

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, 2019, there were 143,557 students enrolled in Rhode Island public schools in preschool through grade 12, a decrease of 1% from 145,118 on October 1, 2009.²

Of these 143,557 Rhode Island public school students, 29% (41,525) were attending schools in the four core cities (communities with the highest child poverty rates), 63% (91,104) were attending schools in the remaining districts, and the remaining 8% (10,928) attended charter schools, state-operated schools, or the Urban

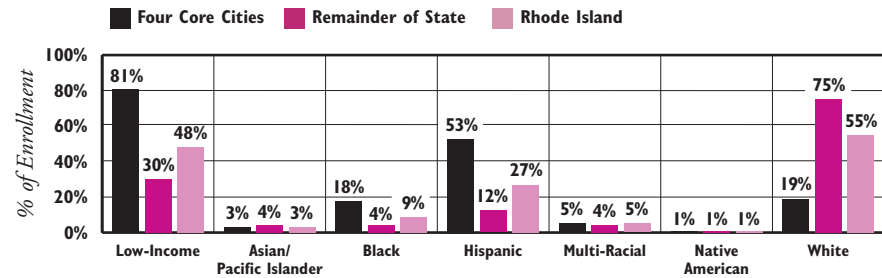
Collaborative Accelerated Project (UCAP). There were an additional 9,036 Rhode Island students attending private and parochial schools (including out-of-state schools) and 1,862 students were home-schooled.³

In October 2019, there were 62,154 students in grades K-5; 33,205 in grades 6-8; and 45,190 in grades 9-12. There were 3,008 children enrolled in preschool classrooms in Rhode Island public schools.⁴ During the 2019-2020 school year, 1,420 children were enrolled in RI Pre-K in 19 public school classrooms and 59 community-based center classrooms.⁵

In October 2019, 55% of Rhode Island public school students were White, 27% were Hispanic, 9% were Black, 3% were Asian/Pacific Islander, 5% were Multi-Racial, and 1% were Native American. In October 2019, 48% of public school students in Rhode Island were low-income (students who were eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program).⁶

Rhode Island schools are also diverse in terms of students with disabilities and students who are Multilingual Learners/English Learners. During the 2018-2019 school year, 15% of Rhode Island public school students were receiving special education services and 10% were Multilingual Learners/English Learners (ELs).⁷

◆ ■■■■■◆
Rhode Island Public School Enrollment by Low-Income Status, Race and Ethnicity, October 1, 2019

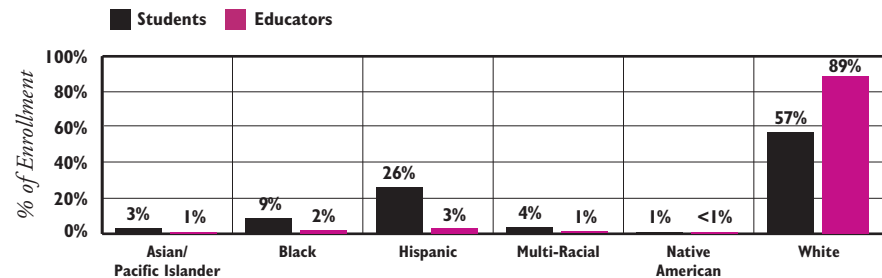


Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, October 1, 2019.

◆ In October 2019, 19% of students enrolled in the four core cities were White, compared with 75% in the remainder of the state, and 81% of students enrolled in the four core cities were low-income compared with 30% in the remainder of the state.⁸

◆ ■■■■■◆
Rhode Island Educator Demographics

Rhode Island Public School Student Enrollment and Teacher Demographics by Race and Ethnicity, 2018-2019 School Year



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, State Report Card, 2018-2019 school year.

◆ Educators of color benefit all students, especially students of color. Students of color demonstrate long-term academic achievement including higher reading and math test scores, decreased likelihood of dropping out of high school, increased likelihood of going to college, and increased social and emotional development in classes with teachers of color.⁹

◆ In October 2018, 89% (12,367) of Rhode Island public school educators identified as White, 3% (454) as Hispanic, 2% (249) as Black, 1% (120) as Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% (85) as Multi-Racial, and less than 1% (25) as Native American.¹⁰

Public School Enrollment and Demographics

Table 42. Rhode Island Public School Enrollment by Grade and Demographic Groups, October 1, 2019

