

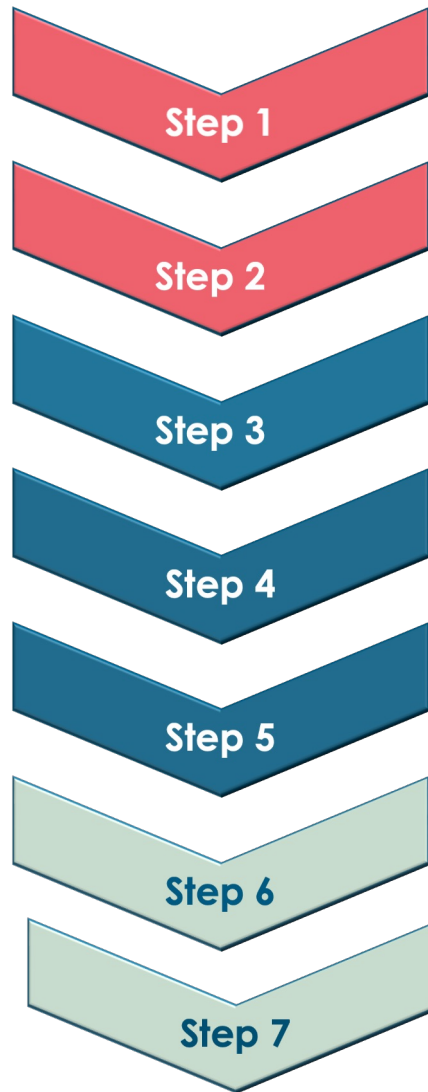


Strategic Plan Update

Board of Directors Education Committee
December 6, 2023



Project Overview



- Environmental Scan
- Organizational Assessment

- Analyze Implications

- Define Desired Future: Vision, Mission, Priority Student Outcomes

- Develop Strategic Themes, Objectives and Measures

- Define Strategic Initiatives

- Create Action Plans

- Develop Monitoring and Review Process

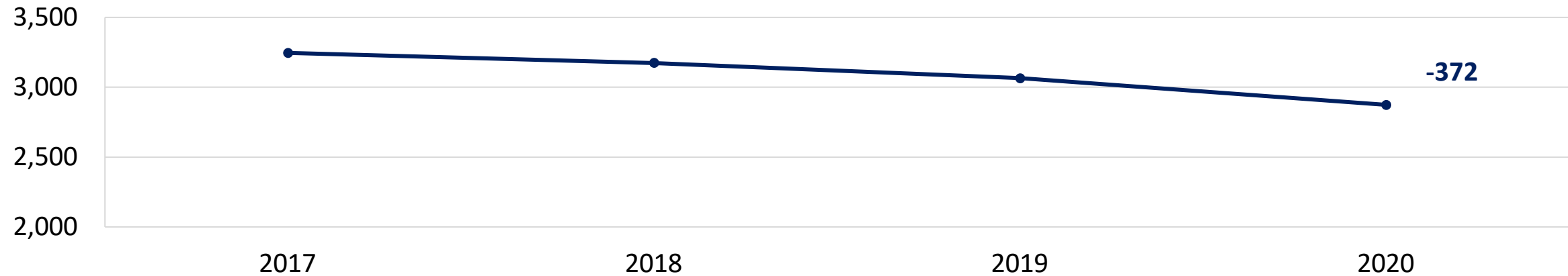
Phase 1: Analysis
June-October

Phase 2:
Strategy Development
November-February

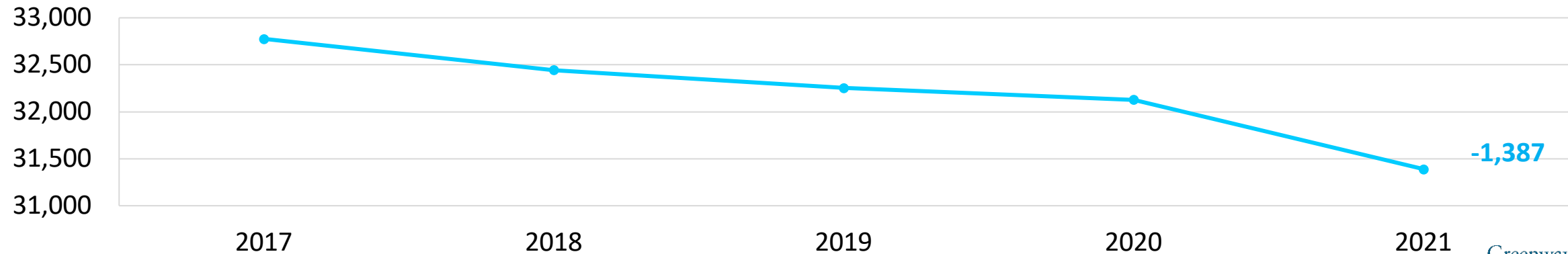
Phase 3: Action
Planning
March-May

Birth rates to Pittsburgh residents are declining which will drive a continued decline in the age 5-17 resident population.

City of Pittsburgh Resident Births Per Year
2017-2020



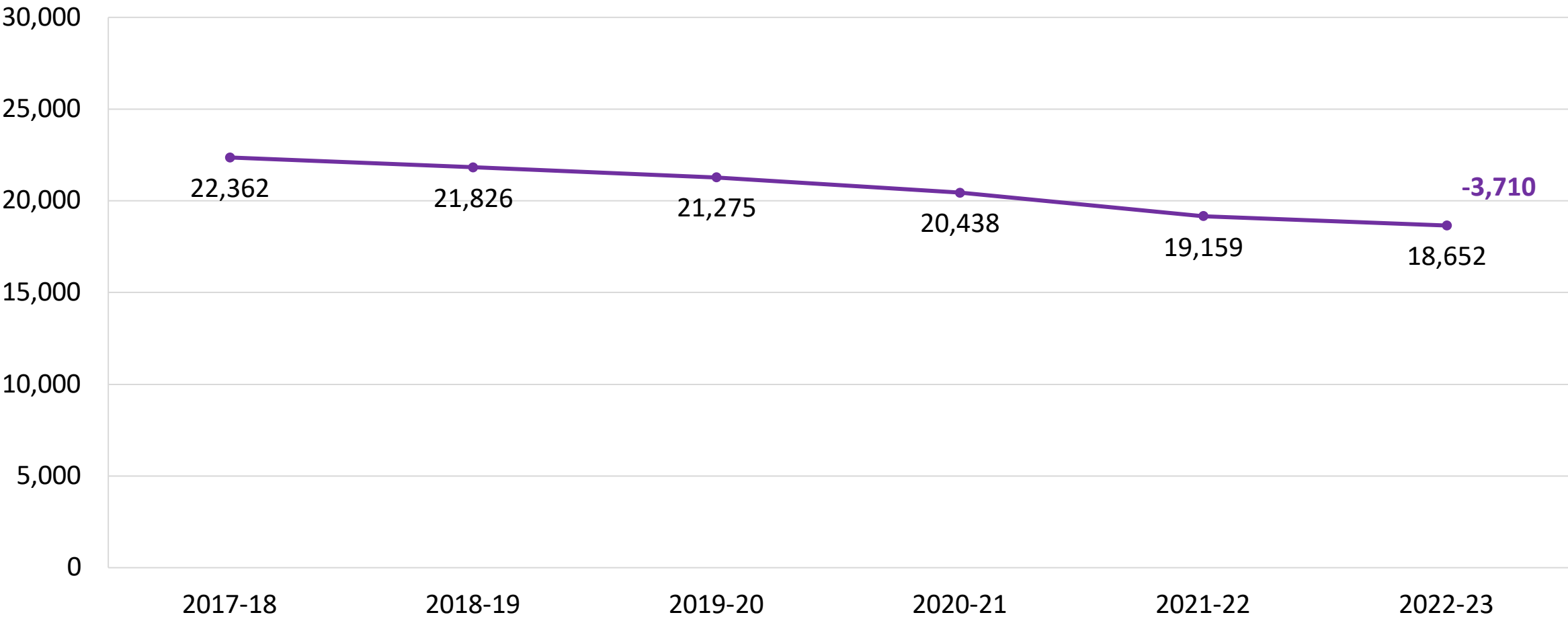
City of Pittsburgh Population Ages 5-17
2017-2021



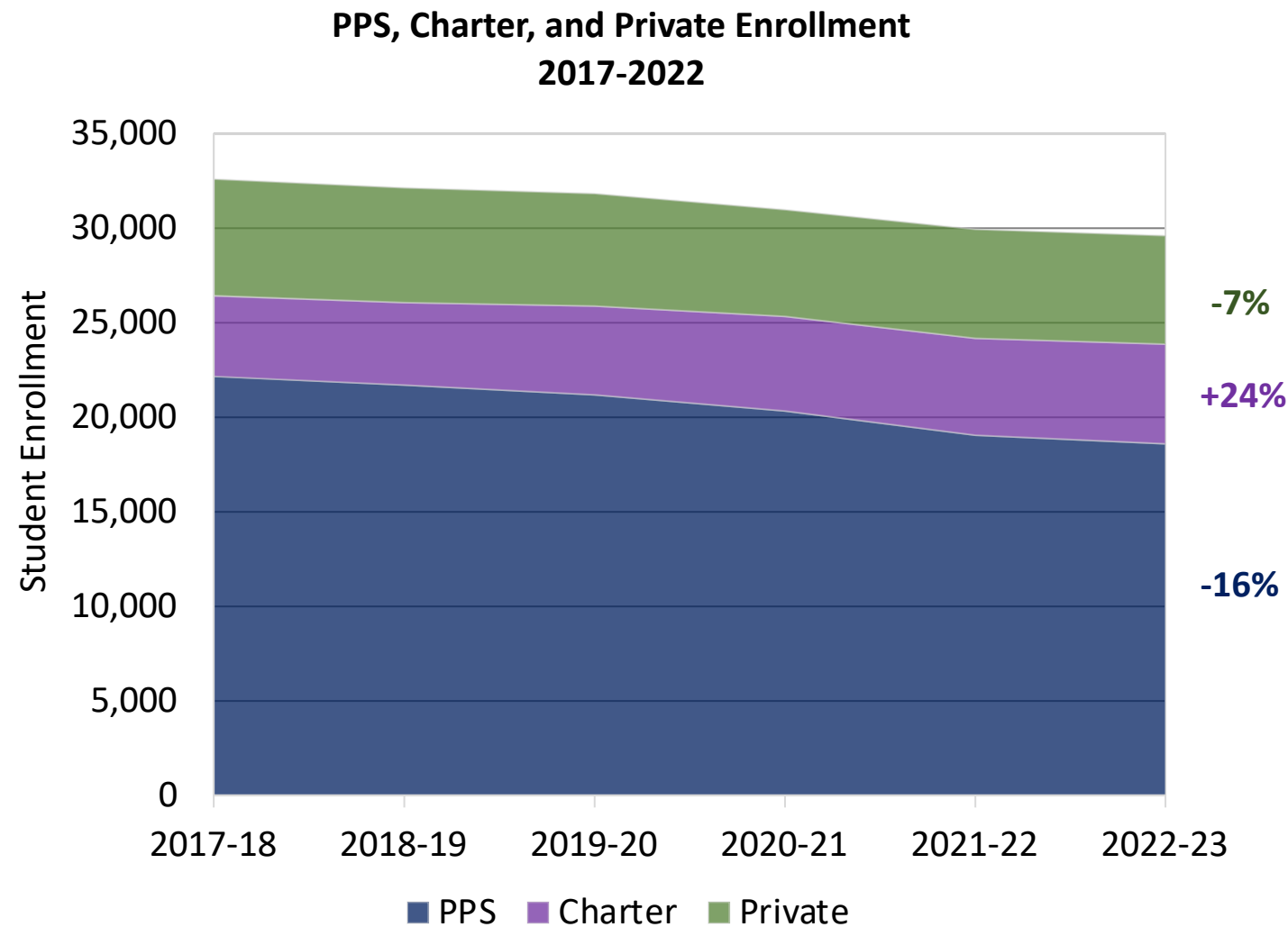
Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health; US Census Data

The number of students enrolled in Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) has steadily declined.

PPS K-12 Total Enrollment: October Student Count
2017-2022



The decline in PPS enrollment results not only from population declines but also from families increasingly choosing charter schools.

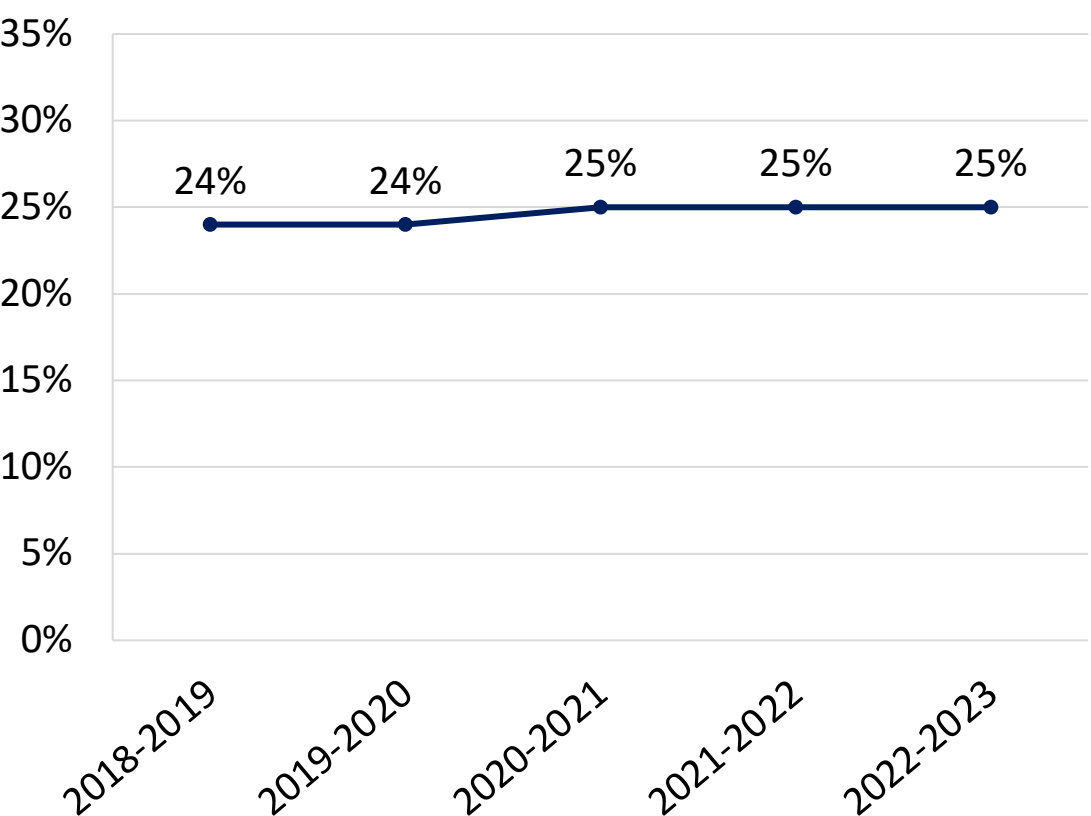


City of Pittsburgh resident school enrollment among all school types declined by 9% over this 5-year period.

