



Massachusetts Education
Equity Partnership

There is no excellence without equity



There is No Excellence Without Equity:

An Honest Look At Massachusetts Education Through Data

Fall 2022

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About MEEP

The Massachusetts Education Equity Partnership (MEEP) represents a statewide movement of advocates for educational equity committed to **building power and capacity** in historically underserved communities, **advancing policies and practices** that achieve educational justice, and **shifting decision-making power and representation** throughout the education system to be inclusive of community voices.

What We do:



Draw Attention to Educational Inequities

We draw attention to educational inequities in Massachusetts and challenge these inequities through advocacy and action.



Advocate for Historically Underserved Students

We advocate for policies and practices that improve opportunity and outcomes for students of color, linguistically diverse students, students from economically disadvantaged families, and students with disabilities.



Engage Communities Across the State

We work alongside students, families, and communities to build urgency and collective will for educational equity and justice.

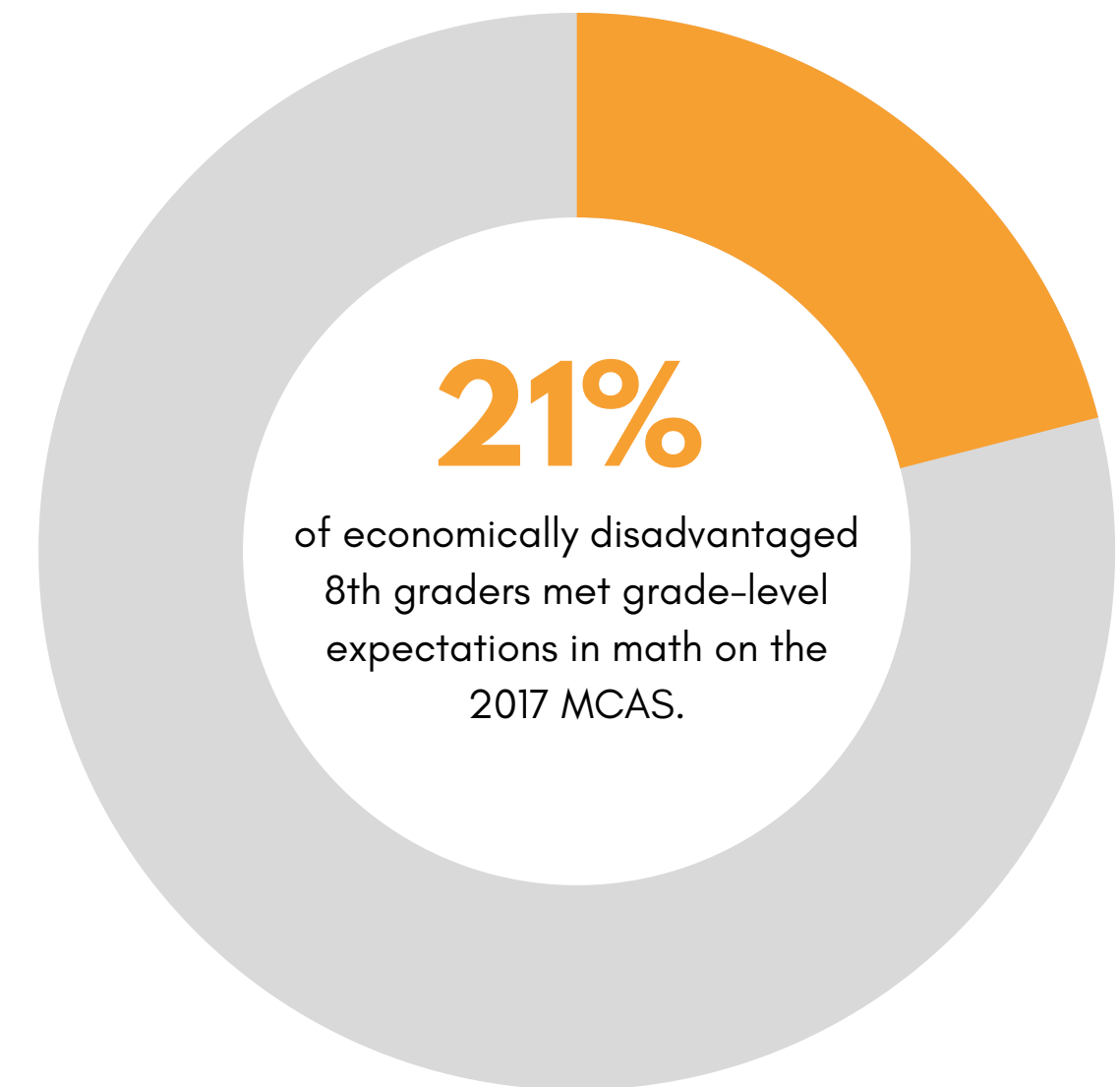
Our Why: A long history of **inequality**

Massachusetts has long been considered a leader in education, especially at the K-12 level. Indeed, Massachusetts has much to be proud of – but the reality is that **for a long time now**, our high overall rankings have masked **deep inequities** in student learning experiences and outcomes.



An Honest Look At The Data

- In 2016, only 44% of Latinx 3- and 4-year-olds were not enrolled in early childhood education – compared to 63% of their White peers.
- In 2016, less than 1 in 3 Black and Latinx students who took the SAT met college-readiness benchmarks in reading and math – compared to 2/3 of their White peers.



What is NAEP

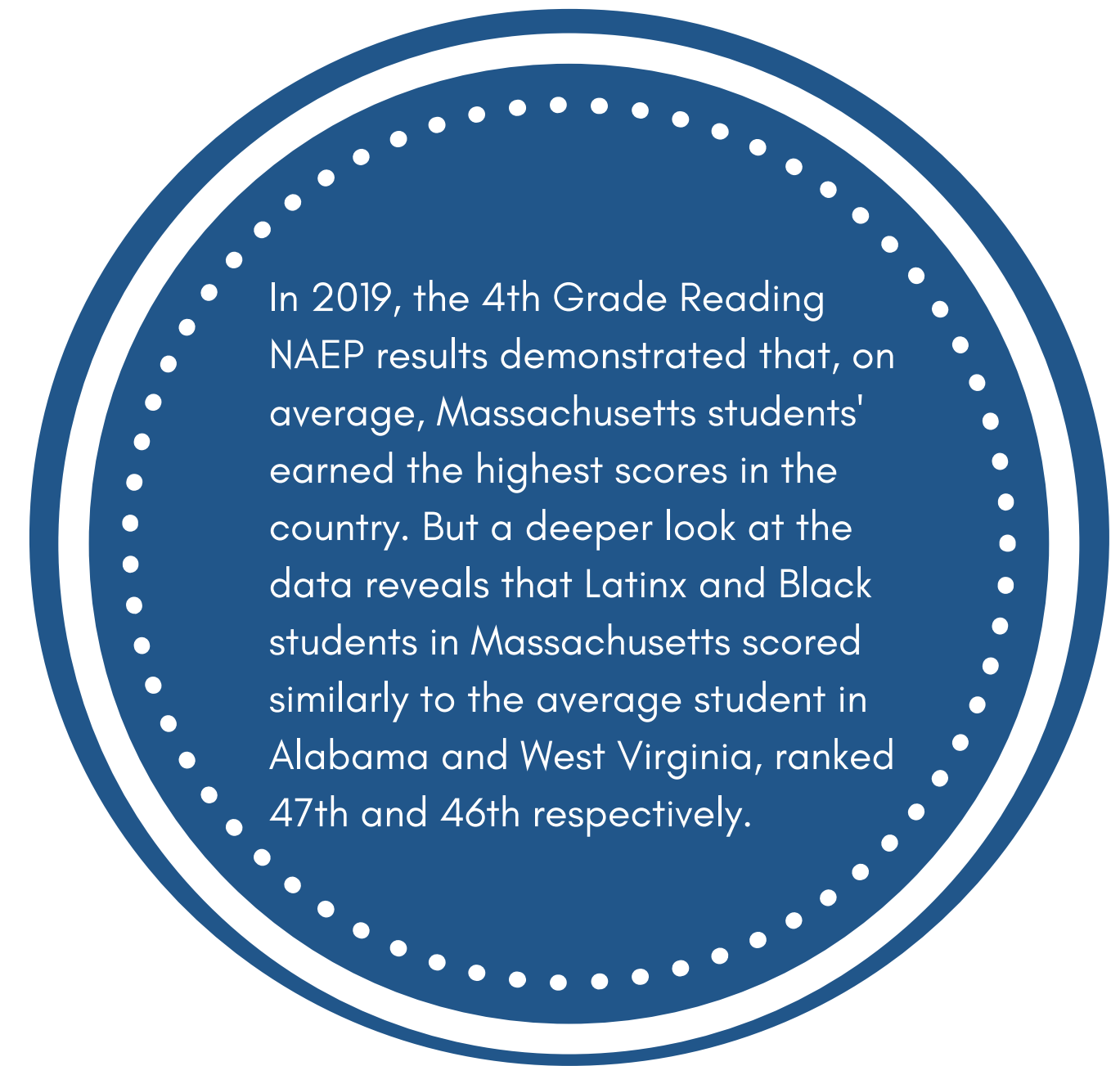
The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), often called The Nation's Report Card, is the largest nationally representative and continuing assessment that provides essential information about student achievement and learning experiences for public and private school students across various subjects.

