



Condition of Education in Western Massachusetts

Rethinking Where Learning Happens

Thursday, November 2nd, 2023

Welcome



Chad d'Entremont

Executive Director,
Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy

The Project

The Condition of Education in the Commonwealth project is one way the Rennie Center fulfills its mission of producing non-partisan, high-quality, independent research that promotes improvement in public education for all Massachusetts children.

Key Components:

- **Release Event**
- **Action Guide**
- **Data Dashboard**

OPENING REMARKS

Paul Belsito | Executive Director, The Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation

KEYNOTE

Patrick Tutwiler | Massachusetts Secretary of Education, Executive Office of Education

RESEARCH PRESENTATION: CONDITION OF EDUCATION IN WESTERN MA

Alexis Lian | Policy Director, Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy

Meghan Volcy | Associate, Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy

PANEL DISCUSSION

Matt Brunell | Co-Executive Director, Springfield Empowerment Zone Partnership

Tricia Canavan | Chief Executive Officer, Tech Foundry

Heather Williams | Youth Director, MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board

CLOSING REMARKS

Ed Lambert | Executive Director, Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education

Opening Remarks



Paul Belsito

Executive Director,
Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation

Keynote Address



Patrick Tutwiler

Secretary of Education,
Massachusetts Executive Office of Education

Rethinking Where Learning Happens



Alexis Lian

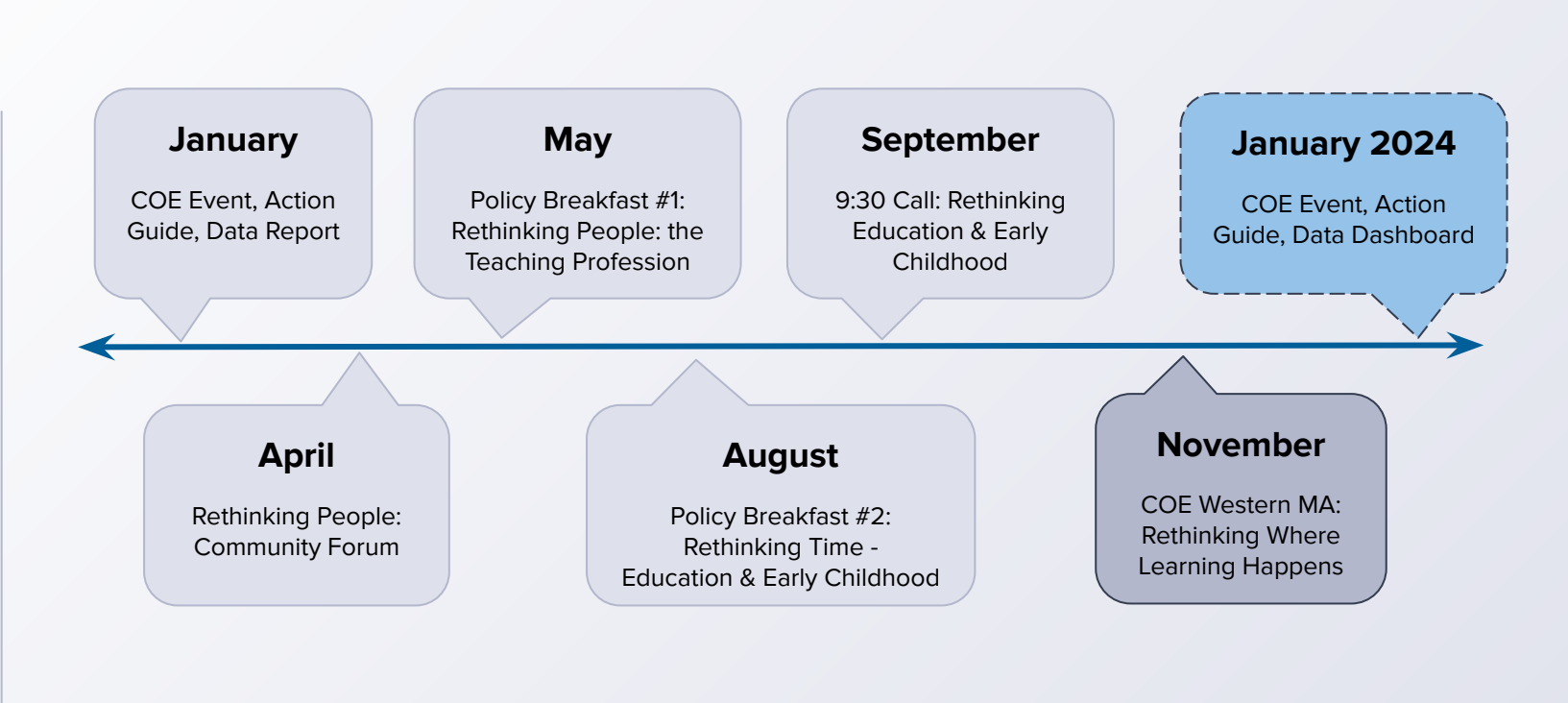
Director of Policy,
Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy



Meghan Volcy

Associate,
Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy

COE 2023 Timeline



Over the course of this year, we dug into data in five different buckets:

- Responding to the Current Moment
- Early Education & Care
- Instructional Practice
- Student Wellbeing
- College & Career Pathways

Today, we'll highlight a few of these indicators related to the need to rethink where learning happens.



