

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

A child's educational journey begins at birth and continues into adulthood. Each child's educational experience varies due to three primary 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 As a result of these factors, racial, ethnic, and income gaps in opportunities to obtain a high-quality education have been well-documented throughout the country over time.

On October 1, 2025, there were 133,829 students enrolled in Rhode Island public schools in preschool through grade 12, a decrease of 6% from 141,959 on October 1, 2015.² Of these students, 28% (36,819) were attending schools in the five core cities (communities with the highest child poverty rates), 61% (81,703) were attending schools in the remaining districts, and 10% (13,037) attended charter schools, state-operated schools, or collaboratives.² There were an additional

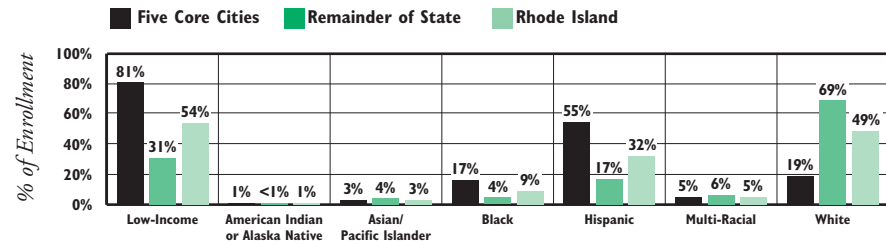
10,529 Rhode Island students attending private and parochial schools (including out-of-state schools), and 3,197 students were homeschooled.³

The most students (57,551) were in grades K-5; 29,988 were in grades 6-8; and 42,855 were in grades 9-12. As of October 2025, there were 3,756 children ages three and four enrolled in Head Start, RI Pre-K, or both during the two years before kindergarten, reaching approximately 17% of all preschool-age children and 27% of low-income preschool-age children. There were 37 RI Pre-K classrooms operated by public schools, 24% of the 153 RI Pre-K classrooms.⁴

In 2025 in Rhode Island, 49% of public school students were white, 32% were Hispanic, 9% were Black, 5% were Multi-Racial, 3% were Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1% were American Indian or Alaska Native. More than half (54%) of these students lived in low-income households (students who were eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program).²

Rhode Island schools are also diverse in terms of students with disabilities and students who are Multilingual Learners. During the 2024-2025 school year, 18% of Rhode Island public school students were receiving special education services and 16% were Multilingual Learners.^{5,6}

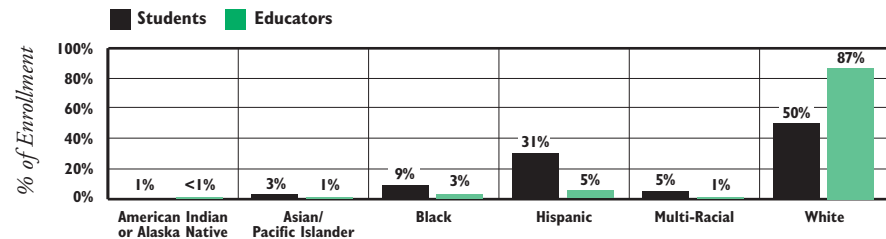
Rhode Island Public School Enrollment by Low-Income Status, Race and Ethnicity, October 1, 2025



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education. (2025). Public schools enrollment dashboard. Retrieved December 2, 2025, from <https://datacenter.ride.ri.gov/Home/FileDetail?fileid=994>.

◆ On October 1, 2025, 81% of students enrolled in the five core cities were Students of Color, compared with 31% in the remainder of state, and 81% of students enrolled in the five core cities were low-income, compared with 31% in the remainder of the state.²

Rhode Island Public School Student Enrollment and Educator Demographics by Race and Ethnicity, October 1, 2024



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, State Report Card, 2024-2025 school year. Hispanic educators may be included in any race category. Educator percentages based on the total number of educators that reported race/ethnicity.

◆ Educators of Color benefit all students, especially Students of Color. Students of Color demonstrate long-term academic achievement including higher reading and math test scores, decreased likelihood of dropping out of high school, increased likelihood of going to college, and improved social and emotional development in classes with Teachers of Color.⁷

◆ Diversifying the teacher workforce requires a multifaceted strategic approach including effective antiracist work in schools and systems to change conditions that drive Educators of Color away from the profession, district efforts to attract diverse talent, and state strategies to remove barriers to licensure and create alternative pathways to certification.^{8,9}

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Table 38. Rhode Island Public School Enrollment by Grade and Demographic Groups, October 1, 2025

