

# **The Condition of Education in Connecticut**

## **2014-15**



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 first year of Connecticut's next generation accountability system (see page 23). This system is a broad set of 12 indicators that helps tell the story of how well a school is preparing its students for success in college, careers, and civic life. The new system moves beyond test scores and graduation rates and instead provides a more holistic, multifactor perspective of district and school performance. Starting with the 2015-16 year, the system will incorporate student growth over time on the state summative assessments. Rather than looking solely at a snapshot in time of student performance, growth results provide a more accurate picture of curriculum and instructional effectiveness and allow for better use of assessment results to improve practice.

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

# **The Education System**

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

<b>School Type</b> <small>(maximum grade range determines classification)</small>	<b>Count</b>
Pre-K Only	45
Elementary Schools (PK-6)	586
Elementary & Middle School Grades (PK-8)	142
Elementary, Middle, & High School Grades (PK-12)	29
Middle Schools (6-8)	156
Middle & High School Grades (6-12)	45
High Schools (9-12)	307
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,310</b>

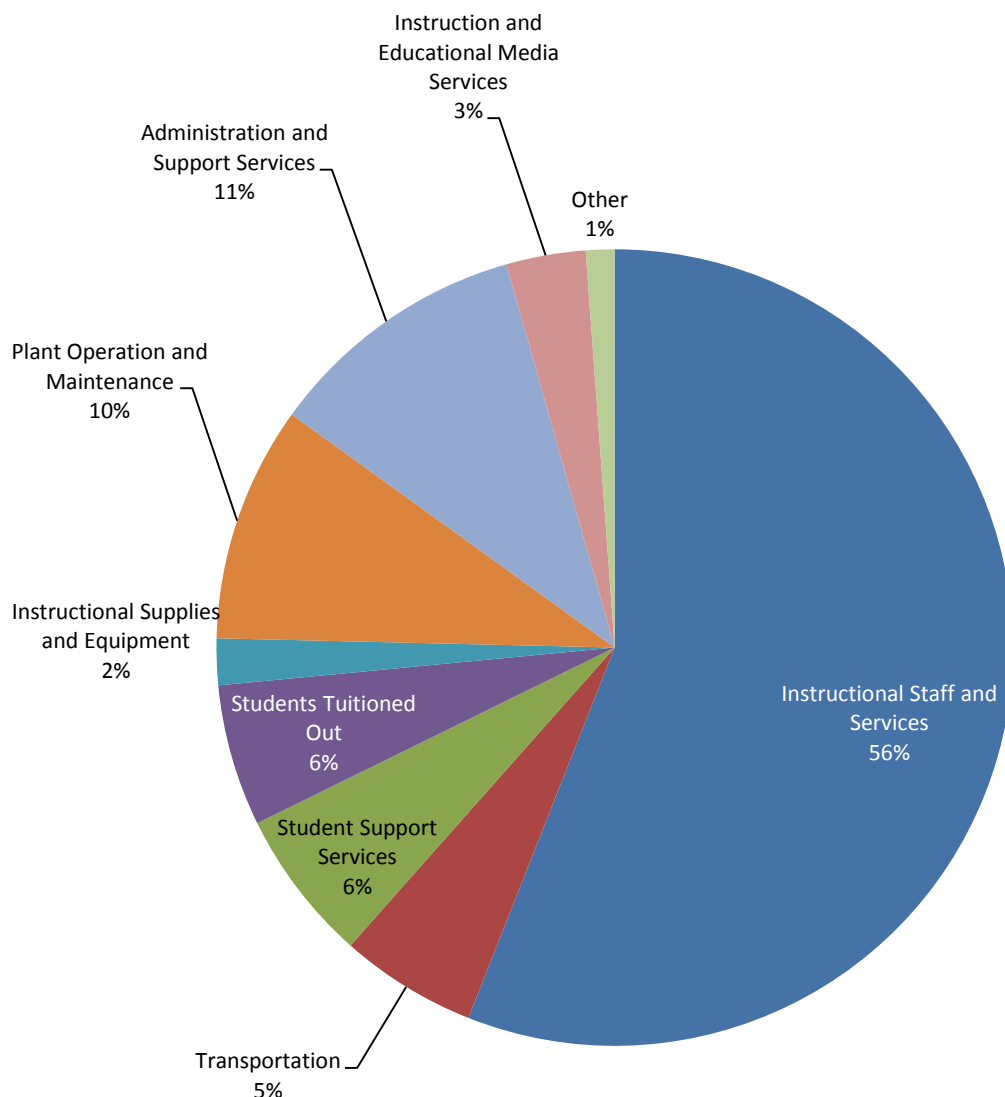
<b>Schools</b>	<b>Count</b>
Public Elementary & Secondary Schools and Programs	1,167
Regional Educational Service Center Schools and Programs	68
Public Charters	22
CT Technical High Schools	17
Endowed Academies	3
State Agencies	33

*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 2014-15, the state's overall school expenditures (excluding investments in land, buildings and debt) totaled \$8.6 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 2014-15



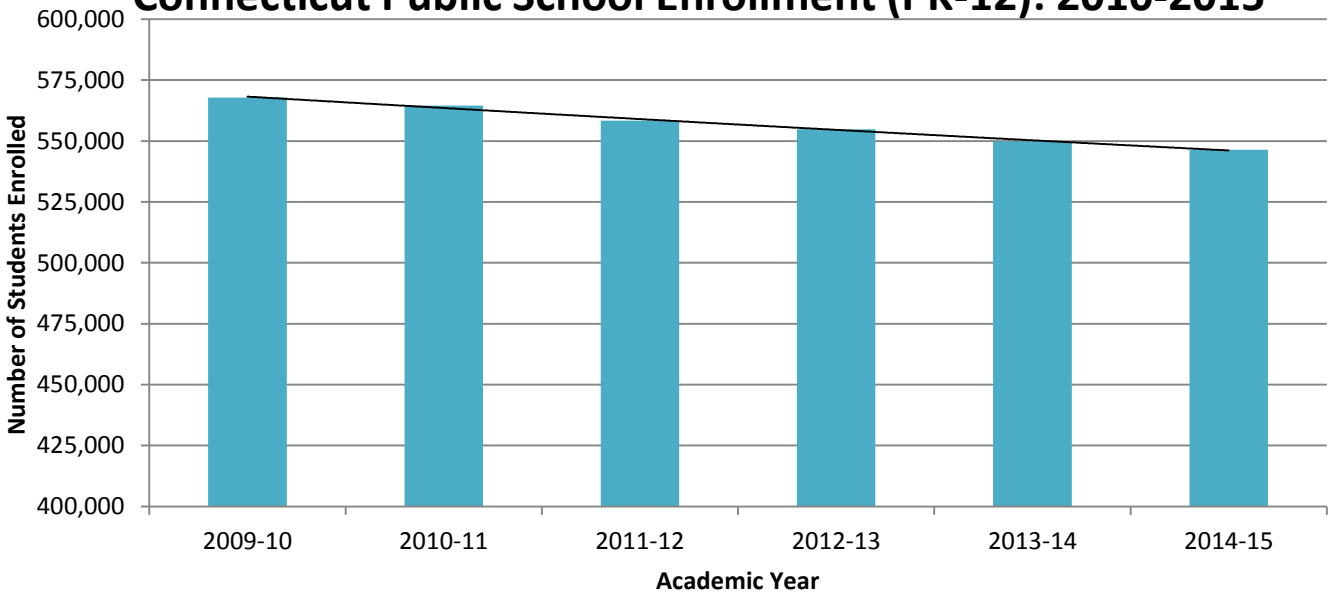
<sup>†</sup> A portion of the cost of students tuitioned out was sent to other Connecticut public school districts and, therefore, is also included under the various expenditure categories.

# Students

**Public School Enrollment**

Statewide enrollment has declined steadily over the past decade. The 2014-15 enrollment was 3.8 percent lower than in 2009-10.

**Connecticut Public School Enrollment (PK-12): 2010-2015**

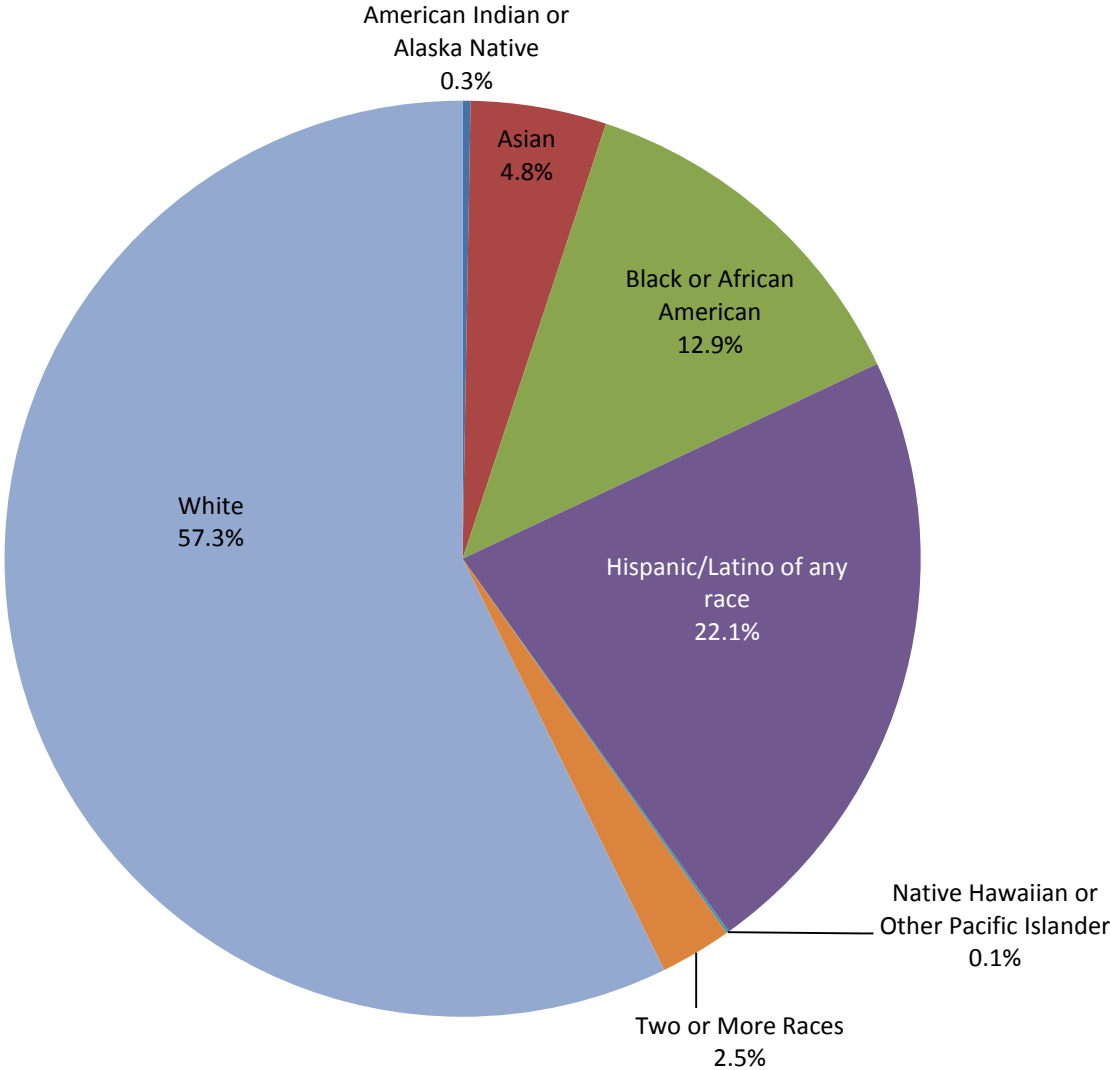




**Public School Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity**

In 2010-11, 37.8 percent of students represented racial or ethnic minorities; in 2014-15, that percentage was 42.7.