Data Report

Each year, the Rennie Center collects a set of key indicators in our Data Report to provide context on the status of education in the Commonwealth. This data is collected from the MA Department of Early Education and Care, MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, MA Department of Higher Education, and other research and policy organizations. This year's Data Report tracks a set of 21 state- and local-level indicators aligned with the focus areas in the Rennie Center's Retrospective Action Guide:

- Responding to the Current Moment
- Early Education and Care
- Instructional Practices
- Student Wellbeing
- College & Career Pathways

As Bay Staters attempt to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and find their footing in a "new normal," it is critical that individuals working in the education sector—from classrooms to the State House, from Berkshire County to Barnstable County—have access to updated, relevant, accurate data.

ABOUT THIS PROJECT

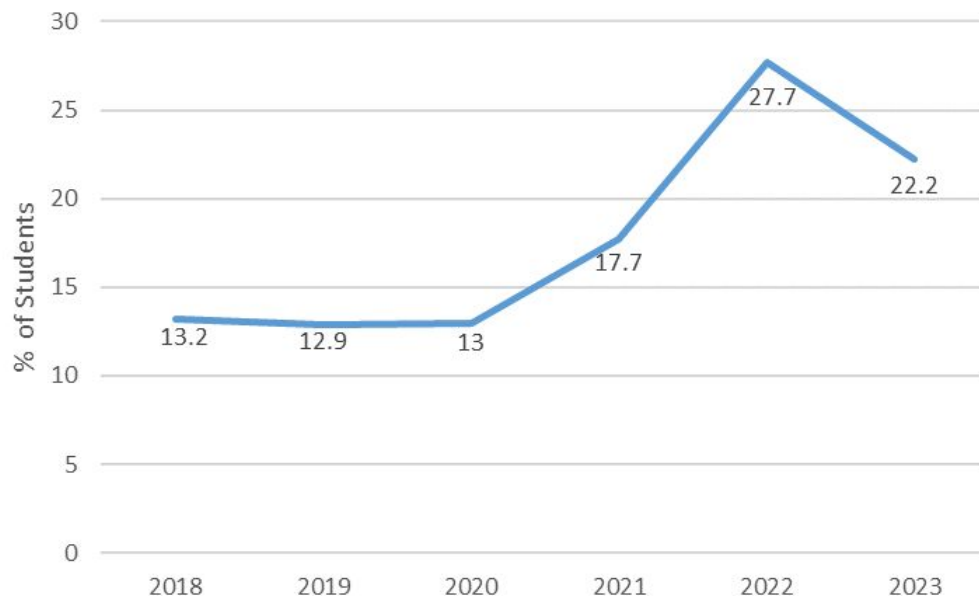
The Condition of Education in the Commonwealth Data Report is one way the Rennie Center fulfills its mission of producing non-partisan, high-quality, independent research that promotes improvement in public education for all Massachusetts children. This resource provides an in-depth look at a range of school performance measures. The 2023 Data Report serves as a supplement to our Action Guide Retrospective, *Looking Back to Look Ahead*, curating indicators that will become a part of a more refreshed, comprehensive Data Dashboard available on the Rennie Center website in the coming year.



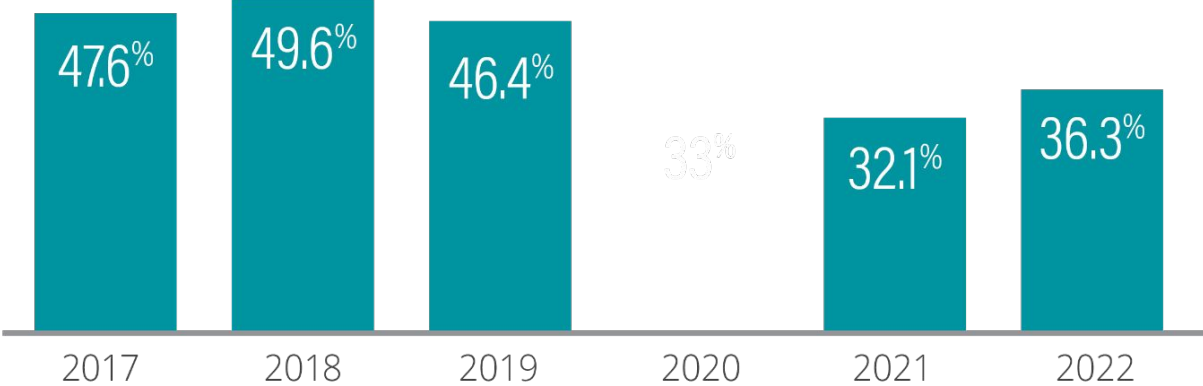
Chronic Absenteeism

Chronic absenteeism (*students who miss 10% or more school days*) increased for all students from 13% at the onset of the pandemic to nearly 28% in 2022.

