



Redding Consortium for Educational Equity

STATUS OF WILMINGTON EDUCATION FOR THE 2020–2021 SCHOOL YEAR

Prepared by
Institute for Public Administration
University of Delaware



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
BIDEN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC
POLICY & ADMINISTRATION

Redding Consortium for Educational Equity

Status of Wilmington Education for the 2020–2021 School Year

July 2022

Prepared by the
Institute for Public Administration
Joseph R. Biden, Jr. School of Public Policy & Administration
University of Delaware

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Authors and Report Preparation	4
Executive Summary.....	5
Key Findings	5
Section I: Wilmington Student Demographics and Public Schools.....	5
Section II: Student Proficiency	6
Section III: Dropout Rates	6
Section IV: Graduation Rates	7
Data and Definitions	7
Section I: Wilmington Student Demographics and Public Schools	9
Wilmington Student Enrollment	10
Section II: Student Proficiency.....	14
COVID-19 Impact on Test Participation.....	15
Student Proficiency in English Language Arts.....	18
Student Proficiency in Math	22
Students from Low-Income Families.....	26
Students with Disabilities	32
English Learners	34
Section III: Dropout Data.....	38
Section IV: Graduation Data	41
Section V: Conclusion and Key Findings.....	44

Preface and Acknowledgements

The Redding Consortium for Educational Equity (Redding Consortium) was created in 2019 to recommend policies and practices to the Governor and General Assembly that will achieve educational equity and improve educational outcomes for all Pre-K–12 students in the City of Wilmington and northern New Castle County, Delaware.

The Redding Consortium for Educational Equity is the sixth group, since 2001, charged with addressing equity and governance issues for Wilmington and northern New Castle County, Delaware school systems through state-level policymaking. With your support, a course will be charted toward sustainable solutions for our students—and we will be the last.

While there are numerous valued contributors, a special thanks goes to:

- **Governor John Carney** for his willingness to continue the fight for all students in Delaware.
- **Secretary of Education Mark Holodick** for his leadership in education.
- **Former Secretary of Education Susan Bunting** for her lifetime commitment to student success.
- **The Delaware General Assembly** for its leadership and support of the pursuit for educational equity.
- **All members of the Consortium and its Work Groups** for their commitment and dedication to improving the Delaware education system so that it benefits all students.
- **The staff and students** of the Institute for Public Administration at the University of Delaware and Delaware State University for providing outstanding support to the operations and research of the Consortium.

Without you all this work would not be possible.

Tizzy Lockman & Matthew Denn

Co-Chairs, Redding Consortium for Educational Equity

Introduction

Prepared by the University of Delaware’s Institute for Public Administration (IPA), in partnership with Delaware State University, for the Redding Consortium for Educational Equity, this report provides an updated analysis of enrollment, student proficiency, graduation rates, and dropout rates for Pre-K–12 (P–12) students residing within the limits of the City of Wilmington. This analysis includes students attending traditional, vocational-technical (vo-tech), and charter schools across the state during the 2020–21 school year. The report provides a snapshot of public education for students living in the City of Wilmington.

The Redding Consortium for Educational Equity (the Consortium) was created through legislation to recommend policies and practices to the Governor, General Assembly, and the Secretary of Education to achieve educational equity and improve educational outcomes of all Pre-K to grade 12 students in the City of Wilmington and northern New Castle County. The Consortium also monitors the educational progress and outcomes of all low-income, English Learners (ELs), and other at-risk students in the City of Wilmington and across northern New Castle County.

This report is the only report in Delaware monitoring the educational progress of Wilmington students as a whole and evaluating the needs and performance of low-income students across the state. Annual evaluations on indicators of student success include disaggregation by geographic locations, with a specific focus on heavily concentrated areas of poverty across the state. Disaggregating data in this way more clearly identifies trends in achievement and opportunity gaps that disproportionately affect low-income students, ELs, and other students at risk in Wilmington and across Delaware.

Due to the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, student achievement data from the 2019–20 school year are unavailable, and direct comparisons of 2020–21 data to previous school years may not be appropriate. Previous year data are included in this report for posterity and to understand the impact the pandemic is having on student achievement.

Authors and Report Preparation

This report was written and prepared by the Institute for Public Administration (IPA) at the University of Delaware. The authors include:

Kelly Sherretz, Project Manager and IPA Policy Scientist
Haley Quissaunee, IPA Assistant Policy Scientist
Brendan Laux, Graduate IPA Public Administration Fellow

This report was edited and formatted by Communications Advisor and IPA Assistant Policy Scientist Sarah Pragg. IPA is led by Director Jerome Lewis, Ph.D., and addresses the policy, planning, and management needs of its partners through the integration of applied research, professional development, and the education of tomorrow’s leaders. Learn more at www.ipa.udel.edu.

Executive Summary

All Delaware students have the right to safe, secure, and student-focused learning environments where they are intentionally provided access to the support, resources, and opportunities they need to reach their full academic and social potential, in and out of the classroom. The Consortium seeks to identify and remove the barriers to equitable education for students from low-income families, English Learners (ELs), and students with disabilities throughout the state, with an initial focus on the City of Wilmington.

This report is the continuation of the Consortium’s annual report on Wilmington student outcomes. This report analyzes data on enrollment, standardized test participation, and student proficiency from the 2020–2021 school year. The report also analyzes dropout rates and graduation rates from the 2019–2020 school year. The report provides a snapshot of education in Delaware, particularly as it pertains to children in the City of Wilmington. The Consortium is reporting these findings to highlight the urgent realities of education in the City of Wilmington and does not mean to criticize the city’s students nor the local education agencies that serve them.

Key Findings

The disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on the state’s students in terms of test participation and proficiency in 2020–21. The full impact of school closures and the measures taken to mitigate the educational impact of the pandemic will take time to be seen. Overall, the inequities remain the same as previously reported: Wilmington students are behind their peers on virtually every indicator of student success, though gaps in dropout rates and graduation rates have closed over the last four years.

The Consortium believes that the educational inequities experienced by Wilmington students are the result of systemic resource-allocation and community collaboration around problems within the public education system. The current system is inadequate to effectively address the unique educational and social-emotional needs of Wilmington students, many of whom live in severe poverty. While significant progress has been made to begin addressing these systemic problems, more work needs to be done to improve educational equity in Wilmington and throughout the state.

Section I: Wilmington Student Demographics and Public Schools

During the 2020–21 school year, there were 10,598 City of Wilmington students enrolled in public education. Of those students:

- 56 percent were from low-income families
- 9 percent were English Learners
- 22 percent were students with disabilities
- 70 percent identified as Black or African American
- 18 percent identified as Hispanic/Latino
- 8 percent identified as White

Section II: Student Proficiency

Wilmington and Non-Wilmington Students

Previous reports indicated a performance gap between Wilmington students and non-Wilmington students. This performance gap continues to hold. Approximately 16 percent of Wilmington students compared to 42 percent of non-Wilmington students met or exceeded state standards on the 2021 English Language Arts (ELA) Smarter Balanced Assessment. Approximately 8 percent of Wilmington students compared to 26 percent of non-Wilmington students met or exceeded state standards on the 2021 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment.

Low-Income Students

The majority of students from low-income families living in the City of Wilmington were not proficient in ELA or math in the 2020–21 school year. Approximately 11 percent of students from low-income families in Wilmington met or exceeded state standards on the SBAC ELA tests in 2021, compared to 25 percent of non-Wilmington students and 23 percent of students statewide from the same population. Approximately 4 percent of students from low-income families in Wilmington met or exceeded state standards on the SBAC Math tests in 2021, compared to 12 percent of non-Wilmington students.

English Learners

The majority of ELs from Wilmington were not proficient in ELA or math in the 2020–21 school year. Approximately 7 percent of ELs in Wilmington met or exceeded state standards on the SBAC ELA tests in 2021, compared to 13 percent of non-Wilmington ELs. Approximately 4 percent of ELs in Wilmington met or exceeded state standards on the SBAC math tests in 2021, compared to 8 percent of non-Wilmington ELs.

Students with Disabilities

The majority of students with disabilities from Wilmington were not proficient in ELA or math in the 2020–21 school year. Approximately 3 percent of students with disabilities in Wilmington met or exceeded state standards on the SBAC ELA tests in 2021, compared to 13 percent of non-Wilmington students with disabilities. Approximately 1 percent of students with disabilities in Wilmington met or exceeded the state’s standards on the SBAC math tests in 2021, compared to 9 percent of non-Wilmington students with disabilities.

Section III: Dropout Rates

In the 2019–20 school year, the statewide dropout rate was 1.3 percent. The dropout rate for all Wilmington students in the 2019–20 school year was 1.2 percent, compared to 0.9 percent in the 2018–19 school year. The dropout rate for Wilmington students from low-income families in the 2019–20 school year was 0.5 percent, compared to 0.8 percent in the 2018–19 school year. These rates reflect a long-term improvement in reducing dropout rates statewide and closing the gap between low-income students and the general student population in Wilmington.

Section IV: Graduation Rates

In the 2019–20 school year, the statewide graduation rate was 87.7 percent. The graduation rate for all Wilmington students in the 2019–20 school year was 83.5 percent, compared to 82.4 percent in the 2018–19 school year. The graduation rate for Wilmington students from low-income families in the 2019–20 school year was 80.0 percent, compared to 78.3 percent in the 2018–19 school year. These rates reflect a long-term improvement in graduation rates for all Wilmington students and Wilmington students from low-income families.

Data and Definitions

All data are from the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE). The main source of data is the DDOE Data Set that includes data collected from school year 2011–12 through 2020–21. This report only includes data from the past five school years. A secondary source of data is the School Profiles published on the DDOE’s website. Each graphic in this report indicates the appropriate data source. Data points are rounded and therefore may not equate to 100 percent when added.

Student Enrollment & Classification

For the purposes of this report, the terms “City of Wilmington” and “Wilmington” are used interchangeably. The term “Wilmington students” is defined as Pre-K–12 students residing within the limits of the City of Wilmington who attend traditional, vocational-technical (vo-tech), and charter schools across the state. The term “non-Wilmington students” is defined as Pre-K–12 students not residing within the limits of the City of Wilmington who attend traditional, vo-tech, and charter schools across the state. Where noted, the terms “Wilmington School” and “non-Wilmington School” refer to the location of the school where each student is attending, not the student’s residency.

Non-charter magnet schools (e.g., Cab Calloway School of the Arts) are counted as district schools. District-authorized charter schools (e.g., Charter School of Wilmington) are counted as charter schools, except where noted.

Throughout the report, data are aggregated by New Castle, Kent, and Sussex counties. These designations refer to the location of the district or charter school each student is attending, not the residency of each student. In this report, all students attending Milford School District are counted as part of Kent County, and all students attending Smyrna School District are counted as part of New Castle County.

The term “English Learners” (ELs) is defined as students who are identified as part of an English Learners Education Program at their school under Title III of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) at the time that data were recorded. Students who have fully transitioned out of their program do not carry an EL designation and therefore are not included in EL data.

Student Performance

In the following analysis, proficiency categorization is determined by four achievement levels: one being “Well Below Expectations,” two being “Below Expectations,” three being “Meets

Expectations,” and four being “Exceeds Expectations.” A student is classified as meeting or exceeding state standards if they receive a three or a four on the state assessment.

Due to the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, direct comparisons of 2020–21 data to previous school years may not be appropriate. Previous year data are included in this report for posterity and to understand the impact the pandemic is having on student performance.

During the 2014–15 school year, the SBAC tests were administered to students in grades 3–8 and 11 in ELA and math. Starting in 2016, SBAC tests assess students in grades 3–8, and the SAT assesses high school student achievement. The SBAC tests in ELA and math were not assessed in the 2019–20 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The SAT is available to high school students (grades 9–12) and is administered to all Delaware high school students in grade 11. The test consists of two major sections, evidence-based reading and writing (ERW) and math, which are scored on a scale of 200–800. In spring 2016, the SAT replaced the SBAC as Delaware’s state test for grade 11. DDOE established achievement Levels 1 to 4, with one being the lowest score, to report student performance on the ERW and math sections of the SAT in conjunction with the assessment scores. Due to the disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic, 2019–20 SAT scores are not included in this report.

To stay consistent with DDOE reporting, the authors of this report followed the data privacy and redaction rules used by DDOE.¹ In some cases, the authors erred on the side of caution to protect student privacy.

¹ <https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/3024>

Section I: Wilmington Student Demographics and Public Schools

This section provides a demographic summary for Wilmington students, each county, and the State of Delaware. Enrollment numbers are determined by the September 30th count each school year. There were 10,598 City of Wilmington students enrolled in public education during the 2020–21 school year. Of these students, 56 percent were from low-income families, 9 percent were English Learners, and 22 percent were students with disabilities. Statewide, 27 percent of students were from low-income families, 10 percent were ELs, and 17 percent were students with disabilities. The following tables detail and compare student demographics statewide to students residing in Wilmington and students attending schools in each county.

