CONNECTICUT
Education

You are viewing an archived document. The content in this document is for historical purposes only and is no longer being updated. The information may be outdated, links may no longer function, and the content may not be fully accessible.

If you need an accessible version of this document, please email edsight.sde@ct.gov.

CONDITION OF EDUCATION

2017-18

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.

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 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.

Equity and excellence are the cornerstones of the State Board of Education's comprehensive plan for public education. Therefore, this report disaggregates data on several of the indicators to separately highlight the experiences and outcomes of students from historically under-performing groups like students with disabilities, English learners, students from low-income families, and those from minority racial/ethnic backgrounds.

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

Table of Contents

FOREWORD 1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 3

THE EDUCATION SYSTEM 4
- Districts, Schools, Programs, and Adult Education Providers 4
- Expenditures 5

STUDENTS 6
- Public School Enrollment 6
- Student Demographics and Characteristics 7
- Special Education by Race/Ethnicity 8
- Languages Spoken at Home among ELs 9
- Adult Education Enrollment 10

EDUCATORS 11
- Capacity 11
- Demographics 12

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND INSTRUCTION 13
- School Discipline 13
- Chronic Absenteeism 14
- Time Students with Disabilities Spent with Nondisabled Peers 15
- Participation in College-and-Career Readiness Coursework 16
- Access to the Arts 16
- Adult Education Program Participation 17

PERFORMANCE 18
- Statewide Next Generation Accountability Report 18
- Meeting Benchmark on a College and Career Readiness Exam 19
- Physical Fitness 20
- High School Graduation Rates 21
- Adult Education Diplomas Granted 22
- College Enrollment 23
- College Completion 24

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The condition of education in Connecticut remains mixed. There are many bright spots but there are also significant areas for improvement. Here are some key highlights:

Connecticut's student enrollment has declined by 3.6 percent over the past five years. Though lower, the enrollment is increasingly more diverse (i.e., 46.4 percent are nonwhite), poor (i.e., 36.7 percent are eligible for free or reduced price meals), and with greater educational needs (i.e., 14.8 percent are students with disabilities while 7.2 percent are English learners) than just five years ago.

While the race/ethnic composition of students is changing, the teaching force is also changing. The percentage of nonwhite educators has increased from 8.1 percent in 2014-15 to 8.7 percent in 2017-18.

The percentage of students who received at least one suspension/expulsion in 2017-18 was at 6.8 percent, compared to 6.7 percent in 2016-17. The chronic absenteeism rate increased from 9.9 percent in 2016-17 to 10.7 percent in 2017-18. Incidences of suspensions/expulsions and chronic absenteeism continue to be evidenced disproportionately among students of color, English learners, students with disabilities, and students from low-income families.

On the 12 indicators of the Next Generation Accountability System, the overall state accountability index increased from 73.2 in 2016-17 to 74.9 in 2017-18. Some indicators showed improvement (e.g., English language arts (ELA) and Mathematics performance index for high needs students, and participation in college and career readiness courses) while others declined (e.g., physical fitness and chronic absenteeism).

The percentage of all students in grades 11 and 12 meeting the college/career readiness benchmark increased from 43.5 percent to 44.8 percent.

The four-year high school cohort graduation rates are rising and the graduation rate gap between most student groups continues to shrink. Connecticut's graduation rate of 87.9 percent remains more than three points higher than the national average. The six-year graduation rate for high needs students (i.e., English learners, students with disabilities, or those from a low-income family) decreased slightly from 82.0 percent (2013-14 cohort) to 81.8 percent (2014-15 cohort). These students are demonstrating that they can complete high school with additional time and support.

College entrance rates dropped slightly for the class of 2017 (72.0 to 70.9 percent). However, Connecticut's rate remains above the national average of 69 percent (National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)). College graduation rates inched up slightly with 50 percent of students from the high school class of 2012 earning a two- or four-year college degree in six years after high school graduation, up from 49.6 for the class of 2011.

THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Districts, Schools, Programs, and Adult Education Providers

Public education in Connecticut is provided to students in prekindergarten to Grade 12 through many types of school districts. These include local and regional boards of education, regional educational service centers (RESC), public charter districts, the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System, Endowed Academies, and state agencies. These school districts deliver their educational services to students through regular schools, specialized programs, and outplacements to private facilities.

Table 1: Number of Schools by the Type of Organization

Organization Type	**Number of Schools**
Public Schools in Local and Regional Districts	960
Regional Educational Service Center Schools	28
Public Charter Schools	24
Connecticut Technical Education and Career System Schools	17
Endowed Academies	3
State Agency Facilities	32
Total Number of Schools	**1064**

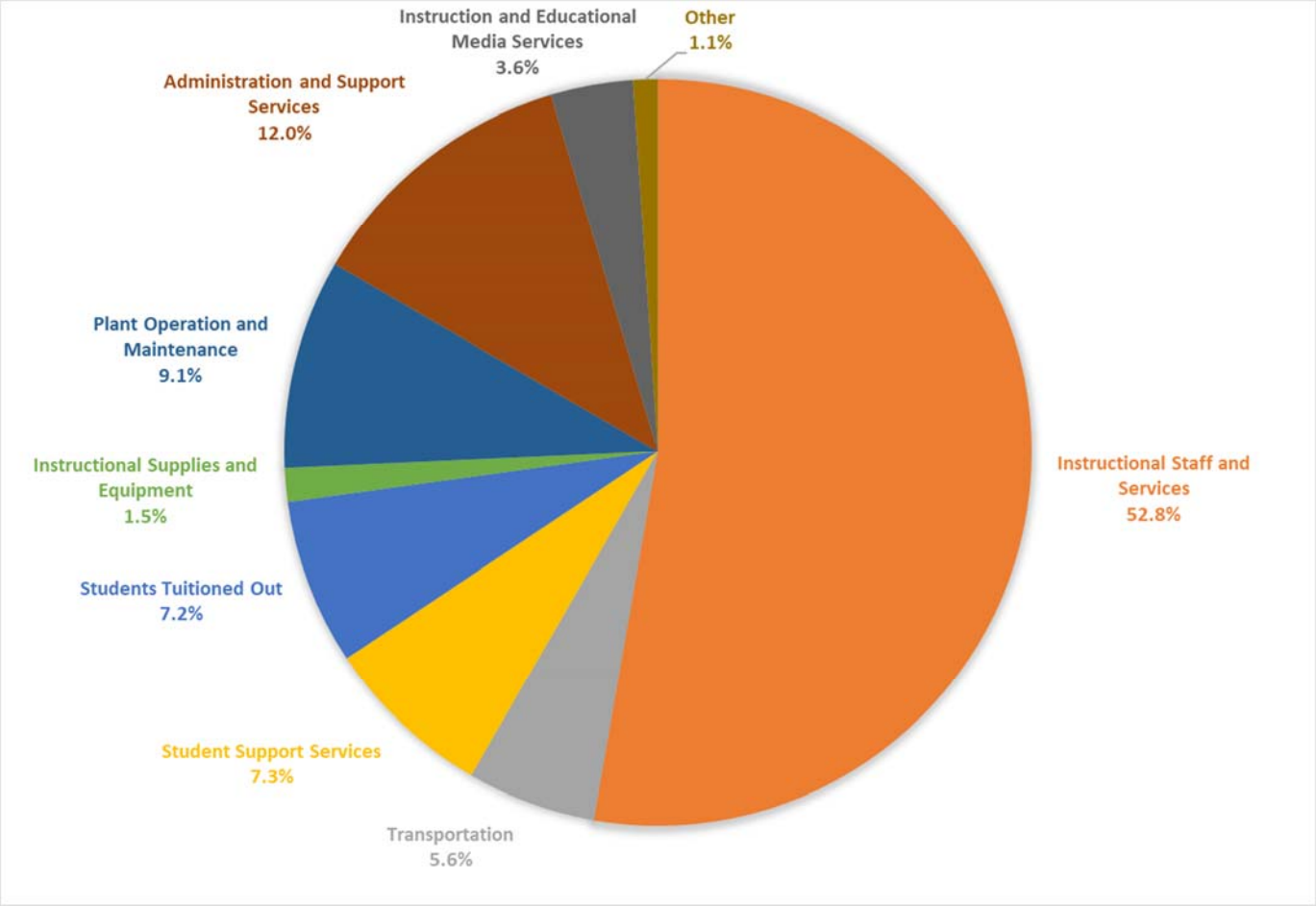
Of the 1,064 schools, 815 are elementary and/or middle schools and 249 are high schools. In addition to these 1,064 schools, 435 specialized programs provide targeted services. The vast majority of these programs are designed for special education students (289), alternative/credit recovery (79), or prekindergarten (42).

In addition to PK-12 education, adult education programs are also provided to residents in all towns across Connecticut through 41 local school district providers, three regional educational service centers, 14 community/faith-based organizations, and two state agencies.

Expenditures

In 2017-18, the state's overall school expenditures (excluding investments in land, buildings and debt) totaled approximately $9.1 billion. Instructional staff and services represented a majority of the total expenditures; 53 cents out of every education dollar was devoted to this area.

