

SCASD Equity Report, 2022-23

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Margaret Bond, Elizabeth Wesdock, Erica Frankenberg, Ghadir Al Saghir, Katharine Dulaney, &
Kyle Horn-Green
Center for Education and Civil Rights



Overview

The Center for Education and Civil Rights at Penn State University formed a partnership with State College Area School District in the summer of 2020 with the intention of assisting the district with collecting and analyzing data, particularly to investigate equity opportunity gaps. This partnership is mutually beneficial, as we and other scholars within Penn State’s College of Education are committed to developing sustainable collaborations, particularly these sorts of research-practitioner partnerships.¹ Knowing that accurate data collection and analysis processes are integral for districts like SCASD to understand and effectively address inequities in their schools, this year’s reports offer district personnel a data and research basis for its equity work while also supporting transparency about educational inequality in the community.

Last year, we issued an initial report on equity, largely using publicly available data. Last year’s report included more background information about why the indicators mattered, and is a good introduction to the types of measures districts can and should analyze around equity. This year, we issue two reports, this report looking at demographics, graduation rates, gifted students, retention, and discipline.² A second report is focused on AP enrollment and student test-taking and performance.³ We appreciate SCASD for providing data to use for this analysis, and hope to continue this analysis to support SCASD and the community in assessing equity gaps and gains. We have additionally been in conversations with district officials about places in which we had questions about the data, and how data collection might be enhanced to further the district’s equity action plan.

As we noted last year, each of the district’s eight elementary schools, two middle schools, and singular high school are reflected in the data featured in this report. In most of the sections of this report, and all of the AP report, data for the Delta Program is only included when district-wide data is reported; we feature school-level data for Delta in this report only when it was provided (e.g., discipline data).

Demographics

¹ In its 2021-2025 strategic plan, PSU’s College of Education expresses its intent to pursue research that addresses social issues and to invest in outreach, dissemination, and partnerships that are mutual in nature. As scholars from the College of Education, we intend for our relationship with SCASD to be, as the strategic plan says, one in which we can “engage collaboratively ...to address pressing social issues, including poverty, essential literacies, racism, inclusion, mental health and well-being, and climate change, among others.” To read more about the College of Education’s strategic plan, please visit <https://ed.psu.edu/strategic-plan-2021-2025>. We appreciate the Office Education & Social Equity for providing support for the student authors of these reports.

² Due to limitations, we do not include analysis of special education in this year’s report. We hope to include it in future analyses.

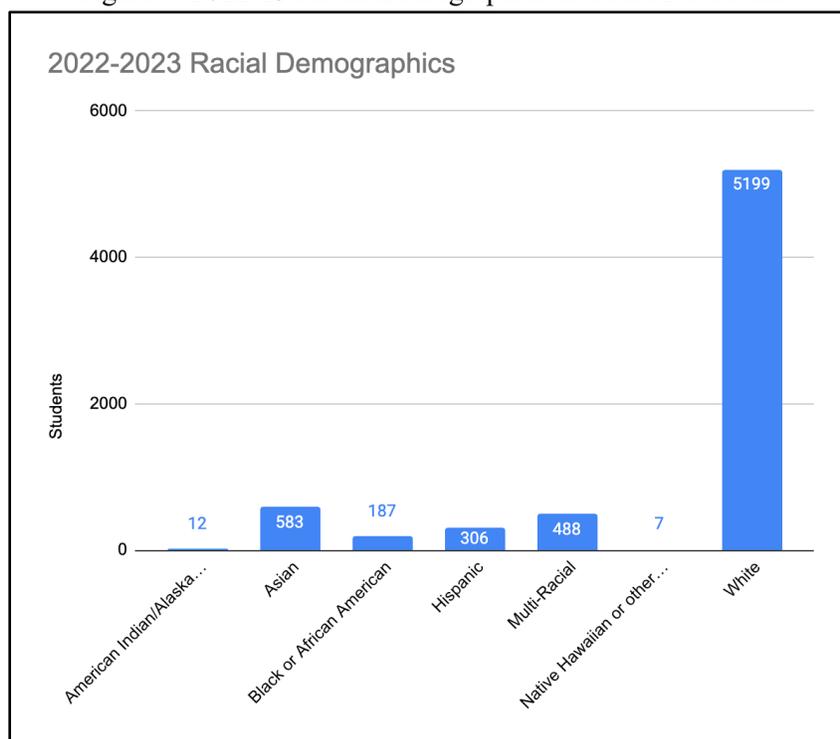
³ Thomas, M., Dulaney, K., Frankenberg, E., & Al Saghir, G. (2023). Equity Analysis of Advanced Placement in SCASD. University Park: Center for Education and Civil Rights.

We begin our analysis of equity in SCASD by examining the overall demographics of the student enrollment, how they have changed over time, and how they are distributed among schools in the district. Looking at trends among student demographic information over time will help us to understand how the district is changing, allowing us to better understand the resources that schools need. Additionally, overall demographic data creates a point of comparison for other student characteristics. This can help to determine if different groups of students are over- or under-represented in disciplinary outcomes, gifted identification, graduation and retention rates, and other indicators of students’ experiences at school.

Race/Ethnicity of Students and Staff

District-Level Demographics. SCASD has been and remains a predominantly white school district, with 76.7% of students (n=5,199) listed as White, but the student population has become more diverse over time (see figure 1).⁴ The largest group of students of color is Asian students, at 8.6% (n=583) of the total student population. Multiracial students are the next largest group of students of color at 7.2% (n=488), followed by Hispanic students at 4.5% (n=306), Black students at 2.8% (n=187), Native American students at 0.2% (n=12), and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander students at 0.1% (n=7).

Figure 1: 2022-23 Racial Demographics of SCASD students



Source: 2022-23 October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data

⁴For longer-term trends in racial demographic change dating back to 1989, see <https://www.urban.org/data-tools/explore-your-schools-changing-demographics>

Examining demographic changes among different racial groups (Figure 2) helps us to track trends in the racial composition of the school district. Hispanic students are the largest growing demographic over the last three years, with the Hispanic population increasing by 51 students from 2020-2021 to 2022-2023, and the white population has declined in recent years by a similar magnitude of 53 students.

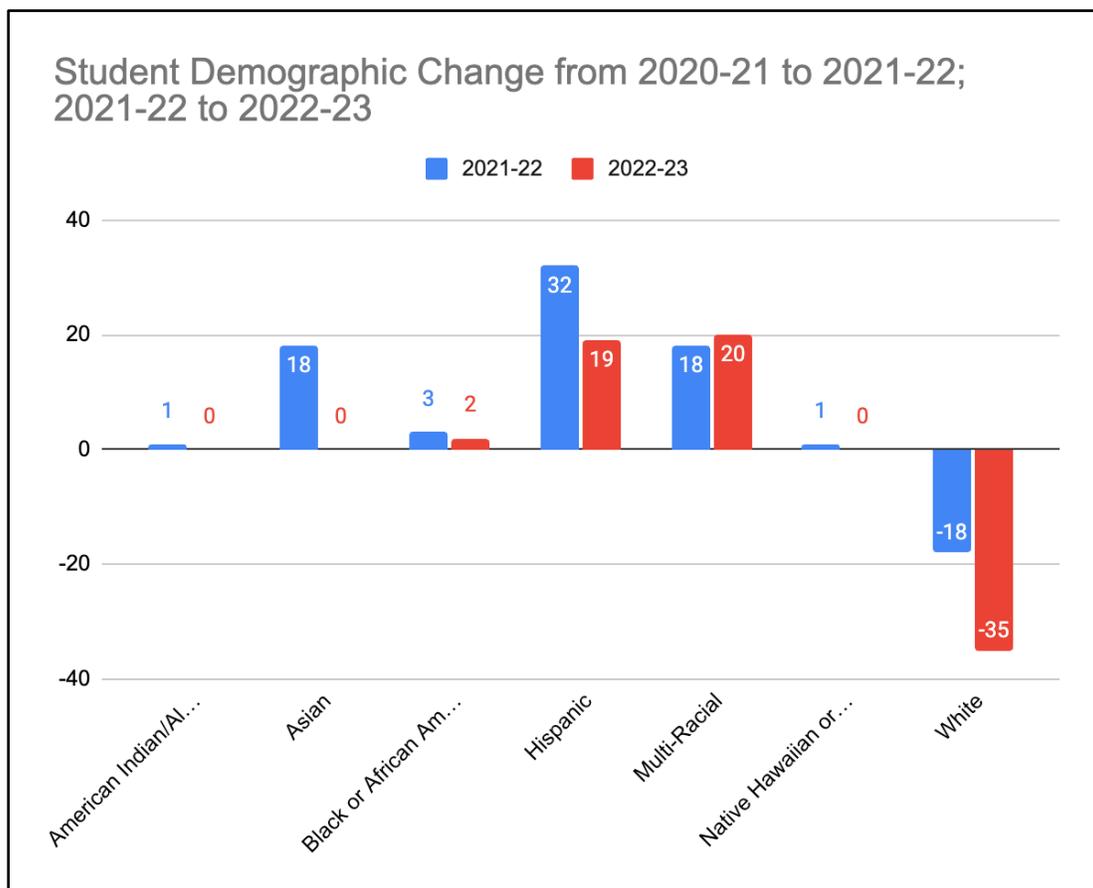


Figure 2: Student Demographic Change from 2020-21 to 2021-22, 2021-22 to 2022-23
 Source: 2022-23 October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data, 2021-22 October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data; Note: Each bar represents the change in enrollment for a given demographic compared to the year prior. That is, the blue bars represent change in the number of students for a given racial demographic from the 2020-21 to the 2021-22 school year, and the red bars represent the number of students changed in a given demographic for the 2021-22 to the 2022-23 school year.

The distribution⁵ of racial demographics among students, teachers, and administrators in the district is not proportional to one another. While White students make up a little over three quarters of the student population, White teachers make up 97% of the teachers and 89% of

⁵ The teacher and administrator demographic data to which we have access lags one year behind the student demographic data described here. Therefore, these might not be the most accurate and updated comparisons.

administrators in the district (see table 1). Some schools have more dramatic racial disproportionalities than others. Easterly Parkway has the highest proportion of Black students of any elementary school in the district with 23 students (7.3% of the school), but there is not a single Black teacher out of the 35 staff members who work at the school. According to the most recent staff demographic data, for the 2021-22 school year, there were two schools (Ferguson Elementary School and Gray’s Woods Elementary School) with exclusively White teachers, three schools (Corl Street Elementary School, Easterly Parkway Elementary School, Radio Park Elementary School, and Park Forest Middle School) with only one teacher of color, and two schools (Mount Nittany Elementary School and Park Forest Elementary School) with only two teachers of color. These data indicate that although the student population in the State College Area School District is growing more racially diverse, the teaching staff remains disproportionately White.

We do not believe these data are directly comparable to data analyzed in our initial equity report, namely the source of teacher diversity for last year’s report was data from Research for Action. As we reported last year, in 2019-20, the latest year, SCASD reported 527 teachers, and 9 were teachers of color. These 2021-22 data reflect higher numbers of teachers of color—which is encouraging—but also a much larger number of teachers overall, 624. This suggests that the categories analyzed via Research for Action data and those produced this year by SCASD may differ. We believe it is important to examine how these patterns change over time, and will seek to longitudinally analyze this data in future reports.

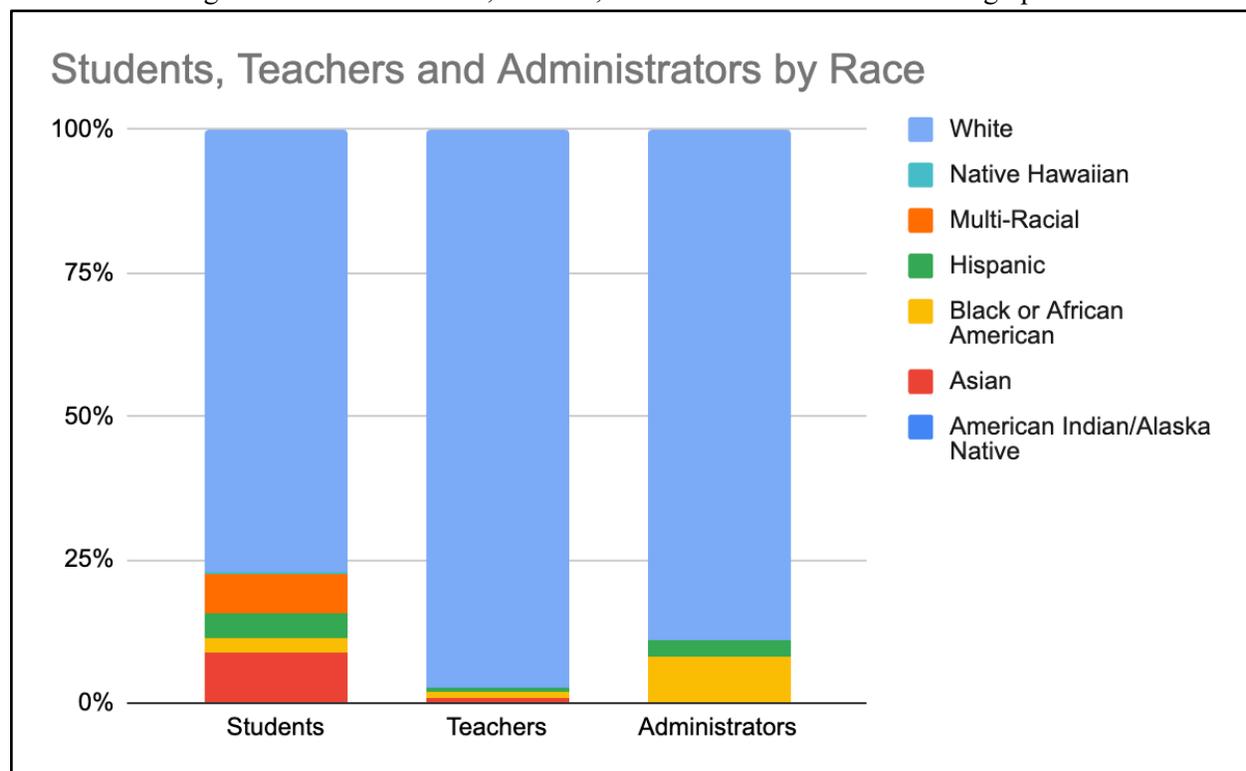
Table 1: 2021-22 Student, Teacher, and Administrator Racial Demographics

	Students	Teachers	Administrators
American Indian/Alaska Native	12 (0.2%)	0	0
Asian	583 (8.6%)	7 (1.1%)	0
Black or African American	185 (2.7%)	6 (0.9%)	3 (8.1%)
Hispanic	287 (4.2%)	5 (0.8%)	1 (2.7%)
Multi-Racial	468 (6.9%)	1 (0.2%)	0
Native Hawaiian	7 (0.1%)	0	0

White	5234 (77.2%)	645 (97.1%)	33 (89.2%)
Total	6776	664	37

Source: 2021-22 October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data; Staff Breakdown 2021-22

Figure 3: 2021-22 Student, Teacher, and Administrator Racial Demographics



Source: 2022-23 October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data, Staff Breakdown 2021-22

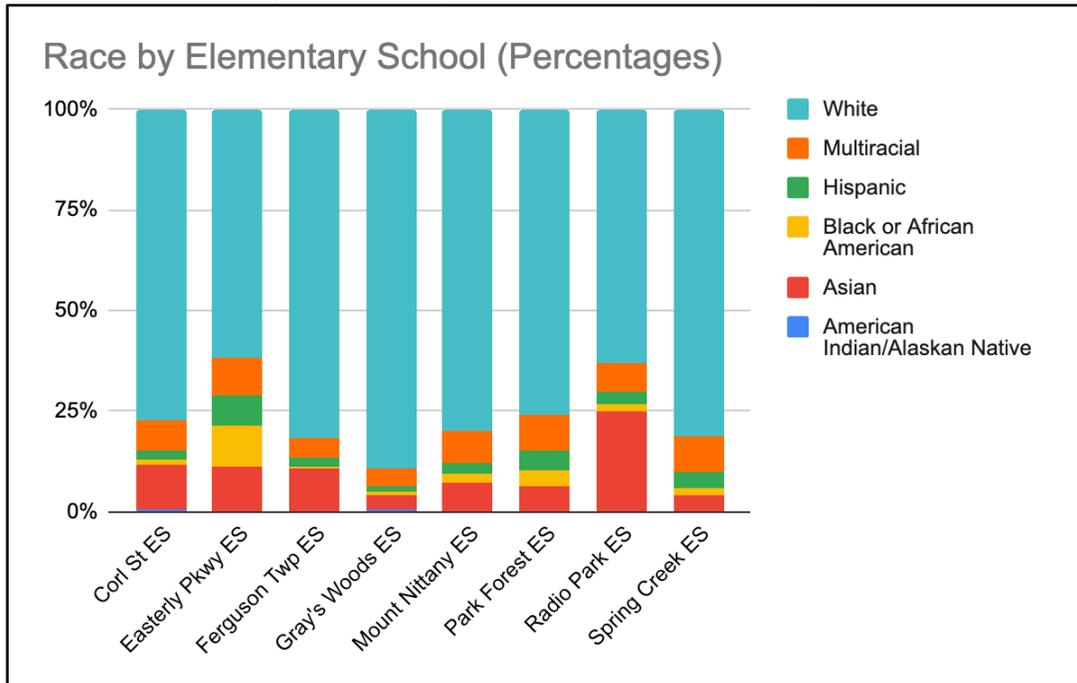
Note: Although it is difficult to see in this graph, Native Hawaiian and American Indian/Native American students make up 0.1% and 0.2% of students in the school district respectively (19 students combined).

School-Level Demographics and Change. The populations of students of different racial demographics are not distributed evenly among the various schools in the district. In particular, with eight elementary schools, the overall enrollment and racial composition of enrollment differs fairly substantially as seen in Figures 4 and 5.

Figure 4 indicates that there is a disproportionate distribution of students from different racial groups among the various elementary schools in SCASD. For example, there is a disproportionately higher concentration of Black students (9.8%, n=31) and Hispanic students (7.6%; n=24) at Easterly Parkway Elementary School, a disproportionately higher concentration of Asian students at Radio Park Elementary School (24.8%; n=98), and a disproportionately

higher concentration of White students at Gray’s Woods (89.4%, n=330). Figure 4 also shows that the highest proportion of Asian students (34.8%, n=98) is at Radio Park Elementary School, which has very few Black or Hispanic Students. The highest proportion of Black and Hispanic students (39.7%, n=31 and 23.1%, n=24, respectively) are at Easterly Parkway Elementary School.

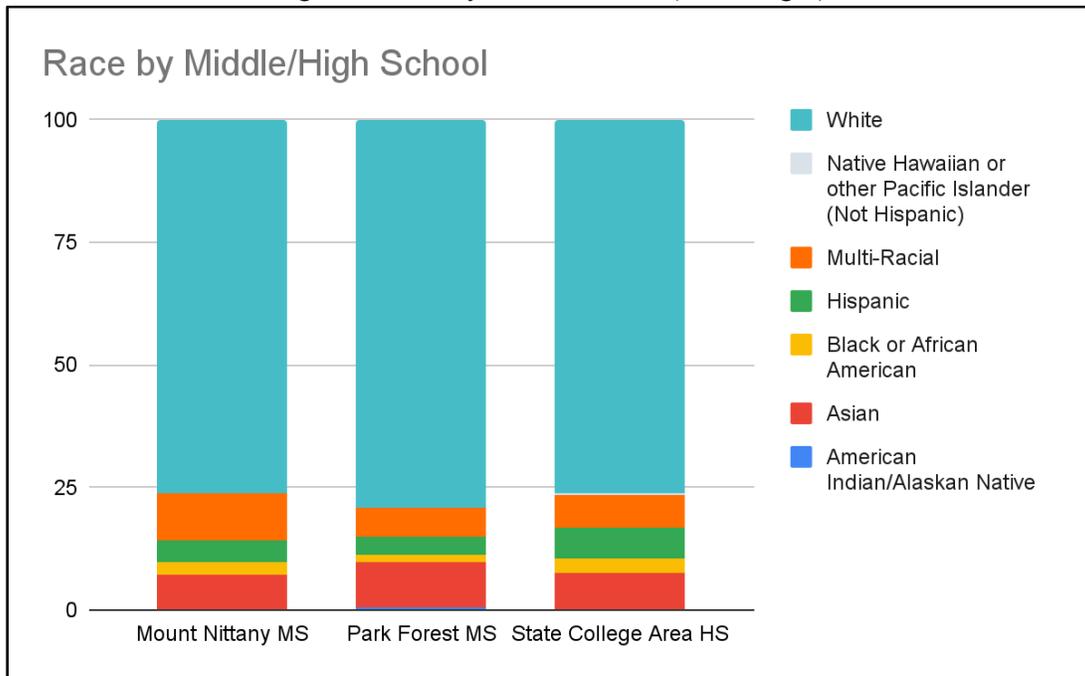
Figure 4: Race by Elementary School (Percentages)



Source: October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data 2022-23

Figure 5 represents the racial demographic proportions of the middle and high schools, which appear relatively comparable. Park Forest Middle School has a slightly higher proportion of white students (79.1%, n=645) and Asian students (9.2%, n=75), Mount Nittany Middle School has a higher proportion of Multiracial students (9.6%, n=67), and State College Area High School has a higher proportion of Hispanic students (5.9%, n=143) than the other secondary schools, but the disparities are not as dramatic as those that emerge between the elementary schools.