Table 1. Profile of City of Wilmington, Delaware, and County Students 2020–21

	Wilmington	Delaware	New Castle County	Kent County	Sussex County
Gender					
Female	49.7%	48.9%	48.9%	48.9%	48.9%
Male	50.3%	51.1%	51.1%	51.1%	51.1%
Race and Ethnicity					
American Indian or Alaskan Native	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%
Asian	< 1%	4.3%	6.3%	1.9%	1.4%
Black or African American	70.2%	30.1%	33.9%	33.1%	16.3%
Hispanic/Latino	18.0%	18.3%	18.4%	11.4%	25.4%
Two or more races	2.3%	4.6%	4.1%	5.9%	4.8%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%
White	8.3%	42.3%	36.8%	47.2%	51.5%
Low-Income Population	56.4%	26.7%	25.8%	29.2%	26.5%
English Learners (ELs) Population	8.7%	9.9%	9.6%	6.1%	14.9%
Students with Disabilities Population	22.2%	16.8%	16.9%	17.3%	15.7%

Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Table 2. City of Wilmington Student Enrollment, 2018–2021

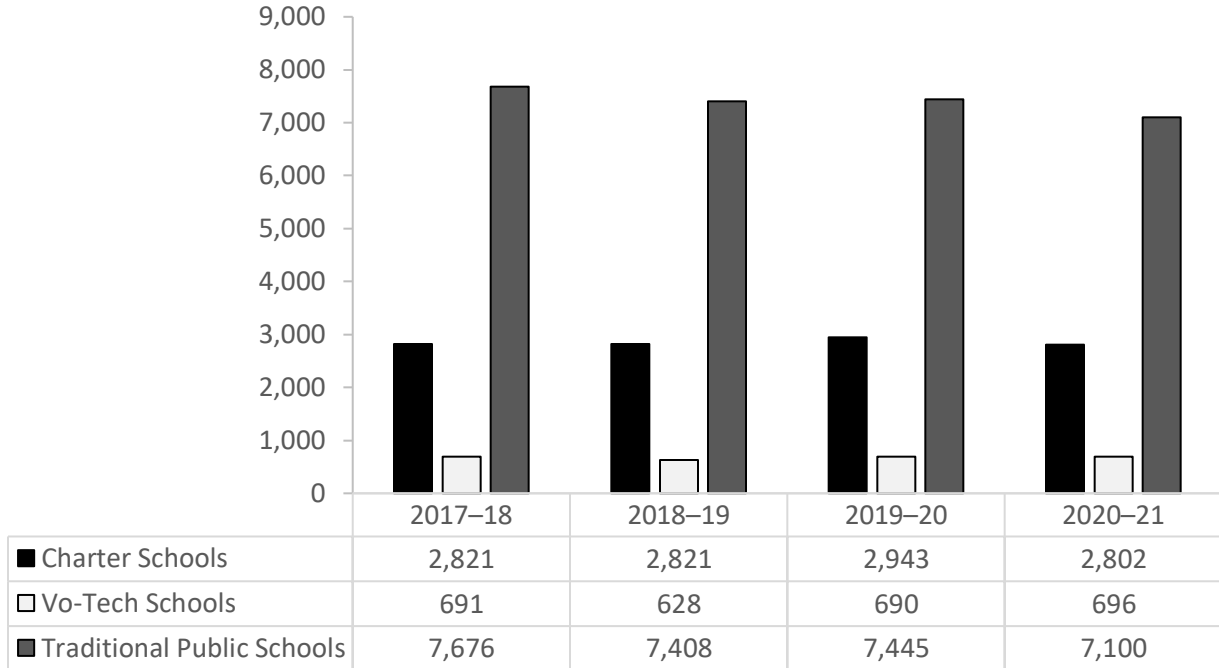
School Year	Pre-K Enrollment	K–8 Enrollment	9–12 Enrollment	Total Enrollment
2017–18	107	7,988	3,093	11,188
2018–19	140	7,797	2,916	10,853
2019–20	177	7,753	3,148	11,078
2020–21	125	7,400	3,073	10,598

Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Wilmington Student Enrollment

This section addresses Wilmington student enrollment in Delaware schools. Figure 1 demonstrates the enrollment of Wilmington students in Delaware public schools over the last four years, by school type.

Figure 1. Wilmington Student Enrollment by Public School Type, 2017–2021 School Years



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2021.

Of the 7,400 Wilmington students in grades K–8:

- 1,661 (22.4%) attend charter schools in Wilmington
- 682 (9.2%) attend charter schools outside of Wilmington
- 2,842 (38.4%) attend district schools in Wilmington
- 2,215 (29.9%) attend district schools outside Wilmington

Of the 3,073 Wilmington students in grades 9–12:

- 351 (11.4%) attend charter schools in Wilmington
- 108 (3.5%) attend charter schools outside of Wilmington
- 323 (10.5%) attend vocational technical (vo-tech) schools in Wilmington
- 373 (12.1%) attend vo-tech schools outside of Wilmington
- 66 (2.1%) attend district schools in Wilmington
- 1,852 (60.3%) attend district schools outside Wilmington

Table 3. Wilmington Student Enrollment in Public Schools, 2020–21 School Year

	2020–2021	Percent of Total Student Population
Red Clay Consolidated School District	3,412	20.6%
Christina School District	1,565	18.8%
Brandywine School District	1,953	11.9%
New Castle County (NCC) Vo-Tech School District	696	14.8%
Edison (Thomas A.) Charter School	557	79.5%
Kuumba Academy Charter School	472	73.3%
East Side Charter School	355	79.1%
Colonial School District	267	2.7%
Great Oaks Charters School	214	36.4%
Academia Antonia Alonso	223	67.3%
Odyssey Charter School	209	27.6%
Charter School of New Castle	210	10.9%
Freire Charter School Wilmington	190	37.9%
First State Montessori Academy	131	21.7%
Charter School of Wilmington	*	4.0%
Gateway Lab School	35	22.2%
Las Americas ASPIRA Academy	69	5.3%
Delaware Military Academy	*	3.7%
Early College High School at Delaware State University	21	< 1%
First State Military Academy	17	< 1%

Additionally, the following districts and charter schools serve between 1 and 15 Wilmington students: Appoquinimink School District, Capital School District, Newark Charter School, MOT Charter School, Milford School District, Smyrna School District, Positive Outcomes Charter School, and Woodbridge School District.

Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

* In this section, Charter School of Wilmington and Delaware Military Academy are reported as part of Red Clay Consolidated School District. Ninety-three Wilmington students were enrolled at Charter School of Wilmington, and 25 were enrolled at the Delaware Military Academy in the 2020–21 school year.

Table 4 below summarizes the public schools that are located within the City of Wilmington limits, regardless of their student population. Table 5 summarizes the percentage of each of these school’s total population that are from low-income families, aggregating Wilmington students and non-Wilmington students.

Table 4. Public Schools within the City of Wilmington, 2020–21 School Year

District Schools Located Within City of Wilmington Limits			
District	Elementary	Middle	High
Brandywine	Harlan Elementary School	P.S. DuPont Middle School	N/A
Christina	The Bancroft School The Bayard School Stubbs Early Education Center	The Bancroft School The Bayard School	N/A
Colonial	N/A	N/A	N/A
Red Clay Consolidated	Highlands Elementary School Lewis Dual Language Elementary School Shortlidge Academy Warner Elementary School	Cab Calloway School of the Arts*	Cab Calloway School of the Arts* Charter School of Wilmington**
NCC Vo-Tech	N/A	N/A	Howard High School of Technology

State-Authorized Charter Schools (Grade Levels Vary) within City of Wilmington Limits

- East Side Charter School (Pre-K–8)
- Edison Charter School (K–8)
- First State Montessori Academy (K–8)
- Freire Charter School Wilmington (8–12)
- Great Oaks Charter School (6–12)
- Kuumba Academy (K–8)

Source: Delaware Department of Education. (2021). School Profiles.

Notes: *Magnet school. ** Charter schools authorized by Red Clay Consolidated School District.

Table 5. Percentage of Low-Income Student Enrollment in Schools Located in the City of Wilmington, 2020–21

School Name	2020–21
The Bancroft School	77%
Warner Elementary School	70%
East Side Charter School	69%
Edison Charter School	68%
Stubbs Early Education Center	66%
The Bayard School	66%
Shortlidge Academy	65%
Great Oaks Charter School	57%
Lewis Dual Language Elementary School	56%
Harlan Elementary School	55%
Kuumba Academy Charter School	55%
Highlands Elementary School	55%
Howard High School of Technology	42%
Freire Charter School Wilmington	39%
P.S. duPont Middle School	32%
First State Montessori Academy	12%
Cab Calloway School of the Arts	9%
Charter School of Wilmington	5%

Source: Delaware Report Card, 2021

Section II: Student Proficiency

The most widely used measure of academic, teaching, and learning success is student performance on state standardized tests. Delaware changed its standardized testing protocol in 2015 from the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) for all subjects to the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC, or Smarter Balanced Assessment) for ELA and math tests. The 2020–21 school year was the sixth year for the use of the Smarter Balanced Assessment. The 2015 SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8 and 11. As of 2016, SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8 and the SAT replaced SBAC to alleviate over-testing.

The SAT measures the skills and knowledge important for success in college and career. It includes Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (ERW) and math sections. The ERW section is composed of a reading test and a writing and language test. The math section assesses skills in algebra, problem solving and data analysis, manipulation of complex equations, geometry, and trigonometry.

On the SAT, students receive a total score that is the sum of their scores on the two sections (math and ERW). The optional SAT essay is scored separately. Each section receives a scaled score of 200 to 800, to adjust for slight differences in difficulty among versions of the test, which is consistent across different versions. Using the College Board’s benchmarks for the ERW and math section, DDOE established achievement Levels 1 to 4, with one being the lowest score, to report student performance on the ERW and math sections of the SAT in conjunction with the assessment scores. The following sections use the college and career benchmarks and achievement levels established by DDOE to examine student performance on the SAT.

The following subsections seek to provide comparative analysis of student performance data between students living in the City of Wilmington and those not living in Wilmington. It includes performance data by the following sub-groups: City of Wilmington students, non-Wilmington students, students attending schools in each county, English Learners, students with disabilities, and students from low-income families.

To stay consistent with DDOE reporting, the authors of this report followed the data privacy and redaction rules used by DDOE.² In some cases, the authors erred on the side of caution to protect student privacy. In these cases, “Well Below” and “Below” were merged into the combined category “Below the Standard” and “At” and “Above” were merged into the combined category “Meets the Standard.” When it was not possible to merge the data, the subgroup was redacted for student privacy.

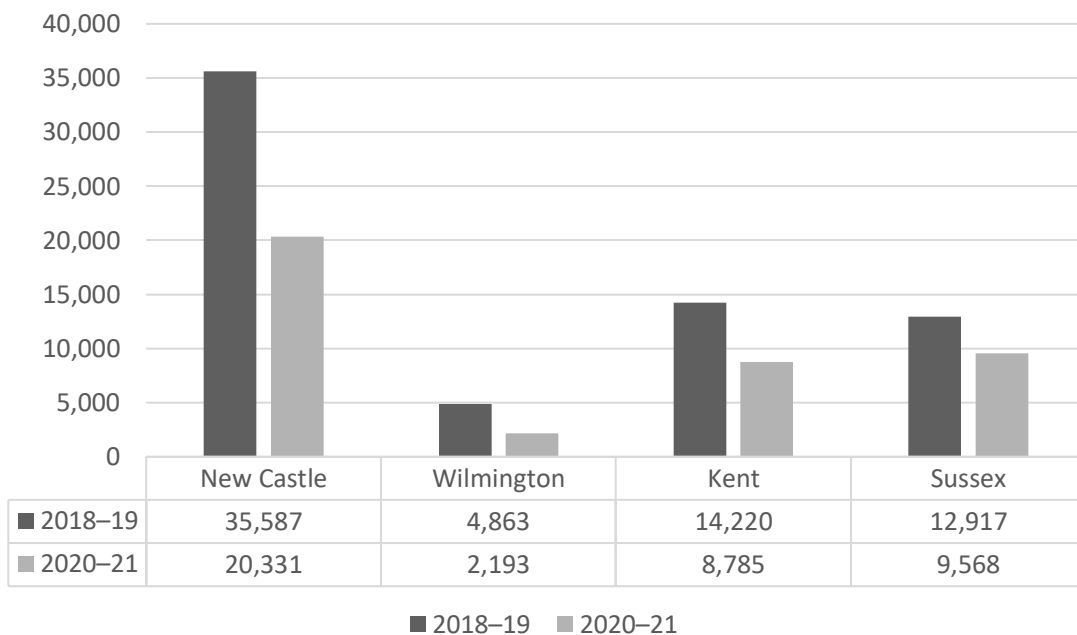
² <https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/3024>

COVID-19 Impact on Test Participation

Due to the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, state testing was not administered in the 2019–20 school year. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) were required to administer the SBAC and SAT for the 2020–21 school year. Fewer students participated in the testing for a variety of reasons during the pandemic than in a typical year. For example, 38 percent fewer students statewide and 55 percent fewer Wilmington students took the SBAC ELA in 2021 than in 2019, despite only modest changes in enrollment. The percent change in the number of students tested for each subgroup is reported throughout this section.³

Further, participation rates varied by region, school district, or charter, and some of these disparities are examined below. Due to these differences in participation, the Delaware Department of Education cautions against comparing the 2021 data directly to previous year data.⁴ The data should be treated as an unweighted, non-representative snapshot of the students who participated in state testing.