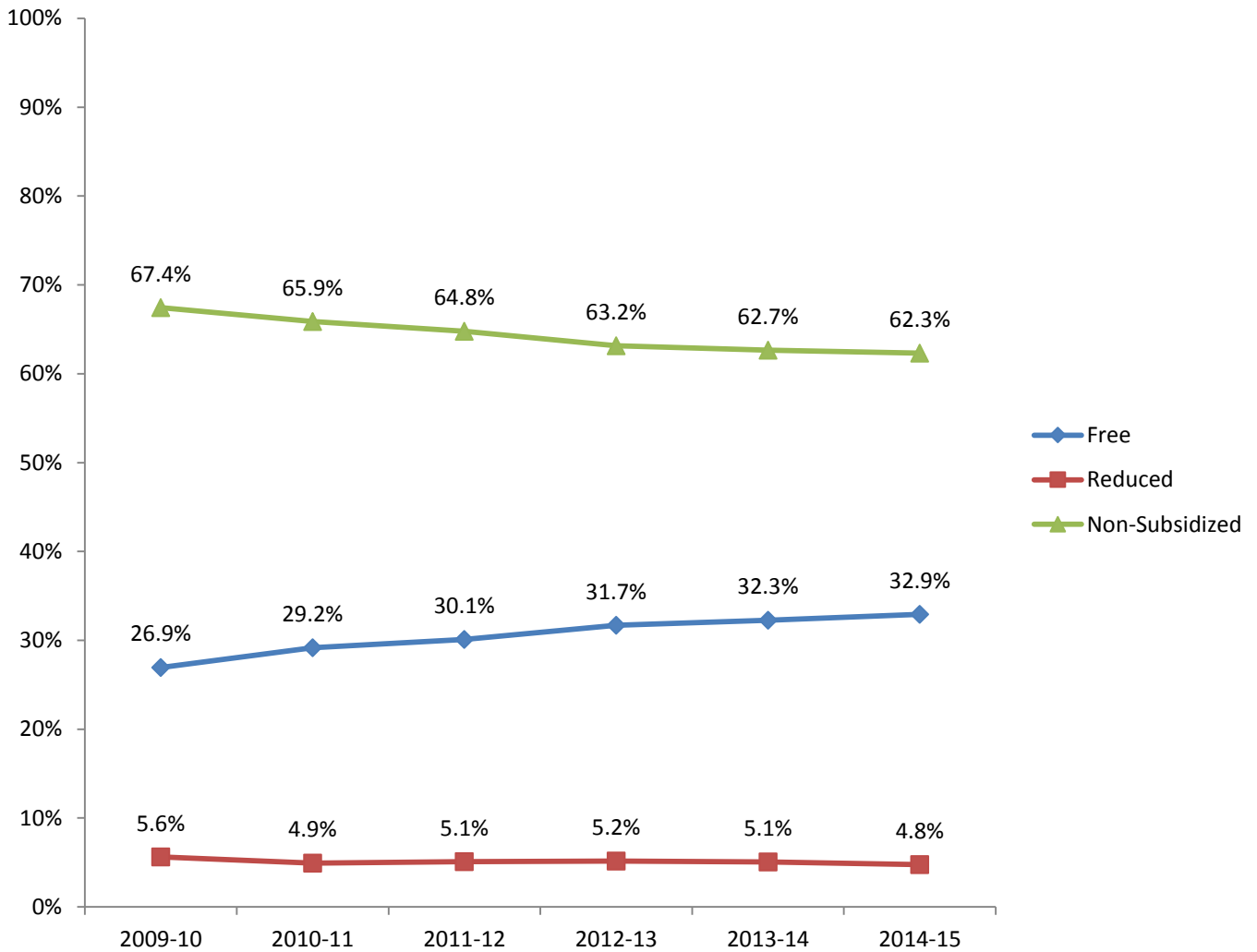
**Student Counts by Race/Ethnicity, 2014-15**



## Economic Need

Connecticut's student body is composed of more low-income students than ever before. The percentage of students eligible for free/reduced price meals<sup>†</sup> rose to an all-time high of 37.7 percent in 2014-15.

### Percentage of Students by Free/Reduced Lunch Eligibility Status

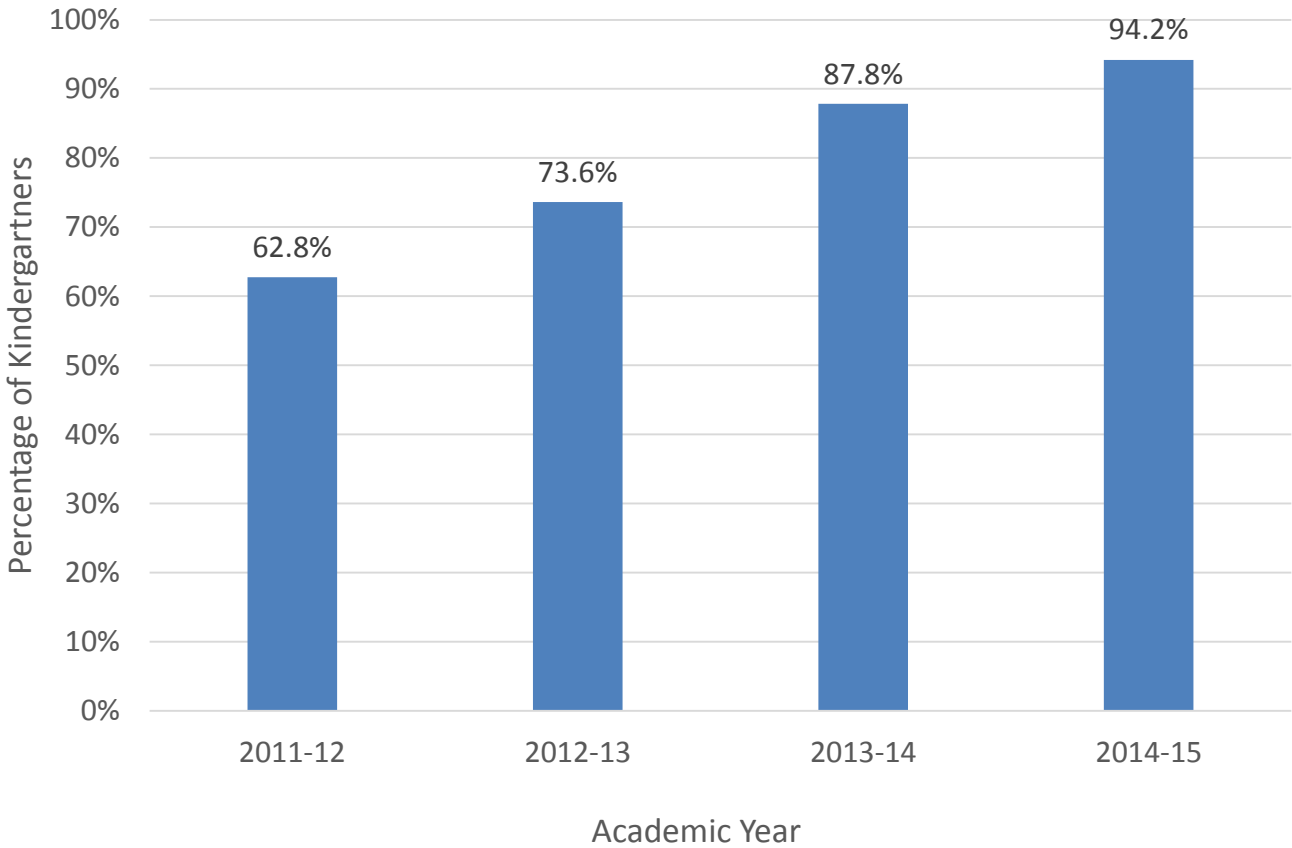


<sup>†</sup> In 2014-15, a family of four needed to earn less than \$31,005 for a child to receive free meals and less than \$44,123 to receive reduced-price meals, according to the USDA Food and Nutrition Services.

**Full-day Kindergarten Enrollment**

The number of school districts offering full-day kindergarten has been growing in recent years. In 2014-15, over 94 percent of kindergarteners were enrolled in full-day kindergarten across the state. This represents an all-time high and an increase of over 30 percentage points from 2011-12.

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

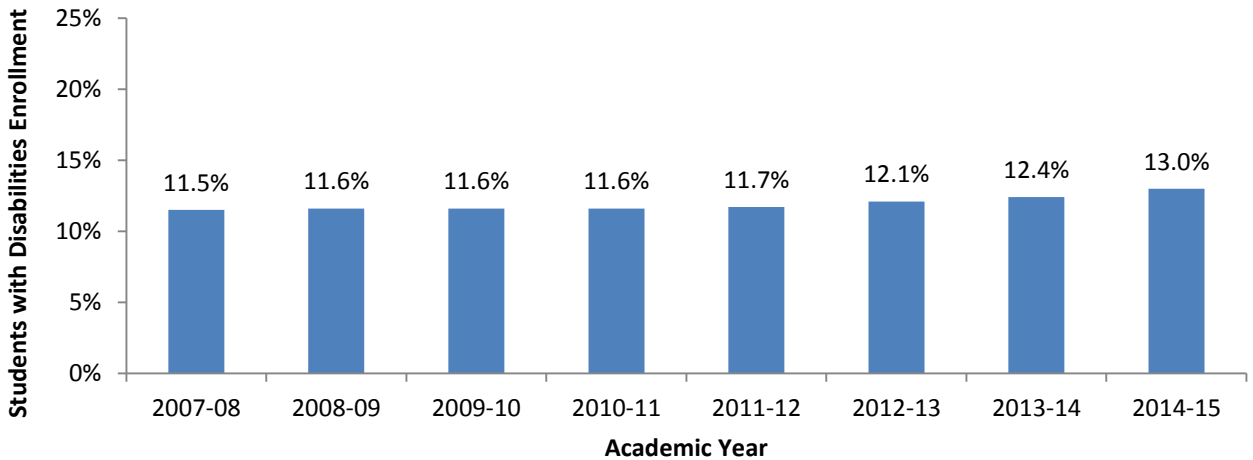


**Special Education**

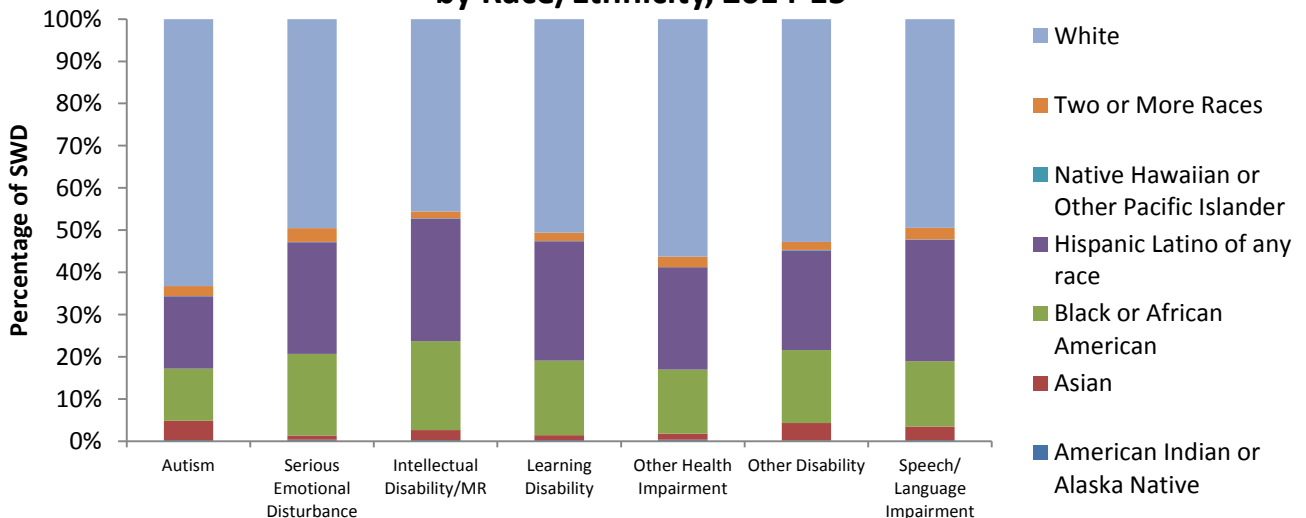
In 2014-15, there were 68,445 Connecticut public school students in Grades K-12, or 13.0 percent of total enrollment, who required special education services. The special education incidence rate has risen over the past four years from 11.6 percent in 2010-11.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires investigation of disproportionate representation in the identification of students with disabilities, by race and ethnicity. In 2014-15, district-level investigations revealed that the most common groups that were disproportionately identified were the following: white students with autism or with learning disabilities and Hispanic students with speech/language impairments. 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 are found to be more than 1.5 times as likely as their nonblack peers to be identified with emotional disturbance and intellectual disability.