Figure 1: Expenditures by Category, 2017-18

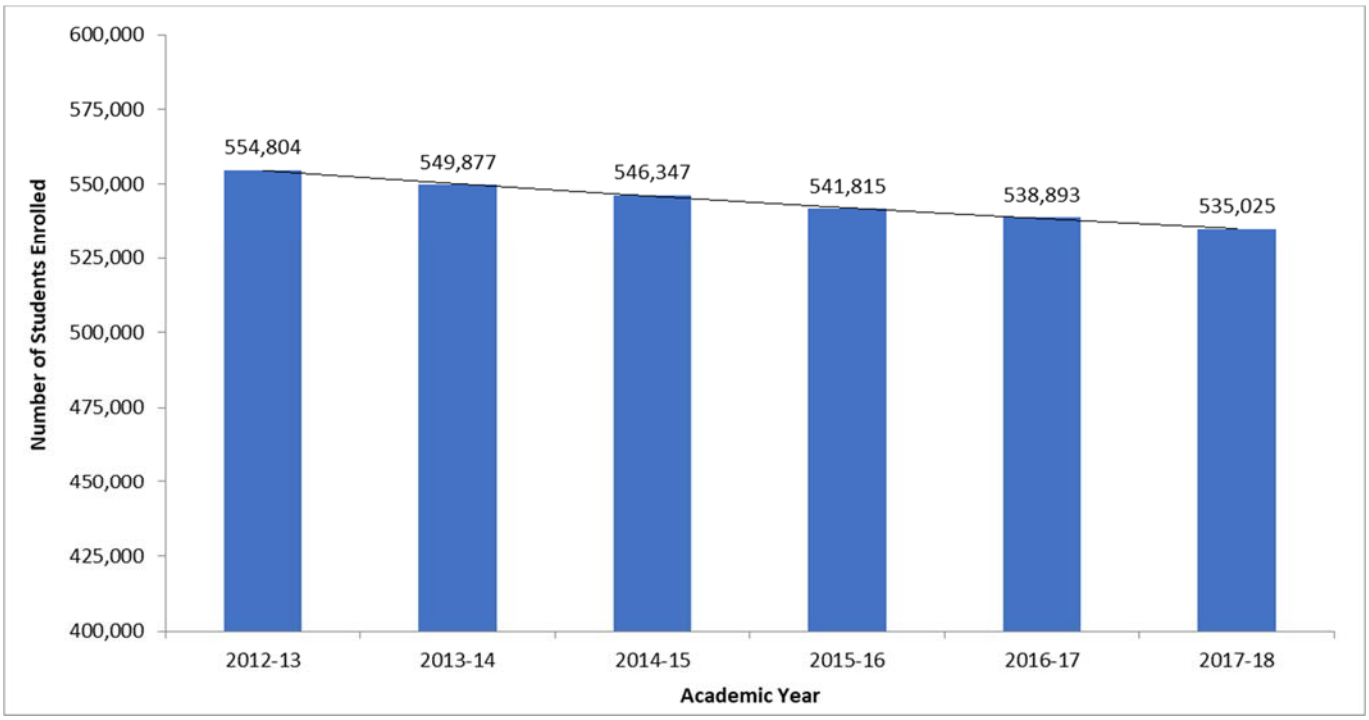


STUDENTS

Public School Enrollment

Connecticut's student enrollment in public schools continues to decline each year. The 2017-18 enrollment of 535,025 was 3.6 percent lower than the 2012-13 enrollment of 554,804.

Figure 2: Connecticut Public School Enrollment (PK-12)



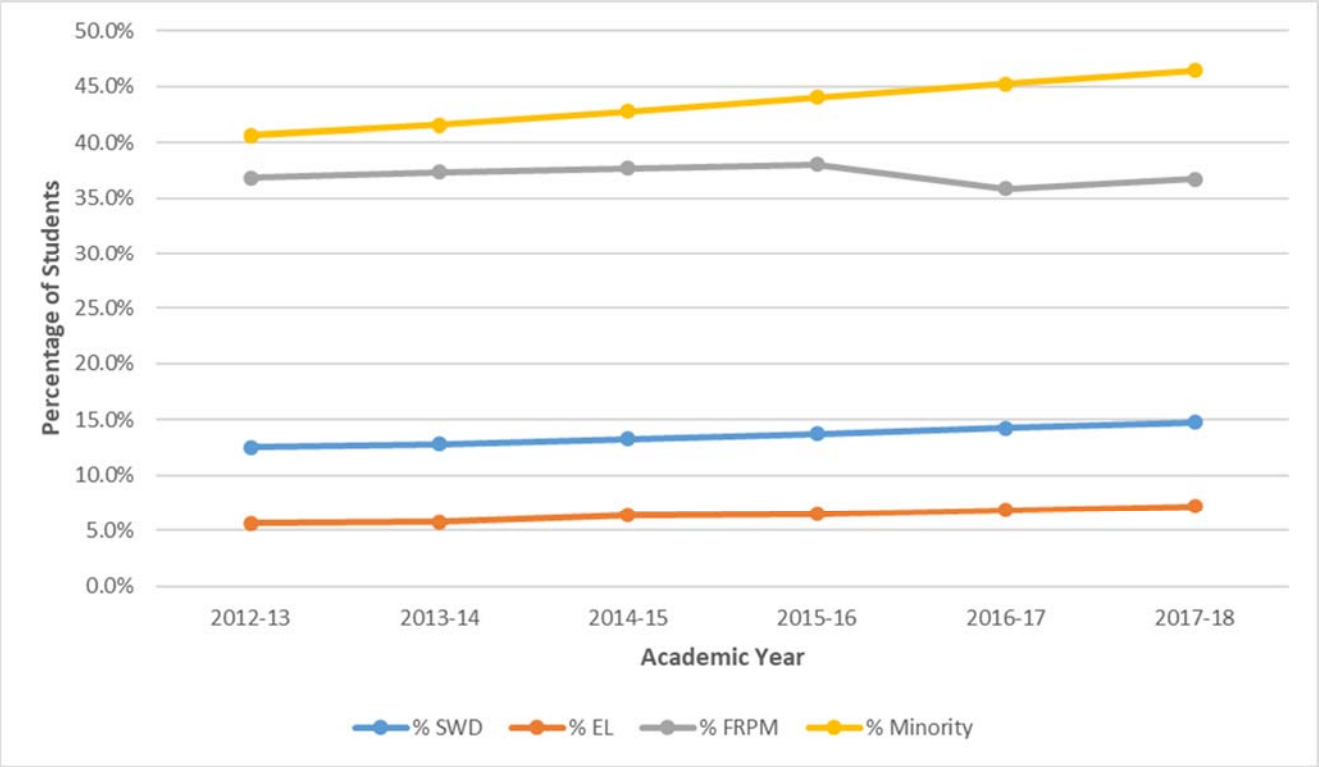
Although statewide enrollment is declining, some districts evidence substantial increases over the same period. These include:

- RESCs like Capitol Region Education Council and LEARN through the establishment of new interdistrict magnet schools and expanded slots in existing magnet schools;
- public charter districts through a combination of new charters and expanded slots in existing charters; and
- some Alliance Districts (Connecticut's 33 lowest-performing districts) including Danbury, New London, Norwalk, Stamford, and Waterbury.

Student Demographics and Characteristics

An increasing proportion of public school students (PK-12) come from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of students from racial/ethnic minorities has increased from 40.6 percent in 2012-13 to 46.4 percent in 2017-18. Substantial increases occurred in the percentage of students who are English learners (EL) or students with disabilities (SWD). ELs account for over seven percent of the student population while nearly 15 percent of students are receiving special education services. The percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals (FRPM) increased slightly in 2017-18 after a slight dip in the 2016-17 school year.

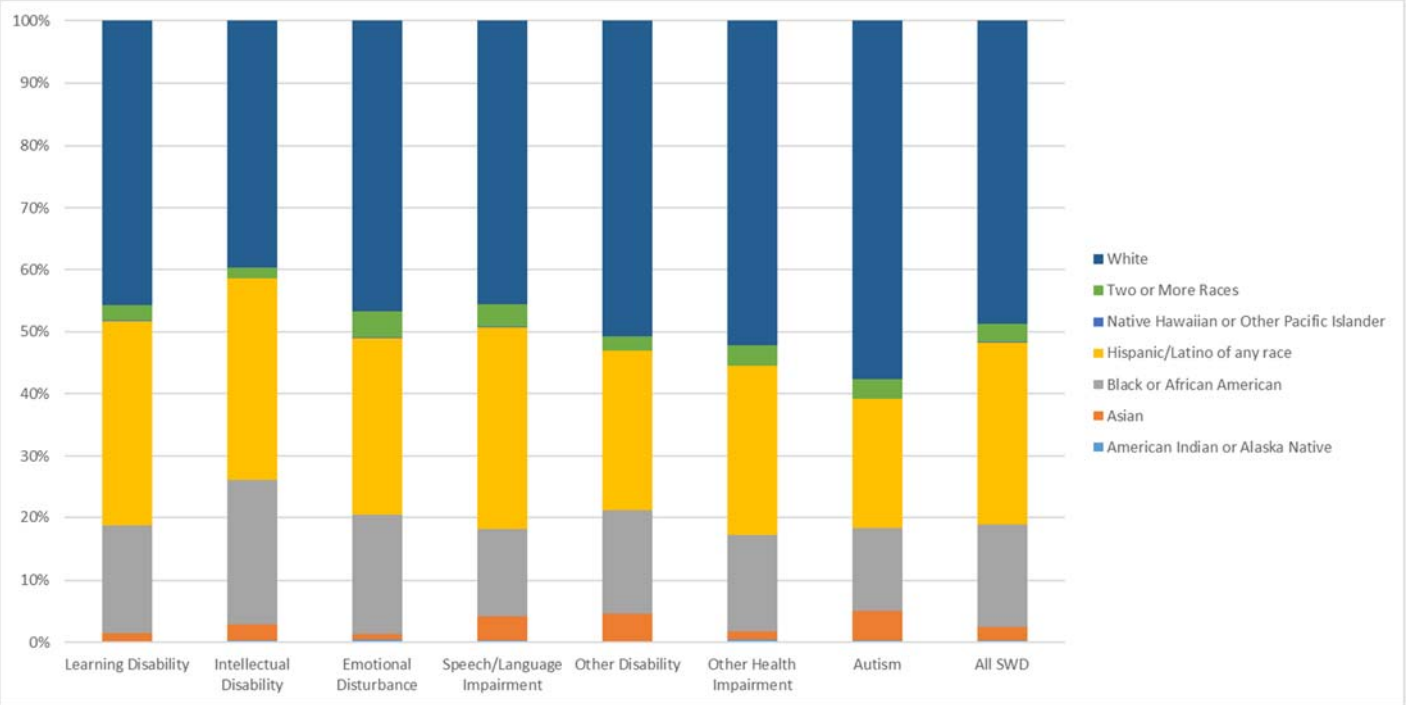
Figure 3: Student Demographics and Characteristics



Special Education by Race/Ethnicity

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires the CSDE to investigate disproportionality based on race/ethnicity in the identification of students with disabilities. In 2017-18, 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.

