

Norwalk ACTS Community Impact Report

March 2018

**/ AS A MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATION, WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE
TO EACH AND EVERY CHILD IN NORWALK, CRADLE TO CAREER.**



No Single Organization Alone

To ensure the success of all children in Norwalk, we are focused on results, improving upon what works and changing what doesn't. We recognize that every individual and organization that impacts our children's growth, from cradle to career, is accountable and that our collective voice is a part of the solution.

Anthony Allison *	Kelly Heese *	Norwalk Housing Authority *
Katrina Andersen *	George Hensinger *	Norwalk Mentor Program *
AT&T *	Horizons at New Canaan Country School *	Norwalk Police Department
Be Foundation *	Horizons at Norwalk Community College *	Norwalk Public Library *
Helene Becker *	Human Services Council *	Norwalk Public Schools *
Jamie Zyla Bennetta *	Yazmin Iglesias *	Norwalk YoungLife
Boy-Responsive Literacy Consulting, LLC *	Amy Jeffereis *	Vicki Oatis *
Sandy Bria *	Stephanie Kadam *	Odyssey Learning and Enrichment Programs *
Carver Foundation of Norwalk *	Kids In Crisis	Mary Oster *
Catholic Charities/Room To Grow *	Laoise King *	Paula Palermo *
Center for Contemporary Printmaking	Let's Get Ready	Partnership for Early Education Research (PEER) *
The Center for Sexual Assault Crisis Counseling & Education	Li'l Critters *	Pepperidge Farm
Child Guidance Center of Mid-Fairfield County *	Liberation Programs, Inc.	Person-to-Person *
The Children's Playhouse *	Literacy How *	The Preferred Group
City of Norwalk *	Mary Kate Locke *	Shannon Quieroga *
Kim Collibee *	Lockwood Mathews Mansion Museum	Red Apples
Community Health Center, Inc. *	Suzanne Lyons *	Diana Revolut *
Connecticut Commission on Children	Maritime Aquarium of Norwalk *	Mayor Harry Rilling *
Courage To Speak	Tricia Massucco *	Lucia Rilling *
Michael Crafter *	Cristina Matos *	Kate Ritter *
Creative Connections	Linda McDonald *	Ritter Family Foundation *
Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County	Mentor Consulting Group *	Riverbrook Regional YMCA *
Day Street Community Health Center	Naramake Family Resource Center	Serving All Vessels Equally (S.A.V.E.) *
Diageo	National Federation of Teachers *	Shames Family Foundation *
Kim Kuta Dring *	Mary Newberry *	Side By Side Charter School *
Desiree Edwards *	Norwalk 2.0	Silver Hill Hospital
Meri Erickson *	Norwalk Collaborative for Youth Success	Silvermine Arts Center
Maria Escalera *	Norwalk Community College *	South Norwalk Community Center *
Fairfield County's Community Foundation *	Norwalk Community Health Center, Inc. *	St. Paul's Episcopal Church *
Fairfield University	Norwalk Early Childhood Council *	STAR Inc.
Family & Children's Agency *	Norwalk Education Foundation *	Lee Malloy Stendardi *
Emily Fox *	Norwalk Federation of Teachers *	Stepping Stones Museum for Children *
Fox Run Family Resource Center *	Norwalk Fire Department	Lisa Brinton Thomson *
GE Capital	Norwalk Fire Department	Robert Townes *
Grace Baptist Church *	Norwalk Grassroots Tennis & Education *	United Way of Coastal Fairfield County *
Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce *	Norwalk Grows *	Meg Woglom *
The Grossman Family Foundation *	Norwalk Health Department *	Young Lives
	Norwalk Healthy Families Collaborative	
	Norwalk Hospital	

* Indicates Members who signed a Memorandum of Agreement in 2017

// *"Norwalk's three-year-olds who started preschool this year will be graduating high school in 2029."*
– Norwalk ACTS 2015 Baseline Report

Dear Norwalk Community,

The Membership of Norwalk ACTS has one singular but ambitious focus: to improve the lives and futures of all of Norwalk's children, from cradle to career. The preschool children that we referred to in the quote above are now in the first grade. Given that it has been three years since we published our Baseline Report, the questions that we have to answer are:

- Have we, as a membership organization, supported and improved the lives of those preschool children?
- Have we, as adults, fully committed ourselves to what we agreed upon when we signed a Memorandum of Agreement in 2014 and again in December of 2017?
- Have we created a community of learning that incubates and fosters best thinking?
- Have we taken action based on what data tells us?
- Have we communicated, shared and expanded upon the good work of our community members?
- Have we aligned investment to what works?
- Are those now first graders, and all the other children and youth in Norwalk, better off than when we first started our work?

In many cases, the answer is YES!

Our city can be extremely proud of our Membership – over 100 individuals and organizations strong – who have dedicated their lives and careers to improving the opportunities and outcomes for all of Norwalk's children. For us it isn't abstract or just a job; we want what is better and best for Norwalk's children, and many of us have adopted the system change process of Norwalk ACTS to achieve it.

As a community and as a Membership, our accomplishments are impressive. We have increased and fortified the Initiatives that are positively impacting our six community level outcomes across the cradle to career continuum. We have built our data capacity and infrastructure that enable us to better disaggregate and prioritize our indicators of success. We have better aligned the participation and engagement of our Membership within our Initiatives. We have empowered our community leaders throughout Norwalk ACTS Membership to be stronger advocates for our work.

Can we rest on what we have accomplished? Absolutely not.

While, as Members, leaders, thought partners and community and child advocates, we are inspired by the work that has been done, data continues to show us that our work – and therefore our impact – has only just begun. With courage and commitment, we must continue to address not just the symptoms but the deep-rooted causes and conditions of the obstacles that impede our progress.

I urge every one of you to take your time reading through this Report. Try to reflect on what your hope is for Norwalk's children- today, tomorrow, next month, next year and in 2029, when our now first graders graduate from high school. In doing so, please answer these two questions:

1. What type of environment and community do I hope to see my children, my neighbors' children, my colleague's children, my grandchildren or my students thrive in?
2. What can I bring to the table to be part of making that hope a reality for all?

Whether you are new to Norwalk ACTS or have been an active Member, we thank you for being part of our community – for your attention, your support and your dedication. I am confident that with consistent intentionality and irrepressible commitment, we CAN achieve our mission – for each and every one of Norwalk's children.

Sincerely,



Anthony Allison
Executive Director, Norwalk ACTS

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/ What We Do

As a **Convener, a Conduit and a Catalyst for Change**, Norwalk ACTS brings together educators, parents, clergy, business leaders, investors, health providers, elected officials and residents who are committed to building a community infrastructure to support a successful journey for each and every child in Norwalk, from cradle to career.

Convener + Conduit = Catalyst for Change

Norwalk ACTS convenes community stakeholders around a common agenda, using shared measurement to form action plans which result in measurable and positive impact on the lives of all Norwalk's children.

Convener

Norwalk ACTS provides the forum and process for each member's voice to be heard, considered and acted upon.



Conduit

Norwalk ACTS is a conduit, connecting and analyzing community-level data, turning it into information and insight which leads to evidence-based decision making.



Catalyst for Change

Norwalk ACTS is a catalyst for systems change, aligning our members' collective work to ensure success for all children, cradle to career.

/ How We Do It

In June of 2014 and again in December 2017, Norwalk ACTS Members signed a **Memorandum of Agreement**, in which they committed to building trust amongst Members and throughout the community, valuing and actively promoting equity, unity and modeling a commitment to our work by:

- Ensuring that the principles of Collective Impact and the methodology of *StriveTogether* guide our work
- Ensuring that data is used as information and evidence to support fact-based decision-making
- Ensuring that all sectors of the community are intentionally engaged in the work regardless of race, gender, age, income, geography, and role
- Ensuring open and candid communication, transparency, an ongoing spirit of innovation, optimism and positive thinking
- Ensuring a persistent commitment to sustainable, long term, systems change and continuous improvement

We Act with Shared Accountability and Differentiated Responsibility.

Various entities, each operating with outlined roles and responsibilities, provide the organizational structure for Norwalk ACTS.

- Membership
- Backbone Staff
- Board of Directors
- Implementation Team
- Initiatives and Working Groups (formerly named Community Action Networks, or CANs)



“Not everything that
can be counted counts,
and not everything that
counts can be counted.”
– Albert Einstein

/ Behind Every Data Point is a Child: The Power of Data

Collecting Data, Connecting Data and Using it to Improve our Community's Support of Children

Data is everywhere. If you have good data, it can be your most valuable asset. And good decision-making is based on the availability and the analysis of good data. **Without it, we cannot measure change or impact.**

Norwalk has plenty of data, but it exists in different places, with different quality, uses and formats. One of the major goals of Norwalk ACTS is to put all that data together to tell a bigger story and empower our community to make collective decisions on how to improve our children's outcomes.

Collecting good data and turning it into information creates a knowledge base. Knowledge is power. And that power becomes the muscle we use to improve the systems that address the needs of Norwalk's children.

Above and beyond knowing who our children are, we need to gain insight into WHY some children are succeeding and WHY some are struggling. In order to do this, we cannot rely on just one data point, like a test score or a zip code or what language a child speaks at home. Nor can we rely on data at a single point in time, at a single grade level each year or from a single source. Because Norwalk ACTS believes that **behind every data point is a child**, we owe it to our children to know the bigger story by collecting, connecting and analyzing multiple data points, over time, across the continuum.

A Word about Data Privacy

Norwalk ACTS takes data privacy seriously. We have signed a data sharing agreement with Norwalk Public Schools, which defines how we are allowed to safely and responsibly use student data, adhering to FERPA guidelines. We also obtain parent consent before any of our Members share data with Norwalk ACTS.

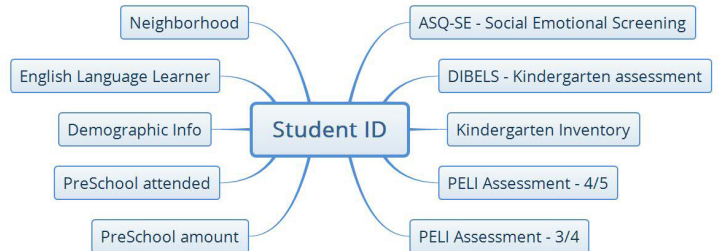
Our ability to collect good data across systems has improved significantly over the past three years. Examples of this are shown in the data maps below. Knowing more about our incoming Kindergartners gives schools and community-based organizations the power to know children better when they arrive.

Incoming Kindergarten Data Map

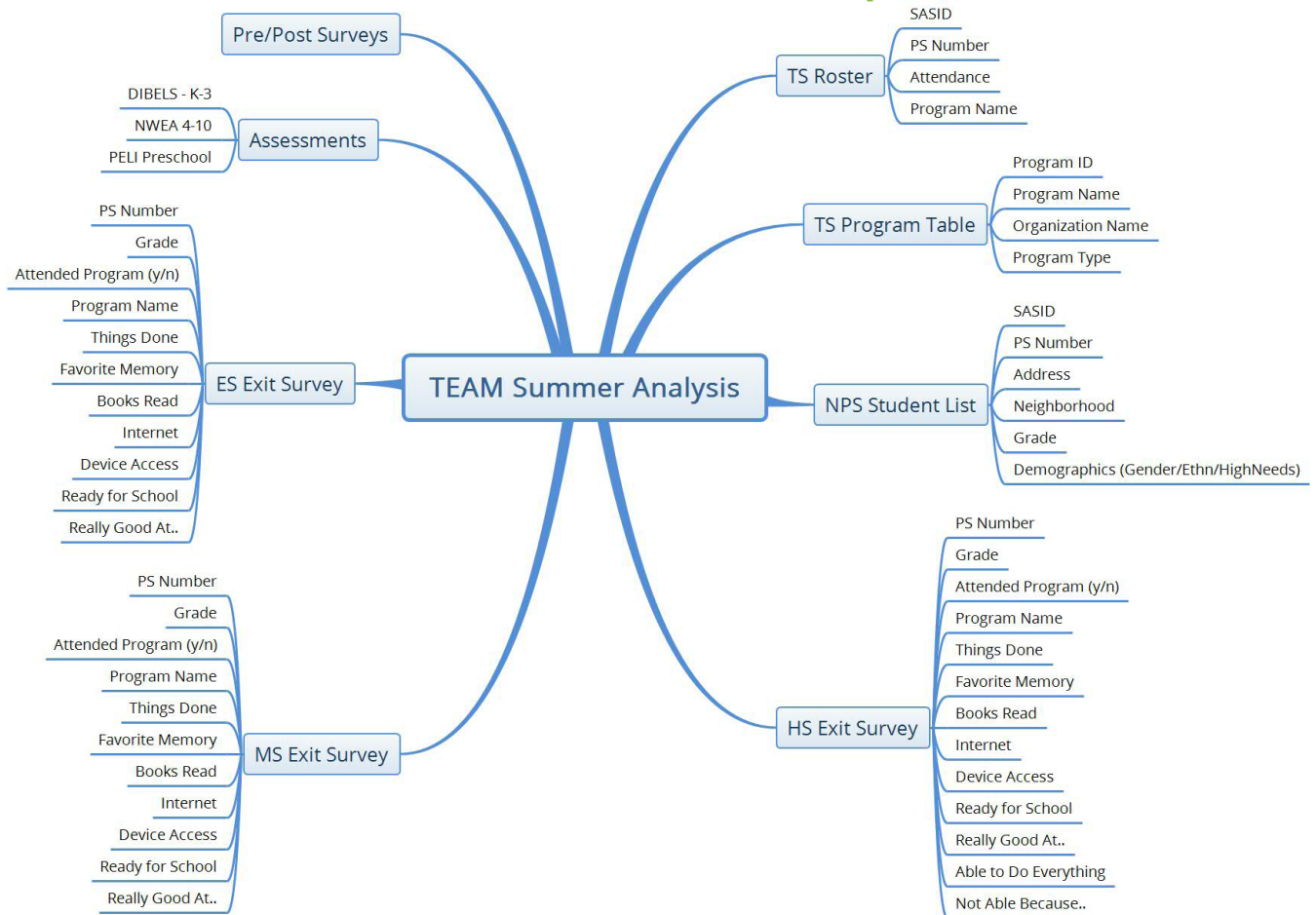
Data We Had in 2014



Data We Have in 2018



TEAM Summer Data Map



Having a growing number of data sets around summer, for example, better informs our community's ability to support children during the summer AND during the school year.

These are just two examples of how Norwalk ACTS is acting as a conduit for data from different sources. There are other examples throughout this report that illustrate how **our community is coming together for the purpose of creating a better data pipeline to serve our children through improved systems.**

/ Norwalk: A City of Growth

Norwalk, with a population of over 88,000, is the sixth largest city in Connecticut. Unlike the rest of Connecticut, which has shown virtually no post-recessionary growth, **Norwalk is one of only a handful of cities in the state that is growing.**

A 23 square-mile land area, Norwalk is in the heart of Fairfield County, one of America's wealthiest counties. Norwalk's rich history dates back to the Revolutionary War and many historic landmarks still dot the landscape. Norwalk's proximity to New York City offers a convenient commute for many. With a multitude of attractions, arts, cuisine and nightlife, as well as a long list of thriving businesses and corporations, **our culture is rich and we celebrate our diversity.**

Over the last thirteen years, Norwalk has experienced **significant and rapid demographic change.** Most notably, the percentage of families with children that qualify for free or reduced priced school meals has increased to over 50%; English is not the primary language in 42% of the households.

