

Kindergarten Age Trends

Introduction

In 2023, the Connecticut General Assembly passed H.B. 5003 which was signed into law as Public Act 23-208. This law changed the age for Kindergarten entry from those students who reached five years of age on or before January 1 of the school year to those with birthdays on or before September 1 of the school year. The purpose of the legislation was to ensure that more students were developmentally ready for Kindergarten upon entry to school.

The law also allows for earlier entry into Kindergarten if upon parent request, the district conducts an assessment of the child and determines that it would be developmentally appropriate to allow earlier entry. This report examines the impact of this new legislation on the October enrollment of students who would previously have qualified to enroll in kindergarten i.e., those born after September 1 of the school year.

Data

The data used for this analysis come from the October Public School Information System (PSIS) data collection which represents the total public school enrollment as submitted and certified by school districts. The October PSIS collection is the official enrollment count for public school districts that is reported in the [Enrollment Dashboard](#) and used for several grant calculations. Three years of data were analyzed; the October 2023 collection for the 2023-24 year represents the baseline year prior to the implementation of the new law while the October 2024 and October 2025 years represents the first two years following the passage of that law.

IMPORTANT CAVEAT: The CSDE does not possess data on the number of children under age 5 as of September 1 whose parents formally requested an assessment of their child for early admission to Kindergarten in Fall of 2024 and 2025. Therefore, this paper will compare the percentage of Kindergarteners who are under age 5 before the new law (i.e., October 2023) and after the new law (i.e., Octobers 2024 and 2025). Any changes in this percentage could among other things be due to fewer parents requesting an assessment, variations in local policy and practice regarding the nature of this assessment, differences in the availability of affordable pre-K programs, changes in birth cohorts, and changes in migration patterns.

Results

Prior to the passage of the new law, in 2023-24 (i.e., the October 2023 PSIS collection), 26.1 percent of Kindergarten students (9,027 out of 34,565) had not turned five years of age as of September 1 of the school year. After passage of the new law, the number of students under age 5 as of September 1 who were admitted to Kindergarten declined significantly. In 2024-25 (i.e., the October 2024 PSIS collection), the first year of the new law, younger students under age 5 comprised 16.0 percent of the total Kindergarten enrollment (4855 out of 30,298); in 2025-26 (i.e., the October 2025 PSIS

collection), the second year of the new law, younger students under age 5 comprised only 9.0 percent of the total kindergarten enrollment (2,826 out of 31,302). See figure 1.

