

# **The Condition of Education in Connecticut 2015-2016**



CONNECTICUT STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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# Foreword

*The Condition of Education in Connecticut* is the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) yearly status report on public education in the state. It fulfills the requirements under Section 10-4(b) of the Connecticut General Statutes.

The Condition of Education presents indicators that describe the progress of the public education system, the characteristics of its students and educators, and student performance on key indicators of student engagement and student readiness for college and careers.

This year's report incorporates results from the second year of Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System (see page 24). This system is a broad set of 12 indicators that help tell the story of how well a school is preparing its students for success in college, careers and life. The new system moves beyond test scores and graduation rates to provide a more holistic, multifactor perspective of district and school performance. This is the first time that Connecticut is including matched student cohort growth on the state summative assessments in the accountability model. Measuring growth provides a more accurate picture of curriculum and instructional effectiveness than just looking at a snapshot in time of student performance.

Please visit our data portal, EdSight, at <http://edsight.ct.gov> for additional information about students, educators, instruction, resources, and performance of schools, districts, and the state.

Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner  
Connecticut State Department of Education

# **The Education System**

### Number of Operating Public Elementary and Secondary Schools/Programs by School Type

<b>School/Program Type</b> ( <u>maximum</u> grade range determines classification)	<b>Count</b>
Pre-K Only	53
Elementary Schools (PK-6)	609
Elementary & Middle School Grades (PK-8)	153
Elementary, Middle, & High School Grades (PK-12)	31
Middle Schools (6-8)	154
Middle & High School Grades (6-12)	68
High Schools (9-12)	329
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,397</b>

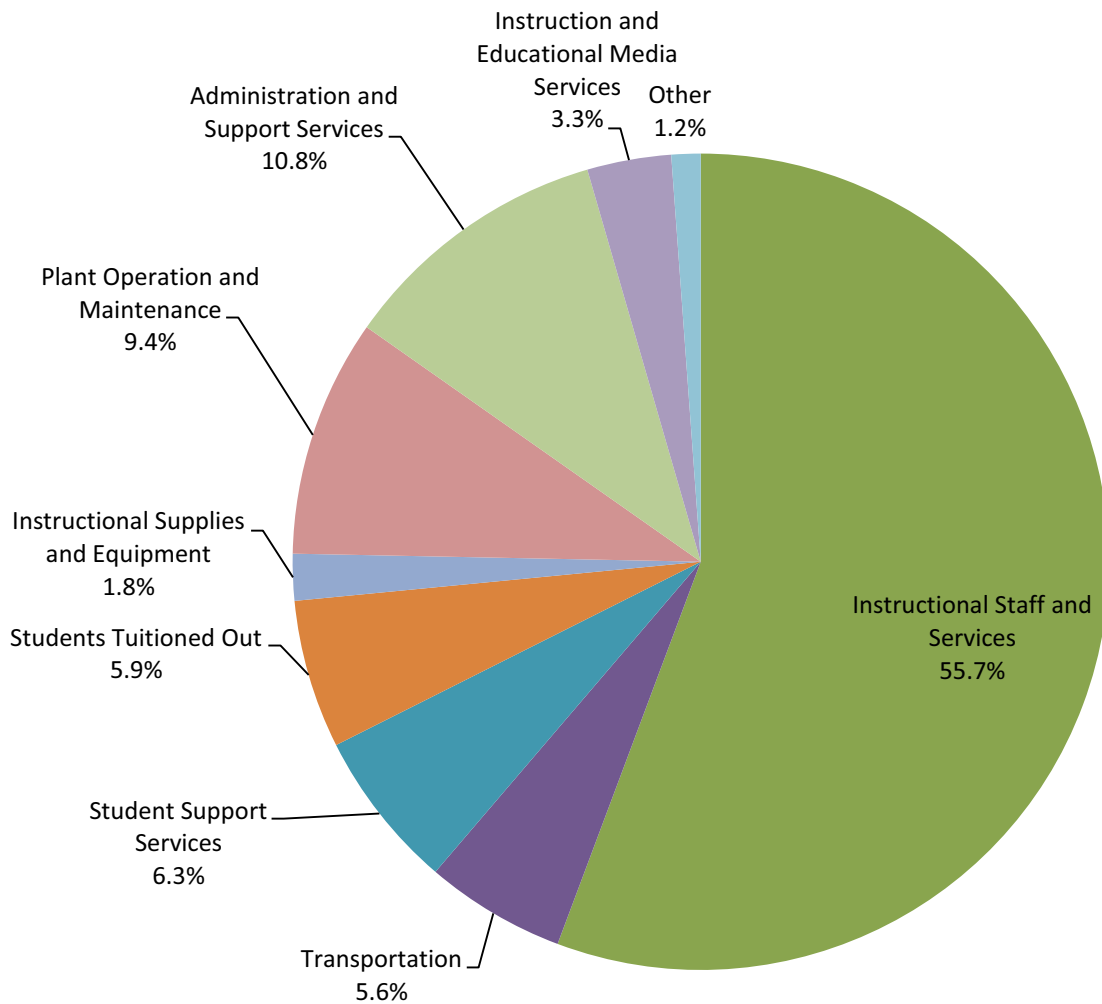
<b>Schools</b>	<b>Count</b>
Public Elementary & Secondary Schools and Programs	1,253
Regional Educational Service Center Schools and Programs	68
Public Charters	24
CT Technical High Schools	17
Endowed Academies	3
State Agencies	32

*Adult education programs include 44 local school districts, two regional educational service centers and 11 cooperating eligible entities that serve all 169 towns in Connecticut per state statute. Twelve other organizations are funded solely through federal grant initiatives.*

## Expenditures

In 2015-16, the state's overall school expenditures (excluding investments in land, buildings and debt) totaled \$8.8 billion. Instructional staff and services represented a majority of the total expenditures; 56 cents out of every education dollar was devoted to this area.

### Expenditures<sup>†</sup> by Category 2015-16

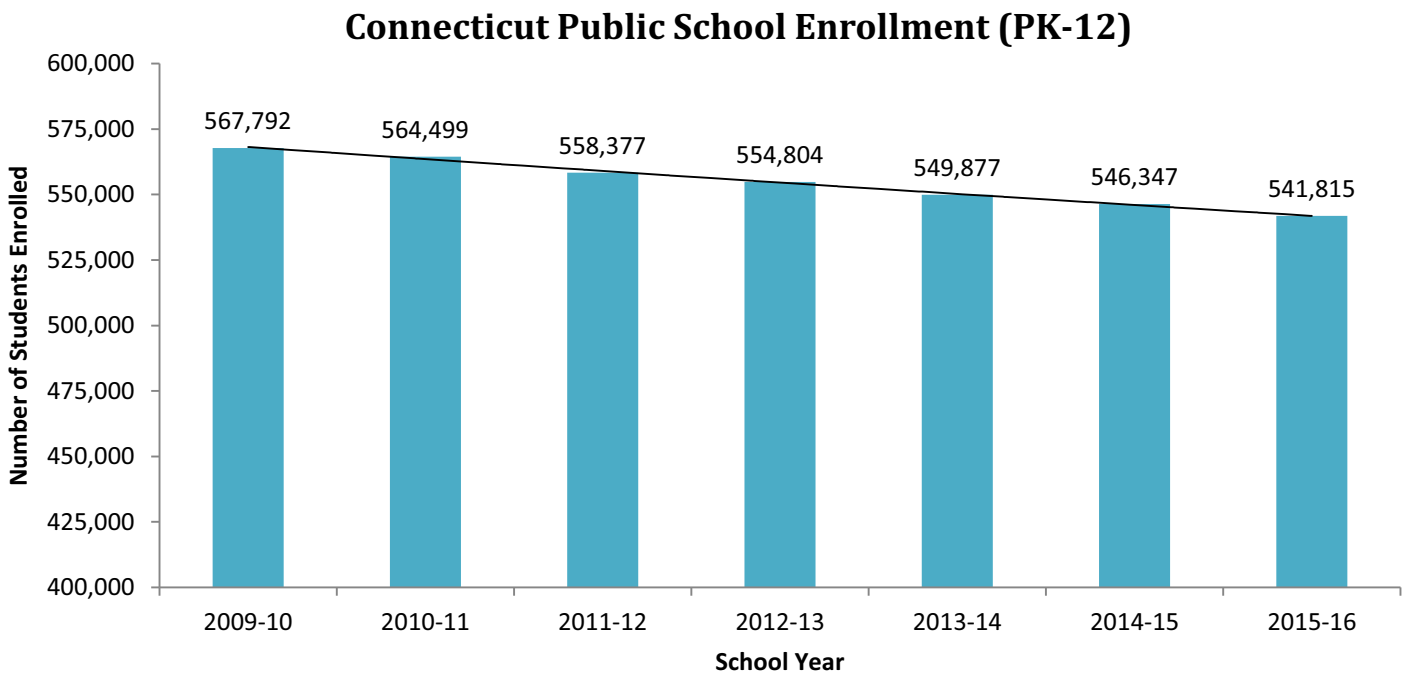


<sup>†</sup> A portion of the cost of students tuitioned out was sent to other Connecticut public school districts and, therefore, is also included under the various expenditure categories.

# Students

**Public School Enrollment**

Statewide enrollment has declined steadily over the past decade. The 2015-16 enrollment of 541,815 was 4.6 percent lower than the 2009-10 enrollment of 567,792.

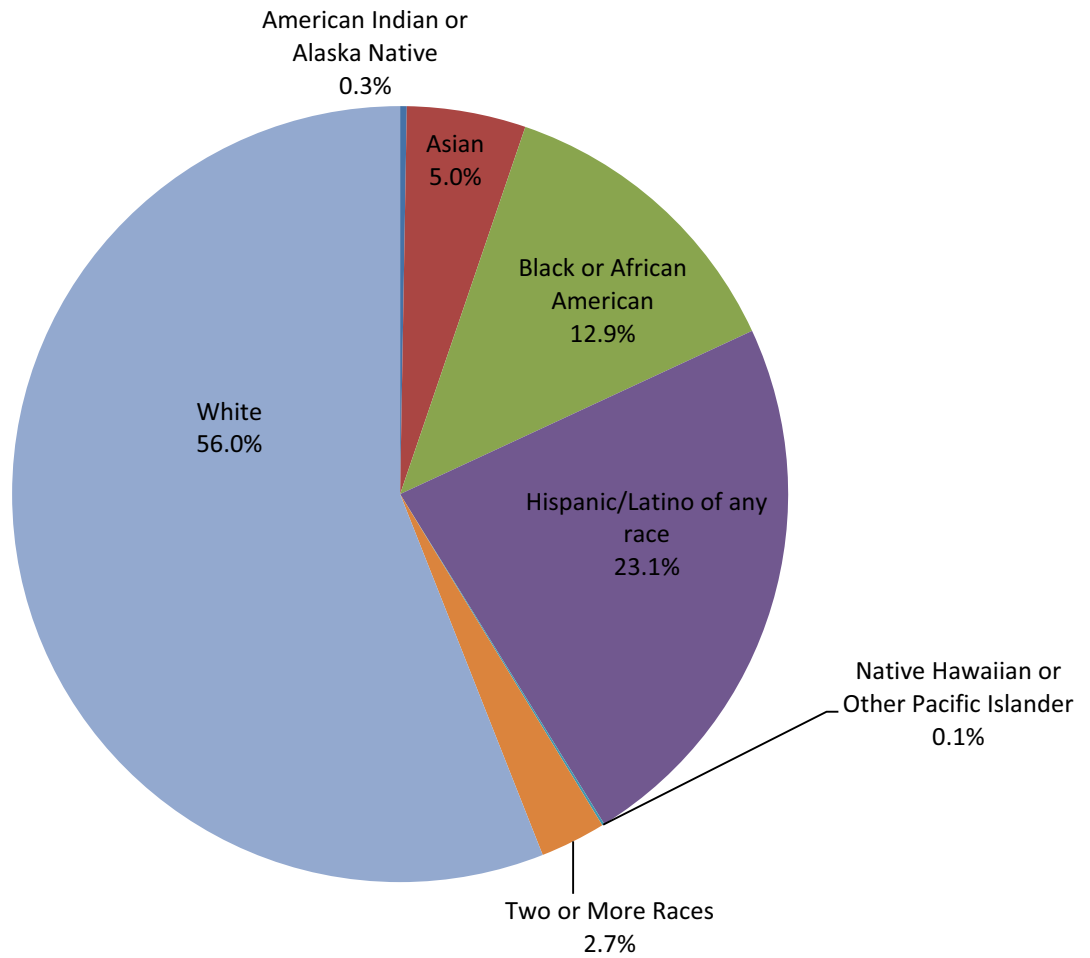




**Public School Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity**

In 2010-11, 38.5 percent of students represented racial or ethnic minorities; in 2015-16, that percentage was 44.

**Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity, 2015-16**

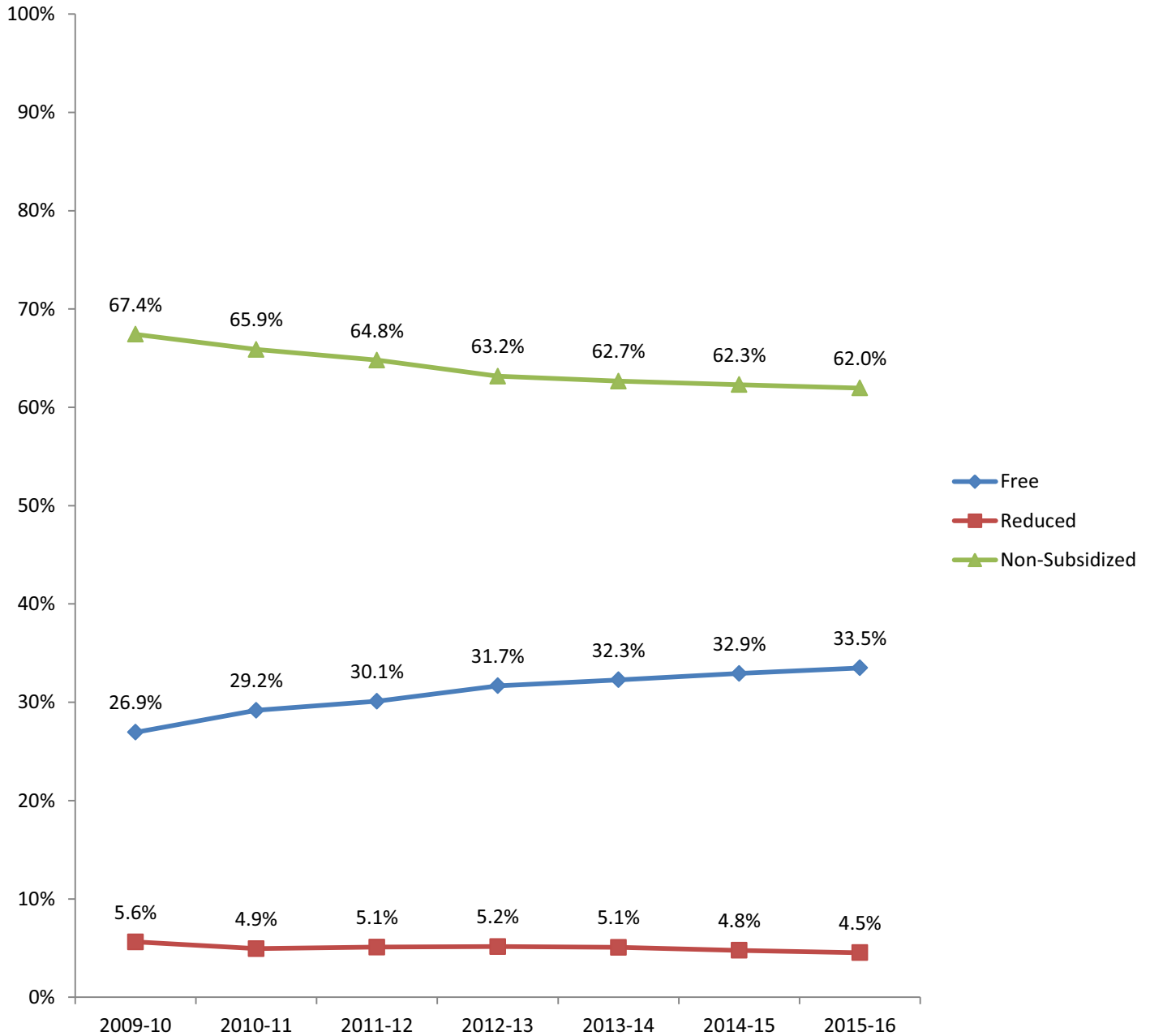


## Students

### Economic Need

Connecticut's student body is composed of more low-income students than ever before. The percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals rose to an all-time high of 38 percent in 2015-16.

#### Percentage of Students by Free/Reduced Meal Eligibility

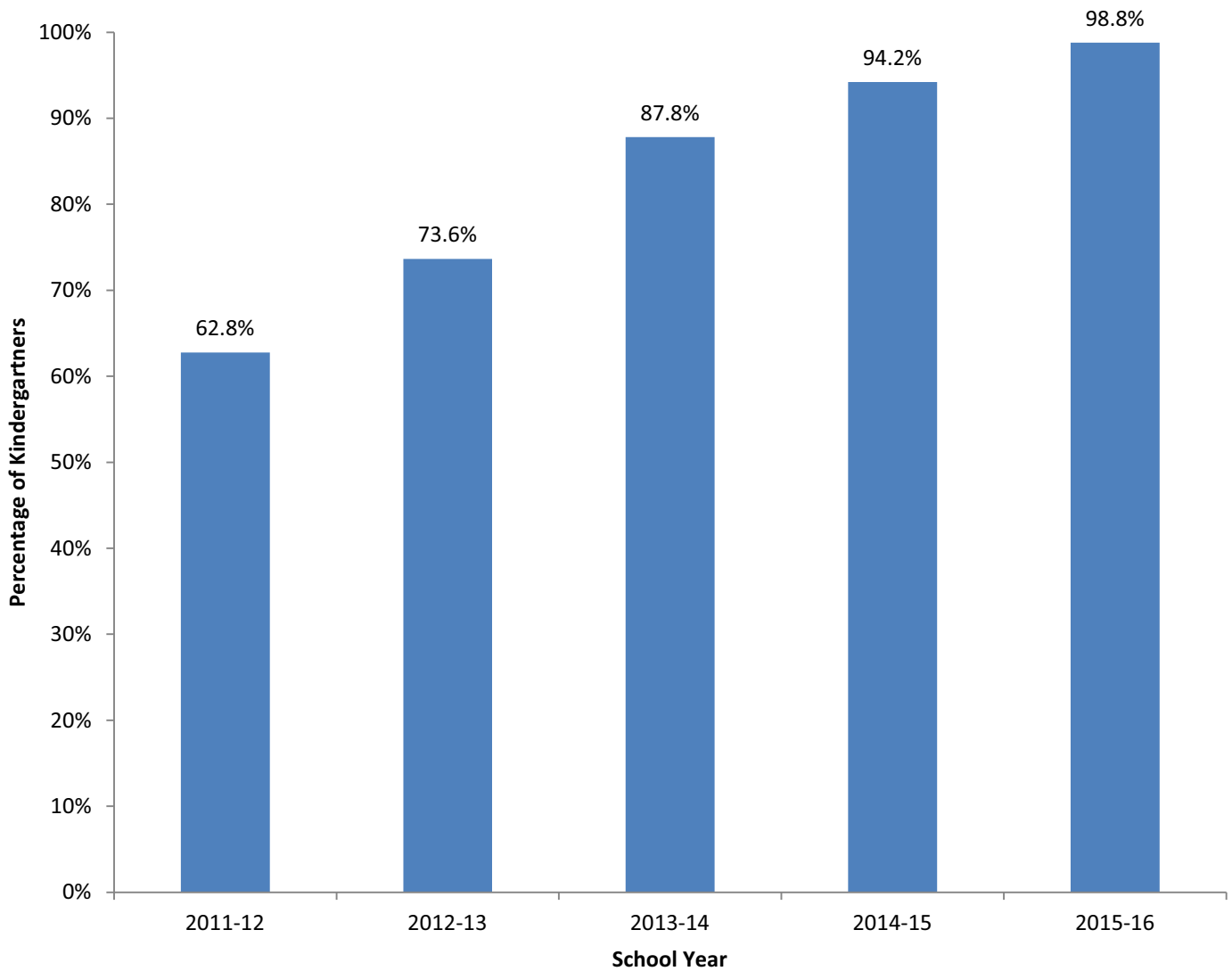


† In 2015-16, a family of four needed to earn less than \$31,525 for a child to receive free meals and less than \$44,863 to receive reduced-price meals, according to the USDA Food and Nutrition Services.

**Full-day Kindergarten Enrollment**

The number of school districts offering full-day kindergarten has been growing in recent years. In 2015-16, nearly 99 percent of kindergarteners were enrolled in full-day kindergarten across the state. This represents an all-time high and an increase of over 35 percentage points from 2011-12.

**Percentage of Students Enrolled in Full-Day Kindergarten**



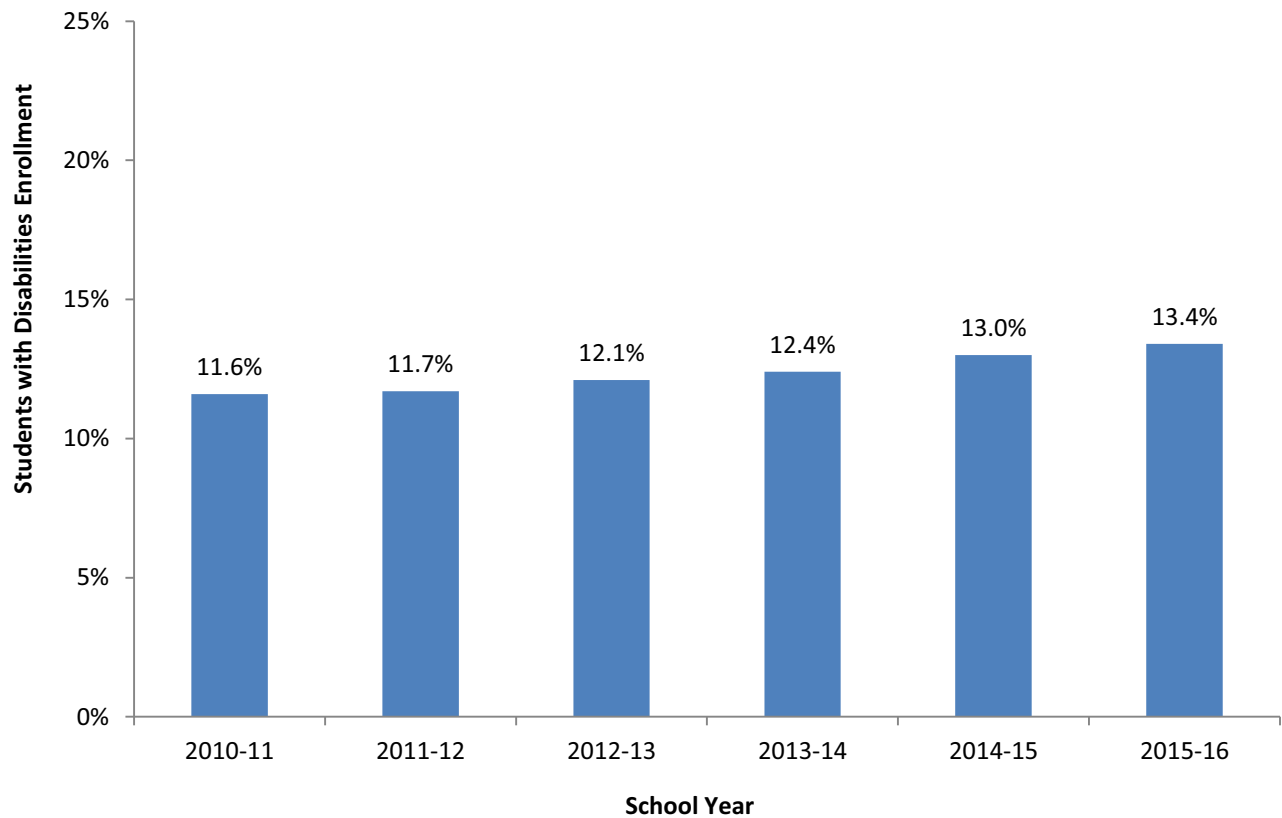
## Students

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### Special Education - Prevalence

In 2015-16, there were 70,055 Connecticut public school students in Grades K-12, or 13.4 percent of total enrollment, who required special education services. The special education prevalence rate has risen over the past four years from 11.6 percent in 2010-11.