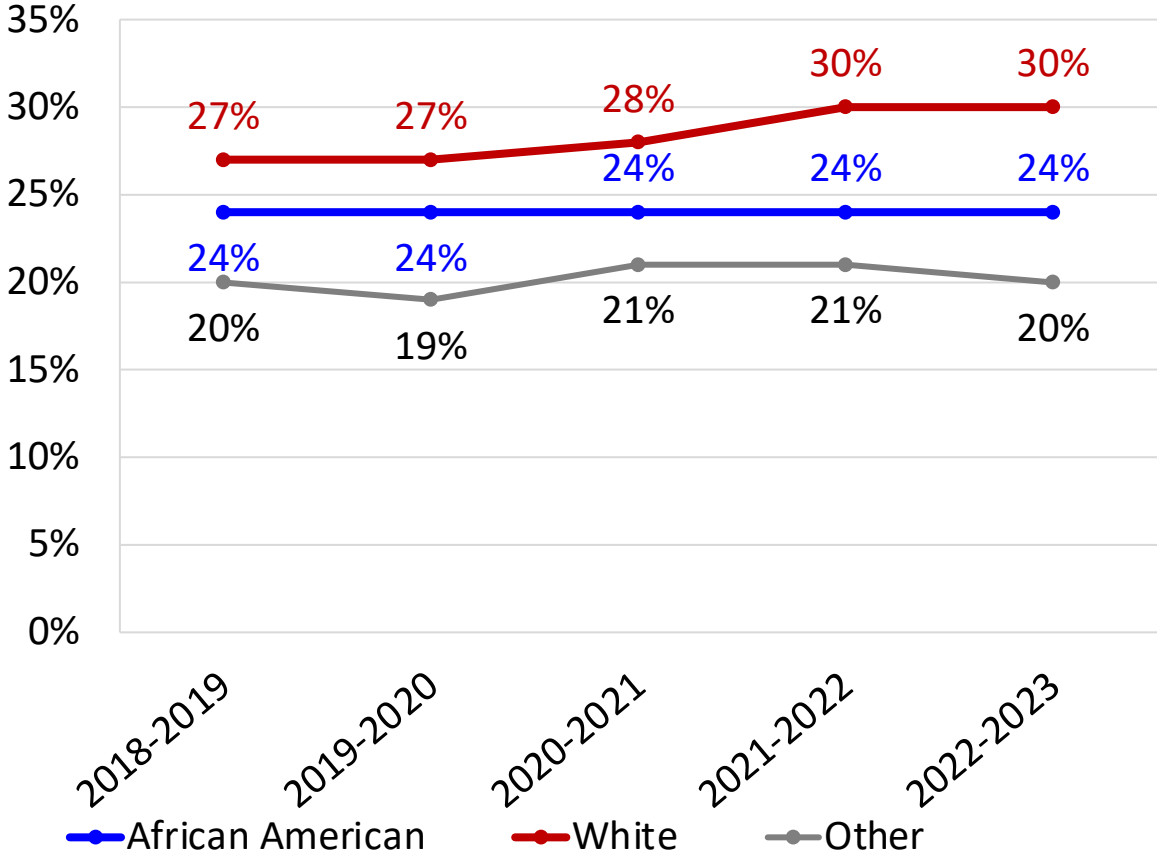
In October of 2022, 62.8% of Pittsburgh resident school enrollees attended a PPS school, a decline from 68% in the Fall of October of 2017.

The proportion of students enrolled in full magnet schools has remained steady at approximately 1 of every 4 students. However, a greater proportion of White students are enrolled in full magnet schools.

Percentage of Students Enrolled in Full Magnet Schools



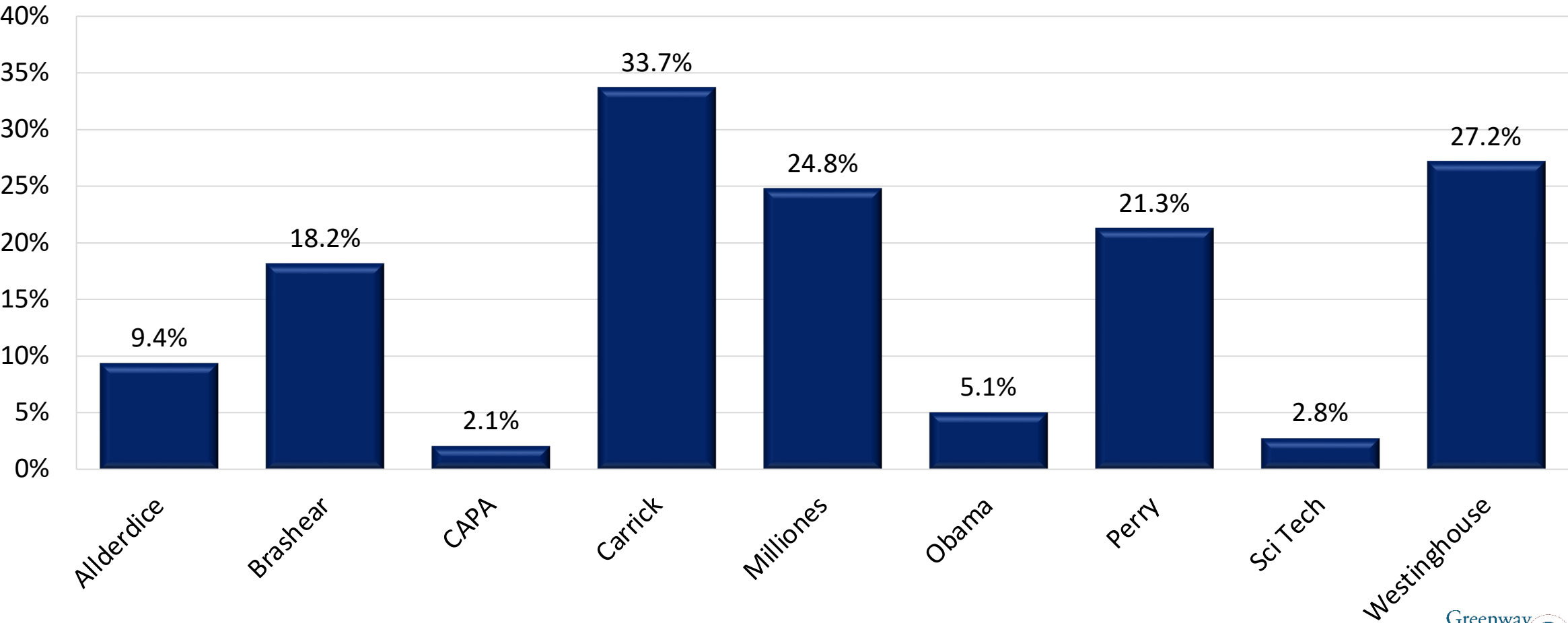
Percentage of Students Enrolled in Full Magnet Schools by Race



Note that this does not include enrollment in partial magnet schools or magnet programs in non-magnet schools.

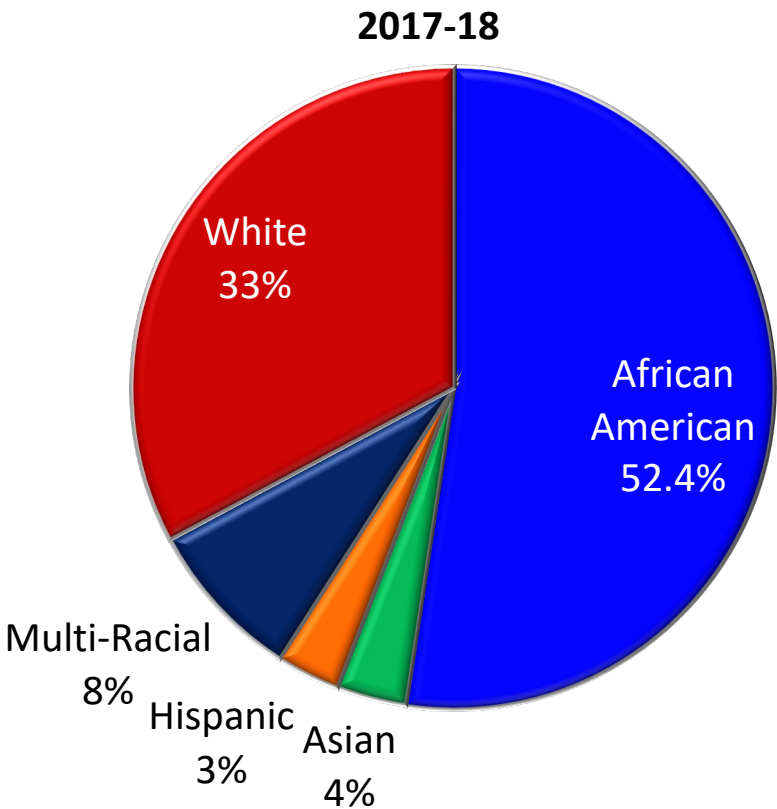
When considering within-school transition among 6-12 and 9-12 schools, it is clear that some schools experience much greater shifts among the student population during the school year than others.

Percentage of Total Students Enrolled who Entered After October Count
2022-23

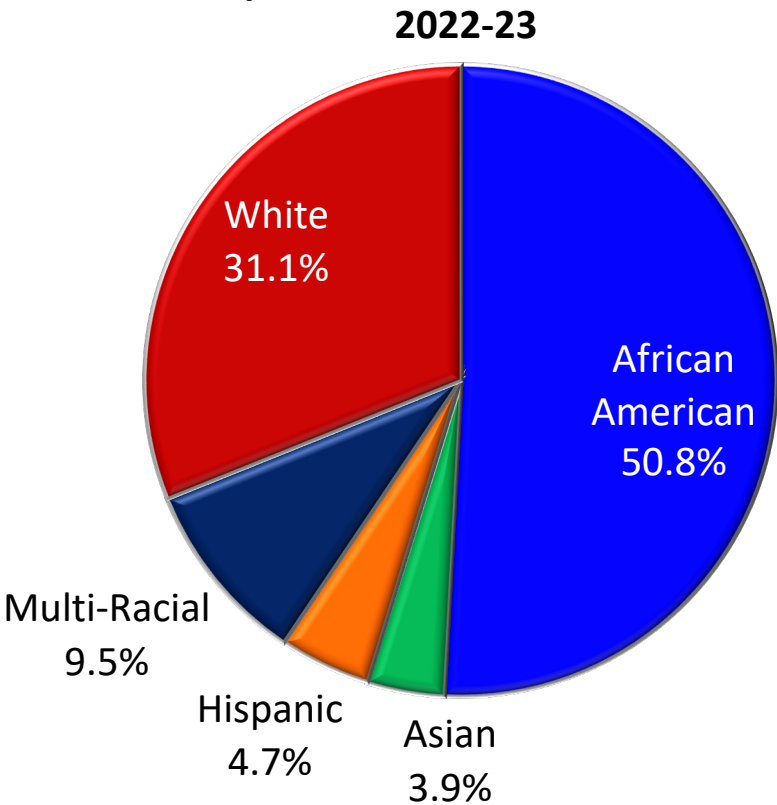


The demographic distribution of PPS students has not shifted remarkably since October of 2017. Students who are economically disadvantaged, have an IEP, or are English Learners have increased slightly.

PPS Student Enrollment Distribution by Student Groups

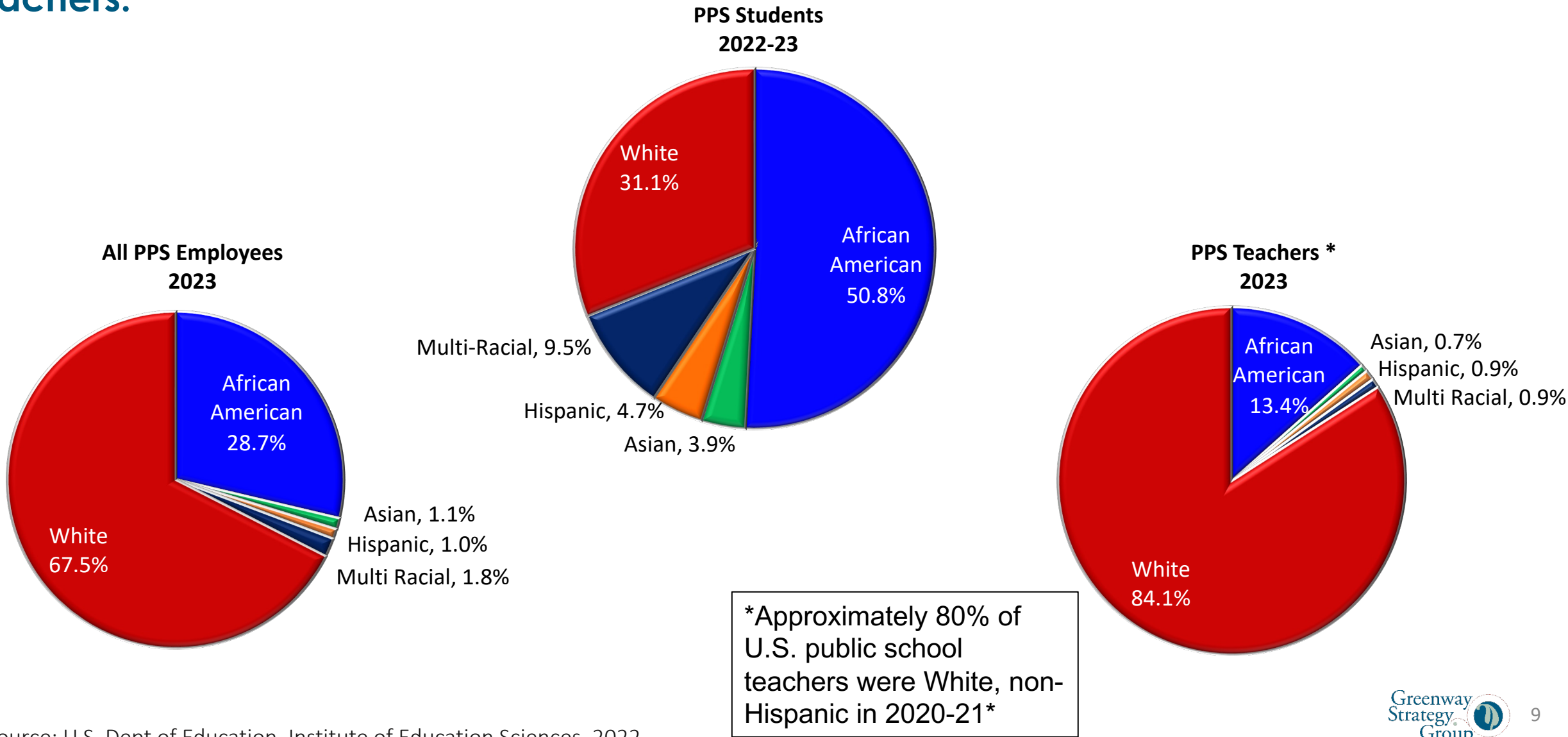


Enrollment	ED	IEP	EL
22,362	63.0%	19.8%	4.8%



Enrollment	ED	IEP	EL
18,652	64.5%	22.2%	6.5%

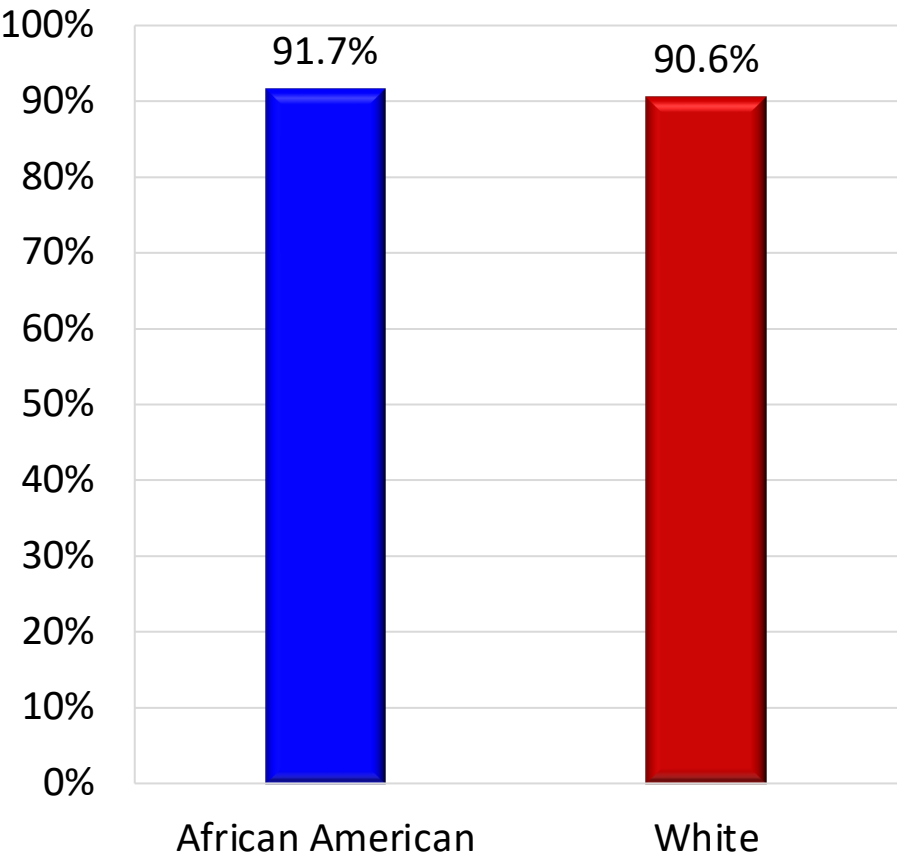
The proportion of White students in PPS is much lower than the proportion of White employees, and significantly lower than the proportion of White teachers. However, the proportion of White teachers in PPS is close to that of all U.S. public school teachers.



