



Blueprint for Maryland's Future Special Education Workgroup

Workgroup Meeting #1

August 23, 2023

Co-Chairs | Mohammed Choudhury, State Superintendent of Schools
Liz Zogby, Special Education Policy & Advocacy



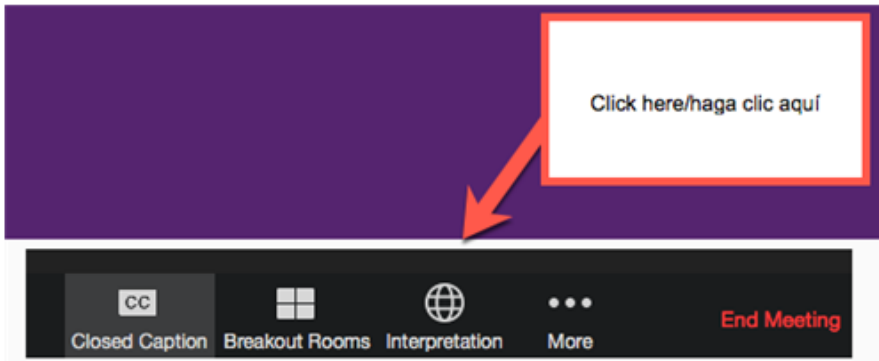
Note to Attendees

This meeting is being recorded and livestreamed via MSDE's YouTube channel:

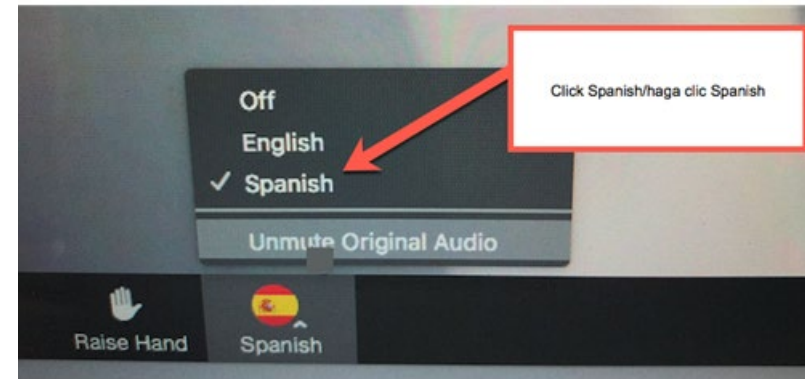
<https://youtube.com/live/ycDSNMCgOOM?feature=share>

¿Español?

1.



2.



PRESENTATION OUTLINE

1. Welcome/Introductions
2. Public Comment
3. Overview of Workgroup Responsibilities
4. Guiding Question #1
5. State of Special Education Data Dive
6. Summary of Previous Recommendations
7. Guiding Question #2
8. Expert Presentation
9. Future Meetings and Next Steps

Membership and Affiliation (1 of 2)

Co-Chairs

- Mohammed Choudhury, State Superintendent
- Liz Zogby, Special Education Policy & Advocacy

Maryland State Legislature

- The Honorable Karen Young, Senator

Directors of Special Education

- Diane McGowan, Anne Arundel County
- Kendy Anderson, Calvert County
- Sherry O'Dell, St. Mary's County

Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program

- Bess Cropper, Worcester County

PreKindergarten Representation

- Imani Rose, Owner/Director
- Jennifer Dorsey, Owner/ Director

Related Services Provider

- Lisa Melody, Baltimore County

School Psychologist

- Erika Levy, Baltimore City

Elementary School Administrator(s)

- Thomas Garner, Washington County
- Maisha Strong, Howard County
- Lauren Tillman, Baltimore County
- Jennifer Quirino, Anne Arundel County

Middle School Administrator(s)

- Becky Bowen, Calvert County
- Katrina Foster, Baltimore County
- Jeanine Necessary, Caroline County

High School Administrator(s)

- BeeJay Dothard, St. Mary's County
- Beth Morton, Calvert County
- Michael Brown, Carroll County

Elementary School Teacher

- Betsy Perry, Montgomery County

Middle School Teacher(s)

- Cheryl Fracassi, Kent County
- Rhea Graham, Baltimore City

Expert in Interventions

- Michele Talbert-Smith, Washington County

Membership and Affiliation (2 of 2)

High School Teacher(s)

- Melissa Kiernan, St. Mary's County
- Joshua Schecter, Prince George's County

Nonpublic Special Education

- David Stone, Assistant VP Operations, Baltimore City/Prince George's County
- Agatha Callahan, Baltimore County

Nonpublic Special Education Case Manager

- Mark Turek, Carroll County/Retired
- Joanne Hoffman, Montgomery County

IHE/Research Professor

- Katharine Holman, Statewide

Higher Education – Teacher Preparation

- Dawn Jacobs Martin, Statewide

Multilingual Learners Advocates

- Dinorah Olmos, Statewide
- Susana Barrios, Statewide

Physician with Expertise in Disabilities

- Dr. Debbie Badawi, Statewide

Employment and Transition Expert

- Jade Gingrich, Statewide

Advocates

- Leslie Margolis, Statewide
- Rene Averitt-Sanzone, Statewide
- Buzzy Hettleman, Statewide

Parents of Students with Disabilities

- Dee Sapp, Charles County
- Winifred Winston, Baltimore City
- Angie Auldridge, Washington County
- Janice Lepore, Baltimore County

Accountability & Implementation Board

- Rachel Amstutz, Statewide
- Lisa Armstrong, Statewide



Public Comment

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. **Public Comment**
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Hear from Registered Guests – Public Comment Period



Overview of Workgroup Responsibilities

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3. **Overview of Workgroup Responsibilities**
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Special Education Workgroup responsibilities as outlined by the Accountability & Implementation Board – Initial Comprehensive Implementation Plan | Blueprint for Maryland's Future

AIB Comprehensive Implementation Plan: Requirements (1 of 3)

Task ID	Requirement
4.3.2	MSDE shall establish a workgroup to collect student data and review instructional methods provided to students who receive special education services.
4.3.2(a)	<p>The workgroup shall collect data on the number and percent of students receiving special education services at each P-12 school, the services available to them, and the accessibility of P-12 teachers, administrators, and staff to these students and their families.</p> <p>MSDE and AIB shall identify workgroup members representing various special education interests who demonstrate commitment to diversity, equity, and expertise.</p> <p>The workgroup shall share its work plan with the AIB and provide regular updates on its progress.</p>

Source: Initial Comprehensive Implementation Plan | Blueprint for Maryland’s Future (12/2022) and AIB Updates (8/1/2023)

AIB Comprehensive Implementation Plan: Requirements (2 of 3)

Task ID	Requirement
4.3.2(b)	<p>The workgroup shall review methods of teaching for students who receive special education services in public P-12 schools in the State.</p> <p>The workgroup’s review shall include methods used in the State and other states and other countries, including addressing learning loss related to COVID-19, in addition to recruiting special education teachers and staff.</p> <p>The workgroup may expand the scope of its review based on recommendations of its members and/or AIB and MSDE to include topics like the impact of teacher shortages on special education and resulting quality or services provided; supports provided to special educators; co-teaching models and supporting general educators in implementing co-teaching models as well as supporting special education students when a special educator is not providing services; increasing family involvement and collaboration in special education programming; and how top-performing systems structure the school day to effectively provide remediation and special education services.</p>
4.3.2(c)	<p>The workgroup shall make recommendations on improving the education of students receiving special education services in P-12 schools in the State, including whether additional funding is needed and addressing learning loss as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>The workgroup may make other recommendations related to additional topics studied by the workgroup.</p>

Source: Initial Comprehensive Implementation Plan | Blueprint for Maryland’s Future (12/2022) and AIB Updates (8/1/2023)

AIB Comprehensive Implementation Plan: Requirements (3 of 3)

Task ID	Requirement
4.3.3	The workgroup submits a final report with its findings and recommendations, including addressing learning loss resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.
4.3.3(a)	<p>AIB shall incorporate the workgroup’s findings and recommendations into the updated Blueprint Comprehensive Implementation Plan.</p> <p>The workgroup shall submit an initial report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly by 12/1/23, an interim report by 7/1/24, and a final report by 12/1/24.</p>
4.3.3(b)	MSDE and LEAs shall implement the workgroup’s recommendations to improve the education of students receiving special education services in Maryland P-12 schools.

Source: Initial Comprehensive Implementation Plan | Blueprint for Maryland’s Future (12/2022) and AIB Updates (8/1/2023)



Guiding Question #1

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What is the state of students with disabilities in Maryland?



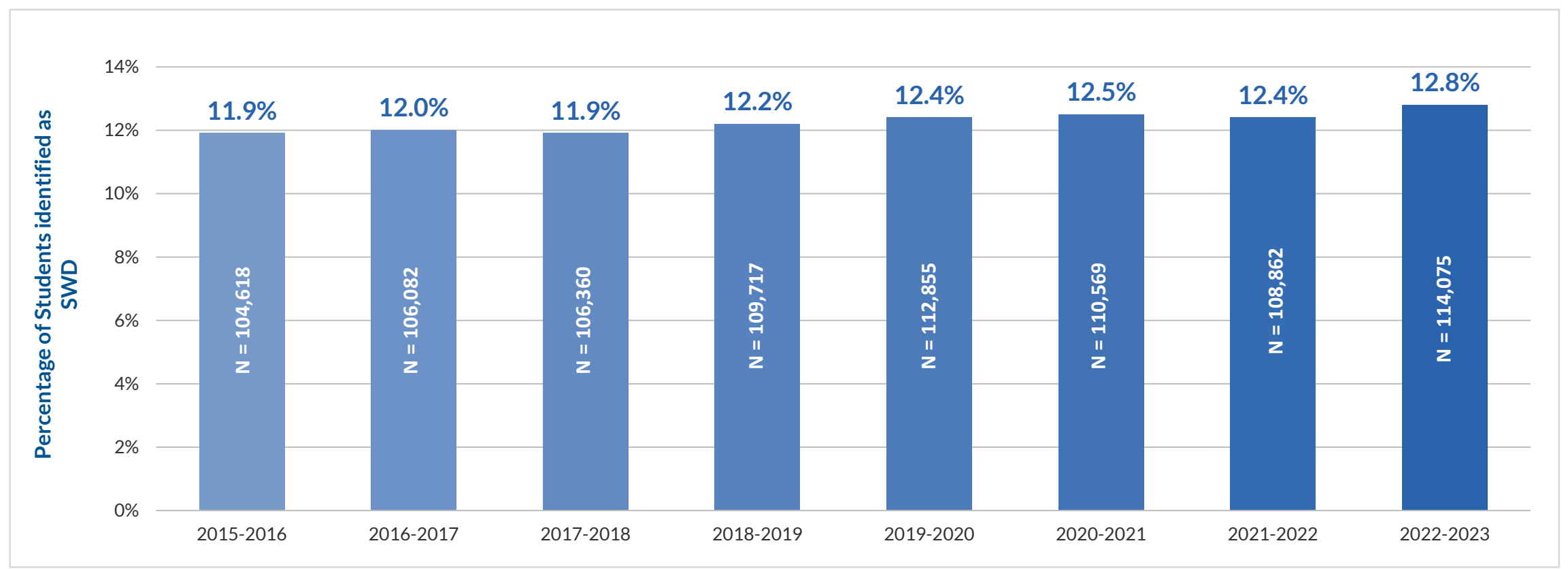
State of Special Education Data Dive

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Students with disabilities by the numbers

Enrollment Trend: Students with Disabilities, 2015-2023

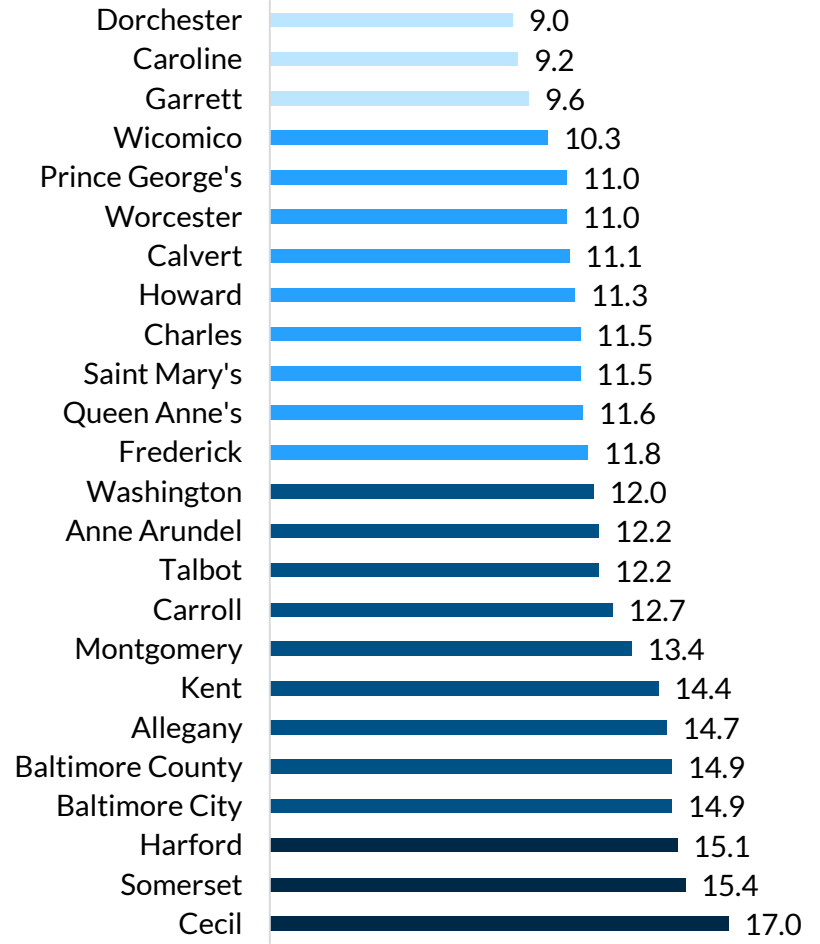
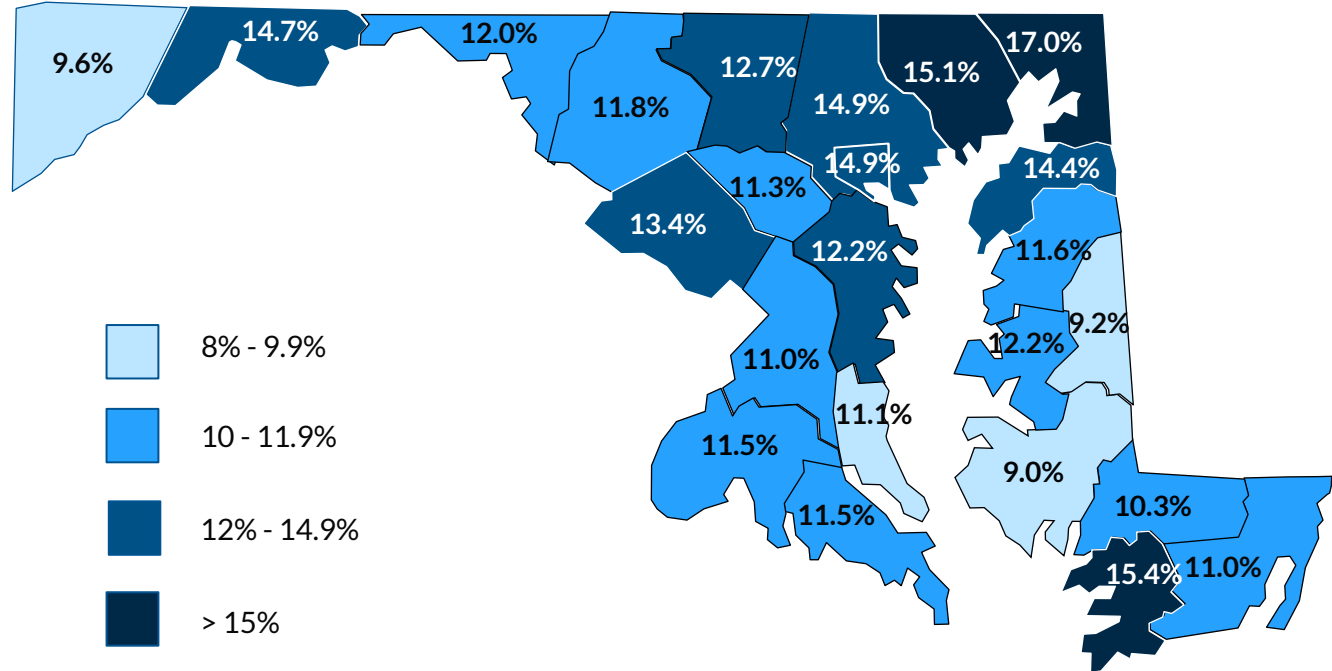
The number and percentage of the total population of Maryland students identified as students with disabilities has incrementally increased over time.