**Prevalence of Students with Disabilities K-12**



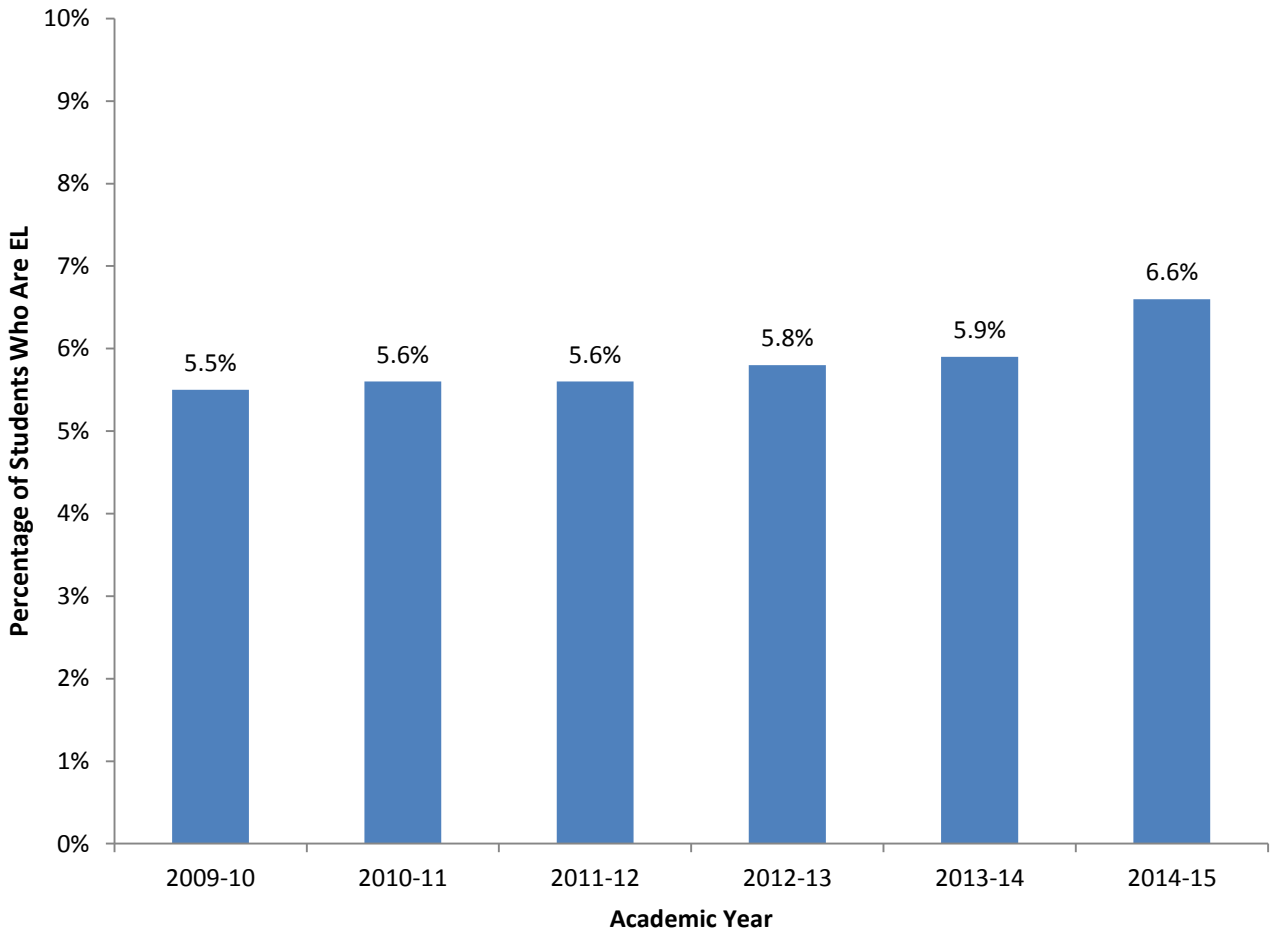
**Percentage of Students with Disabilities, Ages 6-21: Disability Type by Race/Ethnicity, 2014-15**



**English Learners**

The percentage of students who are English learners (EL) has been increasing since 2009-10. In 2014-15, the percentage increased substantially from the prior year to an all-time high of 6.6 percent.

**Percentage of Students Who Are English Learners**



## Languages Spoken at Home

In the 2014-15 school year, Connecticut's EL students spoke 136 different non-English languages. While most districts only had to accommodate a few languages, there were 35 districts whose ELL 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, 2014-15

<b>Language</b>	<b>Number of Students with Non-English Dominant Language</b>
Spanish	52,891
Portuguese	3,124
Mandarin	2,337
Polish	2,260
Arabic	1,968
Creole-Haitian	1,725
Vietnamese	1,236
Albanian	1,230
Urdu	1,198
Russian	840
Gujarati	796
French	729
Hindi	665
Serbo-Croatian	663
Bengali	658

Source: Connecticut State Department of Education Public School Information System (PSIS) October 2014 Collection, Freeze 1.

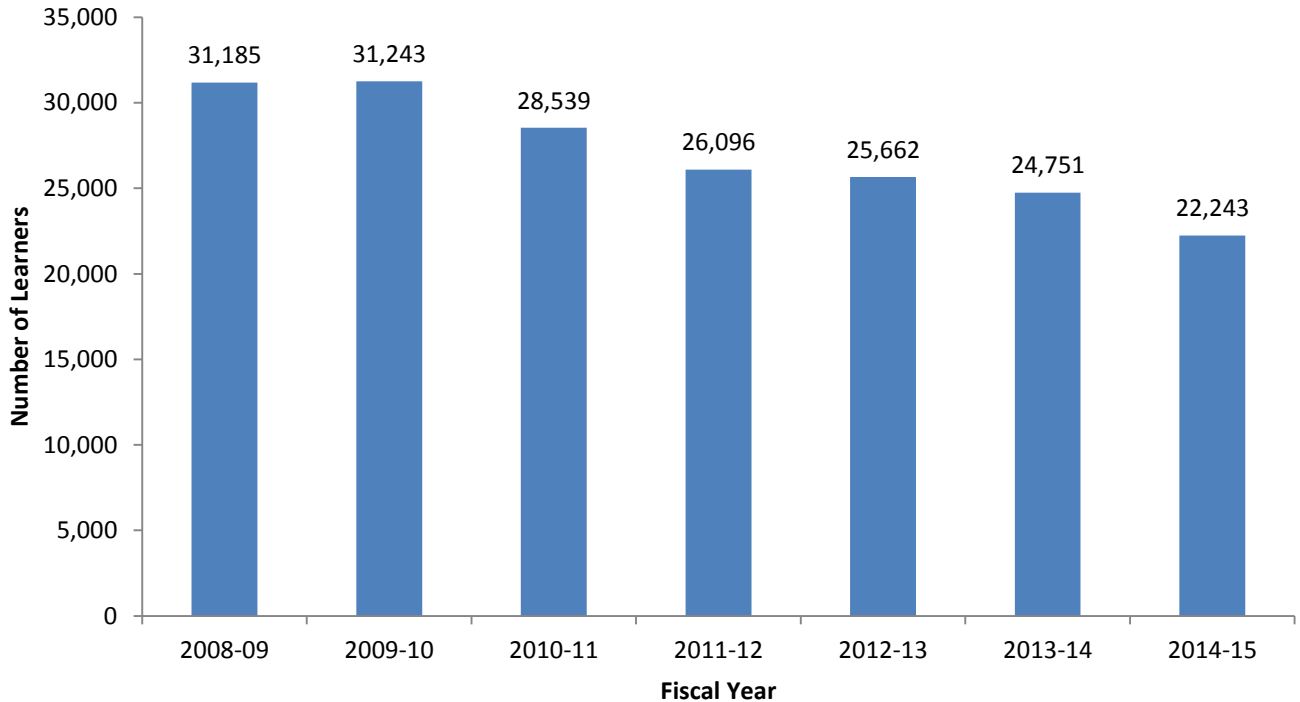
\*School districts must provide all English language learners with services to assist them in becoming proficient in the English language. Schools that have 20 or more students who are not proficient in English and speak the same language are required to offer a program of bilingual instruction in the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

## Connecticut's Adult Learners<sup>†</sup>

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 who is 17 years of age or older and is not enrolled in a public elementary or secondary school program. In 2014-15, Connecticut adult education programs served 22,243 adult learners, a 28.7 percent decline from 2008-09.

### Total Adult Education Enrollment



<sup>†</sup> *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 2014-15.

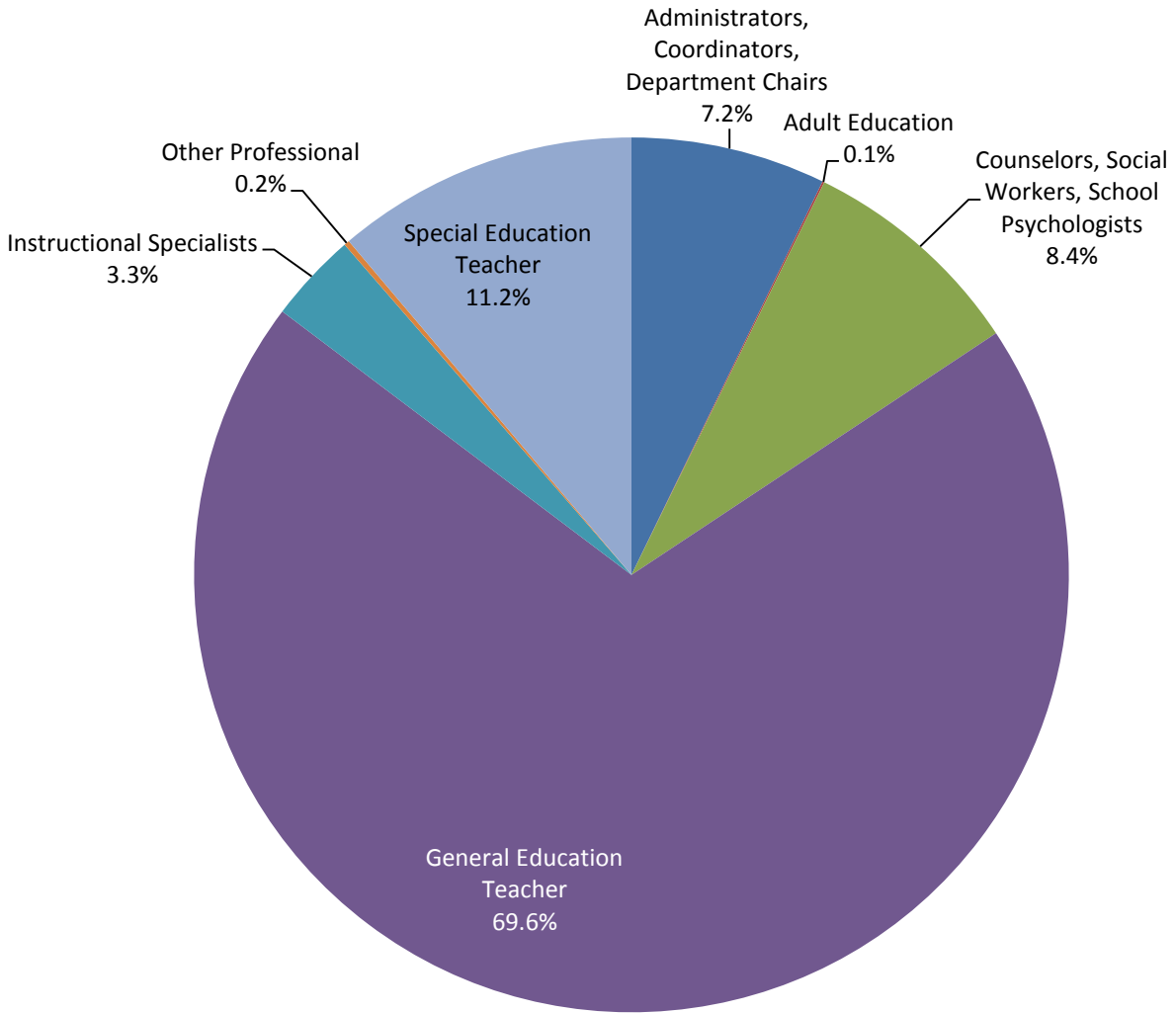
# **Educators**



**Certified Staff Members**

General education and special education teachers combined constitute 80.8 percent of full-time equivalent (FTE) certified staff.