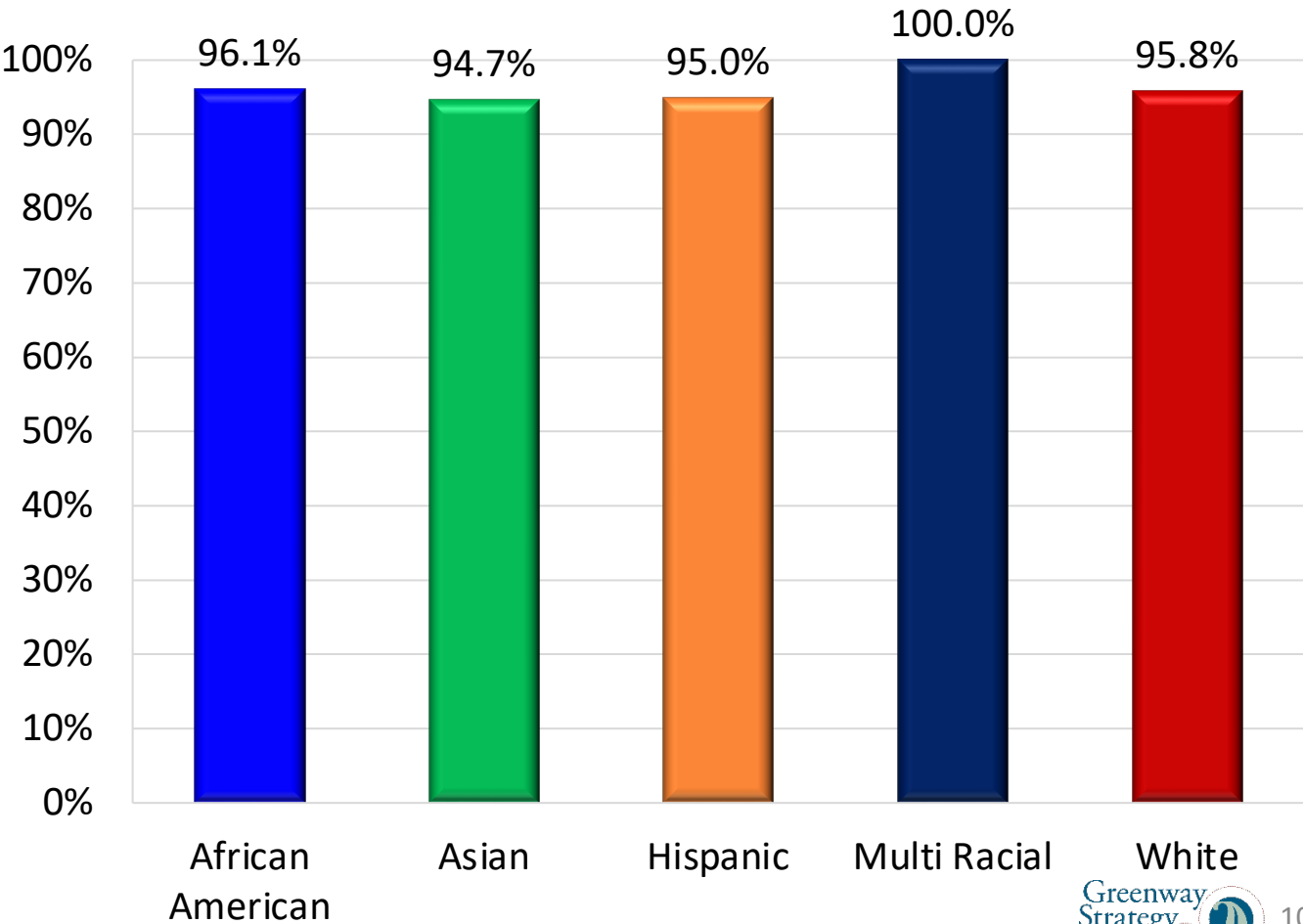
*Source: U.S. Dept of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, 2022

Retention rates for school-based paraprofessionals and certified professionals are generally positive and do not reflect significant difference by race.

Retention Rate of PPS
Paraprofessionals by Race
2022-23

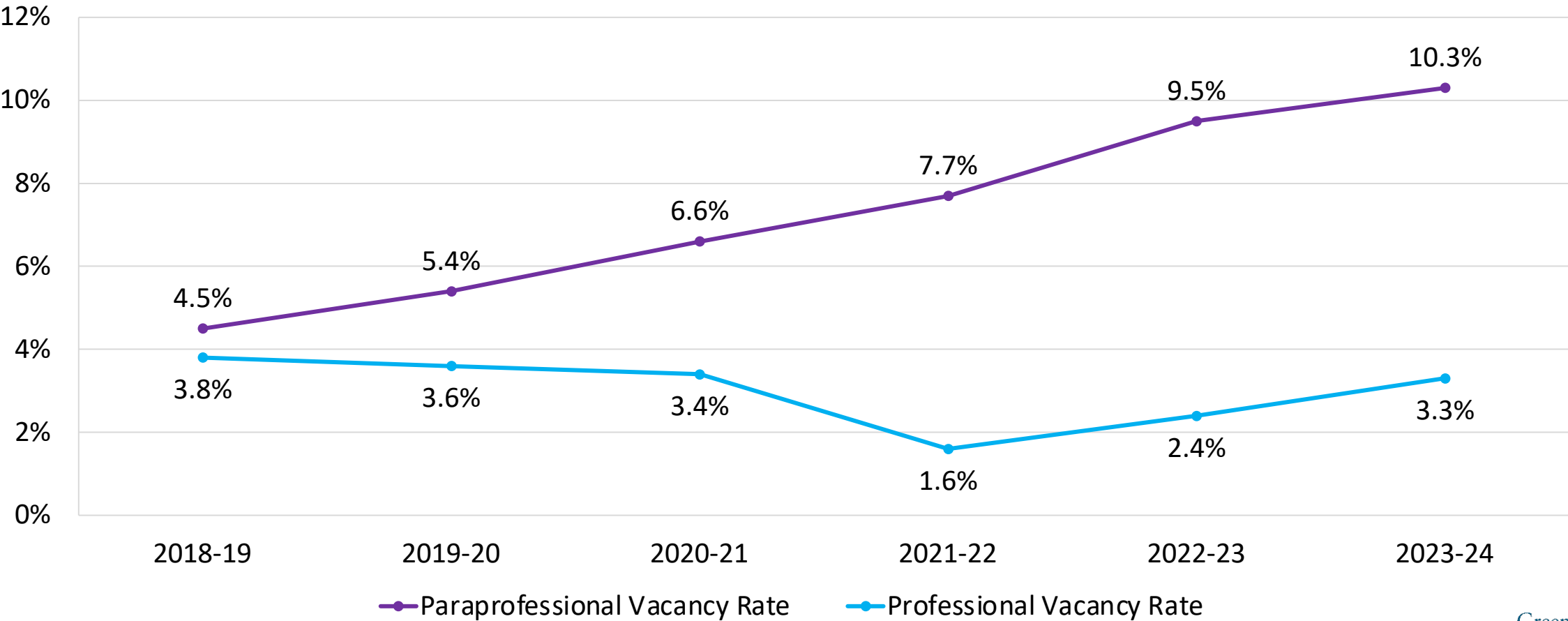


Retention Rate of PPS Certified Professionals by Race
2022-23



Vacancy rates for certified professionals are below the national job vacancy rate of 5.6%. The vacancy rate for paraprofessionals is above the national rate and has been increasing consistently over the past five years.

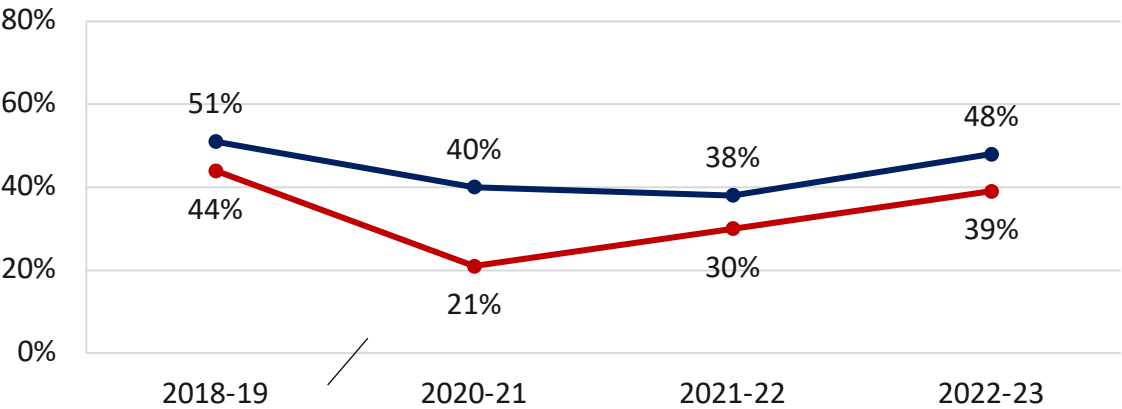
PPS Vacancy Rate of Paraprofessionals and Certified Professionals
2018-2023



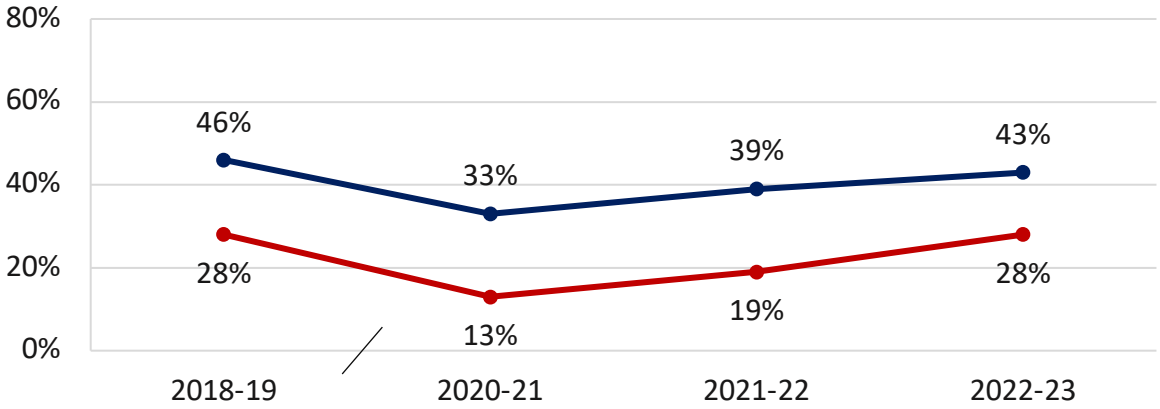
State assessment results across grades have increased since the drop related to the pandemic. Math scores are consistently lower than ELA.

Percentage of PPS Students at Proficient or Advanced Levels by Grade in ELA and Math

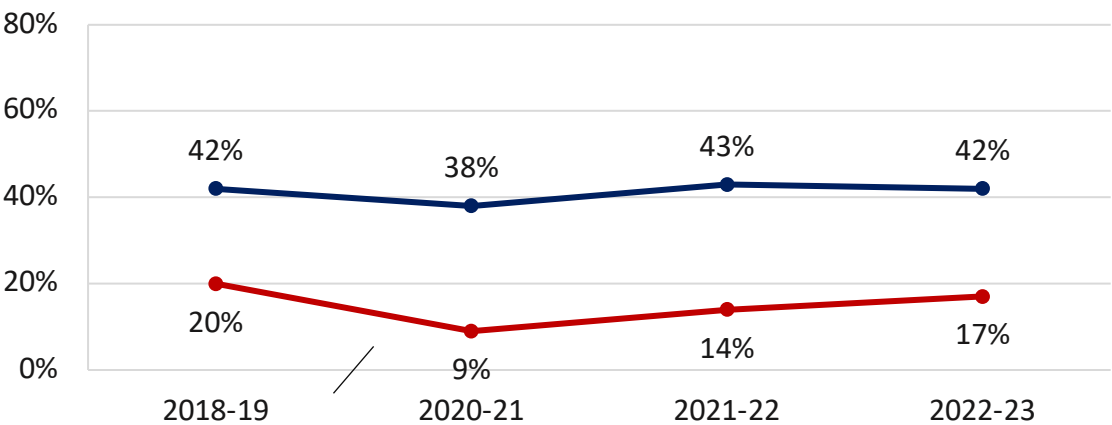
3rd Grade



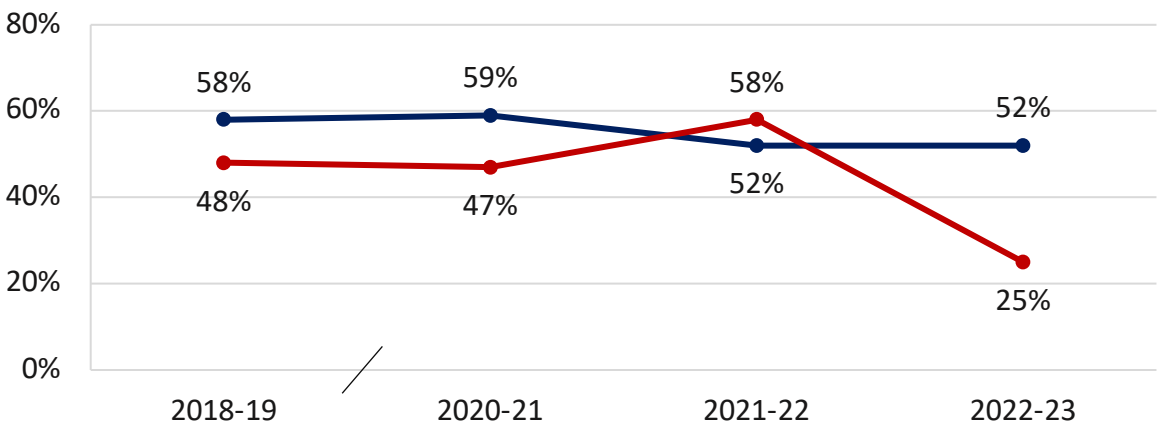
5th Grade



8th Grade



11th Grade

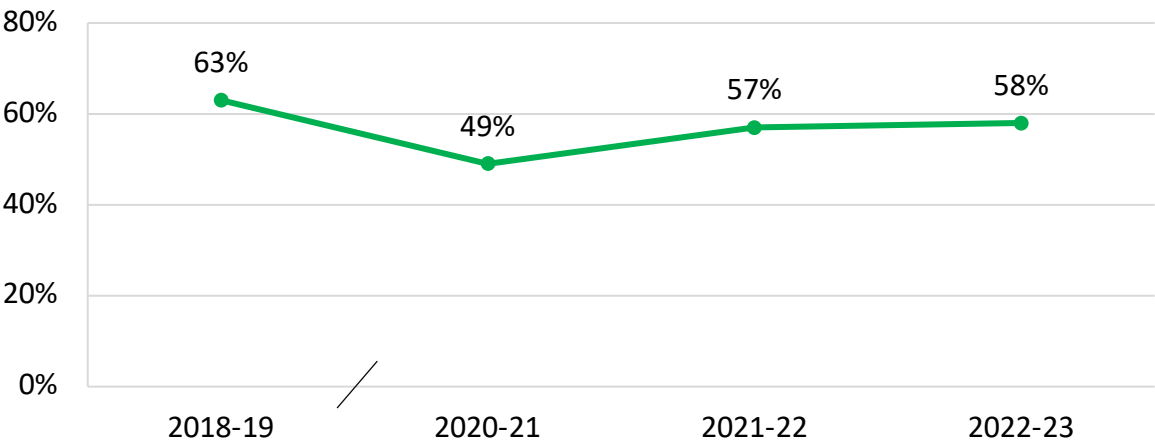


● ELA ● Math

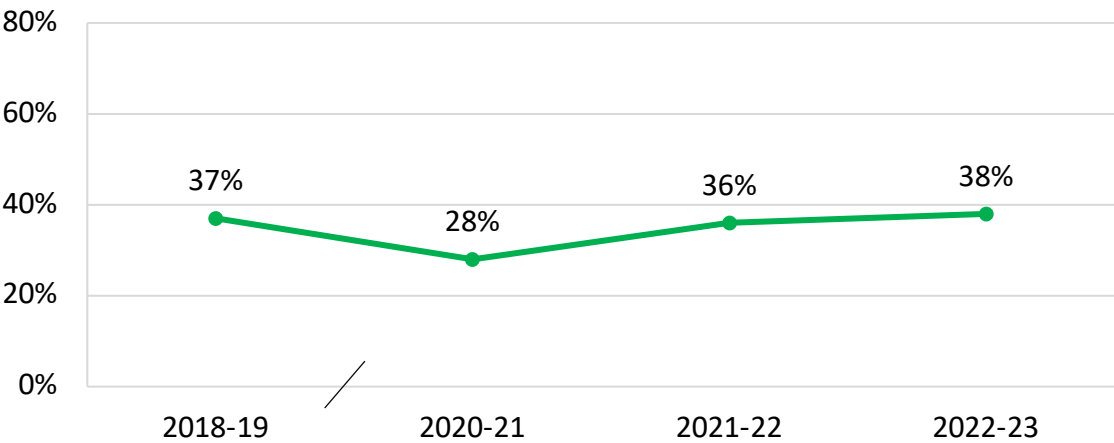
Science scores have also increased since the drop related to the pandemic.