Figure 4: Percentage of Students with Disabilities, Ages 6-21: Disability Type by Race/Ethnicity, 2017-18



Languages Spoken at Home among ELs

In the 2017-18 school year, Connecticut's ELs spoke 140 different non-English languages. The 15 most prevalent non-English dominant languages among ELs in Grades PK-12 are listed below.

Table 2: 15 Most Prevalent Non-English Languages Spoken at Home among ELs, 2017-18

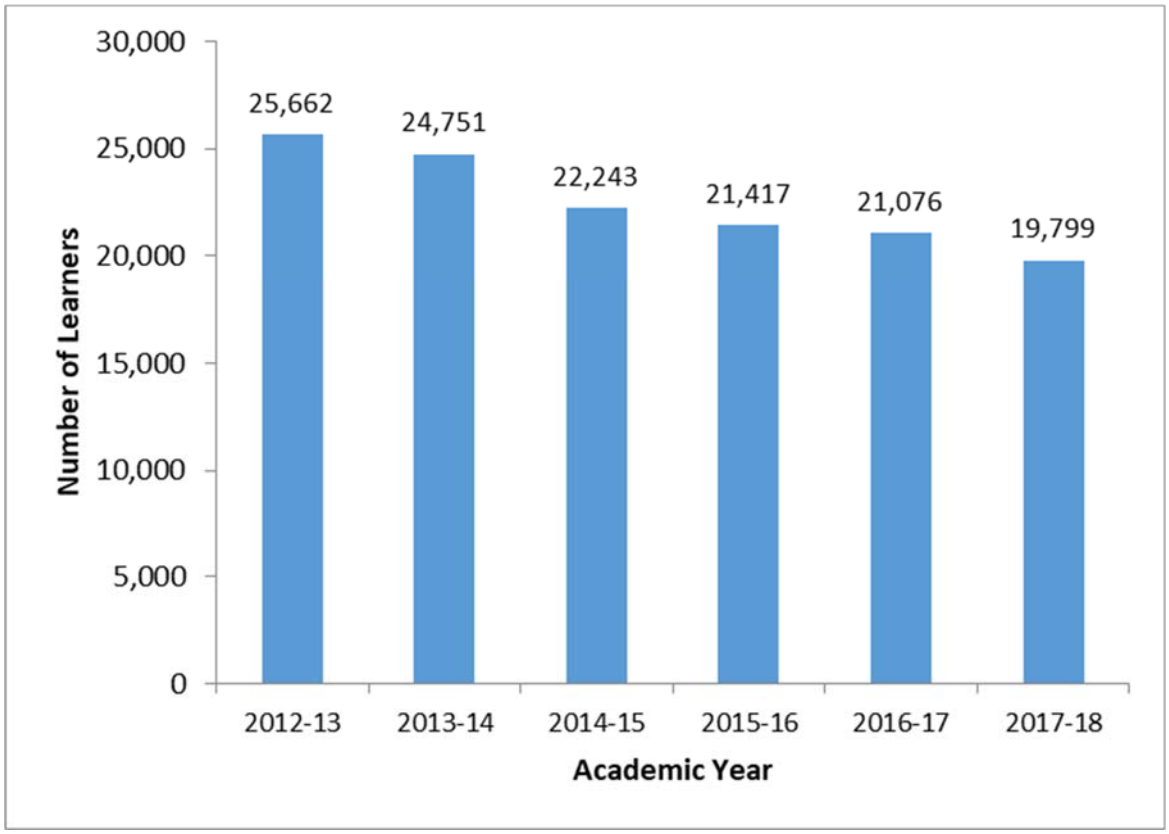
Language	Number of ELs
Spanish	27,372
Portuguese	1,756
Arabic	1,242
Creole-Haitian	834
Mandarin	641
Polish	468
Urdu	432
Albanian	423
Bengali	320
Vietnamese	309
French	295
Gujarati	225
Russian	218
Telugu	213
Turkish	209

While most districts had to accommodate only a few languages, there were 45 districts whose ELs spoke 20 or more different non-English languages. 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.

Adult Education Enrollment

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 2017-18, Connecticut programs served 19,799 adult learners.

Figure 5: Adult Education Enrollment

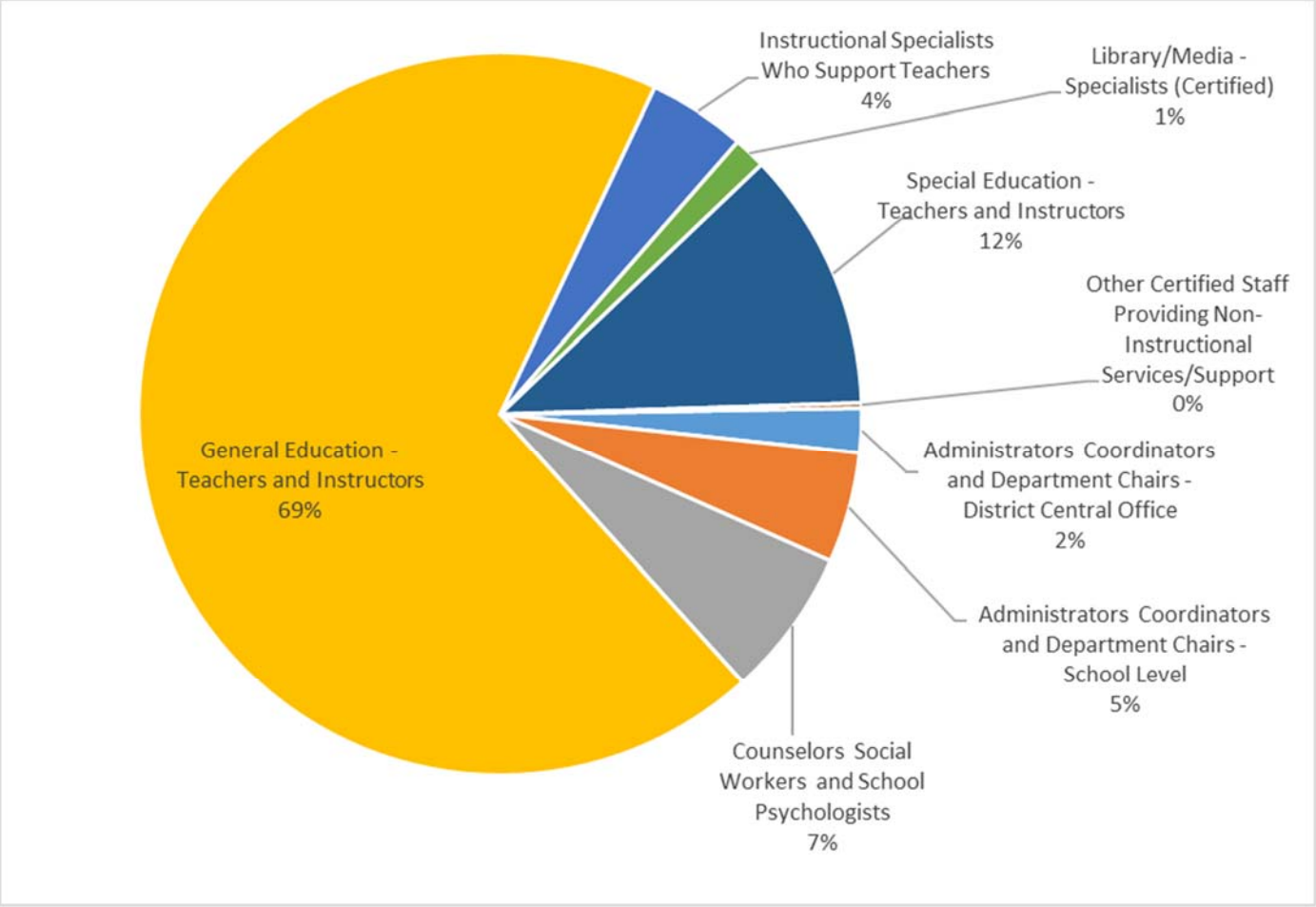


EDUCATORS

Capacity

General education and special education teachers combined constitute 81 percent of full-time equivalent (FTE) certified staff. The total FTE of certified staff exceeded 52,000 for the fourth straight year.