Figure 2. SBAC ELA Participation by County, 2018–19 and 2020–21 School Years

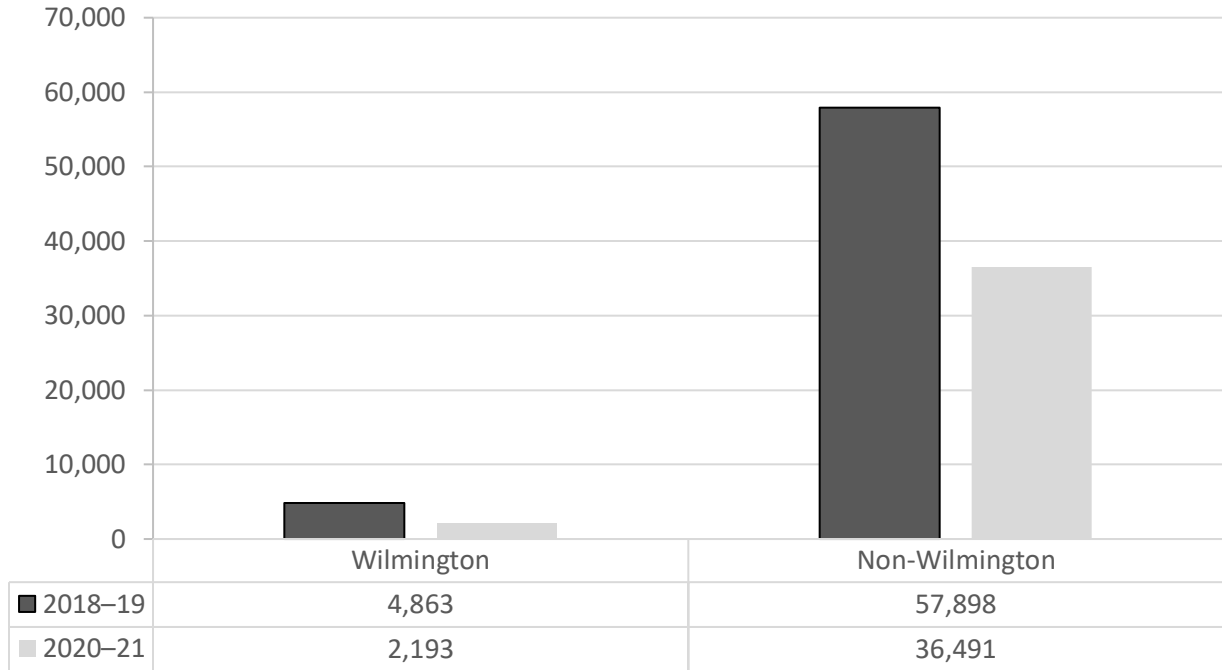


Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

³ Where test participation is compared between 2019 and 2021, the percent change is calculated as the difference in the number of students tested in each year, divided by the number of students tested in 2019. This method does not consider changes in student population, and so the actual change due to the pandemic for each analyzed group may be under or overstated depending on the student population change within that group.

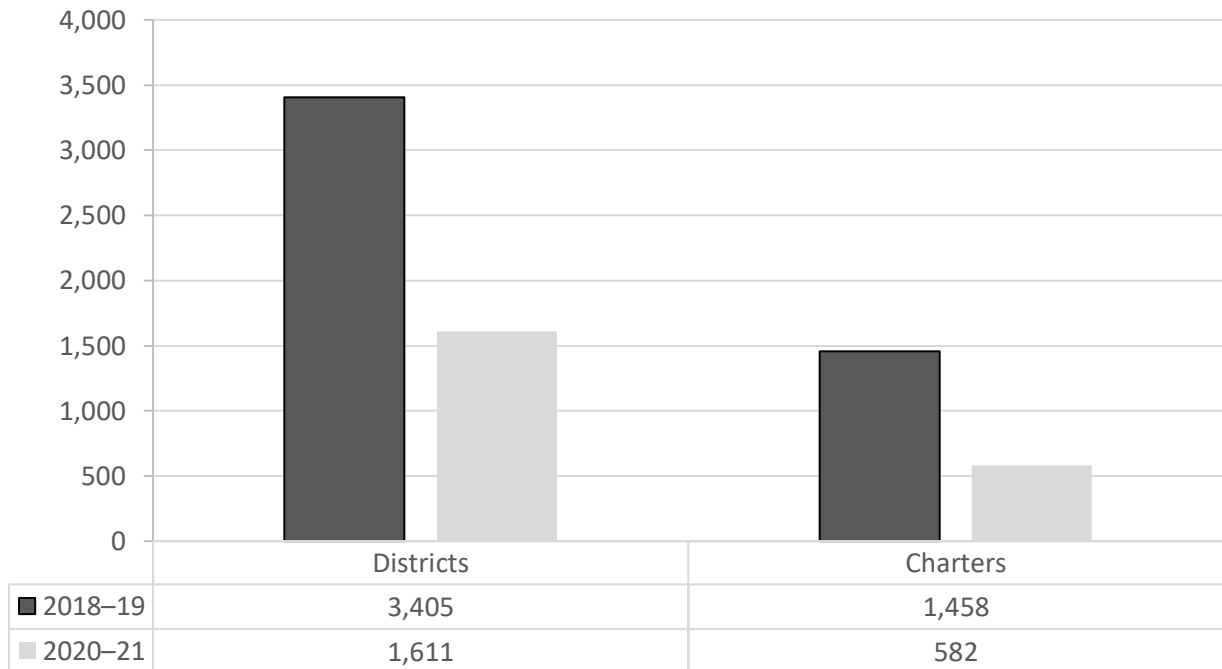
⁴ The Delaware Department of Education’s full guidance on use of the 2021 data is published online at the following address: <https://www.doe.k12.de.us/cms/lib/DE01922744/Centricity/Domain/111/DDOE%20FAQ%20Impact%20on%20Assessment%202021.pdf>

Figure 3. SBAC ELA Participation by Wilmington and Non-Wilmington Students, Statewide, 2018–19 and 2020–21 School Years



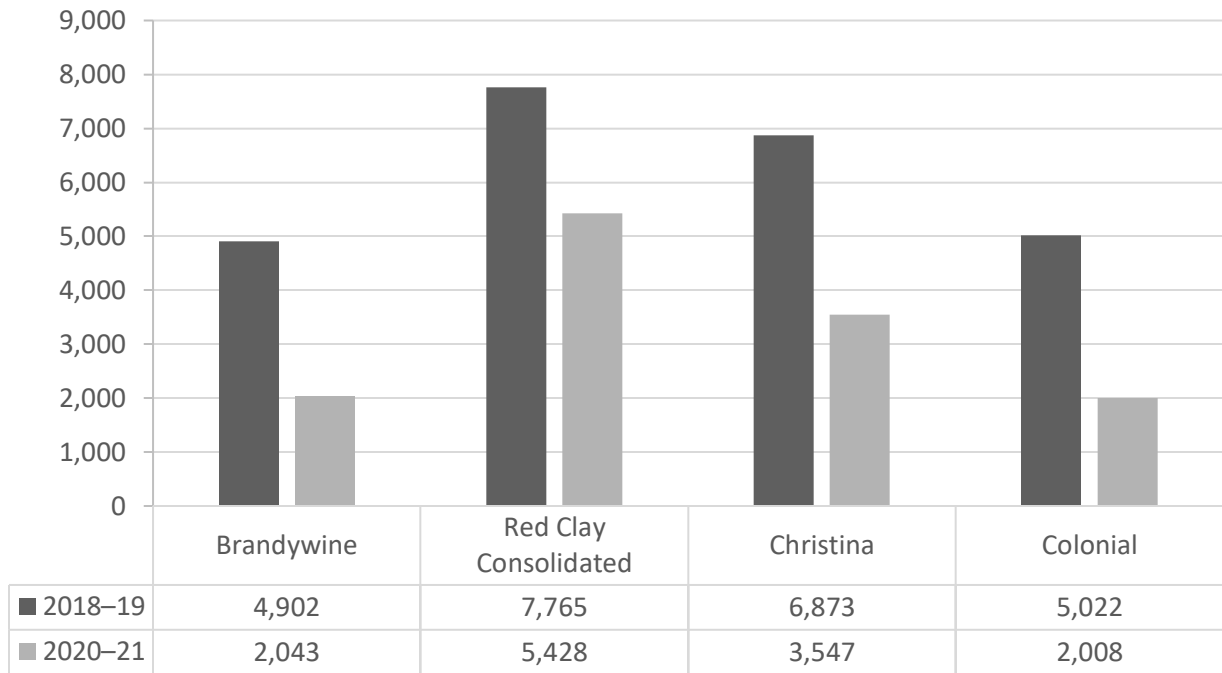
Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Figure 4. Wilmington Student SBAC ELA Participation by District or Charter, 2018–19 and 2020–21 School Years



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Figure 5. All Students SBAC ELA Participation, Districts Serving Wilmington, 2018–19 and 2020–21 School Years

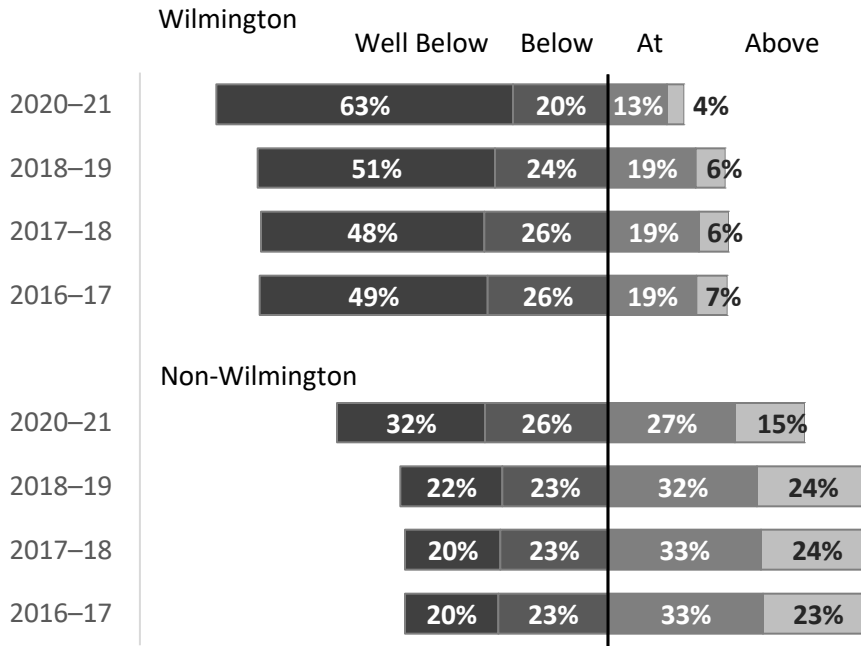


Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Student Proficiency in English Language Arts

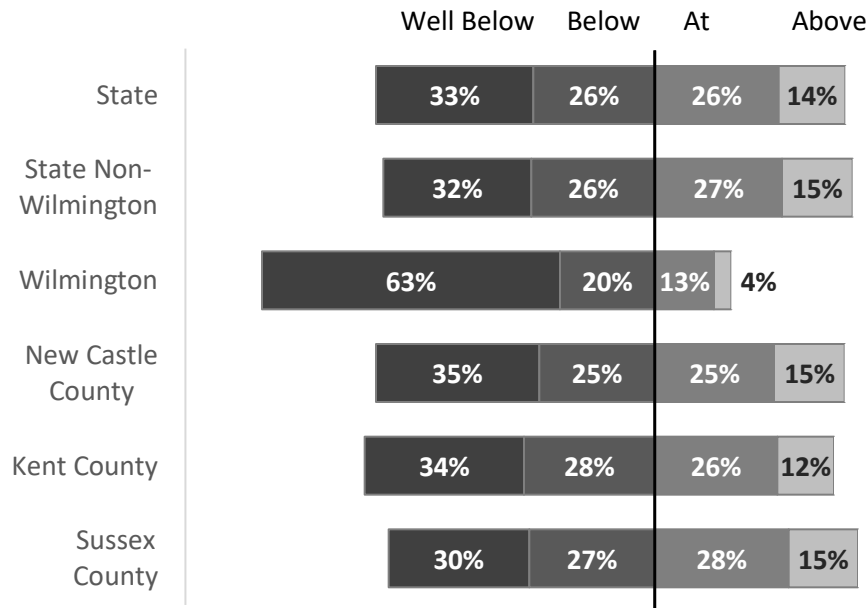
This section examines student proficiency in ELA for both SBAC and SAT by state, county, Wilmington students, and non-Wilmington Students. Figures 6 and 7 below compare proficiency of Wilmington students and non-Wilmington students on the SBAC in ELA across a five-year period, and in 2021 by county.