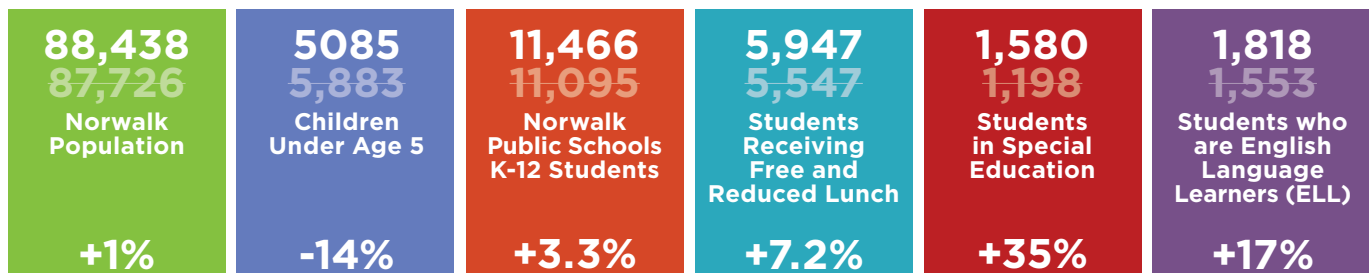
The Norwalk Public School (NPS) district has over 11,000 students in twelve elementary schools, four middle schools, two comprehensive high schools, one alternative high school program and one inclusive preschool program. Norwalk is also home to the Center for Global Studies, an inter-district high school magnet program, as well as Norwalk Early College Academy, the State's first early college P-TECH model program in partnership with IBM and Norwalk Community College. Over the past three years in particular, **NPS has made tremendous gains** in student growth metrics. The recently released 2016-17 *Connecticut Next Generation Accountability Report* details the overall success of school districts in the state.

NPS has shown significant growth as measured across a broad set of 12 indicators that help tell the story of how well a school is **preparing its students for success in college, careers and life.** The system is intended to move beyond test scores and graduation rates, providing an overall perspective of district and school performance and incorporating student growth over time. As detailed in the Accountability Report, **NPS has achieved the following:**

- An accountability index score of 76.9%, compared to a State index of 73.2%
- A 56-point growth in accountability index score
- The third greatest gain of K-12 districts in the state
- The highest gain of any of the state's 21 cities
- A move to the top of its District Comparison Group (DRG) for the first time, ahead of other similar districts
- A #1 ranking in growth results, as compared to similar districts, for all students and high needs students in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math
- A four-year graduation rate of 90.4%, exceeding the state average graduation rate of 87.4%

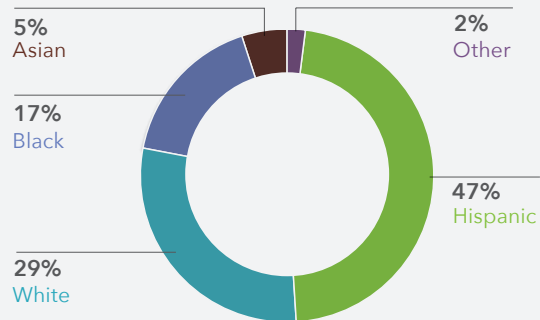
Also, new Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessment results showed NPS ranking first in Percent of Target Achieved (PTA) in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math, as compared to similar districts.

In Norwalk, there are also a K-8 parochial school, a Montessori middle school, a PreK-8 charter school, a 6-12 Prep School, plus **Norwalk Community College**, which is one of the area's most comprehensive and innovative post-secondary institutions. Additionally, the city is home to **dozens of community-based organizations** that are dedicated to the well-being of children, families and individuals living in Norwalk.

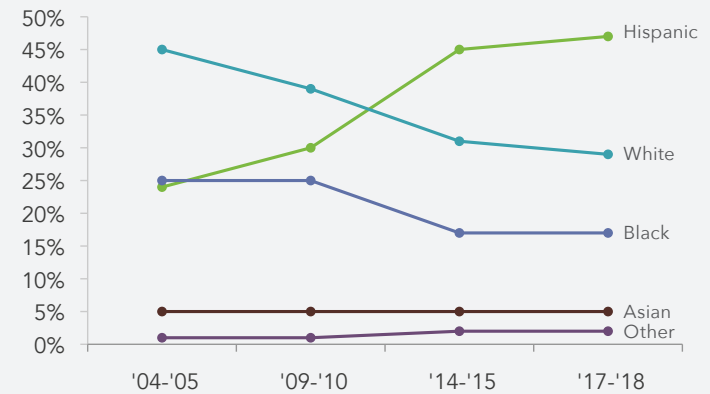


Sources: Norwalk Population – U.S. Census ACS Estimates; Norwalk Public Schools Population – NPS PowerSchool student information system
The chart above represents change in city statistics since publication of Norwalk ACTS Baseline Report in March 2015.

Norwalk Public Schools Student K-12 Population 2017 - 2018

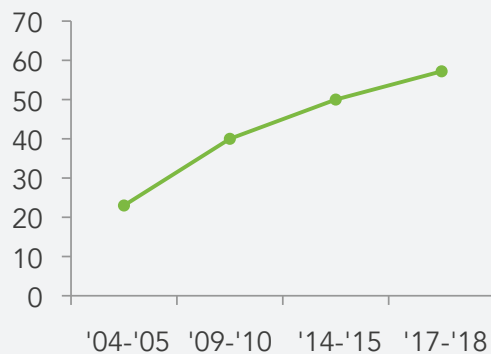


Norwalk Public Schools Student K-12 Population 13-Year Trend

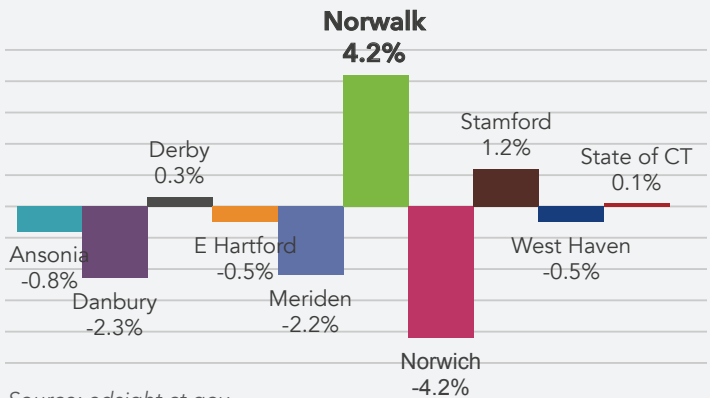


Source: Census, NPS PowerSchool. Populations may vary

Norwalk Free and Reduced Lunch 13-Year Trend

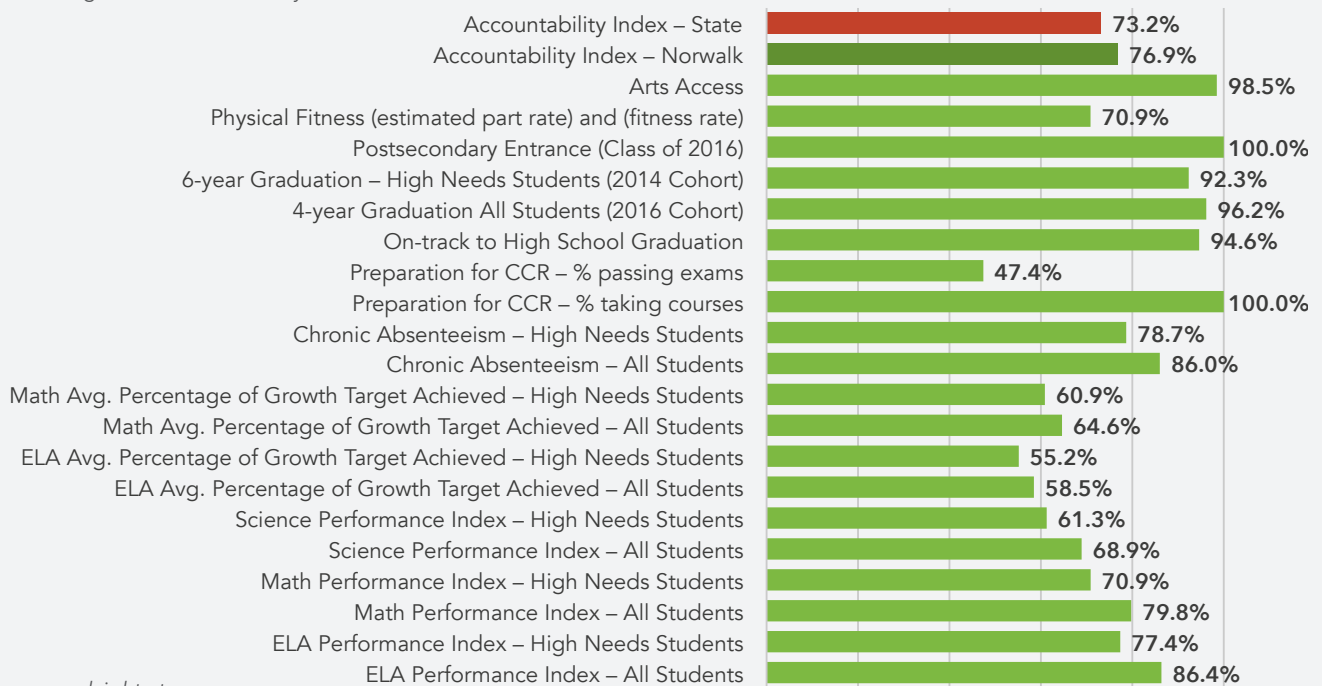


District Reference Group (DRG) H Accountability Index Change 2015-2016 to 2016-2017



Source: edsight.ct.gov

Norwalk Public Schools 2016-17 Accountability Index Percentage of Points Earned by Indicator



Source: edsight.ct.gov

/ Outcome (n.): the way a thing turns out; a consequence

**“It is the outcome of the actions
taken that counts.” ►**

In large part, the following outcome pages present academic data. While this data can indicate progress across outcomes, academic data alone does not represent the entire picture of a child.

To better serve the needs of the children of Norwalk, an acceleration in the collection, connection, analysis and use of social-emotional and health and wellness data is warranted. Work in these areas will help our community better define our success in support of our city's children.



Norwalk ACTS' Collective Impact process, strategies and initiatives are aimed at strengthening the educational, social-emotional and physical health support systems for the children and youth of Norwalk. All aspects of our work are aimed at improving the following community level outcomes:

Norwalk ACTS Community Level Outcomes

1

/ Norwalk children enter Kindergarten ready to learn.



2

/ Norwalk students meet the goal level in 3rd Grade reading.



3

/ Norwalk students have the necessary skills to successfully transition from 5th to 6th Grade.



4

/ Norwalk students have the necessary skills to successfully transition from 8th to 9th Grade.



5

/ Norwalk students successfully graduate from high school in 4 years, ready for college, post-secondary training or full-time employment.



6

/ Norwalk graduates are career-ready with a college degree or professional certificate.



The Big Picture

OUTCOMES

1
Norwalk children
are ready to learn
in Kindergarten.

2
Norwalk students
meet the goal
level in 3rd Grade
Reading.

3
Norwalk students have
the necessary skills to
successfully transition
from 5th to 6th Grade.

Norwalk
skills
fr

INDICATORS

Fall Kindergarten Entrance
Inventory Assessment: % of
Students Ready in 6 Domains

Preschool Attendance: % of Incoming
Kindergarten Students with Reported
Preschool Attendance

Kindergarten English Language Arts:
% of Students Meeting or Exceeding
Beginning of Year DIBELS
Assessment Standards

Third Grade English Language Arts:
% of Students Meeting or
Exceeding Smarter Balanced
Assessment Standards

Third Grade Math: % of Students
Meeting or Exceeding Smarter
Balanced Assessment Standards

Sixth Grade English Language Arts:
% of Students Meeting or Exceeding
Smarter Balanced Assessment
Standards

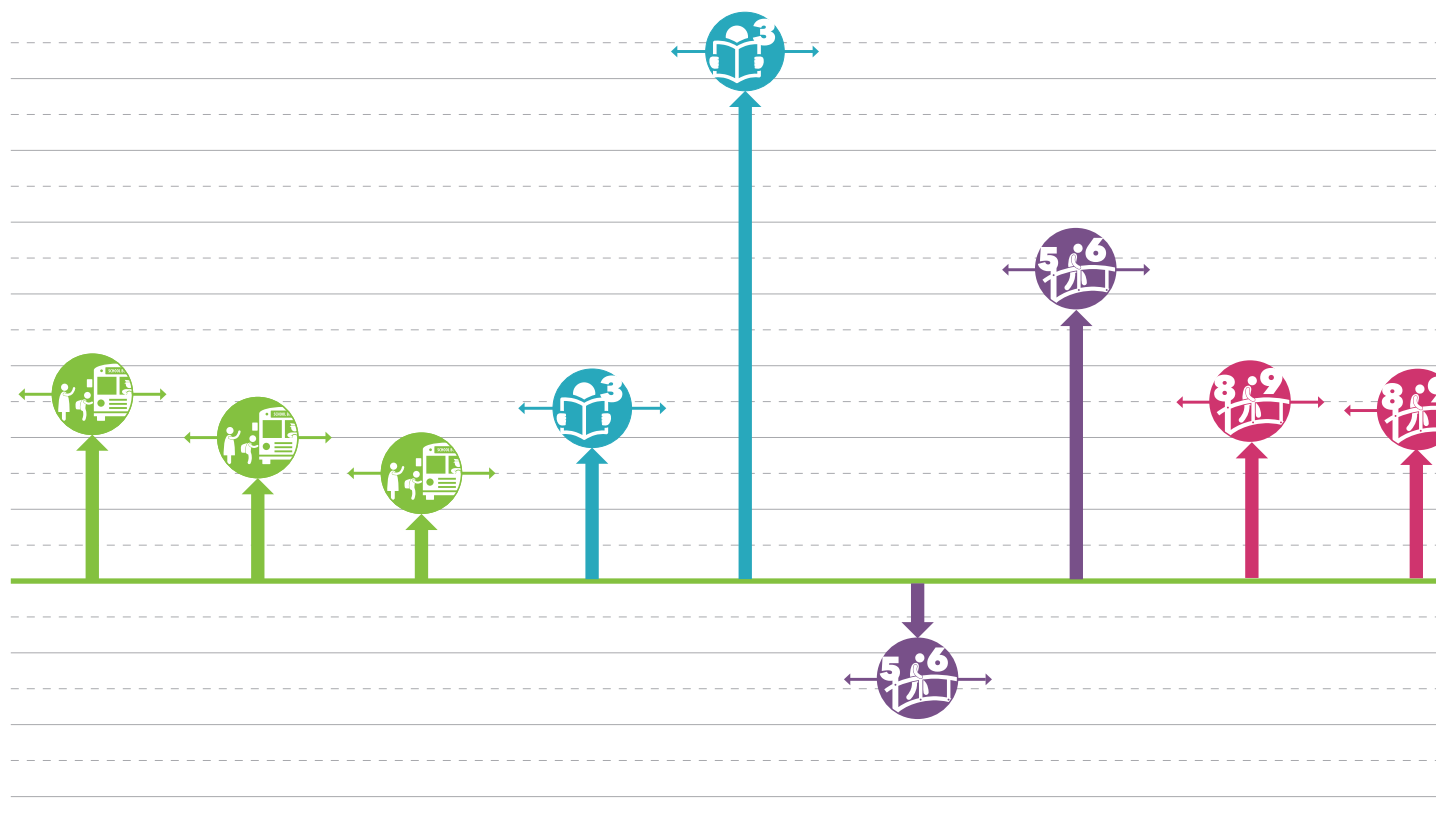
Sixth Grade Math: % of Students
Meeting or Exceeding Smarter
Balanced Assessment Standards

Eighth Grade English Language Arts:
% of Students Meeting or Exceeding
Smarter Balanced Assessment
Standards

Eighth Grade Math: % of Students
Meeting or Exceeding Smarter
Balanced Assessment Standards

PERCENTAGE POINT IMPROVEMENT SINCE BASELINE

+14
+12
+10
+8
+6
+4
+2
BL
-2
-4
-6



CURRENT

60.2%
Fall 2016

91.0%
Fall 2017

62.0%
Fall 2017

50.1%
Spring 2017

54.3%
Spring 2017

42.9%
Spring 2017

33%
Spring 2017

48.8%
Spring 2017

29.0%
Spring 2017

BASELINE

55.0%
Fall 2014

87.0%
Fall 2015

59.0%
Fall 2014

45.2%
Spring 2015

39.9%
Spring 2015

45.3%
Spring 2015

24.3%
Spring 2015

43.8%
Spring 2015

24.1%
Spring 2015

Norwalk Community College Office of Institutional Effectiveness

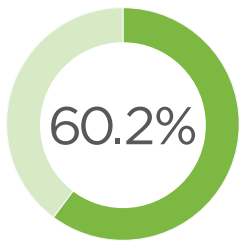
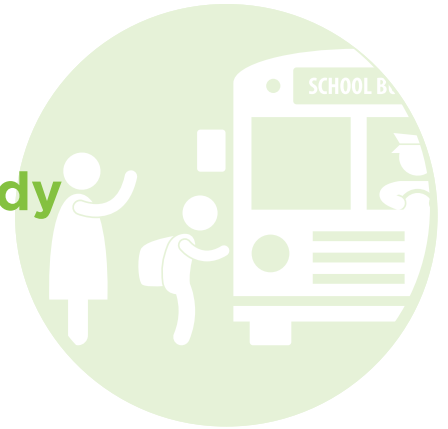
Norwalk graduates are career-ready
with a College Degree or
Professional Certificate.