Figure 6: Certified Staff Full-time Equivalent by Role Type: 2017-18

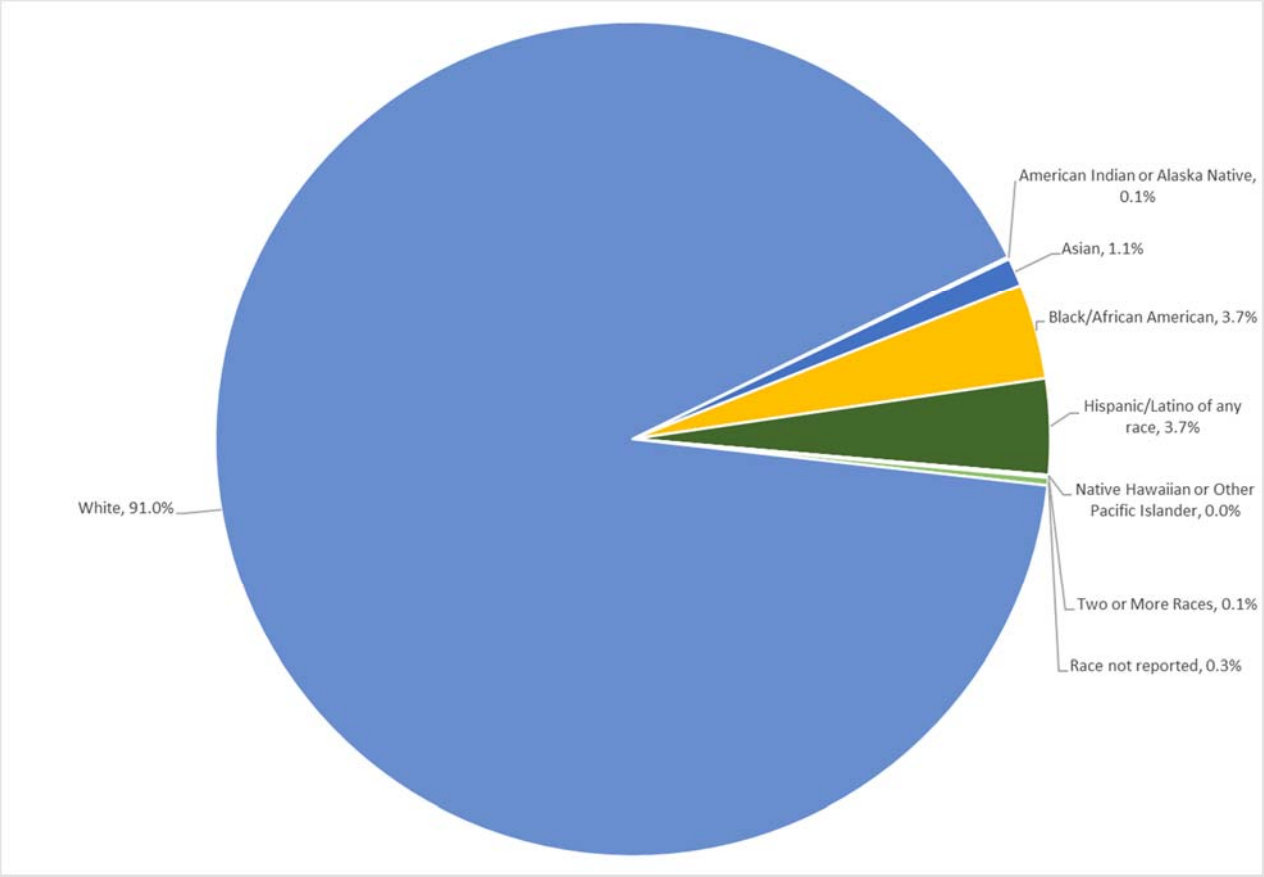


Full-time equivalent (FTE) is derived by dividing the amount of time a person works by the time required of a corresponding full-time position. A full-time position is considered to be 1.0 FTE. For example, a teacher who works two of the five days per week would be a 0.4 FTE (2 days/5 days = 0.4 of full time or 0.4 FTE).

Demographics

While Connecticut's student population is diverse with nonwhite students comprising 46.4 percent of the student body, 91 percent of certified school staff are white. The percentage of nonwhite educators has increased over the past four years from 8.1 percent in 2014-15 to 8.7 percent in 2017-18.

Figure 7: Percentage of Certified Staff by Race/Ethnicity, 2017-18

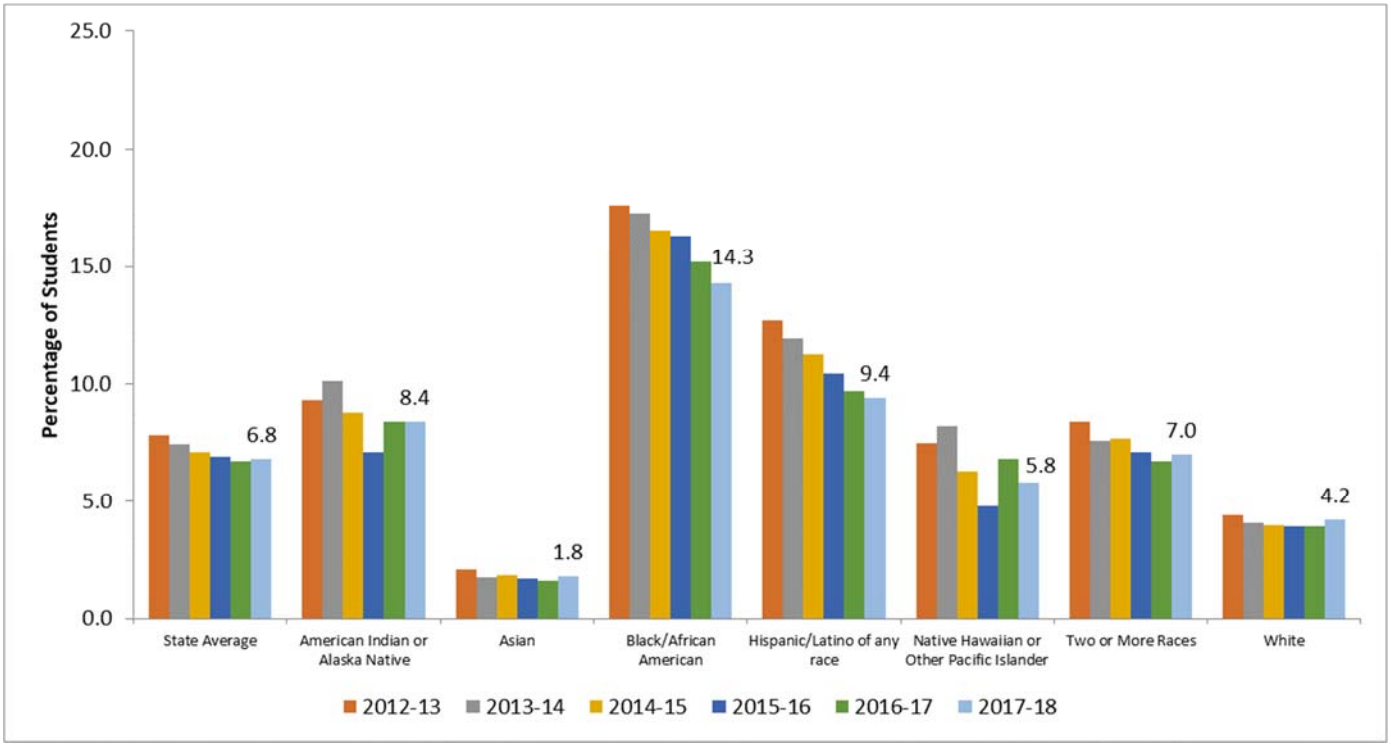


School Climate and Instruction

School Discipline

Local Educational Agencies are required to report to the CSDE all disciplinary incidents that result in any of the following: In-School Suspension (ISS), Out-of-School Suspension (OSS), Bus Suspensions, and Expulsions (EXP). In addition, offenses classified as "serious" and all incidents involving alcohol, drugs or weapons must be reported regardless of the type of sanction imposed. All bullying incidents must also be reported regardless of sanction. In the 2017-18 school year, 6.8 percent of all students received at least one suspension or expulsion. Black/African American students are suspended at substantially higher rates than their white counterparts though suspension rates are declining overall for most Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino student groups.

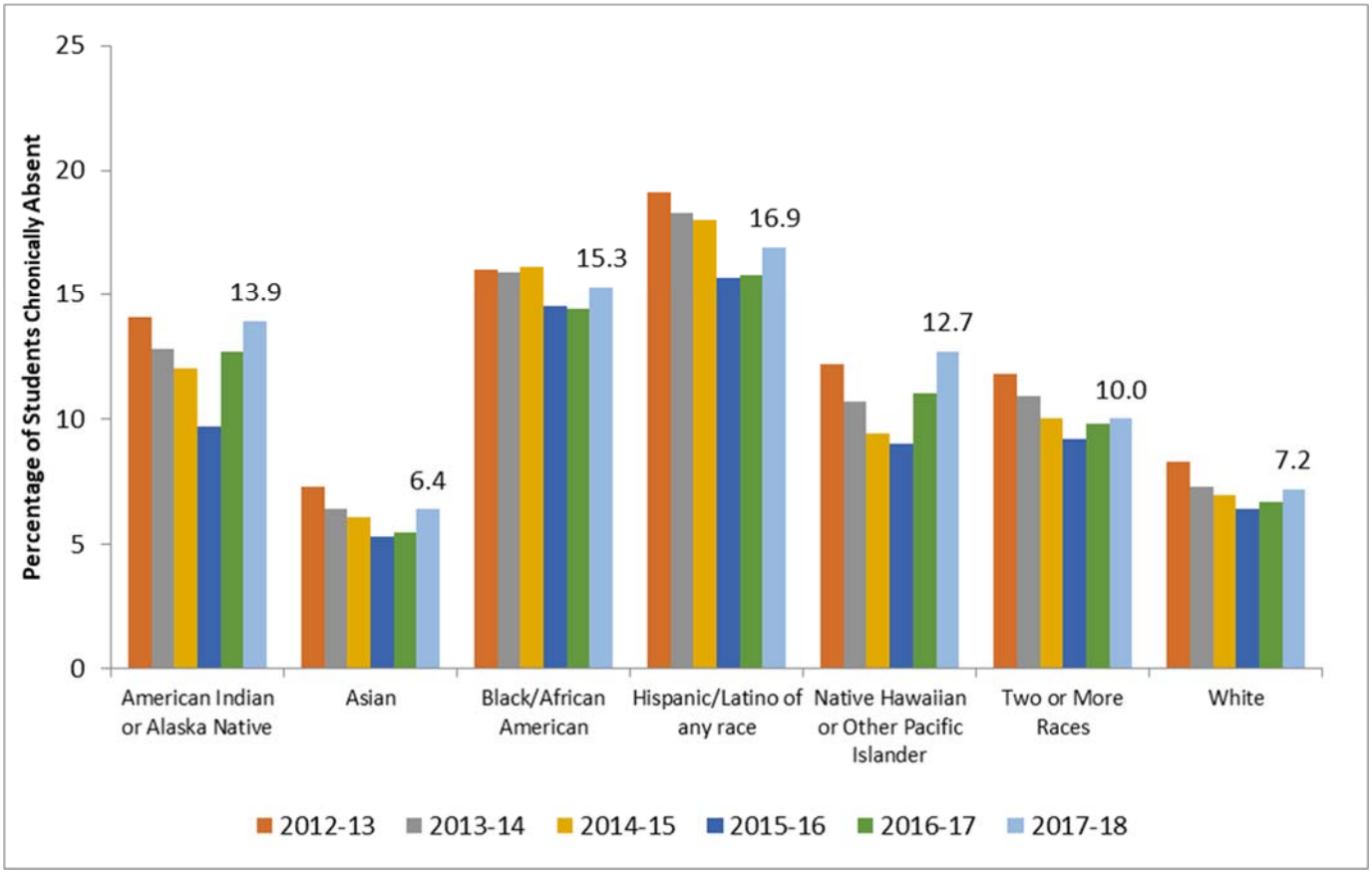
Figure 8: Suspension Rates by Race/Ethnicity