Source: Maryland Early Intervention and Special Education Services Census Data & Related Tables

Enrollment: Students with Disabilities as a Percentage of LEA Enrollment, 2022-2023

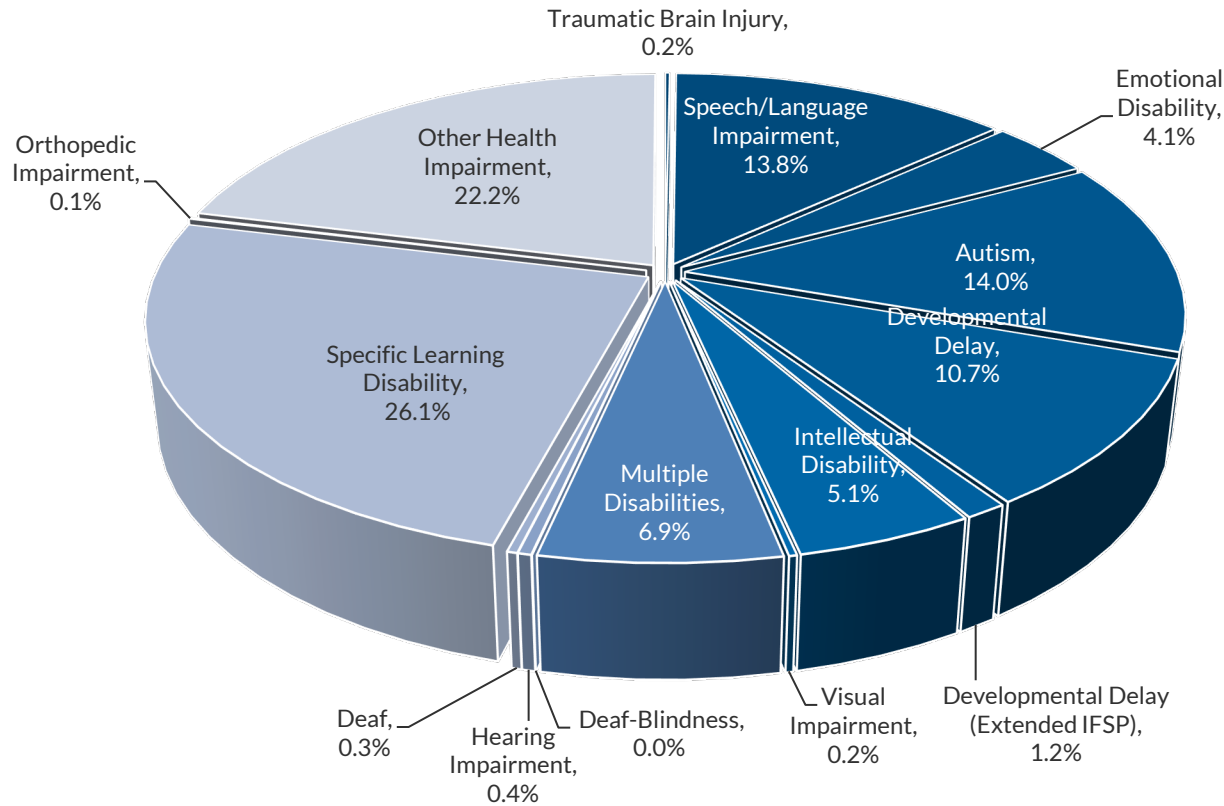
The percentage of students identified as students with disabilities varies by LEA, from 9% to 17%.



*SEED School omitted from map (9.2%).
Source: Maryland Early Intervention and Special Education Services Census Data & Related Tables

Enrollment by Disability Category, 2022-2023

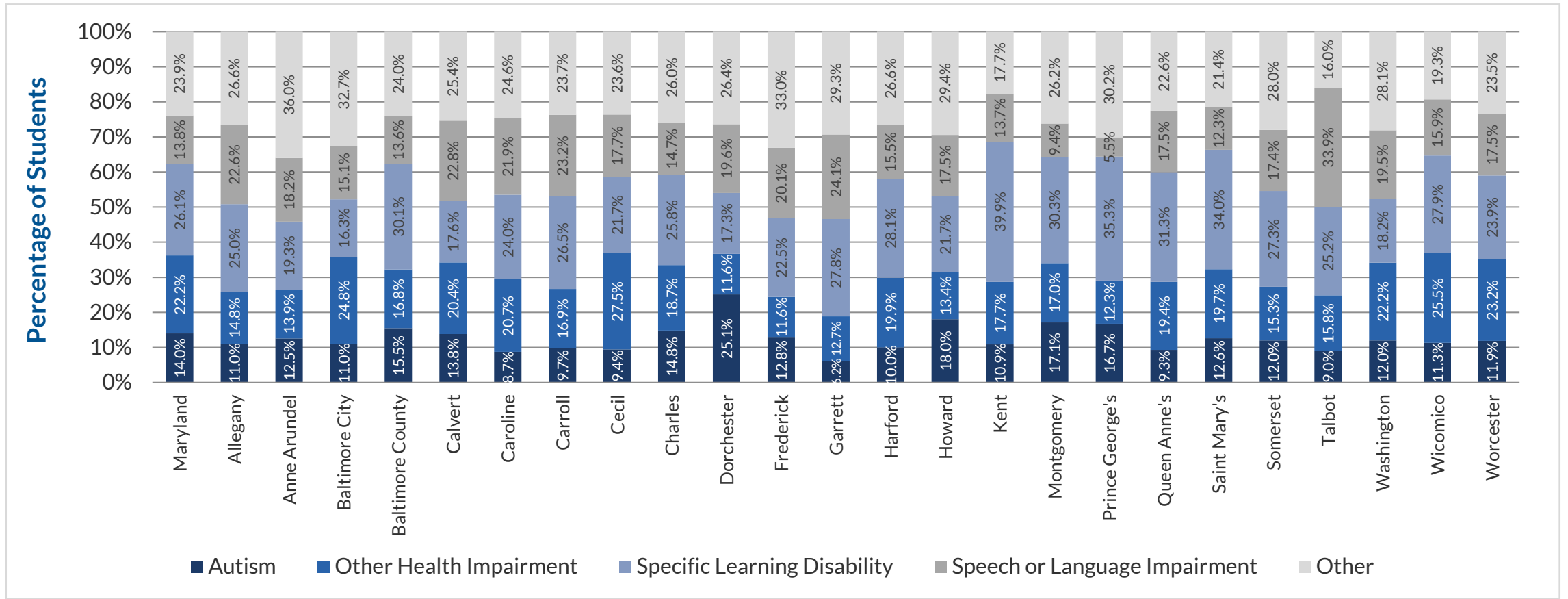
In Maryland, the most common disability categories include specific learning disability, other health impairments, autism, and speech/language impairments



Source: Maryland Early Intervention and Special Education Services Census Data & Related Tables

Students with Disabilities by LEA and Disability, 2022-2023

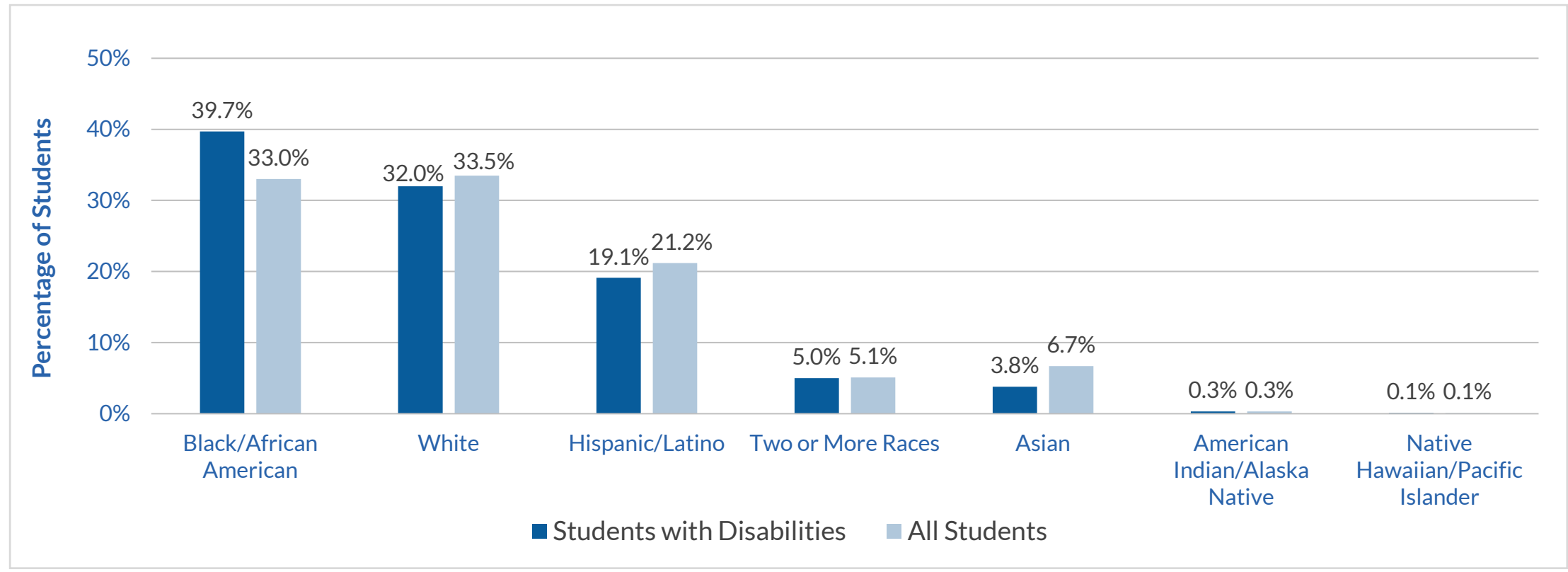
Students with disabilities by disability category across Local Education Agencies in Maryland.



Data Source: Maryland Early Intervention and Special Education Services Census Data & Related Tables

Students with Disabilities by Race/Ethnicity, 2021-2022

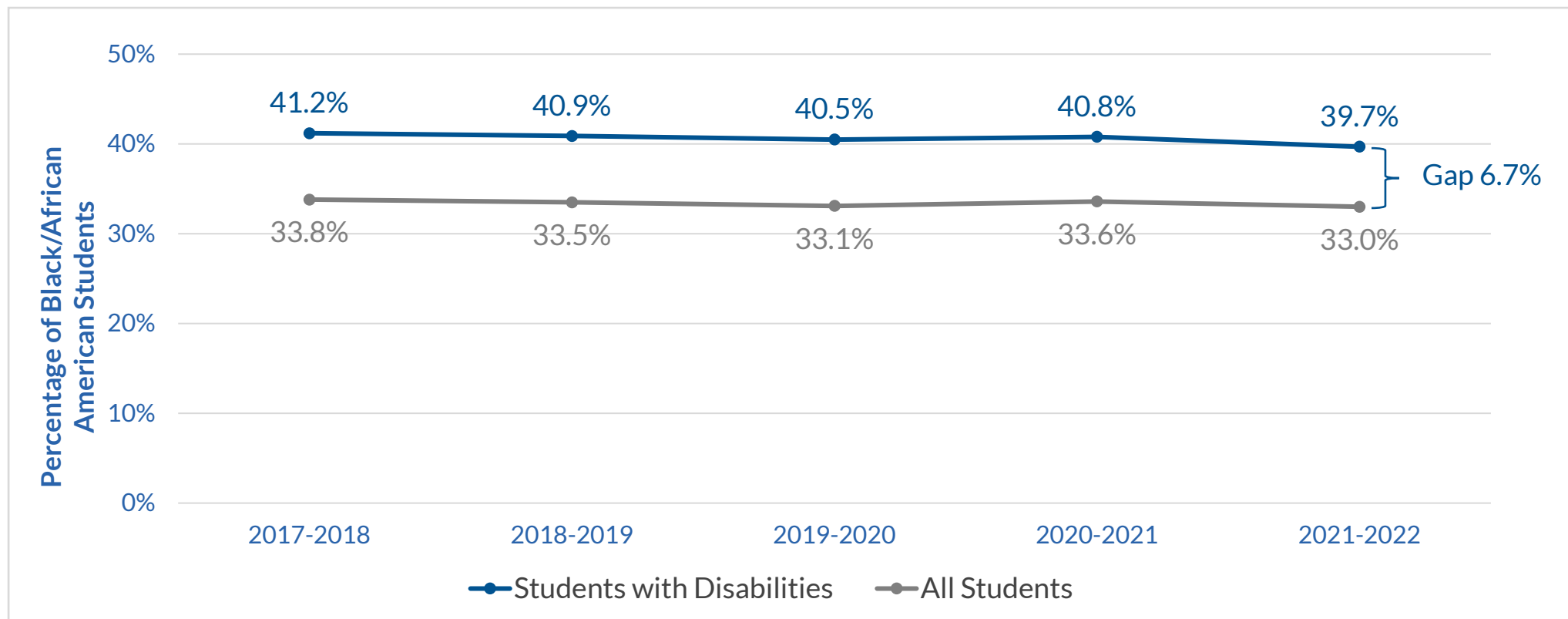
Black/African American students disproportionately comprise the students with disabilities population compared to other race/ethnicities.