The infographic illustrates the growth of the University of the Pacific's international student body from 2013 to 2017. The chart uses a green line to represent the number of students and a blue line to represent the percentage of the total student body. Icons of graduation caps and handshake symbols are used to represent international students and the university's commitment to global education, respectively.

Year	Number of International Students	Percentage of Total Student Body
Fall 2017	82.7%	31.6%
Fall 2016	57.1%	25.0%
Spring 2017	81.3%	44.9%
Fall 2016	57.0%	44.0%
Fall 2015	26.0%	31.6%
Spring 2014	26.0%	25.0%
Fall 2014	22.7%	25.0%
Fall 2013	23%	23%
Fall 2013	60%	67%

OUTCOME

1 // Norwalk Children are Ready to Learn in Kindergarten



Percent of Children
Scored a 2 or a 3 in
all Six KEI Domains

What does the data tell us?

- Since Norwalk Public Schools began tracking incoming Kindergarten students' preschool experience in 2015, it has been possible for our community to have a better sense of how many children arrive at Kindergarten having had a preschool experience. The data tells us that the **number of children who do not attend preschool appears to be decreasing**. The percentage of students whose preschool experience is "unknown" is trending downward. Our goal is to eliminate the "unknowns" so that our community can have more accurate information on preschool experience prior to Kindergarten entry.
- The Kindergarten Entrance Inventory (KEI) is a brief assessment given to children in the fall of Kindergarten. It is a measurement of their proficiency in six domains: Language, Literacy, Numeracy, Physical/Motor, Creative/Aesthetic and Personal/Social, on a scale of levels 1-3, with 3 being the highest proficiency. This assessment allows Kindergarten teachers to gauge how prepared a child is for Kindergarten. The disaggregated data shows us that **60.2% of children scored a 2 or a 3 in all six domains**.
- Universal screening measures are a critical component of a comprehensive, standard-aligned reading instructional program. Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) is a researched-based Grades K-3 universal screening reading assessment approved by the Connecticut State Department of Education. Assessments are used to assist in identifying students at risk for dyslexia or other reading-related learning disabilities. Beginning in Kindergarten, students are assessed three times each year **using the DIBELS tool, enabling educators to progress monitor and provide appropriate intervention at every step along the way**.
- **Academic data is important but it does not tell the whole story** of a child's readiness for Kindergarten. To better serve the needs of children making the transition to Kindergarten, we must look at other indicators to help understand what it means to be ready. The Prenatal to 3rd Grade Initiative is taking a holistic look at the developmental assets that a child would benefit from having in order to be "ready to learn". These assets are often more difficult to recognize and measure, and this work is underway.



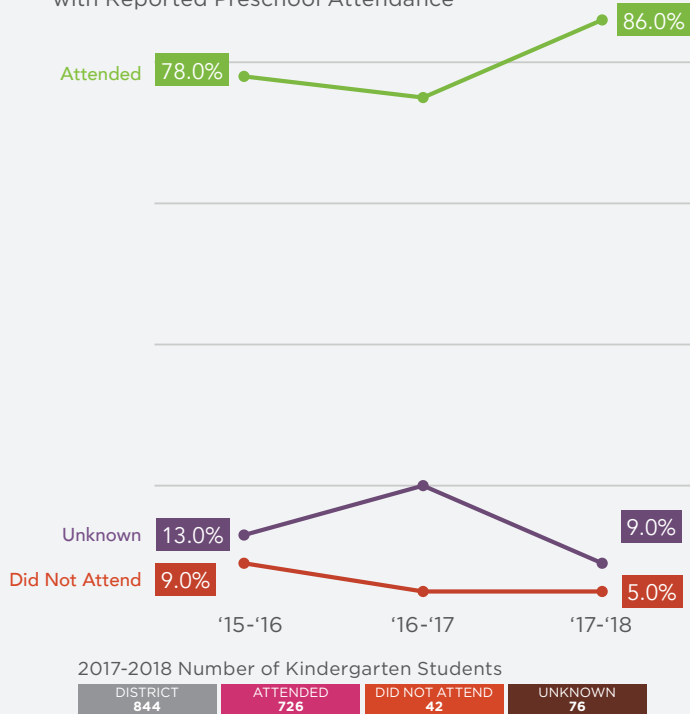
Why does this Outcome matter?

"As a parent, I think that at the speed education is evolving these days, preschool plays an essential role in our kids' preparation for their future as kindergarteners and up to graduation. The first major change I saw in my own children in preschool was the evolution of their social skills, as they stepped out of the comfort of their nuclear family into a classroom full of children their age. Also, in the preschool my children were enrolled in, they used the PELI (language and literacy assessment), which let me and other parents see our kids' progress with their language. Preschool provided the best environment I could imagine."

– Veronica Naranjo, Preschool parent and
Member of the Norwalk Early Childhood Council

Preschool Attendance

Percent of Norwalk Incoming Kindergarten Students with Reported Preschool Attendance

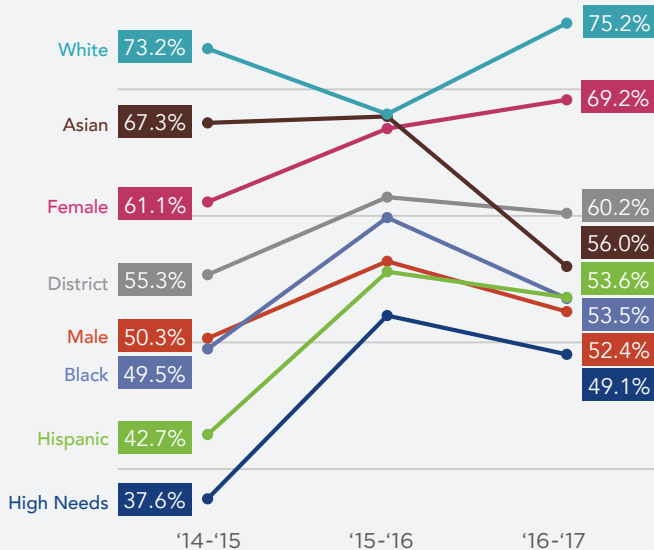


Source: NPS PowerSchool student information system



Kindergarten Entrance Inventory

Percent of Norwalk Kindergarten Students Considered Ready for Kindergarten in 6 Domains by Gender, Race and High Needs



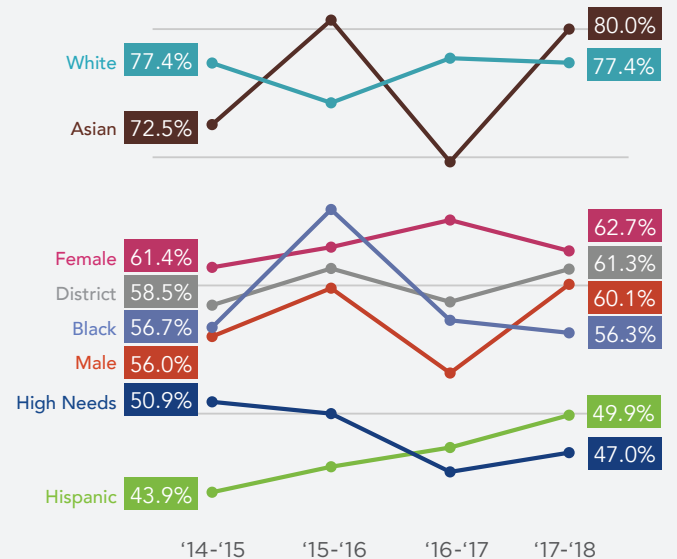
2016-2017 Number of Students Assessed in Kindergarten

DISTRICT	FEMALE	MALE	ASIAN	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE	HIGH NEEDS
804	373	431	50	101	407	804	477

Source: Norwalk Public Schools

Kindergarten Beginning of Year (BOY) DIBELS Assessment

Percent of Norwalk Kindergarten Students At or Above Composite Benchmark by Gender, Race and High Needs



2017-2018 Number of Students Assessed in Kindergarten

DISTRICT	FEMALE	MALE	ASIAN	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE	HIGH NEEDS
847	386	461	55	119	411	221	345

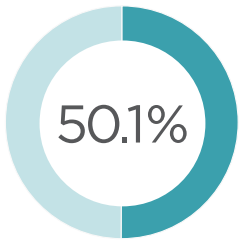
Source: Norwalk Public Schools MCLASS

Notes: Data points representing quantities <=10 that can possibly be re-identified have been suppressed to ensure confidentiality. High Needs = Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL), Special Education (SPED) and/or English Language Learner (ELL)

OUTCOME

2

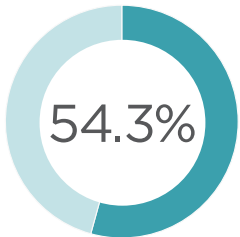
Norwalk Students Meet the Goal Level in 3rd Grade Reading



Percent of Norwalk Public School 3rd graders are meeting or exceeding English Language Arts (ELA) / literacy achievement standards

What does the data tell us?

- Using the Smarter Balanced Assessments results as an indicator for how many children are reading on grade level in 3rd grade, the data tell us that **50.1% of Norwalk Public School 3rd graders are meeting or exceeding English Language Arts (ELA) / literacy achievement standards**. If we look at trend data for the past three years, we can see that 4.9% more children are meeting or exceeding ELA / literacy achievement standards than in the 2014-15 school year.
- 3rd grade Smarter Balanced Assessments Math results have **improved by 14.4% over the past three years**. The upward trend is evident for all populations.
- Beyond the analysis of academic data, the **assessment of social-emotional and health and wellness indicators** helps our community to understand how to support children so that they are on track to learn and develop, both in and out of school. Three Norwalk ACTS Initiatives (Prenatal to 3rd Grade, TEAM Summer and Social and Emotional Learning) are addressing this work.



Percent of Norwalk Public School 3rd graders are meeting or exceeding Math achievement standards



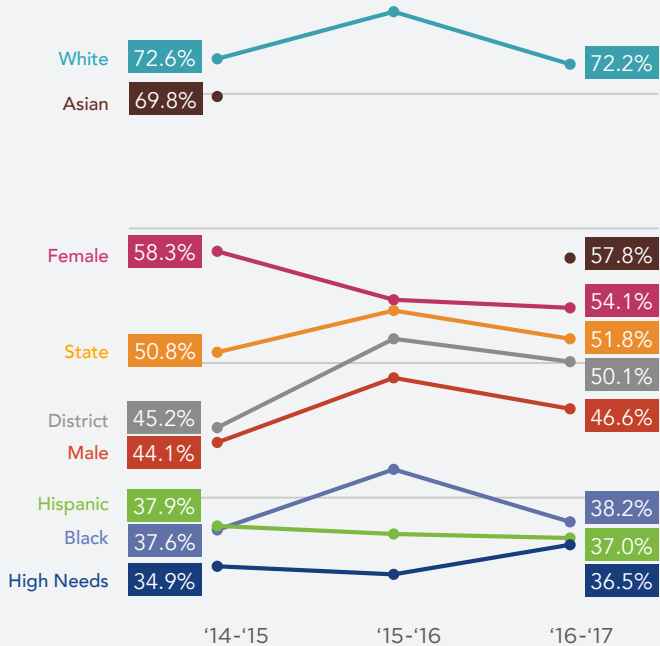
Why does this Outcome matter?

"Reading on grade level by 3rd grade is critical to a child's academic success because it is the point where children transition from "learning to read" to "reading to learn." In earlier grades, children are developing their ability to "crack the code" of our alphabetic language and develop the necessary skills to decode words and develop reading fluency while maintaining a good understanding of what they read. When they reach the upper elementary grades, they begin to encounter a wider variety of texts and must be able to apply critical thinking and comprehension strategies in order to analyze new information, as well as expand their vocabulary knowledge. Children who are not able to read fluently by 3rd grade begin to fall behind and struggle with these deeper comprehension skills, and that struggle can continue as they move through the grades. Developing reading proficiency by 3rd grade will not only help to ensure a child's long-term academic success, but can also help to cultivate a lifelong love of reading."

- Ed Wachowski; Curriculum and Instruction Site Director,
Silvermine Dual Language Magnet Elementary School

Third Grade English Language Arts

Percent of Norwalk Students Meeting or Exceeding Standards (Smarter Balanced Assessments) by Gender, Race and High Needs



Source: edsight.ct.gov

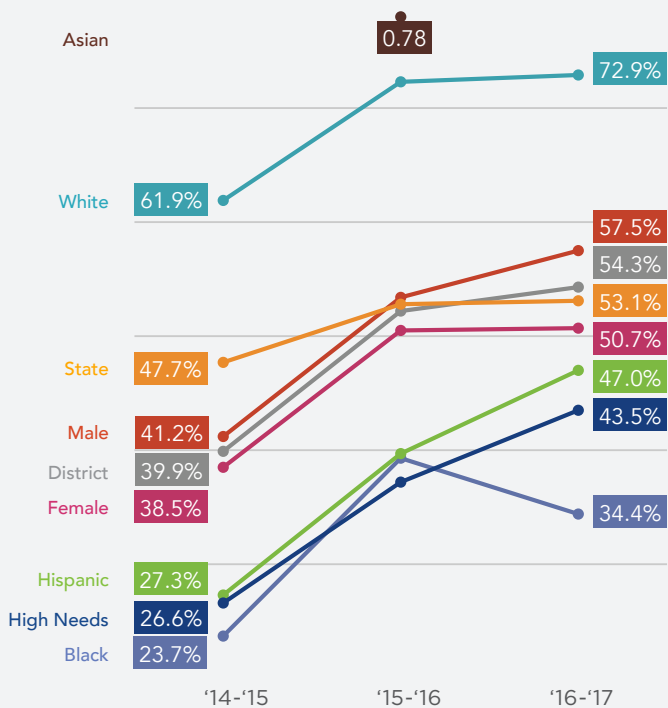
2016-2017 Number of Students Assessed in Grade 3

DISTRICT	FEMALE	MALE	ASIAN	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE	HIGH NEEDS
858	403	455	45	131	387	266	542