Figure 6. ELA Proficiency for Wilmington and Non-Wilmington Students on the SBAC, 2016–2021 School Years (Grade Levels Combined)



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Figure 7. ELA Proficiency for All Students by State, County, and Wilmington on the SBAC, 2020–21 School Year (Grade Levels Combined)



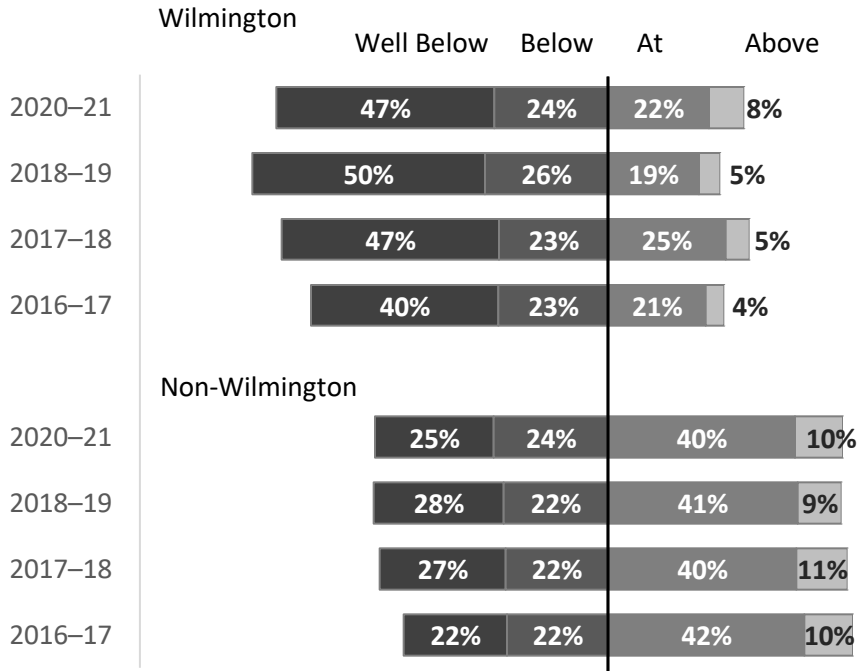
Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Summary of Student Proficiency in English Language Arts on the SBAC

- In 2021, participation of Wilmington students on the SBAC declined by 55 percent, compared to 37 percent for non-Wilmington students.
- Statewide, 41 percent of students met or exceeded state standards.
- Approximately 16 percent of Wilmington students met or exceeded state standards, compared to 42 percent of non-Wilmington students.
- By county, the number of students who met or exceeded state standards is within +/- 3 percentage points of the state average.

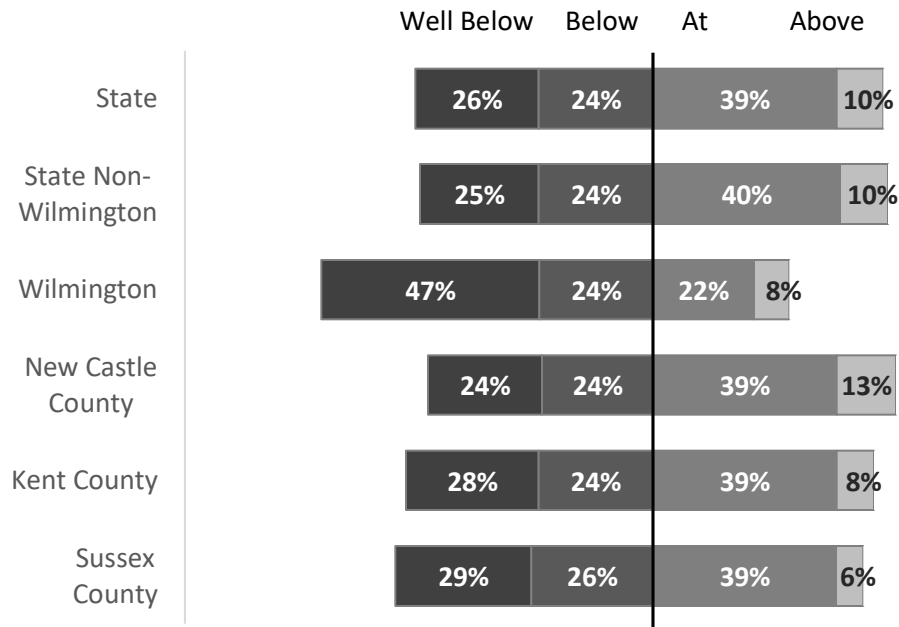
Figure 8 describes proficiency of Wilmington students and non-Wilmington students on the ERW section of the SAT across a five-year period. Figure 9 displays student ERW proficiency by state, county, and Wilmington on the SAT in the 2020–21 school year.

Figure 8. ERW Proficiency for Wilmington and Non-Wilmington Students on the SAT, 2016–2021 School Years



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Figure 9. ERW Proficiency for All Students by State, County, and Wilmington on the SAT, 2020–21 School Year



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

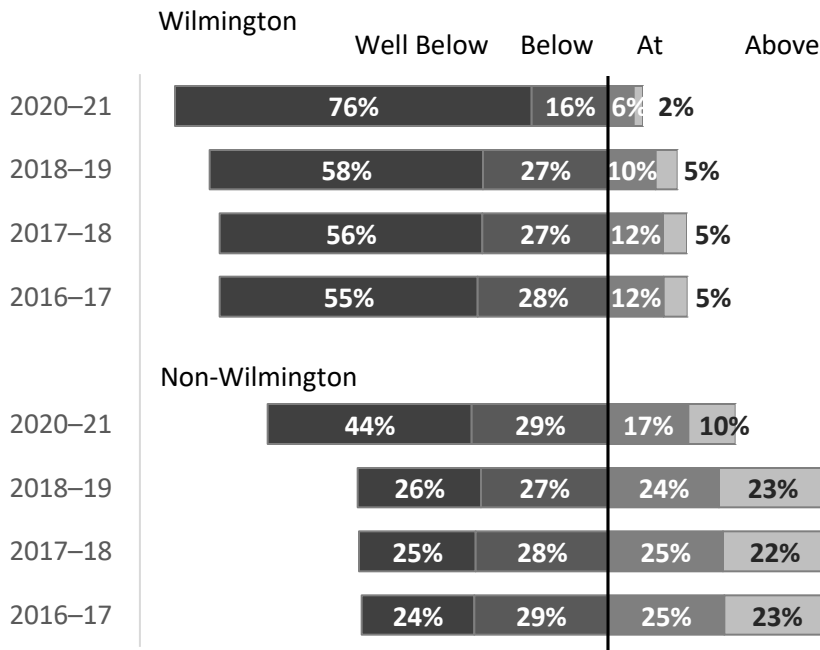
Summary of Student Proficiency in Evidence-Based Reading and Writing on the SAT

- In 2021, participation of Wilmington students on the SAT declined by 35 percent, compared to 17 percent for non-Wilmington students.
- Statewide, 49 percent of students met or exceeded state standards.
- Approximately 29 percent of Wilmington students met or exceeded state standards, compared to 50 percent of non-Wilmington students.
- By county, the number of students who met or exceeded state standards is within +/- 5 percentage points of the state average.

Student Proficiency in Math

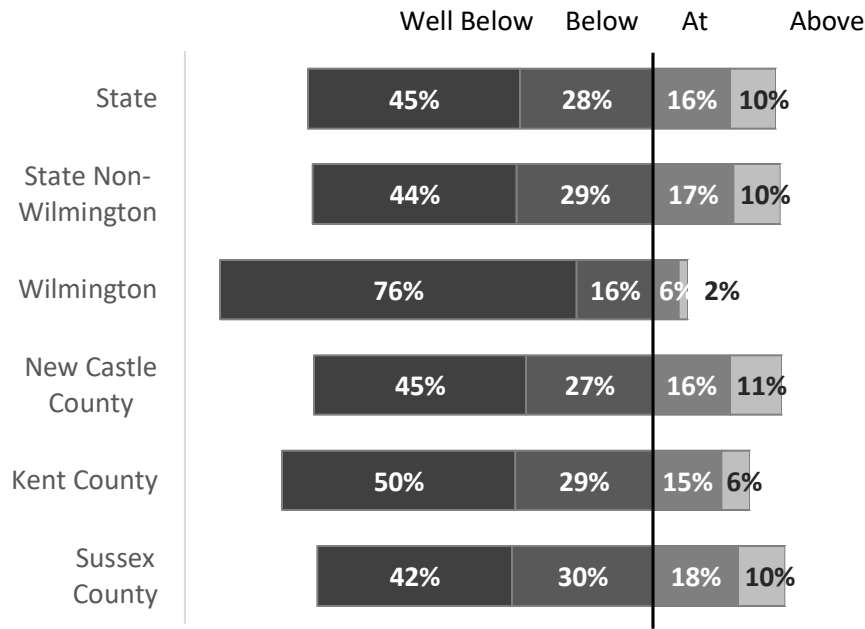
This section examines student proficiency in math for both SBAC and SAT by state, county, Wilmington students, and non-Wilmington Students. Where necessary to protect student privacy, student achievement is aggregated to “Meets the Standard” and “Does Not Meet the Standard.”

Figure 10. Math Proficiency for Wilmington and Non-Wilmington Students on the SBAC, 2016–2021 School Years (Grade Levels Combined)



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Figure 11. Math Proficiency for All Students by State, County, and Wilmington on the SBAC, 2020–21 School Year

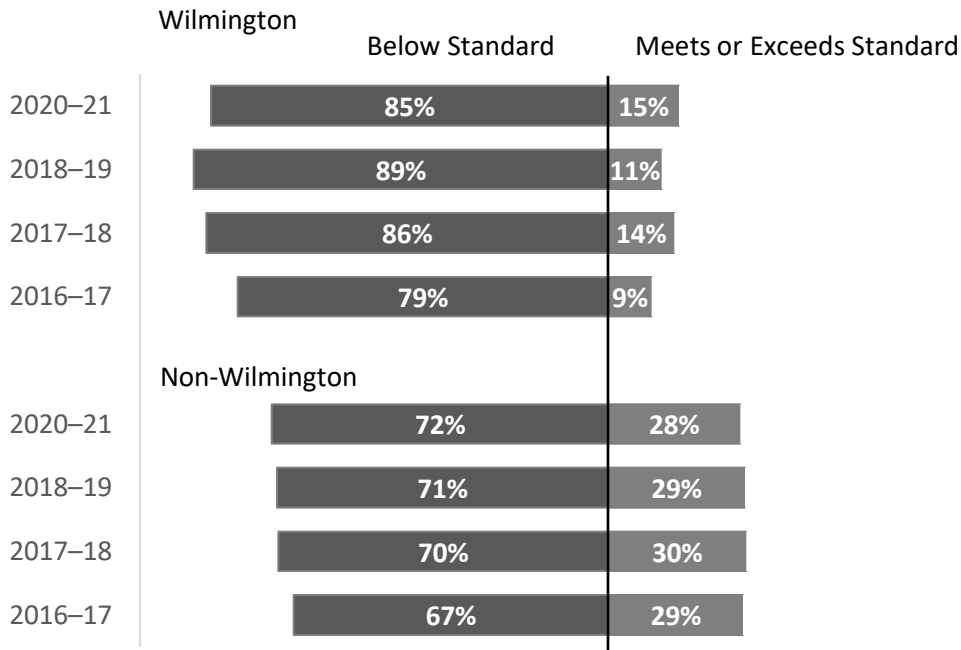


Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Summary of Student Proficiency in Math on the SBAC

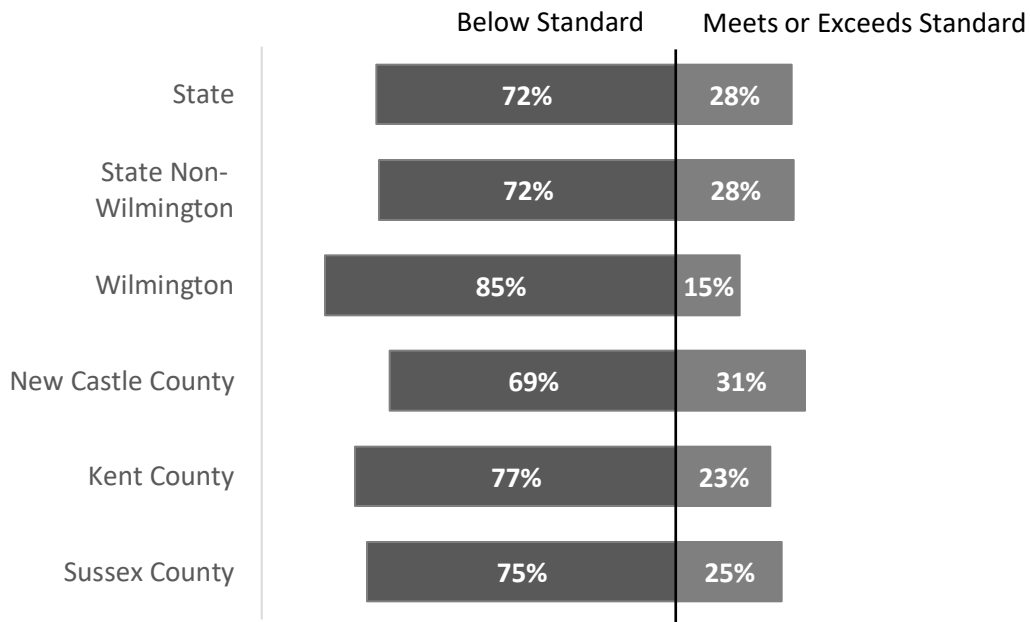
- In 2021, participation of Wilmington students on the SBAC declined by 56 percent, compared to 38 percent for non-Wilmington students.
- Statewide, 26 percent of students met or exceeded state standards.
- Approximately 8 percent of Wilmington students met or exceeded state standards, compared to 27 percent of non-Wilmington students.
- By county, the number of students who met or exceeded state standards is within +/- 6 percentage points of the state average.