Data Source: MSDE Early Attendance Data Collection

Black/African American Student Enrollment, 2018-2022

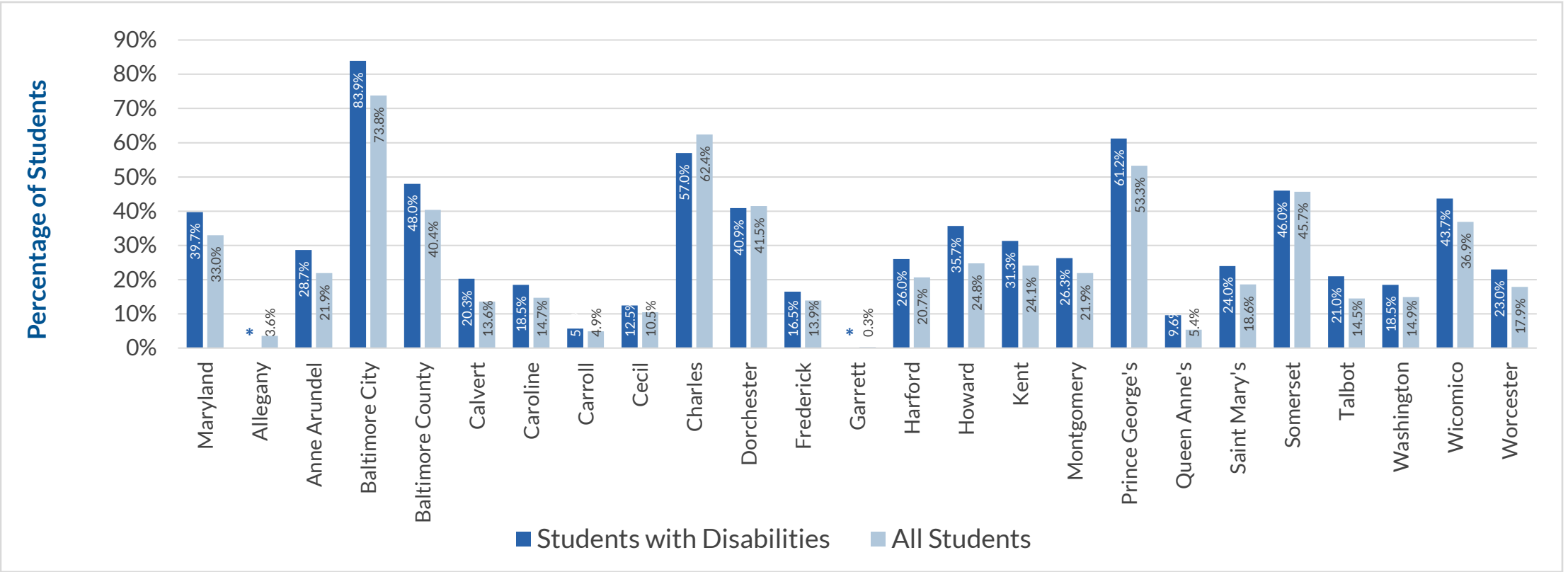
The proportion of Students with Disabilities that are Black/African American has consistently been higher than the overall student population.



Data Source: MSDE Early Attendance Data Collection

Black Student Enrollment by LEA and Disability Status, 2021-2022

The majority of LEAs in Maryland have an overrepresentation of Black students enrolled in special education compared to overall enrollment in each district.

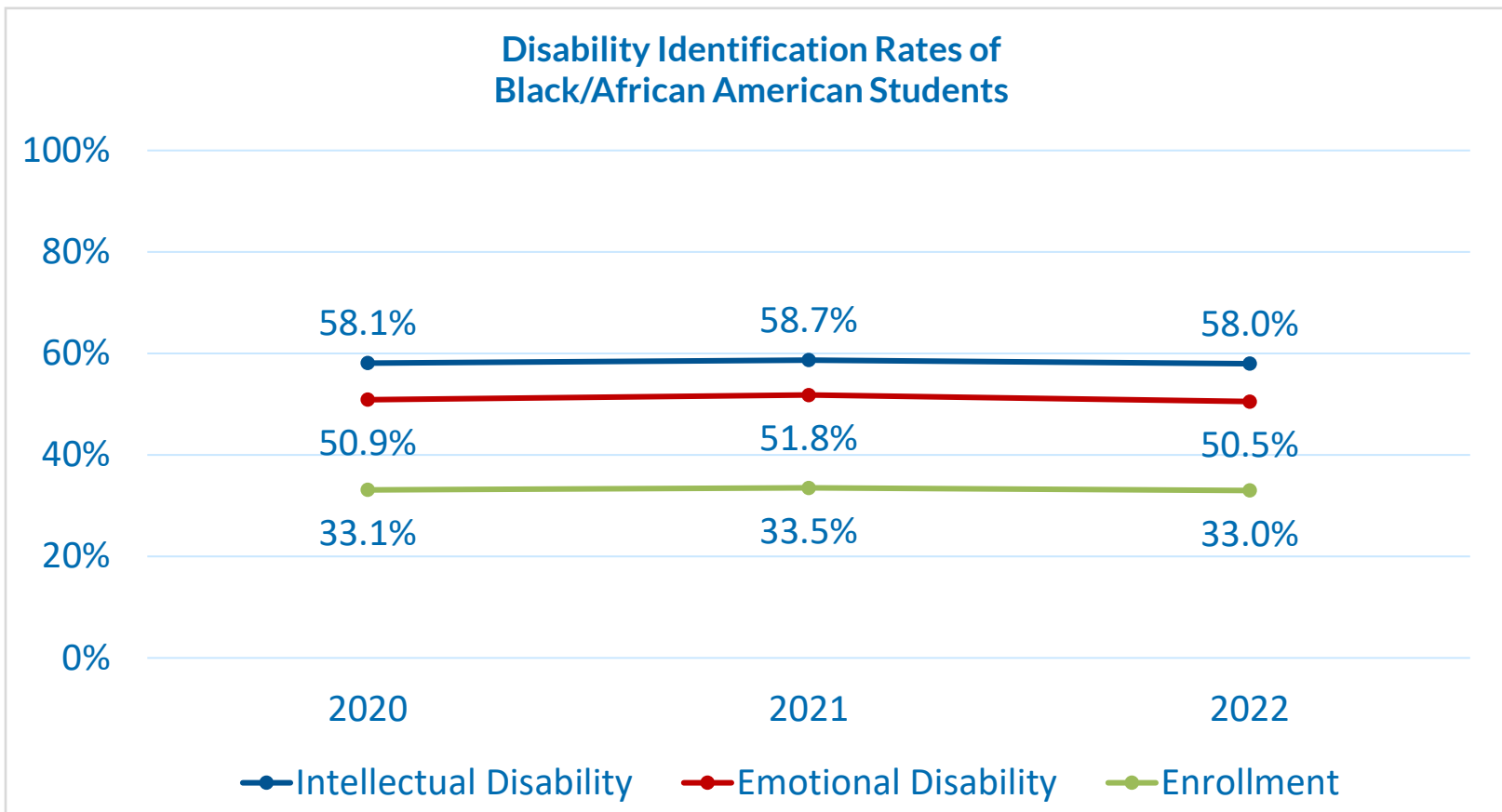


Data Source: MSDE Early Attendance Data Collection

* Small cell size

Identification of Students over Time

The disproportionality in identification of Black/African American students has not changed over the past few years.



Black/African American students are 33% of the State’s student population but **over half of the students identified for intellectual and emotional disabilities.**

Categories of LEAs

Majority

Black/African American:

At least 50% Black/African American students

- Baltimore City
- Charles
- Prince George's

Diverse:

No race/ethnicity group more than 50% of students

- Anne Arundel
- Baltimore County
- Dorchester
- Howard
- Montgomery
- Somerset
- Wicomico

Majority White:

More than 50% White students

- Allegany
- Calvert
- Caroline
- Carroll
- Cecil
- Frederick
- Garrett
- Harford
- Kent
- Queen Anne's
- Saint Mary's
- Washington
- Worcester

Intellectual Disability Identification Rates

Black/African American students were overidentified for an intellectual disability in every LEA except one in 2021-2022.

Black/African American Proportions of Enrollment and Identification for an Intellectual Disability by LEA Category, 2021-2022

	Black/African-American Enrollment ²	Black/African-American ID rate ²
State	33%	58%
Majority Black/African American LEAs	61%	80%
Diverse LEAs	28%	44%
Majority White LEAs	14%	20%
Not Majority Black/African American LEAs ¹	23%	35%

¹Combination of Diverse LEAs and Majority White LEAs

²ID rate is the proportion of identified students that were Black/African-American.

Emotional Disability Identification Rates

Black/African American students were overidentified for an emotional disability in two-thirds of the LEAs in 2021-2022.

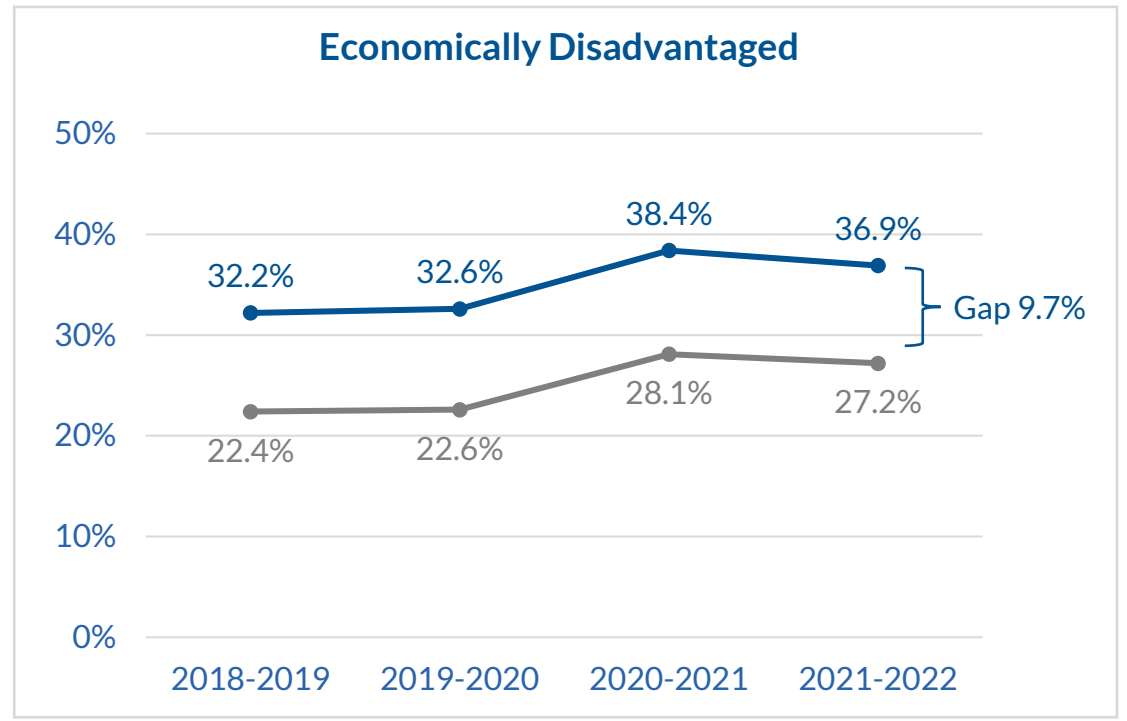
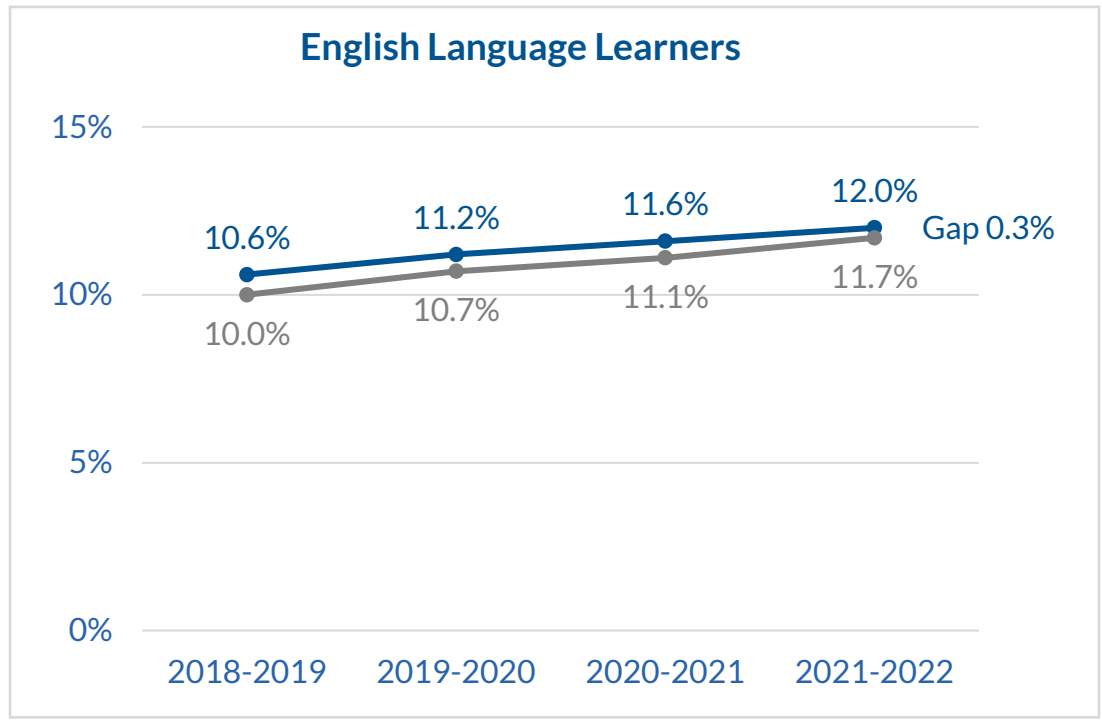
Black/African American Proportions of Enrollment and Identification for an Intellectual Disability by LEA Category, 2021-2022

	Black/African-American Enrollment ²	Black/African-American ID rate ²
State	33%	51%
Majority Black/African American LEAs	61%	83%
Diverse LEAs	28%	41%
Majority White LEAs	14%	18%
Not Majority Black/African American LEAs ¹	23%	33%

¹Combination of Diverse LEAs and Majority White LEAs
²ID rate is the proportion of identified students to all students.

Students with Disabilities by Student Group, 2019-2022

Rates of students with disabilities who are also English learners or economically disadvantaged have increased at similar rates to their peers.