Figure 5: Race by Middle School (Percentages)

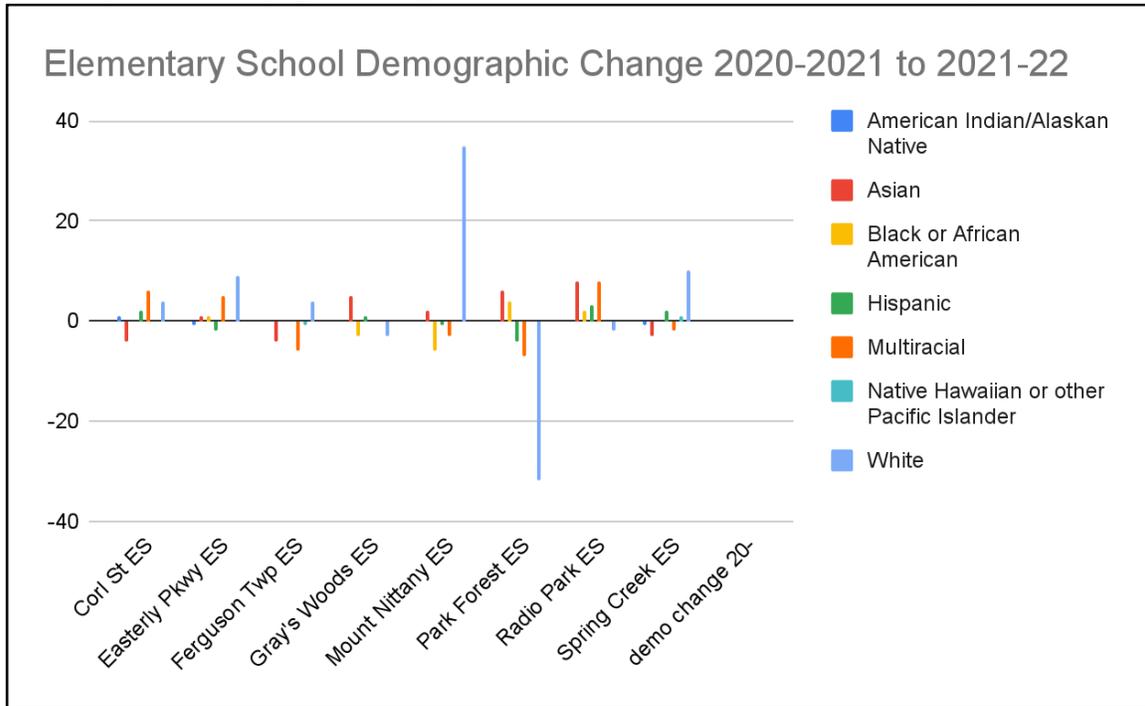


Source: October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data 2022-23

These trends indicate that each school has a different demographic makeup, which is important to note when determining whether students are represented in other categorizations (e.g., gifted, discipline) at proportionate rates corresponding to their overall representation within a school or the district. Additionally, these different proportions of students of different racial demographics are important to examine trends like students’ exposure to diversity among educators and their peers.

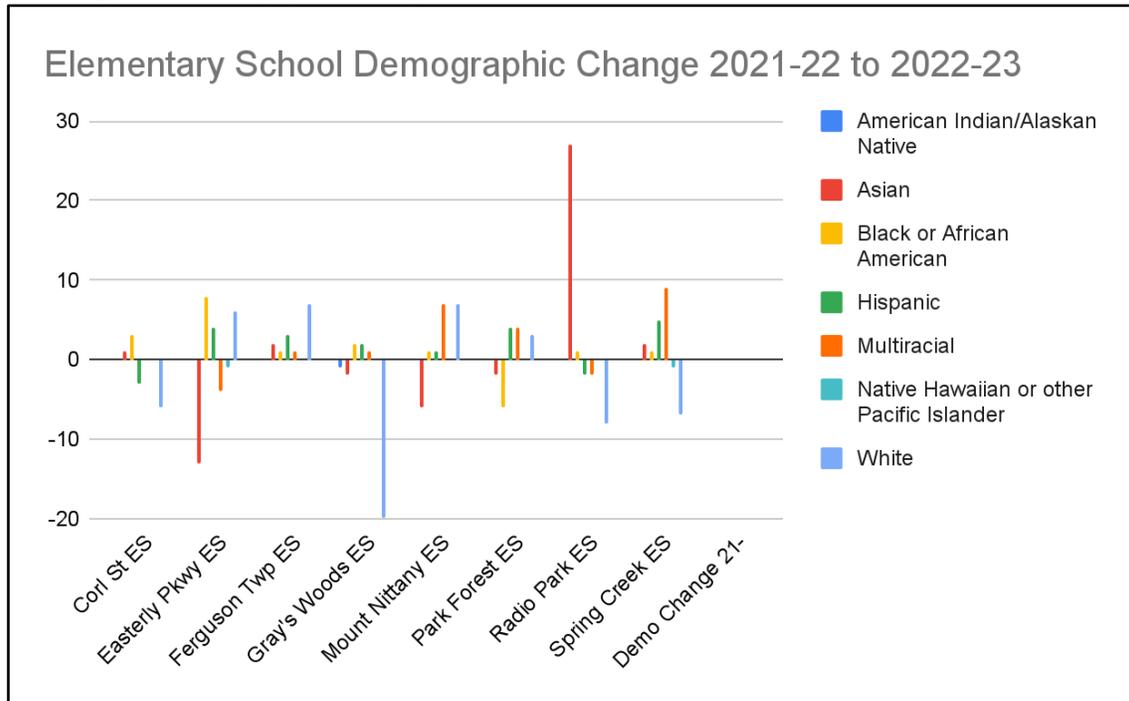
Focusing specifically on the district’s elementary schools, the change of groups is varied across schools. Radio Park has experienced a growth of Asian students especially, and overall growth, despite a decline of White students. Easterly Parkway, by contrast, has had a decline in Asian students prior to the last year, but an increase in Black students. Mount Nittany has experienced increases in White students in both years, especially prior to 2021-22. These differential changes help to understand how students are sorted among schools, and can inform a range of other district policy decisions.

Figure 6: Demographic Changes, 2020-21 to 2021-22, at SCASD Elementary Schools



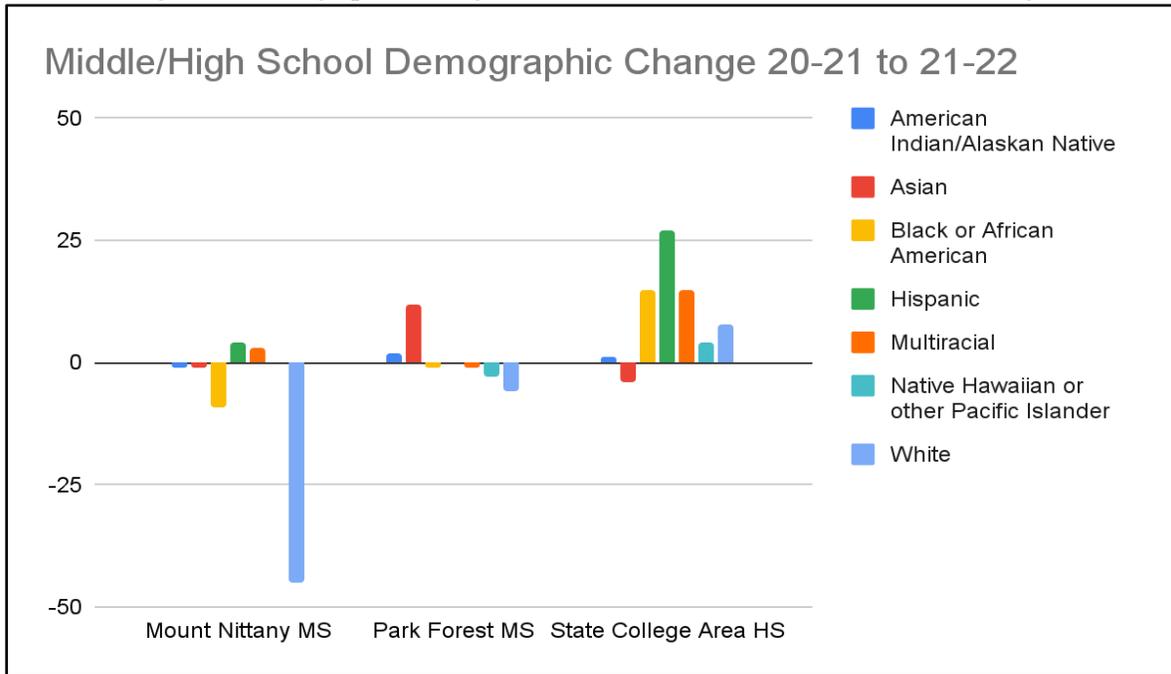
Source: 2021-22 October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data, NCES Common Core of Data “Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey”, 2020-21

Figure 7: Demographic Changes, 2021-22 to 2022-23, at SCASD Elementary Schools



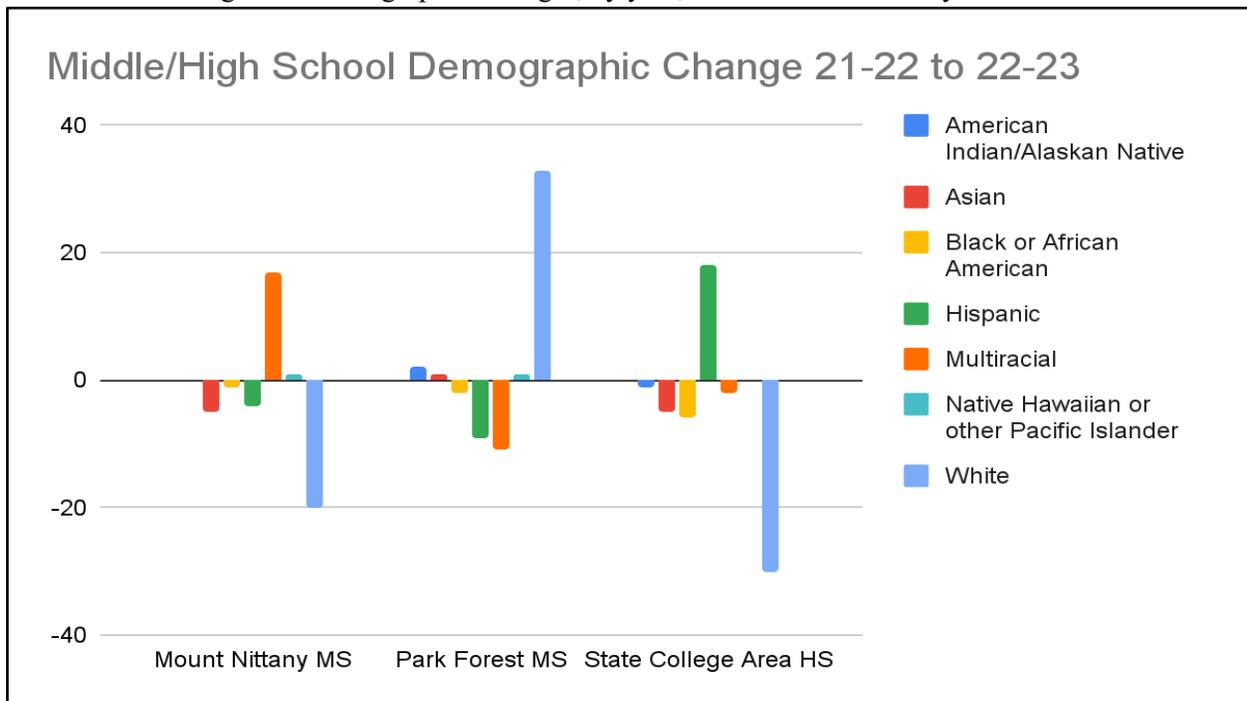
Source: 2021-22 October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data, 2022-23 October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data

Figure 8: Demographic Changes, 2020-21 to 2021-22, at SCASD Middle/High Schools



Source: 2021-22 October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data, NCES Common Core of Data “Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey”, 2020-21

Figure 9: Demographic Changes, by year, at SCASD Elementary Schools



Source: 2021-22 October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data, 2022-23 October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data

Economic Disadvantage⁶

We next examine the students from households with economic disadvantage, and the extent to which these students are distributed across different schools. We use free or reduced lunch as our measure of economic disadvantage because this is the best widely-available measure to which we currently have access; it classifies students as disadvantaged if their family income is up to 185% of the federal poverty line and students submit the paperwork for eligibility.⁷ The overall proportion of students in the school district who qualified for free or reduced lunch in October of the 2022-23 school year was 13.7%.⁸ Although there are similar percentages of students in SCASD who experience economic disadvantage among school levels (i.e., elementary, middle, and high school), students experiencing economic disadvantage are unevenly distributed among schools in the district, especially among elementary schools.

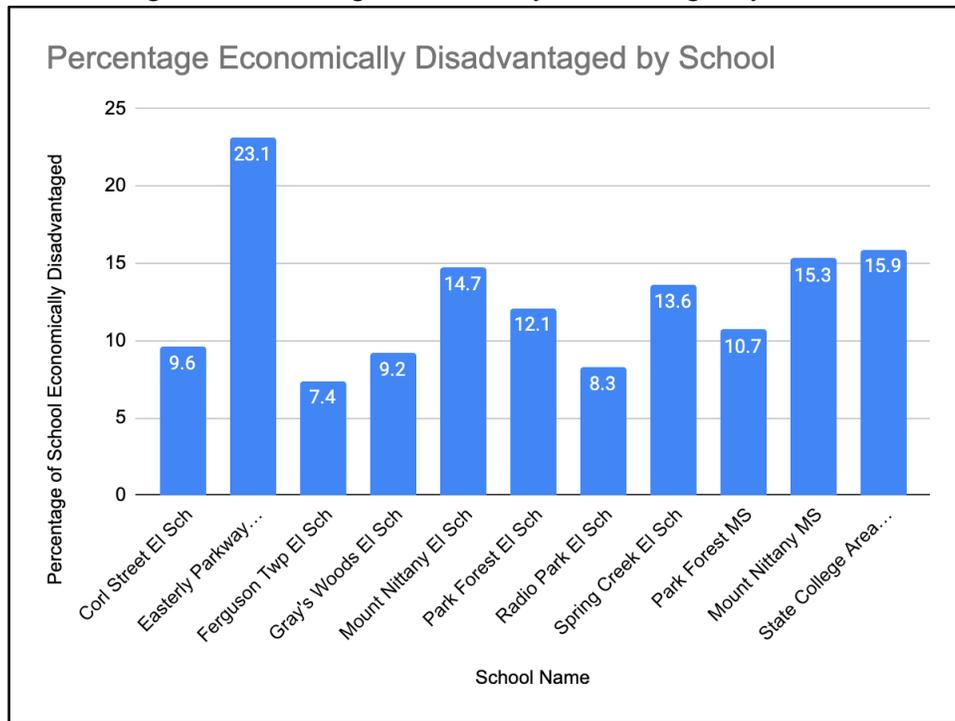
Easterly Parkway Elementary School has the highest rate of low-income students in the district at 23.1% low-income students, a rate almost double the district-wide average (13.7%) and more than triple the lowest proportion in the district (Ferguson Township Elementary School at 7.4% low-income students). This is an important disparity to address because this data suggests that low-income students are concentrated in certain elementary schools, while students who do not qualify for free and reduced lunch are concentrated in other schools, which may necessitate the allocation of different supports and resources across different schools.

⁶ In last year's report, we examined students by race and economic disadvantage combined, but we lacked data on that this year. See last year's report, pp 13-16.

⁷ The National Center for Education Statistics outlines information about the National School Lunch Program and its use as a proxy measure for student poverty here: <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=898>. However, using free or reduced lunch as an indicator of economic disadvantage has its drawbacks. For example, undocumented immigrant families may not always feel safe submitting paperwork to indicate eligibility for the program due to the danger of deportation. See Lytton, B. (2017, March 27). Danbury's undocumented nervous about school food programs. News Times. <https://www.newstimes.com/local/article/Danbury-s-undocumented-nervous-about-school-11028803.php>.

⁸ Not all of the students who would have qualified for free and reduced lunch in the 2022-2023 school year may have submitted forms indicating as such, in which case the district would have inaccurately grouped them as not qualifying for this category. Furthermore, even if a student does *not* qualify for free-and-reduced lunch, their family still may not necessarily be able to afford to live comfortably in the State College Area School District. For a family of four, they must have an income under \$51,338 to be eligible for reduced-price lunch and \$36,075 for free lunch.

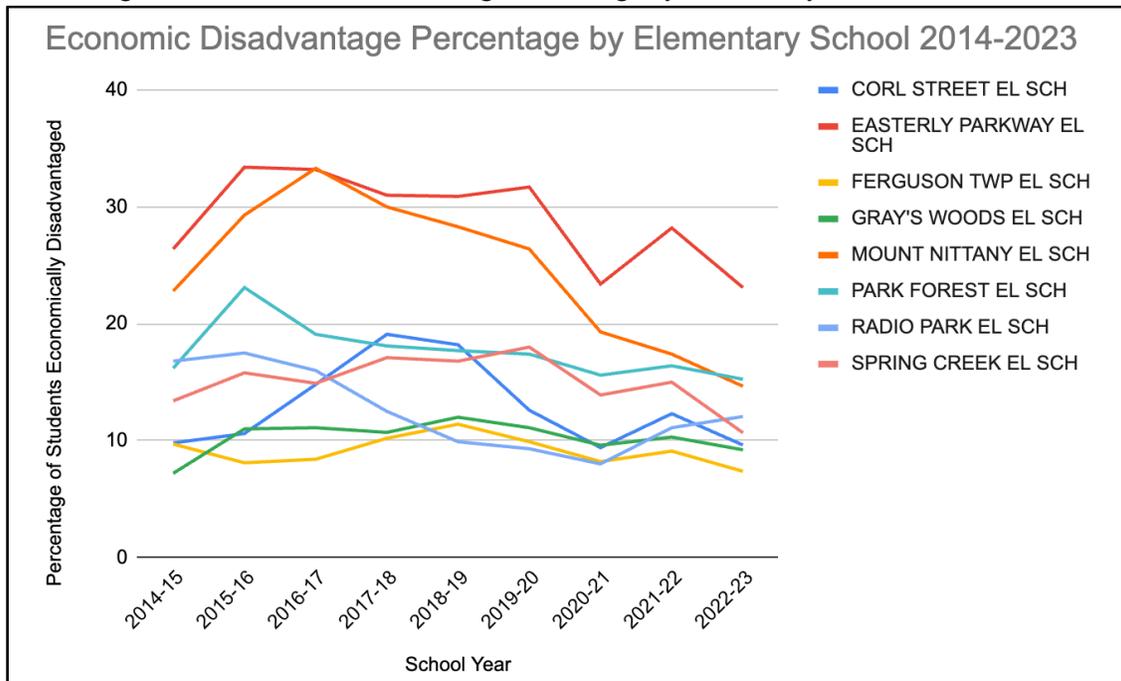
Figure 10: Percentage Economically Disadvantaged by School



Source: 2022-23 October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data

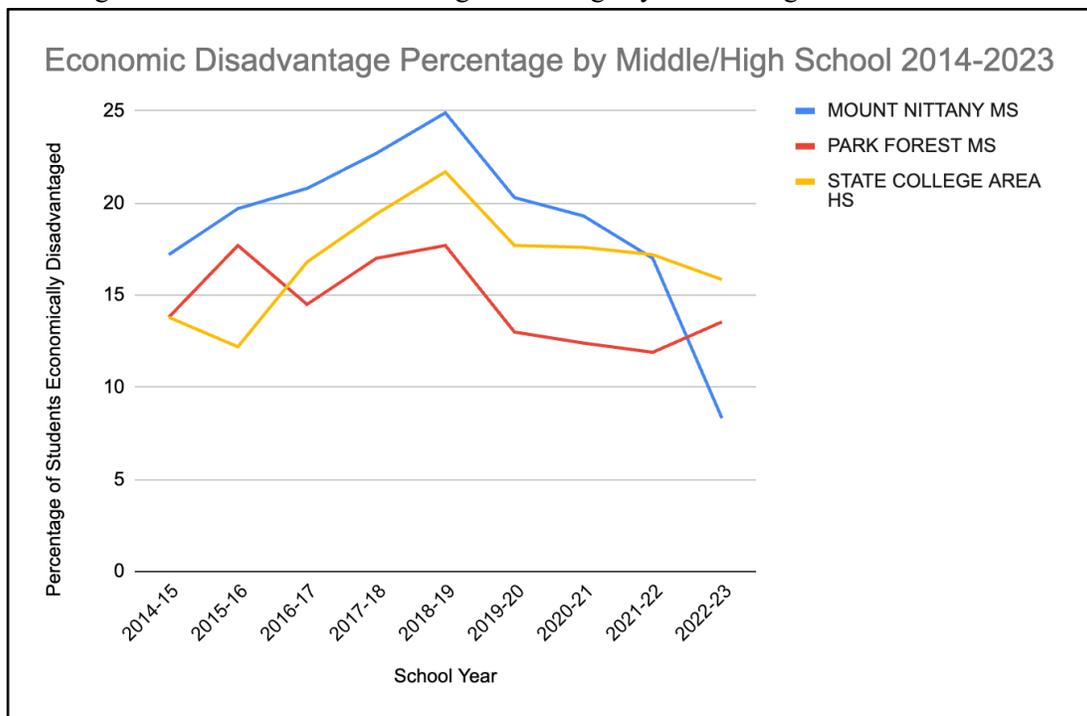
The percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch in a given school decreased overall from the 21-22 to 22-23 school year (see also Figure A-2 in Appendix). Some schools had greater rates of percentage decrease than others, with the percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch decreasing by 5.1% at Easterly Parkway Elementary School and by 4.3% at Park Forest Elementary School. This drop at Easterly Parkway is notable because even in the 2022-23 school year, Easterly Parkway Elementary School has the highest school-level rate of economic disadvantage, and it consistently has the highest rates of economic disadvantage of any elementary school in the district. However, this data can only tell us the level of change in each school, rather than the causes for these changes, so we cannot determine whether these changes are due to within-household income, student movement, qualification threshold changes, or other developments.