Figure 1: Kindergarten Enrollment by Age

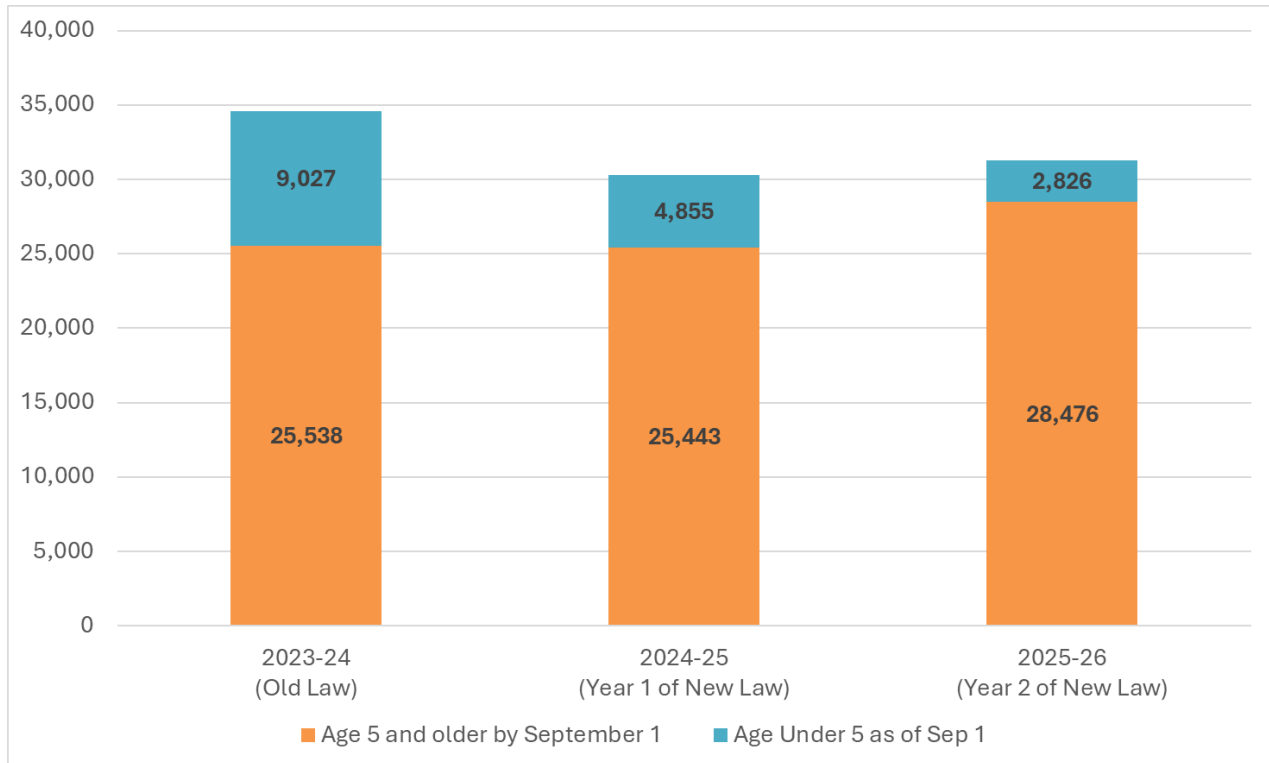