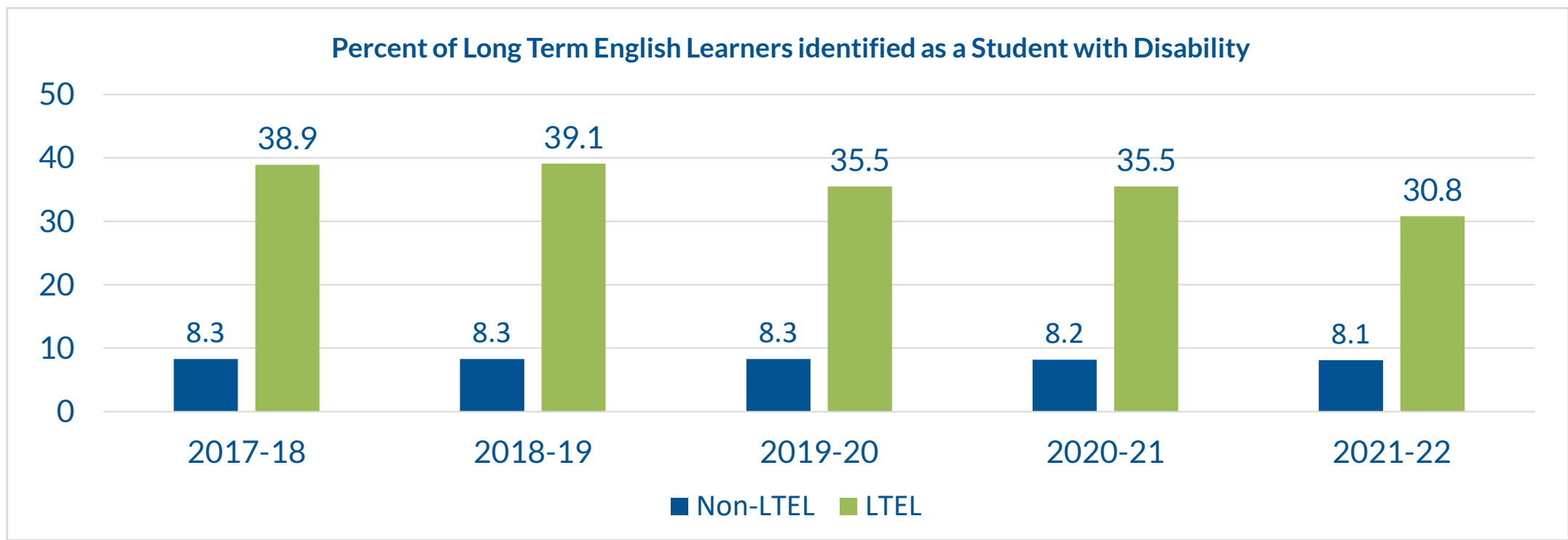


—●— Students with Disabilities —●— All Students

Data Source: MSDE Early Attendance Data Collection

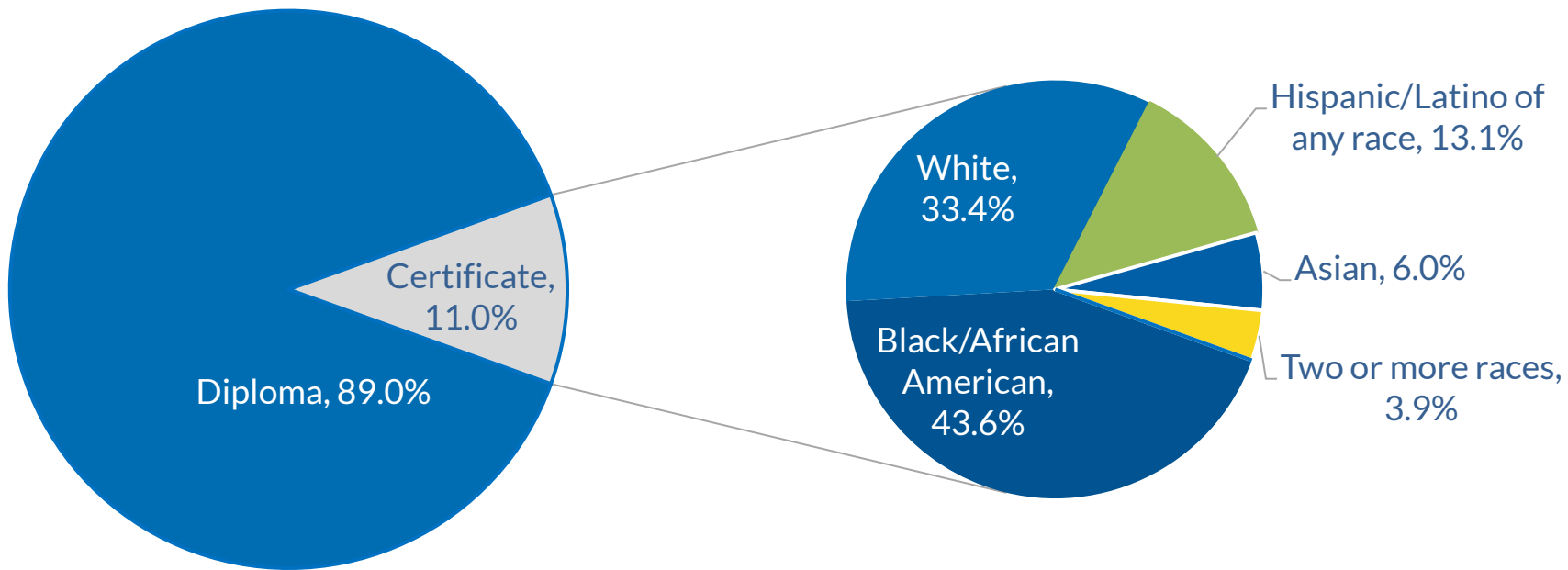
Students with Disabilities and Long-Term English Learner Status, 2018-2022

Maryland long term English learners (LTEL) were almost 4 times more likely to be identified for special education services than were English learners who were non-LTEs.

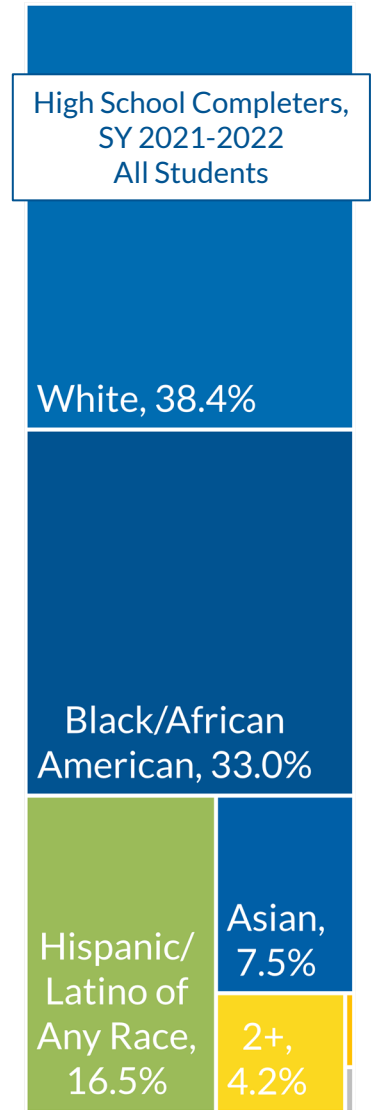


High School Completion: Students with Disabilities by Race/Ethnicity, SY 2021-2022

Of the 5,605 students with disabilities completing high school in school year 2021-2022, 89.0% graduated with a diploma and 11.0% graduated with a certificate (617).

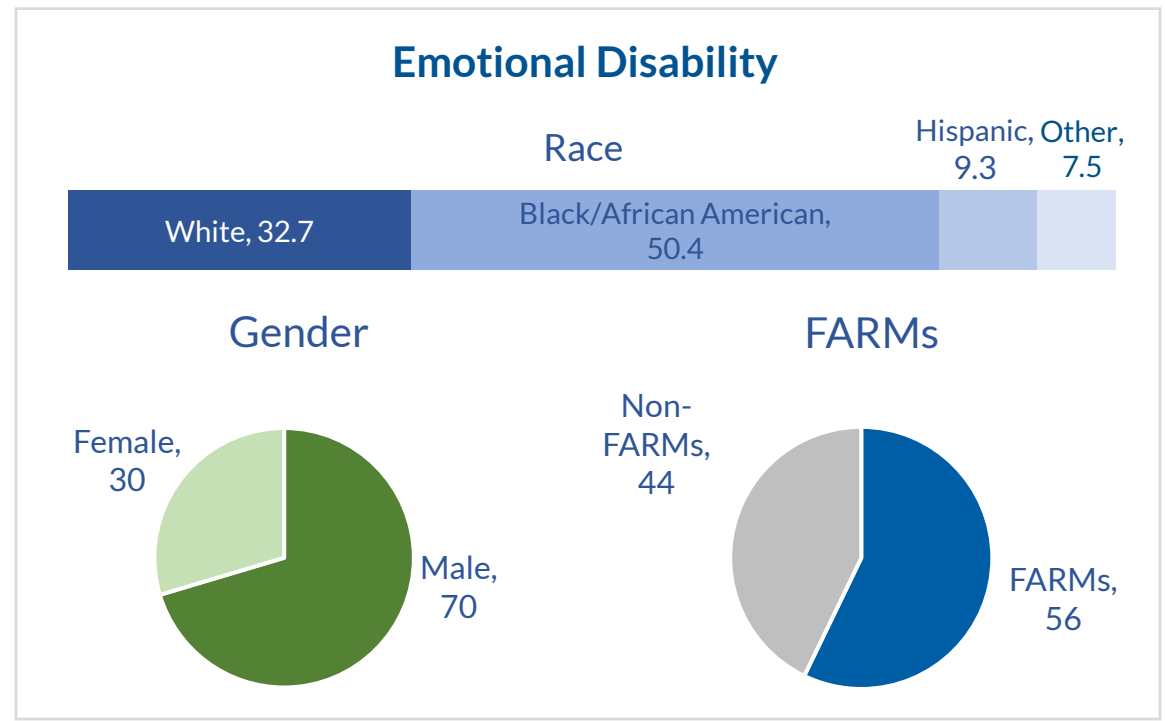
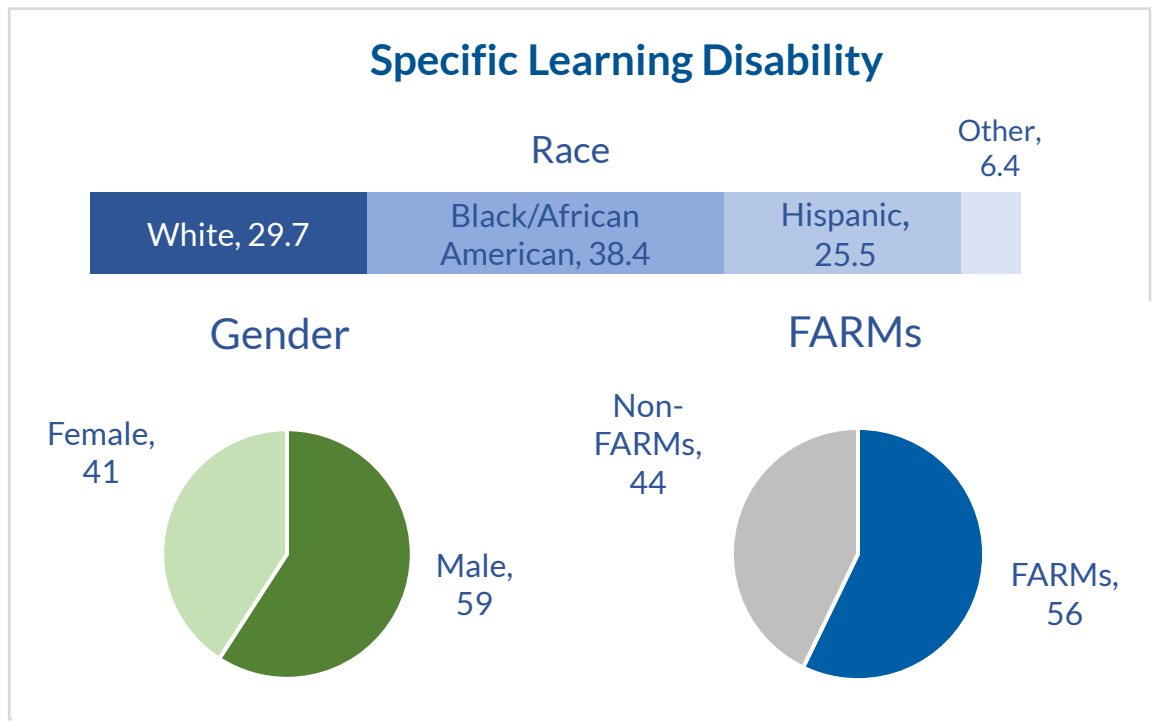


High School completion includes Diplomas, Certificates, and early college admission.
 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and American Indian/Alaska Native students with disabilities who graduated with a Special Education certificate data are suppressed due to small population.

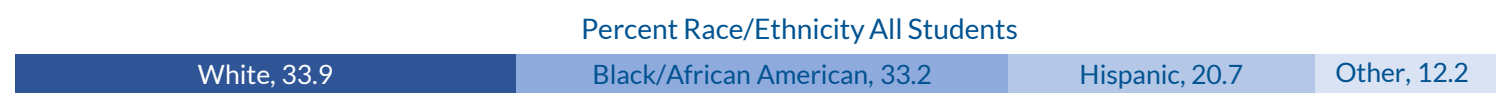


Students with Disabilities: Disability Type by Race, Gender, and Eligible for Free and Reduced Meals (FARMs), 2021-2022

More Black/African American students are identified as having a specific learning or emotional disability as compared to the statewide percent of Black/African American of 33.2%.