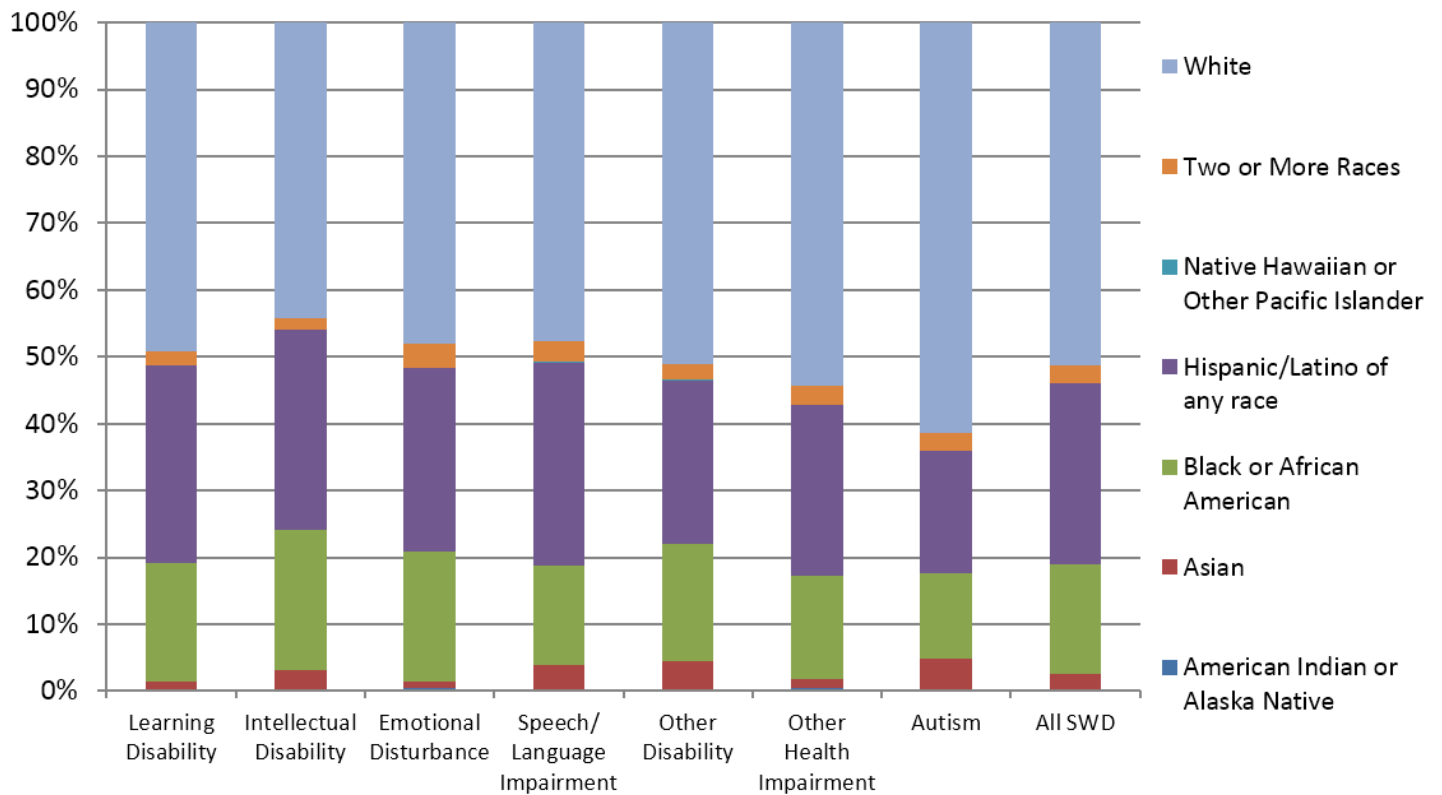
#### Prevalence of Students with Disabilities (SWD) K-12



**Special Education - Disproportionality**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires investigation of disproportionate representation in the identification of students with disabilities, by race and ethnicity. In 2015-16, district-level investigations revealed that the most common groups that were disproportionately identified were the following: white students with other health impairments and white students with autism. Of the districts with data of concern, upon investigation none were found to have disproportionate identification as a result of inappropriate policies, practices, or procedures. At the state level, black/African American students were more than one-and-a-half times as likely as their nonblack peers to be identified with emotional disturbance and intellectual disability.

**Percentage of Students with Disabilities, Ages 6-21: Disability Type by Race/Ethnicity, 2015-16**



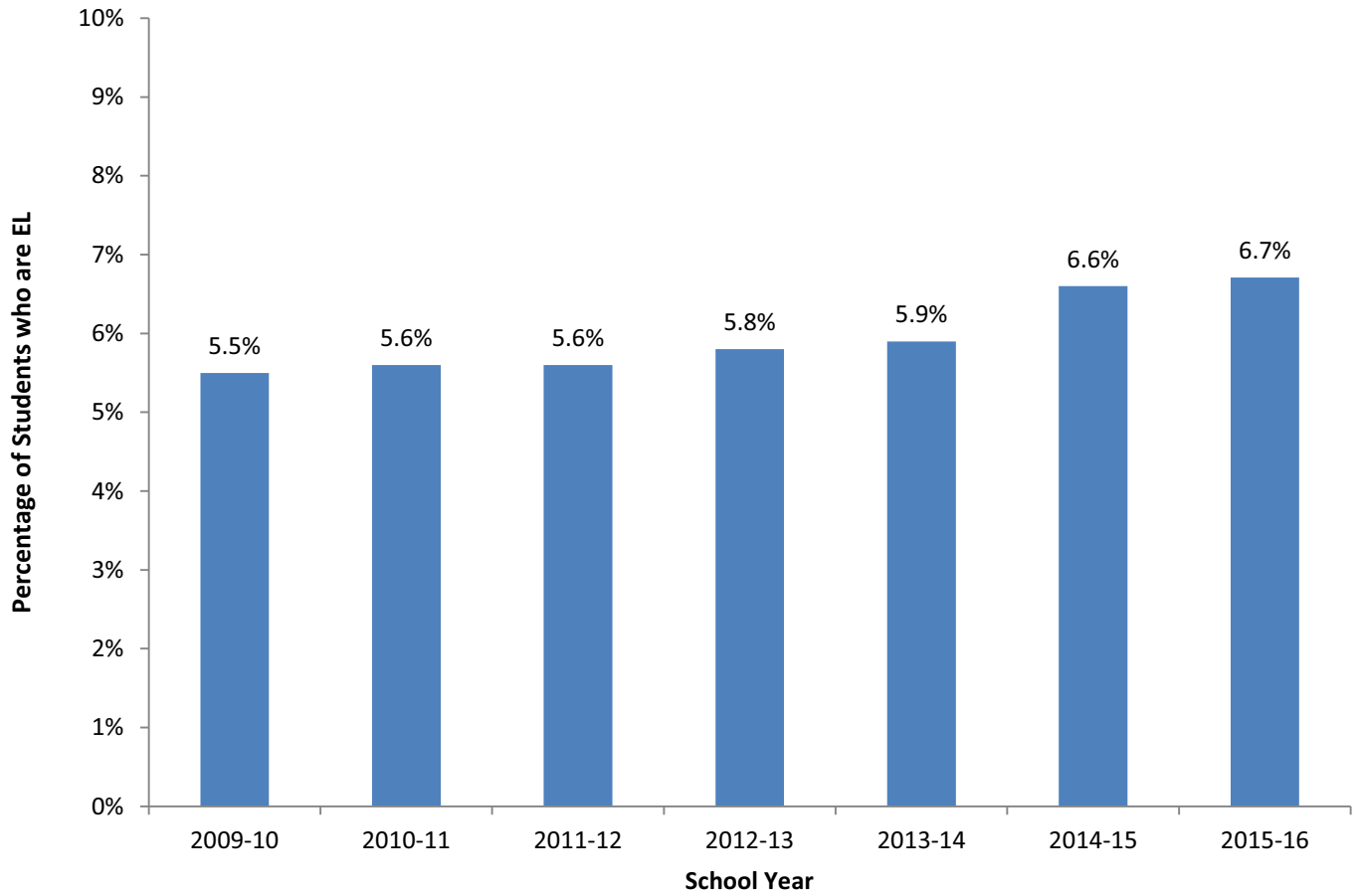
## Students

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### English Learners

In 2015-16, the percentage of students in grades K-12 who were English learners (EL) increased slightly from 6.6 percent in 2014-15 to an all-time high of 6.7 percent.

#### Percentage of Students who are English Learners, Grades K-12



**Languages Spoken at Home**

In the 2015-16 school year, Connecticut's EL student subpopulation spoke 146 different non-English languages. While most districts only had to accommodate a few languages, there were 39 districts whose EL student subpopulations spoke 20 or more different non-English languages.\* The table below shows the most prevalent languages spoken in these students' homes.

**15 Most Prevalent Non-English Languages  
in Connecticut Schools, 2015-16**

<b>Language</b>	<b>Number of Students with Non-English Dominant Language</b>
Spanish	53,538
Portuguese	3,342
Mandarin	2,468
Polish	2,206
Arabic	2,130
Creole-Haitian	1,709
Albanian	1,229
Vietnamese	1,225
Urdu	1,218
Gujarati	834
Russian	827
French	738
Hindi	733
Telugu	685
Bengali	654

Source: Public School Information System (PSIS) October 2015 Collection, Freeze 1.

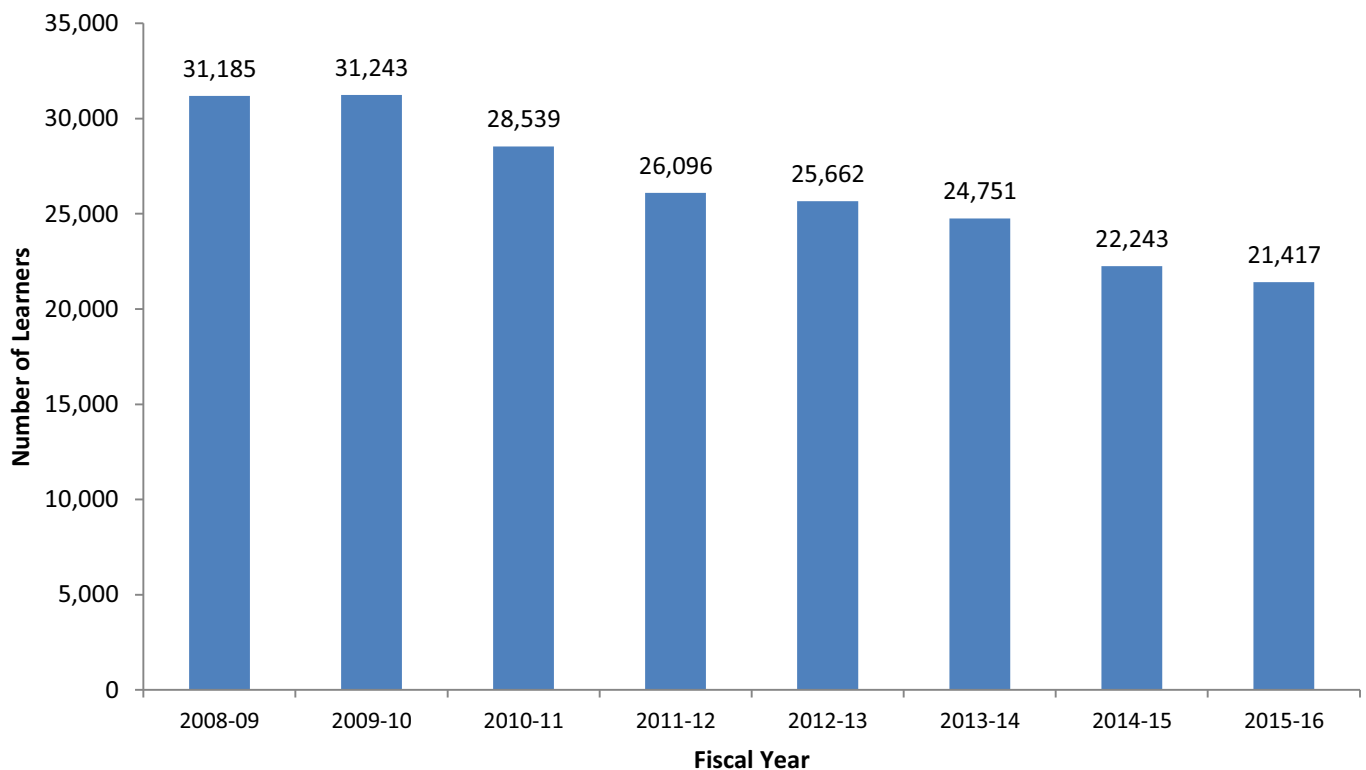
\*School districts must provide all English learners with services to assist them in becoming proficient in the English language. Schools that have 20 or more students who are not proficient in English and speak the same language are required to offer a program of bilingual instruction in the following school year.

### Connecticut's Adult Learners†

Connecticut's adult education programs operate in their local communities to assist adults in obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary for employment, self-sufficiency and citizenship; becoming full partners in the educational development of their own children; and completing their secondary school education.

Connecticut law requires that adult education services be provided by local school districts free of charge to any adult, 17 years of age or older, who is not enrolled in a public elementary or secondary school program. In 2015-16, Connecticut adult education programs served 21,417 adult learners.

#### Total Adult Education Enrollment



† Note: Data represent unduplicated counts; individuals are reported only once regardless of the number of classes in which they were enrolled. For example, if a student is enrolled in four different high school completion classes, he or she is counted one time.

Note: The Total Enrollment for years 2011-2012 and later does not include those learners enrolled only in Spanish GED programs.

Source: Connecticut Adult Reporting System (CARS) database and Statewide Program Profile 2015-16.