Figure 11: Economic Disadvantage Percentage by Elementary School 2014-2022



Source: National Center for Education Statistics Elementary/Secondary Information System using data from Common Core of Data (CCD) for the State College Area School District for School Years 2014-15 to 2021-22

Figure 12: Economic Disadvantage Percentage by Middle/High School 2014-2023



Source: National Center for Education Statistics Elementary/Secondary Information System using data from Common Core of Data (CCD) for the State College Area School District for School Years 2014-15 to 2021-22

English Learners

There were 212 SCASD students classified as English learners (EL) in 2022-23 (see Table 2). Students are identified as such by screeners administered to students whose home language is other than English. This amounts to 3.13% of the total SCASD population. This represents an increase from the previous school year (2021-22), where there were 187 English learners making up 2.8% of the total student population. The most common home languages among SCASD students who are designated as English learners are Spanish (n=45), Arabic (n=33), Russian (n=18), Chinese (Yue/Cantonese) (n=17), and Chinese (Mandarin) (n=14). Middle school grades had the fewest EL students in 2021-22, but had substantial increases in 2022-23.

When examining by school, Easterly Parkway ES and Radio Park ES have the highest percentage of EL students; the HS, Easterly Pkwy ES and Radio Park ES also have the highest raw number of EL students. In terms of number and percentages of immigrant students, however, the HS, Easterly Parkway ES and Park Forest MS have the highest number of immigrant students, and Easterly Parkway and Park Forest MS have the highest proportion of immigrant students. Middle school grades had the fewest EL students in 2021-22, but had substantial increases in 2022-23. See Table 2 for the number of English Learners by grade.

When examining by school, Easterly Parkway ES and Radio Park ES have the highest percentage of EL students; the HS, Easterly Pkwy ES and Radio Park ES also have the highest raw number of EL students. In terms of number and percentages of immigrant students, however, the HS, Easterly Parkway ES and Park Forest MS have the highest number of immigrant students, and Easterly Parkway and Park Forest MS have the highest proportion of immigrant students. These trends are important because they indicate areas for the district to focus support and allocate resources for English learning students and immigrant students. Because English learners in the district are more likely to experience economic disadvantage than non-English-learning students, these patterns are important for the district to monitor. See appendix for additional tables on EL and immigrant students.

Table 2: English Learners by Grade, 2021-22, 2022-23

Grade	2021-22	2022-23
K	18	26
1	19	22
2	21	20
3	19	19
4	13	17

5	16	16
6	11	9
7	9	15
8	8	14
9	11	11
10	15	12
11	13	16
12	14	15
Total	187	212

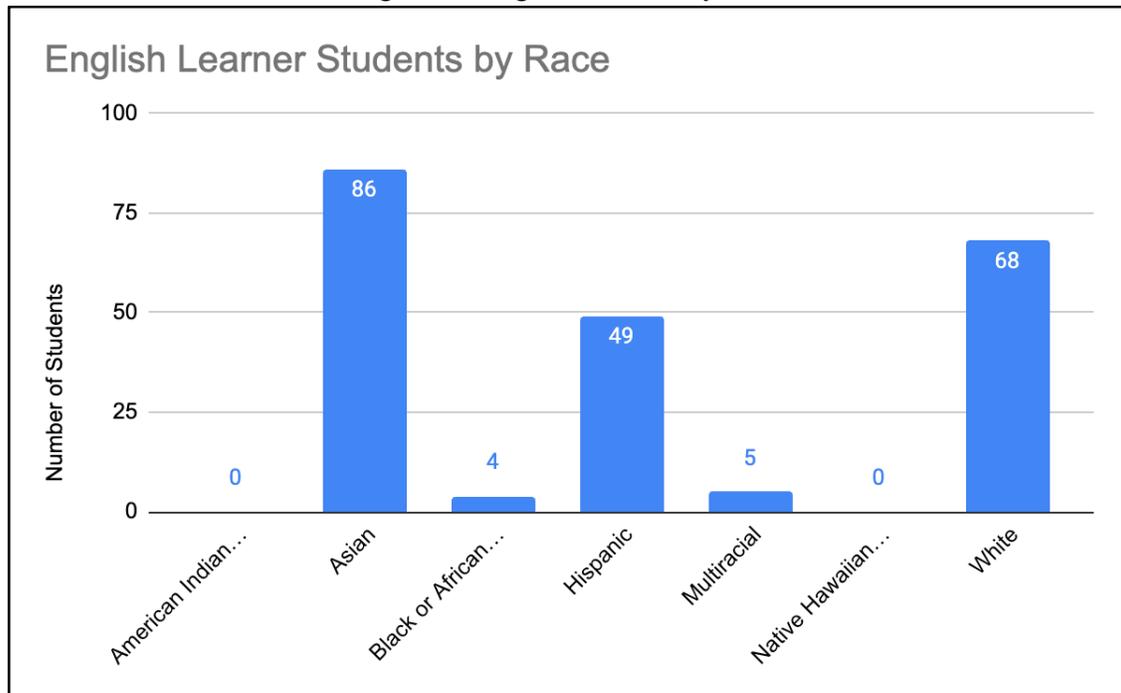
Source: 2021-22 October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data; 2022-23 October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data

Intersectional Identities: English Learners, Economic Disadvantage, and Race

SCASD students who are English learners have a higher chance of qualifying for free or reduced lunch than the general population of students. The general population has a rate of economic disadvantage at 13.65%, whereas the general rate for economic disadvantage among English-learning students is nearly double that at 26.4%. This disparity indicates that students who are receiving resources for learning English are also more likely to need resources for students who are economically disadvantaged. The district must consider the ways that different identities are intersecting for students to provide resources and services better suited for student needs.

Most students learning English in the district are Asian students (n=86/212) followed by white students (n=68/212) and Hispanic students (n=49/212).

Figure 13: English Learners by Race



Source: 2022-23 October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data

Demographics: Findings Summary

- Although SCASD remains a predominantly White school district, the proportion of students of color continues to grow.
- There is a disproportionate distribution of racial groups across elementary schools.
- There are disparities among student, teacher, and administrator racial demographics, with a disproportionately high number of White teachers compared to the racial makeup of the student population.
- Economic inequalities exist between schools in the district.
 - For example, Easterly Parkway has more than three times as many economically disadvantaged students as Ferguson Township Elementary.
- English learners make up 3.13% of the student population, which constitutes an increase from 2.8% in the 2021-22 school year.
- English learners are disproportionately concentrated at certain schools (e.g., Easterly Parkway), and higher percentages of English learners qualify for free or reduced lunch than non-English learners.

Graduation

Graduation Rates

Examining graduation rates is critical because a high school diploma is connected to a variety of important future life outcomes including college and career access and success. This graduation rate data comes from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (2015-20) and SCASD (2021 & 2022). The data is reported by cohort for each year of students, namely the percentage of students from the 9th grade cohort that graduate within four years. These data include information about graduation rates overall as well as by student's race, economic disadvantage, English-learning status, and special education status.

For the 2021-22 school year, the total graduation rate (93.2%) slightly increased from the 2020-2021 school year (92.6%). Graduation rates vary among racial demographic groups. For Black students and other students of color, the graduation rate is typically lower than the total graduation rate and the graduation rate of White students. Only in 2019-20 is the White graduation rate lower than the total graduation rate over the course of the years studied.

The total graduation rate was fairly constant over the 7 years examined, ranging from 92.5% (lowest) in the 2016-17 school year to 95.9% (highest) in the 2019-2020 school year, with an average four-year cohort graduation rate of 93.8%. The impact of the pandemic may have influenced the graduation rate for the 2019-20 year, which may have led to diversions from the typical trend.⁹ The 2019-20 school year saw higher graduation rates overall, particularly for Black students (88.9%), Hispanic students (93.8%), and Multiracial students (95.2%), although White students experienced a lower than average graduation rate (93.4%). Following the 2019-20 school year, graduation rates dropped slightly for all groups except for White students, whose graduation rate increased.

Because of the relatively low number of students of color in each cohort in SCASD, we use averaged graduation rates across the 7-year period to examine overall trends.¹⁰ Over the course of the years 2015-2022, the average 4-year cohort total graduation rate was 93.8%. The graduation rate for White students and multiracial students have remained relatively constant over the 7-year period, with an overall average of 94.4% of White students (which was the highest of any racial/ethnic group) and 90.9% of multiracial students graduating with the four-year cohort during the 2015-2022 time period. Asian students saw the largest increase in graduation rates from 2015-2022, with an average 94% graduation rate. Black students and Hispanic students had the highest rate of decline in graduation rate over this time period, with average overall graduation rates of 86% and 83.5% respectively. Overall, Hispanic students had

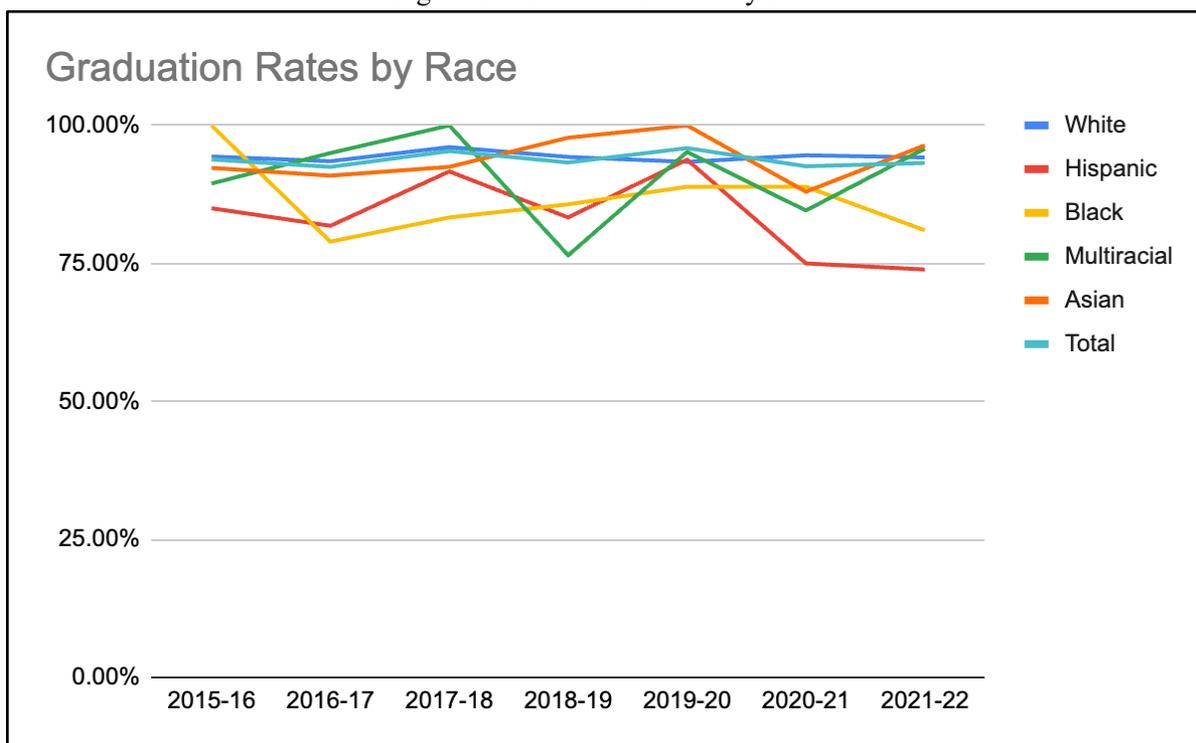
⁹ Students who were seniors in the 2019-20 year had more flexible graduation requirements because of the COVID-19 pandemic, when the school year was interrupted at the end of the third marking period.

¹⁰ This average assumes even numbers of students over each year, since we didn't have this information for all cohorts. Ideally if we had the total number of students in each cohort, we'd weight the average by students for a more precise measure.

the lowest average rate of any racial/ethnic group of students during this period, more than ten percentage point lower than the district’s average graduate rate.

However, these trends should be interpreted carefully, as the data includes only overall averages for each demographic group and therefore does not account for changes in the number of students in each class’s cohort which could drastically skew the averages. Dramatic differences may appear from year to year because of a small population of students in a given demographic, but we only had information on the numbers of students in each cohort for the last two years, which is needed contextual information to better assess yearly differences.

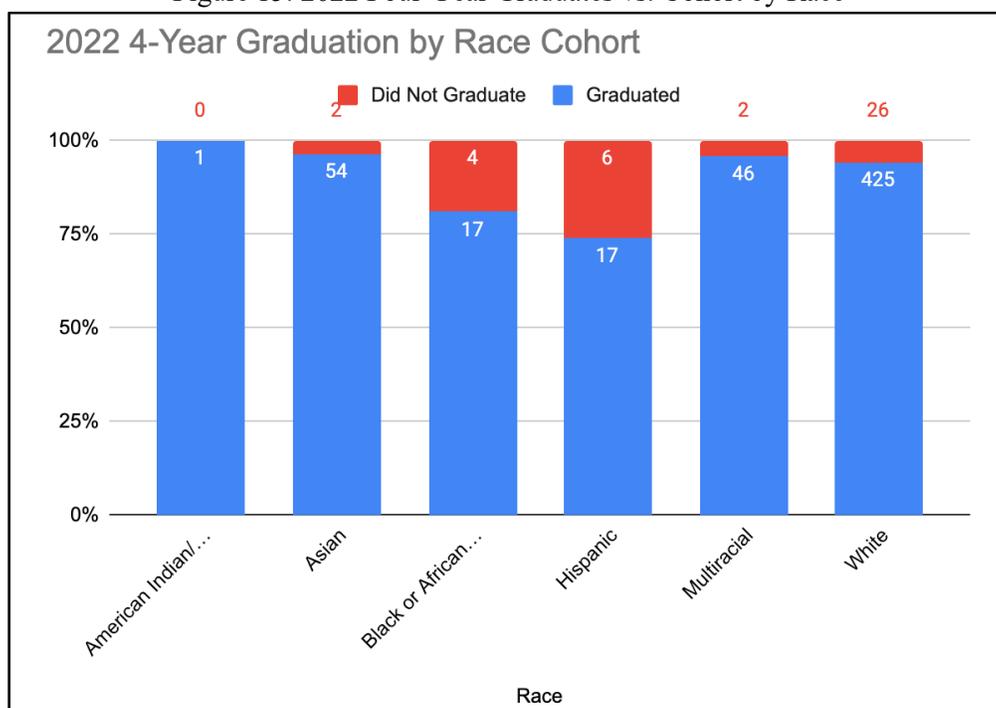
Figure 14: Graduation Rates by Race



Source: Cohort Graduation Rate ACS 2019-20, 2021-22, 2022 CECR Equity Report

Figure 15 depicts the proportion of 4-year graduates in the most recent cohort (class of 2022) compared to the number of students who did not graduate by racial demographic. Hispanic students had the highest proportion of students who did not graduate with their four-year cohort (26.1%) followed by Black students (19%). This is important because it demonstrates that although the majority of students who did not graduate in 4 years were white (26 students), not graduating was unequally distributed across racial demographic groups (see also A-1 in Appendix).

Figure 15: 2022 Four-Year Graduates vs. Cohort by Race



Source: Cohort Graduation Rate ACS 2021-22

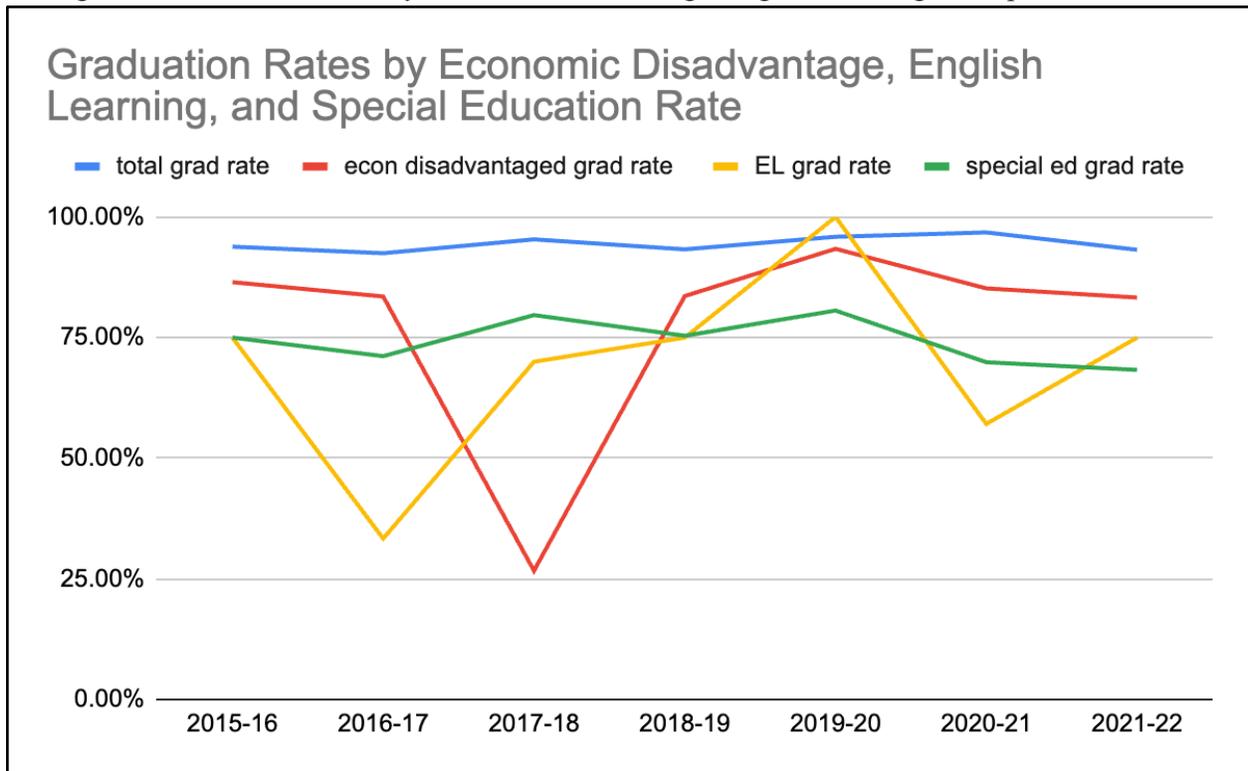
Figure 16 indicates that the graduation rate for students receiving special education services has been somewhat constant over time, hovering around the average of 74.3%. This rate, lower than all students, may be due, in part, to the continuing education program LifeLink. However, the available data does not distinguish whether or not students are participating in this program. Nevertheless, this was approximately twenty percentage points lower than the total district graduation rate.