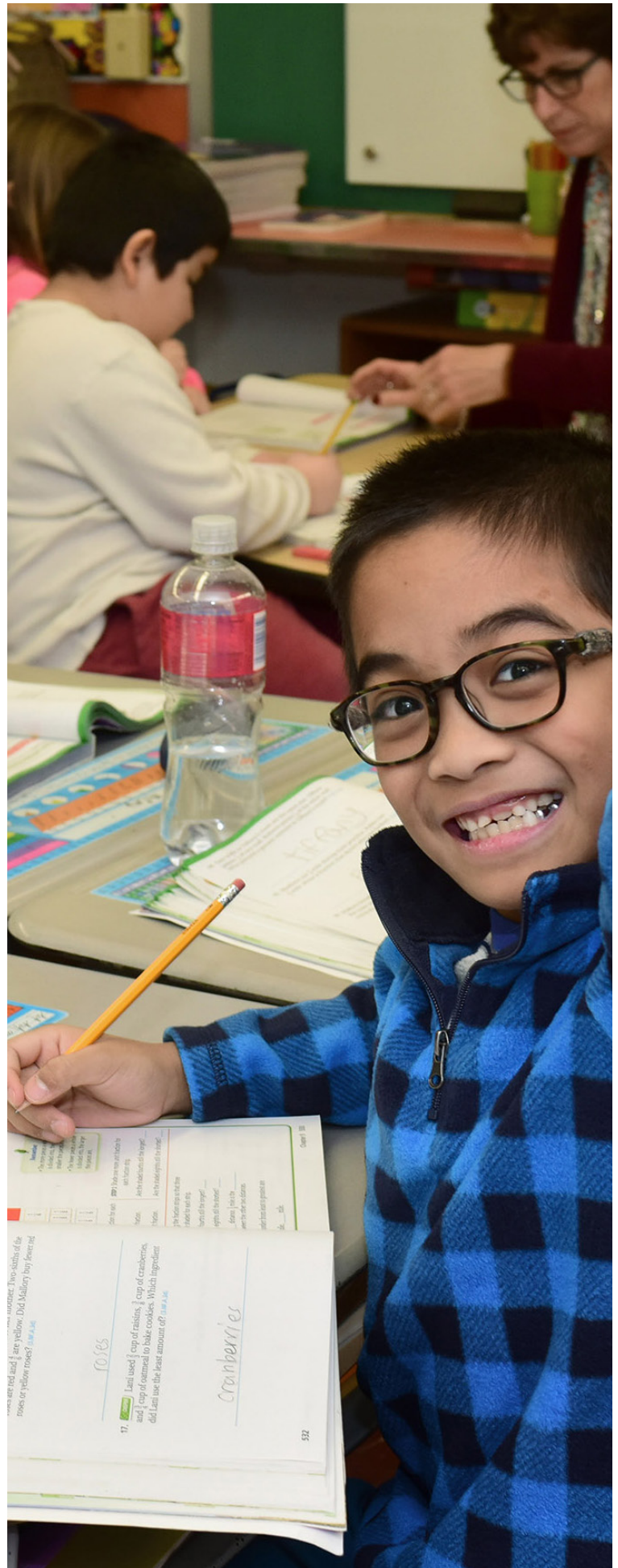
Notes: Data points representing quantities ≤ 10 that can possibly be re-identified have been suppressed to ensure confidentiality. High Needs = Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL), Special Education (SPED) and/or English Language Learner (ELL)

Third Grade Math

Percent of Norwalk Students Meeting or Exceeding Standards (Smarter Balanced Assessments) by Gender, Race and High Needs

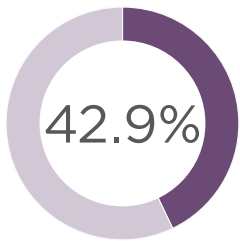


Source: edsight.ct.gov

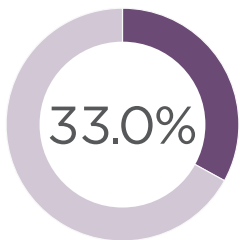


OUTCOME

3 // Norwalk Students Have the Necessary Skills to Successfully Transition from 5th to 6th Grade



Percent of Norwalk Public School 6th graders are meeting or exceeding English Language Arts (ELA) / literacy achievement standards



Percent of Norwalk Public School 6th graders are meeting or exceeding Math achievement standards

What does the data tell us?

- Using the Smarter Balanced Assessments results as an indicator for how many children are potentially transitioning to 6th grade successfully, the data tell us that **42.9% of Norwalk Public School 6th graders are meeting or exceeding English Language Arts (ELA) / literacy achievement standards**. If we look at trend data for the past three years, we can see that 2.4% fewer children are meeting or exceeding ELA benchmarks than in the 2014-15 school year.
- **Smarter Balanced Assessments Math results have improved by 8.7% over the past three years.** The upward trend is evident for all populations.
- To better determine and address the needs of students making the transition to middle school, we must consider **social-emotional and health and wellness indicators** to help define what it means to be ready to transition. Work around how to support and foster successful transitions for all children has begun in our Transitions, TEAM Summer and Social and Emotional Learning Initiatives.



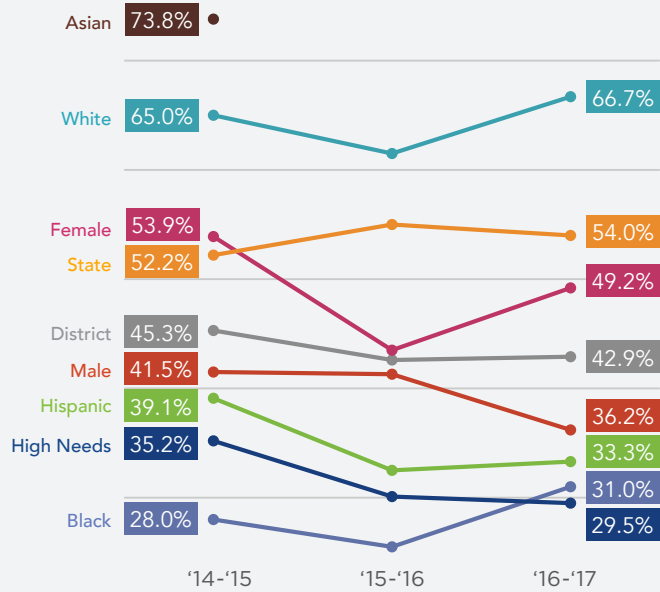
Why does this Outcome matter?

"5th to 6th grade transition is one of the most exciting times for students and parents. The middle school years are full of academic, social and emotional growth and development. Students become more independent and socially active as well as becoming more responsible for their academic work and actions within the community. They need support during these formative years from their parents, their school and the community."

– Phebe Fallon, School Counselor,
Nathan Hale Middle School

Sixth Grade English Language Arts

Percent of Norwalk Students Meeting or Exceeding Standards (Smarter Balanced Assessments) by Gender, Race and High Needs



Source: edsight.ct.gov

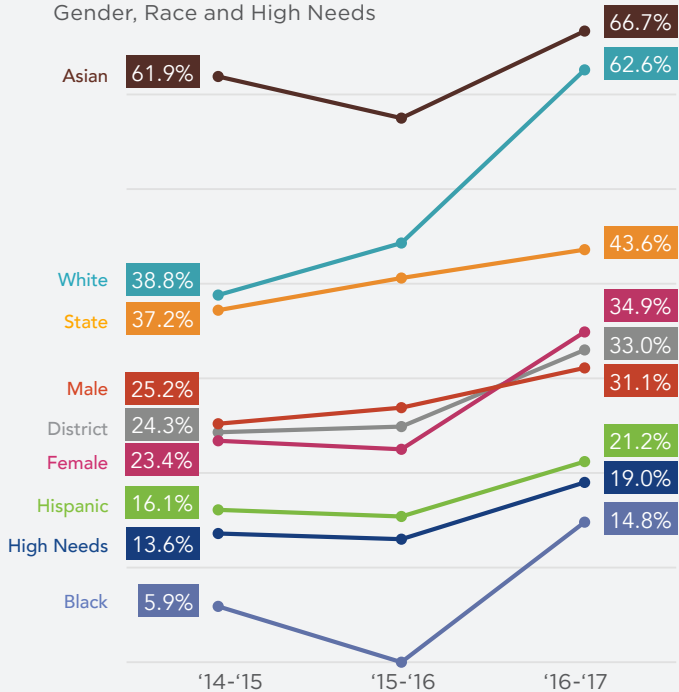
2016-2017 Number of Students Assessed in Grade 6

DISTRICT	FEMALE	MALE	ASIAN	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE	HIGH NEEDS
812	417	395	27	142	411	222	518

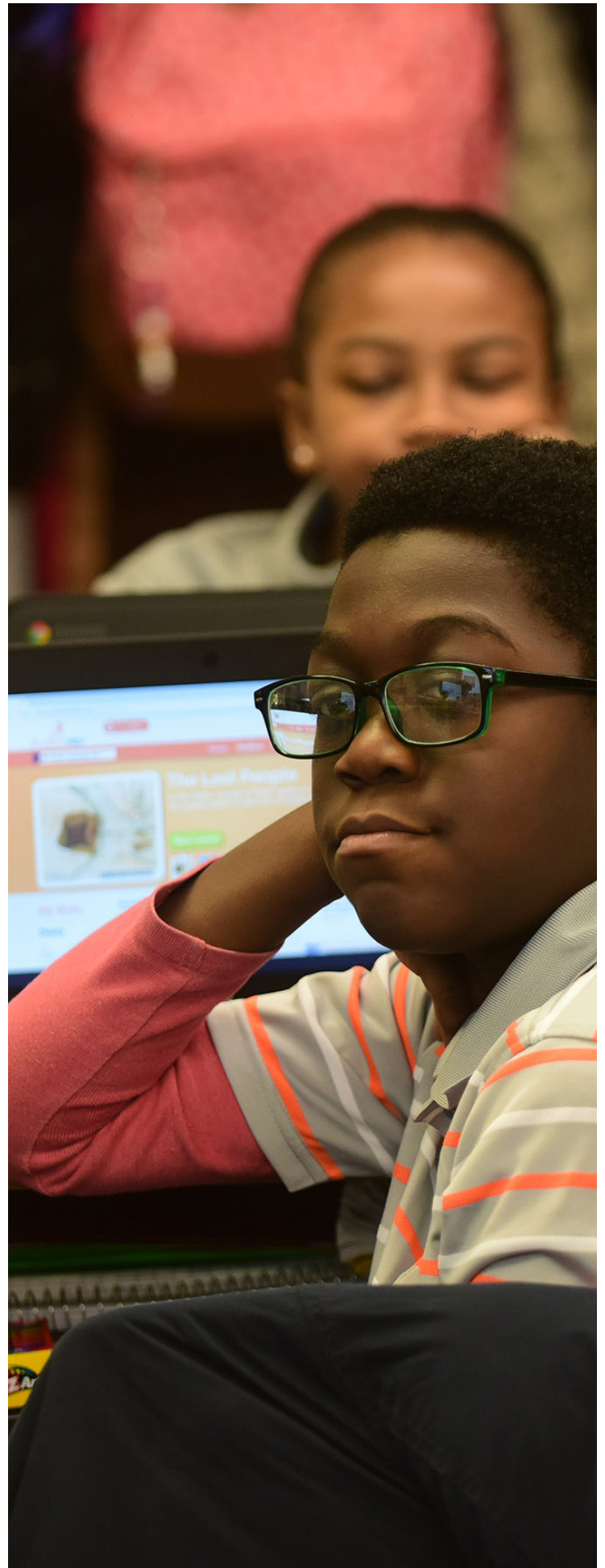
Notes: Data points representing quantities ≤ 10 that can possibly be re-identified have been suppressed to ensure confidentiality.
High Needs = Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL), Special Education (SPED) and/or English Language Learner (ELL)

Sixth Grade Math

Percent of Norwalk Students Meeting or Exceeding Standards (Smarter Balanced Assessments) by Gender, Race and High Needs



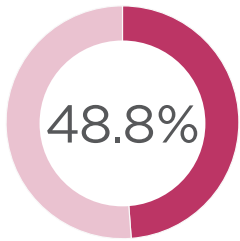
Source: edsight.ct.gov



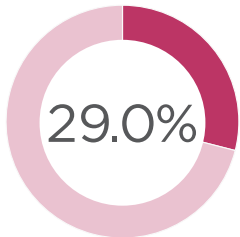
OUTCOME

4

Norwalk Students Have the Necessary Skills to Successfully Transition from 8th to 9th Grade



Percent of Norwalk Public School 8th graders are meeting or exceeding English Language Arts (ELA) / literacy achievement standards



Percent of Norwalk Public School 8th graders are meeting or exceeding Math achievement standards

What does the data tell us?

- Using the Smarter Balanced Assessments results as an indicator for how many youth are potentially ready to transition to 9th grade successfully, the data tell us that **48.8% of Norwalk Public School eighth graders are meeting or exceeding English Language Arts (ELA) / literacy achievement standards**. If we look at trend data for the past three years, we can see that there is an increase of 5% since the 2014-15 school year.
- **Smarter Balanced Assessments Math results have improved 4.9%** since the 2014-15 school year.
- The disaggregated data indicates that in both ELA and Math, this upward trend is **evident for all populations**.
- To be considered “on track” for graduation, students in 9th grade should earn at least 25% of the credits they need to graduate. The 2016-17 school year was the first year that the requirements were increased from 24 to 25 credits. The data tells us that **82.7% of our current 10th graders earned the 25% of credits necessary**. The graph indicates a downward trend across school years; however, this may partly be explained by the increase in credit requirements.
- Beyond having good grades in preparation for high school, youth must also have a myriad of **social, personal and work habit skills** to successfully carry them to the next level. Many of these skills are taught in middle school but the transition to high school is not always smooth or successful. The more we can understand and address the challenges, the better we can support children during this transition. Our Transitions Initiative is analyzing middle and high school transitions, and in conjunction with members of TEAM Summer and the Social and Emotional Learning Initiative, will define criteria for successful transitions that the community can support through strategy development.



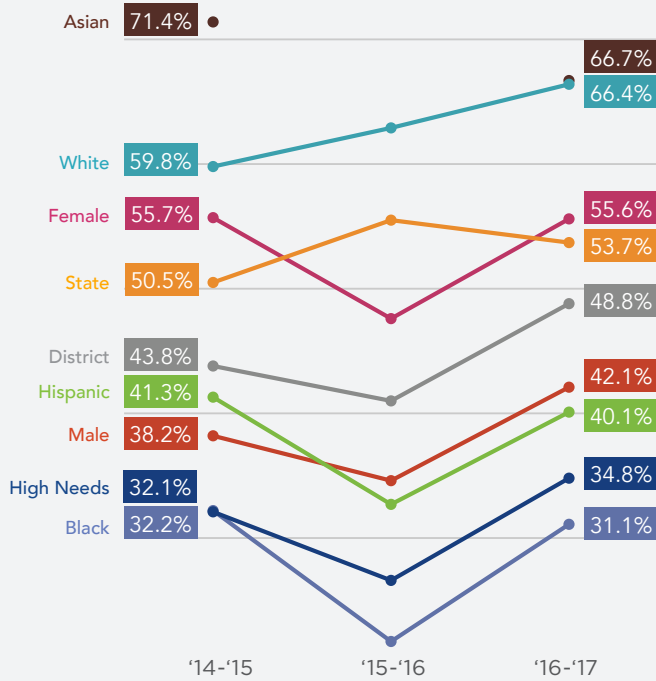
Why does this Outcome matter?

“Being able to balance an increased workload and social-emotional needs is a pressing concern when transitioning to high school. There is common fear that students will not be able to handle the necessary workload while expanding their horizons. Students who make the transition to high school successfully will find later transitions, like those to college and career, much easier to handle.”