Despite districts and schools returning to fully in-person schooling and a slight decrease in 2023, chronic absenteeism is significantly higher than pre-pandemic rates.



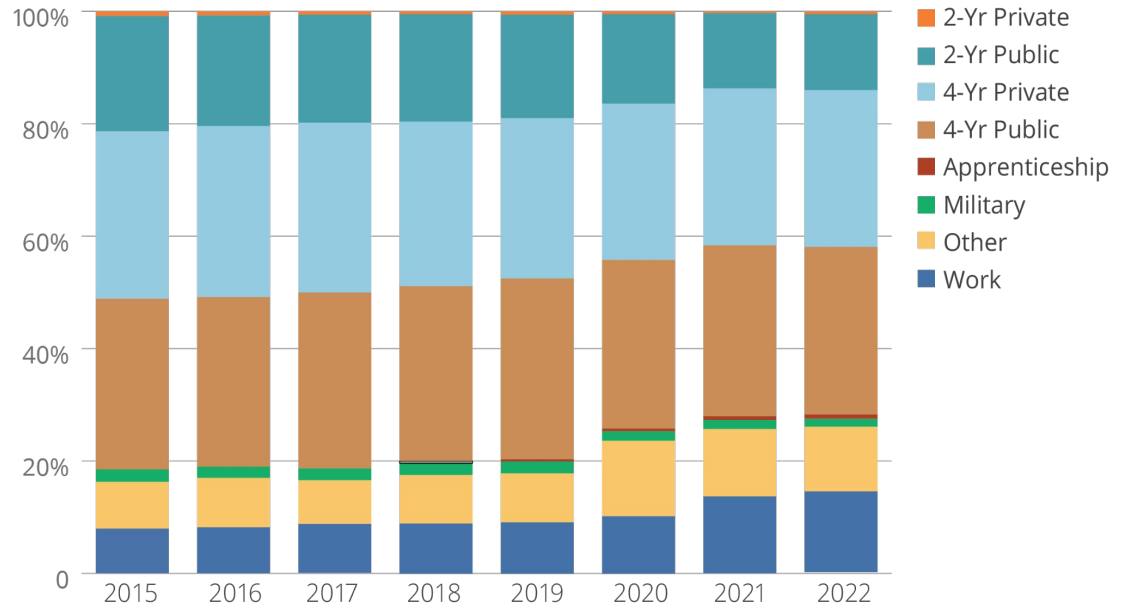
8th Grade Math MCAS Scores



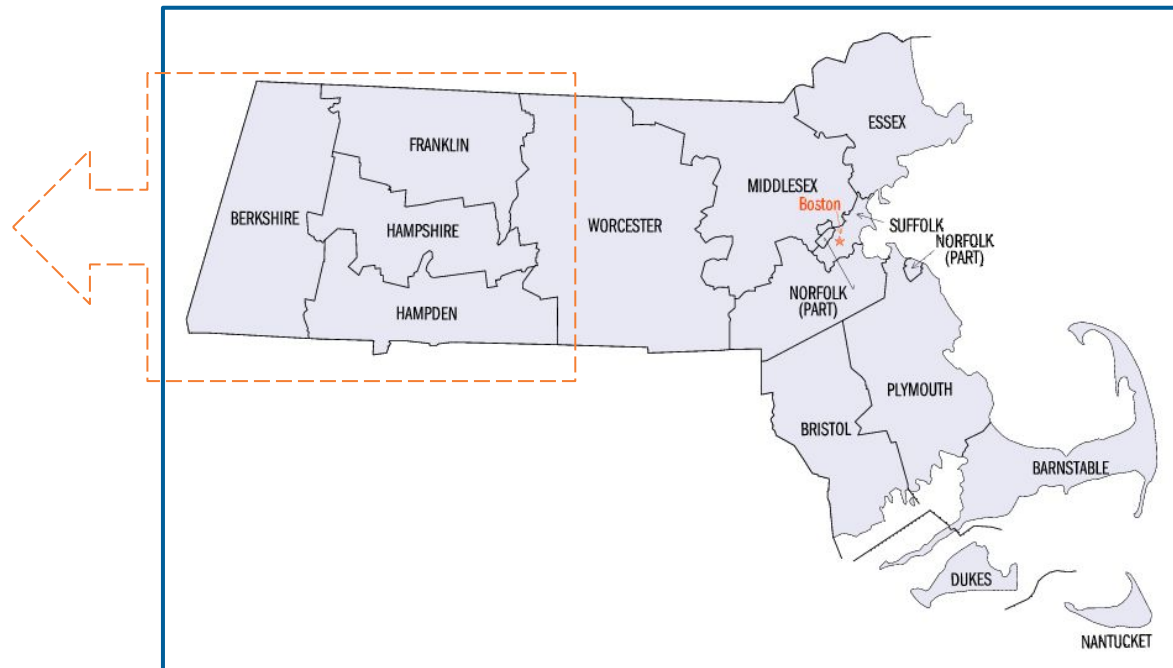
8th grade math scores have declined since 2018, exacerbated by the pandemic.