Why the Data Matters

NAEP allows us to compare student achievement across states, providing educators, policymakers, and parents with necessary data.

What the Data Tells Us

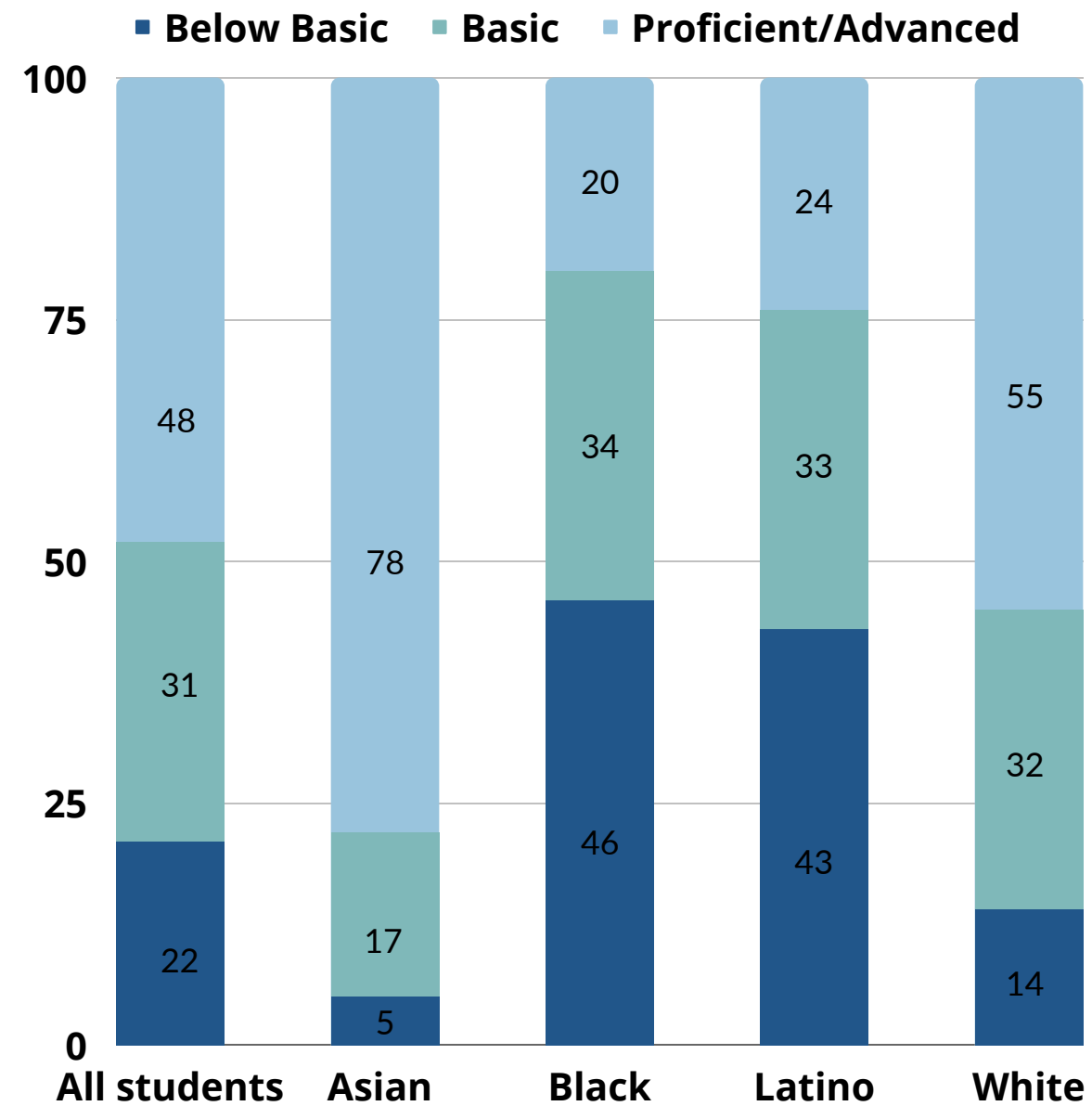
NAEP data consistently show that on average, Massachusetts educational outcomes rank at the top of the country. But when we look beyond the averages, we see that the education level our Black, Latinx, and economically disadvantaged students receive is more similar to that of the average student in the lowest-performing states than to that of their more privileged peers in the Commonwealth itself.