**Certified Staff Members: Full-time Equivalent  
by Assignment Type, 2014-15**

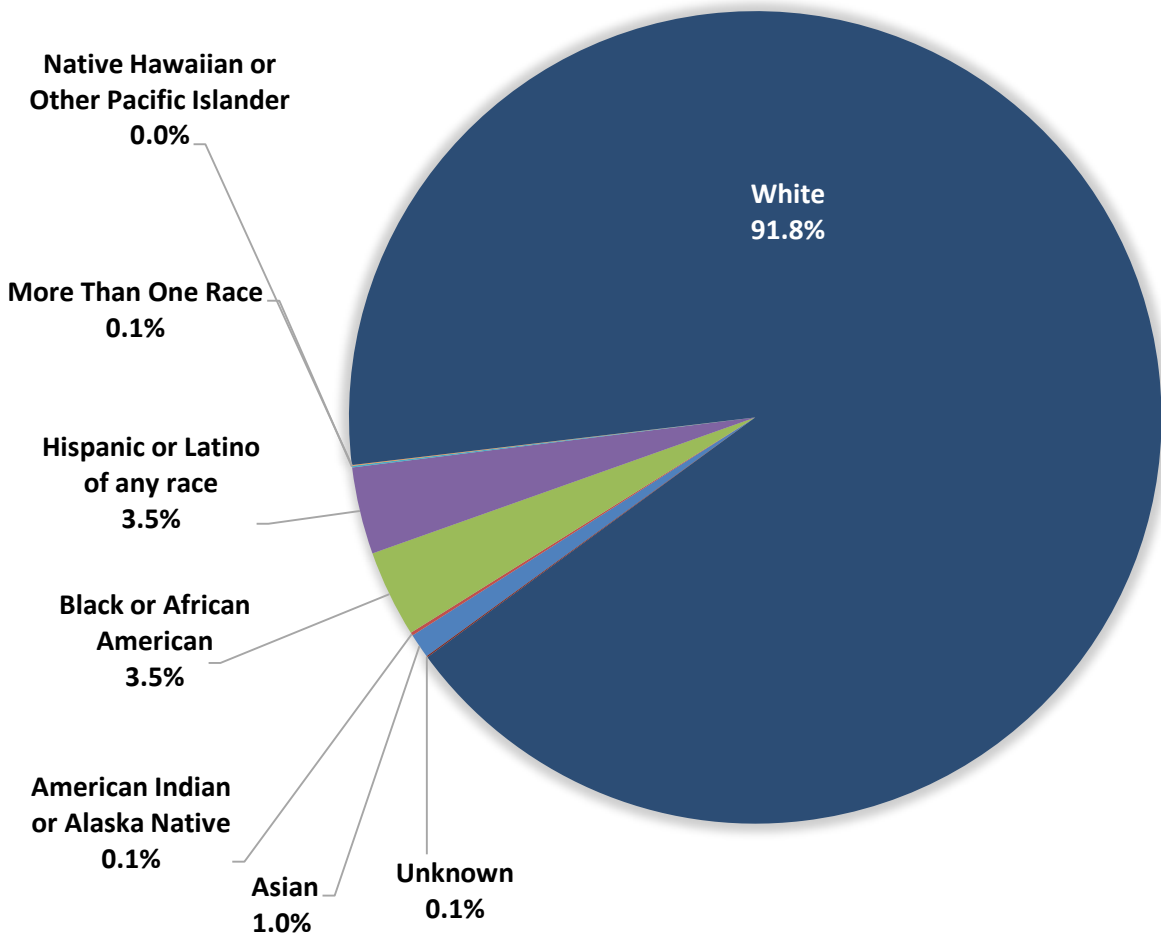


Total Full-time Equivalent<sup>†</sup> Certified Staff Count = 52,043.37

<sup>†</sup> 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 somewhat diverse with nonwhite students composing 42.7 percent of the student body, Connecticut's teaching force is quite homogeneous. Nearly 92 percent of certified school staff are white.



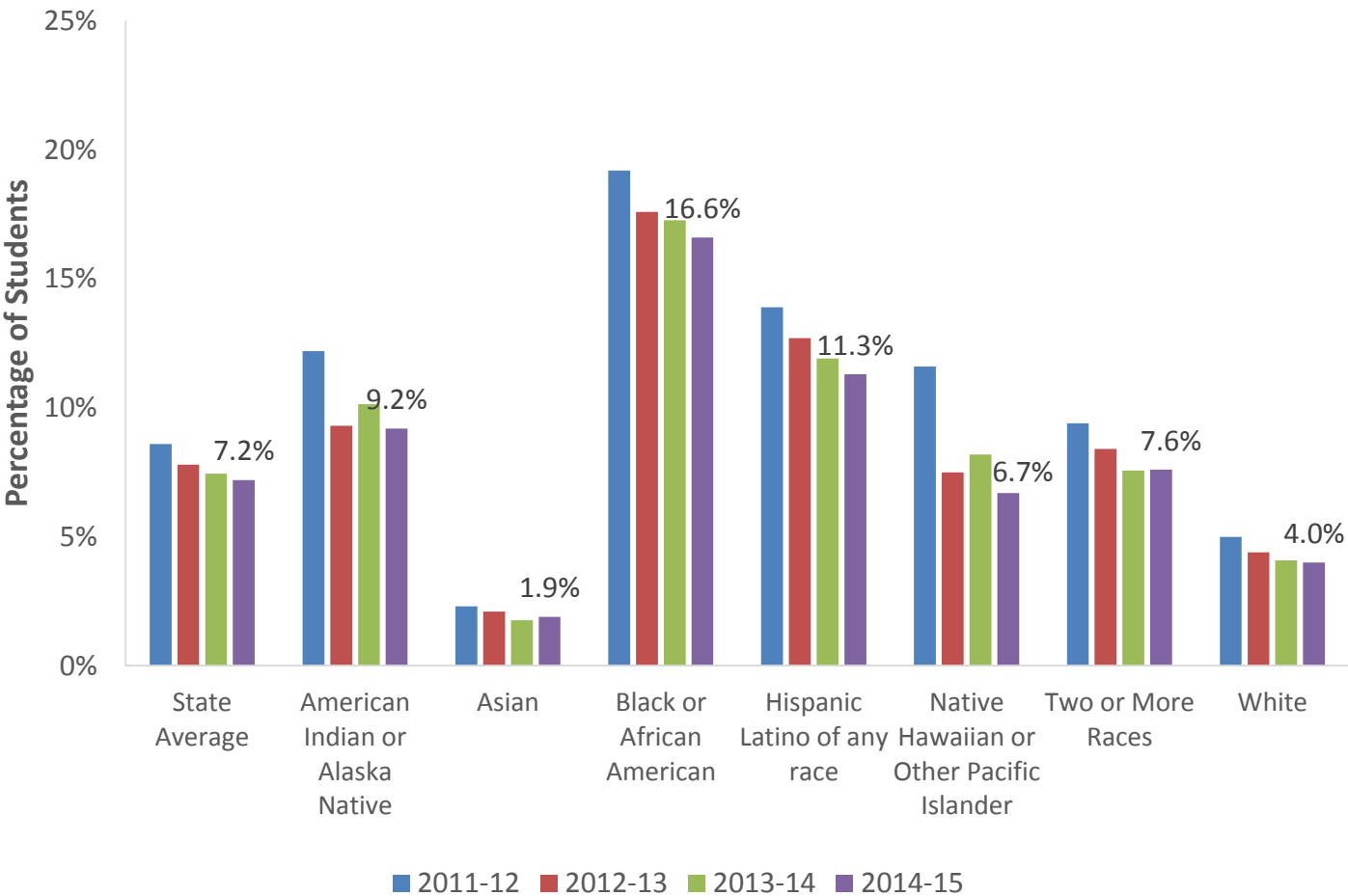
# **Instruction and School Climate**

### 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 2014-15 school year, 7.2 percent of all students received at least one suspension or expulsion. This rate has been declining statewide for all students and subgroups over the past several years. However, black/African American and Hispanic students continue to be suspended at substantially higher rates than their white counterparts.

### Suspension/Expulsion Rates by Race/Ethnicity

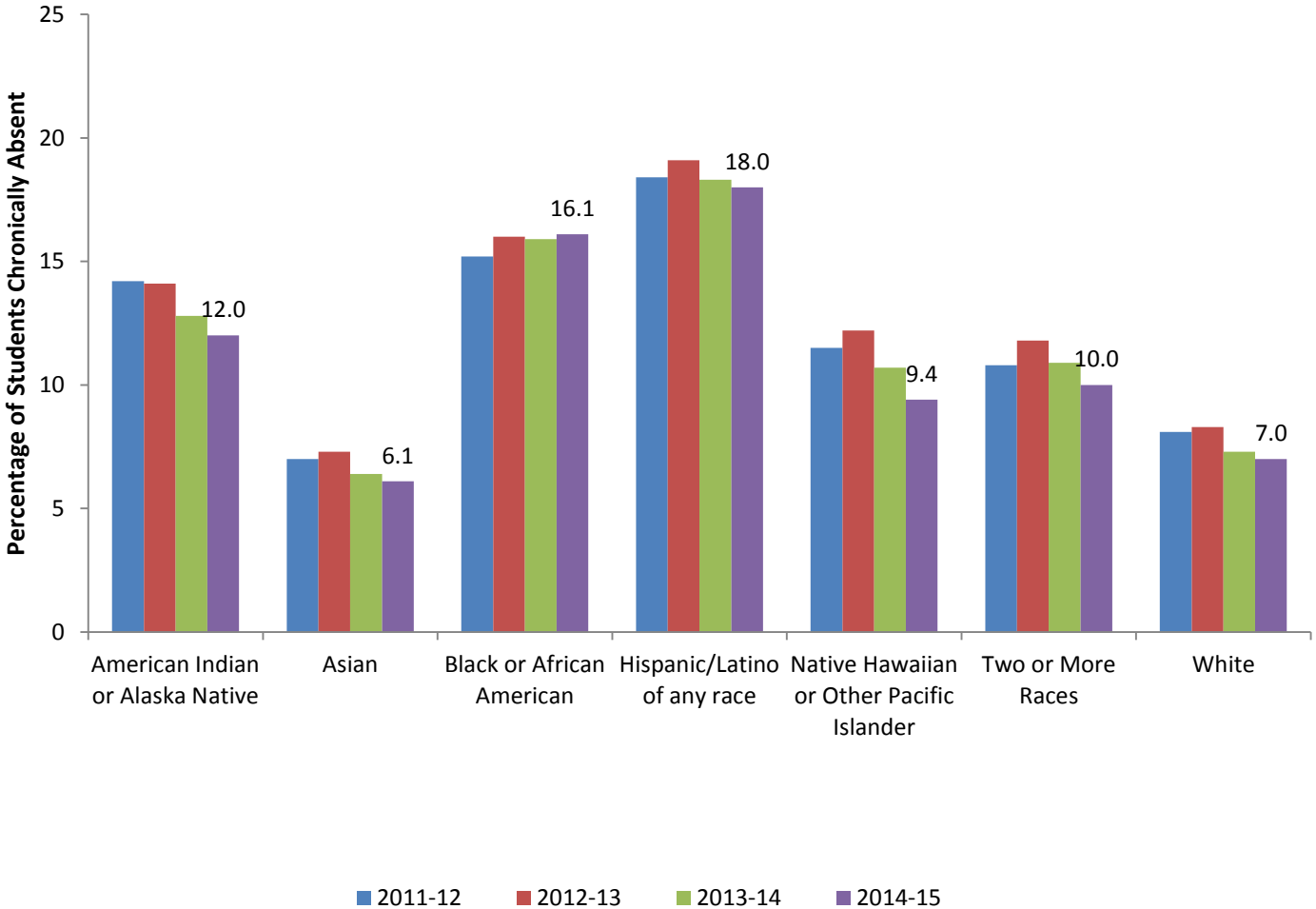


### Chronic Absenteeism

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 statewide chronic absenteeism rate for students in Grades K-12 was 10.6 percent in 2014-15. This translates to nearly 56,000 students. This rate is the lowest it has been in the past four years. There is considerable variation among districts, as well as among factors such as race/ethnicity.