The rates for economically disadvantaged students and English learners have fluctuated more over the 2015-2022 time period. Graduation rates for students who were economically disadvantaged ranged between 26.7% in 2017-18 to 93.4% in 2019-20. These drastic differences might be due to a small number of total economically disadvantaged students in that grade, but because we do not have access to the raw totals of students who belong to each demographic group for the graduation data, we cannot draw conclusions about this variation.¹¹ Economically disadvantaged students consistently had graduation rates below the total graduation rate (which averaged 93.8%). English learners had a highly fluctuating graduation rate as well, with graduation rates ranging from 33.3% in 2016-17 to 100% in 2019-20.¹²

¹¹ In the most recent two years, State High has reported approximately 400 economically disadvantaged students, which, if evenly distributed, would be approximately 100 per year. We don't have information as to how this might have been different for the 2017-18 cohort.

¹² Again, the general increase in graduation rates across demographic groups for the 2019-20 school year is likely due to the additional support and changing circumstances in the midst of the pandemic in 2020.

Figure 16: Graduation Rates by Economic Disadvantage, English Learning, and Special Education



Source: Cohort Graduation Rate ACS 2019-20, 2021-22

Graduation: Findings Summary

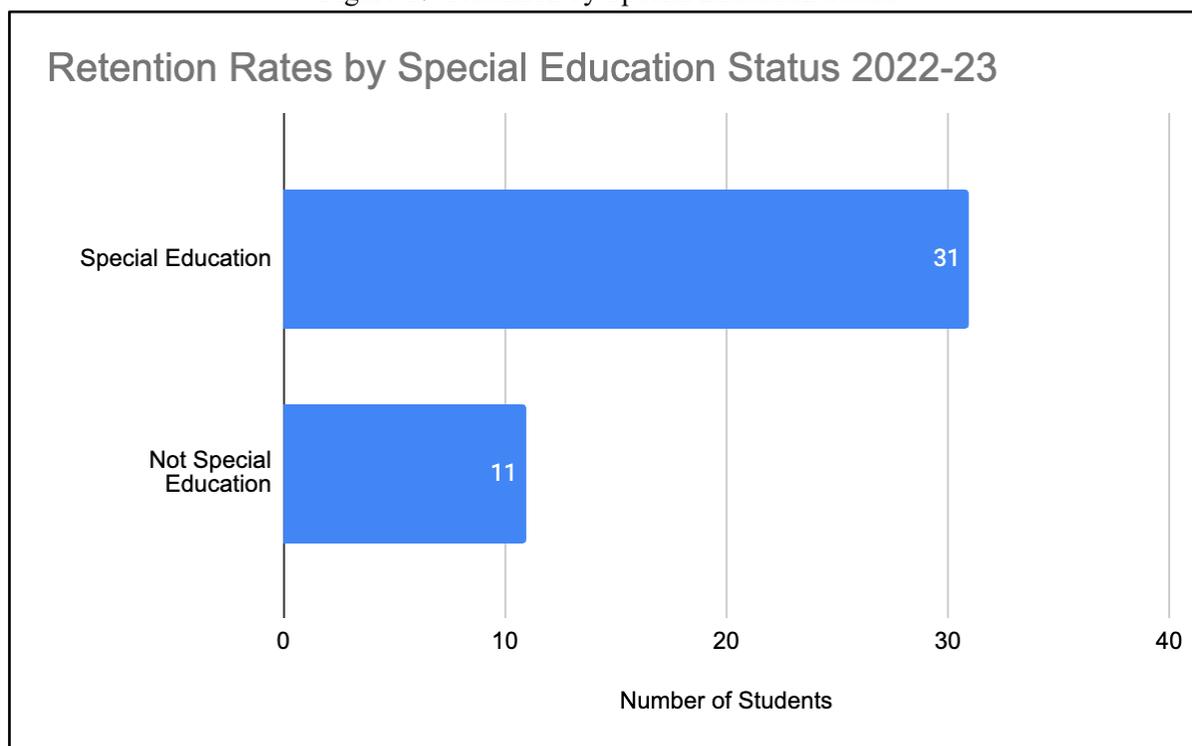
- The total 4-year cohort graduation rate has stayed relatively consistent over the past 7 years.
- Graduation rates for all student demographic groups increased during the 2020 year (with the highest graduation rate of the 7-year period studied) to an overall 95.9% graduation rate.
 - The influence of the pandemic impacted student graduation rates for the 2019-20 graduating class.
- Students who are economically disadvantaged, students who are English learners, and students in special education consistently have graduation rates below the total graduation rate for students overall.

Retention

Although retention is relatively rare in SCASD (42/6782; 0.62%), it is important to examine the patterns among students who are retained to understand how different groups of students are disparately impacted by retention decisions. Boys are more likely to be retained than girls, with 26 boys (61.9% of retained students) and 16 girls (38.1% of retained students) retained. Most retentions occur at the 12th grade level (30 of 42 retentions or 71.3%), but retentions do occur in the elementary (n=2) and middle school (n=4) grades as well.

Most students who are retained in SCASD are in special education, with 31 (73.8%) of the students retained for the 2022-23 school year having an IEP and only 11 (26.2%) of the retained students not having an IEP.¹³ 28 out of 30 students (or 93.3%) retained at the 12th grade level qualified for special education.

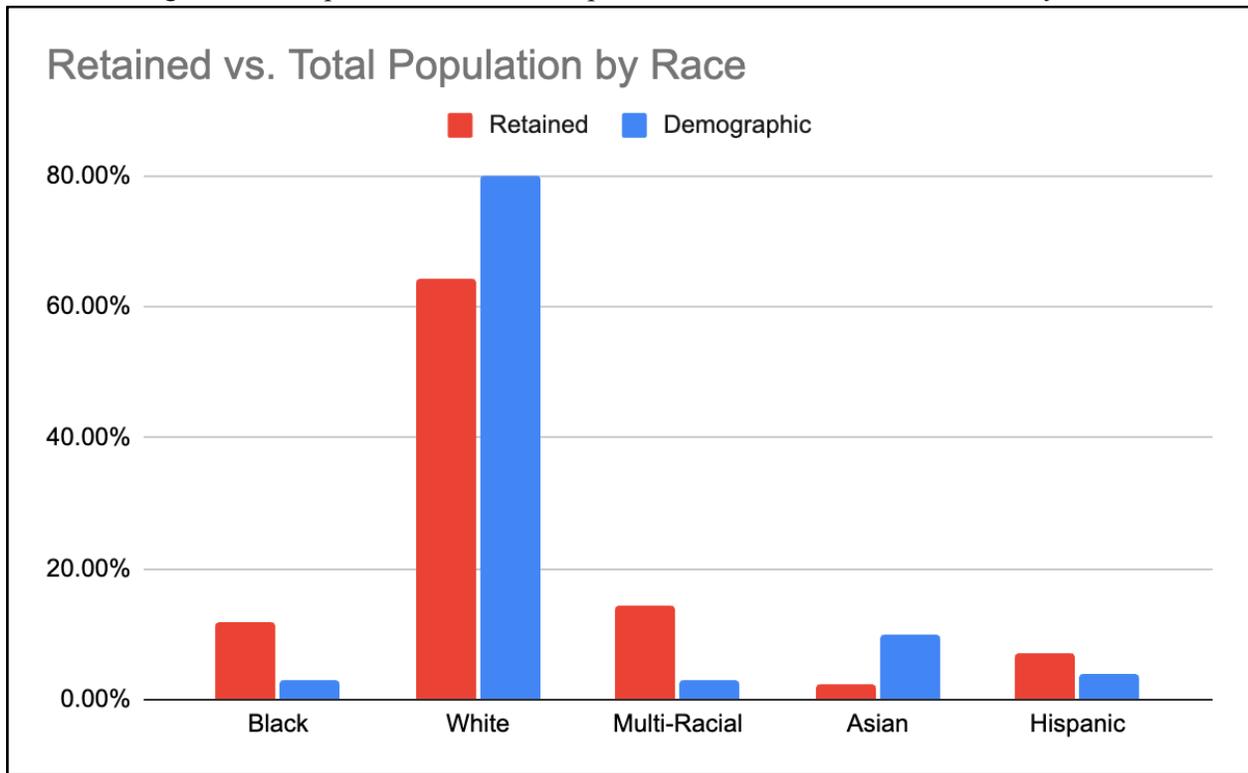
Figure 17: Retention by Special Education Status



Source: Retained Students 2022-23

¹³ The retention data does not provide information differentiating students who are considered “retained” but are participating in a continuing education program such as LifeLink. More information about the LifeLink PSU program is available here: <https://lifelinkpsu.weebly.com/>

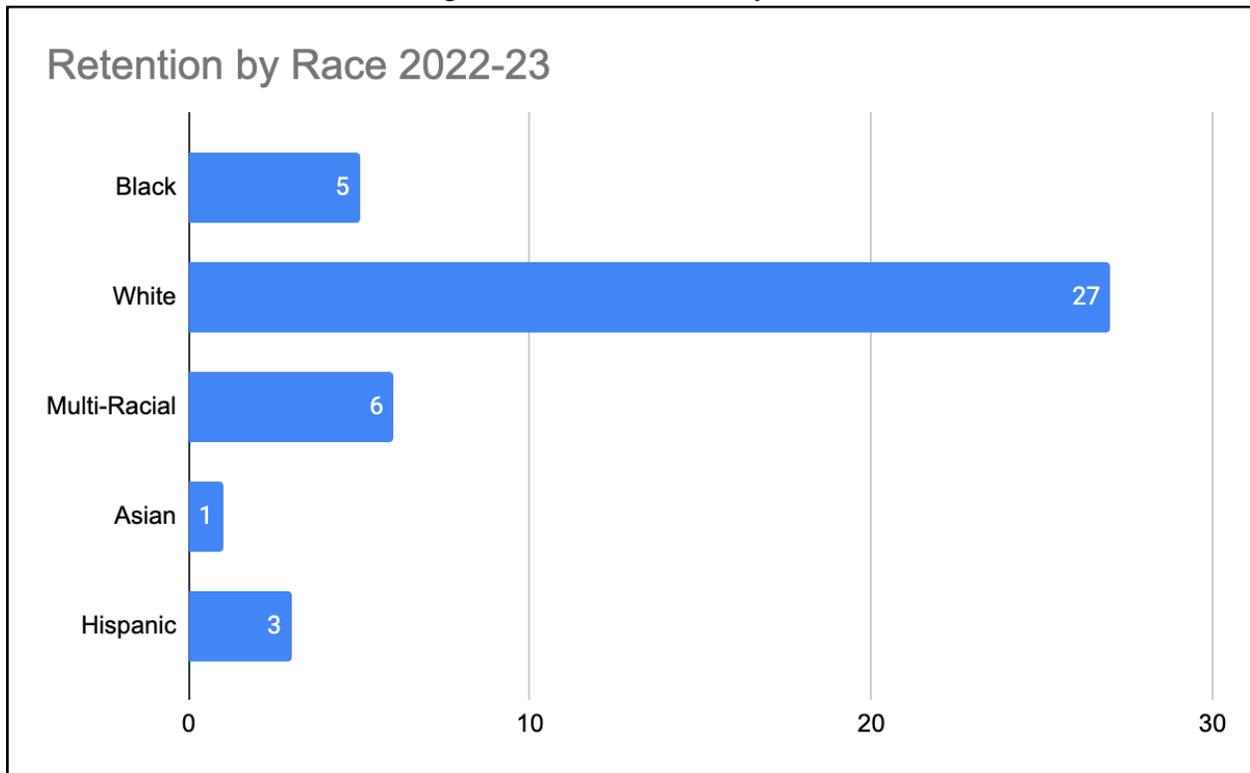
Figure 18: Comparison of Racial Composition of Retained and All students by race



Source: Retained Students 2022-23

Retention disproportionately affects certain groups of students of color. Black, Multiracial, and Hispanic students are overrepresented among retained students. Black students make up 2.8% of the total student population, but 11.9% of retained students. (This means that Black students are retained at a rate more than four times higher than their representation among the student population, which means that Black students are being retained at a rate four times higher than it would be if retention rates were proportional to student demographic representation.) Multiracial students make up 7.2% of the student population but 14.3% of retained students, and Hispanic students make up 4.5% of the population but 7.1% of retained students. Retention disproportionately affects students of color, and given the adverse impacts of retention on future student outcomes, it is important to closely examine these patterns.

Figure 19: Retention Rates by Race



Source: Retained Students 2022-23

Retention: Findings Summary

- Retention in SCASD is relatively rare at 42 retentions out of 6782 students.
- Students with an IEP are much more likely to be retained than students without an IEP (73.8% versus 38.1% of retained students)
 - Retention data does not include information about continuing education programs such as LifeLink.
- Retention disproportionately affects Black students (2.8% population; 11.9% retained), Multiracial students (7.2%; 14.3%), and Hispanic students (4.5%; 7.1%).

Gifted

SCASD has a universal screening process to search for giftedness among students in the third grade, although parents or teachers can refer students in any grade. Students who are identified as gifted in SCASD¹⁴ are also then evaluated as to whether they are in need of specially designed instruction. Examples of such instruction may be accelerated instruction with regular classroom teachers and/or instruction via gifted support teachers. Reflecting national patterns in disproportionate rates of identification of students, SCASD’s policy includes language about screening students with other exceptionalities that may “mask” giftedness, and the policy outlines a new effort to screen underrepresented groups twice in elementary school.¹⁵ Screening identifies students to undergo fuller evaluation for gifted services.

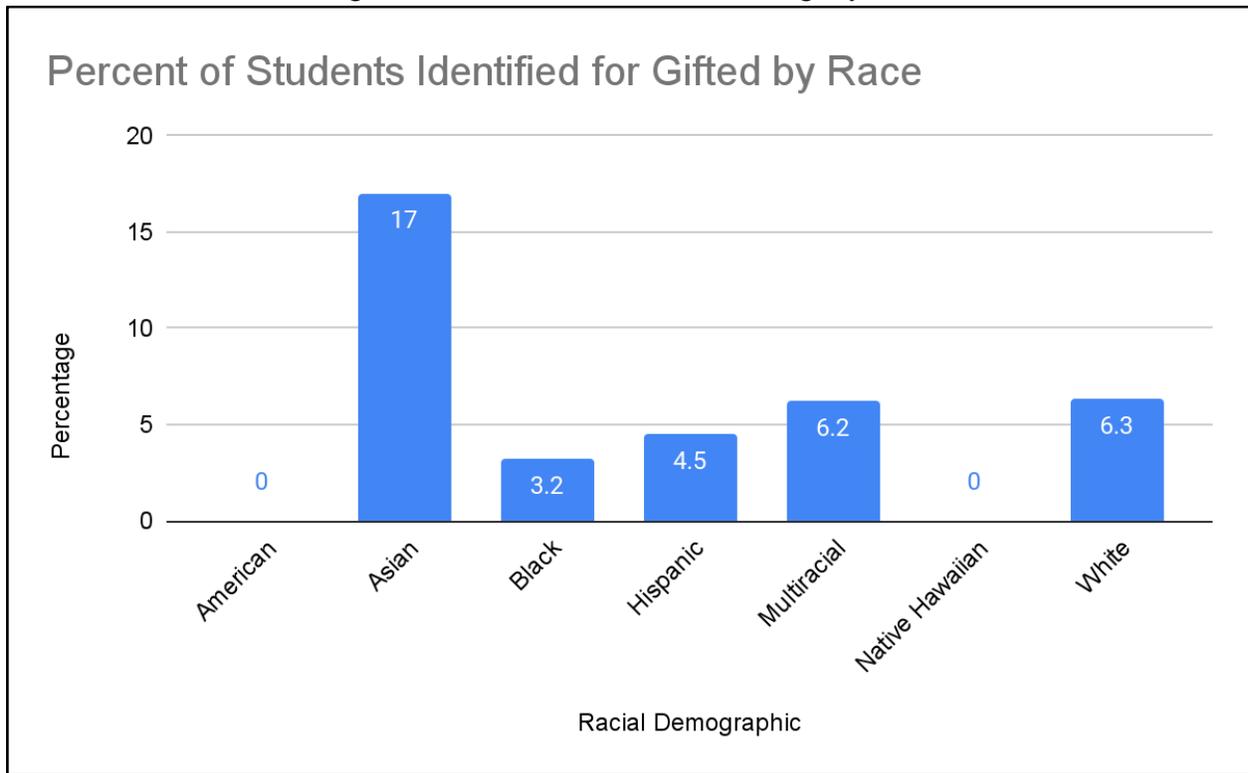
Gifted Students and Race

In general, gifted identification varies by race, school, and school level of students. We examine the gifted population as a measure of equity because students who are labeled as “gifted” are more likely to have more advanced opportunities for academic enrichment in their schooling. Making sure that all students have equitable access to advanced academic resources is important for schools interested in promoting equity through their work. When comparing the gifted population of each racial demographic to their overall representation in the school population, the Asian student population has the highest proportion identified as gifted, with 15.7% of Asian students in the district identified as gifted. There are also a high number of White males in the early years of gifted designation.

¹⁴ For more information about the SCASD gifted program and identification practices, please see: <https://www.scasd.org/Page/33431> and <https://www.scasd.org/Page/33420>

¹⁵ Pilot screening program presented to SCASD School Board in January 2023.

Figure 20: Gifted Identification Percentage by Race

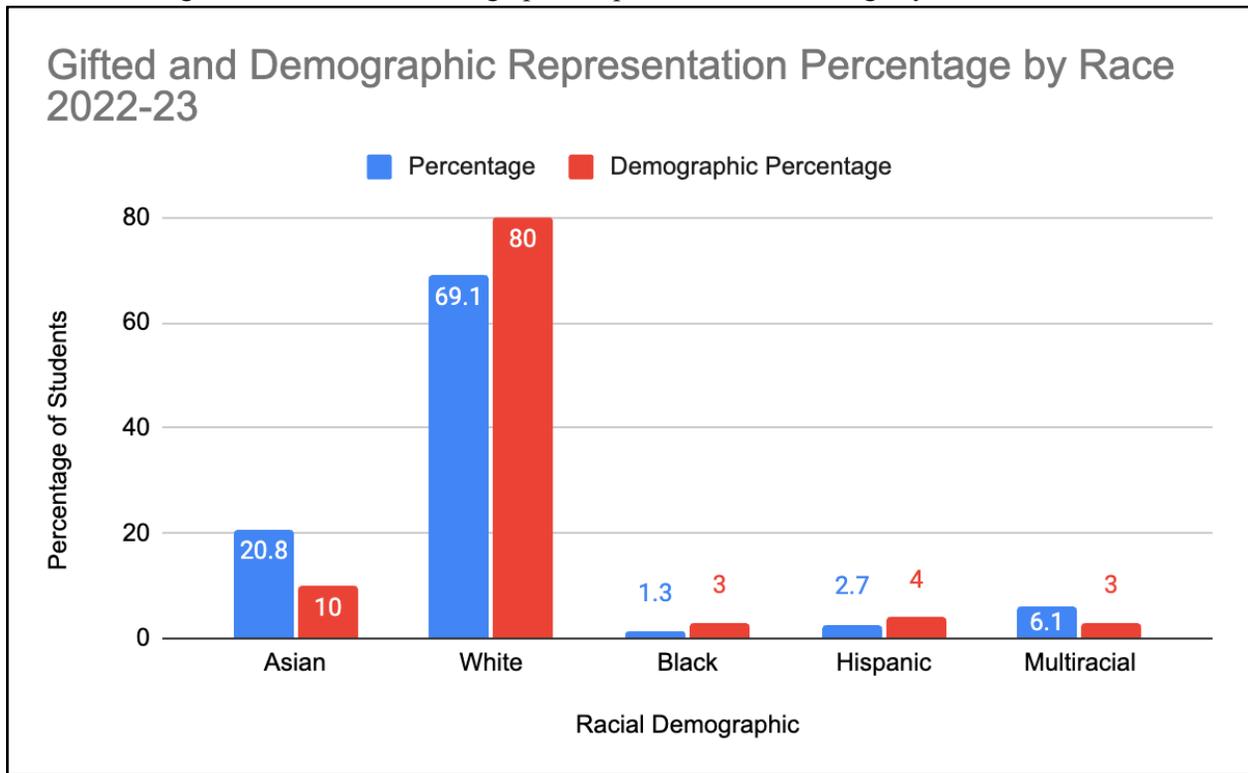


Source: Gifted Details Student Snapshot GY and GN 2022, 2021-22 October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data; 2022-23 October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data¹⁶

In SCASD, students are not identified for gifted services equally across racial demographics. White students make up the largest racial demographic of students in the gifted program at 69.1% of the students in gifted, whereas Black students are the smallest demographic at only 1.3% of students in gifted. Furthermore, the lowest rate of identification for the gifted program based on the total student population is among Black students. Only 2.8% of Black students in the district are identified as gifted. Notably, there are no Black students in the gifted program at the elementary level, and only 6 Black students are in gifted at the middle and high school levels. Based on the proportion of different racial demographics among the overall student population, Asian and Multiracial students are overrepresented in gifted designation, whereas White, Black, and Hispanic students are underrepresented.

