

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, 2017, there were 142,949 students enrolled in Rhode Island public schools in preschool through grade 12, a decrease of 2% from 145,342 on October 1, 2008.

Of these 142,949 Rhode Island public school students, 29% (41,313) were attending schools in the four core cities (communities with the highest child poverty rates), 64% (91,842) were attending schools in the remaining districts, and the remaining 9,794 attended charter schools, state-operated schools, or the Urban Collaborative

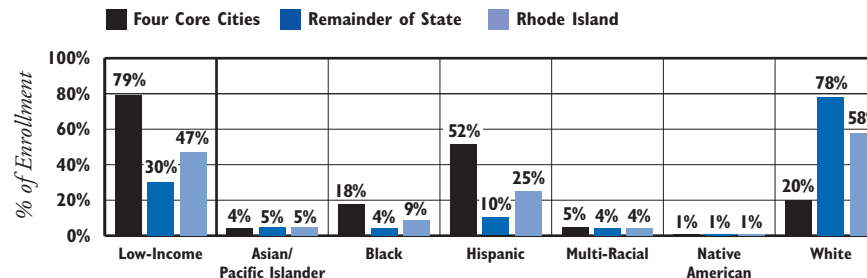
Accelerated Project (UCAP). During the 2016-2017 school year, there were 16,892 Rhode Island students attending private and parochial schools (including out-of-state schools) and 1,639 students were home-schooled.²

In October 2017, there were 63,442 students in grades K-5; 32,818 in grades 6-8; and 44,212 in grades 9-12. There were 2,477 children enrolled in public school preschool classrooms in Rhode Island. During the 2017-2018 school year, 1,080 children received services from state Pre-K programs in 17 public school classrooms and 43 community-based center classrooms.^{3,4}

In October 2017, 58% of Rhode Island public school students were non-Hispanic White, 25% were Hispanic, 9% were Black, 3% were Asian/Pacific Islander, 4% were Multi-Racial, and 1% were Native American. In October 2017, 47% of public school 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 Learners. During the 2016-2017 school year, 15% of Rhode Island public school students were receiving special education services and 8% were English Learners.⁶

Rhode Island Public School Enrollment by Low-Income Status, Race and Ethnicity, October 1, 2017



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, October 1, 2017.

◆ In October 2017, 20% of students enrolled in the four core cities were White, compared with 78% in the remainder of the state, and 79% of students enrolled in the four core cities were low-income compared with 30% in the remainder of the state.⁷

The Condition of Public School Buildings

◆ The condition of school facilities impacts the learning and behavior of students and teachers and is also an important indicator of equity. Rhode Island has the second-lowest K-12 capital construction investment in the country.⁸ A year-long assessment commissioned by RIDE found that only 12.4% of school buildings were judged to be in good to average condition and forecasted \$627.6 million in high-priority construction and repairs needed to address building safety and code compliance issues. The statewide cost to bring all school buildings into ideal condition is estimated at \$2.2 billion.⁹

◆ The average age of school buildings in the United States is 42 years old. In Rhode Island, the average age of school buildings is 56 years old.^{10,11} After 30 years, a school facility's systems are past their useful life. The cost for renewing schools in Rhode Island over the next five years is estimated to be \$793.5 million.¹²

◆ In Rhode Island, elementary schools have the majority of building deficiencies. The estimated cost to address all deficiencies is nearly \$880 million for elementary schools and nearly \$760 million for high schools.¹³

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Table 41. Rhode Island Public School Enrollment by Grade and Demographic Groups, October 1, 2017