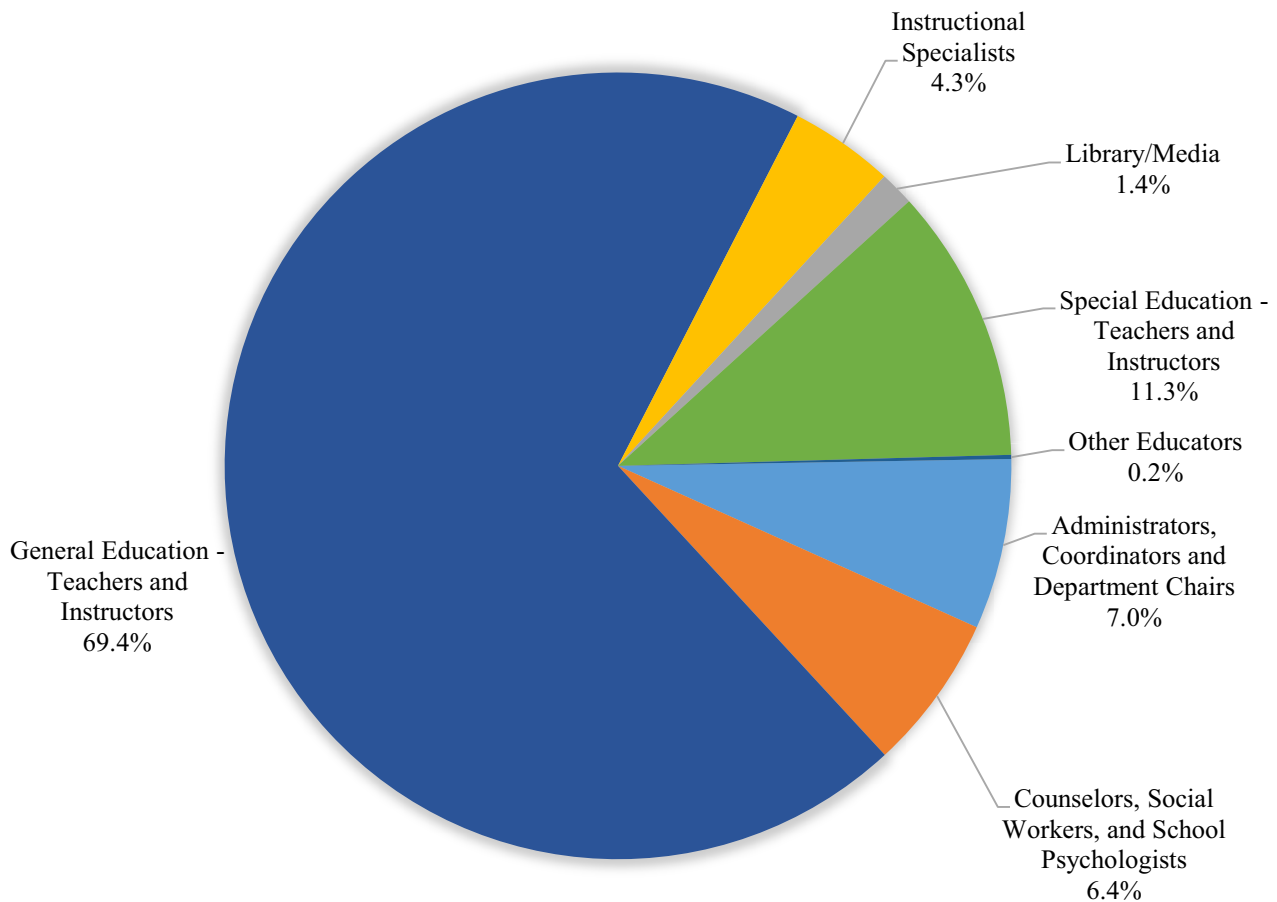


# **Educators**

**Certified Staff Members**

General education and special education teachers combined constitute 80.7 percent of full-time equivalent (FTE) certified staff.

**Certified Staff Full-time Equivalent By Role Type: 2015-16**



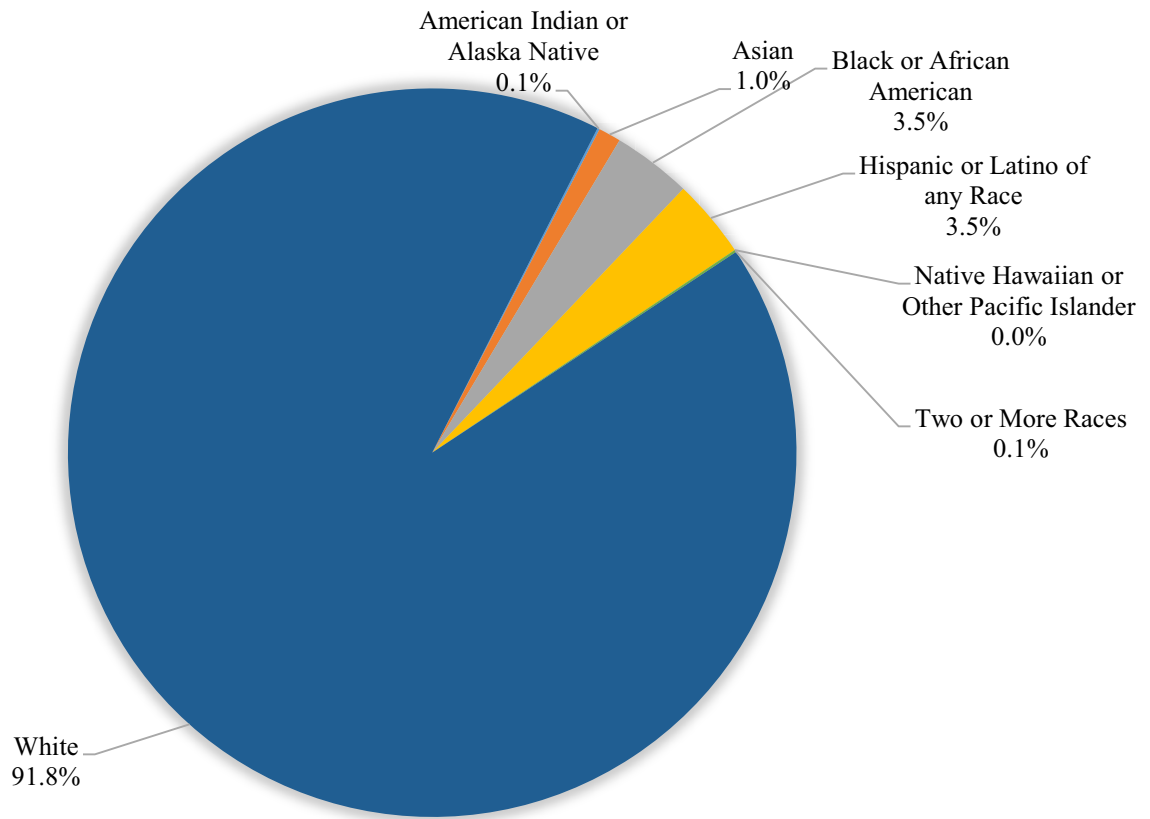
Total Full-time Equivalent† Certified Staff Count = 52,334.49

† Full-time equivalent (FTE) is derived by dividing the amount of time a person works by the time required of a corresponding full-time position. A full-time position is considered to be 1.0 FTE. For example, a teacher who works two of the five days per week would be a .4 FTE (2 days/5 days = .4 of full time or .4 FTE).

### **Demographics of School Staff**

While Connecticut’s student population is diverse with nonwhite students comprising 44 percent of the student body, Connecticut’s teaching force is quite homogeneous. Nearly 92 percent of certified school staff are white.

**Certified Staff Demographics: 2015-16**



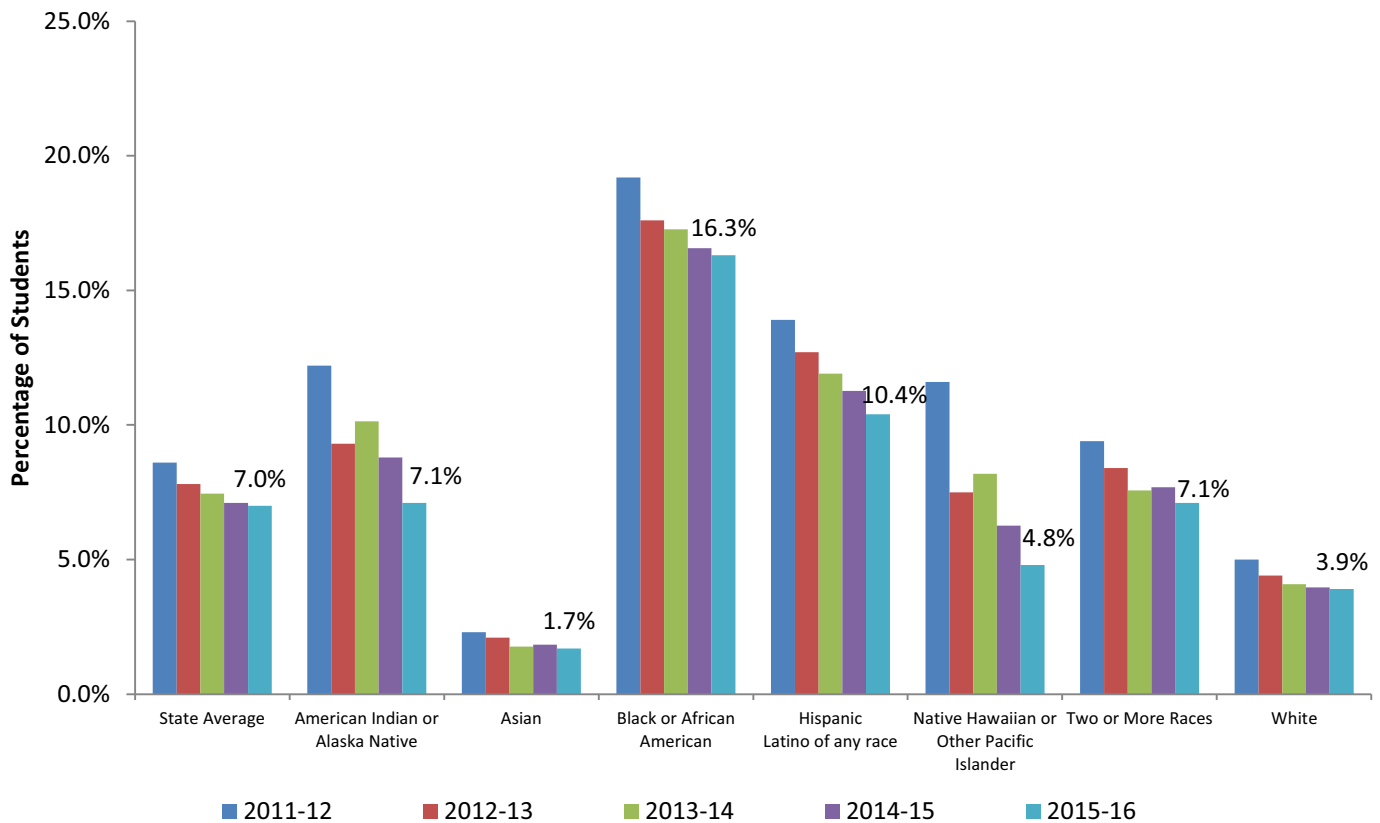
# **School Climate and Instruction**

### School Discipline

The Connecticut State Department of Education collects sanction data, which includes in-school suspensions (ISS), out-of-school suspensions (OSS), and expulsions (EXP). Districts are required to report all incidents that result in a sanction.

In the 2015-16 school year, 6.9 percent of all students received at least one suspension or expulsion. Black/African American and Hispanic students are suspended at substantially higher rates than their white counterparts though suspension rates are declining overall.

**Suspension/Expulsion Rates by Race/Ethnicity**

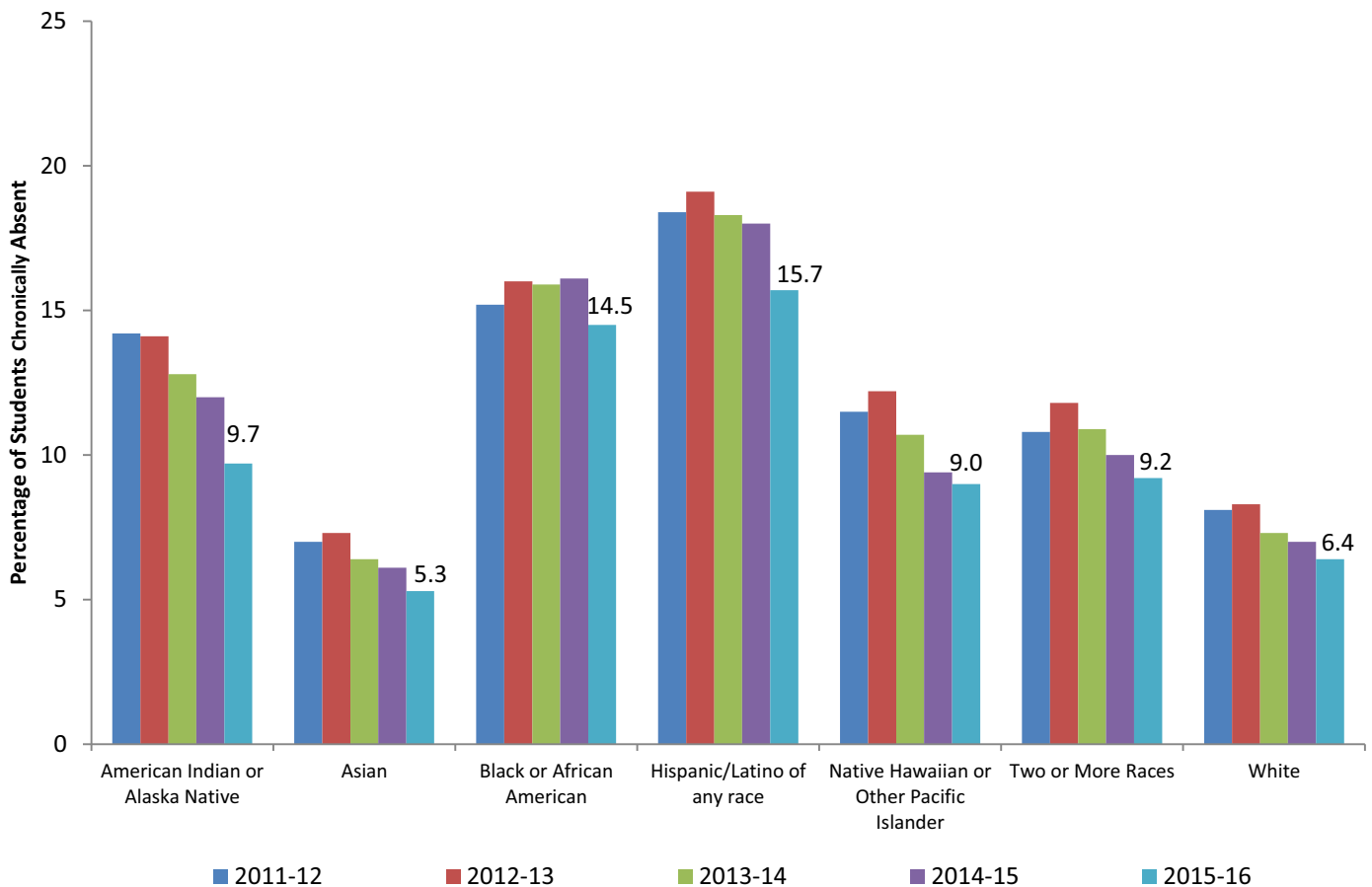


### Chronic Absenteeism

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10 percent or greater of the total number of days enrolled in the school year for any reason. It includes both excused and unexcused absences. Several research studies have highlighted the association of chronic absenteeism to student academic achievement and high school graduation.