Figure 12. Math Proficiency for Wilmington and Non-Wilmington Students on the SAT, 2016–2021 School Years



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Figure 13. Math Proficiency for All Students by State, Country, and Wilmington on the SAT, 2020–21 School Year



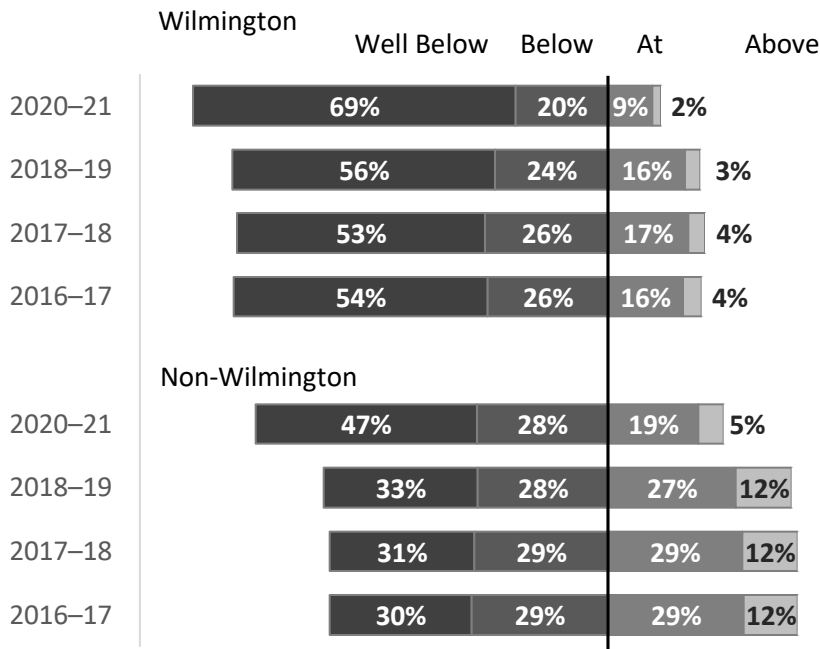
Summary of Student Proficiency in Math on the SAT

- In 2021, participation of Wilmington students on the SAT declined by 35 percent, compared to 17 percent for non-Wilmington students.
- Statewide, 28 percent of students met or exceeded state standards.
- Approximately 15 percent of Wilmington students met or exceeded state standards, compared to 28 percent of non-Wilmington students.
- By county, the number of students who met or exceeded state standards is within +/- 6 percentage points of the state average.

Students from Low-Income Families

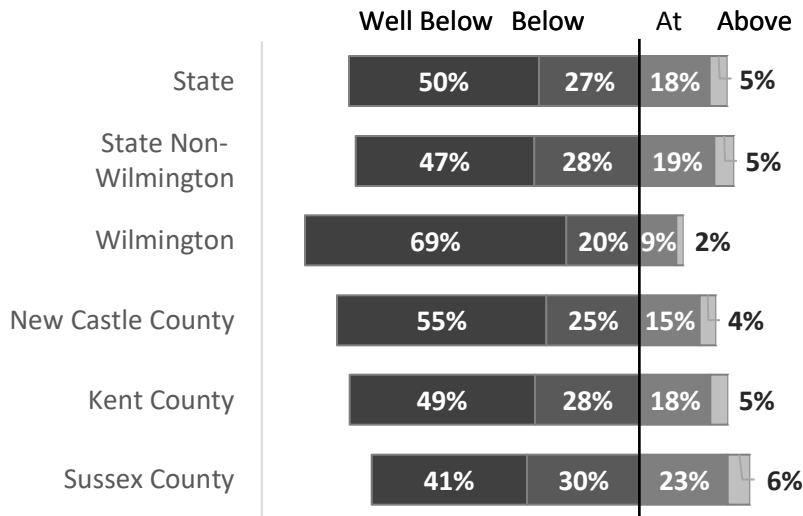
The following figures compare the proficiency of all students from low-income families and City of Wilmington students from low-income families on both the SBAC and SAT. Figures 14 and 15 discuss performance of students from low-income families on the SBAC in ELA. Due to participation differences caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the data should be treated as an unweighted, non-representative snapshot of the students who participated in state testing.

Figure 14. ELA Proficiency for Students from Low-Income Families on the SBAC, 2016–2021 School Years, Grade Levels Combined



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Figure 15. ELA Proficiency for Students from Low-Income Families on the SBAC, by State, County, and Wilmington, 2020–21 School Year



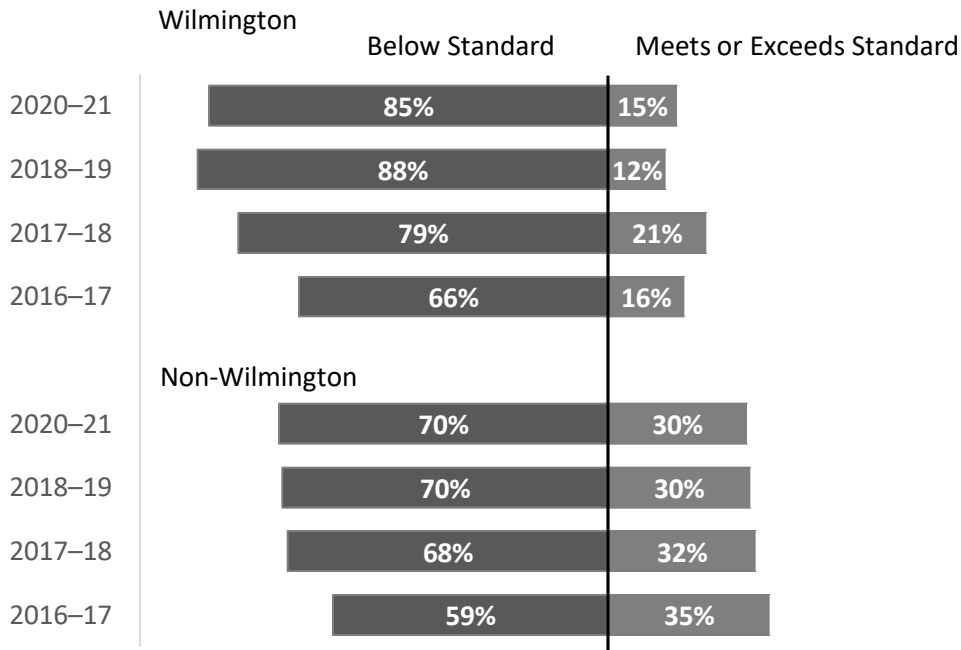
Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Summary of Student Proficiency in English Language Arts on the SBAC for Students from Low-Income Families

- In 2021, participation of students from low-income families on the SBAC declined statewide by 53 percent, compared to 38 percent for all students.
- In 2021, participation of Wilmington students from low-income families on the SBAC declined by 60 percent, compared to 55 percent for all Wilmington students.
- Statewide, 23 percent of students from low-income families met or exceeded state standards, compared to 41 percent of the statewide student population.
- Approximately 11 percent of Wilmington students from low-income families met or exceeded state standards, compared to 25 percent of non-Wilmington students from low-income families, and 16 percent of all Wilmington students.
- By county, the number of students from low-income families who met or exceeded state standards is within +/- 6 percentage points of the state average of students from low-income families.

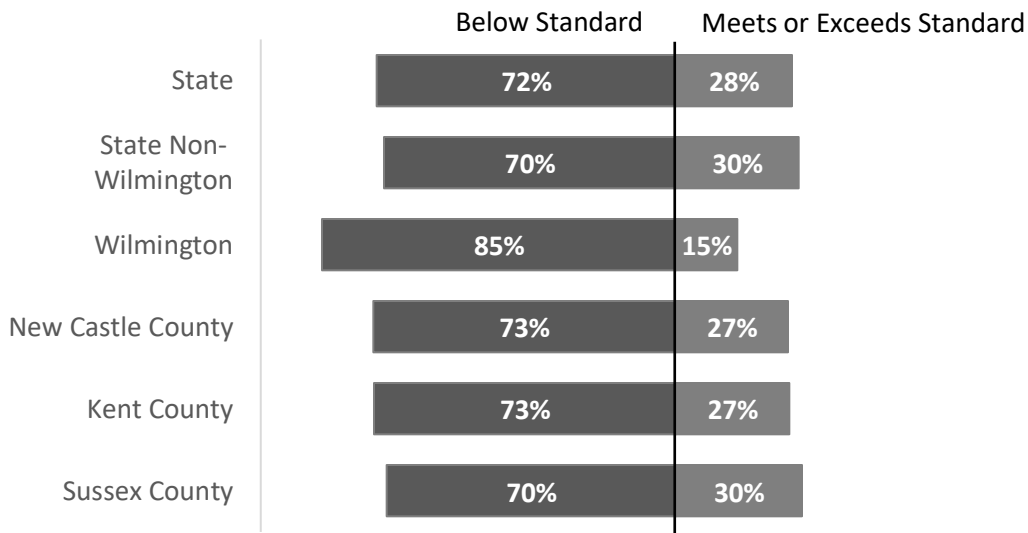
Figures 16 and 17 discuss performance of students from low-income families on the ERW section of the SAT. For student privacy, categories have been aggregated.

Figure 16. ERW Proficiency for Students from Low-Income Families on the SAT, 2016–2021 School Years



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Figure 17. ERW Proficiency for Students from Low-Income Families on the SAT, by State, County, and Wilmington, 2020–21 School Year



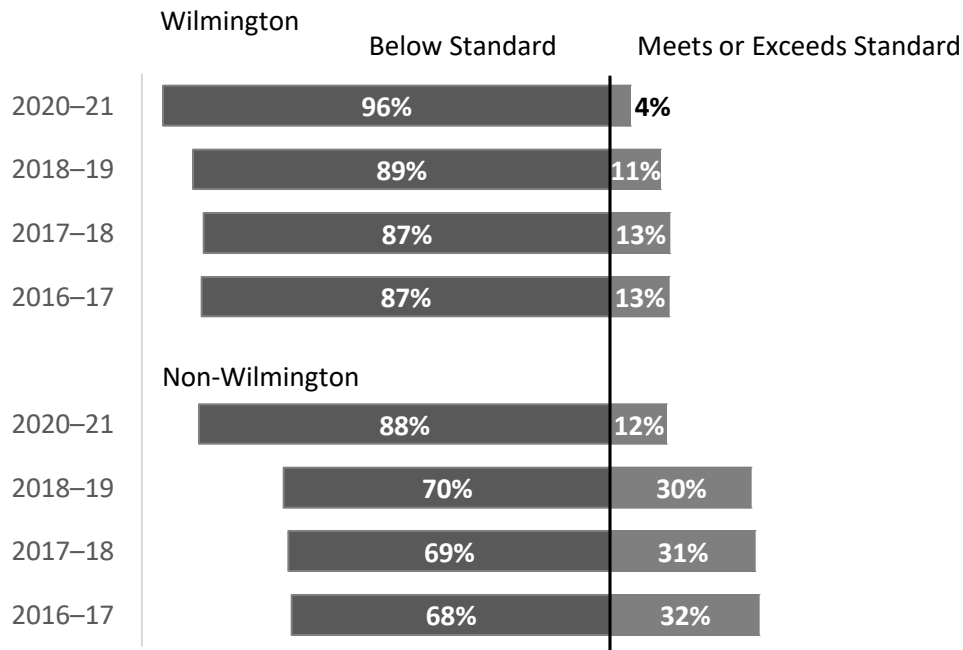
Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Summary of Student Proficiency in Evidence-Based Reading and Writing on the SAT for Students from Low-Income Families

- In 2021, participation of students from low-income families on the SAT declined statewide by 39 percent, compared to 18 percent for all students.
- In 2021, participation of Wilmington students from low-income families on the SAT declined by 42 percent, compared to 35 percent for all Wilmington students.
- Statewide, 28 percent of students from low-income families met or exceeded state standards, compared to 49 percent of the statewide student population.
- Approximately 15 percent of Wilmington students from low-income families met or exceeded state standards, compared to 30 percent of non-Wilmington students from low-income families, and 29 percent of all Wilmington students.
- By county, the number of students from low-income families who met or exceeded state standards is within +/- 3 percentage points of the state average of students from low-income families.