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	27	1,388	789	1,158	5%	6%	1%	3%	0%	4%	85%	3,362
Bristol Warren	45	1,463	758	960	31%	2%	2%	5%	<1%	4%	86%	3,226
Burrillville	43	908	538	784	29%	1%	1%	4%	0%	2%	92%	2,273
Central Falls	71	1,285	514	648	76%	1%	16%	60%	4%	3%	15%	2,518
Chariho	83	1,278	721	1,129	17%	1%	1%	3%	2%	3%	92%	3,211
Coventry	125	2,001	1,122	1,498	30%	2%	2%	4%	<1%	1%	91%	4,746
Cranston	58	4,498	2,482	3,326	43%	9%	5%	27%	1%	5%	54%	10,364
Cumberland	80	2,042	1,105	1,420	22%	4%	3%	11%	<1%	2%	80%	4,647
East Greenwich	56	1,047	634	761	5%	6%	1%	6%	<1%	4%	83%	2,498
East Providence	63	2,435	1,210	1,559	51%	2%	12%	8%	1%	8%	69%	5,267
Exeter-West Greenwich	63	693	391	533	14%	2%	2%	5%	0%	1%	91%	1,680
Foster	31	264	0	0	20%	<1%	0%	4%	<1%	22%	94%	295
Foster-Glocester	0	0	510	747	17%	1%	1%	2%	<1%	2%	94%	1,257
Glocester	11	529	0	0	14%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	95%	540
Jamestown	24	306	161	3	10%	3%	1%	<1%	<1%	1%	94%	494
Johnston	86	1,454	782	943	45%	3%	5%	20%	<1%	1%	71%	3,265
Lincoln	87	1,343	778	875	23%	3%	4%	7%	<1%	2%	85%	3,083
Little Compton	11	148	89	0	9%	<1%	<1%	1%	0%	3%	95%	248
Middletown	19	1,015	533	614	31%	4%	6%	13%	<1%	8%	69%	2,181
Narragansett	52	492	342	437	18%	2%	1%	2%	1%	4%	89%	1,323
New Shoreham	0	49	24	47	18%	2%	0%	20%	0%	2%	77%	120
Newport	48	1,066	442	681	64%	2%	14%	26%	2%	13%	43%	2,237
North Kingstown	112	1,490	922	1,431	22%	2%	1%	6%	<1%	3%	87%	3,955
North Providence	84	1,575	899	1,073	52%	3%	12%	20%	<1%	4%	60%	3,631
North Smithfield	42	767	411	514	17%	2%	2%	9%	<1%	4%	84%	1,734
Pawtucket	147	4,421	2,228	1,942	61%	1%	28%	27%	1%	6%	36%	8,738
Portsmouth	25	958	559	900	17%	2%	2%	5%	<1%	2%	89%	2,442
Providence	367	10,899	5,439	7,370	87%	5%	17%	65%	1%	4%	9%	24,075
Scituate	9	521	326	413	16%	1%	<1%	2%	0%	1%	96%	1,269
Smithfield	44	1,055	588	708	14%	2%	1%	7%	<1%	3%	87%	2,395
South Kingstown	78	1,273	772	946	17%	2%	2%	4%	3%	5%	83%	3,069
Tiverton	32	832	436	535	23%	2%	2%	1%	0%	3%	91%	1,835
Warwick	198	3,910	2,104	2,741	31%	4%	3%	11%	<1%	4%	79%	8,953
West Warwick	69	1,734	746	1,039	46%	3%	5%	14%	1%	3%	75%	3,588
Westerly	90	1,190	664	846	37%	3%	1%	8%	1%	7%	79%	2,790
Woonsocket	69	2,977	1,306	1,630	72%	5%	10%	33%	<1%	6%	45%	5,982
Charter Schools	24	4,108	1,355	2,286	68%	2%	15%	55%	<1%	4%	24%	7,909
State-Operated Schools	4	28	15	1,702	56%	1%	15%	44%	2%	5%	35%	1,749
UCAP	0	0	123	13	85%	0%	16%	65%	4%	2%	10%	136
Four Core Cities	654	19,582	9,487	11,590	79%	4%	18%	52%	1%	5%	20%	41,313
Remainder of State	1,795	39,724	21,838	28,621	30%	5%	4%	10%	1%	4%	78%	91,842
Rhode Island	2,477	63,442	32,818	44,212	47%	5%	9%	25%	1%	4%	58%	142,949

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education, Public School Enrollment in preschool through grade 12 as of October 1, 2017.

*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 served 1,080 children in 17 public school classrooms and 43 community-based center classrooms in 2017-2018. 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.

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

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.

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