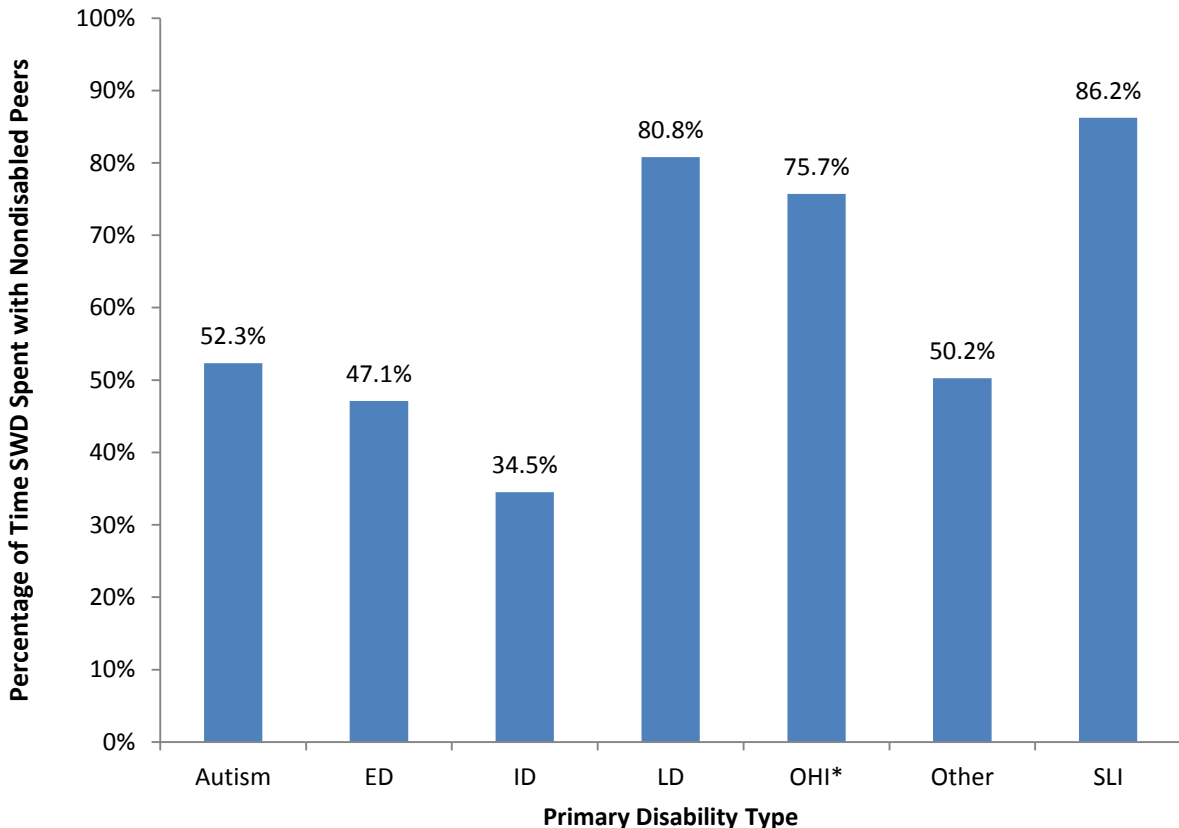
### Chronic Absenteeism Rates by Race/Ethnicity



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

Time students with disabilities 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 70.6 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 (ID), only 34.5 percent spent 80-100 percent of their time with nondisabled peers in 2014-15, compared to 80.8 percent of students with a learning disability (LD). Similarly, 47.1 percent of students with an emotional disturbance (ED) spent 80-100 percent of their time with nondisabled peers, compared to 86.2 percent of students with a speech or language impairment (SLI).

**Percent of Students (K-12) Who Spend 80-100% of Time with Nondisabled Peers by Primary Disability Type, 2014-15**

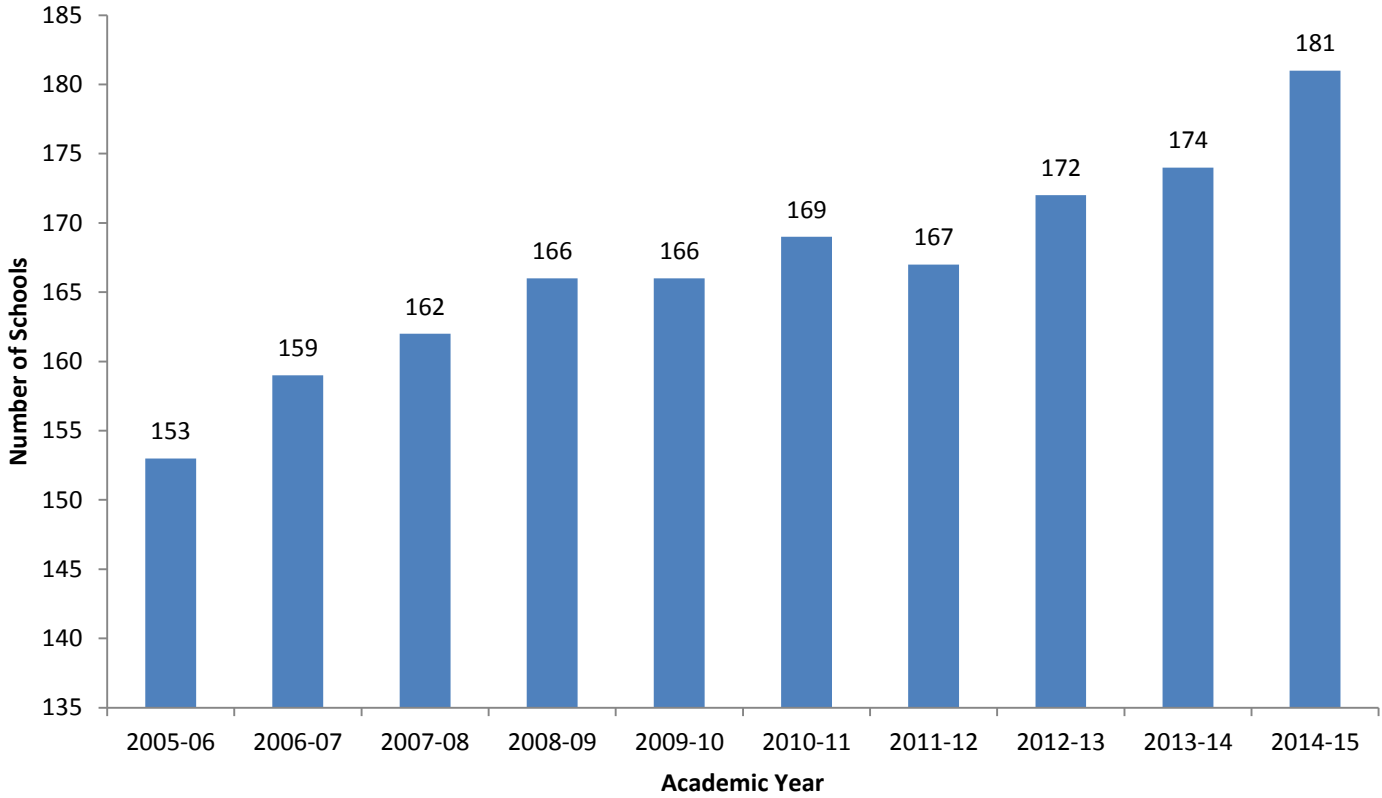


\*Other Health Impairment (OHI)

### **Access to Advanced Placement Courses**

An increasing number of schools are making Advanced Placement exams available to their students. In 2014-15, 17.5 percent more schools offered AP exams than a decade earlier.

#### **Number of Schools Offering Advanced Placement Exams**

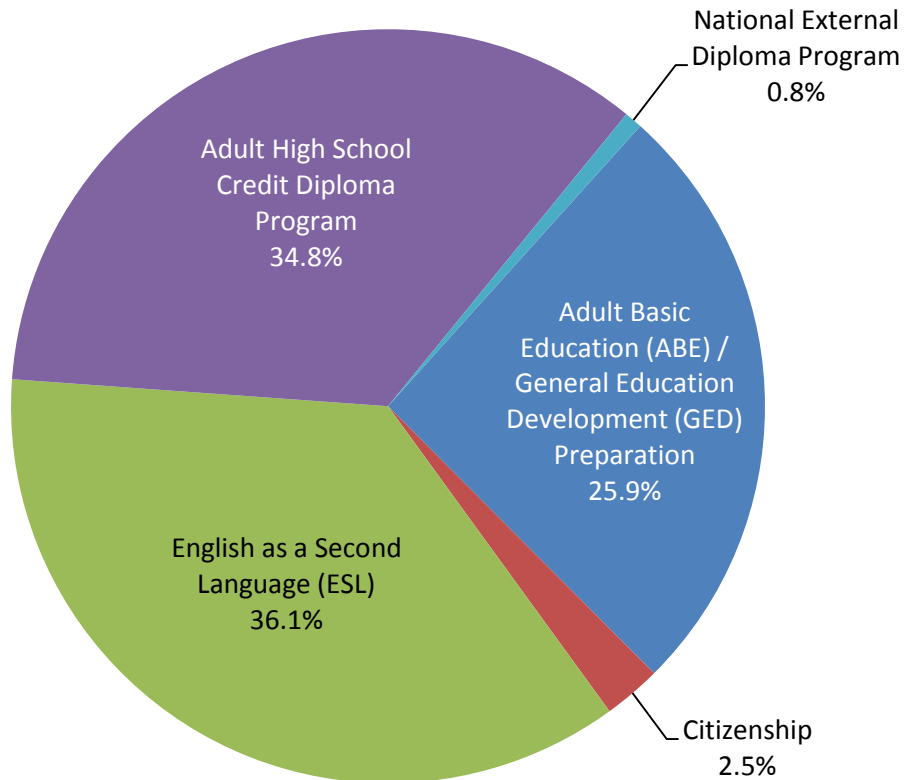


## Adult Education Programs

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).

In 2014-15, 61.5 percent of adult learners participated in basic literacy or secondary school completion programs, while 38.6 percent of learners participated in ESL or citizenship programs.

### Adult Education Enrollment by Program Type, 2014-15



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



# Performance

**Statewide Accountability Indicators, 2014-15**

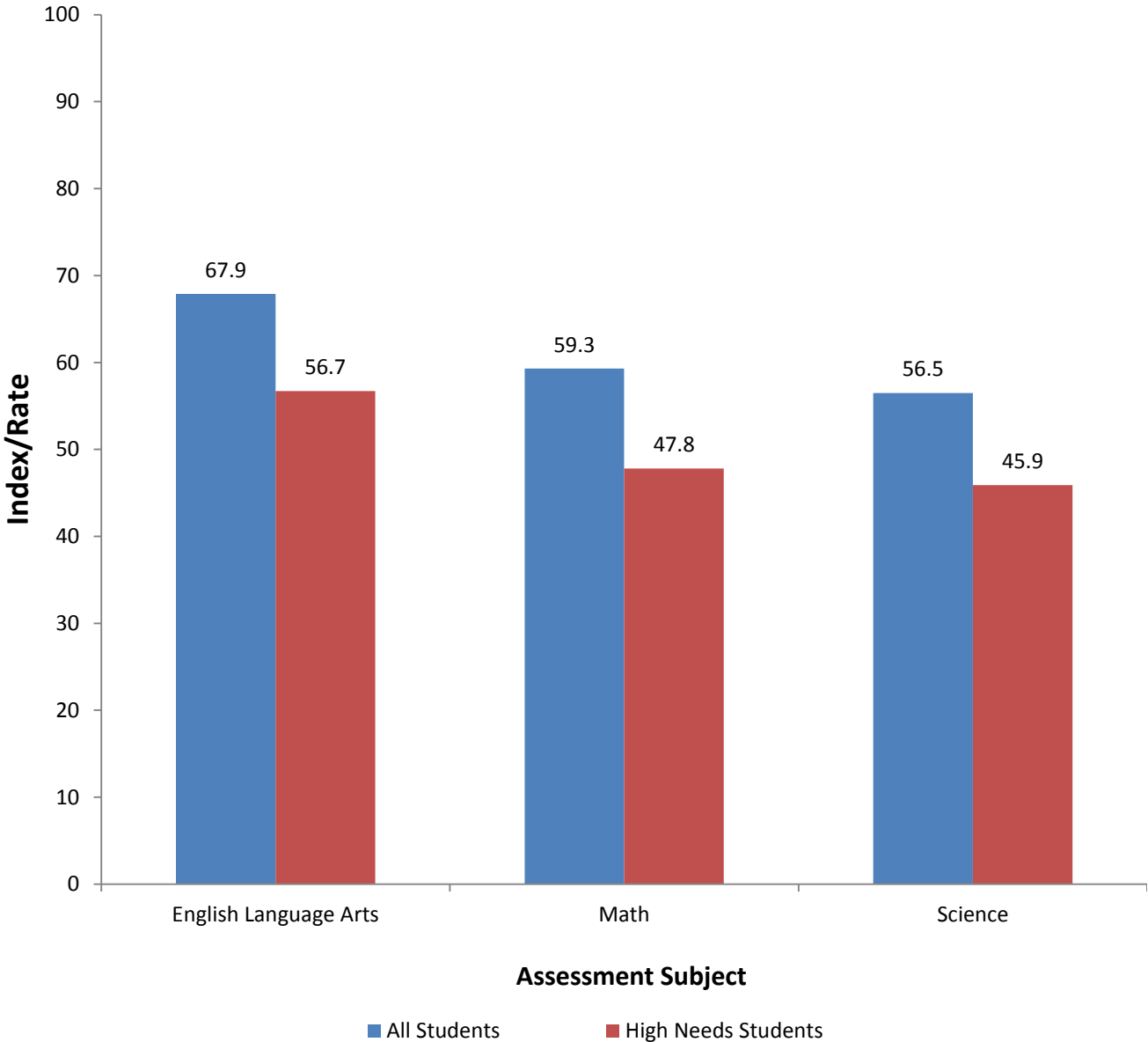
These statistics are the first results from [Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System](#) for districts and schools. This system is a broad set of 12 indicators that helps tell the story of how well a school is preparing its students for success in college, careers, and civic life. It moves beyond test scores and graduation rates and instead provides a more holistic, multifactor perspective of district and school performance. In future years, the system will incorporate student growth over time. The State Accountability Index of 76.1 and the points earned for each indicator reflect some bright spots but also highlight areas needing attention.