¹⁶ We assume that the gifted data from fall of 2022 represent the number of gifted students for the 2022-23 school year, so we use the October enrollment data for 2022-23 to compare proportions.

Figure 21: Gifted and Demographic Representation Percentage by Race 2022-23

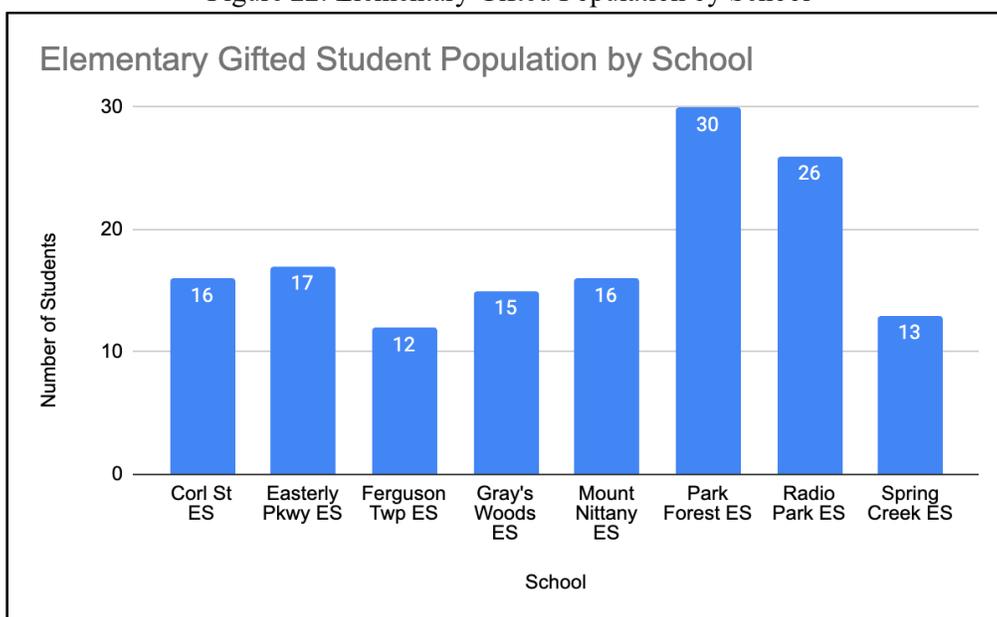


Source: Gifted Details Student Snapshot GY and GN 2022

Gifted Students by School

Rates of gifted student identification differ between different schools in the district. Elementary schools across the district had varying numbers of students in gifted, as seen in Figure 22. Ferguson Township Elementary School had the lowest number of students in gifted education at 12 students (4% of the school’s population), whereas Park Forest Elementary School had the highest number of students identified for gifted education at 30 students (7% of the school’s total population).

Figure 22: Elementary Gifted Population by School



Source: Gifted Details Student Snapshot GY and GN 2022

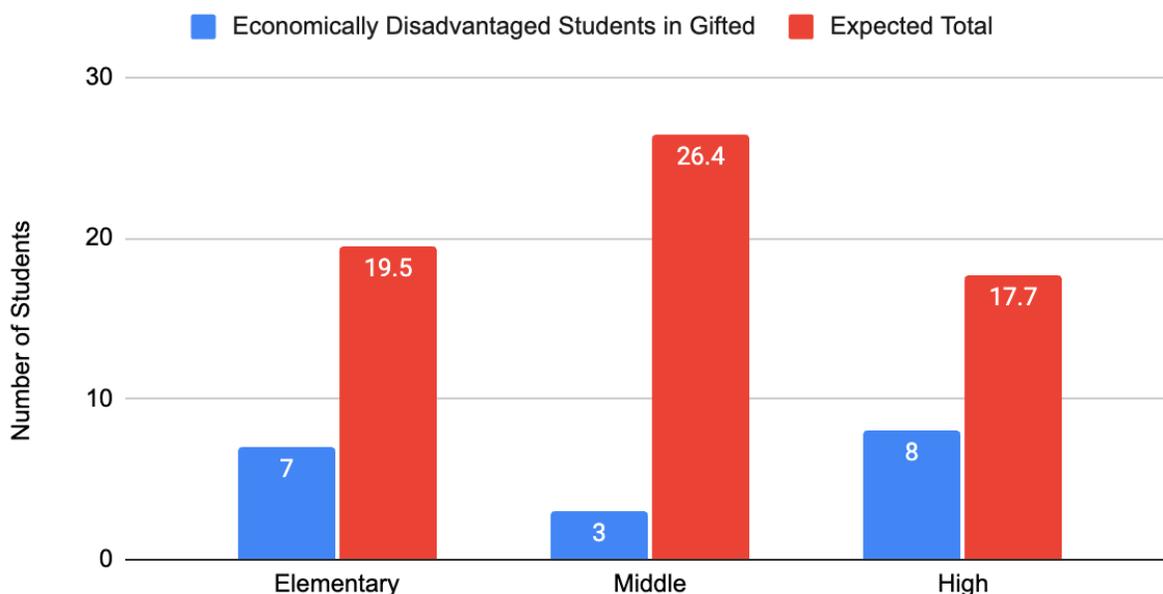
Gifted Students and Economic Disadvantage

Students classified as economically disadvantaged made up only a small proportion of the total gifted student population, at a disproportionately low rate. Figure 23 depicts the number of economically disadvantaged students that we would expect to see in each grade level (elementary, middle or high), given the schoolwide proportion of economically disadvantaged students of 13.65%. However, we see that the actual representation of economically disadvantaged students in the gifted program in each grade level is lower than the proportion in the district overall.¹⁷

¹⁷ This pattern of underrepresentation of economic disadvantage in the gifted program holds constant across every grade level, but we use school levels instead of grade here to protect the privacy of the small number of students belonging to these two groups.

Figure 23: Gifted Economically Disadvantaged and Expected Total by Grade 2022-23

Economically Disadvantaged Gifted Students and Expected Total



Source: Gifted Details Student Snapshot GY and GN 2022

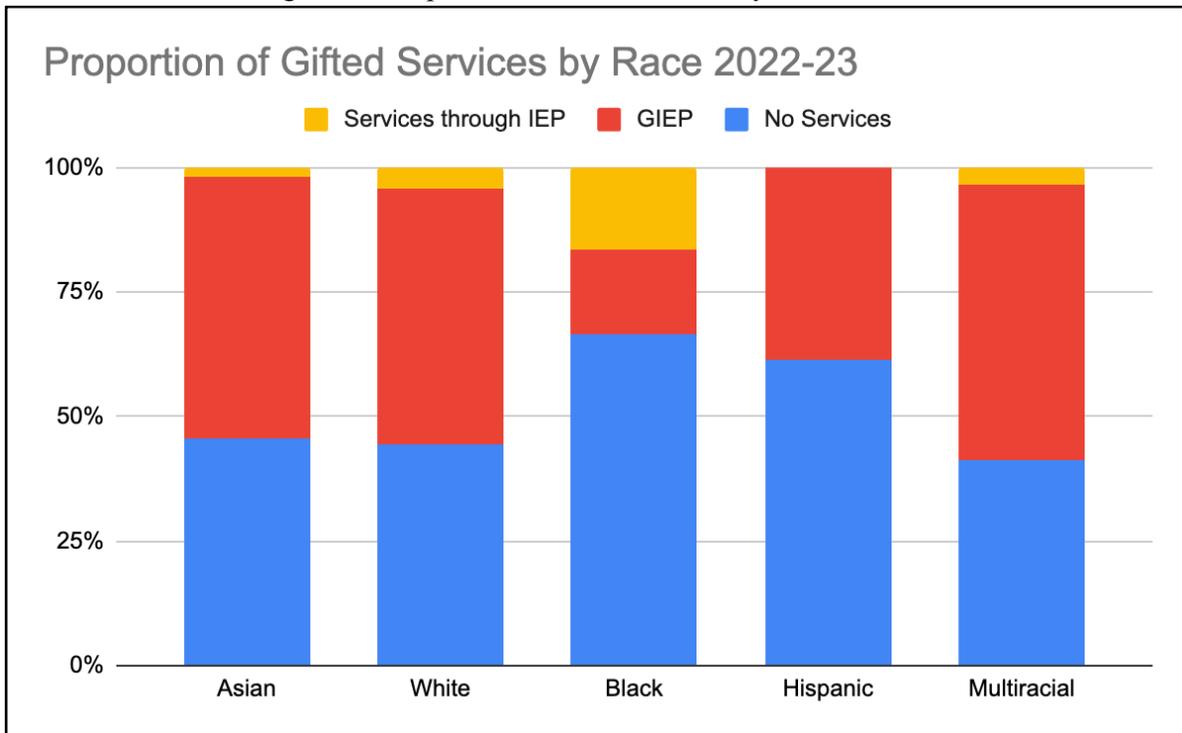
Gifted Services

Students at different school levels tend to receive different levels of services from the school. Elementary school students are more likely to receive services through a GIEP (Gifted Individualized Education Program) in general, and high school students are less likely to receive gifted services (Figure 25).

Disparities also emerge between racial demographics in terms of gifted services received. Students identified for the gifted program are designated as one of 3 categories: gifted receiving no services, gifted receiving services through a GIEP, and gifted receiving services through an IEP (Individualized Education Program).¹⁸ Students identified for gifted education receive services at different rates across different demographic groups (see Figure 24 and Figure A-3 in Appendix).

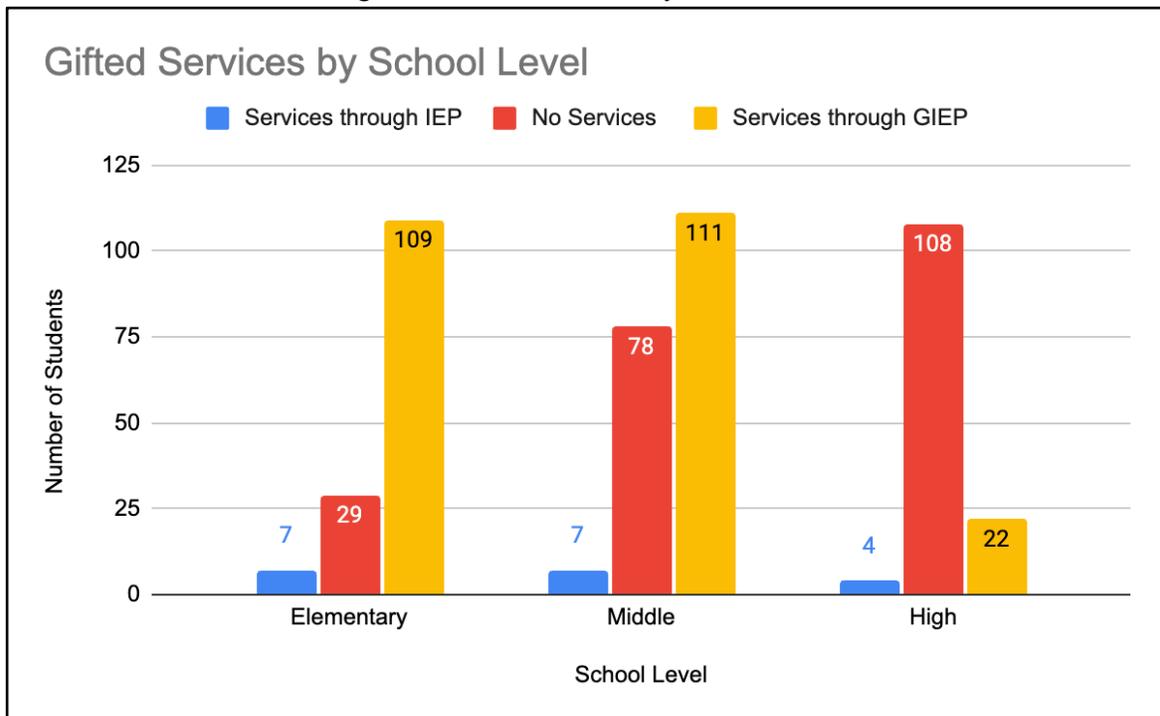
¹⁸ We did not receive data on gifted students that also had an IEP and were not receiving specially designed instruction, thus our analysis may underestimate the total number of gifted students and/or our analysis of disparities among student subgroups.

Figure 24: Proportion of Gifted Services by Race 2022-23



Source: Gifted Details Student Snapshot GY and GN 2022

Figure 25: Gifted Services by School Level



Source: Gifted Details Student Snapshot GY and GN 2022

Gifted Students: Findings Summary

- Students are not identified for gifted services at equal rates across racial demographics.
 - White students are the largest racial demographic in the gifted program (69.1%).
 - Black students are the smallest demographic in the gifted program (only 1.3% and none in elementary school grades) and experience the lowest rate of identification for gifted students based on overall population.
- Gifted identification varies widely across schools (e.g., Ferguson Township Elementary School has 12 students in the gifted program compared to 30 students at Park Forest)
- Economically disadvantaged students are underrepresented in the gifted program.
- Gifted services vary by school level and race, with the rate of receiving no services higher for high school students.
 - Differential rates of gifted services may be due to differences in gifted identification by grade level.

Attendance

Research shows that the more adverse life events a student is dealing with, the greater the likelihood that they will be chronically absent from school.¹⁹ This trend disproportionately impacts students of color, English Language Learners, and students living in poverty. Examining this data helps to understand the inequalities that manifest through patterns in attendance and chronic absenteeism.²⁰

Among the various student populations in State College Area School District, disparate trends emerge. On average out of a school year of 177 days, students with two or more races (n=30) are present for 113.6 days, Black students (n=214) are present for 138.6 days, Undisclosed students²¹ (n=186) are present for 145.3 days, Hispanic students (n=316) are present for 146.1 days, Multiracial²² students (n=476) are present for 156.7 days, White students

¹⁹ The US Department of Education shares the latest data on chronic absenteeism with charts:

<https://www2.ed.gov/datastory/chronicabsenteeism.html#intro>

²⁰ The State College Area School District also uses the measure of habitual truancy to determine issues with attendance. The Pennsylvania Department of Education defines truancy as when students accumulate three or more unexcused absences during a given school year, and “habitual” truancy as when a student has accumulated six or more unexcused absences in a given school year. More information is available here:

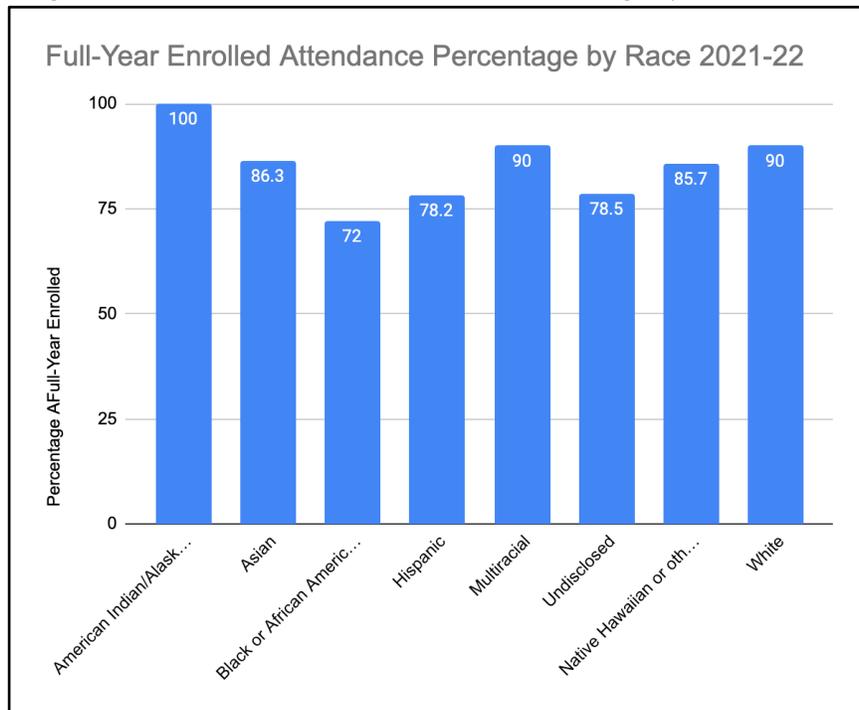
<https://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/ESSA/FutureReady/Pages/Attendance.aspx>

²¹ 186 students in the district have their race listed as “undisclosed” in the attendance data made available to the CECR. Our analysis of trends and disparities across racial groups in terms of attendance and chronic absenteeism is limited by the lack of complete information about student demographic designations. Notably, in other data sets provided by SCASD, we did not have students with undisclosed, which makes comparisons between the datasets a bit more challenging.

²² In addition, the data for attendance categorizes 30 students as Two or More Races and 476 students as Multiracial. For the purposes of this report, we have combined these two groups, as the district has confirmed that the two different terms refer to the same group of students. The categorization of multiracial students/students who identify with two or more races under two separate groups makes it more difficult to analyze the data and draw conclusions

(n=5320) are present for 156.8 days, Asian students (n=629) are present for 157.9 days, Native Hawaiian students (n=7) are present for 162.5 days, and Native American or Alaska Native students (n=12) are present for 164.1 days, on average.

Figure 26: Full-Year Enrolled Attendance Percentage by Race 2021-22

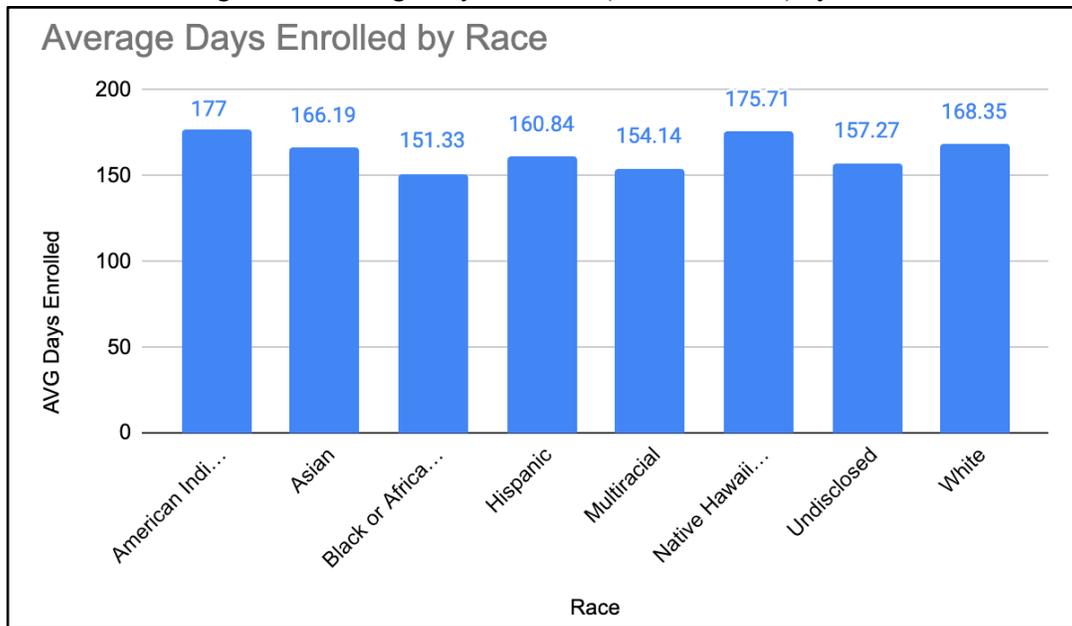


Source: 2021-22 Attendance Detailed Report

about trends among students' various demographic groups. We recommend either combining these groups in future datasets or more clearly defining the justification for separating groups from one another. Other sets of data for the school district do not display these disparate labels for Two or More Races or Multiracial students. For example, the data for student enrollment reports only "Multi-Racial" students. Consistency between levels of reporting and records will help to produce accurate data regarding equity in attendance and other patterns across the student body.