Percentage of PPS Students at Proficient or Advanced Levels by Grade in Science

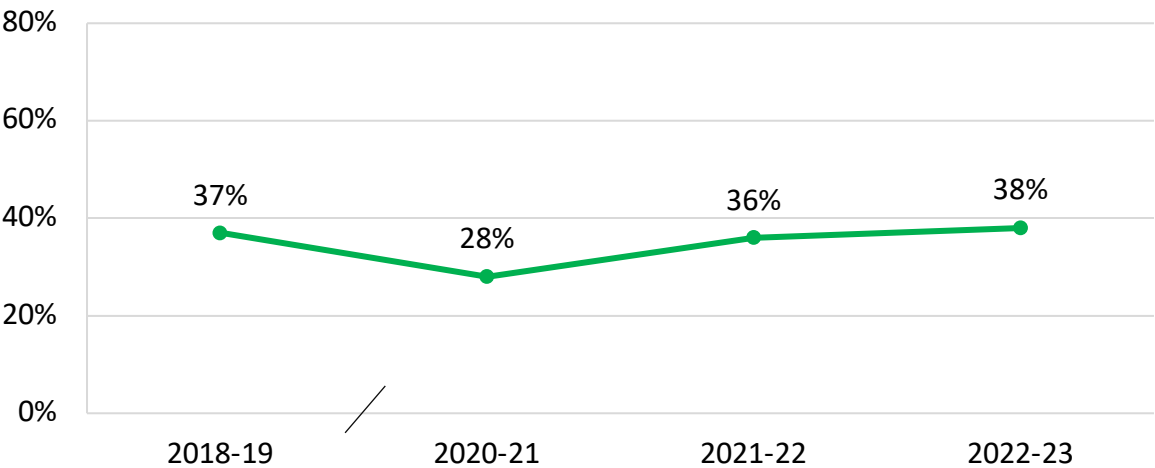
4th Grade



8th Grade



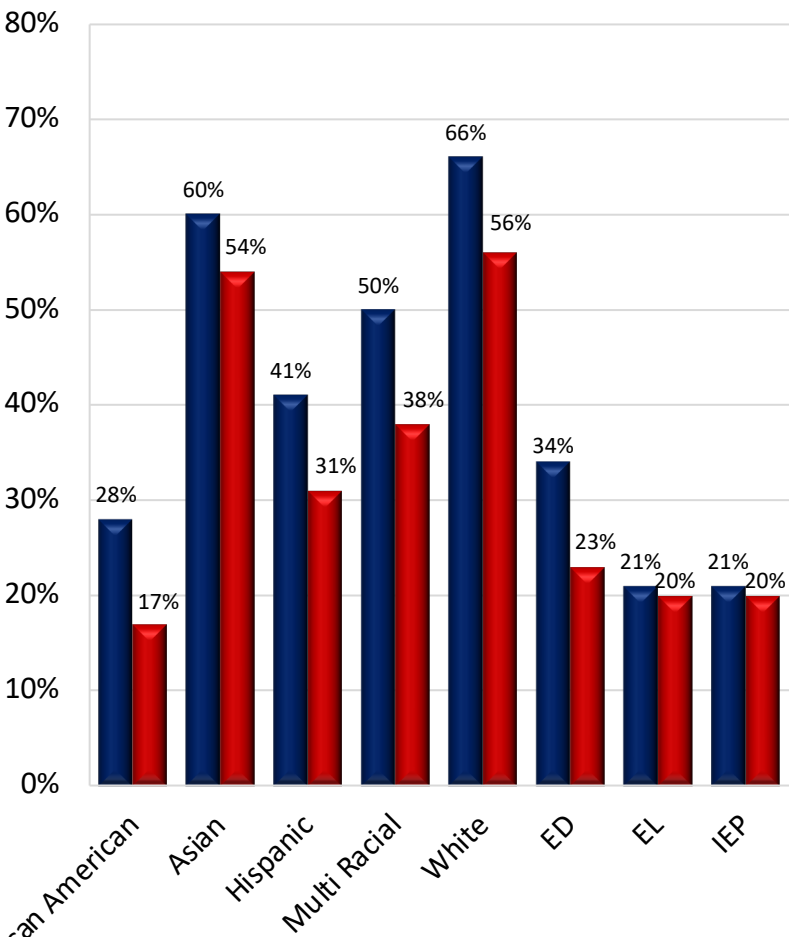
11th Grade



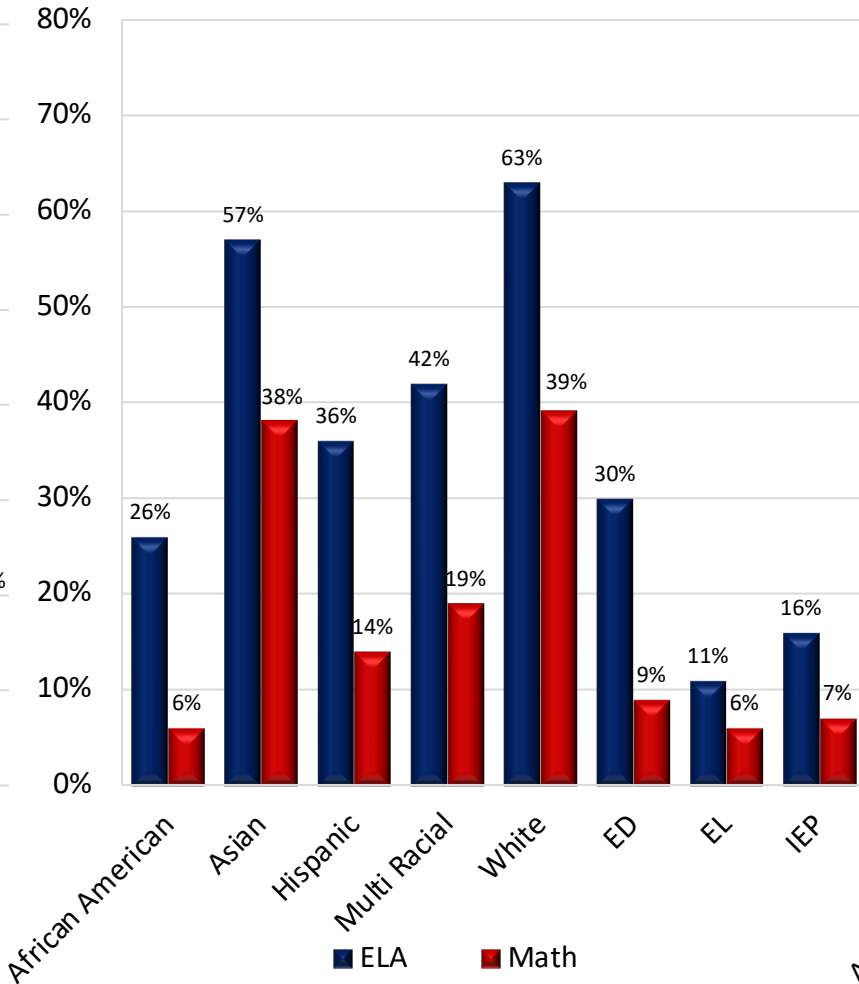
Asian and White students consistently score in the Advanced and Proficient ranges at higher levels than other students. In Math, African American students, English learners, and students with IEPs consistently score at significantly lower levels.

Percentage of PPS Students at the Proficient or Advanced Levels in ELA and Math by Student Group
2022-23

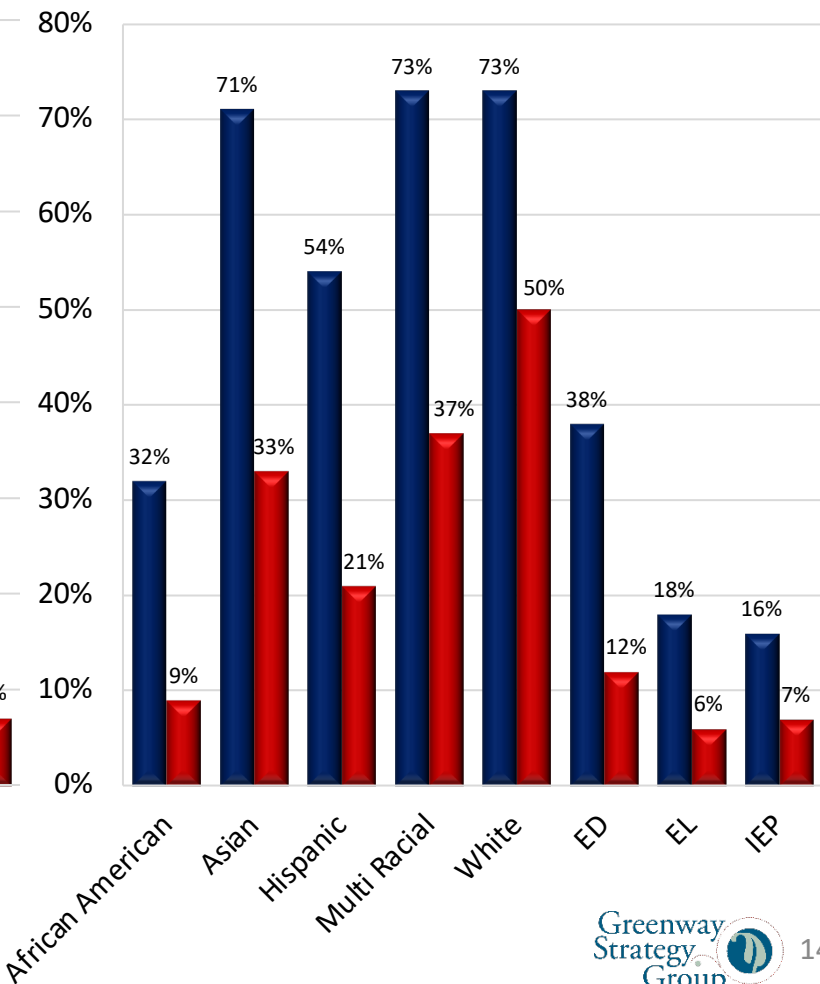
Grades 3-5



Grades 6-8



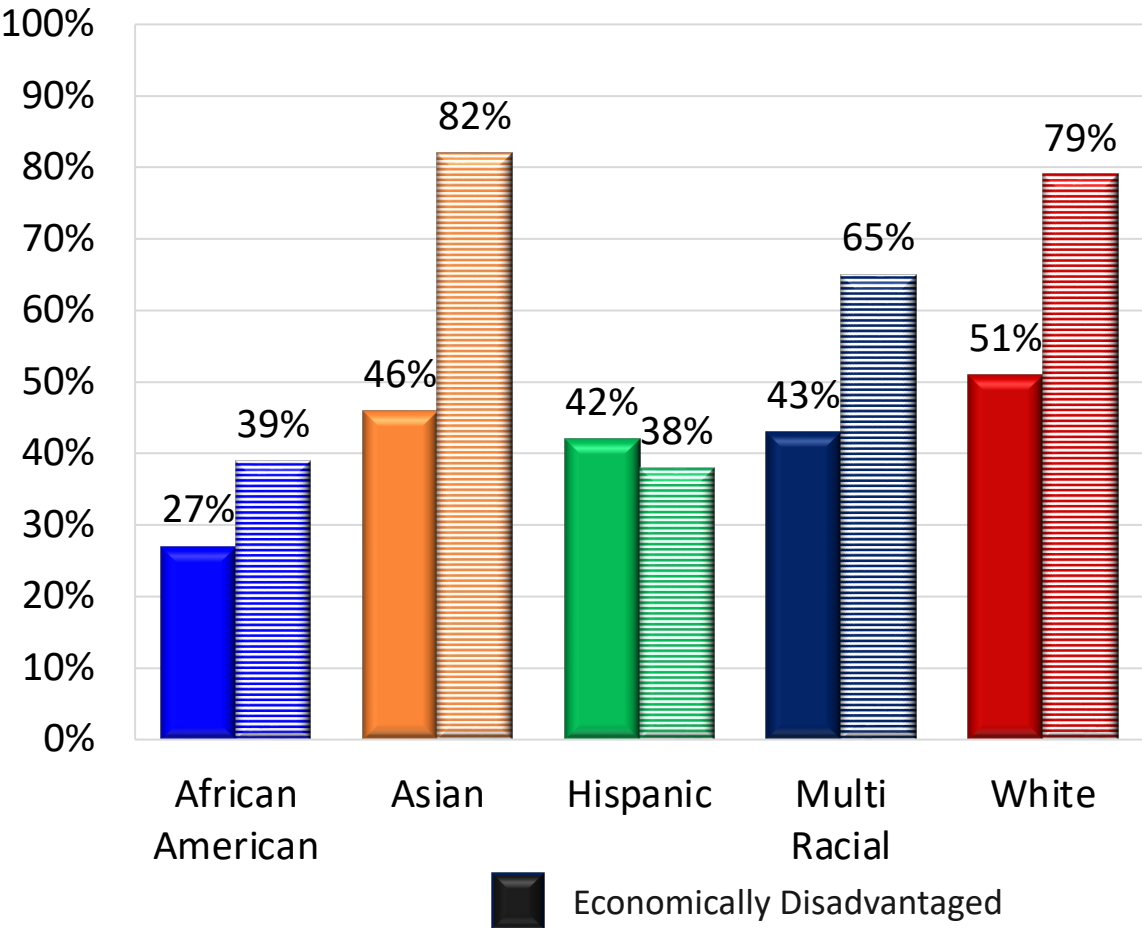
Grade 11



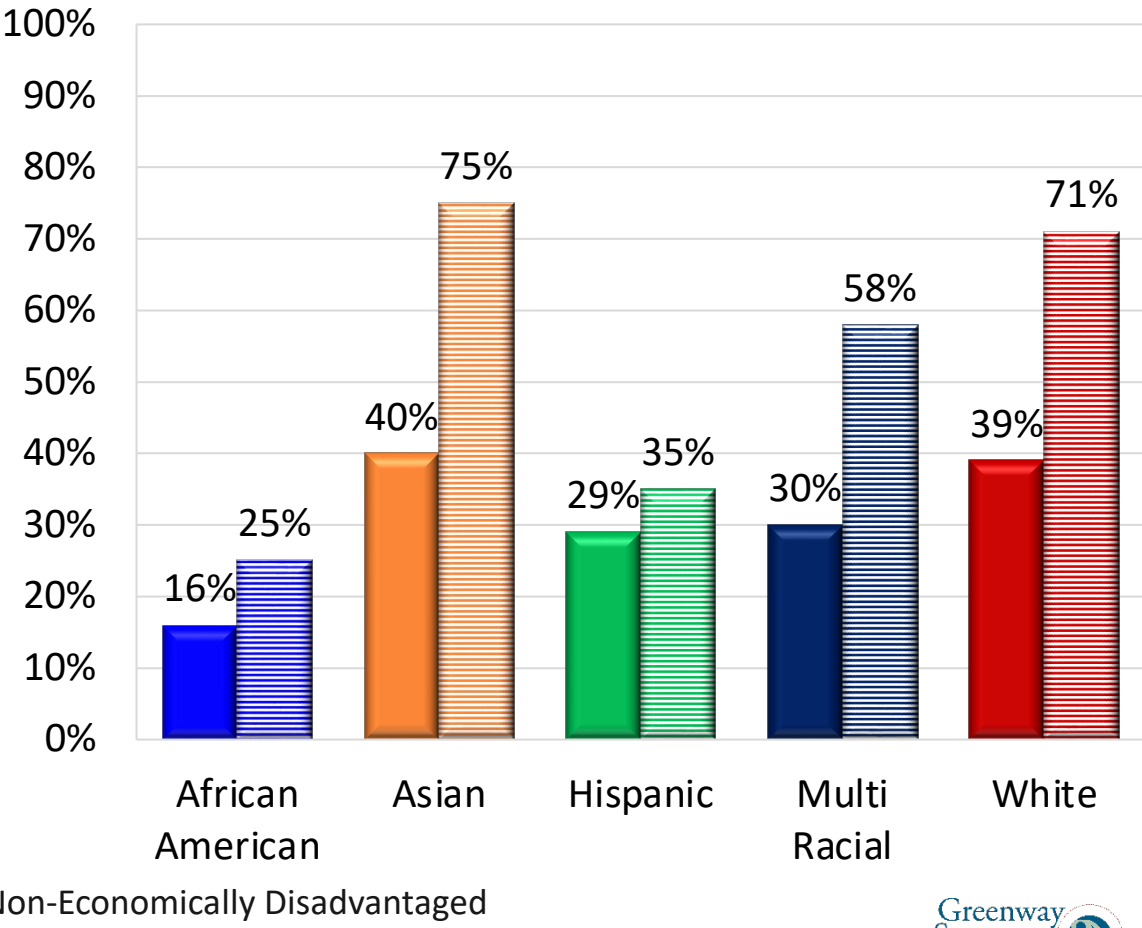
When we disaggregate these student groups by both race and economic disadvantage, we see that economic disadvantage is a greater differentiator for Asian, White, and Multi-racial students. African American and Hispanic students who are NOT economically disadvantaged score at dramatically lower rates than all White, Asian, and Multi-racial student groups.