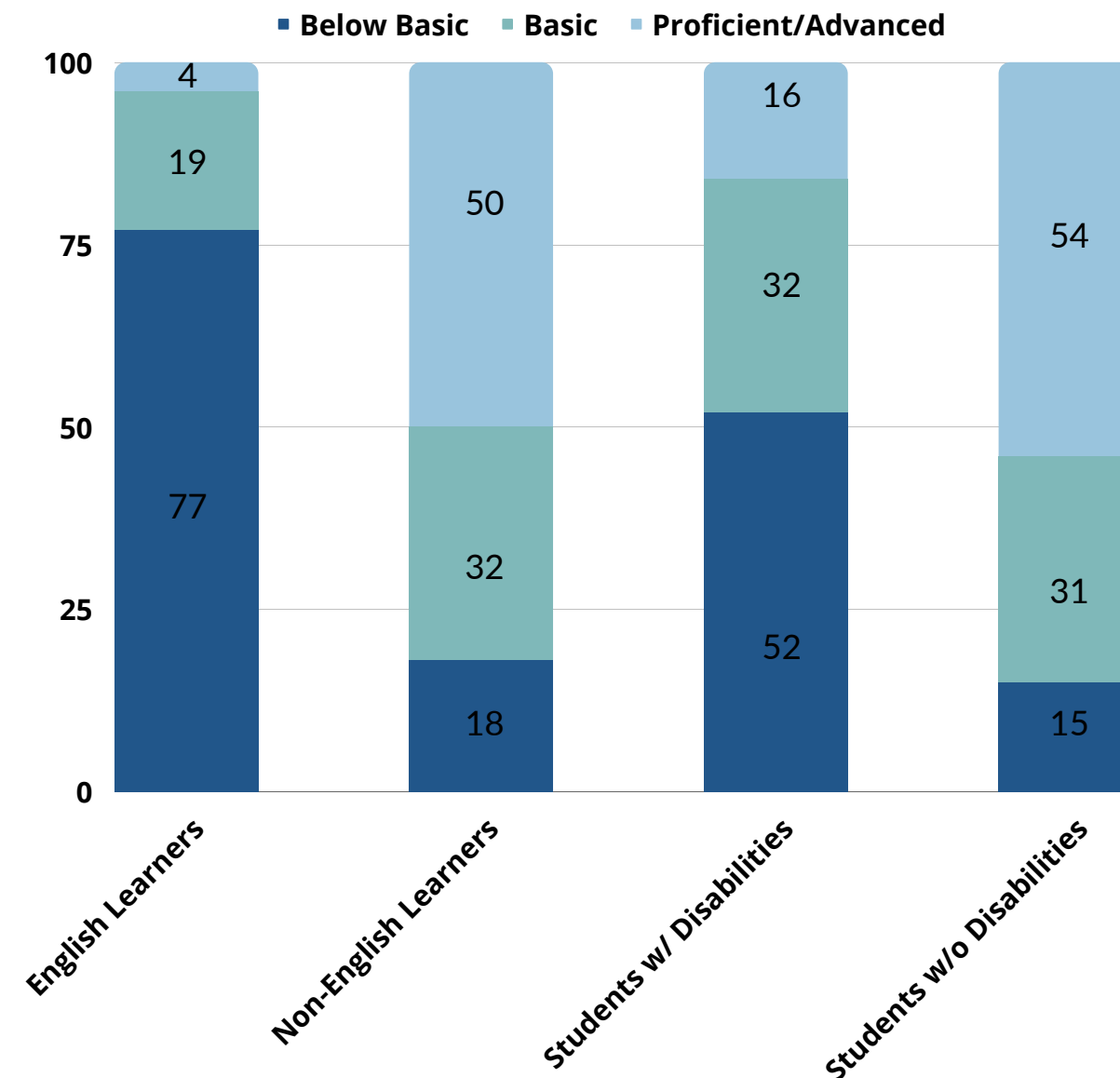
Number 1 For Some

MA 8th-grade math performance on NAEP by student group, 2019

By Race/Ethnicity

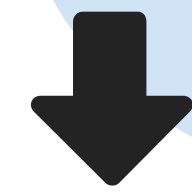


By Family Income, Language and Disability Status



**Large Disparities,
Little Progress in
Sight**

Only **4% of English learners** and **16% of students with disabilities** are proficient/advanced in 8th-grade math.



Sources: National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP): [NAEP Data Explorer](#) (2019).

Then, COVID-19 hit.

The pandemic's impacts were deeply unequal



More than **70% of Black and Latinx students from low-income families** were learning remotely, compared to 1/3 of White students from wealthier families.



77% of White students live in households with reliable broadband internet connections versus **59% of Black students and 58% of Latinx students.**



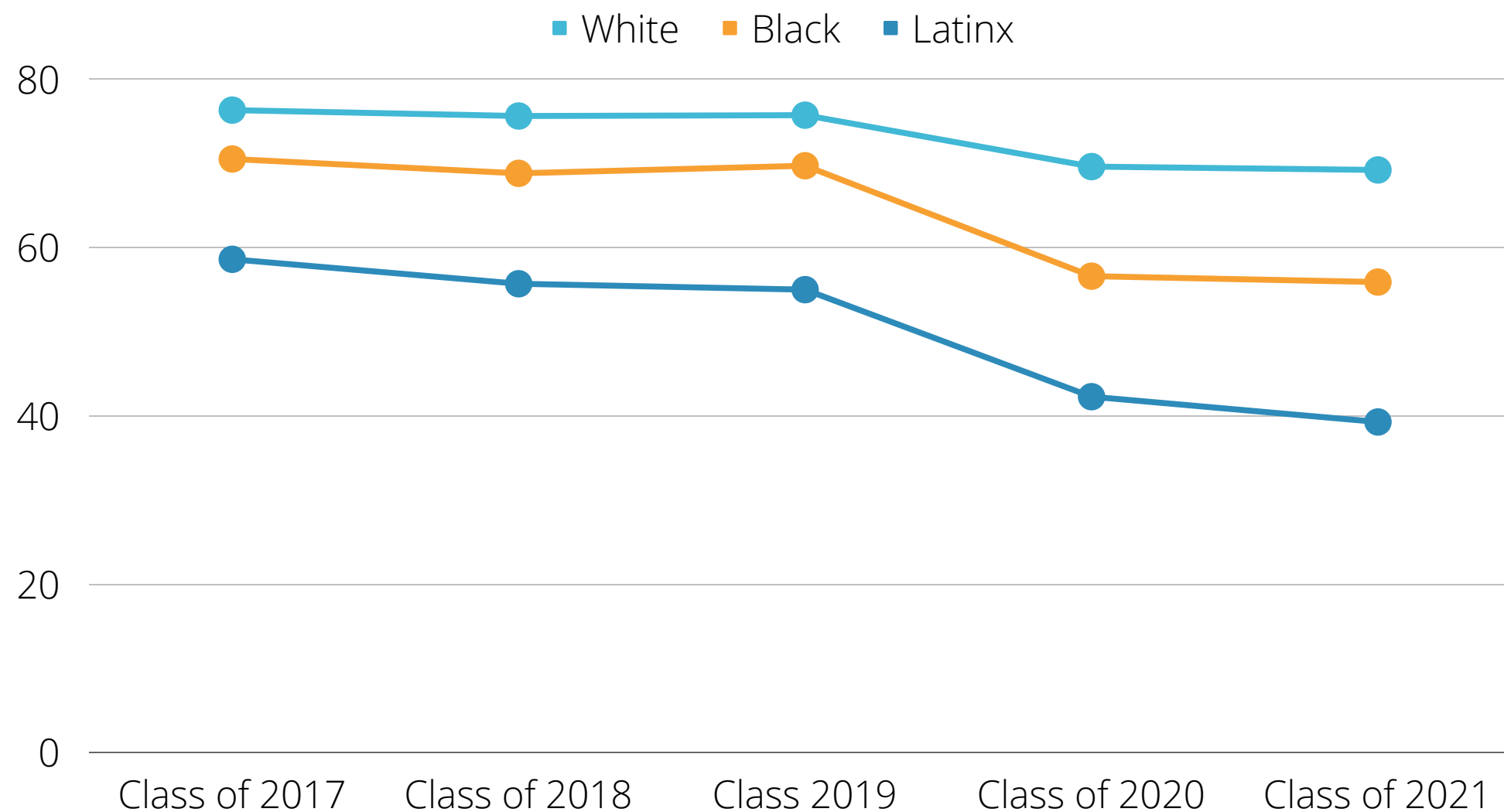
72% of parents from lower-income families were concerned about their children **falling behind in school**, compared to 55% of parents from upper-income families.



Not surprisingly, opportunity and achievement disparities grew even wider.

Growing Disparities in College Enrollment

Percent of High School Graduates Enrolling in Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs)



In 2021, **39% of Latinx high school graduates enrolled in IHEs**, compared to **69% of their White peers** – an even wider gap than before the pandemic.

Even before the pandemic, our state struggled to reduce education inequities. If we go back to our pre-COVID "normal," our new, **deeper disparities could become a permanent part of our education system.**

VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

“

Unfortunately, I know that those kids who are going to be left behind are going to be mine.

Because of **where we live**

Because of **our income**

Because of **the color of our skin**

Because of **access to other tools and technology**

Jenary, a Springfield parent, participated in MEEP's Meet the Moment Campaign.





Digging Deeper: Early Education Data



What the Data Tells Us & Why it Matters



Access



Access to high-quality early education and care in Massachusetts is low and unequal despite data showing that high-quality early childhood education programs can help all children enter kindergarten with the foundational academic and social-emotional skills they need to succeed.



Affordability



Child care in Massachusetts costs more than in most other states in the country. Infant care can cost more than a 5th of a family's income -- 7x the percentage recommended by the federal government.