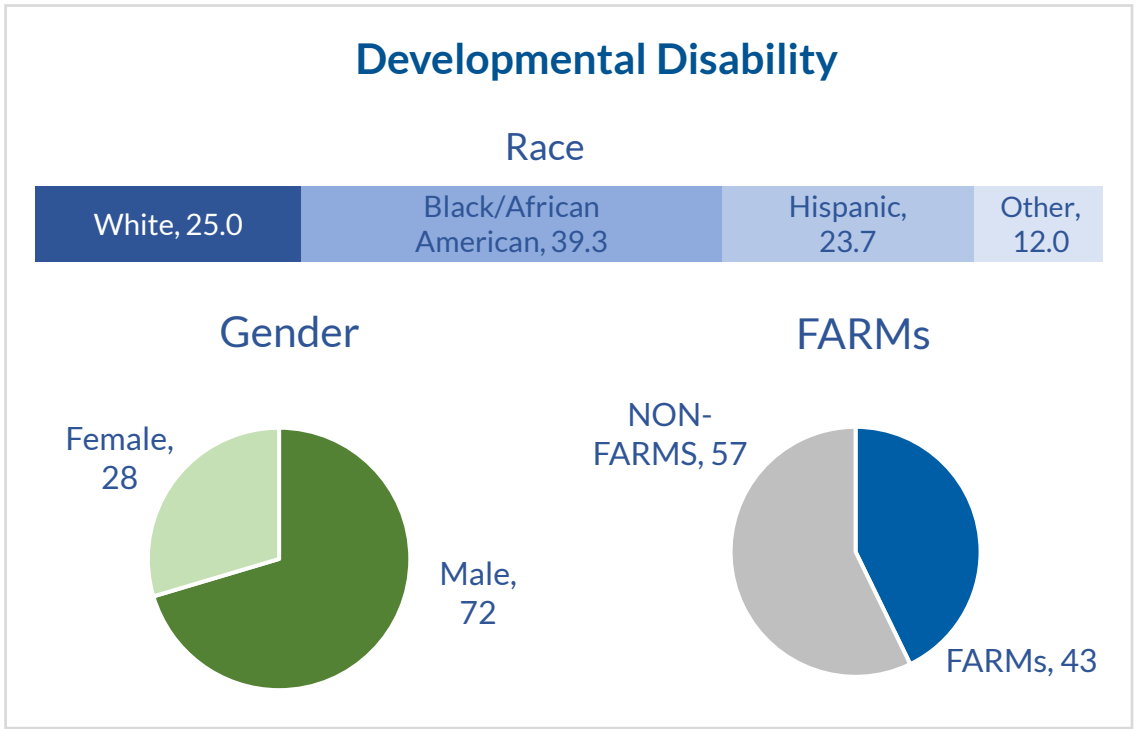
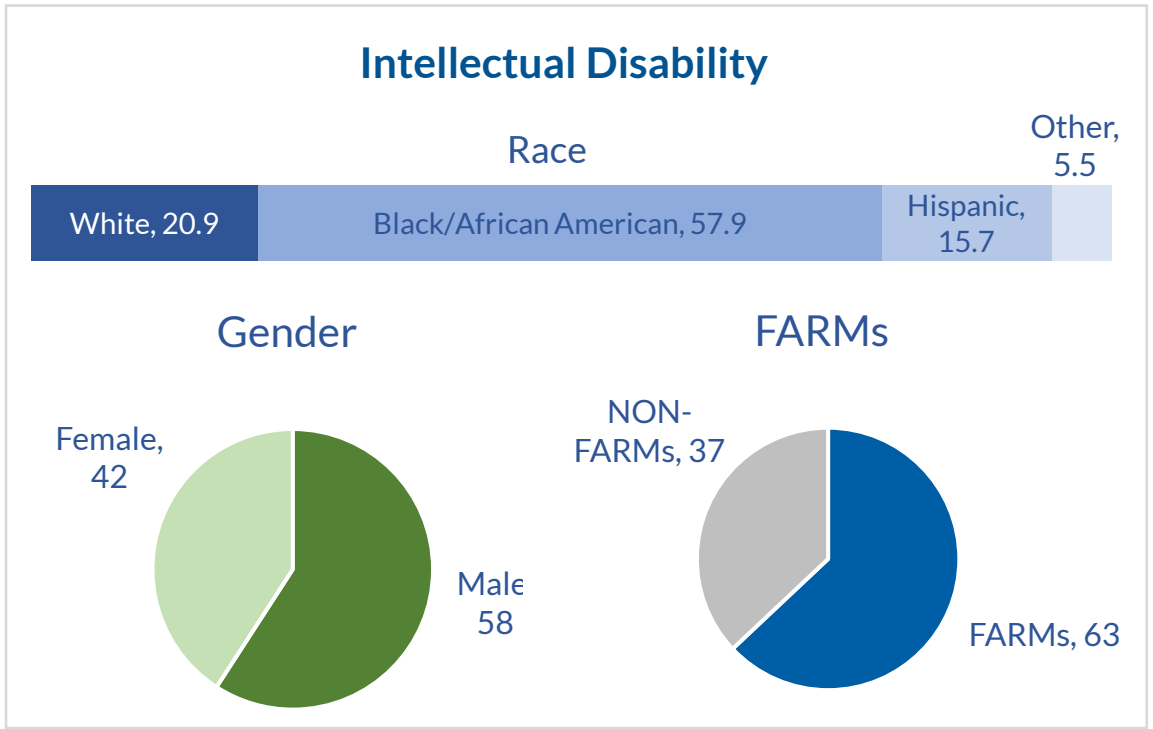


Data Sources: MSDE Early Attendance Data Collection, Enrollment Data Collection SY 2021-2022



Students with Disabilities: Disability Type by Race, Gender, and Eligible for Free and Reduced Meals (FARMs), 2021-2022

More Black/African American students are identified as having an intellectual or developmental disability as compared to the statewide percent of Black/African American of 33.2%.



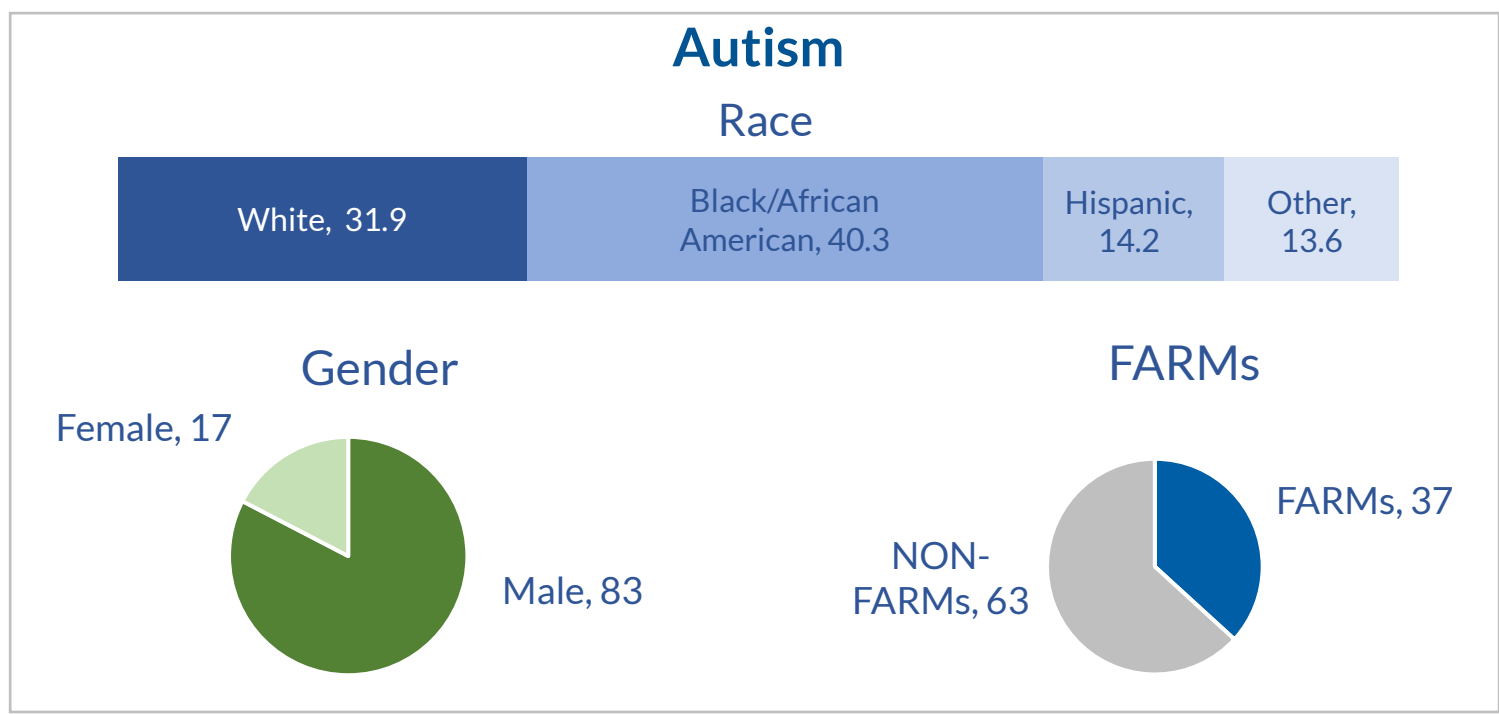
Percent Race/Ethnicity All Students



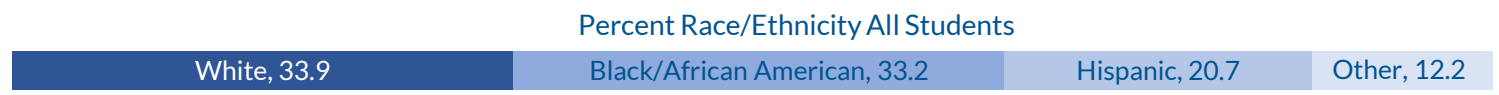
Data Sources: MSDE Early Attendance Data Collection, Enrollment Data Collection SY 2021-2022

Students with Disabilities: Disability Type by Race, Gender and Eligible for Free and Reduced Meals (FARMs), 2021-2022

Students identified as having Autism are more likely to be male and not eligible for free and reduced meals.

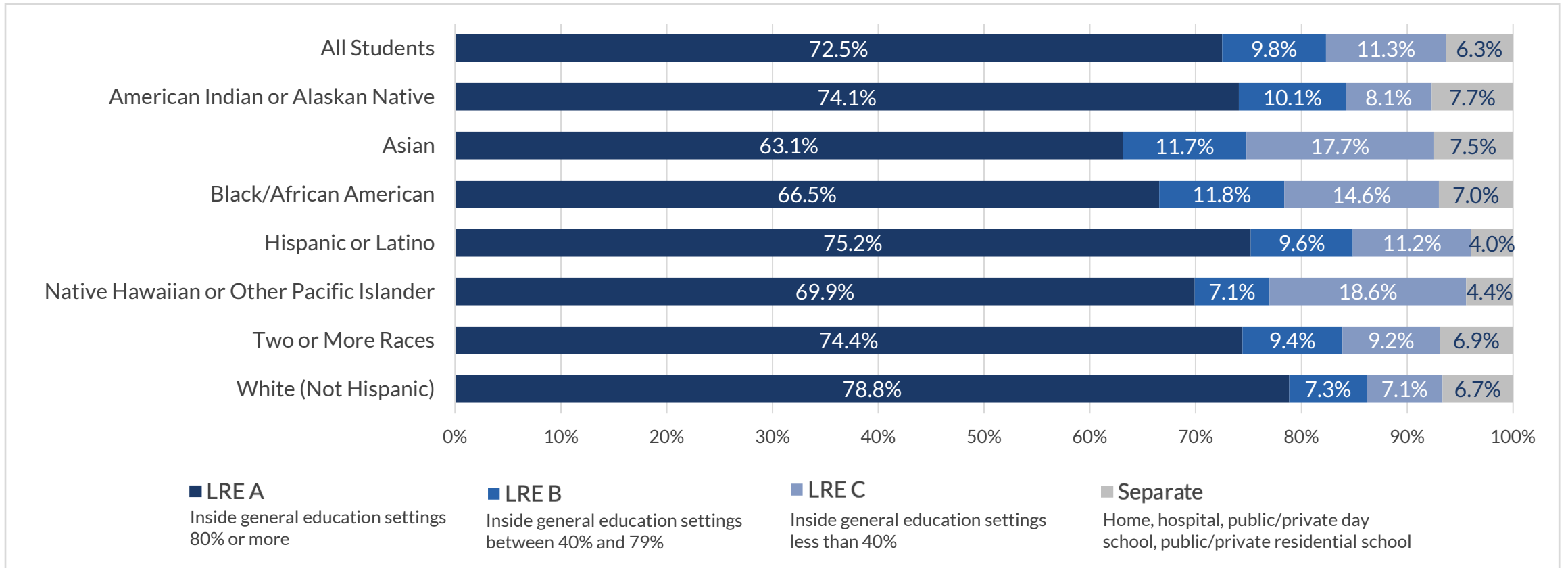


Data Sources: MSDE Early Attendance Data Collection, Enrollment Data Collection SY 2021-2022



Least Restrictive Environment by Race/Ethnicity, 2022-2023

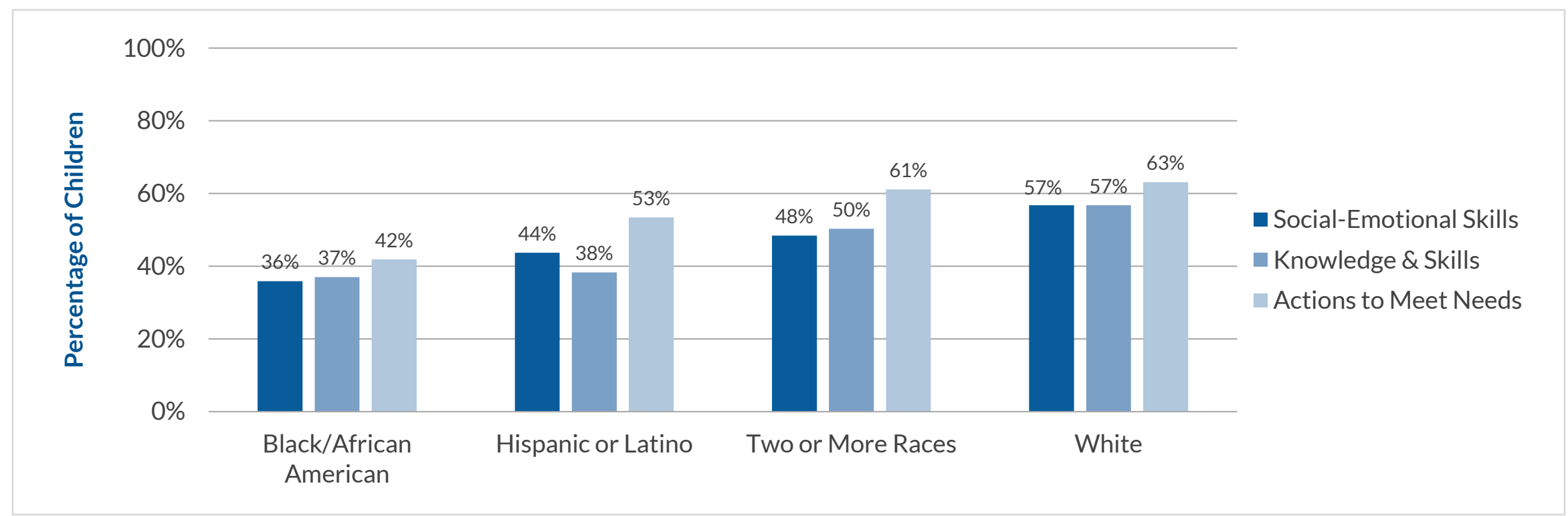
White students are placed in Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) A at higher rates than their peers of other races/ethnicities whereas Asian and Black/African American students are placed in LRE A at the lowest rates.



Data Source: MSDE Early Intervention and Special Education Services Census Data & Related Tables

Outcome Data: State Preschool Child Data by Race, 2021-2022

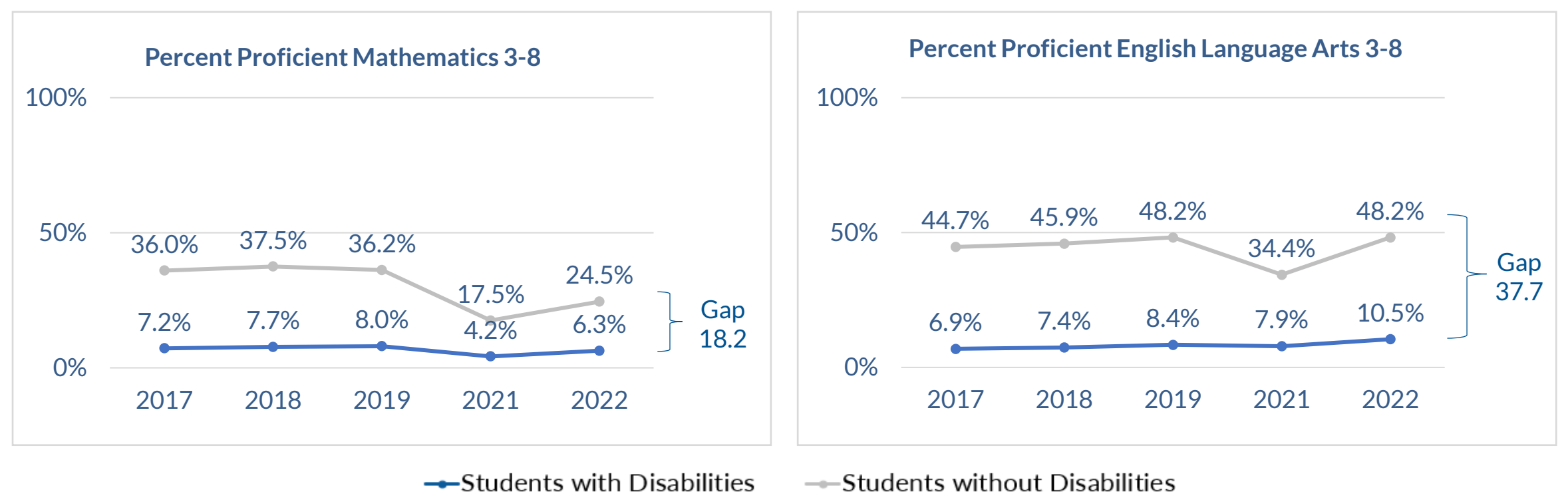
The percentage of children (ages 3-5) who were functioning within age expectations in each skill area by the time they exited the program (2021-2022) was highest for White students.