Percentage of PPS Students in Grades 3-5 at the Proficient or Advanced Levels by Student Group and Economic Disadvantage*
2022-23

ELA



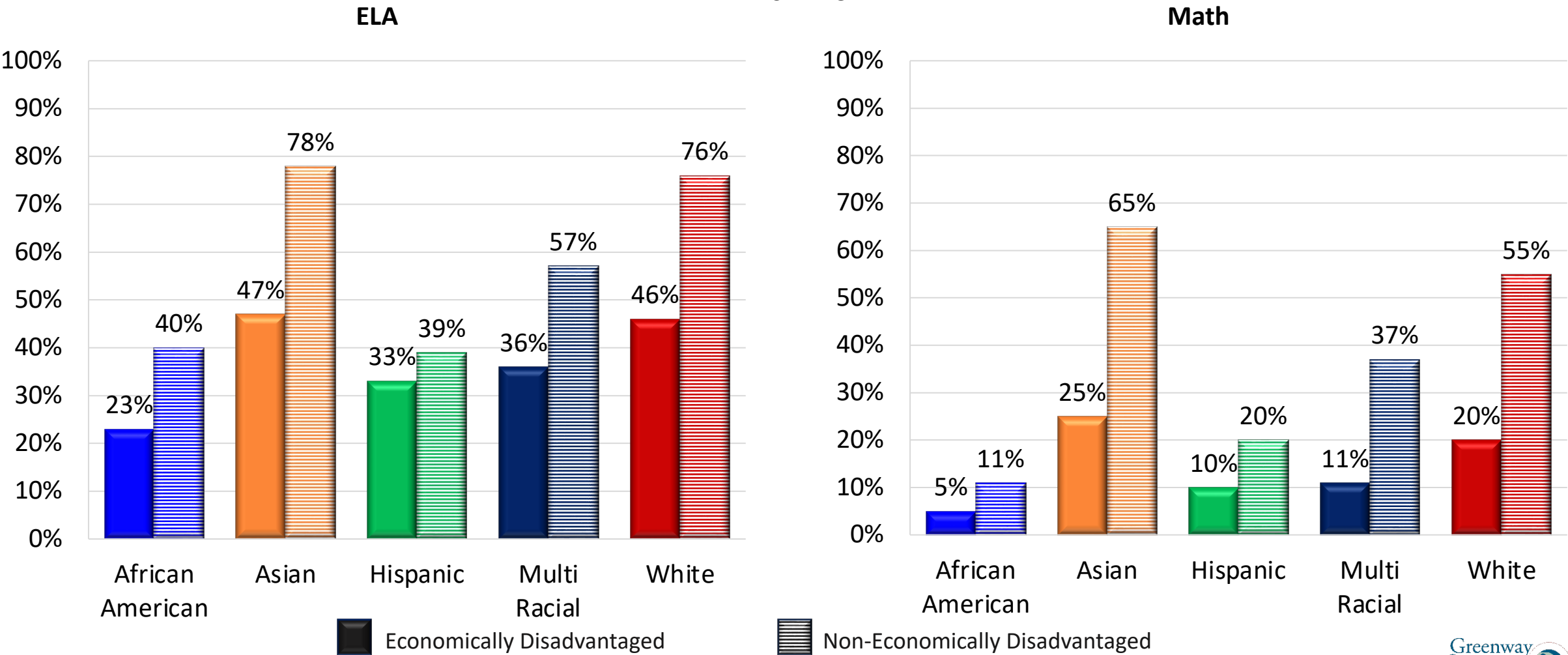
Math



* Economic disadvantage is indicated by qualification for SNAP or TANFF benefits

This phenomenon continues to middle school where it is even more exaggerated in Math.

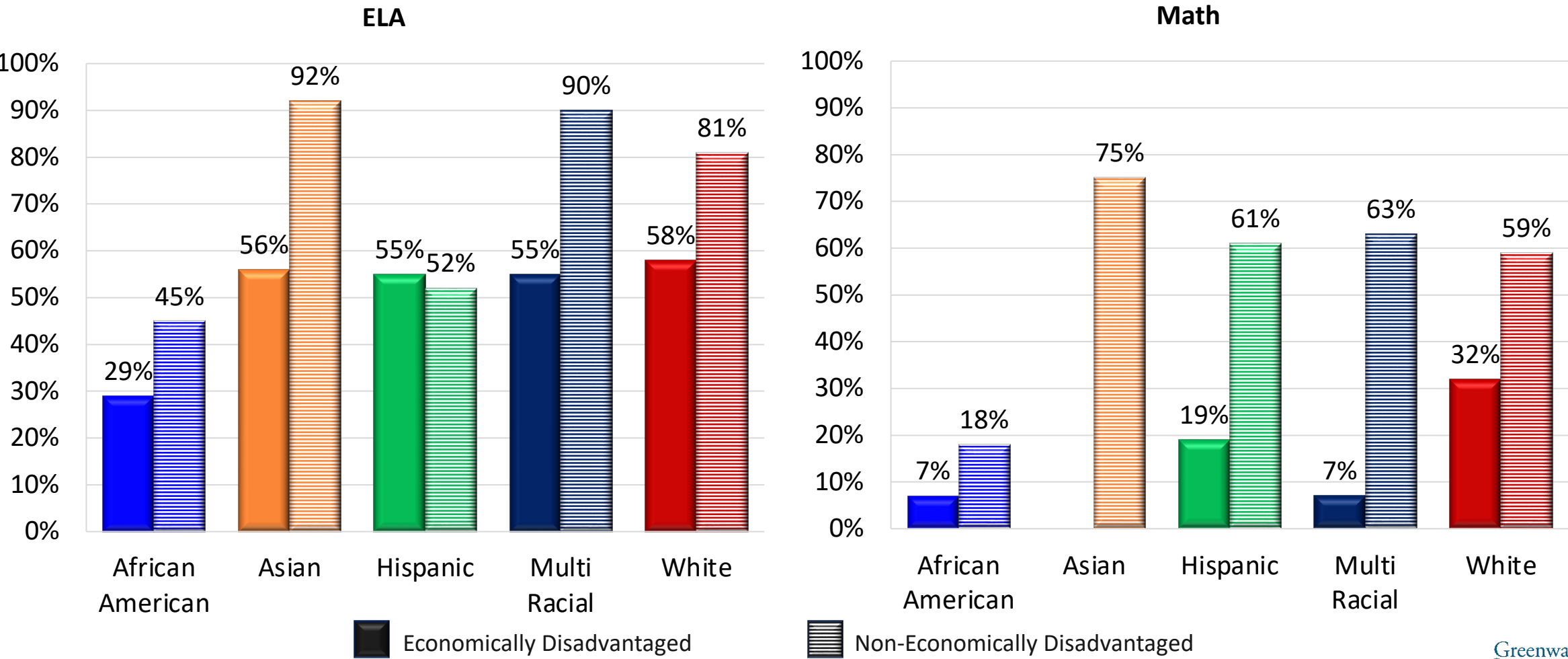
Percentage of PPS Students in Grades 6-8 at the Proficient or Advanced Levels by Student Group and Economic Disadvantage
2022-23



* Economic disadvantage is indicated by qualification for SNAP or TANFF benefits

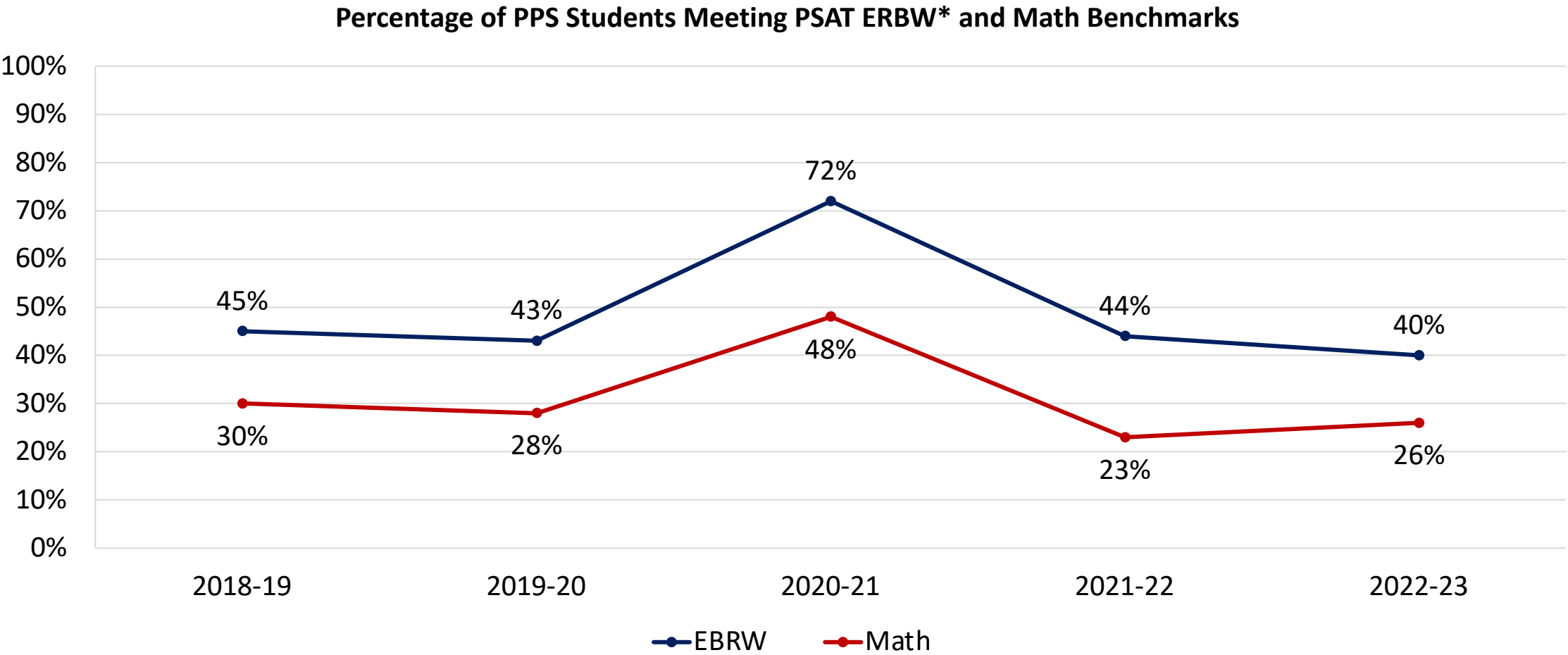
...and to high school.

Percentage of PPS Students in Grade 11 at the Proficient or Advanced Levels by Student Group and Economic Disadvantage
2022-23



* Economic disadvantage is indicated by qualification for SNAP or TANFF benefits

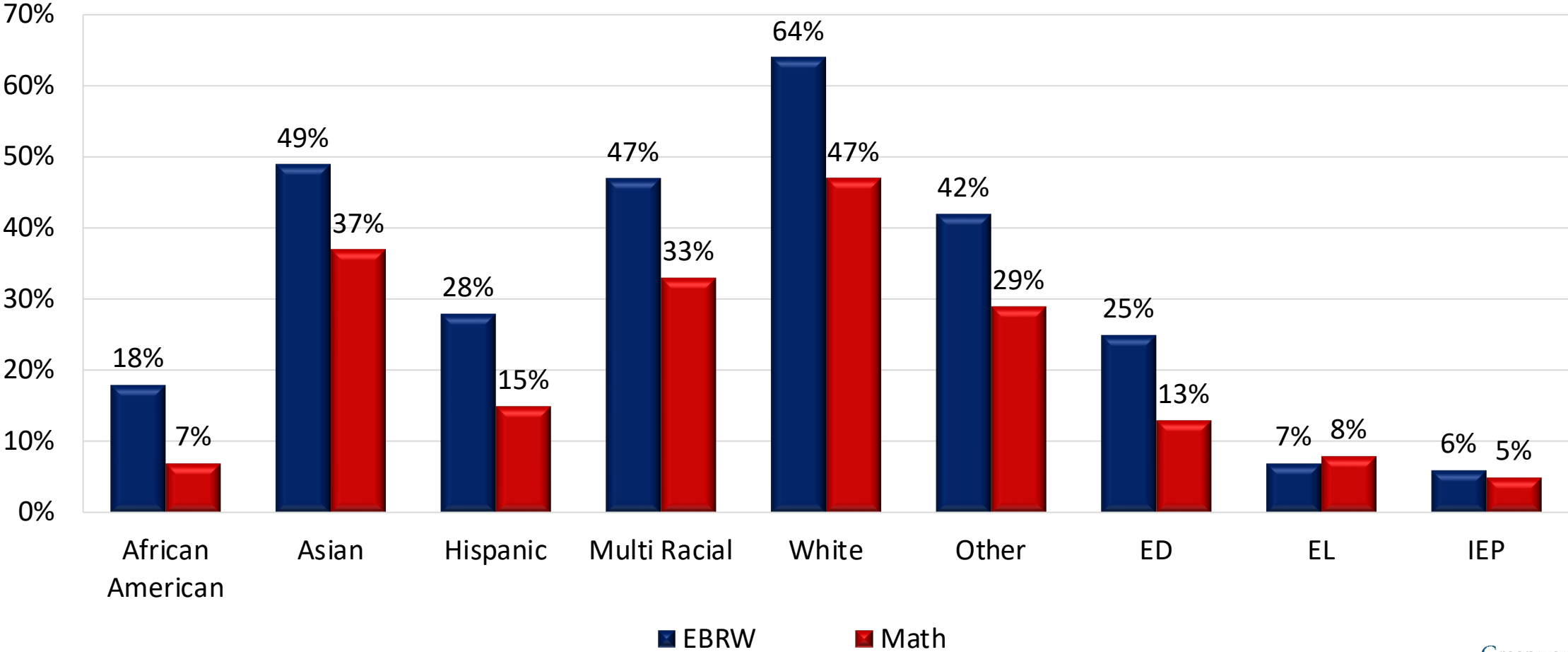
With the exception of 2020-21, PSAT benchmark attainment has been consistent.