No	Indicator	Index/ Rate	Target	Points Earned	Max Points	% Points Earned
1a	ELA Performance Index – All Students	67.9	75	90.5	100	90.5%
1b	ELA Performance Index – High Needs Students	56.7	75	75.6	100	75.6%
1c	Math Performance Index – All Students	59.3	75	79.1	100	79.1%
1d	Math Performance Index – High Needs Students	47.8	75	63.7	100	63.7%
1e	Science Performance Index – All Students	56.5	75	75.3	100	75.3%
1f.	Science Performance Index – High Needs Students	45.9	75	61.2	100	61.2%
4a	Chronic Absenteeism – All Students	10.6%	<=5%	38.8	50	77.6%
4b	Chronic Absenteeism – High Needs Students	17.3%	<=5%	25.4	50	50.8%
5	Preparation for CCR – % taking courses	66.1%	75%	44.1	50	88.1%
6	Preparation for CCR – % passing exams	37.3%	75%	24.9	50	49.7%
7	On-track to High School Graduation	85.6%	94%	45.5	50	91.1%
8	4-year Graduation All Students (2014 Cohort)	87.0%	94%	92.6	100	92.6%
9	6-year Graduation - High Needs Students (2012 Cohort)	77.6%	94%	82.6	100	82.6%
10	Postsecondary Entrance (Class of 2014)	72.8%	75%	97.1	100	97.1%
11	Physical Fitness (estimated participation rate = 87.6%)	51.0%	75%	17.0	50	34.0%
12	Arts Access	45.7%	60%	38.1	50	76.2%
	<b>State Accountability Index</b>			<b>951.4</b>	<b>1250</b>	<b>76.1%</b>

### **Performance Index by Subject**

In 2014-15, students identified as High Needs (English learners, students with disabilities, and students eligible for free or reduced price meals) were outperformed by the All Students group in English language arts, math, and science.

### **Performance Index by Subject, 2014-15**



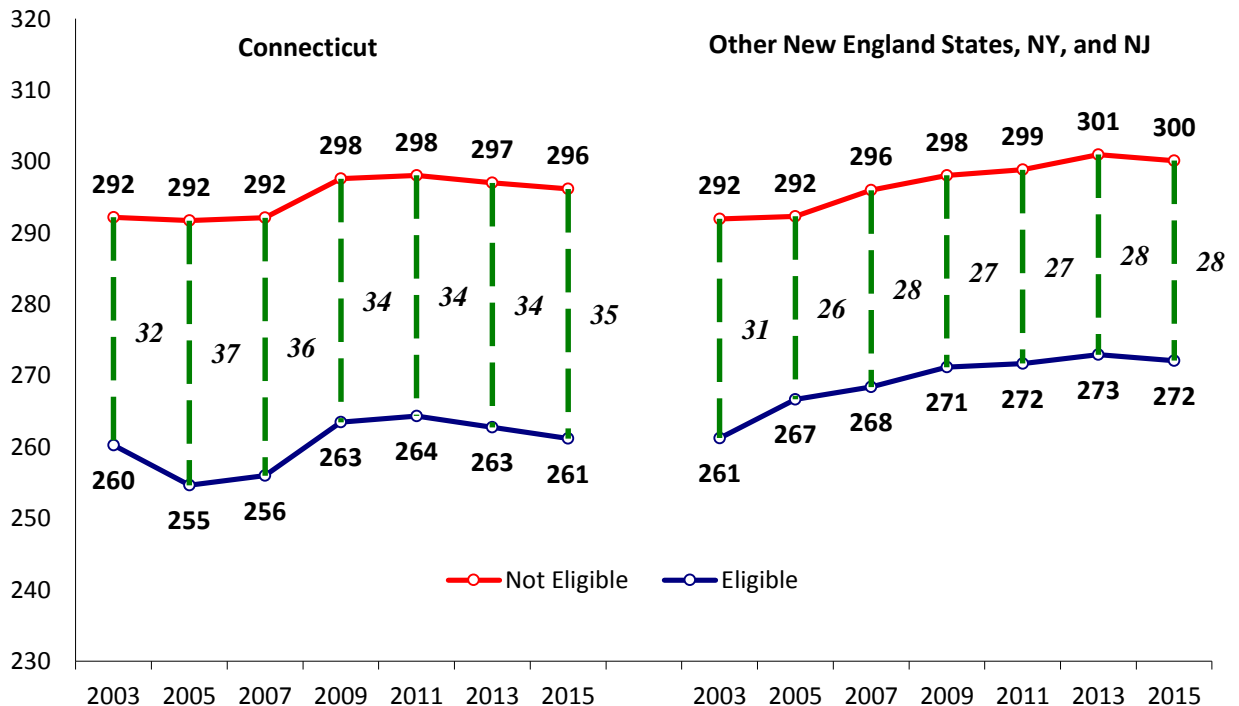
## Measuring Trends in Student Achievement: Results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

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 following graphics show Connecticut’s Grade 8 student performance based on average NAEP scale scores compared to the other New England states, New York, and New Jersey. Overall performance in these states is disaggregated to show the performance differences and trends of students who are eligible for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), a proxy for socioeconomic status, compared to their peers who are not NSLP-eligible.

In mathematics, subgroup performance trends have been inconsistent in Connecticut and performance differences are quite large. The other states presented below have shown greater consistency and improvement for both groups of students over time. Moreover, economically-disadvantaged students in Connecticut were outperformed by their peers in the other states.

**NAEP Mathematics Grade 8 – National School Lunch Eligibility**  
*Gap - Average Scale Score: 2003-2015*

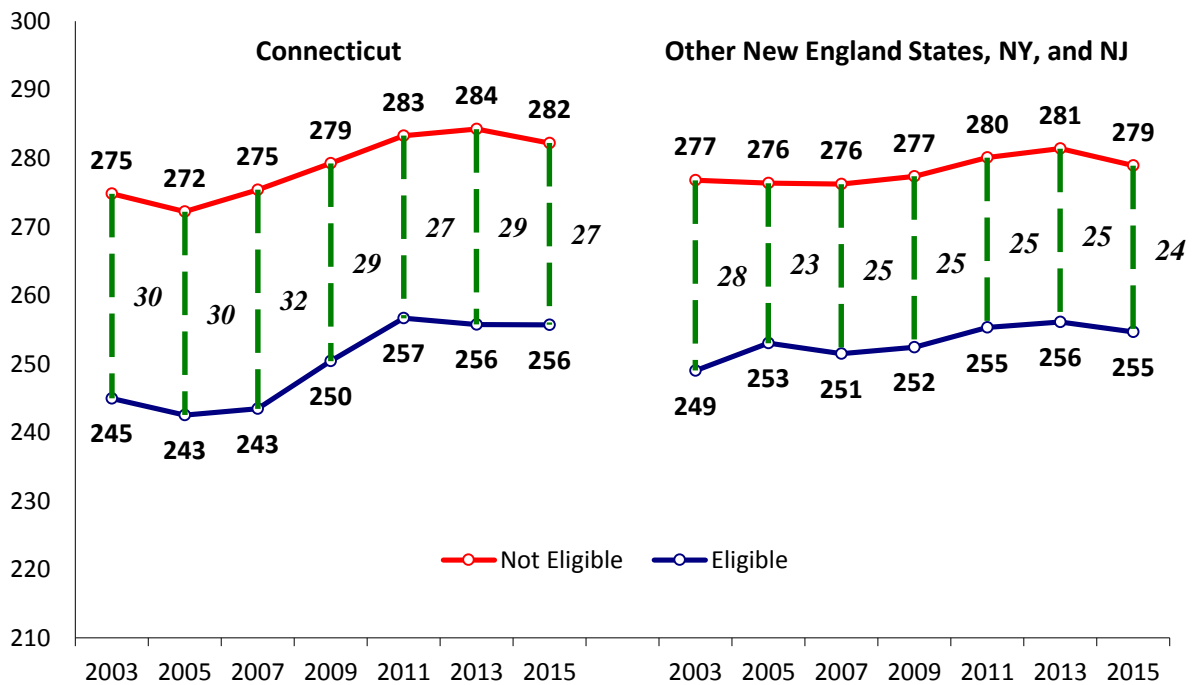


NOTE: The NAEP Mathematics scale ranges from 0 to 500. Observed differences are not necessarily statistically significant. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

**Measuring Trends in Student Achievement:  
Results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)**

NAEP Reading results show that both NSLP-eligible and NSLP-not eligible students in Connecticut have improved since 2003. However, performance has stagnated over the past two administrations. Connecticut maintains a higher overall average scale score than its peers in New England, New York, and New Jersey. The disaggregated data show that there is a large performance disparity between students who are NSLP-eligible and their peers who are not eligible for all states presented below.

**NAEP Reading Grade 8 – National School Lunch Eligibility**  
*Gap - Average Scale Score: 2003-2015*



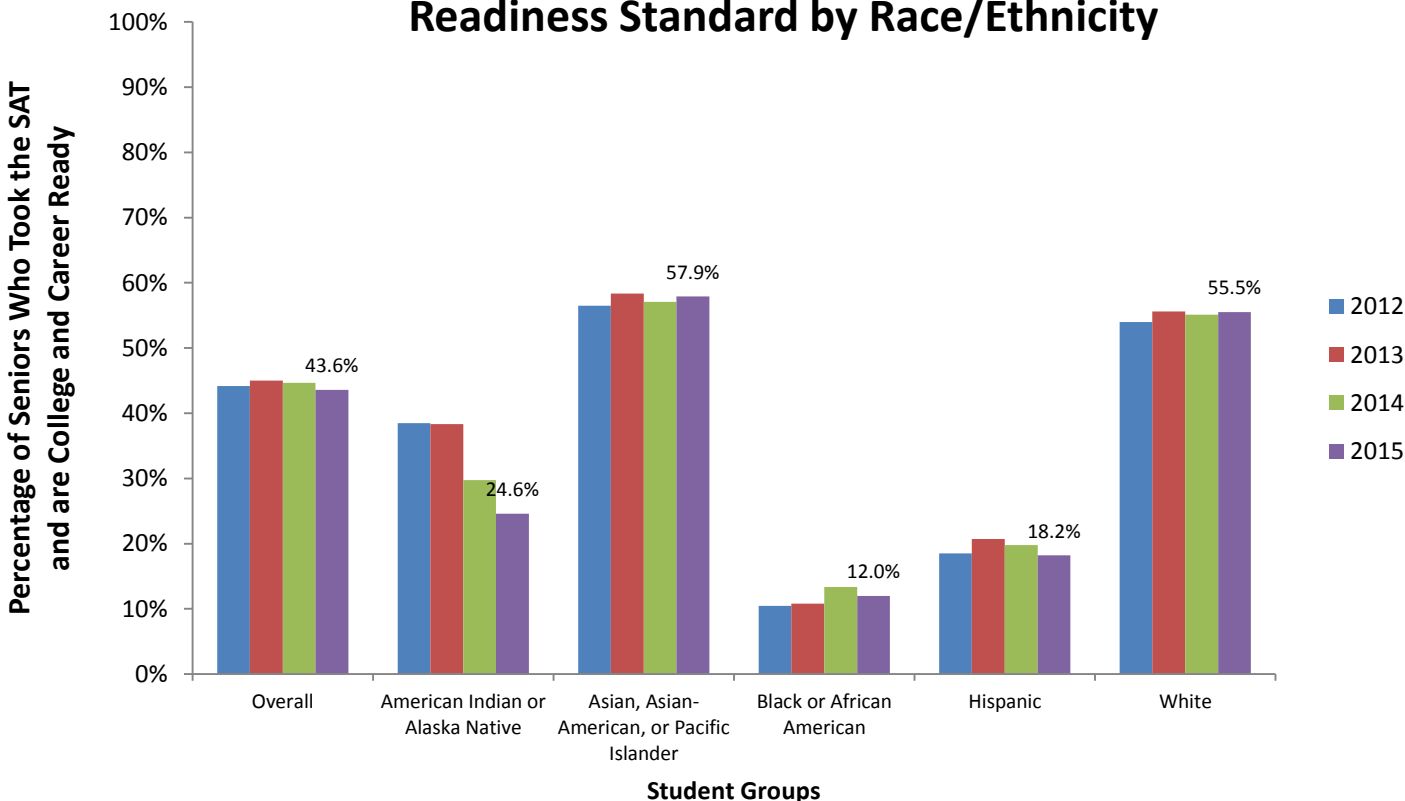
NOTE: The NAEP Reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. Observed differences are not necessarily statistically significant.  
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

### SAT Reasoning Test†

The SAT is one of the nation’s most commonly used college readiness assessments. From 2006 to 2015, the SAT test has consisted of three sections, with the addition of a writing assessment to the previously existing mathematics and critical reading (formerly verbal) assessments. All three assessments are graded on a scale of 200 to 800 points. The College Board has determined a composite score of 1550 to be representative of college and career readiness.