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	33	1,386	843	1,135	4%	7%	1%	4%	<1%	5%	83%	3,397
Bristol Warren	44	1,378	784	967	30%	2%	2%	7%	<1%	5%	85%	3,173
Burrillville	40	935	539	733	34%	1%	1%	5%	<1%	3%	90%	2,247
Central Falls	223	1,247	592	816	95%	1%	16%	54%	11%	4%	14%	2,878
Chariho	83	1,270	740	1,145	17%	1%	1%	3%	2%	3%	91%	3,238
Coventry	121	1,891	1,064	1,472	29%	2%	2%	5%	<1%	1%	89%	4,548
Cranston	88	4,431	2,484	3,472	44%	9%	5%	30%	1%	6%	50%	10,475
Cumberland	99	2,029	1,070	1,470	21%	5%	3%	12%	<1%	3%	78%	4,668
East Greenwich	61	1,109	630	795	6%	6%	1%	6%	<1%	5%	82%	2,595
East Providence	246	2,265	1,208	1,532	45%	2%	11%	11%	1%	9%	66%	5,251
Exeter-West Greenwich	68	710	370	515	14%	2%	2%	4%	<1%	1%	91%	1,663
Foster	25	214	0	0	25%	0%	0%	4%	0%	2%	95%	239
Foster-Glocester	0	0	495	860	15%	1%	1%	3%	<1%	3%	92%	1,355
Glocester	5	550	0	0	12%	<1%	1%	3%	<1%	2%	93%	555
Jamestown	23	293	169	4	7%	1%	1%	<1%	0%	2%	96%	489
Johnston	133	1,443	809	873	44%	3%	5%	24%	<1%	1%	67%	3,258
Lincoln	97	1,388	771	955	28%	4%	5%	8%	<1%	2%	82%	3,211
Little Compton	19	138	80	0	13%	0%	0%	1%	0%	4%	95%	237
Middletown	14	986	515	618	28%	4%	6%	14%	1%	8%	68%	2,133
Narragansett	93	431	293	461	21%	2%	1%	3%	1%	5%	88%	1,278
New Shoreham	0	62	27	46	21%	1%	1%	19%	0%	4%	75%	135
Newport	53	973	446	682	68%	3%	11%	33%	2%	13%	38%	2,154
North Kingstown	98	1,499	881	1,514	22%	2%	2%	7%	<1%	4%	85%	3,992
North Providence	77	1,483	877	1,148	47%	3%	13%	22%	<1%	5%	56%	3,585
North Smithfield	41	688	420	517	17%	2%	1%	9%	0%	4%	84%	1,666
Pawtucket	248	4,104	2,312	2,120	72%	1%	30%	26%	1%	7%	36%	8,784
Portsmouth	27	918	548	933	17%	2%	2%	5%	<1%	3%	88%	2,426
Providence	334	10,452	5,605	7,445	84%	4%	16%	67%	1%	4%	8%	23,836
Scituate	16	516	293	401	11%	1%	<1%	3%	0%	1%	94%	1,226
Smithfield	46	1,001	599	736	14%	2%	1%	7%	<1%	3%	86%	2,382
South Kingstown	59	1,206	684	933	17%	2%	2%	5%	3%	6%	82%	2,882
Tiverton	32	788	416	523	21%	2%	3%	2%	<1%	3%	90%	1,759
Warwick	204	3,832	1,984	2,590	35%	4%	3%	12%	<1%	5%	76%	8,610
West Warwick	76	1,684	863	1,006	51%	3%	5%	16%	1%	3%	72%	3,629
Westerly	102	1,116	623	807	35%	2%	1%	9%	2%	7%	79%	2,648
Woonsocket	47	2,845	1,431	1,704	75%	5%	11%	36%	<1%	6%	41%	6,027
Charter Schools	24	4,868	1,593	2,529	65%	2%	16%	56%	1%	4%	21%	9,014
State-Operated Schools	9	25	19	1,733	70%	2%	16%	46%	<1%	4%	32%	1,786
UCAP	0	0	128	0	88%	0%	24%	60%	2%	4%	9%	128
Four Core Cities	852	18,648	9,940	12,085	81%	3%	18%	53%	1%	5%	19%	41,525
Remainder of State	2,123	38,613	21,525	28,843	30%	4%	4%	12%	1%	5%	76%	91,104
Rhode Island	3,008	62,154	33,205	45,190	48%	3%	9%	27%	1%	5%	55%	143,557

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education, Public School Enrollment in preschool through grade 12 as of October 1, 2019.

*Preschool includes students enrolled in half-day or full-day preschool through the public school district (primarily preschool special education classrooms). During the 2019-2020 school year, the RI Pre-K program served 1,420 children in 78 classrooms, 45% operated by Head Start agencies, 31% operated by child care programs, and 24% operated by public schools. Elementary includes students in kindergarten through 5th grade, middle includes 6th through 8th grades, and high includes 9th through 12th grades.

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

State-operated schools include: Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center, William M. Davies Jr. Career & Technical High School, DCYF, and the Rhode Island School for the Deaf.

Charter Schools include: Achievement First Rhode Island, Beacon Charter High School for the Arts, Blackstone Academy, Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy, Charette High School, The Compass School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, The Greene School, Highlander Charter School, Hope Academy, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, The Learning Community, 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 from Little Compton attend high school in Portsmouth. Jamestown students can choose to attend high school in Narragansett or North Kingstown.

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 186)