*Evidence-based Reading and Writing

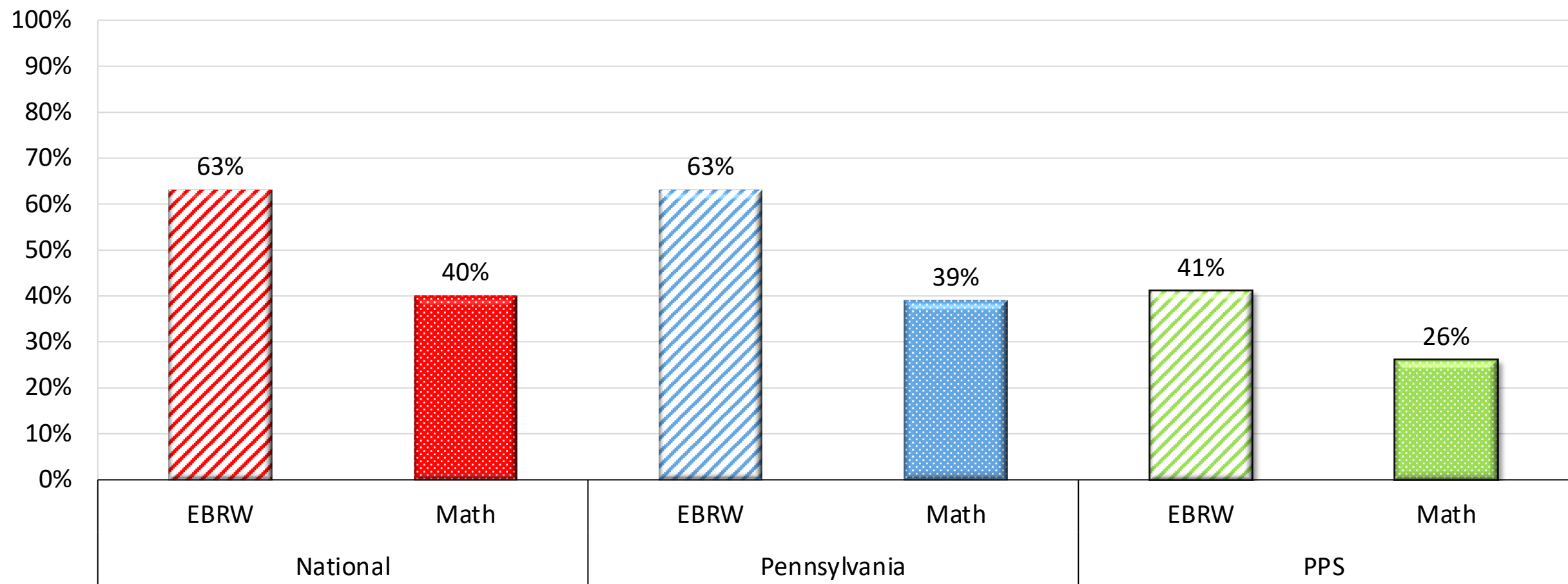
White students meet PSAT benchmarks at higher rates than other student groups.

Percentage of PPS Students Meeting PSAT ERBW and Math Benchmarks by Student Group
2022-23



Overall, PPS students meet PSAT benchmarks at lower rates than students in the U.S. overall or the state of Pennsylvania. Note that math scores are significantly lower for all students.

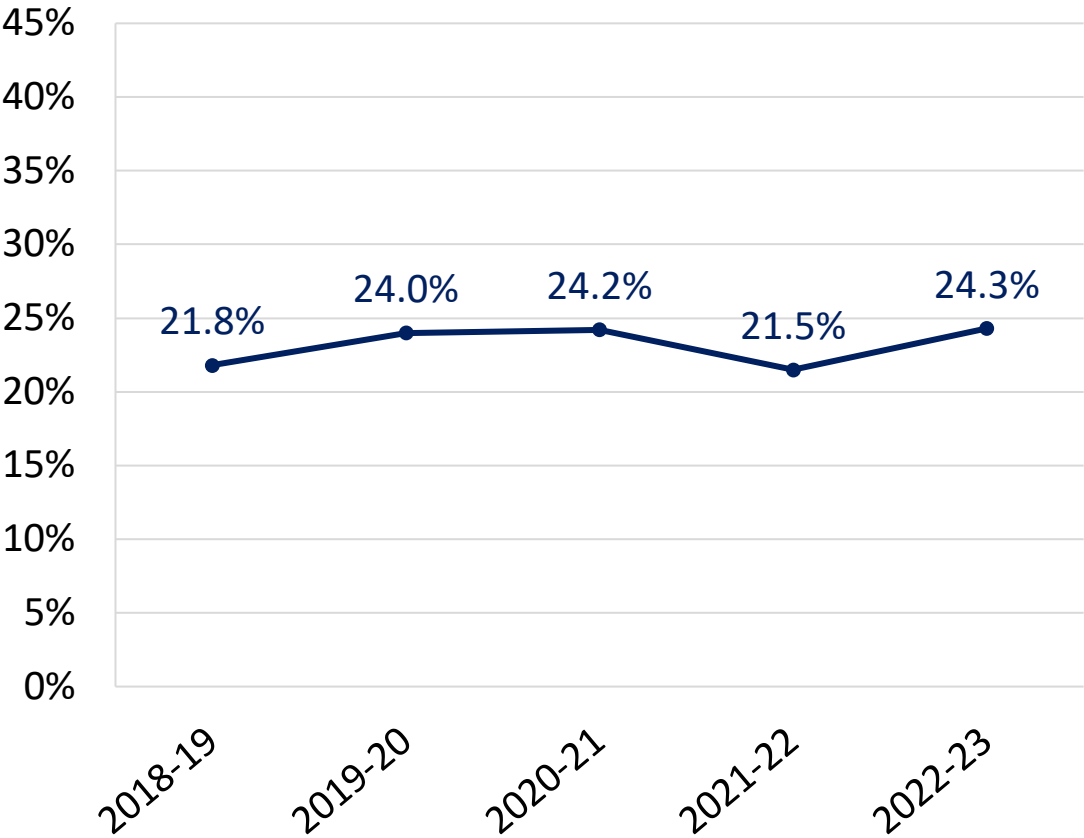
Percentage of 11th Grade PPS Students Meeting PSAT Grade-Level Benchmarks 2023



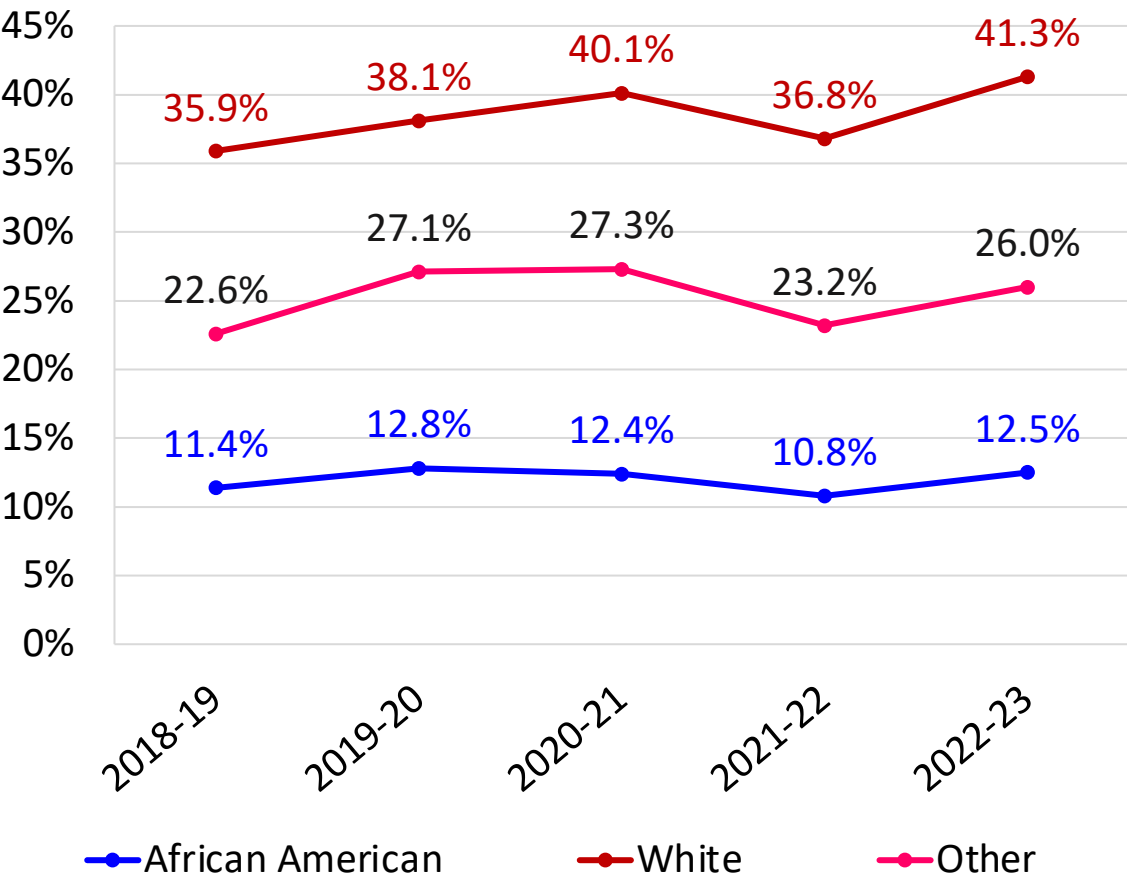
Source: College Board, SAT Suite Annual Report 2023

Students completing at least one AP course remain fairly steady. White students are significantly more likely to complete an AP course than African American students and this gap has increased.

Percentage of PPS Students Grades 9-12
Completing at Least 1 AP Course *



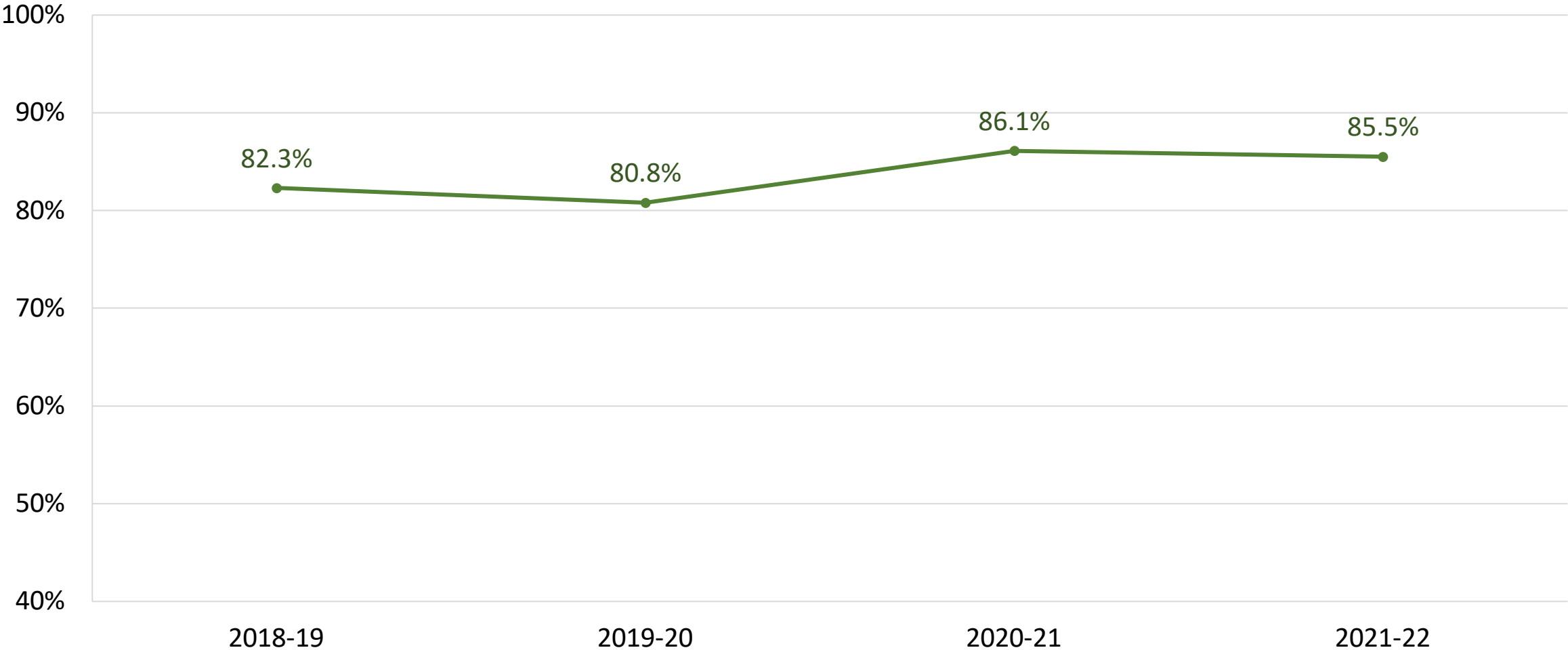
Percentage of PPS Students Grades 9-12
Completing at Least 1 AP Course By Race



* AP course completion does not require passing an AP exam.

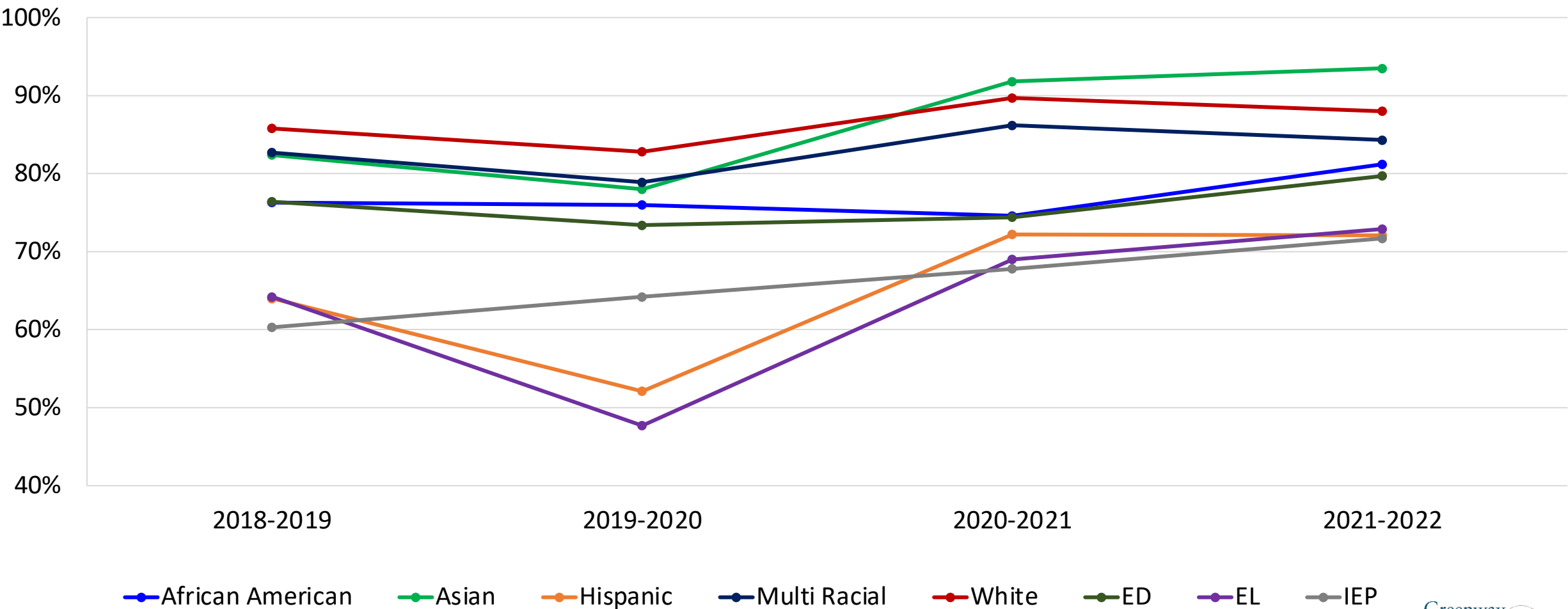
The 4-year graduation rate has increased since 2018-19.