– Dr. Dan Sullivan, Guidance Department Chair,
Norwalk High School

Eighth Grade English Language Arts

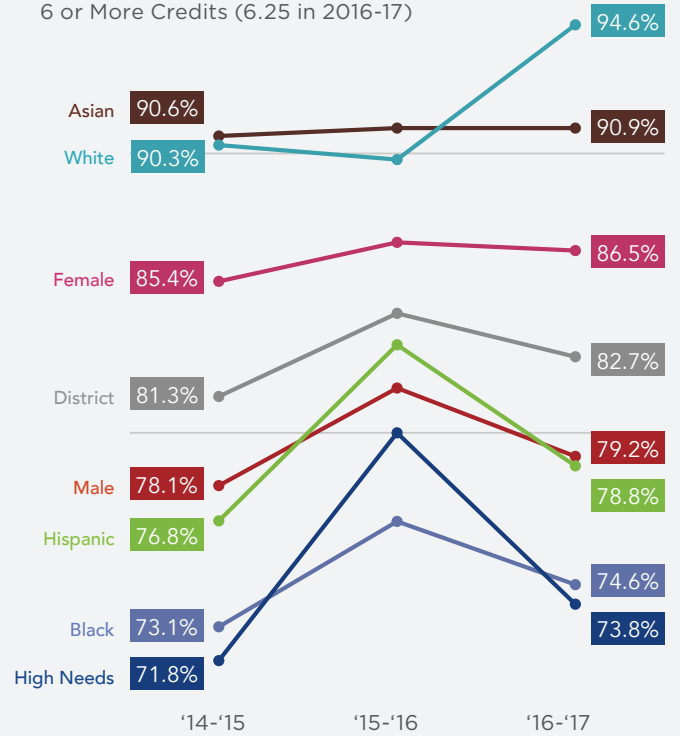
Percent of Norwalk Students Meeting or Exceeding Standards (Smarter Balanced Assessments) by Gender, Race and High Needs



Source: edsight.ct.gov

Total Credits Earned in Ninth Grade

Percent of Norwalk Students Who Earned 6 or More Credits (6.25 in 2016-17)



Source: edsight.ct.gov

2016-2017 Number of Students Assessed in Grade 8

DISTRICT	FEMALE	MALE	ASIAN	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE	HIGH NEEDS
845	417	428	42	148	374	262	509

Notes: Data points representing quantities ≤ 10 that can possibly be re-identified have been suppressed to ensure confidentiality. High Needs = Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL), Special Education (SPED) and/or English Language Learner (ELL)

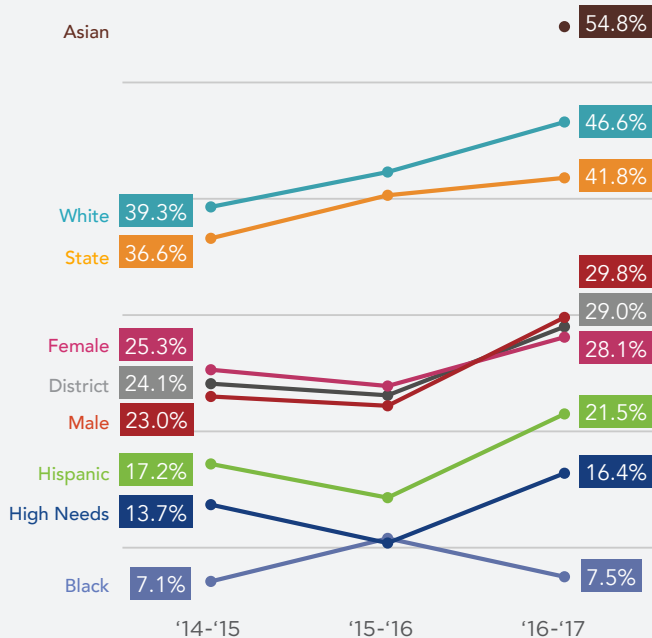
2016-2017 Number of Students in Grade 9

DISTRICT	FEMALE	MALE	ASIAN	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE	HIGH NEEDS
874	423	451	44	173	406	241	463

Notes: Data points representing quantities ≤ 10 that can possibly be re-identified have been suppressed to ensure confidentiality. High Needs = Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL), Special Education (SPED) and/or English Language Learner (ELL)

Eighth Grade Math

Percent of Norwalk Students Meeting or Exceeding Standards (Smarter Balanced Assessments) by Gender, Race and High Needs



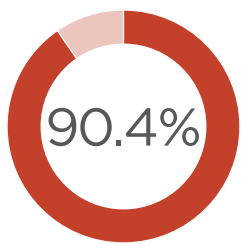
Source: edsight.ct.gov



OUTCOME

5

Norwalk Students Successfully Graduate from High School in 4 Years, Ready for College, Post-Secondary Training or Full-Time Employment



Percent of Norwalk Public School Seniors Graduate

What does the data tell us?

- Norwalk students are graduating high school at a rate of 90.4% compared with 87.4% for the state.
- According to the College Board, the PSAT and SAT are highly relevant to future success because they focus on the skills and knowledge at the heart of education. These assessments measure what students learn in high school and what students need to succeed in college. Norwalk Public Schools' students' PSAT results over the past two years tell us that **student scores in English, Reading and Writing (ERW) have shown an improvement of 0.1%**. However, the **upward trend of students meeting goal in Math is significantly larger, at 6.6%**. Norwalk Public Schools' students' SAT results show that **ERW results have decreased 1.1% but Math results have increased 2.7% over two years**.
- In partnership with Norwalk Public Schools, Norwalk ACTS surveyed Norwalk students and data show that 89.9% of Norwalk high school students surveyed in September 2017 (n=967) agree or strongly agree with the statement, **"I want to go to college."** However, only 69% of Norwalk students are shown to actually enroll in the first fall semester after graduation.
- The National Mathematics Advisory Panel found that "students who complete Algebra II are more than twice as likely to graduate from college compared to students with less mathematical preparation." Thus, the success rate of students taking Algebra II can serve as an important indicator of college and career readiness. **While the percent of students who earned a B or Better in Algebra II has slightly improved from 44% to 44.9% over the past three years, previous outcome data shows that Norwalk's students are making significant improvement on Smarter Balanced Math Assessments.** Additionally, Norwalk middle schools are piloting a promising new Teach to One math program that meets students where they are in math, and promotes mastery of concepts at an individual pace. We will be watching the results over the cradle to career continuum to verify these conclusions for our students.
- Data shows us that though a high percentage of students are graduating, a markedly **smaller percentage are graduating college and career ready** as set forth by Common Core standards.
- Norwalk boasts competitive high school graduation rates. However, there are **gaps across graduation rates, college-going aspirations, college and career readiness** as defined by the Connecticut State Department of Education and college entrance and persistence rates. Gathering and analyzing these data will propel Norwalk ACTS Membership to reactivate Working Groups or Initiatives in order to target interventions to close the gaps between college aspiration, readiness, entrance and persistence.



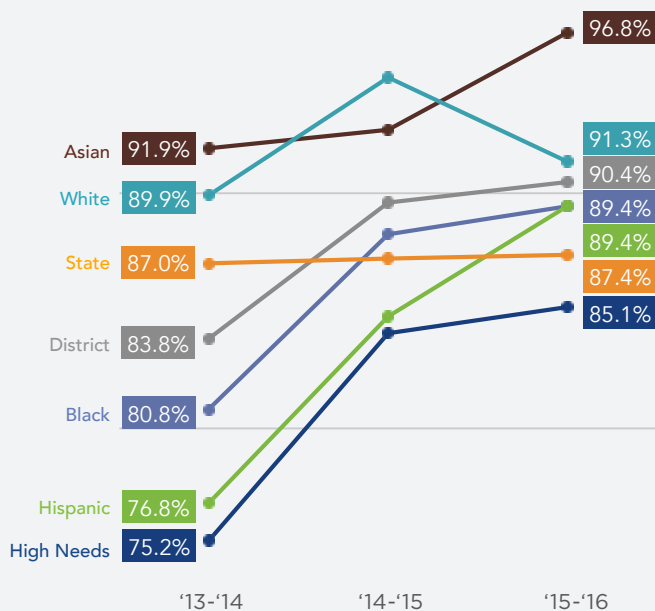
Why does this Outcome matter?

"Preparing students for both college and career is imperative in supporting young people's future success and ensuring a well trained and adaptable workforce for communities. IBM is proud to partner with Norwalk Public Schools and Norwalk Community College on Norwalk Early College Academy (NECA), Connecticut's first P-TECH grades 9-14 school. Together, we are committed to ensuring that students graduate with both their high school diploma and associates degree, along with the technical and professional skills they need to compete in the 21st century economy."

– Grace Suh, Director, Education Corporate Citizenship, IBM Corporation

Norwalk Four-Year Graduation Rates

Percent of Norwalk Students Graduating High School in Four Years by Gender, Race and High Needs



2015-2016 Number of High School Seniors

DISTRICT	ASIAN	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE	HIGH NEEDS
780	310	274	149	32	360

Source: CT State Department of Education (CSDE)

Note: 2017 Graduation rates have not been released at time of printing.

DESIRE

90%

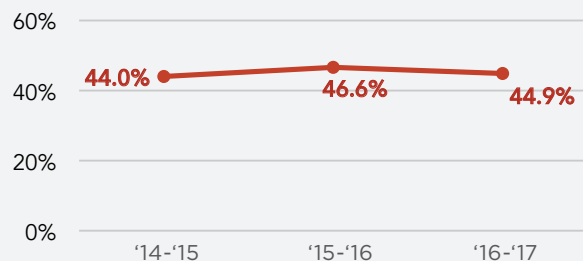
Norwalk students surveyed indicate a desire to go to college

ACCEPTED

80%

2017 Norwalk graduates accepted to a 2- or 4-year college

Students Who Passed Algebra II



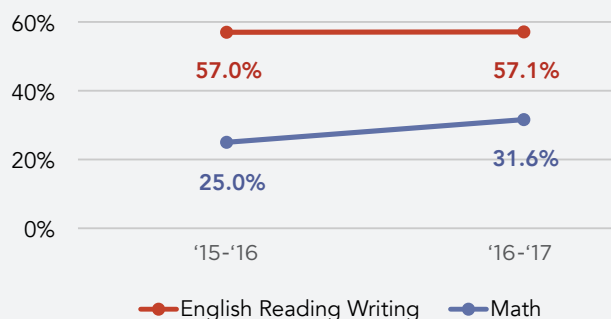
Source: NPS PowerSchool student information system

ENROLLED

69%

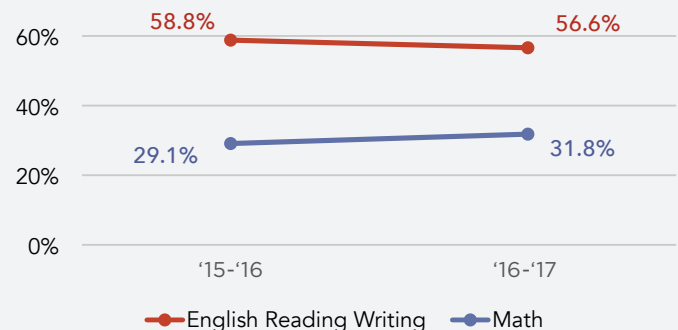
2017 Norwalk graduates enrolled the fall semester immediately after graduation

Students Meeting 11th Grade PSAT/NMSQT Benchmark



Source: The College Board

Norwalk 11th Grade Students Meeting SAT Benchmarks

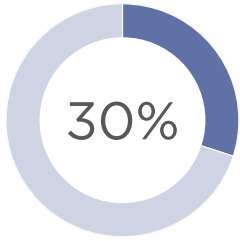


Source: The College Board

OUTCOME

6

Norwalk Graduates are Career-Ready with a College Degree or Professional Certificate



Percent of 2017 Norwalk High School Graduates Enrolled at Norwalk Community College (NCC) in the Fall of 2017

What does the data tell us?

- Acceptance to a 2- or 4-year college is an important indicator of educational attainment. Based on Naviance data, **Norwalk Public Schools' acceptance rates have remained flat over the past three years at 80%**. Other indicators that support career-readiness include graduation rate, actual enrollment vs. acceptance, college retention after the first year and degree/certificate attainment within six years.
- 30% of 2017 Norwalk high school graduates enrolled at Norwalk Community College (NCC) in the fall of 2017. Norwalk ACTS uses data from NCC to help understand the successes and challenges of the students who attend there. One of the indicators that we would like to see reduced to zero is the number of students who require remedial courses, which don't accrue credits but are a prerequisite to credit-bearing coursework. In the past three years, the number of **Norwalk students who require remedial courses has increased from 60% to 67%**.
- Standardized scores are not the only indicator of readiness or college-going mindsets. Alongside graduation rates and readiness, it is critical to examine college entrance and freshman - sophomore year college persistence. National Clearinghouse data show that on average, **10% of Norwalk students do not return to college for their sophomore year**. College persistence data also show that nationally, students with a high level of social-emotional skills and average cognitive skills have a 20% higher probability of graduating from college than students with high cognitive skills alone.
- Norwalk Public Schools uses the **Naviance college and career-readiness** software solution to help students align their strengths and interests to postsecondary goals. In addition to helping students find and apply to colleges, the software has multiple features that help them learn about themselves - their learning styles, career possibilities, strengths and goal setting. Naviance also provides a platform for task management that keeps students on track to complete the many assignments leading up to graduation and post-secondary enrollment.
- Data from Naviance, coupled with college enrollment and completion data from the National Student Clearinghouse can shine a light on what happens to our students after they leave high school. Norwalk ACTS Membership, through new or reactivated Working Groups and Initiatives, will work with the Social and Emotional Learning Initiative to **understand the success rates of our community's career readiness support** of children by measuring and addressing the academic and social-emotional indicators mentioned above.

Why does this Outcome matter?

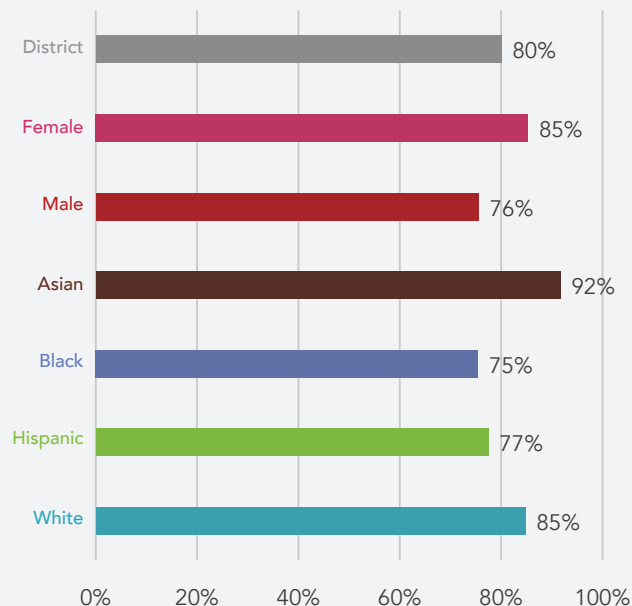
"Although we often hear of the anomaly of programming jobs in certain tech sectors, college degrees, professional certificates and technical training will continue to play a significant role in career readiness and qualification, and to the sustainment of a rewarding - financial and otherwise - career. These long-established milestones of academic achievement are still highly relevant and necessary in our early 21st century world - not only for their technical knowledge, but for their nonacademic education and learning as well. And for those who choose paths outside of this structure, it is imperative that they too be ready, and continue career preparation and planning past high school."