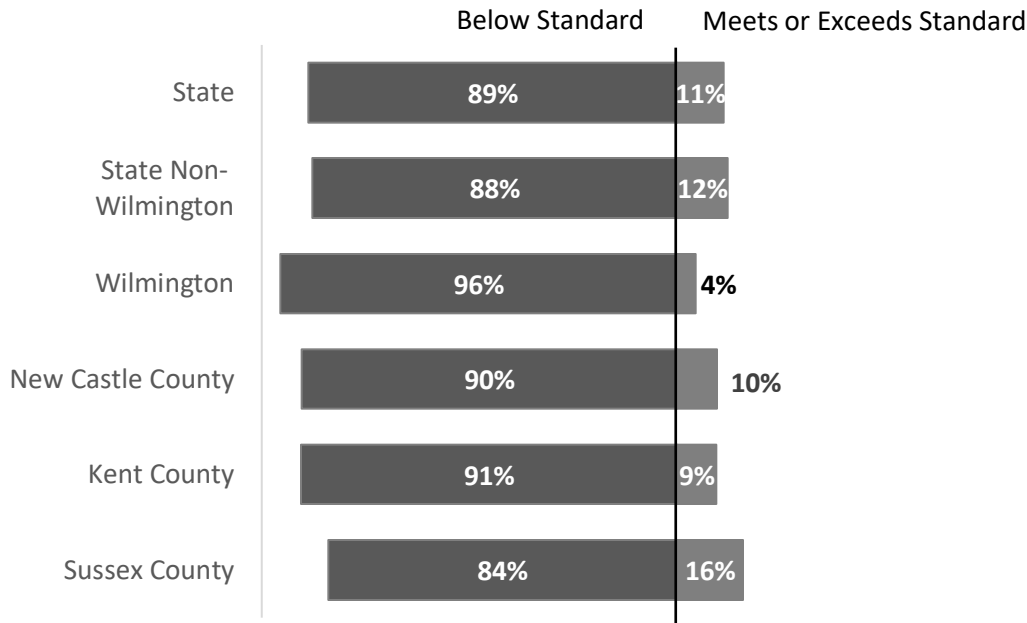
The following figures discuss achievement in math for Wilmington and non-Wilmington students from low-income families on the SBAC.

Figure 18. Math Proficiency for Students from Low-Income Families on the SBAC, Wilmington and Non-Wilmington Students, 2016–2021 School Years (Grade Levels Combined)



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Figure 19. Math Proficiency for Students from Low-Income Families on the SBAC, State, County, and Wilmington, 2020–21 School Year (Grade Levels Combined)



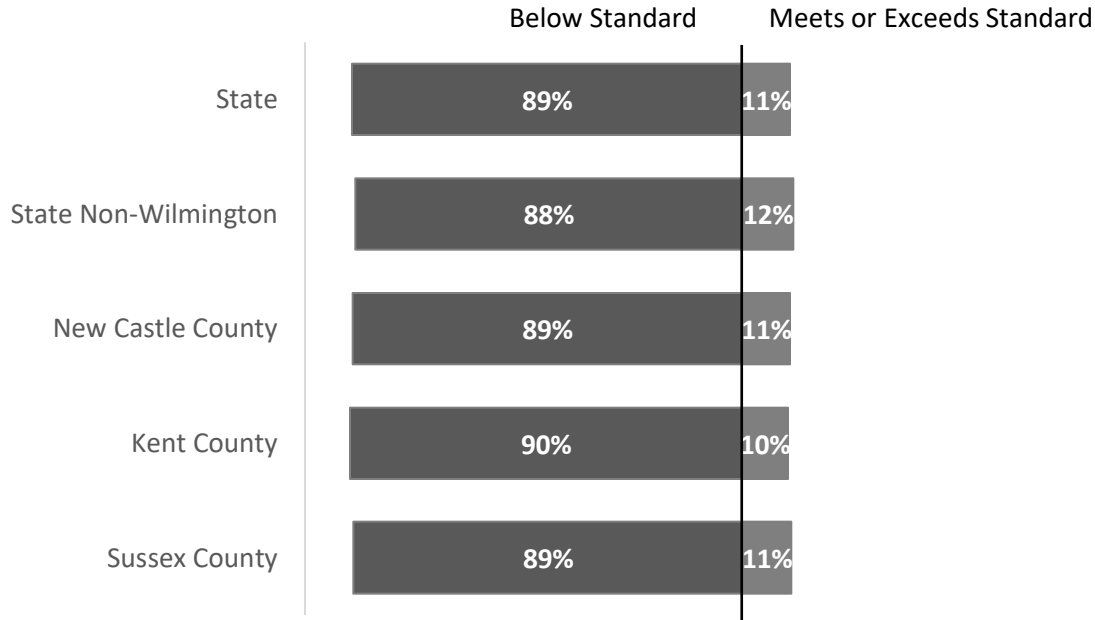
Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Summary of Student Proficiency in Math on the SBAC for Students from Low-Income Families

- In 2021, participation of students from low-income families on the SBAC declined statewide by 54 percent, compared to 39 percent for all students.
- In 2021, participation of Wilmington students from low-income families on the SBAC declined by 61 percent, compared to 56 percent for all Wilmington students.
- Statewide, 11 percent of students from low-income families met or exceeded state standards, compared to 26 percent of the statewide student population.
- Approximately 5 percent of Wilmington students from low-income families met or exceeded state standards, compared to 12 percent of non-Wilmington students from low-income families, and 8 percent of all Wilmington students.
- By county, the number of students from low-income families who met or exceeded state standards is within +/- 5 percentage points of the state average of students from low-income families.

The following figure shows the state, county, and non-Wilmington achievement on the math SAT. Wilmington numbers have been redacted for student privacy.

Figure 20. Math Proficiency for Low-Income Students by State, County, and Non-Wilmington on the SAT, 2020–21 School Year



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Summary of Student Proficiency in Math on the SAT for Students from Low-Income Families

- In 2021, participation of students from low-income families on the SAT declined statewide by 39 percent, compared to 18 percent for all students.
- In 2021, participation of Wilmington students from low-income families on the SAT declined by 42 percent, compared to 35 percent for all Wilmington students.
- Statewide, 11 percent of students from low-income families met or exceeded state standards, compared to 28 percent of the statewide student population.
- A majority of Wilmington students from low-income families did not meet the state standards on SAT Math and had a lower achievement rate than non-Wilmington students from low-income families.
- By county, the number of students from low-income families who met or exceeded state standards is within +/- 1 percentage points of the state average of students from low-income families.

Students with Disabilities

The following section discusses the proficiency of students with disabilities, encompassing students categorized as receiving special education services. The data compare proficiency of students with disabilities statewide and in each county with students with disabilities living in the City of Wilmington on both the SBAC and SAT. Due to participation differences caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the data should be treated as an unweighted, non-representative snapshot of the students who participated in state testing.

For this subgroup, student achievement is aggregated to “Meets the Standard” and “Does Not Meet the Standard” for SBAC. SAT Math results have been redacted. Additionally, all SAT results for Wilmington students have been redacted.

Summary of Student Proficiency in English Language Arts on the SBAC for Students with Disabilities

- In 2021, participation of students with disabilities on the SBAC declined statewide by 37 percent, compared to 38 percent for all students.
- In 2021, participation of Wilmington students with disabilities on the SBAC declined by 49 percent, compared to 55 percent for all Wilmington students.
- Statewide, 12 percent of students with disabilities met or exceeded state standards, compared to 41 percent of the statewide student population.
- Approximately 3 percent of Wilmington students with disabilities met or exceeded state standards, compared to 13 percent of non-Wilmington students with disabilities, and 16 percent of all Wilmington students.
- By county, the number of students with disabilities who met or exceeded state standards is within +/- 4 percentage points of the state average of students with disabilities.

Summary of Student Proficiency in Evidence-Based Reading and Writing on the SAT for Students with Disabilities

- In 2021, participation of students with disabilities on the SAT declined statewide by 33 percent, compared to 18 percent for all students.
- In 2021, participation of Wilmington students with disabilities on the SAT declined by 45 percent, compared to 35 percent for all Wilmington students.
- Statewide, 9 percent of students with disabilities met or exceeded state standards, compared to 49 percent of the statewide student population.
- A majority of Wilmington students with disabilities did not meet the state standards on SAT ERW and had a lower achievement rate than non-Wilmington students with disabilities.
- Approximately 9 percent of non-Wilmington students with disabilities met or exceeded state standards.

- By county, the number of students with disabilities who met or exceeded state standards is within +/- 2 percentage points of the state average of students with disabilities.

Summary of Student Proficiency in Math on the SBAC for Students with Disabilities

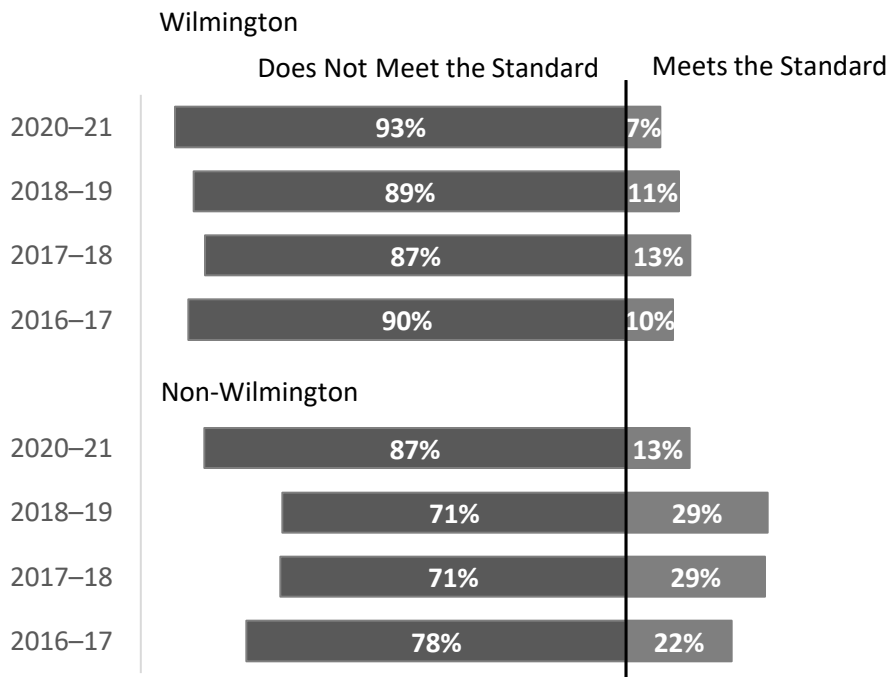
- In 2021, participation of students with disabilities on the SBAC declined statewide by 38 percent, compared to 39 percent for all students.
- In 2021, participation of Wilmington students with disabilities on the SBAC declined by 51 percent, compared to 56 percent for all Wilmington students.
- Statewide, 8 percent of students with disabilities met or exceeded state standards, compared to 26 percent of the statewide student population.
- A majority of Wilmington students with disabilities did not meet the state standards on SBAC Math and had a lower achievement rate than non-Wilmington students with disabilities.
- By county, the number of students with disabilities who met or exceeded state standards is within +/- 3 percentage points of the state average of students with disabilities.

English Learners

The following figures compare the proficiency of students categorized as English Learners (ELs) statewide and the proficiency of ELs who live in the City of Wilmington on the SBAC. The data include all students classified as ELs by the reporting schools in each academic year and do not include former EL students who have exited the program. Due to participation differences caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the data should be treated as an unweighted, non-representative snapshot of the students who participated in state testing.

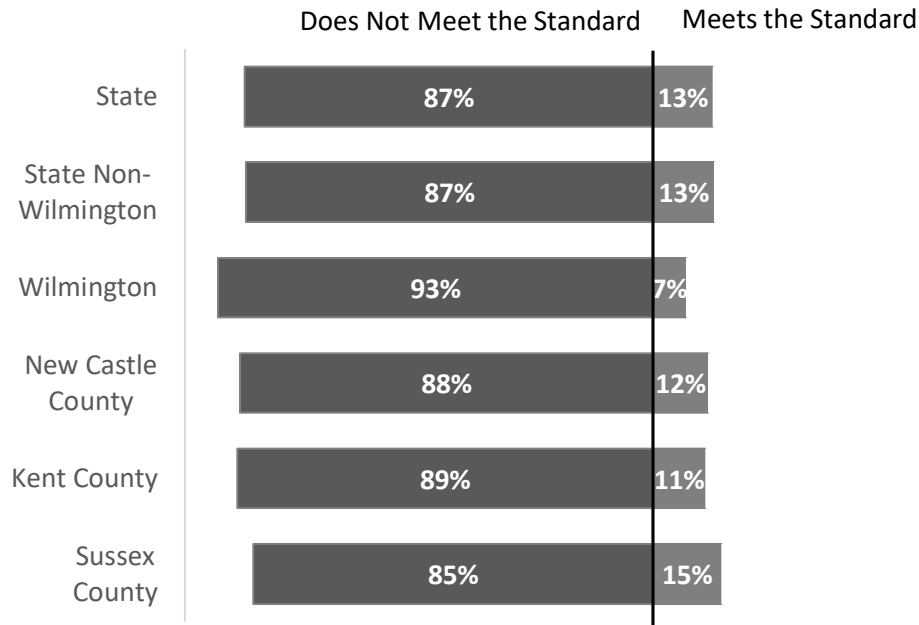
For this subgroup, student achievement is aggregated to “Meets the Standard” and “Does Not Meet the Standard” for SBAC. All SAT results have been redacted.