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 with student academic achievement and high school graduation. Chronic absenteeism is also an indicator in Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System. Connecticut's statewide chronic absenteeism rate for students in Grades K-12 was 10.7 percent in 2017-18. This translates to over 55,000 students qualifying as chronically absent. There remains considerable variation in chronic absenteeism rates among students from different race/ethnic groups.

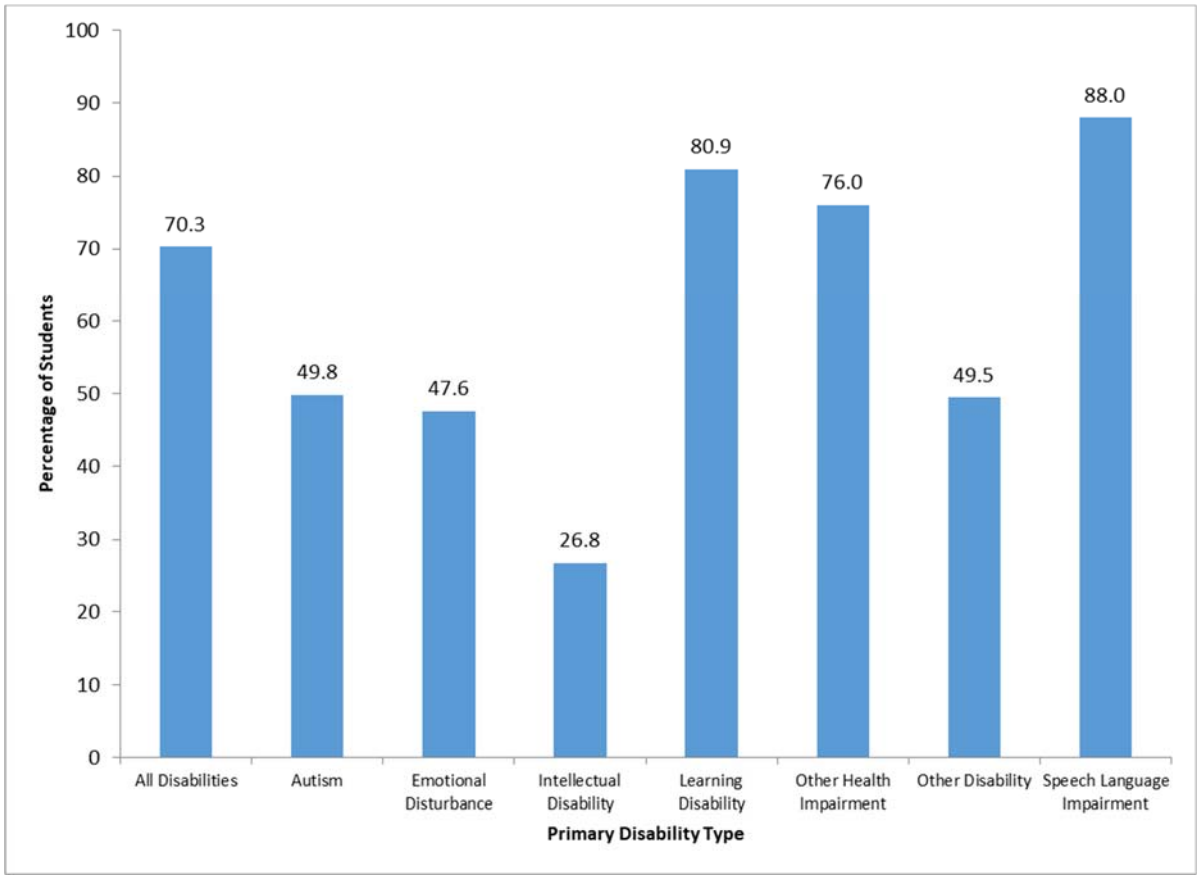
Figure 9: Chronic Absenteeism Rates by Race/Ethnicity



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 70.3 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 26.8 percent spent at least 80 percent of their time with nondisabled peers as compared to 80.9 percent of students with a learning disability. Similarly, 47.6 percent of students with an emotional disturbance spent at least 80 percent of their time with nondisabled peers, compared to 88.0 percent of students with a speech or language impairment.

Figure 10: Percent of Students (K-12) who Spend 80-100% of Time with Nondisabled Peers by Primary Disability Type, 2017-18

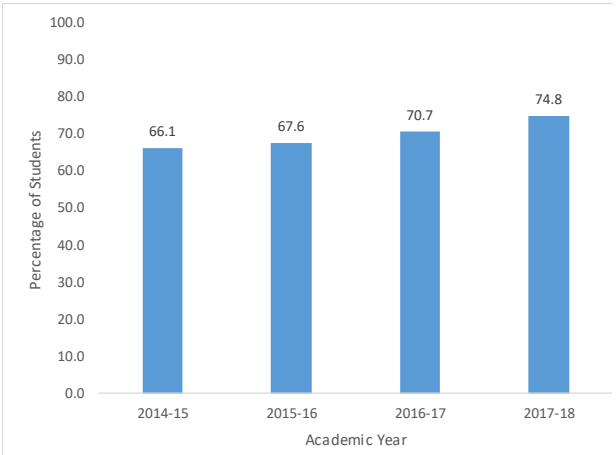


Participation in College-and-Career Readiness Coursework

To be ready for college and careers upon high school graduation, students need to have participated in rigorous coursework during high school. In recognition of the diverse pathways of our students, the CSDE evaluates the percentage of students in 11th and 12th grade who participated in at least two courses in one of the following options during high school:

- two courses in advanced placement, international baccalaureate, and/or dual enrollment;
- two courses in one of seventeen career-technical education categories; or
- two workplace experience courses in any area.

Figure 11: Percentage of 11th and 12th Grade Students taking CCR Coursework

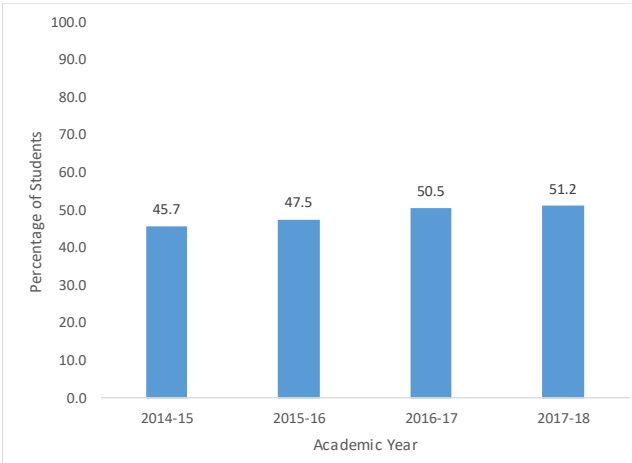


This metric is Indicator 5 of Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System and has shown consistent increases from 2014-15.

Access to the Arts

Every student needs and deserves a high-quality education in the arts, including dance, music, theater, and the visual arts. The arts are an integral component of the comprehensive curriculum provided to all Connecticut students. For accountability purposes, the CSDE evaluates the percentage of students in grades 9 through 12 who participated in at least one dance, theater, music, or visual arts course in the school year. This metric is Indicator 12 of Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System and has shown steady increases from 2014-15.