Connecticut’s state-wide chronic absenteeism rate for students in Grades K-12 was 9.6 percent in 2015-16. This translates to about 52,000 students. There was considerable variation among districts, as well as among factors such as eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch.

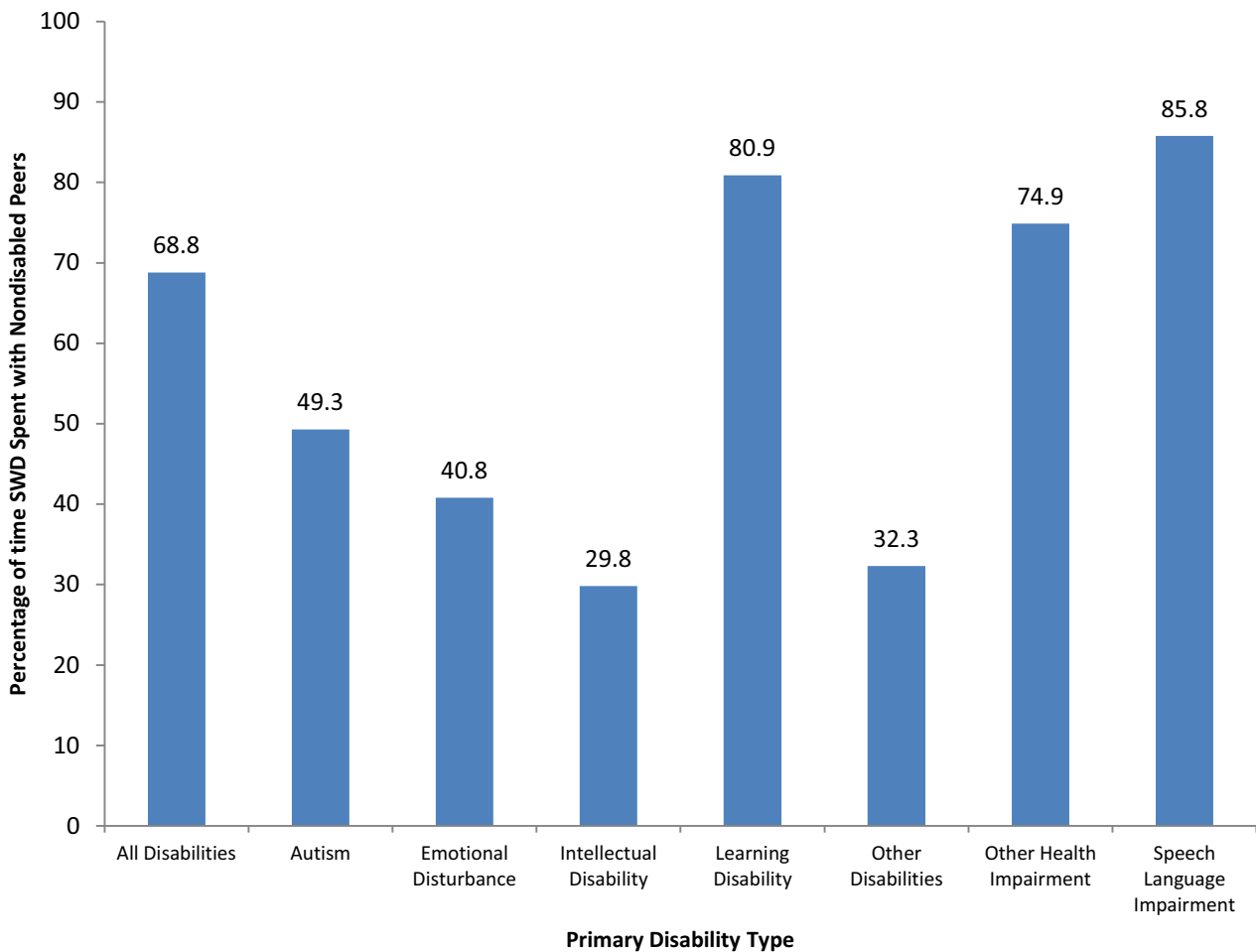
### Chronic Absenteeism Rates by Race/Ethnicity



### **Time Students with Disabilities Spent with Nondisabled Peers**

For students with disabilities, time spent with nondisabled peers is an important indicator of access to the general curriculum. It is also a demonstration of students being educated in their least restrictive setting; this complies with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requirement that students with disabilities be educated with their nondisabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate. While 68.8 percent of all students with disabilities spent at least 80 percent of time with nondisabled peers, there is significant variation across the primary disability types. Of all students with an intellectual disability, only 29.8 percent spent 80-100 percent of their time with nondisabled peers in 2015-16, compared to 80.9 percent of students with a learning disability. Similarly, 40.8 percent of students with an emotional disturbance spent 80-100 percent of their time with nondisabled peers, compared to 85.8 percent of students with a speech or language impairment.

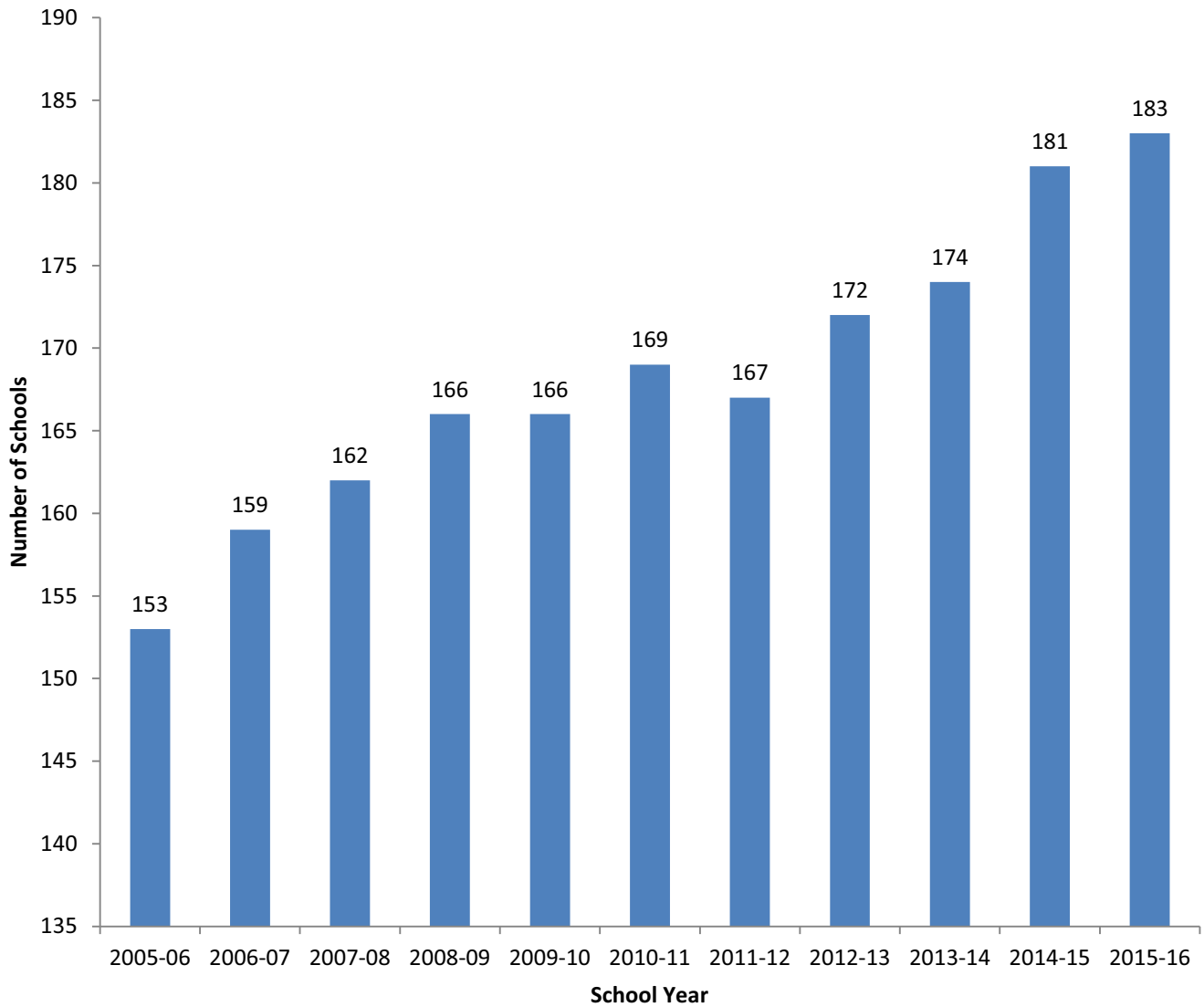
**Percentage of Students (K-12) who Spend 80-100% of Time with Nondisabled Peers by Primary Disability Type, 2015-16**



**Access to Advanced Placement**

An increasing number of schools are making Advanced Placement available to their students. In 2015-16, 19.6 percent more schools offered AP than a decade earlier.

**Number of Schools Offering Advanced Placement**

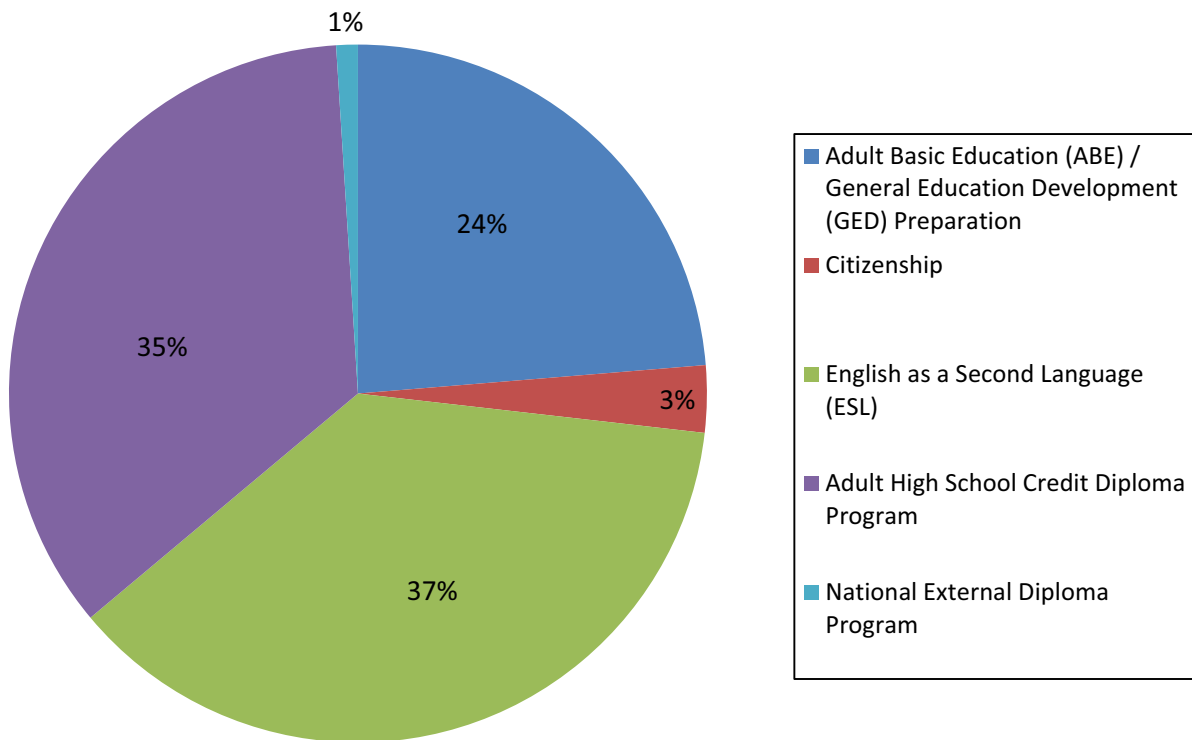




### **Adult Education Programs**

Adult learners participate in one of the following state-mandated adult education instructional programs: citizenship preparation; English as a second language (ESL); adult basic literacy education; or one of three secondary school completion programs (i.e., General Educational Development [GED], Adult High School Credit Diploma, or National External Diploma).

**Adult Education Enrollment by Program Type, 2015-16**



Source: Connecticut Adult Reporting System (CARS) database and Statewide Program Profile.