Plans of High School Graduates

A wider variety of post-secondary pathways has become more attainable to students due to policies and programs such as early college, innovation career pathways, and increased internship opportunities. This graph illustrates the increasing diversification of high school graduates' planned next steps.



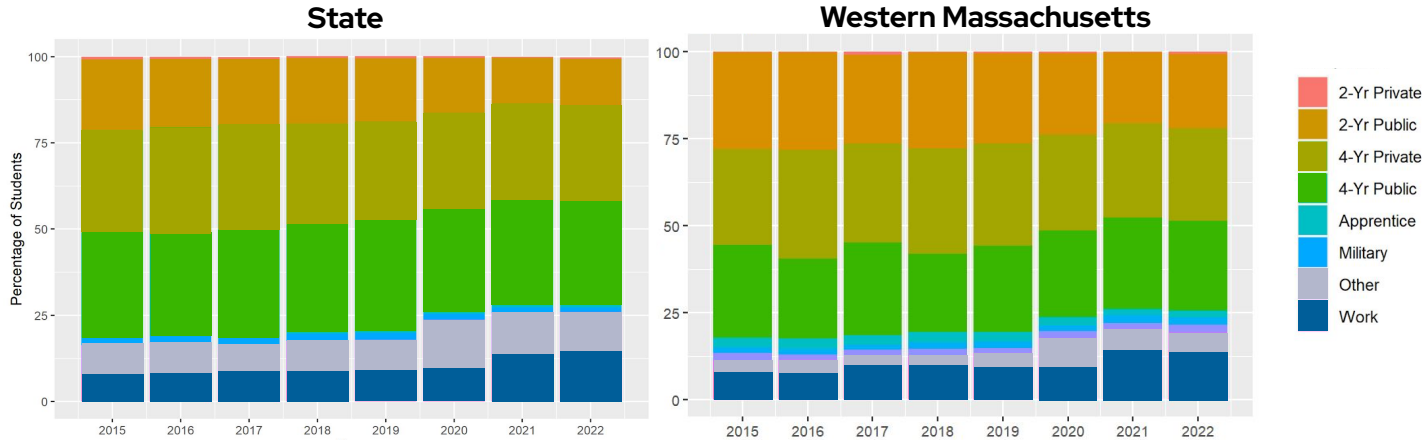
Today we are focusing our attention on Western Massachusetts by taking a deep dive into the condition of education in **Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden, and Hampshire** counties.





Trends Across the Region

Plans of High School Graduates



*This includes school districts in Berkshire, Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden County.

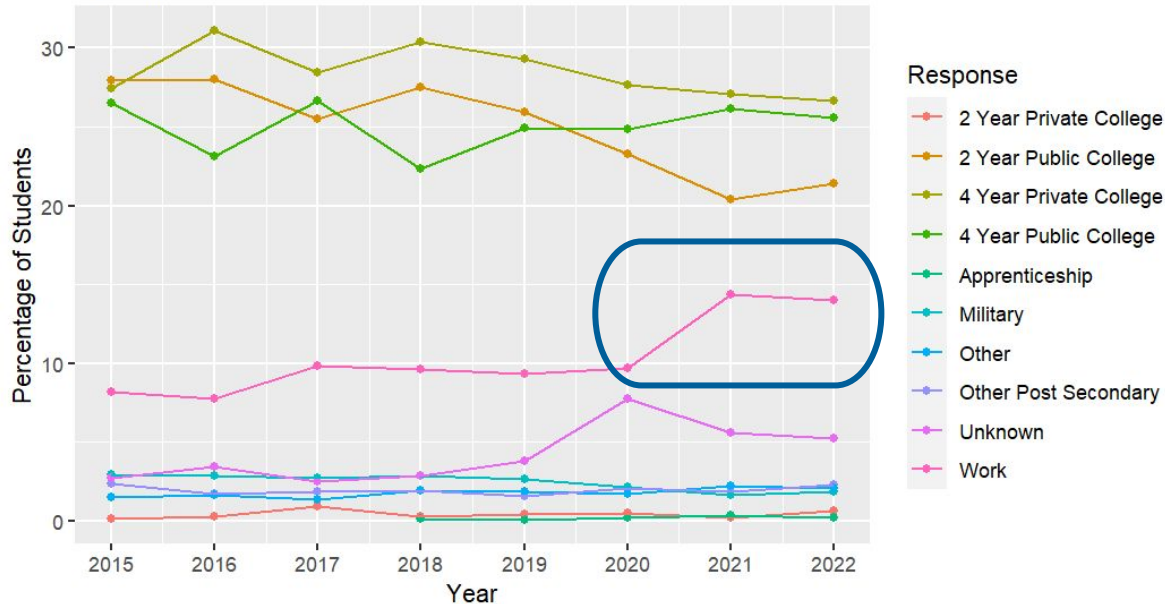
There is much higher interest in plans to attend a 2-year public college than the state aggregate.