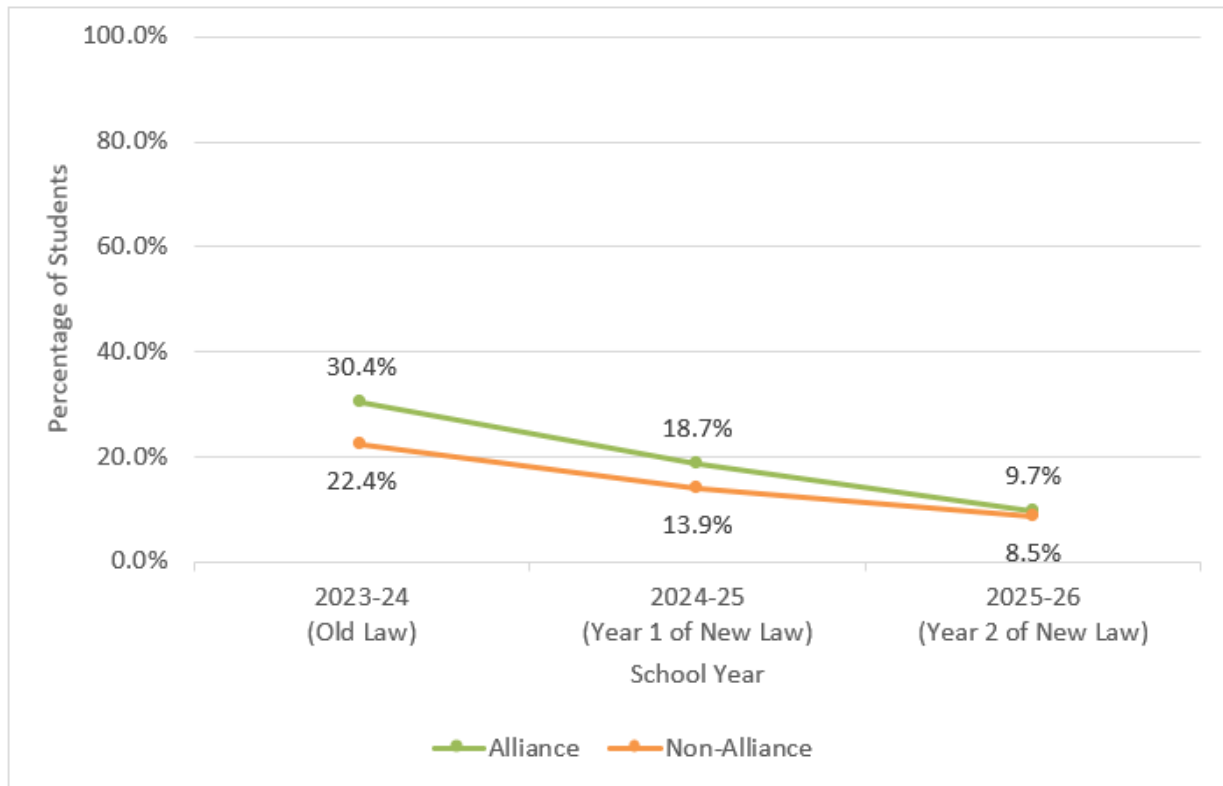