The number of days enrolled indicates the number of days, out of the total 177 in the school year, students were enrolled in the school district.²³ Our assumption is that students with less than 177 days of enrollment are students who either moved into the district after the year started or who left before it ended. This measure may help us to understand the extent to which different demographic groups were more or less transitory than others, but this requires further examination.

Figure 27: Average Days Enrolled (for all students) by Race

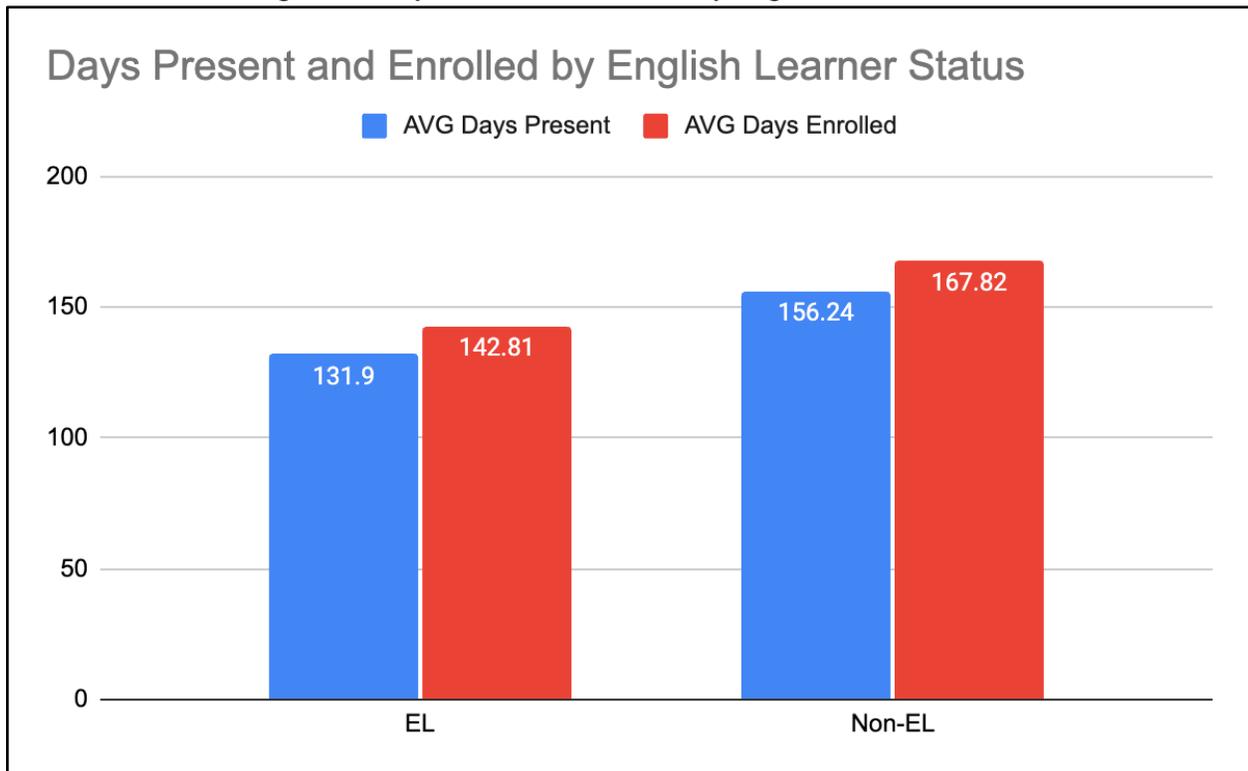


Source: 2021-22 Attendance Detailed Report

²³ Some of the 180 days can be teacher inservice days, hence 177 total days for students, according to communications with district staff.

Disparities in terms of attendance also emerge between students who are designated as English learners (ELs) (n=245) when compared to students who are not categorized as English learners (n=6946). English learning students are, on average, present for 131.9 days out of 177, compared to 156.2 days for students who are not ELs.

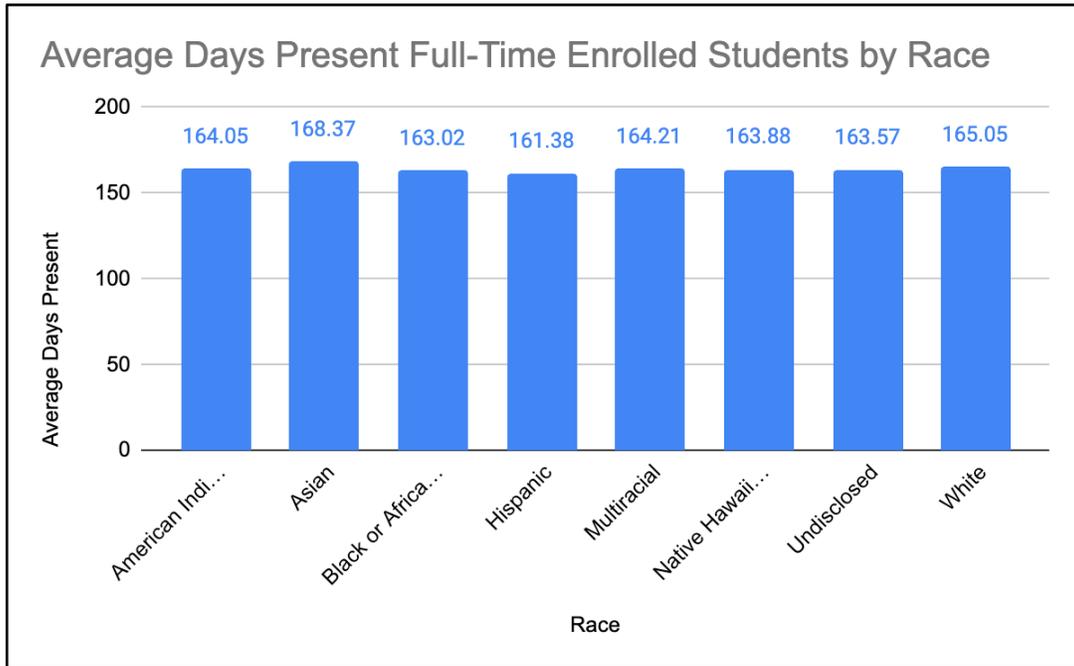
Figure 28: Days Present and Enrolled by English Learner Status



Source: 2021-22 Attendance Detailed Report

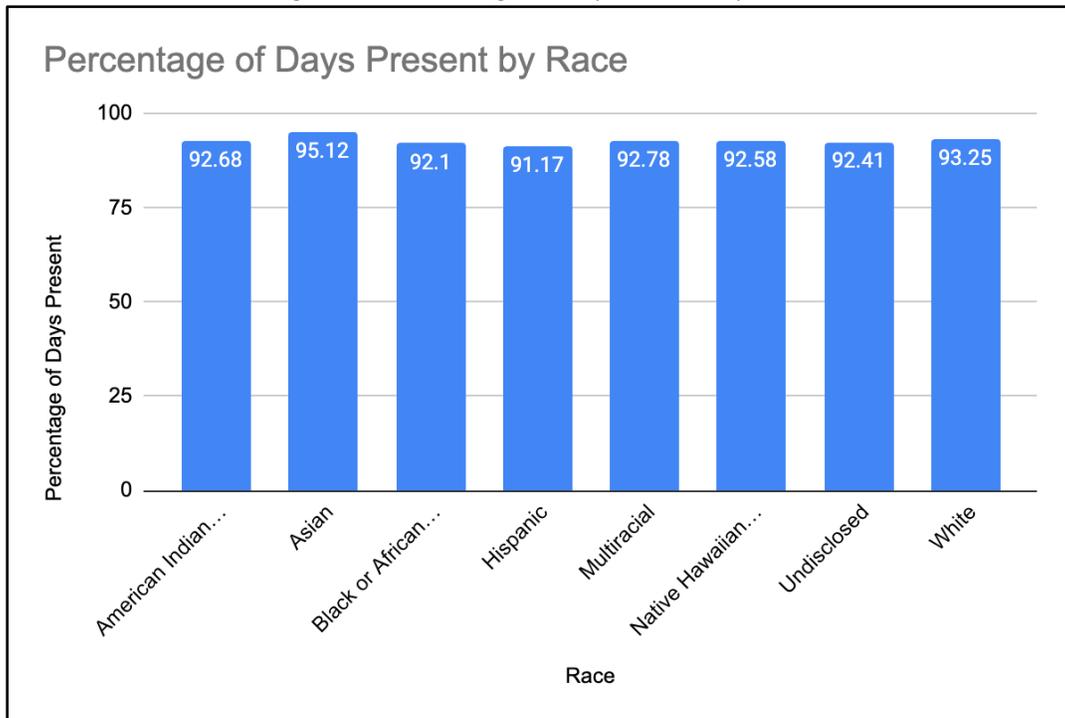
However, when limiting the analysis to students who are enrolled for the full school year (i.e., 177 days), the disparities in attendance between different demographic groups diminish somewhat, suggesting that some differences among student groups' average overall attendance rates may be attributed to whether or not students from different demographic groups are enrolled for the full school year. Students among various racial groups who were enrolled for the full school year at SCASD attended an average of 168.4 days for Asian students, 165.1 days for White students, 164.2 days for Multiracial students, 164.1 days for Native American students, 163.6 days for Undisclosed students, 163.9 days for Native Hawaiian students, 163 days for Black students, and 161.4 days for Hispanic students. While students of different racial groups appeared to have widely varying attendance rates, some of these variations could be somewhat accounted for through the differing rates of full-time enrollment, although some differences between racial demographic trends persisted.

Figure 29: Full-Year Enrolled Average Days Present by Race



Source: 2021-22 Attendance Detailed Report

Figure 30: Percentage of Days Present by Race



Source: 2021-22 Attendance Detailed Report

Students from different racial demographics are not equally likely to be enrolled in SCASD for the full school year. For example, 100% of Native American or Alaska Native students (n=12), 93% of Multiracial students (n=476), and 90% of White students were enrolled for the full school year (n=5320), compared to only 47% of students of two or more races (n=30), 72% of Black students (n=214), and 78% of Hispanic (n=316) and Undisclosed (n=186) students.

Findings about total days enrolled are important because they illustrate the impact of mid-year school changes on overall attendance. Students who miss days of instruction due to absence or mid-year school transitions may struggle to maintain their academic progress. In addition, an awareness of the factors contributing to student absence and the supports available to encourage student attendance are also crucial to monitoring attendance rates.

Chronic Absenteeism

In this report, we use measurement of chronic absenteeism to identify issues and disparities involved in students' school attendance.²⁴ The Pennsylvania Department of Education determines the selection criteria for students to be designated as chronically absent²⁵ from school as being absent for 10% or more of the school year. In a 180-day school year, this would mean that students are absent for 18 days or more. Students who are enrolled at the school for less than 90 days are excluded from this categorization because the state determines that they have not been enrolled for long enough for the school to have reasonably intervened in their attendance. Disparities in chronic absenteeism are important because of their impact on school funding, particularly for students involved in special education.

Chronic absenteeism does not emerge equally among all groups. Students at different schools and grade levels, as well as different demographic populations, experienced chronic absenteeism at different rates during the 2021-22 school year²⁶ for which we have data. Over all

²⁴ For more information about SCASD Attendance policy, see here: <https://www.scasd.org/domain/839#:~:text=If%20you%20have%20reported%20your,hour%20window%20are%20considered%20unexcused>. In terms of school-district-specific ramifications for student absences, the district designates three or more unexcused absences as a First Offense, with further absences potentially involving a School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) meeting with parents or the filing of a Second Offense. Ten or more student absences (not counting educational trips and doctor excused absences) prompt the sending of notification letters to inform parents of the limit on school absences and the requirement of doctor's notes for absences going forward. The year examined here was one in which COVID absences/quarantine may have affected trends.

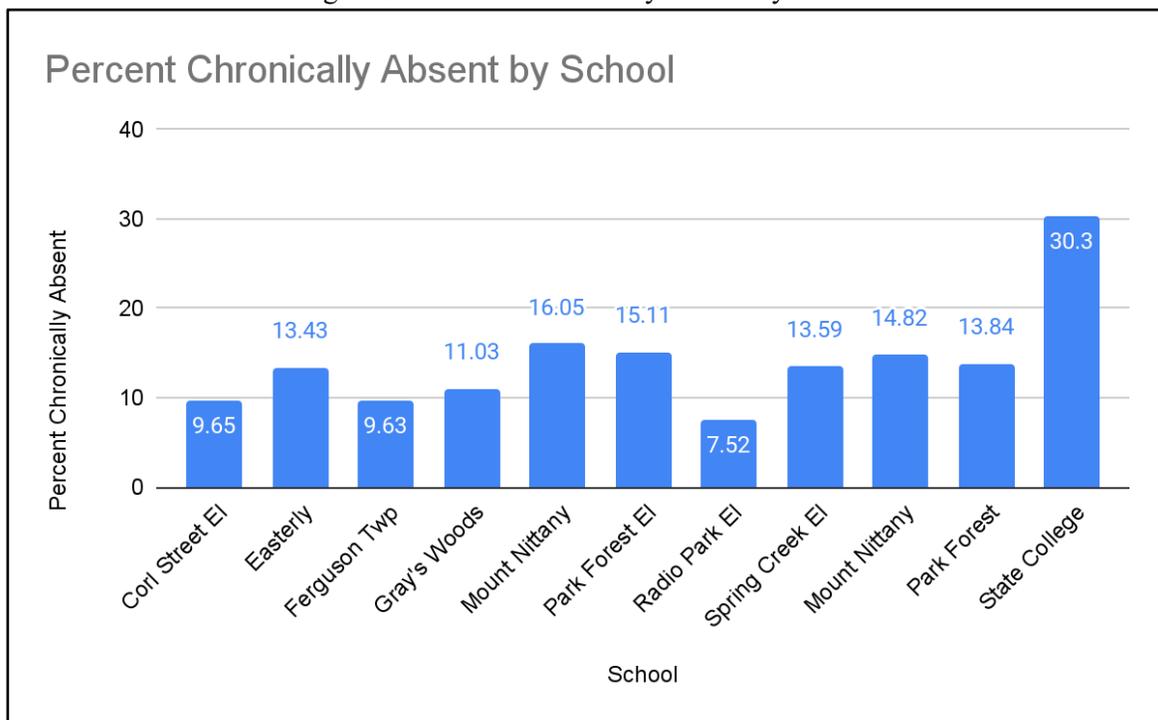
²⁵ Truancy is another measure of absence and attendance used in the State College Area School District. A designation of "truant" involves a student missing three or more unexcused absences from school during a given school year, whereas "habitually truant" refers to a student accumulating three or more unexcused absences throughout the course of a given school year. For more information, see: <https://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/ESSA/FutureReady/Pages/Attendance.aspx> The attendance data examined in this report does not include designations of excused versus unexcused absences according to the school district records.

²⁶ The unusual circumstances in the midst of the pandemic of the 2021-22 school year in particular suggest that at least some degree of the variation in attendance and chronic absence for students may be due to the altered context and mitigation procedures.

groups, the average level of chronic absenteeism in the school district is 19.1%, with 1,372 students qualifying as chronically absent per the state’s definition.

Chronic absence varies by grade level and school, with twelfth graders experiencing the highest level of chronic absence at 42.6%. Likely related, the high school has the highest rate of chronic absence compared to other schools in the district, with 30.3% of students qualifying as chronically absent. The lowest rate of chronic absence in the school district is at Radio Park Elementary School, with only 7.5% of students designated as chronically absent. Although the gradual increase in chronic absence holds constant with trends in overall attendance, the dramatic increase in chronic absence at the twelfth-grade level²⁷ to nearly half the grade at 42.6%, which is more than triple the average rate of 13.6% across all other grades and requires further examination.

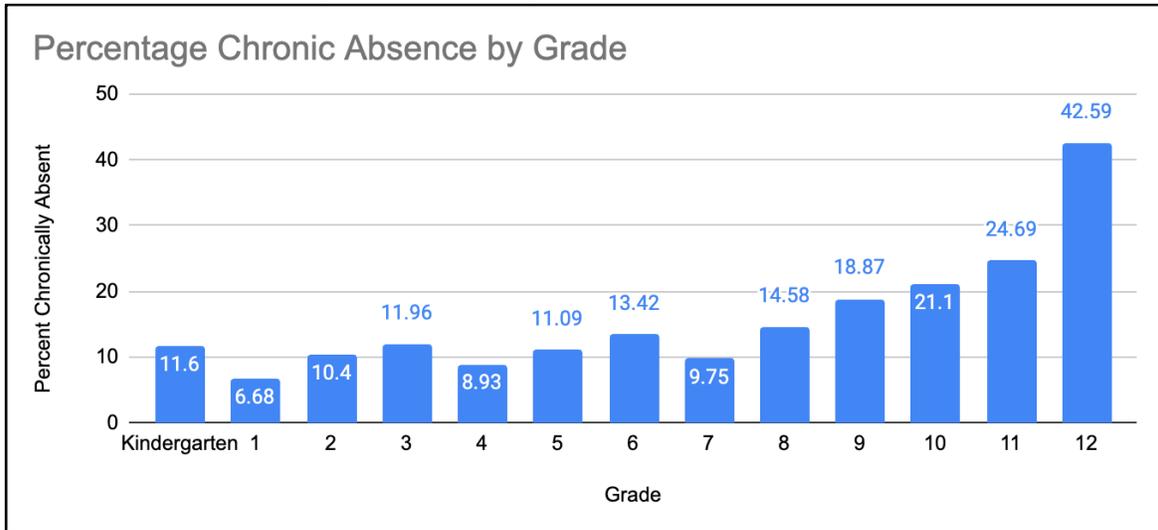
Figure 31: Percent Chronically Absent by School



Source: 2021-22 Attendance Detailed Report

²⁷ While some twelfth graders’ absences could be attributed to activities like college visits or class events, we lack sufficient data on excused and unexcused absences or the reasons behind them to draw conclusions about the cause of this pattern. However, the substantial rate of chronic absence at the twelfth-grade level (with nearly half of the grade qualifying as chronically absent) merits further investigation.

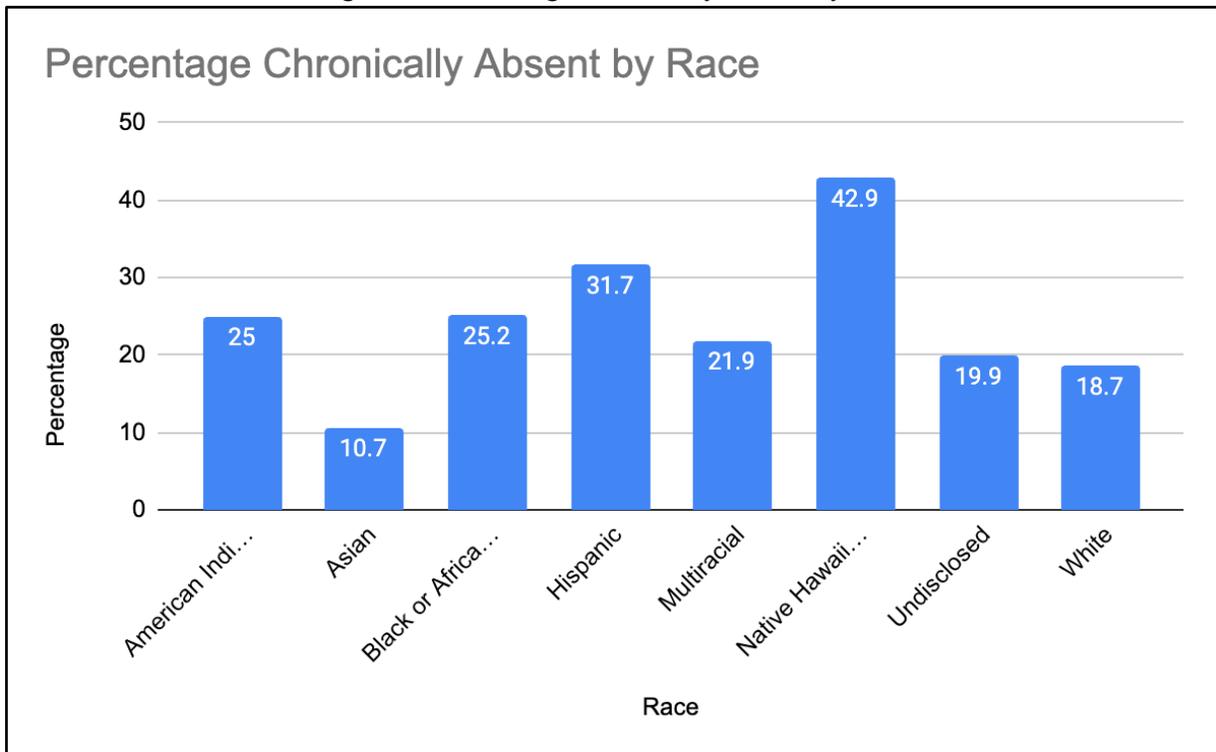
Figure 32: Percentage Chronic Absence by Grade



Source: 2021-22 Attendance Detailed Report

Rates of chronic absence vary by race as well. In particular, Asian students have the lowest chronic absentee rate (10.7%), followed closely by White students (18.7%). On the other hand, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students had the highest rate of chronic absence (42.9%) followed by Hispanic students (31.7%).