Students in Western MA have increasingly planned to go directly to work after high school at similar, and at times higher, rates as the state since 2015.



Trends Across the Region

Plans of High School Graduates in Western MA



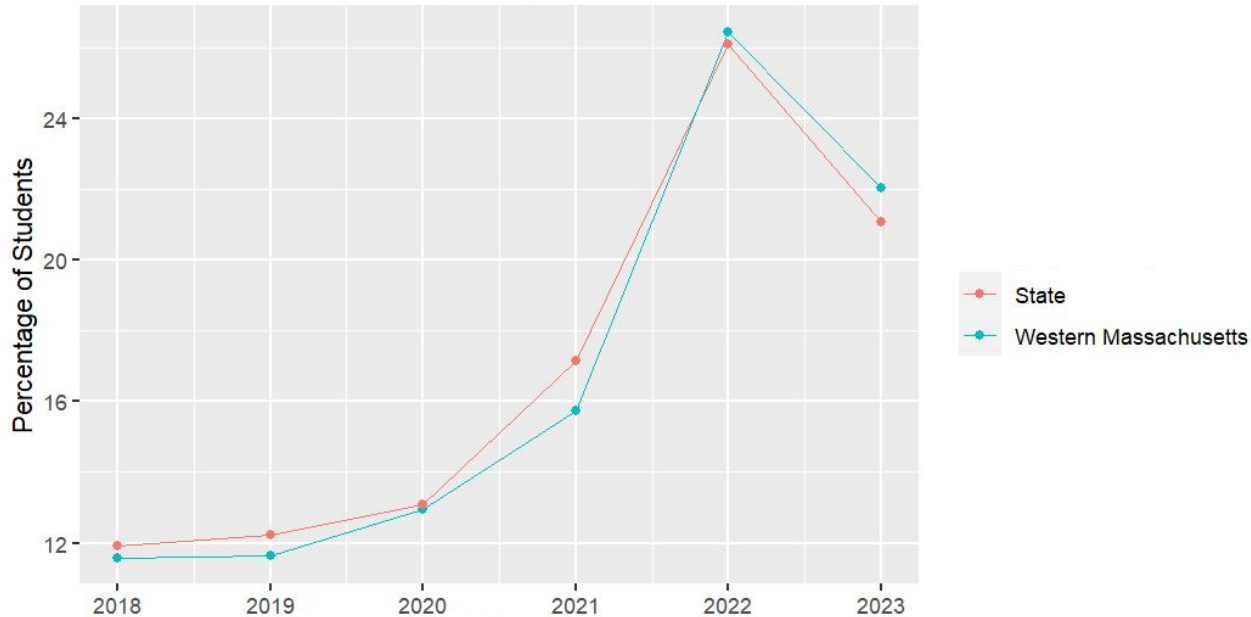
*This includes school districts in Berkshire, Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden County.

Looking specifically at Western MA counties, students have increasingly planned to go straight to work over the past seven years, with a significant jump mid-pandemic.