Overall, 43.6 percent of the 2015 Connecticut public high school senior class who took the SAT met the college and career readiness standard. This is a slight decline from 2013 when 45 percent of the senior class who took the SAT met the standard. As with other measures of student achievement, varying performance levels are evidenced among students from different racial/ethnic backgrounds; 12 percent of black or African American and 18 percent of Hispanic students met the standard as compared with 56 percent of white students and 58 percent of Asian students.

### Percentage of Seniors Who Met the College and Career Readiness Standard by Race/Ethnicity



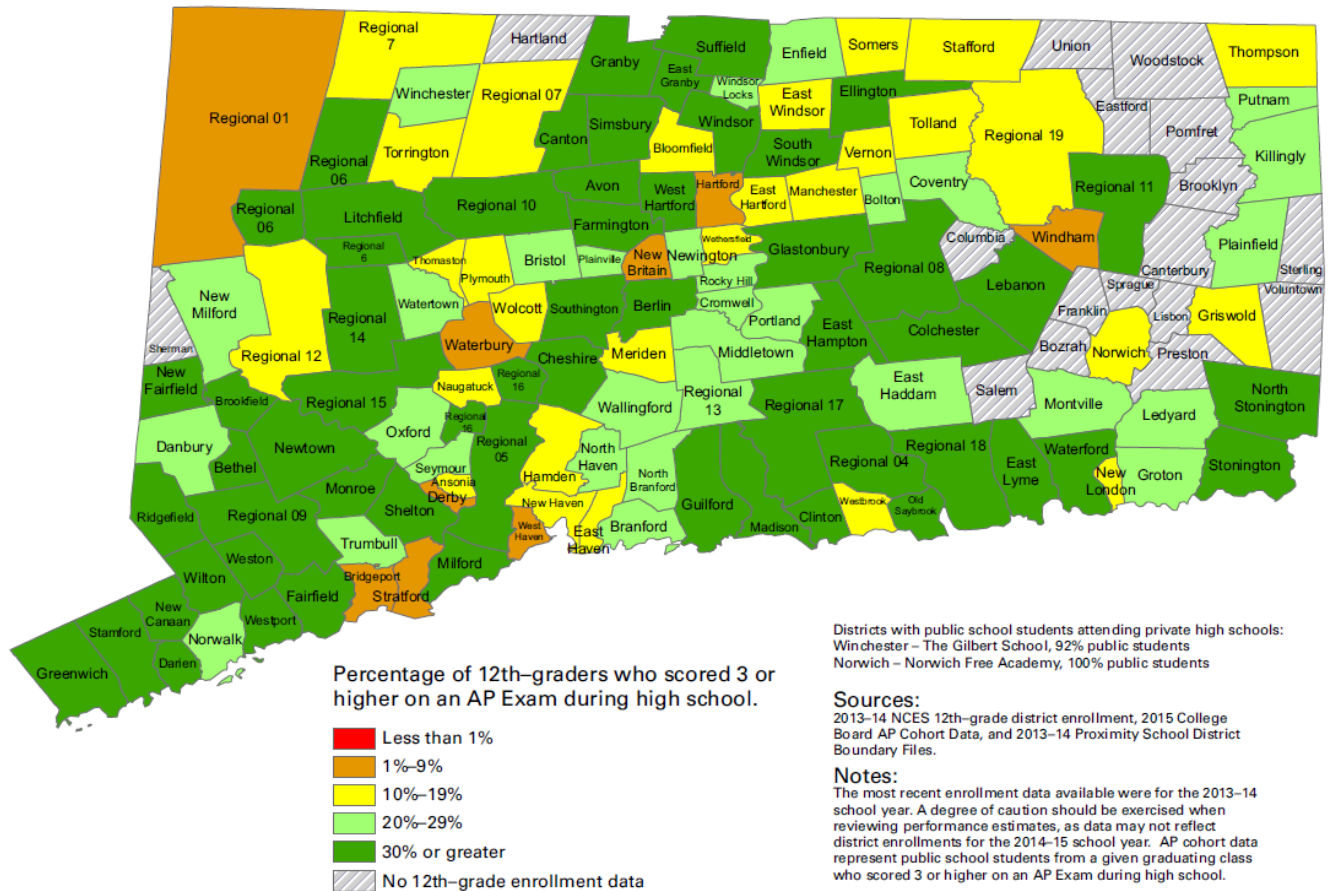
† The source for these data is the College Board.

## Advanced Placement<sup>†</sup>

The Advanced Placement (AP) program is a rigorous high school program of college-level courses and examinations. Connecticut was ranked **fourth nationwide** with 30.4 percent of its 2015 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 13.4 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. Fifteen Connecticut districts also made the AP Honor Roll, which recognizes and honors 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 Cheshire\*, Clinton\*, East Granby\*, East Haddam, Ellington\*, Fairfield\*, Greenwich\*, Montville\*, New Canaan\*, North Branford\*, Portland, Regional School District 13, Regional School District 5, Rocky Hill\*, and Wolcott.

### Connecticut Public Schools

AP<sup>®</sup> Success by District: Class of 2015



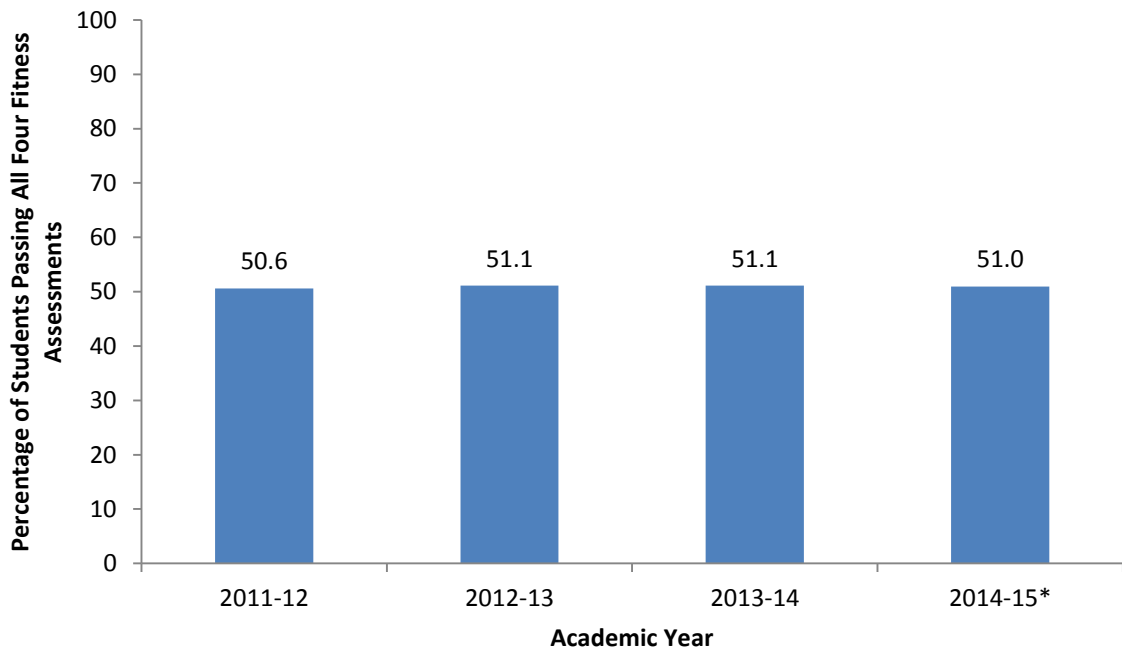
<sup>†</sup> The source for these data is the College Board.

\*District has achieved the honor for multiple years.

## Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment

The Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment program (CPFA) 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, only slightly more than half of students in the tested grades (4, 6, 8 and 10) met the “Health” standard on all four assessments in 2014-15.

### 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 2014-15 data.



**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 81.8 percent for the cohort of 2010 to 87 percent for the cohort of 2014. 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 continue to be substantially lower and have only shown modest improvement in the past five years.

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>% Change from 2010</b>
All Students	81.8	82.7	84.8	85.5	87.0	<b>6.4%</b>
Black/African American	68.7	71.2	73.0	75.7	78.6	<b>14.4%</b>
Hispanic	64.0	64.2	68.6	70.2	74.0	<b>15.6%</b>
White	88.7	89.4	91.3	91.4	92.2	<b>4.0%</b>
Eligible For F/R Meals	62.7	62.5	70.5	72.1	75.9	<b>21.1%</b>
English Learners	60.1	59.4	62.7	63.8	63.0	<b>4.8%</b>
Special Education	62.5	62.4	64.4	64.7	65.2	<b>4.3%</b>

Source: PSIS

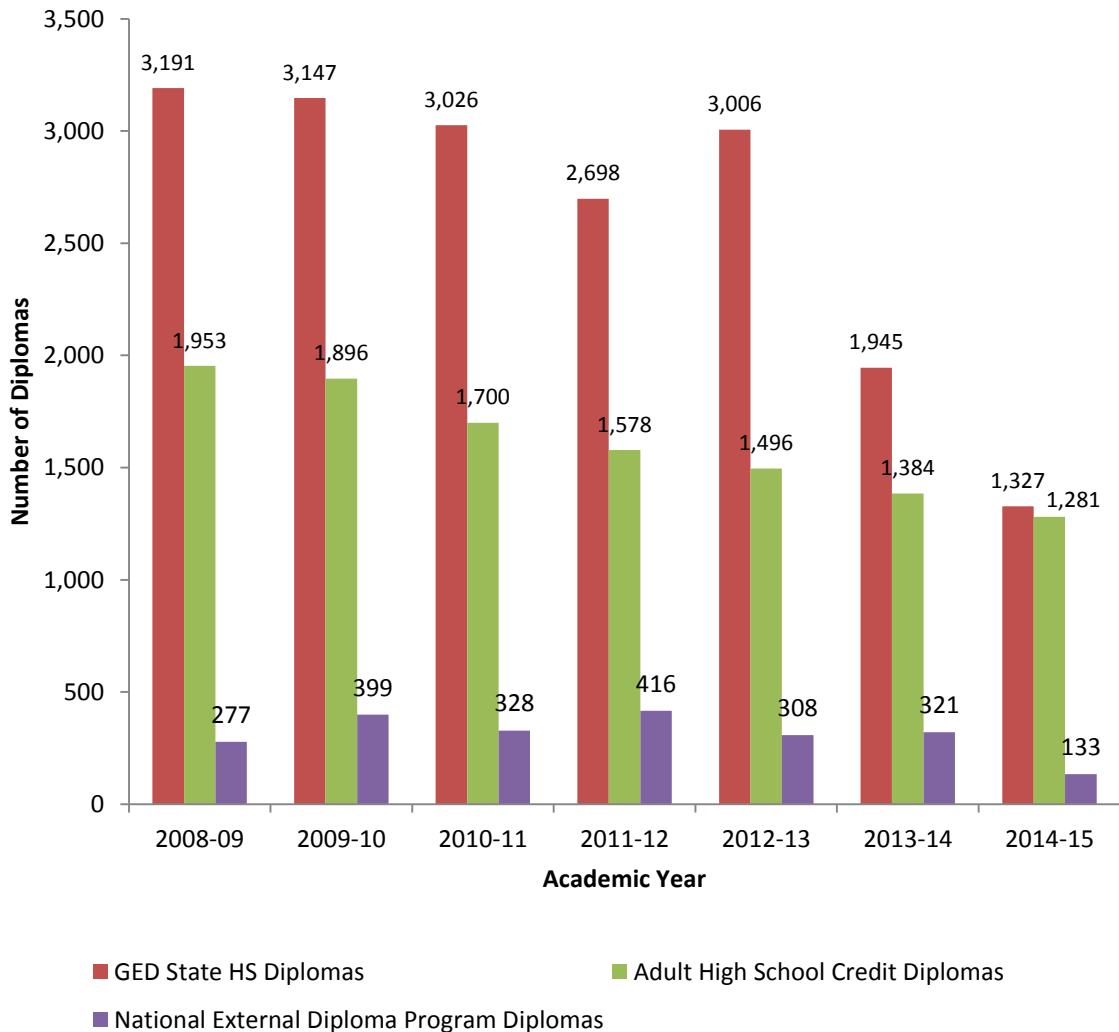
Note: The race categories that were created in 2012—Native American or Alaska Native, Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and Two or More Races—are not included in the above table because they do not yet have prior years of data. To see the complete data, please go to: <http://edsight.ct.gov>