Educators



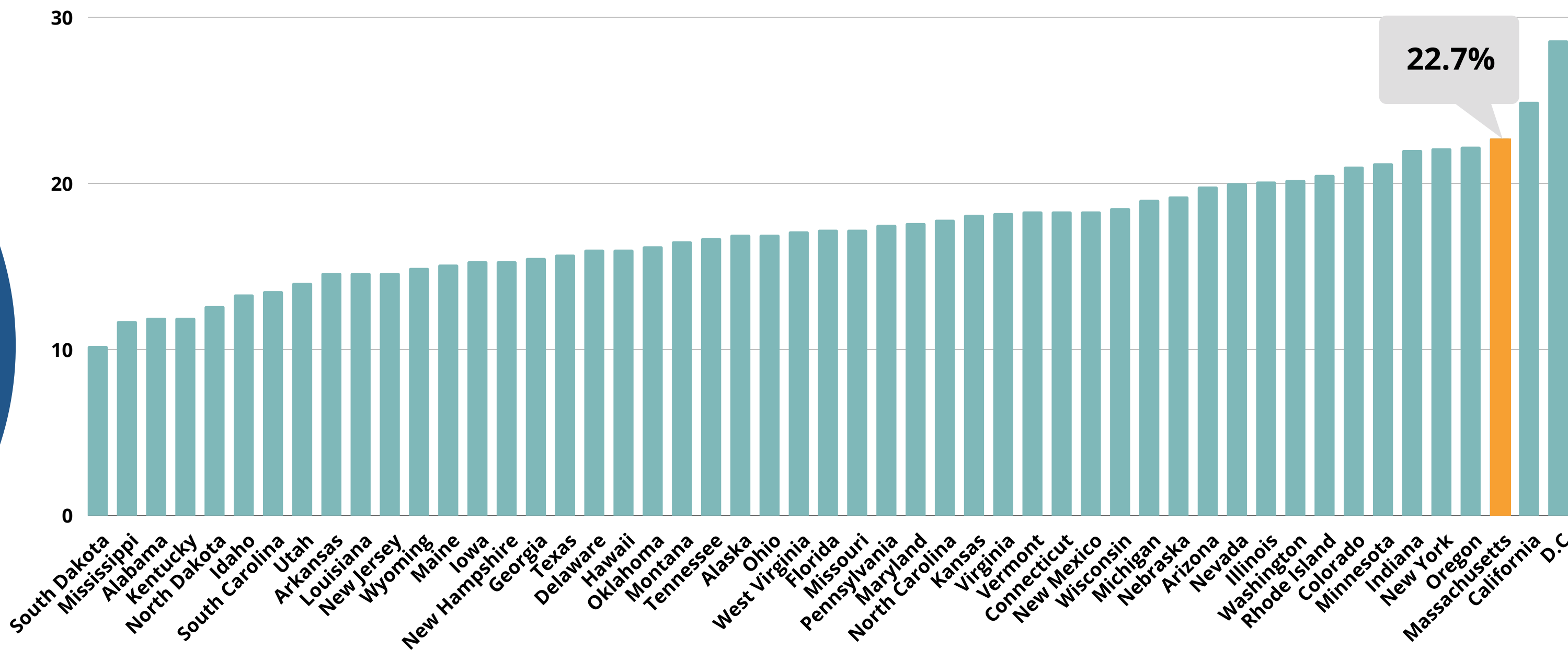
In Massachusetts, the average salary for a public school Kindergarten teacher is \$67,000 compared to the **average annual preschool teacher wage of \$25,000**. Inequitable pay is one factor contributing to early educator turnover.



The Inequities Begin Early

Annual Infant care cost as share of median income, by state

Massachusetts is ranked **3rd out of 50 states and the District of Columbia** for annual infant care costs as share of median income



Source: Economic Policy Institute: [Child care costs in the United States](#) (October 2020).

Families Shouldering the High Cost of Childcare

A white silhouette of the state of Massachusetts is positioned on the right side of the slide. A white, torn-edge rectangular box is overlaid on the map, containing the text '\$20K' and a paragraph of text.

\$20K

is the average infant care cost per year. The average price for **4-year-olds is only slightly lower, at \$15,000 a year.**

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), affordable child care costs 7% of a family's income. By this standard, **only 5.4% of Massachusetts families can afford infant care.**

VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY



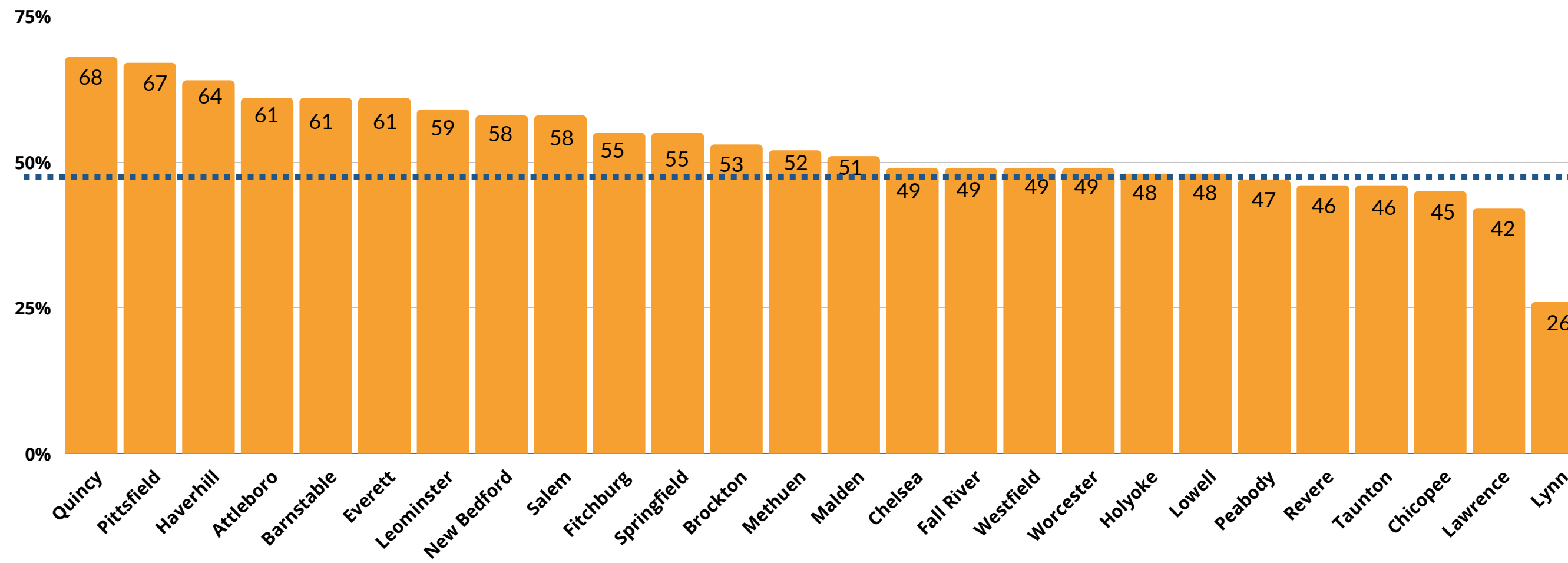
At this moment in time, Massachusetts again has the opportunity to lead the nation in bold, consequential action that addresses the multiple **inequities the childcare field has endured forever.**

Jillayne, Early education advocate



In many Gateway Cities, **Less than Half** of Children are Enrolled in Preschool

Percent of children ages 3 and 4 enrolled in preschool in Massachusetts' Gateway Cities, 2015-2019