Trends Across the Region

Chronic Absenteeism in Western MA



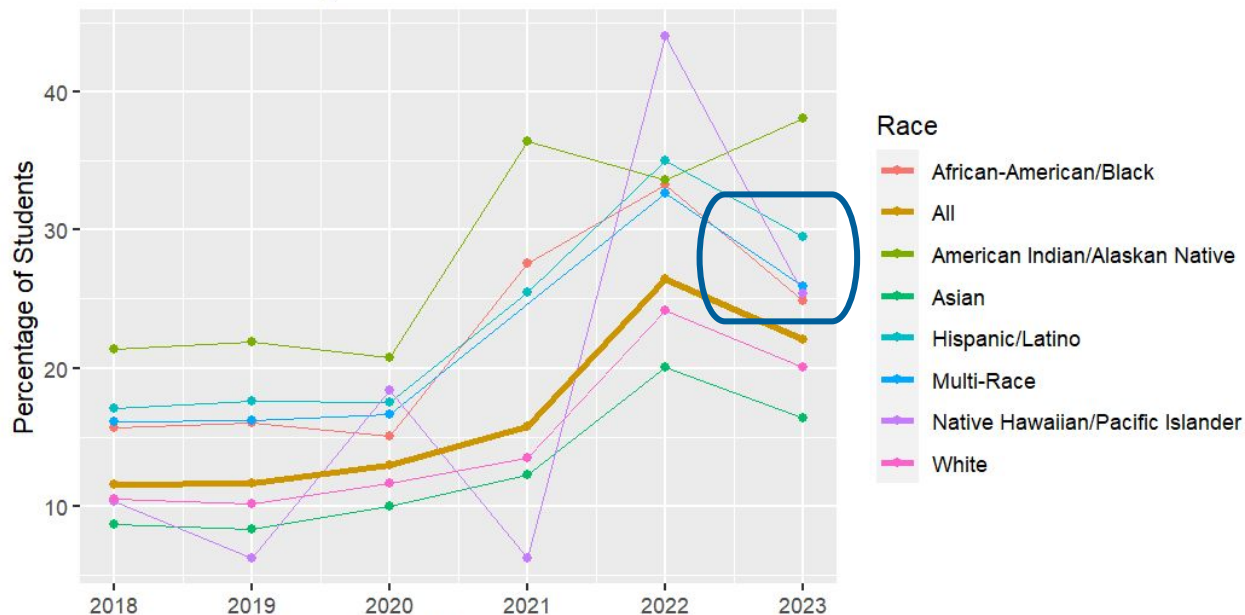
Counties in Western Massachusetts have mirrored state trends regarding chronic absenteeism.

While numbers are improving, students are chronically absent from school at higher rates than 2021 and 2020.



Trends Across the Region

Chronic Absenteeism by Race in Western MA



In 2023, nearly 30% of students identifying as Hispanic/Latino were chronically absent.

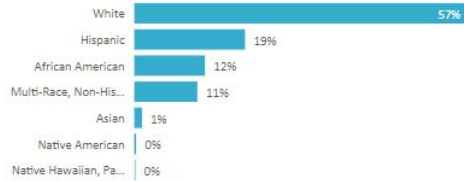
Students identifying as Hispanic/Latino make up 32% of the Western MA student population.



District
Pittsfield

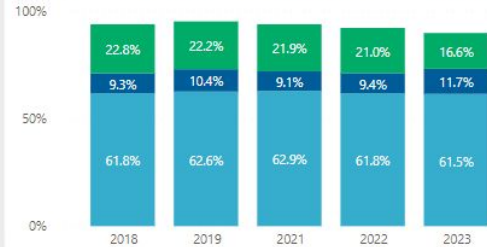
Demographic Information for Pittsfield

4,897 Enrollment 66% Low Income 22% Disabilities 8% EL



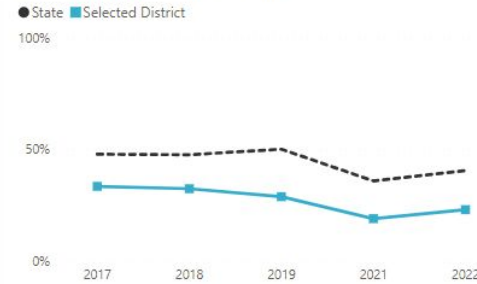
Students with Disabilities

● Full Inclusion Rate ● Partial Inclusion Rate ● Substantially Separate Rate

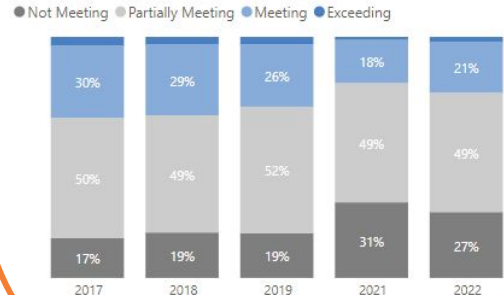


MCAS ELA **MATH** SCI MCAS Grade: All

Proficiency for All Students Over Time

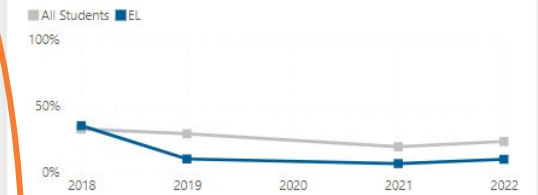


Student Performance by Year

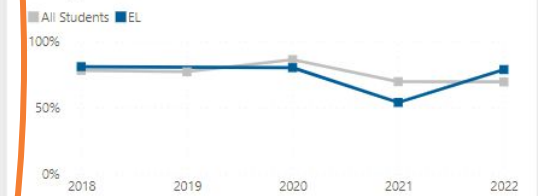


Gap Analysis Group by: EL

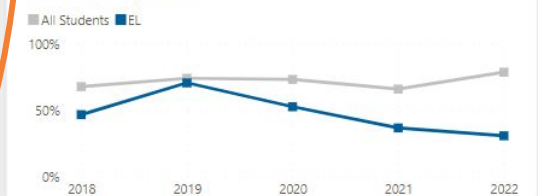
MCAS Proficiency



Passing 9th Grade Courses



MassCore Completion Rate





Plans of High School Graduates in Pittsfield (2021-2022)