Figure 2 compares the percentage of Kindergarten students under age 5 as of September 1 between the 36 Alliance Districts and all other districts in the state. In October 2023, under the old law, 30.4 percent of Kindergarten students in Alliance Districts were under age 5 compared to 22.4 percent in non-Alliance districts. By October 2025, the second year of the new law, these percentages had declined among both Alliance and non-Alliance districts and were very similar to each other i.e., 9.7% in Alliance Districts vs 8.5% among non-Alliance districts.

Figure 2: Percentage of Kindergarteners under 5 Years of Age as of September 1

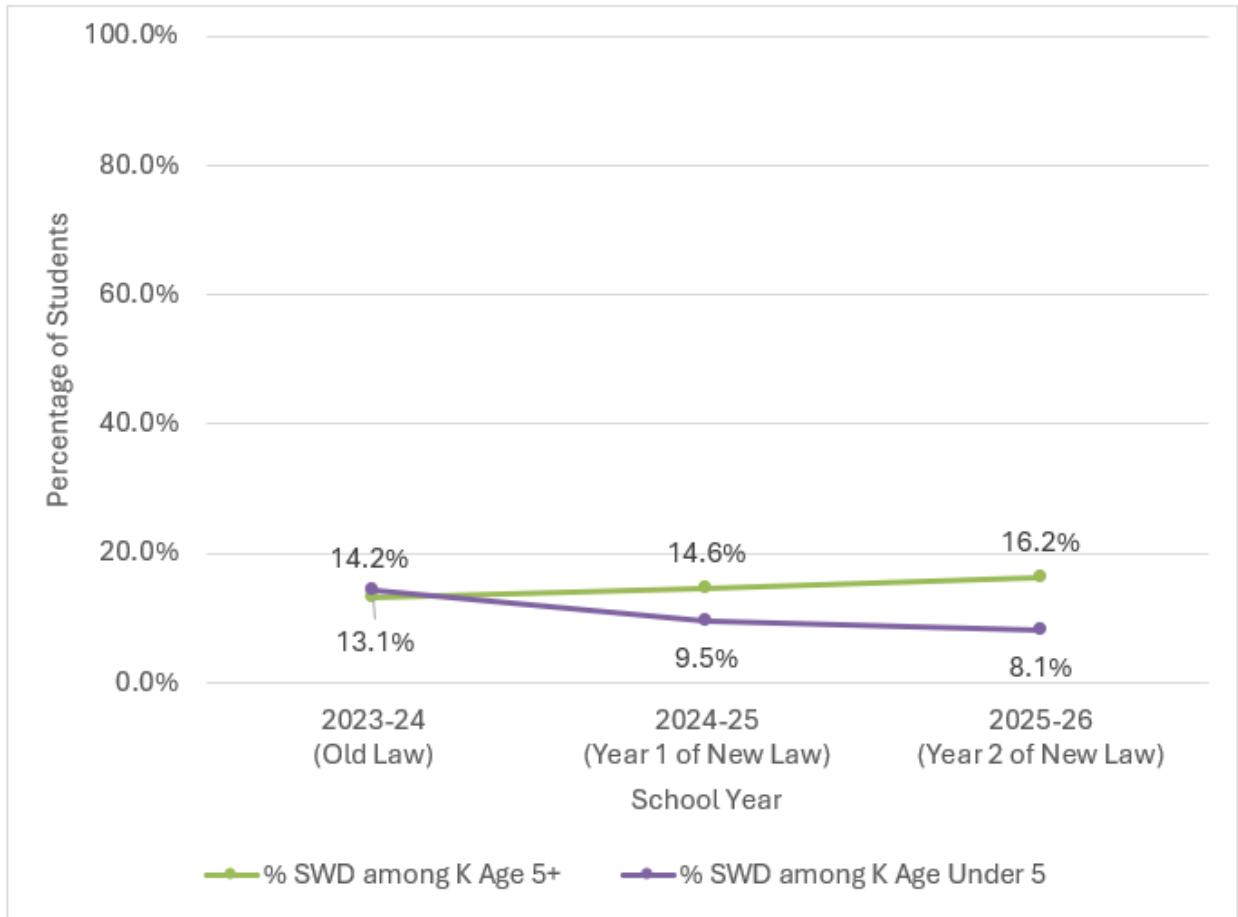


The percentage of kindergarten students under age 5 as of September 1 for each Connecticut public school district is included in the Appendix (see Table 1). There is wide variation among districts in terms of the number of younger students who are accepted into Kindergarten. For example, even in 2025-26 within Alliance Districts, in Bridgeport and Norwalk, younger students comprised over 21 percent of the total Kindergarten enrollment while in East Hartford and Hartford it was less than 5 percent. Such large differences are due likely to differences in local policies and practices with respect to the acceptance of children under 5 to Kindergarten.

The effect of this new law on the enrollment of students with disabilities and English learners in Kindergarten was also examined. For this analysis, the percentage of students with disabilities or English learners in Kindergarten was calculated separately both for students under age 5 and for those 5 or older as of September 1. See Figures 3 and 4.