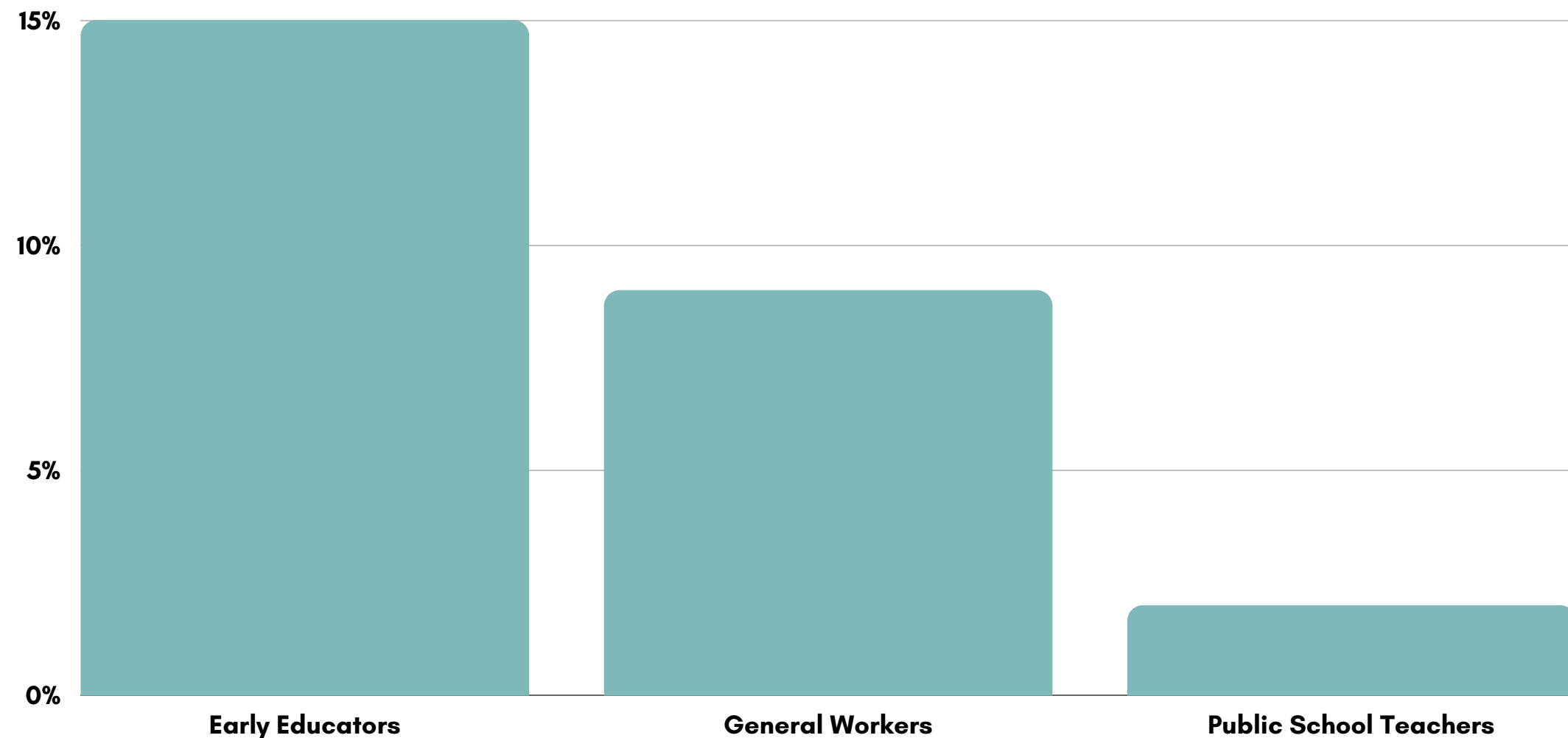


In Massachusetts, there are **354,000 children** aged 0 to 5 yet the early education and care system only has the capacity for **220,000**.

Child care workers are among the lowest-paid educators in Massachusetts.

The average early childhood educator in Massachusetts earns **\$14 per hour**. When we consider that **92% of the early childhood workforce is female, and 41% are people of color** (compared to just 9% of elementary/secondary teachers), these statistics highlight a worrisome equity challenge in our education system.

Poverty rate of Early Educators





Digging Deeper: Elementary/Secondary Education Data



What the Data Tells Us & Why it Matters



English Language Arts (ELA)



Learning to read is **one of the most important skills** for students to develop and master for their future. Students who are **competent readers** are **more likely to perform well in other subjects.**



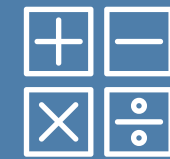
Only **1 in two** 3rd graders are **meeting or exceeding** grade-level expectations in English Language Arts (ELA).



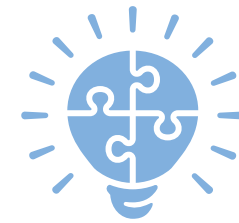
Educator Diversity



Having a racially and culturally diverse teacher workforce is **beneficial for all students**, and particularly for students of color, who often **thrive in classrooms led by teachers who share their racial and cultural backgrounds.**



Mathematics



Students that do well in math **tend to do better in school.** Math is also a **gateway subject for many high-paying jobs.**



Only **1 in three** 8th graders are **meeting or exceeding** grade-level expectations in math.



Course Passing



Students who stay on track – i.e., pass all their classes – in 9th grade are **four times more likely to graduate** high school.

3rd Grade English Language Arts MCAS Results, By Student Subgroup

3rd Grade ELA MCAS % Meeting or Exceeding Expectations

Subgroup	2019	2021	Difference (2019-2021)
Overall	56	51	-5
Economically Disadvantaged	38	31	-7
English Learners	26	16	-10
Students with Disabilities	22	22	0
Black	38	32	-6
Latinx	38	28	-10

What is MCAS?

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) is the Commonwealth's statewide assessment. All Massachusetts public school students must participate in MCAS, providing educators, policymakers, and parents with a common measure of student achievement that allows for direct comparisons among student groups, schools, and districts across the state. Beginning in third grade, students take math and English language arts tests according to their grade level.

8th Grade Math MCAS Results, By Student Subgroup

Unfinished learning has implications for all students, but **fewer historically underserved populations met grade-level expectations** pre-pandemic, and this number has only decreased according to 2021 MCAS results.

8th Grade Math MCAS % Meeting or Exceeding Expectations

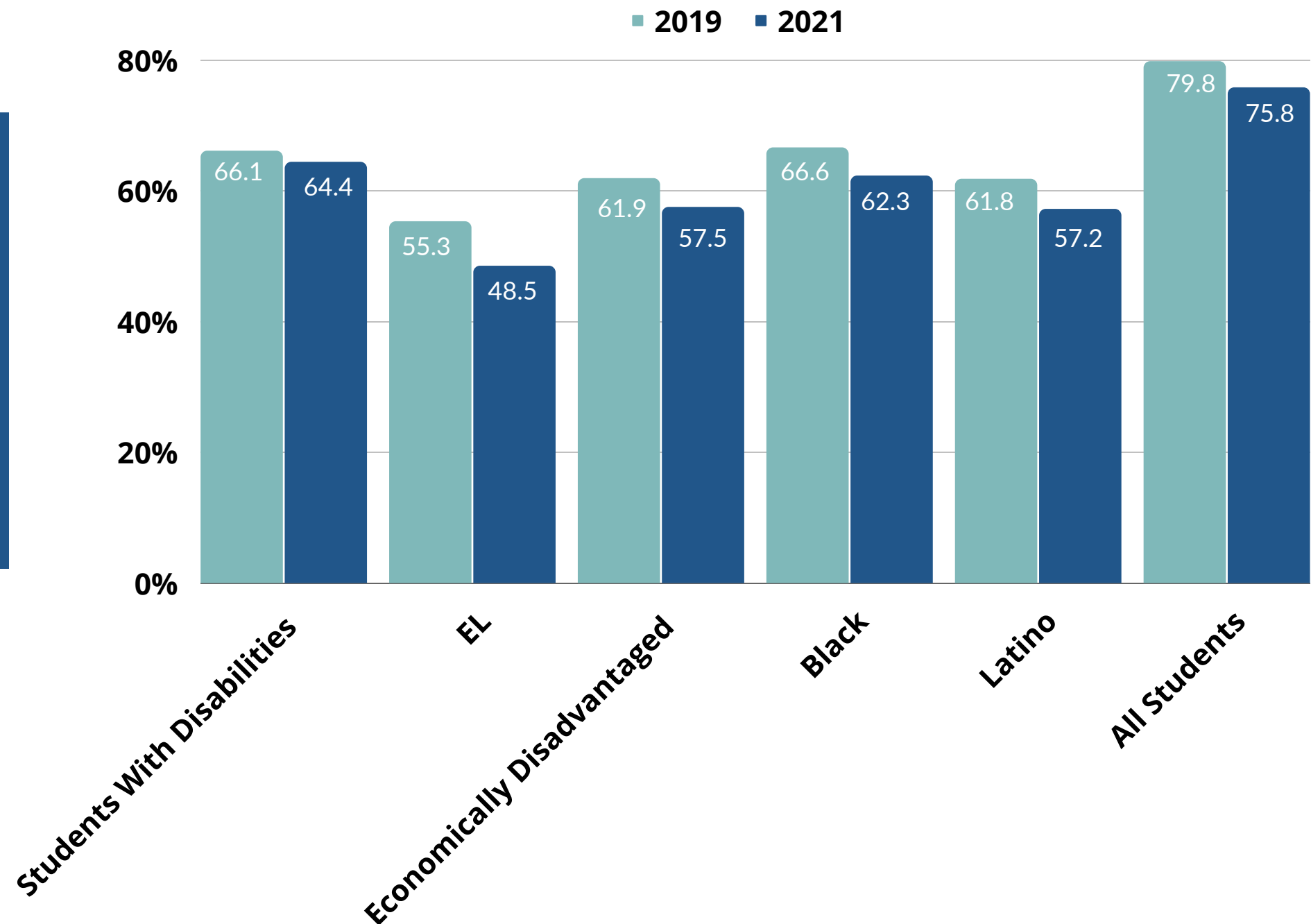
Subgroup	2019	2021	Difference (2019-2021)
Overall	46	32	-14
Economically Disadvantaged	22	14	-8
English Learners	8	4	-4
Students with Disabilities	11	7	-4
Black	25	15	-10
Latinx	25	15	-10