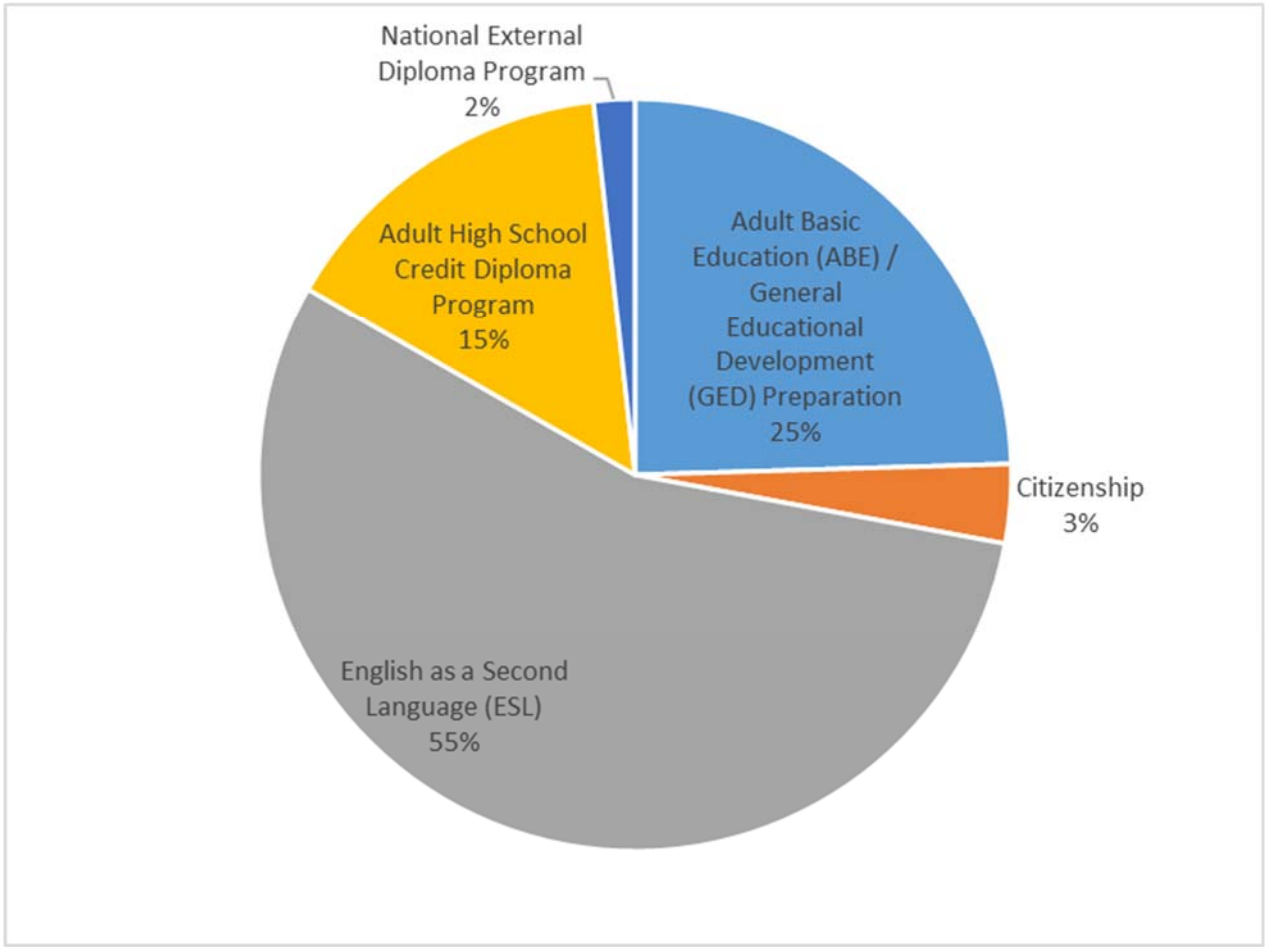
Figure 12: Percentage of Students in Grades 9 – 12 taking at least One Arts Course



Adult Education Program Participation

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).

Figure 13: Adult Education Enrollment by Program Type



PERFORMANCE

Statewide Next Generation Accountability Report

These statistics represent the results from the fourth 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 district/school is preparing its students for success in college, careers and life. The overall statewide accountability index grew from 73.2 in 2016-17 to 74.9 in 2017-18. Some indicators increased (e.g., academic achievement of high needs students, college/career course participation and exam performance) while others declined (e.g., chronic absenteeism, postsecondary entrance, physical fitness).

Table 3: Statewide Accountability Report, 2017-18

No:	Indicator	Index/ Rate	Target	Points Earned	Max Points	% Points Earned	Change from 2016-17
1a.	ELA Performance Index – All Students	67.6	75	45.1	50	90.2%	0.7%
1b.	ELA Performance Index – High Needs Students	57.5	75	38.3	50	76.6%	2.1%
1c.	Math Performance Index – All Students	62.7	75	41.8	50	83.6%	0.7%
1d.	Math Performance Index – High Needs Students	52.0	75	34.7	50	69.4%	2.1%
2a.	ELA Avg. Percentage of Growth Target Achieved – All Students	60.7%	100%	60.7	100	60.7%	5.3%
2b.	ELA Avg. Percentage of Growth Target Achieved – High Needs Students	55.6%	100%	55.6	100	55.6%	5.8%
2c.	Math Avg. Percentage of Growth Target Achieved – All Students	61.9%	100%	61.9	100	61.9%	0.2%
2d.	Math Avg. Percentage of Growth Target Achieved – High Needs Students	55.4%	100%	55.4	100	55.4%	1.7%
4a.	Chronic Absenteeism – All Students	10.7%	<=5%	38.6	50	77.2%	-3.2%
4b.	Chronic Absenteeism – High Needs Students	16.6%	<=5%	26.8	50	53.6%	-3.2%
5	Preparation for CCR – % taking courses	74.8%	75%	49.9	50	99.8%	5.5%
6	Preparation for CCR – % passing exams	44.8%	75%	29.9	50	59.8%	1.8%
7	On-track to High School Graduation	87.5%	94%	46.5	50	93.0%	-0.4%
8	4-year Graduation All Students	87.9%	94%	93.5	100	93.5%	0.5%
9	6-year Graduation - High Needs Students	81.8%	94%	87.0	100	87.0%	-0.2%
10	Postsecondary Entrance	70.9%	75%	94.5	100	94.5%	-1.5%
11	Physical Fitness	50.1%	75%	33.4	50	66.8%	-2.0%
12	Arts Access	51.2%	60%	42.7	50	85.4%	1.2%
	State Accountability Index			**936.3**	**1250**	**74.9%**	1.7%

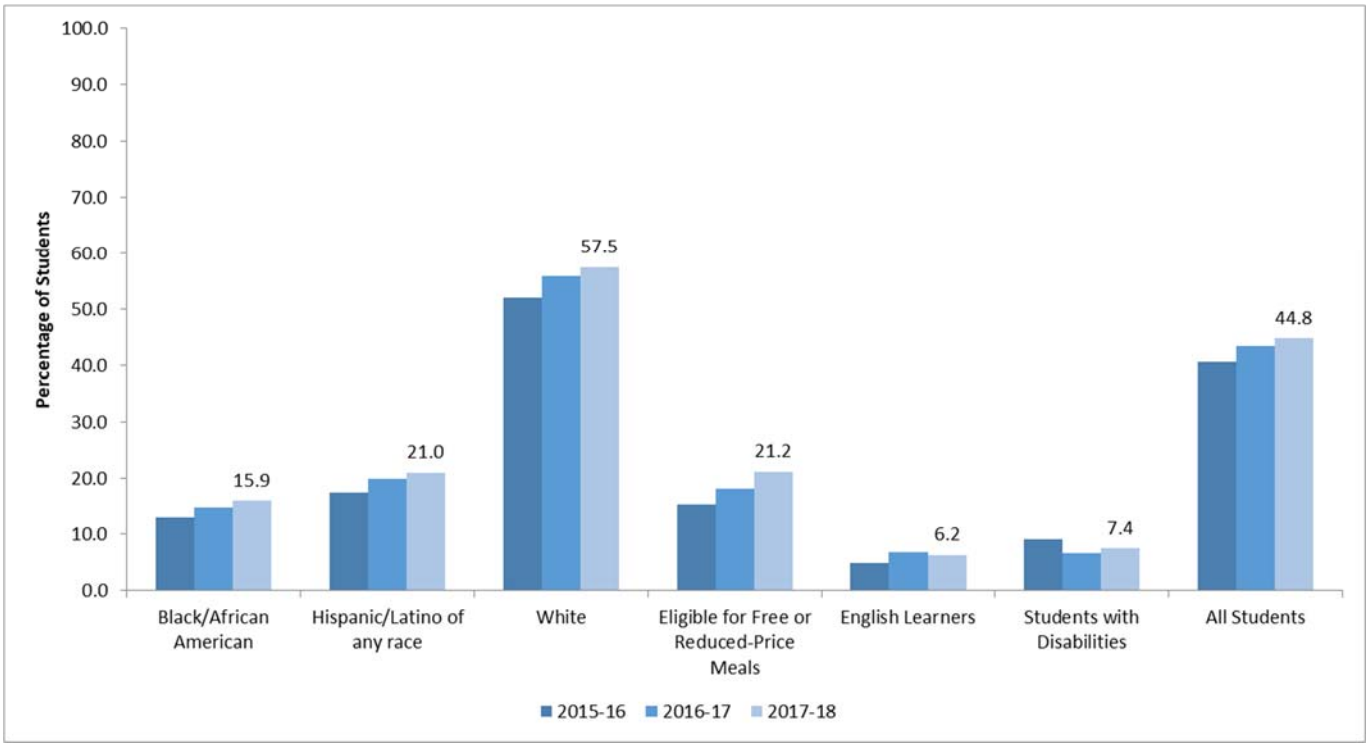
Note: Change between ±1 percentage point is indicated as

Meeting Benchmark on a College and Career Readiness Exam

The graph below shows the percentage of 11th and 12th graders 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). This metric is Indicator 6 of the Next Generation Accountability System. Overall, 44.8 percent of Connecticut 11th and 12th graders in 2017-18 met a college and career readiness standard on any of the above mentioned exams. This is a significant increase from 2015-16 when 40.7 percent met standard.

Contributing to this is the notable increase in the number of students who took at least one AP exam in 2017-18 (30,414) – up 5.0 percent from 2016-17. These students took 55,744 exams – also up 5.0 percent from the prior year. Of the exams taken, 37,804 exams achieved a score of three, four, or five – down 0.7 percent from 2015-16. Improvements were evidenced among students from all racial/ethnic backgrounds though performance gaps remain large.