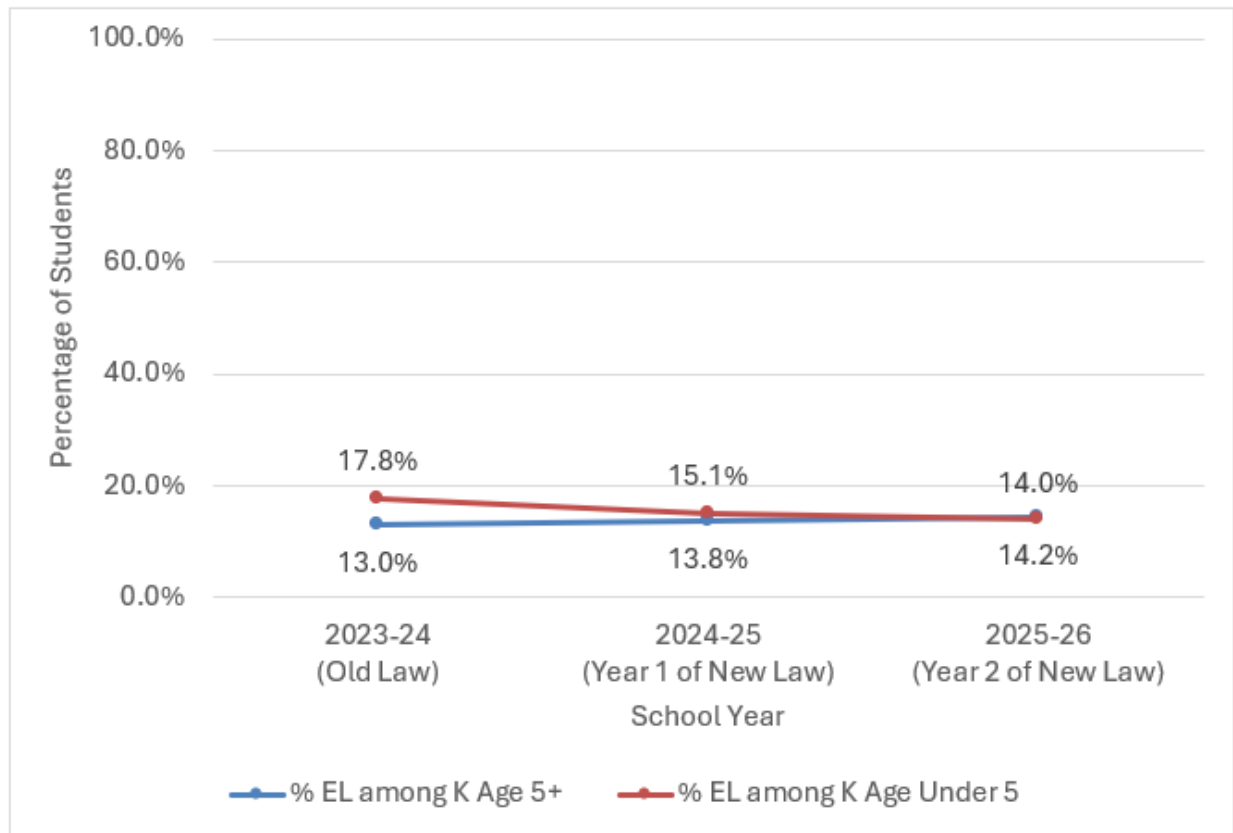
Students with disabilities (SWD) as a percentage of all Kindergarten students under age 5 (Figure 3) was 14.2 percent in 2023-24 under the old law but declined significantly to 8.1 percent in 2025-26. By contrast, students with disabilities as percentage of all Kindergarten students age 5 and older has increased in the past two years after passage of the new law from 14.2 percent to 16.2 percent.

Figure 3: Percentage of Students with Disabilities in Kindergarten by Age Group



English learners as a percentage of all Kindergarten students under age 5 (Figure 4) was 17.8 percent in 2023-24 under the old law but declined to 14.0 percent in 2025-26. By contrast, the English learners as percentage of all Kindergarten students age 5 and older increased slightly in the past two years after passage of the new law from 13.0 percent to 14.2 percent.

Figure 4: Percentage of English Learners in Kindergarten by Age Group



Conclusion

Pursuant to the passage of PA 23-208, the enrollment of students under age 5 as of September 1 of the school year has declined significantly. Prior to this law taking effect in 2023-24, 26.1 percent of Kindergarteners were under age 5. In the first two years of the law (i.e., 2024-25 and 2025-26), this declined to 16 percent and 9 percent respectively. This effect is observed in both Alliance and non-Alliance districts across the state; in 2025-26, 9.7 percent of Kindergarteners in Alliance Districts and 8.5 percent of Kindergarteners in non-Alliance districts were under age 5. There is wide variation among districts in terms of the number of younger students who are accepted into Kindergarten. For example, in Bridgeport and Norwalk, younger students comprised over 21 percent of the total Kindergarten enrollment while in East Hartford and Hartford it was less than 5 percent. Such large differences are due likely to differences in local policies and practices with respect to the acceptance of children under 5 to Kindergarten. This law has also had an impact on the prevalence of younger students with disabilities and English learners in Kindergarten. In 2025-26, students with disabilities are prevalent among Kindergarten students age 5 or older at twice the rate as their younger peers (16.2 percent vs 8.1 percent) when the prevalence rates were similar two years ago. In 2025-26, English learners are equally represented in those 5 or older, as well as those under 5 (14.0 percent vs 14.2 percent).