- Brian Griffin, President,
Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce



Class of 2017 Accepted to a 2- or 4-Year College

Percent of Norwalk Graduates Accepted by Gender and Race



Class of 2017 Graduates

DISTRICT	FEMALE	MALE	ASIAN	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE
841	387	454	36	175	284	289

Source: Naviance Student Information System

PERSISTED

90%

Average of Norwalk graduates who return to college for sophomore year

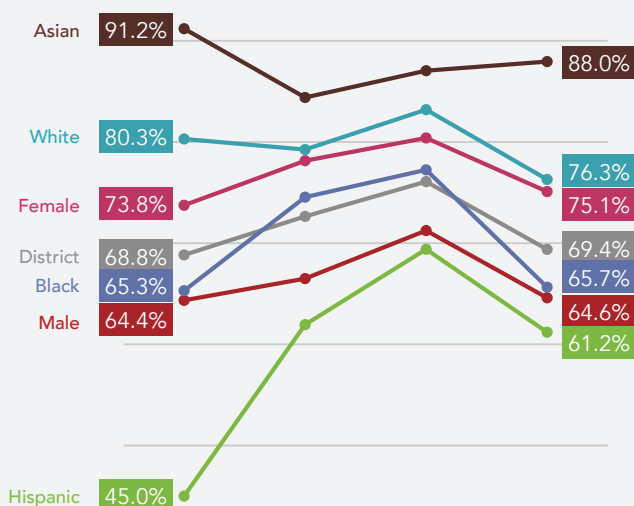
GRADUATED

44%

2011 Norwalk graduates who completed a degree within 6 years

Norwalk Students Enrolled in College the Fall Immediately After High School

Percent of Students Enrolled by Gender, Race and High Needs

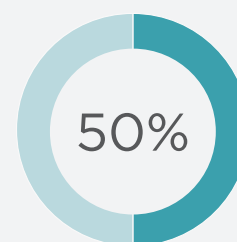


Class of 2017 Number of Norwalk Seniors in Clearinghouse Data Cohort

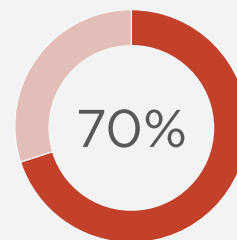
DISTRICT	FEMALE	MALE	ASIAN	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE
722	332	390	31	148	256	268

Sources: Naviance student information system and National Student Clearinghouse

Probability of Being a College Graduate by Age 30



Probability that students with **high Cognitive skills** and **average Social and Emotional skills** will graduate from college



Probability that students with **average Cognitive skills** and **high Social and Emotional skills** will graduate from college

Source: Heckman, J. J., Stixrud, J., and Urzua, S. (2006). The Effects of Cognitive and Noncognitive Abilities on Labor Market Outcomes and Social Behavior. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 23(3): 411-482.



/ The Evolution of Work

Outcome-Centric ► Blended Initiatives

Through the early action planning work of Norwalk ACTS outcome-centric Community Action Networks (CANs), it became clear that the previously employed CAN-centric model was not producing the kind of continuum analysis that was necessary to effect change. As a result, **Norwalk ACTS CANs are now functioning as blended initiatives.** This provides Members with opportunities to use data to find commonality within their individual outcome work, and to focus on what is and isn't working throughout the cradle to career continuum. The blended process moves the work out of a siloed model into one that provides deeper insight into "system change" opportunities and strategies.

The following pages highlight the work of Norwalk ACTS Initiatives and their alignment to our six community level outcomes.

Social and Emotional Learning Initiative

English Language Learner (ELL)
Education Initiative

Prenatal to 3rd Grade
Initiative

Transitions
Initiative

Cradle



Career

TEAM Summer

Digital Learning
Initiative

Health and Wellness Initiative

Most Mature

Maturing

Emerging



/ Prenatal to 3rd Grade Initiative

The Prenatal to 3rd Grade Initiative strives to create an overarching community system for children and families that will launch every young child on a path to success. With assets of over 30 organizations and 50 members, the Prenatal to 3rd Grade Initiative encompasses four working groups: Language and Literacy, Home Visiting, Early Childhood Health & Development and PreK to Kindergarten Transition.

Work Highlights

- The **PreK to K Transition** Working Group convened over 60 early childhood experts and community members to create common language among early childhood educators, and to create a clear set of criteria or indicators for what a child would need to make a successful transition and enter Kindergarten ready to learn
- The Language and Literacy Working Group has led three years of the **Preschool Early Literacy Indicator (PELI)** assessment process with School Readiness, Child Day Care and Head Start preschool providers, enabling preschool educators to use assessment data to determine when interventions and additional supports are necessary
- The Home Visiting Working Group has created the **Norwalk Early Childhood Home Visiting Referral Form**, allowing for a single point of entry for pregnant women and families with children birth through age 8 to easily access the continuum of home visiting services available in Norwalk

How We Are Improving Systems

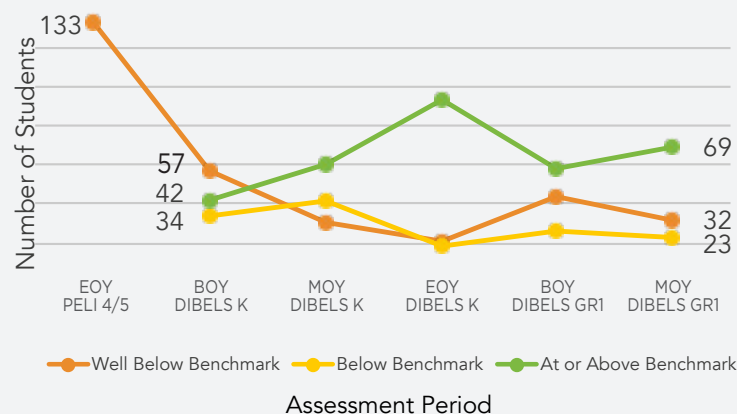
- Kindergarten teachers and PreK Education Providers are taking part in a **co-learning system** through visiting each other's classrooms with the intention of building relationships and sharing their methods and practice of teaching
- The **Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)** and the **Ages and Stages Questionnaire - Social and Emotional (ASQ-SE)** are developmental screening tools used across all home visiting programs in Norwalk; the Norwalk Early Childhood Council has now adopted the ASQ and the ASQ-SE for children in all School Readiness and Child Day Care Contract programs; this will improve our community's ability to identify the developmental and social-emotional needs of our youngest children as early as possible and connect them with appropriate services
- Each elementary school will receive a **Kindergarten Summary** page for children entering Kindergarten, which will include their PELI, ASQ and ASQ-SE information; this will allow for the use of data to inform decision-making around Kindergarten classroom placement

Jamal is confident and ready for Kindergarten because his parents, his PreK provider and his Kindergarten educators are now working together to better understand his developmental, social-emotional and educational needs.



Class of 2029 PELI - DIBELS Composite History

Literacy Assessment Progress of Current 1st Graders Who Were Assessed at Well Below Benchmark at End of Year (EOY) PreK



Sources: PELI and MCLASS assessment databases

Graph above shows the progress of students who scored Well Below Benchmark on their PELI literacy assessment in the spring before Kindergarten.

Norwalk ACTS

Prenatal to 3rd Grade Initiative Assets

Prenatal to 3 Years → PreK → Kindergarten to 3rd Grade

Working Groups

Language & Literacy

- All Our Kin
- Child First (Mid Fairfield Child Guidance)
- City of Norwalk – Early Childhood
- Family & Children's Agency
- Literacy How
- Non-School Readiness Providers
- Norwalk Early Childhood Council
- Norwalk Public Library
- Norwalk Public Schools
- Reach Out and Read
- School Readiness Providers
- United Way of Coastal Fairfield County
- Yale – PEER (Partnership for Early Education Research)

Home Visiting

- Child Development Infoline
- Child First (Mid Fairfield Child Guidance)
- City of Norwalk – Early Childhood
- Family & Children's Agency
- Family Resource Centers
- Norwalk Early Childhood Council

Early Childhood Health & Development

- Campbell's Healthy Communities
- Child Development Infoline
- City of Norwalk – Early Childhood
- Day Street Community Health Center
- Family & Children's Agency
- Healthy for Life
- Norwalk Community Health Center
- Norwalk Early Childhood Council
- Norwalk Grows
- Norwalk Health Department
- Norwalk Public School Nurses
- Norwalk Public Schools Wellness Committee
- United Way of Coastal Fairfield County

PreK to K Transition

- After School Programs
- Bridgeport Prospers
- City of Norwalk – Early Childhood
- CT Parent Power
- Health Professionals
- Literacy How
- Non-School Readiness Providers
- Norwalk Community College
- Norwalk Early Childhood Council
- Norwalk Housing Authority
- Norwalk Public School Administrators
- Norwalk Public School Site Directors
- Norwalk Public School Teachers
- School Readiness Providers
- Stamford Cradle to Career
- United Way of Coastal Fairfield County
- Yale – PEER (Partnership for Early Education Research)
- Yale (PreK Ruler)

Cultural Relevancy

Professional Development

Equity

Capacity Building



/ TEAM Summer

Opportunity and Experience for All

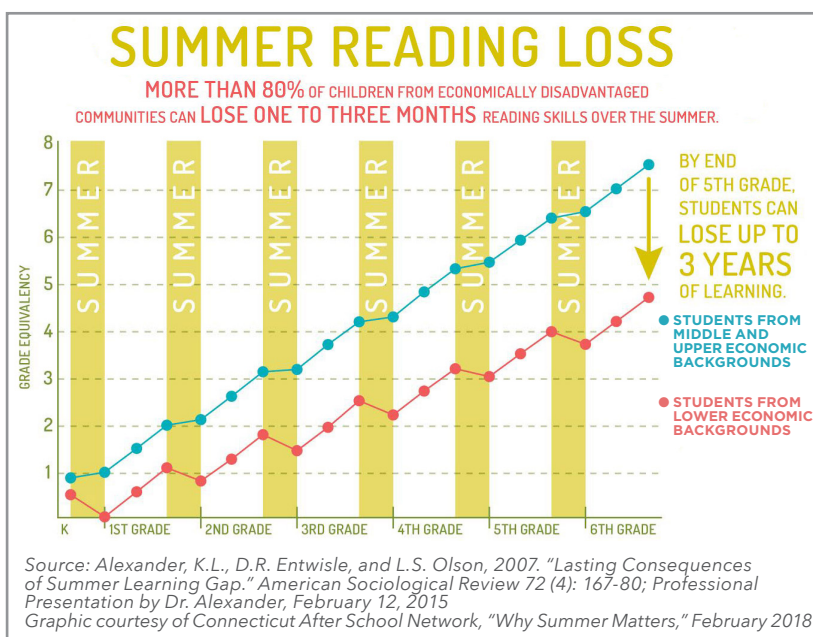
TEAM Summer is a partnership of Norwalk providers and community leaders working together to ensure that our city's children are learning, experiencing and discovering during the summer. We are working to promote a summer learning community that ensures that an increasing number of youth are provided with high-quality summer fun and learning opportunities that meet academic, social-emotional and health and wellness needs, sustainably over time.

Work Highlights

- Established a **community of learning** where an increasing number of member organizations share data and best practices
- Built and publicized an online, interactive **Summer Resource Portal** as a centralized resource for families to identify and enroll in opportunities for summer programming
- Implemented **shared measurement collection** in order to identify children who are enrolled, those who are not enrolled, what if any correlations engagement in summer programming has on academic growth and to what degree students felt that their summer providers engaged in behaviors associated with facilitating success in youth
- Partnered with Norwalk Public Schools to implement a **Summer Exit Survey** in order to strategize methods for providing summer access for students and to collect information on attitudes associated with college and career readiness

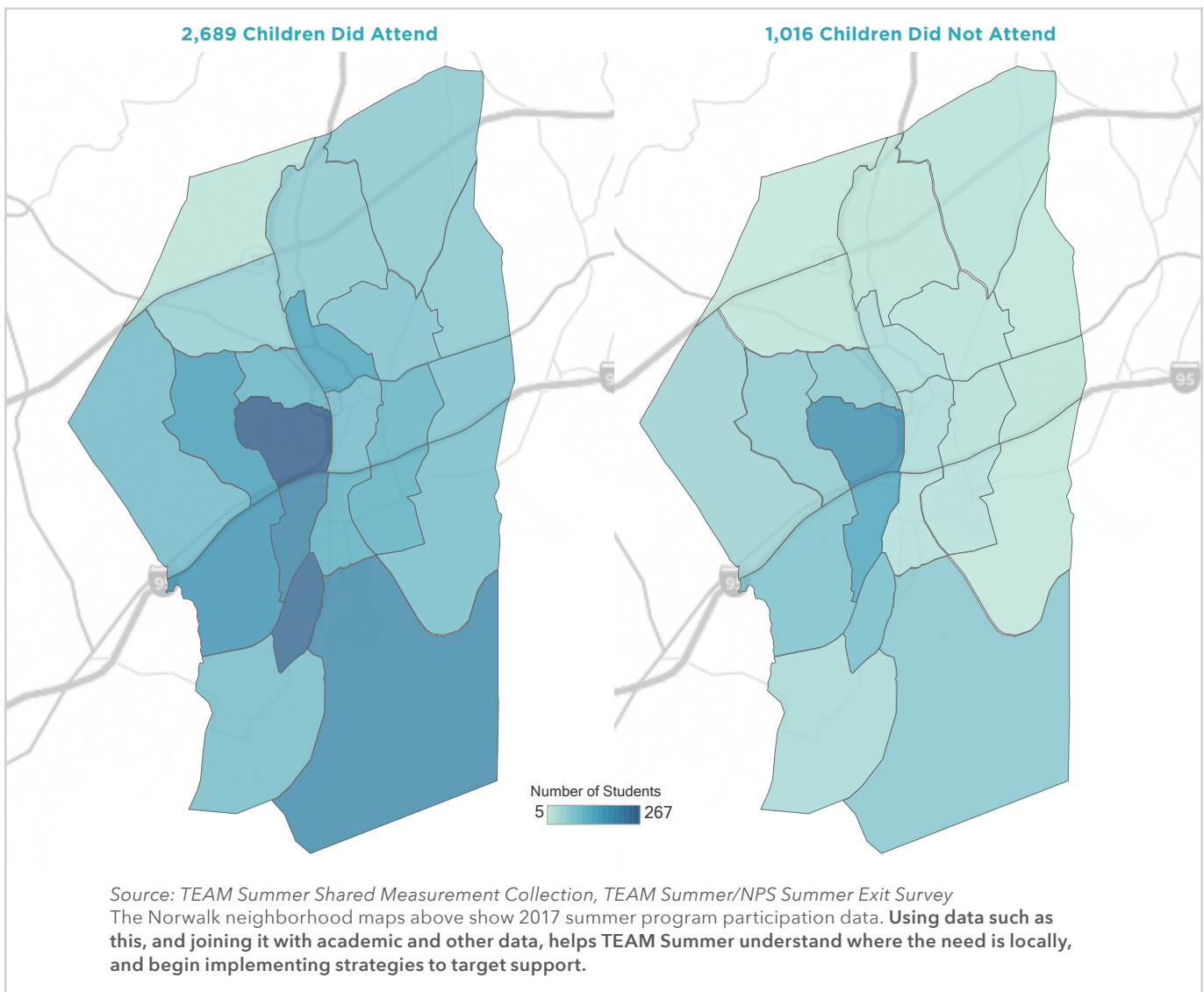
How We Are Improving Systems

- By creating an open and trusted forum, community members are **partnering and aligning** to share successes, address challenges and find common solutions
- Members are embracing the **use of data** to drive decision-making
- We are **changing the community conversation** around "summer slide" to focus on summer strength and opportunity for all children and youth, and to expand analysis to encompass more than academic assessment alone
- We are **leveraging financial resources** to provide direct program support and expand impact of the collective



Sara's family used the TEAM Summer Online Portal to find the right summer experience for her, enabling her to continue learning and experiencing new things throughout the summer.

Who Had a Summer Experience in 2017?



“TEAM Summer has created a community of youth providers who are learning, sharing and now working better together. But we know this is only the beginning. Grassroots is honored and grateful to be part of TEAM Summer, and we are committed to strengthening ourselves and all of Norwalk together in order to ensure all children and youth are on a path to success.”