## 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 2014-15, a total of 2,741 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, 2014-15

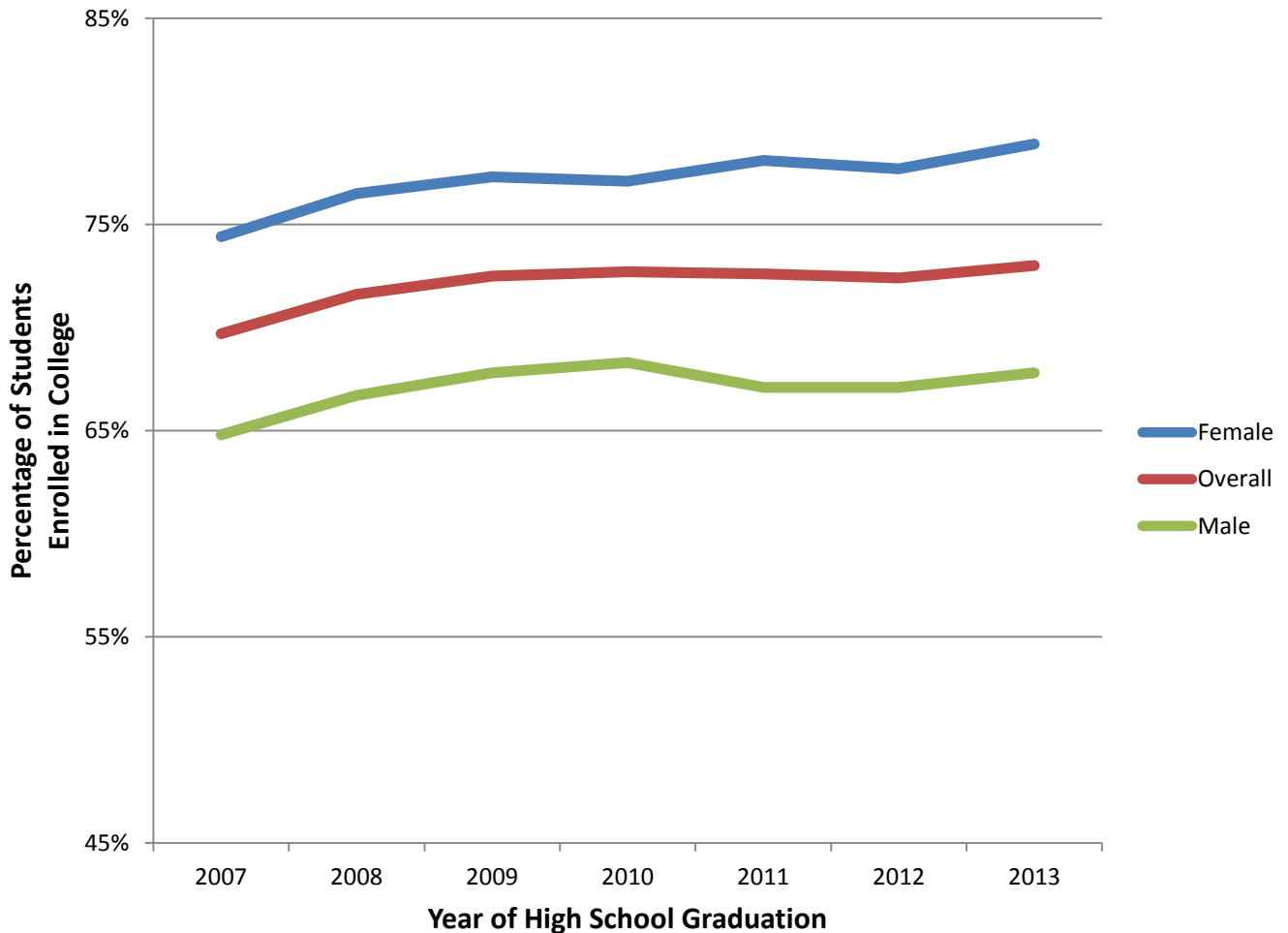


Source: Connecticut Adult Reporting System (CARS) database and Statewide Program Profile

## College Enrollment of Connecticut Public High School Graduates

In spring 2013, Connecticut public high schools graduated more than 38,000 students. Of these graduates, 73.0 percent enrolled in higher education within a year of graduating as compared with 69.7 percent for the class of 2007. The college enrollment rate of females (78.9 percent) from the high school class of 2013 was substantially higher than that of males (67.8 percent).

### College Enrollment at Any Time During the First Year After High School



Source: National Student Clearinghouse Student Tracker reports

## Postsecondary Credit Attainment and Remediation

The 2011 graduating cohort contained more than 37,000 on-time graduates. Of this cohort, 45.4 percent enrolled in state public universities and community colleges within 16 months after high school graduation. Nearly 60 percent of those who enrolled earned a year’s worth of college credit (24 credits) within two years of enrollment. Of those students who enrolled in Connecticut State Universities (CSU) and/or Community Colleges (CC), 46.4 percent participated in at least one remediation course.

English learners, students with disabilities, black, Hispanic, and students eligible for free or reduced price meals participated in at least one remediation course at substantially higher rates than peers and met the credit attainment standard at substantially lower rates than their peers.

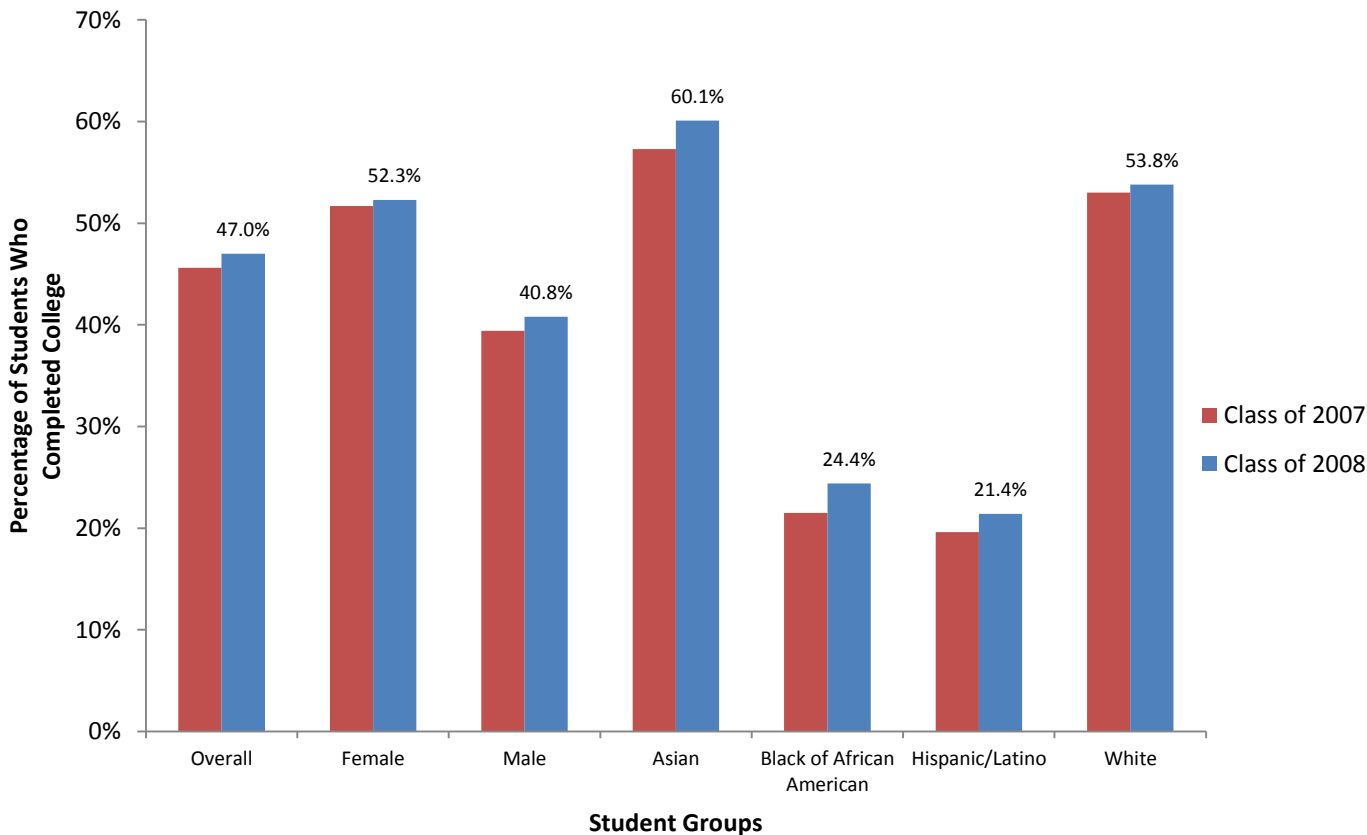
Subgroup	Credit-Attainment at State Public Universities and Community Colleges		Remediation at Connecticut State Universities (CSU) and Community Colleges (CC)	
	Percent Enrolled in 16 months	Percent Earning 24 Credits	Percent Enrolled in 16 months	Percent Participating in at least one Remediation Course
<b>Gender</b>				
Female	47.6%	61.6%	39.6%	48.2%
Male	43.2%	58.1%	35.0%	44.3%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>				
Asian	53.5%	72.6%	30.0%	44.9%
Black or African American	52.7%	45.8%	48.2%	64.4%
Hispanic/Latino of any race	50.1%	48.9%	45.2%	64.7%
Two or More Races	49.4%	51.6%	40.1%	41.4%
White	42.8%	64.6%	34.3%	37.5%
<b>English Learners</b>				
No	45.3%	60.2%	37.0%	45.3%
Yes	48.9%	53.0%	45.4%	70.5%
<b>Special Education Status</b>				
No	46.1%	61.8%	37.2%	43.6%
Yes	39.6%	40.4%	38.2%	71.5%
<b>Free/Reduced Price Meal Eligible</b>				
No	43.5%	65.9%	34.0%	37.1%
Yes	49.9%	48.0%	45.1%	62.5%
<b>State Total</b>	<b>45.4%</b>	<b>59.9%</b>	<b>37.3%</b>	<b>46.4%</b>

Source: [P20 WIN](#) data and SDE calculations

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

Forty-seven percent of the 2008 high school graduating class graduated from college with an associate’s, bachelor’s or higher degree within six years. That percentage is up slightly from the 2007 when 45.6 percent of students in the class of 2007 graduated from college in six years. The college completion rates vary among different student groups. For example, 52.3 percent of females graduated in six years compared with 40.8 percent of males. Variations also exist between students from different racial/ethnic backgrounds; 60.1 percent of Asian students and 53.8 percent of white students completed college within six years compared with 24.4 percent of black/African American students and 21.4 percent of Hispanic/Latino students. However, a higher percentage of students completed college within each student group from the class of 2008 than the class of 2007. Black/African American students experienced the greatest increase in college completion rates among the student groups.

#### **College Completion in 6 Years**



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

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