Appendix

Table 1: Percentage of Kindergarten Students Who were Under Age 5 on September 1¹

District Name	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Achievement First Bridgeport Academy District	33.3	22.9	17.2
Achievement First Hartford Academy District	19.7	25.0	21.1
Amistad Academy District	34.0	18.7	15.4
Andover School District			
Ansonia School District	31.4	20.3	11.8
Area Cooperative Educational Services	27.1	23.1	24.4
Ashford School District	27.8	46.7	
Avon School District	25.2	8.8	3.5
Barkhamsted School District	31.0	32.3	
Berlin School District	17.6	19.0	6.5
Bethany School District	14.5		
Bethel School District	26.5	7.0	5.6
Bloomfield School District	21.9	17.4	12.0
Bolton School District	15.8	15.6	15.6
Booker T. Washington Academy District	28.9	36.6	38.0
Bozrah School District			
Branford School District	26.1		
Brass City Charter School District			
Bridgeport School District	30.4	25.8	21.8
Bristol School District	28.7	18.5	14.6
Brookfield School District	26.2	12.6	
Brooklyn School District	37.3		
Canaan School District			
Canterbury School District	25.9	21.4	
Canton School District	19.6	17.3	12.3
Capital Preparatory Harbor School District	34.0	14.6	30.0
Capitol Region Education Council	27.3	17.2	13.9
Chaplin School District			
Cheshire School District	23.5	8.8	4.1
Chester School District			
Clinton School District	22.4	9.1	
Colchester School District	22.8	7.4	7.3
Colebrook School District			
Columbia School District	29.7	19.4	
Cooperative Educational Services	24.4	16.7	25.0
Cornwall School District			

¹¹ Percentages are not displayed for a district if fewer than 20 students were enrolled in Kindergarten or fewer than 6 students were under age 5 as of September 1.

District Name	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Coventry School District	17.4	20.5	
Cromwell School District	24.4	16.8	15.1
Danbury School District	31.6	15.5	2.8
Darien School District	10.4	4.9	5.1
Deep River School District	25.0		
Derby School District	31.3	15.8	10.0
East Granby School District	22.0	20.7	
East Haddam School District	17.3	19.7	15.8
East Hampton School District	22.9	11.5	10.2
East Hartford School District	31.3	26.0	3.6
East Haven School District	25.0	12.5	
East Lyme School District	20.3	13.4	7.8
East Windsor School District	26.4	20.0	12.5
Eastern Connecticut Regional Educational Service Center (EASTCONN)			
Eastford School District			
Easton School District	20.0	13.9	14.4
EdAdvance			
Ellington School District	28.2	6.9	
Elm City College Preparatory School District	30.2	21.3	19.4
Elm City Montessori School District	29.0	22.2	
Enfield School District	35.2	12.1	3.1
Essex School District	21.6		16.7
Fairfield School District	14.9	11.2	3.9
Farmington School District	21.3	15.0	7.1
Franklin School District			
Glastonbury School District	19.3	11.8	3.3
Goodwin University Educational Services (GUES)	31.3	17.7	15.2
Granby School District	19.4	12.0	9.0
Greenwich School District	19.1	11.1	9.2
Griswold School District	30.2	24.3	14.4
Groton School District	26.3	3.3	5.2
Guilford School District	13.2	12.7	5.0
Hamden School District	27.1	15.1	10.9
Hampton School District			
Hartford School District	31.4	23.8	4.3
Hartland School District			
Hebron School District	27.6	9.0	
Highville Charter School District	35.7		
Integrated Day Charter School District	36.4	26.5	
Jumoke Academy District	37.0	22.6	26.4
Kent School District			
Killingly School District	27.5	9.9	