9th Grade Students Falling Behind

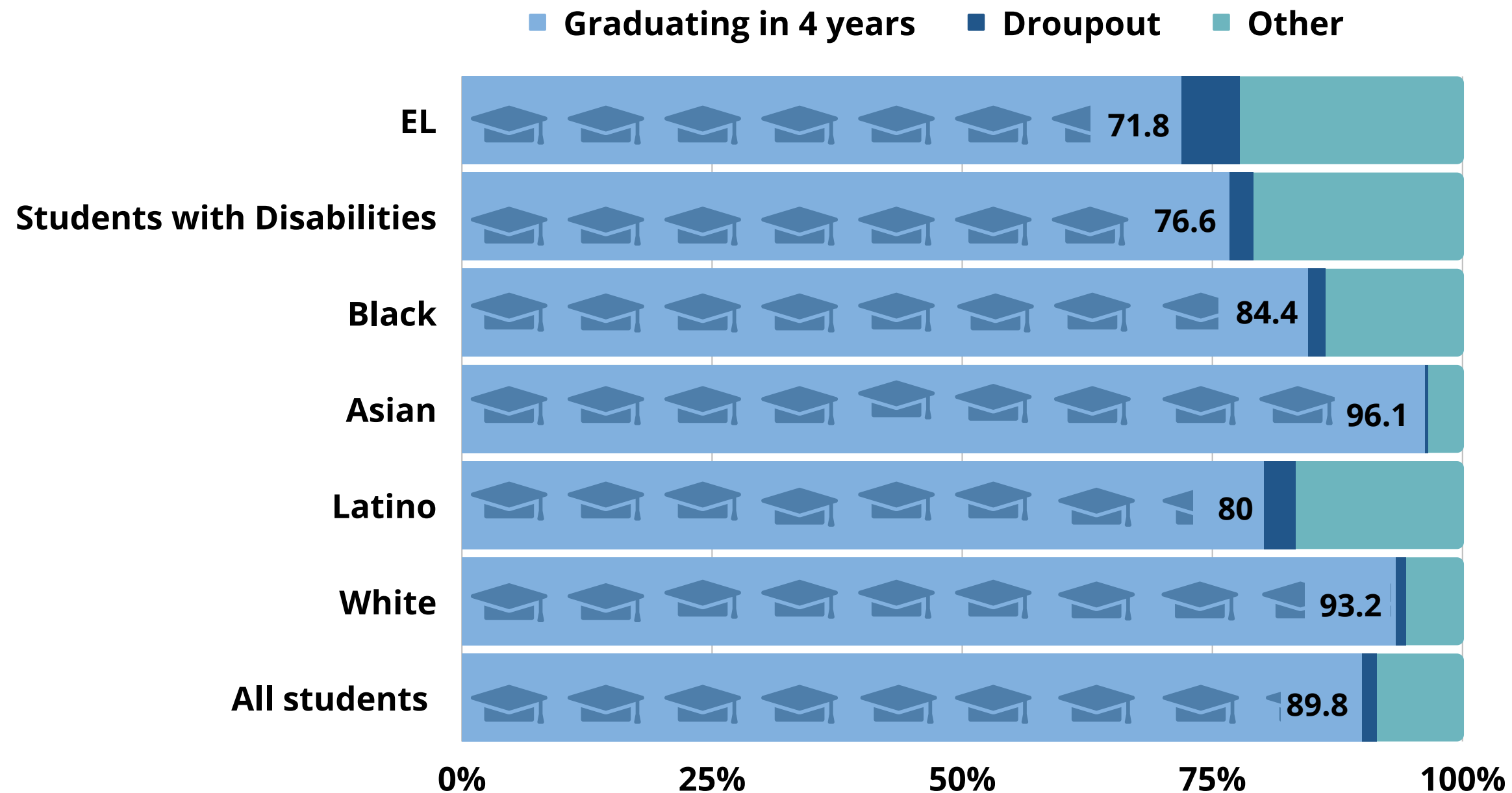
Percent of 9th Graders Passing All Classes in 2019 and 2021, by subgroup



Less than 50% of English learner high school freshmen passed all their classes in 2021 -- that's a drop of nearly 7 percentage points since 2019.



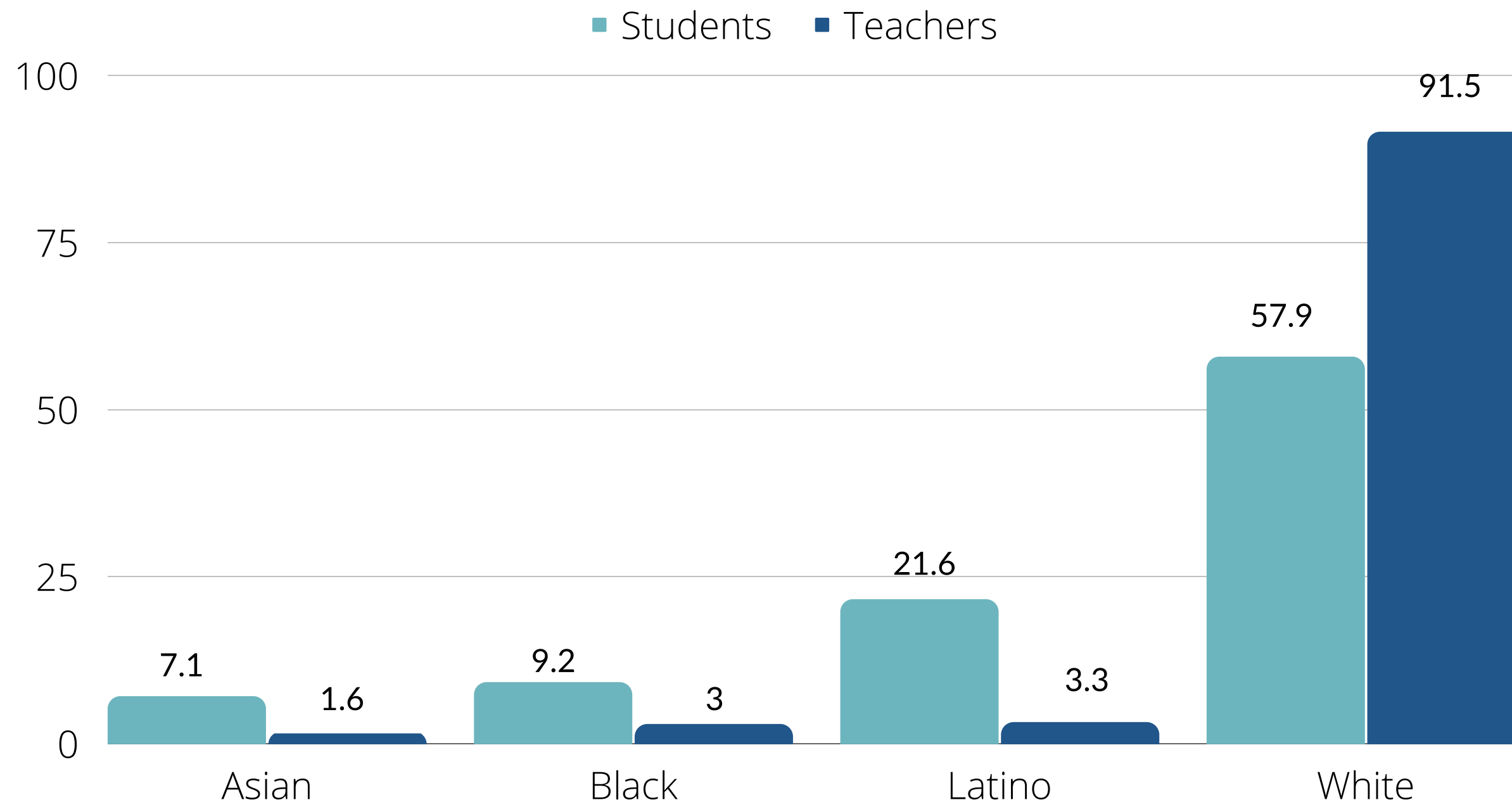
Disparities in Graduation Rates



Only **71.8%** of **EL students** graduated high school in 2021 -- **18 percentage points less** than the statewide average.

Students Lack Access to Diverse Teachers

Percent of Massachusetts students and teachers who are...