Data Source: State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report: Part B

Outcome Data: Elementary and Middle School Proficiency, 2017-2022

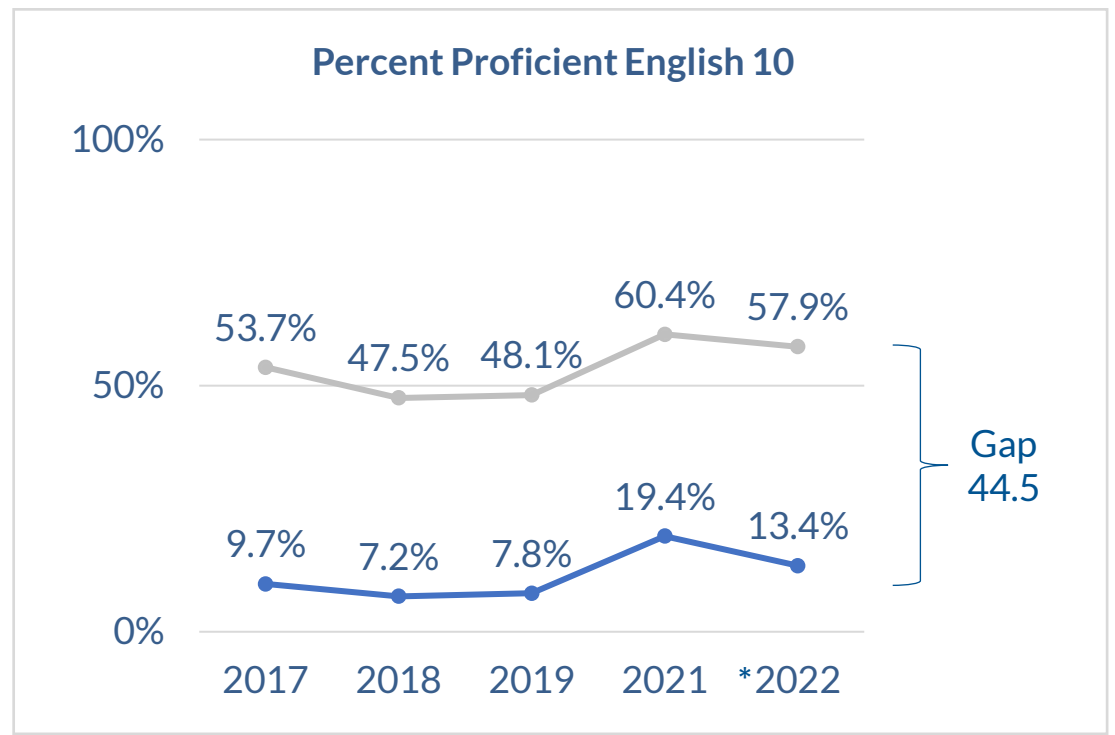
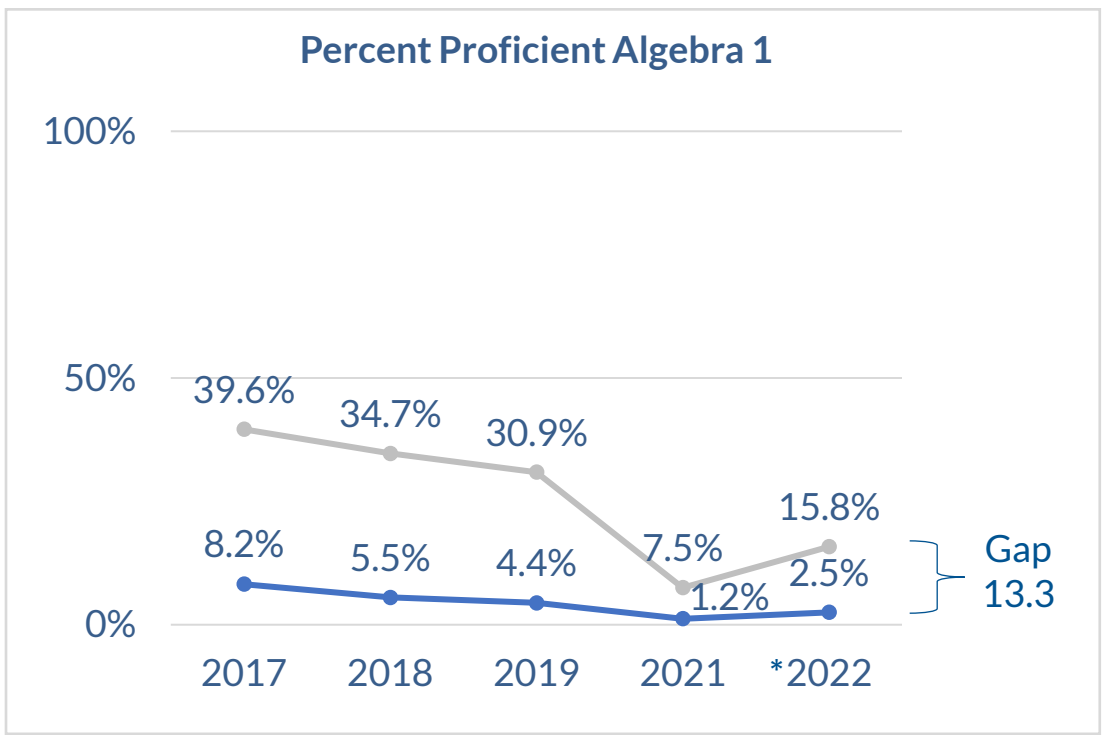
Maryland students have returned to pre-pandemic performance in English Language Arts in spring 2022. Students improved in mathematics in spring 2022 as compared to Early Fall 2021 results.



*Assessments for 2021 (SY 2020-2021) were shortened tests and were administered in Fall 2021. Preliminary SY 2021-2022 data as of January 3, 2022.

Outcome Data: Algebra I and English 10 Proficiency, 2017-2022

Maryland students have returned to pre-pandemic performance in English 10 in spring 2022 with smaller gains seen in mathematics.

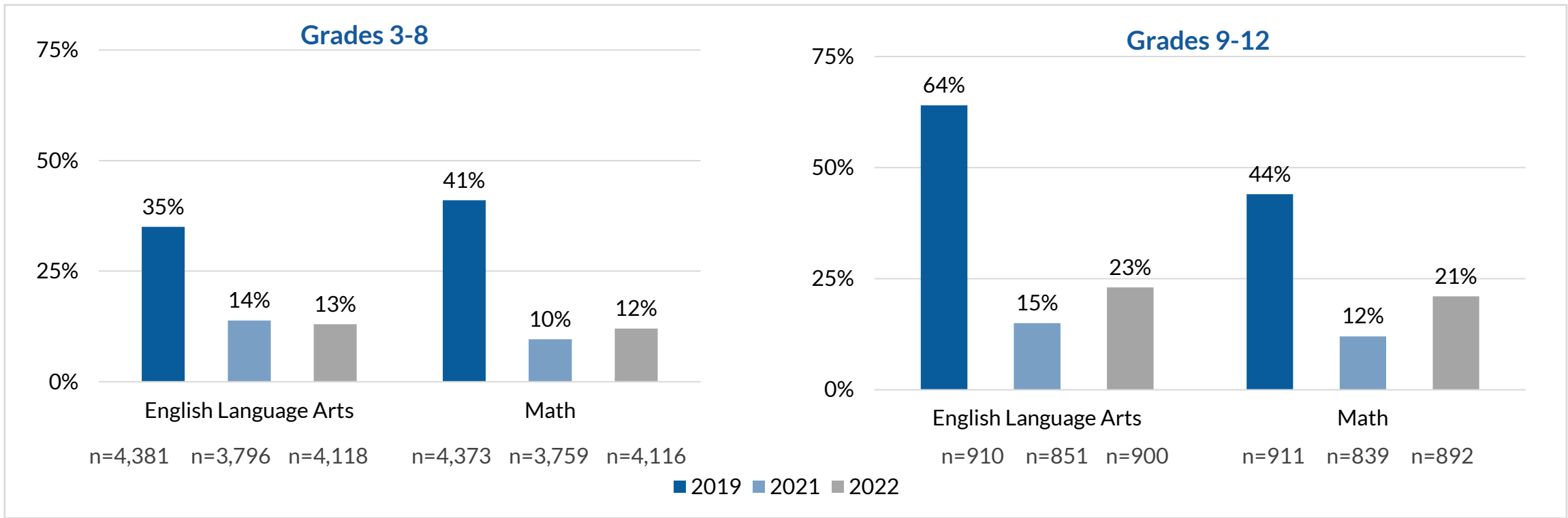


— Students with Disabilities — Students without Disabilities

*Assessments for 2021 (SY 2020-2021) were shortened tests and were administered in Fall 2021. Preliminary SY 2021-2022 data as of January 3, 2022.

Outcome Data: Alternate Assessment Proficiency, 2019-2022

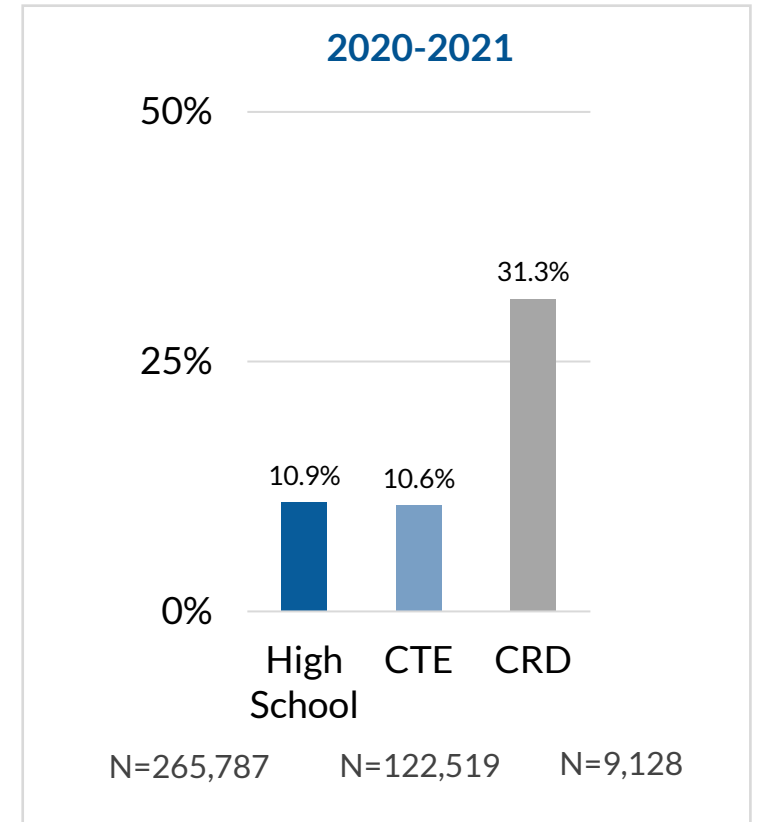
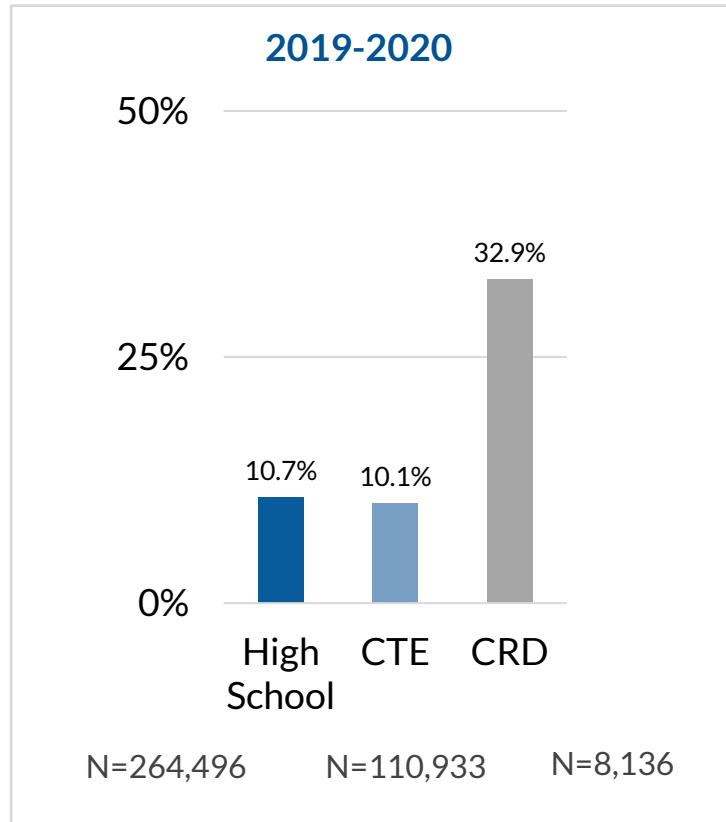
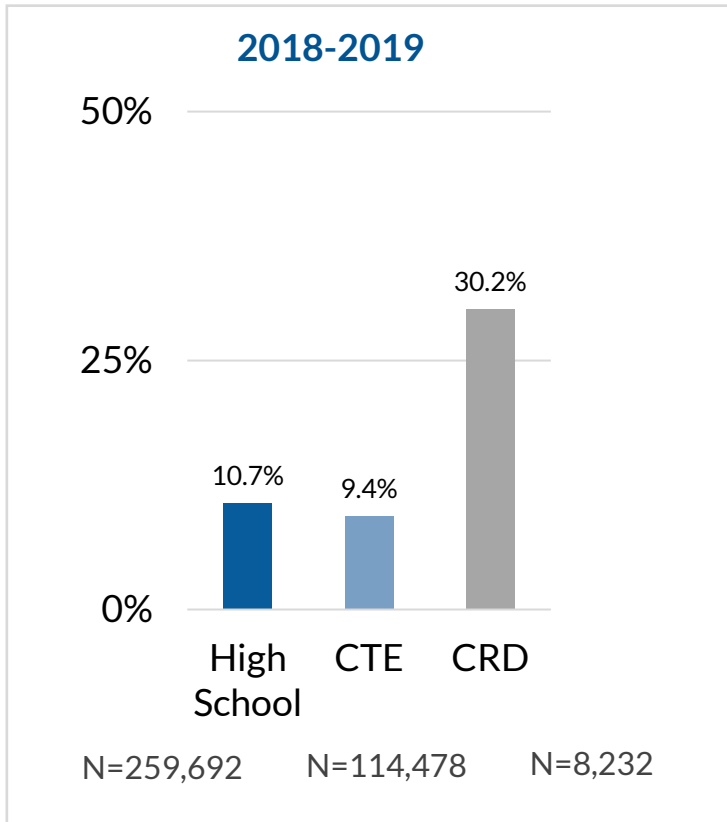
The percentage of students demonstrating proficiency on the alternate assessment has not returned to outcomes from SY 2019.