31.2% of students in Pittsfield plan to attend a 2-year public college compared to just 13.5% of students across the state.

13.2% of students in Pittsfield plan to go straight to work, though it is important to note that 0% are planning to start an apprenticeship.



Selected Bright Spots in Berkshire County



Source: Monument Mountain High School, [The Berkshire Eagle](#)

- ★ Monument Mountain Regional High School (MMRHS) in Great Barrington developed designated **Innovation Career Pathways** in the following sectors:
 - Business and Finance
 - Healthcare & Social Assistance
 - Manufacturing
- ★ MMRHS created **specific staffing positions** related to internship placement and CVTE initiatives.
- ★ North Adams Public Schools (Drury High School) has partnered with the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts to create an **Early College program** for students.

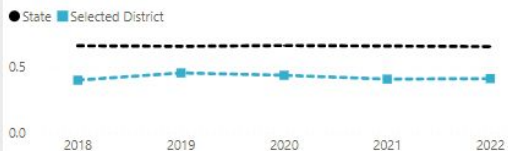


District

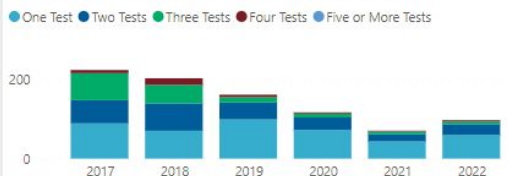
Holyoke

High School Performance

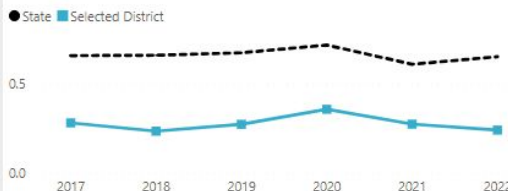
% Students Completing Advanced Coursework



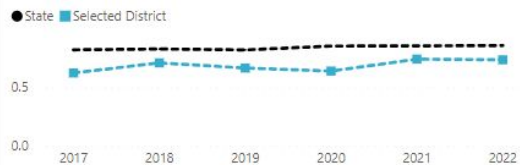
of Students by Advanced Placement Tests Taken



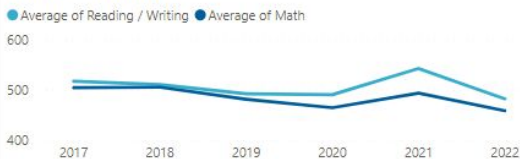
% of Students Scoring 3-5 on AP



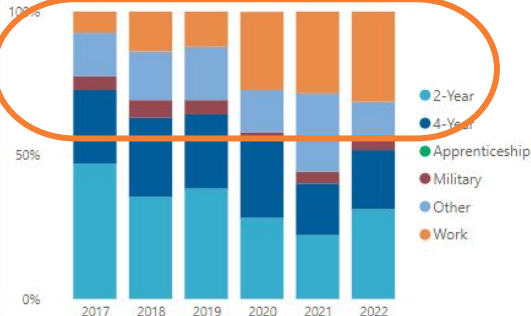
4 Year Graduation Rate



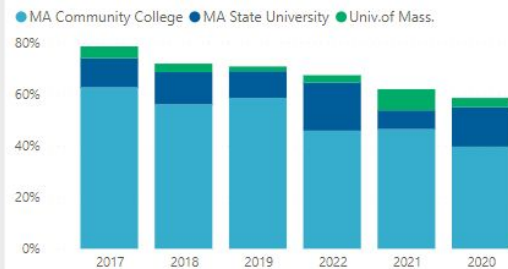
Average SAT Scores



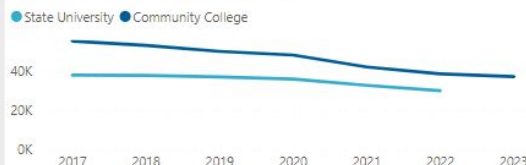
Plans of High School Graduates



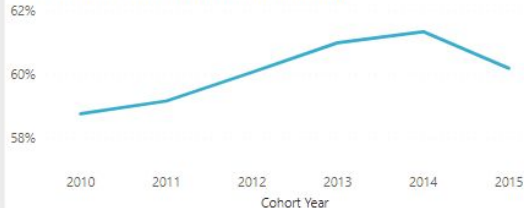
% of College Attenders Attending MA Colleges