# Performance

## Performance

### Statewide Accountability Indicators, 2015-16

These statistics represent the results from the second year of [Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System](#) for districts and schools. This system is a broad set of 12 indicators that help tell the story of how well a school is preparing its students for success in college, careers and life. This is the first time that Connecticut is including matched student cohort growth on the state summative assessments in the accountability model. Connecticut improved on almost all indicators in 2015-16 over the previous year, including in math performance, science performance, chronic absenteeism, preparation for college and career readiness, percent on track for graduation, the six-year graduation rate for high needs students, and access to the arts.

No:	Indicator	Index/ Rate	Target	Points Earned	Max Points	% Points Earned
1a.	ELA Performance Index – All Students	67.7	75	45.1	50	90.3%
1b.	ELA Performance Index – High Needs Students	56.7	75	37.8	50	75.6%
1c.	Math Performance Index – All Students	61.4	75	40.9	50	81.9%
1d.	Math Performance Index – High Needs Students	49.9	75	33.3	50	66.5%
1e.	Science Performance Index – All Students	57.5	75	38.3	50	76.7%
1f.	Science Performance Index – High Needs Students	47.0	75	31.3	50	62.7%
2a.	ELA Avg. Percentage of Growth Target Achieved – All Students	63.8%	100%	63.8	100	63.8%
2b.	ELA Avg. Percentage of Growth Target Achieved – High Needs Students	58.3%	100%	58.3	100	58.3%
2c.	Math Avg. Percentage of Growth Target Achieved – All Students	65.0%	100%	65.0	100	65.0%
2d.	Math Avg. Percentage of Growth Target Achieved – High Needs Students	57.4%	100%	57.4	100	57.4%
4a.	Chronic Absenteeism – All Students	9.6%	<=5%	40.7	50	81.4%
4b.	Chronic Absenteeism – High Needs Students	15.6%	<=5%	28.9	50	57.7%
5	Preparation for CCR – % taking courses	67.6%	75%	45.1	50	90.1%
6	Preparation for CCR – % passing exams	40.7%	75%	27.1	50	54.2%
7	On-track to High School Graduation	85.1%	94%	45.3	50	90.5%
8	4-year Graduation All Students	87.2%	94%	92.8	100	92.8%
9	6-year Graduation - High Needs Students	78.6%	94%	83.6	100	83.6%
10	Postsecondary Entrance	71.9%	75%	95.9	100	95.9%
11	Physical Fitness	50.5%	75%	16.8	50	33.7%
12	Arts Access	47.5%	60%	39.6	50	79.2%
	<b>State Accountability Index</b>			<b>987.0</b>	<b>1350</b>	<b>73.1%</b>

**Smarter Balanced Growth Report, 2015-16  
State of Connecticut, ELA and Math, All Grades Combined**

Connecticut's Growth Model for the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics applies to students in grades 4 through 8. This growth model provides ambitious yet achievable individual student growth targets for all students. Over 43 percent of matched students met their growth targets. On average, students achieved 63.8 percent of their growth targets in ELA and 65.0 percent of their growth targets in mathematics.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Number of Matched Students</b>	<b>Growth Rate</b>	<b>Average Percentage of Target Achieved</b>
<b>ELA</b>	185,345	43.1%	63.8%
<b>Math</b>	185,864	43.9%	65.0%

When these results were disaggregated based on a student's high need status (i.e., the student was either an English learner, a student with a disability, or a student eligible for free or reduced price meals), they reveal sizeable gaps. In order for high needs students to achieve at higher levels, they must grow at significantly faster rates than those evidenced here. Connecticut's long-term goal is for the average percentage of target achieved to be 100% for all student groups.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>High Needs (F/R, EL or SWD)</b>	<b>Number of Matched Students</b>	<b>Growth Rate</b>	<b>Average Percentage of Target Achieved</b>
<b>ELA</b>	<b>High Needs</b>	83,738	35.2%	58.3%
	<b>Non-High Needs</b>	101,607	49.6%	68.3%
<b>Math</b>	<b>High Needs</b>	84,435	35.7%	57.4%
	<b>Non-High Needs</b>	101,429	50.7%	71.2%

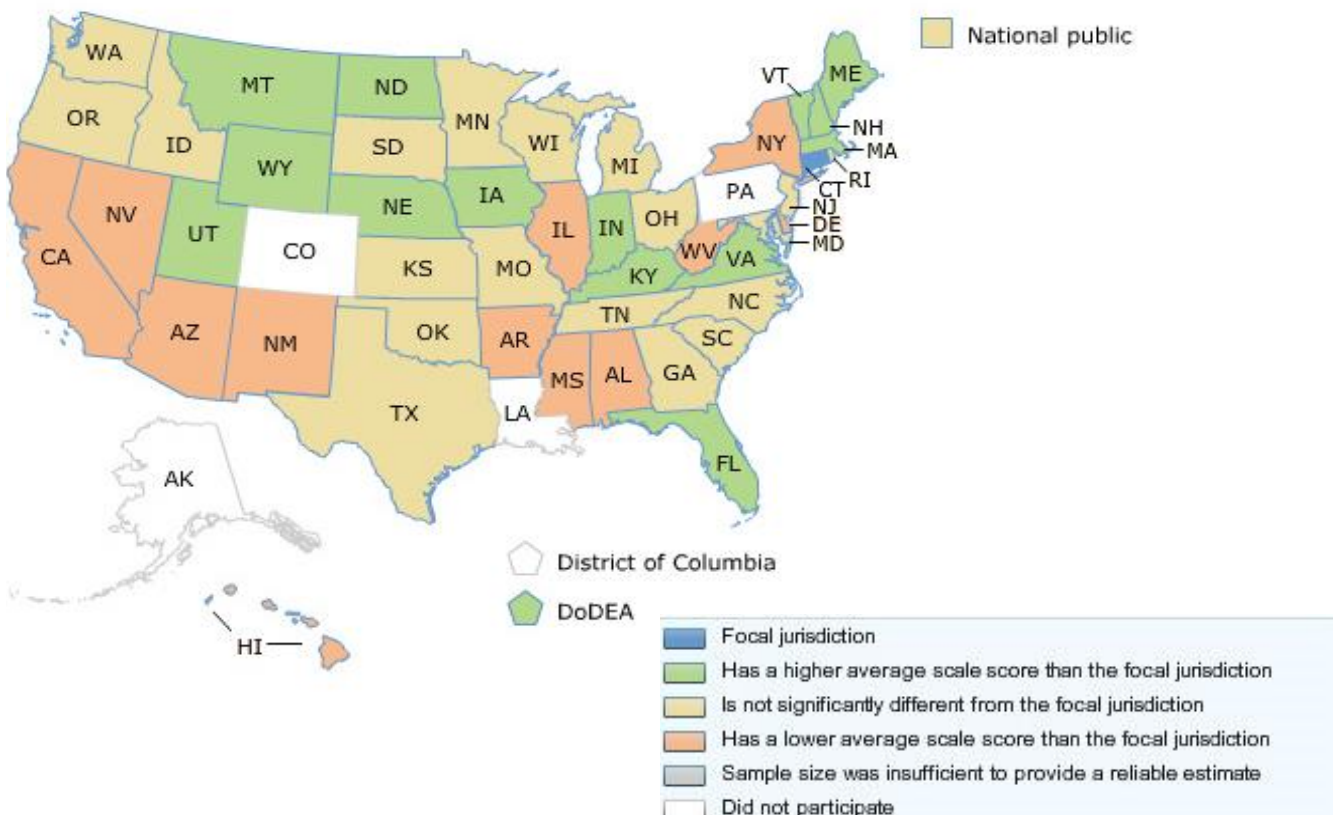
## Performance

### National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Science – Grade 4

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is often called the “Nation’s Report Card.” It is a congressionally mandated assessment administered by the National Center for Education Statistics within the U.S. Department of Education. It is the only nationally representative, continuing assessment of what America’s students know and can do in various subject areas. Since NAEP assessments are administered in the same way across the nation, NAEP results can be compared across states.

The NAEP Science assessment was last administered in 2015. Connecticut’s overall performance in Grades 4 and 8 did not change when compared to the previous administrations, but many other states showed improvement. The following graphics show Connecticut’s Grade 4 and Grade 8 student performance based on average NAEP scale scores compared to all other states and participating jurisdictions.

Connecticut’s Grade 4 students earned an average scale score of 154 in 2015. This is not different than the National public average of 153. The map below shows that fourteen states and the Department of Defense schools outperformed Connecticut’s fourth graders. Additionally, large disparities in performance exist in Connecticut when comparisons are made based on race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and disability status.

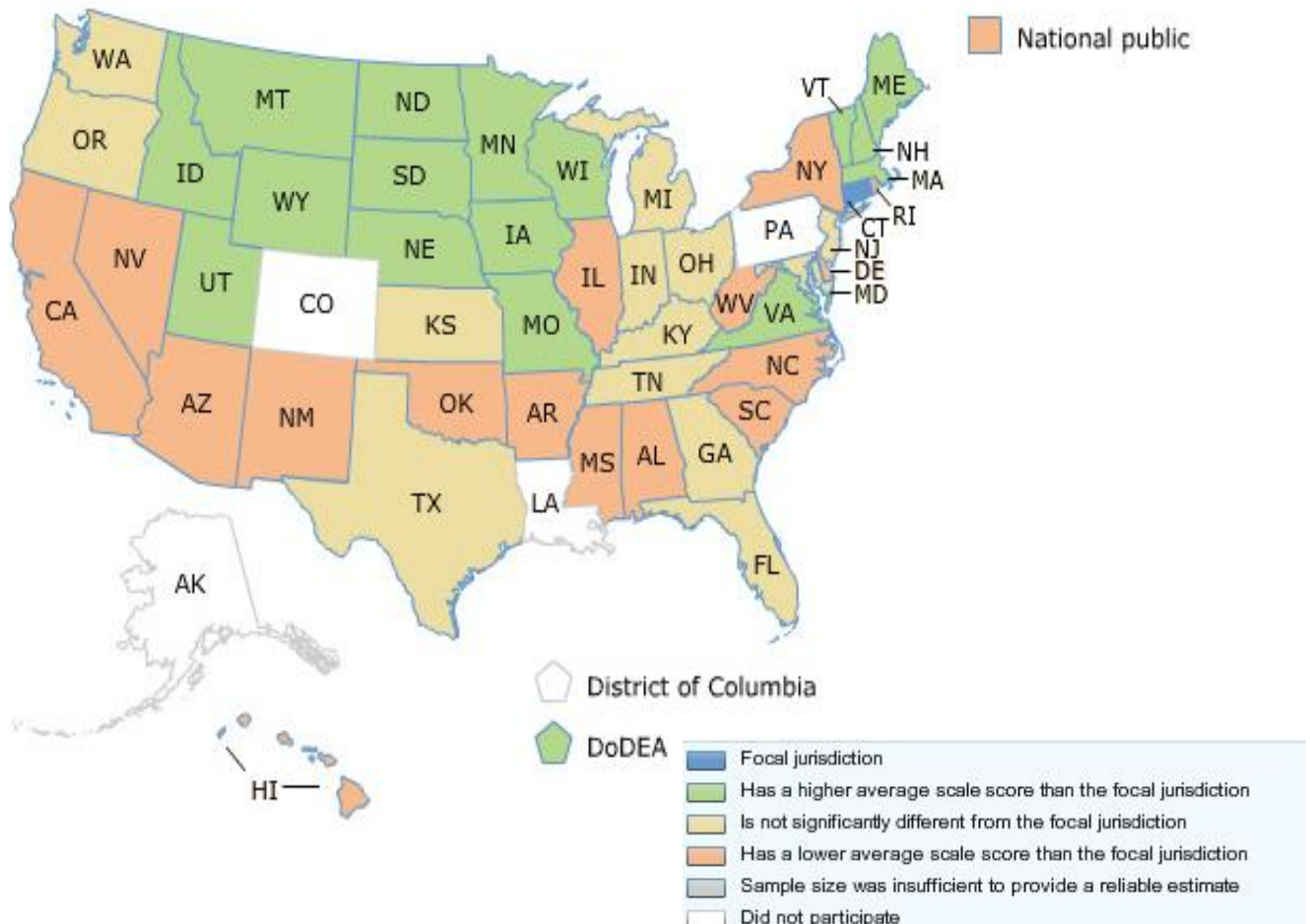


## Performance

### National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Science – Grade 8

Connecticut's Grade 8 students earned a higher average scale score (155) than the National public average (153), but 16 states and the Department of Defense schools earned higher scores than Connecticut. Similar to the Grade 4 results, Connecticut's achievement gaps are persistent.

Connecticut is in its second year of a five-year plan to implement Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) in every classroom. Adoption of the standards in November 2015 was a first step toward a renewed focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) in Connecticut schools. Ultimately, the new standards coupled with appropriate professional learning supports will improve teaching and learning and prepare students for the jobs of the future. NAEP 2015 data show that 41% of Connecticut's Grade 8 students would like a job that involves science. The NGSS were carefully designed to emphasize scientific inquiry and ensure that students are thinking like a scientist. This active approach to learning has the potential to be more engaging and inspire more students to consider advanced study and eventual careers in STEM fields.