SCHOOL DISTRICT	ENROLLMENT BY GRADE LEVEL*				ENROLLMENT BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS							TOTAL ENROLLMENT
	PRE-SCHOOL*	ELEMEN-TARY	MIDDLE	HIGH	% LOW-INCOME	% AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE	% ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER+	% BLACK	% HISPANIC	% MULTI-RACIAL	% WHITE	
Barrington	49	1,367	736	1,068	14%	<1%	8%	2%	7%	7%	76%	3,220
Bristol Warren	57	1,106	641	817	38%	<1%	1%	1%	9%	7%	82%	2,621
Burrillville	38	806	456	640	44%	<1%	1%	2%	7%	3%	88%	1,940
Central Falls	177	974	512	772	89%	6%	1%	17%	55%	4%	18%	2,435
Chariho	92	1,159	631	1,021	30%	2%	1%	1%	5%	4%	88%	2,903
Coventry	134	1,711	885	1,232	38%	<1%	2%	1%	10%	4%	82%	3,962
Cranston	167	4,040	2,289	3,410	52%	1%	9%	5%	38%	6%	41%	9,906
Cumberland	113	2,233	1,122	1,451	24%	<1%	8%	4%	16%	5%	67%	4,919
East Greenwich	40	1,086	556	738	13%	<1%	10%	2%	8%	6%	75%	2,420
East Providence	215	2,158	1,064	1,709	55%	1%	2%	12%	19%	10%	57%	5,146
Exeter-West Greenwich	87	620	363	475	22%	<1%	2%	1%	7%	4%	86%	1,545
Foster	18	210	0	0	31%	0%	0%	1%	4%	0%	95%	228
Foster-Glocester	0	0	430	858	28%	0%	1%	1%	6%	4%	89%	1,288
Glocester	<10	532	0	0	23%	0%	0%	<1%	7%	4%	88%	538
Jamestown	26	229	141	<10	11%	<1%	1%	1%	2%	6%	91%	400
Johnston	125	1,453	738	820	61%	<1%	4%	8%	35%	3%	49%	3,136
Lincoln	112	1,364	782	975	33%	<1%	5%	7%	13%	4%	72%	3,233
Little Compton	10	142	68	<10	20%	0%	0%	4%	6%	1%	89%	222
Middletown	39	835	411	515	38%	1%	4%	5%	19%	8%	62%	1,800
Narragansett	90	302	187	364	24%	<1%	2%	1%	6%	8%	83%	943
New Shoreham	0	50	27	45	45%	0%	0%	2%	29%	2%	67%	122
Newport	39	745	373	589	72%	2%	1%	9%	42%	13%	33%	1,746
North Kingstown	102	1,551	824	1,308	24%	<1%	2%	3%	9%	6%	80%	3,785
North Providence	78	1,480	794	1,094	45%	<1%	4%	15%	28%	6%	46%	3,446
North Smithfield	37	684	394	531	26%	<1%	2%	2%	11%	5%	79%	1,646
Pawtucket	337	3,442	1,881	1,874	75%	1%	1%	31%	39%	6%	22%	7,534
Portsmouth	15	873	453	770	18%	<1%	3%	2%	9%	6%	81%	2,111
Providence	562	8,478	4,179	6,605	86%	1%	4%	15%	69%	4%	9%	19,824
Scituate	13	512	265	385	28%	0%	<1%	1%	3%	1%	95%	1,175
Smithfield	64	1,066	484	698	24%	<1%	2%	2%	11%	5%	80%	2,312
South Kingstown	59	891	548	712	23%	2%	2%	2%	7%	7%	80%	2,210
Tiverton	29	611	380	432	38%	<1%	1%	2%	8%	5%	84%	1,452
Warwick	243	3,382	1,787	2,292	52%	1%	4%	4%	18%	6%	68%	7,704
West Warwick	87	1,494	719	1,065	62%	1%	2%	5%	23%	6%	63%	3,365
Westerly	60	823	481	641	45%	1%	3%	1%	11%	8%	76%	2,005
Woonsocket	84	2,479	1,147	1,570	72%	1%	4%	13%	28%	7%	47%	5,280
<i>Charter Schools</i>	24	6,630	3,106	3,277	75%	1%	1%	18%	62%	3%	14%	13,037
<i>State-Operated Schools</i>	<10	33	16	1,965	70%	1%	1%	16%	51%	5%	27%	2,021
<i>Collaboratives</i>	0	0	118	131	100%	1%	1%	31%	61%	4%	2%	249
<i>Five Core Cities</i>	1,199	16,118	8,092	11,410	81%	1%	3%	17%	55%	5%	19%	36,819
<i>Remainder of State</i>	2,205	34,770	18,656	26,072	38%	<1%	4%	4%	17%	6%	69%	81,703
<i>Rhode Island</i>	3,435	57,551	29,988	42,855	54%	1%	3%	9%	32%	5%	49%	133,829

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education, Public School Enrollment in preschool through grade 12 as of October 1, 2025.

*Preschool includes students enrolled in half-day or full day preschool through the public school district (primarily preschool special education classrooms). In 2025, the RI Pre-K program served 2,586 children in 153 classrooms, 36% operated by Head Start agencies, 40% 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.

+Data for Asian and Pacific Islander students is not disaggregated by ethnic group. National research shows large academic disparities across Asian ethnic groups.

Charter schools include the Achievement First Rhode Island and Blackstone Valley Prep mayoral academy networks, Beacon Charter School, Blackstone Academy, Charette Charter, The Compass School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, Excel Academy Rhode Island, The Greene School, Highlander Charter, The Hope Academy, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, The Learning Community, Nuestro Mundo Public Charter, Providence Preparatory Charter, Rhode Island Nurses Institute Middle College, RISE Prep Mayoral Academy, Segue Institute for Learning, SouthSide Charter School, Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts, Village Green Virtual.

State-operated schools include Davies Career & Technical High School, Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center, Sheila Skip Nowell Leadership Academy, and Rhode Island School for the Deaf.

Collaboratives include Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program (UCAP) and YouthBuild Preparatory Academy.

Five core cities are Central Falls, Newport, 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.

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Source of Data for Table/Methodology for Children Participating in School Meals

Collaboratives include Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program, West Bay Collaborative and YouthBuild Preparatory Academy.

Five core cities are Central Falls, Newport, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

The October 2025 enrollment is for the full month of October and is not comparable with the October 1, 2025 enrollment numbers reported elsewhere in the 2026 *Factbook*.

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