District Name	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Learn	42.4	22.0	
Lebanon School District	22.4	16.7	
Ledyard School District	37.3	17.6	16.7
Lisbon School District	32.4		
Litchfield School District	15.5		
Madison School District	12.7	8.9	6.1
Manchester School District	30.5	5.4	3.1
Mansfield School District	31.0		
Marlborough School District	26.9	15.0	
Meriden School District	33.4	18.0	6.6
Middletown School District	31.7	3.2	1.8
Milford School District	18.6	18.8	7.7
Monroe School District	21.1	17.5	13.1
Montville School District	26.0	9.8	4.8
Naugatuck School District	27.4	18.2	2.7
New Beginnings Inc Family Academy District	28.2		10.8
New Britain School District	30.8	20.9	7.9
New Canaan School District	12.2	8.5	4.5
New Fairfield School District	21.9	20.3	16.9
New Hartford School District	13.3	14.6	
New Haven School District	30.3	20.2	12.5
New London School District	29.4	8.8	
New Milford School District	28.4	20.7	
Newington School District	26.2	9.9	4.5
Newtown School District	25.1	7.6	12.8
Norfolk School District			
North Branford School District	25.6	15.9	
North Canaan School District	26.5		
North Haven School District	21.7	20.4	12.4
North Stonington School District	15.1	22.7	
Norwalk School District	28.5	27.8	21.6
Norwich School District	33.3	15.5	13.8
Odyssey Community School District			
Old Saybrook School District			
Orange School District	15.6	12.0	7.8
Oxford School District	28.1	11.3	10.1
Plainfield School District	30.2	19.8	
Plainville School District	34.7	21.6	4.9
Plymouth School District	29.1	14.3	7.1
Pomfret School District	38.9		
Portland School District	25.0	15.6	8.8
Preston School District	15.0	23.3	

District Name	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Putnam School District	22.1	18.4	13.3
Redding School District	24.8	11.6	
Regional School District 06	34.2		
Regional School District 10	17.6	15.3	6.0
Regional School District 12			
Regional School District 13	17.0	16.0	
Regional School District 14	19.8	29.5	
Regional School District 15	24.2	14.7	13.4
Regional School District 16	28.3	9.9	9.5
Regional School District 17	16.5	10.9	12.6
Regional School District 18	22.1	14.1	
Regional School District 20		19.6	19.8
Ridgefield School District	15.3	10.1	4.4
Rocky Hill School District	26.3	17.1	19.3
Salem School District	21.9	21.7	
Salisbury School District	19.0		
Scotland School District			
Seymour School District	26.9	15.9	8.2
Sharon School District			
Shelton School District	25.6	20.9	21.3
Sherman School District		32.0	
Side By Side Charter School District			
Simsbury School District	17.5	9.6	
Somers School District	23.2	19.4	9.6
South Windsor School District	25.7	24.1	15.0
Southington School District	20.8	15.7	11.8
Sprague School District	27.6		
Stafford School District	20.2	11.8	
Stamford Charter School for Excellence District	34.4	16.1	22.6
Stamford School District	29.9	16.4	3.6
Sterling School District	37.0		
Stonington School District	17.1	8.4	
Stratford School District	29.9	24.5	3.7
Suffield School District	21.7	17.3	9.4
Thomaston School District	28.8	28.2	13.7
Thompson School District	24.7	17.6	
Tolland School District	24.3		
Torrington School District	32.9	3.2	2.5
Trumbull School District	23.1	17.5	17.4
Unified School District #2			
Union School District			
Vernon School District	25.0	24.7	14.4

District Name	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Voluntown School District			26.1
Wallingford School District	23.9	13.4	12.7
Waterbury School District	32.2	16.0	9.4
Waterford School District	30.3	11.2	5.6
Watertown School District	32.4	21.7	18.2
West Hartford School District	21.7	9.7	3.2
West Haven School District	32.7	20.3	17.3
Westbrook School District	20.5	18.2	
Weston School District	19.0	8.8	4.5
Westport School District	12.2	8.3	
Wethersfield School District	22.0	5.6	
Willington School District	20.0		
Wilton School District	18.5	11.8	4.6
Winchester School District	28.8		
Windham School District	27.3	8.6	8.3
Windsor Locks School District	39.6	17.4	8.8
Windsor School District	26.9	27.9	26.5
Wolcott School District	25.2	21.5	8.7
Woodbridge School District	18.2	20.0	13.1
Woodstock School District	28.2		
State	26.1	16.0	9.0