In 2019-20, **38% of schools in the state did not have a single teacher of color.**

VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY



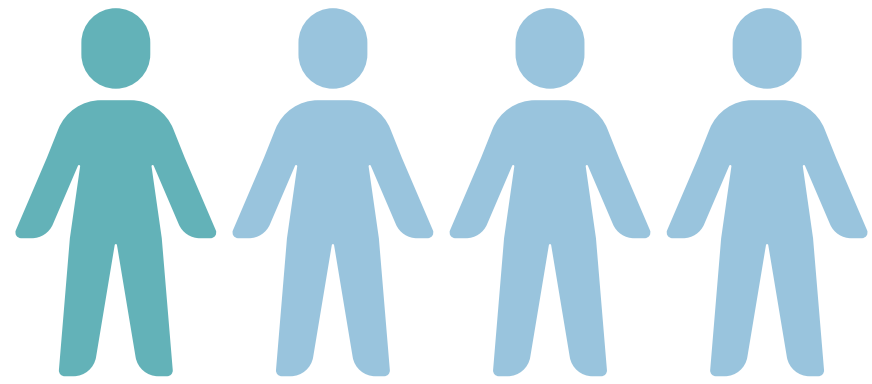
For many students, I'm their first black teacher
and I teach 7th grade

Jennifer Hedrinton, Malden, MA math teacher
2021 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year, participated in MEEP's
May 2021 Hear Our Truth event.

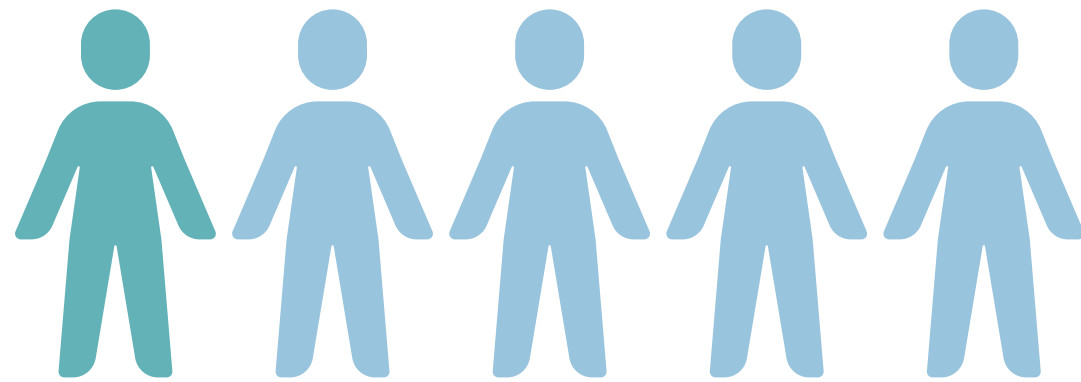


Diversity and Representation Matter

Black Students



Latinx Students



During the 2019–20 school year, about **1 in 4 Black students** and **1 in 5 Latinx students** attended a school **without a same-race teacher on staff** – an experience that is all but unheard of for White students in our state.



Digging Deeper:

Post-secondary Education Data



What the Data Tells Us & Why it Matters



Access



Latinx and Black students faced disparities in enrollment even before the onset of the pandemic, but **disparities have only widened post-pandemic.**



Affordability



A postsecondary degree is a pivotal route to achieving social and economic mobility. Yet, a **public higher education is unaffordable** for many students, especially Black and Latinx students, who have less wealth, on average, than their White peers.



Completion

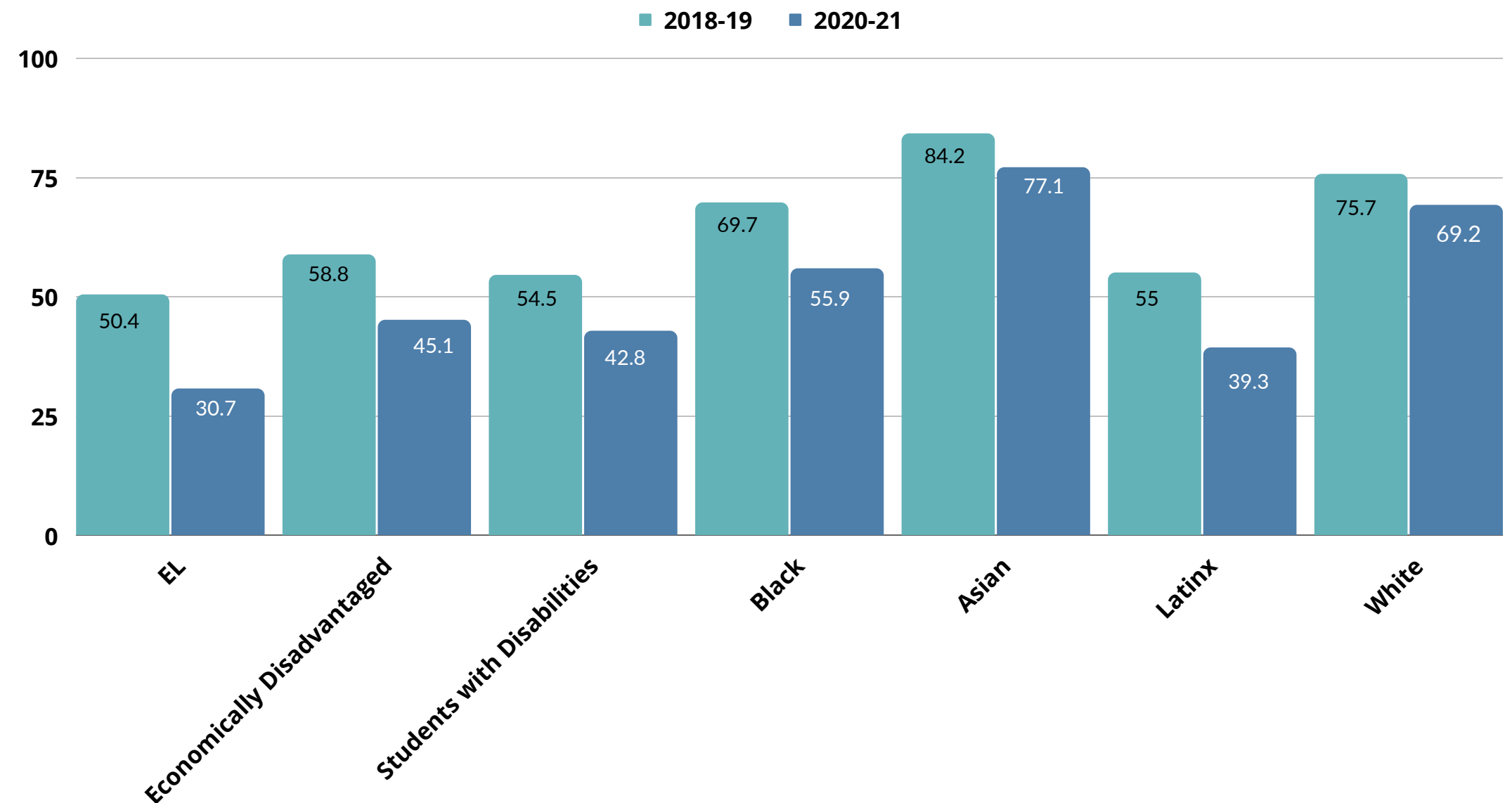


Obtaining a college degree has never been more important, but too few students who begin college make it to graduation. As the state's economy accelerates its shift toward knowledge-based industries already **underserved communities are being left further behind.**