PPS 4-Year Graduation Rate

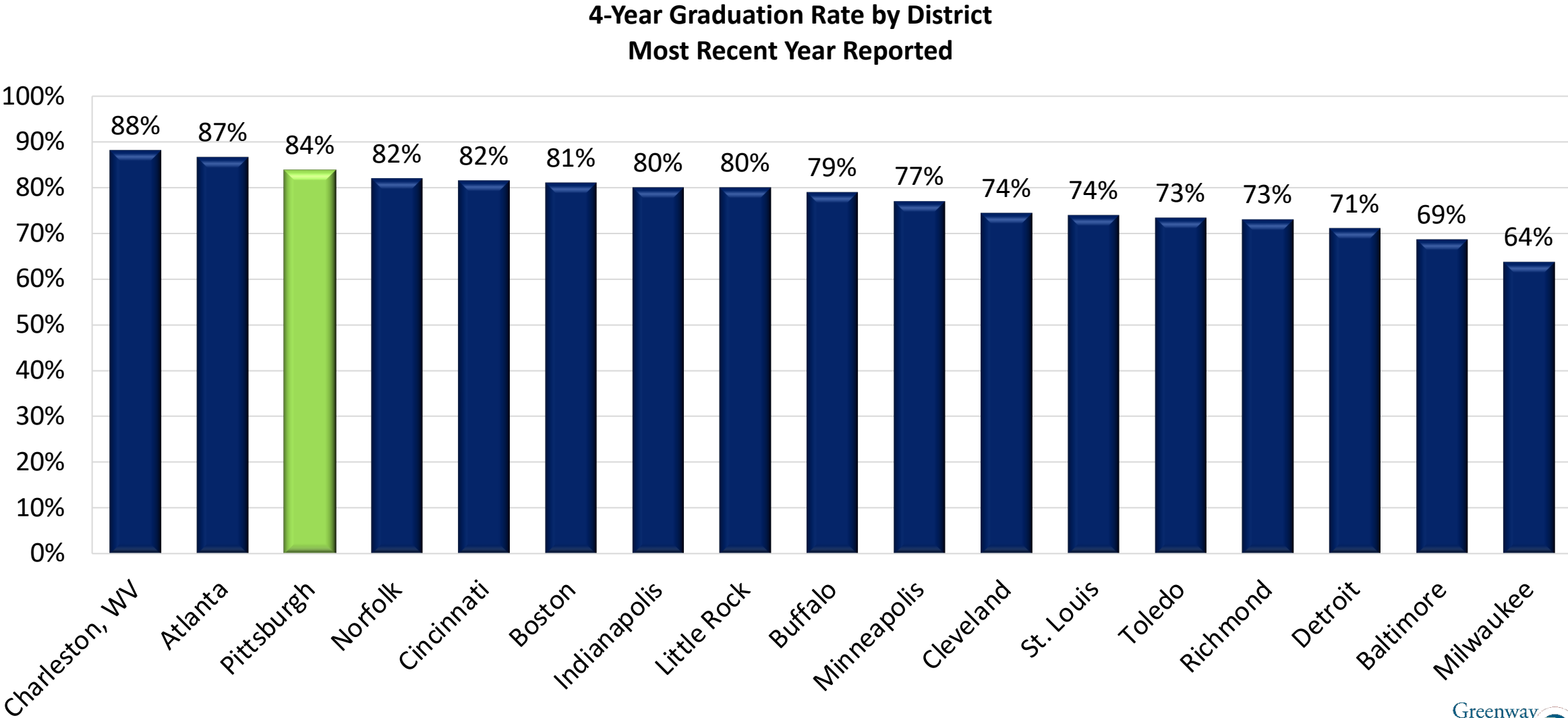


Graduation rates have increased among all student groups and racial disparity is less stark than in standardized assessments. The greatest gains have been made among students with an IEP.

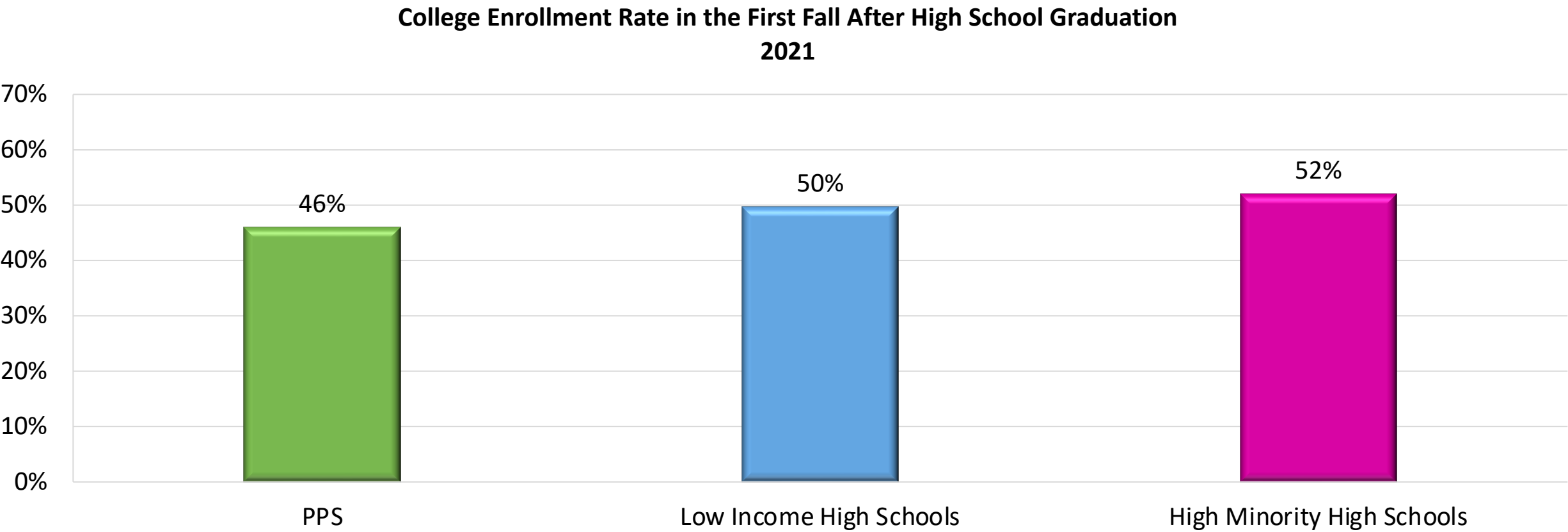
PPS 4-Year Graduation Rates by Student Group



The PPS 4-year graduation rate surpasses most peer districts.



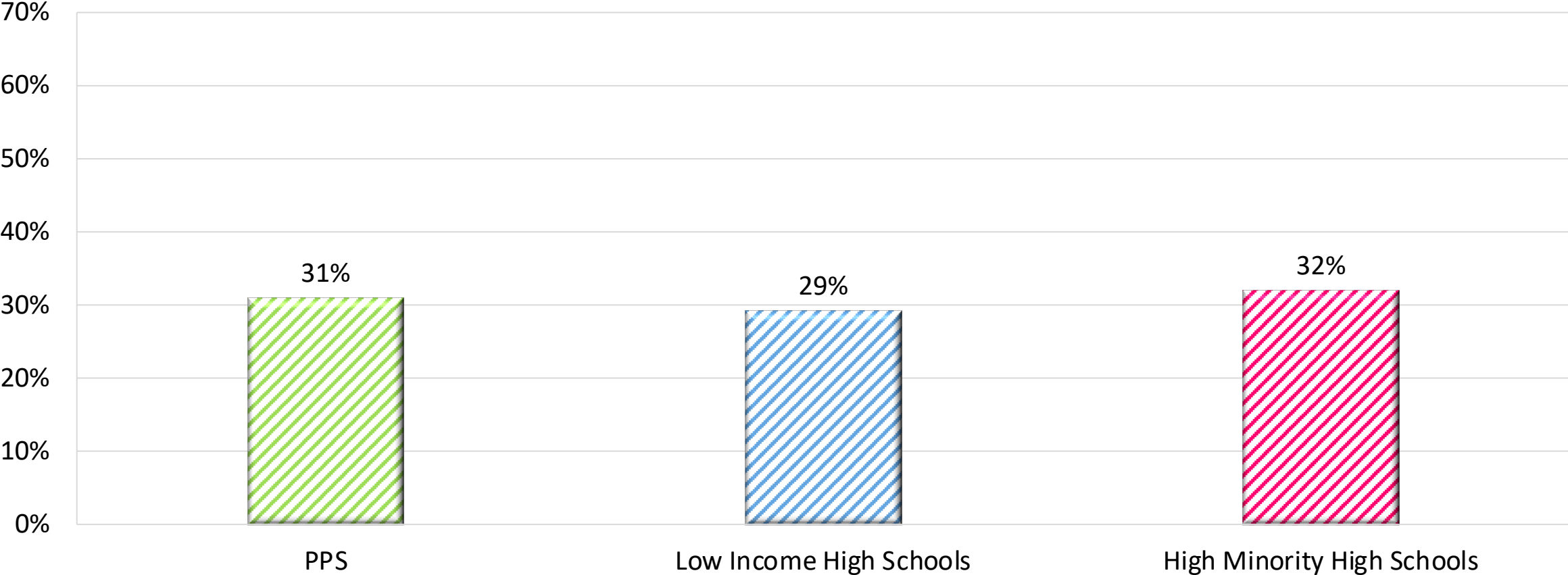
When considering college enrollment in the first year after high school graduation, PPS graduates have slightly lower rates than students from low income schools and high minority schools across the U.S. This data includes enrollment in 4-year and 2-year colleges and universities.



Low-income schools are defined as schools where at least 50% of the entire student population is eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Minority schools are defined as those schools where at least 40% of the students are Black or Hispanic.

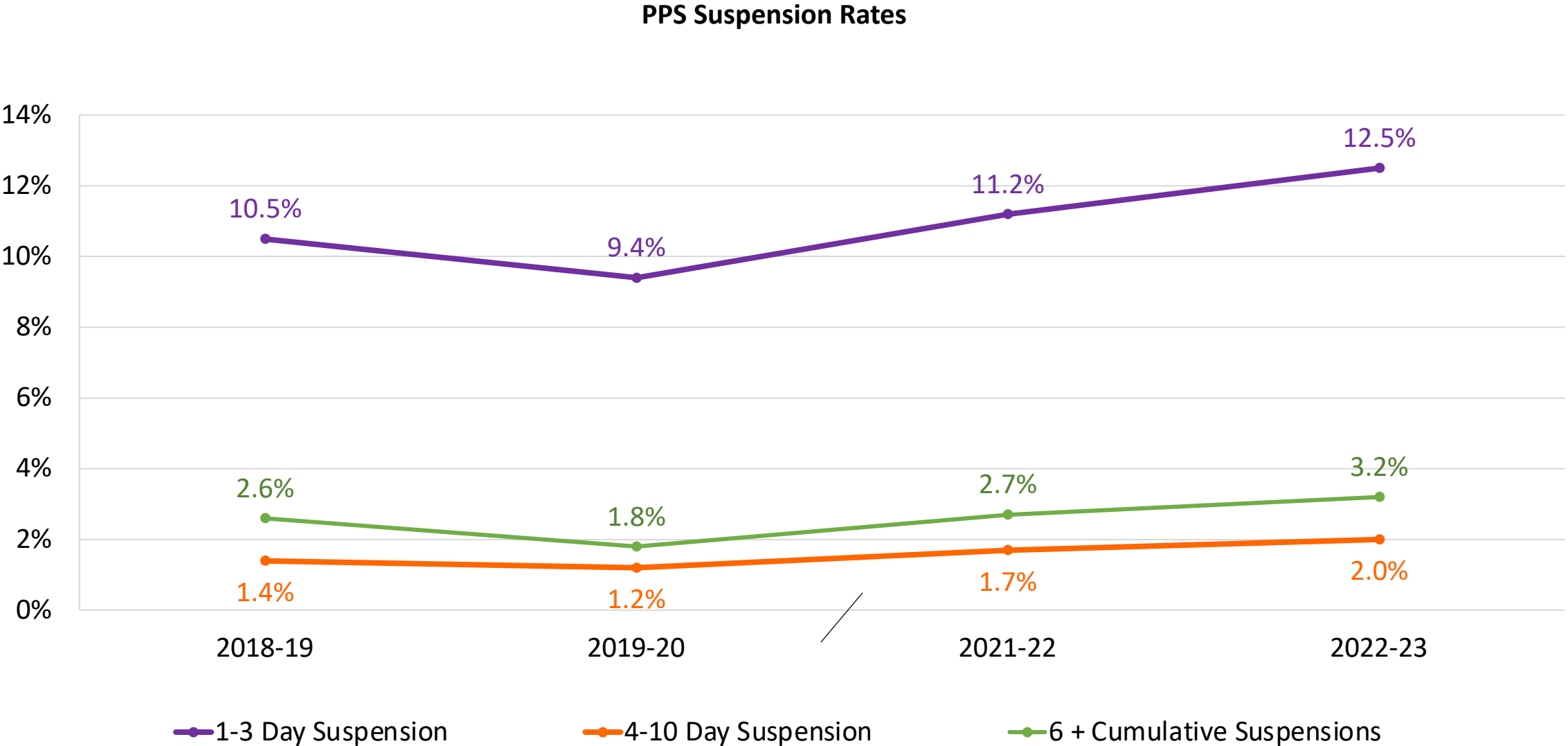
When considering the 6-year graduation rate, PPS graduates complete college at slightly higher rates than students from low-income schools and slightly lower rates than high minority schools across the U.S.

**College Completion Rate Six Years After High School Graduation, Compared to Other Urban Schools
2015 and 2016**



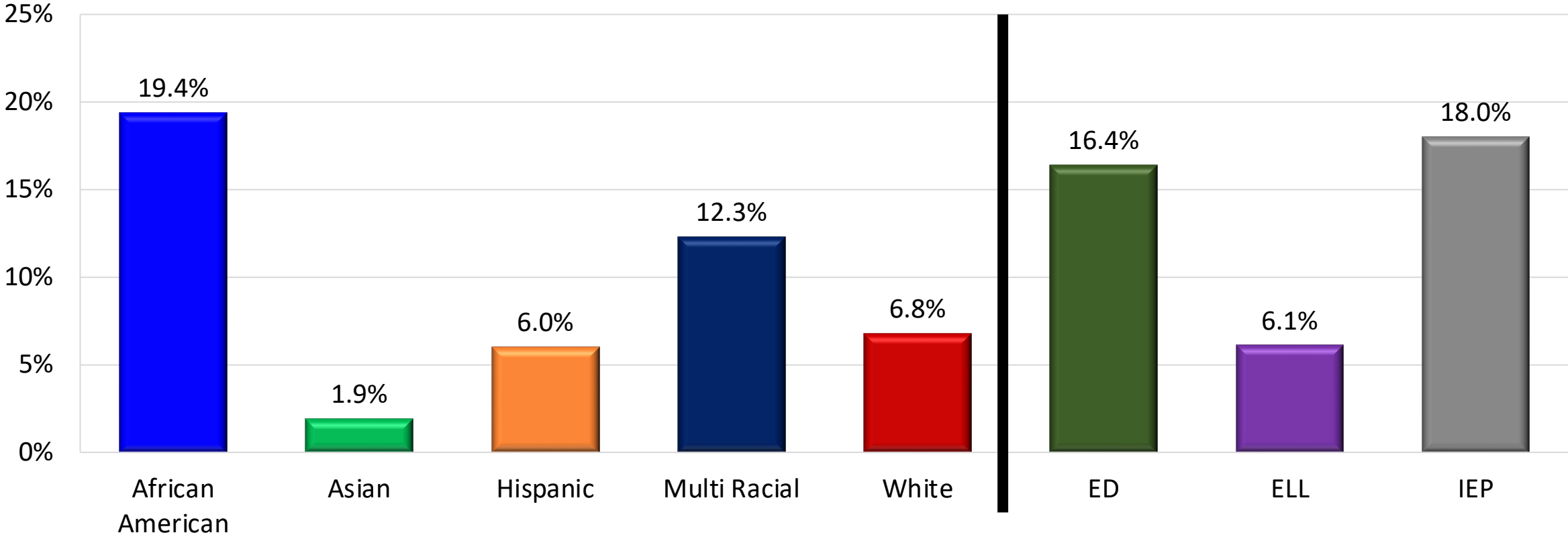
Source: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, High School Benchmarks 2023

Student suspension rates have increased over the past 5 years.



African American students and students with an IEP are more likely to be suspended than other student groups. In 2022-23, almost 1 of every 5 African American students were suspended at least once.