College Enrollment in MA Colleges



6-Year Graduation Rate (State University)



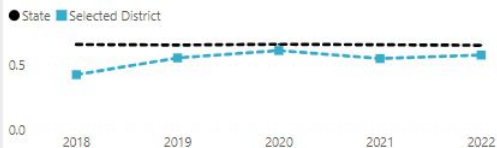


District

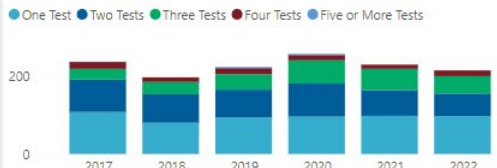
West Springfield

High School Performance

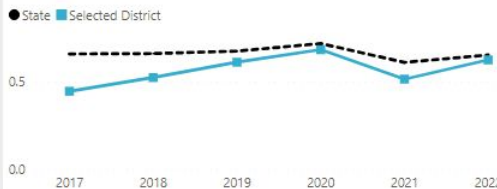
% Students Completing Advanced Coursework



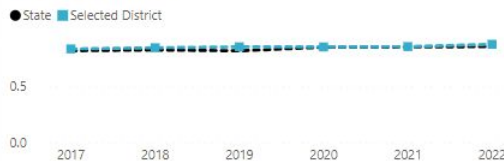
of Students by Advanced Placement Tests Taken



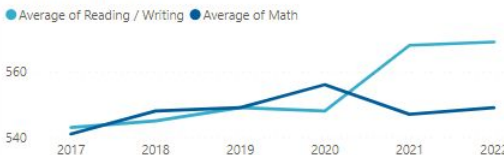
% of Students Scoring 3-5 on AP



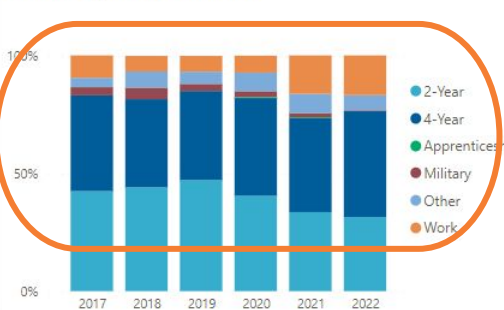
4 Year Graduation Rate



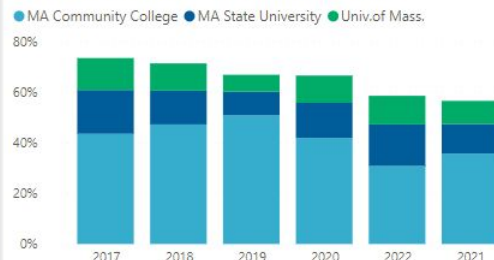
Average SAT Scores



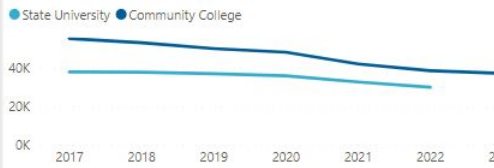
Plans of High School Graduates



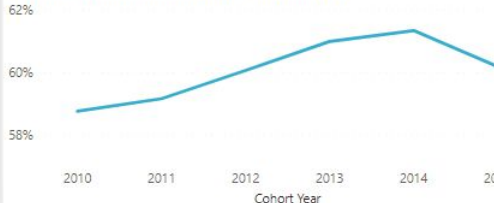
% of College Attenders Attending MA Colleges



College Enrollment in MA Colleges



6-Year Graduation Rate (State University)





Selected Bright Spots in Hampden County



Source: West Springfield High School, [The Republican](#)

- ★ West Springfield High School developed designated **Innovation Career Pathways** in the following sectors:
 - Manufacturing
 - Business & Finance
 - Healthcare & Social Assistance
 - Information Technology
- ★ Several high schools have partnered to develop and offer **Early College** programs to their students. Some include:
 - Springfield Technical Community College (STCC) partnering with Springfield High School of Commerce and Veritas Preparatory Charter School
 - Holyoke High School partnering with Holyoke Community College and Westfield State University

Panel Discussion

Chad d'Entremont
Moderator

- **Matt Brunell** | Co-Executive Director, Springfield Empowerment Zone Partnership
- **Tricia Canavan** | Chief Executive Officer, Tech Foundry
- **Heather Williams** | Youth Director, MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board

Closing Remarks



Ed Lambert

Executive Director,
Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education

Wrap Up & Next Steps

Thank you!

Save the Date!

See you on **Tuesday, January 30th, 2024** for our
Condition of Education Report at the Omni Parker
House in Boston.