– Betsy McNeil, Executive Director,
Norwalk Grassroots Tennis & Education

Team Summer Members

A.C.H.I.E.V.E.
Camp ELLI
Carver Foundation
City of Norwalk
City of Norwalk – Early Childhood
CT Yankee Council
Family & Children’s Agency
Horizons at New Canaan Country School
Horizons at Norwalk Community College
Kumon Math and Reading Center of Norwalk
Maritime Aquarium
Mayor’s Summer Youth Employment Program
Norwalk ACTS

Norwalk Community College –
College for Kids
Norwalk Education Foundation
Norwalk Grassroots Tennis and Education
Norwalk Health Department
Norwalk Housing Authority
Norwalk Public Library
Norwalk Public Schools
Norwalk Public Schools – After the Bell
Norwalk Public Schools –
Norwalk Summer Academy
Norwalk Public Schools – PF Camp
Norwalk Public Schools – School Readiness

Norwalk Recreation and Parks
Norwalk River Rowing Association
Odyssey Early Learning
and Enrichment Programs
Person-to-Person
Riverbrook Regional YMCA
Silvermine Art Center
South Norwalk Community Center
Stepping Stones Museum for Children
Studio Arte
UConn InCHIP Connecticut
Youth Opportunity Consortium



/ Health and Wellness Initiative

Healthy, fit, well-nourished kids are ready to focus, learn and engage. Norwalk ACTS believes good health is essential to helping children thrive from cradle to career.

The mission of the Health and Wellness Initiative is to foster a culture of health, provide access to resources and advocate for policies that sustain the health of the children and families of Norwalk. We are working to help kids eat more fruits and vegetables, spend more minutes each day being active and connect children and families with appropriate health care services.

How We Are Improving Systems

- Norwalk Public Schools publicly declared its commitment to health and wellness by including wellness goals in their **Strategic Operating Plan**
- Norwalk Board of Education approved and adopted a comprehensive **Wellness Policy**, providing a framework for future wellness activities
- Norwalk Public Schools administrators and staff and community organizations now serve on the revitalized **District Wellness Committee**, a coalition committed to overseeing how the Wellness Policy is followed throughout the district
- Educators now have access to a toolkit to increase opportunities for **physical activity in the classroom**
- More students now have an easy, appealing way to grab a **healthy breakfast** and eat in their classrooms at school every day
- More afterschool providers now have the training, supplies and support they need to deliver an **evidence-based nutrition and physical activity program**
- Norwalk families can now access newly designed NorWalker community walking maps and information about healthy options at select restaurants, encouraging them to make **healthier choices out in the community**



Maya can now pick up a healthy breakfast on her way into school, get up and move more throughout the school day, and make healthier choices at home and in the community.

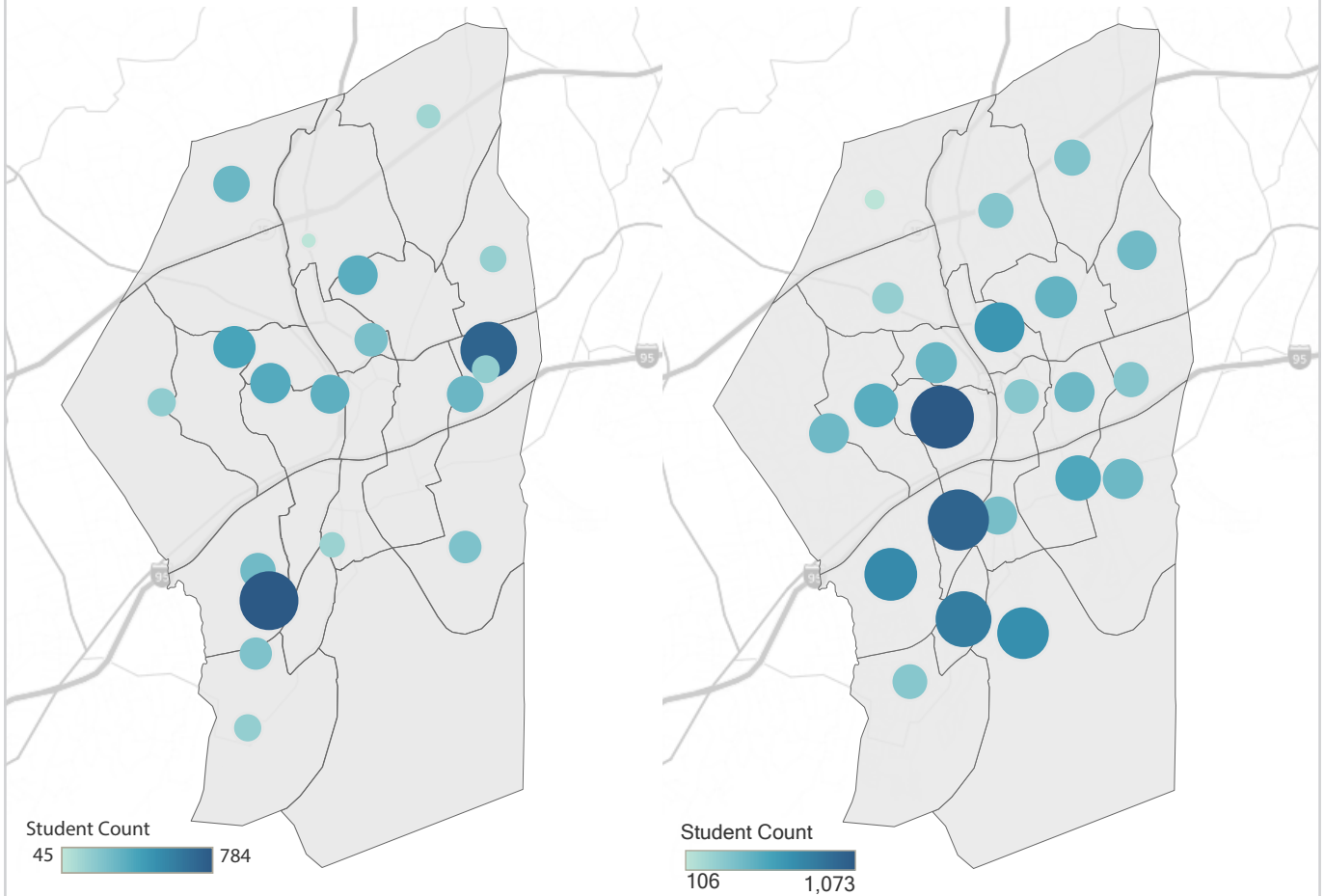
Source: Norwalk Public Schools

22.5%

Increase in breakfast meals served, thanks to the new breakfast program implemented this year

Free and Reduced Lunch – Where They Go to School

Free and Reduced Lunch – Where They Live



Source: NPS PowerSchool student information system

These maps show where Norwalk students in the free and reduced lunch program attend school (left) versus the neighborhoods in which they live (right). **Maps like this can help the Health and Wellness team assess community need and make decisions about food delivery programs and other initiatives.**

"The Jefferson Breakfast On The Go program has successfully provided an easy and relevant opportunity for our students to have breakfast in the classroom each day. We feel that this opportunity keeps student energy levels up, helps them to concentrate and hopefully, lead to improved achievement. Our program has seen an instant spike in the number of breakfast meals provided, and the program now reduces the delay that occurred when students were required to have breakfast in the cafeteria.

*- Nick Brophy, Principal,
Jefferson Science Magnet Elementary School*

9 – 24

Average additional minutes of daily physical activity for elementary school students in the GoNoodle pilot project

10_{out of} 12

Elementary school afterschool sites trained and equipped to provide Fit Kids, an evidence-based nutrition education and physical activity program



/ Social and Emotional Learning Initiative

The mission of the Social and Emotional Learning Initiative is to organize and provide resources to develop the social and emotional skills essential for lifelong success of Norwalk's children and families. As a team of service providers, practitioners, parents, students and leaders from the district and community-based organizations, we strive to create a continuum of enrichment and intervention services and to create alignment between community and school district services in order to maximize available resources.

Work Highlights

- Adopted the **five core competencies** of the CASEL framework as a focus for the community: self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision-making and self-awareness
- Selected **tools to gather baseline data** on the social-emotional needs of children, including the ASQ-SE (completed by parents for all students registering for Kindergarten)
- In 2017, the **Norwalk Public Schools District Wellness Committee** identified its key initiatives, including social-emotional health; members of the Committee will partner with Norwalk ACTS Social and Emotional Learning Initiative in an effort to have one community coalition developing actions plans to address the social-emotional needs of Norwalk's children

How We Are Improving Systems

Norwalk is moving towards a coordinated system of support to meet the social-emotional and mental health needs of children in our community with strong alignment between school district and community-based services in order to maximize critical resources.

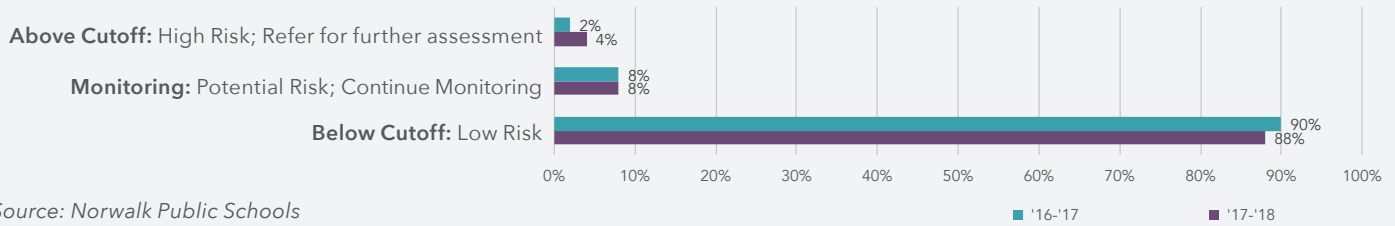
Goals Moving Forward

- Partner with *Positive Directions* to implement the **Attitudes & Behaviors Survey**, which measures developmental assets, to collect baseline data on the social-emotional health and well-being of Norwalk's youth (grades 6 – 12); by creating a community-level system for measuring the strengths, assets and needs of Norwalk's youth, we will gain a better understanding of how best to support the social-emotional needs of Norwalk's youth and drive decision-making around programs and services
- Complete a **community level inventory** of social-emotional supports and available resources to help build a better system of service delivery to ensure all children have access to enrichment and intervention behavioral health services in a collaborative and cost-effective way
- Convene community and school-based behavioral health service providers providing direct enrichment and intervention services to children/adolescents for a facilitated discussion regarding the landscape of services offered within the community; initiate a **collective conversation** on how best to support the needs of children/adolescents given the limited community and school-based resources
- Create a **single point of entry system** within each school for children/adolescents in crisis to access the appropriate level of mental health support, both internally and externally, in real-time



// Now that Joshua and his family are connected to counseling services, Joshua is learning to think before he acts, is able to make better decisions and can express his feelings and thoughts.

NPS Incoming Kindergarten ASQ-SE Screening Results



40 Developmental Assets

These first four asset categories focus on external structures, relationships and activities that create a positive environment for young people

EXTERNAL ASSETS

SUPPORT



Young people need to be surrounded by people who love, care for, accept and appreciate them

1. Family support
2. Positive family communication
3. Other adult relationships
4. Caring neighborhood
5. Caring school climate
6. Parent involvement in schooling

EMPOWERMENT



Young people need to feel valued and valuable. This happens when youth feel safe and respected

7. Community values youth
8. Youth as resources
9. Service to others
10. Safety

BOUNDARIES AND EXPECTATIONS



Young people need clear rules, consistent consequences for breaking rules, and encouragement to do their best

11. Family boundaries
12. School boundaries
13. Neighborhood boundaries
14. Adult role models
15. Positive peer influence
16. High expectations

CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME



Young people need opportunities (outside of school) to learn and develop new skills and interests with other youth and adults

17. Creative activities
18. Youth projects
19. Religious community
20. Time at home

INTERNAL ASSETS

COMMITMENT TO LEARNING



Young people need to be surrounded by people who love, care for, accept and appreciate them

21. Achievement motivation
22. School engagement
23. Homework
24. Bonding to school
25. Reading for pleasure

POSITIVE VALUES



Young people need to develop strong guiding values or principles to help them make healthy life choices

26. Caring
27. Equality and social justice
28. Integrity
29. Honesty
30. Responsibility
31. Restraint

SOCIAL COMPETENCIES



Young people need the skills to interact effectively with others to make difficult decisions and to cope with new situations

32. Planning and decision making
33. Interpersonal competence
34. Cultural competence
35. Resistance skills
36. Peaceful conflict resolution

POSITIVE IDENTITY



Young people need to believe in their own self-worth and to feel that they have control over the things that happen to them

37. Personal power
38. Self-esteem
39. Sense of purpose
40. Positive view of personal future

/ Transitions Initiative

The quality of students' transitions to middle and high school sets the course for their educational future. Research shows that student failures during the first year of high school make it difficult for students to graduate.

There are three fundamental transition needs that every student has: safety, information and connection. To make a successful transition, students need the what, where, how and when to aid them on their journey. Through partnerships with Norwalk Public Schools and community-based organizations, Norwalk ACTS Members and partners are working to ensure all students have the necessary skills to successfully transition from 5th to 6th grade and 8th to 9th grade.

Work Highlights

- Implemented **6th grade Teacher Survey** to glean perspectives around preparedness for 6th grade
- Created a **strategy workflow** to focus on communication, performance data, social-emotional health and wellness, physical fitness and summer learning
- Researched and discussed **best practices** for current middle to high school transition programs; identified and addressed which components of these programs are necessary for student success
- **Identified and aligned community resources** and programs to support the high school transition programs and 21st century skills development
- Reviewed and addressed obstacles/barriers to parent engagement and student participation in transition programs; incorporated **student led conferences and added transportation** to and from each program

Goals Moving Forward

- Increase the number of children with **access** to transition programs
- Increase **community awareness** about the importance of transition programs
- Continue to **align partners** around transition
- **Expand financial resources** around support of transition programs
- Convene district and community stakeholders in order to **create a checklist to define "successful" transition**, academically, socially, emotionally and physically



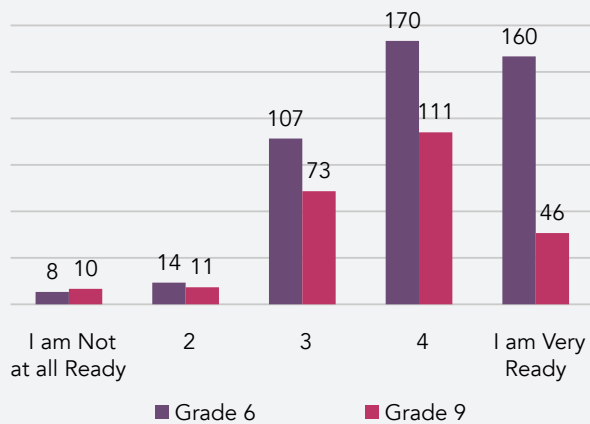
// Shanyia's older sister didn't know how hard it was going to be to move from middle to high school. But now, through a partnership between her school and out-of-school time providers, Shanyia has developed the necessary skills to successfully transition from 8th to 9th grade and feels more prepared.

Transitions Data Map



The data map above shows a compilation of responses to a survey given to 6th grade NPS teachers which asked them to identify characteristics they look for in their students as they transition to middle school.

I Feel Ready for the New School Year 2017 Summer Exit Survey Results



Source: TEAM Summer/Norwalk Public Schools Summer Exit Survey
The total 6th grade responses is 459; the total 9th grade responses is 251. Note the difference in the numbers of 6th graders versus 9th graders indicating they were Very Ready for the transition.





/ English Language Learner (ELL) Education Initiative

ELLs come to the United States for a variety of reasons: to escape violence and persecution, to reunite with family who are already here and for economic opportunities. Many of our ELLs, however, are born in the United States and learn English when they enter our schools as Kindergarteners. As an emerging initiative, our members are working to ensure a successful, rigorous and equitable academic experience for all of our ELLs in the Norwalk Public Schools.

ELLs have unique needs and double the work as they attempt to learn English and their academic subjects at the same time. We need to provide them with appropriate classes, programs and supports to ensure their academic success. Given the many ELLs throughout our school district, all teachers need to receive training and develop expertise in strategies and best practices for teaching ELLs.