**PPS Suspension Rate by Student Groups
2022-23**



Unique Suspension Incidents: 3,461
Unique Students Suspended: 2,679

Stakeholder Input

Stakeholders Interviewed	
Superintendent Dr. Wayne Walters	City of Pittsburgh
Board of Directors	Alexis Walker, Education Coordinator, Office of the Mayor
Dwayne Barker	Funders
Jamie Piotrowski	Carmen Anderson, Heinz Endowments
Tracey Reed	Gregg Behr, Grable Foundation
Yael Silk	Fred Brown, Forbes Fund
Devon Taliaferro	Diana Bucco, Buhl Foundation
Sala Udin	Sylvia Fields, Eden Hall
Gene Walker	Sam Reiman, Richard King Mellon Foundation
Sylvia Wilson	Lisa Schroeder, Pittsburgh Foundation
Emma Yourd	Community Partners
Former Board Members	Saleem Ghubril, Pittsburgh Promise
Kevin Carter	Samantha Murphy, Allegheny Co. Dept. of Human Services
William Gallagher	
Pam Harbin	

Focus Groups Partner Organizations
Career Education Partners
Local Task Force
Parent Advisory Council (and Friends)
Pittsburgh City Council
Pittsburgh Cultural Collaborative
Pittsburgh Learning Collaborative
Youth Justice Organizations

Input Sessions District Leaders
Executive Cabinet
PPS Administrators Association Leaders
Principals
Union Leaders - Clerical
Union Leaders - Custodial/ Maintenance
Union Leaders - Teachers

Focus Groups 9-12 Students at Each School
Allderdice
Brashear
CAPA
Carrick
Milliones
Obama
Perry
Sci-Tech
Student Achievement Center
Westinghouse

Prior District Stakeholder Input
Designing our Future survey and focus groups, 2023 Including students in grades 3-8, high schools and special schools (Conroy, OCA, Pioneer)
Tripod survey of student learning environments, 2023
Panorama survey of students regarding social-emotional learning: student competency and well-being, 2023
Panorama survey of certified professionals and paraprofessionals regarding teaching and learning conditions, 2022
ESSER survey and input forums, 2021

Perceptions of district and community assets

A. Supportive and effective community organizations

- 23% of parent focus group responses mention community supports for mental and emotional well-being (top mention).
- 18% of parent focus group responses mention after-school support and enrichment.
- Nonprofit community service providers were the most frequently mentioned as assets by community partners, funders, and union representatives.
- County social services, higher education, cultural, and advocacy organizations were also frequently mentioned as assets by external stakeholders,
- Student surveys show favorable ratings for supportive relationships.
- Teaching and para professional survey results show highly favorable ratings for community support of the school.

B. Teachers and school staff

- 26% of student focus group responses mention teachers or staff supporting their success (top mention.)
- 20% of parent focus group responses mention school-based support and enrichment.
- Student surveys show favorable ratings for teachers' caring and conferring, with the exception of middle school.
- Certified and para-professional survey results are favorable regarding availability of professional development, although ratings are declining and do not reflect differentiation or follow-up.
- Survey results among certified professionals reflect strong use of data to guide instruction.
- Survey results among certified professionals are favorable regarding teachers' instructional leadership.

C. Caring families and mentors

- 17% of student focus group responses mention family and mentors supporting their success.

Emerging community trends

A. Increasing housing costs

- Community stakeholders report affects of increasing housing costs including increased rates of truancy and school transition, increase in unhoused families, and declining school-age population.

B. Increasing community violence

- Community stakeholders report increase in gun violence and violence among youth, and trauma in families driving an increased need for safe spaces.
- Only 42% of student survey respondents in grades 6-12 report feeling safe .
- 12% of student focus group responses mention issues of safety and discipline getting in the way of their success.

C. Growth in career opportunities

- Community stakeholders report increasing growth in robotics and technology companies which present an opportunity for a comprehensive plan among the school district, higher education, and business.
- As cost of higher education increases, community stakeholders perceive a need for greater focus on school to career programs with high-wage jobs.
- Pittsburgh Promise is sunseting which increases the perceived need for school to career pathways.

D. Growth in school options beyond PPS

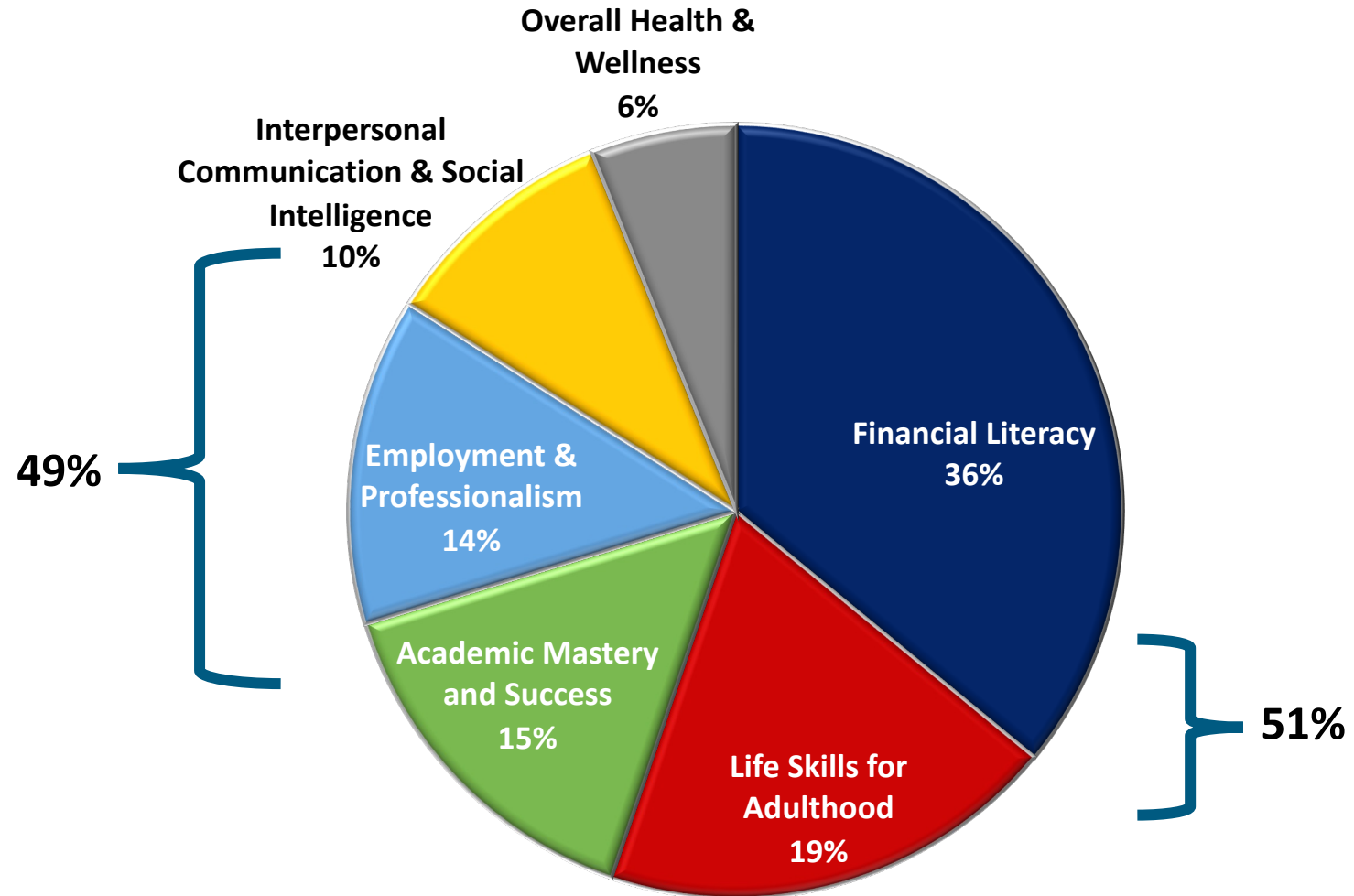
- While numbers of school-age children are declining, other school options such as charter schools, home schools, and virtual schools are increasing.

E. Increasing stressors affecting mental health and emotional well-being

- Community stakeholders report issues of student stress and teacher burnout.
- Covid, community violence, poverty, and housing instability all contribute to these issues.
- Student survey ratings regarding emotional regulation are generally unfavorable (less than 50% positive).

Priority interests and opportunities among students and families

Over 50% of high school student responses to “What do you need to know and be able to do after you graduate?” reflect knowledge and skills for practical navigation of adult life. Approximately 40% of responses reflect professional and academic success.



Priority interests and opportunities among students and families

A. Enhanced instructional methods and content

- When asked what they would change for future students, 37% of student responses mention instructional and curriculum changes, including more relevant content, engaging learning methods, and addressing diverse student needs of all types (top mention.)
- 42% of parent focus group responses mention academic programming and scheduling as an important interest and opportunity, including a variety of content areas, and experiential and physical activities (top mention.)

D. Support for mental health and emotional well-being

- When asked what they would change for future students, 17% of student comments mention support for mental health and well-being.

B. Extracurricular experiences

- Community stakeholders mention extracurricular activities such as sports and performing arts as areas that families and students are seeking, and reasons why people choose non-PPS options.
- 13% of student focus group responses reference an extracurricular activity as supporting their success.
- Extracurricular activities was the second highest area of interest and opportunity mentioned by parent focus group participants.

C. Safe environments

- Community stakeholders mention safe environments most frequently when asked about interests and opportunities of Pittsburgh families and students.
- 12% of student focus group responses mention addressing safety and discipline when asked about a change they would make for future students.

Barriers to positive student outcomes and quality experiences

A. Environmental stress

- Community stakeholders and high school students report students needing to work to support themselves and/or their families.
- Poverty and its many affects are resulting in truancy, transiency, food insecurity, lack of access to health care, and other factors that affect student physical and mental health.
- Students report that community violence affects student wellness and in some cases impedes their access to school.
- Teachers surveys reflect increasing difficulty in forming connections with students.

D. Inadequate school-based staffing

- Staffing is the most frequently mentioned barrier among parent focus group participants, generally related to insufficient staff numbers.
- While student survey feedback regarding teachers is favorable, students in focus groups frequently mentioned issues with teachers and administrators as something that gets in the way of their success.

B. Unsupportive academic environments

- Community stakeholders report that many students feel disconnected from school.
- 17% of student focus group responses mention academic and school environment as a barrier including limited course options and inability to influence their own learning.

E. Transportation challenges

- Community stakeholders consistently reference a lack of school district transportation and limitations to the city's transportation infrastructure.
- Transportation is frequently mentioned by parent focus group participants as a barrier.
- Students report significant challenges with transportation including inability of families to provide transportation, reliance on undependable public transportation, and fear of walking in unsafe areas.

C. Unsafe and undisciplined school environments

- Safety and discipline are frequently mentioned as barriers by student focus group participants.
- Student surveys reflect significant issues with disruptive behavior (levels of agreement over 70%.)
- Certified and paraprofessional surveys show low ratings of student conduct, which have declined precipitously over prior years.
- Only 44% of Designing our Future survey respondents agree that student staff and safety is a priority in PPS.

F. Lack of accurate and timely communication

- Lack of timely and accurate communication is mentioned by community stakeholders and parent focus group participants as a barrier.

Driving forces creating barriers to positive student outcomes and quality experiences

G. Lack of connection to community resources

- Community stakeholders describe a lack of knowledge and will to utilize community resources to support students.
- Community stakeholders and parents report inconsistency among teachers and school leaders in connecting students and families to community resources.
- Only 22% of Designing our Future survey respondents agree that wellness and mental health supports are easy to access within PPS, and only 20% agree that PPS views aligned partnerships as key for supporting student outcomes and experiences.

H. Aging and underutilized school buildings

- The number of under-enrolled schools is viewed as a burden by community stakeholders, driving inequity in student outcomes and experiences, constraining overall district resources, and impeding strong school cultures.
- Student focus group participants mention factors related to the poor physical condition of their schools, inequitable access to academic and non-academic programs, and unequal financial investment in magnet schools as things that get in the way of their success.

G. Systemic bias

- Community stakeholders, students, and parents report that district practices benefit White students and families to the detriment of others.

Priorities for strategic plan focus: supported by all stakeholder groups

- Address school under enrollment, physical conditions, and inequitable programs and resources
- Create safe and productive environments for learning
- Increase support for school-based staff
- Better prepare students for post-graduate success, with an emphasis on career preparation and life skills
- Create systemic alignment and utilization of community resources

98.5% of the 1,112 respondents to the 2023 Designing Our Future survey agreed with the statement:

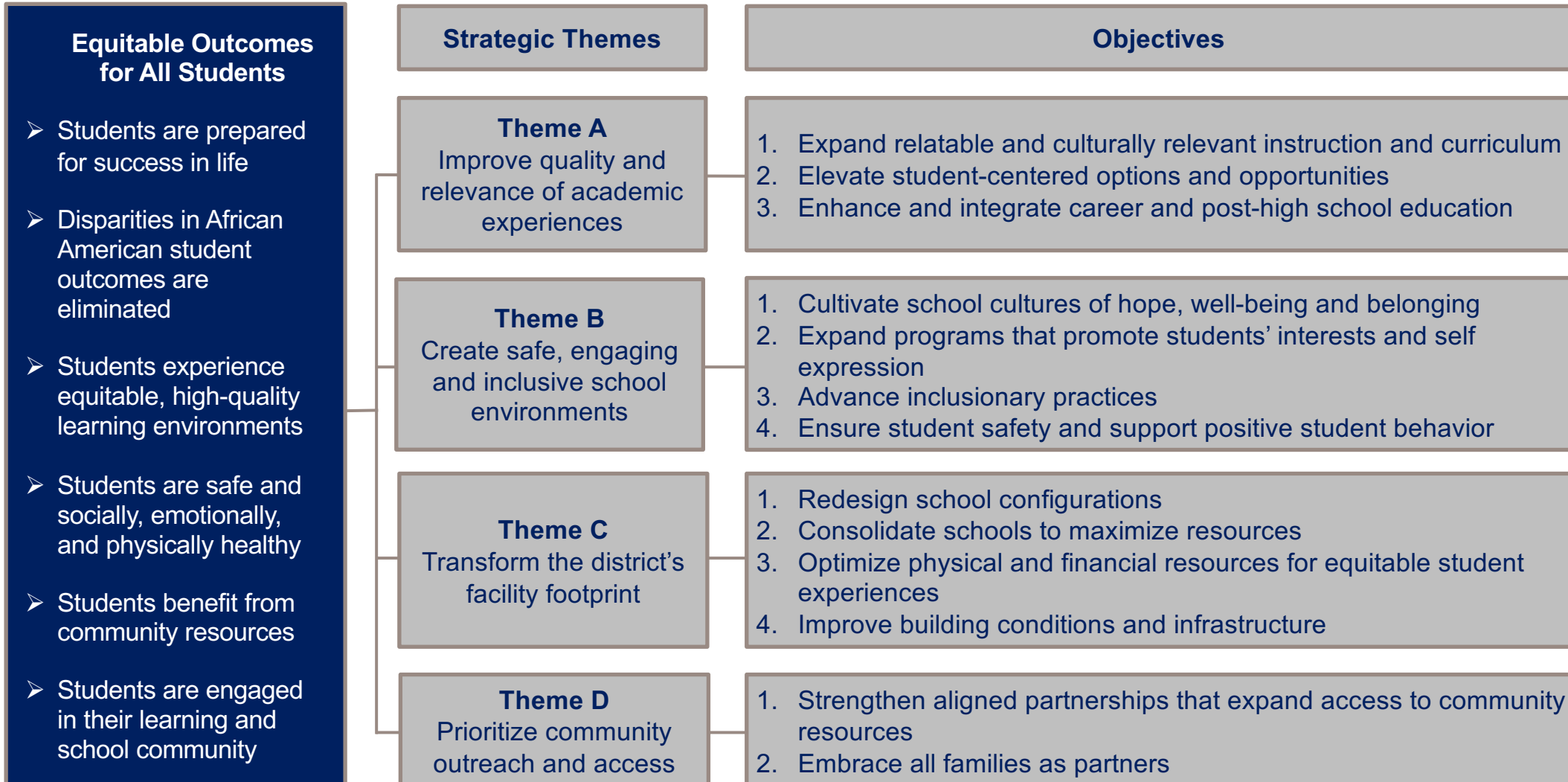
Every child living within Pittsburgh Public Schools' footprint is entitled to a high-quality and robust educational experience, regardless of race, zip code, gender (including gender identity or expression), disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and economic designation. Therefore, our schools must be safe, effective, modern learning environments.

We are committed to improving student outcomes and experiences through decisions and practices rooted in excellence, equity, and efficiency.

Our strategic plan will improve these outcomes.

We will attain these outcomes by shifting our practices around these strategic themes...

which will result in measurable progress on these objectives.



Pending...
Strategic Initiatives will define our actions to achieve the objectives.

Next Steps

December 8 th through December 22 nd	• Community feedback opportunities hosted by community partners with their constituents • District-led feedback sessions • Virtual session, Tuesday, December 12th, 6-7:30 p.m. • Virtual session, Friday, December 15, 10-11:30 a.m. • Online survey open to entire community
December 8 through January	Feedback reviewed and categorized by Greenway Strategy Group
January Education Committee Meeting	Feedback presented to the Board of Education with recommended changes
January Board Meeting	Board approval of strategic plan framework
January through February	Strategy Teams develop strategic initiatives within each strategic theme