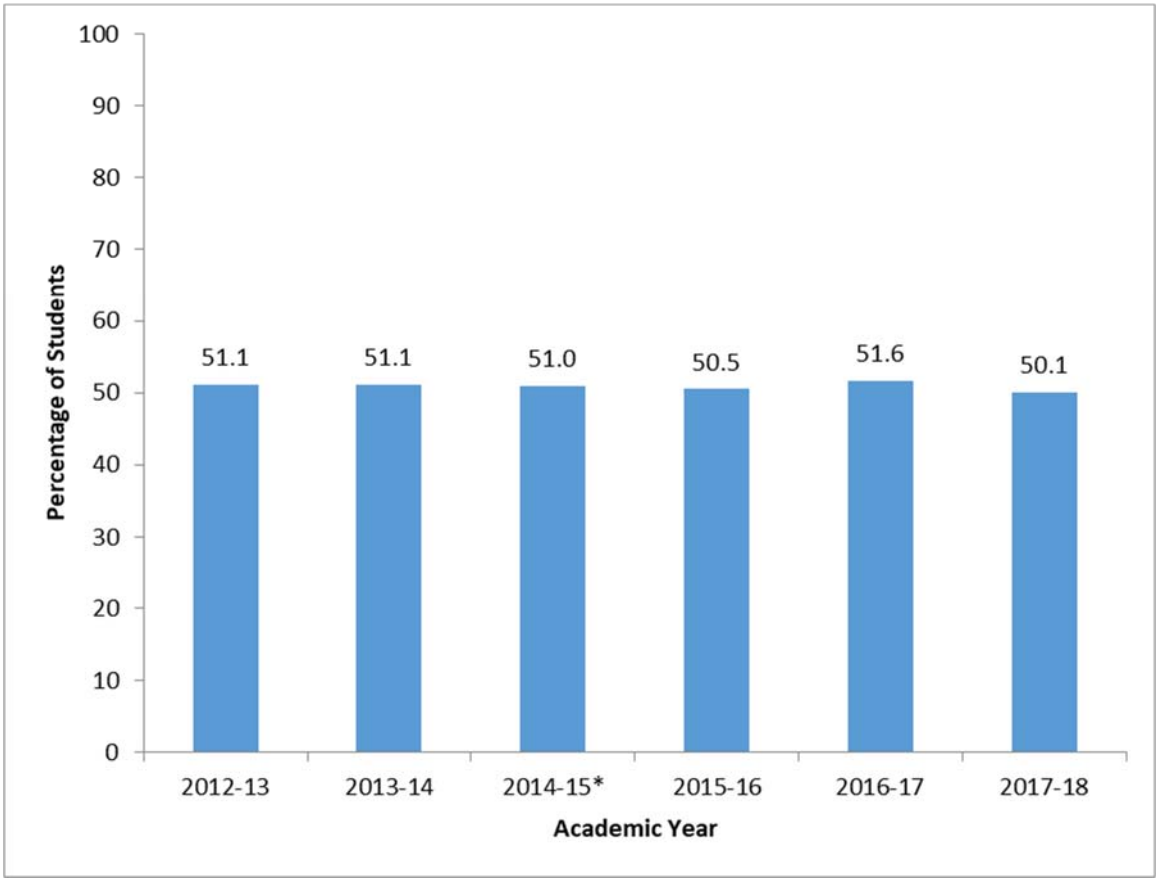
Figure 14: Percentage of 11th and 12th Graders Meeting Benchmark on a College and Career Readiness Exam



Physical Fitness

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, 50.1 percent of students in the tested grades (4, 6, 8 and once in high school) met the "Health Fitness Zone" standard on all four assessments in 2017-18. This is a slight drop from last year's figure of 51.6 percent. This metric, which also considers the participation rate in the Fitness Assessments, is Indicator 11 of Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System.

Figure 15: Percentage of Students Reaching Health Standard of CT Physical Fitness Assessment

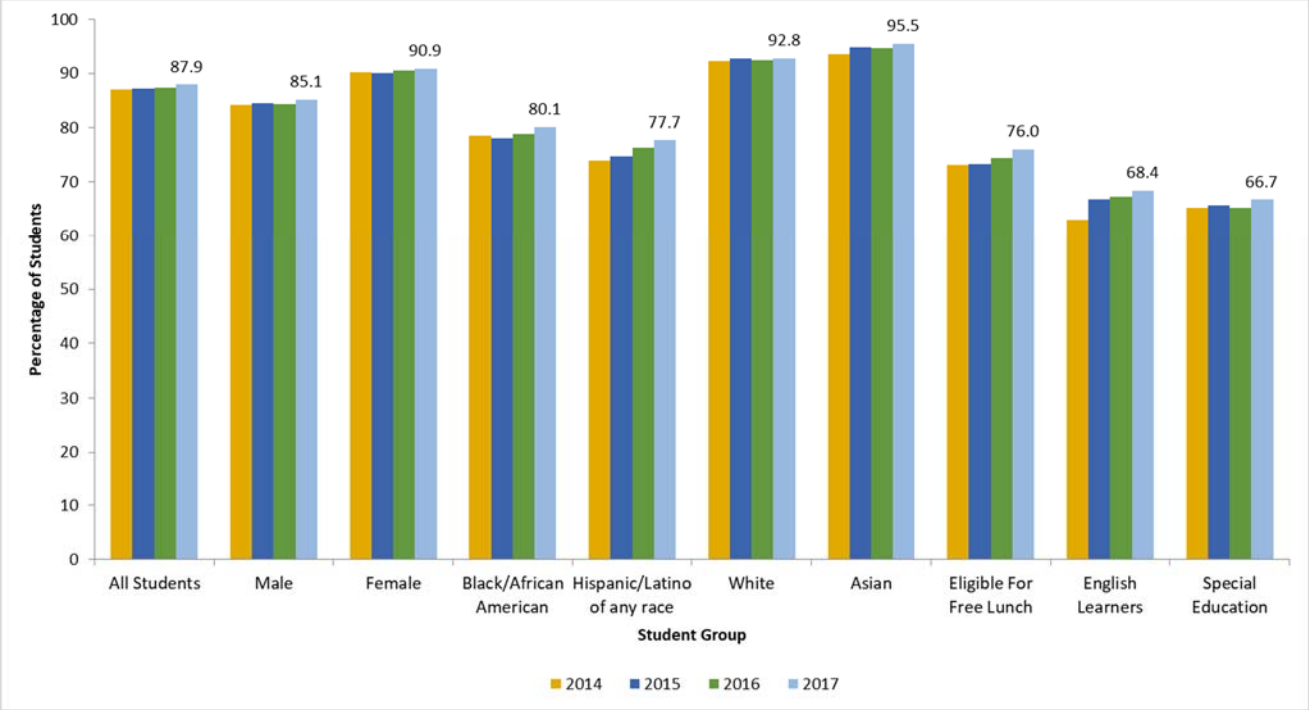


*For the first time in 2014-15, the ED165 collected data from district-run programs. This means that students who may not have been reported in past years are included in the data in 2014-15 and the following years.

High School 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. It is Indicator 8 of Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System. Connecticut's four-year graduation rate has increased from 85.5 percent for the cohort of 2013 to 87.9 percent for the cohort of 2017. The graduation rates for students who are black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, English learners, or eligible for free meals have increased at a rate that is greater than that of the state average.

Figure 16: Four-Year Graduation Rate Trend by Student Group



Some students benefit from having an extra year or two to complete high school. They may be English learners who came to this country in high school, students who must work to support their families, or students with disabilities receiving transition services. For these and many other students, the six-year graduation rate serves as an important additional measure of high school success (see table 4 below). Therefore, Connecticut incorporates the six-year rate in its accountability system.

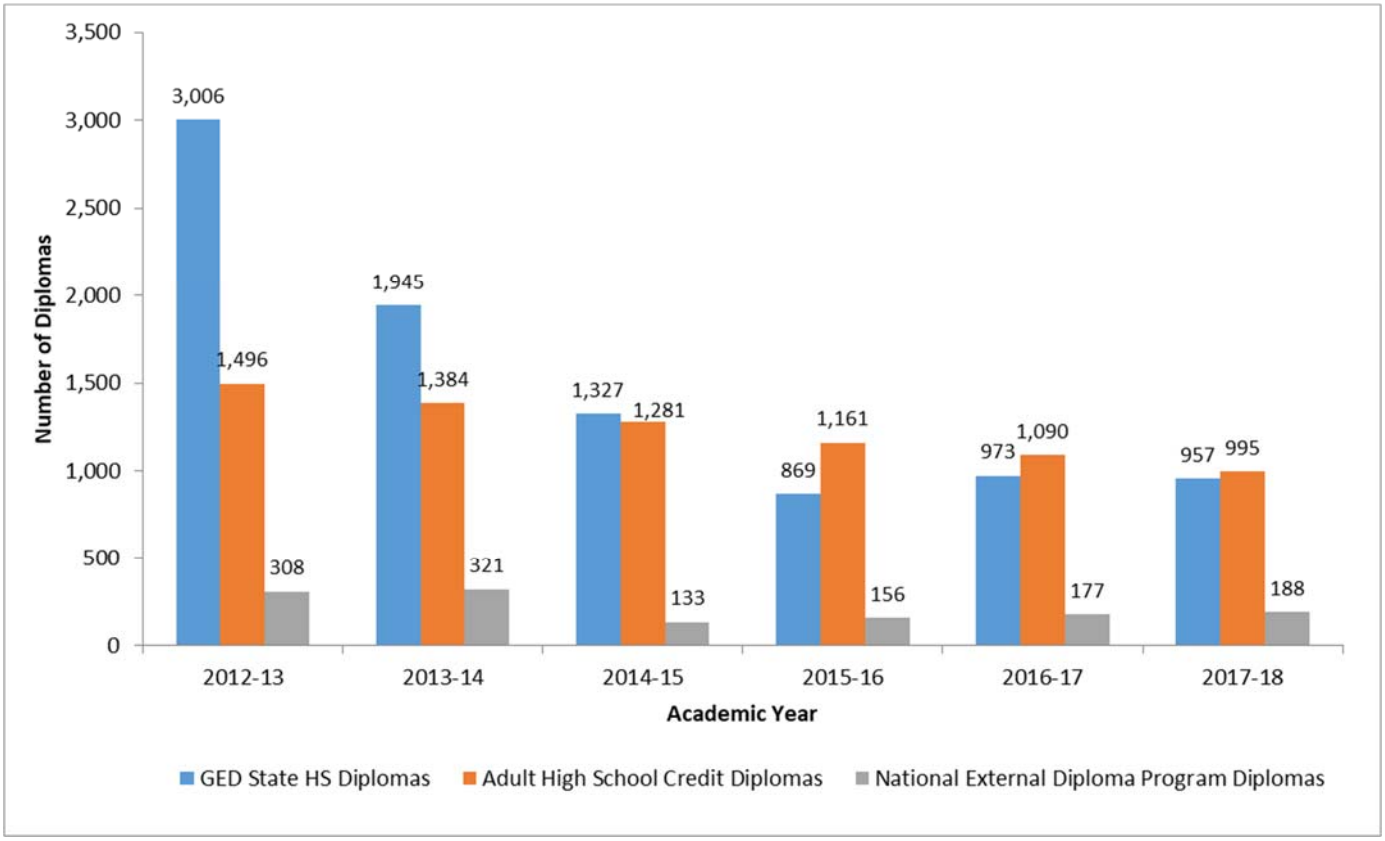
Table 4: Four- and Six-year Graduation Rates for the 2015 Graduation Cohort

Category	4-Year	6-Year
All Students	87.2	90.2
English Learners	66.7	75.4
Students with Disabilities	65.6	76.2
Eligible for Free Meals	73.3	78.9

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 2017-18, a total of 2,140 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.