Figure 21. ELA Proficiency for English Learners, Wilmington and Non-Wilmington Students on the SBAC, 2016–2021 School Years (Grade Levels Combined)



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Figure 22. ELA Proficiency for English Learners by State, County, and Wilmington on the SBAC, 2020–21 School Year (Grade Levels Combined)



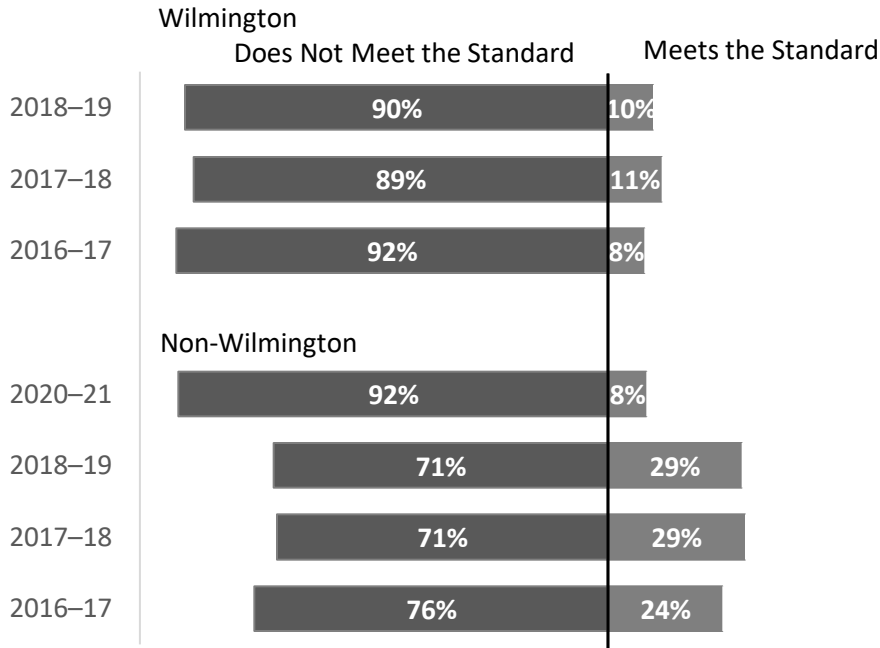
Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Summary of Student Proficiency in English Language Arts on the SBAC for English Learners

- In 2021, participation of English Learners on the SBAC declined statewide by 21 percent, compared to 38 percent for all students.
- In 2021, participation of Wilmington English Learners on the SBAC declined by 34 percent, compared to 55 percent for all Wilmington students.
- Statewide, 13 percent of English Learners met or exceeded state standards, compared to 41 percent of the statewide student population.
- Approximately 7 percent of Wilmington English Learners met or exceeded state standards, compared to 13 percent of non-Wilmington English Learners, and 16 percent of all Wilmington students.
- By county, the number of English Learner students who met or exceeded state standards is within +/- 6 percentage points of the state average of English Learners.

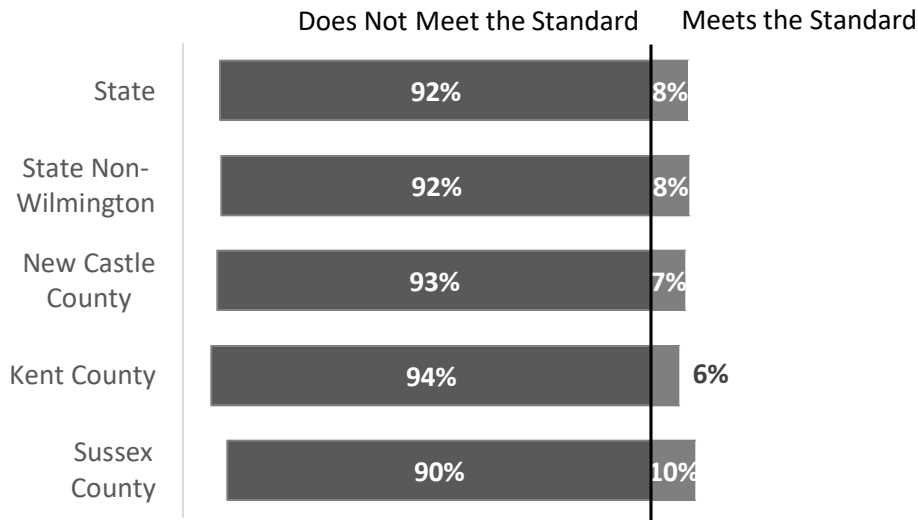
Figures 23 and 24 below discusses the performance of English Learners on the SBAC in math. Wilmington student proficiency data for the 2020–21 school year are redacted to protect student privacy.

Figure 23. Math Proficiency for English Learners on the SBAC, Wilmington and Non-Wilmington Students, 2016–21 School Years (Grade Levels Combined)



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Figure 24. Math Proficiency for English Learners on the SBAC by State, County, and Wilmington, 2020–21 School Year (Grade Levels Combined)



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Sets 2020 and 2021.

Summary of Student Proficiency in Math on the SBAC for English Learners

- In 2021, participation of English Learners on the SBAC declined statewide by 24 percent, compared to 39 percent for all students.
- In 2021, participation of Wilmington English Learners on the SBAC declined by 37 percent, compared to 56 percent for all Wilmington students.
- Statewide, 8 percent of English Learners met or exceeded state standards, compared to 26 percent of the statewide student population.
- Approximately 4 percent of Wilmington English Learners met or exceeded state standards, compared to 8 percent of non-Wilmington English Learners, and 8 percent of all Wilmington students.
- By county, the number of English Learners who met or exceeded state standards is within +/- 2 percentage points of the state average of English Learners.

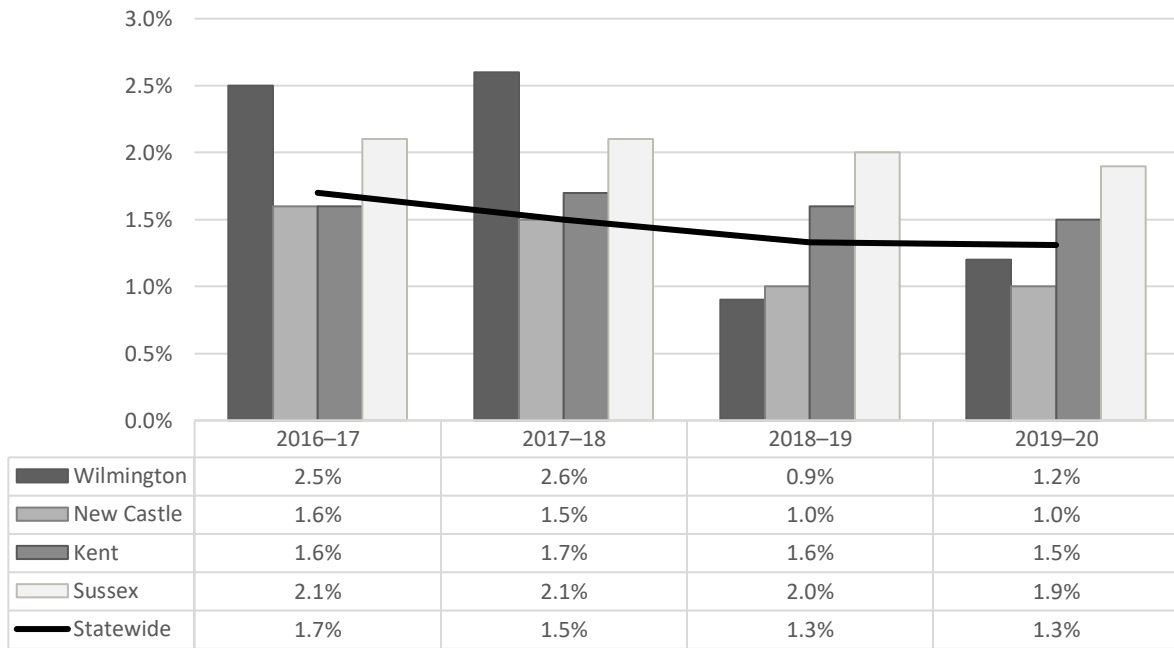
Section III: Dropout Data

Dropout rates are another indicator of student academic success in addition to test scores. In Delaware, students can decide to drop out of school at the age of 16 with permission from their parents or at the age of majority (age 18) should parental permission not be provided.

In the following analysis, dropout rates were calculated as the number of students in 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades of a given group or demographic that have opted to discontinue their formal education in a single school year divided by the total enrollment of students in 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades in the same group or demographic, which is consistent with the Delaware Department of Education’s calculation.⁵

In the following section, Figures 25 through 27, examine dropout rates of Wilmington students compared to state, county, and non-Wilmington students, and those of students from low-income families.

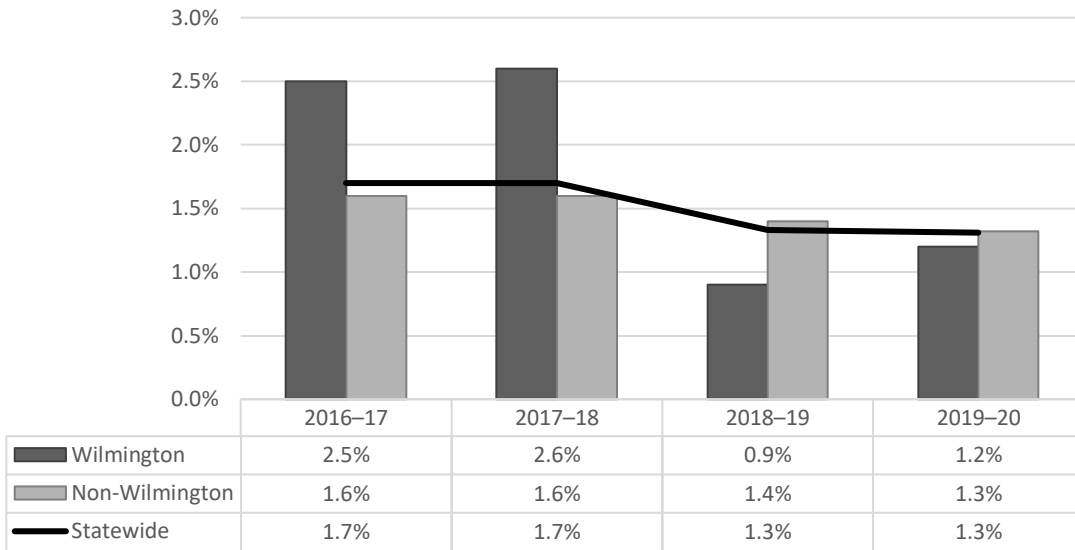
Figure 25. High School Dropout Rates, All Students Statewide and by County, 2016–2020



Source: Delaware Department of Education, 2020.

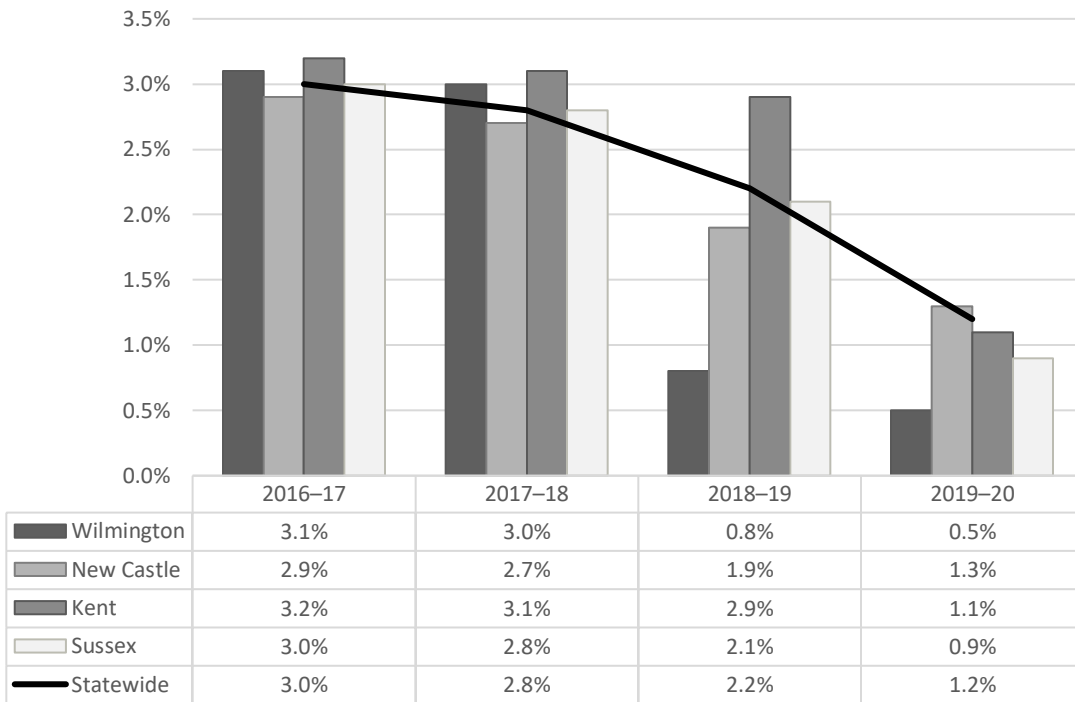
⁵ Delaware Department of Education. (June 2020). Delaware summary of 2019–2020 graduation and dropout data. Retrieved from: <https://www.doe.k12.de.us/cms/lib/DE01922744/Centricity/domain/167/graduation%20rates/FINALDropout%20Summary%20Report19-20.pdf>

Figure 26. High School Dropout Rates, Wilmington and Non-Wilmington Students, 2016–2020



Source: Delaware Department of Education, 2020.