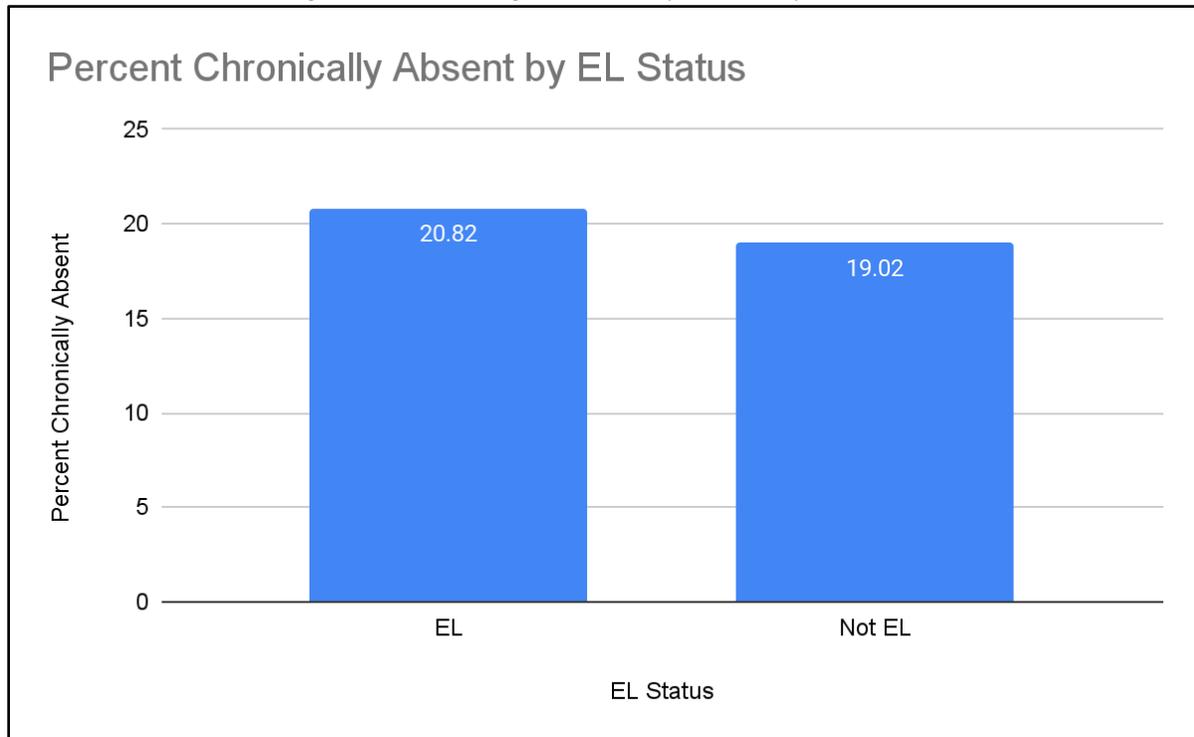
Figure 33: Percentage Chronically Absent by Race



Source: 2021-22 Attendance Detailed Report

Chronic absence varies somewhat by English learning status, with English-learning students somewhat more likely to qualify as chronically absent than non-English-learning students. However, these results may be influenced by the definition of chronic absence requiring students to have attended the school for at least 90 days, which was a requirement less likely to be met among the English-learning student population (which we found to potentially be more transient) than the non-English-learning student population.

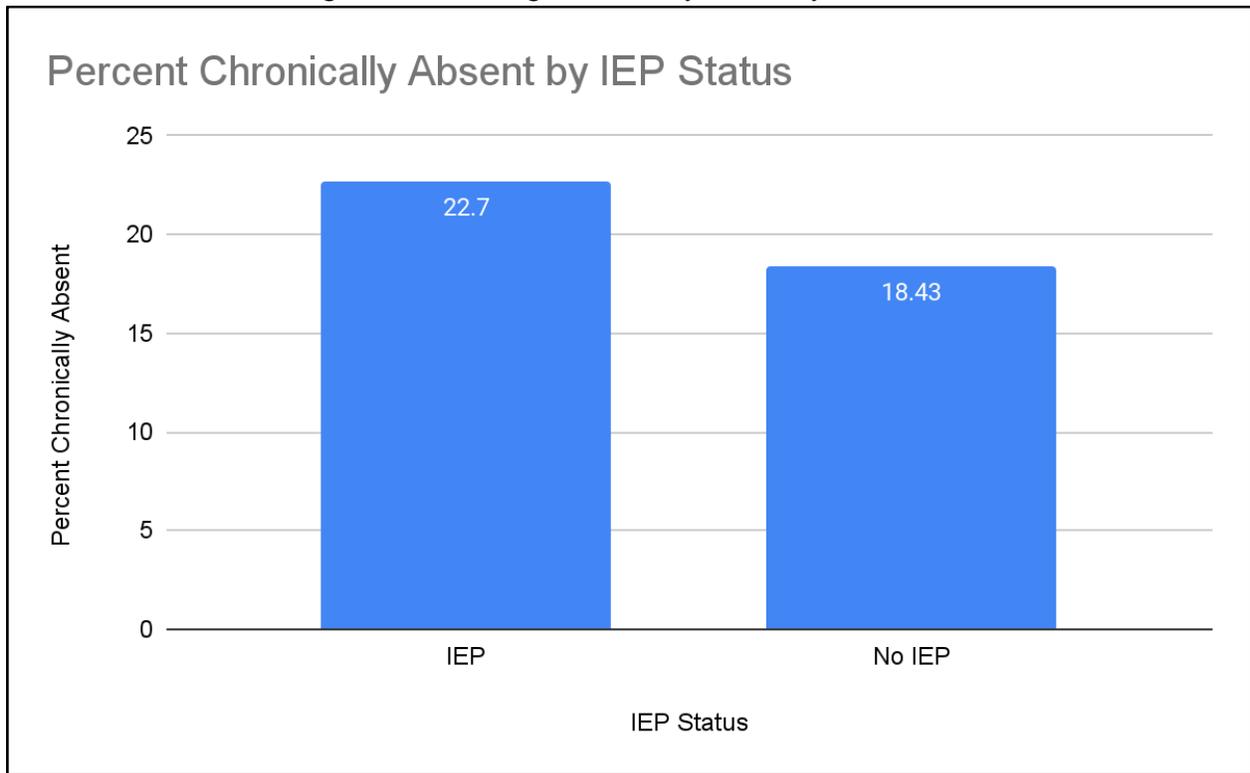
Figure 34: Percentage Chronically Absent by EL Status



Source: 2021-22 Attendance Detailed Report

Chronic absence was generally higher for students with an IEP than students without an IEP. While 22.7% of students with an IEP were designated as chronically absent based on the state's definition, only 18.4% of students without an IEP qualified as chronically absent.

Figure 35: Percentage Chronically Absent by IEP Status



Source: 2021-22 Attendance Detailed Report

Attendance: Findings

- Although there are racial and EL-status-based disparities in attendance, these trends even out when accounting for full-time enrollment.
- Chronic absenteeism increases dramatically in high school, particularly for 12th graders.
 - That is, 42.6% of seniors are chronically absent, which is more than three times the average of 13.6% across all other grades. The overall average rate of chronic absenteeism including 12th graders is 15.8%.
- Chronic absenteeism is unequally distributed across racial and other demographic groups.
 - For example, 31.7% of Hispanic students versus 10.7% of Asian students are considered chronically absent.

Discipline

This section examines the discipline recorded for the 2021-2022 school year throughout the whole State College Area School District. It uses data about students who received in-school suspensions (ISS), out-of-school suspensions (OSS), expulsions, and referrals to law enforcement. Breaking down these incidents by demographics such as race and grade level allows us to see the patterns that are occurring across the district. All of the methods of discipline take students out of their classroom, leading to varying levels of lost or interrupted instruction time. This section explores which students lose the most instruction time, and how ISS and OSS account for this lost time.

In the last two decades, there has been increased attention to the ways in which discipline is disproportionately administered. Additionally, data from the federal government has outlined the extent to which even young children are being suspended from school and missing access to critical educational opportunities. In May 2023, the U.S. Departments of Education and Justice released guidance sharing proactive practices districts can use to eliminate the discriminatory practices that may persist in the application of discipline policies.²⁸ As such, we assess on a limited number of critical metrics to understand how discipline in 2021-22 affected SCASD students, and we also recommend additional research to understand the extent to which there may be other discrepancies.²⁹

The 2022-23 school year introduced a new district-wide handbook, whereas previously there were different policies for each level of schooling. There is still a separate code of conduct for elementary students, whereas middle and high school students adhere to one shared code of conduct. These guidelines give suggestions for how to deal with each violation. The elementary guide refers to these suggestions as “actions taken” and the middle/high school guide deems them “consequences.”³⁰ While the guidelines give suggested actions, consequences vary based on each situation and discretion is used. Our analysis of discipline in the district relies only on the action taken in each case. This analysis could be furthered in the future by diving into the violations behind the disciplinary actions, to compare if and how violations are being handled for different students.

²⁸ https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/tvi-student-discipline-resource-202305.pdf?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=

²⁹ For example, in last year’s report, we reported on the number of disciplinary incidents, which we did not have to analyze this year. We also recommended last year and continue to suggest that it is important to understand practices among when and who are referring students. Educators’ approach to discipline understandably varies, and also varies by student, and this could help ensure more uniform implementation of discipline policies. See, for example, new research that illustrates “frequent referrers” substantially widen the racial discipline gap. Liu, J., Penner, E., & Wenjing, G. (2023). Troublemakers? The role of frequent teacher referrals in expanding racial disciplinary disproportionalities. Prepublished June 15, 2023. <https://www.doi.org/10.3102/0013189X231179649>.

³⁰ State College Area School District 2022-23 Student/Family Handbook https://docs.google.com/document/d/1sbzg2aKWLxv-NHc_vzx_UKEC3hEYrR4qoaRcu4fuza4/edit

Figure 36 compares the racial composition of the entire student population with the percentage that each race makes up of the disciplined population. Though Hispanic, Native Hawaiian, and American Indian students make up 4.2%, 0.1%, and 0.2% of the population respectively, no students from these groups received discipline so they are not included in our analysis in this section.

In-school suspension takes students away from the classroom and isolates them in a designated “ISS room” for a certain period of time.³¹ Students are required to complete work given to them by their teachers or the ISS staff during this time and are evaluated on their work.³² They are still doing school work, but they are losing critical time with a teacher that other students are not.

Out of school suspensions require students to be out of the school building for a certain period of time. Students are responsible for making up the quizzes and exams they missed in their absence. Similar to in-school suspensions, they are missing out on time in class with a teacher helping them learn. This also may require adult supervision for students who are not in school. Among the disciplinary actions we analyze, out of school suspensions were the most used disciplinary action in SCASD in 2021-22.

Expulsions are defined by the Pennsylvania Code Title 22 Chapter 12.6 as excluding a student from school for more than 45 days or permanently.³³ Removing a student from the classroom this long may be a barrier to their learning or development. There were four expulsions in 2021-22, made up of two White Students and two Multiracial students, all enrolled in the high school. Though a small number, Multiracial students comprised a disproportionately high share of expelled students.

Referrals to law enforcement depend on the individual situation and staff discretion. Once law enforcement is involved, there is no record of how many days students miss or further consequences. There were fifteen students referred to law enforcement in the 2021-22 school year who had already been suspended. There were two students who were referred to law enforcement without first receiving any type of suspension.

White students make up 77.2% of the total population, but their share in the disciplined population is lower than that, between 50-75% for each method of discipline. Black and

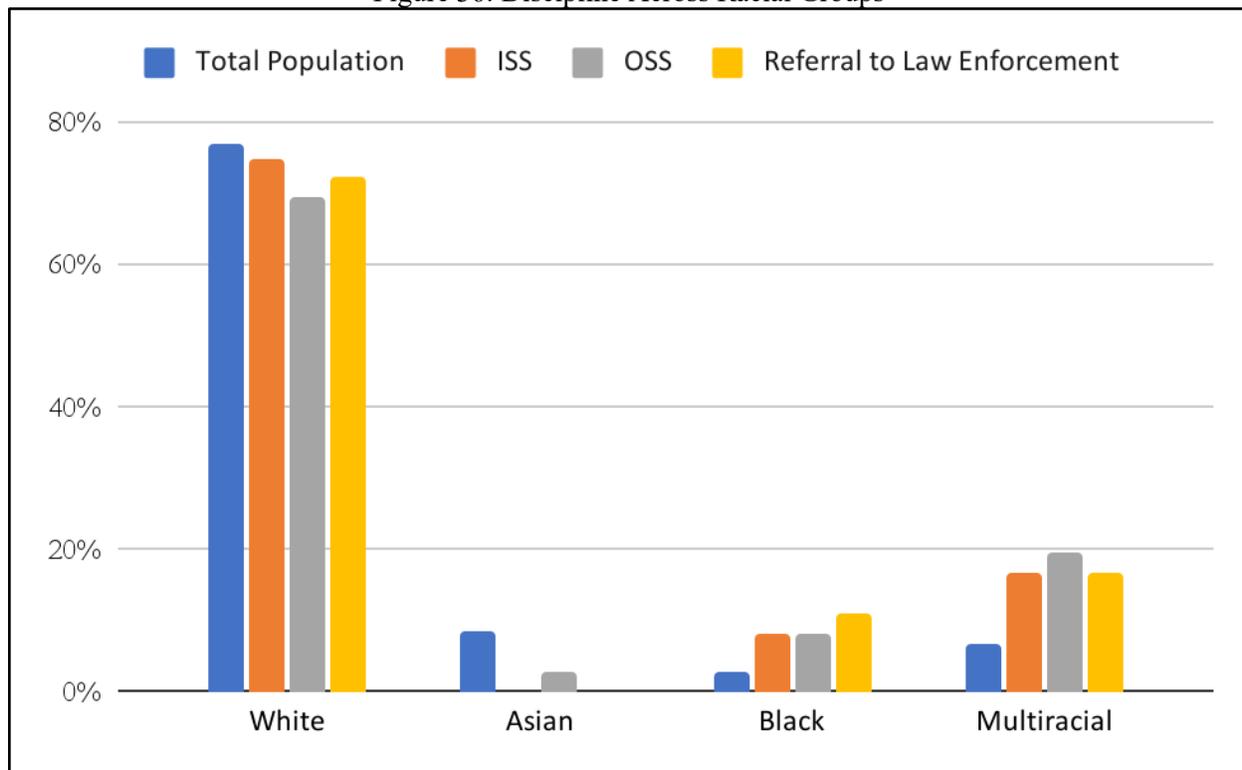
³¹ This procedure was described in the State College Area High School 2019-2020 Student/Parent Handbook, so it may not exactly be the same for the 2021-22 school year. More information on SCASD ISS procedures can be found at <https://www.scasd.org/cms/lib/PA01000006/Centricity/Domain/1/HShandbookAug.pdf>

³² State College Area High School 2019-2020 Student/Parent Handbook <https://www.scasd.org/cms/lib/PA01000006/Centricity/Domain/1/HShandbookAug.pdf>

³³ State College Area School District 2022-23 Student/Family Handbook https://docs.google.com/document/d/1sbzg2aKWLxv-NHc_vzx_UKEC3hEYrR4qoaRcu4fuza4/edit

Multiracial students show an opposite trend, making up a higher percentage of the disciplined population than their percentage of the total population. Black students are only 2.7% of the student body, but their measure of the disciplined population ranges between 8-11%. Multiracial students have an even higher disparity. They account for 6.9% of the student population, but make up between 16-50% of the disciplinary cases.

Figure 36: Discipline Across Racial Groups

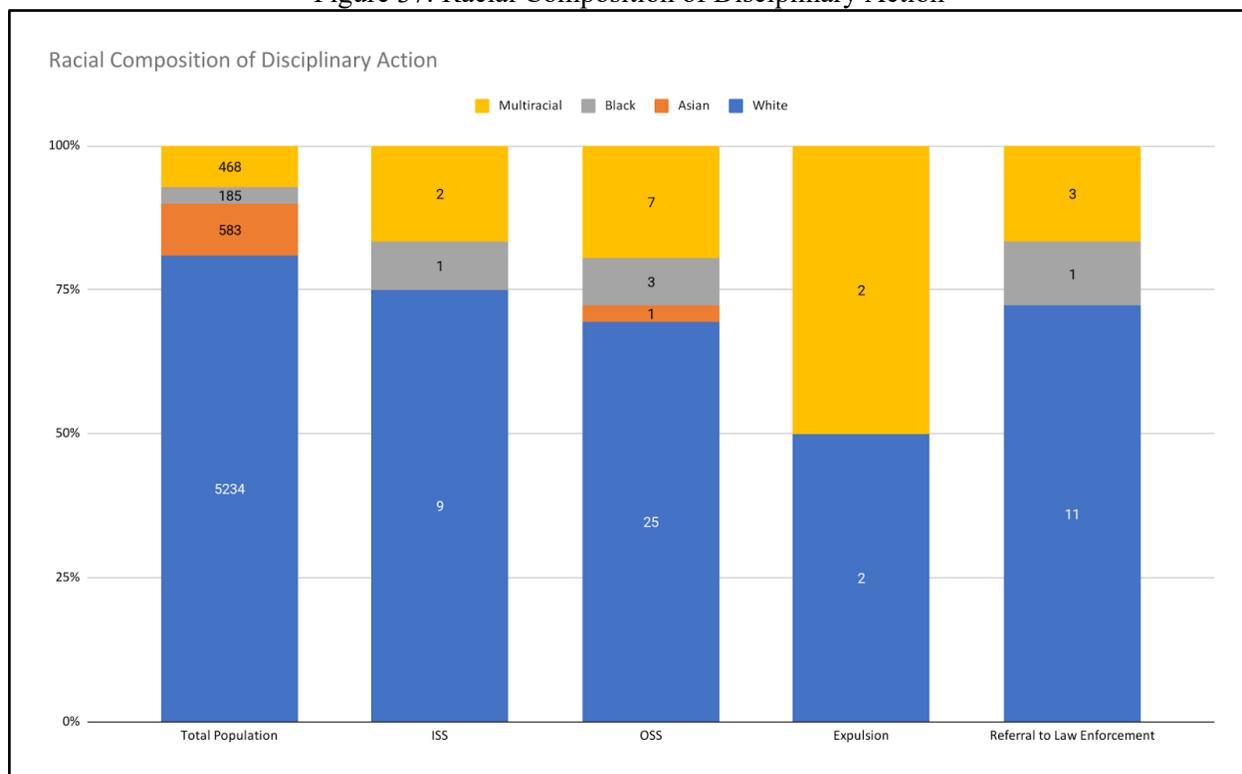


Source: Discipline Data reported by SCASD; Note: ISS refers to In-school suspension; OSS refers to out-of-school suspension

Another way to look at the disparities in disciplinary action among different racial groups is by looking at the number of cases. The figure below is another representation of the racial composition of disciplinary action across the whole district. The number of students of each race is laid out as a portion of the total population for each category (left bar). With a majority of White students in the district, it makes sense that White students share a large percentage of the disciplinary incidents. However, White students are disproportionately present less in every single one of the discipline categories compared to their share of the total population. The Black and Multiracial student population show the opposite trend. They make up a larger percentage of each discipline category than they do of the whole district. Figure 37 also includes expulsions. With only four expulsions recorded for the 2021-22 school year, White and Multiracial students appear to be overrepresented in this area. Analysis of the types of incidents resulting in expulsions, as well as the disciplinary steps taken before expulsion occurs, would assist in making a clearer picture of the use of expulsions within SCASD. There was only one Asian

student recorded in the discipline data so this population is absent from the ISS, expulsion, and referral to law enforcement bars in the figure.

