,277	17	*	*	23	60	0	33	*	148	12%
Smithfield	2,384	49	18	20	32	139	11	24	*	298	12%
South Kingstown	3,120	63	13	22	82	93	15	74	19	381	12%
Tiverton	1,825	44	11	19	43	99	11	23	*	259	14%
Warwick	9,045	210	102	120	281	470	51	97	47	1,378	15%
West Warwick	3,415	83	52	81	94	202	26	47	*	592	17%
Westerly	2,810	53	24	33	102	125	21	58	26	442	16%
Woonsocket	5,862	146	107	129	309	436	84	207	35	1,453	25%
Charter Schools	6,987	60	45	54	147	411	15	152	*	892	13%
State-Operated Schools	1,738	16	0	23	43	97	*	0	65	247	14%
UCAP	139	0	0	*	*	19	0	0	0	21	15%
Department of Corrections	NA	0	0	32	*	14	0	0	0	53	NA
Four Core Cities	41,549	526	520	563	1,098	2,659	344	1,060	191	6,961	17%
Remainder of State	90,965	1,687	773	1,019	2,403	4,485	515	1,564	441	12,887	14%
Rhode Island	141,377	2,289	1,338	1,660	3,692	7,671	877	2,776	705	21,008	15%

## Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), Office for Diverse Learners, Special Education Census June 30, 2017. 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 2016-2017 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/or have traumatic brain injury.

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

Charter schools include Achievement First Providence Mayoral Academy, Beacon Charter High School for the Arts, Blackstone Academy, Blackstone Valley Prep, The Compass School, Paul Cuffee Charter 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, RISE Prep Mayoral Academy, Segue Institute for Learning, Sheila "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy, Southside Elementary Charter School, Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts, and 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 187.