## Performance

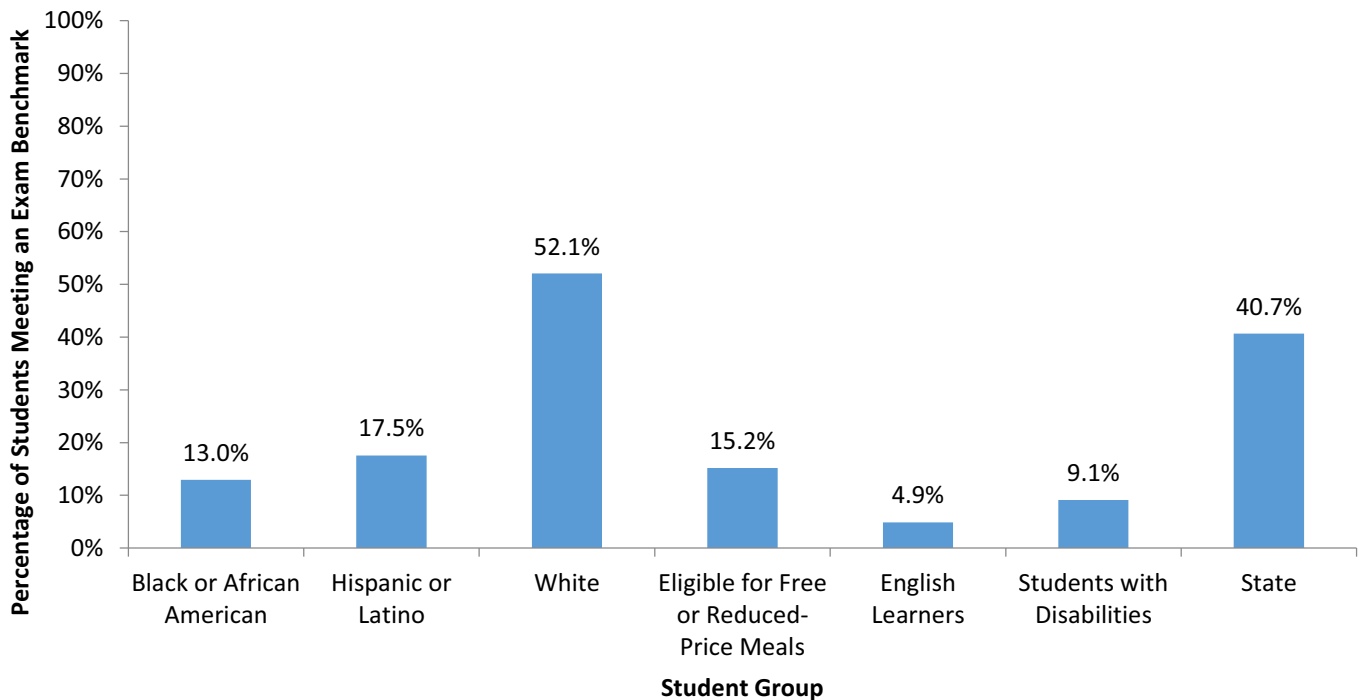
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### Percentage of 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Graders Meeting Benchmark on a College and Career Readiness Exam: 2015-16

The graph below shows the percentage of 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders in the 2015-16 school year who met the College and Career Readiness benchmark on any of the following exams: Smarter Balanced, SAT, CT SAT School Day, ACT, Advanced Placement (AP), or International Baccalaureate (IB).

Overall, 40.7 percent of Connecticut 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders met a college and career readiness standard on any of the above mentioned exams. This is a significant increase from 2014-15 when 37.3 percent met a standard. As with other measures of student achievement, varying performance levels are evidenced among students from different subgroups; while overall 40.7 percent of students met the standard, only 15.2 percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals, 9.1 percent of students with disabilities, and 4.9 percent of English learners met the standard.

Percentage of Grade 11 and 12 Students Meeting Benchmark on a College and Career Readiness Exam: 2015-16



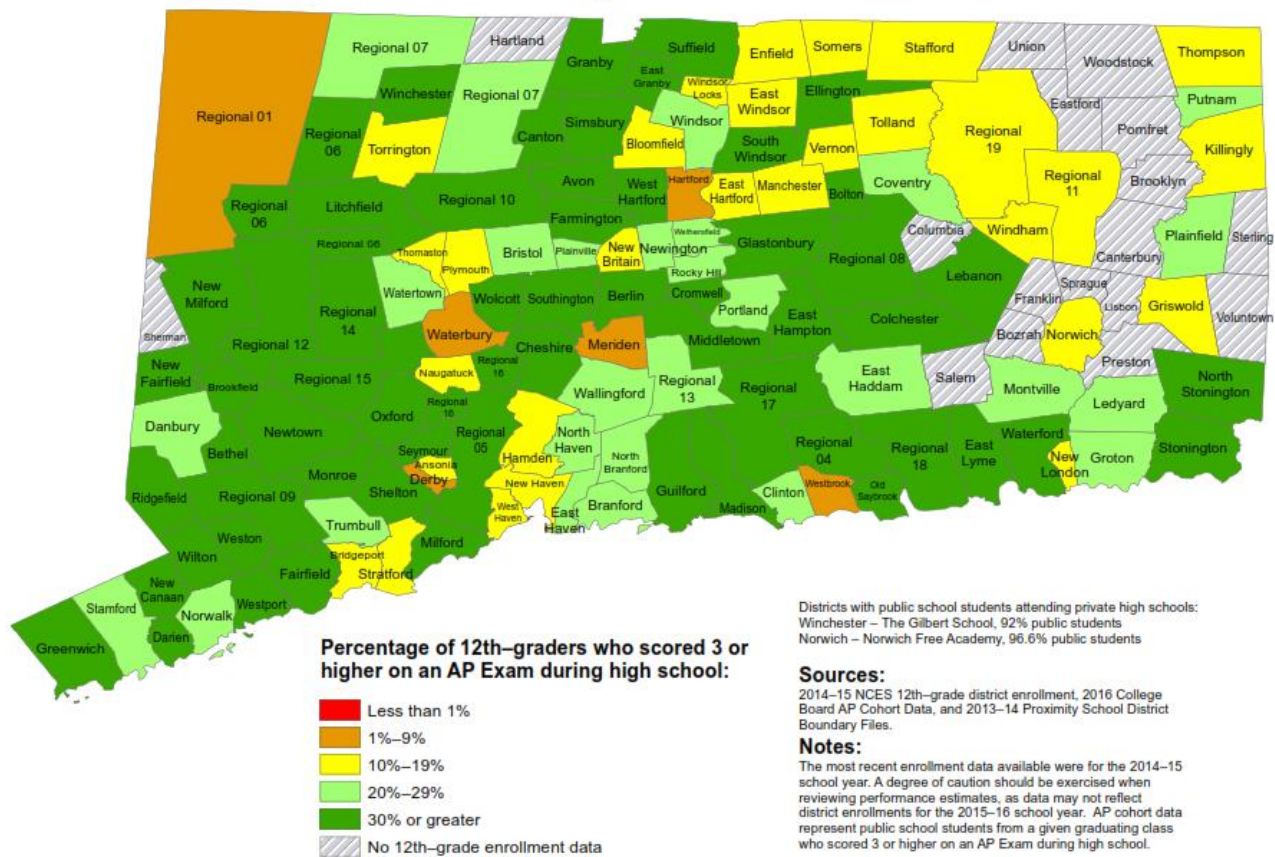
† The source for these data is EdSight.



## Advanced Placement†

The Advanced Placement (AP) program is a rigorous high school program of college-level courses and examinations. Connecticut was ranked **third nationwide** with 30.1 percent of its 2016 high school graduates scoring 3 or better on at least one AP exam during high school and ranked **second most improved in the nation** with an increase of 11.4 percentage points over the last decade. While the traditional performance gaps evidenced in other metrics were also evidenced in these data, there were some bright spots. Thirteen Connecticut districts made the AP Honor Roll, which recognizes those outstanding school districts that simultaneously increase access to AP coursework while increasing the percentage of students earning scores of 3 or higher on AP exams. The districts were Berlin Public School District\*, Cromwell School District\*, East Hampton School District\*, Lebanon Public School District, Milford School District, New Milford School District\*, North Branford School District\*, Regional School District 13\*, Seymour Town School District, Southington School District\*, Tolland School District\*, West Haven School District\*, and Wolcott School District\*.

### Connecticut Public Schools AP® Success by District: Class of 2016



† The source for these data is the College Board.

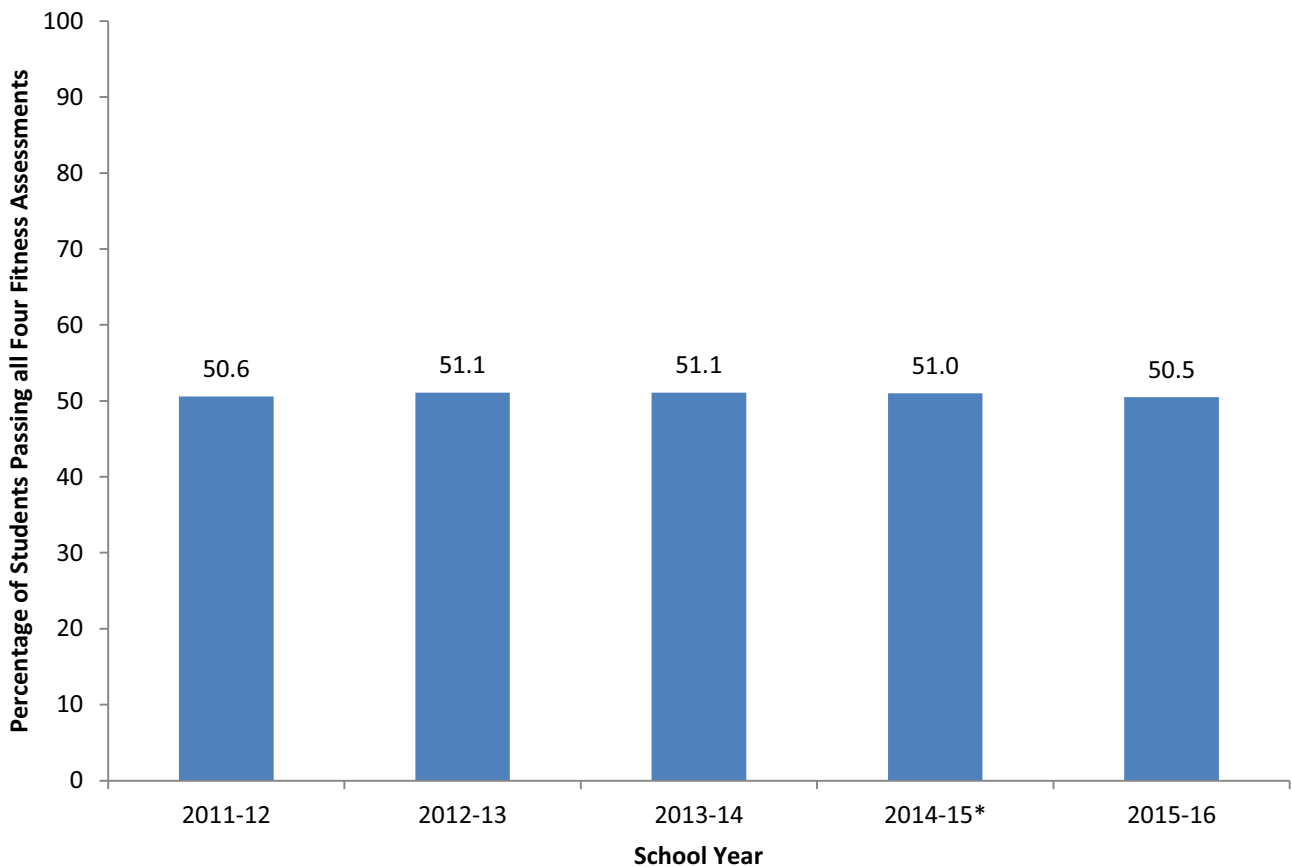
\*District has achieved the honor for multiple years.



### **Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment**

The Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment program includes a variety of health-related physical fitness tests designed to assess muscle strength, muscular endurance, flexibility, and cardiovascular fitness. Criterion-referenced standards associated with good health are used rather than the previously applied normative standards. Statewide, half of students in the tested grades (4, 6, 8 and 10) met the “Health Fitness Zone” standard on all four assessments in 2015-16.

**Percentage of Students Reaching Health Standard of CT Physical Fitness Assessment**



Source: ED165

Note: For the first time in 2014-15, the ED165 collected data from district-run programs. This means that students who may not have been reported in past years are included in the data in 2014-15 and the following years.