Figure 37: Racial Composition of Disciplinary Action



Source: Discipline Data reported by SCASD

One of the ways to understand how exclusionary discipline is affecting students, beyond the number of disciplinary actions, is to analyze days that were lost to classroom instruction due to a student serving a suspension that had them out of the classroom and/or out of the school. Last year’s report analyzed lost days of instruction from the 2016-17 school year. When isolating the number of instructional days lost to OSS, the numbers have decreased since 2016-17 for all students except for Multiracial students. White students lost almost 50% less instructional days in 2021-22. Conversely, the number of days lost to OSS for Multiracial students increased more than 50% from only 23 days in 2016-17 to 49 days in 2021-22. The total number of lost days for Asian students decreased from 10 to 3 and for Black students decreased from 34 to 25. The most surprising change is the drastic decrease of 28 days to 0 days for Hispanic students across these years.

Table 3 breaks down the total number of lost instructional days by race and type of suspension. White students make up the highest number of suspensions and number of lost instructional days, but they also have the largest population. Between all 47 incidents, White students lost a total of 180.5 days, which equates to about 3.8 days lost per incident. Multiracial students lost 52 instructional days and had a high number of OSS incidents given their total

population size. Black students have the third highest number of lost instructional days. A total of 27 days makes them 10% of the lost instructional days while they only make up 2.73% of the entire population; Black students are missing instructional time at a far higher rate than their peers. Asian students - who are the second largest racial group in SCASD - only had one suspension recorded for the 2021-22 school year, totalling only 3 days of lost instruction. One group that has been disproportionately disciplined more in the past are Hispanic students, who were reported to have zero incidents this past year. The amount of days of lost instruction is an underestimate because we do not know how much time was lost to expulsions and referrals to law enforcement. These numbers would only increase as we add up how many days students spent out of school for these incidents.

Table 3: District-Wide Suspensions by Race for the 2021-22 School Year

	Student Population	Total # of ISS Incidences	Total # of OSS Incidents	Total # of Lost Instructional Days (ISS and OSS combined)
American Indian/Alaska Native	12	0	0	0
Asian	583	0	1	3
Black	185	1	3	27
Hispanic	287	0	0	0
Multiracial	468	2	11	52
Native Hawaiian	7	0	0	0
White	5234	14	27	180.5
Total Population	6776	17	42	262.5

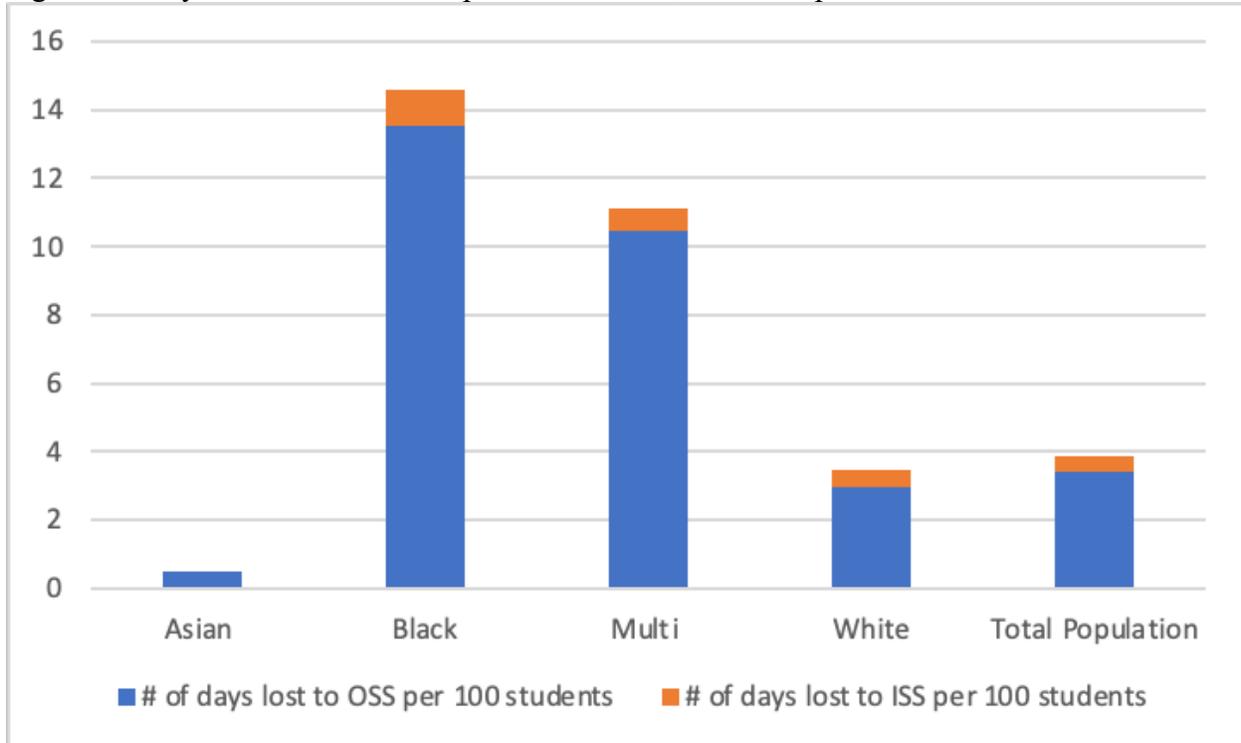
Source: Discipline Data reported by SCASD

The days that students spend out of the classroom for discipline means they are missing vital classroom instruction time. This is time that they will not get back. As such, research and policy efforts in recent years have focused on efforts to reduce suspensions, especially for younger students.³⁴ The majority of lost instructional time in SCASD during the 2021-22 school year was due to out-of-school suspension. In-school suspensions did not take away as much time, but they add to the total lost instructional time. Black students had the highest rate of lost instructional time at 14.59 days lost per 100 students (Figure 38). Compared with the total population, this number is almost four times the amount of days lost per 100 students in the entire district. The second highest rate of lost instructional time is for Multiracial students. Averaging at 11.11 days lost per 100 students, Multiracial students lost less instructional time on average than Black students, but still more than double the average across the total population.

³⁴ For example, California has eliminated suspension for certain categories of disciplinary incidents for K-8 students, and minimized discipline for attendance reasons. See <https://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/el/le/yr21ltr0819.asp>

White and Asian students averaged below the total population for instructional days lost per 100 students.

Figure 38: Days of Lost Instruction per 100 students, due to suspensions



Source: Discipline Data reported by SCASD

Table 4 gives a general overview of the disciplinary action taken at each schooling level. By separating the disciplined students by race, we analyzed the prevalence of discipline among each race to see what was happening in each separate school level. Black students account for a higher percentage of the discipline cases in high school than middle or elementary school. Conversely, White students account for a lesser percent of the discipline cases in high school than in middle school. Multiracial students account for the highest percentage of discipline in elementary school, though there were only three elementary school cases. While this table presents the number of students who were disciplined in each school level, it does not present the total number of disciplinary incidents. There are students who received the same discipline on more than one occasion.

Table 4: Total Suspensions and Expulsions by Grade Level

	Asian	Black	Multiracial	White	Total
Elementary School	0	0	2	1	3

Middle School ³⁵	0	1	3	17	21
High School	1	3	6	25	35

Source: Discipline Data reported by SCASD; Note: This table does not include data on American Indian/Alaska Native, Hispanic, or Native Hawaiian because there were no reported disciplinary incidents. It also does not include referral to law enforcement as that data is unavailable.

Discipline: Findings Summary

- Compared to earlier years, exclusionary discipline is lower among SCASD students than in prior years
- Black students have much higher days of lost instructional time than other groups (per 100 students)
- By contrast, Hispanic students have no reports of exclusionary discipline
- Multiracial students have the largest disparity between their total population and their percentage of the disciplined population. They are 6.9% of the total population, and 18.9% of the disciplined population.

³⁵ Unlike most other data analyzed in this report, several disciplined students were identified as being enrolled at Delta MS, which we combine with other middle schools. We do not have information on the demographics of students in Delta MS to be able to compare.

Recommendations

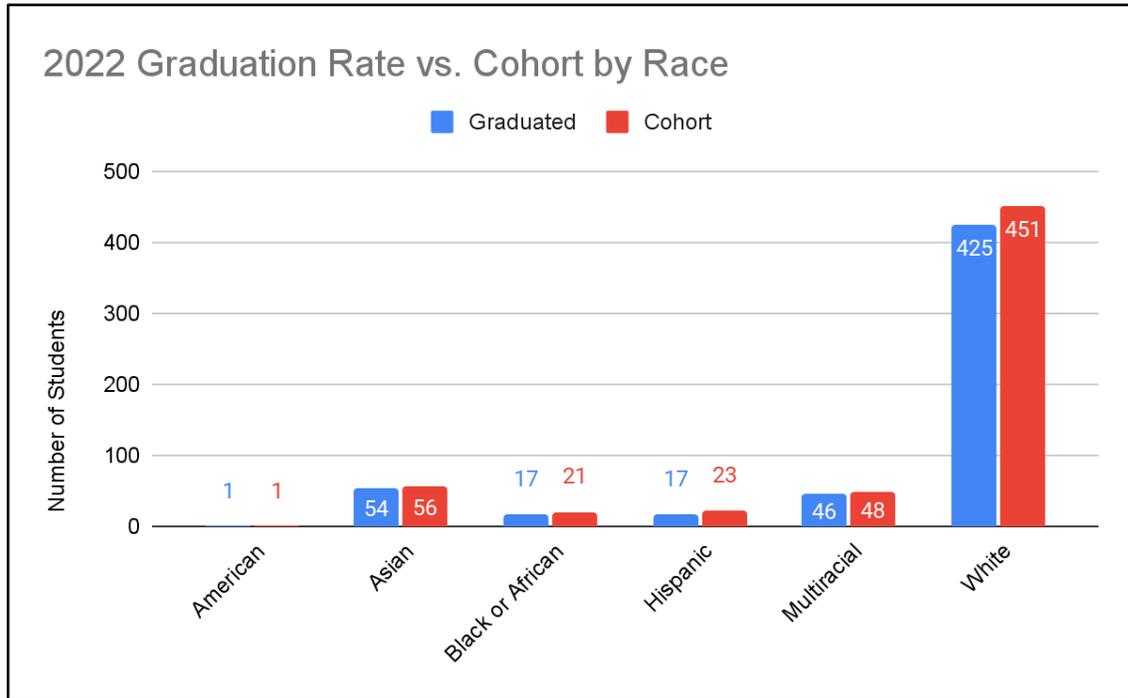
- Reporting on an annual basis, per SCASD equity action plan, regarding annual equity progress and any new trends; also shared with the community.
 - Accuracy of data is a current barrier to deeper, more accurate analysis
 - Data systems could articulate more easily to enable comparisons among student subgroups
 - Transparency of updates important for community in easily accessible manner
 - Some of the recommendations below would also require additional data
- Develop action plans to address enrollment differences across schools, particularly focusing on racial groups, economic disadvantage, and English Language status; provide additional resources to schools as needed.
- Identify policies and practices to reduce attendance differences across schools, grades, ELs/native English speakers, and racial groups.
- Provide additional resources to students to increase graduation rates of subgroups that are lower than the district's overall rate.
- Assess causes of racial disparities in screening processes of the gifted programs and assess new screening effort.
- Support equitable opportunity for advanced learning from the earliest grades and monitor enrollment in advanced courses (see accompanying AP report for additional recommendations).
- Intentionally plan to increase teacher and staff diversity, including addressing recruitment and retention.
- Review whether student discipline policy revisions have reduced racial disparities.
- In keeping with last year's report, we suggest future reports could also broaden understanding of students and staff's experiences in the district such as curriculum, climate, and extracurricular activities that can help to engage and sustain students.

About the Center for Education and Civil Rights (CECR)

The Center for Education and Civil Rights seeks to be a hub for the generation of knowledge and coalition-building among the education and civil rights communities to promote research-based actions that address the complicated nature of racial and ethnic inequality in the 21st century. The Center's collective work is intended to promote equity across the educational pipeline by supporting efforts that facilitate integration through an interdisciplinary approach. CECR is directed by Erica Frankenberg. For more information, see cecr.ed.psu.edu or follow [@psu_civilrights](https://twitter.com/psu_civilrights).

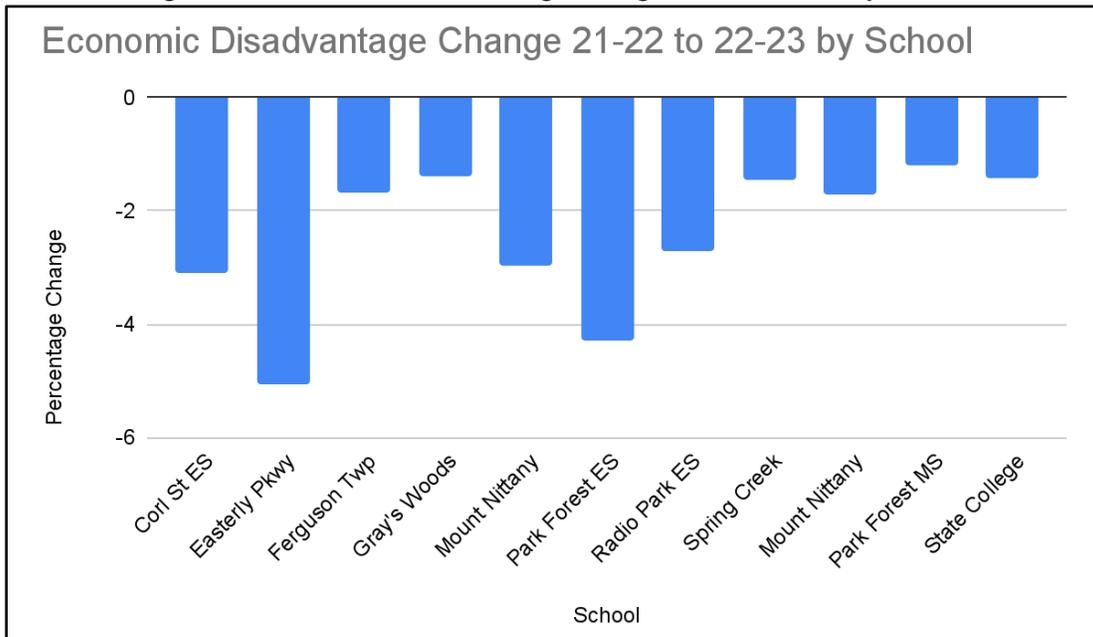
Appendix

Figure A-1: 2022 Number of Students Who Graduated vs. Number of Students in Cohort by Race



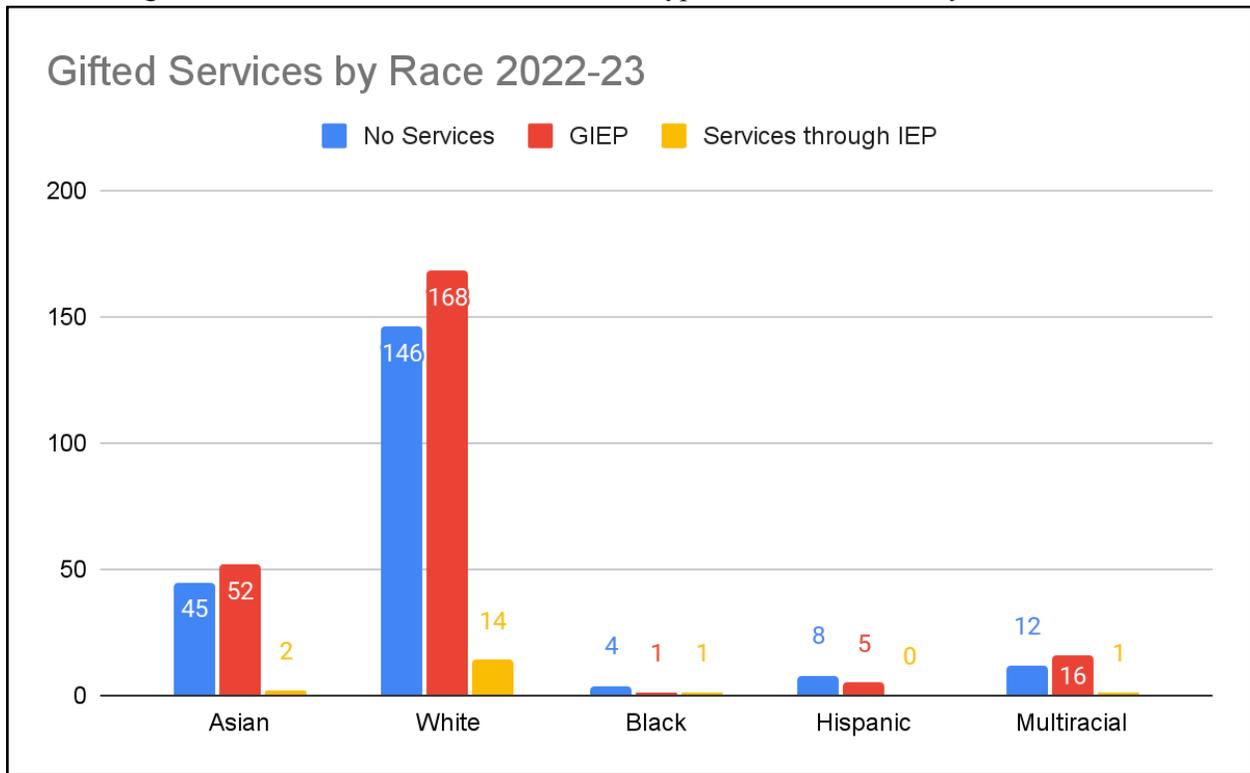
Source: Cohort Graduation Rate ACS 2021-22

Figure A-2: Economic Disadvantage Change 21-22 to 22-23 by School



Source: 2021-22 October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data, 2022-23 October Enrollment, Low Income, and EL Data

Figure A-3: Number of Gifted Students with Type of Gifted Services by Race 2022-23



Source: Gifted Details Student Snapshot GY and GN 2022

Figure A-4: Number of English Learner Students by School 2022-23

Percent English Learning Students by School

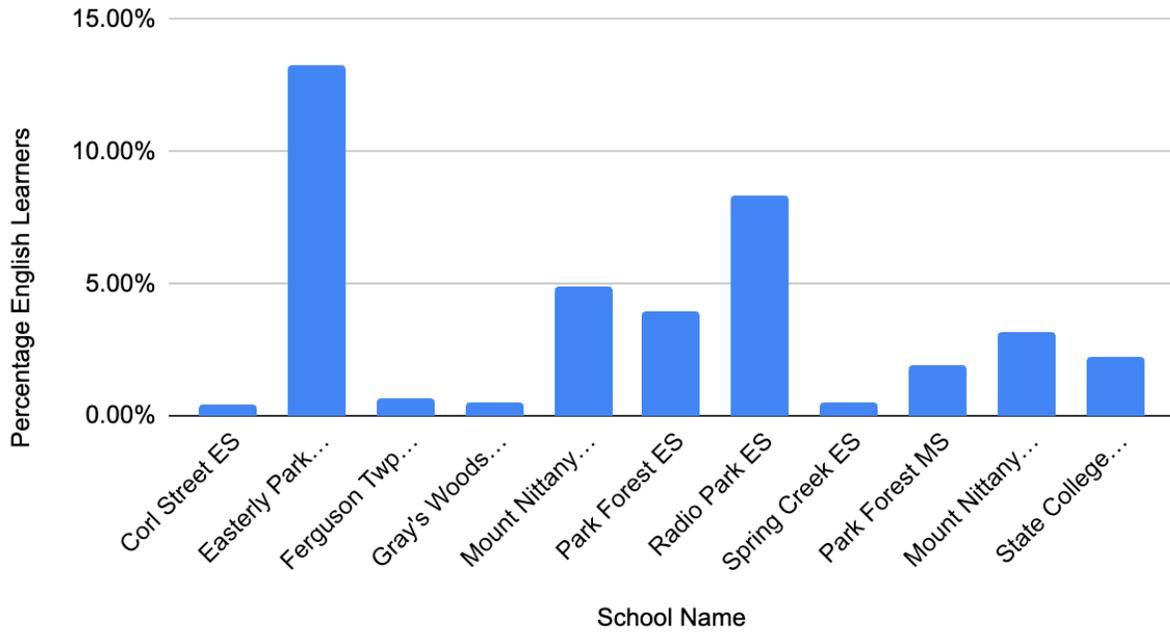


Figure A-5: Number of Immigrant Students by School 2022-23

Immigrant Student Percentage by School