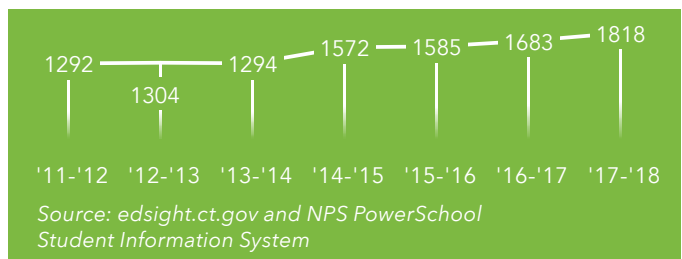
Work Highlights

- Created the **Norwalk International Academy** at Norwalk High School and Brien McMahon High School to meet the unique needs of ELL newcomers at the high school level
- Provided **intensive training in “sheltered instruction”** (i.e., ELL strategies and best practices) for various cohorts of Norwalk teachers
- Added more courses to the intensive **ELL Summer Academy** to help students accelerate their acquisition of English and earn credits for graduation
- Assisted with the transitions to a **“whole school” dual language program** at Silvermine Elementary School
- Increased services at the **ELL Welcome Center** to assist families with their transition to a new country; a new ELL Parent Handbook will be published soon
- Created a **Bilingual Instructional Aide Handbook** so that Aides have additional guidance in their service to ELLs

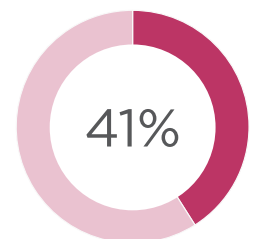
Goals Moving Forward

- Create **job/career pathways** within our Norwalk International Academy at the high schools; motivate older ELLs to graduate and move on to college and/or viable careers that will sustain them and their families
- Provide **training** for all Norwalk teachers in ELL strategies and best practices
- Continue the transition to a **“whole school” dual language program** at Silvermine Elementary School and enhance the middle school dual language program
- Create an **ELL Teacher Handbook** to assist all teachers with ELLs in their classrooms
- Standardize the procedures for evaluating ELLs who may have **special needs**
- Continue to add resources to the **ELL website**

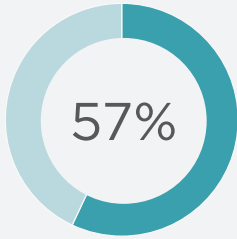
Number of ELL Students Attending Norwalk Public Schools



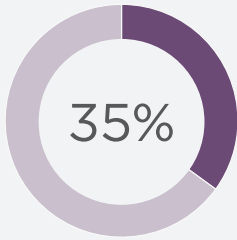
Diego is learning English and his academic subjects from teachers who are prepared to teach ELLs. He is well on his way to English proficiency, graduation and college or a career.



Since 2011, the number of English Language Learners has increased almost entirely in the past 4 years



Percent of Norwalk
Households Where **English**
is the Primary Language



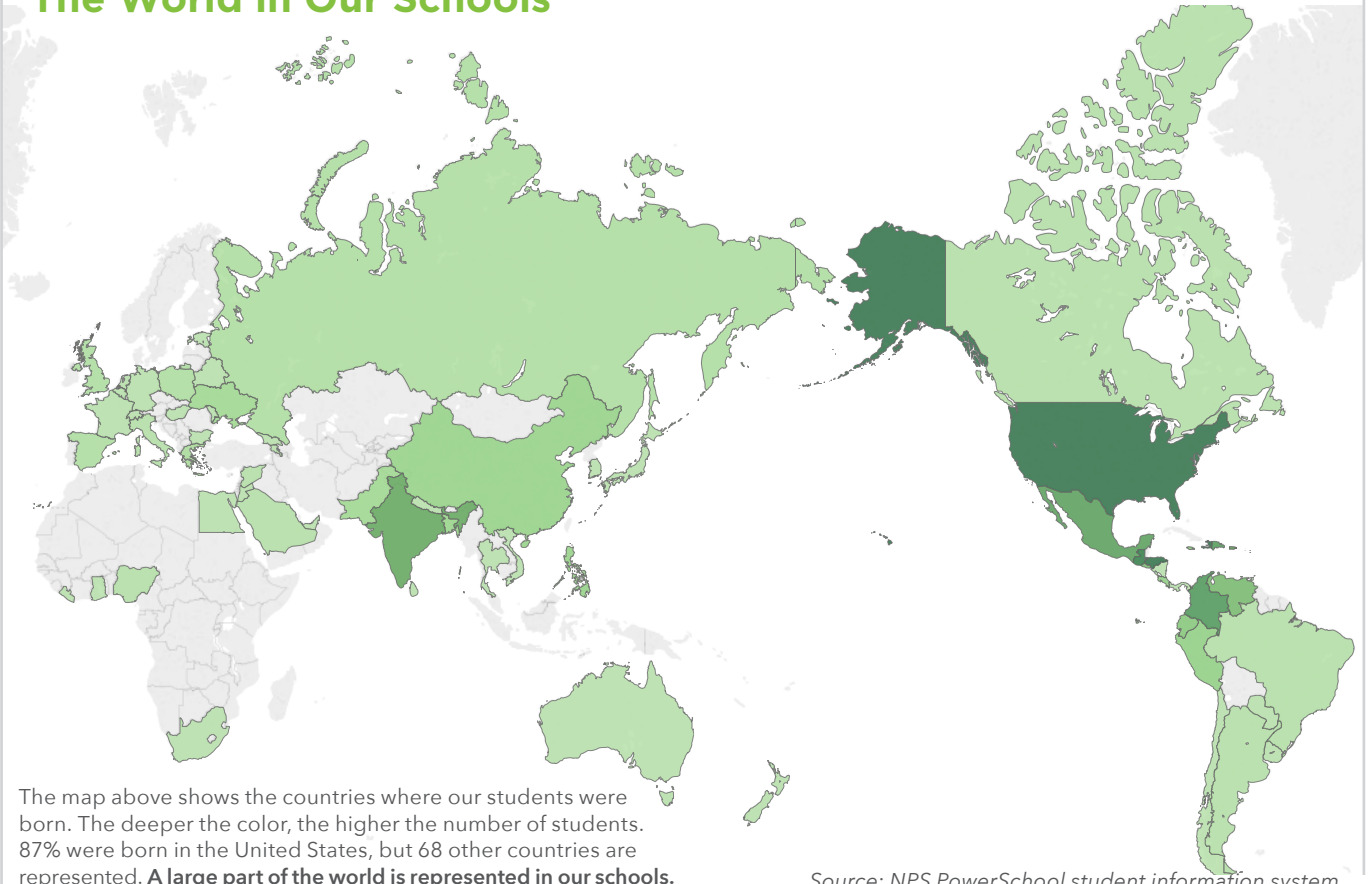
Percent of Norwalk
Households Where **Spanish**
is the Primary Language

64 Languages Other Than English and Spanish Spoken at Home By Our Students



Source: NPS PowerSchool student information system

The World in Our Schools



The map above shows the countries where our students were born. The deeper the color, the higher the number of students. 87% were born in the United States, but 68 other countries are represented. **A large part of the world is represented in our schools.**

Source: NPS PowerSchool student information system



/ Digital Learning Initiative

Children in today's society need to be adept at using technology as a means to collect information, communicate, collaborate and as a learning resource. We are working to develop our students into digital citizens and 21st-century-learners by providing them with the access, resources and skills to be digitally literate. Norwalk has too many students who do not have access, devices or knowledge on how to use the internet, which leaves them at a disadvantage to other students.

Work Highlights

- Implemented **district-wide student survey** to assess need for WiFi at home
- **Secured investment** to provide needed equipment and connectivity at the high school level to bring access to students who need it

Goals Moving Forward

- Provide **access and devices** to all students who need it
- Provide the **skills** necessary to use the internet as an effective tool for learning
- Create and provide a **digital citizenship curriculum**
- Offer **workshops for parents** to assist families with teaching children how to live healthy technology lifestyles

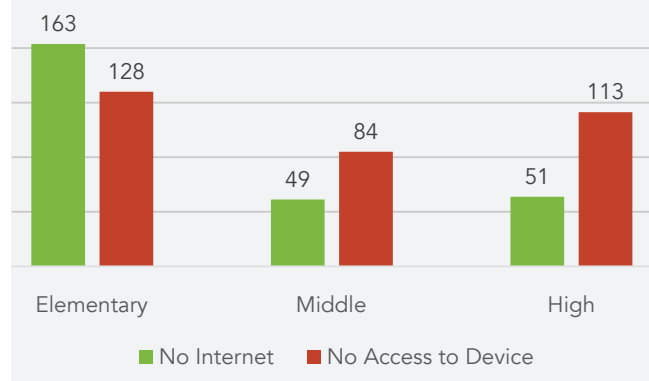
How We Are Improving Systems

- Partnered with TEAM Summer to leverage the implementation of the 2017 Summer Exit Survey to include survey questions related to digital access, so that Norwalk Public Schools could collect the necessary data to competitively apply for the **Sprint 1Million Project Grant**
- Collected data was so compelling that Sprint announced in December 2017 that Norwalk high school students would receive needed **equipment and connectivity** to complete schoolwork from home
- The program was rolled out in January 2018 with a pilot for **250 students** at both Norwalk and Brien McMahon High Schools; each student participating in the *1Million Project* will receive a free smartphone, tablet, or hotspot device and 3GB of high-speed LTE data per month for up to four years, while they are in high school
- The partnership with Sprint enables Norwalk Public Schools to raise the bar and close the gap by **leveling the playing field when it comes to students and technology**



NPS Students with No Internet or No Device Access

Summer Exit Survey Results (47% Responded from Grades 3 – 12)



// Max now has a computer and WiFi hotspot access at home which allows him to continue learning outside the classroom.

/ We Know and Therefore We Must

We Know...	Therefore We Must...
There is no single measurement of success and that often success cannot be measured through hard data alone; there is value to anecdotes and perspectives on experience – although these are hard to quantify.	▶ Help our Members find aligned ways to communicate success – both internally and externally, and with and without numbers.
Norwalk has many community leaders who have proven to be bright spots.	▶ Continue to cultivate their thinking, motivation and leadership, and support and empower one another so that we can launch and foster our best thinking towards innovative social change.
Human capacity drives engagement and administrative capacity is taxed for many Members; having enough staffing at the program and community level creates room for innovation and enables collective engagement.	▶ Increase our focus on ensuring that more parents, youth and emerging leaders are at the table , so that we are better able to identify and align opportunities, and address barriers across the cradle to career continuum.
Data collection systems are vastly diverse and siloed across and within Member organizations.	▶ Continue to facilitate the collection and connection of data among our Members to enable continuous improvement and to support our ability to continually refine indicators to improve accuracy and validity.
Analyzing community level data in the aggregate does not tell the whole story of outcome improvement.	▶ Amplify the analysis and use of disaggregated data to highlight disparities across sub-populations in order to elevate our focus on actions that address equity .
Having impact doesn't necessarily mean creating new programs.	▶ Continue to ensure that our Initiative tables are "communities of learning" for deeper partner programmatic alignment and sharing of resources and best practice.
The strength of the Implementation Team has brought a broader and deeper scope of vision, conversation and action.	▶ Continue to work with existing and new leaders to build or reactivate Working Groups and Initiatives throughout the cradle to career continuum.
Our <i>StriveTogether</i> Partners in Bridgeport, Stamford and Waterbury provide us with ongoing problem-solving and resource-sharing opportunities.	▶ Build the strength of our regional network in order to maximize resources of time, treasure and talent in support of our communities.
State and federal financial resources are limited but opportunities for regional and collective investment across the cradle to career continuum are maturing and aligning.	▶ Continue to identify, align, leverage and secure investment opportunities across all aspects of the continuum to provide more and better opportunities for all of our children, and develop an ecosystem where investors and investees work in partnership to improve outcomes.

Putting Our Strengths to Work

On January 19th, 2018, Norwalk ACTS received notification from *StriveTogether* that Norwalk ACTS had met all benchmarks necessary to be named a **Sustaining Partnership**. This designation not only acknowledges the improved process and action of Membership and Infrastructure, but it also enables Norwalk ACTS to access a variety of **professional development and investment resources and opportunities** that we will eagerly pursue over the course of the next year. Our sphere of influence includes a network of over 70 partnerships around the country, many that we are innovating and sharing success alongside with now, and we are excited to continue to build upon those relationships.

In November 2017, Norwalk ACTS was selected, along with only eight other *StriveTogether* Network Members nationally, to participate in a **Social-Emotional Learning Expert Convening** that was held in San Antonio at the end of February. Having engaged with experts in the field around the measurement of social-emotional learning competencies and root causes of social-emotional learning disparity gaps, the Norwalk ACTS Team will actively be sharing what they learned in order to **improve social-emotional learning competencies in our community** through the use of Results Counts techniques, disaggregated data and peer-to-peer learning.

In February 2018, *StriveTogether* notified Norwalk ACTS that it had been selected, along with six other *StriveTogether* Network Members nationally, to participate in the **Prenatal to Age 3 (PN-3) Impact and Improvement Network**. The PN-3 Impact and Improvement Network offers partnerships the opportunity to narrow in, focus on and work to improve the number of children meeting key prenatal to age 3 milestones. This 16-month learning network collaborative will help support Norwalk's focused work on **ensuring that children participating in home visiting programs receive developmental screenings, appropriate tiered interventions, and are meeting developmental benchmarks**. The Pritzker Children's Initiative is a critical partner in support of this work.

In the days, weeks and months ahead, we must remain steadfast in our principle of using **data to take action** on issues related to **equity and opportunity**. We must continue to transform insight to **accelerate advocacy and to change policy** at the local and state levels. Our community and leadership must **identify and secure collective investment opportunities** across all aspects of the Norwalk ACTS continuum to provide more and better opportunities for all of our children. And all of us must persistently seek ways to **support and empower one another** so that we can launch and foster our best thinking towards **innovative social change**.

/ It Takes a Village

Norwalk ACTS is grateful to the dozens of Members and community leaders who have made this Impact Report possible.

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SPECIAL THANKS GO TO:

Kathy Labieniec for her amazing design talent and patience in the face of difficult timelines and revisions

Erik Trautmann and **Charles Silverman** for capturing our children so beautifully in their photographs

Diane Filardo, Jean Starkman, Cathy Orgovan, Jordan Rifaey and **Ralph Valenzisi** at Norwalk Public Schools for their ongoing support and assistance in helping Norwalk ACTS use data as an informative flashlight

Dr. Danielle Rathey at UConn's InCHIP Connecticut Youth Consortium for her continued guidance, advice and consistent optimism

Our friends at **StriveTogether** and our partners across the national network for creating a true community of learning, of which Norwalk ACTS is proud to be a Member

Our **Investors** who make it possible for the Backbone Staff to provide our Membership with the resources necessary to move our community work forward



The Grossman
Family Foundation

RITTER FAMILY
FOUNDATION



This Report is dedicated to
Dr. Saloma (Sally) B. Grose
and
Rev. James W. Carter
in loving memory of their courage,
tenacity and vision that gave birth to
Norwalk ACTS and continue to move us forward
We persist in their memory.



/ Join Us

How can I engage?

1/ Reach Out

Please visit our website and get in touch with us at info@norwalkacts.org to ask questions or become a part of our communications, our work and our Partnership.

2/ Share

We are asking organizations joining the Partnership to sign Memorandum of Agreements (MOAs) with Norwalk ACTS. It is important that we align ourselves to achieve shared goals and outcomes. To get a copy of the MOA, please contact us at info@norwalkacts.org.

3/ Act

Measuring what matters, identifying effective practices, aligning resources and being committed to Continuous Improvement are necessary actions for the achievement of better outcomes for Norwalk's children. Please email us at info@norwalkacts.org to inquire how you can implement these actions within your own organization or to become involved with a Working Group or Initiative.

4/ Invest

Ensuring successful outcomes for all of Norwalk's children requires investments of time, talent and treasure. Please contact us to discuss how you can invest in our important work.

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Norwalk / **ACTS**



Norwalk ACTS is a member of the *StriveTogether* Cradle to Career Network, a national network of 70 community partnerships using a rigorous approach to accelerate progress and sustain success in education.