Declines in College-Going

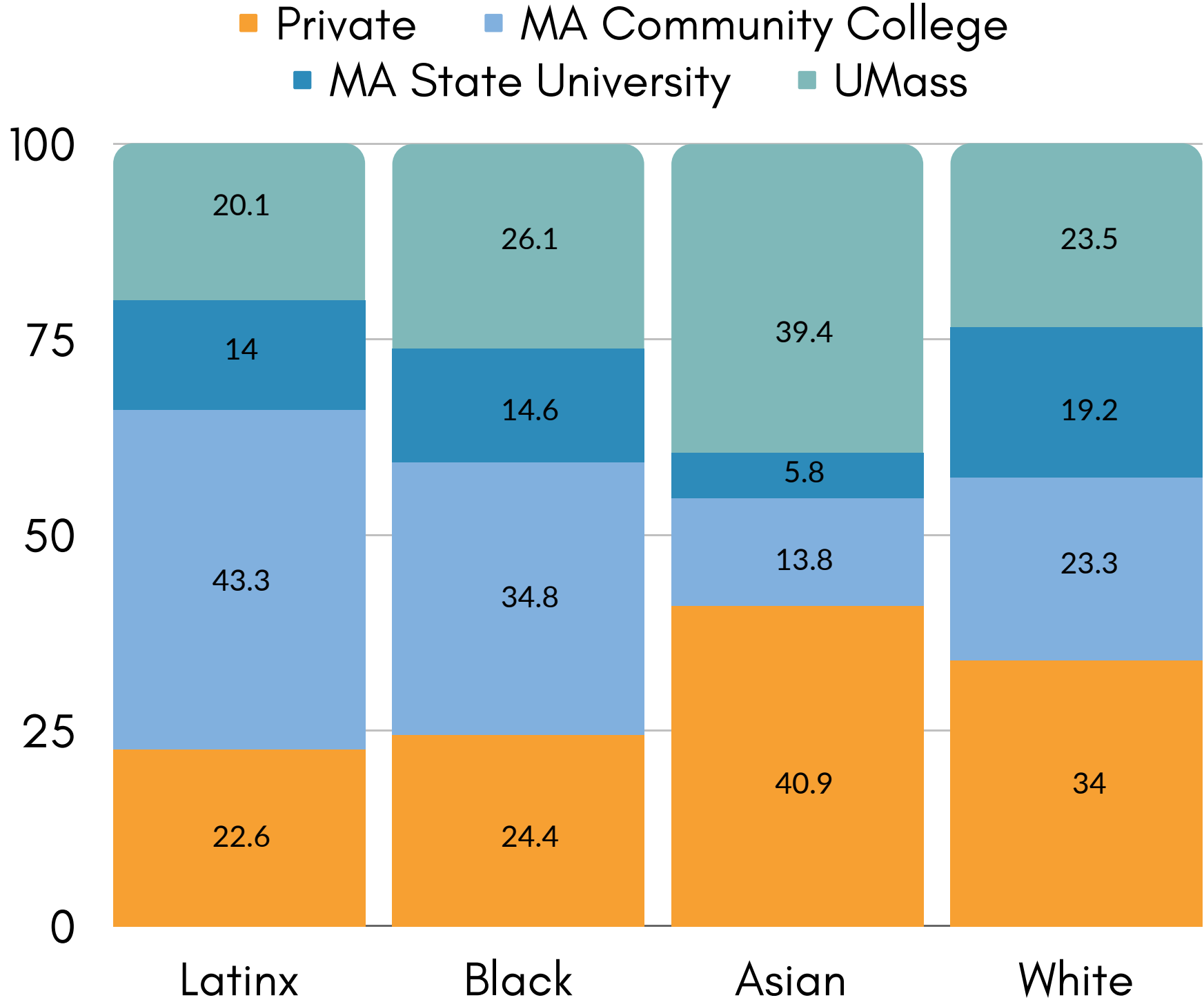
College Enrollment among high school graduates, by student subgroup

Only **30.7% of English Learners** who graduated high school in 2021 enrolled in college -- **19 percentage points less** than before the pandemic.



Disparities In College Enrollment, by Segment

Graduates Attending Massachusetts Institutions of Higher Education (IHE), Race/Ethnicity and Segment



In Massachusetts, Latinx and Black students are overrepresented at community colleges. **43.3% of Latinx** graduates who enrolled in Massachusetts IHEs enrolled in community colleges, compared to **23.3% of their White peers.**

Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education: 2021- 2022 Graduates Attending Institutions of Higher Education by Student Group.(June 2022).

College Affordability

Family Income	Average Annual Cost	Percentage of annual Income spent on College Costs
\$0-\$30,000	\$13,252	up to 44%
\$30,001-\$48,000	\$15,498	32% - 52%
\$48,001-\$75,000	\$18,485	25% - 39%
\$75,001-\$110,000	\$21,626	19% - 29%
\$110,001+	\$23,059	21% or less

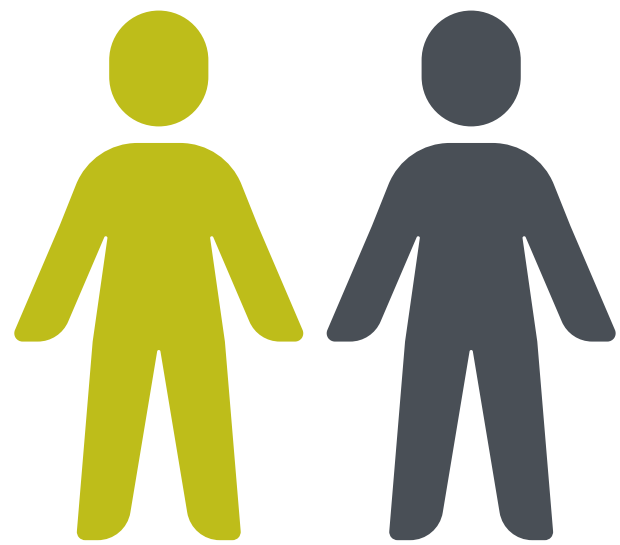
Example of a Large State University

For many students from families earning less than \$30,000 annually at this Massachusetts state university, college attendance costs can amount to more than half of their family's income — after grants and loans. In contrast, families earning more than \$110,000 annually can expect to pay only a fifth or less of their annual income. These inequitable patterns are representative of colleges across the Commonwealth.



Cost includes tuition, living costs, books, supplies, and fees minus the average grant and scholarship for federal financial aid recipients.

College Completion



In 2017, only **1 of every 2** first-time, degree-seeking students who enrolled in a Massachusetts public college graduated within six years.

Completion rates for historically underserved students are much lower. In 2017, only **28% of Latino males** who enrolled in public colleges **graduated**.

Envisioning a more equitable education system

Massachusetts leaders have an opportunity to build on the state's rich educational history and authentically partner with families and communities to plot a **new course forward** — one that puts **education equity front and center**.



Where we are now: A moment of immense opportunity

With many of our highest-need districts receiving millions of dollars in additional federal pandemic recovery and state SOA funding, with new leadership on the way, and greater public demand for change than we have seen in years, Massachusetts has an opportunity to plot a new course — one that puts education equity front and center.

SINCE 2020

\$3.4 billion

IN NEW FEDERAL FUNDING FOR EDUCATION

WITH

\$2.2 billion

MORE COMING TO DISTRICTS BY 2027 VIA THE STUDENT OPPORTUNITY ACT

Mapping our future together: our vision for education in Massachusetts

As organizations that work directly with students, families, educators, and education leaders, we know that there is no excellence without equity.

We are committed to ensuring that Massachusetts' education system becomes a leader in serving all our students, not just some.

We urge state leaders to commit to an education system where ...

Our vision for early education

1

All families can afford high-quality early education and care.

2

All families -- and especially traditionally underserved families -- have easy access to high-quality, culturally affirming early education programs that meet their needs.

3

Early childhood educators are representative of the children and families they serve, well-prepared, and are tangibly valued and supported within their communities.



Our vision for K-12 education



1

All students and families feel like they belong, are respected, and welcomed in their school community.

2

All students receive engaging, culturally responsive and rigorous learning experiences, and the individualized support they need to prepare for college, careers, and life.

3

All students have access to a diverse, well-prepared, well-supported, and stable educator workforce.

Our vision for postsecondary education



1

All students have an opportunity to access a postsecondary education.

2

All students applying to and attending public postsecondary institutions understand their financing options and can complete their degrees without financial barriers.

3

All students get the support they need to successfully complete their degree.

We can, and must, do better.

Today's **reality falls far short of this vision**, especially for students of color, students from low-income families, English learners and students with disabilities.

Read our report, *There Is No Excellence Without Equity: A Path Forward for Education in Massachusetts*, to learn what state leaders can do to realize this vision, and make Massachusetts No. 1 for all of our students.



Ways to Engage

- We are far from the vision of ensuring we have an equitable education system for all children in Massachusetts, so join us in our efforts and stay connected to our future releases by reaching out at **MEEP@masseduequity.org** to sign up for our mailing list.
- If you haven't had the opportunity to view our full education equity agenda with recommendations for state leaders, make sure to visit us at **www.MassEduEquity.org**.
- Share the report on social media -- Facebook and Twitter -- tag us at **@MassEduEquity**, and use the hashtag **#MassEduEquity, #maedu, #mapoli, and #NoExcellenceWithoutEquity**



MASSACHUSETTS EDUCATION
EQUITY PARTNERSHIP

There is no excellence without equity

Stay Connected



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.....
Questions? Comments? Get in Touch!
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