Figure 27. High School Dropout Rates, Low-Income Students Statewide and by County, 2016–2020



Source: Delaware Department of Education, 2020.

Summary of High School Dropout Data

- Since peaking at 3.9 percent in the 2011–12 school year, the statewide dropout rate has been on a steady decline.⁶
- Encouragingly, the gap in dropout rates between Wilmington and non-Wilmington students has steadily closed.
- Dropout rates among Wilmington students from low-income families have declined dramatically since 2018.
- The switch to remote learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic may have a temporary impact on the dropout rate in either direction, but the full impact will likely not be seen for several more school years.

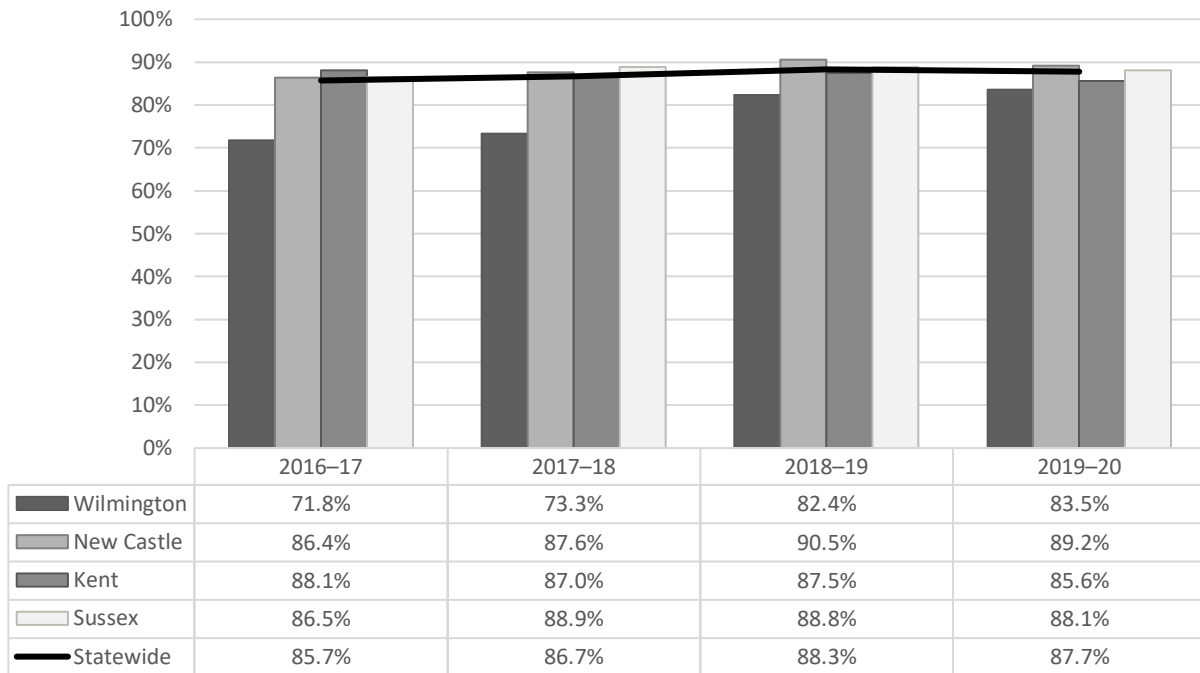
⁶ 2019–2020 Delaware Dropout Summary Report, Delaware Department of Education

Section IV: Graduation Data

Another indicator of student success is the rate of school completion among students within classes, or cohorts. Delaware uses the *four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate*, which measures the number and percentage of cohort members who earned a regular high school diploma within four years or less. Cohort, for the purposes of this report, is defined as the collective of students entering ninth grade expected to graduate after completing four years of academic coursework. Cohorts are referenced as being classes of a given year (e.g., “Class of 2020”). Graduation data are adjusted to include students who transferred and moved into a cohort and to exclude students that leave a cohort.

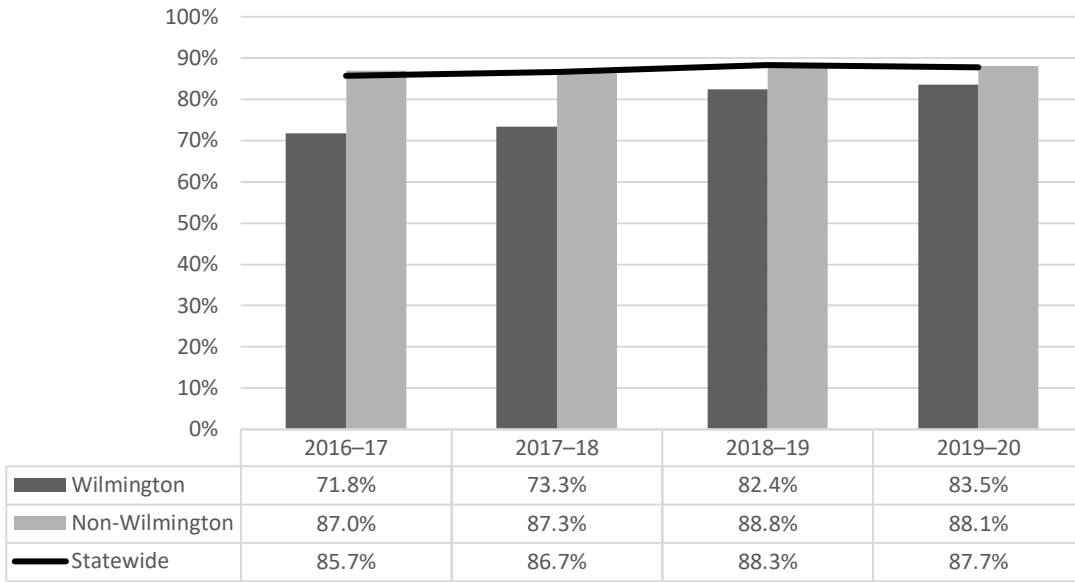
In this section, Figures 28 through 30 examine the graduation rates for Wilmington students, non-Wilmington students, and students from low-income families statewide.

Figure 28. High-School Graduation Rates, All Students Statewide and by County, 2016–2020



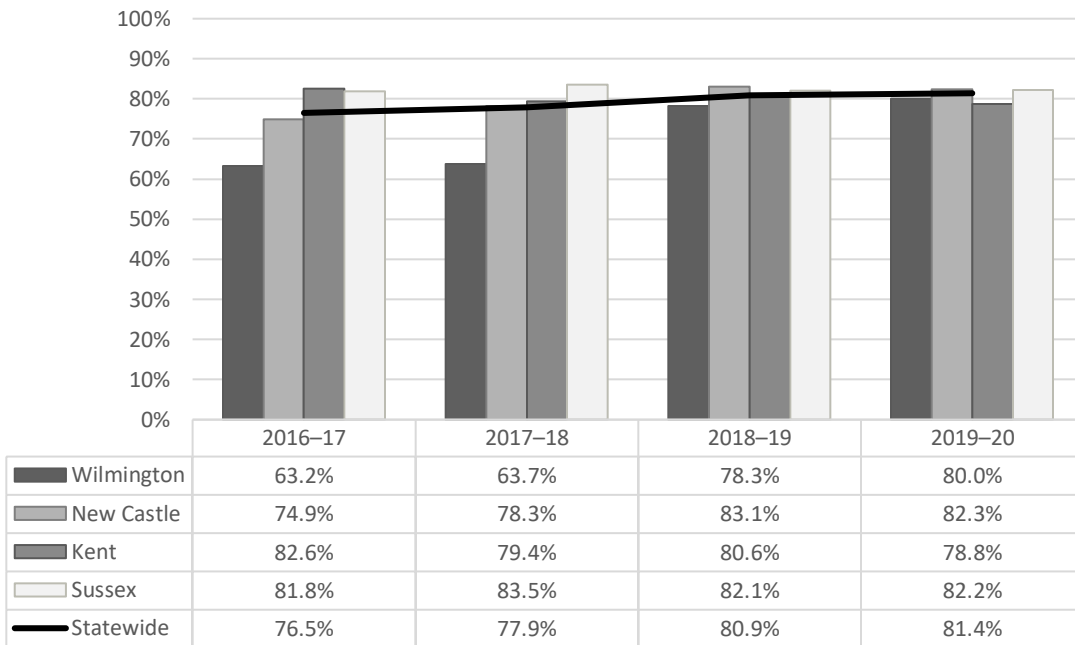
Source: Delaware Department of Education, 2020

Figure 29. High-School Graduation Rates, Wilmington and Non-Wilmington Students, 2016–2020



Source: Delaware Department of Education, 2020

Figure 30. High-School Graduation Rates, Low-Income Students Statewide and by County, 2016–2020



Source: Delaware Department of Education, 2020

Summary of High School Graduation Data

- Despite regressing by about half a percentage point in 2020, the statewide graduation rate has improved by 8 percentage points over the last 10 years, from 79.6 percent in 2012 to 87.7 percent in 2020.⁷
- For low-income students statewide, the graduation rate is improving. The rate increased from 76.5 percent in 2017 to 81.4 percent in 2020. Graduation rates among students from low-income families are lower than the statewide graduation rate.
- Over the last four years, graduation rates among Wilmington students have improved, and the gap between Wilmington students and non-Wilmington students has narrowed.
- The switch to remote learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic may have a temporary impact on the graduation rate in either direction, but the full impact will likely not be seen for several more school years.

⁷ 2014–2015 & 2019-20 Delaware Graduation Summary Reports, DE Dept. of Education

Section V: Conclusion and Key Findings

The disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on all of the state's students in terms of test participation and proficiency in 2020–21. The full impact of school closures and the measures taken to mitigate the educational impact of the pandemic remain to be seen. Overall, the inequities remain the same as previously reported: Wilmington students are behind their peers on virtually every indicator of student success, though gaps in dropout rates and graduation rates have closed significantly over the last four years.

- Approximately 16 percent of Wilmington students compared to 42 percent of non-Wilmington students met or exceeded state standards on the 2021 English Language Arts (ELA) Smarter Balanced Assessment.
- Approximately 8 percent of Wilmington students compared to 26 percent of non-Wilmington students met or exceeded state standards on the 2021 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment.
- Approximately 30 percent of Wilmington students, compared to 50 percent of non-Wilmington students met or exceeded college and career readiness benchmarks in Evidence-Based Reading and Writing on the SAT in 2021.
- Approximately 15 percent of Wilmington students, compared to 28 percent of non-Wilmington students met or exceeded college and career readiness benchmarks in math on the SAT in 2021. These figures represent a decrease from the previous years.
- In all subject areas, Wilmington students from low-income families, English Learners, and students with disabilities are generally not meeting state standards, and are underperforming compared to the general Wilmington student population.
- Gaps in graduation and dropout rates between Wilmington and non-Wilmington students have closed significantly since the 2016–17 school year.

The Consortium believes that these trends, for the most part, are the result of systemic governance, resource-allocation, and community collaboration problems within the public education system. The current system is inadequate to effectively address the unique educational and social-emotional needs of Wilmington students, many of whom live in severe poverty. While significant progress has been made to begin addressing these systemic problems, more work needs to be done to improve educational equity in Wilmington and throughout the state.



Institute for Public Administration

Biden School of Public Policy & Administration
University of Delaware

180 Graham Hall University of Delaware Newark, DE 19716-7380
phone: 302-831-8971 *email:* ipa@udel.edu *fax:* 302-831-3488

www.ipa.udel.edu

The University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration (IPA) addresses the policy, planning, and management needs of its partners through the integration of applied research, professional development, and the education of tomorrow's leaders.

The University of Delaware is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and Title IX institution.
For the University's complete non-discrimination statement, please visit <http://www.udel.edu/home/legal-notice/>