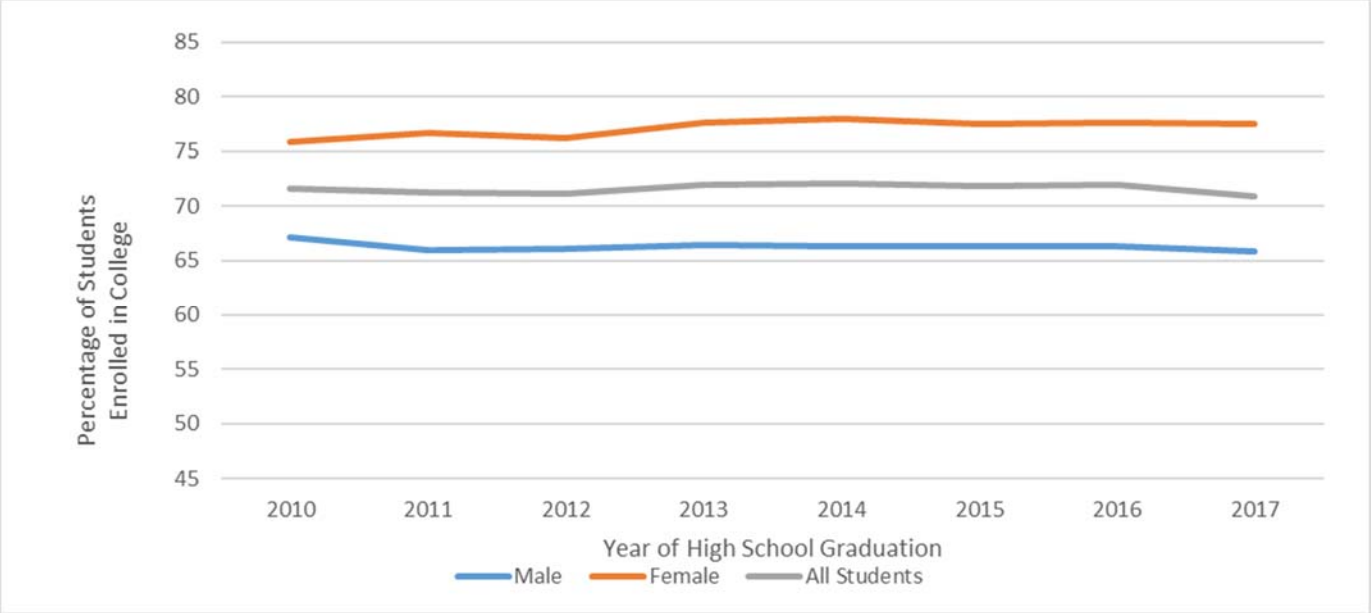
Figure 17: Adult Education Diplomas by Type



College Enrollment

Of the more than 38,000 Connecticut public high school graduates from the class of 2017, 70.9 percent enrolled in higher education within a year of graduating, which is slightly lower than the previous year's graduating class (72.0 percent). The college enrollment rate of females (77.5 percent) from the high school class of 2017 was substantially higher than that of males (65.9 percent).

Figure 18: Percentage of High School Graduates Who Enroll in College Anytime During the First Year after High School

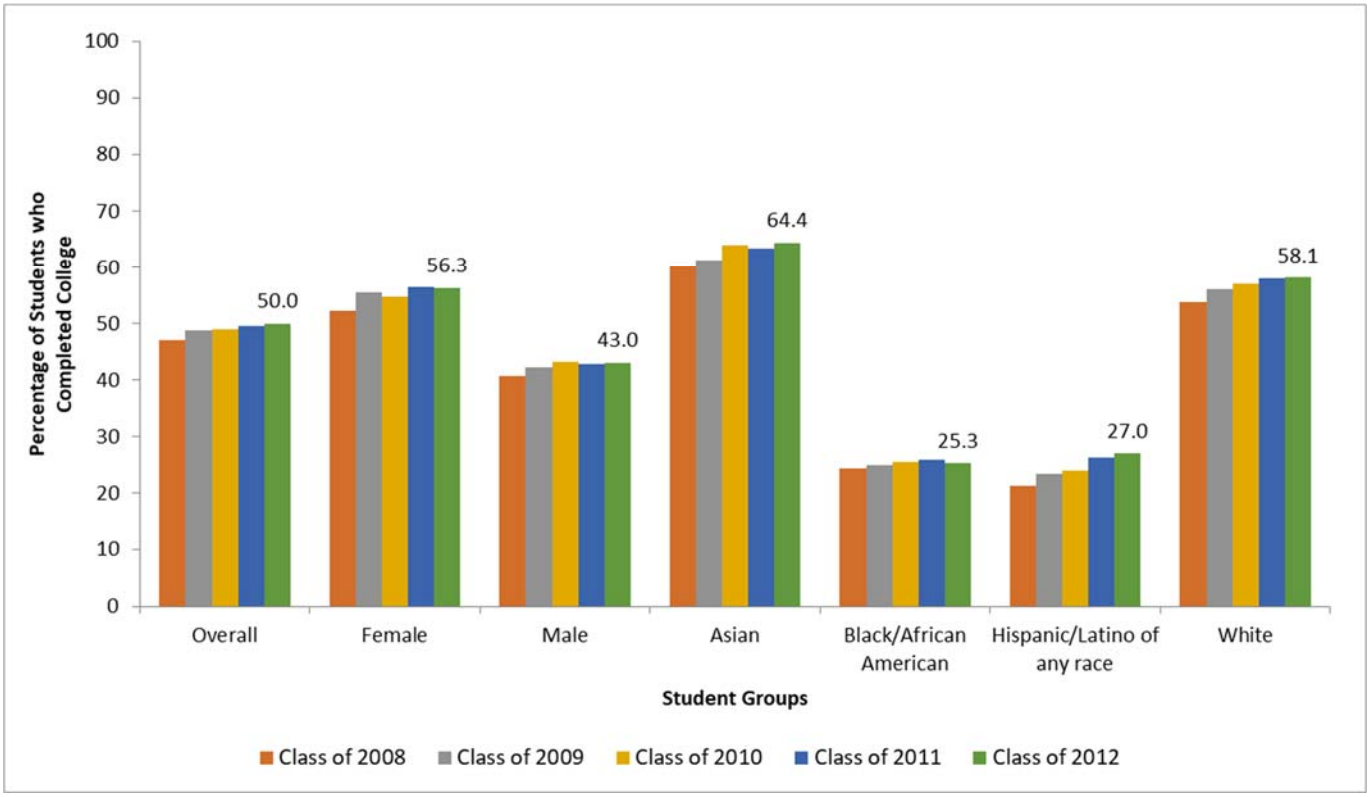


College Completion

Fifty percent of the 2012 high school graduating class graduated from college with an associate, bachelor's, or higher degree within six years. This continues the increasing trend since 2008. The college completion rate for males was slightly higher among the 2012 high school class (43.0) as compared to the 2011 class (42.8), while the corresponding rates for females evidenced a very slight decline (56.4 to 56.3).

The college completion rate for students who identified as Hispanic/Latino increased to 27.0 percent among the class of 2012, an increase from 21.4 percent for the class of 2008. A slight decrease was evidenced among black/African American students (25.9 percent to 25.3 percent). The six-year college completion rates were substantially higher among Asian students (64.4 percent) and white students (58.1 percent).

Figure 19: Percentage of High School Graduates Earning a College Degree in Six Years or Less



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
Ned Lamont, Governor

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Allan B. Taylor, Chairperson
Estela López, Vice Chairperson
Erin D. Benham
Erik M. Clemons
William P. Davenport
Makayla R. Dawkins, Student
Donald F. Harris
Tarini Krishna, Student
Malia K. Sieve

Mark E. Ojakian (Ex Officio)
President, Connecticut Board of Regents
for Higher Education
Robert Trefry (Ex Officio)
Chair, Connecticut Education and Career
System Governing Board

Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell
Commissioner of Education

The Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The Connecticut State Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of **race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability (including, but not limited to, intellectual disability, past or present history of mental disorder, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. The Connecticut State Department of Education does not unlawfully discriminate in employment and licensing against qualified persons with a prior criminal conviction.** Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to:

Levy Gillespie
Equal Employment Opportunity Director/American with Disabilities Act Coordinator
Connecticut State Department of Education
450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 607
Hartford, CT 06103-1841
860-807-2071
Levy.Gillespie@ct.gov