*Alternate Assessment administered to students with significant cognitive disabilities.

Students with Disabilities in Career and Technical Education, 2018-2021

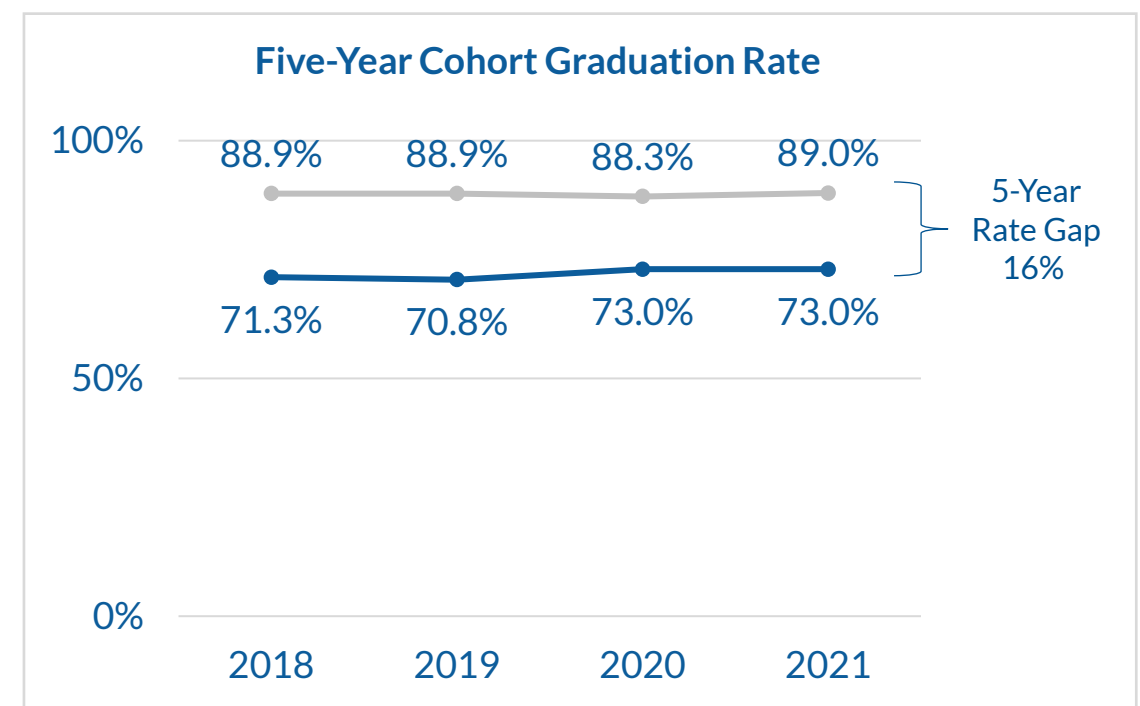
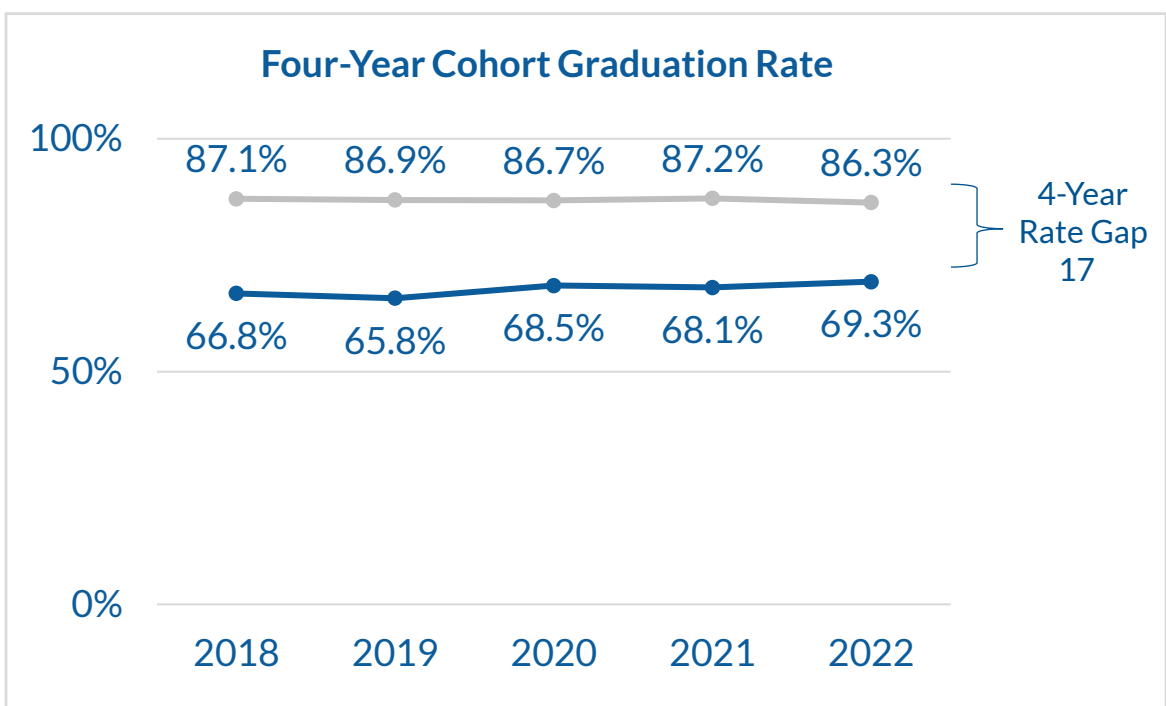
Students with disabilities as a percentage of high school, CTE, and Career Research and Development (CRD) enrollment.



Data Source: Maryland CTE Works: CTE Participant Enrollment

Cohort Graduation Rates, 2018-2022

For students with disabilities, 69.3% graduated within 4 years and 73.0% graduated within 5 years. Although these rates have both trended up, there continues to be a gap in comparison to all students.

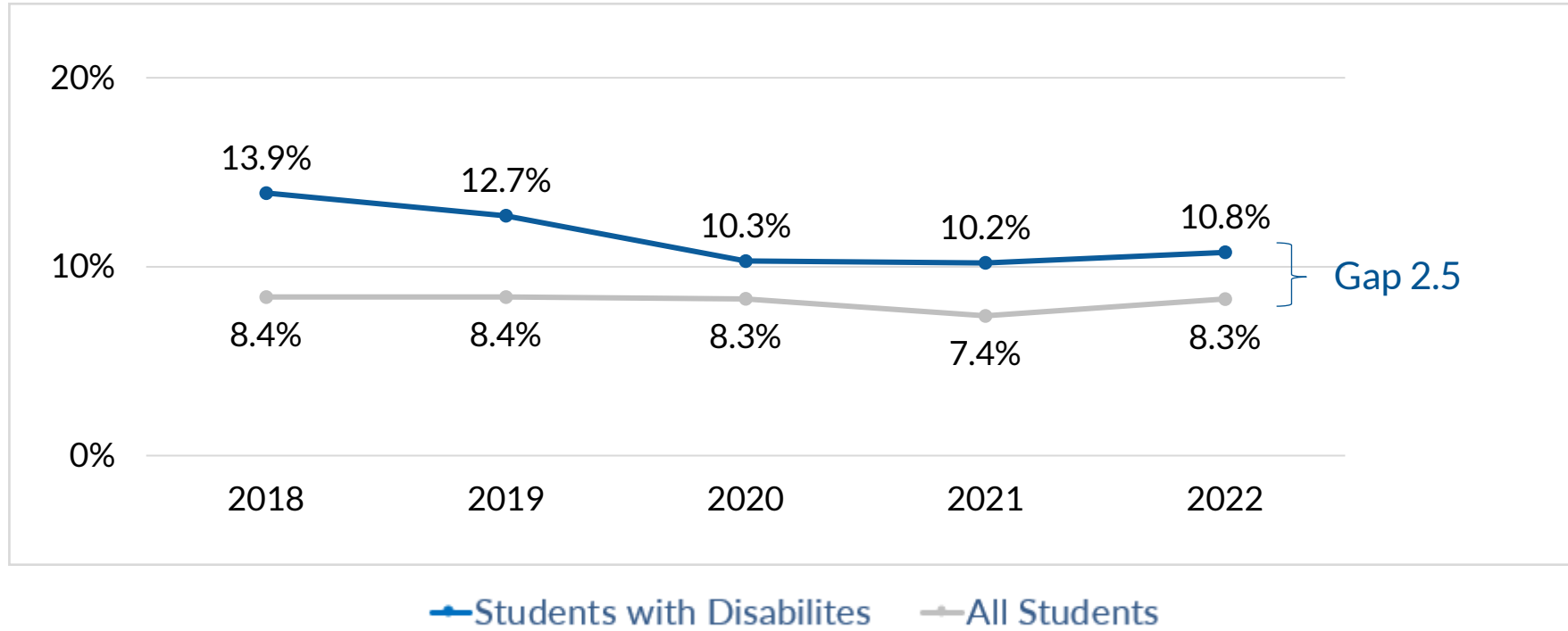


— Students with Disabilities — All Students

Data Source: Maryland Report Card

Cohort Dropout Rate, 2018-2022

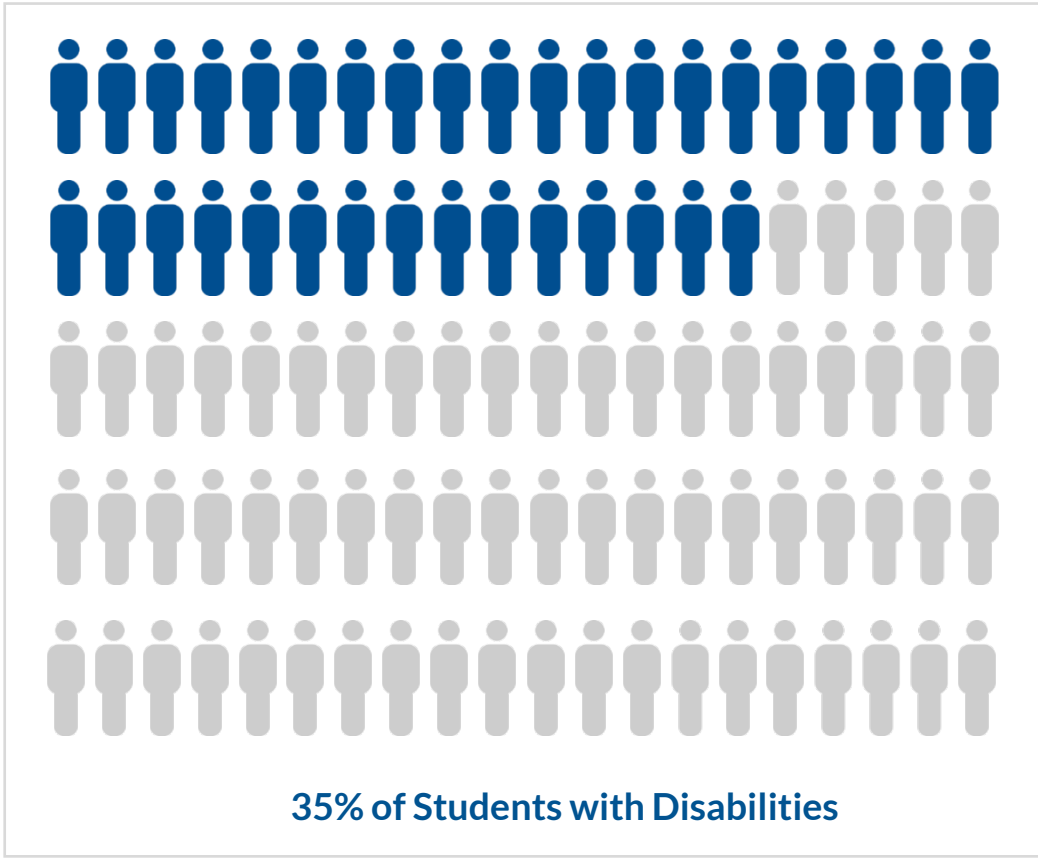
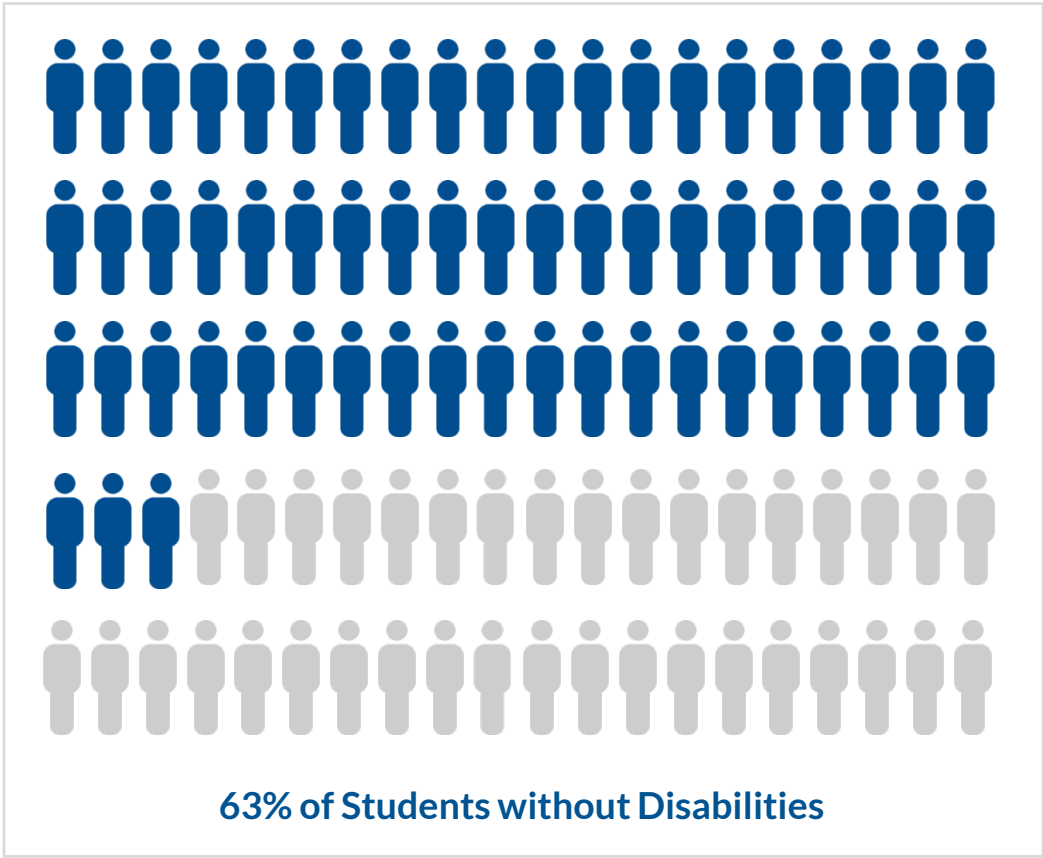
Dropout rates for students with disabilities increased in school year 2021-2022 compared to the prior year; however, the gap in comparison to all students decreased.