**Graduation Rates**

The four-year graduation cohort rate is the percentage of first-time ninth graders who graduate in four years or less with a regular high school diploma. Overall, Connecticut’s four-year graduation rate has increased over the past four years from 82.7 percent for the cohort of 2011 to 87.2 percent for the cohort of 2015. The graduation rates for students who are black, Hispanic, or eligible for free or reduced-priced meals has increased at a rate that is greater than the state average. However, the four-year graduation rates for English learners and students with disabilities continues to be substantially lower and has only shown modest improvement in the past five years.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	% Change from 2011
<b>All Students</b>	82.7	84.8	85.5	87.0	87.2	5.4%
<b>Male</b>	79.6	81.5	82.4	84.1	84.4	6.0%
<b>Female</b>	86.0	88.3	88.7	90.1	90.1	4.8%
<b>Black/African American</b>	71.2	73.0	75.7	78.6	78.1	9.7%
<b>Hispanic</b>	64.2	68.6	70.2	74.0	74.8	16.5%
<b>White</b>	89.4	91.3	91.4	92.2	92.7	3.7%
<b>Asian</b>	92.2	91.9	93.2	93.5	94.8	2.8%
<b>Eligible For Free Lunch</b>	59.6	66.6	68.6	73.1	73.3	23.0%
<b>English Learners</b>	59.4	62.7	63.8	63.0	66.7	12.3%
<b>Students with Disabilities</b>	62.4	64.4	64.7	65.2	65.6	5.1%

Source: PSIS

Notes:

The race categories that were created in 2012—Native American or Alaska Native, Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and Two or More Races—are not included in the above table because they do not yet have prior years of data. To see the complete data, please go to: <http://edsight.ct.gov>

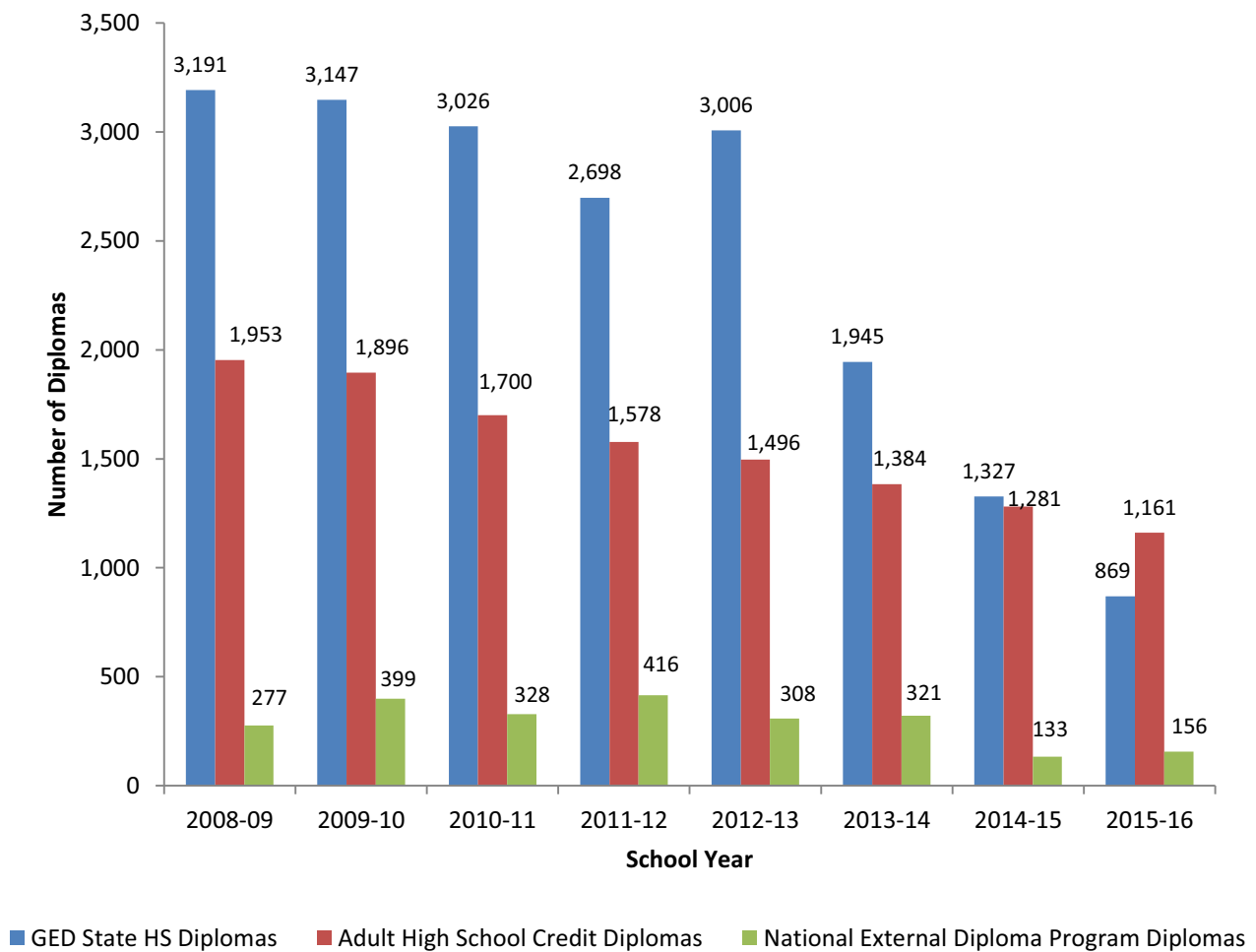
% change from 2011 is calculated as follows: (2015 minus 2011) divided by 2011 \* 100.

### Adult Education Diplomas Granted

Connecticut offers three pathways for adult learners to attain a high school diploma: (1) pass the General Educational Development (GED) Tests; (2) earn adult education credits toward an adult high school diploma; or (3) demonstrate 100 percent mastery on the National External Diploma Program (NEDP) assessments.

In 2015-16, a total of 2,186 individuals earned diplomas through these adult education pathways. Earning a diploma through adult education enables individuals to pursue postsecondary education/training opportunities and participate more fully in Connecticut’s workforce.

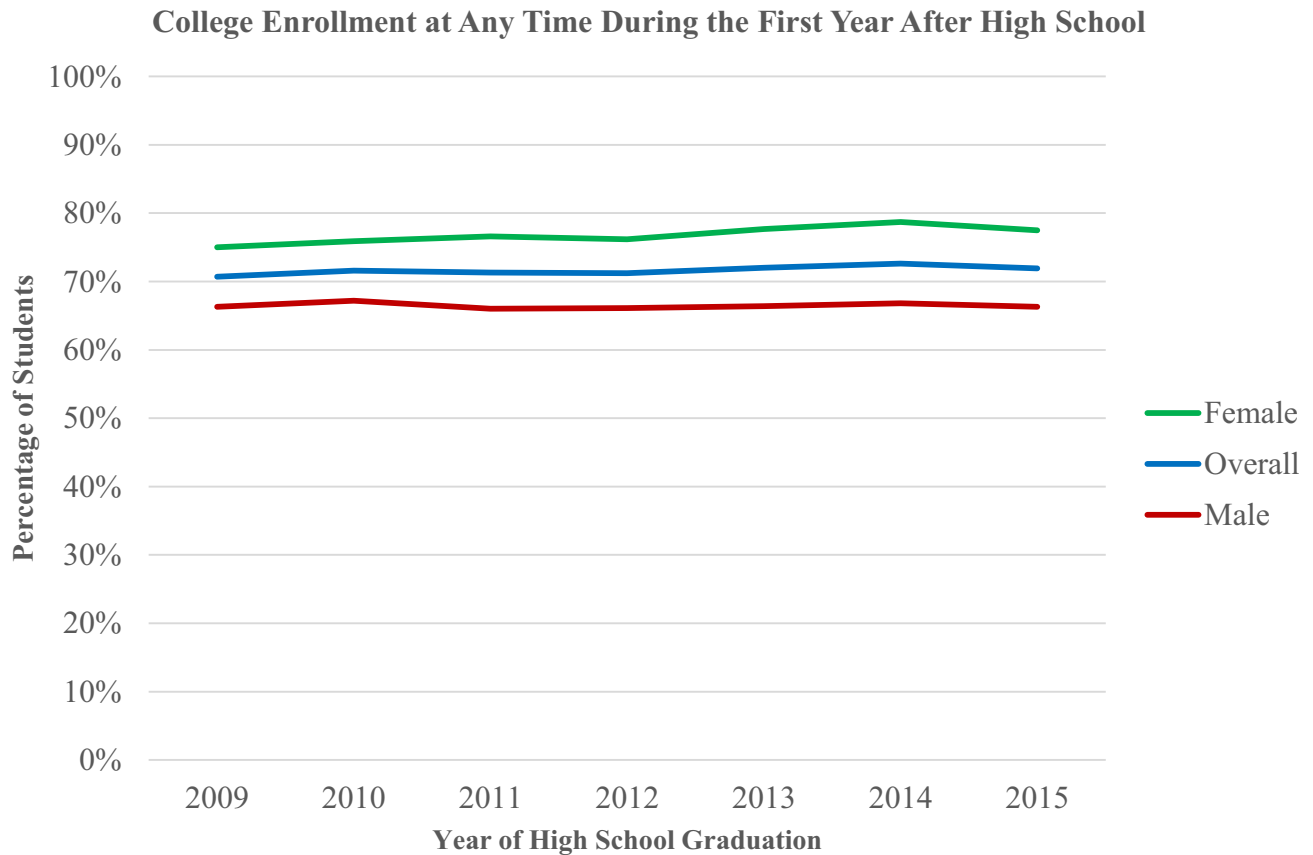
### Adult Education- Diplomas Granted



Source: Connecticut Adult Reporting System (CARS) database and Statewide Program Profile

### College Enrollment of Connecticut Public High School Graduates

In spring 2015, Connecticut public high schools graduated more than 38,000 students. Of these graduates, 71.9 percent enrolled in higher education within a year of graduating, which is only slightly lower than the previous year’s graduating class (72.6 percent). The college enrollment rate of females (77.5 percent) from the high school class of 2015 was substantially higher than that of males (63.3 percent).

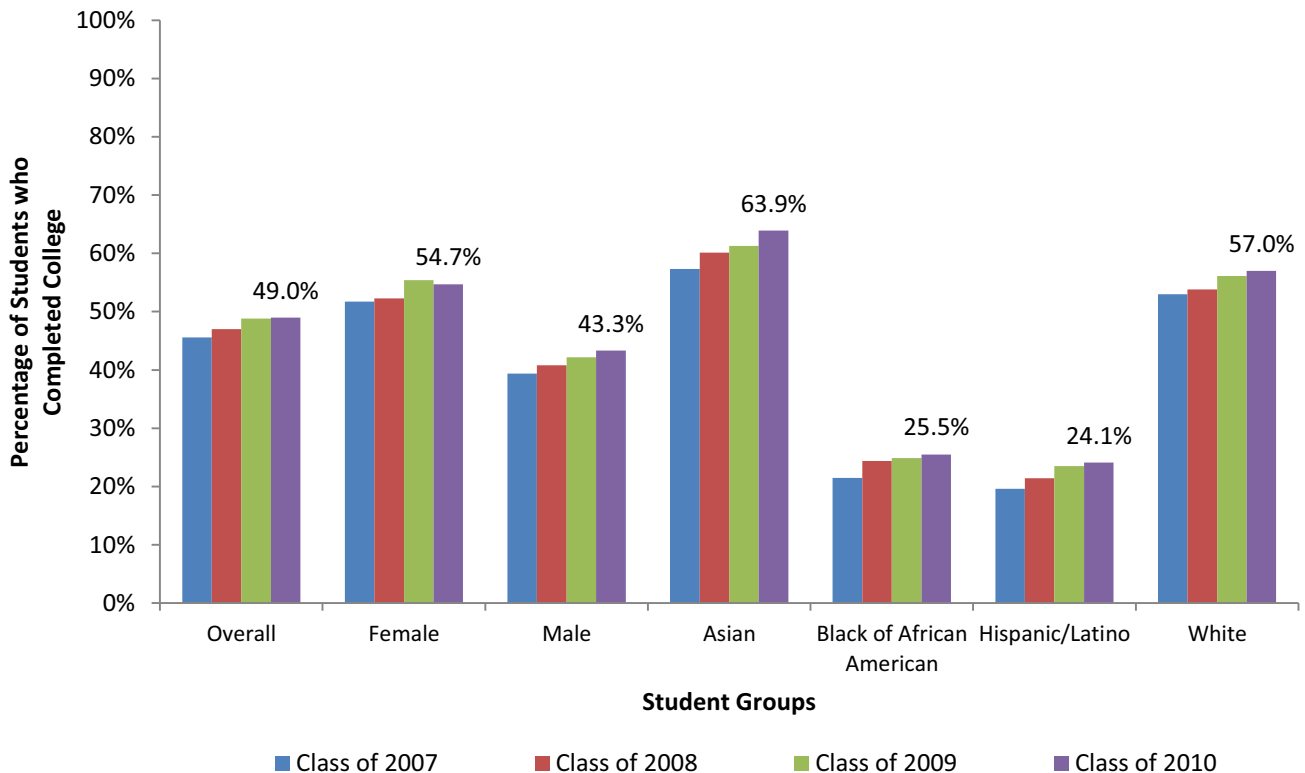


Source: National Student Clearinghouse Student Tracker, EdSight, and CSDE calculations

**College Completion of Connecticut Public High School Graduates**

Forty-nine percent of the 2010 high school graduating class graduated from college with an associates, bachelors or higher degree within six years. That percentage is up slightly from the 2009 class when 48.8 percent of students graduated from college in six years. The college completion rates vary among different student groups. For example, 54.7 percent of females graduated in six years compared with 43.3 percent of males. Variations also exist between students from different racial/ethnic backgrounds; 63.9 percent of Asian students and 57.0 percent of white students completed college within six years compared with 25.5 percent of black/African American students and 24.1 percent of Hispanic/Latino students.

**College Completion in 6 Years**



Source: National Student Clearinghouse Student Tracker reports and CSDE calculations.

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