Data Source: Maryland Report Card

College Enrollment for Students with Disabilities, Class of 2020

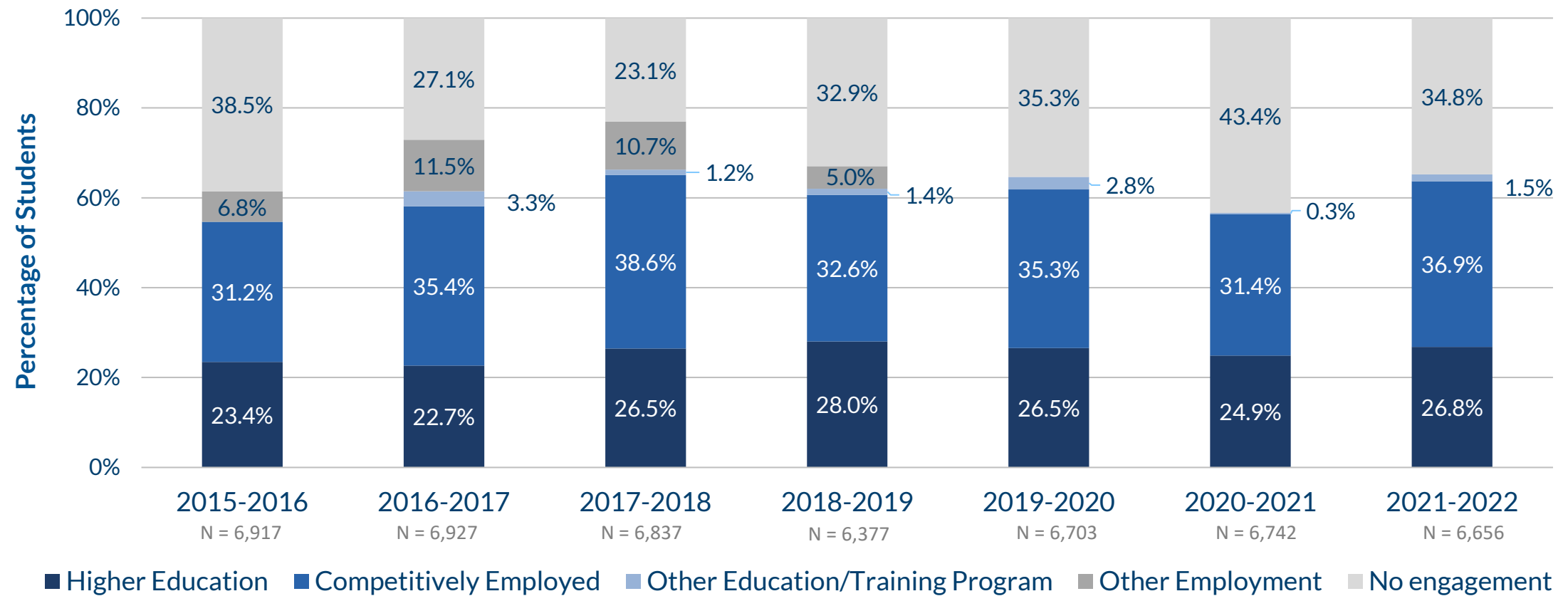
Fewer students with disabilities from the class of 2020 enrolled in college within twelve months of graduating from high school in comparison to their peers.



Data Source: Maryland Report Card, National Student Clearinghouse

Postsecondary Outcomes for Students with Disabilities, 2016-2022

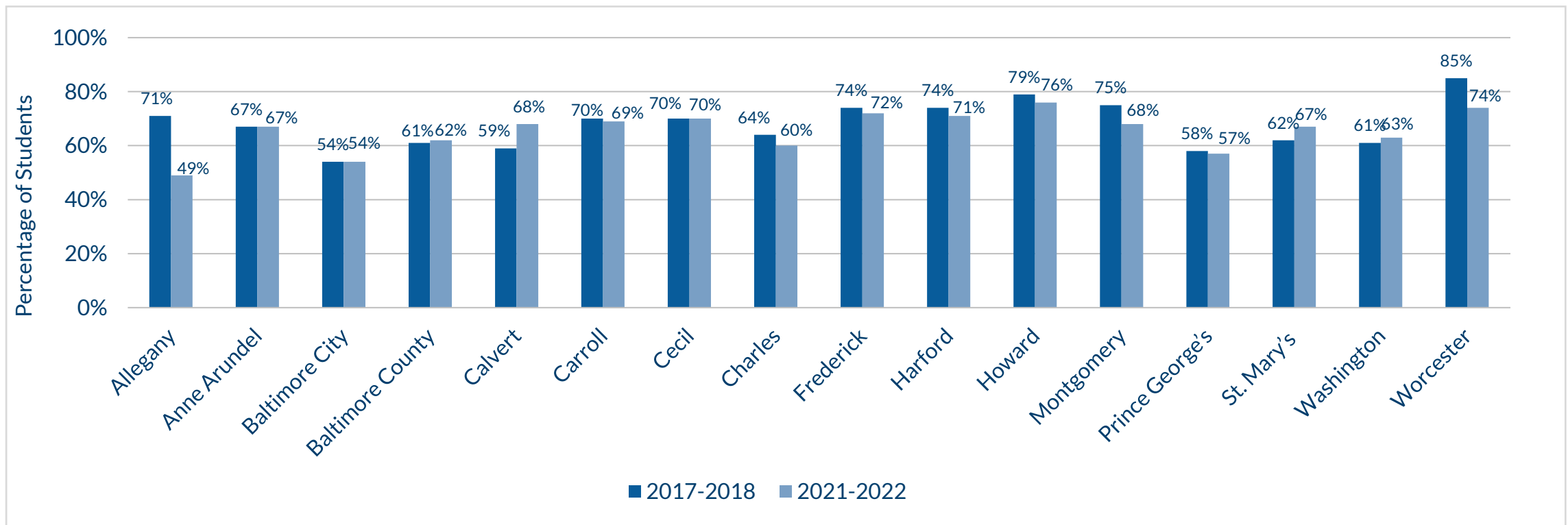
The postsecondary outcomes for students with disabilities was impacted by the pandemic, with a high of 43% of students having no engagement after exiting secondary education. In SY 2021-2022, 37% of students were competitively employed and 27% enrolled in higher education.



Data Source: Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center (MLDSC), Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services (DEI/SES), Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)

Postsecondary Outcomes by LEA

Percentage of Students with Disabilities Enrolled in Higher Education or Competitively Employed within one Year of Leaving School.



*LEAs having less than 1% Students with Disabilities excluded.
Data Source: Maryland CTE Works: CTE Participant Enrollment



Summary of Previous Recommendations

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Review of what Maryland can learn from previous studies and task force recommendations

Summary of Recommendation from Prior Workgroups and Taskforces (1 of 2)

Instruction

- Use a **multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS)** for struggling readers
- Engage in a **structured literacy approach** for reading instruction
- Ensure systemic use, with fidelity of **differentiated instruction, Ready to Learn, MTSS, Universal Design for Learning** to improve student learning
- Develop **strategies to bridge policy and practice to support broad and deep implementation of evidence-based-practices (EBPs)**

Teacher Quality

- **Transform curricula and instructional strategies currently utilized in teacher preparation programs** for reading at the undergraduate (pre-service), graduate levels of university preparation, as well as in professional development (in-service) training
- **Utilize performance assessments**, such as *A Resource for Elementary Education Teacher Educators*
- Develop and implement **guidelines** to be used during the accreditation and program approval processes to evaluate the extent to which **performance assessments of all teacher candidates include certain competencies**
- Ensure **preparation** and continuing **professional development** of general education teachers to incorporate special education pedagogical **knowledge, skills, and dispositions**

Summary of Recommendation from Prior Workgroups and Taskforces (2 of 2)

Accountability: Monitoring and Data Collection

- Institute **accountability for continuous improvement and gap closing** for every school district, school and classroom
- Develop policies and technical assistance and monitor for **standards-based, results-driven accountability**
- Review MSDE's processes and procedures for **fiscal monitoring to better evaluate resource allocation** patterns

Disproportionality

- Study the affect of racial, ethnic, gender, economic, and disability disproportionality on students with disabilities

Funding

- Consider **differentiated support to LEAs including differentiating funding amounts** based on results and progress data
- Make a series of **short-term investments in supplemental interventions** for students with disabilities that go beyond their special education services to close the achievement gap between students with disabilities and all students

Family Engagement

- Encourage a **greater emphasis on the role of parents** as a valued and integral part of the IEP team
- **Disseminate materials directly to families** in addition to through LEAs and refine the IEP tool to **simplify printout**
- Consider **specific training for staff and families**

Resources from Prior Workgroup and Taskforce Recommendations

- Visionary Panel for Better Schools, Final Report: Achievement Matters Most (2002).
- Maryland State Department of Education, K-16 Workgroup: Ad Hoc Committee on Special Education Teacher Preparation Report (2006).
- Commission on Special Education Access and Equity, Report and Recommendations (2014).
- Task Force to Study the Implementation of a Dyslexia Education Program, Final Report (2016).
- WestEd, Study of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Process and the Adequate Funding Level for Students with Disabilities in Maryland (2019).



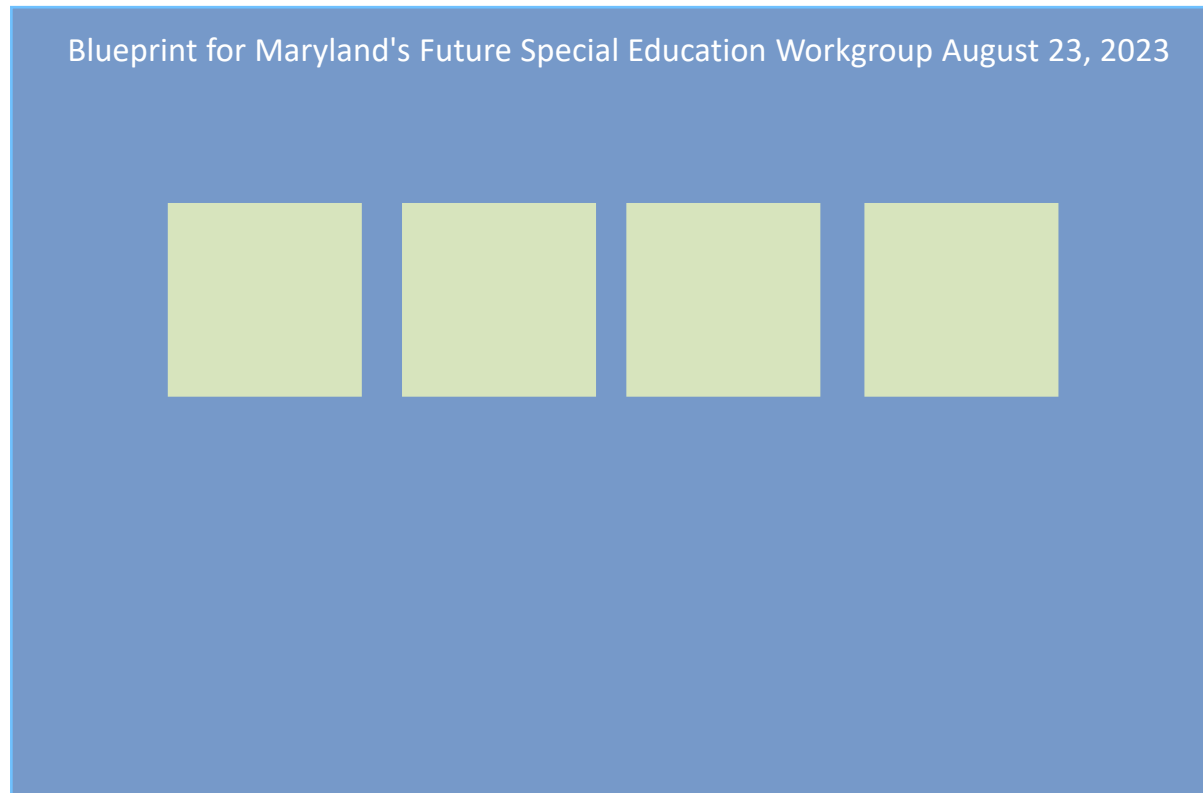
Guiding Question #2

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Public Comment
3. Overview of Workgroup Responsibilities
4. Guiding Question #1
5. State of Special Education Data Dive
6. Summary of Previous Recommendations
7. **Guiding Question #2**
8. Expert Presentation
9. Future Meetings and Next Steps

How do we overcome persistent barriers to effective implementation?

What are the persistent barriers to effective implementation?

- Padlet for brainstorming persistent barriers





Expert Presentation: Reducing Overidentification and Increasing Achievement

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Learn how other states and school systems have effectively implemented change for students with disabilities

Paul B. Ash, Ph.D.

- Former superintendent of schools in Lexington, Massachusetts and is a recognized national consultant.
- Lexington Public Schools' success included significantly closing achievement gaps for special education, minority, and low-income students.
 - On the state performance tests in special education, grade 10 scores increased from 79% proficient and advanced to 100%. Grade 10 special education mathematics scores increased from 81% proficient and advanced to 95%.
- The school system's success was highlighted as an [Education Trust Extraordinary District](#).
- In 2010, the national newspaper [Education Week highlighted Lexington's professional development program](#) as one of six national models on how professional learning can be used to improve student learning and teacher innovation.



Future Meetings and Next Steps

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Public Comment
3. Overview of Workgroup Responsibilities
4. Guiding Question #1
5. State of Special Education Data Dive
6. Summary of Previous Recommendations
7. Guiding Question #2
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Moving the work forward

Next Steps and Resources

- The workgroup shall submit an initial report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly by 12/1/23, an interim report by 7/1/24, and a final report by 12/1/24.
- MSDE Blueprint Special Education Workgroup Webpage: [URL]
- Future meetings will include small breakout groups to allow participants to engage in deeper discussions
- Next Meeting:
 - September 20, 2023 from 4pm to 6pm at MSDE's Board Room in Baltimore, with a virtual option.
 - Guiding Questions: What are existing standards and expectations under IDEA for the progress students with disabilities should be able to achieve? How do we ensure that IEP goals are set that are appropriately ambitious?

Future Meeting Topics

Topics
Instruction
Integration of General and Special Education
Accountability: Monitoring and Data Collection
Teacher Quality/Inservice and Teacher Preparation
Special Education – Delivery of Services – Instruction and Related Services
Funding
Significant Disproportionality
Parent and Family Partnerships
Early Intervention/Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program (MITP)
Diplomas and Graduation Requirements

Future Monthly Meeting Dates

Date	Time
Wednesday, August 23, 2023	4:00 - 6:00 pm
Wednesday, September 20, 2023	4:00 - 6:00 pm
Wednesday, November 1, 2023	4:00 - 6:00 pm
Wednesday, November 29, 2023	4:00 - 6:00 pm
Tuesday, January 30, 2024	4:00 - 6:00 pm
February TBD	4:00 - 6:00 pm
March, TBD	4:00 - 6:00 pm
April, TBD	4:00 - 6:00 pm
May, TBD	4:00 - 6:00 pm

Location - Meetings will be held at the Maryland State Department of Education located at 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201 in the 7th floor Board Room, with a virtual option for attendance.

BLUEPRINT

FOR MARYLAND'S FUTURE

More information can be found on MSDE's Blueprint webpage:

Blueprint.MarylandPublicSchools.org